

Annual Report

2023 to 2024

Looking **ahead.**

GUUDJI YIIGU

(GOO-JEE IK-KOO)

We welcome you to Port Stephens – part of the Worimi Aboriginal Nation. Port Stephens Council acknowledges the Worimi people as traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waterways on which we all live, learn, work and play.

We value and respect the Worimi people and the legacy 60,000 years of Aboriginal Nation traditions and culture brings with it. As part of Council's culture of acceptance, diversification and harmony we walk alongside the Worimi people on a journey of listening and learning.

Together we will strive to make this a better place for all people. As guardians of these lands, we ask that you tread lightly to help preserve the biodiversity and respect those who came before as well as those who will follow.

Artwork by Regan Lilley.



Welcome to the 2023-2024 Port Stephens Council Annual Report.

This report is designed to show you our highlights, challenges and performance between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024. It also provides a guide for the year ahead.

We're committed to transparent reporting and an accountable process. We want our community to understand the organisation, our opportunities and constraints and help guide decision making. The report takes a plain English, honest and authentic approach.

Volume 1

OPERATIONS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

for the year together with statutory and governance information.

Read these 3 sections for general information about our Local Government Area and Council.

1

Our Port Stephens

2

Our Year in Review

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Our Leadership

Jump to this section to read stories that highlight our achievements across the 4 main focus areas as identified in the Port Stephens Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032: Our Community | Our Place | Our Environment | Our Council.

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Our Performance

These 2 sections contain information that we're required to include by regulation and supplements information provided elsewhere in the report.

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Statutory Statements

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Volume 2

CONTAINS OUR AUDITED FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

If you love to look at finances displayed in spreadsheet style tables, then this volume is for you.

It outlines our audited financial accounts including performance, financial position and cash flows for the financial year ended 30 June 2024.

Volume 3

CONTAINS OUR PORT STEPHENS 2021-2024 REPORT

Reflecting on the journey over the previous 3 years, considering the challenges and opportunities experienced along the way.

We use the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework in the Local Government Act 1993 to regularly report on our progress towards implementing our Delivery Program 2022 to 2026. This Annual Report is the second year of our Delivery Program 2022 to 2026 following Council's adoption on 28 June 2022 of the Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032, Delivery Program 2022 to 2026, Operational Plan 2022 to 2023 and Resourcing Strategy 2022 to 2032.

You can read these full reports at portstephens.nsw.gov.au

We acknowledge the Worimi people as the traditional custodians of this land.

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This report has been prepared in line with Section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 and Section 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

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Our favourite stories

Read our favourite stories that highlight key achievements across the 4 main focus areas as identified in the Port Stephens Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032: Our Community, Our Place, Our Environment, Our Council.



Building a healthy and happy community

54



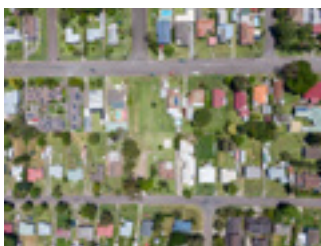
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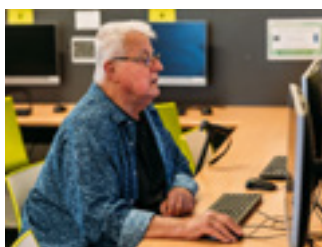
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Our Port Stephens

Section 1

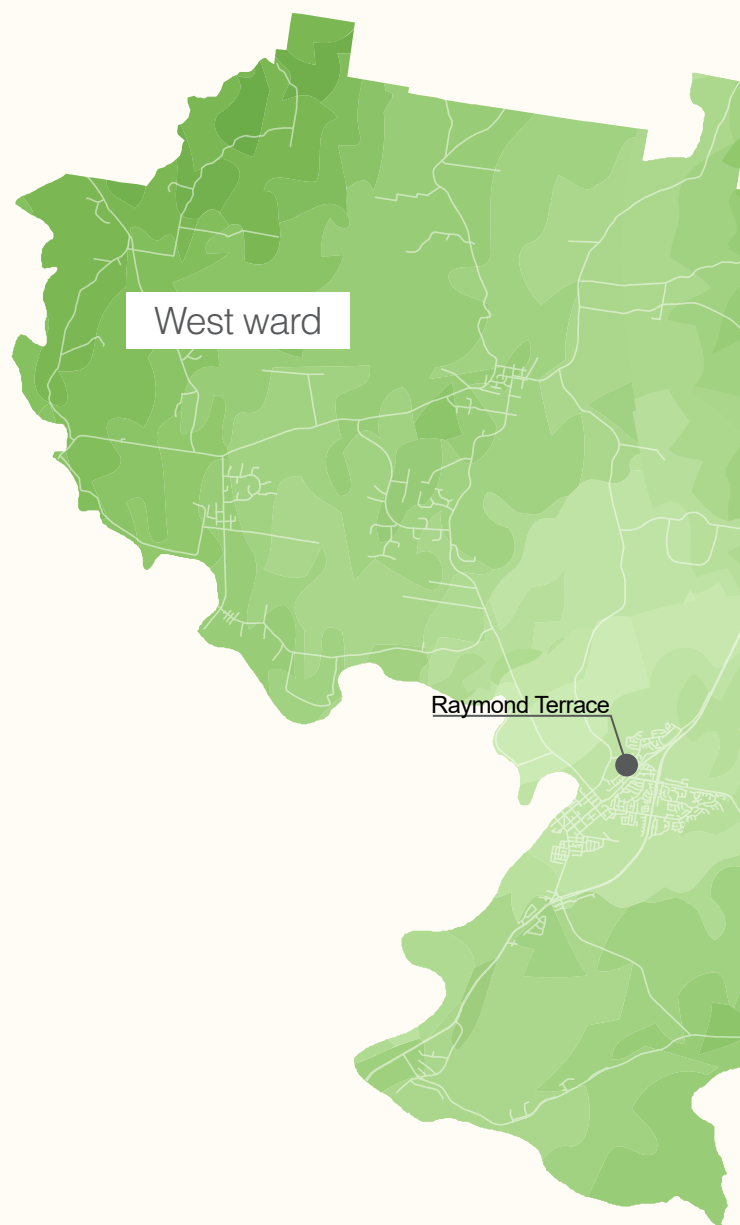
This section includes an overview of Port Stephens history, our population, economy, location and our people.

06 | Port Stephens snapshot

- Our location
- Our Council
- Our people
- Our economy
- Our stakeholders

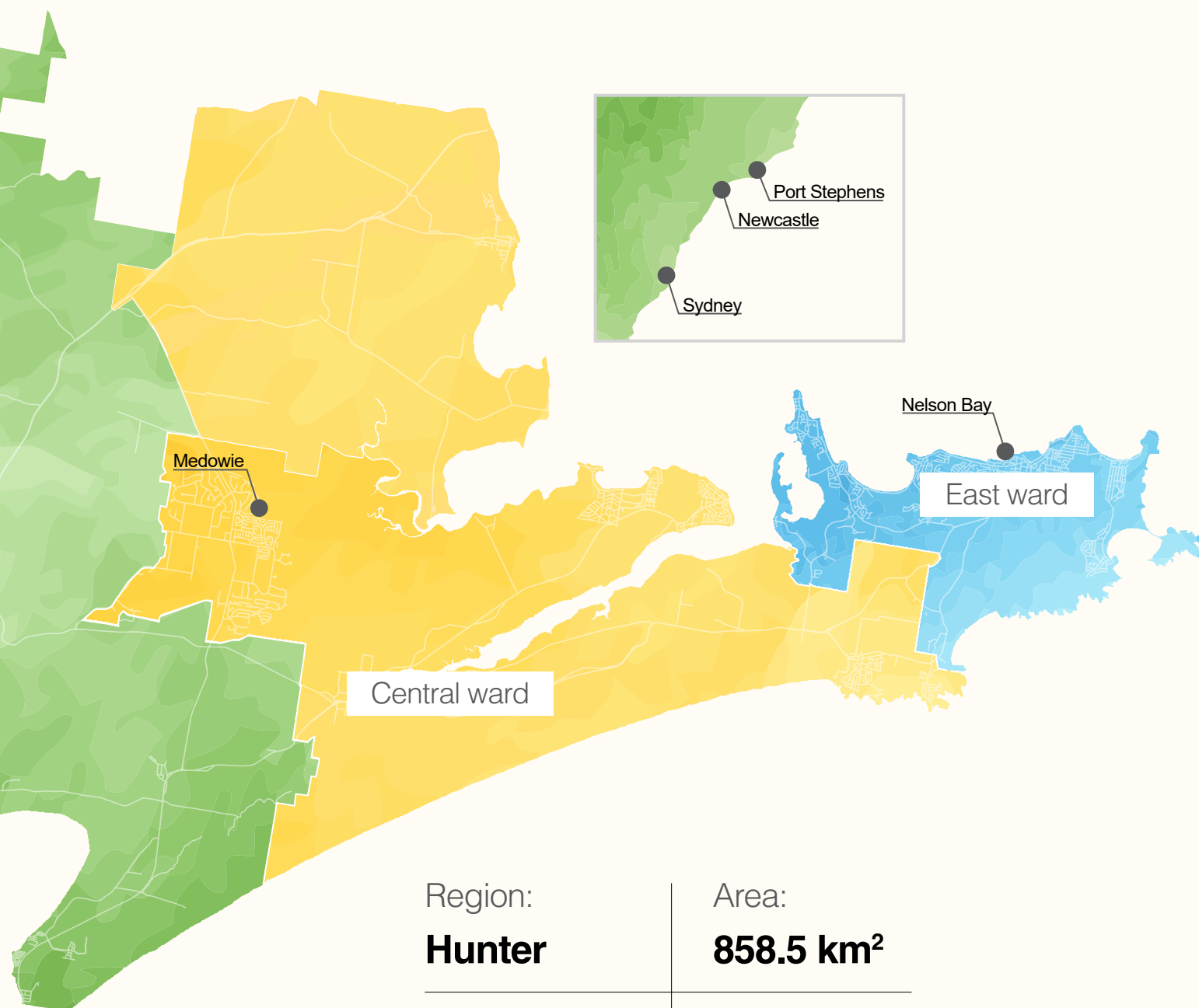
11 | Who are we?

- Community's vision
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Our location

Located on the east coast of Australia just 2 hours north of Sydney, Port Stephens is known for its incredible natural beauty, diverse economy and its unique towns and villages. These unique characteristics make it such a great place to live, work and visit.



Region:
Hunter

Area:
858.5 km²

Population
density:
**88
persons/km²**

Major centres:
**Raymond Terrace
Medowie
Nelson Bay**

Our Council

Port Stephens Council's history stretches back almost

200 YEARS



TO THE EARLY
1800's

when the Raymond Terrace and
Dungog District Council was formed.



IN
1937

Port Stephens Shire Council amalgamated with Raymond Terrace
Municipal Council to form the modern Port Stephens Council.

Port Stephens has



A POPULARLY
ELECTED
MAYOR AND



9 COUNCILLORS
REPRESENTING



3 WARDS

They are supported by

608 EQUIVALENT
FULL-TIME
EMPLOYEES



who work hard to deliver
our community's vision
of a great lifestyle in a
treasured environment.



Our people

POPULATION

77,748



(ABS 2023 Estimated
Resident Population)

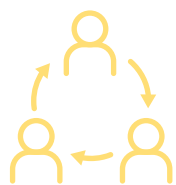
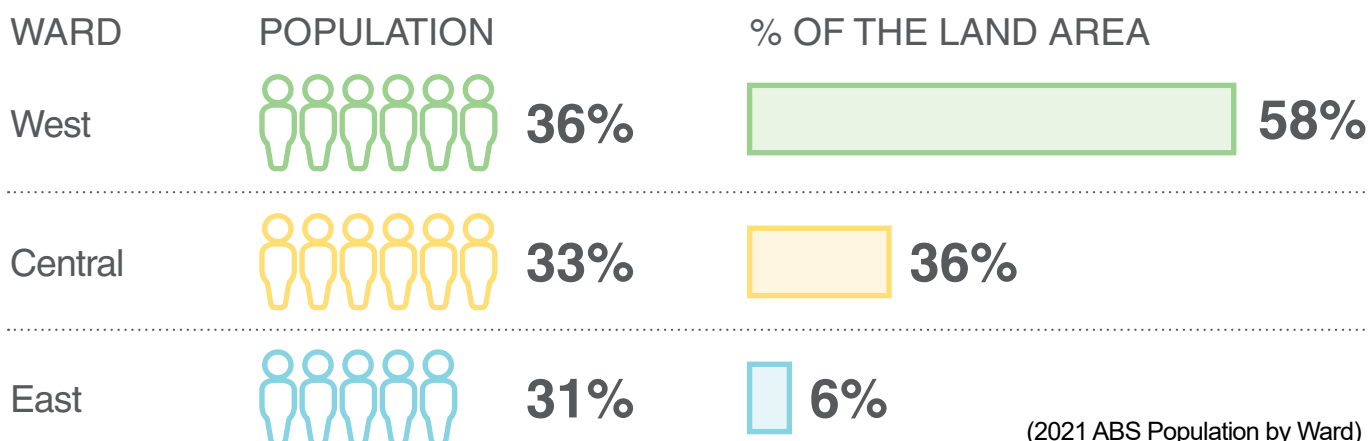


POPULATION
PROJECTION

93,658
by 2041

(NSW Government
Department of Planning)

Our people



MEDIAN AGE
47 years
(2021 Census)



OLDER THAN NSW MEDIAN AGE OF
39 years
(2021 Census)



ABORIGINAL AND
TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDER
POPULATION

4,887 (2021 Census)

Our economy



31,070
Number of jobs in
Port Stephens
(as at June 2023, Remplan)



6,078
businesses trading
in Port Stephens
(as at June 2024, Remplan)



3.8%
Unemployment
(as at June 2023, Remplan)



\$6.949 BILLION
Gross Regional Product
(as at June 2023, Remplan)

MAIN EMPLOYING INDUSTRIES

Public Administration and Safety **13.9%** Manufacturing **11.3%** Construction **11.2%**



You can read more about Port Stephens in our economic and community profiles:
portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community/our-profile

Source: Remplan 2024

Our stakeholders

We work with a diverse range of individuals, organisations and interest groups to deliver projects and services for our community. Understanding the values and priorities of these groups is vital in working together to shape our place.

We use a range of methods to communicate and engage with stakeholders. Methods differ across stakeholder groups depending on the level of influence they may have. This is outlined in our Communication & Engagement Strategy.



Who are we?

Community's vision

A great lifestyle in a treasured environment.

Council's vision

We have a deep respect for the Port Stephens community and work to grow trust, confidence and pride in the outcomes we deliver. We foster an inclusive and supportive culture that encourages both professional and personal growth. We know that each and every one of us is responsible for the sustainable management of our resources. Through a collective effort, we will create a thriving and vibrant place for generations to come.

Council's purpose

To deliver outcomes valued by our community in the best possible way.

Values

Respect – creating a unique, open and trusting environment in which each individual is valued and heard.

Integrity – being honest and inspiring trust by being consistent, matching behaviours to words and taking responsibility for our actions.

Teamwork – working together as one Council, supporting each other to achieve better results for everyone.

Excellence – improving the way we work to meet the challenges of the future.

Safety – providing a safety focused workplace culture to ensure the wellbeing of staff, their families and the community.



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Our Year in Review

Section 2

This section includes a snapshot of our highlights, challenges, performance and what's happening in the community.

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Raymond Terrace Festival

Our year in review

Over the past year, we've embarked on a journey to shape a brighter future for Port Stephens. Our focus has been on strengthening our communities, securing our financial stability, and enhancing our core services to serve the needs of our residents better.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to fostering accessibility, promoting community well-being, investing in infrastructure improvements, safeguarding our environment, and revitalising our town centres. Together, we can create a vibrant and inclusive Port Stephens where everyone thrives.

We are proud to present our Annual Report for 2023-2024. This report highlights our progress, achievements, and plans for the future. We invite you to join us as we look ahead and envision a Port Stephens that is thriving, inclusive, and environmentally responsible.

Our Community highlights



47

IT'S ON! ACTIVATIONS



703

LIBRARY
PROGRAMS HELD



1,225,427

BEACH VISITS



113,510

CHILDCARE PLACES



provided throughout Port Stephens. Places takes into account the total number of sessions across the year. For example, if a child attended OOSH every morning and afternoon for 40 weeks of the year it is counted as 400 places filled.



Adopted

NEW COMMUNITY
WELLBEING STRATEGY
AND DISABILITY
INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

Our challenges	Looking forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting our community • Appropriate support for those most vulnerable • Responding to the values and priorities of our community • The diversity of our community is acknowledged, respected and celebrated • Understand and respect cultural heritage • Accessible spaces that enable connection and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve wellbeing, inclusivity and accessibility across our community • Provide facilities and learning options for children and families • Ensure equitable and safe access to sports, recreational, cultural and leisure activities • Support volunteers to deliver community programs and increase social connections • Recognise and support the values and priorities of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People • Support and promote local cultural activities • Provide vibrant and inclusive community spaces to support lifelong learning

Our Place highlights



ALMOST
\$36M
SPENT ON ROADS,
bridges, footpaths, car parks
and drainage



Pathway
CONNECTIONS
COMPLETED

including path upgrades in Nelson Bay, Little Beach, Fingal Bay and Fern Bay; design of "Port Walk" between Nelson Bay to Shoal Bay and concept design of Airport to Stockton extension of the 'Shiraz to Shore' shared path, connecting the Hunter Vineyards to Newcastle CBD and the Airport

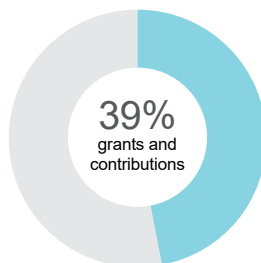


Adopted
LOCAL HOUSING
STRATEGY

focusing on housing supply,
diversity and affordability



\$58M
OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE



39% of which was funded
through grants and
contributions, including
Transport for NSW funding of
\$7.2 million and recreation and
culture funding of \$5.6 million



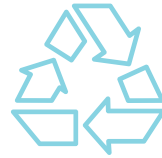
592
DEVELOPMENT
APPLICATIONS

Our challenges	Looking forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business sustainability in a challenging economy • Seasonal fluctuations in the Visitor Economy • External funding to support business and tourism • Funding to undertake maintenance, repairs and upgrades to our community's infrastructure and assets to acceptable condition • Connecting communities through infrastructure and services • Resourcing to support infrastructure delivery • Housing supply diversity and affordability • Investment in place based infrastructure to unlock housing • Community resilience to natural disasters and rising cost of living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in programs that support local business development, visitation and events • Provide Strategic Funding Support for destination marketing • Fund the delivery and maintenance of place based infrastructure • Invest SRV funds into enhanced services (roads, drainage, natural environment, waterways and public space) and seek additional State/Federal funding into infrastructure • Plan and advocate for improved connections between our communities (transport, roads and footpaths) • Improve infrastructure delivery to strengthen workforce sustainability • Provide land use plans, tools and advice to support sustainable investment • Enhance public safety, health and liveability through regulatory controls and services • Create, advocate and support connected and vibrant places that attract residents, workers and business • Prioritise emergency services, disaster preparedness and the protection of community assets from natural disasters • Investment in Newcastle Airport to achieve international routes and significant industrial development • Work with the State and Federal government to assist with the housing crisis

Our Environment highlights



Adopted
COASTAL MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM (CMP)



5,795
TONNES OF
RECYCLING



5,117
TREES PLANTED
with the help of volunteers



Emission
REDUCTIONS
ACTION PLAN
Developed and under
implementation



7,000
TONNES OF GARDEN
ORGANICS
reused, diverted from landfill by
using garden organics bins



Award
HIGHLY COMMENDED
for Port Stephens Drive Koala
Vehicle Strike Project

Our challenges	Looking forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complexity of environmental legislation • Balancing the demand for housing with the protection of our environment • A consistent approach to environmental sustainability regarding carbon emissions across all layers of government • Enabling technology to support emissions reductions • Protecting our coastline and waterways from natural disasters and longer term coastal processes • A shared approach to asset protection • Government funding to support environmental resilience • Maintain continued and ongoing volunteer support • Changing regulatory environment for waste management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the value of the natural environment • Improve data and mapping accuracy to provide a better understanding of our environment • Build better frameworks that enable a more proactive approach to environmental sustainability • Deliver actions that support renewable energy and alternative fuel use • Invest in programs that improve resource recycling and reduction of waste • A regional approach to waste management and renewal of waste collection and processing contract • Seek funding for the delivery of the Coastal Management Program to improve environmental resilience and asset protection • Drive collaboration between coastal Councils to ensure better environmental outcomes • Advocate for permanent protection high risk infrastructure in active coastal erosion areas such as Shoal Bay beach

Our Council highlights



6

COMMUNITY CATCH-UPS

across Port Stephens connecting Councillors and Executives with the community



\$16.8
MILLION

OPERATING GRANT FUNDING

received mostly from State and Federal Governments



266,481
WEBSITE VISITS



Our challenges	Looking forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce attraction and retention • Community Advocacy • Increasing complexity of legislation and changing technology to support service delivery • Financial sustainability • Optimising our investments • Reliance on external funding sources • Community expectations for meaningful participation in Council decision making • Expanding our reach to a more diverse and representative audience • Increasing demand for online services • Increasing community satisfaction with Council services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and encourage the capabilities and aspirations of Council's workforce • Provide strong leadership, advocacy role and government relations • Provide a strong ethical governance structure and systems for Council • Invest in digital technologies to improve Council performance and support to customers • Enhance non rate revenue • Optimise our investments • Ensure Financial Resilience • Grow a customer first organisation through best practice processes and technology • Provide genuine opportunities for the community and stakeholders to actively participate in council decision making



Mayor's message

As I reflect on my final year as the Mayor of Port Stephens, I'm filled with a sense of pride and optimism for the future of Port Stephens. We've made significant strides in creating a more inclusive, accessible, and vibrant community.

Focus on accessibility for all

Our commitment to accessibility is evident in the transformation of Little Beach, Nelson Bay. With the addition of a Changing Places toilet, beach wheelchairs, and extended pathways, this

beloved recreational area is now welcoming to all. This project aligns perfectly with our newly adopted Community Wellbeing Strategy, which aims to create inclusive spaces for everyone.

Beyond Little Beach, we've upgraded 5 playgrounds across Port Stephens, ensuring that children of all abilities can enjoy the benefits of outdoor play. These upgrades are just one example of our dedication to enhancing the overall liveability of our community.

Creating liveable places

We've also made significant progress in revitalising our town centres. The Lemon Tree Passage Foreshore revitalisation and the ongoing transformation of Raymond Terrace are testament to our commitment to creating vibrant hubs that stimulate economic growth and enhance the quality of life for our residents.

Infrastructure improvements have been a key focus this year. We've invested in road repairs and rehabilitation, ensuring a safer and more connected future for our community. The completion of Tomaree Road, Shoal Bay, is a significant milestone, with upgrades that include new kerb and gutters, road pavement reconstruction, minor drainage repairs, and elements that will facilitate future footpath construction.

We've also made progress on other key road projects, such as Fairlands Road, Medowie, Avenue of the Allies, Tanilba Bay and Italia Road, East Seaham. These investments are part of our ongoing commitment to improving our road network and ensuring that our community can move around safely and efficiently.

Addressing homelessness and housing affordability

We've collaborated with community organisations, government agencies, and stakeholders to develop strategies and implement initiatives to support those experiencing homelessness and increase affordable housing options.

We've continued to the Homeless Stakeholder Advisory Group, bringing together various stakeholders to discuss and address homelessness issues in our community. We've also partnered with Hume Community Housing and Homes NSW to identify and develop social housing options in this area.

While there is still more work to be done, we're working hard to make sure everyone in our community has access to safe, affordable housing.

Celebrating and connecting with our community

There's been a focus on celebrating and connecting with our community throughout the year in many ways. From the inaugural Sail Port Stephens Street Party to the annual Australia Day celebrations, we've created opportunities for residents to come together, enjoy entertainment, and foster a sense of belonging.

Our community Catch-up events have also been valuable platforms for residents to share their thoughts and concerns with Councillors and our Executive Team. These events have helped us to stay connected to our community and ensure that their voices are heard.

Although I'm stepping down as the Mayor of this beautiful place, I'm confident the new Council will remain committed to building a Port Stephens where everyone feels valued, included, and has the opportunity to thrive. Looking ahead, there'll be a continued focus on accessibility, community wellbeing, infrastructure improvements, and creating vibrant town centres.



Ryan Palmer
Mayor of Port Stephens



General Manager's message

After laying a solid groundwork in recent years, we've dedicated this year to envisioning a future where our community thrives. By building upon our past achievements, we've been working towards a safer, sustainable and thriving future for all our residents.

Creating homes for everyone

Our region faces a growing housing shortage, exacerbated by limited development opportunities and increasing demand. This has led to rising housing prices and impacts on our community's social and economic well-being.

To start to address these challenges, we've endorsed the Port Stephens Local Housing Strategy and Housing Supply Plan. These plans outline strategies for increasing housing diversity, affordability and supply, ensuring our community has the necessary housing options to thrive. It identifies what types of housing can be built, where new homes can be located and what's required to support new development.

We've also be working to streamline development processes. We've improved DA times by putting together a dedicated team to

fast-track DA lodgements and integrated our systems with the NSW Planning Portal. We've also secured a Federal Government grant to help us further reduce red tape to make it easier, quicker and more affordable to lodge a DA.

Environmental endeavours

Environmental conservation has been another key focus. We're proud of successfully completing the Port Stephens Drive Koala Vehicle Strike Project, protecting our iconic koala population, developing a detailed vegetation map to inform future conservation efforts, partnering with local groups for culturally-informed cool burns to revitalise our natural environment, and securing funding to combat the spread of invasive plant species.

We're also leading the charge towards a sustainable future with implementing an Emissions Reduction Action Plan to reduce our carbon footprint, focusing on a circular waste economy, diverting waste from landfill and reusing materials, and rolling out new green bins and a waste app to make waste management easier.

Looking Forward: Strategic Initiatives and Financial Sustainability

Over the last year, we've been actively engaged with our residents and key stakeholders to develop key strategies for housing, coastal management, and wellbeing. Following community input, Council has adopted these strategies and we're looking forward to rolling out key actions.

Our financial sustainability efforts have focused on diversifying our non rate revenue including introducing smart parking into Shoal Bay, Little Beach and Fingal Bay. We've also continued

discussions and planning for the development of the key commercial properties we own in both Raymond Terrace and Salamander Bay and invested our recent property sales into new assets at Tomago and beyond. Our Beachside Holiday Parks continue to be a valuable non-rate revenue stream, attracting thousands of visitors annually. We're investing in upgrades at Shoal Bay and Fingal Bay Holiday Parks to enhance the guest experience and boost revenue.

We've established a Resilience Fund reserve to further strengthen our financial position. This reserve will be funded from surplus non-rate revenue sources of income streams, such as dividends from Newcastle Airport and will enable us to invest in high-impact projects aligned with our community's priorities.

By focusing on these strategic initiatives and financial sustainability measures, we're positioning Port Stephens for long-term growth and prosperity.

Looking ahead, we're committed to continuing our collaborative efforts and building upon the past year's successes. Together, we can create a Port Stephens that is a thriving, inclusive, and connected place for all.



Tim Crosdale

General Manager of Port Stephens Council



Scorecard

Our 6 key result measures underpin everything we do at Port Stephens Council.

At the end of each focus area, we provide a detailed scorecard showing our progress against our goals on pages 62 to 94.

1. Service delivery				
	Target: > 95%	Integrated Plans delivered on time	Result:	<div><div>94% on track</div><div>2023</div></div> <div>6% ↑</div> <div><div>100% on track</div><div>2024</div></div>
2. Community Satisfaction				
	Target: 2.94	Out of 5 score	Result:	<div><div>2.94 Out of 5 score</div><div>2023</div></div> <div>0.14 ↑</div> <div><div>3.08 Out of 5 score</div><div>2024</div></div>
Source: Community Satisfaction Survey 2023				
3. Employee wellbeing				
	Target: > 80%	employee engagement	Result:	<div><div>83% on track</div><div>2023</div></div> <div>1% ↑</div> <div><div>84% on track</div><div>2024</div></div>

Source: 2022 Employee Engagement Survey **Source: 2023 Employee Engagement Survey



Raymond Terrace Library mural

4. Risk management



Target:
> 85% risk management maturity score

Result:

86%
on track

2023



86%
on track

2024

5. Financial sustainability



Target:
underlying financial result better than budget

Result:

\$1.078M
on track

2023

↑
36.6%

\$1.473M
on track

2024

6. Asset management



Target:
100% asset maintenance ratio

Result:

106%
on track

2023

↓
1%

105%
on track

2024

Financial summary

Port Stephens Council has achieved an underlying operating surplus of \$1.473 million. The underlying result excludes non-operational transactions. The 2023-2024 financial year was challenging due to a number of factors, including rising employee costs and the increasing costs of materials and services. The positive result has been achieved primarily through a financial sustainability program, which promotes fiscal responsibility, optimising non-rate revenue opportunities and driving operating efficiencies.

Financial overview 2023 to 2024

The income statement summarises Port Stephens Council's total income and operating expenditure. The 2023-2024 operating result was a surplus of \$46.9 million, which includes income from capital grants and contributions. This income is restricted for the purpose of constructing new assets and renewing existing assets as shown in the statement of financial position. When capital grants and contributions are excluded, the operating result is a surplus of \$6.1 million for the 2023-2024 financial year. This is lower than the surplus of \$8.7 million for the 2022-2023 financial year. The decrease is due to higher expenditure levels from rising operational costs.

Income statement \$'000	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
Total income from continuing operations	146,900	160,410	172,936	188,430	206,490
Total expenses from continuing operations	126,833	127,601	131,154	147,318	159,562
Operating result from continuing operations	20,067	32,809	41,782	41,112	46,928
Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	-4,251	2,817	8,853	8,770	6,148

The statement of financial position provides a snapshot of Port Stephens Council's assets, liabilities and net wealth (equity) at 30 June 2024. Council's total asset base increased primarily for two reasons, we completed asset revaluations to reflect the renewal cost of public infrastructure and our capital works program grew during the year due to successful grant applications. Council's liabilities increased due to bank loans being sourced to assist in the funding strategy of the Newcastle Airport terminal expansion.

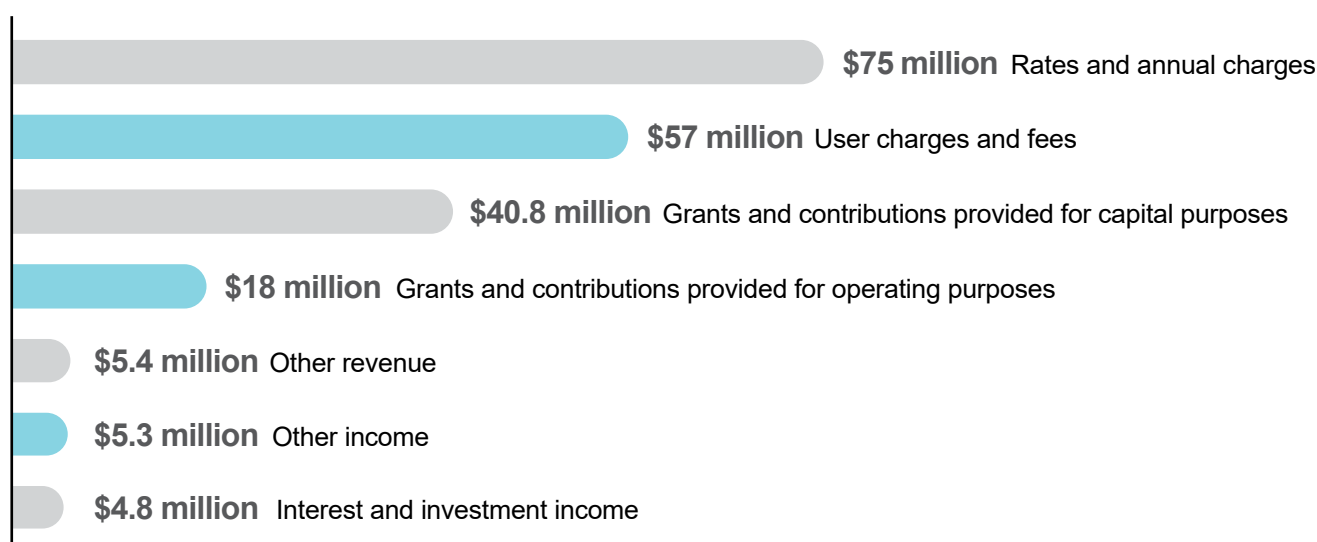
Balance sheet \$'000	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024
Total current assets	53,939	70,007	62,737	87,157	88,293
Total current liabilities	37,093	41,692	48,999	51,198	46,227
Total non-current assets	1,064,256	1,095,591	1,306,703	1,447,040	1,576,520
Total non-current liabilities	37,635	36,501	40,117	53,484	65,769
Total equity	1,043,467	1,087,405	1,280,324	1,429,515	1,552,817



Our revenue – where the money came from

We received \$206.5 million in revenue in the 2023-24 financial year. The largest income sources were rates and annual charges, which totalled \$75 million, and user charges and fees which totalled \$57.1 million (which includes the Newcastle Airport). These were also our largest sources of income in 2022-23.

Rates and annual charges such as domestic waste management service charges are crucial income sources for Council. User charges and fees such as holiday park fees and Transport for NSW works charges are also important sources of income.



Our expenses – where the money was spent

We spent \$231.6 million during the year – \$159.6 million on operations and \$72 million on capital projects.


Major Infrastructure spending included:

	Roads, bridges, footpaths and car parks \$12.8 million
	Drainage \$1.2 million
	Buildings \$5.5 million
	Newcastle Airport \$25.7 million
	Other open space or recreational assets \$2.5 million

The above figures include assets that have been dedicated to Council. The total value of assets dedicated to Council in 2023-24 is \$3 million.











Total equity

What we own, minus what we owe

	Port Stephens Council community equity (defined as our net worth) was \$1.6 billion at 30 June 2024.
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Our assets – what we own

Our infrastructure, property, plant and equipment was valued at \$1.5 billion and our investment property assets were valued at \$44.3 million at 30 June 2024. The value of our infrastructure is:

	Plant and equipment \$11.2 million
	Office equipment, furniture and fittings \$2.2 million
	Land \$162.3 million
	Land improvements \$8 million
	Roads, bridges, footpaths and carparks \$570.1 million
	Buildings \$179.6 million
	Drainage \$282.3 million
	Other infrastructure \$58.4 million
	Other assets \$1.8 million
	Newcastle Airport \$211 million

Shoal Bay shared pathway



Major events

Council run or sponsored events across Port Stephens.

Jul 2023



NAIDOC Week celebrations

Emergency Services
Regatta – Port Stephens



Raymond Terrace Festival

Human Whale

Aug 2023

2023 In2Adventure
Tre-X Offroad Triathlon
– Port Stephens

Sep 2023

Clans on the Coast

Goanna Academy
– Sporting event



Night at the Beach

Oct 2023



Nelson Bay Art Walk Launch

Karuah Oyster and Timber
Festival 2023

King of the Box –
Surfing Event

Adrenaline Junkie - Sprint
Series Adventure Race

Dec 2023



New Years Eve

Medowie Christmas Carnival

Swim Run Weekend

Fly Point Carols at the Bay

Food Foodies! Nelson Bay

Tillifest 2023

Cricket NSW U14 Boys Country Championships –
Northern Pool

Jan 2024



Australia Day Nelson Bay and Raymond Terrace

Feb 2024

Peter Wilson
Memorial Cup

2024 Garmin Billfish
Shootout



Camplify Port Stephens Pro QS1000 (surfing event)

2024 NSWGFA Interclub
State Championships

Port Stephens Creatives
Conference

Apr 2024

Port Stephens Outrigger
Canoe Club

Sail Port Stephens –
Passenger Series – The
Commodores Cup (PHS)
and Port Stephens
Trophy (ORC)

ANZAC Day event support



Sail Port Stephens Street Party

May 2024

Sail Port Stephens –
trailables and off-the-
beach classes

Sustainable Living Festival
– Homegrown/Econetwork

Volkswagen Port
Stephens NSW State
Titles 2024 (surfing)

Jun 2024



Illuminate Raymond Terrace

Little Beach For All

Having your say

We're committed to actively communicating and engaging with our residents, stakeholders and staff in the development of policies, plans and the delivery of services for our community. Our Communication and Engagement Strategy recognises that community information sharing, consultation and participation are vital for effective decision-making. You can read it at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/communication-and-engagement-strategy

There are many ways you can have your say on the governing of Port Stephens and the future of our place:

- Vote for Councillors every 4 years through the local government election for Port Stephens Council.
- Arrange to speak face to face with Councillors via public access prior to Council meetings.
- Write to or call elected members of the Council.
- Get social and connect with us on our social media channels, including Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.
- Make submissions on major projects or notified consents that are consulted or advertised throughout the year.
- Participate in the annual Community Satisfaction Survey.
- Via our online Report and Request tool.

Our major formal community engagements were on:



WELLBEING
STRATEGY



HOUSING
STRATEGY



6 x PLAYGROUND SURVEYS
ELKIN, KORORA, TAYLORS BEACH,
DUNMORE, TOMAREE, CENTENNIAL



COASTAL
MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM STAGE 4



SMART PARKING
EXTENSION AT
SHOAL BAY



GREEN WASTE
DROP OFF
USER SURVEY

27

KEY FORMAL
ENGAGEMENT
PROJECTS

4,246

NUMBER OF
SURVEY RESPONSES
PROVIDED

60

NUMBER OF FACE TO
FACE (includes online)
COMMUNITY
OPPORTUNITIES
PROVIDED

1121

NUMBER OF FACE TO
FACE (includes online)
COMMUNITY
ATTENDEES

We also spoke to the community about the Community Satisfaction Survey, Shoal Bay Place Plan, Dogs at Boat Harbour Beach, Henderson Park amenities and Medowie Social future use options.

Next steps: The following projects are in the planning phase and we'll be engaging with the community in the next financial year:

- New Community Strategic Plan with our new Councillors
- Liveability Index
- Tilligerry Place Plan
- Pathways Plan
- Birubi Smart Parking rollout
- Ongoing Capital Works Program engagement



Learn more at haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au

Awards and recognitions

At Port Stephens Council, we believe in doing the right things in the best way. We're proud of our culture of excellence and the recognition we have received this year for achieving the best outcomes for Port Stephens.

Awarding body	Award
2023 NSW Tourism Awards	Gold - Tourist Attraction – Port Stephens Koala Sanctuary
2024 ARA Annual Report Award	Gold – 2022-2023 Annual Report
2024 NSW Local Government Excellence Awards	Highly Commended – Environmental Leadership - Port Stephens Drive Koala Vehicle Strike Project.
Statewide Mutual – 2023 Risk Management Excellence Awards	Highly Commended – Technological Innovation (Metropolitan and Large Regional Councils)



Our Leadership

Section 3

This section includes an overview of our leadership and organisation

33 | Our elected Council

39 | Our governance

40 | Our Executive Team

42 | Organisation structure

44 | Our employees

Equity, diversity and inclusion

Work Health and Safety

45 | Our volunteers



Our elected Council

Port Stephens Council has a popularly elected Mayor and 9 Councillors representing 3 wards – East, Central and West.



Learn more about our elected council at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/mayor-and-councillors



Ryan Palmer **Mayor**

A lifetime resident of Port Stephens, Ryan was popularly elected as Mayor in 2017 and in 2021. He is passionate about the Port Stephens area and has brought a new level of transparency and consultation to the Council.

Since being elected, Ryan is proud of the actions he's taken to create a place for all generations to live an active and healthy lifestyle.

Ryan has a strong interest in economic development activities and believes in providing employment opportunities, not only for today but for future generations, like his 2 children, Bella and Knox.



Councillor Chris Doohan
Central Ward

Chris Doohan has lived in Medowie for nearly 2 decades, and the greater Port Stephens region for more than 40 years. He was elected as a Central Ward Councillor in 2012 and has been Deputy Mayor in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2020.

Chris is passionate about Port Stephens and is incredibly proud to represent his community, participating in many local committees, councils, associations and groups.

Chris has 2 children, Holly and Jaike, who have been schooled locally and are active in local sporting teams.



Councillor Jason Wells
Central Ward

Jason has called Medowie home since 2006 where he lives with his wife and 2 children. He's worked in a local NSW public school for 19 years.

For the last 5 years Jason has held the role of President of Medowie Little Athletics Club, engaging with the local community and supporting young people.

Jason has a thorough understanding of the needs of local families of Central Ward and advocates strongly for the provision of high quality and cared for public spaces and safe and accessible pathways.



Councillor Steve Tucker
Central Ward

Steve was first elected to Council in 2004 and lives at Tanilba Bay.

He has served as Deputy Mayor on 2 occasions in 2006 and 2014.

A retired engineer, he is most interested in building community and sporting infrastructure to support local communities.



Councillor Leah Anderson East Ward

Leah relocated from her original home town of Camden to Port Stephens in 2005, where she's raised her 2 children and has been actively involved in the community for many years.

She founded and was President of Port Stephens Women In Business, is the past President of Business Port Stephens and was proud to be awarded Port Stephens Woman of the year in 2018.

Leah wants the best for the people of Port Stephens, and she will listen, care and act, to work hard for the community.



Councillor Glen Dunkley East Ward

Glen is another lifetime Port Stephens resident. Married to Kate with 2 teenage children, Glen is in his second term on Council as a representative of the East Ward. The safety and environment manager holds a degree in Occupational Health and Safety.

A life member of the Fingal Bay Surf Lifesaving Club and President between 2007 and 2011, Glen has picked up a number of National Awards as a result of his outstanding service that stretches back to 1992.



Councillor Matthew Bailey East Ward

Matt Bailey is a first time Councillor on Port Stephens Council and has a background in financial planning and education.

Matt has spent most of his career as a financial planner and has a Bachelor of Business from the University of Newcastle where he majored in Human Resources and Management. He also has a Diploma in Financial Planning.

Matt is a father of 2 boys and grew up in Tamworth before moving to the Hunter Region in 2006. Matt is currently studying a Master of Primary Teaching at the University of Newcastle.



**Councillor Giacomo Arnott
West Ward**

Giacomo has lived and worked in Raymond Terrace his whole life. He is a Law and Business graduate and has his Diploma of Legal Practice.

He is a professional firefighter based at Raymond Terrace and volunteers with many local groups and community-based initiatives. He also works in industrial law, fighting for the rights of workers.

Giacomo has spent his time on Council delivering for the ratepayers of Port Stephens, standing up for what's right and improving communications with the Port Stephens community. He is continuing to try and improve transparency, while delivering valued services and infrastructure to the local community. Giacomo was the Deputy Mayor from 2022 to 2023.



**Councillor Peter Francis
West Ward**

Peter has been involved in communications, marketing, advocacy, sales, and influencing people's opinions for most of his professional career.

He's been granted several National and International awards in recognition of his various acts in the areas of diplomacy and humanitarian works.

Peter is a mental health advocate, presenter, facilitator, public speaker, blogger, writer, and master of ceremonies and his views on community consultation and advocacy are ones which are integral to bringing about a cohesive and integrated whole.



**Councillor Peter Kafer
West Ward**

Peter and his family moved to Raymond Terrace in 2000 from Stockton and he is a former Port Stephens Councillor from 2008 to 2017. Peter is an active member of many community organisations in Stockton, Newcastle and Raymond Terrace including Aboriginal Corporations, Community Advocacy groups and Historical Societies.

He's had careers in Nursing, NSW State and Federal Police and teaching, as well as a mentor in High Schools for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. Peter advocates for the mental health and awareness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community.

Peter is an Internationally recognised Aboriginal artist in USA and European Countries with active exhibitions in California and throughout Hunter Valley.



Councillor attendance 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

Port Stephens Council is required to meet at least 10 times a year. These meetings are known as Ordinary Meetings and are presided over by the Mayor or in their absence, the Deputy Mayor.

Our Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at the Council Chambers in Raymond Terrace. Meetings are live-streamed online and the public is welcome to attend.

2 Way conversations are informal meetings held between the Mayor, Councillors and staff with specific subjects that the Mayor or Councillors wish to discuss. They form part of an elected members' ongoing professional development.

Port Stephens also has 18 community committees and a further 28 groups in which the Mayor and Councillors represent Council. These can be viewed on page 125.

COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

	Ordinary meeting	Extra ordinary meeting	All meetings combined	2 Way conversations
Number of meetings	23	0	23	70
Mayor Palmer	20	0	20	51
Councillor Anderson	23	0	23	68
Councillor Arnott	23	0	23	63
Councillor Bailey	17	0	17	31
Councillor Doohan	12	0	12	24
Councillor Dunkley	20	0	20	28
Councillor Francis	19	0	19	41
Councillor Kafer	17	0	17	16
Councillor Tucker	21	0	21	61
Councillor Wells	22	0	22	65



Councillor induction and professional development

Our Councillor Induction and Professional Development Policy requires an annual report on all councillor induction programs, ongoing professional development and training sessions.

The following professional development opportunities were provided to all elected members. The table shows those who participated.

There was a councillor induction program conducted during this period following the Local Government election in December 2021.

For the total cost of professional development including accommodation and training for this period, refer to page 99. Travel costs for the Mayor are included in the provision of a Mayoral vehicle.

Professional development	Attendees
AICD Company Directors membership	Mayor Palmer & Cr Dunkley
AICD Company Directors Course	Cr Anderson & Cr Wells
ALGA National General Assembly	Mayor Palmer, Cr Anderson, Cr Dunkley, Cr Tucker
LGNSW Annual Conference	Mayor Palmer, Cr Anderson, Cr Arnott, Cr Tucker
LGNSW Rural & Regional Summit	Mayor Palmer
LGNSW Mayoral Forum	Cr Anderson
LGNSW Visitor & Economy Conference	Mayor Palmer
Royal Australian Historical Association Conference	Cr Wells
NSW Homelessness Forum	Cr Anderson

Our Governance

Port Stephens Council is a body politic under the Local Government Act 1993. The elected Council must abide by this Act and the associated State and Federal legislation. Our governance framework is based on the Australian Public Service Commission's principles of public sector governance – accountability, transparency, integrity, stewardship, efficiency and leadership.

Code of Conduct

The overarching element of governance in council is the Code of Conduct. Training in the Code of Conduct is compulsory for all staff, Mayor, Councillors and volunteers. The code sets high standards for ethical behaviour and decision-making. It states Mayor/Councillors' roles and responsibilities and outlines the process for making and investigating allegations of breaches. During 2023 to 2024, there were 4 Code of Conduct complaints about Councillors and the General Manager. Of the 4 complaints, 3 were addressed by alternate means.

Privacy and personal information

The Privacy Management Plan was reviewed and adopted by Council on 25 June 2024. There were no internal reviews under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 conducted by our Council this year. There were no other contraventions of any information protection principles, nor of privacy codes of practice or disclosure of personal information kept in a public register.

Audit committee

Our Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee aims to enhance the corporate governance of our Council. It provides independent oversight, review and advice on our governance, risk, control and compliance framework. The Committee comprises 3 independent external representatives and a non-voting Councillor representative:

- Ben Niland (Former Chairperson) - July 2023 to September 2023
- Deborah Goodyer (Chairperson) – October 2023 to present
- Frank Cordingley – July 2023 to present
- Shaun Mahony – July 2023 to February 2024
- Paul Dunn – February 2024 to present
- Councillor Leah Anderson – July 2023 to present
- Councillor Chris Doohan – July 2023 to August 2023
- Councillor Glen Dunkley (alternate) – July 2023 to August 2023

The 2023 to 2024 Internal Audit program included 5 audits into:

- Contract/Contractor Management
- Volunteer Management
- Disaster Management
- National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme compliance audit
- RMS Drives compliance report.



Find out more about our audit committee at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/committees

Our Executive Team

Port Stephens Council is led by General Manager Tim Crosdale, who is supported by 3 Directors.



Learn more about our Executive Team at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/executive-team



General Manager Tim Crosdale

Appointed 2022

Tim joined Port Stephens Council as Group Manager Development Services in 2018 and since 2020 was Group Manager of Corporate Services.

With extensive experience at senior and executive level management across private consulting and in local government, Tim has a successful track record in leadership, professional services provision, business and staff management.

He brings extensive skills and experience in development and strategic planning, project delivery, and business operations including HR, marketing, financial management and business development.

Tim is focused on working collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure the delivery of valued services to the Port Stephens community.



Infrastructure Director
Greg Kable

Appointed 2016

Greg joined Port Stephens Council in 2011 and soon became Section Manager Capital Works in 2013.

With over 30 years experience in local government and 20 years managing large operational workforces, Greg enjoys leading and motivating multi-disciplinary teams to deliver building, engineering and maintenance programs.

He holds postgraduate qualifications in Commerce, Engineering and Management.

Greg is passionate about the delivery of quality infrastructure and customer service to the people of Port Stephens.



Corporate Strategy & Support Director Zoë Pattison

Appointed 2023

Zoë has worked at Port Stephens Council for 25 years, providing strategic Senior and Executive leadership and service delivery across the Corporate Strategy & Support functions, including Human Resources, ICT, Corporate Reporting, Strategic Property, Finance and Continuous Improvement.

With a number of post graduate qualifications including a Master of Business Leadership, Zoë is Graduate Membership of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and holds two Board positions.

With a focus on building capability and capacity amongst our people, in alignment with the future direction of the organisation, Zoë is passionate about providing strategic leadership to improve the services we deliver to our customers.



Community Futures Director Steven Peart

Appointed 2020

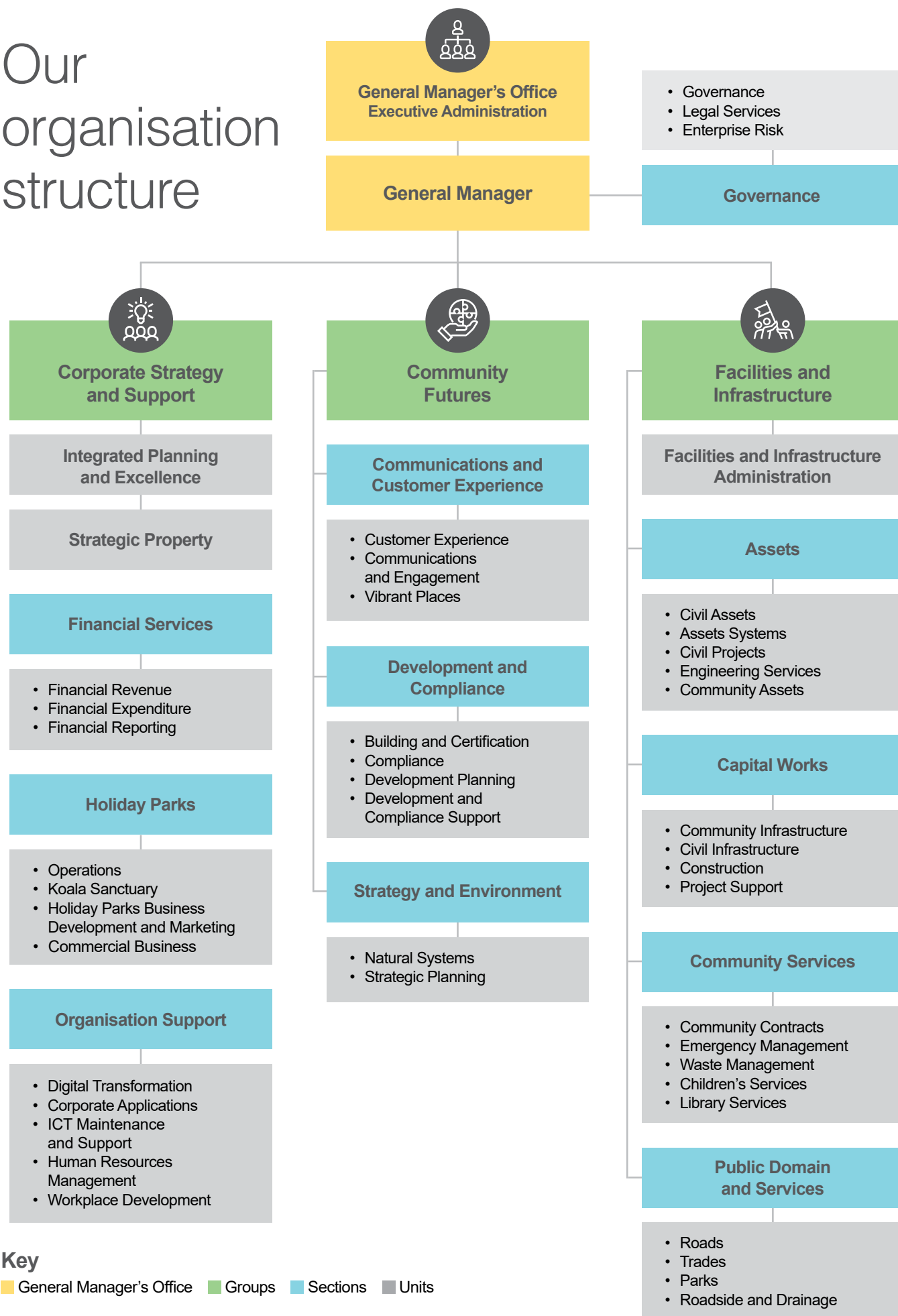
Steven joined Port Stephens Council as Strategy and Environment Section Manager in 2018.

He was appointed Acting Development Services Group Manager in 2020 and after a competitive recruitment process, was appointed permanently to the role in May 2021.

Over the past 14 years, Steven has held senior leadership positions in local government, environmental and engineering consulting firms, and major mining companies.

Steven is focused on building a team culture of innovation and excellence to create the best outcomes for our customers while respecting our broader community and the environment.

Our organisation structure





Our employees

We're committed to ensuring our workforce has the skills and experience to deliver valued services to our community. Our Workforce Plan outlines how we'll achieve our community's vision while our Employer Value Proposition sets out our commitment to attract, engage and retain our employees. Supported by our Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025, our Employer Value Proposition has a people first approach and promotes employee health, fosters their wellbeing and supports their lifestyle. It's important that our Council's workforce reflects the community we serve.

Equity, diversity and inclusion

We're committed to creating a workplace that values diversity and is fair, equitable and inclusive for all employees. Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee highlights for 2023 to 2024:

- We have almost a full complement of EDI representatives covering most teams and locations across Council.
- We promoted Pride month across Council where staff were asked to participate in a 'Wear the Rainbow Day' to celebrate and show their support.
- We promoted Harmony Week to employees in celebration of inclusiveness, respect and belonging for everyone. Staff came together over morning tea to connect and celebrate all things diversity.
- We celebrated NAIDOC Week with employees and our community, recognising the valuable contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make. Read more on page 55.
- We celebrated International Women's Day by supporting an event for scholarship applicants. These scholarships support our Council's efforts to create a community where women are safe, healthy, equally represented and valued for their contribution to society. Read more on page 61.

Work health and safety

We're committed to providing a safety – focused workplace that ensures the wellbeing of our employees, their families and our community.

Safety observations

Our safety observation program aims to proactively prevent injuries by positively reinforcing safe work behaviour and providing constructive feedback. All managers must conduct at least 2 safety observations per month. This year, the number of Safety Observations increased by 4% to 1,531 and identified 55 actions to enhance worker safety.

Employee consultation

Our Health and Safety Committee and Health and Safety Representatives have an important role in consulting with employees on health and safety matters. The Committee (representing management and workers) met 4 times during the year to oversee workplace safety at Council.

Workers compensation

Our workers compensation premium remains stable, observing a robust injury management program and improving three-year safety performance. The number of workers compensation claims increased 6% this financial year. We remain focused on injury prevention and wellness, channelled through our injury management, safety observation and employee wellness programs.

Our volunteers

Our volunteers give their time and energy to make Port Stephens a better place.

Without them, many of our services and programs wouldn't exist. They contribute to:

- Keeping our parks, reserves and cemeteries pristine
- Improving our natural bushland areas
- Participating in our sports councils and cultural committees
- Participating in our halls, libraries, Koala Sanctuary and Visitor Information Centre

There's a volunteer opportunity for everyone at Port Stephens Council. We regularly encourage new volunteers to join us at **portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community/volunteers**

Supporting our volunteers

We know that giving back is just as beneficial for our volunteers as it is for our community. Volunteering gives people a sense of purpose, a strong social network and the chance to contribute to our community. Our volunteers also have access to a comprehensive learning and development program to improve their skills and knowledge. We're currently moving our induction program online to provide a better model of supporting our volunteers.



Raymond Terrace Community Working Bee 2024

Our Performance

Section 4

This section includes an overview of each of our Delivery Program Focus Areas.

47 | Our planning process

48 | Our focus areas

50 | Our Community

64 | Our Place

74 | Our Environment

84 | Our Council



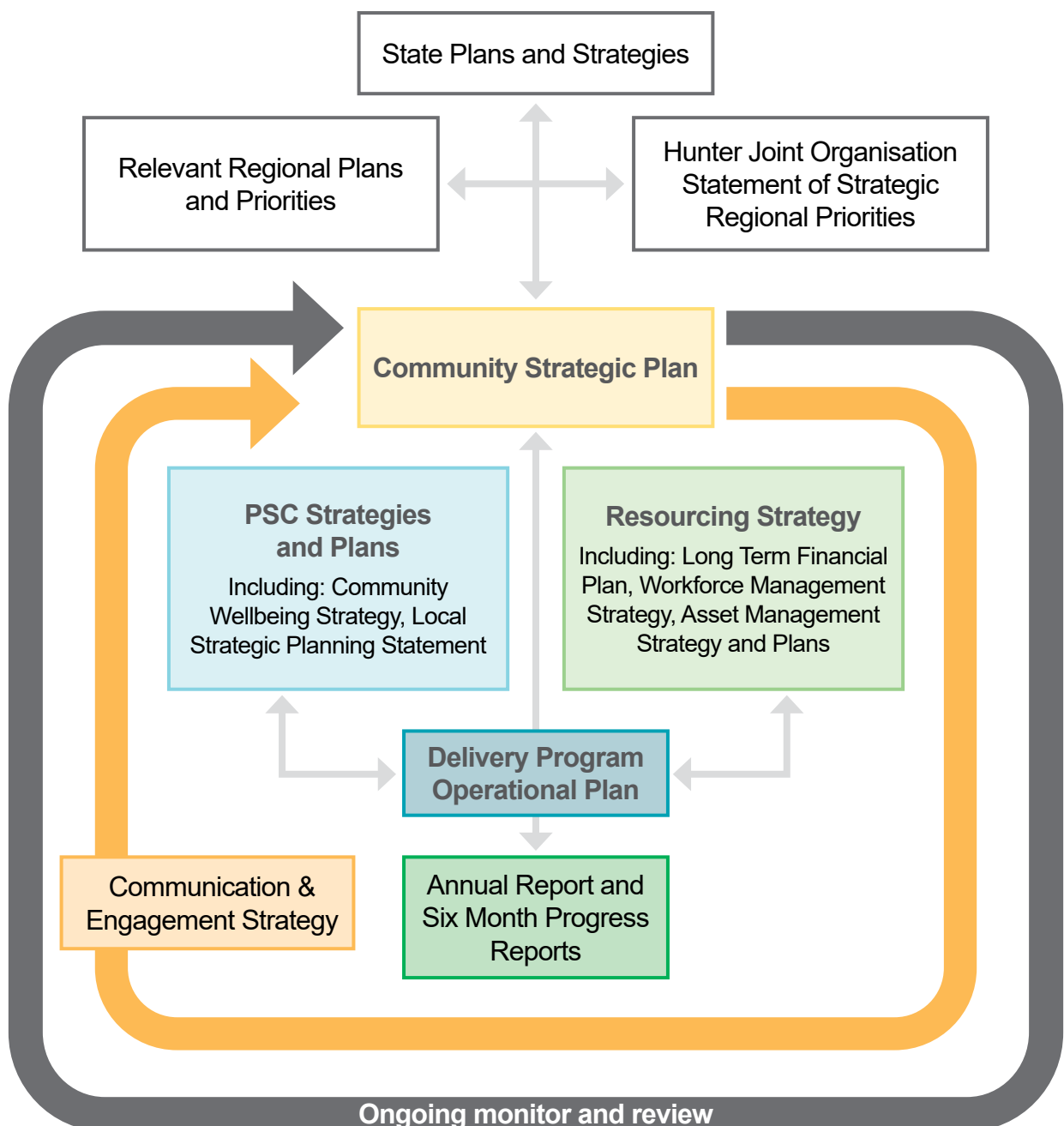
Our planning process

We use the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework. It comprises:

- **Community Strategic Plan** – Our Community’s long-term vision.
- **Council’s Delivery Program** – our Council’s objectives for the elected term to help achieve the community’s vision.
- **Operational Plan** – yearly actions to implement the Delivery Program.

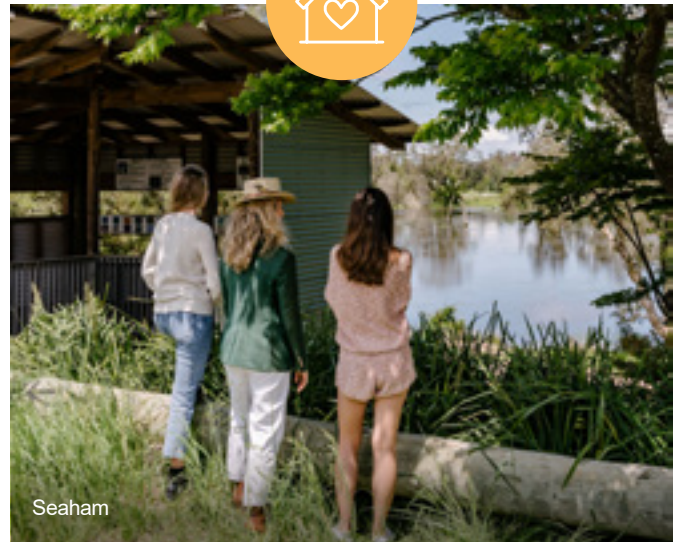


Learn more about our integrated planning process at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/plans-and-reporting/integrated-plans



Overview: our focus areas

The Port Stephens Council Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032 outlines our 4 main focus areas. Each goal is a key direction in our **Delivery Program 2022 to 2026**.



Our Community

An accessible and welcoming community respecting diversity, heritage and culture

C1 Community wellbeing

Improve wellbeing for our diverse community supported by services and facilities

C2 Recognised traditions and lifestyles

Our community supports the richness of its heritage and culture

Our Place

A liveable and connected place supporting community wellbeing and local economic growth

P1 Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investment

Our community has an adaptable, sustainable and diverse economy

P2 Infrastructure and facilities

Our community's infrastructure and facilities are safe, convenient, reliable and environmentally sustainable

P3 Thriving and safe place to live

Our community supports a healthy, happy and safe place



Our Environment

Port Stephen's environment is clean, green, protected and enhanced

E1 Ecosystem function

Our community has healthy and dynamic environmental systems that support biodiversity conservation

E2 Environmental sustainability

Our community uses resources sustainably, efficiently and equitably

E3 Environmental resilience

Our community is resilient to environmental risks, natural hazards and climate change

Our Council

Port Stephens Council leads, manages and delivers valued community services in a responsible way

L1 Governance

Our Council's leadership is based on trust and values of Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Excellence and Safety (RITES)

L2 Financial Management

Our Council is financially sustainable to meet community needs

L3 Communication and engagement

Our Council is committed to enabling an engaged and informed community

Our Community

An accessible and welcoming community respecting diversity, heritage and culture



Goal C1: Community Wellbeing

Improved wellbeing for our diverse community supported by services and facilities

Launching our first Changing Places Precinct

Little Beach, Nelson Bay has been transformed into a more inclusive and accessible space for everyone.

The upgrades to the popular recreational area include a fully accessible “Changing Places” toilet with a sling and adult changing table. We’ve also added beach wheel chairs, so everyone can enjoy the sand and water. Extended pathways and an accessible playground make it easier for everyone to get around and have fun.

These improvements were part of our broader commitment to creating a community where wellbeing is a priority. Our new Community Wellbeing Strategy aims to create inclusive spaces, and Little Beach was a perfect example of this goal in action.

The precinct’s completion was marked with a vibrant community celebration called “Little Beach for All”. The community came together to celebrate, enjoying food, music, and fun activities. The event was a testament to the power of inclusivity and the positive impact it can have on a community’s wellbeing.

Little Beach is now a place where everyone feels welcome, regardless of their abilities. This achievement is a significant step forward for the community of Port Stephens.

Collaborating to improve homelessness

We're continuing to bring together the Homeless Stakeholder Advisory Group (HSAG), where various stakeholders collaborate to share information and ideas, discuss and understand data and collaborate on projects at a Local Government Level. The group includes the Member for Port Stephens and Member for Paterson, NSW Police, NSW Department of Communities and Justice, key community sector organisations, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and 2 community members.

This year the Group focused on delivering their 12-month action plan to support disadvantaged individuals in our community. Along with advocacy to State Ministers and government officials, they've directed used furniture from Council owned holiday parks to Port Stephens based community service organisations and charities and developed an emergency food and crisis relief calendar outlining where to find food, vouchers and rental support across the community.

They've also put a lot of effort into gaining support for social and affordable housing which is crucial with a 45% increase in the median house price in Port Stephens since 2018.

Looking forward the HSAG will continue to focus on a range of new initiatives including a communications and support program for real estate agents to help frontline staff understand the options for those facing housing issues.

They will also be working with local service providers to roll out the End Street Sleeping program, which works towards a more coordinated approach to ending street sleeping in Port Stephens over the next 5 years.

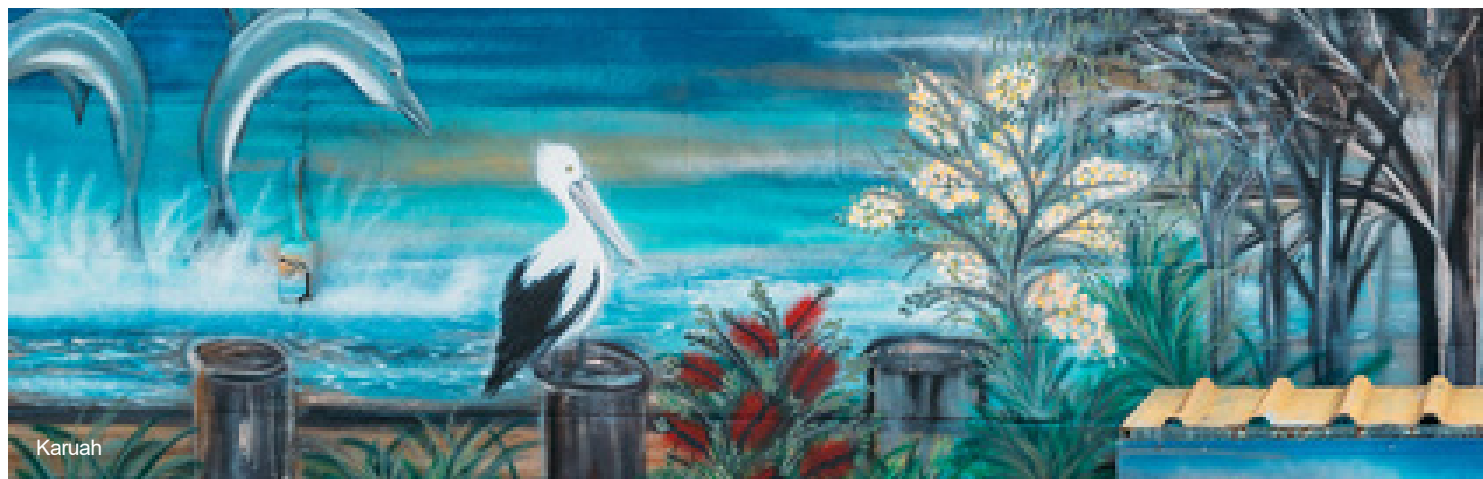
These efforts aim to foster a coordinated approach to addressing homelessness in Port Stephens.



Learn more and the Homelessness Stakeholder Advisory Group at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/committees



Little Beach, Nelson Bay



Programs for our young people

Young people have been a focus this year. We've delivered free, fun-filled school holiday programs and celebrated National Youth Week with a range of exciting events. These initiatives have provided a platform for young people to connect with Council, share their ideas, and build new friendships in a safe and supportive environment.

From Silent Discos and Snak and Rap to Summer Splash, our diverse program lineup has offered something for everyone. Local community groups and agencies also joined us at many events to help our young people's access to services and programs they need in their day to day life.

A highlight of the year was the launch of Battle of the Arts during National Youth Week. Inspired by our Youth Advisory Panel, this talent quest showcased the incredible creativity of local high school students from musicians and dancers to actors, poets and storytellers. We were thrilled to see a drama ensemble from Irrawang High School in Raymond Terrace claim the top prize of \$500 – a nice boost to help fund their creative ambitions. Their talent and ambition are an inspiration to us all.

We hope Battle of the Arts will become an annual event, fostering a vibrant creative scene for young people across Port Stephens.



Learn more about events and programs happening near you at **portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community/events**

Seniors Festival at our libraries

We are committed to creating opportunities for our seniors to connect with their community, celebrate diversity and explore new horizons.

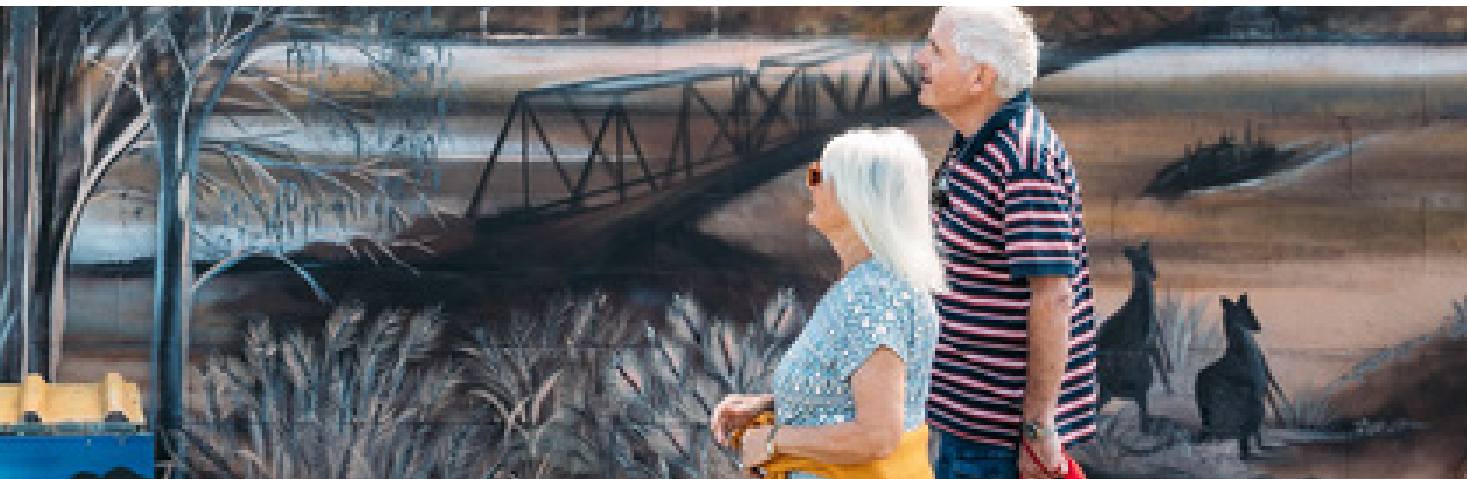
Seniors Festival coincides each year with NSW Seniors Week. This year, we promoted a vibrant program of events and activities across Port Stephens including exhibitions, aerobics classes, educational talks and workshops, yoga, concerts, cruises, and craft activities, to name a few! Thanks to the support of the NSW Government, many of these events are free or low-cost, ensuring accessibility for all.

Our Libraries played a significant role in socially supporting seniors during Seniors Week and year round hosting a broad range of seniors events across all branches. These events celebrated the wisdom that comes with age, and encouraged seniors to get out of the house, meet new people, and perhaps even pick up a new skill or hobby.

From stimulating brain training sessions to inspiring author talks, and creative craft workshops to essential tech support, our libraries provide a welcoming space for seniors to thrive. Looking forward we will continue to foster a community where wisdom is celebrated, friendships are forged, and lifelong learning is encouraged in our local libraries.



Learn more about what's happening at our libraries at **portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/library**



What we did to promote inclusion in 2023 to 2024:

- We've adopted our new Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) as part of our Wellbeing Strategy.
- We built an accessible amenities at Yulong Oval, Medowie and disability toilet at Seaham Sporting fields.
- We've improved the verge for disability parking on Raymond Terrace's main street, William Street.
- We've continued to review our footpaths and ramps throughout our towns and villages to identify and prioritise gaps, upgrades and new footpaths required.
- We've installed 15 new bus shelters around Port Stephens
- We've improved our accessible communication incorporating captions on external videos, text to speech overlays on Councils online engagement platform, and improved the skillset of graphic designer staff accessible design and documents.
- Developed Easy Read versions of the Wellbeing Strategy and Disability Inclusion Action plan
- We're working to incorporate web chat into Council's website
- Improvements to Inclusion tent and accessibility at major events, with collaboration with local pharmacy business and Social Story being developed for Illuminate festival.

- We incorporated an accessible arts workshop into Council's Creatives Conference in February 2024
- We've commenced investigations and engagement with the industry about supporting accessible tourism and business programs.
- We've been successful in our application for Disability and Inclusion program funding in our mobile preschool to provide additional staff to develop and deliver Individual Learning Plans for each child. The funding will also assist to make any adjustments to the environment and purchase any specialised resources.
- Our OOSH Team have been undertaking additional training in better understanding inclusion and children's behaviour to help them better understand barriers to inclusion, and develop actions and strategies to cover these to increase participation and achieve positive learning outcomes.

Looking forward:

We're investigating a new listening group for people with Disability lived experience to have direct input into Council projects, programs and initiatives.

We're also making upgrades to Shoal Bay Holiday Park with more accessible facilities including an accessible camp kitchen station, accessible play equipment and accessible BBQ and outdoor furniture.



Our Community FEATURE STORY



Little Beach, Nelson Bay

Building a healthy and happy community

Our wellbeing is vital to our health and happiness. It's shaped by where and how we grow, live, work, play and age.

For wellbeing to grow, it's critical that all people in our community, especially our most vulnerable, have the same access and opportunity to participate in all the things that make Port Stephens such an incredible place.

We've developed a Community Wellbeing Strategy demonstrating our commitment to making Port Stephens a place where wellbeing is prioritised and people can lead happy, healthy and connected lives no matter their age, background or ability. The Strategy provides a roadmap on how we can improve overall wellbeing - bringing together directions from a number of existing strategies and policies such as our Ageing Strategy, Crime Prevention Plan, Disability Inclusion Action Plan and, Multicultural Policy to deliver an integrated approach to wellbeing.

Over 760 people shared their time, ideas and opinions as we developed this Strategy. Through these conversations, we've learnt that wellbeing means different things to different people and ranges from basic needs such as access to food, water and shelter through to accessibility, time with family and friends and access to facilities.

We have used this feedback to focus the strategy on creating inclusive and safe places which encourage participation in community life. We have also developed a number of actions which to build community resilience, capacity and skills so we can all adapt and thrive in times of change.

We know we play a significant role in community wellbeing and recognise that collaboration and partnerships with our communities and other stakeholders are critical to our success. We look forward to strengthening these partnerships to achieve genuine change to wellbeing across our place.



Learn more about the Community Wellbeing Strategy at
portstephens.nsw.gov.au/development/strategies-and-planning-guides/community-wellbeing-strategy

Goal 2: Recognised traditions and lifestyles

Our community supports the richness of its heritage and culture

Yabang Gumba Gu

We're committed to improving the lives of First Nations people in our community. The Yabang Gumba Gu agreement, signed in 2018 with the local Worimi and Karuah Land Councils, provides a roadmap for achieving our shared vision for Port Stephens.

In the past year, we've made strides in collaboration with First Nations communities to implement key initiatives outlined in the agreement.

The 2023 NAIDOC Week celebrations provided a powerful opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of First Nations people, particular Elders, to our community. Through a flag raising ceremony, march and family fun day, we honoured the wisdom and guidance for future generations.

To strengthen local Aboriginal communities, we invested \$28,608 in five community groups

through our Aboriginal Projects Fund. Projects included an Indigenous Adult Art and Cultural Coolamon workshop with an art work showcase at Tomaree Library, the creation of a possum skin cloak by students at Hunter River High School, and resources for culturally inclusive classrooms at Fern Bay Public School. Additionally sewing classes and materials for women who have experienced domestic violence and a community veggie patch was also established.

A key focus has been the development of Port Stephens Council's draft Aboriginal Protocols. These protocols will establish a framework for respectful, inclusive and informed decision making that acknowledges the inherent rights of First Nations peoples to their cultural heritage. By building trust and strong relationships, these protocols will guide out work with First Nations communities on all Council projects and initiatives. We look forward to collaborating with First Nations peoples to refine the draft Protocols before being formally adopted by Council.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community/community-services/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people



NAIDOC Week 2023

Art Walk Nelson Bay

This year, we launched the Art Walk Nelson Bay, a unique experience connecting street art and murals dotted in the Nelson Bay town centre into one exciting and colourful walk.

Weaving from the Nelson Bay Marina, through to the tree-lined streets of the Nelson Bay CBD, the Art Walk is underpinned by Our Incredible Place Strategy. It aims to create vibrant spaces, provide a sense of community and attract visitors to stay and spend in our local community.

Showcasing the talent of Worimi artist Jason Russell, and mural artist Jordan Lucky, the Art Walk features 12 individual locations each with their own experience. To launch the Art Walk we held a guided tour where the artists provided insights into their inspiration and the stories behind each piece.

The Art Walk remains a permanent experience for locals and visitors to explore at their own pace. Pick up a free map and guide from our Visitor Information Centre, or download it from our website. Descriptive plaques and QR codes allow passers-by to engage with each piece—although we encourage you to immerse yourself in the entire Art Walk to appreciate it at its fullest!



Learn more or download
the art walk map and guide
pscouncil.info/artwalk-nb

Sail Port Stephens Street Party

In April, we transformed Nelson Bay into a vibrant hub of activity with the inaugural Sail Port Stephens Street Party. This lively celebration brought together locals and visitors for a night of entertainment, food, dining and dancing.

With a “cool, coastal vibes” theme, the event provided Sail Port Stephens participants a unique opportunity to mingle with the local community and soak up the regatta atmosphere. Street closures allowed businesses to extend their operations onto the street under strings of festoon lights and a starry night sky. Party-goers filled the streets, enjoying outdoor dining and dancing to the vibrant sounds of the live entertainment.

Local businesses embraced the opportunity to participate, with 4 restaurants and 17 retail businesses extending trading hours and offering special deals, enjoying the increased foot traffic and buzzing ambience. A further 11 local businesses generously donated prizes for a fantastic giveaway featuring local accommodation, experiences and products.

The overwhelming positive feedback from locals, businesses, and visiting sailing teams confirms the success of the Sail Port Stephens Street Party. We look forward to building on this momentum and bringing this event to life again in 2025.

Creatives Conference inspires innovation

To foster a vibrant creative community, we hosted the inaugural Port Stephens Creatives Conference early in 2024. This event brought together local artists, designers, and innovators to share ideas, foster collaboration, and explore new opportunities.

Aligned with the Our Incredible Place Strategy, the conference aimed to ignite creativity and inspire future projects. Through a diverse program of guest speakers and workshops, attendees delved into topics ranging from accessibility in art to the need for dedicated creative spaces.

The conference was a resounding success, generating a wealth of ideas and identifying a strong desire for a connected creative community. By providing a platform for artists to share experiences and collaborate. The event laid the groundwork for a more dynamic and inclusive cultural landscape in Port Stephens.

Looking forward, we envision a region where creativity flourishes and artists have the resources and support to realise their full potential. Building on this momentum, we're committed to making the Creatives Conference an annual program, continuing to nurture local talent, stimulate innovation, and position Port Stephens as a thriving hub for arts and culture.



Learn more about arts, culture and
heritage at pscouncil.info/arts-heritage



Sail Port Stephens Street Party, Nelson Bay
Photo by Megann Evans Photography



Australia Day festivities celebrated community

With events across four locations, Port Stephens celebrated Australia Day with citizenship ceremonies, live music, markets, marching bands, pool parties and fireworks. The theme was Reflect. Respect. Celebrate., encouraging locals to reflect on our history, respect the stories of others, and celebrate Port Stephens, our achievements and our people.

We marked Australia Day but also celebrating diversity and community spirit. Our region welcomed 27 new citizens and honoured local champions at the 2024 Port Stephens Annual Awards.

Our annual award winners are inspiring individuals who have made significant impacts on our community through their dedication to volunteering, sports, and environmental causes.

Citizen of the Year – Meagan Ambrose

A Registered Nurse, Community Care Clinical Nurse, and Woundcare Clinical Nurse Consultant who is also actively involved in various community organisations.

In 2022, she opened a Dementia and Memory Loss Activity Centre to provide much-needed respite for loved ones and carers.

The centre has already provided over 3,739 hours of respite to 25 clients in its first year of operation, earning Meagan recognition from Dementia Australia for her passion and dedication to this important cause.

Young Citizen of the Year – Abby Keely

Abby is a remarkable young leader who continuously gives back to her community through her involvement in various organisations and charities.

As the Captain of Irrawang High School and a proactive member of the Council Youth Advisory Panel, Dance Xtreme, and Medowie Girl Guides, Abby is a true inspiration for those around her.

She's also working towards her Queens Guide Award and will represent Girl Guides Australia at an International Leadership Program in India in January 2024.

Port Stephens Medals

The Port Stephens Medal is awarded to individuals, organisations or groups for distinguished service to the community.

Nelson Bay Cancer Patient Transport Group

This incredible group of more than 55 volunteers has been providing transport for cancer sufferers to Newcastle and Maitland metropolitan areas since 2012.

With 819 individual trips and over 88,380km driven, this group has been a lifeline for patients in need of treatment, scans, and medical appointments.

Not only do they provide essential transportation, but they also offer emotional support and social interactions, making the journey a little easier for those in need.

Sportsperson of the Year – Alice Mitchell

Alice is a young and accomplished athlete who has been a dedicated member of the Nelson Bay Touch Football Association for over a decade.

At just 15 years of age, she proudly represented the state of New South Wales in Touch Football.

Alice is also a valued member of the Nelson Bay Netball Association and currently coaches a touch football squad, where she instils important values such as teamwork, confidence, and healthy life choices in her athletes.

Cultural Endeavour – Jacob Ridgeway

Jacob Ridgeway is an award-winning singer, songwriter, and performing artist who has used his music as a powerful platform to share his experiences and observations of life as a proud Worimi and Gamilaroi man.

With his debut single 'Bullyman' winning the 2019 National Indigenous Story Award Grand Prize and charting in the iTunes Alternative Chart and All Genres Chart, Jacob has performed alongside some of Australia's biggest music names and earned critical acclaim.

Jacob also offers a unique creative writing course that uses music to foster creativity, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and practical writing skills in his students.

Environmental Award – Nelson Bay Civic Pride Group

This group is led by Margaret Wilkinson and her dedicated team of volunteers, Rory Milne, Ian Spight, and Judy Washington, have been voluntarily maintaining the gardens in Nelson Bay CBD since 2018.

Initiated by the Tomaree Business Chamber, now Business Port Stephens, this group ensures that the gardens are beautifully planted and maintained, providing a positive and visually stunning feature for both tourists and locals in Port Stephens.



For more information about Port Stephens Annual Awards visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community/annual-awards



Our Community FEATURE STORY



Raymond Terrace Library

Growing role of our libraries

In Port Stephens, our local libraries are so much more than just books - they are vibrant community hubs offering opportunities to learn, explore, and connect. With four libraries across Port Stephens, we are committed to providing a diverse range of programs, events and collections to support lifelong learning.

Over the past year, our libraries have been on a journey of transformation, diversifying their offering to appeal to people of all ages and interests from children's craft sessions and movie nights to author talks and workshops on wellness, technology, and lifestyle. Every season our popular two-week school holiday programs are always a hit with local families.

Best of all, many of these programs, events and activities are completely free to attend, making them accessible to everyone in our community. They are also a fun way to get out of your comfort zone, meet new people and perhaps pick up some new skills!

If you are ever looking for something interesting, fun and entertaining to do, make sure to stop by your local Library – there's so much to discover!



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/library

International Women's Day Scholarships

Each March, International Women's Day (IWD) celebrates the remarkable achievements of women worldwide. To honour local women, we offer scholarships supporting their passions in arts, culture, environment, business, community, health, or sport. The winners for 2024 were:

Sally-Anne Marshall

A dedicated and tireless social worker who has served the community of Port Stephens for 8 years. There are very few face-to-face social workers in the area, but Sally-Anne has been a beacon of hope for women who have survived domestic violence, homelessness, and other adversities.

Now, Sally-Anne is taking her advocacy work to the next level by focusing on disability, particularly those with neurodivergence. With the help of this scholarship, she hopes to continue her passion in this space and develop much-needed books and resources that will support the community.

Emma McMillan

The proud owner of the Wellness Centre in Port Stephens. With many years of experience in the wellbeing and community services industry, Emma is passionate about helping people live their best lives.

With the help of this scholarship, Emma is taking her commitment to the next level. She's been working hard to bring weekly wellness classes to those in need, including people experiencing hardship, homelessness, family and domestic violence, NDIS, or mental health issues.

This scholarship will also help Emma to expand her initiative and offer even more support to people in our community who are struggling.

Brodie Oxlade

A courageous survivor of child abuse and post traumatic stress disorder who is determined to turn her pain into purpose.

Brodie has an incredible story to share, and she is ready to share it with the world through

a memoir that will raise awareness about these issues. But publishing a book is no small feat, and Brodie can't do it alone—that's where the Port Stephens Council IWD scholarship will assist.

Brodie will use the scholarship to help cover the costs of publishing her book, including legal checks, editing, formatting, printing, and distribution. By helping Brodie, we're also helping make a difference in the lives of countless people who are struggling with similar experiences.

Brodie's memoir will be a powerful tool for raising awareness and helping others heal.

Jacie Whitfield – Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Salamander Bay

Jacie has a passion for empowering women through their menopausal transition, post-partum recovery, and infant care.

She wants to bring her expertise to the beautiful community of Port Stephens through workshops and classes, all of which will be available via a mobile service.

With the help of the IWD scholarship funds, Jacie hopes to level up her skills, education, and training, as well as expand her marketing strategies. Additionally, the funds will also be used to provide top-of-the-line equipment for her sessions.






For more information about our International Women's Day Scholarships visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/news/2024/four-local-ladies-inspire-on-international-womens-day












Our Community Performance

Aspirational measures

-  **On track**
Target achieved or on track to be achieved
-  **Monitor**
< 5% off the target
-  **Off track**
> 5% off the target

C1 | Community wellbeing

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
C1.1.1.1 Develop and commence implementation of the Community Wellbeing Strategy	Targeted early intervention actions completed	Delivered	On track	
	Actions implemented from the Youth Strategy	Delivered	On track	
	Actions implemented from the Disability Inclusion Action Plan	Delivered	23	
	Endorsed Community Wellbeing Strategy	Endorsed	On track	
	Actions implemented from the Community Wellbeing Strategy	Delivered	On track	
C1.2.1.1 Deliver early education and care for children	Customer satisfaction with Thrive Kids	≥ 90%	97%	
	Annual accreditation	Compliant	Compliant	
C1.3.1.1 Initiate and manage contracts with recreational, leisure and community services	Community satisfaction score with Council swimming pools	Better than baseline of 68% 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey	64% 2024 Community Satisfaction Survey	
	Maintain a score above NSW 3 year average in the Royal Life Safety Assessment Audit	>3 year average	On Track	

C2 | Recognised traditions and lifestyles

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
C2.1.1.1 Implement initiatives and projects to promote Aboriginal Culture and protect Aboriginal places	Endorsed Aboriginal protocols	Endorsed	Development of protocols commenced	⊖
	Comment: This project is being expanded and is currently underway. Engagement has been completed, with endorsement expected prior to the end of 2024.			
	Award grants within the budgeted Aboriginal projects fund	Delivered	Aboriginal Projects Funding awarded. Refer page 55.	✓
	NAIDOC week activities delivered	Delivered	On-track	✓
	Coordinate 4 Aboriginal Strategic Committee meetings	Delivered	Monitor	⊖
	Comment: Meetings coordinated, however only 1 held due to scheduling conflicts.			
	Endorsed reviewed Yabang Gumba Gu agreement for 2024-2026	Endorsed	Review commenced with Project Control Group	⊖
	Comment: Review to continue in 2025.			
C2.2.1.1 Implement actions of Our Incredible Place Strategy	Actions implemented from our Incredible Place Strategy	Delivered	On track	✓
	Reconnecting Regional events major event held	Delivered	On-track	✓
	Major event sponsorship program delivered	Delivered	On-track	✓
	Australia Day and NAIDOC community events delivered	Delivered	On-track	✓
	Community funding program delivered	Delivered	On-track	✓
C2.3.1.1 Provide support for the preservation of Port Stephens heritage	Hold 3 Heritage Advisory Panel meetings annually	Delivered	On-track	✓
C2.4.1.1 Deliver public library services, programs and resources	Library user satisfaction score	>90%	94%	✓
	Increase customer satisfaction with outreach and homebound services	Increase	On-track	✓
	Number of visits to Library branches	≥230,000	231,417	✓
	Internet and Wi-Fi usage at Raymond Terrace and Tomaree Library branches	≥45,000	28,382	✗
	Comment: Usage has continued to rise, but is not quite at pre-COVID levels.			
	Community Satisfaction with Library Programs, Activities & Events	Increase	On-track	✓
	Attendance at programs, activities and events	≥ 9,500	9,252	⊖
	Use of library resources (collection items borrowed)	≥ 300,000	305,945	✓

Our Place

A liveable and connected place supporting community wellbeing and local economic growth.



Goal 1: Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investment

Our community has an adaptable, sustainable and diverse economy

Raymond Terrace Improvement Project

Our community driven Raymond Terrace Town Centre Improvement Project was designed to foster local pride and create a more dynamic town centre. The project was initiated by our West Ward Councillors in December 2023 and then developed entirely shaped by local input.

We invited residents to share their ideas for improving the town centre both in face-to-face sessions and online. From these suggestions, we developed potential projects and asked the community to choose their favorites. The clear winners were a community clean-up and the creation of an Urban Green Space.

We look forward to working closely with our community to bring these projects to life and create a town centre that everyone can be proud of.



Learn more and to keep up to date at haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/raymond-terrace-cbd-improvement-project

Koala Sanctuary win gold award

The Port Stephens Koala Sanctuary achieved a significant milestone this year by winning Gold at the NSW Tourism Awards in the “Tourism Attraction” category. This prestigious accolade recognises the Sanctuary’s exceptional commitment to conservation, innovation, and world-class visitor experiences.

Reflecting the growing global concern for koala populations, the Sanctuary has experienced a surge in international visitation, with a 25% increase in day visitors over the past year. Europe remains a dominant market, with



France, Germany, and the UK leading the way. In Asia, Singapore holds the top spot, followed closely by China and Korea.

To address the increasing demand for koala care and rehabilitation, the Port Stephens Koala Hospital is undergoing a major expansion. This cutting-edge facility, scheduled for completion in September 2024, will feature a ground-breaking on-site CT scanner, a state-of-the-art research laboratory, and an enhanced public viewing area. These advancements will enable the Sanctuary to provide world-class care for koalas and other native wildlife while contributing to vital research and conservation efforts.



Learn more about our Koala Sanctuary portstephenskoalas Sanctuary.com.au

Mayoral Academic Scholarships

For 14 years, the Port Stephens Mayoral Academic Scholarship program has been the launch pad for local talent. Over 170 students have received a combined \$350,000 in scholarships, thanks to the long-standing partnership and generous support of 17 local businesses and Council.

This year, our generous sponsors contributed \$40,000 to 20 truly inspiring young people. Through rigorous applications and interviews with the Mayor and senior staff, these students demonstrated their academic prowess and potential.

Our scholarship program goes beyond financial assistance. Scholarship winners are connected with their sponsors creating opportunities for valuable networking and mentorship.



Learn more and find out who our sponsors and scholarship winners were at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community/grants-funding-and-scholarships/mayoral-academic-scholarships

Checking in on business

It's important we have a strong dynamic business sector in Port Stephens. To understand the needs and aspirations of our business community, we conduct the Port Stephens Business Health Check every 2 years. This valuable survey provides insights into the challenges and opportunities facing local businesses. Responses help us plan how we support business moving forward, shaping economic development initiatives that drive our region's success.

In 2024, the Business Health Check received responses from a wide range of business types from across Port Stephens, with 73% of respondents rating Port Stephens as an Good or Excellent place to do business.



Learn more about how we support business at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/business/support-for-businesses



Our Place

FEATURE ARTICLE



Making our roads a priority

This year saw significant progress in improving our road network, a key priority for both Council and the community. While there's always more to be done, substantial investments are paving the way for a safer and more connected future.

Through our community Advocacy Program, we worked hard to secure funding to support road repairs and rehabilitation. This financial year, we secured \$10 million from the NSW Government to help deliver these works.

This investment is funding essential repairs and upgrades across the road network. Tomaree Road, Shoal Bay was completed in May 2024 with new kerb and gutters, road pavement reconstruction, minor drainage repairs, and elements that will facilitate future footpath construction.

Other roads selected for rehabilitation thanks to this commitment include:

- Fairlands Road, Medowie
- Rookes Road, Salt Ash
- Swan Bay Road, Swan Bay
- Avenue of the Allies, Tanilba Bay
- Beach Road, Nelson Bay
- Short Street, Fingal Bay
- Trevally Street, Nelson Bay
- Italia Road, East Seaham
- East Seaham Road, East Seaham

The focus on improving our roads will continue. Looking forward, additional rate revenue from the Special Rate Variation will enable more funding dedicated to revitalising our road network. We'll also continue to apply for grant funding for projects like the \$3.4 million upgrade to Avenue of the Allies in Tanilba Bay.



Learn more about our road maintenance program at pscouncil.info/road-maintenance



Taylors Beach playground – Councillor Leah Anderson and Mayor Ryan Palmer

Goal 2: Infrastructure and facilities

Our community's infrastructure and facilities are safe, convenient, reliable and environmentally sustainable.

Inclusive playgrounds for all

This year, we've upgraded 5 playgrounds across Port Stephens, delivering exciting new spaces for children of all abilities to enjoy.

Supported by a combination of Council and external funding, Taylors Beach, Salamander Bay, Karuah, Tanilba Bay and Nelson Bay now boast more inclusive and welcoming playgrounds.

The community were involved in the playground designs, with residents prioritising elements like climbing structures, swings, slides,

and opportunities for sensory play. These preferences were incorporated alongside adherence to the "Everyone Can Play" guidelines, ensuring both fun and safety.

These upgrades represent our commitment to enhancing the well-being and overall liveability of Port Stephens. By investing in quality public spaces, we encourage families to spend time outdoors, fostering a sense of community and promoting healthy lifestyles for all ages.



Learn more about the play spaces and their locations
haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/projects-works

Building a sporting future for Port Stephens

Sport is integral to our community - the surf to the sporting fields, Port Stephens offers a diverse range of activities for everyone.

This year, we embarked on a journey to enhance 2 key facilities – Lakeside and Mallabula Sports Complexes – through the development of dedicated masterplans. Working closely with the West Ward and Tilligerry Sports Councils we're ensuring these spaces meet the changing needs of our community.

Lakeside Sporting Complex is set to become a dynamic hub for sports and recreation, with an additional international-sized field, upgraded amenities including enhanced facilities for women and girls, and a potential indoor sports centre. Mallabula Sporting Complex, will expand its capacity, improving accessibility, and creating a safer environment for all users through additional fields, upgraded parking, and enhanced security measures.

These initiatives are just the beginning. We recognise the power of sport to improve physical and mental health, foster social connections, and build a stronger community. Looking forward, we'll continue to prioritise projects like this that enhance the sporting experience for everyone, regardless of age, ability, or background.



Learn more and view the masterplans at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/development/strategies-and-planning-guides/open-space-and-recreation-planning

Revitalising our town centres

Our town centres are the heart of our communities. We're committed to revitalising town centres across Port Stephens, creating vibrant hubs that stimulate economic growth, attract visitors, and enhance the overall quality of life for our residents.

A key example of our commitment is the recently completed Lemon Tree Passage Foreshore revitalisation. Thanks to funding from the

NSW Public Spaces Legacy Program, we've transformed this area into a beautiful, accessible, and inviting space for everyone. This project includes a new shared pathway, expanded park amenities, and a space for events and activities.

In Raymond Terrace, we're continuing to build on the community-driven Raymond Terrace Public Domain Plan, transforming the town centre into a vibrant destination. Stage 2 of the William Street revitalisation, completed earlier this year, has already brought new life to the area with new landscaping, entry feature signage, art installations, and improved pedestrian crossings.

Looking forward, we'll continue this momentum, working closely with the community to create a town centre that everyone can be proud of.

Expanding the Hunter's cycling network

The Hunter is a thriving tourism hub, attracting over 10 million visitors annually. Cycling tourism is a key driver of economic growth and Port Stephens has stunning landscape to offer.

In collaboration with Transport NSW, we've been designing part of the proposed Shiraz to Shore Cycle Trail, a 6.8km shared pathway from Fern Bay to Newcastle Airport. This pathway has been identified by the Hunter Joint Organisation as a vital missing link, enabling safe and reliable active transport between Newcastle City and the Newcastle Airport.

Aiming for completion by April 2025, the design work we're completing for this project will help to build the pathway that connects picturesque wine country to breathtaking coastal vistas and enhance connectivity, providing a safe and enjoyable active transport option for locals and visitors alike.



Learn more about the Fern Bay to Newcastle Airport shared path at pscouncil.info/shiraz-to-shore



Raymond Terrace Depot

Goal 3: Thriving and safe place to live

Our community's infrastructure and facilities are safe, convenient, reliable and environmentally sustainable.

Creating homes in Raymond Terrace

We know that housing supply is a big issue for our community. Social housing in particular is urgently needed to help reduce the impacts of homelessness on our community.

Over the past year, Council has worked in partnership with Hume Community Housing, NSW Land and Housing Corporation (now Homes NSW), and Tract Consulting to investigate social housing opportunities in Raymond Terrace.

Funded by the NSW Government through the Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund, the project aimed to facilitate an increase in social housing supply and diversity in Raymond Terrace. The project identified two key precincts, which had a high proportion of ageing, low-density, single dwelling style public housing. The plan identified how government investment could both increase and improve social housing supply in this location.

Moving forward, Council is continuing to work with Homes NSW and Hume Community Housing to advocate for funding to deliver these works.

New Depot and EOC opens

This year, we opened our new Raymond Terrace Depot. After many years of work, the depot has created a space that has improved staff safety, efficiency, and collaboration. With upgraded office spaces, modern training facilities, and improved car park accessibility, our team now operates in a more comfortable and productive environment.

Central to the new facility is the state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). Designed to be a hub for coordinated emergency response, the EOC brings together essential agencies such as the SES, Rural Fire Service, NSW Ambulance, Fire & Rescue NSW, and Marine Rescue during times of crisis. Strategically located in Raymond Terrace, the EOC ensures rapid response capabilities across the entire Port Stephens region. When not in use for EOC purposes, the space is used by other Council training and meetings, maximising the facility's value for our community.



Our Place

FEATURE ARTICLE



Creating homes for everyone

Like many regional communities across Australia, Port Stephens is facing a huge challenge – the trifecta of housing supply, diversity, and affordability.

The NSW Government has forecast that Port Stephens will need to find housing for an additional 20,000 residents over the next 20 years. With increasing investment in Tomago and Heatherbrae and the expansion of Newcastle Airport to accommodate international flights, it would be naïve to think more people wouldn't want to choose Port Stephen as a place to call home.

With limited opportunity for new housing developments, we're seeing housing prices increase – pushing low to middle income families out of the market. This not only causes significant social impacts but also, economic impacts. As we lose our students, our young professionals and in some cases retirees who can no longer afford to live in our community, we struggle to find people to fill jobs. Aged care facilities, health, hospitality and trades are all looking for more people to fill more and more vacancies. Unless we find solutions, these problems will only get worse over time.

To help deliver solutions to this increasing issue, we endorsed the Port Stephens Local Housing Strategy and Port Stephens Housing Supply Plan. These plans set the blueprint for future housing growth across Port Stephens, identify what types of housing can be built, where new homes can be located and what is required to support new development and opportunities for more town houses and apartments in our town centres close to shops, services and public transport.

We know that by increasing the diversity and affordability of housing types, our residents can continue to live in their community close to family, friends, community and networks through all stages of their life.

As a Council we are committed to the getting housing right - we need more housing but we also need more services – we know one can't happen without the other.

Having this strategy endorsed is the first step in looking forward – there is so much more to be done but by working together, we can make positive change to shape the future of our community.



Read more about the Port Stephens Local Housing Strategy by visiting pscouncil.info/housing-strategy

Fast tracking Development Applications

This year, Port Stephens Council approved 592 Development Applications (DA) with a total value of \$391.9 million. These DAs were determined in an average time of 26 days.

Improving our DA assessment timeframes has been a key priority for Council for a number of years. We've put together a dedicated team to fast-track DA lodgements and are working to integrate our systems with the NSW Planning Portal – this means things are more efficient, speeding up the whole process.

This investment in improving DA assessment time frames have been part of a bigger focus for Council - housing supply, affordability and diversity is impacting many in our community. We've recently secured a Federal Government grant to help us further reduce red tape to make it easier, quicker and more affordable to lodge a DA.

In the last financial year, Council staff assessed and determined major development applications including high technology facilities at the Newcastle Airport, residential flat buildings in Nelson Bay, major industrial facilities, large residential subdivisions, seniors housing and commercial developments. This includes approving a long-standing development application for a 700 lot footprint in the Kings Hill Urban Release Area.

Looking forward we'll be fast tracking assessments for single houses, granny flats and subdivisions and simplify the application process. We'll also be working to attract investment to more housing types around our town centres by promoting the advantages of investing in Port Stephens.

Planning for our places

Our newest Place Plans for Hinterland and Shoal Bay were adopted in 2023-2024 setting the community's vision for these places. The Hinterland Place Plan aims to address the challenges rural landowners face due to ongoing weather events and increasing development. It focuses on improving economic and social outcomes by promoting pedestrian-friendly activities, better connectivity between towns and villages, and protecting the unique local environment.

The Shoal Bay Place Plan highlights infrastructure projects that will improve liveability and inform plans for future development, such as the Shoal Bay Precinct Drainage Investigation Concept Design, undertaken through a State government grant of \$250,000. The Place Plan also outlines how local events and activations, like the Shoal Bay Food and Wine Festival to be delivered by Council in November 2024, will support year round vibrancy. It also emphasises protecting and celebrating Shoal Bay's natural assets through projects like clean up days, beachfront stabilisation, environmental volunteering and education campaigns.

We're also working on our next Place Plan for the Tilligerry and we've started involving the community in shaping the vision for the peninsula.

Actions from our existing place plans for Karuah and Medowie continue to be delivered. Projects include further town centre beautification and investigations into short term RV and motorhome parking sites in Karuah, and initiating planning for the town centre expansion site in Medowie.



Learn more about our Place Plan at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/development/place-plans



Our Place Performance

Aspirational measures

- On track**
Target achieved or on track to be achieved
- Monitor**
< 5% off the target
- Off track**
> 5% off the target

P1 | Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investments

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
P1.1.1.1 Deliver Economic Development Strategy actions	Actions implemented from our Economic Development Strategy	Delivered	On track	
	Small business month activities delivered	Delivered	On track	
P1.1.2.1 Provide strategic and financial support to Destination Port Stephens	Increase in visitor expenditure per annum	Increase	On track	

P2 | Infrastructure and facilities

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
P2.1.1.1 Provide, manage and maintain community assets	Progress completion of civil, community and corporate asset program inspection	>90%	92%	
P2.1.2.1 Provide asset and engineering services	Engineering development, flooding and drainage development application referrals are completed to the agreed service standards	≥ 90%	89%	
P2.1.3.1 Implement Council's adopted annual capital works program	Projects completed on time and within budget	>95%	100%	
	Maintain average Transport for NSW contractor performance grading	Good	Good	
P2.1.4.1 Maintain Council's civil and community infrastructure	High priority road defects fixed on time	100%	90%	
	Comment: Due to the amount of wet weather, Council has been unable to meet all interventional levels for servicing defects. 5% decrease from 2022-2023.			
	High priority roadside drainage and maintenance defects fixed on time	100%	90%	
	Comment: Due to the amount of wet weather, Council has been unable to meet all interventional levels for servicing defects. 10% increase from 2022-2023.			
	High priority open spaces and foreshore maintenance defects fixed on time	100%	95%	
	High priority actions for Building Trades fixed within the required time frame	100%	95%	
	Mechanical services carried out in line with the manufacturer's specifications	100%	100%	

P3 | Thriving and safe place to live

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
P3.1.1.1 Develop, implement and monitor land use plans and strategies	Revised LSPS on Public Exhibition	Exhibited & adopted	On-track	✓
	Revised LHS adopted by Council	Adopted	On-track	✓
	Raymond Terrace Sub-precinct Masterplan finalised	Finalised	On-track	✓
	Raymond Terrace Strategy Review on public exhibition	Exhibited	The State reforms for low and mid-rise housing were announced which will achieve similar results (raising height limits).	✓
	Planning Proposals assessed within timeframes as per DPE LEP Making Guideline (Sept 2022)	Compliant	On-track	✓
	Local Infrastructure Contribution updated endorsed	Endorsed	On-track	✓
	No more than 10% overdue planning certificates	Compliant	On-track	✓
	Local Infrastructure Contribution referrals completed within the agreed timeframe	Compliant	On-track	✓
P3.2.1.1 Provide development services	Median net determination time for Development Applications	≤40 days	26 Days	✓
	Maintain certification market share	43% (2022-2023)	38%	—
	Increase the number of premises added to the fire safety program	Annual increase-	22 added	✓
P3.2.1.2 Provide compliance & ranger services	Development compliance customer requests closed as a proportion of number received	≥ 95%	95%	✓
	Ranger customer requests closed as a proportion of the number received	≥ 95%	100%	✓
P3.2.1.3 Provide environmental health services	Environmental health customer requests closed as a proportion of the number received	>95%	99%	✓
P3.3.1.1 Implement the actions within Place Plans across centres and coordinate place management and activation programs	Support the delivery of Place Plan actions	Delivered	On-track	✓
	Deliver a LGA wide place activation program	Delivered	On-track	✓
P3.3.2.1 Provide financial assistance for the community	Provide an annual community financial assistance program	Delivered	On-track. Refer page 103.	✓
P3.4.1.1 Deliver emergency management services, programs and resources	APZ Contractor's performance against the agreed program	100%	100%	✓
	Completion of annual objectives identified in the Emergency Management Strategic Objectives	100%	100%	✓

Our Environment

Port Stephens' environment is clean, green, protected and enhanced



Goal 1: Ecosystem function

Our community has healthy and dynamic environmental systems that support biodiversity.

Stepping up our koala protection efforts

In a significant step towards wildlife conservation, we successfully completed the Port Stephens Drive Koala Vehicle Strike Project. This initiative aims to reduce the number of interactions between cars and koalas on this busy road.

The project involved building a new fence and underpass to guide koalas safely away from traffic. Additional structures were installed to help koalas return to safety if they entered the road. This collaborative effort, involving Council, the NSW Government, and local experts, has created a safer environment for our iconic koala population.

The project has been Highly Commended in the Environmental Leadership category at the LG Professionals, NSW Excellence Awards Dinner.

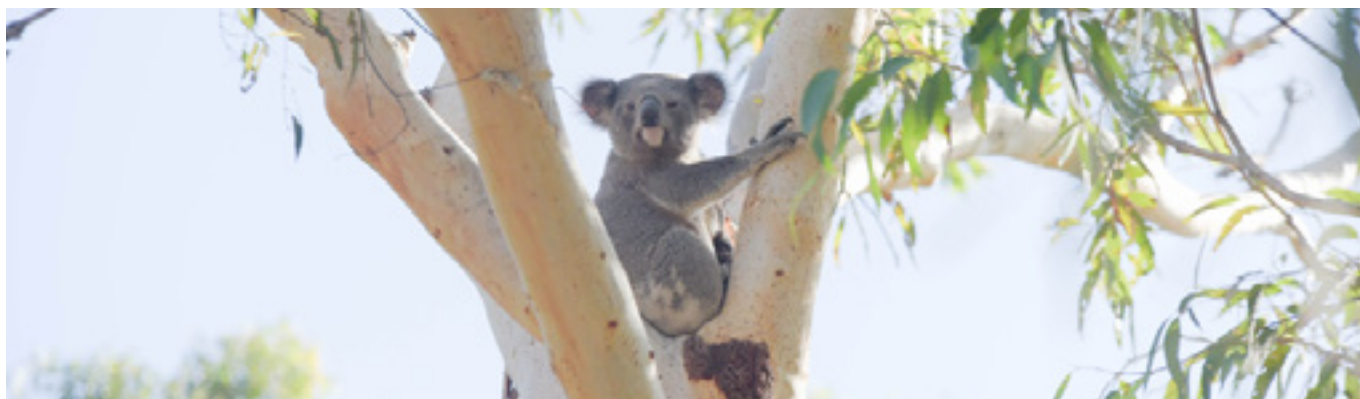
Beyond this project, Council is committed to long-term koala conservation. Council has secured \$300,000 funding from the State Government to prepare and deliver updated koala habitat mapping for Port Stephens. The mapping will help inform Council's land management decisions on a regional and local scale.

On a local scale, Council's Koala Landholder Partnership Program encourages community members to create koala-friendly habitats on their private properties by planting trees and removing harmful weeds. This grassroots approach demonstrates the power of community involvement and collaboration in protecting our incredible flora and fauna.

By combining infrastructure improvements and community engagement, we're taking significant strides to ensure the survival of our beloved koalas for generations to come.



Learn more about our koala protection projects at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/koalas/key-documents-and-links



Vegetation mapping to inform our decisions

Port Stephens boasts a diverse range of ecosystems, and effective land management relies on comprehensive environmental data. To better understand and protect our valuable habitats, we've secured State and Federal funding to develop and deliver a detailed vegetation map for all of Port Stephens.

This multi-stage project will create the first vegetation map specifically tailored to Port Stephens. This mapping will help pinpoint sensitive habitats, identify biodiversity corridors and rehabilitation areas, and inform decisions to protect threatened species and restoration of our natural environment.

The first stage, focusing on the Tomaree and Tilligerry Peninsula, has been completed, with the remaining areas to be completed by December 2025. This invaluable resource will complement existing statewide mapping efforts and provide a solid foundation for future conservation initiatives.

Keeping our landscape safe together

We're proud to partner with the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council, Firesticks Alliance, and Hunter Local Land Services to revitalize our natural environment through culturally-informed cool burns. This year, we held 2 workshops in Mallabula educating the community about this traditional land management practice.

Cool burns, conducted by the Worimi people, are essential for restoring our landscape. By carefully managing undergrowth, they

create ideal conditions for eucalypt trees, a vital food source for koalas, reduce the risk of devastating wildfires and restore the natural balance of the ecosystem by promoting the growth of native plants.

Looking forward, we're committed to expanding this important initiative to Salamander Bay demonstrating our commitment to protecting our environment and koalas, and honouring the deep cultural connection between the Worimi people and the land.

Taking action on unwanted invaders

Invasive species pose a significant threat to our beautiful natural environment. These unwanted invaders are impacting our waterways, coastlines, and parks.

We've secured \$160,000 in grant funding from the NSW Government to combat the spread of invasive plant species across Port Stephens. This funding is helping us weed out unwanted aquatic species like Alligator weed, Water Hyacinth, and Giant Salvinia, as well as terrestrial pests such as Chinese Violet, Bitou Bush, and Long-leaf Willow Primrose.

By fighting the war on weeds, we're protecting our environment, preserving Port Stephens' natural beauty and ensuring our public spaces remain enjoyable for everyone.



Learn more about weeds at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/weeds

Goal 2: Environmental sustainability

Our community uses resources sustainably, efficiently and equitably.

Emissions Reduction Action Plan

We're committed to a sustainable future.

We're working towards carbon neutrality in our operations by 2025 and have already achieved a significant reduction in emissions. This progress is due to initiatives like solar panels installation at the Administration Building, libraries, community centres, and Salamander Waste Transfer Station. We also installed water-saving irrigation and energy-efficient LED lighting at sporting facilities.

To guide our ongoing efforts, we've developed an Emissions Reduction Action Plan (ERAP) aligned with the broader state and federal Net Zero targets by 2050. By taking decisive steps to reduce our carbon footprint, we're looking forward and committed to a leadership role in environmental sustainability.



Learn more about our achievement in reducing emissions at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/sustainability-and-climate-change

Driving our circular economy

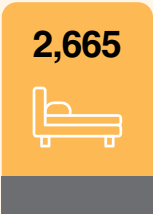
We continue to focus on a circular waste economy, finding ways to reuse, recycle and repurpose items that come to our waste transfer station. By diverting unwanted household items from landfill and transforming them into new products, we're conserving natural resource such as energy, water and materials and preserving the beauty Port Stephens has to offer.

This year, we hosted various problem waste drop off days where residents responsibly disposed of items like mattresses, tyres, electronics, and chemicals. These materials are then recycled or repurposed becoming part of our circular economy.

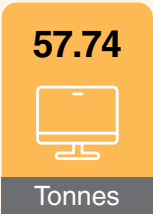
Here's an idea of how much we've recovered and examples of the new life these items take on:



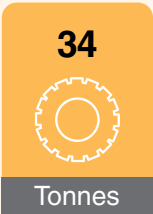
By choosing to recycle and reuse,
you're helping to create a cleaner,
greener Port Stephens for everyone.



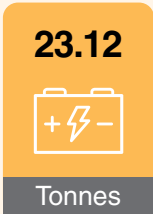
- Mattresses and bed bases
- Foam is turned into carpet underlay
 - Textiles are recycled into acoustic panelling
 - Springs are sent to scrap metal and recycled into metal roofing
 - Timber bases are turned into a mulch or weed matting



- Electronic waste
- Plastic components are turned into plastic sleepers, plant stakes, posts, insulation or plastic trays
 - Metal components are repurposed into other electronic components, or even jewellery
 - Glass components have heavy metals removed and are then turned back into new screens



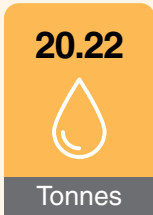
- Tyres and rims
- Rubber is turned into alternative fuel sources or crumb rubber products
 - Steel is recycled



- Batteries
- Cobalt within batteries is reused to create new batteries



- Chemicals
- Paints are used as an alternative fuel in cement kilns



- Oils
- Paints are used as an alternative fuel in cement kilns



Our Environment

FEATURE ARTICLE



Rolling out new green bins

In response to strong community demand, we introduced 32,000 garden organics bins across Port Stephens in July 2023. A key initiative of our Waste Management Strategy, it's a significant step towards a greener future, diverting 25% of green waste from landfill. After processing, garden organics waste is mulched and composted for reuse.

With a fortnightly collection, residents now have the convenience of recycling garden prunings, lawn clippings, and more directly from their home. We've also retained weekly green waste drop off days for larger loads after community feedback expressed the value in this service for those who have larger garden organics loads to dispose of.

Along with the new green bins, we've rolled out a new waste app. It's a one stop shop for waste in Port Stephens. With over 7000 downloads to date, it is a valuable tool providing essential information on what can be recycled and where, making waste management easier than ever.



Learn more about waste and recycling at
portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/waste-and-recycling

Embracing sustainability with Good for the Hood

This year, we joined the Good for the Hood @ Home program to empower our community to live more sustainably. This free online program offers practical workshops and resources to help residents reduce waste, save energy, and adopt eco-friendly habits.

Workshop topics included:

- Reducing food waste in the home
- Reusing cloth nappies for infants, and reusable sanitary items for menstruation
- Electric vehicles
- How to save on your electricity bills with solar energy
- Composting
- Homemade skin care and easy, green cleaning
- Switching to induction cooking
- Crafting an egg-cellent Easter

An online hub was also created specifically for Port Stephens residents, serving as a space for participants to connect, share tips and conduct discussions around sustainability and reducing waste.

Our community has enthusiastically embraced the program.

Nationally there are 1067 Good for the Hood members, 159 of which hail from Port Stephens – almost 15%!

We're proud to see so many Port Stephens locals signing up to the Good for the Hood program and looking for ways to improve their sustainability and keep Port Stephens beautiful.





Our Environment

FEATURE ARTICLE



Protecting our coastal assets

Here in Port Stephens, we all know our coast is one of our greatest assets. We're blessed with some of the world's most beautiful sandy beaches and bays, rocky headlands, mangroves, saltmarshes and seagrass beds.

Over the years, we've seen our coast constantly change. The ongoing changes to our coastlines are hard to ignore and as a community we need to make sure we're working together to reduce the impacts of climate change.

To protect our amazing coastline for generations to come, we've developed a Coastal Management Program. This plan outlines steps we can take to manage the challenges we might have with our coastline in the future.

We've been talking with the community since 2021 to understand the coastal areas most valued and what coastal hazards affect them. We've mapped these coastal hazards to 2040, 2070 and 2120. We've also looked at potential management options to reduce the impact of the hazards into the future.

We've used this valuable feedback, along with expert advice, to develop a program that works for everyone. Our Coastal Management Program includes 60 actions to protect our beaches, improve water quality, and support our local wildlife. It's a 10 year program with some actions driving outcomes during that period and other actions setting the ground work for action further into the future.

The draft Coastal Management Program is now with the NSW Minister for Environment, awaiting certification and we're looking forward to commencing implementation from late 2024.



Learn more about the draft Coastal Management Program at pscouncil.info/cmp-2024

Goal 3: Environmental resilience

Our community is resilient to environmental risks, natural hazards and climate change

Taking action to reduce our flood risk

Flooding has long been a challenge for communities in the Lower Hunter, often impacting multiple council areas. When considering planning decisions and development applications that are located in a flood plain each council needs to make sure development doesn't impact the flood risk of our neighbours

We all use computer modelling to understand the impact and behaviour of the floods as they travel down to the ocean and have a better understanding of the impact across all areas. However, the approach undertaken to analyse these impacts varies at each Council. Without a consistent approach, there's the potential of increasing flood risks in other areas.

With the help of funding by the NSW Government, we've been working with Maitland City Council and the City of Newcastle to develop new planning controls that are consistent across the region.

These new rules will help us determine where and how much development is safe in flood-prone areas, and what steps can be taken to reduce flood risks across the region. We're excited to share these new plans with the community soon.

By working together, we can better protect our communities from the threat of flooding.



Learn more about flood management at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/development/flood-safety

Improving the health of the Hunter River Estuary

The Hunter Estuary is one of the largest and most complex estuaries in NSW. Its home to internationally important shorebirds and wetlands and faces pressures from mining, agriculture, industry, urbanisation and Climate Change.

Despite its importance, the health of the Hunter Estuary is under pressure, having been assessed as fair to poor in its recent water quality studies.

To address these challenges, a collaborative partnership, the Hunter Estuary Alliance (HEAL) has been formed. HEAL comprises of the City of Newcastle, Port Stephens Council, Maitland City Council, Cessnock City Council, Dungog Shire Council, Hunter Local Land Services, Hunter Water and Department of Planning and Environment. HEAL is developing a comprehensive Coastal Management Program (CMP) to restore and protect the Hunter Estuary.

The Hunter Estuary CMP will focus on the coastal areas of Port Stephens in the Hunter River catchment area, from Fern Bay up through Raymond Terrace and along the Paterson, Williams and Hunter rivers. Its development occurs across 4 stages, and Stage 1 and 2 have been completed with the key risks, vulnerabilities and opportunities for the Hunter Estuary identified.

Looking forward we'll embark on Stage 3, consulting with key stakeholders and the community, to identify and evaluate options to improve the health of the Hunter Estuary.






Learn more about the Hunter Estuary CMP by visiting portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/environmental-plans-and-strategies/hunter-estuary-coastal-zone-plan-of-management







Our Environment Performance

Aspirational measures

-  **On track**
Target achieved or on track to be achieved
-  **Monitor**
< 5% off the target
-  **Off track**
> 5% off the target

E1 Ecosystem function

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
E1.1.1.1 Develop and monitor environmental policies and strategies	Completed stage 1 of revised koala habitat mapping (vegetation mapping)	Delivered	Stage 1 Vegetation Map has been received in draft.	
Comment: Mapping refinements being completed with partner government agencies. Stage 2 of the mapping is underway.				
E1.1.1.2 Provide environmental impact assessment services and a range of nature conservation, biosecurity and rehabilitation programs	Median determination time for tree assessment	≤15 days	Compliant	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed Environmental Volunteer Action Plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nyrang Reserve Kent Guardians Landcare Group Shoal Bay Landcare Group Shoal Bay West Landcare Group Greater than 75% Natural Assets at Category 1 to 3 (Satisfactory Level) Assets at Category 1 to 3 (Satisfactory Level) 1847 number of sites inspected in accordance with DPI MoU Biosecurity customer requests closed as a proportion of number received ≥ 95% 1041 hours spent on weed treatments 	Delivered	On-track	
	Commenced Environmental Volunteer Action Plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nelson Bay West Landcare Volunteers Group Soldiers Point Salamander Bay Parks, Reserves & Hall Committee Fly Point Nature Reserve Group Tanilba Foreshore Parks Group Fingal Bay Parks Group 	Delivered	On-track	

E2 | Environmental sustainability

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
E2.1.1.1 Develop and implement a Carbon Neutral Action Plan	Endorsed Carbon Neutral Action Plan	Endorsed	Emissions Reduction Action Plan delivered	✓
E2.2.1.1 Implement the Waste Management Strategy 2021- 2031	Community satisfaction score for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> garbage collection access to waste depot / transfer stations 	Better than baseline of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 81% 67% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 87% 75% 	✓
	Waste diverted from landfill	≥ 40%	42%	✓
	Satisfaction with safe, clean public amenities (i.e. toilets, fish bins, BBQs etc.)	61%	64%	✓
		2023 Community Satisfaction Survey	2024 Community Satisfaction Survey	

E3 | Environmental resilience

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
E3.1.1.1 Develop and implement the Coastal Management Program (CMP) incorporating climate change risks	Completed Stage 3 of Port Stephens CMP	Delivered	Stage 4 CMP delivered, lodged for certification with NSW Minister for Environment	✓

Our Council

Port Stephens Council leads, manages and delivers valued community services in a responsible way.



Goal 1: Governance

Our Council's leadership is based on trust and values of Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Excellence and Safety (RITES)

Advocacy for our community

The State and Federal Governments have recognised Port Stephens as a thriving economic hub for the region. It's our vision to build a vibrant and liveable place that supports local economic growth.

We've been working hard to secure funding and support from the State and Federal Government. Our goal is to ensure Port Stephens and our community is at the forefront of their future planning.

We've made significant progress, including securing a \$10 million grant for road upgrades across Port Stephens. We've also focused on support for housing supply, affordability and diversity, expediting development of the Williamstown and Tomago Defence, Aviation and Advanced Manufacturing precinct and investing in our town centres and multi-functional sport precincts.

We'll continue to actively ask our State and Federal Government representatives to make our vision a reality and we work together on building a bright tomorrow for Port Stephens.



Learn about all our advocacy priorities at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/plans-and-reporting/community-advocacy-priorities

Community feedback shaping our decisions

We're committed to delivering outcomes that improve the wellbeing and liveability of our community. One of the many ways in which we seek feedback from our community is through our Community Satisfaction Survey. This data and information helps us reflect on what our community value and how well we are delivering our services. In October 2023

and again in April 2024 we invited residents to have their say. We used social media, newspaper advertisements, flyers and our website to reach as many people as we could.

In October 2023 residents rated their overall satisfaction with the performance of Council's services as a mean score of 2.94 out of 5. In April 2024 this increased to a mean score of 3.08 out of 5. This translates to 51% satisfied, 38% dissatisfied and 12% neutral.

We know our roads remain our biggest priority to work on and we've been tackling some of our known hot spot roads via the delivery of some major road improvement projects such as Tomaree Road with Fairlands Road, Medowie and East Seaham Road, East Seaham scheduled to begin in 2025.

Whilst our results showed promise, the response sample of 211 in 2024 was not statistically representative of our population. We will continue to work with our Council on how we obtain information from our community.



Learn more about Our Community Satisfaction at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community-satisfaction-survey

Respect is everyone's role

In response to a concerning rise in aggression towards council staff since the COVID-19 pandemic, Port Stephens Council joined forces with seven other Hunter councils and the United Services Union to launch the 'Respect is Everyone's Role' campaign in July 2023. This collaborative initiative aimed to foster a culture of respect and safety for all council employees.

The campaign highlights the human impact of aggression, showcasing the faces of 24 dedicated council staff members who deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. By sharing their personal stories and passions, we aimed to remind the community that council employees are everyday people who simply want to do their jobs.

We invite organisations, public figures, and community members to join us in committing to a respectful workplace and community. Together, we can create a culture where everyone feels valued and safe.

Investing in our people: This is life at PSC!

Over the past couple of years, we have embarked on a journey to redefine what it means to work at Port Stephens Council. By deeply understanding our employees' experiences and aspirations, we crafted a compelling Employer Value Proposition (EVP) that encapsulates our inclusive culture, commitment to growth, and dedication to our community.

Our EVP is more than just words; it's a promise. It reflects the pride and passion our team brings to work every day. By sharing authentic employee stories, we're showcasing the unique and rewarding journey that comes with being part of our organisation.

Looking ahead, we're committed to continuously enhancing our workplace and fostering an environment where our employees thrive. By aligning our strategies with our EVP, we're building a high-performing team capable of delivering exceptional outcomes for our community. Our people are our greatest asset, and we're investing in their success.



Learn more about life at PSC at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/careers



Connecting our community

Over the past year, we've actively engaged with our community through a diverse range of events and initiatives. From large-scale celebrations to intimate community gatherings, our aim has been to create opportunities for residents to connect with each other and Council.

The Raymond Terrace Festival was a highlight, showcasing the area's rich heritage. It brought together Council, local families and business with live music, delicious food, and family-friendly activities.

Our Night at the Beach event transformed Birubi into a magical space, bringing both locals and the wider community together for a night under the stars. It combined entertainment with creative sand sculptures and illuminated puppets, as well as educating our community on the value of the incredible Worimi Conservation Lands and how this amazing place came to be.

Illuminate, our biggest cultural event yet, transformed Raymond Terrace into a vibrant celebration of community and diversity. It was a night filled with dazzling fire and light, cultural performances, and a warm sense of belonging. Our newest Australians were personally invited to connect with their new community in a fun and lasting way.

Our popular Community Catch-up events have also provided valuable face-to-face conversations between the Mayor, Councillors, Council's Executive Team, and residents. They have created opportunities for residents to share their thoughts and concerns and find out more about Council projects.

These events have also served as platforms for gathering essential community feedback on key initiatives such as Smart Parking, waste services, coastal management, and housing to name a few. By working closely with our community, and providing opportunities for each other to connect, we're building a stronger, more vibrant Port Stephens.

Goal 2: Financial Management

Our Council is financially sustainable to meet community needs.

Proactively funding our future

We continue to be committed to financial sustainability with opportunities to save on costs and increase our revenue, identified as actions within our Financial Sustainability Strategy.

In June 2023, IPART approved a three year Special Rate Variation (SRV), bringing in additional income to fund existing services. This helped us continue to deliver services to the community this year, without any operational deficits as inflation has grown, securing Council's long term financial sustainability.

In future years this additional income will also be spent on priority areas identified by our community - fixing our roads is the highest priority and in later years looking after our public space, waterways and foreshores.

Our Financial Sustainability Strategy has also guided our focus on diversifying where our non-rate revenue comes from and ensuring we deliver services for the community in the best possible way.

The successful rollout of smart parking, the growth in our investment portfolio and the attraction of grant funding have helped us generate more non-rate revenue. By using Business Excellence tools we're also continuing to improve how we allocate our resources, ensuring we deliver the best value for our community.

To further strengthen our financial sustainability and invest in our community's future, we've established the Resilience Fund. This strategic reserve will fund high-impact projects aligning with our community's priorities such as major infrastructure developments and expanded services. By investing surplus non-rate revenue, such as dividends from Newcastle Airport, into this fund, we're positioning our community for long-term growth and prosperity.

The Resilience Fund helps us to look forward and plan for the future, making sure our community continues to thrive.

Investing in our future

Generating non-rate revenue is key to our long term financial sustainability. This year, we focused on maximising returns from our commercial property portfolio.

One property in particular posed significant challenges due to high maintenance costs and a poor rental location. With the commercial property market in the broader region flooded with new buildings, finding tenants willing to pay market rates became increasingly difficult. To attract new tenants, we would have needed to offer significant incentives such as fit out contributions and rent free periods, negatively impacting our Long Term Financial Plan.

Faced with the potential loss of our remaining major tenant and rental income, we made the strategic decision to sell the property. This allowed us to invest in an industrial facility in Tomago, which is generating similar rental income but with significantly lower maintenance costs. This move has not only stabilised our revenue but also positioned us for future growth.

Looking forward, we'll continue to optimise the property we own, building a stronger financial foundation for Port Stephens.



Holiday season drives revenue for Council

Across the peak seasons, Port Stephens Beachside Holiday Parks welcomed thousands of visitors to the region who enjoyed the first class beachfront facilities at Fingal Bay, Shoal Bay and Halifax Holiday Parks.

With over 570 villas, cabins and caravan sites available across all parks, an estimated 2,500 guests can be accommodated each night in Port Stephens - the largest tourist accommodation provider in the region.

Our Beachside Holiday Parks are one of our non-rate revenue streams supplementing our operational budget and the daily services we provide to the community.

This year occupancy levels at our Holiday Parks continue to be very strong.

Looking forward, we're enhancing the guest experience with upgrades at Shoal Bay Holiday Park. New amenities, including an indoor kitchen, accessible BBQ area, communal dining space with luxury fireplace, and a children's playground and multi use court, will create a more inviting and comfortable environment for visitors.

These improvements will not only attract more holiday makers to our region but also strengthen our financial position, enabling us to continue providing the services we deliver for our community.



Learn more about our Beachside Holiday Parks at beachsideholidays.com.au

Goal 3: Communication and engagement

Our Council is committed to enabling an engaged and informed community

Communications and Engagement Advisory Group

A key action of our 2022-2027 Communications and Engagement Strategy, is to establish a Communications and Engagement Advisory Group (CEAG). This year the CEAG was formed bringing together 8-12 community representatives, Councillors from each Ward and Council support staff.

The CEAG has direct input into shaping our communication and engagement strategies and has already made significant contributions, providing valuable input on key projects like the Local Housing Strategy Review, Port Stephens Coastal Management Program and Smart Parking. By incorporating diverse community perspectives, we aim to improve how we communicate, provide meaningful community engagement opportunities and build trust in Council decision-making.

Looking forward, the CEAG will continue to play a vital role in ensuring our community's voice is heard and valued.



Read the agenda and minutes of the CEAG at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/committees

Making it easier to have your say

To improve our community engagement, we've launched a new Have Your Say platform. This online tool enables residents to provide input on Council projects and decisions.

The platform removes geographical and time constraints, allowing for broader participation anytime, anywhere, gathering valuable data to inform decision-making. Interactive features like mapping tools and online forums facilitate real-time feedback and collaboration.

The Have Your Say platform also fosters transparency by providing access to project updates and past engagement results. This empowers residents to stay informed and participate in shaping their community's future.

The platform is a key component of our 2022-2027 Communications and Engagement Strategy, leveraging technology to broaden participation and ensuring diversity of voice and opinion in engagement activities.

This platform enhances our ability to connect with the community and make informed decisions that reflect the needs and aspirations of our residents.



Sign up to the Have Your Say to make sure you don't miss a chance to share your thoughts haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au



Our Council

FEATURE ARTICLE



Improving our online services

Our online services aim to make it easier for residents, businesses and visitors to interact with us. This year, we've launched exciting new features on our website.

Our new Report, Request and Apply page is a one stop shop for accessing our services. This centralised hub makes it easier to navigate and report issues, submit requests, and access crucial applications. Available anywhere, anytime, it puts the power to interact with us directly at our community's fingertips.

We've also completed some extra work in the background to make sure our community can use keywords to locate specific services or resources faster and with ease. No more browsing through irrelevant pages – users can get straight to what matters most, saving valuable time.

We've also developed a dedicated Projects and Works webpage easily accessible from our homepage. This page provides regular updates, including progress images, funding details, and completion timelines. our community can easily search by suburb or project name to stay informed about what's happening in their area.

These improvements are just the beginning of our ongoing commitment to providing exceptional online experiences. We're constantly working to make interacting with us as smooth and efficient as possible.



Learn more at pscouncil.info/project-and-works

Stakeholders unite for housing solutions

Port Stephens, like many Australian communities, is facing a housing crisis. Soaring housing prices, workforce shortages and rising living costs are making it hard for people to find affordable homes. On top of this, our population is expected to grow by 20,000 people over the next 20 years. To address this complex issue, we undertook a comprehensive review of our Local Housing Strategy (see page 70).

A key component of the review was a Housing Forum, bringing together over 50 key stakeholders, including community groups, businesses, developers, and real estate professionals. Individual community members were also invited through a formal Expression of Interest process. Stakeholders were purposely dispersed throughout the forum enabling robust conversations and all voices and perspectives to be heard. Through in-depth discussions and expert insights, we discussed the housing crisis and shared potential solutions.

The valuable feedback gathered from the forum informed the revision of our Local Housing Strategy, which was endorsed in June 2024. This updated strategy provides a roadmap for addressing the housing challenges facing our community.



Learn more about the Port Stephens Housing Strategy at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/local-housing-strategy





Our Council Performance

Aspirational measures

- On track**
Target achieved or on track to be achieved
- Monitor**
< 5% off the target
- Off track**
> 5% off the target

L1 | Governance







What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
L1.1.1.1 Implement the Workforce Management Strategy	Employee Engagement Score	>80%	84%	
L1.2.1.1 Coordinate and deliver Councillor and executive support services	Maintain Elected Member's satisfaction with executive support services	100%	100%	
L1.2.1.2 Conduct citizenship ceremonies	Citizens conferred	100%	100%	
L1.2.1.3 Advocate for community priorities and work with other levels of government and stakeholders	Maintain participation in consultation/ advocacy activities with other levels of government or agencies	Maintained	On-track	
L1.2.1.4 Develop shareholder value through an effective partnership with Newcastle Airport	Maintain participation in NAPL/ GNAPL Board meetings	Maintained	On-track	
L1.2.1.5 Work with Hunter Councils to enhance the Hunter Region	Maintain participation in Hunter Joint Organisation meetings	Maintained	On-track	
L1.3.1.1 Deliver governance and legal services and enterprise risk management	Maintain Risk maturity score	≥ 85%	86%	
	Decrease in the rolling projected workers' compensation deposit premium (rounded)	Pay < base and <100%	Refer comment below	
	Comment: Significant reduction in our premium has been achieved. However, this measure is no longer considered an appropriate reflection of performance. A revised measure is in place for the period 2024-2025.			
L1.3.1.2 Coordinate and report on the internal audit process	Percentage of Audit-identified issues resolved within the expected timeframe	100%	100%	
L1.3.2.1 Undertake a community satisfaction survey	Community satisfaction score with Council	Better than baseline of 45% 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey	51% 2024 Community Satisfaction Survey	

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
L1.3.2.2 Implement the legislative requirements of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework	Integrated Plans delivered on time	≥ 95%	100%	✓
L1.3.2.3 Deliver the Business Excellence workplan	Progress of the Business Excellence workplan	Delivered	On track	✓
L1.3.3.1 Implement the annual service review program	Progress of the service review program, % completed on time	Delivered	100%	✓
L1.3.4.1 Implement annual actions of the Corporate Systems and Data Management Strategy	Maintain system uptime	99.99%	100%	✓

L2 | Financial management

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
L2.1.1.1 Manage Council's financial resources in accordance with the Financial Services Work plan	Underlying financial result is better than the budget	Delivered	On-track	✓
	Maintain Unqualified Annual Financial Statements	Delivered	On-track	✓
L2.1.2.1 Manage the property portfolio in accordance with the Strategic Property work plan	Maintain yield on the commercial investment portfolio at or above the Australian All Property Index	≥ Australian All Property Index	Yield has been maintained 1.3% above industry baseline	✓
	Maintain property vacancy rate below the Newcastle industry standards	Maintain	Vacancy rate is 3%	⊖
	All projects are delivered in accordance with Property Investment Strategy	Delivered	On-track	✓
L2.1.3.1 Implement the annual actions of the Beachside Holiday Parks and Koala Sanctuary Operational Plan	Maintain Net Promoter Score (NPS) for Council's	Beachside Holiday Parks >70% Koala Sanctuary >75%	Beachside Holiday Parks 71% The Koala Sanctuary 91%	✓
	Progress of actions under the Beachside Holiday Parks and Koala Sanctuary Operational Plan	Delivered	On-track	✓

L3 | Communication and engagement

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2023-2024	
L3.1.1.1 Develop, implement and monitor Council's Customer Experience Roadmap and Action Plan	Actions implemented from the Customer Experience Road Map and Action Plan	Delivered	On track	
	Maintain the number of tour and accommodation bookings on behalf of operators	5,106 (2022-2023)	4,674	
Comment: Growing completion from multi-national booking platforms affecting direct bookings through the Visitor Information Centre.				
L3.2.1.1 Manage Council's communications and community engagement activities	Number of visits to the PSC website	244,220 (2022-2023)	489,210	
	Social media engagement	369,000 (2022-2023)	6,226,150	
	Number of communications and engagement projects considered by the Communications and Engagement Advisory Panel	New	7	
	Community members who feel they can provide input into Council decision making	Better than baseline of 31% 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey	41% 2024 Community Satisfaction Survey	



Statutory Statements

Section 5

The following information is required by such instruments as Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 and other NSW government acts. The relevant section or clause is highlighted beside each report.



Statutory information

Statutory information

Our Council is committed to open and transparent reporting. The information in this section is legislated and supplements the information provided elsewhere in the report.

Our general reporting requirements are set out in section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) and section 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulations). To access copies of the Act and Regulations, visit legislation.nsw.gov.au

Overview of reporting requirements

Below is an overview of reporting requirements that have been achieved, reported elsewhere in this report, aren't required or the service wasn't provided.

Legislation	Achieved
Implementing the Delivery Program 2022 to 2026 – Section 428(1) the Act	Yes
Implementing the Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032 – Section 428(2) the Act	Yes, reporting on the previous Council term, see Volume 3
Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines – Section 428(3) the Act including council's progress on the delivery of the service reviews council has committed to undertake, the results of those reviews and any changes made to levels of service.	Yes, refer to page 111
Audited financial reports - Section 428(4)(a) the Act	Yes, see Volume 2
Other information as the IP&R Guidelines or the regulations may require - Section 428(4)(b) the Act	Yes
Annual report copies – Section 428(5) the Act	Yes. Copies will be made available at our libraries, electronically on our website and a link to our website provided to the Minister for Local Government's office.
Induction training and ongoing professional development of Mayor and Councillors - Section 186 the Regulations	Yes, refer to page 38.
Overseas travel undertaken by Mayor, Councillors and staff Section 217(1)(a) the Regulations	No overseas travel undertaken during the financial year.
Private works resolutions – Section 217(1) (a4) the Regulations	No work carried out on private land requiring a resolution under section 67 of the Act.
Equal employment opportunities activities – Section 217(1)(a9) the Regulations	Yes, refer to page 44.
Coastal protection – Section 217(1)(e1) the Regulations	Council did not levy an annual charge for coastal protection services.
Stormwater management services – Section 217(1)(e) the Regulations	Council did not levy an annual charge for stormwater management services as it received a special variation to its general income from 1997 to 1998 for stormwater management activities.
Condition of Civil Assets	Yes, view special schedule 7 of volume 2



Overview of reporting requirements continued

Legislation	Achieved
Carers Recognition Act 2010	Did not provide service.
Environmental Upgrade Agreements – Section 54P(1) Local Government Act 1993	Council did not levy any charges to repay advances under an environmental upgrade agreement.
Disability Inclusion – Disability Inclusion Act 2014, section 13(1)	Yes, refer to page 62.

Rates and charges written off during 2023 to 2024

Section 132 the Regulations

Type	Amount	Type	Amount
Pensioner concessions	\$1,513,388	Uneconomical to recover	\$1,478
Postponed rates	\$3,628	Ratepayer's hardship (interest charges)	\$236
Small debts	\$906	Not legally recoverable	\$1,445
Conservation agreements	\$3,079	Total	\$1,524,160

Mayoral and Councillors' fees and provision of facilities

Section 217(1)(a1) the Regulations

A summary of the expenses incurred in performing the functions of Mayor and Councillors and associated allowances.

Our policy recognises the Mayor and Councillors, in performing their civic functions, are entitled to be provided with certain facilities and be reimbursed for certain expenses. The policy was adopted on 11 January 2022 and will be reviewed again in September 2024.

Allowances	Costs
Mayoral allowance	\$90,460
Councillors' fees and allowances	\$234,630
Councillors' superannuation	\$25,809
Councillors' expenses (see below)	\$70,379
Cost of catering	\$41,820
Cost of Mayoral vehicle	\$5,509
Total	\$468,608

Expenses	Costs
Mobile phone rental	\$0
Mobile phone calls	\$2,082
Landline phone rental	\$0
Landline phone calls	\$0
Fax rental	\$0
Fax calls	\$0
Internet	\$2,481
Intrastate travel	\$11,988
Intrastate out of pocket expenses	\$0
Interstate travel (out of NSW)	\$0
Interstate out of pocket expenses	\$0
Interstate accommodation (out of NSW)	\$0
Intrastate accommodation	\$11,928
Conferences	\$12,759
Training	\$0
Partners' expenses	\$45
Computers	\$3,486
Stationery	\$523
Awards and ceremonies	\$1,046
Child care expenses	\$1,458
Communications bundle	\$3,093
Councillors' uniforms	\$0
Professional development	\$19,490
Total	\$70,379

Contracts awarded greater than \$150,000

Section 217(1)(a2) the Regulations

Name of contractor	Contract details and purpose	Contract value
Drumderg Services Australia Pty Limited	Victoria Parade Footbridge Stage 3 - Demolition	\$424,819
Husky Demolition Pty Ltd	8 & 10 Donald Street - Demolition	\$198,547
Drumderg Services Australia Pty Limited	Victoria Parade Footbridge Stage 3 - Concreting	\$188,509
Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd	PSC Asphalt Package of Works	\$830,385
RDO Equipment Pty Ltd	Supply and delivery of 1x Wide Area Wing Deck Cabin Mower	\$159,500
ANA Asphalt	TfNSW Mix 3 Bump And Heavy Patching	\$239,634
Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd	PSC Asphalt Package of Works	\$182,537
Worley Consulting Pty Ltd	Shoal Bay Precinct Drainage Design	\$154,374
Enviroculture Maintenance Services Pty Limited	PSC Cemeteries Maintenance - Mowing	\$383,350
Boral Construction Materials Group Ltd	Spray Sealing Services	\$1,358,675
Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd		\$525,563
Polite Enterprises Corporation Pty Ltd	Bus Shelter Supply	\$164,934
Boral Construction Materials Group Ltd	TfNSW State Roads - Reseals	\$676,044
VVG Services NSW Pty Ltd	Supply of 2x Truck Cab Chassis	\$289,244
Glascott Landscape And Civil Pty Ltd	William Street, Raymond Terrace	\$237,508
ANA Asphalt	TfNSW Asphalt Resurfacing and Heavy Patch	\$1,385,770
VVG Services NSW Pty Ltd	Supply of 1x Truck Cab Chassis	\$156,886
Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd	TfNSW State Roads - Extra Asphalt Resurfacing	\$707,971
ANA Asphalt	Fly Point: Victoria Parade and Beach Road - Asphalt Works	\$300,271
ANA Asphalt	Local Road Reseal Asphalt Patching	\$295,903
Syscon	Beach Rd, Nelson Bay - Lighting Upgrade	\$163,184
Otis Elevator Company Pty Ltd	Raymond Terrace Community Care Centre Elevator Replacement	\$181,500
Byrne Pipe And Civil Pty Limited	Teramby Road, Nelson Bay - Landslip Remediation	\$993,141
Byrne Pipe And Civil Pty Limited		\$1,008,339
Bolte Civil Pty Limited	Avenue Of The Allies, Tanilba Bay - Road Reconstruction	\$3,365,280

Name of contractor	Contract details and purpose	Contract value
Professional Traffic Solutions Pty Ltd	Traffic Control Services	\$549,086
Watchout Training & Traffic Control		\$1,425,765
Retro Traffic Pty Ltd		\$279,642
Killalea Construction Pty Ltd	Yulong Oval Amenities	\$4,570,522
Byrne Pipe And Civil Pty Limited	Marine Drive - Landslip Remediation	\$1,217,541
Programmed Property Services Pty Ltd	External Preventative Maintenance Program	\$1,174,510
Finn Valley Plant & Civil Pty Ltd	Teramby Road, Nelson Bay - Landslip Remediation	\$464,502
Ferry Building Group Pty Ltd	Minor Building Works	\$224,563
Killalea Construction Pty Ltd		\$288,714
MRW Building Pty Limited		\$560,680
Certis Security Australia Pty Ltd	PSC Security Services (excl. Holiday Parks)	\$430,277
Business Security & Management Solutions Pty Ltd	Holiday Parks Security Services	\$216,700
Anna Bay Sand & Earthmoving	Plant And Equipment Hire And Haulage	\$524,665
Hunter Spraying & Slashing		\$262,977
Show Mow & "All Go"		\$387,734
ATAK Industries Pty Ltd		\$248,278
Elbourne Plant Hire Pty Ltd		\$364,695
Boral Construction Materials Group Ltd		\$927,561
Fenworx Pty Ltd	Bitumen, Emulsions and Asphalt Materials	\$625,267
Humes Concrete Products	Minor and Major Civil Works	\$267,735
Holcim (Australia) Pty Ltd	Supply and Delivery of Readymix Concrete	\$200,249
Hanson Construction Materials Pty Ltd		\$272,268
KJ Fitz Trading Pty Limited	Project Management - 12 months from 28 Feb 2024 to 28 Feb 2025	\$207,515
Loyalty Management Solutions Pty Limited	Project Management - 12 months from 17 Jun 2024 to 17 Jun 2025	\$200,200
Southern Cross Protection Ltd	PSC Security Services	\$157,956
Bluewater Stainless	William Street, Raymond Terrace	\$177,155
Ausroad Manufacturing Pty Ltd	HD45 Series Road Maintenance Truck	\$420,310

Legal proceedings

Section 217(1)(a3) the Regulations

A summary of the amounts incurred in relation to legal proceedings taken by and or against Council from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Workers compensation and other employment matters, public liability and professional indemnity claims are not included. Our Council recovered \$141,108 in legal costs.

Legal matter	Details	Status	Cost
Land and Environment Court			
Kingshill Development No 1 and 2 Pty Ltd	Appeal against refusal by Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel to grant consent to residential subdivision concept development application. Court refused grant of development consent.	Completed	\$ 2,111*
Ward & Ward	Appeal against Council refusal to grant development consent for single dwelling. Court granted development consent.	Completed	\$ 2,888
Connect Global Limited	Appeal against Development Control Order and Council refusal to grant development consent regarding use of premises as a transitional group home.	Ongoing	\$ 88,412
Kinala Pty Ltd	Appeal against Council refusal to grant development consent for 9 storey residential flat building. Court granted development consent.	Completed	\$ 4,011
Clippers Anchorage Pty Ltd	Appeal against Council refusal to grant development consent for alterations and additions to marina. Court refused grant of development consent.	Completed	\$ 107,494
Kingshill Development No 1 and 2 Pty Ltd	Appeal against Court refusal to grant development consent for residential subdivision concept development application.	Ongoing	\$ 1,890*
Mims Love Pty Ltd	Appeal against Council refusal to grant development consent for a residential flat building.	Ongoing	\$ 3,873
Local Court			
Davis	Prosecution for alleged waste offences. Defendant found guilty, fined a substantial amount and ordered to pay Council professional fees.	Completed	\$ 7,908
Williams	Prosecution for dog offences. Defendant found not guilty, matter dismissed.	Completed	\$ 620
Kinsella	Prosecution for dog not under effective control in public place. Matter withdrawn by consent.	Completed	\$ 1,591
Myers	Prosecution for dog not under effective control in public place. Defendant found guilty, no conviction recorded and ordered to pay Council professional fees.	Completed	\$2,054
Maxus Builders	Prosecution for failure to comply with clean-up notices. Defendant found guilty, fined and ordered to pay Council professional fees.	Completed	\$ 6,143
NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal			
FHH & FTU	Appeal of Tribunal decision. Appeal dismissed. Council seeking costs in the matter.	Ongoing	\$ 35,759
Total			\$ 268,035

*These costs were paid by Department of Planning and Environment



Financial assistance

Section 217(1)(a5) the Regulations

Each year, our Council provides financial assistance to community and cultural groups in Port Stephens in accordance with section 356 of the Act.

Community grants

Category	Amount
Mayoral fund and special events grants	\$49,770
Mayoral academic scholarship grant*	\$40,328
Ward fund grants	\$32,789
Aboriginal project grants	\$28,608
Community support grants	\$67,433
Environmental projects grants	\$13,135
Total	\$232,063

*Thanks to sponsorships. Refer to page 65 to read more.

Council also provides funds as part of its sponsorship policy. These funds provide multiple benefits to Council and the community through promotion of tourism through to the activation of public space.

Category	Amount
Business growth	\$25,849
Major event sponsorship	\$129,913
My Incredible Place micro grants	\$8,500
Community event development sponsorship	\$32,845
Vibrant spaces sponsorship fund	\$66,208
Total	\$263,315

Hardship rate relief and rate donations

Council provided \$24,393.29 in hardship rate relief and rate donations under sections 601 and 356 of the Act in 2023 to 2024 consisting of \$20,987.50 under the Rates Assistance Program and \$2,656.01 under the Waste Assistance Program of the Debt Recovery and Hardship Policy and \$749.78 under the section 601 revaluation hardship provisions.

Waste services

Under our Financial Assistance for the Disposal of Waste in Port Stephens Policy, \$47,587 was provided to the following organisations:

Organisation	Amount
1st Anna Bay Cubs And Scouts	\$417
State Emergency Services – Port Stephens Unit	\$201
Clean4shore NSW	\$7,697
Hunter Horse Haven Inc.	\$269
Lemon Tree Passage Rural Fire Service	\$329
Medowie Assembly Of God Fellowship	\$813
Port Stephens Community Woodworkers	\$649
Port Stephens Koalas	\$7,855
Raymond Terrace Early Education Centre	\$366
Port Stephens Uniting Church - Salamander	\$69
Raymond Terrace Men's Shed	\$153
Rotary Club Of Raymond Terrace	\$507
Salamander Bay Recycling	\$5,956
Salamander Men Shed	\$2,900
Salvation Army Hope Centre	\$421
Salvation Army Port Stephens	\$403
Scope Home Access Hunter Region	\$2,526
St Vincent De Paul Anna Bay	\$6,016
St Vincent De Paul Raymond Terrace	\$50
St Vincent De Paul Society - Nelson Bay	\$529
State Emergency Services - Port Stephens Unit	\$9,461
Total	\$47,587

External bodies exercising the functions delegated by Council

Section 217(1) (a6) the Regulations

There were no external bodies exercising the functions of our Council.

External bodies of which Council has controlling interests

Section 217(1) (a7) the Regulations

Our Council must report on all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which we (whether alone or in conjunction with other councils) held a controlling interest during the reporting period.

Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 3 Pty Ltd

Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 4 Pty Ltd

Following the corporate restructure of the Newcastle Airport Ltd on 9 October 2013, there are 4 partners of the Newcastle Airport Partnership. City of Newcastle owns Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 1 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 1) and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 2 (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 2). Port Stephens Council owns Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 3 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 3) and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 4 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 4).

Following the incorporation of the Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Pty Ltd on 20 December 2018, there are 4 partners of the Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Partnership. City of Newcastle owns Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 1 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 1) and Newcastle

Airport Partnership Company 2 (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 2).

Port Stephens Council owns Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 3 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 3) and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 4 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 4).

Port Stephens Council holds 100% interest in Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 3 Pty Ltd and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 4 Pty Ltd.

External bodies in which Council has participated

Section 217(1)(a8) the Regulations

Our Council must report on all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which we participated during that year. These include:

- **Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd (NAPL)**
- **Newcastle Airport Partnership (NAP)**
- **Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Pty Ltd (GNAPL)**
- **Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Partnership (GNAP)**

Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd operates the Newcastle Airport as agent for the Newcastle Airport Partnership. City of Newcastle and Port Stephens Council hold the rights to their share of the assets and their share of the obligations in the partnership. Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Pty Ltd manages the development of Astra Aerolab on behalf of the Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Partnership. City of Newcastle and Port Stephens Council hold the rights to their share of the assets and their share of the obligations in the partnership. Port Stephens Council has a 50% interest in NAPL, NAP, GNAPL and GNAP and the City of Newcastle has an interest in the remaining 50%.

Corporate Entities of the Hunter Councils

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

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

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

Hunter Joint Organisation – a statutory body under the Act established in 2018 to identify, advocate for and collaborate on regional strategic priorities for the Hunter. Its statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and community.

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

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

We have representation on each entity's board and share ownership and governance of the entities with the other 9 councils of the Hunter Region.

NSW Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme (Statewide)

- Our Council is a member of the NSW Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme, known as Statewide. It started in 1993 as a joint venture forming a 'self-insurance mutual' covering public liability and professional indemnity insurance. Membership includes 117 member councils across NSW.

StateCover Mutual - Our Council is a member of StateCover Mutual. This body was established as a not-for-profit workers compensation insurer to partner with the NSW local government in the management of workplace risk.

StateCover Mutual provides an integrated injury prevention and injury management service model to minimise the overall cost of members' workplace risk.

Senior staff remuneration

Section 217(1) (b) and (c) the Regulations

Our Council's senior staff consists of the General Manager and 3 Directors. All senior staff are employed under standard contracts.

- General Manager \$365,000 *
- Senior staff (excluding the General Manager) \$991,901.65*

*In accordance with the Total Remuneration Package (TRP) outlined in their senior staff contract.

Annual Reporting of Labour Statistics

Section 217 (1) (d) (i)-(iv) the Regulations

Section 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation) requires Council to publish labour force data in the annual reports. This is designed to allow greater scrutiny of councils' employment practices by their governing bodies, their communities, and key stakeholders such as the unions.

Increased transparency around councils' employment practices will promote better compliance with the Act and the Local Government (State) Award, encourage a more strategic approach to workforce

planning and allow better-informed decision making by councils in relation to the management of their workforces.

The Secretary DPIE will fix the relevant day for reporting purposes after the end of each year.

For the financial year 2023-2024, our council is required to report the total number of persons who performed paid work on 14 February 2024*, including:

- Number of persons directly employed by the council:
 - on a permanent full-time basis: 406
 - on a permanent part-time basis: 99
 - on a casual basis: 62
 - under a fixed-term contract: 34
- the number of persons employed by the council who are “senior staff” for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1993: 4 (General Manager and Directors)
- the number of persons engaged by the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person’s employer, that is wholly or principally for the labour of the person: 48
- the number of persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person’s employer, as an apprentice or trainee: 15

*These figures differ to the figures on page 8 due to the date and reporting requirements.

Companion animals

Section 217(1) (f) the Regulations

Our Council provides an annual return to the Office of Local Government on activities to enforce and ensure compliance with the Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2018, including lodgement of pound data collection returns. We also report information on an incident-by-incident basis in relation to dog attacks.

Our Council provides the full suite of companion animal functions. This year, the Companion Animals Register has collected the following information:

- 188 reported dog attacks – 46 dog attack incident reports entered into the Companion Animals Register, which is down 10% on the previous year.
 - 357 companion animals were impounded.
- Of the companion animals impounded:
- 131 were either collected by their owner or returned to their owner before being transported to the pound
 - 170 were sold to new owners or released to rescue organisations
 - 55 were surrendered to the pound by the public.

Companion Animal management and activities

For the year 2023-2024, we spent \$248,069 related to companion animal management and activities (excluding Ranger salaries and vehicle costs). Of this, \$3,385 was spent on Community education programs, Personal Protective Equipment, Tools and training.

- We conducted a restricted, dangerous and menacing dog project this year. We conducted 2 rounds of inspections (30 total) of all declared dangerous, restricted or menacing dogs listed in the LGA. This helps ensure owners are complying with all mandatory control requirements for owning an animal subject to an order.
- Rangers attended RAAF Base Williamtown’s open day. The Rangers supported Councils presence at the event. We had the chance to talk to people who have just posted into the local area about the NSW Companion Animal rules and regulations, local rules as well as provide information on how to get their animals details updated on the Companion Animals Register. It was great day and good opportunity to have positive interactions with our community.
- Rangers attended ‘Store for Paws’ community event Bunnings Heatherbrae – owners of pets came in to check their pets details are all up to date, Rangers provided information on responsible pet ownership - 20 interactions
- Careers Day at Irrawang Primary School.

Ranger Ralph attended the parade – Rangers provided information on all things compliance as well as responsible pet ownership - 7 education classes and 170 children attended.

- Ranger Ralph (Ranger Mascot) attended Australia Day celebrations in Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay where Companion Animal promotional and educational items were given to customers.

Desexing Initiatives

We promote the services of Hunter Animal Watch and the National Desexing Network, which carry out subsidised desexing of animals in Port Stephens.

Alternatives to euthanasia

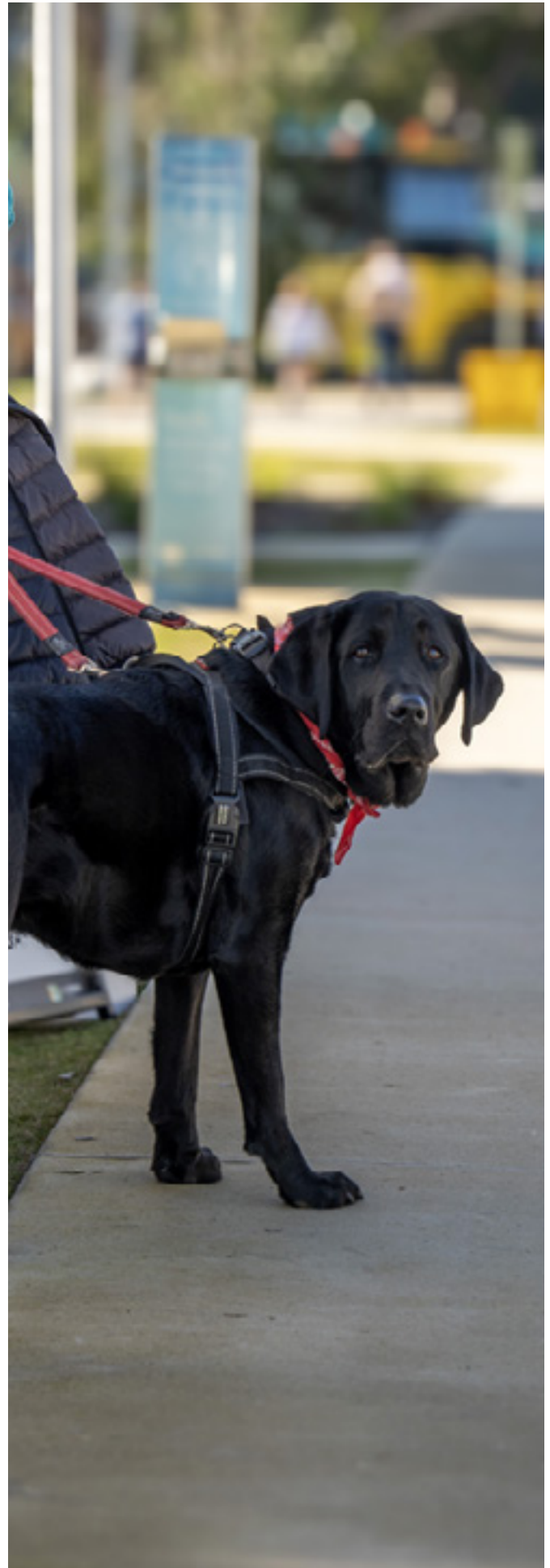
To reduce euthanasia rates, we do our best to return animals to their owners before taking them to the pound. We also promote the sale of suitable unclaimed cats and dogs from our pound online and through partnerships with registered rescue organisations. The Council Animal Refuge have done a great job in reducing euthanasia rates.

Off-leash areas

We continue to promote, improve and enforce the rules in our off lead areas in Port Stephens.

Managing and Controlling Companion Animals

Council collected \$54,719 in registration fees and forwarded to the Office of Local Government. We received \$204 for the hire of cat traps and produced total income amount of \$97,098 from the percentage return for registration fees (in our LGA) from the Office of Local Government. This number also includes fees and charges received from impound activities. This was put towards Companion Animal Register administration, impound facility functions, tools and equipment and other initiatives undertaken over the reporting period.



Capital Expenditure Guidelines 2010

Section 12, Division of Local Government Department of Premier and Cabinet

A summary of capital works in progress as of 30 June 2024

Name of project	Progress	Budget as at 30 June 2024 (excluding GST)	Previous Financial Years Expenditure (excluding GST)	Expenditure 2023 to 2024 (excluding GST)
Birubi Information Centre	In progress	\$1.5M	\$1.175M	\$204K
Depot	Completed	\$13.399M	\$10.867M	\$2.532M

Special Rate Variation

The 2023-2024 financial year is the first year of Council’s three year special rate variation which was approved by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in June 2023.

Consistent with the community consultation process undertaken during the application process the additional funds generated during the first financial year were used by Council to assist in maintaining baseline services for the Community across all areas. This has assisted in avoiding operational deficits during a period of high inflation, in an approach aimed at securing Councils long term financial sustainability.

The second year of the special rate variation will provide enhanced services in key areas of community priority and continue to maintain existing services to a growing population. The enhanced services program will see funds being spent on road rehabilitation and resurfacing, recreational facilities, waterways and protecting our natural environment.

A key condition of IPART’s approval is providing information to the Community outlining how funds have been spent. This will be undertaken annually as part of the Annual Report presented to the Community.

Special rate variation income and expenditure for 2023-2024

Priority Area	Unspent Balance Brought Forward	Allocation 2023/2024	Total Funding Available	Actual Expenditure 2023/2024	Unspent Closing Balance
Maintaining existing service levels	-	2,468,819	2,468,819	2,468,819	-
Fixing our roads	-	-	-	-	-
Protecting our natural environment	-	-	-	-	-
Looking after our waterways and foreshores	-	-	-	-	-
Looking after our public spaces	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	2,468,819	2,468,819	2,468,819	-

As demonstrated within the Financial Statements, Council was able to avoid an operating deficit (after capital capital) which enabled existing service levels to be maintained in line with inflationary cost pressures. The budget variations section of the financial statements also demonstrate that there were no significant differences between the actual and forecasted operating expenditure within the Long Term Financial Plan for 2023/2024.

Council isn't solely reliant on the income from the special rate variation in order to main financial stability. A number of cost saving and revenue generating actions where outlined in the application to IPART. These actions and there status are outlined as follows:

Area	Activity	Actioned	Partially Actioned	Future Action	Ongoing Action
Productivity & Cost Savings	Continued delivery of the service review program				☑
	Installation of solar panels on 14 community buildings	☑			
	Investigate the transition of Council fleet to electrical vehicles		☑		
	Participate in the ATO's trial of E-invoicing in the Hunter region	☑			
	Implementation of a new green bin service	☑			
	Development of a Carbon Neutrality Action Plan	☑			
	Implementation of new booking software for children services	☑			
	Development of a new waste services app	☑			
Generate non rate revenue	Review of surplus land		☑		
	Continued implementation of SMART Parking		☑		
	Establishment of the Resilience Fund	☑			

The direct impact that all of these initiatives has had on Councils overall financial sustainability is difficult to quantify. This is due to broad nature of some of these projects, however the comparison between the actual underlying operating result and the original budgeted underlying result demonstrates a positive improvement in Councils financial sustainability. The actual underlying result also demonstrates that without the additional special rate variations funds, Council would have recorded an operating deficit.

	Original Budget	Actual
Underlying operating result	769	1,473

Service Reviews

Section 428(3), 428(4)(b) the Act

Since 2011 we've been reviewing all of our business and our services at Council. Completing a full review of all of our service packages (60+ Service Packages) every 4 years and mid-point review every 2 years. Refer to our Operational Plan 2023 to 2024 and Annual Report 2022-2023 for more background of what this process involves.

The following scheduled reviews were undertaken over the 2023-2024 financial year:

Full Service Reviews – 17 Service Packages (SP)

- Community Services Part 2 – August 2023 (3 SP)
- End to End Infrastructure Delivery – April 2024 (14 SP)

Midpoint Reviews – 16 Service Packages (SP)

- Compliance (unscheduled) – July 2023 (1 SP)
- Financial Services – July 2023 (4 SP)
- Capital Works / Survey team (unscheduled) - November 2023 (1 SP)
- Public Domain and Services - February 2024 (6 SP)
- Financial Services (unscheduled) - February 2024 (4 SP)

Outcomes

None of the reviews completed resulted in a negative change to the service delivery to our community. The reviews provided process improvements, strengthening collaboration, system improvements, strategic planning improvements, resourcing improvements, increased service delivery, re-alignment of roles and responsibilities and operational savings.

We continue to improve and mature our service review program and processes. This includes the introduction of the Service Delivery Business Plan and more mature data analytics to strengthen our understanding of trends and community expectations.

Modern Slavery

Section 428(4)(c)&(d) the Act

This statement outlines Port Stephens Council's commitment to combatting modern slavery and the measures we have implemented during this reporting period to reduce the risk of our procurement activities impacting on human rights.

The procurement Policies, Framework and Processes ensure that the following objectives are applied to procurement activities undertaken by Council:

- Ensure that Council resources are used efficiently and effectively, providing value for money
- Achieve compliance with relevant legislative requirements achieving high standards of probity, transparency, accountability, and risk management
- Eliminate unnecessary purchases, maximise the re-use and recycling of productions, minimise waste and purchase fewer goods with negative environmental impact
- Increase purchaser awareness regarding 'sustainability advantage' of alternative products
- Deliver Council's commitments in relation to ecologically sustainable development (ESD), environmental management and social wellbeing objectives
- Where practical, Council will collaborate with other Councils to take advantage of economies of scale
- Give preference to procurements which provide community and social benefits
- Aim to eliminate practices of modern slavery or hidden labour exploitation including illegal wages and employment practices, discrimination and harassment, where identified
- Provide opportunities for local business to act as a supplier to Council

Council's procurement procedures set out how we plan, source, and manage contracts and suppliers throughout the procurement lifecycle. Procurement activities range from purchase orders and purchasing cards for low-risk purchases to formal Request for Quotation (RFQ) and Request for Tender (RFT) processes for high risk and high spend projects.

Port Stephens Council have adopted a hybrid centre-led procurement structure, where strategic vision is managed by the Procurement team, with a centralised approach to tenders and quotations over \$50,000. Low value quotations are decentralised and managed throughout the

Organisation. We recognise the importance of taking steps to ensure that goods and services procured by and for our Council are not the product of modern slavery.

Reasonable steps are being taken by Port Stephens Council to ensure goods and services procured are not a product of modern slavery and include the following:

Activity	Description	Actioned	Partially Actioned	Future Action
Staff Awareness & Training	Staff awareness of modern slavery and Council's policy and expectations	✓		
	Staff Training	✓		
Supplier Engagement	Awareness of Council's policy and expectations		✓	
	Supplier Training			✓
	Supplier self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ)		✓	
	High risk supplier engagement			✓
Risk Assessment	Inherent risk assessment at a category level	✓		
	Pre-purchase checklist to identify higher risk procurements	✓		
	Supplier risk assessment – existing suppliers	✓		
	Supplier risk assessment – new and potential suppliers	✓		
Tendering & Contracting	Modern slavery tender criteria	✓		
	Procurement process/procedure includes the requirement to assess that the tendered price allows for at least the minimum level of wages and other entitlements required by law	✓		
	Modern slavery contract clauses	✓		
	Supplier Code of Conduct	✓		
Reporting & Grievance Mechanisms	Confidential reporting mechanism/process for staff, contractors, community to report concerns related to modern slavery	✓		
Response & Remedy Framework	Response and remedy framework involving actions, such as facilitation of access to health, legal or psychosocial services, financial compensation and prevention of future harm			✓
Monitoring & Review	Monitoring and review of the effectiveness of modern slavery related processes		✓	

Government Information
(Public Access) (GIPA)
Act 2009, Government
Information (Public Access)
(GIPA) Regulation 2018

The GIPA Act 2009 has a number of mechanisms to access information – mandatory, proactive, informal and formal release.

This year, our Council processed 1665 informal access for information requests, removing the need to make a formal application in most cases.

The following is our annual report as required under section 125 of the GIPA Act:

Review of proactive release program – clause 7(a)

Agencies must review their programs for the release of government information at least once every 12 months to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. Our program for the proactive release of information involves:

- reviewing all formal applications and informal requests to determine if the information sought should be released proactively in future
- aligning our Electronic Records Management systems categories to the GIPA Act and determining if any further records should be released proactively in future
- monitoring matters raised by employees and determining if the information should be released proactively in the future.

This year, we reviewed this program by ensuring there is an ongoing monitoring program of all applications/requests for information – formal, informal or other. The program also includes information from Council officers with respect to the information they are producing. As a result of this review, we have not added any additional information to the proactive release provision.

Clause 8, Schedule 2

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

Reviews carried out by the agency	Information made publicly available by the agency
Yes	Yes

Number of access applications received – clause 8(b)

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

Total number of applications received – 62

Number of refused applications for Schedule 1 information – clause 8(c)

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

Number of Applications Refused	Wholly	Partly	Total
	1	1	2
% of total	50%	50%	100%



In Our Hands Family Farm, Seaham

Access application statistics – section 8(d) and schedule 2

Table A: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome*

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already held	Refuse to deal with an application	Refuse to confirm or deny whether the information is held	Application withdrawn	Total	Percentage of total
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Private sector business	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	12	17	26%
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	1	4	0	2	0	0	0	3	10	15%
Members of the public (other)	2	3	0	2	1	1	0	30	39	59%
Total	3	10	1	5	1	1	0	45	66	100%
Percentage of total	5%	15%	2%	7%	2%	2%	0%	68%		

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

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

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with an application	Refuse to confirm or deny whether the information is held	Application withdrawn	Total	Percentage of total
Personal information applications**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	3	9	1	5	1	1	0	44	64	97%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3%
Total	3	10	1	5	1	1	0	45	66	100%
Percentage of total	5%	15%	2%	7%	2%	2%	0%	68%		100%

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

Table C: Invalid Applications

Reason for invalidity	Number of applications	Percentage of total
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	0	0%
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0	0%
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0	0%
Total number of invalid applications received	0	0%
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	2	100%
Total	2	100%

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

Reason for invalidity	Number of applications	Percentage of total
Overriding secrecy laws	0	0%
Cabinet information	0	0%
Executive Council information	0	0%
Contempt	0	0%
Legal professional privilege	2	67%
Excluded information	1	33%
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0%
Transport safety	0	0%
Adoption	0	0%
Care and protection of children	0	0%
Total	3	100%

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

Reason for invalidity	Number of applications	Percentage of total
Responsible and effective government	6	14%
Law enforcement and security	2	4%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	20	44%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	17	38%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0	0%
Secrecy provisions	0	0%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0%
Total	45	100%

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

Table F: Timeliness

Reason for invalidity	Number of applications	Percentage of total
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	62	98%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	1	2%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0%
Total	63	100%

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

	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total	Percentage of total
Internal review	0	0	0	0%
Review by Information Commissioner*	1	0	1	100%
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0	0%
Review by NCAT	0	0	0	0%
Total	1	0	1	
Percentage of total	100%			

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

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

	Number of applications for review	Percentage of total
Applications by access applicants	1	100%
Applications by persons to whom the information the subject of access application relates (section 54 of the Act)	0	0%
Total	1	100%

Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies

	Number of applications for review	Percentage of total
Agency-initiated transfers	0	0%
Applicant-initiated transfers	0	0%
Total	0	0%



Code of Conduct

Section 11.1, Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW

Our Council is required to report complaints relating to the Mayor, Councillors and the General Manager in the year to September. In addition to this, we provide the below details for 2023 to 2024.

Model Code of Conduct statistics from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023		
a)	The total number of Code of Conduct complaints made about councillors and the General Manager under the Code of Conduct in the year	4
b)	The number of Code of Conduct complaints referred to a conduct reviewer during the reporting period	0
c)	The number of Code of Conduct complaints finalised by a conduct reviewer at the preliminary assessment stage during the reporting period and the outcome of those complaints	0
d)	The number of Code of Conduct complaints investigated by a conduct reviewer during the reporting period #Matter refers to an ongoing investigation.	1 [#]
e)	Without identifying particular matters, the outcome of investigations completed under these procedures during the reporting period - Investigation found a breach had occurred	N/A
f)	The number of matters reviewed by the Office during the reporting period and without identifying particular matters, the outcome of the reviews - The matter remains with the Office of Local Government	1
g)	The total cost of dealing with Code of Conduct complaints made about councillors and the General Manager during the reporting period, including staff costs	\$7,949

Fisheries Management Act 1994

Section 220ZT (2)

Our Council operates in accordance with and gives consideration to Fisheries Management Act related Threat and Recovery Abatement plans.

There are 2 ongoing Permits which have been active over the 2023-2024 financial year:

- Fisheries Permit and Marine Park Permit for infrastructure cleaning maintenance works within Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park- issued March 2022 for 3 years.
- Fisheries Permit and Marine Park Permit for Tomaree Foreshore sand removal and replenishment- issued January 2022 for 3 years.
- Marine Park Permit for Lemon Tree Passage Shared Path (Henderson Park) - Issued Jan 2023 for 1 year.
- Fisheries Permit PN22/518 for Lemon Tree Passage Shared Path (Henderson Park) - Issued Jan 2023 for 2 years.

The following fisheries permits were sought in the 2023-2024 financial year:

- Fisheries Permit for Notts Creek Bridge Replacement Glen Oak- issued October 2023
- Fisheries Permit for Teramby Road Landslip scuba stair replacement- issued March 2024

Marine Parks permits:

The following marine park permit was sought in the 2023-2024 financial year:

- Marine Park Permit for Teramby Road scuba stair replacement- Issued Mar 2024
- Marine Park Permit for Nelson Bay and Shoal Bay Foreshore stairs upgrades- Issued August 2023

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Section 7.5(5)

There were 2 planning agreements executed and in force during 2023 to 2024.

Swimming pool inspections

Swimming Pools Act 1992 section 22f(2), Swimming Pools Regulation 2018 clause 18(b)(c)

A review of the “reports” previously utilize by the Compliance team are no longer active or not reflective of the information that is required. Therefore the numbers below have been extracted directly from the NSW Swimming Pool Register, in this regard the numbers detailed are dated between 01/07/2023-25/06/2024, due to NSW report updates.

Total number of inspections of visitor accommodation and premises with more than 2 dwellings	45
Number of inspections that resulted in the issuance of a Certificate of Compliance	201
Number of inspections that resulted of the issuance of a Non-Compliance Certificate	62

Developer Contributions and Levies

Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (EPA Reg)

Section 218(1), 218(A) (2) (a-g) the Regulations

Contributions Plan	Project number / ID	Project description
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SRF17	King Park Sports Complex, Raymond Terrace – Implementation of Masterplan
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	RW46	One Mile Beach Reserve 2, One Mile
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SRF2	Brandon Park, Seaham - netball and tennis surface upgrades
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SRF9 / SRF22	Yulong Oval, Medowie - multipurpose amenities upgrades
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	OSF33	Spencer Park, Soldiers Point - playground and park furniture
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SRF16	Tomaree Sports Complex, Nelson Bay - sports pavilion B1
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	OSF56	Boomerang Park, Raymond Terrace – playground upgrade, park facilities improvements and skate park improvements
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	OSF11	Aliceton Reserve, Karuah – landscaping, playground and recreation facilities
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	OSF16	Aliceton Reserve, Karuah – Public amenities
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	RW34	Avenue Of The Allies, Tanilba Bay - Diggers Drive to Lemon Tree Passage Road"
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	Civic Administration	Traffic and Transport Study at Fern Bay
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	OSF22 / OSF29 / OSF21	Henderson Park, Lemon Tree Passage – reserve upgrades
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	TCU4	Raymond Terrace -Town Centre Upgrades
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	FD20	Medowie – improve and enlarge existing drains crossing roads, overland flow paths, downstream drainage systems
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	FD21	Tomaree – construct and / or improve drainage and overland flow paths
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SP2	Brandy Hill Drive, Brandy Hill – shared path from Clarence Town Road to Seaham Road
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	RW29	Ferodale Road/Peppertree Road, Medowie – upgrade intersection to signalised"
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SP36	Cook Parade, Lemon Tree Passage – shared path from Morton Avenue to Meredith Avenue
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SP52	Beach Road, Nelson Bay – shared path from Victoria Parade to boat ramp
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	TCU3	Nelson Bay – Town Centre Upgrades pedestrian facilities

	Location	Purpose	FY23/24 Actual Dev Cont Expenditure	Contribution expended to date	Project status	Percentage of costs funded by Developer Contributions
	All catchment areas	Sports & Leisure Facilities	\$62,637.00	\$150,000.00	Complete	28%
	Tomaree	Roadworks	\$196,141.00	\$196,141.00	Underway	NA
	Raymond Terrace and the Hinterland	Sports & Leisure Facilities	\$80,784.00	\$80,784.00	Complete	10%
	Central Growth Corridor	Sports & Leisure Facilities	\$715,368.00	\$715,368.00	Underway	NA
	Tomaree	Public Open Space, Parks & Reserves	\$32,973.00	\$32,973.00	Underway	NA
	All catchment areas	Sports & Leisure Facilities	\$33,321.00	\$450,000.00	Complete	13%
	All catchment areas	Public Open Space, Parks & Reserves	\$32,504.00	\$47,504.00	Complete	89%
	Central Growth Corridor	Public Open Space, Parks & Reserves	\$76,788.00	\$76,788.00	Complete	41%
	Central Growth Corridor	Public Open Space, Parks & Reserves	\$3,378.00	\$3,378.00	Underway	NA
	Central Growth Corridor	Roadworks	\$438,629.00	\$438,629.00	Complete	12%
	Civic Administration	Civic Administration	\$31,700.00	\$31,700.00	Complete	100%
	Central Growth Corridor	Public Open Space, Parks & Reserves	\$140,000.00	\$210,000.00	Complete	25%
	All catchment areas	Town Centre Upgrades	\$400,000.00	\$400,000.00	Complete	
	Central Growth Corridor	Flood & Drainage Works	\$5,289.00	\$5,289.00	Underway	NA
	Tomaree	Flood & Drainage Works	\$17,535.00	\$60,000.00	Complete	100%
	7.12	7.12	\$13,092.00	\$249,999.81	Underway	NA
	Central Growth Corridor	Roadworks	\$75,000.00	\$75,000.00	Underway	NA
	7.12	7.12	\$327,977.00	\$327,977.00	Complete	33%
	Tomaree	Shared Paths	\$85,880.00	\$85,880.00	Complete	10%
	All catchment areas	Town Centre Upgrades	\$131,723.00	\$356,723.00	Complete	62%



Contributions Plan	Project number / ID	Project description
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	CAF3	Council Admin Building Upgrade, Raymond Terrace – Phase 1
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SP63	Nelson Bay Road, Fern Bay – shared path from Braid Road to Bayway Village
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SP50	Marine Drive, Fingal Bay – shared path from Boulder Bay Road to Barry Park
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	CCF2	Library Resources
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	CAF1	Raymond Terrace Works Depot
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	CAF1	Raymond Terrace Works Depot

Section 218(A)(3)(a)(b)

Total value of all developer contributions received for financial year 2024 \$4,612,828

Total value of all developer contributions expended for financial year 2024 \$4,872,811

Note: No new borrowings have been expended for another purpose under the same or another Contributions Plan



	Location	Purpose	FY23/24 Actual Dev Cont Expenditure	Contribution expended to date	Project status	Percentage of costs funded by Developer Contributions
	7.12	7.12	\$287,200.00	\$287,200.00	Underway	NA
	Fern Bay	Shared Paths	\$86,500.00	\$86,500.00	Underway	NA
	Tomaree	Shared Paths	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00	Complete	
	All catchment areas and 7.12	Community & Cultural and 7.12	\$248,392.00	\$994,090.11	Complete	100%
	Civic Administration - Works Depot	Civic Administration - Works Depot	\$220,000.00	\$1,309,220.00	Complete	
	7.12	7.12	\$980,000.00	\$2,232,274.00	Complete	

Appendix

Section 6

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Brandy Hill



Election of representatives on Council, committees, regional committees and groups

355C Committees and Regional Committees and Groups

Ref	Committee name	Purpose of Committee	Delegates
1	Aboriginal Strategic Committee	To exchange information between the Aboriginal community and Council on issues affecting Aboriginal people. To promote mutual awareness and respect for the cultures of both Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal communities.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Francis Cr Kafer
2	Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Formerly the Audit Committee	The Audit Committee is an advisory committee of Council comprising of two Councillor representatives and three independent external representatives. The objective of the Audit Committee is to enhance the corporate governance of Council through the provision of independent oversight, review and advice. The Committee will assist Council by providing independent assurance and assistance on the organisation's governance, risk, control and compliance frameworks.	Cr Anderson Councillors Doohan and Dunkley were members up to August 2023 due to new Guidelines (OLG guidelines preclude the Mayor from being a member of the Committee).
3	Hinton School of Arts Committee	To assist Council in the management of Hinton School of Arts.	Cr Arnott Cr Francis Cr Kafer
4	Karuah Community Hall Committee	To assist Council in the management of Karuah Community Hall.	Cr Doohan Cr Tucker Cr Wells
5	Lemon Tree Passage Old School Centre Committee	To assist Council in the management of Lemon Tree Passage Old School Centre and surrounds.	Cr Doohan Cr Tucker Cr Wells
6	Medowie Sports Council	To facilitate communication between the sporting community and Council. To ensure the existing and future needs of sports participants and administrators are brought to the attention of Council.	Cr Doohan Cr Wells
7	Nelson Bay Community Hall Committee	To assist Council in the management of Nelson Bay Community Hall.	Cr Anderson Cr Bailey
8	Port Stephens Australia Day Committee	To coordinate the annual celebration of Australia Day in Port Stephens in line with recommendations from the Australia Day Council.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Arnott Cr Doohan Cr Dunkley Cr Francis

Ref	Committee name	Purpose of Committee	Delegates
9	Port Stephens Sister Cities Committee	To promote and have ongoing relationships between international communities providing opportunities for cultural exchange.	Mayor and all Councillors
10	Raymond Terrace Senior Citizens Hall Management Committee	To assist Council in the management of the Raymond Terrace Senior Citizens Hall.	Cr Arnott Cr Francis Cr Kafer
11	Salt Ash Community Hall	To assist Council in the management of Salt Ash Community Hall.	C Doohan Cr Tucker Cr Wells
12	Salt Ash Sports Ground Committee	To assist Council in the management, maintenance and improvements to Salt Ash Sports Ground.	Cr Doohan Cr Tucker Cr Wells
13	Seaham Park & Wetlands Committee	To assist Council in the management, maintenance and improvements to the park and wetlands.	Cr Arnott Cr Francis Cr Kafer
14	Strategic Arts Committee	To provide input into Port Stephens Council's strategic policies, plans and programs relating to culture and the arts.	Mayor Palmer Cr Francis Cr Kafer Cr Tucker
15	Tanilba Foreshore Hall Committee	To assist Council in the management of Tanilba Bay Foreshore Hall.	Cr Tucker Cr Wells
16	Tilligerry Sports Council	To facilitate communication between the sporting community and Council. To ensure the existing and future needs of sports participants and administrators are brought to the attention of Council.	Mayor Palmer Cr Doohan Cr Tucker Cr Wells
17	Tomaree Sports Council	To facilitate communication between the sporting community and Council. To ensure the existing and future needs of sports participants and administrators are brought to the attention of Council.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Bailey Cr Dunkley
18	West Ward Sports Council	To facilitate communication between the sporting community and Council. To ensure the existing and future needs of sports participants and administrators are brought to the attention of Council.	Mayor Palmer Cr Arnott Cr Francis Cr Kafer

Regional Committees and Groups

Ref	Committee name	Purpose of Committee	Delegates
19	AGL Newcastle Gas Storage Facility Community Dialogue Group	The purpose of a Community Consultative Committee is to provide a forum for discussion between a proponent and representatives of the community, stakeholder groups and the local council on issues directly relating to a specific State significant project.	Mayor Palmer
20	Birubi Point Cultural Heritage Advisory Panel	To advise Port Stephens Council on the management plan required to protect the Worimi cultural and spiritual heritage and enhance the environment of the Birubi Point Crown Reserve and Birubi Point Aboriginal Place.	Cr Wells
21	Brandy Hill Quarry Community Consultative Committee	The purpose of a Community Consultative Committee is to provide a forum for discussion between a proponent and representatives of the community, stakeholder groups and the local council on issues directly relating to a specific State significant project.	Cr Arnott Alternate Cr Kafer
22	Cabbage Tree Road Community Consultative Committee	The purpose of the committee is to provide an advisory forum of community representatives to meet requirements of the development consent.	Cr Kafer Alternate Cr Arnott
23	Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management Implementation Committee	Responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Port Stephens Council Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management.	Cr Anderson Alternate Cr Kafer
24	Communication and Engagement Advisory Panel	The purpose is the delivery of transparent communications and meaningful community engagement. To provide information, advice and guidance on development and delivery of Council communications and engagement programs to ensure a diversity of voices participates in decision making for their place.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Wells Cr Kafer
25	Community Support Fund	To make recommendations to Council on applications received through the Grants process.	Mayor Palmer Cr Arnott Cr Doohan Cr Dunkley Alternate Cr Anderson for East Ward Cr Wells for Central Ward (1 Councillor from each Ward).
26	Environment Advisory Panel	To provide community representation for consultation, advice and advocacy on environmental matters in Port Stephens.	Cr Anderson Alternate Cr Francis
27	General Manager Performance Review Panel	To conduct evaluation of the performance of the General Manager.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Arnott (nominated by the Council). Plus a Councillor nominated at the time by the General Manager).

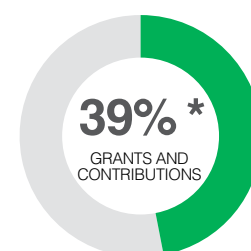
Ref	Committee name	Purpose of Committee	Delegates
28	Heritage Advisory Panel	To provide community representation for consultation, advice and advocacy of heritage matters in Port Stephens.	Cr Wells Alternate Cr Kafer
29	Hunter Joint Organisation	The Hunter Joint Organisation is a collaborative body that brings together the 10 councils in the region to provide a united and local voice for our communities. As the hub for local intergovernmental collaboration, the organisation's statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities, and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and community.	Mayor Palmer
30	Local Government Community Safety & Crime Prevention Network NSW Note: This is a Committee of the Port Stephens Local Area Command. Membership is by invitation from the Local Area Commander. Council's delegate is the Mayor.	To provide a forum for local community members, service providers, businesses and the police to discuss issues and appropriate strategies relating to crime and community safety. **Attendees will be by invitation only, one representative will be invited by the Police from each peak body/organisation e.g. Hunter Water / Housing NSW). Council will hold two positions, one will be Community Engagement Officer, and the other will be the Mayor or his representative if unable to attend.	Mayor Palmer
31	Customer and Community Advisory Group (CCAG)	This committee is an advisory committee to Hunter Water Corporation.	Cr Francis Alternate Cr Kafer
32	Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel	To consider development applications referred to the Panel under the legislation for development applications for the Port Stephens Local Government area. The Panel comprises of 3 State members and 2 Councillors. The term is for 3 years for each Panel member.	Mayor Palmer Cr Arnott Alternates Cr Anderson Cr Tucker Civil Assets Section Manager Strategy & Environment Section Manager
33	Local Traffic Committee	This is a Service NSW based committee which allows Council to have delegated authority to install or remove regulatory sign posting on public roads.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Alternate Cr Kafer
34	Lower Hunter Bushfire Management Committee	The committee is a legislative requirement and is to discuss direction across local government areas and across agencies in regard to bushfire management.	Cr G Arnott Cr Kafer
35	Lower Hunter Community Advisory Group	The Group is managed by Hunter Local Land Services (HLLS). The purpose is to provide an opportunity the HLLS to engage with stakeholders on a range matters, including strategic direction and programs.	Cr Francis

Ref	Committee name	Purpose of Committee	Delegates
36	Marine Parks Advisory Panel Ministerial Appointment	Community Consultative Committee regarding the proposed Marine Park in Port Stephens.	Cr Anderson
37	NSW Public Libraries Association (Central East Zone)	The purpose of the Association is to champion the public library cause, strengthen the public library network, advocate effectively, foster cooperation and collaboration, build trust and support, initiate partnerships and share relevant information.	Cr Wells
38	Port Stephens Economic Development Advisory Panel	Act as a communication and advisory mechanism to Council on relevant Economic Development issues. Oversee the implementation of the Economic Development Strategy	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Doohan Cr Dunkley Cr Francis Cr Tucker
39	Port Stephens Floodplain Advisory Panel	To provide advice on flood/floodplain management studies/plans	Cr Francis Alternate Cr Arnott
40	Port Stephens Local Health Committee	To provide leadership in the community to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure health services meet local community health needs • Promote health services and initiatives • Enhance the health of the community. 	Cr Anderson Alternate Cr Tucker
41	Port Stephens/ Myall Lakes Estuary and Coastal Zone Management Committee	This Committee includes representatives from Great Lakes Council and is responsible for long term planning for the estuary and the coastline.	Cr Bailey Alternate Cr Anderson
42	RFS District Liaison Committee	To review the progress of the service level agreement between Port Stephens Council and NSW Rural Fire Service in the local government area.	Cr Arnott Alternate Mayor Palmer
43	Salt Ash Sand Project Community Consultative Committee	The purpose of a Community Consultative Committee is to provide a forum for discussion between a proponent and representatives of the community, stakeholder groups and the local council on issues directly relating to a specific State significant project.	Cr Doohan Alternate Cr Wells
44	Stone Ridge Community Consultative Committee	The purpose of the committee is to provide an advisory forum of community representatives to meet requirements of the development consent.	Cr Francis Alternate Cr Arnott
45	Williamstown Consultative Committee Forum	To provide a forum for the residents of Williamstown area to discuss relevant issues with Federal, State and Local Government elected members and agencies.	Mayor Palmer (General Manager)
46	Worimi Conservation Lands Board of Management Ministerial Appointment	To oversee the management of the lands owned by the Aboriginal owners and leased back to the NSW Government.	Cr Bailey Alternate Cr Francis

Capital works projects

Capital works project expenditure in 2023 to 2024.

*Grant funds contributed to this project



Classification	Job description	Cost (\$)
31.304 mm	Little Beach Jetty*	79,060.30
Bridge	Notts Creek Bridge*	557,588.53
Buildings	Yulong Oval Amenities*	2,174,585.97
Buildings	Birubi Surf Lifesaving Club Upgrades*	76,144.09
Buildings	Lakeside Leisure Centre Grid Mesh	6,882.31
Buildings	Tomaree Aquatic Centre De Filter	34,150.00
Buildings	Tilligerry Aquatic Centre Splash Pad	22,955.29
Buildings	Raymond Terrace Activity Van Switchboard	8,696.40
Buildings	Community Assets DIF Installations	33,371.36
Buildings	Raymond Terrace Depot	2,532,214.38
Buildings	Little Beach Amenities Replacement*	308,060.71
Buildings	Solar Panel Rollout	106,568.67
Buildings	Victoria Parade Amenities, Fixture and Fittings Upgrades	6,410.33
Buildings	Little Beach Changing Places Amenities Replacement*	314,028.12
Buildings	Medowie Childcare Centre Shade Shelter Replacement	40,674.02
Buildings	King Park Sport Complex Seating and Building Upgrades*	35,082.38
Buildings	Lakeside Aquatic Centre Playground*	31,783.55
Buildings	Fingal Bay North Amenities*	8,650.04
Buildings	Administration Building and IT Modifications	305,838.32
Buildings	Raymond Terrace Activity Van Roof Replacement	9,049.99
Buildings	Lakeside Leisure Pool Heat Pump	48,784.26
Carparks	Birubi Tourism Interchange*	204,277.60
Carparks	Little Beach Carpark Design*	17,520.00
Carparks	Shoal Bay Carpark	106,147.67
Carparks	Inner Lights Carpark Retaining Wall	12,968.02
Commercial Investment	Commercial Investment and Land*	14,887,869.00
Digital Assets	Smart Parking Implementation	498,628.02
Natural Disaster	Teramby Road, Landslip and Pathway*	616,973.92
Natural Disaster	Marine Drive, Fingal Bay Landslip*	1,248,886.45
Natural Disaster	Bourke St Flood Pump	45,673.55
Natural Disaster	Kangaroo St Flood Pump	176,816.88

Classification	Job description	Cost (\$)
Drainage	Nelson Bay Drainage Works	427,606.22
Drainage	Canomii Close, Nelson Bay Drainage Works	17,535.38
Drainage	Corrie Parade Drainage Works	55,621.52
Drainage	Irene Crescent Drainage Works	85,943.56
Fleet	Fleet Replacement Program*	3,024,150.79
Holiday Parks	Holiday Park Improvements	2,284,967.91
ICT	Information Technology Improvements	1,255,285.08
Libraries	Library Resources	248,392.30
Libraries	Library Check in Machines	16,952.01
Open Space	Tomaree Sports Complex - Field Lighting*	248,563.46
Open Space	Koroa Oval Playground*	66,669.04
Open Space	Fishermans Bay Reserve Infrastructure	20,780.02
Open Space	Little Beach Reserve Irrigation	47,934.66
Open Space	Gula Park Boardwalk	48,459.29
Open Space	Salamander Sports Complex Surface Releveling	184,602.17
Open Space	Nelson Bay Foreshore Access Points*	29,018.08
Open Space	Shoal Bay Foreshore Access Points*	15,943.64
Open Space	Taylors Beach Playground*	134,541.55
Open Space	Little Beach Fish Cleaning Tables*	59,248.11
Open Space	Spencer Park Upgrades	32,972.68
Open Space	Brandon Park Upgrades*	208,920.57
Open Space	Little Beach Retaining Wall	65,142.65
Open Space	Foster Park Shelters and Tables	5,871.88
Open Space	Little Beach Furniture, and BBQs*	297,857.99
Open Space	Aliceton Reserve Playground*	152,337.80
Open Space	Centennial Park Playground	75,686.05
Open Space	Tomaree Sports Complex Playground	89,526.74
Open Space	Corlette Headland Boardwalk*	8,490.00
Open Space	Boomerang Park BBQs	32,504.43
Open Space	Sports Facility Masterplans*	45,100.00
Open Space	Raymond Terrace Netballs Court Renovations	36,558.31
Pathways	Brandy Hill Pathway	73,091.95
Pathways	Fly Point to Halifax Pathway*	806,992.75
Pathways	Lemontree Passage Town Centre Upgrades*	750,348.07
Pathways	Nelson Bay Road Fern Bay Pathway*	1,014,736.06
Pathways	Lemontree Passage Town Centre Pathway*	865,870.42
Pathways	King Park Sport Complex Pathway	51,241.24

Classification	Job description	Cost (\$)
Pathways	Shoal Bay Road Footpath Design*	117,470.28
Pathways	Teramby Road, Landslip and Dive Site*	368,299.89
Pathways	Shared Pathway Design - Shiraz to Shore*	170,831.74
Pathways	Bus Shelter Upgrades*	277,095.18
Pathways	Marine Drive, Fingal Bay Pathway Extension	155,181.01
Roads	Reseal Program*	2,620,467.26
Roads	Avenue of the Allies, Tanilba Way*	3,420,494.46
Roads	Sturgeon Street, Raymond Terrace	1,025,742.73
Roads	Bucketts Way, Twelve Mile Creek*	280,885.51
Roads	Lemontree Passage Road, Oyster Cove*	1,450,765.86
Roads	East Seaham Road, East Seaham*	340,002.44
Roads	Medowie Road, Medowie*	307,994.89
Roads	Mustons Road, Karuah	163,047.25
Roads	Nelson Bay Town Centre Upgrades*	151,360.09
Roads	Port Stephens Street, Raymond Terrace*	144,055.40
Roads	Government Road, Nelson Bay	50,678.23
Roads	Clarencetown Road Upgrades*	104,331.76
Roads	Soldiers Point Rd retaining wall	9,750.00
Roads	Port Stephens Drive, Koala Blackspot*	808,819.97
Roads	Tanilba Road Mallabula	68,013.66
Roads	Hannah Parade, One Mile	196,141.22
Roads	Raymond Terrace Town Centre Upgrades*	769,671.39
Roads	Duns Creek Road, Duns Creek	9,817.46
Roads	Lavis Lane, Williamtown	564,413.61
Roads	Beach Road, Nelson Bay*	741,591.64
Roads	Janet Parade, Salt Ash*	59,138.06
Roads	Ferodale Road Design	74,999.99
Roads	William Street Clock, Raymond Terrace	48,926.00
Roads	Swan Bay Road*	987,232.97
Roads	Halloran Way Retaining Wall*	18,100.01
Roads	Tomaree Rd, Shoal Bay*	924,260.66
Roads	Italia Rd, East Seaham & Balickera*	2,034,947.95
Roads	Rookes Rd, Salt Ash*	468,262.63
Roads	Beach Road, Nelson Bay*	284,021.05
Roads	Sandy Point Road*	372,221.25
Roads	Lemontree Passage Road, Oyster Cove*	101,504.30

Glossary of terms and acronyms

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Advocacy: The act of speaking or arguing in favour of something like a cause or idea.

Biodiversity: The variety of all living things including plants, animals and microorganisms, their genes and the ecosystems of which they are a part.

Capital works: Major projects undertaken to either renew, upgrade or construct assets owned by Port Stephens Council.

CMP: Coastal Management Program

Community Strategic Plan (CSP): A strategic document with a minimum 10-year outlook, which outlines our community's long term vision and priorities.

COVID-19: The disease caused by a new coronavirus.

Customer First: An organisational framework which puts our customers (ratepayers, community and colleagues) at the heart of everything we do.

DA: Development application.

Delivery Program: A document with a minimum 4-year outlook, which outlines our Council's objectives in achieving the Community Strategic Plan.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP): A plan outlining the actions we'll take to remove barriers for people with disability.

Financial year: The financial year we are reporting on in this report is from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

Gathang: The language of the Worimi people of Port Stephens.

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R): A framework used by NSW councils to report on progress in meeting the community's vision and objectives.

It incorporates the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Operational Plan, Long Term Financial Plan, Strategic Asset Management Plan and Workforce Plan.

IPART: Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal.

LGA: Local government area.

Long Term Financial Plan: A plan for how we'll fund the objectives and strategies in the Community Strategic Plan.

NCAT: NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal

OLG: Office of Local Government NSW.

OOSH: Out of School Hours Care.

Operational Plan: An annual action plan for how we'll implement the Delivery Program plus budgets, fees and charges.

PFAS: Per and poly fluoroalkyl substances. A synthetic chemical that has been linked to the historical use of firefighting foam.

Risk management: Coordinated activities to direct and control Council with regard to risk.

RMS: Roads and Maritime Services.

Special Activation Precinct (SAP): A dedicated area in a regional location identified by the NSW Government to become a thriving business hub.

Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP): A 10-year framework for managing our Council's assets so appropriate services are effectively delivered to the community.

TfNSW: Transport for NSW

Worimi: Our Council acknowledges the Worimi people as the traditional owners of the Port Stephens local government area.

Workforce Plan: A plan to ensure we have the right people and skills to deliver the objectives in the Community Strategic Plan.

YAP: Youth Advisory Panel.

Yabang Gumba-Gu: Meaning 'road to tomorrow', this is an agreement and 3-year action plan our Council has signed with the local Worimi and Karuah Aboriginal Land Councils.

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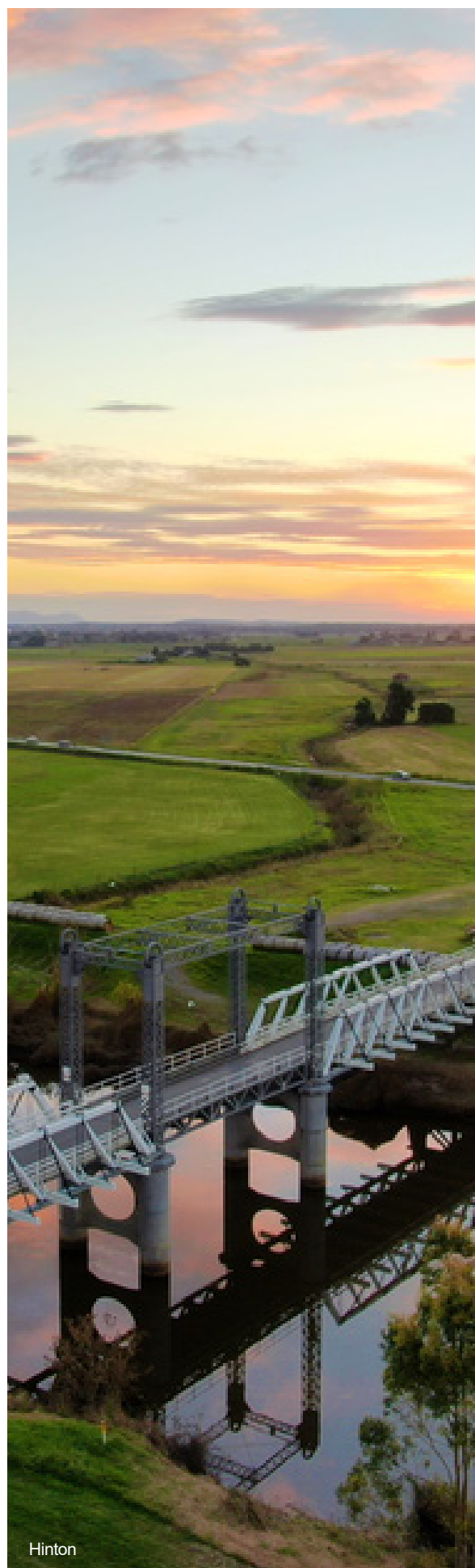
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Hinton



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Tomaree Coastal Walk, photo by Daniel Parsons/DPE