

# **INVERELL SHIRE COUNCIL**

## **Annual Report**



**2014/2015**

# INVERELL SHIRE COUNCIL

## AUDITORS

Forsyths Chartered Accountants, Armidale

## STATISTICS;

Population of Inverell ~ 16,000

Population of the Shire ~ 18,000

Total Area ~ 8,623sqkm

Inverell is located 664km north of Sydney

## INVERELL SHIRE COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION CENTRE

Office Hours 8:30am – 4:30pm

144 Otho Street

(PO Box 138)

Inverell NSW 2360

DX6159

Phone: (02) 67 288 288

Fax: (02) 67 288 277

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

Web: [www.inverell.nsw.gov.au](http://www.inverell.nsw.gov.au)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR	4
GENERAL MANAGER'S INTRODUCTION	5
STRATEGIC DIRECTION	6
PROFILE OF THE SHIRE	7
MAP OF THE INVERELL LOCAL GOVERNMENT SHIRE	10
ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES	11
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	12
THE ROLE OF THE MAJOR PLAYERS	12
HOW YOUR COUNCIL FUNCTIONS	14
COUNCIL MEETINGS, COMMUNITY ACCESS & CONSULTATION	15
PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES / OTHER ACTIVITIES	16
STATUTORY REPORT	26

## Message from the Mayor



I have pleasure in presenting to you Council's 2014 - 2015 Annual Report.

This statutory report effectively gauges the performance of the Council in achieving the objectives contained within the Operational Plan for the corresponding year.

In 2014 – 2015 Council was cognisant of the need to carefully match income with expenditure whilst trying to meet the expectations of the community.

I am pleased to confirm that despite the global economic conditions, Council has, through the review and consolidation of its programs, been able to fund the continuation of its existing programs to either maintain or improve 'service levels' during the reporting year.

I acknowledge that even though Council's budget does expand every year, the difficulty of maintaining a higher level of service for a growing community is a constant challenge for Council and its Senior Officers.

In recognition of that, Council is thankful for the level of skills and dedication shown by management which, with the agreement of Council at a policy level, has kept Council in a strong financial position over recent years and has been repeatedly recognised by Council's Independent Auditor.

Council has a strong vision for the continued growth of the Shire to maintain it as a strong, vibrant, self-sustaining Community. Council's strategies and objectives continue to support Council's Vision.

As we strive to create a community that reaches its enormous potential, I thank the community for working alongside Council to create a better Inverell Shire for us all, now and well into the future.

I commend Council's 2014- 2015 Annual Report to you.

Cr P J Harmon  
Mayor

## General Manager's Introduction



I am pleased to report on Inverell Shire Council's activities and achievements for the 2014 – 2015 financial year.

The Annual Report is a statutory document that gives Council and the community the opportunity to assess performance against the objectives stated in the Operational Plan.

Council prides itself on supplying excellent services and facilities for the community of today whilst displaying a vision for the community of tomorrow.

Again, a large Capital Works and Infrastructure Renewal Program was completed. The major highlights of this program included \$5M for Road Asset renewal works, \$0.4M for Water Asset Renewals, \$1.45M for Heavy Plant Purchases, and \$0.36M for Bushfire Equipment Upgrades. These Capital Works and Purchases were supplemented by continuing works on the \$5M New Ashford Water Treatment Plant Project, the \$3M Inverell Sewerage Treatment Plant Asset Renewal and Upgrade Project, the \$0.32M Ashford SES Headquarters Building, and the \$0.5M Ashford Medical Centre Development.

Funding was also provided to assist projects that aimed to promote the continued cultural and social growth of the Shire, and the expansion of the area's economic base.

As you will glean from this Annual Report, Council takes great pride and continually strives to build on its mission statement 'To work with the community in providing and facilitating the provision of services that enhance the quality of life of all shire residents.'

I invite you to peruse Inverell Shire Council's 2014 - 2015 Annual Report.

PJ Henry PSM  
General Manager

## Strategic Direction



### VISION

'A Community for Everyone.'

### MISSION STATEMENT

'To work with the community in providing and facilitating the provision of services that enhance the quality of life of all shire residents.'

### CUSTOMER COMMITMENT

Inverell Shire Council is a service based organisation and will conduct itself accordingly. Its customers, both internal and external to the organisation, can reasonably expect the highest possible standards of Service. Council Staff will make every effort to ensure that their response reflects the Council's commitment to providing a quality service.

### VALUE STATEMENT

Council seeks to devote itself to the corporate values made explicit in its Operational Plan.

**Responsiveness:** Council is committed to being responsive and accessible to the Public and to work in a fair and equitable manner with the organisations and individuals with whom it interacts.

**Excellence of Service:** Council strives and is committed to achieving excellence in its work. Council expects a quality service to be delivered to its customers and high productivity in all areas of Council operation.

**Respect for Staff:** In return for a commitment to Council values, Council is committed to fostering and utilising the skills of its staff and offering an equitable and safe work environment.

These values are fundamental to Council's Management and Business Plans as they underpin the setting of Objectives and delivery of Council services.



## Profile of the Shire

Inverell is a thriving regional commercial and service centre, reaching an estimated target area of 60,000 people, offering opportunities for resourceful companies and individuals, as well as support services for both commerce and industry. The following matters are highlighted:



### The Area:

The Shire of Inverell covers an area of 8,623 square kilometres of rich farm and grazing land, including large mineral deposits, particularly tin and sapphires – the area produces a significant proportion of the world's sapphires.

Inverell is situated on the Macintyre River in the central New England Tablelands. It is 590 metres above sea level, 689 kilometres by road from Sydney, 437 kilometres from Brisbane and only a short drive to the popular mid and northern coastline of eastern Australia. The town is situated on the Gwydir Highway, which connects western New South Wales with the eastern seaboard.

### The People:

The Inverell Shire offers a diverse lifestyle for residents and visitors, while the clean country environment promotes a healthy lifestyle and relaxed peace of mind. The Local Government Area has approximately 16,660 residents. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Regional Profile Figures for Inverell in the 2011 Census recorded that Inverell has a population of approximately 11,867 people.

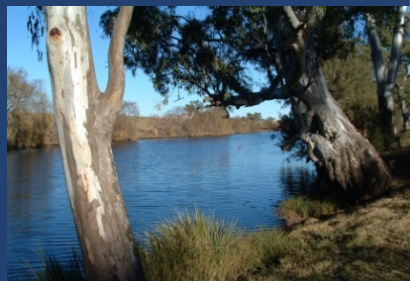
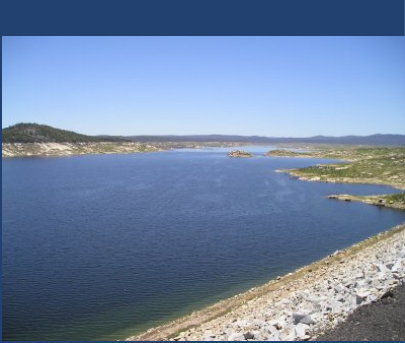
### The Economy:

Inverell Shire is unique in that it continues to experience sound growth. Inverell itself is an emerging Major Regional Centre.

Inverell features diverse retail, manufacturing, professional services, construction and agricultural sectors. They are all major contributors to the local economy. Tourism, in particular, is a growing industry in the region. These are supported by Inverell's unique "Growing Inverell Program".

The most recent Business Retention and Expansion survey conducted through the Growing Inverell Program in June, 2013 highlighted the following:

- Local Employment has increased 15% over the last two years
- 56.6% of businesses expect an increase in profit
- 51% of businesses listed Inverell as above average in terms of business infrastructure and services
- 5% of Inverell Shire businesses are involved in International Trade.



### **The Climate:**

Inverell experiences four distinct seasons. The Average Summer temperature is 30 degrees Celsius. The average Winter temperature is 18 degrees Celsius.

Inverell's average annual rainfall is 850 millimetres.

### **The Environment:**

The Inverell Shire has a unique natural environment consisting of two major river systems, two major water storage dams; Copeton and Pindari, two National Parks; Kwiambal and Kings Plains and 10 State Forests, as well as wilderness areas.

Inverell Shire Council faces the challenge of ensuring that the environment is protected and enhanced, facilitating a healthy and safe lifestyle for all and the promotion of biodiversity. These aims must be achieved while ensuring an equitable balance between the environment and social and economic development of Inverell Shire.

Inverell Shire Council has sound water resources that have escaped the impact of severe drought and resulting water shortages faced across much of Eastern Australia. Council recognises the need to preserve this resource and promote the responsible use of water within the Shire.

Inverell's air is crisp and clean due to its elevation of 590m above sea level. Council has recently participated with the State Government in the Wood Smoke Reduction Program to assist in maintaining this standard.

### **Housing:**

Inverell Shire offers a broad range of housing and lifestyle alternatives. These range from unit accommodation, to duplexes, small residences through to executive residences on small and large lots (up to approximately 1,200 square metres), and a wide variety of larger lifestyle lots of 1 hectare and over.

Inverell offers a range of Retirement and Aged Care housing and accommodation alternatives. The industry leading H N McLean Memorial Retirement Village is located in Inverell.

Aged Care facilities are also available at Ashford.

Building activity remains strong in Inverell Shire and has been at record levels for the last three years. There continues to be strong development activity across the Shire.

### **Education:**

Inverell Shire is well catered for in respect of educational opportunities with a wide range of alternatives from pre-school through to secondary school. In the 2013 Business Retention and Expansion Survey, Inverell's School's received a score of 99% as being good to excellent.





TAFE NSW has a campus in Inverell and Inverell is in close proximity to the University of New England. A University of New England Outreach Centre is located at Inverell TAFE.

Northern Inland Community College Inc. has a branch in Inverell with a commitment to provide lifelong learning opportunities that meet peoples' education and skills training needs.

#### **Culture:**



Cultural activities play an important part in the vibrancy of our Shire. The Inverell Art Gallery is located in Council's Cultural Precinct in Inverell and is supported by Council. A number of annual cultural events are conducted including the Venetian Carnival, Multicultural Day and the Sapphire City Floral Festival. The Tom Roberts Festival is conducted every four years.

Inverell Shire also enjoys a rich heritage, reflected in its built and natural environment. Council recognises the importance of its communities Cultural Assets. Council provides an annual budget allocation for Cultural initiatives.



## Map of the Inverell Local Government Shire



## Elected Representatives

The Inverell Shire Council is made up of nine (9) Councillors. The Councillors are elected by residents and ratepayers of the Shire every four (4) years. The next general election is scheduled for September, 2016.

The Councillors elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor every September at a special meeting of Council.

The elected member should reflect the views of the community and is primarily responsible for making decisions on policy matters and the allocation of funds for Council services.



Cr Paul Harmon  
Mayor



Cr Anthony Michael  
Deputy Mayor



Cr Di Baker



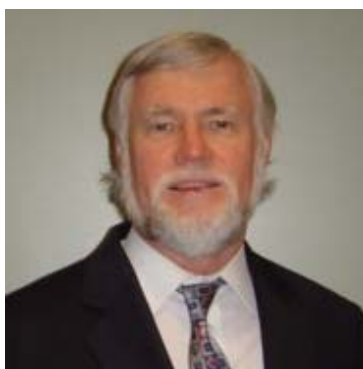
Cr Harold Castledine



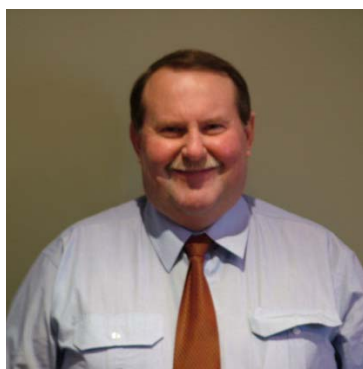
Cr Phil Girle



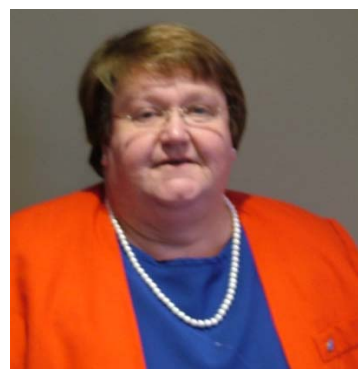
Cr Barry Johnston



Cr David Jones



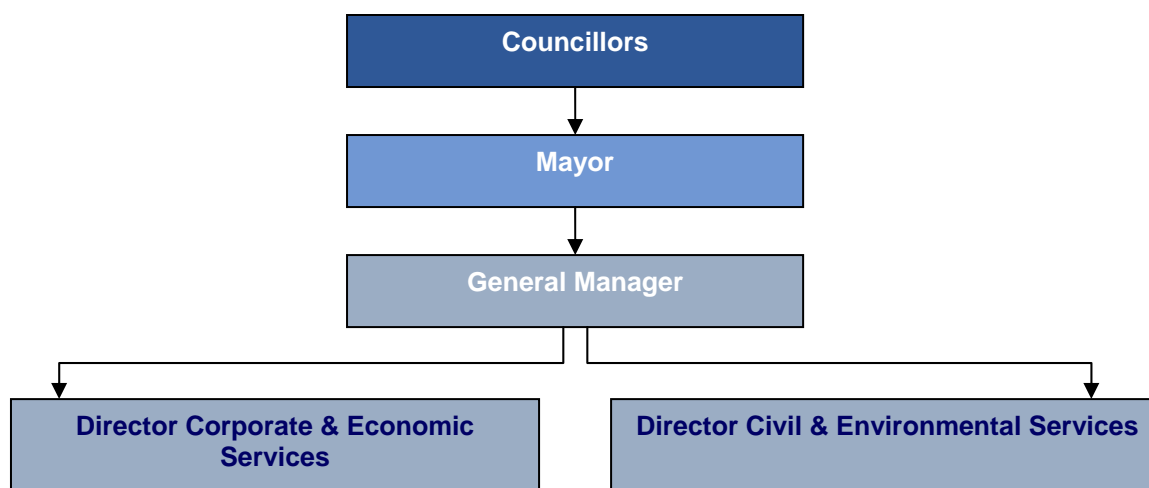
Cr Mal Peters



Cr Jacki Watts

## Organisational Structure

The overall structure of the Inverell Shire Council is demonstrated in the chart below. The organisation consists of the Elected Members, the General Manager and two divisional Directorates.



## The Role of the Major Players

### The Mayor

- To provide leadership and guidance to the community
- To exercise policy-making functions between meetings of the Council
- To preside at meetings of the Council
- To represent Council at civic and ceremonial functions
- To facilitate communication between the community and the Council by way of correspondence, telephone, face to face meetings and inspections

### The Councillors

- To represent the interests of the residents and ratepayers
- To provide leadership and guidance to the community
- To facilitate communication between the community and the Council
- To attend meetings of the Council

### The Council

- To determine Council policies and objectives
- To direct and control the affairs of the Council in accordance with the Local Government Act
- To review the performance of the Council and its delivery of services, and the management plans and revenue policies of the Council
- To represent at all times the needs of the community as a whole



**The General Manager****Mr Paul Henry PSM**

The General Manager is Council's principal staff officer, and is responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the Council's organisation and for ensuring the implementation of decisions of the Council without delay. The General Manager has the following particular functions:

- To assist the Council in connection with the development and implementation of the Community Strategic Plan and the Council's Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan and the preparation of its Annual Report and State of the Environment Report
- The day-to-day management of the Council
- To exercise such of the functions of the Council as are delegated by the Council to the General Manager
- To appoint staff in accordance with an organisation structure and resources approved by the Council
- To direct and dismiss staff
- To implement the Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan

**The Director Corporate and Economic Services****Mr Ken Beddie**

Corporate and Economic Services is responsible for the following activities:

- Corporate/Strategic Planning and Development
- Administrative Services
- Economic Development
- Property Development
- Financial Services
- Information Services
- Stores & Purchasing
- Depot Services
- Library Services
- Tourism Services
- Cultural Development
- Community/Social Development
- Aerodrome Services
- Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service Liaison

**The Director Civil and Environmental Services****Mr Brett McInnes**

Civil and Environmental Services is responsible for the following activities:

- Statutory and Strategic Planning
- Survey & Design
- Environmental and Public Health
- Infrastructure
- Building Control
- Major Drainage
- Waste Management Services
- Parks and Reserve Services
- Public and Private Swimming Pools
- Local Emergency Management
- Caravan Park Supervision
- Water/Sewerage Services
- Cemetery Operations
- Traffic Management Services
- Regulatory Services and Compliance
- Road/Bridge Maintenance & Construction



## How Your Council Functions

Council currently consists of nine (9) Councillors and is the ultimate decision making body, receiving and acting upon advice from Council Officers, Advisory Committees, Sunset Committees/Working Parties and Section 355 Committees.

The elected member should reflect the views of the community and is primarily responsible for making decisions on policy matters and the allocation of funds for Council services.

The *Local Government Act 1993* provides for the General Manager to exercise the day-to-day management of the Council.

### Advisory Committees

These particular Committees address specialist issues under their jurisdiction. They consist of Councillors and public representatives and are requested to advise only on matters relating to the appropriate function/s. Advisory Committees report to Council on a quarterly basis making recommendations in relation to policy and planning.

Current Advisory Committees include:

- Local Traffic Committee
- Precinct Committees – Ashford Business Council, Yetman Hall & Progress Association, Delungra District Development Council, Gilgai Recreational Reserve Trust.

### Sunset Committees/Working Parties

These Committees are appointed where any matter before Council or a Committee requires detailed investigation. Meetings are held on an 'as required' basis and terminate once the matter under investigation is reported to Council for determination. Current Sunset Committees include the Evans Street Redevelopment Committee and the Public Art Sunset Committee.

### Section 355 Committees

Section 355 Committees are formed under this Section of the Local Government Act to 'care, control and manage appropriate functions'. These Committees operate under authorities delegated by Council and report annually to Council. These include the Great Inland Fishing Festival, Sapphire City Festival and the Inverell Sports Council.

## Council Meetings, Community Access & Consultation

Ordinary Meetings of Council are conducted on the fourth Wednesday of the month, commencing at 3pm. These meetings are held in the Council Chambers, Administrative Centre, 144 Otho Street, Inverell. Members of the public are most welcome to attend these meetings.

Matters for discussion are listed in Council's Business Paper, electronic copies of which are available for perusal on a terminal at Council's Administrative Centre and also online via Council's website; [www.inverell.nsw.gov.au](http://www.inverell.nsw.gov.au).

Council encourages community input and residents are reminded that Council conducts a half-hour Public Forum Session at every Ordinary Meeting of Council, starting at 3.00pm. Residents are welcome to make verbal submissions to Council not exceeding five (5) minutes on any matter.

Additionally, Council advertises and promotes community attendance at precinct meetings which are held regularly in the surrounding villages.

With the assistance of Radio 2NZ and STA FM Inverell, Council conducts regular monthly Talkback Shows. Residents may phone in and discuss any matter of concern with the Mayor and General Manager.





## Principal Activities / Other Activities

The following summary identifies Council's Major Principal Activities and their associated strategies.

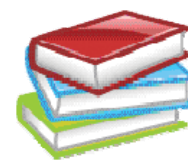
### Destination One – A Recognised leader in a broader context



Strategies	
R.01	Inverell Shire is promoted and distinguished regionally, nationally and internationally
R.02	Inverell exhibits the qualities of and operates as one of the three principle centres, (Inverell, Armidale and Tamworth) of the New England North West area as reflected by its strong economic, cultural and social diversity.
R.03	Villages offer a range of district level services and lifestyles reflective of their historic traditions.
R.04	Inverell Shire positively influences policy on rural and regional growth.
R.05	Provide access to services in the Shire equivalent to or better than that in other major regional areas.
R.06	Council ensures it is able to provide resources to effectively deliver its Strategy and Programs.
R.07	Council is recognised for and distinguished by its management, innovation and customer service.
R.08	Council leads the community by influencing and participating in policy development to the benefit of the Shire through partnerships and alliances with government, regional interests, Shire groups and communities.



## Destination Two – A community that is healthy, educated and sustained



Strategies	
C.01	Facilitate the provision of a broad range of services and opportunities which aid the long term sustainability of the community.
C.02	Seek to ensure developments make adequate provision for services that meet the needs and expectations of the community.
C.03	Promote an ordered and safe Community.
C.04	Improve the integration of natural and built environments.
C.05	Create clean and attractive streets and public places.
C.06	Reduce the consumption of non-renewable resources.
C.07	Provide local opportunities for recreation, cultural and social activities.
C.08	Reduce the risk to the community arising from emergency events.
C.09	Create a strong sense of community identity.
C.10	Contribute to the health of the community by promoting healthy lifestyles and practices.
C.11	Develop a range of educational and skills development opportunities to meet the requirements of the community.
C.12	Facilitate the provision of affordable housing and accommodation to meet the requirements of the Shire's residents.
C.13	Facilitate activities that improve the quality of life for people who are requiring support.
C.14	Facilitate the provision of opportunities for residents to gain employment.
C.15	The social well being and health of individuals and communities within the Shire is being maintained and improved.
C.16	Families and children are valued and supported to enable them to contribute to the economic, cultural and social well being of the Shire.
C.17	Promote Inverell Shire as an integral component of the cultural fabric of the New England North West Region.

### Destination Three – An Environment that is protected and sustained



Strategies	
E.01	Promote sustainable agricultural activities
E.02	Council's strategies to achieve sustainable, productive use of rural lands and preservation of the rural qualities are implemented.
E.03	Protect, rehabilitate and manage all impacts on the built and natural environment.
E.04	Conserve and rehabilitate core vegetation on Council land and manage major impacts on corridors and remnant bush lands.
E.05	Manage human impacts on the Shire's unique diversity of plants and animals.
E.06	Protect and manage significant natural features and landscapes.
E.07	Inverell Shire conducts itself as a responsible environmental practitioner through prudent consumption of resources and recycling initiatives.

### Destination Four – A strong local economy



Strategies	
B.01	Business, institutions and Council are working cooperatively towards agreed initiatives to strengthen and expand the Shire's economic base.
B.02	Plan for and promote the clustering of specific business and industry sectors in commercially appropriate locations.
B.03	Facilitate access to services and infrastructure including education, training and research for business.
B.04	Develop and promote the Shire as the place for business establishment.
B.05	Assist business to integrate with the community and natural environment.
B.06	Plan for and promote private and commercial businesses and residential, industrial and commercial development.
B.07	Promote a competitive, dynamic and progressive business environment that improves market value.
B.08	Promote Shire communities as a destination for visitors.
B.09	Generate economic benefits to the Shire by increasing visitation from domestic, regional, national and international market sectors.

## Destination Five – The community is supported by sustainable services and infrastructure



Strategies	
S.01	Sound Local Government Administration, Governance and Financial Management are provided.
S.02	Council displays leadership, community engagement and collaboration with others.
S.03	Council provides equitable services; consistent with available resources and priorities to meet the Shire's identified needs and preferences.
S.04	Council's workforce and workplace match contemporary and emerging organisational needs and requirements.
S.05	Attractive and vibrant town centres, local centres and community meeting places are provided.
S.06	Established population centres are revitalised and people have pride in the community in which they live.
S.07	Provide accessible and usable recreational facilities and services that meet the needs of the community.
S.08	Civil infrastructure is secured, maintained and used to optimum benefit.
S.09	Council's buildings, parks and open space assets are maintained to a standard fit for their contemporary purpose.
S.10	Maintain and enhance a safe, efficient and effective local road network.
S.11	Facilitate the sharing of information and ideas through remote communications.
S.12	Provision of safe and efficient networks to ensure connectivity between populations.
S.13	Provide communities with a quality potable water supply, effective drainage and sewerage systems.
S.14	Increase the number of people walking and cycling, particularly for journeys within the community.
S.15	Promote the effective integration of waste management and recycling services.

## **Business and Commercial Activities**

Council conducts a number of activities, which are operated on a commercial basis and consequently are categorised in accordance with the requirements of the NSW Government's Policy Statement on the "Application of National Competition Policy to Local Government".

Under these guidelines Council conducts two (2) Category 1 business activities (turnover > \$2 million pa), being:

- Water Supply Activities
- Waste Water/Sewerage Activities

The following actions have been taken in regard to these business activities:

- ✓ The principles of "Competitive Neutrality" have been applied to Council's Sewerage and Water Funds.
- ✓ The Business Activities have been separately identified within Council's operations.
- ✓ A "separate Internal Accounting and Reporting Framework" has been established in respect of these activities.
- ✓ "Private Sector Pricing Factors" including, tax equivalent payments, debt guarantee fees, rate of return on capital invested and dividend payments have been included in pricing calculations for the setting of charges.

## **Human Resource Activities**

Council is committed to maintaining high quality human resources and as explicitly stated in Council's 'Statement of Values', is further committed to fostering and utilising the skills of its staff in an equitable and safe work environment. To this end, Council has identified six (6) key components.

### ***Recruitment Philosophy***

The importance of recruiting and selecting the "best" staff in the "best" possible way cannot be underestimated.

Council expressly seeks to make use of the best talent available, (as this ensures the best performance to the organisation and the community) whilst taking into account modern management practices and complying with regulations and legislation covering the hiring of staff.

The recruitment process focuses on the assessment of applicants for both competency (knowledge, skills and attitude) and preference (activities that they like doing) thereby achieving the "best fit"; A process that is consistently applied through the operation of Council's recruitment panel.

### ***Training***

To ensure that appropriate training is provided to enhance the skills and knowledge of employees in a manner that is mutually beneficial.

### ***Intra Organisational Communication***

To provide employees with relevant information and feedback and promote communication across all levels.

### ***Work Health and Safety***

To provide a safe working environment for all employees, by adhering to all the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act, 2011*, including in particular the continued operation of Council's Risk Management Committee.



### ***Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation***

To ensure that all employees injured at work are compensated under the Workers' Compensation Act and are provided with supportive rehabilitation programs.

### ***Industrial Relations***

To promote open and consultative communication between management, employees and industrial unions.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity Activities**

Council is committed to ensuring that the talents and resources of all employees are fully utilised and that no employee or job applicant regardless of ethnicity, sex, marital status, pregnancy, physical and intellectual impairment, sexuality or age receives less favourable treatment by condition or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. Furthermore, Council is unequivocally committed to promoting Equal Employment Opportunity for all employees.



Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program aims to ensure that all current and prospective employees receive fair and equitable treatment when applying for employment, training or promotion by providing selection criteria based on experience, qualifications and merit.

Council's EEO Policy reinforces the position that equal employment opportunity is a right to fair and unbiased conduct, practices and decisions in all employment related activities and is based on the principle of merit expounded in Council's EEO Program.

### **Environmental Activities**

Council is committed to a holistic approach in its management planning process and its operational plans are considered against a background of Environmental Planning. Council monitors and reports on the State of the Environment considering a broad spectrum of environmental issues including:

- The Atmosphere
- Land
- Aquatic Systems
- Waste Management
- Biodiversity
- Noise
- Heritage
- Built Environment

Council's Environmental Reporting and assessment is represented in a dynamic document which changes and evolves as environmental issues, large or small, are resolved and other issues arise. As Council acts for the community in this matter, it places great emphasis on the involvement of the general public in its role of identifying issues that affect the environment. The community is further involved in the formulation of policies and plans that play a role in rectifying and preventing damage to the environment, now and in the future.

### **Aims and Objectives of the Plan**

1. To provide comprehensive information on the current state of the environment within the Shire.
2. To provide information to help government departments and the community to gain a comprehensive picture of the local environment and to assist in decision making, education and identifying future needs.
3. To ensure that the environment is protected and enhanced, facilitating a healthy and safe lifestyle for all, and to promote biodiversity. This aim however must be achieved while

ensuring an equitable balance between the environment and social and economic development.

4. To provide the necessary foundation for strategic environmental planning and the development of environmental rehabilitation, restoration and protection initiatives.

Environmental planning considerations underpin Council's management planning philosophy, to form an integral part of the operational plans of Council whilst also separately identified in the State of the Environment Report as a support document to Council's Operational Plan.

### **On-site Sewage Management**

Council has prepared an On-site Sewage Management Strategy (OSSMS) which details its approach to the ongoing management of on-site sewage management installations within the Council area. This strategy is designed to ensure that Council follows appropriate guidelines to ensure that the on-site sewage management systems within the Council area are operating efficiently and safely.

The results of Council's activities throughout any particular year are required to be reported on within the State of the Environment Report.

### **Local Environmental Plan (LEP)**

Council is required to develop and implement a Local Environmental Plan (LEP). An LEP is the principal legal document for controlling the development of land at the council level. The zoning provisions detailed in the LEP establish the permissibility of uses and standards regulate the extent of development on Land in the Shire area. LEP's are prepared by councils and approved by the Minister (after public exhibition).

Council has undertaken a comprehensive review of its LEP. This involved consultation with, and input, from the Community and State Government. The Inverell Local Environmental Plan 2012 was gazetted on 7 December, 2012 and will meet the community's planning needs for the next 20 years, with 5 yearly reviews.

### **Water & Sewerage Businesses**

#### **Water Supply Business**

Inverell Shire is well serviced for water and has not experienced the supply difficulties and restrictions faced by other communities. Council owns and operates three (3) water supply schemes providing treated water to over 16,000 people. The schemes are known as:

1. Copeton Water Supply Scheme – supplying treated water to Inverell, Delungra, Gilgai and Tingha within the Guyra Shire. The Water is supplied from Copeton Dam which is three (3) times the size of Sydney Harbour.
2. Ashford Water Supply Scheme – supplying treated water to Ashford. The Water is supplied from the Severn River below Pindari Dam.
3. Yetman Water Supply Scheme – supplying treated water to Yetman from bores.

Council manages the schemes as a single water supply fund. The extent of capital investment in the infrastructure associated with Council's water supply requires an extensive knowledge of the system as it is now and the maintenance and capital upgrades it will need in the future. The plan is part of a mechanism of ensuring continuity of supply of treated water to National Health & Medical Research Council standards for the best dollar value.





The Business Plan identifies the means of managing the existing infrastructure identified in Council's Water Assets Register and future assets using the framework of Total Asset Management. Inverell Shire Council recognises the role of government is that of a service and facility provider and this role must be undertaken in the most cost efficient and effective manner. Council also recognises the responsibility to determine natural service areas and communities of interest, without regard to artificial and historical Local Government boundaries while prompting the responsible use of its natural resources.

### Sewerage Business

Council owns and operates four (4) sewerage schemes, which serve approximately 10,000 people.

These schemes are at:

- Inverell;
- Ashford;
- Delungra; and
- Gilgai.

A scheme for Yetman is currently under investigation.

The schemes are managed as a single sewerage fund and are operated in an environmentally sensitive manner. There is a capital investment of approximately \$33M in the infrastructure and details are recorded in Council's Asset Management System.



### Access Planning

Council's Access Planning is underpinned by the philosophy that it operates as a tool to assist in the management of Council facilities and services in a manner that facilitates access to and use of those facilities and services by all members of the community.

Specifically the goals for Access Planning include:

- Improve services and facilities to existing consumers, customers and elected representatives;
- Maintain Inverell Shire Council's image as a leader in the field of accessibility;
- Allow for a planned and managed change in business or services;
- Allow public consultation for accessibility issues;
- Break down the physical, attitudinal and communication barriers associated with accessibility;
- To undertake a bi-annual review to ensure compliance to current standards and changing needs of the community;
- To ensure progressive training and education of Council staff to ensure that the Access goals are met.

### Fraud Control

Council takes seriously its duty to effectively and efficiently manage the Communities Resources and Facilities entrusted to it. Council has established a Fraud Control Policy and also utilises Internal and External Audit Functions to ensure the correct use of Council's Resources. This Function is conducted in accordance with Industry Best Practice.

## Cultural Plan

“To encourage active and equitable community participation in all aspects of cultural and artistic pursuit through the coordinated provision of cultural facilities and services in accord with community expectations, needs and available resources”, forms the Vision for Inverell Shire Council's Cultural Plan.



The development of the Cultural Plan is underpinned by the definition of Culture adopted from the NSW Local Government and Shires Association as “the aspirations and activities practiced and utilised by Local Government in the community to reflect and celebrate the past, current and future identity, character, spirit and sense of place. For Local Government, cultural development is the purposeful pursuit of Council functions that enrich local identity, a sense of place and quality of life.”

The development and implementation of the Cultural Plan is formed by the following key principles: Identity, Diversity, Economy, Activity, and Heritage.

The Cultural Plan expresses the community's objectives and needs for cultural services and facilities. The Shire's community is actively involved in a wide array of cultural and artistic activities. This Plan provides a framework for decision making in relation to the scope and quality of cultural opportunities designed to meet the needs of the Shire's residents and visitors.

### Objectives of the Plan

- To facilitate the use of appropriate facilities, advocating where necessary for improved infrastructure development,
- Encourage the promotion of local events and activities; promote the value of participation; promote local sponsorship of activities and events; explore opportunities for improved networking,
- To collaborate with and support the efforts of local service providers to enhance the scope of opportunities and to encourage community participation,
- To more efficiently utilise existing resources and opportunities,
- To ensure Community needs and expectations are met,
- To enhance the economic potential of the Inverell's cultural appeal,
- To maximise the return on Inverell's rich cultural history and heritage, whilst preserving its value,
- To build on Inverell Shire's reputation as a 'desirable destination',
- To promote equality of access and cultural experience for the whole community.



## Economic Development



Council recognises the importance of facilitating a healthy vibrant, innovative and proactive community. The prosperity of a region's future depends on the health of its supporting economic base.

Council's objectives in respect of economic development are:

- To promote industry and commercial activity within the Inverell Shire;
- To create job opportunities and to enhance skills development and retention;
- To encourage and attract economic growth in tourism infrastructure;
- To identify, encourage and attract agri-business. This includes agriculture, agri-tourism, eco-tourism;
- To identify and attract opportunities in education and communication; and
- To assist in identifying the future development direction of the Shire.

Council continues to demonstrate leadership in promoting economic development in the Inverell Shire in association with industry, key stakeholders and other partners. The "Growing Inverell Program" is an example of this leadership.

Key results to date include:

- Redevelopment and beautification of the Inverell CBD,
- The implementation of the Growing Inverell Program and development of a Community Strategic Plan (Economic Development Plan) to identify, encourage and facilitate growth,
- Growth and promotion of Inverell's tourism industry through the Visitor Information Centre and provision of comprehensive promotional materials,
- Facilitation of business development seminars,
- Facilitation of the annual Skills Retention/Careers Expo,
- Facilitation and promotion of the bi-annual Inverell On Display Event showcasing local businesses, products and services,
- Production of Inverell Promotional DVD's,
- Facilitation and participation in regional national and international events promoting Inverell.

## Statutory Report

The following information is provided in response to statutory requirements. The Statutory Report addresses the elements of the Council's Charter which is set out in Section 8 of the *Local Government Act 1993* as follows:

- to provide directly or on behalf of other levels of government, after due consultation, adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities for the community and to ensure that those services and facilities are managed efficiently and effectively
- to exercise community leadership
- to exercise its functions in a manner that is consistent with and actively promotes the principles of multiculturalism
- to promote and to provide and plan for the needs of children
- to properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development
- to have regard to the long term and cumulative effects of its decisions
- to bear in mind that it is the custodian and trustee of public assets and to effectively plan for, account for and manage the assets for which it is responsible
- to engage in long-term strategic planning on behalf of the local community
- to exercise its functions in a manner that is consistent with and promotes social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights
- to facilitate the involvement of councillors, members of the public, users of facilities and services and council staff in the development, improvement and co-ordination of local government
- to raise funds for local purposes by the fair imposition of rates, charges and fees, by income earned from investments and, when appropriate, by borrowings and grants
- to keep the local community and the State government (and through it, the wider community) informed about its activities
- to ensure that, in the exercise of its regulatory functions, it acts consistently and without bias, particularly where an activity of the council is affected
- to be a responsible employer.



**Within 5 months after the end of each year, a council must prepare a report as to its 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 – Section 428 (1)**

The following information details Council's achievements in respect of its Delivery Plan for 2014/2015:

### **Destination 1 – A recognised leader in the broader context:**

The actions completed:

- Participation in the 2014 Regional Living Expo;



- Participation in Road Funding meetings with the Roads and Maritime Services;
- Participation in New England Northwest Regional Tourism meetings;
- Participation in New England Destination Management Hub;
- Participated in meetings with New England Councils and prepared the submission to establish a trial Joint Organisation of Councils in the New England. Secretariat for the Group;
- Participated in “Fit for the Future” meetings with New England Councils;
- Participated in Border Region Organisation of Councils Meeting.

## **Destination 2 – A community that is healthy, educated and sustained:**



The actions completed:

- Facilitation role for “Linking Together Centre” and development of strong partnerships with Best Employment, State and Federal Government funding bodies;
- Provided ongoing Auspicing, Executive Management and assistance to Connections Disability Services;
- Completed building works on new \$0.36M Ashford Emergency Operations Centre;
- Assisted with the 2014 Sapphire City Festival;
- Co-ordinated the 2015 Multi-Cultural Day Event in Victoria Park;
- Secured library funding from Brighter Access for Early childhood Inclusion Program;
- Secured funding from Festival Australia for Ngay Walaaybaa (My Home) visual arts exhibition and conducted the Exhibition;
- Secured \$0.51M funding from Clubs NSW for Cameron Park Redevelopment Project \$1.2M – Project 60% completed;;
- Completed works on the new \$0.76M Ashford Medical Centre;
- Provided assistance totalling \$0.45M to the Evans Street Surgery in their development of the new Inverell Medical Centre/Training Facility;
- Co-ordinate youth activities – including Movies in Campbell Park and activities for the Aged and Indigenous Communities;
- Established an Aboriginal Consultative Committee;
- Partnering with Family NSW to provide Playgroup activities at Tingha and Inverell through the Linking Together Centre; and
- Participation in New England Cooperative Library and renewed a significant number of Library Resources. Extended the Free Wireless Facilities at the Library and Visitors Information Centres.

## **Destination 3 – An environment that is protected and sustained:**



The actions completed:

- Partnering with Catchment Management Authority in “Brigalow Nandewar Bio Links Program;
- Completed \$0.13M Solar Energy System for the Inverell Administration Centre with a 2.6 year Capital Payback Period. All of Council's major building will by Solar Energy equipped by 30 June, 2016;
- Partnership with Catchment Management Authority for Serrated Tussock weeds program;
- Secured NSW Environmental Trust Funding for Waste Less Recycle More Initiatives of Love Food hate waste, Household compost Bins Project, Community Recycling Centre, Ashford landfill consolidation, Elsmore landfill consolidation; and
- Completed Solar Energy Systems at the Inverell Works Depot and Inverell Tourist Centre.

## Destination 4 – A strong Local Economy:



The actions completed:

- Participated in a wide range of Tourism and Marketing Shows;
- Completed Transport Museum Complex and completed sale of old site to Boss Engineering to enable the expansion of their business and local employment;
- Provided Planning support and Assistance to Bindaree Beef, the proposed Wind Farm Developments, and also to a range of smaller developments.
- Participated in Inverell Promotional Activities with the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and
- Provided sponsorship for the Copeton Waters Freshwater Swim, the Northern Inland 4x4, Fishing, Caravan and Camping Expo. The 2014 Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic, The Mini World Cup Soccer Event, The Inverell Toughen Up Challenge and the Inverell Art Gallery.

## Destination 5 – The Communities are served by sustainable services and infrastructure:



The actions completed:

- Commenced and completed a significant range of Road Upgrade Projects on the Regional Road and Local Road Network;
- Commenced Highway upgrade project east of Delungra for Roads and Traffic Authority;
- Completed a significant quantum of Shire Roads Gravel Resheeting;
- Completed a significant quantum of heavy patching throughout the Shire;
- Completed Councils 2014/2015 bitumen reseal program at an average cost which is 30% below the Industry Benchmark Costs;
- Completed works for Bitumen Resealing of the Inverell Airport and Runway;
- Completed additional Kerb and Gutter Works in Gilgai as part of the Gilgai Drainage Upgrade Project;
- Bitumen Sealed the remaining unsealed section of the Auburnvale Road to the Copeton Northern Foreshores Recreation Area.
- Completed an Optic Fibre installation from Administration Centre to Inverell Works Depot;
- Successfully secured a 3% Interest Rate Subsidy from the Office of Local Government under the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) round three for the Inverell Sewerage Treatment Plant (this is the last round of the program), NSW Public Works are undertaking Design Works for Council in this matter;
- Completed 2013-2014 Financial Statements – sound financial result achieved;
- Secured additional Repair Program funding from RMS for the Three Sisters Road Upgrade Project south of Ashford;
- Secured Active Transport Funding (Cycleways and Footpaths) for 2015/2016 - \$0.44M Project;
- Secured Black Spot funding for upgrade of Old Bundarra Road from Leviathan Road to Schwenkes Lane and a turning lane at Rob Roy Road on the Gwydir Highway;
- Secured Fixing Country Roads funding for Tin Tot Bridge - \$1M Project, Project to be completed in 2015/2016;
- Secured Fixing Country Roads funding for HML Assessment on the Bruxner Way. Roads and Maritime Services are to conduct the Assessment;
- Installed Disabled Access facilities, a new large shelter and refurbished the Amenities at the Sporting Complex;
- Continued Work on the new \$4.7M Ashford Water Treatment Plant;
- Undertook a range of Village Upgrade and Improvement Works;
- Provided Grant Funding to a range of Village and Small Rural Area Community Projects;

- Continued the implementation of Council's Shire Wide Waste Strategy;
- Completed the major Varley Oval Redevelopment Project with the construction of the new Amenities/Storage Block;
- Completed a comprehensive review of Council's Plant Fleet against Council's Operation needs. A new 16 Tonne Roller, Posi-track Loader and Water Truck were added to the Fleet. Commenced the roll out of a GPS Plant Fleet Tracking System;
- Constructed a new Bushfire Shed at Elsmore and continued with the upgrade of the Rural Fire Service Bushfire Tanker Fleet;
- Completed minor upgrades of the Inverell Art Gallery and Inverell Visitors Information Centre Complex; and
- Prepared Council's Fit for the Future Roadmap.

While successfully delivering these outcomes to the Community, Council continued to focus on demonstrating efficient service and infrastructure delivery, achieving value for money for current and future ratepayers. The following are some of Council's current Efficiency Indicators that Council is required to report on by the Office of Local Government or that have been established by Council:

1. Governance and Administration Costs per capita – Council results on the last available published data from the Office of Local Government (2013/2014 Comparative Data) indicate that Council's costs in this area are 50% lower than those for other Group 11 Councils and 52% lower than the NSW average. Council's Real Operating Cost per Capita has reduced by 15% over the last 5 years;
2. Workers Compensation Insurance – Council's 2014/2015 Premium was just \$214K (GST Inclusive) or 1.67% of Wages and Salaries Paid. This compares to an industry average of 3.6% meaning Council spends substantially less on Workers Compensation Premiums than the industry;
3. Bitumen Reseals Program – Council continues to perform above the IPWEA Benchmark in respect of its annual Bitumen Reseals Program. Council's Bitumen Reseal Costs for 2014/2015 were \$3.52/m<sup>2</sup> Rural and \$3.47/m<sup>2</sup> Urban against IPWEA Benchmarks of \$4.59/m<sup>2</sup> Rural and \$4.66/m<sup>2</sup> Urban. This means that Council is able to undertake a higher annual quantum of Bitumen Reseals per dollar of Bitumen Reseals Budget than its industry colleagues;
4. Waste Management – Council moved Waste Collection back to day labour in 2013/2014. Council's performance in 2014/2015 remains sound despite this change at a time when many Councils undertake Waste Collection by Contract. Council's Domestic Waste Management Charge for 2014/2015 was \$280.00, the lowest in the region. Council's Waste Management Charge/Levy payable by all properties remained the lowest in the region at \$55.00 and Council had the highest amount of domestic waste being recycled at 45% against an 11 Council average of 36%. Actions are being taken to further increase the amount of waste being recycled;
5. Water Supply and Sewerage Services – On the last available data published by the Office of Local Government (2013/2014 Comparative Data) Council's Water and Sewerage Costs were \$361.63 per capita or 28% less than the \$464.05 average for Group 11 Council's;
6. Energy Efficiency Program – Council continues to undertake significant work in this area. To date the following works have been completed:
  - Recycling Centre Solar Energy – on track to achieve a 4.2 year pay-back period;
  - Library Solar Energy – on track to achieve a 3.7 year pay-back period;
  - Linking Together Centre Solar Energy – on track to achieve a 3.7 year pay-back period (system was Grant Funded);
  - Administration Centre Solar Energy – on track to achieve a 2.6 year pay-back period;



- Varley Oval Solar Lighting Project – goal to minimise operating costs of redeveloped facility;
- Transport Museum Energy Efficient and Natural Lighting Project – goal to minimise costs of redeveloped facility. Results already indicate that during normal daylight opening hours only office lighting is required;
- Administration Centre Energy Efficient Lighting Project – goal to minimise operating costs and improve efficiencies;
- Works Depot and Visitor Information Solar Energy installations to achieve a 4 year pay back period;
- Energy Efficient LED Street Lighting will be installed in late 2015 as part of the Northern Lights Energy Efficiency Program involving 7 Councils;
- Electricity Cost savings total \$380K per annum.

#### 7. Fleet Management:

In driving operational efficiencies Council has on a continuing basis maintained a modern Plant Fleet. This Fleet is under constant review in respect of size and operational fit. It is noted that the Plant Fleet continues to achieve sound financial results. As advised by Council's Auditor it is important to maintain a modern, cost effective and efficient Plant Fleet that can be delivered into the Works Programs at the lowest possible cost. As a result of the ongoing review of the Fleet, the Plant Hire Rates have not had to be increased over the last four (4) years as additional cost efficiencies have been achieved, bringing significant savings to Council's Works Programs. Council has commenced a program of adding GPS Tracking to its Plant Fleet to further improve efficiencies.

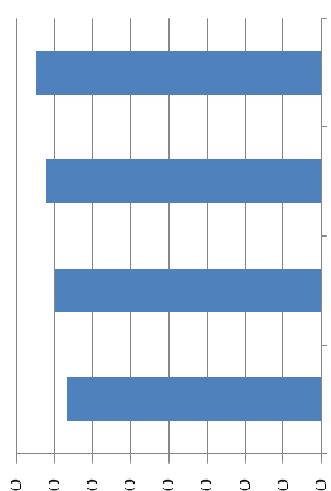
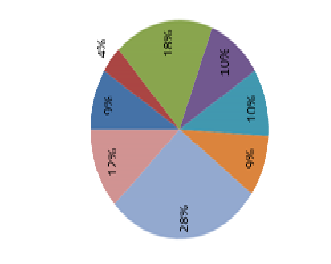
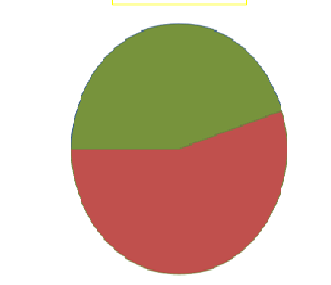
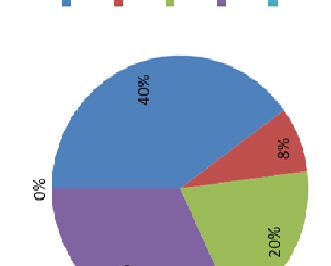
Council has over the last five (5) years also introduced a number of new items to its plant fleet specifically targeted at providing additional efficiencies into Council's Works Programs. These include:

- Road Reclaimer;
- Cement/Lime Spreader Truck;
- Survey Total Station and Grader Laser Control Equipment;
- Mini Excavator;
- Posi Track Loader with 1 Metre Mill Attachment;
- Additional 16 tonne Roller
- Additional Water Tanker.

Overall, Council's achievements in respect of its 2013 – 2016 Delivery Plan during 2014/2015 have been strong and are in accordance with the Objectives set by Council.

Council's Financial Performance remained very strong over the period and the following comments from the External Auditor, Forsyths of Armidale are noted:

- "As stated in our previous report, Council's enviable cash position provides a strong footing from which to address infrastructure improvements and complete internally restricted projects";
- "It is pleasing to report that Council's systems and records have been well maintained during the year"; and
- "We take this opportunity of thanking the General Manager and his staff for their co-operation and assistance during the course of the audit".

OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPARATIVE DATA REPORT 2013/2014		Inverell Shire has an area of approximately 8,605 square kilometres with a population of 16,727 for 2013/2014. Located in the north west slopes region, the Shire is an agricultural region which produces a wide range of crops, including wheat barley, oats, sorghum, wine grapes and maize. There is some mining of tin, sapphires, zircons and diamonds, with Inverell being known as the Sapphire City.					
Council		KEY: LGA = Local Government Area, Group Average = Group 11 Council Average being large rural Councils, TCorp = NSW Treasury Corporation					
Your Local Population		Inverell LGA	Group Average	Your Council	Inverell LGA	Group Average	
Five year population change (%)		4	4	Councillors (No.)	9	9	
Population aged 19 or less (%)		28	28	Population per Councillor (No.)	1,859	1,495	
Population aged between 20 & 60 (%)		46	48	Equivalent Full Time Staff (FTE) (No.)	212 ****	151	
Population aged above 60 (%)		26	24	2013/2014 Total Revenue (\$'000)	35,738	36,264	
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (%)		6.5	5.8	2013/2014 Total Expenses (\$'000) (excludes Capital Exp.)	32,303	33,600	
Language spoken other than English (%)		2.2	2.8	Residential Pensioner Rebates (%)	29	22	
Socio-Economic Index Rank (1 low, 152 high)		18	n/a	Population Density (residents per square km)	1.9	4.0	
Your Local Economy		Inverell LGA	Group Average	Your Public Facilities/Council	Inverell LGA	Group Average	
Unemployment Rate (%)		8.7	6.4	Public Swimming Pool Complexes (No.)	2	3	
Average Taxable Income (\$)		35,598	44,416	Public Halls (No.)	15	8	
Average Household size (No.)		2.5	2.5	Public Libraries (No.)	1	2	
Largest Industry Employer		Retail Trade	Retail Trade	Open Space (ha)	260	230.8	
Value of DA's determined (\$'000)		25,099	27,532	Total Road Length (km)	2,143.00	1,450.80	
Active Businesses in LGA (No.)		1,665	1,410	Access to Internet at Home (%)	60.6	65.3	
Average Residential Ordinary Rates		Expenditure on Services		Council's Waste Services		General Rates from each Rate Category	
							

In 2013 Tcorp Assessed Inverell Shire Council's Financial Sustainability Rating as Moderate with a Neutral Outlook. In 2013 the Infrastructure Audit assessed Council's Infrastructure management as Moderate.				
Your Council's Finances		Inverell LGA	Group Average	Group Average
Average Ordinary Residential Rate (\$)		746.42	685.26	343.85
Average Ordinary Business Rate (\$)		3,210.53	1,902.00	229.30
Average Ordinary Farmland Rate (\$)		2,405.39	2,522.31	464.05
Average Ordinary Mining Rate (\$)		0	121,262	187.27
Total Land Value/Total Rate Revenue (\$)		114.08	172.04	206.54
Typical Residential Water and Sewerage Bill (\$)		988	1,247	93.09
Average Domestic Waste Charge (\$) NSW Average \$1,196.00		262.51	294.75	385.43
Own Source Revenue (%) Tcorp Benchmark > 60%		69.00	69.00	38.98
Grants and Contributions Revenue (%) NSW Average 30%		31.00	31.00	4.6
Operating Performance Ratio (%) Tcorp Benchmark > 4.0		-1.30	-8.44	36.4
Unrestricted Current Ratio (%)		2.04	3.91	51
Outstanding Rates and Charges (%) NSW Average 6.32%		5.60	6.59	178
Debt Service Cover Ratio (%) Tcorp Benchmark > 2.0		14.00	9.10	6,466
Cash Expense Cover Ratio (Mths) Tcorp Benchmark > 3 mths		20.10	13.10	49
Your Council's Leadership		Inverell LGA	Group Average	Group Average
Development Applications determined by Council/ors (%)		0	9.7	532
Audited Financial Reports submitted by due date		Yes	n/a	88
Code of Conduct complaints (No.)		0	1	11
Complaints investigated requiring action (No.)		0	n/a	108
Cost of dealing with Code of Conduct complaints (\$)		0	4,172	0.94
Population per EFT Staff (No.)		79 ****	94	
ROAD DATA		Inverell LGA	Group Average	Group Average
Regional Sealed Roads		391 km		532
Shire Sealed Roads		342 km		88
Shire Gravel Roads		1,248 km		11
Urban Streets		140 km		108
Bridges/Major Culverts - 181 with a total length of 10 km				
Culverts/Causeways - 4,081 with a total length of 12 km				
Your Council's Services		Inverell LGA	Group Average	Group Average
Governance and Administration Costs per Capita (\$)		173.37		343.85
Environmental Costs per Capita including Waste (\$)		208.92		229.30
Water and Sewerage Services Expenditure per Capita (\$)		361.63		464.05
Community Services Expenditure per Capita (\$)		185.09		187.27
Recreation and Cultural Expenditure per Capita (\$)		105.40		206.54
Public Order and Safety Expenditure per Capita (\$)		62.06		93.09
Other Services Expenditure per Capita (\$)		239.13		385.43
Library Services Expenditure per Capita (\$)		59.72		38.98
Library Circulation per Capita (Items)		8.1		4.6
Domestic Waste not going to Landfill (%)		45.1		36.4
Development Applications (mean gross days)		21		51
Development Applications Determined (No.)		146		178
Companion Animals Microchipped (No.)		8,295		6,466
Companion Animals Microchipped/Registered (%)		51		49
Your Council's Assets		Inverell LGA	Group Average	Group Average
Roads, Bridges, Footpaths Expenditure per Capita (\$)		541		532
Building and Infrastructure Renewal Ratio (%) Tcorp Benchmark > 100%		106		88
Infrastructure Backlog Ratio (%)		6		11
Road Length per Capita (metres)		129		108
Asset Maintenance Ratio (Tcorp Benchmark > 1)		1.03		0.94
**** Employee Number Includes Connections and Linking Together Centre 36 Staff (adjusted figure is 95)				
Governance and Administration Cost per Capita		Inverell	Group 11 Councils	NSW Average
		\$150.00	\$200.00	\$250.00
Environmental Costs per Capita including Waste		Inverell	Group 11 Councils	NSW Average
		\$150.00	\$200.00	\$250.00
Water and Sewerage Services Expenditure per Capita		Inverell	Group 11 Councils	NSW Average
		\$150.00	\$200.00	\$250.00
Percentage of Expenditure on Roads, Bridges & Footpaths		Inverell	Group 11 Councils	NSW Average
		15%	10%	5%
Library Circulation per Capita (No.)		Inverell	Group 11 Councils	NSW Average
		8.1	4.6	4.6

(Data Source: Office of Local Government Comparative Data Report 2013/2014)

**The annual report in the year in which an ordinary election of councillors is to be held must also report as to the council's achievements in implementing the community strategic plan over the previous 4 years – Section 428 (2)**

Council considered and adopted a report on Council's four (4) year term at their meeting held on 21 August, 2012. A report as to Council's achievements in implementing the community strategic plan over the 4 year term will be available in 2016.

**A report must contain the following particulars – Section 428 (4) (a)**

A copy of Council's General Purpose Financial Reports that includes the Audit of Accounts prepared by Forsyths Chartered Accountants for the Year ended 30 June 2015 is attached as Annexure A to this Annual Report.

**Overseas visits – Regulation Section 217 (1) (a)**

Council is required to detail overseas visits undertaken by Councillors, Council Staff or other persons, while representing the Council (including visits sponsored by other organisations).

There were no overseas visits undertaken during 2014/2015 by Councillors or staff representing Inverell Shire Council.

**Mayoral and Councillors Expenses – Regulation Section 217 (1)(a1)**

Provision of Facilities and Payment of Expenses		Council Cost
cl217(1) (a1)	Payment of Expenses, provision of facilities	\$13,693.23
cl217(1) (a1)(i)	Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to Councillors.	\$0.00
cl217(1) (a1)(ii)	Telephone calls made by Councillors.	\$720.00
cl217(1) (a1)(iii)	Attendance of Councillors at conferences and seminars.	\$8,166.58
cl217(1) (a1)(iv)	Training of Councillors and provision of skill development.	\$0.00
cl217(1) (a1)(v)	Interstate visits by Councillors including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket travelling expenses.	\$808.32
cl217(1) (a1)(vi)	Overseas visits by Councillors including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket travelling expenses.	\$0.00
cl217(1) (a1)(vii)	Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a Councillor.	\$253.64
cl217(1) (a1)(viii)	Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a Councillor.	\$0.00
Total		\$23,641.77

The total amount of fees paid to the Mayor and Councillors for the year was \$120,485.88. Councillors received an annual fee of \$10,740, with the Mayor receiving an additional fee of \$23,440.

The total amount spent on the provision of Council and other meeting costs for the year was \$13,693.23.

Council has a Policy on the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors. A full copy of the Policy is available for public inspection during office hours or via our website.

### Contracts Awarded 2014/2015 – Regulation Section 217 (1)(a2)

The following contracts were awarded during the 2014/2015 reporting year:

Nature of Goods & Services	Contractor	Amount
Fibre Optic Solution Project	Telco Civil Pty Ltd	\$176,188.28

### Legal Proceedings – Regulation Section 217 (1)(a3)

In 2014/2015 Council did not incur any amount in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against the Council.

Council did however incur costs totalling \$38,724.90 for debt recovery, obtaining legal advice and conveyancing.

### Works Carried Out On Private Land – Regulation Section 217 (1)(a4)

Council did not make any resolutions during the year under Section 67 of the Act concerning work carried out on private land (if the cost of the work was fully or partly subsidised by Council).

### Charitable Donations – Regulation Section 217 (1)(a5)

Council contributed a total of \$54,345.11 to the following organisations under Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* in the 2014/2015 reporting year. A detailed list of organisations which received assistance included:

Organisation	Amount
Inverell Pipe Band	\$2,000.00
Ashford Golf Club	\$536.93
Delungra Golf Club	\$1,425.27
Inverell Eisteddfod Society	\$991.50
Inverell Toughen Up Challenge	\$500.00
Inverell Lapidary Club	\$640.43
Copeton Freshwater Swim	\$2,000.00
Delungra Tennis Club	\$307.10
Country Women's Association of NSW	\$1,611.35
Inverell Pipe Band	\$2,382.99
Wallangra Hall Committee	\$250.00
Northern Inland 4x4 Fishing Caravan & Camping Expo	\$2,000.00
Inverell Rescue Association	\$1,842.41
Delungra Senior Citizens Association	\$200.00
Sapphire City Concert Band	\$2,000.00
Inverell Art Gallery	\$3,550.00
Inverell Macintyre Lions Club	\$200.00
Local Heritage Fund	\$6,987.27
Mount Russell Hall Committee	\$318.40



Yetman Hall Committee	\$554.00
Gwydir Native Fish Hatchery	\$1,818.18
Bonshaw Parents & Citizens Association	\$2,000.00
Delungra Girl Guides	\$500.00
Ashford Business Council	\$2,800.00
Opera in the Paddock	\$10,000.00
Staggy Creek Recreation Reserve	\$2,000.00
Delungra Bowling Club	\$2,000.00
Auburn Vale Tennis Club	\$1,929.28
Swanvale Tennis Club	\$1,000.00
Total	<hr/> \$54,345.11

#### **Delegations to External Bodies – Regulation Section 217 (1)(a6)**

Council delegated functions to the following External Bodies during 2014/2015.

- North West Weight of Loads

#### **Companies in which Council held a controlling interest – Regulation Section 217 (1)(a7)**

Council did not have a controlling interest in any companies during 2014/2015.

#### **Partnerships, Co-operatives or Joint Ventures – Regulation Section 217 (1)(a8)**

Council was a party to the following Partnerships, Co-operatives or Joint Ventures during 2014/2015.

Bush Fire Management Committee  
 Country Mayor's Association  
 NSW Public Libraries Association  
 Border Regional Organisation of Councils  
 New England Group of Councils  
 Northern Inland Regional Waste Group  
 Northern Regional Joint Regional Planning Panel  
 Community Safety Precinct Committee  
 Inverell Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC)

#### **Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan – Regulation Section 217 (1)(a9)**

Council is committed to ensuring that the talents and resources of all employees are fully utilised and that no employee or job applicant regardless of ethnicity, sex, marital status, pregnancy, physical and intellectual impairment, sexuality or age receives less favourable treatment by condition or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. Furthermore, Council is unequivocally committed to promoting Equal Employment Opportunity for all employees.

Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program aims to ensure that all current and prospective employees receive fair and equitable treatment when applying for employment, training or promotion by providing selection criteria based on experience, qualifications and merit.

Council's EEO Policy reinforces the position that equal employment opportunity is a right to fair and unbiased conduct, practices and decisions in all employment related activities and is based on the principle of merit expounded in Council's EEO Program.

Council has adopted and is operating under its Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Policy and Management Plan. The Plan contains strategies for communication and education, recruitment, appointment and promotion, training and development, conditions of service, anti-discrimination, harassment and grievance procedures.

Council is committed to ensuring that the talents and resources of all employees are fully utilised and that no employee or job applicant regardless of ethnicity, sex, marital status, pregnancy, physical and intellectual impairment, sexuality or age receives less favourable treatment by condition or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. Furthermore, Council is unequivocally committed to promoting Equal Employment Opportunity for all employees.

Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Program aims to ensure that all current and prospective employees receive fair and equitable treatment when applying for employment, training or promotion by providing selection criteria based on experience, qualifications and merit.

Council's EEO Policy reinforces the position that equal employment opportunity is a right to fair and unbiased conduct, practices and decisions in all employment related activities and is based on the principle of merit expounded in Council's EEO Program.

EEO Training is included in Council's Induction Training and is also included in Supervisory Training. Position Vacant advertisements reinforce that Council is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

#### **Remuneration General Manager – Regulation Section 217 (1)(b)**

Salary	\$235,221.02
Superannuation	\$30,000.00
Non-cash benefit	\$8,960.00
Fringe Benefits Tax	\$41,861.14
Total	<u>\$316,042.16</u>

#### **Remuneration Senior Staff – Regulation Section 217 (1)(c)**

The total remuneration for Council's two (2) senior staff remuneration packages for the year (excluding the General Manager position) was \$463,121.92. This is broken into the following components (combined for all senior staff excluding the GM):

Salary	\$354,723.70
Superannuation	\$54,520.33
Non-cash benefit	\$17,920.00
Fringe Benefits Tax	\$35,957.89
Total	<u>\$463,121.92</u>

#### **Comparison of actual stormwater management services with projected stormwater management services as proposed in management plan, stating reasons for any difference – Regulation Section 217 (e)**

In 2014/2015 Council continued to impose a Stormwater Management Service Charge; the funding mechanism put in place for Councils to fund Stormwater Management Services, outside of the Notional Yield Calculation. The charge applies to all land within the Inverell, Ashford, Delungra, Yetman and Gilgai urban areas that fall within the residential or business categories for rating purposes (except vacant land) to which stormwater services are provided. The charge was set at \$25.00 for 2014/2015 (ie the maximum charge which can be raised). Funds raised through the charge were utilised to fund both capital projects and recurrent expenditure relating to new and additional stormwater management services. The

Stormwater Management Service Charge raised \$108,693.56 in the 2014/2015 reporting year.

A comparison of the actual stormwater management services with projected stormwater management services as proposed in the management plan is detailed below.

Projected Performance	Actual Performance
<b>Maintenance</b>  Prepare and implement annual maintenance program for lined and unlined stormwater drainage systems  Investigate complaints/requests regarding drainage matters	<b>Maintenance</b>  Annual Maintenance Program implemented  Complaints/requests responded to in a timely manner
<b>Asset Management</b>  Undertake data capture of and maintain stormwater assets register  Identify and update information on all drainage assets within the urban area  Provide maintenance management services for stormwater systems	<b>Asset Management</b>  Information captured and updated  Information captured and updated  Routine maintenance carried out
<b>Strategic Planning</b>  Prepare a forward plan for stormwater drainage improvement needs	<b>Strategic Planning</b>  Strategic Forward Plan for Stormwater Drainage prepared

#### **Statement detailing coastal protection services provided by the council during the year – Regulation Section 217 (e1)**

Council did not impose a coastal protection service levy during the 2014/2015 reporting year.

#### **Companion Animal Activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with the Companion Animals Act and Regulation – Regulation Section 217 (f)**

Council, in consultation with stakeholders, has prepared a Companion Animals Management Plan. The plan is not a statutory requirement but is considered best practice from the perspective of explaining to the community how Council complies with its obligations under the *Companion Animals Act 1998*. The plan identifies Council's current regulatory and educational activities as well as putting a review procedure in place. This plan acknowledges the social benefits that companion animals can provide as well as the importance of responsible pet ownership.

Council complies with guidelines on the exercise of functions under the Companion Animals Act, which includes lodging pound collection returns and data relating to dog attacks with the Department of Local Government on a regular basis.

A number of education programs were conducted during the reporting year to encourage responsible pet ownership and included advertising in the local media and articles in Council's newsletter. Council in conjunction with local networks promoted responsible pet ownership through preschools and primary schools in the Shire.

Council promotes and encourages the desexing of dogs and cats through local media channels, distribution of fliers and on Council's website. Council also works in conjunction with local vets to regularly conduct desexing days for dogs and cats.

Council has a number of strategies in place to comply with the requirement under the Companion Animals Act to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals. This includes lost and found segments being conducted daily on the local radio and Council working closely with networks in Inverell, Warialda and Bingara to find homes for unclaimed animals.

Council provides a vast network of walking tracks for leashed companion animals and their owners to utilise. A centrally located off leash area exercise area is also provided adjacent to Lions Park.

Companion Animal Control Expenses totalled \$151,032.00 for the 2014/2015 reporting year.

### Annual Reporting Requirements under Section 125 of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

During the 2014/15 reporting year Inverell Shire Council conducted quarterly reviews of its program for the release of government information to identify the kinds of government information held by Council that should in the public interest be made available and that can be made publicly available without imposing unreasonable additional costs on the agency.

Details of the information made publicly available on Council's website as a result of the review have included:

- Business papers and minutes of all major Council Committees,
- Facts Sheets on Major Council Decisions,
- Regular Updates on Major Projects i.e. Varley Oval and Cameron Park Redevelopment,
- Statistical information about access applications.

**Table A: Number of applications by type of applicant 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	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Members of Parliament	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Private Sector Business	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Not for Profit organisations or community groups	nil	Nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Members of the public (application by legal representative)	nil	2	nil	2	nil	nil	nil	nil
Members of the public (other)	nil	1	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil

\* More than one decision can be made in respect of a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision. This also applies to Table B.

**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*	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	nil	3	nil	2	nil	nil	nil	nil
Access applications; partly personal information applications and partly other	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil

\* A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in clause 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant (the applicant being an individual).

**Table C: Invalid applications**

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

**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	nil
Cabinet information	nil
Executive Council information	nil
Contempt	nil
Legal professional privilege	nil
Excluded information	nil
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	nil
Transport safety	nil
Adoption	nil
Care and protection of children	nil
Ministerial code of conduct	nil
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	nil

\* More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and, if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application). This also applies in relation to Table E.

**Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure: matters listed in table to section 14 of Act**

	Number of occasions when application not successful
Responsible and effective government	nil
Law enforcement and security	nil
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	3
Business interests of agencies and other persons	nil
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	nil
Secrecy provisions	nil



Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	nil
--	-----

**Table F: Timeliness**

	Number of applications
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	3
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	nil
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	nil
Total	3

**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	nil	nil	nil
Review by Information Commissioner*	nil	nil	nil
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	1	nil	1
Review by ADT	nil	nil	nil

\* The Information Commissioner 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	nil
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	nil

**Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies under Division 2 of Part 4 of the Act (by type of transfer)**

	Number of applications transferred
Agency initiated transfers	nil
Applicant initiated transfers	nil

### Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (Section 33)

Inverell Shire Council has a Privacy Management Plan as required by the Act. Staff are aware of both the legislation and the plan. The release of information has been in accordance with the legislation and the plan.

There have been no reviews under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* during the reporting period.

### State of the Environment Report

Council's State of the Environment Report will be prepared in 2016 as a component of Council's End of Term Report under the Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework.

### Public Interest Disclosures

Council is required to have a Public Interest Disclosures Policy under section 6D of the Public Interest Disclosures Act, 1994 (the PID Act). Council's policy must have procedures for receiving, assessing and dealing with public interest disclosures, having regard to the Ombudsman's guidelines in formulation of the policy for the purposes of the Act. Our policy conforms to Council's Code of Conduct, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, Workplace Harassment Policy and Workplace Grievance Procedure Policy. The policy is accessible to all staff via Council's intranet and is reviewed annually.

The intention of the PID Act is to provide protection for staff members reporting genuine concerns regarding corruption, maladministration, substantial waste of public money or government information contraventions. Penalties can be imposed on anyone who takes detrimental action on an individual substantially in reprisal for that person making a public interest disclosure. Under Clause 4 (1) of the Public Disclosures Regulation, 2011, Council must include the following information in its Annual Report.

#### Public Interest Disclosures in 2014/2015

Number of public officials who made PIDs	0
Number of PIDs received	0
Of PIDs received, number primarily about:	
Corrupt Conduct	0
Maladministration	0
Serious and substantial waste	0
Government information contravention	0
Local government pecuniary interest contravention	0
Number of PIDs finalised	0

#### Rates and Charges written off during the year (cl 132 reg)

Council's Annual Report must detail the rates and charges written off during the year. This information is presented in the table below.

Rate or Charge	\$
Debtor Write Offs	\$1,545.28
Pensioner Water	\$127,881.22
Pensioner Sewer	\$107,318.75
Pensioner General	\$325,469.36
Pensioner Garbage	\$107,551.13
Postponed Rates	\$22,351.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$692,116.74</b>

