

BELLINGEN SHIRE
ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020

Bellingen Shire
COUNCIL





A GUMBAYNGGIRR COMMUNITY VISION

A place where there is genuine respect for the land and the original people of this country.

A place where the ancestors' way of holding country is recognised.

A place where there is respect for custodial people who carry this tradition today and for Elders and the children of the future.

A place where we all walk together, where we can all be here in harmony with the land and all life.

The land around here has a great capacity to do that, to heal... in a way that's not separating.

CONTENTS

Message from the Mayor and General Manager	6
The Annual Report in Context	8
Structure of the Annual Report	9
Our Profile	10
Our Council	11
Part A - Achievements in implementing The Delivery Program	13
Resilient Economy	14
Community Wellbeing	24
Places for People	30
Our Living Environment	38
Civic Leadership	46
Part B - Statutory and Other Information	64
Community Engagement Activities <i>(Refer to Part A - Civic Leadership)</i>	56
Special Variations in General Income	65
Environmental Levy Projects 2018-2019	66
Overseas Visits	67
Elected Members' Expenses	67
Mayor and Councillor Fees	67
Councillor Support and Expenses	67
Major Contracts (Greater than \$150,000) Awarded	68
Legal Proceedings	68
Works Subsidised on Private Land	69
Donations and Contributions	69
Functions Delegated by Council	71
Corporations, Partnerships, Joint Ventures or Other Bodies in which Council Held a Controlling Interest	73
Corporations, Partnerships, Joint Ventures or Other Bodies in Which the Council Participated	73
Implementation of Workplace Equity and Diversity Plan <i>(Refer to Part A - Civic Leadership)</i>	51
Workplace Health and Safety <i>(Refer to Part A - Civic Leadership)</i>	54
General Manager and Senior Staff Remuneration	74
Stormwater Management Services	74
Coastal Protection Services	74
Companion Animals Act - Compliance	74
Particulars of Any Environmental Upgrade Agreement Entered Into	76
Report on Capital Works Projects	76
Rates and Charges Written Off	77
Planning Agreements	77
Private Swimming Pool inspections	78
Public's Right to Access Government Information	78
Complaint and Compliment Reporting	85
Code of Conduct Reporting	85
Public Interest Disclosures Reporting	87
Compliance with the Carers (Recognition) Act 2010	87
Recovery & Threat Abatement Plans	87
Part C - Financial Statements	88



CONNECTED, SUSTAINABLE, CREATIVE

COMMUNITY VISION

We are a community that is inclusive, connected to each other in our shire, and with connections beyond - regionally, nationally, and globally.

We strive to live sustainably to ensure that we have enough for all, forever.

We are a community that is creatively and culturally dynamic. We are ingenious and inventive in finding innovative solutions to problems and challenges.

OUR VALUES

We have developed core values to guide our organisation. These guiding principles dictate behaviour and help to achieve on our Community Vision and our major strategies.



Service Ethic /
Commitment



Professionalism



Respect



Teamwork



Integrity



Communication



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR & GENERAL MANAGER

This report features Council's contribution towards realising our Shire's Community Vision, which identifies the strategic direction for our long-term future, and details the range of actions undertaken to deliver the essential programs, projects and initiatives our community relies on.

Our efforts have focussed on working together with our community to translate their hopes and aspirations into meaningful activities that address the environmental, financial sustainability, resilience, water security and disaster preparedness challenges our Shire faces now and into the future due to the recent drought, bushfires, floods and the current pandemic crisis.

To achieve this, Council has had to be agile, brave and resourceful to maintain the operational capacity required to deliver the essential services our community relies on in parallel with our continued efforts to protect the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of our community.

This proactive strategic approach has provided Council with the agility to balance the needs of the organisation with our community's aspirations via the introduction of scalable options for the delivery of these essential services in response to the evolving challenges we continue to face in our Shire.

In addition, our ever-changing environment has required that Council work tirelessly to mitigate the impact of the challenges faced to deliver against the organisation's Operational Plan in compliance with Federal and State Government advice and the most recent Public Health Order.

As part of this transformational journey, Council has pursued opportunities identified during UTS's Financial Sustainability Review to improve its long-term financial position, inclusive of reviewing depreciation accruals, staff expenditure, service levels, fees and charges and grant advocacy activities.

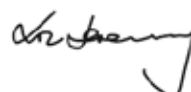
The results of these continuous improvement activities have also informed Council's strategic asset management planning activities, which promote financially sustainable maintenance, repair and rehabilitation (MR&R) activities to address the suite of significant challenges our Shire's road and bridge network presents.

MR&R achievements have included the resurfacing of an additional 13 kilometres of poor condition sealed roads, the reconstruction of 2.2 kilometres of road that was in too poor a condition to reseal and the grading of 66 kilometres of our unsealed road network.

Our Shire's total of 15 load limited bridges has also been significantly reduced down to 12, with a further 6 load limited timber bridges programmed for MR&R works for the next financial year, and \$3.98 million in grant funds have been utilised to progress the construction process for the replacement of an additional three high priority timber bridges.

Ongoing water resilience is also an imperative for our community so Council has substantially progressed our own secure yield analysis assessments to inform Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy to optimise the water, wastewater and stormwater services operated by Council.

Council has also provided training, financial and logistical support to coordinate local resources, inclusive of representatives from Council, local medical, emergency, Chambers of Commerce and community service providers, to implement sustainable community recovery, preparedness and resilience initiatives to ensure we remain a connected, sustainable, and creative community.



Liz Jeremy
General Manager



Cr Dominic King
Mayor



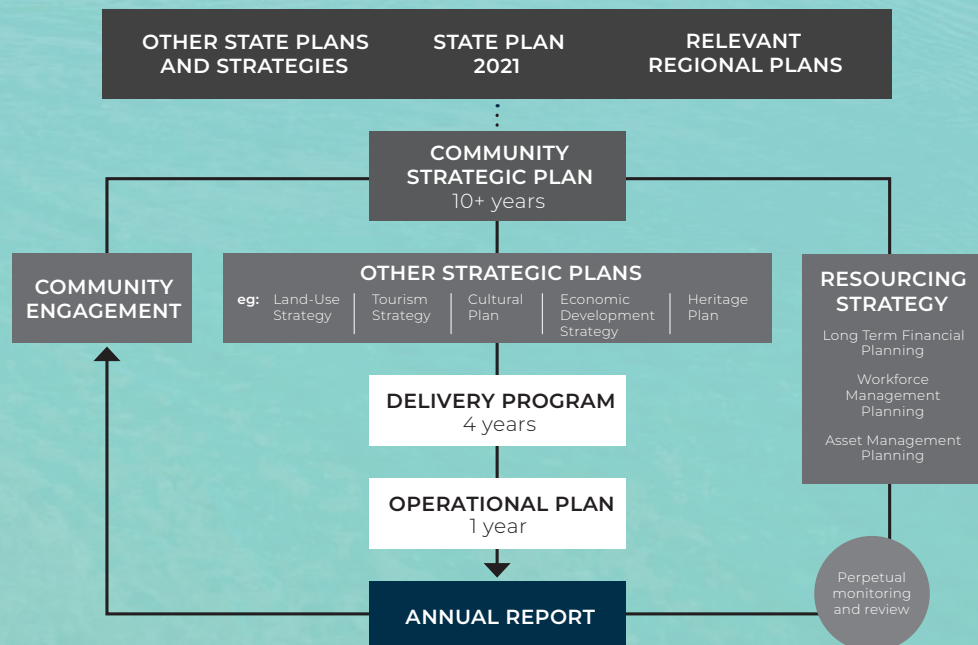
“GONE ARE THE DAYS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT DOING THINGS ON THEIR OWN. WE ARE LOOKING TO THE COMMUNITY FOR PARTNERSHIPS TO ENSURE OUR SHARED VISION FOR THE FUTURE IS REALISED”

Bellingen Shire Mayor, Cr Dominic King

THE ANNUAL REPORT IN CONTEXT

The Annual Report is a component of Councils Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework, and outlines Councils achievements during the financial year in implementing its Delivery Program. It also provides the information that the Council is required to disclose.

The IP&R framework is shown below.



STRUCTURE OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report is one of the key components of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. The report helps Council to keep our community informed about outcomes and achievements in the previous financial year.

PART A - ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM

Reports on the achievements in implementing the Delivery Program and measures the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives in the Community Strategic Plan.



PART B – STATUTORY INFORMATION

Council is required to publicly report on the legislated obligations Council must meet each year as well as other information the NSW Government believes should be provided to the community.



PART C – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The full, audited Financial Statements of Council can be found in this section.



OUR PROFILE

The Bellinghen Shire is currently home to 12,946 people (ABS Estimated Resident Population 2017), who come from many different countries and are involved in diverse occupational, cultural, and social activities.

Our Shire has three distinct geographical areas – ocean, river, and mountains incorporating the communities of Mylestom, Repton, and Urunga on the coast, Bellinghen nestled in the river valley, and Dorrigo on the plateau. Each is a vibrant and rich community with its own characteristics.

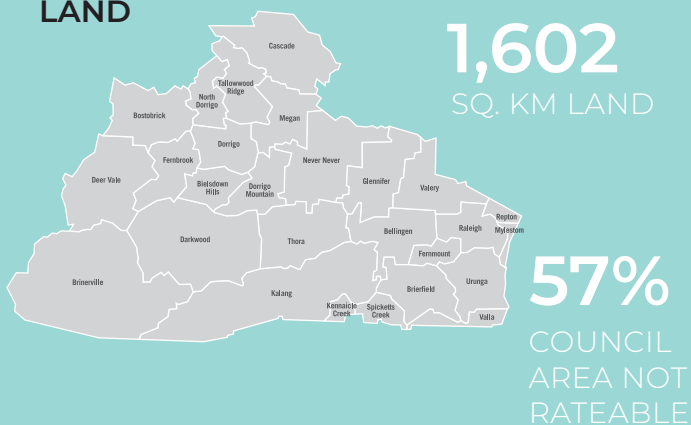
Our Local Government Area is made up of many beachside and inland localities, villages, towns and suburbs. These are Urunga, Raleigh, Repton, Mylestom, Fernmount, Bellinghen, Gleniffer, Kalang, Darkwood, Orama, Brinerville, Thora, Bostobrick, North Dorrigo, Dorrigo, Cascade, Megan, Brierfield, and Deer Vale. Situated about half way between Sydney and Brisbane, with a total area of 160,205

hectares, our Shire is a lifestyle region with an emphasis on cultural activities and social cohesion. Agricultural practices have diversified over the years and are now a mix of traditional and non-traditional farming methods.

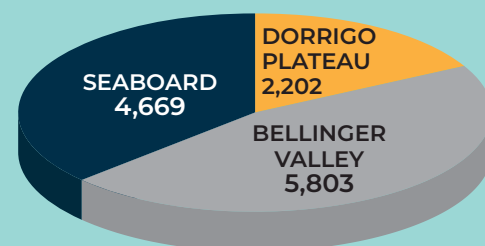
Many of today's residents operate small to medium-size enterprises in creative industries involving artists, crafts people, writers, musicians, and horticulturists.

Bellinghen Shire has an abundance of natural assets. Some 57% of the Shire is State Forest (21.26%), National Parks (32.36%) and Crown land. This and our cultural attractions have created a thriving tourism industry with 210,000 visitors coming to our Shire each year spending a total of \$58.9 million. Numerous festivals, ranging from jazz, classical and world music, to environmental, food and wine events, attract distinct audiences enhancing the social and economic fabric of the region.

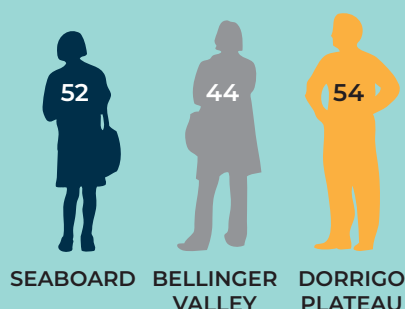
LAND



POPULATION



MEDIAN AGE



EMPLOYMENT



Source: ABS census 2016

OUR COUNCIL

As a local government organisation, Bellinghen Shire Council is charged with the responsibility for the delivery of a diverse range of services each and every day.

Council has 149 approved positions (as at 30 June 2020).

The elected Council comprises 7 councillors who represent the entire Local Government Area. The Mayor is elected by popular vote once every four years and the Deputy Mayor is nominated and elected annually by fellow Councillors.



Image: (l to r): Cr Steve Jenkins, Cr Jennie Fenton, Cr Garry Carter, Cr Steve Klipin, Cr Dominic King (Mayor), Cr Toni Wright-Turner, (Deputy Mayor), Cr Desmae Harrison.

53 
SPORT & REC FIELDS

9 
HALLS

3 
LIBRARIES

COMMUNITY FACILITIES


3 
SWIMMING POOLS

2 
SURFCLUBS

1 
SALEYARD

1 
HELIPAD

TRANSPORT

577 
ROADS

135 
BRIDGES

29 
SHARED PATHWAYS

3 
CAR PARKS

170 
WATER MAINS

101 
WASTEWATER MAINS

39 
STORMWATER DRAINS

SERVICES

10 
RESERVOIRS

5 
TREATMENT PLANTS

HIGHLIGHTS



5,642

TONNES OF WASTE
DIVERTED FROM
LANDFILL



6,955

TONNES OF
KERBSIDE WASTE
COLLECTED



20,496

PHONE CALLS AND
COUNTER ENQUIRIES
ANSWERED



70,352

LIBRARY ITEMS
BORROWED



82,352

LIBRARY VISITORS



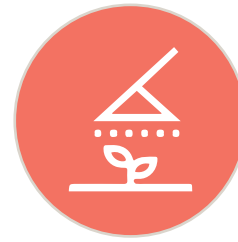
56%

OF OUR
COMMUNITY ARE
LIBRARY MEMBERS



526

HEALTH &
ENVIRONMENT
INSPECTIONS



681

HECTARES WEEDS
REMOVED

IN 2019-20 COUNCIL DELIVERED A \$7.7 MILLION CAPITAL PROGRAM INCLUDING:



\$1,922,035

ROADS AND TRANSPORT



\$2,064,863

COMMUNITY FACILITIES
TOWN IMPROVEMENTS
SPORT AND RECREATION



\$3,739,412

WATER, SEWER, ENVIRONMENT
AND WASTE *INC FLOOD EVENT



ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM

Council provides 31 core services that deliver its principle activities, identified under the Community Vision, Council's Community Strategic Plan. These activities have been categorised in line with the community's 10 year priorities as follows:

- RESILIENT ECONOMY
- COMMUNITY WELLBEING
- PLACES FOR PEOPLE
- OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENT
- CIVIC LEADERSHIP



RESILIENT ECONOMY

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

RESILIENT ECONOMY



RESILIENCE DISASTER RESPONSE

'A Local & Vocal Response' – Our Shire's Pandemic Response Group (PRG)

There has been a lot going on behind the scenes in terms of coordinating local resources and talent to establish our Shire's Pandemic Response Group (PRG) and its associated sub-groups, which are made up of representatives from Council, local medical, emergency, Chambers of Commerce and community service providers.

Our combined efforts have focussed on working together with our community to deliver initiatives, actions and information regarding the key community areas of clinical support, community preparedness and resilience, community information, business support services and the maintenance of Council's essential community services.

Holistic solutions to ensure our community is in a strong position to provide local responses to this global crisis and respond to the challenges the current pandemic situation presents us during the reporting period have included:



“THIS RURAL SHIRE IN NSW, AUSTRALIA ARE REALLY DOING SOME INTERESTING INITIATIVES REGARDING THEIR PANDEMIC RESPONSE GROUP, ITS CONNECTION CENTRE AND COVID-19 WEBSITE.”

International Community & Economic Development Consultancy – Bank of I.D.E.A.S

CLINICAL ACTION GROUP (PRG)

Consisting of representatives from the local medical and health professions within our Shire, the PRG's Clinical Action Group have worked tirelessly to establish our own COVID-19 Clinic, which is resourced by local doctors, to commence testing long before any State or Federal Government funded testing clinics were operational.

The COVID-19 Clinic has subsequently provided our Shire with a dedicated facility to test for the virus, coordinate patient after care support services and reduce the risk of transmission of the Coronavirus at one of our local medical clinics, which could result in the closure of that clinic.

The group has also worked with the PRG's associated sub-groups to identify opportunities to address the range of challenges we will face and identify ways to support our local economy, the elderly and isolated and the services we rely on from the potential impacts this virus might have on the way we live our day to day lives.

To date, during the reporting period our COVID-19 Clinic has tested more than 150 people in our Shire and operates daily utilising a rotating roster system where medical professionals across our Shire volunteer time away from their private practices to ensure our pharmacies and medical clinics could continue to operate.

NEIGHBOURHOOD CARE NETWORK

Council funded the initial set-up of our Shire's neighbourhood Care Network and provided training, financial and logistical support to stand-up the network and continues to support volunteers to ensure that the Network can continue to operate beyond the current pandemic crisis.

The Neighbourhood Care Network team have also been collaborating with subject matter experts from Oxford City Council in the United Kingdom via regular Zoom meetings to guide their efforts to respond to the evolving challenges we anticipate we will face as a community in the future.

Since its inception, the Network has also registered more than 500 people as needing or offering support, and has recruited more than 100 Neighbourhood Coordinators who are responsible for 50 dwellings within their area, which means that more than 80% of the dwellings in our Shire are now covered by the Network.

Our Neighbourhood Coordinators have worked with our community and local businesses to mobilise a network of drivers to support our local businesses who are still trading but are experiencing difficulties with providing deliveries and to provide practical support services like dog walking, lawn mowing and technical assistance to residents wanting to use the internet to stay connected with family and friends.

That means as a community we can remain informed, engaged and aware of each other as the Network has taken the necessary steps to establish personal support networks amongst our families, friends and neighbours to ensure that we protect the health and wellbeing of our community and particularly our elderly, vulnerable and isolated.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE HUB

Having recently experienced drought, bushfires, floods and now the current COVID-19 pandemic, Council has invested \$1.225 million in Federal Government bushfire funds towards infrastructure and programs across our Shire to ensure we are a resilient community that can recover and prepare for future challenges.

Accordingly, to increase our community's capacity to support a strong, positive recovery and to better prepare for future disaster events, Council has allocated significant funding to develop a Community Resilience Hub in partnership with our community, to implement sustainable and effective community recovery, preparedness and resilience initiatives.

To guide the development of our Community Hub, Council has recruited Community Recovery Resilience and Preparedness Officers to work together with our Community Advisory Panel to identify local priorities and develop mutual goals in collaboration with local medical, emergency, Chambers of Commerce and community service providers.

This collaborative approach will be used to develop a Community Hub model that will establish a single point of truth for all disaster, community support and information resources during a disaster event, and promote year round foundational programs that enhance social cohesion, community partnerships and access to resources regarding employment, affordable housing, and social support systems.

Further, the Community Hub will also support the establishment of our Shire's Micro Community Model and Food Hub and support Council's investment of \$35,000 towards the delivery of community and volunteer workshops and training to champion mutual solutions to improve our community's resilience and capacity to prepare and recover from the impacts of future disasters.



“IT’S ALL ABOUT HELPING COMMUNITY HELP ITSELF. WE DON’T KNOW WHAT WE’RE FACING, WE JUST KNOW WE’RE BETTER IF WE DO IT TOGETHER.”

Council's appointed facilitator of the Bellingen Shire Pandemic Response Group - Dean Beasley

ART SPACE URUNGA

Council provides support through funding initiatives and promotional avenues to a range of cultural and artistic events, and a recent collaboration with local artists, sculptors and crafts folk has transformed an old butcher shop on the corner of Urunga's Main Street into a thriving arts hub.

Urunga's Art Space began as a pop up gallery, but has proven to be so successful and popular with local artists, residents and visitors, that Council has made the Art Space a permanent gallery and continues to subsidise the rent for the premises to support its operation.

Accordingly, the Arts Space project has continued to deliver the results our Arts & Cultural Plan identify as key strategic priorities, because the gallery has continued to deliver artistic, cultural, community, social and economic returns despite the recent bushfire season and current COVID-19 pandemic.

Further, to assist the Art Space and other commercial properties in our Shire, Council recently adopted a range of rate relief measures to assist ratepayers suffering genuine financial hardship during the current pandemic crisis and Council has suspended the commercial rents of adversely affected businesses.

For example, unfortunately the Art Space was required to close its doors in accordance with restrictions and the most recent Public Health Order to ensure best practice social distancing protocol were observed, so the gallery simply went into solution mode and launched their online gallery at www.artspaceurunga.com

The Art Space's online gallery has featured numerous online exhibitions and markets including their 'Mother's Day Virtual Made with

Love Markets' which attracted 1063 individual shopping visits and their 'Burnt' online exhibition, which provided a heartfelt and intimate welcome into the effect of the recent local bushfires on our community.

The 'Burnt' online exhibition featured works from our Shire's best visual artists, crafts people and designers and 20% of the online profits made from the sale of these artworks have been donated to regional bushfire relief efforts demonstrating our arts community's desire to give back to those around them.



'AS AN ARTIST, DEEPLY AFFECTED BY THE RECENT BUSHFIRES IN NSW I SEE THIS EXHIBITION AS A VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO EXPLORE CREATIVE RESPONSES. FOR ME PERSONALLY IT DESTROYED MY HOUSE, MY WORKSHOPS AND OVER 50 YEARS OF COLLECTED RESOURCES. AS AN ARTIST THIS WAS DEVASTATING BEYOND BELIEF'

Participating 'Burnt' artist - Ian Watson.



CREATE MUSICAL CAREER PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH

Council also engages in collaborative partnerships across a range of cultural and artistic initiatives to support programs such as our Create Musical Careers Pathway for Youth Program, which provides our aspiring young musicians with the opportunity to be mentored by an established artist.

The program places participants in bands that rehearse songs selected from a diverse suite of musical genres to expand their musical skills and knowledge, and these bands are mentored by local established artists for one full day weekly during each school term.

LOCAL ART @ WATERFALL WAY VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

Waterfall Way is one of the best scenic drives in New South Wales and winds through five national parks via Bellingen's lush green farm paddocks, so it is not surprising that the drive attracts thousands to the Shire annually.

Consequently, Council's Waterfall Way Visitor Information Centre operates seven days a week, 364 days a year to accommodate the 22,000 visitors it receives annually that make the scenic pilgrimage from our seaboard villages to the Dorrigo Plateau.

To take advantage of the Information Centre's high visitation rates, Council has created a dedicated artistic retail space to showcase the work of our Shire's best visual artists, crafts people and designers to cultivate and support our local artisans creativity.

Further, the initiative has proven to be extremely successful with thousands of tourists having purchased and taken home with them a piece of local art that represents our Shire's art scene, our community and our



ECONOMIC RECOVERY & DEVELOPMENT

Council continues to work at a regional level and collaborate with the State Government to pursue key strategic targets identified in the Regional Economic Development Scheme (REDS), and to advance the commercial prospects of our Shire.

Our own Economic Development and Tourism Plan aligns with the key economic strategies identified in the scheme, and focusses on the key priorities of innovation, investment, and infrastructure to advocate and support the growth of our key industry sectors .

Our plans also identify and capitalise upon the economic and environmental diversity of the Shire's three main townships of Bellingen, Urunga and Dorrigo and places a strong focus on nature-based tourism and supportive commercial opportunities.

Accordingly, to attract additional investment and economic growth to the region, Council has progressed a series of initiatives during the reporting period inclusive of the following:

FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM

To expand market access for our Shire's small and medium sized farmers and enhance local producers' financial viability and production capacity, Council has invested \$95,000 towards establishing a Food Hub Pilot Program to explore and evaluate the potential positive economic impact of local food investments.

The pilot program aims to develop an innovative business model in which agricultural producers, buyers and other related supply chain parties form collaborative partnerships to create local jobs, build community resilience, expand community access to healthy and fresh food and demonstrate environmental stewardship to support the transition towards sustainable agriculture.

SMALL BUSINESS STIMULUS

Our Shire was originally one of thirteen councils that did not qualify for the NSW and Commonwealth Governments' \$10,000 Bushfire Grants Scheme despite having suffered an approximate 70% downturn in trade due to the recent bushfires.

Council however successfully lobbied the NSW Deputy Premier, the Office of Emergency Management, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and the Members for Cowper and Oxley to ensure our Shire's local businesses qualified for the grants scheme.

BUSINESS SUPPORT NETWORK: PANDEMIC RESPONSE GROUP

Council has worked together with representatives from our three Chambers of Commerce and our cohort of volunteers to create our Shire's Business Support Network and transform our Waterfall Way Visitor Information Centre into a Business Information Centre that provides support to local businesses regarding government grants, adaptation advice and peer support.

Consequently, the Business Information Centre regularly receives inquiries from business owners who have questions about grants, support and mental health issues and referral systems are in place to support them through these challenging times.

Weekly zoom meetings are also held, with personal check-in calls being made to those businesses still operating and a Business Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to assist local businesses with practical support, information and to connect them with additional online resources.

The Bellingen Shire Coronavirus Pandemic Response Group's community information hub, www.bellingenshireconnects.com.au also connects our community with our Business Support Network to coordinate small neighbourhood groups to work with our community and local businesses to provide business delivery and practical support services.

Further, to ensure our Shire's restaurants and cafes can be re-opened safely and in accordance with restrictions and the most recent Public Health Order, the Business Support Network also offers one-on-one contact support services with Council Environmental Health Officers to help proprietors work through spatial distancing requirements, hygiene provisions and to provide current updates regarding health regulations in respect to trading conditions.



DANGAR FALLS - DORRIGO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Waterfall Way, which was recently voted as one of the best scenic drives in New South Wales, winds through five national parks via Bellingen's lush green farm paddocks and delivers you to the Dorrigo Plateau.

Once there, you will discover Dangar Falls, one of the Shire's major nature-based tourist attractions located just two kilometres north of Dorrigo town centre.

The falls, which are set amidst scenic agricultural and dairy farmland, provide a truly unique experience featuring a beautiful 30-metre waterfall cascading down to an expansive swimming hole.

Council secured close to \$1m in 2018 to invest in infrastructure that would increase visitation rates, length of stay times and provide attractive, safe and convenient access for all who visit the falls.

Accordingly, to increase tourist visitation rates and encourage the symbiotic economic development of our Shire's villages, these upgrade works are connected via a pathway that links Dangar Falls with Dorrigo's town centre and Visitor Information Centre.

To enhance the visitor experience, upgrade works have commenced during the reporting period to construct two new viewing platforms, carpark and walking track upgrades and the installation of interpretive signage and the project will be completed by 2020.







COMMUNITY
WELLBEING

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

COMMUNITY WELLBEING



THE HUB ART LOUNGE

Council's Youth HUB, or the HUB as it's known, is arguably one of the busiest Council community facilities in our Shire and it is supported by our fulltime Coordinator and management committee, which provides in-kind support to a suite of social, cultural and artistic programs.

The HUB's program of activities boasts a suite of initiatives including the HUB's Arts Lounge, which provides our community with a creative space to participate in art activities and workshops to make art and explore their creative side and prior to COVID-19 the HUB engaged with more than 83 community organisations, hosted 1,241 events and attracted more than 13,838 guests in a six month period

Members of our community can come together at the Arts Lounge to share ideas with other artists, learn new techniques and create their own individual works across a variety of mediums including painting, sketching, photography, digital art, jewellery making, leather works and sculpture and can access all of art supplies necessary to turn imagination into reality.

COUNCIL LIFESAVING SERVICES

Our Shire boasts approximately 10 kilometres of unspoiled natural coastline set up against a lush littoral rainforest backdrop, and our beaches are best known for their crystal clear waters and the abundance of reef formations that attract thousands of beachgoers to our Shire every year in search of the perfect wave or an idyllic swimming spot.

That is why during the current reporting period, Council has allocated \$89,000 to provide a professional lifeguard service to compliment the efforts of volunteer members of our local surf lifesaving clubs during the summer school holiday peak period.

Additionally, to support our local surf lifesaving clubs efforts to promote access to recreational and sporting activities that encourage our community to get involved in beach safety and community programs, Council recently secured and invested \$54,000 of grant funds to refurbish the Bellinger Valley North Beach Surf Club.

The club house refurbishment addressed potential safety issues that would affect patrolling operations and improved access to the facility to accommodate all patrons including the disabled, the elderly, young families and children and to support our Shire's popular Junior and Nipper activities, where children learn surf safety, basic first aid and resuscitation skills.



COMMUNITY WELLBEING CONT.

MYLESTOM PATHWAY, PLATFORM & SURF CLUB PROJECT

Council is currently delivering the Mylestom Pathway component of the \$261,884 Stage 2 Stronger Country Communities funded project, which will vastly improve accessibility and promote recreational opportunities in the area by connecting the surf club to Mylestom's foreshore parklands via a 620 metre long, 1.8 metre wide section of shared pathway.

In parallel, Council is also delivering complimentary works via the \$141,000 Stage 3 Stronger Country Communities funded Mylestom Kerb, Gutter and Parking Project, which features 540 metres of kerb and gutter, 10 formalised parking spaces plus one dedicated disabled parking space, improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists and improved drainage and natural landscape structural support.



COMMUNITY WELLBEING CONT.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS & RESILIENCE RESPONSE

To identify innovative ways to support our local economy and maintain the services our community relies upon, Council has established and facilitates the Bellinghen Shire Coronavirus Pandemic Response Group.

The group is made up of support networks and representatives from Council, local medical, emergency, Chambers of Commerce and community service providers to coordinate local resources to ensure our local businesses and community remains connected and supported throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

To support our local businesses, which have been challenged by financial sustainability issues due to the impact of the recent drought, fires and the current COVID-19 pandemic, Council has invested \$145,000 of Commonwealth's Disaster Recovery and Resilience funds received towards stimulating their economic recovery and development.

To explore and identify Shire-wide initiatives that will provide long-term solutions to the economic impacts we will face in the years ahead, Council is also engaging with our business community to develop projects that will create a legacy which can benefit the economy for years to come.



COMMUNITY WELLBEING CONT.

SECTION 355 COMMITTEES

Our Volunteer Strategy provides inclusive opportunities for our community to volunteer their

time and efforts to support our community facilities network, which host a broad range of recreational, sporting, arts and cultural activities.

The strategy, which guides the activities of more than 160 dedicated volunteers, is supported by council's Volunteer Coordinator who administers the shared responsibility of managing and maintaining these valuable community assets.

Council also supports 22 individual Section 355 Management Committees across the shire and co-submits grant applications to fund the operation and maintenance of these facilities, which regularly host community events including sporting fixtures, yoga classes, social activities and music events.





PLACES FOR PEOPLE

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

PLACES FOR PEOPLE



LOCAL SIGNS WIN NATIONAL AWARD

Our Gleniffer Reserves are renowned for their natural beauty and the Reserve's suite of interpretive signage designed by Fisher Design and Architecture won the coveted 2019 Interpretation Australia Award for Excellence Project between \$15,000-\$50,000 Category.

The awards recognise outstanding examples of natural and cultural heritage interpretive signage that make a difference to our daily lives and help us understand and navigate our community by providing depth and insight to our experiences in our built and natural environments.

That is why our Gleniffer Reserves signage suite promoted a symbiotic relationship between visitors and the areas natural ecosystem by highlighting the reserves unique native flora and fauna and Indigenous and European history.

The signage suite also features QR codes which allow smart phone and tablet users to access video content and audio files that capture the natural sights and sounds of area and help visitors identify ways to reduce their environmental footprint.

To compliment the Reserves natural surroundings, the interpretive signage was also constructed using recycled hardwood timber from McFadyen's Bridge at Gleniffer and Council's own outdoor crew crafted and installed the signs onsite that help educate and inform visitors to our beautiful Gleniffer Reserves.



INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

Our road and bridge networks present council with a suite of significant challenges, given that 26% of our urban roads and 38% of our rural roads are in a poor condition, and that we also manage the fourth largest timber bridge network (by length), in the state.

Addressing these challenges remains a priority for council and asset management planning activities that focus on the financial sustainability and management of our asset base, has allowed council to employ a strategic approach towards maintenance, repair and rehabilitation activities (MR&R) inclusive of the following MR&R activities and achievements:

Road Network Our road network renewal program has resurfaced an additional 13 kilometres of poor condition sealed roads, reducing our worst condition rural sealed road length from a total of 109 kilometres down to 80 kilometres.

Council has also reconstructed 2.2 kilometres of road that was in too poor a condition to reseal, which has reduced the level of roads in poor condition by 8%, and council's adopted Special Rate Variation investments have funded the completion of 69% of our sealed road renewal works backlog.

66 kilometres of our unsealed road network has also been graded, which equates to 32% of the total network, and gravel re-sheeting works were undertaken on 8.2 kilometres of the network.



PLACES FOR PEOPLE CONT.

Bridge Network Council has conducted a detailed assessment of its 85-timber bridge assets, 22 of which were originally subject to load limits and at the start of the review period, 15 of these bridges remained load limited.

This assessment activity has subsequently informed the development of our Timber Bridge MR&R Program, which features an investment program of \$29 million during the next 11 years, representing Council's most significant infrastructure investment to date.

Timber Bridge MR&R Program data has also provided Council with supportive information to lodge robust grant funding submissions, inclusive of Council's current efforts to secure \$2 million in grant funds to contribute towards the replacement of key load limited timber bridges which have significantly impacted council's ability to provide essential access to commuters, the local agricultural and industrial sectors and compromised the operations of emergency service agencies and utility providers.

During the reporting period, councils maintenance teams have worked tirelessly to significantly reduce the shire's total of 15 load limited bridges down to 12, with a further 6 load limited timber bridges programmed for MR&R works for the next financial year.

Additionally, Council has utilised the previously secured \$3.98 million in grant funds to progress the construction process for the replacement of an additional three timber bridges of high priority within the Shire during the reporting period, as these bridges would have otherwise remained load limited for the immediate future.

Council also continued to champion the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO), and lead the development of the MNJCO Timber Bridge Renewal Prospectus, which represents a \$20 million investment to address a total of 91 bridges or 41% of the regions ageing timber bridges.



PLACES FOR PEOPLE CONT.

URUNGA BOARDWALK UPGRADE

Council has invested \$109,000 of NSW Government Stronger Country Communities Round Two grant funds towards a total of more than \$311,000 to ensure one of the best boardwalks on the east coast was performing at its best for the recent busy school holiday period.

Given the boardwalk's popularity, Council work crews had to double up their efforts and compress their hours operation to keep the boardwalk open on the weekends and for the weekday dawn and dusk exercise periods.

Ultimately the boardwalk upgrade works were completed prior to the start of the school holiday period which saw 400 metres of original timber decking removed and replaced with 385 lineal metres of sustainable and durable Envirowalk fibreglass mesh.

URUNGA LIBRARY

Our library network is growing in popularity because Council has continued to invest in their emerging roles as a community hub resource where people, information, ideas and technology come together.

Council invested \$153,260 of grant funds to deliver the Urunga Library Redesign Project, which featured an internal refurbishment to enhance the user experience of all library visitors including the disabled, the elderly, young families and children.

Refurbishment features included new mobile shelving units, a flexible floor plan to cater for community events, installation of a unisex, accessible toilet to current accessibility standards and the relocation and lowering of the customer service desk to enhance accessibility.

Council has also secured an additional \$109,683 in grant funding to complete the project, and extend the library's footprint to create a community meeting space for workshops, presentations and gatherings that will feature a flexible floor plan to suit a variety of events and activities.



PLACES FOR PEOPLE CONT.

ATHERTON DRIVE MASTER PLAN

The Atherton Drive foreshore precinct is located north of the Urunga central business district and features a four-hectare, 1.3-kilometre strip of public land along the shores of the beautiful Kalang River.

Recognising the foreshore serves as an iconic gateway to the Kalang River and Urunga, Council extensively engaged with the community and collaborated with the Bellinger Heads State Park Trust and Crown Lands to co-develop the Atherton Drive Master Plan.

This initiative brought council and the community together throughout a Master Planning process creating a shared vision on how best to preserve and enhance the significant scenic qualities and recreational values of the area.

The Master Plan will now guide the future use and development of the precinct, which will be progressively implemented as resources and funding become available.

Preliminary grants totalling \$504,000 have progressed riverbank erosion and bank stabilisation works and during the reporting period, Council and Crown Lands have substantially progressed a development application for the demolition of six dilapidated buildings and associated concrete slabs and footings to accommodate future stages of the Master Plan which include:

- the Kalang Riverside Walk, a 2.5 metre shared pedestrian / cycleway following the foreshore
- strategic installation of 'vista friendly' new barbeque facilities and park furniture suites throughout the precinct
- improved boating infrastructure and soft launching access to the river
- new public amenities facilities
- Atherton Drive upgrade works to retain a vehicular circuit through the foreshore area

PLACES FOR PEOPLE CONT.

TEAM-WORK WINS AWARD

Our collaborative efforts to develop a new Growth Management Strategy for our Shire were announced as the winner of the New South Wales Local Government Excellence Awards' Community Partnerships and Collaboration Category.

Bellingen's submission was selected as the winner amongst a competitive field of metropolitan and regional councils for the award, which celebrates examples of exceptional achievement by local councils that encourage and fostered innovation and continuous improvement.

Council's submission featured our Homes for Our Future Community Engagement Project, which saw Council and our community come together to create a shared vision on how to sustainably manage growth in the Shire and maintain its existing character.

Engagement activities focussed on identifying our community's long-term views on how they wanted our shire to grow, their priorities for future planning and ideas on how to address complex challenges facing our Shire.

Council has also collaborated with our Shire's Affordable Housing Action Group (AHAG) to promote the Growth Management Strategy and our recently adopted Local Housing Strategy 2020-2040 to encourage ongoing dialogue and explore environmentally responsible, affordable and secure housing initiatives featuring universal design.

The AHAG boasts 869 members working in partnership with Council to promote engagement activities that share information and work towards discovering innovative and practical change initiatives that translate the community's hopes and aspirations into meaningful input that will inform decision-making in our Shire for decades.

Consequently, with the assistance of the AHAG, Council's Strategic Land Use Planning Team spoke with more than 500 community members, collected 250 detailed submissions and logged 1900 comments during our Homes for Our Future Community Engagement Project.

These bipartisan efforts sought to gather feedback from a truly diverse range of stakeholders and seek out those voices not often heard from to inform our Shire's Growth Management Strategy and Local Housing Strategy 2020-2040 and to have these efforts formally recognised shows just what can be achieved when we work together.



MEMORIAL HALL

Memories will be brought back to life at Bellingen's Memorial Hall thanks to almost \$4 million in grant funding that will see this iconic building restored to its former glory.

Our 90-year-old heritage listed hall, which was built to honour the 960 men and women from our shire who served in World War One, required significant investment including maintenance and repair works to prevent further deterioration.

In addition to a \$1.7mil investment by council, grant submissions secured \$335,151 grant from the Stronger Country Communities Fund, \$92,243 in funding from the Heritage Near Me Activation Grants program and a further \$3.3 million grant from Create NSW's Regional Culture Fund.

Preliminary works have been undertaken by local tradesmen and artisans to restore the iconic Soldiers Window, repair leaking roof panels and address significant water damage issues on the upper floor.

Council has also completed detailed designs to guide future works on the Bellingen Memorial Hall Transformation Project, which will significantly increase the original footprint of the two-storey hall and include:

- an additional 60 seats in the original theatre
- disability compliant access to toilet facilities and 2 additional unisex toilets
- multi-function exhibition space
- multiple dedicated change rooms and shower facilities
- supper room and kitchen facilities
- studio theatre and foyer
- outdoor viewing deck / event space

By investing in its future, we have ensured our community will be able to create their own special memories in the Memorial Hall. Detailed design is complete and development applications and assessments are being prepared in parallel with the creation of detailed designs and associated tender documentation.

CORONATION PARK UPGRADE

To ensure our seniors are valued, involved and supported, Council has championed a signature project that will provide greater socialisation opportunities for our ageing population and promote their health and wellbeing.

Council has successfully advocated for funding to deliver the \$326,880 redevelopment of Dorrigo's Coronation Park, which will provide improved access and infrastructure to enable seniors and those with a disability to easily access and use the park.

These works aim to address the issues of loneliness and isolation that can contribute towards health and wellbeing issues, given that seniors make up 57% of the population for the area and that 36% of Dorrigo residents live alone.

The project is being delivered during the reporting period and features accessible entryways, improved path network, accessible toilets, picnic shelter, playground equipment, disability swing, safety fencing, formalised parking area with designated accessible parking space and landscaping works.



OUR LIVING
ENVIRONMENT

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENT



INVESTING IN OUR WATER FUTURE

As a community we need to stay smart and be water wise and the recent record-breaking drought has highlighted the importance of our efforts to protect one of our most precious resources, clean drinking water.

During the reporting period, continuing low rainfall in our catchment areas and falling river levels saw our Shire activate Level 4 Water Restrictions for several months to extend our supply of clean drinking water and prepare for the potential transition to Level 5 Emergency Water Restrictions.

Subsequently, Council secured funding, procured and placed on standby a 2.5 ML/day reverse osmosis plant, sourced pipes, pumps, tanks and generators, and progressed the associated Review of Environmental Factors, Section 60 approvals and drinking water assessments to their final stages to ensure Council was in a strong position to quickly stand up the reverse osmosis plant at any time in the future if required.

In parallel, Council has continued to work with the State Government to proactively investigate our future water security and produce an options report which will identify alternative, sustainable ways to secure our Shire's water supply and inform Council's Integrated Water Cycle Planning, which includes a process of mapping the aquifer.

In addition, our own secure yield analysis assessments are being undertaken to inform Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy to optimise the water, wastewater

and stormwater services operated by Council and ensure that we are resilient community that is prepared for the future challenges our ever-changing environment presents us .

SMART WATER CONSERVATION

Ongoing water resilience is an imperative for our community. Council has framed a water conservation program involving the appointment of a Water Resilience Officer to educate and engage with local businesses and community members to maximise conservation activities. In addition, the Mid North Coast JO has established the Our Precious Resources Program, which aims to bulk procure and effectively subsidise provision of water tanks and associated infrastructure.

Further, to provide better and smarter ways to monitor water usage across the catchment, Council is providing Smart Water Metres across our Shire that will enable Council to automatically detect and notify residents of leaks in water services as well as resident access to on line portal to view and manage water usage.



OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENT CONT.

SEWERING COASTAL VILLAGES SCHEME

Council in partnership with the NSW Government is investing \$22 million to deliver the Coastal Communities Sewer Infrastructure Project, which will see the sewer connected at the following villages:

- Mylestom: 180 residential lots, Mylestom Surf Club and Shop, Reflections Holiday Park
- Repton: 31 residential lots, Bellinger River Tourist Park
- Raleigh: 23 residential lots
- Raleigh Industrial Estate: 25 industrial lots with the capacity to connect to an additional 75 industrial lots

The project will see 20.5 kilometres of sewer mains installed during the project, which will also deliver:

- a new sewer pump station at Mylestom
- upgrade works at Yellow Rock pump station
- double the capacity of the Urunga Sewage Treatment Plant
- provide recycled water for new residential sub-divisions in Urunga
- upgraded ultra-filtration, chlorination and UV treatment infrastructure at the Urunga Sewage Treatment Plant.

GLENIFFER RESERVES MASTER PLAN

Nestled at the base of the Great Dividing Range, the Promised Land in Gleniffer is one of the hidden gems of our shire featuring an idyllic waterhole in the crystal-clear waters of the Never Never River.

Council has invested \$250,000 to develop The Gleniffer Reserves Masterplan, which aims to promote passive outdoor recreational opportunities, and provide sustainable design and management solutions and guide usage of the site.

A Vegetation Management Plan has subsequently been developed, addressing ongoing land and social management issues across the four reserves, and has guided the significant investment of \$90,000 to establish walking tracks and formalised car parking arrangements during the reporting period at Earl Preston Reserve.





OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENT CONT.

COUNCIL CALLS ON STATE TO PROTECT KOALA HABITAT

Years of drought and the recent apocalyptic bushfire season have decimated any chance of survival for our region's koala population which could be extinct by 2050, according to a report tabled at the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Koala Populations and Habitat.

Council presented evidence at the Inquiry detailing our Koala Management Strategy, which highlights the critical importance of our Shire's koala population and the need for landscape wide approaches to koala habitat protection that cover multiple land tenures including private land, National Parks and Forestry Corporation estate.

Council advocated the critical importance of our strategy, which gave rise to the protection of more than 1000 hectares of land as Core Koala Habitat and also established a range of management objectives for koala conservation activities to address some of the key threats to koala habitats that exist within the Shire.

For example, Council has continued its collaborative efforts to establish a Great Koala National Park (GKNP) and approved the GKNP to set-up their headquarters and operate out of Council's Urunga Visitor Centre to support their work securing additional habitat for koalas.

Council has also provided \$25,000 seed funding to develop a business case to attract funding that will support the work of the GKNP initiative, which will deliver the best possible outcomes for our local environment and economy, by creating a tourism asset that will attract additional investment and economic growth to the region.

OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENT CONT.

GONDWANA RAINFOREST VEGETATION REPORT

Recognising the essential role our native vegetation plays in conserving and promoting a biodiverse and thriving natural landscape, and our shared responsibility to manage and protect it, Council has adopted the Bellingen Shire Biodiversity Strategy and invested \$90,000 to develop and deliver a Vegetation Report to protect our Shire and its Gondwana rainforests.

Locally, our Shire's Biodiversity Strategy acknowledges that Bellingen is a community that values, protects, conserves and enhances natural areas and biodiversity in coastal, river and plateau environments to promote local ecosystem health, including species and their genetic diversity and ability to survive in their natural habitat.

Our Biodiversity Strategy also supports and aggregates existing biodiversity management plans including: Gleniffer Reserves PoM, Bellingen Shire Council Coastal Area Koala Management Strategy, Bellinger and Kalang Rivers Health Plans, Bellinger and Kalang River Estuary Management Plan, Bellingen Flying-fox Camp Management Plan, Bellinger River Snapping Turtle Management Program and Coastal Zone Management Plan.

Council's Vegetation Report also aims to enhance our approach towards managing the emerging priorities and pressures on our Shire's natural environment by identifying opportunities to investigate cultural burning landscape management activities to address the changes in regional native vegetation that have been observed and are anticipated as a result of global climate change.

For example, our Shire's escarpment township of Dorrigo, which lays claim to the World Heritage listed Gondwana rainforests of

Dorrigo National Park, features ancient fire sensitive old growth rainforests that boast an unbroken lineage of 80 million years.

However, due to sustained drought conditions and an unprecedented bush fire season, almost 1000 square kilometres of this vital corridor of rainforest, which protects several endangered ecological communities, was burnt by the Bees Nest fire during our recent bushfire season.

Traditionally, Dorrigo National Park receives high rainfall averages which sustain and protect the permanently damp ancient Gondwana rainforest refuges from our Shire's bushfire seasons, however during the reporting period Dorrigo Plateau received only one third of its annual rainfall.

Consequently, this project aims to proactively mitigate the impacts of these extreme climate events by creating a partnership-based approach between sectors and organisations with responsibility for managing native vegetation including Council, NSW Rural Fire Service, state and federal governments, landholders, industry and environmental groups.

To achieve this, Council convened with its Community Advisory Panel and cohort of local subject matter experts to explore environmental recovery, preparedness and resilience opportunities to formalise our Shire's approach towards protecting these rainforests, which possess the same international ecological significance as the Galapagos Islands.



OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENT CONT.

KALANG HEADWATERS NATURE RESERVE PROPOSAL

Council championed the Kalang Headwaters Proposal via a five-part notice of motion which acknowledged the significant loss of more than 150,000 biodiverse hectares of burned critical habitat and the importance of protecting the remaining compartments in the Kalang headwaters.

The Headwaters Nature Reserve Proposal, has been developed with the support of Council by the Friends of the Kalang Headwaters in collaboration with the Bellingen Environment Centre, Kalang River Forest Alliance, National Parks Association of NSW and a significant number of concerned community members.

Thus far, more than 3,500 signatures on the petition to the NSW Parliament supporting the Headwaters Nature Reserve proposal, which is a strong indication that there is widespread community support in our Shire, the region and beyond to protect this area from industrial logging.

Council has also lobbied at a state and federal level, inclusive of representations to the Premier, The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, the NSW Environment Minister, The Hon. Matt Kean MP and our local State Member, The Hon. Melinda Pavey in its endeavours to ensure the conservation of biodiversity and protection of our Shire's world heritage listed forests.

COASTAL COMMUNITIES SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

Our Shire's Bellinger and Kalang Rivers have been closed on numerous occasions due to repeated instances of faecal contamination and these closures, which have impacted on public health and the health of our rivers, wetlands, oyster farms and local businesses, can largely be attributed to failing septic tanks within the project area.

That is why Council in partnership with the NSW Government is investing \$22 million to deliver the Coastal Communities Sewer Infrastructure Project, which will see the sewer connected at the villages of Mylestom, parts of Raleigh and Repton and the Raleigh Industrial Estate.

These bipartisan efforts to deliver best management wastewater infrastructure assets to protect the health of our Shire's Bellinger and Kalang Rivers will see more than 246 on-site sewage management or septic systems within the project area replaced, 105 of which have been identified as high risk systems during previous Council inspections.





“OUR OWN COMMUNITY VISION IDENTIFIES THAT WE ALL WANT CLEAN WATER WHICH IS PROTECTED AND USED SUSTAINABLY WHICH IS WHY WE HAVE INVESTED \$11 MILLION TO PROTECT THE REGION'S AQUACULTURE AND TOURISM INDUSTRIES”.

Mayor Dominic King



WASTE MANAGEMENT

Council's journey to improve its waste management facilities, services and performance commenced 12 years ago with a suite of strategic investments in alternative waste technologies to optimise service delivery and environmental sustainability.

Our efforts were recognised in the last NSW Local Government waste and Recovery Data Report, which ranked Bellingen Shire as the number one recycler in NSW for diverting an impressive 80% of kerbside waste collected from landfill.

Bellingen Shire was also one of the first in the state to introduce a three-bin system, which no doubt contributed towards our exemplar diversion rates and continuing behaviour changing initiatives focussed on engagement, advocacy and the introduction of composting benchtop organic 'binfratstructure' continue to divert our organic waste stream.

Further, Council's investment in best practice and innovative systems also continues today via the \$866,000 staged upgrade of our three waste management facilities located at Bellingen, Dorrigo and Urunga and the securing of \$900,000 in funding to rehabilitate the former Dorrigo landfill site.

Additionally, upgrade works completed at the Raleigh Waste Management Centre during the reporting period have also included the installation of a new weighbridge to accurately record and calculate relevant fees and charges based upon the weight and type of waste entering the site.



CIVIC LEADERSHIP

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

CIVIC LEADERSHIP



ECONOMIC RELIEF

To assist individuals, businesses and community groups feeling the impact of the dramatic decline in economic activity within our Shire due to the Federal Government's social distancing rules, Council has implemented a suite of economic relief measures to help alleviate financial pressure.

Economic relief measures introduced include the suspension of commercial rents, account keeping fees for all debtors, interest on overdue rates and annual charges, debt recovery action on outstanding accounts and the waiver of any other fee associated with small business and community groups suffering financial hardship.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

As part of Council's transformation journey, our Executive Team with the support of UTS undertook an extensive Financial Sustainability Review that analysed Council against 45 unique metrics and provided recommendations on potential opportunities for Council to improve its long-term financial position.

Council has pursued these opportunities, inclusive of reviewing depreciation accruals, staff expenditure, service levels, fees and charges and grant advocacy activities, and the results of these continuous improvement activities have been monitored through identified metrics that are reported regularly through the Audit and Risk Committee to efficiently deliver the essential services our community relies on.



'BELLINGEN'S FOCUS ON THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS OPERATIONS IS ENABLED BY A DETERMINED AND ONGOING FOCUS ON CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, IN A REALLY CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT. THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS ARE EXCEPTIONAL AND ARE TO BE COMMENDED.'

Professor Roberta Ryan, UTS.

BELLINGEN SHIRE COUNCIL WINS THE A.R BLUETT AWARD 2020 REACHING THE PINNACLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACHIEVEMENT

Bellingen Shire Council has received the greatest accolade a New South Wales Council can achieve by winning the Rural Category of the 2020 Local Government NSW A. R. Bluett Memorial Awards.

A. R. Bluett Memorial Awards which have been awarded annually since 1945, celebrate examples of exceptional achievement by progressive rural and regional/metropolitan councils that encourage and foster innovation and continuous improvement.

These awards are recognised as the pinnacle of local government achievement. It is rewarding and exciting that our winning submission was selected amongst a competitive state-wide field of regional councils.

As the custodian of our Community Vision Council has collaborated with our community to create a shared vision on how to sustainably manage growth in our Shire, maintain its natural beauty and uniqueness and remain a sustainable, inclusive, and connected community.

Bellingen Shire Council's award submission detailed council and our community's continued efforts and progress towards addressing the opportunities and challenges identified in the Shire's Community Vision.

The work of the council through initiatives such as values based social research undertaken recently entitled "Why local government matters", has allowed council

to understand what really matters to our community which is and will continue to underpin future strategic and operational planning.

Noting that our characteristics are our challenges, this year in particular has seen the culmination of outcomes around numerous initiatives built on a solid platform of progressive reform, delivering upon community aspiration and identified organisational imperatives to position it effectively as a sustainable organisation.

As a finalist in the Bluett Award program we hosted a visit by A.R. Bluett Trust Chairman, Les McMahan and fellow Trustee Judges Mike Montgomery AM and Genia McCaffrey who conducted an inspection of our Shire, received presentations on our operations and services and had the opportunity to hear from some of our community members and partner organisations on the great work achieved within our community.

The Bluett Trustee's visit was a great opportunity for Council's team and our community alike to showcase achievements. As a community we have demonstrated what is possible when you harness the talent and skill of a small and committed team that are dedicated to working with our community to discover our Shire's true potential.



The
Bluett
AWARD



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

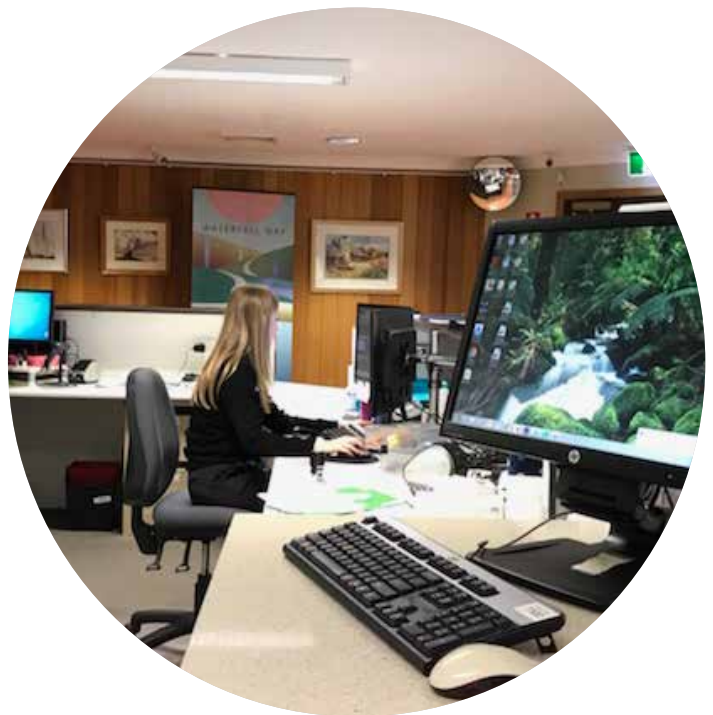
Council's Digital Transformation Project is delivering new enterprise software systems and IT infrastructure to support our continued efforts to deliver the essential programs, projects and initiatives that our community relies on each and every day, particularly in the face of disaster.

Accordingly, Council has invested more than \$780,000 to continue the progressive transition towards automation, improved customer service and a contemporary managed service platform in recognition of the need to enhance the resilience and preparedness of the organisations operational capacity to address the environmental, social and economic challenges our Shire faces now and into the future.

This proactive approach recently provided Council with the operational agility to immediately re-engineer our operations and introduce scalable options for the delivery of essential services, and the ability to develop contingency arrangements and manage the operational impacts caused by our Shire's recent bushfire season and COVID-19 pandemic Health Order and best practice social distancing protocols.

Additionally, the projects whole-of-organisation desktop computer and laptop hardware and software upgrade modules allowed Council's administration, depots and remote facilities to work online and collaboratively review Council's essential and non-essential services and revise work schedules and practices to identify opportunities to maintain operational capacity in response to potentially reduced staff numbers.

Finally, the project, which has been delivered in accordance with our Project Governance Framework which has incorporated modern and responsive solutions into its service delivery model to ensure Council's efforts to enhance the resilience and preparedness of the organisations operations are realised.



CUSTOMER SERVICE WINS AWARD AGAIN

Bellingen Shire Council's Customer & Business Services Team have taken out the 2019 National Local Government Customer Service Network Awards' Customer Service Team of the Year Category.

The announcement was made during the reporting period at the 2019 National Local Government Customer Service Network Awards Dinner held in Port Macquarie, and the win was especially rewarding given Council's Customer & Business Services Team had previously won the Customer Service Team of the Year Category in 2015.

WORKFORCE STRATEGY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

Council's philosophy of 'putting people at the heart of what we do' is demonstrated through the Workforce Strategy.

Reviewed and updated throughout 2019-20, the strategy responds to Council's Community Strategic Plan – Bellingin Shire Community Vision 2027 - and guides the support of our workforce to be professional and resilient, able to work in partnership and collaboration to deliver quality local services that meet the diverse needs of our community.

Our supporting action plan is articulated under 3 objectives that will prepare our people to meet our community's immediate and long-term demands:

- 1. Attract** - Strive to create and maintain a workforce that reflects the diversity of our community
- 2. Develop** - Value and retain experience while at the same time grow talent and create career development opportunities.
- 3. Retain** - Build an environment that encourages accountability and rewards performance with a focus on opportunities to enhance the health and wellbeing of our employees.

In 2019-20, we delivered initiatives outlined below relating to workplace culture, diversity and equal employment that stem from our Workforce Strategy and contribute to our objectives.

To continue maintaining a culture consistent with our Vision, Mission and Values, our People and Culture team continued to drive the Trainee, Apprentice and Cadet Program aimed at young talent within the community, offering both on the job training, mentoring and formal tertiary qualifications.

A combination of management consultation and a set of criteria is applied when determining the intake each year. The criteria included:

- balancing the ageing workforce in the team
- bringing future ready skills to the team, and
- bringing skills that are difficult to fill due to the nature of the work.

Six positions were made available in 2019 including four apprentices and two trainees. Council also formalised an MOU with Charles Sturt University to commence its cadet program 1 July 2020.

Workplace Relations

Council's Staff Consultative Committee is a representative body that meets regularly to discuss and resolve organisational wide issues. The committee is integral to assist to mitigate issues and provides an important voice for our team members. It is also involved in reviewing our policies and providing feedback to team members. During the reporting period the Committee were instrumental in representing the broader staff to finalise outcomes of recent service reviews in the Infrastructure Services Department, delivering advice on Council's First Aid arrangements, office layout, IT and seating arrangements programs and initiating a review of the committee's constitution.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Council continues to offer a confidential counselling and referral service to provide support to staff and their immediate families. The EAP is integral to supporting all people-related, business-as-usual and change management activities, and provides crises management support, developmental/coaching services, career support, conflict resolution, manager support and carer support.

Health and Wellbeing

As an activity of the Work Health and Safety Committee, council has developed a Health and Wellbeing Policy and has conducted a staff survey in order to progress the development and implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This work will be progressed in the next reporting period.

A wellness room has also been introduced for staff to access for a range of diverse reasons related to personal health and wellbeing. Council undertook a workforce survey in relation to flexible working arrangements in response to the Covid-19 period which received responses from 50% of our workforce that worked from home during the period. The responses were utilised to inform and update Councils Working from Home and Flexible Work Arrangements Policy and Procedure.

Togetherbration

People are at the heart of what we do at Council and it is important to recognise our long serving team members and the contributions they have made to Council and the community. The annual service recognition program 'Togetherbration' was held in December 2019 with 31 team members being recognised for increments of 5 years' service.

Reward and recognition was also awarded to team members demonstrating Council's Core Values (professionalism, service ethic/commitment, respect, teamwork, integrity, communication) in their everyday work, whereby staff can nominate fellow employees who have contributed towards the achievement of Council's goals, provided excellent customer service to the community, and those who have gone above and beyond to inspire others. The Togetherbration program invites all staff to an informal presentation conducted by the General Manager and Mayor to collectively highlight the achievements of staff and recognise excellence.





WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

Bellingen Shire Council (BSC) is committed to continuous improvement in WHS performance, and continues to maintain external accreditation to AS/NZS 4801 for the Integrated Management System (IMS) (the Work Health & Safety Management System) used on road construction and maintenance projects for the RMS. The IMS is supported by a range of policies and procedures at the Corporate level to minimise risks to health and safety for all Council workers and members of the public.

BSC has an active Health & Safety Committee that has worker representatives (HSR's) from across the organisation to help facilitate communication, coordination and consultation on health and safety matters. Recent improvements and/or changes include updating the Sun Protection Procedures to a risk-based approach, allowing workers flexibility in choosing the best control options for protection against Ultraviolet radiation.

Another recent change is the introduction of a Drug & Alcohol Policy and associated procedures which allows random Drug and Alcohol testing across the organisation, to help ensure workers are coming to work without impairment from illicit drugs and/or alcohol.

Employee training and development has also been ongoing in a range of areas, including Asbestos removal, Fire Protection, and approximately two-thirds of all BSC employees either have already or about to complete nationally accredited First Aid Training.

CIVIC LEADERSHIP CONT.

COUNCIL'S KOALA & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COLLABORATION

Council has championed the formation of the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO), with Port Macquarie Hastings and Kempsey Shire Councils to collaborate with key stakeholders and lobby the Government to support our regional priorities.

These efforts have led to development of the Koala Recovery Project which has seen the MNCJO and the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital undertake conservation activities in key koala habitats across our region.

Appropriately, the project was recently showcased at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, where delegates were briefed on the threats our local koalas face and our regional efforts to protect koala habitat and populations.

The MNCJO has also collaborated with suite of NSW government agencies including the Regional Development Authority (RDA), tourism agency Destination North Coast and the NSW Office of Emergency Management, to develop a Community Resilience Program and secure a Disaster Preparedness Officer to work with MNCJO Councils to deliver disaster preparedness programs to support the local community and strengthen their fire recovery and response capacities.

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COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

- Bellingen Shire Council seeks to place community engagement at the centre of Council activity and decision making to increase community wellbeing, resilience and connectedness.
- Accordingly, Council's community engagement approach aims to promote an active community, through participatory and deliberative engagement processes.
- However, during the reporting period Council's approach towards community engagement has had to be responsive and flexible due to COVID-19 Public Health Orders and the closure of regional/ rural print newspapers.
- Consequently, Council has utilised the following methods / mediums to seek community feedback and promote Council projects, programs and initiatives taking into consideration the limited capacity to conduct community meetings / activities, workshop and forums:
 - Inaugural Community Advisory Panel held to review community resilience funding opportunities to help inform Council's decision-making process
 - council training, financial and logistical support and assistance for Bellingen Shire Coronavirus Pandemic Response Group volunteers
 - paid advertising in the new Coffs Harbour News of the Area newspaper and Don Dorrigo Gazette
 - media releases distributed to local online media (Coffs Coast Advocate, Bellingen Courier Sun, Ilovebelloshire) local radio (2BBB, ABC Coffs Coast) and local television (Prime, WIN, NBN)
 - 78 media releases posted to BSC website promoting Council projects, programs and initiatives
 - reinstatement of fortnightly Mayoral columns with Coffs Harbour News of the Area newspaper
 - 2 of 4 Quarterly @BELLOSHIRE Community Newsletters produced and distributed online, via rates notices and Council Branch Libraries and Administration Centre
 - promotion of Council projects, programs and initiatives via three Branch Library Community Noticeboards
 - promotion of Council projects, programs, initiatives, and actions via BSC websites 'The Real Deal' platform.



Workshops & Forums/Community Meetings

- Bellingen Council to feature at the Urunga markets (Environmental Projects)
- Mid North Coast Joint Organisation of Councils Collaboration Forum
- Draft Bellingen Shire Local Housing Strategy Public Exhibition
- Community Invited to Select Books for Their Library Session
- Save-A-Mate (SAM) facilitator training program
- Bees Nest Bushfire Recovery Community Information Sessions
- Share Your Journey at the free Bellingen Community BBQ Community Meeting
- Draft Signage Strategy – Have your say Online Forum
- Council Seeks Community Support to Fix its Country Road Online Forum
- Meet the Author @ Bellingen Library Sessions
- Environmental Levy Grants Online Forum
- Drug & Alcohol Information Session @ Bellingen Library
- Automatic external defibrillator (AED) training sessions
- Major Sculpture Proposed for Dorrigo Community Consultation Sessions
- Community Checking In Event @ Bellingen Showgrounds Community Meeting
- Christmas Library Activities Program
- Seniors Festival Activities
- Community Support Fund Round 1 Online Forum
- Community Leadership & Resilience Scholarship Scheme Workshops

Community Celebration Activities:

- Australia Day Awards and Community Celebrations
- Library Lovers Day
- Seniors Week Festival



Create Community Engagement Hub

On 30 January 2017 Council launched its online public engagement platform using the Bang the Table software platform.

Intended to supplement existing engagement activities, this tool has enabled Council to have a one-stop-shop to distribute information, conduct surveys, add images and videos as well as gather feedback on its current projects and services.

During the reporting period July 2019 to June 2020 the following 59 projects (37 more projects than previous reporting period) were published on Create which attracted 10,200 site visits (6000 more site visits than previous reporting period) with 520 engaged visitors logged (296 more visitors logged than previous reporting period)

Create Traffic Summary



Highlights





Project Summary

PROJECT
Coronavirus Community Updates
NSW Bushfire Community Recovery Information
Major Sculpture proposed for Dorrigo
Final approval issued for the Bellingen Shire Local Housing Strategy
Draft Bellingen Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020-2040
Biodiversity Strategy 2019 Have your Say
Australia Day Awards, Stay Water Wise
Bellingen Coastal Management Program
Create- Bellingen Main Street Master Plan
The Mylestom Pathway Project
Bellingen Shire Council Timber Bridge Renewal Program
Business Support Network
Fixing Country Roads - Council seeks your support
Draft Biodiversity Strategy 2019
Disaster Assistance Grants
Climate Emergency Response Framework
Draft Signage Strategy
Expressions of Interest sought for Public Art Works in Church Street
Gleniffer Reserves - River Bank & Public Infrastructure works
Lower Bellinger and Kalang Rivers Floodplain Risk Management Study
Bellingen Memorial Hall
Bellingen Main Street Project - Church Street North Precinct
Draft Community Participation Plan
Our Council - Our Community - Becoming a Councillor

PROJECT
Reclassify land at Lookout Road from Community to Operational
Bellingen Shire Council Waste Facility Fees and Charges
The Mylestom Pathway Project - a New South Wales Government Stronger Country Communities Project
Community Leadership & Resilience Scholarship Scheme
Town Centre Car Parking Strategies
Proposed Economic Stimulus Projects
Companion Animals Management Plan (Review)
Stronger Country Communities Fund
Expression of Interest (EOI) for a Contractor to review Plan of Management for Connell Park
Property Leases & Licenses Policy
Bellingen Shire Signage Strategy
Proposed fees and charges for Bellingen Memorial Hall community meeting room
2020-2021 Draft Operational Plan
Fees & Charges and Revenue Policy
Councillor Community Forums
Our financial future looks bright
Privacy Statement and Privacy Management Plan - Public Exhibition
Expression of Interest - Australia Day Committee Membership
Why Local Government Matters
Nominate for New 2021 Australia Day Awards
Public Exhibition - Draft Contribution for Sealing of Unsealed (Gravel) Road Policy
Public Exhibition - Draft Rest Area Policy
Ian J Cooper Awards for Access and Inclusion

LIST OF PROJECTS COMPLETED BY 30 JUNE 2020

NATURE OF PROJECT	DATE COMPLETED
Adams Bridge Replacement	Nov 2019
Breakwells Bridge Replacement*	Feb 2020
Savins Bridge Replacement*	June 2020
Coramba Road Rehabilitation	June 2020
South Arm Road Rehabilitation	Feb 2020
Bailey Street / Repton Road Intersection Upgrade	August 2019
Newry Street Rehabilitation	July 2019
Yellow Rock Road Rehabilitation	August 2019
Bonville Street*	Dec 2019
Newry Street*	Dec 2019
South Street*	Dec 2019
Pilot Street*	Dec 2019
Old Punt Road*	Dec 2019
Old Coast Road*	Dec 2019
Cedar Court*	Dec 2019
Ford Street*	Dec 2019
Prince Street*	Dec 2019
Roberts Street Lane*	Dec 2019
Vale Street*	Dec 2019
Scotchmans Road*	Dec 2019
Martin Road*	Dec 2019
Mount Street*	Dec 2019
Old Brierfield Road*	Dec 2019
Rigney Drive*	Dec 2019
Acacia Street*	Dec 2019
Bangalow Street*	Feb 2020
Bielsdown Street*	Feb 2020
Dorrigo Street*	Feb 2020
Gatenby Street*	Feb 2020

LIST OF PROJECTS COMPLETED BY 30 JUNE 2020 CONT.

NATURE OF PROJECT	DATE COMPLETED
Kurrajong Street*	Feb 2020
Oak Street*	Feb 2020
Pine Street*	June 2020
Tyringham Street*	June 2020
Maynards Plains Road*	June 2020
Hayden Street*	June 2020
Formation Renewals	June 2020
Gravel Re sheeting	June 2020
Urunga Boardwalk Upgrade Stage 1	Feb 2020
Dorrigo Tennis Club Improvement	November 2019

*SRV funding used



LIST OF PROJECTS IN PROGRESS BY 30 JUNE 2020

NATURE OF PROJECT	% COMPLETED 30 JUNE 2020
Deep Creek Bridge Replacement	85%
Pine Creek Bridge No.2	5%
Bielsdown Bridge Replacement	5%
Tallowood Point Bridge	25%
Martells Road Rehabilitation Ch 2400 to Ch 3000	70%
Martells Road Rehabilitation Ch 4358 to Ch 4859	50%
Minerva Lane*	50%
South Arm Road*	30%
Whisky Creek Road*	50%
Lower Bielsdown Road*	50%
Muldiva Road*	50%
Mylestom Path	55%
Urunga Boardwalk South Arm Rehabilitation	80%
Dangar Falls Viewing Platforms	10%
Coronation Park Redevelopment	15%

*SRV funding used



AWARDS & CITATIONS



A R BLUETT MEMORIAL AWARDS 2020

WINNER - REGIONAL COUNCIL CATEGORY



LGNSW EXCELLENCE IN THE ENVIRONMENT AWARDS

WINNER - ROADSIDE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT



NATIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARDS

WINNER - CUSTOMER SERVICE TEAM OF THE YEAR

A long wooden pier extends from the foreground into a calm body of water. The pier is made of dark wood and has a simple railing. The water is a light blue color, and the sky is a clear, bright blue with some light, wispy clouds. In the distance, there is a line of green trees and a small white building on a grassy bank.

B

STATUTORY AND OTHER
INFORMATION

Special Variations in General Income

Special Rate Variation 2014/15

The ordinary rates include an 11.8% Special Rate Variation which was approved by the Minister in June 2014. The SRV applies to all rateable land within the Shire. The 2014/15 SRV generated approximately \$0.62M in additional revenue in 2019/20 and is estimated to generate an additional \$6.42M over the next 10 years. The increase is funding and servicing a loan of \$4.85M for Councils capital works program to address the transport infrastructure backlog, and additional maintenance on the road network. The \$0.62M SRV funds were spent in the following way:

- Repayment of loan \$0.48M (subsidised by an interest rate subsidy under the Local Government Infrastructure Renewals Scheme)
- Roads Maintenance expenditure \$0.14M

All expenditure in 2019/20 was made in accordance with the approved SRV application and Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Determination.

Special Rate Variation 2017/18 – 2020/21

In addition to the 2014/15 SRV, the ordinary rates include three of the four consecutive 6% Special Rate Variation's which were approved by the Minister in May 2017 and May 2018. The SRV's apply to all rateable land within the Shire. The three consecutive 6% SRV's generated approximately \$0.86M in additional revenue in 2019/20, expecting to generate an additional \$6.8M over the next 10 years. The increase is partially funding Councils capital works road reseal program to address the transport infrastructure backlog. The \$0.86M SRV funds were spent in the following way:

- Roads resealing program \$0.86M

All expenditure in 2019/20 was made in accordance with the approved SRV application and Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Determination.

Due to the impact of COVID-19 the forecast 2020/21 6% Special Rate Variation has been delayed until the 2021/22 year.

Environmental Levy Projects 2019-2020

Introduction

Bellingen Shire Council applied to the Minister for Local Government in May 2005 for a special variation to General Income for environmental projects. On the 30th June 2005 Council received notice that an increase of 4% was approved on an on-going basis.

As identified in the Shire of Bellingen 2030 Community Vision, the environment levy supports the implementation of projects to achieve the strategic directions, outcomes and aspirations for the future from our local community. The key focus areas are as follows:

- Invasive plant management;
- Biodiversity management;
- Coastal and river ecosystem management;
- Sustainable food production;
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Expenditure of the Environmental Levy budget for the 2019/20 financial year to the value of \$246,900

Summary

PROJECT	FUNDING
Environmental Levy Community Fund	\$30,000
River & Biodiversity Community support, assistance and grant application/scoping time	\$26,000
Weeds Action Program	\$30,000
Sustainability and Climate Change Projects	\$20,000
Past project maintenance	\$25,000
Bellinger Landcare Incorporated	\$27,500
Bellingen Urban Landcare	\$8,000
Dangar Falls - 'Track the Waterfalls' project As resolved by Council at its Ordinary meeting 28/11/2018	\$13,500
Communities Environment Grant	\$15,000
Fish Habitat Rehabilitation Grant – Atherton Foreshore	\$10,000
Coast and Estuaries Grant – Stage 2	\$33,000
Strengthening Local Food Systems	\$5,000
Riverwatch – Our River our Future	\$3,900
Total	\$246,900

Overseas Visits

There were no overseas visits undertaken by Councillors, Council Staff or other persons representing the Council during the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

Elected Members' Expenses

Mayor and Councillor Fees

The total fees paid to the Mayor and Councillors in 2019-20 was \$111,649 compared to \$110,097 in 2018-19.

Councillor Support and Expenses

EXPENSES	2018-19 \$	2019-20 \$
Councillor support and provision of facilities (including provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to councillors and telephone calls made by councillors)	11,235	11,088
Attendance at conferences and seminars	7,222	12,917
Training of councillors and provision of skill development	12,564	8,905
Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a councillor	2,418	0
Fees paid to Mayor and Councillors	110,097	111,649
Motor Vehicle Allowances	4,553	1,252
Mayoral vehicle operational costs and depreciation	8,723	7,681
Insurance costs for Councillors and Officers liability	32,095	32,416
Total costs for the year	188,907	185,908

Major Contracts (Greater than \$150,000) Awarded

GOODS OR SERVICES	TOTAL CONTRACT VALUE \$,000	SUPPLIERS
Design and tender documentation for Coastal Villages Sewer Scheme	\$1,555,109	NSW Public Works Advisory
Waste Processing	\$828,615	Biomass Solutions Pty Ltd & Coffs Harbour City Council
Bitumen Spray Seal	\$776,774	All Pavement Solutions Pty Ltd
Kerbside collection	\$704,352	Handybin Waste Services Pty Ltd
Asphalt (Supply, delivery and placement of road resurfacing)	\$378,970	Fishers Asphalt
Design of Memorial Hall	\$347,589	Sibling Architecture
Upgrade of Telemetry Works	\$300,000	Clarence Valley Council
Purchase of new Hiab Truck	\$246,391	Southside Truck Centre
Mylestom Path	\$231,193	Tuttys Tanks & Concreting
Pool Management Services	\$228,000	YMCA
Replacement Tractors	\$222,325	Stan Cork Machinery
Bulk Fuel Supply	\$196,000	Park Pty Ltd
Ready Mix Concrete Supply	\$171,570	Hurd Haulage Pty Ltd t/a Hy-Tec Concrete
Piling Works	\$167,450	Local Land Services
Water Supply Options Assessment	\$166,687	NSW Public Works Advisory
MR Tip Truck replacement	\$151,000	MC Trucks Pty Ltd.
Total	\$6,672,025	

Legal Proceedings

Council was not formally involved in any legal proceedings in the 2019/20 financial year, other than undertakings regarding recovering rates which are reported in the financial statements.

MATTER	ISSUE	STATUS/RESULT	EXPENSES	RECEIVED
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Works Subsidised on Private Land

No resolutions were made during this period concerning work subsidised by Council and carried out on private land.

Donations and Contributions

Community Support and Community Event Sponsorship Funds

Council offers a Community Grants Program (Program) twice a year that runs over the financial period. The grants available through the Program include the Community Support Fund, Community Events Sponsorship Fund and Creative Placemaking Fund.

The total annual budget allocation for the Community Support and Event Sponsorship Funds for 2019/2020 financial year is \$50,000 and \$10,000 for the Creative Placemaking Fund.

During Round 1, Council received eleven (11) funding applications totalling \$39,010.

Four (4) applications were received for the Community Event Sponsorship Fund, four (4) applications for the Community Support Fund and three (3) applications for the Creative Placemaking Fund.

Nine (9) applications were supported either fully or in-part with the total funding recommended for Round 1 being \$28,375. Of this, \$23,310 will come from the Community Funds budget and \$5,065 from the Creative Placemaking Fund budget.

Community Event Sponsorship Fund (Round 1)

ORGANISATION	ACTIVITY	\$,000
The Art Space Urunga	Entertainment, marketing, catering, curation and hanging costs for Indigenous Art Exhibition - Darruyay-Junyirrigam. (Translates to Treaty)	\$1,654
Bellingen Community Arts Council	Venue hire, equipment hire, performance fees and marketing costs for 2019 Bellingen Fine Music Festival	\$3,000
Dorrigo Folk and Bluegrass Festival Inc	Hire of performance marquees, seating and tables for 2019 festival	\$5,000
Arts Mid North Coast - Auspice (Screenwave International Film Festival)	Marketing costs for 2020 Screenwave International Film Festival	\$5,000
SUB-TOTAL		\$14,654

The Community Support Fund (Round 1)

ORGANISATION	ACTIVITY	\$,000
Mylestom Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association	Senior social events and activities	\$1,000
Bellingen Men's Shed Association Inc	New storage shed and shelving, plus construction of an outdoor space	\$5,000
Dorrigo & Guy Fawkes Agricultural Show Association	Paint line maker for Dorrigo Show traffic control	\$2,656
SUB-TOTAL		\$8,656

The Creative Placemaking Fund (Round 1)

ORGANISATION	ACTIVITY	\$,000
Amanda & Anthony Traynor	Shire wide street art project 'Find the Mosaic Tile'	\$2,065
Urunga Neighbourhood Centre	Indigenous public art community project to be painted on Urunga Neighbourhood Centre building	\$3,000
SUB-TOTAL		\$5,065

During Round 2, Council received nineteen (19) funding applications totalling \$71,600. This is more than twice the amount that was available for Round 2. Of the applications received in Round 2, six (6) were received for the Community Event Sponsorship Fund, twelve (12) for the Community Support Fund and one (1) for the Creative Placemaking Fund.

Eighteen (18) applications were supported with the total funding recommended for Round 2 being \$31,118.

Community Event Sponsorship Fund (Round 2)

ORGANISATION	ACTIVITY	\$,000
Bellingen Readers and Writers Festival Inc	Bellingen Readers and Writers Festival 2020 event	\$3,500
Urunga Mylestom Chamber of Commerce	The People's Day – Australia Day Event	\$2,000
Dorrigo Folk and Bluegrass Festival Inc	Megan Hall Centenary Event	\$1,000
Arts Mid North Coast - Auspicing Screenwave	Nextwave Regional Film Festival	\$3,500
The Grub Club	The Sgt. Matthew Locke MG Charity Event	\$1,000
Cancer Council	Stars of Bellingen Shire Gala Event	\$1,000
SUB-TOTAL		\$12,000

The Community Support Fund (Round 2)

ORGANISATION	ACTIVITY	\$,000
National Parks Association of NSW Inc – Coffs Coast Branch	Equipment and works to support the Great Koala National Park's presence in the Urunga Visitor Information Centre	\$4,000
Dorrigo Chamber of Commerce	Christmas lights	\$1,000
Bellingen Youth Orchestra	A Day at the Proms for all ages	\$3,800
Gleniffer Community Association	Tap filter to assist in the provision of drinking water at events and reduce the need to supply water using plastic bottles	\$ 500
Bellingen Community Arts Council	Music and seating equipment to support professional musicians	\$1,000
Bellingen Neighbourhood Centre Inc	Voices of the Community Storytelling activities	\$1,700
Oz Green	Test-a-thon activities to take place at the Growers Markets to connect, educate and build community capacity and participation in science through engagement with partners such as Bellingen Riverwatch, volunteers, schools etc.	\$1,880
Urunga CWA	Installation of air conditioning to support community activities such as seniors' activities and the baby health centre	\$1,000
Bellingen Growers Market	To activate the markets through the creation of a Creative Corner for children and young people.	\$1,000
Camp Creative	Scholarships to support four young people to attend Camp Creative	\$ 968
Dorrigo Plateau Local Area Land Council	Commence renovations with the removal of overgrown vegetation and improve the security of the building	\$1,500
Urunga Sail Training Inc	Subsidised funding to support the training of volunteers	\$ 770
SUB-TOTAL		\$19,118

Due to unforeseen circumstances, two projects were not able to go ahead including one from the Community Support Fund to the value of \$1,000 and one from the Creative Placemaking Fund to the value of \$2,065.

HERITAGE FUND GRANTS	LOCATION	\$
Restore staircase to original 1920's condition	19 Cudgery Street, Dorrigo	\$3000
Re-roof residence	35 William Street, Bellingen	\$5000
Restore staircase to original 1920's condition	19 Cudgery Street, Dorrigo	\$3000
	SUB-TOTAL	\$11,000

TOTAL		\$70,493
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The total actual amount contributed or otherwise granted by Council under Section 356 of the Act for 2019-20 was \$70,493.

Functions Delegated by Council

External bodies that exercised functions delegated by Council during the period were:

BODY	FUNCTION
EXTERNAL BODIES	
Clarence Regional Library Committee	Library Service
NSW Rural Fire Service	Rural Fire Services
COMMUNITY COMMITTEES (SECTION 355 NSW LGA 1993)	
Australia Day Committee	Australia Day Activities
Bellingen Citizens Centre Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
Bellingen Island Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve
Bellingen Memorial Hall Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
Bellingen Shire Youth Centre	Care, Control and Management of the Bellingen Shire Youth Hub
Bellingen/Connell Park Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Parks
Bellinger Valley Historical Society Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Bellingen and Urunga Museums
Brierfield Hall Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
Burdett Park Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Park
Deervale Hall and Recreation Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall and Reserve
Dorrigo Public Hall Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
Dorrigo Recreation Grounds Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve
Dorrigo Saleyards Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Saleyards

ORGANISATION	CONTRIBUTION (\$)
Hickory House and Neighbourhood Bus Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Community Bus & Centre
Megan Hall and Recreation Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall and Reserve
Mylestom Hall Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
North Bellingen Children's Centre Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
North Dorrigo Recreation Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve
Raleigh Hall and Recreation Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall and Reserve
Thora Community Hall Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
Urunga Literary Institute and Senior Citizens Centre Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Centre and the Literary Institute Hall
Urunga Recreation Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve

Corporations, Partnerships, Joint Ventures or Other Bodies in which Council Held a Controlling Interest

Council did not participate in any corporations, partnerships, joint ventures or other bodies in which it held a controlling interest.

Corporations, Partnerships, Joint Ventures or Other Bodies in Which the Council Participated

ORGANISATION	ROLE
Arts Mid North Coast	Board Member
Mid North Coast Weight of Loads Group	Member
Hunter Councils Inc. - Regional Procurement Initiative	Partner
Statewide Mutual Limited	Member, Board Member
StateCover Mutual Limited	Member
Mid North Coast Regional Organisation of Councils	Member
Mid North Coast Joint Organisation	Member
Coffs Coast Regional Waste Services	Member
Our Living Coast Regional Sustainability Alliance	Member

General Manager and Senior Staff Remuneration

Senior Staff Salaries

There are three positions within Council designated as Senior Staff as at 30 June 2020. These include the General Manager, Deputy General Manager, Operations and Deputy General Manager, Corporate and Community. The total remuneration package of \$268,621 payable to the General Manager included salary, FBT costs associated with the provision of a Council owned motor vehicle and superannuation costs.

The combined total remuneration package cost of \$483,737 payable to the two Deputy General Manager Positions included salary, additional leave, FBT costs associated with the provision of a Council owned motor vehicle under leaseback arrangement and superannuation.

Stormwater Management Services

Council did not levy a stormwater management levy during the reporting year.

Coastal Protection Services

Council did not levy an annual coastal protection charge during the reporting year.

Companion Animals Act - Compliance

Companion Animals Act – Compliance Pound

- Forty-eight (48) dogs were seized, surrendered or found roaming free during the 2019/2020 year. Twenty-three (23) of these dogs were returned to their owners prior to being impounded and nineteen (19) of these dogs were transferred to Council's animal shelter. Two (2) dogs remained in the pound from the previous year. No dogs remained in the pound at the end of this reporting period. All impounded dogs were either returned to their owner or re-homed. One dangerous dog was euthanised.
- Six (6) cats were seized, found abandoned or stray, and were transferred to the animal pound. One (1) cat was feral which had been trapped and was euthanised. The remaining five (5) impounded cats were re-homed.
- Recently implemented processes and one on one education has seen a significant increase in compliance and a decrease in the number of dogs that have been seized.
- Council works closely with Nambucca Shire Council and the Macksville Pound and numerous rescue organisations. This relationship has allowed us to re-home all suitable dogs and cats that can't be adopted out via our subsidised sale and de-sexing program.
- In line with Council's adopted Companion Animals Management Plan, Council aims to return companion animals to their owners, or to rehouse those animals which have been surrendered to the pound. Only in situations where rehousing is not possible for reasons of suitability or temperament, will euthanasia be considered as a management option.

FINANCIAL YEAR – DOGS	SEIZED OR SURRENDERED	IMPOUNDED	EUTHANISED
2014 – 2015	141	94	30
2015 – 2016	62	32	15
2016 – 2017	59	28	6
2017 – 2018	51	28	4
2018 - 2019	42	19	0
2019-2020	48	25	3

FINANCIAL YEAR – CATS	SEIZED OR SURRENDERED	IMPOUNDED	EUTHANISED
2014 - 2015	15	12	12
2015 - 2016	9	7	7
2016 - 2017	16	13	13
2017 - 2018	8	5	5
2018 - 2019	6	6	1
2019-2020	14	14	0

Statement on activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with Companion Animals Act and Regulation

- Council's Customer and Business Services Team in conjunction with Ranger Services interrogate the Companion Animals Register on a monthly basis and send notices to owners of unregistered dogs in the Shire. Three notices are sent with intervals of 14 days, 7 days and a final notice after another 7 days. Following the final notice if the animal is still not registered a Penalty Notice (PN) is issued for non-compliance. If after 3 months the animal has still not been registered the processes starts again.
- Service requests are investigated and if animals are found to be not identified with a microchip and/or are not registered their owners are issued with a written notice to comply. Non-compliance results in penalty notices being issued.
- A barking dog process has been implemented to deal with dog noise.
- Regular patrols are conducted, and one on one education and warnings are issued to offenders in the first instance. PN's are issued for subsequent breaches and for serial offenders Nuisance Orders are issued.
- Two (2) Dangerous Dog Orders, Nil (0) Menacing Dog Order and One (1) Nuisance Dog Orders were issued. Nil (0) Nuisance Cat Orders were issued.

Dog Attack data

- Fourteen (14) dog attacks were investigated and lodged with the Office of Local Government

COMPANION ANIMAL MANAGEMENT FUNDING	
Registration commissions	11,069.00
Impounding fees, charges	14,763.00
Fines	13,810.00
Total Income	35,131.00

COMPANION ANIMALS – ACTIVITY 2019/20 FY		
	DOGS	CATS
IN		
Seized	43	3
Abandoned/stray	3	11
Surrendered	2	0
OUT		
Returned to owner	18	0
Sold	0	0
Released to owner	20	0
Released to organisation for rehoming	7	13
Escaped pound	0	1
EUTHANISED		
Dangerous dog	1	NA
Owner request	1	0
Illness/disease/injury	0	0
Unable to rehome	0	0
Feral/infant	0	1
Unsuitable for rehoming	1	0
IN POUND AT END OF YEAR		
	0	0

Companion Animal Community Education Programs

Council undertakes one-on-one compliance education with owners who have been found to be in breach of the Companion Animals Act.

Strategies to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats

Council does not currently have any strategies in place for the promotion of and/or assistance with de-sexing of dogs or cats.

Particulars of Any Environmental Upgrade Agreement Entered Into

Council has not entered into any arrangements during the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

Report on Capital Works Projects

Council's capital projects for infrastructure facilities, including renovations and extensions have not exceeded 10% of Council's annual rate revenue during the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

Rates and Charges Written Off

The total value of rates and charges written off for the year 2019 /2020 was \$511,273.79 as follows:

RATES AND CHARGES WRITTEN OFF		2016/2017 \$	2018/19 \$	2019/20 \$
PENSION REBATES				
General Rates-Residential	A100	101,766.66	101,863.05	217,999.14
General Rates-Farmland	A101	4,387.63	4,304.18	8,565.79
General Rates-Business	A102	591.81	467.63	1,166.63
Water Annual Charges	A110	43,672.50	42,945.41	81,793.61
Water Usage Charges	A115	34,720.81	12,340.34	10,652.47
Sewer Annual Charges	A120	101,766.66	34,321.88	73,320.75
DWM Charges	A130	52,280.77	49,910.72	105,157.85
		237,420.17	233,812.86	498,656.24
RATES-Residential				
RATES-Residential	A100	2,160.61	2,872.71	1,244.85
RATES-Business	A102	-	-	-
DWM	A130	-	-	-
Non DWM	A135	0.37	358.00	370.00
WATER-ANNUAL CHARGES	A110	0.14	-	-
WATER-USAGE CHARGES	A115	9,879.94	12,340.34	10,652.47
SEWER-ANNUAL CHARGES	A120	0.53	-	-
SEWER-USAGE CHARGES	A123	-	0.02	-
LIQUID TRADE WASTE ANNUAL CHARGES	A145	-	-	-
LIQUID TRADE WASTE USAGE CHARGES	A146	-	278.90	-
INTEREST-RATES	A150	620.90	370.01	296.09
INTEREST-WATER	A156	280.48	33.56	54.14
LEGAL FEES/COSTS	A155	-	3.92	-
		12,942.97	16,257.46	12,617.55
TOTALS		250,363.14	250,070.32	511,273.79

Planning Agreements

Council did not enter into any planning agreements during 2019/20.

Private Swimming Pool inspections

PRIVATE SWIMMING POOL INSPECTIONS	2019/20
Number of inspections of tourist and visitor accommodation	
Total	0
Number of inspections of premises with more than 2 dwellings	
Total	0
Number of inspections that resulted in issuing a certificate of compliance under s22D of the SP Act	
Total	37
Number of inspections that resulted in issuing a certificate of non-compliance under cl21 of the SP Reg	
Total	19

Public’s Right to Access Government Information

The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act) came into effect on 1 July 2010 and replaced the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and Section 12 of the NSW Local Government Act 1993.

The aim of the GIPA Act is to provide an open, accountable, fair and effective government. This means that all government agencies in NSW are required to make more information freely available and more processes and documents of Government will be available following an application process.

In 2019/20 no (0) formal valid applications for access to information were received.

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.

Council’s program for the proactive release of information involves updating Council’s Agency Information Guide and Privacy Management Procedures and Plan to ensure that staff are provided with clear guidance as to what information should and should not be proactively released.

During the reporting period, we reviewed this program by analysis of the types of requests made to Council and what proportion could be answered through open access means.

Clause 7(a): Details of the review carried out by the agency under section 7 (3) of the Act during the reporting year and the details of any information made publicly available by the agency as a result of the review

REVIEWS CARRIED OUT BY THE AGENCY	INFORMATION MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE BY THE AGENCY
Yes	Yes

As a result of this review, we released the following information proactively through Councils interactive community engagement portal "Create":

PROJECT NAME	DOCUMENTS PROACTIVELY RELEASED FY20
Create-Atherton Drive Master Plan	Final - Atherton Drive Urunga Master Plan July 2018
	Atherton Drive Master Plan Community Engagement Plan
	O'Meara Woods & Associates Structural Engineers Report.
	Briefing Note on the options considered in removing camphor laurel trees in Church Street Bellingin
Create- Rural Lands Policy	Attachment 3: Location of Existing Multiple Occupancies
The Bellingin Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan	Bellingin Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 - Adopted
Create-Low Pressure Sewer Policy	Low Pressure Sewer Installation Specifications
	Low Pressure Sewer Homeowners Manual
Create- Bellingin Main Street Master Plan	76-SK-Bellingin Playground Concept
	76-L13 Playground Drawing
	Final Tree Selection for Bellingin Town Centre
	Heritage Advisor Comments on Church Street Revitalisation Project
Create-Atherton Drive Master Plan	Atherton Drive Urunga Master Plan 020218
Create-Low Pressure Sewer Policy	Low Pressure Sewer Agreement
	Low Pressure Sewer Component Specifications
Create- Bellingin Main Street Master Plan	Works Commencing Monday September 25th
	Oak Street Parking Restrictions - 27/07/17 - 11/08/17
	Comments from Senior Health & Building Surveyor.
	Concept Plan - Bellingin 40kph Ped Zone
	Section 1a - Oak/Hyde Street Intersection - Kerb & Footpath Demolition
	Bellingin Main Street Plan - Landscape Design April 2017
Bike Tourism	Bellingin Shire Cycling Routes
Create- Bellingin Main Street Master Plan	76-L06 Church Street Soft Landscape Plan-Issue 5
	76-L08 Oak Street Soft Landscape Plan-Issue 5
	76-L10 Typ. Gateway Plan Soft Landscape Schedule Details-Issue 5

PROJECT NAME	DOCUMENTS PROACTIVELY RELEASED FY20
Create- Bellingen Main Street Master Plan	Confirmation from Director EH&P all relevant conditions complied with
	File Note from Development Planner confirming compliance with Conditions 3,4, & 10.
	BellingenMainStreetPlan_OrderOfCosts_RevD_190815
	Bellingen Shire Council - Mainstreet Pedestrian Improvements Stage 1
	active-transport-scoring-sheet Bellingen Town Centre
	Main Street Upgrade Design
	Bellingen Main Street Plan - Artists Impression
	Bellingen Main Street Plan 2015 - Church Street Intersection Upgrade
	Church Street North Revitalisation 2010 - Artists Impression
	Church Street North Street Revitalisation 2010
	Adopted Bellingen Main Street Plan - May 2015
Create- Rural Lands Policy	Attachment 6: Definitions relevant to agriculture
	Attachment 2: Extract from 2007 Council Report Justifying E4 Zones
	FAQ - Blueberry Regulation in the Bellingen Shire
Create-Low Pressure Sewer Policy	Low Pressure Sewer Agreement
	Low Pressure Sewer Installation Specifications
	Low Pressure Sewer Component Specifications
	Low Pressure Sewer Homeowner's Manual
	Low Pressure Sewer Policy - Adopted June 2017
Create-Liquid Trade Waste Policy	Liquid Trade Waste Policy - Adopted
Create- Bellingen Main Street Master Plan	76-L09 Bridge Street Soft Landscape Plan-Issue 5
	Traffic Control Plan Court House Demo Works
	Traffic Control Plan - Water Reticulation Upgrade - Oak Street-Hyde Street Intersection
	Oak Street Daytime Traffic, Parking and Pedestrian Arrangements 07/08/2017 - 11/08/2017
	Oak Street After Hours Traffic, Parking and Pedestrian Arrangements 07/08/2017 - 11/08/2017
	RMS Main St Funding
	Playground Concept Drawings
	Playground Concept Diagram
	Section 1B - Oak/Hyde Street Intersection - Kerb & Footpath Demolition

PROJECT NAME	DOCUMENTS PROACTIVELY RELEASED FY20
Create- Bellingin Main Street Master Plan	Photo showing replacement tree and infrastructure reinstatement 8 November 2012
	Works Management Plan - Church St Bellingin Tree Removal 2011
	Detail of Replacement Tree Submitted for Approval
	PAMP & Bike Plan Council Meeting
	Hyde Street Bellingin - Active Transport Project
	Concept Plan - Hyde & Oak Street
	Concept Plan - Hyde & Church Streets
	Concept Plan - Hyde & Bridge Street including crossings
	Bellingin Shire Council - Mainstreet Pedestrian Improvements Stage 4
	Bellingin Shire Council - Mainstreet Pedestrian Improvements Stage 3
	Bellingin Shire Council - Mainstreet Pedestrian Improvements Stage 2
	Bellingin Main Street Plan submission
	Bellingin Main St Plan J Mongard
	Master Plan 0027/26
	Mayor Dominic King talking with 2BBB's Leo Bradney-George - 14-03-17
	Bellingin CBD Study - Pam Fletcher 2002
	Church Street - Arborists Recommendations 2010

During the reporting period, our agency received no formal and valid access applications (including withdrawn applications but not invalid applications).

Clause 7(b): The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year (including withdrawn applications but not including invalid applications).

TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
0

Number of Refused applications for Schedule 1 Information - Clause 7(c)

During the reporting period, Council did not refuse any applications.

Clause 7C: The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year that the agency refused either wholly or partly, because the application was for the disclosure of information referred to in Schedule 1 to the Act (information for which there is conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure)

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS REFUSED	WHOLLY	PARTLY	TOTAL
	0	0	0
% of Total	0%	0%	0%

Statistical information about access applications - Clause 7(d) and Schedule 2

TABLE A: NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS BY TYPE OF APPLICANT AND OUTCOME*										
	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/ Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Private sector business	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of the public (other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
% of Total	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		

* 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 APPLICANT AND OUTCOME*										
	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/ Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Personal information applications*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
% of Total	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0%

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

TABLE C: INVALID APPLICATIONS

Reason for invalidity	No of applications	% of Total
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	0	0%
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0	0%
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0	0%
Total number of invalid applications received	0	0%
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	0	0%

TABLE D: CONCLUSIVE PRESUMPTION OF OVERRIDING PUBLIC INTEREST AGAINST DISCLOSURE: MATTERS LISTED IN SCHEDULE 1 OF ACT

	Number of times consideration used*	% of Total
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%
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 times consideration used*	% of Total
Responsible and effective government	0	0%
Law enforcement and security	0	0%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	0	100%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	0	0%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0	0%
Secrecy provisions	0	0%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0%
Total	0	0%

TABLE F: TIMELINESS

	Number of applications*	% of Total
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	0	0%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	0	0%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0%
Total	0	0%

TABLE G: NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS REVIEWED UNDER PART 5 OF THE ACT (BY TYPE OF REVIEW AND OUTCOME)

	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total	% of Total
Internal review	0	0	0	0%
Review by Information Commissioner*	0	0	0	0%
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0	0%
Review by NCAT	0	0	0	0%
Total	0	0	0	0%
% of Total	0%	0%	0	0%

*The Information Commissioner does not have the authority to vary decisions, but can make recommendations to the original decision-maker. The data in this case indicates that a recommendation to vary or uphold the original decision has been made by the Information Commissioner.

TABLE H: APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW UNDER PART 5 OF THE ACT (BY TYPE OF APPLICANT)

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

TABLE I: APPLICATIONS TRANSFERRED TO OTHER AGENCIES

	Number of applications transferred	% of Total
Agency-Initiated Transfers	0	0%
Applicant - Initiated Transfers	0	0%
Total	0	0%

Complaint and Compliment Reporting

Bellingen Shire Council Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures

2018-2019	COMPLAINTS	COMPLIMENTS
Total	16	36

Code of Conduct Reporting

1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019

**NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS AND ASSOCIATED COSTS
MODEL CODE PROCEDURES REFERENCE: 12.1**

1 a)	The total number of code of conduct complaints made about councillors and the general manager under the code of conduct in the year to September.	0
b)	the number of code of conduct complaints referred to a conduct reviewer during the reporting period	1
c)	The number of code of conduct complaints finalised by a conduct reviewer at the preliminary assessment stage and the outcome of those complaints.	1
d)	The number of code of conduct complaints investigated by a conduct reviewer.	2
e)	without identifying particular matters, the outcome of investigations completed under these procedures during the reporting period	1 ongoing, 1 not found to have breached the Code of Conduct
f)	the number of matters reviewed by the Office during the reporting period and, without identifying particular matters, the outcome of the reviews	1 overturned Investigators finding of a breach of the code of conduct
g)	The total cost of dealing with code of conduct complaints made about councillors and the general manager including staff costs.	\$61,172.03

Public Interest Disclosures Reporting

Organisations are required under the Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 (PID Act) to collect and report on information about public interest disclosures (PIDs).

The Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011 outlines what information public authorities are to record and include in both the six-month report to the NSW Ombudsman and the public authority's annual report:

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON PIDS	MADE BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS PERFORMING THEIR DAY TO DAY FUNCTIONS	UNDER A STATUTORY OR OTHER LEGAL OBLIGATION	ALL OTHER PIDS
Number of public officials who made PIDs	0	0	0
Number of PIDs received	0	0	0
OF PIDS RECEIVED, NUMBER PRIMARILY ABOUT:			
Corrupt conduct	0	0	0
Maladministration	0	0	0
Serious and substantial waste	0	0	0
Government information contravention	0	0	0
Local government pecuniary interest contravention	0	0	0
Number of PIDs finalised	0	0	0

Note: The number of PIDs finalised only refers to PIDs that have been received since the commencement of the relevant period.

Commentary on PID Obligations

Council has reviewed, updated and endorsed its Code of Conduct, Fraud Control Plan, Fraud Investigation Procedures, Reporting Form, the Fraud and Corruption Policy and Risk Management Policy.

The Council's General Manager has taken action to make staff aware of their obligations through the issue of the information to all staff and the provision of relevant information on Council's Internet. An all staff fraud health check has also been undertaken to raise awareness in this area.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Actions in Councils Disability Inclusion Action Plan have been implemented over the last 12 months based on the availability of resources and plan priorities. The timeframe for reporting to the Minister has not been communicated, and a report will be prepared providing details of specific actions as and when required.

Compliance with the Carers (Recognition) Act 2010

Dorrigo Support Centre's Policies and Procedures recognises and acknowledges the valued role of carers and their diverse needs which takes into consideration culture, age, disability, religion, socio-economic status, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Through our assessment, planning, delivery and review of services, we acknowledge the importance of consultation with carers to ascertain the model of service delivery; the participants goals and/or aspirations; health requirements and community engagement.

The carers participation in the review process in line with the Service Plan, is paramount in providing effective support for the people they care for, and/or providing the information and referral pathway that will enable them to make informed choices on services required.

Recovery & Threat Abatement Plans

Council was not identified in any Recovery & Threat Abatement Plan by the Department of Industry, Skills and Regional Development during this period.



WWW.BELLINGEN.NSW.GOV.AU

COUNCIL@BELLINGEN.NSW.GOV.AU
33 HYDE ST BELLINGEN NSW 2454
02 6655 7300