



2013/2014 ANNUAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The last financial year saw considerable changes in the Local Government landscape. This included a complete review of Local Government under the Sansom Report and proposed changes to the Local Government Act.

Council made submissions on both these matters and believes that the following Annual Report will support Council's position that Coolamon Shire Council is in a strong position to face the challenges of Local Government now and into the future.

We are now two years into a four year Council Election cycle which means that the current Integrated Planning and Reporting information is half way through its lifespan.

This means that Council will now need to ensure that we are on track to achieving what we as the Council and the Community set out to achieve.

It must be realised that the Strategic Plan encompasses a twenty year period, and a number of projects are put in train that are seen as having a long term payback. Furthermore, it is a twenty year program and accordingly all programs and their implementation do not have to commence in the first, second, third or even fourth year. With any long term plan, there must be flexibility in delivery to allow opportunities or threats to be realised as conditions change.

This Annual Report will detail the achievements that Council has made over the past financial year in endeavouring to work towards encompassing the goals that were established under the twenty year Community Strategic Plan.

The Delivery Plan was broken down into four key themes;

- 1) Sustaining our close-knit Shire communities.
- 2) Sustaining the environmental qualities of the Shire.
- 3) Sustaining our strong rural based economy.
- 4) Working together to achieve our Communities 2030 vision.

Extracted from within those themes were the desired outcomes and strategies for individual communities.

The Ardlethan Pool upgrade was continued through last financial year to ensure that the facility now has compliant pumping and filtration equipment. In addition, the installation of solar panels in order to reduce power costs was underway at the end of the reporting period

In addition to solar panels at the Ardlethan pool, Council undertook an assessment of its power usage which triggered the additional provision of solar energy at the Library and Coolamon Pool. This will see operational cost savings through the use of alternative power.

Council continues to undertake roles outside the normal practices of Local Government by running the Health Precinct that incorporates the Allawah Lodge Aged Persons Hostel and the Allawah Retirement Village.

In addition, Council also runs the Early Childhood Centre in Coolamon and supports the Preschools in Ardlethan, Coolamon and Ganmain.

Council's commitment to the young and aged of our communities has and will continue.

Last year saw Council complete a significant road restoration programme after the flooding that had occurred in 2012. Council would like to formally thank the Engineering and Work Staff for undertaking this work in addition to their normal maintenance and construction programmes.

At the end of this financial reporting period saw the retirement of long serving General Manager, Terrey Kiss. Terrey held this position for 30 years and has been an important factor in how Coolamon Shire Council has met the demands of Local Government by strengthening the local communities and the people they represent. Council would like to thank Terrey for the contribution he has made to the Coolamon Shire Community.

As the new General Manager, together with your Mayor, John Seymour we commend this report to you the residents of the Shire detailing the operation of Council over the last financial year.



John Seymour
MAYOR



Tony Donoghue
GENERAL MANAGER

GENERAL INFORMATION

Council Headquarters:

Physical Address:	Shire Hall, 55 Cowabbie Street, Coolamon, 2701
Postal Address:	PO Box 101, Coolamon, 2701
Telephone:	(02) 6930 1800
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Website:	www.coolamon.nsw.gov.au

Office Hours:

General Business	8.30am to 5.00pm
Cashier	8.30am to 4.30pm

Elected Members:

Mayor:	Clr. John Seymour	0427 275 144
Deputy Mayor:	Clr Bruce Hutcheon	0427 273 439
Councillors:	Clr Grant Beard	0458 782 190
	Clr Dennis Brill	0427 278 266
	Clr Bec Huxtable	0428 267 353
	Clr Kerrilee Logan	0427 276 377
	Clr Kathy Maslin	0427 783 810
	Clr Dave McCann	0427 273 044
	Clr Alan White	0428 698 204

Senior Staff:

General Manager:	Mr Tony Donoghue	0427 273 694
Executive Manager, Corporate & Community Services:	Mr Courtney Armstrong	0428 314 787
Executive Manager, Engineering & Technical Services:	Mr Tony Kelly	0428 266 104

Meetings:

Council conducts the majority of its business in an open forum, with the only exceptions being those matters pertaining to staff, litigation, and the private business of individuals where confidentiality has been requested. However, all such decisions are ratified in Open Council.

Ordinary Meetings of Council are held on the third Thursday of every month commencing at 2.00pm and generally conclude around 6.00pm. Ratepayers are welcome to attend.

Should there be any need to change the meeting date or call for a meeting due to special circumstances, then Council will comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act in this regard. This will include notification in the Council Newsletter where possible.

Agenda's are available at the office during business hours and in addition will be provided during the meeting. The Business Agenda for each meeting is prepared on the second Wednesday of each month, and any person wishing to bring a matter before Council should lodge it with the General Manager by that day.

Minutes of Council meetings are published in the week following the Council meeting and are available to the public at the Council Chambers or online on Council's website www.coolamon.nsw.gov.au

REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF DELIVERY PROGRAM & OPERATIONAL PLAN

Section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 requires that Council's prepare an annual report for that year reporting as to it's achievements in implementing its delivery program and the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives at which those principal activities are directed.

Council's performance during the 2013/2014 year with respect to the Delivery Program Actions are detailed below

THEME 1 SUSTAINING "OUR CLOSE-KNIT SHIRE COMMUNITIES"

Objective 1.1: A maintenance of community values with any growth in population.

1.1.1 Foster and build community partnerships and networks *Support local community organisations.*

Progress Report:

During the 2013/2014 year, Council actively supported local community organisations and Council's Section 355 Committees. Following the rationalisation of Council's Section 355 Committees in 2012/2013 the exchange of information between Council and the Communities has ensured that the activities undertaken met with Council's objectives and align with IP&R requirements.

Donations have continued to be made to all Schools throughout the Shire towards their prize giving evenings.

In order to support the many community organisations such as Halls, CWA's etc, rate relief has been provided to a number of organisations that acted on behalf of their communities.

Council continues to administer the Coolamon Shire Community Benefit Fund providing financial assistance to Shire residents in accordance with the rules and regulations of the fund.

Council provided support to the Ganmain Guardian, Ardlethan Kelpie Bark and Coolamon Lions Club in the production of their monthly newsletters.

Council has continued to administer the Raffle and Street Stall bookings on behalf of the communities of Coolamon and Ganmain.

1.1.2 Encourage volunteerism within all age groups for social support, recreational pursuits and community services and activities.

Volunteer base to be maintained and expanded.

Progress Report:

Council has continued to encourage volunteerism in its monthly newsletter and has been actively involved in providing training to its volunteers.

The Coolamon Lions Club continues to run a Recycling Programme for paper, cardboard and glass with Council subsidising the transportation of their recyclable materials to Wagga.

Council has been able to maintain its volunteer level to continue to provide Meals on Wheels and Community Transport together with Home Maintenance and Modification to various sectors of the community. A Christmas lunch was held for social support volunteers to thank them for their time and effort.

Council provides mowers to the Villages where volunteers undertake mowing on behalf of Council. These mowing volunteers are all appropriately accredited and undertake their work on behalf of the community.

Council participated in the REROC Take Charge & Volunteer program that aims to link community organisations with young people who wish to make a contribution to their community. This program will continue into the future with the hope of developing a new generation of community volunteers.

1.1.3 Develop and implement initiatives to welcome new residents and make them aware of the Shire's opportunities.

Provide information and resources to shire communities so that new residents can be welcomed and informed.

Progress Report:

Council has continued to review and update its Residents Guide and Information Booklet for distribution to new residents. Further work is continuing on updating tourist maps of the towns and villages of the Shire.

Council continued to maintain two websites during the 2013/2014 financial year with dedicated sections for Residents, Businesses and Visitors.

A link from the Coolamon Shire Council website has been provided that directs users to a specific site focusing on business and tourist opportunities in our Shire.

Council has continued to advertise the Allawah Retirement Village and the Coolamon Early Childhood Centre on the internet and Council's newsletter over the past twelve months encouraging people to consider this as an alternate place to reside.

Objective 1.2: A high standard of services, facilities and infrastructure for all age groups.

1.2.1 Provide access to facilities, services and information to support families, youth and seniors including the provision of child care facilities and respite services.

To provide childcare services that meets the needs of the Community.

To provide a full range of Community Services to the frail, aged and disabled persons within the community within the constraints of Grants provided by State and Federal Governments.

To promote services and access to services for people with diverse cultural, socially isolated and linguistic backgrounds where a need has been identified.

To ensure that the needs of young people in the Coolamon Shire are identified and met within financial constraints.

That Council continue to provide accommodation for those persons with particular needs which will ensure that they continue to reside within those communities.

To assist frail aged and disabled persons to continue to reside with dignity in their local Communities.

Progress Report:

The Ardlethan Preschool together with the Coolamon Early Childhood Centre continued to meet all departmental licensing requirements that are required by the State and Federal Governments.

The Coolamon and Ganmain Pre Schools are housed in premises which are owned by Council with established lease arrangements between the committees and Council.

The provision of services to the frail aged and disabled persons within the community continues to be part of Council's operational area through its administration of the Community Transport scheme and the services of the Allawah Community Care including the provision of monthly community meals, the delivery of meals on wheels and the Home Maintenance and Modification Program.

Council also continues to administer the Home Care Package program (previously known as Community Aged Care Package) which provides meals and home assistance to residents within the Shire to enable them to reside within their own homes with dignity and extend their length of time of residing within their local communities.

Council's Youth and Development Community Officer continued to implement successful holiday programme throughout the year, together with the implementation of special projects for which specific grant funding has been sourced.

Council continues to provide accommodation for the aged with its 33 bed Aged Person Hostel and 24 Unit Retirement Village. In addition to the Retirement Village and Allawah Lodge Aged Persons Hostel, Council also provides self contained units in Coolamon, Ganmain and Ardlethan. In total Council have 22 of these units throughout the towns of the Shire which continue to provide suitable accommodation for aged residents within their local communities. All of the accommodation above is meeting the needs of the community with the ongoing maintenance of the various buildings and gardens being part of Council's operational aspect in relation to the provision of these services. Following the construction of two Retirement Village units in Ganmain and the occupancy rate, Council will be undertaking a survey of Ganmain residents to assess the needs and wants of the community in relation to aged accommodation options.

Under the Community Housing Programme, Council continued to provide accommodation to three families that are suitable for their needs. Following consultation with NSW Housing, the majority share holder in the houses, it has been decided that these properties will be sold.

1.2.2 Provide protection from crime, fire, anti-social activities and other threats to community safety.

To provide professional, effective and cost efficient responses to all emergency incidents within the Shire in accordance with Service Level Agreement between Council and RFS.

To provide efficient and effective measures for the prevention and mitigation of fire impact on the local Community through effective planning initiatives, fuel management strategies, fire trail maintenance, and the continual assessment of bushfire risk across the District.

To provide support to the Local State Emergency Services Group and ensuring they are capable of responding in an adequate manner to all emergency situations.

To minimise and control the public nuisance effect of straying stock and animals.

To develop and implement projects that address local road safety issues.

Lobby for adequate local police working presence.

The preservation and enhancement of public health by regulating and inspecting all premises and vehicles used for the preparation, storage, delivery and sale of food and refreshments.

Address social standards and values in particular growing issues of alcohol abuse and vandalism

Provide support for NSW Fire Brigades

Progress Report:

Council has continued its program of roadside spraying in order to minimise the risk of bush fire hazards.

Council continued to support emergency services through the payment of levies to support the State Emergency Service, Fire & Rescue NSW and the NSW Rural Fire Service. Council continued to provide premises for the local State Emergency Services and NSW Rural Fire Service and contribute to the State Emergency Service through a levy. A new fire station for FRNSW was completed on the same land designated for emergency services.

Straying stock and animals have been minimal throughout this reporting period, with Council's ranger having taken the necessary action to ensure the risk is minimised within Council's service standard when reports were received.

Council continues to ensure that the Companion Animals Act is followed in regard to registration and take any necessary action in relation to noise complaints and dangerous dogs.

Council has continued to be represented at meetings with the NSW Police Force and the lines of communication between local police and Council have been retained. Council continues to make representations to have an increased permanent and operating policing presence in the rural areas of the Shire.

Annual Food Shop Inspections have been carried out with the follow-up procedures being enforced.

Council has continued its lobbying with the relevant bodies and members of parliament in relation to the establishment of an Ambulance Service in the township of Coolamon. Council's efforts continue to recognise the importance of the Ambulance Service that already services Ardlethan and surrounds.

The Coolamon Shire Community Drug Action Team was formed during the reporting period with objectives dealing with drug and alcohol issues affecting the community.

1.2.3 Provide and maintain safe and serviceable public facilities and infrastructure including roads, footpaths, and stormwater drains.

To ensure that all land and buildings owned and controlled by Council are maintained in an appropriate manner and utilised for their designated and appropriate community purpose.

Ensure that all aspects of Council's Cemetery operations are carried out in an appropriate and dignified manner with due respect and accuracy.

To continue to maintain the existing public conveniences in a clean and tidy manner.

To provide an overall system of management that allows Community Committees to control their own Halls in accordance with their needs and requirements.

To ensure all urban roads within all communities are sealed or where unsealed are maintained via a system of programmed management.

To ensure that a quality sealed rural road system is in existence throughout the Shire.

To provide a quality unsealed rural road network throughout the Shire.

The provision and maintenance of a safe and adequate footpath system in close proximity to the commercial areas and public facilities of all communities.

To provision and maintenance of a suitable stormwater system inclusive of an adequate kerb and gutter network.

The provision of an adequate system of Street Lighting to all developed commercial and residential areas of the towns and villages.

Progress Report:

The ongoing inspection and maintenance of Council's land and buildings continued throughout the year with a report being presented as part of Council's budgetary purposes highlighting the main areas of required maintenance for the various buildings owned and controlled by Council. Council integration of its safety inspection with the annual building inspection ensures that identified risks can be managed and placed into work schedules.

The maintenance of buildings has been carried out subject to financial constraints. The annual fire inspections on Council's designated buildings were completed with the appropriate report and certification being provided.

Council finalised rectification works relating to flood damage sustained in 2012, funded through grants from the State Government.

Council's maintenance staff continued the program of maintenance at the various cemeteries and all burials and plaque requests were completed within the designated time frames.

Council's existing public conveniences were cleaned in accordance with the cleaning schedule as agreed to with Council contractors. Public conveniences located in Lions Park, Coolamon, continue to be closed to the public after daylight hours.

Council continued its support of the local community hall committees in their operations of control and maintenance of their halls.

The maintenance of Council's sealed and un-sealed roads continued over the past twelve months.

Road inspections continue to be carried out on a regular basis. This together with Council's road hierarchical plan which has been considered by Council during this reporting period provides Council with direction for the maintenance upkeep of its road infrastructure.

The main street improvements on York Street, Marrar were completed during this reporting period.

Council continues to liaise with Essential Energy to ensure that the street lighting system is adequately maintained throughout the villages and towns of the Shire.

Council has developed a relationship with the Junee Correctional Centre that has seen participants involved in the maintenance of Council's assets including the Marrar Cemetery.

1.2.4 Provide and maintain efficient sewerage systems that allow for required expansion.

To provide, maintain and operate a sewage disposal system and treatment works that meets the needs of the Coolamon and Ganmain Communities and to continue monitoring the developing areas in respect of the need for sewerage extensions.

Progress Report:

Council has continued to meet all of its licensing requirements in relation to the Coolamon and Ganmain sewerage systems.

An evaporation pond was constructed at the Ganamin STW to replace the operation of the pivot irrigation system.

Council in conjunction with consultants, completed its Strategic Business Plan with relation to its Sewerage operations.

1.2.5 Investigate implementation of new cost effective sewerage systems where required by environmental pressures and/or by community desire.

To continue to investigate the most appropriate means of constructing and financing a sewerage scheme in the township of Ardlethan.

Progress Report:

Council has not been successful in receiving funding from either the Federal or State Governments with respect to the construction of a sewerage scheme for Ardlethan. The situation in relation to construction of a Sewerage Scheme in Ardlethan will continue to be monitored with applications made to various funding opportunities when they become available.

1.2.6 Investigate provision of improved, more integrated public and community transport within the Shire.

Support the provision of improved public transport within the Shire.

Progress Report:

The majority of public transport is administered and controlled by State Government Agencies. The tyranny of distance and cost means limited access to the communities of the Coolamon Shire. Council will continue to lobby State Government to gain greater access in rural areas.

Council has attempted to encourage people to use the community bus through the Community Transport Organisation. To date its attempts in this area have met with limited success. Council continues to run the Community Transport Programme.

1.2.7 Support appropriate healthcare providers within the Shire and greater region.

Support the provision of adequate health services to the whole Shire.

Progress Report:

Council continued to provide professional accommodation in Coolamon and Ganmain for the local Medical Practitioner together with accommodation for other health related practitioners.

Council in conjunction with Murrumbidgee Medicare Local set up a Healthy Project Officer for the Coolamon Shire with Council helping in the accommodation of the Officer at the Allawah Community Centre and being involved in the advisory committee.

1.2.8 Improve physical access to shops and other buildings for the elderly and disabled.

Support local businesses with improvements to the access to their premises.

Progress Report:

Council provides appropriate advice to businesses on access requirements to their premises when so requested.

Council continues to work through access issues identified in the PAMPS Study that has ongoing works completed.

1.2.9 Develop and implement an education strategy.

Ensure the maintenance and enhancement of existing educational facilities within the Shire.

Progress Report:

Residents of the Shire have secondary education to Higher School Certificate level in Ardlethan and Coolamon and there is easy access to the Wagga Campus of TAFE and Charles Sturt University via Council's Road Network. No action has been taken by Council to contact education providers with regards to the development and/or implementation of an education strategy.

Council once again participated in the REROC "Build a Bridge Camp" that encourages senior secondary students to consider a career in civil engineering. Engineers from participating Councils, together with Road and Maritime Services and IPWEA mentor the students over the three day camp.

1.2.10 Extend improved access to telecommunication and broadband services.

Support the provision of equitable telecommunication and broadband services for all residents of the Shire.

Progress Report:

Council has continued to pursue opportunities for increasing the mobile coverage for all areas within the Shire.

Council continued to be in negotiation with the National Broadband Network (NBN) as part of their roll out across the nation. Several towers have been built within the Shire to increase access to the Network, as well as the location of infrastructure on the existing tower in Coolamon owned by Council.

1.2.11 Continue to explore opportunities to provide a reliable water supply for our sporting fields.

Provide effluent reuse water to the benefit of sporting organisations.

Progress Report:

Recycled water being delivered to users when required.

Potable water supplies to the Towns and Villages of the Shire are provided by Goldenfields Water County Council that implements the necessary upgrades to ensure a reliable and constant supply of water.

Numerous water saving programmes have been put in place to reduce the reliance on potable water including the use of recycled water on a number of Council parks, gardens and reserves.

Objective 1.3: A lifestyle with diverse entertainment, recreation and cultural opportunities.

1.3.1 Create opportunities to participate in active and healthy recreational activities.

Support sporting organisations with the retention of their assets.

Progress Report:

Council continued to manage a number of facilities as trustee including showgrounds, community reserves and walking tracks.

The filtration upgrade at the Ardlethan Swimming Pool was completed during the reporting period with the upgrade identified for Ganmain to be considered in the development of future budgets.

Council Staff have continued to monitor the use of the Coolamon Skate Park.

The use of recycled water on the sporting fields of Kindra Park, the Coolamon Touch fields and the Coolamon Golf Course is continuing, allowing residents to participate in the various sporting activities, with extension to the scheme to various parks, gardens and reserves within the township of Coolamon.

1.3.2 Provide innovative and enhanced library services that encourage lifelong learning.

To continue to provide a Mobile Library Service, in order to satisfy the information, cultural, educational and recreational needs of residents.

Continued operation of static library in Coolamon.

Progress Report:

The Riverina Regional Library's Mobile Library continues to service towns and villages within the Shire whilst the static library provided in Coolamon has helped increase membership and usage levels.

Council has received no complaints about the operations of either its mobile library or static library services. The statistics associated with the Coolamon Static Library have continued to grow and are considered excellent usage rates per head of capita when compared to the rest of the Regional Static Libraries.

Council has also sponsored the broadband for Seniors Programme in order to teach seniors how to use computers and the Internet service.

School Holiday Programmes together with fortnightly Story Time sessions are also held at the Library for the respective School age students.

1.3.3 Support and promote arts, artists and cultural development within the local community.

Implement initiatives that will develop and maintain a vibrant and creative community, involved in cultural activities

Provide appropriate guidance for community organisations in identifying funding sources for cultural events.

Council acknowledge Aboriginal culture

Progress Report:

The Up-to-Date Cultural Centre has been used for art exhibitions, antique auctions and continues to be utilised for library operations.

Council continues to sponsor the Up-2-Date Art Exhibition with awarding of the "Coolamon Shire Council Acquisition Prize". This is awarded to eligible local Artists who reside in the Coolamon Shire Council Local Government Area. Council also supports the Coolamon Shire Photographic Competition – "Capture Coolamon".

Letters of support have been provided to community organisations when seeking grant funding.

Displays of aboriginal culture are implemented when materials are provided, during the reporting period no materials or displays have been held.

Council continued it's membership of the Eastern Riverina Arts Programme, with Council's Community Development Officer establishing a working relationship with the organisation.

1.3.4 Provide attractive, accessible and safe parks, recreational and other public places.

To provide a safe and secure swimming pool facility in the towns of Ardlethan, Coolamon and Ganmain.

To provide parks and gardens that are aesthetically attractive and are available for passive recreational pursuits.

To implement an Urban Tree Management Plan and Tree Removal Programme that is both aesthetically attractive and ensures that Council's civil infrastructure is not damaged by such plantings. Furthermore, that the assets of Essential Energy are given consideration during the implementation of the programme.

Progress Report:

Throughout the swimming season all pools operated satisfactorily with water standards being adhered to.

The replacement of the filtration plant and equipment at the Ardlethan Pool was successfully completed during the reporting period.

Training has been provided to the pool licensees.

Council has received no complaints about the standard of its parks and gardens.

Inspections have been carried out on the playground equipment.

Staff have continued with tree planting throughout the urban areas of the Shire. Incorporated in with this tree planting has been a tree lopping/maintenance program.

1.3.5 Preserve and promote local history and heritage.

To enhance & promote local cultural heritage within the Shire to create benefit for the community

Progress Report:

Funding has continued for the employment of a heritage consultant to act as Council's Advisor.

The local heritage program allocations have been made.

Council continues to check funding opportunities to ensure that the local history and heritage can be promoted and preserved in the most appropriate manner.

1.3.6 Encourage activities that promote community spirit.

*To promote the celebration & awareness of Australia Day
Support local community activities*

Progress Report:

The Coolamon Community hosted the 2014 Australia Day Celebrations with film maker, author and one of the leading international experts on Indian Entertainment Sector, Anupam Sharma participating as ambassador.

The “Coolamon New Year Eve Party” was again successfully held.

The community has access to Council venues for arranged community activities.

1.3.7 Provide appropriate guidance for sports clubs in writing grant applications

Provide appropriate guidance for sports clubs in identifying funding sources.

Progress Report:

Letters of support have been provided to sporting clubs when seeking grant funding.

Council provides support to the running of Grant Writing Programmes.

1.3.8 Encourage cycling and walking, through developing tracks and paths

Establish “need-based” tracks and paths within the Shire

Progress Report:

Council has adopted the PAMPS and Cycleways program in conjunction with Roads and Maritime Services, with ongoing works undertaken as prioritized by Council. Council acknowledged the need for the existing plans to be reviewed with consultants engaged to undertake this process at the end of the reporting period.

1.3.9 Identify an appropriate annual or periodic event that could attract visitors to the Shire and encourage community leaders to plan and deliver the event.

Support local communities with endeavours to hold events that attract visitors.

Progress Report:

Council continued to support annual events held within the shire with promotional assistance provided by Tilma Management as part of their engagement as Council’s Business & Tourism Managers. Council continued to sponsor the Shire’s Australia Day Celebrations.

THEME 2 SUSTAINING THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITIES OF THE SHIRE

Objective 2.1: Adaptation to climate variability.

2.1.1 Monitor and strategically manage environmental risks and impacts of climate variability.
Adapt to climate variability through development of a climate variability strategy

Progress Report:

Council has previously completed a Climate Change Strategy in conjunction with Statewide Mutual and considers these outcomes in its strategic planning.

2.1.2 Develop community leadership on becoming leaders in resource use, reuse and recycling.
Develop leadership on becoming energy efficient including carbon capture, water recycling and solar efficiency
Secure sustainable, affordable supplies of water and use our water even more wisely.
Encourage efficient water usage by Shire communities.
Encourage solar energy usage by Shire communities.

Progress Report:

Solar energy panels were installed at the Ardlethan and Coolamon Swimming Pools. Together with the other sites at which Council has previously installed panels, the onsite production of electricity helps to offset Council's use of grid power. Investigations continue to determine the use of panels at other Council sites.

Effluent re-use water continued to be distributed to sporting organizations and parks, gardens and reserves in the township of Coolamon. This distribution is after adequate and appropriate dosing of the water to meet Public Health guidelines.

Council has power saving kits available at the Coolamon Library to enable residents to identify potential energy savings within their homes, thus helping the environment.

Council continued to source funding to further enhance its domestic waste management services. Council continued to investigate the implementation of Organics Recycling Collation for Ganmain.

Council undertook an energy efficiency audit on a number of Council premises that resulted in the identification of number of saving opportunities. Council staff will continue to source energy saving technologies and make changes to energy use practices.

Council also attended the RERO "Off the Grid Conference" where presentations were made to local government, business, community organisations and industry organisations on the significant changes to the energy market over the past decade and how to choose an energy provider and alternative energy sources. In addition to the Council participated in two group tenders for the supply of electricity for small and large sites. The tender process will be completed in the ensuing financial year.

Objective 2.2: Our rich heritage and natural environment character conserved.

2.2.1 Protect natural landscapes and systems in particular our native vegetation, biodiversity and Murrumbidgee River catchment through sharing regional responsibilities.

To protect the local environment or assist in maximising productivity of prime agricultural land by the removal of infestation of noxious plants.

To ensure all septic tanks throughout the Shire are operating in accordance with the minimum requirements of the Local Government Regulations, Public Health guidelines and industry standards.

To develop an environment that is sustainable for future generations in terms of visual attractiveness and pollution free.

To operate the quarrying service to Council's programmes in an environmentally sensitive manner.

To ensure the protection of natural vegetation on Council controlled land.

Progress Report:

Council continues to maintain the service agreement in conjunction with the Temora and Junee Shire for the control of noxious weeds.

The ongoing spraying of noxious weeds has been carried out on the various areas identified with infestations.

There has been no environmental damage reported from construction sites in the area.

Council continues to maintain its appropriate licenses for its mining operations.

Council has in place two voluntary conservation agreements for the preservation of native vegetation. Council continues to comply with these agreements.

Council continues to monitor the tree corridors that were planted in conjunction with the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority.

2.2.2 Encourage and ensure high quality planning and urban design outcomes.

To provide a Planning Instrument that ensures all land within the Shire is developed in an appropriate manner and reflects the rural nature of the communities.

Ensure that all building activity within the Coolamon Shire meets the requirements of the EP&A Act and the Local Government Act 1993.

Progress Report:

The ongoing preparation of a comprehensive Development Control Plan to supplement the new Local Environmental Plan continues.

Council has received no complaints in relation to building activity carried out within the area.

Inspections are carried out and the assessment and approval time is meeting expectations.

2.2.3 Protect local heritage and residential amenity, including protection of significant architecture, Indigenous heritage and the natural environment.

Identify, protect, enhance and celebrate all significant Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage sites

Maintain our heritage through ensuring that development and restoration of shops and buildings is compatible with the heritage value of the surrounding area(s)

Progress Report:

Council continues to allocate funding under the local heritage program for restoration and improvements to heritage assets in the towns and villages of the Shire.

Part of the assessment process of all Development Applications within identified areas of heritage significance ensures compliance with any heritage issues.

Grant funding has been received for the continued employment of a Heritage Advisor.

2.2.4 Reduce our waste to landfill through effective waste management & recycling.

The effective collection of all household garbage from within the defined scavenging areas in a regular and clean manner.

Minimise landfill disposal methods whilst still maintaining effective garbage depots within the Shire that are safe, environmentally friendly and effectively managed.

Progress Report:

Council continues to collect household garbage from within all defined areas of the towns and villages of the Shire. No complaints of a substantial nature in respect of this service have been received.

Licensing conditions are being complied with at Council's landfill sites. Recycling at the landfill sites has been extended with waste being deposited in the designated areas. Landfill sites are manned when operating.

Council is continuing to investigate the implementation of Organics Recycling Collection for the town of Ganmain.

Council is a member of the REROC Waste Forum and Council's General Manager, Tony Donoghue is chairman. The group formed in 1997 and has expanded from dealing solely with waste management to encompass a wide variety of environmental issues. The forum aims to undertake projects to improve community awareness and behaviour and undertake projects to identify and implement solutions in resource and infrastructure management. Council has continued its involvement in the Metal Waste Collections, Used Oil Collections, Organics Recycling following a cluster trial, E-waste collections, Household Hazardous Waste, Woodsmoke. During the reporting period the forum published a Regional Waste Management & Resource Recovery Strategy 2014-2021 which included an individual audit undertaken on the waste management activities within the Coolamon Shire local government area.

THEME 3 SUSTAINING OUR STRONG RURAL BASED ECONOMY

Objective 3.1: A sustainable economy amid a changing regional, national and global environment.

3.1.1 Promote and support existing and new business investment within the Shire to take advantage of the Shire's access to Wagga Wagga, the Bomen Industrial Estate, Junee, and Temora.

Council support the promotion of businesses within the Shire.

Provide high quality infrastructure to support the investment by businesses within the Shire

Encourage the development or relocation of employment generating industries within the Shire.

Progress Report:

The preparation of a comprehensive Development Control Plan is ongoing.

Infrastructure is in place to service the establishment of business within the Shire. No complaints have been received about the adequacy of Council's infrastructure.

Council has a land bank available for development of subdivisions to encourage people to relocate to the area.

Engagement Tilma Management as Council's Tourism and Business Development Manager has seen the ongoing maintenance of a dedicated Tourism and Business website.

3.1.2 Foster and build partnerships with tertiary institutions (TAFE and CSU) to increase access to knowledge and skills within the Shire and the region to benefit shire businesses.

To advertise training available throughout the Shire.

Progress Report:

Training brochures are available at Shire offices and training opportunities are advised in the monthly Newsletter where appropriate.

Council makes available facilities to training providers when requested.

Council engaged a number of university students to undertake practical work experience during their vacation periods and continues to look for opportunities to engage trainees in the various facets of Council's operations.

3.1.3 Develop and implement initiatives to promote the local and regional economy.

Refer Strategy 3.1.1

Progress Report:

As a member of REROC, Council staff lead the development of the REROC Regional Freight Transport Plan with an overriding goal being the implementation of integrated transport solutions for the Region for both the rail and road transport networks. The Plan identifies constraints on the freight transport networks with weighted factors used to assess the overall impact of the constraint. The measures required to alleviate the constraints were then identified and costed. The participating

Council's will then use the plan to lobby the state and federal governments for funding on a regional basis.

Council continued to support Riverina Regional Tourism and participate in their advertising and promotional programs.

3.1.4 Focus development within the Shire to avoid unnecessary duplication of public services and facilities.

*Emphasis the importance of consolidating Council's resources to defined focal points
To provide fully serviced residential land at a reasonable purchase price from Council's land bank.*

Progress Report:

Council continues to focus on maintaining Coolamon as the Shire headquarters and Ardlethan as the northern entry point to the Shire. Council's long-term strategy is to provide residential subdivisions on the northern side of Coolamon Township, with plans underway to commence construction work in 2014/2015.

Council has continued to work on preparations of a master plan for the expansion of the township of Coolamon on the northern side of the township.

Objective 3.2: Increased awareness within prospective businesses, tourists and residents of the appeal of the Coolamon Shire.

3.2.1 Develop a Coolamon Shire image focusing on the unique identity of the Shire and its towns and villages.

*Promote the Coolamon Shire as a place to work and live.
Proactively communicate the community and council's achievements and events to the wider community*

Progress Report:

Council continues to advertise the benefits of the Allawah Retirement Village together with other promotions of the Coolamon Shire.

Continued contact with media outlets such as newspapers, radio and television has been maintained during this reporting period.

Council's dedicated Tourism and Business website aids in the promotion of the Shire as a place to work, live and visit. Council signage board at the Coolamon Railway Station advising people of all activities within the Coolamon Shire with a second sign being installed at Ardlethan during the reporting period.

The "Capture Coolamon" Photographic competition once again focused on capturing photographic images that were taken in the Coolamon Shire. These photographs will form a database from which Council can choose images to help promote and advertise the Coolamon Shire as an alternative place to live and a great place to visit.

3.2.2 Develop and implement initiatives to attract tourists.

To encourage visitation and generally promote the area.

To provide a Caravan Park in Ardlethan and Coolamon that constitutes a basic level of service/short term accommodation to the travelling community.

Improve the signage throughout our towns and villages

Progress Report:

Membership with the Riverina Tourism Association has continued.

The ongoing update of the Coolamon Shire Residents Guide continues.

The Short Stay Caravan Park in Ardlethan for 1 to 3 day stopovers has continued to prove very popular and receives good patronage.

Council's plans to undertake capital works at the Coolamon Caravan Park were deferred in the reporting period subject to the relocation of the adjacent tennis courts. The relocation of the tennis courts will allow the caravan park to be expanded and will take place in the ensuing financial year.

Objective 3.3: Sustained viability of our farming land.

3.3.1 Identify opportunities, programs and funding to maintain and or enhance farming productivity and support the retention of farming population.

Identify opportunities, programs and funding available for maintaining farming productivity.

Investigate alternative farming initiatives suitable to the area and climate.

Progress Report:

The Rural Financial Counselling Service has been servicing the Coolamon Shire Local Government Area from the Rural Transaction Centre in Ganmain. Council has provided administration support for the North Eastern Riverina Rural Counselling Service which also operates from the Ganmain Rural Transaction Centre.

3.3.2 Determine the green economic opportunities available for farms to enter carbon offsets market.

Encourage farmers to investigate and undertake "green" economic opportunities.

Progress Report:

Council has not undertaken any action with regards to this action during the reporting period.

THEME 4 WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE THE “OUR COMMUNITIES 2030” VISION

Objective 4.1: Opportunities identified for diversified community leadership, inter-generational leadership and transition of youth into leadership roles

4.1.1 Encourage community leadership

*Provide development programs to grow capability in our current and prospective leaders.
Encourage involvement of respected community representatives in providing mentoring to youth.*

Progress Report:

Council consolidation of its Section 355 Committees has ensured that their activities appropriately reflect Council’s needs and that they act as a conduit to their respective communities.

Council’s Community Development Officer has implemented successful holiday programmes throughout the year.

As part of Local Government Week, School Leaders were invited to a morning tea with the Mayor and Senior Staff. The Mayor also held an afternoon tea for community volunteers to thank them for their continued work for their respective communities.

Youth Week activities were conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Youth Week Grant which was received by Council. These activities were well supported and provided an outlet for the youth of the Shire to experience many social interactions between various groups.

Coolamon Shire Council in conjunction with REROC has undertaken youth activities that included Council staff supports the ‘Build a Bridge’ Programme by participating and mentoring young Engineers.

Council sponsored a number of youth delegates to attend and represent Coolamon Shire at the REROC Take Charge Youth Leadership Forum.

Objective 4.2: Council as an organisation be consultative, participatory, encouraging and well managed.

4.2.1 Maintain two-way communication with the community and increase awareness of Council’s activities

*Involve the community in Council’s planning processes
Continue communication between Council and the Community.*

Progress Report:

Council continues to produce a monthly newsletter which is distributed to all residents of the Shire.

Bus Tours were held in February 2013 for both Community Groups and Councillors to discuss issues associated with each Community and the Shire as a whole.

Council’s website is updated on a regular basis, it provides information to all members of the public on Council activities and events.

Council Community Section 355 Committees continue to act as a conduit between Council and the communities that they represent in relation to the strategic direction of those communities and Council.

4.2.2 Work in partnership with the Shire's community in planning the future of the Shire.

Development of long-term resourcing strategy, including long-term financial planning, workforce planning and asset planning to achieve the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan

To provide an effective staffing structure that is capable of carrying out Council's objectives in an efficient manner.

The continued maintenance of a realistic Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Progress Report:

During the reporting period Council's Long term Financial Plan was and Work-force were updated. With the aid of consultants, Council developed an Asset Management Plan that will continue to be updated. Work Staff Performance Reviews are carried out in August/September each year. The appraisals were completed within the designated timeframe.

Training programs implemented and training provided as required.

Senior Staff Assessments were completed within the required timeframe.

Staff appraisals have been carried out in the various operational areas including Administration, Allawah Lodge Aged Persons Hostel and the Coolamon Early Childhood Centre together with the Allawah Community Care.

4.2.3 Build and foster relationships and strategic networks to the benefit of the Coolamon Shire.

Participate with other councils in resource sharing projects to reduce operational costs

Progress Report:

Council continues to retain its membership of REROC, ERAP, ERNWAG, NSW Rural Fire Service Riverina Zone, Riverina Regional Tourism and the membership of these organisations will continue to be monitored.

During the last year Council, together with a number of other Councils in REROC continued the development of a Strategic Transport Plan for the region with presentations made to other like organisations and the state government.

The Coolamon Shire Council together with Temora, Junee, Gundagai, Corowa and Greater Hume Shires run an Internal Audit Programme that is chaired by neighbouring General Managers to ensure that the audit process is carried out in a clear and transparent manner.

4.2.4 Maintain Council's strong financial position.

To ensure that Council's finances are managed in an effective and timely manner.

Progress Report:

Investments are reviewed on a weekly basis.

Various Financial Reports have been completed within the statutory time-frame and submitted to respective Government Departments.

4.2.5 Deliver high quality services that meet customer expectations.

Develop and implement Customer Service policies and procedures that are customer focused.

Progress Report:

Council staff continue to comply with its Customer Service policy and the statement of business ethics is being adhered to.

No complaints have been received about the service Council has been providing.

4.2.6 Minimise risk for Council and the community.

Develop and implement a Risk Management System suitable for Council operations.

Develop and implement suitable Internal audit process for Council operations.

To ensure consultation with respect to OH&S is carried out on a systematic basis.

To ensure that training, instruction and performance evaluation of relevant parties is carried out.

To ensure that Council's Accident/Injury/Public Liability Claims Management are administered in a competent manner.

To ensure that documentation & records management provide a framework for easy retrieval and reference.

Progress Report:

The annual review of the Work, Health & Safety and Risk Management System was completed in April. Senior Manager's Meetings continue to receive a monthly report presenting and reviewing all Work, Health and Safety.

Council continues to undertake an Internal Audit managed by an external Consultant that looks into procedures and processes of the Council. During the previous Annual Reporting period Council investigated Risk Management, Workforce Planning, Debtors Management and GIPA Reporting.

Council's Safety Committee meets 3 monthly when agenda items arise with copies of these minutes being presented to Council.

Council's Risk Operations Committee encompassing all of Council's operations continues to meet to ensure there is a clear and identifiable link between staff and Senior Management decisions with respect to Council's overall Risk Management System.

All staff are provided with Council's Induction Booklet upon appointment and regular Tool-Box meetings have been scheduled for the next reporting period.

The review of Work Activity Statements is ongoing annually with the Work Activity Statements to be discussed at tool-box meetings.

Training in the various areas is provided for work staff and staff within the other spheres of Council operations on a needs basis.

Council has in place an incident reporting system which is operating satisfactorily.

Council staff continue to carry out roads, footpaths and kerb and gutter inspections with the necessary remedial action being performed where risks are identified.

Records management systems including general records are controlled by Council's Executive Assistants.

Property records are controlled by Health and Building Staff and are meeting Council's requirements.

4.2.7 Continuously monitor, review and publicly evaluate progress, including periodic community satisfaction surveys, of the Community Strategic Plan to ensure priority areas are being acted upon.

Report to the community on the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan

Undertake community satisfaction surveys to gauge the community's response to the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan.

Progress Report:

This Annual Report, in addition to the six monthly Delivery Plan Reviews are available to the community for review in relation to the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan.

The next community survey will be undertaken at the end of the current Councillor term with the results to be used by the new Council in the review of the Community Strategic Plan and the development of the Delivery Program for the next four years.

4.2.8 Strongly advocate our local interests with the State and Federal Government on issues such as planning and development, and the provision of services and facilities.

Strongly advocate our local interests with the State and Federal Governments.

Progress Report:

During the reporting period the Coolamon Shire Council local government area has been moved to the newly created state seat of Cootamundra effective the State Election to be held in March 2015.

Council will continue to lobby both State and Federal Politicians on issues that affect the local community.

Council has continued to make representations on behalf of its communities during the reporting period including representation on policing, residential aged care, swimming pool regulations, “red tape” review, Local Government Acts Taskforce, Independent Local Government Review Panel, volunteers and Rural Fire Service

Objective 4.3: Working together to sustain civic pride in our towns and villages.

4.3.1 Encourage vibrant and vital towns and villages displaying our civic pride.

To provide and maintain a clean and pleasant streetscape.

Progress Report:

The upgrade of York Street, Marrar has been completed and other town works were undertaken to continue to reflect the communities pride in their towns.

Council continues to clean streets in the central business district of the towns in accordance with contract requirements. Rubbish has been collected and disposed of in accordance with designated practices and frequency.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 requires that the annual report must contain a copy of the council's audited financial reports prepared in accordance with the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

Councils Financial Reports detail Council's financial performance and position for the year ended 30 June 2014.

See [Coolamon Shire Council 2013/2014 Financial Reports](#)

ADDITIONAL STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

OVERSEAS VISITS

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a)

During the 2013/2014 Financial Year no overseas visits were undertaken during the year by Councillors, Council Staff or other persons while representing Council.

COUNCILLORS EXPENSES & PROVISION OF FACILITIES

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a1)

During the 2013/2014 Financial year, Council paid Councillor fees, inclusive of the Mayoral fee, totalling \$84,134.52.

The total cost incurred by Council during the year relating to the payment of expenses of, and the provision of facilities to, Councillors in relation to their civic functions was \$3,491.44 and can be summarized as follows:

i.	Office Equipment	Nil
ii.	Telephone	Nil
iii.	Attendance at conferences and seminars	Conference/Delegates: \$1,760.00 Travel: \$ 512.72
iv.	Training	Nil
v.	Interstate visits	Nil
vi.	Overseas visits	Nil
vii.	Spouse, Partner or Other Person in the Accompaniment of a Councillor	\$ 1,218.72
viii.	Provision of Care for a Child or Other Immediate Family Member	Nil

CONTRACTS

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a2)

During 2013/2014 Council awarded the following contracts:

CONTRACTOR	CONTRACT	CONTRACT AMOUNT
Stabilised Pavements Australia	Extension of 2012/04	Unit rate contract

LEGAL EXPENSES

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a3)

In 2013/2014 Council incurred legal expenses totalling \$26,571.63. These expenses were incurred in the following areas:

Description	Amount
Rates & Debt Recovery (inc. court fees)	9,951.22
Planning & Development	1,600.00
Employment Contracts & Issues	6,070.00
Property Sales & Acquisitions/Contract development	5,375.41
Professional Development	3,575.00

SUBSIDIZED WORK

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a4)

Council did not pass any resolutions under 67 of the Local Government Act 1993 concerning work carried out on private land which was fully or partly subsidized by Council during this financial year.

COUNCIL CONTRIBUTIONS

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a5)

The total amount contributed or otherwise granted by Council under Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 was \$16,234.43 which included contributions to:

- Eastern Riverina Arts Programme
- Coolamon Shire Art Acquisition Prize
- Senior Citizens Dinners
- Australia Day functions
- Prize donations to the various Schools throughout the Shire
- Assistance to the various Committees and Historical Societies within the Shire

EXTERNAL BODIES

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a6)

During the year the following external bodies exercised functions delegated by Council:

- Advance Ardlethan Committee
- Advance Ganmain Committee
- Advance Marrar Committee
- Advance Beckom Hall & Community Committee
- Coolamon Shire Community Benefit Fund Committee
- Coolamon Showground Management Committee
- Friends of the Up to Date Cultural Precinct
- Local Heritage Fund Committee
- Rannock Community Centre - Reserve No. 89397
- Voluntary Workers
- Coolamon Shire Events Committee
- Coolamon Shire Community Drug Action Team

CONTROLLING INTERESTS

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a7)

Council did not hold a controlling interest in any corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated during the year).

JOINT VENTURES/PARTNERSHIPS

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a8)

Council was a party to the following joint ventures throughout 2013/2014:

- 1) Statewide - New South Wales Local Government
- 2) Riverina Regional Library Service
- 3) Riverina Eastern Region of Councils
- 4) NSW Rural Fire Service-Riverina Zone (Fire Control Agreement between the Councils of Wagga Wagga City, Coolamon, Junee, Lockhart and Urana Shires.
- 5) Noxious Weeds Agreement between Coolamon Shire, Junee Shire and Temora Shire Councils

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a9)

Council continues to place great emphasis on its Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan to ascertain its relevance in relation to Council's operations.

The strategies under the Management Plan are listed below:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| STRATEGY 1: | Communication and Awareness Raising |
| STRATEGY 2: | Consultation |
| STRATEGY 3: | Recruitment and Selection |
| STRATEGY 3.1: | Preparation and Questioning in Interviews |
| STRATEGY 4: | Appointment, Promotion and Transfer |
| STRATEGY 4.1: | Appointment, Promotion and Transfer – Higher Grades |
| STRATEGY 4.2: | Appointment, Promotion and Transfer - Disabilities |
| STRATEGY 4.3: | Appointment, Promotion and Transfer - Career Paths |
| STRATEGY 4.4: | Appointment, Promotion and Transfer – Part Time |
| STRATEGY 4.5: | Appointment, Promotion and Transfer – Under 21 years |
| STRATEGY 5: | Training and Development |
| STRATEGY 6: | Conditions of Service |
| STRATEGY 7: | Grievance Procedures |
| STRATEGY 8: | Evaluation and Review of EEO Management Plan |

Throughout the year Council continued to monitor its EEO Policies. In the 2013/2014 period, 14 new employees (casual and permanent) were appointed to Council's Staff. All employees in their induction procedures were provided with a copy of Council's EEO Management Plan to enable them to be fully aware of the principles and guidelines that Council has adopted.

REMUNERATION PACKAGES

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(b) & Clause 217 (1)(c)

The total value of the General Manager's Remuneration Package was \$211,038 which included the employer's superannuation contribution, the amount payable by Council by way of fringe benefits tax, there were no bonus payments for performance or any other payments made to the General Manager that did not form part of the salary component. There were no non cash benefits paid under the package.

As there were no other designated Senior Staff Managers employed by Council throughout 2013/2014 and therefore no other amounts are required to be reported.

STORMWATER CHARGES

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(e)

Council did not levy an annual charge for stormwater management services during the year.

COASTAL PROTECTION CHARGES

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(e1)

Council did not levy any charge for coastal protection services during the year.

COMPANION ANIMALS ACT AND REGULATIONS

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(f)

In 2013/2014 Council seized a total of 24 dogs. Of this total 18 were returned to the owner and 16 were transferred to Council's pound facility. Of these 16 animals, 2 were euthanized at the owners request and 1 was euthanized because it was unable to be rehoused whilst the remaining 15 were rehoused. This information has been provided to the Office on Council's Return of Seizures of Cats and Dogs for the 2013/2014 financial year.

During its normal twelve months operation Council produces and distributes a monthly Newsletter. At various times throughout the year information is provided on the Companions Animals Legislation and the owners responsibilities for the control and care of their dogs. This Newsletter is distributed to every property within the Shire, published online and is available upon request.

Various brochures and pamphlets are available at Council's offices and various publications on Council's website outline the responsibilities of owners of companion animals.

In order to assist the public with de-sexing of either their cat or dog, Council has procedures in place where these people are referred to various veterinary services. In an attempt to reduce the amount of euthanasia for unclaimed animals, Council in the past has made contact with local pet shops in Wagga Wagga to ascertain whether they would be willing to accept unclaimed animals from this area and with local Rescue Groups who then rehouse the animals. On occasions this contact has proved successful.

Council provides an off leash area for the exercising of animals in the township of Coolamon. Further investigation is continuing about the possibility of extending this off lease area into other communities and villages of the Shire.

Financial Information – Companion Animals

During the 2013/2014 Financial Year Council received \$153.00 in impounding fees and \$,900.00 in fines and costs. The expenditure that Council incurred amounted to \$9,653.10 which comprised of wages, plant hire and the provision of miscellaneous supplies and activities.

During the past financial year there were 4 dog attacks in the Coolamon Shire which was reported to the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government, Department of Premier & Cabinet.

RATES AND CHARGES ABANDONED

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 132

During the 2013/2014 Financial Year rates and charges (exclusive of Pensioner) amounting to \$60.77 were written off.

Council provided rate relief to Pensioners during the Financial Year in the sum of \$126,448.22. Council did however, receive \$69,359.66 pensioner's concession subsidy from the NSW State Government.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS)

Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009 - Clause 7a and Schedule 2

1. Review of proactive release program – Clause 7(a)

Under section 7 of the GIPA Act, agencies must review their programs for the release of government information to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. This review must be undertaken at least once every 12 months.

Our agency's program for the proactive release of information involves

1. Council having appointed a principal officer and having a policy of, wherever possible, proactively making information available to the public,
2. Information is made available either electronically, by hard copy, or by making information available to view in the Council offices. There is only a cost associated if the information requires employee time to collate the documents. In these circumstances the charges are in accordance with GIPA requirements.
3. As part of Council's policy of proactively making information available Council provides assistance to members of the public that request information or enquire about information prior to making an informal request.
4. Council releases information in response to informal applications in accordance with GIPA requirements.
5. Council assists applicants in finding information if it considers the information is held by another agency.

During the reporting period, we reviewed this program by undertaking an internal audit review with the objective of the review is to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of Council's approach to managing its GIPA obligations and to assess the level of compliance.

As a result of this review, we released the following information proactively: Nil.

2. Number of access applications received – Clause 7(b)

During the reporting period, our agency received a total of 6 formal access applications (including withdrawn applications but not invalid applications).

3. Number of refused applications for Schedule 1 information – Clause 7(c)

During the reporting period, our agency refused a total of 0 access applications either wholly or in part because the information requested was information referred to in Schedule 1 to the GIPA Act. Of those applications, 0 were refused in full, and 0 were refused in part.

4. Statistical information about access applications – Clause 7(d) and Schedule 2

Table A: Number of applications by type of application and outcome

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with application	Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private sector business	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Members of the public (application by legal representative)	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Members of the public (other)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with application	Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn
Personal information applications*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table C: Invalid applications

Reason for invalidity	No. of applications
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	0
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0
Total number of invalid applications received	0
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	0

Table D: Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure: matters listed in

Schedule 1 to Act

	Number of times consideration used
Overriding secrecy laws	0
Cabinet information	0
Executive Council Information	0
Contempt	0
Legal professional privilege	0
Excluded information	0
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0
Transport safety	0
Adoption	0
Care and protection of children	0
Ministerial code of conduct	0
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0

Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure: matters listed in table to section 41 of Act

	Number of occasions when application not successful
Responsible and effective government	0
Law enforcement and security	0
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	0
Business interests of agencies and other persons	0
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0
Secrecy provisions	0
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0

Table F: Timeliness

	Number of applications
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	6
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	0
Note decided within time (deemed refusal)	0
Total	6

Table G: Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)

	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total
Internal review	0	0	0
Review by Information Commissioner *	0	0	0
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0
Review by ADT	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

* The Information Commission does not have the authority to vary decisions, but can make recommendations to the original decision-maker. The data in this case indicates that a recommendation to vary or uphold the original decision has been made by the Information Commissioner.

Table H: Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)

	Number of applications for review
Applications by access applicants	0
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	0