Richmond Valley Council

AGENDA

Ordinary Council Meeting

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

Date: **Tuesday, 21 July 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 PUBLIC ACCESS AND QUESTION TIME

4 APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE OR ATTENDANCE BY AUDIO-VISUAL LINK BY COUNCILLORS

5 MAYORAL MINUTES

Nil

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

6.1 MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 30 June 2026.

REPORT

Refer to attached Minutes.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Unconfirmed Ordinary Minutes 30 June 2026 (under separate cover)

7 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

8 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

9 PETITIONS

10 NOTICE OF MOTION

Nil

11 MAYOR'S REPORT

11.1 MAYORAL ATTENDANCE REPORT 11 JUNE - 13 JULY 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Mayoral Attendance Report for the period 11 June – 13 July 2026.

June
13 - Cassino Gallery - NAIDOC Exhibition
17 - Rous County Council Ordinary meeting
17 - NSW Trade Mission dinner
18 - Biggest Morning Tea Red Ink
19 - Northern Rivers DAP drop in consultation Casino
23 - ALGA Conference Canberra and meetings with Ministers
24 – ALGA Conference Canberra
25 – ALGA Conference Canberra
27 – Official Opening Casino Suspension Bridge
27 – Rotary Annual Changeover dinner
27 – Casino Truck Show Volunteer catchup
28 – Bites, Beats and Big Map event
30 – Richmond Valley Council Ordinary meeting

July
1 – St Marys Intersection Upgrade Presentation
1 - Country Mayors Regional welcome dinner
2 – Country Mayors Association forum Ballina
3 – Rous County Council - Welcome Event
6 – NAIDOC March and Celebration Casino
7 – Citizenship Ceremony
10 – Evans Head Fishing Classic Presentation

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

12 DELEGATES' REPORTS

12.1 DELEGATES' REPORT JUNE 2026 - ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATION

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

REPORT

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

Rous County Council

Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Sandra Humphrys have provided the following summary of the main items of business for the Rous County Council Ordinary Meeting held on 17 June 2026.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Summary Rous Council meeting 17 June 2026

Council Meeting, Wednesday 17 June 2026

Summary of main items of business

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

Reports to Council

1. Rescission – Code of Meeting Practice

View Agenda Item 9.1 (pages 5 - 121)

(a) Council resolved to rescind the resolution made on 19 November 2025 adopting the 2025 Model Code of Meeting Practice.

(b) As the 2025 Model Code would no longer be the Council's adopted code, the 2021 Model Code has become the operative code again.

(c) On 28 May 2026, the Office of Local Government (OLG) advised that the NSW Legislative Council has disallowed the regulation that prescribed the 2025 Model Code.

(d) An updated Model Code is expected to be released by the OLG soon.

2. Delivery program and Operational plan

View Agenda Item 10.1 (pages 122 - 123)

(a) Council adopted the Delivery Program | Operational Plan, including the 2026/27 Budget and Statement of Revenue Policy, following its annual review.

(b) The public exhibition period closed on 15 May 2026, with no submissions received.

(c) The Long-Term Financial Plan (2026/27–2035/36) has been updated to reflect revised timing for costs associated with the Tamarind Drive intersection project.

(d) The Statement of Revenue Policy has been updated to incorporate fees set by the Office of Local Government's (OLG) Circular 26-06.

(e) OLG Circular 26-06 Information prescribes the amount to be charged for specific fees and charges that are set under the Local Government Act 1993. The following fees and charges have been amended accordingly:

(i) Property information certificates - increased fee from $100.00 to $105.00
(ii) Interest on overdue water accounts – decreased from 10.5% to 9.5%.

3. Determination of Income Taxation for Councillors

View Agenda Item 10.2 (pages 124 - 126)

(a) Council received and noted the option for Councillor fees to be subject to income tax withholding under Part 2-5 of the Taxation Administration Act 1953.

(b) Council considered Option B as the preferred option; however, as unanimous support was not achieved, the motion was lost.

(c) Council will therefore maintain the current approach, with Councillors remaining responsible for managing their own financial and taxation arrangements.

4. Wilsons River Elevated Watermain Betterment Tender Award

View Agenda Item 11.1 (pages 127 - 130)

(a) Council accepted the tender submitted by SEE Civil Pty Ltd for the Wilsons River Elevated Watermain Betterment Contract in the amount of $1,715,965 (ex GST).

(b) Three tender submissions were received for the project, from Ledonne Constructions Pty Ltd, Pensar Group Pty Ltd and SEE Civil Pty Ltd.

(c) In response to the severe flood events that occurred in February and March 2022, the Department of Regional New South Wales established the NSW Betterment Program – Infrastructure Betterment Fund to support infrastructure improvements that enhance disaster resilience.

(d) Under this program, Rous secured grant funding to undertake works to improve resilience of an elevated section of the Lismore 600 watermain that bridges over the Wilsons River at Bexhill.

Information Reports (these are always just listed)

5. Council received and noted various information reports

View Agenda Items 12.1 – 12.6 (pages 131 - 160)

12.1 Investments – April 2026 (pages 132 – 138)
12.2 Investments – May 2026 (pages 139 – 145)
12.3 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee – meeting update (pages 146 – 152)
12.4 Gallans Road Project Update – May 2026 (pages 153 – 157)
12.5 Floodplain Management Australia Conference April 2026 – Councillor attendance (pages 158 – 159)
12.6 Actions Pending (160)

Confidential

6. Chair's Minute: General Manager Performance Review – June 2026

(a) Council accepted the recommendation of the Chair and Councillors that assessed the General Manager's annual review on 20 May 2026 as 'More than Satisfactory'.

(b) Council agreed to the recommended change to the General Manager's total remuneration package as specified in the confidential report.

13 MATTERS DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE

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

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

13.1 MATTERS TO BE DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE

RECOMMENDATION

That items identified be determined without debate.

14 GENERAL MANAGER

14.1 AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ADVOCACY UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly (NGA) 2026 was held in Canberra from 23-25 June 2026 at the National Convention Centre Canberra. It was the 32nd National General Assembly of Local Government and was conducted under the theme: “Stronger Together: Resilient. Productive. United”.

During the assembly, Councillor Mustow, Councillor Humphrys and the General Manager participated in a range of additional meetings with Federal Government representatives to discuss issues of importance to local government and regional communities. These meetings were assisted by our Federal Member of Parliament Kevin Hogan MP and his staff at Parliament House and included engagements with Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, Kristy McBain MP; Minister for Regional Health, Health Services and Mental Health, Emma McBride MP; a Senior Advisor to Minister Murray Watt; and a Senior Advisor to Minister Clare O’Neil.

These discussions provided valuable opportunities to advocate for Council priorities, strengthen relationships with key Federal Government stakeholders, and gain insights into current and emerging policy directions affecting local government.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the report on the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly, which was attended by the Mayor, Cr Humphrys and the General Manager;
2. Notes the meetings held with Federal Government Ministers to advocate for more housing, improved health services and further investment in essential infrastructure for our community;
3. Writes to the relevant Ministers to thank them for the discussions and to seek their ongoing support for further growth and investment in the Richmond Valley.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 8: Lead and advocate for our community

8B1 Advocate to federal and state government for community priorities and seek grant funding

8B1.2 Build positive working relationships with local members of parliament, government agencies and working groups to support advocacy

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Council is investing in growth projects to support improved community outcomes, greater availability of housing and further industrial growth opportunities, as outlined in the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Economic Development Strategy.

REPORT

ALGA National General Assembly

Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sandra Humphrys and the General Manager attended the National General Assembly 2026, held in Canberra 23-25 June. More than 1,100 local government leaders attended from across Australia. The Assembly was formally opened by Governor-General Sam Mostyn AC.

A major focus was advocacy for increased Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs), with delegates supporting an emergency motion calling on the Australian Parliament to restore FAGs to 1% of federal taxation revenue annually.

The program included both a Regional Forum and the inaugural Urban Forum, addressing issues such as housing, infrastructure, workforce challenges, emergency management, productivity, climate resilience and community services.

Key Resolution Outcomes from the 2026 NGA

1. Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs)

The most significant resolution was support for an emergency motion calling on the Australian Parliament to:

- Restore Financial Assistance Grants to 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue.
- Provide councils with sustainable, untied federal funding.
- Address growing concerns about local government financial sustainability and service delivery capacity.

2. Local Government Financial Sustainability

Delegates reinforced the need for:

- Fairer long-term funding arrangements.
- Greater recognition of the increasing responsibilities being carried by councils.
- Support for councils to continue delivering infrastructure, roads, community facilities and essential services.

3. Roads and Enabling Infrastructure

Resolutions and discussions supported stronger federal investment in:

- Local roads and transport networks.
- Community infrastructure.
- Infrastructure needed to support population growth and regional development.

4. Housing and Community Development

Delegates called for increased collaboration between all levels of government to address:

- Housing supply and affordability.
- Regional and metropolitan growth pressures.
- Community infrastructure needs associated with new development.

5. Emergency Management and Climate Resilience

The Assembly supported measures to help councils:

- Prepare for and respond to natural disasters.
- Improve community resilience.

- Strengthen local emergency management capability and climate adaptation planning.

6. Workforce and Skills

Resolutions highlighted challenges facing councils in:

- Recruiting and retaining skilled staff.
- Building local government workforce capability.
- Addressing regional workforce shortages.

7. Disability Inclusion and Community Cohesion

Delegates supported initiatives that promote:

- Greater accessibility and inclusion.
- Stronger, connected communities.
- Improved outcomes for people with disability.

Parliament House meetings with Federal Ministers and senior advisors

While in Canberra we took the opportunity to advance our advocacy for the Richmond Valley community with meetings scheduled with the following Ministers and their offices on matters within their portfolio as described below:

- Minister Kristy McBain – Emergency Management, Regional Development, Local Government & Territories – flood mitigation and funding for enabling infrastructure to unlock housing supply.
- Minister Emma McBride - Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention & for Rural and Regional Health – Planning and funding for future health services.
- Minister Murray Watt's Senior Advisor – Environment & Water - Water supply and sewerage projects funding.
- Minister Claire O'Neil's Senior Advisor – Housing – Housing supply initiatives in the Richmond Valley and the need for enabling infrastructure funding.

Briefing notes and supporting information were provided at these meetings to inform the discussions. The briefing notes focused on issues including unlocking housing supply across the Richmond Valley, the importance of funding for enabling infrastructure, the need for improved regional health services and flood mitigation investment following the CSIRO report release.

CONSULTATION

Council frequently meets with Federal and NSW Government Ministers and government departments to advocate for financial support and partnerships to secure investment in growth initiatives across the Richmond Valley.

CONCLUSION

The 2026 ALGA National General Assembly adopted a strong advocacy position seeking restoration of Financial Assistance Grants to 1% of federal taxation revenue, arguing that current funding levels threaten council sustainability. Other major resolution themes focused on local government financial sustainability, roads and infrastructure funding, housing, emergency management, climate resilience, workforce shortages, disability inclusion and community cohesion. The Assembly emphasised the need for stronger Commonwealth–local government partnerships to deliver local solutions to national challenges

14.2 FLOOD RESILIENCE PLANNING - CSIRO REPORT AND REGIONAL ADAPTATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The release of the CSIRO's final report on potential flood mitigation measures in the Richmond River Catchment marks the end of a four-year project under the Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative (NRRI) to improve regional flood resilience. The report outlines a preferred scenario to reduce flood levels by up to two metres during major events in the Richmond River catchment, through a series of temporary detention basins, drainage upgrades and the opening of Boundary Creek. While the report has prompted broad public discussion and a formal response from Lismore City Council, last week, it is still early days to determine whether any of the proposals are feasible. More detailed analysis into the benefits and risks of the mitigation measures, as well as potential costs and delivery timeframes is required. The Australian and NSW Governments have announced $3m to support this work, with the project being led by the NSW Reconstruction Authority and the National Emergency Management Authority. The outcomes will help to inform the Northern Rivers Disaster Adaptation Plan. Meanwhile Council has been progressing with finalisation of its Flood Risk Management Plan, with the final Plan due to be presented to the August Ordinary Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the release of the CSIRO's final report under the Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative and the flood mitigation options identified for further analysis.
2. Acknowledges the significant body of work completed for the NRRI project and the funding received through Phase One for essential flood resilience works in the Richmond Valley.
3. Continues to work with the NSW Reconstruction Authority to support the next stage of the options review process and the continued development of the Northern Rivers Disaster Adaptation Plan.
4. Further notes the completion of the public exhibition of the draft Richmond Valley Flood Risk Management Plan and the proposed presentation of the final plan to the August 2026 Ordinary Meeting.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 2: Adapt to regional challenges & build resilience

2A1 Implement long-term adaptation strategies for our communities

2A1.1 Work with NSW RA to develop the Northern Rivers Disaster Adaptation Plan

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Council has received $23 million from the NRRI project to support replacement and raising of the twin Tatham Bridges and drainage improvements at Thearles Canal and Dairy Flat. It continues to seek further support from the Australian and NSW Governments to deliver additional disaster adaptation projects.

REPORT

The release of the CSIRO's final report under the Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative project (NRRI) on 30 June 2026 marks the end of a four-year process of data gathering, hydrodynamic modelling and analysis, in response to the 2022 floods. The report outlines a preferred scenario to reduce flood levels in the Richmond River catchment during major events, through a series of

temporary detention basins, drainage upgrades and the opening of Boundary Creek. The final CSIRO report is available at: Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative - CSIRO

While there has been significant public comment on the report since its release and Lismore City Council voted, last week to support the proposed measures, it is still early days to determine whether the mitigation measures are actually feasible. This will be determined in the next phase of analysis, to assess the technical, environmental, economic and social feasibility of the proposals. The Australian and NSW Governments have committed a further $3m to support this work, with the NSW Reconstruction Authority and the National Emergency Management Authority (NEMA) leading the project. The feasibility studies produced from this analysis will provide a better understanding of the total cost of the works, the benefits and risks of the various proposals, and the possible timeframe required to deliver these solutions.

NRRI Phase One projects

Council has been working closely with the NRRI since July 2022, when the first phase of the project – Rapid Review and Assessment – began. This phase provided a better understanding of the catchment and climate conditions that led to the 2022 floods and identified key projects that could be undertaken in the short-term to help build resilience. The Australian Government provided $150 million to fund these works and Richmond Valley Council was successful in receiving a total of $23 million to replace and raise the twin Tatham Bridges and improve drainage at Thearles Canal and Dairy Flat. The program also provided funds to improve the town drains at Woodburn and Coraki and supported regional initiatives such as improving flood gauges, undertaking floor level surveys and developing Community-Led Resilience Teams and preparedness programs. Council completed the Dairy Flat and Thearles Canal works in 2024 and had the opportunity to confirm how well the new culverts performed during the Cyclone Alfred event in early 2025. With completion of the Tatham Bridges project earlier this year, the Woodburn-Casino Road has seen substantial improvements in flood resilience. This will reduce the time that communities are isolated during major events and ensure that this important freight route remains open, connecting the Summerland Way with the Pacific Motorway.

NRRI Phase Two assessment

The work to develop the second phase of the CSIRO project, to identify and test potential flood mitigation options, commenced in 2023. The initial stage focussed on building a new hydrodynamic model that would replicate historic flood events across the 7000 km^2 Richmond River catchment. This included compiling detailed LiDAR and river bathymetry datasets, assessing councils' existing flood studies and gathering information from the community on historic flood levels. The model was then tested to confirm it could accurately represent the 2008, 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2022 flood events and the project progressed to the next stage of scenario testing. This was a 12-month process, including consultation with councils and the community to develop two bundles of mitigation options that could be tested using the model. The aim was to re-run each of three historic events (2008, 2017 and 2022) with first Bundle One and then Bundle Two options in place, to determine if they could reduce water heights and overland flooding in these scenarios. As a result, Bundle Two was identified as having the greatest potential flood mitigation benefits. This included reductions in peak flood heights of some two metres at Lismore, based on the 2022 event. The outcomes for Casino range from <1m reduction in peak levels for the 2022 event to a 2.76m potential reduction for the 2008 event under the Bundle Two scenario. Predicted flood peak reductions are lower in down-stream communities such as Coraki under the scenarios (0.42m for the 2022 event).

Progressing Council's own flood studies

While the CSIRO project was underway, Council continued with the essential work of revising its own flood study and hydrodynamic models and completing its Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP). The FRMP process was supported by an advisory committee, consisting of community members and technical officers from Council and the NSW Government. Council endorsed the draft Flood Risk Management Plan for public exhibition at its April Ordinary Meeting. The exhibition concluded in June and submissions from community members and state agencies are currently being reviewed by Council's consultants to assess whether any amendments are required to the Plan. The submissions and consultants' response will then be considered by the Flood Risk

Management Committee before the final report and Draft Plan is presented to Council's August Ordinary Meeting for consideration. Finalising the Flood Risk Management Plan will provide more certainty for flood-affected communities, particularly in the Mid-Richmond, with clearer guidance for assessing potential flood risks to future development.

Next steps in flood assessment

Although the CSIRO final report has confirmed that it may be possible to reduce peak flood levels in some parts of the catchment, there is still considerable work to be done to determine whether the options are feasible and whether the benefits outweigh the costs and risks involved. Council will support the NSW Reconstruction Authority to progress the feasibility studies and ensure that local considerations are addressed, particularly in the Mid-Richmond communities. At this stage, the Authority has not set a timeline for completion of the studies, but it is expected to be at least 12 months. The results will help to inform the Northern Rivers Regional Disaster Adaptation Plan.

Developing the Regional DAP

Council has been working closely with the Northern Rivers Regional Disaster Adaptation Plan (DAP) team since 2023 and was a pilot for place-based disaster adaptation planning through the Mid-Richmond Place Plans project. Over the past year, the team has undertaken a Regional Risk Insights assessment, considering the potential future impacts of nine major hazards: Flood; bushfire; coastal hazards; heatwaves; storms and cyclones, tornados; landslides; earthquakes and tsunamis. Insights from this work were shared at community consultation sessions this month. The team has also looked at future exposure and vulnerability to hazards across the region. This included undertaking a comprehensive review of infrastructure in all seven local government areas, to identify regionally significant facilities and consider potential risks to essential services during disasters. As part of this process, Council highlighted the significant role that the Casino aerodrome plays in regional disaster response, particularly bushfires, and the need to ensure ongoing investment in upgrading the facility. The importance of investing in disaster resilience for key services, such as water supply, sewerage and telecommunications, was also emphasised, as well as the need to support the continued operation of key freight routes, such as the Summerland Way and Bruxner Highway.

The second stage of the Regional DAP process is now drawing to a close, with the draft Foundation DAP due for completion later this year. The Foundation Plan will focus on regional hazard insights and projected impacts of future climate change and population increase across the Northern Rivers. It will also include feedback from the public engagement program and explore risk reduction tools to mitigate and adapt to future disasters. Additionally, the Foundation DAP will identify early actions that could be implemented to improve disaster resilience, subject to funding.

The third stage of the process will be to complete the full Disaster Adaptation Plan for the region, including further data analysis, options assessment and implementation plans. Representatives from Council are involved in working groups to help inform this process. The work is expected to take at least another year and will include consideration of the feasibility studies prepared in response to the CSIRO work.

CONSULTATION

Consultation on the final NRRI report is currently underway throughout the region. The project has been informed by previous rounds of community consultation and direct discussion with local councils. Similarly, Richmond Valley Council has conducted extensive engagement to prepare its revised flood study in 2023 and the Flood Risk Management Plan, in 2026, with submissions on the draft FRMP currently being reviewed. Further community consultation has also been undertaken by the NSW RA in support of the Regional DAP process, with the most recent engagement sessions being held last month.

CONCLUSION

The past four years have seen an increasing focus on building long-term flood resilience for the Richmond Valley, with the release of the CSIRO's final report into flood mitigation options being the latest milestone on the journey. This opens the way for the next stage of assessing the feasibility of

the proposed options, including costs, benefits and risks throughout the catchment. This work will be led by the NSW RA and NEMA and Council will be closely involved in the process. Meanwhile, Council has been progressing with its own flood risk management plan, with the final plan due to be presented to the August Ordinary Meeting.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

15 OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

15.1 RICHMOND VALLEY DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2026-2030

Director: **Vaughan Macdonald**

Responsible Officer: **Stacey Mills**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan 2026–2030 (Our Place, Our Future) has been prepared to provide a strategic framework for the growth and development of the Richmond Valley visitor economy over the next five years.

Following a Request for Quotation process, Destination Store was engaged to develop the plan. The project included stakeholder engagement, market analysis and a review of current tourism trends, visitor data and destination assets.

The plan adopts a place-based approach that focuses on growing the visitor economy while preserving the authentic character, landscapes and communities that define the Richmond Valley. It identifies strategic actions to strengthen tourism experiences, increase visitor yield, support investment, improve visitor infrastructure and enhance destination marketing.

The plan is presented for Council's consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan 2026–2030 (Our Place, Our Future).
2. Notes that implementation of identified actions will be subject to future budget considerations, partnerships with businesses and external funding opportunities.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 3: Grow and diversify our economy

3E2 Increase visitation to the Richmond Valley

3E2.1 Review and implement the Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the Destination Management Plan will be considered through future operational planning processes, annual budgets, partnership arrangements and external grant funding opportunities. Endorsement of the plan does not commit Council to additional expenditure beyond existing budget allocations.

REPORT

Background

The Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan 2021–2025 concluded in December 2025. Following a Request for Quotation (RFQ) process involving four specialist tourism consultancies, Destination Store was engaged on 3 February 2026 to prepare a new Destination Management Plan to guide tourism development and destination management in Richmond Valley through to 2030.

Following the appointment of Destination Store, an inception meeting was undertaken with the Council tourism team. Council provided a range of background information, including previous

strategies, visitor data, event attendance information and regional economic data to support the development of the plan.

Consultation

Destination Store undertook consultation across the Richmond Valley in March 2026 to identify opportunities, challenges and priorities for the future of the visitor economy.

Six in-person consultation sessions were conducted with Councillors, Council staff, community representatives and local businesses, together with an online session involving government stakeholders.

Key themes identified through consultation included:

- Richmond Valley's authentic rural character, agricultural heritage and strong sense of place as key destination strengths.
- The importance of heritage assets, museums, historic buildings and established events such as the Casino Truck Show and Beef Week.
- Opportunities to expand nature-based tourism, including river recreation, fishing, birdwatching, equestrian tourism, and the Northern Rivers Rail Trail.
- Potential to further leverage local food, produce and agricultural experiences.
- The need for improved visitor infrastructure, including public amenities, signage, wayfinding, accommodation diversity and access to recreational and natural assets.
- Stronger destination branding, marketing and regional partnerships to increase visitation and visitor length of stay.
- Support for culturally appropriate tourism initiatives developed in partnership with First Nations communities.
- Opportunities associated with major future events, including the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Overall, consultation reinforced the importance of building on Richmond Valley's authentic character, strengthening existing tourism experiences, improving supporting infrastructure and fostering partnerships to sustainably grow the visitor economy.

Destination Management Plan Development

Following completion of stakeholder consultation, Destination Store prepared a Situation and Market Analysis for Council, to establish a baseline understanding of Richmond Valley's visitor economy, demographics, tourism assets, accommodation supply and visitor trends.

Key insights from the analysis include:

- Drive market dominance - Visitation is primarily driven by regional NSW and South-East Queensland, reinforcing Richmond Valley's role as a short-break and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) destination.
- High day-trip visitation - Approximately 59% of visitors are day-trippers, highlighting opportunities to increase overnight stays and visitor expenditure.
- Distinct destination roles - Evans Head functions as the region's primary leisure destination, while Casino performs a key events, business and regional service role.
- Coastal-inland expenditure divide - Visitor expenditure has increased in Evans Head while declining in Casino, reflecting the strength of coastal leisure tourism.
- Seasonality influences demand - Visitation peaks during holiday periods and major events, with lower activity during off-peak periods.
- Accommodation opportunities - Growth opportunities exist in cycling-friendly, agritourism and nature-based accommodation.

- Lower visitor yield - The visitor economy remains largely driven by short stays and stopover visitation, limiting overall visitor expenditure.
- Alignment with tourism trends - The region is well positioned to capitalise on growing demand for cycling, agritourism, nature-based, wellness and experience-led travel.

The analysis indicates that future growth will be driven by increasing visitor yield, extending visitor length of stay and developing distinctive experiences that encourage visitors to explore more of the Richmond Valley.

Our Place, Our Future – The Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan 2026-2030

The Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan 2026–2030, *Our Place, Our Future*, provides a strategic framework to guide the sustainable growth of the visitor economy over the next five years.

The plan recognises that Richmond Valley's competitive advantage lies in its authentic rural landscapes, agricultural heritage, coastal villages, waterways, cultural assets and strong community identity.

Rather than pursuing tourism growth for its own sake, the plan seeks to ensure that tourism investment supports and strengthens local communities, businesses and places.

A central principle of the plan is that tourism development should leave the region stronger, more resilient and better connected than before.

The plan is structured around three strategic pillars:

Supply

Developing the experiences, places, infrastructure and accommodation that encourage visitors to stay longer, spend more and explore further. Key focus areas include:

- Hero visitor experiences
- Farm and agricultural tourism
- Food and produce experiences
- Cycling and active tourism
- Coastal, river and nature-based experiences
- Events and visitor servicing
- Accommodation development

Demand

Attracting the right visitors at the right time through:

- Stronger destination positioning
- Experience-led marketing
- Improved digital presence and conversion
- Targeted drive-market campaigns

- Enhanced visitor information and trip planning

Enablers

Creating the conditions required for successful delivery through:

- Cultural stewardship
- Investment attraction
- Planning and design quality
- Governance and partnerships
- Industry capability development
- Data and performance measurement
- Alignment with regional and state priorities

The plan identifies four destination themes that will guide future tourism development and marketing:

- Coastal Escape
- River and Nature
- Country and Culture
- Taste the Valley

Together, these themes aim to encourage visitors to experience the region from coast to country, connecting Evans Head, the Richmond River, Casino, rural villages and the region's productive agricultural landscapes.

The Destination Management Plan has been designed as an implementation-focused strategy, supported by a Priority Action Plan that identifies practical actions to be delivered between 2026 and 2030.

CONSULTATION

Following completion of the draft plan, Destination Store undertook a final presentation of the Destination Management Plan to businesses, community representatives and stakeholders who participated in the consultation process via an online stakeholder forum on 16 July 2026.

CONCLUSION

The Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan 2026–2030, Our Place, Our Future, provides a clear and practical framework for growing the visitor economy while preserving the unique qualities that make the Richmond Valley an attractive place to live, work and visit.

The plan responds directly to stakeholder feedback, market analysis and emerging tourism trends, identifying opportunities to increase visitor yield, extend visitor stays and strengthen the region's tourism offering through sustainable and place-based development.

Endorsement of the plan will provide Council, industry and stakeholders with a shared direction for tourism development and investment, while positioning Richmond Valley to take advantage of future opportunities and build a stronger, more resilient visitor economy.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. RVC Destination Management Plan 2026-2030 (under separate cover)

16 PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

16.1 RAPPVILLE TRANSFER STATION OPERATIONAL FREQUENCY

Director: **Tina Kao**

Responsible Officer: **Justine Clarke**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, with sustained reduction in demand at Rappville Transfer Station, Council resolved to change the frequency of its opening from weekly to fortnightly. Since that time, tracking and observations have identified that there has been a further decrease in demand, averaging less than 12 residential users per opening, and no commercial users. Many local residents already utilise Nammoona Waste Facility due to its lower pricing structure based on weight via the weighbridge, compared with set charge per load size. This provides an opportunity for further adjustment to Rappville Transfer Station operational frequency to consider a monthly opening schedule, as well consideration of the likelihood of residential household participation in a monthly kerbside waste pick up service, if made available.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council transitions from a fortnightly to monthly opening schedule for Rappville Transfer Station, enabling a waste disposal facility to remain available locally, whilst responding to ongoing low usage of the facility, minimising exposure to safety risk, and moderating operational financial losses.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 5: Provide infrastructure that meets community needs

5D1 Manage resource recovery facilities effectively

5D1.3 Ensure compliance with Environment Protection Licences (EPL), Landfill Environmental Management Plans (LEMP) and relevant legislation

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

A number of operational considerations are addressed within this report ranging from safety to staffing, as well as ongoing operational losses at Rappville Transfer Station due to very low usage numbers sustained over 12-24 months.

REPORT

Rappville Transfer Station is a small rural waste facility servicing the Rappville and Whiporie communities. This facility has had persistently low patronage and operates at a significant financial loss. A previous reduction from weekly to fortnightly openings in 2024 resulted in lower operating costs without a material reduction in revenue, indicating limited demand sensitivity to reduced opening frequency.

Patronage and Usage

Staff observations and customer behaviour show that many Rappville and Whiporie residents already use the Nammoona Waste Facility, which offers a weighbridge-based pricing that offers cost effective disposal solutions for customers rather than the fixed size-based charging structure at Rappville.

Recent operating periods show an average of 12 residential users per fortnight (on Saturdays), with no commercial users. Most customers are Rappville residents, with two to three typically travelling from Whiporie. No local businesses currently use the facility. The former commercial

user, the local pub, now disposes of waste at Nammoona. Users typically travel to Casino for essential services, meaning reduced local access does not necessarily create isolated travel requirements. Recent visitation rates at Rappville Transfer Station are shown below:

Date	Recycling	Waste	Approx visits
10/01/2026	7	10	12
24/01/2026	9	13	16
7/02/2026	10	13	16
21/02/2026	8	11	14
7/03/2026	8	6	9
21/03/2026	7	9	11
28/03/2026	5	5	7
18/04/2026	11	11	15
2/05/2026	5	8	10
16/05/2026	2	6	7

Safety and Infrastructure

Safety for staff and the condition of the infrastructure has been an ongoing issue for Rappville Transfer Station.

The site is unsuitable for a single operator staffing due to safety risks and therefore requires two staff per day it is open. Operational safety for staff has been an increasing concern with on-the-ground incidences over the years. Workforce staffing shortages have also meant higher grade staff on overtime, are frequently required to maintain the current fortnightly schedule. This occurs even when revenue for the fortnight's opening can be as low as $260.

The facility is also in need of essential upgrades; the current drop-off area is no longer fit for purpose and requires a ramp for users to access the additional waste stream skip bins. Installation of a rooftop fed water tank is also required for emergency use, and general maintenance is required on the shed. Given current and projected revenues, these essential upgrades are significant compared with the low patronage and the continual decline in usage. The cost of these essential upgrades is estimated to be in the vicinity of $15,000.

Additionally, upgrades such as electricity connection or solar power, and communications infrastructure such as a Star link are needed. These require substantial investment, whilst carrying a risk of vandalism and theft due to the isolated location of the site.

Continuing the fortnightly opening schedule perpetuates:

- High overtime and higher-grade staffing costs.
- Ongoing exposure to certain unsafe areas.
- A fixed requirement for two staff every Saturday opening.
- Continued operational losses with no realistic pathway to cost recovery.

Operational Options

Under both fortnightly and monthly models, the site remains at a significant operating loss. Current cost estimates based on standard grading understate the true operating cost as they exclude regular overtime and higher grade backfills. The following options provide continued servicing for the community, whilst addressing the issues highlighted in this report.

Option 1

Continue Fortnightly Operations

Maintaining current fortnightly operations represents the status quo in service level. It does not address funding for infrastructure upgrades and staff safety whilst working in an isolated location. Operational safety for staff has been an increasing concern with on-the-ground incidences over the years. It also continues to incur high staffing costs and low patronage numbers.

Net annual operational loss (minimum): - $20,146

Option 2

Transition to Monthly Operations

This option maintains Rappville Transfer Station as a waste disposal facility. It reduces pressure related to staffing shortages, also reduces the high staffing operational costs over weekends. Whilst it addresses staffing issues, it does not eliminate the infrastructure upgrade and maintenance needs at this site.

Net annual operational loss (minimum): -$13,817

Under both fortnightly and monthly models (Options 1 and 2), the site remains at a significant operating loss. Current loss estimates are based on standard staffing grades, which does not include the higher-grade skills and the overtime penalty payments to staff.

Option 3

Monthly Collection Service

An alternative service model is to provide a monthly kerbside collection within Rappville township. A collection service would utilise existing collection vehicles and monthly red and yellow bin collection (one pick-up per bin colour per month). This does not include a FOGO bin collection, which would be required by 2030, under the Environmental Protection Authority's FOGO mandate, which requires a green bin collection wherever there is a red bin service.

Participation rate in the kerbside collection service is estimated at 20 households out of the approximate 40 properties within the township, based on recent years usage of the local transfer station. There is also a further 60 rural properties identified as being unsuitable for kerbside collection due to their isolated location and road conditions. These 60 properties currently have access to burning residual household waste on their own property under the *Protection of the Environment (Clean Air) Regulations*.

Net annual operational loss (minimum): -$18,064

CONCLUSION

Moving to a monthly opening schedule reduces staffing frequency requirements and associated penalties, improving the net position without eliminating access altogether. However, it does not eliminate the infrastructure concerns.

Eliminating the Transfer Station and transitioning to a monthly kerbside service addresses the low patronage, staffing issues and infrastructural upgrades needed. However, the financial loss remains high, the participation rate in the service likely low, and a large number of rural properties cannot be serviced due to access - therefore, resulting in an inefficient service benefit to cost ratio. All three operational options represent ongoing financial losses.

Accordingly, it is recommended that Council considers transitioning from a fortnightly opening schedule to a monthly opening at Rappville Transfer Station, continuing to provide local access to waste disposal, whilst reducing safety exposure concerns and minimising inefficient service costs.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

16.2 DRAFT AMENDMENT RICHMOND VALLEY DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN 2021 - POST EXHIBITION REPORT

Director: **Tina Kao**

Responsible Officer: **Francis Eyndhoven**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public exhibition of minor amendments to the *Richmond Valley Development Control Plan* (DCP) has been undertaken which sought to correct unintended administrative and spelling errors, inconsistency between chapters, updates as required for consistency with NSW legislation, codes and guidelines, and insertion of outcomes arising from the *Richmond Valley Regional Job Precinct* Implementation Strategy.

The draft DCP was exhibited from 5 May 2026 to 8 June 2026. No submissions were received and only two (2) additional changes have been made during the consultation period arising from feedback received from internal technical officers. This report provides clarification on questions posed by Council, regarding the proposed amendments, during its meeting of April 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approves the amendments to the Draft *Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2021* outlined in this report; and
2. Adopts the updated *Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2021* to take effect from 27 July 2026.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

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

1B1 Provide a greater chouce of housing for our community

1B1.1 Prepare housing strategies and update planning controls to support the RV Growth Management Strategy and Place Plan recommendations

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil

REPORT

The *Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2021* (DCP) forms an important part of Council's Planning and Development framework. The DCP provides finer detailed and localised planning controls for development permitted under the *Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012* (LEP).

The public exhibition period has now closed, and Council did not receive any public submissions. Councillors did raise queries at the April 2026 Council meeting. These are outlined here:

a) **Artificial turf** - The designs for laying of artificial turf either require a concrete subsurface or a compacted subsurface usually impregnated with cement powder as a binder to provide structural rigidity. As a result, while the artificial turf itself may be permeable the subsurface layers are not, and storm water cannot easily disperse from these areas.

b) **Clause A-6.1.8 Wall height to setback controls** - The intent is to clarify that 'maximum wall height – 2m' is to be written as **'**maximum wall height minus (2) two metres' in the DCP. The amendment is to use plain English clarifying how the setback is assessed by Council.

c) **Clarify private and landscape open space percentage (%) to align with Code SEPP, the artificial turf detracts from that** – Currently the DCP has a minimum landscaping requirement exclusive of hardstand areas of 30% of lot area for all lot sizes. On an average 900m² lot size this allows for 630m² of GFA and hardstand (such as driveways, carports, sheds, footpaths and artificial turf areas) combined. While the Codes SEPP has a sliding scale of minimum landscaping area dependent on lot size, Council as part of approving the last DCP amendment (in 2021) considered 30% minimum landscaping area to be the best compromise for the residential development types existing or to be developed in the Richmond Valley local government area.

d) **Major review of the DCP** - A more significant review of the DCP is proposed to be undertaken in-line with changes to the LEP. The work to prepare updated DCP controls is anticipated to commence in the months following adoption of both the Richmond Valley Floodplain Risk Management Plan and the Casino CBD Masterplan. DCP adjustment arising from the Broadwater, Coraki, Woodburn and Evans Head Place Plans would also be sought for inclusion at this time. Major updates to the DCP will require significant resources and are anticipated to take 18 months.

(a) There are also changes being implemented as part of the NSW Government Planning System Reform which are slowly being enacted and this is expected to continue into the first half of 2027. This includes changes to Complying Development processes and the proposed creation of a SEPP (Low Rise Housing Code) which will likely consolidate or remove all low-rise housing (residential development) chapters from DCPs across NSW.
(b) Any subsequent changes to Richmond Valey policies, plans and guidelines will consider the NSW State Government's planning reform implementation program.

e) **Clause A-6.2.1 - Carports forward of the building line linked in to the existing roofline, height restriction of 3.3m needs to be removed or the change is not viable, restriction of width to 33% or maximum 6m is not adequate to accommodate needs** - The draft DCP states that the carport roof can match or replicate the roof profile of the existing dwelling. The 3.3m height restriction is therefore not considered to be an issue given this amendment allows for replication of the dwelling's roof profile as viewed from the street. The 6m width of a carport allows for two undercover carparking bays and is consistent with the Building Code of Australia and the maximum garage door width facing the road under the Codes SEPP. Any further increase to the number of car parking bays (such as 3 to 6 undercover carparking spots in front of a dwelling) would significantly change the façade of the dwelling and affect the visual amenity of the street.

f) **Flood risk management plan outcomes** - Outcomes arising from the Richmond Valley Flood Risk Management Plan will be devised and prepared for inclusion in the LEP and DCP after its adoption by Council. This process is anticipated to require 12-18 months in order to ensure interpretation and application of engineering technical advice into development planning controls.

g) **Review from frequent users-** The amendments in the draft DCP comprised of contributions from regular users including technical officers within RVC, feedback from community members through their interaction and queries to Council's concierge service, response from development applicants and Government agency, amongst others. Feedback has been documented over an extended period of time and culminated in the administrative and minor amendments as exhibited.

h) **Impacts on existing Development Applications (DAs)** – DAs received prior to commencement of the amended DCP will apply the current DCP controls. DAs that have been received but not determined by commencement of the amended DCP will continue to apply the DCP under which it was submitted. DAs received after the date of the amended DCP commencement will apply the amended DCP.

i) **Link to Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program** - Delivery Program 1B1.1 is considered the most appropriate activity applying to DCP changes, as the proposed amendments support the delivery of housing and development as part of the *Richmond Valley Growth Management Strategy* and *Richmond Valley Regional Jobs Precinct*.

One additional amendment during public exhibition

The draft *Richmond Valley Development Control Plan* was placed on public exhibition and input was sought from the community and key stakeholders. Internal stakeholders requested a change to the A-9 Shop Top Housing chapter to correct that Shop top housing constructed outside the E1-Local Centre and E2-Commercial Centre zones does not have boundary setback controls. The proposed amendment reads: *Shop top housing undertaken in a Residential zone is to be consistent with the surrounding built form and comply with the corresponding development standards for Multi Dwelling Housing and Residential Flat Buildings as detailed in Part A-8.* This will be inserted as an amendment to Part A-9.2.

The draft DCP was exhibited for a minimum of 28 days, in accordance with Council's Community Participation Plan (CPP), with no submissions being received. The amended plan is now presented for Council's consideration.

Click on the links below to view the draft documents.

Draft-RVDCP-2026-Introduction

Draft-RVDCP-2026-Part-A-Residential-Development

Draft-RVDCP-2026-Part-B-Commercial-Development

Draft-RVDCP-2026-Part-C-Industrial-Development

Draft-RVDCP-2026-Part-D-Rural_Land_Uses

Draft-RVDCP-2026-Part-E-Visitor_Accommodation_Caravan_Parks_Manufactured_Home_Estates

Draft-RVDCP-2026-Part-F-Signage

Draft-RVDCP-2026-Part-G-Subdivisions

Draft-RVDCP-2026-Part-H-Natural-Resources-and-Hazards

Draft-RVDCP-2026-Part-I-Other-Considerations

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

17 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES & PROJECTS

Nil

18 ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

18.1 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS REPORT - JUNE 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 30 June 2026 is shown below:

Bank Accounts	Term Deposits	Floating Rate Notes	Fixed Rate Bonds	TCorp IM Funds	Total
$24,174,020	$41,000,000	$6,250,000	$3,000,000	$19,470,293	$93,894,312

The weighted average rate of return on Council's cash and investments at 30 June 2026 was 5.66% which was above the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index for June of 4.10% (annualised), which is Council's benchmark.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Financial Analysis Report detailing the performance of its cash and investments for the month of June 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 30 June 2026, Council has earned $2,853,703 in interest and $1,558,118 in fair value gains from funds held in TCorp, for a total investment income of $4,411,821. This equates to 141.14% of the annual budget for interest and investment income of $3,125,750, noting the annual budget was increased by $682,000 following the December Quarterly Budget Review.

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 did not meet in June, so the cash rate remained at 4.35%.

Rate of Return

The weighted average rate of return on cash and investments in June was 5.66%, a decrease in 351 basis points from the previous month. The rate of return is 156 basis points above the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index of 4.10% (annualised) which is Council's benchmark.

Council's NSW Treasury Corporation IM Funds returned net gains of $142,921 during the month of June. The Medium-Term Growth Fund (MTGF) returned a gain of $110,680 and the Long-Term Growth Fund (LTGF) returned a gain of $32,241.

NSW Treasury Corp's monthly economic report states that the Australian economy has underperformed so far in 2026, with the overall economy only growing by 0.3% in the March quarter. Investors have reduced expectations that there will be further rate increases, with market pricing at the end of June suggesting that there is only a 50% of another rate increase in this cycle.

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 $93,894,312 at 30 June 2026. This was made up of Council's Business Online Saver Account ($23,235,000), Term Deposits ($41,000,000), Floating Rate Notes ($6,250,000), Bonds ($3,000,000), NSW Treasury Corporation Investments ($19,470,293) and other bank accounts ($939,020).

Council's investment portfolio had maturity dates ranging from same day up to 1,813 days. Term deposits, floating rate notes and bonds of $50,250,000 represented 53.52% of the total portfolio as at 30 June 2026.

Council made the following new investment during June 2026:

Banking Institution	Investment Type	ESI	Amount Invested	Investment Term	Interest Rate
Judo Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 Months	5.30%
Transport Mutual Credit Union	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 Months	5.60%
MyState Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$3,000,000	6 Months	5.40%
Move Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	7 Months	5.50%
Move Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$1,000,000	7 Months	5.50%
Bank of Sydney	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 Months	5.45%
Judo Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 Months	5.50%
Total			**$14,000,000**		

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

Banking Institution	Investment Type	ESI	Amount Invested	Interest Earned
Judo Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	44,378.08
Credit Union South Australia	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	44,822.47
Move Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	44,621.92
Bank of Sydney	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	23,189.04
Total			**$8,000,000**	**157,011.51**

Council had $19,470,293 in longer term investments being the MTGF and LTGF held with NSW Treasury Corporation as at 30 June 2026. The investment values and fair value returns are shown below:

Investment Holding	Fair Value at 30 June 2026	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) at 30 June 2026	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) YTD	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) Life of Investment
Medium Term Growth Fund	$ 15,162,117	$ 110,680	$ 1,076,798	$ 4,157,088
Long Term Growth Fund	$ 4,308,175	$ 32,241	$ 463,600	$ 1,308,175
Total	**$ 19,470,293**	**$ 142,921**	**$ 1,540,398**	**$ 5,465,263**

Environmentally Sustainable Investments (ESI's)

Council's cash and investments portfolio of $93,894,312 at 30 June 2026 includes $66,720,293 or 71.1% 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 month of June 2026, Council's investments have been made in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

As at 30 June 2026 Council's cash and investments totalled $93,894,312 with $24,174,020 of this being funds held in bank accounts. The weighted average rate of return was 5.66% and total investment revenue equals 141.14% of budgeted revenue for the year to 30 June 2026.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. RVC Investment Pack - June 2026 (under separate cover)

18.2 COUNCILLOR CONDUCT - PROPOSED REFORMS

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Catherine Davis**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Local Government (OLG) has released Circular No 26-08, *Consultation on Councillor Conduct Reforms*, which invites submissions from local government organisations on the next steps in developing the Councillor conduct and meeting practices framework. This consultation is an extension on the OLG's continuing reforms to the management of councillor conduct, previously considered in the OLG discussion paper *Councillor conduct and meeting practice – a new framework*, issued in September 2025.

This consultation focuses on reforms to the process of handling complaints against councillors (including conflict of interest complaints) and introduces a draft Model Code of Conduct for Councillors.

As part of their continuing reforms to the regulation of councillor conduct, the OLG has released a Policy Statement *Improving Councillor Accountability*, in addition to the draft *Model Code of Conduct for Councillors.* This report provides copies of the policy statement and draft Code for review and offers submission points for Council's consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Considers the OLG Councillor Conduct Reform Policy Statement *Improving Councillor Accountability*, and draft *Model Code of Conduct for Councillors*;
2. Endorses Council providing feedback to the OLG in relation to the proposed reforms, in line with the proposed feedback response items contained in this report; and
3. Provides the General Manager with any further considerations for inclusion in the submission by 28 July 2026.

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

The proposed reforms aim to reduce the cost to Councils' of addressing Councillor Code of Conduct complaints internally via direct referral for all complaints to the OLG. However, the proposed reforms raise issues (discussed in the report below) which may have an unexpected impact on Council's budget.

REPORT

Background to the proposed new framework

After the local government election in 2024, the OLG announced proposed significant changes to the regulation of councillor conduct; including ways councillor misconduct and complaints about councillor conduct are managed. The OLG's discussion paper *Councillor Conduct and Meeting Practices* met with strong feedback from the local government sector, including a submission by

Council in general support of framework reform in addition to raising concerns with the proposed changes, particularly in terms of meeting practices.

Since release of the 2024 OLG discussion paper, local government was subject to the implementation of a new Code of Meeting Practice which required adoption of mandatory provisions by 31 December 2025. On 26 May 2026 the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Model Code of Meeting Practice) Regulation 2025* which prescribed the new Code was disallowed, thereby reverting the Model Code of Meeting Practice to the 2021 Code. Council, at the June 2026 Ordinary Meeting accordingly rescinded the Code of Meeting Practice adopted at the December 2025 Ordinary Meeting and has now reverted to the Code of Meeting Practice adopted at the August 2025 Ordinary Meeting. The OLG have advised they are in the process of preparing a new Model Meeting Code for prescription and will advise councils of further developments.

Whilst a new Model Meeting Code is being prepared, the NSW Government are now proceeding with their next steps in implementing other changes to the councillor conduct framework by releasing a Councillor Conduct Reform Policy Statement *"Improving Councillor Accountability"* and draft *Model Code of Conduct for Councillors*.

Submissions on the policy statement and draft code of conduct are invited, with the due date being 7 August 2026.

The new framework for the regulation of councillor conduct

Improving Councillor Accountability – Councillor Conduct Reform Policy Statement (Policy Statement)

The Policy Statement acknowledges that councillors should be able to freely and fairly engage in public debate. However, the Policy Statement also recognises councillor behaviours that sometimes occur beyond appropriate behaviour, including:

- Comments which venture beyond what peers consider acceptable
- Engaging in misconduct, which may include legislative breaches or corrupt conduct; and
- Weaponising code of conduct complaints

Key principles of the new framework

The overarching rationale for the new framework is to strengthen public trust in local government decision making by ensuring consistent and effective enforcement of councillor obligations and creating stronger deterrence against misconduct behaviours. Additionally, the framework is aimed at supporting elected members of council by protecting procedural fairness in conduct and disclosure matters.

The key principles for the new framework include:

- To protect robust political debate whilst ensuring that democratic right is not abused
- To clearly define misconduct which will provide clear guidance to councillors and the community as to what is expected of a councillor in their role; and
- To establish a clear starting point and centralised process for the management of complaints against councillor conduct

To address inappropriate behaviours, the Policy Statement introduces two major changes to the regulation of councillor conduct:

i. A centralised system of dealing with complaints and reports of councillor misconduct; and
ii. Separation of the Code of Conduct of Local Councils into two separate codes – one specifically relating to councillors and the other to all other staff of council.

Handling complaints against councillors and councillor misconduct

Currently, complaints against councillors are directed in the first instance to the Mayor or General Manager of Council. The proposed new centralised system aims to promote impartiality and integrity of investigation by requiring all complaints made against councillors be submitted directly

to the OLG. The OLG anticipates this move will lessen the resource burden on councils dealing with complaints against councillors, with reference to what can be recognised as frivolous or vexatious complaints. To achieve this, definitions of *unsatisfactory behaviour* and *serious misconduct* are intended to be prescribed under the misconduct provisions in the Local Government Act 1993 (LGA).

It is recommended that Council generally support moving the handling of complaints against councillors to an external system for triage, investigation and action. Noting however, that Richmond Valley Council's councillors have continually presented positive behaviours, with no Councillor Code of Conduct complaints being received for the past ten years. Accordingly, whilst supporting this move to a centralised system, it must be noted that the resource benefit promoted will not be applicable to this organisation at this time. Further, it is considered that should a complaint be made against a councillor currently, it would be handled appropriately internally and would not require independent review. However, in the interests of ensuring community confidence in impartiality and consistency, Council recognises the value in moving management of these complaints to an external source.

Three-part complaint handling system

The centralised system for handling complaints against councillors is based on a three-part model as it relates to unsatisfactory behaviour, serious misconduct and legislative breaches:

1. The OLG

It is planned that the OLG will take an overarching management role with respect to the oversight of councillor conduct in the following ways:

- The OLG will be the initial point of contact for any complaints made against councillors, which includes conduct, conflict of interest and public interest disclosure complaints.
- On receiving a complaint, the OLG will undertake an initial triage process; this will include an assessment and possible early dismissal of complaints which do not meet defined thresholds, and determine which complaints require referral to either the Privileges Committee or the Land and Environment Court (LEC); and
- The OLG will be directly responsible for the investigation of allegations of serious misconduct which is below the threshold for referral to the LEC, can be addressed more efficiently and proportionately without a court determined penalty, or has been referred back from the Privileges Committee.

If the OLG determines serious misconduct has occurred, they will have the power to issue a formal warning, caution, training order, performance order, suspension (with or without sitting fees) or require a formal apology. Additionally, the OLG will be able to enter into voluntary undertakings with respect to behavioural management.

2. The Privileges Committee

A Privileges Committee will be established to manage matters referred by the OLG which involve "unsatisfactory behaviour" and will be comprised of experienced mayors and councillors appointed by the Minister for Local Government. On receipt of an OLG referral, a panel will be selected from the committee (by a Ministerially appointed Chairperson), to review the complaint. A councillor will be required to explain or justify their behaviour in front of their peers.

The Privileges Committee will have the power to issue lower-level sanctions such as formal warnings, reprimands and censures, with the intention to reinforce standards by peers without financial consequences. A Panel may also decide to take no action or refer serious matters back to the OLG for consideration, or to the Departmental Chief Executive (DCE) via the OLG for further deliberation.

Whilst establishment of a Privileges Committees appears a positive move forward and should support councillors by creating a peer-review process with the intent to uphold expected

standards, there is a concern that a committee in which its members are solely selected by the Minister may not encourage the confidence of impartiality it seeks to address.

3. The Land and Environment Court

- A transfer of adjudication for legislative breaches and systemic or serious misconduct requiring court determined penalties from the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) to the LEC is underway, through the *Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment (Councillor Conduct) Bill 2025*. The Bill is yet to pass parliament; however, it is anticipated once passed, will establish the LEC as the primary judicial forum for serious councillor misconduct and will dispense of the resolution pathway currently in operation with NCAT.
- It is proposed the LEC will have the power to impose severe sanctions including disqualification, suspension, reversal of unjust benefit, compensation (or restitution) and civil penalties.

Powers of investigation and penalty

In addition to the sanction powers noted above, the reforms propose increased investigation powers for the OLG including:

- Compelling answers and protecting individual rights – a new power which will allow investigators to compel answers whilst also providing protection against self-incrimination
- Strengthening current entry and seizure powers
- Pursuing voluntary undertakings – an alternate to a performance improvement order, a voluntary undertaking would operate as a binding agreement to adopt agreed behaviours, including timeframes and consequences for non-compliance.

The OLG proposes to apply a risk-based approach to the application of investigative and enforcement powers, with guidelines and other regulatory materials to be made publicly available to support transparency and confidence in the framework.

At this time, no guidelines have been drafted. It is therefore difficult to ascertain how the increased powers of investigation and penalties will be put into practice; noting the Policy Statement indicates the increased powers are will not be used routinely and rather, as a last resort.

Possible financial burden

Whilst it is noted that the move to an external councillor conduct management system may not impact Richmond Valley Council's resources to a significant degree (currently), future financial burden is a possibility.

The reforms propose a cost recovery approach, where councils would contribute financially to the cost of managing conduct matters, specifically costs related to the work of the Privileges Committee and not the OLG's core regulatory functions.

At this time, there is no further information available as to what costs, allocation of contribution and clarification on what functions of the OLG will be recognised as "core regulatory functions". It is recommended that the submission seeks further clarification on this matter prior to implementation.

Councillor code of conduct (the draft Code)

The OLG has identified the intent of a separate code of conduct for councillors is to create a code dedicated to councillors only, which is designed to reflect and support the political nature of elected councillor roles, simplify conflict of interest rules, remove provisions which can be weaponised and modernise how councillors disclose their personal interests.

The draft code has been designed to have an "easy to read" format with contents page providing simplified accessibility to dedicated provisions. Notable provisions are as follows:

- Definitions – the draft Code contains a dedicated definitions section similar to the current *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW 2020* (the 2020 Code); however, the draft Code contains definitions not included in the 2020 Code:
    - Binding caucus vote

- Bullying
- De facto partner
- Harassment
- Political donation
- Relative

The above definitions are designed to assist a councillor in understanding conduct expectations and conflict/disclosure requirements.

- Enforceability – the draft Code provides that a failure to comply with the provisions of the code of conduct will constitute misconduct under the LGA. This will enliven the regulatory powers of the OLG. There may be a benefit to adding to the definitions a term of "misconduct" and connecting this to the provisions in the LGA for continuity purposes

- Work health and safety – clause 2.4 provides that a councillor must not fail to comply with the provisions of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act). No further guidance is offered as to the obligations under the WHS Act. It is recommended to request further clarification surrounding this clause, or seek advice as to whether any guidance or training will be offered to councillors in relation to work health and safety obligations

- Land use planning, development assessment and other regulatory functions – clause 2.5 creates an obligation on a councillor to *"take reasonable and practicable steps to ensure that land use planning, development approval and other associated regulatory decisions are made properly, transparently and fairly to all parties…."*. No further guidance is provided as to how this obligation is practically applied as relative to councillors and what constitutes "reasonable and practicable steps". It is recommended Council advocate for improved clarification with respect to this obligation and whether any guidelines published will provide this clarification

- Personal disclosure and conflict of interest – a major change to the framework and included in the draft Code is the streamlining of reporting of interests, conduct expectations and the form in which they take. Part 3 offers a broad overview of what constitutes a conflict of interest, including a test to apply when considering whether a councillor has a conflict of interest. Further, the requirements for personal disclosure of interests have been simplified and includes a comprehensive overview of what must be reported at Schedule 1, with the required form which must be completed located at Schedule 2. The form separates public facing information (which is required to be published) from private information, which encourages efficiency in transparency

- The draft Code contains provisions which may be encompassed in some of Council's current policies, such as personal benefits (gifts), interactions with staff and access to information and resources. It is accordingly expected that these policies will be reviewed on enactment of the draft Code and where possible codified into one document for efficiency purposes.

<u>How will the measures be implemented?</u>

Stage 1 of the councillor conduct reforms is underway, with introduction on 14 October 2025 of the *Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment (Councillor Conduct) Bill 2025*, which transfers adjudication for legislative breaches and systemic or serious misconduct requiring court determined penalties from NCAT to the LEC. This proposed legislation has been introduced, with debates ongoing.

Stage 2 of the councillor conduct reforms is planned as follows:

- Amendment of the LGA to update misconduct provisions and widen the definition of misconduct to include unsatisfactory behaviour and serious misconduct
- Amendment of the LGA to consolidate the OLG's investigatory and regulatory powers (including disciplinary provisions) into one dedicated chapter; and
- Issue of the Model Code of Conduct for Councillors for adoption, to be prescribed under section 440(1) of the LGA.

In consideration of the recent disallowance of the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Model Code of Meeting Practice) Regulation 2025* which resulted in Council being required to rescind the Code of Meeting Practice adopted in December 2025, it is recommended a concern be raised as to the timing of when the reforms are to be implemented, with consideration to commencement of the centralised councillor conduct management model and Model Code of Conduct for Councillors to coincide with commencement of the amended legislation.

Proposed feedback response items

It is proposed Council prepare a submission which includes the following feedback:

- That Council supports continuing efforts by the OLG in reforms to the councillor conduct management framework, including re-direction of the management of complaints against councillors to an external body – this will improve community confidence in impartiality and remove burden from the General Manager and Mayor to investigate such complaints
- That further consideration and clarification is required as to the make-up of the proposed Privileges Committee – whether they are current and/or previous elected councillors (and mayors) and whether conduct of a more impartial method of appointment is warranted
- That the possible financial burden on councils be clarified – to better explain the proportionate costs model including an estimation of these costs, whether only the councils with a conduct complaint will incur costs and will there be a cap on the amount?
- Referral to OLG when council receives a complaint – when can we expect appropriate guidance to provide to councillors/staff/community on the new arrangements? Has any consideration been allocated to accessibility for persons who are not computer literate (for completing the proposed online submission)? How will this be managed?
- That Council supports a code of conduct dedicated to councillors generally as a means of providing support for the political nature of a councillor's role with expectations for a councillor in conducting their role set out in an accessible and understandable way
- That Council supports the modernisation of the interests and disclosures process to ensure transparency whilst also improving efficiency of reporting
- That the definitions in the draft Code are not substantial enough and may benefit from examples of unreasonable behaviour, noting that this may be addressed in the LGA, however, inclusion of this in the draft Code would improve efficiency of understanding for councillors
- Whether further clarification and guidance or training will be offered to councillors in relation to work health and safety obligations
- That improved clarification with respect to the planning, development and regulatory functions obligation be provided, and whether any guidelines published will include this clarification; and
- That clarification as to the timing of when the reforms are to be implemented be provided, with consideration to commencement of the centralised councillor conduct management model and Model Code of Conduct for Councillors to coincide with commencement of the amended legislation.

CONSULTATION

This report represents Council's consultation process with councillors with respect to the proposed "next steps" for the councillor conduct framework and invites commentary on proposed feedback response items and any further viewpoints for consideration.

CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding historical data indicates the councillors for Richmond Valley Council consistently maintain high standards of conduct which have not resulted in complaints against conduct, supporting a framework focusing on the management of councillor conduct is a positive step to promote integrity, transparency and impartiality within our local community and the broader state community.

Whilst support for the management of complaints against councillors and a separate code of conduct for councillors is strong, there remain areas of concern which should be addressed; it is therefore recommended these areas of concern should be brought forward in the submission response.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **Councillor Conduct Reform Policy Statement (under separate cover)**
2. **Draft Model Code of Conduct for Councillors (under separate cover)**

19 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

RECOMMENDATION

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

19.1 RICHMOND VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY - YEAR ONE UPDATE

Director: **Vaughan Macdonald**

Responsible Officer: **Stacey Mills**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Economic Development Strategy - first year update.

REPORT

Background

The Richmond Valley Economic Development Strategy 2025–2030 was adopted by Council in August 2025 and provides the strategic framework for sustainable economic growth, investment attraction, workforce development and visitor economy outcomes across the Richmond Valley.

The Strategy is built around five objectives:

1. Establish the Richmond Valley as a Regional Growth Centre
2. Be an Easy Place to Do Business
3. Advance Innovation and Broaden our Economic Landscape
4. Build a Thriving Future
5. Grow the Visitor Economy

During the first year of implementation, significant progress has been made across all objectives. Key achievements include supporting renewable energy investment, advancing housing opportunities, facilitating industrial land activation, strengthening business engagement, supporting workforce initiatives and completing the Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan 2026–2030.

This report outlines progress achieved during the first year of implementation.

Objective 1: Establish the Richmond Valley as a Regional Growth Centre

This objective focuses on attracting investment, employment and regional economic activity.

Key Progress

Strengthen Infrastructure and Investment

- Council pursued a range of grant funding opportunities to improve the resilience and safety of the region's road infrastructure. Funding applications totalling more than $6.3 million were submitted for six priority projects, with a combined project value exceeding $7.8 million. These projects focus on flood mitigation, road safety, transport connectivity, and traffic management, with one project already approved and the remaining major applications currently under review.
- Council continued to strengthen its partnership with nbn to improve digital connectivity and support economic growth across the Richmond Valley. Through ongoing collaboration,

Council has promoted awareness of business-grade internet solutions, fibre upgrade opportunities and fixed wireless improvements to support local businesses and residents. Council has also worked with nbn to ensure emerging industrial developments, including the Reynolds Road and Casino Industries Activation precincts, are considered in future network planning. The partnership will continue to support digital capability initiatives, business engagement, and improved telecommunications infrastructure across the LGA.

- The Casino Suspension Bridge was officially opened on 27 June 2026, with Minister for Small Business, Recovery and the North Coast Janelle Saffin, Mayor Robert Mustow and Member for Page Kevin Hogan attending the opening ceremony. Designed and constructed by Forge Engineering, the bridge was delivered through a $3.5 million grant funded by the Australian and NSW Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. The project has reinstated a vital community connection while delivering a more resilient and iconic piece of infrastructure that will serve residents and visitors for generations to come.
- CBD Draft Master Plan is currently on public exhibition. Prepared in partnership with Arcadia, GHD and Richmond Valley Council, the Master Plan establishes a long-term vision for the future growth and revitalisation of the Casino CBD. The Plan outlines a 25-year framework to create a vibrant, connected, walkable and investment-ready town centre, supporting:
    - Increased housing diversity and business opportunities
    - High-quality public spaces and community gathering areas
    - A stronger sense of place and local identity
    - Sustainable growth that respects Casino's heritage and character
- The Master Plan will guide future capital works, grant funding applications, land use planning, urban design outcomes and activation of key catalyst sites. Once adopted, the Plan will provide a coordinated roadmap for future investment and strengthen Casino's role as the Richmond Valley's primary commercial, civic and community centre.

Renewable Energy Investment

- Council continues to support the Richmond Valley Solar Farm project and is working with Ark Energy and Elecnor to facilitate workforce accommodation during construction.
- The Richmond Valley Solar Farm will be developed in stages, with Stage 1 comprising a 200MW solar farm and 275MW/3,148MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), anticipated to commence in early 2027.
- The Emu Park Solar Farm is progressing through the State planning process and includes a proposed 350MW solar farm and 200MW/800MWh BESS.
- OX2 has advised it will not proceed with the Summerville Solar Farm project due to project viability considerations.

Airpark Residential Project

- A State Significant Development Application has been lodged through the Housing Delivery Authority for a 157-lot residential subdivision at Evans Head Airpark.
- Stage 1 proposes 50 residential lots, 40 dwellings (10% affordable) and associated civil infrastructure.
- A scoping report has been submitted to seek the SEARs, with Council having provided initial feedback to inform the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure preparation of the SEARs which sets out the requirements for the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) which must be prepared to support the Development Application for projects of this scale.

Industrial Land and Precinct Development

- Lots 5 and 6 at Reynolds Road were sold for development of the new Australia Post Parcel Distribution Centre. Construction commenced in June 2026 and is targeted to be operational by the end of this year.
- Promotion and activation of the remaining Reynolds Road lots continues.
- Council is finalising a concept masterplan for the Casino Industries Activation site to guide future development and land release for this development.
- Council has undertaken a more comprehensive investment campaign on LinkedIn, showcasing the success of leading local businesses and promoting investment opportunities across the Richmond Valley. The campaign has generated more than 40,000 impressions across the platform, with the Regional Jobs Precinct targeted investment video proving to be the highest-performing post, achieving more than 10,000 impressions and 5,000 views.
- To further strengthen Council's investment attraction activities, the Invest and Live Team participated in the Regional NSW Economic Development and Investment Attraction two-day workshop. Insights gained through the workshop will help inform the development of the Richmond Valley Investment Prospectus, a targeted document designed to attract investment by showcasing the region's competitive advantages, strategic opportunities and priority investment projects.

Year One Outcome

Richmond Valley continues to attract significant investment across renewable energy, housing and industrial development. These projects support employment, population growth and economic resilience while strengthening the region's position as a regional growth centre.

Objective 2: Be an Easy Place to Do Business

This objective focuses on supporting local businesses and facilitating investment.

Key Progress

Business Support and Engagement

- A monthly business newsletter is now distributed to approximately 1,400 contacts, achieving an average open rate of 51%.
- Over the past twelve months, the Invest and Live Team recorded 7,683 stakeholder engagements across meetings, consultations, campaigns, events and communications.
- Council supported a broad range of business and investment enquiries for numerous RV businesses that have progressed. (Not specified for business privacy reasons)
- Twenty-two workshops, surveys and stakeholder engagement activities were delivered covering topics including AI, AgTech, business development and regional growth opportunities.
- Partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce were strengthened through delivery of the 2025 and upcoming 2026 Richmond Valley Business Awards which are being held at Evans Head on Saturday 18 July 2026.
- Council has continued to advocate on behalf of key local industries, working with a major agribusiness and State Government agencies to address proposed regulatory changes that could impact regional employment, productivity and economic outcomes.

Business Promotion

- Local businesses were promoted through social media, business spotlights and the Beyond the Paddock video series.
- Business-related social media engagement increased by 42.3%.

- The Beyond the Paddock series attracted more than 30,000 views.
- Business promotion campaigns generated over 150,000 social media impressions.

McCaughey Group / Spring Grove Fresh Foods

- Construction continues on the Spring Grove Fresh Foods Cold Storage Facility.
- Major structural works, cold room installation and associated electrical infrastructure have been completed.
- The export-accredited regional cold storage facility will strengthen supply chain efficiency for agricultural producers, food manufacturers and distributors, improving business competitiveness and supporting future investment and job creation across the Richmond Valley. Once completed, the facility will provide more than 1,000 pallet spaces, including chilled and blast freezing capacity, alongside a national distribution service offering pick, palletising and freight solutions. The project will secure around 100 existing jobs while creating opportunities for business expansion and new employment by enabling smaller producers to access export and distribution markets.
- Council has worked closely with the proponent to support project delivery and maximise local economic benefits.

Development Facilitation

- Council's Invest and Live and Development Assessment teams have worked collaboratively to support investment and development outcomes.
- Council assisted proponents with tourism, agritourism, retail and commercial development opportunities across the Richmond Valley. This coordinated approach has improved communication, reduced barriers and streamlined development enquiries.
- On 17 June 2026, the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) hosted Consuls-General and trade representatives from 11 countries as part of a Northern Rivers industry showcase. Richmond Valley hosted the delegation in Woodburn, where local business owner Daniel Simpson shared the Rod N Reel Hotel's recovery and growth journey following the 2022 floods. Delegates also toured SeaO2 Nutrition to gain insight into the region's innovative agribusiness sector and the commercial production of microalgae products. Mayor Robert Mustow and Council's Invest and Live Team attended a networking dinner with regional leaders, manufacturers and producers, providing opportunities to strengthen international relationships and explore potential export and trade opportunities for local businesses. The visit showcased Richmond Valley's diverse industry strengths and highlighted opportunities to grow investment, trade and export outcomes across the region.

Year One Outcome

Council has strengthened the local business environment through targeted engagement, support programs and investment facilitation. Continued business and industry investment reflects growing confidence in Richmond Valley as a place to do business.

Objective 3: Advance Innovation and Broaden our Economic Landscape

This objective focuses on diversifying the local economy through emerging industries, innovation and improved connectivity.

Key Progress

Connectivity and Enabling Infrastructure

- Council advocated for increased public transport across the LGA through consultation undertaken as part of the development of the NSW Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan, highlighting the need to better connect communities with each other, health services and rail services.

- Discussions continued with Transport for NSW and regional partners regarding future freight efficiency, road connectivity and infrastructure investment opportunities.
- Council advocated for the introduction of bicycle carriage on the XPT to better connect rail passengers with the Northern Rivers Rail Trail, enhancing sustainable transport options and encouraging increased cycling tourism across the Richmond Valley.

Emerging Industries

- Renewable energy projects continue to position Richmond Valley as a key location for renewable energy investment within Northern NSW. Council is working with Gateway by ICN, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) and regional economic development practitioners to maximise local procurement and workforce opportunities for the Northern Rivers.

Year One Outcome

Richmond Valley is strengthening its economic diversity through improved connectivity, emerging industry opportunities and participation in new renewable energy and supply chain markets.

Objective 4: Build a Thriving Future

This objective focuses on workforce attraction, housing and community prosperity.

Key Progress

Workforce Development and Education Pathways

- Council identified a gap in education pathways for disengaged young people through discussions with schools, TAFE and government agencies.
- The Invest and Live Team has been working with North Coast Community College to establish a long-term education facility in Casino.
- The proposed facility would support literacy, numeracy and employment readiness pathways.
- TAFE has confirmed support for future renewable energy training programs aligned to workforce demand.

Housing and Population Growth

- Council continues to advocate for increased housing supply across the Richmond Valley and has worked with interested parties on the Meadows subdivision and infill housing opportunities throughout the Richmond Valley.
- The Evans Head Airpark proposal represents a significant opportunity to increase housing diversity and support population growth.
- Council has worked with renewable energy proponents to identify workforce accommodation solutions ahead of major project construction.
- Discussions continue with government agencies and housing developers/providers regarding future housing supply opportunities including the Summerland Estate which is identified in the Reconstruction Authority's Resilient Lands Strategy.

Community and Economic Resilience

- Council continues to advocate for investment in housing, workforce development and enabling infrastructure to support future growth.
- Strategic partnerships with education and training providers are improving local pathways into employment and industry.

Year One Outcome

Council has continued to strengthen the foundations for long-term growth through workforce development, education partnerships and advocacy for increased housing supply. These initiatives will help support future employment needs and population growth across the Richmond Valley.

Objective 5: Grow the Visitor Economy

This objective focuses on increasing visitation, visitor expenditure and tourism investment.

Key Progress

Destination Management Planning

- The Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan 2026–2030 was completed, providing a strategic framework for future visitor economy growth.

Tourism Infrastructure and Experience Development

- Construction of the Three Villages Cycleway between Evans Head and Woodburn is underway.
- Planning and funding advocacy continue for future sections linking Evans Head, Broadwater and Woodburn.
- The project will improve cycling connections, visitor dispersal and active tourism opportunities.
- Casino Pedestrian Suspension bridge has seen a significant increase in visitation with visitors walking over the bridge and the nearby Cassino Art Gallery has seen a significant increase in its visitation.
- Council has continued supporting local events and tourism operators through industry engagement and promotion.

Destination Marketing

- Discover Richmond Valley continued expanding its digital marketing and destination promotion activities.
- Over the prior 12 months, Facebook recorded 852,000 views and gained 693 new followers, increasing the audience by 20.5%. Instagram recorded 111,000 views and reached approximately 35,000 users.
- Destination marketing activities have increased awareness of Richmond Valley and strengthened the region's digital tourism presence, providing a strong foundation for destination growth.

Year One Outcome

Completion of the Destination Management Plan, combined with ongoing marketing and visitor infrastructure projects, has established a strong foundation for future visitor economy growth.

Overall Strategy Progress

The first year of implementation has delivered measurable progress across all five objectives of the Economic Development Strategy.

Key achievements include major renewable energy investment, activation of industrial land, support for local businesses, workforce development initiatives and completion of the Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan.

Together, these initiatives are supporting investment, employment growth and economic diversification while positioning Richmond Valley for future growth.

CONCLUSION

The first year of implementation of the Richmond Valley Economic Development Strategy 2025–2030 has delivered positive outcomes across investment attraction, business support, industry development, workforce planning and tourism.

While many initiatives remain ongoing, progress achieved during the year demonstrates strong momentum towards the Strategy's objectives and provides a solid foundation for future economic growth across the Richmond Valley.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

19.2 CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT APRIL - JUNE 2026

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Ngarie Macqueen**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Customer Service Report for the period 1 April – 30 June 2026.

REPORT

Customer Service Delivery

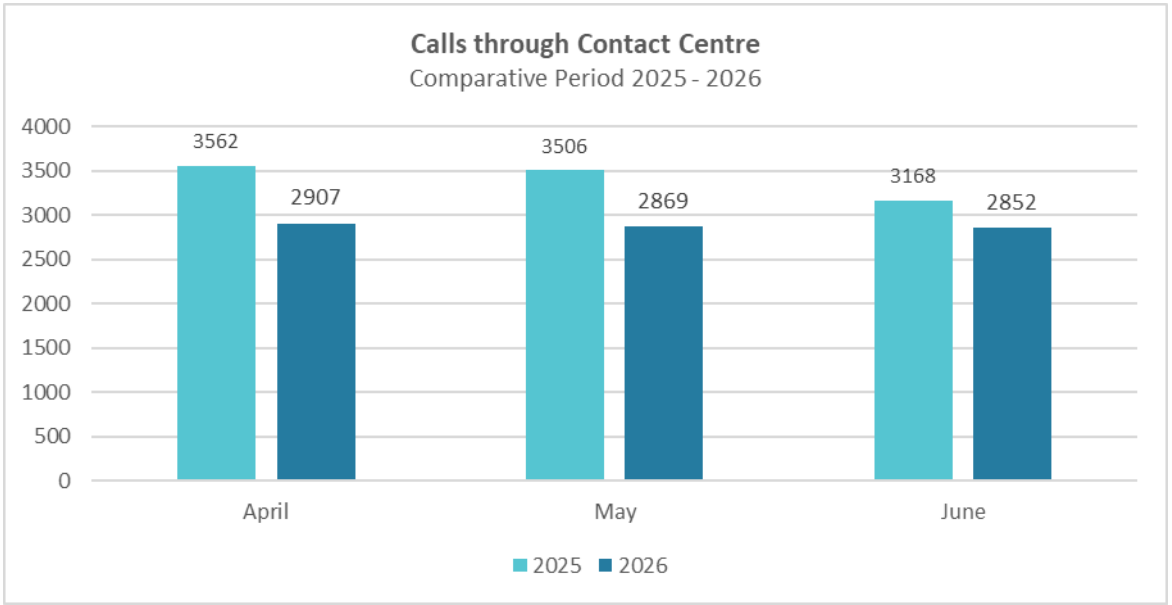
Council's team is committed to consistently delivering professional and caring customer service to the Richmond Valley community through all areas of works performed. The information contained within this quarterly report demonstrates the significant variety and volume of tasks completed by Council's 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 8,628 calls were handled by the contact centre team during the reporting period. This includes 5,445 calls received through the queue, 72 calls directly to Customer Experience (CE) agents and 3,900 outbound calls made by CE staff. The contact centre has exceeded all service targets for the reporting period, including 86.80% of calls answered within industry standard of 30 seconds. The average time each caller spends in the queue is 18 seconds, 0.53% average of abandoned calls, and an average call time of 2:35 minutes.

A total of 36,632 calls were handled for the 2025/2026 financial year. This includes 23,335 calls received through the queue, 594 calls directly to Customer Experience (CE) agents and 12,703 outbound calls made by CE staff.



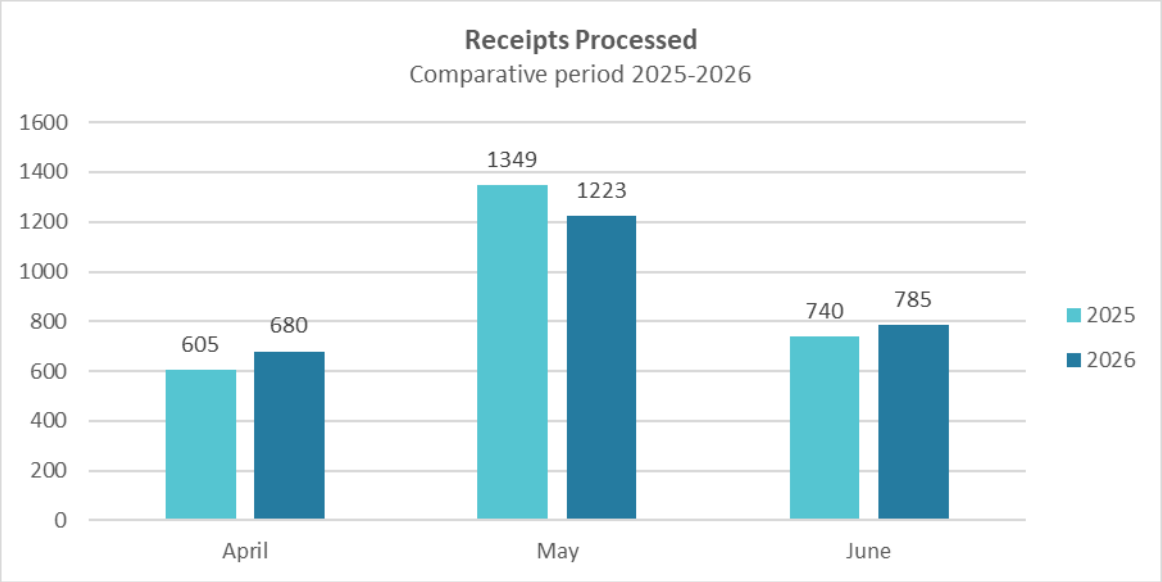
Graph 1: Calls received into the call centre

Receipt and Administration Statistics

A total of 2,688 receipts were processed for the reporting period. May 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:

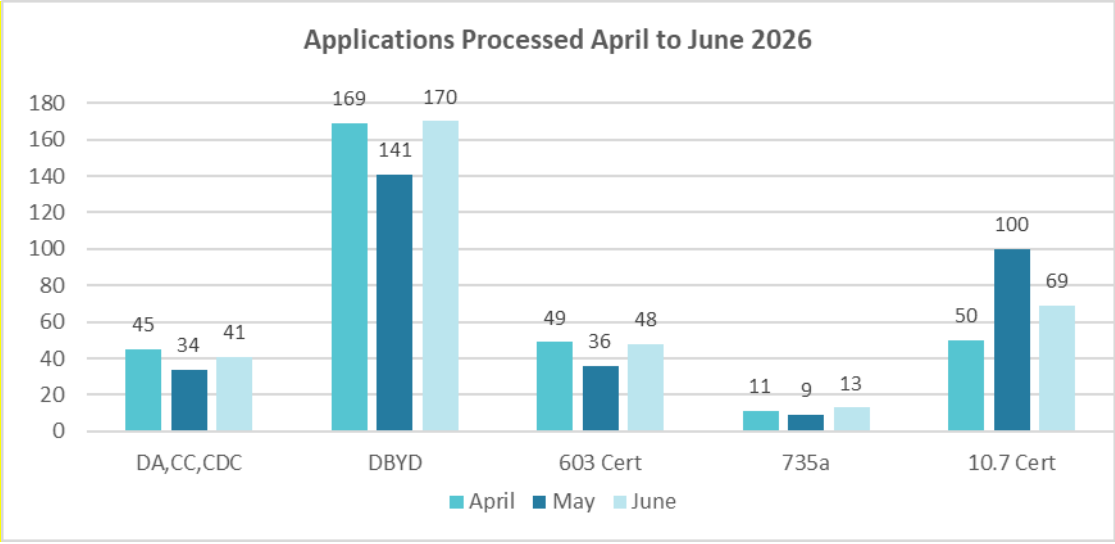
- 60% EFTPOS.
- 23% as cash payments.
- 14% were paid via direct bank transfer.
- 3% by cheque.



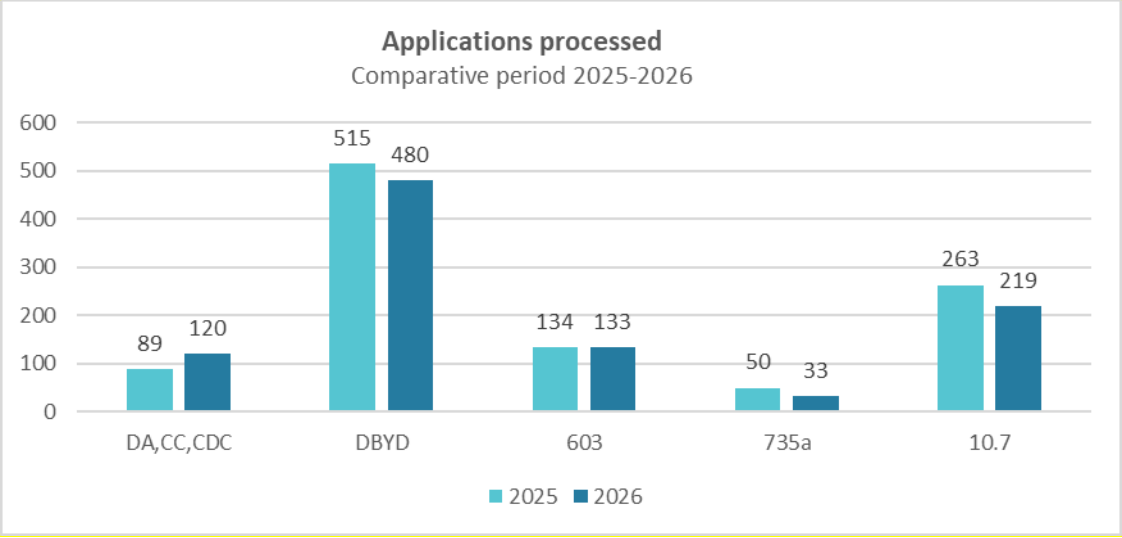
Graph 2: Total number of receipts

Certificates and Customer Requests

A total of 385 Section 735A, 10.7, and 603 Certificates were received in the reporting period with 99.7% completed within set timeframes in accordance with Council's service standards.



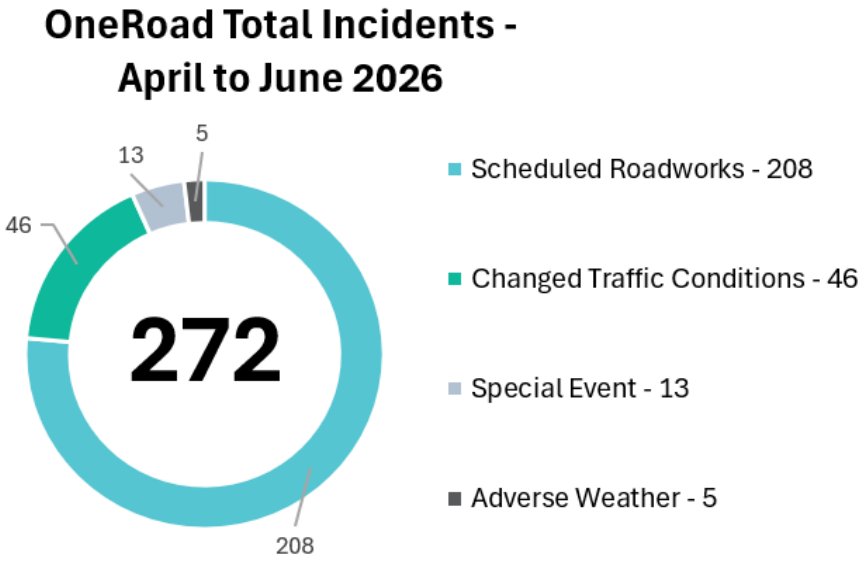
Graph 3. Applications received



Graph 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 OneRoad portal in a timely manner. Road users can be confident conditions and closures on the Live Traffic app are current and are regularly updated to include details of expected delays and alternative routes to minimise disruptions.



Graph 5: Total planned and unplanned road incidents recorded

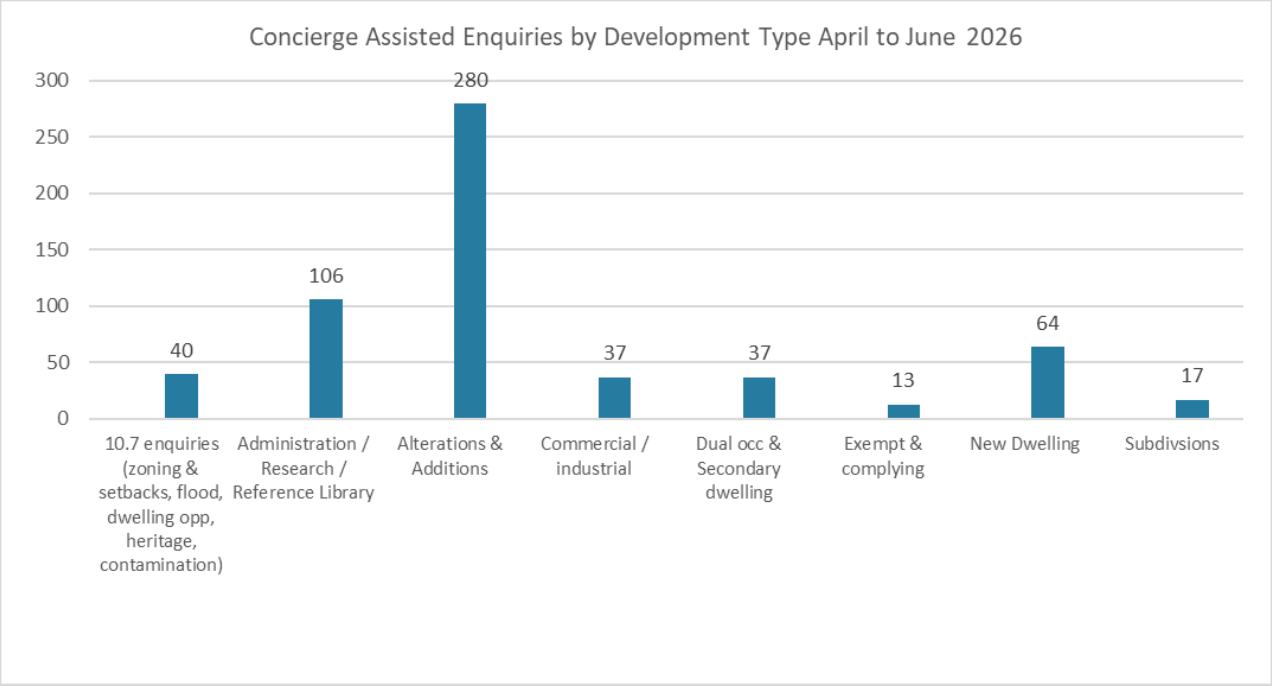
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT TEAM

Development Concierge

The Development Concierge fielded 594 enquiries during the reporting period. Majority 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 planning portal assistance service to applicants, providing full case management throughout the assessment process to ensure customers receive quality support and imposed timeframes are achieved.

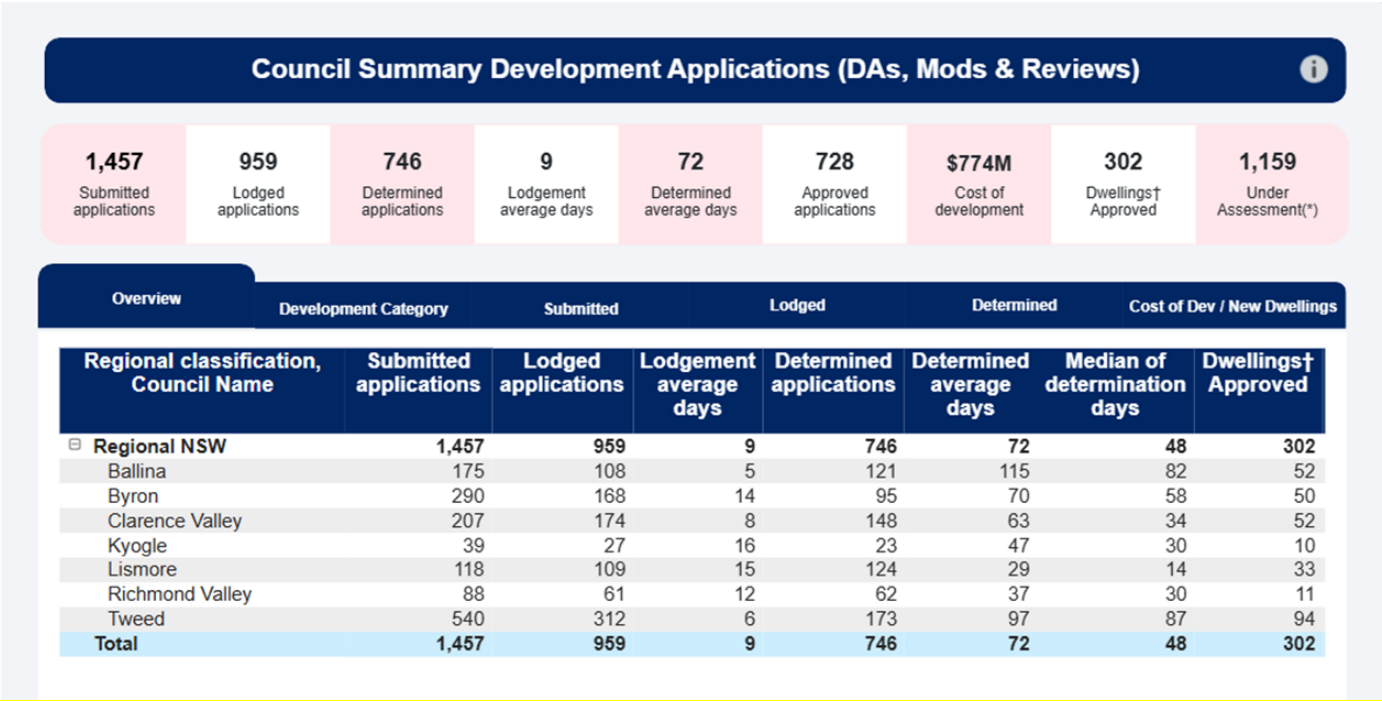


Graph 6 Concierge enquiries by type

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)

1,457	959	746	9	72	728	$774M	302	1,159
Submitted applications	Lodged applications	Determined applications	Lodgement average days	Determined average days	Approved applications	Cost of development	Dwellings† Approved	Under Assessment(*)

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	**1,457**	**959**	**9**	**746**	**72**	**48**	**302**
Ballina	175	108	5	121	115	82	52
Byron	290	168	14	95	70	58	50
Clarence Valley	207	174	8	148	63	34	52
Kyogle	39	27	16	23	47	30	10
Lismore	118	109	15	124	29	14	33
Richmond Valley	88	61	12	62	37	30	11
Tweed	540	312	6	173	97	87	94
Total	**1,457**	**959**	**9**	**746**	**72**	**48**	**302**

Figure 7 NSW Planning Portal Council summary comparison

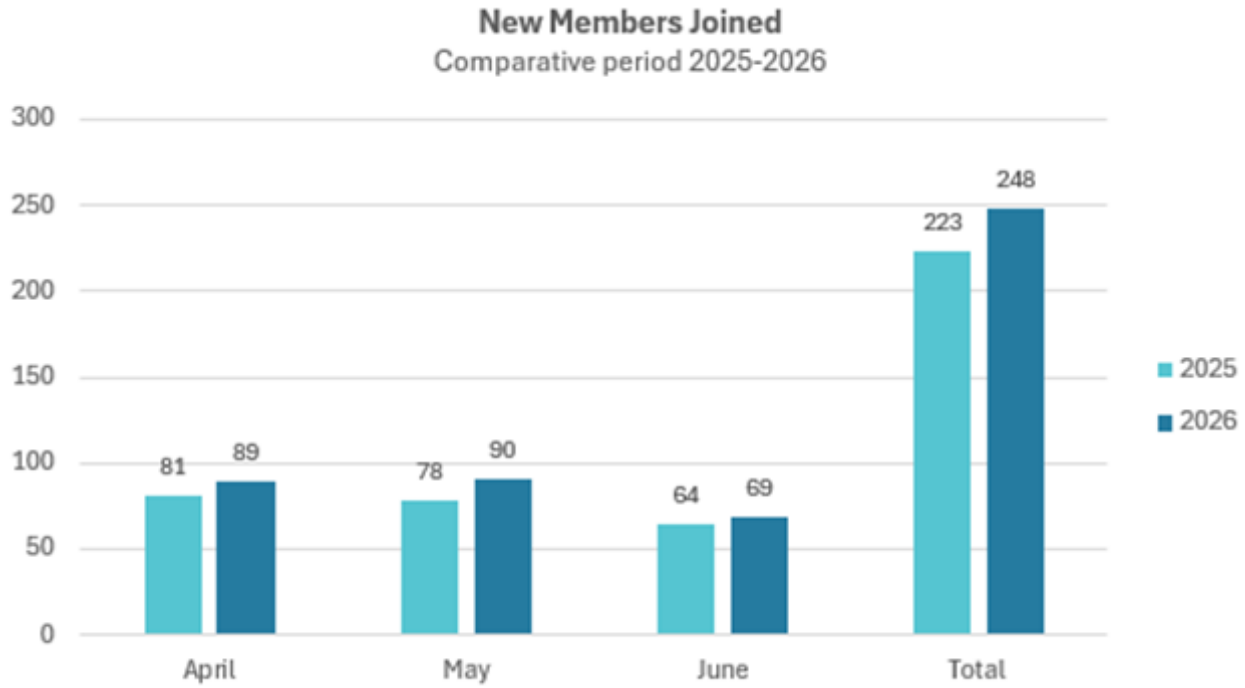
Application Type	Totals	April	May	June
Total DA Received	**88**	31	27	30
Total CC Received	**29**	12	7	10
Complying Development	**3**	2	0	1
Subdivision Certificate	**15**	4	7	4
S138 - Road Reserve Activities	**103**	42	30	31
S68 - Plumbing Permits & Events	**103**	42	30	31
PC Appointments	**15**	6	2	7
Occupation Certifcate	**19**	3	8	8
Building Certificate	**14**	7	6	1
Private Certificate	**16**	6	5	5

Figure 8 Applications received via the NSW Planning Portal

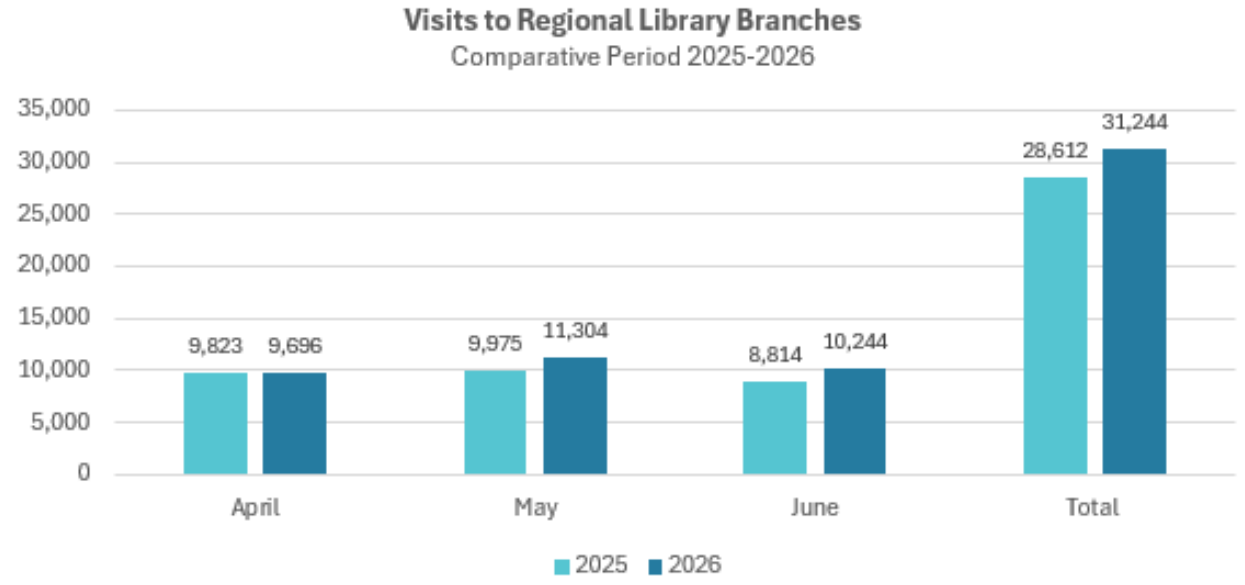
REGIONAL LIBRARY TEAM

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 April - June period. There was a 11.21% increase in the number of new members joining the Regional Library as compared to the same period in 2025, with overall visitation up by 9.20%.



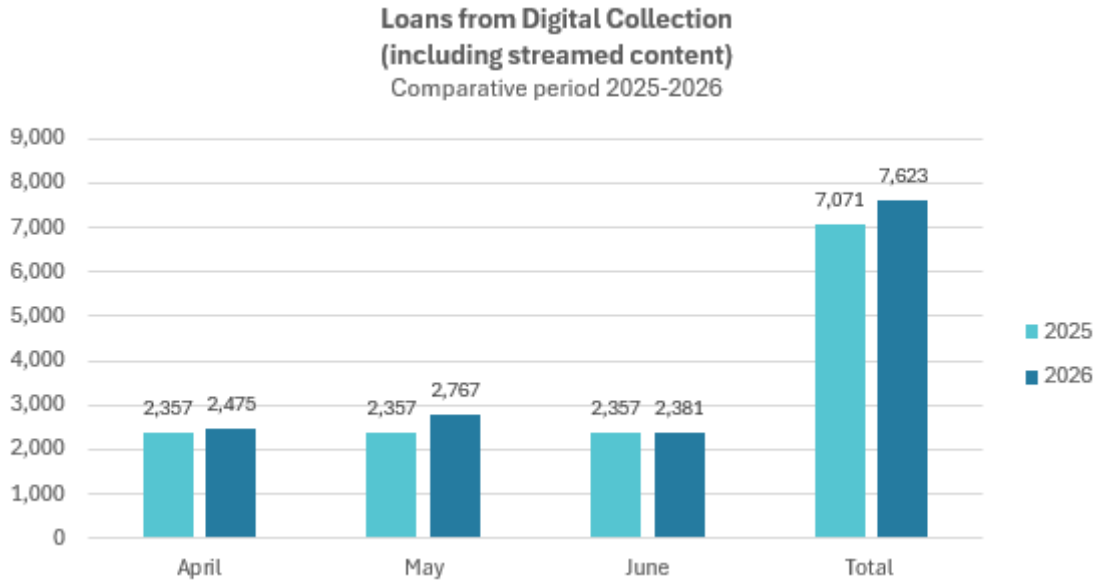
Graph 9 The number of new members to join the Regional Library



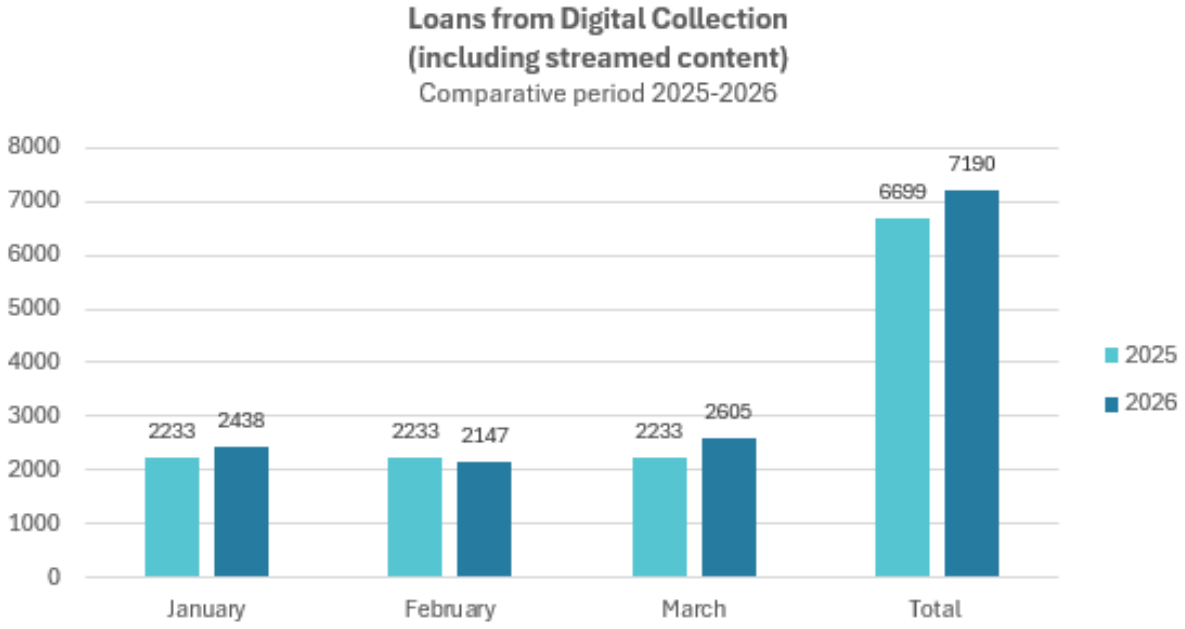
Graph 10 Visits to Regional Library branches

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 April - June period. As compared to the same period for the previous year there has been a 7.81% increase in digital loans, and a 0.93% decrease in physical loans.



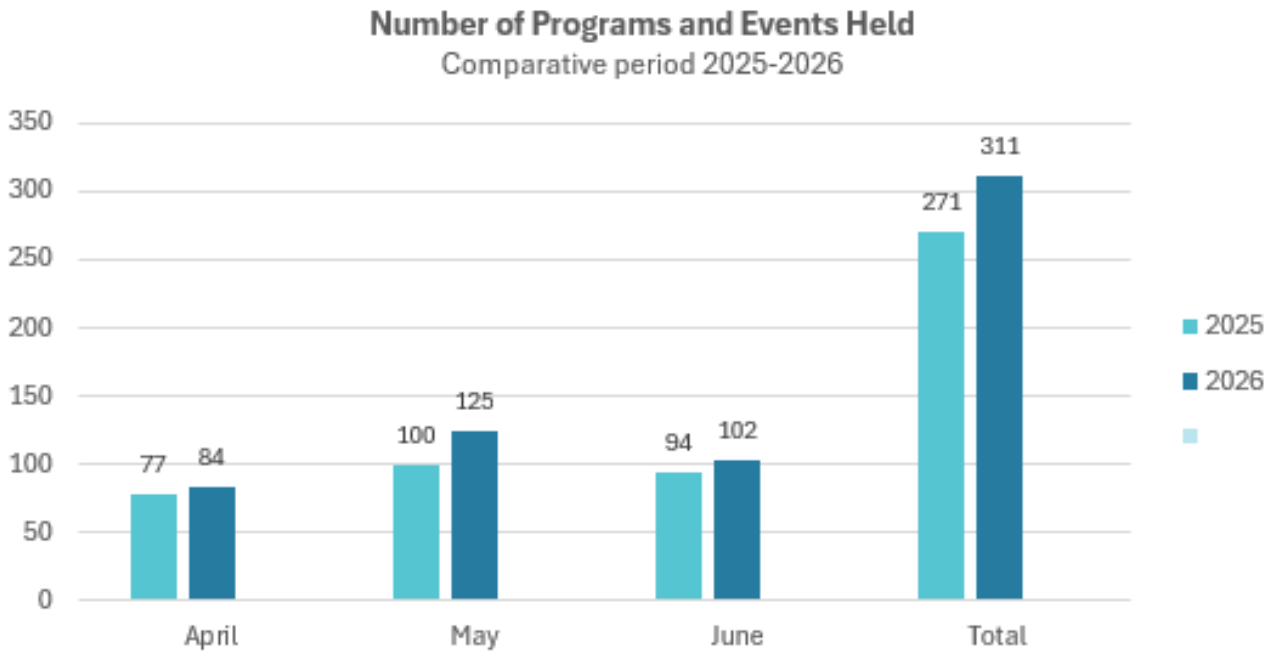
Graph 11 Loans from the Regional Library's physical collection



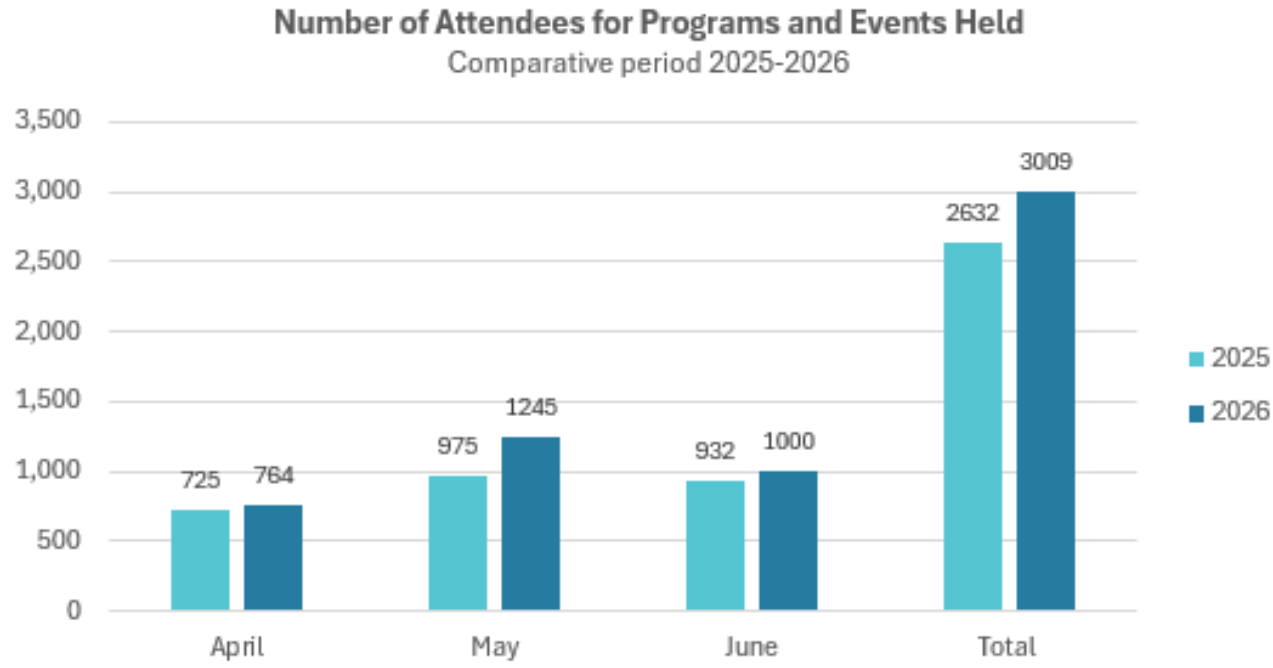
Graph 12 Loans from the Regional Library's digital collection

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 April - June period there was a 14.76% increase in the number of programs and events held and a 14.32% increase in the number of attendees as compared to the same period in 2025.



Graph 13 Number of programs and events held by the Regional Library

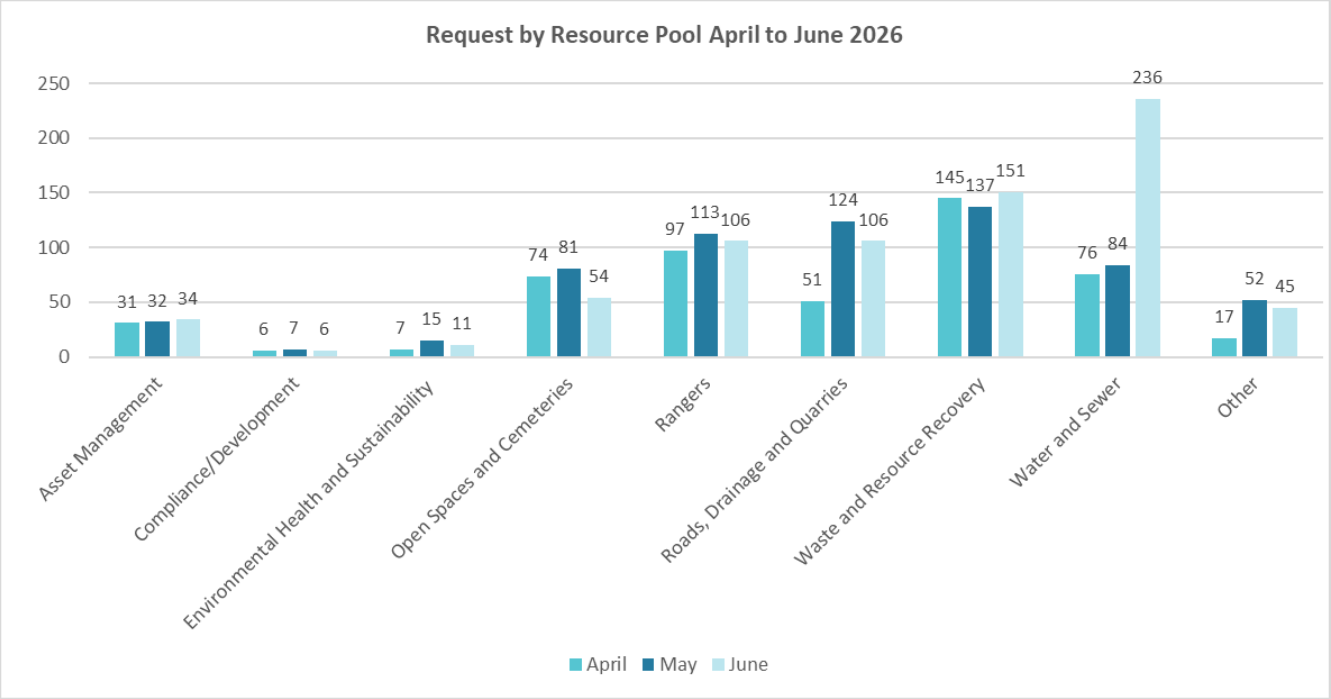


Graph 14 Number of attendees for programs and events held by the Regional Library

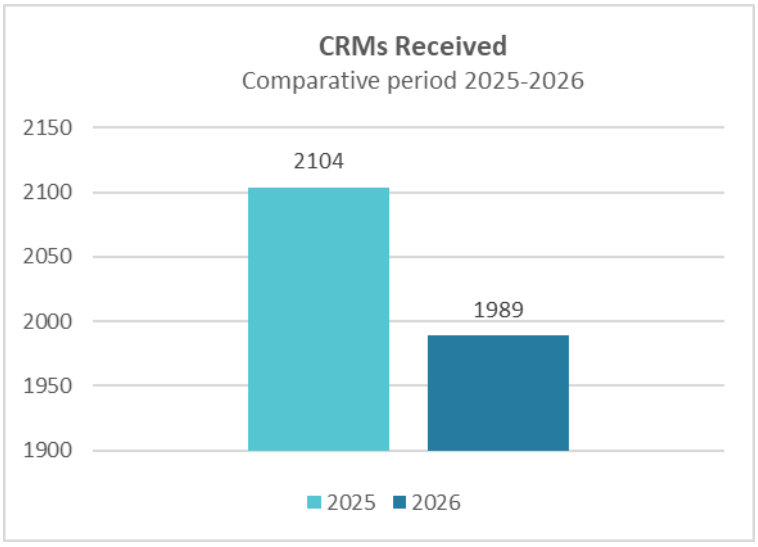
RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL TEAM

Customer Request Management System (CRMS) - Key Statistics

Council's CRMS provides a structured process for Council to receive, track, and respond to community requests received across a broad range of services, including roads, animal management, waste, water, and sewer services. During the reporting period, a total of 1,898 new service requests were logged.



Graph 15 Number of customer requests received



Graph 16 Customer requests comparison

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

19.3 DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION AUTHORITY

Director: **Tina Kao**

Responsible Officer: **Tina Kao**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes advice received from the Hon Paul Scully MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces outlining the newly formed Development Coordination Authority (DCA) operating with full statutory powers from 1 July 2026.

REPORT

The NSW Government has established the Development Coordination Authority (DCA) as part of its commitment to making the planning system faster, more efficient, and easier to navigate. The DCA forms part of the amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, which were passed by Parliament in November 2025.

The new statutory framework streamlines and simplifies the planning system by consolidating more than 800 government referral triggers and 175 planning instruments into a single, coordinated list aligned with State priorities.

Key Benefits

- Single point of contact for NSW Government input on local development proposals.
- Greater certainty of response timeframes through a more coordinated assessment process.
- Clear, consolidated advice provided on behalf of all relevant NSW Government agencies.
- Early guidance and support to ensure referral requirements are identified and addressed correctly from the outset.
- Reduced complexity and duplication within the planning and development assessment process.

The establishment of the DCA is intended to improve coordination between government agencies, reduce delays, and provide a more streamlined experience for applicants navigating the NSW planning system.

In practice, when our community and businesses submit a development application, modification or planning proposal, Council remains their key point of contact before, during and after the assessment processes.

Where a referral to agencies is required, Council will liaise with the DCA as a single point of contact, rather than separate referrals to each individual State agency. Despite DCA being the new single point of contact, Council remains responsible for referrals to non-DCA coordinated entities including Commonwealth bodies such as Australian Rail Track Authority, along with utility providers such as Essential Energy, Rous Water, as well as NSW Police, Heritage Advisory and others. Referrals to these non-DCA entities will be undertaken consistent with existing processes.

Applicants will be asked to indicate upon submitting an application on the planning portal, as to whether they require a referral to an agency. Once the DCA and Council concurs on the number of referrals for the application, the DCA charges the applicant $1,100 for each unique referral or $550 per unique modification referral. This fee is separate to Council's DA fees and charges and is invoiced directly by the DCA to the applicant. This fee represents an increase from previous one-off referral fee of $426 charged by the Government.

For most building Development Applications in the LGA, referrals to a maximum of 1 or 2 agencies under the DCA is anticipated and would typically incur $1,100-$2,200 in referral fees. These referrals may be to agencies under the DCA such as the Rural Fire Service, Heritage, Biodiversity,

Transport for NSW, and the like. A coordinated referral report from the DCA to Council is anticipated to reduce the time Council Officers spend in communicating with separate Government agencies, however does not negate the need to still make referrals to non-DCA coordinated entities.

For State Significant Development (SSD), State Significant Infrastructure (SSI), State-led rezonings, and State-assessed rezoning proposals, the relevant DPHI team responsible for the development or plan will remain the primary point of contact.

Response advice to referral will be provided by the DCA within 28 days. This 28 days is not inclusive of the time required for Council to undertake the public exhibition, assessment and administration processes that are necessary to the application and determination.

A review and update to Council's Development Assessment Panel Policy will be undertaken upon the majority of the Government's planning reform being implemented, which has been advised to be late 2026.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Letter from Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

The Hon Paul Scully MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

NSW GOVERNMENT

Mr Vaughan Macdonald
Locked Bag 10
CASINO NSW 2470
council@richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Macdonald, Vaughan

On 1 July 2026, the Development Coordination Authority (DCA) will commence operating with its full statutory powers.

Establishing the DCA is one of the Minns Government's signature reforms to make the planning system faster and easier to navigate and was part of changes to the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* that passed through Parliament last November with near unanimous support.

The NSW Government is working to shift planning practices and change culture across the planning system. Changing the culture is fundamental to creating a system that is outcomes-focused, proportionate, and risk-based, and responsive to the needs of a growing and evolving NSW.

The NSW Government has a vital leadership role in modelling the behaviours we want others to adopt; however, real progress requires a collective effort, with everyone contributing to drive meaningful change.

What's changing

As you know, a development application (DA) currently can be referred to up to 22 different parts of the NSW Government for advice. If a DA needs to be referred to an agency, it takes about 50 days longer to get a decision. For every additional referral beyond the first, a DA takes 100 days longer to determine. Applicants not only face extensive delays but at times, conflicting and confusing advice.

From 1 July 2026, the DCA will be a one-stop shop for NSW Government inputs on planning matters.

It will bring together expertise from across agencies so conflicts can be resolved quickly and provide a single, coordinated response on behalf of the NSW Government in just 28 days, allowing projects to be assessed sooner.

A new statutory framework

We are also introducing a new statutory framework that consolidates more than 800 triggers for government and other expert input spread across 175 planning instruments into a single list clearly aligned with State priorities. We've removed inconsistent and outdated provisions and made triggers for input easier to access and understand.

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The new framework has been shaped by council feedback. It will safeguard important areas like the environment, heritage and bush fire management and prevent unnecessary referrals of DAs to the DCA.

The DCA's role

The establishment of the DCA responds to long-held frustration among councils about the complexity of referrals and the impact this has on council workloads and assessment timeframes.

From 1 July, councils will benefit from:

- A single point of contact for inputs from the NSW Government on local development.
- Greater certainty over the timeframe for response.
- Receiving clear, coordinated, and consolidated advice on behalf of all NSW Government agencies including concurrences and general terms of approval.
- Early help with getting referrals right.

Councils will continue to engage directly with Commonwealth authorities and utility providers where necessary.

These changes will remove administrative burden from councils, provide a simpler referral pathway and faster advice, positioning councils to start assessment of applications sooner.

The DCA will also work with developers, councils, and agencies to resolve post consent issues on large residential housing projects to accelerate the delivery of much-needed homes.

Resources to support you and your community

The DCA will be working closely with councils ahead of 1 July to make sure they are ready for the change and post 1 July, to drive continuous improvement of its service.

You can find out more about the DCA including simple one-page explainers and how to submit an enquiry at https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing/development-coordination-authority.

Should you have any questions, please contact Emma Kelly, Manager Front Door, Development Coordination Authority, on (02) 9228 2820 or emma.l.kelly@dphi.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Paul Scully MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

24/6/26

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GPO Box 5341 Sydney NSW 2001

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19.4 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 $6,595.38 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 January 2026 – 30 June 2026. The General Manager has exercised his delegation to write off monies over $1,000 on two (2) occasions during this period due to concealed water leak applications.

- Property 134450 $2,701.64 – this write off was due to a water leak which was identified due to excessive water consumption. The water account would have put the owner under significant financial hardship. An old outside toilet under the stairs that is not used had a failed inlet valve causing the water to run constantly as it was not shutting off to the cistern. The toilet has now been capped off.
- Property 129940 $3,893.74 - this write off was due to a concealed water leak which was identified due to excessive water consumption. The leak was situated underneath the common driveway near the entrance to the townhouse complex. The cause of the leak was a broken poly pipe under the concrete. The leak was repaired on 27 March 2026.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

19.5 GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION REPORT - JUNE 2026

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Rylee Vidler**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Grant Application Information Report for the month of June 2026.

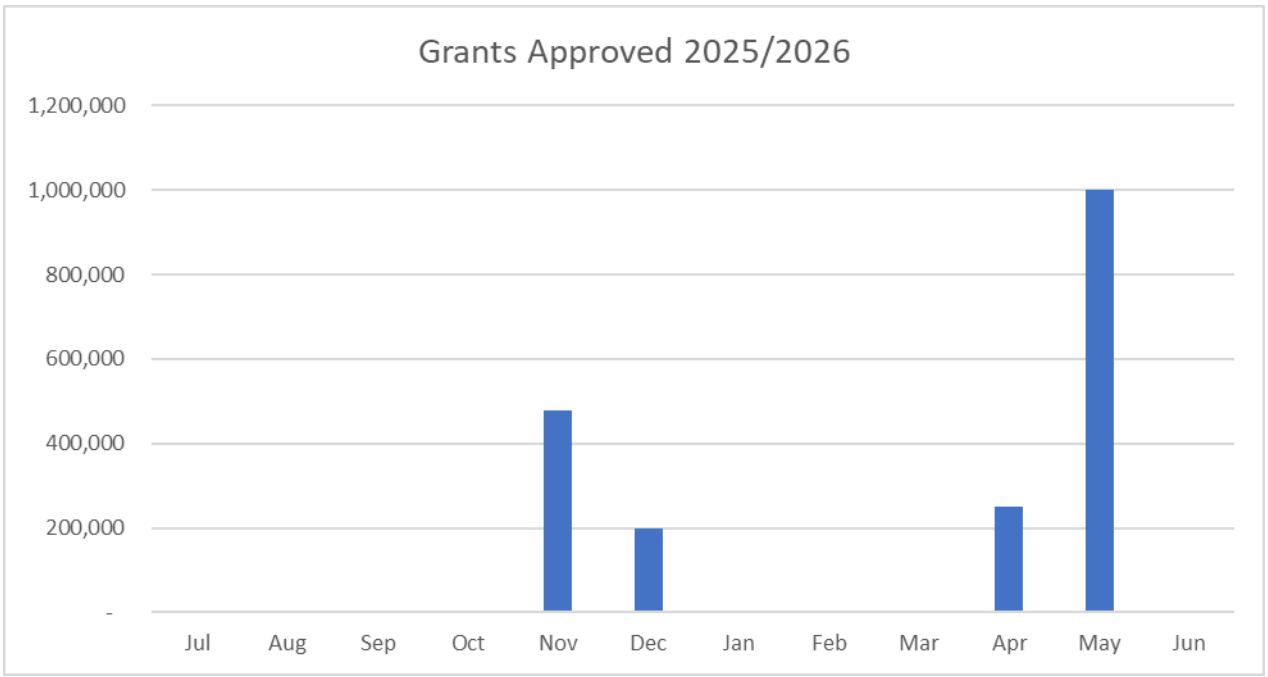
REPORT

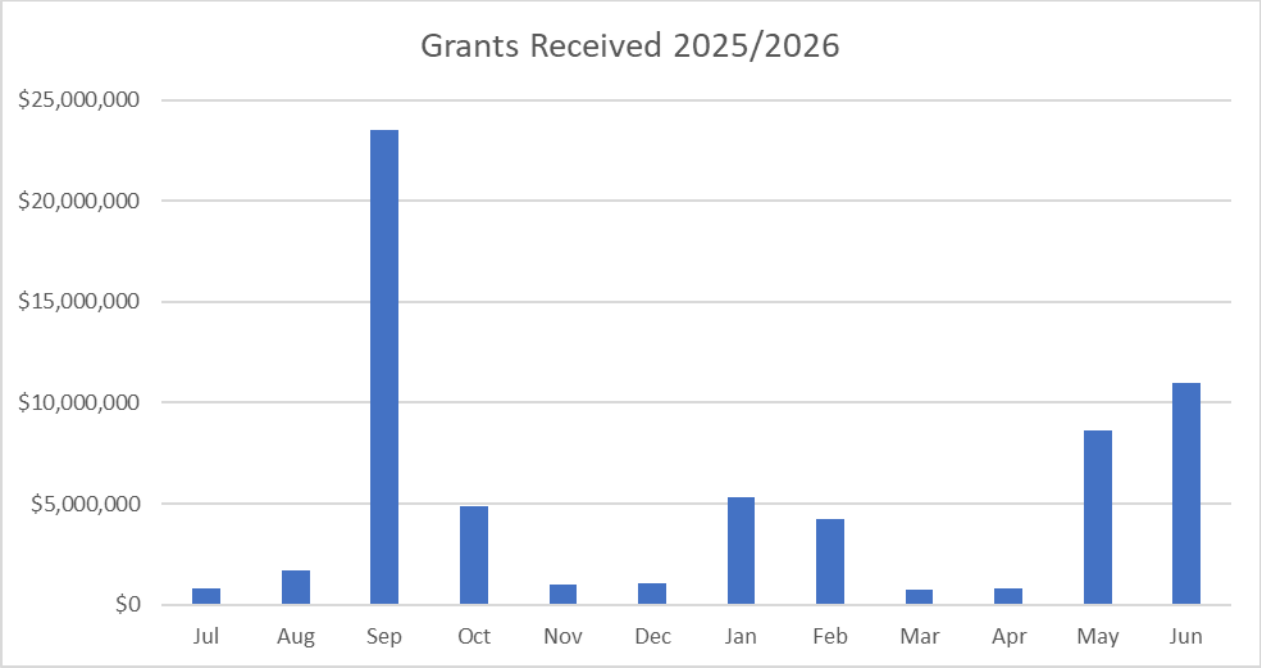
This report provides information on grant applications that have been approved, grants that have been received, grant applications that were unsuccessful and grant applications that were submitted for the month of June 2026.

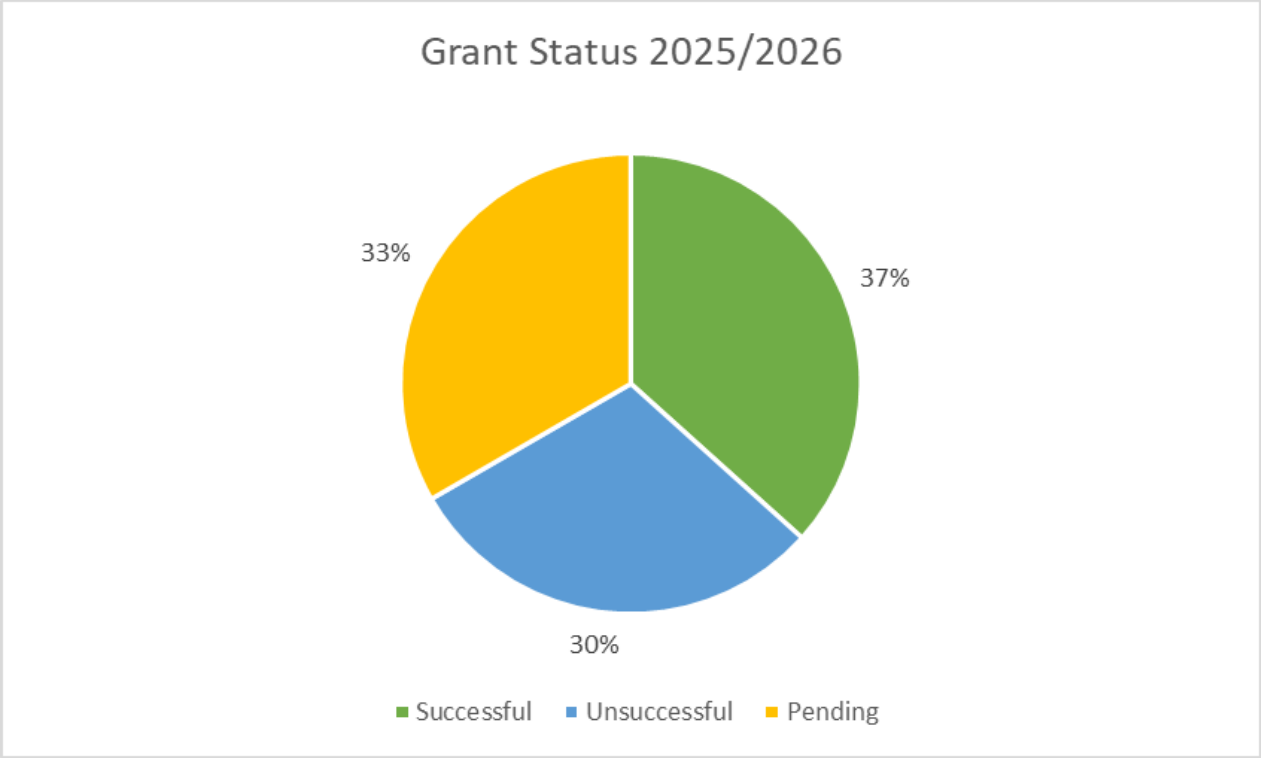
During the reporting period, Council was notified of one successful application and three unsuccessful applications. Council did not submit any new applications in June.

Council received $10,985,256 during June for approved grants.

A summary of grants approved and received, as well as the status of applications for the current financial year to 30 June 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
33%
37%
30%
Successful
Unsuccessful
Pending

Grants that have been approved

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Approved
Jabiru Wetland Continued Weed Maintenance	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (State)	Crown Reserves Improvement Fund	$ 5,940	$ 5,940	$ -	4 December 2025	23 June 2026
Comment: This funding will allow Council to continue to manage invasive weed species throughout Richmond Park in partnership with Rous County Council.							

Unsuccessful Grant Applications

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Advised Unsuccessful
Staff Professional Development - Procurement and Contracting	Local Government Procurement (Other)	LGP Capability Grant Fund 2026	$ 25,000	$ 25,000	$ -	15 May 2026	15 June 2026
Comment: Funding was oversubscribed.							
Richmond Park Masterplan	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (State)	Crown Reserves Improvement Fund	$ 100,000	$ 100,000	$ -	4 December 2025	23 June 2026
Comment: Funding was oversubscribed with applications totalling seven times the available funds.							
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	23 June 2026
Comment: Funding was oversubscribed with applications totalling seven times the available funds.							

Grants that have been received

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Received	Total Received
Broadwater Pedestrian Connection Project	Regional NSW (State)	Resilient Business Activation Program	$ 100,000	$ 70,000	$ 30,000	18 December 2024	$ 49,000 1 June 2026	$ 70,000
Comment: Final milestone payment received.								
Strategic Planning - Staged works (Stage 1)	Department of Climate Change, Energy, The Environment and Water (DCCEEW) (State)	Safe and Secure Water Program	$ 151,784	$ 75,892	$ 75,892	N/A	$ 42,500 4 June 2026	$ 75,892
Comment: Final payment received.								

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Received	Total Received
Richmond Valley Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (State)	Floodplain Management Program 2023-24	$ 200,000	$ 133,333	$ 66,667	17 April 2023	$ 74,213 15 June 2026	$ 100,000
Comment: Progress payment received.								
AGRN1198 - Immediate Reconstruction Works	NSW Reconstruction Authority (State)	Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)	$ 41,060	$ 30,795	$ 10,265	Various dates	$ 30,795 17 June 2026	$ 30,795
Comment: Funding received for Immediate Reconstruction Works completed post Cyclone Alfred Event.								
AGRN1198 - Essential Public Asset Reconstruction	NSW Reconstruction Authority (State)	Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)	$ 12,746,049	$12,746,049	$ -	Various dates	$ 3,583,236 17 June 2026	$ 3,583,236
Comment: Advance funding of 30% received to allow EPAR works to commence.								
Her Way: Connecting Casino CBD with Queen Elizabeth Park	Transport for NSW (State)	Safer Cities: Her Way 2	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ -	6 March 2026	$ 470,000 17 June 2026	$ 470,000
Comment: First milestone payment received.								
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	$ 250,000 18 June 2026	$ 250,000
Comment: Funding received upon executed funding deed.								
Queen Elizabeth Park Recreational Upgrade	NSW Office of Sport (State)	Multi-Sport Community Facility Fund	$ 1,643,749	$ 1,643,749	$ -	2 September 2022	$ 278,749 18 June 2026	$ 1,593,749
Comment: Progress payment for works completed at Queen Elizabeth Park.								

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Received	Total Received
Fixing our Sporting Grounds	Office of Sport (State)	Sports Priority Needs Program	$ 1,579,506	$ 1,579,506	$ -	23 September 2022	$ 7,951 18 June 2026	$ 1,579,506
Comment: Final payment received for completed work.								
AGRN1198 - Emergency Works	NSW Reconstruction Authority (State)	Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)	$ 785,825	$ 681,250	$ 104,575	Various dates	$ 27,000 19 June 2026	$ 93,222
Comment: Payment received for emergency works completed post Cyclone Alfred event.								
Financial Assistance Grant 2026/27	NSW Local Government Grants Commission (Federal)	Financial Assistance Grant	$ 7,556,421	$ 7,556,421	$ -	N/A - Annual Allocation	$ 6,045,137 22 June 2026	$ 6,045,137
Comment: Approximately 80% advance payment for 2026/27 FA Grant.								
Evans Head Sewage Treatment Project (Stage 2A Detailed Design)	Department of Climate Change, Energy, The Environment and Water (State)	Safe and Secure Water Program	$ 600,000	$ 300,000	$ 300,000	N/A	$ 90,000 22 June 2026	$ 180,000
Comment: Milestone payment received.								
Jabiru Wetland Continued Weed Maintenance	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (State)	Crown Reserves Improvement Fund	$ 5,940	$ 5,940	$ -	4 December 2025	$ 5,940 25 June 2026	$ 5,940
Comment: Funding received upon executed funding deed.								
Casino Water Treatment Works	Department of Planning and Environment (State)	Safe and Secure Water Program	$ 623,003	$ 311,502	$ 311,502	N/A	$ 30,735 29 June 2026	$ 129,971
Comment: Milestone payment received.								

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

19.6 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT FOR THE PERIOD 1 JUNE 2026 TO 30 JUNE 2026

Director: **Tina Kao**

Responsible Officer: **Andy Edwards**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Development Applications report for the period 1 June 2026 to 30 June 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 June 2026 to 30 June 2026 was twenty (20) with a total value of $2,582,115.00.

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

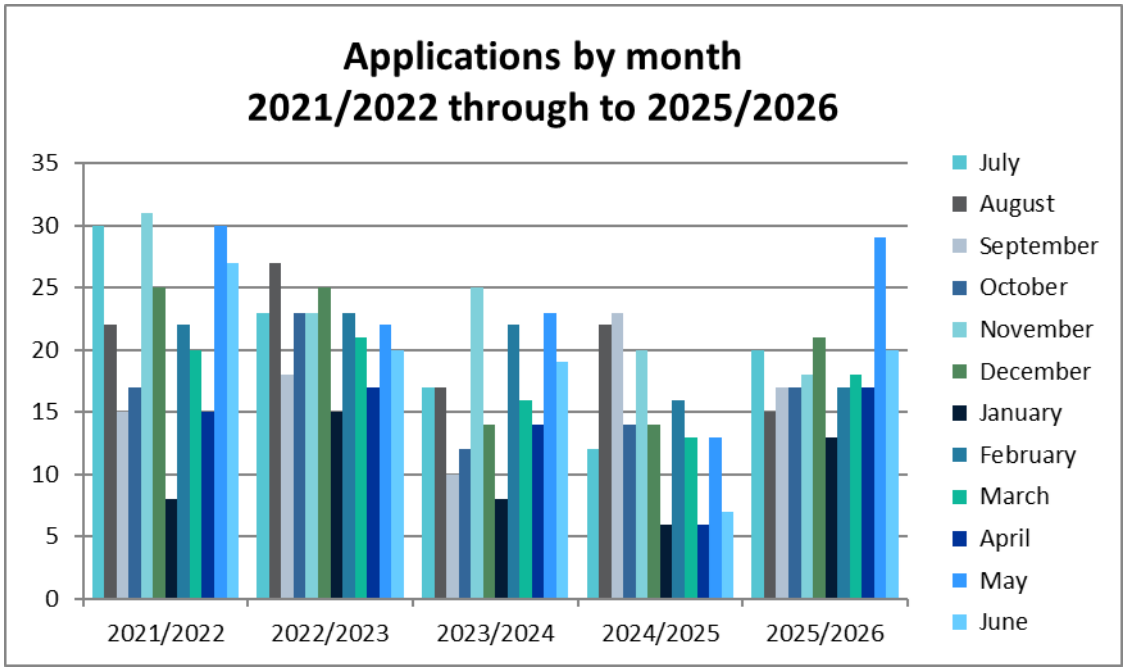


Figure 1: Monthly number of development applications and CDC's processed by Council over five financial years.

Figure 2 provides the annual value of Development Consents including CDCs issued by Council and private ceritifers over five financial years. Figure 3 provides a detailed review of the value for the reporting month of June 2026.

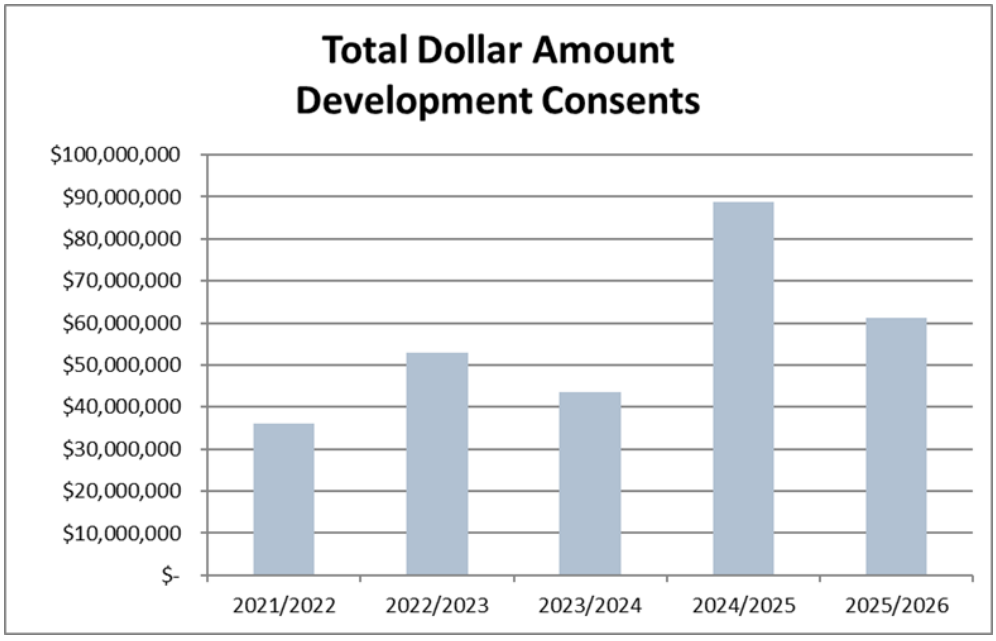


Figure 2: Annual value of development

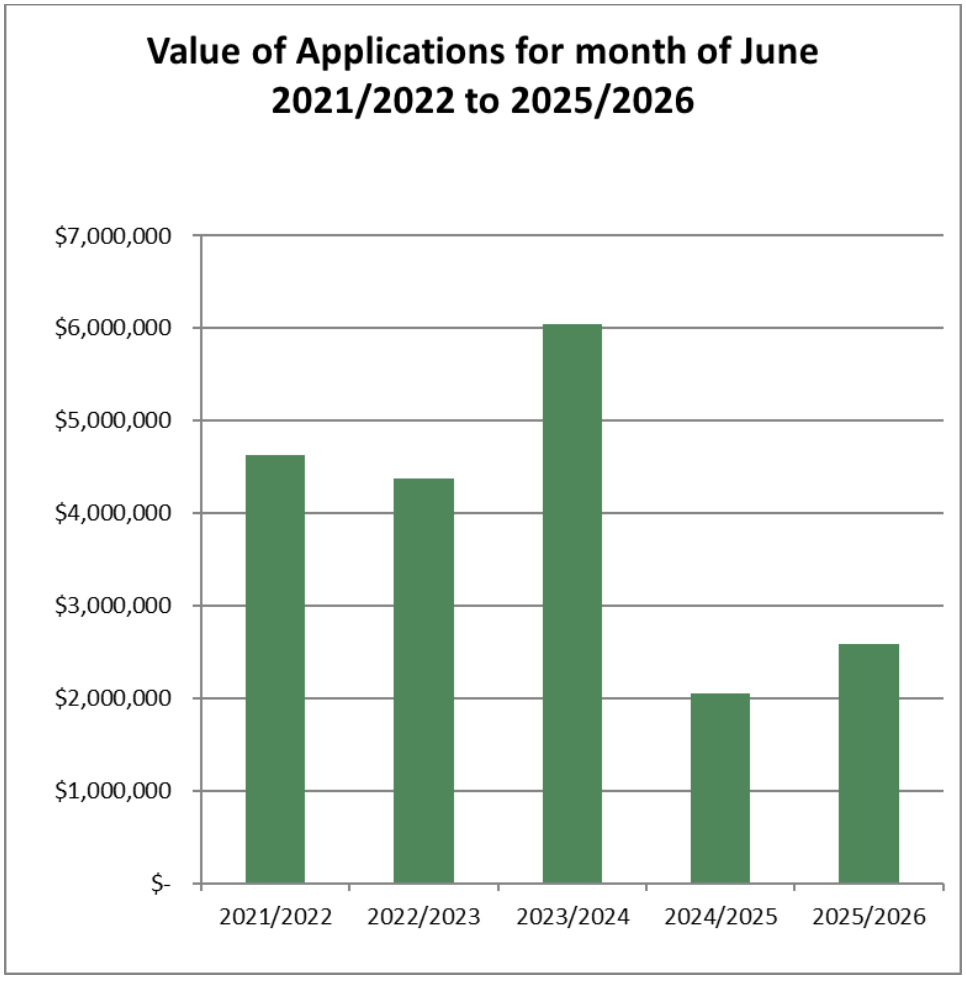


Figure 3: Value of development for the month of June from 2021/2022 to 2025/2026

2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
27	20	19	7	20

Table 1: Number of Applications for the month of June 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 4 and 5 detail the value and number of applications determined by Council over the past five years.

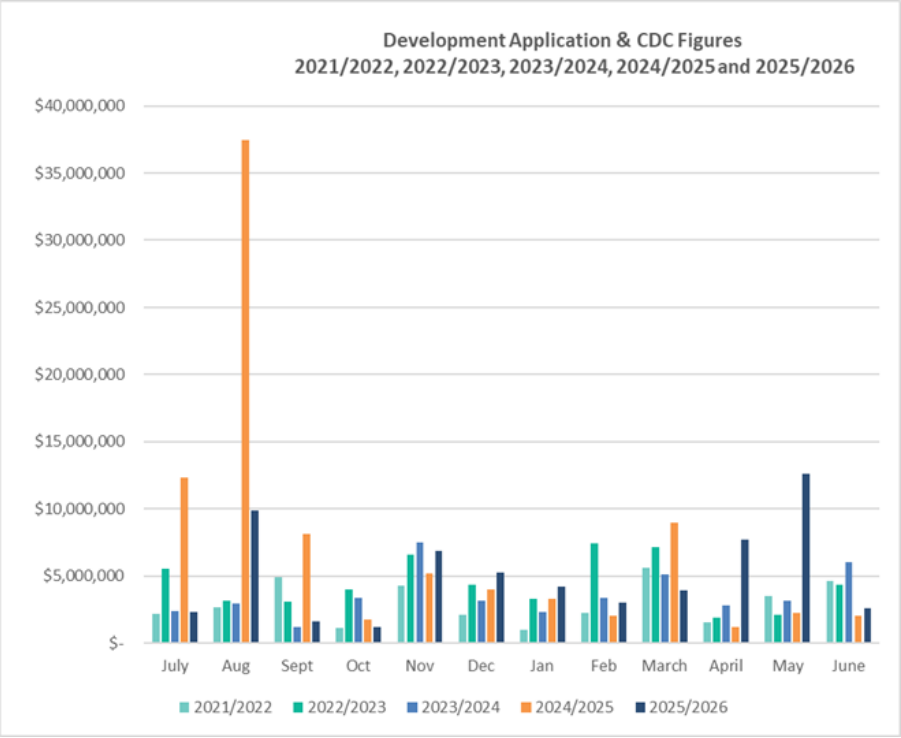


Figure 4: Value of development applications per month over five financial years.

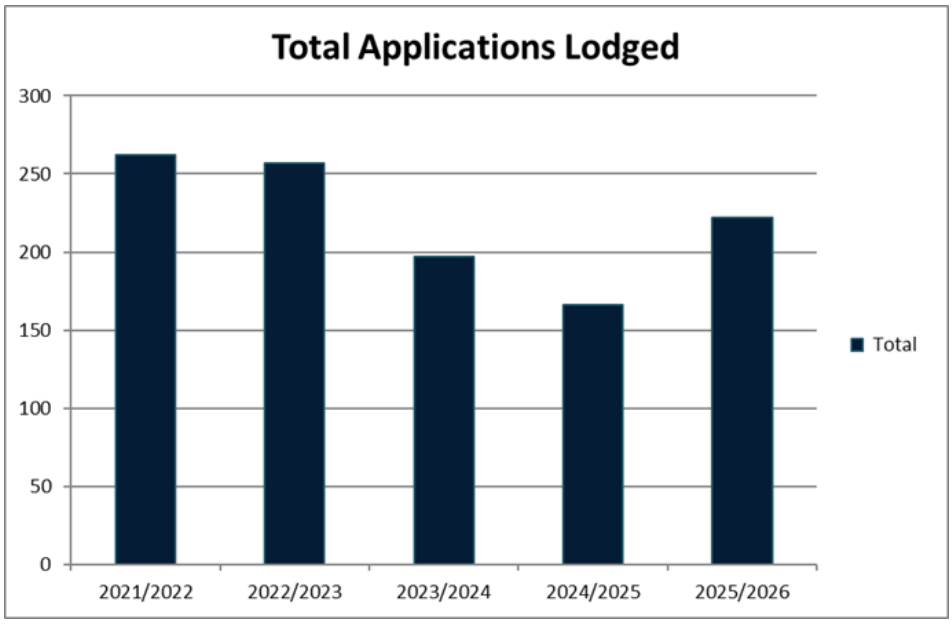


Figure 5: Number of Development Applications & CDCs per annum over five financial years

Activity for the month of June 2026

General Approvals (excluding Subdivisions, Section 4.55)	19
Section 4.55 amendments to original consent	1
Operational Consent	-
Deferred Consent	-
Subdivision	-
Refused	
Complying Development (Council Approved)	-
Complying Development (Private Certifier Approved)	-
Amended Complying Development (Private Certifier Approved)	-
TOTAL NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED	**20**
Rejected	**-**
Withdrawn	-
Surrendered	-
Average assessment days for applications determined in June 2026 (Planning & Building Combined)	**27**
No. of Integrated development applications determined in June 2026	**-**
No. of Designated development applications determined in June 2026	-

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 June 2026 to 30 June 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (In Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost $**
DA2026/0203	J S Barron	J S Barron	43 Terrace Street, Evans Head	Alts & adds to existing dwelling including the construction of new bedroom, garage, new verandahs, kitchen living area, laundry and associated works.	23/04/2026	5/05/2026	2/06/2026	153,230.00
DA2026/0206	MT Town Planning Pty Ltd	S C & M J Pearce	2/2 Ferrier Court, Casino	Construction of a dwelling forming part of a dual occupancy development.	24/04/2026	15/05/2026	16/06/2026	290,606.00
DA2026/0207	Ballina Pool Shop	J L & D J McLean	57 Banksia Street, Evans Head	Inground concrete swimming pool and associated fencing.	24/04/2026	11/05/2026	10/06/2026	64,800.00
DA2026/0209	B W Stock	T L & B W Stock	150 Dobies Bight Road, Dobies Bight	Addition of a flyover patio to existing house and concrete slab under patio area.	24/04/2026	7/05/2026	5/06/2026	70,000.00
DA2026/0216	Fernleigh Drafting & Council Services	L J & M L Collison	45 Farley Street, Casino	Demolition of existing shed and construction of a new detached steel frame shed including a variation to the DCP.	30/04/2026	19/05/2026	10/06/2026	24,255.00
DA2026/0220	Council Approval Group	M G Kelly-Gleeson	48 Pratt Street, Casino	As-built enclosure between two existing office/workshop spaces, with deck and carport. This DA includes a variation to the DCP.	5/05/2026	21/05/2026	18/06/2026	29,000.00

DA2026/0221	J E Rankin	J E Rankin	6 Diary Street, Casino	As built inground swimming pool and associated fencing.	5/05/2026	6/05/2026	4/06/2026	66,000.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 June 2026 to 30 June 2026 (Cont'd)

Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (In Portal)	Date Accepted (In Portal)	Determination Date	Estimated Cost $
MA2026/0030	D A Stringer	D A Stringer & S K Yandell	10 Tatham Ellangowan Road, Tatham	Section 4.55 (2) modification to approved Function/Event Centre to achieve compliance with access, fire separation, onsite facilities and associated works.	14/05/2026	4/06/2026	30/06/2026	150,000.00
DA2026/0231	C Crook	J L Pokarier	186 Walker Street, Casino	6.6m x 7m shed.	19/05/2026	28/05/2026	30/06/2026	35,150.00
DA2026/0234	R J Hayes	C Strong	66 Richmond Street, Woodburn	Construction of a new steel framed storage shed with mezzanine and associated works with request to vary DCP.	22/05/2026	27/05/2026	18/06/2026	48,994.00
DA2026/0238	T L Graham	T L & N P Graham	58 Stapleton Avenue, Casino	Alterations and additions to existing dwelling and associated works.	25/05/2026	3/06/2026	24/06/2026	85,150.00

DA2026/0239	R J Hayes	R J Hayes	4 Seamist Lane, Evans Head	Construction of an open carport forward of the building line and enclose part of existing garage to turn into a living room.	27/05/2026	29/05/2026	25/06/2026	19,910.00

Summary of Council Certified Complying Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 June 2026 to 30 June 2026

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

Summary of Flood Affected Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 June 2026 to 30 June 2026

Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (In Portal)	Date Accepted (In Portal)	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
DA2026/0214	PJ Planning & Development Services	L J & A E Darnell	10 Fischer Street, Broadwater	Raise existing dwelling and undertake alterations and additions with request to vary DCP.	29/04/2026	12/05/2026	4/06/2026	230,010.00
DA2026/0222	N Johnstone	J A Hill	107 Bridge Street, Coraki	Raise existing dwelling and addition to existing rear timber deck.	5/05/2026	19/05/2026	17/06/2026	100,000.00
DA2026/0229	R J Hayes	D J & A E Lickiss	625 Rileys Hill Road, Rileys Hill	Raising of existing dwelling and associated works.	14/05/2026	27/05/2026	11/06/2026	209,990.00
DA2026/0235	PJ Planning & Development Services	N T Boyce	63 Richmond Street, Woodburn	Raising of existing dwelling and associated works.	22/05/2026	9/06/2026	30/06/2026	199,650.00

Summary of Privately Certified Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 June 2026 to 30 June 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Submitted to Council for Registration**	**Date Accepted**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act with a Clause 4.6 Variation for the period 1 June 2026 to 30 June 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (in Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost**
DA2026/0173	R J Hayes	R A James	40 Richmond Street, Woodburn	Raise existing dwelling, including timber deck extension and associated works including a Clause 4.6 height variation to the RVLEP.	13/03/2026	18/03/2026	3/06/2026	159,170.00
DA2026/0215	PJ Planning & Development Services	K A Ponweiser	61 River Street, Woodburn	Raise existing dwelling including a Clause 4.6 request to vary the RVLEP 2012 Height allowance.	29/04/2026	12/05/2026	3/06/2026	196,900.00
DA2026/0226	Cambuild Australia Pty Ltd	K M Smith	23 Uralba Street, Woodburn	Raise the existing dwelling, construction of a new verandah and external stairs including a Clause 4.6 height variation to the RVLEP.	12/05/2026	27/05/2026	26/06/2026	270,000.00
DA2026/0228	Northern Rivers House Raising & Restumping Pty Ltd	P M Marchant	137 River Street, Woodburn	Raise existing dwelling above flood level including a Clause 4.6 height variation to the RVLEP.	14/05/2026	21/05/2026	18/06/2026	179,300.00

Summary of Development Applications Refused under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 June 2026 to 30 June 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 June 2026 to 30 June 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 June 2026 to 30 June 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (in Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Date Withdrawn**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

20 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Nil

21 QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING (IN WRITING)

22 MATTERS REFERRED TO CLOSED COUNCIL

Nil

23 RESOLUTIONS OF CLOSED COUNCIL