

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024





ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Dungog Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Cultural Custodians of Country in the Dungog Shire, including the Gringai, Geawegal/Geawal, Wanaruah/Wonnarua, and Worimi peoples.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and emerging.

CONTENTS

A Message from the General Manager	04
Purpose of the Annual Report	06
Council Performance Against Deliverables	07
Highlights	08
Our Shire	10
Our Community Values	12
Our Annual Report 2023-24	13
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER	14
Strategies	15
Operational Outcomes	16
INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS	17
Strategies	18
Operational Outcomes	19
CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES	20
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT	21
Strategies	22
Operational Outcomes	23
Statutory Requirements	24
Major Contracts Awarded	28
Special Rate Variation Expenditure	35
Government Information Public Access Act	39
Modern Slavery	45
Appendix	46



A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

– Gareth Curtis

I am very pleased to present Dungog Shire Council's Annual Report for 2023-24. Our ongoing commitment to implementing the Community Strategic Plan and improving services across the shire are reflected in the pages of this report.

Our community will note that the Annual Report 2023-24 highlights our accomplishments in delivering the strategies and actions outlined in our delivery program and operational plan for the year. We also assess our effectiveness based on criteria that reflect our progress towards those actions and objectives.

We must acknowledge the former Mayor and Councillors for their decisions made on behalf of the community, as well as for the strategic achievements accomplished during their term. These accomplishments are evident in the actions carried out by Council staff, which are reported in our regular delivery program updates. Council staff also deserve recognition for their dedication to delivering the services and actions specified in the program.

During this period, Council faced ongoing challenges due to vacancies, significant delays, and interruptions to its works and services. However, we have made progress in filling long-standing vacancies. Additionally, improvements have been seen in our ability to source materials and contractors, and cost increases have been somewhat moderated, as reflected in recent tenders considered by the Council.

Our draft net operating result showed a surplus of **\$11.638 million**, compared to the **\$9.191 million** surplus projected in the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP). Excluding capital grants and contributions, we recorded a deficit of **\$9.965 million**, compared to the **\$437 thousand** deficit forecast in the LTFP.

Actual income from continuing operations reached **\$42.714 million**, surpassing the **\$29.686 million** forecast in the LTFP. Meanwhile, actual expenses from continuing operations totaled **\$31.076 million**, compared to the **\$20.495 million** projected in the LTFP.

In 2023/24, the final year of the Special Rate Variation (SRV), Council budget expenditure was **\$1.013 million** for roads and infrastructure. Additionally, **\$520,000** was allocated to the Transport Infrastructure Reserve for future projects.

The fixing country bridges program has been a remarkable success, with 23 bridges replaced and opened to traffic in April 2024.

Another highlight is the ongoing **\$25 million** roads backlog program, with long-awaited works commencing on Stroud Hill Rd. We have received positive feedback on these works, which have progressed well.

Our Planning and Environment Directorate has also found success in grant programs for flood studies in Clarence Town and EV charging stations in Vacy and Dungog.

I would like to once again express my gratitude to our staff and volunteers for their hard work and commitment, as well as to our former Mayor and Councillors for their support and leadership throughout the year. Working collaboratively continues to yield excellent outcomes that will benefit the community and help achieve the goals outlined in our Community Strategic Plan 2032.

Gareth Curtis
General Manager
Dungog Shire Council

Actual income from continuing operations reached \$42.714 million, surpassing the \$29.686 million forecast in the LTFP.

PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report is our community’s update on performance in achieving the Community Strategic Plan, the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. It reports on our service delivery, financial performance and provides key information on how we are tracking to our community’s goals.

The Community Strategic Plan is our community’s vision for our shire in ten years from now. It is prepared by Council on behalf of the community, bringing together community feedback to understand our shire’s main priorities and aspirations.

The Delivery Program takes the community’s strategic goals and turns them into actions. Creating and scheduling programs for the next four years based on the community’s priorities and what is possible.

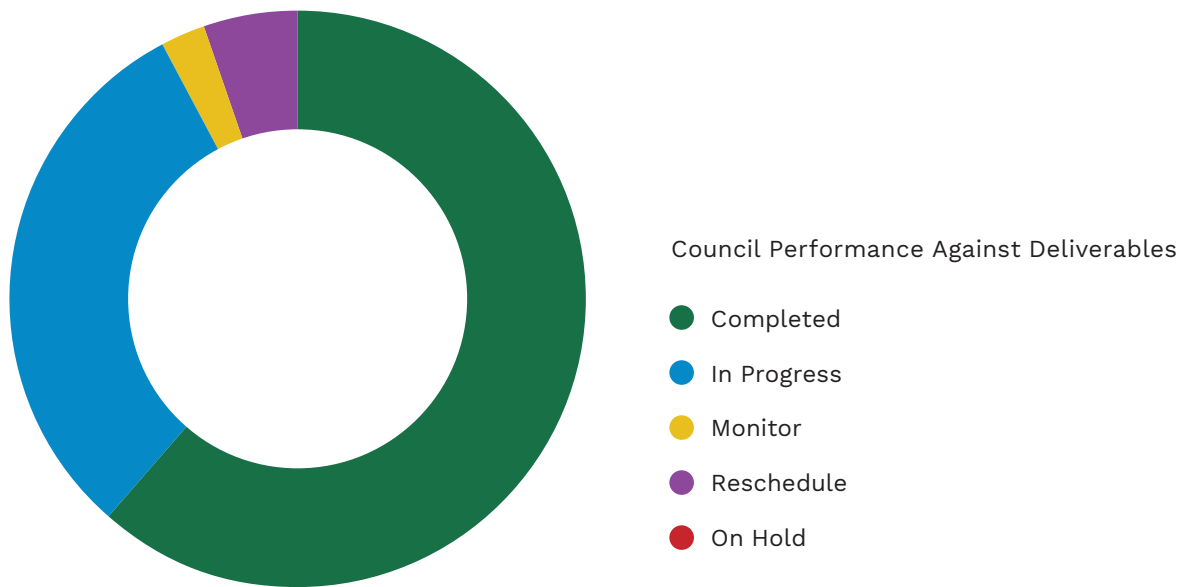
The Operational Plan is Council’s annual action plan. Its purpose is to take the community’s objectives and turn them into a delivery program with measurable activities and deadlines.

The Annual Report is council’s progress report on how it is progressing with its deliverables, keeping council accountable to the community on its actions.



COUNCIL PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE DELIVERABLES AS DEFINED IN THE OPERATIONAL PLAN

	Completed	In Progress	Monitor	Reschedule	On Hold
General Manager	20	4	1	0	0
Infrastructure & Assets	16	3	0	4	0
Corporate and Customer Services	5	0	0	0	0
Planning and Environment	7	17	1	0	0
Totals	48	24	2	4	0



HIGHLIGHTS

Multiple meetings with TfNSW and Minister regarding Clarence Town Bridge funding by NSW Government culminating in Ministerial announcement and media release attended by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on 16 Feb 2024. This advocacy successfully resulting in securing the initial state funding of **\$5.5Million plus a further \$5.5Million**

Advocacy for betterment funding continued – **awaiting funding deed from NSW Government for upgrade of various shire river crossings**, new bridge over the Paterson River at Gresford and the Hooke Street drainage upgrade.

Community Engagement Strategy review completed.

Draft document will be reported to Council and placed on public exhibition following the Local Government elections.

Sec 355 Management Committees and User groups **recognised during National Volunteer Week 2024.**

Dungog Shire Cultural Plan

endorsed by Council, including updated Acknowledgment of Country.



Working with Hunter Joint Organisation on **Electric Vehicle project.**



\$25M backlog funding program ongoing.

The **23 bridge replacements** are now complete and were constructed and open to traffic by April 24.

Council is awaiting the executed funding deed for the new bridge over the Paterson River at Gresford (**Betterment Program**).



Employment and Housing land **reviews underway.**



SRV Funding for Duke Street & Queen Street Clarence Town Complete.

Hooke Street **Master Plan endorsed** by Council.



Rural Lands Strategy under review to support a comprehensive review of the LEP. Grant successful for funding toward finalising the Rural Lands Strategy.



Successful Grant Application with DPE for funding for review of Clarence Town Flood Study with a **total project budget of \$100,000**

Successful grant application to undertake the Clarence Town Flood Study review.

Successful grant applications for **EV charging stations** to be installed at Vacy and the Visitor Information Centre.



Endorsement of Dungog Shire Council **Waste Strategy**

The **Visitor Information Centre** has been refurbished and a launch of the new look “VIC” occurred in May 2024.



Bulky waste annual pick-up was provided during February 2024.

OUR SHIRE

12.3%

of residents are employed in construction



94%

of Dungog shire residents rated their quality of life living in the shire as 'good' to 'excellent'



9,767

residents in the shire in 2023. Growth of 46 from the previous year.



1,204

Local businesses in 2023



Dungog Shire Council's Gross Regional Product is estimated at

\$0.43 billion

which represents 0.05% of the state's GSP (Gross State Product).



Top industry

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing





In Dungog Shire **19.5% of the population** reported doing some form of voluntary work in 2021. **This was a greater proportion than Regional NSW.**

OUR COMMUNITY VALUES



Our Community

That we all enjoy a safe, supportive community, characterised by vibrant cultural life and a strong sense of local heritage.



Our Environment and Planning

That we balance the needs of the natural and built environment, by ensuring the natural environment is enhanced and that growth is achieved through a balanced mix of development which acknowledges our unique scenic qualities, rural amenity and lifestyle.



Our Economy

That we ensure our economy is strong, creative, innovative and sustainable and provides us with jobs, business and creative opportunities and easy access to goods and services.



Our Infrastructure

That we aim to provide safe, functional, accessible, resilient and well maintained infrastructure, services and transport networks and that we all have access to a range of activities and facilities that cater for our sporting and recreational needs.



Our Leadership

That we aim for strong community leadership, financial sustainability and ethical, accountable and responsive governance.

OUR ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Delivery Program

The following section reflects the Council's progress in implementing the Delivery Program from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. Council's Operational Plan is derived from the Delivery Program.

The report on the 2023/24 Operational Plan which follows, highlights Council's progress.

There are a number of strategies assigned to each theme of the Community Strategic Plan which are also aligned to Council's Delivery Program.

Strategic Targets

The targets below are reported by operational departments including the office of the General Manager, Infrastructure & Assets, Planning & Environment and Corporate & Customer Service.

Progress Indicators



Completed

Actions of a program's activities are complete.



In Progress

A program's actions are on track and due to be completed on time.



Monitor

Some program actions require review and remediation to ensure completion.



Reschedule

An activity's actions have been moved to a future reporting period.



On Hold

An action has been indefinitely placed on hold.

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

Strategies

1.1

That we all enjoy a safe, supportive community, characterised by vibrant cultural life and a strong sense of local heritage.

2.1

The health of our natural environment and biodiversity is preserved and enhanced.

4.1

That our Community is supported by safe, functional, accessible and maintained infrastructure, and effective local and regional transport networks.

4.2

That the Community has access to a range of places, activities and facilities which cater for diverse sporting and recreational interests.














5.1

That we aim for strong community leadership, financial sustainability and ethical, accountable and responsive governance.







OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

Operational Outcomes

Action	Strategies	Status
1.1.1	Continue to develop programs/initiatives to welcome and support new residents into the shire.	
1.1.2	Create options for community participation through volunteerism.	
1.1.3	Acknowledge and celebrate the contribution volunteers make to the Dungog shire.	
1.1.4	Raise public awareness of local activities and events that provide a foundation of community building.	
1.1.5	Develop and initiate opportunities for greater participation of young people in local community activities.	
1.1.6	Foster the cohesiveness of local community groups.	
1.1.10	Ensure that community health and safety issues are identified and addressed.	
1.1.11	Assist community organisations to secure funding and other resources.	
2.1.4	Involve the community in maintaining and enhancing environmental health.	
2.2.4	Ensure the heritage and streetscapes of villages are preserved and enhanced.	
4.1.1	Improve the safety and functionality of our road network. Council Advocacy.	
4.1.2	Ensure a local police presence throughout the shire.	
4.1.3	Ensure our communities have access to quality educational institutions and health and social services/facilities.	

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

Operational Outcomes

Action	Strategies	Status
4.1.4	Ensure our local bridge network is safe and able to accommodate heavy vehicle load requirements.	
4.1.5	Improve the provision of transport services to communities within the shire.	
4.1.6	Ensure that community assets, facilities and public infrastructure are planned for, maintained and improved to a reasonable standard.	
4.2.3	Encourage and support a diversity of sporting and recreational activities throughout the shire.	
5.1.1	That we aim for strong community leadership, financial sustainability and ethical, accountable and responsive governance.	
5.1.2	Decision-making processes are open, transparent and inclusive.	
5.1.3	Council undertakes broad effective communication and engagement with the communities across the Shire.	
5.1.4	Council’s governance and organisational structure reflects the vision, priorities and directions outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.	
5.1.6	Council services are planned and delivered with a focus on quality customer service, continuous improvement, governance and risk management.	
5.1.7	Council maintains a regional outlook and seeks opportunities for strategic alliances with neighbouring councils.	
5.1.8	Council will advocate for our communities by actively pursuing constructive relationships with other spheres of government.	
5.1.10	Other programs supporting Our Leadership.	

INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS

Strategies

1.1

That we all enjoy a safe, supportive community, characterised by vibrant cultural life and a strong sense of local heritage.

2.2

That the growth is achieved through a balanced mix of development which acknowledges our unique scenic qualities, rural amenity and country lifestyle.

2.3

We are committed to climate action.

4.1

That our Community is supported by safe, functional, accessible and maintained infrastructure and effective local and regional transport networks.

4.2

That the Community has access to a range of places, activities and facilities which cater for diverse sporting and recreational interests.
















5.1











That we aim for strong community leadership, financial sustainability and ethical, accountable and responsive governance.



INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS

Operational Outcomes

Action	Strategies	Status	
1.1.7	Enhance resident capacity to prepare for and withstand the effects of natural disasters and rapid onset events within the shire.		
1.1.9	Ensure that there are locally available services and facilities to cater for people of all ages.		
2.2.4	Ensure the heritage and streetscapes of our villages are preserved and enhanced.		
2.3.1	We participate in climate change collaboration and partnerships to leverage effort and resources, and are keen to learn from others.		
2.3.2	We participate in partnerships and seek grant funding to support our aspirations in climate change action.		
	Ensure Council fleet purchases meet strict greenhouse gas emissions requirements and support the uptake of electric vehicles.		
	Support cycling through provision of adequate cycle lanes, bike parking and end of ride facilities.		
4.1.1	Improve the safety and functionality of our road network.		
	Council Advocacy		
	Road Asset Management Policy and Plans		
	Unsealed Rural Road Network Review		
	Funding		
4.1.4	Road Safety		
	Ensure our local bridge network is safe and able to accommodate heavy vehicle load requirements.		
Bridge Assessments			
	Timber Bridge Upgrades		

Action	Strategies	Status
4.1.6	Ensure that community assets, facilities and public infrastructure are planned for, maintained and improved to a reasonable standard.	
4.1.7	Ensure that the provision of public infrastructure and services reflects the needs of a growing and changing population.	
4.2.1	<p>Ensure that local recreational and sporting facilities reflects the needs and interests of a growing community.</p> <p>Continuous review and implementation of Council's Parks and Recreation Asset Management Plan.</p> <p>Support Council's s355 Management Committees.</p> <p>Ensure Council's Parks and Recreation Plans of Management are developed and reviewed.</p> <p>Finalise the Open Space and Recreation Strategic Plan (incorporating the Bike Plan review and Dungog Common). Future priorities from the Plan will inform future delivery program/operational plan subject to funding.</p>	   
4.2.2	Ensure that sporting and recreational spaces are well maintained and provide appropriate facilities and amenities for locals and visitors.	
4.2.3	Encourage and support diversity of sporting and recreational activities throughout the shire.	
4.2.4	Ensure that appropriate access to public land is maintained.	
5.1.5	Council undertakes prudent financial management to ensure its long-term viability.	

CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

Strategies

1.1

That we all enjoy a safe, supportive community, characterised by vibrant cultural life and a strong sense of local heritage.

5.1

That we aim for strong community leadership, financial sustainability and ethical, accountable and responsive governance.



Action	Strategies	Status
1.1.8	Foster and support the cultural life of the shire.	✔
5.1.1	We aim for strong community leadership, financial sustainability and ethical, accountable and responsive governance.	✔
5.1.5	Council undertakes prudent financial management to ensure its long-term viability.	✔
5.1.9	Communities across the shire have access to a range of communication formats for receipt and exchange of information.	✔
5.1.10	Other programs supporting Our Leadership.	✔

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

Strategies

1.1

That we all enjoy a safe, supportive community, characterised by vibrant cultural life and a strong sense of local heritage.

2.1

The health of our natural environment and biodiversity is preserved and enhanced.

2.2

That the growth is achieved through a balanced mix of development which acknowledges our unique scenic qualities, rural amenity and country lifestyle.

2.3

We are committed to climate action.

3.1

That we ensure our economy is strong, innovative and sustainable, and that it provides us with jobs, business opportunities, and easy access to goods and services.

4.1











That our Community is supported by safe, functional, accessible and maintained infrastructure and effective local and regional transport networks.



PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

Operational Outcomes

Action	Strategies	Status
1.1.10	Ensure that community health and safety issues are identified and addressed.	
2.1.1	Manage public access and use of natural areas to enhance our environmental experiences and to preserve and promote ecological values.	
2.1.2	Support and manage the responsible use of resources including the minimisation of waste and the promotion of recycling practices in homes, workplaces, development sites and public places.	
2.1.3	Raise public awareness of the responsibilities of landholders regarding management of land.	
2.1.4	Involve the community in maintaining and enhancing environmental health.	
2.1.5	Ensure that Dungog Shire Council’s policies and procedures adequately protect and enhance the shire’s natural environment and biodiversity.	
2.1.6	Ensure that local waterways and riparian areas in the shire are clean and healthy.	
2.1.7	Manage and reduce the impact of weeds on the natural environment.	
2.1.8	Ensure that appropriate regulatory and enforcement agencies are proactive in addressing environmental issues in our shire.	
2.2.1	Ensure that we plan for adequate land supply to accommodate future expected population growth.	
2.2.2	Maintain a long term planning approach that caters for diversity and choice in rural and village living.	 
2.2.3	Ensure that our land use planning for the shire acknowledges the importance of our rural character and agricultural activities.	
2.2.4	Ensure the heritage and streetscapes of villages are preserved and enhanced.	
2.3.1	We participate in climate change collaboration and partnerships to leverage effort and resources, and are keen to learn from others.	
2.3.2	We participate in partnerships and seek grant funding to support our aspirations in climate change action.	

Action	Strategies	Status
3.1.1	Ensure that economic growth and expansion across the shire is supported by improvement of local public and private infrastructure.	
3.1.2	Ensure we plan for the availability of land to facilitate commercial and industrial growth.	
3.1.3	Review the provision of improved camping and caravan facilities throughout the shire.	
3.1.4	Ensure that appropriate public and private sector agencies and businesses work co-operatively to strengthen and expand the shire's economic base.	
3.1.5	Promote the shire as a good location for the establishment of innovative, small-to-medium scale, sustainable businesses.	
3.1.6	Work closely with relevant Chambers of Commerce and Progress Associations to promote and share best business practice, offer platforms to lobby government on behalf of business where required, undertake advocacy for education, transport and health, make representation to government on critical shire issues, and seek out grant and other funding opportunities.	
3.1.7	Work with Dungog Regional Tourism to develop a strategic approach to growing visitor numbers across the shire.	
3.1.8	Implement the actions stemming from the Dungog Shire Economic Development Plan.	
3.1.10	Improve the availability of telecommunications infrastructure to our communities and visitors.	
4.1.7	Ensure that the provision of public infrastructure and services reflect the needs of a growing and changing population.	

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Mayoral and Councillor Expenses

In addition to the Mayoral fee of \$16,558 and Councillor’s fees of \$70,786, expenditure in relation to the provision of facilities and Councillor’s expenses amounted to \$130,270. This figure includes:

Expenses	\$ Amount
Council elections	0
Code of conduct investigations	0
Provision of dedicated office equipment	0
Conference and seminar expenses	23,518
Training and skill development	0
Interstate travel by Councillors	0
Overseas visits by Councillors	0
Expenses of any spouse/partner accompanying a Councillor	0
Expenses involved in the provision of child care	0
Mobile phone and internet costs	224
Travel	9,533
Meals and sustenance	6,480
Delegates expenses	3,171
Total	42,926

Senior Staff

During FY2023-2024 Council classified the General Manager and 1 Director as Senior Staff pursuant to Section 332(2) of the Local Government Act.

In respect of the employment of the Senior Staff during FY2023-2024, compensation was \$520,129.77 which includes the salary component, employer and employee superannuation, provision of vehicle and fringe benefits tax.

Title	Salary incl. Super	Vehicle
General Manager	\$291,284.32	\$12,000.00
Senior Staff	\$204,845.45	\$12,000.00

Overseas visits undertaken

Reg cl 217(1)(a)

No overseas visits were undertaken during the year by Councillors and others representing the Council.

Councillor Training

Reg cl 186 – For the purposes of section 428(4)(b) of the Act, an annual report of a council must include the following information:

- (i) the names of any Mayors or Councillors who completed any induction training course, induction refresher course or supplementary induction course under this Part during the year,
- (ii) the names of any Mayors or Councillors who participated in any ongoing professional development program under this Part during the year,
- (iii) the number of seminars, circulars and other activities delivered as part of the ongoing professional development program in accordance with this Part during the year.

Training/professional development opportunity	Councillors attended
ALGA National General Assembly (June 2024)	Cr John Connors
Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2023 (November 2023)	Cr John Connors Cr Jessica Clark

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Equal Opportunity Employment

217(1)(a9) a statement of the activities undertaken by the Council during that year to implement its equal employment opportunity management plan.

The purpose of Council's EEO Policy is:

- (i) to eliminate discrimination or harassment in employment on the grounds of race, sex, marital status, physical impairment, intellectual impairment and sexuality, and compulsory age retirement. These grounds are specified in the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act which binds Councils.
- (ii) to promote Equal Employment Opportunity for women, members of non-English speaking backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and people with disabilities.

Persons Working on 14 February 2024

As Reg cl 217 (1)(d) Council must provide a statement of the total number of persons who performed paid work on the relevant day.

Total number of persons employed by Council	84
Permanent full time	68
Permanent part time	7
Casual basis	0
Fixed term contract	1
Senior staff	2
Contract services labour	6
Contract services apprentice or trainee	0

Public Interest Disclosures

Council is committed to the objectives of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 (the PID Act) and encourages the disclosure of serious wrongdoing by public officials.

In accordance with the PID Act, Council's 'Public Interest Disclosures Policy' established guidelines for the reporting and management of reports of serious wrongdoing.

For the reporting period ending 30 June 2024, Dungog Shire Council received no public interest disclosures.

Disability Inclusion Plan

The Disability Inclusion Plan supports both Dungog Shire Council's Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program, and aligns with the principles of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, as well as the NSW Government's Disability Inclusion Plan, which specifies four focus areas. Council's actions undertaken in 2023-2024 are detailed following:

1. Attitudes and Behaviours:

- Inclusion tent provided at three shire events.

2. Liveable Communities:

- Extended linkage paths of travel within the public school precinct at Clarence Town and Gresford
- Hearing Assistance System and vision impairment software in shire Library
- Improvements to accessible parking spaces at the shire's sporting complexes
- Improvements to inclusive, accessible amenities
- Connect and extend linkage paths of travel within play space areas in Dungog.

3. Employment:

- Provision of resources or equipment to support areas of need.

4. Systems and Processes:

- Hearing Assistance System and vision impairment software in shire Library
- Investigating resource options in Council's Customer Service Area.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Major Contracts Awarded 2023-2024 (over \$150,000)

Contractor Name	Summary of Works	\$ Contract Value	Contract Start Date	Estimated Contract End Date
Burns Earthmoving Pty Ltd	Plant Hire Annual Tender T1/2023	660,544.18	1/7/2023	30/06/2024
Conplant Pty Ltd	Plant Hire Annual Tender T1/2023	170,650.48	1/7/2023	30/06/2024
JR & EG Richards Pty Ltd	Waste Collection Services	1,077,048.66	5/10/2015	4/10/2025
Colas New South Wales Pty Ltd	Regional Procurement Tender - T01234HUN	492,406.54	1/07/2023	30/06/2026
Civica Pty Ltd	Software Licencing & Support	370,945.58	N/A	N/A
Dannenberg Earthmoving Pty Ltd	Part of Council's Annual Plant Hire Tender - T1/2023	196,940.25	1/07/2023	30/06/2024
Quarry Products Newcastle Pty Ltd	Regional Procurement Tender - T372324	1,795,395.20	1/01/2024	31/12/2026
Downer EDI Works Pty LTD	Regional Procurement Tender - T012324 HUN	202,481.52	1/7/2023	30/06/2024
Barker Ryan Stewart Pty Ltd	Development Engineering Services (professional staff) and Civil Engineering Design Services	362,975.25	N/A	N/A
Elbourne Plant Hire Pty Ltd	Plant Hire Annual Tender T1/2023	796,253.50	1/07/2023	4/10/2025
KCE Pty Ltd	Reconstruction of two sections of Stroud Hill Road - Tender T2/2023	773,097.30	08/03/2024	30/06/2025
Stabilised Pavements of Australia	Regional Procurement Tender - T202223HUN	773,177.49	1/01/2023	31/12/2024
Accurate Asphalt & Road Repairs Pty Ltd	Regional Procurement Tender - T202223HUN	252,008.57	1/1/2023	31/12/2024
GW & GJ Trappel Pty Ltd	Plant Hire Annual Tender T1/2023	497,813.80	1/7/2023	30/06/2024

Contractor Name	Summary of Works	\$ Contract Value	Contract Start Date	Estimated Contract End Date
Holcim (Australia) Pty Ltd	Regional Procurement Tender - T072223HUN	151,888.20	1/10/2019	30/09/2024
Labour Co-operative Limited	Labour Hire - Regional Procurement Tender T601920HUN	428,244.57	1/10/2019	30/09/2024
Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd	Regional Procurement Tender - T01234HUN	3,464,456.82	1/07/2023	30/06/2026
Porter Equipment Australia Pty Ltd	Competitive quotation process for purchase under the Tender Requirement Limit	185,241.37	N/A	N/A
Irwin Fencing Pty Ltd	Regional Procurement Tender - T412021HUN	665,486.80	1/04/2024	31/03/2026
WD & CA Everett Earthmoving Contractors Pty Ltd	Quarry Gravels	306,683.22	N/A	N/A
Mark G & Cindy A Fisher	Plant Hire Annual Tender T1/2023	167,272.60	1/7/2023	30/06/2024
Edser Plant & Civil Pty Ltd	Plant Hire Annual Tender T1/2023	512,841.57	1/7/2023	30/06/2024
GP Mechanical Services	Plant Hire Annual Tender T1/2023	237,050.58	1/7/2023	30/06/2024
Hastings Co-operative Limited	Bulk fuel supply T082223HUN	401,645.78	1/10/2022	30/09/2025
Bridgebuild & Civil Pty Ltd	Bridge Construction 12/2022 – Weldon Rumbels Bridge–Mates Bridge	1,237,988.10	08/09/2022	30/06/2024
MECC (NSW) Pty Ltd	Multiple minor works at multiple sites undertaken under quotation process	150,747.30	N/A	N/A
Icombined 360 Services Group Pty Ltd	Regional Procurement Tender - T152324HUN	402,675.65	18/10/2023	30/09/2025

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Major Contracts Awarded 2023-2024 (over \$150,000)

Contractor Name	Summary of Works	\$ Contract Value	Contract Start Date	Estimated Contract End Date
Cramps Earthmoving	Plant Hire Annual Tender T1/2023	360,083.75	1/7/2023	30/06/2024
Watchout Traffic Control	Regional Procurement Tender - T152324HUN	998,652.00	1/10/2023	30/09/2025
Design & Build Recruitment Pty Ltd	Temporary Worker Contract (various workers)	201,990.98	01/02/2023	Ongoing
Kloster Hyundai	Multiple vehicle purchases undertaken throughout the year undertaken on quotation basis	181,858.40	N/A	N/A
Clarence Town River Park Pty Ltd	Williams River Holiday Park Management Services	205,609.66	14/09/2022	14/07/2024
Merchant Excavation & Electrical Pty Ltd	Plant Hire Annual Tender T1/2023	367,154.00	1/7/2023	30/06/2024
Lifeguarding Services Australia	Pool Contractor – Dungog Pool 03/2020 Contractor – Clarence Town Feb-20	195,974.22	1/7/2020	30/06/2025
Skelton Earthworks Pty Ltd	Concrete & Civil Works Various Projects - No contract required	357,174.29	N/A	N/A
Newpave Asphalt	Asphalt Works undertaken on quotation basis	163,380.01	N/A	N/A
Bridge & Marine Engineering Pty Ltd	Bridge Construction Dusodie – T08/2022 Dowlings – T12/2022 Archinals & Bruxner – T01/2021	938,946.71	24/06/2021	30/06/2024

Contractor Name	Summary of Works	\$ Contract Value	Contract Start Date	Estimated Contract End Date
TRC Trails Pty Ltd	Trail construction under quotation basis	192,823.74	N/A	N/A
GC Civil Contracting	Bridge Tender T14/2022 for Hicks & Osmonds Bridges	969,642.85	17/02/2023	30/06/2024
H Civil Pty Ltd	Contract & Project Management Services	266,006.20	N/A	N/A
Hunter Valley Development Services Pty Ltd	Consultancy Services Agreement – Development Engineering	201,561.04	23/08/2023	Ongoing
Persona Communications	Communication Services	218,375.48	01/07/2023	30/06/2024
Ellis Building Group Pty Ltd	Building Fit-outs undertaken under quotation basis	225,582.53	N/A	N/A
Toisch Pty Ltd	Bridge Construction – Apr-21 Thalaba & Fosterton T04/2021 Kingfisher Creek T14/2022	643,788.00	01/02/2022	30/06/2024
Fortec Australia Pty Ltd	Bridge Construction Reeves & Packham Bridges T14/2022 Middlebrooks, Chesworths & Ashards T01/2022 Jordans Bridge T2/2022	2,812,127.35	8/9/2022	30/06/2024

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Projects which contributions or levies have been used

Project ID	Summary of Works	Amenity or Service	\$ Amount	% of cost funded by levy	Any Amounts Borrowed	\$ Value of the land and material public benefit	Project Complete (Y/N)
Gundaroo Rd	Rehabilitation	Road and Active Transport	178,014	100%	Nil	444,604	N

Contributions and levies

EPA Reg 218A(3)(a), (b)

(a) Total value of all contributions and levies received during the year – \$514,000

(b) Total value of all contributions and levies expended during the year – \$178,000

Environmental Upgrade Agreement

No environmental upgrade agreements have been entered into. Act 54P(1).

Coastal Management Services

Reg 217(1)(e1).

There are no coastal management services in place.

Work carried out on Private Land

During the period 1st July 2023 to 30th June 2024, all private works were undertaken in accordance with Section 67 of the Local Government Act 1993. Council did not resolve to subsidise any works.

Stormwater Management Services

Income received from stormwater levies for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 have been transferred to restricted assets and will be utilized on capital and maintenance works associated with stormwater management.

Total Stormwater Charges levied in 2023/24: \$42,445.

Planning Agreements

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 No 203.

No new planning agreements were entered into during the 2023/24 Financial Year.

A planning authority that has entered into one or more planning agreements must, while any such planning agreements remain in force, include in its annual report details of in force planning agreements.

Description	Date entered into	Names of parties	Land
In connection with Development Consent DA103/2011 for a 9 Lot Subdivision, the Developer made an offer to the Council to enter into a Planning Agreement to provide a monetary contribution of \$69,300 toward the construction of roadworks at the intersection of Angela Close and Glen William Road, Clarence Town.	5 November 2020	Dungog Shire Council and Mr A S and Mrs P M Jones	No 38 and 39 Angela Close, Clarence Town being Lot 3 and 4 in DP 800829 and the intersection of Glen William Road and Angela Close, Clarence Town.

Inspection of Private Swimming Pools

Swimming Pools Act 1992 (SP Act), s2F(2)
Swimming Pools Regulation 2018 (SP Reg) cl 23

- 1 inspection were of tourist and visitor accommodation.
- 0 inspections were of premises with more than 2 dwellings.
- 22 inspections resulted in issuance a certificate of compliance under s22D of the SP Act.
- 4 inspections resulted in issuance a certificate of non-compliance under cl 21 SP Reg.

Legal Costs

As Reg cl 217(1)(a3) Council must provide a summary of the amounts incurred by the Council in relation to legal proceedings including:

- amounts incurred by Council in relation to proceedings taken by or against Council (including out of court settlements)
- summary of the state of the progress of each legal proceeding and (if finalised) the result. Planning & Environment Directorate

Planning Legal Costs: \$243,774

Corporate and Engineering Legal Costs: \$62,994

Real Estate Development Legal Costs: \$12,396

Williams River Holiday Park Legal Costs: \$9,772

Buttai Gravel Pty Ltd v Independent Planning Commission & Ors – ongoing: \$237,236

Animal Boarding Establishment – ongoing: \$6,538

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Grants and Contributions (section 356)

Donations and Expenditure under Section 356 amounted to \$29,641 and was made up as follows:

Donations & Contributions	\$ Amount
Australia Day	10,557
Anzac Day	409
Gresford District Agricultural Society	125
Dungog Community Radio Inc	1,200
Dungog Arts Society	500
Ride Dungog	10,000
Arts Upper Hunter	6,850

Rates and Charges Written Off

Rates and Charges written off for the year amount to \$172,679 and comprised the following:

- Mandatory Pensioner Rebates under Section 575 Of the Local Government Act 1993: \$170,464 (55% reimbursed to Council by the State Government).
- Postponed Rates and Charges written off under Section 595 of the Local Government Act 1993: \$1,895.00
- Abandonments – small debts: \$320.00

Activities funded by a Special Rate Variation (SRV) of general income.

On 14 May 2019 IPART advised that Council’s SRV was partially approved for a five year period, meaning that Council can increase its general income from financial years 2019 to 2024, consisting of annual increases to rates as follows:

Year	Annual General Increase in General Income
2019-20	15%
2020-21	15%
2021-22	10%
2022-23	10%
2023-24	10%

SRV Expenditure

The SRV expenditure budget in 2023-24 was \$ 1.245 million. Actual expenditure was \$1.013 million \$520,000 was also allocated to Council's Transport Infrastructure Reserve for future projects.

Project	SRV Budget 2023/24	Overall Project Cost (Multiple Years)	SRV Funds Expended 2023/24
Duke Street Clarence Town	\$220,000	\$857,066	\$202,820
Queen Street Clarence Town	\$200,000	\$755,700	\$186,150
Allyn River Road from Halton to Gringhi Bridge	\$660,000	\$3,340,000	\$34,196
Park Street/Allyn River Road	Nil	\$1,370,000	\$425,000 (From Transport Infrastructure Reserve)
Bridge Loan Repayments	\$165,000	NA	\$165,000
Transfer to Transport Infrastructure Restricted Assets	\$520,000	NA	\$425,000 (See Park/Allyn Project Above)

For the year ended 30 June 2024, the draft net operating result was in surplus of \$11.638 million, compared to a surplus of \$9.191 million forecast in the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP). Before capital grants and contributions, the deficit was \$9.965 million, compared to a deficit of \$437 thousand forecast in the LTFP.

Actual income from continuing operations totaled \$42.714 million, compared to \$29.686 million forecast in the LTFP. Actual expenses from continuing operations totaled \$31.076 million, compared to \$20.495 million forecast in the LTFP.

The net operating result was \$2.447 million more favourable than forecast due to the drivers below:

1. Capital grants and contributions were \$12.716 million higher than forecast across infrastructure asset categories of roads, bridges and community facilities.
2. Materials and contracts were \$3.549 million higher than forecast due to increased cost of materials and services on capital works programs.

Since the IPART announcement, Council has worked with several owners of farmland properties held in multiple lots to seek one rateable assessment. Council has assisted these owners reduce fifty two (52) separate rateable assessments down to nineteen (19).

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Legal and Finance

External bodies exercising Council functions

Function	Body
Enforcement of relevant legislation concerning the overloading of vehicles on regional roads and local roads within the shire.	Mid North Weight of Loads Group
Care, control and management of the James Theatre Community Centre.	James Theatre Community Centre Committee
Care, control and management of the Clarence Town School of Arts Hall.	Clarence Town School of Arts Committee
Care, control and management of the Gresford School of Arts Hall.	Gresford School of Arts Committee
Care, control and management of the Paterson School of Arts Hall.	Paterson School of Arts Committee
Care, control and management of the Vacy School of Arts Hall.	Vacy School of Arts Committee
Care, control and management of the Martins Creek School of Arts Hall.	Martins Creek School of Arts Committee
Care, control and management of the Showground reserve.	Dungog Showground and Recreation Reserve Management Committee
Care, control and management of the Paterson Sportsground.	Paterson Sportsground Committee
Care, control and management of the Gresford Sporting Complex.	Gresford School of Arts Committee
Care, control and management of the Vacy Sportsground.	Vacy Sportsground Committee
Care, control and management of the Clarence Town Sporting Complex.	Clarence Town Sporting Complex Committee

Companion Animals Act

Dungog Shire Council provides Companion Animal Services that include active administration, enforcement, education and monitoring components. There is currently one off-leash area in the shire located at Frank Robinson Reserve and Dungog Council promotes its Companion Animal program on social media, school visits and on our website.

We lodge pound information data annually. Any dog attack data is updated as required on the NSW

Companion Animals Register. A commercially operated kennel is utilised to provide pound services, on a fee for service basis. There is no contract in place for these services and the private facility is located in an adjoining Local Government area.

In 2023/24, \$39,355 was expended on Council's Companion Animal program. Expenditure consists of fees to the private impounding facilities, administration and related programs such as the

provision of educational material and investigation of complaints. Council received 406 new Companion registrations, generating revenue of \$17,059 from Companion Animal Fees.

During the reporting period 20 companion animals were seized, 15 were reunited with the owner, the remaining 5 were rehomed with an Animal welfare organisation. 0% were euthanized. Council also worked closely with another Animal Welfare agency, rehoming 140 dogs from one property,

Compliance officers investigated 106 Companion Animal related complaints during the period.

In Council's Companion Animals Management Plan that details strategies in relation to companion animals, a focus on providing another off-leash dog park is currently under consideration.

**In 2023/24, \$39,355
was expended on
Council's Companion
Animal program.**



CORPORATE ENTITIES OF THE HUNTER COUNCILS

For nearly 70 years, local government in the Hunter has found significant benefit in working together through positive cooperation and resource sharing.

The ten Hunter councils include: Cessnock City Council, Dungog Shire Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Maitland City Council, MidCoast Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council, City of Newcastle, Port Stephens Council, Singleton Council, and Upper Hunter Shire Council.

Arising from this collaboration, the ten Hunter councils collectively own and manage the following corporate entities:

Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) – a statutory body under the *Local Government Act 1993*, established in 2018 to identify, advocate for and collaborate on regional strategic priorities for the Hunter. The Hunter Joint Organisation’s statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities, and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and the community.

Arrow Collaborative Services Limited (and its wholly owned subsidiaries **Hunter Councils Legal Services Limited**) – companies limited by guarantee under the *Corporations Act 2001* and established to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided by Hunter councils and local government more broadly across NSW. The services provided focus on specialised planning and environmental law, and regional purchasing and procurement. Arrow also provides direct support to the operations of the Hunter Joint Organisation.

Hunter Councils Incorporated – an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* that holds property assets for the Hunter Joint Organisation and Arrow Collaborative Services.

Dungog Shire Council has representation on each entity’s board, and shares ownership and governance of the entities with the other nine councils of the Hunter region.



GOVERNMENT INFORMATION PUBLIC ACCESS ACT

1. Review of proactive release program – Clause 7(a)

Under section 7 of the GIPA Act, agencies must review their programs for the release of government information to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. This review must be undertaken at least once every 12 months.

Our agency’s program for the proactive release of information involves identifying information that should in the public interest be available to the public without imposing unreasonable additional cost to Council and making it available for inspection or via Council’s website where possible.

During the reporting period, we reviewed this program by undertaking a review of Council’s Information Guide to ascertain if there were additional documents that could be added to the Open Access Information list.

During the reporting period, our agency received a total of 35 formal access applications (including withdrawn applications but not invalid applications).

2. Number of access applications received – Clause 7(b)

3. Number of refused applications for Schedule 1 information – Clause 7(c)

During the reporting period, our agency did not refuse an application either wholly or in part because the information requested was information referred to in Schedule 1 to the GIPA Act.



GOVERNMENT INFORMATION PUBLIC ACCESS ACT

4. Statistical information about access applications – Clause 7(d) and Schedule 2

Table A: Number of applicants by type of applicant and outcome									
	Full access granted	Partial access granted	Refused Access	Information not held	Information already available	Refusal to disclose if information held	Application withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Private sector business	9	2	0	0	1	0	0	12	34.29%
Not for profit and community organisations	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2.86%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	8.56%
Members of the public (other)	12	4	0	1	0	0	2	19	54.29%
Total	23	8	0	1	1	0	2	35	
% of Total	65.71%	22.86%	0.00%	2.86%	2.86%	0.00%	5.71%		

*More than one decision can be made in respect of a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision. This also applies to Table B.

Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome

	Full access granted	Partial access granted	Refused access	Information not held	Information already available	Refusal to disclose if information held	Application withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Personal information applications	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	23	7	0	1	1	0	2	34	97.14%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2.86%
Total	23	8	0	1	1	0	2	35	
% of Total	65.71%	22.86%	0.00%	2.86%	2.86%	0.00%	5.71%		

*A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in Clause 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant (the applicant being an individual).

Table C: Invalid applications

Reason invalid	Number of applications
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	3
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0
Total number of invalid applications received	3
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	2

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION PUBLIC ACCESS ACT

Table D: Conclusive presumption of overriding matters listed in Schedule 1 of the Act public interest against disclosure:

	Number of times consideration used	Number of applications
Overriding secrecy laws	0	0
Cabinet information	0	0
Executive Council information	0	0
Contempt	0	0
Legal professional privilege	0	0
Excluded information	0	0
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0
Transport safety	0	0
Adoption	0	0
Care and protection of children	0	0
Ministerial code of conduct	0	0
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0	0
Information about complaints to Judicial Commission	0	0
Information about authorised transactions under Electricity Network Assets (Authorised Transactions) Act 2015	0	0
Information about authorised transaction under Land and Property Information NSW (Authorised Transaction) Act 2016	0	0
Total	0	0

*More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and, if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application). This also applies in relation to Table E.

Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure: matters listed in table to section 14 of Act

	Number of occasions when application not successful
Responsible and effective government	0
Law enforcement and security	0
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	0
Business interests of agencies and other persons	0
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0
Secrecy provisions	0
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0

Table F: Timeliness

	Number of occasions when application not successful
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	0
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	0
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0
Total	0

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION PUBLIC ACCESS ACT

Table G: Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)

	Decision Varied	Decision Upheld	Total
Internal review	0	0	0
Review by Information Commissioner*	0	0	0
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0
Review by NCAT	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

Table H: Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)

	Number of applications for review
Applications by access applicants	0
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	0
Total	0

Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies under Division 2 of Part 4 of the Act (by type of transfer)

	Number of applications for review
Agency-initiated transfers	0
Applicant-initiated transfers	0

MODERN SLAVERY

In accordance with Section 428(4)(c) and (d) of the Modern Slavery Act NSW, we are dedicated to ensuring compliance with this important legislation. We stand firmly opposed to any breaches of human rights violations. We set clear expectations on the minimum expected standard of conduct for contractors, suppliers and Council officials in our Code of Conduct and Statement of Business Ethics.

The Code of Conduct outlines the minimum standards of conduct for Council officials. It is prescribed by regulation to assist Council officials to act honestly, with appropriate care and due diligence in a way that grows public confidence in local government.

Our Statement of Business Ethics sets clear expectations by which Council's Suppliers and Contractors must act. Establishing clear expectations on how workers are to be treated. Providing safe work places with a demonstrated respectful and ethical culture adhering to the National Employment standards.

We embrace the principles and obligations outlined in the Modern Slavery Act NSW and as an organisation are committed to serving our community with integrity and compassion. We want to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to human rights and work resolutely toward eliminating modern slavery.

The Anti Slavery Commissioner identified no issues with council operations.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1 - The State of Our Shire Report is provided as a stand-alone document to this report.



Dungog truly offers its residents a rural lifestyle with city benefits – this is part of why Dungog is growing.



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