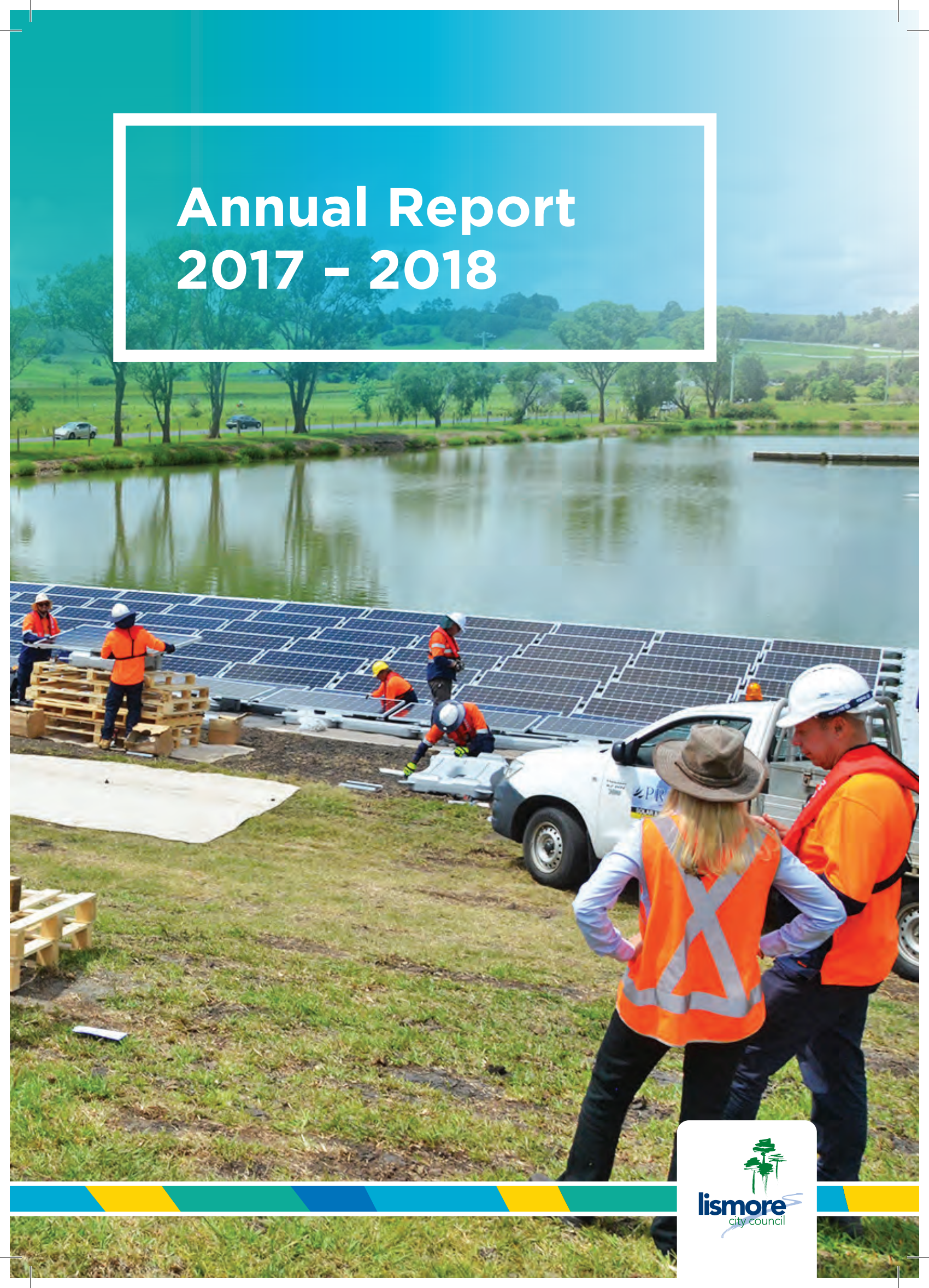


Annual Report 2017 - 2018



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Mayor's Message

I have the pleasure of introducing Lismore City Council's Annual Report for 2017-18. While we have continued to discuss our recovery from the devastating flood in March last year, I like to think that we are really preparing for the Lismore of the future.

It is not just rebuilding but a call to our community, and the almost 20,000 households therein, to go beyond the tragedy and find a core of resilience that will help us overcome anything that comes our way in the decades ahead.

It has been a year of significant investment in local facilities, with big increases in spending on our local roads. We have also won a significant number of grants to boost our 'regional city' credentials through new and improved sporting fields, the Lismore Regional Gallery and the new South Lismore Sewage Treatment Plant to ensure future growth. This investment has allowed Council to reduce its infrastructure backlog, but I acknowledge we still have a lot of work to do.

These infrastructure improvements aim to meet our Imagine Lismore Community Strategic Plan goals to become a more sustainable city. We have won a number of awards and commendations for



our community solar initiative and Biodiversity Management Strategy, each making life easier for farmers and residents alike.

We have taken big steps forward in owning our regional city status with the launch of the second *Lismore Prospectus*. Its new 'work + live + play' section highlights the best of our community. Our unique selling point is the amazing mix of business, culture and events that only a regional city can offer.

Lismore is full of untapped potential. We all know it. Now is the time to step up and realise what we can achieve together.

Lismore City Council acknowledges the people of the Bundjalung Nation, traditional custodians of the land on which we work.



General Manager's Message

Lismore City Council has seen change and major achievements over the 2017-18 year. Many areas across Australia are more regularly dealing with natural disasters such as drought, bushfire and flood. New South Wales is not alone in that regard. Despite the devastating flood of March 2017, Lismore has still managed to deliver some of its most impressive achievements to date.

The new \$5.8 million Lismore Regional Gallery and Quadrangle were opened in October 2017.

This project has reinvigorated the city centre with the large gathering space now the site of markets, arts and cultural performances, community events, live music, street theatre and art installations.

The Lismore Community Solar initiative was another key milestone, and in January 2018, Council proudly switched on Australia's largest floating solar farm. The project has received national recognition including being named National Champion at the LG Professionals Federation Awards.

We have completed the \$2.8 million upgrade of Lismore's central sportsground Oakes Oval, making it suitable for national level AFL, soccer,



cricket and rugby matches. This development has already borne fruit, with the attraction of a first-grade AFL game between the Sydney Swans and the Gold Coast Suns to be held at Oakes Oval in March 2019.

Of course, we also saw the departure of former General Manager, Gary Murphy, which led to my arrival here at Lismore City Council. I am honoured that the Mayor and Councillors deemed me a worthy candidate to take on this role, and I am energised and excited about what we will deliver together in the future.

Who we are

Lismore is known as the heart of the Northern Rivers.



As a regional city and services hub, Lismore supports a large urban population as well as providing vital services for many outlying villages, hamlets and rural areas.

Lismore is located within rich farmland and is flanked by beautiful beaches and ancient rainforests. It is 45 minutes from the world-famous holiday destination Byron Bay, 30 minutes from the world-famous alternative lifestyle capital Nimbin and a two-and-a-half hour drive from Queensland's capital city, Brisbane.

Lismore is the recognised centre for health, education, retail, entertainment, culture and sport in the Northern Rivers. It continues to strengthen its status as a regional city with

hospital service upgrades, expansion of university facilities and, in the countryside, the growth of many cottage industries and a strong farming sector that celebrates and exports the best of the region's food, art and natural products to the world.

Lismore's population of around 45,000 encompasses a diverse range of colourful people from all walks of life. Lismore is a city where difference is embraced and community is strong.

All of this combines to create a unique Local Government Area with a character that is vibrant and individual. The region is more broadly known as the Rainbow Region in honour of this diversity.

Our community at a glance...

Source ABS: 2016



Compared to NSW, Lismore has a higher proportion of:

Adults aged 45 years and over

Labourers, community and personal service workers and sales workers

People employed in health, social services and education

People that travel to work by car

Total population

43,125

Urban population

27,569

Rural population

15,556

Unemployment

7.8%

Total households

19,022

Average household size

2.4

Average weekly income

\$1,067

Average age

43

People who speak a language other than English

6.7%

One parent families

21.7%

Single person households

29.4%

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

5.0%

People born in Australia

82%

Reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability

6.4%

Your Councillors

Lismore City Council is made up of 11 Councillors who were elected for a four-year term in September 2016.

 <p>Our Mayor Mayor Isaac Smith E: isaac.smith@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 0412 807 806</p>	 <p>Cr Gianpiero Battista E: gianpiero.battista@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 0412 579 571</p>	 <p>Cr Greg Bennett E: greg.bennett@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 0434 918 808</p>	
 <p>Cr Darlene Cook E: darlene.cook@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 0427 895 316</p>	 <p>Cr Vanessa Ekins E: vanessa.ekins@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 6624 5500</p>	 <p>Cr Adam Guise E: adam.guise@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 0497 851 305</p>	 <p>Cr Eddie Lloyd E: eddie.lloyd@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 0478 133 888</p>
 <p>Cr Elly Bird E: elly.bird@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 0418 639 927</p>	 <p>Cr Nancy Casson E: nancy.casson@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 0406 785 472</p>	 <p>Cr Neil Marks E: neil.marks@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 0419 284 827</p>	 <p>Cr Bill Moorhouse E: bill.moorhouse@lismore.nsw.gov.au T: 0427 661 242</p>

The role of Councillors is to:

- Provide strong and effective leadership, planning and decision-making.
- Plan strategically, allocate resources, and provide services and regulation that meet the diverse needs of the local community.
- Represent the collective interests of residents, ratepayers and the local community.
- Facilitate communication between the community and Council.

Councillor Entitlements

Councillors are eligible for a range of entitlements and remunerations associated with their role, including reimbursement of expenses incurred in carrying out their civic duties and provision of facilities to assist in fulfilling their obligations. These are provided in accordance with Council's Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy, which ensures entitlements are transparent, accountable, and meet the expectations of the community. A copy of the policy can be downloaded from Council's website at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au.

In 2017-18, a total of \$254,510 was provided in allowances, including:

- \$42,100 for a Mayoral allowance
- \$212,410 in total for Councillor allowances

Councillors were also eligible for the following allowances, expenses and facilities:

Councillor Expenses & Facilities	\$
Office equipment and facilities	28,734
Telephone calls	6,902
Conferences and seminar attendance	12,005
Training	7,829
Interstate visits (including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses)	900
Overseas visits (including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses)	8,502
Expenses for spouses (who accompanied a Councillor)	115
Child care	0
Total	64,987

Council Meetings

In 2017-18, Council reviewed and updated its Code of Meeting Practice, the Code of Meeting Practice Guidance Notes and the Council Briefing Policy. Council commenced operating under the new code in February 2018. Following a period of public exhibition, the documents were formally adopted by Council in April 2018.

22 Council meetings held in 2017-18



DID YOU KNOW?

The Council Briefing Policy has a new provision to enable public forum sessions at the start of every Council Briefing, which allows members of the public to address Councillors on any topic for 15 minutes. To find out more, visit our website at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au.

Councillor Travel

To celebrate the 55th anniversary of Lismore's sister city relationship with Yamato Takada in Japan, Mayor Isaac Smith and Councillor Neil Marks travelled to Japan in August 2017. The Mayor attended the Mayors for Peace Conference in Nagasaki and then travelled on to Yamato Takada where he met with Councillor Marks to commemorate the anniversary.

Our vision, values and organisational structure

Vision

Lismore City Council's vision is:

"To connect and serve the community who are at the heart of everything we do."

Values

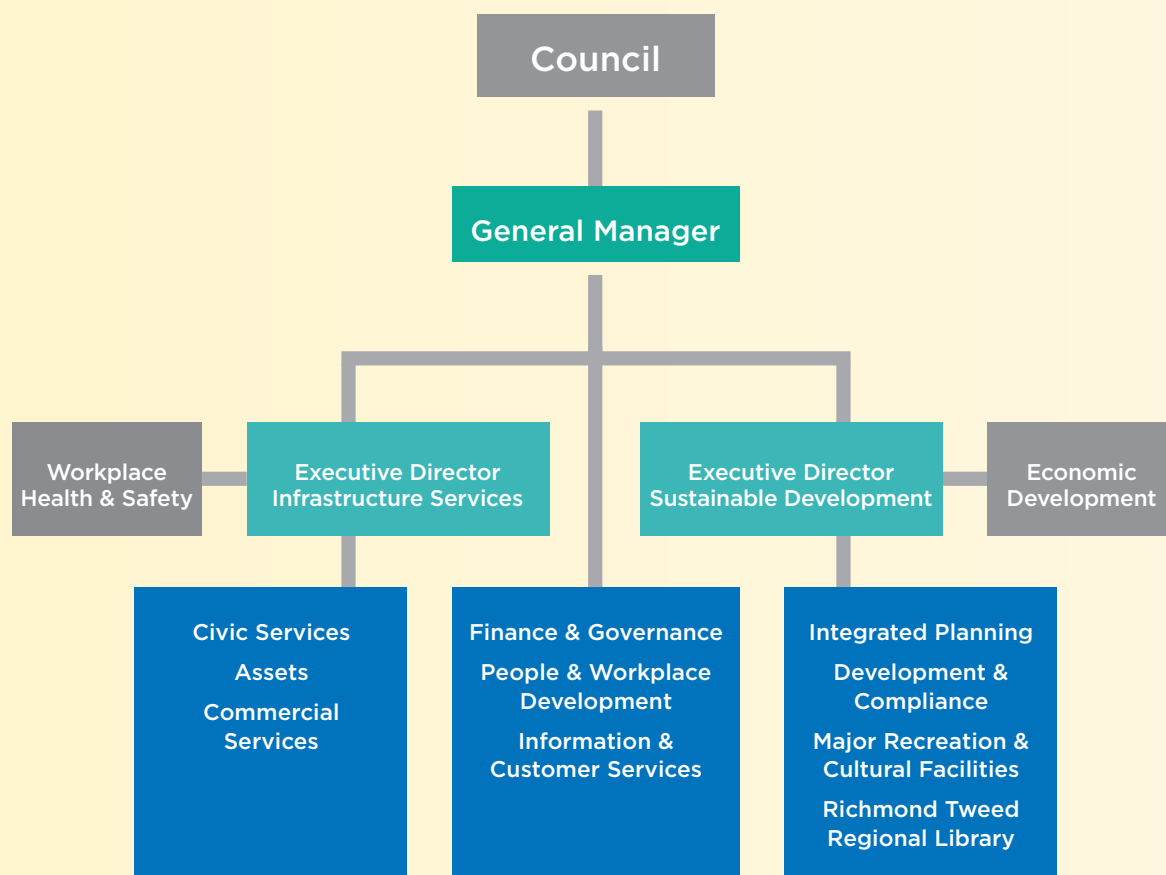
Lismore City Council has organisational values that aim to ensure our staff and our community understand the attitudes and behaviours that we expect from our people.

- We are passionate about providing services to our community and the work that we do.
- We strive to always achieve our best, both personally and professionally.
- We communicate respectfully with one another in order to share ideas and learn.
- We respect one another and different points of view.

Organisational structure

Every four years, Council adopts a staff structure to support the Council and General Manager to deliver programs and activities detailed within the combined Imagine Lismore Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Our current structure is:



General Manager

The total remuneration package for the General Manager position was \$347,622.

Gary Murphy, former General Manager, served at the helm of Council for seven years before leaving in May 2018 to take up a new role at Central Coast Council.

Before his departure, Gary completed (in October 2017) a study tour to gain insights into how local



government organisations have coped with austerity measures to achieve sustainability and what lessons might be applicable to Lismore City Council. As part of this study tour, he attended:

- the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) annual conference in San Antonio, USA;
- the Solace Summit in Manchester, UK; and
- a number of meetings with local councils and government agencies in both countries.



Gary is replaced by Shelley Oldham, who commenced in October 2018.

482 Council employees (at the end of June 2018) that work across the Lismore Local Government Area.



Executive Directors

Council has two Executive Directors. The total remuneration package for Executive Directors in 2017-18 was \$441,624.

Infrastructure Services

Gary J. Murphy, Executive Director



Sustainable Development

Brent McAlister, the former Executive Director, left Council in August 2018.

Peter Jeuken (below) is currently acting in the role.



Note: The total remuneration package includes the total value of salary, superannuation, non-cash benefits, and fringe benefits tax for non-cash benefits. Council did not pay bonuses or performance payments in 2017-18.

Delivery Program Report



Our Progress

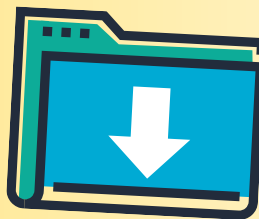
Lismore City Council provides a broad range of services to meet the day-to-day needs of our community. Every program, project, activity, and service Council delivers to the community is planned for and documented in the Imagine Lismore Delivery Program 2017-2021. The Delivery Program seeks to achieve a range of strategic objectives identified

by the community in the Imagine Lismore Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027.

This section of the Annual Report focuses on Council's implementation of the Delivery Program during 2017-18 and details progress, achievements, and statutory information prescribed by the *Local Government Regulation 2005* for each of the five key themes.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can download copies of the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program from our website at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au.



A An inclusive and healthy community



10-year objectives

A1 Our community is safe, happy and healthy.

A2 We recognise our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and cultures.

A3 Our sporting facilities and recreational spaces encourage active and passive community participation.

A4 Our community is a desirable place to live, an easy place to work and a welcoming place to visit.

A5 Our community has access to essential services.

\$26 million spent in 2017-18

Key Achievements

Launch of the *Feel Blue Touch Green* initiative during the Mental Health Month Expo in October 2017.

Completion of a masterplan for facilities and landscaping at cemetery sites to ensure better service to the community.

Nearly \$8 million received in grant funding to progress state-of-the-art upgrades to Oakes Oval and Albert Park Baseball and Softball Complex.

Completion of the Regional Hockey Facility at Hepburn Park including relocation of Goonellabah Cricket Club practice nets.

Record visitor numbers at Goonellabah Sports & Aquatic Centre (GSAC).

Reopening of Lismore Memorial Baths in December 2017 following flood damage repairs.

Appointment of a broadly representative Access and Inclusion Advisory Group to assist in implementing the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-20.

Participation of 110 staff in an Indigenous cultural awareness program.

A 'Reconciliation Action Plans in the Region' workshop held to promote and discuss the benefits of RAPs.

Public Health and Safety

Council has a responsibility to look after the health and safety of our community. Some of the ways we do this is through public health inspections, environmental compliance and companion animal management. We undertake thousands of inspections each year and respond to community complaints and requests.

142 private swimming pool fence inspections

787 on-site sewerage management (septic system) inspections

323 fines for breaches of companion animal laws



120 dog attack incidents investigated

486 food safety inspections

Sea of Bellies

The *Binjil Dubais Northern Rivers Sea of Bellies* project connected pregnant Aboriginal women and partners of Aboriginal men with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander maternity services to foster a culture of connection and support with local Elders and artists, through the art of belly casting.

The project was delivered in collaboration with Beyond Empathy, the Northern NSW Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service, and the YWCA NSW.

Artist Jo Davidson trained local midwives in belly casting and local Elders and artists were invited to paint the belly casts. The process allowed for the sharing of stories and cultural knowledge between mums and the Elders while facilitating access to health and social services workers.

The project culminated in an exhibition at the Lismore Regional Gallery, showcasing the painted belly casts. The exhibition was launched during NAIDOC Week to celebrate the 2018 theme 'Because of her, we can!'



Companion Animals in your LGA

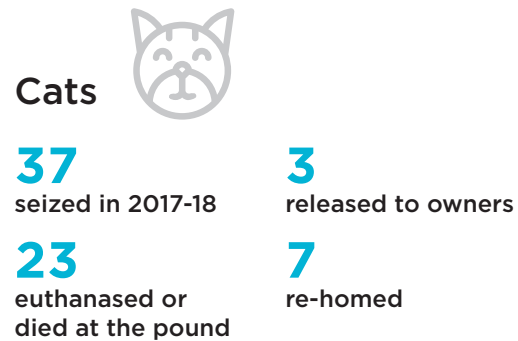
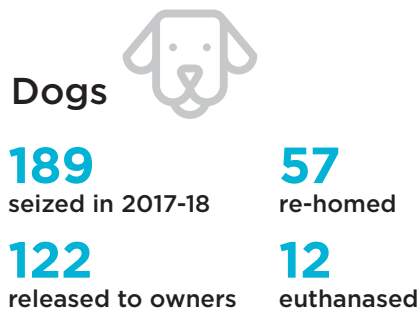
Council spent \$360,000 on companion animal management activities in 2017-18. This covered enforcement, education and information activities such as:

- Community education programs and community liaison to promote and assist in responsible pet ownership, microchipping and desexing of dogs and cats. This included working with the National Desexing Network and participating in community events such as the North Coast National and Pets in the Park (a community pet walking day).
- Maintenance of four off-leash areas including Riverside Park South (fenced area), Lismore Gasworks, Elizabeth Gardens, and Hepburn Park in Goonellabah.
- Provision of appropriate management and care of animals at Lismore Pound.

- Investigation of 120 dog attack incidents (including when a dog threatens, harasses, chases, or bites a person or another animal). Sixty-one were reported to the Office of Local Government.

Alternatives to Euthanasia

Council has an obligation under the *Companion Animal Act 2008* to consider alternative courses of action before euthanasing any animals that come into its care. Where possible, animals are released back to owners or put up for adoption, or released for rehoming to animal rescue organisations such as the Animal Rights & Rescue Group, Animal Welfare League NSW & Qld, Companion Animals Welfare Inc, 11 Hour Rescue, Australian Working Dogs Rescue, and Wally's Rescue. Sadly, sometimes animals may not be suitable for rehoming due to poor health or temperament and in these cases, animals are euthanased.



Cemeteries and Crematorium

One of our Delivery Program strategies is to provide residents with suitable and well-planned cemeteries, chapel and crematorium services. To help us with this, we completed a masterplan for facilities and landscaping at cemetery sites to ensure better service to the community.

DID YOU KNOW?

414 burials and
177 cremations in 2017-18



A Diverse Community

Council is working towards a Lismore that is accessible and inclusive of everyone, and provides equal opportunity for people living with a disability to utilise and enjoy public spaces and activities in our city.



A Diverse Council Workforce

Council recognises that its workforce is ageing and we need to attract younger staff.

One of the ways that we are doing this is by removing barriers to employment and encouraging diversity within our workforce to build the talent pool we need for the future.

To help us achieve this, Council updated its Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Plan in 2018. It details our commitment to deliver equal employment opportunity through the Reconciliation Action Plan, Gender Action Plan, and Disability Inclusion Action Plan, to ensure a workforce that is representative of our community's demographics.

Key achievements in 2017-18 in implementing the EEO Plan include:

- Two successful work trials for local people living with disability through partnerships with local disability employment service providers.

- Participation of 110 employees in a cross-cultural awareness course through the Centre for Cultural Competence Australia to increase respect and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.
- Appointment of six local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees within Council. Additionally six school-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees continued their participation in the Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Program, which aims to reduce employment barriers and provide education and vocational training opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Staff consultation was undertaken to inform the development of a Gender Action Plan to address existing gender equity imbalances. The Gender Action Plan is currently in draft stage.

26 staff identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

482 employees, of which 34% were female 66% were male

12 staff identified as having a disability

95 staff in a supervisory role, of which 26% were female 74% were male



An Inclusive Lismore

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) promotes equal rights for all in our community and recognises Council's responsibility to support people living with disabilities to access the same human rights as everyone in the community. Key achievements in 2017-18 in implementing the DIAP include:

- Appointment of a broadly representative Access and Inclusion Advisory Group which holds bi-monthly meetings aimed at providing advice to Council on disability access and inclusion.
- An exhibition held at the Lismore Regional Gallery in partnership with RED Inc. to showcase the artwork of 14 contemporary local artists living with disability.
- Installation of a lift at the old Council Chambers to improve access for the Richmond River Historical Society and members of the community.
- Commencement of live streaming of Council's ordinary meetings and investigation of captioning.
- Provision of a hearing loop in Council Chambers.
- Provision of funding for AUSLAN interpreters for meetings upon request.
- Actively seeking grant funding to undertake infrastructure projects to improve accessibility of Council-owned assets.

Reconciliation in the Region

Council hosted a 'Reconciliation Action Plans in the Region' workshop at the Lismore Regional Galley in May 2018, in partnership with Southern Cross University, Rous County Council, and ACON.

The event was an opportunity to promote and discuss the benefits of Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs), share experiences, and increase awareness and understanding of RAPs in the community.



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2013, Council became the first council in the Northern Rivers to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan, created in consultation with Reconciliation Australia.



Sport and Recreation

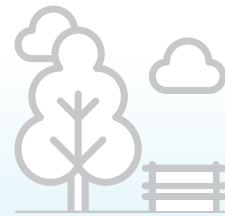
To look after the health of our community, Council provides a range of sporting facilities and recreational facilities that encourage active and passive community participation.

We've been busy campaigning to secure significant resources to consolidate Lismore as a regional sports hub. Some major grants in 2017-18 allowed us to progress a number of key sport and recreation facility upgrades.

3 major recreational facilities, including GSAC, Nimbin Pool and the Lismore Memorial Baths

36 sporting ovals and fields for our active community

121 hectares of open spaces, including parks and gardens



Albert Park Upgrade

In 2017-18, Council spent \$2 million to complete Stage 1 of the Albert Park Baseball and Softball Complex redevelopment, which included demolition works, construction of batting cages and upgrades to the existing carpark and grandstand.

We also secured an additional \$4.95 million in grant funding from the NSW Office of Sport to complete Stage 2, which involves upgrades of Fields 1, 2, 3 and 4 to national baseball standards, the upgrade of Baxter Field to international standard, and new clubhouse facilities.

The redevelopment of the Albert Park Baseball and Softball Complex will make Lismore a destination for baseball in Australia, creating significant economic benefits for the community and the region.

Projects we progressed:

- The Goonellabah Cricket Club practice nets were successfully relocated to the eastern side of Hepburn Park.
- Progression of the upgrade to Roder Oval practice cricket facility, which includes new netting, fencing, synthetic grass and storage facility.
- Planning and community consultation commenced for upgrades to Crozier Field, which will occur in conjunction with Stage 2 of the Oakes Oval upgrade.
- We launched the *Feel Blue Touch Green* initiative as part of Mental Health Month activities in October 2017.
- The new Regional Hockey Facility at Hepburn Park was completed and became fully operational. This included the resurfacing of the existing hockey field and construction of a second artificial hockey field.
- We commenced a review of the Lismore Sport and Recreation Plan 2011-21.

Oakes Oval Redevelopment

The Oakes Oval facility was established in Lismore over 30 years ago and until recently, very little had been spent on maintenance or upgrades. In August 2017, Council received a grant of \$2.8 million through the Building Stronger Country Communities stream of the Regional Growth Fund to commence with site redevelopment (see also page 44).

A project of this size and nature required Council to undertake a Capital Expenditure Review

through business case planning in order to apply for the grant. With the funds, Council extended the playing field and upgraded scoreboards and the spectator grandstand. Further upgrades are planned to improve public amenities and spectator seating capacity, in conjunction with upgrades to Crozier Field. These additional works are subject to further funding opportunities, which Council is continuing to explore.



Lismore Memorial Baths

The iconic Memorial Baths in the centre of the CBD suffered significant damage as a result of the 2017 flood. Following flood damage repairs, including to seating areas, the café and the pool filtration system, the Memorial Baths reopened in December 2017. Flood mitigation works were also carried out to prevent such significant damage in future floods.

Lismore Memorial Baths reopened in December after flood repairs and attracted **58,673** visitors to 30 June 2018



GSAC

Goonellabah Sports & Aquatic Centre (GSAC) increased efforts over 2017-18 to improve its brand, operations, and customer service. In addition, GSAC hosted a number of events and programs during the financial year which encouraged more areas of the community to visit the centre. This work paid off, with record visitor numbers in March, and higher than average visitor numbers for the year.

In recognition of its efforts, the centre received gold at the 2017 Northern Rivers Business Awards.

GSAC attracted **368,762** visitors, which included **29,204** casual pool visits



B A prosperous and vibrant city



10-year objectives

B1 Our community has diverse business and industry as well as opportunities for investment and growth.

B2 Our city and villages are attractive meeting places that provide for diverse activity and strengthen our social connections.

B3 Our community has a diverse and thriving arts and cultural life.

B4 Our community is connected and convenient.

\$3.8 million spent in 2017-18

Key Achievements

The Lismore Regional Gallery was officially opened in October 2017, with visitor numbers exceeding predictions.

Flood recovery support concluded with businesses in the CBD.

Council hosted and supported a range of exciting annual events including the Lismore Lantern Parade, Carols in the Heart, and the Lismore Workers Club 10th Masters Games, which attracted large crowds to the CBD.

Lismore's annual celebration of street food and culinary delights, Eat the Street, won silver at the NSW Tourism Awards in November 2017 and gold at the North Coast Regional Tourism Awards in July 2018.

Progression of numerous projects to revitalise the CBD including installation of planter boxes, completion of new kerbside gardens and a trial of a pop-up parklet.

Lismore Regional Airport runway resealing completed in December 2017.

Growing the Heart of Lismore



Council provides a range of programs and services to support opportunities for growth in business and industry and to promote a thriving arts and cultural scene.

Events we hosted:

We hosted and supported a number of signature events in 2017-18, attracting large crowds to the CBD, including:

- Eat the Street
- Lismore Workers Club 10th Masters Games
- ARTSTATE Regional Arts Festival
- Lismore Lantern Parade
- Carols in the Heart

DID YOU KNOW?



Eat the Street, Lismore's annual celebration of street food and culinary delights, **won silver** at the NSW Tourism Awards and gold at the North Coast Regional Tourism Awards in 2017-18.

Lismore Regional Gallery and Quadrangle



After decades of planning, funding applications and hard work, the \$5.8 million Lismore Regional Gallery and Quadrangle officially opened in October 2017. With ongoing funding support from Southern Cross University, the new Gallery and Quadrangle have transformed the city centre, attracting more than 70,000 visitors in its first few months, far more than anticipated.

"The Lismore Regional Gallery is now a functional and modern facility that we can be proud of as a regional city." – Brett Adlington, Director

Fast Facts 2017-18



70,506 visitors

229 artists presented their work

17 events held in the Quadrangle attended by over 17,000 people

87 group tours with over 1300 participants

28 exhibitions

15 art workshops

Your Rates at Work

Special Rate Variation Expenditure for Business Promotion

The Lismore Business Promotion Program is administered by Council and governed by the Lismore Business Panel. It has been funded in part by a Special Business Rate Variation Levy (SBRVL) applied to Inner CBD and Urban business ratepayers since 1998. In 2017-18, a total of \$115,277 was collected from business ratepayers and expended in full for a range of promotional activities, including:

Expenditure Program for 2017-18	
Placemaking and activations	\$7,085
Marketing	\$63,192
Event support and assistance	\$45,000
Total	\$115,277

Some key achievements in 2017-18 include:

- Sponsorship of the Lismore Chamber of Commerce & Industry Awards to showcase local businesses.
- '12 days of Christmas' marketing campaign, including television and print media promotion, and street theatre performances to attract shoppers to the CBD for a Christmas experience.
- Event management for the annual award-winning Eat the Street festival, now in its fourth year.

A full list of activities funded by the SBRVL for 2017-18 can be found in *Appendix 1: Statutory Information*.

In May 2018, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) approved an extension of the SBRVL to 2022-23.

Projects we progressed:

In 2017-18, flood recovery support successfully concluded with businesses in the CBD and we progressed a number of projects to revitalise the CBD, including:

- Installation of self-watering planter boxes in Club Lane, Woodlark Street, and at the Quadrangle.
- Completion of new kerbside gardens in Magellan, Woodlark, and Carrington Streets.
- A trial of a pop-up market in Club Lane.

You may be wondering what happened to the upgrade of footpaths in Lismore CBD?

These important works were deferred in order to coordinate and align with NBN Co. and Telstra plans to install fibre-to-the-curb technology in the CBD. This will minimise overall project costs and disruption. It is anticipated that work will commence in January 2019.

Lismore Regional Airport

The Lismore Regional Airport and Lismore Aviation Centre are currently undergoing a \$1.8 million upgrade. In 2017-18, the runway was resealed and the radio system (PAL/AFRU) was upgraded. Further works to come include new runway lighting, new light aircraft taxiways and concrete helipad, better tourist information facilities and visitor amenities, more aircraft parking, new signage, road improvements, and improved security and streetlighting.

6548
general aviation
aircraft movements
at Lismore Regional
Airport



C Our natural environment



10-year objectives

B1 Our waterways and catchments are healthy.

B2 We are committed to resource recovery, waste management and recycling innovation.

B3 We are committed to environmental sustainability.

B4 Our diverse natural environment is protected and enhanced.

\$18.9 million spent in 2017-18

Key Achievements

Completion of a floating solar farm on the overflow ponds at the East Lismore Sewage Treatment Plant, through the Lismore Community Solar initiative.

National recognition of the Lismore Community Solar Initiative, with two prestigious awards including the Community Partnerships Award at the 2017 NSW Local Government Excellence Awards.

Implementation of technology improvements to the Materials Recovery Facility in response to China's new recycling policy (National Sword).

More than 65% of all household waste collected from kerbside bins was diverted from landfill through recycling, composting or reuse.

LED lighting installed on six Council-owned buildings including the Brunswick Street Depot and Lismore Regional Airport.

Round four of the Rural Landholder Initiative resulted in partnerships with rural landholders to undertake 14 new projects to conserve biodiversity on private land.

Technology and infrastructure stopped 100 tonnes of pollutants and sediments from entering the Wilsons River.

Completion of a koala habitat and population study for the LGA, which estimated the local koala population at approximately 1800.

Supporting Biodiversity

We work hard to protect and enhance our region's biodiversity and conserve our environment to grow healthy habitat, improve water quality and provide natural amenity for all.



29 bush regeneration sites along the Wilsons River

4.7km of riverbank areas restored

10 hectares of land revegetated with koala habitat, including **1755** koala food trees

3922 native trees planted

450 people engaged by environmental education events and workshops

68.7 hectares of weed management and control

Your Rates at Work

Special Rate Variation Expenditure for Biodiversity Management

In 2015, Council implemented the Biodiversity Management Strategy (BMS) 2015-2035 in direct response to requests from the community to provide environmental leadership. Since 2016, the BMS has been funded by a Special Rate Variation (SRV) applied to Farmland, Residential Rural and Residential Urban/Village ratepayers in the LGA. In 2017-18, a total of \$513,000 was collected from ratepayers. This was expended for a range of activities, including:

Expenditure Program for 2017-18		
	Planned \$	Actual \$
Cleaning up our own Backyard		
Planning and processes	31,000	81,135
Supporting the community	46,000	40,609
Working with landholders	290,000	289,396
Working in urban environment	109,000	105,539
Koala Plan of Management	37,000	42,691
Total	513,000	563,370

The expenditure for 2017-18 included a large carry-over of unspent SRV funds from 2016-17, mainly for the 'Cleaning up our own Backyard' expenditure category. This carry-over was caused by two things. First, a key project to map vegetation in the LGA was delayed in 2016-17 by the lack of up-to-date aerial photography. Second, staff changes slowed the progress of other activities. Council will complete the remaining work backlog in 2018-19.

Some key achievements in 2017-18 include:

- Development of an Urban Landcare Manual to support urban Landcare groups on public lands.
- Biodiversity events and workshops attracted 450 participants.
- Restoration of 14.6ha of native vegetation, including 3922 trees, in partnership with rural landholders (see next page).
- 68.7ha of weed management undertaken and bush regeneration works underway at 29 sites along the Wilsons River.
- Restoration of 10ha of koala habitat.

A full list of achievements and outcomes can be found in *Appendix 1: Statutory Information*.

Rural Landholder Initiative

Through the Rural Landholder Initiative (RLI), Council partners with rural landholders to conserve and restore vegetation areas with high-conservation value, threatened species habitat and native ecosystems on rural properties through on ground works, education, collaboration, partnerships and incentives. Council provides dollar-for-dollar assistance to landholders for worthy projects that benefit our ecosystems. Landholders are encouraged to work alongside professional bush regenerators (paid by Council) who provide mentoring and practical skills.

In 2017-18, Council partnered with rural landholders to undertake 14 new projects to conserve biodiversity on private land. Five field days were held, which provided valuable opportunities for local

landholders to come together to share experiences, knowledge, and ideas.

Now in its third year, the project is creating positive change through improved land management practices. In recognition of this, Council was named a finalist in the Environmental Leadership & Sustainability category at the 2018 NSW Local Government Professionals Excellence Awards.



Since the RLI started, 49 projects have been undertaken in partnership with landholders to restore 85 hectares of bushland.

Projects we progressed:

- We completed a koala habitat and population study for the LGA, which estimated the local koala population at approximately 1800.
- Council's Roadside Vegetation Management Plan was updated and staff training provided.
- We resurfaced 145m of the Tucki Creek Arboretum walk in Goonellabah.
- A report on wildlife roadkill mitigation was drafted.
- We held the inaugural Lismore Biodiversity Awards in August 2017 to recognise people working to protect and enhance our environment.
- Council staff participated in National Tree Day by planting 206 trees and groundcover plants along Tucki Tucki Creek.



Environmental Sustainability

Council is actively working to protect our natural assets, use our resources wisely, and grow sustainability. We are committed to responsible waste management, reducing our impact on the environment, and becoming a model of sustainability.

66% of household waste diverted from landfill in 2017-18

100 tonnes of pollutants and sediments diverted from Wilsons River and Tucki Tucki Creek

14% of Council's energy generated by renewable sources



Lismore Community Solar, an Australian first

The Lismore Community Solar initiative – a partnership between Lismore City Council and community solar energy facilitator Farming the Sun – was launched in January 2018.

The partnership seeks to break new ground in working with communities to fund renewable energy projects that power Council facilities. Through the initiative, Council established two 100kW solar farms – a rooftop solar farm at Goonellabah Sports & Aquatic Centre (GSAC) and a floating solar farm on the overflow ponds at the East Lismore Sewage Treatment Plant.

These are the first Council-operated and community-funded solar farms in Australia and are flagship projects for Council's 2023 Renewable Energy Master Plan. The initiative has generated

interest both nationally and internationally as a model for government and community cooperation. In recognition of this, Council won the Community Partnerships Award at the 2017 NSW Local Government (LG) Excellence Awards and was named Partnerships & Collaboration National Champion at the 2018 LG Professionals Federation Awards.

DID YOU KNOW?

Lismore City Council is the first regional council in Australia to commit to making its electricity supply **100% renewable**



Other projects we progressed:

- We commenced construction of a mechanical sorting facility at the Materials Recovery Facility to sort waste from commercial, industrial and construction sources, which aims to divert over 8000 tonnes of waste from landfill.
- Six solar photovoltaic (PV) systems were installed on Council-owned buildings.
- LED lighting was installed on six Council-owned buildings, including the Brunswick Street Depot and Lismore Regional Airport.
- Preliminary designs for improving Brown's Creek were completed.

Lismore's War on Waste

Lismore is undoubtedly the recycling hub of the region with our state-of-the-art Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), which processes around 22,000 tonnes of recyclables each year that are on-sold to be made into new products. In January 2018, enforcement of China's new recycling policy (National Sword) placed extreme restrictions on the export of recyclable materials from Australia. This required Council to take swift action to keep the LGA's waste out of landfill, including finding local markets for processing recyclable materials and taking steps to close the loop on recycling. Some of the changes we made include:

- Implementation of technology improvements to the MRF at the Lismore Recycling & Recovery Centre to ensure recycling streams are cleaner. This included the installation of a new optical sorter to better sort plastics, making it easier to find markets for them in Australia.
- Stockpiling some recyclable materials, while we search for local markets for them.
- Crushing glass bottles and jars into sand for use in pipe bedding, drainage and road base.
- Supporting residents to make adjustments to household recycling habits.
- Commencing a phase-out of single-use plastics at events sponsored by or held at Council venues by 2020.

While these changes impacted on the MRF's overall profitability in 2017-18, they will help to reduce our impact on the environment through responsible waste management.

17,000 tonnes of waste collected from **15,250** households, including **5423** tonnes dry recyclables **4970** tonnes organic waste



Your Rates at Work

Stormwater Management Services Levy

Council is responsible for capital works, maintenance, operation and renewals of an extensive stormwater management system valued at over \$82 million. Council collected \$380,260 in levies in 2017-18, of which \$129,843 was spent on the stormwater network, and the rest kept in reserves. The expenditure covered activities such as inspection, maintenance, operation, administration, and education and training on the stormwater network.

The stormwater management system is a complex network of 'grey' and 'green' infrastructure, which stopped 100 tonnes of pollutants and sediments from entering the Wilsons River and Tucki Tucki Creek in 2017-18.



5380 stormwater pits

148km of stormwater pipes, culverts, lined channels and unlined channels

20 bio-detention basins and filtration structures (e.g. rain gardens)

D Our built environment



10-year objectives

D1 Our city and village services are well managed and maintained.

D2 Our built environment is managed and enhanced to meet the needs of our growing community.

D3 Our land use planning caters for all sectors of the community.

D4 Our community has a diversity of affordable housing options.

\$44 million spent in 2017-18

Key Achievements

Resealed 69.4km of roads and reapirod 26,500 potholes.

Enabling works completed for Robson Bridge (Tucki Tucki) and Town Bridge (The Channon) ahead of planned bridge replacements in 2018-19.

Renewed and built 3.4km of water supply pipes and 1.9km of sewer mains.

Stage 1 works for Nimbin Water Supply upgrade near completion and under budget.

Construction of a new Sewage Treatment Plant in South Lismore was largely complete and ready to commence commissioning preparations by 30 June 2018.

Installation of four lifts at Lismore City Hall, GSAC, Gordon Pavilion, and Lismore Library.

Processed 544 development applications with a 20% improvement in processing speed.

Completed two Voluntary Planning Agreements to facilitate infrastructure for residential subdivisions.

Assets and Infrastructure

Infrastructure assets deliver important services to communities. Within our built environment, they comprise a number of types including roads, water, stormwater, wastewater, buildings, and land. A key issue facing Council is ageing assets in need of renewal and replacement.

Council's Asset Management Strategy allows us to create, acquire, maintain, operate, rehabilitate and dispose of \$1.8 billion in built environment assets in the most efficient and cost-effective manner for present and future residents.

\$21.3 million spent on maintaining and enhancing 1205 km of roads

Reduction in the infrastructure backlog since 2016-17



4755 call outs relating to roads, water and wastewater

\$26 million South Lismore Sewage Treatment Plant nearing completion



Fixing the Roads: Challenges

Council's largest asset group is its transport network, which provides essential access throughout Lismore LGA for residents, businesses and visitors. With 1200km of roads, high rainfall and large traffic movements as people travel to and from work, maintaining the area's vast road network is an ongoing challenge. For the past few years, we've invested extra money and resources to the task and have adopted alternative approaches. In 2017-18, we continued to implement our best value for money strategy in allocating capital funding for roads (see next page). However, there is still a significant shortfall and the gap increases every year as costs rise. Council has some tough decisions ahead to find more funding for roads.

As part of budget deliberations in mid-2018, Council decided to postpone the community consultation required before a Special Rate Variation for roads can proceed. Instead, Council opted to pursue a Service Efficiency Review for

roads to help identify where additional savings can be made within the roads program, and to help us address the infrastructure backlog into the future.

We manage:

791km of sealed roads

414km of unsealed roads

301km of kerb and guttering

97km of footpaths and cycleways

16 carparks

109 bridges and major culverts



Fixing the Roads: Progress

In 2017-18, Council spent \$21.3 million (\$14.7m capital + \$6.6m maintenance) on preserving, restoring and enhancing road assets. This included almost \$3.8 million in road repairs as a result of the March 2017 flood and \$1.4 million from federal and state governments to address road safety issues. Some of the major works completed include:

- 26,500** potholes repaired
- 270km** of grading for unsealed roads, including 113km of flood repairs
- 69.4km** of resealing works
- 4.7km** of rehabilitation works, including Molesworth Street, Hunter Street and Conway Street in Lismore, Wyrallah Road in East Lismore, Dunoon Road in North Lismore, Kyogle Road in Tuncester, and Broadwater Road in Broadwater

We also spent \$450,000 in routine and preventative maintenance for bridges (guardrail repairs, weed reduction, replacing decking timbers etc.). Specifically, we completed:

- Enabling works for Robson Bridge (Tucki Tucki) and Town Bridge (The Channon) ahead of planned bridge replacements in 2018-19.
- Replacement of decking timbers for Ridgewood Bridge (Clunes).

Unfortunately, we don't always get it right the first time. In 2017-18, we had to rework 4.6% of the total value of works for the year, higher than our target of 2%. We're hoping to address this and bring the number down through an internal Service Efficiency Review (see previous page).

Reducing the Infrastructure Backlog

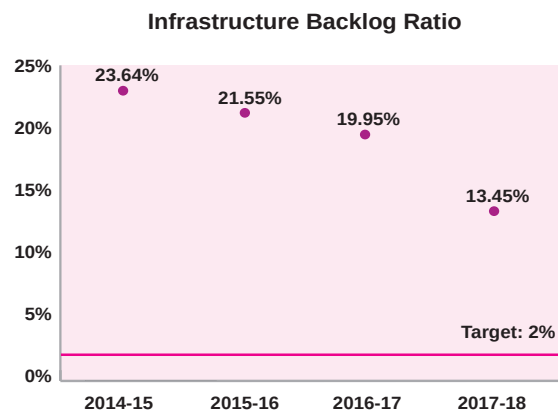
To be financially sustainable, a significant challenge Council faces is to adequately address the infrastructure backlog while still providing our range of other services to the community.

Council has made commitments through its Imagine Lismore Delivery Program and Long Term Financial Plan, and the NSW Government's 'Fit for the Future' process, to take steps to address its \$164 million infrastructure backlog. Over the past

four years, we've taken a 'best value for money' approach and have begun to reduce it. We still have a long way to go – our infrastructure backlog ratio (13.45% in 2017-18, see Community Finance Report for more information) is still above the Fit for the Future benchmark of 2%. We are continuing to explore options to sustainably fund the remaining backlog. The challenge moving forward gets much more difficult.

DID YOU KNOW?

We measure this ratio by how much has to be spent on existing infrastructure assets to return them to an agreed service level (i.e. the backlog) against the total value of infrastructure assets on Council's books. The way this is calculated changed in 2017-18 which accounts for the large reduction last year.



Water and Wastewater

Council manages an extensive water supply and wastewater treatment network with a replacement value of \$752 million.

This includes five water supply systems and four wastewater systems that service the Lismore LGA. All necessary renewals, capital upgrades and network expansion are planned and funded through

a Strategic Business Plan for Water and Wastewater, which includes a fully-funded capital works program. In 2017-18, Council spent \$24.3 million (\$21.1m capital + \$3.2m maintenance) building, maintaining and renewing the water supply and wastewater treatment network. A significant proportion of this was spent on progressing a number of key infrastructure projects.

We manage:

736km of pipes

3 wastewater treatment plants

13 water supply reservoirs

40 pump stations



In 2017-18, we built or renewed:

3.4km of water supply pipes

1.9km of sewer mains

1 engineered overflow



New Sewage Treatment Plant

The construction of a new Sewage Treatment Plant in South Lismore was largely complete and ready to commence commissioning preparations by 30 June 2018.

Sewage treatment capacity will increase from 15,000 people to 22,500 people, catering for expected population increases as North Lismore Plateau is opened up to residential development. A 334kW solar farm will be incorporated in the completed project, offsetting 20% of the new

plant's power costs. At a total cost of \$26 million, the South Lismore Sewage Treatment Plant is the largest project (by spend) Council has ever undertaken and is a key step toward expanding the capacity of Lismore as a regional city. The plant is expected to be operational by December 2018.

This significant upgrade will transform the 80-year-old plant into a modern facility with an expected increased capacity of 45%.



Land and Buildings

Council has in its care 928 parcels of land, encompassing over 200 buildings and a wide range of community facilities as well as undeveloped land.

These assets are currently valued at over \$208 million. Annual works usually include things such as general building maintenance, plumbing and electrical, pest control, painting, and vandalism repair.

In 2017-18, we spent \$1.3 million developing and maintaining land and building assets, including:

- LED lighting upgrade at GSAC.
- Installation of four lifts at Lismore City Hall, GSAC, Gordon Pavilion, and Lismore Library.
- CCTV upgrade at Wyrallah Road Works Depot.
- A new water tank at Eltham public amenities facility.

In 2017-18, Council did not conduct any

We manage:

1200ha
of Council-owned land

215 Council buildings, including offices, works depot buildings, public facilities and supporting structures, such as:

4 major sporting facilities

5 community halls

2 libraries

1 art gallery

33 amenities facilities

17 clubhouse facilities



Nimbin Water Supply Upgrade

In 2017-18, Council spent \$2.8 million to continue upgrading the Nimbin Water Supply.

The Stage 1 works include a new pump station within the existing DE Williams Dam site and a 5km water main to service customers on Gungas Road and Tuntable Falls Road. These works were largely complete by 30 June 2018, with the pipeline ready for disinfection and testing. As Stage 1 was under budget by 20% (approximately \$800,000), Council plans to use this money to bring forward Stage 2 of the project, which includes filtration works to address water quality issues during wet weather events. Stage 2 is expected to take approximately 20 months to complete once the feasibility stage is finished. Though this will delay the commissioning of Stage 1 works, it will ensure a smoother transition to the new supply.

Other projects we progressed:

- The concept designs for the main pump station and rising main to service the Pineapple Road development were completed and investigations commenced for a possible upgrade to the existing sewer pipeline in the vicinity of Tucki Tucki Creek.
- We commenced reviews of its Water Infrastructure and Wastewater Infrastructure Asset Management Plans, a process that takes place every five years.
- We conducted groundwater testing at Blakebrook Quarry and prepared a report for the Department of Environment and Planning, which may facilitate future plans for vertical expansion of quarry activities.

Planning for the Future of the LGA

To ensure our built environment is managed to meet the growing needs of our community, Council plays an important role in land-use planning and development approvals. This includes identifying suitable land that will support

population and economic growth and regulating development and construction in compliance with relevant planning controls and laws. Council also partners with developers and housing providers to deliver affordable housing options within the LGA.

Regulating Planning and Development

Council plays an important role as a regulator for building and development. It assesses rezoning and development applications and conducts building and construction inspections to ensure compliance with relevant planning controls and laws. In 2017-18, Council processed 544 development applications (DAs). The average turnaround time for a residential DA was 29 days, which was 20%

faster than the previous year. A notable DA received was for a subdivision to create 433 residential lots on North Lismore Plateau (see next page).

Council also conducted 1468 inspections of new building work and issued 22 fines totalling \$46,000 for breaches of NSW planning legislation.

8 Local Environmental Plan amendments determined (including 4 rezoning)

544 development applications determined

20% improvement in processing time for residential development applications

1468 building inspections on new building work



DID YOU KNOW?

A complete guide to the development application process is available on Council's website at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au. You can also come and speak to a duty planner at our Corporate Centre.

Affordable Housing

In September 2017, Council entered into an agreement with the federal government to use \$3.5 million of funding to assist with the delivery of affordable housing in Lismore LGA. These funds remained after Council's 'Build Your Future' grant scheme finished. Council received 39 applications to the scheme, of which nine were granted.

With the funds, Council invited expressions of interest (EOIs) from suitably experienced and qualified housing providers, community organisations and/or private developers to partner with Council to deliver affordable housing close to health services, retail, employment, and recreation facilities. Council is also interested in partnerships to increase the diversity of housing types, including one and two-bedroom dwellings. This EOI process was ongoing as at 30 June 2018.

Voluntary Planning Agreements

In 2011, Council approved a DA for a 62-lot rural residential subdivision at Cameron Road, McLeans Ridges. The approved subdivision development is subject to a Voluntary Planning Agreement, which includes the following works to meet the demand for services and facilities arising from the increased residential population:

- Upgrade Cowlong Road
- Upgrade Boatharbour Road
- Upgrade McLeans Ridges Hall

At 30 June 2018, Council held \$446,800 in restricted funds collected from previously released subdivision lots that will be directed to the road improvements. Council also transferred \$21,400 collected in contributions for the upgrade of McLeans Ridges Hall to the hall committee to progress the works.

In addition, two new Voluntary Planning Agreements were drafted for the North Lismore Plateau (see below).

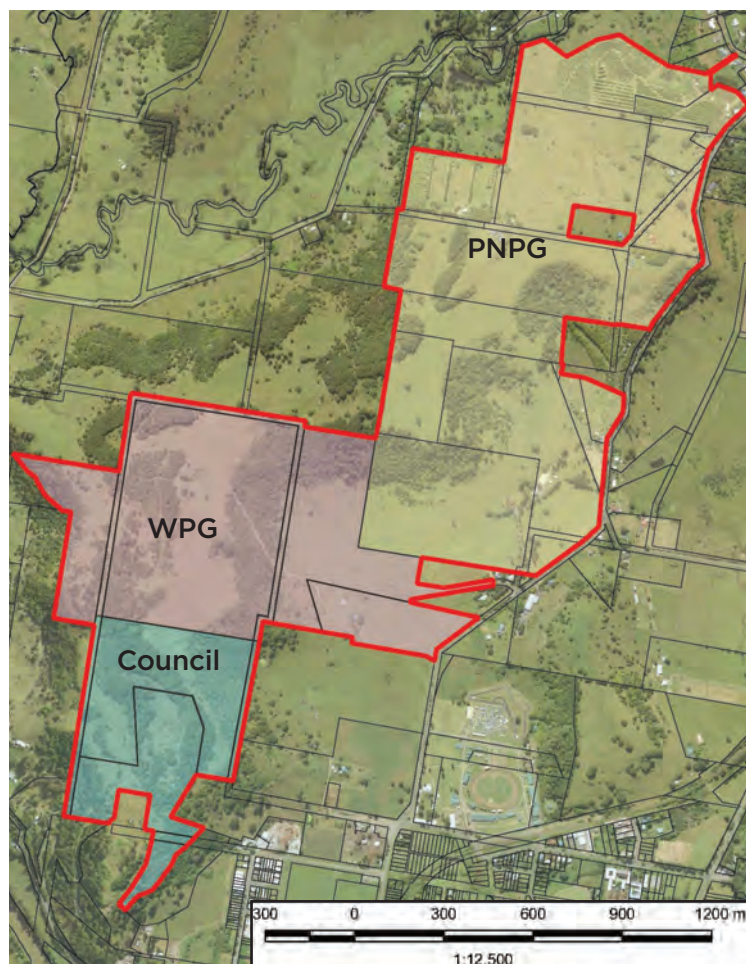
North Lismore Plateau

North Lismore Plateau is a new urban release area located within easy walking and cycling distance of the Lismore CBD. Within the release area, there are three landowner groups:

- Council
- Winten Property Group (WPG)
- Plateau North Property Group (PNPG)

In 2017-18, Council drafted two Voluntary Planning Agreements with WPG: one for the provision of water and wastewater infrastructure, and one for biodiversity certification to address potential impacts on biodiversity when planning land-use changes. These agreements were placed on public exhibition in March 2018.

Council also received a DA from WPG for a subdivision to create 433 residential lots, a commercial allotment, open space and areas for environmental management. This DA was still under Council consideration at the end of June 2018.



E Leadership and Participation



10-year objectives

E1 We engage and communicate with our community.

E2 We collaborate with other agencies to achieve great outcomes.

E3 Our decisions and actions are open, transparent, effective and in the interests of all.

E4 We provide effective management and responsible governance.

E5 We continue to grow our reputation and capacity as a regional city.

\$17.3 million spent in 2017-18

Key Achievements

A Deed of Agreement was signed between Tweed, Lismore, Byron and Ballina councils for the Richmond Tweed Regional Library service.

The 2018 *Lismore Prospectus* was launched to promote Lismore as a place to live, work and play.

Celebration of the 55th anniversary of the sister city relationship with Yamato Takada, Japan.

Twenty-three recipients received funds as part of Council's Annual Community Grants Scheme to undertake worthwhile community projects.

A partnership with the North East Community Panel resulted in new playgrounds and picnic areas for Dunoon.

Launch of a new community consultation portal, Your Say Lismore, which opened up opportunities for the community to provide feedback on Council plans and projects.

A number of internal Council projects commenced to improve our governance and management capability.

We made 18 successful funding applications to the NSW Government Regional Growth Fund, with almost \$9 million in grant funding received for sporting and community infrastructure.

Growing our Regional City

We are immensely proud of Lismore's regional city status. For tens of thousands of people living on the NSW North Coast, it is considered the business, sporting, education and medical capital of the Northern Rivers and the place they come to for important services. Whilst Council is

able to provide a broad range of services across the LGA, sometimes greater outcomes can be achieved by partnering with other agencies or empowering community groups. Together, we can grow our reputation and capacity as a regional city.

18 successful applications made to the Regional Growth Fund to progress worthy projects for Lismore LGA

\$257,671 in financial assistance provided to **70** recipients including **23** community groups **29** rural halls



4 councils signed a historic Deed of Agreement for regional library services

75 partnerships with government agencies, businesses and community groups

163,000 enquiries at the Visitor Information Centre



Lismore Prospectus



Craig Foster spoke at the launch of the Lismore Prospectus.

Earlier this year, Council released the 2018 *Lismore Prospectus*, which provides a comprehensive introduction to the 'heart of the Northern Rivers' and lists the opportunities for private and public sector investment in our vibrant city. It is the second prospectus Council has developed and in the 2018 publication, a new section was added to show how

attractive the city and broader LGA as a place to 'live, work and play'.

Many of the investment opportunities outlined exist in the Central Growth Corridor, which seeks to link the Wilsons riverbank through the city centre to parkland areas and the health precinct.

Certainty for Regional Library Services



In November 2017, the Richmond Tweed Regional Library (RTRL) officially entered in to an historic Deed of Agreement – the first in 46 years.

The RTRL was first created in 1971 and, with almost 100,000 members today, it serves one of the biggest LGA populations in NSW. It also has the fifth largest library collection in the state.

Until 2010, the RTRL Committee managed operation of the library service under a handshake agreement, at which point it was officially brought under the administration of Lismore City Council for legal reasons. The new Deed of Agreement gives all four member councils (Tweed, Lismore, Byron and Ballina) ownership and greater certainty about the library's future governance and direction, by formalising resource sharing and ongoing management responsibilities.



245,769 visitors to RTRL branches in Lismore LGA

18,060 members of RTRL live within Lismore LGA

1,576,081 items borrowed from RTRL branches in Lismore LGA

“We now have a common goal and with all councils interested and engaged, we can focus our collective strengths on continuing to build a modern and vibrant library service that meets the needs of our diverse communities across the Northern Rivers into the 21st century.” *Jo Carmody, RTRL Manager*

Partnering Projects

When Council collaborates with government agencies, NGOs and local businesses, we get more action and better results.

Council's Partnering Strategy Phase Two: 2017-2020 includes working with 75 partners from the arts, health, business, education, agriculture, environment, sport and recreation sectors to deliver a broad range of projects to achieve the community's vision for Lismore LGA. Key projects underway in 2017-18 include:

- Lismore Disaster Ready partnership. This included a post-flood review and draft of the Lismore Emergency Recovery Action Plan, which will be used as a template for other NSW councils, and formation of the Lismore Emergency Recovery Network.
- Activation of the Quadrangle in Lismore CBD, in partnership with Southern Cross University, Northern Rivers Conservatorium, and Arts Northern Rivers.
- A partnership with Service NSW, through its Small Business Friendly Council program, delivered the Easy to do Business portal to make it easier for businesses to open their doors in the LGA.
- Working with health partners to facilitate the completion of a 30-bed student accommodation facility at the University Centre for Rural Health and progress of the \$320 million Lismore Base Hospital upgrade.



75 partnerships and alliances maintained with government agencies, businesses and community groups

17 projects aimed at delivering the community's vision for Lismore LGA

Regional Growth Strategy

In 2017-18, Council worked with Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, and Richmond Valley councils to develop the Northern Rivers Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-22, which aims to identify high-value projects and grant opportunities based on the strengths of the economic region.

The Strategy will be used to bring together stakeholders and mobilise resources, which will help to facilitate faster access to government funding sources, such as the NSW Government's Regional Growth Fund (RGF), which was created to activate local economies and create jobs in regional communities.

Council made a total of 28 applications through the various streams of the RGF in 2017-18. To date, 18 of these have been approved, with a total of almost \$9 million granted. Successful projects include:

- Major Oakes Oval and Crozier Field upgrades (see Theme A) worth \$6 million.
- Minor upgrades to sporting facilities across the Lismore LGA, including Thistles, Hepburn, Heritage, Riverview, and Kadina Parks.
- New amenities block at Mortimer Oval.
- Development of an international-standard mountain bike facility in Lismore.

Council has also been invited to resubmit funding applications for the Lismore Parkland and NBN/CBD footpath projects.



18 successful funding applications made to the NSW Government Regional Growth Fund

Almost **\$9 million** in grant funding received to progress community and sporting infrastructure

Community Partnerships

Council believes in partnerships with the community and that a small amount of money invested in a community group can go a long way.

In 2017-18, Council contributed a total of \$257,671 in financial assistance through grants and donations. Of this, \$105,543 was provided through the Annual Community Grants Scheme, which supports community groups and organisations to undertake worthwhile community projects that benefit the LGA.

A total of 23 recipients received small grants of up to \$10,000 through the 2017-18 funding round.

Successful projects included:

- Nimbin Youth Film Festival 2017 and Reel Abrupt Film Festival 2017.
- Erection of a tourist sign at Tamarind Park, Dunoon.
- Installation of an access ramp at Jiggi School of Arts Hall.
- Lismore Young Songwriters Competition.
- Spring Garden Competition 2017.

A full list of recipients can be found in *Appendix 1: Statutory Information*.



23 recipients of the Annual Community Grants Scheme



29 rural halls received \$2000 towards maintenance and insurance costs

Celebrating Sister Cities

Lismore celebrated the 55th anniversary of its sister city relationship with Yamato Takada, Japan, in 2017-18.

To mark the occasion, Mayor Isaac Smith and Councillor Neil Marks travelled to Japan in August 2017. Lismore also welcomed delegates from Yamato Takada in June 2018, including the Vice-Foreign Minister of Japan, the Consulate-General of Japan, and the Mayor of Yamato Takada. As well as formal ceremonies and meetings between dignitaries, the delegates also joined Lismore's iconic Lantern Parade, carrying a lantern of their city mascot, Miku Chan.

Council's Interests

Whilst Council did not hold a controlling interest in any corporations, trusts, or joint ventures, it did participate in two partnerships, both of which benefit the LGA:

1. Council maintained an equal 25% interest (worth \$1.2 million) in the Richmond Tweed Regional Library, along with Ballina Shire Council, Tweed Shire Council and Byron Shire Council (see also next page).
2. Council is a member of the North East Weight Load Group (NEWLOG), which aims to reduce damage to Council roads through promotion of road safety and policing of vehicle weights as prescribed by relevant legislation. In 2017-18, Council's share in NEWLOG equity was \$15,086.

A Responsible Council

Council has systems and policies in place to ensure decisions and actions are open, transparent and in the interests of all. One of the ways we ensure transparency is through annual reporting. It is essential

that Council is as efficient and effective as possible internally, so we're able to provide the most efficient and effective services externally as well.

482 Council employees

9 applications for public access to government information processed



9128 telephone enquiries to Council's Contact Centre

1 public interest disclosure received by the public authority



Projects we progressed

Providing the community with efficient and effective services means we're constantly looking at our in-house capabilities to make sure we're efficient and effective internally as well. In 2017-18, we started a number of projects to improve our internal operations, including:

- Development of a corporate governance and risk framework and preparations for establishing an Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.
- New project management processes and training, to better manage project risk, and to improve project management capability of Council staff.
- Implementation of a new corporate performance management system, to better track Council's progress and performance in delivering the projects and activities in the Delivery Program.
- Rollout of a corporate training program aimed at senior leaders, covering a range of topics including Code of Conduct, frontline leadership, workplace culture, and cultural awareness and competency, to build management and governance capability in staff.
- Strengthening of internal financial reporting and assessment processes, with the introduction of peer-reviews to improve accuracy.
- Overhaul of procurement processes and systems, including development of a new Procurement Policy.
- Refreshment of human resources procedures and systems, including workforce and succession planning, identification of future talent pool, and staff performance management.

Public Access to Government Information (GIPA)

In 2017-18, Council processed nine applications for public access to government information, of which six were approved in part, two were withdrawn, and one was refused.

A full list of statutory GIPA statistics can be found in *Appendix 1: Statutory Information*.

Have Your Say, Lismore

In 2017-18, we completed some important projects to allow residents to have more opportunities for input.

Council introduced new public forum sessions at the start of every Council Briefing, which allows members of the public to address Councillors on any topic for 15 minutes. We also launched Your Say Lismore, a new community consultation portal, in December 2017. It has opened up new opportunities for the community to provide feedback on Council plans and projects.

6700 visits to the new Your Say Lismore community engagement portal



Since its launch, Council has provided the public with opportunities to have their say on:

- Public exhibition of Council plans and policies, such as the Operational Plan (contains the annual budget).
- High-profile project such as the Bridge to Bridge Masterplan, signature trees for Lismore, and the CBD rainbow walkway.
- Surveys on community activities and issues such as 'What does January 26 mean to you?' and a review of our Sport & Recreation Plan.

12 new or revised Council plans and policies listed on Your Say Lismore for public exhibition



Better Reporting

Some key pieces of legislation that guide Council's work also contain statutory reporting requirements on many different issues. One of Council's statutory reporting duties is to report on its progress to the community. This information helps to build community understanding of how Council is performing as a business entity and a community leader.

A key project this year was the upgrade and reconfiguration of Council's corporate performance management system. This means we're collecting better progress and performance data to help us improve our reporting to Council, the community and

government agencies. This year, we released our first six-monthly progress reports and have been aiming to achieve a style and format that's accessible and relevant to the community.

DID YOU KNOW?

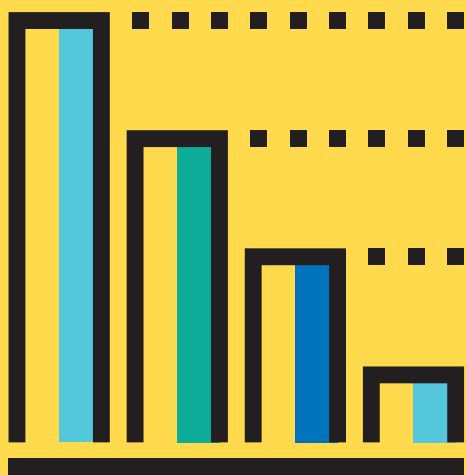
Council's progress reports for this year are available in hardcopy at our Corporate Centre or on the website at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au.

Legal Proceedings

In 2017-18, Council was involved in four legal proceedings, incurring a total of \$59,202 in legal expenses.

Details	\$ Costs	Status	Result
LCC vs Reeves	17,427	Ongoing	N/A
Scott-Brydges vs LCC	12,500	Ongoing	N/A
Allport vs LCC	28,652	Finalised	Consent Orders
Widjabuk Wai Bai vs LCC & Ors	623	Ongoing	N/A
Total Legal Expenses	59,202		

Community Financial Report



What information is included?

The Community Financial Report provides a plain English explanation of our financial statements so that they can be easily understood by our community, business partners, customers and employees.

It's a snapshot of:

- our financial performance for 2017-18;
- our position at 30 June 2018; and
- what the results mean in terms of financial sustainability.

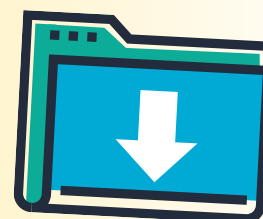
What were the highlights?

From a finance perspective, 2017-18 was a mixed year. Our financial position improved slightly from 2016-17, with more money invested in assets and paying down our debts. However, our overall financial performance was worse than the previous year: our revenue increased, but so did expenses. In particular, while we celebrated the historic Deed of Agreement for the Richmond Tweed Regional Library (see page 43), this new equity sharing arrangement impacted Council's bottom line. The March 2017 flood, which was a difficult time for the community, also continued to impact Council's operations, which is reflected in the financial performance for the year.

Looking to the longer-term, Council faces an ongoing challenge to adequately fund the maintenance and renewal of its assets, particularly as our community grows and needs increase. This is not a unique issue to us, but one experienced by many other local governments in NSW. We've made progress in addressing this issue in recent years, but there is still a long way to go. As we look at our options, we will continue to consult with the community on the best and most sustainable way forward.

DID YOU KNOW?

More detailed information about our financial performance and position is provided in the audited Financial Statements and Auditor's Report (Appendix 2), which is available from our website at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au.



Financial Performance

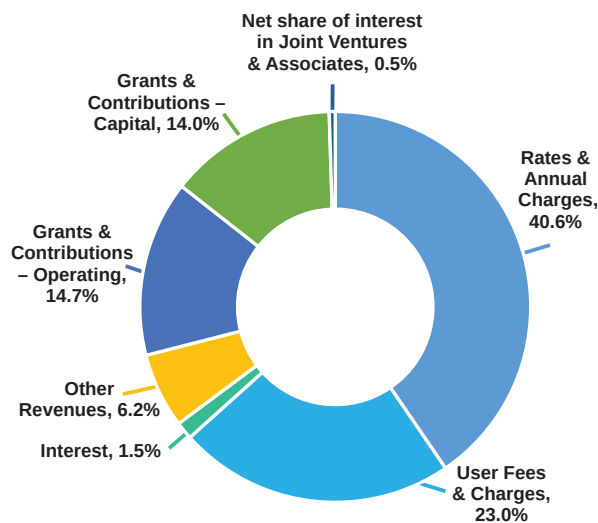
Total Revenue: \$126 million

up \$5.1 million from last year

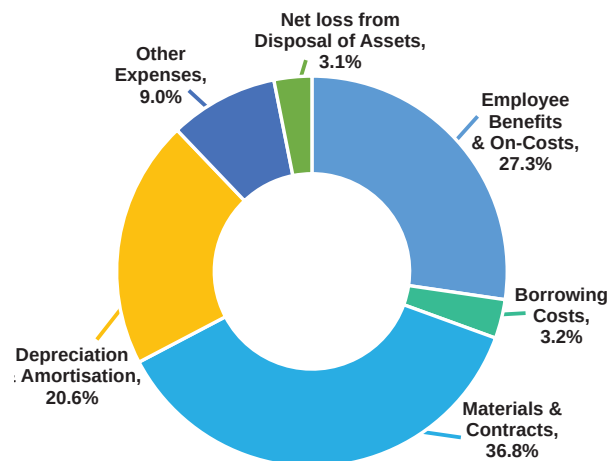
Total Expenses: \$110 million

up \$8.1 million from last year

Where did the money come from?



How was the money spent?



What was the result?

Net Result: \$15.7 million surplus

(after capital grants and contributions)
down \$3 million from last year

Net Result: \$1.9 million deficit

(before capital grants and contributions)
down \$6.4 million from last year

Major changes from 2016-17:

- \$3.3 million increase in capital grants and contributions to spend on new community assets.
- \$3.3 million reduction in user fees and charges, mainly due to reduced product sales at the Blakebrook Quarry.
- A one-off expense of \$3.3 million due to the new Richmond Tweed Regional Library equity sharing arrangement with Tweed, Byron and Ballina councils (see page 43).
- \$4.6 million increase in materials and contracts expenses, mainly due to insurance and roadwork repairs associated with the March 2017 flood.

DID YOU KNOW?

A capital grant or contribution includes money provided by the government or contributions from developers for Council to renew or build new community assets. The money cannot be spent on Council's day-to-day operating activities or services.

Financial Position

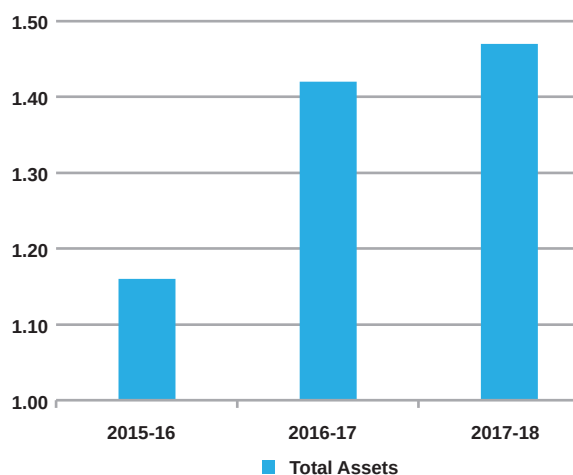
Total Assets: \$1.47 billion

up \$48.2 million from last year

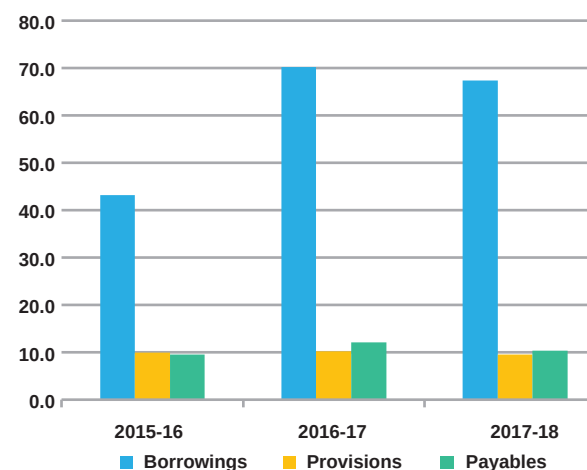
Total Liabilities: \$87.2 million

down \$5.2 million from last year

What do we own? (\$ billion)



What do we owe? (\$ million)



94.2% of Council's assets were infrastructure, property, plant and equipment, including:

- Roads, bridges and footpaths
- Water infrastructure
- Wastewater infrastructure
- Stormwater infrastructure
- Land and buildings
- Plant and equipment
- Open space and recreation assets (including parks)

Debt is not a dirty word

When appropriate, we borrow funds to invest in community infrastructure. We do not borrow to fund our day-to-day operating expenses. Borrowings were higher over the past two years mainly to fund major wastewater infrastructure upgrades (see page 36). These are long-term assets that benefit the community over many years. Debt funding enables us to spread the costs over the life of the assets as we pay back the loan over many years.

What was the result?

Net Worth: \$1.38 billion

up \$53.4 million from last year

Major changes from 2016-17:

- \$48.8 million increase in new assets or renewal of existing assets, including a significant investment in new wastewater infrastructure.
- \$2.8m decrease in what we owe to lenders (our borrowings).
- \$1.7 million decrease in what we owe to suppliers (our payables).

Financial Sustainability

Each year we report a series of performance measures, which are benchmarks set by the NSW Government that reflect expectations for local government financial sustainability. The measures use figures from the audited Financial Statements (Appendix 2) to demonstrate relationships between key numbers.

There are two types of measures:

- Financial measures, which show how well Council is managing its finances.
- Infrastructure asset measures, which show how well Council is managing its assets.

Financial Measures

Operating Performance Ratio

This measures the extent to which revenue raised covers operational expenses.

Benchmark: > 0%

Council's result: **1.4%**



Debt Service Cover Ratio

This measures the availability of Council's operating cash to service its debt, including interest, principal and lease payments.

Benchmark: > 2 times

Council's result: **3.4 times**



Own Source Operating Revenue Ratio

This measures financial flexibility by assessing Council's reliance on external funding sources such as grants and contributions.

Benchmark: > 60%

Council's result: **71.1%**



Rates and Annual Charges Outstanding Percentage

This measures the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on Council's liquidity, and the adequacy of Council's recovery efforts.

Benchmark: < 10%

Council's result: **9%**



Unrestricted Current Ratio

This measures whether Council has enough short-term resources to cover short-term financial obligations.

Benchmark: > 1.5 times

Council's result: **1.37 times**



Cash Expenses Cover Ratio

This measures the number of months Council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflows.

Benchmark: > 3 months

Council's result: **7.5 months**



Infrastructure Asset Measures

Asset Maintenance Ratio

This measures actual maintenance for the year as a percentage of the required maintenance for the year.

Benchmark: > 100%

Council's result: **92.6%**



Infrastructure Backlog Ratio

This measures Council's infrastructure backlog as a proportion of the total value of Council's infrastructure assets.

Benchmark: < 2%

Council's result: **13.5%**



Asset Renewal Ratio

This measures the rate at which existing assets are being renewed against the rate at which they are depreciating.

Benchmark: > 100%

Council's result: **74.1%**



What do the results mean?

Our financial sustainability measures for 2017-18 suggest that we had enough resources to cover immediate expenses, service our debts, and fund operating expenses during the year without relying too heavily on external funding (such as grants and contributions from the government). These are all shorter-term ratios, and the 2017-18 results suggest that we effectively managed our finances.

However, the infrastructure asset measures, which are focused on longer-term sustainability,

suggest that Council faces an ongoing challenge to adequately fund the maintenance and renewal of its assets. In 2017-18, all of Council's infrastructure asset measures were in the red. This means Council was not able to find sufficient funding to cover the required asset maintenance and renewal costs for the year. Whilst the infrastructure backlog is not yet within the benchmark, Council's efforts in the past few years have reduced the backlog from 24% down to about 13% and we are continuing to explore options to bring it down further.

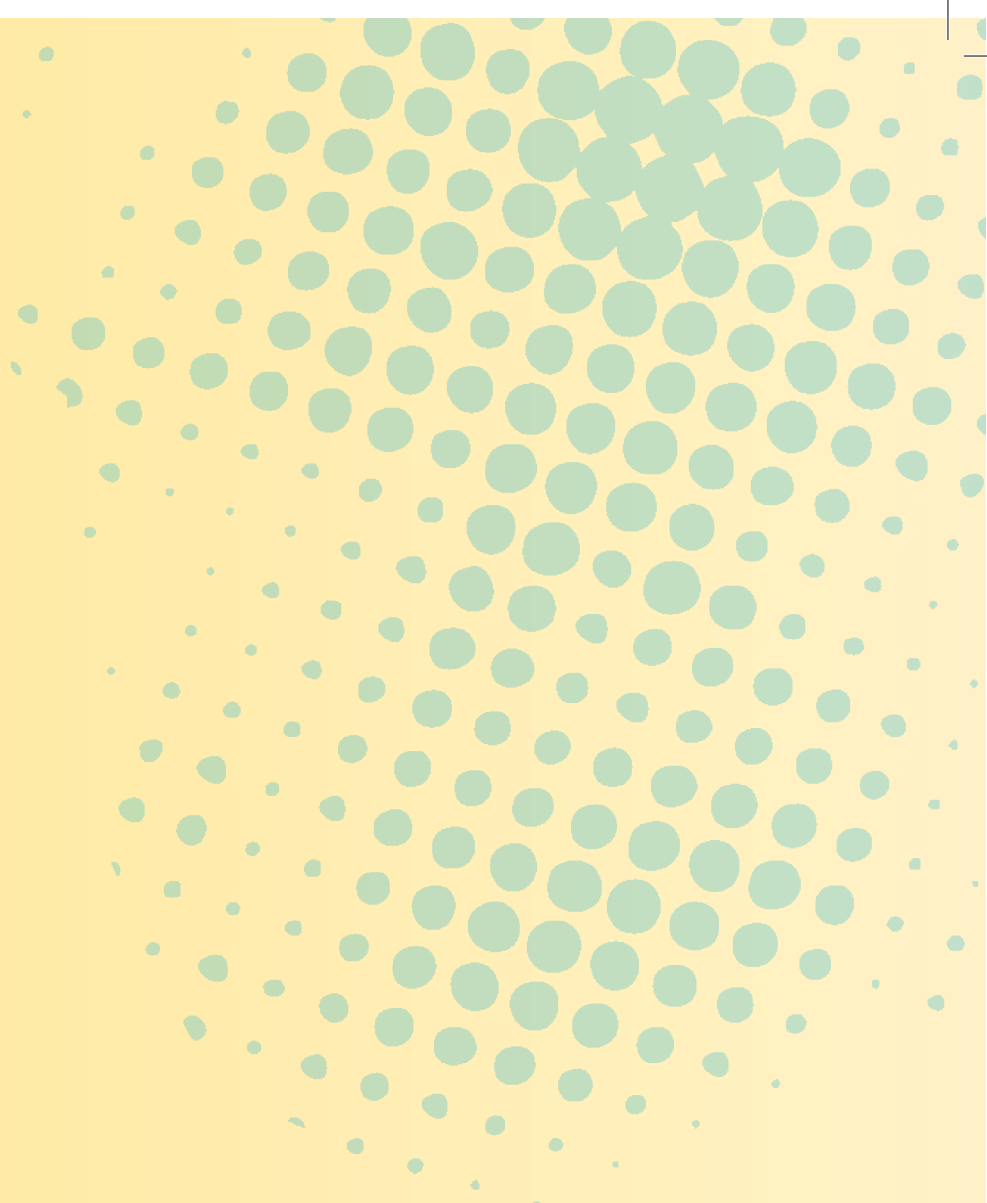
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DID YOU KNOW?

The Appendices can be downloaded from the website at www.lismore.nsw.gov.au.







**For more information phone
Lismore City Council**

1300 87 83 87

