

Balranald Shire Council Implementation Plan that addresses the findings and recommendations from the Office of Local Government's Report titled

"Balranald Shire

Council report on Preliminary Enquiries dated August 2016"

	OLG REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPOSED OUTCOMES	ACTION BY	STATUS AT 21 December 2017	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (IF REQUIRED)	COMPLETION DATE
1	That Council finalise and resolve to adopt a LTFP that has clear links to Council's asset management plans.	Asset Management Plans are being developed and will be completed by 28 July 2017. Council has resolved that the LTFP be reported to the August 2017 Council meeting.	GM	<p>Morrison Low are undertaking the preparation of the LTFP in conjunction with the rating review and SRV process. The project plan proposes that Council adopt the 2018/19 LTFP for community consultation on 17 Oct with the final LTFP being adopted at the November 2017 meeting.</p> <p>Preliminary review by DID highlighted some financial inconsistencies with LTFP and Asset Management Plan (AMP). Comments are mainly based on the AMP.</p> <p>Overall the AMP seems to be good (based on available information) and addresses most of the issues.</p> <p>It should be noted that critical policies such as the Rural Roads Policy requires an urgent review. This could have a direct impact on agreed LOS, intervention levels and potential impact on LTFP</p> <p>Preliminary comments/ thoughts on AMP:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Needs to be workshopped with Asset Managers to have an understanding of how the following was considered/ assumed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) How LOS and intervention levels was agreed upon for council owned buildings such as Theatre Royal, Courthouses, Greenham Park, Euston Rec Reserve, pool, houses (some require major refurbishment), weir/ lock, swing bridge, etc. b) Maintenance or replacement of street furniture c) Maintenance and replacement of assets acquired through grants such as pontoons and boat ramps d) Make up of asset components i.e intersection to intersection, cattle grid to cattle grid, valve to valve? e) Water and Sewer: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Linkage to Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) II. Make up of asset classes and components III. Timing of replacement of expensive critical assets such as membranes at Euston Water Treatment Plant? Do we need a separate reserve? f) Waste: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Potential major rehabilitation cost at end of contract for Euston Landfill (5-7 year horizon) II. Operations and management of both landfill sites could be high risk (environmental, reputational, financial and corporate). 	Morrison Low are preparing Council's Asset Management Plans & a former General Manager from the surrounding district is preparing the LTFP which will be provided to the August Council meeting.	30-Nov-17
2	That Council reviews its Quarterly Budget Review Statement with Councillors to ensure accuracy and relevance for decision-making at a strategic level.	Councillors review the Quarterly Budget Review Statement at the November 2016 meeting.	DCCD	Reviewed at November 2016 Council meeting. Completed Strategic decision making needs to be fostered with Councillors.	In-house. Consultation/ Lessons learnt workshops with high performing Councils? External	15-Nov-16
3	That all elected councillors undertake financial and code of conduct training directly after the next Council election.	LG NSW organised training day for Code of Conduct scheduled for 19 January 2017 and Finance Training Day on 10 March 2017.	GM	All Councillors attended the Code of Conduct training held on 19 January 2017 along with the Finance Training day held on 10 March 2017. Completed.	LGNSW	10-Mar-17
4	That Council undertake a comprehensive review of all its policies and ensure they are submitted to Council for adoption.	All of Council Policies to be reviewed and adopted by Council at the February 2017 Council meeting. In doing so identify any critical outstanding policies and included them for adoption.	GM	<p>A total of 40 policies were adopted by Council at the February 2017 Council meeting.</p> <p>There are approximately 6 more relevant policies to be presented to Council.</p> <p>Suggest to review policies annually due to changes in legislation, best practices, etc.</p>	A consultant with 20+years' experience in governance undertook the review for Council Policies should be applicable to this Council	21-Feb-17
5	That Council develop a plan to improve its document management processes and system which will meet the requirements of the State Records Act 1998.	Electronic Management System installed. dedicated staff member appointed to manage the system and staff provided training to utilise the system.	DCCD	Project Manager appointed in May 2017 & Casual receptionist 5days/fortnight to allow receptionist to assist project manager. Council accepted a quote from Kaphis on 21 June to supply and install Trim (which is utilised by the surrounding Councils). Installation commenced on 3 July and the dedicated position has filled. The System is operational with staff training to be undertaken during Oct & Nov. Consideration should be given to structure and layout of TRIM containers.	External Project Manager appointed to Project Manage the whole project.	29-Sep-17

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6	That until Council has an audit committee, councillors review responses to the issues raised in the external auditor's management letters on an annual basis at a Council meeting.	External auditor's management letters Reported to the February 2017 Council Meeting	DCCD	External auditor's management letters Reported to the 21 February 2017 Council Meeting. The Inaugural Audit Committee Meeting was held on 1 June 2017 with a progress report to the June 2017 Council meeting. Completed.	In-house	1-Jun-17
7	That Council's progress in implementing the recommendations from the external auditor's management letter is reported to Council each month.	A monthly progress report be provided to Council up to and including the December 2017 meeting.	DCCD	Audit management letters were reported to the December 2016 and February 2017 meetings with a monthly progress report being reported to the June, July, August, September & October 2017 Council meetings.	In-house	22-Dec-17
8	Council should establish an audit committee and an internal audit framework pursuant to OLG's Internal Audit Guidelines.	Internal audit framework established and first Audit Committee meeting held prior to 30 June 2017.	GM	Internal Audit Framework adopted at the February 2017 Council meeting. External members were appointed at the April Council meeting and the inaugural Audit Committee meeting was held on 1 June 2017. Completed.	In-house	1-Jun-17
9	That Council develop a fraud and corruption policy and conduct a fraud risk assessment.	Fraud and corruption policy adopted by Council and Consultant undertake a fraud risk assessment by 31 August 2017.	GM	Policy adopted at the February 2017 Council meeting. Crowe Horwath have undertaken a survey of all management staff against the key areas of fraud control & provided a Fraud Risk Assessment Spreadsheet to Council on 10 August & Council's Management team have reviewed the assessment. Completed	Crowe Horwath of Albury have been appointed to undertake an Independent fraud risk	31-Aug-17
10	That in addition to the current arrangements, credit card statements for the Mayor and General Manager be reviewed, approved and signed off by another Councillor in line with expenditure that has been	Implement Report Recommendation.	GM	Process implemented 15 November 2016 where all relevant staff have been informed in writing of the process and the DCCD will audit. Completed.	In-house	15-Nov-16
11	That for any staff provided with a credit card, their transactions are signed off and approved by the General Manager and the Finance Coordinator.	Implement Report Recommendation.	GM	Process implemented 15 November 2016 where all relevant staff have been informed in writing of the process and the DCCD will audit. Completed.	In-house	15-Nov-16
12	That Council develop an end of year plan to complete and finalise Council's audited financial statements each year and report regularly to a Council	End of year plan reported to the June Council meeting with a progress report to the following 3 Council meetings.	DCCD	Initial report provided to February 2017 Council meeting with a follow up report to the June, July, August & September 2017 Council meeting. Completed.	In-house	29-Sep-17
13	That Council pursue unrepresented payments including several EFT payments and cheques dating back to August 2014 and February 2014, respectively.	As per report recommendation	DCCD	4 Cheques have been cancelled and reissued 15/11/16. Council's financial system provider rectified the EFT payments. Completed.	In-house	15-Nov-16
14	That Council ensure an authentic and informed LTFP is presented to Council in August 2017.	Adoption of Long term Financial Plan	GM	Morrison Low are undertaking the preparation of the LTFP in conjunction with the rating review and SRV process. The project plan proposes that Council adopt the 2018/19 LTFP for community consultation on 17 Oct with the final LTFP being adopted on 21 November 2017.	Consultant – Morrison Low	30 November 2017
15	That Council consider the future operations of the Balranald Caravan Park to ensure the Park continues to be a major asset for the District and produces realistic income with minimum risk.	Options for future management of the Caravan Park considered and implemented by Council.	GM	Sustainable Park Solutions were appointed by Council at the June meeting to prepare a Master Plan and Business Plan for the Balranald Caravan Park. Furthermore, Council resolved not to renew the current lease. At the August meeting Council resolved 1/ to adopt the Master Plan and Business Plan for the Balranald Caravan Park. 2/ Public invite	Consultant – Sustainable Park Solutions	31 December 2017
16	That Council consider divesting the management and possibly ownership of the Biddee Haven Hostel in Balranald to ensure income losses do not impact on Council's limited budget and risks to Council are minimized.	Options for the future ownership and management of the facility considered and Council decision made.	DCCD	At the August Council meeting Council resolved to send a delegation to meet with the Federal Minister for Aged Care and Primary Health on Friday at Broken Hill to discuss the options to retain the license beds in our community and that a report comes back to Council at next meeting. At the September Council meeting Council resolved	In-House	30 September 2017
17	That regardless of the success or otherwise of the application for IWCM business plans be prepared for the Water and Sewer Funds.	Adoption of a IWCM strategy including business plans for the Water & Sewer Funds.	DID	Funding sought from government program for 2017/2018. Council has budgeted \$120k in the budget with the offset of grant income of \$60k	Consultant (estimate \$60k extra if grant not received)	31 December 2018
18	That the "sugar hit" from the sale of the Caltex Service Station be applied to current areas of deficiency (such as staff levels) or modernisation of approaches (such as a Document Management System) or building	Sale of site and funds reserved for specific purposes	DCCD	Council divesting ownership now imminent (contracts exchanged). Council conscious of the need for judicious expenditure of the sale proceeds	In-house	30 November 2017
19	That Council undertake a rates review to ensure the correct categorisation of properties to ensure equity and income maximization.	Review completed in this calendar year	GM	Morrison Low have completed a draft rate review which is being reported to the October Council meeting.	Consultant Morrison Low Budgeted \$89,500, which includes the SRV work	30 November 2017

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20	That preparations commence for a general Special Rates Variation (SRV) and that Council look at the possibility of SRVs for mines and solar farms approved or planned.	SRV preparation work undertaken and SRV application submitted	GM	Morrison Low have been engaged to undertake the SRV process with a report being presented to the October Council meeting.	Consultant – Morrison Low, as above	31 January 2018
21	That Council embed the recently adopted Business Improvement Plan into its operations.	Recognition of the importance of the Business improvement plan and regularly reporting to Council.	GM	The business improvement plan will be considered quarterly by Council. Where relevant reference will be made to the plan in staff reports. General Manager's performance assessment will be aligned to the Plan.	In-house	Ongoing
22	That Council look to adopting S.94 or S.94A plans to ensure future income opportunities are not lost.	Council is in a position to readily assess impacts of major developments in the shire	DID	To be actioned.	Consultant (estimate \$10k)	30 June 2018
23	That a review of all fees and charges be undertaken, before the next Budget, with a view to establishing full cost recovery or identifying the reasons for not pursuing full cost recovery.	Maximize Council's income from these sources.	DCCD	To be actioned.	In-House	30 April 2018.
24	That a review of plant charges and on costs be made, before the next Budget, to ensure profitability is maximized and all overheads are correctly charged and recovered.	Maximize Council's income from these sources.	DID	To be actioned.	In-House	30 April 2018.
25	That Council recognize that approaches in previous years of not funding depreciation have reduced the cash position of Council and Council commit to cash funding of depreciation.	Council's budgeting process allows for depreciation to be funded.	DCCD	The recent road revaluation reduced Council's total annual depreciation by the amount of \$2.2M. The LTFFP will address the situation with the draft LTFFP being presented to the October Council meeting.	In-House	30 November 2017
26	That a long term financial and improvement plan be prepared for the Visitors Information Centre.	Council adopts a precinct management plan for the Visitor Information Centre and surrounds	DCCD	The plan is currently being prepared in house and programed to be presented to the November Council meeting.	In-House	30 October 2017
27	That Council move quickly to fill staff vacancies as identified in the latest staff structures as presented to Council.	A full complement of suitability qualified staff	GM	Structure presented to Consultative committee and discussion with staff commenced	In-House	28 February 2018
28	That Directors of Council be given more security of tenure.	Directors appointed permanently to positions	GM	Permanent Directors appointed and commenced on 4 September 2017.	In-House	30 October 2017
29	That Council consider a Staff Education Assistance and Encouragement Policy.	Adoption of a formal Staff Education policy	DCCD	To be actioned.	In-House	31 December 2017
30	That Council look to a succession planning approach with staff.	Adopted Workforce Plan that addresses staff succession issues	DCCD	The new structure provides a career path for staff which combined with staff education and training will address succession planning issues.	In-House	31 March 2018
31	That Council monitor Secondary Employment to ensure worker safety is paramount, work obligations are not compromised and conflicts of interest are minimized.	Ongoing monitoring & development of a secondary employment policy	DCCD	Code of conduct training provided to all staff to make them aware of their responsibilities in relation to secondary employment. Reminders issued to staff and a number of staff have sought in writing approval for secondary employment.	In-House	30 October 2017
32	That Council require the General Manager and Directors to undergo personality profiling and follow up interviews to align their personalities with the rigors of the roles.	Profiling of General Manager and Directors completed	GM	To be actioned.	Consultant – online, approximate cost \$3,000	31 December 2017
33	That Council's newly appointed Performance Review Panel conduct two formal assessments annually and also meet quarterly for discussions with the General Manager.	Action to be implemented	GM	The General Manager has ½ yearly reviews with a facilitator. Quarterly meetings will be implemented.	Consultant for ½ yearly and In-house for the quarterly meetings	30 November 2017

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34	That the General Manager's Performance Agreement be a meaningful agreement which reflects the aspirations and obligations of Council including subscribing to Fit for the Future requirements. adherence to the	New Performance Agreement to be established.	GM	Consultant (LGMS Solutions) is now working on this following a recent review.	Consultant – within budget	30 November 2017
35	That Council undertake a definite and sustained campaign of community engagement.	Appointment of a 0.5FTE communication officer	DCCD	Structure that is currently under consideration includes the 0.5FTE communication officer with Position Description complete. The CSP and SRV will demand more sustained communication.	In-house & budgeted for	Ongoing & according to requirements
36	That Council undertake a service level review to inform the planning documents.	Service Levels established for key delivery areas	GM	To be actioned.	Consultants & In-house Estimate of \$50k	31 December 2018.
37	That Councillors recognise the dignity and authority of the position of Mayor at all times.	Awareness of the appropriate relationships emanating from the Code of Conduct, Code of Meeting Practice and Councillor/Staff Interaction Policy.	GM	Appropriate policies are established, policies to be reinforced from time to time.	In-house	ongoing
38	That the Mayor preside over all gatherings where Councillors are present. (Meetings and Workshops). Further that the Mayor familiarise himself with the respective Codes governing behaviour by Councillors and	Authority of Mayor established.	GM	This recommendation has been implemented.	In-house	ongoing
39	That Council do more to "sell itself" by promoting positive news and achievements.	Improved communication and public relation	DCCD	To be actioned following the appointment of a communications officer	In-house	ongoing