

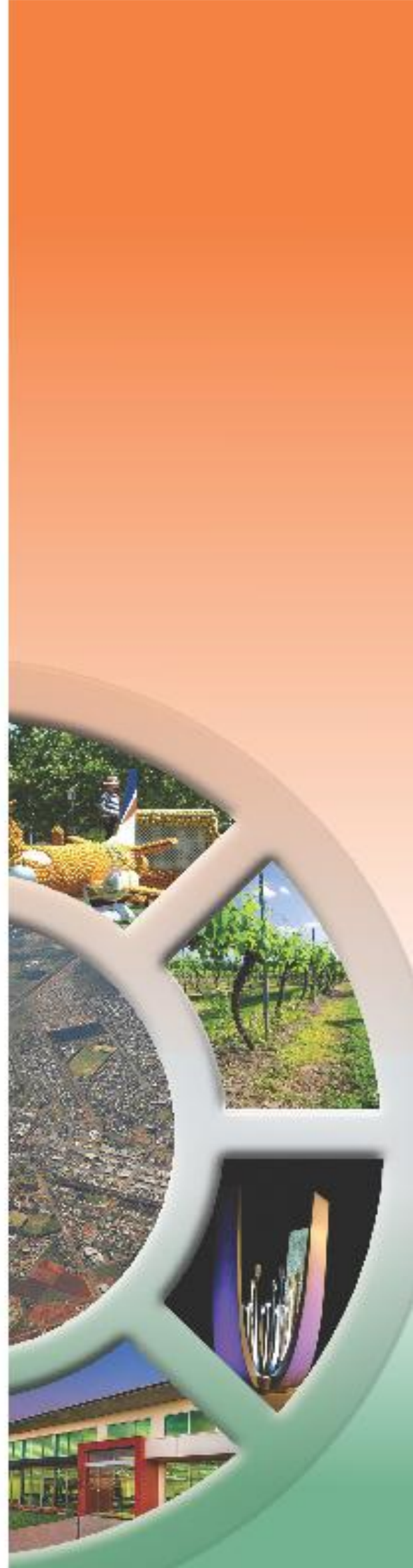


Ordinary Meeting

Tuesday, 9 June 2026

ATTACHMENTS UNDER SEPARATE COVER

- CL01** Local Government Remuneration Tribunal 2026 - Determination of Fees Payable to Mayor and Councillors
 - CL02** Code of Meeting Practice
 - CL08** St Vincent De Paul Care and Support Program
 - CL09** Treasury Policy on Council Loan Borrowings
 - CL10** Treasury Policy for Investments
- Minutes of the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum Committee Meeting held on 20 May 2026**



ATTACHMENTS UNDER SEPARATE COVER

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Local Government Remuneration Tribunal

Annual Determination

Report and determination
under sections 239 and 241 of the
Local Government Act 1993

23 April 2026



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Executive Summary

Functions of the Tribunal

1. Section 241 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (the Act)* requires the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal (**the Tribunal**), by 1 May each year, to determine for each of the categories of Councils determined under s 239, the maximum and minimum fees to be paid to Mayors and Councillors in the following year. As well as those of Chairpersons and members of County Councils: s 400. The Tribunal may also amend a determination it has made for fees to be paid to the appointed Chairperson and appointed Councillors of a council designated as a Rural and Remote Council: c 12(c), sch 11.
2. Section 239(1) of the Act requires the Tribunal to determine the categories of Councils and mayoral offices at least once every three years. It must then also place each Council and mayoral office into one of those categories. There are presently 135 Councils in the State, including County Councils, which are allocated into 15 different categories, with Central Darling Council being the subject of a 2025 Special Determination.
3. The Tribunal must also report its determination to the Minister within seven days: s 244. The Tribunal's Annual Determination takes effect from 1 July each year.
4. All of the Tribunal's functions must be undertaken in accordance with the purposes of the Act, specified in s 7 to be:
 - (a) *to provide the legal framework for the system of local government for New South Wales,*
 - (b) *to set out the responsibilities and powers of Councils, Councillors and other persons and bodies that constitute the system of local government,*
 - (c) *to provide for governing bodies of Councils that are democratically elected, or for certain rural and remote Councils, part elected and part appointed,*

Executive Summary

(d) to facilitate engagement with the local community by Councils, Councillors and other persons and bodies that constitute the system of local government,

(e) to provide for a system of local government that is accountable to the community and that is sustainable, flexible and effective.

Fees

5. For reasons explained below, the Tribunal has determined that from 1 July 2026 there must be a **3.7%** increase in the current minimum and maximum fees applicable to each category of Council, as well in the fees of the appointed Chairperson and appointed Councillors of Central Darling Shire Council. That reflecting increases in the cost of living. Relevant indicators since the 2025 adjustment, including:
 - Consumer Price Index for the 12 months to February 2026 of 3.7%;
 - Wage Price Index for the 12 months to December 2025 of 3.4%;
 - Full-time average weekly ordinary time earnings for the 12 months to November 2025;
 - NSW Public Sector Salaries increases for FY 2025/26 of 3%;
 - Local Government State Award increases for FY 2025/26 of 3%;
 - IPART Rate Peg Base Cost Change for FY 2025/26 of 3.6%;
 - The 2025 Public Service Senior Executive remuneration determinations of the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Tribunal; and
 - The 2025 State Members of Parliament Basic Salary remuneration determination of the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal.

6. The Tribunal has also taken note of the current war in the Middle East, which is likely having an adverse impact on the cost of living. But takes the view that its effects and their potential impact on fee adjustment, cannot reliably be determined at this point.

Executive Summary

7. What was advanced in submissions included that not only should there be a cost of living increase in 2026. But that there should be a much more significant increase in fees, to reflect that current fees no longer adequately reflect the challenging work which Mayors and Councillors must undertake in their important elected offices. With the result that fees should be increased to reflect those determined by the Tribunal for the Chairperson and appointed Councillors of the Central Darling Council in its 2025 Special Determination. As well as the remuneration and allowances paid to Mayors and Councillors in Queensland and Victoria.
8. The Tribunal accepts that it has the discretion to determine that fees should justly be increased, by more than a cost of living adjustment, as was urged. That permitting its consideration of the adequacy of current fees, given the work which Mayors and Councillors are elected to perform and how that has changed over time.
9. That is because while s 242A of the Act requires the Tribunal to give effect to the same policies on increases in remuneration as those that the Industrial Relations Commission is required to give effect to under s 146C of the *Industrial Relations Act 1996* (NSW) when making or varying awards or orders relating to the conditions of employment of public sector employees. That section has now been repealed, that removing the prior fetter on the Tribunal's discretion to adjust fees in the way urged on this review.
10. The Tribunal also accepts that a greater increase than that which it has determined, may be warranted. But has concluded that the amount of any such increase requires further consideration in light of changes which have taken place over time. Not merely in the amount of the fees fixed by past Determinations, but also in the work Mayors and Councillors have to perform in their elected offices.
11. Understandably, some submissions sought to draw comparisons with the fees fixed by the 2025 Special Determination for the appointed Councillors and Chairperson for the Central Darling Shire Council and those fixed for other Mayors, as well as with payments made to Councillors and Mayors in other States.

Executive Summary

12. When such comparisons are drawn, consideration can not only be given to the amount of such fees and remuneration. It must also be given to matters such as the nature of the appointments, the work required and the hours and nature of the work performed as a result. As well as to how that compares to what is required of Mayors and Councillors of Local and County Councils in this State and the fees which they receive, as a result. That also requiring an understanding of the applicable statutory schemes and the reasons for the past fixation of the fees and remuneration relied on.
13. The Tribunal was provided with little information or submissions about such matters and so is unable to come to conclusions about whether increases based on the comparisons sought to be drawn, can be entertained.
14. Other submissions about desirable fee adjustment depend on the NSW Parliament amending the Act, to provide for Mayors and Councillors to receive remuneration or salary, rather than a fee for office.
15. Even if such comparisons are presently available to be made, the differences in the statutory regimes, which were not addressed, as well as similarities and differences in the work being compared, would have to be considered. Conclusions about such matters cannot rest merely on opinions advanced in submissions.

Categories

16. In its 2026 Annual Review, as it has done in past three yearly reviews, the Tribunal undertook a s 239 determination, having invited and received submissions about proposed changes. As a result, it has concluded that it is necessary to rectify a criteria anomaly identified in the Regional Strategic category established by the 2023 Annual Determination, as well as adjusting the population criteria for the Major Strategic Area category, from 300,000 to 200,000.

Executive Summary

17. The Tribunal also identified that Dungog Shire Council has met the population threshold and Councillor to population ratio criteria for Rural Large and will, as a result, be placed in the Rural Large category.
18. The Tribunal also concluded that in 2026 there should be no other change to the present categories, which will thus continue to be:

Metropolitan	Non-Metropolitan	County Councils
Principal CBD	Major Regional City	Water
Major CBD	Major Strategic Area	Other
Metropolitan Major	Regional Strategic Area	
Metropolitan Large	Regional Centre	
Metropolitan Medium	Regional Rural	
Metropolitan Small	Rural Large	
	Rural	

2027 Annual Review

19. For reasons explained further below, in the 2027 Annual Review the Tribunal will invite further submissions from every Council, Local Government NSW and the Minister, about the current categories, criteria and fee structure and whether they remain fit for their statutory purpose. That will provide an opportunity for reliable information and submissions to be provided about claimed changes and available comparisons.
20. The Tribunal will then give further consideration to the current structure of the categories by reference to which it must fix minimum and maximum fees. That consideration may also have an impact on further fee adjustment in 2027, given that the submissions advanced on this review have raised the question of whether the current system of categories and the criteria by which Councils are allocated to them, remain fit for their purpose.

Executive Summary

21. The new structure and criteria will reflect the requirements of the Act, as will the new criteria adopted and Councils' allocation to the revised categories. The Tribunal will also determine which criteria individual Councils satisfy, which they will have an opportunity to address, having been invited to provide the Tribunal with the relevant, reliable information.

Section 1 – Introduction

Methodology

22. The Tribunal's inquiries are regulated by s 243 of the Act, which permit it to make such inquiry as it thinks necessary, before making a determination.
23. Section 248 requires Councils to pay Councillors fees which are fixed by reference to the minimum and maximum fees determined by the Tribunal. Section 239 also requires the Tribunal, at least once every 3 years, to determine categories for Councils and mayoral office and to place Councils into those categories.
24. The Tribunal's 2026 Annual Review commenced in October 2025 with the assistance of its Secretariat, when all Councils and the Association were invited to provide submissions about fees and categorisation. Its invitation asked that submissions be endorsed by Councils. All submissions received from Councils were endorsed. The Tribunal also received a submission from some individual Councillors and the Association.
25. Some twenty-five submissions were received from Councils, only some of which addressed fee increases. In its submissions the Association addressed proposed fee increases, as well as problems with the Determination flowing from the operation of the Act, proposed alterations to Council categories and the criteria by which they are allocated.
26. The Tribunal later met with representatives of 19 Councils, seven Councillors and the Association, who addressed written submissions and, in some cases, provided further data to support the submissions advanced. Not all of that provided was sourced from publicly available sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics and its reliability was thus not able to be assessed.
27. The Tribunal also had regard to the other information referred to in this report.

Section 1 – Introduction

Summary of submissions

28. Most of the submissions received focused on the inadequacies of the fees and the statutory system which requires them to be fixed as they are. Issues raised including that:
- The remuneration which the fees generate being grossly inadequate, not adequately compensating for the skills, knowledge and responsibilities the Act requires Councillors and Mayors in urban, regional and rural contexts to have and exercise;
 - There has been significant, increasing complexity in the work which has to be undertaken, as well as an increase in the time it requires, without a change in remuneration to compensate for these changes;
 - That including as the result of changes to the Code of Meeting Practice which Councils have to observe, which has resulted in increased expenses having to be born, for which there is no compensation;
 - There is a need for a Deputy Mayor fee to be implemented, to reflect what this role now requires;
 - That the current fee structure and meeting requirements act as a barrier to desirable skilled representation in local government, as well as to desirable diversity in that representation;
 - It has also driven the loss of able and experienced representatives;
 - The existing differences in fees received by Councillors and Mayors in Metropolitan Councils, by comparison to those received by those in Regional and Rural Councils, did not reflect the similarities in their roles and responsibilities. Nor the additional responsibilities which have to be undertaken in Regional and Rural Councils;
 - The Determination drives politicisation of Councils, by requiring them to set their own fees within the minimum and maximum set by the Tribunal, which also put them into an undesirable position of conflict: ss 239 and 248; and

Section 1 – Introduction

- Fees were out of step with those which are paid to Board members and those who accept appointments to advisory committees, with which comparisons were also sought to be drawn, but no concrete information was provided about.
29. On this review the Tribunal was urged to undertake a similar assessment of fees to that undertaken in 1995 and not to limit its consideration of what fee increase a cost of living adjustment would warrant. It was also urged to also consider the range of factors it has taken into account in the past, in determining what a cost of living adjustment should be.
30. Various submissions also urged the desirability of various other proposed legislative changes. For example:
- Introducing a new model of remuneration for Mayors and Councillors to replace the current fee based structure;
 - Removing the Tribunal's obligations to fix maximum and minimum fees for Mayors and Councillors;
 - Introducing a separate fixed fee for the Deputy Mayor position;
 - Deputy Mayors receiving mayoral fees while acting as Mayor, but Mayors still continuing to be paid their Mayoral fees;
 - Indexed pro rata remuneration; and
 - Recognition that the work of Mayors and Councillors involves a full time job. As to which, it must be noted, no information provided to the Tribunal established this to be the case.
31. These matters are not within the Tribunal's control, but they will be drawn to the attention of the Minister.
32. The Tribunal accepting the importance of the various views raised by Councils, Councillors and the Association and as a result, will draw them to the attention of the Minister. But that

Section 1 – Introduction

it has power to act on some of them on this review, has not been established, given the current statutory scheme.

33. The Tribunal also notes that consideration of future expected developments when Councils are categorised was also urged by some submissions. While others expressed satisfaction with the Council's current categorisation, as the basis for fixing its fees, while not addressing whether it still satisfied the applicable criteria. This will have to be revisited in the 2027 Annual Review.
34. If further submissions are then advanced, which provide a basis for different conclusions being arrived at about any of the above matters, they will of course be considered by the Tribunal. And if the Act is amended in response to what has been urged, the Tribunal will then undertake whatever statutory tasks it is given.

Section 2 – 2025 Determinations

2025 Annual Determination

35. In 2025, the Tribunal received sixteen written submissions, which included two requests for re-categorisation. As a result, it reviewed population and other data relating to those Councils, to ensure categorisation was consistent with the applicable criteria.
36. The Tribunal found that the then current allocation of the Councils remained appropriate, with the exception of Mid Coast Council. As a result of it meeting the population benchmark, it was re-categorised from Regional Centre to Regional Strategic Area: 2025 Annual Determination report at [58]-[59].
37. The Tribunal also determined that the minimum and maximum fees applicable to each category would increase by 3% from 1 July 2025.

2025 Special Determination

38. The Tribunal also made a Special Determination in 2025, following the introduction of the *Local Government Amendment (Rural and Remote Councils) Act 2024* and the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Rural and Remote Councils) Regulation 2025*. Having on 6 June 2025 received a direction from the Minister for Local Government under s 242 of the Act, to determine the maximum and minimum fees for Appointed Councillors and the Chairperson for Central Darling Shire Council.
39. The effect of the legislation was to insert Schedule 11 into the Act, cl 3 permitting a Council to be designated as a Rural and Remote Council by regulation, as the Central Darling Shire Council was, when the Minister recommended that it met criteria specified by the regulation: cl 3(2). The Regulations now provide that a Council may be designated as a Rural and Remote Council if, at the time of designation, its area has a population of 5,000 persons or fewer as recorded in data series 1410.0–Data by Region published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics: r 413F.

Section 2 – 2025 Determinations

40. Central Darling Shire Council is designated as a Rural and Remote Council for 10 years: r 413G. With the result that it must have six Councillors, one elected from each ward, as well as three appointed by the Minister r 413G(3).
41. The Minister must also appoint an appointed Councillor as chairperson of the Council: cl 10(1) sch 11. The Tribunal's determinations under s 241 do not apply to appointed Councillors: cl 12(2)(a) sch 11. But it must determine their maximum and minimum fees and may at any time amend such a determination: cl 12(2)(b) and (c) sch 11.
42. In its Special Determination the Tribunal determined a minimum fee of \$13,830 and a maximum of \$13,930 for appointed Councillors and a minimum of \$72,080 and a maximum of \$72,180 for the appointed Chairperson.
43. This Determination was relied on in this review to advance the Association's submissions that the functions of the appointed chairperson of Central Darling Shire Council are substantially the same as those of Mayors of other Rural Councils. With the result that their fees should be increased to similar amounts. That was supported by submissions advanced by some Councils.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

The relevant history

44. The submissions advanced require not only a consideration of the current fees and what the statutory scheme provides for, but also of the history by which they have been arrived at. As well as the impact of changes which have occurred.
45. The history was not addressed by the submissions advanced.
46. Relevantly, it includes that in 1994 the Tribunal undertook wide ranging consultations to establish what was then involved in the roles and functions of elected representatives of local government, conducting public hearings to obtain a representative cross section across the State.
47. It then examined matters such as Councillors' backgrounds and experience; community activities engaged in before and after election; time spent on meetings as well as preparation time; Council's functions and the issues and problems they had to deal with. As well as remuneration levels and ratios between Councillors and Mayors. The Tribunal having received submissions from 66 Councils, 7 County Councils, associations and the public: at page 3 – 5 of the 1994 Determination.
48. The functions of Councils and the roles of their elected officials under the Act were explained, with contrasts drawn with the predecessor 1919 legislation. Under which members of Councils "*were regarded in effect, as performing honorary community roles, with some provision for recompense for prescribed incurred expenses*": at 11 of the 1995 Determination.
49. Existing fees were then found not to adequately recompense those elected for the performance of their duties at regular Council meetings, special community and committee meetings, communication with the community and representing Council at functions: at 11

Section 3 – 2026 Review

of the 1995 Determination. That requiring lengthy periods to be spent on Council business and associated interviewing, reading and preparation: at 12 of the 1995 Determination.

50. The Tribunal had regard to all such activities in setting fees under the 1993 Act, at a time when they were performed in addition to Mayors and Councillor's normal occupations: at 12 of the 1995 Determination. It then being the common experience that the substantial majority of Councillors and Mayors were involved in some other employment or engagement, either full-time or part-time.
51. The fees then fixed were based on an assumption that Councillors would also be recompensed for expenditure reasonably incurred in relation to their Council duties. That being a matter of discretion for each Council, according to the particular circumstances of that Council. That allowing them to determine the extent of any absorption of expenses in fees: at 16 of the 1995 Determination.
52. The minimum fees were determined on the basis that Councillors and Mayors were *"performing a community service in addition to their normal occupations"*: at 16 of the 1995 Determination. The usual practice being *"to programme the attendance of councillors and mayors outside normal business hours for meetings and other activities to accommodate their other time commitments. Their duties not requiring continuous attendance during the course of each working day."*: at 16 – 17 of the 1995 Determination.
53. And that *"The duties performed as mayor attract an additional fee for extra delegated duties and functions actually performed"*: at 17 of the 1995 Determination. It was further explained at 19 of the 1995 Determination:

"The minimum fees determined provide the statutory minimum payment for councillors and mayors. They are based on an assessment of the average council in each category. As - with any averaging, the fees may be generous for some councils but modest for others. The maximum fees provide the necessary ambit of discretion to enable each council to assess its performance compared with other councils in its category. Such discretion

Section 3 – 2026 Review

enables each council to determine whether its performance as a whole compared with the other councils justifies a payment in excess of the minimum to its councillors and/or mayor. It is conceivable that because of significant delegations by a council to the mayor, this situation may warrant a fee greater than the minimum for the mayor, but not for councillors. The reverse situation could also apply.”

54. What was then being evaluated by the Tribunal being *“the knowledge, skills and community interests of councillors and mayors”*: at 19 of the 1995 Annual Determination.
55. This Determination also explained, in detail, how the categories were then arrived at. With various distinctions drawn between Metropolitan and Non-metropolitan Councils, with consideration of matters such as their size, population, assets and expenditure, amongst other factors. Consideration also then being given to the unique position of the Council of the City of Sydney.
56. It also explained how this related to the fees determined, given the relevant history. Which included a change from the original position under the 1919 Act, that Local Government elected officials had traditionally been seen as civic minded citizens providing a voluntary service to the community, being born in mind. As well as what had been recognised when the *Local Government (Payment of Fees) Amendment Act 1993* (NSW) was introduced. It recognising payment of a fee for attending to Council business, i.e., meetings, inspections, etc, which did not involve the payment of salaries: at 64-66 of the 1995 Annual Determination.
57. Consideration was also given to the statutory roles and responsibilities of Councils in other States and overseas, as well as of comparisons then sought to be drawn with members of Parliament.
58. It was not then accepted that local government representation had progressed to the status of an independent career. Even though some elected officers chose to spend their time, full time, on Council duties: at 69-70 of the 1995 Determination.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

59. It was also explained that the minimum and maximum fee range fixed required Councils to each evaluate the functions and responsibilities which were actually performed by their Councillors: at 76 of the 1995 Determination.
60. After 1995, over time the fees fixed by the Determination have been increased by the Tribunal, to reflect changes it made to the categories of Councils which the Act required it to review regularly, in order to fix appropriate maximum and minimum fees.
61. In 2017 the Tribunal noted that what the Act required was “a categorisation model in which Councils with the largest number of features in common can be grouped together for remuneration purposes. This is not straightforward, as each Council has challenges and issues which are unique”: at [16].
62. It then found that while the then existing criteria continued to provide an equitable and transparent model by which to differentiate Councils for the purposes of determining remuneration, there was some scope to refine the criteria to address a number of anomalies and to better reflect the composition of Councils after amalgamations: at [18] – [19] 2017 Annual Report.
63. It also sought to improve consistency and transparency in the allocation of Councils into categories, with the result that a number were either recategorised into an existing category, or a new category: at [19].
64. Fees were determined for the new categories, having regard to relativities between the existing groups: [54].
65. Fees were later increased to reflect not only cost of living increases, but also changes which the Tribunal made to Council categories and the applicable criteria. But for a time, the Tribunal’s powers to increase fees were frozen and at other times available fee increases were capped, as the result of steps taken by Governments.

Section 3 – 2026 Review

66. These changes to its discretions were explained in the Tribunal's various Annual Determinations. They help explain the complaints received on this review about the current fees, which it must be accepted, as a result, do not reflect all increases in the cost of living over time.
67. On the Association's approach, this has resulted in fees which no longer accurately reflect what the Tribunal first assessed, independently, in 1995.
68. In 2020 the Tribunal considered recategorisation proposals it received in 2019, about which it sought and received submissions: at [13]-[19] 2020 Annual Report. Then creating the new category of Regional Centre; renaming Regional City to Major Regional City and also adopting some changed criteria. As well as reordering the Regional Strategic Area criteria, considering that it warranted further differentiation.
69. It also altered the criteria for Metropolitan Medium and Metropolitan Large categories, with resulting changes for other categories: at [23]-[30]. In some cases, additional criteria being significant enough to warrant some Councils' categorisation into a group with a higher population: at [30]. Fees were set to reflect resulting activities: at [69].
70. In 2023 the Tribunal sought to improve consistency of the criteria and also adopted non-resident population criteria for some categories, with resulting reclassification of some Councils: at [23]-[25] 2023 Annual Report. As well as creating two new categories, Rural Large and Metropolitan Major, to bridge identified gaps: [26]-[36].

2026 Annual Review process - Fees

71. As explained, this year's submissions pursued various concerns about the current fees. They not being considered to adequately compensate for the skills and knowledge Councillors and Mayors are required to exercise, or the time they have to spend in performing the duties of their offices, given considerable changes over time. In

Section 3 – 2026 Review

considerable part this having been driven by population increases and changes introduced by Governments.

72. The view repeatedly urged being that current fees result in a considerable barrier to desirable diversity in representation in local government, as well as problems in attracting and retaining suitably qualified people to stand for and remain in office, when elected.
73. The Tribunal accepts that there are such problems, given the information and submissions it has received.
74. There were various submissions that an increase was necessary, given the increased cost of living. But few submissions addressed the quantum of the increase. Narrabri Council urging a 10% increase and Lake Macquarie a 3-4% increase. Another that fees should be doubled. Other submissions urging that Mayoral fees be increased substantially to reflect the 2025 Special Determination. The Association and some Councils also seeking increases which resulted in fees similar to the remuneration paid in Queensland and Victoria.
75. The City of Sydney Council did not seek such increase in the fees payable to the Lord Mayor, but urged very substantial increases for Councillors. Some Councillors also providing, late, further information which the Tribunal did not have the opportunity to give adequate consideration to, given all they have raised and the time frame in which this review must be completed.
76. Some submissions also urged an increase in fees of rural and regional Councillors and Mayors, to assist in addressing low candidature numbers.
77. The Association also urged that a significant increase in fees was needed to:

“1. Ensure that Councillors and Mayors in New South Wales do not continue to experience fee erosion flowing from the former NSW Public Sector Wages Policy;

Section 3 – 2026 Review

2. Reflect the current economic climate in New South Wales and adjust fees according to recent and relevant economic data; and

3. Recognise the increasing demands and time commitment required of elected local government representatives.”

78. The Association noting that the repeal of s 146C of the *Industrial Relations Act 1996* (NSW) had the result that the Tribunal is no longer constrained by a cap when awarding fee increases. And urging that the Tribunal accept that current fees were manifestly inadequate, not properly reflecting as they needed to, the current responsibilities and role of elected Council officials. That preventing Councils' financial stability and also deterring quality candidates, of all backgrounds, pursuing civic office, which was not in the public interest.
79. It also submitting that fees should now be assessed on the basis that the work of elected officials was valued at more than 8 hours per week, at the rate of the national minimum wage. It also advanced economic and wage data to support these arguments
80. The submissions thus drew comparisons with:
- The salary paid to members of parliament under the *Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989* (NSW);
 - Remuneration which Mayors and Councillors of Queensland Councils are paid under the *Local Government Act 2009* (QLD) and the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (QLD); and
 - Allowances which Victorian Mayors and Councillors receive, fixed by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal under s 39 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (VIC).

Section 3 – 2026 Review

81. Specific examples were also relied on. Including, for example, that Councillors in Townsville are paid a maximum remuneration of \$135,123, while those in Liverpool are paid a maximum fee of only \$34,820. While in the case of Mayors the comparison was \$225,206 to \$136,290.
82. The difficulty with such comparisons is that the other legislative schemes relied on, do not provide for a fee based structure of the kind for with the Act provides for NSW Mayors and Councillors.
83. Parliamentarians in this State, for example, receive a basic salary and an electoral allowance payable as compensation in respect of all incidents of the performance of their parliamentary duties (other than those compensated or reimbursed by other additional entitlements): s 4 and 10(2B) of the *Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989* (NSW).
84. Still, some submissions relied on an observation in the 2024 Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal Annual Report, where I, in my capacity as Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal, said at [28] that:

“Not only should Members of Parliament be fairly remunerated for their important and challenging work, within the State’s means, but it must also be remembered that such remuneration and the other conditions and entitlements provided by the Determination play a real role in attracting people of high intellect, integrity and vigour to stand for election to the Parliament. People who have the necessary skills to perform such work well and who are prepared to devote their time to serving the public interest, rather than only their own interests. Appropriate salary and conditions also help to ensure that such people are also prepared to continue seeking re-election in order to continue performing the important work of their offices.”
85. The view urged being that those observations also apply to NSW Councillors and Mayors, given the valuable, time consuming and challenging work which their roles now require them to perform.

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86. While the Tribunal was not provided with information which would provide a basis for the acceptance of these opinions, support for them can be found in s 232 of the Act, which explains the important roles which Councillors play. As well as in s 233A, which specifies the oath of office which they must take after election. By which they promise to undertake the duties of their office in the best interests of the people of their Council area and that they will faithfully and impartially carry out their functions, powers, authorities and discretions.
87. Despite this and no matter how earnestly held, it is not presently apparent how these views can be acted on by the Tribunal, given the current legislative scheme. All of them seeming to depend on the Parliament amending this State's Act, to provide for Mayors and Councillors to receive remuneration or salary, rather than a fee for office.
88. As has been explained in past Annual Determinations, that is not a matter within the Tribunal's control.
89. The 20 May 1993 Second Reading speech to the Act explains how its terms were arrived at. As the result of a lengthy bipartisan reform process, following enquiry into changes required to be made to the then frequently amended predecessor 1919 legislation: Hansard p 2414. The Tribunal's 1994 Determination explains the process by which it initially fixed fees and the subsequent Annual Determinations, how they have been increased over time.
90. Tribunal Determinations have thus explained that Mayors and Councillors are paid a fee for the services which they volunteer to provide when they are elected, not a salary. Section 241 still obliges the Tribunal to fix such a fee. It follows that it does not have the power to determine that they should be paid a salary, or remuneration.
91. Little Information was provided on this review to support the submissions which urged the view that the current statutory fee model is no longer appropriate. The significantly increased and more responsible work which it is widely considered now falls to Councils

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to perform and what that requires of its Mayor and Councillors, helps explain why it is also widely considered that legislative change is now desirable.

92. Such information is relevant to the determination of an increase in fees. But the Tribunal has no power to act on the view that the current statutory fee based model no longer remains appropriate. Nor to determine that a remuneration based model such as that contained in the Queensland and Victorian legislation should be adopted in this State. Nor what such remuneration should be.

Conclusions about general fee increase in 2026

93. The Tribunal has considered all it has received, together with the other matters referred to in this report, having been assisted by its two assessors: s 236. Meeting with them to consider their views about the submissions the Tribunal received and the exercise of its functions on this review.
94. The result is the Tribunal's conclusions that:
- All fees should be adjusted from 1 July 2026 by 3.7% to reflect changes in the cost of living, in the expectation that there will be further increases in those costs, driven by the consequences of the war in the Middle East, which is already having adverse impacts on the entire Australian community;
 - To make no other adjustments to fees on this review, but to invite the submissions further explained below, in the 2027 Annual Review. The Tribunal accepting that changes have occurred which ought to be reflected in the fees fixed by the Determination. But also considering that further information and consideration is required, before conclusions can be arrived at about how those changes can be fairly reflected by a further fee adjustment.

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95. The Tribunal thus accepts that it is time to undertake a review of the kind the Association proposed, but has concluded that it cannot be undertaken in this review. That explaining the process which the Tribunal proposes to undertake in 2027, explained in section 4.

The same fee structure for all Mayors and Councillors

96. Remuneration for a Mayor or Councillor not being based on geographical location was also urged by submissions advanced. A number contending that the role of a Mayor and Councillor was fundamentally the same, requiring the same skills, knowledge, experience and responsibilities regardless of location. With the result that the fees of Regional and Rural Mayors should be increased to that of their Metropolitan colleagues.
97. These submissions cannot be accepted. The Act requiring the Tribunal to fix appropriate categories of Council, having regard to specified criteria. The Determination's history and criteria helping to explain differences recognised by the categories. Which the Tribunal must reflect in the minimum and maximum fees fixed for each category.
98. These submissions did not pay necessary regard to these statutory requirements, which are not for the Tribunal to ignore or abandon.
99. The Act does not permit the Tribunal to fix the same fees for all Mayors and Councillors, irrespective of their category. If it were to be found that the fees for Mayors and Councillors of different categories ought to be completely the same, that would necessarily reflect that those Councils ought to fall within the same category.

Fees for Deputy Mayors

100. The Act also does not permit the Tribunal to fix a separate fee for Deputy Mayors. Despite which the issue of a distinct fee within the Determination for the role of Deputy Mayor was once again pressed, as it has been on past reviews. That being supported on this review

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by reports of Mayors being unable to perform the functions of their offices, which had to be taken on by Deputy Mayors, without receiving any resulting additional fees.

101. One submission was that Deputy Mayors undertake significant responsibilities, which the Act fails to adequately recognise or remunerate. Another that a Deputy Mayor must also step in to represent the Mayor when unavailable, chairs committees and plays a pivotal role in decision making and advocacy.
102. The submissions thus urged that the fee structure recognise the additional workload and responsibility that comes with the role of Deputy Mayor.
103. The issue of fees for the role of Deputy Mayor was explained in the 2024 Annual Determination at [53]-[55] and in the 2025 Annual Determination at [62]- [65]. What was there explained was not addressed in the submissions.
104. Section 249 (5) still permits a Council to “pay the Deputy Mayor (if there is one) a fee determined by the Council for such time as the Deputy Mayor acts in the office of the Mayor. The amount of the fee so paid must be deducted from the Mayor’s annual fee.” That requires a decision of Council and cannot be dictated by either the Mayor or a Deputy.
105. The submissions advanced reveal that some Councils have chosen not to exercise this power. With the result that the Deputy Mayor who took on functions the Mayor was unable to perform for a period, received no additional fees to reflect the increased duties taken on. That is an available outcome under the Act and remains a matter for each Council to determine. It is not within the control of Mayors.
106. Still, there having been no change to the Act which would permit the Tribunal to determine a distinct fee for the position of Deputy Mayor, must result in the submissions advanced being rejected. It will, however, draw the issues raised to the Minister’s attention.

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Setting of Fees by Councils

107. Concerns regarding the setting of minimum and maximum fees by Councils, still required by s 241, was also again raised by some submissions. A number calling on the Tribunal to set only one mandatory fee for each category. Another suggesting that the Tribunal could increase the minimum fees to the same amount as the maximum fee level. Another, advocating repeal of s 241 of the Act.
108. Such change was urged because it was considered that this would result in desirable equality of fees and remove the potential for politicisation of fee setting, and potential conflicts of interest. That also enhancing relationships with the community.
109. In the same way as the Court of Appeal recently explained in *Director of Public Prosecutions (NSW) v President of the Legislative Council of New South Wales* [2026] NSWCA 20 [57], the Tribunal is satisfied that it cannot do indirectly, what the Act does not permit it to do directly.
110. It follows that these submissions must also be rejected. But this issue will also be drawn to the Minister's attention.
111. In the 2027 Annual Review, submissions will be invited about the appropriate range between the minimum and maximum fees for the categories then determined.

2026 Annual Review process – category review

112. In determining Council categories, the Tribunal is required to have regard to the matters specified in s 240 of the Act, namely:
- The size of areas;
 - The physical terrain of areas;

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- The population of areas and the distribution of the population;
 - The nature and volume of business dealt with by each Council;
 - The nature and extent of the development of areas;
 - The diversity of communities served;
 - The regional, national and international significance of the Council;
 - Such matters as the Remuneration Tribunal considers relevant to the provision of efficient and effective local government; and
 - Such other matters as may be prescribed by the regulations.
113. The categories of County Councils also require regard be paid to the functions of County Councils: s 240(2). They are specified in s 394 of the Act to be any one or more of the functions of a Council under the Act or any other Act, in accordance with a proclamation made for the purpose of Part 5 of the Act.
114. The Tribunal last reviewed the categories of Councils and mayoral offices in 2023. The current categories in 2026 attracting the increased minimum and maximum fees earlier explained. With the result that some of them continue to overlap considerably, others being but little different and some not readily able to be reconciled.
115. This helps explain why the Tribunal has concluded that limited change is warranted on this review, without the more extensive review of categories, criteria and resulting appropriate fees which will be undertaken in 2027. In order to ensure that the statutory intent is achieved by the Determination. On that review all Councils will be asked to provide reliable, comparable and publicly available data, on which the Tribunal's decisions can then fairly be made.
116. The purpose of the categories and the specified criteria is to enable the Tribunal to annually determine the maximum and minimum amounts of fees to be paid to Mayors and Councillors in each of the categories it determines: s 239.

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117. They having no other statutory purpose, it is difficult to see the reason for a number of current categories attracting overlapping fees; there being limited differences between the fees attracted by other categories, while fees for the Chairperson of the Darling Shire Council are very substantially higher than those paid to very many Mayors.
118. This and the submissions advanced also raise the question of whether the categories and criteria provided by the 2023 Annual Determination, adjusted in the limited way explained by this Determination, adequately reflect the requirements of the Act. As well as whether they continue to remain appropriate and fit for purpose or require further review.
119. The matters specified in s 240(1) driving the need to take into account relevant statistical and demographical data, such as that sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Office of the Local Government and Planning NSW, to which regard has been paid in the past. As well as to data provided by Councils about their particular areas and operations, which also have to be taken into account.
120. One of the difficulties on this review was that the Tribunal had no up to date data about the position of the majority of Councils, which would enable it to determine whether the current category and criteria continue to be fit for purpose, given the requirements of s 240. As well as whether the categories into which Councils are currently placed, remain appropriate.
121. The history of the categories established by past Determinations began in 1994, when there were more Councils in existence and fees were fixed having regard to past history. In 1995, 5 categories were established, with three special categories then also continuing, S1 – Sydney City Council, S2 Newcastle and Wollongong City Councils and S3 – County Councils.
122. In the Tribunal's ongoing 3 yearly reviews since then, categories have been altered, merged and increased for various reasons, including to reflect Council mergers. A new model being adopted in 2017 when the number of Councils was reduced to 128. That

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having established 5 Metropolitan categories and 4 Non Metropolitan categories. In 2020 criteria for some categories were altered, two new categories created and one renamed.

123. In 2023 a further two new categories were created, three Councils which met the criteria thresholds for existing categories were reclassified and criteria consistency improved by the inclusion of the non-resident population, for a number of categories. A consideration permitted by s 240(1), which enables the Tribunal to have regard to such matters as it considers relevant to the provision of efficient and effective local government. The County Council categories remaining unchanged.
124. Submissions advanced in 2026:
- Sought the creation of 2 new categories;
 - Proposed recategorisation of 7 Councils - Parramatta, Lake Macquarie, Murray River, Port Macquarie-Hastings, Randwick, Shellharbour and Willoughby Councils;
 - Sought that one category revert to a previous name;
 - questioned the suitability of current criteria; and
 - Urged the Tribunal to take into account other matters which Council now consider to be relevant to the determination of categories and their categorisation. Visitor numbers, being the best example.
125. If accepted, these submissions require consideration of how these aims could properly be reflected in the category criteria, which the submissions did not address.
126. It also appears that there may, in 2026, be further Council demergers, which will also necessitate consideration of the categories and Council allocations, in order that appropriate fees are fixed for their Councillors and Mayors in 2027.

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127. This all helped drive the Tribunal's conclusion that further change is required to current categories and criteria. But that the submissions and information it has received on this review, did not enable final views to be formed about what those changes should justly be. That will be revisited in the 2027 Annual Review.

Correction of an identified anomaly

128. The current category allocations and criteria appear in the 2025 Annual Determination at Section 5 and Appendix 1 respectively.
129. One required change which has been identified results from an anomaly. The criteria for the category Regional Strategic contains the following sentence:

Currently, only Lake Macquarie Council meets the criteria to be categorised as a Regional Strategic Area. Its population and overall scale of Council operations will be greater than Regional Centre Councils.

130. This is incorrect. There currently being 5 Councils classified as Regional Strategic: Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Mid-Coast, Shoalhaven, and Tweed. As a result, this erroneous statement has been removed from Appendix 1 of the 2026 Annual Determination.

Proposed renaming of “Principal CBD” as the “Principal City”

131. This change in name was urged in order to revert to a prior category name, the Council submitting that this would properly recognise its regional, national and international significance, which extended beyond the Sydney CBD. As well as reflecting significant increases in the roles and responsibilities of its Councillors, in Australia's only global city and to ensure that fees they receive appropriately reflect their responsibilities.
132. The submission explained alterations, over time, to the area which the Council covers. It now having eight distinct economic precincts, as the result of the area added to the City in

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2004: the Harbour, City North, Pyrmont, City South, Eastern Creative, Tech Centre West, Entertainment and Recreation and Southern Enterprise. That having had an impact on representation and other matters relied on to advance a proposed significant increase in Councillors' fees.

133. It was in 2017 that the name change from Principal City to Principal CBD was introduced as part of a restructure which reflected the evolving shape of local government in the State. That retaining the Council of the City of Sydney in its own category, while recognising the emergence of the second CBD in Sydney at Parramatta.
134. The Tribunal can see no disadvantage from the proposed name change. But is still not persuaded that it should now be adopted, without consideration being given to such a change within the wider review proposed for 2027.
135. No change having been proposed to either the criteria which apply to this category, or to the Major CBD category into which only the Council of the City of Parramatta falls. It recognising Parramatta to be the secondary CBD, which some submissions urged was no longer appropriate.

Proposed reclassification of City of Parramatta Council from Major CBD to Principal CBD

136. Council sought to be recategorised from the Major CBD to Principal CBD category, to better reflect its size, rate of growth, economic influence, operational budget and strategic and geographical importance.
137. Council also submitting that it plays a leading role in Greater Sydney's advancement. With factors relied on including:
- 30% of Australia's top 500 companies have offices located in Paramatta;

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- The city is accessible to 2.3 million people within 45 minutes, by car or public transport;
- Creative and cultural institutions such as Riverside Theatre, Olympic Park and the upcoming Powerhouse Paramatta museum are located there;
- As is a large Health and research precinct which includes six (6) universities and Westmead Hospital;
- The Engineering and Innovation Hub, as well as Western Sydney Startup Hub also being located within the LGA; and
- It having the second largest economy, which generates a gross regional product of \$32.88 billion, and 33,000 businesses with over 202,000 jobs.

138. What was advanced did not accord with submissions advanced by some other Councils.

139. The Tribunal is not persuaded that the City of Parramatta Council is incorrectly categorised or satisfies the criteria of Principal CBD, which reflect the unique position of the Council of the City of Sydney. Nor did it advance any changed criteria which would fairly capture both its position and that of the Council of the City of Sydney. That the two can fairly be equated, has also not been established.

140. The Determination has long recognised the distinct role which the Council of the City of Sydney plays, with the result the higher fees its Mayor and Councillors receive, which is reflected in the current criteria:

The Council of the City of Sydney (the City of Sydney) is the principal central business district (CBD) in the Sydney Metropolitan area. The City of Sydney is home to Sydney's primary commercial office district with the largest concentration of businesses and retailers in Sydney. The City of Sydney's sphere of economic influence is the greatest of any local government area in Australia.

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The CBD is also host to some of the city's most significant transport infrastructure including Central Station, Circular Quay and International Overseas Passenger Terminal. Sydney is recognised globally with its iconic harbour setting and the City of Sydney is host to the city's historical, cultural and ceremonial precincts. The City of Sydney attracts significant visitor numbers and is home to 60 per cent of Metropolitan Sydney's hotels.

The role of Lord Mayor of the City of Sydney has significant prominence reflecting the CBD's importance as home to the country's major business centres and public facilities of state and national importance. The Lord Mayor's responsibilities in developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, including other Councils, state and federal governments, community and business groups, and the media are considered greater than other mayoral roles in NSW.

141. The submission and data advanced did not establish that Parramatta satisfies these criteria. Nor a basis for the conclusion that its Mayor and Councillors should receive the same fees as those received by the Mayor and Councillors of the City of Sydney.

142. The criteria which apply to its category, Major CBD, being:

The Council of the City of Parramatta (City of Parramatta) is the economic capital of Greater Western Sydney and the geographic and demographic centre of Greater Sydney. Parramatta is the second largest economy in NSW (after Sydney CBD) and the sixth largest in Australia.

As a secondary CBD to Metropolitan Sydney the Parramatta local government area is a major provider of business and government services with a significant number of organisations relocating their head offices to Parramatta. Public administration and safety have been a growth sector for Parramatta as the State Government has promoted a policy of moving government agencies westward to support economic development beyond the Sydney CBD.

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The City of Parramatta provides a broad range of regional services across the Sydney Metropolitan area with a significant transport hub and hospital and educational facilities. The City of Parramatta is home to the Westmead Health and Medical Research precinct which represents the largest concentration of hospital and health services in Australia, servicing Western Sydney and providing other specialised services for the rest of NSW.

The City of Parramatta is also home to a significant number of cultural and sporting facilities (including Sydney Olympic Park) which draw significant domestic and international visitors to the region.

143. The assumptions reflected in these criteria were challenged by other Councils as no longer being correct. Blacktown Council relying, for example, on data which showed that its residential population in 2024 was considerably greater than that of Parramatta, 274,956 to 438, 843. As was its total population, including workers not residing within its area.
144. The data received helped drive the conclusion that the current criteria may no longer be fit for purpose. And that further consideration needs to be given to what appropriate categories now are and what criteria should apply to them.
145. But the reclassification proposed on this review, cannot be accepted.

Proposed new Metropolitan Major – High Growth Category

146. Blacktown City Council sought the creation of a new category, Metropolitan Major – High Growth, for which it did not advance either criteria, or proposed fees.
147. It is now classified as a Metropolitan Major Council, together with Canterbury Bankstown. They having both last been assessed as falling below the Major CBD category, into which only the City of Parramatta falls. The current criteria for the Metropolitan Major category are:

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Councils categorised Metropolitan Major will typically have a minimum residential population of 400,000.

Councils may also be categorised Metropolitan Major if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 400,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- total operating revenue exceeding \$300M per annum*
- the provision of significant regional services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities*
- significant industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors*
- high population growth.*

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Major will have a sphere of economic influence and provide regional services considered to be greater than those of other Metropolitan Councils.

148. Blacktown contended that the proposed new category would recognise larger, more complex Councils which exceed the criteria of Metropolitan Major. It being relevant that it would continue to outstrip Parramatta in various respects, given its current and expected ongoing growth. This new category thus facilitating fair and appropriate adjustments to the remuneration payable to Mayors and Councillors.

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149. The Council relying on data such as population, budget and asset growth, as well as 'transformational' projects and ongoing developments which had driven further change and challenges for it and its officers, reflective of its strategic planning and economic sphere of influence. It claiming now to be the fourth largest economy in NSW, with significant plans for further growth to 2041.
150. It also relied on comparisons which it sought to draw with Canterbury-Bankstown, from which it said it is now differentiated by a range of factors, which it is not necessary to explain.
151. What was not advanced was either proposed criteria for the new category sought, nor fees which might fairly attach to it. The Council placing reliance on what parliamentarians are paid in NSW, a reliance which I have explained is not available under the current statutory scheme.
152. The difficulty with what was proposed is also revealed by the limited difference between the maximum and minimum fees for the existing categories, which reflects an assessment that the work involved cannot be significantly differentiated.
153. Nor can it be accepted that it is appropriate for criteria to be based on anticipated growth in population, infrastructure, assets or budgets, as this and some other submissions urged. That is not embraced by s 240 of the Act. Nor can anticipated developments be accepted to be a reliable basis on which decisions can fairly be made about categories or criteria, depending as they do on assumptions.
154. The basis of what is anticipated at a particular point in time being unlikely to be able to be established by independent, reliable and publicly available data, which will allow relevant comparisons to be drawn. And the adoption of such criteria giving rise to the difficulties which will result, if what is anticipated, does not come to pass.

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155. It may also not be overlooked that when the submissions were received, Major CBD Mayoral fees ranged from \$44,840 to \$126,320, while those in Metropolitan Major Councils ranged from \$44,840 to \$114,300. This helps explain why the view has to be taken that there is little purpose to be served by the adoption of the proposed new category, which would sit between the existing categories.
156. Particularly without identification of criteria which reflect its true differentiation from the existing categories. That such differentiation does not exist, is reflected in the current small differences in fees for the existing categories.
157. The result is that the Tribunal has not been persuaded that the proposed new category can be established.
158. If in the 2027 review the establishment of new categories is pursued, the Tribunal should be provided with a proposal which addresses not only the name of the proposed category, but also appropriate criteria, together with the maximum and minimum fees which are proposed. They will have to have appropriate relationships with other categories, which will also have to be explained by the submission.
159. As will the consequences of their adoption for other Councils which may be affected. Such Councils will also have to be given an opportunity to be heard, before the Tribunal comes to any conclusions about proposed new categories. That will be achieved by service of the proposed change on other affected Councils.

Metropolitan Major

160. No Council sought any alteration to the criteria or recategorisation to this category.

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Metropolitan Large

161. Both Randwick and Willoughby Councils sought to be recategorised as Metropolitan Large Councils, currently being categorised as Metropolitan Medium. Despite neither satisfying the population threshold, although Randwick does satisfy the revenue criteria. Their total populations as at 1 July 2025 being, 176,656 and 133,052 respectively, including non-resident workers.
162. Randwick City Council sought to be reclassified from Metropolitan Medium to Metropolitan relying on:
- Population estimates as at 1 July of 201,000, comprising of 156,000 residents and 45,000 non- resident working population;
 - A high population growth that regularly exceeds the Sydney average;
 - An operating revenue of \$221 million;
 - A Gross Regional Product of \$10.55 billion for the year ending June 2024;
 - The provision of regional services, including major education, health, sporting, recreation and cultural facilities; and
 - Significant industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors.
163. Willoughby City Council contending that it exceeded the functions of a typical Metropolitan Medium Council, relying on:
- A population as at 30 June 2024 of 79,634 with a growth rate of 5.47% between 2022 and 2024;
 - A forecast for continued population growth due to the planned construction of additional dwellings, the likely impact being an increase of 15,000 to 20,000 people in coming years;

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- A high daily visitation rate driven by the employment and commercial hub of Chatswood with opal data showing in excess of 50,000 entries and exits per day at Chatswood station;
- Total revenue of \$187.9 million for the 2025/2026 financial year;
- A Gross Regional Product of \$13.11 billion for the year ending June 2024; and
- The provision of regional services in health, education, culture, transport and two (2) large retail precincts.

164. The current criteria are:

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Large will typically have a minimum residential population of 200,000.

Councils may also be categorised as Metropolitan Large if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 200,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- *total operating revenue exceeding \$200M per annum*
- *the provision of significant regional services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities*
- *significant industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors*
- *high population growth.*

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Councils categorised as Metropolitan Large will have a sphere of economic influence and provide regional services considered to be greater than those of other Metropolitan Councils.

165. It follows that the recategorisation sought by Randwick and Willoughby Councils cannot be accepted, given the current population requirements.
166. The data also suggested that the Inner West Council may no longer satisfy the applicable criteria, it having been reclassified in 2020 from Metropolitan Medium, but having in 2024 non-resident workers of only 43,100 and a residential population of 193,125. In the 2027 review this Council will thus be invited to establish which criteria it then satisfies.
167. The data also shows that Campbelltown Council has a total population over the threshold for the Metropolitan Large category, but that it does not satisfy the non-resident working population criteria and so it also cannot be reclassified.

Metropolitan Medium

168. No changes were sought to the criteria, which are:

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Medium will typically have a minimum residential population of 100,000.

Councils may also be categorised as Metropolitan Medium if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 100,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- *total operating revenue exceeding \$100M per annum*

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- *services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities*
- *industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors • high population growth.*

The sphere of economic influence, the scale of Council operations and the extent of regional servicing would be below that of Metropolitan Large Councils.

169. Canada Bay, a Metropolitan Small Council, does satisfy the revenue criteria and has a total population of over 100,000, but it does not satisfy the non-resident working population criteria and so also cannot be recategorised.

Proposed new Metropolitan Small – Fast Growing category

170. Burwood Council, categorised as a Metropolitan Small Council, proposed the creation of this new category, in which it sought to be included. It proposing that it be 'aligned' to the Metropolitan Medium category, to recognise its scope, scale and strategic importance, given the challenges of rapid population growth and increasing service demands it faced.

171. The criteria for the Metropolitan Small Council are:

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Small will typically have a residential population less than 100,000.

Other features which distinguish them from other Metropolitan Councils include:

- *total operating revenue less than \$150M per annum.*

While these Councils may include some of the facilities and characteristics of both Metropolitan Large and Metropolitan Medium Councils the overall sphere of economic

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influence, the scale of Council operations and the extent of regional servicing would be below that of Metropolitan Medium Councils.

172. Burwood Council pointed to the criteria for Metropolitan Major, Large and Medium categories, which were considered to have regard to population growth, economic influence and impact of services, as well as considerations such as strategic importance. While Metropolitan Small criteria were confined to population size and operating revenue. It contending that its inclusion in the proposed new category was warranted due to:
- Its recognition by the NSW Government as a designated strategic centre;
 - Increased complexity in planning, service delivery, and intergovernmental coordination;
 - A population that is expected to double in the next 10 years due to major developments in the town centre and in close proximity to the new metro station; and
 - Its economic growth and influence across Greater Sydney, specifically its night time economic initiatives.
173. The Tribunal has not concluded that the creation of this proposed new category is warranted, given the existing criteria and the resulting fees which the current categories attract.
174. Given the existing overlap in the fees of the Metropolitan Small and Medium categories and how their criteria are structured, the Tribunal is not persuaded that an intervening category is needed.
175. These submissions did help shed light on the inherent difficulties of the existing fee structures. Which has to be considered in light of the overlaps and small differences in the fee ranges between the differing categories. But that still precludes the adoption of this proposed new category.

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Metropolitan Small

176. No change to the criteria was proposed. They are:

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Small will typically have a residential population less than 100,000.

Other features which distinguish them from other Metropolitan Councils include:

- total operating revenue less than \$150M per annum.*

While these Councils may include some of the facilities and characteristics of both Metropolitan Large and Metropolitan Medium Councils the overall sphere of economic influence, the scale of Council operations and the extent of regional servicing would be below that of Metropolitan Medium Councils.

Major Regional City

177. This category applies to Newcastle and Wollongong, and no change was sought to the criteria, which are:

Newcastle City Council and Wollongong City Councils are categorised as Major Regional City. These Councils:

- are metropolitan in nature with major residential, commercial and industrial areas*
- typically host government departments, major tertiary education and health facilities and incorporate high density commercial and residential development.*

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- *provide a full range of higher order services and activities along with arts, culture, recreation, sporting and entertainment facilities to service the wider community and broader region*
- *have significant transport and freight infrastructure servicing international markets, the capital city and regional areas*
- *have significant natural and man-made assets to support diverse economic activity, trade and future investment*
- *typically contain ventures which have a broader State and national focus which impact upon the operations of the Council.*

The proposed change to the Major Strategic Area criteria

178. Lake Macquarie Council proposed a change to the criteria of this category, which would result in its reclassification from Regional Strategic Area to the Major Strategic Area category. By reducing the population threshold from 300,000 to 200,000. That proposal not impacting any other Council.
179. The submissions it advanced were one of the few which directed required attention to matters which have to be considered by the Tribunal, when considering change to categories and criteria. Including the relevant history, the consequences of changes earlier made, relevant comparisons between positions of Councils in the affected category and the consequences of the proposed further change.
180. The current criteria for the two categories are:

Major Strategic Area

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Councils categorised as Major Strategic Area will have a minimum population of 300,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included. Other features may include:

- health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community*
- a full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres*
- total operating revenue exceeding \$250M per annum*
- significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention*
- a proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.*

Currently, only Central Coast Council meets the criteria to be categorised as a Major Strategic Area. Its population, predicted population growth, and scale of the Council's operations warrant that it be differentiated from other Non-metropolitan Councils. Central Coast Council is also a significant contributor to the regional economy associated with proximity to and connections with Sydney and the Hunter Region.

Regional Strategic Area

Councils categorised as Regional Strategic Area are differentiated from Councils in the Regional Centre category on the basis of their significant population and will typically have a residential population above 100,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included. Other features may include:

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- *health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community*
- *a full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres*
- *total operating revenue exceeding \$250M per annum*
- *significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention*
- *a proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.*

Currently, only Lake Macquarie Council meets the criteria to be categorised as a Regional Strategic Area. Its population and overall scale of Council operations will be greater than Regional Centre Councils.

181. In 2023 the Tribunal determined that the population criteria threshold for the Regional Strategic Area had to be adjusted from 200,000 down to 100,000, that resulting in Lake Macquarie Council no longer being the only Council in this category. Council reiterated its views, urged in 2024 and 2025, that this change had distorted the distinction between the Major Strategic Area and Regional Strategic Area categories, given the other Councils which now also fell into the Regional Strategic category.
182. The Council's population statistics in 2024 were of 221,859 residents, plus a non-resident working population of 23,769, totalling 246,095. It drew a comparison with that of the Central Coast Council, which has 354,803 residents, plus a non-resident working population of 11,043, totalling 365,846. While of the four other Councils categorised as Regional Strategic Areas, the greatest total population was Shoalhaven, which has 115,435.

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183. The Council also relied on it having similar gross regional product to Wollongong Council, a Major Regional City. As well as more than double that of the other Councils now in the Regional Strategic category. Its case that the population threshold for Major Strategic Area should be revised from 300,000 down to 200,000 also being supported by:
- Its population, now making it the second largest Non-metropolitan Council after Central Coast with proximity to Sydney and tourist numbers similar to that Council;
 - Its density of some 338/sqm, being considerably more than Maitland at 245, Tweed and 76 and Shoalhaven only 24, while Central Coast was 211 and even Wollongong 324;
 - Its predicted population growth to 2046, with resulting ongoing building demand;
 - The impact of major NSW Government projects within its LGA, including the Low and Mid-rise Housing reform announced in February 2025;
 - The Renewable energy zone and Transport Oriented Development Program;
 - An annual economic output of \$30.03 billion, (approximately 20% of the Hunter economy);
 - 14,768 active businesses;
 - A Gross Regional Product of \$17.39 billion;
 - A tourism industry that sees 1.65 million tourists per year; and
 - University, shopping, airport and art facilities, as well as Australia's largest power station.
184. The Council thus urged acceptance that its output and scale of operations were now significantly greater than that of other Councils in its category and more akin to Central Coast Council, with the result that the population threshold for the Major Strategic Area category should be reviewed.

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185. The Tribunal has concluded that the Council's submissions should be accepted. The 2023 changes having had unintended consequences, which ought now to be addressed, rather than awaiting the 2027 further review.
186. The submissions which this Council and some others made, also drew attention to the considerable impact of significant daily visitor numbers, not taken into account by the criteria. This is a matter which should be addressed in the 2027 Annual Review, so that the Tribunal can consider whether and how that might sensibly be reflected in category criteria.

Regional Strategic Area

187. No change to the criteria was proposed.
188. Port Macquarie-Hastings and Shellharbour sought to be recategorised as Regional Strategic Areas, but neither satisfy the population criteria. Having populations in 2024 respectively of only 92,772 and 89,967 respectively, including non-resident workers. They both still satisfying the criteria for their current category, Regional Centre, which are:

Councils categorised as Regional Centre will typically have a minimum residential population of 40,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- a large city or town providing a significant proportion of the region's housing and employment*
- health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community*

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- *a full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres*
- *total operating revenue exceeding \$100M per annum • the highest rates of population growth in regional NSW*
- *significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention*
- *a proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.*

Councils in the category of Regional Centre are often considered the geographic centre of the region providing services to their immediate and wider catchment communities.

189. Port Macquarie-Hastings Council contended that it met the criteria for Regional Strategic Area, relying on:

- An expectation that Council did exceed the population threshold when non-resident working population was included;
- A projected total operating revenue of \$276 million in 2025/26;
- Gross Regional Product of \$13.287 million;
- An economic output this is underpinned by healthcare, retail, construction, education and training, tourism, professional and technical services;
- Tier 1 regional health services that services a catchment area beyond their LGA boundary;
- Four (4) tertiary education institutions;
- The Council operated Port Macquarie regional airport that services Sydney, Brisbane and Lord Howe Island and a total of 5,013 flights annually;

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- A tourism industry that attracts over 1.7 million visitors per annum and contributing \$540 million to the economy; and
- Regional commercial and cultural services that include a performing arts theatre, an art gallery, courthouse and major hospitality, entertainment and conference venues.

190. Shellharbour City Council's proposal relied on:

- A residential and non-residential working population in 2024 of approximately 90,000, with expectations that the residential population will hit 100,000 by 2035;
- An annual population growth rate in excess of 1.8%;
- An expected operating revenue of \$262 million in 2025/26;
- A Council owned and operated regional airport;
- A Council owned marina;
- A Tertiary training campus; and
- Construction of the new Shellharbour Hospital which will deliver improved health facilities for the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District.

191. The criteria do not encompass categories being allocated on the basis of anticipated growth in population and revenues and so the recategorisations sought must be refused.

192. It also appears that Armidale Council does not meet the population threshold, but in earlier reviews the Tribunal concluded that it should remain in this category, for specified reasons. In the 2027 Annual Review it will be invited to make a submission about its appropriate categorisation, given the criteria which it then satisfies.

Regional Centre

193. No change to the criteria was proposed. They are:

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Councils categorised as Regional Centre will typically have a minimum residential population of 40,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- a large city or town providing a significant proportion of the region's housing and employment*
- health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community*
- a full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres*
- total operating revenue exceeding \$100M per annum*
- the highest rates of population growth in regional NSW*
- significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention*
- a proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.*

Councils in the category of Regional Centre are often considered the geographic centre of the region providing services to their immediate and wider catchment communities.

Regional Rural

194. Broken Hill Council also no longer satisfies the criteria of this category, which it submitted it should maintain, its population in 2024 only being 17,839. In the 2027 Annual Review it

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will be invited to address its appropriate categorisation, to ensure that it is then placed into the appropriate category, given the criteria which it then satisfies.

195. The applicable criteria for this category being:

Councils categorised as Regional Rural will typically have a minimum residential population of 20,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- a large urban population existing alongside a traditional farming sector, and are surrounded by smaller towns and villages*
- health services, tertiary education services and regional airports which service a regional community*
- a broad range of industries including agricultural, educational, health, professional, government and retail services*
- large visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and events.*

196. Murray River Council sought to be recategorised as Regional Rural, it being currently classified as Rural Large, despite not satisfying the population criteria, its population in 2025 still only totalling 16,042. It relied on large visitor numbers to support its submissions, which had increased over time, as well as other changes. Referring to matters such as:

- An annual population growth rate of 8-11% in the main centre of Moama, with predicted population numbers reaching over 18,000 by 2046;
- A growing tourism, accommodation and food industry that supports 14.1% of the employment figures in their LGA;

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- Tourist visitation growing on average by 10% per annum, with the average number of visitors in 2023 and 2024 of 481,595; and
- Significant growth in education, training, health and retail service employment categories.

197. Despite this, the Tribunal has concluded that this submission cannot be accepted. Population is an important aspect of the categorisation system which cannot routinely be overlooked when Councils are categorised. The Act not contemplating subjective categorisation.

Rural Large

198. No changes were proposed to the criteria, which are:

Councils categorised as Rural Large will have a residential population greater than 10,000, and a Councillor to resident ratio of at least 1 to 1200.

Other features may include:

- *one or two significant townships combined with a considerable dispersed population spread over a large area and a long distance from a major regional centre*
- *a limited range of services, facilities and employment opportunities compared to Regional Rural Councils*
- *local economies based on agricultural/resource industries.*

199. The Tribunal has identified that Dungog Shire Council now has a residential population greater than 10,000 and a Councillor to resident ratio greater than 1 to 1,200. As a result,

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Dungog Shire Council will be classified as a Rural Large Council in the 2026 Annual Determination.

Rural

200. No changes were proposed to these criteria, which are limited to “Councils categorised as Rural will typically have a residential population less than 10,000”.
201. Although Glenn Innes Severn Council observed that this review provided an opportunity to “recalibrate the remuneration and categorisation system to ensure its contemporary, fair, capable of supporting the expectation and responsibilities placed on elected representatives.”

County Councils

202. A summary of County Council functions produced by the Tribunal Secretariat is:

Castlereagh Macquarie County Council

A local government authority for weed management control in the Walgett, Coonamble, Waren, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shire Council areas.

Central Tablelands Water

Central Tablelands Water is the trading name adopted by Central Tablelands County Council, a water supply authority constituted under NSW Local Government Legislation.

Central Tablelands County Council was first proclaimed in 1944. The county area embraces the Shires of Blayney, Cabonne and Weddin. Bulk water is also supplied to Cowra Shire Council to service rural consumers and the villages of Woodstock and Gooloogong.

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Goldenfields Water

It is responsible for water supply functions within the local government areas of Bland, Coolamon, Junee, Temora, and parts of Cootamundra-Gundagai, Hilltops and Narrandera.

It also supplies water in bulk to Hilltops and Cootamundra-Gundagai Councils, which distribute the water directly to residents in parts of their local government area.

Approximately 11, 974 properties are connected directly to its drinking water supply network in Bland, Coolamon, Junee, Temora and parts of Cootamundra-Gundagai and Narrandera.

The facilities it owns and operate include:

- 34 water pumping stations (including river extraction and Jugiong Water Treatment Plant Pumping Station)*
- 72 water supply reservoir sites with approximately 115 reservoirs*
- Eight bores*
- Six re-chlorination stations*
- 2100 km of water mains*

Western Sydney Weeds Authority (formerly Hawkesbury River County Council)

Western Sydney Weeds Authority (formally Hawkesbury River County Council) is a special purpose Council, its goal being to administer the Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW) throughout our Council areas of Blacktown, Hawkesbury, Penrith and the Hills Shire. That involving

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weed management, detection of new incursions and containment of high-risk plant species that impact on biodiversity, agriculture, and property.

Riverina Water County Council

It is responsible for the provision of safe, reliable water at the lowest sustainable cost. over an area of approximately 15,400 square kilometres with a population of more than 77,000 people.

Rous County Council

Its experts and advisors supply the Northern Rivers with water, weed biosecurity, and rural flood mitigation. It sources, stores, treats and supplies water to the Ballina, Byron, Lismore and Richmond Valley Councils, which on-sell water to their communities.

Protecting the region's biodiversity by managing and eradicating high-risk weed species. Working closely with communities and Councils in Ballina, Byron, Lismore, Richmond Valley, Kyogle and Tweed Shire regions.

And also managing the rural flood mitigation for the Richmond River floodplain. Including monitoring and managing an 80km network of levees, 750 floodgates, and 180km of drains to reduce inundation and divert flood waters.

Upper Hunter County Council

It is the registered trading name of Upper Hunter County Council a single purpose Council which is a Local Control Authority for invasive plants under the NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015 (NSW).

Its present area of operation is the local government areas of Upper Hunter, Muswellbrook and Singleton located at the northern end of the Hunter Valley, New South Wales.

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It provides weed management systems utilizing technology to prevent, contain or reduce the biosecurity risk of invasive plants to the environment, economy and community within the area of operation of the County Council.

Upper Macquarie County Council

It is a local control authority for the Biosecurity Act 2015. Two Councillors are delegated from each of four constituent Councils to form an eight Member Central Tablelands Weeds Authority Council. Its core function being to detect priority weeds and actively encourage landholders to correctly manage the identified priority weed in accordance with the Central Tablelands Local Lands Services Strategic Weed Management Plan.

It carries out its functions across Bathurst Regional Council, City of Lithgow Council, Blayney Shire Council and Oberon Council.

County Councils – Water

203. No change was proposed for the criteria, which are “County Councils that provide water and/or sewerage functions with a joint approach in planning and installing large water reticulation and sewerage systems.”
204. The current list of these Councils is accurate.

County Councils – Other

205. No change was proposed for the criteria which are “County Councils that administer, control and eradicate declared noxious weeds as a specified Local Control Authority under the Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW).”
206. Two County Councils – Other have been removed from the 2026 Annual Determination, being the Central Murray and the New England Tableland County Councils. The New

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England Tableland County Council was dissolved on 16 June 2025, by the *Local Government (Dissolution of New England County Council) Proclamation 2025*. The Central Murray County Council was dissolved on 1 July 2019, by a proclamation made under s 397 of the *Local Government Act*, as noted in NSW Government Gazette No 65-2205 of 27 June 2019.

207. The result is that only four Councils now fall into this classification.

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Structure and fee considerations

208. In the 2026 Annual Review, it has come to light that:

- There has been considerable change which has affected the work of those elected or appointed to Council offices, in part driven by Government decisions which have affected Councils over time. Including in the case of Metropolitan Councils those explained in the Governments draft 2026 Sydney Plan and in the case of Non-metropolitan Councils, by various regional plans;
- They and submissions advanced raise for consideration whether the current number of categories remain necessary. Reliance having been placed on Victoria, for example, where there are only 4 categories;
- The current criteria, first fixed in 2017 and amended since then in various Annual Determinations, do not accord entirely with the requirements of s 240, which specifies the matters by which the Tribunal **must** determine the categories of Councils and Mayors;
- Some of the current criteria could better assist transparent classification of Councils into categories;
- There has not for some time been an overall assessment of whether Councils continue to satisfy the criteria of the categories into which they have been placed over time;
- Changes in the fee structure, over time, have resulted in a considerable overlap between the maximum and minimum fees payable in various categories, which may no longer be appropriate, given submissions advanced;
- Some light on which was also shed by the conclusions arrived at in the 2025 Special Determination, in relation to the Central Darling Shire Council, on which reliance has been placed.

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209. The results are best explained by the following snapshot of the current categories, fees, overlaps and ratios. It having to be understood that Mayors and Chairpersons are paid both the Councillor fee, as well as the separate fee fixed for their offices. This also helps explain the Tribunal's decision to undertake the further review in 2027.

Table 1 – Table of Councillor and Mayoral fees, by Council categories

Category	Mayoral/Chairperson Additional Fees (Effective 1 July 2025)		Councillor Fees (Effective 1 July 2025)		Ratio (Mayor: Councillor)	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Principal CBD	\$193,650	\$254,810	\$31,640	\$46,420	6.1:1	5.5:1
Central Darling Shire Council - Appointed Chairperson	\$72,080	\$72,180	\$13,830	\$13,930	5.2:1	5.2:1
Major CBD	\$44,840	\$126,320	\$21,120	\$39,100	2.1:1	3.2:1
Metropolitan Major	\$44,840	\$114,300	\$21,120	\$36,970	2.1:1	3.1:1
Major Regional City	\$44,840	\$114,300	\$21,120	\$36,690	2.1:1	3.1:1
Major Strategic Area	\$44,840	\$114,300	\$21,120	\$36,690	2.1:1	3.1:1
Metropolitan Large	\$44,840	\$101,470	\$21,120	\$34,820	2.1:1	2.9:1

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	Mayoral/Chairperson Additional Fees (Effective 1 July 2025)		Councillor Fees (Effective 1 July 2025)		Ratio (Mayor: Councillor)	
Regional Strategic Area	\$44,840	\$101,470	\$21,120	\$34,820	2.1:1	2.9:1
Metropolitan Medium	\$33,630	\$78,480	\$15,830	\$29,550	2.1:1	2.7:1
Regional Centre	\$32,940	\$68,800	\$15,830	\$27,860	2.1:1	2.5:1
Regional Rural	\$22,420	\$50,680	\$10,530	\$23,220	2.1:1	2.2:1
Metropolitan Small	\$22,420	\$50,650	\$10,530	\$23,220	2.1:1	2.2:1
Rural Large	\$16,820	\$40,530	\$10,530	\$18,890	1.6:1	2.1:1
Rural	\$11,210	\$30,390	\$10,530	\$13,930	1.1:1	2.2:1
Water	\$4,490	\$19,080	\$2,090	\$11,620	2.1:1	1.6:1
Other	\$4,490	\$12,670	\$2,090	\$6,930	2.1:1	1.8:1

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The conduct of the 2027 Annual Review

210. In 2027, the Tribunal intends to commence its review earlier than usual, in order to accommodate the detailed review of the Determination's categories which it has concluded it is necessary to pursue. Together with a consideration of appropriate criteria which reflect the requirements of s 240 of the Act. In order to facilitate the adoption of fees appropriate for the revised structure, also having regard to demonstrated change over time, as well as current responsibilities of Mayors and Councillors.
211. That will also require a review of the category into which each Council should then be placed, which s 239 of the Act requires must be undertaken at least once every three years.
212. Submissions will thus be invited in a two stage process.
213. The first, to determine how the Determination should be amended to achieve the category and criteria structure which the Act envisages, as well as the appropriate maximum and minimum fees. That, it must be observed, will not necessarily result in the current number of categories being retained.
214. In the second stage submissions about Councils' placement into the new structure will be sought.
215. The Tribunal will then ask Councils to provide reliable data to support their submissions about which category they fall into. Addressing each of the applicable criteria adopted, as well as relevant comparisons which they seek to draw with other Councils.
216. Categorisation having to be as transparent and fair as possible, the Tribunal intends to rest its decisions on reliable data such as that available from ABS statistics and budgets which Councils adopt year to year. The Tribunal will thus invite those who make submissions to provide reliable data and information, on which its decisions can be made. Not merely the expression of unsupported opinions.

Section 4 – The 2027 Annual Review

217. As it has in the past, the Tribunal will thus also ask Councils, when inviting submissions, to confirm that the information and submissions advanced have been endorsed by a Council vote.
218. It will thus invite submissions and information which will enable it to examine and determine whether the current categories and criteria remain fit for purpose. Given the requirements of the Act, the data on which the Tribunal's decisions must be based and the problems to which this report has drawn attention, which it will seek to address.
219. If it is considered that categories require adjustment, submissions should address what form the new categories and criteria should take, to reflect the statutory purpose of the categories of Councils and mayoral offices and their role in the fair determination of fees. As well as addressing proposed criteria which adhere to the requirements of s 240(1) of the Act, which will help the Tribunal to determine the maximum and minimum fees appropriate for the new structure, which should thus also be addressed.
220. At the first stage of this process, Councils will be asked to serve proposals which will affect other Councils, on all affected Councils, so that they may have a fair opportunity to address such proposals in their submissions.
221. What is proposed in order to adjust fees to reflect cost of living increases should also be identified at the first stage. As well as the final fees proposed. The submissions should also address changes relied on to warrant their adoption. With reliable information which supports the claimed changes, also being provided.
222. An example of potential revised criteria for the current Metropolitan Major category, which has regard to all of the requirements of s 240 of the Act, as well as to matters which the Tribunal has in the past identified to be relevant to the determination of the category into which Councils follows.

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223. What the Tribunal envisages in the 2027 review including the adoption of a structure which, if dollar figures are specified, may have to be adjusted over time, in order to reflect changes over time. As may specified population sizes.

224. A revised category for Metropolitan Major Councils, if it is retained, which has regard to the s 240 requirements, could thus provide:

Metropolitan Major

Councils categorised Metropolitan Major;

(1) must have a minimum residential population, or a combined residential and non-resident working population (of at least 50,000), which exceeds 400,000.

(2) will typically serve:

(a) a dense population occupying a built up physical terrain;

(b) a widely diverse community

(c) an area at least as large as those of Metropolitan Large Councils of ?,

(d) industrial, commercial and residential development which is both at least as significant and as extensive as that of Metropolitan Large Councils, with established development corridors;

(3) will also have:

(a) to manage a significant volume of business, consistent with its assets and budgets, which is at least as significant and varied as that of Metropolitan Large Councils;

Section 4 – The 2027 Annual Review

(b) operating revenue exceeding, for example, \$394,617,030 per annum, that being \$300 million adjusted by December CPI since December 2016;

(c) a sphere of economic influence and significance beyond the Council area, nationally as well as regionally, reflective of their service of:

(i) natural and/or developed attractions within the Council area, including sport, recreational and cultural facilities, which daily attracts significant tourism and/or visitors from outside the Council area; and

(ii) major health, education and other facilities which support the greater Sydney population; and

(d) a continuing high rate of population growth and development for which the Council is planning, evidenced by ?.

225. After submissions have been received in the second stage, the Tribunal will make its 2027 Annual Determination, which will include the new categories, criteria and increased fees the Tribunal has determined will take effect from 1 July 2027. As well as identifying the category into which each Council will then be placed.

Local Government Remuneration Tribunal



The Hon Acting Justice M Schmidt

Dated: 23 April 2026

Section 5 – Determinations

Determination No. 1 – Allocation of Councils into each of the categories as per section 239 of the Act effective 1 July 2026

General Purpose Councils – Metropolitan

Principal City (1)

- Sydney

Major CBD (1)

- Parramatta

Metropolitan Major (2)

- Blacktown
- Canterbury-Bankstown

Metropolitan Large (10)

- Bayside
- Cumberland
- Fairfield
- Inner West
- Liverpool
- Northern Beaches
- Penrith
- Ryde
- Sutherland
- The Hills

Metropolitan Medium (8)

- Campbelltown
- Camden
- Georges River
- Hornsby
- Ku-ring-gai
- North Sydney
- Randwick
- Willoughby

Metropolitan Small (8)

- Burwood
- Canada Bay
- Hunters Hill
- Lane Cove
- Mosman
- Strathfield
- Waverley
- Woollahra

Section 5 – Determinations

General Purpose Councils - Non-Metropolitan

Major Regional City (2)

- Newcastle
- Wollongong

Major Strategic Area (2)

- Central Coast
- Lake Macquarie

Regional Centre (22)

- Albury
- Armidale
- Ballina
- Bathurst
- Blue Mountains
- Byron
- Cessnock
- Clarence Valley
- Coffs Harbour
- Dubbo
- Eurobodella

Regional Rural (14)

- Bega
- Broken Hill
- Goulburn Mulwaree

Regional Strategic Area (4)

- Maitland
- Mid-Coast
- Shoalhaven
- Tweed

- Hawkesbury
- Lismore
- Orange
- Port Macquarie-Hastings
- Port Stephens
- Queanbeyan-Palerang
- Shellharbour
- Tamworth
- Wagga Wagga
- Wingecarribee
- Wollondilly

- Griffith
- Hilltops
- Kempsey

Section 5 – Determinations

- Kiama
- Lithgow
- Mid-Western
- Muswellbrook
- Nambucca
- Richmond Valleys
- Singleton
- Snowy Monaro

Rural Large (17)

- Bellingen
- Cabonne
- Cootamundra-Gundagai
- Cowra
- Dungog
- Federation
- Greater Hume
- Gunnedah
- Inverell
- Leeton
- Moree Plains
- Murray River
- Narrabri
- Parkes
- Snowy Valleys
- Upper Hunter
- Yass

Rural (37)

- Balranald
- Berrigan
- Bland
- Blayney
- Bogan
- Bourke
- Brewarrina
- Carrathool
- Central Darling*
- Cobar
- Coolamon
- Coonamble
- Edward River
- Forbes
- Gilgandra
- Glen Innes Severn
- Gwydir
- Hay
- Junee
- Kyogle
- Lachlan
- Liverpool Plains
- Lockhart
- Murrumbidgee

Section 5 – Determinations

- Narrandera
- Narromine
- Oberon
- Temora
- Tenterfield
- Upper Lachlan
- Uralla
- Walcha
- Walgett
- Warren
- Warrumbungle
- Weddin
- Wentworth

* Designated as a Rural and Remote Council by the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*

County Councils

Water (4)

- Central Tablelands
- Goldenfields Water
- Riverina Water
- Rous

Other (4)

- Castlereagh-Macquarie
- Upper Hunter
- Upper Macquarie
- Western Sydney Weeds Authority
(formerly Hawkesbury River)

Section 5 – Determinations

Determination No. 2 - Fees for Councillors and Mayors as per section 241 of the Act effective from 1 July 2026

The annual fees to be paid in each of the categories to Councillors, Mayors, Members, and Chairpersons of County Councils effective on and from 1 July 2026 as per section 241 of the *Local Government Act 1993* are determined as follows:

Table 1: Fees for General Purpose and County Councils

General Purpose Councils – Metropolitan

Councillor/Member Annual Fee (\$) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Principal City	32,810	48,140
Major CBD	21,900	40,550
Metropolitan Major	21,900	38,340
Metropolitan Large	21,900	36,110
Metropolitan Medium	16,420	30,640
Metropolitan Small	10,920	24,080

Mayor/Chairperson Additional Fee* (\$) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Principal City	200,820	264,240
Major CBD	46,500	130,990
Metropolitan Major	46,500	118,530
Metropolitan Large	46,500	105,220
Metropolitan Medium	34,870	81,380
Metropolitan Small	23,250	52,520

Section 5 – Determinations

General Purpose Councils - Non-Metropolitan

Councillor/Member Annual Fee (\$) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Major Regional City	21,900	38,050
Major Strategic Area	21,900	38,050
Regional Strategic Area	21,900	36,110
Regional Centre	16,420	28,890
Regional Rural	10,920	24,080
Rural Large	10,920	19,590
Rural	10,920	14,450

Mayor/Chairperson Additional Fee* (\$) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Major Regional City	46,500	118,530
Major Strategic Area	46,500	118,530
Regional Strategic Area	46,500	105,220
Regional Centre	34,160	71,350
Regional Rural	23,250	52,560
Rural Large	17,440	42,030
Rural	11,620	31,510

County Councils

Councillor/Member Annual Fee (\$) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Water	2,170	12,050
Other	2,170	7,190

Section 5 – Determinations

Mayor/Chairperson Additional Fee* (\$) effective 1 July 2026

Category	Minimum	Maximum
Water	4,660	19,790
Other	4,660	13,140

*This fee must be paid in addition to the fee paid to the Mayor/Chairperson as a Councillor/Member (s.249(2)).

Section 5 – Determinations

Determination No. 3 - Fees for appointed Councillors and Chairperson as per clause 12(c), Schedule 11 of the Act effective from 1 July 2026

Councils designated as ‘rural and remote Councils’

The annual fees to be paid to appointed Councillors and the Chairperson of councils designated as a rural and remote Council on and from 1 July 2026, as per clause 12(c), schedule 11 of the *Local Government Act 1993* are determined as follows:

Table 2: Fees for appointed Councillors and Chairpersons of rural and remote Councils

Appointed Councillor Annual Fee (\$) effective 1 July 2026

Council	Minimum	Maximum
Central Darling Shire Council	14,340	14,450

Appointed Chairperson Additional Fee** (\$) effective 1 July 2026

Council	Minimum	Maximum
Central Darling Shire Council	74,750	74,850

**This fee must be paid in addition to the fee paid to the Chairperson as an appointed Councillor (s.249(2)).

Local Government Remuneration Tribunal



The Hon Acting Justice M Schmidt

Dated: 23 April 2026

Appendices

Appendix 1 Criteria that apply to categories

Principal CBD

The Council of the City of Sydney (the City of Sydney) is the principal central business district (CBD) in the Sydney Metropolitan area. The City of Sydney is home to Sydney's primary commercial office district with the largest concentration of businesses and retailers in Sydney. The City of Sydney's sphere of economic influence is the greatest of any local government area in Australia.

The CBD is also host to some of the city's most significant transport infrastructure including Central Station, Circular Quay and International Overseas Passenger Terminal. Sydney is recognised globally with its iconic harbour setting and the City of Sydney is host to the city's historical, cultural and ceremonial precincts. The City of Sydney attracts significant visitor numbers and is home to 60 per cent of Metropolitan Sydney's hotels.

The role of Lord Mayor of the City of Sydney has significant prominence reflecting the CBD's importance as home to the country's major business centres and public facilities of state and national importance. The Lord Mayor's responsibilities in developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, including other Councils, state and federal governments, community and business groups, and the media are considered greater than other mayoral roles in NSW.

Appendices

Major CBD

The Council of the City of Parramatta (City of Parramatta) is the economic capital of Greater Western Sydney and the geographic and demographic centre of Greater Sydney. Parramatta is the second largest economy in NSW (after Sydney CBD) and the sixth largest in Australia.

As a secondary CBD to Metropolitan Sydney the Parramatta local government area is a major provider of business and government services with a significant number of organisations relocating their head offices to Parramatta. Public administration and safety have been a growth sector for Parramatta as the State Government has promoted a policy of moving government agencies westward to support economic development beyond the Sydney CBD.

The City of Parramatta provides a broad range of regional services across the Sydney Metropolitan area with a significant transport hub and hospital and educational facilities. The City of Parramatta is home to the Westmead Health and Medical Research precinct which represents the largest concentration of hospital and health services in Australia, servicing Western Sydney and providing other specialised services for the rest of NSW.

The City of Parramatta is also home to a significant number of cultural and sporting facilities (including Sydney Olympic Park) which draw significant domestic and international visitors to the region.

Appendices

Metropolitan Major

Councils categorised Metropolitan Major will typically have a minimum residential population of 400,000.

Councils may also be categorised Metropolitan Major if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 400,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- Total operating revenue exceeding \$300M per annum
- The provision of significant regional services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities
- Significant industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors
- High population growth.

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Major will have a sphere of economic influence and provide regional services considered to be greater than those of other Metropolitan Councils.

Metropolitan Large

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Large will typically have a minimum residential population of 200,000.

Councils may also be categorised as Metropolitan Large if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 200,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- Total operating revenue exceeding \$200M per annum

Appendices

- The provision of significant regional services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities
- Significant industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors
- High population growth.

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Large will have a sphere of economic influence and provide regional services considered to be greater than those of other Metropolitan Councils.

Metropolitan Medium

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Medium will typically have a minimum residential population of 100,000.

Councils may also be categorised as Metropolitan Medium if their residential population combined with their non-resident working population exceeds 100,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population must exceed 50,000.

Other features may include:

- Total operating revenue exceeding \$100M per annum
- Services to greater Sydney including, but not limited to, major education, health, retail, sports, other recreation and cultural facilities
- Industrial, commercial and residential centres and development corridors
- High population growth.

The sphere of economic influence, the scale of Council operations and the extent of regional servicing would be below that of Metropolitan Large Councils.

Appendices

Metropolitan Small

Councils categorised as Metropolitan Small will typically have a residential population less than 100,000.

Other features which distinguish them from other Metropolitan Councils include:

- Total operating revenue less than \$150M per annum.

While these Councils may include some of the facilities and characteristics of both Metropolitan Large and Metropolitan Medium Councils the overall sphere of economic influence, the scale of Council operations and the extent of regional servicing would be below that of Metropolitan Medium Councils.

Appendices

Major Regional City

Newcastle City Council and Wollongong City Councils are categorised as Major Regional City. These Councils:

- Are metropolitan in nature with major residential, commercial and industrial areas
- Typically host government departments, major tertiary education and health facilities and incorporate high density commercial and residential development
- Provide a full range of higher order services and activities along with arts, culture, recreation, sporting and entertainment facilities to service the wider community and broader region
- Have significant transport and freight infrastructure servicing international markets, the capital city and regional areas
- Have significant natural and man-made assets to support diverse economic activity, trade and future investment
- Typically contain ventures which have a broader State and national focus which impact upon the operations of the Council.

Major Strategic Area

Councils categorised as Major Strategic Area will have a minimum population of 200,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- Health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community
- A full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres

Appendices

- Total operating revenue exceeding \$250M per annum
- Significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention
- A proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.

Regional Strategic Area

Councils categorised as Regional Strategic Area are differentiated from Councils in the Regional Centre category on the basis of their significant population and will typically have a residential population above 100,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- Health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community
- A full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres
- Total operating revenue exceeding \$250M per annum
- Significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention
- A proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.

Appendices

Regional Centre

Councils categorised as Regional Centre will typically have a minimum residential population of 40,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- A large city or town providing a significant proportion of the region's housing and employment
- Health services, tertiary education services and major regional airports which service the surrounding and wider regional community
- A full range of high-order services including business, office and retail uses with arts, culture, recreation and entertainment centres
- Total operating revenue exceeding \$100M per annum
- The highest rates of population growth in regional NSW
- Significant visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and major events that attract state and national attention
- A proximity to Sydney which generates economic opportunities.

Councils in the category of Regional Centre are often considered the geographic centre of the region providing services to their immediate and wider catchment communities.

Appendices

Regional Rural

Councils categorised as Regional Rural will typically have a minimum residential population of 20,000. To satisfy this criteria the non-resident working population can be included.

Other features may include:

- A large urban population existing alongside a traditional farming sector, and are surrounded by smaller towns and villages
- Health services, tertiary education services and regional airports which service a regional community
- A broad range of industries including agricultural, educational, health, professional, government and retail services
- Large visitor numbers to established tourism ventures and events.

Councils in the category of Regional Rural provide a degree of regional servicing below that of a Regional Centre.

Rural Large

Councils categorised as Rural Large will have a residential population greater than 10,000, and a Councillor to resident ratio of at least 1 to 1200.

Other features may include:

- One or two significant townships combined with a considerable dispersed population spread over a large area and a long distance from a major regional centre
- A limited range of services, facilities and employment opportunities compared to Regional Rural Councils
- Local economies based on agricultural/resource industries.

Appendices

Rural

Councils categorised as Rural will typically have a residential population less than 10,000.

County Councils - Water

County Councils that provide water and/or sewerage functions with a joint approach in planning and installing large water reticulation and sewerage systems.

County Councils - Other

County Councils that administer, control and eradicate declared noxious weeds as a specified Local Control Authority under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.



Code of Meeting Practice GOV-CP-413
(PUBLIC POLICY)

Policy History

Revision No.	Council Meeting Date	Minute No.	Adoption Date
1		0706	28/09/2004
2		0198	13/06/2006
3		0277	08/08/2006
4		0370	09/09/2008
5		0383	30/09/2008
6		0140	11/05/2010
7		0141, 0142	11/05/2010
8		0308	14/09/2010
9	25/06/2019	19/197	25/06/2019
10	10/11/2020	20/264	10/11/2020
11	28/06/2022	22/166	28/06/2022
12	10/12/2024	24/346	22/01/2025



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1 INTRODUCTION

This Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Meeting Code) is prescribed under section 360 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation).

The Model Meeting Code applies to all meetings of councils and committees of councils of which all the members are councillors (committees of council). Council committees whose members include persons other than councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the council determines otherwise.

Councils must adopt a code of meeting practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code.

A council's adopted code of meeting practice may also incorporate the non-mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code and other supplementary provisions. However, a code of meeting practice adopted by a council must not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of this Model Meeting Code.

A council and a committee of the council of which all the members are councillors must conduct its meetings in accordance with the code of meeting practice adopted by the council.

2 MEETING PRINCIPLES

2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

- Transparent:* Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.
- Informed:* Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.
- Inclusive:* Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.
- Principled:* Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.
- Trusted:* The community has confidence that councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.
- Respectful:* Councillors, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.
- Effective:* Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.
- Orderly:* Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.



3 BEFORE THE MEETING

Timing of ordinary council meetings

- 3.1 Not selected.
- 3.2 The council shall, by resolution, set the frequency, time, date and place of its ordinary meetings.

Note: Councils must use either clause 3.1 or 3.2

Note: Under section 365 of the Act, councils are required to meet at least ten (10) times each year, each time in a different month unless the Minister for Local Government has approved a reduction in the number of times that a council is required to meet each year under section 365A.

Extraordinary meetings

- 3.3 If the mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) councillors, the mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The mayor can be one of the two councillors requesting the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.3 reflects section 366 of the Act.

See also Supplementary provisions Extraordinary Council Meetings.

Notice to the public of council meetings

- 3.4 The council must give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings and of each meeting of committees of the council.

Note: Clause 3.4 reflects section 9(1) of the Act.

- 3.5 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of a meeting of the council and of a committee of council is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the council's website, and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.
- 3.6 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.



Notice to councillors of ordinary council meetings

- 3.7 The general manager must send to each councillor, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the council, a notice specifying the time, date and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.7 reflects section 367(1) of the Act.

- 3.8 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to councillors in electronic form, but only if all councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda and business papers in that form.

Note: Clause 3.8 reflects section 367(3) of the Act.

Notice to councillors of extraordinary meetings

- 3.9 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to councillors of an extraordinary meeting of the council in cases of emergency.

Note: Clause 3.9 reflects section 367(2) of the Act.

Giving notice of business to be considered at council meetings

- 3.10 A councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted by 12 pm, five business days before the meeting is to be held.

- 3.11 A councillor may, in writing to the general manager, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.

- 3.12 If the general manager considers that a notice of motion submitted by a councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the council has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the general manager may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council.

- 3.13 A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the general manager must either:

- (a) prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council, or



- (b) by written notice sent to all councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

Questions with notice

- 3.14 A councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.10, ask a question for response by the general manager about the performance or operations of the council.
- 3.15 A councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.14 that comprises a complaint against the general manager or a member of staff of the council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the general manager or a member of staff of the council.
- 3.16 The general manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.14 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the council or orally at the meeting.

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

- 3.17 The general manager must cause the agenda for a meeting of the council or a committee of the council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.
- 3.18 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the council states:
 - (a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the council, and
 - (b) if the mayor is the chairperson – any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and
 - (c) all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and
 - (d) any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.10.
- 3.19 Nothing in clause 3.18 limits the powers of the mayor to put a mayoral minute to a meeting under clause 9.6.
- 3.20 The general manager must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the council any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the general manager, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The general manager must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the council.
- 3.21 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to take place when the meeting



is closed to the public, the general manager must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:

- (a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and
- (b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.

Note: Clause 3.21 reflects section 9(2A)(a) of the Act.

3.22 The general manager must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the general manager, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public, and must not be disclosed by a councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

Statement of ethical obligations

3.23 Business papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the council and committees of the council must contain a statement reminding councillors of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the council's code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public

3.24 Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the council and committees of council, are to be published on the council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the council.

Note: Clause 3.24 reflects section 9(2) and (4) of the Act.

3.25 Clause 3.24 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the general manager has identified under clause 3.21 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 3.25 reflects section 9(2A)(b) of the Act.

3.26 For the purposes of clause 3.24, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to councillors.

Note: Clause 3.26 reflects section 9(3) of the Act.



3.27 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.24, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

Note: Clause 3.27 reflects section 9(5) of the Act.

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

3.28 The general manager must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.

3.29 Despite clause 3.28, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the council, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if:

- (a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
- (b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

3.30 A motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.

3.31 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.29(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

3.32 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.29(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

Pre-meeting briefing sessions

3.33 to 3.38 - Not mandatory and not included in Code.

4 PUBLIC FORUMS

See Supplementary provisions Public Participation at Meetings.

5 COMING TOGETHER

Attendance by councillors at meetings

5.1 All councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the council and of committees of the council of which they are members.

Note: A councillor may not attend a meeting as a councillor (other than the first meeting of the council after the councillor is elected or a meeting at which the councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an



oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

- 5.2 A councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the council or of a committee of the council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this Code.
- 5.3 Refers to Boards/Joint Organisations
- 5.4 Where a councillor is unable to attend one or more ordinary meetings of the council, the councillor should request that the council grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. This clause does not prevent a councillor from making an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However, the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this code and the Act.
- 5.5 A councillor's request for leave of absence from council meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the councillor intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.
- 5.6 The council must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a councillor's request for a leave of absence.
- 5.7 A councillor's civic office will become vacant if the councillor is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the council without prior leave of the council, or leave granted by the council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.

Note: Clause 5.7 reflects section 234(1)(d) of the Act.

- 5.8 A councillor who intends to attend a meeting of the council despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the general manager at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.

The quorum for a meeting

- 5.9 The quorum for a meeting of the council is a majority of the councillors of the council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.

Note: Clause 5.9 reflects section 368(1) of the Act.

- 5.10 Clause 5.9 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the council.

Note: Clause 5.10 reflects section 368(2) of the Act.



- 5.11 A meeting of the council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:
- (a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or
 - (b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or
 - (c) at any time during the meeting.
- 5.12 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date and place fixed:
- (a) by the chairperson, or
 - (b) in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the councillors present, or
 - (c) failing that, by the general manager.
- 5.13 The general manager must record in the council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the council, together with the names of the councillors present.
- 5.14 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health, safety or welfare of councillors, council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency, the mayor may, in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the council's website and in such other manner that the council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.
- 5.15 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.14, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the council or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.3.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

- 5.16 A meeting of the council or a committee of the council may be held by audio-visual link where the mayor determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The mayor may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of councillors and staff at risk. The mayor must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the general manager and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor.
- 5.17 Where the mayor determines under clause 5.16 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the general manager must:



- (a) give written notice to all councillors that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and
- (b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that all councillors can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link, and
- (c) cause a notice to be published on the council's website and in such other manner the general manager is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.

5.18 This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.16 in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a council holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.16, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting.

Attendance by councillors at meetings by audio-visual link

5.19 Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual link with the approval of the council or the relevant committee.

5.20 A request by a councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the general manager by 4pm prior to the meeting in question and must provide reasons why the councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.

5.21 Councillors may request approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link. Where a councillor requests approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link, the request must specify the meetings the request relates to in addition to the information required under clause 5.20.

5.22 The council must comply with the Health Privacy Principles prescribed under the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* when collecting, holding, using and disclosing health information in connection with a request by a councillor to attend a meeting by audio-visual link.

5.23 A councillor who has requested approval to attend a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link may participate in the meeting by audio-visual link until the council or committee determines whether to approve their request and is to be taken as present at the meeting. The councillor may participate in a decision in relation to their request to attend the meeting by audio-visual link.

5.24 A decision whether to approve a request by a councillor to attend a meeting of the



council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link must be made by a resolution of the council or the committee concerned. The resolution must state:

- (a) the meetings the resolution applies to, and
- (b) the reason why the councillor is being permitted to attend the meetings by audio-visual link where it is on grounds other than illness, disability, or caring responsibilities.

- 5.25 If the council or committee refuses a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.
- 5.26 A decision whether to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link is at the council's or the relevant committee's discretion. The council and committees of the council must act reasonably when considering requests by councillors to attend meetings by audio-visual link. However, the council and committees of the council are under no obligation to approve a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the technical capacity does not exist to allow the councillor to attend the meeting by these means.
- 5.27 The council and committees of the council may refuse a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the council or committee is satisfied that the councillor has failed to appropriately declare and manage conflicts of interest, observe confidentiality or to comply with this code on one or more previous occasions they have attended a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link.
- 5.28 This code applies to a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the councillor was attending the meeting in person. Where a councillor is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.
- 5.29 A councillor must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The councillor's camera must be on at all times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this code.
- 5.30 A councillor must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.



Entitlement of the public to attend council meetings

5.31 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the council and committees of the council. The council must ensure that all meetings of the council and committees of the council are open to the public.

Note: Clause 5.31 reflects section 10(1) of the Act.

5.32 Clause 5.31 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

5.33 A person (whether a councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council if expelled from the meeting:

- (a) by a resolution of the meeting, or
- (b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

Note: Clause 5.33 reflects section 10(2) of the Act.

Note: If adopted, clauses 15.14 and 15.15 confer a standing authorisation on all chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council to expel persons from meetings. If adopted, clause 15.14 authorises chairpersons to expel any person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting. Alternatively, if adopted, clause 15.15 authorises chairpersons to expel persons other than councillors from a council or committee meeting.

Webcasting of meetings

5.34 Each meeting of the council or a committee of the council is to be recorded by means of an audio or audio-visual device.

5.35 At the start of each meeting of the council or a committee of the council, the chairperson must inform the persons attending the meeting that:

- (a) the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on the council's website, and
- (b) persons attending the meeting should refrain from making any defamatory statements.

5.36 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website:

- (a) at the same time as the meeting is taking place, or
- (b) as soon as practicable after the meeting.

5.37 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website for at least 12 months after the meeting.



5.38 Clauses 5.36 and 5.37 do not apply to any part of a meeting that has been closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act.

Note: Clauses 5.34 – 5.38 reflect section 236 of the Regulation.

5.39 Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

Attendance of the general manager and other staff at meetings

5.40 The general manager is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee of the council of which all of the members are councillors.

Note: Clause 5.40 reflects section 376(1) of the Act.

5.41 The general manager is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the council and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.

Note: Clause 5.41 reflects section 376(2) of the Act.

5.42 The general manager may be excluded from a meeting of the council or a committee while the council or committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the general manager or the terms of employment of the general manager.

Note: Clause 5.42 reflects section 376(3) of the Act.

5.43 The attendance of other council staff at a meeting, (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

5.44 The general manager and other council staff may attend meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual-link. Attendance by council staff at meetings by audio-visual link (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the general manager.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson at meetings

6.1 The mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the mayor, the deputy mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the council.

Note: Clause 6.1 reflects section 369(1) of the Act.

6.2 If the mayor and the deputy mayor (if any) are absent, a councillor elected to chair the meeting by the councillors present presides at a meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 6.2 reflects section 369(2) of the Act.



Election of the chairperson in the absence of the mayor and deputy mayor

- 6.3 If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting.
- 6.4 The election of a chairperson must be conducted:
- (a) by the general manager or, in their absence, an employee of the council designated by the general manager to conduct the election, or
 - (b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the general manager nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no general manager or designated employee.
- 6.5 If, at an election of a chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.
- 6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:
- (a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and
 - (b) then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.
- 6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.
- 6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to have precedence

- 6.9 When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the council:
- (a) any councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and
 - (b) every councillor present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

7 MODES OF ADDRESS

- 7.1 If the chairperson is the mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' or 'Madam Mayor'.



- 7.2 Where the chairperson is not the mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson'.
- 7.3 A councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.
- 7.4 A council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms [surname].

8 ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 8.1 Not selected.
- 8.2 The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of the council shall be:
 - 01 Council Acknowledgements
 - 02 Apologies and Applications for Leave of Absence or Attendance by Audio-visual Link by Councillors
 - 03 Confirmation of minutes
 - 04 Business Arising
 - 05 Declarations of interests
 - 06 Presentations
 - 07 Mayoral minute(s)
 - 08 General Manager's Reports
 - 09 Information Reports
 - 10 Adoption of Committee Minutes
 - 11 Business with Notice – Rescission Motions
 - 12 Business with Notice – Other Motions
 - 13 Outstanding Action Report
 - 14 Matters to be dealt with by Closed Council

Note: Councils must use either clause 8.1 or 8.2.

- 8.3 The order of business as fixed under clause 8.2 may be altered for a particular meeting of the council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.

Note: If adopted, Part 13 allows council to deal with items of business by exception.

- 8.4 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.3 may speak to the motion before it is put.



9 CONSIDERATION OF BUSINESS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Business that can be dealt with at a council meeting

- 9.1 The council must not consider business at a meeting of the council:
- (a) unless a councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.10, and
 - (b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the councillors in accordance with clause 3.7 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.9 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.
- 9.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:
- (a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the council, or
 - (b) is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or
 - (c) subject to clause 9.9, is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a mayoral minute, or
 - (d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee, including, but not limited to, a committee of the council.
- 9.3 Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the councillors if:
- (a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and
 - (b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.
- 9.4 A motion moved under clause 9.3(a) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 9.5 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 9.3(b).

Mayoral minutes

- 9.6 Subject to clause 9.9, if the mayor is the chairperson at a meeting of the council, the mayor may, by minute signed by the mayor, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the council, or of which the council has official knowledge.



- 9.7 A mayoral minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the council's agenda for the meeting. The chairperson (but only if the chairperson is the mayor) may move the adoption of a mayoral minute without the motion being seconded.
- 9.8 A recommendation made in a mayoral minute put by the mayor is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.
- 9.9 A mayoral minute must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent, or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.
- 9.10 Where a mayoral minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan, it must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation. If the mayoral minute does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

Staff reports

- 9.11 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the council, a resolution of the council.

Reports of committees of council

- 9.12 The recommendations of a committee of the council are, so far as they are adopted by the council, resolutions of the council.
- 9.13 If in a report of a committee of the council distinct recommendations are made, the council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

- 9.14 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.10 and 3.14.
- 9.15 A councillor may, through the chairperson, put a question to another councillor about a matter on the agenda.
- 9.16 A councillor may, through the general manager, put a question to a council employee about a matter on the agenda. Council employees are only obliged to answer a question put to them through the general manager at the direction of the general manager.



- 9.17 A councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a councillor or council employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the council.
- 9.18 Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.
- 9.19 The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a councillor or council employee.

10 RULES OF DEBATE

Motions to be seconded

- 10.1 Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of motion

- 10.2 A councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.
- 10.3 If a councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to councillors, the councillor may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the council.
- 10.4 In the absence of a councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the council:
- (a) any other councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or
 - (b) the chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the council.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

- 10.5 It is the duty of the chairperson at a meeting of the council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.
- 10.6 The chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.



- 10.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.
- 10.8 Any motion, amendment or other matter that the chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

Motions requiring the expenditure of funds

- 10.9 A motion or an amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the general manager on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

Amendments to motions

- 10.10 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.
- 10.11 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the chairperson.
- 10.12 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.
- 10.13 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before council at any one time.
- 10.14 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.
- 10.15 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.
- 10.16 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the councillor who moved the original motion.

Foreshadowed motions

- 10.17 A councillor may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the council, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original



motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.

- 10.18 Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a councillor may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the council at any time. However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.
- 10.19 Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.

Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

- 10.20 A councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.
- 10.21 A councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.
- 10.22 A councillor must not, without the consent of the council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.
- 10.23 Despite clause 10.22, the chairperson may permit a councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.
- 10.24 Despite clause 10.22, the council may resolve to shorten the duration of speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.
- 10.25 Despite clauses 10.20 and 10.21, a councillor may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:
- (a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or
 - (b) if at least two (2) councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) councillors have spoken against it.
- 10.26 The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.25. A seconder is not required for such a motion.



- 10.27 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.20.
- 10.28 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.
- 10.29 All councillors must be heard without interruption and all other councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another councillor is speaking.
- 10.30 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.
- 10.31 Refers to Boards/Joint Organisations.

11 VOTING

Voting entitlements of councillors

- 11.1 Each councillor is entitled to one (1) vote.

Note: Clause 11.1 reflects section 370(1) of the Act.

- 11.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

Note: Clause 11.2 reflects section 370(2) of the Act.

- 11.3 Where the chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

- 11.4 Refers to Boards/Joint Organisations.

Voting at council meetings

- 11.5 A councillor who is present at a meeting of the council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion.

- 11.6 If a councillor who has voted against a motion put at a council meeting so requests, the general manager must ensure that the councillor's dissenting vote is recorded in the council's minutes.

- 11.7 The decision of the chairperson as to the result of a vote is final, unless the decision is immediately challenged and not fewer than two (2) councillors rise and call for a division.



- 11.8 When a division on a motion is called, the chairperson must ensure that the division takes place immediately. The general manager must ensure that the names of those who vote for the motion and those who vote against it are recorded in the council's minutes for the meeting.
- 11.9 When a division on a motion is called, any councillor who fails to vote will be recorded as having voted against the motion in accordance with clause 11.5 of this code.
- 11.10 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However, the council may resolve that the voting in any election by councillors for mayor or deputy mayor is to be by secret ballot.
- 11.11 All voting at council meetings, (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

Voting on planning decisions

- 11.12 The general manager must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the council or a council committee (including, but not limited to a committee of the council), the names of the councillors who supported the decision and the names of any councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.
- 11.13 For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is taken to have been called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the council or a council committee.
- 11.14 Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.
- 11.15 Clauses 11.12–11.14 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

Note: Clauses 11.12–11.15 reflect section 375A of the Act.

Note: The requirements of clause 11.12 may be satisfied by maintaining a register of the minutes of each planning decision.

12 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

- 12.1 The council may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the council.

Note: Clause 12.1 reflects section 373 of the Act.



- 12.2 All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the council, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the council when in committee of the whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches.

Note: Clauses 10.20–10.30 limit the number and duration of speeches.

- 12.3 The general manager or, in the absence of the general manager, an employee of the council designated by the general manager, is responsible for reporting to the council the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.
- 12.4 The council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the council's minutes. However, the council is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

13 DEALING WITH ITEMS BY EXCEPTION

- 13.1 The council or a committee of council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.
- 13.2 Before the council or committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.
- 13.3 The council or committee must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 13.1 that a councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.
- 13.4 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the council or committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.3.
- 13.5 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.
- 13.6 Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.
- 13.7 Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1 in accordance with the requirements of the council's code of conduct.



14 CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS TO THE PUBLIC

Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

14.1 The council or a committee of the council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:

- (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors),
- (b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,
- (c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,
- (d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
 - (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or
 - (iii) reveal a trade secret,
- (e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,
- (f) matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property,
- (g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,
- (h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,
- (i) alleged contraventions of the council's code of conduct.

Note: Clause 14.1 reflects section 10A(1) and (2) of the Act.

14.2 The council or a committee of the council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Note: Clause 14.2 reflects section 10A(3) of the Act.

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

14.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:

- (a) except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security, and



- (b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the council or committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.3 reflects section 10B(1) of the Act.

14.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:

- (a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the council or committee is involved, and
- (b) are clearly identified in the advice, and
- (c) are fully discussed in that advice.

Note: Clause 14.4 reflects section 10B(2) of the Act.

14.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

Note: Clause 14.5 reflects section 10B(3) of the Act.

14.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:

- (a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or
- (b) the discussion of the matter may:
 - (i) cause embarrassment to the council or committee concerned, or to councillors or to employees of the council, or
 - (ii) cause a loss of confidence in the council or committee.

Note: Clause 14.6 reflects section 10B(4) of the Act.

14.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the council or committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

Note: Clause 14.7 reflects section 10B(5) of the Act.



Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

14.8 Part of a meeting of the council, or of a committee of the council, may be closed to the public while the council or committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:

- (a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and
- (b) the council or committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:
 - (i) should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and
 - (ii) should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 14.8 reflects section 10C of the Act.

Representations by members of the public

14.9 The council, or a committee of the council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

Note: Clause 14.9 reflects section 10A(4) of the Act.

14.10 A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.

14.11 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications must be received by **12 pm on the Tuesday** of the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.

14.12 The general manager (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 14.11. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

14.13 No more than **two** speakers are to be permitted to make representations under clause 14.9.

14.14 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the council. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 14.9, the general manager or their delegate is to



determine who will make representations to the council.

- 14.15 The general manager (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.
- 14.16 Where the council or a committee of the council proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 14.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than **two** speakers to make representations in such order as determined by the chairperson.
- 14.17 Each speaker will be allowed **five** minutes to make representations, and this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

Expulsion of non-councillors from meetings closed to the public

- 14.18 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.
- 14.19 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Obligations of councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link

- 14.20 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

- 14.21 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:
- (a) the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,
 - (b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,



- (c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.21 reflects section 10D of the Act.

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

- 14.22 If the council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.
- 14.23 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 14.22 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

15 KEEPING ORDER AT MEETINGS

Points of order

- 15.1 A councillor may draw the attention of the chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.
- 15.2 A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.
- 15.3 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the councillor raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of order

- 15.4 The chairperson, without the intervention of any other councillor, may call any councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.
- 15.5 A councillor who claims that another councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the chairperson to the matter.
- 15.6 The chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the council.



- 15.7 The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

- 15.8 A councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.
- 15.9 If a motion of dissent is passed, the chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.
- 15.10 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of disorder

- 15.11 A councillor commits an act of disorder if the councillor, at a meeting of the council or a committee of the council:
- (a) contravenes the Act, the Regulation or this code, or
 - (b) assaults or threatens to assault another councillor or person present at the meeting, or
 - (c) moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the council or the committee, or addresses or attempts to address the council or the committee on such a motion, amendment or matter, or
 - (d) insults, makes unfavourable personal remarks about or imputes improper motives to any other council official, or alleges a breach of the council's code of conduct, or
 - (e) says or does anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.

Note: Clause 15.11 reflects section 182 of the Regulation.

- 15.12 The chairperson may require a councillor:
- (a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(a) or (b), (e) or
 - (b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 15.11(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or



- (c) to retract and apologise without reservation for any statement that constitutes an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(d) and (e).

Note: Clause 15.12 reflects section 233 of the Regulation.

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

15.13 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the council, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of councillors.

Expulsion from meetings

15.14 Not selected.

15.15 All chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council are authorised under this code to expel any person other than a councillor, from a council or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act. Councillors may only be expelled by resolution of the council or the committee of the council.

Note: Councils may use either clause 15.14 or clause 15.15.

15.16 Clause 15.15 does not limit the ability of the council or a committee of the council to resolve to expel a person, including a councillor, from a council or committee meeting, under section 10(2)(a) of the Act.

15.17 A councillor may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.12. The expulsion of a councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the councillor for the act of disorder concerned.

Note: Clause 15.17 reflects section 233(2) of the Regulation.

15.18 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.

15.19 Where a councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

15.20 If a councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the councillor or member of the public



from that place and, if necessary, restrain the councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

How disorder by councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link may be dealt with

- 15.21 Where a councillor is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the chairperson or a person authorised by the chairperson may mute the councillor's audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this code.
- 15.22 If a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the chairperson of the meeting or a person authorised by the chairperson, may terminate the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings

- 15.23 Councillors, council staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the council and committees of the council.
- 15.24 A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the council or a committee of the council without the prior authorisation of the council or the committee.
- 15.25 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.24 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.24. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 15.24, may be expelled from the meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.
- 15.26 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

16 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- 16.1 All councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the council and committees of the council in accordance with the council's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.
- 16.2 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct. Where a councillor has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed



at the meeting, the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the councillor must not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or at any time during which the council or committee is voting on the matter.

17 DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL

Council decisions

- 17.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the council.

Note: Clause 17.1 reflects section 371 of the Act in the case of councils and section 400T(8) in the case of joint organisations.

- 17.2 Decisions made by the council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or altering council decisions

- 17.3 A resolution passed by the council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given under clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.3 reflects section 372(1) of the Act.

- 17.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.

Note: Clause 17.4 reflects section 372(2) of the Act.

- 17.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with clause 3.10.

Note: Clause 17.5 reflects section 372(3) of the Act.

- 17.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) councillors if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.

Note: Clause 17.6 reflects section 372(4) of the Act.

- 17.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.



Note: Clause 17.7 reflects section 372(5) of the Act.

- 17.8 The provisions of clauses 17.5–17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.

Note: Clause 17.8 reflects section 372(7) of the Act.

- 17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.11 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.

- 17.10 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution relating to a development application must be submitted to the general manager no later than **10 am the day after** the meeting at which the resolution was adopted.

- 17.11 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved on the report of a committee of the council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the council.

Note: Clause 17.11 reflects section 372(6) of the Act.

- 17.12 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency, a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the council may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:

- (a) a notice of motion signed by three councillors is submitted to the chairperson, and
- (b) a motion to have the motion considered at the meeting is passed, and
- (c) the chairperson rules the business that is the subject of the motion is of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the council.

- 17.13 A motion moved under clause 17.12(b) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) can speak to the motion before it is put.

- 17.14 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.12(c).

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

- 17.15 Despite the provisions of this Part, a councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:

- (a) to correct any error, ambiguity or imprecision in the council's resolution, or
- (b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.



- 17.16 In seeking the leave of the chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), the councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.
- 17.17 The chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.
- 17.18 A motion moved under clause 17.15 can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.15 can speak to the motion before it is put.
- 17.19 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.15.
- 17.20 A motion moved under clause 17.15 with the leave of the chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

18 TIME LIMITS ON COUNCIL MEETINGS

18.1 – 18.5 Not selected.

19 AFTER THE MEETING

Minutes of meetings

- 19.1 The council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the council.
- Note: Clause 19.1 reflects section 375(1) of the Act.
- 19.2 At a minimum, the general manager must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the council's minutes:
- the names of councillors attending a council meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,
 - details of each motion moved at a council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
 - the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
 - whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
 - such other matters specifically required under this code.
- 19.3 The minutes of a council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the council.



Note: Clause 19.3 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

19.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.

Note: Clause 19.5 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

19.7 The confirmed minutes of a council meeting must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting

19.8 The council and committees of the council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.

Note: Clause 19.8 reflects section 11(1) of the Act.

19.9 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.

Note: Clause 19.9 reflects section 11(2) of the Act.

19.10 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the council or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.

Note: Clause 19.10 reflects section 11(3) of the Act.

19.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 19.9 and 19.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

Implementation of decisions of the council

19.12 The general manager is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the council.



Note: Clause 19.12 reflects section 335(b) of the Act.

20 COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Application of this Part

20.1 This Part only applies to committees of the council whose members are all councillors.

Council committees whose members are all councillors

20.2 The council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.

20.3 A committee of the council is to consist of the mayor and such other councillors as are elected by the councillors or appointed by the council.

20.4 The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the council is to be:

- (a) such number of members as the council decides, or
- (b) if the council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

Functions of committees

20.5 The council must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established, but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of committee meetings

20.6 The general manager must send to each councillor, regardless of whether they are a committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the committee, a notice specifying:

- (a) the time, date and place of the meeting, and
- (b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

20.7 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

Attendance at committee meetings

20.8 A committee member (other than the mayor) ceases to be a member of a committee if the committee member:

- (a) has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the committee without



having given reasons acceptable to the committee for the member's absences,
or

- (b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

20.9 Clause 20.8 does not apply if all of the members of the council are members of the committee.

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

20.10 A councillor who is not a member of a committee of the council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the councillor is not entitled:

- (a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or
- (b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or
- (c) to vote at the meeting.

Chairperson and deputy chairperson of council committees

20.11 The chairperson of each committee of the council must be:

- (a) the mayor, or
- (b) if the mayor does not wish to be the chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the council, or
- (c) if the council does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.

20.12 The council may elect a member of a committee of the council as deputy chairperson of the committee. If the council does not elect a deputy chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a deputy chairperson.

20.13 If neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson of a committee of the council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be acting chairperson of the committee.

20.14 The chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the council. If the chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the deputy chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting chairperson is to preside at the meeting.



Procedure in committee meetings

- 20.15 Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each committee of the council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the council unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause.
- 20.16 Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the committee is equal, the chairperson of the committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 20.15.
- 20.17 Refers to Boards/Joint Organisations.
- 20.18 Voting at a council committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

Closure of committee meetings to the public

- 20.19 The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the council to the public.
- 20.20 If a committee of the council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended, and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.
- 20.21 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 20.20 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

Disorder in committee meetings

- 20.22 The provisions of the Act and this code relating to the maintenance of order in council meetings apply to meetings of committees of the council in the same way as they apply to meetings of the council.

Minutes of council committee meetings

- 20.23 Each committee of the council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:
- (a) the names of councillors attending a meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,



- (b) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,
 - (c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
 - (d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and
 - (e) such other matters specifically required under this code.
- 20.24 All voting at meetings of committees of the council (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.
- 20.25 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.
- 20.26 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.
- 20.27 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.
- 20.28 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.
- 20.29 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the council must be published on the council's website. This clause does not prevent the council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the council on its website prior to their confirmation.

21 IRREGULARITIES

- 21.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a council or a council committee are not invalidated because of:
- (a) a vacancy in a civic office, or
 - (b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any councillor or committee member, or
 - (c) any defect in the election or appointment of a councillor or committee member, or
 - (d) a failure of a councillor or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a council or committee meeting in accordance with the council's code of conduct, or



(e) a failure to comply with this code.

Note: Clause 21.1 reflects section 374 of the Act.

22 DEFINITIONS

the Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
act of disorder	means an act of disorder as defined in clause 15.11 of this code
amendment	in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion
audio recorder	any device capable of recording speech
audio-visual link	means a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons at different places
business day	means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales
chairperson	in relation to a meeting of the council – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this code, and in relation to a meeting of a committee – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.11 of this code
this code	means the council's adopted code of meeting practice
committee of the council	means a committee established by the council in accordance with clause 20.2 of this code (being a committee consisting only of councillors) or the council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1
council official	has the same meaning it has in the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW
day	means calendar day
division	means a request by two councillors under clause 11.7 of this code requiring the recording of the names of the councillors who voted both for and against a motion
foreshadowed amendment	means a proposed amendment foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.18 of this code during debate on the first amendment
foreshadowed motion	means a motion foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.17 of this code during debate on an original motion
open voting	means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means



planning decision	means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a council under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act
performance improvement order	means an order issued under section 438A of the Act
quorum	means the minimum number of councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting
the Regulation	means the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>
webcast	a video or audio broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet either concurrently with the meeting or at a later time
year	means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June

23 SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS

Webcasting and Recording of Meetings

- 23.1 Webcasts are protected by copyright and owned by Griffith City Council. No part may be copied or recorded or made available to others without the prior written permission of the Council.
- 23.2 The webcast is not, and shall not, be taken to be an official record of Griffith City Council or of any meeting or discussion depicted therein. Only the official minutes may be relied upon as an official record of the meeting.

Petitions

- 23.3 Petitions may be presented to the Council.
- 23.4 A Councillor may present a petition to the Council.
- 23.5 The Chairperson must not permit discussion on the petition.

Lay on Table / Defer Items

- 23.6 A procedural device to bring about a temporary adjournment to a debate is to move the motion that the matter lay on the table. This allows the motion to be re-introduced if and when Council desires.



- 23.7 If carried, the effect of this motion is to stop debate on the substantive motion, plus any proposed amendments, to allow more information to be obtained. The matter may lie on the table until such time as a Councillor takes the initiative to give notice for it to be re-listed or if a period of three months has elapsed since the motion was carried by the Council (which ever may be the lesser).
- 23.8 The motion provides Council the opportunity to take certain action on a contentious matter before the Council which the Council wishes to defer debate upon, because of a lack of information, to enable an informed decision to be made. The motion, if carried, places the matter in abeyance until specific steps are taken to place it on the agenda again in accordance with clause 23.7.
- 23.9 When the motion is laid on the table, all motions applied to the motion are also tabled. Once taken from the table, the motion is handled as it would have been at the time it was laid on the table.
- 23.10 With regard to the motion “that the question lies on the table”, the following points need to be observed:
- (a) Does not require a seconder.
 - (b) The Chairperson may decline to accept the motion.
 - (c) There is no debate or amendments permitted, although the chair may allow up to three questions addressed to the mover of the motion, prior to putting the motion (with the mover providing responses to the question).
 - (d) The mover must not have participated in the debate.
 - (e) It must be proposed at the close of a speech, not during it.
 - (f) If not carried, it cannot be reintroduced.
 - (g) Any Councillor can specify the nature and content of further information as part of any questions raised.

Public Participation at Council Meetings

- 23.11 Addresses from the public gallery must be in respect to matters on the meeting agenda.
- 23.12 Addresses from the public gallery must have prior approval from the Mayor/Chairperson.
- 23.13 Members of the public can request to address the Council on matters on the Agenda. Notice of this must be given no later than **12.00 noon on the day of the meeting**.
- 23.14 If approval is granted by the Chairperson, the applicant (or one person representing a group or organisation); or if there are opposing views, up to two speakers representing



each viewpoint, are permitted to address that meeting at the time specified by the Chairperson; except that the Chairperson, at their discretion, may permit the immediate consideration by the Council or the Committee in relation to an urgent matter.

23.15 When addressing the Council, any person is required to observe the same standards required by a Councillor. Specifically, he or she must:

- (a) Obey the direction of the Chairperson.
- (b) Not use any behaviour or language inconsistent with good order and decorum.
- (c) Not make personal reflections or impute improper motives to councillors or staff.
- (d) Speak no longer than 5 minutes.
- (e) Not ask questions of the Council, Councillors or Council staff.

23.16 A Councillor including the Chairperson may ask questions of a speaker following their address. Questions put must be direct, succinct and without argument.

Committees of Council under S355

23.17 Committee meetings are to be conducted to standard guidelines as set out in Council's Code of Meeting Practice and Council Committees Policy (GOV-CP-402).

Non-members entitled to attend Committee Meetings (ie other than Committees of the Whole)

23.18 Members of the public who are not members of a Committee are entitled to attend Committee meetings as observers, only if the Committee permits. Attendance is by invitation from the Committee. Such persons are not entitled to move or second a motion, vote at the meeting, address the meeting and/or table documents unless otherwise determined by the Chairperson. (Addresses are limited to a maximum of 5 minutes.)

Extraordinary Council Meeting

23.19 The Mayor or General Manager, in consultation with the Mayor, may call an Extraordinary meeting without the need to obtain the signature of two Councillors to consider urgent business.

23.20 For the purpose of the above clause, urgent business is any matter that, in the opinion of the Mayor or the General Manager, requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled Ordinary Meeting of Council.

23.21 The Order for an Extraordinary Council Meeting is as follows:



Council Acknowledgements
Apologies and Applications for Leave of Absence or Attendance by Audio-visual Link
by Councillors
Confirmation of Minutes
Business Arising
Declarations of Interest
Mayoral Minutes
General Manager's Report
Outstanding Action Report

Council Workshop Guidelines

23.22 The Council Workshop Guidelines are as follows:

Council Workshop Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of Council Workshops is to allow the Mayor, elected Councillors and Senior Council Management staff to:

1. Exchange information (sometimes confidential) on proposals that are being worked on by staff or proposals that councillors would like to see investigated;
2. Provide a forum for discussion on proposed staff initiatives and discuss options for engaging the community in determining Councils strategic, corporate direction;
3. Assist in Councillor/Senior Staff team building;
4. Help develop trust and understanding between those who attend the Workshops.

Format

1. Councillors and staff need to declare any conflicts of interest by completing relevant form and returning it to Chairperson either prior to commencement of meeting or during should a matter arise.
2. The Workshops are to be chaired in rotation and in alphabetical order by Councillors.
3. There will be no standing orders or formal meeting procedures.
4. Those attending the Workshops should be respectful and show courtesy for the person that is talking.

Venue

The venue for Workshops will be the Council Chambers.



Times

Starting time is 7.00pm. (as per Council resolution: Minute No: 0267 9/10/12).

Finishing time is 10.00pm (on time).

Date

Workshops are to be held on the third Tuesday of the month.

Agenda

Councillors and staff are encouraged to have issues and information reports put onto an agenda which will be prepared by the Personal Assistant to the General Manager & Mayor. These will consist of notes, memorandums and draft reports (not including recommendations).

The General Manager, Director Economic and Organisational Development, Director Sustainable Development, Director Utilities, Director Infrastructure and Operations and Director Business, Cultural & Financial Services will also provide a five minute update on their Directorates.

Decisions

Decisions by Councillors or directions to staff cannot be made at a Workshop.

Minutes

No minutes or recording of workshops shall be kept.

BRETT STONESTREET

GENERAL MANAGER

Adopted 30 January 2001

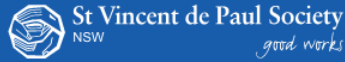
Revised 16 October 2012

Revised 25 June 2019

Revised 10 November 2020

Revised 10 December 2024





Our Mission

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organisation that aspires to live the gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice, hope and joy, and by working to shape a more just and compassionate society.

Our Vision

The St Vincent de Paul Society aspires to be recognised as a caring Catholic charity offering a hand up to people in need. We do this by respecting their dignity, sharing our hope, and encouraging them to take control of their own destiny.

Our Aspiration

An Australia transformed by compassion and built on justice.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the Traditional Custodians of this land, with deep respect. May the Elders, past and present, be blessed and honoured. May we join together and build a future based on compassion, justice, hope, faith and reconciliation.

The Annual Report of the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW was produced by the State Support Office Communications Team, November 2025.

Responsibility for this document rests with the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW.

Designed by Justine Cubbin.

Privacy statement:

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW respects the privacy of the people it assists, our members, volunteers and employees. As a result, the names of clients, members, volunteers or employees featured in this report may have been changed and pictorial models used.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW

ABN: 91 161 127 340

Auditor: Crowe

Primary Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia

Primary Solicitor: Hicksons





HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024/25



105,000 PEOPLE
supported by members



11,800 PEOPLE
supported by services



115,000 PEOPLE
supported by Vinnies Vans



\$15.1 MILLION
provided in financial
and material aid



20 YEARS
of the Vinnies CEO Sleepout



VINNIES FINDS LAUNCHED,
bringing the Vinnies Shops
experience online



WHO WE ARE

This Annual Report covers the activities of the Group, comprised of The Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW), St Vincent de Paul Society NSW, St Vincent de Paul Housing and Vinnies Dubbo Return and Earn Pty Ltd, for the Financial Year 2024/25.

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW is a lay Catholic member-led organisation that has been assisting people experiencing disadvantage and hardship for over 140 years.

The Society was founded by a 20-year-old man named Frederic Ozanam in 1833 who, with a group of friends, sought to alleviate the poverty and disadvantage that he saw around him in post-revolution France. Frederic started what is now a worldwide movement in just 20 short years.

The Society NSW currently has 12,500 members and volunteers across the state. In total, we have close to 400 local member networks, referred to as Conferences, present in communities throughout NSW.

Our members, volunteers and employees assist people experiencing disadvantage with resources including food, financial assistance, help with energy bills and other expenses, budget counselling, school items for children, and the provision of other material items such as furniture, clothing, bedding and other household items.

Importantly, we also provide vital emotional support and referral services as needed.

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW is also a leading provider of frontline services, with over 100 local services and programs across the state. These deal with a range of issues including homelessness, domestic and family violence, disability, mental health, refugee and migrant inclusion, rehabilitation and addiction.

GROWTH AND INNOVATION GROUNDED IN COMPASSION • 3

A YEAR IN MOMENTS



1

August '24

Launched the 'Immediate Aid, Measurable Impact' report in partnership with the McKell Institute, highlighting the importance of our emergency relief support.

July '24

Following concerted efforts by advocates, including the Society NSW, the NSW Government announced rental reforms to end no-grounds evictions.



2



3

September '24

NSW Premier Chris Minns unveiled a new Vinnies Van, generously funded by the NSW Government.



4

October '24

Worked alongside the NSW Reconstruction Authority at Recovery Assistance Points in Western NSW to support communities impacted by major power outages.



5

November '24

Ahead of the first NSW Drug Summit in 25 years, ABC 730 visited Freeman House to showcase our services and lived experience voices.



6

December '24

The Vinnies Christmas Appeal highlighted pressures faced by families during the festive season; an IGA Christmas dinner featured on A Current Affair, showcasing the impact our services make in the community.



7

January '25

Added our voice to the Raise The Age campaign, calling on the NSW Government to lift the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14.

February '25

Provided assistance in recovery centres in Northern NSW following Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. A few months later, we responded once again to floods in the North East region.

8



9



March '25

Brides-to-be flocked to Vinnies Waverley for a Bridal Expo offering pre-loved dresses at bargain prices, with sales going directly towards supporting our programs and services.

10



April '25

The Vinnies CEO Sleepout was launched for its 20th anniversary. Close to \$2.8 million was raised in NSW to enable the vital work of our Vinnies Services across the state.

May '25

During the Federal Election, the Society NSW called for action on housing, income support, refugees and First Nations priorities; Prime Minister Anthony Albanese pledged funding to upgrade one of our Domestic and Family Violence refuges.

11



June '25

Unveiled a new era for Vinnies Shops with the launch of Vinnies Finds, offering online access to pre-loved treasures.

12



GROWTH AND INNOVATION GROUNDED IN COMPASSION • 5

President's Message

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW has been present in communities for over 140 years, performing good works in the name of shaping a more just and compassionate society. This mission is only possible because of the collective efforts of all our people – members, volunteers and employees – who make a difference each day.

Individually, we all bring value and talents to our roles.

As St Paul wrote in his letters to the church in Corinth:

"Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ."
(1 Corinthians 12: 12)

Collectively, we perform many functions, using the gifts we've been blessed with, together in service of something greater – an impact that transforms lives and society as a whole.

This impact is grounded in values that we should all aspire to live out every day. These should not merely be words or feel-good sentiments. They should represent how we seek to act and as guiding principles for the world we wish to shape.

I am so thankful for all that our people have done over the past year. The challenges that we've faced have been many, yet the response that has been displayed time and again has been one of seeing an opportunity to bring about a positive impact in someone's life.

For this, and all that you do in service of the Society NSW, I offer my heartfelt thanks.

As we complete the second year of our Strategic Plan, we have made great strides towards strengthening our membership and services, along with ensuring the long-term viability of our work through new initiatives that will generate essential revenue.

In looking towards the future and our ability to increase the impact we make in communities, we must also be adaptive to the present challenges that arise and test our resolve.

For the second year in a row, more than 100,000 people have sought support from our members. This support is often for the most basic of needs.

The demand we see for assistance should be a concern for us all. We should not be comfortable with this reality "as just the way that things are now."

We cannot be comfortable with providing more support as the only response to more people facing hardship. We have a responsibility to meet people's immediate needs as well as advocating to heal the conditions that bring about the wounds of hardship.

Assistance, advocacy and spirituality are not disparate parts of our work. They are all informed by one another, acting in unison to bring about the transformation that defines our work as Vincentians.

The times we live in are both terrifying and exciting. The inequality that exists in our communities is widening, but we can make a choice to act on it.

Thank you for all that you do, living out the values that have defined the Society NSW for over a century, in choosing to do good works.

On behalf of the State Council,
With heartfelt appreciation and warmest wishes,



Peter Houweling
NSW State Council President



Spiritual Reflection



A brief reading from the Book of Wisdom...*The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God, no torment shall ever touch them. In the eyes of the unwise, they did appear to die, their going looked like a disaster, their leaving us, like annihilation; but they are in peace.*

On Easter Monday 2025, we learnt of the passing of Pope Francis in Rome.

Pope Francis came to us on the evening of 13 March 2013, wearing a simple white cassock, his own brown shoes, eschewing the traditional red cape with white fur trimming, expressing that the time of Carnivale was over. He took the name Francis, and he lived as simply.

Pope Francis' pontificate is widely seen as a significant movement of change in the Catholic Church, marked by a strong emphasis on synodality, social justice, humility, and outreach to marginalised communities, while also attempting to modernise the Church's image through a more accessible and personal style.

In the early hours of 8 May 2025, we learnt of the election of American Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost as Pope Leo XIV. Pope Leo, first pope from the Augustinian Order, served for many years in Peru and was made Cardinal in 2023 by the late Pope Francis.

Although early days, it seems that Pope Leo will continue much of the pastoral work of the late Pope Francis, with particular attention to marginalised communities and global outreach. In his first address he emphasised the importance of unity, peace, synodality and dialogue, stating, "Help us to build bridges."

His predecessor of name, Leo XIII, was instrumental in a call to social teaching and action within the Church and in the global society through the writing of *Rerum Novarum*. For the St Vincent de Paul Society, these words simply echoed the debates and actions of our founders, especially Frederic Ozanam, whose voice and spirit are very alive in the words of *Rerum Novarum* demanding fair wages for working people; a more equitable distribution of wealth and ownership; giving a voice to the voiceless and marginalised.

It has been an extraordinary year. An Annual Report not only provides stakeholders with information about a company's operations and financial performance; it also essentially holds us to pause and reflect.

The implementation of our Strategic Plan is taking shape in all our communities. It echoes our pastoral response to those we serve, not for our own sake, reflecting the service of Francis and the coming of Leo, but to serve in hope. We have a long way to go still but may we draw closer together enhancing our responses to the growing needs in our communities, needs in the face of poverty, needs in the face of vulnerability and exclusion across NSW.

May we continue to follow the example of the gospels and our founders in seeing those we serve through the prism of our wounded humanity. May we learn more of ourselves and the purpose of our life in this place, being drawn closer in our shared humanity, being drawn closer in hope and being drawn closer in radical love and compassion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leo Tucker', written in a cursive style.

Leo Tucker
Executive Director, Mission & Spirituality

Chair and CEO Message

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW has transformed lives and communities over the past year through the dedication and compassion of countless people striving towards a shared vision of a more just and compassionate society.

Every day, people turn to the Society NSW in times of need and are met with a hand up of support from our members, volunteers and employees. This assistance is seen through immediate and tangible aid with food, household bills and other emergency relief as well as a significant number of frontline services across homelessness, domestic and family violence, inclusion and alcohol and other drug rehabilitation.

The Society NSW assisted more than 200,000 people across the state for the second year in a row, including 105,000 people through our members, 115,000 accessing our Vinnies Vans and 11,800 supported by Vinnies Services. This consistent demand reflects the need that exists, as well as the ability of the Society NSW to provide assistance in hundreds of communities across the state each and every day.

This ability to respond locally was invaluable in our response to natural disasters across the North East region during the year. In the aftermath of Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred and the Northern NSW floods, the Vincentian spirit was in full display as our people met people in recovery centres providing them with immediate assistance to help them to recover and rebuild. As natural disasters become more frequent and intense, our experience and relationships in local communities and with government will be vital to the overall support we provide.

As we reach the end of the second year of our five-year Strategic Plan, the Society NSW is making great strides towards ensuring we are expanding our network to respond to more people in more communities. We are also working to ensure that we can respond now and that this is sustainable for years to come.

Through growth and innovation in our work, we have been able to strengthen the impact of our existing services by developing partnerships for the benefit of the people we assist. We can see this impact at work through our Vinnies Vans, where, every night, our network of vans provide meals and connection to people in local communities. Over the past year, we have established hubs in locations, such as Belmore Park, in the heart of Sydney, where we have partnered with local health services and government agencies to create a space where people can be connected with the support they need in an environment that is safe and inclusive. Additionally, the inclusion of outreach case workers on the vans has been pivotal in connecting the people we assist with all the services they may need to rebuild their lives.

The 2024/25 financial year has seen our service footprint expand with new homelessness support in Wollstonecraft and Swansea, along with a successful tender for our second residential alcohol and other drug rehabilitation centre in Bucca, north of Coffs Harbour. All these services will be transformative to people in need and align with our aspiration to expand the Society NSW's reach into communities where there is acute community need.

The launch of our e-commerce platform, Vinnies Finds, was a milestone moment. For over 100 years, Vinnies Shops have been a fixture of communities, providing



customers with the opportunity to discover a pre-loved treasure to call their own while simultaneously raising funds for our services. Vinnies Finds is a continuation of that tradition by bringing the experience of our Vinnies Shops directly to people without the bounds of bricks-and-mortar walls. For all that is new about the adoption of an e-commerce platform, the purpose remains grounded in future-proofing our services and work in community.

In all the successes that the Society NSW has been able to achieve over the past 12 months, we are humbled by the commitment and generosity of all our people who give of themselves to make a difference.

The Society NSW's reach is vast in the work we do and the lives we impact.

Richard Stewart
Chair

Yolanda Saiz
CEO

OUR VALUES



COMPASSION

Welcoming and serving all with understanding and without judgement.



EMPATHY

Establishing relationships based on respect, trust, friendship and perception.



COMMITMENT

Loyalty in service to our mission, vision and values.



RESPECT

Service to all regardless of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender or political opinions.



ADVOCACY

Working to transform the causes of poverty and challenging the causes of human injustice.



INTEGRITY

Promoting, maintaining and adhering to our mission, vision and values.



COURAGE

Encouraging spiritual growth, welcoming innovation and giving hope for the future.

Living our Mission

The St Vincent de Paul Society's heritage shapes and inspires a living and contemporary tradition. It is a heritage of which we are proud – it is faith in action to address poverty and inequality.

We are inspired by the basic tenets of our mission and vision: to work 'to shape a more just and compassionate society' and to offer a 'hand up' to people experiencing disadvantage. We respect the dignity of the people we assist and encourage them to take control of their own destiny.

We are spiritual and connected. Our spirituality is guided by the ministry of Jesus – radical inclusivity, restoration and accompaniment. We aspire to live values of commitment, compassion, respect, empathy, advocacy and courage each day.

We are committed to those people who live on the margins of our community and are guided by Catholic social principles of dignity of the human person and solidarity.

All of our people contribute to the common purpose of serving the most disadvantaged in our community, providing a 'hand up' and helping them to rebuild their lives.



Vinnies Finds – a new era for retail and impact

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW entered a new era in the history of our retail operations in 2025 with the launch of an innovative e-commerce platform, designed to bring the Vinnies Shops experience, combining sustainability with social impact, to customers at any place and any time.

Vinnies Finds went live in May, offering over 20,000 unique items for sale at the time of launch.

The website's design is warm, modern, and user-friendly, offering a smooth and simple experience whether browsing on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Shoppers can search by category, brand, or price using powerful filters, and the site also includes helpful links to information about volunteering and how to donate.

Behind the scenes, the Vinnies Finds warehouse in Stanmore plays a key role in the platform's success. A team of staff and volunteers carefully sort and upload new items daily, ensuring each product meets quality standards. The warehouse includes a professional photography space, equipped with cameras, lighting, mannequins, clothing racks, and photo boxes for jewellery and accessories. This setup helps showcase every item in the best possible light.

The decision to enter the online marketplace is part of the ambitions outlined in our Strategic Plan to generate vital funds to support the ongoing work of our programs and services drawing on the established Vinnies Shops brand and connecting with customers beyond our brick-and-mortar stores.

Interest in Vinnies Finds has been evident from the outset with over \$30,000 in first-day sales, attracting more than 10,000 website sessions, as part of a hugely successful debut week generating over \$80,000 from more than 900 sales. In the first month of operation,



through to the end of the financial year, 1,800 orders were completed, raising over \$170,000.

To celebrate the launch of Vinnies Finds, influencers, stylists, media representatives, and supporters were invited to enjoy a behind-the-scenes tour of our Stanmore warehouse, along with an exclusive opportunity to shop from a handpicked collection.

Reflecting on the launch, Yolanda Saiz, St Vincent de Paul Society NSW CEO, said: "We are thrilled to announce the launch of our online platform, which is a game-changer in allowing us to fulfil our good works in the community. This new channel allows us to reach more thrift shoppers than ever before, giving them the

chance to not only shop sustainably but also contribute to the collective goodwill that powers the essential services we provide."

Media interest in the launch was strong, with dozens of stories appearing across major TV, radio, print, and online platforms in the days following the event. The coverage helped spark national excitement and welcomed a wave of new customers to the Vinnies Finds online store.

To learn more, plus discover new items and collections added daily, visit www.vinniesfinds.com.au.

Strategic Plan takes great strides in year two

As the second year of our five-year Strategic Plan comes to a close, the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW is enhancing its positive impact in communities across the state.

"*Strengthening Communities, Transforming Lives*" was developed to enhance the quality of our existing work, identify opportunities for growth and strengthen our financial resilience to deliver outcomes for the people we assist. The past year has seen major milestones reached for each of these priorities, placing the Society NSW in a strong position to achieve our overall strategic goals.

In all aspects of the Strategic Plan, our work remains consistent with the mission, vision and values of the Society NSW. At the core of this work is respect for the people we assist, recognition of our members and volunteers, and creating a positive environment for our employees to thrive.

Highlights from the past year

The Society NSW is on track for targets to Excel, Grow, and Cultivate across most of our Strategic Key Results.

- **Vinnies Vans'** reach has grown substantially in FY25. All Key Result measures for vans services are above their respective FY28 target trends. The Society NSW now has 106 active **Vans Stops** and 16 **Mobile Hubs** with our people making 12,078 **referrals** to additional wraparound services.
- Outcomes for the number of people assisted into accommodation and the share of those who sustain their accommodation are both ahead of target.
- Homeless women aged 55+ and First Nations people we assist are experiencing higher stability outcomes.
- Fundraising is exceeding its target trend following strong FY24 and FY25 results.
- Members and volunteers feel significantly more recognised for their work with perceptions of recognition growing by 5 points to 73%.
- **Employee engagement** is at a high of 86%, and **employee perceptions of organisational progress** increased by 12 points to 74%.



Strategic Goals



Excel: Amplify the impact of our service offering

Highlight: Stability outcomes for all the people we assist have increased steadily since 2023 to 67%. The Society NSW has focused on improving outcomes for some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable cohorts. Stability outcomes for homeless women aged 55+ are now above the average having increased by 9% since 2023 to 77% in 2025.



Grow: Extend the reach of our services

Highlight: The addition of Adele House has doubled our residential Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) services. The Society NSW took over operation of Adele House, located north of Coffs Harbour in Bucca, following a successful tender process with the PAYCE Foundation in late 2024.



Cultivate: Enable our people, operational and financial capabilities so we can deliver more and better outcomes

Highlight: Vinnies Finds, an e-commerce platform allowing customers to purchase pre-loved clothing from the convenience of their device, was unveiled with over 20,000 items for sale upon launch and generated more than \$165,000 in its first five weeks of operations. Bringing a second-hand shopping experience online is set to generate vital funds for the Society, to enable programs and services delivered across the state.

Strategic Initiatives

The Society NSW identified 11 strategic initiatives for delivery in FY25, with five of these initiatives completed during the past financial year:

- **Person We Assist Journey Mapping:** Using data and stories to map the journey of people we assist to gain deeper insight into their experiences accessing assistance and improve how we support them at crucial moments.
- **Place-based Approaches:** Articulating a clear 'placed-based approach' for our programs and services leveraging our extensive experience in local and tailored response to community needs, with community and best-practice.
- **Membership and Volunteer Strategy:** Developed a three-year strategy on member recruitment and retention to ensure the sustainability of critical early intervention and support programs and services for the people we assist.
- **Vinnies Vans Strategy:** Developed a strategy to lift the impact and reach of our Vinnies Van Services to better support significantly disadvantaged and hard to reach communities through this outreach program.
- **E-Commerce (Phase 1: Stanmore Operationalisation):** Developed and launched the e-commerce retail platform, Vinnies Finds, to bring pre-loved goods shopping to the next generation of retail customers, volunteers and donors.

The Society NSW is on track with the remaining strategic initiatives, several of which are multi-year and will continue to be prioritised moving forward.

Building Strategic Maturity

The Society NSW has taken several actions in the past two years to organise and mature how we effectively plan and deliver on our Strategic ambition. These include:

- Designed and built strategic key results and targets to credibly track our progress and offer a more robust view of the Society NSW's strategic performance.
- Implemented best-practice project management and reporting processes to effectively monitor Strategy implementation progress and provide transparency to relevant stakeholders.
- Refreshed our approach to annual business planning to enable greater transparency, efficient allocation of people and resources, and stronger alignment with strategic and operational performance measures.

OUR PEOPLE

Members



The Society NSW has over 4,200 members located in communities across the state supporting our good works and shaping a more just and compassionate society.

The emergency relief aid provided by our members has immediate and tangible impacts for the people we assist and is the farthest-reaching program delivered by the Society NSW, covering the entire state.

Members belong to locally based groups, known as Conferences, that are traditionally associated with Catholic parishes. Many members view their work as an opportunity to put their faith into action by doing good works.

The past year has seen our members assist people through a range of programs, including the No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS), which assisted 804 people – increasing by 15% on the previous year – with small, interest-free loans for essential items such as appliances, furniture, car expenses and more. 1,661 people were supported through the NSW Government's Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) scheme, providing more than \$333,000 in energy relief. We are continuing to refine our data reporting systems to provide the most accurate information on the people we assist and the impact of our support.



Gender of Members

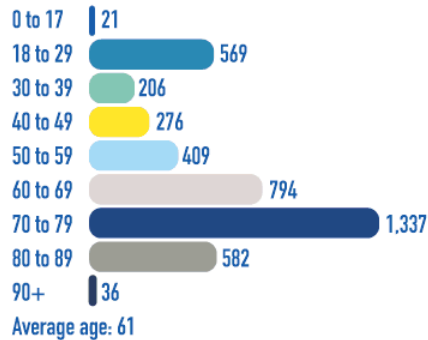
Female	2,448	58%
Male	1,629	38.5%
Other / unknown gender identity	153	3.5%

Members by Region



Metropolitan	2,321	North West	414
North East	703	West	117
South	675	TOTAL	4,230

Age of members



Youth Membership

Young people have always played an important role in the St Vincent de Paul Society, from our origins in post-Revolution France to the present day, through a commitment to putting faith into action and living out social justice teachings.

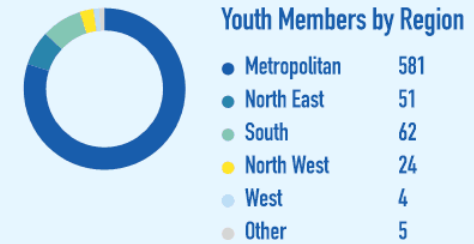
Across the state, we have 727 youth members engaged in the good works of the society, ranging from Buddies Days, Home Visitations, Sleepouts, and fundraising activities, focused on offering a hand up to those in need.

We have 198 school-based Conferences, comprising over 5,200 student members, which are engaged in various social justice activities and donated over \$700,000 in financial and material donations to the Society NSW.

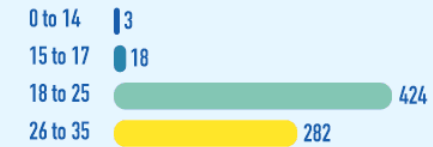
Youth engagement stretches from Mini Vinnies to Young Adult Conferences for people aged under 35. To enhance the experience for high school students, the Vinnies Service Medallion (VSM) was launched statewide following a successful pilot. The VSM is a

free, state-wide program for students in Years 7-12 that encourages and recognises their contributions to community service, leadership, advocacy, and fundraising. Plans are now underway to transition all secondary school engagement to this impactful, values-driven program that empowers young changemakers and fosters a deeper connection to social justice and volunteering.

Vinnies Youth was present at 23 tertiary institutions, including three TAFE campuses, during O Week where we attracted a record of 4,737 expressions of interest from students. As part of the O Week campaign, 'Bring Your Best' bins encouraged students to donate pre-loved clothing and items, while a new Youth Conference in Albury – St Elizabeth of Hungary – was formed to support the local community. Vinnies Youth was also present at more than 30 community engagement stalls, including Youth Week and Careers Expos throughout the state.



Age of Youth Members



Volunteers

Volunteers are an essential part of bringing about impact in communities every day. Thanks to the generosity and dedication of 8,289 volunteers located across the state, the Society NSW is able to raise vital funds and deliver programs and services in line with our mission and vision.

Four in five of our volunteers support our retail network operations, which encompasses serving customers in our Vinnies Shops, sorting quality donations and contributing to a more sustainable economy, less reliant on fast fashion and textile waste.

Volunteers assist our Vinnies Vans services as part of a roster of people providing meals, referrals and emotional support across the state. People also volunteer at our services, delivering programs to upskill, educate and allow the people we assist to express themselves.

The average age of volunteers is 51 years with a majority of our volunteer base being post-retirement age along with a substantive number involved through school and young adult initiatives.

A National Volunteer Week awards ceremony was held at our State Support Office to recognise Youth Volunteers, Adult Volunteers, Senior Volunteers, Volunteer Leaders and overall Volunteers of the Year across both Retail and Services cohorts. Yolanda Saiz, St Vincent de Paul Society NSW CEO, paid tribute to all award recipients and nominees and urged all present to let the celebration be a spark for continued action, "The world needs more kindness, more courage, more connection – and I believe, without a doubt, that our community of volunteers is leading the way."

Volunteers by Directorates

Retail: 6,601 / 79.6%

Membership, Volunteers and Early Intervention: 1,216 / 14.7%

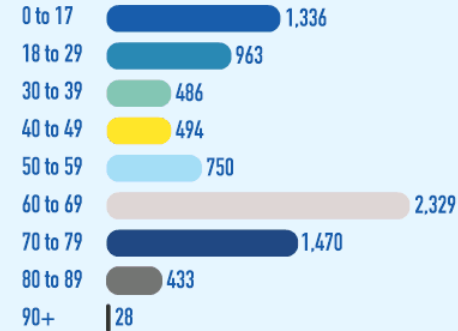
Vinnies Services: 214 / 2.6%

Conference: 216 / 2.6%

Council / Business Service: 42 / 0.5%



Age of Volunteers

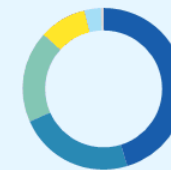


Average age of volunteers: 51



Gender of Volunteers

Female	6,119	73.8%
Male	2,118	25.6%
Other / unknown gender identity	52	0.6%



Volunteers by Region

Metropolitan	3,769	45.5%
North East	1,915	23%
South	1,511	18.2%
North West	785	9.5%
West	269	3.3%
NSW	40	0.5%
TOTAL		8,289



Employees

The Society NSW has over 1,550 employees bringing a range of specialist skills to enhance the work we do throughout the state.

Our employees work across seven directorates that collectively enable the impact we make in communities every day:

- Membership, Volunteers and Early Intervention
- Vinnies Services
- Commercial Enterprise, Retail and Fundraising
- Mission and Spirituality
- People, Culture and Safety
- Enabling Services
- Strategy and Engagement

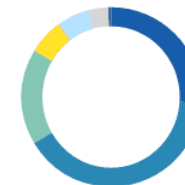
More than a quarter of our employees have been with the Society NSW for more than five years, offering essential knowledge of the organisation and contributing to a culture of recognition and opportunities for career development.

Ensuring our employees have a safe and respectful workplace, fostering an environment and culture of diversity and inclusion for all, is paramount to achieving our aspiration of a more just and compassionate society.



Employment Type

● Casual	423	27%
● Fixed-Term	188	12%
● Full-Time	644	41%
● Part-Time	304	20%
TOTAL	1,559	



Years of services

● Under 1	439	28%
● 1-4	685	44%
● 5-9	213	14%
● 10-14	88	5.5%
● 15-19	72	4.5%
● 20-30	46	3%
● 30+	16	1%
TOTAL	1,559	

People who joined the Society



YEAR	2024/25	2023/24
Total	514	460

People who left the Society



YEAR	2024/25	2023/24
Total	368	309

The impact of member assistance

Our members supported over 100,000 people throughout the state for the second year in a row. This demand for assistance highlights the hardship present in communities and the impact the Society NSW is able to make.



104,825
people assisted



\$15.1 million
in financial and material
aid distributed



176,000
interactions with people through
office appointments, phone calls
and home visits



25%
people identify as First Nations



73,635
hours of support provided
through our members



75%
people requesting food
assistance



31%
people seeking assistance
for the first time



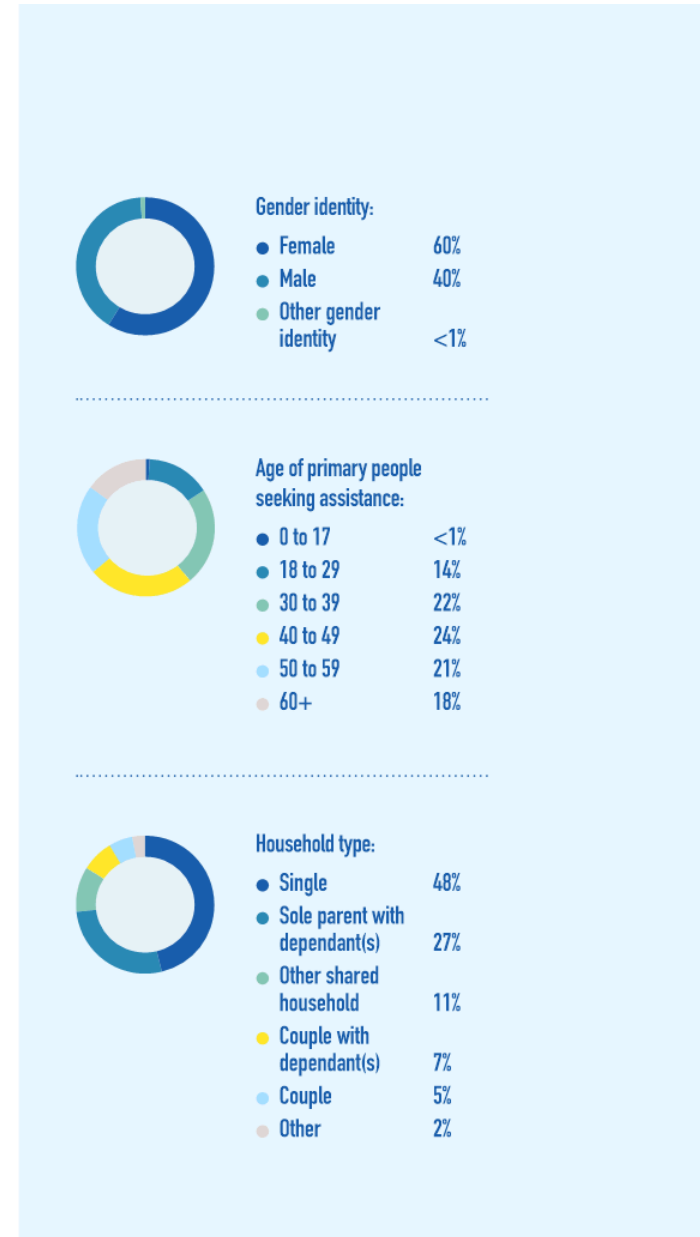
49%
people experiencing
housing stress



712
primary people supported
through EAPA



804
people supported through the
No Interest Loans scheme



Vinnies Vans

Vinnies Vans offer people much more than a meal. They're a place to connect, gain referrals to other services and be treated with dignity. The Society NSW operates Vinnies Vans throughout the state, attending to 108 stops every single week.

As part of the approach our Vinnies Vans take in connecting people with wrap-around support, we have established 16 hubs at locations across Metropolitan Sydney. These hubs allow people to access health and AOD services, clothing, legal aid and connect with the Department of Communities and Justice.

A new addition to our Vinnies Vans has been an outreach case worker role, sitting as part of Vinnies Services, who attends day and night time services to connect with people and identify issues beyond immediate food assistance.

In order to enhance our state-wide data reporting system, we launched an app to record Vinnies Vans activity in the past financial year, creating a baseline and a system to support onward referrals for the people we assist. From this, we know that 115,331 people accessed Vinnies Vans support and 12,078 people were referred to additional wraparound services.

Over the last year, 230,000 meals were served as part of day and night-time services, along with an additional 42,500 snack packs and 64,000 toiletries packs distributed to people seeking assistance. The NSW Government generously funded a new Vinnies Van which was launched by Premier Chris Minns at a barbecue lunch in Redfern.



115,000
people supported
by our Vinnies Vans

Natural Disaster Response

The North East region of NSW was hit by multiple natural disasters in the span of three months with Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred followed by severe flooding.

The damage caused by these twin disasters left thousands of people isolated, homes damaged, and, tragically, resulted in loss of life.

In response to these crises, the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW stepped up with immediate assistance to help people in their time of need.

This support included distributing funds raised through disaster appeals and collaborating with the NSW Reconstruction Authority in recovery centres.

Our teams continue to provide long-term support in these local communities.



Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred



More than \$75,000 raised through the generosity of compassionate donors



825 households supported



\$124,000 in support provided in the form of Woolworths vouchers and Vinnies Shops gift cards



Teams based in recovery centres in Coffs Harbour, Ballina and Lismore

Mid North Coast Floods



Over \$480,000 raised through generous donations



Material assistance provided including gift card vouchers, whitegoods, furniture, beddings, rent assistance, and other assistance



Worked with NSW Reconstruction Authority to assist 2,389 approved households with \$428,850 in support



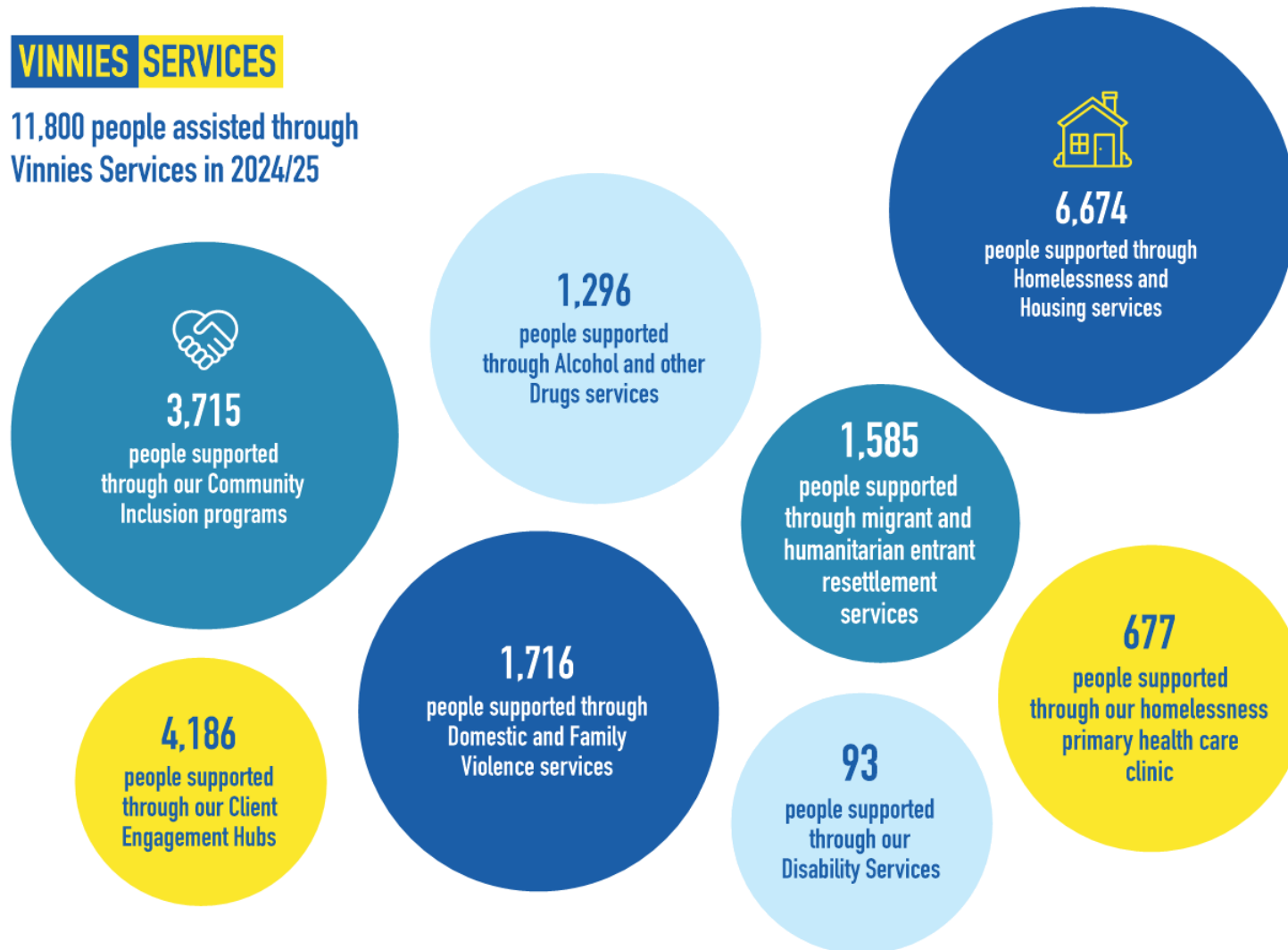
Members present in recovery centres in Taree, Kempsey and Maitland



Outreach assistance was also provided through our Vinnies Vans

VINNIES SERVICES

11,800 people assisted through Vinnies Services in 2024/25





Our Homelessness and Housing services experienced a 14% decrease in unassisted enquiries for support.



Domestic and Family Violence (27%) was the leading reason people sought support from our Homelessness and Housing services.



69% of people were referred to our alcohol and other drugs services.



The Ozanam Learning Centre experienced a 64% increase in people accessing the service over the last year, providing 9,100 instances of service.

Vinnies Services utilise the following practice principles and frameworks in its support of people in need:

Person-centred; we recognise that people have individual needs and circumstances that influence what services are required, the priorities for addressing needs and the best ways to provide care. We understand that a person's care and support needs does not define them, and we employ a person-centred, strength-based approach to ensure that all our service users are treated with respect and dignity.

Trauma-informed; we recognise how experiencing trauma can impact a person's sense of safety, wellbeing and trust, which in turn can make accessing services considerably more difficult.

Culturally safe; we welcome people in all their diversity. Our services use a range of culturally safe and respectful practices to offer a safe environment for everyone. These practices include awareness of and respect for culture and diversity, and the impacts of our actions and beliefs on others; understanding the diversity in our local communities and partnering with a range of stakeholders and community representatives to ensure inclusion and safety; seeking and learning from feedback about cultural safety in our services from people, communities, and our own staff.

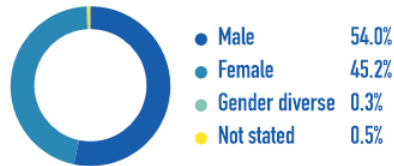
Evidence based; our services are informed by evidence-based practice approaches and align with current best and emerging practice, and lived and living experience expertise. We are committed to using evidence-based practices that have proven effectiveness in the scientific literature.

Harm reduction; harm reduction is designed to reduce individual and social consequences of drug use, without necessarily involving a reduction in use. It is also sometimes referred to as secondary prevention. Harm reduction work focuses on supporting positive changes, and working with people without judgement, coercion, discrimination, or requiring people to stop using drugs as a precondition to support.

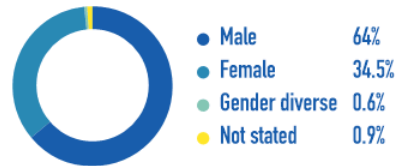
Housing First; we acknowledge that safe and stable housing is essential to achieving stability and whole of life wellbeing.

Community Development; alongside our crisis responses, we employ a community development approach to support a whole of community response to social issues. This involves working alongside communities to strengthen connections, improve capacity and advocate for issues that matter to them.

Homelessness and Housing



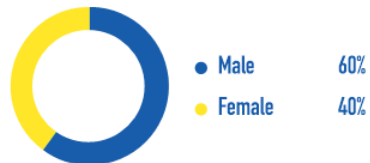
Health Services



Domestic and Family Violence



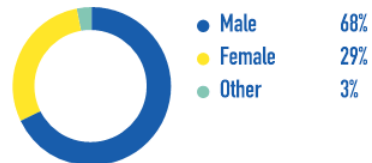
Client Engagement Hubs

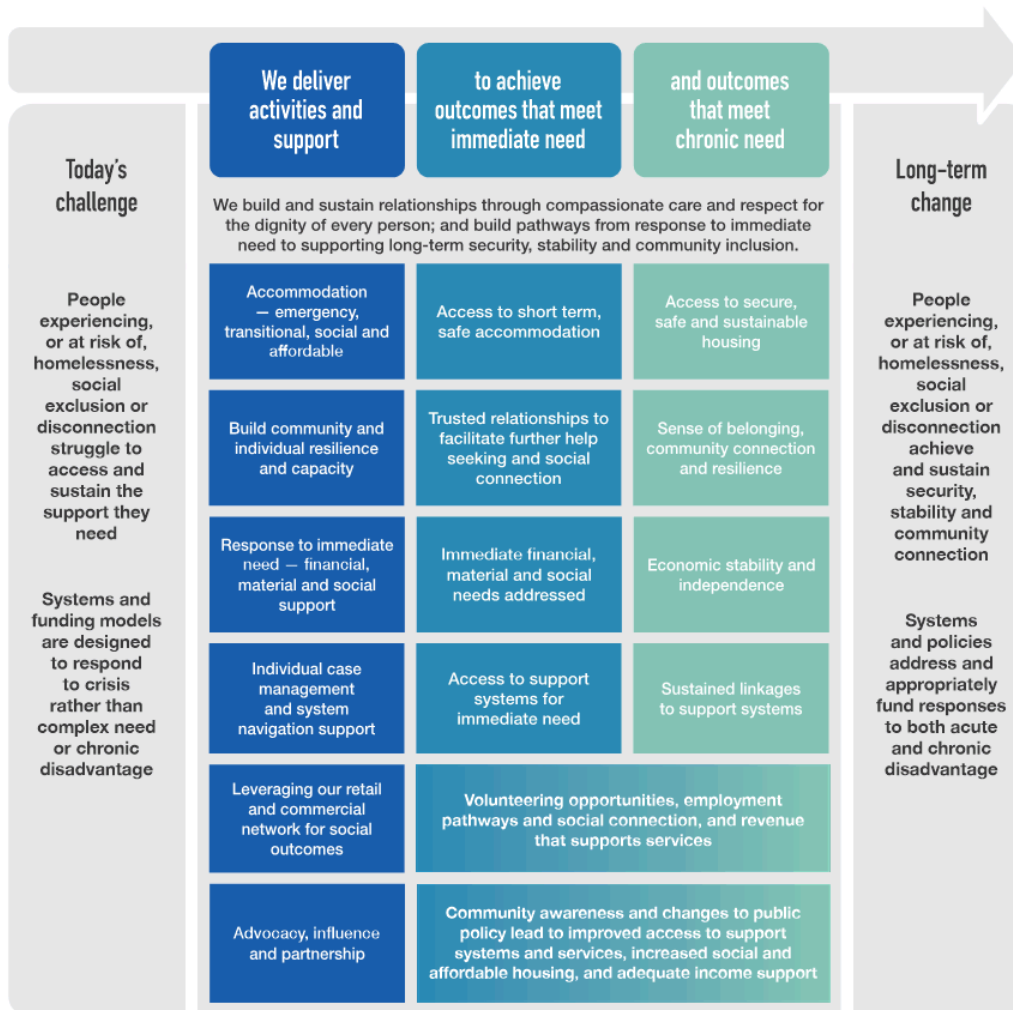


(people who consented to provide this information)



Disability





Theory of Change

“We build and sustain relationships through compassionate care and respect for the dignity of every person; and build pathways from response to immediate need to supporting long-term security, stability and community inclusion.”

Our Theory of Change articulates the difference we want to make in people’s lives and our communities. It reflects who we are, what we do, and how we do what we do.

It also reflects our current understanding of how the activities and supports we provide contribute to the people we assist achieving long-term positive change.



Homelessness and Housing

Our Homelessness and Housing services offer a range of programs that aim to deliver safety and security in housing at all stages of life. These include:

- Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS)
- Soft Entry Hubs
- Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF)
- Together Home
- Reconnect Program

On average, it took our Homelessness and Housing services 189 days to achieve a housing outcome (closed case) for people we assist, decreasing from 245 days in the previous year.

Our services fielded 2,938 enquiries for assistance that we were unable to fulfill throughout the year. The primary reason was due to a lack of available accommodation, representing 43% of all unassisted enquiries from our Homelessness and Housing services.

Our client engagement centres located across the North Coast supported 4,186 people with more than 153,000 instances of assistance. This included 85,000 onsite and takeaway meals, along with accessing cleaning facilities and technology. Additionally, 576 people accessed onsite medical services, 211 accessed onsite housing-related advocacy, and 108 people accessed onsite Legal Aid and correctional-related services.

The Society NSW operates 10 dedicated Domestic and Family Violence Refuges, along with a further two refuges that primarily offer this support. Additionally, we offer case management support through four programs, including 'Staying Home Leaving Violence' funded by the NSW Government. As part of the case management offered through these services, dedicated roles work alongside children and young people to support their needs. This approach recognises children and young people as victim-survivors in their own right and is part of strengthening the Society NSW's commitment to safeguarding.

Support provided through our Domestic and Family Violence services:



1,716

women and children supported



402

unassisted enquiries to our Domestic and Family Violence services – the most common reason was due to agency having no accommodation available



63%

of people were experiencing homelessness at the time of seeking support



65%

of people assisted are known to be in stable accommodation at the completion of support



47%

of people reported improved social connections



66%

of people reported improved wellbeing

Case study: Tony's life after Vincentian House

When Tony found himself without a home and with a newborn son to care for, Vincentian House offered support in his time of need.

Seven years on, Tony and his son, Jandy, are living independently and loving life.

"We're doing really good," says Tony.

Currently living in social housing, located a short walk from Jandy's school, Tony's current circumstances are a far cry from the challenges faced while trying to access support in his darkest hour.

"Out of everything I tried – hundreds of phone calls everywhere – just trying to get help for a single man with a child, nothing was happening. The only place that even thought about taking me was Vincentian House."

Gaining a lifeline from Vincentian House – a service operated by the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW supporting parents with children – Tony was made to feel welcome as soon as he set foot through the doors. From the uncertainty of homelessness, he and Jandy were given a self-contained unit that became a home.

"It was a place where I could actually stop, breathe and see a future."

Going on to spend 12 months at Vincentian House while working with the case management team to find a permanent home, Tony was able to make use of additional support offered at the service, such as counselling and learning how to cook.

This support continues to be of value years later with Tony crediting it with helping him to become a better parent.

"The lessons I learnt here, I still use in my daily life and I'm really grateful for that."

Much has changed for Tony nearly a decade on from his introduction to Vincentian House. He has a safe place to call home. Jandy is thriving in school. He's even thinking about a move to the country, using money he's saved up to buy a little property, for a change of pace and scenery.

Life has presented Tony and Jandy with more challenges than most. With a little help from Vincentian House, he has the stability to be the dad he wants to be for his son.

"We couldn't be happier."



GROWTH AND INNOVATION GROUNDED IN COMPASSION • 25

Health Services

The Society NSW operates a range of health services designed to support vulnerable members of the community during early intervention, crisis and recovery stages.

These services operate across six functions:

- Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Detoxification and Rehabilitation Service
- Complex Support AOD Services
- AOD Day Rehabilitation Programs (non-residential)
- AOD Outreach Programs
- Clinic Services (Primary Healthcare)
- Aged Care Services

The Continuing Coordinated Care Program (CCCP) assists people to address their alcohol and other drugs usage in a supportive and non-judgemental environment. 521 people were supported through CCCP in the past year with the Society NSW present in communities covering Albury, Hunter New England and Central Coast, South Eastern NSW, Wagga Wagga, Nepean Blue Mountains, Eastern Sydney, South Western Sydney and Western Sydney. Beyond offering support to reduce substance use, CCCP aims to support people with their goals around housing, health, income, education, employment, and family connections.

The Matthew Talbot Clinic provides primary healthcare to people who fall outside the scope of the traditional health system. 677 people were supported through the clinic over the course of the year, including 177 men

accessing the service for the first time. Over 10,000 appointments were delivered by our frontline workers, supporting people with medication dispensation, referrals to specialists, immunisations and more.

Visiting specialists provided close to 1,600 consultations, covering GP appointments, psychiatric consultations and health (podiatrist and optometrist) treatments. The support offered also includes treatment and monitoring for people living with serious mental illness. According to the Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network, the most common mental health diagnosis is Schizophrenia. The Clinic is able to connect people – many of whom are untreated or undiagnosed – with support through bulk billed GPs and psychiatrists that would otherwise be prohibitive outside of our tailored approach.



Support provided through the Matthew Talbot Clinic over the past year:



677
people assisted



10,266
appointments



1,593
consultations from
visiting specialists:

- 901 GP appointments
- 411 Psychiatric consultation
- 281 allied health (podiatrist and optometrist) treatments



9,588
instances of
medication dispensing



153
immunisations



1,277
referrals to
external specialists

Sarah's story

Sarah had recently completed a residential rehabilitation program when she was referred to our Continuing Coordinated Care Program (CCCP).

Having experienced substance dependency throughout her life, her motivations for participating in the program were clear.

She wanted to maintain her abstinence from alcohol and other drugs, gain financial and housing stability, rebuild her parenting capacity with the ultimate goal of regaining custody of her children.

Working with the CCCP team on relapse prevention and addressing barriers due to her status as a New Zealand citizen ineligible for government support, Sarah was connected with housing support and encouraged to re-enter the workforce through a referral for employment support.

As part of Sarah's goal of being reunited with her children, she has participated in peer support programs run by a women's homelessness services to regain stability for herself and her children.

The support provided by CCCP extends far beyond substance use. It recognises the varied challenges people face and works with them to connect with services that can make a difference.

Through the support of CCCP, Sarah has been able to maintain her alcohol and drug use abstinence and is using her lived experience as a peer support worker to assist other women navigating their own recovery journey.

Sarah has had increased supervised visits with her children. She is working towards full restoration and is well-placed to be reunited given the progress she has made.



Disability and Inclusion

Our Disability and Inclusion services supported over 3,700 people in the past year through 15 services across the state.

This past year saw the Society NSW make the difficult decision to transition out of two disability services in Sydney – Mary Mackillop Outreach and Como Social and Leisure Centre. Both services leave a lasting legacy of support in the community and we are confident that Achieve Australia, a much trusted and experienced NDIS Provider whose core work is in the field, is well placed to support participants in realising their personal goals.

We remain committed to our disability services in regional areas, such as Castlereagh Industries in Coonamble and Jim Da Silva Farm near Nowra, where we provide a range of assistance to support people living with a disability to realise their goals.

Castlereagh Industries employs 19 people living with a disability through various businesses including recycling, retail, laundry, car wash and courier services. Two thirds of workers identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and the service holds a strong connection with the local Indigenous community who offer cultural support and advice.

The Society NSW has implemented Supports In Employment to allow people living with a disability to obtain and maintain open employment. Following the decision to close Australian Disability Enterprises based in Sydney in 2022, workers have been transitioned into mainstream employment within the Society NSW with support provided. Employees receive a fair, award-level wage with 14 individuals maintaining employment 18 months after recruitment.

The North Coast Settlement Service in Coffs Harbour works with newly arrived migrants and people on humanitarian visas to engage with the local community. Close to 1,600 people were supported in the past year, including 250 people seeking assistance for the first time, to improve social engagement, economic wellbeing and community connections. The past year has seen the NCSS partner with a local farmer near Coffs Harbour to grow fruits and vegetables as part of the Unity Farm project.

The Ozanam Learning Centre is the Society NSW's flagship inclusion service, operating in Woolloomooloo for close to two decades. Close to 1,100 people accessed a range of programs during the past financial year with 9,100 instances of service delivered. The OLC Art Exhibition was held for the fourth time while the Forbes Street Band performed 25 gigs throughout the year.

Vinnies Connect operates throughout Greater Sydney partnering people experiencing loneliness with volunteers to develop connections and friendship. 25 people have engaged with the program in the past year with 65% of connections lasting more than 12 months.

With the addition of Adele House as part of our health services, the inclusion team has been able to introduce a technical and living skills program to support residents seeking treatment to successfully transition to independent living, employment and long-term recovery.

Additionally, over 200 participants have engaged in activities conducted by Creative Space across the Southern Highlands and 400 individuals have taken part in Community Development opportunities across Sydney, including the second annual Woolloomooloo Street Parade.



Case Study: Ariet

When Ariet, a remarkable Anuak woman from Ethiopia, arrived with her family on the mid-north coast of NSW in 2020, she carried the trauma of ethnic persecution and time in a refugee camp, which were soon followed by the sudden passing of her husband. With limited English and very few job prospects, Ariet endured grief and isolation.

Through North Coast Settlement Service's Intercultural Women's Group, Ariet began to share her skills in traditional Ethiopian weaving and discovered new opportunities through Inclusion. "Ariet is someone who we all feel is special," says NCSS Team Leader, Biba Honnet. Her character shone brightly when a local commercial farmer offered NCSS an acre of organic land. Ariet stepped forward to lead what has become Unity Farm.

Ariet brought other refugees and her children onto the project, teaching traditional farming techniques which she adapted to the unique local climate. The community grow culturally significant crops like okra, maize, and mustard greens, and now sell these to the local IGA – and Ariet negotiates the sales.

Today, Ariet drives herself to work, speaks English with growing confidence, and leads a thriving community farm. Her journey of recovery and her emergence as a compassionate leader is extraordinary.



Clinical Governance and Quality

At the heart of our work is a deep commitment to the people we assist. Their stories, voices, and experiences continually inspire our dedication to high-quality, person-centred service delivery. The Clinical Governance and Quality Team works closely with services and the broader Society NSW to support safe, effective, and compassionate service delivery. Feedback from the people we assist, their families and representatives, our people, partners, funders, and stakeholders play a critical role in guiding ongoing improvement efforts.

Homelessness and Housing

Stability

Two thirds (66%) of people in crisis are in safe and stable accommodation three months after seeking assistance.

Resilience

Two thirds (66%) of people in crisis report being more satisfied with their overall wellbeing following support.

Improved wellbeing

Two thirds (68%) of people in crisis reported stabilised or improved satisfaction in their overall wellbeing and life satisfaction.

Personal Wellbeing

Adults reported improved Personal Wellbeing Index scores across all areas measured, including standard of living rising from 5.22 at intake to 6.54 at exit.

Health

Wellbeing

Four in five (84%) reported their health had improved or stabilised from accessing treatment at our AOD services.

Resilience

Four in five people (85%) reported their quality of life had improved or stabilised following treatment.

Stability

One in two (54%) people reported a positive shift in lowering the severity of their dependence following treatment.

Quality of Life

People accessing our AOD services reported improved Quality of Life scores across all areas measured, including sense of self rising from 2.98 at intake to 3.63 at exit.

Snapshot of Key Achievements

- Successful Midterm Audit for relevant Disability Services and Aged Care under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Practice Standards, with no recommendations for improvement noted, and excellent auditor feedback.
- Successful Midterm Audit under the Quality Improvement Council (QIC) Health and Community Services Standards (7th Edition) for:
 - Housing and Homelessness Services
 - Health Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Services
- Successful Re-accreditation of Matthew Talbot Clinic under the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Standards.
- First-time Accreditation achieved by the Ozanam Learning Centre (OLC) under the QIC Standards.
- Improved analysis and reporting of service safety and quality data and trends from Integrated Risk Management System (data system) to the Quality Action Group, Board and Committees.
- Oversight and advice on new Aged Care legislation and reforms to Board and Committees and supporting self-assessment of our Aged Care service to ensure compliance.
- Continued operation of the Quality Action Group and Quality Working Groups, aligned with the Care and Support Quality Framework.
- Embedded the Care and Support Quality Framework.
- Regular collaboration with Quality Leads and key people leaders further enhancing alignment, consistency in approach, shared learning and striving for excellence.
- Developed a Vinnies Services Accreditation Framework to align and strengthen quality, risk and compliance activities across all Vinnies Services and the wider Society NSW.
- Conducted internal quality audits and service reviews to ensure compliance with applicable standards.
- Establishment of a working group to further develop and enhance person-centred practice learning and development for our people.
- Supported the development and review of organisational policies, Easy Read documents, and service protocols.

Accreditation Overview

Vinnies Services operates under more than five regulatory frameworks, each requiring adherence to specific accreditation standards. These ensure compliance with contractual, governance, and sector expectations. Vinnies Services is committed to maintaining accredited services as part of our mission to deliver safe, effective, and accountable care. The Clinical Governance and Quality Team support Vinnies Services divisions and the wider Society NSW to effectively demonstrate and evidence meeting accreditation requirements.

Accrediting Bodies and Associated Standards

1. National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Practice Standards

- a. Disability and Inclusion Services
- b. Frederic House (Aged Care)

2. Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) Standards

- a. Frederic House Aged Care Facility

3. Quality Improvement Council (QIC) Health and Community Services Standards

- a. Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Services
- b. Housing and Homelessness Services
- c. Ozanam Learning Centre

4. Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Standards

- a. Matthew Talbot Primary Health Clinic

5. NSW Health Clinical Care Standards

- a. Alcohol and Other Drugs Services

Accreditation Cycle

- Full Accreditation (every three years): Involves a comprehensive external audit and service review.
- Midterm Review (18 months post-accreditation): Requires internal self-assessment and independent review to verify ongoing compliance.

Accreditation Outcomes (2024–2025)

- Housing and Homelessness Services achieved their first full accreditation under the QIC Standards in September 2022, a major milestone.
- In May 2024, both Housing and Homelessness and Health AOD Services successfully completed their midterm audits, with no recommendations and positive auditor feedback.
- NDIS Services completed their midterm audit in September 2024, with no recommendations and high praise from auditors for:
 - Strong participant outcomes
 - Skilled and engaged staff
 - Well-embedded practice frameworks
- Each program demonstrated rigorous planning and collaboration to ensure that documentation, processes, and evidence aligned with service standards.
- These successes reflect the dedication of frontline staff, service leaders, volunteers, enabling teams, and executive leadership, who continue to uphold the Society NSW's strong commitment to excellence.

Looking Ahead

- Housing and Homelessness Services, OLC and Health AOD Services are preparing for their next re-accreditation audit in February 2026 against the QIC Health and Community Services Standards (7.1 Edition).
- Disability Services and Frederic House are preparing for re-accreditation under the NDIS Practice Standards in 2025.
- Frederic House is also preparing for the introduction of the Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards, coming into effect from 1st November 2025, aligning with the national aged care reform agenda.

In 2025–2026, the Clinical Governance and Quality Team will prioritise the following focus areas:

- Enhancing internal quality audits to support continuous improvement in systems, processes, and service delivery.
- Strengthening data systems to capture and analyse trends that inform service delivery and guide strategic decision-making.
- Refining the incident and complaint review process in collaboration with our enabling and support partners to promote learning, improve practices, and drive service development using outcome-based data.
- Fostering stronger cross-organisational partnerships to collaboratively achieve positive outcomes for the people we assist.
- Engaging our people in improvement initiatives, recognising their frontline insights into operational challenges, successes, and opportunities.
- Increasing the involvement of the people we assist—including those with lived experience—in shaping quality initiatives and contributing to service delivery decisions.

OUR ADVOCACY

Advocating for a more just and compassionate society is integral to the mission and identity of the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW. The Society's founding document – 'The Rule' – states "[we are] committed to identifying the root causes of poverty and to contributing to their elimination." Our social justice work seeks to achieve this aspiration through advocating on key issues within the Society NSW and broader public.



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NSW Drug Summit

The first Drug Summit held in NSW in 25 years took place at the end of 2024, providing an opportunity for the State Government to respond to drug use and dependency – with a focus on health and wellbeing – through consultation with community and stakeholders. Three forums were held as part of the Drug Summit in Griffith, Lismore and Sydney with leadership from the Society NSW represented at all three sessions. The Society NSW joined with other social service organisations (Uniting, NCOSS, Salvation Army, Wayside Chapel, Wesley Mission) to release two joint statements ahead of the Drug Summit and following the release of the Drug Summit recommendations. As the NSW Government considers its response to recommendation from the Drug Summit, the Society NSW signed a joint letter with the National Alcohol and Drug Foundation calling on MPs to focus on prevention and early intervention measures to address health impacts of drug use and dependence.

Elections and Budgets

The Society NSW amplified the 'Justice and Compassion' priorities established by National Council in the lead up to the 2025 Federal Election. The priorities highlighted during the campaign were supporting the social safety net, housing security, the needs of First Nations people, and rising to the refugee challenge. Members sought to discuss these issues with candidates across the state and secured face-to-face meetings with seven candidates along with correspondence from major parties and independents. The Society NSW was also present at community assemblies held by the Sydney Alliance and Hunter

Alliance, bringing together over 1,000 representatives to discuss key issues including energy affordability, housing and homelessness, and climate resilience.

In the lead up to the NSW State Budget in June, the Society NSW prepared a submission to Treasury, calling on the NSW Government to act on priority areas including:

- Investing in collaborative efforts to break the cycle of repeat homelessness for people sleeping rough who have complex needs
- Setting tenants up for success
- Increasing the capacity of Specialist Homelessness Services and its workforce
- Supporting people experiencing substance use issues
- Remodelling EAPA to address energy hardship.

Rosalie Rendu Forum

Our annual Rosalie Rendu Forum brought together a group of distinguished women, offering insights into rental reform. We were delighted to have Trina Jones (NSW Rental Commissioner), Dr Jemima Mowbray (Tenants' Union of NSW), Dr Penelope Bowyer-Pont (Macquarie University) and Anna Scott (Vinnies Services) join us for the online discussion moderated by Solange Frost (Society NSW, South Regional Director) during Anti-Poverty Week. Issues raised during the evening included the experiences of people supported by the Society NSW in navigating the rental market, the impact of the government's proposed reforms, examples of rent regulation from around the world, the need to improve the quality of rental housing and giving renters the confidence to exercise their rights.

The social justice team additionally participated in the Member Leaders and Youth Activate Forum, presenting on human rights and its importance in underpinning our good works. The Society NSW helped to develop and facilitate a series of face-to-face forums with the NSW Rental Commissioner, hearing from renters as part of a consultation process to inform the NSW Fairer Rental Reform legislation.

First Nations Justice

As a supporter of the Raise The Age NSW movement, the Society NSW continues to lend its voice to call on the NSW Government to raise the age of criminal responsibility, without conditions, from 10 to 14 years of age. Together with other First Nations voices, we led the Sydney Alliance Truth Telling Action Group to support and join the Raise the Age NSW Campaign. The campaign chief actions are to promote the need to do better for kids, especially First Nations children who are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice and out of home care systems. This advocacy work was presented at the First Nations Staff Conference, held in Coffs Harbour, where consultation was also sought to inform a future Social Justice Statement.

Homelessness Strategy

In response to the NSW Government's draft Homelessness Strategy, we provided feedback with a submission emphasising the need for homelessness to be rare, brief and not repeated. Our submission was based on statewide consultation with our Homelessness and Housing services, accounting for the voices of frontline workers, managers, directors from regional and metropolitan areas.

Recommendations in our submission included increasing baseline funding by 30%, internal collaboration between frontline staff and government agencies to foster trust



and transparency, enhancing support for people leaving services to avoid falling back into homelessness and funding to address specialist needs. The submission reiterated the need to continue funding social housing and investing in affordable housing to meet the growing need of low-income households, particularly for Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations and other First Nations-led housing services.

The Society NSW looks forward to being an engaged, active member in a state-wide system of connected local systems as a SHS provider, participant in prevention and early intervention initiatives and active advocate on behalf of people experiencing and those at risk of homelessness.

Energy

The Society NSW participates in regular departmental reference groups, as well as specific consultation, to advocate for systemic change to our energy system. This advocacy has called for local energy hubs to assist people to understand their bills and apply for concessions, along with providing practical measures for

people to stay cool in summer and warm in winter. We have made joint submissions to the Australian Energy Market Commission to change energy retailer rules, as well as attending various NSW Energy and Water Ombudsman Bring Your Bill Days, including in remote NSW communities.

Homes NSW Consultation

To ease the administrative burden faced by frontline Specialist Homelessness Services staff, the Policy and Advocacy team conducted an internal consultation with workers from our services, resulting in 11 recommendations presented to Homes NSW. As a result of the process, quarterly meetings will be held with Homes NSW to provide feedback on the experience of our staff and people we assist in navigating the social housing system in NSW. Through direct consultation and collaboration with government agencies, the Society NSW can deliver evidence-based policy recommendations to improve the services and achieve stronger outcomes for people throughout the community.

Submissions and Research

Federal Inquiry into Health Impacts of AOD in Australia Submission

Submission to NSW Government Loneliness Inquiry

Continuing Good Works, Enhancing Services and Broadening Supports - NSW 2025-26 Pre-Budget Submission

Joint Submission on Assisting Energy Hardship Customers Rule Change

Submission on the NSW Homelessness Strategy & Action Plan

Submission to the Modern Slavery Committee Inquiry

Joint Submission to the AEMC Improving the application of concessions to bills consultation paper

Joint Submission to the AEMC Improving the Ability to Switch to a Better Offer Rule Change Consultation Paper

Joint Submission on assisting energy hardship customers

Submission to Legislative Council Committee into proposed reforms to liability and entitlements for psychological injury in New South Wales

Joint submission to the AER Exemptions framework, additional consultation

Submission to Legislative Council Committee on inquiry into the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025

Joint statements with peak sector organisations

Joint Statement on the Drug Summit

Joint Statement: Reinstate evidence requirements for evictions due to repairs or renovations

'Drug Summit consensus was clear – we need the NSW Government to implement its recommendations': A Joint Statement from leading NSW social service organisations

Joint Letter to encourage focus on prevention and early intervention at the Drug Summit





Engaging with decision makers to bring about change

The Society NSW is committed to working collaboratively with all levels of government to bring about outcomes for the people we assist. In addition to alleviating hardship with immediate aid, our work aspires to identify and address structures that contribute to longer-term hardship. Through engagement with political decision makers, we can draw attention to the concerns of the people we assist, along with positioning our members and services as being well placed to deliver support directly to communities.

The past year has seen the Society NSW engage with Federal Ministers including Amanda Rishworth, as part of a forum held alongside the McKell Institute, to discuss Social Services Policy in Australia. Tanya Plibersek, who succeeded Minister Rishworth in the Social Services portfolio, met with our frontline services at the Marian Centre to discuss the commencement of

the Leaving Violence program. We were also honoured to receive Prime Minister Anthony Albanese during the Federal Election campaign, who visited his electorate of Grayndler with a pledge to redevelop Rosalie House, if re-elected.

NSW Premier Chris Minns was on hand to unveil a new Vinnies Van funded by the NSW Government at a barbecue lunch held alongside the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs NRL club. Rose Jackson attended the 2025 Vinnies CEO Sleepout in her capacity as NSW Minister for Housing and Homelessness, as well as announcing funding for a women's refuge in Swansea. A fundraiser in support of our Members, Volunteers and Early Intervention directorate attracted bipartisan support with Premier Minns and Mark Speakman, Leader of the Opposition, attending alongside prominent government ministers.

During the Federal Election, we assisted the Social Justice Committee with resources for engaging with candidates in key electorates. This support saw our members meet with candidates to discuss the Society's election priorities.

MPs and MLCs met regularly to discuss the work performed by the Society in local communities and broader advocacy work. We were delighted to have Jordan Lane (Member for Ryde), Charishma Kalyianda (Member for Liverpool), Sally Quinnell (Member for Campbelltown) and Dai Le (Member for Fowler) join our Vinnies Vans to provide direct assistance in their communities.

HOW WE RAISE FUNDS

Enterprise & Sustainability

The Society NSW is able to make an impact in hundreds of communities throughout the state through various income-generating activities. In addition to raising funds to support our programs and services, our retail and commercial enterprise activities make a positive impact on the environment by giving pre-loved items a second life and reducing waste from ending up in landfill.

Key highlights from the year include:



4,367,264 CUSTOMERS
served in our Vinnies Shops



157,550,466 CONTAINERS
at our Return and Earn depots



10,761,436 ITEMS
sold across the state with
an impressive 2,416,942 in
women's clothing



\$91.7 MILLION
in income generated through
retail, production and logistics



3,717,371 KG
of donated textiles were
received and sorted



220 SHOPS
located throughout NSW



**4,200 FURNITURE
COLLECTIONS**
throughout the state



600 MILLION
containers processed over
the lifetime of our involvement
in Return and Earn





Commercial Enterprise

The Commercial Enterprise team has shown remarkable commitment to advancing our fundraising objectives and driving positive environmental outcomes, generating \$11.5 million in revenue in the 2024/25 financial year.

As part of the NSW Return and Earn Scheme we now operate ten automated bulk processing depots throughout the state. This year, the volume of containers processed increased 20% on the previous year, while in January, we celebrated the 600 millionth container processed across all our depots over the lifetime of the scheme. This allowed us to provide over \$15 million in refunds back into local communities whilst generating \$2.87 million in net income for the Society NSW.

By actively participating in the NSW Government's Return and Earn scheme, we play a vital role in diverting waste from landfill, strengthening local communities, and generating essential funds for the programs and services delivered by the Society NSW.

The Vinnies Dubbo Return and Earn site was previously a joint venture with Regional Enterprise Development Institute Ltd (RED.IE). The Society NSW took 100% ownership of the commercial enterprise in April 2025, and it is now an entity as part of the Group.

Last year, we proudly launched VUCOR (Vinnies Used Cooking Oil Recycling), which collects and recycles used cooking oil from restaurants and commercial kitchens. The used cooking oil is recycled locally right here in

NSW, into biodiesel and animal feed products. This partnership with Scanline, part of Cleanaway, is now a year old and has over 90 venues participating. Each month, we collect over 20 tonnes of used cooking oil. We look forward to building on this good foundation and expanding the scheme to many more venues in FY26.

Our Bag o Rags initiative, which transforms unusable textiles into high-quality commercial cleaning rags, continued to deliver solid results, demonstrating resilience and adaptability in a changing market. We currently supply rags to over 220 companies across the state. We continue to grow our relationships with Sydney Councils. We are the recipient of an increasing number of councils textiles using various different collection models that best suit the individual council.

Retail

The Society NSW operates 220 Vinnies Shops and six distribution centres across the state, generating \$91.7 million over the past financial year.

A century on from the very first Vinnies Shop, located in Newtown, Sydney, a new era for our shops commenced in 2025 with the launch of the Vinnies Finds e-commerce platform. Innovation has always been part of Vinnies Shops, and by future-proofing our retail operations, we can continue to make an impact in the community.

The South region welcomed a new shop in Wollongong (Crown Street) with an expanded range of items, while Fairy Meadow underwent refurbishments with the shop re-open for the public in August 2024. Our Logistics teams also got a revamped look with nine trucks being rebranded across Metropolitan Sydney, Orange, Wagga Wagga, Bathurst, Taminda and Brookvale.

Through our network of distribution centres, 3,717,371 kilograms of donated textiles were received and sorted in accordance with quality controls. We also completed 4,217 furniture collections and 3,268 community support deliveries throughout the state. Our Product Stewardship services returned \$4 million in corporate donations, while 45,000 kilograms of metal produces and 40,000 kilograms of E-Waste were recycled.

Corporate volunteering has been exponentially growing over the years and is now a game-changer for retail and logistics. In this financial year, 814 volunteers from a wide range of corporations have rolled up their sleeves

and made a real impact, contributing the equivalent of 4,087 hours over 111 days. In just a few short hours, these teams help sort donations, refresh shop displays, build modular furniture and tackle large-scale tasks that would take days to complete. Their energy, teamwork, and dedication deliver an incredible boost to our operations.

The Economic Pathways Refugee Integration Program (EPRI), supporting people we assist in South West Sydney to develop skills and engage with the community, commenced delivery in the 2023/24 financial year. From the commencement of the program a total of 250 participants were enrolled. The career pathways provided for participants through the Vinnies network included, 24 in Transport; 143 in Warehousing; 30 in Retail/e-commerce; 51 in Sewing; 1 in Administration and 1 Employment coach. The program has been mutually beneficial with 51 participants gaining employment, including 21 participants employed at our Auburn Distribution Centre or in retail roles at Vinnies Shops. Following the success of the EPRI program, the Department of Home Affairs approved a 12-month extension until June 2026.



Fundraising

The Society NSW raised \$33 million through our fundraising channels over the past year. The support of all our donors is greatly appreciated and plays an essential role in enabling the programs and services delivered by members, volunteers and employees throughout the state. Our fundraising programs are tailored to reach across the community through regular appeals, events, corporate partnerships, major donors, bequests and community fundraising.

Key Results	Donations
Major Donors & Charitable Foundations	\$5,733,235
Gifts in wills	\$8,650,496
Corporate partnerships	\$1,298,702
Appeals & Direct Marketing	\$12,155,802
Disaster Appeal	\$997,895
Events and community fundraising	\$4,182,370
TOTAL	\$33,018,500



Philanthropy

We give thanks to our community of philanthropists for their ongoing commitment to helping those experiencing hardship and disadvantage to achieve security, stability and connection this past year. Special recognition is due to our key supporters whom we could not do without, namely:

- The Claffy Foundation
- Dick and Pip Smith Foundation
- Fussell Family Foundation
- Maple-Brown Family Foundation
- PAYCE Foundation
- The Profield Foundation Trust
- RTR Group Pty Ltd

In 2024-25, an invaluable boost of funding from the NSW Government's Homeless Innovation Fund (HIF) allowed us to rejuvenate an existing facility in the Lake Macquarie area to transform it into a temporary accommodation service for vulnerable women over 55 years with wrap-around supports. We acknowledge

the facility was a kind gift from the Sisters of St Joseph Lochinvar who have entrusted St Vincent de Paul Society NSW to continue their legacy of helping those experiencing disadvantage.

This year also saw the gift of eight units from the Mercy Foundation, the charitable arm of the Sisters of Mercy, which is providing much needed accommodation to women and children escaping domestic and family violence in Sydney. The units have been generously furnished and the security enhanced through a gift from a private donor.

We are grateful to have received funding from numerous Clubs around New South Wales who participate in the ClubGrant scheme. This funding has greatly increased the capacity of our Conferences to continue their work in community. A special mention must go to the Liverpool Catholic Club for funding homelessness services and the Vinnies Van in the Liverpool area. We acknowledge those clubs giving generously to help communities in the aftermath of climatic events, such as Broken Hill power outage and North Coast flooding.



Wills and Estates

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW received 73 generous estates, totalling almost \$8.7 million, to support our good works over the past year with an average bequest of \$118,500.

We continue to welcome new supporters to our Vinnies Forever Friends Group, comprised of individuals who have generously confirmed a gift to the Society NSW in their Will. Members of our Forever Friends group visited services operated by the Society NSW to see the first-hand impact of their generosity.

We continue to acknowledge our benefactors by sharing stories from their loved ones in our publications. Family members and friends are invited to attend thank you events and our Annual Mass where we present our "Book of Gratitude" containing the names of individuals who have left a bequest to the Society NSW.

The Society NSW is very appreciative of these valued gifts which are applied directly as per the instructions of the Estate. As Bequests are unpredictable in nature, the Society NSW applies a five-year historical average with an appropriate growth target.

Corporate Partnerships

Corporate partnerships play an important role in supporting the work of the Society NSW.

The Christmas season is one of the prime times for corporate support with a number of campaigns generating vital funds. IGA continued its longstanding partnership with a Christmas Campaign raising over \$364,000 through the sale of Vinnies Christmas Baubles and specially marked Community Chest products. Gravox raised \$117,000 nationally and generously donated a range of their products to be donated to households in need. JWS, Genesis, Nine, AMP and Claude Outdoor participated in volunteering activities along with gift drives and barbeques at our services.

In response to natural disasters impacting Northern NSW, IGA, Woolworths, Amazon, Lyone Foundation and Optiver stepped up with financial support to assist people with immediate assistance.

Amazon helped students to thrive in the classroom with a Back to School campaign, providing 1,000 packs to be distributed by our members across the country, along with sponsoring the 2025 Vinnies Reconciliation Movement (VRM) Youth NAIDOC Poster Competition. Prize winners from each region received educational resources sourced from Amazon.

Abergeldie's support of the Society NSW has spanned nearly two decades and that relationship will continue through a renewed five-year partnership. This support will enable our Vinnies Vans services to continue meeting the needs of people we assist throughout Western Sydney.

Helia is another longstanding supporter of the Society NSW, generously enabling our Vinnies Vans and upgrades to domestic and family violence services. We were delighted to welcome Zenviron as a corporate partner to support the work of our Vinnies Vans in Newcastle and



the Hunter region. Corporate support was also important in facilitating a Family Fun Day in Wagga Wagga during the April school holidays.

AMP Foundation stepped up as a national dollar matching sponsor during the Vinnies CEO Sleepout, contributing \$200,000 to support the fundraising efforts of participants across the country.

Workplace Giving was launched internally at the Society NSW to allow our people to continue their impact. Our Workplace Giving program experienced a 31% increase over the past financial year, allowing employees to donate a small portion directly from their pre-tax salary each pay period.

The Society NSW hosted a range of volunteering and engagement activities for corporates and their employees to give back to the community. These included hosting barbeques, packing sandwiches and snack packs to be distributed through our Vinnies Vans, assembling Christmas hampers and holding winter drives.

Community Fundraising and Events

Our community fundraising and events team achieved strong results over the past year with close to \$4.2 million raised through sleepouts, individual and group fundraisers, and events held locally.

The Vinnies CEO Sleepout celebrated its 20th anniversary, raising \$2.8 million in NSW. This year saw an influx of first-time participants through a targeted recruitment campaign. In-person events were held in Sydney and Wollongong, while the impact of natural disasters saw participants in Newcastle take part in a virtual event.

Additional sleepouts tailored for communities of all shapes and sizes were held across the state with 59 school sleepouts, 27 community sleepouts and five

locations participating in the NSW Vinnies Community Sleepout, which raised over \$200,000, in August.

We continued to expand our network of Smart Mini devices to assist conferences with their day to day fundraising as well as Appeals. This technology has seen greater fundraising outcomes, generating \$155,000 in income. The Fundraise Your Way site also allowed for our Conferences (115 pages, generating \$157,000) and wider community (22 pages, generating \$34,000) to host fundraisers to support our good works.

Our Annual Mass and Thank You Events were well attended in recognition of the contributions made by our supporters, Conference members and sponsors.

Appeals and Regular Giving

Our generous supporters raised just over \$12.1 million from our appeals and regular giving program helping the Society NSW deliver the critical services and programs needed to keep up with the increased demand.

The Winter Appeal raised over \$4.9 million from 6,606 supporters and the Christmas Appeal raised \$3.0 million from 6,128 donors.

Services like the Matthew Talbot Hostel and our Vinnies Vans were supported by 5,325 new donors who kindly donated \$789,451 which also supported the dedicated work of our members and volunteers.

Our regular givers contributed more than \$1 million providing much needed funding to the good works of the Society NSW.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to our supporters for their compassion and dedication in assisting everyone who turns to our services for assistance.



OUR STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP





Our Governance

The St Vincent de Paul Society in NSW is comprised of four entities:

- The NSW State Council of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. The State Council is comprised of democratically elected and appointed members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul in NSW, in accordance with The Rule. Democratic authority and responsibility is vested by the members in each elected Conference President and in each Council President. The NSW State Council is an unincorporated association.
- The Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW) is a body corporate incorporated under the Roman Catholic Church Communities' Lands Act 1942 (NSW). The Trustees are comprised of the members of the NSW State Council.
- The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW is a public company limited by guarantee.
- St Vincent de Paul Housing is a special purpose vehicle through which we manage the maintenance and service provision of over 500 social and affordable

housing units that have been constructed through the Social and Affordable Housing Fund.

The NSW State Council governs the work of members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul in NSW. The NSW State Council is part of a federated structure, with Councils in each State and Territory, and a National Council. The members of the NSW State Council are the Company Members of St Vincent de Paul Society NSW.

The Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW) hold property assets on trust for the good works of the Society in NSW. The Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW) are the Sole Company Member of St Vincent de Paul Housing.

The Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW), The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW and St Vincent de Paul Housing are registered charities with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and are regulated by the ACNC. The three entities form a reporting group for financial reporting to the ACNC.

State Council Advisory Committees

The State Council is supported by a number of advisory committees:

Membership Advisory Committee

Chair: Brian Murnane

Purpose: To provide advice and recommendations to the State Council and assist all Central Councils to effectively recruit, retain, and support members. Works to enable members to understand, support and empower the people we serve.

Social Justice Committee

Chair: Tom Gersbach

Purpose: To advise and make recommendations to the State Council on ways to address social justice issues and enhance members' understanding of the root causes of poverty and disadvantage.

Spirituality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Chair: Mary Ryan

Purpose: To provide the State Council with advice and recommendations relating to the organisation's mission, and spiritual and pastoral development of members, volunteers, and employees.

Youth Committee

Chair: Madeleine Sirris

Purpose: To provide the State Council with advice and recommendations relating to the engagement and activities of youth members, and volunteers.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors governs the operations of the company. The Board provides strategic oversight and direction for the activities of the company and ensures that activities are aligned with the Society's mission and the objects for which the company was established.

During the 2024/25 financial year, the following individuals were Directors of the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW:

Chair

Richard Stewart

Richard Stewart OAM has contributed in various capacities to the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW for more than twenty years, including many years in board and committee roles. In his regular work, he is a partner at PwC. He specialises in valuation, corporate finance, strategic value advice, mergers and acquisitions, capital raisings and joint ventures arrangements. His experience with PwC has spanned more than 38 years of work in Australia, Asia, the UK and USA. He has worked for many of PwC's most prestigious global clients across many industries during his career. He received the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2015, for his work in the social welfare sector and the accounting profession.

Directors

- Elizabeth McNamara
- John Adams
- Anne Stanfield
- Michelle Chahine
- Peter Doyle
- Dr Evelyne Tadros
- Birgit Burge-Teply
- Peter Houweling
- Paul Edgar
- John McKendry (Acting Director)

Board attendance and eligibility – 2024/25

Name	Eligibility	Attendance
Richard Stewart	6	5
Elizabeth McNamara	6	6
John Adams	6	6
Anne Stanfield	6	6
Michelle Chahine	5	5
Peter Doyle	6	6
Dr Evelyne Tadros	6	6
Birgit Burge-Teply	6	4
Peter Houweling	5	4
Paul Edgar	1	1
John McKendry (Acting Director)	1	1

Board Advisory Committees

The Board is supported by a number of advisory committees. The Board committees and their purposes are set out below.

Audit and Finance Committee

Chair: Elizabeth McNamara

Purpose: To provide oversight of the Society's financial performance and position; investments; effectiveness of internal controls; compliance with law and regulation; and external and internal auditors.

Governance, Nominations Committee

Chair: Dr Evelyne Tadros

Purpose: To provide advice on good governance practices and principles, including in relation to the Company's structure; operations and performance; risk management; and decision-making.

People and Culture Committee Chair:

Chair: Peter Doyle

Purpose: To provide advice on good governance practices and principles, including in relation to the Company's structure; operations and performance; risk management; and decision-making.

Service Quality and Safety Committee Chair:

Chair: Anne Stanfield

Purpose: To provide advice on proposals for the establishment of new Special Works and to assess existing Special Works. The Committee receives quarterly reports on each Special Work across the Society.

Remuneration Committee Chair:

Chair: Richard Stewart

Purpose: To provide advice on remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer and his direct reports.



State Council

The State Council, which serves the members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul NSW, is made up of an elected State Council President; Central Council Presidents; and Vice Presidents who are appointed by the State Council President.

The State Council additionally fulfills the role of Trustees holding in trust all land and properties that are made available for the work of the Society.

Peter Houweling – NSW State Council President

Peter has served as NSW State Council President since August 2024. He has been an active member of St John the Evangelist Parish Dapto since being posted to Wollongong as a primary school teacher after his marriage in 1973. He was elected as president of the parish council when it was first established under parish priest Father Francis Tran and is currently an active member of the Dapto Conference.

Dame Beverley Kerr AM – Deputy President; Vice President, Vinnies Services

Beverley joined the Society NSW 23 years ago and is a member of the Corrimal Conference and serves across a number of roles throughout the organisation, including Chair of the Service Quality and Safety Committee. She is also a Director of Amélie Housing and member of the Amélie Housing Audit, Risk and Finance Committee.

Bradley Jones – Vice President, Governance

Bradley is a highly experienced and well-regarded barrister with more than 20 years' experience, specialising in taxation, administrative, commercial law and equity. With an expansive practice in Commonwealth and state revenue matters, Bradley regularly appears for both taxpayers and revenue authorities in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, the Federal Court and the High Court of Australia. He resigned from the position of Vice President, Governance in March 2025.

John McKendry – Vice President, Housing

John has enjoyed a life-long journey with the Society, from Queensland University to Canberra and the Maitland/Newcastle Central Council. John previously served as Interim Chair of the company Board from 2019 -2021. Prior to retirement, he was Chief Operating Officer for Australia Japan Cable, an international consortium of telecom companies.

Brian Murnane – Vice President, Membership; Vice President, Property

Brian has held both paid and voluntary positions in community organisations for the past 50 years. He joined the Society NSW in 1972, and since that time he has served on every level of the Society NSW from Conference to Council General. Prior to retirement in 2023, Brian worked for forty years in the Community Housing Sector, being a founding member of Argyle Community Housing, BlueCHP, Ecclesia Housing, and founding CEO of St Vincent de Paul Housing, & Amélie Housing. He was appointed as Vice President, Property in March 2025.

Brooke Simmons – Vice President, Social Justice

Brooke works as a Senior Structural Engineer for Taylor Thomson Whitting and serves as a member of Our Lady of the Way Conference in North Sydney. She has been volunteering with the Society NSW since 2009, including positions in the Night Patrol, Kids Camps, Buddies Days and Sydney University Young Vinnies. Brooke resigned from the role of Vice President, Social Justice at the completion of 2024.

Tom Gersbach – Vice President, Social Justice

A member of St. Mary MacKillop Parish, Oran Park, Tom joined the Camden/Oran Park Conference after a long career in nursing where he worked in various hospital and community-based settings around NSW. He has acted as Conference and Regional President and represents the Wollongong Central Council on the Society NSW's Social Justice Committee, where he was made Vice President at the commencement of 2025.

Mary Ryan – Vice President, Spirituality, Diversity and Inclusion

Mary joined the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW in 2014 and served as President of St Patrick's Conference Swansea from 2017-2021. Mary currently serves as Eastlakes Regional Council President and as Chair of the Spirituality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Frances Scurfield – Vice President, Twinning

Frances joined the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW in the Wilcannia/Forbes Central Council after volunteering in the highlands of Papua New Guinea for years, where she saw firsthand how much the Queensland St Vincent de Paul Society overseas assistance helped local communities. Frances has worked in the Wilcannia/Forbes office for more than a decade whilst also acting as the Central Council's Twinning Officer.

John Walden – Vice President, Treasurer; Sydney Archdiocese Central Council President

John serves as Sydney Archdiocese Central Council President. He joined the Society NSW as a member of the Maroubra Junction Conference in October 2006, where he was elected President of the Conference in March 2007, and remains a member of the Conference to date.

Madeleine Sirris – Vice President, Youth

Maddie has worked in community development, running community events, and implementing early intervention and prevention programs for young people since graduating with a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Sydney in 2018. Maddie first became involved with the Society NSW in 2011 through her high school Conference and has continued to be involved in various roles throughout university and beyond.

John Adams – Armidale Central Council President

John is a member of St Patrick's Conference Glen Innes and serves as Social Justice Representative on the Armidale Diocesan Council and Chair of the Finance Committee of St Patrick's Parish, Glen Innes. John is a Justice of the Peace (NSW), formerly served as Deputy Chair of the Glen Innes Health Service Board and recently retired from a long career as a Paramedic with NSW Ambulance.

Marina Gray – Bathurst Central Council President

Marina was elected as Central Council President for Bathurst in February 2024. With 25 years of experience as a Society NSW member, Marina has held various significant positions, including Conference President in Bourke and Bathurst, as well as Regional President in Cobar Region within the Wilcannia/Forbes Central Council. She also previously served as Evans Regional President.

Michelle Chahine – Broken Bay Central Council President

Michelle was elected as Broken Bay Central Council President in June 2021 after first joining the Society NSW in 2015 as a member of the Asquith Conference. She is currently the Vocations Office for the Diocese of Broken Bay and brings a passion in youth ministry to her role, having mentored the Asquith Youth Conference for the past six years and served as a member of the Ku-ring-gai Chase Catholic Parish Pastoral Council and as their Youth Coordinator. Michelle was appointed Vice President, Membership in May 2025 and retired from her role as Broken Bay Central Council President at the end of June.

Annette Johnstone – Broken Bay Central Council President

Annette was elected as Broken Bay Central Council President on 28 June 2025. She has been a Vincentian since the early 1990's and is currently a member of Our Lady of the Rosary Conference, Wyoming and Gosford Regional President. Annette has a strong background in community work, including hands-on case management and advocacy and has experience working with Members of Parliament. Her leadership is marked by compassion, strategic insight, and a tireless drive to support those in need.

Vikram Pitre – Greater Western Sydney Central Council President

Vikram joined the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW in 2017 with his wife as an outlet for their passion for community work. He was born in Kolkata, where he lived a few hundred meters from Saint Teresa's home and was fortunate to have met her on many occasions; he moved permanently to Australia in 2008 and started his own finance brokerage company before completing a graduate degree in immigration law.

Paul Edgar – Lismore Central Council President

Paul was elected as Lismore Central Council President in August 2023. He has been an active member of the Yamba Conference since 2015, serving as Conference Treasurer for four years. Additionally, Paul has contributed to the Lismore State Council as the Social Justice representative on the State Council for three years. His dedication to Society service is further evidenced by his role as Regional President of the Clarence Orara Region, a position he has held for four years.

Brian Halligan – Maitland/Newcastle Central Council President

Brian joined St Patrick’s Conference Swansea in 2014. He became Conference President, then Eastlakes Regional President before serving as Central Council President where he was Commissioned on Pentecost Sunday 2022. He resigned from his position as Central Council President in March 2025.

John Setz – Maitland/Newcastle Central Council President

John has been a member of the St Patrick’s Conference in Wallsend/Shortland since 2015. He has filled the roles of Secretary, Treasurer, and President. He is currently the Regional President for the Lake Macquarie Region, a position he has held for the past two years. In a prior life he was a Mathematics teacher and Head Teacher in a variety of schools, in both regional and metropolitan areas. He was elected as Central Council President in May 2025.

Marissa Papsiros – Vice President, Youth

Marissa was appointed as Vice President, Youth in July 2025, having been a dedicated member and volunteer with the St Vincent de Paul Society for over ten years. From 2021 to 2025, she served as the Sydney Central Council Youth Representative and President of the Young Adult Conference, mentoring and supporting youth leadership across the Society.

Anthony Foley – Wagga Wagga Central Council President

Anthony is currently the President of St Clare’s Conference, North Albury Care and Support Centre, and was elected Central Council President for Wagga Wagga in July 2024. Over the past ten years, Anthony has actively participated in various capacities within the Society NSW. With a career spanning 35 years as a civil engineer, he has contributed significantly to state and local government entities in the Riverina region and has been involved with various other community organisations.

Jim Rogers – Wilcannia/Forbes Central Council President

Jim joined the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW in 2007 and previously served as Wilcannia/Forbes Central Council President from 2014-2018. Jim has been a member of Conferences in Parkes, Peak Hill and Condoblin and served as Central West Regional Council President after retirement from a long career in agriculture.

Peter Doris – Wollongong Central Council President

Peter joined the Society NSW at St Joseph’s Conference, Moorebank in 1995. After moving to the Southern Highlands in 2012, he joined St Michael’s Conference, Mittagong. Peter became Regional President for the Southern Highlands in 2017 and since then has performed many duties for Wollongong Central Council.

State Council attendance and eligibility – 2024/25

Name	Eligibility	Attendance
Peter Houweling	6	6
Dame Beverley Kerr AM	6	6
Brooke Simmons	4	4
John Adams	6	6
Marina Gray	6	6
Michelle Chahine	6	6
Vikram Pitre	6	5
Paul Edgar	6	5
Brian Halligan	6	5
John Walden	6	6
Anthony Foley	6	4
Jim Rogers	6	5
Peter Doris	6	6
Bradley Jones	5	1
John McKendry	6	5
Mary Ryan	6	6
Frances Scurfield	6	5
Madeleine Sirris	6	3
Brian Murnane	5	4
John Setz	1	1
Tom Gersbach	2	2
Annette Johnstone	0	0
Marissa Papsiros	0	0

Our Operations

Work Health and Safety

At the Society NSW, we are committed to ensuring the safety of everyone involved in or impacted by our activities. We understand that keeping our members, volunteers and employees safe will enable us to continue to provide a hand-up to people in need.

We have continued to focus on building a constructive culture that enables safety and wellbeing for all people, every day at every site. We are part way through a long-term plan with ongoing progress demonstrated by improved employee engagement survey results in relation to both health and safety (85% favourable, +2%) and wellbeing (78% favourable, +4%).

A key to this progress has been our focus on safety leadership, consistent with our organisational focus on the Vinnies Leadership Framework.

Implementation of our safety management system has continued through the setting of clear expectations for the management of safety through the communication and formalisation of our safety management standards.

The underlying causes of our claims for psychological injury were analysed and used to develop actions to address psychosocial risk that have been embedded within our planning for FY2026 with a strong focus on leadership development.

Our safety reporting culture has remained stable and proactive, with proactive hazard reporting equating to more than 20% of all reporting during FY2025.

Progress was made in relation to a number of our critical risks:

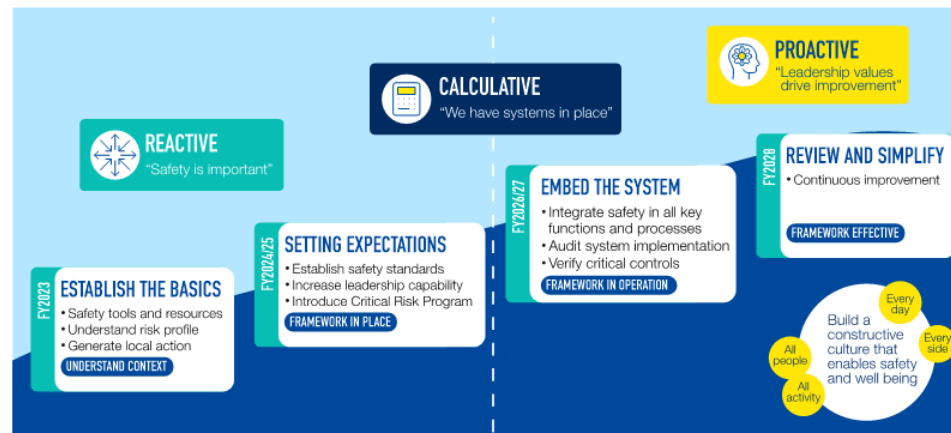
- Policy and procedures for work-related violence and safe home visitation were reviewed.

- Society specific manual handling training was developed for gradual rollout.
- Retail and Logistics commenced a lean process review to improve efficiency and minimise manual handling.
- Communication (e.g. use of two-way radios) and duress technology has been significantly improved in high-risk environments.
- A cross-Society Emergency Planning Committee was established.
- The risk of fire in facilities has been addressed by the ongoing embedding of emergency planning and training in accommodation facilities.
- Our new Security and Emergency Management role supported the development of emergency procedures and delivery of emergency training for our priority two sites.

On two occasions, the cross-directorate Business Continuity Team was stood up to address flood events that impacted a significant number of facilities in the North East region. On both occasions, a coordinated approach helped to support our workers and minimise disruption to our ongoing operations.

We have taken a range of steps to address our workers compensation (WC) risk and achieve positive recovery outcomes for our injured workers, including the introduction of a new role to manage WC and injury management across the state. We have also reviewed and changed our WC Insurance Broker and Claims Service Provider. We received more claims for workers compensation during FY2025 than the previous years. However, we have achieved improved recovery and return to work outcomes compared to previous years.

Safety roadmap



People and Culture

We are proud to report that in our last employee engagement survey we achieved a high survey participation rate of 87% and improved results across all aspects of the survey. The results for key areas of engagement, wellbeing and progress increased significantly, reflecting positively on our employees' experience of working with the Society NSW. These strong improvements over four years for all survey categories are above results in the Community and Advocacy Services industry benchmark. Our survey partner Xref acknowledged these results with two awards, Change Champion with exceptional improvements in work practices and employee engagement, and Best Workplace Award for outstanding people management practices and fostering highly engaged workplaces. The results reflect the collective efforts of our people, along with a commitment to building a supportive, values driven workplace and affirm what makes it a truly rewarding place to work.

The focus on developing our leaders continued this year and we achieved a significant milestone with 283 leaders completing the core Management Development Program, concluding our first implementation phase, so that in future this program will welcome new leaders into their role within the Society NSW. The program is based on the Vinnies Leadership Framework and builds the knowledge and skills of leaders to live the Leadership Purpose and apply the Leadership Principles.

Leadership Framework



Diversity and Inclusion

We continue to progress actions that support our commitment to inclusion and align with our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

Actions over the past financial year include:

- Completing annual reporting to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA); analysis of our gender pay gap showed it has decreased further and at the time of reporting was -0.2% in favour of women. WGEA has advised that a gender pay gap that is -5% to +5% is an optimal target range and indicates that as an employer we are not significantly favouring either men or women.

- Significant days of inclusion were marked throughout the year including Mardi Gras, International Women's Day, Wear It Purple, International Day of People with Disability and for the first time Inclusion at Work Week. These events provided a valuable opportunity to raise awareness, engage with employees and highlight the inclusive practices for people we assist.
- To support career development, a mentoring guide was developed to assist people establish an effective mentoring relationship for personal and professional growth.
- We conducted lunch and learn sessions on inclusive recruitment for people leaders with sessions covering unconscious bias, hiring First Nations employees, recruiting people with disability, inclusive onboarding and induction. The training supported updates to the Society NSW's Recruitment Policy on inclusive hiring practices.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)

Activities supporting our Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) focussed on improving accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities. Actions over the past financial year included:

- The creation of a new Workplace Adjustment Passport to make it easier for employees with disability to get and retain the adjustments they need to fully participate at work. The passport was recommended by the Australian Disability Network, following an audit of the Society NSW's people practices and developed with input and support from our People with Disability Employee Network Group.
- Easy Reads developed to support our Workplace Adjustments and ensure information is accessible and understandable to a wide range of people. An Easy Read version of our Employee Engagement Survey was used by just over 100 employees to complete the survey.
- The development of new Assistance Animal Guidelines and Checklist for the Society NSW to assist managers and employees bringing assistance animals to work sites.



Advancing Reconciliation: A year of meaningful progress

In 2024–25, the Society NSW made significant strides in deepening our commitment to reconciliation and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The launch of our third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in September 2024 marked a pivotal moment in this journey. Spanning July 2024 to June 2026, this RAP is guided by four core pillars—Relationships, Respect, Opportunities and Governance—each designed to foster culturally responsive and locally tailored engagement across our work.

Our RAP is a central pillar of the Society NSW's broader Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, reflecting our vision of a just, equitable and united society—one grounded in truth-telling, mutual respect, and meaningful connection between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

Setting the Tone: A Powerful Launch at Pete's Place

The launch of our Innovate RAP was held at Pete's Place in Coffs Harbour in September with community, members, volunteers and employees joining in a celebration of culture, connection and shared commitment. The decision to hold the launch at Pete's Place was made due to one in two people accessing the services identifying as First Nations. By centering the RAP in every aspect of the Society NSW—from leadership to frontline service delivery—we can demonstrate through our actions that reconciliation must be lived, not just spoken.

The first full year of our Innovate RAP has delivered tangible progress:

- **65% of RAP deliverables completed**
- **26% currently in progress**
- **9% yet to commence**

Elevating First Nations Voices

The results of our latest Employee Engagement Survey demonstrate the impact of intentional, culturally grounded work. In 2025, participation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees more than doubled, rising from 5% in 2023 to 12%. This increase is a powerful indicator of growing trust, visibility, and inclusion within the organisation.

Importantly, First Nations employees also recorded the highest favourable engagement scores of any cohort across the Society NSW. This milestone reflects the sustained leadership of our First Nations Engagement team and the First Nations Staff Network, whose efforts—from community-led cultural initiatives to systemic education—are building a more inclusive and culturally safe workplace where First Nations staff feel seen, heard and valued.

Celebrating Culture and Building Connection

Throughout the year, we delivered a range of impactful initiatives aligned to our RAP and in celebration of significant cultural events:



National Reconciliation Week (NRW)

We hosted a powerful Town Hall with Uncle Bruce Howell, who spoke about caring for Country and culture in a modern world, along with hosting a Reconciliation Trivia event to deepen understanding of First Nations cultures and our reconciliation journey. The Vinnies Reconciliation Movement (VRM) was launched, in partnership Amazon, allowing young people to share what reconciliation means to them through art, resulting in over 150 entries statewide.

NAIDOC Week

Staff across the state participated in a diverse and vibrant program of NAIDOC Week events with Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremonies held at key sites. Other activities included the creation of a First Nations mural in the Lewisham boardroom, weaving and art workshops, boomerang painting, Koori cook-ups, and the return of the popular Lewisham damper morning tea. These events continue to foster cultural safety, pride and connection throughout the organisation.



GROWTH AND INNOVATION GROUNDED IN COMPASSION • 51

Strategy, Delivery And Impact

The Strategy, Delivery and Impact team continued to progress our Strategic Plan during the course of the past financial year.

In each of the target areas of our five-year Strategic Plan – Excel, Grow and Cultivate – significant strides have been made through 11 strategic initiatives. Five of these have been completed over the past year including the Person We Assist Mapping Journey, Place-based Approaches, Membership and Volunteer Strategy, Vinnies Vans Strategy and the launch of the Vinnies Finds e-commerce.

We are continuing to build strategic maturity by monitoring the progress of our targets and implementing processes that provide transparency to all our stakeholders.

As we amplify our service offering to meet the needs of the people we assist and extend the reach of our support into communities where we are best-placed to provide support, we are well placed at the end of our second year, through advancements in income generating activities, to realise our Strategic vision which will enable us to make a sustainable and ongoing impact in communities.

Mission And Formation

The Mission team have worked to embed the mission of the Society across the whole of the organisation through releasing the Mission Strategy to support the broader strategic plan. Mission partners have worked collaboratively with other directorates to increase the mission focus, along with offering a mission lens through various working groups, such as the Rainbow Pride, Sustainability Network, Disabilities and Inclusion Action Plan Committee and Modern Slavery Networks.

The Mission Team are also part of the National Mission Network under the National Council of the Society, and as part of this network we support and contribute

to various national resources to help the States and Territories with embedding the mission, values and ethos across the Society. The NSW Mission Team contributed to the writing committee for the foundational Vincentian Way document. This resource will be used to assist and support present and new members for State Council, Board Directors and Executive in alignment to the Mission and Identity of the Society.

In the area of formation, this year we saw the continuation and growth of our suite of formation programs for the Society NSW.

We continued with the roll out of the Mission Masterclass for people leaders equipping them in a deep understanding of the mission, values and principles that underpin our organisation and have seen over 60 people leaders going through the course so far. We expanded the reach of our Mission and Legacy Sessions for our members providing spiritual formation in our Vincentian Identity. These sessions have been offered within central Council or Regional Council retreat days or part of member support days.

We launched our Pastoral Care program with the introduction of the Pastoral Care Formation and Training, to members in Armidale providing pastoral support to Freeman House. This program supports members and volunteers in the integration of pastoral care services within our Vinnies Services.

We continued to provide workshops for both members and employees in understanding change, loss and grief, as well as providing crucial support when losses and significant changes occur. As an organisation, our people are frequently exposed to loss and grief and this formation and support is highly valued.

Our Spiritual Reflection Guides are supplied to Conferences across NSW for spirituality resources, along with making this resource available to other States and Territories and international Vincentian communities

including, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. We also invited the Fijian National Council to attend, online, the State Council retreat which was most appreciated by Council.

Finally with the retirement of Greg Ryan, the Mission team welcomed Nirmal Nanayakkara to the team. Nirmal, formally involved with the MVEI directorate, will work in the Northern regions of NSW supporting Central Council Presidents, Regional Directors, members and employees.

Technology Services

During the FY25 financial year, the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) team has focused on improving cybersecurity, system reliability and improving technology performance. Our new e-commerce platform was launched in May 2025. ICT worked closely with Retail team and the Strategy team to deliver the project.

IT infrastructure has been upgraded in the Matthew Talbot Hostel and OLC, Jim Da Silva Farm, Freeman House and Adele House to improve internet and communication reliability. ICT teams have worked closely with the Property team to support the setup of new shops and supporting shop moves.

ICT and the Governance and Risk team have worked together to improve the security and management of paper records across a number of locations. There has also been a strong drive to improve our data quality to ensure we are adhering to compliance requirements.

ICT implemented systems to record and track funding arrangements, thereby improving data reliability and our ability to respond to donor and funder reporting requirements. The team also improved the emergency relief management system reducing the burden on members and volunteers providing disaster relief.

ICT continues to enhance Client Access Management Systems (CAMS) and Society Client Information System (SCIS) by streamlining and adding features to improve our ability to support the people we assist.

Communications, Marketing and Design

The Society NSW aims to connect with our numerous stakeholder groups through various modes of communication. Through promoting our good works, showcasing volunteers and aiding fundraising arms, we aim to position the Society NSW as a leading Australian charity.

Online modes, particularly our social media, have been successful in reaching and resonating with younger audiences. Our TikTok and Instagram have continued to display significant growth with the decision to switch solely to video content at the beginning of this fiscal year.

This was aided by a narrowing down our tone and focus by separating shops content from services content across different accounts.

	Followers	Growth during FY 24/25
Facebook (services)	19,033	+9% (1,624)
Instagram (Shops)	22,428	+38% (6,179)
LinkedIn	12,964	+20% (2,215)
TikTok	7,508	+40% (2,142)
Instagram (Services)	2,570	+2,570% (+2,570)
Facebook (Shops)	835	+835% (835)

The team has worked on numerous disaster relief campaigns throughout the year for floods and storms, alongside creating retail and brand campaigns like Bring Your Best, and supporting major fundraisers and Appeals such as the Winter Appeal and Christmas Appeal.

The Society NSW's impact was highlighted regularly in the media with coverage promoting the launch of Vinnies Finds, profiling the work of our specialist services – and the people we assist – in the lead up to the NSW Drug Summit, informing the public on donating quality items to our shops, and raising awareness of our major fundraising campaigns such as the Christmas and Winter Appeals and Vinnies CEO Sleepout.

The Society NSW was featured prominently in several high-profile outlets including ABC 730, A Current Affair, 2GB, ABC Radio, Daily Telegraph, Sydney Morning Herald, Guardian Australia, news.com.au and across Australian Community Media

We received 124 monthly media mentions on average throughout print newspapers, radio, television and online publications. Vinnies spokespeople were quoted in 54% of our total media mentions.

	Total Mentions	Average Monthly Mentions
Online	519	43
Print	193	16
AM	336	28
TV	209	17
FM	231	19
Total	1,488	124

	Total Mentions	AM	FM	Print	Online	TV	Vinnies Spokespeople	%
July	63	6	10	14	19	14	30	47%
August	129	31	26	28	32	11	75	58%
September	71	9	12	10	18	22	39	55%
October	61	15	2	9	22	13	37	60%
November	141	25	51	6	45	14	66	47%
December	193	117	6	21	40	14	65	34%
January	62	1	6	8	43	4	48	77%
February	23	0	1	6	13	3	15	65%
March	161	9	5	27	100	20	117	73%
April	85	9	13	10	48	5	45	53%
May	229	44	62	25	44	54	97	42%
June	266	70	37	29	95	35	108	40%
TOTAL	1,488	336	231	193	519	209	742	54%

612 projects from numerous directorates were completed this year by our Brand and Creative Services team. Their efficiency meant 2.5 projects were completed per working day, including assets with upwards of 50 components. Almost 50% of the workload sits with Commercial Enterprise, Retail and Fundraising.

Highlights:

- Rolling out the retail rebrand across Vinnies Finds, as well as physical stores
- Streamlining our Masterbrand look
- Assisting with major fundraisers and Appeals e.g. Vinnies CEO Sleepout
- Supporting MVEI events and outreach collateral
- Helping VSCs find their own look and feel

Our Digital Content producer has worked on over 200 projects this year, producing video and photo content to showcase the work of the Society NSW. We have significantly increased the volume of major TV network coverage by creating a media b-roll, a catalogue of pre-filmed footage for stations. In-house videos were also created for several fundraisers and internal communication, including Conferences, over 40 videos for the Vinnies CEO Sleepout, radio ads for the NSW Floods CSA as well as social media content.

Governance

The Society NSW's governing bodies, the Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW) and the Board of St Vincent de Paul Society, work collaboratively to help deliver the Society's mission and support a one Society approach that draws on the strengths of our members, volunteers and employees.

In 2024/25, the National Council of the Society of St Vincent de Paul continued its review of Part III, Articles for Australia, of the Society's foundational governance document, The Rule. The Society in NSW contributed to the review. The review will likely conclude in FY 25/26, and work is now underway to consider its implementation.

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW also commenced a review of its constitution with a view to implementing an updated constitution prior to the 2025 AGM.

Risk

The Board, its Audit, Risk and Finance Committee, and the Executive Leadership team show their commitment to sound risk management through the various governance structures, policies, frameworks and processes implemented across the Society NSW.

An adequately resourced risk team ensures that the Society NSW's Risk Management Framework and Risk Appetite Statement are implemented, suitable, and representative of the current external and internal context. An Integrated Risk Management System is used to support the Risk Management Framework and the Society NSW's management of risks and compliance.

In 2024-25, we formalised our approach to compliance management with the introduction of a new Framework and the rollout of a compliance register and module, supported by a partnership with Law Compliance.

In May, the Board and Executive Leadership team participated in their annual joint strategy and risk workshop that includes a focus on ensuring the Society NSW is well placed to manage risk in successfully executing its Strategic Plan.

Audit

The Society NSW maintains an Internal Audit function that provides objective assurance to the organisation, reporting to the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee of SVDP NSW.

The Internal Audit function takes a risk-based auditing approach towards assessing the effectiveness of internal controls and governance to enhance the delivery of the Society NSW's services and operations. In 2024/25, the following audits were undertaken: Conference use of gift cards and credit card usage, rental income within Homelessness and Housing Services, retail shops within the metropolitan region, and reviews of two Container Deposit Scheme sites. Internal Audit also managed a cyber security audit, co-sourced with Findex (Aust) Pty Ltd.

Follow up audits are undertaken to ensure recommendations made during the audit process are actioned by management within agreed timeframes.

The Internal Audit function also provides audit services to SVDP Society Housing Australia and SVDP Housing.

Safeguarding

The Society NSW continues to strengthen its commitment to Safeguarding by embedding a culture of prevention, accountability, and continuous improvement across all levels of the organisation.

Through alignment with the **NSW Child Safe Standards**, our policies and practices aim to ensure safe, inclusive, and responsive environments for children and young people. A key focus this year has been the delivery of Vinnies Safeguarding Learning to 4,403 employees, members, and volunteers. This training builds awareness and embeds the requirements of the Standards into everyday practice, empowering our people to identify risks, respond appropriately, and take proactive steps to keep children safe.



The Society NSW received and managed 3,036 safeguarding reports for children. Each report is addressed in accordance with legislation, and our safeguarding procedures.

Following our commitment to child safety, the Society NSW also recognises the importance of safeguarding adults who may be at risk due to age, disability, trauma, or other vulnerabilities. In 2024-2025, we responded to 455 reports concerning adults at risk.

In 97% of safeguarding reports, we were able to provide support through our Conferences, programs, or services or external referrals. This highlights our capacity to offer early intervention and wraparound support.

Our safeguarding processes support early identification of risk, and we work closely with external agencies, where appropriate, to ensure people we assist receive the right help at the right time.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Procurement

The Procurement team is responsible for the effective sourcing and engagement of suppliers, supporting the Society NSW's operational efficiency and ability to deliver high-quality services to the people we assist. We aim to maximise the value of supplier relationships through robust sourcing and supplier management practices. This ensures the careful selection, performance monitoring, and ongoing management of suppliers to achieve the best possible outcomes for the Society NSW. A core part of our approach includes identifying and mitigating risks across the supplier value chain through diligent, ongoing governance.

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In the past financial year, the Procurement team collaborated with stakeholders across the Society NSW to support a range of projects and initiatives. The ongoing focus is to increase the proportion of our manageable spend under formal contract, and provide procurement support to our strategic initiatives.

Major strategic projects have included request for proposals for IT services, including payroll, the development and launch of our new online store, and a number of property projects including the refurbishment of Frederic House, an aged care facility in inner Sydney. In addition, we've negotiated the renewal of a number of contracts with suppliers that are material to our operations. We also provided pro-active support to frontline teams, helping to stand up disaster response services in regions including Broken Hill and Northern NSW.

We continue to develop internal capability in procurement and supplier management, which included the development and launch of a procurement e-learning module.

As the Society NSW's fleet manager, the Procurement team managed a project to introduce telematics to pool vehicles. Telematics provides the ability to monitor vehicle travel data, providing opportunities for enhanced safety and fleet efficiency. Although only recently installed, the technology has already enabled fleet savings and efficiencies.

Our continued focus is on delivering value, driving cost efficiencies, managing supplier-related risks, and ensuring alignment with the Society's mission and values. Procurement also plays a critical role in supporting the Society NSW's ethical and social commitments. This includes ensuring compliance with the Modern Slavery Act through the publication of our annual Modern Slavery Statement and supporting our Reconciliation Action Plan. Through our membership with Supply Nation, we seek to identify and promote opportunities for First Nations businesses to supply goods and services to the Society NSW.

Property

Our property team supports the delivery of the Society NSW's good works, by ensuring that our properties are kept open, accessible and safe for the people we assist.

The past year has seen enhanced levels of service delivery in our property portfolio through disposals and acquisitions aligned with our strategic aspirations, including the establishment of several new service centres including retail shops, return and earn facilities, conferences spaces and accommodation services.

Business continuity is managed through a significant leasing portfolio, along with continuing to satisfy accreditation and compliance requirements.

As part of our commitment to environment sustainability, we are continuing the installation of solar photovoltaic to reduce carbon-based electricity consumption.

Legal

Our Legal Services team provides a range of services to the Society NSW including general legal advice, contract review and drafting, subpoena responses, policy review and claims management. Our team also manages the Complaints function for the Society NSW and holds the roles of Privacy Officer and Whistleblower Officer.

During the past financial year, the Legal Services team expanded in capacity and increased the number of legal matters handled by almost 50%. We also developed our pro bono relationships and significantly increased the number of pro bono hours provided by our generous law firm partnerships, thereby decreasing our external legal spend.

In FY24/25, the Legal Services team supported a number of the Society NSW's strategic initiatives including e-commerce and Privacy & Records Management and developed a new legal file management system which will streamline our interactions with stakeholders.

Finance

The finance team have commenced and implemented a number of initiatives throughout the past year, focussed on realising efficiencies as well as improving governance and processes.

A new whole of Society operational dashboard and key operating metrics were developed and launched to compliment the strategic measures and dashboards giving valuable insights into key drivers of operational performance across the Society NSW with directorate specific measures and dashboards planned for FY26.

Commenced replacement of current payroll system which is being decommissioned at the end of 2025, included within the scope of the new system is a time and attendance and rostering solution expected to enable better management of our workforce and optimisation of resources. Implementation is well underway and expected to be completed early in 2026. Other upgrades and enhancements to systems were embedded including funding manager to manage our grants, supporting the e-commerce platform launch, the inclusion of budgets and commitments in exflow (our Accounts Payable system) to better manage costs as well as expansion of the purchase order system beyond motor vehicles and new goods.

A review of decision making in the Society NSW and the tools to support these has been undertaken with a new and refreshed business case template and other supporting documentation developed, currently in consultation and planned to be rolled out in FY26.

OUR SUPPORTERS

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the following individuals and organisations that gave significant support to the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW this year:

2GB	EzyCharge	Jireh Endowment	Liverpool Catholic Club
Abergeldie Complex Infrastructure	Gene Pty Ltd	Rapid Relief Team	Maple-Brown Family Foundation
Amazon Australia	Grill'd	Scentre Group	Mercy Foundation
AMP Foundation	Grinders Coffee	Seasonal Supplies	PAYCE Foundation
Australian Stockbrokers Foundation	Helia	Select Events	The Profield Foundation Trust
Baker McKenzie	Hilton Sydney	Sky News Australia	RTR Group Pty Ltd
BioPak	IGA	The Australian	Sisters of Charity of Australia
Capitol Transport	Johnson and Johnson Family of Companies	Visy	Sisters of St Joseph Lochinvar
Carbon Reduction Institute	Johnson Winter Slattery	Zenviron	Government bodies
Coronation Property Co Pty Ltd	Lyone Foundation	Charitable Foundations	Federal Government
COS	Manildra Foundation	The Claffy Foundation	NSW Government
Dharma Care Inc.	Mayers Fine Food	Dick and Pip Smith Foundation	NSW Local Government
DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club	Mayers Fine Food	The Ernest Heine Family Foundation	
	Nine	Fussell Family Foundation	
	oOh!media		
	Perpetual Foundation –		



Estates of the late

We remember the following people for generously leaving a gift in their Wills to the Society. We keep them and their families in our thoughts and prayers.

Pamela McAuliffe Errington; Phillipa Nan Davis; Gwendoline Constance Peters; Leslie Bruce Blackshaw; Marie Josephine O'Donovan; James Laurence Manning; Graham Houston Matheson; Roslyn Louise Harry ; Wilma Cecily Friedlieb; John Francis O'Keefe; Pauline Imedla Rochfort; Marie Margaret Doherty; Stanley Roy Fogarty; John William Mercer; Carmel Mary Chandler; Lucia Maria Calandra; Berno Niklaus Kuhn; Jeffrey Thomas Langley; Gary Stephen Watson; William Allan Michael Mullins; Anna Teresa Flanagan; Elizabeth Mary Mcateer; Bruce Alexander Ferris; Patricia McEnery; John Barry Jones; William Patrick Shannon; Margaret Ann Edgley; Carmel Clare O'Connor; Patrick Joseph Crowley; John Hardy Birrell; Gilbert Keith Murray; Donald Walker; Patricia Anne McCusker; Robert Patrick Manery; Frank Alan Walker; Robert John Sullivan; Richard Gottfried Klaus; Irene Kopycinski; Chantal M Celjan; Robert Winston Alderson; Colin Sale; Elizabeth June Dowton; Margaret Francis Wallace; David Gregory Evans; Beatrice Alicia Harris; Roger Charles Kraushaar; Patricia Marie Baker; Michael Phillip Baker; Catherine Davis; Michael Joseph Driscoll; Margaret D'Astoli; June Gladys Phelan; Patrick Thomas Downie; Elizabeth Louise Brady; Theresa Boyle; Evelyn Judith Anne Mcvey; John Patrick Deasey; Patricia Anne Marshall; Dennis Timothy Jobson; Elizabeth Mihic; Ann Veronica Ryan; James Harrington Bailey; Judith Ann Buckley.

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FINANCIALS

We present the consolidated financial report for the year ended 30 June 2025, which includes The Trustees of The Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW), St Vincent de Paul Housing and Vinnies Dubbo Return and Earn Pty Ltd.

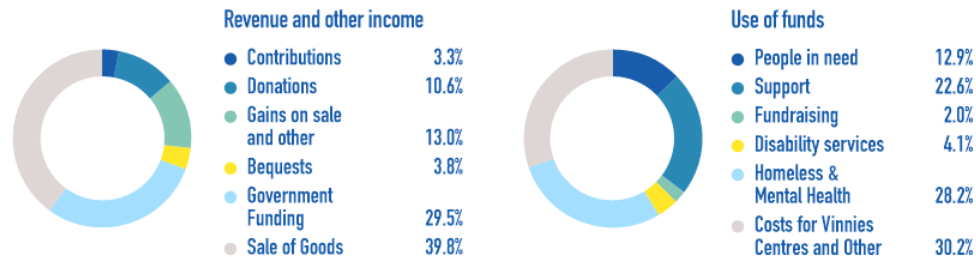
Key financial results include:

- Consolidated net operating surplus is \$3.0m (2024: \$18.0m, driven by revaluation of Housing assets and a large bequest).
- Total revenue of \$230.2m (2024: \$231.5m), this is a decrease of \$1.3m or (0.5%) on prior year.
- Total expenditure of \$225.6m (2024: \$212.3m), this is an increase of \$13.3m or 6.3% on prior year.
- Government funding increased by \$5.5m (\$67.9m 2025 vs \$62.4m 2024) due to additional funding for a number of services, increases in emergency relief assistance for people we assist and greater occupancy in our residential services.
- Vinnies Retail Shop sales increased by \$2.5m or 2.8% on last year to \$91.7m. The growth in retail revenue comes at a time that the retail sector is experiencing significant headwinds, the growth in 2025 can be attributed to targeted campaigns, the refurbishment of existing stores, opening of new stores and the launch of e-Commerce platform (Vinnies Finds).
- During the year, the Group spent \$101.9m (2024: \$96.4m) directly in the areas of homelessness, housing and mental health, disability and inclusion services and early intervention.

Review of operations

	2025 Actual \$'000	2024 Actual \$'000	2023 Actual \$'000	2025 vs 2024	2025 vs 2023
Revenue	230,192	231,457	206,785	(0.5%)	11.3%
Expenditure	(225,570)	(212,281)	(201,534)	(6.3%)	(11.9%)
Operating surplus	4,622	19,176	5,251	(75.9%)	(12.0%)
Contributions to related entities	(1,647)	(1,201)	(1,164)	(37.1%)	(41.5%)
Net operating surplus	2,975	17,975	4,087	(83.4%)	(27.2%)

Analysis of 2025 revenue and other income and use of funds



Five-year financial results summary

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Average Change (%)
Revenue & other income (\$'000)						
Donations & appeals	22,893	22,477	18,890	19,735	24,368	
Bequests	10,127	10,021	8,500	14,501	8,650	
Sale of goods & other	71,990	57,475	83,034	89,125	91,657	
Government funding	72,444	53,179	59,887	62,285	67,893	
Client contributions	11,236	11,828	12,734	7,276	7,632	
Gains on sale of assets	699	2,759	830	1,619	3,075	
Others Including Net Gain on Investment Properties	22,719	34,795	22,910	36,916	26,917	
Total revenue & other income	212,108	192,534	206,785	231,457	230,192	
Year-on-year change (%)	(8.8%)	(9.2%)	7.4%	11.9%	(0.5%)	
Use of funds (\$'000)						
Fundraising costs	3,508	3,607	3,713	4,408	4,535	
Costs for centres of charity and other	50,005	47,009	55,942	62,541	68,049	
People in need	25,571	25,688	26,917	28,713	29,051	
Homeless, mental health and housing	48,665	52,852	56,302	58,854	63,652	
Disability Services	18,996	17,440	17,884	8,884	9,205	
Other costs	29,383	39,320	40,776	48,881	51,078	
Total expenditure	176,128	185,916	201,534	212,281	225,570	
Year-on-year change (%)	(29.5%)	5.6%	8.4%	5.3%	6.3%	
Contributions to related entities	860	1,288	1,164	1,201	1,647	
Net surplus / (deficit)	35,120	5,330	4,087	17,975	2,975	
Services % of total costs	81.3%	76.9%	77.9%	74.9%	75.3%	77.1%
Services % of total income	67.5%	74.3%	75.9%	68.7%	73.8%	
Fundraising costs % of total costs	2.0%	1.9%	1.8%	2.1%	2.0%	
Fundraising & admin % of total costs	18.7%	23.1%	22.1%	25.1%	24.7%	22.9%
Fundraising costs to donations & bequests	10.6%	11.1%	13.6%	12.9%	13.7%	

Operating position

The Group reported a net operating surplus for the year of \$3.0m (2024: \$18.0m). Included in the net surplus is a fair value adjustment of \$0.6m of the Social and Affordable Housing properties. Our retail network plus the container deposit scheme outlets generated revenues of \$99.4m, Donations and Bequests providing \$33.0m, Government funding \$67.9m, with the remaining \$29.9m made up of client contributions, Investment income and other income making up the total revenue of \$230.2m.

The Group spent \$101.9m directly in the areas of homelessness, housing and mental health, disability and inclusion and early intervention, retail network and fundraising costs accounted for \$72.6m with enabling, support and other costs of \$52.7m making up the total expenditure of \$227.2m.

Cash and Financial position

The Group is fortunate to be in a sound financial position with net assets at 30 June 2025 of \$423.6m. The main components of this are property assets of \$513.5m, cash assets of \$45.8m and strategic and other deposits of \$75.3m.

The Group's Strategic Plan for 2024-2028 is Strengthening Communities, Transforming Lives which aspires to amplify the impact of our service offering and extending the reach of our services to ensure our services support lasting outcomes for the people in need of services.

The objective of the Group's Strategic Reserves are primarily to safeguard against the risk of major unforeseen events, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Group and its activities to support those most in need. Furthermore, these funds are utilised to fund major strategic initiatives presented to the Board, subsequent to review by the Audit Risk and Finance Committee (ARFC). The Group's plan for 2028 is the continuation of investments that will further build organisational capability to ultimately support service delivery to the people we assist.

Trends and ratio analysis

The ratio of service delivery costs as a percentage of total costs is in line with the five-year average of around 77.1%.

The ratio of fundraising and administration costs as a percentage of total cost is 22.9%. It should be noted that included in these costs were interest expense of \$11.2m on the St Vincent de Paul Housing NSW loan. The adjusted ratio excluding this is 19.7% which is slightly higher than the five-year average of 19.1%.



Analysis of results

Sales of goods from Vinnies Retail Shops represent a significant contribution to total revenues at 39.8% (2024: 38.5%). As part of the retail growth strategy, we launched the e-Commerce platform in May.

Government funding increased during the year to \$67.9m representing a significant contribution to total revenues and other income at 29.5%. The Group is fortunate to receive significant funding from the Government, however many of our services are co-funded by the Group, as can be seen by our spending of \$101.9m in areas of homelessness, housing and mental health, disability and inclusion and early intervention. As such these shortfalls are sustained by surpluses generated from Vinnies Retail Shops, donations, bequests, client contribution and cash reserves.

Donations and appeals contributed 10.6% to total revenues and other income (2024: 8.5%). The 2025 CEO Sleepout raised approximately \$2.8m for crisis accommodation and specialised services for those experiencing homelessness.

Bequests generated \$8.7m (2024: \$14.5m) and accounted for 3.8% (2024: 6.3%) of total revenues and other income. The Group is very appreciative of these valued gifts which are applied directly as per the instructions of the Estate. Bequests are unpredictable in nature as they may be contested in wills, delays to the assigning of rights and fair value estimations.

Investment income which is comprised of interest and dividends and fair value gains/losses on investments showed a favourable result of \$7.4m (2024: \$6.0m).



Yolanda Saiz
Chief Executive Officer
Dated this 1st day of November 2025



Kathryn Kerr
Chief Financial Officer,
Executive Director, Enabling Services

Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW)

Declaration by the NSW State Council

For the year ended 30 June 2025

In the opinion of the Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW):

- the consolidated financial statements and notes of The Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW) comply with the Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and associated regulations, and other mandatory professional reporting requirements;
- the attached consolidated financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of The Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW)'s financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that The Trustees of the Society of St Vincent de Paul (NSW) will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Responsible Entities:



Peter Houweling
President, NSW State Council
1 November 2025
Sydney



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Independent Auditor's Report to the Trustees of St Vincent de Paul (NSW)

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of The Trustees of St Vincent de Paul (NSW) (the Entity) and its subsidiaries (the Group), which comprises the consolidated statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, the consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the consolidated statement of changes in equity and the consolidated statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information, and the Trustees' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Group has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (ACNC Act), including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Group's financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2022*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

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Independent Auditor's Report

The Trustees of St Vincent de Paul (NSW)

Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor's Report Thereon

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Group's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Trustees for the Financial Report

The Trustees of the Entity are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the ACNC Act, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intend to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Trustees are responsible for overseeing the Group's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

Independent Auditor's Report

The Trustees of St Vincent de Paul (NSW)

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Group's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Group's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Group to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Plan and perform the Group audit to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business units within the Group as a basis for forming an opinion on the Group financial report. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and review of the audit work performed for the purposes of the Group audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with the Trustees regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Crowe Audit Australia

Crowe Audit Australia



Alison Swansborough
Partner

1 November 2025
Sydney





 **St Vincent de Paul Society**
NSW *good works*

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Treasury Policy on Council Loan Borrowings FS-CP-704 (PUBLIC POLICY)

1. Policy History

Revision No.	Council Meeting Date	Minute No.	Adoption Date
1	24/08/2010	0296	24/08/2010
2	27/01/2015	15/005	27/01/2015
3	13/02/2018	18/046	16/03/2018
4	10/12/2019	19/387	17/01/2020
5	14/06/2022	22/151	15/07/2022
6	09/06/2026	xx/xxx	dd/mm/yyyy

2. Policy Scope

This policy applies to:

- All **external borrowings** undertaken by Griffith City Council;
- All **internal borrowings** between Council funds;
- All decisions related to taking on, restructuring, refinancing, or consolidating debt;
- Borrowings for all Council funds,

3. Policy Objective

The purpose of this policy is to set out the high-level principles governing Council's use of borrowings as a legitimate financial tool to support delivery of community infrastructure.

Detailed operational requirements, limits, indicators, processes, and compliance measures will be set out in the Borrowing Strategy.

4. Policy Statement

4.1 Principles

Borrowing decisions must adhere to the following overarching principles:

- **Borrowings are not income** - Borrowings are not a source of revenue. They must be repaid and must only be used where they represent the most responsible and sustainable financial option.
- **Borrowing is one tool among many** - Borrowing should be considered alongside other funding options, including reserves, grants, asset recycling and operational funding.
- **Borrowings must be affordable and sustainable** - All borrowing decisions must ensure the Council can afford repayments now and into the future, aligned with Council's risk appetite and long-term financial sustainability objectives



- **Borrowings must align with long-term planning** - Borrowing must be consistent with the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and enable responsible intergenerational funding of assets

4.2 Risk appetite

Council will maintain a defined risk appetite for borrowings, reflecting its capacity to service debt under a range of financial scenarios and its commitment to long-term financial sustainability.

Borrowing decisions must remain within Council's approved risk appetite as set out in the Risk Management Framework and operationalised through the Borrowing Strategy, including financial indicators such as DSCR, liquidity and debt levels.

Council adopts a moderate and controlled risk appetite for borrowings, where:

- debt is used prudently to enable intergenerational infrastructure delivery;
- financial resilience is maintained under stress scenarios; and
- exposure to financial, liquidity and refinancing risk is actively managed.

4.3 Appropriate Use of Borrowings

Borrowings may be used only where they deliver long-term community benefit and meet the following criteria:

- **Capital projects only** - Borrowings will only fund long-term capital items, including new infrastructure or major refurbishment of existing assets.
- **Enabling infrastructure / forward funding** - Borrowing may be used to accelerate works or provide forward funding for infrastructure when this lowers whole-of-life costs or unlocks development or service benefits.
- **Intergenerational equity** - Borrowing may be used where it is fair and appropriate that future beneficiaries contribute to the cost of infrastructure.
- **Revenue-generating assets** - Borrowing may support assets associated with a reliable revenue stream, where revenues support repayment
- **Prohibited uses** - Borrowings **must not** be used to fund:
 - Operational expenditure
 - General maintenance
 - Short-lived assets

4.4 Conditions for borrowing

Borrowings may only proceed where the following minimum conditions are met:

- **Inclusion in Long-Term Financial Plan** - All proposals must be incorporated into the LTFP and reflect Council's projected financial capacity



- **Business Case / Capital Expenditure Review** - A Business Case or Capital Expenditure Review (CER) must support the proposal and include:
 - Need and rationale
 - Strategic alignment
 - Options analysis
 - Financial and risk analysis
 - Impact on debt sustainability and DSCR
- **Debt Sustainability Requirements** - Council must maintain the Debt Service Cover Ratio (DSCR) and associated indicators as set out in the Borrowing Strategy
- **Risk Assessment** - All proposals must undergo a risk assessment consistent with Council's risk management framework.

4.5 Borrowing options

Council may consider the following borrowing mechanisms:

- **Internal Borrowings** - Internal loans from eligible externally restricted funds may be considered where permitted, subject to legislative requirements and adequate liquidity in the lending fund.
- **TCorp (Preferred Partner)** - NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp) is Council's preferred external borrowing partner.
- **Private Money Market / Other Lenders** - Council may approach private lenders or money markets where:
 - A Request for Quotation (RFQ) is conducted in accordance with procurement rules;
 - TCorp products are unsuitable or unavailable.
- **Loan Structure** - Unless justified otherwise in the business case, loans will be:
 - Denominated in AUD
 - Onshore in Australia
 - Credit foncier / fixed interest style

Any deviation must be specifically justified.

4.6 Borrowing Strategy

Council will maintain a **Borrowing Strategy**, incorporated into or aligned with the LTFP/Operational Plan, which will set out:

- Existing and proposed borrowings
- Borrowing limits (overall and by fund)
- Financial indicators and benchmarks



- Covenants and compliance requirements
- Conditions for internal borrowings
- Annual review requirements
- Reporting requirements (quarterly internal, annual external)

4.7 Monitoring and reporting

- The Borrowing Strategy will be reviewed annually.
- Borrowing performance will be reported quarterly to the Senior Management Team
- A summary report on borrowing performance, including compliance with financial indicators, risk position and alignment with the Borrowing Strategy, will be reported to Council at least annually
- All borrowings must comply with legislation, regulations, delegations, and Ministerial approvals where required.
- Borrowing decisions must be approved in accordance with Council's Delegations Register, as amended from time to time.
- Roles responsible for managing and executing borrowings must act within the limits of their authorised delegations.

5. Delegation of Function

Financial Services

6. Definitions

Capital Project

- Creates a new asset or significantly renews/improves an existing one.
- Provides long-term community or operational benefit.

Capital Item

- Asset with useful life > 1 year and above Council's capitalisation threshold.
- Includes infrastructure, buildings, plant, equipment, or technology.

Enabling Infrastructure

- Infrastructure that supports or unlocks future development or services.
- Often required upfront to allow later capital works.

Credit Foncier Loan



- Fixed, equal repayments over loan term.
- Principal + interest paid together; interest reduces over time, principal increases.

7. Exceptions

None

8. Legislation

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

Office of Local Government – Capital Expenditure Guidelines (2010)

Ministerial Borrowing Guidelines

9. Related Documents

(FS-CP-101) Fraud & Corruption Control Policy

(FL-PO-201) Procurement Policy

(AS-CP-201) Asset Management Policy

(RM-CP-001) Risk Management Policy

Long Term Financial Plan

Asset Management Strategy

10. Directorate

Business Cultural and Financial Services



Appendix – Borrowing Strategy

1. Purpose of the Borrowing Strategy

The Borrowing Strategy provides the **operational detail** underpinning Council's Borrowing Policy.

It sets out:

- How borrowing decisions are assessed
- How much Council can borrow
- How borrowings are structured
- How borrowings are monitored and reported
- How Council ensures compliance with legislative and policy obligations

The Strategy ensures Council borrows prudently, sustainably and transparently, in alignment with the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and risk management framework.

2. Relationship to the Borrowing Policy

This Strategy is a **subsidiary document** to the Borrowing Policy.

The Policy establishes high-level principles and permitted use of borrowings.

The Strategy provides the detailed processes, limits, indicators, and governance requirements, including how decisions are made and monitored.

Where there is any conflict, the Borrowing Policy prevails.

3. Borrowing Framework

3.1 Decision-Making Framework

Before any borrowing is undertaken, Council must ensure:

1. **Project justification** is established through a Business Case or Capital Expenditure Review (CER).
2. The project is included in the **LTFP** and/or relevant Delivery Program.
3. Borrowings are assessed alongside alternative funding options (grants, reserves, asset recycling).
4. Borrowing aligns with Council's **risk appetite** and financial sustainability goals.
5. The impact on Council's **Debt Service Cover Ratio (DSCR)** and other financial indicators has been modelled.
6. Borrowings comply with relevant legislation and Ministerial guidelines.

3.2 Borrowing Approval Process



Borrowings must follow this process:

1. Service Area / Project Owner prepares Business Case or CER.
2. Finance Manager evaluates borrowing feasibility, financial implications and DSCR impact.
3. Borrowing is included and modelled in the LTFP.
4. Borrowing recommendation is presented to Senior Management Team (SMT).
5. SMT endorsement progresses borrowing to Council for approval.
6. Finance negotiates loan terms with TCorp or other lenders.
7. Borrowing is executed only after Council resolution.

4. Borrowing Limits and Financial Indicators

Borrowing limits and indicators ensure borrowings remain within sustainable, manageable levels.

4.1 Borrowing Limits (Total and By Fund)

Borrowing limits will be set out in this Strategy, including:

- Total borrowing ceiling (e.g., Council-wide cap)
- Fund-level limits (General, Waste, Sewer, etc.)
- Internal debt limits
- Year-by-year borrowing profiles

These limits are reviewed annually as part of the LTFP update.

Borrowing Limits (Total and By Fund)

Fund	Borrowing Limit	Notes
General Fund	\$30 million	Reviewed annually
Waste Fund	\$7 million	Revenue-backed capacity
Sewer Fund	\$20 million	Regulated revenue base
Water Fund	\$1 million	Regulated revenue base

Aggregate Borrowing Limit

Limit Type	Value	Commentary
Total Borrowing Ceiling	\$58 million	Based on LTFP modelling
Annual Borrowing Envelope	\$3–\$6 million	Updated in Operational Plan

4.2 Key Financial Indicators

The following indicators guide borrowing decisions:



Debt Service Cover Ratio (DSCR) - DSCR must remain above the thresholds determined in the Borrowing Policy.

Liquidity Indicators - Liquidity must remain sufficient to meet debt obligations.

Interest Rate Exposure - Borrowings must be structured to maintain predictable, manageable interest costs.

Debt Maturity Profile - Debt must be managed to avoid concentration of large repayments in any single year.

Legislative and TCorp Covenant Requirements - Council must comply with all financial covenants set by TCorp (if applicable) and relevant legislation.

Indicator	Purpose	How It's Used	Target / Reference
Debt Service Cover Ratio (DSCR)	Measures Council's capacity to service debt from operating cashflows	Stress-tested when evaluating new borrowings; monitored quarterly	Strategy-defined minimum (e.g., >2x, >4x aggregate)
Own Source Revenue Ratio	Indicates reliance on external revenue	Ensures borrowings don't exceed sustainable revenue	As per LTFP parameters
Unrestricted Cash Ratio	Ensures liquidity remains adequate	Checked prior to any new borrowing	Strategy-defined minimum
Interest Rate Exposure	Ensures loan structure remains stable	Ensures fixed-rate portfolio unless justified	Fixed interest for all new loans
Debt Maturity Profile	Avoids large refinancing bulges	Determines timing of future borrowings	Staggered maturity preferred
Borrowings to Asset Base Ratio	Ensures debt levels match asset scale	Monitored for long-term sustainability	Strategy-specific benchmark

5. Borrowing Options and Loan Structure

5.1 Internal Borrowings

Internal loans may be used where:

- The lending fund has sufficient unrestricted funds
- Ministerial approval is obtained where required
- A formal loan agreement sets:
 - fixed term
 - fixed interest
 - fixed repayments
- Interest rates reflect equivalent external rates

Internal borrowings are subject to the same risk assessment as external borrowings.



5.2 External Borrowings

Council may borrow from:

a. NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp) — Preferred Provider

- No competitive procurement process required
- Must comply with TCorp covenants
- Preferred for pricing stability, governance and credit strength

b. Private Lenders / Money Market

Used only when:

- TCorp products are unavailable or unsuitable
- A Request for Quotation (RFQ) is conducted under Procurement Policy

5.3 Loan Structure

Unless justified by a documented business need, all borrowings must be:

- Fixed term
- Fixed interest
- Fixed repayments
- Denominated in AUD
- Located onshore in Australia

Credit-foncier style loans are the standard.

Alternative structures (e.g., interest-only, variable rates) require explicit justification in a CER or business case.

5.4 Refinancing and Debt Consolidation

Refinancing or consolidating debt may occur where:

- It reduces financial risk
- It lowers total cost
- It improves repayment stability
- It aligns with Council's long-term financial strategy

All refinancing must follow the same approval process as a new loan.

6. Risk Management

Borrowings will be subject to Council's risk management framework, including:



- Financial risk assessment
- Sensitivity testing (interest rates, project delays, revenue changes)
- Scenario modelling within the LTFP
- Review of exposure to external economic conditions

Borrowings must remain within Council’s risk appetite and not compromise long-term sustainability.

7. Monitoring, Reporting and Review

7.1 Internal Reporting

Quarterly reporting to SMT will include:

- Current borrowing balances
- DSCR and other financial indicators
- Covenant compliance
- Variations from projected borrowing schedules
- Status of internal loans

7.2 External Reporting

Annually, Council will report borrowing performance:

- through the Annual Financial Statements and Annual Report; and
- via a dedicated briefing or report to Council outlining borrowing performance, compliance with key indicators, and forward outlook.

7.3 Annual Review of Borrowing Strategy

The Borrowing Strategy will be reviewed annually (or earlier if needed) to ensure:

- Borrowing limits remain appropriate
- DSCR and indicators reflect updated financial settings
- Forecast borrowings remain aligned with the LTFP
- Market conditions and TCorp offerings are reviewed

Changes to the Strategy require Council endorsement – via the Long-Term Financial Plan

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Council	Approves new borrowings and Borrowing Strategy
General Manager	Ensures compliance and oversees borrowing activity
Finance Manager	Prepares analyses, manages borrowing processes, monitors performance



Role	Responsibility
Project Owners	Provide business cases and CERs supporting borrowing proposals
SMT	Reviews and endorses borrowing recommendations

9. Review Cycle

This Strategy will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the LTFP and whenever material financial changes occur.

DRAFT



Treasury Policy on Council Loan Borrowings FS-CP-704 (PUBLIC POLICY)

10. Borrowing Tables

Debt Maturity Profile

Loan	Lender	Fund	Amount	Start Date	Maturity Date	Notes
Water Reclamation Plant	NAB	Sewer	\$11,000,000	Oct 2011	Sep 2031	
Water Reclamation Plant	NAB	Sewer	\$3,714,000	Jan 2022	Sep 2031	Refinancing
Water Reclamation Plant	NAB	Sewer	\$3,653,000	Mar 2022	Mar 2032	Refinancing
GRALC, GRSC	TCorp	General	\$10,000,000	Feb 2021	Feb 2041	
Griffith CBD	TCorp	General	\$10,000,000	Feb 2020	Feb 2030	
Griffin Green	TCorp	General	\$1,800,000	Feb 2021	Feb 2031	LCLI subsidy
		Water	\$330,000			
		Sewer	\$870,000			
Collina development	TCorp	General	\$1,920,000	Jan 2019	Jan 2029	
		Sewer	\$280,000			

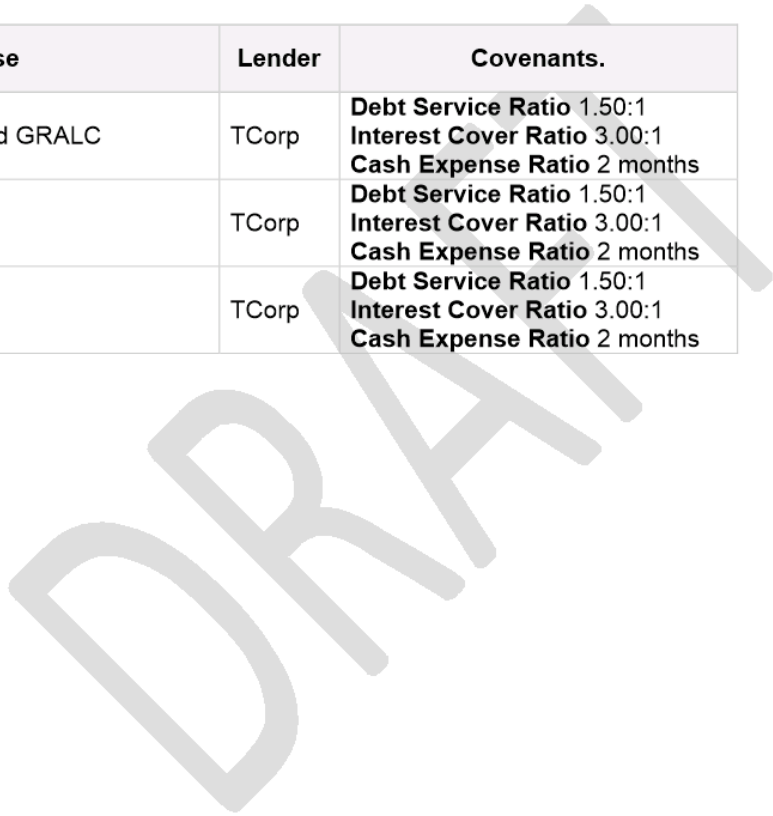
Borrowing Pipeline

Project	Fund	Estimated Cost	Proposed Borrowing	Year	CER Completed?	Status
Lake Wyangan Housing	General	\$17.5m	\$6.75m	2025/26	No	Approved
Tharbogang Landfill – Stage 1	Waste	\$7.0m	\$3.2m	2026/27	No	Approved
Tharbogang Landfill – Stage 2	Waste	\$3.0m	\$2.9m	2027/28	No	Under Review



Current covenants

Purpose	Lender	Covenants.
Griffin Green, GRSC and GRALC	TCorp	Debt Service Ratio 1.50:1 Interest Cover Ratio 3.00:1 Cash Expense Ratio 2 months
Collina development	TCorp	Debt Service Ratio 1.50:1 Interest Cover Ratio 3.00:1 Cash Expense Ratio 2 months
Griffith CBD	TCorp	Debt Service Ratio 1.50:1 Interest Cover Ratio 3.00:1 Cash Expense Ratio 2 months





Treasury Policy on Council Loan Borrowings FS-CP-704
(PUBLIC POLICY)

1 Policy History

Revision No.	Council Meeting Date	Minute No.	Adoption Date
1	24/08/2010	0296	24/08/2010
2	27/01/2015	15/005	27/01/2015
3	13/02/2018	18/046	16/03/2018
4	10/12/2019	19/387	17/01/2020
5	14/06/2022	22/151	15/07/2022

2 Policy Objective

To place a maximum limit on loan borrowings by individual funds to ensure Council limits its level of indebtedness to a manageable level whilst still providing a valuable source of funding for approved major capital works.

3 Policy Statement

- 3.1 Council shall limit its Debt Service Cover Ratio in total for all funds (General, Waste, Water & Sewer) to a minimum level of >4x as at 30 June for each completed financial year.
- 3.2 To ensure that the above Debt Service Cover Ratio is maintained at or above >4x, the total level of borrowings outstanding across all funds should be no greater than \$45 million as at 30 June for each completed financial year.
- 3.3 The General fund will limit its Debt Service Cover Ratio to a maximum level of >2x to ensure it can sustainably meet its debt obligations as they fall due.
- 3.4 Council shall not borrow funds for water supply works and provision shall be made in each annual budget for sufficient fees and charges to be levied that will meet the requirements of the Capital Works program to be completed with any reserve funds to be set aside into a Water Fund Reserve.
- 3.5 Council will revise downwards both the Debt Service Cover Ratio percentage and maximum borrowing limits as debt is reduced overall. Revisions should take place on a three (3) year cycle.
- 3.6 An indicative table to advise maximum borrowing limits and debt servicing cover ratios is as follows;

Fund name	Borrowing Limit allowable	Debt Service Cover Ratio limit
General	\$25.0 million	>2x
Waste	\$2.0 million	>4x
Water	\$ Nil	Nil



Sewer	\$18.0 million	>3x
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The amount each fund can borrow at any point in time will depend on the overall aggregate amount of borrowings which cannot exceed each individual borrowing limit or debt service cover ratio or the total aggregate limits as at 30 June each year as set out in this policy.

4 Definitions

None

5 Exceptions

None

6 Legislation

None

7 Related Documents

None

8 Directorate

Business Cultural and Financial Services



Treasury Policy on Investments FS-CP-303 (PUBLIC POLICY)

1. Policy History

Revision No.	Council Meeting Date	Minute No.	Adoption Date
1	01/12/1998	1094	01/12/1998
2	03/10/2000	P36	03/10/2000
3	11/06/2002	315	11/06/2002
4	14/01/2003	25	14/01/2003
5	24/01/2006	26	24/01/2006
6	24/02/2009	0057	24/02/2009
7	11/05/2010	0142	11/05/2010
8	27/01/2015	15/005	27/01/2015
9	13/02/2018	18/046	16/03/2018
10	14/06/2022	22/151	15/07/2022
11	13/06/2023	23/148	14/07/2023
12	Reviewed Audit Risk Improvement Committee – no change	N/A	20/08/2025
13	16/06/2026		

2. Policy Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All **cash and surplus funds** controlled by Griffith City Council;
- All investment decisions made under section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993*;
- Officers and delegates involved in treasury, cash management or investment activities.

3. Policy Objective

The objective of this Policy is to establish high-level principles governing how Council invests surplus funds to:

- Preserve capital;
- Maintain sufficient liquidity to meet operational and statutory obligations;
- Achieve an appropriate return commensurate with risk;



- Comply fully with legislative and Ministerial requirements.

Detailed investment limits, risk controls, maturity profiles and benchmarks are contained in the Investment Strategy.

Investment decisions will support the objectives of Council's Long-Term Financial Plan, Delivery Program and Resourcing Strategy, ensuring funds are available when required while maximising risk-adjusted returns.

4. Policy Statement

4.1 Policy Principles

Investment decisions must comply with the following overarching principles, consistent with the 2010 OLG Guidelines:

4.1.1 Security of Capital (Primary Objective)

Council's investments must prioritise protection of capital over yield. Investments must be made prudently and conservatively.

4.1.2 Liquidity

Council must maintain adequate liquidity to fund:

- Day-to-day operations;
- Known capital commitments;
- Unforeseen contingencies.

4.1.3 Yield (Secondary Objective)

Subject to security and liquidity, Council will seek to optimise investment returns over the medium to long term.

4.1.4 Diversification

Investment risk must be managed through diversification by:

- Financial institution;
- Investment type;
- Credit quality; and
- Maturity.

4.1.5 Prudence and Responsibility



Funds will be invested with the care, diligence and skill that a prudent person would exercise when managing the affairs of others, having regard to the probability of loss, liquidity needs and the long-term financial sustainability of Council.

4.1.6 Risk Appetite

Council has a low tolerance for risks that may result in loss of capital, non-compliance or reputational harm.

Council accepts a moderate level of financial risk where exposures are controlled, diversified and supported by robust liquidity and governance arrangements.

4.2 Permitted and Prohibited Investments

Council may only invest in instruments authorised under the **Ministerial Investment Order**.

The following are expressly prohibited:

- Speculative or leveraged investments;
- Derivatives (other than within authorised pooled funds);
- Investments denominated in foreign currency;
- Subordinated debt or hybrid securities.

4.3 Relationship to the Investment Strategy

Council will maintain an Investment Strategy as a subsidiary document to this Policy.

- The Policy sets principles, governance and risk appetite.
- The Strategy sets operational limits, benchmarks, maturity profiles and reporting.

Where inconsistency arises, this Policy prevails.

4.4 Monitoring and review

- Investment risks will be identified, assessed, treated and monitored in accordance with Council's Risk Management Framework (RM-GU-301).
- Key investment risks and controls will be recorded in the Council Risk Register and reviewed at least biannually.
- Investment performance, compliance and emerging risks will be reported monthly to Council, noting any risks assessed as Medium or above under the Risk Framework.
- This Policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier if legislative, financial or risk circumstances change materially.



5. Delegation of Function

- Council delegates authority to invest funds to the **General Manager and Director – Business, Cultural & Financial Services**, within the limits of this Policy and the Investment Strategy.
- All delegated investment decisions must comply with both the Policy and Strategy
- Council retains responsibility for approving the Policy, noting the Investment Strategy and retains oversight through monthly reporting.

6. Definitions

Authorised Investments - Investments permitted under the Ministerial Investment Order made under section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*, as amended from time to time.

Liquidity - The ability of Council to meet its financial obligations as they fall due without incurring unacceptable losses or costs.

Surplus Funds - Council monies that are not immediately required for operational or capital expenditure and are available for investment in accordance with this Policy.

Prudent Person Standard - The requirement that investments be managed with the care, diligence and skill that a prudent person would exercise when managing the affairs of others, having regard to risk, liquidity and preservation of capital.

Authorised Deposit-taking Institutions (ADI's) - are corporations authorised under the Bank Act 1959 (Cwth) to take deposits from customers. ADI's include banks, building societies and credit unions all of which are regulated by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority.

Bloomberg Ausbond Bank Bill Index - is an index comprised of 13 synthetic instruments defined by rates interpolated from the RBA 24-hour cash rate and the one and three month Bank Bill Swap Rates.

Bank Bill Swap Rate (BBSW) - is the compilation and average rate of market rates supplied by domestic banks relating to multiple maturities of bank bills.

Bill of Exchange - is an unconditional order in writing, addressed by one person to another, signed by the person giving it, requiring the person to whom it is addressed to pay on demand, or at a fixed or determinable future time, a sum certain in money to or to the order of a specified person, or to bearer.



Debenture - is a debt security usually secured by a fixed or floating charge over an underlying asset or pool of assets. Debentures are normally issued by companies in return for medium and long term investment funds.

Floating Rate Notes - are securities that (in Australia) pay a coupon normally priced at a fixed margin above the Bank Bill Swap Rate

TCorp - means NSW Treasury Corporation

Term Deposits - are non-tradeable investments offered by ADIs with varying maturity dates (normally from one month to 60 months) and a rate set at the outset. Interest is normally payable upon maturity or if the term is longer than 12 months, annually from the investment date. Penalties apply if the funds are withdrawn before maturity and a notice period of 31 days is usually required.

7. Exceptions

None

8. Legislation

- *Local Government Act 1993*;
- *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*;
- Current **NSW Ministerial Investment Order**;
- Relevant guidelines issued by the Office of Local Government.

9. Related Documents

(FL-PO-201) Procurement Policy
(FS-CP-704) Treasury Policy for Borrowings
Risk Management Policy

10. Directorate

Business Cultural and Financial Services



Appendix A – Investment Strategy

1. Purpose of the Investment Strategy

The Investment Strategy provides the operational framework supporting the Treasury Investment Policy. It details:

- How funds are allocated;
- Risk controls and limits;
- Liquidity management;
- Performance benchmarks;
- Reporting and review requirements.

2. Council Investment Framework

2.1 Core Investment Objectives

1. Preservation of capital;
2. Maintenance of liquidity;
3. Achievement of risk-appropriate returns.

2.2 Investment Horizon

Council funds are categorised by expected time horizon:

Surplus Fund Category	Primary Purpose	Typical Time Horizon	Liquidity Requirement	Capital Risk Tolerance	Suitable Investment Types	Portfolio Guidance
Operating Liquidity Funds	Day-to-day operating expenses and short-term obligations	At call to 90 days	Very high	Very low	At-call deposits; term deposits up to 3 months; TCorp Cash Facility	Maintain sufficient balance to meet forecast cash needs plus a contingency buffer
Short to Medium-Term Restricted Funds	Grants and committed capital projects	Up to 2 years	High	Low	Term deposits up to 24 months; bank bills (within limits); short-duration pooled funds	Match maturities to forecast expenditure profiles where practicable



Surplus Fund Category	Primary Purpose	Typical Time Horizon	Liquidity Requirement	Capital Risk Tolerance	Suitable Investment Types	Portfolio Guidance
Long-Term Strategic and Reserve Funds	Infrastructure reserves, asset renewal and long-term provisions	2 to 7 years (subject to certainty)	Moderate	Low to moderate	Staggered term deposits; authorised bonds; longer-duration pooled funds	Use diversification and maturity laddering to enhance yield while preserving capital

Long-term investments will only be used where Council has a high level of certainty that funds will not be required for operational or capital purposes within the investment term.

3. Authorised Investments

Investments are restricted to those permitted by the Ministerial Order, including:

- Commonwealth, State or Local Government securities;
- ADI deposits and bonds (excluding subordinated debt);
- Bank bills (≤ 200 days);
- NSW Treasury Corporation / TCorp Investment Management funds.

All investments must be denominated in AUD.

3.1 Assessment and Selection of Investments

All investment decisions must be supported by a documented assessment demonstrating that the investment is **suitable for the category of surplus funds being invested**.

At a minimum, the assessment will consider:

a. Legislative and Policy Compliance

- Eligibility under the Ministerial Investment Order;
- Consistency with this Strategy and approved limits.

b. Credit and Counterparty Risk

- Credit rating of the issuer or guarantor;
- Exposure to the issuer relative to diversification limits;
- Any recent or anticipated credit rating changes.

c. Liquidity and Term Alignment

- Ability to access funds when required;
- Alignment between investment maturity and forecast cash needs for the relevant surplus fund category.



d. Risk-Adjusted Return

- Expected return relative to benchmark;
- Assessment of whether additional return appropriately compensates for additional risk.

e. Portfolio Impact

- Effect on overall portfolio diversification, maturity profile and liquidity;
- Consistency with Council's risk appetite under RM-GU-301.

3.2 Decision and Documentation Requirements

- All investments must be approved by an authorised delegate under Council's delegations.
- A record of investment assessments will be retained, including confirmation of:
 - surplus fund category;
 - compliance with limits;
 - rationale for selection.
- Where external advice is obtained, Council retains full decision-making responsibility.

4. Risk Management and Limits

4.1 Credit Risk

- Minimum credit ratings apply by issuer type;
- Any downgrade below minimum thresholds triggers review and potential divestment.

4.2 Diversification Limits

Limits are established for:

- Maximum exposure per issuer;
- Maximum exposure by credit rating;
- Maximum exposure by investment type.

4.3 Liquidity Management

- Sufficient funds must be maintained at call or maturing within 90 days to meet forecast cash requirements.
- Liquidity requirements are reviewed as part of cash-flow forecasting and LTFFP updates.

5. Performance Measurement



5.1 Benchmarks

Performance benchmarks are set by asset class, including:

- **At-Call Cash and Operating Liquidity Funds** – RBA Cash rate
- Term Deposits – 90-day BBSW;
- Bank bills – 90-day BBSW + margin;
- Bonds / TCorp funds – 90-day BBSW + higher margin.

5.2 Evaluation

- Performance is assessed net of fees;
- Underperformance is investigated within a risk-adjusted context.

6. Use of Investment Advisors

- Council may appoint licensed investment advisors.
- Advisors operate in an advisory capacity only.
- Performance and value are reviewed at least biennially.

7. Reporting

7.1 Internal Reporting

Monthly reports to Council will include:

- Investment balances and maturity profile;
- Compliance with limits;
- Performance versus benchmark;
- Investment income versus budget.

7.2 External Reporting

Investment information will be disclosed through:

- Annual Financial Statements;
- Other statutory reporting requirements.

8. Review and Amendment

- The Investment Strategy will be reviewed **annually** as part of the LTFP and Operational Plan process.
- Changes to limits or benchmarks require endorsement through Council's financial planning framework.



Appendix B – Investment Benchmarks and Limits

1. Purpose

This Schedule establishes **performance benchmarks and investment limits** to guide the implementation of Council's Treasury Investment Strategy. It supports the primary investment objectives of:

1. security of capital;
2. liquidity; and
3. risk-appropriate return.

2. Performance Benchmarks

Performance benchmarks are applied by **investment category**, rather than as a single portfolio benchmark, to reflect differing risk and liquidity characteristics.

2.1 Cash and At-Call Investments

Typical use: Operating liquidity

Benchmark:

- Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) Official Cash Rate

Performance objective:

To maintain capital stability and immediate liquidity while achieving returns consistent with cash market conditions.

2.2 Term Deposits – up to 12 Months

Typical use: Short-term restricted funds

Benchmark:

- 90-day Bank Bill Swap Rate (BBSW)

Performance objective:

To achieve returns at or above short-term money market rates without compromising liquidity or capital preservation.

2.3 Term Deposits – 12 to 24 Months

Typical use: Medium-term restricted funds

Benchmark:

- 180-day BBSW

**Performance objective:**

To earn modestly enhanced returns reflecting extended investment duration, while remaining consistent with Council's low risk appetite.

2.4 TCorp Investment Facilities (Cash / Enhanced Cash / Income)

Typical use: Liquidity management and diversification

Benchmark:

- 90-day BBSW (net of fees)

Performance objective:

To outperform standard cash investments over a market cycle while maintaining appropriate liquidity and credit quality.

2.5 Fixed Interest Government or Semi-Government Securities (if utilised)

Typical use: Long-term reserves

Benchmark:

- 90-day BBSW + margin, commensurate with duration and risk

Performance objective:

To enhance yield relative to cash while preserving capital and maintaining high credit quality.

3. Diversification Limits**3.1 Limits by Investment Type**

Investment Type	Current Position	Proposed Limit
At-call cash & deposits	Moderate	≤ 30%
Term deposits (total)	High	≤ 75%
TCorp pooled facilities (aggregate)	Moderate-high	≤ 45%
Fixed interest securities	Nil / minimal	≤ 20%

3.2 Limits by Counterparty

Counterparty	Maximum Exposure
Any single ADI (A-rating or higher)	≤ 30% of total portfolio
Any single ADI (below A but permitted)	≤ 10%
NSW Treasury Corporation (aggregate)	≤ 60%
Commonwealth or NSW Government	≤ 100%



4. Credit Rating Limits

Council will only invest with counterparties that meet minimum credit rating requirements at the time of investment.

4.1 Minimum Credit Ratings

Investment Type	Minimum Rating*
At-call accounts and term deposits	A- / A3
Bank bills, negotiable instruments	A- / A3
Fixed interest securities	AA- / Aa3
Pooled funds	Fund-level mandate with high investment-grade ratings

* Ratings from Standard & Poor's or Moody's (or equivalent).

4.2 Portfolio Exposure by Credit Rating

Credit Rating	Maximum Exposure
AAA / AA	No limit (within issuer and type limits)
A	≤ 65% of portfolio
Below A	Nil, unless expressly permitted by Council resolution

4.3 Downgrade Management

- Any investment downgraded below the minimum threshold must be reviewed immediately.
- Council is not required to divest immediately where doing so would crystallise a loss, but remediation actions must be documented and reported to Council.

5. Maturity Limits

Term to Maturity	Maximum Exposure
Greater than 24 months	≤ 25%
Greater than 36 months	≤ 10%
Greater than 60 months	Only with explicit Council approval

6. Compliance and Review

- Compliance with this Schedule will be reported **monthly to Council**.
- Benchmarks and limits will be reviewed annually as part of the Investment Strategy review or Long-Term Financial Plan update.
- Any variation requires approval in accordance with Council delegations.



7. Relationship to Policy

This Schedule forms part of the Treasury Investment Strategy and must be read in conjunction with:

- the Treasury Policy for Investments;
- Council's Risk Management Framework (RM-GU-301); and
- the Ministerial Investment Order under section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993*

DRAFT



Investment of Surplus Funds FS-CP-303 (PUBLIC POLICY)

1 Policy History

Revision No.	Council Meeting Date	Minute No.	Adoption Date
1	01/12/1998	1094	01/12/1998
2	03/10/2000	P36	03/10/2000
3	11/06/2002	315	11/06/2002
4	14/01/2003	25	14/01/2003
5	24/01/2006	26	24/01/2006
6	24/02/2009	0057	24/02/2009
7	11/05/2010	0142	11/05/2010
8	27/01/2015	15/005	27/01/2015
9	13/02/2018	18/046	16/03/2018
10	14/06/2022	22/151	15/07/2022
11	13/06/2023	23/148	14/07/2023
12	Reviewed Audit Risk Improvement Committee – no change	N/A	20/08/2025

2 Policy Objective

- To provide a framework for investment of Council's funds with a view to minimising the risk of loss of capital or interest and to ensure that Council's liquidity requirements today and going forward are satisfied. Having regard to these prime objectives, Council will seek to achieve the best rates of return available.
- To undertake investment of available funds in accordance with the latest Ministerial Order and Council's adopted Investment Strategy.

3 Policy Statement

3.1 Background

Cash revenues generated from investments can represent a significant contribution to the total annual income of Council and it is important that Council has clear policy guidelines on how and where funds can be invested as well as the optimum time frames over which to invest funds. The current Local Government Act 1993 – Investments Order (relating to investments by Council's) is quite explicit as to the types of institutions and investments with which Council can invest, there are nevertheless significant variations in the financial credit ratings, size and performance of these institutions, which allows Council considerable discretion on where it can invest its available funds.

This policy aims to:

- a) state the types of institutions with which Council can invest



- b) identify appropriate time frames for invested funds, and
- c) nominate the types of investments entered into.

3.2 Policy Guidelines

3.2.1 Funds for Investment

Council funds identified as being available for investment, are to be invested in accordance with the authorised investments as detailed in point 3.2.4.

3.2.2 Authority for Investment

Investment of Council funds is to be in accordance with:-

- Local Government Act 1993 – Section 625;
- Local Government Act 1993 – Investment Order (of the Minister) dated 12 January 2011;
- The Trustee Amendment (Discretionary Investments) Act 1997 – Sections 14A(2), 14C(1) & (2); and
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – Clause 212

3.2.3 Delegation of Authority

The General Manager and Director - Business, Cultural & Financial Services have delegated authority to invest available funds on behalf of the Council.

3.2.4 Authorised Investments (as per the Local Government Act 1993 – Investment Order dated 12 January 2011)

Council may only invest money (on the basis that all investments must be denominated in Australian Dollars), in the following forms of investments:

- a) Any public funds or securities issued by or guaranteed by, the Commonwealth, any State of the Commonwealth or a Territory;
- b) Any debentures or securities issued by a council (within the meaning of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW));
- c) Interest bearing deposits with, or any debentures or bonds issued by, an authorised deposit-taking institution (as defined in the *Banking Act 1959* (Cwth)), but excluding subordinated debt obligations;
- d) Any bill of exchange which has a maturity date of not more than 200 days; and if purchased for value confers on the holder in due course a right of



recourse against a bank which has been designated as an authorised deposit-taking institution by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority;

- e) A deposit with the New South Wales Treasury Corporation or investments in a TCorp Investment Management (TCorIM) Funds.

All investment instruments (excluding short term discount instruments) referred to above include both principal and investment income.

Transitional Arrangements

- (i) Subject to paragraph (ii) nothing in this Order affects any investment made before the date of this Order which was made in compliance with the previous Ministerial Order and such investments are taken to be in compliance with this Order.
- (ii) Paragraph (i) only applies to those investments made before the date of this Order and does not apply to any restructuring or switching of investments or any re-investment of proceeds received on disposal or maturity of such investments, which for the avoidance of doubt must comply with this Order.

3.2.5 Approved Investment time frames include:

Fund Type	Minimum Investment Time Horizon	Maximum Exposure as % of Total Investment Portfolio
Cash Funds (at call)	0 – 180 days	0% – 100%
Interest bearing deposits, debentures or bonds	0 – 2 years	0% – 100%
Interest bearing deposits, debentures, securities, managed funds	0 – 5 years	0% - 50%

The asset structure features of the fund are to be consistent with the time horizon, risk parameters, and liquidity requirements of Council as set out in its Investment Strategy and accompanying attachments.

3.2.6 Council's Investments

Term to Maturity

Subject to the portfolio restrictions imposed under point 3.2.5 above, the term to maturity of any of Council's investments may range from "At Call" to 5-7 years, unless specifically approved by Council.



3.3 General Policy Guidelines

3.3.1 Diversification/Credit Risk

(i.) Investments

The portfolio holdings must meet the maximum percentage allocation and issuer credit rating requirements set out in the Table below:

Standard & Poors Rating		Individual issuer up to	Portfolio limit up to
Long Term	Short Term		
AAA	A-1+	100%	100%
Major Banks			
AA-	A-1+	40%	50%
A+ to A-	A-1/A-2	20%	40%
BBB+	A-2	5%	10%
BBB to BBB-	A-3	\$250,000	5%
TCorpIM	Funds	-	100%

All securities must have an active secondary market.

(ii.) Credit Ratings

If any of Council's investments are downgraded such that they no longer fall within Council's investments policy guidelines, any security or fund concerned will be divested as soon as is practicable.

3.3.2 Performance Benchmarks

The performance of the funds under investment aim to meet or exceed the following performance benchmarks overall;

Investment	Performance Benchmark
Cash & Term Deposits	90 Day Bank Bill Swap Rate
Bank Bills	90 Day Bank Bill Swap Rate + 0.25% net of fees
Debentures, Bonds, TCorp Funds	90 Day Bank Bill Swap Rate + 0.50% net of fees

3.3.3 Reporting

A monthly report shall be provided to Council, detailing the investment portfolio in terms of performance and allocation in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.



The report will also detail investment income earned versus budget year to date.

For audit purposes, certificates must be obtained from the banks/fund managers confirming the amounts of investment held on Council's behalf at 30th June each year.

3.3.4 Variations to Policy

The General Manager, or in his absence, the Director - Business, Cultural & Financial Services be delegated authority, under the Local Government Act to approve variations to this policy if the investment is to Council's advantage and/or due to revised legislation without diminishing the Council's security.

All changes to this policy are to be reported to Council at the next scheduled meeting following the change to the policy.

3.4 Review of Investment Policy and Strategy

Council's optimum asset allocation of funds will be reviewed annually and form an integral part of the overall investment strategy for the forthcoming year.

3.5 Investment Advisors

Council may appoint an Investment Advisor(s) to provide management services as well as written and oral advice in relation to the performance and allocation of its Investment portfolio, provided such services are provided at negotiated costs, no higher than those generally available in the industry.

A bi-annual review of the performance of the investment portfolio as well as the investment advisor(s) is to be conducted by the Director - Business, Cultural & Financial Services as part of the control measures outlined in the investment strategy, such strategy complying with Council's investment policy.

4 Definitions

Terms and definitions identified below are specific to this policy and are critical to the effectiveness of it.

- **Authorised Deposit-taking Institutions (ADI's)** - are corporations authorised under the Bank Act 1959 (Cwth) to take deposits from customers. ADI's include banks, building societies and credit unions all of which are regulated by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority.
- **Bloomberg Ausbond Bank Bill Index** - is an index comprised of 13 synthetic instruments defined by rates interpolated from the RBA 24-hour cash rate and the one and three month Bank Bill Swap Rates.



- **Bank Bill Swap Rate** - is the compilation and average rate of market rates supplied by domestic banks relating to multiple maturities of bank bills.
- **Bill of Exchange** - is an unconditional order in writing, addressed by one person to another, signed by the person giving it, requiring the person to whom it is addressed to pay on demand, or at a fixed or determinable future time, a sum certain in money to or to the order of a specified person, or to bearer.
- **Debenture** - is a debt security usually secured by a fixed or floating charge over an underlying asset or pool of assets. Debentures are normally issued by companies in return for medium and long term investment funds.
- **Floating Rate Notes** - are securities that (in Australia) pay a coupon normally priced at a fixed margin above the Bank Bill Swap Rate
- **TCorp** - means NSW Treasury Corporation
- **Term Deposits** - are non-tradeable investments offered by ADIs with varying maturity dates (normally from one month to 60 months) and a rate set at the outset. Interest is normally payable upon maturity or if the term is longer than 12 months, annually from the investment date. Penalties apply if the funds are withdrawn before maturity and a notice period of 31 days is usually required.

5 Exceptions

None

6 Legislation

None

7 Related Documents

Revised NSW Ministerial Investment Order

8 Directorate

Business Cultural and Financial Services



Annexure A

1. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Council has from time to time, varying amounts of funds available for investment purposes. This investment strategy aims to provide a clear and coherent statement on how and where these funds are to be invested to assist in meeting Council's corporate objective in relation to financial management which is *"to employ sound financial and other management practices so as to optimise use of Council's resources and ensure that the recipients of Council's services receive value and contribute on an equitable basis"*.

A key outcome of implementing this strategy is to achieve "best practice" in our investment activities.

1.1 Investment Strategy Objectives

- a) Achieve earnings in excess of the chosen benchmark.
- b) Preservation of Capital ie Maintain security of council's funds.
- c) Maximise the amount and time under investment for available funds.
- d) Maintain adequate liquidity levels, sufficient to cover any unexpected events

1.2 Strategies

Council will achieve its objectives by;

- a) Having in place policies and procedures to measure and review investment and fund manager performance on a regular basis as follows;
 - Review investment performance on a monthly basis through the preparation of a report to Council on fund performance as required by Clause 16 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulation 1999
 - Review Fund Manager performance on a bi-annual basis
 - Review Investment Policy and Strategy annually
- b) Ensuring that any investment advisors or dealers acting for or on behalf of Council are licensed by the Australian Securities and Investment Commission.



- c) Maintain an agreed level of immediately accessible funds.
- d) Managing the risk profile of the portfolio by allocating portfolio and counterparty limits by rating, diversifying investment types and separating investment maturities.
- e) Select and manage investments that satisfy Council's investment objectives including setting investment return benchmarks that reflect the type of investments held.
- f) Adhering to the Ministerial Orders and guidelines on the authorised investments Council is allowed to invest in.
- g) Reviewing the Cash at Bank account on a regular basis with a view to transferring any available funds to invested funds to maximise returns.
- h) Establishing an open and professional working relationship with the nominated fund manager(s) that communicates the nature and risks associated with each investment.

1.3 Diversification/Credit Risk

Investments

The portfolio holdings must meet the maximum percentage allocation and issuer credit rating requirements set out in the Table below

All securities must have an active secondary market.

Standard & Poors Rating		Individual issuer up to	Portfolio limit up to
Long Term	Short Term		
AAA	A-1+	100%	100%
Major Banks AA-	A-1+	40%	50%
A+ to A-	A-1/A-2	20%	40%
BBB+	A-2	5%	10%
BBB to BBB-	A-3	\$250,000	5%
TCorpIM	Funds	-	100%



1.4 Authorised Investments (as per the Local Government Act 1993 – Investment Order dated 12 January 2011):

Council may only invest money (on the basis that all investments must be denominated in Australian Dollars), in the following forms of investments:

- a) Any public funds or securities issued by or guaranteed by, the Commonwealth, any State of the Commonwealth or a Territory;
 - b) Any debentures or securities issued by a council (within the meaning of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW));
 - c) Interest bearing deposits with, or any debentures or bonds issued by, an authorised deposit-taking institution (as defined in the *Banking Act 1959* (Cwth)), but excluding subordinated debt obligations;
 - d) Any bill of exchange which has a maturity date of not more than 200 days; and if purchased for value confers on the holder in due course a right of recourse against a bank which has been designated as an authorised deposit-taking institution by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority;
 - e) A deposit with the New South Wales Treasury Corporation or investments in a TCorp Investment Management (TCorpIM) Funds.
-



VISION

A social and cultural environment that is welcoming to both locals and visitors. A place that reflects our community's identity through built heritage, objects and experiences.

MISSION

A welcoming and accessible environment to share the stories of Griffith's region and its people's resilience, culture and diversity.

Key Objectives

- Sustainable management of collection and increased interpretation (Measurement: Development of and adherence to Collections Policy)
- Significant increase in engaging locals on a regular basis, rather than once or twice a year. (Measurement: visitor figures)
- Premier tourism product for the region. (Measurement: visitor figures)
- A Museum that reflects the Griffith community and residents are proud of. (Measurement: return visitation)

Strategic Direction

The Strategic Master Plan repositions Griffith Pioneer Park Museum from:

- a traditional static pioneer museum
- to a dynamic regional cultural destination representing:
 - First Nations histories,
 - Pioneering histories,
 - Multicultural Griffith,
 - Irrigation, agricultural and industry heritage,
 - Community identity,
 - and contemporary regional stories.

NB: The Strategic Master Plan is intended as a long-term roadmap, and not all actions are expected to be completed within the initial implementation period.

Core business functions & activities

Core Activity	Secondary Activity	Tertiary Activity	Quaternary Activity
Museum	Education & Learning	Community & Creative Engagement	Events & Venue Hire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heritage buildings, displays and collections • History tours (monthly & by appointment) • Train rides • Tourist destination • Retail Operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excursions • Group visits • Training room • School holiday programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Group • Playgroup • Church groups • Musical & theatre performances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue hire • Action Day • Festivals • Wedding photography

Target Audiences

Audience 1	Regional Tourists: Couples 40–70, grey nomads, cultural travellers.
Audience 2	Schools & Educators: Teachers; students aged 5–18; mixed cultural backgrounds.
Audience 3	Community Groups & Cultural Organisations: Retirees, hobby groups, multicultural associations (especially Italian heritage).
Audience 4	Local Families : Parents 25–45, children 0–12; multicultural; budget-conscious.
Audience 5	Event Seekers & Experience-Driven Visitors : Young adults, families, hobbyists, festivalgoers; diverse backgrounds.

MASTER PLAN PHASING

Entry Gateway

- New soft and hard scaping which celebrates the site being on Wiradjuri Country
- Acknowledgement signage
- Provide an information centre that informs visitors of the scope and narrative of the Museum. Start with a version in the Bynya Homestead entrance but plan for it as a prominent aspect of the new entry building.

Front entry/Bynya Homestead and Nurses Quarters

- Develop Schematic Plans for a new entry and multipurpose space, Café and offices.
- Bynya Homestead is currently the best facility to inform visitors of the facets of the Museum and interpretive displays and a theaterette to enhance the visitor experience should be considered.
- The current administration building/Nurses Quarters be assessed for suitability for housing future permanent exhibitions or collections.

Collection Management Store

- After full survey of collection is completed and de-accession program commenced, develop detailed design for climate controlled collection management store for appropriate storage and conservation of the museum's collection.
- Include pen storage (roof only) for large machinery, climate control indoor storage with pallet racking and room for small forklift.
- Specify environmental conditions required including relative humidity, temperature, lighting levels.
- Consideration to be given to integrated pest management requirements including quarantine areas

Move Identified Buildings

- Relocate Okay Fruit & Veg store (Blg 17) to a better position to open up Volunteer Garden, possibly other side of St James
- Church
- Relocate the Griffin Sisters Building (Blg 37) next to Soldier's Settlers Hut (Blg 22) to match with timber streetscape

Toilet Block/s

- Procure designs for an additional amenities block to meet increased event capacity. The museum should aspire to a more contemporary design which diversifies from the 'pioneer' aesthetic of the park setting a new expectation for diverse architectural experiences.
- The new amenities block should be located close to event space
- Update and refurbish existing toilet blocks (Myall Park hall and Behind Fairview Cottage)
- Undertake landscape improvements for accessibility

Gathering Space and Observation deck

- Existing structure to be designed for open space gathering
- Facing North-East the space will capture views of the bush and current event grassed area
- Facing South-West will give views to the Wiradjuri Cultural Area
- Engage asbestos removalist to confiscate asbestos and replace with suitable materials

Accessibility Review

- Undertake accessibility review of all current and proposed exhibition buildings.
- Determine staging plan to work through landscape/ramp upgrades to buildings

Landscape Masterplan

- Engage a Landscape Architecture Studio to develop site specific landscape e.g. the proposed 'Griffin Garden' being circular garden that incorporates the Griffin's design ideas. Pathways will provide access and create sight lines to the other Museum areas.
- Future designs should include a set kits of parts for the park with regards to bins, paving materials, planting species etc
- More detailed site survey required including vegetation, paths, buildings (heights, features etc).

Why This Phase Plan Matters

- **Drives visitation and tourism growth**

Strengthens the Museum as a premier regional attraction *(p. 16)*

- **Increases revenue and financial sustainability**

More visitors, events and hire opportunities *(p. 16)*

- **Improves accessibility and inclusion**

Safer, easier access for elderly, families and people with disability *(p. 8, 14)*

- **Better reflects our community**

Expands storytelling to include First Nations and diverse cultures *(p. 11, 13)*

- **Protects and preserves the collection**

Proper storage and conservation of significant assets *(p. 14, 23)*

- **Supports events, education and community use**

Enables festivals, school programs and local engagement *(p. 10, 16)*

Progress on Strategic Aims

Overall Status

- **Future Actions / Long-Term Actions: 20 actions ~29%**
- **In Progress: 34 actions ~49%**
- **Achieved: 15 actions ~22%**

Over **70%** of actions are either completed or actively underway, demonstrating strong progress across the plan. Some actions are long-term aspirations, some are dependent on external funding, some require major capital investment, and some are intentionally staged.

* Last updated 16 March 2026



1. Engage with & Include Aboriginal & Torres Strait Island Peoples in all that we do

Achieved:



1.1.1 Establish an Aboriginal Advisory Consultative Group to inform curatorial and programming decisions.

In Progress:



1.1.2 Build on existing and broker new relationships with local Aboriginal communities.

1.2.1 Establish a permanent exhibition/interpretation at the Museum entrance to inform visitors of the region's first residents and their interaction and connection with the land.

1.2.3. Develop a dedicated First Nations Experience as detailed in Master Plan.

Future Actions/Long Term Actions:



1.1.3 Establish trainee Aboriginal Curator position.

1.1.4 Establish Aboriginal outdoor interpretation and maintenance position

1.1.5 Implement relevant actions in Council's Reconciliation Action Plan.



2. Manage the Collection Sustainably

Achieved:



- 2.1.2 Develop a Collections Policy
- 2.2.2 Identify future collection storage requirements
- 2.3.5 Review items on display to ensure preservation and conservation best practice is followed

In Progress:



- 2.1.1 Undertake a significance assessment on moved buildings.
- 2.1.3 Undertake a preservation needs assessment & set out a 5-year plan for conservation on a collection & display priority basis.
- 2.1.4 Deaccession items of low significance and items that have no connection with the history or stories of the Griffith region.
- 2.2.1 Prioritise collecting & interpreting stories of individuals & communities in Griffith not currently represented in the collection.
- 2.3.1 Develop climate control facilities for exhibition and collection storage space
- 2.3.3 Continue to catalogue and digitise the collection.
- 2.3.4 Develop a Buildings Conservation Management Plan to program for maintaining and preserving moved buildings of significance.

Future and/or Long-Term Actions:



- 2.2.3 Develop Statements of Significance for the Museum's 20 most significant objects.
- 2.2.4 Progressively digitise objects for website publication starting with identified significant objects
- 2.3.2 Undertake a Preservation Needs Assessment



Achieved:



- 3.1.5 Undertake annual surveys to benchmark visitor experiences and continue to understand and respond to market trends.
- 3.2.3 Develop an annual exhibition program that sees a new temporary exhibition presented each year.
- 3.3.1 Undertake a Signage Review and Way finding Strategy.

In Progress:



- 3.1.1 Develop dynamic exhibitions that resonate with locals and ensures there is always something new to see or do.
- 3.1.4 Provide opportunities for visitors to tell and share their own stories in our projects, including oral histories.
- 3.1.6 Develop experiences or activities that respond to youth audiences
- 3.2.1 Invite participation, co-creation and exchanges of ideas with and for our audiences, including focus groups, consultation and user testing with communities
- 3.2.2 Build connections with key audiences such as teachers and children, and new audiences such as migrants and youth through advisory and reference panels.
- 3.2.4 Create digital content for online access.

Future Actions/Long Term Actions:



- 3.1.2 Develop public programs that respond to community
- 3.1.3 Reduce general entry fees for residents of Griffith Local Government Area.
- 3.2.5 Work with local artists to interpret the collection and highlight artisan and creative practices.
- 3.3.2 Prioritise disability access in building improvements and budgets in line with Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan



Achieved:



- 4.1.2 Develop a program of events and activities in the Italian Precinct.
- 4.1.4 Changing exhibition program alongside the permanent display.
- 4.2.2 Support the presentation and hosting of events and programs for identified communities at the Museum.
- 4.2.3 Collect stories and objects that are significant to the migration and settlement of identified communities in Griffith

In Progress:



- 4.1.1 Establish a new MOU with the Italian Museum Committee
- 4.1.3 Implement the Italian History Experiences identified in the Master Plan.

Future Actions/Long Term Actions:



- 4.2.1 Undertake regular engagement with key multicultural communities

5. Corporate Governance



Achieved:



5.1.1 Diversify and increase revenue from retail, programs, workshops, commercial hires and tourist admission fees.

In Progress:



5.1.2 Undertake a policy review to identify gaps and needed updates

Future Actions/Long Term Actions:



5.1.3 Establish unrestricted reserves for Museum capital works and Museum acquisitions, and object/building conservation works (repository for donations)

5.1.4 Complete Standards Review Program and implement recommendations



Achieved:



- 6.1.1 Expand the Curator position to a full-time role.
- 6.2.2 Collaborate with other Council sections to create programs and host events that engage visitors, meets mutual objectives and shares Council resources.
- 6.3.3 Develop a brand identity for the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum.

In Progress:



- 6.1.3 Procure appropriate assets or equipment required for continued maintenance operations of the Museum.
- 6.1.4 Develop strategies to recruit & keep volunteers, including meeting new residents, regular social activities, & dedicated positions to support volunteers.
- 6.1.5 Develop a training plan for staff and volunteers.
- 6.1.6 Develop work plans for volunteers to undertake specific projects i.e. digitising, research, conservation.
- 6.2.1 Employ a part time Education & Public Programs Officer
- 6.3.2 Establish relationship with Destination Riverina Murray to continue to develop the Museum as the City's number 1 tourist destination
- 6.3.5 Develop a digital marketing strategy that includes social media, digital advertising and website.
- 6.3.6 Develop a Retail Strategy that includes a review of products for sale & identifies opportunities to commission products made by local artisans & artists
- 6.4.1 Investigate and identify appropriate operating model for café/catering services and develop a business case. (council run/social enterprise/leased)
- 6.4.2 Expand events and functions capacity as identified in Master Plan.
- 6.5 (.1, .2, .3, .4, & .6) Supporting infrastructure

Future / Long term Actions:



- 6.1.2 Increase maintenance team, recognising the requirements for both buildings and grounds.
- 6.2.3 Establish partnerships with business associations such as Riverina Winemakers Association, Murrumbidgee Irrigation & Griffith Business Chamber to host events & raise the profile of the Museum's stories & collections.
- 6.3.1 Develop marketing collateral in other languages such as Hindi to assist International visitors.
- 6.3.4 Invest in quality print collateral.
- 6.5.5 Water collection & on site recycling



Conclusion

The Strategic Master Plan provides a long-term framework to guide Griffith Pioneer Park Museum's transition from a traditional static museum to a dynamic regional cultural destination.

Significant progress has been achieved across:

- community engagement,
- collections management,
- public programming,
- partnerships,
- accessibility,
- and strategic planning initiatives.

Many remaining actions involve:

- major capital investment,
- long-term infrastructure planning,
- additional staffing resources,
- and external funding opportunities.

Implementation will continue to occur progressively through:

- staged delivery,
- operational planning,
- grant funding opportunities,
- partnerships,
- and future Council prioritisation.

“Acknowledging yesterday to connect today and grow tomorrow.”