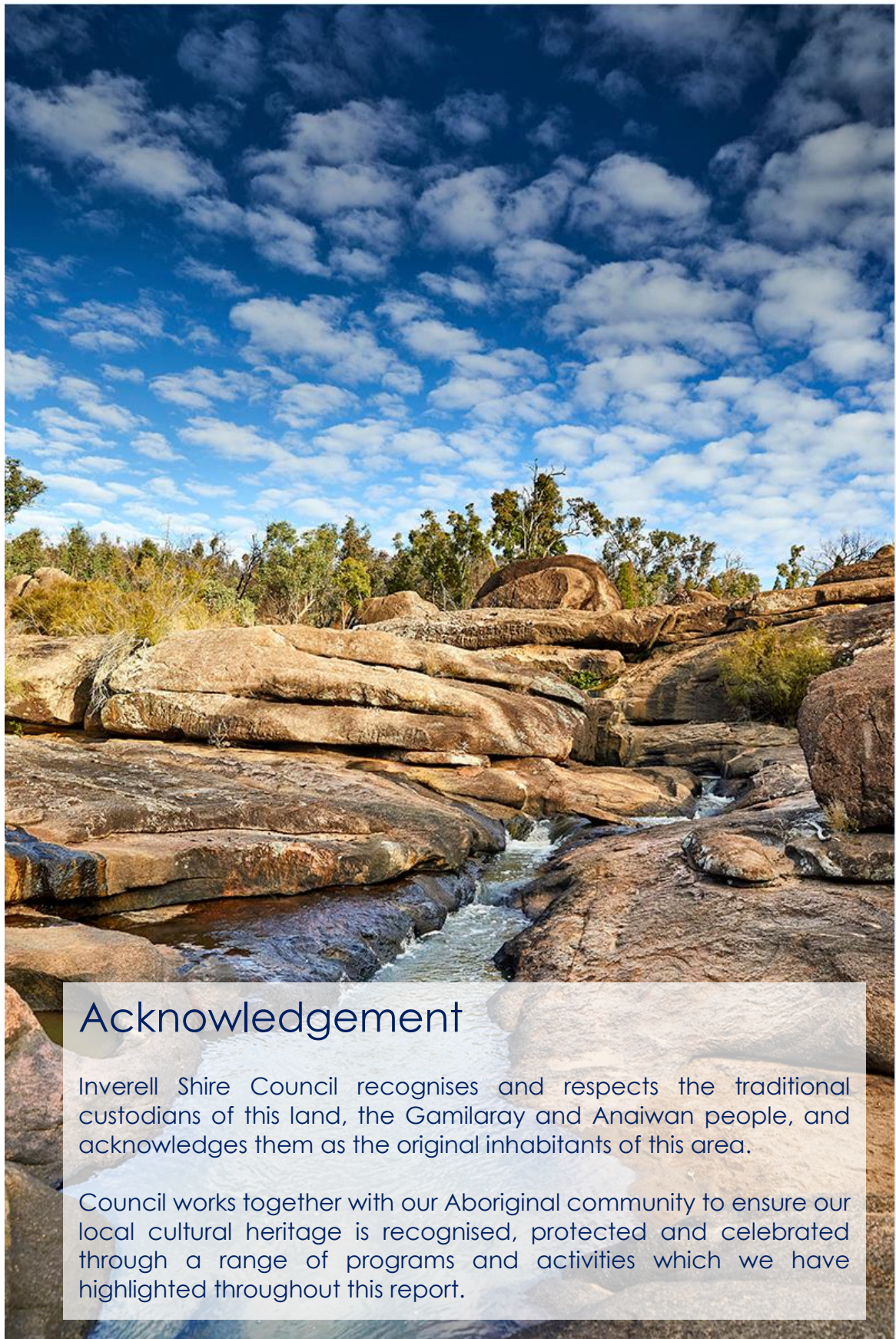




INVERELL
SHIRE COUNCIL

Annual Report 2022 - 2023



Acknowledgement

Inverell Shire Council recognises and respects the traditional custodians of this land, the Gamilaray and Anaiwan people, and acknowledges them as the original inhabitants of this area.

Council works together with our Aboriginal community to ensure our local cultural heritage is recognised, protected and celebrated through a range of programs and activities which we have highlighted throughout this report.

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Financial Statements for Year Ended 30 June 2023

A background image showing a park scene with trees on the left, a bridge with a metal railing in the foreground, and a body of water with reeds on the right.

About this report

This annual report provides an overview of Inverell Shire Council's operational and financial performance during the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

In particular, the report focuses on Council's work and achievements in implementing the strategies detailed in our four (4) year Delivery Program. The strategies and actions contained therein are developed by Council in response to the expectations of the community expressed as objectives on our 20 year Community Strategic Plan (CSP). These objectives are summarised into the following five (5) focus areas (destinations) which reflect the priorities of the local community:

1. A recognised leader in the broader context
2. A community that is health, educated and sustained
3. An environment that is protected and sustained
4. A strong growing local economy
5. The community is served by sustainable services and infrastructure.

In summary, the strategies are how Council will achieve what the community needs and wants. An overview of Council's objectives and strategies is provided on pages 5, 6 and 7.

This report also contains statutory reporting as prescribed by the *Local Government Act 1993* and *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* as well as other legislation for which Council is required to report annually. The statutory reporting includes Council's audited financial reports which detail Council's financial performance for the year. Along with information provided throughout this report, the financial reports demonstrate our Fit for the Future status and how Council continues to achieve long term financial sustainability.

More information about our Integrated Planning and Reporting framework including current as well as past plans and reports is available on Council's website.

Council's Objectives & Strategies

<div> <div>COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-32</div> <div>DELIVERY PLAN 2022-24</div> </div>	
Destination 1: A recognised leader in the broader context	
Objective	Strategies:
<p>The Shire is recognised as a vital component of the New England North West and a regional leader</p>	<p>R.01 Inverell Shire is promoted and distinguished regionally, nationally and internationally.</p> <p>R.02 Inverell exhibits the qualities of and operates as one of the three principal centres of the New England North West, as reflected by its strong economic, cultural and social diversity.</p> <p>R.03 Villages offer a range of district level services and lifestyles, reflective of their historical traditions.</p> <p>R.04 Inverell Shire positively influences policy on rural and regional growth.</p> <p>R.05 Access to services in the Shire is equivalent to, or better than other major regional centres.</p> <p>R.06 Council ensures it provides resources to effectively deliver its strategies and programs.</p> <p>R.07 Council is recognised for and distinguished by its management, innovation and customer service.</p> <p>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.</p>
Destination 2: A community that is healthy, educated and sustained	
Objective	Strategies:
<p>The Shire is a sustainable and equitable place that promotes health, wellbeing, life-long learning and lifestyle diversity.</p>	<p>C.01 Provision of a broad range of services and opportunities aid the long term sustainability of the community.</p> <p>C.02 Provision of transport and activity nodes is planned.</p> <p>C.03 Inverell Shire promotes an ordered and safe community.</p> <p>C.04 Improve the integration of natural and built environments.</p> <p>C.05 Create clean and attractive streets and public places.</p> <p>C.06 Reduce the consumption of non-renewable resources,</p> <p>C.07 Provide local opportunities for recreation, cultural and social activities.</p> <p>C.08 Reduce the risk to the community arising from emergency events.</p> <p>C.09 Create a strong sense of community identity.</p>

	<p>C.10 Promoting healthy lifestyles and practices.</p> <p>C.11 Develop a range of educational and skills development opportunities to meet the requirements of the community.</p> <p>C.12 Provide affordable housing and accommodation to meet the requirements of the Shire's residents.</p> <p>C.13 Facilitate activities that improve the quality of life for people who require support.</p> <p>C.14 Provide opportunities for residents to gain employment.</p> <p>C.15 Maintain and improve the social and physical wellbeing of individuals and communities.</p> <p>C.16 Support the community to enable them to contribute to the economic, cultural and social wellbeing of the Shire.</p> <p>C.17 Promote the Shire's role in the cultural fabric of the New England North West.</p>
Destination 3: An environment that is protected and sustained	
Objective	Strategies:
Sustainable agriculture, protection & conservation of natural resources & recognised as a vital component of the New England North West & a regional leader.	<p>E.01 Promote sustainable agricultural activities.</p> <p>E.02 Council's strategies to achieve sustainable, productive use of rural lands and preservation of rural qualities are implemented.</p> <p>E.03 Protect, rehabilitate and manage all impacts on the built and natural environment.</p> <p>E.04 Conserve and rehabilitate core vegetation areas and manage major impacts on corridors and remnant bushland.</p> <p>E.05 Manage human impacts on the Shire's unique diversity of plants and animals.</p> <p>E.06 Protect and manage significant natural features and landscapes.</p> <p>E.07 Inverell Shire conducts itself as a responsible environmental practitioner through prudent consumption of resources and recycling initiatives.</p>
Destination 4: A strong local economy	
Objective	Strategies:
Economic and employment growth and the attraction of visitors	<p>B.01 Business, institutions and Council are working cooperatively towards agreed initiatives to strengthen and expand the Shire's economic base.</p> <p>B.02 Plan for and promote the clustering of specific business and industry sectors in commercially appropriate locations.</p> <p>B.03 Facilitate access to services and infrastructure including education, training and research for business.</p> <p>B.04 Develop and promote the Shire as the place for business establishment.</p>

	<p>B.05 Assist business to integrate with the community and natural environment.</p> <p>B.06 Plan for and promote private and commercial business and residential, industrial and commercial development.</p> <p>B.07 Promote a competitive, dynamic and progressive business environment that improves market value.</p> <p>B.08 Promote the Shire as a destination for visitors.</p> <p>B.09 Generate economic benefits to the Shire by increasing visitation from domestic, regional, national and international market sectors.</p>
Destination 5: Supporting the community with sustainable services & infrastructure	
Objective	Strategies:
<p>The provision of community-focused services and the maintenance, enhancement and upgrade of infrastructure.</p>	<p>S.01 Sound local government administration, governance and financial management are provided.</p> <p>S.02 Council displays leadership, community engagement and collaboration with others.</p> <p>S.03 Council provides equitable services, consistent with available resources and priorities to meet the Shire's identified needs and preferences.</p> <p>S.04 Council's workforce and workplace match contemporary and emerging organisational needs and requirements.</p> <p>S.05 Attractive and vibrant town centres, local centres and community meeting places are provided.</p> <p>S.06 Established population centres are revitalised and people have pride in the community in which they live.</p> <p>S.07 Provide accessible and usable recreational facilities and services meet the needs of the community.</p> <p>S.08 Civil infrastructure is secured, maintained and used to optimum benefit.</p> <p>S.09 Council's buildings, parks and open space assets are maintained to a standard fit for their contemporary purpose.</p> <p>S.10 Maintain and enhance a safe, efficient and effective local road network.</p> <p>S.11 Facilitate the sharing of information and ideas through remote communications.</p> <p>S.12 Provision of safe and efficient networks to ensure connectivity between population centres.</p> <p>S.13 Provide communities with quality potable water supply, effective drainage and sewerage systems.</p> <p>S.14 Increase the number of people working and cycling, particularly for journeys within the community.</p> <p>S.15 Promote the effective integration of waste management and recycling services.</p>



Mayor's Message

I have pleasure in presenting to you Council's 2022 - 2023 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 2022 – 2023 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, implementation of Council's adopted Fit for the Future Roadmap, 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 skill 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 2022 - 2023 Annual Report to you.

Cr P J Harmon
Mayor



General Manager's Message

I am pleased to report on Inverell Shire Council's activities and achievements for the 2022 – 2023 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'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:

- ✓ Completed Off-Road Recreation Circuit on Lake Inverell Drive;
- ✓ Completed Lake Inverell Foreshore Upgrade;
- ✓ Completed public art mural in Evans Street;
- ✓ Installed shade shelters at Tingha Skatepark;
- ✓ Upgraded sporting facilities at Tingha Recreation Reserve;
- ✓ Completed construction of half court basketball court in Inverell;
- ✓ Upgraded drainage Wood Street between Stannifer and Park Streets in Gilgai;
- ✓ Completed Stage 3 of Town Centre Renewal Plan – Byron Street;
- ✓ Facilitated Rounds 1 & 2 of the Sapphire Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund;
- ✓ Worked in partnership with Inverell RLX to upgrade saleyards;
- ✓ Completed a significant quantum of Shire Roads Resealing and Resheeting;
- ✓ Commenced management of Tingha Gems Caravan Park;

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.

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

I invite you to peruse Inverell Shire Council's 2022 - 2023 Annual Report.

PJ Henry PSM
General Manager

Who we are Our place Our people

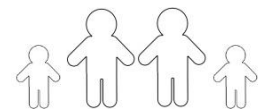
Inverell Shire is a dynamic and vibrant community which includes the towns and villages of Ashford, Bonshaw, Delungra, Gilgai, Inverell and Yetman. The Shire encompasses an area of 8,623 square kilometres and has a unique natural environment consisting of the Macintyre, Severn & Dumaresq River systems, two major water storage dams; Copeton and Pindari, two National Parks; Kwiambal and Kings Plains and 10 State Forests, as well as wilderness areas. The original inhabitants of the area are the people of the Anaiwan and Kamilaroi nations. Inverell is situated on the Macintyre River in the Northern Tablelands. It is located on the Gwydir Highway 1½ hours north west of Armidale and 7 hours north west of Sydney.

Inverell is nestled in the Macintyre Valley and supports productive rural communities producing beef, sheep and wool, as well as cereal crops. The landscape has a diverse range of soils and terrain, and includes large mineral deposits, particularly tin, sapphires and diamonds – the area procures a significant proportion of the world's sapphires. The establishment of Copeton Dam in the 1970s assured Inverell a reliable long term water supply and provided a strong platform for sustainable economic and population growth.

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.

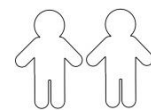
Couples with children

34.2%



Couples without children

45.0%



One parent families

19.1%



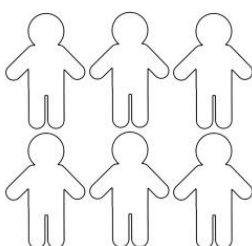
Lone person household

29.2%



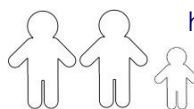
Population of Inverell Shire in 2021 was

17,853



Average household size

2.4



0-19 years
25.5%



20-39 years
21.3%



40-59 years
23.6%



60+ years
29.5%

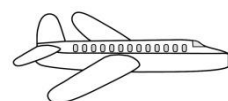


Average age

41



11.1% of residents are Indigenous Australians



17.4% of residents were born overseas



4.8%

Were from non-English speaking backgrounds

Highest level of schooling



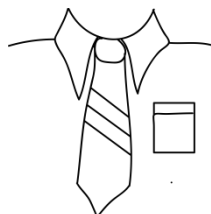
Year 10
17.4%

Year 12
12.0%

TAFE
20.6%

University
16.8%

Employment



Full time employment
56.4%

Part time employment
31.1%

Unemployed
6.2%



Have a mortgage or own home
67.2%



Renting
27.3%



\$1163
Median weekly household income



Persons aged 15+ who volunteer

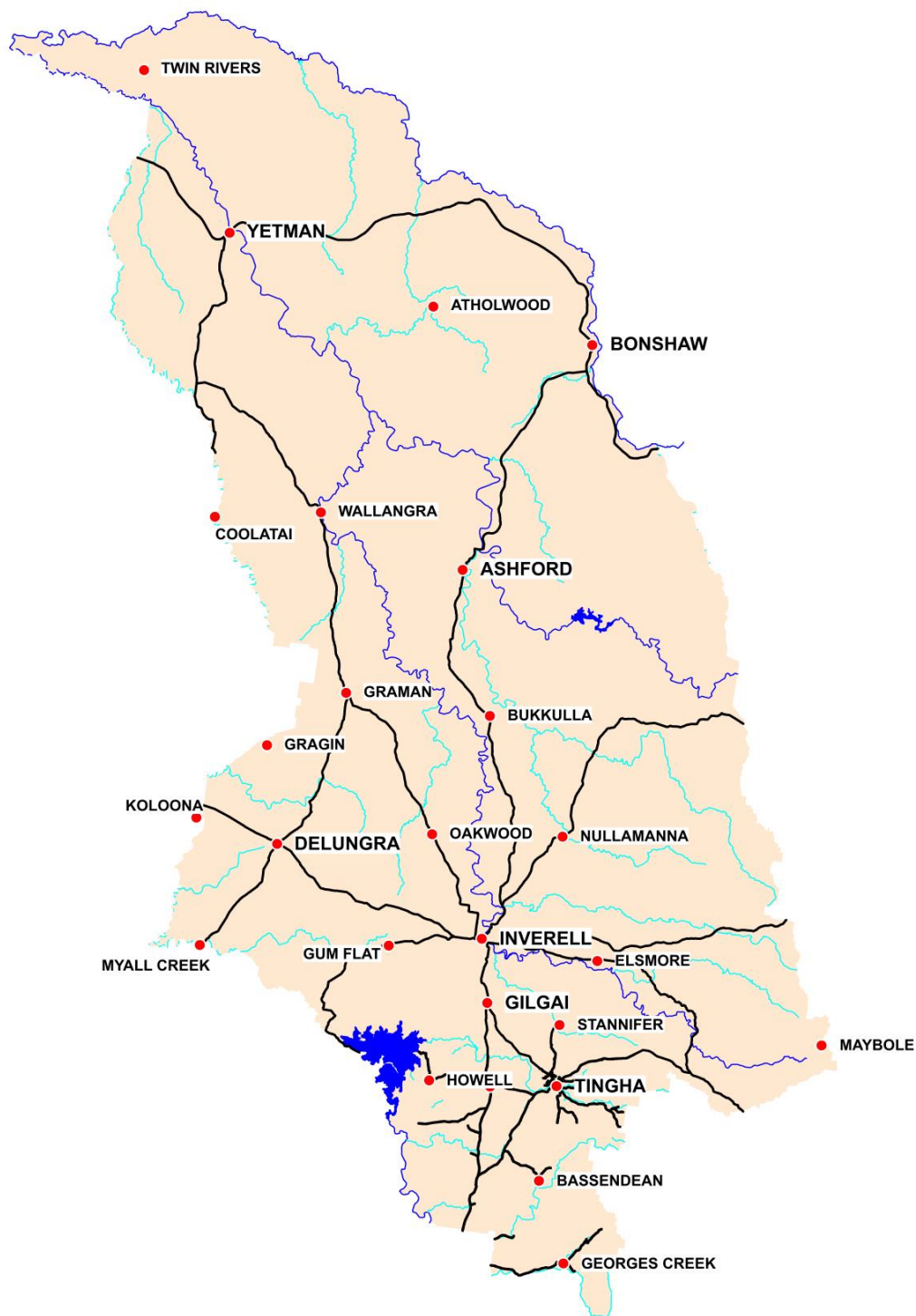
16.5%



Homes with internet
69.4%

Who we are

Our Local Government Area



Who we are Our Council

The Inverell Shire Council is made up of nine (9) elected members who represent the community.

Councillors were last elected in December 2021. Cr Harmon was elected as Mayor at Council's meeting on 12 January, 2022. Cr Kate Dight was elected as Deputy Mayor at the same meeting.

The Councillors for 2022 – 24 include the following:



Cr Paul Harmon
Mayor



Cr Kate Dight
Deputy Mayor



Cr Di Baker



Cr Stewart Berryman



Cr Paul King OAM



Cr Nicky Lavender



Cr Jacko Ross



Cr Wendy Wilks



Cr Jo Williams

Who we are

Our Organisation

Inverell Shire Council has a skilled and professional workforce who delivers a diverse range of services and activities to the local community. Functions and services are grouped into two directorates – corporate & economic services and civil & environmental services. The directors of each directorate report directly to the General Manager as demonstrated in the organisational chart below.



Who we are

Our Employees



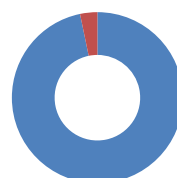
196
permanent
/temporary
employees

94% (185)
permanent)

6% (11)
temporary

96% of employees
live in Inverell
Shire LGA

Full time
96% (189)



Part time
4% (7)



83%
Male
(163)

17%
Female
(33)

Ages



15-24 **6.12%**

25-34 **16.32%**

35-44 **15.81%**

45-54 **28.57%**

55-64 **28.57%**

65+ **4.59%**

Baby boomers
(1946 to 1964)
24.48%

Generation X
(1965 to 1976)
36.22%

General Y
(1977 to 1995)
30.10%

General Z
(1996 and later)
9.18%

Gender breakdown in management roles

Executive (GM & Directors)

3__

Senior (group managers)

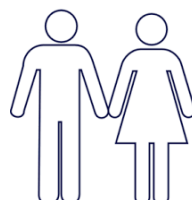
6__

Middle (managers)

7__

Supervisor (including team leaders)

23__



__0

__2

__2

__1

Staff turnover rate (based on permanent staff only) **12.13%**

Year in review

Key Financial Results

Total Expenditure	2022/23 \$53.125M 2021/2022 \$48.384M
Total Capital Spend	2022/23 \$19.829M 2021/22 \$15.339M
Net Operating Result	2022/23 \$9.123M 2021/22 \$9.705M

Income breakdown \$'000							
	Rates and annual charges	User fees & charges	Interest & investment revenues	Other revenues	Operating grants & contributions	Capital grants & contributions	Net gains/(loss) from disposal of assets
2022/23	23,770	6,043	2,488	933	19,420	9,022	(2014)

Expenses breakdown in focus areas \$'000					
	Services Infrastructure	Community	Environment	Economy	Leadership
2022/23	36,867	6,022	5,706	913	3,617

* A breakdown of expenses related to the Special Rate Variation and capital works can be found in the Statutory Reporting section of this report.

Year in review

Key Performance Results

In addition to the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan strategies on which this report focuses, Council also monitors its progress against the actions identified in its annual Operational Plan throughout each financial year.

In Council's 2022-23 Operational Plan, actions were tracked and reported on a quarterly basis in Council's Quarter Review of the Operational Plan.

Following is a progress summary of the actions as at 30 June 2023. All actions were either complete or on schedule to be completed by the end of the financial year.



Year in review

Calendar of Events

2022

July

NAIDOC Week



August

Community Hall Bush Dance



September

1926 – 2022



October

Sapphire City Festival



November

Music Under the Stars Concert



December

Christmas Display



Year in review

Calendar of Events

2023

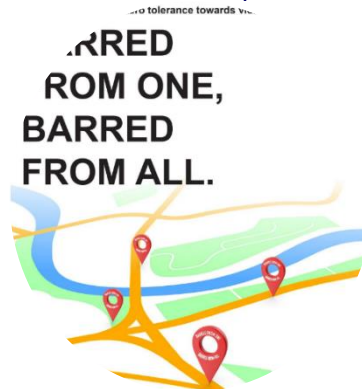
January

Citizen of the Year – Allen East



February

Barred from All Policy



March

Smoke Free CBD



April

Multicultural Festival



May

Careers Expo



June

Legacy Torch Relay



A photograph of a boutique interior. In the foreground, a dark grey straw hat with a black band and a large black feather is prominently displayed on a mannequin head. To the left, there are shelves and racks filled with various items, including a large woven basket, a purple bag, and several colorful scarves. In the background, more hats and clothing are visible on display. The store has a warm, wooden ceiling and a polished wooden floor.

Our achievements

In this section of the Annual Report, Council's performance is outlined in more detail focusing on outcomes achieved against each strategy listed in our Delivery Program 2020 - 2024 taking into account the results of our Operational Plan 2022 – 23. This information is categorised into the five (5) focus areas of Regional, Community, Environment, Economy and Services with the following details provided:

- Summary of key facts for each focus area
- Achievement and/or progress against each strategy including a financial results breakdown
- Highlights showcasing key achievements.



Regional

A recognised leader in the broader context

Operational income \$26.325M

Operational expense \$3.617M

11 ordinary meetings held

6 addresses to Council

20 media releases

165,889 visitors to
Council's website

808 new likes on
Facebook

2 Aboriginal initiatives and
events implemented and/or
supported

Includes costs relating to council's role as a component of democratic government, including elections, member fees and expenses, subscription to local authorities, meetings of council and policy making committees and area representation and public disclosure and compliance together with related administration cost and other support services, engineering works, public disclosure, GIPA, council legislative policy compliance.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Participated in road funding meetings with the Roads and Maritime Services;
- Participated in New England High Country Destination Management Hub;
- Participated in meetings with New England Council's Joint Organisation of Councils;

- ❑ **Secretariat for the Border Regional Organisation of Councils;**
- ❑ **Participated in NAIDOC Committee meetings;**
- ❑ **Sought grants for the benefit of the community;**
- ❑ **Sponsored acquisition prize of Inverell Art Prize;**
- ❑ **Participated in the Northern Inland Risk Management Group;**
- ❑ **Audit Risk & Improvement Committee transitioning from establishment to assuming the functions of the committee;**
- ❑ **Review of WHS and establishment of working group to implement reforms; and**
- ❑ **Completed Council Strategic Planning review of future projects for this term of Council.**

R.01

Inverell Shire is promoted and distinguished regionally, nationally and internationally.

Council continues to participate in several marketing campaigns each year that present Inverell Shire as an attractive and vibrant community that distinguishes it from other centres of the region. Highlights over the last 12 months include: Attending Caravan, Camping & Lifestyle Expos in Brisbane, Sydney, Newcastle, Toowoomba and Lismore, Phase 3 of a digital marketing campaign 'Put Inverell in the picture', featured in the *Regional Lifestyle Magazine*, launch of New England High Country's Eastern Seaboard Motorcycle Touring Map, advertising in several caravan and living magazines.



R.02

Inverell exhibits the qualities of and operates as one of the three principal centres of the New England North West, as reflected by its strong economic, cultural and social diversity.

Inverell's attractive Central Business District provides an expansive range of economic, social and lifestyle services to the New England North West areas and South Queensland. Council continues to facilitate the activities of local non-government organisations to undertake servicing of the Shire and the wider region.

R.03

Villages offer a range of district level services and lifestyles, reflective of their historical traditions.

Villages continue to offer a range of district level retail and services to their surrounding community. Council continues to work closely with the Village Precinct Committees with the implementation of their Village Business Strategic Plan. Key achievements include facilitating the operations of the Rural Transaction Centre and Village Hall, operation and maintenance of the Delungra landfill.

R.04

Inverell Shire positively influences policy on rural and regional growth.

Council has joined with 6 other Councils in the region to form the New England Joint Organisation of Councils (NEJO). The role of the JO is to plan for and prioritise services/projects which deliver regional benefits, advocate to relevant partners on the need for specific projects and service, collaborate with relevant partners for project/service delivery. The JO is currently formulating a Statement of Regional Priorities which will assist in driving economic sustainability, to have educated, healthy and safe communities that are well connected and to attract investment in critical infrastructure.

R.05

Access to services in the Shire is equivalent to, or better than other major regional centres.

Council has established a number of partnerships with service provider organisations in our community. These partnerships assist Council in identifying community issues regarding levels of social services needed in the community,

particularly target groups identified in the Social Planning framework. Council partners with these organisations as and when required, to develop proactive responses to those needs. One example is Council partnering with Best Employment to coordinate activities at the Linking Together Centre which seek to enrich the lives of people living in the South Inverell community.

R.06

Council ensures it provides resources to effectively deliver its strategies and programs.

Council has developed annual and longer-term resource plans aligned to Council's strategic programs. Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements have been met, asset replacement program has been formulated and funded and financial performance targets have been achieved.

R.07

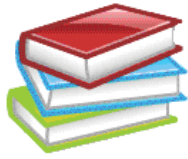
Council is recognised for and distinguished by its management, innovation and customer service.

Council's operating culture is flexible, efficient, integrated and aligned to Council's strategic objectives and program delivery. A structure program of continuous improvement based on identifying and adopting leading practice across the organisation has been implemented.

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.

A targeted program of advocacy and policy discussion is being conducted with the active cooperation of others, benefitting interests around social, environmental, economic and infrastructure properties. Council optimises support for our community, through positive relationships which have been formed with local State and Federal Members and government departments and attendance at key government forums including the newly formed New England Joint Organisation of Councils, NSW Local Government Conference, Australian Local Government Women's Association.



Community

A community that is healthy, educated and sustained

Operational Income \$3.553M

Operational Expense \$6.022M

41,287 people visited our libraries

51,306 people visited our tourist centre

203 library programs and activities presented

491 new library members

18,156 visits to the Inverell Pool

7 reports of graffiti received and removed by Council

130,276 items loaned from the library (including 4,779 click and collect and 25,868 ebooks)

Includes Council's fire and emergency services levy, fire protection; emergency services, enforcement of Local Government Regulations; health matters; administration and education; social protection (welfare); migrant, aboriginal and other community services administration; youth services; aged and disability services; children services; childcare and other family and children services; public cemeteries; public conveniences; street lighting; town planning; other community amenities; public libraries; museums; art galleries; public halls; other cultural services and building control.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Assisted with preparations for Sapphire City Festival;
- Secured NSW Government funding for extension of shared path network in Inverell;
- Participated in New England Cooperative Library;
- Assisted community groups to apply for grant funding;
- Participated in work experience programs with local schools;
- Completed Lake Inverell upgrade;
- Completed \$5M Upgrade of Copeton Northern Foreshores;
- Secured funding and commenced construction of infrastructure projects including Taylor Avenue Intersection; Brooks Oval Upgrade; Premier Access Link; Amenities Block at Sports Complex;
- Completed public art mural in Evans Street Cultural precinct;
- Installed shade shelter over skatepark in Tingha; and
- Completed construction of pump track at the Youth Precinct, Inverell.

C.01

Provision of a broad range of services and opportunities aid the long term sustainability of the community.

Council provides community leadership and advocacy to ensure the community is provided with a broad range of services and opportunities commensurate with other regional centres and ensures that issues which impact on the community are managed for the benefit of the community. Council provides an annual allocation of support funding to enable donations to be considered by Council to assist community groups in achieving their community objectives.

C.02

Seek to ensure developments make adequate provision for services that meet the needs and expectations of the community.

Council's Civil & Environmental Services Team provide a pre-lodgement advisory services on social, technical, engineering and environmental matters associated with development applications to ensure compatibility of Council's policies and standards with the outcome sought by the developer. During the

reporting period, the average time taken to process development applications was 32 days.

C.03

Inverell Shire promotes an ordered and safe community.

Council provides timely responses to citizen requests regarding acts and regulations and attends to customer requests concerning possible statutory requirement breaches within 10 working days.

Council ensures the availability of an adequate emergency response service within the shire to deal with natural disasters and man-made incidences. Council hosts Local Emergency Management Committee Meetings every quarter and partners with the local Police Service to ensure adequate resources are available to protect and serve the community of Inverell Shire. Community Safety Precinct Committee meetings are held every quarter involving Police & Mayors of the local command along with the State Local Member.

C.04

Improve the integration of natural and built environments.

Council implements development control plans, policies, procedures and practices to ensure that the physical development of the Shire provides for a variety of living choices which is in harmony with the natural characteristics and the surrounding built environment.

C.05

Create clean and attractive streets and public places.

Parks and gardens maintenance service levels have enhanced and maintained streetscapes to ensure they are attractive, safe and welcoming.

C.06

Reduce the consumption of non-renewable resources,

To reduce the consumption of non-renewable resources, Council has developed and implemented a Community Waste Management program that educates the community about waste and recycling, undertakes resource recovery initiatives and minimises resource utilisation. Council has continued with the roll out of solar panels on Council owned facilities and wind/solar powered lighting along shared paths.

C.07

Provide local opportunities for recreation, cultural and social activities.

Council has locally focused cultural programs and initiatives that facilitate forums, networks and training opportunities that are conducive to strengthening relationships between tourism, arts, heritage, sports and recreational interest. Highlights throughout the year included allocating \$8K to various community groups for cultural/recreational projects, allocating \$36K towards heritage projects, facilitating both the Sapphire City Festival and Multicultural Festival, hosting Movie Nights in Shire Villages.

Council also contributes to the physical wellbeing of the community through the provision of active and passive recreation areas. A limited number of customer requests concerning unsatisfactory condition of active & passive recreational areas/sport facilities were received and promptly dealt with.

To enhance opportunities for the youth and encourage youth leadership development, Council continued to participate in the school-based trainee and work experience program.

C.08

Reduce the risk to the community arising from emergency events.

Council continues to work with Local Land Services to provide improved outcomes for shire waterways. The continuation of the Bridge to Bridge program which involved removal of exotic plants along the Macintyre River was a highlight for the year.

Council partnered with the SES to promote preventative property management to protect the built and natural environment as a result of storm activity during the course of the year.

C.09

Create a strong sense of community identity.

To ensure the community is recognised for the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage, Council provides and maintains public cemeteries within the Shire to a standard, which display respect and dignity for the deceased.

Council is also supportive of community groups achieving their objectives and donated in excess of \$404K of grant funding throughout the reporting period.

C.10

Promoting healthy lifestyles and practices.

Council is actively supportive and involved in programs and initiatives that promote and contribute healthy lifestyles and practices. Customer requests concerning public health issues during the report period were minimal. Council provides a myriad of infrastructure for individuals and sporting groups to utilise including a network of shared bike paths, criterium track, skatepark, pump track and half-court basketball facilities.

C.11

Develop a range of educational and skills development opportunities to meet the requirements of the community.

Council has developed and implemented skills training and retention strategies to address the needs and requirements of the Shire's residents and businesses. This resulted in Council hosting a Careers and Life Choices Expo which involved 44 exhibitors and students from 8 schools participating.

C.12

Provide affordable housing and accommodation to meet the requirements of the Shire's residents.

With input from Housing NSW and local service providers, an affordable housing strategy to address the needs and requirements of the Shire's residents has been developed and implemented. This has resulted in positive supported living outcomes.

C.13

Facilitate activities that improve the quality of life for people who require support.

Council has continued to work with community-based groups to provide services for the aged, disabled and youth of the Shire.

Highlights in years past have included hosting Grandparents Day at the Inverell Town Hall, coordinating a number of youth activities including skateboard workshops and village movie nights, first aid training and a colour run.

C.14

Provide opportunities for residents to gain employment.

Council is actively seeking collaboration with and between educational departments, employment agencies, and public and private organisations for economic and employment growth. Council continues to participate in, coordinate and initiate relevant programs that deliver access to a full range of employment opportunities to the Shire's residents. Planning is underway to conduct another Career and Life Choices Expo. 44 employers exhibited and 8 schools from the region participated in the latest Expo. Council partnered with the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry to roll out their 'Flag a Job' initiative.

C.15

Maintain and improve the social and physical wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Council has strategies in place to respond to the social and health needs of the community and continues to actively participate in the formulation, management and implementation of the Shire's Social Plan. This is evidenced in particular through a partnership formed with Best Employment to offer a range of programs at the Linking Together Centre and Connections.

Council also provides a diverse range of literature in all contemporary mediums to support the educational and recreational needs of the community by providing and maintaining a high-quality library service. Customer feedback on the library service offered in the Shire is overwhelmingly positive.

Council is also cognisant of the need to provide for the recording of local history and the contribution made by the traditional land owners and pioneers to the current generation. Accordingly, Council has procured and continues to maintain a local studies collection at the Shire Public Library and worked with Aboriginal Elders to record the Goonoowigall sound trails.

C.16

Support the community to enable them to contribute to the economic, cultural and social wellbeing of the Shire.

Council is an advocate for standards of care and education to promote and support families, child safety and wellbeing and regularly participates in Inverell Place Team meetings.

Promote the Shire's role in the cultural fabric of the New England North West.

Council has developed partnerships and projects with cultural organisations and connects where appropriate with cultural plans and development of other Council's in the New England Region. Council's Public Art Sunset Committee continued to build upon the annual Christmas Display and the shire's collection of public art.



Viewing platform at Lake Inverell



Environment

An environment that is protected and sustained

Operational income \$5.112M

Operational expense \$5.706M

5052 tonnes of kerbside waste collected

881 tonnes of kerbside recycling collected

37 complying development certificate applications approved

32 days average time taken for all development applications

\$32,727,333 was the value of development applications approved

164 development applications approved

Includes costs relating to priority weeds and vermin control; environmental protection matters, solid waste management, street cleaning, drainage and stormwater management.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Partnered with Local Land Services in River Rehabilitation & Weeds Removal Programs;
- Continued Osage Orange Removal Program along the Macintyre River;
- Participated in Cross Borders Working Group on weed control;

- ❑ Participated in Northern Inland Regional Waste meetings;
- ❑ Ongoing works to improve riverbank environment in Inverell;
- ❑ Finalised grant funded rehabilitation of Gum Flat & Nullamanna Landfills;
- ❑ Completed LED lighting upgrade at Inverell Library;
- ❑ Commenced LED street lighting upgrade in partnership with Essential Energy; and
- ❑ Commenced construction of Companion Animal Impounding Facility.



Celebrating a new partnership with Glen Industries to operate the recycling facility at the Inverell Materials Recovery Facility

E.01

Promote sustainable agricultural activities.

Council continues to collaborate with the Local Lands Services Team to facilitate the management and protection of the Shire's agricultural land for sustainable agricultural use.

E.02

Council's strategies to achieve sustainable, productive use of rural lands and preservation of rural qualities are implemented.

Council's adopted strategic planning documents and development control plan is being utilised as the basis for future rural land use decisions. Council continues to be involved in programs and initiatives that support the Border

Rivers Catchment Action Plan such as improving the condition of our border waterways by containing the spread of Harissia Cactus.

E.03

Protect, rehabilitate and manage all impacts on the built and natural environment.

Council has established measures and processes to protect the built environment and safety of the residents of the Shire through both direct control and education. Council has met the target of completing all inspections and approvals within the agree timeframes.

Council has implemented programs throughout the reporting period to reduce environmental degradation and the loss of biodiversity through weed invasion. A highlight has been the eradication of woody weeds along the banks of the Macintyre River throughout the township of Inverell.

Council has implemented initiatives to facilitate the adoption of energy efficient practices and the use of renewable resources. During the report period Council has invested in solar/wind lighting of pathways and intersections and has had lighting audits carried out for a number of major Council buildings.

E.04

Conserve and rehabilitate core vegetation areas and manage major impacts on corridors and remnant bushland.

To biological diversity on Council controlled land is being protected and conserved through partnerships and the implementation of a biodiversity conservation and bushland management strategy that involved Council partnering with Fishing Club on a \$ for \$ basis to purchase fingerlings to restock our rivers with suitable fish species.

E.05

Manage human impacts on the Shire's unique diversity of plants and animals.

Council continues to minimise the community impact on the Shire's bio-diversity through the provision of a safe, reliable and economic solid waste collection and disposal service which meets modern environmental standards. There has been a marked reduction in domestic waste deposited at the tip following recycling, reuse and composting programs conducted throughout the report period. The introduction of the State Governments Return and Earn Program has also assisted in reducing the amount of recyclable waste

disposed as land fill. Council continues to investigate a revolve store and computer bank.

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

Council has an ongoing partnership with the local RSPCA and vets supporting microchipping and desexing programs. Council contributes staff time and \$4,400 annually towards this program.

E.06

Protect and manage significant natural features and landscapes.

Council is cognisant of identifying, protecting and maintaining the Shire's natural heritage. To facilitate the management of the Shire's living heritage Council aims to produce a catalogue of living heritage.

E.07

Inverell Shire conducts itself as a responsible environmental practitioner through prudent consumption of resources and recycling initiatives.

Council continues to develop and enhance collaborative partnerships for sustainability with the Shire's communities, organisations and business groups. Council's waste management strategies continue to be implemented across the shire.



Economy

A strong local economy

Operational income \$0.799M

Operational expense \$0.913M

48,770 visitors to Tourism Inverell

96 applications received for Sapphire Wind Farm Community Fund

2 items of public art installed

Link Airways continued their RPT service from Brisbane – Inverell – Narrabri – Sydney

Includes camping areas and caravan parks; tourism and area promotion; industrial development promotion; real estate development; and other business undertakings.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Participated in Inverell promotional activities with the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- Supported small business in Inverell Shire through small grants program;
- Facilitated round one of Sapphire Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund;
- Partnered with 'Buy from the Bush' to host small business workshops;
- Supported the Chamber's "Choose Inverell" campaign;
- Completed \$5M upgrade of Copeton Northern Foreshores, funded by NSW Government; and
- Worked in partnership with Inverell RLX to upgrade saleyards.



Inverell Polocrosse Club recipients of Sapphire Wind Farm grant funding

B.01

Business, institutions and Council are working cooperatively towards agreed initiatives to strengthen and expand the Shire's economic base.

Council meets regularly with the Inverell Chamber of Commerce and Industry, businesses, learning and training institutions and other key stakeholders to develop mutual understanding and support for a common agenda for action. The reestablishment of an Inverell to Sydney air route remains a priority.

B.02

Plan for and promote the clustering of specific business and industry sectors in commercially appropriate locations.

To ensure the physical development of the Shire is in accordance with community needs and expectations, using adopted planning instruments and policies, Council continues to make Local Environmental Plan information available and provides assistance to developers as required.

B.03

Facilitate access to services and infrastructure including education, training and research for business.

Council meets regularly with key stakeholders including major employers, businesses, learning and training providers to identify opportunities for growth and to obtain services required to allow viable businesses to start up and/or grow.

B.04

Develop and promote the Shire as the place for business establishment.

During the reporting period Council prepared to host a Careers and Life Choices Expo for the students of 8 local high schools, to highlight the range of opportunities available for jobseekers and facilitate the economic and industrial development of the shire with the view to maintaining population growth and the retention and expansion of business and service to the Shire and Region. Attendees at the Expo will be surveyed

The results of the survey will be used to gauge the status of the local economy.

Council's General Manager actively pursued a number of industrial development opportunities throughout the year. Development of the Rifle Range Industrial Estate is on track to be completed next financial year.

B.05

Assist business to integrate with the community and natural environment.

Throughout the term, Council identified and encouraged a number of businesses intending to relocate from other regional centres. Most recently Link Airways was one such business to commence operations in Inverell. Council assisted Link Airways by enabling access to and maintaining the Inverell Airport and Terminal Building.

B.06

Plan for and promote private and commercial business and residential, industrial and commercial development.

During the reporting period Council developed and adopted a Land Use Strategy to guide the retention and growth of industrial land use as a key component of an employment generating mix of uses to support economic growth.

Council also ensures its property portfolio is maintained at a level sufficient to meet the Shires business development and residential needs. Works are almost complete on the next stage of the Rifle Range Industrial Subdivision.

B.07

Promote a competitive, dynamic and progressive business environment that improves market value.

During the reporting period, Council sourced competitive quotations and called for tenders for a number of Council projects. These projects stimulate the local economy and provide opportunities for employment.

B.08

Promote the Shire as a destination for visitors.

Council carries out a wide range of activities to promote the Shire as a destination for long and short stay visitors. These activities range from attendance at a number of caravan, camping and lifestyle expos, advertising in print and on social media, regional and international markets, availability of accommodation brochures.

B.09

Generate economic benefits to the Shire by increasing visitation from domestic, regional, national and international market sectors.

Council continues to target international markets through tourism activities, including inflight magazine promotions, social media campaigns and regional tourism promotion.



Services

The communities are served by sustainable services and infrastructure

Operational income \$26.459M

Operational expense \$36.867M

\$19.829M spent on Asset Additions (all classes)

\$17.817M spent on infrastructure capital works

\$14.438M spent on capital infrastructure works (renewals)

\$272K Developer Contributions levied

Water supply, sewerage, sporting grounds and venues, swimming pools, parks, gardens, lakes, other sporting and recreational services, quarries and pits, sealed and unsealed roads and bridges on urban, local and regional roads, footpaths, parking areas, aerodromes and other transport and communications.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- 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 2022/2023 bitumen reseal program;
- Progressing with upgrade works at the Inverell Sewerage Treatment Plant;
- Commenced permanent water conservation measures and education campaign;
- Undertook RMS Drought Relief-Heavy Vehicle Access upgrade works on Jardine Road;
- Completed construction of SH12/Tingha bridge roundabout;
- Completed refurbishment of public amenities in Campbell Park;

- **Completed installation of 4 bus shelters under the Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Program.**
- **Inverell Aquatic Centre Refurbishment project commenced.**



Shade shelter installed over Ashford Pool

S.01

Sound local government administration, governance and financial management are provided

Council has implemented leading practice ethical and corporate governance standards and continues to provide a range of resources, services and systems which underpin Council's administrative processes in a timely and efficient manner.

During the reporting period Council provided robust governance and administrative systems to ensure the ongoing health and stability of Council, the discharge of statutory and governance responsibilities, proper reporting and the efficient use of Council's resources. Council met its governance compliance responsibilities as measured by the Office of Local Government.

A sound long-term financial position has been maintained and all statutory compliance has been met.

Council continued to provide a range of resources, services and systems to support the recruitment of high-quality staff, based upon EEO principles and promotes sound staff management practices, the development of staff skills and expertise.

Council continues to provide a safe and healthy work environment which is reflected with workers compensation insurance premiums once again being below industry averages.

Council has developed and maintained an integrated, cost effective and efficient range of application software, management systems and other technologies which contributes to the ability of Council to improve the level of efficiency and productivity.

Council's record and document management service was upgraded during the year to ensure that Council's obligations in respect of the State Records Act continue to be met.

Council's geographical systems continue to be developed, integrated, managed and maintained in order to maximise the efficiency of decision making and planning.

Best practice in procurement and investment management has been adopted and implemented and write offs minimised over the term.

Council provides a functional work base and amenities for Council's staff and the secure storage of material, store items as well as plant and equipment. The target of completing resource requests within a timely manner was met.

During the term, Council introduced a texting service to promote and improve public awareness of Council's tasks and operations. Council also created a 'My Inverell My Say' page on its website to enable community input.

A systems review was carried out on Council's risk management and internal controls to ensure that Council continues to operate using innovative, flexible and responsible management systems capable of providing efficient, effective and economical management.

Council's has developed and continued to implement a fleet management strategy that adopts fleet and plant equipment best practise and benchmarking and is reflective of Energy Efficiency Best Practices. Plant utilisation return on capital investment provides for continued delivery of a modern plant fleet.

In addition, Council continues to provide and maintain a modern efficient and reliable asset management system which ensures the effective and efficient management of Council assets.

S.02

Council displays leadership, community engagement and collaboration with others.

Council reviewed its current practices to enable it to engage more effectively with the community while meeting its statutory and public interest obligations. One of the recent outcomes was the introduction of 'My Inverell My Say' page on Council's website.

S.03

Council provides equitable services, consistent with available resources and priorities to meet the Shire's identified needs and preferences.

Services and programs included in the Operational Plan and Budget continue to be selected based on considerations of equity, best value, relevance and benefit to the community.

S.04

Council's workforce and workplace match contemporary and emerging organisational needs and requirements.

Policies, procedures and practices continue to be monitored and ensure Council's workforce is appropriately planned, skilled, and empowered and Council continues to be recognised as an employer of choice and key staff are retained.

S.05

Attractive and vibrant town centres, local centres and community meeting places are provided.

Local centres, community facilities and prominent meeting places are increasingly valued and recognised by the village communities. Council engaged with each village community to develop and implement projects. Highlights include hall refurbishments, tree planting, play equipment and maintaining garden beds.

S.06

Established population centres are revitalised and people have pride in the community in which they live.

Council continues to work with residents to create and revitalise places and spaces to reflect their local identity, making public places more appealing for use by a broad range of community members. Council partnered with several service clubs and resident groups to establish May Street Lookout, maintain Apex Park in Ashford, maintain and manage village halls etc.

S.07

Provide accessible and usable recreational facilities and services meet the needs of the community.

Council continues to facilitate the joint use of the Shires recreation and leisure facilities, sporting and open space facilities and encourages the co-location of programs. Most recreational and leisure facilities are utilised by a minimum of at least two groups. Council continues to develop the youth precinct in Lions Park.

S.08

Civil infrastructure is secured, maintained and used to optimum benefit.

An Asset Management Strategy is in operation for civil infrastructure that optimises its use and maintains it to agreed standards for its contemporary purpose.

S.09

Council's buildings, parks and open space assets are maintained to a standard fit for their contemporary purpose.

A Building Asset Management Strategy is in operation that maintains Council's assets to appropriate standards fit for contemporary purposes. Condition assessment and audit is performed regularly.

S.10

Maintain and enhance a safe, efficient and effective local road network.

Council continues to address deficiencies and areas of congestion in the local road network to ensure the road network capacity, safety and efficiency are improved and traffic congestion is reduced. Traffic calming devices were installed at a number of intersections identified as blackspots thanks to grant funding received through the Traffic Blackspot Program.

S.11

Facilitate the sharing of information and ideas through remote communications.

Through collaborative partnerships and community advocacy, cost effective broadband and mobile service coverage communication services continue to be rolled out to all citizens of the Inverell Shire. This year, under the Federal Government's Mobile Blackspot Program, Council recommitted their offer of a maximum \$20K contribution per site for the construction of an access road to a tower site to encourage carriers to submit a tender for any site in Inverell Shire.

Inverell Shire Council, through collaborative partnerships, has programs and initiatives to increase computer literacy within the community. This year, to promote the development of computer skills and the application of communication technologies, Council successfully conducted a number of computer building workshops for youth.

S.12

Provision of safe and efficient networks to ensure connectivity between population centres.

Inverell provides an airport facility approved by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority that caters for private and commercial aviation operators and their passengers. September 2022 marked the five year anniversary since Link Airways commenced their Inverell to Brisbane service.

Council has effectively planned, organised, directed and controlled the Works Program to ensure all works are delivered on time and on budget.

North West Weight of Loads undertakes initiatives on Council's behalf to reduce the incidence of overloaded vehicles using the road system.

Council, through it's Local Traffic Committee is dedicated to optimising safe traffic flow throughout the road network by providing safe and clear traffic

guidance and public education which has resulted in a reduction in customer requests concerning the road network.

The implementation of Council's Bridge Management Plan continues to ensure availability, uninterrupted, safe traffic flow across the Shire where bridge maintenance and construction is required to link the road network.

Council's program of priority works was developed in partnership with the State and Federal Government and implemented to maintain the state regional/rural and local/urban road network to ensure the safe and efficient movement of vehicular cycling and pedestrian traffic throughout the Shire. Available funds, sourced both internally and externally, were utilised to improve the road network. Construction program were completed on time and on budget.

S.13

Provide communities with quality potable water supply, effective drainage and sewerage systems.

Council continues to provide and maintain an adequate water supply and related service to the community based on a responsible view of water as a commodity and as a scarce natural resource.

Council also provides an environmentally responsible, cost effective, customer focused sewerage system that caters for the sustainable growth of the community.

A stormwater drainage system, which minimises the impact of storm events, is cost effective, customer focused and caters for the sustainable growth of the community, continues to be maintained by Council. Customer requests during the term have been responded in a timely manner.

S.14

Increase the number of people working and cycling, particularly for journeys within the community.

Council continues to promote cycling and walking as an essential component in integrated transport and land use by creating and supporting infrastructure and facilities that encourage such alternative methods of transport. During the year Council expanded the foot/cyclepath network, partnered with the Inverell Mountain Bike Club to develop a cycle park and assisted Inverell Parkrun establish and market a course in Inverell.

S.15

Promote the effective integration of waste management and recycling services.

Council's Waste Management Strategy delivers an innovative approach that takes advantage of the most practical and sustainable waste management solutions available which meet not only statutory recycling levels but also environmental and community demands. During the term Council expanded the roadside garbage and recycling collection service, carried out a whitegoods collection, and partnered with community organisations to significantly reduce the amount of domestic waste disposed of at the Inverell Landfill.



Statutory Reporting

The information in this section of the annual report addresses the reporting requirements detailed in section 428 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, clause 217(1) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* and other relevant legislation. It serves to complement the information provided in other sections of this report as well as provide increased transparency and accountability to the community.

Companion Animals Act

Community

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.

Impounding & Reporting

Council complies with guidelines on the exercise of functions under the Companion Animals Act which includes lodging monthly pound collection returns (survey of council seizures of cats and dogs) with the Office of Local Government.

Attacks & Reporting

Compliance Officers have over the last year, investigated several incidents of dog attacks. As a result of these investigations, some fines have been forthcoming and restrictions placed on the subject dogs. Incidents were logged with the Office of Local Government into the Companion Animals Register as each incident occurred. A total of 19 incidents were recorded for the 2022/2023 reporting year.

Education Programs

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.

Desexing Programs

Council has an ongoing partnership with the local RSPCA and vets supporting microchipping and desexing programs. Council contributes staff time and \$4,400 annually to the program.

Alternatives to Euthanasia

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, social media and Council working closely with local networks including the RSPCA, Animal Welfare League and various rescue groups to actively rehome suitable animals.

Off Leash Areas

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 on the riverbank along Campbell Street. A 4,000m² off leash dog park was recently established in Lions Park.

Companion Animal Control Expenses totalled \$140,932.93 for the 2022/2023 reporting year.

Disability Inclusion

Inverell Shire Council is committed to ensuring that people with a disability have equitable access to opportunities and enjoy the benefits of living in Inverell Shire.

We are also mindful of the need to work collaboratively to build a strong, inclusive and equitable community. Our Vision is to create 'A Community for Everyone'.

Accordingly, Council has adopted the Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan which outlines our strategy for achieving our Vision. The plan focuses on how Inverell Shire can be a more inclusive and accessible town, a place where people want to live, work and play. A copy of the plan has been forwarded to the Disability Council NSW in line with the requirements of the *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014*.

Council's Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan can be accessed on Council's website.



Charitable Donations

Councils may provide financial assistance to others under section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993*. Inverell Shire Council allocates funds in each annual Operational Plan. The distribution of funds is managed either by policy, recommended to Council by its Economic & Community Sustainability Committee or in some instances where the request is less than \$200, the General Manager may determine (provided that the request is in accordance with policy).

Council contributed a total of \$192,492.66 to the following organisations under Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* in the 2022/2023 reporting year. A detailed list of organisations which received assistance included:

Organisation	Amount
Ashford Business Council Inc.	\$2,800.00
Ashford Golf Club	\$890.52
Ashford Show Society	\$3,000.00
Ashford Tennis Club	\$496.19
Delungra Golf Club	\$1,047.85
Delungra Hall	\$4,106.22
Down to Earth Garden Club	\$405.00
Gum Flat Public School P & C	\$200.00
Gwydir Fish	\$1,818.18
Inverell Darts Association	\$200.00
Inverell Eisteddfod Society	\$1,655.91
Inverell Homes for the Aged	\$11,666.67
Inverell Pioneer Village	\$27,612.00
Inverell Pipe Band	\$2,995.50
Inverell Polocrosse Club	\$35,353.97
Inverell Showground Land Manager	\$1,242.00
Inverell Town & Country Club	\$5,204.47
Joey's Mini World Cup	\$12,500.00
Local Heritage Fund – Kawaramoto	\$15,603.00
Local Heritage Fund – Cleary	\$3,500.00
Local Heritage Fund – Inverell Presbyterian Church	\$3,937.00
Local Heritage Fund – Aitken & Barry	\$10,500.00
Local Heritage Fund – Edendale Co	\$17,160.00
Local Heritage Fund – Berkley	\$5,300.00
Moree Plains Shire Council - Weight of Loads	\$16,584.83
Mount Russell Hall	\$513.35
Nullamanna Reserve Land Manager	\$200.00
Sapphire City Concert Band	\$4,000.00
Tingha Citizens Association Inc	\$2,000.00
Yetman Hall & Progress Association	\$722.15
Total	\$192,492.66

Written Off Rates and Charges

Under Section 132 of the Local Government (General) Regular 2005, Council must report on the amount of rates and charges written off during the year.

This information is presented in the table below.

Rate or Charge	Amount
Debtors Write Offs	\$35,751.95
Pensioner Water	\$124,184.38
Pensioner Sewer	\$101,587.49
Pensioner General	\$318,965.54
Pensioner Garbage	\$108,013.82
Postponed Rates	\$22,441.61
Total	\$710,944.79

Voluntary Planning Agreements

Voluntary Planning Agreements, also known as VPA's are a voluntary arrangement under which a developer is requested to dedicate land free of cost, play a monetary contribution or provide any other material public benefit, to be used for or applied towards the provision of public infrastructure or another public purpose.

A planning agreement may be used instead of (or in addition to) imposing the condition included in Council's current Contributions Plan, to negotiate development contributions that relate to a development, that may address other purposes and have a wider public benefit.

Inverell Shire Council imposes conditions included in Council's current Contributions Plan. To date, the need to enter into a Voluntary Planning Agreement with a developer has not arisen therefore no Planning Agreements are currently in force.

Environmental Upgrade Agreements

Council has not established any Environmental Upgrade Agreements.

Fisheries Management

Council have not received any formal requests or complaints regarding matters covered in any recovery or threat abatement plan listed under the NSW Fisheries Management Act.

Private Swimming Pools

Number of inspections that:

Were of tourist and visitor accommodation	8
Were of premises with more than 2 dwellings	0
Resulted in issuance of a certificate of compliance under s22D of the Swimming Pool Act	42
Resulted in issuance of a certificate of non-compliance under cl 21 Swimming Pool Regulation	2

Stormwater Management Services

In 2022/2023 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 2022/23 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 \$200.00. 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 \$147,343.55 in the 2022/2023 reporting year.

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

MAINTENANCE	
Projected Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare and implement annual maintenance program for lined and unlined stormwater drainage systems ○ Investigate complaints/requests regarding drainage matters
Actual Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual Maintenance Program implemented ○ Complaints/requests responded to in a timely manner
ASSET MANAGEMENT	
Projected Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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
Actual Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information captured and updated ○ Routine maintenance carried out
STRATEGIC PLANNING	
Projected Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare a forward plan for stormwater drainage improvement needs
Actual Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Draft Strategic Forward Plan for Stormwater Drainage prepared

Coastal Protection Services

Council did not impose a coastal protection service levy during the 2022/2023 reporting year.

Special Rate Variation Expenditure

Inverell Shire Council was successful with its special rate variation application, under Section 508A of the Local Government Act, in 2016/2017 to increase its general ratings income. The multi-year special variation provided increases of 6.25% in 2017-18, 7.25% in 2018-19 and 7.25% in 2019-20, or a cumulative increase of 22.21% over three years.

The total funds expended in 2022/2023 under the special rate variation amounted to \$1,805,066. A breakdown of this expenditure is as follows:

<p>Budget Deficit Repair</p> <p>\$420K</p>	<p>This allocation of funding is allocated across Council entire General Fund Budget to ensure existing Service Levels are maintained. Without the Special Rate Variation Council would need to reduce its overall level of expenditure by \$420K to deliver a balanced budget.</p>
<p>Asset Maintenance</p> <p>\$308K</p>	<p>Various maintenance projects on the Rural Road Network to ensure Service Levels are met and the useful lives of these assets are maximised (drainage, bitumen maintenance and patching, roadside slashing, gravel maintenance and patching, vegetation management).</p>
<p>Road Grading Maintenance Program</p> <p>\$101.3K</p>	<p>Various maintenance grading projects across Council entire grading program on the Rural Road Network to maintain existing service levels.</p> <p>In the 2022/23 financial year Council's maintenance crews spent \$1,568,579 on grading to maintain Council's unsealed road network.</p>
<p>Road Infrastructure Backlog Program</p> <p>\$595K</p>	<p>Road Infrastructure Backlog Program, being for heavy Patching, Pavement Stabilisation and Rehabilitation on the Regional Road Network.</p> <p>The 2022/23 funding of \$595K was allocated to the Yetman Road Upgrade and the Taylor Avenue Upgrade.</p>
<p>Road Infrastructure Asset Renewal Program</p> <p>\$250K</p>	<p>Road Infrastructure Asset Renewal Program, being additional funding allocated to road patching, pavement stabilisation and rehabilitation on Council's road network to prevent asset falling into backlog.</p> <p>2022/23 funding of \$250K was allocated to gravel resheeting (\$15K), Bruxner Way (\$140K) and drainage structures (\$95K).</p>
<p>Restore Industry Assistance and Promotions Program</p> <p>\$80.7K</p>	<p>The assistance and promotion of business and industry program had been reduced by \$32.5K over recent years. These funds are allocated to restore funding to this program. Projects funded from this program are subject to approval by Council Resolution.</p> <p>2022/23 budget allocation was deferred to 2023/24 for future industry assistance and promotions.</p>
<p>Urban Construction</p> <p>\$50K</p>	<p>Urban Infrastructure Asset Renewal program, being additional funding allocated to the urban road network. 2022/23 funding of \$50K was allocated to the Tingha Bridge roundabout.</p>

Works Carried Out On Private Land

Council did not make any resolutions during the year under Section 67 of the Act concerning work carried out on private land.

Contracts Awarded

The following contracts were awarded during the 2022/2023 reporting year:

Nature of Goods & Services	Contractor	Amount
Inverell Aquatic Centre Replacement	Hines Constructions	\$24,978,789.00
Supply Playground Equipment	Playground Centre Australia Pty Ltd	\$246,286.70
Supply 3 x Gravel Trucks	Westar Truck Centre	\$1,417,577.70
Construct Nullamanna Bush Fire Station	Build Me Co	\$249,200.00
Supply Smooth Drum Roller	Westrac Pty Ltd	\$249,140.82
Supply Garbage Truck	Superior Park Pty Ltd	\$492,994.00
Concrete Pavement Construction at Gwydir Highway and Bundarra Road	Conex Group	\$220,365.00
2022/23 Bitumen Resealing & Construction Spray Sealing	NSW Spray Seal	\$1,979,816.00
Traffic Control Services	Ahoy Traffic Control & Labour Hire Services	\$500,000.00
Cleaning Contract 1A, 1B & 1C	Cleveland Property Services	\$258,949.78
Inverell Airport Lighting Upgrade	Airport Lighting Specialists	\$150,284.55
Telecommunication Asset Relocation (Roundabout)	Telstra Pty Ltd	\$711,838.71
Inverell Sewer Main Condition Assessment	Interflow Pty Ltd	\$211,053.00

Equal Employment Opportunity Management

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.

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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.

Mayoral and Councillors Expenses

Provision of Facilities and Payment of Expenses		Council Cost
cl217(1) (a1)	Payment of Expenses, provision of facilities	\$5,885.40
cl217(1) (a1)(i)	Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to Councillors	\$181.72
cl217(1) (a1)(ii)	Telephone calls made by Councillors	\$1,114.39
cl217(1) (a1)(iii)	Attendance of Councillors at conferences and seminars	\$22,382.56
cl217(1) (a1)(iv)	Training of Councillors and provision of skill development	\$420.00
cl217(1) (a1)(v)	Interstate visits by Councillors including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket travelling expenses	\$685.46
cl217(1) (a1)(vi)	Overseas visits by Councillors including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket travelling expenses	Nil
cl217(1) (a1)(vii)	Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a Councillor	\$2,980.72
cl217(1) (a1)(viii)	Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a Councillor	Nil
Total		\$33,650.25

The total amount of fees and allowances paid to the Mayor and Councillors for the year was \$153,486.58. In 2022/23 Councillors received an annual fee of \$12,650, with the Mayor receiving an additional fee of \$27,600.

The total amount spent on the provision of Council and other meeting costs for the year was \$11,499.11.

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.

12 in-house workshops/briefing sessions were delivered throughout the year as part of the ongoing professional development of councillors.

Overseas Visits

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 2022/2023 by the Mayor, Councillors or staff representing Inverell Shire Council while representing Council.

Senior Staff Remuneration

The Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 requires Council to report on the remuneration of its senior staff.

Council has a management structure consisting of a General Manager and two Directors. The General Manager and the Directors are employed on standard Division of Local Government contracts.

General Manager

The remuneration packages (including salary, performance payments, non-cash benefits, motor vehicle, fringe benefits and superannuation) for the position of General Manager was \$387,467.00.

Directors

The remuneration (including salary, performance payments, non-cash benefits, motor vehicle, fringe benefits and superannuation) for the Directors positions for 2022/23 totalled \$471,871.00.

External Bodies, Companies & Partnerships

Council delegated functions to the following External Bodies during 2022/23.

- North West Weight of Loads

Council did not have a controlling interest in any companies during 2022/23.

Council was party to the following Partnerships, Co-operatives or Joint Ventures during 2022/23:

- Australian Airports Association
- Country Mayor's Association of NSW
- Northern Tablelands Bushfire Management Committee
- Local Emergency Management Committee
- New England Joint Organisation of Councils
- Northern Inland Regional Waste Group
- Northern Joint Regional Planning Panel
- NSW Public Libraries Association

Legal Proceedings

In 2022/23 Council did not incur any amount in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against the Council.

Council did however incur costs totalling \$61,598.24 for debt recovery expenses, obtaining legal advice and conveyancing.

Labour Statistics

In accordance with the Office of Local Government Circular No 22-20 Annual Reporting of Labour Statistics, Wednesday 25 May 2022 has been chosen as the 'relevant day' for councils to report on their labour statistics in their annual reports under this section. Accordingly, the following figures are provided:

Persons directly employed by Council:	
• On a permanent basis	180
• On a permanent part-time basis	4
• On a casual basis	0
• Under a fixed-term contract	6
Persons employed by Council as 'senior staff' members	
	7
Persons engaged by Council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, that is wholly or principally for the labour of the person	
	19
Persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, as an apprentice or trainee	
	6

Obligations under the Government Information Public Access (GIPA) Act

During the 2022/23 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 ie Inverell Aquatic Centre Redevelopment
- Statistical information about access applications.

Table A: Number of Application 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/decide 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)	1	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Members of the public (other)	nil	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/decide whether information is held	Application withdrawn
Personal information applications*	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	1	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	Number 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

	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	nil

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

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.

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 2022/2023

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