



Bellingen Shire Council

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Annual Report 2009/10 (Regulatory)



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Bellingen Shire – a lifestyle region

Bellingen Shire is located on the Mid North Coast of NSW halfway between Sydney and Brisbane and just south of Coffs Harbour. It has a total area of 1,605 square kilometres with a coastline of approximately 10km. State forests and National Parks cover 53% of the rural area. The resident population of the Shire was 13,369 in 2009. Over the past five years the population of Bellingen Shire has increased at an average annual rate of 0.9%.

The Shire is located within the traditional lands of the Gumbaynggirr people whose tribal boundaries extend along the east coast of New South Wales from south of Nambucca, north of Woolgoolga and west across the Dorrigo Plateau escarpment.

Bellingen Shire consists of three broad topographical areas incorporating the seaboard around Mylestom, Repton and Urunga, the valleys of the Bellinger and Kalang rivers and the Dorrigo plateau landscapes. Each has its own characteristics and provides a choice in cultural and natural diversity.

The area extends inland from Urunga at the mouth of the Bellinger River and includes its broad and fertile valley with the historic and beautiful town of Bellingen as its regional centre. Further inland the Waterfall Way climbs through the World Heritage Area of the Dorrigo National Park. Just beyond is the tableland town of Dorrigo and the wild Nymboida River. The Dorrigo escarpment forms a natural barrier across the Shire.

The Pacific Highway and north coast rail line provide a strong transport infrastructure linking Sydney and Brisbane. The scenic Waterfall Way, rated number three of Australia's top 10 most iconic drives, also offers easy access from the coast through the lush Gondwana Rainforests of the Great Divide to the New England region. The large regional airport at Coffs Harbour provides a gateway for international and domestic visitors to the Shire.

The links to Coffs Harbour provides significant employment opportunities, commercial and retail services and access to high quality transport, education, health and tourism infrastructure. The Coffs Harbour Education Campus incorporates the Southern Cross University, TAFE North Coast Institute and a senior college providing exceptional learning opportunities.

The Shire is a lifestyle region with an emphasis on cultural vibrancy, liveability and social cohesion. It has diverged over the years and is now a mix of traditional and non-traditional farming. Many of today's residents are artists, craftspeople, writers, musicians and horticulturalists, with approximately 12.1% of employed residents having established home-based activities.

Bellingen Shire is an "economy in transition." While the traditional industry base of timber, dairying, potato and meat processing are essential to the economic health of the Shire, emerging and developing industries include tourism which is underpinned by the Dorrigo Rainforest Centre, national parks, cultural attractions and a successful events sector. Aquaculture, agribusiness/processing, arts and cultural industries, organics and regional cuisine and aged care have also developed.

A number of diverse world class businesses are based in the Shire and Coffs Coast region and compete nationally and internationally due to their innovative culture, continuous quest for improvement and access to a skilled and committed workforce.

Bellingen's "creative" economy distinguishes Bellingen from its neighbours. The physical character of the Shire, of river valleys, varied landscapes, warm and humid sub tropical climate and small and friendly townships, combined with the notion of an economy consisting of skilled artisans and creative enterprises represents a very powerful and precious image.

The events sector is also part of this "creative" economy. The renowned annual Bellingen Jazz & Blues Festival, Bellingen Renewable Energy Fair, Camp Creative, Dorrigo Folk & Bluegrass Festival, Global Carnival and ToastUrunga all add to the Shire's already buzzing cultural life. The vibrant monthly Bellingen Markets also provides an opportunity to showcase our people and culture.

Tourism is strengthened by the fantastic climate, a stunning environment, café, market and festival culture and access to a wide range of tourism and recreational opportunities. For lifestyle you can choose the Dorrigo plateau, rural areas, town convenience or beachside living.

In March 2009 two of the Coffs Coast's idyllic villages were counted amongst the Best 100 Towns in Australia, with one proving it has better coffee than Sydney and the other standing out as a gateway to an 'otherworldly atmosphere' of natural beauty.

Bellingen was rated as the 27th best town in the country, while Dorrigo came in at 77 in a poll by Australian Traveller magazine.

"Everywhere we're asked the same question: what is our favourite town?" Australian Traveller reported. "So for our fourth birthday, we set out to answer that much debated question and compiled a list of towns that are unique, beautiful and are often hidden gems."

Bellingen was rated the most well-preserved town on the Mid North Coast and was recognised as 'a laidback town making its evolution from a dairy subsistence to a romantic B&B experience'. "You can get better coffee in Bellingen than in Sydney these days."

Dorrigo was praised as 'the gateway to the parks, the beach and the rainforest'.

Profile (Source: ABS census data 2006)

Age	Number	%	NSW %
0-17	3,078	24.8	24.0
18-29	942	7.6	15.7
30-44	2,227	17.9	21.7
45-59	3,088	24.9	19.9
50-74	2,041	16.4	12.0
75 or over	1,041	8.4	6.7
Total	12,417	100.0	100.0
Weekly individual income			
Negative/Nil	656	7.1	8.6
\$1-\$399	4,702	51.1	37.0
\$400-\$799	2,509	27.2	25.4
\$800-\$1,299	920	10.0	16.4
\$1,300-\$1,599	246	2.7	5.1
\$1,600-\$1,999	93	1.0	3.0
\$2,000 or more	87	0.9	4.5
Total	9,213	100.0	100.0
Schooling: highest year completed			
Did not go to school	45	0.5	1.3
Year 8 or equivalent or below	816	8.9	7.4
Year 10 or equivalent or below	4,355	47.8	37.6
Year 11 or equivalent	671	7.3	6.6
Year 12 or equivalent	3,245	35.5	47.1
Total	9,132	100.0	100.0
Birthplace			
Australia	10,311	88.0	74.4
Overseas	1,404	12.0	25.6
Total	11,715	100.0	100.0
Language spoken at home			
English only	11,656	97.6	78.7
Speaks language other than English	290	2.4	21.3
Total	11,946	100.0	100.0
Religion: top 5 responses			
No Religion	3,224	29.2	0.6
Anglican	3,096	28.0	24.2
Catholic	2,162	19.6	31.3
Uniting Church	960	8.7	5.1
Presbyterian and Reformed	356	3.2	3.7

Gross Regional Product

The GRP for Bellingen Shire increased by 1.7% from \$357.0 million to \$363.1 million in 2008/09 (latest figures).

With regard to industry, the largest contribution was made by the Manufacturing industry, with approximately \$41.8M or 11.5% of the total GRP for the Shire. The Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing (8.7%), Health Care & Social Assistance (7.9%) and Education & Training (6.6%) sectors were the next highest contributors to the GRP.

The Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing industry experienced the highest annual increase in the industry value added in 2008/09, rising by 15.5% from the level recorded in 2007/08. Other sectors that experienced high levels of annual growth included Information & Telecommunications (up 8.9%), Other Services (up 8.3%) and Transport, Postal & Warehousing (up 7.0%).

GRP (Output) by Industry (\$m)			
	2008/09	% of Total	Annual % Change
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	31.5	8.7	15.5
Mining	0.0	0.0	na
Manufacturing	41.8	11.5	2.7
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	4.1	1.1	-9.7
Construction	16.6	4.6	-2.6
Wholesale Trade	20.4	5.6	4.9
Retail Trade	19.8	5.5	1.2
Accommodation and Food Services	16.5	4.5	5.5
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	14.1	3.9	7.0
Information Media and Telecommunications	5.9	1.6	8.9
Financial and Insurance Services	19.1	5.3	0.6
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	10.5	2.9	0.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	16.7	4.6	-3.6
Administrative and Support Services	8.6	2.4	-0.9
Public Administration and Safety	15.0	4.1	-6.9
Education and Training	24.0	6.6	1.2
Health Care and Social Assistance	28.7	7.9	3.3
Arts and Recreation Services	5.1	1.4	-7.0
Other Services	7.2	2.0	8.3
Non Classifiable industry	3.1	0.8	2.5
Total Industry Value Added	308.7	85.0	2.6
Ownership of dwellings	28.0	7.7	4.7
GRP at Factor Cost (\$m)	336.8	92.7	2.7
Taxes less subsidies on production and imports	27.9	7.7	-4.5
Statistical Discrepancy	-1.6	-0.4	-
Gross Regional Product (\$m)	363.1	100.0	1.7

Business Activity

The most recent ABS Australian Business Register indicated there were an estimated 1,212 businesses (registered for GST and actively trading) in the Shire in June 2007.

The estimated total turnover of all industry in the Shire was \$354 million in 2006/07 and the average turnover of all businesses was approximately \$292,100. The Wholesale Trade sector recorded the highest average turnover of \$926,000, followed by Retail Trade \$495,900, Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants \$426,300 and Finance & Insurance \$400,000.

Businesses by Industry	Number	%	Turnover \$m	%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	348	28.7	54.7	15.5
Mining	6	0.5	0.8	0.2
Manufacturing	57	4.7	20.5	5.8
Electricity, gas, water & waste services	3	0.2	0.0	0.0
Construction	213	17.6	64.2	18.1
Wholesale trade	36	3.0	33.3	9.4
Retail trade	156	12.9	77.4	21.9
Accommodation Cafes & Restaurants	60	5.0	25.6	7.2
Transport and Storage	48	4.0	17.9	5.1
Communication Services	18	1.5	4.9	1.4
Finance & Insurance	21	1.7	8.4	2.4
Property & Business Services	156	12.9	34.5	9.7
Education	3	0.2	0.5	0.1
Health & Community Services	30	2.5	6.3	1.8
Cultural & Recreation Services	18	1.5	1.1	0.3
Personal & Other Services	39	3.2	3.9	1.1
Total	1,212	100.0	354.0	100.0

Tourism Visitor Numbers

The average number of domestic visitors per annum to the Shire over the three years to June 2007 was approximately 226,000, which was comprised of Domestic Overnight 87,000 (38.5%) and Domestic Day of 139,000 (61.5%). The total number of domestic visitor nights spent in the region was approximately 299,000pa over the three years to June 2007.

Domestic Overnight and Day visitors to the Shire spent an average total of approximately \$28 million pa over the three years.

Economic Profile

Each year Council produces a statistical overview of the Shire to assist business and the community to gain an understanding of the Shire.

Your Council

Council provides a range of day-to-day services for our local community and is responsible for issues that affect our daily lives. These services include:

- libraries, community centres and halls
- recreation facilities such as public swimming pools and sporting fields
- infrastructure such as roads, bridges, boat ramps, skate parks, public toilets and picnic areas
- water and sewerage services
- environmental and public health services
- waste management and recycling
- controlling companion animals
- planning and development services
- services for specific groups in the community such as children, young people, older people, people with disabilities, indigenous people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Council operates within laws set by the NSW Government with the main powers and responsibilities coming from the Local Government Act 1993 and associated regulations.

Council elections are held every four years with the last election being held in September 2008 and the next election to be held in September 2012. Each council must have between five to fifteen councillors with Bellingen Shire having seven councillors, one of whom is the mayor who is directly elected by the local community.

The role of the councillors is to set the council's strategic direction and make final policy decisions. Council meetings are held monthly, on the fourth Wednesday, to discuss issues and make decisions on behalf of the local community. You are most welcome to attend these meetings and to watch your elected members at work.

A number of Advisory Committees have been set up to assist council to develop various plans and policies and many local management committees (Section 355 LGA 1993) have been established to have the care, control and management of community and sporting facilities.

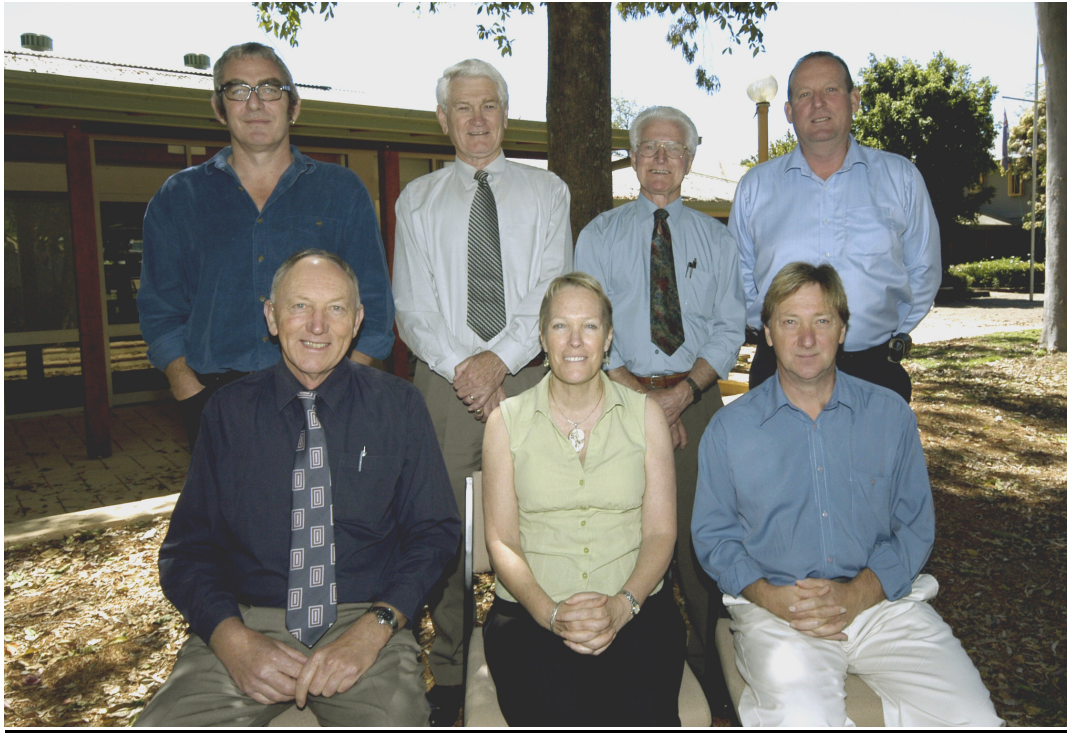
Council employs a range of administrative, outdoor, technical and professional staff. The general manager is responsible for implementing the strategic direction and policies set by the councillors and managing the work of council staff.

Members of the public are entitled to have access to the majority of council documents. Council may also allow you access to other documents, but this will be a matter for the designated Public Officer to decide.

You could be involved with the decisions made by your Council by

- *writing or telephoning Council about issues important to you*
- *talking to your councillors*
- *addressing Council during the Public Access session at the beginning of each Council Meeting on any agenda item*
- *attending public meetings and forums held on specific issues throughout the year*

Elected Representatives



Back Row: Crs Sean Tuohy, Bruce Cronin, Gordon Braithwaite and David Scott
Front Row: Crs Mark Troy (Mayor), Kerry Child (Deputy Mayor) and Ian Coe

Cr Mark Troy (Mayor)
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Cr Bruce Cronin
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Phone 6655 1181 Fax 6655 1181
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Cr Kerry Child (Deputy Mayor)
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Cr David Scott
"Carinya"
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Cr Gordon Braithwaite
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Cr Sean Tuohy
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seanbellengreen@gmail.com

Cr Ian Coe
41 Perrys Road, REPTON NSW 2454
PO Box 2018, MYLESTOM NSW 2454
Phone 6699 1047
iancoe@y7mail.com

Record of Attendance at Council and Committee Meetings

Councillor	Ordinary Meetings	Extraordinary Meetings	Committee of Council - Works
Mark Troy (Mayor)	11	Nil	3
Kerry Child (Deputy Mayor)	11	Nil	3
Gordon Braithwaite	11	Nil	3
Ian Coe	11	Nil	3
Bruce Cronin	11	Nil	3
David Scott	10	Nil	2
Sean Tuohy	10	Nil	3

Eleven (11) Ordinary Meetings of Council were held on 22 July, 26 August, 23 September, 29 October, 25 November, 16 December, 25 February, 24 March, 28 April, 26 May and 23 June.

No Extraordinary Meetings of Council were held during the year and three (3) Works Committee meetings were held on 7 October, 24 March and 23 June.

Mrs Patricia Oakman passes away

A former Bellingen Shire President, Mrs Oakman passed away on the 20 May 2010 at the age of 93. Mrs Oakman, OAM, was the first female Shire President in New South Wales and was the Shire President of Bellingen Shire from 1970 to 1972 then again from 1976 to 1980.

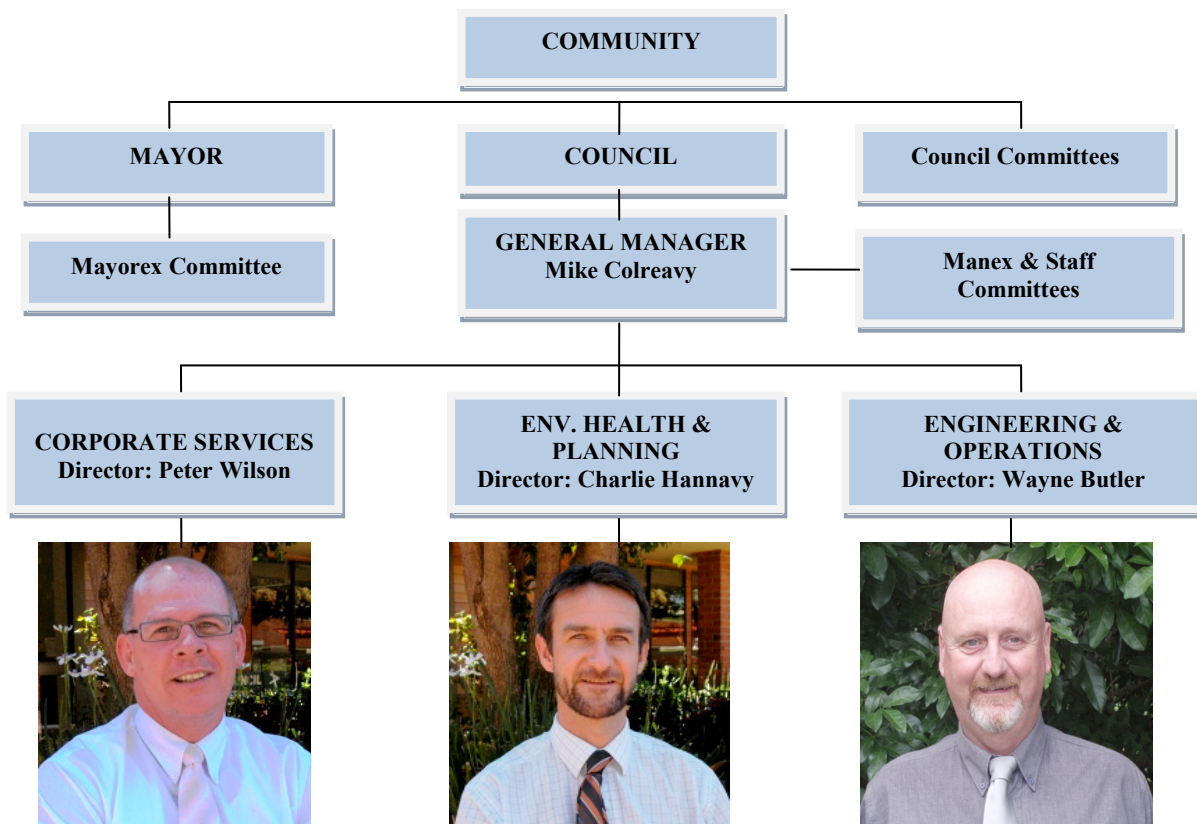
Organisational Structure



**Cr Mark Troy
Mayor**



**Mike Colreavy
General Manager**



- Administration Support
- Financial Management
- Risk Management & Insurances
- Human Resources & OH&S Co-ordination
- Library Services
- Tourism and & Economic Development
- Public Cemeteries
- Information Technology
- Records Management
- Fire & Emergency Services

- Development Control
- Building Services
- Public Health
- Environmental Management
- Pollution Control
- Law Enforcement
- Community Development
- Strategic Planning
- Community Services
- Flood Plain Management

- Roads & Bridges
- Parks & Recreation
- Plant & Equipment
- Water & Sewerage
- Waste Management
- Vegetation Control
- Quarries
- Buildings & Asset Maintenance
- Emergency Management

Management Executive Team

The General Manager, together with the senior management team form the Management Executive Team (MANEX) which is responsible for the functional implementation of Council's decisions and directions and provide professional and technical advice to staff, councillors and relevant committee members.

Delegations from Council to the General Manager enable the Council to concentrate on important policy issues and matters impacting on the Shire. The General Managers' delegated powers allow for more efficient and effective operations and expedient implementation of Council decisions.

General Manager	Mike Colreavy	14 November 2005 - present
Director of Corporate Services	Peter Wilson	4 January 2006 - present
Director of Engineering & Operations	Mike Edsall *	21 November 2005 – 4 July 2010
	Wayne Butler	4 January 2010 - present
Director of Environmental Health & Planning	Charlie Hannavy	22 January 2007 – present

* Mike Edsall finished work on 20 November 2009 to take extended leave prior to his official retirement in July 2010

Bellingen Council to appoint a new General Manager

In April Councillors endorsed the establishment of a selection committee and to engage Local Government Management Solutions, an arm of the Local Government and Shires Associations, to recruit a new general manager.

After more than 34 years in local government and five years as General Manager of Bellingen Council, Mike Colreavy will retire in November 2010, after having his four year contract extended by 12 months in November 2009.

Vision, Mission & Strategic Framework

Vision

A Shire of outstanding natural beauty, scenic rural landscapes and attractive towns and villages with a distinctive local character.

A prosperous and cohesive community enjoying a variety of satisfying lifestyles, a wide range of employment opportunities, and high quality infrastructure, services and facilities.

Mission

To enhance our community's lifestyle and protect our unique environment through effective leadership, community involvement and commitment to service.

Strategic Framework

Leadership and Governance

Goal

Effective community leadership through good governance and sound administration.

Four Year Priorities

- Improve and promote the Management Plan as a shared strategic framework for priority setting and coordination within Council and with other key stakeholders.
- Maintain a sound financial position and examine options for increasing revenue and reducing costs.
- Work effectively with a wide range of community groups and other stakeholders both through existing joint committees and by establishing new partnerships.
- Enhance the flow of information to the community on Council's activities and support necessary community involvement in planning and decision-making processes.
- Enhance information & communications technology resources and consider e-business options.
- Improve governance policies and procedures.
- Continue to develop the skills and capacity of Council's workforce to meet changing needs.

Economic Development

Goal

Increased prosperity through targeted economic and tourism development.

Four Year Priorities

- Continue to implement the Bellinghen Shire Economic Development Plan, including preparation of strategies for creative industries, agribusiness, marine and freshwater aquaculture, and promotion of regional and local cuisine.

- Implement the Industrial Land Strategy, including preparation of a Local Environmental Plan for proposed industrial estates at Urunga and Dorrigo.
- Formulate business strategies to guide Council's involvement in tourism, caravan parks
- Support for community economic development activities, and retention of an investment property portfolio.

Sustainability and Environment

Goal

Sustainable growth, conservation of environmental resources and enhanced quality of life.

Four Year Priorities

- Implement the Growth Management Strategy and Sustainability Framework.
- Ensure Council is well placed to implement the State Government's proposed changes to proposals for strategic and local planning.
- Continue to improve the State of Environment Reporting and give a higher priority to environmental management issues in the Management Plan.
- Prepare a Town Centre Plan for Urunga and continue to implement appropriate development controls and townscape improvement programs to enhance the character of all major centres.
- Undertake floodplain management studies for the Upper Bellinger and Kalang rivers.
- Maintain a strong focus on vegetation management, control of noxious weeds and improving water quality in rivers.
- Implement the management plan for the lower Bellinger river and estuary, and undertake a scoping study to determine longer-term management issues and options for the coastal zone.
- Introduce an Environmental Levy and consult with the community with regard to allocation of revenue collected.

Transport and Infrastructure

Goal

A safe, efficient transport system and other high quality infrastructure.

Four Year Priorities

- Introduce upgraded asset management systems and establish an overall plan for Shire roads to set appropriate and affordable standards ('levels of service').
- In cooperation with neighbouring Councils, seek further improvements to the Waterfall Way and provision of an alternative sealed route from Dorrigo to the coast.
- Strongly promote the Shire's interests in relation to planning for upgrading and realignment of the Pacific Highway.

- Finalise planning and if necessary commence works to upgrade water supply systems serving the Bellinghen and the Urunga areas and sewerage systems in Bellinghen, Dorrigo and Urunga.
- Update business plans for water and sewerage.
- Progress the long-term waste management strategy for the collection and processing of domestic and commercial waste.
- Place selected engineering operations on a more commercial footing and prepare necessary business plans.
- Review allocation of Section 94 contributions in the light of legislative changes.
- Progress to final plans and implementation of Bellinghen CBD study.

Community Wellbeing

Goal

Community wellbeing and equitable access to adequate community services and facilities.

Four Year Priorities

- Update Council's Social Action Plan as an umbrella framework to guide service provision and promote greater community wellbeing.
- Enhance partnerships and coordination with community organisations, government agencies and other providers to secure needed services.
- Maintain efforts to promote understanding and cooperation with the Shire's indigenous population.
- Ensure effective implementation of the Disability Action Plan and associated Development Control Plan.
- Prepare a business strategy for ongoing management of swimming pools within available resources.
- Develop proposals for an expanded library facility for Bellinghen.
- Complete investigations for a replacement Tidal Pool for Urunga.

The Year in Review

Council recorded a number of significant achievements during 2009/10 in achieving the objectives within the Strategic Directions set out in the 2009/10-2012/13 Management Plan. These highlights are outlined as follows:

July

- As part of the ongoing changes to the NSW Planning system, the State Government introduced 'independent' regional planning panels, effective from 1 July 2010, to determine development applications of regional significance. There are six regional planning panels across the State with Bellingen Shire to be served by the northern RPP.
- From 1 July Council was no longer the Trust Manager for the North Beach Caravan Park and Hungry Heads Cabins. These facilities will now form part of the recently gazetted Bellinger Heads State Park and management responsibility rests with the NSW Department of Lands.
- NSW State Government Waste and Environmental Levy implemented as of 1 July. The levy applies to all coastal councils located north of Port Stephens. From 1 July 2009 waste disposed to landfills will attract a levy of \$10 tonne and the levy will increase by \$10 each year until it reaches around \$70 tonne by the year 2015/16.
- Bellingen Shire marked NAIDOC Week (July 5 to 12) by hosting a Smoking Ceremony and morning tea at the Bellingen Library on Saturday 11 July. Local Elder Uncle Tom Kelly opened the celebrations with a 'Welcome to Country' followed by an address by the Mayor. A small crowd was entertained by Barbara Weaver of Dorrigo and entertaining company the Gumbayngirr Elders Choir. The theme of this year's NAIDOC Week, 'Honouring our Elders, Nurturing our Youth', reflected the contribution of Elders to our communities as inspirational leaders and nurturers of young people. It encompassed the achievement of Elders past and present and looks to the future.
- Project priorities for application of the \$158,000 to be received under the Federal Government's Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program (RLCIP) Round 2 adopted.
- Donations under Section 356 Local Government Act totalling \$38,356 approved.
- Report considered by Council on options and action plan for the development of a Community Services Centre hub and Youth Space on the council owned William Street property.
- Funding Agreements executed for two projects under the Area Assistance Scheme 2009 amounting to \$125,000. The Young, Fun, Together As One project received funding of \$65,000 for the upgrade of the skate park infrastructure at Jarrett Park, Bellingen. The Reaching Youth – Enriching Lives project received funding of \$60,000 to provide a dedicated youth outreach facility in the Dorrigo Community Centre.
- Bellingen Shire Council Statement of Reconciliation adopted.
- Strategic Land Use Planning Program adopted.

- Panel Contract awarded for the supply of Traffic Control Services for a two year period at an estimated annual cost of \$340,000.
- Council's partnership with Coffs Harbour City Council, the Coffs Coast Tourism Alliance, was successful in attracting \$128,000 in NSW State Government co-funding to undertake promotion of the Coffs Coast, including the Waterfall Way, as the premier experiences.
- Bellingen Local Environmental Plan (BLEP) and the Lower Bellinger and Kalang River flood extent maps went electronic, with the maps being able to be accessed on the Council's website.
- An alliance designed to promote local food production and supply was officially launched in Coffs Harbour on 28 July. The Local Food Futures Alliance was formed in June last year, aimed at developing a strong local food economy based on sustainable agricultural practices. The alliance includes representatives from the local community, the Bellingen and Coffs Harbour councils and the North Coast Area Health Service. The vision is to create a strong, sustainable, resilient and socially just local food economy for the Coffs Coast region into the future.

August

- Council hosted a climate change workshop on 1 August, in conjunction with a discussion forum facilitated by the local environmental organisation 'Eco-Bello', to enable the community to have input into the Bellingen Shire Emission Reduction Program (BERP) and the community emission reduction target.
- Campaigners for the Cameron's Corner wetlands celebrated after receiving news the RTA was deferring proposed roadworks at the site. The RTA said that the decision had been taken following strong community response to its environmental assessment and the Council's advice that it no longer supported the preferred option. Improvements at Cameron's Corner will now be deferred until funding is available to reassess the route options.
- Council resolved to maintain the current Organisational Structure and that the General Manager's position remain the only "Senior Staff" position within the structure.
- Delegations of Authority to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and General Manager reviewed.
- Bellingen Shire Council Code of Conduct adopted following a review.
- Privacy Management Plan adopted.
- Funds of \$25,944 committed to repair the fibreglass lining of the main pool at the Dorrigo Swimming Centre.
- Panel Contract awarded for the supply of Quarry Materials at an estimated annual cost of \$698,500.
- Tenders awarded for the supply of plant and trucks at a nett cost of \$952,039.

- The formation of a single Local Emergency Management Committee between Coffs Harbour City Council and Bellingen Shire Council was approved by Council.
- Tender accepted for the restoration of the landslip at Short Street Lane, Bellingen for \$143,000.
- Support given to the concept of the development of a basketball stadium at the Urunga Recreation Reserve.
- As from August library members had the option to receive their library notices via SMS or email.

September

- Work completed on the construction of a new 2 metre wide concrete footpath between the northern end of Church Street, Bellingen and Lavenders Bridge. The \$80,000 project was funded by Council (75%) and the RTA (25%) as part of Council's Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP).
- Councillor Child elected as Deputy Mayor.
- Organisational Structure review adopted.
- Tender accepted from Australian Lifeguard Service for the Provision of Life Saving Services for a period of four years, commencing in the 2009/10 Season, at a Year 1 cost of \$75,677.
- Clarence Regional Library Strategic Plan 2008-2018 and Action Plan endorsed.
- Council resolved to abolish its administered sports fund and to make an annual contribution of \$1,000 to the non-profit Bellingen Shire Go Bello Go Sports Fund, commencing in 2009/10.
- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy reviewed and the updated Workplace Equity and Diversity Plan was adopted, following the endorsement by the EEO Committee and the Staff Consultative Committee.
- Council resolved to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the NSW Land and Property Management Authority, for the joint management of the Bellinger Heads State Park, which was gazetted on 7 March 2008.
- A Summary Report of grant funding applications lodged, totalling \$6,576,555, and outlining the success in obtaining grant funding of \$550,671 as at August 2009 was submitted to Council.

October

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the NSW Land and Property Management Authority, for the joint management of the Bellinger Heads State Park, executed 12 October 2009.
- Council as a significant reconciliation gesture decided to formally name the Council Park in Hyde Street, Bellingen the "Maam-Gaduying"... "Meeting Place Park", as the name represents 'Meeting Place' in the Gumbayngirr language.

- Vacant land at Lot 1 Ferry Street, Urunga to be reclassified from community land to operational land by an LEP, in order for the land to be disposed of.
- Council resolved to nominate in Group 3 to implement the new legislated Integrated Planning & Reporting framework. The Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Act 2009 provides transitional provisions for phasing in of the new legislation with Council required to have a number of strategic planning processes in place by 30 June 2012. These include a Community Strategic Plan, Community Engagement Strategy, Resourcing Strategy (including Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plan and a Workforce Management Plan), a Delivery Program and an Operational Plan.
- Bellingen Shire Social Plan 2010-2015 adopted.
- The draft Coffs Coast Local Food Futures Framework that proposed measures to grow a sustainable local food economy for the Coffs Coast was exhibited for public consultation. The draft Framework was created through the Coffs Coast Local Food Futures Alliance (LFFA), which aims to bring fresh local produce to tables throughout the region. The Coffs Coast Local Food Futures Alliance was formed in June 2008 when members of community groups throughout Coffs Harbour and Bellingen came together with government agencies to look at ways to bring food production and supply back to the local level. The Alliance's vision is to create a sustainable local food economy that supports and sustains healthy, connected, strong and resilient communities that actively care for each other and their environment. The draft Framework puts forward a series of key initiatives that will help develop such a local food economy.

November

- Mr Geoff Allen, Council's Auditor from Forsyth's Business Services Pty Ltd presented the Audit Report, Financial Statements and the audit of Council's financial records for the year ended 30 June 2009.
- Council resolved to join with NoROC and MIDGOC in making a joint business case submission to the Department of broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy for the NSW North Coast to be the first region on the mainland for the rollout of the National Broadband Network (NBN).
- Comprehensive State of the Environment Report 2008/09 adopted.
- Modification to the Organisational Structure approved.
- The demountable buildings and heritage stables, on the former Telstra site, to be made available for the establishment of a local Youth Space area, subject to Y2A's submission and approval of a Development Application prior to any occupation or use of the site.

December

- A presentation was made to Mr Col Dagger at the December Council Meeting in appreciation of his 20 years of service as he was retiring in January 2010.
- Rural Fire Service (RFS) Bellingen District RFFF 2010/11 Estimates totalling \$2,086,277 adopted.

- Council adopted an emission reduction target of 40% on 1990 levels by 2020.
- Development Consent granted for a 24 lot residential subdivision at Brigalow Caravan Park, Urunga.
- Tender from Nviroscope Pty Ltd accepted for the rehabilitation of Buffer Creek Bridge on Gordonville Road at a price of \$64,900.
- Council informed of the introduction of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act) and the implications for Council. The Act introduces an entirely new scheme for providing public access to government information.
- The Mayor Mark Troy delivered Bellingen Shire Council's Statement of Reconciliation at a ceremony held in the "Maam-Gaduying" Meeting Place Park on Wednesday 16 December 2009.
- Member for Coffs Harbour, Andrew Fraser MP, announced that the Urunga SLSC is to receive \$29,000, under the Community Building Partnership Grants Program (Coffs Harbour electorate), to complete the club's storage shed.
- Bellingen and Nambucca Shire Councils were successful in gaining \$80,000, under the NSW Health Communities Scheme, for a youth alcohol education program. The program will target young people between the ages of 14 and 17 years, aiming to help them make responsible choices regarding alcohol. The funding will see a part-time project manager appointed to develop and oversee the initiatives.
- A second progress report on the implementation of the recommendations from the Department of Local Government Promoting Better Practice Program Review Report June 2008 was submitted to the Department of Local Government in December. The Review Report contained fifty eight (58) recommendations across six areas and the first progress report on the implementation of the recommendations was submitted to the Department of Local Government in December 2008. The Department responded in February 2009 noting the significant progress made and commended Council for its efforts.

January

- Funding of \$50,000 offered to Council, under the Community Building Partnership Grants Program (Oxley electorate), for the construction of the North Bellingen cycleway. These funds together with Section 94 Developer Contributions of \$90,000 and \$16,000 from the Environmental Levy will enable approximately 130 metres of cycle/pathway to be built off the northern end of Lavenders Bridge. The project will include removing the collapsing log retaining wall and replacing it with a masonry wall. The steps will also be eliminated and the planned kerbside path will provide much safer access for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Free Wireless became available at the Shire Branch libraries.
- Australia Day celebrations held at Dorrigo.

February

- The NSW Rural Fire Service ended the statutory Bush Fire Danger Period, for the Coffs harbour and Bellingen LGAs, on 19 February due to continuing mild weather conditions.

- A Council deputation met with the NSW Deputy Premier and Minister for Health in Sydney on the 24 February to convey concerns about the service reductions at the Bellinger River District Hospital.
- Annual Report 2008/09 endorsed
- Code of Meeting Practice adopted. The Code was revised to reflect further changes recommended by the Department of Local Government Meetings Practice Note (August 2009).
- Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors Policy adopted.
- Priorities adopted for application of the \$158,000 in funding under the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program (RLCIP) Round 2. The projects identified were the Stage 2 construction of the Urunga SLSC storage shed (\$4,000), the upgrade of the stage, hall entrance and acoustics at the Dorrigo Community Hall (\$100,000) and the upgrade of playground facilities at McNally Street, Bellingen (\$5,000). Funds of \$60,000, made up of \$49,000 from the RLCIP and \$11,000 from Council funds, were also earmarked for the upgrade of existing playground facilities at Dangar Falls, Dorrigo and Connell Park, Bellingen and for the provision of new playground equipment at the Urunga Library.
- Revised Strategic Land Use Planning Program adopted.
- Council accepted ownership of the Dorrigo Helicopter Landing Site.
- Council resolved to lodge four applications under the State Government's Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme, seeking funding to undertake a range of natural disaster risk assessments and risk reduction works. The projects included the Central Urunga Flood Study Option 2, Wheatley Street/Tamarind Drive, Bellingen Catchment Study, and provision of Roadside Flood markers and the protection of Kalang Road from river erosion at Moodys Bridge.
- The reconstruction of Boggy Creek Bridge on Boggy Creek Road, west of Bellingen, completed. The works resulted from the flooding events experienced in 2009.
- Work completed on a new pontoon for boat users at Mylestom. Jointly funded by Council and the NSW Maritime, the works included the installation of a pontoon and gangway, allowing recreational users safe access in and out of their boats.

March

- Organisational Structure amended to incorporate a revised structure for the Department of Environmental Health & Planning.
- Council entered into a new Licence Agreement with Youth 2 Adult (Y2A), for use of the of the old Telstra site in Church Street, Bellingen, for a period of 10 years with a further 10 year option. The demountable buildings and heritage stables will be converted into a Youth Space.

- Bushfire Risk Management Plan was released for public comment. The Mid North Coast draft Plans and maps describe the level of bushfire risk across the Coffs Coast and outlines strategies to minimise the threat. The plan, devised by the Mid North Coast Bushfire Management Committee, identifies bushfire issues, identifies assets at risk, assesses the level of risk, establishes 'treatment strategies' to minimise the risk, and those who are responsible for carrying out those treatments.

April

- Council and the Thora Hall Management Committee were allocated \$28,350 from the State Government's Community Halls Renewal Fund, to be used to provide better access facilities, installation of insulation in the ceiling space, an air conditioning system in the kitchen and the acquisition of an electronic communication notice board. The Hall provides a focus for people who live in the rural community and is a place to meet for social occasions and provides a venue for a vast range of other activities.
- A presentation was made to Mr Bob Morrison at the April Council Meeting in appreciation of his 25 years of service and wishing him well in his retirement.
- Debt Recovery Policy adopted.
- Council endorsed the progress report of the "Our Living Coast" sustainability initiative that is being conducted in partnership with the three Coffs Coast Councils with \$1.998M in funding from the NSW Environmental Trust, under the Urban Sustainability Program. The project is designed to improve biodiversity and sustainability outcomes and build and strengthen partnerships at both a regional and local level.
- Tender awarded for the Design and Construction of Stage 4 of the Urunga Boardwalk for the amount of \$360,000. Stage 4 will extend the existing boardwalk to the mouth of the river along the contours of the seawall. The width and style will match the existing boardwalk and will be approximately 400 metres in length.
- A preliminary investigation and assessment report on the landslip damage to the Bowraville to Bellingen Road (Main Road 118) estimates that the cost to repair the damaged road segments ranges from \$25M to \$30M. During the extreme flood events experienced in 2009 the road suffered major storm damage due to landslides and scouring of embankments and was closed as a result.
- As part of a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, Council implemented a fleet management strategy aimed at reducing the number and size of light vehicles in its fleet. The strategy will promote the adoption of more fuel efficient 4 cylinder vehicles instead of the larger 6 cylinder vehicles.
- An ongoing collaboration between Council, the Heart Foundation and the North Coast Area Health Service was recognised with the publication of a case study on the Premier's Council for Active Living website. The case study describes efforts to embed healthy planning principles into Council's planning policies and to provide a greater focus on programs or services that will improve the health of residents of the shire.

- Restoration of part of South Arm Road and the reconstruction of the collapsed culvert in Crown Street Bellingen commenced. The damage to the roads was caused by the flood events in 2009 and the projects are funded under the Federal and State Governments Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements.

May

- A Think Tank was held on the 13 May to bring together young people, local business and key industry stakeholders to explore innovative and creative opportunities for youth employment. The Think Tank was organised by the Bellingen Sustainable Business Alliance (BSBA), an initiative of the Bellingen Chamber of Commerce, Council and OzGREEN.
- Kalang River Health Plan adopted.
- As part of the NSW Government's Planning Reform Program, Council was required to rationalise its planning controls so that only one Development Control Plan applied to any parcel of land with the Shire. This reform is designed to accompany the adoption of the Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and to reduce the complexity of the planning system. The Draft Bellingen Shire Development Control Plan 2010 was prepared in accordance with the reform program and was placed on public exhibition for comment.

June

- The Hon Anthony Albanese, Minister for Infrastructure and Local Government, visited Urunga on the 4 June to officially announce that the Federal Government will provide \$1.4 million for a range of CBD beautification projects in Urunga, Bellingen and Dorrigo.

In Bellingen, the Church Street north al fresco dining area will be upgraded with the formalisation of angle parking and a new pedestrian entry threshold off Hyde Street. A viewing platform will be built to provide views of the river and mountains.

Below it, Jarrett Park will be transformed with a major expansion of the skate park and the building of an all-weather basketball court and a performance platform. The park will be landscaped and new pathways will lead to a viewing platform on the river bank.

Footpaths and pedestrian crossings in the Urunga town centre are in for an upgrade and the upgrades in Hickory Street, Dorrigo north of Waterfall Way will be duplicated south of the War Memorial and pedestrian safety improved.

Central to the works program will be the creation of an indigenous green team.

- The youth of Bellingen EYE were thrilled that Council had decided to support their "No Plastic, Fantastic" campaign to make the Bellingen township plastic bag free in 2010/11. The official campaign launch was held at the New Energy Festival on 5 June.

- Council gave the approval for the construction of the new Dorrigo sewerage treatment plant to be brought forward from the year 2020. This decision was in response to concerns raised by the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) of possible contamination of the Bielsdown River. The construction of the new treatment plant is to be completed by December 2012 at an estimated cost of \$4.8M.
- Management Plan for 2010/11 – 2013/14 and Four Year Forward Financial Plan adopted.
- Information Technology Strategic Plan adopted. The Plan was developed in response to the Promoting Better Practice Review undertaken by the Department of Local Government in December 2007, and released in June 2008, which recommended that Council develop a comprehensive information systems/technology strategy to support its corporate goals.
- Pet owners in the Shire have responded to a registration drive by Council with figures showing a 63% increase in dog registrations and a 50% increase in cat registrations over the last 18 months.

Flood Report released in October

Tourism, the effect of power outages on the dairy industry, community mental health, flood education and emergency warning systems were among the ongoing issues listed for further discussion by Ken Moroney in his report on the region's autumn floods.

Mr Moroney was the recovery co-ordinator for the north coast floods in May 2009 and his report also referred to the 31 March flood in Coffs Harbour and Bellingen.

Mr Moroney noted in his report that the impact on the region and its residents was multiplied by the floods, storms and heavy rainfall which affected the area in February, March, April and May 2009.

He recommended a review of the composition and functions of recovery committees and recovery centres to provide residents with more holistic government services and recommended that local state members of parliament should be invited as observers onto their local recovery committee, while local mayors should be appointed as local recovery co-ordinators.

Mr Moroney reported that recovery centres were the key to community satisfaction with the process of flood recovery and noted that Coffs Harbour's flood recovery centre had served as the model for others in the region.

He said concerns were raised with him about the number of devices for early warning of flood levels and their accuracy.

Mr Moroney recommended a properly structured and focused community based flood education and awareness program and that the use of portable electronic message switching devices and static emergency advice signs be discussed with the RTA and the ABC.

A generator subsidy scheme for dairy farmers affected by power outages was one possible solution to farmers who were unable to milk, had cows contract mastitis, had to throw out stored milk because of prolonged blackouts and farms cut off from factories as flood waters cut roads.

As an accidental by-product of metropolitan media reporting, it was felt tourism was affected as visitors avoided the area even once 'a level of normality' had returned to local roads.

Mr Moroney said Tourism NSW needed to be engaged at such a critical time.

Natural disaster declared for the Mid-North Coast

The New South Wales Government declared the mid-north coast shires of Nambucca and Bellingen natural disaster areas on the 29 October 2009. The flash flooding compounded damage from the four floods since February

Mid-North Coast region floods for the fifth time

The NSW Government on the 7 November 2009 declared Bellingen, Nambucca and Kempsey Shires and Coffs Harbour City Council natural disaster zones, after a deluge of rain drenched the region and cut off entire communities.

The declaration enabled the local councils to receive state government assistance to repair roads, bridges, water bores and other public infrastructure. It was the fifth time in the year that the region was hit by severe floods.

A Bureau of Meteorology climatologist told the ABC Radio that Bellingen had already had its wettest year on record, with 3,416 millimetres for the year to date (10 November). The previous highest rainfall for Bellingen was 2,895 millimetres in 1921.

The Bellingen Shire Courier Sun newspaper detailed rainfall figures for Bellingen Shire since 1900 on the 6 January 2010 which showed that 3,638 millimetres had been recorded for 2009.

Council Park officially named 'Maam Gaduying'

The open space in front of the Council's Administration Building was officially named the 'Maam Gaduying' or 'Meeting Place Park', on Wednesday 16 December 2009. Maam Gaduying means meeting place in the Gumgayngirr language.

Mayor Mark Troy and local elder, Uncle Tom Kelly unveiled a sign as part of the ceremony and the Mayor also made a declaration of the Statement of Reconciliation.

Cr Troy said the previous Council agreed to begin the process of developing a Statement of Reconciliation in August 2007. Discussions subsequently took place with Aboriginal community representatives and the draft statement was sent to five Gumbayngirr organisations for endorsement.

The Statement will make a positive contribution to the well being of the Shires aboriginal community in particular and to the boarder community. The Statement is intended to promote a sense of unity and community harmony through acceptance, appreciation of our aboriginal people's culture and traditional connection. It demonstrates Councils leadership and commitment to the principles of social justice and equity for all members of our community.

The Mayor stated that he considered the declaration of the Statement of Reconciliation and naming of the cherished green community space "Maam Gaduying" or "Meeting Place" is the most significant local reconciliation action undertaken in his time in Local Government and perhaps his lifetime.

Cr Troy also said that Aunty Bea Ballangarry had recently visited the site and this is what she had to say: "An excellent example of growing a community without the need for dollars is the discussions that took place to name this park Maam Gaduying. What this has done for me as an individual Elder in my Tribal Country is feel the move towards a more respectful inclusiveness. To have my Gumbayngirr language publicly identifying a 'place' especially a meeting place is a powerful statement. The natural progression that follows this change is immeasurable."

Australia Day – celebrating Australian Identity and Culture

Bellingen Shire turned on a great show for Australia Day 2010, with hundreds of people flocking to the local community event held in the main street of Dorrigo to celebrate our national day, and above all, to celebrate being Australian with pride and flair.

The driving force behind community radio station 2bbb, Ms Dorin Hart was awarded the 2010 Bellingen Shire Citizen of the Year. The announcement was made by the Bellingen Shire Ambassador, Clown Doctor Peter Spitzer.

Dorin Hart has been a part of Radio 2bbb since the mid 1980s in various positions including chairperson, news co-ordinator and trainer. But it was her role during the March 2009 floods that kept the station afloat as floodwaters inundated the building in Wheatley Street, North Bellingen.

The 2bbb building required extensive restoration and again Dorin Hart put her hand up to supervise the refurbishment and the smooth switch over from the studios to an OB van in the main street of Bellingen over a three week period.

The outcome was that 2bbb stayed on air for the whole period of the renovation shutdown at Wheatley Street and the studios were renewed with a new kitchen, equipment, carpet and paint. The workmen commented positively on the whole exercise which ran smoothly and harmoniously with Dorin in charge.

Her nominees stated "this small example illustrates the outstanding and mindful contribution Dorin Hart makes on a regular basis to the community".

The Event of the Year was the Dorrigo Relay For Life which raised over \$30,000 for cancer research. Planning began in May last year and culminated in 280 representatives in 20 teams walking on a sloppy, miserable field in heavy rain in early November.

The Bellingen High School Student Representative Council received the Community Group Award in recognition of the students who unselfishly gave up their lunch times, recesses and morning for numerous charities.

The Senior Team of the Year was the Dorrigo Fire Brigade. As well as protecting the Dorrigo community, the 14 members of the brigade competed very successfully at State, National and International championships.

In 2009 in Tamworth, the team finished third in the State competing against 60 much larger towns. They went on to represent NSW and Australia in New Zealand where they finished with a silver medal and overall 11th pacing out of 30 teams. They were the number two ranked team in NSW and number 3 in Australia.

The Junior Team of the Year was the Bellingen High School under 16 Futsal Team. The team won the Mid North Coast Zone title, were runners-up in the North Coast Regional Carnival and overall runners-up at the National Carnival, losing the final 4-2 to St Andrews from the Gold Coast.

Outstanding junior lawn bowler, Corey Wedlock was the recipient of the Junior Sportsperson of the Year. He was the first junior to win the Urunga Bowling Club's minor singles title and is the District under 18 singles and pairs champion, a remarkable effort for a 13-year-old.

Congratulations to the award winners.

Citizen of the Year	Dorin Hart
Young Citizen of the Year	Robert Sherrington
Junior Sportsperson of the Year	Corey Wedlock
Team of the Year - Junior	Bellingen High School 16 yrs girls Futsal Team
Team of the Year - Senior	Dorrigo Fire Brigade
Community Group	Bellingen High School Students Representative Council
Community Event of the Year	Dorrigo Relay For Life

Coffs Coast Tourism Marketing Campaign

Coffs Coast Marketing co-ordinated a major tourism marketing campaign in February to help the local industry to recover from the disastrous weather events of March 2009.

The collaborative campaign was between Coffs Harbour City Council, Bellingen and Nambucca Shire Councils, Coffs Coast Tourism Association, Tourism Bellinger and Nambucca Valley Tourism, with many businesses coming on board to support the campaign.

In addition to the NSW State Government funding of \$300,000, the campaign was also funded partly through the Coffs Coast Marketing budget, partly through the Tourism NSW Promotions Fund and partly through the three Coffs Coast councils.

The money put forward from the State Government flood-recovery funding which was required to be used solely for promotion to assist in reinvigorating travel to the region. The wider reach of the campaign included a dedicated website, television advertising, a direct email campaign, print and online advertising and brochures.

Of the \$300,000 committed to the campaign, 67 per cent went to tourism industry bodies on the Mid North Coast while the Northern Rivers industry received the remaining 33 per cent.

Campaign to entice coastal visitors “Time Away? Go the Waterfall Way”

Coffs Coast residents and visitors were invited in the month of February 2010 to spend some Time Away and Go the Waterfall Way.

The invitation was part of a Waterfall Way television marketing campaign, a partnership between Armidale Dumaresq Council, Bellingen Shire Council and Tourism Bellinger, with support from Tourism NSW.

A series of television commercials promoting the region ran in the Coffs Coast area throughout February, showcasing some of the scenery and attractions on the Waterfall Way.

Waterfall Way is a scenic drive that begins in Urunga and finishes in Armidale, taking in Bellingen, Dorrigo, Ebor and Wollomombi and passing some of Australia's most breathtaking National Parks, including New England, Oxley Wild Rivers, Cathedral Rock, Guy Fawkes River and Dorrigo. The drive has made the list of the Top 10 Australia's Greatest Drives by domestic tourism magazine, Australian Traveller.

The campaign slogan, 'Time Away? Go the Waterfall Way', was designed to encourage people to visit the area and enjoy all the region has to offer. The television commercials directed people to a special website containing accommodation, retail and dining offers and there was also a special information number for the campaign.

The aim of the campaign was to encourage people who live in or are visiting the Coffs Coast region to drive the Waterfall Way and stay in Armidale for at least one night, do some shopping and dining out while they are here, then go home and tell their friends and family how wonderful our region is,

Australian Citizenship

Australian citizenship symbolises our unity as a nation. It represents commitment to Australia and its people, the values we share and our common future. It also symbolises the sense of belonging to the country where we have been born or where we have decided to make our home.

Citizenship ceremonies are often presided over by officials including the Australian Governor General, Prime Minister, Government Ministers and local government Mayors.

Citizenship brings with it significant rights and responsibilities, including the right to vote, stand for public office, and travel on an Australian passport. Our rich heritage stems from the contributions made by all who chose to live here.

Council welcomes its 17 new Citizens who received their Australian Citizenship

26 January 2010	Anthony DAVIS	Wai CHEUNG	David NORTON
	Penelope NORTON	Sally PAGULAYAN	Gary PHILLIPS
	Keri PHILLIPS	Poppy PHILLIPS	Summer PHILLIPS
	Renate ROHRL	Rory SCALLAN	Sandra SCALLAN
24 May 2010	Glenda BORSBOOM	Joanna DADD	Stefano GUICCIARRDI
	Jhilmil KAR	Debbie LANCASTER	

Statutory Disclosures

Condition of Public Works [Section 428(2)(d) LGA 1993]

Condition of Public Works - Special Schedule No. 7 (as at 30 June 2010)

ASSET CLASS/ASSET CATEGORY		Written Down Value 30/06/10	Asset Condition 30/06/10 (see code descriptors)	Estimated cost to bring to Satisfactory Standard \$000's	Required Annual Maintenance \$000's	Current Annual Maintenance \$000,s
		\$000's		\$000's	\$000's	\$000,s
Public Buildings	Council Offices	3,519	1	0	25	18
	Works Depot	1,765	4	3,000	50	10
	Emergency Services	1,233	1	0	15	10
	Museum	369	2	0	15	3
	Library	2,013	1	0	15	6
	Childcare Centres	3,140	2	50	20	0
	Parks and Reserves	3,797	3	200	40	110
	Public Halls	1,828	3	75	100	18
	Other	831	2	0	12	16
	Amenities and Toilets	587	3	200	40	50
		19,082		3,525	332	241
Public Roads	Sealed Roads	253,084	4	4,000	790	4,081
	Unsealed Roads	80,057	3	900	250	2,821
	Bridges	18,670	3	700	250	846
	Footpaths	2,588	3	25	6	12
	Kerb & Gutter	7,687	3	100	5	4
	Car Parks	291	3	50	5	7
		362,377		5,775	1,306	7,771
Water	Treatment Plants	1,952	2	0	39	42
	Reservoirs	4,117	3	100	11	4
	Pipelines	18,093	3	500	92	80
	Pump Stations	419	2	0	16	6
		4,581		600	158	132
Sewerage	Pump Stations	2,936	3	250	79	81
	Pipelines	11,086	4	500	75	112
	Treatment Works	4,379	2	0	87	112
		18,401		750	241	305
Drainage Works	All Drainage	14,964	3	280	85	90
		14,964		280	85	90
Total - All Asset Classes		439,405		10,930	2,122	8,539

Notes

- (1) Satisfactory refers to estimated cost to bring the asset to a satisfactory condition as deemed by Council. It does not include any planned enhancements to the existing asset.
- (2) Required Annual Maintenance is what should be spent to maintain assets in a satisfactory standard.
- (3) Current Annual Maintenance is what has been spent in the current year to maintain assets.

Asset Condition Codes (as per NSW Local Government Asset Accounting Manual)

- 1 Near Perfect – ranges from New to Good
- 2 Superficial Deterioration – ranges from generally Good to Fair
- 3 Deterioration Evident – ranges from Fair to Marginal
- 4 Requires Major Reconstruction – ranges from Poor to Critical
- 5 Asset Unserviceable – Critical beyond repair

In assessing the replacement rate of depreciating assets it is important to note that Special Schedule No 7, which is an unaudited statement prepared in conjunction with the financial report, discloses that the estimated cost to bring assets to a satisfactory standard is \$10.93M including \$5.6M for roads and bridges.

Legal Proceedings [Section 428(2)(e) LGA 1993]

In 2009/10 Council's expenditure on legal proceedings was \$24,406 compared to \$9,853 in the previous year. These expenses related to the seeking of legal advice on various matters, the sale and purchase of land, consideration of tenders, road closures and representation of council in third party appeals against council orders.

Matter	Costs \$
Handling of Native Title Claims	375
Advice - Designated Development – Aged Care Facility Raleigh	580
Advice – Industrial Matters	9,791
Lease preparation – Bonville Street Urunga	869
Lease preparation – Lot 1 DP776432 Church Street Bellingen	878
Lease preparation – Oyster Shed on Road Reserve	771
Debt Recovery costs not recoverable	5,218
Local Court proceedings – BSC v Cleary	250
Local Court proceedings – BSC v Johnston	700
Advice – Prohibition on keeping of dogs	1,152
Advice – Use of Service Poles	921
Advice – Billing Cattle Crossing	2,499
Legal Costs Assistance (LGSA) – Berrigan Shire and Murray Shire Councils	402
	\$24,406

Elected Members' Expenses [Section 428(2)(f) LGA 1993]

Mayor and Councillor Fees

The fees payable to the Mayor and Councillors are determined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. Each year the Tribunal reviews the fees payable to the Mayor and Councillors and determines the minimum and maximum fees for each category of Councils.

As at 1 July 2008 there were 152 General Purpose Councils and 16 County Councils. Bellingen Shire Council is classified as a Category 4 Council.

The Tribunal released its determination in respect to fees payable to Mayors and Councillors for 2009/10 on 29 April 2009. The Tribunal considered that an increase of 2.50% in the fees was appropriate. The Tribunal found that there was no strong case to significantly alter the current categories of Councillor and Mayor offices or to move individual Councils between categories. The Tribunal did however apply descriptive titles for each of the categories.

The Tribunal determined the range of fees for Category 4 Councils - Rural to be as follows:
 Mayoral fees – Minimum \$7,480 Maximum \$20,280
 Councillor fees – Minimum \$7,040 Maximum \$9,290

At its Ordinary Meeting held on 22 July 2009 Council considered the Tribunal's report and resolved that the annual fee to be paid to the Mayor be \$20,280 and the annual fee to be paid to Councillors be \$9,290.

The total fees paid to the Mayor and Councillors in 2009/10 was \$85,310 compared to \$81,889 in 2008/09.

Councillor support and expenses

Council has adopted a policy concerning the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to the Mayor and Councillors in relation to the discharging of their civic functions. The policy was reviewed in November 2009. **[See Annexure V]**

A summary of the Councillors' expenses and facilities paid in accordance with the policy during the twelve month period ending 30 June 2010 is as follows:

Expenses	2008/09	2009/10
Attendance at conferences and seminars	\$15,899	\$16,848
Travelling expenses	\$9,568	\$3,131
Councillor support and provision of facilities	\$23,849	\$17,232

Training of councillors and provision of skill development – \$1,127

Overseas visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket expenses – Nil \$

Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a councillor – Nil \$

Senior Staff Remuneration Packages [Section 428(2)(g)]

Council had one Senior Staff position under its structure as at 30 June 2010 that being the General Manager. The total remuneration package of \$158,890 payable to the General Manager included salary, provision of a Council owned motor vehicle and superannuation costs.

Contracts Awarded [Section 428(2)(h) LGA 1993]

Supplier	Contract	Duration of Contract	Contract Sum \$
22 July 2009 Panel Tenderers - Men at Work Traffic Services, Midcoast Traffic Services, Workforce International, Statewide Traffic Control & Clearwater Asset Services	MNCGOC Regional Procurement Initiative – Panel Contract for Supply of Traffic Control Services	1 May 2009 – 31 March 2011 with provision for 12 month extension	Estimated \$340,000 annually
26 August 2009 Panel Tenderers – Thora Road Base Quarry Thora, CEMEX Australia P/L Boambee & Bellinghen, Green Brothers Investments P/L Glenreagh, Tom Jung Quarries Coffs Harbour, Quarry Solutions P/L Valla & High Quality Sands Repton	Panel Contract for Supply of Quarry Materials	1 September 2009 – 30 June 2011	Estimated \$698,500 annually
26 August 2009 Mid Coast Trucks (6) Conplant Ammann Aust (1) Carrington Equipment P/L (1) Komatsu Australia P/L (1)	Purchase of nine (9) Plant items on a trade basis	Supply and delivery	Purchase \$1,219,493 Trade \$267,455 Nett Cost \$952,039
26 August 2009 Nviroscope P/L	Restoration of landslip at Short Street Lane, Bellinghen	2009/10	\$143,000
23 September 2009 Australian Lifeguard Service	Provision of Life Saving Services to North Beach and Hungry Head beaches	Period of four years covering 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12 & 2012/13 Seasons	Estimated \$75,677 annually
16 December 2009 Nviroscope P/L	Rehabilitation of Buffer Creek Bridge on Gordonville Road	2009/10	\$64,900
28 April 2010 Fred Keizer Constructions	Design and Construction of Stage 4 of the Urunga Boardwalk	Project to be completed in 2010	\$360,000

Bushfire Hazard Reduction Activities [Section 428(2)(I) LGA 1993]

NSW Rural Fire Service – Mid North Coast Team

A Service Level Agreement between the Councils and the RFS provides the basis for the management and administration of the RFS and the Bellingen and Coffs Harbour Rural Fire Districts.

As a result of the restructuring and integration of the rural fire districts into a single management area, the activity reports and statistics compiled since 1 July 2005 reflect the performance of the team and all the rural fire brigades collectively.

The team incorporates the local government areas of Bellingen and Coffs Harbour and embraces a total area of 2,779 sq km and encompasses the following areas of fire protection responsibility and jurisdiction:

LGA	Total Area	Rural Fire District	NSW Fire Brigade District
Coffs Harbour	1,176 km ²	1,129.46 km ² (96.04%)	46.54 km ² (3.96%)
Bellingen	1,603 km ²	1,588.88 km ² (99.12%)	14.12 km ² (0.88%)

The team is staffed by 9 full-time paid staff and 1 temporary staff member. There are thirty eight (38) Rural Fire Brigades (17 in Bellingen and 21 in Coffs Harbour) that service the rural areas and villages of the Mid North Coast Team.

Volunteer Strength	Bellingen	Coffs Harbour
Total RFS Volunteers	985	1,363
Total Active Volunteer Fire fighters	417	584

Fire Mitigation and Prevention Activities

Activity	Bellingen	Coffs Harbour
Community Education Activities	7 (650 hours)	5 (560 hours)
79BA Development Applications	24	264
S96 Amendments	3	7
Hazard Complaints	3	10
Fire Permits Issued	207	462
Fire Permit Escapes	2	3
Hazard Reduction Works	15	23
Area of HR work, Burning or Mechanical	1,210.62 ha	2,300.80 ha
Linear kms of Trail Works	271.1 km	213.8 km

The prolonged wet weather reduced the hazard reduction burning across the team area. The emphasis during the year was on properties and their preparation for and prevention of bush fire. This included awareness in whether to stay and defend property or to leave early. Street walks were undertaken in some highly fire prone areas and these were carried out in conjunction and co-operation with the NSW Fire Brigade.

Fire incidents and brigade responses

Incident	Bellingen	Coffs Harbour
Fire Responses	100	300
Motor Vehicle Accident Responses	57	70
Other Responses	32	118
Total Incident Responses	189	488
Volunteer Hours	6,800	12,200

Training and Development

	Bellingen	Coffs Harbour
Training Courses / Activities	68	68
Volunteer Participants	277	553
Volunteer Man Hours	37,672	75,208

The training courses were carried out by a combined training group across the two council areas. Training hours substantially increased from last year as the core subject courses have increased in duration.

Capital Works Program

With the completion of Kalang, all Bellingen District stations have now been upgraded to a minimum level of 2 bay stations. There are several stations such as Glennifer, Fernmount and Hydes Creek that still need minor extensions and improvements to amenities and it is projected that these works will be completed during 2010/11.

In the Coffs Harbour District, Coramba has been completed after extensive delays involving land issues, station design and perceived flood problems. The Fire Control Centre project was completed in August, occupation occurred in September 2009 and the building was officially opened on 1 November 2009.

Coffs Harbour Stations	Station Type	Completion Date
Sherwood Creek	Driveway	May 2010
Corindi/Red Rock	Driveway	May 2010
Boambee	Amenities	June 2010
Coramba	3 bay with amenities	Commenced May 2009 Completion November 2009
Fire Control Centre	Large Control Centre	Commenced November 2008 Completion November 2009
Bellingen Stations	Station Type	Completion Date
North Bellingen	Amenities	May 2010
Kalang	2 bay with amenities	Completion due November 2010

New vehicles for Bellingen included three Command Group vehicles and one Cat 9 for Megan. The delivery of a heavy Cat 1 tanker was delayed due to ADR compliance issues. New vehicles for Coffs Harbour included three Command Group vehicles and one 22 seater bus. Four heavy Cat 1 tankers were also delayed due to ADR compliance issues.

Community Development and Planning Multicultural Services [Section 428(2)(j) LGA 1993]

Based on the 2006 Census statistics, 90% of the Shire's population were born in English speaking countries and 94% of persons over the age of 5, speak English only at home. The population of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent is 2.6%.

While there appears to be no significant need or demand for multicultural programs at the local level, Council does acknowledge that the Shire has some cultural diversity and frames its policies and practices to be flexible enough to accommodate all of its citizens.

Annual financial assistance and in kind support is provided to the Bellinghen Global Carnival, a world music, dance, theatre, electronica and arts festival conducted in Bellinghen each year over the October long weekend.

Council has not undertaken any specific programs in the period to promote services and access to services for people with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Services for the needs of Children and Young People

Council provides the buildings occupied by the Dorrigo Pre-School, Bellinghen Pre-School, Urunga Pre-School, North Bellinghen Children's Centre and the Mylestom Play Group. It is also responsible for the Urunga Neighbourhood Centre, which is the home for some children's services in that town and provides financial assistance to the Dorrigo Playgroup to assist with rent and insurances.

Council provides premises for the Bellinghen Neighbourhood Centre which houses the Bellinghen & Seaboard Youth Services (BSYS). A part-time youth development worker was employed to operate the youth service in Dorrigo until January 2009. This involved organising programs, projects, workshops, & activities for young people on the Dorrigo Plateau and attracting outreach health, employment and educational services for young people. This service is now being auspiced by the Bellinghen Neighbourhood Centre and BSYS.

Council owns and operates branch libraries at Dorrigo, Bellinghen and Urunga which provide extensive services and resources for children, particularly during the annual Book Week. The public have free internet access to computers at each of the libraries and library staff encourages children to use these facilities through the provision of training and the use of volunteers to help young people make best use of the facilities available.

Small donations are made to each of the schools in the Shire to assist with the provision of prizes for annual school presentation functions. Financial assistance is also provided to the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and local Surf Life Saving Clubs on an annual basis.

Council provides playing fields and children's playgrounds in each of the towns in the Shire and in some of the larger rural residential localities. Strategies are also in place to progressively improve children's playgrounds by removal of dangerous equipment and provision of soft-fall areas. Public swimming pools are operated in Dorrigo and Bellingen and are used regularly by young people.

Youth Week is supported through a financial contribution for an Art Competition and co-ordination of some of the activities held during the week. A contribution is also made to match Commonwealth funding for Youth Week activities.

During the year Council also made small contributions to the Australian Breastfeeding Association's Bellingen Babies program and Y2A Power Play project from the Social Plan Committee budget.

Programs to promote services & access for residents

Council continues to support the Bellingen Shire Access Advisory Committee by way of financial assistance and administrative support.

Council's Disability Discrimination Act Action (DDAA) Plan identifies barriers preventing the equitable access to all Council services and facilities and incorporates a comprehensive strategy to remove those barriers.

The new Church Street public toilet facility in Bellingen's CBD includes an accessible toilet and baby change facilities. An accessible toilet for people with disabilities is located in the new Bellingen branch library and external toilet facilities for the disabled are provided in the Council Park.

Council auspices the activities of the Dorrigo Support Centre, which provides services to frail aged and disabled persons on the Dorrigo Plateau.

A mini bus continues to operate on the Dorrigo Plateau for transport of disadvantaged residents and to ensure that Dorrigo's elderly people, those with disabilities and youth have access to services and social activities.

The Mayor participates in a weekly radio session at the local community radio station and Council encourages public participation in its meetings. Hearing loops have been installed in the Council Chambers to assist people with hearing difficulties and the Chambers are accessible by wheel chair.

Council is a participant in the Local Government & Shires Associations "local-e" project that is providing Council with tools that enable staff to manage the content of the web site more effectively. Council hosts the Community Directory on its website which is prepared by the Bellingen Neighbourhood Centre with annual financial assistance being provided by the Council.

Access and Equity Activities

Council is committed to developing a Social Plan every 5 years in co-operation with key stakeholder groups and residents to identify the needs of its community and provide or advocate for appropriate and accessible services and facilities for their benefit. Council can then respond to many of the issues identified in the plan particularly in the building of partnerships, understanding population and demographic trends, ensuring access and equity and improvements to infrastructure. A copy of the Bellingen Shire Social Plan for 2010-2015 is available on Council's website.

A summary of the proposed activities and initiatives in relation to access and equity activities to assist identified groups within the community is undertaken every 12 months and is outlined in Council's Management Plan.

An access and equity activity is defined as one which assists Council to:

- promote fairness in the distribution of resources, particularly for those most in need
- recognise and promote people's rights and improve the accountability of decision makers
- ensure that people have fairer access to the economic resources and services essential to meeting their basic needs and improving their quality of life
- give people better opportunities for genuine participation and consultation about decisions affecting their lives.

Council continues to facilitate and provide administrative support for the Bellingen Shire Access Advisory Committee through its Community Planning Officer. The Advisory Committee meets every month with the meetings being facilitated by the Community Planning Officer. The Committee also includes councillor representation and is consulted by Council's planning professionals regarding access requirements for various Development Applications when a request is made to waive or modify access provision requirements as indicated in Council's Development Control Plan.

Another initiative has been the development of a Development Control Plan to ensure reasonable access for disabled persons to public facilities, developments and open spaces.

The Ian J Cooper Awards are held every two years by the Access Advisory Committee to celebrate International Day of People with Disability. The Awards recognise local businesses for their consideration of people with disabilities.

Council placed a locally made hand crafted bench, designed for people with mobility difficulties, in Maam Gaduying (Meeting Place) Park in May 2010, as a memorial to Ian J Cooper, a founding member of the Access Advisory Committee, to mark the 10th anniversary of his death.

Social Plan Achievements

- \$10,000 allocated to the Social Plan Committee to implement action plan.
- Social Plan Committee auspices a Small Grants Scheme, to assist community groups with projects that address the needs identified in Council's Social Plan for 2010-2015, allocating \$4,000 towards the program.

Small Grants of \$1,300 and \$2,270 were awarded respectively to the Australian Breastfeeding Association Bellingen Babies project and Y2A (Youth to Adults) Power Play, a project for young women. Contributions of \$255 each were also made towards the development of Men's Sheds in Bellingen, Dorrigo and Urunga.

- A contribution of \$2,000 from the Social Plan Committee was made to Y2A towards the establishment of a youth space in Bellingen.
- \$2000 is set aside annually for the refurbishment of playground equipment from the Social Plan Committee budget.
- A NAIDOC celebratory community morning tea was held in Bellingen Library with Local Aboriginal Elders with entertainment provided by Dorrigo singer Barbara Weaver and the Gumbaynggirr Elders Choir.
- Statement of Reconciliation was endorsed by Council in July 2009 and delivered by the Mayor on the 16 December 2009 at a gathering in the Council Park. The Park was also officially renamed "Maam Gaduying" (Meeting Place) as part of the ceremony.
- A recurrent contribution of \$1,000 is made to the Bellingen Neighbourhood Centre to maintain and update the Bellingen Shire Community Directory
- Free use of Council banner poles is promoted to event organisers
- Council maintains ongoing partnerships with Red Cross, Constable Care & NSW Cancer Council to promote health & safety awareness in the community
- A MLAK key system in place for accessible toilet facility
- An ArtAbility exhibition was held in December 2009, to showcase the art of people with a disability throughout the Shire, with the exhibition running for two weeks. A "Meet the Artists" morning tea was also held on 3 December to promote the International Day of People with a Disability.
- Implementation of actions from DDA Plan and issues identified by Access Advisory Committee were addressed
- Ongoing auspice & support for increased disability and aged respite care programs

Community Development Activities

Council employed a part time Dorrigo Neighbourhood Program Co-ordinator to provide information, recruit & train volunteers and coordinate local projects on the Dorrigo Plateau until June 2010, which was funded by a two year grant from the Area Assistance Scheme.

A number of support groups, programs and projects were established through this program, including a U3A group (University of the Third Age) with 123 members, Dorrigo Youth Clinic, Dorrigo Community Plateau Inc, a Tax Help Centre, a Seniors Housing Action Group, a Children's Service Brochure, Hot Milk (a new mother's support group), a Scrabble (social support) group, Life Experience Counts course, a Multicultural cooking course, an ongoing

Youth Mentor training course in partnership with Reconnect and TAFE, and a free counselling service. The Dorrigo Neighbourhood Centre also acted as an agent for BUDs toy library, NILS (No Interest Loans Scheme) and provided referral and information to the isolated community of the Dorrigo Plateau.

Council's Community Planning Officer promoted and co-ordinated the AAS & Community Builder's Funding Program and provided assistance and support to applicants.

Works Subsidised on Private Land [Section 428 (2)(k) LGA 1993]

No Council resolutions were made during the year that have Section 67 of the Local Government Act 1993 implications involving the completion of work on private land either partly or fully subsidised by Council.

Contributions and Donations [Section 428(2)(l) LGA 1993]

Section 356 of the Local Government Act enables Council to make donations or provide financial assistance to community groups. In 2009/10 contributions to community organisations totalled \$39,264.

Council also contributed financially towards the following services:

- NSW Rural Fire Service - \$261,498
- State Emergency Service - \$62,427
- NSW Fire Brigades - \$41,119
- North Beach and Urunga SLSC - \$24,000
- Go Bello Go Sporting Fund - \$1,000

Human Resource Activities

[Section 428(2)(m) LGA 1993]

Overview

The following policies were reviewed and updated in consultation with staff and adopted by Council:

- Code of Conduct – in accordance with Section 440(7) of the Local Government Act
- Recognition of Service Policy
- Workplace Equity and Diversity Plan
- Privacy Management Plan
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Return to Work Policy
- Smoke-Free Workplace Policy

As a result of the recommendations of the Department of Local Government Promoting Better Practice Review (PBPR), a Workplace Equity and Diversity Plan was developed and adopted. This plan is designed to assist Council to meet its EEO requirements. The PBPR also resulted in Council's Privacy Management Plan and Procedures being updated and adopted in order to assist Council meet guidelines for compliance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act (1998) NSW and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW).

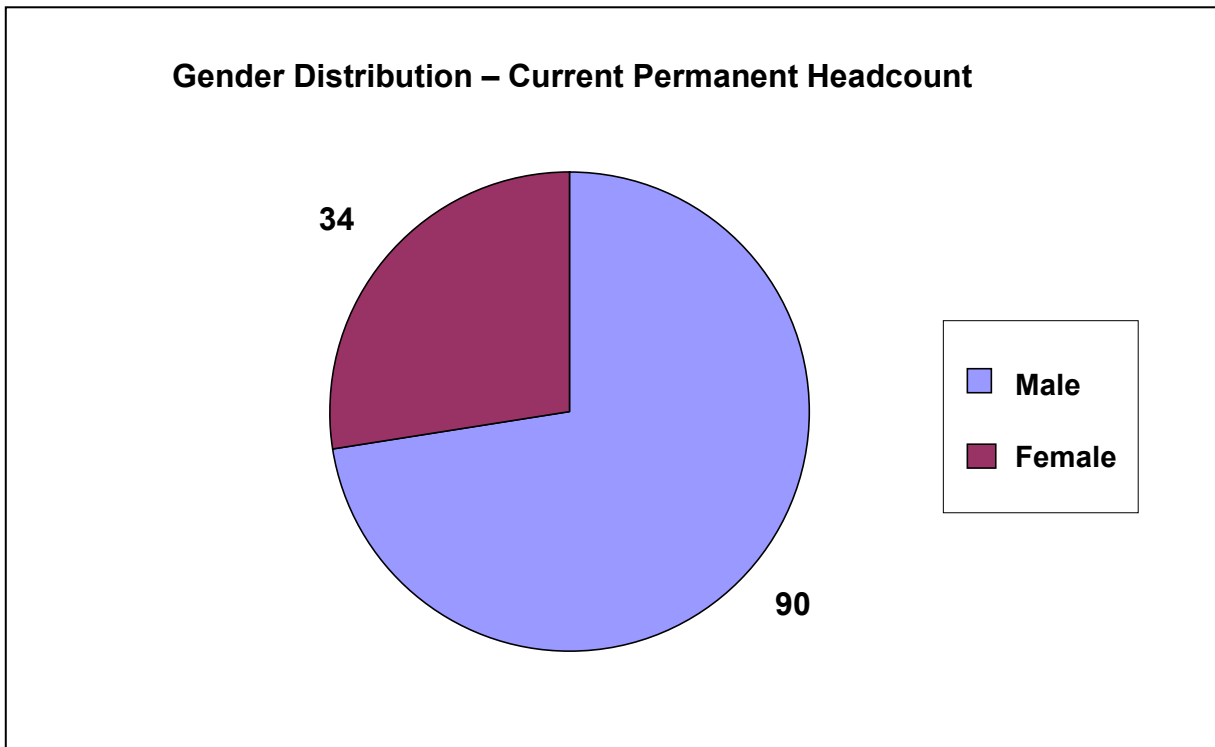
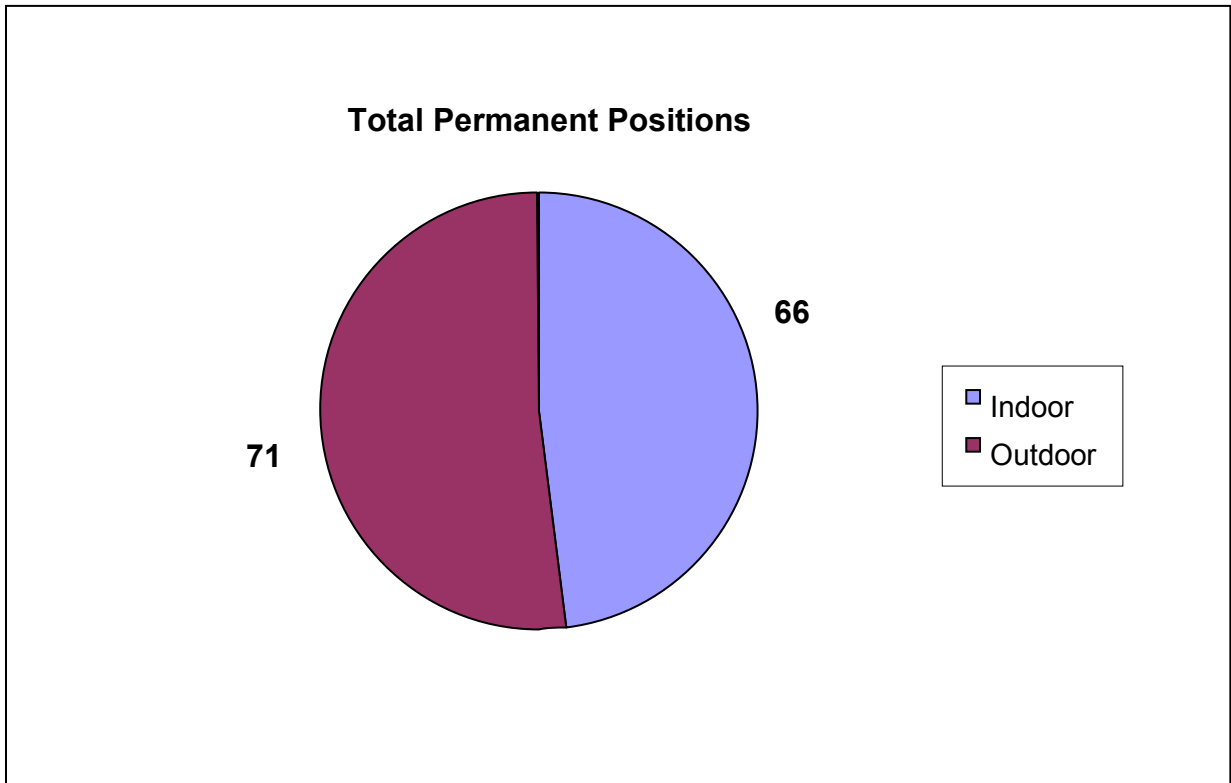
Council increased its support for staff undertaking further study resulting in forty five (45) staff undertaking formal studies at Certificate, Diploma or Tertiary level. Twenty three (23) of these study programs had the associated costs heavily subsidised under the Federal Government Productivity Places Program and eight (8) study programs were fully funded under apprenticeship training.

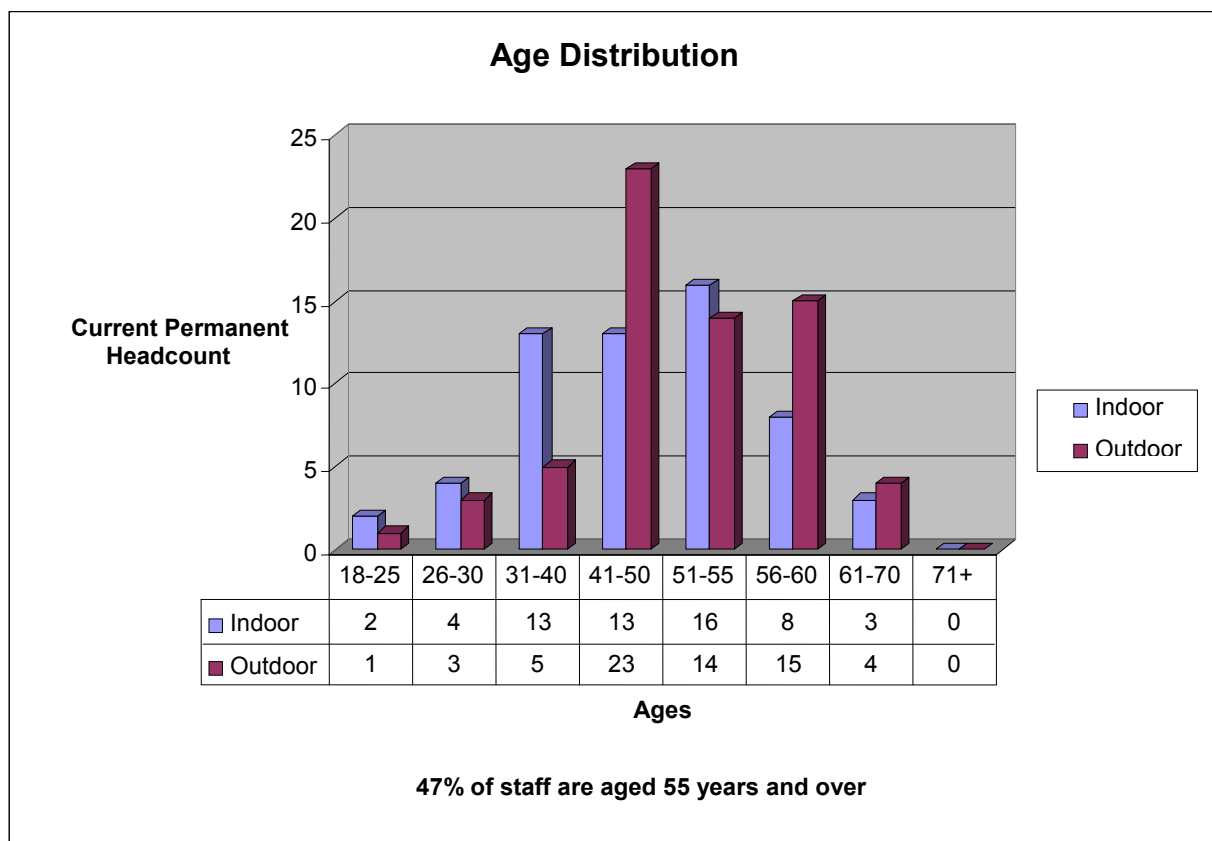
Council also continued its involvement in work experience and traineeship programs designed to assist young people enter the workforce.

An award winning Noise Management Program was developed in collaboration with our Regional Group of Councils with the training piloted at the Council.

Current Staff Employment Statistics (as at June 2010)

Total number of employees on payroll (includes full time, part time, temporary employees, trainees and casuals)	161
Total number of casual employees	23
Total number of temporary employees	14
Total number of permanent positions (includes full time and part time)	137
Total number current permanent headcount	124
Positions vacant	13
Total number of part time employees	16





The ageing workforce has necessitated the development of several Workforce Planning initiatives related to the retention and transfer of knowledge and skills, the feasibility of phased retirement options and the extension of Council’s already successful traineeship program.

Recruitment & Selection

All vacant positions were advertised and filled in accordance with the merit principle, the Local Government Act 1993, the Bellinghen Shire Council Recruitment and Selection Policy and the Workplace Equity and Diversity Plan.

During the year 20 permanent positions were advertised with 11 positions being filled and 9 positions still in the latter stages of recruitment as at the 30 June 2010. Council’s average “time to hire” (i.e. from advertisement to commencement) was 13 weeks.

Staff Turnover

Staff exits from permanent headcount totalled 14 giving a turnover rate of 10.3% (up from 4.3% reported in the previous year). These figures include 2 retirements.

Training and Development

Council’s commitment to employee learning and development was demonstrated in a variety of ways during the year. The Local Government and Shires Association were engaged to provide refresher training for all staff on our Code of Conduct responsibilities, anti-harassment and bullying, and drug and alcohol management. In addition, Council provided training to staff in the following areas:

Code of Practice - Power lines	Financial Planning and Reporting
OHS WorkCover Induction	Integrated Planning and Reporting
Traffic Control Certificate	FBT and HAS
RTA Technical Updates	Report Writing
Manual Handling	English Grammar and Punctuation
Crane & Plant Electrical	Civic View
ChemCert Training	GIPA Act
First Aid	Leadership/Supervisory
Confined Spaces	Conducting Performance Appraisals
Dogging Certificate	Excel and SQL
Activated Sludge	Conflict Management

Staff were also supported in their professional development by attendance at conferences and workshops including:

AIBS State Conference	AIBS Regional Workshop
Rangers Conference	Payroll Taxation Workshop
IPWEA Conference	Flygt Pump Workshop
Water Managers Conference	Civic View Conference

Throughout the year Council supported a total of 45 staff in their formal studies at Certificate, Diploma and Tertiary level. Courses of study ranged from Civil Construction Design, Town Planning, Civil Construction and Water Operations to Finance, Accounting, Business, Management, Front Line Management and Human Resources. Significantly, 23 of these study programs had the associated costs heavily subsidised under the Federal Government Productivity Places Program and 8 study programs were fully funded by the Federal Government under apprenticeship training. Eight (8) employees also undertook the Certificate IV in Training & Assessment. The training was over a duration of six months and involved a number of train the trainer projects.

In addition to the above, 3 traineeships concluded this year – 1 each in Finance, Human Resources and Information Technology. 1 Engineering traineeship is ongoing.

An average of \$948 per head count (including temporary workers) was spent on training and development.

Employee Relations

Council continues to maintain positive working relations with staff. The Staff Consultative Committee & Occupational Health & Safety Committee met regularly throughout the year and worked collaboratively on a number of initiatives including action planning in response to the Staff Survey and developing Customer Service Guidelines.

There were no industrial disputes reported for the year ended 30 June 2010.

Employee Health & Safety

“Safety First” is one of Council’s core values. The well-being and protection of all workers is viewed with the utmost importance. During the reporting year, this commitment to health and safety was demonstrated in the following ways:

- Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) Policy reviewed and adopted
- Return to Work Policy reviewed and adopted
- The provision of specialist in house Return to Work services resulting in over 90% of staff that suffered a work related injury returning to their “usual duties”
- OH&S Consultation process maintained with monthly OH&S Committee meetings and regular workplace inspections being undertaken across all work areas, including road construction sites
- OH&S Induction held monthly for all new staff including Code of Conduct, EEO, anti-harassment and bullying training
- Conducted annual self audit of OH&S System
- Emergency procedures implemented, evacuation plans developed for all staffed facilities and fire wardens trained
- Rolling review program of Safe Work Method Statements continues for higher risk work
- An award winning Noise Management Program was developed in collaboration with our Regional Group of Councils (MIDGOC) with the training piloted at the Council. The program’s goal is to preserve hearing and is aimed at:
 - Increasing awareness about the process of hearing
 - Promoting how Council and employees can work together to minimise exposure to damaging noise levels
 - Reducing noise from machinery
- Skin cancer screening was undertaken during October 2009 with 40 staff taking part. The program receives funding support from Council’s workers compensation insurer and is proposed to be conducted annually.
- There were a total of 26 workers compensation claims during the reporting year, 14 of which resulted in 377 “days lost” to injury. This compares favourably with the previous year where there were a total of 24 claims, 13 of which resulted in 540 “days lost”. The reduction in “days lost” is the result of a more proactive approach to managing and promoting health and safety, including programs to increase safety awareness in the workforce. While there is an increase in premium costs for next year, the cost per employee for workers compensation is decreasing over the long term.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

As part of our health and well-being strategy, Council offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to staff and their immediate family members. The program offers confidential and professional advice, support and counselling on a wide range of issues that can be either personal or work related, including serious problems such as depression, drug and alcohol dependence, anxiety, etc. The program is promoted initially at employee induction training and posters are on display in work areas. Further direct promotion was undertaken during the year including attaching a brochure explaining the service to employee payslips.

During this year a total of 6 employees engaged the services of the EAP (up from 3 users in 2008/09). The employees who utilised this service can be further broken down into 4 male and 2 female.

Activities undertaken to implement Council's Equal Opportunity Management Plan [Section 428 (2)(n) LGA 1993]

As a result of the recommendations of the Department of Local Government Promoting Better Practice Review a Workplace Equity and Diversity Plan was developed and adopted in September 2009. This plan is designed to assist Council to meet its EEO requirements. In addition, Council reviewed and updated its EEO Policy.

Employment of people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Descent

Council's Workplace Equity and Diversity Plan incorporates an Indigenous Employment Strategy. Council has identified one employee who is of indigenous descent. This employee is currently being sponsored to complete a Certificate IV course.

In addition, Council has been in discussion with various employment agencies that specialise in indigenous recruitment strategies for the purpose of increasing our workforce diversity.

Employment of People with Disabilities

Council has not yet employed a staff member with a recognised disability. However, Council has outsourced shredding of confidential documents to Coffs Harbour Challenge, a business staffed by people with disabilities.

Employment of people from Non English Speaking Backgrounds

An individual needs assessment was conducted and customised language support training provided for one staff member.

Flexible employment

Staff continue to be informed of flexible employment options. All requests for part time work post maternity leave have been approved.

Grievances

There were no EEO related grievances during the period.

EEO Committee

Council has a separate EEO Committee that meets on a needs basis to discuss all EEO matters including reviewing relevant policies and procedures prior to them being adopted.

Risk Management Activities

Overview

An external audit of Public Liability was conducted during the year and a framework for improving Council's management processes was established.

Public liability claim costs for the year decreased.

Bellingen, Nambucca and Kempsey Shire Councils were successful in obtaining a joint grant of \$140,000 under the Department of Climate Change - Local Adaptations Pathway (LAP) Program. The grant will assist Council in identifying likely impacts of climate change on Council operations and initiate the development of an Adaptation Plan.

A comprehensive Business Continuity Plan was developed and a desktop trial of procedures was conducted in March 2010.

Risk Management

An external audit of Public Liability was conducted during the year and a framework for improving Council's management processes was established. This framework reviews eight work processes including roads and footpath planning and monitoring, building certificates and applications, information gathering, tree management, and signage. A plan detailing the steps needed to improve these work areas and decrease Council's liability has been developed and is currently being implemented.

Public liability claim costs fell this year from a total annual cost of \$25,524 (2008/09) to \$16,927 (2009/10). There were a total of 44 public liability claims during the year with 32 being declined based on lack of merit or exclusion under the Civil Liabilities Act 2002.

The Department of Climate Change announced that the Local Adaptations Pathway (LAP) was open for grant applications. The LAP Program provides assistance to local government in identifying likely impacts of climate change on Council operations and initiating the development of an Adaptation Plan (which is separate from mitigation measures such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions). Nambucca, Bellingen and Kempsey Shire Councils prepared and submitted a joint grant application under the LAP Program. This application was successful and the joint Council's have received \$140,000 in funding to complete the project. The program commenced with a risk assessment process and has involved community and staff workshops to help identify risks to Council's infrastructure and services. The Adaptation Plan is scheduled for completion towards the end of 2010 and then it will be submitted to Council for adoption.

Business Continuity Plan

A comprehensive Business Continuity Plan has been drafted with extensive input from across Council's operations. A desktop trial of procedures was conducted during March 2010. Feedback from the trial is being incorporated into the draft document. Annual reviews of the Plan are proposed to ensure relevance and adequacy of Council's response to a range of potential business disruptions.

External Bodies Exercising Council Functions [Section 428(2)(o) LGA 1993]

The following external bodies exercised functions delegated by Council during the period.

BODY	FUNCTION
EXTERNAL BODIES	
Clarence Regional Library Committee	Library Service
NSW Rural Fire Service	Rural Fire Services
ADVISORY COMMITTEES	
Local Heritage Advisory Committee	Management of local heritage matters
Environment Advisory Committee	Advise Council on environmental matters
Dorrigo Community Services Advisory Committee	Management of Community Service programs on the plateau
Access Advisory Committee	Advise Council on access matters
Arts & Cultural Advisory Committee	Advise Council on cultural matters
Social Plan Advisory Committee	Preparation of Social Plan and advise Council on matters pertaining to the Plan
Local Traffic Advisory Committee	Advise Council on traffic matters
Coastline & Estuary Management Advisory Committee	Advise Council on environmental matters

LOCAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES (SECTION 355 LGA 1993)	
Tourism Destination Marketing and Development Committee	Destination and Marketing Activities
Australia Day Committee	Australia Day Activities
Dorrigo Community Centre	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
Brierfield Hall	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
Urunga Literary Institute & Senior Citizens Centre	Care, Control and Management of the Centre and the Literary Institute Hall
Dorrigo Saleyards	Care, Control and Management of the Saleyards
Burdett Park, Fernmount	Care, Control and Management of the Park
Urunga Recreation Reserve	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve
Bellinghen Island Reserve	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve
Mylestom Hall	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
Deervale Hall & Recreation Reserve	Care, Control and Management of the Hall & Reserve
Thora Hall	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
Bellinghen Memorial Hall	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
Megan Hall and Recreation Reserve	Care, Control and Management of the Hall and Reserve
Hickory House	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
Bellinghen Citizens Centre	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
Dorrigo Recreation Reserve	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve
North Dorrigo Recreation Reserve	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve
Raleigh Hall & Recreation Reserve	Care, Control and Management of the Hall & Reserve
North Bellinghen Children's Centre	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
Bellinghen Shire Visitor Information Centre, Urunga	Care, Control & Management of the Centre
Bellinghen/Connell Parks	Care, Control & Management of the Parks
Bellinghen Valley Historical Society	Care, Control & Management of the Bellinghen and Urunga Museums

Controlling Interest In Companies **[Section 428(2)(p) LGA 1993]**

Southern Phone Company

Bellingen Shire Council is a shareholder in the company along with 41 other NSW councils.

The company was founded in 2002 with assistance from the Commonwealth Government's Networking the Nation program. Southern Phone is a telecommunications carrier operating a regional broadband network that serves 12 centres in the south east of NSW.

In November 2002 Council resolved to make application to the Southern Phone Company for two shares at \$1 each, being one A Class share and one share in the B to ZZ class. Council's liability is limited to the value of its shares. Should the venture fail there can be no call on shareholders for funds.

Partnerships, Co-operatives and Joint Ventures **[Section 428(2)(q) LGA 1993]**

Coffs Coast Regional Waste Services

In July 2004 Council resolved to participate in the Coffs Coast Regional Resource Recovery Scheme with Coffs Harbour City Council and Nambucca Shire Council.

The project will involve the full recovery and treatment of waste from the three Council areas including collection, recycling and disposal. Putrescible waste from the region will be collected and processed at a waste processing facility at Englands Road, Coffs Harbour. The strategy, although maintaining each Council as a separate entity, will enable a consistent, sustainable and economical approach to waste management in the area.

In accordance with the signed agreement Coffs Harbour City Council administers the contract on behalf of the Councils.

Mid North Weight of Loads Group

Member of the Group which enforces vehicle weight limits to reduce damage to council classified roads and thereby decreasing road maintenance costs.

Regional Procurement Initiative

Council is a participating member with other North coast councils in the Hunter Valley Councils' initiative.

Statewide Mutual Limited

A self-insurance mutual liability scheme aimed at providing members with cost effective public liability, professional indemnity, fidelity guarantee and property insurances and to promote good risk management practices to minimise the occurrence and effect of claims.

StateCover

A self-insurance mutual providing workers compensation insurance for Council.

Amount of Rates & Charges Written Off [Section 428(2)(r) LGA 1993]

The total value of rates and charges written off for the year 2009/10 was \$522,526.04 compared to \$483,003.85 in 2008/09.

ITEM	AMOUNT
Pension Rebates	488,970.97
Rates	13,569.31
Water Rates	2,652.98
Water Usage	9,816.32
Sewerage Rate	2,757.79
Domestic and Commercial Waste	2,893.37
Interest	1,865.30

The total amount of rates and charges written off as pensioner rebates during 2009/10 was \$488,970.97 compared to \$480,198.08 in 2008/09 and \$481,939 in 2007/08.

Overseas Visits by Councillors, Staff and Other Persons while representing Council [General Regulation 2005 Clause 217(1)(a)]

Bellingden Shire Council was not represented at any overseas events in 2009/10.

Planning Agreements Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 Section 93G(5)

Council did not enter into any planning agreements during 2009/10.

National Competition Policy (NCP) [General Regulation 2005 Clause 217(1)(d)]

National competition policy is being applied to government businesses at all levels throughout Australia and Council has adopted the principle of 'competitive neutrality' to its business activities as part of the NCP program.

Competitive neutrality is based on the concept of a 'level playing field' between persons competing in a market place, particularly between private and public sector competitors. Essentially, the principle is that government businesses, whether Commonwealth, State or Local, should operate without net competitive advantages over other businesses as a result of their public ownership.

The underlying philosophy is that a 'level playing field' will enhance competition. Competition can promote greater efficiency and lower costs to government and the community. The government recognises that policies to enhance competition may have social impacts. However, if the application of competition policy is thought to impose net costs on the community, and this is supported by a benefit/cost analysis, then an exemption from the application will be allowed.

In relation to local government, it is accepted that some business activities will have a significant economic impact. The threshold of \$2M annual sales turnover/annual gross operating income has been chosen, in consultation with local government, as a reasonable measure of economic significance for the purpose of applying a corporatisation model and pricing requirements. In these cases, the benefits of applying competitive neutrality are expected to outweigh the costs.

Category 1 Business Activities (Annual Turnover > \$2M)

Bellingen Shire Council Water Supply and Sewerage Services are established as separate Special Rate Funds. As the total annual operating revenues exceed \$2M they are both defined as a "Category 1" Business Unit.

Local Government Water Supply and Sewerage Businesses are permitted to pay an annual dividend from its water supply or sewerage business surplus. The maximum dividend payable for the Water Supply Business in 2009/10 was \$114,885 although no dividend was actually paid, as council does not satisfy the criteria in the Guidelines for Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage. No maximum dividend was applicable for the Sewerage Business.

Category 2 Business Activities (annual Turnover < \$2M)

Council has identified its quarry operations as Category 2 Business Activities as this business has an annual turnover of less than \$2M but the activities are considered to be significant in a local context.

The implementation and application of the NCP guidelines are reviewed annually as part of the process of preparing the financial reports.

NCP Complaints Handling Mechanism

In 1994 a Complaints Policy was adopted and the policy statement was updated in January 1998 to make special reference to Competitive Neutrality Complaints. No Competitive Neutrality complaints were received in the year ended 30 June 2010.

Stormwater Management Services [General Regulation 2005 Clause 217 (1)(e)]

This requirement applies where a Council has levied an annual charge for stormwater management services. It requires a comparison of the actual services made available by the Council during the year (measured in accordance with the criteria set out in the relevant management plan) with the projected services that were proposed to be made available (outlined in the management plan relating to the year concerned), together with a statement of the reasons for any difference between them.

Bellingen Shire Council did not levy an annual charge for stormwater management services in 2009/10.

Companion Animals Act – Compliance Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Clause 217(1)(f)

Ninety six (96) Companion Animals were taken to Councils pound during the year consisting of 88 dogs and 8 cats. Of those animals impounded 65 were released to their owners and 2 were re-homed.

Companion Animals registered in 2009/10 numbered 235 animals compared to 325 animals in 2008/09.

Companion Animal Management Funding

Registration commissions	11,044
Impounding fees, charges & fines	7,251
Total Income	\$ 18,295

State Emergency Services

Introduction

The SES is a community based rescue organisation dedicated to helping the community in times of need following floods, storms and other emergencies. The SES provides qualified volunteers to respond to flood and storm threats, minimise damage to properties, and rescue people who are endangered, trapped or injured. In addition the SES provides assistance to other emergency service agencies including the NSW Police, NSW Fire Brigades, NSW Ambulance Service and the Rural Fire Service. The Local Controller is Craig Wykes.

Membership

Unit	Established	Unit Controller	Membership
Dorrigo – Railway St	1983	Ellie Luhr	24
Bellingen – 19 South St	1960	Toby Cuthel	21
Urunga – 7 Orara St	1970	Merv Rose	24

Training

Training was conducted on all combat roles throughout the year with members contributing numerous hours towards maintaining their qualifications and skills.

Training Course	Urunga	Bellingen	Dorrigo	Total
Maintain Team Safety		6	1	7
General Rescue	6	4	3	13
Communications	7		2	9
Induction		3		3
Storm and Water		8	1	9
Road Crash Rescue	1		2	3
First Aid	16			16
Flood Boat Crew Member		1		1
Working in Operation Centre		1		1
Chain Saw Cross Cut and Limbing			6	6
Chain Saw Felling			3	3
Traffic Control		2		2
	30	25	18	73

Operations

The local units provided a total of 2,866 operational hour's service to the community during 2009/10.

Unit	Tasks	Personnel	Hours
Urunga	39	227	729
Bellingen	28	59	1,635
Dorrigo	17	80	502

Community Service Activities

Support to Council	51
Community Tasks	22
Meetings	28
Working Bees	23
Training	150
First Aid (Training & support to community activities)	20
Total	294

Equipment and Accommodation

The Urunga SES Headquarters was officially opened on Tuesday 20 July 2009 by the Deputy Commissioner of the SES, Mr Dieter Gescke ESM.

In a joint venture with the SES and Council, the HQ was redesigned, extended and refurbished to allow the volunteers to carry out their valuable work for the community when emergencies arise throughout the local area. The new building now has an operations and training room, administration offices, kitchen, disabled shower and toilet, additional storage areas and a refurbished existing toilet area. In addition the HQ has been fitted out with much needed communications and office equipment to allow the volunteers to carry out an operation when required.

The Shire now has three updated SES buildings that are at a level of operational capability that can handle future emergency situations.

Flood & Rescue Boats

The Units now maintain and operate five (5) flood rescue boats. During the year an additional boat was added to the Bellingen Unit and further consideration and planning is under way for a fourth boat to be added to the Unit's fleet of vessels.

Vehicles

The NSW SES has invested large amounts of time standardising plans for purpose built vehicles to better meet the operational needs of the community, the service and the volunteers. The Shire currently has two Category 1 heavy rescue vehicles and four Category 3 vehicles which it operates in the Shire as well as Out of Area operational support

Unit	Make	Type	Purchase Date	Replacement Date	Replacement Cost to Council \$
Dorrigo	Ford Courier	3	July 2005	2013/14	10,000
Dorrigo	Isuzu NPR 450	1	January 2009	2019/20	20,000
Bellingen	Toyota Landcruiser	3	March 2003	2011/12	12,500
Bellingen	Toyota Hilux	3	March 2003	2012/13	10,000
Urunga	Toyota Landcruiser	3	October 2001	2010/11	12,500
Urunga	Isuzu NPR 300	1	October 2000	2010/11	20,000

Flood Planning

The Unit has a current Flood Plan for the Bellinghen LGA which was endorsed by the Local Emergency Management Committee in July 2006. The plan is under review following the major flood events in 2009.

Other Activities

The Units currently assist the local community with activities such as the Bellinghen Jazz Festival, Lions Club Fire Works display, Anzac Day Ceremonies, Toast of Urunga, Carols by Candle Light, Relay for Life, Dragon Boat Races, Global Carnival, Dorrigo Blue Grass Festival, Bellinghen & Dorrigo Shows, Camp Creative, Council Banners, Westpac Helicopter, local schools and Cycle Racing.

Funding and Council Support

In order for the Bellinghen Shire SES to continue to service the growing community as it has for the past 50 years during times of natural and man-made incidents or emergencies particularly flood and storm responses, the SES requires council funding and support to be maintained. The assistance from Council is greatly appreciated and as such the Units are proud to be able to service the Council and community of the Bellinghen Shire.

Financial Management

Financial Statements 2009/10

The Audited 2009/10 Financial Statements and Auditor's Report were presented to the public at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 24 November 2010. A copy of the reports can be viewed on Council's website.

Income Statement

The operating result from all activities increased from a surplus of \$85,000 in 2008/09 to a surplus of \$2.2M in 2009/10. This result includes grants for capital purposes of \$2.4M. The expenditure of these grants is not recorded in this Statement but in the Balance Sheet and when excluded for comparative purposes, the surplus reverts to a deficit of \$219,000 compared to a deficit in the previous year of \$2.19M.

Total income increased by \$3.318M (13.4%) due to a \$2.391M (34.6%) increase in operating grants and contributions. Contributing to this significant increase was the receipt of flood damage repair grants.

Expenses from continuing operations increased by \$1.198M (4.9%), resulting from increases in employment costs of \$674,000 (8.5%), materials and contracts of \$2.177M (30.1%) due to an increase in the level of maintenance work as a result of the 2009 flood events and Other expenses from Ordinary Activities \$364,000 (16.1%).

Council Functions/Activities – Financial Information [Financial Statements Note 2(a)]

Activity	Revenues \$'000		Expenses \$'000		Operating Result \$'000		Assets Held \$'000
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	
Governance	0	0	0	184	0	(184)	0
Administration	128	639	3,401	2,215	(3,273)	(1,576)	23,291
Public Order & Safety	1,029	887	1,200	1,070	(171)	(183)	4,101
Health	78	19	569	361	(491)	(342)	504
Environment	0	2,363	0	3,068	0	(705)	0
Community Services & Education	343	450	450	552	(107)	(102)	4,323
Housing & Community Amenities	2,466	299	3,904	1,198	(1,438)	(899)	18,842
Water Supplies	2,469	2,831	1,766	1,968	703	863	38,045
Sewerage Services	1,937	1,984	1,899	2,215	38	(231)	31,417
Recreation & Culture	196	592	1,375	1,694	(1,179)	(1,102)	21,708
Mining, Manufacturing & Construction	138	95	216	183	(78)	(88)	287
Transport & Communication	1,845	9,338	4,048	10,521	(2,203)	(1,183)	367,928
Economic Affairs	147	204	262	620	(115)	(416)	8,765
Total - Functions	10,776	19,701	19,090	25,849	(8,314)	(6,148)	519,211
General Purpose Revenues	8,293	8,353	0	0	8,293	8,353	0
Total	19,069	28,054	19,090	25,849	(21)	2,205	519,211

Balance Sheet

Cash and Investments as at 30 June 2010 totalled \$30.3M compared to \$28.6M in 2008/09 due to the positive cash flow results from operations (which excludes non-cash expenses such as depreciation and amortisation) offset by the purchase of assets and the repayment of loans during the year.

Receivables decreased by \$1.369M (25.0%) due to an improvement in the collection of outstanding rates and charges and the reduction in grants receivable at year end.

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment increased by \$232.9M (93.1%) mainly due to the revaluation of roads and related infrastructure during the year.

Working Capital

The General Fund Net Current Asset position at year end of \$12.251M is an important financial indicator as it discloses the working capital available to Council to fund day to day operations and finance infrastructure and new community projects.

However included in Current Assets are assets of \$9.733M which are "restricted" by regulation or other externally imposed requirements and therefore are not available for other than their restricted purpose.

After funding General Fund, Water, Sewerage and Domestic Waste internal and external restrictions of \$16.681M, Council has General Funds of \$2.518M to finance working capital needs. This compares to unrestricted funds of \$2.783M in the previous financial year. Net funds after restrictions for Water are \$8.018M, Sewerage \$4.604M and Domestic Waste \$465,000.

Council has internally restricted \$558,000 to fund non-current employee leave entitlements, which represents 23% of current leave entitlements. This funding is considered adequate given that the annual leave component is traditionally provided for in Council's current year budget.

Financial Indicators

The key indicators disclosed in the Financial Statements are:

RATIO	PURPOSE	2010	2009	2008	2007
Unrestricted Ratio	To assess the adequacy of working capital after excluding all restricted assets and liabilities	4.16	3.83	3.14	4.40
Debt Service Ratio	To assess the degree to which revenues are committed to the repayment of debt	1.2%	1.8%	1.0%	1.3%
Rate Coverage Ratio	To assess the degree of dependence upon revenues from rates and annual charges	32.9%	34.8%	41.0%	41.0%
Outstanding Rates %	To assess the impact of uncollected rates and charges on liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts	9.1%	12.3%	11.9%	6.7%
Asset Renewals Ratio	To assess the rate at which assets are being renewed against the rate they are being depreciated.	0.69	0.61	1.21	0.00

The Unrestricted Ratio excludes all current assets and liabilities that are restricted for specific purposes such as water, sewer, domestic waste management and specific purpose unexpended grants & contributions. This ratio is before setting aside cash to fund internal restrictions relative to the general function. The ratio of 4.16 is higher than the 2008/09 Group 11 Councils average ratio of 4.01%. A ratio of 2 or better is generally viewed by the industry as good.

The Debt Service Ratio has decreased due to a reduction in debt servicing costs. The ratio of 1.2% compares with the average of 3.47% for Group 11 Councils and a State average of 4.57% in 2008/09.

The rate coverage ratio shows that 32.9% of the Council's income is derived from rates and charges. This compares to the average of 34.45% for Group 11 Councils and a NSW State average of 47.24% in 2008/09.

The Outstanding Rates and Charges ratio of 9.1% is a 26% improvement on the previous year, however it is considered too high and reflects the delay in debt recovery action. The Group 11 Councils ratio was 8.16% and the NSW State average was 5.4% for 2008/09.

The Asset Renewals Ratio is a new ratio established by the Department of Local Government from 2006/07 and is aimed at assisting readers of the financial statements to assess Council's performance in respect to the renewal of its infrastructure assets against the level of infrastructure asset deterioration, as represented by the depreciation expense. The ratio for 2009/10 highlights that Council expended about 69 cents on asset renewals for every \$1 of estimated reduction in asset condition for the same period. In essence the overall infrastructure has deteriorated during the year.

Overall the financial indicators show that Council's financial position is sound.

Special Variations in General Income

Road Levy

The ordinary rates include a 5.00% Road Levy which was approved by the Minister in 1996/97. The Levy applies to all rateable land within the Shire. The income generated in 2009/10 amounted to \$237,285 and the balance of the internal restriction as at 30 June 2010 was \$518,077.

Projects funded in 2009/10 were the Little Murray Bridge Deck Replacement \$160,151, Pipeclay Bridge Safety Fencing \$37,991 and additional road maintenance of \$150,000.

Your Environmental Levy at Work

In July 2005 Council received Ministerial approval for a special variation in general income of 4.0% to introduce an Environmental Levy to help fund environmental projects. The income generated in 2009/10 amounted to \$199,319 and the balance of the internal restriction as at 30 June 2010 was \$208,986. Council has established an Advisory Committee to identify and prioritise projects.

Projects	Exp 2009/10	Exp 2008/09	Exp 2007/08
Urunga Lagoon - Boardwalk extension			15,108
Riverbank Improvements - Mylestom retaining wall Stage 1			40,416
Noxious Weed Control - tree removal on roadsides			9,765
Noxious Weed Control – Urunga Lagoon		16,796	828
Water Quality monitoring and assessment of Bellinger and Kalang Rivers	14,370		4,151
Water Quality monitoring – Man Arm Creek		2,472	
Dangar Falls Project - control of weeds for rainforest remnant protection		7,200	7,445
Jarrett Park riverbank restoration on south western side of river			89,423
Funding program for community groups to undertake environmental projects	23,607	15,990	41,254
Administration support costs		241	7,885
Pedestrian and Mobility Plan (PAMP)	60,000		34,984
Contribution to DPI testing Kalang River		10,000	
Bellingen Island Reserve – bush regeneration	17,386	12,272	
River Keeper contribution		30,000	
Estuary Erosion Study	27,158		
Ecosystem Health Monitoring	21,600		
Dangar Falls Pathway Upgrade	14,616		
Sustainability Projects	8,698		
Coastal Planning	2,063		
Weed Tree Removal on Roads	1,470		
Improving Stormwater Management	430		
Total	\$191,398	\$94,971	\$251,259

Access to Information

Section 12 LGA 1993

Members of the public are entitled to have access to the majority of council documents and inspection is generally free, although you may have to pay reasonable photocopying charges if you want to have your own copy.

Section 12 LGA 1993 specifies which council documents must be available free of charge for people to inspect at council offices during business hours. These documents include:

- council codes, plans, policies and reports
- registers and returns
- agendas, business papers and minutes
- planning and development documents

Many of these documents are available on council's website.

Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 1989 Statistical Report

The Freedom of Information Act 1989 can also be used to access council documents. In 2009/10 Council received three (3) requests for access to information under the Freedom of Information Act. In comparison Council received two (2) applications in 2008/09, three (3) applications in 2007/08 and one (1) application in 2006/07.

Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act (PPIPA)

When accessing council documents you need to be aware of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, which helps to protect personal information and the privacy of individuals. Council has complied with the Act by developing a Privacy Management Plan and ensuring that staff are aware of the requirements regarding public access to information.

No reviews were conducted as provided for under Part 5 of the Act.

Part II

Audited Financial Reports [Section 428(2)(a) LGA 1993]

The Reports were adopted on 24 November 2010 and a copy of the Financial Statements, including the Auditor's Report, can be accessed on Council's website.

Part III

Principal Activities [Section 428(2)(b) LGA 1993]

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, quarterly Management Plan reviews are presented to Council on each Principal Activity. The "Year in Review" section provides a snapshot of the achievements during the reported year.

Part IV

State of the Environment Report 2008/09 [Section 428(2)(c) LGA 1993] [General Regulation 2005 Clauses 217(2) and 218-226]

The State of the Environment Report (SoE) was presented to Council on 24 November 2010 and establishes a range of environmental performance indicator data.

The Comprehensive SoE Report can be viewed on Council's website.

www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au

Part V

Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Mayors and Councillors Policy [Section 252 LGA 1993]

Objective

The objective of the policy is to ensure Council complies with the provisions of Sections 252 and 253 of the Local Government Act 1993, Clause 403 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, Councils Code of Conduct and the Guidelines released by the Department of Local Government (October 2009) concerning the payment of expenses incurred or to be incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and Councillors in relation to discharging the functions of Civic Office.

[Note: This policy excludes annual fees paid to the Mayor and Councillors under sections 248-251 inclusive of the Local Government Act.]

Policy Statement

In accordance with Section 252 of the Local Government Act, Council will pay expenses incurred or to be incurred, and provide facilities for, the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and Councillors to enable them to discharge their functions of Civic Office.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is accountability and transparency in the reimbursement of expenses incurred or to be incurred by Councillors. The policy also ensures that the facilities provided to assist Councillors to carry out their civic duties are reasonable.

Application

This policy applies to the Mayor and Councillors of Bellingen Shire Council.

General Conduct

Councillors must act lawfully, honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence in carrying out their functions under the Local Government Act or any other Act. This is required under section 439 of the Local Government Act and reinforced in the Model Code of Conduct made under section 440.

Use of Councils Resources

Councillors should be mindful of the provisions in the Bellingen Shire Council Code of Conduct about the use of council resources to ensure that councillor expenses and facilities are not used inappropriately.

The Bellingen Shire Council Code of Conduct provides that council resources must be used ethically, effectively, efficiently and carefully. Council property including intellectual property, official services and facilities must not be misused by any person or body for private benefit or gain. Councillors must also avoid any action or situation that could create the appearance that council resources are being used inappropriately.

A person's re-election is considered to be a personal interest. Official council material such as letterhead, publications, websites as well as council services and forums must not be used for such personal interests. Situations in which the appearance may be given that these are being used for such purposes are also to be avoided.

The fundraising activities of political parties, including political fundraising events, are considered to be personal interests. In accordance with the Department of Local Government Guidelines Councils should not pay expenses or provide facilities to councillors in relation to supporting and/or attending such activities and events.

In circumstances where it is appropriate for councillors to give a gift or benefit (for example, on a council business related trip or when receiving visitors), these gifts and benefits should be of token value and in accordance with the Bellingen Shire Council Code of Conduct.

Private Benefit

Councillors should not obtain private benefit from the provision of equipment and facilities, nor from travel bonuses such as 'frequent flyer' schemes or any other such loyalty programs while on council business. However it is acknowledged that incidental use of council equipment and facilities may occur from time to time. Such incidental private use is not subject to a compensatory payment back to council. Councillors should not obtain more than incidental private use of facilities.

Where more substantial private use does occur the Act provides that a payment may be made to cover the level of that private use (refer s252 (2)).

Payment of expenses – General Provisions

General expense allowances:

In accordance with clause 403 of the Regulation councillor expenses and facilities policies must not include provision for a general expense allowance. A general expense allowance is a sum of money paid by a council to a councillor to expend on an item or a service that is not required to be receipted and/or otherwise reconciled according to a set procedure and within a specific timeframe.

It is not appropriate or lawful for council to pay general allowances unrelated to actual expenses incurred and which are designed to supplement councillors' annual fees

Payment of expenses generally allowances and expenses:

Expenses and costs incurred by Councillors will only be reimbursed in accordance with this policy. Councillors must make a claim for reimbursement of expenses in accordance with this policy within **one** month following the incurrence of the expense. In the event that no expenses have been incurred a "NIL" return is to be completed for record keeping purposes.

Reimbursement and reconciliation of expenses:

Where all the expenses of discharging the functions of Civic Office on approved Council business are not paid for in advance by Council, in accordance with this Policy, the

Councillor shall:

1. Retain all documentation substantiating the incurring of such expenses.
2. Complete claim forms for all expenses incurred and attach all documentation.
3. Lodge claim form for payment with the Director of Corporate Services within one month after the completion of the specific Council business.

Incidental expenses may not require specific receipts provided it can be demonstrated that expenditure was incurred and is not general in nature. Where receipts are not required it would be appropriate for councillors to certify that the expenditure was for the purpose intended. The level of supporting documentation should be commensurate with the nature of expenditure. For example expenditure on parking, tolls, refreshments and the like may only require a signed statement listing the payments.

[Note: Councillors can only receive reimbursement for expenses when the expense is identified by this policy. No general expense is allowed.]

Payment in advance:

Councillors may request payment in advance in anticipation of expenses to be incurred in attending conferences, seminars and training away from home. Councillors may also request an advance payment for the cost of any other service or facility covered by this policy. However, Councillors must fully reconcile all expenses against the cost of the advance as soon as possible following the incurrance of the expense.

Requests for payment in advance should be made to the General Manager or the Director of Corporate Services.

Establishment of monetary limits and standards

Identifying and publishing monetary limits allows members of the public to know the expected cost of providing services to Councillors and to make comment during the public consultation phase of making or amending the policy. It also avoids situations where Councillors incur costs that are unforeseen or considered unreasonable by other Councillors and the public.

Subsequently, where practical and appropriate, this policy sets out the monetary limits for all the expense provisions available to Councillors, as well as the standards for the provision of equipment and facilities provided to Councillors. The total costs associated with the implementation of this Policy are set out in the Annual Management Plan and the Annual Report.

Approval arrangements

Approval for discretionary trips and attendance at conferences and the like, should be where possible, approved by a resolution of the Council. If this is not practicable then the approval should be given jointly by the Mayor and the General Manager. If the Mayor requires approval it should be given by the General Manager.

Spouse and partner expenses

Council will, in limited circumstances, reimburse Councillors for expenses incurred by the Councillor for their spouse, partner or accompanying person in the performance of his or her official duties. An accompanying person is considered to be a person who has a close personal relationship with the Councillor and/or provides carer support to the Councillor.

Council will reimburse the reasonable costs of spouses and partners or an accompanying person for attendance at official council functions that are of a formal and ceremonial nature, are within the local government area, and where there is a reasonable community expectation that the Councillor's spouse, partner or accompanying person will attend. Examples could include Australia Day ceremonies, Citizenship ceremonies, civic receptions and charitable functions for charities formally supported by Council, service club annual changeover functions, awards nights, such as business awards, and debutant balls where generally partners are invited and the Mayor or Councillor attends as representatives of the Council.

Council will also reimburse the reasonable expenses incurred by the spouse, partner or accompanying person of the Mayor, or a Councillor when they are representing the Mayor, when they are called on to attend an official function of Council or carry out an official ceremonial duty while accompanying the Mayor outside of the Council area, but within the State. Examples could include charitable functions to which the Mayor has been invited and award ceremonies and other functions to which the Mayor is invited to represent the Council.

Council will not reimburse any expenses incurred by a Councillor's spouse, partner or accompanying person when they are accompanying a Councillor to a conference, seminar or the like. An exception to this is the NSW Shires Association (LGSA) annual conference, where Council will reimburse the cost of registration and the official conference dinner incurred by Council's elected delegates' spouse, partner or accompanying person when accompanying a Councillor to this conference. Expenses incurred by a Councillor's spouse, partner or accompanying person, where this Councillor is only attending the LGSA annual conference as an observer will not be reimbursed by Council.

The payment of expenses for spouses, partners or accompanying persons for attending appropriate functions as permitted above is limited specifically to the ticket, meal and/or the direct cost of attending the function. Council will not reimburse peripheral expenses incurred by spouses, partners or accompanying persons such as transport, special clothing or grooming.

Specific Expenses for Mayors and Councillors

Conference, Seminar and Training Expenses

Council will be responsible for the expenses of the Councillors attending conferences, seminars, training, meetings and official engagements and functions, where the Councillor has been duly authorised by the Council or is deputising for the Mayor.

Council will meet the direct costs associated with the conference, seminar, training course and the like. These costs may include registration fees, travel costs, accommodation, official lunches and dinners, and associated tours where they are relevant to the business and interest of Council.

Council will also be responsible for meals not included in the conference fee for attendance by Councillors at these functions. A maximum daily allowance (refer **Table 1**) will be reimbursed for expenses claimed under this provision.

Councillors wanting to attend conferences, seminars, training courses and the like will be required to make an application for approval. Applications are to be submitted on the prescribed form. Attendance at these functions is subject to annual budget limits.

Travelling Expenses

General travel arrangements:

All travel by councillors should be undertaken by utilising the most direct route and the most practicable and economical mode of transport subject to any personal medical considerations.

Interstate and Overseas Travel:

Any travel by Councillors interstate must be approved by the Mayor.

Council may be responsible for the costs incurred by Councillors for overseas travel if the requirements of Council Policy are met. In particular such travel is subject to budgetary constraints and approval at an open Council meeting following consideration of the costs and benefits to the community.

Applications for interstate travel should include full details of the travel, including itinerary, costs and reasons for travel.

Application for overseas travel should include detailed proposals of the nomination of the Councillors undertaking the trip, purpose of the trip and expected benefits. The duration, itinerary and approximate total costs of each overseas trip should also be provided. Overseas travel must be approved on an individual trip basis by a meeting of the full Council.

Council provided vehicle:

Councillors will be entitled to travel to conferences, seminars, meetings and official engagements and functions, where the Councillor has been duly authorised by the Council or is deputising for the Mayor, at the expense of the Council, by Council vehicle, unless specifically authorised otherwise.

When a Council vehicle is allocated to a Councillor for use on Council business, only a Councillor, a staff member or a licensed driver authorised by the Councillor should operate the vehicle.

Where a Council vehicle is provided, Council shall reimburse the Councillor for any incurred fuel, parking fees, or similar vehicle costs.

Any traffic or parking fines incurred while travelling in a private or Council vehicle on Council business is the responsibility of the person driving at the time of the offence, Council will not reimburse any of these costs.

Provision of own motor vehicle:

Where a Councillor is required to utilise his/her own private vehicle in connection with approved Council business, he/she will be paid a rate per kilometre equivalent to the appropriate engine capacity rate as contained in the Local Government (State) Award 2007.

Any expenses claimed in excess of this amount require authorisation from the Mayor and the General Manager. Examples where this may be necessary are for attendance by Councillors at routine meetings, or where a Councillor is unable to access a Council vehicle and is required to utilise their private vehicle to travel long distances for conferences or training seminars.

Where a Councillor's private vehicle is utilised Council shall reimburse the Councillor for any incurred parking fees and/or RTA Tollway fees. Where a Councillor is required to use their own vehicle, they should advise their comprehensive insurance provider that the vehicle will be used on council business.

Meals and Beverage Expenses

Council will provide food and beverage at Council and Committee meetings.

Care and other related Expenses

Council will reimburse Councillors the reasonable cost of carer arrangements, including childcare expenses and the care of elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family members of Councillors, to allow Councillors to undertake their functions of Civic Office.

The provisions for these expenses are as follows:

- a) Childcare expenses for children up to and including the age of 16 years are payable when a Councillor attends:
 - i. Council meetings, inspections, formal briefing sessions and civic or ceremonial functions convened by the Mayor or Council;
 - ii. Committee meetings,
 - iii. Meetings scheduled by Council or the Mayor;
 - iv. Meetings arising as a result of a Councillor being appointed by Council to an outside body or committee; or
 - v. A meeting or function or other official role as a representative of Council or the Mayor.

- b) Expenses are paid to registered carers or approved child care services up to one hour before and one hour after such functions set out above (based on advertised starting time).
- c) A maximum monthly amount as set out in **Table 1** will be paid in accordance with this provision.
- d) Claims are to be submitted, with necessary documents such as tax invoices or where required doctor's certificate or the like, to the General Manager or the Director of Corporate Services within one month after the occurrence of expenses under this provision.

Reasonable Legal Expenses

Council may reimburse reasonable legal expenses in the following circumstances:

1. A Councillor defending an action arising from the performance in good faith of a function under the Local Government Act (section 731 refers); or
2. A Councillor defending an action in defamation provided the statements complained of were in good faith in the course of exercising a function under the Act; or
3. A Councillor for proceedings before the Local Government Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal or an investigative body provided the subject of the proceedings arises from the performance in good faith of a function under the Act and the Tribunal or investigative body makes a finding substantially favourable to the Councillor.

Expenses are not covered in relation to proceedings arising merely from something that a councillor has done during his or her term in office. Also Council will not meet the costs of a Councillor seeking advice in respect of the Councillor taking possible defamation action, or in seeking a non-litigious remedy for possible defamation. (DLG Circular 05/08)

Insurance

Council will provide all Councillors with Personal Accident Cover, Councillors' & Officers' Liability Insurance and other appropriate insurance cover required in the discharge of their official duties.

Provision of Facilities - General provisions

Provision of facilities generally

Council will provide facilities to support the Mayor and the Councillors to undertake their functions of Civic Office.

Use of Council resources

Use of Council resources is subject to provisions of the Code of Conduct and Council's Policies.

Council facilities, equipment and services are not to be used to produce election material or for any other political purpose.

Return of facilities

At the end of involvement with Council, all property of the Council must be delivered to the

General Manager.

Council may provide Councillors with the opportunity to purchase Council equipment previously allocated to them at the cessation of their duties. If Council makes available such an option, the item for sale should be purchased at an agreed fair market price or written down value.

Private use of equipment and facilities

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Councillors must use Council resources ethically, effectively, efficiently and carefully in the course of Councillors undertaking their public duties, and must not use them for private purposes unless this use is lawfully authorised and proper payment is made where appropriate.

Councillors should not generally obtain private benefit from the provision of equipment and facilities, nor from travel bonus or any other loyalty schemes. This does not apply to activities undertaken for private purposes and paid for by the Councillor (For example frequent flyer points or fly-buys obtained as a result of private travel funded by the Councillor).

Provision of Equipment and Facilities for Councillors

Council will provide the following facilities to the Mayor and Councillors to support them to undertake their functions of Civic Office.

Stationery

Council will provide, upon request, the following stationery to Councillors to be used only on Council business:-

- a) Writing Pads
- b) Envelopes
- c) Paper
- d) Business Cards
- e) Writing Pens
- f) Diary
- g) Postage for associated mailing of official correspondence.

Administration Services

Council will provide an administrative service to all Councillors to facilitate the discharge of functions of Civic Office.

Corporate Dress

Council will provide Councillors with a Bellingen Shire Council name badge.

Resource Centre

Council will provide an office suite, "Councillors Room" located in the Administration Centre, available to Councillors.

Information Technologies and Resources

Council may provide resources in accordance with Council Policy - Computer & Information Technology Use. The use of such equipment, if provided, is to be in accordance with the Policy.

The resources are currently defined as computer equipment, including personal computers, scanners and printers, including those connected to any council network, email, facsimiles,

internet, intranet, mobile telephones, pagers, telephones, two way radios, digital cameras and blackberries.

Access to these facilities may be provided in Councils offices. Also the following items may be provided in the Councillor's place of residence for use on Council business and that all associated costs/rentals be paid by Council. Such resources shall remain the property of the Council. These items include a multifunction fax/copier and internet connection.

Provision of Additional Equipment and Facilities for Councillors

In addition to the facilities, equipment and services provided to Councillors the following additional facilities will be provided to the Mayor:

Mayoral Motor Vehicle

The Mayor will be provided with a fully maintained motor vehicle to discharge the function of Civic Office and the performance of Council business. The vehicle will be of an appropriate standard as agreed by the Mayor and the General Manager.

The vehicle shall always remain the property of the Council. The Mayor will be entitled to use the motor vehicle for purposes other than the discharge of functions of the Civic Office and the performance of Council business. Fees payable to the Mayor will not be reduced for any private benefit gained from the private use of the vehicle.

The Mayor is entitled to authorise any licensed driver to drive the Mayoral vehicle. Communication facilities will be included with the vehicle for use on Council business and will remain the property of the Council. The Council will pay associated costs/rentals.

Council shall reimburse the Mayor for any incurred fuel, parking fees, or similar vehicle costs.

Resource Centre

Council will provide a furnished office suite, "Mayor's Room" located in the Administration Centre, available to the Mayor.

Information Technologies and Resources

The Mayor will be provided with information technologies/resource to be used at the Administration Centre, or any location, which the Mayor may decide, with all costs being paid by Council. The Mayor will be given access to all Council data and be subject to access and usage protocols observed by all users of Council's computer system.

Council will provide the Mayor with appropriate communication facilities (For example mobile phone, Blackberry or similar) with a monthly usage limit as set out in **Table 1**. Amounts exceeding this limit should be advised to the General Manager.

The use of such equipment, if provided, is to be in accordance with the guidelines set out in Council Policy - Computer & Information Technology Use.

Reporting Requirements

Sections 428 (2) (f) and (r) of the Local Government Act 1993 requires a Council to include in its Annual Report:

- i. Total amount of money expended during the year on Mayoral Fees and Councillor Fees;
- ii. Council's policy on the provision of facilities for, and the payment of expenses to Councillors;
- iii. Total amount of money expended during the year on providing those facilities and paying those expenses.
- iv. Such other information the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 may require.

Section 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 requires Council to include in its Annual Report:

- Details (including the purpose) of overseas visits undertaken during the year by councillors, council staff, or other persons representing the council (including visits sponsored by other organisations);

At the time of preparing this policy the Guidelines released by the Department of Local Government advised that amendments were being proposed for Section 217 of the Regulations. The proposed amendments would require Council to include additional information in its Annual Report. The Guidelines recommend the following approach be undertaken until amendments are proclaimed:

Councils are required to report separately on the total cost of expenses and the provision of facilities for the Mayor and all Councillors, as well as the following:

Expenses

- the cost of phone calls including mobiles, home located landlines, facsimile and internet services
- spouse/ partner/ accompanying person expenses
- conference and seminar expenses
- training and skill development expenses
- interstate travel expenses
- overseas travel expenses
- care and other related expenses

Provision of facilities

- The cost of the provision, including rental, of dedicated office equipment allocated to councillors on a personal basis such as laptop computers, mobile phones, telephones and facsimile machines and internet installed in the councillors' homes.

- In addition to the statutory reporting requirements, councils should report other costs where these are significant. For example, councils should report the cost of the provision of facilities and equipment where such provision is above what would normally be required for the day-to-day running of the council.

Legislation

Local Government Act 1993 – Sections 23A, 252-254 and 428

Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 – Sections 217 and 403

Other Government Policy Provisions

- DLG Guidelines for payment of expenses and provision of facilities
- Code of Conduct
- DLG Circulars to councils
- ICAC publications
- Council policies

Table 1

Clause	Description	Amount
8.1	Conference, Seminar and Training Expenses	\$77.00 per day
8.4(c)	Care and other related expenses	\$206.00 per month
11.3	Provision of additional information technology equipment and resources for the Mayor	\$77.00 per month (maximum)

[Note: The amounts shown in this table are to be indexed from 1 July annually in line with the current inflation rate]

[The Policy was adopted by Council on 28 October 2010. Council did not give public notice of the changes to the policy as the amendments were not substantial]