



AGENDA

Ordinary Council Meeting Tuesday, 15 September 2026

Date: Tuesday, 15 September 2026

Time: 4PM

Location: Council Chambers, Market Street Balranald

**Terry Dodds PSM
Chief Executive Officer**

BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL

AGENDA

In Case of an emergency, for example a fire, please evacuate the building following the direction of the Administrator. The order to evacuate may be signified by a council officer or myself. Please proceed to the assembly area (in front of police station) or in the car park across the road. An instruction to evacuate to an area should be followed without delay to assist Council in ensuring the Health and Safety of all staff and visitors.

LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS PLEASE NOTE:

This Council meeting is being streamed live, recorded, and broadcast online. To those present in the gallery today, by attending or participating in this public meeting you are consenting to your image, voice and comments being recorded and published. The Mayor and/or Chief Executive Officer have the authority to pause or terminate the stream if comments or debate are considered defamatory or otherwise inappropriate for publishing. Attendees are advised that they may be subject to legal action if they engage in unlawful behaviour or commentary.

OUR VISION

To create a better, more vibrant, more resilient and more engaged community, by capitalising upon its human, cultural, environmental and business assets and encouraging a strong sense of civic participation and pride.

OUR MISSION

“Committed to Balranald Shire, Providing for our People, Protecting our Heritage, and Planning for our Future.”

OUR VALUES

Honesty:	We will be transparent, frank and truthful to ourselves, each other and with other people we deal with.
Respect:	We will treat others as we want to be treated ourselves, we will be tolerant of each other and accept that people have different opinions.
Enjoyment:	We will create a pleasant and enjoyable working environment with satisfying jobs.
Teamwork:	We will cooperate and support each other to achieve common goals.
Openness:	We will collaborate openly and provide opportunities to communicate and network regularly with each other.
Leadership:	We will provide a clear strategy and direction and support all to achieve organisational and community goals.
Customer Focus:	We will constantly strive to be responsive to our customers' needs and preferences by providing high quality services.

Notice is hereby given that an Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held in the
Council Chambers, Market Street Balranald on:
Tuesday, 15 September 2026 at 4PM

Order Of Business

1	Opening of Meeting	5
2	PRAYER & Acknowledgement of country	8
3	Apologies	8
4	Confirmation of Minutes	9
4.1	MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 18 AUGUST 2026	9
5	Disclosure of Interest	24
6	Mayoral/Councillor Report	25
6.1	MAYORAL REPORT - FAR WEST NEEDS ACTION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND INVESTMENT	25
6.2	COUNCILLOR REPORT - MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION - NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026	28
6.3	COUNCILLOR REPORT - ATTENDANCE REPORT - ALGWA 75TH ANNIVERSARY NATIONAL CONFERENCE, 20-22 SEPTEMBER 2026.....	31
6.4	COUNCILLOR REPORT - ATTENDANCE AT 75TH NATIONAL ALGWA CONFERENCE, MANLY AUGUST 2026	36
7	Committee Reports.....	38
7.1	AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 JULY 2026	38
7.2	EUSTON PROGRESSIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 29 JUNE & MONDAY 29 JULY 2026	57
8	Notice of Motion.....	62
8.1	NOTICE OF MOTION - KYALITE WATER.....	62
8.2	NOTICE OF MOTION - E-BIKE AND MICRO-MOBILITY POLICY	63
8.3	NOTICE OF MOTION - PLACE NAMING REGISTER.....	64
9	Notice of Rescission.....	65
	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS Reports (incorporating all staff reports)	66
	Part A – Items Requiring Decision.....	66
10	Chief Executive Officer's Reports.....	66
10.1	ELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR.....	66
10.2	DATE AND TIME FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS	76
10.3	ORDER OF BUSINESS AND CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE AMENDMENT ...	79
10.4	DELEGATIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.....	160
10.5	RATING FOR MINING LANDS	166
10.6	REFERRAL OF DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO AUDIT - YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2026	171

10.7	RESTRICTED FUNDS 2026	271
10.8	SECURING REGIONAL NSW WATER AND SEWERAGE SERVICES	274
10.9	FINANCIAL POSITION AND FORWARD FINANCIAL RISKS	290
10.10	NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS COMMISSION PROPOSED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANT METHODOLOGY	296
10.11	SPONSORSHIP - 2027 KYALITE FISHING CLASSIC	343
10.12	DONATION REQUESTS - SPORTING PARTICIPANTS	347
10.13	DONATION REQUESTS - SPORTING PARTICIPANTS	355
Part B – Items for Information.....		361
11 Chief Executive Officer's Reports.....		361
11.1	MONTHLY INVESTMENTS REPORT	361
11.2	OUTSTANDING RATES AND USAGE CHARGES AS AT 31 AUGUST 2026.....	368
11.3	DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST RETURNS TO 30 JUNE 2026.....	370
11.4	COUNCIL PROPERTY BUILDING REPAIRS	372
11.5	MONTHLY OPERATIONAL REPORT	374
11.6	CORRESPONDENCE.....	404
11.7	CIRCULARS FROM THE OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT	480
11.8	MEETINGS ATTENDED BY THE MAYOR, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND THE EXECUTIVE TEAM	482
5 Questions on Notice		486
	Nil	
6 Confidential Matters		487
32.1	ESTABLISHMENT OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT SERVICES PANEL FOR FUNDED PROJECTS	487
33.2	STATUS UPDATE ON ACTIONS TO ADDRESS FIRE DAMAGE TO THE ROYAL THEATRE BUILDING.....	487
7 Closure of Meeting.....		488

1 OPENING OF MEETING

CHAPTER 3. PRINCIPLES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

8 OBJECT OF PRINCIPLES

THE OBJECT OF THE PRINCIPLES FOR COUNCILS SET OUT IN THIS CHAPTER IS TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO ENABLE COUNCILS TO CARRY OUT THEIR FUNCTIONS IN A WAY THAT FACILITATES LOCAL COMMUNITIES THAT ARE STRONG, HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS.

8A GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR COUNCILS

(1) EXERCISE OF FUNCTIONS GENERALLY.

THE FOLLOWING GENERAL PRINCIPLES APPLY TO THE EXERCISE OF FUNCTIONS BY COUNCILS--

- (A) COUNCILS SHOULD PROVIDE STRONG AND EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION, LEADERSHIP, PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING.
 - (B) COUNCILS SHOULD CARRY OUT FUNCTIONS IN A WAY THAT PROVIDES THE BEST POSSIBLE VALUE FOR RESIDENTS AND RATEPAYERS.
 - (C) COUNCILS SHOULD PLAN STRATEGICALLY, USING THE INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK, FOR THE PROVISION OF EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT SERVICES AND REGULATION TO MEET THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.
 - (D) COUNCILS SHOULD APPLY THE INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK IN CARRYING OUT THEIR FUNCTIONS SO AS TO ACHIEVE DESIRED OUTCOMES AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENTS.
 - (E) COUNCILS SHOULD WORK CO-OPERATIVELY WITH OTHER COUNCILS AND THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO ACHIEVE DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.
 - (F) COUNCILS SHOULD MANAGE LANDS AND OTHER ASSETS SO THAT CURRENT AND FUTURE LOCAL COMMUNITY NEEDS CAN BE MET IN AN AFFORDABLE WAY.
 - (G) COUNCILS SHOULD WORK WITH OTHERS TO SECURE APPROPRIATE SERVICES FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY NEEDS.
 - (H) COUNCILS SHOULD ACT FAIRLY, ETHICALLY AND WITHOUT BIAS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.
 - (I) COUNCILS SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYERS AND PROVIDE A CONSULTATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT FOR STAFF.
- (2) DECISION-MAKING THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES APPLY TO DECISION-MAKING BY COUNCILS (SUBJECT TO ANY OTHER APPLICABLE LAW)--
- (A) COUNCILS SHOULD RECOGNISE DIVERSE LOCAL COMMUNITY NEEDS AND INTERESTS.
 - (B) COUNCILS SHOULD CONSIDER SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES.
 - (C) COUNCILS SHOULD CONSIDER THE LONG TERM AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF ACTIONS ON FUTURE GENERATIONS.
 - (D) COUNCILS SHOULD CONSIDER THE PRINCIPLES OF ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

- (E) COUNCIL DECISION-MAKING SHOULD BE TRANSPARENT AND DECISION-MAKERS ARE TO BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR DECISIONS AND OMISSIONS.
- (3) COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COUNCILS SHOULD ACTIVELY ENGAGE WITH THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES, THROUGH THE USE OF THE INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK AND OTHER MEASURES.

PRINCIPLES OF SOUND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT*8B PRINCIPLES OF SOUND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT*

THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES OF SOUND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT APPLY TO COUNCILS:

- (A) COUNCIL SPENDING SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE, ALIGNING GENERAL REVENUE AND EXPENSES.
- (B) COUNCILS SHOULD INVEST IN RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.
- (C) COUNCILS SHOULD HAVE EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL AND ASSET MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING SOUND POLICIES AND PROCESSES FOR THE FOLLOWING--
 - (I) PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING,
 - (II) ASSET MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT,
 - (III) FUNDING DECISIONS,
 - (IV) RISK MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.
- (D) COUNCILS SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO ACHIEVING INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY, INCLUDING ENSURING THE FOLLOWING--
 - (I) POLICY DECISIONS ARE MADE AFTER CONSIDERING THEIR FINANCIAL EFFECTS ON FUTURE GENERATIONS,
 - (II) THE CURRENT GENERATION FUNDS THE COST OF ITS SERVICES.

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING PRINCIPLES THAT APPLY TO COUNCILS*8C INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING PRINCIPLES THAT APPLY TO COUNCILS*

THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING APPLY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK BY COUNCILS:

- (A) COUNCILS SHOULD IDENTIFY AND PRIORITISE KEY LOCAL COMMUNITY NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS AND CONSIDER REGIONAL PRIORITIES.
- (B) COUNCILS SHOULD IDENTIFY STRATEGIC GOALS TO MEET THOSE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS.
- (C) COUNCILS SHOULD DEVELOP ACTIVITIES, AND PRIORITISE ACTIONS, TO WORK TOWARDS THE STRATEGIC GOALS.
- (D) COUNCILS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIVITIES TO WORK TOWARDS THEM MAY BE ACHIEVED WITHIN COUNCIL RESOURCES.
- (E) COUNCILS SHOULD REGULARLY REVIEW AND EVALUATE PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING STRATEGIC GOALS.
- (F) COUNCILS SHOULD MAINTAIN AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PLANNING, DELIVERING, MONITORING AND REPORTING ON STRATEGIC GOALS.
- (G) COUNCILS SHOULD COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS TO MAXIMISE ACHIEVEMENT OF STRATEGIC GOALS.
- (H) COUNCILS SHOULD MANAGE RISKS TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY OR AREA OR TO THE COUNCIL EFFECTIVELY AND PROACTIVELY.
- (I) COUNCILS SHOULD MAKE APPROPRIATE EVIDENCE-BASED ADAPTATIONS TO MEET CHANGING NEEDS AND CIRCUMSTANCES.

2 PRAYER & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Prayer

ALMIGHTY AND ETERNAL GOD, GIVE US THE GRACE TO FAITHFULLY FULFIL THE DUTIES OF OUR OFFICE.

SHED THE LIGHT OF YOUR WISDOM AND COUNSEL UPON US SO THAT, STRENGTHENED BY THESE GIFTS, WE WILL, IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE AFFAIRS OF THE COUNCIL, ALWAYS DO WHAT IS RIGHT AND JUST.

WE ASK THAT OUR DELIBERATIONS WILL BE BOTH FRUITFUL AND WISE.

AMEN

Acknowledgement of Country

We pay our respect to the Traditional Custodians of the Lands where we hold this meeting to Elders past, present and emerging.

Condolence Message

I WOULD LIKE TO OFFER CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES IN OUR SHIRE THAT HAVE LOST LOVED ONES RECENTLY.

3 APOLOGIES

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**4.1 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 18 AUGUST 2026**

File Number: D26.127578

Reporting Officer: Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant

Responsible Officer: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18 August 2026 as a true and accurate recording of that meeting.

REPORT

Council held its Ordinary Meeting on Tuesday, 18 August 2026, in the Council Chambers, Market Street, Balranald.

The minutes of that meeting are now attached for review and approval by Council as being a true and correct copy of that meeting

ATTACHMENTS

1. Minutes - Ordinary Meeting - 18 August 2026  



MINUTES

**Ordinary Council Meeting
Tuesday, 18 August 2026**

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

18 AUGUST 2026

Order Of Business

1	Opening of Meeting	4
2	PRAYER & Acknowledgment of country.....	4
3	Apologies	4
4	Confirmation of Minutes.....	5
4.1	Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 21 July 2026.....	5
5	Disclosure of Interest	5
6	Mayoral/Councillor Report	5
6.1	Mayoral Report - August 2026.....	5
7	Committee Reports.....	5
	Nil	
8	Notice of Motion.....	6
9	Notice of Rescission.....	6
	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS Reports (incorporating all staff reports)	6
	Part A – Items Requiring Decision.....	6
10	Chief Executive Officer's Reports.....	6
10.1	Adoption of the Long Term Financial Plan 2026-2036	6
10.2	Donation Requests - Sporting Participant.....	6
10.3	Ash Harvies Upcoming Trans-Australia Fundraising Run - Request for Accommodation Support	7
10.4	Fee Waiver Request - Theatre Royal - Maari Ma Health - Balranald Health, Wellbeing and Support Services Expo	7
10.5	Fee Waiver Request - Library - Plus Community.....	8
10.6	Fee Waiver Request - Theatre Royal - Balranald Central School - Year 12 Formal.....	8
10.7	Greenham Park Hall Hire Fee Waiver Request - Combined Churches 2026 - Christmas Carols.....	8
10.8	Greenham Park Fee Reimbursement Request.....	9
10.9	Christmas Light Competition	9
10.10	DA 17/2026 - Section 4.6 Variation - Dwelling on Riverfront Area - 41 Cole Street Euston	10
10.11	Draft Balranald Caravan Park Reserve Plan of Management.....	11
	Part B – Items for Information.....	12
11	Chief Executive Officer's Reports.....	12
11.1	Monthly Investments Report.....	12
11.2	Monthly Operational Report.....	12
11.3	Meetings attended by the Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer and The Executive Team	12
11.4	Circulars from the Office of Local Government.....	13

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**18 AUGUST 2026**

11.5	Correspondence.....	13
11.6	Outstanding Actions	13
12	Notice of Motion / Questions on Notice	14
	Nil	
6	Confidential Matters	14
L.1	IT Managed Service Provider Tender.....	14

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES18 AUGUST 2026

**MINUTES OF BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MARKET STREET BALRANALD
ON TUESDAY, 18 AUGUST 2026 AT 4PM**

1 OPENING OF MEETING**2 PRAYER & ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY****Prayer**

Almighty and eternal God, give us the grace to faithfully fulfil the duties of our office.

Shed the light of your wisdom and counsel upon us so that, strengthened by these gifts, we will, in the administration of the affairs of the council, always do what is right and just.

We ask that our deliberations will be both fruitful and wise.

Amen

Acknowledgement of Country

We pay our respect to the Traditional Custodians of the Lands where we hold this meeting to Elders past, present and emerging.

PRESENT:

Mayor Louie Zaffina, Deputy Mayor Dwaine Scott, Cr Iain Lindsay-Field, Cr Alison Linnett, Cr Tracy O'Halloran, Cr Phillip Pippin, Cr German Ugarte

Cr Leigh Byron joined via Teams

IN ATTENDANCE:

Terry Dodds (CEO), Edna Mendes (Chief Financial Officer), Hodi Beauliv (Executive Manager - Community & Governance), Raju Ranjit (Manager of Infrastructure & Project Services), Carol Holmes (Senior Executive Assistant) and Tharmeala Vijayan (Executive Assistant)

3 APOLOGIES

Nil

InitialPage
4

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**18 AUGUST 2026****4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****4.1 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 21 JULY 2026**

RESOLUTION 2026/180

Moved: Deputy Mayor Dwaine Scott

Seconded: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Tuesday 21 July 2026 as a true and accurate recording of that meeting.

CARRIED**5 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST****6 MAYORAL/COUNCILLOR REPORT**

RECOMMENDATION

That the late item 6.1 Mayoral Report - August 2026 be admitted to the agenda.

6.1 MAYORAL REPORT - AUGUST 2026

RESOLUTION 2026/181

Moved: Cr Tracy O'Halloran

Seconded: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

That the Mayoral Report be received and noted.

CARRIED**7 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Nil

4.20PM Cr Leigh Byron Joined

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES18 AUGUST 2026

8 NOTICE OF MOTION

9 NOTICE OF RESCISSION

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORTS (INCORPORATING ALL STAFF REPORTS)

PART A – ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

10 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORTS

10.1 ADOPTION OF THE LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2026-2036

RESOLUTION 2026/182

Moved: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Seconded: Cr Tracy O'Halloran

That Council note the information provided in this report.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents the updated Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) for the period 2026-27 to 2035-36 which forms part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting document set, which also includes the Community Strategic Plan, Workforce Plan, Operational Plan and Annual Budget adopted at Council's June 2026 Ordinary meeting.

10.2 DONATION REQUESTS - SPORTING PARTICIPANT

RESOLUTION 2026/183

Moved: Cr Alison Linnett

Seconded: Cr Phillip Pippin

That Council

1. Donate \$250 to Ryan Johnstone as he is playing AFL for NSW at the Australian Schools National Carnival; and
2. Note that Ryan meets the guidelines of the Donations, Subsidies & Financial Assistance Policy.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of a donation application received seeking financial assistance to participate in the School Sport Australia 14 and Under AFL Carnival.

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

18 AUGUST 2026

10.3 ASH HARVIES UPCOMING TRANS-AUSTRALIA FUNDRAISING RUN - REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT**RESOLUTION 2026/184**

Moved: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Seconded: Cr Alison Linnett

That Council:

1. Note the request from Mr Sam King on behalf of Ms Ash Harvie and her support team.
2. Consider providing overnight access at the Balranald Caravan Park with 2 powered sites on **22 November** for one night.
3. A) Authorise the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to liaise with the organisers regarding any approved support arrangements.

CARRIED**Cr Ugarte & Mayor Zafiina voted against the motion**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Council of a request received from Mr Sam King, Lead Organiser for Ms Ash Harvie's upcoming trans-Australia fundraising run, and to seek Council's consideration of providing support for the team during their passage through the Shire.

10.4 FEE WAIVER REQUEST - THEATRE ROYAL - MAARI MA HEALTH - BALRANALD HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SUPPORT SERVICES EXPO**RESOLUTION 2026/185**

Moved: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Seconded: Cr German Ugarte

That Council:

- i. Waive the fees for the hire of Theatre Royal Hall by Maari Ma for the Balranald Health, Wellbeing and Support Services Expo.
- ii. Write to Maari Ma Health to advise that the hall hire costs have been waived; however, if the hall is left in an untidy state, an invoice will be sent to cover the cleaning costs.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of a Fee Waiver request (**Attachment 1**) that has been received from Maari Ma Health, seeking the Theatre Royal Hall hire costs to be waived for Thursday 23 October 2025 to hold the Balranald Health, Wellbeing and Support Services Expo.

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

18 AUGUST 2026

10.5 FEE WAIVER REQUEST - LIBRARY - PLUS COMMUNITY

RESOLUTION 2026/186

Moved: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Seconded: Cr Phillip Pippin

That Council;

1. Reimburses the fees for the hire of the Library to Plus Community for the Christmas in July event.
2. Permits the fortnightly drop-in sessions at the library, provided the coordination with the librarian has occurred.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of a Fee Waiver request (**Attachment 1**) that has been received from Jaime Smyth on behalf of Plus Community SHLV, requesting that Library hire to be reimbursed for the Christmas in July function for community awareness engagement for domestic violence services available in Balranald Shire.

10.6 FEE WAIVER REQUEST - THEATRE ROYAL - BALRANALD CENTRAL SCHOOL - YEAR 12 FORMAL

RESOLUTION 2026/187

Moved: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Dwaine Scott

That Council:

- i. Waives the fees for the hire of Theatre Royal Hall by Balranald Central School for the Year 12 Formal.
- ii. Writes to Balranald Central School to advise that the hall hire costs have been waived; however, if the hall is left in an untidy state, an invoice will be sent to cover the cleaning costs.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider a request from Balranald Central School seeking a waiver of Theatre Royal Hall hire fees for the Year 12 Formal to be held on 25 September 2026.

10.7 GREENHAM PARK HALL HIRE FEE WAIVER REQUEST - COMBINED CHURCHES 2026 - CHRISTMAS CAROLS

RESOLUTION 2026/188

Moved: Cr Tracy O'Halloran

Seconded: Cr Leigh Byron

Initial

Page
8

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

18 AUGUST 2026

That Council waive the fees for the hire of Greenham Park Hall for the Community Christmas Carols to be held on Sunday, 13 December 2026 as requested.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of a Fee Waiver request (**Attachment 1**) that has been received from the Balranald Presbyterian Church on behalf of the Combined Churches, seeking the Greenham Park Hall hire costs to be waived for the community Christmas Carols to be held on the evening of Sunday 13 December 2026.

10.8 GREENHAM PARK FEE REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST**RESOLUTION 2026/189**

Moved: Deputy Mayor Dwaine Scott

Seconded: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

That Council:

1. Approves the reimbursement (or waiving) of hire fees associated with the use of Greenham Park Hall by Emergency Australia for the delivery of the Rural and Remote First Aid Training held in Balranald.
2. Reimburse Emergency Australia the cost of the hire fee for Greenham Park Hall.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of a request received from Rachael Williams requesting a fee waiver for Greenham Park Hall.

10.9 CHRISTMAS LIGHT COMPETITION**RESOLUTION**

Moved: Cr Alison Linnett

Seconded: Cr German Ugarte

That Council appoint the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer to judge the Christmas lights after registrations close in the week commencing 14 December 2026.

AMENDMENT

Moved: Cr Alison Linnett

Seconded: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

That Council appoint Cr Alison Linnett and Cr Iain Lindsay-Field to judge the Christmas Light Competition.

The Amendment was **PUT** and **CARRIED** and become the **MOTION**

RESOLUTION 2026/190

Moved: Cr Alison Linnett

Seconded: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

InitialPage
9

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**18 AUGUST 2026**

That Council appoint Cr Alison Linnett and Cr Iain Lindsay-Field to judge the Christmas Light Competition.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To appoint the judges for the 2026 Christmas Light Competition.

10.10 DA 17/2026 - SECTION 4.6 VARIATION - DWELLING ON RIVERFRONT AREA - 41 COLE STREET EUSTON**MOTION**

Moved: Cr Tracy O'Halloran

Seconded: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

That:

1. Development Application 17/2026 for the demolition of an existing dwelling and shed, and construction of a new dwelling on Lot 6 Section 19 DP 758402, 41 Cole Street Euston, be granted consent subject to the conditions attached, and
2. The request submitted under Section 4.6 of the Balranald Local Environmental Plan 2010 (**the LEP**) to vary the non-numerical development standard in Clause 6.5 of the LEP to permit a dwelling on river front area is supported.

(Division)

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Moved: Cr Alison Linnett

Seconded: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

A motion was moved that Council suspend standing orders.

RESUMPTION OF STANDING ORDERS

Moved: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Seconded: Cr Alison Linnett

A motion was moved that Council resume standing orders.

RESOLUTION 2026/191

Moved: Cr German Ugarte

Seconded: Cr Alison Linnett

That Council defer consideration of this item pending review by the Planning Department in consultation with Logistics, with a report to be brought back to Council.

CARRIED

In Favour: Crs Louie Zaffina, Dwaine Scott, Leigh Byron, Iain Lindsay-Field, Alison Linnett, Tracy O'Halloran, Phillip Pippin and German Ugarte

Against: Nil

CARRIED 8/0

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

18 AUGUST 2026

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Council consent under Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)* for a Section 4.6 Variation to Clause 6.5 of the Balranald Local Environmental Plan 2010 to permit the demolition of an existing dwelling & shed and construction of a new dwelling on Lot 6 Section 19 DP 758402, 41 Cole Street Euston.

At 5.10pm Council suspended standing Orders to enable EnergyCo team join the meeting present to Council

At 5.39pm Energy Co team left the meeting and Council resumed Standing Orders.

10.11 DRAFT BALRANALD CARAVAN PARK RESERVE PLAN OF MANAGEMENT**RESOLUTION 2026/192**

Moved: Cr Tracy O'Halloran

Seconded: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Officer Recommendation

That Council

1. Endorses the Draft Plan of Management, Balranald Caravan Park Reserve, Reserve No. 68009, Version 3.2, for public exhibition, subject to final administrative and editorial review before exhibition.
2. Places the Draft Plan of Management on public exhibition for a minimum period of 28 days and invites written submissions for a period of not less than 42 days from the date on which the draft Plan is first placed on public exhibition, in accordance with section 38 of the Local Government Act 1993.
3. Before exhibition, officers:
 - a) Reconcile the land-area references contained in sections 2.3 and 5.8 of the Draft Plan of Management;
 - b) Amend the reference in section 5.8 to leasing the caravan park to a 'private lease' to the more accurate term 'private operator' or 'private lessee'; and
 - c) Undertake a final review of legislative references, agency names, spelling, grammar and formatting in accordance with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's advice.
4. Receives a further report following the public exhibition and submission period detailing any submissions received and recommending whether the Plan of Management should be adopted or amended.
5. Notes that where substantive amendments are proposed following public exhibition, the amended Draft Plan of Management is to be resubmitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, Crown Lands and Public Spaces for the necessary Ministerial consent before adoption.
6. Notes that adoption of the Plan of Management will establish the statutory framework that would enable Council, at a future time, to separately consider a proposal to lease the operational caravan park area to a suitably qualified private operator.

CARRIED

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**18 AUGUST 2026**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek endorsement to exhibit the draft Plan of Management, Balranald Caravan Park Reserve, Reserve No. 68009 and invite the public to comment.

PART B – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**11 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORTS****11.1 MONTHLY INVESTMENTS REPORT****RESOLUTION 2026/193**

Moved: Cr Leigh Byron

Seconded: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

That Council note the information provided in this report.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to report to Council on the balances of cash and investments held by Council as at 31 July 2026.

11.2 MONTHLY OPERATIONAL REPORT**RESOLUTION 2026/194**

Moved: Cr German Ugarte

Seconded: Cr Tracy O'Halloran

That the report be received and noted.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide a monthly update of Council's operations.

11.3 MEETINGS ATTENDED BY THE MAYOR, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND THE EXECUTIVE TEAM**RESOLUTION 2026/195**

Moved: Cr Tracy O'Halloran

Seconded: Cr Leigh Byron

That the report be received and noted.

CARRIED

InitialPage
12

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**18 AUGUST 2026**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of the meetings undertaken on behalf of Council by the Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Team since the previous Council Meeting.

11.4 CIRCULARS FROM THE OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**RESOLUTION 2026/196**

Moved: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Dwaine Scott

That Council notes the report.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Council with copies of the circulars received from the Office of Local Government (OLG).

11.5 CORRESPONDENCE**RESOLUTION 2026/197**

Moved: Cr Alison Linnett

Seconded: Cr Tracy O'Halloran

That the report be received and noted.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of some recent correspondence received and/or forwarded, which may be of interest.

11.6 OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**RESOLUTION 2026/198**

Moved: Cr German Ugarte

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Dwaine Scott

That the report be received and noted.

CARRIED

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Council with the updated Action Sheets Report (**Attachment 1**), which details all outstanding actions from previous Meetings.

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES18 AUGUST 2026

12 NOTICE OF MOTION / QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Nil

6 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

MOTION

Moved: Cr Tracy O'Halloran

Seconded: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993:

L.1 IT Managed Service Provider Tender

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(i) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

MOTION

Moved: Cr Alison Linnett

Seconded: Cr Leigh Byron

That Council revert back to Open Council and the Chief Executive Officer announced the Recommendation of the Closed Meeting..

RESOLUTION 2026/199

Moved: Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Seconded: Cr Alison Linnett

That Council

1. Accept the tender submitted by Charlie Mac and Associates for the provision of Managed Information Technology Services.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to finalise contract negotiations and execute the contract documentation.

CARRIED**The Meeting closed at 6.53PM.**

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Council Meeting held on 15 September 2026.

.....
MAYOR

Initial

Page
14

5 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

6 MAYORAL/COUNCILLOR REPORT**6.1 MAYORAL REPORT - FAR WEST NEEDS ACTION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND INVESTMENT**

File Number: D26.127667

Reporting Officer: Louie Zaffina, Mayor

Responsible Officer: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Mayoral Report be received and noted.

FAR WEST NEEDS ACTION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND INVESTMENT

The Draft Far West Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan (SRITP), released by Transport for NSW, outlines a 20-year vision for transport infrastructure and services across the Far West region. The plan seeks to identify key transport priorities and proposes more than 30 initiatives aimed at improving connectivity, safety, freight movement and network resilience.

While the draft plan represents an important step in recognising the unique transport challenges faced by remote communities, there remains a significant gap between identifying problems and delivering practical solutions.

What The Draft Plan Does Well

The draft plan deserves recognition for several positive aspects.

Recognition of Far West Challenges

The plan acknowledges the vast distances, dispersed population, harsh climate, and unique operating environment that make transport delivery in the Far West different from metropolitan and regional centres. It recognises that communities depend heavily on reliable transport links to access services, employment and economic opportunities.

Focus on Freight Productivity

Freight movement is critical to the Far West economy. Agriculture, mining and local industries rely on extensive road networks to move goods efficiently and safely. The draft plan identifies freight efficiency as a priority and includes initiatives aimed at improving freight corridors and network planning.

Commitment to Network Resilience

The plan highlights the importance of building a more resilient transport network, particularly in response to flooding, extreme weather events and increasing maintenance pressures on key transport corridors. This is an important acknowledgement of the realities faced by remote communities.

Road Safety Improvements

Road safety remains one of the most critical challenges across the Far West. The draft plan identifies opportunities to improve major roads, heavy vehicle rest areas, town entry treatments and other safety measures designed to reduce risk for all road users.

Where the Draft Plan Falls Short

Despite these strengths, the draft plan lacks the detail required to provide confidence that meaningful improvements will actually be delivered.

No Specific Funding Commitments

The plan identifies challenges and proposes broad initiatives, but it does not commit to specific funding allocations for priority projects. There is no certainty regarding which projects will be funded, when they will be funded, or how they will be delivered.

Communities need more than broad strategic directions. They need guaranteed investment in critical road infrastructure.

No Delivery Timelines

The draft focuses heavily on a long-term strategic vision rather than a detailed implementation program. While a 20-year horizon is important, communities also need short, medium and long-term delivery schedules that clearly identify when improvements will occur.

Without defined timelines, it becomes difficult to measure progress or hold governments accountable.

Lack of Measurable Outcomes

The plan contains aspirations and objectives but provides limited measurable targets. There are few performance indicators that would allow communities to track whether promised improvements are being achieved.

A successful transport strategy should include clear benchmarks, reporting requirements and regular public updates.

The Need for Priority Road Funding

What councils and communities across Balranald and the wider Far West need is guaranteed funding for priority road upgrades, rather than broad statements of support for the regional transport network.

The region already understands its transport challenges. The priority now is moving beyond identifying issues and developing funded delivery programs that address them.

The focus must shift from planning alone to implementation.

The Far West needs action over words.

It needs accountability from both developers and government.

Why Population-Based Funding Does Not Work

As Councillor Zaffina has stated:

"Balranald might have a small population, but the transport network we look after doesn't just serve our population. It carries agriculture, mining, freight, school buses and tourists. It provides access to Mungo and the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area and connects communities and industries across a very large part of western New South Wales.

Funding those roads based on how many people happen to live beside them simply doesn't recognise what those roads actually do."

This is a critical point that must be considered in future funding decisions.

Transport infrastructure in remote regions serves a much broader purpose than simply moving local residents. Roads in the Far West support industries that contribute significantly to the state economy while also providing access to nationally significant tourism destinations.

Funding models must reflect freight volumes, economic contribution, tourism importance and strategic connectivity, not just population numbers.

Access to Essential Services

The Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan is not just about roads.

It is about ensuring regional residents can access healthcare, education, employment and community services.

With increasing centralisation of health and specialist services, residents are often required to travel significant distances for treatment and appointments. Communities must have safe, reliable and comfortable transport links to reach these essential services.

If government policy continues to centralise services into larger regional centres, then transport infrastructure must be upgraded accordingly to ensure equitable access for remote communities.

The Importance of Mildura as a Regional Hub

For much of the Far West region, Mildura plays a crucial role as the primary service centre.

Residents regularly travel across the Victorian border to access health services, retail, education, aviation and business opportunities.

Future transport planning must recognise these Cross-Border travel patterns and ensure road networks support the movement of people and freight between Far West NSW and Mildura.

Aerodrome Upgrades Must Be Included

Transport planning for remote communities must also recognise the importance of aviation infrastructure.

Local aerodromes play a critical role during emergencies, natural disasters, patient transfers and medical evacuations.

Funded upgrades to regional aerodromes should form part of the final transport strategy. Reliable aviation infrastructure is essential for maintaining access to urgent services and supporting community resilience during emergency situations.

Community Consultation Dates

The Draft Far West Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan is out for public exhibition, seeking feedback/comments from community members until Friday 11 September 2026. Transport NSW held 2 community drop-in sessions for community members to speak directly with staff. These were held on Wednesday 9 September 2026 at the Euston Club from 11 am – 1.30 pm and at the Theatre Royal, Balranald from 3.30 – 6.30 pm.

Conclusion

The Draft Far West Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan provides a useful framework and successfully identifies many of the transport challenges facing remote communities. Its focus on freight productivity, network resilience and road safety is welcome.

However, the plan currently falls short of providing the certainty regional communities need.

The final plan must be strengthened through:

- Guaranteed funding commitments for priority road projects.
- Clear delivery timelines.
- Measurable performance targets.
- Greater accountability and public reporting.
- Recognition of freight and economic importance beyond population figures.
- Investment in aerodrome infrastructure.
- Improved connectivity to major service centres, overtaking lanes along the Sturt to Mildura.

The Far West does not need another document that simply identifies problems. It needs a funded, accountable delivery plan that turns strategic vision into practical outcomes for the communities, industries and visitors that rely on the region's transport network every day.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

6.2 COUNCILLOR REPORT - MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION - NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026

File Number: D26.127825

Reporting Officer: Iain Lindsay-Field, Councillor

Responsible Officer: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Report from Cr Iain Lindsay-Field be received and noted.

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION – NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026

Held at Riverlinks Eastbank in Shepparton

Wednesday, 26th and Thursday, 27th August, 2026

Around 120 attended on Day One and 80 on Day Two. Held on the same two days as the 2026 Bush Summit in Dubbo that was organized by News Corp Australia.

The MDA Conference was organized and run by Cr Shari Blumer, National President (and her small team) at the Murray Darling Association. Cr Blumer is a Griffith Shire Councillor.

Started in 1944 as the Murray Valley Irrigation League, the purpose of the Murray Darling Association is to provide effective presentation of local government and communities at state and federal level in the management of Basin resources by providing information, facilitating debate and seeking to influence government policy.

Their website notes “To achieve our purpose we will:

- Advocate on behalf of Basin Communities;
- Use local knowledge and expertise to fully understand regional issues;
- Act as a two-way conduit for information and discussion between our communities and government;
- Encourage and facilitate debate about the things that matter for the Basin’s future;
- Explore options to achieve sound solutions to regional issues;
- Test information to ensure a sound base for those options and;
- Be an educational resource for the Basin.”

This year’s meeting was particularly important due to the 10 Year Review of the Murray Darling Basin Authority. This review is to deliver it’s final report in late 2026. Mr Tim Goodes, an Executive Director spoke on behalf of the MDBA. He said that there was agreement on findings to date in the following areas:

- Maximising outcomes from water for the environment;
- Water quality and critical human water needs;
- Native fish decline and carp;
- Governance, transparency and accountability;
- Land and water management.

He also mentioned that there were differing views in respect of:

- SDLs and future water recovery;
- How climate risk should be managed;
- River connectivity and rule changes;

- Impacts on agriculture and regional communities.

SDL's are Sustainable Diversion Limits that provide legal limits on the amount of water that can be taken from rivers and groundwater. They apply to 29 surface water and 80 groundwater resource units across the Basin.

There was a fair bit of discussion on Constraints which refers to the physical structures or operational rules that restrict the volume and flow rate of environmental water delivered through the river system. The Constraints conversation comes into focus with the Connecting Rivers actions that are attempting to recover native fish populations.

The CEO of the MDBA, Mr Andrew McConville was not present.

Dr Simon Banks, the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder, was present.

Also happening at the same time as the MDBA 10 Year Review is a review of the Water Act and a Deputy Reviewer, Ms Vanessa O'Keefe, addressed the Conference. Although the review of the Water Act was not yet due, it had been decided (I would guess by the Minister) that the review be brought forward to align with the Basin Plan Review. This

The Water Act

Review will go to the Minister in Feb 2027. Vanessa said that the feedback received on the Basin Plan Review was also being shared with the Water Act Review.

New dams were definitely a talking point of the Conference with Mr Andrew Reynolds from GHD leading the conversations. Many of the dams built early last century are now due for major upgrades... so there is a lot of money to be spent. It's not dam walls that need replacing but steel gates, infrastructure and electronics to run each dam. Andrew made the point that most of large catchment/lowest cost per ML caught dam sites have been built... he said "they knew what they were doing in the old days and knew the best sites to capture the greatest amount of water for the smallest amount of money".

One of the Motions put through late on Day Two was for a new dam on the Burdekin River inland from Townsville. This would feed water out into Western Queensland with some talk of an amount going into the Murray Darling Basin.

Dr Peter Reeve from One Basin CRC (Co-Operative Research Centre) spoke about desalinating water and filling aquifers, amongst other things. Established in 2022, the One Basin CRC is an industry led 10 year, \$150 million programme to bring science-led solutions to the region. It sees independent researchers and scientists working with local communities, partnering with industry, producers and First Nations peoples to solve real world problems.

Jason Smith, Head of Strategy and Growth for Rubicon Water talked about the water savings that have been gained due to new technology in gates, control systems and piping etc. Prior to these changes it was recognized that the system lost 30% of water it diverted during transmission. There is still a lot of room for improvement with only 40-50% of water supplied through canal networks being efficiently used.

Rubicon's Total Channel Control network integrates smart automated equipment, such as control gates, flow meters, and radio technology, enabling 24 hour ordering and autonomous operation of water systems. Using sensors, software, accurate measurement and remote control technology it is a vast Improvement on what went before.

Carp, native fish and water quality was a major subject for discussion at the start of Day Two. Dr Ivor Stuart, Assoc Prof. from Charles Sturt University is a leader in this area and he talked about what he sees as the way forward to control carp. While the carp virus is still being considered as one of "tools in the toolkit", it is an overall suppression methodology that he is suggesting. He says that there are different zones of the Murray Darling that each need to be treated differently with the upper reaches becoming Protection Zones where we need to keep carp out; Suppression Zones namely the mid-reaches (the Ovens River being an example) of the river system where carp volumes are suppressed to 200 and 400 kg/ha of carp mass; and Carp Production Zones (eg. Lower Murray) where they would try to keep carp at between 400 and 600kg/ha using commercial

removal including fishing. Dr Stuart says success is not eliminating carp but shrinking the production footprint of the basin.

Dr Stuarts final messages were that:

“Native fish recovery depends on addressing the major constraints together – flows, connectivity, habitat and ecological pressures such as carp.

For carp that means an agreed Basin-scale trajectory: where and how do we reduce carp impacts to support long-term river and native fish recovery”

The final session was on Basin Community Security and Industry Socio Economics. There were lots of mentions of the recently lost 68 jobs at the rice mill in Deniliquin due to the price of water. Another example was the change in rice production between 2018 and 2019 when the price of water went from \$140ML to \$400ML and production dropped from 600,000t to 54,000t. Also mentioned was Kagome, a tomato processor with operations across Northern Victoria and the Riverina. The business employees 153 full-time equivalent staff and 300 and 350 seasonal workers. It can process up to 250,000 tonnes annually grown across 2,500 hectares. Due to the high cost of water, rising input costs and consumer choices current tomato throughput is around 150,000 tonnes. Kagome are offsetting this loss in tomato production by processing carrots, apples, pears and beetroot.

I put a couple of questions in on the “removing water title from land title” and they didn’t get addressed. Not sure why but for me this is as big an issue as the environmental buy-backs. Perhaps the Murray Darling Association don’t want to “muddy the water”, please excuse the pun, and don’t want to take the focus off buy-backs. Mr Michael McCormack, the Federal Member for Riverina, addressed this issue in passing and commented that changes would be like “unscrambling an egg”.

A fellow from the CSIRO also spoke and I missed his name. As he said he comes along each year and “bangs on” about Climate Change. His department had recently run models that used a million years of data and compared a whole lot of climate change & non climate change scenario’s. One result from all that data was that for the Southern Basin, the likelihood of another Millenium like Drought in the next 25 years rose from 8% under the historical baseline to 31% under median climate change. The comment was also made that if there were to be another Millenium Drought that almonds would use all the consumptive water available in the Basin and there would be none available for any other crops. Quite frightening really!

I also asked questions about what should be done to save the family farm. Answers all seemed to focus on adaption and taking on tourism and the like. This seemed unrealistic and unfair to me as government policy had clearly damaged smaller family farms and the communities that relied upon them.

The last session was the AGM and I am sure that results and Motions from this session will be emailed through in due course. I do want to mention one Motion proposed by Mayor Ruth McRae of Murrumbidgee Shire and that was around the end to Water Buy- Backs. The Motion was endorsed and unanimously passed.

The recently published book “Caught in the Current” by Patrick Byrne had a stall at the Conference and a number of speakers throughout the two days were given copies. The answers to fixing the Murray Darling Basin are not easy, but a book, such as this, which attempts to bring understanding to the subject should be congratulated. I am particularly in agreement with their assertion that the SA Lower Lakes are a location that wastes our valuable fresh water.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

6.3 COUNCILLOR REPORT - ATTENDANCE REPORT - ALGWA 75TH ANNIVERSARY NATIONAL CONFERENCE, 20-22 SEPTEMBER 2026.

File Number: D26.127828

Reporting Officer: Tracy O'Halloran, Councillor

Responsible Officer: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- **Receive and note** the report regarding attendance at the ALGWA 75th Anniversary National Conference.
- **Direct the Executive Team** to review the latest state and national advocacy guidelines from ALGWA to ensure Balranald Shire Council remains aligned with best practices for workplace diversity and civic inclusion.
- **Endorse the development of a localized Place Naming Register** managed by staff, initiating a Phase 1 baseline audit of Balranald's current asset names followed by a cumulative framework to honor historically significant local women in future developments.
- **Direct the CEO** to prepare a report exploring the development of a Balranald Shire E-Bike and Micro-Mobility Policy, focusing on community safety codes, local youth-led engagement frameworks, and alignment with emerging NSW State Government definitions.

SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of my attendance at the Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) 75th Anniversary National Conference. The conference took place from 20–22 August 2026 at the Manly Pacific Hotel, hosted in partnership with the Northern Beaches Council. Under the theme "Bold Beginnings, Brighter Future," this milestone event brought together delegates, including women leaders, policymakers, and changemakers from every state and territory.

The purpose of this report is to share key learnings and actionable insights that can be integrated into the strategic and community governance frameworks of Balranald Shire Council.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS & CORE DISCUSSIONS

The comprehensive two-day program combined advocacy, history, and forward-looking strategic sessions. Key focus areas included:

- **National Strategic Advocacy:** A primary milestone of Day Two was the official conference opening and presentation of the ALGWA National Report by NSW President Shannon Welch to the **Hon. Kristy McBain MP**, Federal Minister for Emergency Management, Minister for Regional Development, and Local Government and Territories. Minister McBain, drawing on her foundational experience when she was first elected as a local mayor in 2016, delivered critical national sector statistics:

- **Online Harassment:** More than 90% of women representing or serving in local government have experienced targeted online harassment.



- **The AI Dimension:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) has introduced an unprecedented threat layer through deepfakes and manipulated content, generating a profound distortion of realities that actively damages democratic public discourse.
- **Representation vs. Imposter Syndrome:** While women now make up a critical mass of elected officials nationwide, a staggering one in three elected women report feeling that they are not qualified or question if they provide quality representation.
- **The Future of Local Government:** Futurist **Simon Waller** challenged delegates to navigate the long-term changes impacting regional sectors over the next 75 years. He noted: "If we think about the future, it holds all the answers. The future is astronomically big. Futurists divide the future into smaller portions working with time and possibility." His framework for regional leadership stressed the following actions:
 - **Deep Thinking Allocation:** Leaders must actively make time for intentional, deep thinking rather than getting caught entirely in day-to-day reactivity.
 - **Horizon Scanning:** Councils must scan for signals or look to the horizon to notice change early. If current conditions worsen, you need to look at the horizon even more often.
 - **Identifying Future Fits:** If an emerging trend or signal does not fit the historical developments of the past, it potentially represents a perfect fit for the future. As Waller summarized, "The future is already here. It's just not evenly distributed."
 - **Technological Shift:** Concurrently, specialized panels explored how councils can proactively apply these horizon-scanning principles to the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) workflows.
- **Safety, Respect, and Workplace Culture:** Core panel items directly addressed state-level findings from the recent #NotOnMyCouncil report published by ALGWA NSW. These discussions underscored the critical necessity of systemic council reforms to counter harassment and foster professional safety and gender equity in regional pockets.
- **Public Safety & Emerging Transport Frameworks:** A critical operational safety session focused on the rapid rise of micro-mobility, detailing the e-bike safety campaign pioneered by the Northern Beaches Council taskforce. A key takeaway is that micro-mobility is strictly a safety issue, rather than an awareness or compliance issue. Their approach recognized that modern road safety does not begin with a licensed driver; instead, it successfully engaged young people and e-bike users as part of the solution. The actionable code developed by their taskforce rests on three simple principles: slow down, ring the bell, and be ready for sudden change.
- **State-Level Advocacy and Policy Gaps:** Crucially, the conference highlighted that the Northern Beaches Council escalated this issue by sending a formal letter to the NSW State Government. This correspondence explicitly pressured the Minister for Roads and Transport to establish absolute clarity around minimum age limits, a legal and standard definition of what constitutes an e-bike, and a statewide push to adopt the safety code. This advocacy exposed a regulatory vacuum where councils are forced to manage high-speed, heavy micro-mobility risks on pedestrian paths without adequate state legislation.
- **Diverse Communities & Leadership Resilience:** A high-profile keynote presentation by commentator **Annabel Crabb** and leadership expert **Major Matina Jewell** offered data-driven perspectives on values-based leadership and navigating governance reforms during periods of volatility.
 - **Annabel Crabb** highlighted that political and social chaos creates an escalated market for situations that should be calm. To understand our modern communities, she simplified Australia's demographic, electoral, and workforce landscape into critical takeaways:



- **Demographic Divide:** The clear majority of Australians are classified as immigrants. In major cities like Sydney and Melbourne, two-thirds of the population are New Australians (immigrants or children of immigrants). Outside major metropolitan cities, this dynamic is completely reversed—two-thirds are Old Australians (families here for longer than two generations) and one-third are New Australians, highlighting the specific regional governance identity relevant to councils like Balranald.
- **The Electoral Blindspot:** Recent elections across the country have historically failed to recognize the sheer power of the women's vote or the women's voice. Political strategists continue to ignore or misread this massive demographic block when constructing campaigns.
- **The Normalization of Leadership:** It is no longer unusual to see women occupying top leadership positions across Australia. Following elections leading into 2025, a historic 50/50 gender balance was achieved across Federal Parliament, representing an unprecedented structural shift in legislative power.
- **The Local Government Groundwork:** Crucially, 87% of all politicians in Australia are local government representatives. This is an immense, foundational statistic that upper tiers of state and federal government desperately need to recognize and respect, as local councils represent the frontline of democracy.
- **The Workforce Powerhouse vs. Domestic Strain:** Professional women now make up the majority of professionals in Australia, representing the single largest chunk of the total workforce. Yet, structural inequality remains stark at home, where women still actively shoulder two-thirds of all unpaid domestic work and care.
- **Major Matina Jewell**, drawing upon her 16 years of experience in the armed forces and her current high-stakes work for the United Nations, shared leadership frameworks documented in her memoir, "Caught in the Crossfire". She presented a universal perspective on resilience, culture, and operational adaptation.
 - **Universal Leadership:** Leaders are not just those with executive titles; every single person in an organisation or business is a leader. Sudden leadership positions occur throughout our lives without warning.
 - **Cultural & Gender Adaptation:** Success requires daily cultural and gender changes. It is completely normal to feel fear from challenges, but challenge equals opportunity. Leaders must give themselves permission to "have a go."
 - **Operational Mindset:** Moving from a "That was then, this is now" position requires actively shifting both organizational thinking and physical operations. Building a strong risk management culture ultimately empowers and supports staff decision-making.
 - **Six Points of Change & Action:** Major Jewell detailed a core six-point framework to achieve true cultural transformation:
 1. Communicate during a crisis: Keep open channels when under pressure;
 2. Turnaround needs to be self-initiated: Cultural realignment must start from within;
 3. Resilience and purpose: Lock onto a clear, unwavering organizational objective;
 4. Do something that helps others: Service creates a powerful "double positive effect" for the team and community;
 5. Implement procedural changes that affect opportunity: Real opportunity requires concrete procedural adjustments;
 6. Positive perspective changes lives: Cultural change takes deep time and persistence, but maintaining a positive perspective fundamentally shifts outcomes.



Strategic Alignment and Insights for Balranald Shire Council

Attending this national-level seminar directly informs several areas where Balranald Shire Council can enhance its operational equity and professional growth:

A. Workplace Safety & Inclusivity

The frameworks from the #NotOnMyCouncil platform provide actionable steps to benchmark our own internal policies, ensuring robust codes of conduct that protect staff and elected officials.

B. Technological Innovation and Strategic Vision

The strategic tools provided by Simon Waller's address offer a model for Balranald Shire Council to build proactive governance frameworks. By deliberately allocating staff resources to look past historical constraints, scan the technical horizon, and prepare for unevenly distributed advancements, Council can better navigate shifting regional conditions.

C. Civic Identity and Place Naming Equity

A standout presentation by Kerry Wilson, lead of the "Put Your Name On It" initiative, addressed the widespread underrepresentation and lack of recognition of women and gender-diverse people in public art and place naming across Australia. To resolve this historical gap, the report highlights the framework successfully implemented by the City of Greater Geelong, which includes:

- **Gender Gap Audit:** Reviewing existing public assets, streets, and parks to establish a baseline of current representation.
- **Targeted Name Bank:** Creating a dedicated repository of notable local women with a strategic 70% target for future naming opportunities.
- **Action Plan & Governance:** Embedding these targets into formal council policy with clear accountability metrics.
- **Dedicated Staff Oversight:** Assigning responsibility to staff to research and add at least one prominent local woman's name and history to the repository every single year.

Proposed Application for Balranald Shire Council:

Balranald Shire has a rich, unique history built by generations of resilient local women whose contributions remain largely untold in our public landscape. It is proposed that Council adapts this methodology by taking a phased approach:

1. Phase 1 (The Register): Establish a historical register that audits and tells the stories behind our current street and place names.

2. Phase 2 (The Growth & Future Target): Actively research, collect, and add the names and stories of notable Balranald women to this register in the following years. This ensures Council has an established, culturally rich database ready to draw from whenever new streets, parks, or public infrastructures are developed.

D. Local Micro-Mobility and Public Space Safety

With the increasing prevalence of e-bikes and motorized scooters within our own regional townships, Balranald Shire Council faces fresh public space management challenges. It is proposed that Council proactively addresses this shift by developing a localized E-Bike and Micro-Mobility Policy. This framework will adapt the Northern Beaches model by directly engaging local youth and schools to co-design safety parameters, ensuring our shared footpaths and public zones remain safe for pedestrians and riders alike.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All travel, registration, and accommodation costs associated with attending this conference were fully accommodated within the approved Council professional development budget allocation for the 2026/2027 fiscal year.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

6.4 COUNCILLOR REPORT - ATTENDANCE AT 75TH NATIONAL ALGWA CONFERENCE, MANLY AUGUST 2026

File Number: D26.127830

Reporting Officer: Alison Linnett, councillor

Responsible Officer: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Councillor Report Attendance at the 75th National ALGWA Conference, held in Manly in August submitted by Cr Alison Linnett be received and noted.

75TH NATIONAL ALGWA CONFERENCE HELD IN MANLY – AUGUST 2026

I am pleased to provide a detailed report on my recent participation in the 75th National Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) Conference, held in Manly in August 2026. I attended this important event alongside Councillor O'Halloran and Ms Beauliv. The conference was a highly valuable professional development opportunity, allowing us to engage with a wide network of local government leaders, build new contacts, and reconnect with longstanding colleagues.

The conference program featured a diverse and engaging range of guest speakers who shared valuable insights into leadership, governance, and community wellbeing. Karen Smith opened the conference with a heartfelt Welcome to Country, sharing a powerful narrative of the Aboriginal history connected to the Manly area. Her address enriched our understanding of Indigenous culture and deepened our appreciation for the traditional custodians of the land, reminding us of the importance of respect and inclusion in local governance.

Kristy McBain's presentation was both compelling and sobering. She addressed the serious issue of domestic violence and highlighted the necessity of ensuring safety and security for all genders within our communities. Kristy also drew attention to the unique dangers women in government face from some members of the community, including threats and intimidation, emphasising the need for stronger support systems for women leaders. Her candid discussion reinforced the critical role councils play in advocating for inclusive, safe, and respectful environments both publicly and within their own ranks.

Annabel Crabb delivered an inspiring speech about her own journey transitioning from a blue-collar worker to a professional woman in leadership. Her reflections on the importance of self-care, viewing oneself as a whole person beyond professional identity, and learning to prioritise effectively resonated deeply. These messages are especially pertinent for those of us balancing demanding roles and community expectations.

Emerging technologies and governance were also explored, including the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a coworker and its increasing presence in government operations. Practical challenges were illustrated through discussions on the e-bike code and the particular issues faced in the Northern Beaches area, demonstrating the complexities involved with innovation and community safety.

A highlight was Major Martina Jewell's keynote address on adaptive and authentic leadership. Drawing from her distinguished 15 years of military service, Major Jewell reflected on the vital importance of diversity and inclusion, flexibility, adaptability to changing environments, and maintaining resilience and purpose. Her military background provided profound insights into leadership under pressure, overcoming challenges, and seizing opportunities in various contexts. Her message about authenticity and purposeful leadership was both inspiring and motivating.

Futurist Simon Waller brought a visionary perspective, framing foresight as a form of hindsight. He introduced concepts such as the Lindy effect and encouraged us to think about legacy, impact,

preparation, and achievement with a long-term mindset — essential considerations for effective community planning and leadership.

Overall, the conference was a rich and inspiring experience. The opportunity to learn from the extensive experiences of speakers and fellow delegates has broadened my perspective and strengthened my capacity to represent our community effectively. I sincerely thank Balranald Council for supporting my attendance and investing in my ongoing development as a councillor.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

7 COMMITTEE REPORTS**7.1 AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 JULY 2026**

File Number: D26.127820

Reporting Officer: Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant

Responsible Officer: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council receive and note the Minutes of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee meeting held on Wednesday 22 July 2026.

REPORT

The Audit Risk & Improvement Committee met on Wednesday 22 July 2026 in the Council Chambers, and the Minutes of that meeting are attached.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Minutes - ARIC - 22 July 2026 [↓](#) 



MINUTES

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting Wednesday, 22 July 2026

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026****Order Of Business**

1	Opening of Meeting	3
2	Acknowledgment of country	3
3	Apologies	3
4	Minutes of Previous Meeting	3
4.1	Minutes of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held on Monday, 18 May 2026	3
5	Disclosure of Interest	4
6	confirmation of previous minutes	4
7	Reports	4
7.1	CEO Update	4
7.2	Human Resources Update	6
7.3	Internal Auditor Update	7
7.4	Information Technology & Cyber Security Update	9
7.5	Chairperson's Report	10
7.6	External and Internal Audit Actions Register	10
7.7	6-month progress Report on the 4-year Delivery Plan	10
7.8	Outstanding Rates and Usage Charges as at 30 June 2026	12
7.9	Outstanding Debtors as at 30 June 2026	13
7.10	Monthly Investments Report	13
7.11	Report of Financial Information	14
	Purpose of Report	16
	Committee Resolution 2026/21	17
	Carried 17	
8	REPORTS	17
9	items without notice	18
10	Next Meeting – 2 September 2026	18
11	Close	18

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

**MINUTES OF BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL
AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MARKET STREET BALRANALD
ON WEDNESDAY, 22 JULY 2026 AT 12.30PM**

1 OPENING OF MEETING

The meeting was opened by the Chairperson at 12.30pm

2 ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

We pay our respect to the Traditional Custodians of the Lands where we hold this meeting to Elders past, present and emerging.

PRESENT: Kerry Phillips (Chairperson), Ross Earl (Member), Ron Gillard (Member) and Cr Iain Lindsay-Field (Member)

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Dodds (Chief Executive Officer – CEO), Edna Mendes (Chief Financial Officer – CFO), Hodi Beauliv (Executive Manager: Community & Governance – EMCG) and Tharmeala Vijayan (Executive Assistant).

Craig Richardson (Internal Auditor), Stephen Prowse (Internal Auditor) and Brett Hangar (External Auditor) joined via Teams.

3 APOLOGIES

Nil

ABSENT INVITEES: Mayor, Cr Louie Zaffina

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**4.1 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 18 MAY 2026**

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/11

Moved: Chair Person Kerry Phillips

Seconded: Member Ross Earl

That Committee confirms the Minutes of the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held on Monday 18 May 2026 as a true and accurate recording of that meeting.

CARRIED

Actions from minutes

1. Audit Action Register should remain under the audit section of the agenda
2. Work plan to be presented

Page 3

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

-
3. Mr Earl highlighted under current governance guidelines elected members are not voting members of the Committee.
 4. The minutes of the previous meeting and the Chairperson's Report to be submitted to Council for review and provide a record of the outcomes and decisions arising from the last meeting.
 5. On page 4 of agenda wrong wording of Ordinary council meeting to be replaced by Audit Risk and Improvement Committee meeting.

5 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**6 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES****7 REPORTS****7.1 CEO UPDATE**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

TO UPDATE THE AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE ON IMPORTANT GOVERNANCE, RISK, COMPLIANCE AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS THAT HAVE PROGRESSED SINCE THE COMMITTEE'S PREVIOUS MEETING.

THE REPORT DRAWS TOGETHER MATTERS ARISING FROM RECENT COUNCIL BUSINESS PAPERS, CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT, THE CLOSURE OF THE PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ORDER PROCESS, THE CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE AND RISK FRAMEWORKS, PREPARATION FOR THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT AUDIT, AND THE BROADER WESTERN NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY WORK BEING PROGRESSED BY COUNCIL.

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO) SPOKE TO THE REPORT AS TABLED AND PROVIDED AN UPDATE ON A RANGE OF GOVERNANCE, RISK, COMPLIANCE AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED THE SCHEDULING OF FUTURE ARIC MEETINGS AND THE TIMING OF THE 2025/26 ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDIT PROCESS. MEMBERS AGREED THAT AN ADDITIONAL MEETING SHOULD BE HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2026 TO REVIEW THE DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF THE EXTERNAL AUDIT. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT THE OCTOBER 2026 MEETING SHOULD REMAIN SCHEDULED, WITH ANY REQUIREMENT FOR A FURTHER MEETING TO BE DETERMINED BASED ON THE OUTCOME OF THE EXTERNAL AUDIT AND ANY SIGNIFICANT MATTERS IDENTIFIED.

THE COMMITTEE SOUGHT CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE TIMING OF THE FINAL AUDIT MANAGEMENT LETTER. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT THE MANAGEMENT LETTER WOULD ORDINARILY BE ISSUED FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF THE AUDIT PROCESS AND THAT ANY SIGNIFICANT MATTERS ARISING DURING THE AUDIT WOULD BE REPORTED TO THE COMMITTEE AS THEY EMERGE. THE CHAIR NOTED THE COMMITTEE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN OVERSIGHT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDIT PROCESS AND ASSOCIATED GOVERNANCE OBLIGATIONS.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED THE IMPLEMENTATION AND TESTING OF COUNCIL'S BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN (BCP). MANAGEMENT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PROGRESS HAD BEEN IMPACTED BY COMPETING ORGANISATIONAL PRIORITIES AND RESOURCING CONSTRAINTS. THE COMMITTEE EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF PROGRESSING IMPLEMENTATION AND TESTING OF THE BCP TO ENSURE ORGANISATIONAL PREPAREDNESS AND RESILIENCE. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT IMPLEMENTATION AND TESTING ACTIVITIES ARE EXPECTED TO OCCUR WITHIN THE NEXT THREE TO SIX MONTHS.

THE CHAIR REQUESTED THAT COMPLIANCE REPORTING BE INCORPORATED AS A STANDING ITEM FOR FUTURE MEETINGS. MANAGEMENT AGREED AND ADVISED THAT A COMPLIANCE REPORT WOULD BE PROVIDED TO EACH MEETING, INCLUDING PERIODS WHERE THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT COMPLIANCE MATTERS TO REPORT.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED THE STATUS OF THE ROYAL THEATRE BUILDING AND THE POTENTIAL GOVERNANCE, RISK AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM THE FIRE-DAMAGED PROPERTY. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT INVESTIGATIONS ARE CONTINUING INTO THE CONDITION OF THE BUILDING, INCLUDING WATER INGRESS, MOULD CONTAMINATION, STRUCTURAL ISSUES AND THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON ASSET VALUATION. IT WAS NOTED THAT RESTORATION WORKS RELATING TO INSURED FIRE DAMAGE ARE SCHEDULED TO COMMENCE IN NOVEMBER 2026, WHILE REMEDIATION OF MOULD AND OTHER NON-INSURABLE ISSUES MAY REMAIN COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITY.

THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS ARE BEING UNDERTAKEN TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF DETERIORATION, REMEDIATION REQUIREMENTS AND ANY IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STATEMENTS. MEMBERS DISCUSSED THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY, UTILISATION AND MAINTENANCE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE FACILITY AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT FURTHER STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION MAY BE REQUIRED REGARDING THE FUTURE OWNERSHIP, USE AND VIABILITY OF THE ASSET.

THE CHAIR HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSING WHETHER AN IMPAIRMENT OR ADJUSTMENT TO THE CARRYING VALUE OF THE ASSET MAY BE REQUIRED AS PART OF COUNCIL'S YEAR-END FINANCIAL REPORTING PROCESS. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT ANY ACCOUNTING TREATMENT WOULD BE DETERMINED FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

THE RELEVANT CONDITION ASSESSMENTS AND PROFESSIONAL ADVICE.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/12

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER RON GILLARD

THAT ARIC:

1. NOTES THE GOVERNANCE, RISK, COMPLIANCE AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS OUTLINED IN THIS REPORT.
2. NOTES THE FORMAL CLOSURE OF THE PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ORDERS APPLYING TO BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL AND THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING THE GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING DISCIPLINES ESTABLISHED THROUGH THAT PROCESS.
3. NOTES THE CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNCIL'S INTEGRATED RISK, BUSINESS CONTINUITY, PROJECT MANAGEMENT, CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY ARRANGEMENTS.
4. NOTES THE PREPARATION OF COUNCIL'S NOMINATION FOR THE 2026 STATEWIDE MUTUAL RISK MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS.
5. NOTES THE EMERGING ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY, MAJOR-PROJECT, RENEWABLE ENERGY AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY RISKS OUTLINED IN THIS REPORT.
6. AGREES THAT THE ARIC MEETING PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 2026 BEING RETAINED AND AN ADDITIONAL MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED ON WEDNESDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 12.30 NOON, THE MEETING TO BE CONDUCTED ONLINE.

CARRIED

7.2 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS AT COUNCIL SINCE THE LAST MEETING.

THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THE HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE REPORT AS PRESENTED.

THE CHAIR INVITED MEMBERS TO RAISE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS REGARDING THE REPORT. NO QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS WERE RAISED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

THE COMMITTEE NOTED THE REPORT.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/13

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER ROSS EARL

THAT THE HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE REPORT BE RECEIVED AND NOTED.

CARRIED

Page 6

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026****7.3 INTERNAL AUDITOR UPDATE**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

FOR THE INTERNAL AUDITOR TO PROVIDE A BRIEF STATUS UPDATE TO ARIC ON THEIR ACTIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING.

MR STEPHEN PROWSE ADVISED THE COMMITTEE THAT MR CRAIG RICHARDSON, DESPITE CURRENTLY BEING ON LEAVE, WAS KEEN TO PERSONALLY PRESENT THE FINDINGS OF THE RECENTLY COMPLETED INTERNAL AUDITS, HAVING ACTED AS THE LEAD AUDITOR FOR BOTH REVIEWS.

MR RICHARDSON PRESENTED THE FINDINGS OF THE FRAUD AND CORRUPTION CONTROL FRAMEWORK AUDIT. THE AUDIT CONCLUDED THAT COUNCIL'S FRAUD AND CORRUPTION CONTROL FRAMEWORK IS PARTIALLY EFFECTIVE, WITH A NUMBER OF CONTROLS OPERATING APPROPRIATELY; HOWEVER, IMPROVEMENTS ARE REQUIRED ACROSS GOVERNANCE, RISK MANAGEMENT, DOCUMENTATION, MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY ARRANGEMENTS. THE AUDIT RESULTED IN 25 RECOMMENDATIONS COMPRISING TWO HIGH, TWENTY-ONE MEDIUM AND TWO LOW-RISK ACTIONS.

THE COMMITTEE ACKNOWLEDGED THE THOROUGHNESS OF THE REVIEW AND NOTED THAT THE FINDINGS PROVIDED A CLEAR ROADMAP FOR STRENGTHENING COUNCIL'S FRAUD AND CORRUPTION CONTROL ENVIRONMENT. MEMBERS EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF STAFF AWARENESS AND TRAINING IN ENSURING EMPLOYEES UNDERSTAND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES, EXPECTED STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND REPORTING OBLIGATIONS.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED MANAGEMENT'S PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH AND NOTED THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOVERNANCE-RELATED ACTIONS WOULD BE SHARED ACROSS THE ORGANISATION TO BUILD CAPABILITY AND OWNERSHIP. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAMES HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED BASED ON AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND REALISTIC DELIVERY EXPECTATIONS, WITH SEVERAL ACTIONS ALIGNING TO BROADER GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES CURRENTLY UNDERWAY, INCLUDING THE REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S DELEGATIONS FRAMEWORK.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF UTILISING A DEDICATED DELEGATIONS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM. MR RICHARDSON ADVISED THAT A NUMBER OF COUNCILS SUCCESSFULLY USE SYSTEMS SUCH AS PULSE TO SUPPORT DELEGATION MANAGEMENT; HOWEVER, THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ANY SYSTEM REMAINS DEPENDENT ON REGULAR REVIEW, APPROPRIATE AUTHORISATION PROCESSES AND CONSISTENT ORGANISATIONAL APPLICATION.

MR RICHARDSON THEN PRESENTED THE FINDINGS OF THE WORKFORCE PLANNING, RECRUITMENT, ONBOARDING AND OFFBOARDING AUDIT. THE AUDIT CONCLUDED THAT GOVERNANCE, RISK MANAGEMENT AND CONTROLS IN THIS AREA ARE INEFFECTIVE AND REQUIRE SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT. KEY FINDINGS IDENTIFIED WEAKNESSES IN THE INTEGRATION OF WORKFORCE PLANNING WITH COUNCIL'S DELIVERY PROGRAM, OPERATIONAL PLAN AND LONG-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN, TOGETHER WITH DEFICIENCIES IN PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT, REVIEW PROCESSES, REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS AND EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE DOCUMENTATION. THE AUDIT RESULTED IN NINE RECOMMENDATIONS COMPRISING FOUR HIGH, FOUR MEDIUM AND ONE LOW-RISK ACTION.

THE COMMITTEE ACKNOWLEDGED THE COMPREHENSIVE NATURE OF THE REVIEW AND NOTED THAT MANY OF THE CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED ARE COMMON ACROSS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR, PARTICULARLY WITHIN ORGANISATIONS THAT HAVE EXPERIENCED PERIODS OF MANAGEMENT TURNOVER AND ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE. MEMBERS HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING ROBUST DOCUMENTATION, RECORD MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE PROCESSES AS KEY GOVERNANCE

Page 7

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

CONTROLS.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED WORKFORCE PLANNING AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS AND NOTED MANAGEMENT'S INTENTION TO STRENGTHEN ALIGNMENT BETWEEN WORKFORCE PLANNING AND THE INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT THE WORKFORCE PLAN WOULD BE REVIEWED AND UPDATED ANNUALLY TO ENSURE IT REMAINS CURRENT AND RESPONSIVE TO ORGANISATIONAL NEEDS, WITH REPORTING INCORPORATED INTO COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PLANNING AND REPORTING PROCESSES.

THE COMMITTEE ALSO DISCUSSED THE IMPORTANCE OF PROACTIVE PEOPLE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, INCLUDING EARLY INTERVENTION IN EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE MATTERS. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT SUPERVISOR CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A PRIORITY AREA AND THAT COUNCIL IS WORKING WITH EXTERNAL PROVIDERS TO STRENGTHEN SKILLS IN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND RETURN-TO-WORK MANAGEMENT. THE OBJECTIVE IS TO INCREASE LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY ACROSS OPERATIONAL AREAS AND REINFORCE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PEOPLE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES.

COUNCILLOR LINDSAY-FIELD NOTED THAT THE FINDINGS REFLECTED HISTORICAL ORGANISATIONAL CHALLENGES AND EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE IMPROVEMENTS RATHER THAN PURSUING SHORT-TERM CORRECTIVE ACTIONS. IT WAS FURTHER NOTED THAT THE AUDIT PROVIDES VALUABLE ASSURANCE REGARDING ORGANISATIONAL MATURITY AND IDENTIFIES OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN WORKFORCE PLANNING, GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY ARRANGEMENTS.

THE CHAIR ACKNOWLEDGED THE VALUE OF INDEPENDENT ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES IN ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE PROCESSES BEYOND THE EXISTENCE OF DOCUMENTED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT BOTH AUDITS PROVIDE A TIMELY OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES AND SUPPORT COUNCIL'S ONGOING ORGANISATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

THE COMMITTEE ALSO REVIEWED THE AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS REGISTER. THE CHAIR RAISED CONCERNS REGARDING THE RECONCILIATION OF THE DASHBOARD SUMMARY WITH THE STATUS OF ACTIONS CONTAINED WITHIN THE REGISTER AND REQUESTED THAT THE MATTER BE REVIEWED. MANAGEMENT AGREED TO UNDERTAKE A REVIEW OF THE DASHBOARD REPORTING.

THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT THE AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS REGISTER PROVIDES AN EFFECTIVE MECHANISM FOR MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS. MEMBERS SUGGESTED THAT FUTURE EXTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS MAY BE EASIER TO MONITOR IF INDIVIDUAL RECOMMENDATIONS ARE RECORDED SEPARATELY WITHIN THE REGISTER RATHER THAN GROUPED UNDER A SINGLE AUDIT FINDING. MANAGEMENT AGREED TO CONSIDER THIS ENHANCEMENT AS PART OF FUTURE REPORTING IMPROVEMENTS.

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/14

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER RON GILLARD

THAT THE AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE:

- 1. NOTE THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S UPDATE.**
- 2. NOTE THE FINAL REPORTS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSES TO THE FOLLOWING INTERNAL AUDITS:**
 - (A) FRAUD AND CORRUPTION PREVENTION**
 - (B) WORKFORCE PLANNING**
- 3. NOTE THE EXTERNAL AUDIT AND INTERNAL AUDIT REGISTER AND MADE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT.**

CARRIED

7.4 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & CYBER SECURITY UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

TO PROVIDE THE AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE WITH AN UPDATE ON COUNCIL'S INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND CYBER SECURITY RISKS, CURRENT MITIGATION ACTIVITIES AND ANY EMERGING ISSUES REQUIRING OVERSIGHT.

THE CHAIR ADVISED THAT THE REPORT WOULD BE TAKEN AS READ AND INVITED QUESTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED COUNCIL'S CURRENT INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS AND SOUGHT CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE EXISTING MANAGED SERVICES ENGAGEMENT AND TRANSITION PLANNING FOR FUTURE SERVICE DELIVERY.

MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT THE CURRENT PROVIDER'S CONTRACT FORMALLY EXPIRED IN NOVEMBER 2024 AND HAS CONTINUED UNDER AN INTERIM EXTENSION ARRANGEMENT WHILE COUNCIL UNDERTAKES A PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOR A REPLACEMENT PROVIDER. IT WAS NOTED THAT CHALLENGES HAVE ARISEN DURING THE CONTRACT PERIOD DUE TO DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS OF THE ORIGINAL CONTRACT SCOPE AND SERVICE EXPECTATIONS.

THE COMMITTEE WAS ADVISED THAT THE CURRENT PROVIDER WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT COUNCIL'S INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ENVIRONMENT THROUGHOUT THE PROCUREMENT AND TRANSITION PROCESS. SHOULD THE INCUMBENT PROVIDER BE SUCCESSFUL THROUGH THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS, SERVICES MAY CONTINUE UNDER A NEW CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENT. MANAGEMENT CONFIRMED THAT APPROPRIATE SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS REMAIN IN PLACE AND THAT THERE IS NO INTERRUPTION TO THE PROVISION OF CRITICAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND CYBER SECURITY SERVICES DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD.

THE COMMITTEE NOTED THE UPDATE AND EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING SERVICE CONTINUITY, EFFECTIVE CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND APPROPRIATE CYBER SECURITY OVERSIGHT THROUGHOUT THE PROCUREMENT AND TRANSITION PROCESS.

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/15

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER ROSS EARL

THAT THE AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE NOTE THE ISSUES AND WORK CURRENTLY BEING UNDERTAKEN BY COUNCIL TO MANAGE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND CYBER SECURITY RISKS.

CARRIED

7.5 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

PURPOSE OF REPORTFOR THE CHAIRPERSON TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE TO THE MEETING.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER ROSS EARL

THAT ARIC NOTES THE CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT FOR THE MEETING AND THAT A REVIEW AND UPDATE OF THE ACTION ITEMS REGISTER WAS UNDERTAKEN.

7.6 EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIONS REGISTER

PURPOSE OF REPORT

STANDING ITEM TO TRACK THE PROGRESS OF ACTIONS AGAINST THE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE NOTE THE CURRENT STATUS UPDATE ON THE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS.

7.7 6-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT ON THE 4-YEAR DELIVERY PLAN

PURPOSE OF REPORT

TO PROVIDE A COPY OF COUNCIL'S 6-MONTHLY PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE 4- YEAR DELIVERY PLAN, WHICH IS PART OF COUNCIL'S NEW MONTHLY UPDATE ON OPERATIONS.

THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERED COUNCIL'S SIX-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT AGAINST THE FOUR-YEAR DELIVERY PLAN, WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED AS PART OF THE MONTHLY OPERATIONAL REPORTING FRAMEWORK IN FUTURE.

THE CHAIR SOUGHT FEEDBACK FROM MANAGEMENT REGARDING COUNCIL'S INITIAL EXPERIENCE WITH THE NEW REPORTING FRAMEWORK. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT COUNCILLORS HAD RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO THE REPORT AND RECOGNISED THE SIGNIFICANT EFFORT INVOLVED IN ESTABLISHING COMPREHENSIVE REPORTING

Page 10

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

AGAINST THE DELIVERY PLAN. IT WAS NOTED THAT THE REPORTING FRAMEWORK REMAINS IN ITS EARLY STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION AND WILL CONTINUE TO EVOLVE AND MATURE OVER TIME.

MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT FUTURE REPORTS WILL INCLUDE ENHANCED FINANCIAL COMMENTARY AT THE DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL, IMPROVED REPORTING FUNCTIONALITY THROUGH COUNCIL'S MAGIQ FINANCIAL SYSTEM, CONSISTENT FINANCIAL GRAPHS AND BENCHMARKING INFORMATION, OPERATIONAL UPDATES FROM INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS UNITS, AND EXPANDED RISK AND PROJECT REPORTING METRICS. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT THE OVERARCHING OBJECTIVE IS TO REDUCE DUPLICATION, IMPROVE TRANSPARENCY AND STRENGTHEN ACCOUNTABILITY BY HAVING MANAGERS REPORT DIRECTLY ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY.

THE COMMITTEE ACKNOWLEDGED THE COMPREHENSIVE NATURE OF THE REPORT BUT NOTED THAT ITS SIZE AND COMPLEXITY MADE IT DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE. MEMBERS SUGGESTED THAT FUTURE REPORTS INCORPORATE DASHBOARDS, SUMMARY SECTIONS, KEY PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS AND NAVIGATION TOOLS TO ASSIST READERS IN QUICKLY IDENTIFYING SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND EMERGING RISKS.

MANAGEMENT AGREED THAT THERE IS SCOPE TO IMPROVE REPORT USABILITY THROUGH CLEARER SUMMARIES, DASHBOARDS AND REPORTING STRUCTURES. IT WAS FURTHER NOTED THAT FUTURE REPORTS WILL MORE CLEARLY DISTINGUISH ORGANISATION-WIDE PERFORMANCE MEASURES FROM BUSINESS UNIT-SPECIFIC REPORTING.

THE CHAIR REINFORCED THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING USERS WITH EFFICIENT MECHANISMS TO NAVIGATE LARGE AND DETAILED REPORTS AND SUPPORTED THE INCLUSION OF SUMMARY TOOLS TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY FOR BOTH COUNCILLORS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

THE COMMITTEE ALSO DISCUSSED THE REPORTING OF ACTIONS IDENTIFIED AS "NOT COMMENCED" AND NOTED THAT, IN SOME INSTANCES, THE ACCOMPANYING COMMENTARY DID NOT PROVIDE SUFFICIENT CONTEXT TO EXPLAIN DELAYS OR IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES. MANAGEMENT ACKNOWLEDGED THIS FEEDBACK AND ADVISED THAT FUTURE REPORTS WILL CONTAIN MORE DETAILED COMMENTARY, WITH MANAGERS ASSUMING GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING MEANINGFUL STATUS UPDATES AND EXPLANATIONS.

THE CHAIR EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING HIGH-QUALITY REPORTING STANDARDS AND ENSURING MANAGERS TAKE OWNERSHIP OF PERFORMANCE REPORTING. IT WAS NOTED THAT REPORTING FRAMEWORKS OF THIS NATURE ARE MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN EMBEDDED THROUGHOUT THE ORGANISATION AND SUPPORTED BY STRONG ACCOUNTABILITY ARRANGEMENTS. THE COMMITTEE ACKNOWLEDGED THE POTENTIAL FOR THE REPORT TO BECOME A KEY ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE, GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY TOOL.

MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT EMBEDDING ACCOUNTABILITY AND OWNERSHIP ACROSS ALL LEVELS OF THE ORGANISATION REMAINS A KEY OBJECTIVE. IT WAS NOTED THAT MANY STAFF ARE STILL BECOMING FAMILIAR WITH THE FRAMEWORK AND THAT REPORTING QUALITY IS EXPECTED TO IMPROVE AS SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY CONTINUE TO MATURE.

COUNCILLOR LINDSAY-FIELD EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE REPORT AND ACKNOWLEDGED THE SIGNIFICANT WORK UNDERTAKEN TO ALIGN THE REPORTING FRAMEWORK WITH COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLANNING AND OPERATIONAL PROCESSES. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION WILL REQUIRE ONGOING TRAINING, LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT AND CONTINUOUS REFINEMENT TO ENSURE THE FRAMEWORK DELIVERS MEANINGFUL PERFORMANCE INFORMATION AND SUPPORTS INFORMED DECISION-MAKING.

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/16

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER ROSS EARL

THAT THE REPORT BE RECEIVED AND NOTED.

CARRIED

7.8 OUTSTANDING RATES AND USAGE CHARGES AS AT 30 JUNE 2026

PURPOSE OF REPORT

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT IS TO ADVISE COUNCIL OF THE OUTSTANDING RATES AND CHARGES AND OUTSTANDING WATER AND SEWER USAGE CHARGES AS OF 30 JUNE 2026.

THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THE REPORT ON OUTSTANDING RATES AND USAGE CHARGES AS AT 30 JUNE 2026.

THE CHAIR SOUGHT CLARIFICATION REGARDING WHETHER ANY PROPERTIES WITH OUTSTANDING RATES AND CHARGES HAD REACHED THE POINT OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SALE UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT. MANAGEMENT PROVIDED AN UPDATE ON PROPERTIES WITH SIGNIFICANT OUTSTANDING DEBTS AND OUTLINED THEIR CURRENT STATUS WITHIN COUNCIL'S DEBT RECOVERY PROCESSES. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT COUNCIL CONTINUES TO ACTIVELY MONITOR ARREARS AND UNDERTAKE APPROPRIATE RECOVERY ACTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS AND ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNICATION WITH RATEPAYERS DURING THE DEBT RECOVERY PROCESS. IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT FINAL REMINDER NOTICES INCLUDE AN ESTIMATE OF POTENTIAL LEGAL AND DEBT RECOVERY COSTS THAT MAY BE INCURRED IF PAYMENT IS NOT RECEIVED BY THE DUE DATE. MEMBERS NOTED THAT PROVIDING GREATER VISIBILITY OF THE FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES ASSOCIATED WITH NON-PAYMENT MAY ENCOURAGE EARLIER ENGAGEMENT AND REDUCE ESCALATION TO FORMAL RECOVERY ACTION.

MANAGEMENT ACKNOWLEDGED THE SUGGESTION AND AGREED TO CONSIDER WHETHER ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING DEBT RECOVERY COSTS COULD BE INCORPORATED INTO FUTURE CORRESPONDENCE. IT WAS NOTED THAT COSTS CAN INCREASE SIGNIFICANTLY ONCE MATTERS ARE REFERRED FOR LEGAL RECOVERY OR EXTERNAL DEBT COLLECTION PROCESSES.

THE COMMITTEE ALSO DISCUSSED SEVERAL DETAILED MATTERS RELATING TO THE CALCULATIONS AND FINANCIAL DATA CONTAINED WITHIN THE REPORT. IT WAS AGREED THAT THESE MATTERS WOULD BE DISCUSSED DIRECTLY BETWEEN THE COMMITTEE MEMBER AND MANAGEMENT OUTSIDE THE MEETING.

THE COMMITTEE NOTED THE REPORT AND THE ONGOING MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT OF OUTSTANDING RATES AND CHARGES.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/17

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER ROSS EARL

THAT COMMITTEE NOTES THE INFORMATION CONTAINED WITHIN THIS REPORT.**CARRIED**

Page 12

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026****7.9 OUTSTANDING DEBTORS AS AT 30 JUNE 2026**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

TO PROVIDE ARIC COMMITTEE WITH A REPORT ON THE OUTSTANDING DEBTORS AS AT 30 JUNE 2026.

THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THE REPORT ON OUTSTANDING DEBTORS AS AT 30 JUNE 2026.

THE CHAIR SOUGHT CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE SIGNIFICANT DEBTOR BALANCE AGED GREATER THAN 60 DAYS, NOTING THAT APPROXIMATELY \$162,000 APPEARED TO BE CONCENTRATED ACROSS A SMALL NUMBER OF DEBTOR ACCOUNTS.

MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE OUTSTANDING BALANCE RELATES TO A SINGLE LONG-STANDING DEBTOR, ALTHOUGH THE DEBT IS REFLECTED ACROSS THREE SEPARATE ACCOUNTS WITHIN COUNCIL'S DEBTOR SYSTEM. THE COMMITTEE WAS ADVISED THAT THE MATTER HAS BEEN REFERRED TO DEBT COLLECTION AND FORMAL RECOVERY ACTION IS UNDERWAY.

MANAGEMENT FURTHER ADVISED THAT THE DEBT RELATES TO HISTORICAL ARRANGEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH BUILDING-RELATED DUMPING FEES, WHERE DOCUMENTATION AND SUPPORTING AGREEMENTS WERE LIMITED AND, IN SOME INSTANCES, RELIED UPON VERBAL UNDERSTANDINGS RATHER THAN FORMALISED CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS. WHILE THIS HAS CREATED SOME COMPLEXITY IN THE RECOVERY PROCESS, MANAGEMENT EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE DEBT REMAINS RECOVERABLE AND CONFIRMED THAT RECOVERY EFFORTS ARE CONTINUING.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD-KEEPING PRACTICES TO SUPPORT THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS AND REDUCE THE RISK OF DISPUTES ARISING FROM INFORMAL ARRANGEMENTS. THE COMMITTEE NOTED MANAGEMENT'S UPDATE AND ONGOING EFFORTS TO RECOVER THE OUTSTANDING DEBT.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/18

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER RON GILLARD

THAT COMMITTEE NOTE THE REPORT.

CARRIED

7.10 MONTHLY INVESTMENTS REPORT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT IS TO REPORT TO ARIC COMMITTEE ON THE BALANCES OF CASH AND INVESTMENTS HELD BY COUNCIL AS AT 30 JUNE 2026.

THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THE MONTHLY INVESTMENTS REPORT AS PRESENTED.

THE REPORT WAS TAKEN AS READ AND NO QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS WERE RAISED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

Page 13

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026****COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/19**

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER ROSS EARL

THAT COMMITTEE NOTE THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS REPORT.**CARRIED****7.11 REPORT OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT IS TO ADVISE AND REPORT TO THE COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF THE FOLLOWING FINANCIAL INFORMATION AS OF 30 JUNE 2026:

1. MONTHLY SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE BIDGEE HAVEN RETIREMENT HOSTEL.
2. MONTHLY SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE CARAVAN PARK

THE COMMITTEE WELCOMED REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE BIDGEE HAVEN CONSULTANCY TEAM, WHO JOINED THE MEETING TO DISCUSS THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH-SUPPORTED IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. THE CONSULTANTS ADVISED THAT INITIAL ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES HAD COMMENCED AND SEVERAL KEY THEMES HAD ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED, INCLUDING FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, ACCREDITATION READINESS, GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY STANDARDS, WORKFORCE PLANNING AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT THE CONSULTANTS' ROLE IS TO PROVIDE SUPPORT, MENTORING AND IMPROVEMENT GUIDANCE RATHER THAN UNDERTAKE AN AUDIT FUNCTION, WITH A PROJECT PLAN AND IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP TO BE DEVELOPED FOLLOWING THE INITIAL SITE VISIT.

THE COMMITTEE ACKNOWLEDGED THE VALUE OF SPECIALIST AGED CARE EXPERTISE AND DISCUSSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ENSURING BIDGEE HAVEN REMAINS FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE WHILE CONTINUING TO PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY. MEMBERS NOTED THE INCREASING COMPLEXITY OF THE AGED CARE SECTOR AND THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING COMPLIANCE WITH EVOLVING REGULATORY, FUNDING AND ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED BIDGEE HAVEN'S CURRENT FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONAL OUTLOOK. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT EXPENDITURE REMAINS TIGHTLY CONTROLLED AND THAT HISTORICAL BUDGET OVERRUNS HAD LARGELY BEEN DRIVEN BY STAFFING COSTS. IT WAS NOTED THAT PREVIOUS BUDGETS DID NOT ADEQUATELY REFLECT THE STAFFING REQUIREMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH OPERATING A RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITY, INCLUDING PENALTY RATES, NIGHT SHIFTS AND AFTER-HOURS COVERAGE. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT BUDGETING METHODOLOGIES HAVE SINCE BEEN REVISED TO BETTER REFLECT ACTUAL OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.

THE COMMITTEE WAS ADVISED THAT, WHILE BIDGEE HAVEN IS FORECAST TO OPERATE AT A DEFICIT OF APPROXIMATELY \$400,000 DURING 2026/27, THE BUDGET HAS BEEN PREPARED CONSERVATIVELY USING MODEST OCCUPANCY ASSUMPTIONS. MANAGEMENT REPORTED THAT OCCUPANCY LEVELS HAVE IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY, WITH CURRENT OCCUPANCY AT APPROXIMATELY 14 RESIDENTS AND A WAITING LIST NOW ESTABLISHED. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT INCREASED COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE, SERVICE STABILITY AND THE USE OF LOCALLY EMPLOYED STAFF HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO STRONGER DEMAND, WHILE HIGHER-ACUITY RESPIRE RESIDENTS

Page 14

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

ARE GENERATING ADDITIONAL REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED WORKFORCE SUSTAINABILITY AND STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT REGISTERED NURSE STAFFING LEVELS ARE CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW TO ENSURE WORKFORCE STRUCTURES REMAIN RESILIENT AND CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING FUTURE GROWTH. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT THE FACILITY HAS SUCCESSFULLY OPERATED WITHOUT AGENCY STAFF FOR APPROXIMATELY 15 MONTHS, RELYING ENTIRELY ON LOCALLY EMPLOYED STAFF AND DELIVERING SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS THROUGH REDUCED AGENCY, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL COSTS. MANAGEMENT FURTHER ADVISED THAT PARTNERSHIPS WITH UNIVERSITIES, TAFE AND TRAINING PROVIDERS ARE BEING EXPLORED TO SUPPORT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, ATTRACT STUDENT PLACEMENTS AND CREATE LOCAL CAREER PATHWAYS INTO AGED CARE.

THE COMMITTEE ALSO DISCUSSED PLANNING FOR THE BIDGEE HAVEN EXPANSION PROJECT. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT CONSULTANCY SUPPORT WILL INCLUDE FINANCIAL MODELLING AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING TO ENSURE STAFFING STRUCTURES, SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS AND FINANCIAL ASSUMPTIONS ARE APPROPRIATELY ESTABLISHED PRIOR TO COMMISSIONING THE ADDITIONAL SIX BEDS. IT WAS NOTED THAT THE EXPANSION IS EXPECTED TO IMPROVE THE FACILITY'S LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND OPERATING POSITION. THE COMMITTEE FURTHER DISCUSSED THE CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH RECRUITING STAFF TO THE REGION AND NOTED THAT HOUSING AVAILABILITY CONTINUES TO PRESENT A CONSTRAINT WHEN ATTRACTING EMPLOYEES FROM OUTSIDE THE AREA.

THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT THE REPORTED FINANCIAL RESULTS WERE SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETE, WITH ONLY MINOR END-OF-YEAR ADJUSTMENTS REMAINING. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT ANY OUTSTANDING ACCRUALS ARE NOT EXPECTED TO MATERIALLY ALTER THE REPORTED RESULT. MEMBERS ACKNOWLEDGED THE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE TIMELINESS AND ACCURACY OF FINANCIAL REPORTING COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEARS AND NOTED THAT, DESPITE ONGOING OPERATING DEFICITS, IMPROVED VISIBILITY OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE SUPPORTS BETTER GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY AND DECISION-MAKING.

FOLLOWING THE DEPARTURE OF THE BIDGEE HAVEN CONSULTANTS, THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED THE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF THE BALRANALD CARAVAN PARK. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT REDUCED INCOME DURING THE YEAR WAS ATTRIBUTABLE TO A COMBINATION OF STAFFING CHALLENGES, WORKPLACE INJURY IMPACTS, REDUCED VISITOR NUMBERS AND THE REDIRECTION OF A PLANNED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT TO SUPPORT LEVEE BANK CONSTRUCTION WORKS. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT ADDITIONAL MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS AND REDUCED SITE AVAILABILITY HAD ALSO IMPACTED FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE.

THE COMMITTEE SOUGHT CLARIFICATION REGARDING RATES, CHARGES AND MAINTENANCE EXPENDITURE EXCEEDING BUDGET. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT PART OF THE VARIANCE RELATES TO INCORRECT COST ALLOCATIONS WHICH WILL BE CORRECTED THROUGH END-OF-YEAR JOURNAL ADJUSTMENTS. ADDITIONAL MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR COSTS WERE ALSO IDENTIFIED AS CONTRIBUTING FACTORS. THE COMMITTEE FURTHER NOTED THAT SEVERAL CABINS ARE CURRENTLY OUT OF SERVICE DUE TO MAINTENANCE ISSUES, INCLUDING MOULD, REDUCING ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY AND REVENUE GENERATION OPPORTUNITIES. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT, SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE FUNDING, UNUSABLE CABINS ARE EXPECTED TO BE REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH POWERED CARAVAN SITES TO MAXIMISE FUTURE REVENUE POTENTIAL.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED COUNCIL'S LONGER-TERM STRATEGY FOR THE CARAVAN PARK AND NOTED THAT MANAGEMENT IS EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES TO TRANSITION OPERATIONS TO A PRIVATE OPERATOR THROUGH AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST PROCESS. IT WAS NOTED THAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN IMPACTED BY APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH CROWN LANDS AND CHANGING COMPLIANCE

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

OBLIGATIONS.

THE COMMITTEE RECEIVED AN UPDATE ON THE PREPARATION OF THE 2025/26 ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT YEAR-END FINANCIAL REPORTING IS PROGRESSING WELL, WITH ASSET INDEXING COMPLETED, BUILDING REVALUATIONS UNDER REVIEW AND ACCRUAL PROCESSING SUBSTANTIALLY FINALISED. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT THE INTERIM AUDIT HAD BEEN COMPLETED WITH NO SIGNIFICANT ISSUES IDENTIFIED. EXTERNAL AUDIT REPRESENTATIVES CONFIRMED THAT NO INTERIM MANAGEMENT LETTER HAD BEEN ISSUED DUE TO THE ABSENCE OF ANY SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS, HIGH-RISK MATTERS OR NEW ISSUES REQUIRING MANAGEMENT ATTENTION.

MANAGEMENT ALSO PROVIDED AN UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAGIQ MANAGEMENT REPORTING SYSTEM, ADVISING THAT STAFF TRAINING IS UNDERWAY AND THAT THE SYSTEM IS EXPECTED TO BE OPERATIONAL WITHIN THE COMING MONTHS. ONCE IMPLEMENTED, THE SYSTEM WILL PROVIDE MANAGERS WITH ACCESS TO DASHBOARDS AND ENHANCED REPORTING FUNCTIONALITY. THE COMMITTEE SUPPORTED A SUGGESTION TO ESTABLISH A SEPARATE STANDING AGENDA ITEM FOR AUDIT MATTERS TO IMPROVE OVERSIGHT OF EXTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITIES AND FUTURE REPORTING. MANAGEMENT CONFIRMED THAT FUTURE MEETINGS WILL INCLUDE DEDICATED AUDIT UPDATES COVERING ENGAGEMENT PLANNING, AUDIT PROGRESS, DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDIT OUTCOMES.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/20

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER RON GILLARD

THAT COMMITTEE NOTES THE FINANCIAL INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 JUNE 2026.

CARRIED**7.12 WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE & INCIDENT REPORT****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

TO PROVIDE A REGULAR UPDATE ON WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY INCIDENTS SINCE THE LAST AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE (ARIC) MEETING.

MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT A NEW WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND RISK OFFICER HAD RECENTLY COMMENCED WITH COUNCIL. IT WAS NOTED THAT THE REPORT HAD BEEN SUBMITTED LATER THAN USUAL AS SYSTEM ACCESS AND REPORTING FUNCTIONALITY HAD ONLY RECENTLY BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR THE POSITION.

THE CHAIR SOUGHT CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE KEY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE REPORT AND ANY EMERGING ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE COMMITTEE'S ATTENTION.

THE COMMITTEE WAS ADVISED THAT THE NUMBER OF REPORTED INCIDENTS HAS CONTINUED TO INCREASE; HOWEVER, MANAGEMENT CONSIDERS THIS TO BE A POSITIVE REFLECTION OF IMPROVED REPORTING PRACTICES RATHER THAN AN INCREASE IN WORKPLACE INJURIES. IT WAS NOTED THAT STAFF ARE BECOMING MORE FAMILIAR WITH INCIDENT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND ARE REPORTING INCIDENTS, HAZARDS AND NEAR MISSES MORE CONSISTENTLY, CONTRIBUTING TO A STRONGER SAFETY REPORTING CULTURE.

MANAGEMENT FURTHER ADVISED THAT A STAFF SAFETY SURVEY HAD RECENTLY BEEN COMPLETED, ACHIEVING A STRONG PARTICIPATION RATE OF APPROXIMATELY 57 PER CENT. THE COMMITTEE ALSO NOTED ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DONESAFE SYSTEM, INCLUDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SAFETY CHECKLISTS, INDUCTION

Page 16

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

PROCESSES, TRAINING MODULES AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION AIMED AT STRENGTHENING COUNCIL'S SAFETY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK.

THE CHAIR NOTED THAT INCREASED INCIDENT REPORTING CAN BE A POSITIVE INDICATOR OF ORGANISATIONAL SAFETY MATURITY, AS IT PROVIDES GREATER VISIBILITY OF HAZARDS AND ENABLES CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED BEFORE MORE SERIOUS INCIDENTS OCCUR. THE COMMITTEE ACKNOWLEDGED MANAGEMENT'S EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE STAFF PARTICIPATION AND IMPROVE REPORTING BEHAVIOURS ACROSS THE ORGANISATION.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING PSYCHOSOCIAL RISKS WITHIN THE WORKPLACE. MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT PSYCHOSOCIAL RISK TRAINING IS SCHEDULED TO BE DELIVERED IN THE COMING MONTHS, WITH SUPPORT FROM STATECOVER TO ASSIST SUPERVISORS IN UNDERSTANDING, IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS. IT WAS NOTED THAT THE TRAINING PROCESS WILL ALSO ASSIST COUNCIL IN IDENTIFYING KEY PSYCHOSOCIAL RISKS AND INFORMING FUTURE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES.

MANAGEMENT ADVISED THAT PRELIMINARY PSYCHOSOCIAL RISKS IDENTIFIED ACROSS THE ORGANISATION INCLUDE WORKPLACE CULTURE, MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING, WORK-LIFE BALANCE, AND WORKLOAD PRESSURES. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT WORK IS CONTINUING WITH BOTH STATECOVER AND WORKCOVER TO STRENGTHEN COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO PSYCHOSOCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE WELLBEING.

THE CHAIR EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING AND PROACTIVELY MANAGING PSYCHOSOCIAL RISKS, PARTICULARLY THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE, SUPERVISOR CAPABILITY AND WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THESE RISKS IS AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF CONTEMPORARY WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY GOVERNANCE.

THE COMMITTEE ENCOURAGED MANAGEMENT TO CONTINUE ENGAGING WITH STATECOVER AND TO UTILISE THE SUPPORT, RESOURCES AND EXPERTISE AVAILABLE, PARTICULARLY IN RELATION TO PSYCHOLOGICAL INJURIES, SUPERVISOR CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT AND PSYCHOSOCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT.

THE COMMITTEE NOTED THE REPORT AND WELCOMED THE PROGRESS BEING MADE IN STRENGTHENING COUNCIL'S WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY SYSTEMS, REPORTING CULTURE AND RISK MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE LATE ITEM 7.12 WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE & INCIDENT REPORT BE ADMITTED TO THE AGENDA.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/21

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER ROSS EARL

THAT THE AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE NOTES AND ENDORSES COUNCIL'S WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND INCIDENT REPORT.

CARRIED**8 REPORTS****COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2026/22**

Page 17

AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**22 JULY 2026**

MOVED: CHAIR PERSON KERRY PHILLIPS

SECONDED: MEMBER RON GILLARD

THAT COUNCIL CONSIDERS THE CONFIDENTIAL REPORT(S) LISTED BELOW IN A MEETING CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 10A(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993:

8.1 STATUS UPDATE ON ACTIONS TO ADDRESS FIRE DAMAGE TO THE ROYAL THEATRE BUILDING

THIS MATTER IS CONSIDERED TO BE CONFIDENTIAL UNDER SECTION 10A(2) - D(I), D(II), E AND G OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, AND THE COUNCIL IS SATISFIED THAT DISCUSSION OF THIS MATTER IN AN OPEN MEETING WOULD, ON BALANCE, BE CONTRARY TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST AS IT DEALS WITH COMMERCIAL INFORMATION OF A CONFIDENTIAL NATURE THAT WOULD, IF DISCLOSED PREJUDICE THE COMMERCIAL POSITION OF THE PERSON WHO SUPPLIED IT, INFORMATION THAT WOULD, IF DISCLOSED, CONFER A COMMERCIAL ADVANTAGE ON A COMPETITOR OF THE COUNCIL, INFORMATION THAT WOULD, IF DISCLOSED, PREJUDICE THE MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ADVICE CONCERNING LITIGATION, OR ADVICE AS COMPRISES A DISCUSSION OF THIS MATTER, THAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE PRIVILEGED FROM PRODUCTION IN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS ON THE GROUND OF LEGAL PROFESSIONAL PRIVILEGE.

CARRIED

9 ITEMS WITHOUT NOTICE

10 NEXT MEETING – 2 September 2026

11 CLOSE

The Meeting closed at 3.10pm.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held on 2 September 2026.

.....
CHAIRPERSON

7.2 EUSTON PROGRESSIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 29 JUNE & MONDAY 29 JULY 2026

File Number: D26.127756

Reporting Officer: Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant

Responsible Officer: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Euston Progressive Advisory Committee meeting held on Monday 29 June & Monday 29 July 2026 be received and noted.

REPORT

The Euston Progressive Advisory Committee (EPAC) held meetings on Monday, 29 June 2026 and Monday 29 July at the Euston Club.

There were no additional recommendations made by the committee to Council in addition to the minutes being received and noted by Council from this meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Minutes - EPAC - 29 June 2026  
2. Minutes - EPAC - 29 July 2026  

MINUTES OFFICER: Santina Zappia

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION
1.	Meeting Open: 5.30pm Attendees:
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
Guy Fielding Santina Zappia Kathy Garreffa Rusty Roberts	
COUNCIL	
Louie Zaffina (Mayor) Connie Mallet (Community Projects, Tourism/Economic Development & Grants Coordinator) Hodi Beauliv (Executive Manager, Community & Governance) Tracy O'Halloran (Councilor) Raju Ranjit (Manager of Engineering Services)	
Welcome of country:	
2.	Apologies: Terry Dodds (CEO,) Mario Chirchiglia, Teresa Garreffa, Phil Cocks, Lena Cocks
3.	Disclosures of Interest: NIL
4.	Confirmation of minutes: Moved: Guy Fielding Seconded: Santina Zappia
5.	Matters arising from minutes: Euston Reserve Club Rooms have been painted. Chairs & tables from the Club Rooms have been delivered to Hatfield and the remaining chairs & tables will be distributed throughout the Shire.

MEETING MINUTES OF THE EUSTON PROGRESSIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON 29th June 2026

6.	Agenda Items:
.	*Connie gave an update on the Rolling Action Plan as of the 29th June 2026. There is an attached copy of the plan with this email. EPAC are happy with the progress. * Wednesday 29th July will be a Cenus meeting at the Euston Club.
7.	Correspondence:
	Mayor Zaffina: Model code of meeting practice.
8.	Items Without Notice
	Rusty; needs another key to the Club Rooms.
9.	MEETING CLOSED 7:20pm - Next Meeting – Monday 29 th July 2026

MINUTES OFFICER: Santina Zappia

Euston Entrance Signs; The word Euston to have a bolder white out line, also to add on the bottom left corner the picture of Reggie, "Est 1846" next to it.
Moved: Louie - motion to adopt option B of the picture samples Seconded: Lena - Carried

MEETING MINUTES OF THE EUSTON PROGRESSIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD ON 29th July 2026



EPAC have endorsed the letter of support for the Euston Bowling Recreation Club, NSW Sustainable Community Program.	
7.	Correspondence:
Invitation to attend the Art Exhibition from Balranald School. Letter of support for, NSW Sustainable Communities Program.	
8.	Items Without Notice
Steven: Was impressed with council and the committees. Santina: We need a new Christmas Tree for Euston, Hodi to investigate. Raju: Club Rooms- Is it possible to change the hot water at the rooms from gas to electric or get one big gas tank, to be discussed at council. BBQ at Lake Benanee; Council will investigate options. Water Towers; Projection or painted, Raju will gather more information on both options. Anderson Park; Toilet block building has started. Louie: Thanked Steven for visiting the Shire. Teresa: Garreffa Parade playground, Council still seeking funding, Raju will have more information soon. Hodi: Putting in grants for River Walk and CRIF. Edna: Smart meters for water have been rolling out in Euston. Guy: Will be away on 31st August so next meeting will be on 24th August.	
9.	MEETING CLOSED 6.30pm - Next Meeting – Monday 24 th August 2026

8 NOTICE OF MOTION**8.1 NOTICE OF MOTION - KYALITE WATER**

Record Number: D26.127882

I, Councillor Louie Zaffina give notice that at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held on 15 September 2026, I intend to move the following motion:

MOTION

That Council request a report from the CEO outlining the practical options available to progress a domestic water supply system for Kyalite, including potential funding, partnerships and delivery options, and recognise the project as an important long-term investment in the Kyalite community.

RATIONALE

Kyalite is a small community, but that should not diminish the importance of having access to reliable and safe domestic water.

For many years, residents have lived without the level of water security that most communities simply take for granted. Council should now look seriously at what can be done, what assistance may be available from other levels of government, and whether there is a practical pathway to delivering a domestic water supply system for Kyalite.

This motion does not commit Council to a particular solution or expenditure. It asks that the options be properly investigated and brought back to Council for consideration.

A reliable domestic water supply would provide a lasting benefit to Kyalite residents, improve water security and community wellbeing, and help support the long-term future of the village.

For a relatively small community, this would be a significant piece of infrastructure and one that could leave a genuine legacy for generations to come.

I commend this Notice of Motion to Council.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

8.2 NOTICE OF MOTION - E-BIKE AND MICRO-MOBILITY POLICY

Record Number: D26.127826

I, Councillor Tracy O'Halloran, give notice that at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held on 15 September 2026, I intend to move the following motion:

MOTION

That Balranald Shire Council:

1. Direct the General Manager to prepare a report exploring the development and implementation of a formal Balranald Shire E-Bike and Micro-Mobility Policy to protect pedestrian zones and regulate high-speed personal mobility devices on Council-managed pathways.
2. Direct staff to engage directly with local schools, youth groups, and community stakeholders to co-design a localised safety campaign, moving away from a strict compliance framework and instead positioning young riders as active partners in the solution.
3. Formally adopt and promote the micro-mobility safety code pioneered by the Northern Beaches Council taskforce: 'Slow down, ring the bell, and be ready for sudden change.'
4. Write to the NSW Minister for Roads and Transport requesting immediate legislative clarity regarding standardised legal definitions of e-bikes, enforceable minimum age limits, and the provision of localised regulatory powers to regional councils currently managing these emerging transport risks in a state-level policy vacuum.

RATIONALE**Background and Justification**

The rapid proliferation of motorised e-bikes and scooters is no longer an issue unique to metropolitan beaches; it is actively transforming public spaces in regional towns like Balranald.

As the Northern Beaches Council taskforce successfully argued, micro-mobility is strictly a safety issue, not an awareness or compliance issue. Modern road safety no longer begins with a licensed driver behind a wheel; it begins on our shared footpaths with young, unlicensed riders operating with heavy, accelerated equipment.

Currently, NSW local councils are caught in a regulatory vacuum. We bear the operational burden of keeping pedestrians safe on our footpaths, yet we lack clear legislative definitions and age limits from the State Government. By passing this motion, Balranald Shire Council will proactively protect our elderly and young pedestrians, establish a clear local safety code, and join state-level advocacy efforts to force the NSW Government to deliver enforceable micro-mobility laws.

I commend this Notice of Motion to Council.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

8.3 NOTICE OF MOTION - PLACE NAMING REGISTER

Record Number: D26.127827

I, Councillor Tracy O'Halloran, give notice that at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held on 15 September 2026, I intend to move the following motion:

MOTION

That Balranald Shire Council:

1. Establish a Phased Historical Asset and Place Naming Register to serve as the definitive repository for the names and cultural histories of all current and future streets, parks, and public infrastructure within the Shire.
2. Direct the General Manager to allocate existing staff resources to execute Phase 1 of this project, consisting of a comprehensive audit to document the origin stories and baseline gender representation of our current named assets.
3. Direct staff to initiate Phase 2, which mandates the proactive collection, research, and inclusion of histories of notable Balranald women and pioneers to build a dedicated database with a long-term 70% targeting framework for future civic naming opportunities.
4. Require staff to update the register annually by identifying and fully documenting at least one historically significant local woman to ensure the repository remains current and expanding.

RATIONALE**Background and Justification**

Data presented by Kerry Wilson from the 'Put Your Name On It' initiative highlights a stark national reality: women and gender-diverse individuals remain systematically unrepresented in Australia's public geography and public art.

Balranald Shire has been built on the backs of resilient, extraordinary women whose historical contributions remain largely anonymous. By adapting the best-practice model utilized by the City of Greater Geelong, Council can turn historical gaps into future opportunities.

This motion creates a structured, two-phase policy. We first honor and catalog the names we have, then intentionally build a culturally rich bank of women's names. When developers grid new subdivisions or when new public parks are created, Council will have an immediate, legally vetted, and historically significant register ready to deploy.

I commend this Notice of Motion to Council.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

9 NOTICE OF RESCISSION

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORTS (INCORPORATING ALL STAFF REPORTS)**PART A – ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION****10 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORTS****10.1 ELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR**

File Number:	D26.126864
Author(s):	Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 6: Our Leadership – A community that values and fosters leadership, lifelong learning, innovation and good governance.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To conduct the statutory mid-term election of the Mayor at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 15 September 2026, determine the term and election of the Deputy Mayor, and review Council's councillor representation on advisory committees, Council committees and external organisations.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note that section 290 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires Balranald Shire Council to conduct its mid-term Mayoral election during September 2026.
2. Note that, for the purposes of Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, the Chief Executive Officer, being Council's statutory General Manager, or a person appointed by the Chief Executive Officer, is the Returning Officer.
3. Receive nominations for the office of Mayor and note the Returning Officer's announcement of the valid nominees in accordance with Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.
4. Determine, if more than one valid nomination is received for Mayor, that the election be conducted by Ordinary Ballot, noting that:
 - a. An Ordinary Ballot is a secret ballot; and
 - b. Only Councillors physically present at the meeting may vote in an Ordinary Ballot.
5. Conduct the election of the Mayor in accordance with Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.
6. Resolve to elect a Deputy Mayor and that the Deputy Mayor hold office for the same term as the Mayor elected at this meeting.
7. Receive nominations for the office of Deputy Mayor and, if more than one valid nomination is received, determine that the election be conducted by Ordinary Ballot, noting that:
 - a. An Ordinary Ballot is a secret ballot; and
 - b. Only Councillors physically present at the meeting may vote in an Ordinary Ballot.

8. Conduct the election of the Deputy Mayor in accordance with Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.
9. Note that Council's current Councillor appointments to the Australia Day Committee, Euston Progressive Advisory Committee, Strengthening Community Access, Inclusion and Wellbeing Advisory Committee and Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Committee were made in July 2025 and remain current under the adopted two-year terms of membership, unless otherwise determined by Council.
10. Confirm, subject to any changes determined at this meeting, the following existing Councillor appointments:
 - Australia Day Committee; Cr Alison Linnett, Cr Dwaine Scott and Cr Phillip Pippin;
 - Euston Progressive Advisory Committee; Cr Leigh Byron and Cr Tracy O'Halloran;
 - Strengthening Community Access, Inclusion and Wellbeing Advisory Committee; Cr Tracy O'Halloran and Cr Alison Linnett;
 - Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Committee; Cr Iain Lindsay-Field and Cr German Ugarte; and
 - Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee; Cr Iain Lindsay-Field as the non-voting Councillor member.
11. Appoint or confirm Councillor delegates and representatives to the external organisations identified in Attachment 2 for the period from the September 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting until the September 2027 Ordinary Council Meeting, or for such other term as applies to the relevant organisation.
12. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a. Advise the Secretary, Office of Local Government and the Chief Executive of Local Government NSW of the results of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor elections;
 - b. Notify relevant external organisations of Council's appointed representatives;
 - c. Update Council's website, registers, correspondence templates and other governance records; and
 - d. Make minor administrative amendments to the representative schedule where the title or structure of an external organisation has changed, provided there is no change to the Councillor appointed by Council.

REPORT

Background

Balranald Shire Council's current Mayor and Deputy Mayor were elected following the September 2024 ordinary local government elections.

Council's four-year term has now reached its midpoint, and the current two-year Mayoral term is concluding.

Section 290(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires a Council that elects its Mayor from among the Councillors to conduct a mid-term Mayoral election during September.

The Office of Local Government issued Circular 26–15 – Elections for Mayors and elections for chairpersons of joint organisations and county councils on 19 August 2026,

confirming the requirement for councils such as Balranald Shire Council to conduct their mid-term Mayoral elections during September 2026.

It is therefore appropriate to conduct the election of the Mayor at Council's September 2026 Ordinary Meeting.

The election also provides an appropriate opportunity to elect the Deputy Mayor and review Council's representation on external organisations.

Election of Mayor

Section 230 of the *Local Government Act 1993* provides that a Mayor elected by the Councillors holds office for two years, subject to the provisions of the Act.

The Mayor elected at the September 2026 meeting will therefore hold office for the remainder of the current Council term, subject to any earlier vacancy arising under the Act.

Returning Officer

Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* governs the election of a Mayor by Councillors.

The General Manager, or a person appointed by the General Manager, is the Returning Officer.

For Balranald Shire Council, the Chief Executive Officer holds the statutory office and functions of General Manager and will act as Returning Officer unless another person is appointed for that purpose.

Nominations

A Councillor may be nominated for election as Mayor or Deputy Mayor without prior notice.

A valid nomination must:

- Be in writing;
- Be made by two or more Councillors, one of whom may be the nominee;
- Include the written consent of the nominee; and
- Be delivered or sent to the Returning Officer.

The Returning Officer must announce the names of the nominees at the meeting.

Nomination forms have been distributed to Councillors in advance of the meeting to assist with the orderly administration of the election.

Councillors have been asked, where practicable, to return completed nomination forms before the meeting. This is an administrative arrangement only and does not prevent a valid nomination being submitted later in accordance with Schedule 7.

Method of Election

Where there is only one valid nominee, that Councillor is elected.

Where there is more than one nominee, Council must resolve whether the election will proceed by:

- Preferential ballot;
- Ordinary ballot; or
- Open voting.

A preferential ballot and an ordinary ballot are both secret ballots.

Council used Ordinary Ballot for the election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor following the 2024 ordinary local government elections. There is no apparent reason to depart from that approach.

Ordinary Ballot is straightforward, well understood and provides an appropriate process for the election of civic office holders.

If there are more than two candidates and no candidate is elected on the first ballot, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is excluded, and further ballots are conducted in accordance with Schedule 7.

Where an equality of votes requires a candidate to be excluded or an election to be determined, the matter is decided by lot in accordance with Schedule 7.

Attendance in Person

Circular 26–15 confirms that **a Councillor must be physically present** at the meeting to vote in an election conducted by Ordinary Ballot or Preferential Ballot because both methods involve a secret ballot.

A Councillor attending the meeting by audio-visual link cannot cast a vote in an Ordinary or Preferential Ballot.

A Councillor attending remotely may participate in the election only where Council resolves to use open voting.

As the recommendation is that any contested election be conducted by Ordinary Ballot, Councillors wishing to vote in the election of the Mayor or Deputy Mayor will need to be physically present at the meeting.

Councillors have been advised of this requirement prior to the meeting (emailed by the CEO on 26/8/2026).

Declaration and Notification of Result

Following completion of the election, the Returning Officer will declare the successful candidate elected.

Council is then required to provide the relevant election result to the Secretary of the Office of Local Government and the Chief Executive of Local Government NSW.

The Chief Executive Officer will also arrange for Council's website, records and relevant external correspondence to be updated.

Deputy Mayor

Section 231 of the *Local Government Act 1993* provides that Council may elect one of its Councillors as Deputy Mayor.

Unlike the office of Mayor, the Act does not prescribe a mandatory two-year term for the Deputy Mayor.

Council may elect the Deputy Mayor for the same term as the Mayor or for a shorter term determined by resolution.

Circular 26–15 confirms that an election for Deputy Mayor should be conducted following expiry of the Deputy Mayor's term and will commonly occur at the same meeting as the mid-term Mayoral election.

For continuity and administrative simplicity, it is recommended that Council elect a Deputy Mayor for the same term as the Mayor elected at this meeting.

The election of Mayor will be completed first, followed by the election of Deputy Mayor.

Council Advisory Committees

In July 2025, Council appointed Councillor representatives to its revised advisory committee structure.

Council's adopted Advisory Committee Guidelines provide for committee membership generally to operate for a two-year period and for membership and Terms of Reference to be reviewed every two years, or earlier where Council determines otherwise.

Accordingly, the current Councillor appointments are not due to expire as part of the September 2026 Mayoral election process.

The current appointments are:

Committee	Councillor Representatives
Australia Day Committee	Cr Alison Linnett, Cr Dwaine Scott and Cr Phillip Pippin
Euston Progressive Advisory Committee	Cr Leigh Byron and Cr Tracy O'Halloran
Strengthening Community Access, Inclusion and Wellbeing Advisory Committee	Cr Tracy O'Halloran and Cr Alison Linnett
Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Committee	Cr Iain Lindsay-Field and Cr German Ugarte
Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee	Cr Iain Lindsay-Field: non-voting Councillor member

Council's Advisory Committee Guidelines also provide for the Mayor to participate as an ex officio member of Council's Advisory Committees.

It is therefore recommended that the current Councillor appointments be confirmed rather than unnecessarily terminated and remade midway through their terms.

Council retains the discretion to vary an appointment where a Councillor wishes to relinquish a position, or Council otherwise considers a change appropriate.

External Organisations and Regional Representation

It is good governance practice to periodically review Council's representatives on external organisations to ensure appointments remain current and relevant.

Attachment 2 provides the proposed Councillor Representation Schedule for 2026–2027.

Balranald Shire Council is now a member of the Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) following the Ministerial determination bringing Balranald into that Joint Organisation.

Council's representation schedule should therefore record RAMJO as Council's Joint Organisation and any historic references to the former Far Southwest Joint Organisation or RAMROC should no longer be included.

Where membership or representation attaches to the office of Mayor, it is preferable for the Council to appoint 'the Mayor' rather than an individual Councillor by name.

This avoids the need for Council to pass a further resolution solely because the holder of the Mayoral office changes.

The same principle may appropriately be applied to other external bodies where representation is clearly associated with the office of Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.

Attachment 2 identifies those appointments proposed for confirmation or determination by Council.

Joint Organisation Election Requirements

Circular 26–15 also deals with elections for chairpersons of Joint Organisations.

Those provisions apply to the election processes undertaken by the Joint Organisation itself and do not alter Balranald Shire Council's statutory process for electing its Mayor.

Balranald's membership of RAMJO is, however, relevant to Council's external representative schedule and will be reflected accordingly.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

There are no material financial implications associated with conducting the elections.

Normal Councillor travel and attendance expenses associated with approved external representation will continue to be managed within Council's adopted budget and its policy for payment of expenses and provision of facilities to the Mayor and Councillors.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Relevant legislation and guidance include:

- *Local Government Act 1993* – sections 227, 230, 231 and 290;
- *Local Government Act 1993* – sections 355 and 377 in relation to committees and delegations;
- *Local Government Act 1993* – section 428A in relation to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee;
- *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* – Schedule 7;
- Council's adopted Code of Meeting Practice; and
- Office of Local Government Circular 26–15 – *Elections for mayors and elections for chairpersons of joint organisations and county councils*.

POLICY IMPLICATION

Relevant Council policies and governance documents include:

- Code of Meeting Practice;
- Advisory Committee Guidelines and associated Terms of Reference;
- Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Terms of Reference; and
- Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Mayor and Councillors Policy.

RISK RATING

Low, provided the statutory mayoral election is conducted during September 2026 and in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* and Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.

Failure to conduct the mayoral election during September would create a statutory compliance risk.

There is also a procedural risk if a Councillor participating remotely seeks to vote in an Ordinary or Preferential Ballot. **Councillors have therefore been specifically advised that physical attendance is required to participate in a secret ballot.**

Maintaining an accurate and current register of Council's committee and external organisation representatives also reduces governance, communication and accountability risk.

ATTACHMENTS

1. **Nomination Form - Election of Mayor / Deputy Mayor** [!\[\]\(0f48f43ebd21f231a458c96216dbf4d1_img.jpg\)](#) 
2. **Attachment 2 - Councillor Representation - External Committees - 2026-2027** [!\[\]\(0a70dbd9915c9ea99c6f238a2c711f53_img.jpg\)](#) 

**BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL
ATTACHMENT 1****NOMINATION FOR ELECTION OF MAYOR / DEPUTY MAYOR
Ordinary Council Meeting – Tuesday, 15 September 2026**

Office nominated for: Mayor [] Deputy Mayor []

A separate nomination form should be completed for each office.

NOMINEE

We, the undersigned Councillors of Balranald Shire Council, nominate:

Cr _____ for election to the office indicated above.

NOMINATOR 1 Name: Cr _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____	NOMINATOR 2 Name: Cr _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____
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ADDITIONAL NOMINATOR – OPTIONAL

Name: Cr _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

CONSENT OF NOMINEE

I, Cr _____, consent to being nominated for election to the office indicated above.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

RETURNING OFFICER – OFFICE USE

Date received: _____	Time received: _____
Received by: _____	Nomination checked as valid: Yes [] No []

Nominees announced at Council meeting: Yes []

Note: Under Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, a councillor may be nominated without notice. A nomination must be in writing by two or more councillors, one of whom may be the nominee, and the nominee must indicate consent in writing.

**BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL
ATTACHMENT 2**

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION SCHEDULE 2026–2027

Organisation / Committee	Proposed 2026–27 Representation	Action	Current Representation
Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO)	Mayor and Chief Executive Officer, together with any other representation provided for under the RAMJO Charter or determined by Council	Confirm	Mayor & Chief Executive Officer
RAMROC	Mayor & Chief Executive Officer	Confirm	Mayor & Chief Executive Officer
Local Emergency Management Committee	Mayor and Chief Executive Officer/delegate	Confirm	Mayor & Chief Executive Officer
Local Traffic Forum	Mayor and Chief Executive Officer/delegate	Confirm	Mayor & Chief Executive Officer
Central Murray Regional Transport Forum	Mayor and Chief Executive Officer/delegate	Confirm	Quenten Graham (delegate)
Sturt Highway Taskforce	Mayor and Chief Executive Officer	Confirm	Mayor & Chief Executive Officer
Murray Darling Association – Region 4	Mayor and Chief Executive Officer/delegate	Confirm	Mayor & Chief Executive Officer
NSW Rural Fire Service / applicable Bush Fire Management Committee	Councillor and Chief Executive Officer/delegate	Confirm	Cr Dwaine Scott & Chief Executive Officer (or delegate)
Western Riverina Noxious Weeds	Council representative and/or Chief Executive Officer delegate as required	Confirm current representation	Cr Philip Pippin & Chief Executive Officer (or delegate)
Southwest Arts Inc.	Councillor representative	Appoint/confirm	Cr Tracy O'Halloran

Organisation / Committee	Proposed 2026–27 Representation	Action	Current Representation
Isolated Children's Parents' Association	Councillor representative	Appoint/confirm	Cr Alison Linnett
Local Land Services advisory representation	Councillor representative	Appoint/confirm	Cr Phillip Pippin Alternate Cr Tracy O'Halloran
NSW Public Libraries Association	Councillor and Chief Executive Officer/delegate	Appoint/confirm Councillor	Cr Alison Linnett & Chief Executive Officer (or delegate)
Willandra Lakes regional representation	Councillor representative	Appoint/confirm	Cr Tracy O'Halloran
EWAG			Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation

Balranald Shire Council is now a member of the Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) following the Ministerial determination bringing Council into the Joint Organisation.

Council's representation should therefore be recorded unequivocally as RAMJO representation. Any previous reference to the Far Southwest Joint Organisation, once the FSWJO is formally dissolved, should be removed from Council's councillor representation schedule.

Where the RAMJO Charter or applicable legislation provides that membership or voting representation attaches to the office of Mayor or Chief Executive Officer, the appointment should be recorded by office rather than by the individual officeholder. This avoids the need for Council to remake an appointment following a subsequent mayoral election or change of officeholder.

10.2 DATE AND TIME FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

File Number:	D26.126866
Author(s):	Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 6: Our Leadership – A community that values and fosters leadership, lifelong learning, innovation and good governance.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To determine the dates, times and location of Council's Ordinary Meetings for the period October 2026 to September 2027.

Section 365 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires Council to meet at least 10 times each year, each time in a different month. Council's Code of Meeting Practice provides that Council is to determine, by resolution, the frequency, time, date and place of its Ordinary Meetings.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Pursuant to section 365 of the Local Government Act 1993 and Council's Code of Meeting Practice, determine that Ordinary Meetings of Council for the period October 2026 to September 2027 be held at 4.00pm in the Balranald Council Chambers on the following dates:

Date	Time	Location
Tuesday, 20 October 2026	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers
Tuesday, 17 November 2026	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers
Tuesday, 15 December 2026	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers
Tuesday, 16 February 2027	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers
Tuesday, 16 March 2027	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers
Tuesday, 20 April 2027	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers
Tuesday, 18 May 2027	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers
Tuesday 22 June 2027	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers
Tuesday, 20 July 2027	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers
Tuesday, 17 August 2027	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers
Tuesday, 21 September 2027	4pm	Balranald Council Chambers

2. Pursuant to section 9 of the Local Government Act 1993 and Council's Code of Meeting Practice, give public notice of the adopted schedule of Ordinary Meetings.

REPORT

Section 365 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires Council to meet at least 10 times each year, with each meeting occurring in a different month.

Council's Code of Meeting Practice provides that Council is to determine, by resolution, the frequency, time, date and place of its Ordinary Meetings and requires public notice to be given of the time, date and place of those meetings.

Council's current practice is to hold its Ordinary Meeting on the third Tuesday of each month commencing at 4.00 pm, with no Ordinary Meeting ordinarily scheduled in January. The proposed schedule generally continues that arrangement. The existing report records the third-Tuesday, 4.00 pm meeting arrangement.

The proposed meeting dates have been checked against the NSW public holiday calendar, and none falls on a public holiday.

The June 2027 Ordinary Meeting is proposed to be held on Tuesday, 22 June 2027, rather than the usual third Tuesday of the month.

There are two practical reasons for this change.

Firstly, the King's Birthday public holiday falls on Monday, 14 June 2027. Moving the Ordinary Meeting to 22 June avoids holding Council's meeting immediately following the long weekend.

More importantly, Council's draft 2027–28 Operational Plan and Budget is likely to be presented to the Ordinary Meeting on 18 May 2027 for public exhibition.

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires the draft Operational Plan to be publicly exhibited for not less than 28 days, with Council required to consider submissions received during the exhibition period before adopting the final Plan.

Holding the June Ordinary Meeting on 22 June 2027 allows the full statutory exhibition period to occur and provides sufficient time for submissions to be received, assessed and reported back to Council before it considers adoption of the 2027–28 Operational Plan and Budget.

The later June meeting also provides a more practical timetable for finalising the Operational Plan and Budget before the commencement of the new financial year on 1 July 2027.

The remaining proposed meeting dates follow Council's normal third-Tuesday arrangement.

The proposed schedule satisfies the requirement under section 365 of the *Local Government Act 1993* for Council to meet at least 10 times in different months.

All Ordinary Meetings will be livestreamed in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

Additional Extraordinary Meetings may be called throughout the year where required and will be advertised in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* and Council's Code of Meeting Practice. This continues the approach identified in the existing report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Nil

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Local Government Act 1993

- Section 9 – Public notice of meetings
- Section 365 – Frequency of Council meetings
- Section 405 – Operational Plan and public exhibition requirements

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

POLICY IMPLICATION

Model Code of Meeting Practice

RISK RATING

Low

Adoption of the annual meeting schedule provides certainty for councillors, staff and the community and assists Council in meeting its statutory meeting requirements.

Scheduling the June 2027 Ordinary Meeting for 22 June also provides an appropriate timeframe for the statutory public exhibition of Council's draft 2027–28 Operational Plan and Budget, consideration of submissions and adoption of the final documents before the commencement of the new financial year.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

10.3 ORDER OF BUSINESS AND CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE AMENDMENT

File Number:	D26.126865
Author(s):	Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 6: Our Leadership – A community that values and fosters leadership, lifelong learning, innovation and good governance.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To clarify Council's General Order of Business and seek Council endorsement of an amendment to Part 8 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice to ensure the Code reflects the order of business used by Balranald Shire Council.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

That Council:

1. Notes that the 2021 Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW is presently the prescribed Model Code of Meeting Practice and is supplemented by the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, including the amendments made by the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Meetings) Regulation 2026*;
2. Endorses the proposed amendment to Part 8: Order of Business for Ordinary Council Meetings, as detailed in this report, for the purposes of public exhibition;
3. Places the draft amended Code of Meeting Practice on public exhibition for a period of not less than 28 days and invites public submissions for a period of not less than 42 days from the date the draft Code is placed on public exhibition, in accordance with section 361 of the *Local Government Act 1993*;
4. Receives a further report following the conclusion of the public submission period to consider any submissions received and determine whether to adopt the amended Code of Meeting Practice in accordance with section 362 of the *Local Government Act 1993*;
5. Notes that until the amended Code is formally adopted, Council's existing Code of Meeting Practice remains in force and any alteration of the order of business for a particular meeting is to be made in accordance with clause 8.3 of that Code; and
6. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to make minor administrative, formatting and cross-referencing amendments to the draft Code before exhibition, provided those amendments do not alter the substance of the proposed Code or any mandatory statutory provision.

REPORT

Council's existing Code of Meeting Practice is based on the 2021 Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW.

Council had adopted a Code based on the 2025 Model Code of Meeting Practice in December 2025 and subsequently amended the General Order of Business in March 2026. Following the disallowance of the regulation prescribing the 2025 Model Code, Council took steps in June 2026 to restore its previous Code based on the 2021 Model Code.

The Office of Local Government has confirmed that the 2021 Model Code is presently the prescribed Model Code of Meeting Practice for NSW councils.

The 2021 Model Code provides two alternative approaches to determining the General Order of Business. Council's reinstated Code does not use clause 8.1, under which the order is simply fixed by resolution. Instead, Council adopted the alternative provision under clause 8.2, which specifies the General Order of Business within the Code itself.

The order presently contained in the reinstated Code is the generic 11-item order contained in the 2021 Model Code. This does not accurately reflect Balranald Shire Council's established meeting format.

Council's business papers have for some time used an expanded order which separately identifies Notices of Motion, Notices of Rescission, reports requiring a decision, reports for information and Questions on Notice. The amended Code considered by Council in March 2026 similarly provided for a 14-item General Order of Business.

It is therefore appropriate to amend Part 8 of Council's current Code so that the Code and Council's actual meeting practice are again aligned.

The proposed amendment does not seek to change the substantive rules governing the conduct of Council meetings. It principally restores the practical General Order of Business already familiar to Councillors, staff and the community.

Proposed replacement Part 8

It is proposed that Part 8 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice be replaced with the following:

8. ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

8.1

Not adopted.

Council has adopted clause 8.2 as the provision determining the General Order of Business for Ordinary Meetings of Council.

8.2

The General Order of Business for an Ordinary Meeting of Council shall be:

1. Opening of Meeting
2. Prayer & Acknowledgement of Country
3. Apologies and applications for a leave of absence or attendance by audio-visual link by Councillors
4. Confirmation of Minutes
5. Disclosures of Interests
6. Mayoral/Councillor Report
7. Committee Reports
8. Notices of Motion
9. Notices of Rescission
10. Chief Executive Officer's Reports – Items Requiring Decision
11. Chief Executive Officer's Reports – Items for Information

12. Questions on Notice
13. Confidential Matters
14. Closure of Meeting

8.3

The order of business fixed under clause 8.2 may be altered for a particular meeting of Council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion may be moved without notice.

Note: If adopted, Part 13 allows Council to deal with items of business by exception.

8.4

Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.3 may speak to the motion before it is put.

The proposed clause retains the structure of clauses 8.2–8.4 of the 2021 Model Code while adapting the actual order of business to meet Balranald Shire Council's operational requirements, as the Model Code permits.

The wording under item 3 has deliberately retained the full Model Code reference to applications for leave of absence and attendance by audio-visual link rather than simply using the heading 'Apologies'.

The terminology Chief Executive Officer's Reports has also been retained to reflect Council's current organisational terminology rather than the 'General Manager Reports' appearing in the original draft report. The original report currently proposes the latter terminology.

Statutory process

Section 360 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires Council meetings to be conducted in accordance with Council's adopted Code of Meeting Practice.

Sections 361–363 prescribe the process for adopting and amending a Code. In particular, a proposed amended Code must be publicly exhibited for at least 28 days, and the community must be given at least 42 days from the commencement of exhibition in which to make submissions. A Code may only be amended by means of a Code adopted in accordance with that process.

Accordingly, Council cannot give immediate permanent effect to the proposed amendment by an ordinary resolution at this meeting. The existing Code will continue to operate until the statutory exhibition and adoption process has been completed.

The *Local Government (General) Amendment (Meetings) Regulation 2026* also now supplements the reinstated 2021 Model Code. Among other matters, it imposes requirements relating to livestreaming, councillor briefings, written responses to requests for information and powers relating to disorder at meetings. The Office of Local Government has advised that these regulatory provisions apply automatically and prevail over any inconsistent provision in a council's existing Code.

The consolidated draft Code placed on public exhibition should therefore identify the 2021 Model Code as its base document, incorporate Council's proposed amended Part 8 and be read consistently with all mandatory provisions of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* currently in for

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Nil, other than minor administrative costs associated with public exhibition.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Local Government Act 1993, particularly sections 360–364.

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

Local Government (General) Amendment (Meetings) Regulation 2026.

2021 Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW, as presently prescribed

POLICY IMPLICATION

Council's Code of Meeting Practice will require amendment following the statutory public exhibition and submission process.

Until the amended Code is formally adopted, Council's existing Code of Meeting Practice remains in force.

RISK RATING

Low, provided the statutory exhibition and adoption process is followed.

Failure to align Council's published meeting procedures with its adopted Code creates an avoidable governance and procedural risk.

ATTACHMENTS

1. **Draft Code of Meeting Practice - Tracked Changes** [↓](#) 
2. **Draft Code of Meeting Practice - Clean Copy** [↓](#) 

BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL

CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

Draft consolidated code - tracked changes

Status	Draft for public exhibition - proposed Version 4
Baseline	Version 3 adopted 16 June 2026, Minute 2026/127
Model Code base	2021 Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW
2026 statutory update	Local Government (General) Amendment (Meetings) Regulation 2026
Controller	Chief Executive Officer (General Manager for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1993)
Review	As required by the Local Government Act 1993 or earlier if legislation changes

[Drafting note: This consolidated draft is shown against Council's Version 3 Code adopted on 16 June 2026.](#)
[Tracked changes identify the substantive amendments proposed to incorporate the June 2026 statutory meeting reforms and Balranald Shire Council's local order of business. Formatting and consolidation changes are not intended to alter the legal effect of unchanged provisions.](#)

[This draft does not replace Council's currently adopted Code unless and until Council completes the statutory public exhibition and adoption process required by the Local Government Act 1993.](#)

Purpose and legislative basis

The Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (Model Meeting Code) is prescribed under section 360 of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation).

[The currently prescribed Model Meeting Code is the 2021 Model Code. It is supplemented by the Local Government \(General\) Amendment \(Meetings\) Regulation 2026. To the extent of any inconsistency, the Act and Regulation prevail over this Code.](#)

Scope

[The Model Meeting Code applies to all meetings of councils and committees of councils of which members consist of Administrator/councillors and staff.](#)

[This Code applies to meetings of Balranald Shire Council and to committees of Council whose members are all councillors. A Council committee whose members include persons other than councillors may adopt its own meeting rules unless Council determines otherwise.](#)

Council must conduct meetings in accordance with this Code. Mandatory provisions of the prescribed Model Meeting Code and the Regulation apply and cannot be displaced by a supplementary Council provision.

Summary of substantive amendments

Part	Change	Reason
3	Remove private pre-meeting briefing provisions and insert written-information / staff-contact rules.	2026 Amendment Regulation / OLG Circular 26-09.
5	Require audio-visual livestreaming and longer online retention of recordings.	2026 Amendment Regulation / OLG Circular 26-09.
8	Insert Balranald's 14-item general Order of Business.	Local operational requirement within clause 8.2 framework.
14	Replace "webcast" terminology with "livestreamed".	Consequential alignment with Part 5.
15	Update acts of disorder, expulsion authorisation and successive-meeting consequences.	2026 Amendment Regulation / current Regulation.
22	Add local CEO/General Manager definition and livestream definition.	Clarity and consequential alignment.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Meeting Principles
3. Before the Meeting
4. Public Forums
5. Coming Together
6. The Chairperson
7. Modes of Address
8. Order of Business for Ordinary Council Meetings
9. Consideration of Business at Council Meetings
10. Rules of Debate
11. Voting
12. Committee of the Whole
13. Dealing with Items by Exception
14. Closure of Council Meetings to the Public
15. Keeping Order at Meetings
16. Conflicts of Interest
17. Decisions of the Council
18. Time Limits on Council Meetings
19. After the Meeting
20. Council Committees
21. Irregularities
22. Definitions

1 Introduction

This Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Meeting Code) is prescribed under section 360 of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation).

The Model Meeting Code applies to all meetings of councils and committees of councils of which all the members are councillors (committees of council). Council committees whose members include persons other than councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the council determines otherwise.

Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code.

A council's adopted code of meeting practice may also incorporate the non-mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code and other supplementary provisions. However, a code of meeting practice adopted by a council must not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of this Model Meeting Code.

The provisions of the Model Meeting Code that are not mandatory are indicated in red font.

A council and a committee of the council of which all the members are councillors must conduct its meetings in accordance with the code of meeting practice adopted by the council.

The Model Meeting Code also applies to meetings of the boards of joint organisations and county councils. The provisions that are specific to meetings of boards of joint organisations are indicated in blue font.

In adopting the Model Meeting Code, joint organisations should adapt it to substitute the terms "board" for "council", "chairperson" for "mayor", "voting representative" for "councillor" and "executive officer" for "general manager".

In adopting the Model Meeting Code, county councils should adapt it to substitute the term "chairperson" for "mayor" and "member" for "councillor".

2 Meeting Principles

2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

Transparent: Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.

Informed: Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.

Inclusive: Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.

Principled: Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.

Trusted: The community has confidence that councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.

Respectful: Councillors, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.

Effective: Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.

Orderly: Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

3 Before the Meeting

Timing of ordinary council meetings

3.1 [Not adopted]

3.2 The council shall, by resolution, set the frequency, time, date and place of its ordinary meetings.

Note: Councils must use either clause 3.1 or 3.2.

Note: Under section 365 of the Act, councils are required to meet at least ten (10) times each year, each time in a different month unless the Minister for Local Government has approved a reduction in the number of times that a council is required to meet each year under section 365A.

Note: Under section 396 of the Act, county councils are required to meet at least four (4) times each year.

Note: Under section 400T of the Act, boards of joint organisations are required to meet at least four (4) times each year, each in a different quarter of the year.

Extraordinary meetings

3.3 If the mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) councillors, the mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The mayor can be one of the two councillors requesting the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.3 reflects section 366 of the Act.

Notice to the public of council meetings

3.4 The council must give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings and of each meeting of committees of the council.

Note: Clause 3.4 reflects section 9(1) of the Act.

3.5 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of a meeting of the council and of a committee of council is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the council's website, and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

3.6 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to councillors of ordinary council meetings

3.7 The general manager must send to each councillor, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the council, a notice specifying the time, date and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.7 reflects section 367(1) of the Act.

3.8 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to councillors in electronic form, but only if all councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda and business papers in that form.

Note: Clause 3.8 reflects section 367(3) of the Act.

Notice to councillors of extraordinary meetings

3.9 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to councillors of an extraordinary meeting of the council in cases of emergency.

Note: Clause 3.9 reflects section 367(2) of the Act.

Giving notice of business to be considered at council meetings

3.10 A councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted 5 business days before the meeting is to be held.

3.11 A councillor may, in writing to the general manager, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.

3.12 If the general manager considers that a notice of motion submitted by a councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the council has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the general manager may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council.

3.13 A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the general manager must either:

- (a) prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council, or
- (b) by written notice sent to all councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

Questions with notice

3.14 A councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.10, ask a question for response by the general manager about the performance or operations of the council.

3.15 A councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.14 that comprises a complaint against the general manager or a member of staff of the council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the general manager or a member of staff of the council.

3.16 The general manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.14 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the council or orally at the meeting.

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

3.17 The general manager must cause the agenda for a meeting of the council or a committee of the council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.

3.18 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the council states:

- (a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the council, and
- (b) if the mayor is the chairperson – any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and
- (c) all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and
- (d) any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.10.

3.19 Nothing in clause 3.18 limits the powers of the mayor to put a mayoral minute to a meeting under clause 9.6.

3.20 The general manager must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the council any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the general manager, the business is, or the

implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The general manager must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the council.

3.21 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to take place when

the meeting is closed to the public, the general manager must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:

- (a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and
- (b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.

Note: Clause 3.21 reflects section 9(2A) (a) of the Act.

3.22 The general manager must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public and must not be disclosed by a councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

Statement of ethical obligations

3.23 Business papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the council and committees of the council must contain a statement reminding councillors of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the council's code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public

3.24 Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the council and committees of council, are to be published on the council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the council.

Note: Clause 3.24 reflects section 9(2) and (4) of the Act.

3.25 Clause 3.24 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the general manager has identified under clause 3.21 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 3.25 reflects section 9(2A) (b) of the Act.

3.26 For the purposes of clause 3.24, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to councillors.

Note: Clause 3.26 reflects section 9(3) of the Act.

3.27 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.24, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

Note: Clause 3.27 reflects section 9(5) of the Act.

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

3.28 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.

3.29 Despite clause 3.28, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the council, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if:

- (a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
- (b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

3.30 A motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.

3.31 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

3.32 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.29(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

Pre-meeting briefing sessions

3.33 Prior to each ordinary meeting of the council, the general manager may arrange a pre-meeting briefing session to brief councillors on business to be considered at the meeting. Pre-meeting briefing sessions may also be held for extraordinary meetings of the council and meetings of committees of the council.

3.34 Pre-meeting briefing sessions are to be held in the absence of the public.

3.35 Pre-meeting briefing sessions may be held by audio-visual link.

3.36 The general manager or a member of staff nominated by the general manager is to preside at pre-meeting briefing sessions.

3.37 Councillors must not use pre-meeting briefing sessions to debate or make preliminary decisions on items of business they are being briefed on, and any debate and decision-making must be left to the formal council or committee meeting at which the item of business is to be considered.

3.38 Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of a briefing at a pre-meeting briefing session, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at pre-meeting briefing sessions and how the conflict of interest was managed by the councillor who made the declaration.

Councillor requests for information and pre-meeting contact with staff

3.33 A councillor, other than the mayor or the chairperson of a meeting, must not meet with council staff before a meeting of the council or a committee of the council to discuss a matter that is, or will be, listed on the agenda for the meeting.

3.34 Clause 3.33 does not prevent a councillor from asking council staff questions or seeking further information about an item on the agenda for a meeting.

3.35 Information provided to a councillor in response to a request under clause 3.34 must be provided in writing and, if practicable, published on Council's website before the meeting, unless the information relates to a matter that is confidential under section 10A of the Act.

3.36 The mayor and the chairperson of a meeting are not subject to the prohibition in clause 3.33.

3.37 Nothing in clauses 3.33–3.36 permits councillors to debate, negotiate or make preliminary decisions on matters outside a properly constituted meeting. Council decisions must be made by resolution at a meeting of Council or a committee exercising delegated authority.

4 Public Forums

4.1 The council may hold a public forum prior to each ordinary meeting of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public forums may also be held prior to extraordinary council meetings and meetings of committees of the council.

4.2 Public forums may be held by audio-visual link.

Public forums are to be chaired by the mayor or their nominee.

4.3

4.4 To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications to speak at the public forum must be received by 1 business day before the date on which the public forum is to be held, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.

4.5 [Not adopted]

4.6 Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak at a public forum unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the public forum.

4.7 The general manager or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

4.8 No more than 2 speakers are to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the council meeting.

4.9 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to address the council on the item of business. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to address the council, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will address the council at the public forum.

If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the mayor or the mayor's nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business.

4.10

Approved speakers at the public forum are to register with the council any written, visual or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the council at the public forum, and to identify any equipment needs no more than 1 day before the public forum. The general manager or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented.

4.11

The general manager or their delegate is to determine the order of speakers at the public forum.

4.12 Each speaker will be allowed 5 minutes to address the council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson.

4.13

4.14 Speakers at public forums must not digress from the item on the agenda of the council meeting they have applied to address the council on. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

4.15 A councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a public forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.

- 4.16 Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question put under clause 4.15. Answers by the speaker, to each question are to be limited to 2 minutes.
- 4.17 Speakers at public forums cannot ask questions of the council, councillors, or council staff.
- 4.18 The general manager or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the council for up to 5 minutes in response to an address to the council at a public forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.
- 4.19 Where an address made at a public forum raises matters that require further consideration by council staff, the general manager may recommend that the council defer consideration of the matter pending the preparation of a further report on the matters.
- 4.20 When addressing the council, speakers at public forums must comply with this code and all other relevant council codes, policies, and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the council's code of conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.
- 4.21 If the chairperson considers that a speaker at a public forum has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the chairperson may request the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's request, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.
- 4.22 Clause 4.21 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers at public forums in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this code.
- 4.23 Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the general manager or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums for such a period as the general manager or their delegate considers appropriate.
- 4.24 Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an address at a public forum, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at public forums and how the conflict of interest was managed by the councillor who made the declaration.

Note: Public forums should not be held as part of a council or committee meeting. Council or committee meetings should be reserved for decision-making by the council or committee of council. Where a public forum is held as part of a council or committee meeting, it must be conducted in accordance with the other requirements of this code relating to the conduct of council and committee meetings.

5 Coming Together

Attendance by councillors at meetings

5.1 All councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the council and of committees of the council of which they are members.

Note: A councillor may not attend a meeting as a councillor (other than the first meeting of the council after the councillor is elected or a meeting at which the councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

5.2 A councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the council or of a committee of the council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this code.

5.3 The board of the joint organisation may, if it thinks fit, transact any of its business at a meeting at which representatives (or some representatives) participate by telephone or other electronic means, but only if any representative who speaks on a matter before the meeting can be heard by the other representatives. For the purposes of a meeting held in accordance with this clause, the chairperson and each other voting representative on the board have the same voting rights as they have at an ordinary meeting of the board.

Note: Clause 5.3 reflects section 397G of the Regulation. Joint organisations may adopt clause 5.3 and omit clause 5.2. Councils must not adopt clause 5.3.

5.4 Where a councillor is unable to attend one or more ordinary meetings of the council, the councillor should request that the council grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. This clause does not prevent a councillor from making

an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However, the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this code and the Act.

5.5 A councillor's request for leave of absence from council meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the councillor intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.

5.6 The council must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a councillor's request for a leave of absence.

5.7 A councillor's civic office will become vacant if the councillor is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the council without prior leave of the council, or leave granted by the council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.

Note: Clause 5.7 reflects section 234(1) (d) of the Act.

5.8 A councillor who intends to attend a meeting of the council despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the general manager at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.

The quorum for a meeting

5.9 The quorum for a meeting of the council is a majority of the councillors of the council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.

Note: Clause 5.9 reflects section 368(1) of the Act.

5.10 Clause 5.9 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the council.

Note: Clause 5.10 reflects section 368(2) of the Act.

5.11 A meeting of the council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:

- (a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or

- (b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or
- (c) at any time during the meeting.

5.12 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date, and place fixed:

- (a) by the chairperson, or
- (b) in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the councillors present, or
- (c) failing that, by the general manager.

5.13 The general manager must record in the council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the council, together with the names of the councillors present.

5.14 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health, safety or welfare of councillors, council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency, the mayor may, in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each

councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the council's website and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.

5.15 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.14, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the council or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.3.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

5.16 A meeting of the council or a committee of the council may be held by audio-visual link where the mayor determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The mayor may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of councillors and staff at risk. The mayor must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor.

5.17 Where the mayor determines under clause 5.16 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the general manager must:

- (a) give written notice to all councillors that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and
- (b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that all councillors can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link, and
- (c) cause a notice to be published on the council's website and in such other manner the general manager is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.

5.18 This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.16 in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a council holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.16, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting.

Attendance by councillors at meetings by audio-visual link

5.19 Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual link with the approval of the council or the relevant committee.

5.20 A request by a councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the general manager prior to the meeting in question and must provide reasons why the councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.

5.21 Councillors may request approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link. Where a councillor requests approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link, the request must specify the meetings the request relates to in addition to the information required under clause 5.20.

5.22 The council must comply with the Health Privacy Principles prescribed under the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 when collecting, holding, using and disclosing health information in connection with a request by a councillor to attend a meeting by audio-visual link.

5.23 A councillor who has requested approval to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link may participate in the meeting by audio-visual link until the council or committee determines whether to approve their request and is to be taken as present at the meeting. The councillor may participate in a decision in relation to their request to attend the meeting by audio-visual link.

5.24 A decision whether to approve a request by a councillor to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link must be made by a resolution of the council or the committee concerned. The resolution must state:

- (a) the meetings the resolution applies to, and
- (b) the reason why the councillor is being permitted to attend the meetings by audio-visual link where it is on grounds other than illness, disability, or caring responsibilities.

5.25 If the council or committee refuses a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.

5.26 A decision whether to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link is at the council's or the relevant committee's discretion. The council and committees of the council must act reasonably when considering requests by councillors to attend meetings by audio-visual link. However, the council and committees of the council are under no obligation to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-

visual link where the technical capacity does not exist to allow the councillor to attend the meeting by these means.

5.27 The council and committees of the council may refuse a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the council or committee is satisfied that the councillor has failed to appropriately declare and manage conflicts of interest, observe confidentiality, or to comply with this code on one or more previous occasions they have attended a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link.

5.28 This code applies to a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the councillor was attending the meeting in person. Where a councillor is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.

5.29 A councillor must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The councillor's camera must be on at all times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this code.

5.30 A councillor must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.

Entitlement of the public to attend council meetings

5.31 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the council and committees of the council. The council must ensure that all meetings of the council and committees of the council are open to the public.

Note: Clause 5.31 reflects section 10(1) of the Act.

5.32 Clause 5.31 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

5.33 A person (whether a councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council if expelled from the meeting:

- (a) by a resolution of the meeting, or
- (b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

Note: Clause 5.33 reflects section 10(2) of the Act.

Note: If adopted, clauses 15.14 and 15.15 confer a standing authorisation on all chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council to expel persons from meetings. If adopted, clause 15.14 authorises chairpersons to expel any person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting. Alternatively, if adopted, clause 15.15 authorises chairpersons to expel persons other than councillors from a council or committee meeting.

Webcasting of meetings

~~5.34 Each meeting of the council or a committee of the council is to be recorded by means of an audio or audio-visual device.~~

~~5.35 At the start of each meeting of the council or a committee of the council, the chairperson must inform the persons attending the meeting that: (a) the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on the council's website, and (b) persons attending the meeting should refrain from making any defamatory statements.~~

~~5.36 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website: (a) at the same time as the meeting is taking place, or (b) as soon as practicable after the meeting.~~

~~5.37 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website for at least 12 months after the meeting.~~

~~5.38 Clauses 5.36 and 5.37 do not apply to any part of a meeting that has been closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act.~~

~~*Note: Clauses 5.34–5.38 reflect section 236 of the Regulation.*~~

Livestreaming and recording of meetings

5.34 Each meeting of the council and each meeting of a committee of the council whose members are all councillors must be recorded by means of an audio-visual device and livestreamed on Council's website at the same time as the meeting is taking place.

5.35 At the start of each meeting referred to in clause 5.34, the chairperson must inform persons attending the meeting that: (a) the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on Council's website, and (b) persons attending the meeting should refrain from making defamatory statements.

5.36 The audio-visual recording of a meeting must remain publicly available on Council's website until the later of: (a) the day that is 12 months after the meeting, or (b) the day the Council's term ends.

5.37 Clauses 5.34–5.36 do not apply to any part of a meeting that has been closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act.

5.38 For the purposes of clauses 5.34–5.37, a committee of the council means a committee of which all members are councillors.

Note: Clauses 5.34–5.37 reflect section 236 of the Regulation as amended in 2026.

5.39 Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the State Records Act 1998 after applicable statutory and records-management retention requirements have been met.

Attendance of the general manager and other staff at meetings

5.40 The general manager is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee of the council of which all of the members are councillors.

Note: Clause 5.40 reflects section 376(1) of the Act.

5.41 The general manager is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the council and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.

Note: Clause 5.41 reflects section 376(2) of the Act.

5.42 The general manager may be excluded from a meeting of the council or a committee while the council or committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the general manager or the terms of employment of the general manager.

Note: Clause 5.42 reflects section 376(3) of the Act.

5.43 The attendance of other council staff at a meeting (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

5.44 The general manager and other council staff may attend meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual link. Attendance by council staff at meetings by audio-visual link (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

6 The Chairperson

The chairperson at meetings

6.1 The mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the mayor, the deputy mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the council.

Note: Clause 6.1 reflects section 369(1) of the Act.

6.2 If the mayor and the deputy mayor (if any) are absent, a councillor elected to chair the meeting by the councillors present presides at a meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 6.2 reflects section 369(2) of the Act.

Election of the chairperson in the absence of the mayor and deputy mayor

6.3 If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting.

6.4 The election of a chairperson must be conducted:

- (a) by the general manager or, in their absence, an employee of the council designated by the general manager to conduct the election, or
- (b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the general manager nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no general manager or designated employee.

6.5 If, at an election of a chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.

6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:

- (a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and
- (b) then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.

6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.

6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to have precedence

6.9 When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the council:

- (a) any councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and
- (b) every councillor present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

7 Modes of Address

7.1 If the chairperson is the mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' or 'Madam Mayor'.

7.2 Where the chairperson is not the mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson'.

7.3 A councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.

7.4 A council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms [surname].

8 Order of Business for Ordinary Council Meetings

8.1 [Not adopted]

~~8.2 The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of the council shall be: [councils may adapt the following order of business to meet their needs]~~

- ~~01 Opening meeting~~
- ~~02 Acknowledgement of country~~
- ~~03 Apologies and applications for a leave of absence or attendance by audio-visual link by councillors~~
- ~~04 Confirmation of minutes~~
- ~~05 Disclosures of interests~~
- ~~06 Mayoral minute(s)~~
- ~~07 Reports of committees~~
- ~~08 Reports to council~~
- ~~09 Notices of motions/Questions with notice~~
- ~~10 Confidential matters~~
- ~~11 Conclusion of the meeting~~

8.2 The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of Council shall be:

- 1. Opening of Meeting
- 2. Prayer & Acknowledgement of Country
- 3. Apologies and applications for a leave of absence or attendance by audio-visual link by Councillors
- 4. Confirmation of Minutes
- 5. Disclosures of Interests
- 6. Mayoral/Councillor Report
- 7. Committee Reports
- 8. Notices of Motion
- 9. Notices of Rescission
- 10. Chief Executive Officer's Reports – Items Requiring Decision
- 11. Chief Executive Officer's Reports – Items for Information
- 12. Questions on Notice
- 13. Confidential Matters
- 14. Closure of Meeting

Note: Council has adopted clause 8.2 instead of clause 8.1. The order in clause 8.2 is adapted to reflect Balranald Shire Council's meeting structure.

8.3 The order of business fixed under clause 8.2 may be altered for a particular meeting of the council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.

Note: Part 13 allows Council to deal with items of business by exception.

8.4 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.3 may speak to the motion before it is put.

9 Consideration of Business at Council Meetings

Business that can be dealt with at a council meeting

9.1 The council must not consider business at a meeting of the council:

- (a) unless a councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.10, and
- (b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the councillors in accordance with clause 3.7 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.9 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.

9.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:

- (a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the council, or
- (b) is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or
- (c) subject to clause 9.9, is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a mayoral minute, or
- (d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee, including, but not limited to, a committee of the council.

9.3 Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the councillors if:

- (a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
- (b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

9.4 A motion moved under clause 9.3(a) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

9.5 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 9.3(b).

Mayoral minutes

9.6 Subject to clause 9.9, if the mayor is the chairperson at a meeting of the council, the mayor may, by minute signed by the mayor, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the council, or of which the council has official knowledge.

9.7 A mayoral minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the council's agenda for the meeting. The chairperson (but only if the chairperson is the mayor) may move the adoption of a mayoral minute without the motion being seconded.

9.8 A recommendation made in a mayoral minute put by the mayor is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

9.9 A mayoral minute must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

9.10 Where a mayoral minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan, it must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation. If the mayoral minute does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

Staff reports

9.11 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

Reports of committees of council

9.12 The recommendations of a committee of the council are, so far as they are adopted by the council, resolutions of the council.

9.13 If in a report of a committee of the council distinct recommendations are made, the council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

9.14 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.10 and 3.14.

9.15 A councillor may, through the chairperson, put a question to another councillor about a matter on the agenda.

9.16 A councillor may, through the general manager, put a question to a council employee about a matter on the agenda. Council employees are only obliged to

answer a question put to them through the general manager at the direction of the general manager.

9.17 A councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the council.

9.18 Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.

9.19 The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a councillor or council employee.

10 Rules of Debate

Motions to be seconded

10.1 Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of motion

10.2 A councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.

10.3 If a councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to councillors, the councillor may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the council.

10.4 In the absence of a councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the council:

- (a) any other councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or
- (b) the chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the council.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

10.5 It is the duty of the chairperson at a meeting of the council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.

10.6 The chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.

10.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.

10.8 Any motion, amendment, or other matter that the chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

Motions requiring the expenditure of funds

10.9 A motion or an amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/ or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

Amendments to motions

10.10 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.

10.11 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the chairperson.

10.12 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.

10.13 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before council at any one time.

10.14 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.

10.15 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.

10.16 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the councillor who moved the original motion.

Foreshadowed motions

10.17 A councillor may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the council, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.

10.18 Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a councillor may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the council at any time. However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.

10.19 Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.

Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

10.20 A councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.

10.21 A councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.

10.22 A councillor must not, without the consent of the council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.

10.23 Despite clause 10.22, the chairperson may permit a councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.

10.24 Despite clause 10.22, the council may resolve to shorten the duration of speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.

10.25 Despite clauses 10.20 and 10.21, a councillor may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:

- (a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or
- (b) if at least two (2) councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) councillors have spoken against it.

10.26 The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.25. A seconder is not required for such a motion.

10.27 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.20.

10.28 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.

10.29 All councillors must be heard without interruption and all other councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another councillor is speaking.

10.30 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.

Participation by non-voting representatives in joint organisation board meetings

10.31 Non-voting representatives of joint organisation boards may speak on but must not move, second or vote on any motion or an amendment to a motion.

Note: Under section 400T(1)(c) of the Act, non-voting representatives of joint organisation boards may attend but are not entitled to vote at a meeting of the board.

Note: Joint organisations must adopt clause 10.31. Councils must not adopt clause 10.31.

11 Voting

Voting entitlements of councillors

11.1 Each councillor is entitled to one (1) vote.

Note: Clause 11.1 reflects section 370(1) of the Act.

Note: Under section 400T(1) of the Act, voting representatives of joint organisation boards are entitled to one (1) vote each at meetings of the board.

11.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

Note: Clause 11.2 reflects section 370(2) of the Act.

11.3 Where the chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

11.4 A motion at a meeting of the board of a joint organisation is taken to be lost in the event of an equality of votes.

Note: Clause 11.4 reflects section 397E of the Regulation. Joint organisations must adopt clause 11.4 and omit clauses 11.2 and 11.3. Councils must not adopt clause 11.4.

Note: Under section 400U(4) of the Act, joint organisations may specify more stringent voting requirements for decisions by the board such as a 75% majority or consensus decision making. Where a joint organisation's charter specifies more stringent voting requirements, clause 11.4 must be adapted to reflect those requirements.

Voting at council meetings

11.5 A councillor who is present at a meeting of the council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion

11.6 If a councillor who has voted against a motion put at a council meeting so requests, the general manager must ensure that the councillor's dissenting vote is recorded in the council's minutes.

11.7 The decision of the chairperson as to the result of a vote is final unless the decision is immediately challenged and not fewer than two (2) councillors rise and call for a division.

11.8 When a division on a motion is called, the chairperson must ensure that the division takes place immediately. The general manager must ensure that the names of those who vote for the motion and those who vote against it are recorded in the council's minutes for the meeting.

11.9 When a division on a motion is called, any councillor who fails to vote will be recorded as having voted against the motion in accordance with clause 11.5 of this code.

11.10 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However, the council may resolve that the voting in any election by councillors for mayor or deputy mayor is to be by secret ballot.

11.11 [Not adopted]

Note: If clause 11.11 is adopted, clauses 11.6 – 11.9 and clause 11.13 may be omitted.

Voting on planning decisions

11.12 The general manager must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the council or a council committee (including, but not limited to a committee of the council), the names of the councillors who supported the decision and the names of any councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.

11.13 For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is taken to have been called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the council or a council committee.

11.14 Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.

BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL | Draft Code of Meeting Practice 2026

11.15 Clauses 11.12–11.14 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

Note: Clauses 11.12–11.15 reflect section 375A of the Act.

Note: The requirements of clause 11.12 may be satisfied by maintaining a register of the minutes of each planning decision.

12 Committee of the Whole

12.1 The council may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the council.

Note: Clause 12.1 reflects section 373 of the Act.

12.2 All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the council, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the council when in committee of the whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches.

Note: Clauses 10.20–10.30 limit the number and duration of speeches.

12.3 The general manager or, in the absence of the general manager, an employee of the council designated by the general manager, is responsible for reporting to the council the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full, but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.

12.4 The council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the council's minutes. However, the council is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

13 Dealing with Items by Exception

13.1 The council or a committee of council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.

13.2 Before the council or committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.

The council or committee must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 13.1 that a councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.

13.3

13.4 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the council or committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.3.

13.5 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.

13.6 Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.

13.7 Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1 in accordance with the requirements of the council's code of conduct.

14 Closure of Council Meetings to the Public

Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

14.1 The council or a committee of the council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:

- (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors),
- (b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,
- (c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,
- (d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
 - (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or
 - (iii) reveal a trade secret,
- (e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,
- (f) matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property,
- (g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,
- (h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,
- (i) alleged contraventions of the council's code of conduct.

Note: Clause 14.1 reflects section 10A(1) and (2) of the Act.

14.2 The council or a committee of the council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Note: Clause 14.2 reflects section 10A(3) of the Act.

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

14.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:

- (a) except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security, and
- (b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the council or committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.3 reflects section 10B(1) of the Act.

14.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:

- (a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the council or committee is involved, and
- (b) are clearly identified in the advice, and
- (c) are fully discussed in that advice.

Note: Clause 14.4 reflects section 10B(2) of the Act.

14.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

Note: Clause 14.5 reflects section 10B(3) of the Act.

14.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:

- (a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or
- (b) the discussion of the matter may:
 - (i) cause embarrassment to the council or committee concerned, or to councillors or to employees of the council, or
 - (ii) cause a loss of confidence in the council or committee.

Note: Clause 14.6 reflects section 10B(4) of the Act.

14.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the council or committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

Note: Clause 14.7 reflects section 10B(5) of the Act.

Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

14.8 Part of a meeting of the council, or of a committee of the council, may be closed to the public while the council or committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:

- (a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and
- (b) the council or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:
 - (i) should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and
 - (ii) should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 14.8 reflects section 10C of the Act.

Representations by members of the public

14.9 The council, or a committee of the council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

Note: Clause 14.9 reflects section 10A(4) of the Act.

14.10 A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.

14.11 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the council in the approved form.

Applications must be received by 1 business day before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.

14.12 The general manager (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 14.11. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

14.13 No more than 2 speakers are to be permitted to make representations under clause 14.9.

14.14 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the council. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the council.

14.15 The general manager (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.

14.16 Where the council or a committee of the council proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 14.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than 2 speakers to make representations in such order as determined by the chairperson.

14.17 Each speaker will be allowed 5 minutes to make representations, and this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

Expulsion of non-councillors from meetings closed to the public

14.18 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.

14.19 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Obligations of councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link

14.20 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

14.21 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:

- (a) the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,
- (b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,
- (c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.21 reflects section 10D of the Act.

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

14.22 If the council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

[14.23 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 14.22 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.](#)

[14.23 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 14.22 during a part of the meeting that is livestreamed.](#)

15 Keeping Order at Meetings

Points of order

15.1 A councillor may draw the attention of the chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.

15.2 A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.

15.3 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the councillor raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of order

15.4 The chairperson, without the intervention of any other councillor, may call any councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.

15.5 A councillor who claims that another councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the chairperson to the matter.

15.6 The chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the council.

15.7 The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

15.8 A councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.

15.9 If a motion of dissent is passed, the chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.

15.10 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of disorder

Acts of disorder

~~15.11 A councillor commits an act of disorder if the councillor, at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council: (a) contravenes the Act, the Regulation or this code, or (b) assaults or threatens to assault another councillor or person present at the meeting, or (c) moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the council or the committee, or addresses or attempts to address the council or the committee on such a motion, amendment or matter, or (d) insults, makes unfavourable personal remarks about, or imputes improper motives to any other council official, or alleges a breach of the council's code of conduct, or (e) says or does anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.~~

15.11 A councillor commits an act of disorder if, at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council, the councillor: (a) contravenes the Act, the Regulation or this Code; (b) assaults, or threatens to assault, another councillor or person present at the meeting; (c) moves or attempts to move a motion or amendment that has an unlawful purpose or deals with a matter outside the jurisdiction of the council or committee; (d) addresses or attempts to address the council or committee on or about a motion, amendment or matter referred to in paragraph (c); (e) uses offensive or disorderly words; (f) makes gestures or otherwise behaves in a way that is sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise discriminatory, or

[that would be considered disorderly if the behaviour occurred in the Legislative Assembly; \(g\) imputes improper motives, or unfavourably personally reflects, on another councillor, a delegate of Council, a member of a committee, a member of Council staff, a person exercising a function on behalf of Council, or a person present at the meeting, except by a motion; or \(h\) says or does anything that would promote disorder at the meeting or is otherwise inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting.](#)

Note: Clause 15.11 reflects section 182 of the Regulation.

~~15.12 The chairperson may require a councillor: (a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(a), (b), or (e), or (b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 15.11(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or (c) to retract and apologise without reservation for any statement that constitutes an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(d) and (e).~~

[15.12 The chairperson may require a councillor: \(a\) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11\(a\), \(b\), \(e\), \(f\) or \(h\); \(b\) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clauses 15.11\(c\) or \(d\) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation; or \(c\) to retract and apologise without reservation for any statement that constitutes an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11\(e\), \(f\), \(g\) or \(h\).](#)

Note: Clause 15.12 reflects section 233(1) of the Regulation.

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

15.13 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the council, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of councillors.

Expulsion from meetings

~~15.14 All chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council are authorised under this code to expel any person, including any councillor, from a council or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act.~~

[15.14 At the first meeting following each ordinary election and after the adoption of a new code of meeting practice, Council must determine by resolution whether to authorise the person presiding at meetings under section 10\(2\)\(b\) of the Act to exercise the power of expulsion for acts of disorder by councillors or disorderly conduct by members of the public.](#)

[15.14A While an authorisation given by Council under clause 15.14 is in force, the person presiding at a meeting may exercise the power of expulsion in accordance with section 10\(2\)\(b\) of the Act, the Regulation and this Code.](#)

15.15 [Not adopted]

15.16 Clause 15.14 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to expel a person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting under section 10(2)(a) of the Act.

15.17 A councillor may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.12. The expulsion of a councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the councillor for the act of disorder concerned.

Note: Clause 15.17 reflects section 233(2) of the Regulation.

[15.17A A councillor who has failed to remedy an act of disorder at a meeting in accordance with a requirement of the chairperson may be expelled from successive meetings until the councillor takes the necessary action to remedy the disorder.](#)

15.18 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.

15.19 Where a councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

15.20 If a councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the councillor or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

How disorder by councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link may be dealt with

15.21 Where a councillor is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the chairperson or a person authorised by the chairperson may mute the councillor's audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this Code.

15.22 If a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the chairperson of the meeting or a person authorised by the chairperson may terminate the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings

15.23 Councillors, council staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the council and committees of the council.

15.24 A person must not livestream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council without the prior authorisation of the council or the committee.

15.25 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.24 or an attempt to contravene that clause constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.18. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 15.24 may be expelled from the meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.

15.26 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

16 Conflicts of Interest

16.1 All councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the council and committees of the council in accordance with the council's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

16.2 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct. Where a councillor has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the councillor must not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or at any time during which the council or committee is voting on the matter.

17 Decisions of the Council

Council decisions

17.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the council.

Note: Clause 17.1 reflects section 371 of the Act in the case of councils and section 400T(8) in the case of joint organisations.

Note: Under section 400U(4) of the Act, joint organisations may specify more stringent voting requirements for decisions by the board such as a 75% majority or consensus decision making. Where a joint organisation's charter specifies more stringent voting requirements, clause 17.1 must be adapted to reflect those requirements.

17.2 Decisions made by the council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or altering council decisions

17.3 A resolution passed by the council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given under clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.3 reflects section 372(1) of the Act.

17.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.

Note: Clause 17.4 reflects section 372(2) of the Act.

17.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.5 reflects section 372(3) of the Act.

17.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) councillors if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.

Note: Clause 17.6 reflects section 372(4) of the Act.

17.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.

Note: Clause 17.7 reflects section 372(5) of the Act.

17.8 The provisions of clauses 17.5–17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.

Note: Clause 17.8 reflects section 372(7) of the Act.

17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.11 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.

17.10 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution relating to a development application must be submitted to the general manager no later than 21 days after the meeting at which the resolution was adopted.

17.11 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved on the report of a committee of the council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 17.11 reflects section 372(6) of the Act.

17.12 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency, a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:

- (a) a notice of motion signed by three councillors is submitted to the chairperson, and
- (b) a motion to have the motion considered at the meeting is passed, and

(c) the chairperson rules the business that is the subject of the motion is of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

17.13 A motion moved under clause 17.12(b) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.14 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.12(c).

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

17.15 Despite the provisions of this Part, a councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:

(a) to correct any error, ambiguity or imprecision in the council's resolution, or

(b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.

17.16 In seeking the leave of the chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), the councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.

17.17 The chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.

17.18 A motion moved under clause 17.15 can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.15 can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.19 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.15.

17.20 A motion moved under clause 17.15 with the leave of the chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

18 Time Limits on Council Meetings

18.1 Meetings of the council and committees of the council are to conclude no later than 9pm.

18.2 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at 9pm, the council or the committee may, by resolution, extend the time of the meeting.

18.3 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at 9pm, and the council does not resolve to extend the meeting, the chairperson must either:

(a) defer consideration of the remaining items of business on the agenda to the next ordinary meeting of the council, or

(b) adjourn the meeting to a time, date and place fixed by the chairperson.

18.4 Clause 18.3 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to adjourn a meeting at any time. The resolution adjourning the meeting must fix the time, date and place that the meeting is to be adjourned to.

18.5 Where a meeting is adjourned under clause 18.3 or 18.4, the general manager must:

(a) individually notify each councillor of the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene, and

(b) publish the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene on the council's website and in such other manner that the general manager is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the time, date and place of the reconvened meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

19 After the Meeting

Minutes of meetings

19.1 The council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the council.

Note: Clause 19.1 reflects section 375(1) of the Act.

19.2 At a minimum, the general manager must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the council's minutes:

- (a) the names of councillors attending a council meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
- (b) details of each motion moved at a council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
- (c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
- (d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
- (e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

19.3 The minutes of a council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 19.3 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

19.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.

Note: Clause 19.5 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been

confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

19.7 The confirmed minutes of a council meeting must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting

19.8 The council and committees of the council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.

Note: Clause 19.8 reflects section 11(1) of the Act.

19.9 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.

Note: Clause 19.9 reflects section 11(2) of the Act.

19.10 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the council or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.

Note: Clause 19.10 reflects section 11(3) of the Act.

19.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 19.9 and 19.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

Implementation of decisions of the council

19.12 The general manager is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the council.

Note: Clause 19.12 reflects section 335(b) of the Act.

BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL | Draft Code of Meeting Practice 2026

Draft - Track Changes | Page 40

20 Council Committees

Application of this Part

20.1 This Part only applies to committees of the council whose members are all councillors.

Council committees whose members are all councillors

20.2 The council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.

20.3 A committee of the council is to consist of the mayor and such other councillors as are elected by the councillors or appointed by the council.

20.4 The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the council is to be:

- (a) such number of members as the council decides, or
- (b) if the council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

Functions of committees

20.5 The council must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of committee meetings

20.6 The general manager must send to each councillor, regardless of whether they are a committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the committee, a notice specifying:

- (a) the time, date and place of the meeting, and
- (b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

20.7 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

Attendance at committee meetings

20.8 A committee member (other than the mayor) ceases to be a member of a committee if the committee member:

- (a) has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the committee without having given reasons acceptable to the committee for the member's absences, or
- (b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

20.9 Clause 20.8 does not apply if all of the members of the council are members of the committee.

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

20.10 A councillor who is not a member of a committee of the council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the councillor is not entitled:

- (a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or
- (b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or
- (c) to vote at the meeting.

Chairperson and deputy chairperson of council committees

20.11 The chairperson of each committee of the council must be:

- (a) the mayor, or
- (b) if the mayor does not wish to be the chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the council, or

(c) if the council does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.

20.12 The council may elect a member of a committee of the council as deputy chairperson of the committee. If the council does not elect a deputy chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a deputy chairperson.

20.13 If neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson of a committee of the council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be acting chairperson of the committee.

20.14 The chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the council. If the chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the deputy chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

Procedure in committee meetings

20.15 Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each committee of the council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the council unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause.

20.16 Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the committee is equal, the chairperson of the committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 20.15.

20.17 A motion at a committee of a joint organisation is taken to be lost in the event of an equality of votes.

Note: Clause 20.17 reflects section 397E of the Regulation. Joint organisations must adopt clause 20.17 and omit clause 20.16. Councils must not adopt clause 20.17.

20.18 Voting at a council committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

Closure of committee meetings to the public

20.19 The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the council to the public.

20.20 If a committee of the council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended, and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

20.21 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 20.20 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

Disorder in committee meetings

20.22 The provisions of the Act and this code relating to the maintenance of order in council meetings apply to meetings of committees of the council in the same way as they apply to meetings of the council.

Minutes of council committee meetings

20.23 Each committee of the council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:

- (a) the names of councillors attending a meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
- (b) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
- (c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
- (d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and

(e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

20.24 All voting at meetings of committees of the council (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

20.25 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.

20.26 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

20.27 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.

20.28 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

20.29 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the council must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the council on its website prior to their confirmation.

21 Irregularities

21.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a council or a council committee are not invalidated because of:

- (a) a vacancy in a civic office, or
- (b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any councillor or committee member, or
- (c) any defect in the election or appointment of a councillor or committee member, or
- (d) a failure of a councillor or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a council or committee meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct, or
- (e) a failure to comply with this code.

Note: Clause 21.1 reflects section 374 of the Act.

22 Definitions

the Act means the Local Government Act 1993

act of disorder means an act of disorder as defined in clause 15.11 of this Code

amendment in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion

audio recorder means any device capable of recording speech

audio-visual link means a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons at different places

business day means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales

chairperson in relation to a meeting of the council, means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this Code; and in relation to a meeting of a committee, means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.11 of this Code

this Code means Council's adopted code of meeting practice

committee of the council means a committee established by the council in accordance with clause 20.2 of this Code (being a committee consisting only of councillors) or the council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1

council official has the same meaning it has in the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW

day means calendar day

division means a request by two councillors under clause 11.7 of this Code requiring the recording of the names of the councillors who voted both for and against a motion

foreshadowed amendment means a proposed amendment foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.18 of this Code during debate on the first amendment

foreshadowed motion means a motion foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.17 of this Code during debate on an original motion

open voting means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means

planning decision means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a council under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act

performance improvement order means an order issued under section 438A of the Act

quorum means the minimum number of councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting

the Regulation means the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

[webcast a video or audio broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet either concurrently with the meeting or at a later time](#)

[livestream means an audio-visual broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet concurrently with the meeting](#)

BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL | Draft Code of Meeting Practice 2026

[general manager means the person appointed to the statutory office of general manager under the Act. At Balranald Shire Council, the operational title used for that office is Chief Executive Officer \(CEO\).](#)

year means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June

BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL

CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

Consolidated code

Status	Draft for public exhibition - proposed Version 4
Baseline	Version 3 adopted 16 June 2026, Minute 2026/127
Model Code base	2021 Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW
2026 statutory update	Local Government (General) Amendment (Meetings) Regulation 2026
Controller	Chief Executive Officer (General Manager for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1993)
Review	As required by the Local Government Act 1993 or earlier if legislation changes

This draft does not replace Council's currently adopted Code unless and until Council completes the statutory public exhibition and adoption process required by the Local Government Act 1993.

Purpose and legislative basis

The Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (Model Meeting Code) is prescribed under section 360 of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation).

The currently prescribed Model Meeting Code is the 2021 Model Code. It is supplemented by the Local Government (General) Amendment (Meetings) Regulation 2026. To the extent of any inconsistency, the Act and Regulation prevail over this Code.

Scope

This Code applies to meetings of Balranald Shire Council and to committees of Council whose members are all councillors. A Council committee whose members include persons other than councillors may adopt its own meeting rules unless Council determines otherwise.

Council must conduct meetings in accordance with this Code. Mandatory provisions of the prescribed Model Meeting Code and the Regulation apply and cannot be displaced by a supplementary Council provision.

Summary of substantive amendments

Part	Change	Reason
3	Remove private pre-meeting briefing provisions and insert written-information / staff-contact rules.	2026 Amendment Regulation / OLG Circular 26-09.
5	Require audio-visual livestreaming and longer online retention of recordings.	2026 Amendment Regulation / OLG Circular 26-09.

8	Insert Balranald's 14-item general Order of Business.	Local operational requirement within clause 8.2 framework.
14	Replace "webcast" terminology with "livestreamed".	Consequential alignment with Part 5.
15	Update acts of disorder, expulsion authorisation and successive-meeting consequences.	2026 Amendment Regulation / current Regulation.
22	Add local CEO/General Manager definition and livestream definition.	Clarity and consequential alignment.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Meeting Principles
3. Before the Meeting
4. Public Forums
5. Coming Together
6. The Chairperson
7. Modes of Address
8. Order of Business for Ordinary Council Meetings
9. Consideration of Business at Council Meetings
10. Rules of Debate
11. Voting
12. Committee of the Whole
13. Dealing with Items by Exception
14. Closure of Council Meetings to the Public
15. Keeping Order at Meetings
16. Conflicts of Interest
17. Decisions of the Council
18. Time Limits on Council Meetings
19. After the Meeting
20. Council Committees
21. Irregularities
22. Definitions

1. Introduction

This Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Meeting Code) is prescribed under section 360 of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation).

The Model Meeting Code applies to all meetings of councils and committees of councils of which all the members are councillors (committees of council). Council committees whose members include persons other than councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the council determines otherwise.

Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code.

A council's adopted code of meeting practice may also incorporate the non-mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code and other supplementary provisions. However, a code of meeting practice adopted by a council must not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of this Model Meeting Code.

The provisions of the Model Meeting Code that are not mandatory are indicated in red font.

A council and a committee of the council of which all the members are councillors must conduct their meetings in accordance with the code of meeting practice adopted by the council.

The Model Meeting Code also applies to meetings of the boards of joint organisations and county councils. The provisions that are specific to meetings of boards of joint organisations are indicated in blue font.

In adopting the Model Meeting Code, joint organisations should adapt it to substitute the terms "board" for "council", "chairperson" for "mayor", "voting representative" for "councillor" and "executive officer" for "general manager".

In adopting the Model Meeting Code, county councils should adapt it to substitute the term "chairperson" for "mayor" and "member" for "councillor".

2. Meeting Principles

2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

Transparent: Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.

Informed: Decisions are made based on relevant quality information.

Inclusive: Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.

Principled: Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.

Trusted: The community has confidence that councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.

Respectful: Councillors, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.

Effective: Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.

Orderly: Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

3. Before the Meeting

Timing of ordinary council meetings

3.1 [Not adopted]

3.2 The council shall, by resolution, set the frequency, time, date and place of its ordinary meetings.

Note: Councils must use either clause 3.1 or 3.2.

Note: Under section 365 of the Act, councils are required to meet at least ten (10) times each year, each time in a different month unless the Minister for Local Government has approved a reduction in the number of times that a council is required to meet each year under section 365A.

Note: Under section 396 of the Act, county councils are required to meet at least four (4) times each year.

Note: Under section 400T of the Act, boards of joint organisations are required to meet at least four (4) times each year, each in a different quarter of the year.

Extraordinary meetings

3.3 If the mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) councillors, the mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The mayor can be one of the two councillors requesting the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.3 reflects section 366 of the Act.

Notice to the public of council meetings

3.4 The council must give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings and of each meeting of committees of the council.

Note: Clause 3.4 reflects section 9(1) of the Act.

3.5 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of a meeting of the council and of a committee of council is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the council's website, and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

3.6 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to councillors of ordinary council meetings

3.7 The general manager must send to each councillor, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the council, a notice specifying the time, date and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.7 reflects section 367(1) of the Act.

3.8 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to councillors in electronic form, but only if all councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda and business papers in that form.

Note: Clause 3.8 reflects section 367(3) of the Act.

Notice to councillors of extraordinary meetings

3.9 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to councillors of an extraordinary meeting of the council in cases of emergency.

Note: Clause 3.9 reflects section 367(2) of the Act.

Giving notice of business to be considered at council meetings

3.10 A councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted 5 business days before the meeting is to be held.

3.11 A councillor may, in writing to the general manager, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.

3.12 If the general manager considers that a notice of motion submitted by a councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the council has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the general manager may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council.

3.13 A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the general manager must either:

- (a) prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council, or
- (b) by written notice sent to all councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

Questions with notice

3.14 A councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.10, ask a question for response by the general manager about the performance or operations of the council.

3.15 A councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.14 that comprises a complaint against the general manager or a member of staff of the council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the general manager or a member of staff of the council.

3.16 The general manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.14 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the council or orally at the meeting.

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

3.17 The general manager must cause the agenda for a meeting of the council or a committee of the council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.

3.18 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the council states:

- (a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the council, and
- (b) if the mayor is the chairperson – any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and
- (c) all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and
- (d) any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.10.

3.19 Nothing in clause 3.18 limits the powers of the mayor to put a mayoral minute to a meeting under clause 9.6.

3.20 The general manager must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the council any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the general manager, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The general manager must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the council.

3.21 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to take place when

the meeting is closed to the public, the general manager must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:

- (a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and
- (b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.

Note: Clause 3.21 reflects section 9(2A) (a) of the Act.

3.22 The general manager must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public and must not be disclosed by a councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

Statement of ethical obligations

3.23 Business papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the council and committees of the council must contain a statement reminding councillors of their oath or affirmation of office made under

section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the council's code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public

3.24 Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the council and committees of council, are to be published on the council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the council.

Note: Clause 3.24 reflects section 9(2) and (4) of the Act.

3.25 Clause 3.24 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the general manager has identified under clause 3.21 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 3.25 reflects section 9(2A) (b) of the Act.

3.26 For the purposes of clause 3.24, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to councillors.

Note: Clause 3.26 reflects section 9(3) of the Act.

3.27 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.24, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

Note: Clause 3.27 reflects section 9(5) of the Act.

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

3.28 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.

3.29 Despite clause 3.28, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the council, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if:

- (a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
- (b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

3.30 A motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.

3.31 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

3.32 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.29(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

Councillor requests for information and pre-meeting contact with staff

3.33 A councillor, other than the mayor or the chairperson of a meeting, must not meet with council staff before a meeting of the council or a committee of the council to discuss a matter that is, or will be, listed on the agenda for the meeting.

3.34 Clause 3.33 does not prevent a councillor from asking council staff questions or seeking further information about an item on the agenda for a meeting.

3.35 Information provided to a councillor in response to a request under clause 3.34 must be provided in writing and, if practicable, published on Council's website before the meeting, unless the information relates to a matter that is confidential under section 10A of the Act.

3.36 The mayor and the chairperson of a meeting are not subject to the prohibition in clause 3.33.

3.37 Nothing in clauses 3.33–3.36 permits councillors to debate, negotiate or make preliminary decisions on matters outside a properly constituted meeting. Council decisions must be made by resolution at a meeting of Council or a committee exercising delegated authority.

4. Public Forums

4.1 The council may hold a public forum prior to each ordinary meeting of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public forums may also be held prior to extraordinary council meetings and meetings of committees of the council.

4.2 Public forums may be held by audio-visual link.

Public forums are to be chaired by the mayor or their nominee.

4.3

4.4 To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications to speak at the public forum must be received by 1 business day before the date on which the public forum is to be held, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.

4.5 [Not adopted]

4.6 Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak at a public forum unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the public forum.

4.7 The general manager or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

4.8 No more than 2 speakers are to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the council meeting.

4.9 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to address the council on the item of business. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to address the council, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will address the council at the public forum.

If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the mayor or the mayor's nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business.

4.10

Approved speakers at the public forum are to register with the council any written, visual or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the council at the public forum, and to identify any equipment needs no more than 1 day before the public forum. The general manager or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented.

4.11

The general manager or their delegate is to determine the order of speakers at the public forum.

4.12 Each speaker will be allowed 5 minutes to address the council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson.

4.13

4.14 Speakers at public forums must not digress from the item on the agenda of the council meeting they have applied to address the council on. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

4.15 A councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a public forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.

4.16 Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question put under clause 4.15. Answers by the speaker to each question are to be limited to 2 minutes.

4.17 Speakers at public forums cannot ask questions of the council, councillors, or council staff.

4.18 The general manager or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the council for up to 5 minutes in response to an address to the council at a public forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.

4.19 Where an address made at a public forum raises matters that require further consideration by council staff, the general manager may recommend that the council defer consideration of the matter pending the preparation of a further report on the matters.

4.20 When addressing the council, speakers at public forums must comply with this code and all other relevant council codes, policies, and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the council's code of conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.

4.21 If the chairperson considers that a speaker at a public forum has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the chairperson may request the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's request, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.

4.22 Clause 4.21 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers at public forums in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this code.

4.23 Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the general manager or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums for such a period as the general manager or their delegate considers appropriate.

4.24 Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an address at a public forum, in the same way that they are required to do so at a council or committee meeting. The council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at public forums and how the conflict of interest was managed by the councillor who made the declaration.

Note: Public forums should not be held as part of a council or committee meeting. Council or committee meetings should be reserved for decision-making by the council or committee of council. Where a public forum is held as part of a council or committee meeting, it must be conducted in accordance with the other requirements of this code relating to the conduct of council and committee meetings.

5. Coming Together

Attendance by councillors at meetings

5.1 All councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the council and of committees of the council of which they are members.

Note: A councillor may not attend a meeting as a councillor (other than the first meeting of the council after the councillor is elected or a meeting at which the councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

5.2 A councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the council or of a committee of the council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this code.

5.3 The board of the joint organisation may, if it thinks fit, transact any of its business at a meeting at which representatives (or some representatives) participate by telephone or other electronic means, but only if any representative who speaks on a matter before the meeting can be heard by the other representatives. For the purposes of a meeting held in accordance with this clause, the chairperson and each other voting representative on the board have the same voting rights as they have at an ordinary meeting of the board.

Note: Clause 5.3 reflects section 397G of the Regulation. Joint organisations may adopt clause 5.3 and omit clause 5.2. Councils must not adopt clause 5.3.

5.4 Where a councillor is unable to attend one or more ordinary meetings of the council, the councillor should request that the council grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. This clause does not prevent a councillor from making

an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However, the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this code and the Act.

5.5 A councillor's request for leave of absence from council meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the councillor intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.

5.6 The council must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a councillor's request for a leave of absence.

5.7 A councillor's civic office will become vacant if the councillor is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the council without prior leave of the council, or leave granted by the council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.

Note: Clause 5.7 reflects section 234(1) (d) of the Act.

5.8 A councillor who intends to attend a meeting of the council despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the general manager at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.

The quorum for a meeting

5.9 The quorum for a meeting of the council is a majority of the councillors of the council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.

Note: Clause 5.9 reflects section 368(1) of the Act.

5.10 Clause 5.9 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the council.

Note: Clause 5.10 reflects section 368(2) of the Act.

5.11 A meeting of the council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:

- (a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or
- (b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or
- (c) at any time during the meeting.

5.12 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date, and place fixed:

- (a) by the chairperson, or
- (b) in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the councillors present, or
- (c) failing that, by the general manager.

5.13 The general manager must record in the council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the council, together with the names of the councillors present.

5.14 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health, safety or welfare of councillors, council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency, the mayor may, in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each

councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the council's website and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.

5.15 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.14, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the council or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.3.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

5.16 A meeting of the council or a committee of the council may be held by audio-visual link where the mayor determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The mayor may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of councillors and staff at risk. The mayor must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor.

5.17 Where the mayor determines under clause 5.16 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the general manager must:

- (a) give written notice to all councillors that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and
- (b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that all councillors can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link, and
- (c) cause a notice to be published on the council's website and in such other manner the general manager is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.

5.18 This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.16 in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a council holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.16, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting.

Attendance by councillors at meetings by audio-visual link

5.19 Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual link with the approval of the council or the relevant committee.

5.20 A request by a councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the general manager prior to the meeting in question and must provide reasons why the councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.

5.21 Councillors may request approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link. Where a councillor requests approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link, the request must specify the meetings the request relates to in addition to the information required under clause 5.20.

5.22 The council must comply with the Health Privacy Principles prescribed under the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 when collecting, holding, using and disclosing health information in connection with a request by a councillor to attend a meeting by audio-visual link.

5.23 A councillor who has requested approval to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link may participate in the meeting by audio-visual link until the council or committee determines whether to approve their request and is to be taken as present at the meeting. The councillor may participate in a decision in relation to their request to attend the meeting by audio-visual link.

5.24 A decision whether to approve a request by a councillor to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link must be made by a resolution of the council or the committee concerned. The resolution must state:

- (a) the meetings the resolution applies to, and

- (b) the reason why the councillor is being permitted to attend the meetings by audio-visual link where it is on grounds other than illness, disability, or caring responsibilities.

5.25 If the council or committee refuses a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.

5.26 A decision whether to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link is at the council's or the relevant committee's discretion. The council and committees of the council must act reasonably when considering requests by councillors to attend meetings by audio-visual link. However, the council and committees of the council are under no obligation to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-

visual link where the technical capacity does not exist to allow the councillor to attend the meeting by these means.

5.27 The council and committees of the council may refuse a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the council or committee is satisfied that the councillor has failed to appropriately declare and manage conflicts of interest, observe confidentiality, or to comply with this code on one or more previous occasions they have attended a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link.

5.28 This code applies to a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the councillor was attending the meeting in person. Where a councillor is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.

5.29 A councillor must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The councillor's camera must be on at all times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this code.

5.30 A councillor must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.

Entitlement of the public to attend council meetings

5.31 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the council and committees of the council. The council must ensure that all meetings of the council and committees of the council are open to the public.

Note: Clause 5.31 reflects section 10(1) of the Act.

5.32 Clause 5.31 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

5.33 A person (whether a councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council if expelled from the meeting:

- (a) by a resolution of the meeting, or
- (b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

Note: Clause 5.33 reflects section 10(2) of the Act.

Note: If adopted, clauses 15.14 and 15.15 confer a standing authorisation on all chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council to expel persons from meetings. If adopted, clause 15.14 authorises chairpersons to expel any person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting. Alternatively, if adopted, clause 15.15 authorises chairpersons to expel persons other than councillors from a council or committee meeting.

Livestreaming and recording of meetings

5.34 Each meeting of the council and each meeting of a committee of the council whose members are all councillors must be recorded by means of an audio-visual device and livestreamed on Council's website at the same time as the meeting is taking place.

5.35 At the start of each meeting referred to in clause 5.34, the chairperson must inform persons attending the meeting that: (a) the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on Council's website, and (b) persons attending the meeting should refrain from making defamatory statements.

5.36 The audio-visual recording of a meeting must remain publicly available on Council's website until the later of: (a) the day that is 12 months after the meeting, or (b) the day the Council's term ends.

5.37 Clauses 5.34–5.36 do not apply to any part of a meeting that has been closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act.

5.38 For the purposes of clauses 5.34–5.37, a committee of the council means a committee of which all members are councillors.

Note: Clauses 5.34–5.37 reflect section 236 of the Regulation as amended in 2026.

5.39 Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the State Records Act 1998 after applicable statutory and records-management retention requirements have been met.

Attendance of the general manager and other staff at meetings

5.40 The general manager is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee of the council of which all of the members are councillors.

Note: Clause 5.40 reflects section 376(1) of the Act.

5.41 The general manager is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the council and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.

Note: Clause 5.41 reflects section 376(2) of the Act.

5.42 The general manager may be excluded from a meeting of the council or a committee while the council or committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the general manager or the terms of employment of the general manager.

Note: Clause 5.42 reflects section 376(3) of the Act.

5.43 The attendance of other council staff at a meeting (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

5.44 The general manager and other council staff may attend meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual link. Attendance by council staff at meetings by audio-visual link (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

6. The Chairperson

The chairperson at meetings

6.1 The mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the mayor, the deputy mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the council.

Note: Clause 6.1 reflects section 369(1) of the Act.

6.2 If the mayor and the deputy mayor (if any) are absent, a councillor elected to chair the meeting by the councillors present presides at a meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 6.2 reflects section 369(2) of the Act.

Election of the chairperson in the absence of the mayor and deputy mayor

6.3 If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting.

6.4 The election of a chairperson must be conducted:

- (a) by the general manager or, in their absence, an employee of the council designated by the general manager to conduct the election, or
- (b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the general manager nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no general manager or designated employee.

6.5 If, at an election of a chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.

6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:

- (a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and
- (b) then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.

6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.

6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to have precedence

6.9 When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the council:

- (a) any councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and
- (b) every councillor present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

7. Modes of Address

7.1 If the chairperson is the mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' or 'Madam Mayor'.

7.2 Where the chairperson is not the mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson'.

7.3 A councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.

7.4 A council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms [surname].

8. Order of Business for Ordinary Council Meetings

8.1 [Not adopted]

8.2 The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of Council shall be:

1. Opening of Meeting
2. Prayer & Acknowledgement of Country
3. Apologies and applications for a leave of absence or attendance by audio-visual link by Councillors
4. Confirmation of Minutes
5. Disclosures of Interests
6. Mayoral/Councillor Report
7. Committee Reports
8. Notices of Motion
9. Notices of Rescission

10. Chief Executive Officer's Reports – Items Requiring Decision

11. Chief Executive Officer's Reports – Items for Information

12. Questions on Notice

13. Confidential Matters

14. Closure of Meeting

Note: Council has adopted clause 8.2 instead of clause 8.1. The order in clause 8.2 is adapted to reflect Balranald Shire Council's meeting structure.

8.3 The order of business fixed under clause 8.2 may be altered for a particular meeting of the council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.

Note: Part 13 allows Council to deal with items of business by exception.

8.4 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.3 may speak to the motion before it is put.

9. Consideration of Business at Council Meetings

Business that can be dealt with at a council meeting

9.1 The council must not consider business at a meeting of the council:

- (a) unless a councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.10, and
- (b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the councillors in accordance with clause 3.7 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.9 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.

9.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:

- (a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the council, or
- (b) is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or
- (c) subject to clause 9.9, is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a mayoral minute, or
- (d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee, including, but not limited to, a committee of the council.

9.3 Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the councillors if:

- (a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
- (b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that

it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

9.4 A motion moved under clause 9.3(a) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

9.5 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 9.3(b).

Mayoral minutes

9.6 Subject to clause 9.9, if the mayor is the chairperson at a meeting of the council, the mayor may, by minute signed by the mayor, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the council, or of which the council has official knowledge.

9.7 A mayoral minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the council's agenda for the meeting. The chairperson (but only if the chairperson is the mayor) may move the adoption of a mayoral minute without the motion being seconded.

9.8 A recommendation made in a mayoral minute put by the mayor is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

9.9 A mayoral minute must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

9.10 Where a mayoral minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan, it must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation. If the mayoral minute does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

Staff reports

9.11 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

Reports of committees of council

9.12 The recommendations of a committee of the council are, so far as they are adopted by the council, resolutions of the council.

9.13 If in a report of a committee of the council distinct recommendations are made, the council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

9.14 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.10 and 3.14.

9.15 A councillor may, through the chairperson, put a question to another councillor about a matter on the agenda.

9.16 A councillor may, through the general manager, put a question to a council employee about a matter on the agenda. Council employees are only obliged to

answer a question put to them through the general manager at the direction of the general manager.

9.17 A councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the council.

9.18 Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.

9.19 The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a councillor or council employee.

10. Rules of Debate

Motions to be seconded

10.1 Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of motion

10.2 A councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.

10.3 If a councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to councillors, the councillor may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the council.

10.4 In the absence of a councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the council:

- (a) any other councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or
- (b) the chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the council.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

10.5 It is the duty of the chairperson at a meeting of the council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.

10.6 The chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.

10.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.

10.8 Any motion, amendment, or other matter that the chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

Motions requiring the expenditure of funds

10.9 A motion or an amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

Amendments to motions

10.10 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.

10.11 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the chairperson.

10.12 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.

10.13 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before council at any one time.

10.14 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.

10.15 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.

10.16 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the councillor who moved the original motion.

Foreshadowed motions

10.17 A councillor may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the council, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.

10.18 Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a councillor may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the council at any time.

However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.

10.19 Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.

Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

10.20 A councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.

10.21 A councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.

10.22 A councillor must not, without the consent of the council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.

10.23 Despite clause 10.22, the chairperson may permit a councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.

10.24 Despite clause 10.22, the council may resolve to shorten the duration of speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.

10.25 Despite clauses 10.20 and 10.21, a councillor may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:

- (a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or
- (b) if at least two (2) councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) councillors have spoken against it.

10.26 The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.25. A seconder is not required for such a motion.

10.27 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.20.

10.28 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.

10.29 All councillors must be heard without interruption and all other councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another councillor is speaking.

10.30 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.

Participation by non-voting representatives in joint organisation board meetings

10.31 Non-voting representatives of joint organisation boards may speak on but must not move, second or vote on any motion or an amendment to a motion.

Note: Under section 400T(1)(c) of the Act, non-voting representatives of joint organisation boards may attend but are not entitled to vote at a meeting of the board.

Note: Joint organisations must adopt clause 10.31. Councils must not adopt clause 10.31.

11. Voting

Voting entitlements of councillors

11.1 Each councillor is entitled to one (1) vote.

Note: Clause 11.1 reflects section 370(1) of the Act.

Note: Under section 400T(1) of the Act, voting representatives of joint organisation boards are entitled to one (1) vote each at meetings of the board.

11.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

Note: Clause 11.2 reflects section 370(2) of the Act.

11.3 Where the chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

11.4 A motion at a meeting of the board of a joint organisation is taken to be lost in the event of an equality of votes.

Note: Clause 11.4 reflects section 397E of the Regulation. Joint organisations must adopt clause 11.4 and omit clauses 11.2 and 11.3. Councils must not adopt clause 11.4.

Note: Under section 400U(4) of the Act, joint organisations may specify more stringent voting requirements for decisions by the board such as a 75% majority or consensus decision making. Where a joint organisation's charter specifies more stringent voting requirements, clause 11.4 must be adapted to reflect those requirements.

Voting at council meetings

11.5 A councillor who is present at a meeting of the council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion

11.6 If a councillor who has voted against a motion put at a council meeting so requests, the general manager must ensure that the councillor's dissenting vote is recorded in the council's minutes.

11.7 The decision of the chairperson as to the result of a vote is final unless the decision is immediately challenged and not fewer than two (2) councillors rise and call for a division.

11.8 When a division on a motion is called, the chairperson must ensure that the division takes place immediately. The general manager must ensure that the names of those who vote for the motion and those who vote against it are recorded in the council's minutes for the meeting.

11.9 When a division on a motion is called, any councillor who fails to vote will be recorded as having voted against the motion in accordance with clause 11.5 of this code.

11.10 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However, the council may resolve that the voting in any election by councillors for mayor or deputy mayor is to be by secret ballot.

11.11 [Not adopted]

Note: If clause 11.11 is adopted, clauses 11.6 – 11.9 and clause 11.13 may be omitted.

Voting on planning decisions

11.12 The general manager must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the council or a council committee (including, but not limited to a committee of the council), the names of the councillors who supported the decision and the names of any councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.

11.13 For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is taken to have been called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the council or a council committee.

11.14 Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.

11.15 Clauses 11.12–11.14 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

Note: Clauses 11.12–11.15 reflect section 375A of the Act.

Note: The requirements of clause 11.12 may be satisfied by maintaining a register of the minutes of each planning decision.

12. Committee of the Whole

12.1 The council may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the council.

Note: Clause 12.1 reflects section 373 of the Act.

12.2 All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the council, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the council when in committee of the whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches.

Note: Clauses 10.20–10.30 limit the number and duration of speeches.

12.3 The general manager or, in the absence of the general manager, an employee of the council designated by the general manager, is responsible for reporting to the council the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full, but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.

12.4 The council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the council's minutes. However, the council is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

13. Dealing with Items by Exception

13.1 The council or a committee of council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.

13.2 Before the council or committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.

The council or committee must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 13.1 that a councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.

13.3 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the council or committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.3.

13.4 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.

13.5 Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.

13.6 Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1 in accordance with the requirements of the council's code of conduct.

14. Closure of Council Meetings to the Public

Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

14.1 The council or a committee of the council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:

- (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors),

- (b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,
- (c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,
- (d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
 - (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or
 - (iii) reveal a trade secret,
- (e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,
- (f) matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property,
- (g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,
- (h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,
- (i) alleged contraventions of the council's code of conduct.

Note: Clause 14.1 reflects section 10A(1) and (2) of the Act.

14.2 The council or a committee of the council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Note: Clause 14.2 reflects section 10A(3) of the Act.

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

14.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:

- (a) except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security, and
- (b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the council or committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.3 reflects section 10B(1) of the Act.

14.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:

- (a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the council or committee is involved, and
- (b) are clearly identified in the advice, and
- (c) are fully discussed in that advice.

Note: Clause 14.4 reflects section 10B(2) of the Act.

14.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

Note: Clause 14.5 reflects section 10B(3) of the Act.

14.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:

- (a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or
- (b) the discussion of the matter may:
 - (i) cause embarrassment to the council or committee concerned, or to councillors or to employees of the council, or

- (ii) cause a loss of confidence in the council or committee.

Note: Clause 14.6 reflects section 10B(4) of the Act.

14.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the council or committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

Note: Clause 14.7 reflects section 10B(5) of the Act.

Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

14.8 Part of a meeting of the council, or of a committee of the council, may be closed to the public while the council or committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:

- (a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and
- (b) the council or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:
 - (i) should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and
 - (ii) should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 14.8 reflects section 10C of the Act.

Representations by members of the public

14.9 The council, or a committee of the council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

Note: Clause 14.9 reflects section 10A(4) of the Act.

14.10 A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.

14.11 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications must be received by 1 business day before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.

14.12 The general manager (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 14.11. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

14.13 No more than 2 speakers are to be permitted to make representations under clause 14.9.

14.14 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the council. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the council.

14.15 The general manager (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.

14.16 Where the council or a committee of the council proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 14.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than 2 speakers to make representations in such order as determined by the chairperson.

14.17 Each speaker will be allowed 5 minutes to make representations, and this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be

closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

Expulsion of non-councillors from meetings closed to the public

14.18 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.

14.19 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Obligations of councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link

14.20 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

14.21 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:

- (a) the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,
- (b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,
- (c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.21 reflects section 10D of the Act.

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

14.22 If the council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

14.23 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 14.22 during a part of the meeting that is livestreamed.

15. Keeping Order at Meetings

Points of order

15.1 A councillor may draw the attention of the chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.

15.2 A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.

15.3 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the councillor raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of order

15.4 The chairperson, without the intervention of any other councillor, may call any councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.

15.5 A councillor who claims that another councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the chairperson to the matter.

15.6 The chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the council.

15.7 The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

15.8 A councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.

15.9 If a motion of dissent is passed, the chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.

15.10 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of disorder

15.11 A councillor commits an act of disorder if, at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council, the councillor: (a) contravenes the Act, the Regulation or this Code; (b) assaults, or threatens to assault, another councillor or person present at the meeting; (c) moves or attempts to move a motion or amendment that has an unlawful purpose or deals with a matter outside the jurisdiction of the council or committee; (d) addresses or attempts to address the council or committee on or about a motion, amendment or matter referred to in paragraph (c); (e) uses offensive or disorderly words; (f) makes gestures or otherwise behaves in a way that is sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise discriminatory, or that would be considered disorderly if the behaviour occurred in the Legislative Assembly; (g) imputes improper motives, or unfavourably personally reflects, on another councillor, a delegate of Council, a member of a committee, a member of Council staff, a person exercising a function on behalf of Council, or a person present at the meeting, except by a motion; or (h) says or does anything that would promote disorder at the meeting or is otherwise inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting.

Note: Clause 15.11 reflects section 182 of the Regulation.

15.12 The chairperson may require a councillor: (a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(a), (b), (e), (f) or (h); (b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clauses 15.11(c) or (d) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation; or (c) to retract and apologise without reservation for any statement that constitutes an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(e), (f), (g) or (h).

Note: Clause 15.12 reflects section 233(1) of the Regulation.

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

15.13 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the council, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of councillors.

Expulsion from meetings

15.14 At the first meeting following each ordinary election and after the adoption of a new code of meeting practice, Council must determine by resolution whether to authorise the person presiding at meetings under section 10(2)(b) of the Act to exercise the power of expulsion for acts of disorder by councillors or disorderly conduct by members of the public.

15.14A While an authorisation given by Council under clause 15.14 is in force, the person presiding at a meeting may exercise the power of expulsion in accordance with section 10(2)(b) of the Act, the Regulation and this Code.

15.15 [Not adopted]

15.16 Clause 15.14 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to expel a person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting under section 10(2)(a) of the Act.

15.17 A councillor may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.12. The expulsion of a councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the councillor for the act of disorder concerned.

Note: Clause 15.17 reflects section 233(2) of the Regulation.

15.17A A councillor who has failed to remedy an act of disorder at a meeting in accordance with a requirement of the chairperson may be expelled from successive meetings until the councillor takes the necessary action to remedy the disorder.

15.18 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.

15.19 Where a councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

15.20 If a councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the councillor or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

How disorder by councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link may be dealt with

15.21 Where a councillor is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the chairperson or a person authorised by the chairperson may mute the councillor's audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this Code.

15.22 If a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the chairperson of the meeting or a person authorised by the chairperson may terminate the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings

15.23 Councillors, council staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the council and committees of the council.

15.24 A person must not livestream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council without the prior authorisation of the council or the committee.

15.25 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.24 or an attempt to contravene that clause constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.18. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 15.24 may be expelled from the meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.

15.26 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-

mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

16. Conflicts of Interest

16.1 All councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the council and committees of the council in accordance with the council's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

16.2 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct. Where a councillor has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the councillor must not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or at any time during which the council or committee is voting on the matter.

17. Decisions of the Council

Council decisions

17.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the council.

Note: Clause 17.1 reflects section 371 of the Act in the case of councils and section 400T(8) in the case of joint organisations.

Note: Under section 400U(4) of the Act, joint organisations may specify more stringent voting requirements for decisions by the board, such as a 75% majority or consensus decision-making. Where a joint organisation's charter specifies more stringent voting requirements, clause 17.1 must be adapted to reflect those requirements.

17.2 Decisions made by the council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or altering council decisions

17.3 A resolution passed by the council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given under clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.3 reflects section 372(1) of the Act.

17.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.

Note: Clause 17.4 reflects section 372(2) of the Act.

17.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.5 reflects section 372(3) of the Act.

17.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) councillors if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.

Note: Clause 17.6 reflects section 372(4) of the Act.

17.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.

Note: Clause 17.7 reflects section 372(5) of the Act.

17.8 The provisions of clauses 17.5–17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.

Note: Clause 17.8 reflects section 372(7) of the Act.

17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.11 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.

17.10 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution relating to a development application must be submitted to the general manager no later than 21 days after the meeting at which the resolution was adopted.

17.11 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved on the report of a committee of the council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 17.11 reflects section 372(6) of the Act.

17.12 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency, a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:

- (a) a notice of motion signed by three councillors is submitted to the chairperson, and
- (b) a motion to have the motion considered at the meeting is passed, and
- (c) the chairperson rules the business that is the subject of the motion is of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

17.13 A motion moved under clause 17.12(b) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.14 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.12(c).

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

17.15 Despite the provisions of this Part, a councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:

- (a) to correct any error, ambiguity or imprecision in the council's resolution, or
- (b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.

17.16 In seeking the leave of the chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), the councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.

17.17 The chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.

17.18 A motion moved under clause 17.15 can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.15 can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.19 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.15.

17.20 A motion moved under clause 17.15 with the leave of the chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

18. Time Limits on Council Meetings

18.1 Meetings of the council and committees of the council are to conclude no later than 9 pm.

18.2 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at 9 pm, the council or the committee may, by resolution, extend the time of the meeting.

18.3 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at 9 pm, and the council does not resolve to extend the meeting, the chairperson must either:

- (a) defer consideration of the remaining items of business on the agenda to the next ordinary meeting of the council, or

(b) adjourn the meeting to a time, date and place fixed by the chairperson.

18.4 Clause 18.3 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to adjourn a meeting at any time. The resolution adjourning the meeting must fix the time, date and place that the meeting is to be adjourned to.

18.5 Where a meeting is adjourned under clause 18.3 or 18.4, the general manager must:

- (a) individually notify each councillor of the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene, and
- (b) publish the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene on the council's website and in such other manner that the general manager is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the time, date and place of the reconvened meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

19. After the Meeting

Minutes of meetings

19.1 The council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the council.

Note: Clause 19.1 reflects section 375(1) of the Act.

19.2 At a minimum, the general manager must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the council's minutes:

- (a) the names of councillors attending a council meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
- (b) details of each motion moved at a council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
- (c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
- (d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
- (e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

19.3 The minutes of a council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 19.3 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

19.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.

Note: Clause 19.5 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been

confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

19.7 The confirmed minutes of a council meeting must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting

19.8 The council and committees of the council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.

Note: Clause 19.8 reflects section 11(1) of the Act.

19.9 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.

Note: Clause 19.9 reflects section 11(2) of the Act.

19.10 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the council or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.

Note: Clause 19.10 reflects section 11(3) of the Act.

19.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 19.9 and 19.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

Implementation of decisions of the council

19.12 The general manager is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the council.

Note: Clause 19.12 reflects section 335(b) of the Act.

20. Council Committees

Application of this Part

20.1 This Part only applies to committees of the council whose members are all councillors.

Council committees whose members are all councillors

20.2 The council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.

20.3 A committee of the council is to consist of the mayor and such other councillors as are elected by the councillors or appointed by the council.

20.4 The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the council is to be:

- (a) such number of members as the council decides, or
- (b) if the council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

Functions of committees

20.5 The council must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of committee meetings

20.6 The general manager must send to each councillor, regardless of whether they are a committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the committee, a notice specifying:

- (a) the time, date and place of the meeting, and
- (b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

20.7 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

Attendance at committee meetings

20.8 A committee member (other than the mayor) ceases to be a member of a committee if the committee member:

- (a) has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the committee without having given reasons acceptable to the committee for the member's absences, or
- (b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

20.9 Clause 20.8 does not apply if all of the members of the council are members of the committee.

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

20.10 A councillor who is not a member of a committee of the council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the councillor is not entitled:

- (a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or
- (b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or
- (c) to vote at the meeting.

Chairperson and deputy chairperson of council committees

20.11 The chairperson of each committee of the council must be:

- (a) the mayor, or
- (b) if the mayor does not wish to be the chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the council, or
- (c) if the council does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.

20.12 The council may elect a member of a committee of the council as deputy chairperson of the committee. If the council does not elect a deputy chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a deputy chairperson.

20.13 If neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson of a committee of the council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be acting chairperson of the committee.

20.14 The chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the council. If the chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the deputy chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

Procedure in committee meetings

20.15 Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each committee of the council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the council unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause.

20.16 Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the committee is equal, the chairperson of the committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 20.15.

20.17 A motion at a committee of a joint organisation is taken to be lost in the event of an equality of votes.

Note: Clause 20.17 reflects section 397E of the Regulation. Joint organisations must adopt clause 20.17 and omit clause 20.16. Councils must not adopt clause 20.17.

20.18 Voting at a council committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

Closure of committee meetings to the public

20.19 The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the council to the public.

20.20 If a committee of the council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended, and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

20.21 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 20.20 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

Disorder in committee meetings

20.22 The provisions of the Act and this code relating to the maintenance of order in council meetings apply to meetings of committees of the council in the same way as they apply to meetings of the council.

Minutes of council committee meetings

20.23 Each committee of the council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:

- (a) the names of councillors attending a meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
- (b) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
- (c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
- (d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
- (e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

20.24 All voting at meetings of committees of the council (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

20.25 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.

20.26 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

20.27 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.

20.28 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

20.29 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the council must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the council on its website prior to their confirmation.

21. Irregularities

21.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a council or a council committee are not invalidated because of:

- (a) a vacancy in a civic office, or
- (b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any councillor or committee member, or
- (c) any defect in the election or appointment of a councillor or committee member, or
- (d) a failure of a councillor or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a council or committee meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct, or
- (e) a failure to comply with this code.

Note: Clause 21.1 reflects section 374 of the Act.

22. Definitions

The Act means the Local Government Act 1993.

Act of disorder means an act of disorder as defined in clause 15.11 of this Code.

Amendment in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion.

Audio recorder means any device capable of recording speech.

Audio-visual link means a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons at different places.

Business day means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales

Chairperson in relation to a meeting of the council, means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this Code; and in relation to a meeting of a committee, means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.11 of this Code

This Code means Council's adopted code of meeting practice

Committee of the council means a committee established by the council in accordance with clause 20.2 of this Code (being a committee consisting only of councillors) or the council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1

Council official has the same meaning it has in the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW

Day means calendar day

Division means a request by two councillors under clause 11.7 of this Code requiring the recording of the names of the councillors who voted both for and against a motion.

Foreshadowed amendment means a proposed amendment foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.18 of this Code during debate on the first amendment.

Foreshadowed motion means a motion foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.17 of this Code during debate on an original motion.

Open voting means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means.

Planning decision means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a council under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act.

Performance improvement order means an order issued under section 438A of the Act.

Quorum means the minimum number of councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting

The Regulation means the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

Livestream means an audio-visual broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet concurrently with the meeting.

General Manager means the person appointed to the statutory office of general manager under the Act. At Balranald Shire Council, the operational title used for that office is Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Year means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June.

10.4 DELEGATIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

File Number:	D26.127779
Author(s):	Hodi Beauliv, Executive Manager: Community and Governance
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 6: Our Council – Upholds the community's expectations of good governance, engages and ethical leadership, a skilled and effective workforce, and operational transparency and accountability.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

For Council to determine the delegation to be made to the Chief Executive Officer (General Manager) in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*. This delegation will provide the framework for the day to day operational management of the organisation.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Revoke any previous delegation to the position of Chief Executive Officer (General Manager)
2. Delegate to the Chief Executive Officer (General Manager), the delegation as provided at Attachment 1

REPORT

The Chief Executive Officer is the only senior staff position that is appointed by Council and is the interface between the governing body as comprised of elected Councillors. The governing body sets the strategy and monitors the performance of the Council. The administrative body of Council, as headed by the Chief Executive Officer, implements the decisions of the governing body.

Section 380 of the Local Government Act 1993 requires Council to review its delegations during the first 12 months of its term. This provision only relates to delegations made by the Council to the Chief Executive Officer or any other person or body. This report recommends that an appropriate delegation be made to the Chief Executive Officer.

Section 377 of the Local Government Act 1993 describes the general powers of the Council to delegate and sets out those functions that are unable to be delegated by Council to the Executive Officer.

Section 377 provides the following:

- (1) A council may, by resolution, delegate to the general manager or any other person or body (not including another employee of the council) any of the functions of the council under this or any other Act, other than the following--
 - (a) the appointment of a general manager,
 - (b) the making of a rate,
 - (c) a determination under [section 549](#) as to the levying of a rate,
 - (d) the making of a charge,
 - (e) the fixing of a fee,
 - (f) the borrowing of money,
 - (g) the voting of money for expenditure on its works, services or operations,

- (h) the compulsory acquisition, purchase, sale, exchange or surrender of any land or other property (but not including the sale of items of plant or equipment),
 - (i) the acceptance of tenders to provide services currently provided by members of staff of the council,
 - (j) the adoption of an operational plan under [section 405](#),
 - (k) the adoption of a financial statement included in an annual financial report,
 - (l) a decision to classify or reclassify public land under Division 1 of Part 2 of Chapter 6,
 - (m) the fixing of an amount or rate for the carrying out by the council of work on private land,
 - (n) the decision to carry out work on private land for an amount that is less than the amount or rate fixed by the council for the carrying out of any such work,
 - (o) the review of a determination made by the council, and not by a delegate of the council, of an application for approval or an application that may be reviewed under section 82A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 ,
 - (p) the power of the council to authorise the use of reasonable force for the purpose of gaining entry to premises under [section 194](#),
 - (q) a decision under section 356 to contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons,
 - (r) a decision under [section 234](#) to grant leave of absence to the holder of a civic office,
 - (s) the making of an application, or the giving of a notice, to the Governor or Minister,
 - (t) this power of delegation,
 - (u) any function under this or any other Act that is expressly required to be exercised by resolution of the council.
- (1A) Despite subsection (1), a council may delegate its functions relating to the granting of financial assistance if--
- (a) the financial assistance is part of a specified program, and
 - (b) the program is included in the council's draft operational plan for the year in which the financial assistance is proposed to be given, and
 - (c) the program's proposed budget for that year does not exceed 5 per cent of the council's proposed income from the ordinary rates levied for that year, and
 - (d) the program applies uniformly to all persons within the council's area or to a significant proportion of all the persons within the council's area.
- (2) A council may, by resolution, sub-delegate to the general manager or any other person or body (not including another employee of the council) any function delegated to the council by the Departmental Chief Executive except as provided by the instrument of delegation to the council.
- (3) A council may delegate functions to a joint organisation only with the approval, by resolution, of the board of the joint organisation.

The proposed attached instrument delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the same scope in terms of functions as has previously and is current in place. This delegation remains in force as it has not specifically been altered or revoked in writing (Attachment 2).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The proposed delegation facilitates the efficient administration and operation of Council by enabling the Chief Executive Officer to exercise functions lawfully delegated by Council. In addition, the proposed delegation reflects that which was previously in place for Council.

The delegation does not authorise the Chief Executive Officer to exercise functions that cannot lawfully be delegated under section 377 of the Local Government Act 1993, including the acceptance of tenders that are required under the Act to be invited by Council. Pursuant to section 55 of the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Council is generally required to invite tenders for contracts with an estimated value of \$250,000 or greater, unless a legislative exemption applies.

Any expenditure or financial commitment made under delegated authority remains subject to adopted budgets, the Long Term Financial Plan, Council's procurement policies and the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and associated Regulations.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

The proposed delegation has been prepared in accordance with sections 377 and 378 of the Local Government Act 1993. The delegation excludes those functions that cannot lawfully be delegated by Council pursuant to section 377 of the Act and preserves those matters that legislation requires to be determined by resolution of Council.

POLICY IMPLICATION

The proposed delegation supports effective governance, administrative efficiency and operational continuity by clearly defining the authority delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

The delegation is supported by a documented delegation framework for staff that is consistent with the principles of good governance and supports the appropriate separation between the strategic role of the governing body and the operational responsibilities of the administration.

RISK RATING

Low. The adoption of an updated delegation to the Chief Executive Officer is a statutory and administrative requirement under the Local Government Act 1993 and supports the effective operation of Council. The proposed delegation is limited to those functions that may lawfully be delegated and expressly excludes functions reserved to Council under section 377 of the Act. The proposed delegation reflects the provisions delegated to the former Chief Executive Officer by Council.

ATTACHMENTS

1. CEO (General Manager) Delegations [↓](#) 
2. Delegations - Instrument of Delegation - General Manager - 2024 [↓](#) 

Delegation of Authority – Chief Executive Officer – Attachment 1

Purpose

The purpose of this delegation document is to outline the functions and powers of delegation authorised by Balranald Shire Council for the Chief Executive Officer (General Manager) in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.

Delegation of Authority to the Chief Executive Officer

- (a) Council delegates to the person holding the position of Chief Executive Officer on an ongoing basis all functions of the Council under the *Local Government Act 1993* and any other legislation, except those functions that are declared to be non-delegable pursuant to section 377(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- (b) The exercise of any function under (a) above is subject to the following:
 - Functions that are required by any legislation or instrument to be performed by resolution of Council
 - Functions that are delegated exclusively to the Mayor under section 226 of the *Local Government Act 1993*
 - Any function, power, authority or duty reserved by the Council by way of Council resolution.

Sub-delegation

The Chief Executive Officer may delegate any of the functions of the Chief Executive Officer other than this power of delegation.

The Chief Executive Officer may sub-delegate a function delegated to the Chief Executive Officer by the Council to any person or body (including another employee of Council). This power of sub-delegation extends to a function sub-delegated to the Chief Executive Officer by the Council under Section 377(2) of the Local Government Act.

Employees other than the Chief Executive Officer cannot sub-delegate or on-delegate any power delegated to them.

If a legislative function is conferred or imposed on an employee of Council under any legislation, the function is deemed to be conferred or imposed on the Council and is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

**INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION****DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO THE GENERAL MANAGER**

In order to provide for the expedient exercise and performance of its powers and duties and the efficient management of its business and responsibilities, Council hereby delegates pursuant to section 377 and section 381 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) (The Act) to the position of the General Manager of the Balranald Shire Council (being the statutory position of General Manager) and to the person holding the aforementioned position in an acting capacity, the exercise of Councils powers, functions, duties and authorities set out in 1a) below, subject to the limitations, exclusions and restrictions set out in paragraph 1b)

This delegation commences on Tuesday 20 February 2024 and remains in forced until specifically altered or revoked in writing.

1. The Balranald Shire Council delegates to the General Manager:

- a) All those functions of the Council under the Act and the Regulations made thereunder, and any other Act, statutory instrument and law, except those functions that are declared to be non-delegable pursuant to section 377(1) of the Act.
- b) The exercise of any function under a) above is subject to the following:
 - i. The General Manager or the holder of any sub-delegation from the General Manager, exercising such delegations in accordance with the policies or resolutions of the Council, as may be adopted by the Council from time to time;
 - ii. Any restrictions or conditions imposed upon any delegation by a policy or resolution of the Council, which is also applied to any sub-delegation made by the General Manager under section 378(2) of the Act.
 - iii. Any lawful direction from the Administrator.

- 2. Council resolves that in exercising this delegation the General Manager shall consult with Council before entering into any significant variation to any existing Council function or service that would have ongoing implications for Council in terms of cost or service delivery.

AUTHORISING RESOLUTION NO. 2024/8 ON TUESDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2024

Acknowledgement and acceptance of Delegation.

20 February 2024

Craig Bennett
General Manager

10.5 RATING FOR MINING LANDS

File Number:	D26.126698
Author(s):	Edna Mendes, Chief Financial Officer
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 2: Our Community – Sustaining and Nurturing our Communities as resilient, resourceful, safe and inclusive.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents the details of an earlier Council resolution dated 19 October 2021, in relation to consideration of a possible Special Rate Variation (SRV) in respect to land used for the purpose of specified mining activities.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the proposal to approach IPART with a view to initiating the process for a targeted Special Rate Variation (SRV) in respect to specified mining lands, outside of the permitted rate peg limits, and

That should the option of a targeted SRV be available, Council commence the process of developing a business case for public consultation and subsequent submission to IPART for approval, with a view to implementing the targeted SRV effective from the 2027/28 rating year.

REPORT

Attached to this report is a copy of the report submitted to Council at its Ordinary meeting held on 19 October 2021, which dealt with the intention to pursue a possible SRV for 'Mining' lands within Balranald Shire. The recommendations of the report were formally adopted, however it appears that the resolution was never actioned, likely due to the frequent changes in executive leadership in the years after that period and the fact that Council, at that time, was already operating under an approved Shire wide SRV of 10%, which expired in 2025.

Report

Attached to this report is a copy of the report submitted to Council at its Ordinary meeting held on 19 October 2021, which dealt with the intention to pursue a possible SRV for 'Mining' lands within Balranald Shire. The recommendations of the report were formally adopted, however it appears that the resolution was never actioned, likely due to the frequent changes in executive leadership in the years after that period and the fact that Council, at that time, was already operating under an approved Shire wide SRV of 10%, which expired in 2025.

Given the lapse in time, this report provides the current Council with an opportunity to consider the intent of the previously adopted resolution, and if appropriate, re-affirm the decision and commence action to initiate the process for a possible SRV in respect to lands used for specified mining activities.

With the current circumstances, the report remains very relevant. Council has received a number of reports over the past 12 months concerning its Rating Structure and these reports have flagged the intensity of mining activities for one site in particular and the difficulty in raising the General Rate above current rate pegging limits.

There are several properties associated with the most recent up-scaling of mining activity and the consequent increase in demand on Council services. All but one of those properties are currently rated as Farmland.

As it stands at present, in order to levy an increased rate on those properties to the level consistent with the other existing comparable mining activities, Council would have to substantially reduce existing rates on all other rating categories, including Farmland and Residential ratepayers, so that the total General Rate income remains within the rate pegging limit.

The situation is rather unique and gives rise to a strong business case which is supported by the principles of equity and ability to pay in terms of distribution of the General Rate burden. As reported to Council previously, Balranald Shire ratepayers compare favourably in terms of their current average annual rate levy, compared to that of other surrounding LGA's. It makes little sense to reduce rates levied on existing ratepayers, simply to enable Council to increase rates on the mining properties, to stay within an artificially imposed revenue ceiling.

Without attempting to write a full business case in this report, that is not consistent with recognising that there is an increase in demand for Council services generally resulting from the mining activities and that increase should be recognised in the level of rates paid by the industry contributing to the increased demand, while also maintaining the existing contribution from other ratepayers.

In considering this report, it is noted that the report submitted to Council in 2021 made reference to the levying of a 'Mining' Rate as the mechanism to levy an increased rate. This refers to the current legislation, specifically Sec 517 of the Local Government Act, which provides for categorising of land for Mining purposes, if the *'dominant use of the land is for a coal mine or metalliferous mine'*.

Under the current Rating Structure, Council has categorised land used for mining purposes as 'Business' in accordance with Sec 518, because the extractive operations within the Balranald Shire area don't meet the strict definition of 'coal' or 'metalliferous' mining under Sec 517. To that end, it really doesn't matter that the original recommendation was for an approach to IPART in relation to introducing a 'Mining' rate, it is more important that the principle is maintained, rather than the mechanism on how the rate would be levied.

Since the original report was compiled, the State Government has initiated several reforms aimed at streamlining local government financial constraints and a review of the Council funding model, as part of the Standing Committee on State Development's Inquiry into the ability of local governments to fund infrastructure and services.

An initial response on the Review's recommendations has been published by OLG, indicating levels of support for various proposals, one of which relates to a review of the Special Rate Variation guidelines (Recommendation 3). The OLG has initiated a local government Expert Advisory Panel to provide further guidance to the Government in considering final responses and any proposed legislative changes.

This remains a work in progress and it is unclear whether Council's intention for a targeted SRV, where the burden would be borne by individual rate payers, as opposed to an 'across the board' increase borne by all rate payers, would be supported. It may very much depend on the strength of the business case.

If the approach to IPART gave the green light for Council to proceed with a formal application, development of the business case and significant community consultation would be required. Applications for an SRV normally close in November of each year, so the timeframe is relatively short.

Submitted for Council's review and endorsement.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Possible increase in General Rates should the proposal be taken to IPART and be successful.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Compliance with various rating provisions of the Local Government Act, 1993.

POLICY IMPLICATION

Possible impact on Council's Revenue Policy for FY 2027/28 and future years

RISK RATING

Low

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachments Rates Review - Mining October 2021 [↓](#) 

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

19 OCTOBER 2021

9.2 RATES REVIEW - MINING OCTOBER 2021

File Number:	D21.57344
Reporting Officer:	Glenn Wilcox, Acting General Manager
Responsible Officer:	Hodi Beauliv, Director Corporate & Community Services
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 3: Our Economy – A community that ensures a strong and resilient economy.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. Undertake a review of its rating structure and look at the introduction of a Mining Rate in the 2022/23 financial year;
2. That Council contact Ipart to discuss the development of a Special Rate Variation to allow a new mining rate to be included outside the General Rate levies that presently exist, to ensure that any changes to mining or State Significant developments does not require the general rates to cover the loss of mining rate income, and
3. That Council contact the NSW Valuer Generals Office to request advice on the introduction of a mining rate, the means of valuation for metalliferous and non-metalliferous mines that may exist in Balranald Shire Council.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is to seek Councils approval to introduce a Mining Rate from 2022/23.

BACKGROUND

Council as part of its improvement process was required to undertake a review into its rating structure and look at the introduction of a mining rate. Council had undertaken a review by Morrison and Lowe as part of an SRV submission in 2017 and determined not to introduce a mining rate.

REPORT

Council has undertaken a number of reviews into its rating structure since 2017, which have resulted in a general Special Rate Variation across all rate categories. Council had previously received a report on the creation of a new rate category for mining. This report was never adopted and mining was placed under a Business category.

This report has been prepared to initiate a review of a mining category and to discuss the proposal with Ipart to create a Special Rate Variation for mining that operates outside the general rating categories.

The reason to isolate mining from the general rate categories is due to the periods that mines operate within and the boom and bust nature of metalliferous mining across western NSW. By operating outside general rate categories it allow the general rates to move as per normal valuation standards and assessment from the Valuer Generals Office and not include the mining component that can artificially lessen general rates (when the mine is operational) or artificially increase general rates at the closure of a mine.

As part of this review all categories of mining shall be examined in the shire and the correct rating structure applied with the assistance of the Valuer Generals office.

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**19 OCTOBER 2021**

A request to Ipart will need to be made in November 2021 to allow the assessment process to be undertaken and the rate categories to be advertised with the Operational Plan 2022/23 in March 2022.

The report has been provided as an open public document to ensure that community transparency is being maintained and that Council is aware of administration and structural changes required.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council shall undertake an assessment with Ipart to determine a mine rate. Mine rates are a permissible rate under the Local Government Act 1993 and regulations subject to community notification process.

The risk will be minimal if Council complies with the Rating requirements under the Act.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Council will be required to notify mines or persons that are to be reclassified into the mining rate category.

OPTIONS

The Council may decide to develop a mining category or to not create a mining category.

CONCLUSION

This report is to request Council to commence a review into the inclusion of a mining rate category and to commence negotiations with Ipart to allow a stand-alone Special Rate Variation to exist for mining that is outside the general rate categories.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Council is required to review its financial base including rates to ensure that it is receiving the correct income as permitted under the Local Government Act 1993

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Council will prepare reports and applications to Ipart to request a Special Rate Variation.

RISK RATING

Moderate

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

10.6 REFERRAL OF DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO AUDIT - YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2026

File Number: D26.127812
Author(s): Edna Mendes, Chief Financial Officer
Approver: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective: Pillar 6: Our Leadership – A community that values and fosters leadership, lifelong learning, innovation and good governance.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Purpose of this report is to advise Council of the completion of the Draft Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2026, and for referral of the Draft Statements to Audit, in accordance with section 413 of the Local Government Act 1993.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the completion of the Draft Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2026;
2. Refers the Draft Financial Statements, incorporating the General Purpose and Special Purpose Financial Statements and Special Schedules, to Audit in accordance with section 413 of the Local Government Act 1993; and
3. Authorise the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to sign the Management Certificate.

REPORT

The Draft Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2026 are attached to this business paper.

Section 413 of the Local Government Act 1993 requires Council to prepare its Annual Financial Statements as soon as practicable after year end and then refer those Statements for audit.

In preparing those Statements, Council must comply with:

- The Local Government Act 1993;
- The Local Government (General) Regulation 2021;
- The Australian Accounting Standards issued by the Australian Accounting Board; and
- The NSW Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

To the best of our knowledge and belief, these Statements will present fairly the Council's operating result and financial position for the financial year 2025-2026. The Statements will also concur with the Council's accounting and other records. We are not aware of any matter that would render these Statements false or misleading in any way.

The external audit will be conducted in early September, with sign-off by the external Auditor expected by mid-October to ensure submission to the OLG as required by 31 October 2026.

Following the audit process, the audited Financial Statements are expected to be presented to the public at Council's scheduled Ordinary meeting to be held on 17 November 2026.

Representatives from the NSW Audit Office and Council's external Auditor will attend that meeting to present an overview of the audit and the result for the year.

The Financial Statements presented to this meeting remain in draft form and are subject to final audit. However, there is not expected to be any material change to the projected operating result of \$8.693M before capital grants, with a net operating result after capital grants of \$2.047M in the financial year ending 30 June 2026.

This year's surplus is attributed largely to the 80% forward payment of the Financial Assistance Grant (FAGS) this visual impact is identified in Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes of \$15.617M, which is significantly higher than levels in previous years.

While this payment is recognised as revenue in the year it is received, it does not relate to 2025-26 service delivery. As a result, the forward payment has inflated the operating surplus, contributing to the reported \$8.693M operating result before capital grants.

Notwithstanding the impact of the advanced payment of Financial Assistance Grant (FAGS), this result represents a very good outcome for Council, given that other factors including increased deprecation charges, could have resulted in the original expected deficit becoming larger. The outcome is pleasing and reflects the diligence of all Managers in keeping expenditure within budget for the majority of operations.

As the Statements remain in draft, a number of the notes and disclosures are yet to be finalised. The draft Statements were also presented to ARIC on Friday 11th September.

Further queries from Councillors will be addressed at the meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Better than expected operating surplus due in part to the advance payment of Financial Assistance Grant (FAGS)

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Local Government Act, 1993,

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021,

Australian Accounting Standards, and the

Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

POLICY IMPLICATION

Nil

RISK RATING

Low

ATTACHMENTS

1. **Annual Financial Statements - 2026** [↓](#) 

Balranald Shire Council

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2026



Balranald Shire Council

GENERAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2026



Balranald Shire Council

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Contents	Page
Understanding Council's Financial Statements	3
Statement by Councillors and Management	4
Primary Financial Statements:	
Income Statement	5
Statement of Comprehensive Income	6
Statement of Financial Position	7
Statement of Changes in Equity	8
Statement of Cash Flows	9
Notes to the Financial Statements	10
Independent Auditor's Reports:	
On the Financial Statements (Sect 417 [2])	77
On the Financial Statements (Sect 417 [3])	78

Overview

Balranald Shire Council is constituted under the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) and has its principal place of business at:

70 Market Street
Balranald NSW 2715

Council's guiding principles are detailed in Chapter 3 of the LGA and includes:

- principles applying to the exercise of functions generally by council,
- principles to be applied when making decisions,
- principles of community participation,
- principles of sound financial management, and
- principles for strategic planning relating to the development of an integrated planning and reporting framework.

A description of the nature of Council's operations and its principal activities are provided in Note B1-2.

Through the use of the internet, we have ensured that our reporting is timely, complete and available at minimum cost. All press releases, financial statements and other information are publicly available on our website: www.balranald.nsw.gov.au.

Balranald Shire Council

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Understanding Council's Financial Statements

Introduction

Each year NSW local governments are required to present audited financial statements to their council and community.

What you will find in the Statements

The financial statements set out the financial performance, financial position and cash flows of Council for the financial year ended 30 June 2026.

The format of the financial statements is standard across all NSW Councils and complies with both the accounting and reporting requirements of Australian Accounting Standards and requirements as set down by the Office of Local Government.

About the Councillor/Management Statement

The financial statements must be certified by senior staff as 'presenting fairly' the Council's financial results for the year and are required to be adopted by Council – ensuring both responsibility for and ownership of the financial statements.

About the Primary Financial Statements

The financial statements incorporate five "primary" financial statements:

1. The Income Statement

Summarises Council's financial performance for the year, listing all income and expenses. This statement also displays Council's original adopted budget to provide a comparison between what was projected and what actually occurred.

2. The Statement of Comprehensive Income

Primarily records changes in the fair value of Council's Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment.

3. The Statement of Financial Position

A 30 June snapshot of Council's financial position indicating its assets, liabilities and "net wealth".

4. The Statement of Changes in Equity

The overall change for the year (in dollars) of Council's "net wealth".

5. The Statement of Cash Flows

Indicates where Council's cash came from and where it was spent. This statement also displays Council's original adopted budget to provide a comparison between what was projected and what actually occurred.

About the Notes to the Financial Statements

The Notes to the Financial Statements provide greater detail and additional information on the five primary financial statements.

About the Auditor's Reports

Council's financial statements are required to be audited by the NSW Audit Office.

In NSW the auditor provides 2 audit reports:

1. an opinion on whether the financial statements present fairly the Council's financial performance and position, and
2. their observations on the conduct of the audit, including commentary on the Council's financial performance and financial position.

Who uses the Financial Statements?

The financial statements are publicly available documents and must be presented at a Council meeting between seven days and five weeks after the date of the audit report.

The public can make submissions to Council up to seven days subsequent to the public presentation of the financial statements.

Council is required to forward an audited set of financial statements to the Office of Local Government.

Balranald Shire Council

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Statement by Councillors and Management made pursuant to Section 413(2)(c) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)

The attached general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- the *Local Government Act 1993* and the regulations made thereunder,
- the Australian Accounting Standards and other pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board
- the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

To the best of our knowledge and belief, these statements:

- present fairly the Council's operating result and financial position for the year
- accord with Council's accounting and other records.

We are not aware of any matter that would render these statements false or misleading in any way.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of Council made on 15 September 2026.

Clr Louie Zaffina
Mayor
15 September 2026

Terry Dodds PSM
Chief Executive Officer
15 September 2026

Clr Dwaine Scott
Deputy Mayor
15 September 2026

Edna Mendes
Responsible Accounting Officer
15 September 2026

Balranald Shire Council | Income Statement | for the year ended 30 June 2026

Balranald Shire Council

Income Statement

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Original unaudited budget 2026 \$ '000		Notes	Actual 2026 \$ '000	Actual 2025 \$ '000
	Income from continuing operations			
6,119	Rates and annual charges	B2-1	6,248	5,974
1,448	User charges and fees	B2-2	2,555	2,670
880	Other revenues	B2-3	674	489
9,252	Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	B2-4	15,617	11,269
1,895	Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	B2-4	6,647	7,024
1,208	Interest and investment income	B2-5	1,392	1,563
475	Other income	B2-6	143	139
21,277	Total income from continuing operations		33,276	29,128
	Expenses from continuing operations			
7,777	Employee benefits and on-costs	B3-1	8,803	7,277
6,743	Materials and services	B3-2	7,724	10,084
77	Borrowing costs	B3-3	71	79
603	Other expenses	B3-5	685	556
—	Net loss from the disposal of assets	B4-1	19	15
—	Net share of interests in joint ventures and associates using the equity method	D2	15	247
15,200	Total expenses from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets		17,317	18,258
6,077	Operating result from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets		15,959	10,870
6,015	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	B3-4	7,265	6,737
62	Operating result from continuing operations		8,694	4,133
62	Net operating result for the year attributable to Council		8,694	4,133
(1,833)	Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes		2,047	(2,891)

The above Income Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balranald Shire Council | Statement of Comprehensive Income | for the year ended 30 June 2026

Balranald Shire Council**Statement of Comprehensive Income**

for the year ended 30 June 2026

		2026	2025
	Notes	\$ '000	\$ '000
Net operating result for the year – from Income Statement		8,694	4,133
Other comprehensive income:			
Amounts which will not be reclassified subsequent to operating result			
Gain (loss) on revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-6	526	30,435
Impairment (loss) reversal / (revaluation decrement) relating to infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-6	–	2,540
Total items which will not be reclassified subsequent to operating result		526	32,975
Total other comprehensive income for the year		526	32,975
Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to Council		9,220	37,108

The above Statement of Comprehensive Income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balranald Shire Council | Statement of Financial Position | as at 30 June 2026

Balranald Shire Council

Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	C1-1	3,319	11,819
Investments	C1-2	34,500	20,500
Receivables	C1-4	6,616	4,396
Inventories	C1-5	274	320
Total current assets		44,709	37,035
Non-current assets			
Receivables	C1-4	–	139
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE)	C1-6	281,067	277,701
Investments accounted for using the equity method	D2	544	559
Total non-current assets		281,611	278,399
Total assets		326,320	315,434
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Payables	C3-1	3,896	3,286
Contract liabilities	C3-2	2,463	2,808
Borrowings	C3-3	293	240
Employee benefit provisions	C3-4	1,079	962
Total current liabilities		7,731	7,296
Non-current liabilities			
Borrowings	C3-3	2,165	958
Employee benefit provisions	C3-4	173	149
Provisions	C3-5	170	170
Total non-current liabilities		2,508	1,277
Total liabilities		10,239	8,573
Net assets		316,081	306,861
EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus		88,296	79,602
IPPE revaluation surplus	C4-1	227,785	227,259
Council equity interest		316,081	306,861
Total equity		316,081	306,861

The above Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balranald Shire Council

Statement of Changes in Equity
for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026			2025		
		Accumulated surplus \$ '000	IPPE revaluation surplus \$ '000	Total equity \$ '000	Accumulated surplus \$ '000	IPPE revaluation surplus \$ '000	Total equity \$ '000
Opening balance at 1 July		79,602	227,259	306,861	75,469	194,284	269,753
Net operating result for the year		8,694	–	8,694	4,133	–	4,133
Net operating result for the period		8,694	–	8,694	4,133	–	4,133
Other comprehensive income							
Gain (loss) on revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-6	–	526	526	–	30,435	30,435
Impairment (loss) reversal / (revaluation decrement) relating to infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-6	–	–	–	–	2,540	2,540
Other comprehensive income		–	526	526	–	32,975	32,975
Total comprehensive income		8,694	526	9,220	4,133	32,975	37,108
Closing balance at 30 June		88,296	227,785	316,081	79,602	227,259	306,861

The above Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balranald Shire Council | Statement of Cash Flows | for the year ended 30 June 2026

Balranald Shire Council

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Original unaudited budget 2026 \$ '000		Notes	Actual 2026 \$ '000	Actual 2025 \$ '000
Cash flows from operating activities				
<i>Receipts:</i>				
6,119	Rates and annual charges		5,911	5,851
1,448	User charges and fees		2,925	2,947
1,208	Interest received		1,280	1,877
11,147	Grants and contributions		19,766	16,065
–	Bonds, deposits and retentions received		3	6
1,355	Other		2,534	2,090
<i>Payments:</i>				
(7,777)	Payments to employees		(9,169)	(7,032)
(6,743)	Payments for materials and services		(8,737)	(10,961)
(77)	Borrowing costs		(69)	(80)
–	Bonds, deposits and retentions refunded		–	(283)
(603)	Other		(55)	(1,147)
6,077	Net cash flows from operating activities	G1-1	14,389	9,333
Cash flows from investing activities				
<i>Receipts:</i>				
–	Sale of investments		5,500	11,500
–	Proceeds from sale of IPPE		145	132
<i>Payments:</i>				
–	Purchase of investments		(19,500)	(2,500)
(16,352)	Payments for IPPE		(10,294)	(11,752)
(16,352)	Net cash flows from investing activities		(24,149)	(2,620)
Cash flows from financing activities				
<i>Receipts:</i>				
1,500	Proceeds from borrowings		1,500	–
<i>Payments:</i>				
(77)	Repayment of borrowings		(240)	(227)
1,423	Net cash flows from financing activities		1,260	(227)
(8,852)	Net change in cash and cash equivalents		(8,500)	6,486
11,819	Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		11,819	5,333
2,967	Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	C1-1	3,319	11,819
20,000	plus: Investments on hand at end of year	C1-2	34,500	20,500
22,967	Total cash, cash equivalents and investments		37,819	32,319

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balranald Shire Council

Contents for the notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2026

A About Council and these financial statements	12
A1-1 Basis of preparation	12
B Financial Performance	14
B1 Functions or activities	14
B1-1 Functions or activities – income, expenses and assets	14
B1-2 Components of functions or activities	15
B2 Sources of income	16
B2-1 Rates and annual charges	16
B2-2 User charges and fees	17
B2-3 Other revenues	18
B2-4 Grants and contributions	19
B2-5 Interest and investment income	22
B2-6 Other income	22
B3 Costs of providing services	23
B3-1 Employee benefits and on-costs	23
B3-2 Materials and services	24
B3-3 Borrowing costs	24
B3-4 Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	25
B3-5 Other expenses	26
B4 Gains or losses	27
B4-1 Gain or loss from the disposal, replacement and de-recognition of assets	27
B5 Performance against budget	28
B5-1 Material budget variations	28
C Financial position	30
C1 Assets we manage	30
C1-1 Cash and cash equivalents	30
C1-2 Financial investments	30
C1-3 Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments	31
C1-4 Receivables	34
C1-5 Inventories	36
C1-6 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	37
C1-7 Intangible assets	41
C2 Leasing activities	42
C2-1 Council as a lessee	42
C2-2 Council as a lessor	43
C3 Liabilities of Council	44
C3-1 Payables	44
C3-2 Contract Liabilities	45
C3-3 Borrowings	46
C3-4 Employee benefit provisions	48
C3-5 Provisions	49

Balranald Shire Council

Contents for the notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2026

C4 Reserves	50
C4-1 Nature and purpose of reserves	50
D Council structure	51
D1 Results by fund	51
D1-1 Income Statement by fund	51
D1-2 Statement of Financial Position by fund	52
D2 Interests in other entities	53
D2-1 Interests in joint arrangements	53
E Risks and accounting uncertainties	55
E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held	55
E2-1 Fair value measurement	59
E3-1 Contingencies	65
F People and relationships	68
F1 Related party disclosures	68
F1-1 Key management personnel (KMP)	68
F1-2 Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses	69
F2 Other relationships	70
F2-1 Audit fees	70
G Other matters	71
G1-1 Statement of Cash Flows information	71
G2-1 Commitments	72
G3-1 Events occurring after the reporting date	73
G4 Statement of developer contributions	74
G4-1 Summary of developer contributions	74
H Additional Council disclosures (unaudited)	75
H1-1 Financial review	75
H1-2 Council information and contact details	76

A About Council and these financial statements

A1-1 Basis of preparation

These financial statements were authorised for issue by Council on 15 September 2026. Council has the power to amend and reissue these financial statements in cases where critical information is received from public submissions or where the OLG directs Council to amend the financial statements.

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these consolidated financial statements are set out below.

These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Australian Accounting Interpretations, the *Local Government Act 1993* (Act) and *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (Regulation), and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting. Council is a not for-profit entity. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars.

Historical cost convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain infrastructure, property, plant and equipment and investment property.

Significant accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the Council's accounting policies. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that may have a financial impact on the Council and that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

Council makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year include:

- (i) estimated fair values of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment – refer Note C1-6
- (ii) employee benefit provisions – refer Note C3-4

Monies and other assets received by Council

The Consolidated Fund

In accordance with the provisions of Section 409(1) of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW), all money and property received by Council is held in the Council's Consolidated Fund unless it is required to be held in the Council's Trust Fund.

Cash and other assets of the following entities have been included as part of the Consolidated Fund:

- General purpose operations
- Water supply
- Sewerage service

A1-1 Basis of preparation (continued)

Volunteer services

Council has not recognised volunteer services in the income statement as they are neither material nor able to be reliably measured.

New accounting standards and interpretations issued but not yet effective

New accounting standards and interpretations issued but not yet effective

Certain new accounting standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2026 reporting period. Council has not applied any pronouncements before its operative date in the annual reporting period beginning 1 July 2025.

As at the date of authorisation of these financial statements Council does not consider that any of these new (and still to be applied) standards and interpretations will have a material impact on the Council's future financial statements, financial position, financial performance or cash flows.

New accounting standards adopted during the year

There were no new standards relevant to Councils that became mandatorily effective for the year ended 30 June 2026.

B Financial Performance**B1 Functions or activities****B1-1 Functions or activities – income, expenses and assets**

Income, expenses and assets have been directly attributed to the following functions or activities. Details of those functions or activities are provided in Note B1-2.

	Income		Expenses		Operating result		Grants and contributions		Carrying amount of assets	
	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Functions or activities										
Governance	-	7	-	893	-	(886)	-	-	-	-
Administration	-	173	-	2,685	-	(2,512)	-	21	-	34,215
Public order and safety	-	143	-	602	-	(459)	-	118	-	1,941
Health	-	4	-	125	-	(121)	-	-	-	320
Environment	-	719	-	872	-	(153)	-	(4)	-	8,674
Community services and education	-	2,219	-	3,181	-	(962)	-	1,942	-	8,069
Housing and community amenities	-	330	-	702	-	(372)	-	813	-	9,063
Water supplies	-	2,673	-	1,428	-	1,245	-	200	-	17,223
Sewerage services	-	1,051	-	684	-	367	-	-	-	13,530
Recreation and culture	-	4,226	-	1,325	-	2,901	-	2,939	-	21,221
Mining, manufacturing and construction	-	32	-	219	-	(187)	-	-	-	-
Transport and communication	-	6,152	-	10,741	-	(4,589)	-	7,339	-	196,211
Economic affairs	-	2,211	-	1,291	-	920	-	830	-	4,408
General Purpose Income	-	9,188	-	-	-	9,188	-	4,095	-	-
FSWJO	-	-	-	247	-	(247)	22,264	-	326,320	559
Total functions and activities	-	29,128	-	24,995	-	4,133	22,264	18,293	326,320	315,434

B1-2 Components of functions or activities

Details relating to the Council's functions or activities as reported in B1-1 are as follows:

Governance

Includes costs relating to Council's role as a component of democratic government, including elections, members' fees and expenses, subscriptions to local authority associations, meetings of Council and policymaking committees, public disclosure (e.g. GIPA), and legislative compliance.

Administration

Includes corporate support and other support services, engineering works, and any Council policy compliance.

Public order and safety

Includes fire and emergency services, fire protection, enforcement of regulations and animal control.

Health

Includes immunisation, food control, health centres etc.

Environment

Includes noxious plants and insect/vermin control; other environmental protection; solid waste management, including domestic waste; other waste management; other sanitation; and garbage, street cleaning, drainage and stormwater management.

Community services and education

Includes administration and education; social protection (welfare); migrant, Aboriginal and other community services and administration (excluding accommodation – as it is covered under 'housing and community amenities'); youth services; aged and disabled persons services; children's services, including family day care; child care; and other family and children services.

Housing and community amenities

Includes public cemeteries; public conveniences; street lighting; town planning; other community amenities, including housing development and accommodation for families and children, aged persons, disabled persons, migrants and Indigenous persons.

Water supplies

Includes management of water schemes, costs of reticulation, treatment and supply, and management of water infrastructure.

Sewerage services

Includes management of sewerage schemes, costs of reticulation and treatment, and management of sewer infrastructure.

Recreation and culture

Includes public libraries; museums; art galleries; community centres and halls, including public halls and performing arts venues; sporting grounds and venues; swimming pools; parks; gardens; lakes; and other recreational and cultural services.

Mining, manufacturing and construction

Includes building control, quarries and pits, mineral resources, and abattoirs.

Transport and communication

Urban local, urban regional, includes sealed and unsealed roads, bridges, footpaths, parking areas, and aerodromes.

Economic affairs

Includes camping areas and caravan parks; tourism and area promotion; industrial development promotion; sale yards and markets; real estate development; commercial nurseries; and other business undertakings.

General Purpose Income

This includes financial assistance grant funding which has no specific function allocation and is expended in areas of council.

B2 Sources of income**B2-1 Rates and annual charges**

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Ordinary rates		
Residential	528	509
Farmland	1,986	1,924
Business	1,437	1,323
Less: pensioner rebates (mandatory)	(19)	(18)
Rates levied to ratepayers	3,932	3,738
Pensioner rate subsidies received	10	10
Total ordinary rates	3,942	3,748
Annual charges (pursuant to s496, 496A, 496B, 501 & 611)		
Domestic waste management services	461	440
Water supply services	927	908
Sewerage services	803	811
Waste management services (non-domestic)	91	86
Stormwater Charges	19	19
Less: pensioner rebates (mandatory)	(16)	(58)
Annual charges levied	2,285	2,206
Pensioner annual charges subsidies received:		
– Water	6	6
– Sewerage	6	6
– Domestic waste management	9	8
Total annual charges	2,306	2,226
Total rates and annual charges	6,248	5,974

Council has used 2024 year valuations provided by the NSW Valuer General in calculating its rates.

Material accounting policy information

Rates and annual charges are recognised as revenue at the beginning of the rating period to which they relate. Prepaid rates are recognised as a financial liability until the beginning of the rating period.

Pensioner rebates relate to reductions in rates and certain annual charges for eligible pensioners' place of residence in the local government council area.

Pensioner rate subsidies are received from the NSW Government to provide a contribution towards the pensioner rebates and are recognised within the underlying revenue item based on their substance.

B2-2 User charges and fees

	Timing	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Specific user charges (per s502 - specific 'actual use' charges)			
Sewerage services	2	25	48
Sewerage services contract aboriginal mission	2	26	37
Water service contract aboriginal mission	2	55	74
Water supply services	2	1,014	1,021
Total specific user charges		1,120	1,180
Other user charges and fees			
(i) Fees and charges – statutory and regulatory functions (per s608)			
Building regulation		15	25
Building services – other		85	59
Inspection services		6	6
Planning and building regulation		1	1
Private works – section 67	2	28	103
Regulatory/ statutory fees		–	1
Section 10.7 certificates (EP&A Act)		8	9
Section 603 certificates	2	6	7
Town planning	2	19	29
Other	2	1	3
Building services	2	2	3
Total fees and charges – statutory/regulatory		171	246
(ii) Fees and charges – other (incl. general user charges (per s608))			
Aerodrome		5	–
Aged care	2	376	240
Caravan park	2	643	763
Cemeteries	2	41	62
Lease rentals	2	7	4
Library and art gallery		14	14
Park rents	2	6	5
Refuse and effluent disposal	2	1	–
Waste disposal tipping fees	2	158	140
Water connection fees	2	10	10
Other	2	3	6
Total fees and charges – other		1,264	1,244
Total other user charges and fees		1,435	1,490
Total user charges and fees		2,555	2,670
Timing of revenue recognition for user charges and fees			
User charges and fees recognised over time (1)		–	–
User charges and fees recognised at a point in time (2)		2,555	2,670
Total user charges and fees		2,555	2,670

Material accounting policy information

Revenue arising from user charges and fees is recognised when or as the performance obligation is completed and the customer receives the benefit of the goods / services being provided.

The performance obligation relates to the specific services which are provided to the customers and generally the payment terms are within 30 days of the provision of the service or in some cases such as caravan parks, the customer is required to pay on arrival or a deposit in advance. There is no material obligation for Council in relation to refunds or returns. Where an upfront fee is charged such as joining fees for the leisure centre the fee is recognised on a straight-line basis over the expected life of the membership. Licences granted by Council are all either short-term or low value and all revenue from licences is recognised at the time that the licence is granted rather than over the term of the licence.

B2-3 Other revenues

	Timing	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Legal fees recovery – rates and charges (extra charges)	2	–	1
Commissions and agency fees	2	88	85
Insurance claims recoveries	2	253	9
Motor vehicle contributions	2	30	32
Raw water standpipe sales	2	194	242
Rebates	2	4	37
Sales – miscellaneous	2	5	5
Tourist information centre sales	2	63	63
Other	2	37	15
Total other revenue		674	489

Timing of revenue recognition for other revenue

Other revenue recognised over time (1)	–	–
Other revenue recognised at a point in time (2)	674	489
Total other revenue	674	489

Material accounting policy information for other revenue

Where the revenue is earned for the provision of specified goods / services under an enforceable contract, revenue is recognised when or as the obligations are satisfied.

Statutory fees and fines are recognised as revenue when the service has been provided, the payment is received or when the penalty has been applied, whichever occurs first.

Other revenue is recorded when the payment is due, the value of the payment is notified, or the payment is received, whichever occurs first.

B2-4 Grants and contributions

	Timing	Operating 2026 \$ '000	Operating 2025 \$ '000	Capital 2026 \$ '000	Capital 2025 \$ '000
General purpose grants and non-developer contributions (untied)					
General purpose (untied)					
Current year allocation					
Financial assistance – general component	2	2,274	928	–	–
Financial assistance – local roads component		929	–	–	–
Payment in advance - future year allocation					
Financial assistance – general component	2	3,805	2,251	–	–
Financial assistance – local roads component	2	1,530	916	–	–
Amount recognised as income during current year		8,538	4,095	–	–
Special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)					
Cash contributions					
Previously specific grants:					
Water supplies	2	–	200	–	–
Aged care	1	2,216	1,886	431	52
Bushfire and emergency services	2	115	119	–	–
Community care	2	197	91	–	24
Economic development	2	–	30	–	–
Environmental programs	2	195	–	–	–
Library – per capita	2	51	51	–	–
Library – special projects	2	26	29	73	–
Noxious weeds	2	54	–	–	–
Recreation and culture	1	10	–	97	2,856
Storm/flood damage	2	–	–	–	113
Street lighting	2	20	20	–	–
Transport (roads to recovery)	2	1,136	1,643	–	–
Transport (other roads and bridges funding)	1	401	30	5,409	2,761
Other specific grants	2	–	20	–	–
Previously contributions:					
Transport for NSW contributions (regional roads, block grant)	2	1,397	1,371	–	–
Tourism	1	418	–	540	1,218
Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions – cash		6,236	5,490	6,550	7,024
Non-cash contributions					
Community services	2	–	–	88	–
Total other contributions – non-cash		–	–	88	–
Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)		6,236	5,490	6,638	7,024
Total grants and non-developer contributions		14,774	9,585	6,638	7,024
Comprising:					
– Commonwealth funding		12,142	7,624	5,845	5,026
– State funding		2,507	1,961	66	1,076
– Other funding		125	–	727	922
		14,774	9,585	6,638	7,024

continued on next page

Page 19 of 78

B2-4 Grants and contributions (continued)

Developer contributions

		Operating 2026 \$ '000	Operating 2025 \$ '000	Capital 2026 \$ '000	Capital 2025 \$ '000
	Timing				
Developer contributions: (s7.4 & s7.11 - EP&A Act, s64 of the LGA):					
Cash contributions					
S 7.4 – contributions using planning agreements	2	214	150	–	–
S 7.11 – contributions towards amenities/services	2	–	–	9	–
Other developer contributions	2	629	1,534	–	–
Total developer contributions – cash		843	1,684	9	–
Total developer contributions		843	1,684	9	–
Total contributions		843	1,684	9	–
Total grants and contributions		15,617	11,269	6,647	7,024
Timing of revenue recognition					
Grants and contributions recognised over time (1)		401	–	6,103	6,855
Grants and contributions recognised at a point in time (2)		15,216	11,269	544	169
Total grants and contributions		15,617	11,269	6,647	7,024

Unspent grants and contributions

Certain grants and contributions are obtained by Council on the condition they be spent in a specified manner or in a future period but which are not yet spent in accordance with those conditions are as follows:

	Operating 2026 \$ '000	Operating 2025 \$ '000	Capital 2026 \$ '000	Capital 2025 \$ '000
Unspent grants and contributions				
Unspent funds at 1 July	495	2,091	2,984	4,260
Add: Funds received and not recognised as revenue in the current year	6,687	11,270	6,594	5,542
Less: Funds recognised as revenue in previous years that have been spent during the reporting year	(6,390)	(12,866)	(4,655)	(3,389)
Less: Funds received in prior year but revenue recognised and funds spent in current year	–	–	(2,333)	(3,429)
Unspent funds at 30 June	792	495	2,590	2,984

Material accounting policy information

Grants and contributions – enforceable agreement with sufficiently specific performance obligations

Grant and contribution revenue from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised as or when control of each performance obligations is transferred.

B2-4 Grants and contributions (continued)

The performance obligations vary according to the agreement but include achievement of specified levels of service, delivery of specific goods or services, or the completion of agreed asset development. Payment terms vary depending on the terms of the grant, cash is received upfront for some grants and on the achievement of certain payment milestones for others.

Performance obligations may be satisfied either at a point in time or over time and this is reflected in the revenue recognition pattern. Point in time recognition occurs when the beneficiary obtains control of the goods / services at a single time (e.g. completion of the project when a report / outcome is provided), whereas over time recognition is where the control of the services is ongoing throughout the project (e.g. provision of community health services through the year).

Where control is transferred over time, generally the input methods being either costs or time incurred are deemed to be the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefit.

Capital grants

Capital grants received by Council under an enforceable contract for the acquisition or construction of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment to identified specifications which will be under Council's control on completion are recognised as revenue as and when the obligation to construct or purchase is completed.

For construction projects, this is generally as the construction progresses in accordance with costs incurred since this is deemed to be the most appropriate measure of the completeness of the construction project.

For acquisitions of assets, the revenue is recognised when the asset is acquired and controlled by the Council.

Other grants and contributions

Assets, including cash, received from other grants and contributions are recognised at fair value when the asset is received. Council considers whether there are any related liability or equity items associated with the asset which are recognised in accordance with the relevant accounting standard.

Once the assets and liabilities have been recognised then income is recognised for any remaining asset value at the time that the asset is received.

Balranald Shire Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2026

B2-5 Interest and investment income

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Interest on financial assets measured at amortised cost		
– Overdue rates and annual charges (incl. special purpose rates)	80	70
– Cash and investments	1,312	1,493
Total interest and investment income	1,392	1,563
Interest and investment income is attributable to:		
Unrestricted investments/financial assets:		
Overdue rates and annual charges (general fund)	42	43
General Council cash and investments	1,060	1,302
Restricted investments/funds – external:		
Water fund operations	170	140
Sewerage fund operations	120	78
Total interest and investment income	1,392	1,563

B2-6 Other income

	Notes	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Rental income			
Commercial related		48	59
Health and day care related		24	21
Staff housing		71	59
Total rental income	C2-2	143	139
Total other income		143	139

B3 Costs of providing services**B3-1 Employee benefits and on-costs**

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Salaries and wages	6,662	5,674
Employee leave entitlements (ELE)	953	751
Superannuation	825	642
Workers' compensation insurance	255	154
Fringe benefit tax (FBT)	–	9
Protective clothing	21	21
Medicals	1	1
Recruitment	56	39
Other	44	14
Total employee costs	8,817	7,305
Less: capitalised costs	(14)	(28)
Total employee costs expensed	8,803	7,277

Material accounting policy information*Retirement benefit obligations*

All employees of the Council are entitled to benefits on retirement, disability or death. Council contributes to various defined benefit plans and defined contribution plans on behalf of its employees.

Superannuation plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense as they become payable. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that a cash refund or a reduction in the future payments is available.

Council participates in a defined benefit plan under the Local Government Superannuation Scheme, however, sufficient information to account for the plan as a defined benefit is not available and therefore Council accounts for its obligations to defined benefit plans on the same basis as its obligations to defined contribution plans, i.e. as an expense when it becomes payable – refer to Note E3-1 for more information.

B3-2 Materials and services

	Notes	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Raw materials and consumables		4,165	6,827
Consultancy & contractor costs		1,142	1,197
Administrator/Mayoral fees and associated expenses	F1-2	183	184
Advertising		79	75
Audit Fees	F2-1	79	77
Bank charges		20	22
Cleaning		279	240
Computer software charges		174	149
Election expenses		28	–
Electricity and heating		467	437
Insurance		595	529
Office expenses (including computer expenses)		84	24
Postage		15	12
Printing and stationery		23	19
Subscriptions and memberships		108	78
Telephone and communications		86	65
Training costs (other than salaries and wages)		67	56
Travel expenses		28	4
Valuation fees		30	40
Other expenses		1	–
Legal expenses:			
– Legal expenses: planning and development		–	2
– Legal expenses: other		71	29
Lease expenses:			
Expenses from leases of low value assets		–	18
Total materials and services		7,724	10,084

B3-3 Borrowing costs**(i) Interest bearing liability costs**

Interest on loans	66	77
Other debts	5	2
Total interest bearing liability costs	71	79
Total borrowing costs expensed	71	79

B3-4 Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets

	Notes	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Depreciation and amortisation			
Furniture and fittings		18	18
Office equipment		47	32
Plant and equipment		478	428
Land improvements (depreciable)		7	31
Infrastructure:	C1-6		
– Buildings – non-specialised		1,219	784
– Buildings – specialised		47	25
– Footpaths		51	37
– Kerb and gutter		64	58
– Other structures		388	292
– Roads and bridges		4,242	4,393
– Sewerage network		227	177
– Stormwater drainage		77	73
– Swimming pools		21	17
– Water supply network		360	327
Other assets:			
– Library books		4	12
Other assets		15	33
Total depreciation and amortisation costs		7,265	6,737
Impairment / revaluation decrement of IPPE			
Infrastructure:	C1-6		
– Roads and bridges		–	(2,540)
Total gross IPPE impairment / revaluation decrement costs		–	(2,540)
Amounts taken through revaluation reserve	C1-6	–	2,540
Total IPPE impairment / revaluation decrement costs charged to Income Statement		–	–
Total depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets		7,265	6,737

Material accounting policy information**Depreciation and amortisation**

Depreciation and amortisation are calculated using the straight line method to allocate their cost, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives. Useful lives are included in Note C1-6 for IPPE assets and Note C1-7 for intangible assets. Depreciation is capitalised where in-house assets have contributed to new assets.

Impairment of non-financial assets

Specialised assets held at fair value which are not primarily held for cash-generating purposes are not subject to impairment testing. These assets are reassessed annually to confirm their value is not materially different from fair value, and any impairment is captured through that process.

Intangible assets not yet available for use, are tested annually for impairment, or more frequently if there are indicators of impairment.

All other non-financial assets are tested for impairment if events suggest their carrying amount might not be recoverable. If the carrying amount is higher than the recoverable amount, an impairment loss is recognised. The recoverable amount is the greater of fair value (less selling costs) and value in use.

Impairment losses for revalued assets are firstly offset against the amount in the revaluation surplus for the class of asset, with only the excess to be recognised in the Income Statement.

Balranald Shire Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2026

B3-5 Other expenses

	Notes	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Impairment of receivables			
Rates and annual charges		99	116
User charges and fees		–	3
Other		–	20
Total impairment of receivables	C1-4	99	139
Other			
Contributions/levies to other levels of government			
– Emergency services levy (includes FRNSW, SES, and RFS levies)		393	371
Donations, contributions and assistance to other organisations (Section 356)		193	46
Total other		586	417
Total other expenses		685	556

B4 Gains or losses**B4-1 Gain or loss from the disposal, replacement and de-recognition of assets**

	Notes	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Gain (or loss) on disposal of plant and equipment	C1-6		
Proceeds from disposal – plant and equipment		145	132
Less: carrying amount of plant and equipment assets sold/written off		(70)	(97)
Gain (or loss) on disposal		75	35
Gain (or loss) on disposal of infrastructure	C1-6		
Proceeds from disposal – infrastructure		–	–
Less: carrying amount of infrastructure assets sold/written off		(94)	(40)
Gain (or loss) on disposal		(94)	(40)
Gain (or loss) on disposal of investments	C1-2		
Proceeds from disposal/redemptions/maturities – investments		5,500	11,500
Less: carrying amount of investments sold/redeemed/matured		(5,500)	(11,500)
Gain (or loss) on disposal		–	–
Other			
Proceeds from disposal of Library Books		–	–
Less: carrying amount of Library Books written off		–	(10)
Gain (or loss) on disposal		–	(10)
Net gain (or loss) from disposal of assets		(19)	(15)

B5 Performance against budget

B5-1 Material budget variations

Council's original budget was adopted by the Council on 17 June 2025 and is not required to be audited. The original projections on which the budget was based have been affected by a number of factors. These include state and federal government decisions, including new grant programs, changing economic activity, environmental factors, and by decisions made by Council.

While these General Purpose Financial Statements include the original budget adopted by Council, the Act requires Council to review its financial budget on a quarterly basis, so it is able to manage the variation between actuals and budget that invariably occur during the year.

Material variations of more than 10% between original budget and actual results or where the variance is considered material by nature are explained below.

Variation Key: **F** = Favourable budget variation, **U** = Unfavourable budget variation.

\$ '000	2026 Budget	2026 Actual	2026 ----- Variance -----	
Revenues				
Rates and annual charges	6,119	6,248	129	2% F
User charges and fees	1,448	2,555	1,107	76% F
Other revenues	880	674	(206)	(23)% U
Operating grants and contributions	9,252	15,617	6,365	69% F
Capital grants and contributions	1,895	6,647	4,752	251% F
Interest and investment revenue	1,208	1,392	184	15% F
Other income	475	143	(332)	(70)% U

Balranald Shire Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2026

B5-1 Material budget variations (continued)

\$ '000	2026 Budget	2026 Actual	2026 ----- Variance -----	
Expenses				
Employee benefits and on-costs	7,777	8,803	(1,026)	(13)% U
Materials and services	6,743	7,724	(981)	(15)% U
Borrowing costs	77	71	6	8% F
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	6,015	7,265	(1,250)	(21)% U
Other expenses	603	685	(82)	(14)% U
Joint ventures and associates – net losses	–	15	(15)	∞ U
Statement of cash flows				
Cash flows from operating activities	6,077	14,389	8,312	137% F
Cash flows from investing activities	(16,352)	(24,149)	(7,797)	48% U
Cash flows from financing activities	1,423	1,260	(163)	(11)% U

Balranald Shire Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2026

C Financial position**C1 Assets we manage****C1-1 Cash and cash equivalents**

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Cash assets		
Cash on hand and at bank	3,307	1,307
Cash equivalent assets		
– Deposits at call	12	12
– Short-term deposits	–	10,500
Total cash and cash equivalents	3,319	11,819
Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents		
Total cash and cash equivalents per Statement of Financial Position	3,319	11,819
Balance as per the Statement of Cash Flows	3,319	11,819

C1-2 Financial investments

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000
Debt securities at amortised cost				
Long term deposits	34,500	–	20,500	–
Total	34,500	–	20,500	–
Total financial investments	34,500	–	20,500	–
Total cash assets, cash equivalents and investments	37,819	–	32,319	–

C1-3 Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2026 \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Total cash, cash equivalents and investments	37,819	–	37,819	32,319	–	32,319
Less: Externally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments	(12,457)	–	(12,457)	(10,642)	–	(10,642)
Cash, cash equivalents and investments not subject to external restrictions	25,362	–	25,362	21,677	–	21,677
					2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000

External restrictions**External restrictions – included in liabilities**

External restrictions included in cash, cash equivalents and investments above comprise:

Specific purpose unexpended loans – general	1,500	–
Specific purpose unexpended grants – general fund	2,463	2,808
External restrictions – included in liabilities	3,963	2,808

External restrictions – other

External restrictions included in cash, cash equivalents and investments above comprise:

Developer contributions – general	99	30
Specific purpose unexpended grants (recognised as revenue) – general fund	919	601
Specific purpose unexpended grants (recognised as revenue) – water fund	–	70
Water fund	4,477	4,934
Sewer fund	2,250	1,569
Stormwater management	77	58
Domestic waste management	672	572
External restrictions – other	8,494	7,834
Total external restrictions	12,457	10,642

Cash, cash equivalents and investments subject to external restrictions are those which are only available for specific use by Council due to a restriction placed by legislation or third-party contractual agreement.

Balranald Shire Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2026

C1-3 Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments (continued)

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2026 \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
(b) Internal allocations						
Cash, cash equivalents and investments not subject to external restrictions	25,362	–	25,362	21,677	–	21,677
Less: Internally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments	(19,018)	–	(19,018)	(13,949)	–	(13,949)
Unrestricted and unallocated cash, cash equivalents and investments	6,344	–	6,344	7,728	–	7,728
					2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000

Internal allocations

At 30 June, Council has internally allocated funds to the following:

Plant and vehicle replacement	1,872	1,955
Infrastructure replacement	1,660	1,475
Employees leave entitlement	375	312
Financial Assistance Grant in advance	5,335	3,167
Insurance	60	40
Council election	45	45
Caravan park reserve	526	553
Council property maintenance	410	140
waste facilities rehabilitation	242	242
Hostel bonds	2,160	1,560
Self care unit bonds	440	440
Self care unit maintenance	49	16
Water supply infrastructure upgrade	1,198	708
Sewer infrastructure upgrade	892	392
Financial system upgrade	500	–
IT infrastructure replacement	500	500
Levee bank restoration	300	250
Asset revaluation	130	80
Housing Development	750	500
Future development fund	1,574	1,574
Total internal allocations	19,018	13,949

Cash, cash equivalents and investments not subject to external restrictions may be internally allocated by resolution or policy of the elected Council.

continued on next page

Page 32 of 78

Balranald Shire Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2026

C1-3 Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments (continued)

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2026 \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
(c) Unrestricted and unallocated						
Unrestricted and unallocated cash, cash equivalents and investments	6,344	–	6,344	7,728	–	7,728

C1-4 Receivables

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000
Rates and annual charges	969	–	554	69
Interest and extra charges	–	–	69	9
User charges and fees	541	–	787	61
Accrued revenues				
– Interest on investments	562	–	372	–
Government grants and subsidies	4,964	–	2,803	–
Net GST receivable	58	–	186	–
Other debtors	–	–	4	–
Total	7,094	–	4,775	139
Less: provision for impairment				
Rates and annual charges	(440)	–	(356)	–
User charges and fees	(38)	–	(3)	–
Other debtors	–	–	(20)	–
Total provision for impairment – receivables	(478)	–	(379)	–
Total net receivables	6,616	–	4,396	139
Externally restricted receivables				
Water supply				
– Rates and availability charges	–	–	86	11
– Other	651	–	267	59
Sewerage services				
– Rates and availability charges	–	–	68	9
– Other	93	–	13	4
Total external restrictions	744	–	434	83
Unrestricted receivables	5,872	–	3,962	56
Total net receivables	6,616	–	4,396	139

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Movement in provision for impairment of receivables		
Balance at the beginning of the year	379	275
Add: new provisions recognised during the year	–	358
– amounts already provided for and written off this year	–	(254)
Balance at the end of the year	379	379

Material accounting policy information

Receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. Receivables are generally due for settlement within 30 days.

Impairment

Impairment of financial assets measured at amortised cost is recognised on an expected credit loss (ECL) basis.

When determining whether the credit risk of a financial asset has increased significantly since initial recognition, and when estimating ECL, the Council considers reasonable and supportable information that is relevant and available without undue cost or effort. This includes both quantitative and qualitative information and analysis based on Council's historical experience and informed credit assessment, and including forward-looking information.

C1-4 Receivables (continued)

When considering the ECL for rates debtors, Council takes into account that unpaid rates represent a charge against the rateable property that will be recovered when the property is next sold. For non-rates debtors, Council uses the presumption that an asset which is more than 30 days past due has seen a significant increase in credit risk.

The Council uses the presumption that a financial asset is in default when:

- the other party is unlikely to pay its credit obligations to the Council in full, without recourse by the Council to actions such as realising security (if any is held) or
- the financial assets (for non-rates debtors) are more than 90 days past due.

Credit losses are measured as the present value of the difference between the cash flows due to the entity in accordance with the contract, and the cash flows expected to be received. This is applied using a probability weighted approach.

On initial recognition of the asset, an estimate of the expected credit losses for the next 12 months is recognised. Where the asset has experienced significant increase in credit risk then the lifetime losses are estimated and recognised.

Council uses the simplified approach for trade receivables where the expected lifetime credit losses are recognised on day 1.

There has been no change in the estimation techniques or significant assumptions made during the current reporting period.

The Council writes off a trade receivable when there is information indicating that the debtor is in severe financial difficulty and there is no realistic prospect of recovery, e.g. when the debtor has been placed under liquidation or has entered into bankruptcy proceedings, or when the receivables are over 6 years past due, whichever occurs first.

None of the receivables that have been written off are subject to enforcement activity.

Where the Council renegotiates the terms of receivables due from certain customers, the new expected cash flows are discounted at the original effective interest rate and any resulting difference to the carrying value is recognised in profit or loss.

Rates and annual charges outstanding are secured against the property.

Balranald Shire Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2026

C1-5 Inventories

	2026	2026	2025	2025
	Current	Non-current	Current	Non-current
	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Inventories at cost				
Stores and materials	228	–	285	–
Trading stock	46	–	35	–
Total inventories at cost	274	–	320	–
Total inventories	274	–	320	–

Material accounting policy information

Raw materials and stores, work in progress and finished goods

Costs are assigned to individual items of inventory on the basis of weighted average costs. Costs of purchased inventory are determined after deducting rebates and discounts. Net realisable value is the estimated selling price in the ordinary course of business less the estimated costs of completion and the estimated costs necessary to make the sale.

C1-6 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

	At 1 July 2025			Asset movements during the reporting period						At 30 June 2026		
	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount	Additions renewals ¹	Additions new assets	Carrying value of disposals	Depreciation expense	WIP transfers	Revaluation increments to equity (ARR)	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount
By aggregated asset class	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Capital work in progress	3,058	–	3,058	272	1,477	–	–	(1,401)	–	3,406	–	3,406
Plant and equipment	6,345	(4,161)	2,184	–	–	–	(478)	–	–	6,555	(4,277)	2,272
Office equipment	748	(542)	206	–	39	–	(47)	–	–	782	(589)	193
Furniture and fittings	395	(296)	99	–	28	–	(18)	–	–	408	(295)	113
Land:												
– Operational land	4,271	–	4,271	–	–	–	–	–	–	4,271	–	4,271
– Community land	3,210	–	3,210	–	–	–	–	–	–	3,297	–	3,297
Land improvements – non-depreciable	830	–	830	–	–	–	–	–	–	830	–	830
Land improvements – depreciable	324	(250)	74	–	26	–	(7)	–	–	350	(256)	94
Infrastructure:												
– Roads and bridges	290,018	(100,941)	189,077	5,409	–	–	(4,242)	1,141	14	298,332	(105,655)	192,677
– Other structures	14,561	(2,903)	11,658	208	24	(42)	(388)	65	–	14,171	(3,190)	10,981
– Swimming pools	1,710	(458)	1,252	–	–	–	(21)	–	46	1,997	(721)	1,276
– Sewerage network	15,567	(4,563)	11,004	126	–	–	(227)	–	237	16,035	(4,896)	11,139
– Water supply network	20,789	(10,018)	10,771	1,349	93	–	(360)	195	229	22,882	(10,606)	12,276
– Buildings – specialised	1,875	(575)	1,300	–	–	–	(47)	–	–	2,071	(622)	1,449
– Stormwater drainage	6,670	(1,792)	4,878	–	342	–	(77)	–	–	6,855	(1,869)	4,986
– Kerb and gutter	5,117	(2,616)	2,501	–	97	–	(64)	–	–	5,215	(2,680)	2,535
– Footpaths	3,644	(1,522)	2,122	–	31	–	(51)	–	–	3,675	(1,573)	2,102
– Buildings – non-specialised	50,294	(21,579)	28,715	10	13	(52)	(1,219)	–	–	49,901	(22,766)	27,135
Other assets:												
– Library books	193	(154)	39	–	–	–	(4)	–	–	193	(158)	35
– Other	880	(428)	452	–	–	–	(15)	–	–	–	–	–
Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	430,499	(152,798)	277,701	7,374	2,170	(94)	(7,265)	–	526	441,226	(160,153)	281,067

(1) Renewals are defined as the replacement of existing assets (as opposed to the acquisition of new assets).

continued on next page

Page 37 of 78

C1-6 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (continued)

	At 1 July 2024			Asset movements during the reporting period								At 30 June 2025		
	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount	Additions renewals ¹	Additions new assets	Carrying value of disposals	Depreciation expense	Impairment reversal (recognised in equity)	WIP transfers	Revaluation decrements to equity (ARR)	Revaluation increments to equity (ARR)	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount
By aggregated asset class	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Capital work in progress	4,420	–	4,420	1,320	932	–	–	–	(3,615)	–	–	3,058	–	3,058
Plant and equipment	5,555	(3,903)	1,652	712	327	(97)	(428)	–	18	–	–	6,345	(4,161)	2,184
Office equipment	609	(510)	99	107	31	–	(32)	–	–	–	–	748	(542)	206
Furniture and fittings	377	(278)	99	–	18	–	(18)	–	–	–	–	395	(296)	99
Land:														
– Operational land	3,607	–	3,607	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	664	4,271	–	4,271
– Community land	2,573	–	2,573	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	637	3,210	–	3,210
Land improvements – non-depreciable	798	–	798	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	32	830	–	830
Land improvements – depreciable	311	(234)	77	–	–	–	(31)	–	–	–	28	324	(250)	74
Infrastructure:														
– Roads	211,124	(53,215)	157,909	3,888	–	–	(4,393)	2,540	1,976	–	27,155	290,018	(100,941)	189,077
– Other structures	10,400	(2,545)	7,855	1,703	1,283	(40)	(292)	–	814	–	335	14,561	(2,903)	11,658
– Swimming pools	1,326	(338)	988	–	–	–	(17)	–	–	–	283	1,710	(458)	1,252
– Sewerage network	14,588	(4,173)	10,415	386	–	–	(177)	–	–	–	379	15,567	(4,563)	11,004
– Water supply network	19,402	(9,282)	10,120	193	–	–	(327)	–	407	–	379	20,789	(10,018)	10,771
– Buildings – specialised	1,754	(467)	1,287	–	–	–	(25)	–	–	–	38	1,875	(575)	1,300
– Stormwater drainage	6,410	(1,648)	4,762	–	–	–	(73)	–	–	–	190	6,670	(1,792)	4,878
– Kerb and gutter	5,016	(1,755)	3,261	48	–	–	(58)	–	–	(749)	–	5,117	(2,616)	2,501
– Footpaths	2,108	(709)	1,399	179	4	–	(37)	–	274	–	302	3,644	(1,522)	2,122
– Buildings – non-specialised	48,021	(19,623)	28,398	218	33	–	(784)	–	126	–	724	50,294	(21,579)	28,715
Other assets:														
– Library books	186	(145)	41	17	–	(10)	(12)	–	–	–	–	193	(154)	39
– Other	845	(398)	447	–	–	–	(33)	–	–	–	38	880	(428)	452
Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	339,430	(99,223)	240,207	8,771	2,628	(147)	(6,737)	2,540	–	(749)	31,184	430,499	(152,798)	277,701

(1) Renewals are defined as the replacement of existing assets (as opposed to the acquisition of new assets).

continued on next page

Page 38 of 78

C1-6 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (continued)

Material accounting policy information

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment are held at fair value. Independent comprehensive valuations are performed at least every five years, however the carrying amount of assets is assessed by Council at each reporting date to confirm that it is not materially different from current fair value.

Water and sewerage network assets are indexed at each reporting period in accordance with the Rates Reference Manual issued by Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).

Land is not depreciated. Depreciation on other assets is calculated using the straight-line method to allocate their carrying amount, net of their residual values, over their estimated remaining useful lives. The range of useful lives applied to new assets by Council are as follows:

Plant and equipment	Years	Other equipment	Years
Office equipment	5 to 10	Playground equipment	5 to 15
Office furniture	10 to 20	Benches, seats etc.	10 to 20
Computer equipment	3 to 4		
Vehicles	5 to 8	Buildings	
Heavy plant/road making equipment	5 to 8	Buildings: masonry	50 to 100
Other plant and equipment	5 to 15	Buildings: other	20 to 40
Water and sewer assets		Stormwater assets	
Dams and reservoirs	20 to 100	Drains	70 to 100
Bores	10 to 50	Culverts	50 to 80
Reticulation pipes: PVC	50 to 80	Flood control structures	20 to 80
Reticulation pipes: other	25 to 50		
Pumps and telemetry	8 to 20		
Transportation assets		Other infrastructure assets	
Sealed roads: surface	15	Bulk earthworks	Indefinite
Sealed roads: structure	35 to 150	Swimming pools	25 to 140
Unsealed roads	90 to 150	Other open space/recreational assets	20
Bridge: concrete	80 to 120	Other infrastructure	20
Bridge: other	80 to 120		
Road pavements	35 to 130		
Kerb, gutter and footpaths	40		

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date.

Land under roads

Land under roads is land under roadways and road reserves including land under footpaths, nature strips and median strips.

Council has elected not to recognise land under roads acquired before 1 July 2008. Land under roads acquired after 1 July 2008 is recognised in accordance with the IPPE accounting policy.

Crown reserves

Crown reserves under Council's care and control are recognised as assets of the Council. While ownership of the reserves remains with the Crown, Council retains operational control of the reserves and is responsible for their maintenance and use in accordance with the specific purposes to which the reserves are dedicated.

Improvements on Crown reserves are also recorded as assets, while maintenance costs incurred by Council and revenues relating to the reserves are recognised within Council's Income Statement.

Rural Fire Service assets

Council has assessed the value of rural firefighting assets ("Red fleet") and determined that the value of these assets are not material and have not recognised them in the financial statements. The NSW Government has confirmed that rural firefighting assets will be transitioned to the control of the Rural Fire Service, effective 1 July 2027.

Externally restricted infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

	as at 30/06/26			as at 30/06/25		
	Gross carrying amount \$ '000	Accumulated depn. and impairment \$ '000	Net carrying amount \$ '000	Gross carrying amount \$ '000	Accumulated depn. and impairment \$ '000	Net carrying amount \$ '000
Water supply						
WIP	-	-	-	257	-	257
Plant and equipment	-	-	-	405	108	297
Land						
– Operational land	-	-	-	146	-	146
Buildings	-	-	-	500	175	325
Infrastructure	-	-	-	20,789	10,018	10,771
Total water supply	-	-	-	22,097	10,301	11,796
Sewerage services						
WIP	-	-	-	3	-	3
Plant and equipment	-	-	-	395	89	306
Land						
– Operational land	-	-	-	555	-	555
Infrastructure	-	-	-	15,567	4,563	11,004
Total sewerage services	-	-	-	16,520	4,652	11,868
Total restricted infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	-	-	-	38,617	14,953	23,664

C1-7 Intangible assets

Intangible assets are as follows:

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Other Intangibles		
Opening values at 1 July		
Gross carrying amount	18	18
Accumulated amortisation	(18)	(18)
Net carrying amount – opening balance	–	–
Movements for the year		
Closing values at 30 June		
Gross carrying amount	18	18
Accumulated amortisation	(18)	(18)
Total intangible assets – net carrying amount	–	–

C2 Leasing activities

C2-1 Council as a lessee

Council had no leases in place as at 30 June 2026

(a) Income Statement

The amounts recognised in the Income Statement relating to leases where Council is a lessee are shown below:

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Expenses relating to leases of low-value assets	20	18
	20	18

(b) Leases at significantly below market value – concessionary / peppercorn leases

Council has elected not to separate non-lease components from lease components for any class of asset and has accounted for payments as a single component.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises: the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration, less any lease incentives received. The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight-line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of asset accounting policy.

Exceptions to lease accounting

Council has applied the exceptions to lease accounting for both short-term leases (i.e. leases with a term of less than or equal to 12 months) and leases of low-value assets. Council recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Leases at significantly below market value / Concessionary leases

Council has elected to measure the right of use asset arising from the concessionary leases at cost which is based on the associated lease liability at initial recognition.

C2-2 Council as a lessor

Operating leases

	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000

The amounts recognised in the Income Statement relating to operating leases where Council is a lessor are shown below

(i) Assets held as property, plant and equipment

Lease income (excluding variable lease payments not dependent on an index or rate)	143	139
Total income relating to operating leases for Council assets	143	139

C3 Liabilities of Council

C3-1 Payables

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000
Goods and services – operating expenditure	380	–	339	–
Goods and services – capital expenditure	190	–	303	–
Accrued expenses:				
– Borrowings	4	–	2	–
– Salaries and wages	222	–	179	–
– Other expenditure accruals	27	–	2	–
Security bonds, deposits and retentions	174	–	171	–
Retirement home contributions	2,600	–	2,000	–
Other	64	–	79	–
Prepaid rates	235	–	211	–
Total payables	3,896	–	3,286	–

Payables relating to restricted assets

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000
Externally restricted assets				
Water	111	–	63	–
Sewer	104	–	31	–
Payables relating to externally restricted assets	215	–	94	–
Total payables relating to restricted assets	215	–	94	–
Total payables relating to unrestricted assets	3,681	–	3,192	–
Total payables	3,896	–	3,286	–

Current payables not anticipated to be settled within the next twelve months

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
The following liabilities, even though classified as current, are not expected to be settled in the next 12 months.		
Payables – security bonds, deposits and retentions	2,774	2,031
Total payables	2,774	2,031

C3-2 Contract Liabilities

		2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000
	Notes				
Grants and contributions received in advance:					
Unexpended capital grants (to construct Council controlled assets)	(i)	2,463	—	2,808	—
Total grants received in advance		2,463	—	2,808	—
Total contract liabilities		2,463	—	2,808	—

Notes

(i) Council has received funding to construct assets including sporting facilities, roads, library and other infrastructure. The funds received are under an enforceable contract which require Council to construct an identified asset which will be under Council's control on completion. The revenue is recognised as Council constructs the asset and the contract liability reflects the funding received which cannot yet be recognised as revenue. The revenue is expected to be recognised in the next 12 months.

Contract liabilities relating to restricted assets

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000
Externally restricted assets				
Unspent grants held as contract liabilities (excl. Water & Sewer)	2,463	—	2,808	—
Total contract liabilities relating to restricted assets	2,463	—	2,808	—
Total contract liabilities	2,463	—	2,808	—

Changes in contract liabilities

Contract Liabilities reduced during the year by \$345,000. This was due to a net reduction of liabilities for completed capital works of \$2.33M, offset by additional unspent funds received in the current year of \$1.989M.

Balranald Shire Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2026

C3-3 Borrowings

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000
Loans – secured ¹	293	2,165	240	958
Total borrowings	293	2,165	240	958

(1) Loans are secured over the general rating income of Council.

Disclosures on liability interest rate risk exposures, fair value disclosures and security can be found in Note E1-1.

Borrowings relating to restricted assets

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000
Externally restricted assets				
Water	93	215	88	309
Total borrowings relating to restricted assets	93	215	88	309
Total borrowings relating to unrestricted assets	200	1,950	152	649
Total borrowings	293	2,165	240	958

(a) Changes in liabilities arising from financing activities

	2025		Non-cash movements				2026
	Opening Balance \$ '000	Cash flows \$ '000	Acquisition \$ '000	Fair value changes \$ '000	Acquisition due to change in accounting policy \$ '000	Other non-cash movement \$ '000	Closing balance \$ '000
Loans – secured	1,198	(240)	1,500	–	–	–	2,458
Total liabilities from financing activities	1,198	(240)	1,500	–	–	–	2,458

	2024		Non-cash movements				2025
	Opening Balance \$ '000	Cash flows \$ '000	Acquisition \$ '000	Fair value changes \$ '000	Acquisition due to change in accounting policy \$ '000	Other non-cash movement \$ '000	Closing balance \$ '000
Loans – secured	1,425	(227)	–	–	–	–	1,198
Total liabilities from financing activities	1,425	(227)	–	–	–	–	1,198

continued on next page

Page 46 of 78

C3-3 Borrowings (continued)

(b) Financing arrangements

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Total facilities		
Total financing facilities available to Council at the reporting date are:		
Bank overdraft facilities ¹	200	200
Credit cards/purchase cards	150	150
Total financing arrangements	350	350
Drawn facilities		
Financing facilities drawn down at the reporting date are:		
– Credit cards/purchase cards	5	5
Total drawn financing arrangements	5	5
Undrawn facilities		
Undrawn financing facilities available to Council at the reporting date are:		
– Bank overdraft facilities	200	200
– Credit cards/purchase cards	145	145
Total undrawn financing arrangements	345	345

Additional financing arrangements information

Breaches and defaults

During the current and prior year, there were no defaults or breaches on any of the loans.

(1) The bank overdraft facility may be drawn at any time and may be terminated by the bank without notice.

C3-4 Employee benefit provisions

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-current \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-current \$ '000
Annual leave	569	–	531	–
Long service leave	444	167	384	145
Other entitlements	66	6	47	4
Total employee benefit provisions	1,079	173	962	149
Total employee benefit provisions relating to unrestricted assets	1,079	173	962	149
Total employee benefit provisions	1,079	173	962	149

Current employee benefit provisions not anticipated to be settled within the next twelve months

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
The following provisions, even though classified as current, are not expected to be settled in the next 12 months.		
Provisions – employees benefits	552	538
	552	538

Description of and movements in provisions

	ELE provisions			
	Annual leave \$ '000	Long service leave \$ '000	Other employee benefits \$ '000	Total \$ '000
2026				
At beginning of year	531	529	51	1,111
Other	38	82	21	141
Total ELE provisions at end of year	569	611	72	1,252
2025				
At beginning of year	414	423	66	903
Additional provisions	392	128	39	559
Amounts used (payments)	(275)	(22)	(54)	(351)
Total ELE provisions at end of year	531	529	51	1,111

Material accounting policy information

Long-term employee benefit obligations

The liability for long-service leave and annual leave that is not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service is recognised in the provision for employee benefits and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the end of the reporting period using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures, and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the end of the reporting period on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

C3-5 Provisions

	2026 Current \$ '000	2026 Non-Current \$ '000	2025 Current \$ '000	2025 Non-Current \$ '000
Asset remediation/restoration:				
Asset remediation/restoration (future works)	–	170	–	170
Sub-total – asset remediation/restoration	–	170	–	170
Total provisions	–	170	–	170

Description of and movements in provisions

	Other provisions	
	Asset remediation \$ '000	Total \$ '000
2026		
At beginning of year	170	170
Total other provisions at end of year	170	170
2025		
At beginning of year	170	170
Total other provisions at end of year	170	170

Nature and purpose of provisions

Asset remediation

Council has a legal/public obligation to make, restore, rehabilitate and reinstate the council tip.

Material accounting policy information

Provisions are recognised when Council has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events, it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation, and the amount has been reliably estimated.

Where there are a number of similar obligations, the likelihood that an outflow will be required in settlement is determined by considering the class of obligations as a whole. A provision is recognised even if the likelihood of an outflow with respect to any one item included in the same class of obligations may be small.

Provisions are measured at the present value of management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation at the reporting date. The discount rate used to determine the present value reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the liability. The increase in the provision due to the passage of time is recognised as a borrowing cost.

Asset remediation – tips and quarries

Close-down and restoration costs include the dismantling and demolition of infrastructure, and the removal of residual materials and remediation of disturbed areas. Estimated close-down and restoration costs are provided for in the accounting period when the obligation arising from the related disturbance occurs, whether this occurs during the development or during the operation phase, based on the net present value of estimated future costs. Provisions for close-down and restoration costs do not include any additional obligations which are expected to arise from future disturbance.

The cost estimates are calculated annually during the life of the operation to reflect known developments, e.g. updated cost estimates and revisions to the estimated lives of operations, and are subject to formal review at regular intervals.

The ultimate cost of environmental remediation is uncertain and cost estimates can vary in response to many factors, including changes to the relevant legal requirements, the emergence of new restoration techniques, or experience at other locations. The expected timing of expenditure can also change, for example in response to changes in quarry reserves or production rates. As a result, there could be significant adjustments to the provision for close down and restoration and environmental clean-up, which would affect future financial results.

Other movements in the provisions for close-down and restoration costs, including those resulting from new disturbance, updated cost estimates, changes to the estimated lives of operations, and revisions to discount rates, are capitalised within infrastructure, property, plant and equipment. These costs are then depreciated over the lives of the assets to which they relate.

C4 Reserves

C4-1 Nature and purpose of reserves

IPPE Revaluation Surplus

The infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE) revaluation reserve is used to record increments and decrements in the revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment.

D Council structure

D1 Results by fund

General fund refers to all Council activities other than water and sewer. All amounts disclosed in this note are gross i.e. inclusive of internal charges and recoveries made between the funds. Assets and liabilities shown in the water and sewer columns are restricted for use for these activities.

D1-1 Income Statement by fund

	General 2026 \$ '000	Water 2026 \$ '000	Sewer 2026 \$ '000
Income from continuing operations			
Rates and annual charges	4,372	1,034	842
User charges and fees	1,423	1,019	113
Interest and investment revenue	1,070	193	129
Other revenues	398	250	26
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	15,617	—	—
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	6,647	—	—
Other income	143	—	—
Total income from continuing operations	29,670	2,496	1,110
Expenses from continuing operations			
Employee benefits and on-costs	8,458	279	66
Materials and services	6,537	899	288
Borrowing costs	49	22	—
Other expenses	545	115	25
Net losses from the disposal of assets	19	—	—
Share of interests in joint ventures and associates using the equity method	15	—	—
Total expenses from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	15,623	1,315	379
Operating result from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	14,047	1,181	731
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	6,617	395	253
Operating result from continuing operations	7,430	786	478
Net operating result for the year	7,430	786	478
Net operating result attributable to each council fund	7,430	786	478
Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	783	786	478

D1-2 Statement of Financial Position by fund

	General 2026 \$ '000	Water 2026 \$ '000	Sewer 2026 \$ '000
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	(2,308)	3,877	1,750
Investments	33,400	600	500
Receivables	5,872	651	93
Inventories	274	—	—
Total current assets	37,238	5,128	2,343
Non-current assets			
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	256,023	13,069	11,975
Investments accounted for using the equity method	544	—	—
Total non-current assets	256,567	13,069	11,975
Total assets	293,805	18,197	14,318
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Payables	3,681	111	104
Contract liabilities	2,463	—	—
Borrowings	200	93	—
Employee benefit provision	1,079	—	—
Total current liabilities	7,423	204	104
Non-current liabilities			
Borrowings	1,950	215	—
Employee benefit provision	173	—	—
Provisions	170	—	—
Total non-current liabilities	2,293	215	—
Total liabilities	9,716	419	104
Net assets	284,089	17,778	14,214
EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus	73,596	9,544	5,156
IPPE revaluation reserves	210,493	8,234	9,058
Council equity interest	284,089	17,778	14,214
Total equity	284,089	17,778	14,214

D2 Interests in other entities

	Council's share of net assets	
	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000
Council's share of net income		
Net share of interests in joint ventures and associates using the equity method – expenses		
Joint ventures	15	247
Total net share of interests in joint ventures and associates using the equity method – expenses	15	247
Total Council's share of net income	(15)	(247)
Council's share of net assets		
Net share of interests in joint ventures and associates using the equity method – assets		
Joint ventures	544	559
Total net share of interests in joint ventures and associates using the equity method – assets	544	559
Total Council's share of net assets	544	559

D2-1 Interests in joint arrangements

The following information is provided for joint arrangements that are individually material to the Council. Included are the amounts as per the individual joint arrangement's financial statements, adjusted for fair-value adjustments, rather than Council's share.

Council is a member of the Far South West Joint Organisation of Councils (FSWJO). Details of Council's membership and participation is as follows:

The FSWJO is a separately constituted entity pursuant to Part 7 (Sections 400O to 400ZH) of the Local Government Act (NSW) 1993, as amended, and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2008. The FSWJO has the same year end date as the Council.

The principal functions of the Far West Joint Organisation will be to:

Establish strategic regional priorities for the joint organisation area and develop strategies and plans for delivering these priorities:

1. Provide regional leadership for the joint organisation area and to be an advocate for strategic regional priorities,
2. Identify and take up opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation on matters relating to the joint organisation area,
3. Enhancing strategic capacity to support member councils to deliver services to their communities,
4. Service delivery to provide services directly to communities within the region.

The percentage ownership interest held is equivalent to the percentage voting rights for all associates as follows:

FSWJO comprises the Councils of the Shires of Balranald, Wentworth, Broken Hill and Central Darling Shire Councils. The Board of the FSWJO comprises 4 voting members being the Mayors of the four member Councils, and non-voting members being the General Managers of the four member Councils, as well as 3 appointed members from the State Government and Cabinet (non-voting).

Balranald Shire Council, as a member of the FSWJO, has a one quarter voting right (25%) in respect to the decisions of the Board.

For the 2025/26 year, no member Councils were required to make contributions to the FSWJO. Members of the FSWJO are indemnified from liability for functions and duties carried out or omitted honestly, in good faith and with due care and diligence.

The FSWJO has engaged an Executive Officer on a standard Local Government employment contract for 3 years.

There are no liability issues identified for Council in the short to medium term.

Far South West Joint Organisation Equity Method

continued on next page

Page 53 of 78

Balranald Shire Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2026

D2-1 Interests in joint arrangements (continued)

	\$'000	\$'000
	2026	2025
Summarised Statement of Financial Position		
Current assets	2,215	2,299
Current liabilities	(41)	(62)
Net assets	2,174	2,236
Summarised Statement of Income and other Comprehensive Income		
Grant funding	-	-
Interest income	8	11
Total income from continuing operations	8	101
Employee benefits	-	-
Depreciation and amortisation	-	-
Administration expenses	(70)	(1,087)
Other expenses	-	-
Total expense from continuing operations	(70)	(1,087)
Gain/(Loss) from continuing operations	(62)	(985)
Total comprehensive income	(62)	(985)
Summarised statement of Cash Flows		
Cashflow from operating activities	(84)	(1,160)
Cashflow from investing activities	-	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(84)	(1,160)
Reconciliation of carrying amount of interest in the joint arrangement to summarised financial information for FWJO accounted for using the Equity method:		
Balranald Shire Council's share of net assets	544	559
Carrying amount of net assets	544	559

E Risks and accounting uncertainties

E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held

Council's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks including (1) price risk, (2) credit risk, (3) liquidity risk and (4) interest rate risk.

The Council's overall risk management program focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the Council.

Council does not engage in transactions expressed in foreign currencies and is therefore not subject to foreign currency risk.

Financial risk management is carried out by Council's finance section under policies approved by the Council.

The fair value of Council's financial assets and financial liabilities approximates their carrying amount.

	Carrying value 2026 \$ '000	Carrying value 2025 \$ '000	Fair value 2026 \$ '000	Fair value 2025 \$ '000
Financial assets				
Measured at amortised cost				
Cash and cash equivalents	3,319	11,819	3,319	11,819
Receivables	6,616	4,535	6,616	4,535
Investments				
– Debt securities at amortised cost	34,500	20,500	34,500	20,500
Total financial assets	44,435	36,854	44,435	36,854
Financial liabilities				
Payables	3,896	3,286	3,896	3,286
Loans/advances	2,458	1,198	2,458	1,198
Total financial liabilities	6,354	4,484	6,354	4,484

Council's objective is to maximise its return on cash and investments whilst maintaining an adequate level of liquidity and preserving capital.

Council's finance area manages the cash and Investments portfolio.

Council has an investment policy which complies with the Local Government Act 1993 and Minister's investment order 625. This policy is regularly reviewed by Council and its staff and an investment report is tabled before Council on a monthly basis setting out the portfolio breakup and its performance as required by Local Government regulations.

The risks associated with the instruments held are:

- **Price risk** – the risk that the capital value of Investments may fluctuate due to changes in market prices, whether these changes are caused by factors specific to individual financial instruments or their issuers or are caused by factors affecting similar instruments traded in a market.
- **Interest rate risk** – the risk that movements in interest rates could affect returns and income.
- **Liquidity risk** – the risk that Council will not be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.
- **Credit risk** – the risk that the investment counterparty will not complete their obligations particular to a financial instrument, resulting in a financial loss to Council – be it of a capital or income nature.

Council manages these risks (amongst other measures) by diversifying its portfolio and only purchasing investments with high credit ratings or capital guarantees.

E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held (continued)

(a) Market risk – interest rate and price risk

	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000

The impact on the result for the year and equity of a reasonably possible movement in the price of investments held and interest rates is shown below. The reasonably possible movements were determined based on historical movements and economic conditions in place at the reporting date.

Impact of a 1% movement in interest rates

– Equity / Income Statement	378	322
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(b) Credit risk

Council's major receivables comprise (i) rates and annual charges and (ii) user charges and fees.

Council manages the credit risk associated with these receivables by monitoring outstanding debt and employing stringent debt recovery procedures. Council also encourages ratepayers to pay their rates by the due date through incentives.

The credit risk for liquid funds and other short-term financial assets is considered negligible, since the counterparties are reputable banks with high quality external credit ratings.

There are no significant concentrations of credit risk, whether through exposure to individual customers, specific industry sectors and/or regions.

The level of outstanding receivables is reported to Council monthly and benchmarks are set and monitored for acceptable collection performance.

Council makes suitable provision for doubtful receivables as required and carries out credit checks on most non-rate debtors.

There are no material receivables that have been subjected to a re-negotiation of repayment terms.

E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held (continued)

Credit risk profile

Receivables – rates and annual charges

Credit risk on rates and annual charges is minimised by the ability of Council to recover these debts as a secured charge over the land; that is, the land can be sold to recover the debt. Council is also able to charge interest on overdue rates and annual charges at higher than market rates which further encourages payment.

	Not yet overdue \$ '000	overdue rates and annual charges				Total \$ '000
		< 5 years \$ '000	1 - 2 years \$ '000	2 - 5 years \$ '000	≥ 5 years \$ '000	
2026						
Gross carrying amount	969	–	–	–	–	969
2025						
Gross carrying amount	–	553	43	27	–	623

Receivables - non-rates and annual charges and contract assets

Council applies the simplified approach for non-rates and annual charges debtors and contract assets to provide for expected credit losses, which permits the use of the lifetime expected loss provision at inception. To measure the expected credit losses, non-rates and annual charges debtors and contract assets have been grouped based on shared credit risk characteristics and the days past due.

The loss allowance provision is determined as follows. The expected credit losses incorporate forward-looking information.

	Not yet overdue \$ '000	0 - 30 days \$ '000	Overdue debts			Total \$ '000
			31 - 60 days \$ '000	61 - 90 days \$ '000	> 91 days \$ '000	
2026						
Gross carrying amount	6,125	–	–	–	–	6,125
Expected loss rate (%)	0.00%	0.00%	16.00%	16.00%	16.00%	0.00%
ECL provision	–	–	–	–	–	–
2025						
Gross carrying amount	–	4,146	86	33	26	4,291
Expected loss rate (%)	0.00%	0.00%	16.00%	16.00%	16.00%	0.54%
ECL provision	–	–	14	5	4	23

E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held (continued)

(c) Liquidity risk

Payables, lease liabilities and borrowings are both subject to liquidity risk; that is, the risk that insufficient funds may be on hand to meet payment obligations as and when they fall due.

Council manages this risk by monitoring its cash flow requirements and liquidity levels, and by maintaining an adequate cash buffer. Payment terms can be extended, and overdraft facilities drawn upon in extenuating circumstances.

Borrowings are also subject to interest rate risk: the risk that movements in interest rates could adversely affect funding costs. Council manages this risk through diversification of borrowing types, maturities and interest rate structures.

The finance team regularly reviews interest rate movements to determine if it would be advantageous to refinance or renegotiate part or all of the loan portfolio.

The timing of cash flows presented in the table below to settle financial liabilities reflects the earliest contractual settlement dates. The timing of expected outflows is not expected to be materially different from contracted cash flows.

The amounts disclosed in the table are the undiscounted contracted cash flows for non-lease liabilities (refer to Note C2-1(b) for lease liabilities) and therefore the balances in the table may not equal the balances in the Statement of Financial Position due to the effect of discounting.

	Weighted average interest rate %	Subject to no maturity \$ '000	payable in:			Total cash outflows \$ '000	Actual carrying values \$ '000
			≤ 1 Year \$ '000	1 - 5 Years \$ '000	> 5 Years \$ '000		
2026							
Payables	0.00%	174	–	–	–	174	3,896
Borrowings	0.00%	–	–	–	–	–	2,458
Total financial liabilities		174	–	–	–	174	6,354
2025							
Payables	0.00%	171	1,115	2,000	–	3,286	3,286
Borrowings	6.42%	–	240	921	37	1,198	1,198
Total financial liabilities		171	1,355	2,921	37	4,484	4,484

Loan agreement breaches

There were not any breaches to loan agreements which have occurred during the reporting year.

E2-1 Fair value measurement

The Council measures the following asset and liability classes at fair value on a recurring basis:

– Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

The fair value of assets and liabilities must be estimated in accordance with various accounting standards for either recognition and measurement requirements or for disclosure purposes.

AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement requires all assets and liabilities measured at fair value to be assigned to a 'level' in the fair value hierarchy as follows:

Level 1: Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the entity can access at the measurement date.

Level 2: Inputs other than quoted prices included within level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.

Level 3: Inputs for the asset or liability that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs).

Fair value measurement hierarchy								
Notes	Date of latest valuation		Level 2 Significant observable inputs		Level 3 Significant unobservable inputs		Total	
	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment								
C1-6								
Plant and equipment			–	–	–	2,184	–	2,184
Office equipment			–	–	–	206	–	206
Furniture and fittings			–	–	–	99	–	99
Land – operational	30/06/22	30/06/22	–	4,271	–	–	–	4,271
Land community	30/06/24	30/06/24	–	–	–	3,210	–	3,210
Land improvements	30/06/22	30/06/22	–	–	–	904	–	904
Buildings non - specialised	30/06/26	30/06/22	–	–	–	28,715	–	28,715
Buildings specialised	30/06/26	30/06/22	–	–	–	1,300	–	1,300
Other structures	30/06/22	30/06/22	–	–	–	11,658	–	11,658
Roads and bridges	30/06/25	30/06/25	–	–	–	189,077	–	189,077
Kerb and channels	30/06/25	30/06/25	–	–	–	2,501	–	2,501
Footpaths	30/06/25	30/06/25	–	–	–	2,122	–	2,122
Stormwater drainage	30/06/22	30/06/22	–	–	–	4,878	–	4,878
Water supply network	30/06/22	30/06/22	–	–	–	10,771	–	10,771
Sewerage network	30/06/22	30/06/22	–	–	–	11,004	–	11,004
Swimming pools	30/06/22	30/06/22	–	–	–	1,252	–	1,252
Other	30/06/22	30/06/22	–	–	–	491	–	491
Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment			–	4,271	–	270,372	–	274,643

Valuation techniques

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE)

Where Council is unable to derive fair valuations using quoted market prices of identical assets (ie. level 1 inputs) Council instead utilises a spread of both observable inputs (level 2 inputs) and unobservable inputs (level 3 inputs).

The fair valuation techniques Council has employed while utilising level 2 and level 3 inputs are as follows:

Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment

Plant & Equipment, Office Equipment and Furniture & Fittings

Plant & equipment, Office Equipment and Furniture & fittings are valued at cost but are disclosed at fair value in the notes. The carrying amount of these assets is assumed to approximate fair value due to the nature of the items. Examples of assets within these classes area as follows:

- Plant & equipment- Graders, Trucks, rollers, tractors and motor vehicles.
- Office equipment- Computers, photocopies, calculators etc.

continued on next page

Page 59 of 78

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

- Furniture & Fittings- Chairs, desks and display boards.

There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

Operational & Community Land

Operational & community Land are based on either the market value approach (level 2) or the cost approach (level 3). Operational Land is represented by actual market values in the Balranald Shire LGA. Operational land was valued based on observable market values (level 2). Community land is based on values supplied by the Valuer General which is not based on market value and as such have been classified at a level 3.

Operational Land has been indexed from a desktop valuation provided by PPE Valuers as at 30 June 2026.

Council changed its methodology for valuation of Community Land during FY 2022/23 to accord with the methodology supported by the NSW Auditor General. Council uses valuations supplied by the NSW Valuer General with a current base date of 1 July 2024.

Buildings- Non Specialised & Specialised

Non- Specialised & Specialised Buildings have been valued externally by PPE Valuers, using the market or cost approach, with effective date 30 June 2026. The approaches estimated the replacement cost of each building by componentising the building into significant parts.

While all buildings were physically inspected and the unit rates based on square market based evidence (level) 2 was established for some building assets, the majority of building assets were valued at a level 3.

Other Structures

Other structures comprise of aerodrome runway, lighting, irrigation systems and fencing etc. have been valued externally by APV Valuers and Asset Management of Level 18, 344 Queen Street Brisbane QLD 4000 using the cost approach, with effective date 30 June 2022. The approach estimated the replacement cost of the asset by componentising the asset into significant parts. No market evidence (level 2) inputs are available therefore level 3 valuation inputs were used for this asset class.

Valuations for all other structures have been indexed at 30 June 2026 based on a desktop valuation provided by PPE Valuations.

Roads, Bridges, Footpaths & Drainage Infrastructure.

Roads comprise roads carriageway, roadside shoulders & Kerb and Gutter and Channels. Bridges comprised of Bridges and Major Culverts. All these asset classes were valued externally by APV Valuers and Asset Management of Level 18, 344 Queen Street Brisbane QLD 4000 using the cost approach, with effective date 30 June 2025.

The approach estimated the replacement cost for each asset by componentising the assets into significant parts using Balranald Shire Council's internal data base of costs. From field observations taken during this revaluation most of the unsealed road network has been reclassified from a formed and paved road asset to a formed only road asset.

Valuations for all roads and transport assets have been indexed using desktop valuations provided by PPE Valuers, effective 30 June 2026.

Water Supply Network

Assets within this class comprise reservoirs, pumping stations and water pipelines.

The cost approach estimated the replacement cost for each asset by componentising the asset into significant parts with different useful lives and taking into account a range of factors. All Water Supply Network Assets were valued externally by APV Valuers and Asset Management of Level 18, 344 Queen Street Brisbane QLD 4000 using the cost approach, with effective date 30 June 2022.

This valuation is based on inventory information provided by Council validated by onsite inspections and CCTV data. No market based evidence (level 2) inputs are available therefore Level 3 valuation inputs were used for this asset class.

Valuations for all water supply assets have been indexed at 30 June 2026 based on a desktop valuation provided by PPE Valuers.

Sewerage Network

Assets within this class comprise treatment works, pumping stations and, sewerage mains.

The cost approach estimated the replacement cost for each asset by componentising the asset into significant parts with different useful lives and taking into account a range of factors. All Water Supply Network Assets were valued externally by APV Valuers and Asset Management of Level 18, 344 Queen Street Brisbane QLD 4000 using the cost approach, with effective date 30 June 2022.

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

This valuation is based on inventory information provided by Council validated by onsite inspections and CCTV data. No market based evidence (level 2) inputs are available therefore Level 3 valuation inputs were used for this asset class.

Valuations for all sewer assets have been indexed at 30 June 2026 based on a desktop valuation provided by PPE Valuers.

Swimming Pools

Assets within this class comprise Council's outdoor swimming pool. valued externally by APV Valuers and Asset Management of Level 18, 344 Queen Street Brisbane QLD 4000 using the market or cost approach, with effective date 30 June 2022. The approach estimated the replacement cost for each pool by componentising its significant parts.

While some elements of gross replacement values may be supported from market evidence (Level 2 input) other inputs (such as estimates of pattern of consumption, residual value, asset condition and useful life) required extensive professional judgement and impacted significantly on the final determination of fair value.

Valuations for all swimming pool assets have been indexed at 30 June 2026 based on a desktop valuation provided by PPE Valuers.

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

Fair value measurements using significant unobservable inputs (level 3)

Significant unobservable valuation inputs used (for level 3 asset classes) and their relationship to fair value.

The following table summarises the quantitative information relating to the significant unobservable inputs used in deriving the various level 3 asset class fair values.

	Valuation technique/s	Unobservable inputs
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment		
Plant and equipment	Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Office equipment	Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life
Furniture and fittings	Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life
Community Land	Unimproved Value	New South Wales Valuer Generals Unimproved Value
Land improvements	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Buildings non specialised	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Building specialised	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Other structures	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Roads and bridges	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Kerb and gutter	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Footpaths	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Stormwater drainage	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Water supply network	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Sewerage network	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Swimming pools	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value
Other assets	Depreciated Replacement Cost	Current Replacement Cost, Remaining Useful Life, Residual Value

continued on next page

Page 62 of 78

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

A reconciliation of the movements in recurring fair value measurements allocated to Level 3 of the hierarchy by class of assets is provided below:

	Plant and equipment		Office equipment		Furniture and fittings		Community Land	
	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Opening balance	2,184	1,652	206	99	99	99	3,210	2,573
Other movements								
Purchases (GBV)	–	1,057	–	138	–	18	–	–
Disposals (WDV)	–	(97)	–	–	–	–	–	–
Depreciation and impairment	–	(428)	–	(32)	–	(18)	–	–
Revaluations	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	637
Rounding	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–
Closing balance	2,184	2,184	206	206	99	99	3,210	3,210

	Land improvement		Buildings n/spec'd		Building specialised		Other structures	
	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Opening balance	904	875	28,715	28,398	1,300	1,287	11,658	7,855
Other movements								
Purchases (GBV)	–	–	–	377	–	–	–	3,800
Disposals (WDV)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(40)
Depreciation and impairment	–	(31)	–	(784)	–	(25)	–	(292)
Revaluations	–	60	–	724	–	38	–	335
Closing balance	904	904	28,715	28,715	1,300	1,300	11,658	11,658

	Roads and bridges		Kerb and gutter		Footpaths		Stormwater drainage	
	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Opening balance	189,077	157,909	2,501	3,261	2,122	1,399	4,878	4,762
Other movements								
Purchases (GBV)	–	5,864	–	48	–	457	–	–
Depreciation and impairment	–	(4,393)	–	(58)	–	(37)	–	(73)
Adjustments and Transfers	–	2,540	–	–	–	–	–	–
Revaluations	–	27,155	–	(749)	–	302	–	190
Rounding	–	2	–	(1)	–	1	–	(1)
Closing balance	189,077	189,077	2,501	2,501	2,122	2,122	4,878	4,878

	Water supply network		Sewerage network		Swimming pool		Other assets	
	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Opening balance	10,771	10,120	11,004	10,415	1,252	988	491	488
Other movements								
Purchases (GBV)	–	600	–	386	–	–	–	17
Disposals (WDV)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(10)
Depreciation and impairment	–	(327)	–	(177)	–	(17)	–	(45)
Revaluations	–	379	–	379	–	283	–	38
Rounding	–	(1)	–	1	–	(2)	–	3
Closing balance	10,771	10,771	11,004	11,004	1,252	1,252	491	491

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Page 63 of 78

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

	Total	
	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000
Opening balance	270,372	232,180
Purchases (GBV)	—	12,762
Disposals (WDV)	—	(147)
Depreciation and impairment	—	(6,737)
Adjustments and Transfers	—	2,540
Revaluations	—	29,771
Rounding	—	3
Closing balance	270,372	270,372

Information relating to the transfers into and out of the level 3 fair valuation hierarchy includes:

Buildings assets were revalued during the year and while a small number of assets were assessed with market inputs (level 2), Council has utilised the level 3 valuations effective 30 June 2025.

Highest and best use

All of Council's non-financial assets are considered as being utilised for their highest and best use.

E3-1 Contingencies

The following assets and liabilities do not qualify for recognition in the Statement of Financial Position, but their knowledge and disclosure is considered relevant to the users of Council's financial report.

LIABILITIES NOT RECOGNISED

1. Guarantees

(i) Defined benefit superannuation contribution plans

Council is party to an Industry Defined Benefit Plan under Active Super – Pool B (the Scheme) which is a defined benefit plan that has been deemed to be a 'multi-employer fund' for purposes of AASB 119 *Employee Benefits* for the following reasons:

- Assets are not segregated within the sub-group according to the employees of each sponsoring employer.
- The contribution rates have been the same for all sponsoring employers. That is, contribution rates have not varied for each sponsoring employer according to the experience relating to the employees of that sponsoring employer.
- Benefits for employees of all sponsoring employers are determined according to the same formula and without regard to the sponsoring employer.
- The same actuarial assumptions are currently used in respect of the employees of each sponsoring employer.

Given the factors above, each sponsoring employer is exposed to the actuarial risks associated with current and former employees of other sponsoring employers, and hence shares in the associated gains and losses (to the extent that they are not borne by members).

Description of the funding arrangements.

Pooled Employers are required to pay future service employer contributions and past service employer contributions to the Fund.

The future service employer contributions were determined using the new entrant rate method under which a contribution rate sufficient to fund the total benefits over the working life-time of a typical new entrant is calculated. The current future service employer contribution rates are:

Division B	1.9 times member contributions for non-180 Point Members; Nil for 180 Point Members*
Division C	2.5% of salary
Division D	1.64 times member contributions

* For 180 Point Members, Employers are required to contribute 9.5% from 1 July 2025 of salaries to these members' accumulation accounts in line with current level of SG contributions, which are paid in addition to members' defined benefits.

The adequacy of contributions is assessed at each actuarial investigation which will be conducted annually, the next of which is due effective 30 June 2026.

Description of the extent to which Council can be liable to the plan for other Council's obligations under the terms and conditions of the multi-employer plan

As stated above, each sponsoring employer (Council) is exposed to the actuarial risks associated with current and former employees of other sponsoring employers and hence shares in the associated gains and losses.

However, there is no relief under the Fund's trust deed for employers to walk away from their defined benefit obligations. Under limited circumstances, an employer may withdraw from the plan when there are no active members, on full payment of outstanding additional contributions. There is no provision for allocation of any surplus which may be present at the date of withdrawal of the Council.

There are no specific provisions under the Fund's trust deed dealing with deficits or surplus on wind-up.

There is no provision for allocation of any surplus which may be present at the date of withdrawal of an employer.

The amount of Council employer contributions to the defined benefit section of the Local Government Superannuation Scheme and recognised as an expense for the year ending 30 June 2026 was \$9,739.38. The last valuation of the Scheme was performed by fund actuary, Richard Boyfield, FIAA as at 30 June 2025.

E3-1 Contingencies (continued)

The amount of additional contributions included in the total employer contribution advised above is \$1,151.91. Council's expected contribution to the plan for the next annual reporting period is \$3,081.87.

The estimated employer reserves financial position for the Pooled Employers at 30 June 2026 is:

Employer reserves only *	\$millions	Asset Coverage
Assets	2,127.6	
Past Service Liabilities	1,966.9	108.2%
Vested Benefits	2,007.4	106.0%

* excluding other accumulation accounts and reserves in both assets and liabilities.

The share of this deficit that is broadly attributed to the Council is estimated to be 0.08% as at 30 June 2026.

Council's share of that deficiency cannot be accurately calculated as the Scheme is a mutual arrangement where assets and liabilities are pooled together for all member councils. For this reason, no liability for the deficiency has been recognised in Council's accounts. Council has a possible obligation that may arise should the Scheme require immediate payment to correct the deficiency.

The key economic long term assumptions used to calculate the present value of accrued benefits are:

Investment return	6.25% per annum
Salary inflation	4.0% 2026/27
	4.0% 2027/28
	4.0% 2028/29
	3.5% p.a. thereafter
Increase in CPI	4.1% 2025/26
	3.75% 2026/27
	2.5% p.a. thereafter

The contribution requirements may vary from the current rates if the overall sub-group experience is not in line with the actuarial assumptions in determining the funding program; however, any adjustment to the funding program would be the same for all sponsoring employers in the Pooled Employers group.

Please note that the estimated employer reserves financial position above is a preliminary calculation, and once all the relevant information has been received by the Funds Actuary, the final end of year review will be completed by December 2026.

(ii) Statewide Limited

Council is a member of Statewide Mutual, a mutual pool scheme providing liability insurance to local government.

Membership includes the potential to share in either the net assets or liabilities of the fund depending on its past performance. Council's share of the net assets or liabilities reflects Council's contributions to the pool and the result of insurance claims within each of the fund years.

The future realisation and finalisation of claims incurred but not reported to 30 June this year may result in future liabilities or benefits as a result of past events that Council will be required to fund or share in respectively.

(iii) StateCover Limited

Council is a member of StateCover Mutual Limited and holds a partly paid share in the entity. StateCover is a company providing workers compensation insurance cover to the NSW local government industry and specifically Council.

Council has a contingent liability to contribute further equity in the event of the erosion of the company's capital base as a result of the company's past performance and/or claims experience or as a result of any increased prudential requirements from APRA. These future equity contributions would be required to maintain the company's minimum level of net assets in accordance with its licence requirements.

E3-1 Contingencies (continued)

(iv) Other guarantees

Council has provided no other guarantees other than those listed above.

2. Other liabilities

(i) Third party claims

The Council is involved from time to time in various claims incidental to the ordinary course of business including claims for damages relating to its services.

Council believes that it is appropriately covered for all claims through its insurance coverage and does not expect any material liabilities to eventuate.

(ii) Potential land acquisitions due to planning restrictions imposed by Council

Council has classified a number of privately owned land parcels as local open space or bushland.

As a result, where notified in writing by the various owners, Council will be required to purchase these land parcels.

At reporting date, reliable estimates as to the value of any potential liability (and subsequent land asset) from such potential acquisitions has not been possible.

ASSETS NOT RECOGNISED

(i) Land under roads

As permitted under AASB 1051, Council has elected not to bring to account land under roads that it owned or controlled up to and including 30/6/08.

(ii) Infringement notices/fines

Fines and penalty income, the result of Council issuing infringement notices is followed up and collected by the Infringement Processing Bureau.

Council's revenue recognition policy for such income is to account for it as revenue on receipt.

Accordingly, at year end, there is a potential asset due to Council representing issued but unpaid infringement notices.

Due to the limited information available on the status, value and duration of outstanding notices, Council is unable to determine the value of outstanding income.

F People and relationships

F1 Related party disclosures

F1-1 Key management personnel (KMP)

Key management personnel (KMP) of the council are those persons having the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the council, directly or indirectly. The aggregate amount of KMP compensation included in the Income Statement is:

	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000
Compensation:		
Short-term benefits	1,086	838
Termination benefits	207	431
Total	1,293	1,269

Other transactions with KMP and their related parties

Nature of the transaction	Transactions during the year \$ '000	Outstanding balances including commitments \$ '000	Terms and conditions	Impairment provision on outstanding balances \$ '000	Impairment expense \$ '000
2026					
Financial Consulting Services	102	-		-	-
2025					
Financial Consulting Services	21	-		-	-

Balranald Shire Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2026

F1-2 Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses

	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000

The aggregate amount of Councillor and Administrator/Mayoral fees and associated expenses included in materials and services expenses in the Income Statement are:

Administrator/Mayoral fees	30	46
Councillors' fees	111	81
Other Councillors' expenses (including Administrator)	42	57
Total	183	184

F2 Other relationships

F2-1 Audit fees

	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000

During the year, the following fees were incurred for services provided by the auditor of Council, related practices and non-related audit firms

Auditors of the Council - NSW Auditor-General:**(i) Audit and other assurance services**

Audit and review of financial statements

Remuneration for audit and other assurance services**Total fees paid or payable to the NSW Auditor-General****Total audit fees**

79	77
79	77
79	77
79	77

G Other matters

G1-1 Statement of Cash Flows information

Reconciliation of net operating result to cash provided from operating activities

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Net operating result from Income Statement	8,694	4,133
Add / (less) non-cash items:		
Depreciation and amortisation	7,265	6,737
(Gain) / loss on disposal of assets	19	15
Non-cash capital grants and contributions	(88)	—
Share of net (profits)/losses of associates/joint ventures using the equity method	15	247
Movements in operating assets and liabilities and other cash items:		
(Increase) / decrease of receivables	(2,180)	(1,058)
Increase / (decrease) in provision for impairment of receivables	99	104
(Increase) / decrease of inventories	46	(20)
(Increase) / decrease of other current assets	—	26
Increase / (decrease) in payables	41	43
Increase / (decrease) in accrued interest payable	2	(1)
Increase / (decrease) in other accrued expenses payable	68	69
Increase / (decrease) in other liabilities	612	144
Increase / (decrease) in contract liabilities	(345)	(1,314)
Increase / (decrease) in employee benefit provision	141	208
Net cash flows from operating activities	14,389	9,333

G2-1 Commitments

Capital commitments (exclusive of GST)

	2026	2025
	\$ '000	\$ '000

Capital expenditure committed for at the reporting date but not recognised in the financial statements as liabilities:

Property, plant and equipment

Buildings	5,424	4,474
Roads	–	1,615
Other Structures	1,077	1,044
Aerodrome	1,500	–
Total commitments	8,001	7,133

These expenditures are payable as follows:

Within the next year	6,801	4,228
Later than one year and not later than 5 years	1,200	2,905
Total payable	8,001	7,133

Sources for funding of capital commitments:

Future grants and contributions	4,673	4,228
Unexpended grants	1,828	2,905
Unexpended loans	1,500	–
Total sources of funding	8,001	7,133

G3-1 Events occurring after the reporting date

Council is unaware of any material or significant 'non-adjusting events' that should be disclosed.

G4 Statement of developer contributions

G4-1 Summary of developer contributions

	Opening balance at 1 July 2025 \$ '000	Contributions received during the year			Interest and investment income earned \$ '000	Amounts expended \$ '000	Internal borrowings \$ '000	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2026 \$ '000	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from \$ '000
		Cash \$ '000	Non-cash Land \$ '000	Non-cash Other \$ '000					
S7.4 planning agreements	30	214	-	-	-	(154)	-	90	-
Contributions not under plans	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	9	-
Total contributions	30	223	-	-	-	(154)	-	99	-

End of the audited financial statements

H Additional Council disclosures (unaudited)

H1-1 Financial review

Key financial figures of Council over the past 5 years

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000	2022 \$ '000
Inflows:					
Rates and annual charges revenue	6,248	5,974	5,419	5,052	4,557
User charges revenue	2,555	2,670	3,462	2,225	2,191
Interest and investment revenue (losses)	1,392	1,563	1,570	665	119
Grants income – operating and capital	21,412	16,609	16,962	16,978	13,352
Total income from continuing operations	33,276	29,128	28,265	25,331	20,688
Sale proceeds from IPPE	145	132	865	–	43
New loan borrowings and advances	1,500	–	–	–	–
Outflows:					
Employee benefits and on-cost expenses	8,803	7,277	5,594	4,936	5,432
Borrowing costs	71	79	89	101	119
Materials and contracts expenses	7,724	10,084	11,323	6,763	3,681
Total expenses from continuing operations	24,582	24,995	23,920	18,482	15,292
Total cash purchases of IPPE	10,294	11,752	7,430	2,551	7,730
Total loan repayments (incl. leases)	240	227	215	206	190
Operating surplus/(deficit) (excl. capital income)	2,047	(2,891)	328	4,087	1,656
Financial position figures					
Current assets	44,709	37,035	38,658	35,604	25,145
Current liabilities	7,731	7,296	8,511	8,515	8,548
Net current assets	36,978	29,739	30,147	27,089	16,597
Available working capital (Unrestricted net current assets)	11,583	10,849	9,986	4,716	3,050
Cash and investments – unrestricted	6,344	7,728	7,506	2,644	2,651
Cash and investments – internal restrictions	19,018	13,949	13,785	12,996	11,618
Cash and investments – total	37,819	32,319	34,833	32,245	22,523
Total borrowings outstanding (loans, advances and finance leases)	2,458	1,198	1,425	1,640	1,846
Total value of IPPE (excl. land and earthworks)	432,828	422,188	332,452	310,194	291,539
Total accumulated depreciation	160,159	152,798	99,223	90,720	76,665
Indicative remaining useful life (as a % of GBV)	63%	64%	70%	71%	74%

Source: published audited financial statements of Council (current year and prior year)

H1-2 Council information and contact details

Principal place of business:

70 Market street
BALRANALD NSW 2715

Contact details**Mailing Address:**

PO Box 120
BALRANALD NSW 2715

Telephone: 03 5020 1300

Facsimile: 03 5020 1620

Opening hours:

8:30am - 5:00pm
Monday to Friday

Internet: www.balranald.nsw.gov.au

Email: council@balranald.nsw.gov.au

Officers**CEO**

Mr Terry Dodds

CFO/Responsible Accounting Officer

Ms Edna Mendes

Public Officer

Ms Hodi Beauliv

Councillors

Clr Louie Zaffina (Mayor)

Clr Dwaine Scott (Deputy Mayor)

Clr Leigh Byron

Cr Iain Lindsay-Field

Clr Alison Linnett

Clr Tracy O'Halloran

Clr Phillip Pippin

Clr German Ugarte

Auditors

Auditor General of NSW

Level 19, Darling Park Tower 2, 201 Sussex Street, Sydney
NSW 2000

Balranald Shire Council**General Purpose Financial Statements**

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Independent Auditor's Reports:

On the Financial Statements (Sect 417 [2])

Independent Auditor's Report

Balranald Shire Council**General Purpose Financial Statements**

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Independent Auditor's Reports: (continued)

On the Financial Statements (Sect 417 [3])

Independent Auditor's Report

Balranald Shire Council

SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2026



Balranald Shire Council

Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Contents	Page
Statement by Councillors and Management	3
Special Purpose Financial Statements:	
Income Statement of water supply business activity	4
Income Statement of sewerage business activity	5
Statement of Financial Position of water supply business activity	6
Statement of Financial Position of sewerage business activity	7
Note – Material accounting policy information	8
Auditor's Report on Special Purpose Financial Statements	11

Background

- i. These Special Purpose Financial Statements have been prepared for the use by both Council and the Office of Local Government in fulfilling their requirements under National Competition Policy.
- ii. The principle of competitive neutrality is based on the concept of a 'level playing field' between persons/entities competing in a market place, particularly between private and public sector competitors.

Essentially, the principle is that government businesses, whether Commonwealth, state or local, should operate without net competitive advantages over other businesses as a result of their public ownership.

- iii. For Council, the principle of competitive neutrality and public reporting applies only to declared business activities.

These include **(a)** those activities classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as business activities being water supply, sewerage services, abattoirs, gas production and reticulation, and **(b)** those activities with a turnover of more than \$2 million that Council has formally declared as a business activity (defined as Category 1 activities).

- iv. In preparing these financial statements for Council's self-classified Category 1 businesses and ABS-defined activities, councils must **(a)** adopt a corporatisation model and **(b)** apply full cost attribution including tax-equivalent regime payments and debt guarantee fees (where the business benefits from Council's borrowing position by comparison with commercial rates).

Balranald Shire Council

Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Statement by Councillors and Management made pursuant to the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

The attached special purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- NSW Government Policy Statement, *Application of National Competition Policy to Local Government*
- Division of Local Government Guidelines, *Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses: A Guide to Competitive Neutrality*
- The Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting
- Sections 3 and 4 of the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's (DCCEEW) *Regulatory and assurance framework for local water utilities, July 2022*

To the best of our knowledge and belief, these statements:

- present fairly the operating result and financial position for each of Council's declared business activities for the year,
- accord with Council's accounting and other records; and
- present overhead reallocation charges to the water and sewerage businesses as fair and reasonable.

We are not aware of any matter that would render these statements false or misleading in any way.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of Council made on 15 September 2026.

Clr Louie Zaffina

Mayor

15 September 2026

Clr Dwaine Scott

Deputy Mayor

15 September 2026

Terry Dodds PSM

Chief Executive Officer

15 September 2026

Edna Mendes

Responsible Accounting Officer

15 September 2026

Balranald Shire Council | Income Statement of water supply business activity | for the year ended 30 June 2026

Balranald Shire Council**Income Statement of water supply business activity**
for the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Income from continuing operations		
Access charges	1,034	988
User charges	1,014	1,020
Fees	5	4
Interest and investment income	193	140
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	–	100
Other income	250	320
Total income from continuing operations	2,496	2,572
Expenses from continuing operations		
Employee benefits and on-costs	279	256
Borrowing costs	22	27
Materials and services	899	806
Other expenses	115	(9)
Total expenses from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	1,315	1,080
Operating result from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets before capital amounts	1,181	1,492
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	395	347
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts	786	1,145
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	–	100
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts	786	1,245
Surplus (deficit) from all operations before tax	786	1,245
Less: corporate taxation equivalent (25%) [based on result before capital]	(197)	(286)
Surplus (deficit) after tax	589	959
Plus accumulated surplus	8,758	7,512
Plus adjustments for amounts unpaid:		
– Corporate taxation equivalent	197	287
Less:		
Closing accumulated surplus	9,544	8,758
Return on capital %	6.2%	9.9%
Subsidy from Council	–	–
Calculation of dividend payable:		
Surplus (deficit) after tax	590	959
Less: capital grants and contributions (excluding developer contributions)	–	(100)
Surplus for dividend calculation purposes	590	859
Potential dividend calculated from surplus	295	430

Balranald Shire Council | Income Statement of sewerage business activity | for the year ended 30 June 2026

Balranald Shire Council

Income Statement of sewerage business activity
for the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
Income from continuing operations		
Access charges	842	827
User charges	26	48
Liquid trade waste charges	83	56
Fees	4	6
Interest and investment income	129	77
Other income	26	37
Total income from continuing operations	1,110	1,051
Expenses from continuing operations		
Employee benefits and on-costs	66	90
Materials and services	288	400
Other expenses	25	2
Total expenses from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	379	492
Operating result from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets before capital amounts	731	559
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	253	191
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts	478	368
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts	478	368
Surplus (deficit) from all operations before tax	478	368
Less: corporate taxation equivalent (25%) [based on result before capital]	(120)	(92)
Surplus (deficit) after tax	358	276
Plus accumulated surplus	4,679	4,310
Plus adjustments for amounts unpaid:		
– Corporate taxation equivalent	120	93
Less:		
Closing accumulated surplus	5,157	4,679
Return on capital %	4.0%	3.1%
Subsidy from Council	90	126
Calculation of dividend payable:		
Surplus (deficit) after tax	359	276
Surplus for dividend calculation purposes	359	276
Potential dividend calculated from surplus	179	138

Balranald Shire Council | Statement of Financial Position of water supply business activity | as at 30 June 2026

Balranald Shire Council**Statement of Financial Position of water supply business activity**

as at 30 June 2026

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	3,877	4,404
Investments	600	600
Receivables	651	353
Total current assets	5,128	5,357
Non-current assets		
Receivables	—	70
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	13,069	11,796
Total non-current assets	13,069	11,866
Total assets	18,197	17,223
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Payables	111	63
Borrowings	93	88
Total current liabilities	204	151
Non-current liabilities		
Borrowings	215	309
Total non-current liabilities	215	309
Total liabilities	419	460
Net assets	17,778	16,763
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	9,544	8,758
IPPE revaluation surplus	8,234	8,005
Total equity	17,778	16,763

Balranald Shire Council | Statement of Financial Position of sewerage business activity | as at 30 June 2026

Balranald Shire Council**Statement of Financial Position of sewerage business activity**

as at 30 June 2026

	2026 \$ '000	2025 \$ '000
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,750	1,069
Investments	500	500
Receivables	93	81
Total current assets	2,343	1,650
Non-current assets		
Receivables	—	13
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	11,975	11,868
Total non-current assets	11,975	11,881
Total assets	14,318	13,531
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Payables	104	31
Total current liabilities	104	31
Total liabilities	104	31
Net assets	14,214	13,500
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	5,156	4,679
IPPE revaluation surplus	9,058	8,821
Total equity	14,214	13,500

Note – Material accounting policy information

A statement summarising the supplemental accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the special purpose financial statements (SPFS) for National Competition Policy (NCP) reporting purposes follows.

These financial statements are SPFS prepared for use by Council and the Office of Local Government. For the purposes of these statements, the Council is a non-reporting not-for-profit entity.

The figures presented in these special purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement criteria of relevant Australian Accounting Standards, other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) and Australian Accounting Interpretations.

The disclosures in these special purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* (Act), the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (Regulation) and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

The statements are prepared on an accruals basis. They are based on historic costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, fair value of non-current assets. Certain taxes and other costs, appropriately described, have been imputed for the purposes of the National Competition Policy.

The Statement of Financial Position includes notional assets/liabilities receivable from/payable to Council's general fund. These balances reflect a notional intra-entity funding arrangement with the declared business activities.

National Competition Policy

Council has adopted the principle of 'competitive neutrality' in its business activities as part of the National Competition Policy which is being applied throughout Australia at all levels of government. The framework for its application is set out in the June 1996 NSW Government Policy statement titled 'Application of National Competition Policy to Local Government'. *The Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses – A Guide to Competitive Neutrality* issued by the Office of Local Government in July 1997 has also been adopted.

The pricing and costing guidelines outline the process for identifying and allocating costs to activities and provide a standard for disclosure requirements. These disclosures are reflected in Council's pricing and/or financial reporting systems and include taxation equivalents, Council subsidies, and returns on investments (rate of return and dividends paid).

Declared business activities

In accordance with Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses – A Guide to Competitive Neutrality, Council has declared that the following are to be considered as business activities:

Category 1

(where gross operating turnover is over \$2 million)

Nil

Category 2

(where gross operating turnover is less than \$2 million)

a. Balranald Shire Council combined water supplies

Comprising the whole of the operations and assets of the raw and filtered water supply systems, that services the towns of Balranald and Euston.

b. Balranald Shire Council sewerage service

Comprising the whole of the operations and assets of the sewerage reticulation and treatment systems, that services the towns of Balranald and Euston.

Taxation equivalent charges

Council is liable to pay various taxes and financial duties. Where this is the case, they are disclosed as a cost of operations just like all other costs.

However, where Council does not pay some taxes which are generally paid by private sector businesses, such as income tax, these equivalent tax payments have been applied to all Council-nominated business activities and are reflected in Special Purpose Financial Statements.

For the purposes of disclosing comparative information relevant to the private sector equivalent, the following taxation equivalents have been applied to all Council-nominated business activities (this does not include Council's non-business activities):

continued on next page

Page 8 of 11

Note – Material accounting policy information (continued)

Notional rate applied (%)

Corporate income tax rate – **25%** (LY 25%)

Land tax – the first \$969,000 of combined land values attracts **0%**. For the combined land values in excess of \$969,000 up to \$5,925,000 the rate is **\$100 + 1.6%**. For the remaining combined land value that exceeds \$4,616,000 a premium marginal rate of **2.0%** applies.

Payroll tax – **5.45%** on the value of taxable salaries and wages in excess of \$1,200,000.

In accordance with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)'s regulatory and assurance framework, a payment for the amount calculated as the annual tax equivalent charges (excluding income tax) must be paid from water supply and sewerage business activities.

The payment of taxation equivalent charges, referred to in the regulatory and assurance framework as a 'dividend for taxation equivalent', may be applied for any purpose allowed under the Act.

Achievement of substantial compliance to DCCEEW's regulatory and assurance framework is not a prerequisite for the payment of the tax equivalent charges, however the payment must not exceed \$3 per assessment.

Income tax

An income tax equivalent has been applied on the profits of the business activities.

Whilst income tax is not a specific cost for the purpose of pricing a good or service, it needs to be taken into account in terms of assessing the rate of return required on capital invested.

Accordingly, the return on capital invested is set at a pre-tax level - gain/(loss) from ordinary activities before capital amounts, as would be applied by a private sector competitor. That is, it should include a provision equivalent to the corporate income tax rate, currently **25%** (LY 25%).

Income tax is only applied where a gain/ (loss) from ordinary activities before capital amounts has been achieved.

Since the taxation equivalent is notional – that is, it is payable to Council as the 'owner' of business operations - it represents an internal payment and has no effect on the operations of the Council. Accordingly, there is no need for disclosure of internal charges in the SPFS.

The rate applied of 25% is the equivalent company tax rate prevalent at reporting date. No adjustments have been made for variations that have occurred during the year.

Local government rates and charges

A calculation of the equivalent rates and charges for all Category 1 businesses has been applied to all assets owned, or exclusively used by the business activity.

Loan and debt guarantee fees

The debt guarantee fee is designed to ensure that Council business activities face 'true' commercial borrowing costs in line with private sector competitors. In order to calculate a debt guarantee fee, Council has determined what the differential borrowing rate would have been between the commercial rate and Council's borrowing rate for its business activities.

(i) Subsidies

Government policy requires that subsidies provided to customers, and the funding of those subsidies, must be explicitly disclosed. Subsidies occur where Council provides services on a less than cost recovery basis. This option is exercised on a range of services in order for Council to meet its community service obligations. The overall effect of subsidies is contained within the Income Statements of business activities.

(ii) Return on investments (rate of return)

The NCP policy statement requires that councils with Category 1 businesses 'would be expected to generate a return on capital funds employed that is comparable to rates of return for private businesses operating in a similar field'.

Funds are subsequently available for meeting commitments or financing future investment strategies. The rate of return is disclosed for each of Council's business activities on the Income Statement.

Note – Material accounting policy information (continued)

The rate of return is calculated as follows:

Operating result before capital income + interest expense

Written down value of IPPE as at 30 June 2026

As a minimum, business activities should generate a return equal to the Commonwealth 10 year bond rate which is 4.74% at 30/6/26.

(iii) Dividends

Council is not required to pay dividends to either itself (as owner of a range of businesses) or to any external entities.

Local government water supply and sewerage businesses are permitted to pay an annual dividend from its water supply or sewerage business surplus.

Each dividend must be calculated and approved in accordance with DCCEEW's regulatory and assurance framework and must not exceed:

- 50% of this surplus in any one year, or
- the number of water supply or sewerage assessments at 30 June 2026 multiplied by \$30 (less the payment for tax equivalent charges, not exceeding \$3 per assessment).

In accordance with DCCEEW's regulatory and assurance framework, statement of compliance and statement of dividend payment form and unqualified independent financial audit report are submitted to DCCEEW.

Balranald Shire Council**Special Purpose Financial Statements**
for the year ended 30 June 2026**Independent Auditor's Report**

Please upift Council's Audit Report PDF (opinion) for inclusion in the SPFS report (via the Home screen).

Balranald Shire Council

SPECIAL SCHEDULES
for the year ended 30 June 2026



Balranald Shire Council**Special Schedules**

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Contents	Page
Special Schedules:	
Permissible income for general rates	3
Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2026	5

Balranald Shire Council | Permissible income for general rates | for the year ended 30 June 2026

Balranald Shire Council

Permissible income for general rates

	Notes	Calculation 2025/26 \$ '000	Calculation 2026/27 \$ '000
Notional general income calculation ¹			
Last year notional general income yield	a	3,799	4,031
Plus or minus adjustments ²	b	78	(36)
Notional general income	c = a + b	3,877	3,995
Permissible income calculation			
Percentage increase	d	4.50%	4.60%
Plus percentage increase amount ³	f = d x (c + e)	175	184
Sub-total	g = (c + e + f)	4,052	4,179
Plus (or minus) last year's carry forward total	h	(2)	20
Sub-total	j = (h + i)	(2)	20
Total permissible income	k = g + j	4,050	4,199
Less notional general income yield	l	4,031	4,199
Catch-up or (excess) result	m = k - l	19	-
Carry forward to next year ⁴	p = m + n + o	19	-

Notes

- (1) The notional general income will not reconcile with rate income in the financial statements in the corresponding year. The statements are reported on an accrual accounting basis which include amounts that relate to prior years' rates income.
- (2) Adjustments account for changes in the number of assessments and any increase or decrease in land value occurring during the year. The adjustments are called 'supplementary valuations' as defined in the *Valuation of Land Act 1916 (NSW)*.
- (3) The 'percentage increase' is inclusive of the rate-peg percentage, and/or special variation and/or Crown land adjustment (where applicable).
- (4) Carry-forward amounts which are in excess (an amount that exceeds the permissible income) require Ministerial approval by order published in the *NSW Government Gazette* in accordance with section 512 of the Act. The OLG will extract these amounts from Council's Permissible income for general rates Statement in the financial data return (FDR) to administer this process.

Permissible income for general rates

Permissible income for general rates: PLUS PDF inserted here

Council needs to uplift custom PDF here - please uplift via "PLUS PDF" choice in the Home/TOC screen?

Balranald Shire Council

Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2026

Asset Class	Asset Category	Estimated cost to bring assets to satisfactory standard	Estimated cost to bring to the agreed level of service set by Council	2025/26 Required maintenance ^a	2025/26 Actual maintenance	Net carrying amount	Gross replacement cost (GRC)	Asset condition as a percentage of gross replacement cost				
		\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	1	2	3	4	5
Buildings	Buildings	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Buildings – non-specialised	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Buildings – specialised	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other	—	—	—	—	28,584	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Sub-total	—	—	—	—	28,584	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other structures	Other structures	—	—	—	—	10,981	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Sub-total	—	—	—	—	10,981	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Roads	Roads	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Sealed roads	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Unsealed roads	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Bridges	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Footpaths	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other road assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Kerb and channels	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other road assets (incl. bulk earth works)	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Sub-total	—	—	—	—	194,779	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Water supply network	Water supply network	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other	—	—	—	—	12,276	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Sub-total	—	—	—	—	12,276	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Sewerage network	Sewerage network	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other	—	—	—	—	11,139	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Sub-total	—	—	—	—	11,139	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Stormwater drainage	Stormwater drainage	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other	—	—	—	—	4,986	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Sub-total	—	—	—	—	4,986	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

continued on next page

Page 5 of 8

Balranald Shire Council

Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2026 (continued)

Asset Class	Asset Category	Estimated cost to bring assets to satisfactory standard	Estimated cost to bring to the agreed level of service set by Council	2025/26 Required maintenance ^a	2025/26 Actual maintenance	Net carrying amount	Gross replacement cost (GRC)	Asset condition as a percentage of gross replacement cost				
		\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000			1	2	3	4	5
Open space / recreational assets	Swimming pools	—	—	—	—	1,276	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Sub-total	—	—	—	—	1,276	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other infrastructure assets	Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Sub-total	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Total – all assets	—	—	—	—	264,021	—	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

(a) Required maintenance is the amount identified in Council's asset management plans.

Infrastructure asset condition assessment 'key'

#	Condition	Integrated planning and reporting (IP&R) description
1	Excellent/very good	No work required (normal maintenance)
2	Good	Only minor maintenance work required
3	Satisfactory	Maintenance work required
4	Poor	Renewal required
5	Very poor	Urgent renewal/upgrading required

Balranald Shire Council | Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2026

Balranald Shire Council

Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2026

Infrastructure asset performance indicators (consolidated) *

	Amounts 2026 \$ '000	Indicator 2026	Indicators 2025 2024		Benchmark
Buildings and infrastructure renewals ratio					
Asset renewals ¹	—	0.00%	221.34%	98.01%	> 100.00%
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	6,632				
Infrastructure backlog ratio					
Estimated cost to bring assets to a satisfactory standard	—	0.00%	2.76%	2.94%	< 2.00%
Net carrying amount of infrastructure assets	267,427				
Asset maintenance ratio					
Actual asset maintenance	—	∞	205.19%	180.73%	> 100.00%
Required asset maintenance	—				
Cost to bring assets to agreed service level					
Estimated cost to bring assets to an agreed service level set by Council	—	∞	2.21%	2.58%	
Gross replacement cost	—				

(*) All asset performance indicators are calculated using classes identified in the previous table.

(1) Asset renewals represent the replacement and/or refurbishment of existing assets to an equivalent capacity/performance as opposed to the acquisition of new assets (or the refurbishment of old assets) that increases capacity/performance.

Balranald Shire Council

Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2026

Infrastructure asset performance indicators (by fund)

\$ '000	General fund		Water fund		Sewer fund		Benchmark
	2026	2025	2026	2025	2026	2025	
Buildings and infrastructure renewals ratio							
Asset renewals ¹							
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	0.00%	238.75%	0.00%	59.02%	0.00%	218.08%	> 100.00%
Infrastructure backlog ratio							
Estimated cost to bring assets to a satisfactory standard							
Net carrying amount of infrastructure assets	0.00%	2.38%	0.00%	9.28%	0.00%	4.54%	< 2.00%
Asset maintenance ratio							
Actual asset maintenance							
Required asset maintenance	∞	267.67%	∞	99.55%	∞	30.96%	> 100.00%
Cost to bring assets to agreed service level							
Estimated cost to bring assets to an agreed service level set by Council							
Gross replacement cost	∞	1.39%	∞	11.54%	∞	9.64%	

(1) Asset renewals represent the replacement and/or refurbishment of existing assets to an equivalent capacity/performance as opposed to the acquisition of new assets (or the refurbishment of old assets) that increases capacity/performance.

10.7 RESTRICTED FUNDS 2026

File Number:	D26.127813
Author(s):	Edna Mendes, Chief Financial Officer
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 6: Our Leadership – A community that values and fosters leadership, lifelong learning, innovation and good governance.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To endorse the level of Restricted Funds (Reserves) as at 30 June 2026.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives the report and notes the balances for Restricted Funds (Reserves).
2. Endorses the Internal Restrictions (Funds) balances as at 30 June 2026.

REPORT

Council has established reserves for various purposes, some of which are required to preserve the status of funds (externally restricted funds) held for utility services such as water, sewerage and waste management. Other reserves (internally restricted funds) have been established by Council to recognise pre-paid grants and reserves for future expenditure.

Council should be aware that funds that are externally restricted may only be used in accordance with the purpose for which they were collected. For example, it is only possible to use surpluses generated from water rates for water infrastructure and operations.

Internally restricted funds may be used in accordance with the resolutions of the Council. Therefore, the Council is required on an annual basis to endorse the funds being held as Internally Restricted Funds.

A new Internal Restriction has been introduced due to savings made from the 2025/26 budget for implementation of the new Financial Software System, \$500K. Additional funds of \$500K have been added to the Infrastructure Replacement, the Water and Sewer Infrastructure Upgrades, \$250K to the Housing Development Fund and \$270K to the Council Properties Fund.

This year sees a reduction of \$344,749 in General Fund externally restricted funds, largely due to work on finalising long-running grant projects.

Internal Restrictions have increased over the 25/26 year, which is a pleasing result and is due to careful monitoring of expenditure and maximising savings where possible.

The table shown below details both Externally and Internally Restricted Funds (Reserves) as at 30 June 2026.

	Balance as at 30 June 2023	Balance as at 30 June 2024	Balance as at 30 June 2025	Balance as at 30 June 2026
Details of Restrictions				
External Restrictions - Included in Liabilities				
Specific purpose unexpended grants - General Fund	4,504,335.00	4,122,173.20	2,808,132.00	2,463,383.78
Specific purpose unexpended grants - Water Fund	5,965.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	4,510,300.00	4,122,173.20	2,808,132.00	2,463,383.78
External Restrictions - Other				
Specific purpose unexpended grants - General Fund	6,121,803.00	2,228,827.47	600,972.00	773,204.60
Specific purpose unexpended grants - Water Fund			70,000.00	70,000.00
Water Supplies	3,664,000.00	4,598,000.00	4,934,000.00	4,477,000.00
Sewerage Services	1,715,000.00	1,968,000.00	1,569,000.00	2,250,000.00
Domestic Waste Management	573,699.80	585,810.80	572,000.00	671,851.00
Stormwater Levy - Urban Drainage Improvements	19,600.24	38,833.96	58,000.00	77,000.00
Developer Contributions	0.00	0.00	30,000.00	99,413.00
	12,094,103.04	9,419,472.23	7,833,972.00	8,418,468.60
Internal Restrictions				
Plant and Vehicle replacement	1,933,000.32	2,048,418.32	1,954,547.32	1,871,470.32
Infrastructure replacement	1,514,399.51	1,664,399.51	1,474,399.51	1,660,399.51
Employee Leave Entitlements	278,439.76	252,439.76	311,439.76	375,000.76
Caravan Park	499,500.11	588,700.11	553,250.72	526,099.23
Waste facilities rehabilitation	242,200.34	242,200.34	242,200.34	242,200.34
Hostel bonds	1,813,377.00	1,583,677.00	1,560,299.51	2,160,299.51
Self Care Unit bonds	140,000.00	300,000.00	440,000.00	440,000.00
Self Care Unit Maintenance	3,999.83	16,165.83	16,165.83	48,833.15
Financial Assistance Grant	5,497,453.00	5,123,000.00	3,167,000.00	5,335,000.00
Future Development Fund	1,074,100.42	1,074,100.42	1,574,100.42	1,574,100.42
Levy Bank Restoration	0.00	160,000.00	250,000.00	300,000.00
Asset Revaluation	0.00	60,000.00	80,000.00	130,000.00
Insurance	0.00	20,000.00	40,000.00	60,000.00
Council Properties (Rental Income)	0.00	70,000.00	140,000.00	410,000.00
Elections	0.00	20,000.00	45,000.00	45,000.00
IT Infrastructure development			500,000.00	500,000.00
Housing Development Fund			500,000.00	750,000.00
Finance System Upgrade				500,000.00
Water				0.00
Infrastructure upgrades	0.00	361,197.00	708,140.00	1,198,140.00
Sewer				0.00
Infrastructure upgrades	0.00	200,830.00	391,986.00	891,986.00
	12,996,470.30	13,785,128.30	13,948,529.42	19,018,529.25
Summary				
External Restrictions	16,604,403.04	13,541,645.43	10,642,104.00	10,881,852.38
Internal Restrictions	12,996,470.30	13,785,128.30	13,948,529.42	19,018,529.25
	29,600,873.34	27,326,773.73	24,590,633.42	29,900,381.63

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Nil

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Nil

POLICY IMPLICATION

Nil

RISK RATING

LOW

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

10.8 SECURING REGIONAL NSW WATER AND SEWERAGE SERVICES

File Number:	D26.127789
Author(s):	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 4: Our Infrastructure – Timely, sustainable and well-planned development and maintenance of fit for purpose community infrastructure.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Council endorsement of the Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and NSW Water Directorate Securing Our Water Supply Action Plan, endorse Balranald Shire Council's supporting submission, and authorise direct advocacy to the NSW Premier and Minister for Water for a funded, long-term capital pathway for regional Local Water Utilities.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the release of the LGNSW and NSW Water Directorate action plan, Securing Our Water Supply: Delivering safe, reliable and affordable water and sewerage services for regional communities at risk.
2. Endorse the Action Plan's six asks of the NSW Government, including a \$5 billion capital grant program for at least 10 years, drinking-water quality support, regulatory reform, a complementary Community Service Obligation model, Local Water Utilities Alliance funding and a long-term regional water workforce program.
3. Endorse Balranald Shire Council's submission, Securing Regional NSW Water and Sewerage Services, as Council's formal advocacy position.
4. Note that Council's 30-year Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy prepared with NSW Public Works identifies more than \$24 million in future water and sewerage capital works for Balranald and Euston, with financial modelling assuming approximately \$17.22 million in government capital assistance.
5. Call on the NSW Government to establish an immediate bridging capital program while the current Local Water Utility reform process is completed, so that councils with completed strategic planning and genuine priority projects are not left without a funding pathway.
6. Write to the NSW Premier, with a copy to the Minister for Water and Local Government NSW, setting out Balranald Shire's position and attaching Council's submission.
7. Authorise the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer to continue advocacy on this matter with the NSW Government, LGNSW, the NSW Water Directorate and other regional councils.

REPORT

Local Government NSW and the NSW Water Directorate have launched a statewide campaign seeking a new long-term funding and policy settlement for council-owned Local Water Utilities. The Action Plan calls for \$5 billion in capital grant funding over at least 10 years, together with measures addressing drinking-water quality, unnecessary regulatory burden, structural affordability, collaboration and workforce capability.

The campaign comes at a time when the NSW Government's \$1.1 billion Safe and Secure Water Program, established in 2017, has been fully allocated and no equivalent replacement capital program has been announced. The NSW Auditor-General's January 2026 Local Government report found that almost \$1 billion is required simply to bring council water infrastructure up to

agreed service levels, while broader sector estimates put priority investment needs at around \$5 billion.

Why this matters to Balranald

For Balranald Shire, this is not a general sector argument. Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy, completed with NSW Public Works in January 2026, looks 30 years ahead at the water and sewerage systems serving Balranald and Euston and identifies significant capital requirements.

Balranald's existing raw-water intake has operational and WHS issues during low river flows.

The Balranald potable-water system will not meet forecast future peak demand without augmentation.

Mechanical and electrical components of the Balranald Water Treatment Plant have an assessed residual life of around 10 to 15 years.

Euston also requires future augmentation to meet expected demand.

Sewerage treatment and system upgrades are identified for both towns.

The preferred water scenario has an estimated capital cost of approximately \$18.45 million, with identified sewerage works adding approximately \$5.76 million. In total, the strategy identifies more than \$24 million in future capital requirements.

The funding arithmetic

Financial modelling is the clearest demonstration of the problem. The NSW Public Works strategy assumed 90 per cent government funding of approximately \$12.04 million towards the Balranald and Euston potable-water scheme upgrades and approximately \$5.18 million towards sewerage treatment plant upgrades - about \$17.22 million in government capital assistance.

That assumption was not invented by Council. It sits inside the long-term strategic planning framework that Council was expected to complete. Council has done the planning, identified the need, estimated the cost, increased charges and made provision for renewal. What is now missing is a dependable capital funding pathway.

A water treatment plant does not become cheap because fewer people use it. Balranald Shire has a little over 2,000 residents spread across more than 21,000 square kilometres. There are simply not enough customers to divide a multi-million-dollar treatment plant bill between while keeping charges remotely affordable.

Current assistance does not close the gap

Council acknowledges that government assistance has not disappeared entirely. Balranald received \$150,000 under the Advanced Operational Support Program for optimisation work at the Euston Water Treatment Plant, including SCADA and turbidity-related improvements. That assistance was useful, but \$150,000 does not build or replace a water treatment plant.

Emergency programs and occasional national funding opportunities are also not a substitute for a predictable capital program. Waiting until a foreseeable infrastructure problem becomes an emergency before substantial funding is available would be poor public policy and more expensive in the long run.

Reform and collaboration

Council supports the NSW Local Water Utility reform process, including consideration of a Community Service Obligation model. Such a model properly recognises that there can be a structural gap between the efficient cost of providing an essential service and the revenue that can reasonably be raised from a very small community.

Council also supports Western NSW Local Water Utility collaboration. Sharing specialist staff, procurement, planning and technical capability makes sense. But collaboration must not be confused with capital funding. Five councils sharing an engineer more efficiently does not make a \$10 million treatment plant cost \$1 million.

Growth and State-significant development

The funding model must also recognise the effect of major State-significant development, including the Southwest Renewable Energy Zone, transmission infrastructure, mining and associated housing and workforce growth. These developments may be good for regional NSW and the State economy, but they can place additional demand on water and sewerage systems designed for very small resident populations. Those costs should not simply be left with existing local customers.

Council's proposed position

Council's submission supports the LGNSW and Water Directorate campaign but goes further in one important respect: there should be an immediate bridging capital arrangement while the longer-term reform model is completed. Any future Community Service Obligation model should complement, not replace, major capital grants.

The principle is straightforward. Council and its customers should continue to pay their fair share, maintain the systems and plan responsibly. But there is a financial point beyond which full cost recovery from a very small customer base becomes unrealistic. Previous State funding programs recognised that reality and the next funding framework must do the same.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

There is no material unbudgeted expenditure arising from endorsement of the Action Plan or the proposed advocacy. The underlying financial issue is significant: Council's current 30-year strategy identifies more than \$24 million in future water and sewerage capital works and assumes approximately \$17.22 million in government assistance towards major treatment infrastructure.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Council's responsibilities for the provision of water supply and sewerage services arise under several NSW legislative and regulatory frameworks, including the Local Government Act 1993, Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Public Health Act 2010, Public Health Regulation 2022, Water Management Act 2000 and Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997.

These obligations include the safe and effective operation of Council's water and sewerage systems, protection of public health and the environment, appropriate asset management and compliance with relevant approval requirements, including section 60 approvals under the Local Government Act 1993 for prescribed water supply and sewerage works.

Endorsement of the LGNSW and NSW Water Directorate Action Plan does not itself create any new legislative obligation for Council. However, the absence of an adequate long-term capital funding pathway does not reduce Council's existing statutory responsibilities. Council remains responsible for maintaining compliant and reliable water and sewerage services irrespective of the financial capacity of its relatively small customer base.

This is one of the central issues addressed by the proposed advocacy: the regulatory obligation remains with the Local Water Utility, while the capacity to fund major infrastructure required to meet that obligation may be beyond the reasonable financial capacity of a small rural council.

POLICY IMPLICATION

The recommendations are consistent with Council's existing strategic direction and, in particular, the 2026 Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy, which identifies the long-term water and sewerage infrastructure requirements for Balranald and Euston.

The advocacy is also consistent with Council's broader approach to:

- Long-term financial and asset management planning.
- Maintaining safe and reliable essential services.
- Managing public health, environmental and infrastructure risks.
- Supporting housing and economic development.

- Responding to additional infrastructure pressures associated with the Southwest Renewable Energy Zone and other major developments.
- Seeking predictable funding for essential infrastructure rather than relying solely on intermittent competitive grant programs.

No change to an existing Council policy is required because of adopting the recommendation.

The proposed position does, however, establish a clear advocacy policy for Council: that any future Community Service Obligation or Local Water Utility reform model should complement, rather than replace, an adequately funded capital grants program, with funding arrangements that recognise the limited revenue capacity of small rural and remote utilities.

RISK RATING

The key risks of an inadequate long-term funding pathway include delayed renewal of ageing infrastructure, increased risk of service interruption or failure, water-quality and public-health risk, increased whole-of-life costs, reduced capacity to accommodate growth and additional pressure on a small and geographically dispersed customer base.

CONCLUSION

Balranald Shire is not asking the State to pay every water and sewer bill. Council's customers pay charges, Council employs operators, maintains the systems, plans for renewal and contributes its own funds. What Council is asking for is a funding model that recognises the arithmetic of small rural Local Water Utilities.

The planning has been done, and the need has been identified. Waiting until ageing infrastructure fails is not a strategy. Council should endorse the Action Plan and the attached Balranald submission and take the matter directly to the Premier and Minister for Water.

ATTACHMENTS

1. **Letter to Premier Minns; Submission on Securing Regional NSW Water and Sewerage Services** [↓](#) 
2. **Securing Regional NSW Water and Sewerage Services Submission** [↓](#) 
3. **Media Release - Water and Sewerage Funding Submission** [↓](#) 
4. **Email to Shadow Minister for Water, Steph Cooke MP** [↓](#) 

The Hon Chris Minns MP
Premier of New South Wales
By email: kogarah@parliament.nsw.gov.au

4 September 2026

Dear Premier

Balranald and Euston: securing our water and sewerage future

I write on behalf of Balranald Shire Council because the numbers around regional water infrastructure simply no longer add up.

Council strongly supports the Local Government NSW and NSW Water Directorate action plan, Securing Our Water Supply. Its call for \$5 billion in capital grant funding over at least 10 years, together with a complementary Community Service Obligation model, regulatory reform, collaboration and workforce support, is sensible and overdue.

For Balranald, however, this is not a broad industry argument. NSW Public Works completed Council's 30-year Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy in January 2026. It identifies more than \$24 million in future water and sewerage capital works across Balranald and Euston.

The strategy identifies operational and WHS issues with Balranald's raw-water intake during low river flows, the need to augment the potable-water system to meet future peak demand, and an assessed residual life of around 10 to 15 years for mechanical and electrical components of the Balranald Water Treatment Plant. Euston also requires augmentation, and sewerage treatment and system upgrades are identified for both towns.

The most important number in the strategy is not the total project cost. It is the financial assumption behind it. NSW Public Works modelling assumed 90 per cent government funding of approximately \$12.04 million for the Balranald and Euston potable-water scheme upgrades and approximately \$5.18 million for sewerage treatment plant upgrades. In total, that is about \$17.22 million in assumed government capital assistance.

This was not an assumption invented by Council. It sits within the State's own strategic planning framework. Council has done what government expects of us: we have planned, identified the need, estimated the cost, increased charges and made provision for renewal. The capital funding program that made that sort of long-term planning achievable has now effectively run out.

Balranald has received useful, targeted assistance, including \$150,000 under the Advanced Operational Support Program for work at the Euston Water Treatment Plant. We appreciate that support. But \$150,000 does not build a water treatment plant.

A water treatment plant does not become cheap because fewer people use it. Balranald Shire has a little over 2,000 residents spread across more than 21,000 square kilometres. There are

only so many households and businesses across which a multi-million-dollar capital bill can be divided.

I am not asking the State to pay every bill. Our customers pay water and sewer charges. Council employs operators, maintains the systems, plans for renewal and contributes its own funds. But there is a point where full cost recovery from a very small customer base becomes mathematically unrealistic.

The NSW Auditor-General has now confirmed the broader problem, finding in January 2026 that almost \$1 billion is required simply to bring council water infrastructure up to agreed service levels. The Government's own consideration of a Community Service Obligation model also recognises that some communities cannot reasonably raise enough revenue to meet the efficient cost of these essential services.

Council also supports collaboration between Western NSW Local Water Utilities. Sharing expertise, procurement and scarce specialist staff is sensible. But collaboration is not capital funding. Five councils sharing an engineer more efficiently does not make a \$10 million treatment plant cost \$1 million.

There is also an emerging State interest in this issue. The Southwest Renewable Energy Zone, transmission infrastructure, mining, housing and associated workforce growth can place additional demand on local systems designed for very small resident populations. Those costs should not be left behind for existing local customers after major investment arrives.

Balranald Shire Council therefore asks your government to adopt the LGNSW and Water Directorate Action Plan and, importantly, to establish an immediate bridging capital program while the current Local Water Utility reform process is completed. Any future Community Service Obligation model should sit alongside, not replace, major capital grants, and capacity-based subsidy arrangements for small and financially constrained utilities should remain.

I would welcome your response setting out how the NSW Government intends to provide a dependable and timely capital funding pathway for councils such as Balranald, and I would be pleased to meet with you or the Minister for Water to discuss the matter.

Yours sincerely

Cr Louie Zaffina
Mayor
Balranald Shire Council

cc: The Hon Rose Jackson MLC, Minister for Water
Local Government NSW

Attachments:

Balranald Shire Council Submission: Securing Regional NSW Water and Sewerage Services

Item 10.1: 10.1.1. BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL: Securing regional NSW water and sewerage services.

BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL

Submission: Securing Regional NSW Water and Sewerage Services



Balranald Shire Council strongly supports the campaign being led by Local Government NSW and the NSW Water Directorate to secure a proper long-term funding model for regional water and sewerage services. For small rural and remote councils, this issue has reached the point where it can no longer be dealt with through another review, another pilot program or another temporary funding arrangement.

1) *The issue.*

Councils are required to provide safe drinking water and compliant sewerage services. We are required to plan decades ahead, maintain ageing infrastructure, meet increasingly complex public health and environmental standards, employ appropriately qualified operators, prepare Integrated Water Cycle Management strategies and fund renewal.

None of those responsibilities have gone away. What has effectively gone away is the capital funding program that allowed small councils to meet them.

2) *Why co-funding existed in the first place.*

The former Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Program, and later the Safe and Secure Water Program, recognised something that is still true today: a small country town cannot fund major water and sewerage infrastructure in the same way as Sydney, Newcastle or Wollongong. A water treatment plant does not become cheap because fewer people use it. A sewerage treatment plant does not cost one hundredth as much simply because the town has one hundredth of the population.

There are minimum engineering, treatment, environmental, safety and regulatory standards that have to be met regardless of the number of customers connected to the system. That was why the State historically co-funded these projects and, importantly, why assistance under Safe and Secure Water could reach 90 per cent for the smallest and least financially capable utilities.

The Safe and Secure Water Program is now effectively exhausted as an accessible capital funding program. Other programs still exist, and Council acknowledges that, but they do not replace a properly funded pathway for major planned infrastructure.

Balranald itself has benefited from targeted assistance. Council received \$150,000 under the Advanced Operational Support Program for work associated with the Euston Water Treatment Plant, including optimisation work, SCADA and turbidity-related improvements. That assistance was welcome and useful. But \$150,000 does not build a water treatment plant.

Likewise, emergency water funding remains available in some circumstances, but having to wait until a foreseeable infrastructure problem becomes an emergency before substantial funding is available would be poor public policy and, ultimately, much more expensive.

erry Dodds CSM, CEO Balranald Shire Council, securing regional NSW water and sewerage services.

The National Water Grid may provide opportunities from time to time, but it is not a substitute for a dependable NSW program available to Local Water Utilities as their infrastructure reaches the point where renewal or augmentation is required.

3) The funding gap now.

The real issue is therefore not whether there is literally no government funding anywhere. The issue is that there is presently not adequately funded, predictable and accessible NSW capital program that a small Local Water Utility can rely upon to deliver major planned water and sewerage infrastructure. That distinction is important, and Balranald is a good example of why.

In January 2026, NSW Public Works completed Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy. This is the very strategic planning process governments expect councils to undertake. It looks ahead 30 years and considers the future of water and sewerage services in Balranald and Euston. The strategy identifies significant future infrastructure requirements.

Balranald: The existing raw-water intake has operational and WHS issues during low river flows. The potable-water system will not meet forecast future peak demand without augmentation, and mechanical and electrical components of the Water Treatment Plant have an assessed residual life of around 10 to 15 years.

Euston also requires future augmentation if expected demand is to be met.

There are also identified sewerage treatment and system upgrades in both towns. The preferred water scenario has an estimated capital cost of approximately \$18.45 million over the planning period. The identified sewerage works add approximately another \$5.76 million. That is more than \$24 million.

For a council such as Balranald, with a population of a little over 2,000 people spread across more than 21,000 square kilometres, nobody can seriously suggest that sort of capital requirement can simply be passed through to local water and sewer customers.

4) Balranald's numbers tell the story.

The most telling part of the NSW Public Works strategy is the financial modelling behind it. The modelling assumed 90 per cent government funding of approximately \$12.04 million towards the Balranald and Euston potable-water scheme upgrades and approximately \$5.18 million towards the sewerage treatment plant upgrades. That is \$17.22 million in assumed government capital assistance.

This was not an assumption plucked from the air by Council. It sits within a long-term strategy prepared with NSW Public Works under the State's own strategic water-planning framework. So we now have an absurd position. Council has done the planning it was expected to do. The infrastructure needs have been identified. The likely timing has been assessed. The cost has been estimated. Council is increasing charges and making provisions for renewal.

The State's own planning process has recognised that substantial government assistance will be required. But the principal capital funding program that would have made that strategy achievable has effectively run out.

Government cannot sensibly require councils to prepare 30-year infrastructure strategies while providing no dependable funding horizon against which those strategies can be delivered.

2

Henry Dodds (Councillor, CEO Balranald Shire Council): Securing regional NSW water and sewerage services.

5) The Auditor-General confirms the problem.

This is not just Balranald saying that the numbers do not work. The NSW Auditor-General reported in January 2026 that almost \$1 billion is required simply to bring council water infrastructure up to agreed service levels.

The Auditor-General also found that 15 council water businesses recorded operating losses in 2024–25 and that, once grant income was removed, the number operating at a loss doubled to 30. That finding should end any argument that small rural utilities can simply increase charges until the problem disappears.

A small utility may be able to recover day-to-day operating costs from its customers and still have no realistic ability to accumulate the millions, or tens of millions, required to replace major treatment infrastructure. There are only so many households to divide the bill between.

Balranald's broader work on rural and remote council sustainability has consistently identified water and sewerage as one of the most difficult responsibilities carried by small councils. It combines expensive infrastructure, specialist operators, increasingly complex regulation, public-health risk and a very small revenue base.

That is why Council has argued more broadly that essential infrastructure should be supported by predictable renewal funding rather than expecting councils to survive by chasing one competitive grant round after another.

6) Reform is welcome, but it cannot replace capital funding.

The current NSW Local Water Utility reform process may eventually improve the position. Council supports consideration of a **Community Service Obligation** model because it acknowledges the fundamental problem: there is a difference between the efficient cost of providing an essential service and the amount that can reasonably be recovered from a very small community.

That is a sensible starting point. But it cannot be an excuse for doing nothing in the meantime. The Government's own reform process is still being developed. Meanwhile, infrastructure continues to age, and the Safe and Secure Water capital program is effectively exhausted. There is a gap between the old system finishing and the new system being designed. Many regional communities are sitting in that gap now.

7) Collaboration is not capital funding.

Council also supports the Western NSW Local Water Utility collaboration work. Balranald is participating with neighbouring councils, and there is obvious value in sharing specialist skills, improving procurement, building workforce capacity and looking for operating efficiencies.

But collaboration should not be confused with capital funding. Five councils sharing an engineer more efficiently does not make a \$10 million treatment plant cost \$1 million.

There is a danger in this debate that structural funding problems are dressed up as efficiency problems because the latter are cheaper for government to address. Efficiency, good management, appropriate pricing, and asset management all matter. But at some point the arithmetic wins.

8) What needs to happen now.

If the efficient cost of providing safe water to a small remote community is greater than the amount that community can reasonably pay, the shortfall has to come from somewhere. That is

2

10) *9) The wider funding model also needs to change.*

precisely why previous governments created co-funding programs. Council therefore supports the LGNSW and NSW Water Directorate call for a \$5 billion capital program over at least ten years.

In addition, Balranald Shire Council believes the NSW Government should establish an immediate bridging arrangement so that councils with completed strategic planning and genuine priority projects are not left waiting several years for the current reform process to conclude. Any future Community Service Obligation model should sit alongside a capital-grant program, not replace it. Major treatment plants, reservoirs, intakes, trunk mains and sewerage infrastructure will still require substantial upfront capital. Moving the funding mechanism from one government spreadsheet to another does not change that fact.

Funding assessments also need to continue recognising the financial capacity of individual utilities. The former subsidy model, which allowed assistance of up to 90 per cent for small and financially constrained utilities, was based on sound reasoning and that principle should remain. Project assessment should focus on public-health risk, asset condition, water security, service reliability, environmental obligations, the community's capacity to pay and the economic role of the infrastructure.

Population alone is a very poor measure. Indeed, low population is often the reason the funding problem exists in the first place.

9) The wider funding model also needs to change.

Government also needs to recognise the **impact of State-significant development** on small water utilities (Southwest Renewable Energy Zone: SWREZ). Renewable energy development, transmission infrastructure, mining, housing growth and other major projects may be good for regional NSW and good for the State economy, but they can place significant additional pressure on infrastructure that was designed for a very small resident population. Those costs should not simply be left behind for existing ratepayers after the investment arrives.

The funding process itself also needs to be simpler. Small councils should not have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on business cases, investigations, designs and consultant reports simply to reach the starting line of a grant program. If government requires that work in order to make an investment decision reasonable project-development costs should be eligible for funding.

The regulatory system should also be reviewed with the same objective. Nobody is suggesting reducing drinking water or environmental standards. But unnecessary duplication, lengthy approval processes and excessive reliance on specialist consultants cost small utilities disproportionately more than large ones. The test should be whether a requirement materially reduces risk, not whether another report can be added to the file.

10) The bottom line.

Balranald Shire Council is not arguing that the State should pay every water and sewer bill.

Our customers pay water and sewer charges. Council employs operators, maintains the systems, plans for renewal and contributes its own funds. But there is a financial limit beyond which the expectation becomes unrealistic.

You cannot divide the cost of a \$20 million or \$30 million infrastructure program among a few hundred or a few thousand customers and call the result affordability. The State understood this

Terry Dodds PSM, CEO Balranald Shire Council, securing regional NSW water and sewerage services.

under the Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Program and when Safe and Secure Water was established. The subsidy bands under that program demonstrate that government understood very clearly that the smallest utilities could not fund major infrastructure alone.

The Auditor-General has now confirmed the same underlying problem. The NSW Government's own consideration of a Community Service Obligation model confirms it again. We therefore do not need another diagnosis; rather, we need a funded implementation pathway.

For Balranald, NSW Public Works has already prepared a 30-year strategy identifying more than \$24 million in future water and sewerage capital works and modelling approximately \$17.22 million in government assistance towards the major treatment infrastructure. The planning has been done, and the need has been identified.

The State now needs to explain how councils such as Balranald are expected to fund it.

- Waiting until ageing infrastructure fails is not a strategy.
- Waiting until a foreseeable water-security problem becomes an emergency is not a strategy.
- Running another pilot while the capital backlog grows is not a strategy either.
- Safe drinking water and properly functioning sewerage systems are essential public-health infrastructure.

People living in Balranald, Euston, Bourke, Brewarrina, Walgett or any other small regional community are entitled to expect the same basic standard of safe drinking water as people living in metropolitan NSW and therefore any funding model has to make that possible.

Balranald Shire Council therefore calls on the NSW Government to restore a substantial, predictable and long-term capital funding program for regional Local Water Utilities, introduce an immediate funding bridge while the present reform process is completed, and ensure that any future **Community Service Obligation** model complements rather than replaces capital assistance.

Terry Dodds PSM

CEO

Balranald Shire Council

tdodds@balranald.nsw.gov.au

4 September 2026

5

MEDIA RELEASE

Balranald backs push for long-term regional water funding

Balranald Shire Council has backed the Local Government NSW and NSW Water Directorate campaign calling for \$5 billion in capital funding over at least 10 years to secure regional water and sewerage services.

Mayor Louie Zaffina said Balranald and Euston showed exactly why a long-term funding model was needed.

“People in Balranald and Euston are entitled to the same basic standard of safe drinking water as people living anywhere else in NSW,” Mayor Zaffina said.

“Our NSW Public Works 30-year strategy identifies more than \$24 million in future water and sewerage capital works across the two towns, with financial modelling assuming about \$17.22 million in government assistance towards the major treatment infrastructure.

“A water treatment plant does not become cheap because fewer people use it. Balranald Shire has a little over 2,000 residents spread across more than 21,000 square kilometres. There are only so many customers across which a multi-million-dollar capital bill can be divided.”

The strategy identifies the future augmentation of water systems in Balranald and Euston, issues with Balranald’s raw-water intake during low river flows, an assessed residual life of around 10 to 15 years for mechanical and electrical components of the Balranald Water Treatment Plant, and sewerage treatment and system upgrades in both towns.

Mayor Zaffina said Council accepted that local customers and Council must continue to contribute.

“We are not asking the State to pay every bill. Our customers pay water and sewer charges, Council maintains the systems and plans for renewal. But there comes a point where the arithmetic simply does not work.”

Council is calling on the NSW Government to support the \$5 billion regional funding proposal and establish an immediate bridging capital program while the current Local Water Utility reform process is completed.

“We support councils sharing skills and becoming more efficient, but collaboration is not capital funding. Five councils sharing an engineer more efficiently does not make a \$10 million treatment plant cost \$1 million,” Mayor Zaffina said.

“Waiting until ageing infrastructure fails is not a strategy. The planning has been done, and the need has been identified. What regional NSW now needs is a funded pathway to get the work done.”

Media contact:

Terry Dodds PSM
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council@balranald.nsw.gov.au

From: [Terry Dodds](#)
To: ["ElectorateOffice Cootamundra"](#); ["cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au"](mailto:cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au)
Cc: [Raju Ranjit](#); [Carolyn Holmes](#)
Bcc: bruce.whitehill@clearwateraustralia.com.au; ken@thetable.group; [David Webb](#)
Subject: Shadow Minister for Water and Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke MP - Royalties for Regional Water Fund (RRWF) Info Session - Wednesday 9 September 2025
Date: Monday, 7 September 2026 4:56:00 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

Dear Ms Cooke,

Balranald Shire Council strongly supports the proposed Royalties for Regional Water Fund and the return of a substantial, predictable capital funding program for regional water and sewerage infrastructure.

Our main request is simple: the funding model must recognise the community's capacity to pay. A standard co-contribution percentage will not work across regional NSW.

Council's NSW Public Works Water and Sewerage Strategic Plan specifically identifies Balranald's community capability to pay as a challenge, using the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage as the relevant measure. Balranald Shire has a little over 2,000 residents spread across more than 21,000 square kilometres. There are simply not enough customers to spread the cost of multi-million-dollar treatment infrastructure across without creating an unreasonable burden on households.

The IWCM makes the point even more clearly. Its financial modelling assumes 90 per cent government assistance for the major Balranald and Euston water treatment upgrades. With that assistance, typical residential charges can broadly remain at the modelled levels of \$785 per annum for filtered water and \$864 for raw water, without Council taking on new loans.

Without that government assistance, the same NSW Public Works modelling says Council would need to borrow around \$10 million for the water upgrades alone, with the cost of servicing that debt flowing directly into higher residential water bills.

That is the problem in a nutshell.

A treatment plant does not become cheaper because a town has fewer people. The standards remain the same, but the number of households available to pay for them collapses.

Balranald therefore asks that the RRWF:

- Expressly include socio-economic disadvantage and capacity to pay in determining the level of assistance.
- Retain the ability to provide up to 90 per cent funding to small and financially constrained Local Water Utilities.
- Allow reduced or nil co-contributions where the evidence demonstrates that the community cannot reasonably carry them.
- Assess projects on public-health risk, water security, asset condition, and community affordability, rather than simply population or the ability of a council to find matching funds.

Council has previously made exactly this point: funding assessments need to recognise individual utility financial capacity, and the former ability to provide up to 90 per cent assistance to small, financially constrained utilities was based on sound reasoning.

The question I would particularly ask on Wednesday is:

Will the Royalties for Regional Water Fund guarantee that socio-economic disadvantage and demonstrated capacity to pay will determine the funding

percentage, including access to up to 90 per cent assistance for small remote utilities such as Balranald, rather than imposing a standard co-contribution requirement?

Yours sincerely

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea." Antoine de Saint Exupery 1900-1944



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@balranaldshirecouncil

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respects to their elders past, present, and emerging.

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From: ElectorateOffice Cootamundra <ElectorateOffice.Cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 4 September 2026 4:47 PM

To: ElectorateOffice Cootamundra <ElectorateOffice.Cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Shadow Minister for Water and Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke MP - Royalties for Regional Water Fund (RRWF) Info Session - Wednesday 9 September 2025

You don't often get email from electorateoffice.cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good afternoon,

Shadow Minister for Water and Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke MP, warmly invites Local Government Mayors, General Managers, NSW Local Water Utilities and Joint Organisations to join her online at **8.25 am on Wednesday, 9 September 2026** for a discussion on the *Royalties for Regional Water Fund* (RRWF). A link to the meeting has been provided at the bottom of this email.

To learn more about the RRWF ahead of the session, please refer to the media releases attached to this email, or view Ms Cooke's full presentation [HERE](#).

Participants are encouraged to submit any questions regarding the RRWF to cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au by **12.00 pm on Tuesday, 8 September 2026**. Ms Cooke will endeavour to address as many questions as possible during the online discussion.

We look forward to your participation. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Microsoft Teams meeting

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Kind Regards,

Kim Hill OAM

Senior Electorate Officer | Junee Office

Steph Cooke MP

State Member for Cootamundra

Shadow Minister for Water and Shadow Minister for Crown Lands

Email: cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au

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I wish to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work today. I would also like to pay my respects to Elders past and present as well as to emerging leaders.

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10.9 FINANCIAL POSITION AND FORWARD FINANCIAL RISKS

File Number: D26.127868
Author(s): Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Approver: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Council with a high-level assessment of Council's 2025–26 financial position and the financial matters that should remain under observation over the next 12–24 months.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note Council's improved financial position at 30 June 2026.
2. Note that the reported surplus is materially influenced by grant timing, particularly the advance payment of Financial Assistance Grants.
3. Note the financial risks and emerging issues outlined in this report.
4. Support continued monitoring of unrestricted cash, employee costs, asset renewal, grant dependence, debt and the Long-Term Financial Plan.

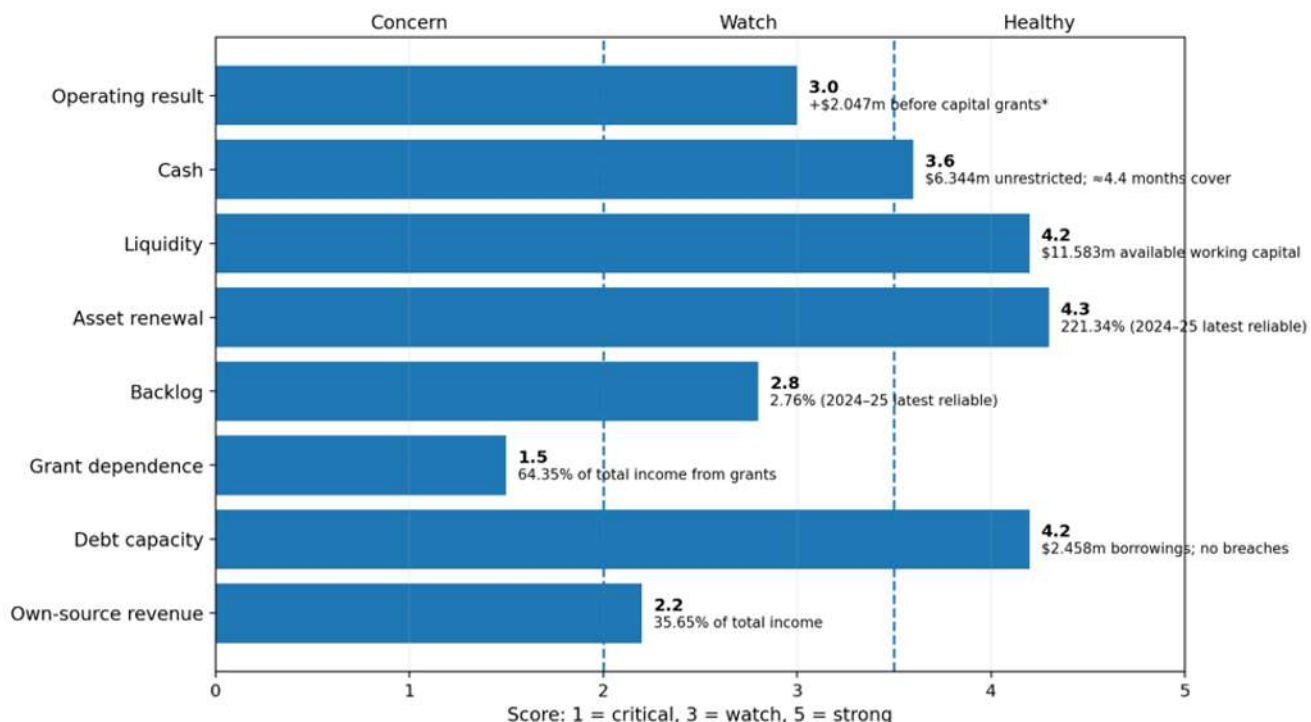
REPORT

There is a lot to like in the 2025–26 result.

- Overall operating result: \$8.694 million surplus.
- Operating result before capital grants and contributions: \$2.047 million surplus, compared with a \$2.891 million deficit in 2024–25.
- Operating cash flow: \$14.389 million.
- Total cash and investments: \$37.819 million.
- Available working capital increased to \$11.583 million.
- Materials and services fell from \$10.084 million to \$7.724 million.

This represents an improvement in Council's financial position.

Balranald Shire Council Sustainability Health Check 2025-26



* The statutory result before capital grants is +\$2.047m. The score is moderated because the year was materially affected by FAG payment timing; a simple year-on-year adjustment for the advance FAG produces an indicative near-break-even result, not a statutory accounting result.

Asset renewal and backlog use 2024-25 as the latest reliable figures because the draft 2025-26 Infrastructure Special Schedule is incomplete and presently produces invalid 0%/∞ indicators.

Health scores are a plain-English management assessment using the original 'Plain English Finances' 1-5 concept. They are not OLG statutory ratios or benchmarks.

1. Matters to Keep in Perspective

a) Financial Assistance Grants

The headline surplus needs to be read carefully.

- Council received \$5.335 million of Financial Assistance Grant in advance.
- The timing of FAG payments can materially **distort** one year's result without changing Council's underlying financial capacity.
- Council should therefore continue to focus on the underlying operating position, rather than the headline surplus alone.

This is particularly important for a small rural council heavily dependent on external funding.

b) Cash

Council's total cash position is strong, but not all of it is freely available.

- Total cash and investments: \$37.819 million.
- Internally allocated funds: \$19.018 million.
- Unrestricted and unallocated cash: \$6.344 million, down from \$7.728 million last year.

I suggest Council watch the unrestricted cash trend, rather than simply the total cash balance.

c) Employee Costs

This is one area to monitor closely.

- Employee costs increased from \$7.277 million to \$8.803 million.
- Salaries and wages increased from \$5.674 million to \$6.662 million.
- Leave entitlement costs and workers' compensation costs also increased.

There are sound operational reasons for this increase, but employee costs are recurrent and must be fully reflected in the Long-Term Financial Plan.

d) Assets and Depreciation

Depreciation increased to \$7.265 million, including \$4.242 million for roads and bridges.

Council's previous work on financial sustainability has made an important distinction:

- Depreciation is not cash;
- But it remains a measure of asset consumption;
- Lowering depreciation does not repair a road or replace a water main;
- Equally, ignoring it simply hides future renewal obligations.

The better measure is the five-to-ten-year trend in:

- Depreciation;
- Asset condition;
- Renewal expenditure;
- Renewal backlog; and
- Planned funding.

The indicative remaining useful life of Council's Infrastructure, Property, Plant, and Equipment (IPPE) has fallen from 74% in 2022 to 63% in 2026.

This is not an immediate alarm, but it is a trend worth watching.

e) Road Network

Council's long-term financial problem remains structural.

Balranald manages approximately:

- 1,593 kilometres of Local and Regional roads;
- Approximately 718 road kilometres per 1,000 residents;
- Local Roads FAG of approximately \$1,213 per kilometre, compared with a NSW median of around \$2,085.

A strong annual financial result does not reduce the physical amount of infrastructure Council must maintain. Infrastructure renewal therefore remains one of Council's most significant long-term financial risks.

f) Water and Sewer

The current operating position is generally sound, but substantial future capital expenditure is coming.

Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management work identifies:

- More than \$24 million in future water and sewer capital works; and
- Approximately \$17.22 million of assumed government assistance towards major infrastructure.

Council should keep an eye on:

- Confirmed versus assumed grant funding;
- Reserve balances;
- Customer affordability;
- Council's own contribution
- The consequences if external funding is delayed.

g) Debt and Capital Commitments

Borrowings increased to \$2.458 million, including \$1.5 million in new borrowings. There were no loan defaults or breaches.

Council also has \$8.001 million in capital commitments, with identified funding sources matching those commitments.

The issue for Council is therefore less about immediate affordability and more about the future operating and renewal cost of newly constructed assets.

h) Budget Accuracy

Several significant differences occurred between the original budget and the final result:

- Operating grants: 69% favourable;
- Capital grants: 251% favourable;
- Employee costs: 13% unfavourable;
- Materials and services: 15% unfavourable;
- Depreciation: 21% unfavourable.

Some volatility is unavoidable for a grant-dependent rural council, but improving forecasting accuracy should remain a management objective.

2. Issues for Council to Watch over the next couple of years: 2026–28

I suggest Council maintain a short financial watch list:

- Unrestricted cash: particularly whether the current downward trend continues.
- Employee costs: whether the 2025–26 increase becomes the new recurrent base.
- Underlying operating result: excluding timing distortions caused by FAG advance payments.
- Infrastructure renewal: particularly roads, buildings, water and sewer.

- Depreciation and asset condition: viewed over several years, not one year.
- Water and sewer funding: particularly reliance on future government capital assistance.
- Grant dependence: including exposure to competitive and one-off funding.
- Debt: still manageable but now increasing.
- Whole-of-life costs of new assets: especially assets constructed through grant programs.
- Long-Term Financial Plan: ensuring today's improved financial position remains sustainable over ten years.

3. Conclusion

Council finishes 2025–26 in a much stronger financial position.

The result should be recognised as a good one.

However, Council should not confuse a strong balance sheet today with the long-term funding problem having disappeared.

Balranald still has:

- A small own-source revenue base;
- A very large infrastructure network;
- Substantial dependence on grants (circa 60%);
- Rising recurrent employee costs;
- Significant future water and sewer capital requirements;
- An ongoing infrastructure renewal burden.

The task over the next two years is therefore straightforward: protect the improved position while ensuring short-term financial strength translates into long-term sustainability.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

No unbudgeted expenditure arises from this report. The forward financial task is to protect unrestricted cash; contain recurrent cost growth and ensure asset renewal and grant-dependent capital works remain affordable.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

The financial statements are subject to sections 413-418 of the Local Government Act 1993, clause 215 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Australian Accounting Standards and the NSW Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

POLICY IMPLICATION

The matters identified should inform Council's Long-Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plans, reserve and debt management, and Integrated Water Cycle Management planning.

RISK RATING

Moderate - current liquidity and working capital are sound, but Council remains exposed to grant dependence, a large asset base relative to own-source revenue, recurrent cost growth and significant future infrastructure needs.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

10.10 NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS COMMISSION PROPOSED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANT METHODOLOGY

File Number:	D26.127902
Author(s):	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 4: Our Infrastructure – Timely, sustainable and well-planned development and maintenance of fit for purpose community infrastructure.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of the NSW Local Government Grants Commission's further advice dated 4 September 2026 on the proposed 2027–28 Financial Assistance Grant methodology, and to consider the indicative financial impact for Balranald Shire Council.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the NSW Local Government Grants Commission's letter dated 4 September 2026 and the further detail provided on the proposed 2027–28 Financial Assistance Grant methodology.
2. Note that, using the Commission's indicative modelling and assuming the NSW funding pool remains unchanged, Balranald Shire Council's total Financial Assistance Grant would increase from \$6,457,119 to \$7,530,884, an indicative increase of \$1,073,765 or approximately 16.6%.
3. Note that the indicative movement comprises:
 - i) A **reduction** in the General-Purpose Component from **\$4,627,495 to \$4,540,107**;
 - ii) An **increase** in the Local Roads Component from **\$1,829,624 to \$2,990,777**.
 - iii) Total is an increase of **+\$1,073,765**

BACKGROUND

Council has previously considered the Financial Assistance Grant methodology and has undertaken substantial work examining the way the General Purpose and Local Roads components are distributed.

On 29 August 2026, a detailed submission was prepared in response to the Commission's proposed methodology consultation. The submission supported the general direction of reform but argued that greater transparency and further testing were required before the methodology was finalised.

In particular, the submission supported moving the Local Roads Component towards a stronger measure of actual road-network burden rather than population, while questioning whether road type, usage, bridges, major structures and lifecycle costs had been adequately recognised.

The submission also supported the proposed balanced-budget approach for the General Purpose Component but raised concerns that historically low expenditure by financially constrained councils should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of low expenditure need.

On 4 September 2026, the Chair of the NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Ms Linda Scott, provided Council with further information on the proposed methodology and, importantly, an indicative calculation of the effect on Balranald Shire Council.

REPORT

Indicative impact on Balranald Shire Council

The Commission has provided the following indicative comparison:

Component	2025–26 Actual	Proposed Methodology	Change
General Purpose	\$4,627,495	\$4,540,107	-\$87,388
Local Roads	\$1,829,624	\$2,990,777	+\$1,161,153
Total	\$6,457,119	\$7,530,884	+\$1,073,765

The overall indicative increase is approximately 16.6%, with the Local Roads Component increasing by approximately 63.5%.

The Commission makes clear that these figures are estimates only and assume no change to the overall NSW allocation from the Commonwealth.

For further context, Council's estimated 2026–27 entitlement under the existing methodology is \$6,803,644, comprising \$4,880,879 General Purpose and \$1,922,765 Local Roads.

The indicative outcome under the proposed methodology is therefore also approximately \$727,000 higher than Council's current 2026–27 estimated total entitlement, although the two figures relate to different grant years and should not be treated as directly comparable budget forecasts.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

There is no immediate financial impact arising from consideration of this report.

If ultimately adopted in the form presently modelled, the Commission's indicative methodology would result in an estimated Financial Assistance Grant of \$7,530,884, approximately \$1.074 million above the 2025–26 actual grant.

The Commission has expressly advised that the figure is indicative only and remains dependent on the total Commonwealth allocation.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Financial Assistance Grants are provided under the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth) and associated National Principles.

The NSW Local Government Grants Commission determines the methodology used to recommend distribution of NSW's allocation within those legislative parameters.

Some matters raised in Council's broader Financial Assistance Grants advocacy, including the overall size of the national funding pool and elements of the Commonwealth statutory framework, are matters for the Australian Government rather than the NSW Grants Commission.

POLICY IMPLICATION

There are no direct changes required to existing Council policy arising from this report. The proposed methodology is an external funding framework administered by the NSW Local Government Grants Commission. Council's endorsed position will, however, inform its ongoing advocacy and future financial and infrastructure planning should the new methodology be adopted.

RISK RATING

The principal risk is that a new methodology may redistribute a fixed funding pool materially between councils.

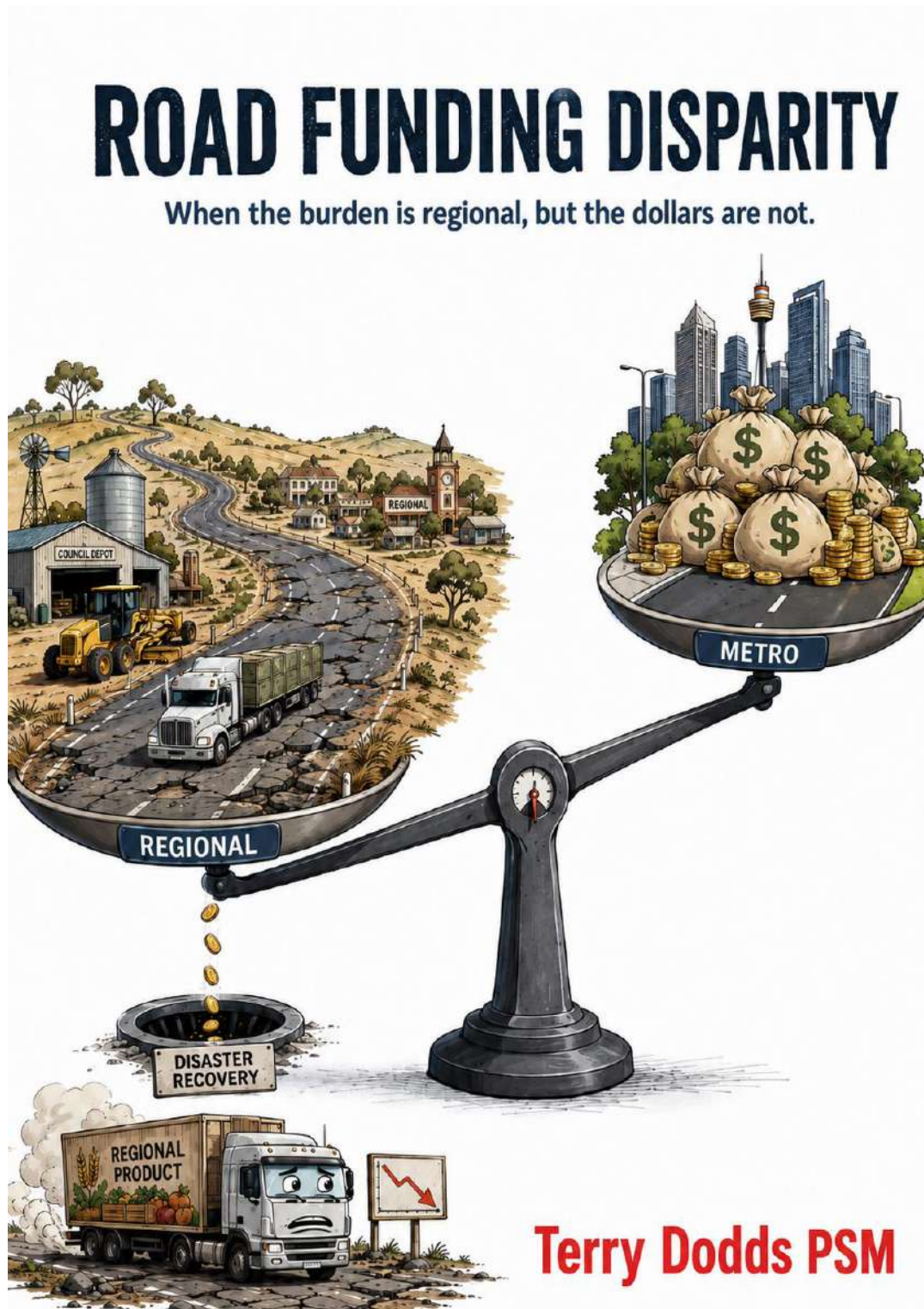
There is also a risk that simplifying the methodology could omit material expenditure drivers or rely on data that do not adequately reflect actual service and infrastructure need.

Council's proposed submission seeks greater transparency, data assurance and appropriate transition arrangements before the methodology is finalised.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Road Funding Disparity [↓](#) 
2. Balranald Shire Council Submission to Grants Commission on Financial Assistance Grants Methodology and Quantum [↓](#) 
3. Letter of advice from Grants Commission [↓](#) 

Terry Dodds PSM. Road Funding Disparity. 15 August 2026. © Terry Dodds PSM, 2026



Terry Dodds PSM. Road Funding Disparity. 15 August 2026. © Terry Dodds PSM, 2026

ROAD FUNDING DISPARITY

Does the current funding pattern adequately recognise the infrastructure burden carried by rural and remote NSW councils?

A comparative analysis of road length and 2026–27 Financial Assistance Grants across all 128 NSW councils.

Prepared by Terry Dodds PSM: 15 August 2026

This is a practitioner policy and advocacy paper. The views expressed are the author's and do not represent the formal position of Balranald Shire Council or any other organisation unless separately adopted or endorsed.

Executive summary

This paper applies a simple diagnostic to an old local government problem: put the road network of every NSW council beside its 2026–27 Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs), then ask what the funding looks like when normalised by the kilometres of road the council is responsible for.

The result does not provide a complete funding formula, and it is not intended to. Road class, pavement type, traffic, bridges, climate, condition, terrain, freight task, population, rate base and other expenditure disabilities all matter. But a dollars-per-kilometre measure is a useful sense-check because it starts with one unavoidable physical fact: the road exists and somebody has to maintain, renew and restore it.

Key finding

Balranald Shire carries 1,593 km of local and regional roads; about 718 km per 1,000 residents. That is the 5th-highest road burden per resident in NSW. Yet its Local Roads FAG component is only \$1,213 per road kilometre, the 5th-lowest in the State. The NSW median is \$2,085 per kilometre.

The statewide classification pattern is more significant than any single council example. Using OLG's own council classifications, the median Rural council carries about 469 road kilometres per 1,000 residents compared with about 2.5 kilometres for the median Metropolitan council. Yet the median Metropolitan council receives about \$4,066 of Local Roads FAG per kilometre compared with about \$1,299 for the median Rural council.

In other words, the median Rural road burden per resident is around 190 times the Metropolitan median, while the Metropolitan Local Roads FAG per kilometre is about 3.1 times the Rural median.

That does not prove the FAG formula is wrong. It does, however, show a sufficiently large structural disparity to justify closer testing of whether distance, network scale and weak own-source revenue capacity are being recognised strongly enough.

Terry Dodds PSM. Road Funding Disparity. 15 August 2026. © Terry Dodds PSM, 2026

The disaster-recovery implications also matter. The Australian Government can reimburse states and territories circa 65 per cent of eligible assistance under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). Better upfront maintenance, cyclic renewal and resilience therefore have a potential fiscal benefit not only for councils and NSW, but also for the Commonwealth taxpayer. The policy question is whether governments are spending enough before the event to reduce what they repeatedly spend after it.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to test the relationship between physical road-network burden and the distribution of Financial Assistance Grants across NSW councils, and to identify whether a simple burden-normalised measure adds useful information to current financial sustainability and funding debates.

It is deliberately a diagnostic paper, not a proposed replacement formula. The intention is to make the disparity visible, test it against broader evidence on rural and remote sustainability, and identify the next analytical work required before policy changes are designed.

2. Data and method

The analysis combines the NSW Office of Local Government 2024–25 Time-Series Data with the Australian Government’s 2026–27 NSW Financial Assistance Grant state summary. The OLG road measure used is total road length including Local and Regional roads. The FAG analysis separates the General Purpose and Local Roads components and also calculates total FAG per road kilometre.

All 128 NSW councils were matched. The Commonwealth table also includes three non-council recipients: Lord Howe Island Board, Silverton Village Committee and Tibooburra Village Committee, which were excluded from the council-to-council comparison.

The principal measures are:

- Road kilometres per 1,000 residents; a simple indicator of infrastructure burden relative to population base.
- Total FAG dollars per road kilometre; a broad funding-intensity diagnostic, noting General Purpose FAGs are untied.
- Local Roads FAG dollars per road kilometre; the more direct comparison of the road component against road-network length.
- OLG classification medians; used to test whether the pattern persists beyond individual councils and outliers.

OLG itself cautions that council performance indicators should not be read in isolation because local circumstances can make service delivery much more difficult or costly in some areas. This paper adopts the same caution. The figures are indicators; the size and direction of the disparity are the reason for further analysis, not a substitute for it.

Terry Dodds PSM. Road Funding Disparity. 15 August 2026. © Terry Dodds PSM, 2026

3. Balranald: a useful case study, not the whole case

Balranald Shire has approximately 1,593.11 kilometres of Local and Regional roads and a population of 2,219. That equates to approximately 718 road kilometres per 1,000 residents, compared with a NSW median of approximately 43 kilometres.

Its 2026–27 FAG entitlement is approximately \$6,847,574. On a road-length basis that is about \$4,298 per kilometre compared with a NSW median of about \$6,480.

The Local Roads component is approximately \$1,932,596, or \$1,213 per kilometre, compared with the NSW median of approximately \$2,085.

This places Balranald 5th-highest in NSW for road kilometres per 1,000 residents and 5th-lowest for Local Roads Financial Assistance Grant per kilometre.

The uncomfortable comparison

Balranald is **near the top of the State for road burden per resident and near the bottom for Local Roads FAG per kilometre**. That does not settle the policy argument, but it makes the case for examining the allocation methodology rather than assuming the current result is self-evidently equitable.

4. The statewide pattern

The strongest evidence is not the ranking of one council. It is the pattern across OLG classifications. Medians are used below to reduce the influence of individual outliers.

Table 1. Median road burden and FAG intensity by OLG classification

OLG classification	Councils	Road km / 1,000 residents	Local Roads FAG / km	Total FAG / km
Metropolitan	25	2.5	\$4,066	\$15,423
Metropolitan Fringe	9	5.7	\$2,982	\$10,445
Regional Town/City	37	24.9	\$2,388	\$7,911
Large Rural	42	166.4	\$1,464	\$4,493
Rural	15	469.1	\$1,299	\$4,259

On the OLG classification medians, a Rural council carries about 469.1 road kilometres per 1,000 residents compared with 2.5 for a Metropolitan council; a ratio of approximately 190 to one. Yet the Metropolitan median for Local Roads FAG is \$4,066 per kilometre, about 3.1 times the Rural median of \$1,299.

Terry Dodds PSM. Road Funding Disparity. 15 August 2026. © Terry Dodds PSM, 2026

This does not mean metropolitan councils do not have legitimate costs. Dense urban road networks can have high unit costs, utilities conflicts, traffic-management requirements and expensive reconstruction standards. The point is narrower: the physical disability created by very long networks and tiny revenue bases is so pronounced that it deserves to be visible within the allocation and sustainability framework.

5. The five councils at each end of the table

The top-and-bottom comparison is useful as a second check. Total FAG includes untied General Purpose funding, so the Local Roads component is the more relevant road-funding comparison.

Table 2. Highest total FAG per road kilometre

Council	Road length (km)	Total FAG / km	Local Roads FAG / km
Broken Hill	258.05	\$31,915	\$2,970
Sydney	330.00	\$25,864	\$5,781
Wollongong	1,068.64	\$22,931	\$3,289
Waverley	123.46	\$21,192	\$4,907
Strathfield	97.11	\$19,984	\$4,608

Table 3. Lowest total FAG per road kilometre

Council	Road length (km)	Total FAG / km	Local Roads FAG / km
Gwydir	2,338.96	\$3,404	\$1,359
Lachlan	3,954.57	\$3,524	\$1,240
Carrathool	2,661.92	\$3,623	\$1,277
Bland	3,133.85	\$3,703	\$1,393
Warren	1,297.35	\$3,747	\$1,196

The average total FAG per kilometre for the five highest councils is approximately \$24,377, compared with \$3,600 for the five lowest - **a difference of about 6.8 times.**

Terry Dodds PSM. Road Funding Disparity. 15 August 2026. © Terry Dodds PSM, 2026

Table 4. Highest Local Roads FAG per road kilometre

Council	Road length (km)	Local Roads FAG / km
Sydney	330.00	\$5,781
Waverley	123.46	\$4,907
Strathfield	97.11	\$4,608
Bayside	369.69	\$4,536
Burwood	89.73	\$4,459

Table 5. Lowest Local Roads FAG per road kilometre

Council	Road length (km)	Local Roads FAG / km
Central Darling	2,392.60	\$967
Cobar	2,298.00	\$1,083
Bourke	2,418.61	\$1,144
Warren	1,297.35	\$1,196
Balranald	1,593.11	\$1,213

The five highest councils average approximately \$4,858 of Local Roads FAG per kilometre. The five lowest average approximately \$1,121. The gap remains about 4.3 times even after General Purpose FAGs are removed from the comparison.

6. A per-kilometre approach is not perfect - but it is transparent

Road length should not become the only funding measure. A kilometre of lightly trafficked gravel road is not equivalent to a kilometre of heavily trafficked urban pavement. Nor does simple length capture bridges, drainage structures, pavement width, freight loading, climate, condition, access constraints or renewal standards.

However, per-kilometre funding has an important advantage: the denominator is physical, visible and difficult to game. It makes the scale of the asset responsibility explicit and can then be adjusted for legitimate cost drivers rather than allowing road burden to disappear inside a complex formula.

There is also precedent in NSW. The \$500 million Regional and Local Roads Repair Program used road kilometres as an allocation basis. Importantly, a July 2023 NSW Parliamentary answer stated that regional councils were eligible for \$1,823 per kilometre under that program, while metropolitan councils were eligible for more than \$10,000 per kilometre. The lesson is not that a per-kilometre model automatically produces fairness. **The lesson is that once the unit rate is visible, the policy weighting is visible too.**

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IPWEA NSW & ACT and the Roads & Transport Directorate have for several years advocated stronger and more sustainable road funding, resilience and betterment. Their 2023 Local Roads Congress identified resilience and betterment as recurring priorities, and the Directorate has publicly described its advocacy for increased state and federal road resources.

7. Disaster recovery changes the fiscal equation

The road-funding debate is often framed as a contest over which councils receive more money. That is too narrow. A better question is whether the funding mix reduces whole-of-government cost over the life of the asset and through repeated disaster cycles.

Work led by the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation on severe-weather impacts extended across two other Joint Organisations and 26 member councils. The resulting work highlighted legacy vulnerabilities created by funding levels, construction methods, location and topography, and recommended a greater focus on proactive maintenance, cyclic renewal, resilience planning, better data and more certain government funding aligned to the scale of the road network.

That evidence should be treated carefully. Deferred maintenance does not cause a flood, storm or bushfire. But a weakened pavement, failed shoulder, undersized drainage system or deteriorated culvert can be more vulnerable when the event arrives. The consequence can be a larger repair task, longer road closures, more community isolation and greater disruption to freight and emergency access.

The Commonwealth has a direct fiscal interest. Under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, the Australian Government may reimburse states and territories for up to 75 per cent of eligible disaster assistance. The Commonwealth's Disaster Ready Fund is explicitly intended to reduce disaster risk and the future recovery burden on governments and communities.

The Commonwealth benefit

A dollar spent on ordinary maintenance is not automatically a disaster-mitigation dollar. But where targeted maintenance, renewal or betterment reduces the scale of eligible disaster restoration, the Commonwealth can benefit through lower recovery reimbursements as well as reduced economic disruption. This is a whole-of-government investment argument, not simply a council funding argument.

For regional Australia, there is also an economic-protection dimension. Local roads provide the first and last mile for agriculture, mining, tourism and regional freight. A damaged or closed local road does not merely inconvenience a council; it can delay product to market, increase vehicle and freight costs, disrupt labour and service access, and reduce the resilience of regional production that contributes to State and national economic output.

8. Depreciation, renewal and the sustainability debate

This analysis also reinforces a distinction developed in earlier work on local government depreciation and financial sustainability. Depreciation is not cash and does not create a reserve.

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Revaluation can change reported depreciation and the operating result without putting one additional dollar in the bank. But the physical asset still consumes service capacity and eventually requires maintenance, rehabilitation or replacement.

The problem is therefore not solved by changing an accounting convention. A council with a very large road network and weak own-source revenue may simultaneously have short-term cash capacity and a serious long-term renewal problem. Good reporting needs to show both.

A rural and remote sustainability lens should therefore bring together physical burden and financial capacity: road kilometres, kilometres per resident or rateable property, own-source revenue, grant dependence, road condition, maintenance adequacy, renewal expenditure, depreciation and disaster exposure. No single ratio should be asked to carry the whole story.

9. What the analysis does not prove

For the avoidance of doubt, this paper does not argue that:

- Every road kilometre should attract the same grant
- Metropolitan councils are necessarily overfunded in absolute terms
- Road length is the only or even the dominant expenditure disability in every council
- Deferred maintenance causes natural disasters
- Depreciation should be mechanically funded dollar-for-dollar

It argues something narrower and more defensible: the disparity is large enough that road-network scale and the disability of distance should be tested explicitly and transparently in future funding and sustainability reform.

10. Policy implications and recommended next work

Before changing any FAG or road-funding formula, the following work would materially improve the evidence base:

- Publish a standard road-burden dashboard for all NSW councils showing road kilometres, kilometres per 1,000 residents, kilometres per rateable property, Local Roads FAG per kilometre, own-source revenue and grant dependence.
- Model the Local Roads FAG component against OLG classifications and road-network characteristics, including sealed/unsealed split, Regional/Local road class, bridges, freight task, climate, condition and renewal need.
- Test a transparent base-per-kilometre component with clearly disclosed loadings for legitimate cost drivers, rather than relying on opaque weighting alone.
- Give greater policy weight to proactive maintenance, cyclic renewal and betterment where evidence shows this can reduce repeat disaster damage and whole-of-government recovery cost.
- Require new infrastructure and grant programs to identify whole-of-life maintenance and renewal consequences before assets are added to already stretched council networks.
- Ask the Commonwealth to model avoided DRFA liabilities and regional economic disruption when assessing investment in resilience and essential local infrastructure.

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- Keep any new FAG or infrastructure increment additional to the existing untied base, with predictable formula funding rather than forcing structurally weak councils into repeated contestable grant rounds.

11. Conclusion

The funding challenge facing rural and remote councils is not difficult to describe. Distance remains distance. A road still has to be inspected, maintained, graded, resealed, drained, repaired after a flood and ultimately renewed regardless of how few people live beside it.

The present analysis does not provide the final answer. It does something more basic: it shows that the current outcome deserves much closer scrutiny. When the median Rural council carries around 190 times the road burden per resident of the median Metropolitan council, while the Metropolitan Local Roads FAG per kilometre is about three times higher, the disability of distance cannot sensibly be treated as a side issue.

The policy objective should not be to move money for the sake of moving money. It should be to allocate public funds where they best protect service capacity, regional production, community access and whole-of-government finances. That means giving infrastructure burden, maintenance, renewal, resilience and disaster exposure a more visible place in the funding equation.

Put simply: it is cheaper to recognise the road while it can still be maintained than to rediscover it after it fails.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

*What the NSW 2027–28 proposal, the 1995 Act and the 128-council model
actually tell us*

Prepared by Terry Dodds PSM

29 August 2026

This is a practitioner policy paper. Balranald Shire Council is used as a worked example because the numbers make the infrastructure problem easy to see. It is not a proposal written to get a particular result for Balranald, Western NSW or any other council. The purpose is national reform, using a test that can be applied to every Australian council. The views are the author's unless separately adopted or endorsed.

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Page 1

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

TEN POINTS UP FRONT

These ten propositions have been tested against the 1995 Act, the NSW Commission's proposed 2027-28 methodology and the 128-council work. They need to be read together. Some are within NSW's control, some require Federal legislation and some are transition choices. I have put them here so a critical reader can see the whole package before taking one part in isolation.

- 1. Protect the current untied base.** Keep today's General Purpose and Local Roads FAGs untied and lock the core settlement at not less than 0.5 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue.
- 2. Add the extra 0.5 per cent as new tied money.** Create an Essential Local Infrastructure Component at 0.1 per cent a year for five consecutive years, taking the total Commonwealth-local government settlement to 1 per cent.
- 3. Change the 1995 Act; do not stretch it.** Section 15 protects the existing grants as unconditional payments. Preserve that protection and create a separate statutory component for the new tied money.
- 4. Make the new stream additional and formula based.** No Roads to Recovery rebadging and no contestable beauty contest. Tie it to essential infrastructure as a class and let councils choose qualifying works from adopted plans.
- 5. Grandfather the base and reform the growth.** Do not redistribute today's pool overnight. Protect existing nominal funding and apply the new need formula to the tied stream from its first dollar.
- 6. Use an asset-preservation test for Local Roads.** Road length is the starting point; type, usage, structures and material cost differences also matter. Keep road kilometres per 1,000 residents as an indicator, not the sole formula.
- 7. Treat the 30 per cent General Purpose minimum as the Federal issue it is.** It sits in section 6 of the Commonwealth Act. NSW cannot alter it through methodology; Parliament must review it if it impedes genuine HFE.
- 8. Rebase the historical interstate Local Roads shares.** A better NSW formula cannot fix a national pool still divided on historical shares. Move them progressively towards contemporary national road-preservation need.
- 9. Use comparable national data and publish the calculation.** Show network need, infrastructure intensity and fiscal capacity for every council on a comparable basis. If the model cannot be explained, it will not survive scrutiny.
- 10. Keep Balranald in its proper place.** It is the worked example because the numbers are stark, not the intended beneficiary. The same test must work for every Australian council and the evidence should determine the result.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

Contents

TEN POINTS UP FRONT	2
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
2. WHY I HAVE CHANGED PART OF THE ARGUMENT	6
3. WHAT NSW IS NOW PROPOSING	7
4. START WITH THE 1995 ACT	8
4.1 HORIZONTAL FISCAL EQUALISATION IS THE STARTING POINT	8
4.2 THE 30 PER CENT MINIMUM IS IN THE ACT.....	9
4.3 NSW HAS MORE ROOM ON LOCAL ROADS.....	9
4.4 THE STATE ROAD SHARES ARE A COMMONWEALTH PROBLEM.....	9
4.5 SECTION 15 DOES NOT KILL THE TIED-INCREMENT IDEA.....	10
5. GENERAL PURPOSE GRANT: BETTER DIRECTION, WITH SOME RISKS	10
5.1 HISTORIC UNDER-SPENDING CANNOT BECOME FUTURE 'NEED'	11
5.2 INFRASTRUCTURE INTENSITY STILL MATTERS IN THE GENERAL PURPOSE GRANT	11
5.3 'OTHER GRANTS' NEEDS A CLEAR RULE	11
5.4 THE ARIA+ >6 FLOOR IS PROTECTION, NOT THE CURE	12
6. LOCAL ROADS: THE MOST USEFUL PART OF THE NEW PROPOSAL.....	12
6.1 LENGTH IS THERE; TYPE AND USAGE ARE NOT YET VISIBLE	13
6.2 RAWLINSONS IS A COST ADJUSTOR, NOT A ROAD-ASSET MODEL.....	13
7. WHAT THE 128-COUNCIL MODEL TELLS US	14
Illustrative fixed-pool outcomes from the NSW proof of concept	14
8. BALRANALD IS THE EXAMPLE, NOT THE ANSWER.....	15
9. TWO QUESTIONS NEED TO BE KEPT SEPARATE	16
Question 1: What should the road network reasonably cost to preserve?.....	16
Question 2: What capacity does the council have to support its overall service and infrastructure burden?	16
10. WHAT NSW CAN FIX, AND WHAT ONLY CANBERRA CAN FIX	17
11. THE FEDERAL CHANGES I WOULD PUT TO PARLIAMENT	18
11.1 RESTORE THE QUANTUM THROUGH A 0.5% + 0.5% HYBRID	18
11.2 FIX THE SECTION 6 MINIMUM PROPERLY	19
11.3 REBASE THE SECTION 12 ROAD SHARES	19
11.4 USE SECTION 16 FOR WHAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO DO	20
11.5 THE 1 PER CENT HYBRID: WHAT ACTUALLY HAS TO CHANGE	20

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

11.6 CREATE A THIRD STATUTORY COMPONENT	20
11.7 WHAT 'TIED' SHOULD MEAN	20
11.8 PHASE IT IN AT 0.1 PER CENT A YEAR	21
11.9 DEFINE THE TAX BASE PROPERLY.....	22
11.10 THE ACT AMENDMENT IS QUITE DOABLE	22
11.11 THE CONSTITUTIONAL PATH IS ALREADY THERE	22
11.12 IF CANBERRA DOES NOT WANT TO AMEND THE FAG ACT	22
11.13 KEEP THE RED TAPE OUT.....	23
11.14 NO SMOKE AND MIRRORS	23
11.15 THE COMMONWEALTH GRANTS COMMISSION OBJECTION	23
11.16 THIS NEEDS TO BECOME GOVERNMENT POLICY	24
12. TRANSITION: GRANDFATHER THE BASE, REFORM THE GROWTH	24
13. QUESTIONS I WOULD PUT BACK TO THE NSW COMMISSION	25
14. WHAT CAN BE TAKEN TO CANBERRA	25
15. CONCLUSION	26
16. NOTE ON THE EVIDENCE BASE.....	27
17. COPYRIGHT, AUTHORSHIP AND ATTRIBUTION	28

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The August presentation from the NSW Local Government Grants Commission has been useful. It fills in some gaps and, more importantly, changes part of the argument. The Commission is proposing to simplify the General-Purpose Component, move to a balanced-budget assessment of expenditure need and revenue capacity, and change the Local Roads Component so road length and a geographic cost index drive the allocation.

It also says quite openly that the existing method has become too complex and that parts of the data being used are no longer reliable. That is not my criticism of the current model; it is the Commission's own reason for reviewing it.¹

The road proposal is the most relevant change. The current NSW Local Roads calculation uses road length, population and bridges. Under the August proposal, population disappears from the Local Roads formula shown in the presentation and road expenditure need is calculated from road-network extent multiplied by a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index. Put simply, more road means more assessed need and a higher regional cost means more assessed need.²

I agree with that direction. Population obviously matters to local government, but it is a poor substitute for measuring the cost of preserving an existing road. Distance remains distance. A 100-kilometre-long road does not become shorter because fewer people live beside it or because the rate base is small. The proposed NSW formula recognises that much more directly than the current one.

Where I think the proposal stops short is in calling that, by itself, a complete measure of road need. The Commission correctly quotes the National Road Principle, which points to road length, type and usage. The formula then shown in the slides is road length multiplied by a broad regional construction-cost index. Road surface, traffic, freight loading, bridges, major culverts, climate, soils and material availability are not separately visible. I am not saying the proposal is wrong. I am saying the Commission should be able to show that the important differences have not been simplified out of the model.^{3,4}

The other part that cannot be glossed over is the Commonwealth Act. The Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 sets some hard boundaries. The 30 per cent General Purpose minimum is in the Act and NSW cannot remove it. The Local Roads Component has to be allocated consistently with the National Principles. Payments to councils are to be unconditional. The State shares of the national road pool are still carried forward through a

¹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, August 2026, slides 7–8 and 17, <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2026-08/local-government-grants-commission-proposed-methodology-consultation-presentation.pdf> (accessed 29 August 2026).

² NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

³ Australian Government, National principles for the allocation of grants under the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995, Identified Road Component Principle: allocation as far as practicable on relative roads expenditure and road-asset preservation need, with relevant considerations including length, type and usage.

⁴ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

structure anchored in historic allocations. So there are things NSW can fix now, and there are things that simply need Canberra to change the rules.^{5,6,7}

The ten propositions are set out up front because they need to be read together. The rest of this paper explains the evidence behind them and, just as importantly, which parts NSW can change now, and which parts require Canberra to amend the Act.

2. WHY I HAVE CHANGED PART OF THE ARGUMENT

This work started with a simple observation. Put the road network of every NSW council beside its population, and its FAG allocation and a pattern appears fairly quickly. Rural and remote councils generally carry far more kilometres of road for every resident and ratepayer available to support them. My August road-disparity paper used that relationship as a sense-check. I never suggested that kilometres per 1,000 residents, by itself, should become the grant formula.⁸

I then modelled all 128 NSW councils. That confirmed the pattern, but it also showed the practical problem with simply redistributing the existing road pool: there would be large winners and large losers. The August OLG presentation moves the discussion on again because the Commission itself is now proposing to remove population from the visible Local Roads calculation and put more weight on road length and geographic cost.^{9,10}

That is important. I am no longer arguing from the outside that the physical road network should count for more; the Commission has effectively accepted that starting point. The remaining questions are more useful ones: how road need should actually be measured, which cost factors are material, how to manage the transition, and which problems sit in the Commonwealth legislation rather than in the NSW formula.

The Commission has also asked councils not to turn the consultation into a complaint about whether their individual grant goes up or down. Its submission material asks councils to deal with fairness, transparency, practicality, data quality and unintended consequences, and to use council examples only where they expose a broader issue. That is exactly the basis on which Balranald is used here.¹¹

⁵ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

⁶ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 4 and 12. Section 12 rolls each State's additional previous-year funding amount forward by the common annual factor; this is the statutory architecture underlying the continuing historical jurisdictional shares of the identified local road component.

⁷ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 15(a). Payments passed by States to local governing bodies under ss 9, 10, 12 and 13 are required to be unconditional payments, subject to the GST withholding provision in s 15(aa).

⁸ **Terry Dodds PSM**, Road Funding Disparity: Does the Current Funding Pattern Adequately Recognise the Infrastructure Burden Carried by Rural and Remote NSW Councils?, 15 August 2026, analysis of all 128 NSW councils using OLG 2024–25 road data and Commonwealth 2026–27 FAG allocations.

⁹ **Terry Dodds PSM**, NSW 128-Council Local Roads FAG Distribution – Proof of Concept, 29 August 2026. The model tests the current allocation against pure road length and several road-length/infrastructure-intensity scenarios. It is explicitly a sensitivity model, not a proposed final formula.

¹⁰ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

¹¹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Council Submission Template Guide – Proposed Methodology Consultation 2026, pp. 1–3, <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2026-08/council-submission-template-guide-proposed-methodology-consultation.pdf> (accessed 29 August 2026).

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

3. WHAT NSW IS NOW PROPOSING

The presentation is still a consultation paper. No final model has been adopted. The Commission says it wants the 2027–28 method to be simpler, based on reliable data and better at equalising financial sustainability. Those are sensible objectives, and I have no issue with them.^{12,13}

Component	Proposed NSW approach	My view
General Purpose	Balanced-budget model. 30% per capita; 70% allocated on assessed financial need. Financial need = expenditure need - revenue capacity.	Cleaner and easier to explain. But the Act sets a minimum outcome; it does not itself prescribe a 30/70 accounting split.
Expenditure need	Statistical estimate based on actual operating expenditure and inherent factors; published slides identify population, remoteness and ATSI.	This needs careful testing. Low historic spending can mean low capacity, not low need.
Revenue capacity	Rate capacity + user fees/charges + a four-year average of operational grants.	Needs a published inclusion/exclusion rule. Disaster, one-off and obligation-specific grants can distort the result if treated too broadly.
Local Roads	Road length x Rawlinsons regional cost index, then allocate the State road pool in proportion to assessed road need.	A big step in the right direction. Population drops out, but type, usage, bridges and structures are not separately visible in the published formula.
Transition/floor	Recommended ARIA+ >6 floor protects 14 most remote councils from falling below 2025-26 GPC.	Useful transition protection. It should not become the permanent answer if the statistical model is missing real expenditure need.

¹² NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, August 2026, slides 7–8 and 17, <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2026-08/local-government-grants-commission-proposed-methodology-consultation-presentation.pdf> (accessed 29 August 2026).

¹³ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slide 17. The stated 2027–28 objectives are simplicity, reliability and equalising councils' financial sustainability across NSW.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

In broad terms, I support the direction of travel. My concern is not that the Commission is changing the model; it should. **My concern is whether some important expenditure drivers have been dropped in the name of simplicity, whether historic expenditure is being used too readily as a proxy for genuine need, and whether the new model is being asked to solve problems that actually sit in the Federal Act.**^{14,15,16,17}

4. START WITH THE 1995 ACT

Any serious national proposal has to start with the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995. We often talk about ‘the FAG formula’ as though a State Grants Commission can simply redesign it from top to bottom. It cannot. The Act separates the General-Purpose funding under section 9 from the additional funding under section 12, which is the identified Local Roads Component, and different rules apply to each.¹⁸

The objects of the Act still make sense. Parliament wanted stronger local-government financial capacity, more equitable service levels, greater certainty, better efficiency and effectiveness, and more transparent and consistent allocation methods. There is nothing in those objectives that prevents a modern infrastructure-intensity or asset-preservation approach. If anything, they support it.¹⁹

4.1 HORIZONTAL FISCAL EQUALISATION IS THE STARTING POINT

Section 6 says the National Principles are to pursue full horizontal fiscal equalisation as far as practicable. In ordinary language, a council should be able, by reasonable effort, to operate at a standard not lower than the State average after allowing for differences in what it reasonably needs to spend and what it can reasonably raise itself.²⁰

That is the issue I keep coming back to. A council can have a very small population and rate base but still be responsible for an enormous physical network. Counting the people does not make the road, bridge, drainage network or aerodrome disappear. HFE is supposed to look at both expenditure need and revenue capacity, and the method needs to be capable of seeing both.

¹⁴ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 19–26. The proposed General Purpose Component is a balanced-budget model: 30 per cent per capita plus a 70 per cent needs pool, with financial need assessed as expenditure need less revenue-raising capacity.

¹⁵ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 23–25 and 38. The presentation identifies population and remoteness as key expenditure drivers and states that the base-case expenditure estimate is statistically derived from councils’ actual operating expenditure, excluding water and sewer, with population, remoteness and ATSI variables.

¹⁶ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 37–44. The recommended consultation option protects 14 councils with ARIA+ scores above 6 from receiving a General Purpose Grant below their 2025–26 amount, funded by redistribution from councils above the statutory minimum.

¹⁷ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

¹⁸ Commonwealth of Australia, Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 3, Federal Register of Legislation, <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text> (accessed 29 August 2026).

¹⁹ Commonwealth of Australia, Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 3, Federal Register of Legislation, <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text> (accessed 29 August 2026).

²⁰ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

4.2 THE 30 PER CENT MINIMUM IS IN THE ACT

Section 6(2)(b) is clear. A council cannot receive less under the General Purpose Component than it would receive if 30 per cent of the State pool were distributed on a per-capita basis. NSW cannot lower that threshold by changing its methodology. If the threshold is to change, Federal Parliament has to change the Act.²¹

There is a useful distinction here. The Act sets a minimum outcome; it does not say the Commission must literally operate two accounting pools of 30 per cent and 70 per cent. The proposed NSW 30/70 model is a simple way of giving effect to the statutory floor, and there is merit in that simplicity, but it is still a design choice. The legal requirement is that no council falls below the 30 per cent per-capita equivalent.^{22,23}

I would therefore describe the 30/70 split as the Commission's proposed method of complying with the Act, not as the only method the Act allows. That may sound like a small point, but it matters when the model is being defended as a policy choice.

4.3 NSW HAS MORE ROOM ON LOCAL ROADS

The Local Roads rule is much less prescriptive. The National Principle says the identified road component should, as far as practicable, be allocated according to relative roads expenditure need and the need to preserve road assets. It specifically points to road length, type and usage. Population is not required as an input to the Local Roads formula.²⁴

That means NSW does not need Canberra's permission to remove population from its road calculation or to move to a stronger preservation-needs model. It already has room to do that within the existing Act and National Principles.

4.4 THE STATE ROAD SHARES ARE A COMMONWEALTH PROBLEM

There is a second road issue that NSW cannot fix. The Commonwealth still divides the national Local Roads pool between States and Territories according to fixed historical shares. Section 12 then rolls each State's amount forward from the previous year using the common annual factor. In practice, the State shares stay anchored to history rather than being rebased to today's road network and road-preservation need.^{25,26}

²¹ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

²² Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

²³ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 84–85. The Commission proposed that States be permitted, within Commonwealth limits, to set a common equal-per-capita pool between 20 and 30 per cent, with a relative-needs pool of at least 65 per cent and an optional reform pool of up to 5 per cent.

²⁴ Australian Government, National principles for the allocation of grants under the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995, Identified Road Component Principle: allocation as far as practicable on relative roads expenditure and road-asset preservation need, with relevant considerations including length, type and usage.

²⁵ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government, 2026–27 program and jurisdictional allocations, <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government> (accessed 29 August 2026).

²⁶ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 4 and 12. Section 12 rolls each State's additional previous-year funding amount forward by the common annual factor; this is the statutory architecture underlying the continuing historical jurisdictional shares of the identified local road component.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

So even a very good NSW formula only improves the way NSW divides its own bucket. It does not answer whether NSW, Queensland, Western Australia, Tasmania or any other jurisdiction has the right-sized bucket in the first place. That is a Commonwealth question.

4.5 SECTION 15 DOES NOT KILL THE TIED-INCREMENT IDEA

Section 15 is quite plain about the FAGs that exist today. Payments made through sections 9, 10, 12 and 13 are to be passed on by the States as unconditional payments. That means Canberra cannot simply pour another 0.1 or 0.5 per cent through the existing sections and then attach infrastructure conditions to it. Under the Act as it stands, the money would still have to arrive at councils untied.²⁷

That does not mean the tied increment in my July Fresh Approach paper was wrong. It means the Act has to be changed if we want the new money to be both permanent and tied. **My original proposal was never to tie the existing FAG base. It was to protect the current untied 0.5 per cent, then add another 0.5 per cent for essential infrastructure in five 0.1 per cent steps. I still think that is the better political and practical settlement.**²⁸

The clean way to do it is to leave the current General Purpose and Local Roads components alone, preserve their unconditional character, and legislate a third component for the additional money. If Parliament does not want to amend the FAG Act, a separate tied Commonwealth-State program can be created, but then we have recreated another program beside FAGs rather than permanently fixing the Commonwealth-local government funding relationship.

5. GENERAL PURPOSE GRANT: BETTER DIRECTION, WITH SOME RISKS

The proposed move from direct assessment to a balanced-budget model is defensible. At its simplest, financial need is what a council reasonably needs to spend less what it can reasonably raise. That is easier to understand and explain than hundreds of disability factors and cost drivers.²⁹

I do, however, have a concern about simplification becoming an end in itself. The Commission says it wants to retain only factors with a material impact. I agree. The test of 'material', though, has to be whether the factor changes the real fiscal position of councils, not whether the data happen to be easy to obtain.³⁰

²⁷ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 15(a)(i)-(iv). Under the current Act, payments made to States under ss 9, 10, 12 and 13 are to be passed to local governing bodies as unconditional payments. Federal Register of Legislation: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text>

²⁸ **Terry Dodds PSM**, Financial Assistance Grants: A Fresh Approach - A practical case for hybrid reform of Financial Assistance Grants, 8 July 2026, especially pp. 10-13. The paper proposed preserving an untied 0.5% core and adding a formula-based tied infrastructure stream in 0.1 percentage-point annual steps over five years.

²⁹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 19-26. The proposed General Purpose Component is a balanced-budget model: 30 per cent per capita plus a 70 per cent needs pool, with financial need assessed as expenditure need less revenue-raising capacity.

³⁰ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slide 17. The stated 2027-28 objectives are simplicity, reliability and equalising councils' financial sustainability across NSW.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

5.1 HISTORIC UNDER-SPENDING CANNOT BECOME FUTURE ‘NEED’

The published base case estimates expenditure needs statistically from councils’ actual operating expenditure, excluding water and sewer, with population, remoteness and ATSI among the drivers. This needs a hard look. **A financially constrained council can spend less because it cannot afford to fill positions, maintain assets or provide the same service standard as a better-resourced council. Low spending is not always evidence of low need; sometimes it is evidence of the problem.**³¹

I am not saying the proposed statistical model necessarily makes that mistake. I am saying the **Commission should prove that it does not**. HFE is meant to estimate what a council needs to function at a reasonable comparable standard, not simply reproduce what councils happened to be able to afford over the last few years.^{32,33}

If a statistical model is going to drive a large part of the State grant, councils should be able to see enough of it to understand the result: what variables were tested, what was retained, how outliers were handled, how the weighted average was calculated, and what evidence was used to decide that other variables were no longer material. A clean diagram is useful, but it is not the same thing as a transparent calculation.

5.2 INFRASTRUCTURE INTENSITY STILL MATTERS IN THE GENERAL PURPOSE GRANT

The Local Roads Component can deal with eligible local-road preservation. It does not deal with the full infrastructure burden carried by a council. Councils also carry regional roads, drainage, buildings, parks, aerodromes and other assets, and those obligations affect their wider fiscal position. The Commonwealth Grants Commission has previously recognised that infrastructure and capital requirements can be relevant to fiscal capacity where they are material.³⁴

This is where kilometres per 1,000 residents remains useful. It is not an assertion that every kilometre costs the same. It simply shows how much physical network sits behind the population and revenue base. The same type of indicator can be tested for other asset classes if it adds anything useful.

5.3 ‘OTHER GRANTS’ NEEDS A CLEAR RULE

The proposed revenue-capacity model includes grants using a four-year rolling average of operational grants. There is logic in that. The National Principles say other relevant grant

³¹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 23–25 and 38. The presentation identifies population and remoteness as key expenditure drivers and states that the base-case expenditure estimate is statistically derived from councils’ actual operating expenditure, excluding water and sewer, with population, remoteness and ATSI variables.

³² Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

³³ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 89–90. The Commission’s proposed relative-needs principles emphasised average service and revenue benchmarks, all material expenditure and revenue differences, infrastructure, policy neutrality and practical, transparent methods.

³⁴ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 100–102. The Commission said infrastructure and capital requirements affect fiscal capacity, described asset-preservation road models, and cautioned that relevant other grant support should be included where it funds assessed expenditure needs.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

support should be recognised where it meets an expenditure need being assessed; otherwise the same need can be counted twice.^{35,36}

The important word is ‘relevant’. The (OLG) slides do not set out exactly what is in and what is out. FAGs, Roads to Recovery, disaster assistance, one-off operating grants and grants that bring additional obligations should not simply be treated as though they are interchangeable. The Commission’s own option dealing with storm and flood grants acknowledges the timing problem. The final model needs a published inclusion and exclusion schedule so councils can see what has been counted as revenue capacity and why.^{37,38}

5.4 THE ARIA+ >6 FLOOR IS PROTECTION, NOT THE CURE

The Commission’s preferred consultation option protects the 14 councils with ARIA+ scores above 6 from receiving a General Purpose Grant below their 2025–26 amount. The presentation also says, quite candidly, that those councils may have expenditure needs the statistical model does not fully capture.³⁹

That admission is useful because it tells us where the risk is. If a model is known to miss a material need, the long-term answer is to improve the model. An ARIA score of 6 also creates a hard edge: two councils can have very similar circumstances but sit on opposite sides of the cut-off. I am comfortable with a floor as transition protection. I am less comfortable with it becoming the permanent fix for a known weakness in the calculation.

During transition, I would prefer a broader, time-limited no-real-loss or collar arrangement while the new model settles down, particularly if the national FAG pool is also being increased. That is easier to explain than permanently protecting one group because the underlying model is accepted to be incomplete.

6. LOCAL ROADS: THE MOST USEFUL PART OF THE NEW PROPOSAL

The Local Roads part of the presentation is the most useful new material. Slide 28 correctly sets out the National Principle. Slides 29 to 33 then show a simple three-step method: establish a regional cost index, calculate road need from road-network extent and that index, and divide the Local Roads pool according to each council’s share of assessed road need.⁴⁰

³⁵ Australian Government, National principles for the allocation of grants under the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995, General Purpose Principles 1–4 and Identified Road Component Principle, <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government/national-principles-allocation-grants> (accessed 29 August 2026).

³⁶ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 23–25 and 38. The presentation identifies population and remoteness as key expenditure drivers and states that the base-case expenditure estimate is statistically derived from councils’ actual operating expenditure, excluding water and sewer, with population, remoteness and ATSI variables.

³⁷ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 37–44. The recommended consultation option protects 14 councils with ARIA+ scores above 6 from receiving a General Purpose Grant below their 2025–26 amount, funded by redistribution from councils above the statutory minimum.

³⁸ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 100–102. The Commission said infrastructure and capital requirements affect fiscal capacity, described asset-preservation road models, and cautioned that relevant other grant support should be included where it funds assessed expenditure needs.

³⁹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 37–44. The recommended consultation option protects 14 councils with ARIA+ scores above 6 from receiving a General Purpose Grant below their 2025–26 amount, funded by redistribution from councils above the statutory minimum.

⁴⁰ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

I support that direction. Population is no longer shown as part of the road formula. A longer network means greater assessed need and a higher geographic cost means greater assessed need. That is a much more logical starting point for preserving an existing physical network.

6.1 LENGTH IS THERE; TYPE AND USAGE ARE NOT YET VISIBLE

There is one obvious gap between slide 28 and slide 32. Slide 28 says the road assessment should, where practicable, use length, type and usage. By slide 32 the formula shown is road length multiplied by the Rawlinsons index for the council's remoteness category. Type and usage have disappeared from what is visible.^{41,42}

That is the point I would press hardest in the NSW consultation. If reliable data exist for surface, road class and usage, use them. If the data do not exist or are not reliable enough, say so plainly and set out how they will be improved. 'As far as practicable' is sensible wording in a national principle, but it should not become a permanent excuse for leaving out a material cost driver.

Bridges and major culverts also need to be dealt with expressly. The existing NSW method has a separate bridge-length component; the proposed slides do not show a separate treatment for bridges or other major structures. They may be captured elsewhere in the Annual Roads and General Return, but that is not apparent from the presentation. A bridge is not just another kilometre of road, and the final method should show exactly where structures sit.

6.2 RAWLINSONS IS A COST ADJUSTOR, NOT A ROAD-ASSET MODEL

Rawlinsons is a well-established construction-cost reference, and the regional index is a reasonable way to recognise that work costs more in some parts of NSW than others. The Commission's 2026 chart shows the cost premium rising progressively from major cities through inner regional, outer regional, remote and very remote areas.^{43,44}

My question is narrower: does a broad regional construction index, on its own, tell us enough about the annual maintenance and lifecycle renewal cost of a road network? Rawlinsons covers buildings, trades, labour, plant and regional construction costs. That makes it useful as a geographic adjustment, but it is not the same thing as a road-preservation model built from road-specific unit rates and lifecycle costs.⁴⁵

The Commonwealth's own national reporting makes that distinction. Some jurisdictions use relatively simple road formulas; others use asset-preservation models that attempt to calculate annual network cost and can allow for sealed and unsealed roads, weather, soils,

⁴¹ Australian Government, National principles for the allocation of grants under the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995, Identified Road Component Principle: allocation as far as practicable on relative roads expenditure and road-asset preservation need, with relevant considerations including length, type and usage.

⁴² NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 31–32. The presentation applies Rawlinsons regional construction cost premiums by ABS remoteness category and then multiplies road length by the estimated index for the council's remoteness category.

⁴³ Rawlinsons (W.A.) Pty Ltd, Rawlinsons Australian Construction Handbook 2026, product description and contents, including regional indices and building/construction cost data, <https://www.rawlhouse.com/publications/2026-australian-construction-handbook> (accessed 29 August 2026).

⁴⁴ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 31–32. The presentation applies Rawlinsons regional construction cost premiums by ABS remoteness category and then multiplies road length by the estimated index for the council's remoteness category.

⁴⁵ Rawlinsons (W.A.) Pty Ltd, Rawlinsons Australian Construction Handbook 2026, product description and contents, including regional indices and building/construction cost data, <https://www.rawlhouse.com/publications/2026-australian-construction-handbook> (accessed 29 August 2026).

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

materials and traffic. The Commonwealth Grants Commission made a similar point in 2013 when it argued for a more comprehensive assessment of road need.^{46,47}

I would keep the Commission's new road framework, but take it one step further:

- Start with verified eligible road kilometres.
- Split the network into a small number of material road classes or surface types.
- Apply standard efficient annual lifecycle preservation costs to each class.
- Apply objective modifiers for material cost differences such as freight loading, climate, soils, materials/haulage and remoteness where the data are reliable.
- Assess bridges and major structures separately.
- Allocate the State Local Roads pool in proportion to assessed preservation need.
- Publish the inputs and calculation for every council.

That is what I mean by an asset-preservation model. It still starts with kilometres, but it does not pretend that every kilometre is the same.

7. WHAT THE 128-COUNCIL MODEL TELLS US

The 128-council model was deliberately simple. It used the common OLG measure of total local plus regional road length, population and the published 2026–27 Local Roads FAG allocation. I then tested what happens if the existing pool is allocated by road length alone and by combinations of road length and road kilometres per 1,000 residents.⁴⁸

It should not be oversold. It is not an asset-preservation model, and it uses the broader OLG road network rather than necessarily the narrower Local Roads dataset used by the Grants Commission. The Commission now says itself that historic council-supplied road-length data have had validation and integrity problems. The workbook therefore shows a strong distributional pattern; it does not pretend to be the final Grants Commission calculation.⁴⁹

Illustrative fixed-pool outcomes from the NSW proof of concept

Council class	Current pool redistributed by road length	90% road length / 10% intensity	Interpretation
Rural	+50.6%	+87.2%	Large upward signal
Large Rural	+31.1%	+31.6%	Material upward signal
Regional Town/City	-15.7%	-22.5%	Downward under fixed pool
Metropolitan Fringe	-32.2%	-38.5%	Large fixed-pool loss
Metropolitan	-50.4%	-55.1%	Very large fixed-pool loss

⁴⁶ Australian Government, Local Government National Report 2022–23, Local Roads Component section, p. 186. The report distinguishes simple road-allocation models from asset-preservation models and notes that Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania used asset-preservation approaches incorporating factors such as road type, weather, soils/material availability and traffic volume.

⁴⁷ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 78–90. The Commission recommended a comprehensive road assessment reflecting length, use, asset-preservation costs and, for new/improved roads, population growth; it also recommended using the same road-needs assessment in the identified road and relative-needs calculations to avoid inconsistency and double counting.

⁴⁸ **Terry Dodds PSM**, NSW 128-Council Local Roads FAG Distribution – Proof of Concept, 29 August 2026. The model tests the current allocation against pure road length and several road-length/infrastructure-intensity scenarios. It is explicitly a sensitivity model, not a proposed final formula.

⁴⁹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slide 8. The Commission states that data credibility has been eroded by unvalidated council-provided expenditure and road-length data and by outdated or invalid cost-driver datasets.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

Balranald (worked example)	+59.2%	+107.5%	Shows sensitivity; not a recommended entitlement
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The 90/10 scenario is deliberately illustrative. It produces 54 gainers and 74 losers. I would not recommend taking today's roughly \$324.5 million NSW road pool and reallocating it overnight on that basis. The point of the exercise is that the existing distribution looks materially different when road burden is made more visible, and that trying to correct the whole difference inside a fixed pool would start a political fight before the engineering work had even been finished.^{50,51}

The useful conclusion from the modelling is therefore not 'use 90/10'. It is much simpler: protect the existing base, improve the way need is measured, and use growth in the FAG pool to move the distribution progressively towards the new measure.

8. BALRANALD IS THE EXAMPLE, NOT THE ANSWER

Balranald Shire is useful because the numbers are large enough to make the problem obvious. In the broader OLG dataset used in my statewide work, the council carries about 1,593 kilometres of local and regional roads for a population a little above 2,200. That is about 718 road kilometres per 1,000 residents. The NSW council median in the same analysis is about 43.⁵²

The Grants Commission uses a narrower road dataset for the Local Roads Component. Its August preliminary advice records 1,336 kilometres of local road for Balranald, a population of 2,244 and 37 metres of bridges - about 595 local-road kilometres per 1,000 residents.⁵³

Those two road-length figures are not a contradiction. They answer different questions. The broader local-plus-regional network is useful when looking at the total infrastructure burden and overall financial sustainability of a council. The eligible Local Roads figure is the correct starting point for the identified road grant. The paper should keep the two separate.

Nor is Balranald unique. Earlier Western NSW work identified roughly 1,356 road kilometres per 1,000 residents in Central Darling, 1,102 in Brewarrina and 1,047 in Bourke, while Broken Hill was around 16. There is no moral judgement in those figures. They simply show that the relationship between infrastructure and the population available to support it varies enormously and deserves to be visible in any serious HFE discussion.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ **Terry Dodds PSM**, NSW 128-Council Local Roads FAG Distribution – Proof of Concept, 29 August 2026. The model tests the current allocation against pure road length and several road-length/infrastructure-intensity scenarios. It is explicitly a sensitivity model, not a proposed final formula.

⁵¹ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government, 2026–27 program and jurisdictional allocations, <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government> (accessed 29 August 2026).

⁵² **Terry Dodds PSM**, Road Funding Disparity: Does the Current Funding Pattern Adequately Recognise the Infrastructure Burden Carried by Rural and Remote NSW Councils?, 15 August 2026, analysis of all 128 NSW councils using OLG 2024–25 road data and Commonwealth 2026–27 FAG allocations.

⁵³ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Balranald Shire Council 2026–27 Financial Assistance Grants Appendix A, August 2026. The preliminary calculation records population 2,244, local road length 1,336 km, bridge length 37 m and a Local Roads Component of \$1,922,765.

⁵⁴ **Terry Dodds PSM**, Western NSW Local Government Sustainability, 11 May 2026. The paper reported road-network intensity of approximately 1,356 km per 1,000 residents for Central Darling, 1,102 for Brewarrina, 1,047 for Bourke and 718 for Balranald, compared with approximately 16 for Broken Hill.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

If a properly constructed national preservation model eventually says Balranald should receive no more than it does now, so be it. Equally, if a metropolitan council has a higher preservation cost because of traffic, pavement standard, drainage and structures, recognise that as well. A credible formula has to survive being applied without knowing the name or postcode of the council beforehand.

9. TWO QUESTIONS NEED TO BE KEPT SEPARATE

After working through the Act and the new NSW proposal, I think the cleanest approach is to keep two questions separate.

Question 1: What should the road network reasonably cost to preserve?

That belongs in the Local Roads Component. Measure the eligible network, road type, usage and the material cost differences, convert that into a standard efficient annual preservation requirement, and allocate the road pool according to relative need. Population growth can be dealt with separately where the government wants to recognise new or expanded road infrastructure.⁵⁵

Question 2: What capacity does the council have to support its overall service and infrastructure burden?

That belongs in the General Purpose HFE calculation. Population, remoteness, rating capacity, land, service dispersion, infrastructure intensity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service needs and other demonstrable factors can all be tested there. The variables should stay because they explain a material difference, not because they have always been in the formula or happen to be convenient to collect.^{56,57}

Road kilometres per 1,000 residents sits between the two questions. It is not a road-cost formula. It is a very simple way of showing how much physical network sits behind the community and revenue base. If road costs are standardised properly, the better version becomes Equivalent Road Kilometres per 1,000 Residents.

Equivalent road kilometres would ‘weight’ road classes by standard lifecycle preservation cost. If one class costs twice the benchmark to preserve, a kilometre counts as two equivalent kilometres; if it costs less, it counts as less than one. That preserves the simplicity of the original indicator without pretending that a CBD road and a lightly trafficked unsealed road cost the same.

⁵⁵ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 78–90. The Commission recommended a comprehensive road assessment reflecting length, use, asset-preservation costs and, for new/improved roads, population growth; it also recommended using the same road-needs assessment in the identified road and relative-needs calculations to avoid inconsistency and double counting.

⁵⁶ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

⁵⁷ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 89–90. The Commission’s proposed relative-needs principles emphasised average service and revenue benchmarks, all material expenditure and revenue differences, infrastructure, policy neutrality and practical, transparent methods.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

10. WHAT NSW CAN FIX, AND WHAT ONLY CANBERRA CAN FIX

Reform	NSW under current Act	Commonwealth action	My view
Remove population from the NSW Local Roads formula	Yes	No Act amendment needed	Support. The proposed NSW model is already doing this visibly.
Adopt a stronger asset-preservation Local Roads model	Yes, within National Principles	No Act amendment needed	Support. Add type, usage, structures and the material lifecycle cost drivers.
Publish km/1,000 residents and equivalent-km indicators	Yes	National adoption desirable	Support as a transparency/HFE measure, not as the sole grant formula.
Refine General Purpose expenditure and revenue proxies	Yes	Must comply with s 6 and National Principles	Support the balanced-budget direction, subject to proper testing and disclosure.
Reduce the statutory 30% minimum	No	Amend s 6(2)(b)	Review. The CGC has previously proposed bounded State discretion between 20% and 30%.
Rebase historical interstate Local Roads shares	No	Commonwealth statutory/policy reform	Support a gradual move to contemporary national preservation need.
Tie the existing FAG base	No under present s 15 architecture	Would require amendment	Do not recommend. Protect the existing untied 0.5% base.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

Move to a durable 1% Commonwealth-local government settlement	No	Commonwealth budget and legislative reform	Support: 0.5% untied core plus a new tied infrastructure component rising by 0.1% a year to 0.5%.
Create a new tied Essential Local Infrastructure Component	No	Amend the 1995 Act (or use separate Commonwealth-State legislation)	Preferred: formula based, non-contestable, broad infrastructure eligibility, low-compliance assurance.
National comparable infrastructure reporting	NSW can publish its data	Use/strengthen s 16 national reporting	Support. This is the practical bridge to a reliable national 500+ council model.

This distinction is worth spelling out because otherwise the State and Commonwealth can spend another decade pointing at each other. NSW can substantially improve its own road and General Purpose methodology now. Canberra has to deal with the statutory 30 per cent minimum, the historical interstate road shares and the overall size of the national FAG pool.^{58,59,60}

11. THE FEDERAL CHANGES I WOULD PUT TO PARLIAMENT

11.1 RESTORE THE QUANTUM THROUGH A 0.5% + 0.5% HYBRID

The Australian Government will provide \$3.639 billion in FAGs in 2026–27: \$2.520 billion General Purpose and \$1.118 billion Local Roads. Against forecast Commonwealth taxation receipts of \$737.1 billion, that is about 0.494 per cent. The first job is therefore to stop the untied base drifting below the 0.5 per cent mark and lock it there as the minimum core settlement.^{61,62}

⁵⁸ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

⁵⁹ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 4 and 12. Section 12 rolls each State's additional previous-year funding amount forward by the common annual factor; this is the statutory architecture underlying the continuing historical jurisdictional shares of the identified local road component.

⁶⁰ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 15(a). Payments passed by States to local governing bodies under ss 9, 10, 12 and 13 are required to be unconditional payments, subject to the GST withholding provision in s 15(aa).

⁶¹ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government, 2026–27. Total FAG entitlement \$3,638,652,430; \$2.9 billion of the 2026–27 estimate was brought forward and paid to States and Territories on 19 June 2026. <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government>

⁶² Australian Government, Budget Paper No. 1: Budget Strategy and Outlook 2026–27, Statement 5, Table 5.1. Total taxation receipts: \$737.1b in 2026–27, \$757.0b in 2027–28, \$782.9b in 2028–29 and \$826.2b in 2029–30. Tax receipts excluding GST are separately reported. https://budget.gov.au/content/bp1/download/bp1_2026-27.pdf

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

I still support the 1 per cent benchmark, but I would get there through the hybrid model I put forward in July: protect 0.5 per cent as untied FAGs, then add a tied Essential Local Infrastructure Component at 0.1 per cent a year for five consecutive years. By year five the additional tied stream reaches 0.5 per cent, and the total settlement reaches 1 per cent. It is a staged budget ask, and it gives the Commonwealth something visible and defensible for the new money without taking away councils' discretion over the base they already receive.⁶³

More money should not simply be poured through the old arrangements. The existing untied base can be modernised over time, with sensible transition protection, while the new tied stream is allocated from day one under a transparent infrastructure-need formula. That gives us two opportunities at once: fix the size of the settlement and improve where the new money goes.

11.2 FIX THE SECTION 6 MINIMUM PROPERLY

I would not abolish a universal minimum. There is a sound argument that every council should receive some Commonwealth support and the Act also puts value on certainty. The issue is that a fixed 30 per cent statutory floor reduces the amount of a finite pool available for genuine equalisation. The Commonwealth Grants Commission reached broadly the same view in 2013 and proposed allowing States, within limits, to choose a common pool between 20 and 30 per cent.⁶⁴

A sensible Federal amendment would keep a national floor but give States bounded discretion. For example, 20 to 30 per cent, backed by published HFE analysis. That is cleaner than forcing State commissions to build extra adjustments around a Commonwealth constraint they cannot change.

11.3 REBASE THE SECTION 12 ROAD SHARES

The Local Roads pool should not stay locked indefinitely to historical State and Territory shares. Over time, each jurisdiction's share should reflect its share of nationally assessed road-preservation need. Existing nominal amounts can be protected at the start, with growth in the pool increasingly allocated under the contemporary measure.^{65,66}

If assessed road need is the right basis for dividing the money between councils inside a State, it is difficult to make a principled case for leaving the State shares frozen in history forever.

⁶³ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 3(3), 9, 12, 15 and 19. The present Act provides general grants under s 9 and additional funding under s 12, requires those payments to be passed on unconditionally under s 15, and appropriates payments under the Act through s 19. A third tied statutory component would therefore require legislative amendment. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text>

⁶⁴ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 84–85. The Commission proposed that States be permitted, within Commonwealth limits, to set a common equal-per-capita pool between 20 and 30 per cent, with a relative-needs pool of at least 65 per cent and an optional reform pool of up to 5 per cent.

⁶⁵ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government, 2026–27 program and jurisdictional allocations, <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government> (accessed 29 August 2026).

⁶⁶ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 4 and 12. Section 12 rolls each State's additional previous-year funding amount forward by the common annual factor; this is the statutory architecture underlying the continuing historical jurisdictional shares of the identified local road component.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

11.4 USE SECTION 16 FOR WHAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO DO

Section 16 already requires the Commonwealth Minister's annual report to assess HFE and Grants Commission methods using comparable national data. That is a ready-made place to publish a consistent national set of indicators: eligible road kilometres, road type, usage, equivalent kilometres, preservation need, population, own-source revenue capacity and infrastructure intensity.⁶⁷

I would not jump straight from the NSW workbook to forcing circa 530 councils into one national spreadsheet. The State datasets are not consistent enough yet. First agree on the definitions and the data dictionary, then model nationally. The NSW 128-council work shows why the exercise is worth doing; section 16 gives the Commonwealth a sensible way to make the underlying information comparable.

11.5 THE 1 PER CENT HYBRID: WHAT ACTUALLY HAS TO CHANGE

The starting point is simple. Do not touch the untied character of today's FAGs. Section 15 should continue to protect the General Purpose and Local Roads components as unconditional payments. The tied conditions apply only to the new money. That is the distinction the Fresh Approach paper was trying to make, and I think it is worth keeping.⁶⁸

11.6 CREATE A THIRD STATUTORY COMPONENT

If the additional 0.5 per cent is to be a permanent part of the Financial Assistance Grant settlement, I would put it in the 1995 Act rather than create another program that can disappear in a later Budget. The Act currently provides for general grants under section 9 and additional funding under section 12. Parliament should add a third entitlement, an Essential Local Infrastructure Component, and make the necessary consequential changes to the objects, allocation provisions, reporting and appropriation provisions.⁶⁹

The important point is not the eventual section number. The important point is that the new component has a statutory existence of its own. The current section 9 and section 12 money stays untied. The new component carries infrastructure conditions because Parliament has expressly created it that way.

11.7 WHAT 'TIED' SHOULD MEAN

I would not tie this money to individual projects approved in Canberra. That would recreate the grant-writing industry we are trying to get away from. Tie it to a broad class of essential local infrastructure, then let councils choose the qualifying works from their adopted asset management plans, long-term financial plans and infrastructure programs.

⁶⁷ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 16(3), requiring the Minister's annual report to include an assessment based on comparable national data of HFE, Grants Commission methods and local-government performance.

⁶⁸ Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, s 96: the Parliament may grant financial assistance to a State on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004Q00685/latest/text>

⁶⁹ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 3(3), 9, 12, 15 and 19. The present Act provides general grants under s 9 and additional funding under s 12, requires those payments to be passed on unconditionally under s 15, and appropriates payments under the Act through s 19. A third tied statutory component would therefore require legislative amendment. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text>

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

Eligible expenditure should include road and bridge renewal, culverts, drainage and stormwater, water and sewer infrastructure, flood and resilience works, housing-enabling infrastructure and renewal of core community assets. I would exclude beautification, prestige projects with no asset-management case, operating-cost substitution and works that do not appear in an adopted plan. **The Commonwealth gets a visible infrastructure outcome; councils keep sensible discretion over which legitimate local asset gets done first.**

11.8 PHASE IT IN AT 0.1 PER CENT A YEAR

I would start the new component in 2027-28. The 2026-27 year is already underway, and 80 per cent of the 2026-27 FAG estimate was brought forward and paid in June. Starting in 2027-28 gives Parliament time to legislate properly and gives councils, States and Grants Commissions time to settle the formula.⁷⁰

The five-year pathway is below. The first three dollar values use the current 2026-27 Budget forecasts. The 2030-31 and 2031-32 taxation-revenue figures are not yet published, so I have deliberately not invented them.⁷¹

Financial year	Untied FAG core	New tied infrastructure stream	Total benchmark
2027-28	0.5% = about \$3.785b	0.1% = about \$757m	0.6% = about \$4.542b
2028-29	0.5% = about \$3.915b	0.2% = about \$1.566b	0.7% = about \$5.480b
2029-30	0.5% = about \$4.131b	0.3% = about \$2.479b	0.8% = about \$6.610b
2030-31	0.5% of actual defined taxation revenue	0.4% of actual defined taxation revenue	0.9%
2031-32 onward	0.5% of actual defined taxation revenue	0.5% of actual defined taxation revenue	1.0%

The legislation should calculate the annual entitlement from the published Budget estimate and then provide a normal reconciliation once the final taxation-revenue figure is known. That is a much cleaner arrangement than arguing every year about whether the percentage has slipped again.

⁷⁰ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government, 2026-27. Total FAG entitlement \$3,638,652,430; \$2.9 billion of the 2026-27 estimate was brought forward and paid to States and Territories on 19 June 2026. <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government>

⁷¹ Australian Government, Budget Paper No. 1: Budget Strategy and Outlook 2026-27, Statement 5, Table 5.1. Total taxation receipts: \$737.1b in 2026-27, \$757.0b in 2027-28, \$782.9b in 2028-29 and \$826.2b in 2029-30. Tax receipts excluding GST are separately reported. https://budget.gov.au/content/bp1/download/bp1_2026-27.pdf

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

11.9 DEFINE THE TAX BASE PROPERLY

The words ‘Commonwealth taxation revenue’ cannot be left as an advocacy slogan. Budget Paper No. 1 reports both total taxation receipts and tax receipts excluding GST. For 2026-27 the difference is \$737.1 billion versus \$634.0 billion, so the choice is material. My papers have used total taxation receipts, including GST, and that should be stated expressly in the legislation if that remains the intended benchmark.⁷²

11.10 THE ACT AMENDMENT IS QUITE DOABLE

At a drafting level I would expect the Commonwealth to do five things: define the taxation-revenue benchmark; add the Essential Local Infrastructure Component as a third statutory payment; establish national infrastructure-allocation principles and a Grants Commission recommendation process for that component; amend section 15 so the existing section 9 and section 12 payments remain unconditional while the new component is passed through subject to the new statutory conditions; and make sure section 19 and the annual reporting provisions cover the new payment. I am not suggesting those are the only drafting choices, but they are the cleanest policy instructions to give the Parliamentary Counsel.⁷³

The Treasurer’s existing power under section 8 to vary the annual FAG factor in special circumstances can change the quantum of the present scheme, and the 2026 determination shows that discretion is real. It cannot, by itself, turn an otherwise unconditional section 9 or section 12 payment into a tied infrastructure grant. The tied component needs its own legislative footing.⁷⁴

11.11 THE CONSTITUTIONAL PATH IS ALREADY THERE

The Commonwealth does not need to invent a new constitutional relationship with councils. Section 96 of the Constitution allows Parliament to give financial assistance to States on terms and conditions. The existing FAG system already works through payments to States for local government purposes. A new tied component can use the same broad Commonwealth-State pathway, with the States required to pass the money to councils according to the statutory formula and infrastructure conditions.⁷⁵

11.12 IF CANBERRA DOES NOT WANT TO AMEND THE FAG ACT

There is a second-best route. The Commonwealth can leave the 1995 Act alone and create the extra 0.5 per cent through separate legislation or the ordinary Federal Financial Relations machinery. Conditional State and local-government payments are not novel. The current

⁷² Australian Government, Budget Paper No. 1: Budget Strategy and Outlook 2026-27, Statement 5, Table 5.1. Total taxation receipts: \$737.1b in 2026-27, \$757.0b in 2027-28, \$782.9b in 2028-29 and \$826.2b in 2029-30. Tax receipts excluding GST are separately reported. https://budget.gov.au/content/bp1/download/bp1_2026-27.pdf

⁷³ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 3(3), 9, 12, 15 and 19. The present Act provides general grants under s 9 and additional funding under s 12, requires those payments to be passed on unconditionally under s 15, and appropriates payments under the Act through s 19. A third tied statutory component would therefore require legislative amendment. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text>

⁷⁴ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 8(1)(c), permits the Treasurer to increase or decrease the annual factor where special circumstances exist. See also Local Government (Financial Assistance) (Final Factor for 2025-26 and Estimated Factor for 2026-27) Determination 2026. That power changes the factor; it does not displace the unconditional-payment requirement in s 15.

⁷⁵ Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, s 96. Parliament may grant financial assistance to a State on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

annual appropriation framework itself allows terms and conditions to be attached to State, Territory and local-government items.⁷⁶

That route would work, but I would not prefer it. It would be another program sitting beside FAGs, and another future Budget could rename it, shrink it or remove it. If the objective is a durable 1 per cent Commonwealth-local government settlement, put the additional component into the FAG legislation and make it part of the furniture.

11.13 KEEP THE RED TAPE OUT

Tied funding can become administratively stupid very quickly. That is not what I am proposing. There should be **no competitive application for the base entitlement, no requirement to employ consultants to write a business case, and no routine co-contribution that penalises the councils with the weakest balance sheets.** Allocation should be by formula.

The assurance should be proportionate: the work must be in an adopted plan; Council publishes the projects funded from the stream; the CEO or General Manager certifies eligibility and expenditure; and the Commonwealth and State use risk-based audit. That is enough to protect the taxpayer without making a small rural council spend a large slice of the grant proving that it deserved the grant.

11.14 NO SMOKE AND MIRRORS

The tied stream has to be additional. Roads to Recovery, Black Spot, disaster assistance, housing infrastructure and established State programs should be shown separately in the Budget papers. **The Commonwealth should not be able to announce a 0.1 per cent FAG increase with one hand and quietly remove the same money from another local-government line with the other.** Parliament cannot bind every future Parliament, but it can make substitution transparent enough that everyone can see it.

11.15 THE COMMONWEALTH GRANTS COMMISSION OBJECTION

The Commonwealth Grants Commission's 2013 work made a fair point: untied grants preserve local choice and tied programs can impose disproportionate compliance costs, particularly on small councils. I agree with that criticism as it applies to the existing FAG base. I do not think it answers the hybrid proposal.⁷⁷

I am not proposing to convert the present 0.5 per cent into tied money. I am saying that if the Commonwealth is asked to contribute another 0.5 per cent of taxation revenue - several billion dollars a year by the end of the phase-in - it is reasonable for taxpayers to know that the additional money is going into essential infrastructure. The answer to the red-tape objection is

⁷⁶ Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2026-27 (Cth), s 16. Payments from State, ACT, NT and local government items may be made on terms and conditions determined by the responsible Minister; this provides a current example of conditional payment machinery outside the FAG Act.

⁷⁷ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Review of the Operation of the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (2013). The Commission supported retaining untied grants and noted the administrative burden that tied arrangements can impose, particularly on smaller councils. Available through the Commonwealth Grants Commission information disclosure register.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

to tie the purpose broadly, allocate the money automatically by formula and leave councils to choose the eligible works.

11.16 THIS NEEDS TO BECOME GOVERNMENT POLICY

There is also a procedural reality. A permanent increase of this size is not something a private member can simply bolt onto the Budget. **Section 56 of the Constitution requires a Governor-General recommendation for proposed laws appropriating money.** In practice, the objective is to get the model adopted as a Commonwealth Government policy commitment, with Treasury, Infrastructure and Parliamentary Counsel then doing the legislative work.⁷⁸

The current House inquiry is a good place to put the proposition because its terms of reference expressly cover the legislative and policy frameworks underpinning Commonwealth support for local government and distinguish between untied grants and tied or specific-purpose funding. **In other words, this is not outside the inquiry's lane; it is squarely in it.**⁷⁹

12. TRANSITION: GRANDFATHER THE BASE, REFORM THE GROWTH

The 128-council model makes one practical point very clearly. A cleaner formula applied overnight to a fixed pool creates some very large losers. It may be mathematically tidy, but it is not a realistic implementation plan.⁸⁰

The better approach is to protect the existing untied base while the General Purpose and Local Roads methodologies are modernised, and put the new tied infrastructure money through the new formula from the first dollar. Councils then have time to adjust to changes in the old components, while the 0.1 per cent annual increments start shifting the Commonwealth-local government settlement towards contemporary infrastructure need immediately.

I also prefer that to a permanent collection of special floors and exceptions. A transition floor should have an end date. If a council remains genuinely high-need after the transition, the formula should keep supporting it because the need is still there, not because it qualified for a special rule years earlier.

I would use five principles for transition:

- No immediate nominal cut to an existing council or State untied FAG allocation when the reform starts.
- The new tied Essential Local Infrastructure Component is genuinely additional and allocated by the new infrastructure-need formula from its first year.
- Transition settings are published in advance and have an end date.

⁷⁸ Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, s 56. A proposed law appropriating revenue or money requires a Governor-General recommendation; a permanent new statutory spending component of this scale therefore requires Executive Government support.

⁷⁹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability, Terms of Reference, 2026. The terms expressly cover Commonwealth legislative and policy frameworks and distinguish untied from tied/specific-purpose funding.

⁸⁰ **Terry Dodds PSM**, NSW 128-Council Local Roads FAG Distribution – Proof of Concept, 29 August 2026. The model tests the current allocation against pure road length and several road-length/infrastructure-intensity scenarios. It is explicitly a sensitivity model, not a proposed final formula.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

- No rebadging of Roads to Recovery, disaster funding or other existing programs as part of the 0.1 per cent annual increase.
- A formal review at the end of the five-year phase tests whether the new settlement is reducing infrastructure and fiscal disparities without creating perverse incentives.

13. QUESTIONS I WOULD PUT BACK TO THE NSW COMMISSION

The new presentation is detailed enough that the NSW submission can now ask fairly specific questions. I support the direction of the review, but I would want the following answered before the new methodology is settled:

1. Why does the published Local Roads formula use road length and a broad Rawlinsons remoteness cost index but not separately use road type and usage, when the Commission itself identifies those matters from the National Principle?
2. How will bridges, major culverts and other high-cost road structures be treated under the proposed Local Roads Component?
3. Why is Rawlinsons the preferred cost index for operational road maintenance, and what testing has been done against NSW road-specific maintenance and renewal costs?
4. Can the Commission publish the Local Roads model using verified council road data before final adoption, including each council's inputs and resulting need share?
5. For the General Purpose expenditure model, what statistical variables were tested, which were retained, what was the model fit, and how were outliers and council classifications treated?
6. How has the Commission tested the risk that actual historical operating expenditure reflects financial constraint or under-service rather than true expenditure need?
7. Which grants are included in the four-year operational-grants revenue-capacity measure and which are excluded? How are FAGs, Roads to Recovery, disaster assistance and one-off specific-purpose grants treated?
8. Why is ARIA+ 6 the proposed floor threshold, what is the sensitivity immediately above and below that cut-off, and is the floor intended as temporary transition protection or a permanent feature?
9. Has the Commission tested a broader transition collar or no-real-loss arrangement rather than redistributing losses immediately between councils?
10. Will the Commission publish a plain-English calculation sheet for every council so each input, assumption and adjustment can be traced?

Those are not arguments for keeping the old formula. I think the old formula should change. They are the questions that need answering if the replacement is to be trusted and capable of surviving scrutiny.

14. WHAT CAN BE TAKEN TO CANBERRA

The Federal case no longer needs to be presented as a Balranald grievance or a country-versus-city argument. That would make it much easier to dismiss.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

NSW is already proposing to move its Local Roads method away from population and towards road-network extent and regional cost disadvantage. That is sensible State reform, but NSW can only divide the historical bucket it receives. Canberra has the bigger levers. It can protect the existing untied 0.5 per cent base, legislate a new tied infrastructure component that rises by 0.1 per cent a year to a further 0.5 per cent, modernise the national distribution rules and improve the data used to measure need.⁸¹

The ask of the Australian Government is straightforward:

- Commit to a statutory 1 per cent Commonwealth-local government settlement: not less than 0.5 per cent untied FAGs plus a tied Essential Local Infrastructure Component phased from 0.1 per cent to 0.5 per cent over five consecutive years.
- Define Commonwealth taxation revenue in the Act. On the approach used in this paper, the benchmark is total taxation receipts reported in Budget Paper No. 1, including GST.
- Make the tied component formula based and non-contestable, with broad essential-infrastructure eligibility, adopted-plan discipline, CEO/GM certification, public project lists and risk-based audit.
- Review and amend s 6(2)(b) so States have bounded flexibility in the equal-per-capita minimum while preserving a national floor.
- Reform the s 12 interstate Local Roads architecture so historical shares progressively converge with contemporary national road-preservation need.
- Retain s 15's unconditional-payment protection for the existing General Purpose and Local Roads components, but amend the Act so the new infrastructure component can carry its own statutory conditions.
- Use s 16 to establish a nationally consistent local-government infrastructure and fiscal-capacity dataset.
- Develop a national road-preservation framework based on length, type, usage and material lifecycle cost drivers, with room for legitimate State-specific conditions.
- Protect existing nominal untied allocations during transition; allocate the new tied stream by formula from the first dollar; and prevent Roads to Recovery or other existing programs being counted against the increase.

I think that package can be put to metropolitan, regional, rural and remote councils without nominating the winners in advance. It starts with measuring need properly and lets the evidence do the rest.

15. CONCLUSION

The August NSW Grants Commission presentation has moved this work on considerably. The Commission is now proposing that road length and geographic cost disadvantage drive the Local Roads Component more directly, with population removed from the road formula shown

⁸¹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability, Terms of Reference, 2026. The terms expressly cover Commonwealth legislative and policy frameworks and distinguish untied from tied/specific-purpose funding.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

in the slides. That is a significant change, and it supports the basic point behind the kilometres-per-1,000-residents work: the physical network has to be visible.⁸²

I support that direction, but I would not stop at road length multiplied by a broad regional construction index. The Commission's own statement of the National Principle refers to length, type and usage. A proper preservation model should also show how bridges, major structures and the material lifecycle cost differences between networks are being treated.

The General Purpose proposal is also a reasonable simplification, provided the Commission can demonstrate that simpler has not become shallower. Historic under-spending, infrastructure intensity, the treatment of other grants and the ARIA floor all need to be tested before the model is locked in.

The Federal Act then tells us where the remaining problems sit. NSW cannot change the statutory 30 per cent minimum or rebase the historical interstate road shares. Section 15 also means the Commonwealth cannot simply add tied conditions to today's FAG payments. None of that prevents the hybrid 1 per cent settlement. It means Canberra has to legislate it properly: preserve the existing untied components and create a new tied infrastructure component for the additional money.⁸³

So the national proposal is now clearer than my earlier drafts, not narrower. Measure the road network properly. Measure the council's reasonable capacity to support its wider responsibilities. Lock in the existing 0.5 per cent untied base. Add 0.1 per cent a year for five years as a tied, formula-based Essential Local Infrastructure Component. Protect the base while the old formulas are modernised, and make sure the new money goes where measurable infrastructure need says it should go.

Balranald demonstrates the problem. It does not define the answer. A sound methodology should work just as well in Blacktown, Broken Hill, Mount Isa, Hobart, the Pilbara or anywhere else, without anyone having to know beforehand which council is supposed to win.

Distance remains distance. Measure the infrastructure, measure the capacity, and fund the relative need.

Terry Dodds PSM

29 August 2026

16. NOTE ON THE EVIDENCE BASE

This paper uses the NSW Grants Commission's proposed 2027-28 methodology. It also draws on the current Commonwealth Act and National Principles, the 2026-27 Commonwealth FAG program and Budget papers, the Commonwealth Constitution, the Commonwealth Grants

⁸² NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

⁸³ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 8(1)(c), permits the Treasurer to increase or decrease the annual factor where special circumstances exist. See also Local Government (Financial Assistance) (Final Factor for 2025-26 and Estimated Factor for 2026-27) Determination 2026. That power changes the factor; it does not displace the unconditional-payment requirement in s 15.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

Commission's 2013 review, the current House inquiry into local government funding, the author's Financial Assistance Grants: A Fresh Approach paper of 8 July 2026, and the NSW 128-council road/FAG modelling. The NSW Commission has made it clear that consultation is continuing and the final 2027-28 methodology has not yet been settled.⁸⁴

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⁸⁴ Sources added for the hybrid funding mechanism include: Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth); Commonwealth Constitution ss 56 and 96; Australian Government Budget Paper No. 1 2026-27; Department of Infrastructure 2026-27 FAG program material; Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2026-27, s 16 (terms and conditions for State, Territory and local-government items); Commonwealth Grants Commission 2013 review; and the House inquiry terms of reference.

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Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Office of Local Government



Our reference: A1020255

Clr Louie Zaffina
Mayor
Balranald Shire Council

By email: lzaffina@balranald.nsw.gov.au
cc: tdodds@balranald.nsw.gov.au
council@balranald.nsw.gov.au

4 September 2026

Dear Clr Zaffina,

I write to provide an update on the NSW Local Government Grants Commission's (the Commission) review of the methodology for how the Commonwealth Government's budgeted Financial Assistance Grants (FA Grants) are allocated to NSW councils. As foreshadowed, this review is being conducted in response to advocacy from the NSW peak local government bodies to ensure improvements to the methodology are made, that it complies with the legislation, is fairer, more transparent and is based on the most correct data available.

The Commission understands that any change to the way grants are distributed is very important for councils and your communities. For this reason, we are seeking council and stakeholder feedback on the draft methodology, as proposed in this letter, before any final decision about the allocation methodology is made.

As all councils understand, this draft proposal cannot change the total Commonwealth funding pool available to NSW councils. Instead, this draft methodology may change how that funding is distributed between councils, with the aim of meeting the legal requirements of the grants, which includes better reflecting each council's relative financial need.

Further information about the key methodology changes is provided at **Attachment A** to support your Council's consideration of the proposal.

To assist with planning and feedback, the table below shows your Council's indicative funding under the draft proposal, assuming the annual NSW amount does not change. These figures are estimates only – as the Commonwealth Government controls the total amount, and this varies with their budget allocation. However, we are providing you this estimate to help councils understand the possible effect of the proposed changes.

	General Purpose Component \$	Local Road Component \$	Total \$
2025-26 Actual	4,627,495	1,829,624	6,457,119
Proposed Methodology	4,540,107	2,990,777	7,530,884

The Commission would welcome your council's views on the draft methodology, including its practicality, transparency, fairness, data sources, potential impacts, risks and any opportunities for improvement. In particular, if you have views on the methodology or data sources, we will welcome your views on alternative methodologies or data sources to use.

The methodology presentation and submission template guide are available on the Office of Local Government website [here](#). Your feedback on the methodology and data sources will help the Commission understand how the proposal may affect councils in practice before we finalise our approach. Submission should be provided **by 9 October 2026** to grantscommission@olg.nsw.gov.au.

Thank you for the important work you and all NSW councils do to support your communities and the financial sustainability of council.

Yours sincerely



Linda Scott
Chair
Local Government Grants Commission

Attachment A – Summary of proposed methodology changes

General Purpose Component

The proposed methodology change uses a balanced-budget approach, which is used by the majority of other Australian jurisdictions. In simple terms, this compares what each council is expected to need to spend with what it is reasonably able to raise in revenue.

This provides a more complete picture of a council's financial position and is intended to ensure funding is allocated fairly, consistently and to better align with the Legislative Instrument - National Principles. The model supports the principles of horizontal fiscal equalisation and effort neutrality. This means councils should be able to provide a comparable level of service through reasonable revenue and expenditure effort, without grant outcomes being driven by individual policy choices. The proposed approach looks at both the cost of delivering local services and a council's ability to raise revenue.

As required under the National Principles, 30 per cent of the General Purpose Component (GPC) funding pool must be distributed on a per-capita basis. This means this part of the funding is allocated to councils based on population. The remaining funding would be distributed according to assessed financial need, with financial need being measured as the gap between a council's modelled expenditure need and modelled revenue capacity, compared with the NSW average.

The proposed methodology would:

1	2	3
Allocate 30% per capita to all councils	Estimate expenditure need and revenue capacity	Allocate 70% according to financial need

Table 1 compares the previous and proposed methodology:

Area	Previous methodology	Proposed methodology
Minimum grant	Allocated after the needs assessment, adding complexity	Allocate 30% of the GPC to all councils on a per capita basis before assessing need
Definition of need	Expenditure need and revenue capacity assessed separately and relative to state averages	Use a balanced-budget approach that accounts for expenditure need and revenue capacity together
Expenditure data	Six expenditure categories; not all expenditure covered; reliance on unaudited disaggregated reporting	One aggregated operating expenditure measure using data aligned more closely with audited totals; water and sewer excluded
Expenditure drivers	The model did not account for remoteness	Model accounts for population, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, ARIA+ remoteness and the interaction between population and remoteness

Area	Previous methodology	Proposed methodology
Revenue capacity	Rates capacity based mainly on land values and aggregated urban/non-urban categories; limited treatment of other revenue	Residential rates based on household income; business, farmland and mining rates assessed using land values; include modelled user fees and charges and a four-year average of operating grants
Adjustments	Separate relative disability allowance and post-model adjustments increased complexity	Remove the separate disability allowance and rely more directly on the model
Local roads	Fixed weightings and separate urban/rural treatment using population, road length, bridge length and remoteness	Use council-reported road and bridge length, adjusted by regional construction cost differences (estimated using Rawlinsons regional construction cost indices)

Table 2 identifies the expenditure need and revenue capacity drivers for the draft methodology of the General Purpose Component:

Expenditure Need	Revenue Capacity
- Modelled as the average operating cost per person expected for a council with similar structural characteristics, rather than the council's chosen or actual spending in a single year - Based on total operating expenditure, excluding water and sewer services, using four years of data - Population: smaller councils are generally assessed as having higher per capita costs because fixed costs are spread across fewer residents - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population: recognises additional service-delivery needs and the relevant National Principle - ARIA+ remoteness recognises isolation-related costs such as freight, travel and access to specialised labour - Population and remoteness interaction recognises that the per capita cost effect of isolation is greater for small remote councils - The model produces a per capita expenditure need for each council using common statewide coefficients	- Estimated as what a council should reasonably be able to raise on average, rather than the revenue it chooses to collect in a particular year - Residential rates: assessed using average household income and the number of households, reflecting affordability and the size of the residential base - Business, farmland and mining rates: assessed separately using land values and category-specific statewide benchmarks - User fees and charges: estimated statistically from council characteristics, excluding water and sewer charges, to preserve effort neutrality - Operating grants: included as a four-year council average as grant support must be recognised and varies considerably between years - The combined rates, user fees and charges, and operating grants produce a per capita revenue-capacity estimate for each council

Under the draft methodology, financial need equals expenditure need minus revenue capacity. Councils, above the weighted NSW average financial need receive a needs-based grant; other councils receive the minimum per capita grant only.

Local roads component

The proposed methodology identifies road need using each council's reported local road and bridge network length, adjusted for regional differences in construction costs via the Rawlinsons Australian Construction Handbook indices. The respective index figures give an indication of how total building project costs vary across NSW, which is used to proxy variations in road maintenance costs. Where a council-specific index is not available, it is estimated using population and ARIA+ remoteness.

Road type, condition and usage are not directly included because comprehensive, consistent and audited data are not available.

Adjustment to ensure national principles are addressed

The methodology recognises that regional, rural, and remote councils often face higher service delivery costs – for this reason, remoteness is included as an important factor in assessing relative need. The methodology also recognises the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, consistent with the National Principles.

The Commission's preferred option includes a safeguard for the 14 most remote NSW councils (Accessibility and Remoteness Index of Australia - or ARIA - score above 6), ensuring they do not receive less funding than they currently receive. The Commission has noted that these councils face unique service delivery challenges, have limited capacity to generate revenue locally, and rely heavily on grant funding. The safeguard provides greater funding certainty for these communities.

10.11 SPONSORSHIP - 2027 KYALITE FISHING CLASSIC

File Number:	D26.127692
Author(s):	Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 2: Our Community – Sustaining and Nurturing our Communities as resilient, resourceful, safe and inclusive.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of a request to consider a sponsorship proposal for the 2027 Kyalite Fishing Classic being held from 19-21 February 2027.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receive and note the report regarding sponsorship of the Kyalite Fishing Classic 2027.
2. Consider sponsoring the Kyalite Fishing Classic 2027 to be held from 19-21 February 2027 at the requested amount of \$3000, noting the current policy amount is \$500 for organisations.

REPORT

This report seeks Council's consideration of a sponsorship request for the Kyalite Fishing Classic 2027, proposed to be held in February 2027 at Kyalite. The event is expected to attract recreational fishers, families, visitors, and competitors from across the region and beyond, generating economic, social, and tourism benefits for the local community.

Council sponsorship would assist event organisers in delivering a safe, well-managed, and successful event while promoting the region as a premier destination for fishing, outdoor recreation, and nature-based tourism.

Council is requested to determine an appropriate level of sponsorship support for the 2027 event.

The organisers have requested Council sponsorship to assist with event costs, including:

- Event promotion and marketing.
- Infrastructure and site preparation.
- Participant facilities.
- Safety and operational requirements.
- Community engagement activities.

The Kyalite Fishing Classic delivers a range of benefits to the municipality, including:

Economic Benefits

- Increased visitor expenditure.
- Enhanced patronage of local businesses.
- Greater demand for accommodation and tourism services.
- Promotion of the region to potential future visitors.

Social Benefits

- Community participation and volunteer involvement.
- Family-friendly recreational opportunities.
- Strengthening community connections and regional pride.
- Positive exposure of the local area through media and social channels.

Tourism Benefits

- Promotion of Kyalite as a destination for fishing and nature-based tourism.
- Increased awareness of local waterways and recreational assets.
- Potential for repeat visitation and future tourism growth.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

\$3,000 if approved from the 2026/2027 donations budget, currently with a balance of \$11,848.00

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Nil

POLICY IMPLICATION

Nil

RISK RATING

Low

ATTACHMENTS

1. Letter to Balranald Shire - Kyalite Fishing Classic Sponsorship [↓](#) 



Kyalite Road
Kyalite NSW 2715

Mr Terry Dodds
70 Market Street
Balranald NSW 2715

Dear Terry,

Firstly, thank you for considering our sponsorship proposal for the **2027 Kyalite Fishing Classic**, to be held from **19–21 February 2027**.

The Kyalite Fishing & Sporting Club is seeking sponsorship to assist with the costs of staging this major regional event, including the hire of essential event infrastructure and the purchase of major prizes.

The Kyalite Fishing & Sporting Club was established in June 2021 with a vision of bringing communities together while showcasing the unique attractions of the Kyalite region. Since its inception, the Club has become a strong driver of community engagement, tourism and the ongoing sustainability of the Wakool River fishery.

Nestled on the picturesque Wakool River between Balranald and Tooleybuc, Kyalite is renowned as one of the region's premier fishing destinations. Each year, hundreds of anglers and campers are attracted to its pristine waterways, excellent fishing opportunities and peaceful camping locations, making Kyalite one of the Riverina's true hidden gems.

The annual Kyalite Fishing Classic continues to grow in popularity and reputation. The most recent Classic attracted **more than 400 competitors over three action-packed days**, providing outstanding fishing, quality entertainment and a fantastic atmosphere for families and fishing enthusiasts. Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive, with many describing it as one of the best fishing competitions in the region.

The Club is also proud of the contribution it makes to the wider community. In 2026, the Club supported or contributed to:

- Royal Flying Doctor Service
- **\$72,000 worth of fingerlings** released into the river system, supported through the NSW Fisheries \$2-for-\$1 commitment
- Kyalite Soldiers Park
- Murray Cray research through Austral Research & Consulting

As part of our commitment to the region and the sustainability of the fishery, the Club has also continued its **\$10,000 Tagged Cod Competition**. In 2026, the competition was expanded, with the number of tagged fish doubled, providing anglers with even more opportunities to catch a prize-winning cod worth thousands of dollars.

Since its formation, the Kyalite Fishing & Sporting Club has experienced remarkable growth, establishing the Kyalite Fishing Classic as one of the premier fishing events in the region. With its unbeatable riverside location, substantial prize pool, family-friendly entertainment and strong focus on conservation and community, the event continues to attract competitors and visitors from across Australia.

We believe the Kyalite Fishing Classic provides outstanding value for sponsors and community partners. Businesses and organisations supporting the event benefit from significant brand exposure, strong community engagement and the opportunity to be associated with one of the fastest-growing and most respected fishing competitions in the region.

For the **2027 Kyalite Fishing Classic**, the Club is seeking a **\$3,000 sponsorship contribution** to assist with the hire of essential event infrastructure, including:

- Toilets and showers
- Fencing
- Marquees
- Tables and chairs

Your support would directly assist the Club in delivering a safe, professional and enjoyable event for competitors, families, visitors and the wider community.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of our sponsorship request and would be extremely grateful for any assistance that your Council can provide towards the 2027 Kyalite Fishing Classic.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our region and its communities.

Kind regards,

Brenten Hogan

President

Kyalite Fishing & Sporting Club

10.12 DONATION REQUESTS - SPORTING PARTICIPANTS

File Number:	D26.127713
Reporting Officer(s):	Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant
Responsible Officer:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 4: Our Culture – A community that respects and celebrates its diverse cultures, heritage and arts.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of two (2) donation application received seeking financial assistance to participate in the Sporting events in Sydney.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**That Council**

- 1. Donate \$150 to Imogen Gervasi as she competed in Sydney at the NSWCHSSA State Athletic Championships from 9 – 11 September 2026**
- 2. Donate \$150 to Layla Grisdale as she is competing in Shotput at the School Athletics Carnival in Sydney.**
- 3. Note that Imogen and Layla both meet the guidelines of the Donations, Subsidies & Financial Assistance Policy.**

REPORT

Council has received a donation request seeking assistance with travelling and accommodation costs from Imogen Gervasi (**attachment 1**) and Layla Grisdale (**attachment 2**). They are both participating in Athletics Carnivals being held in Sydney.

Imogen Gervasi competed at the Primary School State Athletics Championships from 9 – 11 September 2026.

Layla Grisdale is competing in Shotput in Sydney at state level at the Secondary School Athletics Carnival in Sydney on 21 and 22 October 2026.

- Organisations must be incorporated and formally structured to serve the residents in the Balranald Shire Council area and be based in the Balranald Shire, or alternatively, have a regional focus that will benefit the residents within the Shire.
- Organisations must be non-profit groups involved in cultural, tourism, sporting, educational, health or community affairs.
- Requests for donations to charities/organisations registered outside the Balranald Shire area will not be considered.
- Council will consider one-off contributions to other areas as a result of a natural disaster.
- Organisations are required to complete the Council's donations application form to have their request considered.
- Council will consider applications from school children who will be competing at State or Regional events at any time throughout the year

The following details the approval limits:

Approval Limits

- School and Sporting Groups

Competing at State or Regional events at venues over 350 km from their location within the Shire - \$150 per competitor, up to a maximum of \$1,000 per group.

- Individuals

Competing at State or Regional events at venues over 350 km from their location within the Shire - \$150

- NSW/Australian Representation – Individuals

NSW - \$250

Interstate - \$250

Overseas - \$500

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

\$150 each can be sourced from the 2026/2027 donations budget, leaving a balance of \$11,548.00.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Donations, Subsidies & Financial Assistance Policy

RISK RATING

Low.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Donation Application - Imogen Gervasi [↓](#) 
2. Donation Request - Layla Grisdale [↓](#) 



Donations Application Form

Address applications to:

General Manager
Balranald Shire Council
PO Box 120
BALRANALD NSW 2715

Privacy Management

Information provided in this form is required in order to process the application. Provision of the information is voluntary; however, if insufficient information is provided, Council will be unable to process the application. The information will be available to authorised officers and may be made available to public enquiries under Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009.

GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF COUNCIL DONATIONS

Council's donation program is an opportunity to give funding and recognition to individuals, community groups and organisations that play an important part in helping develop the region's environmental sustainability, community wellbeing, economic prosperity and cultural life.

Council donations generally do not apply to individuals however in certain circumstances donations may be provided.

Organisations will be eligible for a maximum of \$500.00 per financial year. Applications are required to meet eligibility criteria outlined in Council's Donations Policy.

More information regarding this funding can be requested by contacting Council's Director Corporate and Community Development on 03 5020 1300.

1. Community group or organisation details

Please note, to avoid duplication, the details provided below will become your organisation's principle contact for all correspondence relating to the Donations Programme.

Community group or organisation: Imogen Gervasi

Postal address: 16 MUNGO ST, BALRANALD

Contact person: Danelle Gervasi

Position: Parent

Telephone No: 0488239105

E-mail address: zabby_35@hotmail.com

2. Objectives of your community group or organisation:

State Athletics championships
representing Balranald

3. Is your organisation not for profit?

☒ Yes / No

4. Is your organisation registered for GST? Yes / No (please circle)

5. ABN Number (if applicable): _____

6. Project or Event Name: NSWCHSSA State Athletics Championships

7. Amount Requested \$: 500

8. Is the project still viable if your community group or organisation receives less than the requested amount?

Provide reason

Yes - put max req amount as guide
all contributions greatly appreciated

9. If income exceeds expenses what will happen to the excess funds?

expenses will by far outweigh

10. Project Details – please complete the section below or attach a copy of your event plan

Brief project description			
What are you going to do?		Compete at State Athletics Championships	
When are you going to do it?		September 9/10/11 th	
Where are you going to do it?		Sydney, Olympic Park Stadium	
Who is involved?		Imogen Gervasi	
Why are you doing it?		to represent my School & Community at state level	
Start Date		7/09/2026	Finish Date 11/09/26
List each component of your project		Cost of component	Amount requested from Council
Accom		\$ 500	\$
flights		\$ 2000	\$
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
TOTAL (include gst)		\$	\$
Please list any funding your organisation has received in the past 18 months (Council and External)			
Date funding received	Amount of funding	Purpose of funding	Have you met all the acquittal conditions of previous funding?
5/5/2026	250	state swimming	yes

Name: Danelle Gervasi

Name: _____

Position: Mother

Position: _____

Signature: [Signature]

Signature: _____

Date: 07/08/2026

Date: _____

Imogen Gervasi
16 Mungo Street
Balranald NSW 2715
07.08.2026

Balranald Shire Council C/O: General Manager,

Dear General Manager,

My name is Imogen Gervasi, and I am writing to kindly request travel support to represent Balranald Central School and the Balranald community as part of the Riverina Athletics Team at the NSWCHSSA State Athletics Championships.

I have proudly represented our school and community at Riverina level at Albury for the past two years, and this year I have been selected to compete at the NSW State Championships, held at Sydney Olympic Park from **September 9-11th 2026**.

I will be competing in **Long Jump and High Jump**, and I am very excited for the opportunity to compete at this level especially as a 12-year-old.

Attending this event requires travel to Sydney, accommodation, and associated costs. Any financial support the Balranald Shire Council is able to provide would greatly assist me and my family in making this trip possible. I am very grateful for the ongoing support the school and community has shown me throughout my athletics journey.

Thank you for considering my request. I will continue to represent Balranald Community with pride.

Kind regards,

Imogen Gervasi

danelle.gervasi@maarima.com.au

04 8823 9105



Donations Application Form

Address applications to:

General Manager
Balranald Shire Council
PO Box 120
BALRANALD NSW 2715

Privacy Management

Information provided in this form is required in order to process the application. Provision of the information is voluntary; however, if insufficient information is provided, Council will be unable to process the application. The information will be available to authorised officers and may be made available to public enquiries under Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009.

GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF COUNCIL DONATIONS

Council's donation program is an opportunity to give funding and recognition to individuals, community groups and organisations that play an important part in helping develop the region's environmental sustainability, community wellbeing, economic prosperity and cultural life.

Council donations generally do not apply to individuals however in certain circumstances donations may be provided.

Organisations will be eligible for a maximum of \$500.00 per financial year. Applications are required to meet eligibility criteria outlined in Council's Donations Policy.

More information regarding this funding can be requested by contacting the Executive Assistant at Council's office on 03 5020 1300.

1. Community group or organisation details

Please note, to avoid duplication, the details provided below will become your organisation's principle contact for all correspondence relating to the Donations Program.

Community group or organisation: Ashlea Pemberton

Postal address: P.O Box 140 Swan Hill, 3585

Contact person: _____

Position: _____ Telephone No: 0437950374

E-mail address: ashleapemberton@hotmail.com

2. Objectives of your community group or organisation:

3. Is your organisation not for profit? Yes / No

4. Is your organisation registered for GST? Yes / No (please circle)

5. ABN Number (if applicable): _____

6. Project or Event Name: _____

7. Amount Requested \$: _____

8. Is the project still viable if your community group or organisation receives less than the requested amount?
Provide reason

9. If income exceeds expenses what will happen to the excess funds?

10. Project Details – please complete the section below or attach a copy of your event plan

Brief project description			
What are you going to do?		School athletics - clinton	
When are you going to do it?		21-22 October	
Where are you going to do it?		Sydney	
Who is involved?		Layla Arisdate - student at B.O.S.	
Why are you doing it?		School athletics made to state	
Start Date		21-9	Finish Date
21-9		22-9	
List each component of your project		Cost of component	Amount requested from Council
Promotion		\$ 500	\$
Fuel		\$ 500-600	\$
Sport Organisation		\$ 90	\$
		\$	\$
TOTAL (include gst)		\$	\$
Please list any funding your organisation has received in the past 18 months (Council and External)			
Date funding received	Amount of funding	Purpose of funding	Have you met all the acquittal conditions of previous funding?

Name: Ash Pemberton

Position: mother

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 7-9-26

Name: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

10.13 DONATION REQUESTS - SPORTING PARTICIPANTS

File Number:	D26.127729
Reporting Officer(s):	Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant
Responsible Officer:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 4: Our Culture – A community that respects and celebrates its diverse cultures, heritage and arts.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of a donation request from Balranald Central School for students and staff attending State Netball in Dubbo.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**That Council**

- 1. Donate \$1000 to Balranald Central School as they are taking 11 students and 3 staff to play Central Schools State Netball in Dubbo.**
- 2. This request meets the guidelines of the Donations, Subsidies & Financial Assistance Policy.**

REPORT

Council has received a donation request seeking assistance with travel and accommodation costs from Balranald Central School (Attachment 1) following the school's participation in the Central Schools State Netball Championships held in Dubbo on 2 and 3 September 2026. The school was represented by 11 students and 3 staff members, with the students earning the opportunity to compete at a state level.

These students represented both their school and the Balranald community with pride, demonstrating commitment, sportsmanship and excellence in their achievement.

Council's support would assist in recognising and encouraging local youth participation in high-level sporting events and help offset the costs associated with representing the community at a state competition.

Council's Policy states that when assessing such requests, the following guidelines will apply:

- Organisations must be incorporated and formally structured to service the residents in the Balranald Shire Council area and be based in the Balranald Shire, or alternatively, have a regional focus that will benefit the residents within the Shire.
- Organisations must be non-profit groups involved in cultural, tourism, sporting, educational, health or community affairs.
- Requests for donations to charities/organisations registered outside the Balranald Shire area will not be considered.
- Council will consider one-off contributions to other areas as a result of a natural disaster.
- Organisations are required to complete the Council's donations application form to have their request considered.
- Council will consider applications from school children who will be competing at State or Regional events at any time throughout the year

The following details the approval limits:

Approval Limits

- School and Sporting Groups

Competing at State or Regional events at venues over 350km distance from their location within the Shire - \$150 per competitor, up to a maximum of \$1,000 per group.

- Individuals

Competing at State or Regional events at venues over 350km distance from their location within the Shire - \$150

- NSW/Australian Representation – Individuals

NSW - \$250

Interstate - \$250

Overseas - \$500

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

\$1000 each can be sourced from the 2026/2027 donations budget and if approved will leave a balance of \$10,598.00.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Donations, Subsidies & Financial Assistance Policy

RISK RATING

Low.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Donation Application Form - Balranald Central School [↓](#) 



Donations Application Form

Address applications to:

General Manager
Balranald Shire Council
PO Box 120
BALRANALD NSW 2715

Privacy Management

Information provided in this form is required in order to process the application. Provision of the information is voluntary; however, if insufficient information is provided, Council will be unable to process the application. The information will be available to authorised officers and may be made available to public enquiries under Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009.

GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF COUNCIL DONATIONS

Council's donation program is an opportunity to give funding and recognition to individuals, community groups and organisations that play an important part in helping develop the region's environmental sustainability, community wellbeing, economic prosperity and cultural life.

Council donations generally do not apply to individuals however in certain circumstances donations may be provided.

Organisations will be eligible for a maximum of \$500.00 per financial year. Applications are required to meet eligibility criteria outlined in Council's Donations Policy.

More information regarding this funding can be requested by contacting the Executive Assistant at Council's office on 03 5020 1300.

1. Community group or organisation details

Please note, to avoid duplication, the details provided below will become your organisation's principle contact for all correspondence relating to the Donations Program.

Community group or organisation: BALRANALD CENTRAL SCHOOL UNDER 16'S NETBALL

Postal address: 53-55 WE STREET BALRANALD NSW 2715 TEAM

Contact person: MICHELLE GERVASI

Position: ADMIN MANAGER Telephone No: 03 5020 2222

E-mail address: balranald-c.school@det.nsw.edu.au

2. Objectives of your community group or organisation:

TO COMPLETE IN THE STATE NETBALL CARNIVAL FOR ALL CENTRAL SCHOOLS IN NSW.

3. Is your organisation not for profit?

☒ Yes / ☐ No

4. Is your organisation registered for GST? (Yes) / No (please circle)
5. ABN Number (if applicable): 18 246 198 266
6. Project or Event Name: STATE CENTRAL SCHOOLS UNDER 16'S NETBALL
7. Amount Requested \$: 500
8. Is the project still viable if your community group or organisation receives less than the requested amount?
Provide reason
YES - PARTICIPANTS WILL COVER ADDITIONAL COSTS.
9. If income exceeds expenses what will happen to the excess funds?
FUNDS WILL BE USED FOR FUTURE NETBALL EVENTS.
10. Project Details – please complete the section below or attach a copy of your event plan

Brief project description			
What are you going to do?		PLAY STATE NETBALL.	
When are you going to do it?		DUBBO 2ND + 3RD SEPT 2026.	
Where are you going to do it?		↗	
Who is involved?		11 STUDENTS 3 STAFF	
Why are you doing it?		CENTRAL SCHOOLS STATE NETBALL	
Start Date		Finish Date	
List each component of your project		Cost of component	Amount requested from Council
TRAVEL		\$ 1290	\$
ACCOMMODATION		\$ 1085	\$
MEALS		\$ 700	\$
		\$	\$
TOTAL (include gst)		\$ 3075	\$
Please list any funding your organisation has received in the past 18 months (Council and External)			
Date funding received	Amount of funding	Purpose of funding	Have you met all the acquittal conditions of previous funding?

Name: MICHELLE GERVASI
 Position: ADMIN MANAGER.
 Signature: [Signature]
 Date: 14/8/26

Name: NADINE MATARAZZO
 Position: PRINCIPAL.
 Signature: [Signature]
 Date: 14/8/26

PART B – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**11 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORTS****11.1 MONTHLY INVESTMENTS REPORT**

File Number:	D26.127782
Author(s):	Kristy Cameron, Finance Officer
Approver:	Edna Mendes, Chief Financial Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 6: Our Leadership – A community that values and fosters leadership, lifelong learning, innovation and good governance.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to report to Council on the balances of cash and investments held by Council as at 31 August 2026.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the information provided in this report.

REPORT**1 Cash and Investments Held**

Council's total cash and investments held as of 31 August 2026 is **\$37,251,687**.

This is an increase of \$1,105,411 (3.06%) on the previous month's total of **\$36,146,276**.

The increase is due to:

- Rates Instalment due
- FAGS Qtr. 1 received

The investment balance as of 31 August 2026 is **\$34.45m**.

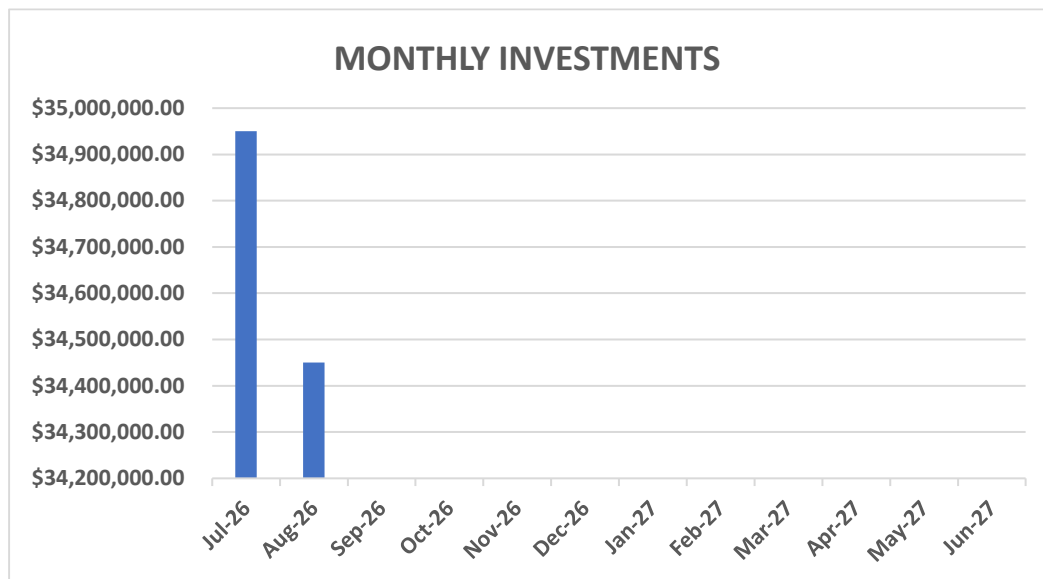
A summary of Council's investments as of 31 August 2026 is detailed on the next page.

The table below also details the interest earned for August 2026 and the projected interest earnings for the Financial Year ending 30 June 2027

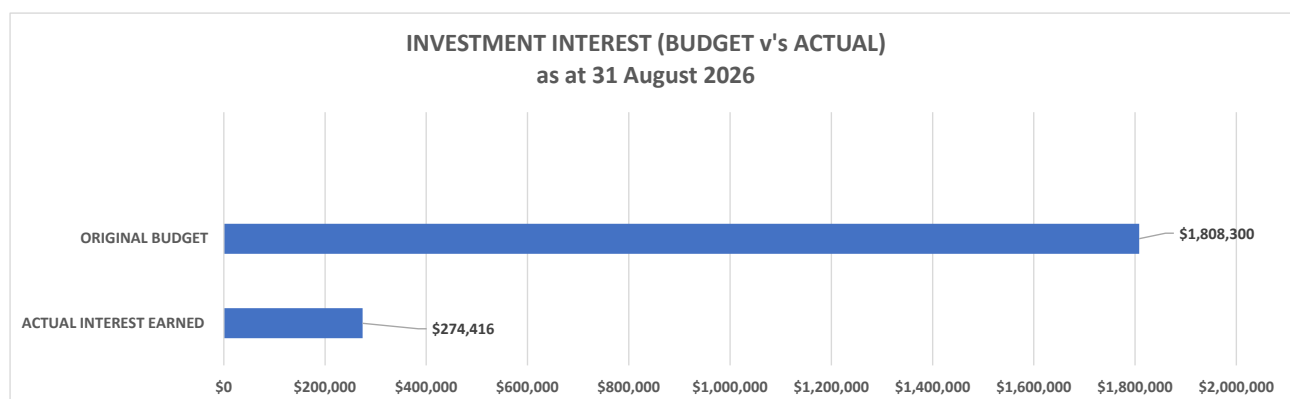
TERM DEPOSITS INVESTMENT REGISTER AND INTEREST EARNED 2026/27

Term Deposits	S&P Rating	Term (Days)	Start Date	Maturity Date	Interest Rate	Investment Value	Daily Interest
Westpac Bank	A-1+	365	22/09/2025	22/09/2026	4.02%	1,000,000	\$ 12
Westpac Bank	A-1+	365	11/10/2025	11/10/2026	4.14%	1,000,000	\$ 12
AMP	A-2	365	3/03/2026	3/03/2027	4.80%	500,000	\$ 6
AMP	A-2	184	3/03/2026	3/09/2026	4.65%	500,000	\$ 6
AMP	A-2	183	15/04/2026	15/10/2026	5.10%	1,000,000	\$ 13
AMP	A-2	276	25/05/2026	25/02/2027	5.25%	500,000	\$ 7
AMP	A-2	273	15/06/2026	15/03/2027	5.25%	1,000,000	\$ 14
AMP	A-2	364	26/06/2026	25/06/2027	5.35%	1,000,000	\$ 14
AMP	A-2	274	29/06/2026	30/03/2027	5.25%	1,000,000	\$ 14
AMP	A-2	365	29/06/2026	29/06/2027	5.35%	1,000,000	\$ 14
NAB Bank			matured				\$ 12
NAB Bank	A-1+	365	27/10/2025	27/10/2026	4.10%	500,000	\$ 5
NAB Bank	A-1+	365	12/11/2025	12/11/2026	4.20%	1,000,000	\$ 12
NAB Bank	A-1+	365	27/11/2025	27/11/2026	4.20%	500,000	\$ 5
NAB Bank	A-1+	365	2/12/2025	2/12/2026	4.30%	1,000,000	\$ 12
NAB Bank	A-1+	274	3/12/2025	3/09/2026	4.25%	500,000	\$ 5
NAB Bank	A-1+	365	8/12/2025	8/12/2026	4.40%	1,000,000	\$ 12
NAB Bank	A-1+	365	17/12/2025	17/12/2026	4.45%	500,000	\$ 6
NAB Bank	A-1+	365	18/12/2025	18/12/2026	4.45%	500,000	\$ 6
NAB Bank	A-1+	336	19/01/2026	21/12/2026	4.50%	1,000,000	\$ 12
NAB Bank	A-1+	273	23/01/2026	23/10/2026	4.50%	1,000,000	\$ 12
NAB Bank	A-1+	214	2/03/2026	2/10/2026	4.65%	1,000,000	\$ 12
NAB Bank	A-1+	273	23/06/2026	23/03/2027	5.20%	1,000,000	\$ 14
NAB Bank	A-1+	307	24/06/2026	27/04/2027	5.20%	1,000,000	\$ 14
NAB Bank	A-1+	244	1/07/2026	2/03/2027	5.20%	950,000	\$ 13
NAB Bank	A-1+	302	30/07/2026	28/05/2027	5.25%	1,000,000	\$ 14
NAB Bank	A-1+	242	31/08/2026	30/04/2027	5.25%	500,000	\$ 7
Bank of Queensland			matured				\$ 12
Bank of Queensland			redeemed				\$ 6
Bank of Queensland			matured				\$ 6
Bank of Queensland			matured				\$ 6
Bank of Queensland	A-2	184	16/03/2026	16/09/2026	5.05%	1,000,000	\$ 13
Bank of Queensland	A-2	184	30/03/2026	30/09/2026	5.15%	1,000,000	\$ 14
Bank of Queensland	A-2	182	7/04/2026	6/10/2026	5.30%	500,000	\$ 7
Bank of Queensland	A-2	183	20/04/2026	20/10/2026	5.15%	500,000	\$ 7
Bank of Queensland	A-2	215	24/06/2026	25/01/2027	5.25%	1,000,000	\$ 14
Bank of Queensland	A-2	217	13/07/2026	15/02/2027	5.15%	1,000,000	\$ 14
Bank of Queensland	A-2	182	24/08/2026	22/02/2027	5.15%	500,000	\$ 7
Bank of Queensland	A-2	273	24/08/2026	24/05/2027	5.20%	500,000	\$ 7
Bank of Queensland	A-2	273	31/08/2026	31/05/2027	5.22%	500,000	\$ 7
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+		redeemed				\$ 12
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+		redeemed				\$ 5
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+	365	23/12/2025	23/12/2026	4.55%	1,000,000	\$ 12
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+	331	29/12/2025	25/11/2026	4.51%	500,000	\$ 6
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+	365	21/01/2026	21/01/2027	4.55%	1,000,000	\$ 12
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+	365	22/01/2026	22/01/2027	4.55%	1,000,000	\$ 12

The graph below details the monthly balance of investments from 1 July 2026 until 30 June 2027:



The graph below details the actual interest earned as at 31 August 2026 (\$274,416) and the original budget amount (\$1,808,300), for the 2026/2027 Financial Year:



The table below details the composition of investments with financial institutions as at 31 August 2026:

Financial Institutions	Ratings	Composition %	Amount ('000)
Westpac	A-1+	5.84	2,012
AMP	A-2	18.86	6,500
CBA	A-1+	18.86	6,500
BOQ	A-2	18.86	6,500
NAB	A-1+	37.58	12,950
Total		100.00	34,462

Council is compliant with the Investment Policy.

The table below details the balances of external and internal restrictions as at, 31 August 2026.

The table also details the balance of unrestricted cash investments as at, 31 August 2026:

External Restrictions

Water Supplies	\$ 4,934,000.00
Sewerage Services	\$ 1,569,000.00
Domestic Waste Management	\$ 572,000.00
Developer Contributions	\$ 30,000.00
Specific Purpose Unexpended Capital Grants - Gen Fund	\$ 2,808,132.00
Specific Purpose Unexpended Operational Grants - Gen Fund	\$ 600,972.00
Specific Purpose Unexpended Operational Grants - Water Fund	\$ 70,000.00
Stormwater Levy - Urban Drainage Improvements	\$ 58,000.00
Total External Restrictions	\$ 10,642,104.00

Internal Restrictions

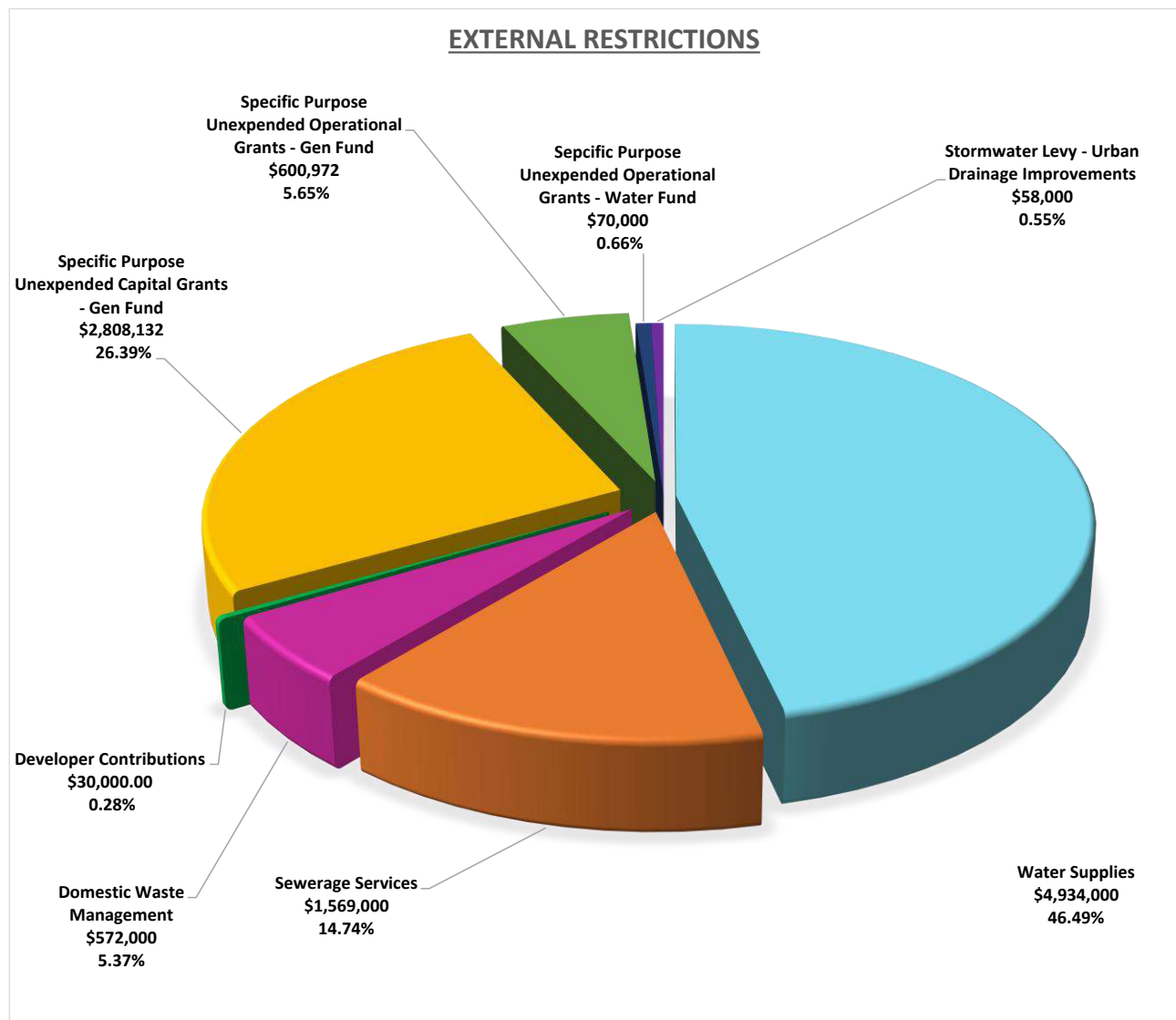
Plant and Vehicle replacement	\$ 1,954,547.32
Infrastructure replacement	\$ 1,474,399.51
Employee Leave Entitlements	\$ 311,439.76
Caravan Park	\$ 553,250.72
Gravel pits rehabilitation	\$ 242,200.34
Hostel bonds	\$ 1,890,000.00
Self Care Unit bonds	\$ 440,000.00
Self Care Unit Maintenance	\$ 16,165.83
Financial Assistance Grant	\$ 3,167,000.00
Future Development Fund	\$ 1,574,100.42
Levy Bank Restoration	\$ 250,000.00
Asset Revaluation	\$ 80,000.00
Insurance Premium	\$ 40,000.00
Council Properties (rental Income)	\$ 140,000.00
Elections	\$ 45,000.00
IT Infrastructure Development	\$ 500,000.00
Housing Development Fund	\$ 500,000.00
Water - Infrastructure upgrade	\$ 708,140.00
Sewer - Infrastructure Upgrade	\$ 391,986.00
Total Internal Restrictions	\$ 14,278,229.90

Total Restrictions	\$ 24,920,333.90
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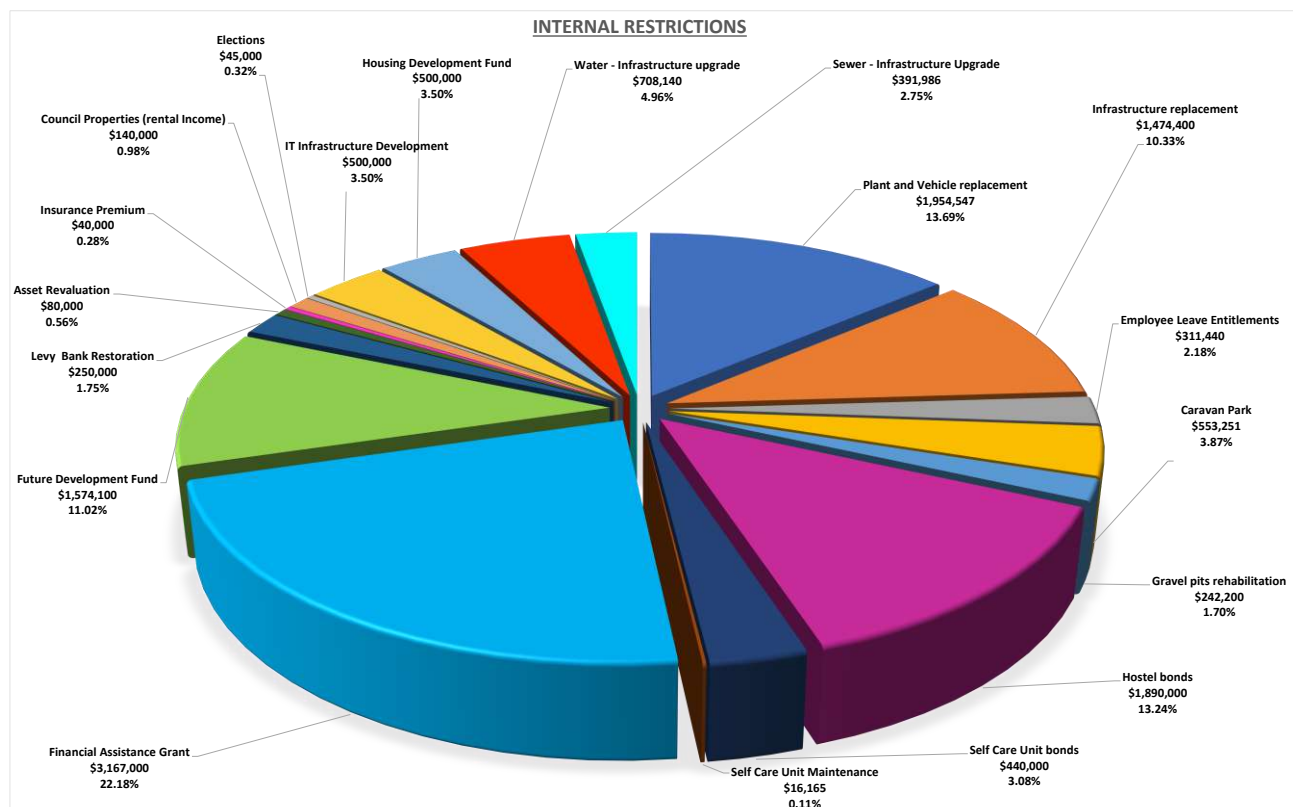
Unrestricted Cash Investments

	\$ 12,331,111.10
Total Cash and Investments	\$ 37,251,445.00

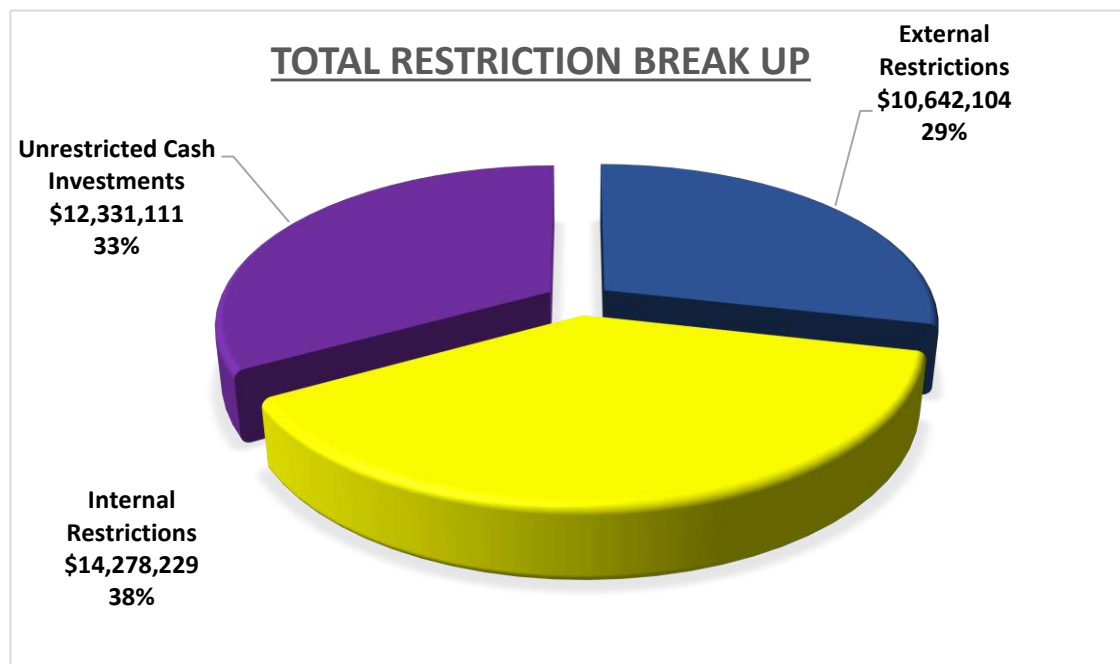
The chart below details the breakup of External Restrictions, detailing dollar value and percentage of each restriction as at 31 August 2026:



The chart below details the breakup of Internal Restrictions, detailing dollar value and percentage of each restriction as at 31 August 2026:



The chart below details an overall view of restricted cash as at 31 August 2026:



SUMMARY

Council currently holds \$37,251,687 in Cash and Investments. The average interest rate for August 2026 is 4.84%. The average interest rate has increased since last month which was 4.75%.

I hereby certify that the investments listed within this report were made in accordance with Section 625 of the Local Government Act, 1993, clause 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 and Council's Investment Policy.

E. Mendes

Responsible Accounting Officer

4 September 2026

2. Bank Reconciliation as at 31 August 2026

The bank reconciliation on the Westpac cash account, or operating account, has been reconciled as at, 31 August 2026 and is detailed below:

Opening Cashbook Balance	1,183,917
Plus Receipts	6,029,668
Less Payments	(4,413,403)
Cashbook Balance at 31 August 2026	2,800,181

Statement Summary	
Opening Statement Balance	1,189,336
Plus Receipts	6,032,145
Less Payments	(4,420,779)
Bank Statement Balance at 31 July 2026	2,800,702
Plus Unpresented Receipts	6,282
Less Unpresented Payments	(6,802)
Reconciliation Balance at 31 July 2026	2,800,181

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The Local Government Act, 1993.

The Local Government (General) Regulation, 2021.

Ministerial Investment Order (Gazetted 11 February 2011).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Council's Investment Policy (Adopted October 2021).

RISK RATING

Low.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11.2 OUTSTANDING RATES AND USAGE CHARGES AS AT 31 AUGUST 2026

File Number: D26.127272
Author(s): Danika Dunstone, Rates & Debtors Officer
Approver: Edna Mendes, Chief Financial Officer
Operational Plan Objective: Pillar 3: Our Economy – A community that ensures a strong and resilient economy.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the outstanding Rates and Charges and outstanding Water and Sewer Usage Charges as of 31 August 2026.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the information contained within this report.

REPORT**Outstanding Rates & Annual Charges**

The following table provides a summary of the outstanding rates and annual charges, and the outstanding water and sewer usage charges as of 31 August 2026.

	Balance Outstanding August 2026
Rates & Charges	\$814,277.40
Water & Sewer Usage Charges	\$155,154.60
TOTAL	<u>\$969,432.00</u>

Summary of all Rates and Charges

The table on the following page provides more detail on all Rates and Charges and Usage Charges as of 31 August 2026.

The 2025/2026 Net Levy of \$6,490,867.16 includes any debit or credit levy adjustments for the current financial year, plus water and sewer usage charges, interest charged and less any pensioner rebates issued.

The balance outstanding for rates and annual charges is 11.35 % (12.34% as of 31 May 2026) of the total receivable as of 31 August 2026.

The balance outstanding for water and sewer usage charges is 13.47 % (16.05 % as of 31 May 2026) of the total receivable as of 30 June 2026.

		Balranald Shire Council - Statement of Rates and Charges							
		As at 30-Jun-26							

Please be advised that accounts aged 366 days and over, where no payment plan is in place, have been referred to the Council's external debt collection agency for further action.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1993) AND ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

RISK RATING

Low.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11.3 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST RETURNS TO 30 JUNE 2026

File Number: D26.124657
Author(s): Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant
Approver: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective: Pillar 6: Our Leadership – A community that values and fosters leadership, lifelong learning, innovation and good governance.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council that the Mayor, Councillors, and designated persons for 2025/2026 have lodged their Written Disclosure of Interest Returns with the Chief Executive Officer.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes that the Mayor, Councillors and the Designated Persons have lodged their written returns with the Interim Chief Executive Officer for the year ending 30 June 2026 by the due date.

REPORT

Completed Disclosure of Interests forms for the period from 1 July 2025 until 30 June 2026 are to be lodged with the Chief Executive Officer by 30 September 2026.

At the time of writing this report, Council had received the Disclosure of Interest Forms from the designated persons, including the Mayor and 6 of our Councillors.

The Disclosure of Interest Register is available upon request, and the Disclosure of Interest forms are available on Council's website for public viewing.

Part 4: Pecuniary Interests, Clause 4.21 of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW 2020 details the following:

Disclosure of interests written returns

4.21 A councillor or designated person must make and lodge with the Chief Executive Officer a return in the form set out in schedule 2 to this code, disclosing the Councillor's or designated person's interests as specified in schedule 1 to this code within 3 months after:

(a) becoming a councillor or designated person, and

(b) 30 June of each year, and

(c) the councillor or designated person becoming aware of an interest they are required to disclose under schedule 1 that has not been previously disclosed in a return lodged under paragraphs (a) or (b).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Section 440AAB of the Local Government Act, 1993 – Register and tabling of returns.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Part 4: Pecuniary Interests, Clause 4,21 of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW 2020.

RISK RATING

Medium.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11.4 COUNCIL PROPERTY BUILDING REPAIRS

File Number:	D26.127810
Author(s):	Edna Mendes, Chief Financial Officer
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 4: Our Infrastructure – Timely, sustainable and well-planned development and maintenance of fit for purpose community infrastructure.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of significant structural damage at 156 Church Street and to notify that a Quarterly Budget Review (QBR) request for additional Budget funding will be submitted in the October QBR1.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the extent of water and termite damage at 156 Church Street and that the insurer has denied the claim.
2. Endorse the submission of a budget variation request in the October Q1 Quarterly Budget Review

REPORT

Council staff identified severe water damage in the ensuite at 156 Church Street, a Council-owned residence occupied by a senior staff member.

A contractor inspection confirmed that the water damage had exposed extensive termite damage within the ensuite's structural framing. Due to safety concerns, the bathroom has been internally demolished and is currently unusable.

An insurance claim was lodged; however, the insurer has denied the claim, citing termite damage exclusions under the policy. As the termite damage is integral to the required repair works, no portion of the remediation is covered.

The property requires remediation to restore structural integrity and ensure the residence remains safe and habitable for the staff member.

Required works include:

- Site establishment and set out of works
- Removal and replacement of termite-damaged framing
- Rebuilding bathroom walls, flooring, supports
- Waterproofing, tiling, plumbing fixtures, fittings
- Electrical works
- Termite treatment and installation of a preventative barrier

The estimated cost, prior to further detailed assessment, is \$114K.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Insurance claim denied.

Funds will be requested in the Q1 QBR (October); from Housing Reserves.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

- Council has a responsibility to maintain staff housing in a safe and compliant condition
- Works must comply with NSW Building Code, waterproofing standards, and termite management regulations

POLICY IMPLICATION

- Procurement will follow Council's Purchasing Policy.

RISK RATING

- Safety Risk: Bathroom currently unusable; structural deterioration may worsen.
- Operational Risk: Staff housing stability impacts workforce retention and service continuity.
- Financial Risk: Delaying works may increase costs.
- Asset Risk: Termite damage may spread if untreated.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11.5 MONTHLY OPERATIONAL REPORT

File Number:	D26.127778
Author(s):	Hodi Beauliv, Executive Manager: Community and Governance
Approver:	Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective:	Pillar 6: Our Council – Upholds the community's expectations of good governance, engages and ethical leadership, a skilled and effective workforce, and operational transparency and accountability.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide a monthly update of Council's operations.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and noted.

REPORT

This is the third Monthly Operational Report (MOR) presented to the Balranald Shire Council. The MOR is being implemented in stages. Last month, three additional sections were added to each department: a financial summary, business as usual and service metrics. This replaced some reports previously provided in individual departments, including engineering and planning.

This month, staff have been empowered to 'own' their business, giving greater detail and improved metrics to assist Council to monitor performance. Outstanding actions have also been added to the report by department. From next month, the report will include updates on projects and risks by teams. Until then, the Grants Update continues to be provided as a separate attachment.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Actions from the 2026-2027 Operational Plan are included in the 2026-2027 Budget adopted by Council in June 2026. Funding to implement the Delivery Program is based on the Long-Term Financial Plan that was adopted in June 2025.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Section 406 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires councils to comply with the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Guidelines prescribed by the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.

In accordance with Essential Element 4.9 of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines, the General Manager is required to provide Council with progress reports on the principal activities outlined in the Delivery Program at least every six months. This report satisfies that requirement.

POLICY IMPLICATION

Nil

RISK RATING

Low

ATTACHMENTS

1. Monthly Operational Report - August (under separate cover) 
2. Grants Update - September 2026  



BSC GRANTS PROJECTS UPDATE

As @ 07-09-2026

- Roads Grant Projects - Current & Pending
- Infrastructure Grant Projects - Current & Pending
- Non Capital Grant Projects - Current & Pending
- Applications in Progress of being submitted
- **Proposed Projects for Grant Funding**



BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



CONTENTS THIS MONTH:

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

03

1. ROADS GRANT PROJECTS

1a. Current projects

Roads to Recovery (RTR/R3R) 2024-29	04 & 05
Transport for NSW – Road Safety Program 2023/24 to 2025/26	06
Transport for NSW – Regional Roads Block Grant Agreement 2026/27	06
Transport for NSW – Natural Disaster AGRN1034	06
Disaster Ready Fund Round 3	07
Tronox - Maintenance of Regional Road 67	07
NSW Boating Infrastructure – Pontoon	07
Safer Local Roads & Infrastructure Program Round 4 – Benanee Road	08
Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program Round 8 – MR67 Balranald-Ivanhoe Road	08
Towards Zero Safer Roads Program – High Pedestrian Activity Area	08

1b. Applications Pending

Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program – Round 5 - Tapalin Mail Road	08
Get NSW Active FY 26/27 NSW Dept. of Climate & Energy – Balranald Flood Risk Study & Plan	09
Disaster Ready Fund	09

2. INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROJECTS

2a. Current Projects

Bidgee Haven Expansion Grant	10
Discovery Centre Redevelopment – Far West Joint Organisation (JO) Grant	11

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026

Stronger Country Communities Fund (SCCF) R5	12
AGRN 1034 Floods 2022 Grant Funding – Office of Local Government	123
FSW Heritage & Cultural Trail – Far West Joint Organisation	14 &15
NSW Public Library Infrastructure Grant 2025-26	16

2b. Applications Pending

Crown Reserves Improvement Fund 2026/27 for the Euston Reserve Lighting Project	16
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3. NON CAPITAL GRANT PROJECTS**3a. Current Projects**

Community Benefit Fund – Office of Responsible Gambling NSW	17
Regional Drought Resilience Program	18
NSW Sustainable Communities Program Early Investment Round – Euston Club Submission	19
Euston Club Grant Category 2 - 2026	20

3b. Applications Pending

Not applicable this month	20
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4. OVERALL - APPLICATIONS IN PROGRESS OF BEING SUBMITTED

ClubGrants Category 3 Infrastructure Fund in support of BFNC electronic scoreboard	21
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5. OVERALL - PROPOSED PROJECTS FOR GRANT FUNDING

Refer to highlighted sections on page 22, 23, 24 & 28	22-28
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BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Completed Projects that have been taken off this Report from the last report:

- Transport for NSW – Regional Roads Block Grant 2025/26
- Transport for NSW School Zone Works – Balranald Central School Bus zone signage & line marking

Successful Applications from last report:

- Euston Club Grant Category 2 - 2026

New Application/s submitted since last report:

- Not applicable for this month

Grants acquitted this report:

- Not Applicable this month

Applications in progress of being submitted:

- National Council of Australia – Australia Day Grant

Proposed projects for grant funding – Status Update:

- Refer to updates which are **highlighted** on pages 22, 23, 24 & 28

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



1. ROADS GRANT PROJECTS

1a. Current Projects

Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Roads to Recovery (RTR / R2R) 2024-2029 Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications & the Arts Expected End date: 2029	For rural and local roads	TOTAL Allocation \$7,329,726	2024/2025 Year		
	Works for 2024/2025 Year	Planned Expenditure for 2024-2025: \$1,465,945			
	1. Shailer Terrace, Euston - Reinstate kerb & gutter	1. \$150,000.00	1. Completed	100	100
	2. Marma Box Creek Road - Seal construction 3.9km	2. \$1,315,945.00	2. Completed	100	100
	RTR Work Schedule for 2025 -2026:	Funding Received 2024/25: \$1,642,639			
	1. Wooranbarra Corrong- Road level Raised/Re-sheeted for 4km	Total Planned Expenditure for 2025-2026: \$265,150.00			
	2. Marma Box Creek - Maintenance Grade	Funding Received 2025/2026: \$152,456	1. Completed	100	100
	3. Churchill Road – Resheet & Maintenance Grade	1. \$150,313	2. Completed	100	100
	4. Euston Prungle/Prungle Marma-Maintenance Grade	2. \$129,700	3. Completed	100	100
	5. Hatfield The Vale – Maintenance Upgrade	3. \$27,289	4. Completed	100	100
	6. Turlee Leaghur – Maintenance Grade	4. \$210,438	5. Completed	100	100
	7. Marma Box Creek – Resheet and Build Up low section	5. \$157,400	6. Completed	100	100
	8. Abbots Tank – Resheet & Build Up Low Section	6. \$172,966	7. Completed	100	100
	RTR Work Schedule 2026-27 →	7. \$199,930	8. Completed	100	100
		8. \$60,576			

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Roads to Recovery (RTR / R2R) 2024-2029 Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications & the Arts Expected End date: 2029	cont... RTR Work Schedule 2026-27 1. Marma Box Creek – Maintenance Grade 2. Prungle Mail – Maintenance Grade 3. Tillara – Raising Low Points and Patrol Grade 4. Oxley Clare – Maintenance Grade 5. Euston Prungle Reseal 2km – Second Coat 6. Weimby Kyalite – Maintenance Grade 7. Weimby Benongal – Maintenance Grade 8. Tapalin Mail – Emergency Maintenance Grade	Total Planned Expenditure: \$ 643,078 Funding Received to Date: \$ Nil 1. \$81,937.00 2. \$58,940.00 3. \$146,015.00 4. \$92,000.00 5. \$138,000.00 6. \$38,368.00 7. \$35,545.00 8. \$52,273.00	1. Completed 2. Not Started 3. Not Started 4. In Progress 5. Not Started 6. In Progress 7. In Progress 8. Planning	100 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	100 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Transport for NSW – Road Safety Program 2023/24 to 2025/26 Transport for NSW - Commonwealth Government Expected End Date: June 2026	1. Ivanhoe Road Shoulder Widening and Edge Line marking for 3.68km (Hatfield) – Project 9277 2. Ivanhoe Road Shoulder Widening and Edge Line marking for 7.87km (Homebush) – Project 9278 3. Shared Footpath from Endeavour Drive to BCS – Project 8872	Total Planned Expenditure \$ 5,843,000 Funding Received: \$2,461,500 1. \$1,350,000.00 2. 2,763,000.00 3. \$1,730,000.00	1. Completed 2. Completed 3. Planning Stage: TfNSW have accepted the altered route along the Highway.	100 100 1	100 100 1
Transport for NSW Transport for NSW – Regional Roads Block Grant Agreement 2026/27 Expected End Date: June 2027	Maintenance of Regional Roads only: - MR67 – Balranald Ivanhoe Road - MR514 – Oxley Road - MR296 – Kyalite Moulamein Road - MR431 – Arumpo Road	Total Planned Expenditure: \$ 1,424,000 Funding Received to Date: \$1,424,000	In Progress	3	3
Transport for NSW – Natural Disaster AGRN1034 Transport for NSW – Reconstruction Expected End Date: June 2026	Recovery Reconstruction works due to the November 2022 floods. 1. MR514 Oxley Road (first section) \$1,087,515.00 2. Island Road – Replace Damaged Culverts \$192,335.00	Total Planned Expenditure: \$1,279,850 Funding Received to date: \$1,51,856	1. In progress 2. Completed	0 100	0 100

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Disaster Ready Fund – Round 3	Increasing Resilience of 2 Flood Impacted Sections of MR514 Oxley Road	Funding: \$2,452,000 Council Contribution: \$613,000 Estimated Cost for 2025-2026: \$3,065,00 Funding Received to date: \$0	In Progress	25	0
Tronox Maintenance of Regional Road 67 – Balranald Ivanhoe Road (Heavy Patching) 2026-2027	Maintenance of Regional Road 67 – Balranald Ivanhoe Road (Heavy Patching).	Funding Amount: \$1,000,000 Estimated Expenditure for 2026-2027: \$1,000,000 Funding Received to date: \$145,041.39	Planning	0	1
NSW Boating Infrastructure for Communities - Pontoon	New floating Pontoon to replace existing structure located at the base of the Balranald Caravan Park	Funding Amount: \$137,369.73 Council Contribution: \$137,369,73 – Variation approved to \$161,150 Estimated Expenditure: \$322,300 – Variation approved to \$161,150 Funding received to date: \$0	Planning stage. Contract has been award	0	0

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program – Round 4	Upgrade approximately 15km of Benanee Road. Works will include construction of subbase and base layers, application of bitumen seal, and installation of edge line marking's	Funding: \$4,944,000 Council Contribution: \$1,236,000 Estimated Expenditure: \$6,180,000	Planning Stage. Awaiting contract to be signed	0	1
Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program – Tranche 4	Construction of 2 Class 5 Rest Areas on MR67, Between Balranald and Ivanhoe.	Funding: \$400,000 Council Contribution: \$100,000 Estimated Expenditure: \$500,000	Not Started	0	0
Towards Zero Safer Roads Program – High Pedestrian Activity Area	Construction of Pedestrian Crossing on We Street in front of the Balranald Library.	Funding: \$153,000 Funding received: Nil	On Hold	N/A	N/A

1b. Applications Pending

Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program – Tranche 5	Tapalin Mail Road 7.7km Seal Construction	Funding: \$2,824,000 Council Contribution: \$706,000	Date Submitted: 30 th April, 2026 Resubmitted/Pending	N/A	N/A

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Get NSW Active FY 26/27	Footpath from Euston Primary School to Recreational Reserve	Funding: \$580,000	Date Submitted: 12 th December 2025 Received notification that the application has been successful. Waiting for deed	N/A	N/A
Get NSW Active FY 26/27	Balranald Active Transport Plan	Funding: \$76,000	Date Submitted: 12 th December 2025 Received notification that the application has been successful. Waiting for deed	N/A	N/A
Disaster Ready Fund Round 4	Cowper Street Euston – Cemetery Road Upgrade	Funding: \$1,220,000 Council Contribution: \$244,000	Date Submitted: 1 st July 2026 Resubmitted/Pending	N/A	N/A

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



2. INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROJECTS

2a. Current Projects

Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Bidgee Haven Retirement Hostel Expansion Grant – Department of Health Job Code: 2620-4999-0021 General Ledger: 2620-1100-0001 CM: F19.244 Deed: D25.111060 Expected End Date: TBA	Bidgee Haven Expansion Construction - Specialised Dementia Wing	Total potential funding: \$5,922,163 (GST exclusive) Instalment 2: \$1,000,000 Instalment 3: \$1,300,000 Instalment 4: \$1,580,000 Instalment 5: \$862,163 Final Instalment: \$480,000 Funds Received to date: Milestone 1 Payment: \$500,000 – Receipt 49078	- Walls and roof frame are up - Steelwork complete - Installation of submains and emergency escape lighting to existing building)	25	15

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Discovery Centre Redevelopment – Far West Joint Organisation Job Code: 6560-4999-0033 General Ledger: 6560-4999-0000 CM: F20.593 Expected End date: Building Works - Completed	Construction of new Pavilion at the Balranald Discovery Centre precinct	Funding for Building Works: \$950,000	Building works: Council continues to oversee the building's performance throughout the Defects Liability Period. Following heavy rainfall in March, a leak above the western mural was traced to faulty flashing and has since been repaired by the contractor, with only minor paint touch-ups to the cornice remaining. Additionally, a separate water ingress issue concerning the rear spouting is currently undergoing rectification.	100	97
		Funded by NSW Sustainable Communities Early Round - \$20,000; Tourism budget & Other funding opportunities	Internal fit-out works are progressing. We have sourced funding via the NSW Sustainable Communities (Early Round) funding for the installation of 12 wall banners promoting key shire attractions. Zoe Griffiths (local graphic designer) is to design the panels. We are also sourcing grant opportunities to deliver other internal elements including furniture & monitor. The Aboriginal Art wall is set up with wonderful local art and a Locally Made wall has also been set up with works from the Men's Shed. The fish tank is now housing the native Purple Gudgeon fishes. We are planning to house other native fishes.	N/A	N/A
		Grant Funding	External works: We are currently sourcing grant opportunities to deliver a range of external infrastructure works including lighting, signage, fixed furniture & CTV cameras	N/A	N/A

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Stronger Country Communities Fund – Round 5 General Ledger: 4500-1145-0000 CM Box: G22/11 Expected End date: Projects 1,3,4 & 5 Completed Project 2. December 2025	1. Kyalite Memorial Park Rest Area: to include public toilets & ancillary facilities 2. Upgrade of Shire entry signage to undertake recognition of first nations lands and enhance town signage for Euston and Balranald 3. Netball Courts Resurfacing & Basketball Courts Balranald: To resurface netball courts and design and construct new basketball courts and facilities 4. Hatfield Community Hall & Precinct Upgrade: Renovations of the Hatfield Community Hall 5. Safe Fencing at the Balranald Pool: To installed approved fencing around the Balranald Pool	Funding: \$943,758 1. \$101,200 2. \$203,500 3. \$418,000 4. \$110,000 5. \$111,100	1. Completed 2. In Progress 3. Completed 4. Completed 5. Completed 2. Two workshops attended by Councillors & Executive Management have been conducted to review designs for the shire entry signs. Design options and feedback from Councillors are currently in progress. - The preferred design will need to be submitted to TfNSW for approval Council's Grants Coordinator and Manager of Technical and Project Services had a meeting with TfNSW on the 27th August to discuss proposed location of the signs and other factors. We are waiting for final design specification and drawings.	1. 100 3. 100 4. 100 5. 100 2. 20	1. 100 3. 100 4. 100 5. 100 2. 35

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
AGRN 1034 Floods 2022 Grant Funding – Office of Local Government - Job Cost Codes: 1. Ben Scott Memorial Bird Trail Remediation Project 4686-4000-0001 2. Balranald Riverfront Precinct Remediation 4686-40001-0001 3. Euston Riverfront Precinct Remediation 4686-4002-0001 CM Box: G24/8 Expected End date: Extension received to the 30 th June 2027	1. Ben Scott Memorial Bird Trail Remediation Project	Funding: \$1,000,000 1. \$400,000 2. \$350,000 3. \$250,000	1. The following works has been implemented: - Demolition works - Information shelter in progress - Water connection from the bore is completed	35	18
	2. Balranald Riverfront Precinct Remediation		2. Council is currently collaborating with various contractors to deliver the project's remaining components, including the design and fabrication of signage as well as the renewal of exercise equipment. The project team is ensuring final delivery remains aligned with the funding deliverables.	60	85
	3. Euston Riverfront Precinct Remediation		3. We are currently awaiting approval from the funding body to transfer the additional budget allocation from the Ben Scott Memorial Bird Trail Project to the Euston Riverfront Precinct Project. An EOFY 2025/2026 Report was submitted on the 27th July	45	37

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
FSW Heritage & Cultural Trail Far West Joint Organisation Balranald Shire Council is the Lead Council on this project Expected Project End Date: 31-08-2026	Development of a heritage and cultural trail that links the 4 LGAs in the FW Joint Organisation. (Wentworth, Broken Hill, Central Darling & Balranald) The funding is for the signage infrastructure	Funding Value: \$1,000,000	Balranald Shire: The design and production of Balranald's new welcome, directional, and interpretive signs are fully complete. Barrier Signs has manufactured and delivered all components to the area. Currently in the pre-installation phase and Council is currently in discussion with ESI to install the signs. Council's Community Projects, Tourism/Economic Dev & Grants Coordinator (and Project Lead) is finalising the Project Scope for ESI.	65	90
			Wentworth Shire: Following the manufacturing and delivery of all materials by Barrier Signs, the Wentworth Shire Council Outdoors Team has successfully installed the signage across the project footprint. However, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) did not approve the four proposed signs earmarked for state road corridors. In response, Council is repurposing two of these assets for installation along the local road network. The project is now complete, with all approved signage successfully deployed. Continued next page...	100	100

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



....continued from previous page

Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
FSW Heritage & Cultural Trail Far West Joint Organisation Balranald Shire Council is the Lead Council on this project Expected Project End Date: 31-08-2026	Development of a heritage and cultural trail that links the 4 LGAs in the FW Joint Organisation. (Wentworth, Broken Hill, Central Darling & Balranald)	Funding Value: \$1,000,000	Broken Hill: The physical installation of the four new town entry signs is now complete, marking a key milestone for the project. Enhancing this upgrade, solar lighting systems for both the Adelaide and Sydney road signs have been fully installed and commissioned. The team is now designing interpretive signage for each of these signs as part of a variation, to be installed in October.	95	95
	The funding is for the signage infrastructure		Central Darling: The project's design phase is moving forward following CDSC's approval of Fabtec's updated sign concepts on September 2nd. Fabtec is currently creating shop drawings alongside structural and footing designs for the town entry signs, which will soon be sent to TfNSW for approval alongside artwork and GPS data. General: Circul8 is finalizing the designs for the four new Visitor Information Centre (VIC) signs, with the final versions expected for Central Darling Shire Council (CDSC) review by 14 August 2026. General: Connector signs are currently being reviewed by DNSW	50	20

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
NSW Public Library Infrastructure Grant 2025-26	Community Innovative Educational Technology Project	Grant Funding Value: \$61,181	Procurement Stage - Waiting to finalise technology requirements - Kid's Corner Reading tree has been purchased and erected	10	10

2b. Applications Pending

Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Crown Reserve Improvement Fund 2026/27 – General Euston Recreation Ground Reserve Lighting Upgrade Project	Funding to install modern LED towers and controls, improving safety, accessibility, and usability.	Grant Funding Value: \$257,984	Date Submitted: 30 th June 2026	N/A	N/A

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



3. NON CAPITAL GRANT PROJECTS

3a. Current Projects

Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Community Benefit Payments (CBP) - Office of Responsible Gambling (ORG) General Ledger: 1020-3110-0001 CM: F22.220 Expected End date: February 2027	For the delivery of Mental Health First Aid Training for Community Members as well as Gambling Education & Awareness and other Mental Health related programs (Project Managed by SCAIWAC - under the auspice of Balranald Shire Council)	Funding: \$254,292 (\$84,764 per year) Two payments of \$84,764 have been received to date	A number of mental health/ well-being related workshops and events were delivered in August as part of the Flying High series of workshops. Further workshops and events are planned for Sept – October 2026 including the Balranald Health, Wellbeing & Support Services Expo on the 29 th October preceded by the Council Civic Reception on the 28 th October	50	50

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Regional Drought Resilience Program Funding Managed by Wentworth Shire Council Expected Project End Date: Extended to the 30 th November 2026	Funding to deliver a series of activities from the Drought Resilience Plan Action Plan This project is in collaboration with Wentworth Shire Council who will be managing the grant funds & reporting 1. Drought Resilient Officer 2. Community Events in Farming & Agricultural Communities 3. Mental Health First Aid Training & Related Resilience Workshops 4. Activation of a Regional Heritage & Cultural Trail 5. Business Resilience and Preparedness Program 6. Regional Road Upgrades	Project Funding Value: \$336,540 1. \$86,540.00 2. \$36,400.00 3. \$47,000.00 4. \$62,000.00 5. \$12,600.00 6. \$92,000.00	1. Wentworth Staff 2. A series of events during October and the Jana Pittman Women's Lunch on the 7 th November were successfully delivered 3. Mental Health First Aid Training for Wentworth & Balranald Shire Council staff were delivered in October 4. All deliverables have been completed 5. The series of workshops have been delivered 6. Wentworth & Balranald Council outdoor staff is working together on this project. Status is to be provided by Wentworth All Balranald Shire Council invoices have been received and an update has been provided to Wentworth. We are currently supporting Wentworth with their reporting activities.	Managed by Wentworth Shire Council	Managed by Wentworth Shire Council

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
NSW Sustainable Communities Program Early Investment Round – BSC Project CM Box: G25/2 Expected Project End Date: 30-11-2027 Job Numbers: 1. 4705-2450-0001 2. 4705-2450-0002 3. 4705-2450-0003 4. 4705-2450-0004	To include 4 key activities: 1. Activation activities of the FSW Heritage & Cultural Trail 2. Town Entry Signs for Balranald & Euston and tourism related directional signs in Euston 3. Audio-Visual technology for the Southern Cross Exhibition 4. Upgrade of the camping site at Lake Benanee	Grant Funding Value: \$731,331 (ex GST) Council Contribution \$243,777 (ex GST) Total Expenditure: \$975,108 (ex GST) – Includes 10% Project Management & 20% Contingency 1. \$471,499 (ex GST) 2. \$156,000 (ex GST) 3. \$49,187 (ex GST) 4. \$73,422 (ex GST) Milestone 1 funding received: \$292,532.40	During the month of May we received Milestone 1 funding for the project of \$292,532.40		
			1. Activation deliverables have been outlined aligned with the grant's milestones and submitted to the contractors. The timeline of activities is currently being finalised and the soft launch of Milestone 1 deliverables will commence during September.	40	40
			2. Euston Town Entry Signs have been produced and installed and we are currently working on the directional/ map signs. Once the Euston signs are completed we will commence community consultation for the Balranald Town Signs	33	6
			3. Content creation is in progress and hardware planning is also in progress	30	40
			4. The purchase order has been issued, and the works are scheduled to commence in late September 2026	0	0

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
Euston Club Grant Category 2 2026 CM Box: G26/7	Euston Multicourt precinct works and embankment. New players' shelter and surrounding landscape upgrades requested by the Euston Club. Extended works of the Euston Club multi-purpose court project	Grant Funding Value: \$160,000	On the 24 th August 2026 we received notification that we were successful with the grant application	0	0

3b. Applications Pending

There are currently no applications pending



4. OVERALL - APPLICATIONS IN PROGRESS OF BEING SUBMITTED

Grant/Project	Description	Funding Amount	Status to date	% Completion	% Expenditure
National Australia Day Council	Funding for Australia Day	Grant Funding Value: TBA	Application process	N/A	N/A

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



5. OVERALL - PROPOSED PROJECTS FOR GRANT FUNDING

Proposed Project	Proposed financial Year	Estimated Funding Sought	Alignment with Plans	ARIC Approved	OLG Approved	Funding status to date
Flying High Arts Festival	2025/26	TBA	Destination Management Plan Section 5d – Balranald Art Gallery Experiences – Public Art programming – Annual Public Art Festival Delivery Plan 1.3.43	N/A	Yes	Completed: Funding for workshops were funded through the SCAIWAC ORG Mental Health grant. The tourism department supported by funding promotional activities
Balranald Football Oval with LED Matrix Scoreboard	2025/26	TBA	Notice of Motion 8.2 16/12/2025 Council Meeting	N/A	No	Council supported the BFNC to submit an application via the ClubGrants Category 3 Infrastructure grant
Hot water system for 103 Church Street	2025/26 year	\$10,000	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought
Solar System for 103 Church Street	2025/26 year	\$12,000	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought
Solar System for 125 Turandurey Street	2025/26 year	\$10,000	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought
Subfloor brick repairs for the Theatre Royal	2025/26 year	\$10,000	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought
Floor coverings/ Timber floor reseal for the Senior Citizens Hall	2025/26 year	\$10,000	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought
Ornate Gates for Greenham Park	2025/26 year	\$10,000	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought

BSC Grants/Projects Update @ 07-09-2026

22

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Proposed Project	Proposed financial Year	Estimated Funding Sought	Alignment with Plans	ARIC Approved	OLG Approved	Funding status to date
Install Children's play area for Garreffa Parade Park, Euston	2025/26 year	TBA	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought
Solar Systems for the Hostel	2025/26 year	\$24,000	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought
Parking Bay Ivanhoe Road	2025/26 year	TBA	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26 (under "Possibilities")	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought. To go to traffic committee & transport for NSW
Solar Panels Early Learning Centre, Euston	2025/26 year	TBA	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26 (under "Possibilities")	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought
Solar Panels Early Learning Centre, Balranald	2025/26 year	TBA	Capital Budget – Delivery Plan 2025/26 (under "Possibilities")	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought
Kyalite River precinct upgrade and Kyalite Raw Water system upgrade priorities	2025/26 – 28/29	\$350,000 for the Raw Water System	Delivery Plan 1.1.2.5 Delivery Plan 4.1.3.3	N/A	Yes	Grant funding to be sought. Costings & Feasibility Study for water system solution has been conducted. Kyalite committee members are expecting Councillors & staff to visit to discuss this project .
Development of the Euston to Weir Trail	2026-2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 1.1.26 & EPAC Rolling Action Plan			Grant funding to be sought

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Proposed Project	Proposed financial Year	Estimated Funding Sought	Alignment with Plans	ARIC Approved	OLG Approved	Funding status to date
Wet play area (Splash Park) in Balranald & Euston	2026 - 2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 1.1.2.8 & TED Rolling Action Plan			Grant funding to be sought
CCTV at key strategic points e.g. the Discovery Centre precinct	2026/27 - 29	TBA	Delivery Plan 1.1.4.1			Grant funding to be sought
Volunteer Coordinator	2027-29	TBA	Delivery Plan 2.1.3.1			Grant funding to be sought
Painting and/or projected imagery of the water towers in Euston & Balranald	2025-2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 1.2.1.3 EPAC Rolling Action Plan Economic Development Strategy DMP			Grant funding to be sought. Project Plan and costings to be developed
Pioneer/European Settlement heritage trail across the shire	2027/28	TBA	Delivery Plan 2.4.3.1			Grant funding to be sought
First Nations Cultural Trail across the shire	2028/29	TBA	Delivery Plan 2.4.4.2 DMP 2026-2031 TED Rolling Action Plan			Grant funding to be sought
First Nations Cultural Centre	2026-2028	TBA	Delivery Plan 2.4.5.2 DMP 2026-2031			Business Case to be developed & Grant Funding to be sought

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Proposed Project	Proposed financial Year	Estimated Funding Sought	Alignment with Plans	ARIC Approved	OLG Approved	Funding status to date
Strategic Land Use Planning	2026 - 2028	TBA	Delivery Plan 3.3.1.1			Grant funding to be sought
Business Prospectus for the LGA	2026 - 2028	TBA	Delivery Plan 3.3.2.1 Economic Development Strategy & TED Rolling Action Plan			Grant funding to be sought
Implementation of the DMP	2026 – 2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 3.4.1.1 Economic Development Strategy TED Rolling Action Plan			A breakdown of proposed activities to be grant funded will be selected via upcoming workshops. Recent meeting with SW Arts to support implementation activities
Sculpture Trail along the river in Balranald and Euston	2027 – 2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 3.4.2.3 Economic Development Strategy DMP TED Rolling Action Plan			Grant funding to be sought
Electronic Information Boards for Balranald & Euston	2027- 2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 3.4.4.3 EPAC Rolling Action Plan			Grant funding to be sought

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Proposed Project	Proposed financial Year	Estimated Funding Sought	Alignment with Plans	ARIC Approved	OLG Approved	Funding status to date
Installation of pontoons in Balranald, Euston & Kyalite	2027 - 2029	\$137,369 grant funding for Balranald \$137,369 Council Contribution for Balranald	Delivery Plan 3.4.4.3 EPAC Rolling Action Plan TED Rolling Action Plan			Successful Grant funding application under the NSW Boating Infrastructure for Communities grant for upgrade of the pontoon in Balranald. The project is now in planning stage
Upgrade to Balranald Aerodrome	2026 - 2029	\$6,500,000 (based on indicative pricing from recent studies and includes extension of runway but excludes the purchase of land)	Delivery Plan 4.1.1.2 Economic Development Strategy TED Rolling Action Plan			Council has been successful in negotiations and in the purchase of the land. Current environmental assessments are being conducted on the land
Self-contained units for Hostel Staff Accommodation	2026-2029	\$3,111,700 (based on previous grant funding application)	Delivery Plan 4.2.1.5			Previously submitted a grant funding application via the Federal Government's Aged Care Capital Assistance Program in May 2025 but this application was unsuccessful
Restoration of degraded or at-risk landscapes, waterways, flora and fauna	2028- 2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 5.1.1.3			Grant funding to be sought

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Proposed Project	Proposed financial Year	Estimated Funding Sought	Alignment with Plans	ARIC Approved	OLG Approved	Funding status to date
Development & Implementation of a Net Zero Action Plan	2027 -2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 5.2.1.3			Grant funding to be sought
Annual environmental awareness campaign and event	2028-2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 5.2.2.6			Grant funding to be sought
Infrastructure required to support local recycling initiatives	2027 – 2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 5.2.4.1 Delivery Plan 5.2.4.2			Grant funding to be sought
Euston Multi-Purpose Facility	2026 - 2027	TBA	Delivery Plan 1.3.2.5 EPAC Rolling Action Plan			Grant funding is currently being sought via the NSW Sustainable Communities Infrastructure Round (Application submitted on the 24 th February 2026). This application was unsuccessful
Restoration of degraded or at-risk landscapes, waterways, flora and fauna	2028- 2029	TBA	Delivery Plan 5.1.1.3			Grant funding to be sought
Euston's Salami Festival	Ongoing	\$20,000	EPAC Rolling Action Plan			Marketing funding for \$20,000 has been sought under the DNSW Flagship Grant. The application was submitted on the 12 th April 2026. The application was unsuccessful.

BSC Grants Projects Update as at: 07-09-2026



Proposed Project	Proposed financial Year	Estimated Funding Sought	Alignment with Plans	ARIC Approved	OLG Approved	Funding status to date
Riverside Restaurant	TBA	TBA	TED Rolling Action Plan			Business Case to be developed & Grant Funding to be sought
Shop Front Façade Project in Balranald	TBA	TBA	TED Rolling Action Plan			Business Case to be developed & Grant Funding to be sought. Shop front strategy will be part of a Love Local Balranald Shire Campaign that is currently being developed and the first draft will be released in September

11.6 CORRESPONDENCE

File Number: D26.127134
Author(s): Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant
Approver: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective: Pillar 1: Our People – A community that is proactive, engaged, inclusive and connected.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of some recent correspondence received and/or forwarded, which may be of interest.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and noted.

REPORT

1. Thank you from The Gallery
2. Asset Valuation, Depreciation and Financial Sustainability in NSW Local Government
3. NSWRA Modelling – Detrimental Impact of Proposed Disaster Funding Reforms
4. Automatic response from NSWRA
5. Media Release – Balranald Shire calls for Local Priorities to be locked into 20year Transport Plan
6. Submission – Balranald Shire Council Submission – Far West Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan – SRTIP
7. Correspondence from OLG regarding Performance Ratio Reviews
8. Submission – Balranald Shire Council Performance Ratio Reviews
9. Correspondence to Linda Scott, Proposed Methodology Consultation 2026 - Response to Council Submission Template Guide
10. Supplementary Questions – Government Service Delivery Standards in Regional NSW
11. Email with suggested answers to supplementary questions
12. Response to Shadow Minister for Water, Steph Cooke MP on potential Royalties for Regional Water Fund.
13. Sturt Highway Corridor Development – response to Hay Shire

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Nil

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Nil

POLICY IMPLICATION

Nil

RISK RATING

Low

ATTACHMENTS

1. Thank you - The Gallery [↓](#) 
2. Brett Whitworth - OLG - Asset Valuation, Depreciation and Financial Sustainability in NSW Local Government [↓](#) 
3. NSWRA Modelling - Detrimental Impact of Proposed Disaster Funding Reforms [↓](#) 
4. Automatic Response from NSWRA - regarding NSWRA Modelling [↓](#) 
5. Media Release - Balranald Shire calls for Local Priorities to be locked into 20 yr Transport Plan [↓](#) 
6. Balranald Shire Council Submission Far West Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan - SRITP - August 2026 [↓](#) 
7. Correspondence from OLG regarding Performance Ratio Reviews [↓](#) 
8. Performance Ratio Reviews - Submission and OLG Circular - August 2026 [↓](#) 
9. Proposed Methodology Consultation 2026 - Response to Council Submission Template Guide [↓](#) 
10. Supplementary Questions - Government Service Delivery Standards in Regional NSW [↓](#) 
11. Email with suggested answers and response to supplementary questions [↓](#) 
12. Royalties for Regional Water Fund - Balranald's Question [↓](#) 
13. Sturt Highway Taskforce - Development of Sturt Highway Corridor Plan; Response to Hay Shire Council [↓](#) 



August 28 2026

Balranald Shire Council
70 Market Street
Balranald
NSW 2715

To: CEO Terry Dodds, Mayor Louis Zaffina & Councillors

Dear all

Re: Acquisitive Award donation – Flying High Exhibition 2026

The opening of the Flying High Exhibition this year was a great success.

This success was not only due to the high standard of entries and community support, but also due to the generous donation of \$5,000 for the Acquisitive Award for 2026.

The support of the Balranald Shire Council is greatly appreciated and we look forward to continuing our partnership with you into 2027.

Many thanks again

Yours sincerely

T Powis

Tina Powis (Secretary)
On behalf of The Gallery Committee

The Gallery, 51 Mayall Street, Balranald, NSW 2715
Email: thegallery5@bigpond.com/ Phone 0350 200200



ALL COMMUNICATIONS MUST
BE ADDRESSED TO THE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL

70 Market Street, Balranald NSW 2715
PO Box 120, Balranald NSW 2715
Tel: 03 5020 1300
ABN: 74 678 751 581
Email: council@balranald.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.balranald.nsw.gov.au

Contact: TD:CH:D26.127138

17 August 2026

Brett Whitworth PSM

Deputy Secretary
Office of Local Government
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
NSW Government

Dear Brett

RE: ASSET VALUATION, DEPRECIATION AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY IN NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT

I have been giving some thought to the current asset valuation review and, more particularly, how it fits within the broader work on financial sustainability. I thought it worth putting a few practical observations to you directly, because I think there is a risk that valuation and depreciation become treated as separate accounting issues when, in the real world of a council budget, they are closely connected.

I am not an accountant and do not pretend to be one. My background is local government, engineering, infrastructure, budgets, grants and service delivery. That probably explains why I come at this from a practical direction: does the information we are producing actually help a Mayor, councillor, CEO or community understand whether a council can afford to maintain its services and look after the assets it already owns?

One point I think is important at the outset is that **AASB 116 does not require** every class of council asset to be continually revalued. The Standard allows either the cost model or the revaluation model, applied by asset class. NSW has chosen, through the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting, to require the revaluation model for the relevant asset classes. That is an important distinction, because it means there is room to consider whether the present NSW approach remains the most useful one without suggesting that accounting standards can simply be ignored.

Take a simple road example. A council may have a road with a carrying value of \$2 million and, after revaluation, the estimated current replacement cost might be \$20 million. There is nothing remarkable in construction costs increasing substantially; anyone buying bitumen, gravel, fuel, plant or contractor time knows that. The difficulty is in deciding what the additional \$18 million on the balance sheet tells the people who must make the decisions.

The road is still in the same place, is still the same length and may be in the same physical condition as it was the day before the valuation. Council has not received another dollar, and, unlike a parcel of land, it cannot generally sell part of the road to fund the remainder. Yet Council now appears wealthier on the balance sheet and may also carry a materially higher depreciation expense through the operating result. Nothing has changed in the bank account, and nothing has changed in Council's capacity to reseal the road.

I am not arguing that depreciation has no purpose. Assets deteriorate and are consumed over time, and any sensible accounting system needs to recognise that. My concern is with the weight we sometimes place on the depreciation number when judging financial sustainability. Depreciation is an accounting allocation; it is not an amount Council physically pays each year, nor is it necessarily the amount Council needs to spend on a particular asset in any one year.

A council can have reasonable unrestricted cash, manageable debt, a sensible renewal program and infrastructure in acceptable condition, yet still report a weak operating result because depreciation is high. Equally, another council can be consuming cash, deferring maintenance and building an asset renewal problem while presenting a comparatively better accounting result. Neither result should be looked at in isolation. We need to see accounting performance, cash capacity and asset condition together. The issue is particularly obvious in rural and remote NSW. Some councils are responsible for enormous road networks spread over very large areas, supported by very small populations and limited rate bases. A grader does not cost less because the population is small, and neither do fuel, gravel, bridges or contractors. When those infrastructure assets are revalued upward, the related depreciation can also rise, making the council appear less sustainable when the underlying problem may be a structural mismatch between the infrastructure it is expected to maintain and the revenue available to support it.

No accounting treatment will solve that structural funding problem, and nor should we expect it to. What we should avoid is allowing the accounting outcome to disguise the difference between a council that is genuinely poorly managed and one that simply has too little revenue capacity for the infrastructure and services government and the community expect it to provide.

For that reason, I think the mixed valuation model deserves serious consideration. Where an asset has a genuine market, and the current value assists decision-making, fair value makes sense. Land is the obvious example. Specialised infrastructure is different. A rural road, bridge, culvert or drainage network normally has no meaningful market and exists because Council is required to provide a service. For these classes, I think the cost model should be properly tested rather than dismissed simply because revaluation has been the NSW practice for a long time.

Moving some infrastructure classes to cost would not, in my view, justify any reduction in asset management discipline. If anything, the reverse should occur. I would rather see stronger information about physical condition, remaining service potential, maintenance needs, renewal timing, likely renewal cost, risk of failure and the funding available to undertake the work. Those are the things that help a council decide what it needs to do next. A theoretical increase in the value of an asset that cannot be sold is useful only if it adds something material to that decision.

I also think we need to be careful about separating the valuation review from the depreciation review. Administratively, I understand why the work has been divided, but the two are joined at the hip in practice. Change the value of an asset, and you change the depreciable amount; that changes depreciation expense, which can change the operating result and then the way the council's financial performance is interpreted. It would be unfortunate to settle one part of the equation in a way that unintentionally constrains the next stage of the reform.

The same applies to the Operating Performance Ratio. I think Government was right to question the role depreciation plays in that measure. The full accounting result matters, but councillors also need to know whether normal recurrent income is covering normal recurrent operating costs. A council should not be regarded as financially sound simply because it has cash while its infrastructure is deteriorating, but nor should it be labelled unsustainable because an infrastructure revaluation has materially increased depreciation without any corresponding change in cash flow, service level or physical condition.

My preference is therefore for financial sustainability to be shown through a small practical dashboard rather than relying too heavily on one or two ratios. At a minimum, I would want councillors to be able to see unrestricted cash and liquidity, recurrent operating capacity, debt and future liabilities, the condition and maintenance of key infrastructure, whether renewal is being directed to assets that genuinely need it, grant dependency, and the realism of the long-term financial plan. That would not remove depreciation from the picture; it would simply put it in its proper context.

I appreciate the argument about comparability between councils, but comparability has its limits. NSW has 128 councils, and they are not 128 versions of the same business. Geography, population, infrastructure networks, service expectations, revenue capacity and exposure to natural disasters vary enormously. We need consistent principles, but we should be cautious about assuming that applying the same formula to every council automatically produces a meaningful comparison. Sometimes it simply means we have calculated the same thing consistently, rather than the right thing usefully.

On balance, my preference would be for NSW to:

- Adopt a mixed valuation approach, with the accounting model selected according to the characteristics of the asset class.
- Retain fair value where there is a genuine market or where a current valuation materially assists decision-making.
- Properly test the cost model for roads, bridges, drainage and similar specialised, non-realisable infrastructure.
- Complete the depreciation review as a closely linked piece of work rather than treating valuation as an endpoint.
- Avoid using depreciation, by itself, as shorthand for financial sustainability.
- Give greater weight to cash capacity, asset condition, maintenance, renewal need and long-term funding capacity.
- Use the reform to remove valuation cost and complexity where the work is producing little practical benefit, while strengthening the quality of asset condition and long-term planning information.

I do not see this as an argument between accountants and non-accountants. Accounting standards matter, audit matters and consistency matters. The final test, though, should be whether the information being produced helps councillors, communities and government understand the actual financial capacity of a council and the condition of the infrastructure for which it is responsible.

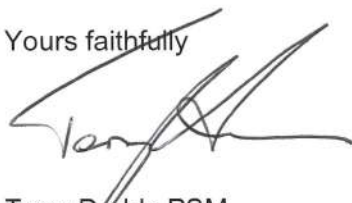
At the end of the day, the questions a mayor and councillor need answered are fairly straightforward: can the council afford to keep providing the services its community expects, is it looking after the assets it already owns, and will it have the capacity to renew those assets when they genuinely need renewing?

If the reporting framework does not answer those questions clearly, then I think there is a reasonable case for changing the framework.

A road that has increased in value by \$10 million has not given the council another \$10 million to spend on it. That does not make the valuation irrelevant, but it does mean we should be very clear about what the number tells us, and what it does not.

I would be happy to discuss any of this with you as the work progresses.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Dodds', with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Terry Dodds PSM
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Carolyn Holmes

From: Terry Dodds
Sent: Monday, 17 August 2026 3:25 PM
To: contact@nema.gov.au
Cc: LGNSW Advocacy Team; Brett Stonestreet; Phyllis Miller; Gary Fry
Subject: NSWRA modelling - detrimental impact of proposed disaster funding reforms on Balranald Shire Council

Dear NEMA Disaster Recovery Funding Framework Review Team,

Balranald Shire Council appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed Disaster Recovery Funding Framework. I am writing as the CEO of a very small rural council that is regularly affected by flooding and where the financial consequences of even one damaged road can be significant.

I understand the need to review the current arrangements, and I have no issue with improving consistency or accountability. My concern is that some of the proposed changes appear likely to shift more of the financial risk from the Commonwealth to the State and, eventually, down to councils like ours. That worries me.

The modelling provided to us by the NSW Reconstruction Authority shows that Balranald has had approximately \$2.808 million in relevant asset restoration expenditure across two events since 2019. On the NSWRA figures, moving from the historical Commonwealth contribution of around 64% to a 50/50 arrangement would have **reduced Commonwealth funding to Balranald by approximately \$393,000, or about 22%.** For a large organisation, \$393,000 might be absorbed somewhere in the budget. For Balranald, it is a very substantial amount of money. Our rate base is small. Our road network is large. When a flood occurs, we still must keep roads open, reconnect communities, get agricultural freight moving, deal with the damage and then somehow fund the reconstruction. There isn't a spare bucket of money sitting in a small council budget waiting for the next flood.

The **proposed increase in the Small Disaster Criterion from around \$240,000 to \$2.7 million is therefore of particular concern.** The NSWRA itself has identified the risk that geographically isolated events could be disproportionately affected by this change. That is exactly the sort of issue that worries councils like ours. A disaster can be relatively small when viewed from Sydney or Canberra but enormous when viewed from Balranald. A flood affecting one part of western NSW may not generate enough damage across the State to reach a \$2.7 million threshold, yet the damage to one small council can be more than it could reasonably fund from its own resources. A disaster should not be judged simply by the number of people affected or whether enough damage has occurred elsewhere in the State to cross a threshold. There needs to be some recognition of the financial impact on the individual council and its capacity to respond.

I am also concerned about the proposed treatment of estimated reconstruction costs.

The NSWRA advice indicates that, under the proposed arrangements, legitimate expenditure above an approved estimated reconstruction cost may ultimately have to be carried by the State or council, rather than being managed through the existing broader efficiencies arrangements. Anyone who has delivered civil works in remote NSW will understand the problem with that! We don't have a deep contractor market. Plant must travel long distances. Materials must be hauled. Fuel, accommodation, mobilisation and labour all cost more. After a major disaster, we are often competing with numerous other councils for exactly the same contractors and resources. An

estimate prepared early in the recovery process is just that, an estimate. It should not become an absolute financial cap where a council ends up carrying legitimate additional costs that could not reasonably have been predicted.

Betterment is another area where I believe we need to be careful.

The NSWRA information indicates that the present betterment arrangements would be replaced by a Resilient Infrastructure Scheme providing up to 15% of an asset's estimated reconstruction cost, subject to criteria that are yet to be settled. We must get away from the cycle of repairing the same infrastructure to basically the same standard, only to pay for it again after the next flood. That isn't good asset management, and I don't believe it is good use of Commonwealth money either. If spending a little more after one disaster prevents the Commonwealth, State, and council from paying for the same road again after the next flood, the betterment expenditure has paid for itself.

There is also a much wider economic impact than simply the cost recorded in Council's ledger. Road closures and damaged roads affect agricultural production, freight, access to services, emergency response, and the ability of people to get in and out of our communities. In regional Australia, those impacts ultimately flow through to State and national productivity.

I am also uneasy about removing Category D exceptional assistance while replacing it with a concept of assistance for 'genuinely extraordinary circumstances' that, at this stage, does not appear to be clearly defined. By definition, major disasters produce circumstances that are difficult to predict. Whatever replaces the current arrangements needs enough discretion to deal with the unexpected.

From Balranald's perspective, I would ask NEMA to reconsider several elements before the new framework is finalised.

- In particular, I believe the framework should retain an ability to recognise the impact of a disaster on an individual council rather than relying solely on a State-wide threshold. It should retain a sensible mechanism for genuine cost variations, ensure betterment is based on what will actually reduce future damage rather than an arbitrary percentage, and make sure small rural and remote councils are not left carrying disaster costs they simply do not have the financial capacity to absorb.
- I would also strongly encourage NEMA to look at this from the Commonwealth's longer-term financial perspective. Reducing the Commonwealth contribution may produce a saving in one budget year, but if that leaves councils with less capacity to maintain infrastructure, delays reconstruction or prevents sensible betterment, I question whether it is a saving at all. The Commonwealth may simply end up paying considerably more when the next flood comes through.
- Lastly, the regions most exposed to flood damage are also many of the same regions producing Australia's food, fibre, minerals and other commodities. These roads aren't just local roads. They are part of the supply chain that gets that production from the farm gate, mine, or processor to market. If small councils are financially constrained to continually patch damaged infrastructure rather than properly restore and improve it, the economic consequences don't stop at the council boundary. Eventually that affects regional production, freight efficiency, and the broader Australian economy.

For a council such as Balranald, disaster recovery is not an occasional theoretical issue. Flooding is part of the environment in which we operate. We accept that responsibility and we do our best to

manage it. What we cannot reasonably do is carry a substantially greater share of the financial consequences of natural disasters while maintaining a very large infrastructure network from a very small revenue base.

I ask that this be very carefully considered before the proposed framework is finalised.

Regards,

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea." Antoine de Saint Exupery 1900-1944



Terry Dodds PSM

Chief Executive Officer

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@balranaldshirecouncil

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respects to their elders past, present, and emerging.

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Carolyn Holmes

From: Terry Dodds
Sent: Monday, 17 August 2026 3:31 PM
To: Carolyn Holmes
Subject: FW: Automatic reply: [SEC=OFFICIAL]

For part of the corro from the big email I sent to NEMA

From: Contact (NEMA) <contact@nema.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 17 August 2026 3:26 PM
To: Terry Dodds <tdodds@balranald.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Automatic reply: [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thank you for contacting the National Emergency Management Agency.

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MEDIA RELEASE

BALRANALD SHIRE CALLS FOR LOCAL PRIORITIES TO BE LOCKED INTO 20-YEAR TRANSPORT PLAN

Balranald Shire Council is calling for the NSW Government's new 20-year Far West transport plan to turn the transport problems already identified across the Shire into firm priorities for future investment.

Mayor Louie Zaffina said Council welcomed the development of the Draft Far West Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan and, in particular, its recognition of road safety, freight, resilience, regional aviation, cross-border travel and public transport.

"The direction is right. What we now need is to make sure the final Plan doesn't lose the local detail," Cr Zaffina said.

"Transport for NSW has already heard from our community about narrow roads, inadequate shoulders, truck rollovers, increasing heavy vehicle movements, limited overtaking opportunities and the difficulty residents face getting to larger centres for medical appointments and other essential services. Those issues are now on the record. The next step is to turn them into actions."

Council wants the final Plan to give greater recognition to the Sturt Highway through Balranald and Euston, the regional and local roads carrying freight and heavy vehicles, improved connections with Victorian centres including Robinvale, Mildura and Swan Hill, and the strategic importance of the Balranald Aerodrome.

"Balranald Shire might have a small population, but the transport network we look after doesn't just serve our population," Cr Zaffina said.

"It carries agriculture, mining, freight, school buses and tourists. It provides access to Mungo and the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area and connects communities and industries across a very large part of western NSW.

"Funding those roads based on how many people happen to live beside them simply doesn't recognise what those roads actually do."

Cr Zaffina said Council would also push for major developments to properly account for their impact on regional and local roads before construction commenced.

"We welcome investment and economic development, but a small rural council cannot be left with the repair bill when hundreds or thousands of additional heavy vehicle movements shorten the life of a road. Road impacts need to be identified early, the necessary upgrades need to occur before

the traffic arrives, and the cost needs to sit with the project that creates the impact rather than our ratepayers."

Council is also seeking stronger recognition of Balranald Aerodrome as important regional infrastructure.

"Our ratepayers are already investing in the future of the aerodrome because reliable emergency aviation and access for services such as the Royal Flying Doctor Service can literally be a matter of life and death in western NSW," Cr Zaffina said.

"A 20-year regional transport plan should recognise that strategic role and provide a pathway for the State and Commonwealth to partner with us on its future."

Cr Zaffina encouraged residents and businesses to take the opportunity to speak directly with Transport for NSW when its consultation team visits the Shire on Wednesday 9 September, at the Euston Club Resort from 11.00 am to 1.30 pm and the Theatre Royal, Balranald from 3.30 pm to 6.30 pm.

Submissions on the Draft Far West Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan close on Friday 11 September 2026.

"The Government has asked whether it has missed anything," Cr Zaffina said.

"This is our opportunity to make sure the things that matter to Balranald and Euston are not just heard, but appear in the final Plan."

Media Contact
Terry Dodds PSM

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

-ends-

Submission on the Draft Far West Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan**Balranald Shire Council: August 2026****1. Introduction**

Balranald Shire Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Draft Far West Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan (SRITP). Council supports its focus on safer and more resilient transport networks, freight productivity, regional aviation, cross-border connectivity and improved access to essential services.

Transport for NSW's early engagement process accurately recorded several problems experienced within Balranald Shire, including road width and camber deficiencies, limited shoulders, restricted overtaking opportunities, truck rollovers, increasing mine and heavy-vehicle traffic, and inadequate public transport for residents needing to reach larger centres for medical appointments, shopping and other essential services.

Council is concerned, however, that some of this specificity has been diluted into broad regional initiatives. A 20-year strategic plan should provide a clear line of sight between the problems identified through consultation, the corridor or community affected, the proposed response, the responsible agency and an indicative delivery horizon.

This is particularly important for Balranald. A small population supports an extensive transport network carrying interstate freight, agriculture, mining traffic, tourism and the emerging transport task associated with major energy and infrastructure investment. The value and strategic function of that network cannot be assessed simply by reference to the number of people living beside it.

2. Matters Council asks to be strengthened in the final SRITP**2.1 Convert Balranald findings into identifiable actions**

Council requests an identifiable Balranald Shire implementation component within the final initiative schedule or subsequent implementation planning. It should identify the principal corridor or transport issue, proposed investigation or intervention, responsible agency, relevant State or Commonwealth program and short-, medium- or long-term delivery horizons.

This would demonstrate that the consultation undertaken by Transport for NSW has directly informed the investment program which follows the Plan, rather than allowing known local issues to disappear beneath region-wide descriptions such as 'safer roads' or 'improved public transport'.

2.2 Recognise the Sturt Highway as a strategic safety and freight corridor

The Sturt Highway performs a national and interstate freight function while also serving Balranald and Euston, agriculture, tourism and increasing heavy-vehicle activity. Council supports the Draft Plan initiatives concerning safer main roads, freight planning, heavy-vehicle route planning and rest facilities, but seeks a specific corridor-based assessment of the Sturt Highway through the Shire.

That assessment should consider pavement and road geometry, shoulder width, overtaking opportunities, intersections and town approaches, heavy-vehicle interaction with general traffic, fatigue-management facilities, natural-disaster resilience and future freight and Oversize Overmass requirements.

2.3 Recognise Balranald Aerodrome as strategic regional infrastructure

Distance changes the role of aviation in remote communities. Balranald Aerodrome is not simply a passenger facility: it supports emergency and health access, including Royal Flying Doctor Service capability, visiting specialist services, workforce access, tourism and future economic development.

Council is already investing significantly in the future of the aerodrome precinct and runway capability. The final SRITP should specifically recognise Balranald Aerodrome as a strategic regional aviation asset and establish a pathway for Council, Transport for NSW and relevant State and Commonwealth agencies to plan and co-fund its long-term development.

2.4 Strengthen cross-border transport for Balranald and Euston

For south-western NSW communities, State boundaries frequently bear little relationship to where residents obtain health, retail, education and other essential services. Euston has a direct functional relationship with Robinvale, while Balranald residents frequently rely on Swan Hill and Mildura.

Council requests that the final SRITP specifically investigate improved passenger transport connections for Euston-Robinvale, Euston-Mildura, Balranald-Swan Hill and Balranald-Mildura, with particular attention to medical appointments, education, employment, shopping and access to onward regional transport services. Flexible, demand-responsive and coordinated cross-border models should be considered rather than relying solely on conventional patronage thresholds.

2.5 Protect Council roads from major development impacts

Council supports renewable energy, mining and other major investment in western NSW. It does not support the infrastructure cost of State-significant development being transferred to a small rural rate base through accelerated deterioration of local and regional roads.

The final SRITP should support a consistent major-project road-impact framework requiring proponents to identify haulage routes early, establish baseline road and bridge condition, model additional heavy-vehicle loading, fund necessary upgrades before peak construction, contribute to additional maintenance, monitor road condition and restore infrastructure affected by project traffic.

The principle should be simple: major projects should leave the transport network no worse than they found it.

2.6 Reform road funding to recognise the task performed by the road

Council strongly supports reform of the road-network funding model. Funding based primarily on population inevitably disadvantages remote councils responsible for long networks carrying freight, agriculture, tourism and strategic traffic for the wider economy.

Future funding models should place materially greater weight on road kilometres, freight volumes and equivalent heavy-vehicle loading, strategic connectivity, agricultural and mining activity, tourism, emergency access, natural disaster exposure, availability of alternative routes and the financial capacity of the council responsible for the asset. Council also supports predictable multi-year network funding in preference to excessive reliance on individual competitive grant programs.

2.7 Treat Mungo and the Willandra Lakes as a strategic access network

Council welcomes recent investment improving access towards Mungo National Park and the Willandra Lakes Region World Heritage Area. The next step should be to treat access as a network rather than as a series of isolated road projects.

Council requests a Mungo-Willandra access and resilience assessment with neighbouring councils, National Parks and Wildlife Service and other relevant agencies. It should consider all-weather access, remaining network constraints, visitor and coach safety, emergency access, consistent road-condition and closure information, maintenance responsibilities, tourism growth and supporting infrastructure.

2.8 Improve freight data and investigate Balranald's logistics role

A lack of data should not be interpreted as a lack of demand. Council supports improved classified traffic counting and freight data on strategic routes in the Shire, with information shared with councils for joint investment planning.

The proposed Far West freight-planning process should also investigate Balranald's longer-term role as a freight, logistics and service location on the Sturt Highway. Its position on a major interstate corridor, together with the aerodrome, agricultural economy and proximity to emerging investment, warrants consideration before infrastructure constraints become apparent.

2.9 Build accountability into implementation

Council acknowledges that a strategic plan cannot contain a funded construction commitment for every project. It should, however, provide enough accountability to demonstrate implementation. Transport for NSW should publish an annual or biennial Far West SRITP implementation report identifying the status of each initiative, lead agencies, investigations completed, funding secured, projects delivered, emerging priorities and reasons for material delay.

3. Council priorities for inclusion in the final Plan

1. An identifiable Balranald Shire implementation schedule linking known local issues to actions and timeframes.
2. Specific recognition of the Sturt Highway through Balranald and Euston as a strategic safety and freight corridor.
3. Specific recognition of Balranald Aerodrome as strategic regional aviation and emergency infrastructure.
4. Improved cross-border passenger transport linking Balranald and Euston with the Victorian service centres residents rely upon.
5. A consistent major-project road-impact framework that prevents development-generated road costs being transferred to council ratepayers.
6. Road-funding reform that recognises network length, freight and heavy-vehicle loading, strategic function, resilience and council financial capacity - not population alone.
7. A strategic Mungo-Willandra access and resilience approach.
8. Improved traffic and freight data and investigation of Balranald's future freight/logistics role.
9. Transparent implementation reporting over the life of the SRITP.

4. Conclusion

Balranald Shire Council supports the intent and broad direction of the Draft Far West SRITP. The early engagement undertaken by Transport for NSW was valuable and accurately identified many of the **transport challenges experienced locally**. Council asks that this detail now be carried through into the final Plan.

Council seeks recognition that transport infrastructure should be assessed according to the function it performs and the economic and social task it carries, rather than simply the number of residents living beside it. That distinction is fundamental to transport planning in western NSW.

Council looks forward to continuing to work with Transport for NSW to convert the Plan into tangible improvements in safety, accessibility, resilience and productivity across the region.



Terry Dodds PSM

Chief Executive Officer
Balranald Shire Council

Date: 25/8/2026

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Office of Local Government



Our reference: A1011845

Terry Dodds
Chief Executive Officer
Balranald Council

Via email: tdodds@balranald.nsw.gov.au

27 August 2026

Dear Terry Dodds

I am writing to advise you that the Office for Local Government (OLG) is reviewing the performance ratio framework for Councils as part of the NSW Government's response to the *Inquiry into the Ability of councils to fund infrastructure and services*.

OLG has developed the *Local Government Performance Ratios Discussion Paper* (Discussion Paper), which outlines a proposed Performance Ratio Framework, including proposed ratios, benchmarks and reporting approaches. The Discussion Paper has been prepared with input from several stakeholders including the Expert Advisory Panel appointed by the Minister for Local Government. We thank these stakeholders for their valuable contributions. The Discussion Paper seeks views on whether the proposed framework would provide more meaningful, timely and comparable insights into council financial performance.

The Discussion Paper is now being released for consultation, and OLG is seeking feedback from councils, sector bodies and other stakeholders on the proposed framework prior to finalisation.

I encourage you to review the Discussion Paper and provide feedback on the proposals. Please also refer to the supporting Appendices to the Performance Ratios Discussion Paper, which provide additional context and information to support your review. Your feedback will help inform the final performance ratio framework.

Online: Complete the online feedback form on the OLG Website at <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/programs-and-initiatives/financial-sustainability-reforms>, or

By email: Complete the Word version of the feedback form and email it to olg@olg.nsw.gov.au with the subject 'Performance Ratios Review', or



By post: Complete the Word version of the feedback form and post it to

Performance Ratios Review
Sector Performance Team
Office of Local Government
Locked Bag 3015
NOWRA NSW 2541

Submissions will be accepted until 5pm on Wednesday 7 October 2026.

For further information, please visit the OLG 'Financial sustainability reforms' webpage at www.olg.nsw.gov.au.

Should you have any questions please contact the Office of Local Government's Sector Performance Team on 02 4428 4100 or olg@olg.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Brett Whitworth PSM
Deputy Secretary
Local Government

Encl: Feedback Form

From: Terry Dodds

Sent: Thursday, 27 August 2026 2:48 PM

To: 'olg@olg.nsw.gov.au' <olg@olg.nsw.gov.au>

Cc: 'Jennifer.Hickey@olg.nsw.gov.au' <Jennifer.Hickey@olg.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Performance Ratio Reviews

Dear Brett, Jennifer and Francis

Thanks for putting this topic out there.

I'm not an accountant, which is probably why I'm so passionate about getting a simple, useful reporting 'snapshot' in front of councillors and others who need to understand a council's financial position quickly.

I hope, in particular, that page 6 of the attached response strikes a chord with those who have some influence over where this framework eventually lands.

Regards

Terry

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Office of Local Government



Circular to Councils

Subject/title	Local Government Performance Ratios Discussion Paper
Circular Details	Circular No 26-17 / 26 August 2026 / A1011845
Who should read this	Councillors / General Managers / Council finance staff
Contact	Performance Team / 02 4428 4100 / olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Action required	Information / Response to OLG

What's new or changing?

- In March 2024, the Hon. Ron Hoenig MP, Minister for Local Government asked the Legislative Council's State Development Committee to undertake a review into the Ability of councils to fund infrastructure and services (the Inquiry).
- In response to the NSW Government's acceptance of Recommendation 17 from the Inquiry, the Office of Local Government (OLG) has undertaken a comprehensive review of the former performance ratio framework.
- OLG, in consultation with the Expert Advisory Panel and a range of stakeholders has developed the *Local Government Performance Ratios Discussion Paper* (the Discussion Paper) which seeks feedback from the sector on the proposed Performance Ratio Framework, including the proposed ratios, benchmarks and reporting approach, prior to finalisation.
- The proposed framework includes a combination of retained, refined and new performance ratios. The Discussion Paper includes targeted discussion questions to seek stakeholder views and test the applicability of the proposed framework across different council contexts.

What will this mean for council?

- Councils are invited to review the Discussion Paper and provide feedback on the proposed Performance Ratio Framework, including the proposed ratios, benchmarks and reporting approach. Feedback received will inform the finalisation of the framework.

T 02 4428 4100 TTY 02 4428 4209, E olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Locked Bag 3015 NOWRA NSW 2541
www.olg.nsw.gov.au



- Councils are also encouraged to review the Appendices to the Performance Ratios Discussion Paper, which provide additional context and supporting information to inform their feedback.
- The proposed framework includes a combination of performance ratios across key areas of operating performance, liquidity, leverage and developer contributions.
- The Discussion Paper seeks feedback on proposed reporting matters, including benchmarking, the use of rolling five-year averages, three-year trends, forward-looking projections and reporting frequency.
- If adopted, the final framework may inform future council performance reporting requirements and the assessment of council financial performance against established benchmarks.
- OLG will consider all submissions received during the four-week consultation period as part of the review process. Feedback will help ensure the final framework is practical, evidence-based and appropriate for councils across NSW.

Key points

- The proposed framework has been developed in response to initial stakeholder engagement and a review of the previous framework, which identified opportunities to improve the relevance, comparability and timeliness of performance reporting.
- The proposed framework introduces six council classification for benchmarking purposes, recognising the diverse operating environments and financial characteristics of NSW councils
- The proposed framework includes a combination of retained, refined and new ratios, as well as updated benchmarking provisions. Proposed changes are outlined in the Discussion Paper and OLG seeks the views of the sector on the proposals.

Where to go for further information

- The Discussion Paper is available on the OLG website under [Financial Sustainability Reforms](#) webpage.
- Feedback is welcome from councils, individual councillors, council staff and key sector stakeholders. Feedback can be provided via:
 - **Online:** Complete the online feedback form on OLG website at [Financial Sustainability Reforms](#), or
 - **By email:** Complete the Word version of the feedback form and email it to olg@olg.nsw.gov.au with the subject 'Performance Ratios Review', or



- **By post:** Complete the Word version of the feedback form and post it to

Performance Ratios Review
Sector Performance
Office of Local Government
Locked Bag 3015
Nowra NSW 2541

- Submissions will be accepted until 5:00 pm on Wednesday 7 October 2026.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brett Whitworth".

Brett Whitworth PSM
Deputy Secretary, Local Government

**BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL**

Local Government Performance Ratios Discussion
Paper

Submission: Local Government Performance Ratios Discussion Paper

Circular No. 26-17: August 2026

Balranald Shire Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed Local Government Performance Ratio Framework.

I have spent a fair amount of time over the past few months looking at local government financial sustainability, asset valuation, depreciation and the Accounting Code. The more I look at it, the more convinced I am that the problem is not that local government does not have enough financial information. **In many cases we have too much of it, and what we do have is indecipherable except by accountants.**

The real issue is whether the information tells councillors, management and the community what they need to know, in a media and narrative that is easily understood.

A mayor or councillor really needs answers to some fairly basic questions.

- Is Council paying its way?
- Does it have enough available cash?
- Is debt manageable?
- Are we maintaining the assets we already own?
- Can we afford to renew them when the time comes?
- And, if the answer to one of those questions is no, is that because Council is making poor decisions or because there is a structural mismatch between the services and infrastructure it is expected to provide and the revenue available to pay for them?

I think the proposed framework is heading generally in the right direction, but there is a danger that we replace the old group of ratios with a new group and convince ourselves we have solved something. This is why I think a graphic representation (page 6) is the only real solution for those of us who aren't accountants. Moreover, also for those of us who are time-poor.

"Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."

Steve Jobs

Ratios are indicators, but they are not the answer, especially if the old are replaced by equally uninterpretable ones that only accountants understand. That distinction is particularly important for rural and remote councils. Balranald has a population of a little over 2,200 people and around 1,600 kilometres of road. The cost of a piece of 'yellow' plant, a tonne of gravel, a new bridge, a kilometre of bitumen or an engineer does not become cheaper because there are fewer ratepayers to pay for it. That is the financial reality that has to sit behind any benchmarking system.

Question 1: Operating Performance Ratio and depreciation

I do not think this should be reduced to a choice between leaving depreciation in the Operating Performance Ratio or taking it out.

Both approaches tell us something useful. Neither tells us enough on its own.

Depreciation is a real accounting recognition of the consumption of assets over time, and it should not simply disappear from the sustainability discussion. However, I argue that the way we calculate depreciation seems flawed.

A council which continually runs down its infrastructure should not be able to look financially healthy merely because depreciation has been removed from the calculation. On the other hand, depreciation is not cash. That distinction matters. Lastly, what and how we depreciate doesn't always make sense.

A council can have sound unrestricted cash, manageable debt, a sensible maintenance and renewal program and infrastructure in reasonable condition, yet still produce a weak Operating Performance Ratio because of depreciation.

That becomes even more problematic when asset revaluations increase the carrying value of infrastructure and consequently increase depreciation. The road has not changed in length. Its condition may not have changed. Council has not received another dollar. Yet the accounting result can change materially.

That does not make depreciation wrong. It means we need to understand what it is telling us.

I would therefore retain the existing Operating Performance Ratio, including depreciation, but put another measure directly alongside it which shows recurrent operating performance excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment.

In other words, show both stories.

One tells us whether Council's recurrent income is meeting the full accounting cost of providing services, including asset consumption. The other tells us whether recurrent income is meeting the more immediate recurrent operating costs.

I would also be cautious about simply removing depreciation and then setting the benchmark at 20%.

If the reason for 20% is substantially that depreciation averages around that level across the sector, we may simply be taking depreciation out of one side of the calculation and putting an average version of it back in through the benchmark. That needs more work.

A rural council carrying hundreds of kilometres of road per thousand residents is fundamentally different from a metropolitan council with a large rate base concentrated over a small area. A single statewide percentage will not necessarily mean the same thing in both places.

- If OLG ultimately decides there can only be one formal Operating Performance Ratio, my preference is to retain the existing measure including depreciation but never publish or interpret it in isolation.

Question 2: Own Source Revenue Ratio

I support retaining the Own Source Revenue Ratio.

It is useful, but I think we need to be careful about the language around it.

A low Own Source Revenue Ratio in a remote council is not necessarily evidence that the council has somehow failed to generate enough revenue. In many cases it tells us something much more fundamental about the council's revenue base.

There are only so many people and properties to rate.

For councils such as Balranald, government grants are not an unusual or temporary source of income. They are an essential part of the financial model.

That makes the proposed council classifications important, and I support that approach.

I also support a lower benchmark for Rural councils than for metropolitan councils. What I would not want to see is the ratio subsequently used as another crude league table suggesting that a council with high grant dependence is automatically badly managed.

- Sometimes the ratio tells us about management.
- Sometimes it tells us about geography.
- Sometimes it tells us that the funding model simply does not match the service obligation.
- The framework needs to recognise the difference.

Question 3: Unrestricted Current Ratio

I support retaining the Unrestricted Current Ratio and have no particular problem with the proposed benchmark.

It is a useful indicator, but I would not place too much weight on it.

A current asset is not necessarily cash sitting in the bank ready to meet next week's payroll. Receivables and other balances may make a ratio look comfortable while the actual cash position tells a somewhat different story.

For that reason, I think the proposed Unrestricted Cash Expense Cover Ratio is potentially more useful to councillors and management.

- Keep the Unrestricted Current Ratio, but put it in context.

Question 4: Rates and Annual Charges Outstanding

- I support retaining this ratio.

It provides a straightforward indication of whether Council is collecting the revenue it has raised and whether a cash-flow problem may be emerging.

I also support different benchmarks for different council groups.

Again, I would treat it as a warning light rather than a verdict.

A worsening result may indicate a problem with debt collection, but it may also reflect drought, economic conditions, hardship or other circumstances affecting a particular community.

The trend is probably more useful than one isolated number.

Question 5: Unrestricted Cash Expense Cover Ratio

- I strongly support this proposal.

Of all the changes being considered, this is one of the ones that I think will actually help councillors understand their council's financial position.

Externally restricted funds are not available to pay normal operating expenses. Including them in a cash cover measure can therefore give a misleading picture.

If the purpose of the ratio is to tell us how long Council could continue to meet its normal expenses from available cash, then unrestricted cash is the right place to start.

- I support the proposed three-month benchmark as an early warning point.

There is still a wrinkle with internally restricted cash. Technically, Council can change an internal restriction, but in practice those funds may already have been set aside for plant replacement, employee liabilities or other genuine commitments.

I would not make the formula more complicated by trying to exclude every internal restriction. Instead, where internally restricted cash is material, Council should simply explain it.

That is where the narrative accompanying the ratios becomes important.

Question 6: Leverage and debt servicing

I prefer the proposed Leverage Ratio as the main debt measure, but I would not completely throw away debt servicing information.

They answer slightly different questions.

- Leverage tells us how much debt Council is carrying compared with its underlying financial capacity.
- Debt servicing tells us whether Council can actually meet the repayment profile.

A council can look comfortable on one and less comfortable on the other.

I therefore think leverage should be the main statewide measure, with debt servicing retained as supporting information where borrowings are material.

- Lease liabilities should also be visible, but they should not simply be mixed into conventional borrowings without explanation. They are both financial commitments, but they are not necessarily the same thing.

Question 7: Contributions Expenditure Performance Ratio

I support the proposed ratio where developer contributions are a material part of the council's financial position.

I also agree that it has limited value for Rural and Large Rural councils where contributions may be small or irregular.

There is one caution.

- We should not create a ratio that encourages councils to spend contribution money simply to make the percentage look better.

Sometimes money is being accumulated for a legitimate future project. Sometimes land has to be acquired. Sometimes another project has to happen first. Sometimes development has moved more slowly than forecast.

- A five-year view is therefore far more sensible than judging this annually.

If a council has a significant accumulated contributions balance, the important thing is that it can explain why.

Question 8: Ten-year projections

I support incorporating forward projections. This is probably more important than another historical ratio as financial sustainability is about where the council is heading. **The challenge I have witnessed is that I've never seen a 10-Year projection keep its purchase for more than two years. Therefore, when completing a 10-Year Financial Plan, the 'value proposition' must be balanced with the probability that such a Plan is a rough guide at best.**

A council may look perfectly sound today but have a Long-Term Financial Plan showing rapidly declining cash, increasing operating deficits and insufficient renewal funding. Another council may have a poor current result, but a credible adopted strategy showing how the position will be corrected. That distinction matters.

- The ten-year ratios should come straight from the adopted Long-Term Financial Plan. We should not create another forecasting system just for OLG.
- **They also need to be clearly identified as a low-probability forecast. A ratio seven or ten years into the future is only as good as the assumptions sitting underneath it and rarely accurate.** (The value is in the direction of travel, not the decimal point.)

Question 9: Quarterly Budget Review Statements

I support putting some of these measures into the QBRS, but not all of them.

- The test should be whether knowing the number quarterly allows Council to do something about it.
- Unrestricted cash certainly does.
- Forecast operating performance probably does.
- Material changes in debt or liquidity do.

But there is little value in taking an annual performance measure and mechanically calculating it every three months just because we can.

I would also strongly argue that anything added to QBRS should feed directly into the annual reporting process.

Councils should not be calculating the same number several different ways for the financial statements, QBRS, OLG returns and Your Council. Calculate it once and use it many times.

Question 10: Three-year trends

I wonder about the value of three-year trend reporting, versus five.

- The annual result tells us where we are. Three years tells us whether things are improving or getting worse, but five years helps smooth out some of the noise. That is particularly important for small councils.

One large grant, one natural disaster or one major capital project can make a small council's annual figures swing substantially.

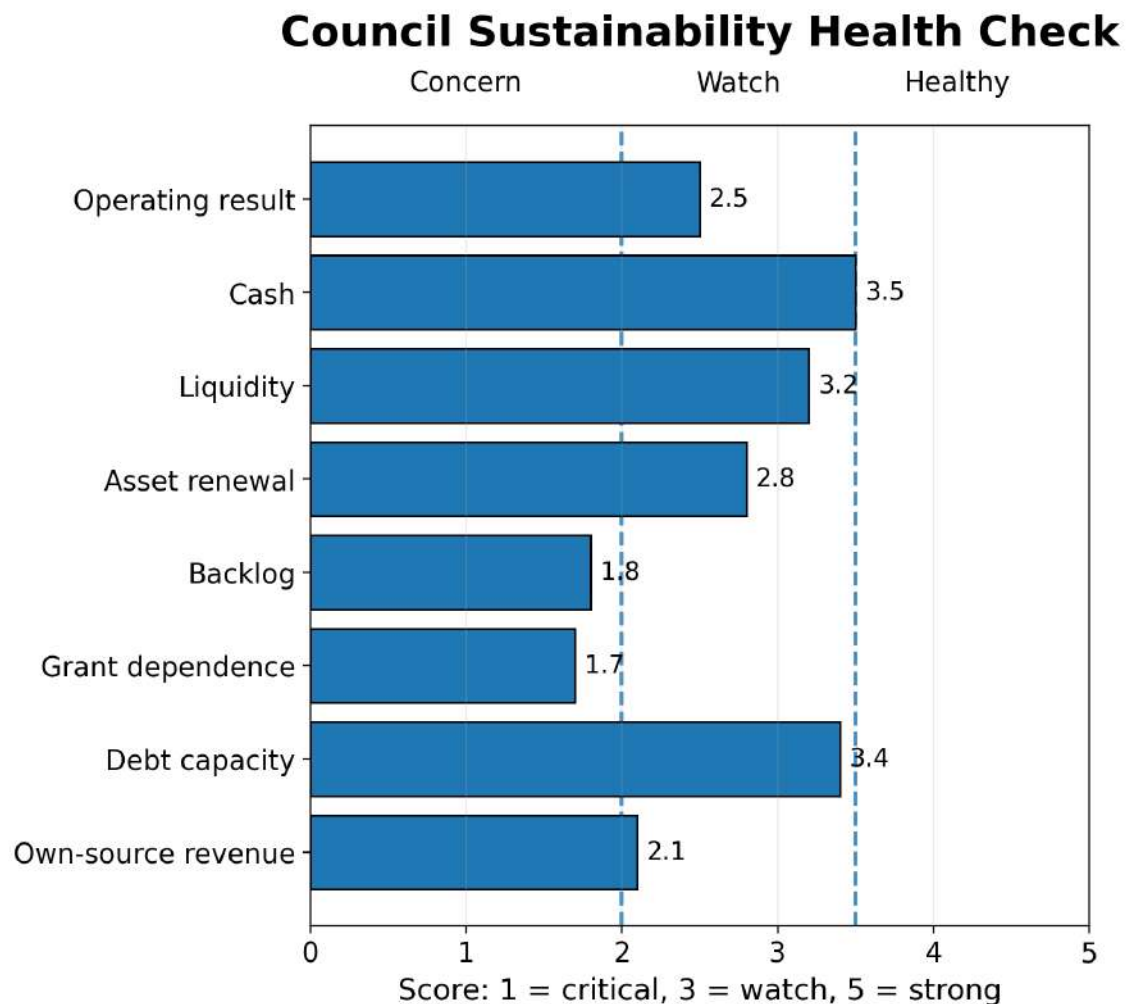
Question 11: Simplification

Yes.

The sector should take every opportunity to simplify these measures.

If experienced councillors, managers and CEOs cannot easily explain what a ratio means, there is probably something wrong with the ratio or the way we are presenting it.

All of this can be translated into a simple chart, such as below, which would allow non-finance people of all ilk to reference and request explanations.



OLG should settle the definitions, publish the formulas and use the same definitions everywhere.

We need to be sure that there isn't one calculation in the Accounting Code, another in QBRS, another in an OLG return and another sitting in *Your Council*. The framework should also avoid creating a second collection of performance measures outside the formal ratio framework.

The aim should be better information, not more information.

Question 12: Narrative explanation

I support this. Numbers without explanation are not transparency. I do not mean another five-page accounting note. I mean a few sensible paragraphs explaining what happened.

- Why did the ratio move?
- Was it a one-off event or is it structural?
- Is it getting better or worse?
- Does Council need to do something about it?

That is the information a councillor actually needs.

A financial ratio outside the benchmark because Council deliberately used cash to deliver a once-in-a-generation infrastructure project is very different from a ratio outside the benchmark because recurrent expenditure has been exceeding recurrent income for the last five years.

Asset management and financial reporting

There is one broader issue that I think needs to remain firmly on the table.

Financial reporting and asset management have been sitting in separate boxes for too long. A council can have plenty of cash and still be running its roads, bridges and buildings into the ground.

Another council can have a relatively poor accounting operating result, partly because of depreciation, while having infrastructure in sound condition and a reasonable renewal program.

Neither council can be properly assessed by looking at the accounting result alone.

I understand why OLG has separated the performance ratio work from the current asset valuation and depreciation review. Administratively, that makes sense. Eventually, however, they need to come back together.

I would like to see one simple front page (as per the graph above) that brings together the handful of things a councillor really needs to see: operating performance, available cash, debt, own-source revenue, grant dependence, asset maintenance, renewal and backlog, together with the direction shown in the Long-Term Financial Plan.

Not another forty pages.

One useful page first, with the technical detail behind it for those who need it.

For rural and remote councils, I would also show some basic context, particularly population and infrastructure intensity.

That is not an attempt to give rural councils an easier benchmark. It is an attempt to make sure people understand what they are comparing.

There is a huge difference between maintaining 15 kilometres of road per thousand residents and maintaining 700, 1,000 or 1,300 kilometres per thousand residents. No amount of accounting consistency makes those operating environments the same.

This creates a structural operating problem, not a simple efficiency problem. Councils should always keep improving, but improvement alone will not close the gap where the system itself does not match the operating reality of rural and remote local government.

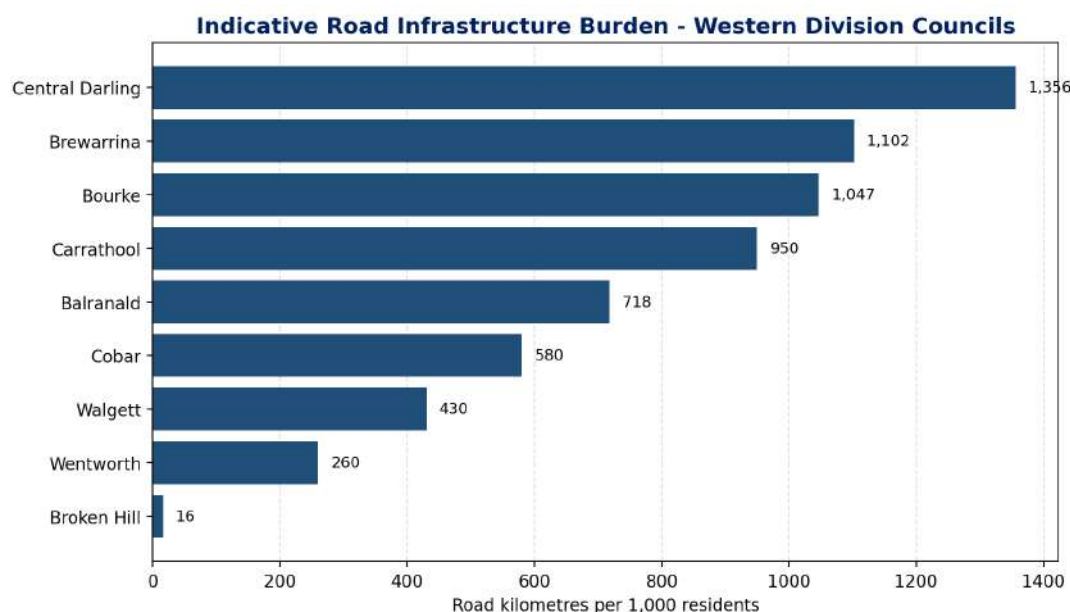


Figure 1. Indicative road kilometres per 1,000 residents for selected Western Division councils. Figures are order-of-magnitude indicators drawn from the source working papers and should be standardised before public release.

The road burden shows the problem clearly. Broken Hill has a very different infrastructure profile from councils such as Central Darling, Brewarrina, Bourke, Carrathool and Balranald. That does not make one council more important than another; it simply shows that a single funding and governance model will not fit every place equally well.

Benchmarks

I also think OLG needs to be very careful about what happens once these benchmarks are published. A benchmark should start a conversation, but it should not end one. If a council falls outside a benchmark, the first question should be why. There may be poor management. If so, say so and deal with it.

But there may also be droughts, floods, a major project, the timing of grants, an infrastructure revaluation, a deliberate use of reserves or a structural revenue problem that a council cannot reasonably solve on its own. Those are very different things.

We have been through the era of treating a handful of ratios as though they could provide a definitive answer about whether a council was fit or sustainable (*Fit-For-The-Future*). I do not think we should go back there!

Closing comments

Overall, I support the direction OLG is taking. A smaller suite of meaningful ratios, better treatment of unrestricted cash, council classifications, trends and forward projections are all worthwhile improvements.

My concern is simply that we do not become so focused on getting the mathematics consistent that we lose sight of what the numbers are supposed to tell us.

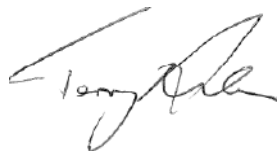
It is the relationship between income, expenditure, cash, debt, assets, service levels and the community's capacity to pay. For councils such as Balranald, geography sits across all of those things.

At the end of the process I would like a mayor or councillor to be able to open the financial report and very quickly answer three questions:

- Can we afford to keep providing the services our community expects?
- Are we looking after the assets we already own?
- Will we have enough money to replace those assets when they actually need replacing?

If the new framework helps answer those questions, it will have been worth doing...provided it is in a graphic form, so it can be instantaneously understood. (Or at least, understanding that questions need to be raised.)

If we simply end up with a new set of ratios that accountants understand and everybody else flicks past, we will have missed the opportunity.



Terry Dodds PSM
Chief Executive Officer
Balranald Shire Council



ALL COMMUNICATIONS MUST
BE ADDRESSED TO THE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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31 August 2026

Ms Linda Scott
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Dear Linda

RE: PROPOSED METHODOLOGY CONSULTATION 2026 - RESPONSE TO COUNCIL SUBMISSION TEMPLATE GUIDE

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed 2027-28 Financial Assistance Grant methodology. I attach the full submission, Financial Assistance Grants: A Practical National Reform Proposal, dated 29 August 2026. Rather than repeat that paper, this letter responds directly to the nine topics in the Commission's Council Submission Template Guide. The page references below are to the attached full submission.

Council: Balranald Shire Council
Contact person: Terry Dodds PSM
Position: Chief Executive Officer
Email: council@balranald.nsw.gov.au
Date: 31 August 2026

1. Overall position: Support with significant modifications

Balranald supports the direction of the review, particularly the move to a simpler balanced-budget General Purpose assessment and the proposed removal of population from the visible Local Roads calculation. However, the methodology should not be finalised until the material expenditure drivers, data assumptions and transition arrangements are more fully tested and disclosed. The strongest support is for the direction of the Local Roads reform; the strongest reservations concern whether road type, usage, bridges and other structures have been simplified out, and whether historic expenditure is being used too readily as a proxy for actual need. See pp. 5-8 and 12-16, with the overall conclusion at pp. 34-35.

2. Alignment with principles

Equity and fairness: the methodology should pursue genuine horizontal fiscal equalisation by measuring both reasonable expenditure need and reasonable revenue capacity, rather than allowing population alone to stand in for infrastructure burden. See pp. 9-10 and 18-20.

Transparency and accountability: councils should be able to trace the variables, assumptions, inputs and adjustments that produce their result. See pp. 12-13, 16 and 32.

Simplicity and consistency are worthwhile objectives, but simplicity should not remove factors that materially alter a council's fiscal position. See pp. 7-8, 12 and 34.

3. Practicality and implementation

The proposed Local Roads framework is more practical and easier to explain than the current method, but implementation depends on verified, consistent road data and a manageable set of road classes and cost drivers.

A practical model should start with verified eligible road kilometres, use a small number of material road classes or surface types, assess major structures separately and apply objective cost modifiers only where reliable data exist. See pp. 15-16.

Transition also needs to be practical: an overnight redistribution of a fixed pool would create very large winners and losers, so existing nominal funding should be protected while the new methodology beds down. See pp. 17 and 31.

4. Transparency and clarity

The consultation material is clearer than the existing methodology, but the final calculation needs to be reproducible. For the General Purpose component, councils should be shown which variables were tested and retained, how outliers and classifications were treated and how model fit was assessed. For revenue capacity, the Commission should publish a clear inclusion/exclusion schedule for operational grants. For Local Roads, each council's verified road inputs, cost index and resulting need share should be published. A plain-English calculation sheet for every council would materially improve confidence in the model. See pp. 12-13, 16 and 32.

5. Data sources and indicators

Rawlinsons is a reasonable geographic construction-cost adjuster, but it is not, by itself, a road-asset preservation model. The final road methodology should test length, type and usage, and should expressly show the treatment of bridges, major culverts and material lifecycle cost differences such as freight loading, climate, soils, material availability and haulage. Where the data are not sufficiently reliable, that limitation should be stated and a data-improvement pathway established. Infrastructure-intensity indicators such as road kilometres; or, preferably, equivalent road kilometres per 1,000 residents are also useful as transparency and HFE indicators, although not as the sole formula. See pp. 13 and 15-20.

6. Potential impacts

The 128-council sensitivity work demonstrates that large distributional shifts are possible if a new road methodology is applied immediately to the existing fixed pool. One illustrative scenario produced 54 gainers and 74 losers, with very large movements between council classes. This is not a reason to retain the present formula; it is a reason to manage transition carefully. The preferable approach is to protect the existing nominal base, improve the measurement of need and use growth in the funding pool to move progressively toward the new measure. See pp. 17 and 31.

7. Risks and unintended consequences

Four risks need particular attention. First, low historic operating expenditure may reflect financial constraint or under-service rather than low expenditure need (p. 12).

Second, treating grants too broadly as revenue capacity can double-count or distort capacity, particularly for disaster, one-off and obligation-specific funding (p. 13).

Third, an ARIA+ threshold can create a cliff effect and should not become a permanent substitute for a model that misses real need (p. 14).

Fourth, a Local Roads formula that does not visibly recognise type, usage and major structures risks over-simplifying relative preservation need (pp. 15-16).

8. Suggested improvements

The attached paper recommends retaining the proposed road-length/cost framework but developing it into a stronger asset-preservation model: verified eligible kilometres; a small number of material road classes or surface types; standard efficient lifecycle preservation costs; objective modifiers for material cost differences; separate treatment of bridges and major structures; and publication of every council's inputs and calculation. See p. 16.

It also recommends a broader, time-limited transition collar or no-immediate-nominal-loss approach rather than relying indefinitely on special floors and sets out ten specific questions for the Commission before final adoption. See pp. 31-32.

9. Additional comments

It is important not to ask the NSW methodology to solve matters that sit in Commonwealth legislation. NSW can improve its General Purpose and Local Roads methods now, but it cannot alter the statutory 30 per cent General Purpose minimum, rebase the historical interstate Local Roads shares or attach conditions to the existing FAG components under the current Commonwealth Act. Those distinctions are explained at pp. 9-11 and summarised at pp. 19-24 and 33-34.

They are included because a durable methodology should be clear about which problems are within the Commission's control and which require Commonwealth reform.

In summary, I support the Commission changing the methodology. The current review is moving in the right direction, particularly on Local Roads.

The remaining task is to make sure that the simpler model still sees the material differences between councils, that the data are reliable and reproducible, and that transition does not create avoidable instability. The attached paper provides the detailed reasoning, evidence and proposed improvements behind these responses.

I would be pleased to discuss any of the matters raised or provide the underlying 128-council modelling if that would assist the Commission.

Yours faithfully



Terry Dodds PSM
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

*What the NSW 2027–28 proposal, the 1995 Act and the 128-council model
actually tell us*

Prepared by Terry Dodds PSM

29 August 2026

This is a practitioner policy paper. Balranald Shire Council is used as a worked example because the numbers make the infrastructure problem easy to see. It is not a proposal written to get a particular result for Balranald, Western NSW or any other council. The purpose is national reform, using a test that can be applied to every Australian council. The views are the author's unless separately adopted or endorsed.

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Page 1

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

TEN POINTS UP FRONT

These ten propositions have been tested against the 1995 Act, the NSW Commission's proposed 2027-28 methodology and the 128-council work. They need to be read together. Some are within NSW's control, some require Federal legislation and some are transition choices. I have put them here so a critical reader can see the whole package before taking one part in isolation.

- 1. Protect the current untied base.** Keep today's General Purpose and Local Roads FAGs untied and lock the core settlement at not less than 0.5 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue.
- 2. Add the extra 0.5 per cent as new tied money.** Create an Essential Local Infrastructure Component at 0.1 per cent a year for five consecutive years, taking the total Commonwealth-local government settlement to 1 per cent.
- 3. Change the 1995 Act; do not stretch it.** Section 15 protects the existing grants as unconditional payments. Preserve that protection and create a separate statutory component for the new tied money.
- 4. Make the new stream additional and formula based.** No Roads to Recovery rebadging and no contestable beauty contest. Tie it to essential infrastructure as a class and let councils choose qualifying works from adopted plans.
- 5. Grandfather the base and reform the growth.** Do not redistribute today's pool overnight. Protect existing nominal funding and apply the new need formula to the tied stream from its first dollar.
- 6. Use an asset-preservation test for Local Roads.** Road length is the starting point; type, usage, structures and material cost differences also matter. Keep road kilometres per 1,000 residents as an indicator, not the sole formula.
- 7. Treat the 30 per cent General Purpose minimum as the Federal issue it is.** It sits in section 6 of the Commonwealth Act. NSW cannot alter it through methodology; Parliament must review it if it impedes genuine HFE.
- 8. Rebase the historical interstate Local Roads shares.** A better NSW formula cannot fix a national pool still divided on historical shares. Move them progressively towards contemporary national road-preservation need.
- 9. Use comparable national data and publish the calculation.** Show network need, infrastructure intensity and fiscal capacity for every council on a comparable basis. If the model cannot be explained, it will not survive scrutiny.
- 10. Keep Balranald in its proper place.** It is the worked example because the numbers are stark, not the intended beneficiary. The same test must work for every Australian council and the evidence should determine the result.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

Contents

TEN POINTS UP FRONT	2
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
2. WHY I HAVE CHANGED PART OF THE ARGUMENT	6
3. WHAT NSW IS NOW PROPOSING	7
4. START WITH THE 1995 ACT	8
4.1 HORIZONTAL FISCAL EQUALISATION IS THE STARTING POINT	8
4.2 THE 30 PER CENT MINIMUM IS IN THE ACT.....	9
4.3 NSW HAS MORE ROOM ON LOCAL ROADS.....	9
4.4 THE STATE ROAD SHARES ARE A COMMONWEALTH PROBLEM.....	9
4.5 SECTION 15 DOES NOT KILL THE TIED-INCREMENT IDEA.....	10
5. GENERAL PURPOSE GRANT: BETTER DIRECTION, WITH SOME RISKS	10
5.1 HISTORIC UNDER-SPENDING CANNOT BECOME FUTURE 'NEED'.....	11
5.2 INFRASTRUCTURE INTENSITY STILL MATTERS IN THE GENERAL PURPOSE GRANT	11
5.3 'OTHER GRANTS' NEEDS A CLEAR RULE	11
5.4 THE ARIA+ >6 FLOOR IS PROTECTION, NOT THE CURE	12
6. LOCAL ROADS: THE MOST USEFUL PART OF THE NEW PROPOSAL.....	12
6.1 LENGTH IS THERE; TYPE AND USAGE ARE NOT YET VISIBLE	13
6.2 RAWLINSONS IS A COST ADJUSTOR, NOT A ROAD-ASSET MODEL.....	13
7. WHAT THE 128-COUNCIL MODEL TELLS US	14
Illustrative fixed-pool outcomes from the NSW proof of concept	14
8. BALRANALD IS THE EXAMPLE, NOT THE ANSWER.....	15
9. TWO QUESTIONS NEED TO BE KEPT SEPARATE	16
Question 1: What should the road network reasonably cost to preserve?.....	16
Question 2: What capacity does the council have to support its overall service and infrastructure burden?	16
10. WHAT NSW CAN FIX, AND WHAT ONLY CANBERRA CAN FIX	17
11. THE FEDERAL CHANGES I WOULD PUT TO PARLIAMENT	18
11.1 RESTORE THE QUANTUM THROUGH A 0.5% + 0.5% HYBRID	18
11.2 FIX THE SECTION 6 MINIMUM PROPERLY	19
11.3 REBASE THE SECTION 12 ROAD SHARES	19
11.4 USE SECTION 16 FOR WHAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO DO	20
11.5 THE 1 PER CENT HYBRID: WHAT ACTUALLY HAS TO CHANGE	20

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

11.6 CREATE A THIRD STATUTORY COMPONENT	20
11.7 WHAT 'TIED' SHOULD MEAN	20
11.8 PHASE IT IN AT 0.1 PER CENT A YEAR	21
11.9 DEFINE THE TAX BASE PROPERLY.....	22
11.10 THE ACT AMENDMENT IS QUITE DOABLE	22
11.11 THE CONSTITUTIONAL PATH IS ALREADY THERE	22
11.12 IF CANBERRA DOES NOT WANT TO AMEND THE FAG ACT	22
11.13 KEEP THE RED TAPE OUT.....	23
11.14 NO SMOKE AND MIRRORS	23
11.15 THE COMMONWEALTH GRANTS COMMISSION OBJECTION	23
11.16 THIS NEEDS TO BECOME GOVERNMENT POLICY	24
12. TRANSITION: GRANDFATHER THE BASE, REFORM THE GROWTH	24
13. QUESTIONS I WOULD PUT BACK TO THE NSW COMMISSION	25
14. WHAT CAN BE TAKEN TO CANBERRA	25
15. CONCLUSION	26
16. NOTE ON THE EVIDENCE BASE.....	27
17. COPYRIGHT, AUTHORSHIP AND ATTRIBUTION	28

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The August presentation from the NSW Local Government Grants Commission has been useful. It fills in some gaps and, more importantly, changes part of the argument. The Commission is proposing to simplify the General-Purpose Component, move to a balanced-budget assessment of expenditure need and revenue capacity, and change the Local Roads Component so road length and a geographic cost index drive the allocation.

It also says quite openly that the existing method has become too complex and that parts of the data being used are no longer reliable. That is not my criticism of the current model; it is the Commission's own reason for reviewing it.¹

The road proposal is the most relevant change. The current NSW Local Roads calculation uses road length, population and bridges. Under the August proposal, population disappears from the Local Roads formula shown in the presentation and road expenditure need is calculated from road-network extent multiplied by a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index. Put simply, more road means more assessed need and a higher regional cost means more assessed need.²

I agree with that direction. Population obviously matters to local government, but it is a poor substitute for measuring the cost of preserving an existing road. Distance remains distance. A 100-kilometre-long road does not become shorter because fewer people live beside it or because the rate base is small. The proposed NSW formula recognises that much more directly than the current one.

Where I think the proposal stops short is in calling that, by itself, a complete measure of road need. The Commission correctly quotes the National Road Principle, which points to road length, type and usage. The formula then shown in the slides is road length multiplied by a broad regional construction-cost index. Road surface, traffic, freight loading, bridges, major culverts, climate, soils and material availability are not separately visible. I am not saying the proposal is wrong. I am saying the Commission should be able to show that the important differences have not been simplified out of the model.^{3,4}

The other part that cannot be glossed over is the Commonwealth Act. The Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 sets some hard boundaries. The 30 per cent General Purpose minimum is in the Act and NSW cannot remove it. The Local Roads Component has to be allocated consistently with the National Principles. Payments to councils are to be unconditional. The State shares of the national road pool are still carried forward through a

¹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, August 2026, slides 7–8 and 17, <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2026-08/local-government-grants-commission-proposed-methodology-consultation-presentation.pdf> (accessed 29 August 2026).

² NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

³ Australian Government, National principles for the allocation of grants under the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995, Identified Road Component Principle: allocation as far as practicable on relative roads expenditure and road-asset preservation need, with relevant considerations including length, type and usage.

⁴ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

structure anchored in historic allocations. So there are things NSW can fix now, and there are things that simply need Canberra to change the rules.^{5,6,7}

The ten propositions are set out up front because they need to be read together. The rest of this paper explains the evidence behind them and, just as importantly, which parts NSW can change now, and which parts require Canberra to amend the Act.

2. WHY I HAVE CHANGED PART OF THE ARGUMENT

This work started with a simple observation. Put the road network of every NSW council beside its population, and its FAG allocation and a pattern appears fairly quickly. Rural and remote councils generally carry far more kilometres of road for every resident and ratepayer available to support them. My August road-disparity paper used that relationship as a sense-check. I never suggested that kilometres per 1,000 residents, by itself, should become the grant formula.⁸

I then modelled all 128 NSW councils. That confirmed the pattern, but it also showed the practical problem with simply redistributing the existing road pool: there would be large winners and large losers. The August OLG presentation moves the discussion on again because the Commission itself is now proposing to remove population from the visible Local Roads calculation and put more weight on road length and geographic cost.^{9,10}

That is important. I am no longer arguing from the outside that the physical road network should count for more; the Commission has effectively accepted that starting point. The remaining questions are more useful ones: how road need should actually be measured, which cost factors are material, how to manage the transition, and which problems sit in the Commonwealth legislation rather than in the NSW formula.

The Commission has also asked councils not to turn the consultation into a complaint about whether their individual grant goes up or down. Its submission material asks councils to deal with fairness, transparency, practicality, data quality and unintended consequences, and to use council examples only where they expose a broader issue. That is exactly the basis on which Balranald is used here.¹¹

⁵ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

⁶ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 4 and 12. Section 12 rolls each State's additional previous-year funding amount forward by the common annual factor; this is the statutory architecture underlying the continuing historical jurisdictional shares of the identified local road component.

⁷ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 15(a). Payments passed by States to local governing bodies under ss 9, 10, 12 and 13 are required to be unconditional payments, subject to the GST withholding provision in s 15(aa).

⁸ **Terry Dodds PSM**, Road Funding Disparity: Does the Current Funding Pattern Adequately Recognise the Infrastructure Burden Carried by Rural and Remote NSW Councils?, 15 August 2026, analysis of all 128 NSW councils using OLG 2024–25 road data and Commonwealth 2026–27 FAG allocations.

⁹ **Terry Dodds PSM**, NSW 128-Council Local Roads FAG Distribution – Proof of Concept, 29 August 2026. The model tests the current allocation against pure road length and several road-length/infrastructure-intensity scenarios. It is explicitly a sensitivity model, not a proposed final formula.

¹⁰ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

¹¹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Council Submission Template Guide – Proposed Methodology Consultation 2026, pp. 1–3, <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2026-08/council-submission-template-guide-proposed-methodology-consultation.pdf> (accessed 29 August 2026).

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

3. WHAT NSW IS NOW PROPOSING

The presentation is still a consultation paper. No final model has been adopted. The Commission says it wants the 2027–28 method to be simpler, based on reliable data and better at equalising financial sustainability. Those are sensible objectives, and I have no issue with them.^{12,13}

Component	Proposed NSW approach	My view
General Purpose	Balanced-budget model. 30% per capita; 70% allocated on assessed financial need. Financial need = expenditure need - revenue capacity.	Cleaner and easier to explain. But the Act sets a minimum outcome; it does not itself prescribe a 30/70 accounting split.
Expenditure need	Statistical estimate based on actual operating expenditure and inherent factors; published slides identify population, remoteness and ATSI.	This needs careful testing. Low historic spending can mean low capacity, not low need.
Revenue capacity	Rate capacity + user fees/charges + a four-year average of operational grants.	Needs a published inclusion/exclusion rule. Disaster, one-off and obligation-specific grants can distort the result if treated too broadly.
Local Roads	Road length x Rawlinsons regional cost index, then allocate the State road pool in proportion to assessed road need.	A big step in the right direction. Population drops out, but type, usage, bridges and structures are not separately visible in the published formula.
Transition/floor	Recommended ARIA+ >6 floor protects 14 most remote councils from falling below 2025-26 GPC.	Useful transition protection. It should not become the permanent answer if the statistical model is missing real expenditure need.

¹² NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, August 2026, slides 7–8 and 17, <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2026-08/local-government-grants-commission-proposed-methodology-consultation-presentation.pdf> (accessed 29 August 2026).

¹³ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slide 17. The stated 2027–28 objectives are simplicity, reliability and equalising councils' financial sustainability across NSW.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

In broad terms, I support the direction of travel. My concern is not that the Commission is changing the model; it should. **My concern is whether some important expenditure drivers have been dropped in the name of simplicity, whether historic expenditure is being used too readily as a proxy for genuine need, and whether the new model is being asked to solve problems that actually sit in the Federal Act.**^{14,15,16,17}

4. START WITH THE 1995 ACT

Any serious national proposal has to start with the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995. We often talk about ‘the FAG formula’ as though a State Grants Commission can simply redesign it from top to bottom. It cannot. The Act separates the General-Purpose funding under section 9 from the additional funding under section 12, which is the identified Local Roads Component, and different rules apply to each.¹⁸

The objects of the Act still make sense. Parliament wanted stronger local-government financial capacity, more equitable service levels, greater certainty, better efficiency and effectiveness, and more transparent and consistent allocation methods. There is nothing in those objectives that prevents a modern infrastructure-intensity or asset-preservation approach. If anything, they support it.¹⁹

4.1 HORIZONTAL FISCAL EQUALISATION IS THE STARTING POINT

Section 6 says the National Principles are to pursue full horizontal fiscal equalisation as far as practicable. In ordinary language, a council should be able, by reasonable effort, to operate at a standard not lower than the State average after allowing for differences in what it reasonably needs to spend and what it can reasonably raise itself.²⁰

That is the issue I keep coming back to. A council can have a very small population and rate base but still be responsible for an enormous physical network. Counting the people does not make the road, bridge, drainage network or aerodrome disappear. HFE is supposed to look at both expenditure need and revenue capacity, and the method needs to be capable of seeing both.

¹⁴ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 19–26. The proposed General Purpose Component is a balanced-budget model: 30 per cent per capita plus a 70 per cent needs pool, with financial need assessed as expenditure need less revenue-raising capacity.

¹⁵ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 23–25 and 38. The presentation identifies population and remoteness as key expenditure drivers and states that the base-case expenditure estimate is statistically derived from councils’ actual operating expenditure, excluding water and sewer, with population, remoteness and ATSI variables.

¹⁶ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 37–44. The recommended consultation option protects 14 councils with ARIA+ scores above 6 from receiving a General Purpose Grant below their 2025–26 amount, funded by redistribution from councils above the statutory minimum.

¹⁷ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

¹⁸ Commonwealth of Australia, Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 3, Federal Register of Legislation, <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text> (accessed 29 August 2026).

¹⁹ Commonwealth of Australia, Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 3, Federal Register of Legislation, <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text> (accessed 29 August 2026).

²⁰ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

4.2 THE 30 PER CENT MINIMUM IS IN THE ACT

Section 6(2)(b) is clear. A council cannot receive less under the General Purpose Component than it would receive if 30 per cent of the State pool were distributed on a per-capita basis. NSW cannot lower that threshold by changing its methodology. If the threshold is to change, Federal Parliament has to change the Act.²¹

There is a useful distinction here. The Act sets a minimum outcome; it does not say the Commission must literally operate two accounting pools of 30 per cent and 70 per cent. The proposed NSW 30/70 model is a simple way of giving effect to the statutory floor, and there is merit in that simplicity, but it is still a design choice. The legal requirement is that no council falls below the 30 per cent per-capita equivalent.^{22,23}

I would therefore describe the 30/70 split as the Commission's proposed method of complying with the Act, not as the only method the Act allows. That may sound like a small point, but it matters when the model is being defended as a policy choice.

4.3 NSW HAS MORE ROOM ON LOCAL ROADS

The Local Roads rule is much less prescriptive. The National Principle says the identified road component should, as far as practicable, be allocated according to relative roads expenditure need and the need to preserve road assets. It specifically points to road length, type and usage. Population is not required as an input to the Local Roads formula.²⁴

That means NSW does not need Canberra's permission to remove population from its road calculation or to move to a stronger preservation-needs model. It already has room to do that within the existing Act and National Principles.

4.4 THE STATE ROAD SHARES ARE A COMMONWEALTH PROBLEM

There is a second road issue that NSW cannot fix. The Commonwealth still divides the national Local Roads pool between States and Territories according to fixed historical shares. Section 12 then rolls each State's amount forward from the previous year using the common annual factor. In practice, the State shares stay anchored to history rather than being rebased to today's road network and road-preservation need.^{25,26}

²¹ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

²² Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

²³ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 84–85. The Commission proposed that States be permitted, within Commonwealth limits, to set a common equal-per-capita pool between 20 and 30 per cent, with a relative-needs pool of at least 65 per cent and an optional reform pool of up to 5 per cent.

²⁴ Australian Government, National principles for the allocation of grants under the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995, Identified Road Component Principle: allocation as far as practicable on relative roads expenditure and road-asset preservation need, with relevant considerations including length, type and usage.

²⁵ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government, 2026–27 program and jurisdictional allocations, <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government> (accessed 29 August 2026).

²⁶ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 4 and 12. Section 12 rolls each State's additional previous-year funding amount forward by the common annual factor; this is the statutory architecture underlying the continuing historical jurisdictional shares of the identified local road component.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

So even a very good NSW formula only improves the way NSW divides its own bucket. It does not answer whether NSW, Queensland, Western Australia, Tasmania or any other jurisdiction has the right-sized bucket in the first place. That is a Commonwealth question.

4.5 SECTION 15 DOES NOT KILL THE TIED-INCREMENT IDEA

Section 15 is quite plain about the FAGs that exist today. Payments made through sections 9, 10, 12 and 13 are to be passed on by the States as unconditional payments. That means Canberra cannot simply pour another 0.1 or 0.5 per cent through the existing sections and then attach infrastructure conditions to it. Under the Act as it stands, the money would still have to arrive at councils untied.²⁷

That does not mean the tied increment in my July Fresh Approach paper was wrong. It means the Act has to be changed if we want the new money to be both permanent and tied. **My original proposal was never to tie the existing FAG base. It was to protect the current untied 0.5 per cent, then add another 0.5 per cent for essential infrastructure in five 0.1 per cent steps. I still think that is the better political and practical settlement.**²⁸

The clean way to do it is to leave the current General Purpose and Local Roads components alone, preserve their unconditional character, and legislate a third component for the additional money. If Parliament does not want to amend the FAG Act, a separate tied Commonwealth-State program can be created, but then we have recreated another program beside FAGs rather than permanently fixing the Commonwealth-local government funding relationship.

5. GENERAL PURPOSE GRANT: BETTER DIRECTION, WITH SOME RISKS

The proposed move from direct assessment to a balanced-budget model is defensible. At its simplest, financial need is what a council reasonably needs to spend less what it can reasonably raise. That is easier to understand and explain than hundreds of disability factors and cost drivers.²⁹

I do, however, have a concern about simplification becoming an end in itself. The Commission says it wants to retain only factors with a material impact. I agree. The test of 'material', though, has to be whether the factor changes the real fiscal position of councils, not whether the data happen to be easy to obtain.³⁰

²⁷ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 15(a)(i)-(iv). Under the current Act, payments made to States under ss 9, 10, 12 and 13 are to be passed to local governing bodies as unconditional payments. Federal Register of Legislation: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text>

²⁸ **Terry Dodds PSM**, Financial Assistance Grants: A Fresh Approach - A practical case for hybrid reform of Financial Assistance Grants, 8 July 2026, especially pp. 10-13. The paper proposed preserving an untied 0.5% core and adding a formula-based tied infrastructure stream in 0.1 percentage-point annual steps over five years.

²⁹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 19-26. The proposed General Purpose Component is a balanced-budget model: 30 per cent per capita plus a 70 per cent needs pool, with financial need assessed as expenditure need less revenue-raising capacity.

³⁰ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slide 17. The stated 2027-28 objectives are simplicity, reliability and equalising councils' financial sustainability across NSW.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

5.1 HISTORIC UNDER-SPENDING CANNOT BECOME FUTURE ‘NEED’

The published base case estimates expenditure needs statistically from councils’ actual operating expenditure, excluding water and sewer, with population, remoteness and ATSI among the drivers. This needs a hard look. **A financially constrained council can spend less because it cannot afford to fill positions, maintain assets or provide the same service standard as a better-resourced council. Low spending is not always evidence of low need; sometimes it is evidence of the problem.**³¹

I am not saying the proposed statistical model necessarily makes that mistake. I am saying the **Commission should prove that it does not**. HFE is meant to estimate what a council needs to function at a reasonable comparable standard, not simply reproduce what councils happened to be able to afford over the last few years.^{32,33}

If a statistical model is going to drive a large part of the State grant, councils should be able to see enough of it to understand the result: what variables were tested, what was retained, how outliers were handled, how the weighted average was calculated, and what evidence was used to decide that other variables were no longer material. A clean diagram is useful, but it is not the same thing as a transparent calculation.

5.2 INFRASTRUCTURE INTENSITY STILL MATTERS IN THE GENERAL PURPOSE GRANT

The Local Roads Component can deal with eligible local-road preservation. It does not deal with the full infrastructure burden carried by a council. Councils also carry regional roads, drainage, buildings, parks, aerodromes and other assets, and those obligations affect their wider fiscal position. The Commonwealth Grants Commission has previously recognised that infrastructure and capital requirements can be relevant to fiscal capacity where they are material.³⁴

This is where kilometres per 1,000 residents remains useful. It is not an assertion that every kilometre costs the same. It simply shows how much physical network sits behind the population and revenue base. The same type of indicator can be tested for other asset classes if it adds anything useful.

5.3 ‘OTHER GRANTS’ NEEDS A CLEAR RULE

The proposed revenue-capacity model includes grants using a four-year rolling average of operational grants. There is logic in that. The National Principles say other relevant grant

³¹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 23–25 and 38. The presentation identifies population and remoteness as key expenditure drivers and states that the base-case expenditure estimate is statistically derived from councils’ actual operating expenditure, excluding water and sewer, with population, remoteness and ATSI variables.

³² Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

³³ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 89–90. The Commission’s proposed relative-needs principles emphasised average service and revenue benchmarks, all material expenditure and revenue differences, infrastructure, policy neutrality and practical, transparent methods.

³⁴ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 100–102. The Commission said infrastructure and capital requirements affect fiscal capacity, described asset-preservation road models, and cautioned that relevant other grant support should be included where it funds assessed expenditure needs.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

support should be recognised where it meets an expenditure need being assessed; otherwise the same need can be counted twice.^{35,36}

The important word is ‘relevant’. The (OLG) slides do not set out exactly what is in and what is out. FAGs, Roads to Recovery, disaster assistance, one-off operating grants and grants that bring additional obligations should not simply be treated as though they are interchangeable. The Commission’s own option dealing with storm and flood grants acknowledges the timing problem. The final model needs a published inclusion and exclusion schedule so councils can see what has been counted as revenue capacity and why.^{37,38}

5.4 THE ARIA+ >6 FLOOR IS PROTECTION, NOT THE CURE

The Commission’s preferred consultation option protects the 14 councils with ARIA+ scores above 6 from receiving a General Purpose Grant below their 2025–26 amount. The presentation also says, quite candidly, that those councils may have expenditure needs the statistical model does not fully capture.³⁹

That admission is useful because it tells us where the risk is. If a model is known to miss a material need, the long-term answer is to improve the model. An ARIA score of 6 also creates a hard edge: two councils can have very similar circumstances but sit on opposite sides of the cut-off. I am comfortable with a floor as transition protection. I am less comfortable with it becoming the permanent fix for a known weakness in the calculation.

During transition, I would prefer a broader, time-limited no-real-loss or collar arrangement while the new model settles down, particularly if the national FAG pool is also being increased. That is easier to explain than permanently protecting one group because the underlying model is accepted to be incomplete.

6. LOCAL ROADS: THE MOST USEFUL PART OF THE NEW PROPOSAL

The Local Roads part of the presentation is the most useful new material. Slide 28 correctly sets out the National Principle. Slides 29 to 33 then show a simple three-step method: establish a regional cost index, calculate road need from road-network extent and that index, and divide the Local Roads pool according to each council’s share of assessed road need.⁴⁰

³⁵ Australian Government, National principles for the allocation of grants under the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995, General Purpose Principles 1–4 and Identified Road Component Principle, <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government/national-principles-allocation-grants> (accessed 29 August 2026).

³⁶ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 23–25 and 38. The presentation identifies population and remoteness as key expenditure drivers and states that the base-case expenditure estimate is statistically derived from councils’ actual operating expenditure, excluding water and sewer, with population, remoteness and ATSI variables.

³⁷ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 37–44. The recommended consultation option protects 14 councils with ARIA+ scores above 6 from receiving a General Purpose Grant below their 2025–26 amount, funded by redistribution from councils above the statutory minimum.

³⁸ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 100–102. The Commission said infrastructure and capital requirements affect fiscal capacity, described asset-preservation road models, and cautioned that relevant other grant support should be included where it funds assessed expenditure needs.

³⁹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 37–44. The recommended consultation option protects 14 councils with ARIA+ scores above 6 from receiving a General Purpose Grant below their 2025–26 amount, funded by redistribution from councils above the statutory minimum.

⁴⁰ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

I support that direction. Population is no longer shown as part of the road formula. A longer network means greater assessed need and a higher geographic cost means greater assessed need. That is a much more logical starting point for preserving an existing physical network.

6.1 LENGTH IS THERE; TYPE AND USAGE ARE NOT YET VISIBLE

There is one obvious gap between slide 28 and slide 32. Slide 28 says the road assessment should, where practicable, use length, type and usage. By slide 32 the formula shown is road length multiplied by the Rawlinsons index for the council's remoteness category. Type and usage have disappeared from what is visible.^{41,42}

That is the point I would press hardest in the NSW consultation. If reliable data exist for surface, road class and usage, use them. If the data do not exist or are not reliable enough, say so plainly and set out how they will be improved. 'As far as practicable' is sensible wording in a national principle, but it should not become a permanent excuse for leaving out a material cost driver.

Bridges and major culverts also need to be dealt with expressly. The existing NSW method has a separate bridge-length component; the proposed slides do not show a separate treatment for bridges or other major structures. They may be captured elsewhere in the Annual Roads and General Return, but that is not apparent from the presentation. A bridge is not just another kilometre of road, and the final method should show exactly where structures sit.

6.2 RAWLINSONS IS A COST ADJUSTOR, NOT A ROAD-ASSET MODEL

Rawlinsons is a well-established construction-cost reference, and the regional index is a reasonable way to recognise that work costs more in some parts of NSW than others. The Commission's 2026 chart shows the cost premium rising progressively from major cities through inner regional, outer regional, remote and very remote areas.^{43,44}

My question is narrower: does a broad regional construction index, on its own, tell us enough about the annual maintenance and lifecycle renewal cost of a road network? Rawlinsons covers buildings, trades, labour, plant and regional construction costs. That makes it useful as a geographic adjustment, but it is not the same thing as a road-preservation model built from road-specific unit rates and lifecycle costs.⁴⁵

The Commonwealth's own national reporting makes that distinction. Some jurisdictions use relatively simple road formulas; others use asset-preservation models that attempt to calculate annual network cost and can allow for sealed and unsealed roads, weather, soils,

⁴¹ Australian Government, National principles for the allocation of grants under the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995, Identified Road Component Principle: allocation as far as practicable on relative roads expenditure and road-asset preservation need, with relevant considerations including length, type and usage.

⁴² NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 31–32. The presentation applies Rawlinsons regional construction cost premiums by ABS remoteness category and then multiplies road length by the estimated index for the council's remoteness category.

⁴³ Rawlinsons (W.A.) Pty Ltd, Rawlinsons Australian Construction Handbook 2026, product description and contents, including regional indices and building/construction cost data, <https://www.rawlhouse.com/publications/2026-australian-construction-handbook> (accessed 29 August 2026).

⁴⁴ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 31–32. The presentation applies Rawlinsons regional construction cost premiums by ABS remoteness category and then multiplies road length by the estimated index for the council's remoteness category.

⁴⁵ Rawlinsons (W.A.) Pty Ltd, Rawlinsons Australian Construction Handbook 2026, product description and contents, including regional indices and building/construction cost data, <https://www.rawlhouse.com/publications/2026-australian-construction-handbook> (accessed 29 August 2026).

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

materials and traffic. The Commonwealth Grants Commission made a similar point in 2013 when it argued for a more comprehensive assessment of road need.^{46,47}

I would keep the Commission's new road framework, but take it one step further:

- Start with verified eligible road kilometres.
- Split the network into a small number of material road classes or surface types.
- Apply standard efficient annual lifecycle preservation costs to each class.
- Apply objective modifiers for material cost differences such as freight loading, climate, soils, materials/haulage and remoteness where the data are reliable.
- Assess bridges and major structures separately.
- Allocate the State Local Roads pool in proportion to assessed preservation need.
- Publish the inputs and calculation for every council.

That is what I mean by an asset-preservation model. It still starts with kilometres, but it does not pretend that every kilometre is the same.

7. WHAT THE 128-COUNCIL MODEL TELLS US

The 128-council model was deliberately simple. It used the common OLG measure of total local plus regional road length, population and the published 2026–27 Local Roads FAG allocation. I then tested what happens if the existing pool is allocated by road length alone and by combinations of road length and road kilometres per 1,000 residents.⁴⁸

It should not be oversold. It is not an asset-preservation model, and it uses the broader OLG road network rather than necessarily the narrower Local Roads dataset used by the Grants Commission. The Commission now says itself that historic council-supplied road-length data have had validation and integrity problems. The workbook therefore shows a strong distributional pattern; it does not pretend to be the final Grants Commission calculation.⁴⁹

Illustrative fixed-pool outcomes from the NSW proof of concept

Council class	Current pool redistributed by road length	90% road length / 10% intensity	Interpretation
Rural	+50.6%	+87.2%	Large upward signal
Large Rural	+31.1%	+31.6%	Material upward signal
Regional Town/City	-15.7%	-22.5%	Downward under fixed pool
Metropolitan Fringe	-32.2%	-38.5%	Large fixed-pool loss
Metropolitan	-50.4%	-55.1%	Very large fixed-pool loss

⁴⁶ Australian Government, Local Government National Report 2022–23, Local Roads Component section, p. 186. The report distinguishes simple road-allocation models from asset-preservation models and notes that Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania used asset-preservation approaches incorporating factors such as road type, weather, soils/material availability and traffic volume.

⁴⁷ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 78–90. The Commission recommended a comprehensive road assessment reflecting length, use, asset-preservation costs and, for new/improved roads, population growth; it also recommended using the same road-needs assessment in the identified road and relative-needs calculations to avoid inconsistency and double counting.

⁴⁸ **Terry Dodds PSM**, NSW 128-Council Local Roads FAG Distribution – Proof of Concept, 29 August 2026. The model tests the current allocation against pure road length and several road-length/infrastructure-intensity scenarios. It is explicitly a sensitivity model, not a proposed final formula.

⁴⁹ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slide 8. The Commission states that data credibility has been eroded by unvalidated council-provided expenditure and road-length data and by outdated or invalid cost-driver datasets.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

Balranald (worked example)	+59.2%	+107.5%	Shows sensitivity; not a recommended entitlement
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The 90/10 scenario is deliberately illustrative. It produces 54 gainers and 74 losers. I would not recommend taking today's roughly \$324.5 million NSW road pool and reallocating it overnight on that basis. The point of the exercise is that the existing distribution looks materially different when road burden is made more visible, and that trying to correct the whole difference inside a fixed pool would start a political fight before the engineering work had even been finished.^{50,51}

The useful conclusion from the modelling is therefore not 'use 90/10'. It is much simpler: protect the existing base, improve the way need is measured, and use growth in the FAG pool to move the distribution progressively towards the new measure.

8. BALRANALD IS THE EXAMPLE, NOT THE ANSWER

Balranald Shire is useful because the numbers are large enough to make the problem obvious. In the broader OLG dataset used in my statewide work, the council carries about 1,593 kilometres of local and regional roads for a population a little above 2,200. That is about 718 road kilometres per 1,000 residents. The NSW council median in the same analysis is about 43.⁵²

The Grants Commission uses a narrower road dataset for the Local Roads Component. Its August preliminary advice records 1,336 kilometres of local road for Balranald, a population of 2,244 and 37 metres of bridges - about 595 local-road kilometres per 1,000 residents.⁵³

Those two road-length figures are not a contradiction. They answer different questions. The broader local-plus-regional network is useful when looking at the total infrastructure burden and overall financial sustainability of a council. The eligible Local Roads figure is the correct starting point for the identified road grant. The paper should keep the two separate.

Nor is Balranald unique. Earlier Western NSW work identified roughly 1,356 road kilometres per 1,000 residents in Central Darling, 1,102 in Brewarrina and 1,047 in Bourke, while Broken Hill was around 16. There is no moral judgement in those figures. They simply show that the relationship between infrastructure and the population available to support it varies enormously and deserves to be visible in any serious HFE discussion.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ **Terry Dodds PSM**, NSW 128-Council Local Roads FAG Distribution – Proof of Concept, 29 August 2026. The model tests the current allocation against pure road length and several road-length/infrastructure-intensity scenarios. It is explicitly a sensitivity model, not a proposed final formula.

⁵¹ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government, 2026–27 program and jurisdictional allocations, <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government> (accessed 29 August 2026).

⁵² **Terry Dodds PSM**, Road Funding Disparity: Does the Current Funding Pattern Adequately Recognise the Infrastructure Burden Carried by Rural and Remote NSW Councils?, 15 August 2026, analysis of all 128 NSW councils using OLG 2024–25 road data and Commonwealth 2026–27 FAG allocations.

⁵³ NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Balranald Shire Council 2026–27 Financial Assistance Grants Appendix A, August 2026. The preliminary calculation records population 2,244, local road length 1,336 km, bridge length 37 m and a Local Roads Component of \$1,922,765.

⁵⁴ **Terry Dodds PSM**, Western NSW Local Government Sustainability, 11 May 2026. The paper reported road-network intensity of approximately 1,356 km per 1,000 residents for Central Darling, 1,102 for Brewarrina, 1,047 for Bourke and 718 for Balranald, compared with approximately 16 for Broken Hill.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

If a properly constructed national preservation model eventually says Balranald should receive no more than it does now, so be it. Equally, if a metropolitan council has a higher preservation cost because of traffic, pavement standard, drainage and structures, recognise that as well. A credible formula has to survive being applied without knowing the name or postcode of the council beforehand.

9. TWO QUESTIONS NEED TO BE KEPT SEPARATE

After working through the Act and the new NSW proposal, I think the cleanest approach is to keep two questions separate.

Question 1: What should the road network reasonably cost to preserve?

That belongs in the Local Roads Component. Measure the eligible network, road type, usage and the material cost differences, convert that into a standard efficient annual preservation requirement, and allocate the road pool according to relative need. Population growth can be dealt with separately where the government wants to recognise new or expanded road infrastructure.⁵⁵

Question 2: What capacity does the council have to support its overall service and infrastructure burden?

That belongs in the General Purpose HFE calculation. Population, remoteness, rating capacity, land, service dispersion, infrastructure intensity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service needs and other demonstrable factors can all be tested there. The variables should stay because they explain a material difference, not because they have always been in the formula or happen to be convenient to collect.^{56,57}

Road kilometres per 1,000 residents sits between the two questions. It is not a road-cost formula. It is a very simple way of showing how much physical network sits behind the community and revenue base. If road costs are standardised properly, the better version becomes Equivalent Road Kilometres per 1,000 Residents.

Equivalent road kilometres would ‘weight’ road classes by standard lifecycle preservation cost. If one class costs twice the benchmark to preserve, a kilometre counts as two equivalent kilometres; if it costs less, it counts as less than one. That preserves the simplicity of the original indicator without pretending that a CBD road and a lightly trafficked unsealed road cost the same.

⁵⁵ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 78–90. The Commission recommended a comprehensive road assessment reflecting length, use, asset-preservation costs and, for new/improved roads, population growth; it also recommended using the same road-needs assessment in the identified road and relative-needs calculations to avoid inconsistency and double counting.

⁵⁶ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

⁵⁷ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 89–90. The Commission’s proposed relative-needs principles emphasised average service and revenue benchmarks, all material expenditure and revenue differences, infrastructure, policy neutrality and practical, transparent methods.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

10. WHAT NSW CAN FIX, AND WHAT ONLY CANBERRA CAN FIX

Reform	NSW under current Act	Commonwealth action	My view
Remove population from the NSW Local Roads formula	Yes	No Act amendment needed	Support. The proposed NSW model is already doing this visibly.
Adopt a stronger asset-preservation Local Roads model	Yes, within National Principles	No Act amendment needed	Support. Add type, usage, structures and the material lifecycle cost drivers.
Publish km/1,000 residents and equivalent-km indicators	Yes	National adoption desirable	Support as a transparency/HFE measure, not as the sole grant formula.
Refine General Purpose expenditure and revenue proxies	Yes	Must comply with s 6 and National Principles	Support the balanced-budget direction, subject to proper testing and disclosure.
Reduce the statutory 30% minimum	No	Amend s 6(2)(b)	Review. The CGC has previously proposed bounded State discretion between 20% and 30%.
Rebase historical interstate Local Roads shares	No	Commonwealth statutory/policy reform	Support a gradual move to contemporary national preservation need.
Tie the existing FAG base	No under present s 15 architecture	Would require amendment	Do not recommend. Protect the existing untied 0.5% base.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

Move to a durable 1% Commonwealth-local government settlement	No	Commonwealth budget and legislative reform	Support: 0.5% untied core plus a new tied infrastructure component rising by 0.1% a year to 0.5%.
Create a new tied Essential Local Infrastructure Component	No	Amend the 1995 Act (or use separate Commonwealth-State legislation)	Preferred: formula based, non-contestable, broad infrastructure eligibility, low-compliance assurance.
National comparable infrastructure reporting	NSW can publish its data	Use/strengthen s 16 national reporting	Support. This is the practical bridge to a reliable national 500+ council model.

This distinction is worth spelling out because otherwise the State and Commonwealth can spend another decade pointing at each other. NSW can substantially improve its own road and General Purpose methodology now. Canberra has to deal with the statutory 30 per cent minimum, the historical interstate road shares and the overall size of the national FAG pool.^{58,59,60}

11. THE FEDERAL CHANGES I WOULD PUT TO PARLIAMENT

11.1 RESTORE THE QUANTUM THROUGH A 0.5% + 0.5% HYBRID

The Australian Government will provide \$3.639 billion in FAGs in 2026–27: \$2.520 billion General Purpose and \$1.118 billion Local Roads. Against forecast Commonwealth taxation receipts of \$737.1 billion, that is about 0.494 per cent. The first job is therefore to stop the untied base drifting below the 0.5 per cent mark and lock it there as the minimum core settlement.^{61,62}

⁵⁸ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 6(2)–(3). Section 6(2)(b) creates the statutory 30 per cent per-capita minimum outcome; s 6(3) defines full horizontal fiscal equalisation.

⁵⁹ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 4 and 12. Section 12 rolls each State's additional previous-year funding amount forward by the common annual factor; this is the statutory architecture underlying the continuing historical jurisdictional shares of the identified local road component.

⁶⁰ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 15(a). Payments passed by States to local governing bodies under ss 9, 10, 12 and 13 are required to be unconditional payments, subject to the GST withholding provision in s 15(aa).

⁶¹ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government, 2026–27. Total FAG entitlement \$3,638,652,430; \$2.9 billion of the 2026–27 estimate was brought forward and paid to States and Territories on 19 June 2026. <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government>

⁶² Australian Government, Budget Paper No. 1: Budget Strategy and Outlook 2026–27, Statement 5, Table 5.1. Total taxation receipts: \$737.1b in 2026–27, \$757.0b in 2027–28, \$782.9b in 2028–29 and \$826.2b in 2029–30. Tax receipts excluding GST are separately reported. https://budget.gov.au/content/bp1/download/bp1_2026-27.pdf

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

I still support the 1 per cent benchmark, but I would get there through the hybrid model I put forward in July: protect 0.5 per cent as untied FAGs, then add a tied Essential Local Infrastructure Component at 0.1 per cent a year for five consecutive years. By year five the additional tied stream reaches 0.5 per cent, and the total settlement reaches 1 per cent. It is a staged budget ask, and it gives the Commonwealth something visible and defensible for the new money without taking away councils' discretion over the base they already receive.⁶³

More money should not simply be poured through the old arrangements. The existing untied base can be modernised over time, with sensible transition protection, while the new tied stream is allocated from day one under a transparent infrastructure-need formula. That gives us two opportunities at once: fix the size of the settlement and improve where the new money goes.

11.2 FIX THE SECTION 6 MINIMUM PROPERLY

I would not abolish a universal minimum. There is a sound argument that every council should receive some Commonwealth support and the Act also puts value on certainty. The issue is that a fixed 30 per cent statutory floor reduces the amount of a finite pool available for genuine equalisation. The Commonwealth Grants Commission reached broadly the same view in 2013 and proposed allowing States, within limits, to choose a common pool between 20 and 30 per cent.⁶⁴

A sensible Federal amendment would keep a national floor but give States bounded discretion. For example, 20 to 30 per cent, backed by published HFE analysis. That is cleaner than forcing State commissions to build extra adjustments around a Commonwealth constraint they cannot change.

11.3 REBASE THE SECTION 12 ROAD SHARES

The Local Roads pool should not stay locked indefinitely to historical State and Territory shares. Over time, each jurisdiction's share should reflect its share of nationally assessed road-preservation need. Existing nominal amounts can be protected at the start, with growth in the pool increasingly allocated under the contemporary measure.^{65,66}

If assessed road need is the right basis for dividing the money between councils inside a State, it is difficult to make a principled case for leaving the State shares frozen in history forever.

⁶³ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 3(3), 9, 12, 15 and 19. The present Act provides general grants under s 9 and additional funding under s 12, requires those payments to be passed on unconditionally under s 15, and appropriates payments under the Act through s 19. A third tied statutory component would therefore require legislative amendment. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text>

⁶⁴ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Financial Assistance Grants for Local Government 2013 (2013), pp. 84–85. The Commission proposed that States be permitted, within Commonwealth limits, to set a common equal-per-capita pool between 20 and 30 per cent, with a relative-needs pool of at least 65 per cent and an optional reform pool of up to 5 per cent.

⁶⁵ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government, 2026–27 program and jurisdictional allocations, <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government> (accessed 29 August 2026).

⁶⁶ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 4 and 12. Section 12 rolls each State's additional previous-year funding amount forward by the common annual factor; this is the statutory architecture underlying the continuing historical jurisdictional shares of the identified local road component.

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11.4 USE SECTION 16 FOR WHAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO DO

Section 16 already requires the Commonwealth Minister's annual report to assess HFE and Grants Commission methods using comparable national data. That is a ready-made place to publish a consistent national set of indicators: eligible road kilometres, road type, usage, equivalent kilometres, preservation need, population, own-source revenue capacity and infrastructure intensity.⁶⁷

I would not jump straight from the NSW workbook to forcing circa 530 councils into one national spreadsheet. The State datasets are not consistent enough yet. First agree on the definitions and the data dictionary, then model nationally. The NSW 128-council work shows why the exercise is worth doing; section 16 gives the Commonwealth a sensible way to make the underlying information comparable.

11.5 THE 1 PER CENT HYBRID: WHAT ACTUALLY HAS TO CHANGE

The starting point is simple. Do not touch the untied character of today's FAGs. Section 15 should continue to protect the General Purpose and Local Roads components as unconditional payments. The tied conditions apply only to the new money. That is the distinction the Fresh Approach paper was trying to make, and I think it is worth keeping.⁶⁸

11.6 CREATE A THIRD STATUTORY COMPONENT

If the additional 0.5 per cent is to be a permanent part of the Financial Assistance Grant settlement, I would put it in the 1995 Act rather than create another program that can disappear in a later Budget. The Act currently provides for general grants under section 9 and additional funding under section 12. Parliament should add a third entitlement, an Essential Local Infrastructure Component, and make the necessary consequential changes to the objects, allocation provisions, reporting and appropriation provisions.⁶⁹

The important point is not the eventual section number. The important point is that the new component has a statutory existence of its own. The current section 9 and section 12 money stays untied. The new component carries infrastructure conditions because Parliament has expressly created it that way.

11.7 WHAT 'TIED' SHOULD MEAN

I would not tie this money to individual projects approved in Canberra. That would recreate the grant-writing industry we are trying to get away from. Tie it to a broad class of essential local infrastructure, then let councils choose the qualifying works from their adopted asset management plans, long-term financial plans and infrastructure programs.

⁶⁷ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 16(3), requiring the Minister's annual report to include an assessment based on comparable national data of HFE, Grants Commission methods and local-government performance.

⁶⁸ Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, s 96: the Parliament may grant financial assistance to a State on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004Q00685/latest/text>

⁶⁹ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 3(3), 9, 12, 15 and 19. The present Act provides general grants under s 9 and additional funding under s 12, requires those payments to be passed on unconditionally under s 15, and appropriates payments under the Act through s 19. A third tied statutory component would therefore require legislative amendment. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text>

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

Eligible expenditure should include road and bridge renewal, culverts, drainage and stormwater, water and sewer infrastructure, flood and resilience works, housing-enabling infrastructure and renewal of core community assets. I would exclude beautification, prestige projects with no asset-management case, operating-cost substitution and works that do not appear in an adopted plan. **The Commonwealth gets a visible infrastructure outcome; councils keep sensible discretion over which legitimate local asset gets done first.**

11.8 PHASE IT IN AT 0.1 PER CENT A YEAR

I would start the new component in 2027-28. The 2026-27 year is already underway, and 80 per cent of the 2026-27 FAG estimate was brought forward and paid in June. Starting in 2027-28 gives Parliament time to legislate properly and gives councils, States and Grants Commissions time to settle the formula.⁷⁰

The five-year pathway is below. The first three dollar values use the current 2026-27 Budget forecasts. The 2030-31 and 2031-32 taxation-revenue figures are not yet published, so I have deliberately not invented them.⁷¹

Financial year	Untied FAG core	New tied infrastructure stream	Total benchmark
2027-28	0.5% = about \$3.785b	0.1% = about \$757m	0.6% = about \$4.542b
2028-29	0.5% = about \$3.915b	0.2% = about \$1.566b	0.7% = about \$5.480b
2029-30	0.5% = about \$4.131b	0.3% = about \$2.479b	0.8% = about \$6.610b
2030-31	0.5% of actual defined taxation revenue	0.4% of actual defined taxation revenue	0.9%
2031-32 onward	0.5% of actual defined taxation revenue	0.5% of actual defined taxation revenue	1.0%

The legislation should calculate the annual entitlement from the published Budget estimate and then provide a normal reconciliation once the final taxation-revenue figure is known. That is a much cleaner arrangement than arguing every year about whether the percentage has slipped again.

⁷⁰ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Financial Assistance Grant to Local Government, 2026-27. Total FAG entitlement \$3,638,652,430; \$2.9 billion of the 2026-27 estimate was brought forward and paid to States and Territories on 19 June 2026. <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/local-government/financial-assistance-grant-local-government>

⁷¹ Australian Government, Budget Paper No. 1: Budget Strategy and Outlook 2026-27, Statement 5, Table 5.1. Total taxation receipts: \$737.1b in 2026-27, \$757.0b in 2027-28, \$782.9b in 2028-29 and \$826.2b in 2029-30. Tax receipts excluding GST are separately reported. https://budget.gov.au/content/bp1/download/bp1_2026-27.pdf

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

11.9 DEFINE THE TAX BASE PROPERLY

The words ‘Commonwealth taxation revenue’ cannot be left as an advocacy slogan. Budget Paper No. 1 reports both total taxation receipts and tax receipts excluding GST. For 2026-27 the difference is \$737.1 billion versus \$634.0 billion, so the choice is material. My papers have used total taxation receipts, including GST, and that should be stated expressly in the legislation if that remains the intended benchmark.⁷²

11.10 THE ACT AMENDMENT IS QUITE DOABLE

At a drafting level I would expect the Commonwealth to do five things: define the taxation-revenue benchmark; add the Essential Local Infrastructure Component as a third statutory payment; establish national infrastructure-allocation principles and a Grants Commission recommendation process for that component; amend section 15 so the existing section 9 and section 12 payments remain unconditional while the new component is passed through subject to the new statutory conditions; and make sure section 19 and the annual reporting provisions cover the new payment. I am not suggesting those are the only drafting choices, but they are the cleanest policy instructions to give the Parliamentary Counsel.⁷³

The Treasurer’s existing power under section 8 to vary the annual FAG factor in special circumstances can change the quantum of the present scheme, and the 2026 determination shows that discretion is real. It cannot, by itself, turn an otherwise unconditional section 9 or section 12 payment into a tied infrastructure grant. The tied component needs its own legislative footing.⁷⁴

11.11 THE CONSTITUTIONAL PATH IS ALREADY THERE

The Commonwealth does not need to invent a new constitutional relationship with councils. Section 96 of the Constitution allows Parliament to give financial assistance to States on terms and conditions. The existing FAG system already works through payments to States for local government purposes. A new tied component can use the same broad Commonwealth-State pathway, with the States required to pass the money to councils according to the statutory formula and infrastructure conditions.⁷⁵

11.12 IF CANBERRA DOES NOT WANT TO AMEND THE FAG ACT

There is a second-best route. The Commonwealth can leave the 1995 Act alone and create the extra 0.5 per cent through separate legislation or the ordinary Federal Financial Relations machinery. Conditional State and local-government payments are not novel. The current

⁷² Australian Government, Budget Paper No. 1: Budget Strategy and Outlook 2026-27, Statement 5, Table 5.1. Total taxation receipts: \$737.1b in 2026-27, \$757.0b in 2027-28, \$782.9b in 2028-29 and \$826.2b in 2029-30. Tax receipts excluding GST are separately reported. https://budget.gov.au/content/bp1/download/bp1_2026-27.pdf

⁷³ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), ss 3(3), 9, 12, 15 and 19. The present Act provides general grants under s 9 and additional funding under s 12, requires those payments to be passed on unconditionally under s 15, and appropriates payments under the Act through s 19. A third tied statutory component would therefore require legislative amendment. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04936/latest/text>

⁷⁴ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 8(1)(c), permits the Treasurer to increase or decrease the annual factor where special circumstances exist. See also Local Government (Financial Assistance) (Final Factor for 2025-26 and Estimated Factor for 2026-27) Determination 2026. That power changes the factor; it does not displace the unconditional-payment requirement in s 15.

⁷⁵ Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, s 96. Parliament may grant financial assistance to a State on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

annual appropriation framework itself allows terms and conditions to be attached to State, Territory and local-government items.⁷⁶

That route would work, but I would not prefer it. It would be another program sitting beside FAGs, and another future Budget could rename it, shrink it or remove it. If the objective is a durable 1 per cent Commonwealth-local government settlement, put the additional component into the FAG legislation and make it part of the furniture.

11.13 KEEP THE RED TAPE OUT

Tied funding can become administratively stupid very quickly. That is not what I am proposing. There should be **no competitive application for the base entitlement, no requirement to employ consultants to write a business case, and no routine co-contribution that penalises the councils with the weakest balance sheets.** Allocation should be by formula.

The assurance should be proportionate: the work must be in an adopted plan; Council publishes the projects funded from the stream; the CEO or General Manager certifies eligibility and expenditure; and the Commonwealth and State use risk-based audit. That is enough to protect the taxpayer without making a small rural council spend a large slice of the grant proving that it deserved the grant.

11.14 NO SMOKE AND MIRRORS

The tied stream has to be additional. Roads to Recovery, Black Spot, disaster assistance, housing infrastructure and established State programs should be shown separately in the Budget papers. **The Commonwealth should not be able to announce a 0.1 per cent FAG increase with one hand and quietly remove the same money from another local-government line with the other.** Parliament cannot bind every future Parliament, but it can make substitution transparent enough that everyone can see it.

11.15 THE COMMONWEALTH GRANTS COMMISSION OBJECTION

The Commonwealth Grants Commission's 2013 work made a fair point: untied grants preserve local choice and tied programs can impose disproportionate compliance costs, particularly on small councils. I agree with that criticism as it applies to the existing FAG base. I do not think it answers the hybrid proposal.⁷⁷

I am not proposing to convert the present 0.5 per cent into tied money. I am saying that if the Commonwealth is asked to contribute another 0.5 per cent of taxation revenue - several billion dollars a year by the end of the phase-in - it is reasonable for taxpayers to know that the additional money is going into essential infrastructure. The answer to the red-tape objection is

⁷⁶ Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2026-27 (Cth), s 16. Payments from State, ACT, NT and local government items may be made on terms and conditions determined by the responsible Minister; this provides a current example of conditional payment machinery outside the FAG Act.

⁷⁷ Commonwealth Grants Commission, Review of the Operation of the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (2013). The Commission supported retaining untied grants and noted the administrative burden that tied arrangements can impose, particularly on smaller councils. Available through the Commonwealth Grants Commission information disclosure register.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

to tie the purpose broadly, allocate the money automatically by formula and leave councils to choose the eligible works.

11.16 THIS NEEDS TO BECOME GOVERNMENT POLICY

There is also a procedural reality. A permanent increase of this size is not something a private member can simply bolt onto the Budget. **Section 56 of the Constitution requires a Governor-General recommendation for proposed laws appropriating money.** In practice, the objective is to get the model adopted as a Commonwealth Government policy commitment, with Treasury, Infrastructure and Parliamentary Counsel then doing the legislative work.⁷⁸

The current House inquiry is a good place to put the proposition because its terms of reference expressly cover the legislative and policy frameworks underpinning Commonwealth support for local government and distinguish between untied grants and tied or specific-purpose funding. **In other words, this is not outside the inquiry's lane; it is squarely in it.**⁷⁹

12. TRANSITION: GRANDFATHER THE BASE, REFORM THE GROWTH

The 128-council model makes one practical point very clearly. A cleaner formula applied overnight to a fixed pool creates some very large losers. It may be mathematically tidy, but it is not a realistic implementation plan.⁸⁰

The better approach is to protect the existing untied base while the General Purpose and Local Roads methodologies are modernised, and put the new tied infrastructure money through the new formula from the first dollar. Councils then have time to adjust to changes in the old components, while the 0.1 per cent annual increments start shifting the Commonwealth-local government settlement towards contemporary infrastructure need immediately.

I also prefer that to a permanent collection of special floors and exceptions. A transition floor should have an end date. If a council remains genuinely high-need after the transition, the formula should keep supporting it because the need is still there, not because it qualified for a special rule years earlier.

I would use five principles for transition:

- No immediate nominal cut to an existing council or State untied FAG allocation when the reform starts.
- The new tied Essential Local Infrastructure Component is genuinely additional and allocated by the new infrastructure-need formula from its first year.
- Transition settings are published in advance and have an end date.

⁷⁸ Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, s 56. A proposed law appropriating revenue or money requires a Governor-General recommendation; a permanent new statutory spending component of this scale therefore requires Executive Government support.

⁷⁹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability, Terms of Reference, 2026. The terms expressly cover Commonwealth legislative and policy frameworks and distinguish untied from tied/specific-purpose funding.

⁸⁰ **Terry Dodds PSM**, NSW 128-Council Local Roads FAG Distribution – Proof of Concept, 29 August 2026. The model tests the current allocation against pure road length and several road-length/infrastructure-intensity scenarios. It is explicitly a sensitivity model, not a proposed final formula.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

- No rebadging of Roads to Recovery, disaster funding or other existing programs as part of the 0.1 per cent annual increase.
- A formal review at the end of the five-year phase tests whether the new settlement is reducing infrastructure and fiscal disparities without creating perverse incentives.

13. QUESTIONS I WOULD PUT BACK TO THE NSW COMMISSION

The new presentation is detailed enough that the NSW submission can now ask fairly specific questions. I support the direction of the review, but I would want the following answered before the new methodology is settled:

1. Why does the published Local Roads formula use road length and a broad Rawlinsons remoteness cost index but not separately use road type and usage, when the Commission itself identifies those matters from the National Principle?
2. How will bridges, major culverts and other high-cost road structures be treated under the proposed Local Roads Component?
3. Why is Rawlinsons the preferred cost index for operational road maintenance, and what testing has been done against NSW road-specific maintenance and renewal costs?
4. Can the Commission publish the Local Roads model using verified council road data before final adoption, including each council's inputs and resulting need share?
5. For the General Purpose expenditure model, what statistical variables were tested, which were retained, what was the model fit, and how were outliers and council classifications treated?
6. How has the Commission tested the risk that actual historical operating expenditure reflects financial constraint or under-service rather than true expenditure need?
7. Which grants are included in the four-year operational-grants revenue-capacity measure and which are excluded? How are FAGs, Roads to Recovery, disaster assistance and one-off specific-purpose grants treated?
8. Why is ARIA+ 6 the proposed floor threshold, what is the sensitivity immediately above and below that cut-off, and is the floor intended as temporary transition protection or a permanent feature?
9. Has the Commission tested a broader transition collar or no-real-loss arrangement rather than redistributing losses immediately between councils?
10. Will the Commission publish a plain-English calculation sheet for every council so each input, assumption and adjustment can be traced?

Those are not arguments for keeping the old formula. I think the old formula should change. They are the questions that need answering if the replacement is to be trusted and capable of surviving scrutiny.

14. WHAT CAN BE TAKEN TO CANBERRA

The Federal case no longer needs to be presented as a Balranald grievance or a country-versus-city argument. That would make it much easier to dismiss.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

NSW is already proposing to move its Local Roads method away from population and towards road-network extent and regional cost disadvantage. That is sensible State reform, but NSW can only divide the historical bucket it receives. Canberra has the bigger levers. It can protect the existing untied 0.5 per cent base, legislate a new tied infrastructure component that rises by 0.1 per cent a year to a further 0.5 per cent, modernise the national distribution rules and improve the data used to measure need.⁸¹

The ask of the Australian Government is straightforward:

- Commit to a statutory 1 per cent Commonwealth-local government settlement: not less than 0.5 per cent untied FAGs plus a tied Essential Local Infrastructure Component phased from 0.1 per cent to 0.5 per cent over five consecutive years.
- Define Commonwealth taxation revenue in the Act. On the approach used in this paper, the benchmark is total taxation receipts reported in Budget Paper No. 1, including GST.
- Make the tied component formula based and non-contestable, with broad essential-infrastructure eligibility, adopted-plan discipline, CEO/GM certification, public project lists and risk-based audit.
- Review and amend s 6(2)(b) so States have bounded flexibility in the equal-per-capita minimum while preserving a national floor.
- Reform the s 12 interstate Local Roads architecture so historical shares progressively converge with contemporary national road-preservation need.
- Retain s 15's unconditional-payment protection for the existing General Purpose and Local Roads components, but amend the Act so the new infrastructure component can carry its own statutory conditions.
- Use s 16 to establish a nationally consistent local-government infrastructure and fiscal-capacity dataset.
- Develop a national road-preservation framework based on length, type, usage and material lifecycle cost drivers, with room for legitimate State-specific conditions.
- Protect existing nominal untied allocations during transition; allocate the new tied stream by formula from the first dollar; and prevent Roads to Recovery or other existing programs being counted against the increase.

I think that package can be put to metropolitan, regional, rural and remote councils without nominating the winners in advance. It starts with measuring need properly and lets the evidence do the rest.

15. CONCLUSION

The August NSW Grants Commission presentation has moved this work on considerably. The Commission is now proposing that road length and geographic cost disadvantage drive the Local Roads Component more directly, with population removed from the road formula shown

⁸¹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability, Terms of Reference, 2026. The terms expressly cover Commonwealth legislative and policy frameworks and distinguish untied from tied/specific-purpose funding.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

in the slides. That is a significant change, and it supports the basic point behind the kilometres-per-1,000-residents work: the physical network has to be visible.⁸²

I support that direction, but I would not stop at road length multiplied by a broad regional construction index. The Commission's own statement of the National Principle refers to length, type and usage. A proper preservation model should also show how bridges, major structures and the material lifecycle cost differences between networks are being treated.

The General Purpose proposal is also a reasonable simplification, provided the Commission can demonstrate that simpler has not become shallower. Historic under-spending, infrastructure intensity, the treatment of other grants and the ARIA floor all need to be tested before the model is locked in.

The Federal Act then tells us where the remaining problems sit. NSW cannot change the statutory 30 per cent minimum or rebase the historical interstate road shares. Section 15 also means the Commonwealth cannot simply add tied conditions to today's FAG payments. None of that prevents the hybrid 1 per cent settlement. It means Canberra has to legislate it properly: preserve the existing untied components and create a new tied infrastructure component for the additional money.⁸³

So the national proposal is now clearer than my earlier drafts, not narrower. Measure the road network properly. Measure the council's reasonable capacity to support its wider responsibilities. Lock in the existing 0.5 per cent untied base. Add 0.1 per cent a year for five years as a tied, formula-based Essential Local Infrastructure Component. Protect the base while the old formulas are modernised, and make sure the new money goes where measurable infrastructure need says it should go.

Balranald demonstrates the problem. It does not define the answer. A sound methodology should work just as well in Blacktown, Broken Hill, Mount Isa, Hobart, the Pilbara or anywhere else, without anyone having to know beforehand which council is supposed to win.

Distance remains distance. Measure the infrastructure, measure the capacity, and fund the relative need.

Terry Dodds PSM

29 August 2026

16. NOTE ON THE EVIDENCE BASE

This paper uses the NSW Grants Commission's proposed 2027-28 methodology. It also draws on the current Commonwealth Act and National Principles, the 2026-27 Commonwealth FAG program and Budget papers, the Commonwealth Constitution, the Commonwealth Grants

⁸² NSW Local Government Grants Commission, Proposed Methodology Consultation, slides 28–33. The proposed Local Roads Component calculates road expenditure need from council road length and a Rawlinsons regional construction cost index, then allocates the State pool in proportion to assessed need.

⁸³ Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth), s 8(1)(c), permits the Treasurer to increase or decrease the annual factor where special circumstances exist. See also Local Government (Financial Assistance) (Final Factor for 2025-26 and Estimated Factor for 2026-27) Determination 2026. That power changes the factor; it does not displace the unconditional-payment requirement in s 15.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: A PRACTICAL NATIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL

Commission's 2013 review, the current House inquiry into local government funding, the author's Financial Assistance Grants: A Fresh Approach paper of 8 July 2026, and the NSW 128-council road/FAG modelling. The NSW Commission has made it clear that consultation is continuing and the final 2027-28 methodology has not yet been settled.⁸⁴

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⁸⁴ Sources added for the hybrid funding mechanism include: Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth); Commonwealth Constitution ss 56 and 96; Australian Government Budget Paper No. 1 2026-27; Department of Infrastructure 2026-27 FAG program material; Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2026-27, s 16 (terms and conditions for State, Territory and local-government items); Commonwealth Grants Commission 2013 review; and the House inquiry terms of reference.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development

**Supplementary questions - Government service delivery
standards in regional NSW**

13 August 2026, Parliament House

Riverina & Murray Joint Organisation

1. What are the main reporting frameworks your member councils are required to comply with when delivering social support services funded by the NSW Government?
2. In your experience, is there sufficient accountability for NSW Government funded services in your region?
3. In your experience, do NSW Government community services grants align to community needs?
 - a. If not, how can community services grants better align to community needs?
 - b. What opportunities are there to provide feedback to government if the grants are causing duplication of services, or not targeting the areas of greatest need?



Parliament of New South Wales · 6 Macquarie Street · Sydney NSW 2000 · Australia
Email: investmentindustry@parliament.nsw.gov.au

From: Terry Dodds

Sent: Saturday, 29 August 2026 11:18 AM

To: Julia Cornwell McKean <julia.cornwellmckean@berriganshire.nsw.gov.au>

Cc: Susan Escott <susan.escott@ramjo.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Suggested answers to supplementary questions

Importance: High

Hi Julia

I hope this finds you well. I have been very critical of grant requirements over the years and have written a couple (maybe more) of submissions about the lengthy, expensive, and often inefficient expenditure of both taxpayers' and ratepayers' money. So when Susan asked me to assist, I couldn't resist.

I spent an enormous effort on the recent Federal Enquiry into Local Government Sustainability (twice) and am yet to see anything come out of it. So, let's hope you have better luck!

There is no single reporting regime for every NSW Government-funded community or social support service delivered by councils. Requirements vary by program and agency, so the following describes the common framework across RAMJO councils.

1. What are the main reporting frameworks your member councils are required to comply with when delivering social support services funded by the NSW Government?

The funding agreement is normally the starting point. It sets out what council must deliver, the milestones and information required, and how the funding is to be acquitted. Depending on the program, this can include KPIs, service or client data, progress reports, expenditure evidence, financial acquittals, final reports and sometimes an audit or evaluation.

NSW Government grants administration. The Grants Administration Guide applies to NSW Government agencies administering grants. Its requirements are then reflected in program guidelines and funding agreements. It is important not to suggest that the Guide applies directly to a council simply because it receives a grant.

Council reporting and audit. Where the activity is part of a council's Delivery Program or Operational Plan, it is also reported through Integrated Planning and Reporting and the annual report. Grant income and expenditure are captured in the annual financial statements, which are audited by the NSW Auditor-General.

Program-specific requirements. Some services have additional statutory or data reporting requirements. Disability Inclusion Action Plan reporting is one example; other programs impose their own service or outcome reporting through the contract or guidelines. **There is therefore no shortage of reporting. The weakness is that most reporting follows individual programs and funding streams.** It does not always show whether, taken together, the services available in a community are actually meeting the need!

2. In your experience, is there sufficient accountability for NSW Government funded services in your region?

There is strong accountability for the money and, in most cases, for compliance with the contract. There is less accountability for the harder question: did the service actually meet the need in the community or was it aimed to support a political stance, or an upcoming election, or to shore up a swinging seat?

A provider can meet every milestone and acquit every dollar correctly while residents are still left with an inadequate service. At the Committee's hearing on 13 August 2026, RAMJO raised examples including ambulance wait times, limited access to dialysis and cardiac diagnostics, difficulty accessing time-critical stroke treatment, limited youth services, unreliable digital connectivity, and Cross-Border service barriers.

The NSW/Victoria border adds another layer. People use the nearest doctor, hospital, specialist, or community service, regardless of which side of the border it is on, but funding, eligibility and planning can still stop at the State line. That needs to be factored into service planning and assessment, not dealt with as an exception afterwards.

At a regional or genuine service catchment level, accountability should also show:

- Whether funded capacity matches actual and forecast demand, including waiting times, geographic coverage, and travel required.
- Workforce vacancies, service interruptions, and referrals that cannot be accepted.
- Where services are duplicated and, just as importantly, where the gaps are.
- Cross-Border usage and the outcomes achieved for people, not just the number of activities delivered.

The NSW grants framework already expects programs to be assessed for appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness, and social benefit. RAMJO's point is that the same discipline should be applied across the regional service system, not only to each grant in isolation.

3. In your experience, do NSW Government community services grants align to community needs?

Sometimes they do, but not consistently. **The problem is usually not the intent of the program; it is when a statewide or narrowly defined funding stream is designed first, and the community is then expected to fit its need into it.**

RAMJO's Strategic Regional Priorities, developed from member councils' Community Strategic Plans and regional workshops, identify health, housing, social inclusion and community resilience as key priorities, supported by workforce, transport, and digital inclusion. They are a sound local test of whether funding is landing where it is most needed.

In this region, because of our huge size and quite different community needs, grants generally work best when they are **place-based, flexible, long enough to establish and retain a service**, and designed with the region.

They work less well when distance, low population density, workforce shortages, thin service markets, Cross-Border patterns, and the real cost of outreach are not properly recognised.

Councils also see what could fairly be described as a '**Clayton's grant**': a process presented as competitive, but with criteria so narrow, prescriptive, or geographically specific that experienced council officers can see immediately that only one or a very small number of areas could realistically qualify!

Whether or not that is the intention, the effect is the same. **Councils are invited to spend scarce staff time and ratepayer money preparing applications for a contest whose outcome appears largely predetermined.** If Government has made a policy decision to fund a particular area, service, or cohort, it should say so and make a direct allocation. **Dressing that decision up as an open competitive grant undermines confidence in the grants system and wastes public resources at both ends.**

3(a) If not, how can community services grants better align to community needs?

Start with the need and design with the region. Use Community Strategic Plans, Joint Organisation priorities, service-access data and local providers before the program rules are settled. Consultation after the guidelines are effectively complete is of limited value.

Often, the government department administering the grants' reaction is to 'consult the community'. The question all local government has is, **"Wasn't that already completed when 128 councils spent tens of millions of dollars collectively completing their Community Strategic Plans?"**

Plan around the service catchment people actually use. In border communities this means considering Victorian services as part of the picture and routinely asking the ‘border question’ when programs are designed.

Fund continuing needs for a sensible period and allow local flexibility. Short funding cycles make it harder to recruit and retain staff and maintain community confidence. Set clear outcomes and safeguards, but do not prescribe a delivery model that only works in metropolitan areas.

Recognise the real cost of regional delivery. Travel, outreach, workforce attraction and retention, small caseloads over large areas and a lack of alternative providers all add cost. Equal funding per head does not necessarily mean equal access.

Map existing services and use the evidence. Before funding something new, agencies should understand existing capacity, unmet demand, and gaps. Evaluation should then inform whether the next round is continued, expanded, redesigned, or stopped.

3(b) What opportunities are there to provide feedback to government if the grants are causing duplication of services, or not targeting the areas of greatest need?

There are avenues now: directly through the funding agency or grant manager, program reviews and evaluations, regional agency staff, the Office of the Cross-Border Commissioner, RAMJO advocacy and inquiries such as this one.

The problem is that these avenues are **fragmented**, and an issue raised with one agency is not necessarily considered across government or reflected in the next funding round.

RAMJO would support a more deliberate feedback loop, including:

- A standard place in progress and acquittal reporting to identify unmet demand, duplication, referral failures and service gaps. However, base acquittal complexity on a **sliding scale based on the monetary size** of the grant. (A \$250,000 grant shouldn’t take hours of work to acquit).
- Regular regional service mapping with Joint Organisations and councils, showing funding, capacity, demand, gaps and Cross-Border usage.
- A formal opportunity for Joint Organisations to comment on significant regional grant programs before the guidelines are finalised (no ‘Clayton’s’ grant criteria).
- A clear cross-agency escalation pathway, including the Cross-Border Commissioner, where relevant, with program evaluations feeding directly into future funding decisions.

The test is simple. Government needs to know not only whether the grant was spent correctly, but whether the services on the ground are meeting the needs of the people

they were intended to serve. Those are related questions, but they are not the same. The second part of the **solution isn't to have council staff members spend an inordinate amount of time reconciling a grant of little financial value.**

I hope this assists.

Cheers

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea." Antoine de Saint Exupery 1900-1944



Terry Dodds PSM

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We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respects to their elders past, present, and emerging.

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From: [Terry Dodds](#)
To: ["ElectorateOffice Cootamundra"](#); ["cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au"](mailto:cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au)
Cc: [Raju Ranjit](#); [Carolyn Holmes](#)
Bcc: bruce.whitehill@clearwateraustralia.com.au; ken@thetable.group; [David Webb](#)
Subject: Shadow Minister for Water and Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke MP - Royalties for Regional Water Fund (RRWF) Info Session - Wednesday 9 September 2025
Date: Monday, 7 September 2026 4:56:00 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

Dear Ms Cooke,

Balranald Shire Council strongly supports the proposed Royalties for Regional Water Fund and the return of a substantial, predictable capital funding program for regional water and sewerage infrastructure.

Our main request is simple: the funding model must recognise the community's capacity to pay. A standard co-contribution percentage will not work across regional NSW.

Council's NSW Public Works Water and Sewerage Strategic Plan specifically identifies Balranald's community capability to pay as a challenge, using the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage as the relevant measure. Balranald Shire has a little over 2,000 residents spread across more than 21,000 square kilometres. There are simply not enough customers to spread the cost of multi-million-dollar treatment infrastructure across without creating an unreasonable burden on households.

The IWCM makes the point even more clearly. Its financial modelling assumes 90 per cent government assistance for the major Balranald and Euston water treatment upgrades. With that assistance, typical residential charges can broadly remain at the modelled levels of \$785 per annum for filtered water and \$864 for raw water, without Council taking on new loans.

Without that government assistance, the same NSW Public Works modelling says Council would need to borrow around \$10 million for the water upgrades alone, with the cost of servicing that debt flowing directly into higher residential water bills.

That is the problem in a nutshell.

A treatment plant does not become cheaper because a town has fewer people. The standards remain the same, but the number of households available to pay for them collapses.

Balranald therefore asks that the RRWF:

- Expressly include socio-economic disadvantage and capacity to pay in determining the level of assistance.
- Retain the ability to provide up to 90 per cent funding to small and financially constrained Local Water Utilities.
- Allow reduced or nil co-contributions where the evidence demonstrates that the community cannot reasonably carry them.
- Assess projects on public-health risk, water security, asset condition, and community affordability, rather than simply population or the ability of a council to find matching funds.

Council has previously made exactly this point: funding assessments need to recognise individual utility financial capacity, and the former ability to provide up to 90 per cent assistance to small, financially constrained utilities was based on sound reasoning.

The question I would particularly ask on Wednesday is:

Will the Royalties for Regional Water Fund guarantee that socio-economic disadvantage and demonstrated capacity to pay will determine the funding

percentage, including access to up to 90 per cent assistance for small remote utilities such as Balranald, rather than imposing a standard co-contribution requirement?

Yours sincerely

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea." Antoine de Saint Exupery 1900-1944



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@balranaldshirecouncil

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respects to their elders past, present, and emerging.

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From: ElectorateOffice Cootamundra <ElectorateOffice.Cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 4 September 2026 4:47 PM

To: ElectorateOffice Cootamundra <ElectorateOffice.Cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Shadow Minister for Water and Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke MP - Royalties for Regional Water Fund (RRWF) Info Session - Wednesday 9 September 2025

You don't often get email from electorateoffice.cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good afternoon,

Shadow Minister for Water and Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke MP, warmly invites Local Government Mayors, General Managers, NSW Local Water Utilities and Joint Organisations to join her online at **8.25 am on Wednesday, 9 September 2026** for a discussion on the *Royalties for Regional Water Fund* (RRWF). A link to the meeting has been provided at the bottom of this email.

To learn more about the RRWF ahead of the session, please refer to the media releases attached to this email, or view Ms Cooke's full presentation [HERE](#).

Participants are encouraged to submit any questions regarding the RRWF to cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au by **12.00 pm on Tuesday, 8 September 2026**. Ms Cooke will endeavour to address as many questions as possible during the online discussion.

We look forward to your participation. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Microsoft Teams meeting

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Kind Regards,

Kim Hill OAM

Senior Electorate Officer | Junee Office

Steph Cooke MP

State Member for Cootamundra

Shadow Minister for Water and Shadow Minister for Crown Lands

Email: cootamundra@parliament.nsw.gov.au

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I wish to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work today. I would also like to pay my respects to Elders past and present as well as to emerging leaders.

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From: Terry Dadds
 To: David Webb; Barnaby Bates; Cr Dennis Gleeson; Cr Peter Dawson; Robert Black; Cr Mayor Michael Kidd; Daniel Hughes (d.hughes@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au); Daryl Morgan; Geoff.gunn@wentworth.nsw.gov.au; John Scro; Mayor Ali Cooper; Cr Carol Oates; Mayor Dallas Tour; Mayor Daniel Leckie; Louie Caffine; Mayor Neville Kocerka; Ruth McEne; Mayor Stuart King; Peter Thompson; Sarah Stephens; Shane Wilson; Alan Darby; Wentworth Shire Council; Todd Remington (T. Farley, MP)
 Cc: Gary McEne; Rene Loney; Ashley Cowley; Carol Dossie; Cassandra Webster; Gabe Menden; RMD@red@narrandera.nsw.gov.au; Ian Donald; Julie Curry; Melissa Seymour; Sheryl Mulliken; Vicki Maher
 Subject: Sturt Highway Corridor Plan - Balranald's response.
 Date: Tuesday, 8 September 2026 9:37:00 AM
 Attachments: jms002.png; jms003.png

Hi David,
 Thanks for taking this on. I've looked through our plans, Council reports, and some TNSW material, and pulled together what I think is the most useful snapshot for Balranald. A couple of the traffic figures are getting a bit long in the tooth, which probably proves one of the points we have been making: we need better and more regular traffic counting along the Sturt.
 This may inspire others! Sorry it's a bit longer than a page too.

LGA / Council

Balranald Shire Council

Population

About 2,200 people.

Major towns

Balranald and Euston. Euston is about 80 km west of Balranald.

Sturt Highway length

About 160 km through Balranald Shire.

I'd suggest we get TNSW to **confirm the exact figure** before the final document is locked down. (The figures are older than when Jesus padded up for the Jerusalem Under 16's cricket club.)

Traffic volume

The only TNSW count I can find at Balranald is about 1,070 vehicles a day. (If it were only this little, we'd be cheering! The new gadgets that have been mistaken for speed cameras, installed west of Hay, west of Balranald and in Wentworth, have been collecting data for a while. I haven't seen the results yet though.)

Heavy vehicle volume

The important number is that about **half of those vehicles are heavy vehicles**, so around 530 a day.

Even considering the data is ancient, the ratio speaks for itself. It is a very high truck component and probably tells the story better than the overall traffic count.

Major industries

This may miss the whole point! It **isn't** what Gross Domestic Product is grown or mined in our area that significantly affects the Sturt. It's the 100's and 100's of heavy vehicles that travel to and from NSW and SA daily that tell the story.

That doesn't mean there isn't local input. Agriculture remains the big one: broadacre cropping, sheep, cattle, goats, and horticulture. Euston and surrounds have significant irrigated horticulture, particularly grapes, almonds, avocados, carrots, and other high-value crops. We also have mineral sands and mining activity, Iluka and Tronox, and now the Southwest Renewable Energy Zone and the construction activity that will come with that. Tourism, transport and servicing those industries are also important.

Key local freight generators

Agriculture and horticulture around Balranald and Euston. Mineral sands and mining. Southwest REZ construction and eventually ongoing operations. Oversize and overmass renewable-energy components. Grain, livestock, farm machinery, and inputs. Inputs shouldn't be dismissed easily as a throwaway word. When the new 100,000 head feedlot is established between Balranald and Hay, a minimum of 700 tonnes of feed per day will be carried to the site.

Then, as it is expected to grow to 200,000 head, the maths are simple. A B-Double Combination ranges from 40 – 55 tonnes (Gross combination masses up to 68 t). These configurations of high-capacity bulk transport are the type used between grain terminals and major commercial feedlots. 1400 tonnes per day equates to between 25 and 35 B-Doubles for 365 days per year.

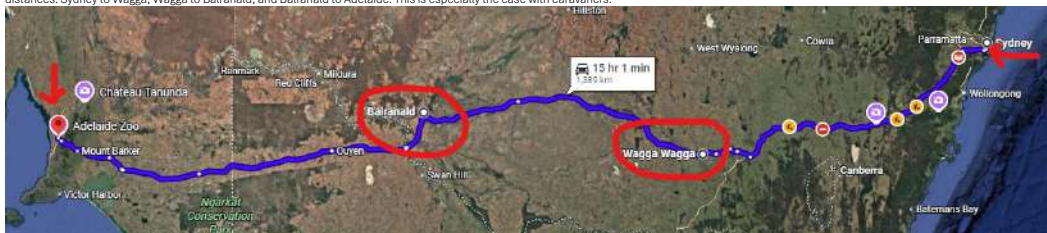
Then, of course, there is the freight that has absolutely **nothing** to do with Balranald (or most of the other Shires along the Sturt, as mentioned previously. But transport uses the Sturt because it is one of the **major** east-west freight routes between the Riverina/eastern states, Sunraysia and South Australia.

Tourism significance

The Sturt is basically our tourism spine. It brings people through Balranald and Euston and provides access towards Yanga, Mungo, and the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area, as well as the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers and Lake Benanee. Balranald and Euston are also important stopping points for fuel, accommodation, and food on what are very long travelling distances. (The trip from Sydney to Adelaide can be broken up into

Key infrastructure and connections

The Sturt Highway obviously runs through both Balranald and Euston. Many people in Balranald/Euston have noticed that the trip from Sydney to Adelaide is often broken up into three legs, or one-third distances. Sydney to Wagga, Wagga to Balranald, and Balranald to Adelaide. This is especially the case with caravanners.



Other important connections are:

- Yanga Way/Balranald: Tooleybuc Road towards Swan Hill.
- Balranald-Ivanhoe Road, particularly for mining traffic.
- The Murray Valley Highway connection through Euston/Robinvale.
- Balranald Aerodrome.
- The grain siding/saleyards area at Balranald, which may have some longer-term potential as a freight/heavy transport precinct.

The aerodrome is becoming increasingly important as well. Council is working on extending the runway, mainly to future-proof RFDS access but also because mining, renewable energy and other major projects are increasing the need for reliable emergency and aviation infrastructure.

Major constraints

This is probably where our biggest concerns are. There are sections with poor road width and camber, limited shoulders (read: almost non-existent), and not enough safe overtaking opportunities. Truck rollovers have been an issue. The heavy vehicle percentage is already high, and we expect it to increase with mining and renewable-energy construction.

There are also issues around rest areas and fatigue management. Now that the (excellently equipped) AMPOL at Trentham Cliffs is operating, heavy transport operators appear to be skipping past the BP East of Balranald and going to the (better) truck stop at Trentham Cliffs. Recently, a couple of heavy vehicles never made it.

West of Euston, there is a long section of floodplain with culverts and drainage infrastructure that needs proper assessment. We saw during the 2022 floods what happens when parts of that system fail. Balranald itself also needs another look from a heavy vehicle point of view. There has previously been discussion about a bypass, and I think that should stay alive rather than allowing future development to close off the opportunity. But that is a **long way off**. We haven't got a single overtaking lane anywhere along the Sturt, and few places where no vehicles can even pull over onto a shoulder (without ending up bogged or belly-up). Basic **safety** should obviously take precedence.

The other major constraint is simply a **lack of good current data**. We need permanent or much more regular classified traffic counts along the western end of the Sturt. There is hope though, with the recent installation of the new counters; although I haven't seen the data yet.

Priority projects

My list would be:

- Overtaking lanes (don't need to be a Rhodes Scholar to work this one out!)
- Widening and shoulder improvements where required
- Investigating/fixing known truck rollover problem areas.
- Proper investigation and upgrading of the floodplain culverts west of Euston;
- Another serious look at the Balranald / Euston heavy vehicle/bypass issue (for corridor definition/acquisition only)
- Better heavy vehicle rest areas (will be improved with the 26 SW-REZ stopping bays)
- Permanent traffic and freight counting.
- Protection of the Sturt from the impact of major mining and renewable-energy developments (generalisation)
- Investigation of a proper freight/heavy transport servicing area at Balranald.

I'd also keep the Balranald Aerodrome in the picture. It is not technically a Sturt Highway project, but it is part of the same freight, emergency response, and regional infrastructure story.

Strategic importance to the Sturt Highway

I think Balranald's story is reasonably simple. We only have about 2,200 people, but the **Sturt Highway through our Shire is doing a job that has very little to do with our population**. It carries interstate freight, agriculture, horticulture, mining traffic, tourism, and increasingly renewable-energy traffic. Balranald and Euston also provide fuel, accommodation, food, emergency services, and other support along a very long stretch of highway.

I think one of the messages in the corridor plan needs to be that the importance of the Sturt should be measured by the **job the road is doing, not by how many people happen to live beside it**.

Give me a yell if you want anything else or if you want me to dig further into any of the figures.

Cheers

Terry

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea." Antoine de Saint Exupery 1900-1944



Terry Dodds PSM

Chief Executive Officer

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We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respects to their elders past, present, and emerging.

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From: David Webb <DWebb@hay.nsw.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 7 September 2026 10:01 AM

To: Barnaby Bates <barnaby.bates@wentworth.nsw.gov.au>; Cr Dennis Gleeson <dgleeson@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au>; Cr Peter Dawson <cr.dawson@narrandera.nsw.gov.au>; Robert Black <rblack@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au>; DJ Mayor Michael Kidd <michaelk@leeton.nsw.gov.au>; Daniel Hughes <dhughes@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au>; Daryl Morgan <daryl.morgan@mildura.vic.gov.au>; Geoff Gunn <geoff.gunn@wentworth.nsw.gov.au>; John Scarce <johns@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au>; Mayor Ali Cupper <ali.cupper@mildura.vic.gov.au>; Cr Carol Oatway <cr.oatway@hay.nsw.gov.au>; Mayor Dallas Tout <councillor.tout@wagga.nsw.gov.au>; Mayor Daniel Linklater <CrLinklater@wentworth.nsw.gov.au>; Louie Zaffina <lzaffina@balranald.nsw.gov.au>; Mayor Neville Kschenka <cr.kschenka@narrandera.nsw.gov.au>; Ruth McRae <ruthm@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au>; Mayor Stuart King <stuart.king@swanhill.vic.gov.au>; Peter Thompson <thompson.peter@wagga.nsw.gov.au>; Sarah Stephen <sstephen@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au>; Shane Wilson <shane.wilson@narrandera.nsw.gov.au>; Silas Darby <silasd@leeton.nsw.gov.au>; Terry Dodds <tdodds@balranald.nsw.gov.au>; Wentworth Shire Council <council@wentworth.nsw.gov.au>

Cc: Kerry McRae <kmcrae@hay.nsw.gov.au>; Anne Lyons <annel@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au>; Ashlee Cavallo <ashlee.cavallo@mildura.vic.gov.au>; Carmel Posselt <possett.carmel@wagga.nsw.gov.au>; Carolyn Holmes <cholmes@balranald.nsw.gov.au>; Cassandra Webster <webster.cassandra@wagga.nsw.gov.au>; Gayle Marsden <gmea@wentworth.nsw.gov.au>; GMSOffice@Narrandera.nsw.gov.au; Jan Donald <JDonald@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au>; Julie Conn <juliec@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au>; Melissa Seymour <melissas@leeton.nsw.gov.au>; Sheryl Mudaliar <smudaliar@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au>; Vicki Maher <Vicki.Maher@Narrandera.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Sturt Highway Corridor Plan

Hi All,

I have commenced the Sturt Highway Corridor Plan, and request each LGA provide the following profile please:

Each one-page profile should provide:

LGA / Council

Population:

Major towns:

Sturt Highway length:

Traffic volume:

Heavy vehicle volume:

Major industries:

Key freight generators:

Tourism significance:

Key infrastructure and connections:

Major constraints (including any photos you wish to share):

Priority projects:

Strategic importance to the Sturt Highway:

This will be most helpful to insert into the plan for background/context. I request this information by Friday 2nd October 2026.

Thanks.



David Webb
General Manager

Hay Shire Council
134 Lachlan Street
Hay NSW 2711

Ph: 02 6990 1100 **Mobile:** 0429 693 492

Values - Integrity • Openness • Responsiveness • Quality of Service

www.hay.nsw.gov.au www.visithay.com.au
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11.7 CIRCULARS FROM THE OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

File Number: D26.127666
Author(s): Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant
Approver: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective: Pillar 6: Our Leadership – A community that values and fosters leadership, lifelong learning, innovation and good governance.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Council with copies of the circulars received from the Office of Local Government (OLG).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the report.

REPORT

Council receives circulars from the OLG for any updates and information that are relevant to Council.

While many of the circulars are of an administrative nature, there may be matters that are of interest to the community.

Circulars Received from the OLG

26-15 *Elections for Mayors and Elections for Chairpersons of Joint Organisations and County Councils*

The Office of Local Government has issued guidance on mayoral elections as well as elections for chairs of county councils and joint organisations. Councils that elect their mayors will be required to hold mid-term mayoral elections in September 2026. (See report in this Business paper.)

26-16 *New Privacy Protections under the Electoral Funding Act 2018*

To protect the privacy of political participants, section 22 of the Electoral Funding Act 2018 (EF Act) has been amended to prohibit the NSW Electoral Commission from publishing residential addresses contained in disclosures of reportable political donations if the donor is a current or previous registered candidate or elected member of a local council of the NSW Parliament.

26-17 *Local Government Performance Ratios discussion paper*

OLG, in consultation with the Expert Advisory Panel and a range of stakeholders has developed the Local Government Performance Ratios discussion paper and is seeking feedback on the proposed Performance Ratio Framework, including the proposed ratios, benchmarks and reporting approach, prior to finalisation. (Council has submitted and also written directly to the OLG.)

26-18 *Consultation on Model Code of Conduct for council Staff, Delegates and Committee Members*

The Office of Local Government is inviting feedback from the Local Government sector on the Model Code of Conduct for Council Staff, Delegates and Committee Members.

All circulars can be found on the OLG's website at [Circulars – Office of Local Government NSW](#)

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Nil

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Nil

POLICY IMPLICATION

Nil

RISK RATING

Low

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11.8 MEETINGS ATTENDED BY THE MAYOR, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND THE EXECUTIVE TEAM

File Number: D26.127833
Author(s): Carol Holmes, Senior Executive Assistant
Approver: Terry Dodds PSM, Chief Executive Officer
Operational Plan Objective: Pillar 6: Our Council – Upholds the community's expectations of good governance, engages and ethical leadership, a skilled and effective workforce, and operational transparency and accountability.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of the meetings undertaken on behalf of Council by the Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Team since the previous Council Meeting.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and noted.

REPORT

Attachment 1 details the meetings that the Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer, and the Executive Team have had since the Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 18 August 2026.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Nil

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATION

Nil

POLICY IMPLICATION

Nil

RISK RATING

Low

ATTACHMENTS

1. Meetings attended by Mayor and Executive Staff [↓](#) 

Date	Meeting	Topic	Who Was Involved
17.8.2026	Catch Up	Managers & Executive	CEO, EMCG, CFO, MTPS & MPE
17.8.2026	Catch Up	Executive Leadership Team Meeting	CEO, CFO & EMCG
18.8.2026	Meeting	Capital Projects	EMCG, CFO & EMCG
18.8.2026	Meeting	Tour Euston & Lunch with Councillors & Community Members of Euston	Mayor
18.8.2026	Workshop	Councillor Workshop	Mayor, CEO, CFO & EMCG
18.8.2026	Meeting	Ordinary Council Meeting	Mayor, CEO, CFO & EMCG
18.8.2026	Radio Interview	ABC Radio Interview – Roads	CFO
19.8.2026	After Council Briefing	Monthly Catch Up with Depot Staff	CFO & EMCG
19.8.2026	After Council Briefing	Monthly Catch Up with Office Staff	CFO & EMCG
19.8.2026	Conference	Statewide Risk Conference	CEO
19.8.2026	Teams Meeting	IT MSP Tender Outcome	EMCG
20.8.2026	Conference	Statewide Risk Conference	CEO
20.8.2026	Teams Meeting	Balranald Lease Agreement Review	Mayor
20.8.2026	Conference	75th ALGWA Conference	EMCG
21.8.2026	Catch Up	Hostel Staff	CFO
21.8.2026	Teams Meeting	LTFP 2026/2027	EMCG
24.8.2026	Catch Up	Managers & Executive	CEO, EMCG, CFO, MTPS & MPE
24.8.2026	Teams Meeting	RFDSSE / Balranald Shire	Mayor, CEO
24.8.2026	Teams Meeting	VC Claims Catch UP	EMCG
24.8.2026	Teams Meeting	BSC Delegations	EMCG
24.8.2026	Catch Up	AGRN Funded Projects	EMCG & MTPS
24.8.2026	Teams Meeting	SW REZ Local Health Service Study	CEO & EMCG
24.8.2026	EPAC Meeting	Monthly Meeting	Mayor & EMCG
25.8.2026	Catch Up	ESIG – regular catch up	CEO, CFO, EMCG, MTPS
25.8.2026	Catch Up	ESI Team	CEO, EMCG, CFO, MTPS & MPE
25.8.2026	Catch Up	David Farley Visit Euston	Mayor
25.8.2026	Meeting	Comtel Technology / Demo session / Bidgee Haven Hostel Project	EMCG & MTPS
25.8.2026	Teams Meeting	HRO Position Clarity Meeting	EMCG

Mayor – Cr Louie Zaffina

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Mr Terry Dodds PSM

Acting Chief Executive Officer (Acting CEO) – Stephen Blackadder

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) – Ms Edna Mendes

Executive Manager – Community & Governance (EMCG) – Hodi Beauliv

Manager Technical & Project Services (MTPS) – Raju Ranjit

Manager Planning & Environment (MPE) – Cathy Brady-Overington

Date	Meeting	Topic	Who Was Involved
26.8.2026	Catch Up	Finance System	CFO
26.8.2026	Catch Up	David Farley Visit Balranald	Mayor, CEO, EMCG
26.8.2026	Catch UP	Mayor/CEO weekly catch up	Mayor & CEO
26.8.2026	Teams Meeting	Governance Frameworks	EMCG
6.8.2026	TED Meeting	Monthly Meeting	EMCG
26.8.2026	Meeting	Monthly Hostel Finance Meeting	EMCG & CFO
27.8.2026	Meeting	SWREZ Touchbase Balranald/RREM	EMCG
27.8.2026	Teams Meeting	Transition Plan – Charlie Mac & Associates	CEO
27.8.2026	Meeting	Regular Governance Team Meeting	EMCG
27.8.2026	Teams Meeting	Red Piranha Regular Meeting	EMCG
27.8.2026	SCAIWAC Meeting	Regular Monthly Meeting	EMCG
27.8.2026	Workshop	CMA	Mayor & CEO
28.8.2026	Meeting	CMA – Quarterly Meeting	Mayor & CEO
31.8.2026	Catch Up	Regular Managers and Executive Catch Up	CEO, EMCG, CFO, MTPS & MPE
31.8.2026	Ceremony	2 new Citizenships	Mayor, CEO & EMCG
1.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Policy Feedback Group – Chief Finance Officers	CFO
1.9.2026	Meeting	Sturt Highway Taskforce	Mayor & CEO
1.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Transition Planning & Next Steps	EMCG
1.9.2026	Catch Up	Regular Catch Up	Mayor & CEO
2.9.2026	Radio Interview	Weekly Radio Interview	CEO
2.9.2026	Meet & Greet	Charlie Mac & Associates	CEO, EMCG
2.9.2026	Catch UP	Executive Leadership Meeting	CEO, EMCG & CFO
2.9.2026	Catch UP	Capital Funded Projects	EMCG & MTPS
3.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Revenue	CFO
3.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Asset Ownership	CEO, EMCG, CFO, MTPS & MPE
3.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Mining Rates	CFO & MPE
4.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Aerodrome Conveyancing Discussion	CEO
4.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Mining – Iluka	CFO & MPE
Mayor – Cr Louie Zaffina			
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Mr Terry Dodds PSM			
Acting Chief Executive Officer (Acting CEO) – Stephen Blackadder			
Chief Financial Officer (CFO) – Ms Edna Mendes			
Executive Manager – Community & Governance (EMCG) – Hodi Beauliv			
Manager Technical & Project Services (MTPS) – Raju Ranjit			
Manager Planning & Environment (MPE) – Cathy Brady-Overington			

Date	Meeting	Topic	Who Was Involved
4.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Contract Finalising	EMCG
7.9.2026	Catch Up	Regular Catch Up	CEO, EMCG, CFO, MTPS & MPE
7.9.2026	Webinar	OLG – Round 4 – Fresh Start	EMCG
7.9.2026	Catch UP	AGRN Funded Projects	EMCG & MTPS
8.9.2026	Teams Meeting	MDA Region 4 Meeting	CEO
8.9.2026	Catch Up	Iluka – Meet & Greet Operations Manager	CEO & EMCG
8.9.2026	Catch Up	Regular Catch UP – ESI Team	CEO, EMCG, CFO, MTPS & MPE
9.9.2026	Radio Interview	Weekly Radio Interview	CEO
9.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Shadow Minister	Mayor & CEO
9.9.2026	Teams Meeting	NSW Local Government Reference Group Meeting	EMCG
9.9.2026	Public Consultation	Draft Far West Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan	CEO, EMCG & MTPS
9.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Darling Murray Murrumbidgee Rural Services Network Meeting	EMCG
9.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Finance System Catch UP	CFO
10.9.2026	Meeting	Western Division Councils of NSW Mid-Term Meeting	Deputy Mayor & CEO
10.9.2026	Meeting	Regular Bidgee Haven Project Meeting	EMCG & MTPS
10.9.2026	Meeting	Regular Governance Team Meeting	EMCG
10.9.2026	Teams Meeting	Renewable Energy	EMCG
11.9.2026	Meeting	Western Division Councils of NSW Mid Term Meeting	Deputy Mayor & CEO
11.9.2026	Teams Meeting	ARIC – Financial Statements	EMCG & CFO

The CEO and Executive Team meet regularly with individual staff members outside the above meetings.

Mayor – Cr Louie Zaffina
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Mr Terry Dodds PSM
Acting Chief Executive Officer (Acting CEO) – Stephen Blackadder
Chief Financial Officer (CFO) – Ms Edna Mendes
Executive Manager – Community & Governance (EMCG) – Hodi Beauliv
Manager Technical & Project Services (MTPS) – Raju Ranjit
Manager Planning & Environment (MPE) – Cathy Brady-Overington

5 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Nil

6 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

RECOMMENDATION

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993:

32.1 Establishment of Project Management Services Panel for Funded Projects

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(i) and d(ii) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it and information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council.

33.2 Status update on actions to address fire damage to the Royal Theatre Building

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(i), d(ii), e and g of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law and advice concerning litigation, or advice as comprises a discussion of this matter, that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege.

7 CLOSURE OF MEETING