

INVERELL SHIRE COUNCIL

Annual Report



2016/2017



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INVERELL SHIRE COUNCIL

AUDITORS

Audit Office of New South Wales

STATISTICS;

Population of Inverell ~ 16,000

Population of the Shire ~ 18,000

Total Area ~ 8,623sqkm

Inverell is located 664km north of Sydney

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Message from the Mayor



I have pleasure in presenting to you Council's 2016 - 2017 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 2016 – 2017 Council was cognisant of the need to carefully match income (which is constrained by ratepegging) 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 service levels for a growing community is a constant challenge for Council.

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 2016 - 2017 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 2016 – 2017 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.

Council's financial position remains sound and Council again received an unqualified audit report. The implementation of Council's adopted Fit for the Future Roadmap demonstrates our continued commitment to achieving long term financial sustainability.

As outlined in this report, Council has over the last 12 months completed a range of important community initiatives and major infrastructure projects to ensure a vibrant future for our community. Some of these major achievements have included:

- White Ribbon Australia workplace accreditation implementation;
- Secure Country Cricket Championships for Inverell;
- Successfully applied for a Special Rate Variation to ensure Council's long term financial sustainability.
- Completed a wide range of Weeds Projects;
- Remediation works at four landfills and installation of two new transfer stations;
- Liaised with Fly Corporate on the commencement of new Regular Passenger Transport (RPT) Brisbane/Inverell/ Moree return service and completed upgrade works at Inverell Airport Terminal;
- Funding 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;
- Completed 125 kms of Gravel Resheeting on Shire Roads, 92 kms of Bitumen Reseals on Shire Roads and Graded 1288kms of gravel roads;
- Completed a wide range of road rehabilitation works on MR137, MR187 and SH12;
- Commissioned a new Water Treatment Plant at Ashford.

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 thank our staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors who deliver the projects and services that our community needs and uses every day. Their efforts ensure that our community continues to develop and grow, paving the way for a vibrant future for our community of tomorrow.

I invite you to peruse Inverell Shire Council's 2016 - 2017 Annual Report.

PJ Henry PSM
General Manager

Our Community

Inverell Shire is a dynamic and creative Community that provides an opportunity for its citizens to enjoy a quality lifestyle. The area is endowed with natural resources and citizens who adopt a progressive and inclusive approach to life. These values are encapsulated in the Shires Vision Statement – ‘A Community for Everyone’.

In the future, it is inevitable that the Community will be faced with challenges that must be addressed. As a Community we must be vigilant to the early warning signs that these challenges are approaching and then be prepared to act decisively in response.

In responding to these challenges, Inverell Shire needs to take control of its own destiny. While acknowledging that the Shire is part of a Region and that an integrated approach to challenges is required, the Shire will not be constrained from celebrating and strengthening its own identity.



Council's Vision:

"A Community For Everyone".

Council's Destinations:

- *A recognised leader in the broader context;*
- *A community that is healthy, educated and sustainable;*
- *An environment that is protected and sustained;*
- *A strong growing local economy; and*
- *The Community is served by sustainable services and infrastructure.*

Our 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 Our 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.

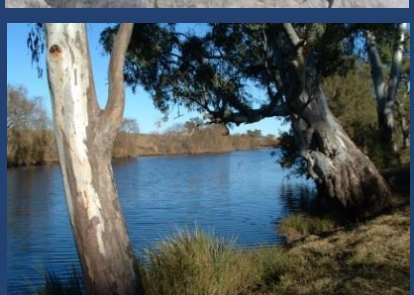
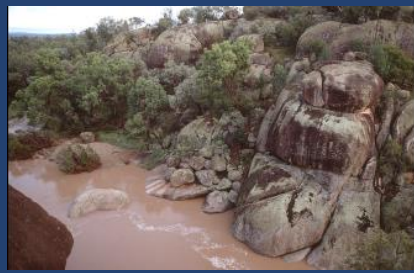
The Economy:

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



Our 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, 2020.

The Councillors elect a Mayor every two (2) years and a 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 Stewart Berryman



Cr Kate Dight



Cr Paul King



Cr Neil McCosker



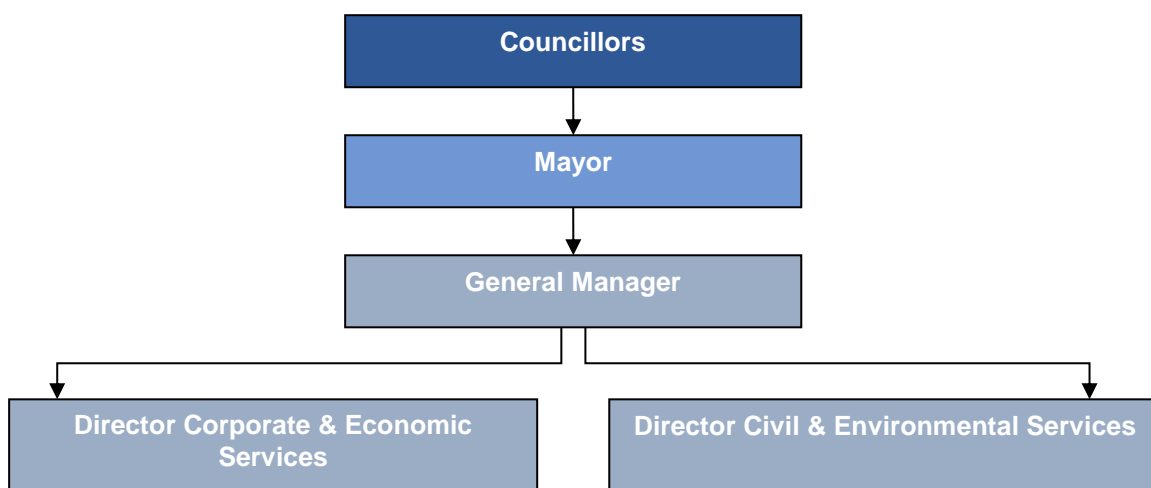
Cr Mal Peters



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

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 of a Council has the following particular functions:

- to conduct the day-to-day management of the council in accordance with the strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies of the council,
- to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the council,
- to advise the mayor and the governing body on the development and implementation of the strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies of the council,
- to advise the mayor and the governing body on the appropriate form of community consultation on the strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies of the council and other matters related to the council,
- to prepare, in consultation with the mayor and the governing body, the council's community strategic plan, community engagement strategy, resourcing strategy, delivery program, operational plan and annual report,
- to ensure that the mayor and other councillors are given timely information and advice and the administrative and professional support necessary to effectively discharge their functions,
- to exercise any of the functions of the council that are delegated by the council to the general manager,
- to appoint staff in accordance with the organisation structure determined under this Chapter and the resources approved by the council,
- to direct and dismiss staff,
- to implement the council's workforce management strategy,
- any other functions that are conferred or imposed on the general manager by or under this or any other Act.

The Director Corporate and Economic Services

Corporate and Economic Services is responsible for the following activities:

- Corporate/Strategic Planning and Development
- Corporate Services
- Economic Development
- Property Development
- Financial Services
- Information Services
- Human Resources
- Asset Management
- Procurement and Contracts
- Depot Services
- Fleet Management Services
- Library and Tourism Services
- Cultural Development
- Community/Social Development
- Aerodrome Services
- Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service Liaison

The Director Civil and Environmental Services

Civil and Environmental Services is responsible for the following activities:

- Statutory and Strategic Planning
- Environmental and Public Health
- Building Control
- Waste Management Services
- Public and Private Swimming Pools
- Caravan Park Supervision
- Cemetery Operations
- Regulatory Services and Compliance
- Heritage Matters
- Survey and Design
- Works Branch Operations
- Major Drainage
- Fleet Operations
- Private Works
- Weight of Loads
- Sporting Facilities Services
- Parks and Reserves Services
- Local Emergency Management
- Water Services
- Sewerage Services
- Traffic Management Services
- Bridges Maintenance and Construction Services
- Roads Maintenance and Construction Services

How Your Council Functions

Council 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 the Inverell Shire Public Library and also online via Council's website www.inverell.nsw.gov.au.

Council recognises the importance of consulting with its Community on a continual basis and encourages community input in a variety of ways. Council conducts a half-hour Public Forum Session at every Ordinary Meeting of Council, starting at 3.00pm and at the commencement of its Major Committee Meetings, held on the Second Wednesday of the month commencing at 9.00am. 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 Community Village Precinct Meetings which are held regularly in the surrounding villages. Contact Council for details on ph: 67 288 288.

With the assistance of STA FM Community Radio, Council conducts regular monthly Talkback Sessions. 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 13,500 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. A new Water Treatment Plant was completed this year.
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

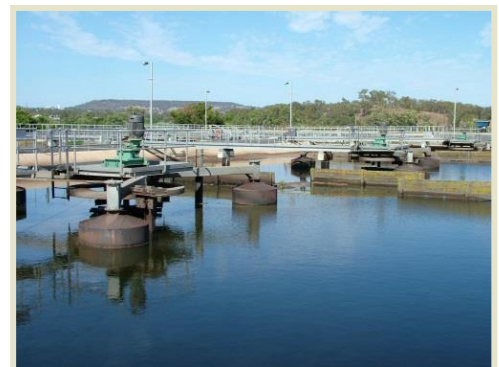
of its natural resources.

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.

The schemes are managed as a single sewerage fund and are operated in an environmentally sensitive manner. There is a capital investment of approximately \$34.5M in the infrastructure and details are recorded in Council's Asset Management System.



Access & Social Planning

Social Planning - The 1996 NSW Social Justice Directions Statement "Fair Go, Fair Share, Fair Say" committed the NSW Government and the Division of Local Government to promoting a more inclusive Community by ensuring that government services are responsive to Community needs and diversity. To this end, Inverell Shire Council has addressed these matters in Council's Strategic Plan. The overriding principles that have been applied in the development of Council's Strategic Plan in this matter are:



- The need to promote fairness in the distribution of resources, particularly for those most in need,
- The need to promote and recognise people's rights and improve the accountability of decision makers,
- The need to ensure that people have fairer access to the economic resources and services essential to meeting their basic needs and improving their quality of life; and
- The need to give people better opportunities for genuine participation and consultation about decisions affecting their lives.

The Strategic Plan now serves a crucial role in documenting identified Community needs and providing a clear direction for recommending remedial action to address prioritised service shortfalls. As a consequence, the Strategic Plan serves as an effective tool allowing Council to formulate its management and business plans across the range of Council functions, ensuring that its services, facilities and processes are, as far as possible, accessible and responsive to all members of the Community.

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



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 Strategic Plan includes an expression of the community's objectives and needs for cultural services and facilities. The communities of the Shire are actively involved in a wide array of cultural and artistic activities.

The Strategic Plan considers the following principles:

- 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 Strategic objectives in respect of a strong economy include recognising 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 Strategic Plan requires the "giving of priority to economic and employment growth and the attraction of visitors". Inverell Shire is now the fastest growing Shire in the New England/North West and Inverell is one of the fastest growing regional centres in New South Wales with an annual growth rate of 2.79%

Council's Strategic objectives in respect of a strong economy are:

- Businesses, Institutions and Council are working cooperatively towards agreed initiatives to strengthen and expand the Shires economic base;
- Plan for and promote the clustering of specific businesses and industry sectors in commercially appropriate locations;
- Facilitate access to services and infrastructure including education, training and research for business;
- Develop and promote the Shire as a place for business establishment;
- Assist business to integrate with the Community and natural environment;
- Plan for and promote private and commercial businesses and residential, industrial and commercial development;
- Promote a competitive, dynamic and progressive business environment that improves market value;
- Promote the Shire as a destination for visitors; and
- Generate economic benefits to the Shire by increasing visitation from domestic, regional, national and international market sectors.

Council has successfully and continues to demonstrate leadership in these strategic areas. Key results to date include:

- Redevelopment and beautification of the Inverell CBD and Cultural Precinct including a \$4.5M expansion of these works in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and minor upgrade works in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- Direct financial and in-kind assistance to Business and the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- Growth and promotion of Inverell's tourism industry through the Visitor Information Centre and provision of comprehensive promotional materials. Tourism is worth in excess of \$47M a year to the local economy.
- Facilitation of business development seminars with the State Government.
- Facilitation of the bi-annual Inverell Skills Retention/Careers Expo.
- Co-ordination of Inverell Business, Tourism and Community Websites.
- Facilitation and participation in regional national and international events promoting Inverell.
- The provision of Financial Assistance to Businesses through its Industry Assistance Programs.
- Participation in the NSW Governments "Small Business Friendly Council" Program.
- Commenced design of Stage 2 of the Rifle Range Road Industrial Subdivision.

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:

8 Object of principles

The object of the principles for councils set out in this Chapter is to provide guidance to enable councils to carry out their functions in a way that facilitates local communities that are strong, healthy and prosperous.

8A Guiding principles for councils

(1) Exercise of functions generally.

The following general principles apply to the exercise of functions by councils:

- a) Councils should provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making.
- b) Councils should carry out functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers.
- c) Councils should plan strategically, using the integrated planning and reporting framework, for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community.
- d) Councils should apply the integrated planning and reporting framework in carrying out their functions so as to achieve desired outcomes and continuous improvements.
- e) Councils should work co-operatively with other councils and the State government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community.
- f) Councils should manage lands and other assets so that current and future local community needs can be met in an affordable way.
- g) Councils should work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs.
- h) Councils should act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community.
- i) Councils should be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supportive working environment for staff.

(2) Decision-making

The following principles apply to decision-making by councils (subject to any other applicable law):

- a) Councils should recognise diverse local community needs and interests.
- b) Councils should consider social justice principles.
- c) Councils should consider the long term and cumulative effects of actions on future generations.
- d) Councils should consider the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

- e) Council decision-making should be transparent and decision-makers are to be accountable for decisions and omissions.

(3) Community participation Councils should actively engage with their local communities, through the use of the integrated planning and reporting framework and other measures.

8B Principles of sound financial management

The following principles of sound financial management apply to councils:

- a) Council spending should be responsible and sustainable, aligning general revenue and expenses.
- b) Councils should invest in responsible and sustainable infrastructure for the benefit of the local community.
- c) Councils should have effective financial and asset management, including sound policies and processes for the following:
 - i) performance management and reporting,
 - ii) asset maintenance and enhancement,
 - iii) funding decisions,
 - iv) risk management practices.
- d) Councils should have regard to achieving intergenerational equity, including ensuring the following:
 - i) policy decisions are made after considering their financial effects on future generations,
 - ii) the current generation funds the cost of its services.

Integrated planning and reporting principles that apply to councils

8C Integrated planning and reporting principles that apply to councils

The following principles for strategic planning apply to the development of the integrated planning and reporting framework by councils:

- a) Councils should identify and prioritise key local community needs and aspirations and consider regional priorities.
- b) Councils should identify strategic goals to meet those needs and aspirations.
- c) Councils should develop activities, and prioritise actions, to work towards the strategic goals.
- d) Councils should ensure that the strategic goals and activities to work towards them may be achieved within council resources.
- e) Councils should regularly review and evaluate progress towards achieving strategic goals.
- f) Councils should maintain an integrated approach to planning, delivering, monitoring and reporting on strategic goals.
- g) Councils should collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals.
- h) Councils should manage risks to the local community or area or to the council effectively and proactively.
- i) Councils should make appropriate evidence-based adaptations to meet changing needs and circumstances.



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 2016/2017.

Overall Council's operational and financial position in respect of its five (5) destinations are sound. The following information is provided in respect of major issues and projects that Council is leading, participating in, or delivering in 2017/2018:

Destination 1 – A recognised leader in the broader context:

- 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 Joint Organisation of Councils in the New England. Secretariat for the Group;
- Participated in Border Region Organisation of Councils Meeting;
- Seeking grants for the benefit of the community;
- White Ribbon Australia workplace accreditation implementation;
- Sponsor acquisition prize of Inverell Art Prize;
- Initiate inaugural NAIDOC week art exhibition; and
- Secure Country Cricket Championships for Inverell.



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

- Joint initiative with BEST Employment to commence free learn to swim classes;
- Facilitation role for “Linking Together Centre” and development of strong partnerships with Best Employment, State and Federal Government funding bodies;
- Assist with Sapphire City Festival;
- Participation in New England Cooperative Library;
- Working with BEST Employment in respect of the management rights of the Linking Together Centre;
- White Ribbon Community Project action plan being implemented;
- Completed Yetman Hall Upgrade;
- Completed Yetman Recreation Centre Upgrade and cricket pitch upgrade;
- Facilitate Grandparents Day;
- Augment launch of Inverell Parkrun; and
- Successful grant submission from NSW Government for LTC building modifications to assist in the establishment of a drop-in centre.

Destination 3 – An environment that is protected and sustained:

- Partnering with Local Land Services in “Nandewar Brigalow Bio Links Program”;
- Remove Harrisia Cactus at Yetman;
- Remove Water Lettuce at Beebo West;
- Participated in Cross Borders Working Group on weed control meetings;
- Participated in Northern Inland Regional Waste meetings;
- Submitted grant applications for two new transfer stations and remediation works at four rural landfills;
- Ongoing works at May Street Park;
- Completed draft open space strategy;
- Completed draft LEMP;
- Assist Yetman community to secure weed funding for Mimosa Bush control on Yetman Common;
- Erect education signage on Macintyre River for river rehabilitation program; and
- Outreach National Science Week activities at Inverell Public School.





Destination 4 – A strong Local Economy:

- Participated in a wide range of Tourism and Marketing Shows;
- Participated in Inverell Promotional Activities with the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- Secure funding for Small Business up skilling workshops;
- Completed upgrade works at Inverell Airport Terminal; and
- Liaised with Fly Corporate on the commencement of new Regular Passenger Transport (RPT) service from Brisbane – Inverell – Moree – Brisbane.

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

- Commenced and completed a range of Road Upgrade Projects on the Regional Road and Local Road Network;
- Completed a significant quantum of Shire Roads Gravel Resheeting;
- Completed a significant quantum of heavy patching throughout the Shire;
- Commenced Council's 2017/2018 bitumen reseal program;
- Completed 2016/2017 Financial Statements – sound financial result achieved. With no audit issues raised;
- Upgrades of infrastructure at Inverell Pool;
- Commenced upgrade works at Inverell Sports Complex;
- Completed 90% of replacement of Tin Tot Bridge;
- Commenced upgrade works at the Inverell Sewerage Treatment Plant;
- Implementing White Ribbon Australia workplace accreditation;
- Recreation Grants awards four community groups;
- Community consultation for Open Space Strategy; and
- Continual Roll out of hybrid solar lighting infrastructure.



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)

A report as to Council's achievements in implementing the community strategic plan over the 4 year term was presented to Council at the August 2016 Ordinary Meeting. A copy of the End of Term Report is included as Appendix 1.

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 the Audit Office of New South Wales for the Year ended 30 June 2017 is included as a separate document to the Annual Report. The financial reports can be found on Council's website.

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 2016/2017 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	\$9,953.30
cl217(1) (a1)(i)	Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to Councillors.	\$7,858.87
cl217(1) (a1)(ii)	Telephone calls made by Councillors.	\$5,798.99
cl217(1) (a1)(iii)	Attendance of Councillors at conferences and seminars.	\$8761.23
cl217(1) (a1)(iv)	Training of Councillors and provision of skill development.	\$2,943.62
cl217(1) (a1)(v)	Interstate visits by Councillors including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket travelling expenses.	\$0.00
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.	\$681.45
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		\$35,997.46

The total amount of fees paid to the Mayor and Councillors for the year was \$129,735.06. Councillors received an annual fee of \$11,290, with the Mayor receiving an additional fee of \$24,630.

The total amount spent on the provision of Council and other meeting costs for the year was \$10,230.77.

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 2016/2017 – Regulation Section 217 (1)(a2)

The following contracts were awarded during the 2016/2017 reporting year:

Nature of Goods & Services	Contractor	Amount
Supply & Spray Bitumen	NSW Spray and Seal Pty Ltd	\$1,253,707.00
Manufacture & Delivery of Precoated Aggregate	Inverell Aggregate Supplies Pty Ltd	\$354,681.00
Construction Aeration Tank Inverell Sewage Treatment Plant	Eire Constructions Pty Ltd	\$1,919,997.00
Design & Construct Neil McCosker Bridge (Tintot)	Ozwide Bridge Rail & Civil Pty Ltd	\$460,250.00
Inverell Sporting Complex Amenities Building Redevelopment	Danbuilt Pty Ltd	\$443,736.37

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

In 2016/2017 Council did not incur any amount in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against the Council.

Council did however incur costs totalling \$40,699.76 for debt recovery expenses, 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 \$110,206.96 to the following organisations under Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* in the 2016/2017 reporting year. A detailed list of organisations which received assistance included:

Organisation	Amount
2 Rivers Pty Ltd – Ashford Salami Festival	\$200.00
Ashford Golf Club	\$2,387.61
Ashford Pony Club	\$1,599.00
Border Branch Stock Horse Challenge	\$200.00
Country Women's Association (Gwydir Group)	\$2,291.46
Country Women's Association (Gwydir Group) refund unspent funds from 2015/2016	(\$3,255.21)
Danthonia Community Christmas Community Event	\$200.00
Delungra & District Tennis Club	\$495.95
Delungra Bowling Club	\$1,000.00
Delungra Senior Citizens Association	\$200.00
Department Primary Industries (cancelled unpresented cheque)	(\$375.00)
Gilgai Public Hall	\$816.00
Graman War Memorial Hall Society	\$1,000.00
Gum Flat Hall	\$2,000.00
Gwydir Fish	\$1,818.18
Inverell & District Lapidary Club	\$380.74
Inverell Anglers Association	\$500.00
Inverell Art Gallery	\$2,355.00
Inverell Chamber of Commerce & Industry	\$10,000.00
Inverell East Rotary Club – Copeton Freshwater Swim	\$2,000.00
Inverell Eisteddfod Society	\$1,573.50
Inverell Girl Guides	\$700.00
Inverell Pioneer Village	\$12,550.00
Inverell Pipe Band	\$3,990.83
Inverell Rescue Squad	\$2,012.61
Inverell Theatre Company	\$2,000.00
Inverell Toughen Up Challenge	\$500.00
Local Heritage Fund - Donaldson	\$1,200.00
Local Heritage Fund – Davis	\$5,500.00
Local Heritage Fund – Daley	\$2,000.00
Local Heritage Fund – McNeil	\$3,000.00
Local Heritage Fund – Capel	\$5,365.00
Local Heritage Fund - Ditchfield	\$4,000.00

Local Heritage Fund – Ditchfield	\$1,635.00
Local Heritage Fund – McGregor	\$1,500.00
Moree Plains Shire Council - North West Weight of Loads	\$19,542.88
Mt Russell Hall	\$1,937.27
Opera North West Ltd	\$10,000.00
Sapphire City Concert Band	\$2,000.00
Sapphire Sports Shears	\$800.00
Yetman Hall & Progress Association	\$2,586.14
Total	\$110,206.96

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

Council delegated functions to the following External Bodies during 2016/2017.

- 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 2016/2017.

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

Council was not party to any Partnerships, Co-operatives or Joint Ventures during 2016/2017.

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	\$230,356.05
Superannuation	\$30,000.00
Non-cash benefit	\$8,960.00
Fringe Benefits Tax	\$39,902.47
Total	<u>\$309,218.52</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 \$474,880.60. This is broken into the following components (combined for all senior staff excluding the GM):

Salary	\$388,623.58
Superannuation	\$55,320.33
Non-cash benefit	\$17,920.00
Fringe Benefits Tax	\$13,016.69
Total	<u>\$474,880.60</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 (1)(e)

In 2016/2017 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 for 2016/17 was set at \$25.00 per residential assessment, \$12.50 per Residential Strata and \$25 per Business Assessment for each 350 m² or additional part thereof, subject to a maximum on Business Premises of \$150. 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 \$140,728.01 in the 2016/2017 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
Maintenance Prepare and implement annual maintenance program for lined and unlined stormwater drainage systems Investigate complaints/requests regarding drainage matters	Maintenance Annual Maintenance Program implemented Complaints/requests responded to in a timely manner
Asset Management 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	Asset Management Information captured and updated Information captured and updated Routine maintenance carried out
Strategic Planning Prepare a forward plan for stormwater drainage improvement needs	Strategic Planning Strategic Forward Plan for Stormwater Drainage prepared

Statement detailing coastal protection services provided by the council during the year – Regulation Section 217 (1)(e1)

Council did not impose a coastal protection service levy during the 2016/2017 reporting year.

Companion Animal Activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with the Companion Animals Act and Regulation – Regulation Section 217 (1)(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 Office 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 the RSPCA and 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 local networks 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 \$216,154.31 for the 2016/2017 reporting year.

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

During the 2016/17 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	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Members of the public (other)	1	nil	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	nil	nil	nil	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	nil
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)	1
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	nil
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	nil
Total	1

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	nil	nil	nil
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 is addressed as a component of Council's End of Term Report under the Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework. Please refer Appendix 1.

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 2016/2017

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	\$911.64
Pensioner Water	\$122,029.58
Pensioner Sewer	\$102,123.48
Pensioner General	\$306,189.56
Pensioner Garbage	\$108,448.68
Postponed Rates	\$23,661.85
Total	<u>\$663,364.79</u>

APPENDIX 1

END OF TERM REPORT

Under the provisions of the NSW Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements, at the end of each four (4) year Council Term, a Term Review is to be completed to indicate Council's performance over the period against the Community Strategic Plan. In considering this document, Council may wish to record comments for consideration by the incoming Council.

The following is a list of some of the wide range of Council's activities and achievements over the last four (4) years which have assisted the continued growth and sustainability of the Shire and its Community during what has been a difficult economic period. This list is not exhaustive, but clearly demonstrates the broad nature of Council's Service and Infrastructure Delivery and its continued strong support and advocacy for its Community.

This report addresses each financial year separately in terms of physical and financial outputs and then goes on to detail a range of information relevant to the Council term.

OPERATIONAL PLAN – COMBINED FUND 2012/2013

The following information is provided in respect of major issues and projects that Council has provided, participated in, or delivered in 2012/2013:

Destination 1 – A recognised leader in the broader context:

(This Destination gives priority to the recognition of the Shire as a vital component of the New England North West Region through Regional Leadership.)

- Participation in Country Week 2012;
- Participation in Road Funding meetings with the Roads and Traffic Authority;
- Visit by Deputy Premier of New South Wales, Andrew Stoner;
- Visit by Governor General of Australia, Dame Quentin Bryce;
- Local Government Elections; and
- Participation in Border Regional Organisation of Councils (BROC) meetings.

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

(This Destination gives priority to the Shire as a sustainable and equitable place that promotes health, well being, life long learning and lifestyle diversity.)

- Facilitation role for "Linking Together Centre" and development of strong partnerships with Best Employment, State and Federal Government funding bodies;
- Conduct of 2012 Careers and Skills Retention Expo;
- Provided Financial Assistance to the "Conservatorium of Music";
- Completed the new Connections Disability Services Building;
- Implemented new CCTV system in the Inverell CBD;
- Assisted with Sapphire City Festival;

- Assisted with and provided Financial Support to the Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic, Joey's Mini World Cup, Copeton Freshwater Swim and other Sporting events;
- Provided funding support to a range of Cultural Activities including the Inverell Art Gallery and Opera in the Paddock;
- Secured funding from Telstra Foundation for "Everyone Connected Adult Literacy" Program and delivered Community Training; and
- Commenced works on the Inverell Town Hall Redevelopment.



Destination 3 – An environment that is protected and sustained:

(This Destination gives priority to sustainable agriculture, protection and conservation of lands, rivers, waterways, bio-diversity and the built environment.)



- Partnered with Catchment Management Authority in "Bridge to Bridge", Macintyre River Program and associated Service Club Initiatives; and
- Completed installation of solar panels at Inverell Waste Facility.

Destination 4 – A strong Local Economy:

(This Destination gives priority to economic and employment growth and the attraction of visitors.)



- Worked with Bindaree Beef to secure access to RMS Land, improve traffic movements at the Abattoir and resealed their carpark;
- Conducted Inverell On Display 2013;
- Participated in a wide range of Tourism and Marketing Shows to support Inverell Shire's \$47M Tourism Industry;
- Participated in Inverell Promotional Activities with the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

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

(This Destination gives priority to the provision of community focused services and the maintenance, enhancement and upgrade of infrastructure.)



- Completed a range of Road Upgrade Projects on the Regional Road Network;
- Completed Highway upgrade project east of Delungra for Roads and Maritime Services;
- Completed a significant quantum of Shire Roads Gravel Resheeting;
- Major upgrade of Nullamanna Road (Stage 2) completed;
- Completed reconstruction of Sewer Pumping Station No2;
- Commenced Planning for the new Ashford Water Treatment Plant;
- Completed sale of land for unpaid rates;
- Completed implementation of new Corporate Financial Management, Asset Management, Payroll and Plant Fleet Management System;
- Elsmore Bridge project commenced;
- Completed Council's 2012/2013 bitumen reseal program;
- Secured funding from State Water Corporation for heavy patching on Copeton Dam Road;
- Skate Park Extension completed;
- Reseal Administration Centre carpark;
- Delungra new footpath program commenced;
- Painted Exterior of Delungra Hall;
- Completed 2012-2013 Financial Statements – sound financial result achieved; and
- Secured 4% interest rate subsidy for the new Ashford Water Treatment Plant project.

OPERATIONAL PLAN – COMBINED FUND 2013/2014

The following information is provided in respect of major issues and projects that Council has provided, participated in, or delivered in 2013/2014:

Destination 1 – A recognised leader in the broader context:

(This Destination gives priority to the recognition of the Shire as a vital component of the New England North West Region through Regional Leadership.)



- Participation in Country Week;
- Participation in Road Funding meetings with the Roads and Maritime Services;
- Visit by Deputy Premier of New South Wales, Andrew Stoner; and
- Participation in New England Northwest Regional Tourism meetings.

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

(This Destination gives priority to the Shire as a sustainable and equitable place that promotes health, well being, life long learning and lifestyle diversity.)



- Facilitation role for “Linking Together Centre” and development of strong partnerships with Best Employment, State and Federal Government funding bodies;

- Assisted with Sapphire City Festival;
- Secured library funding from Brighter Access for Early Childhood Inclusion Program;
- Assisted with and provided Financial Support to the Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic, Joey's Mini World Cup, Copeton Inland Swim and other Sporting events;
- Secured funding from Festival Australia Yilambu – Yilaathu (Past – Present) Indigenous Story Telling Project;
- Secured funding from Community Building Partnerships Program for the Linking Together Mentor Shed;
- Prepared Plans and Specifications for the new Ashford Medical Centre;
- Provided assistance to the Evans Street Surgery in their development of a new Medical Centre project;
- New partnership established with Carers NSW to implement the “Together Program”;
- New partnership with Best Employment, Glen Severn Council and Gwydir Shire Council to deliver the “Low Income Energy Efficiency Program”;
- Co-ordinate youth activities – Movies in Campbell Park;
- Completed building works on new Linking Together Centre;
- Provided funding support to a range of Cultural Activities including the Inverell Art Gallery and Opera in the Paddock; and
- Helping Hands and Linking Youth Program recognised by Youth Action NSW, a peak organisation representing young people and youth services, with the Linking Together Centre being awarded with the 2013 Outstanding Project/Service Working with Aboriginal Young People Award.



Destination 3 – An environment that is protected and sustained:



(This Destination gives priority to sustainable agriculture, protection and conservation of lands, rivers, waterways, bio-diversity and the built environment.)

- Partnered with the Local Land Services in “Brigalow Nandewar Bio Links Program”;
- Partnered with the Local Land Services to clean up Macintyre River near Inverell Complex;
- Partnered with the Local Land Services on the establishment of the Ross Hill Reserve adjacent to Jardine Road/Angel Avenue;
- Sealed new Lookout Area adjacent to Macintyre River;
- Working With Regional Development Northern Inland on a Regional Streetlighting Energy Efficiency Upgrade Program; and
- Commenced Energy Efficiency Program for Administration Building.

Destination 4 – A strong Local Economy:



(This Destination gives priority to economic and employment growth and the attraction of visitors.)

- Completed 98% of the redevelopment of Varley Oval;
- Completed 90% of works on new Transport Museum building;
- Completed works on Town Hall Redevelopment;
- Commenced works on the new Ashford SES EOC building;
- Completed works on Riverside Restaurant upgrade;
- Participated in a wide range of Tourism and Marketing Shows to support Inverell Shire's \$47M Tourism Industry;
- Participated in Inverell Promotional Activities with the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- Produced new Inverell Shire Tourism Guide; and
- Completed upgrade of transformer in Turnham Carpark with Essential Energy for CBD Electricity Supply security.



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



(This Destination gives priority to the provision of community focused services and the maintenance, enhancement and upgrade of infrastructure.)

- Completed a 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 Council's 2013/2014 bitumen reseal program;
- Completed new Elsmore Bridge;
- Completed new Kiss and Drop Facility at Holy Trinity School;
- Completed Delungra Footpath Upgrade Program and installed new Ross and Raglan Street Footpath;
- Called Tenders for the new Ashford Water Treatment Plant and Reservoir;

- New Cardboard Press installed at Inverell Recycling Facility for use by Northaven and completed a range of upgrade works at the facility for Northaven;
- Completed new Plant Storage Shed at Inverell Depot;
- Submitted Local Infrastructure applications for the Inverell Sewerage Treatment Plant;
- Secured Community Building Partnerships Program funding for additional exercise equipment in Campbell Park;
- Submitted Club Grant Scheme application for major upgrade of Cameron Oval; and
- Completed 2013-2014 Financial Statements – sound financial result achieved;



OPERATIONAL PLAN – COMBINED FUND 2014/2015

The following information is provided in respect of major issues and projects that Council has provided, participated in, or delivered in 2014/2015:

Destination 1 – A recognised leader in the broader context:



(This Destination gives priority to the recognition of the Shire as a vital component of the New England North West Region through Regional Leadership.)

- Identified as a “Continuing Stand-alone Council” by the NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel;
- Participation in 2014 Regional Living Expo;
- Visit by Deputy Premier, Mr Troy Grant;
- Visit by Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Barnaby Joyce;
- Visit by NSW Governor, Hon. David Hurley;
- 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 Group of 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; and
- Participated in Border Region Organisation of Councils (BROC) Meetings.

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



(This Destination gives priority to the Shire as a sustainable and equitable place that promotes health, well being, life long learning and lifestyle diversity.)

- Facilitation role for “Linking Together Centre” and development of strong partnerships with Best Employment, State and Federal Government funding bodies;
- Completed building works on new Ashford EOC Centre;
- Assisted with Sapphire City Festival;
- Assisted with and provided Financial Assistance to the Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic, Joey’s Mini World Cup, Copeton Freshwater Swim and other Sporting events;
- Secured library funding from Brighter Access for Early Childhood Inclusion Program;
- Secured funding from Festival Australia for Ngay Walaaybaa (My Home) visual arts exhibition;
- Secured \$530K in funding from ClubGrants NSW for Cameron Park Redevelopment;
- Completed works on the new Ashford Medical Centre;
- Provided assistance and financial support to the Evans Street Surgery in their development of the new Inverell Medical Centre to secure Inverell’s GP Services into the future:
- Co-ordinated youth activities including Movies in Campbell Park;
- Partnering with Family NSW to provide Playgroup activities at Tingha and Inverell;
- Participation in New England Cooperative Library;
- Provided funding support to a range of Cultural Activities including the Inverell Art Gallery; and
- Refurbished Inverell War Memorial with the Inverell RSM Club.



Destination 3 – An environment that is protected and sustained:

(This Destination gives priority to sustainable agriculture, protection and conservation of lands, rivers, waterways, bio-diversity and the built environment.)



- Partnered with Local Land Services in “Brigalow Nandewar Bio Links Program;
- Completed Energy Efficiency Program for Administration Building and Linking Together Centre;
- Partnership with NSW Environmental Trust 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 Energy Efficiency Program for Inverell Works Depot and Inverell Tourist Centre.

Destination 4 – A strong Local Economy:



(This Destination gives priority to economic and employment growth and the attraction of visitors.)

- Commenced Cameron Park Redevelopment;
- Completed works at Ashford Medical Centre;
- Completed works on the new Ashford SES EOC building;
- Commenced works on new toilet and storage shed at Varley Oval;
- Participated in a wide range of Tourism and Marketing Shows to support Inverell Shire's \$47M Tourism Industry;
- Completed Transport Museum Complex and completed sale of old site to Boss Engineering; and
- Participated in Inverell Promotional Activities with the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

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



(This Destination gives priority to the provision of community focused services and the maintenance, enhancement and upgrade of infrastructure.)

- Completed a range of Road Upgrade Projects on the Regional Road and Local Road Network;
- Completed 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 Council's 2014/2015 bitumen reseal program;
- Completed works for Resealing Inverell Airport;
- Completed an Optic Fibre link installation from the Administration Centre to the Inverell Works Depot;
- Successfully secured 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);
- Completed 2013-2014 Financial Statements – sound financial result achieved;
- Secured additional ongoing Repair Program funding from RMS for Regional Roads Renewals and Upgrades;
- Secured Active Transport Funding (PAMP) for 2015/2016 - \$0.44M Project;
- Secured Black Spot funding for upgrade of Leviathan to Schwenkes Lane and a turning lane at Rob Roy Road;



- Secured Fixing Country Roads funding for Tin Tot Bridge - \$1M Project;
- Secured Fixing Country Roads funding for HML Assessment on the Bruxner Way.
- Continued Gilgai Drainage Project;
- Installed new Vivian and Wood Street and Gwydir Highway near Bowling Club Footpaths and a number of Pram Ramps;
- Continued Brissett/Killeen Street Drainage Upgrades;
- Upgraded Evans Street Cultural Precinct; and
- Installed new Awning on Yetman Hall and Fences.

OPERATIONAL PLAN – COMBINED FUND 2015/2016

The following information is provided in respect of major issues and projects that Council has provided, participated in, or delivered in 2015/2016:

Destination 1 – A recognised leader in the broader context:



(This Destination gives priority to the recognition of the Shire as a vital component of the New England North West Region through Regional Leadership.)

- Fastest growing Shire in the Northern Tablelands Electorate with an annual growth rate of 2.39% making Inverell one of the fastest growing regional centres in NSW. The Shire population is now 16,846.
- Declared “Fit for the Future” by the NSW State Government following the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal’s Audit and Review of Council’s Fit for the Future Roadmap and supporting documentation;
- One of only seven (7) lead NSW Councils to be able to undertake borrowings from NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp) being a Fit for the Future Council, at an interest rate 1% below Commercial Rates, saving the community \$147K in interest payments. Council was commended by NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp) for Council’s professionalism and friendly collaboration as they roll out their new Local Government Borrowing Facilities;
- Visit by Minister for Environment & Heritage, Hon. Mark Speakman;
- Visit by Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Barnaby Joyce;
- Visit by Governor General, Hon. Peter Cosgrove;
- 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 Group of Councils - Secretariat for the Group;
- Participated in Border Region Organisation of Councils (BROC) Meetings;
- Conducted the August, 2015 Committee meetings in Yetman; and
- Submitted Bluett Award – Excellence in Local Government Nomination.

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



(This Destination gives priority to the Shire as a sustainable and

equitable place that promotes health, well being, life long learning and lifestyle diversity.)

- Facilitation for “Linking Together Centre” and development of strong partnerships with Best Employment, State and Federal Government funding bodies;
- Installed new Christmas Tree at the Visitors Centre;
- Assisted with the 2015 Sapphire City Festival and commenced planning for the 2016 – 60th Anniversary Festival;
- Assist with and provided funding to, the 2015 and 2016 Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classics, Joey’s Mini World Cup, Copeton Inland Swim and other Sporting events;
- Partnering with Family NSW to auspice Playgroup activities at Tingha and Inverell;
- Provided funding support to a range of Cultural Activities including the Inverell Art Gallery and Opera in the Paddock; and
- Participation in New England Cooperative Library.

Destination 3 – An environment that is protected and sustained:



(This Destination gives priority to sustainable agriculture, protection and conservation of lands, rivers, waterways, bio-diversity and the built environment.)

- Partnered with Local Land Services in “Brigalow Nandewar Bio Links Program;
- Completed installation of weighbridges at Inverell Landfill;
- Received grants totalling \$495K from NSW Environmental Trust for the rehabilitation of Council landfills;
- Installed new Inverell Community Recycling Centre;
- Installed Solar Energy System at Inverell Art Gallery, Tourist Centre and Works Depot; and
- Completed Energy Efficient Street Lighting Upgrade for the Shire.



Destination 4 – A strong Local Economy:



(This Destination gives priority to economic and employment growth and the attraction of visitors.)

- Participated in a wide range of Tourism and Marketing Shows to support Inverell Shire's \$47M Tourism Industry;
- Participated in Inverell Promotional Activities with the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- Participated in ongoing meetings with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry participants in respect of securing an Inverell Airservice;
- Ongoing discussions with Bindaree Beef in respect of their major expansion;
- Installed new Tourism signage on New England Highway at Wallangarra;
- Published new Inverell Tourism Guide; and
- Delivered new Inverell Tourism promotional programs publications and social media;

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



(This Destination gives priority to the provision of community focused services and the maintenance, enhancement and upgrade of infrastructure.)

- Commenced \$17.9M Rural Roads Program. This is the largest Rural Road Program implemented by Council, being some \$8.4M greater than the normal program;
- Secured additional Active Transport Funding (PAMP) for 2015/2016 - \$283K Project and installed new Bikepaths/Footpaths in Lions Park, Brae Street, Lower Byron Street, Victoria Park, and Rivers Street;
- Completed a significant quantum of Shire Roads Gravel Resheeting;
- Completed a significant quantum of heavy patching throughout the Shire;
- Completed Council's 2015/2016 bitumen reseal program being the largest ever program;
- Upgrade Drainage and commenced new Footpath in Rosslyn Street;
- Installed Pram Ramps at various locations around Inverell;
- Secured Black Spot funding for upgrade of Leviathan to Schwenkes Lane and a turning lane at Rob Roy Road. Rob Roy Project complete and remaining project in progress;
- Secured \$1.5M Grant for upgrade of Gwydir Highway/Bundarra Road/Chester Street Intersection;
- Completed 2014/2015 Financial Statements – sound financial result achieved;
- Installed Taxi-way to new Hangars at Inverell Airport;
- Completed Cameron Park Oval, Cricket Nets, Playground Development;
- Completed new Amenities/Canteen Block at Cameron Park;
- Completed works on new toilet and storage shed at Varley Oval and Officially re-opened Varley Oval;





- Completed infrastructure works at Gilgai Park, being new shade shelter and softfall upgrade;
- Completed Playground Upgrade and Shade Shelter at Lake Inverell and commenced upgrading old Bitumen Footpaths to Concrete Bikepath standard;
- Completed infrastructure works at Bellevue Park, being new playground, shelters and amenities;
- Completed minor upgrades at Equestrian Centre including shade shelters and arena fencing;
- Completed legislative upgrade at Ashford Depot fuel facility;
- Installed Shade Shelters over Playgrounds in Gilgai and at Lake Inverell and replaced soft-fall;



- Completed new amenities building in Victoria Park and installed two (2) new Shelters and new Footpaths;
- Completed Stage 1 upgrade works at Inverell Complex and secured a \$0.93M Grant for the Final Stage of the Inverell Sports Complex Upgrade;
- Completed installation of new playground equipment in Campbell Park;
- Completed installation of new playground equipment "All Abilities" in Victoria Park;
- Secured Funding for new Shelters in Waratah Park, Shelters have been ordered;
- Commissioned Cultural Project for Henderson Street Roundabout;
- Commenced construction of the new Ashford Sports Ground amenities building;
- Upgraded Yetman Memorial Hall, Yetman Recreation Hall, fenced Playground and installed new Exercise Equipment; and
- Commenced installation of new Playground Equipment in Lions Park.



As can be expected, the highlighted matters do not cover Council's day-to-day service delivery activities, nor the wide range of other smaller works and projects completed over the Term, all aimed at ensuring Inverell remains as a vibrant, growing, healthy and economically sustainable community for all.

FIT FOR THE FUTURE (FFF):

The major standout achievement for this Council during the current term was Council being declared as "Fit for the Future" by the NSW State Government. This followed a comprehensive Audit of Council's FFF Roadmap and supporting documentation by IPART NSW. IPART approved Council's FFF Roadmap which has now been implemented as required by the NSW State Government. Council is required to meet seven (7) FFF Benchmarks by 30 June, 2020 and maintain or further improve its FFF position into the future to remain as a FFF Council. Under the FFF Program requirements, Council's must demonstrate that they are independently financially sustainable in the medium and long term.

The first major action implemented under Council's approved FFF Roadmap was the FFF Rural Road Infrastructure Renewal Program. This program which is already delivering major benefits sees Council's Roads Maintenance, Renewal and Upgrade Budget expanding to \$31.5M over 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 against a previous expenditure high of \$9.5M per annum.

A large proportion of the increase was funded from the draw down of Council's untied Investments. \$24m or 80% of these funds were allocated to the Rural Area and \$7.5M or 20% to the Urban Area.

Council delivered its first FFF Newsletter to residents in July, 2016. This was sent to every Shire Resident. While public comments have been made that the Newsletter should have been included in the Annual Rate Notice Mail-out, this was not possible, as this would have meant that over 2,400 non-ratepaying residents in the Shire would not have received the FFF Newsletter. It is a fact that not every household receives a Rate Notice and as many Ratepayers pay their rates in full and don't receive Instalment Notices, the delivery of important communications through the Rate Notice mail out is not a reliable way of communicating with Shire Residents.

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING:

Council during 2016 adopted its Roads, Footpaths and Drainage Infrastructure Asset Management Plans and these are available on Council's Website. As the Council is aware the development of these plans included a full data capture, and comprehensive review of

Council's Road Infrastructure Assets using industry specialists. The information coming out of this review was subsequently audited by Council's External Auditor and also in the review of Council's FFF Roadmap by IPART NSW.

In respect of the Water and Sewerage Funds, Plans for these activities were previously prepared by NSW Public Works. These plans are supplemented by Council's Water and Sewerage Fund Works priorities as adopted by Council.

For Buildings and Other Structures, Council engaged CT Management Group, who are specialists in this area, to prepare the Asset Management Plans. These plans have now been provided to Council for review. The Buildings and Other Structures Asset Management Plans will be placed on public exhibition following their consideration by Council in early 2016/2017.

Council's Asset Management has been sound over the Term with Service Levels being maintained in all areas and enhanced in some, particularly in respect of Rural Roads. As advised in the FFF Roadmap Council has an Infrastructure Backlog of \$5.1M which is below the FFF <2.0% requirement. The Backlog relates entirely to the Rural Sealed Road Network with no infrastructure Backlog existing in other Asset Classes.

Council has Benchmarked this Backlog amount against the Council's in the Region with the following results being recorded:

TABLE: Regional Councils Financial Assessments in \$'000s - 2014-15

New England Councils	Recurrent Road Funding Available \$'000s	Estimated Annual Maintenance Required \$'000s	Actual Annual Maintenance \$'000s	Maintenance Shortfall \$'000s	Infrastructure Backlog \$'000s
Armidale	3,960	3,932	3,681	-251	11,036
Glen Innes	3,592	1,343	1,853	510	17,904
Gunnedah	4,161	2,785	2,785	0	7,404
Guyra	3,171	1,421	1,522	101	4,325
Gwydir	6,141	3,669	3,669	0	13,896
Inverell	7,611	4,535	4,548	13	5,097
Liverpool Plains	4,984	3,565	5,867	2,302	5,597
Moree Plains	8,415	5,165	4,639	-526	7,521
Narrabri	6,354	5,178	6,150	972	8,925
Tamworth	11,987	11,553	11,709	156	20,063
Tenterfield	5,445	2,405	2,792	387	11,148
Uralla	3,278	2,583	2,550	-33	533
Walcha	2,914	1,326	1,399	73	16,407
New England	72,014	49,460	53,164	3,704	109,793

As can be seen, Council's Infrastructure Backlog is within Industry Benchmarks. Council's IPART approved FFF Roadmap includes a Strategy for addressing this Backlog.

In respect of the quality of Council's Asset Management and its Systems, it is noted that Council received the following unsolicited comment from the consultants who prepared Council's Buildings and Other Structures Assets Plans in May 2016:

"I must congratulate Council firstly. Overall, your buildings and other structures are in very good shape and frankly, would be the envy of the majority of Councils across Australia. Indeed we have not come across a Council that has managed their facilities so well in the past six years of doing these building condition assessments. Council's prudent management approach is certainly providing a sustainable portfolio of facilities to support

the services that Council is providing into the foreseeable future” – Owen Harvey, Regional Manager, Queensland 31 May, 2016.



As a result of the Council's strong Asset Management and Financial performance over the Term, Council has been able to allocate the additional special "one-off" funding into the 2016/2017 Budget for Asset Renewals and Upgrade:

• Old Stannifer Road, Gilgai – New Bitumen	\$ 0.35M
• Kings Plains Road – New Bitumen	\$ 0.35M
• Ross Street, Inverell – Rehabilitation	\$ 0.20M
• <u>Regional Roads – Shoulder Works</u>	<u>\$ 0.10M</u>
	TOTAL \$ 1.00M

BENCHMARKING:

Council Benchmarks itself against the Industry on a continuing basis and the following information is noted for the current Council Term.

Office of Local Government Comparative Data Report:

1. Population per Councillor is 1,872 (Group 11 Council average is 1,505).
2. Governance and Administration costs for 2014/2015 at \$165.86 per capita are 55% below the Group 11 Council Average (\$365.90 per capita) and under 50% of the NSW Council average, resulting in more funds being available for Service and Infrastructure delivery.
3. Typical Residential Water Bill for 2013/2014 of \$548.00 p.a. with no water restrictions, against a NSW Average of \$550.00 p.a. and a NSW Councils 3,000 to 10,000 properties Average of \$617.00, while providing significant ongoing water subsidies to Bindaree Beef (Inverell's largest employer and a business of State significance).
4. Typical Residential Sewer Bill for 2014/2015 of \$453.50 p.a. against a NSW Average of \$625.00 p.a. being 27.5% less.
5. Lowest Waste Management Charges in the Region.
6. Recycling Rate is 45% against a Group 11 Council average of only 36%.

(Office of Local Government has not released the 2015/2016 Report)

Statecover Mutual and Statewide Mutual Audit Reports:

(Statecover is the Council's Workers Compensation Insurer and Statewide Mutual provides a suite of insurance products)

7. Workers Compensation premiums of \$1.67 per \$100 of Wages Paid, against an Industry Average of \$3.61 per \$100 of wages paid.

8. Work Health and Safety Performance of 100 (being 100% for WHS Management System Compliance and 100% for Specific Hazard identification and treatment). This is against an Industry average of 75%.
9. Achieved all Work Health and Safety and Public Liability Insurance Performance Rebates over the last five (5) years saving Council over \$250K. Council has been advised that due to its continuing strong Work Health and Safety performance it will receive a discount of \$35K on its 2016/2017 Workers Compensation Insurance Premium.

Social Programs:

10. Council's "return on investment" for programs delivered through the Linking Together Centre on behalf of the State and Federal Governments is up to \$6 return for every \$1 invested providing strong social gains to the community.

Infrastructure Programs:

11. ROAD DATA

a. Regional Roads		391 km
b. Bridges/Major Culverts		105
c. Culverts and Causeways	912	
d. Sealed Local Roads		341 km
e. Gravel Local Roads		1,248 km
f. Bridges/Large Box Culverts		69
g. Culverts and Causeways	3,157	
h. Sealed Urban Streets		121 km
i. Gravel Urban Roads (Back Lanes)		13 km
j. Urban Bridges/Major Box Culverts		7
k. Culverts and Causeways	12	

TOTAL ROADS 2,114 km

(Group 11 Council Average Road Length is only 1,451km)

TOTAL BRIDGES/MAJOR BOX CULVERTS 181

TOTAL CULVERTS/CAUSEWAYS 4,081

12. Bitumen Road Costs:

a. Bitumen Road Stabilisation		\$ 200,000 - \$250,000 per km
b. Bitumen Road Rehabilitation		\$ 250,000 - \$400,000 per km
c. Convert Gravel to Bitumen		\$ 250,000 - \$400,000 per km
d. Bitumen Reseals – Rural	\$	3.70 per square metre
e. Bitumen Reseals – Urban	\$	3.90 per square metre

Reseal and Heavy Patching Costs are up to 25% below the IPWEA National Industry Benchmarks. This result is efficiency driven and resulted in an additional 10km of bitumen roads being resealed in 2014/2015 under Council's ongoing Reseals Program, (Total Reseal in 2014/2015 was 73.4km – basically equivalent of resealing from Inverell

to Bingara). The 2015/2016 programs were adjusted to include the ongoing efficiencies.

13. Indicative average Gravel Road resheet cost (dependant on Gravel Pit location and haulage distances) of under \$14,000 per km, being a 15% reduction in the unit rate due to ongoing efficiencies (cost was \$16,500 a km in 2009).

The last reported 2012/2013 RMS Regional Road Network Gravel Resheet figure was \$26,500 per kilometre. Some Group 11 Council Gravel Resheeting Rates are up to \$33,380 per km.

The efficiencies generated in the 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 Gravel Resheeting Programs resulted in Council being able to program an additional 25km of Gravel Resheeting on the Nullamanna and other Roads in 2015/2016, being an additional 20%.

14. Grading cost of \$913.00 per km with a Water Cart and Roller and \$1,245.00 per km if the Table Drains are redone at the same time. Council's 2016/2017 draft Budget provides an allocation of \$1.2M for Road Grading, representing 35% of Farmland Rates.

Governance:

15. Council is one of the 72 NSW Councils who participate in the NSW Small Business Friendly Council Program.
16. Council is one of the 32% of NSW Councils that has an Audit and Risk Committee;
17. Independent Reviews of Council have recognised the ongoing sound Management of Council as follows;
 - a. *"Council has been well managed over the review period"* – New South Wales Treasury Corporation (TCorp) Financial Assessment and Benchmarking Report, 2013;
 - b. *"Council's approach to integrity management and its responses during the review gives reason for a high level of confidence in Council's ability and commitment to the further improvement of an already well-managed organisation"* – Echelon Australia Integrity Management Programme Diagnostic Review Draft Report April, 2015.
 - c. *"Council's systems and records have been well maintained during the year and the audited accounts will be submitted to the Division of Local Government within the prescribed time"* – Forsyths Business Services Pty Ltd 2014/2015 Audit Report.
 - d. *"We would like to thank you and your staff and especially Paul Pay, for all the professionalism and patience exhibited as we tested newly developed systems and processes designed to provide a seamless experience for Council borrowers. If other Councils match the professionalism and friendly collaboration exhibited by your staff, we can look forward to TCorp promptly providing a very positive benefit to local Councils in New South Wales"* - New South Wales Treasury Corporation (TCorp) 4 April, 2016.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM:

Council during the current term has continued its strong focus on Continuous Improvement and Operational Efficiency/Effectiveness. The following matters are highlighted.

INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS – REVIEW:

Council as part of its Continuous Improvement Program was provided with an opportunity to have an Independent External Audit undertaken of Council's existing "Integrity Management Systems". The Integrity Management Audit Program was designed by the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and delivered by Echelon Australia. The Audit Program followed on from training provided to 19 Councils in the region by the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

The Integrity Management Systems Audit was undertaken in accordance with relevant Australian Standards and included a review of the following areas of Council:

1. Policy and Leadership;
2. Accountability;
3. Communication;
4. Training Strategy;
5. Issue Reporting Structure;
6. Integrity Management Integration; and
7. Council's Continuous Improvement Processes.

The independent audit has been completed and a Report provided to Council's Audit and Risk Committee for consideration, prior to its adoption by Council.

The key finding of the Independent Audit was that:

"Council's approach to integrity management and its responses during the review gives reason for a high level of confidence in Council's ability and commitment to the further improvement of an already well-managed organisation" – Echelon Australia 2015.

The cost of the Audit was covered by Council's Public Liability Insurer - Statewide Mutual.

REAL OPERATING COST PER CAPITA FFF BENCHMARK:

The Fit for the Future (FFF) Program introduced a new Efficiency Benchmark being Real Operating Cost per Capita. The FFF Program requires that Councils demonstrate a decrease in its Real Operating Cost per Capita over time.

In this regard Council has realised a 21.0% Efficiency Gain or 3.0% per annum for the 7 years ending 30 June, 2016, being the initial FFF Review Period. This is a high achievement for any Organisation and demonstrates the current Council's ongoing commitment to Continuous Improvement and achieving ongoing Efficiency/Effectiveness gains, while maintaining and improving Service Levels.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM:

Council has embraced Energy Efficiency and Solar Energy Systems over the current Council Term. Council now has 7 Solar Sites being amongst the highest in the Industry and was a major partner in the Northern Solar Lights Energy Efficient LED Street Lighting Program with 7 other Councils. During the period Council has also upgraded the lighting in many of its Buildings to Energy Efficient Lighting. The cost savings realised now total \$445K per annum. in the General Fund. Council has also now secured further Electricity Cost savings for the next two years of up to 28% below Retail Market Rates through its partnership with Local Government Procurement.

In addition to these matters, new latest technology Solar Lighting Street Lighting has now been installed through Campbell Park between the Suspension Bridge and Campbell Park to improve community safety.

The cost savings realised have been redirected by Council largely into Rural Road Maintenance and Renewal over the Council Term.

PLANT FLEET:

During the current term of Council, Council has undertaken a full review of its Plant Fleet and its long term operational needs. This review has seen Council embrace innovation and add additional latest technology Road Construction and Maintenance Equipment to its modern Plant Fleet. The major new items include:

- Cement/Lime Spreader Truck to work with Council's Road Reclaimer;
- Large Posi Track Loader with 1 Metre Road Mill and a Heavy Duty Mulcher to assist with Road Rehabilitation, Road Shoulder Maintenance and Roadside Vegetation Management;
- An additional Large Smooth Drum Roller to assist Council's Rural Roads Grading/Maintenance Program;
- An additional Water Truck to assist Council's Rural Roads Grading/Maintenance Program;
- A Large Tilt Tray Truck to enable the efficient movement of Plant around the Shire;
- A 5 Tonne Mini Excavator;
- A 2.5 Tonne Offset Smooth Drum Roller; and
- An additional Survey Station was also purchased to be utilised with Council's Laser Grader Control Systems to aid efficiencies in Council's Road Construction Programs.

These Plant Items have assisted Council in having some of the lowest Road Construction and Maintenance Costs in the Region and placed Council in a strong position to continue to undertake Highway Maintenance and Renewal Works for the NSW Roads and Maritime Services on a contract basis.

In 2015 Council also commenced the roll-out of GPS Tracking into its Plant Fleet to improve efficiency and to assist Work Health and Safety. Based on current trends, a productivity increase of up to 10% will flow into Council's Works Program as a result of this innovation.

Council has also been able to make ongoing cost saves of \$180K per annum in its Light Vehicle Replacement Program, while continuing to strongly support local suppliers.

BENEFITS FOR 2016/2017 AND FUTURE BUDGETS:

The Benefits of Council's Continuous Improvement Programs over the 2015/2016 Financial Year can be clearly seen in Council being able to provide \$142,175 for the following increases in the Budget Allocations in 2016/2017 and beyond, at a time where the Rate Peg has not fully covered increases in Council's operating costs and the Federal Government's Freeze on the indexation of Council's Finance and Assistance Grant continues. (The indexation freeze for all Australian Councils will cost Inverell Shire \$436K in 2016/2017 and each subsequent year).

Operational Programs:

• Local Heritage Program – Assistance to Owners	\$ 20,000
• Opera in the Paddock (Program Re-instated)	\$ 5,000
• Grafton to Inverell – Additional Police Escort Costs	\$ 1,000
• Administration Postage – Aust. Post Increases	\$ 2,700
• Finance Postage	\$ 1,575
• Library Postage	\$ 900
TOTAL	\$ 31,175

Works Programs – Service Level Increases:

• Road Grading	\$ 73,000
• Cameron Park Maintenance	\$ 15,000
• May Street Park Maintenance (New Budget)	\$ 3,000
• Public Toilets Maintenance (Cleaning of New Toilet Facilities)	\$ 5,000
• Lake Inverell Maintenance	\$ 3,000
• Central Business District Maintenance	\$ 4,000
• Cycleway Maintenance	\$ 2,000
• Ashford Oval Expenses	\$ 1,000
• Victoria Park Expenses	\$ 1,000
• Campbell Park Expenses	\$ 1,000
• Bellevue Park Expenses	\$ 3,000
TOTAL	\$ 111,000

As shown, the major beneficiary is in the area of Council's Rural Road Budget – Grading, with the 2016/2017 draft Budget providing a 6.5% increase in the Rural Roads Grading Budget to improve Service Levels in this area. This provides for an additional 80km of grading with the Grader, Watercart and Roller. The Total Grading Budget is now \$1.2M per annum being 35% of the Farmland Rates collected.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING ACHIEVEMENTS:

GRANT FUNDING:

Council during the term continued its strong lobbying of the State and Federal Governments to attract very substantial additional Grant Funding to the Shire, over and above Council's recurrent Grants.

Over the Term this Council has secured an additional \$22.9M in grant funding for the benefit of the Community. \$16.5M of this amount was for Road Funding within the Shire area.

One issue that receives little publicity in respect of Grant Funding is in respect of Council's Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service Facilities and Equipment, to support these services and their valuable volunteers. Over the Term, Council has delivered two (2) new Bushfire Stations, two (2) Station refurbishments, continued its Bushfire Tanker Replacement Program, six (6) new Tanker appliances while donating three (3) older Tankers to other Shires for their volunteers, delivered a new SES Headquarters for Ashford and upgraded the Yetman SES Building. The three (3) now surplus demountable SES Buildings in Ashford are in the process of being relocated to the Inverell SES Headquarters to provide a Regional Training Facility.

LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL SCHEME:

During the Council Term, Council was successful in gaining Loan Interest Rate Subsidy Scheme subsidies from the NSW Government for two major infrastructure projects. Applications to the LIRS were competitive.

Council received a 4.0% Interest Rate Subsidy (maximum subsidy) on the \$2.0M Loan under Round One of the Scheme, for the new Ashford Water Treatment Plant. The subsidy saves the Community \$456K in interest payments over the ten year life of the loan.

Council received a 3.0% Interest Rate Subsidy (maximum subsidy) on the \$2.0M Loan under Round Three (the final program) of the Scheme, for the Redevelopment of the Inverell Sewerage Treatment Works. The subsidy saves the Community \$357K over the 10 year Loan Period. The LIRS is no longer available.

NSW TREASURY CORPORATION – LOW INTEREST RATE LOANS:

Being a "Fit for the Future" (FFF) Council, Council is one (1) of only seven (7) NSW Council's that to date, have been provided with access to low interest rate Loan Borrowings from NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp). Being FFF Council was able to secure \$2M in loan funding for new Waste Management Infrastructure at 3.02% while the rates offered by the major Banks were in the vicinity of 4.11% over the life of the loan, savings of \$147K will be realised for the Community.

The abovementioned interest savings to the Community total \$0.96M.

INDUSTRY PROMOTIONS AND ASSISTANCE/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

As indicated above, Council has continued its strong focus on Industry Assistance and Promotion over the Term. Major highlights have been:

- Financial assistance to Bindaree Beef in land acquisition, Heavy Vehicle Movement area and Carpark upgrades;
- Financial assistance with the construction of the new Inverell Medical Centre and supporting infrastructure;
- Provision of Industrial Land;
- Sale of Land to and provision of Financial Assistance to Boss Engineering;
- Sponsorship of the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry Promotions;
- Provision of “Seed Funding” to a number of new Sporting Events as part of Council’s “Sports Marketing Strategy”;
- Sponsorship of the Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic; Opera in the Paddock etc;
- Provision of Financial Assistance to a range of Businesses from the Inverell Development Support Fund;
- Ongoing Tourism Promotion to support Inverell Shire’s \$47M Tourism Industry; and
- Ongoing lobbying for the new Inverell Hospital Development with \$30M committed to the project by the State Government.

Council has provided funding in the 2016/2017 Budget for the next Stage of the Rifle Range Road Industrial Subdivision, noting the limited number of Industrial Blocks now available in Inverell.

CONCLUSION:

Considering the information noted above, including the fact that the Shire continues to grow strongly as evidenced by its strong population growth, it is submitted that Council has been successful in the delivery of its Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan over the Council Term. I also submit that Council has been financially responsible as it has delivered a strong and sustainable Financial Position, as evidenced by its continued strong Financial Indicators and Independent Audit Reports. IPART’s independent review and audit of Council and its Fit for the Future Roadmap and the State Governments subsequent finding that Inverell Shire Council is Fit for the Future further confirms this.

Many very significant Community Infrastructure and Service needs have been addressed by the Council over the 2012 – 2016 Term. The significant number of long term projects included the new \$3.6M Ashford Water Treatment Plant, the new \$1.2M Inverell Sewerage Pump Station Number 2, the \$0.8M Elsmore Bridge Replacement, \$1.75M Town Hall Refurbishment, the new \$1.5M Transport Museum, Inverell \$0.15M Art Gallery Upgrade, Community Recycling Centre \$200K, Cardboard Press at Recycling Centre \$227K, and the new \$0.75M Linking Together Centre Complex.

The \$3.5M Inverell Sewerage Treatment Plant Redevelopment has been scoped, funded and works have commenced on this major project which will ensure that Inverell’s growth needs can be met into the future. The \$1M replacement of the Tintot Bridge on the Graman Ashford Road has also been funded (\$0.8M Grant received) with this project to be completed in 2016/2017.

Council has also placed a very strong focus on the development of its Villages, and as a result has delivered substantial improved infrastructure and services to each of these over the Term. The Ashford Medical Centre, Ashford SES Headquarters, Ashford Driver Reviver, Yetman Memorial Hall Upgrade, Yetman Recreation Hall Upgrade, Yetman Sports Ground upgrade and Shade Shelter, Gilgai Drainage/Kerb and Gutter, Gilgai Beautification Works and Shade Shelter over their Playground, Delungra Railway Park, ANZAC Memorial and the Delungra Playground Upgrade Works are highlighted. The Council will be aware that construction works have commenced on the new \$250K Ashford Sports Ground Amenities Block.

As shown, Council during the 2012 - 2016 Term has completed a range of Strategic Projects for the Shire including implementation of the new Waste Management Strategy in accordance with NSW EPA requirements, provided assistance for new Business and Business Expansion including the new Inverell Medical Centre, Bindaree Beef, Boss Engineering and a range of smaller businesses, and supported the Community/Community Organisations in the delivery of a very wide range of Strategic Infrastructure and Services, such as the new Connections Disability Services Administration Building, the new Lapidary Club, the new Men's Shed and the new Linking Together Centre Complex. Council has also been the lead Council in the establishment of the New England Group of Councils.

Overall it is considered that Council and the Community can be justifiably proud of Council's achievements during the 2012 - 2016 Council Term and that it is a Fit for the Future Council.