

# LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL

## 2012-2013 ANNUAL REPORT



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## **MAYOR'S FOREWORD**

### **Councillor Ian Lobsey OAM**

I am very pleased to present the 2012/13 Annual Report for Liverpool Plains Shire Council which has been prepared under the new Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements.

Council had an extremely challenging but successful year making significant progress across all functional areas. Challenges faced included extensive flood repairs following three separate flood events in 2011 and 2012, strong local opposition to coal seam gas exploration, General Practitioner shortages, four out of seven first time councillors being elected, two planning proposals to amend the 2011 LEP were gazetted, submissions were made on the proposed new Planning and Local Government Acts and the Independent Local Government Review Panel Papers as well as completion within budget of the Quipolly Dam Upgrade – the largest capital project ever undertaken by Council.



Council, with its relatively small rating base, has limited funds available for discretionary capital funding and therefore works hard on obtaining grant and private sector funding to provide new infrastructure sought by our residents. Council and the community had great success in obtaining funding for a new multi station playground area which has proven extremely popular with children, the Quipolly Dam safety and capacity upgrade, extended shared bicycle paths, the new recreation area at Quipolly Dam, Werris Creek skate park, touch screen display and lift for the Australian Railway Museum expansion, lift for the Quirindi Showground upstairs dining room, the removal of hazardous material at the Railway Museum, a new car park area for Quirindi HACC, the upgrade of the Administration Centre, path paving to the new Werris Creek Multi Purpose Health Centre, a boat ramp and disabled access paths at Quipolly Dam and numerous road construction grants.

Council has continued its aim of working towards best practice in the delivery of services and gauges its success by benchmarking itself against other councils through independent community surveys and by entering into various awards. This year has seen another successful year with Council taking out a number of National and State Awards with the Local Government National Award for Infrastructure and Financial Management being the most prestigious.

Please take the time to read this document and provide Councillors with feedback to assist us to continue to provide cost effective services and infrastructure that strive to meet the needs of the community.

Ian Lobsey OAM  
Mayor

## YOUR COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES



Cr Ken Cudmore



Cr Ian Lobsey OAM  
**Mayor**



Cr Andrew Hope



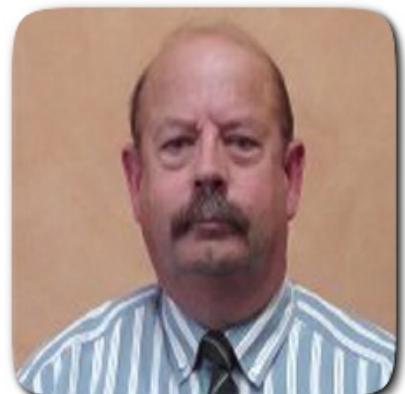
Cr Andrew Laurie



Cr Mary Roberts



Cr Col Stewart  
**Deputy Mayor**



Cr Robert Webster

## SECTION 1 GENERAL REPORTING

### ENGINEERING WORKS AND SERVICES

A significant program of work was undertaken by Council on roads, drainage and shared pathway projects during the year at a combined cost of over \$2.035m. The following projects were completed on regional roads during the year and are listed with their approximate costs:

- MR 130 Werris Creek Road 20.2 – 20.45 North of Quirindi, Reconstruction \$230,796;
- MR 130 Werris Creek Road 17.9 -18.9 North of Quirindi, Reconstruction \$472,752;
- MR 130 Werris Creek Road 19.3 – 19.8 North of Quirindi, Reconstruction \$307,156;

Other road projects undertaken included:

- SR1 Bundella Road reconstruction, \$444,125
- SR 28 Harrisons Plains Road reconstruction \$212,680

The following projects were not included in Council's original budget however they were completed during the year with funding from successful grant applications:

- Quirindi footpath, Bell Park to Waterford Street \$52,000;
- Quirindi Footpath, Jacob & Joseph Creek bridge Henry Street to Russell St via Longfield Park, Swinging Bridge and Kennedy Lane \$248,000;
- Quipolly Dam Recreation Area boat ramp \$32,000

Council undertook a \$492,640 gravel road re-sheeting program which included \$137,640 allocated from the "Special Rate Variation", \$325,000 from the Roads to Recovery Program and \$30,000 from the Block Grant. The roads treated included:

- SR34 Press's Rd,
- SR32 Swinging Ridges Rd,
- SR83 Wilmotts Rd,
- SR112 Greys Rd,
- MR358 Merriwa Rd
- SR73 Wandobah Rd

Urban Resheeting

- Deaks Road
- Bent Street
- Gurton Street
- Echo Hills Road



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## **ENGINEERING WORKS AND SERVICES (Continued)**

The culvert and causeway construction and repair program continued with \$210,000 allocated towards the cost of upgrading or constructing culverts and causeways. Major projects funded under this budget included:

- SR28 Harris Plains Rd
- SR73 Wandobah Rd
- SR 26 Big Jacks Creek Rd
- SR 75 Slacksmiths Ln
- MR129 Coonabarabran Rd (x2)

Flood Damage restoration work involving gravel re-sheeting and drainage infrastructure repairs continued with the expenditure of \$1,472,285 of Natural Disaster funding over a broad area of the Shire on roads including Clowes Rd, Warrah Ridge Rd, Bundella Rd, Brunskills Rd, Wandobah Rd, Howes Hill Rd, Stangers Rd, Currabubula Stock Route Rd, Mt Cobia Rd, Pandora Pass Rd, Telargra Rd Rockgedgiel Rd,

Work was completed on the theoretical assessment of the Quirindi storm water drainage system to identify existing and future drainage issues and assist with forward work planning. Previously similar studies have been completed for Werris Creek and Willow Tree. The data produced will be collated into a forward work strategy during the 2013/14 financial year.

A significant bitumen resealing program was completed on the sealed regional and local road networks with a total of \$730,000 allocated in Council's budget to this imperative maintenance treatment. This allocation included \$161,900 from the Special Rate Variation approved 4 years ago for road maintenance.

Overall Council's road assets are being consumed due to the funding gap between required and annual maintenance. Council has continued to make representations to the other tiers of government for increased road maintenance funding through membership of the Australian Local Government Association and the Australian Rural Roads Group. These bodies are lobbying for an increase in State and Federal government funding for road maintenance to get road infrastructure to a satisfactory standard. Funding for the maintenance and replacement of other assets is also difficult with a future reduction in service levels or an increase in revenue required if existing assets are to be retained.

Water supplies remained at good levels despite an overall decrease in rainfall from the previous 2 years. Further progress in planning and implementing drought proofing strategies for individual supplies was achieved with the completion of the Quipolly Dam safety and capacity upgrade project while several representations to State and Federal Members of Parliament were made seeking funding for other components of the Regional Water Supply Strategy.

## ENGINEERING WORKS AND SERVICES (Continued)

The safety and capacity upgrade work completed at Quipolly Dam involved raising the crest height of the wall by 3.6 metres through the construction of a concrete parapet wall, replacement of the water intake well access bridge, improvements to the intake well, demolition of the old wall access bridge and removal of the spillway concrete nib wall. Spillway training walls were constructed and precast concrete fusegates were installed onto the spillway to raise the effective height of the spillway by 2 metres while increasing the flood efficiency of the spillway through the labyrinth design of the gates. The project was completed at a cost of approximately \$6.6m, approximately \$2m less than initial estimates and almost half the cost of a traditional spillway configuration. Council received recognition for its asset and financial management of this project by winning the Small Council category at the National Local Government Awards. Council also received a Highly Commended award for innovation in water supply at the NSW Institute of Public Works Engineers Australia (IPWEA) annual Excellence Awards for the use of the innovative spillway design.



Fusegates on the spillway – Quipolly Dam Upgrade



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## **ENGINEERING WORKS AND SERVICES (Continued)**

### **Works Administration**

To meet Council's obligations under the Workplace Health and Safety Act staff continued to receive training in many key and hazardous work areas such as Confined Spaces, Traffic Control, Chainsaw Operation and Chemical Handling, First Aid, Pool Supervision and Life Saving. The Workplace Health and Safety Committee held a number of meetings and workplace inspections were undertaken at several Council worksites throughout the year.

Development of Council's Asset Management System continued with the collection of additional asset data to improve and refine the asset specific management plans. Comprehensive asset management plans have now been prepared for Water and Waste Water, Structures, Property, Roads, Drainage, Bridges, Footpaths, Airport and Plant and Fleet. A re-valuation of Council's Building assets was completed.

Extraction licensing of Warrah Ridge Quarry was completed through the Department of Primary Industries with the implementation and recording of license imposed conditions such as noise, air and water monitoring. The extraction and drainage plan for the site was also implemented with the construction of storm water diversion drains, stabilization of steep batters and changes to gravel extraction and screening procedures.

### **Works Depots and Plant Administration**

Several plant items were replaced and upgraded during the year including the replacement of a smooth drum roller, maintenance grader, medium rigid truck, tractor and slasher. A fifth grader, retained from the 2011/12 plant replacement program, for the purpose of completion flood repairs following events in 2010 and 2011 will be sold early next financial year.

Good returns were experienced on the sale of Council Plant with most items disposed of through public auction. Generally the prices achieved were as estimated and set as the auction reserve. The downturn in light vehicle prices report in last years annual report continued this financial year which forced a further review of Councils' light vehicle replacement policy. Light vehicles are now being held for approximately 5 years or 120,000km however Council's plant and fleet staff continue to monitor the situation and act to maximize returns.



## ENGINEERING WORKS AND SERVICES (Continued)

### Parks & Reserves

Parks and Reserve operations were undertaken and a high standard of presentation was achieved. Landscaping work and recreation facilities such as picnic tables, chairs and a toilet were constructed at the Quipolly Dam Recreation area. A new playground was constructed in Bell Park Quirindi at a cost of over \$210,000 with funding provided by Shenhua through the Watermark Coal project. A new skate park facility was constructed in Single Street Werris Creek at a cost of \$70,000. The facility was funded by Whitehaven Coal P/L and the prefabricated steel ramps were manufactured by Council staff in the mechanical workshop. Sun protection for children was improved at Premer with the installation of shade sails at Premer Park.



Opening of the new playground at Bell Park Quirindi

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## **ENGINEERING WORKS AND SERVICES (Continued)**

### **Public Cemeteries**

Cemetery maintenance was completed including topdressing of the lawn cemeteries and turf care. New concrete strips for memorial plaques were constructed at Quirindi and Spring Ridge Cemeteries. Council is appreciative of the volunteers who carry out maintenance on behalf of Council at several cemeteries.

### **Swimming Pools**

Minor crack repairs were again completed at the Quirindi pool together with replacement of the filtration and pump equipment. A new chlorine tank, covered spill bund and fencing was installed at Werris Creek swimming pool.

The total number of pool patrons was 8,792 at Werris Creek and 22,893 at the Quirindi Pool. The Quirindi Swimming Pool again opened to season ticket holders for early morning swim training however there was a notable reduction in the number of people participating. This service will be reviewed prior to the 2013/14 swimming season.

### **Airport**

The pilot training usage agreement with BAE Systems in Tamworth continues to be successful and allows the airport to operate at minimal expense to ratepayers. Operation and management of the airport continues to meet CASA standards and retained the status of a Registered Aerodrome during the year.

### **State Roads**

Council's Road Maintenance Council Contract (RMCC) with the Roads and Maritime Services for maintenance and project work on the Kamilaroi Highway from the New England Highway at Willow Tree to the Shire boundary with Gunnedah Shire Council continued. The work involves routine maintenance, undertaken to meet service levels specified in the contract, and ordered work which is only undertaken at RTA direction. Council met the RTA specification requirements for the contract and received an overall contract performance rating of "satisfactory" for the work.

### **Regional Roads**

A further 3 projects were completed on MR130 Werris Creek Road under the Roads and Maritime Services REPAIR Program. In total 1.95km of road was reconstructed between Gap Rd and Scotts Lane at a cost of \$1.01m. The work involved stabilization and gravel overlay of the existing pavements.

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## **ENGINEERING WORKS AND SERVICES (Continued)**

### **Shire Roads**

The annual reseal and gravel re-sheeting programs were undertaken and completed as scheduled. Routine maintenance of both bitumen and gravel roads was undertaken. Maintenance grading of the gravel road network was completed with all roads receiving their grading requirements according to Council Policy during the year.

Work continued on the reconstruction of Bundella Road between Borambil Creek Road and Slacksmiths Lane with a further 1.8 km of pavement work in two (2) sections at a cost of approximately \$444,125.

### **Urban Streets**

The following improvement project was undertaken in addition to routine urban maintenance of Council's town and village streets:

- Intersection of Sisson and Hall Sts Willow Tree – minor pavement construction and sealing \$30,000.
- Bitumen Resealing Urban Roads \$51,000

### **Special Rate Variation**

The Special Rate Variation approved for road maintenance projects totaled \$355,529 in 2012/2013. From these funds the following maintenance activities were undertaken:

Bitumen Resealing (\$134,729)

- Bundella Road

Drainage Maintenance (\$55,200)

- Yorks Road
- Pollock Lane
- Seven Creeks Road
- Whittons Road
- Gaspard Road
- Lowesoft Road
- Rowntrees Lane
- Borah Creek Road
- Lowes Creek Road
- Kingsmill Road
- Black Gully Road
- Glen Alpine Road
- Stangers Road



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## **ENGINEERING WORKS AND SERVICES (Continued)**

### **Special Rate Variation (Cont.)**

Gravel Re-sheeting (\$165,600)

- Wilmotts Road

### **Water Supplies**

Council's single largest capital works project to upgrade Quipolly Dam to new flood safety standards was completed in 2012/13. Augmentation of the storage capacity up to 8GL was also carried out during the upgrade works. Expenditure totaling \$6.6M, comprising of design, construction and purchase of the Fusegates exceeded the total budget by 1.1% due to a longer than anticipated approvals phase and several minor latent conditions found during construction.

Use of the innovative Fusegates to achieve significant cost savings in the crest wall construction design and to facilitate the extra water storage, yielded Council recognition for excellence from both the National Awards for Local Government and the Institute of Public Works Engineers Australia.

Continuation of the staged roll out of water supply telemetry occurred with huge gains in data collection being obtained from the project. Refined operation of pump equipment and water source management is now able to be undertaken with associated improvements in efficiency and control.

Construction of the control valving and associated automated control for the recently constructed eastern reservoir in Quirindi was carried out in 2012/13.

Replacement of temporary pump equipment along with switchboard control gear and associated telemetry has transformed the operation of the less than adequate Willow Tree water source. Variable speed driven pumps now allow a "soft start" of water into the reticulation lowering the initial shock of water on the reticulation pipes. Improved control of the extraction rate now allows for better matching of the water resource to extend the life of the supply during low groundwater levels.

Installation of online instrumentation to enhance water quality monitoring at the Werris Creek Water Treatment Plant was also undertaken during the period.

Mains replacement works commenced during the later portion of 2012/13, rolling into the 2013/14 program to create an improved schedule of works for this often difficult undertaking. Continuous work was set up for a crew to enable improvements in pipelaying technique to be utilized during the program. Mains were replaced in Quirindi and Werris Creek to improve fire fighting capacity and improve isolation zones for minimizing future shutdowns to a smaller number of consumers.

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## ENGINEERING WORKS AND SERVICES (Continued)

### Sewerage Systems

Online flow and quality instrumentation was installed into the Quirindi sewerage treatment plant to enhance operation of aeration, and hence effluent quality, processes at the plant. Inflow quantity measurement is also allowing better management of the split of flows distributed to the two different sides of the plant.

Replacement of pumps and switchboard at the Golland Fields (SPS8) sewer pump station occurred due to failure. The new equipment provides a standardized pump with increased reliability and flexibility into other pump stations. As part of the replacement, alterations to enable bypass pumping (with petrol pumps) were made allowing for continued operation options in the event of power failure. The switchboard upgrade carried out was made utilizing switchboards purchased from Coffs Harbour City Council which included integration of the telemetry components needed for the planned roll out of the final stage telemetry.

Purchase of a precast sewerage pump station during 2012/13 was carried out as part of Council's participation in upgrading and operating the Wallhallow water services on behalf of the NSW Government. Council is acting as contractor and project manager for the project with funds coming from the Aboriginal Water and Sewerage program.



New Werris Creek Skatepark

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

### **ADMINISTRATION**

The Environmental Services Department is responsible to Council and the community for administering a wide range of programs. Primarily the role of the department is to administer various aspects of environmental legislation and the maintenance and improvement of Council's built assets.

Departmental staff have demonstrated a commitment to their individual roles with active participation in both the departmental training plan and their workplace health and safety responsibilities.

### **LAND-USE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS**

#### **STRATEGIC**

Council's comprehensive Local Environmental Plan, known as the Liverpool Plains Local Environmental Plan 2011 (the LEP) has been in service for two years. Similarly, a modern and user-friendly Development Control Plan (DCP) supports the LEP and has been in service for a similar time frame.

The LEP is a 'living' document which will need to reflect changing community needs and expectations. Reflecting this need is a major LEP housekeeping amendment which has been finalized. LEP Amendment No. 2 was prepared by Council following gazettal of the comprehensive LEP to rectify minor anomalies and errors identified in the comprehensive LEP preparation process. The LEP amendment also facilitates the rezoning of certain lands which were deemed to have sufficient strategic planning merit to proceed. This amendment process included the preparation and exhibition of a detailed Planning Proposal which was underpinned by an extensive program of community consultation. The Liverpool Plains Local Environmental Plan (Amendment No. 2) was gazetted (formally made as law) in late 2012.

Complementary Strategic Planning achievements:

- Preparation of a growing range of Plain-English Fact Sheets in respect of a variety of common development types
- Reviewing and consolidating Council planning policy matters
- Advocacy and government liaison in respect of regional planning and policy matters
- Adoption of a Shire wide Heritage Strategy
- Progress with the Werris Creek Main Street Study
- Implementation of the findings from the Quirindi Flood Risk Management Plan.



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## **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (Continued)**

### **LAND-USE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS (Cont)**

#### **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**

Through the current system of development approvals, certification of developments and compliance inspections, all development applications have been checked so that they comply with the various applicable LEPs, DCPs, the Building Code of Australia, Planning for Bushfire Protection requirements and other related legislation.

Council has also fulfilled its other statutory obligations by issuing various certificates under the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 such as s149 (Planning Certificates) and s149 (D) (Building Certificates).

Activities for the reporting period undertaken include:

- Approval of development valued at \$5,777,231 (2012/13)
- Council issued 312 section 149 zoning certificates (2012/13)

An annual review of Council's development assessment systems has also been undertaken with the view of improving efficiencies and achieving quality-based outcomes. A range of improvements have been progressively implemented/enhanced, including:

- The continued operation of a cross-organisational Development Assessment Panel comprising internal technical experts such as Engineers, Town Planners and Building Surveyors
- Process mapping of assessment systems and implementation of associated efficiency improvements
- File archiving and planning management project
- Implementation of an automation program for planning and development-allied certificates (eplanning)
- Negotiations for the introduction of an Electronic Housing Code web based tool covering LPSC; and
- Updating of standard development conditions.

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (Continued)**

### **BUILDING REGULATION**

This area of Council's responsibilities is continuing to grow in both scope and complexity. In short and over the period covered by this report extra effort has been applied in the following areas:

- Fire safety of public buildings both privately owned and in Council ownership. Places of accommodation such as hotels, motels, frail aged accommodation facilities and the like are given priority attention
- Awnings over footpaths. The past removal of posts and replacement with cantilever mechanisms has now generated problems. Catastrophic failures being reported nationally has highlighted the need for this work
- Private pool registration and safety fencing. Drowning statistics continue to drive the regulatory function with standards being raised in order to try to eliminate this type of ever-present risk.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

#### **NOXIOUS WEEDS CONTROL**

Council continues to employ two (2) full-time inspectors and one (1) casual, part-time spray operator.

In summary, their activities include:

- Providing current and reliable control information to the community
- Inspect private property in an endeavor to achieve compliance with the Noxious Weeds Act by land owners
- In negotiated partnerships, undertake environmental weed control projects with CMA and other funding
- Undertake control work on Crown Land and land for which Council is responsible with funds provided
- Manage and control noxious weeds on public land and Council controlled road reserves
- To a limited extent, under contract, control noxious weeds on privately owned land.



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## **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (Continued)**

### **GENERAL**

The annual State of Environment report is found in full later in this report and provides a "pressure, state, response" coverage of a vast array of environmental parameters. In short, the pressures on our local environment are identified, the current status of the environmental aspect is described and Council's proposed (or ongoing) response is documented.

Environmental Services staff actively participate in formal interactions with Mining Companies holding exploration licences and planning approvals for mining activities within LPSC and in neighbouring Local Government Areas where there is a clear and present impact. Of paramount importance in these interactions is the protection of prime agricultural land and ground water supplies, the protection of Council's road infrastructure and an ongoing advocacy role in economic development and social impact matters

Council has fulfilled its role as a regulatory authority under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act and has undertaken investigations into complaints with regard to pollution incidents.

The management and protection of the Grassy Whitebox Woodland remnants at Wallabadah and Currabubula is a responsibility for Council. This is in addition to the maintenance of past riparian zone rehabilitation projects undertaken within the boundaries of the shire.

Roadside dumping of hazardous materials such as asbestos materials and truck/car tyres continues to pose a significant risk to the environment and consume both financial and staff resources. A program of 'trouble spot' security monitoring has been implemented.

Council has an adopted strategic objective of completing the re-instatement of creek frontage areas in urban settings with the multiple benefits of environmental improvement, return to safer public access and reduction of flood flow impediments. Securing funding opportunities and demonstrated project outcomes has been successful over the year and prospects are good for the completion of the work in coming years.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (Continued)



Aerial view of completed Whittaker Street Project

## WASTE MANAGEMENT

Council provides a range of programs to assist the community to dispose of their waste in an environmentally acceptable and safe manner. These include:

- Participation in drumMUSTER and Chemcollect programs
- Recycling drop-off centres at Council landfills
- Weekly domestic waste pick-up and fortnightly recycling kerbside collection service to nominated areas
- Bi-annual bulky waste pickups

All landfill sites are supervised when they are open to the public as a means of providing greater public awareness of the many issues facing this crucial service. This initiative has had a waste reduction benefit with greater volumes of recyclable items being collected and removed from the waste stream. This has the additional benefit of limiting the consumption of landfill space.



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## **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (Continued)**

### **WASTE MANAGEMENT (Cont)**

Significant landfill site rehabilitation has been completed at all sites and is being formalized into site management plans. All sites are being assessed for improved management opportunities to create extended lifespans.

Council's activities in this regard relate to; expanding the types of products being recycled e.g. batteries and cooking oil, and attempting to resolve the ongoing illegal dumping issues with rubber tires and asbestos materials.

Council has a collection contract with JR Richards for kerbside collection of general refuse and recycling co-mingles which is by way of a 240L mobile bin for each service. This upgraded service commenced in October 2009. At the same time, Quirindi Aboriginal Corporation accepted the contract to undertake site management services and provide a modern separation and resale of recyclables business undertaking.

As part of Council's contract for kerbside waste and recycling collection, the contractor conducts two annual kerbside collections – one of green waste and one for bulky goods waste. These collections are programmed to continue annually and assist to keep town areas tidy and free of potential vermin harbourage situations.

### **PUBLIC HEALTH**

This essential program aims to enhance public health and amenity standards by:

- Monitoring and regulating food shops including education of owners and food handlers. An on-line food handlers training course has been made available through Council's website
- Investigate public health complaints and monitor implementation solutions
- Regulation and inspection of on-site sewage management installations
- Providing a public toilet cleaning service to facilities under Council's control and to a standard that meets community standards
- Community Sharps Bins, one in Werris Creek and one in Quirindi, for public use as a legitimate alternative to placing sharps into the general waste stream.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (Continued)

### COMPLIANCE/RANGER SERVICES

Council administers the Companion Animals Act and employs a Compliance Officer and one full-time Ranger who undertake regular patrols across the Shire.

In addition, these personnel respond to:

- Smoke pollution complaints from backyard burning
- Dangerous and nuisance dog complaints
- Cat complaints
- Call-outs for stock straying on roads
- Abandoned vehicle incidents
- Littering enforcement
- Pollution incidents
- Overgrown allotment complaints
- Unfenced private swimming pool issues
- OSMS approvals and inspections
- Adherence to signposted restrictions at the Quipolly Dam Recreation Area

#### Annual Statistics 2012/13

Dogs Seized	164
Dogs Surrendered	99
Dogs Rehomed	30
Dogs Euthanased	119
Dangerous Dog Orders	1
Nuisance Dog Orders	6
Stock Call-Outs	45
Stock Impounded	117
Cats Seized	44
Cats Euthanased	41

Council has formal leash free areas in Quirindi (3), Werris Creek, Currabubula, Willow Tree, Wallabadah and Premer. Promotional pamphlets and signage improvements have been carried out to promote the lawful use of these areas.

Design and documentation work for Council's new Animal Welfare Facility to be located near the Quirindi Landfill has been completed this year in anticipation of building commencement in 2014/15.





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## **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (Continued)**

### **BUILDING ASSET MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT**

This ongoing program enhances facilities and maintains Council's existing public buildings in a state of good repair and condition.

Activities have included:

- Routine maintenance at individual sites
- Quirindi Racecourse passenger lift
- Werris Creek Museum passenger lift and fire safety upgrade.

### **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

This program provides support and assistance to:

- NSW Rural Fire Service
- NSW Fire Brigade
- State Emergency Service
- Volunteer Rescue Association

Council is also responsible for the Local Emergency Management Committee and Local Rescue Committee. These Committees meet quarterly. A Local Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) for Liverpool Plains Shire has been outfitted at the Quirindi Works Depot which provides a secondary back-up EOC, as well as a training facility, to support the existing EOC at the Council's office.

A desktop exercise and a review of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been undertaken this year in anticipation of a simulated emergency exercise and the introduction of a new Emergency Plan (EmPlan) in 2014/15.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

### LIBRARY SERVICES

Council is a member of the Central Northern Regional Library, which is administered by Tamworth Regional Council. Members of the group are Tamworth Regional Council, Narrabri Shire, Uralla Shire, Walcha Shire, Gwydir Shire and Liverpool Plains Shire.

There are two branch libraries at Quirindi and Werris Creek and two public service outlets at Premer and Willow Tree.

Opening hours are:

<b>Quirindi</b>	Monday to Friday	10 am – 5 pm
	Saturday	10 am – 12 pm
<b>Werris Creek</b>	Tuesday to Friday	10am – 5pm
	Saturday	10 am – 12 pm
<b>Premer</b>	Monday	9 am – 10.30pm
	Saturday	9.30am -12pm
<b>Willow Tree</b>	Sunday to Saturday	9am – 5pm

Residents are encouraged to use their local library and to avail themselves of the extended services available from the Regional Library network. Public access computer bookings continue to grow showing the way forward for 21<sup>st</sup> Century libraries.

### YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Council has continued to provide a number of services for children and the youth of the Shire.

These services are similar to those conducted over previous years due to their success.

Council sponsors the Life Education Program which provides a subsidy to all primary school children in the Shire to enable them to attend the program

A community based Committee that administers the Youth Scholarship Program on Council's behalf has continued to provide funding to assist local youth. Projects undertaken include school excursions, help with tuition and book fees for first year university students, attending conferences that promote youth leadership and helping students chosen to represent their school or region in sport.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES (Continued)

### YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES (Cont)

Vacation Care is provided during the September and Christmas Holidays. Children aged between five and twelve years can access care for a minimal cost during these periods. The shire's libraries also provide activities during the school holidays which targets children aged between 5-12 years. Storytime is held at the Quirindi Library weekly and is a program especially for younger children under five.

A Creative and Practical Arts competition is held each year as part of Youth Week and a Youth Forum is held annually.

Council also provides financial support to the Koori Kids Program and merchandise is distributed to youth as part of the NAIDOC Week Celebrations:

- Higher School Certificate Youth Theatrical participation;
- NSW Youth Parliament participation
- NSW State Schools Constitutional Convention.

Council provides accommodation for the Beehive Playgroup at the Quirindi Pavilion and the Eastside Childcare Centre continued to be the Shire's major long day care provider.



Children at the Eastside Childcare Centre

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## **COMMUNITY SERVICES (Continued)**

### **HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE**

The Liverpool Plains HACC program assists clients who are frail and/or aged and people with disabilities to remain in their homes and within the general community for as long as is practical. HACC Centres are located at the corner of Station and Dalley Streets Quirindi, North Street Werris Creek and King George V Park Willow Tree. The frail, aged and disabled of Liverpool Plains Shire Council have excellent care available to them.

The Service is funded by the State and Federal Governments and sponsored locally by Council. Due to increases in funding and other small grants, the range of activities has increased over the past year. These new activities include craft days, extra transport services and exercise classes.

Further support is provided by:

- Oxley Community Transport Service,
- Gunnedah Oxley Community Options
- Home Care Service
- HACC Development Team
- Commonwealth Carer Respite Tamworth
- Community Nurses from Hunter New England Health
- HACC Development.

Anyone who is frail, aged or disabled can be assessed for HACC Services.

HACC Services are also available to carers. Carers are family members or friends who care for frail aged persons or those with a disability.

Services include:

- Shopping Access Bus
- Hydrotherapy Bus
- Tamworth Specialist Medical Bus
- Premier -Tamworth Bus
- Ladies RSL Club Luncheon Bus
- Men's Day Outings
- Carers' Meetings
- HACC Car
- Meals on Wheels
- Food Service



## COMMUNITY SERVICES (Continued)

### HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE (Continued)

- Craft Day
- Monthly Carers' Meeting
- Social Support
- Seniors' Newsletter
- HACC Holiday
- Referral Service
- Shopping Service
- Transport
- Domestic Assistance (client shopping)
- Movement to Music Gentle Exercises
- Assessments
- Referral to Other Services
- Co-ordinator Seniors Week
- Tax Help

Council also received funding from the State Government for a new HACC Carpark, which has made accessing transport from the Quirindi Centre much easier for clients, volunteers, carers and staff.



HACC Clients – Annual Holiday to  
the Central Coast October 2012

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## COMMUNITY SERVICES (Continued)

### RECREATION CENTRE

Since the employment of a new Senior Fitness Instructor, the Recreation Centre has gone from strength to strength. With the introduction of new classes, the number of users has continued to increase. More community groups are taking advantage of this facility and management is constantly exploring new ideas and undergoing training to continue to provide clients with an excellent service. The most popular classes include Heartmoves, Shake IT and Kick Boxing.

Some of the community groups using the Recreation Centre on a regular basis include:

- Rugby Union
- Rugby League
- Squash
- Basketball
- Dance groups
- Quirindi High School for school sport
- Yoga
- Fitness Classes

Opening Hours are:

Monday – Thursday	9.30am -1.00pm 4.30pm-6.30pm
Friday	9.30am-1.00pm

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## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Whilst agriculture remains the backbone of employment within the Liverpool Plains, mining and gas exploration have emerged as critical new employment sectors. Exploration licenses have been taken up by BHP Billiton near Caroona within the Shire boundaries, whilst Shenhua, China's largest producer of coal, is exploring near Breeza in Gunnedah Shire. Both these sites are geographically closer to Quirindi and Werris Creek than any other major population centre. Santos is also exploring for coal seam methane in the district, leading to employment outcomes on drilling rigs and ancillary support. The prospect of further mines in the Gunnedah Basin has also resulted in teams of workers subcontracted to the ARTC utilising, at certain times, almost all available accommodation within the Shire. Whilst the economic activity is welcome, Council remains committed to the protection of the alluvial floodplains and underlying aquifers of the Shire.

A notable occurrence during the period was the 2011 Census. Whilst the Shire had a slight negative population growth, both Quirindi and Werris Creek recorded substantial growth.

Council continued its participation at Country Week which again proved effective in showcasing the attractions of the shire to potential new residents.

Liverpool Plains actively participated in the promotion of the Kamilaroi Highway and New England North West Tourism. The Shire also actively participated in the development of a Destination Management Plan for Tamworth, Liverpool Plains and Gunnedah. Domestic tourism remains stagnant but Council's strategy of developing attractions in the towns and villages saw positive numbers.

The Australian Railway Monument and Rail Journeys Museum continue to attract visitors largely due to the quality of the displays and the effectiveness of the volunteers.

The rehabilitation of the building has been completed and the proposal to install a lift for second floor access has received grant funding.

An independent Management Plan for recreational activity at Quipolly Dam was completed and a management committee established to oversight development. The Recreation Area was opened in May 2013.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Continued)

Major capital works projects were completed included disabled access at Quipolly Dam and a new skate park for Werris Creek.

The Royal Theatre at Quirindi is hosting live performances and regular cinema with approximately 3,000 cinema goers attending in the first full year. The Visitor Information Centre is the gateway to the Shire encouraging visitors to explore further afield. Almost 10,000 people used the Centre.

The First and Second Fleet Memorial Gardens continue to be of particular appeal to visitors.

A cycleway in Quirindi which features exercise equipment and meanders attractively along the Quirindi Creek was completed. This project was jointly funded by the Federal Government, Council and BHP Billiton.



Part of the new Quipolly Dam Recreation Area



## SECTION 2 STATUTORY REPORTING

### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The audited Financial Statements for 2012/2013 were unavailable for inclusion in the annual report as the Division of Local Government has approved an extension of time for the completion of the audit.

### COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED

Each of the Principal Activities and sub activities in Year 1 of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan has detailed actions and performance measures as indicated. Council's performance against these actions was assessed and a summary of these achievements follow.

#### STRATEGY 1.1 Ensure residents have the opportunity to have a say on important issues

Actions 2012/13		Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
1.1.1	Periodically review community engagement strategy	Community engagement strategy reviewed	Annually	Completed
		Satisfaction mean greater than 3 in community survey	Bi-annually	Not achieved – 2.79
1.1.2	Councillors to be available for community members to raise issues	No reasonable complaints from members of the public about access	Ongoing	No complaints received
1.1.3	Council to have a greater presence in outlying areas	At least two committee meetings held each year in other locations in the shire	Annually	One held in the quarter –Werris Creek in Feb 2013

## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 1.2 Foster and support community leadership and encourage innovation

	Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
1.2.1	Develop scholarships for young people to foster leadership.	Youth scholarships available and committee established.	Annually	Scholarships granted by committee
1.2.2	<b>Promote volunteering and develop partnerships with community leaders</b>	<b>Volunteers sought for community purposes and supported by council.</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Advertising held in Dec quarter with minimal responses</b>
	<b>Hold volunteer appreciation function</b>	<b>Meetings held with community representative groups</b>	<b>Annually</b>	<b>Function held</b>
1.2.3	Improve the efficiency and transparency of council processes	Independent Internal Auditor engaged to review all council processes and report to Council	Annually	Internal Auditor engaged as per internal audit plan
1.2.4	<b>Encourage staff to be innovative</b>	<b>Funds/efficiencies generated from staff innovation, eg Tr@ceR, quarry extraction</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>IT staff currently re- developing Tr@ceR EDM and Weeds programs</b>

### Advocate for an increase in the resources committed by the Federal and State Governments to Local Government and Liverpool Plains Shire

### STRATEGY 1.3 Council in particular for infrastructure

	Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
1.3.1	Council will advocate strongly for improved funding to Local Government by lobbying Local Members of Parliament, and supporting Namoi Councils and LGNSW proposals	Quantum of additional resources allocated to Council as a result of lobbying	Ongoing	Meeting held with Local Fed member re water strategy a success with \$400k allocated to LPSC.

## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### **STRATEGY 1.4** Seek Constitutional recognition of local government to enable direct funding from the Commonwealth

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
1.41 Council will actively support constitutional recognition of local government via media campaigns in conjunction with the ALGA	Local Government is recognised in the constitution after the next Referendum	Ongoing to September 2013	Referendum called off due to election timing

### **STRATEGY 1.5** Demonstrate accountability, good customer service, transparency and ethical conduct

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
1.5.1 Provide relevant staff training and offer competitive working conditions and remuneration	Council is seen as a leading employer	Ongoing	Training plan developed and staff undertaking training as required
1.5.2 Ensure decision making processes are fair, open and equitable	Council recognised as a transparent, accountable and ethical organisation	Ongoing	Achieved – Councillor training undertaken
1.5.3 Ensure staff respond to all forms of customer requests in a timely manner	Satisfaction mean greater than 3 in community survey	Ongoing	Achieved – 3.38

## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 1.6 Increase the number of female councillors and management staff

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
1.6.1 Promote the need for greater gender equity on councils via media outlets, newsletters and community forums	Female staff and councillors as a percentage of total staff and councillors	Every four years for councillors; ongoing for staff	Only one female candidate for Council who was elected despite promotion at various community meetings. Finance Manager replaced with female.

### STRATEGY 1.7 Explore options for an enhanced local government sector as detailed in the NSW Government's Destination 2036 Action Plan

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
1.7.1 Discuss resource-sharing opportunities with Namoi Councils	Discussions held	By 30 June 2013	Council signed Namoi Councils Deed of Agreement for Water Alliance
1.7.2 Contribute to Regional Action plans that link with the State Plan	Regional Plans contributed to	By 30 June 2013	Regional Plans to be updated with LPSC works as agreed to by Namoi Councils



## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 1.8 Enhance the financial sustainability of Council

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
1.8.1 Develop long term financial plans that improve council's financial position	LTFP developed and reviewed	Annually	LTFP reviewed by Treasury Corp. with Council being rated as weak with a negative outlook..  LTFP adopted by Council shows increasing financial sustainability subject to IPART approval of special rate variation

### STRATEGY 2.1 Support and develop programs which protect and enhance the Shire's natural environment and 'rural' character

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
2.1.1 Undertake creek clearing projects.	Projects undertaken, health of rivers and creeks improved	Completed	Henry St Bridge project added to list of achievements in this area
2.1.2 Seek grant funding opportunities.	Grants received	Ongoing	No new funding received
2.1.3 Ensure LEP and DCP protects rural areas	LEP and DCP adequately protect the environment, rural character maintained	Ongoing	LEP/DCP rural provisions performing as designed
2.1.4 Undertake statutory functions in weed control	People made aware of new and emerging weeds	Ongoing	Annual program of education activities and property inspections completed

## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 2.2 Ensure that environmental and development standards satisfy community needs and aspirations

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
2.2.1 A development control plan will be developed and implemented to provide guidance for the sustainable development of the Shire	DCP developed Mean satisfaction rating greater than 3 in community survey	June 2013 Bi-annual	DCP in place Community Survey outcome unclear – 2.89

### STRATEGY 2.3 Assist in the provision of infrastructure and resources associated with the emergency services requirements of The Shire

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
2.3.1 Provision of funding and accommodation in annual operational plans for RFS, VRA and SES	Mean satisfaction rating greater than 3 in community survey	Bi-annual	Achieved – 4.17
2.3.2 A comprehensive emergency management response and capacity Plan will be developed through the DisPlan	DisPlan developed and reviewed in conjunction with agencies such as NSW FB, NSW RFS, SES, VRA, Police and Department of Health.	Ongoing	Initial steps taken to modernise to an EMPlan. Standard template plan is as yet not ready to progress. DisPlan remains operational

### STRATEGY 2.4 Council uses its resources wisely to reduce its ecological footprint

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
2.4.1 Implement results of water, waste and energy audits from Namoi towards a sustainable future project when funding permits	Council's ecological footprint is smaller.	Ongoing to 2016/17	Env Trust has not approved funding for audit works

## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 2.5 Council will work for the retention, restoration and protection of the Shire's heritage

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
2.5.1 Complete a community heritage plan	Heritage Plan completed	Completed	Werris Creek main street study completed as an addition to and implementation of the Heritage Plan.

### STRATEGY 2.6 Ensure the importance of the black soil Liverpool Plains to agricultural production and wealth of the Shire, Region and State will be recognised

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
2.6.1 Advocate for protection of black soil plains from mining & gas extraction	Mining approvals do not allow encroachment on the black soil plains	Ongoing	SLURP approved including Aquifer Interference policy. Submission made on Watermark EIS

### STRATEGY 2.7 Ensure best practice principles are adopted for waste management and recycling

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
2.7.1 Increase education to community on benefits of recycling.	Education program implemented	Ongoing	Completed September 2012
	Waste to Art Program implemented	Annually	2013 competition currently taking place

## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 3.1 The community builds on its strengths and embraces its heritage and cultural diversity

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
3.1.1 Promote and support cultural festivals and events within the Shire.	Festivals, events and promotions are celebrated.	Annually	Christmas decorations in place. Australia Day, swap meet supported. Royal Theatre supported.

### STRATEGY 3.2 The community has improved access to health services and facilities

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
3.2.1 Council will monitor and advocate for the provision of health services to ensure residents have access to quality services and facilities that meet community expectations.	Current health services are at least maintained and/or improved and new health services are introduced to meet local demand	Ongoing	Attended Quirindi Health Service Meetings
3.2.2 Continue with the provision of subsidies to attract new GP's	Sufficient GP's to meet demand	Ongoing	Facilities provided New GP relocated to Quirindi & PT GP started –one left
3.2.3 Advocate better services for people with special needs.	Better services provided as a result of advocacy	Ongoing	Quipolly Dam Rec Area disabled access Advocacy through Quirindi Health Service
3.2.4 Advocate services to address mental health issues	Better services provided as a result of advocacy	Ongoing	Not aware of new services this quarter. Advocacy through Quirindi Health Service



## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 3.3 The community has improved access to health services and facilities

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
3.3.1 Council will lobby the State Government to have a greater police presence in The Shire.	The number of police stationed in the Shire increased.	Ongoing	No change this quarter
3.3.2 Council will continue to install CCTV cameras at strategic crime hot spots	CCTV cameras installed	As required	None installed this quarter

### STRATEGY 3.4 Provide opportunities to facilitate utilisation of the skills and expertise of women in the community within the workforce

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
3.4.1 Provide adequate day care facilities through the Eastside CCC and the provision of assistance to pre-schools and play groups.	Number of women in the workforce as per the census statistics compared to last census.	Ongoing	1341 women in work force up 30

### STRATEGY 3.5 Increase tourism infrastructure and visitation to the Shire

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
3.5.1 Maintain local tourism committee and involvement with NENW Tourism, Inland Tourism and Kamilaroi Highway Promotion Committee and review tourism plan.	Mean satisfaction level above 3 in the community survey	Bi-annual	Visitor Economy Taskforce report released  Achieved - Mean satisfaction for tourism 3.16
3.5.2 Implement strategies in the tourism plan.	Strategies implemented	Ongoing to 2016/17	Significant impact by VET Report. Need to develop Destination Management plan.

## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 3.6 Strengthen and grow the economic prospects of The Shire and create more sustainable job opportunities

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
3.6.1 Promote and market the area to attract businesses and new residents.	Increase in resident population as per ABS projections	Annually	Population increased by 6% to 7,997
	Mean satisfaction level above 3 for economic development in the community survey	Bi-annual	Not achieved- Mean satisfaction level of 2.71
3.6.2 Make industrial and commercial land available along with the provision of associated infrastructure	Net number of new businesses established in the Shire	Annually	Business count not undertaken
	Reduced number of vacant commercial premises in Quirindi and Werris Creek	Ongoing	WC vacancy from 34% down to 28% Qdi vacancy from 6% up to 7%

### STRATEGY 3.7 Improve the health and wellbeing of residents and ensure residents play an active role in the community

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
3.7.1 Encourage and develop vibrant and creative open space areas and public infrastructure for use by residents and youth in particular.	Increase in people being active and using recreational facilities	Ongoing	Recreation Centre maintaining numbers. Good use of shared bikepath, outdoor gym equipment and skate park. Skate park for Werris Creek installed. Quipolly Rec area open to public.
	Mean satisfaction level above 3 for youth services in the community survey	Bi-annual	Not achieved – Youth mean level 2.92 Rec centre – 2.92 Child care Centre – 3.66

## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 4.1 Maintain and develop a bicycle and/or footpath network that satisfies community expectations

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
4.1.1 Undertake works as per the asset management plan and develop options for shared pathways in the Shire	Satisfaction mean above 3 in survey community survey	Bi- annual	Works being completed in accordance with construction program. Improvement Program Under review.  Survey completed with mean of 3.2 and above benchmark

### STRATEGY 4.2 Maintain a road transport network that satisfies community needs

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
4.2.1 Undertake biannual road surveys and works as per management plan and funding limits.	Satisfaction mean above 3 in survey community survey	Bi-annual	Proposed for July 2013 subject to funding  Rural Roads below 3 Urban roads 3.06
4.2.2 Lobby for rail overpasses at key road/rail interfaces to reduce delays	Overpasses constructed	Ongoing	Ongoing – raised at Transport for NSW meeting on 27/09/2012, Shenhua EIS response

## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 4.3 Ensure bridges and drains are well maintained and satisfy community expectations

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
4.3.1 Undertake maintenance and new works as funding permits	Satisfaction mean above 3 in survey community survey	Bi-annual	Construction program complete. Bridges 3.7 Drainage 3.19

### STRATEGY 4.4 Provide adequate and well maintained cemeteries, pools, parks, gardens, public toilets, showgrounds, playing fields and district facilities that are safe and developed to agreed standards

Actions 2012/13	Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
4.41 Undertake works as per Asset Management Plans and available funding ensuring that local parks, public open spaces, town centres, cemeteries, pools, showgrounds and playing fields continue to be enhanced to accommodate future needs	Satisfaction mean above 3 in survey community survey	Bi-annual	Approved budget projects and maintenance work being undertaken. Pub toilets 3.39 Cemeteries 3.66 Town centres 3.6 Parks 3.68 Swim Pools 3.68 Sport ovals 3.85 Showground 3.81

## COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE DELIVERY PROGRAM & THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES AT WHICH THOSE PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED (Continued)

### STRATEGY 4.5 Pursue best practice management of Water Supply and Sewerage Systems including resource sharing with other Councils

Actions 2012/13		Performance Measure	Timeline	Status 30.06.13
4.5.1	Implement Best Practice Water Supply and Sewerage principles.	Achievement of 100% compliance with best practice principles excluding best practice pricing	Ongoing to 2016/17	Ongoing – data provided to consultant for SBP & IWCM
		Satisfaction mean above 3 in survey community survey	Bi-annual	Water 3.34 Sewer 4.08
4.5.2	Develop an alliance with Gunnedah Shire Council and/or Namoi Councils	Alliance implemented	By 2012/13	Completed with Namoi Councils

## STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Council's State of Environment Report is attached at Appendix "A".



## REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF PUBLIC WORKS

### Condition of Public Roads and Drainage

Item	Condition at end of 2012/13	Estimate of cost to bring to satisfactory standard [2012/13 Values]	Estimate of annual cost of maintaining satisfactory std. [2012/13 values]	Total Maintenance Expenditure for 2012/13
Regional Roads	FAIR – Rehabilitation of some pavement failures on the poorer sections in the past year and an aggressive resealing program with a polymer binder over the last three years to prevent water ingress.	1,620,000	575,000	348,575
Rural Roads Sealed & Unsealed	FAIR - Numerous sections of sealed network badly in need of rehabilitation. Considerable effort was again made to gravel re-sheet sections of the unsealed road network and a determined program to improve drainage continued. Quality gravel is proving difficult to obtain in some areas of the shire and the poor friable gravels compound the drainage problems.	1,700,000	3,648,700	2,128,532
Urban Streets	FAIR – Council's focus on bitumen reseals over the last three years and again in the 2011/2012 year, is beginning to show dividends with reduced incidence of potholes and pavement failures in urban streets. There are a number of streets that will not benefit from resealing and reconstruction is the only option in these areas.	875,000	338,300	138,891

## REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF PUBLIC WORKS (Continued)

### Supplementary Notes

#### REGIONAL ROADS

Capital works were undertaken on 3 sections of MR 130, Werris Creek Road north of Gap Road at a total cost of \$1,010,704. The work involved widening the road formation, chemically stabilizing the existing pavement, applying a 100mm stabilized gravel overlay and a 2 coat hot bitumen seal.

#### RURAL SHIRE ROADS

Capital works expenditure for the year totaled \$2,239,000. Works included the reconstruction of a further 1.8km of Bundella Road, the replacement of several culverts and causeways including Harrisons Plains Rd, Wandobah Rd, Big Jacks Creek Road and Slacksmiths Lane. Gravel re-sheeting was undertaken on numerous gravel roads including Presses Rd, Swinging Ridges Road, Wilmotts Rd, Greys Rd and Wandobah Rd. A substantial bitumen reseal program was undertaken in accordance with Council's Roads Asset Management Plan.

#### URBAN STREETS

An assessment of the Quirindi town storm water drainage system continued with computer modeling of the runoff sub-catchments completed together with the identification of system deficiencies and augmentation needs. Work will continue on this project in 2013/14 with the compilation of the theoretical data in a detail options and strategy report. The Quirindi shared pathway network was expanded with the extension of the Hawker Street pathway through Bell Park and the construction of a new shared pathway along Henry Street Quirindi from the Jacob and Joseph Street Bridge to Russell Street via Longfield Park, the Annette McNamara Swinging Bridge and Kennedy Lane. The intersection of Sission and Hall Streets in Willow Tree was sealed.

#### Condition of Bridges

Item	Condition at end of 2012/13	Estimate of cost to bring to satisfactory standard [2012/13 Values]	Estimate of annual cost to keep at satisfactory std. [2012/13 values]	Total Maintenance Expenditure for 2012/13
Concrete/ Steel	Satisfactory	0	5,000	7,500
Timber	Satisfactory	24,000	19,000	42,500

### Supplementary Notes

#### BRIDGES

Bridge inspections and routine maintenance was completed on Council's bridges which overall are assessed as being in a satisfactory condition.

## REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF PUBLIC WORKS (Continued)

### Condition of Water Supplies

Item	Condition at end of 2012/13	Estimate of cost to bring to satisfactory standard [2012/13 Values]	Estimate of annual cost to keep at satisfactory std. [2012/13 values]	Total Maintenance Expenditure for 2012/13
Quirindi Supply	Satisfactory	150,000	174,000	229,132
Werris Creek Supply	Fair	50,000	60,000	232,293
Villages Supplies	Satisfactory	32,000	37,000	148,575

### Supplementary Notes

#### WATER SUPPLIES

Expenditure in 2012/13 was dominated by the Quipolly Dam upgrade in the Werris Creek water supply to complete the project.

Planned water main replacements have been undertaken with a combined program over both the 2012/13 and 2013/14 budgets.

### Condition of Sewerage System

Item	Condition at end of 2012/13	Estimate of cost to bring to satisfactory standard [2012/13 Values]	Estimate of annual cost to keep at satisfactory std. [2012/13 values]	Total Maintenance Expenditure for 2012/13
Quirindi System	Satisfactory	111,000	85,000	160,803
Werris Creek System	Satisfactory	120,000	94,000	154,197

### Supplementary Notes

#### SEWERAGE SYSTEM

The majority of expenditure incurred in the sewerage systems related to the replacement of failed pump components or enhancements for treatment processes. These are not annual recurrent costs and the replaced components should provide many years of efficient operation. The enhanced treatment process improves the quality of the effluent discharged to the environment providing improved environmental outcomes and improved compliance with sewer license requirements.



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## **PROGRAMS UNDERTAKEN DURING TO PROMOTE SERVICES AND ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS**

Persons of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island descent constitute 10.9% of the total Shire population, whilst persons from non-English speaking backgrounds make up a further 1.4% of the population.

Council maintains regular contact with the various local Aboriginal Lands Councils on indigenous issues. The joint venture project with the Quirindi Aboriginal Corporation for the provision of waste management and recycling services in Quirindi, Werris Creek and Willow Tree continues to operate.

Council has prepared a Social Plan, Cultural Plan and Disability Action Plan (Appendix "B").

## **ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE FOR THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN**

Council operates a 39 place Long Day Childcare Centre in East Street Quirindi.

Council provides a venue for Family Day Care to operate an outreach childcare service at the Quirindi Pavilion. The centre is also used to conduct a playgroup twice per week. Council advertises children's services and activities in its weekly newspaper column.

Council operates the Quirindi Recreation Centre and the following are provided - basketball court, squash courts, gymnasium and instructors for fitness classes. School groups attend weekly.

Council participates in Youth Week activities and held several successful youth events in association with the local High School and the Quirindi Interagency group.

A vacation play centre is operated during the October and Christmas school holiday break at Quirindi which continues to attract participants from across the shire. Council utilises a bus to bring participants from the outlying villages to enable access.

Council provides funds to the Youth Scholarship Committee, which is managed by local citizen and Councillors, and its purpose is to support young people to undertake activities that enable personal development. Sponsorship during the period included sending several students on training courses.

Council has provided support to the Life Education Van by underwriting the cost for every primary school student in the Shire to attend a session on drug education.

Swimming pools are provided during the warmer months for children, including "learn to swim" classes, at both Werris Creek and Quirindi. The many parks in the shire provide play equipment and shade covers are being progressively installed.



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## **PROGRAMS UNDERTAKEN TO PROMOTE SERVICES AND ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS AND OTHER USERS**

Council, in association with the Quirindi Advocate and the Werris Creek Flyer, publishes a Weekly Update column which sets out activities being undertaken by Council and forthcoming events. This is also available on Council's website. A quarterly newsletter is also mailed to all residents.

Council's HACC Service publishes a monthly newsletter which is distributed to clients and placed at various public locations. Council's libraries also publish a weekly column on events in the Quirindi Advocate. The Quirindi Recreation Centre provides a newsletter to its customers and the Royal Cinema provides fortnightly leaflets to various shopping outlets.

Council commenced the use of Facebook and Twitter to further extend its information services to the community.

## **STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT COUNCIL'S EEO MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Committee comprises staff from across the organisation.

### ***Key Equal Employment Strategies are:***

- Identify, develop and publicise training and development opportunities.
- Encourage participation in training courses and education support schemes which allow staff to reach their full potential.
- Review staff training and education policies to ensure that course participation encompasses merit and EEO.
- Review and monitor conditions of service to ensure that they conform to EEO principles and demonstrate fair practice.
- Consult with relevant employer groups, unions and staff through meetings related to EEO.
- Ensure formal guidelines for appointment, promotion and internal transfers which encompass EEO guidelines are followed.
- Ongoing review of job and performance appraisals to ensure they are non-discriminatory and conform with EEO principles.
- Ensure grievance mechanisms are available to all staff
- Conduct regular EEO surveys of all staff – The next bi-annual employee survey is to be undertaken by an independent Company - Micromex in March 2015.





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## **STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT COUNCIL'S EEO MANAGEMENT PLAN (Continued)**

### *Results of March 2013 Employee Survey*

An Independent Employee Survey was conducted in March 2013 to examine employee attitudes and satisfaction on a broad range of Council services and facilities so that management can determine if there are any problems and if so implement measures to address those problems.

The Survey was conducted by Micromex Research Pty Ltd. The results were also benchmarked against other Councils.

The results of the survey were considered at a meeting of the EEO Committee held 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

There were 93 surveys received (74% response rate) with 70% being male and 30% female. 58% of respondents were aged between 35 and 54 with 23% under 35 and 19% over 55.

When asked what the best things were about working for Council the most frequent responses out of 204 and noting that some respondents gave more than one reply were:

1. working conditions/flexibility – 43%
2. people /team – 22%
3. type of work and work outcomes – 20%
4. job security/stability – 8%
5. helping people/community service – 6%

When asked what areas could be improved the most frequent responses out of 174 were:

1. communication - 28%
2. working conditions/increase wages – 15%
3. Management issues – 14%
4. equipment and procedures review – 11%
5. workload – 10%

Communication is still an area that could be improved with no change from the 2011 survey at 28% despite more staff meetings. However, working conditions/increase wages has reduced substantially from the previous survey at 29% to 15% in 2013 and could partly be due to the administration building upgrade.

Overall, staff are generally satisfied working for Council with results similar to 2010 and 2011. 83% of indoor staff stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied, 10% were neutral and 8% were dissatisfied.

81% of outdoor staff stated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied, 14% were neutral, 4% were dissatisfied and 2% very dissatisfied.

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## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT COUNCIL'S EEO MANAGEMENT PLAN (Continued)

When benchmarked with other Councils indoor staff were above the benchmark in 5 of the 24 criteria, below average in fifteen and equal in four. Outdoor staff were above the benchmark in 17 of the 24 criteria, below average in four and equal in three. It should be noted that indoor staff had higher levels of satisfaction than outdoor staff in all but 4 of the criteria.

Regarding **overall** employee satisfaction both indoor and outdoor staff were above the benchmark.

In both 2010 and 2011 internal communication was seen as an issue and a question was again included in the 2013 survey on how this could be improved. The most frequent responses out of 69 replies were:

1. Hold more meetings with staff – 13
2. Have a more personal approach – 4
3. Come out to job sites to meet with employees – 4
4. More breakfast meetings – 3

Directors will endeavour to meet more often with staff and encourage more meetings between overseers and gangers.

**It is proposed to continue with the following actions in 2013/14 to be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014:**

- 1 The annual performance appraisal process clearly outlines the position description and duties of the position.
- 2 Regular meetings of staff teams occur across all sections of Council.
- 3 A review of available plant, equipment and other resources be undertaken to ensure staff can better perform their duties subject to cost benefit analysis.
- 4 A review of the Workforce Strategy be undertaken to determine whether Council has the required skilled workforce to carry out the operational plan and delivery program at the service levels to be determined by Council.
- 5 EEO training be undertaken for all new staff



## SUMMARY OF AMOUNTS INCURRED IN RELATION TO LEGAL PROCEEDINGS DURING 2012/2013

Legal costs for 2012/2013 totalled \$231,734 and the following is a dissection by activity:

- Ongoing - A total of \$115,050 was incurred in relation to legal action against ratepayers for recovery of overdue rates.
- Complete - \$3,876 – Legal advice on “Deed”, termination of lease and rehabilitation of contaminated land.
- Complete - \$721 – Preparation of lease.
- Continuing - \$903 - Compliance issues various.
- Complete - \$900 – Recovery of small debt.
- Complete - \$690 – Advice sought on pecuniary interest matter.
- Complete - \$28,565 – Legal matter non-compliance with Council order and subsequent cross claim.
- Continuing - \$19,729 – Legal matter non-compliance with Council order.
- Continuing - \$61,300 – Legal matter with non-compliance of building order.

## FEES, EXPENSES AND FACILITIES PROVIDED TO THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS DURING 2012/2013

The following fees were expended during the year 2012/2013:

Mayoral Fees	=	\$ 19,260
Deputy Mayor Fee	=	\$ 2,855
Councillors Fees	=	\$ 70,992

## POLICY IN RELATION TO THE PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO COUNCILLORS

Council has adopted an amended “Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors” policy in accordance with section 253 of the Local Government Act 1993. Council adopted the amended policy at its **26<sup>th</sup> November 2013** Ordinary Meeting after having given 28 days notice for public submissions.

Council will promote the policy on the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to councillors to the community by placing the policy on their websites and making it readily accessible.

Council shall review the policy on an annual basis and submit this policy to the Chief Executive, Local Government, Division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet within 28 days of adoption by Council, even if it is proposed to adopt an unchanged policy.

Council reimburses all reasonable travelling expenses of Councillors while on Council business in accordance with the “Payment of Expenses and the Provision of Facilities to Councillors” policy.

## **POLICY IN RELATION TO THE PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO COUNCILLORS (Continued)**

For details of expenses and facilities see Appendix "C".

The total cost associated with Councillor expenses for 2012/2013 was \$45,976. This comprised of:

Delegates' expenses for attendance at conferences/meetings, seminars and personal development \$10,760

Meals and sustenance associated with meetings \$ 5,305

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Mayor</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Total</b>
Mobile phone – Net of contributions	\$1,662	NIL	\$1,662
Facsimile/Internet	\$ 381	NIL	\$ 381
Travel – meetings	NIL	\$1,936	\$1,936
Badges, Blazes & Name Plaques	NIL	\$3,077	\$3,077
Interstate travel	NIL	NIL	NIL
Overseas Travel	NIL	NIL	NIL
Child care	NIL	NIL	NIL
Spouse / Partner expenses (Shires Conference)	NIL	NIL	NIL
Mayoral Motor Vehicle – Net of Contributions	\$14,485	NIL	\$14,485
Computer (capital)	NIL	NIL	NIL

## **SENIOR STAFF EMPLOYED BY COUNCIL DURING 2012/2013**

At the 30th June, 2013, Council employed only one senior staff member in terms of the Local Government Act and that was the General Manager who is employed on a five year performance based contract.

The General Manager's total package of \$214,323.37 is made up of a salary component totalling \$188,446.70 with the remaining \$25,876.67 being made up as follows:

- Superannuation - \$17,896.43
- Motor Vehicle - \$ 8,180.24

Fringe Benefits Tax Payable \$9,824.60

## **CONTRACTS IN EXCESS OF \$150,000 AWARDED BY COUNCIL DURING 2012/13**

In 2012/2013 Council awarded four (4) contracts through the tendering process.

Contracts were awarded to:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose of contract</b>
Westrac Equipment P/L	\$ 136,880	Purchase of Roller (p53)
AGL	Schedule of rates	Supply of electricity
Fulton Hogan Industries	Schedule of Rates	Supply of Bitumen Emulsion
Westrac Equipment P/L	\$ 324,390	Purchase of Grader (p4)
JCB Construction Equipment Australia	\$ 124,300	Purchase of Backhoe (p16).

### **Schedule of Rates Contracts**

During the year Council purchased Bitumen Emulsion from Fulton Hogan under a Schedule of Rates Contract. These goods and services were purchased at the contracted rate and the total value of this contract will exceed \$150,000 over the life of the contract.

During the year Council purchased Electricity from AGL under a Schedule of Rates Contract. These goods and services were purchased at the contracted rate and the total value of this contract will exceed \$150,000 over the life of the contract.

## **SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING WORK CARRIED OUT ON PRIVATE LAND AND ANY SUBSIDIES RELATED TO THIS WORK**

Council undertook works on private land in 2012/2013 to the total of \$36,485.

Council's policy with regard to charging for these private rates is as follows:

<b>Plant Hire Rates</b>	Private Hire Rate
<b>Additional Labour</b>	Actual Cost + On Costs and Overheads
<b>Stores and Materials</b>	Cost + 9%

During 2012/2013 Council did not partly or fully subsidise any works carried out on private land.

## **GRANTS UNDER SECTION 356**

During 2012/2013, Council made grants totalling \$25,863 to individuals and local community groups.



## EXTERNAL BODIES EXERCISING FUNCTIONS DELEGATED BY COUNCIL DURING 2012/2013

Twenty seven (27) external bodies were delegated functions by Council during 2012/2013:

Body	Function
Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Committee providing advice on Aboriginal matters
Mid North Weight of Loads	Control of Weight of Loads on Roads
Blackville Hall Committee	Management of Public Hall
Home & Community Care Committee	The provision of meal, transport and respite services for the aged and disabled
Sports Council	Advisory body providing support in the development of sport and recreational facilities
Central Northern Libraries	The provision of library services
Tourism & Promotion Committee	Assisting with the strategic planning of regional tourism
Australia Day Committee	Organisation of Australia Day Celebrations
Currabubula Hall & Reserve Committee	Management of Public Hall and reserve
Liverpool Plains Tourism & Economic Development Committee	Advisory body providing support and advice in economic development and tourism
Sister City Committee	Management of Council's relations with its Sister City – Blacktown
Arts Council (Inc Wallaby Art Group)	Organisation of art functions.
Internal Audit Committee	Management of Council's internal audit function.
Premier Village Development Committee	Management of Public Hall and reserve.
Quipolly Dam Recreation Area Committee	Management and development of the Quipolly Dam recreation area.
Royal Theatre Committee	Management of the Quirindi Royal Theatre.
Spring Ridge Development Committee	Management of Public Hall and reserve.
Youth Scholarship Committee	Advisory body providing support and advice on youth programs and activities.
Summerhill Lodge Management Committee	Management of residential units for low income earners
Wallabadah Development Committee	Management of Public Hall
Warrah Creek Hall Committee	Management of Public Hall
Werris Creek Horse & Rider Club	Management of recreational facility
Werris Creek Development Committee	Advisory body to Council for works and services in Werris Creek
Werris Creek Sporting Complex	Management of recreational facility
Werris Creek Railway Institute	Management of Public Hall
Women's Focus Committee	Advisory body providing support and advice on women's programs and services
Willow Tree Harvesting for the Future Committee	Advisory body to Council for works and services in Willow Tree

## **COMPANIES IN WHICH COUNCIL HELD A CONTROLLING INTEREST DURING 2012/2013**

Council did not hold a controlling interest in any companies during 2012/2013.

## **PARTNERSHIPS, CO-OPERATIVES OR OTHER JOINT VENTURES TO WHICH THE COUNCIL WAS A PARTY DURING 2012/2013**

Council was not a party to any partnerships, co-operatives or other joint ventures during 2012/2013.

## **AMOUNTS OR RATES AND CHARGES WRITTEN OFF DURING THE YEAR**

Pensioner rates abandoned under S.575 LGA 1993	\$228,204
Ordinary rates abandoned	\$11,707
Water, Sewer and Waste Management charges abandoned	\$420
Total	\$240,331

### **Notes**

It is compulsory that Council write off rates in accordance with section 575 of the Local Government Act, 1993. Other ordinary rates and charges are written off in accordance with Council's Economic Development Incentives policy.

## **PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES**

Councillors and Council staff are encouraged to report what they believe to be unethical conduct within the organisation. Council is required under the Public Interest Disclosures Act to collect and report on information about public interest disclosures (PIDs). No PIDs were made for the period 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013.

	<b>1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013</b>
Number of public officials who made PIDs	0
Number of PIDs received	0
Of PIDs received, number primarily about:	0
Corrupt conduct	0
Maladministration	0
Serious and substantial waste	0
Government information contravention	0
Local government pecuniary interest contravention	0
Number of PIDs finalised	0

Note: The number of PIDs finalised only refers to PIDs that have been received since 1 July 2012 to the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

## **PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES (Continued)**

Council has a public interest disclosures policy in place. A brochure summarising the key roles and responsibilities of the policy is available to all staff. Council's Disclosures Coordinator and Disclosures Officers are responsible for receiving PIDs

## **OVERSEAS VISITS FUNDED BY COUNCIL**

No overseas visits funded by Council were taken by Council members or staff during 2012/2013.

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) FOR THE PERIOD 2012/2013**

<b>Total number of access applications received</b> during the reporting year	<b>4</b>
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\*During the reporting year four (4) applications were received, and four (4) were determined.

**Statistical Information about access applications for 2012/2013 is as follows:**

<b>Table A: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome*</b>								
	<b>Access granted in full</b>	<b>Access granted in part</b>	<b>Access refused in full</b>	<b>Information not held</b>	<b>Information already available</b>	<b>Refuse to deal with application</b>	<b>Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held</b>	<b>Application withdrawn</b>
<b>Media</b>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Members of Parliament</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Private sector business</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Not for profit organisations or community groups</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Members of the public (application by legal representative)</b>	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Members of the public (other)</b>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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

## ANNUAL REPORT OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) FOR THE PERIOD 2012/2013 (Continued)

Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome								
	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with application	Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn
Personal information applications*	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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

The total number of decisions in Table B should be the same as Table A.

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

## ANNUAL REPORT OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) FOR THE PERIOD 2012/2013 (Continued)

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

	Number of times consideration used*
Overriding secrecy laws	0
Cabinet information	0
Executive Council information	0
Contempt	0
Legal professional privilege	0
Excluded information	0
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0
Transport safety	0
Adoption	0
Care and protection of children	0
Ministerial code of conduct	0
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0

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

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

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

**Table F: Timeliness**

	Number of applications
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	4
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	0
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>



## ANNUAL REPORT OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) FOR THE PERIOD 2012/2013 (Continued)

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

	<b>Decision varied</b>	<b>Decision upheld</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Internal review</b>	0	0	0
<b>Review by Information Commissioner*</b>	0	0	0
<b>Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act</b>	0	0	0
<b>Review by ADT</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	0	0	0

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

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

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

## ADDITIONAL MATTERS

### National Competition Policy

A key component of the Government's economic reform has been the application of National Competition Policy to the public sector.

Under National Competition Policy, the principle of competitive neutrality is applied to certain significant business activities of Council in order that their operational costs and charges are brought more into line with those applying in the commercial sector (the level playing field concept).

Under competitive neutrality, Council businesses are classified as either category 1 (revenue in excess of \$2m) or category 2 (revenue less than \$2m). Council has no category 1 businesses, with the following businesses having revenues of less than \$2m and defined as category 2 businesses under National Competition Policy:

- 1) *Water Services*
- 2) *Sewer Services*

The Department of Local Government's July 1999 guidelines "Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses: A Guide to Competitive Neutrality" outline the process for identifying and allocating costs to activities and provide a standard of disclosure requirements. These disclosures are reflected in Council's pricing and financial reporting systems and include taxation equivalents, Council subsidies, rate of return on investments in business units and dividends paid.



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## **ADDITIONAL MATTERS (Continued)**

Council has adopted a Competitive Neutrality Complaints Policy which provides background to competitive neutrality procedures for lodging competitive neutrality complaints and other relevant information required for a complainant to effectively deal with this issue.

No competitive neutrality complaints were received during the 2012/2013 period.

### **Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (PPIA)**

The PPIA came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2000 and has a substantial effect on what information is collected by Council and how that information is used.

Council is committed to the information protection principles contained in the Act and has adopted a Privacy Management Plan to assist with the administration of privacy issues.

### **Stormwater Management Services**

Council did not levy an annual Stormwater Management charge in 2012/2013 and no provision was made for this charge in the Operational Plan.

### **Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979**

Council, during the period, had no planning agreements in force.

# **APPENDIX "A"**

## **State of Environment Report**

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# State of the Environment Report

2012/2013

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# 1 Introduction

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The State of the Environment (SoE) report is a useful document for informing planning and decision making processes, educating council staff and the community, and as a way of demonstrating accountability to the community. Since the inception of SoE reporting with the introduction of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW), the SoE report has become a cornerstone of local government's management and reporting of its natural environment. Recent amendments to the *Local Government Act 1993*, in addition to the implementation of the NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, have necessitated changes to the reporting requirements of the SoE report. As part of this new regime, under Section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a SoE report is to be included in the annual report of a council in the year of an ordinary election of councillors. This last occurred in September 2012 for the Liverpool Plains Local Government Area (LGA). Furthermore, the SoE report is now required to report on environmental issues that are relevant to the environmental objectives in the Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

The Liverpool Plains Shire Council (LPSC) SoE report considers the vision and commitments undertaken by the council in partnership with the Liverpool Plains community. Accordingly, this report will also assess council's progress in achieving the environmental objectives from the LPSC CSP. The vision and commitments, and environmental goals from the LPSC CSP, are presented below:



## **Vision**

That the Liverpool Plains Shire area achieves higher levels of growth and generates improved quality of life through expanded opportunities for economic and social development being realised within an environmentally and financially sustainable framework.



## **Mission**

To achieve the vision through a proactive community focus, delivering best value and practice services that are recognised by the community for their quality and positive impact on development.

## Objectives for the Environment (LPSC CSP)

- 1. To develop strategies that facilitates growth and guides Council towards ecologically sustainability through responsible management of both the natural and built environments*
- 2. To be recognised as a leader in environmental management*

In accordance with the overarching reporting requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*, this report aims to:

- Identify relevant environmental issues in relation to the environmental objectives of the LPSC CSP;
- Establish relevant environmental indicators for each environmental objective, and
- Report on, and update trends in each of the identified environmental indicators, and
- Identify significant activities and events that have a major impact on the environmental objectives from the LPSC CSP.

## 2 Methodology

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In the preparation of this report, six (6) priority environmental themes of biodiversity, land, energy, waste, heritage and natural disasters were selected after a review of the objectives of the LPSC CSP and the strategies from the LPSC Delivery Program (DP). These themes also link with the suggested environmental themes for environmental management from the *Integrated Planning and Reporting Manual for local government in NSW* (NSW Division of Local Government, 2012).

For each environmental theme, relevant environmental issues have been identified using the Pressure-State-Response Model (OCED, 1993). These environmental issues encompass, for example, the increasing number of threatened and exotic species. Therefore, the Pressure-State-Response Model helps to facilitate consistency in terms of environmental reporting with previous SoE reports and the use of data to update environmental trends.

The Pressure-State-Response Model involves consideration of the following :-

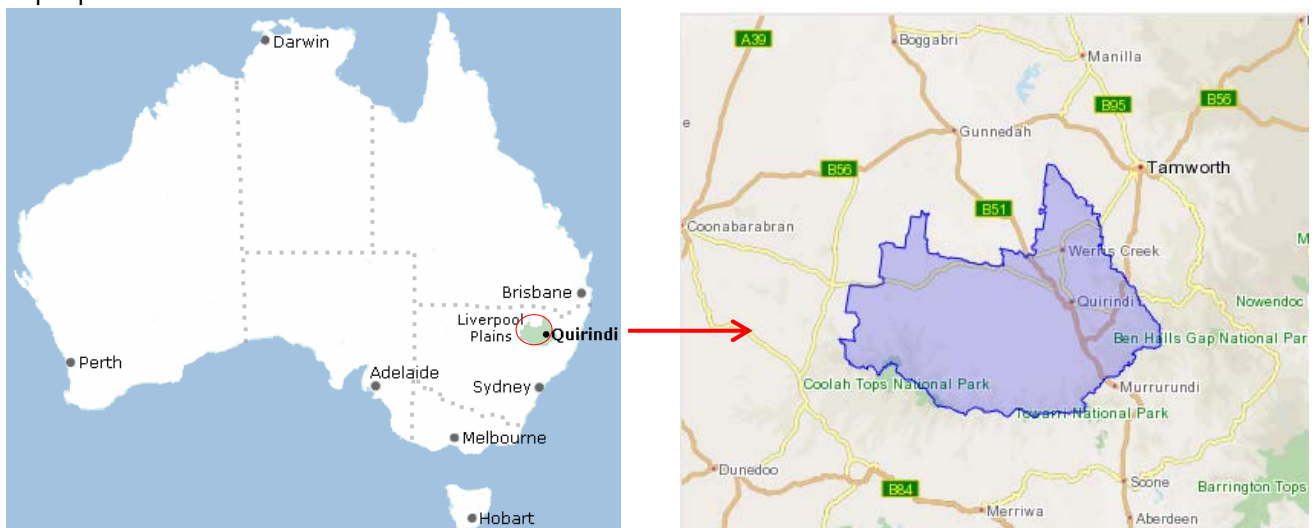
1. **Pressure** – human induced impacts (negative and positive) on the environment ascertained from socio economic and environmental indicators.
2. **State** – reflect the impact of the above pressures by quantifying the condition of the environment of effects on the environment whilst measuring outcomes of strategies and responses.
3. **Response** – specifically highlights planned, collective or individual action in response to indicator outcomes. These responses have been reviewed against the LPSC CSP and Delivery Program.

Furthermore, environmental indicators for each of the environmental objectives in the LPSC CSP have been established in relation to the strategies in the LPSC DP and associated actions in the Operational Plan (OP). Council's performance against the DP and OP for the 2012/2013 financial year is illustrated through the following symbols:

	Completed/on track
	Commenced/progressing
	Not completed

### 3 Our Shire

The Liverpool Plains Shire is located in the northwest of NSW approximately halfway between Sydney and Brisbane. The Liverpool Plains is home to the Kamilaroi people. Many small towns are spread throughout the Shire including; Premer, Spring Ridge, Currabubula, Wallabadah, Pine Ridge, Mount Parry, Ardglen, Carroona, Walhallow, Tamarang, Colly Blue, Bundella, Yarraman, Blackville, Old Warrah and Piallaway. Quirindi is the largest population centre providing the majority of the region's administrative, commercial, industrial and retail functions. Werris Creek and Willow Tree are smaller settlements, providing for the basic needs of local and surrounding populations.



**Figure 1. Location of the Liverpool Plains LGA.**

The Shire is located within the foothills of the Great Dividing Range and features a varied topography. The LGA is one of the most productive agricultural regions in Australia due to the prevalence of rich volcanic soils throughout the plains. These valuable agricultural lands support seasonal rotations of sunflowers, sorghum, canola, corn, lucerne, barley and wheat. Portions of the region are also located within the Sydney-Gunnedah coal basin, which is currently NSW's largest coal resource.



To find out more about the Liverpool Plains visit Council's website  
[www.lpsc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lpsc.nsw.gov.au)

### 3.1 Population

Liverpool Plains Shire features three major urban settlements, Quirindi, Werris Creek and Willow Tree with an estimated total regional population of 7,480 (ABS Census of Population, 2011). This estimate is a reduction on the previous year's estimate of 7,540 indicating a small reduction in population numbers. However, with recent developments in the mining industry, it is anticipated that population levels will be maintained and a modest population increase will be experienced in the short to medium term (5 to 10 years). Furthermore, it is anticipated that increased mining resource activity will facilitate the demand for temporary or permanent accommodation, mining-related goods and services, and encourage new development. However, as outlined in the *New England North West Strategic Land Use Plan* (NSW Government, 2012), the expected development associated with the rapid growth of the mining resource industry in the region will be constrained by issues such as accommodation availability, and land and water supply.

### 3.2 Geology

The Liverpool Plains Shire is composed of various landforms. These range from rugged country on the ranges to rolling hills, sedimentary slopes and open flood plains. Each aspect of the landform supports a unique ecosystem. These include, for example, the grassland ecosystem associated with the major lava field of the Liverpool Range. Weathering of the Tertiary Basalt forming the ranges has created the highly fertile black cracking clays of the Liverpool Plains. These soils support valuable dry land and irrigation cropping, pasture grazing, and intensive livestock industries.

## 4 Environmental Themes

### 4.1 Biodiversity

#### 4.1.1 Pressure

The Liverpool Plains LGA encompasses flat open plains to the north and west that extend into steep and undulating foothills to the east and south. As a result, there are a wide range of landscapes, soil types, geological formations and habitats present throughout the region. These ecosystems are under constant threat from activities, such as farming and development. For example, there are currently no plans to allow powerboat access to the Quipolly Dam for recreational purposes. However, should this occur the current prevalence of bird life (both temporary and permanent,) may be

Threatened habitat is also increasingly under pressure from pest and weed invasion as well as damage from exotic species and feral animals.

#### 4.1.2 State

The Liverpool Plains Biodiversity Strategy, which was prepared by Eco Logical Pty Ltd in 2010, outlines the biodiversity assets in the Liverpool Plains region. The following table provides a summary of key biodiversity assets:

**Table 1. Summary of Flora and Fauna in the Liverpool Plains region.**

Ecosystems	There is a variety of ecosystems within the Liverpool Plains LGA ranging from river floodplain and aquatic ecosystems to the forested foothills of the Great Dividing Range.
Vegetation Communities	25 distinct vegetation communities have been classified, 8 of which are classified as endangered under the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (TSC Act).
Flora	Two species of vascular plants are present in the Liverpool Plains LGA are listed under the NSW Legislation (TSC Act). There are three species that are matters of National Environmental Significance under Commonwealth legislation along with 7 other threatened species that may or are likely to occur in the LGA.



Fauna	<p>Nineteen NSW-listed threatened bird species have been recorded in Liverpool Plains, one of which is also listed as Threatened and one listed as Migratory under Commonwealth legislation (EPBC Act).</p> <p>There have been 20 NSW-listed mammal species recorded in the Liverpool Plains LGA; three of these are listed as Threatened under the EPBC Act. Three other nationally Threatened mammal species may or are also likely to occur in the area.</p> <p>Under the EPBC Act there is also 1 threatened frog, 1 threatened fish and 2 threatened reptile species that may or are likely to occur in the Liverpool Plains LGA. One of the reptile species has been recorded and is also listed as threatened under NSW legislation.</p>
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(Source: Eco Logical Pty Ltd).

Furthermore, the African Boxthorn was listed as a Weed of National Significance during the reporting period. A notable infestation of Alligator Weed also occurred along the Peel River and was monitored appropriately.

#### 4.1.3. Response

In accordance with the goals of the CSP, the listed strategies in the DP and the actions in the OP, the LPSC has undertaken the following activities as outlined in Table 2. Furthermore, LPSC Weed Officers continue to provide an essential service under the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993*. As a part of this service, a general environmental weed awareness campaign that is underpinned by support from the NSW Department of Primary Industries. The LPSC is the nominated Local Control Authority (LCA), which oversees the control of noxious weeds for the Liverpool Plains LGA. Council employs two (2) full time weeds officers who undertake property inspections, control work on Crown Land and the land for which Council has responsibility.

**Table 2. Council's Performance against Strategy 2.1 of the DP.**

Delivery Program Strategy 2.1 Support and develop programs which protect and enhance the Shire's natural environment and 'rural' character			
Operational Plan Actions 2013/14 – 2016/17	Environmental Indicator	Comments:	Status
<b>2.1.1 Undertake creek clearing projects</b>	Projects undertaken, health of rivers and creeks improved	Eight creek riparian zone rehabilitation projects, such as Henry Street Bridge, have been successfully undertaken by Council in the 2012 to 2013 financial year. These projects were achieved through a two stage process. Physical and spatial connectivity has been facilitated between sites to achieve a satisfactory standard of rehabilitation that enabled easy maintenance and encouraged the propagation of native species for future rehabilitation.	
<b>2.1.2 Seek grant funding opportunities</b>	Grants received	Council has prepared two grant funding applications from mining resource companies under their community enhancement funding programs. In total, these applications are seeking approximately \$300,000 to finance the rehabilitation of three urban riparian zones in Quirindi, Wallabadah and Werris Creek.	
<b>2.1.4 Undertake statutory functions in weed control</b>	People made aware of new and emerging weeds	An African Boxthorn awareness media campaign was launched to draw attention to the inclusion of the species as a Weeds of National Significance (WoNS).	

## 4.2 Land

### 4.2.1 Pressure

Land management is considered to be one of the most important issues currently concerning the Liverpool Plains LGA. The key issues impacting on land resources in the Shire are associated with:

- The development and extraction of coal resources in the Liverpool Plains and Gunnedah LGA's;
- Competition between agricultural activities and the development of coal resources on the fringes of the fertile Liverpool Plains;
- Soil degradation, erosion and salinity because of unsustainable farming practices and environmental factors;
- Soil contamination from competing land uses; and
- Supply of land for various purposes, such as residential, agriculture, commercial and industrial

### 4.2.2 State

#### 4.2.2.1 Salinity

The economic and environmental impacts of salinity predominantly occur on agricultural land. However, salinity also affects infrastructure, such as roads and buildings. Salinity in rivers and creeks can also potentially have an adverse impact on ecological systems and reduce biodiversity.

According to the Namoi CMA, the Liverpool Plains region is somewhat exposed to issues arising from salinity; however, they are not considered to be significant at this time. Recent developments to agricultural land management practices, including the introduction of drip irrigation systems, have greatly improved soil condition in the region. The long term impacts of salinity have also been reduced with the ongoing monitoring of groundwater tables.

#### 4.2.2.2 Erosion

The impacts of erosion, which occurs when land has been disturbed or where water has concentrated over time, can be far reaching. If left unchecked, decreased water quality, biodiversity decline and reduced land use potential are just some of the potential negative effects.

#### 4.2.2.3 Land supply

The Liverpool Plains Local Environmental Plan 2011 (LPLEP2011) and the Liverpool Plains Development Control Plan 2012 (LPDCP2012) are the primary planning instruments to guide development in the region. Both of these planning instruments help to protect and enhance the Shire's natural environment and rural character. Residential, commercial and industrial land monitoring has been recently completed by the LPSC in conjunction with the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

#### 4.2.2.4 Mining

In 2006, the State Government awarded BHP Billiton a 5 year exploration license to explore coal resources over ELA 6505. This exploration licence embraces an area of approximately 344 square kilometres surrounding the township of Caroonah. The ELA site also transverse the boundary of the Gunnedah and Liverpool Plains shires. This exploration license was renewed, with conditions, in 2011.

Residents and landholders within the ELA have raised various social and environmental concerns. These include:

- Impacts on aquifers
- Impacts on flooding
- Loss of prime agricultural land
- Social impacts
- Impacts on infrastructure
- Climate change
- The sustainability of mining
- Mining on a floodplain; and
- Impact of any mining substance

The Minister for Primary Industries has established the Caroonah Coal Consultative Committee ([www.caroonacoalcc.com.au](http://www.caroonacoalcc.com.au)) whose purpose is to provide a forum for open discussion between BHP Billiton ([www.bhpbilliton.com.au](http://www.bhpbilliton.com.au)), the appointed community representatives, other interested stakeholders and relevant Government stakeholders.

Furthermore, the shire's natural environment and 'rural' character is also protected through the development assessment process. Any application for

development must be subject to a comprehensive and rigorous Environmental Assessment process that identifies impacts so as to achieve the Namoi Catchment Management Plan Target " *Vibrant Communities and Landscapes for the Future*", being:

- A healthy resource base capable of providing ecological sustainability and productive outcomes
- A viable community sharing growth and access to services; and
- Socially satisfied communities with minimal conflict and providing opportunities for people of all backgrounds
- Consultation is continuing via the Caroona Coal Consultative Committee and recent updates of new developments and information release can be obtained from ([www.caroonacoalcc.com.au](http://www.caroonacoalcc.com.au))

#### 4.2.3 Response

Tables 3 -5 report on the progress of the LPSC in achieving the environmental objectives in the CSP through implementation of the DP and OP for the 2012/2013 reporting period. In addition to this information, the LPSC undertakes erosion mitigation activities at gully heads and roadside areas as required for managing and reducing potential erosion impacts.

**Table 3. Council's Performance against the Strategy 2.1 of the DP.**


Delivery Program Strategy 2.1 Support and develop programs which protect and enhance the Shire's natural environment and 'rural' character			
Operational Plan Actions 2013/14 – 2016/17	Environmental Indicator	Comments:	Status
<b>2.1.1 Ensure LEP and DCP protect rural areas</b>	LEP and DCP adequately protect the environment, rural character maintained	Both the Liverpool Plains Local Environmental Plan 2011 (LPLEP 2011) and the Liverpool Plains Development Control Plan 2012 (LPDCP 2012) contain provisions that help to protect and enhance the Shire's natural environment and rural character. For example, Clause 4.2A in the LPLEP 2011 regulates the construction of dwellings in certain rural, residential and environmental protection zones. Clause 4.2A aims to minimise unplanned rural residential development and to enable the replacement of lawfully erected dwelling houses within specified zones. Together with State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP), such as the SEPP Rural Lands (2008), the LPLEP 2011 and LPDCP 2012 are effectively protecting rural areas.	



Table 4. Council's Performance against Strategy 2.6 of the DP.





Delivery Program Strategy 2.6 Ensure the importance of the black soil Liverpool Plains to agricultural production and wealth of the Shire, Region and State will be recognised			
Operational Plan Actions 2013/14 – 2016/17	Environmental Indicator	Comments:	Status
<b>2.6.1 Advocate for greater protection of black soil plains and water aquifer from mining and gas extraction</b>  <b>Encourage sustainable farming and technologies</b>	Mining and gas approvals do not allow encroachment on the black soil plains  Aquifers protected	Council has advocated for the protection of vital agricultural and existing natural resources throughout the reporting period. Various submissions to the NSW State Government in respect of a broad range of policy matters. These include an Aquifer Interference Policy, New England and North West Strategic Land Use Plan, and amendments to State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007.  Submissions have also been made on the Watermark EIS.	

Table 5. Council's Performance against Strategy 2.2 of the DP.

Delivery Program Strategy 2.2		Ensure that environmental and development standards satisfy community needs and aspirations		
Operational Plan Actions 2013/14 – 2016/17	Environmental Indicator	Comments:		Status
<b>2.2.2 Council will review its LEP every 5 years</b>	LEP reviewed every 5 years	Scheduled review of the LPLEP 2011 is midway through available five year operation period. Specific areas of the LPLEP 2011 have been identified for closer scrutiny in 2015. This process is also largely dependent on progress with the NSW planning reform program being delivered by the NSW State Government.		
<b>2.2.2 The development control plan will be reviewed and implemented to provide guidance for the sustainable development of the Shire</b>	DCP reviewed	The LPDCP 2012 was introduced in May 2012 and complements the LPLEP 2011. Progressive review of the adequacy and suitability of planning controls, and associated standards, of the DCP is being undertaken.		
	Level of community satisfaction in surveys for management of development	Community education activities, such as post meeting press releases, have been undertaken in order to assist community understanding of the purpose and role of the LPDCP 2012. The biannual community surveys are beginning to reflect this improved level of community knowledge.		

## 4.3 Natural disasters

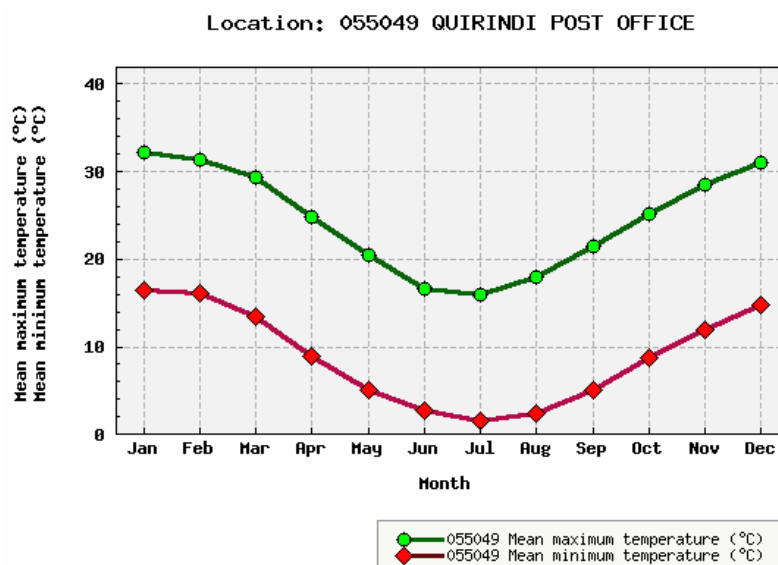
### 4.3.1 Pressure

Natural disasters can include floods, severe storms, bushfires, droughts, heat waves, earthquakes and tsunamis. With a sizeable area of the Liverpool Plains LGA being prone to bushfires or flooding, natural disasters are an important issue concerning the safety of residents and viability of industries in the region. Moreover, academic literature is increasingly suggesting that the incidence and intensity of extreme weather events is likely to increase if global warming induced climate change continues into the future (IPCC, 2007).

### 4.3.2 State

#### 4.3.2.1 Climate

The Liverpool Plains Shire experiences a temperate climate with summer dominant rainfall. The annual rainfall recorded for 2012 was 612mm with significant falls over the summer months (Bureau of Meteorology, 2013). The average daily maximum temperature is 24.6°C. The average daily minimum temperature is 8.9 °C. In addition, the region is prone to drought, bushfire and flooding; however, losses to life, property and/or livestock are relatively rare.



Australian Government  
Bureau of Meteorology

Figure 2. Mean maximum and minimum temperatures for Quirindi.

#### 4.3.2.2 Drought and Floods

The NSW Department of Industry and Investment produces monthly drought maps based on information provided by 14 Livestock Health and Pest Authorities around the state, rainfall data from the Bureau of Meteorology and reports from the Department of Primary Industries.

Drought classification of an area takes into account the following factors:

- Pasture availability
- Climate events, such as frosts; and
- Seasonal factors such as pasture growing seasons

The drought maps presented below (refer to Figures 3 and 4) illustrate notable drying across the northern half of NSW from June 2012 to December 2012. The Central North area was drought declared in November 2009 but has gradually fluctuated between satisfactory/marginal conditions until December 2012.

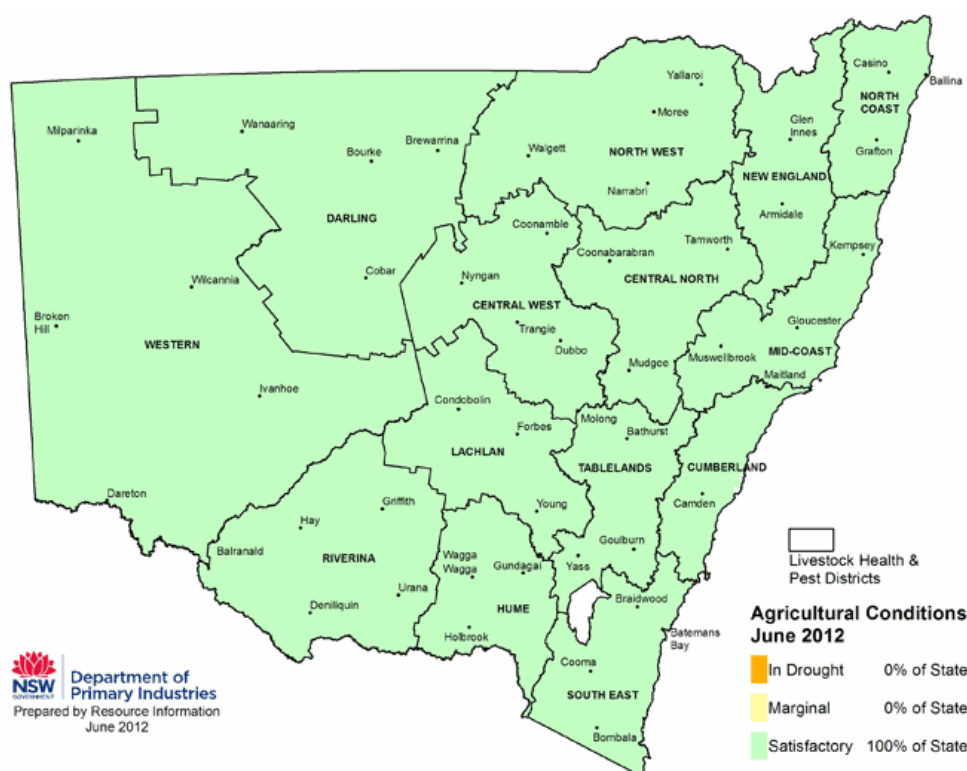


Figure 3. Drought Map June 2012.





### 4.3.3 Response

As Table 6 illustrates, emergency services in the Liverpool Plains LGA continue to receive annual operational support from the LPSC. Some key upcoming priorities will be the development and review of a modern EMPlan, and the completion of community surveys.

In accordance with recommendations by Council's insurer, Statewide Pty Ltd, additional review and analysis tools have been incorporated into Council's development assessment and planning systems. The application of industry best practice, commensurate with community education in respect of the implications of climate change, will go some way to ensuring that the Liverpool Plains community is in a better position to cope with the unpredictable effects and implications of climate change.

**Table. 6 Council's performance against Strategy 2.3 of the DP.**

Delivery Program Strategy 2.3 Assist in the provision of infrastructure and resources associated with the emergency services requirements of The Shire			
Operational Plan Actions 2013/14 – 2016/17	Environmental Indicator	Comments:	Status
<b>2.3.1 Provision of funding and accommodation in annual operational plans for the RFS, VRA and SES</b>	Level of community satisfaction in surveys for emergency services compared to benchmark	Identified community services organisations, such as the Rural Fire Service (RFS), continue to receive annual operational support from Council. Community satisfaction indicators continue to show positive trends and inter-organisational corporation level are high.	
<b>2.3.2 A comprehensive emergency management response and capacity plan will be developed through the EMPlan</b>	EMPlan developed and reviewed in conjunction with agencies, such as NSW FB, NSW RFS, SES, VRA, Police and Department of Health.	The current DISPlan is still operational and will be converted to a modern EMPlan by June 2014 when the template framework model is released for use by the LPSC Local Emergency Management Committee.	



## 4.5 Energy


### 4.5.1 Pressure

The consumption of non-renewable energy resources places significant pressure on the environment, not only from the manufacturing and distribution of goods, but throughout the life-cycle of a product. Pressure on the environment occurs throughout the production, use and disposal of resources. Population growth has also substantially increased the environmental impacts associated with the use of non-renewable energy resources, and often significantly influences the cost and supply of products.

### 4.5.2 Response

Table 7 outlines Council's achievements in using resources wisely to reduce its ecological footprint.

Table. 7 Council's performance against Strategy 2.4 of the DP.

Delivery Program Strategy 2.4 Council uses its resources wisely to reduce its ecological footprint			
Operational Plan Actions 2013/14 – 2016/17	Environmental Indicator	Comments:	Status
<b>2.4.1 Implement results of water, waste and energy audits from Namoi towards a sustainable future project when funding permits</b>	Council's ecological footprint	The sustainable future project was reduced in its areas of investigation and practical implementation due to insufficient funding. Areas of water, waste and energy efficiency that were identified in the project have been progressively applied to Council's built assets. For example, solar hot water systems have been installed at the Werris Creek and Quirindi swimming pools, and the Quirindi showground.	

## 4.6 Waste

### 4.6.1 Pressure

LPSC measured approximately 465 tonnes of recyclable waste in 2012/2013. This statistic is expected to increase commensurate with population growth driven from the mining resource sector across the region. With this projected increase in the supply and demand of goods and services, Council has implemented strategies, contracts and actions to ensure public amenity is maintained to a high level, as demand on all resources inevitably increases across the region.

Illegal dumping has also been a recurrent and problematic issue across the Liverpool Plains LGA during the reporting period.

### 4.6.2 State

LPSC promotes recycling and waste minimisation. Council encourages residents to compost food scraps and other decomposable materials for use in their own garden via an ongoing community education campaign.

Council operates a contract agreement with JR Richard's & Sons for kerb side waste collection and recycling services throughout the region. The Quirindi Aboriginal Corporation also undertakes site management at the Quirindi landfill and operates a recycling business.

Council's waste management activities and programs for the 2012/2013 financial year are listed in Table 8.

**Table 8. Waste generation LPSC.**

Waste Category	Total Waste (tonnes)
Municipal solid waste (MSW)	2895.58
Commercial and industrial waste	23
Construction and demolition waste	815
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3733.59</b>

**Table. 9 Waste reduction programs for LPSC.**

Details of Program	Household/Persons
Kerbside collection of co-mingled recyclables	2723
Annual bulky waste collection	2609
Drum MUSTER (chemical storage recycling)	Shire-wide
Chemical collection	Shire-wide
Used oil collection	Shire-wide

#### 4.6.3 Response

Within the CSP, the LPSC has identified three key actions to help to ensure that best practice principles are adopted for waste management and recycling. Council's progress in achieving the environmental objectives of the CSP are summarised in Table 8.

In addition, the LPSC has undertaken a pilot program within the Environmental Protection Authority's (EPA) Contaminated Land Management Program to address contamination from derelict Underground Petroleum Storage System (UPSS) sites. A UPSS site in Wallabadah was selected for the pilot program with remediation works commencing during the reporting period.

Table. 10 Council's performance against Strategy 2.7 of the Delivery Program.

Delivery Program Strategy 2.7 Ensure best practice principles are adopted for waste management and recycling			
Operational Plan Actions 2013/14 – 2016/17	Environmental Indicator	Comments:	Status
<b>2.7.1 Expand waste resource services and facilities</b>	Consider and determine the introduction of green waste bins	Results from the March 2013 LPSC Community Research Report revealed that only 28% of residents in the Liverpool Plains Local Government Area were interested in an additional fortnightly green waste bin at an annual cost of \$110.	✓
	Level of community satisfaction in surveys and compared to benchmarks		✗
<b>2.7.2 Increase education to community on benefit of recycling</b>	Education program implemented	A Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery School Education program held during 17 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> September 2012. All schools in the Shire were invited to participate. Presentations were held at Blackville Public, St Joseph's Primary, Walhallow Public, Premer Public, Quirindi Public and Werris Creek Public. The presentations were well received and will become an annual component of the Waste Education program.	✓

	Waste to Art (Waste>Art) Program Implemented	The Waste>Art competition resulted in a well-supported and publicised awards presentation. The focus of the education program through our waste contractors continues to be implemented in local primary and secondary schools.	✓
<b>2.7.3 Develop a waste management strategy</b>	Waste management strategy developed	Necessary components of the waste management strategy are well advanced with individual management plans being prepared for both smaller rural landfill sites and the three major urban landfill sites. The overall strategy showing interactions between those sites and the two transfer stations are scheduled for completion by 2014.	↻



## 4.7 Heritage

### 4.7.1. Indigenous and Historic (European Cultural) Heritage – Pressure

Both Indigenous and historic heritage may be threatened by development and/or a lack of appropriate management and awareness. The key threats to historic heritage in the Liverpool Plains Shire include:

- Land use conflict
- Development
- Road and other infrastructure upgrades; and
- Community awareness

Under Section 86(4) of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, it is an offence to harm or desecrate a designated Aboriginal place or Aboriginal artefact. Harm includes destroying, defacing or damaging an Indigenous heritage item or place.

### 4.7.2 Indigenous and historic Heritage – State

Development on sites of Indigenous and historic heritage significance has the potential to be permanently harmed and contribute to the deterioration of the heritage in the region. In 2009, 65 artefacts and/or significant places of Indigenous heritage were recorded throughout the Liverpool Plains LGA. In comparison, 104 historic heritage items were recorded in the Shire.

### 4.7.3 Response

Table 9 outlines Council's progress towards retaining, restoring and protecting features of the Shire's heritage. In addition to the listed actions in Table 9, the LPSC strives to protect the Shire's heritage through:

- Mapping heritage items and sites as part of the LPLEP2011 process;
- Local heritage funding as an incentive to maintain buildings with historical, cultural and heritage value that adds to the ambience, character and amenity of our built environment;

Table. 11 Council's performance against Strategy 2.5 of the DP.

Delivery Program Strategy 2.5 Council will work for the retention, restoration and protection of the Shire's heritage			
Operational Plan Actions 2013/14 – 2016/17	Environmental Indicator	Comments:	Status
<b>2.5.1 Complete a community heritage plan</b>	Heritage Plan completed	The Heritage Plan has been completed, adopted and advertised accordingly by Council. The Werris Creek Main Street Study has also been completed.	✓
	Obtain funding for a shire wide Aboriginal Heritage Study	Preliminary investigations undertaken; however, project constrained due to resource constraints	✗

## 5 Summary of Environmental Trends

**Table 12. Environmental Trend Summary**

Environmental Issue	Trend	Comments
Biodiversity	Increasing	Continuing pressures from development, exotic species and environmental conditions
Land	Increasing	Continuing pressures on demand and supply of resources as development continues across the region
Natural disasters	Increasing	Continuing threats from bushfires and flooding
Energy	Increasing	Reducing Council's ecological footprint is an important concern for sustainability
Waste	Increasing	Waste recycling is paramount to sustainability and population pressures
Heritage	Steady	Increasing vigilance and recognition of heritage items through planning instruments is helping their long term protection and management

## 6 Conclusion

To a large extent, the LPSC has commenced the specified DP strategies and OP actions to achieve the environmental objectives from the LPSC CSP. However, due to the limited resources, LPSC has prepared this SoE report with information and data available at the time. Absent data has been noted for inclusion in future SoE Reports, enabling Council to detail environmental trends occurring within the Shire through various environmental indicators and to measure Council's achievements in addressing the environmental

objectives of the CSP.

## 7 Where to from here?

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An environmental monitoring program on key performance indicators should be continued in coming years. This will help to demonstrate Council's accountability to the community as a leader of environmental management, and make the compiling of data for the next End of Term and SoE report easier.

The opportunity also exists to for Council to engage with other relevant organisations in the region to develop a system of monitoring, evaluation and reporting that involves collaboration across various levels (local/regional/state). For example, the LPSC participated in the 2007/08 Namoi Regional State of the Environment Report. Therefore, it is recommended that Council investigates the option of participating in another regional state of the environment-type review to help inform the CSP.

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## **APPENDIX "B"**

### **Social Plan, Cultural Plan and Disability Action Plan**



# Liverpool Plains Shire Council Social Plan

2010-15





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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

### **HOW WELL ARE THE SOCIAL NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY BEING MET?**

The social needs of people living in the Liverpool Plains Shire are being well met. Long-term residents are generally happy with the services and facilities available across the Shire. People are positive about the towns and villages and believe in their future. Families are being drawn to the Shire because it offers an affordable alternative to city living. Many self funded retirees are making the area their home, bypassing the lure of the more expensive coastal regions. The prospect of new industry and jobs is also expected to bring workers and their families to the area. The Shires proximity to the major regional centre of Tamworth, and access to specialist medical services, schools, shopping centres and employment are providing further incentives for people to locate to the Shire. Overall, existing and new residents are recognizing the benefits of living in the Liverpool Plains Local Government Area.

Liverpool Plains Shire Council and the local community need to plan for the future. The people of the Shire must continue to strive towards achieving their vision of higher levels of growth, quality of life and expanded opportunities for economic and social development within the framework of ecological sustainability. Access, equity and social issues are integral to this vision.

### **PRIORITY NEEDS**

Many of the needs identified in this plan are not strictly social issues. Rural communities have many economic and environmental challenges to overcome. It would be short sighted and counter productive to isolate any one of these issues from the other.

Similarly, some of the actions and needs identified in this report are not strictly a Council responsibility. However, Council is committed to act as a facilitator for the provision of new and expanded services. This will involve exploring new funding opportunities, lobbying for appropriate legislation, developing new networks, and stimulating economic growth and prosperity in the Shire.

The action plans in Section 5 of this report details the role Council can take and highlights the respective community and government partnerships required to facilitate change.

### **KEY STRATEGIES**

#### **Provide Recreational Opportunities**

Meeting the needs of younger people is a high priority. Council is aware that keeping younger people engaged and involved in the community can help them to develop into caring and responsible adults.

Opportunities afforded from facilities such as the Quirindi Recreation Centre continue to provide new social and recreational activities for younger people, particularly those less than 18 years of age.

Council is committed to developing sporting/recreational facilities across the Shire. The development of a walking path, cycleway and skate park are all initiatives that will improve the amenities available for youth to pursue leisure activities. Council is endeavouring to construct shade sails in all parks and sporting ovals throughout the Shire.

### **Indigenous Access to the Community**

The Aboriginal community must have access to the economic resources and services essential to meeting their basic needs and improving quality of life. The employment of a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) is one way the Aboriginal Community can increase opportunities for participation and consultation on local issues. This will ensure that cultural considerations are integrated into the broader community. Walhallow's inclusion into the Liverpool Plains Local Government Area as a result of amalgamation has magnified the need for this role.

Council can facilitate the employment of a Community Liaison Officer by the Aboriginal Community.

### **Community Development & Participation**

Community development requires the engagement and participation of all sectors of the population. Liverpool Plains Shire Council has continued to engage the community through facilitation and the provision of scholarships, grants, information resources and various employment opportunities.

There is a need for stronger volunteer participation within the community. Too few individuals currently maintain the many voluntary roles that are available. The majority of volunteers within the community generally belong to the 'older persons' demographic and very little recruitment of younger people is occurring.

Stronger community-driven leadership will encourage participation from organisations and individuals to contribute to the Shire in a more positive and productive way.

### **Maintain Health Care Services at current levels**

Liverpool Plains Shire has continued to maintain a high level of Health Care Services, whilst many other communities throughout the State have experienced a gradual decline. Quirindi is well served by three (3) Doctors and three (3) Dentists.. The hospital has a 24-hour Emergency Department.

The Community is continuing to build on the current level of services whilst building partnerships with Hunter New England Health and other health agencies, to provide opportunities for improved Health Care. Construction of HealthOne in Quirindi will commence in February 2010.

The construction of the Werris Creeks Multi Purpose Centre has been initiated and this will have very positive benefits to Werris Creek people.

### **Maintain Home & Community Care Services (HACC)**

Liverpool Plains Shire Council has proudly supported the HACC program over a number of years, a service that provides social support for the less independent within the community. The HACC Program is a joint Commonwealth/State program that provides help to frail aged people, younger people with disabilities and their carers so they can remain at home and avoid inappropriate or premature admission to residential care. Council will continue to promote, maintain and build on the services currently provided by HACC. Council's commitment to the expansion of HACC services has resulted in the opening of the Willow Tree HACC Outreach Centre three days per week. Willow Tree HACC will eventually be housed in the new Interpretive Centre which will be in operation early in 2010. It is hoped that the Community of Currabubula will be the next centre to benefit from the presence of a HACC service in their community. Council has also purchased the former ambulance house which will be refurbished and converted to the new HACC office for the residents of Quirindi.

### **Increase cultural opportunities**

While the Shires sporting needs are extremely well met and various cultural activities exist, there is room for improvement. Two specific examples include:

- (1) The Royal Theatre is currently undergoing extensive renovation and will be an important cultural centre for the community. This will be the major venue for community celebrations, presentations, live performance as well as a cinema.
- (2) Promoting multicultural events and multiculturalism in the community. Council will carefully monitor new settlers to identify any emerging population sub-groups requiring particular recognition.

### **Promote natural resource management and build on the Shire's environmental record**

Liverpool Plains Shire Council has implemented progressive natural resource management projects, standing up as a regional leader in the promotion of Landcare and river restoration projects. Given the rural nature of the shire, and the close links between the natural environment, economic prosperity and social well being, Council will continue to strengthen these existing initiatives, through ongoing and active partnerships with the Namoi Catchment Management Authority.

Regenesis is a joint initiative of Sister Cities, Blacktown City Council and Liverpool Plains Shire Council. The NSW Environmental trust has granted this alliance \$2 million to establish the Regenesis project. The partnership will allow for large tracts of public and privately owned land to be utilized for biodiversity plantings and carbon storage. Regenesis revegetation projects are planted in accordance with accredited carbon trading requirements. Through the Regenesis project, those with the carbon sequestration rights on the planted land will receive carbon certificates that have a dollar value and are tradable. Regenesis will operate through the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme once that scheme is operational. Regenesis funding has also allowed Liverpool Plains Shire Council to develop a biodiversity strategy to assist Council's planning functions.

Liverpool Plains Shire Council will work closely with BHP, landholders and relevant Government bodies to ensure that all mining exploration is carried out without any disruption to farming practices or to the detriment of the land or the water tables beneath the land.

BHP is currently contributing towards a water study to look at the interconnectivity of the aquifers. Landholders and community members are also concerned about mining effects on dust levels and subsidence.

Chinese mining company Shenhua will also have an impact on the Liverpool Plains although it is not within the shire. Shenhua has been granted an exploration licence to search for coal however the company will be dealing with Gunnedah Shire Council.

Santos has commenced coal seam gas exploration in the Shire.

The Green is the New Black project will engage auditors for waste water and electricity and then implement measures to reduce the amounts generated

### **Maintain 'Aged Care' facilities and Services**

Quirindi Retirement Homes Ltd has constructed the "Eloura" Aged Care facility. This is a 90 bed retirement home with a dedicated dementia wing. The home is constructed in the Quirindi Hospital grounds.

The community must ensure that a range of Aged Care facilities and services are provided for the aging population, particularly a choice of residential living opportunities.

Home & Community Care (HACC) will continue to provide a range of services to the aged population including:

- Transport services via a car to Tamworth or Newcastle for medical appointments;
- Medical bus to Tamworth;
- Bus to Tamworth Hydrotherapy pool;
- Shopping access transport; and
- Monthly shopping/medical access bus from Premer to Tamworth.
- Respite to carers.

## **FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Release new land to meet future demands associated with the town's growth**

Quirindi and Werris Creek, like many other regional centres, are experiencing a boom with demand far outweighing supply. There is a critical shortage of rental accommodation and this is an issue for potential new residents. Council is reviewing the Liverpool Plains Shire Local Environmental Plan (LEP) which will allow for the release of new land for residential and industrial expansion however this is possibly two years away. The residential streetscape in Quirindi and Werris Creek are both important initiatives that will continue over the next five years.

Commercial accommodation within the Shire is particularly limited and there is a pressing need for the development of at least one new motel.

### **Promotion of local produce**

Quirindi has had a marked increase in the number of restaurants opening. A new café and pizzeria has recently opened and several of the hotels have engaged chefs who are providing good quality meals at a reasonable price. Council encourages all new enterprises and hopes that locals support these new businesses.

### **Promote Quirindi as a centre of equine sporting excellence**

The Liverpool Plains Shire is recognised as a place of sporting excellence, offering a range of high quality sporting grounds and facilities. The Shire is in a good position to market the regions sporting lifestyle opportunities. For example, many of the traditional horse areas of the Upper Hunter have increased in popularity, making it difficult for newcomers to purchase land due to inflated real estate prices. Quirindi's close proximity to the Hunter, its sensible real estate prices, and the Shires generous provision of equine facilities, make it a sound alternative to the latter.

The Shires' reputation for equine and sporting excellence has the potential to attract new people with new skills, ideas, professions and social interests.

### **Maintain position of Community Services Coordinator**

A Community Services Coordinator (CSO) is required by LPSC to facilitate the further expansion of services in the Shire.

The CSO is involved in ensuring issues of Access & Equity, coordinating the HACC program and working with other agencies to manage and coordinate Council's community initiatives.



### **Promote local shopping opportunities**

Economic growth will drive local demand for goods and services. Currently many consumers within the community are purchasing goods and services from Tamworth and other centres. Council's role in promoting retail and service delivery in Quirindi will strengthen consumer demand for 'home' product, and encourage the community to shop locally. The opening of Carlo's IGA has given Quirindi a much needed retail boost. The store has given customers a much wider variety of goods at reasonably competitive prices.

Additionally, the opportunities associated with local shopping will be enhanced through increased competition and a broadening of the range of goods and services available to the consumer. Council is aware of the need for improved visual amenity and retail ambience within the Central Business District, and has continued to improve town facilities through the Streetscape initiative.

### **Insulate the Community from agricultural downturn**

Council is continuing to promote new industry and investment within the Shire, not aligned to the regional rural economy. The agricultural sector will continue to be an integral part of the Shires cultural, social and economic future. However, Council is aware that by supporting non-agricultural investment, the Shire will be buffered from rural downturns brought about by variable climatic conditions and/or rural commodity fluctuations. The opening of McVicar's sawmill and possible expansion of Coalmines in the region are examples of economic diversification to protect existing businesses from fluctuations.

## REVIEW OF ISSUES BY TARGET GROUPS

	TRANSPORT	EMPLOYMENT	COMMUNITY FACILITIES	SAFETY/CRIME PREVENTION	HEALTH	EDUCATION	RECREATION	CULTURE	ENVIRONMENT
<b>Children</b>  <b>0-11 years</b>	<p>Affordable access to pre-school.</p> <p>It is expensive for volunteers to obtain a bus licence.</p> <p>To provide for Walhallow children to access services</p> <p>Access to Quirindi Services from outlying areas</p>		<p>Many of the volunteer groups have limited support and funding</p> <p>Interagency support for children's community groups, eg Birth to Beyond-voluntary groups with limited funding and support, eg Inability to use main street for Book Parade.</p> <p>There is no group to help young mothers connect to gain support. Those that are new to town have difficulty finding out about available services as they have no extended networks.</p>		<p>Access to health services.</p> <p>There is no local breastfeeding support group eg ABA.</p> <p>No public funded dental services locally. As referrals are prioritised and needs based the waiting list is very long.</p>	<p>There is a shortage of after school care in Werris Creek, Willow Tree, Wallabadah, Spring Ridge.</p> <p>Continue NW Life Education</p> <p>Affordable access to Preschool-not eligible for childcare benefit subsidy</p> <p>Assist preschool to maintain services</p>	<p>Sun protection on play equipment</p>		

<b>Young People</b>  <b>12-25 years</b>	<p>Transport to access holiday activities &amp; promote paths and cycleways</p>	<p>Apprenticeships are very hard to come by.</p>	<p>There is no forum for youth to have their say and the formation of a Youth Council would be advantageous.</p>	<p>Street lights are not sufficient in some areas.</p>	<p>Access to health services – limited advertising of services in the places that people attend.</p>	<p>Continue to provide scholarships.</p>	<p>Recreational facilities at Recreational Centre. Increase activities ie Big Day In</p>	<p>There is no recognition of different culture within schools or Council.</p>	<p>Concern of the impact of coal mines on the environment eg impact on aquifers, dust, farming and subsidence.</p>
	<p>Access to Quirindi services from outlying areas- limited transport options, limited options on weekends, after hours transport, limited footpaths.</p> <p>Outlying villages such as Willow Tree, Wallabadah, Werris Creek and Spring Ridge find it difficult to access entertainment if parents are unable to help out.</p> <p>Representative sport is hard to attend as travelling costs are so expensive.</p>	<p>Increase the number of school based traineeships.</p> <p>There needs to be more liaison between High Schools and large employers like BHP so that students are choosing electives that will be beneficial in obtaining employment.</p>	<p>There is no Youth Officer available to represent youth and their concerns.</p>	<p>Counselling services and Social Workers need to be available and courses on anger management need to be accessible.</p>	<p>Poor access to sexual health and lifestyle health services eg quit smoking.</p> <p>Young people need to be better informed about what services are available and there is often a lack of knowledge about health issues.</p> <p>There is no way for youth to access information on sexual health.</p> <p>There is no female doctor in town and they need incentives to stay.</p> <p>The ambulance service is very expensive and therefore not always accessible to all.</p>	<p>Council Youth Committee formed &amp; provides programs for youth development.</p> <p>There needs to be more access to computers and tutoring available to those who cannot afford it.</p> <p>The local High School has a high staff turnover making it difficult for students to develop successful study habits especially in Year 11 and 12.</p> <p>School uniforms are outdated and a strict uniform policy is not enforced.</p> <p>There are very few national or international excursions..</p>	<p>Sporting facilities to promote general exercise- walking/cycling track, pool hours earlier/later, cover pool to allow full year access.</p> <p>Exorbitant cost of sporting activities/groups preclude the disadvantaged</p> <p>There are not many activities for youth later at night.</p> <p>Facilities such as the Recreation Centre and the picture theatre are not being fully utilised for youth activities.</p>	<p>Visitors from overseas need to be encouraged and initiatives like an International Sister City. need to be encouraged.</p>	<p>There has been a lack of community consultation for and against the development of coal mining in the shire.</p>

<p><b>Women</b></p>	<p>Limited transport options</p> <p>Limited options on the weekends and after hours transport.</p> <p>People are not always fully aware of transport options eg taxi vouchers, community transport, transport for Health.</p> <p>Access to Quirindi Services from outlying areas</p>		<p>Dept of Women visits.</p> <p>Encourage participation on boards &amp; committees.</p> <p>There are limited options for short term childcare especially High School aged children with special needs.</p> <p>There is only one baby shopping=trolley at Carlo's IGA.</p> <p>Any parent with twins or several toddlers and a baby would find shopping difficult.</p> <p>Many young women are socially isolated</p> <p>The close proximity of Tamworth means there is no full time Family Support office, Centre Care or access to the women's refuge.</p> <p>Provide increased access to child care</p>	<p>Active campaign against domestic violence &amp; support women's programs</p> <p>Increased levels of domestic violence.</p> <p>Under reporting of domestic violence.</p> <p>Access to services, eg Women's Refuge, support services, Police, "Safe Home"</p> <p>Oxley area command are concerned that Liverpool Plains Shire has been poorly funded in the area of Family Services.</p>	<p>Limited advertising of services in the places that people attend.</p> <p>Sexual health and mental health.</p> <p>There are no female doctors in the district and the women's Health Nurse position at Community Health is vacant.</p>		<p>Poor access to social activities ie limited availability of restaurants, entertainment options after hours</p>	<p>Explore new cultural opportunities</p>	
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<p><b>Older People</b></p>	<p>Maintain community transport options.</p> <p>Transport is limited on weekends.</p> <p>Footpaths are not always present.</p> <p>Target group needs to be made more aware of transport options.</p> <p>The only community bus is the Community Health bus which is often not available and its size limits the number of people that can attend activities.</p>		<p>Promote HACC Services</p> <p>Recruit volunteers for HACC Services</p> <p>Expand HACC Services into Currabubula.</p> <p>There needs to be more support for carers when client transitioning to residential aged care services.</p> <p>Older people are continuing to drive when they are not always safe to do so.</p> <p>Aged Care services are not communicating with each other and they are missing opportunities where referrals could be made to better meet the needs of clients.</p> <p>The cost of residential care is immense so it is important that people be made aware of services that will allow them to remain in their homes for longer periods.</p>		<p>There are no counselling/grief services for clients and or carers at aged care facilities.</p> <p>Clients need to be more aware services that are available through the Anglican Counselling services and Hunter New England Health.</p> <p>There is limited utilisation of Health Services by clients in residential aged care services.</p>		<p>Clients are not aware of the HACC shopping bus, taxi vouchers and transport for Health. The private town bus does not pick up or drop off in the main street or near Shaw's or Carlos.</p> <p>There is a certain stigma attached to attending Day Centres with both carers and clients. Clients in the general community need to be encouraged to use these services as well as clients from the Aged Care facilities as they are an excellent opportunity for social interaction.</p> <p>A lot of clients are not accessing trips because of lack of facilities at a lot of the venues.</p>	<p>Support Seniors Week &amp; continue to support services of HACC in the community Support given</p>	
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<b>People with disabilities</b>	<p>Declining numbers of volunteers are making it more difficult for people with disabilities to remain in their home.</p>		<p>The Quirindi Library disabled toilets are unable to be accessed by someone in a powered wheelchair.</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for short term respite care and carers for disabled</p>	<p>Community Health, HACC, Transport for Health and similar need to promote services they have available to ensure that as many residents as possible have access.</p>	<p>There is no after school or holiday funding for children with a disability over 12 years.</p>	<p>There are no recreational activities that can be accessed at present especially for youth. Clients are too young to even want to attend Day Centres and too severely physically disabled to access HACC services easily.</p>	<p>Support access issues through LPSC Disability Access Committee</p>	
	<p>Maintain and expand disabled parking services.</p> <p>Access to the Florist, NAB, Paper Shop, Hotels, Courthouse and Police Station.</p> <p>There is no designated Disabled parking between the Courthouse and IGA. Motorists are often parked in front of ramps. Even small steps are difficult to negotiate for people using a powered wheelchair.</p> <p>There is no disabled symbol on the road at disabled parking spaces.</p> <p>At present disabled passengers are forced to go in front of their vehicles and into the line of traffic to access the disabled ramp.</p>		<p>There are a lack of disabled facilities at Bell Park and Golland Fields. There are not enough picnic tables at Golland Fields and Bell Park. Both of these sites are flat and ideal for activities for people with a disability.</p> <p>There is no after school or respite centres for carers of children over the age of 12 years who have a disability.</p> <p>Some form of respite is needed urgently within the Shire.</p>		<p>There is a large gap in service from independent living to Low Care facilities.</p>	<p>Long Day Care and Family Day Care can only manage children up to 12 years as the safety of younger children must be considered especially when behavioural problems are indicated.</p> <p>Funding and facilities are geared more towards community members with intellectual disabilities rather than physical disabilities and their carers are left in the mainstream.</p>			

<b>Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Is.</b>	<p>Improve and provide a range of transport options</p> <p>Access to Quirindi services from outlying areas- Limited transport options, limited options on weekends, after hours transport, limited footpaths (Walhallow to Caroonna shops)</p> <p>Access to driver training.</p> <p>There needs to be provision made for a check in station for child restraints.</p>	<p>The CDEP local apprenticeship initiative has been discontinued.</p> <p>An indigenous administered housing initiative could include builders, plumbers etc.</p> <p>There is not enough focus on female employment.</p>	<p>Include in Community Directory</p> <p>Develop partnership agreement</p> <p>Poor access/visibility to Social &amp; Wellbeing Centre-flights of steps precludes disabled access</p> <p>Acknowledgement to traditional people of the land eg plaque in council reception and other significant public areas-self determination of local Aboriginal population.</p> <p>There is no community Shop at Walhallow any more. Shop needs to reopen so that residents can have more healthy choices.</p>	<p>Employ Indigenous Liaison Officer.</p> <p>It is very difficult to access the Women's Refuge and there is no Safe house in the Shire.</p>	<p>Investigate Outreach Services</p> <p>Access to services- limited advertising of services in the places that people attend.</p> <p>Limited access to sexual health and lifestyle health services, eg Quit Smoking-no local services for these issues.</p> <p>Oral Health Services-no public funded dental services locally.</p>	<p>Promote pre school participation &amp; occasional care</p>	<p>There are not enough subsidies available for sporting groups making membership expensive and difficult to access for many families.</p>	<p>Need to establish a Keeping Place and mentoring program.</p> <p>There is no suitable venue for meetings of parenting groups . Funding for these groups is limited and they cannot always afford Council's fees and charges.</p> <p>Investigate opportunity for Aboriginal Cultural Centre</p> <p>Aboriginal craft gallery and activity centre- limited access to services that promote self esteem, cultural awareness</p>	
	<b>Cultural &amp; linguistically diverse</b>						<p>Instigate a multicultural festival or celebration</p>	<p>Recognise in Community Directory</p>	
	<b>General</b>	<p>Provide appropriate community transport</p>	<p>Info package for new residents</p> <p>Update community directory</p> <p>Facilitate communication between service providers</p>		<p>Promote the role of HNEHS &amp; provision of services at local level</p>	<p>Provide leadership training</p>		<p>Explore new cultural activities</p>	



# CHAPTER 1: Introduction

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

The Liverpool Plains Shire has a long and productive agricultural history in the Namoi Valley catchment and it is experiencing a new era of industrial expansion and population growth.

Liverpool Plains Shire Council's proactive approach to local economic development, lifestyle migration away from Sydney and the coastal areas, coupled with the regional real estate investment market, is already realising the potential for population increase in the Shire.

Quirindi and Werris Creek's convenient proximity and strong agricultural sector is providing opportunities for commercial investment and lifestyle in the Shire. Situated between the New England and Kamilaroi Highways, and on a main railway corridor, the Shire is central to both Sydney and Brisbane. The regional city of Tamworth is located 65 kilometres north of the township of Quirindi.

The Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, has given Liverpool Plains Shire Council the opportunity to formally develop this Social/Community Plan.

Social plans aim to:

- a) Identify the community's social needs;
- b) Assess how those needs are being met; and
- c) Identify strategies to ensure that those needs are met.

These plans and recommendations must then be incorporated into other Council planning (i.e. management plans), budgeted for and reported on annually.

The rural settlement patterns of the area have a major influence on how Local Government Areas such as the Liverpool Plains Shire addresses its social issues. Quirindi is a sub-regional service centre servicing Willow Tree, Werris Creek, Currabubula, Wallabadah, Blackville, Pine Ridge, Premer, Spring Ridge, Carroona and Walhallow. The Shire caters for many people who, technically, live outside the Liverpool Plains Local Government Area, but socially, consider themselves to be part of the Shire.

This plan considers social needs under the following broad categories:

- Transport
- Housing
- Employment
- Safety/Crime prevention
- Recreation
- Education
- Culture

- Community Facilities
- Economy
- Families
- Communication
- Environment

## **1.2 What is a social plan?**

Under the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 all councils in NSW must develop a social plan and report on identified access and equity activities annually.

A social plan examines the needs of the local community, including groups that may be disadvantaged, and develops activities that council and/or other agencies could implement to address these needs.

Access and equity activities aim to promote social justice and enhance community well being. They include: a council's social/community welfare, health, cultural and recreation activities as well as aspects of council activities such as providing infrastructure/services, planning/regulation and providing information.

## **1.3 How is it developed?**

The Department of Local Government has prepared Social/Community Planning and Reporting Guidelines to help councils meet their compulsory requirements. These guidelines were a valuable resource in preparing this plan.

## **1.4 How does the social plan fit in?**

This plan will become part of the Liverpool Plains Shire Council annual Management Plan. The Management Plan is the main planning document for Council – it provides the budget, and sets service delivery levels for activities across all areas of operation. The social plan will be attached to the Management Plan and council will need to consider it together with other plans. The plan is updated each year to reflect Council's Management Plan and community trends.

## **1.5 Who will use the plan and how?**

Liverpool Plains Shire Council has a legal responsibility to develop and report on this plan, however, they will not be responsible for implementing all the recommendations. Council can use this plan to influence the activities and initiatives of government and non-government agencies to ensure that community needs are best met. The plan is based on community input through public consultation and therefore is a valuable reference for council, providing insight into community concerns.

Similarly, the community can use this plan as a bargaining tool. By being familiar with what this plan is trying to achieve, the community can work with council to ensure that resources are fairly distributed, rights are recognised and promoted and that people have fair access to resources and services to meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life. The planning process also gives people opportunities for genuine participation and consultation about decisions that affect their lives.

## **1.6 How often will the plan be reviewed?**

Local government must submit new social plans by 30 November, every five years, from November 2004. Each year, Councils must also review and update their social plans as part of the annual review of their management plans. This includes comparing what they said they would do with what they actually achieved. This process means that councils are accountable and gives them an opportunity to improve how they address social needs.

## CHAPTER 2: Liverpool Plains Shire Council

### About the Social Plan

*The Social Plan fits under the umbrella of the Liverpool Plains Shire Management Plan. That means that both plans should work towards a common direction. The information in this section is taken directly from the Quirindi Shire Council 2009/10-2019/20 Community Strategic Plan. It gives an overview of Council's values and what they are trying to achieve for everyone who lives in the Shire.*

#### 2.1 Council's Vision

That the Liverpool Plains Shire area achieves higher levels of growth and generates improved quality of life through expanded opportunities for economic and social development being realised within an environmentally and financially sustainable framework.

#### 2.2 Council's Mission

To achieve the Liverpool Plains Shire vision through a pro-active community focus delivering best value and practice services that are recognised by the community and our peers for their quality and positive impact on development.

#### 2.3 Council's Values

The elected members, management and staff of Liverpool Plains Shire Council are committed to Council's vision and mission and through mutual trust and respect will strive:

#### 2.4 For our Residents

- To provide professional, friendly and innovative service;
- To apply principles of access and equity with facilities and services; and
- To encourage and promote a strong sense of Community.

#### 2.5 For our Community

- To maintain principles of democracy, public participation and fairness in decision making;
- To have a positive influence on community attitudes;
- To promote, provide and plan for the needs of all ages;
- To encourage and stimulate economic growth and prosperity in the Shire;
- To establish a safe, caring and clean community environment;

- To create a dynamic area sustaining its agricultural and natural heritage.

## **2.6 For our Staff and Volunteers**

- To promote a working environment that fosters innovation, equal opportunity, job satisfaction and performance;
- To encourage strong community partnership in the provision of services and facilities;
- To seek continuous improvement in the way that Council does business;
- To encourage and appreciate the contribution of community volunteers.

## **2.7 For our Environment**

- To maintain and enhance the reputation of the built environment;
- To protect and enjoy the natural, built and cultural environment;
- To promote economic sustainability and technological advantage for agriculture and industry;
- To develop effective road, transport and infrastructure networks.

## **2.8 For our Customers and Suppliers**

- To conduct business with integrity and respect;
- To ensure consistency and accountability in Service relationships;
- To communicate requirements accurately and precisely;
- To exercise and expect honesty in business dealings.

## **2.9 Principal objective for Community Services**

To provide a fair and equitable distribution of social and community services that are developed in consultation with the stakeholders and to act as a facilitator in the provision of new and expanded service.

To facilitate, support and provide opportunities for our community to participate in activities that will assist in maintaining and improving their well-being.

## **2.10 Role of Council**

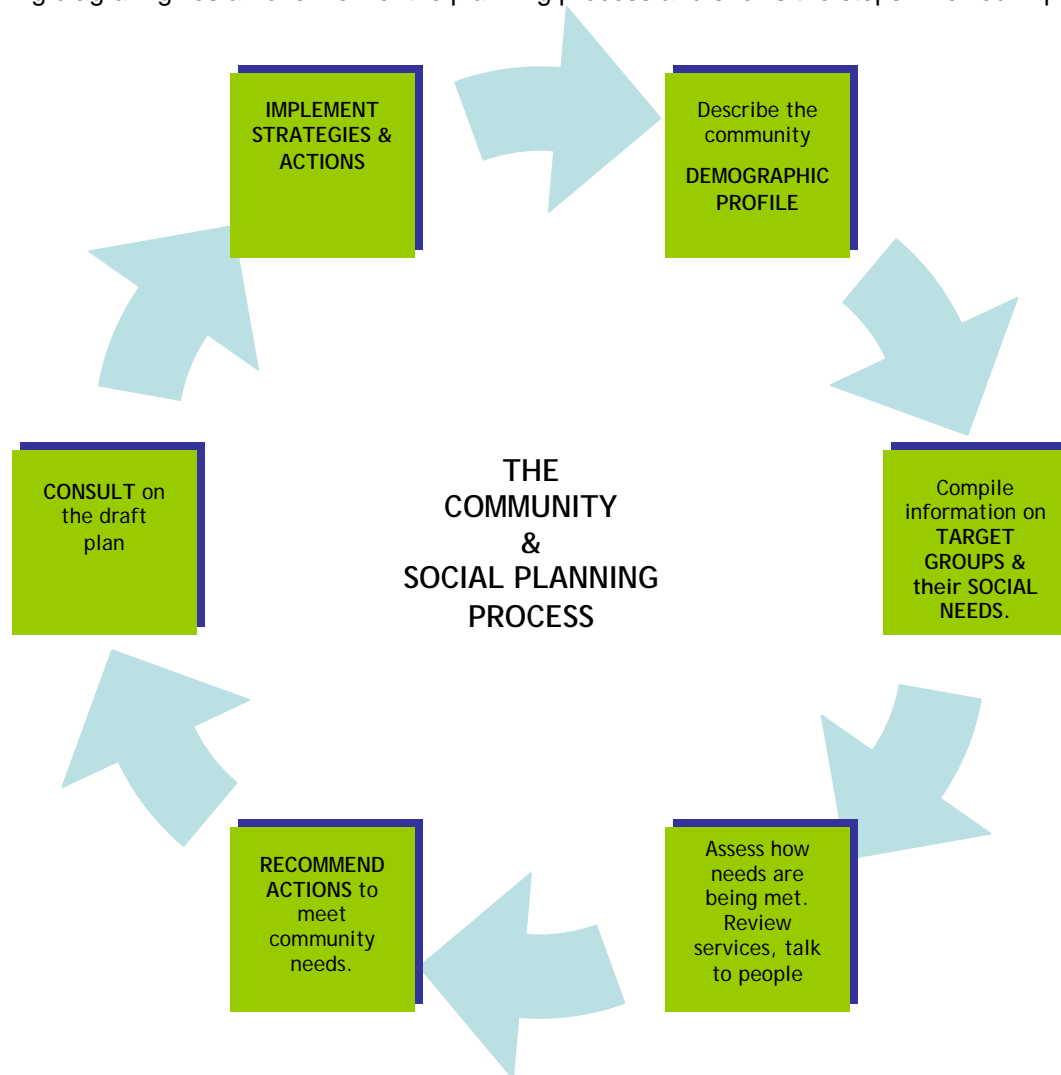
The Local Government Act 1993 defines the role of Council under Section 8(1). This role is explained through a set of principles to guide Council in carrying out its functions:

- To provide directly or on behalf of other levels of government, after due consultation, adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities for the community and to ensure that those services and facilities are managed efficiently and effectively;
- To exercise community leadership;
- To exercise its function in a manner that is consistent with and actively promotes the principles of multiculturalism;
- To promote and provide and plan for the needs of children;

- To properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development;
- To have regard to the long term and cumulative effects of its decisions;
- To bear in mind that it is the custodian and trustee of public assets and to effectively account for and manage the assets for which it is responsible;
- To facilitate the involvement of Councillors, members of the public, users of facilities and services and Council staff in the development, improvement and co-ordination of local government;
- To raise funds for local purposes by the fair imposition of rates, charges and fees, by income earned from investments and, when appropriate, by borrowing and grants;
- To keep the local community and the State Government (and through it, the wider community) informed about its activities;
- To ensure that, in the exercise of its regulatory functions, it is consistent and without bias, particularly where an activity of the Council is affected; and
- To be a responsible employer.
- To engage in long-term strategic planning on behalf of the local community.
- To exercise its functions in a manner that is consistent with and promotes social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights.

## CHAPTER 3: The Planning Process

The following diagram gives an overview of the planning process and shows the steps involved in preparing a community social plan:





### **3.1 What is a target group?**

A target group is a discrete and definable section of the community that has special needs. For the purpose of this plan there are two types of target groups – mandatory and optional.

A social plan must include information about the needs of the 7 mandatory target groups. These groups are: children (aged between 0 and 11 years), young people (between 12 and 24 years of age), women, older people, people with disabilities, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. These groups, however, are not homogenous i.e. people may belong to more than one group.

### **3.2 Developing the demographic profile**

The demographic profile shows the current makeup of the community in Liverpool Plains Shire, including changes in population over time. This information is based on figures from the 2006 Census and other relevant documents from the State and Federal government and Liverpool Plains Shire Council.

### **3.3 Identifying social needs**

The needs of the various target groups were identified by:

- A discussion paper was sent to community groups throughout the shire informing them of the Social planning process and asking them what their perception of social needs in the Shire were. Groups were given a table to complete and return to council.
- Focus group meetings were organised with representatives from each of the target groups. At these meetings issues were identified and appropriate strategies to help solve these issues were put forward.
- Reviewing various local and regional plans to help understand issues commonly experienced by members of the community or the target group, that could negatively impact on quality of life. Some issues from the 2006 Social Plan were also included in the issues section of this document. These plans are listed under references:

### **3.4 How did we assess how well the needs were being met?**

Target groups identified existing services available in the shire and successful programs and initiatives that are currently available.

The Community Plan prepared for Liverpool Plains Shire Council in 2006 was also reviewed to determine if recommendations from that plan were adopted.

### **3.5 Who recommended actions and how?**

Recommendations in this plan were based on discussions with various stakeholders/target groups and an assessment of the 2006 Social Plan. Any recommendations from the previous plan that were not implemented are carried forward to this document.

### **3.6 Who will implement actions?**

While this plan is mainly aimed at Liverpool Plains Shire Council, they are not necessarily responsible for implementing all the recommendations in the plan. The primary role of the Liverpool Plains Shire Council is to act as a facilitator, providing an impetus for community leadership and participation. Further,

some recommendations will require action by State and Federal governments, community groups, service providers and/or individuals. The action plan section of this plan identifies who should be responsible for specific activities and initiatives.

## CHAPTER 4: Understanding the Community – A Demographic Profile

### WHAT IS A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND WHY IS IT PART OF A SOCIAL PLAN?

*A demographic profile is a set of statistics that shows the characteristics of the community – in this case, a local government area. This information can help to better understand the features and needs of the general community and specific groups.*

#### 4.1 Population profile

	Males	Females	TOTALS
Total persons	3761	3799	7540
Aged 15 years and over			6066
Aged 65 years and over			1430
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander			715
Born in Australia			7224
Born overseas			316
Speaks English only			6976
Speaks other languages			34
Indigenous persons aged 18 years and over	200	222	422
Australia citizen			6827
Employed	1715	1309	3024
Unemployed	116	74	190
Unemployment rate			5.9%

**Table1: Overview of the Liverpool Plains Shire community.**

*Source: AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS 2006 Census of Population and Housing.*

### **How has the LPSC community changed since 2001?**

- Despite the impacts of drought, traditional industries of agriculture, forestry and fisheries still account for the majority of employment but has declined from 935 jobs to 814;
- The total number of people unemployed in 2006 was at an all time low (5.9% of labour force). Total unemployed peaked in 1991 at 9.8% of the labour force;
- Growing employment sectors include mining, manufacturing, retail and health services
- The median age of the population has risen from 41 to 43
- The overall population has risen by 9%

### **4.2 What does the future hold for the Shire and what are the social implications?**

Rural communities in NSW are struggling under the combined impacts of drought, varying commodity prices and a loss of services. However, the future for the Shire is extremely positive compared to some rural communities.

Liverpool Plains Shire Council has been actively implementing economic development initiatives to strengthen and promote a positive future for the town and community. This includes employing an Economic Development Director and a Community Economic Development Officer and commissioning an 'Economic Development Strategy', Business Retention and Expansion Programme, 'Economic / Social Impact Study on the Retail Sector' and actively promoting new industry in the Shire.

A plantation softwood processing plant valued at \$10 million has been established in the town's industrial area and currently employs up to 50 people, and other new businesses will provide further employment. Council has upgraded the Main Street of Quirindi including infrastructure streetscape/landscaping works and in 2008 Council issued a final occupation certificate for a new supermarket which has given our community a much wider variety and selection of goods making it unnecessary for residents to travel to larger regional centres to shop. The development is worth over \$5.7 million.

Werris Creek Coal Pty Ltd commenced operations of a two Mt per annum open cut mine, which employs approximately 50 persons.

The NSW Government announced the awarding of an Exploration Licence to BHP Billiton to explore for coal about the Caroon area. Preliminary estimates suggest a world-class underground mine of 10Mt/annum with a life expectancy of 30 years and employment in the order of 300 persons. BHP is coming towards the end of this exploration period. BHP is currently contributing towards a water study to look at the inter-connectiveness of the underground water. The presence of BHP has caused a lot of concern and trepidation among landholders and some community members who feel that mining will have a negative impact on the environment and will affect the social and economic development of the community. There is also a group who feel that the mining industry will bring economic growth and prosperity to Quirindi and outlying villages.

Although the town is closely linked to the agricultural sector, it is expected that the introduction of new industry and non-agricultural services will provide an economic buffer in times of rural and climatic difficulty.

While some of these new businesses may employ current residents from within the shire, they could also attract new employees and their families to the area. Irrespective of where these new people fit into the demographic profile, they will have social needs which could include child care, school facilities, recreation or any number of health services.

The Shire's geographic situation offers a number of advantages yet to be fully realised. The town's relatively close proximity to the eastern seaboard and to major population growth areas such as Newcastle and Tamworth, offers a unique opportunity for trade, tourism and housing. The town's location between two major highways and its access to major inland rail corridors further highlight these opportunities.

The Shire is also situated within two hours of major regional universities, namely Newcastle and the University of New England in Armidale. A public hospital, affordable housing, a retirement village, nursing home, three doctors and three dentists make Quirindi an attractive proposition to many retirees looking for a 'tree change' to regional NSW. The real estate market in Sydney and along the coastal fringe is making towns like Quirindi an attractive prospect for many people. These people will also have certain social expectations and needs.

These new residents in the community will inject new skills and social interests - this can only help in making the Shire a more vibrant and progressive community in which to live.

#### **4.3 Some questions to consider:**

- WHAT IS THE LIKELY IMPACT OF THE AGEING POPULATION?
- WHAT WILL BE THE FUTURE EDUCATION NEEDS?
- HOW WILL FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTICULARLY MINING IMPACT ON SOCIAL ISSUES?

## CHAPTER 5: Target Group Descriptions and Strategies

### CHILDREN: THIS GROUP INCLUDES BOYS AND GIRLS LESS THAN 12 YEARS OF AGE

*Children and young people participate in society in many different ways. They live in families, go to school, play sport and belong to organisations. Children and young people who develop strong, caring relationships in their communities are more likely to grow up safe and healthy, participate in education, culture and employment and not become involved in violence and crime. Strong communities encourage and value the participation of children and young people.*

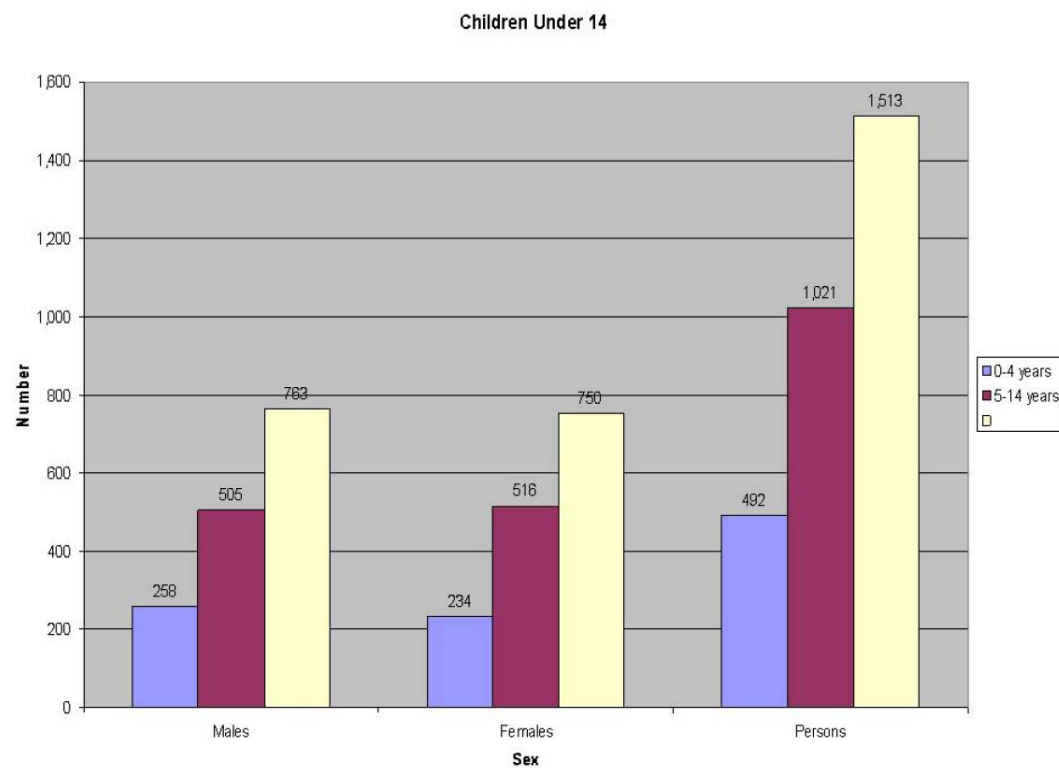
#### 5.1

## Target group Children



### Characteristics:

- In 2006, 1513 children under the age of 14 years were living in Liverpool Plains Shire. This is just over 19% of the population;
- The number of children under 14, as a % of the population, is returning to levels experienced in the mid 90's;



**FIGURE 1: Number of males and females under 14 years of age.**

Source: **AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS 2001 Census of Population and Housing.**

## What are the main **SOCIAL NEEDS** of this age group?

NEED	INCLUDING
<b>TRANSPORT</b>	Outlying areas may require transport to facilities.
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES</b>	Mainly recreational, including sporting groups and library services.
<b>HEALTH</b>	Early intervention to identify existing and potential health problems
<b>EDUCATION</b>	Mental stimulation and development of social skills prior to formal schooling.
<b>RECREATION</b>	Young children need opportunities to participate in sport and other recreational activities.
<b>FAMILY</b>	Adult support for youth and children's sporting and community organisations.

The needs of this group vary considerably and need to be viewed in light of babies and toddlers (under 2 years), pre school (aged 3 to 4 years) and school aged children (5 to 12 years).

## How well are these needs being met?

### **EDUCATION – Under 5 years**

The Quirindi Pre School operates 5 days per week and is licensed for 30 children/day.

The Werris Creek District Pre-School is opened weekdays and is licensed for 20 children/day.

Willow Tree Pre-School is opened Monday to Wednesday and is licensed for 14 children/day.

Currabubula Pre-School is opened Fridays and is licensed for 10 children/day.

Pre School plays a very important role in the community. It helps children to develop social skills and is the first opportunity for many in a structured environment. This is important preparation for school, smoothing the transition from home to school.

In many cases, Pre School is also the first formal setting for parents. It is a place to meet other parents and many friendships established through this first contact are carried through life. It is also the first place that many parents are on committees and many then become involved in other community organisations.

The pre school environment is also important from a health perspective as it provides a forum for all the specialists who come together to “case manage” children with special needs.

Beehive Occasional Day Care Centre also provides a 2-day per week occasional care service. Liverpool Plains Shire Council has developed and licensed a 45 place Long Day Care Centre which is operating at capacity.

### **PRE SCHOOL – ABORIGINAL STUDENTS**

The % of Aboriginal children attending Quirindi Pre School are at low rates. A recent survey showed that cost and transport are the major issues preventing more aboriginal children from attending the Pre School (pers. comm. Alison Thompson). Children are not using the community bus to access play group and preschool even though it is available. A possible solution to this could be that community workers and family services may need to go to Walhallow. A discussion with the parents of preschool aged children at Walhallow may reveal why the Community Bus is not being used.

### **EDUCATION – SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN**

There are several Public schools in the Shire catering for Infants and Primary age children. These include: Quirindi, Willow Tree, Werris Creek, Walhallow, Currabubula, Spring Ridge, Wallabadah, Blackville and Premer Public School and St Joseph’s Quirindi. Tamworth bus lines also provide a service to transport children to schools in Tamworth.

### **HEALTH**

Health Services are provided by Hunter New England Area Health Service, operating from the Quirindi Hospital, Werris Creek Hospital and the Community Health Centre. The Medical Liaison Committee generally considers current services adequate. A Nurse Practitioner is operating at Premer.

Liverpool Plains Shire Council facilitated the recruitment of two new doctors who have established practices in the refurbished offices of the CWA Hall and the George Street Surgery in Quirindi. Council continues to work with Hunter New England Area Health Service and local GPs to establish a HealthOne Medical Centre in Quirindi. Council is also involved in establishing a Multi Purpose Health Centre in Werris Creek.

### **RECREATION**

The sporting needs of children in Quirindi are reasonably well met through a huge range of sporting organisations.

While there are many recreational activities available, participation could potentially be limited if overheads are increased because of the rising cost of public liability insurance. This could mean that lower socio economic groups miss out.

The Quirindi Recreation Centre has the services of a full-time fitness instructor and is being well utilized by the squash and basketball clubs. School groups are also using the facility for sporting activities.

Council has obtained access to the Railway Institute Building in Werris Creek and is working with an active local Committee to develop this facility so that it may provide a range of community activities. S.94 funding from the Werris Creek Coal Mine has been used to undertake works and provide equipment.

The Liverpool Plains Shire Library at Quirindi is open 5.5 days a week with story time, for younger children, once a week. The Library also has public access computers for e-mail, internet and other computer based applications. All libraries in the Central Northern Libraries network are now on line. This



will improve access, particularly for outlying areas. Liverpool Plains Shire Council has also established a Library branch at Premer and monthly exchanges are taking place.

In 2009 Council completed construction of the new Werris Creek Library building. The main street location and modern and inviting interior have seen large increases in library usage in Werris Creek. The Library is also used for community promotions and events and is a welcoming place for the community to meet.

The International School of Music caters for children from pre school age upwards and there is a Youth Band in Quirindi.

The Holiday Fun Centre, coordinated by Liverpool Plains Shire Council, offers children a safe, fun and educational environment for youth during the September/October and Christmas school holidays. This facility gives working parents access to affordable child care during these times.

### Strategies including those carried forward from the 2006/07 Social Plan.

Issue	Why?	Strategy to overcome Issue.	Who is responsible?	Time Frame
<b>Transport</b>  <b>Access to local Pre-Schools</b>	<p>Pre-School is very expensive to access. It is very expensive for volunteers to obtain a bus licence making it difficult for children in outlying villages to access services.</p> <p>Many families are ineligible for the Child Care subsidy and Pre-Schools are only partially funded. Declining numbers attending mean that smaller Pre-Schools may lose funding and are at risk of closing.</p>	<p>-Pre-Schools may have to look at increasing fees and boost fundraising efforts.</p> <p>-Arrange transport between towns so that spaces in the smaller Preschool can be filled.</p> <p>-Purchase a community bus to be used to pick up children around the district.</p> <p>-Lobby local MP's for further funding.</p>	<p>Community groups, Pre-School Directors and Local Council.</p>	<p>This is something that needs to be addressed within the next five years as Werris Creek pre-School is at risk of closing.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<b>Health</b>				

Support for breastfeeding mothers	There is no local breastfeeding support group eg ABA.	-Approach Tamworth ABA to see if they are happy to organise a branch in Liverpool Plains Shire.	Child and Family Health nurse.	
Sun protection on play equipment.	Many of the parks in the shire have little or know shade protection. Equipment becomes too hot to use in summer months.	-Continue to apply for funding from the department of Sport and Recreation. -Develop Council Policy to eventually cover all playground equipment throughout the shire. Possible use of village funds to do this.	Community groups and Liverpool Plains Shire Council.	Ongoing
<b>Oral Health Services</b>	There are no public funded dental services locally.	This service is accessible through the Tamworth service, however referrals are prioritised and needs based making the waiting list very long.	Child and Family Health Nurse need to ensure clients are aware of the available services and make sure that they have appropriate information re accessing these services.	Ongoing
<b>Education</b>				
Interagency support for children's groups such as Birth to	Many voluntary groups are working with limited funding and support and this makes it difficult to organise	More support from Council with cheaper hire fees and funding more available.	Community Service Coordinator	Ongoing

Beyond.	fundraising and promotional events.		-Business holders need to be more flexible regarding street closures.	
<b>After School Care and Family Day Care.</b>	Shortage of after school care in Werris Creek, Willow Tree, Wallabadah and Spring Ridge. There is no Family Day Care in all of these areas except Spring Ridge which has one carer.	-Encourage and advertise for more carers in the community. -Expand Long Day Care services.  Make sure that newcomers are aware of after school care at local primary schools.-		
<b>Recreation</b>				
<b>Social Isolation of young families with no extended networks</b>	-Young mothers that are new to the area find socializing difficult as there is no family support. It can also be hard to find out about available services.	-Establish a "New mums" group which could meet on the first day of each month. -Promote all services available on Council website. -Develop a children's services webpage. -Establish a family support office in Quirindi, Werris Creek, Willow Tree, Spring Ridge and Wallabadah.	Child and Family Health Nurse to help promote services to new mums.  Councils IT staff and Councils Community Services Coordinator	This is something that needs immediate action.

## **YOUNG PEOPLE – THIS GROUP INCLUDES MALES AND FEMALES 12 TO 24 YEARS OF AGE**

*It is important that young people are valued in society and the community as a whole can benefit from their contribution, ideas and energies (AYF, 1995). Involving younger people is essential for youth development and social change – younger people provide the future social fabric of rural communities.*



### Characteristics:

- In 2006, 736 young people aged 15-24 were living in Liverpool Plains Shire. This is 9% of the total population.
- This group is underrepresented compared to the NSW and Australian averages

### What are some of the SOCIAL ISSUES for this group?

- Employment – what do they do after school? Are there enough jobs if they want to stay in the local area?
- Recreation – some not old enough to go to hotels but want entertainment – under age drinking;
- Changes of going from Primary School to High School – loss of friends and support network;
- Boredom;
- Unrealistic expectations from parents and unhappy home environment; and
- Lack of self esteem.

### What are the main SOCIAL NEEDS of this group?

NEED	INCLUDING
TRANSPORT	To have access to safe reliable transport to attend social, cultural and recreational activities around the shire.
EMPLOYMENT	To have the opportunity to obtain work locally through apprenticeship schemes and the development of new businesses in the community.
COMMUNITY FACILITIES	To participate in the community and be involved in decisions that affects their lives. To have a variety of facilities available to enjoy a happier and more worthwhile life.
SAFETY/CRIME PREVENTION	Including appropriate support to prevent social problems from developing.
HEALTH	Information and advice to help them to lead healthy lives. This might include issues

	such as suicide, contraception, alcohol, illicit drugs and sexual health.
<b>EDUCATION</b>	Information, advice and support to achieve education and employment goals.
<b>RECREATION</b>	Opportunities to participate in sport, recreation and developmental activities.
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	The desire for a healthy and sustainable environment that can be enjoyed by future generations.

## HOW WELL ARE THESE NEEDS BEING MET?

### EDUCATIONAL

Secondary educational needs are met through Quirindi High School and other private and public schools in Tamworth. A number of young people attend private boarding schools in the Sydney and New England regions.

The Quirindi TAFE also offers an extensive range of vocational education and training courses to diploma level while Adult and Community Education provides courses of community interest. The University of New England Access Centre, on the Quirindi TAFE campus, provides a direct link to University level education.

### QUIRINDI RECREATIONAL CENTRE

Young people are well catered for with numerous sporting and cultural activities. The Quirindi Recreational Centre building provides an important recreation facility for the entire community. Many people travel to Tamworth for more extensive sporting opportunities and stronger competition.

Younger people that are not sport oriented can become involved with the Quirindi Youth Band.

### SUPPORT AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Discussions with students from the Quirindi High School at the Liverpool Plains Shire Council Youth Forum revealed that some young people don't feel that they are valued in the community. There were examples of High School students that have done particularly well in sporting and academic pursuits but received little community recognition. Liverpool Plains Shire Council is aware of these issues and is endeavoring to facilitate promotion of individual excellence within the community. The participants felt that they did not have the opportunity to vocalize their concerns or issues they felt needed attention. It was suggested a Youth Council be formed as a means of getting their message across.

### OPPORTUNITY

Council and community groups offer several youth scholarships. Council funds the Shire Youth Scholarship scheme to help young people pursue educational and training opportunities as well as interests in art, music, the sciences, sport and similar fields. The scholarship is available to people between 16 and 23 years of age.

The Local Rotary Club supports the Rotary Youth Leadership Award, a week long, intense personal development program which is committed to developing the interpersonal and professional skills of young adults. Participants have the opportunity to improve various communication skills and to practice decision making and leadership in practical situations.

**AIM: Ensure that the younger people in the community have access and opportunities to enhance their social well being, and pursue their interests related to career, education, health, accommodation and recreational activities.**

**NEW STRATEGIES – These strategies have been identified through community consultation**

Issue	Why?	Strategy to overcome issue.	Who is responsible?	Time Frame
<b>Transport</b>  <b>Outlying villages such as Willow Tree, Wallabadah, Werris Creek and Spring Ridge find it difficult to access entertainment.</b>	-Unless parents are able to transport children there is no other way for youth to attend functions as travelling costs are expensive.  -The bus to Tamworth for school and work is very crowded.	-Council provide a subsidised bus service on weekends and school holidays. Approach Tamworth Bus Companies to provide subsidised bus service. -Council purchase a community bus.  -Make information more widely known regarding Youth Scholarships or subsidised transport costs	-Council and community groups.	-This is an immediate concern.
<b>Recreation</b>  <b>Lack of Recreational facilities.</b>	Youth do not have anywhere to go in after school hours or on the weekend. This is especially the case for the 18-25 year demographic.	Reopening of the Royal Picture Theatre for general viewing-or at least Saturday and Sunday afternoons.  -Introduce self defence classes at the Quirindi	Community groups, parent volunteers, Liverpool Plains Shire	These are all things that need to be started immediately or within the next 12 months.

		<p>Recreation Centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Hold socials at the Recreation Centre at least once a term.</li> <li>-Form a Liverpool Plains Shire Youth Council. A public meeting would be held regarding this to discuss the format the Council would take.</li> <li>-Start a girl's Rugby Union Club. A delegation could approach Quirindi Lions to help organise this with the comp to be run alongside the existing competition.</li> <li>-Open the Quipolly Dam for recreational use.</li> <li>-Longer pool opening hours as the pool is currently used between 4.00 and 6.00pm making it inaccessible to the general public. Opening the pool until 7.00pm, an extra hour per day would make a difference.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Education</b></p> <p>High staff turnover.</p>	<p>Large staff turnover at the High School make it difficult for students to</p>	<p>-P&amp;F to raise concerns with the school community. Lobby state and Federal MPs to change</p>	<p>P&amp;F, Staff and students</p>	<p>A uniform change can be phased in over the next five</p>





**WOMEN – THIS GROUP INCLUDES WOMEN OF ALL AGES. THIS GROUP ALSO OVERLAPS WITH MANY OTHER TARGET GROUPS. FOR EXAMPLE, SOME WOMEN ALSO FIT INTO THE CATEGORIES OF OLDER PEOPLE , INDIGENOUS AND/OR YOUNG PEOPLE.**

*Women make an important social, cultural and economic contribution to society. They are mothers, business leaders, wives, friends and community members. Age, ethnicity, location and social and economic circumstances affect their needs and opinions.*



## 5.3 Target Group Women

## CHARACTERISTICS

- In 2006, 3799 women were living in Liverpool Plains.
- 984 (26%) were 60 years of age or older.
- The % of females employed in part time work has gradually increased since 2001;
- The % of females employed full time (as a % of the labour force) has increased by 8% since 2001;
- 344 women identified themselves as Indigenous.
- The majority of females were born in Australia with only 175 born overseas; and
- The majority of females speak English only with a small minority speaking a language other than English.

Figure 3 below shows the break up of the female population by age. The number on each column refers to the number of women in that age group.

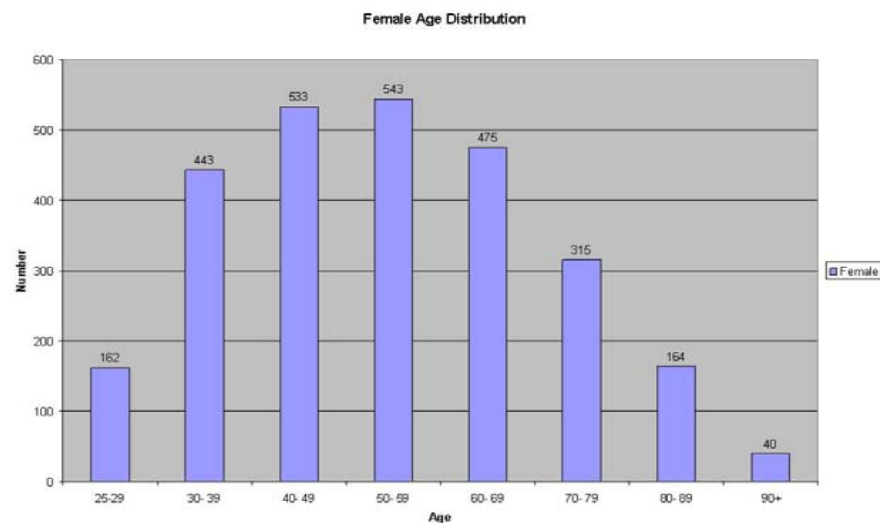


Figure 3: – Women living in Quirindi by age group

### What are the **SOCIAL ISSUES** for this group?

- Motherhood and raising a family;
- Balancing work and family;
- Geographic isolation from being part of a rural shire;
- Women's health issues – including depression and self esteem;
- Domestic violence;
- Mental stimulation and
- Lack of extended family for new families moving to the shire.

### What are the **SOCIAL NEEDS** of this target group?

NEED	INCLUDING
<b>HEALTH</b>	Initiatives that improve their health and quality of life by providing appropriate housing, sanitation, physical activity and nutrition, media and body image message.
<b>TRANSPORT</b>	Safe and reasonably priced transport.
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES</b>	Safe streets and shopping areas, accessible buildings, transport and recreational areas. Women at risk from domestic violence may need refuge to reduce violence against them. Supportive social networks and social contact with other women in similar situations. Effective and responsive services to help families and individuals including the provision of childcare services
<b>CRIME/PERSONAL SAFETY</b>	Recognising that Domestic Violence is occurring especially in the case of verbal and psychological abuse.
<b>EDUCATION</b>	Information on education and training opportunities.
<b>RECREATION</b>	Opportunities to participate in sport, recreation and developmental activities.

*Reference: Issues of Importance for Women in NSW – a document produced by the Department for Women based on the NSW Government Action Plan for Women.*

## **HOW WELL ARE THESE NEEDS BEING MET?**

### **FAMILY SERVICES**

Family services and support are provided by various organisations including Home and Community Care (HACC), HNEAHS, Tamworth Family Support and State Government Departments.

Council has built the Eastside Long Day Care Centre. Part of the motivation for building this facility was to support the younger, single mothers in the community by providing them with short term care so they could pursue further education through the local College of TAFE.

The Community Health Centre also provides early childhood clinics and immunisation. However, there is no breast feeding support group and this has been identified as an area of need.

### **HEALTH**

Women's health needs are reasonably well met through Hunter New England Area Health Service. The hospital provides obstetrics, pediatrics – a major advantage for women who wish to have a family. The town does not have a female doctor and the Women's Health Nurse position at Community Health is currently vacant.

Under the DoCs Family First program every new mother is visited by the Family and Child Nurse within 2 weeks of birth.

### **EDUCATION**

Education is available through the TAFE and Adult Education. The availability of child care is a limiting factor for some women wishing to pursue further education.

### **RECREATION**

As with all age groups, there is a huge range of sporting and recreation facilities for women.

### **SAFETY/CRIME PREVENTION**

Domestic violence is an issue in just about any community and Quirindi is no exception. The Regional Violence Prevention Specialist (RVPS) says that many of these issues are compounded in rural areas.

While the NEAHS provided sexual assault services, unfortunately, the nearest women's refuge is in Tamworth. The RVPS identifies poor access to counseling services for women in smaller communities as a major issue.

Tamworth Women's Refuge says that transport is a major problem for women trying to escape domestic violence, especially outside of working hours. They provide Outreach services, including a group for women experiencing domestic violence. The Butterflies group (established for women victims of domestic

violence) runs a course over a 6-week period addressing issues such as self-esteem and confidence. HNEAHS and the RVPS recently joined forces to conduct education on this issue.

Council, in 2006, in conjunction with Quirindi Police launched a Domestic Violence Information Kit which the Police can distribute to victims.

The emotional needs of young mothers is also considered a huge issue and getting mothers to feel good about themselves is critical for the development of their children. Addressing these needs is also a key focus for Family First.

## OPPORTUNITY

One of the groups at most risk from accessing opportunities is women from lower socio economic backgrounds, particularly those who don't work. The HNEAHS Family and Child Care Nurse believes that this may be the greatest area of need.

## STRATEGIES – Including those carried forward from the 2006/07 Social Plan

Issue	Why?	Strategy to Overcome Issue	Who is responsible?	Time Frame
<b>Health</b>  <b>Sexual Health, Drug harm minimization and mental health.</b>	<p>There are no female doctors in the district &amp; Women's Health Nurse position at Community Health is vacant.</p> <p>Chlamydia and syphilis are becoming more common in communities as are mental health issues.</p>	<p>Hunter New England Health need to advertise and actively recruit women for these positions. Council could offer incentives in the form of rent assistance.</p> <p>Investigate education programs focusing on safe sex and ensure there are adequate needle dispensers in public toilets and hospitals. Start the process of establishing a satellite service accessing staff and expertise from the Bligh Street clinic.</p>	Health Service Manager, Liverpool Plains Shire Council.	<p>This is an issue that needs addressing.</p> <p>Although there is some mental health support available through community health there are a lot of community members that do not have access to this.</p>
<b>Transport</b>	. It is often difficult accessing services from outlying areas.	Ensure that target group is made aware of transport	Community nurse, Community Services	This sort of information can be passed on immediately

	There are limited transport options on weekends and after hours. Limited advertising of health services available	options eg taxi vouchers, Community Transport and Transport for Health.	Coordinator, HACC Services from Willow Tree, Werris Creek and Quirindi.	
<b>Community Facilities</b>	Shortage of shopping trolleys at IGA. Poor hygiene of trolleys that are available.	Approach IGA management to install new trolleys and make them aware of the state of the existing ones.	IGA management	As soon as possible. Customers could start lobbying immediately.
<b>There is a lack of family based services in the Shire.</b>	<p>There are limited options for short term childcare especially High School aged and children with special needs. The close proximity of Tamworth means there is no full time Family Support Office, Centre Care or access to the Women's Refuge.</p> <p>There is no safe house for women who are victims of domestic violence to go to in an emergency. The nearest Women's Refuge is in Tamworth which means long waits for victims until transport can be organised.</p>	<p>Local Government, Community groups and individuals need to lobby Government agencies to try to establish these services in our community.</p> <p>Education is an important solution and identifying high risk areas and times would be beneficial. The perpetrators needed to be part of the solution and programs such as the "Men's Shed", parenting groups, behaviour management and mentoring could help to implement appropriate behaviour. Advertise available services in places where women are more likely to frequent eg Doctors Surgery, supermarket and chemist.</p>	Community groups, members of the community, Community Health Nurse and Liverpool Plains Shire Council	This is an issue that is of immediate concern and needs to be looked at urgently.

<b>Crime/ Personal Safety</b>	<p>There has been an increase in the incidence of domestic violence being reported. As domestic violence is more likely to be reported to family and friends it is highly unlikely that these are the only instances occurring.</p> <p>With the birth of a child young mothers find themselves socially isolated, there is sleep deprivation and dealing with the change in status of relationships can trigger an incidence of domestic violence.</p>	<p>Establish an adopt-a-grandparent program so that families with no connections can have some chance of social interaction. There needs to be strategies in place to ensure that new comers to town are made aware of the different services available.</p>	<p>Friends, family and community groups play a vital role in encouraging a victim to come forward and report Domestic Violence. Recently changed laws mean that if police do not report an instance they must explain why the incident was not reported</p>	<p>This is an ongoing issue that is often culturally based making it very difficult to have an impact on occurrences.</p>
<b>Recreation</b>	<p>There is limited availability of restaurants and after hour's entertainment.</p> <p>Young mothers who are new to the district do not have extended networks of support and often no family members to call on to help with child minding.</p>		<p>Community Nurse, Liverpool Plains Shire Council Community Service Coordinator. Community groups that may have volunteers available to do this.</p>	

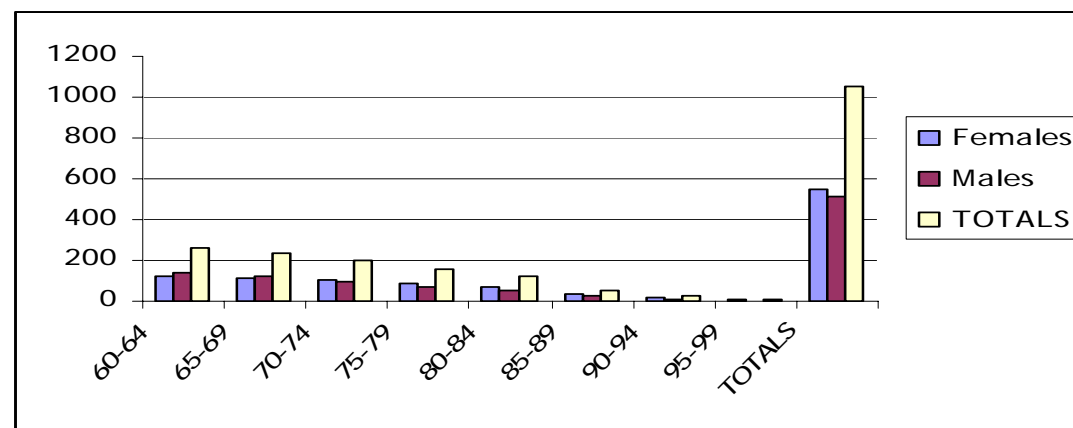


OLDER PEOPLE - THIS GROUP INCLUDES INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OVER 45 YEARS OF AGE AND NON - INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OVER 60 YEARS OF AGE.

***Older people make a great contribution to society. They offer skills, knowledge and wisdom that come with maturity and contribute to the social capital of a community by volunteering their time and experience. By 2021, nearly 18% of people in NSW will be over the age of 65.***



## CHARACTERISTICS



**Figure4** : Number of older people living in the Liverpool Plains Shire by age and sex.

### What are the potential **SOCIAL ISSUES** for this group?

- Loneliness & depression – particularly for those with no family and/or family who may live elsewhere;
- Failing health – including eyesight and hearing which limits their mobility and ability to look after themselves;
- Loss of basis skills such as being able to drive motor vehicles; and
- Discrimination because of their age.
- Inability to access services
- Early or unnecessary admittance into a medium to high level care facility.

### What are the main social **NEEDS** of this group?

NEED	INCLUDING
HEALTH	Health, accommodation, care and support to promote independence, well being and health.
TRANSPORT	Public transport, often to larger centres that can provide specialist needs e.g. medical
COMMUNITY	Accessible and supportive living environments that allow them to live as independently as

<b>FACILITIES</b>	possible. Depending on physical and mental health, this might involve various options.
<b>SAFETY/CRIME PREVENTION</b>	Feeling safe and supported in their homes especially the elderly that are living on their own.
<b>RECREATION</b>	Social interaction and friendly support, opportunities to participate in leisure and volunteering.

*References: NSW Healthy Ageing Framework 1998-2003 Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.*

## HOW WELL ARE THESE NEEDS BEING MET?

Older people basically fall into three key groups. Firstly, there are older people who still retain their independence and may be working or are self-funded retirees. A second group relies on some support in the form of Day Care or home assistance. This group may suffer from some type of disability. The third group includes older people who need a higher level of outside care. Some of these people live in the Retirement Home.

Many of the needs of the elderly are met through the time given by volunteers. Unfortunately many of the volunteers are aging and probably only have a few years of active volunteering left. The future of services provided by HACC such as Meals on Wheels and Community Transport are in jeopardy of disappearing or being greatly reduced as the number of able bodied volunteers declines. It is up to community groups to actively recruit volunteers and continually try to attract new members.

Social support and services for the less independent are largely provided through the Home and Community Care (HACC). The HACC Program is a joint Commonwealth/State program that provides support to frail aged people, younger people with disabilities and their carers so they can remain at home and avoid inappropriate or premature admission to residential care. Quirindi, Willow Tree and Werris Creek HACC offers an enormous range of services including:

- Transport services via a car to Tamworth or Newcastle for medical appointments.
- Medical bus to Tamworth (once/month);
- Bus to Tamworth Hydrotherapy pool (once/week);
- Shopping access transport (once/week); and
- Monthly shopping/medical access bus from Premier to Tamworth

## **HEALTH**

Community Health supplies a number of services that are accessed by the elderly of the community. These services include podiatrist, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, mental health worker, community nurse and dietician.

The HACC Centre serves as a drop-in for people, 5 days a week and plays a huge role in overcoming loneliness and depression. The centre provides services for about 100 clients, with the use of the various services being sporadic. HACC provides transport for clients to attend medical appointments in Quirindi, Tamworth and beyond.

## **TRANSPORT**

Transport is a major issue for older people and more is required. There is also a shortage of volunteers for meals on wheels and community transport. The increased emphasis on public liability has also had a huge impact on volunteer organisations. It is also becoming increasingly difficult for volunteers to obtain their bus licence due to the large number of driving hours that are needed before a licence is issued.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

The Liverpool Plains Shire Council has a wide range of Aged Care facilities ranging from in home care to a high care facility. After an enormous fundraising effort the local community has raised the funds to build a new aged care facility that caters for medium to high care residents. Werris Creek and Quirindi hospitals both host day centres where the elderly from the aged care facilities and the general public can come together for social interaction and activities such as craft, bingo and social outings.

## **CRIME/PERSONAL SAFETY**

Quirindi has a very low crime rate and home invasion and assault is rare however older people would not go out at night alone or not secure their homes when they leave it.

## **RECREATION**

- Men's Day (once/month) – this involves a day trip somewhere;
- Ladies' lunch at the local RSL Club (once/month);
- Craft day at the Ingall Centre and HACC Centre(once/month);
- Carer's meetings for spouses and partners of aged and disabled within the community;
- 4 day holiday for carers (annually);
- Seniors Week – held over 4 days; and

- Weekly gentle exercise – to help balance and prevent falls.
- Older people in the community are very active in various community service groups including CWA, Quota, Lions, Rotary, Probus (a social group only) and Red Cross. These groups provide the more active seniors with a rich social life.

**STRATEGIES - Including those carried forward from the 2006/07 Social Plan**

ISSUE	WHY?	STRATEGIES	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME FRAME
<b>Transport Access to Quirindi from outlying areas.</b>	<p>There are limited transport options, limited options on weekends and after hours. Many older people are choosing to retire in Quirindi and it is often difficult to access information on services on first arriving in town.</p> <p>There is limited advertising of services in the places people attend.</p> <p>A full time podiatrist is a major need for the elderly and adequate foot health is a major factor in fall prevention.</p>	Target group needs to be made more aware of available transport options.	HACC, LPSC, Hunter New England Area Health.	This is an ongoing concern.
<b>Access to services.</b>	<p>It is often a very difficult time for family members and carers when an elderly person makes the transition to residential aged care services e.g. Nursing Home.</p> <p>Clients are often aware of services and what are funding arrangements for high level care.</p> <p>The various aged care groups are not communicating and there are opportunities where referrals could</p>	<p>Advertise in HACC newsletter and community services article in the Advocate. Hunter New England Health needs to update their brochures and distribute to HACC offices Library, St Vincent De Paul and Doctors surgeries.</p>	HACC, Hunter New England Area Health, LPSC, Community Services Coordinator.	ASAP
<b>Support for Carers.</b>	<p>Letting clients know</p>	Liaise with Retirement		ASAP

<p>Quirindi Retirement Homes do not have grief counseling services for clients and or carers.</p> <p>Limited utilisation of health services by clients in residential aged care services.</p> <p>All aged services need to work together</p>	<p>be made by one group for another.</p>	<p>what services are available and at least giving them a choice. Access Anglican Counseling Service or refer client to Hunter New England Area Health Social Worker and Mental Health Worker.</p> <p>When first entering care carers and clients could be given a brief description of available services, how to access these services and a contact list.</p> <p>Organise an aged care forum to inform services of other services available.</p>	<p>Homes staff to ensure choices are known to carers or if necessary referrals made.</p> <p>Staff at Quirindi Retirement Homes</p> <p>Community Services Coordinator.</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>Every two years</p>
<p><b>Transport</b> Access to main street shopping and social facilities.</p>	<p>Clients are often not aware of the HACC shopping bus, taxi vouchers and Transport for Health. The private town bus does not pick up/drop off in the main street or near Shaws/IGA.</p>	<p>Service flyer to include contact details for all services. Disabled area at Carlo's IGA is in a difficult spot for people traveling by bus to access and special arrangements must be made for the HACC shopping bus.</p>	<p>All service providers, LPSC.</p>	<p>ASAP</p>

<p><b>Older people continuing to drive when not functionally able.</b></p> <p><b>No access to publicly funded transport.</b> This type of transport needs volunteers and carers to have the necessary training in handling clients and their aids. Volunteers must be able to correctly lift a client and have expertise in managing mental illness and physical disabilities.</p>	<p>Increase local awareness of RTA processes for older drivers. GP accountability to initiate driving assessments.</p> <p>Although the Community Health Bus provides a wonderful service it is not always available and limits the number of people that can attend an outing. This is a major concern for HACC clients especially. With this type of transport</p>	<p>Road safety lessons for Gofer Drivers possibly participate in an annual road safety event.</p> <p>If Council is unable to purchase a bus due to funding restrictions groups could possibly come to some arrangement with Howard's Bus Service in conjunction with Oxley Transport. There is a growing need for this service and at present not all clients are able to access day trips due to the constrictions of a small bus that needs a wheel chair ramp.</p>	<p>RTA, LPSSC, community groups such as CWA and Quota.</p> <p>LPSC, HACC</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>The bus could be something that community groups can fundraise for over the next five years. There does need to be provision made by Council for depreciation and ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the vehicle.</p>
<p><b>Recreation</b></p> <p><b>Making full use of Day Centres</b></p>	<p>Older people in the community are not attending Day Centre activities. There seems to be a stigma attached to these places and clients feel the service is not appropriate even when their years are quite advanced.</p>	<p>Clients need to be encouraged to attend these centres on a couple of occasions. Clients are giving up after just one visit and often this is not giving the service a chance. Clients need to be informed of the days the</p>	<p>LPSC, Quirindi Retirement Homes need to promote their services in the wider community.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

		centre is opened and the activities available. Clients from the general community need to be encouraged to use these services as well as clients from Elmswood and the Retirement Homes.		
<b>Community Facilities</b>	The cost of residential care is so immense it is important that people be made aware of services that will allow them to remain in their homes for longer periods.	Council, Health and community organizations need to constantly lobby Government Organisations to increase HACC funding to keep people in their homes. Volunteers need to be encouraged and recruited to enable services to continue.	Hunter New England Area Health, LPSC, HACC Services, Community groups.	Ongoing



## PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - COVERING ALL DISABILITIES INCLUDING PEOPLE WITH HIV/AIDS

*Councils are encouraged to understand and analyse disability using a social model, rather than a medical one. This approach values the abilities and skills of people with disabilities and focuses on social, political or economic barriers that limit or prevent the person with a disability from taking part in community life.*

# 5.5

## Target Group

# PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



## Characteristics

No detailed information was available for people with a disability in Liverpool Plains Shire.

### What are the main **SOCIAL NEEDS** of this target group?

NEED	INCLUDING
HEALTH	Access to health services and advice specifically relating to their disability. This may include a range of options from in-home care to occasional day care. On council and local services that are accessible to people with disabilities.
COMMUNITY FACILITIES	Access to buildings used to provide services, including communication.
TRANSPORT	Specifically designed to meet their needs. Parking for disabled passengers is a major problem.
EDUCATION	Access to educational opportunities.
RECREATION	Access to recreational opportunities. To participate in community events and access services and facilities that is available to able bodied people.

### HOW ARE THESE NEEDS BEING MET?

The needs of disabled people in Liverpool Plains Shire are largely met through the Home and Community Care (HACC) Day Options Program, Oxley Community Transport and Day Care.

The Carer Respite Service is based in Tamworth and operates as a brokerage service. They have 29 clients in Quirindi, including aged and/or people with a disability. The Northern Carer's Respite Service, based in Glen Innes, offers a similar service and is often the first port of call before being referred to other local services. At present the nearest respite that is offered is in Armidale which means a considerable amount of traveling to access the service for our Shire residents.

Respite care demands are not being fully met - Community Options have limited funding for home based respite.

Some disabled people participate in HACC activities organised for older people. This type of service is not appropriate for younger people with a disability as they are not interacting with people of their own age and many of the activities they are taking part in are not suitable or of interest to them. There is no post School Options Program in Liverpool Plains Shire.

Kalorama Farm and Quirindi Day Options have been taken over by the Challenge Foundation which is based in Tamworth. The service still provides living skills and community access programs for people with intellectual disabilities.

Similarly, "Milpara" is a group home catering for 5 residents. Group homes provide quality, small-group supported accommodation in a community setting. They support and assist people with intellectual disabilities who cannot live independently or with their family, even with support. People wishing to use "Milpara" must join a waiting list.

Group Home staff helps clients to access day programs, holidays and recreation programs. However, there is an urgent need for short-term respite for carers of disabled people in Liverpool Plains Shire. This is important to provide planned short-term and time-limited breaks for families and other unpaid carers of children with a developmental delay and adults with an intellectual disability.

Short term, affordable respite care for disabled people is a huge issue Australia wide. Although this may not be realistic in the short term this should be flagged as a long-term goal for the Shire.

Council also has a strong commitment to improving access for disabled people and is increasing disabled parking, upgrading toilets for wheel chair access and providing ramps. They also investigate all reports relating to footpath access and address problems whenever possible.

#### **STRATEGIES – Including those carried forward from the 2006/07 Social Plan**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Why?</b>	<b>Strategy to overcome issue</b>	<b>Who is responsible</b>	<b>Time frame</b>
<b>Health</b> Gap from independent to low care facility.	With the decline in volunteers people with disabilities who wish to remain in their home will find services more difficult to access.	Promoting volunteering and encourage new volunteers. Services will become increasingly dependent on paid staff performing duties once done by volunteers. Community Health, HACC, Transport for Health and similar need to promote the services they have available and ensure that as many residents as possible have access.	Council, Community Health and HACC.	Ongoing
<b>Recreation</b>	Disabled youth of the district do not have access to recreational facilities. It was noted that lack of recreational facilities was also an issue for non disabled youth as well. Some clients are too young	This is a serious issue for disabled residents especially the younger age groups. Tenpin Bowling is an option however Tamworth is a considerable distance away. The Royal Picture Theatre will be accessible to the	Council	Ongoing

	or so severely handicapped to access Day Centres and HACC Services.	disabled of our community and was appreciated by all present at the group meeting.		
<b>Community Facilities</b>	The Quirindi Library disabled toilets are unable to be accessed by someone in a powered wheelchair.	Disabled toilets at the library will need to be upgraded in the future. The Mothers change room is being used at present and is a satisfactory solution in the short term.	Council.	Long term
<b>Lack of picnic facilities at Bell Park and Golland Fields.</b>	Quirindi Day Options has recently been taken over by the Challenge Foundation and intertown visits will be a regular occurrence. As there will be up to 20 visitors at present there are not enough tables available. It is extremely difficult for a person with a disability to eat off their lap. Golland Fields and Bell Park are ideal locations to hold functions as they are both quite level and the toilets have disabled access.	Community groups will be approached for donations and fundraising opportunities. Various community grants i.e. "Healthy Communities" will also be accessed.	Challenge Foundation, Council and all community groups.	This is something that needs looking into in the short term.

<p><b>Access to respite/after school care.</b></p>	<p>There is no after school care or holiday funding for children with a disability over 12 years. Long Day Care and Family day Care can only manage children up to 12 years as the safety of the younger children must be considered especially when behavioural problems are indicated. Funding and facilities are geared more towards community members with intellectual disabilities rather than physical disabilities. People with physical disabilities are left in the mainstream,</p> <p>It was noted that access to the following shops was difficult: Florist, NAB, Newsagent, all hotels the Courthouse and the Police Station.</p>	<p>With Challenge Foundation taking over Day Options clients may be able to approach them regarding after school care as this service is available in Tamworth. A respite centre is desperately needed in the Shire.</p>	<p>Challenge Foundation, Council and all community groups.</p>	<p>This is a high priority need and needs looking into urgently especially during school holidays.</p>
<p><b>Access to shops and parking</b></p>	<p>The disabled car park near Rowntrees is difficult for disabled passengers to use as they must get out of the car on the other side of the ramp. If the passenger is unable to use steps they must walk out into the line of</p>	<p>There is no designated Disabled parking between the Courthouse and IGA. Fonzie's ramp is not easy to access and people are often parked in front of ramps. Even very small steps are difficult to access by people</p>	<p>Liverpool Plains Shire Council.</p>	<p>This is something that needs immediate attention and would be quite simple to fix.</p>

	traffic and walk to the ramp. This is potentially very dangerous and requires traffic to be stopped at times.	using a powered wheelchair. There is no disabled symbol on the road at any of the disabled car parks and there are places where it is difficult to see the signs due to overhanging branches.		
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**ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE- INCLUDING PEOPLE OF ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER DESCENT, WHO IDENTIFY AS SUCH, AND ARE ACCEPTED BY THE RESPECTIVE ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITY.**



## 5.6 Target Group Indigenous People

### Characteristics

- In 2006, 716 Aboriginal people were living in Liverpool Plains Shire.
- The large majority of Indigenous people were Aboriginal with the minority being Torres Strait Islander or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander;
- 406 or 57% were over the age of 20; and
- The % of Indigenous people living in Liverpool Plains is relatively high compared to the NSW average of 1.9%.

### What are the SOCIAL ISSUES for this group?

- Basic education and training – this limits employment opportunities;
- Cultural differences; and
- Transport- many Aboriginal people don't have driver's licenses and, therefore, find it difficult to travel to access services, attend interviews and participate in community events.

### What are the main SOCIAL NEEDS of this group?

NEED	INCLUDING
HEALTH	Improved health facilities.
CRIME/PERSONAL SAFETY	For a more responsive justice system. To empower Aboriginal communities and individuals to achieve economic self sufficiency.
COMMUNITY FACILITIES	Housing, infrastructure, family and support services.
TRANSPORT	From Walhallow to pre schools and recreation facilities.
EDUCATION	Education and training specifically for Aboriginal students.
RECREATION	Quirindi Recreation Centre and sporting facilities.
CULTURE	For the work of Aboriginal artists, to encourage greater respect for Aboriginal people's relationship with the land, the sea and the rivers.

References: NSW Government's Statement of Commitment – Premier's Department



## **HOW WELL ARE THESE NEEDS BEING MET?**

### **HEALTH**

Mainstream health services for the indigenous community are provided through the Quirindi Community Health Centre with regular visits from Hunter New England Area Health Services workers.

An Aboriginal Maternity Health Service was introduced in the late 1990s but has waned recently. The service previously visited Quirindi fortnightly but now visits as required to provide antenatal, post natal care and women's health information in homes, hospital or at the Community Health Centre. Aboriginal Health workers from Tamworth and Walhallow provide a weekly service from the Community Health Centre and Nungaroo Land Council.

Walhallow Aboriginal Corporation also employs a Health Care Worker and has received funding to employ a doctor 1 day/week for 12 months. While this is a boost, there are concerns about what will happen after the 12 months has elapsed.

### **EMPLOYMENT**

The Quirindi Aboriginal Corporation has a contract with Council to sort recyclable materials and manage the Quirindi and Werris Creek landfills.

The Walhallow Aboriginal Corporation is also very strong.

The abolition of the CDEP programme has caused consternation in the Aboriginal community and has resulted in the shutting down of a number of enterprises however the community is highly integrated into the general workforce.

### **HOUSING**

Aboriginal housing is available through NSW Department of Housing, Quirindi Aboriginal Corporation and Nungaroo Lands Council. Both local organisations have rental properties available and Nungaroo leases and manages three properties from NSW DoH.

According to the Nungaroo Lands Council, housing demands are not fully met, particularly for flats for young singles and couples and three bedroom houses for families. There is a three year waiting list for properties and, ironically, they have 20 vacant blocks that they cannot afford to develop.

### **INFORMATION**

Nungaroo Lands Council acts as a referral service for the Aboriginal community, directing people to other services to meet individual needs.

## SERVICES

Isolation is a major issue, particularly for Aboriginal youth, and transport is seen as the biggest barrier to indigenous people participating in the community and accessing resources.

Aboriginal health workers believe that transport needs to be available specifically for younger and older people. Although two buses are available, none are solely dedicated to meeting health needs and consequently, it is often difficult to plan events. Similarly, HACC transport is difficult to access because of the demand.

### STRATEGIES-Including those carried forward from the 2006/7 Social Plan.

Issue	Why?	Strategy to overcome the Issue.	Who is responsible?	Time Frame
<b>Health</b>  Access to dental, mental health and women's health services.	Since the closure of the Public Dental Service at the Walhallow Outpost these services are now only available at Tamworth and Gunnedah making them much more difficult to access. Counseling services are also difficult to access and the Social and Emotional well being Centre is dealing with a lot of the mental health issues.  There is very little support for children with parents who have drug and alcohol related issues.	Services at the Walhallow Outpost need to be reestablished to enable access for people needing treatment.  North West Slopes Life Solutions will be possibly offering a full time service to help reduce the number of people on their waiting lists in the Liverpool Plains Shire. Life solutions are receiving up to 30 referrals per month and patients are waiting up to four months to receive treatment.	Walhallow and Nungaroo Land Councils in conjunction with Liverpool Plains Shire Council and Hunter New England Health.	Over the next 12 months.

<p>Youth making poor healthy lifestyle choices.</p> <p>Better understand the needs of the local Aboriginal community and facilitate communication between Council and indigenous residents.</p>	<p>Young people are often making poor choices with their food and eating a lot of take away meals.</p> <p>Employ an Aboriginal Liaison officer</p>	<p>A Healthy Choices Program for youth needs to be established so that they can be educated.</p> <p>Work in conjunction with local Land Councils so that the most suitable person for the job is recruited.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Transport</b></p>	<p>Community members need greater access to driver training.</p> <p>There is no provision for check in stations for child restraints.</p>	<p>Access funding to run driver training courses or organise with RTA or Driver Training facility to do the same.</p>		<p>This is an ongoing concern.</p>

CULTURALLY DIVERSE - THIS GROUP INCLUDES PEOPLE OF VARIOUS NATIONAL, ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS & SOCIAL BACKGROUNDS.

*Australia has benefited economically and socially through its acceptance of culturally diverse peoples. Persons of ethnic and culturally diverse backgrounds have much to offer the local community*



## 5.7 Target Group Culturally Diverse

**Characteristics:**

- In 2006, there were 321 people living in the Liverpool Plains who were born overseas. This represented 4% of the total population
- More than half (55%) of the citizens born overseas were female
- The UK was the most frequent country of origin, followed by New Zealand and the Netherlands
- The language most spoken at home after English, was Chinese, followed by Dutch, and Italian.

**What are the SOCIAL ISSUES for this group?**

- Basic education and training
- Access to information;
- Cultural differences; and
- Community acceptance and non-vilification

**What are the main SOCIAL NEEDS of this group?**

NEED	INCLUDING
HEALTH	Access to health facilities that provide for cultural sensitivities. Access to legal and Community Service information.
COMMUNITY FACILITIES	Participate in community events and access services, facilities that are available to the rest of the community. Employment prospects and multi-lingual Library Services. Access to adequate housing, family and support services and interpretive services.
TRANSPORT	Opportunities for driver training and licensing
EDUCATION	English language courses and basic educational needs
RECREATION	Quirindi Recreation Centre and sporting facilities.
CULTURE	To have access to a range of culturally diverse activities.

## **HOW WELL ARE THESE NEEDS BEING MET?**

Liverpool Plains Shire Council operates as a self-governing body within the legislative framework set out by the State Government. A key role of the NSW Government Division of Local Government is to assist councils in carrying out their activities in accord with this framework. Under both the Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000 and the NSW Local Government Act 1993, councils are required to carry out their functions in a manner that actively promotes the principles of multiculturalism. The Liverpool Plains Shire Council will identify and address the needs of people from culturally and linguistically diverse background in their management planning process.

### **HEALTH**

The Quirindi Health Centre and Hunter New England Area Health provide excellent mainstream health services. Staff are aware of cultural sensitivities and are trained in handling such matters. NSW Health State policy requires that discretion and discernment is exercised when dealing with issues that may arise from cultural beliefs, practices and customs.

NSW Health provides through Hunter New England Area Health a number of interpretation services and Telephone interpreting services for public patients. The service is available 24 hours a day, seven day a week.

Hunter New England Area Health provides a counselling service accessible to all cultural groups.

Access to gender specific doctors can be arranged through the Hospital or doctor consultation process.

### **EMPLOYMENT**

Liverpool Plains Shire Council has endeavoured to promote new industry and services within the Shire, generating job opportunities for both professional and blue-collar workers. It is expected that employment opportunities will increase dramatically throughout the Shire over the next decade. This will provide opportunities for people of culturally diverse backgrounds to find employment in a range of fields.

Opportunities for career training are available through the Quirindi TAFE and other regional educational institutions.

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Access to foreign language reading material can be sourced through the State Library of NSW Multicultural Services. This service can be facilitated through the Liverpool Plains Shire Council Library Services, or through the Central Northern Library Services.

Government Language Service providers are the responsibility of the NSW Interdepartmental Committee on Migrant Settlement. These services have been made available for regional and rural NSW. It is NSW government policy to provide interpreters for clients who do not speak English and who are dealing with government agencies. In NSW all service providers can access the translating and interpreting services provided by the Community Relations Commission for a multicultural NSW (CRC) and the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA). In addition to these services, NSW Health and Centrelink also provide interpreter services.

## EDUCATION

Educational needs are met through Quirindi High School and other private and public schools in Tamworth. A number of young people attend private boarding schools in the Sydney and New England regions.

The Quirindi TAFE also offers an extensive range of vocational education and training courses to diploma level, while Adult and Community Education provides courses of community interest. The University of New England Access Centre, on the Quirindi TAFE campus, provides a direct link to University level education.

English language tutorship can be accessed through the NSW TAFE, or the Department of Education and Training in Tamworth which has a dedicated unit, Multicultural Programs Unit (MPU). Its role is to ensure the delivery of quality multicultural education and training programs and services. MPU coordinates and implements a range of statewide programs and initiatives aimed at improving the outcomes for learners from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Further, the University of New England' offers the, Language Training Centre (LTC) to provide English language training for overseas students of non- English speaking backgrounds.

## CULTURE

### STRATEGIES –Including those carried forward from the 2006/2007 Social Plan

Issue	Why?	Strategy to overcome issue.	Who is responsible?	Time Frame
<b>Health</b> English as a second language.	Language difficulties can make it difficult for people from another culture to be understood.	Ensure that interpretive services are available.	Hunter New England Area Health	Ongoing
No female doctor in the town.	Some cultures do not like discussing health issues with members of the opposite gender.	Keep trying to entice a female doctor to the area.	Hunter New England Area Health, Liverpool Plains Shire Council	Ongoing
<b>Community Facilities</b>	Language and cultural differences may make it difficult to access some community facilities such as TAFE, Community	Establish English as a second language class either at TAFE or the local High School.  Provide access to foreign language reading materials through State	New England TAFE, Quirindi High School and Liverpool Plains Shire Council.	Ongoing

	Health and mainstream education.	Library of NSW Multicultural Services.		
<b>Education</b> <b>Students may not know how to access ESL classes.</b>	In order to gain employment potential applicants need to have a certain standard of English.	Lobby local High School to include these classes if they are not already available.  Provide access to legal and community information pamphlets in a variety of languages in LPSC Library.	Quirindi High School.	Ongoing
<b>Culture</b>	Residents do not have access to artworks from different cultures.	Promote multicultural art exhibitions.	Arts Council	Ongoing



**This section addresses the needs of all residents of Liverpool Plains Shire. This includes Quirindi itself and the outlying areas including Premer to the west, Wallabadah to the east, Werris Creek & Currabubula to the north and Willow Tree to the south.**



## 5.8

## TARGET GROUP

# General Community

### Characteristics:

- In 2006 there were 7950 people living in Liverpool Plains Shire;
- 39% of the population were aged 15 years and over;
- 18% of the population were aged 65 years and over
- 90% of people living in Quirindi in 2001 were born in Australia; and
- 95% of people speak English only.

### How well are SOCIAL NEEDS being met?

A survey conducted in March 2009 throws some light on what the community likes about the Liverpool Plains.

<b>Lifestyle</b>			<b>162</b>
Peace and quiet	55	Laid back lifestyle	1
Lifestyle	40	Landscape	1
Country lifestyle	23	Living in our own home	1
It's a nice place to live	11	Love living in the area	1
Small town atmosphere	11	Not overcrowded	1
Beautiful area	5	Parks	1
Good schools	2	Scenic outlook	1
It's very friendly	2	Quality of life	1
A good spot	1	Very relaxed	1
Clean, healthy environment	1	Werris Creek is a great town to live in	1
Home	1		
<b>Community</b>			<b>66</b>
		Close relationship with indigenous people	1
The people	28	Community support	1
Sense of community	23	Privacy	1
Good town to live in	7	Supportive community	1
Countryside	3		
Support from Council for children's sporting events	1		
<b>Location</b>			<b>23</b>
Well maintained area	7	Best district in the country	1

Close to Tamworth	3	Close to town	1
Born and raised here	2	Livelihood from the area	1
Great place	2	Living in Werris Creek	1
Location	2	Position	1
Pretty town	2		
<b>Services/facilities</b>			<b>14</b>
Broad range of services/facilities	10	Central to major services	1
Convenient for services, e.g. medical	2	The hospital	1
Environment			13
Clean air	4	Natural environment	1
Climate	4	Soil	1
Dry weather	1	Water	1
Good water supply	1		
Family and friends			8
Family	5	Friendly elderly people	1
Family friendly	1	Friendly community	1
<b>Other</b>			<b>35</b>
Safety	9	No neighbours	1
Low crime rates	6	No traffic lights	1
Economically healthy area	2	Safe place for children	1
Freedom	2	Safe town	1
Security	2	Sports grounds	1
Affordable	1	Strong economy	1
Business opportunity	1	Very clean	1
Crime free	1	Very pretty, main town gardens	1
Everything for everybody	1	Work	1
No congestion	1		

## WHAT OTHER STRATEGIES NEED TO BE IMPLEMENTED?

The community was also asked what the highest priority issues were over the next ten years and the results are as follows:

<b>Services/Facilities</b>		<b>70</b>
Aged care services and facilities	22	Youth opportunities 2
Youth facilities, e.g. skate park	10	Disability access 1
Hospitals	7	Keeping the doctors in the area 1
Tourism	7	Lack of hospital services 1
Medical services and facilities	3	Lack of police 1
Schools	3	Law and order 1
Child care services	2	MPS Unit at Werris Creek 1
Community services and facilities	2	Natural gas services to residential areas 1
Lack of doctors	2	Upgrade of the hospital 1
More youth services	2	
<b>Roads/Footpaths</b>		<b>59</b>
Roads	40	Footpaths at Werris Creek 1
Footpaths	5	Kerb and guttering 1
Country roads	2	Kerb and guttering between Fitzroy St and the racecourse 1
Maintenance of footpaths	2	Maintenance of roads between Werris Creek and Tamworth 1
Street lighting	2	More pedestrian crossings 1
Tarring unsealed roads	2	Roads out of town 1
<b>Mining</b>		<b>46</b>
Coal mine issues	22	Coal mines wrecking the underground aquifer 1
Balance farming and mining	5	Coalmines, are they going to back the farmers 1
Control of coal mines	3	Development due to coal mining 1
No coal mining	3	Impact of the coal mining industry 1
Effect of coal mining on water supplies	2	Mining effects on the community 1
Limit mining	2	Pollution caused by the coal mines 1
Addressing the impact of coal mines on the local environment	1	Threat of mining 1
Balancing the needs of the community and mining	1	
<b>Environment</b>		<b>37</b>

Water	12	Bore water access	1
Water management	8	Cleaning of creeks	1
Water conservation	6	Maintaining the good water in aquifers	1
Environment	3	Protecting environment, e.g. bushland	1
Influence of the Greens	2	Soil quality	1
Agriculture	1		
<b>Development</b>			<b>27</b>
Infrastructure	5	Keeping small towns in the LGA maintained	1
More development	3	Land development	1
Encourage new businesses to the area	4	Landfill	1
Affordable housing	1	Main street	1
Beautifying the town centre	1	Promoting the town	1
Development of tourism	1	The growth of the town	1
Export markets	1	Tourism for the goldmine	1
Industry growth	1	Upkeep of town	1
Irrigation	1	Youth centre upgrades	1
<b>Other</b>			<b>45</b>
Employment	10	Harmonious Shire	1
Housing	4	Kerbside recycle bins	1
Economic development	2	Less dictatorial attitude to local communities	1
Economic management	2	Look after constituents	1
Lowering the rates	2	Permanent residents	1
Management of the railways	2	Pool needs to be opened more often	1
Providing job opportunities for younger people to retain the population	2	Public transport	1
Transport	2	Recession	1
Better management of general duties in the town	1	Rubbish dumping	1
Control of youth behaviour in local ovals/parks	1	Socio/economic impact	1
Drainage	1	Sustainability	1
Financial management by Council	1	The swinging bridges should be fixed for historical effect and general use	1
Good living	1	Town sewerage for Willow Tree	1

## 5.9 CRIME STATISTICS

The Liverpool Plains Shire has a low crime rate ranking relative to most LGA's:

### LIVERPOOL PLAINS LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

	2003			2004			2005			2006			2007			2008		
	Total	Rate per 100,000 popul ation	Rank	Total	Rate per 100,000 popul ation	Rank	Total	Rate per 100,000 popul ation	Rank	Total	Rate per 100,000 popul ation	Rank	Total	Rate per 100,000 popul ation	Rank	Total	Rate per 100,000 popul ation	Rank
Murder	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc
Non DV Assault	31	391.0	110	37	470.0	91	53	676.6	60	51	649.8	62	76	968.3	19	28	356.7	113
DV Assault	31	391.0	72	21	266.7	105	39	497.9	41	42	535.1	37	48	611.5	26	28	356.7	75
Sexual Assault	6	75.7	53	3	38.1	114	3	38.3	108	6	76.4	60	6	76.4	62	6	76.4	65
Other Sex Offences	14	176.6	10	3	38.1	137	4	51.1	112	7	89.2	65	11	140.1	25	6	76.4	79
Robbery w.o weapons	-	-	nc	2	25.4	69	1	12.8	99	-	-	nc	2	25.5	66	-	-	nc
Robbery w. firearm	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc
Robbery w weapon	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	nc
Break & Enter	16	201.8	139	22	279.4	128	24	306.4	124	19	242.1	130	12	152.9	140	20	254.8	127
B&E Non dwelling	22	277.5	134	19	241.3	121	37	472.4	50	38	484.1	49	28	356.7	70	16	203.8	117
Motor Vehicle Theft	6	75.7	139	4	50.8	138	6	76.6	127	6	76.4	135	2	25.5	140	8	101.9	126

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Steal from MV	9	113.5	141	13	165.1	139	18	229.8	130	16	203.8	130	12	152.9	134	16	203.8	136
Steal retail store	5	63.1	126	4	50.8	126	3	38.3	130	8	101.9	102	9	114.7	94	6	76.4	113
Steal from dwelling	26	327.9	107	14	177.8	136	16	204.3	123	22	280.3	103	20	254.8	107	9	114.7	140
Steal from person	-	-	nc	1	12.7	126	-	-	nc	1	12.7	123	1	12.7	126	-	-	nc
Fraud	5	63.1	139	9	114.3	128	7	89.4	133	14	178.4	117	9	114.7	131	7	89.2	136
Malicious Damage	78	983.7	117	49	622.4	140	60	766.0	135	99	1,261.3	97	99	1,261.3	93	50	637.0	139

Source: Bureau of Crime Statistics

Ranking fluctuates over time however across most areas Liverpool Plains is a relatively safe environment in which to live.

## **The role of natural resource management in Liverpool Plains Shire**

Landcare and Landcare groups contribute to the social nature of rural Shires such as Liverpool Plains. The social spins offs of Landcare have been well documented. Apart from providing a focus for joint community effort on environmental projects, Landcare also fills an important social role. It brings people together to share a common goal of improving the environment and, in the process, exposes participants to an invaluable social support system.

Council also worked with the community to establish the 'Quirindi Community Nursery'. The nursery is managed by volunteers and supplies native plants for local and regional natural resource management activities. Profits generated by the nursery are channeled into community projects.

The Liverpool Plains Shire Council had also been active in working with regional ornithological groups to identify bird routes throughout the shire. A bird route brochure has been produced and a bird hide constructed on the shores of the old Quipolly Dam.

## **The role of the Churches**

Quirindi is home to a number of churches including the Anglican, Catholic, Uniting, Harvest Christian, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah Witnesses and 'Christian Home Fellowship' group.

The churches contribute significantly to the moral, economic and social needs of the Shire. For example, the churches are instrumental in assisting the community through charitable activities such as St Vincent de Paul's, the Red Shield Appeal and a number of discreet benevolent charitable services. Church volunteers are often involved in activities such as meals on wheels, and unpaid aged care and home support services. The local youth are catered for with youth groups, coffee drop in centres, and counseling services. The Uniting church operates a bookshop, providing residents access to Christian literature, music and gifts.

The role of the church in maintaining and supporting 'Social Services' can not be sufficiently measured, however it is certain that it plays an important role in contributing to the social needs of the Liverpool Plains Shire.

## **The role of aged care facilities**

The development of aged care facilities in the Shire has advanced greatly since the early 1980,s when three separate committees merged to form 'Quirindi Retirement Homes Ltd'. The 'QRH Ltd' is responsible for a number of aged care lodgings including the:

- 'Quirindi & District Nursing Home', a 36 resident home situated on the grounds of the Quirindi Hospital;
- 'Eloura a brand new facility; and
- 2 x independent living units, 'The Gables' a 12 unit accommodation complex on George Street, and 'The Villas' a 6 unit complex on the corner of Hill and Abbott Streets.

Apart from the permanent employees, aged care facilities in the Shire are well supported by a strong network of volunteers who assist in providing palliative care, respite, entertainment, religious instruction, and companionship. The aged are also supported through programs implemented by HNEAHS and HACC. Volunteers, recreational opportunities and entertainment programs are coordinated by two 'Recreational Activities Officers' employed by QRH LTD.

Liverpool Plains Shire also operates Summerhill Lodge at Werris Creek, which provides low cost self-care accommodation for elderly citizens and other disadvantaged persons.



### **The role of Service Clubs**

Service clubs provide a large contribution to communities. There are many active service clubs in LPSC including Country Women's Association (CWA), Lions, Quota, Rotary and Toastmasters. The combined Services clubs support a number of the local charities including the Salvation Army, Smith Family, and the St Vincent de Paul Society. The service clubs also provide funding for a broad range of community programs. For example, the Lions Club supports many local initiatives including catering for Australia Day celebrations. It also supports youth with various opportunities such as Lions Youth of the Year quest, Kids to the Coast (for the disadvantaged), International Peace Poster competitions, and prizes for school speech days. The refurbished Royal Theatre will provide residents with a new entertainment venue.

The Lions club is often called upon to contribute barbecue cooks for numerous sales and catering ventures and conducts the annual Lions Club Auction with all proceeds going to various charities.

The Quirindi RSL Club provides residents with a venue for musical and other stage entertainment, and the building is often utilized as the 'unofficial' Quirindi conference centre. The lack of a designated Entertainment Centre in the Shire has meant that facilities such as the RSL Club, Werris Creek Bowls and Tennis Club and the Quirindi Bowling Club provide an important entertainment venue for residents. The refurbished Royal Theatre will provide residents with a new entertainment venue.

### **Quirindi Rural Heritage Village**

The 'Quirindi Rural Heritage Village' was founded in 1998 to promote 'Australia's cultural heritage through the preservation of its rural antiquities'. The village is situated on the grounds of Captain Cook Bicentennial Park, five kilometres north west of the Quirindi Township. The Shire Council transferred tenureship of the park lease to the 'Rural Heritage Village Committee' in 1998.

The QRHV holds the annual 'Rural Heritage Rally and Swap Meet', which draws interest from around the country.

### **The Role of Volunteer Groups**

Communities continue to provide "volunteers" with a range of activities such as SES, NSW Rural Fire Service, Volunteer Rescue Association and other community clubs that plan and stage events.

Without these volunteers, communities would not benefit from many activities and services. Among the most significant group of volunteers is those responsible for the Rail Journeys Museum in Werris Creek whose activities have won many prestigious awards in recent times.

## CHAPTER 6: Issue-Based Specific Strategies

### 6.1 HEALTH

*Typically, rural areas in Australia have lower health standards than their city counterparts, with a higher overall death rate, hospitalisation rates and a tendency to consult with health professionals only when the problem is urgent. They are also more likely to be at risk of a major disease.*

*(Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care's Regional Health Strategy', 1999)*

#### WHAT ARE THE MAJOR HEALTH ISSUES?

The major health issues are:

ISSUE	INCLUDING
Drug addiction	
Alcohol addiction	
Mental health	Issues such as anxiety, depression and social phobias are huge ongoing issues. Lack of referrals and inappropriate referrals.

In a rural shire such as Liverpool Plains, geographic and economic factors are intrinsically linked to health. The seasonal fluctuations that characterise the rural sector can have a significant effect on mental health.

#### HOW ARE THESE NEEDS MET?

Quirindi has a Community Acute Health Service and currently provides acute care, medical services, obstetrics and pediatrics. The hospital has a 24-hour Emergency Department. The Community Health Service shares the same “campus” as the hospital and provides various services including an Aboriginal health clinic, day care centre, diabetes education, early childhood clinics, immunisation, sexual assault services, cardiac rehabilitation program and speech pathology.

Quirindi Health Service also supports community based health services at Nundle and Premer.

A number of health related groups also operate in Liverpool Plains Shire. These are listed in the community directory.

## **6.2 INFORMATION**

*Information is a basic need in any community and helps to involve, empower and build rural and regional communities. Technological advances in recent years have changed the way that people access and use information and this has social implications, especially in rural communities.*

New resident kits have been developed.

All Libraries in the Central Northern Libraries network are on-line and this has improved access, particularly for outlying areas.

The strategies in this section are cross-referenced with other sections of this plan.

## **6.3 EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

### **HOW ARE EDUCATION NEEDS MET?**

Quirindi, as the main service centre of the Shire, has two primary schools and one high school. There are also public schools at Blackville, Premer, Spring Ridge, Wallabadah, Walhallow, Werris Creek, Currabubula, and Willow Tree. All of these schools feed into Quirindi High School.

The Quirindi Campus of the New England Institute of TAFE is a modern, integrated facility. The campus provides access to an extensive range of vocational education and training courses to diploma level offered through TAFE NSW. These courses are delivered using a number of delivery modes and modern technologies.

The TAFE Campus is also home to Quirindi Adult and Community Education (ACE), which provides courses of community interest. The University of New England Access Centre, situated on the campus, provides a direct link to University level education. The Liverpool Plains Shire Council Long Day Care Centre, located next to the TAFE Campus, complements educational opportunities by allowing family members to participate in further education and training.

### **WHAT ARE THE MAIN TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT IN QUIRINDI?**

The majority of people employed in Liverpool Plains Shire are involved in agriculture, forestry and fishing. The other dominant industries are health and community services and retail trade. Even still the number employed in the agriculture sector has decreased significantly in the last 15 years from 935 to 814 people.

## 6.4 CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

### WHY IS CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INCLUDED IN A SOCIAL PLAN?

*Cultural development adds richness and diversity to communities and cultural amenities are fundamental to people's needs and the business of local government.*

*For the purpose of this plan the word "cultural" includes the performing and visual arts, craft, museums, historical societies and heritage, libraries, built environment and heritage, festivals, events and organised leisure activities. The term "cultural development" includes conducting, participating in and promoting cultural activities and opportunities throughout the Shire.*

#### How well are cultural needs met?

The Arts in the Liverpool Plains Shire are extremely important in terms of their social contribution to the Shire's culture, but also to its education, economy and society. The Liverpool Plains Arts Council (LPAC) has been formed to coordinate and develop the various arts activities in the Shire, in an effort to positively increase the contribution that art and culture make to the community.

The Liverpool Plains Shire Arts Council operates as a section 355 Management Committee under the Local Government Act. They must report on their activities and adhere to detailed guidelines relating to appointment of members, membership and financial management.

Apart from the Arts Council, other cultural activities and organisations include:

- Quirindi Art Society;
- Quirindi Arts and Craft Shop;
- Royal Theatre;
- Historical Cottage and Museum.
- Rail Journeys Museum
- Rural Heritage Village
- Wallabadah Cultural Centre
- Liverpool Plains Shire Council Arts Council

#### Cultural planning

Liverpool Plains Shire Council has prepared a cultural plan. This plan contains a detailed inventory and description of local cultural assets, resources and infrastructure.

As with Social/Community Plans, Cultural Plans are submitted to the NSW Minister for Local Government for endorsement.

## CHAPTER 7: Acknowledgements and References

### 7.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the following people for contributing to this Social Plan:

Name	Position/title	Organisation	Interests
Belinda Eykamp	Community Services Coordinator	Liverpool Plains Shire Council	Youth/Social
Neil McGarry	Director Economic & Community Development	Liverpool Plains Shire Council	Aged/Cultural
Carmel Jones	Manager – Eastside Childcare Centre	Liverpool Plains Shire Council	Children
Fay Dart	Early Childhood Nurse	Hunter New England Area Health	Children, Women, Elderly
Colleen Wills	Councillor	Liverpool Plains Shire Council	Children, Youth, Women
Liverpool Plains Shire Council HACC Service			Elderly, Disabled

## 7.2 REFERENCES

- Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care (1999) Regional Health Strategy.
- Department of Local Government (October 2000). Cultural Planning – a Handbook for Local Government. Revised third draft.
- NSW Department of Local Government (December 2002) Social and Community Planning and Reporting Manual.
- NSW Department of Local Government (December 2002) Social and Community Planning and Reporting Guidelines.
- Liverpool Plains Shire Council Terms of Reference, Liverpool Plains Shire Arts Council.
- Liverpool Plains Shire Council 2009/2010 Management Plan.
- Liverpool Plains Shire Council Community/Social Plan 2006/2010.

## 7.3 ACRONYMS

Acronym	Term	Relevant sections
ACE	Adult and Community Education	Employment, education
ANW	Arts North West	Cultural development
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission	Indigenous
AYF	Australian Youth Foundation	Young people
BODC	Beehive Occasional Day Care	Children
CDEP	Community Development and Employment Program	Indigenous
CNL	Central Northern Libraries	Cultural development
DADHC	Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care	Older people
DAP	Disability Action Plan	People with a disability
DoCS	Department of Community Services	
DoH	NSW Department of Housing	
DIPNR	Department of Infrastructure, Planning & Natural Resources	General Community
DLG	Department of Local Government	All
HACC	Home and Community Care	Older people, people with a disability
EDO	Economic Development Officer (Liverpool Plains Shire)	All
LPSC	Liverpool Plains Shire Council	All
LDCC	Long Day Care Centre	Children
HNEAHS	Hunter New England Area Health Service	All

NLC	Nungaroo Lands Council	Indigenous
OCT	Oxley Community Transport	Older people, people with a disability
PCYC	Police Citizens Youth Club	Youth and general community
QAC	Quirindi Arts Council	Cultural development
QHS	Quirindi High School	Youth
QPS	Quirindi Pre School	Children
QRC	Quirindi Recreation Centre	Youth, general community
QRH LTD	Quirindi Retirement Homes Limited	Aged Care
QRHV	Quirindi Rural Heritage Village	Cultural Heritage
QSC	Quirindi Shire Council	All – Previous LGA
QSC	Quirindi Sports Council	Youth, general community
RCMC	Recreation Centre Management Committee	Youth, general community
RTC	Rural Transaction Centre	
SRC	Student Representative Council	Young people
TAFE	College of Technical and Further Education	Employment, education
TFS	Tamworth Family Support	Children, women
TWR	Tamworth Women's Refuge	Women
UNE	University of New England	Employment, education
WAC	Walhallow Aboriginal Corporation	Indigenous
WLC	Walhallow Lands Council	Indigenous

# APPENDICES

## LIVERPOOL SHIRE COUNCIL MANAGEMENT PLAN – 2009/2010

### **APPENDIX 1: Statement of Access and Equity**

Following the introduction of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, Council must include information about access and equity activities in its management plan.

An access and equity activity is described as one that benefits both the general community and/or particular target groups and helps Council to:

- Promote fairness in the distribution of resources;
- Recognise and promote people's rights and improve the accountability of decision makers;
- Ensure that people have fairer access to the economic resources and services essential to meeting their basic needs and improving quality of life; and/or
- Give people better opportunities for genuine participation and consultation about decisions affecting their lives.

When determining Council strategies regarding social and community planning issues, Council needs to take into consideration identified levels of need, Council's financial situation and local demography. The following activities are planned to be undertaken as part of Council's response to its Community Social Plan:

- Continue implementation of Council's Disability Action Plan;
- Continue to identify issues of concern for aged and disabled residents and visitors;
- Actively involve the local community, commercial and social groups and other non-government agencies in the planning process;
- Respect cultural diversity;
- Promote fair, open and participatory decision making;
- Consider the equity implications of all proposals;
- Construct public disabled toilet facilities as budget s permit across the shire;
- Develop an aging strategy;
- Construct disabled facilities and disabled access at the Royal Theatre.



## **APPENDIX 2: Review of 2006/2010 Social Plan**

### **CHILDREN**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>What's happened?</b>
North West Life Education	Maintain Council support for North West Life Education	Ongoing	Council funds each Primary School student in the Shire to attend North West Life Education. This includes students from Walhallow.
Family Day Care	Request that Family Day Care keep council informed regarding the supply and demand for carers.	Ongoing	Ongoing contact with HACC Services
Quirindi Toy Library	Assist the Toy Library to optimise funding opportunities		Toy Library closed. Toys distributed to the Play Groups.
Extension of Holiday fun program	Consider extending the Holiday fun program with a trial extension during Mar/April 2000	Ongoing	The Centre is operated during Christmas and September School Holidays.
Aboriginal access to pre school education	Assess, with NEAHS, Quirindi Pre School and Nungaroo Lands Council Aboriginal access to pre school facilities and if additional outreach services are required.		Program has commenced. Aboriginal Playgroup established.
Community leadership	Initiate, in conjunction with appropriate community organisations, leadership training programs to encourage community participation.	Ongoing	A workshop has been held on grant application writing and Community Development Workshops held by Economic Development Officer in all Shire villages.

## YOUNG PEOPLE

Description	Recommendation	Target Date	What's happened?
Sport and recreation facilities	Maintain ongoing commitment to provide facilities for sport and recreational activity	Ongoing	The Quirindi Recreation Centre has been refurbished. Improved facilities for No. 1 Oval , Qdi
Youth Scholarship Scheme	Continue and develop the Youth Scholarship Scheme	Ongoing	A committee is in place.
Leadership training	In conjunction with appropriate community organisations, initiate leadership training programs to encourage community participation.	Ongoing	This is part of the Youth Scholarship Scheme.

## WOMEN

Description	Recommendation	Target Date	What's happened?
Domestic violence	Recognise that domestic violence is a community issue and acknowledge the work being undertaken under the Regional Violence Protection Strategy.	Ongoing	Domestic violence is still an issue. Release of Domestic Violence Information Kit.
Women's health	Continue to support the women's health initiative of the Hunter New England Area Health Service and encourage development of outreach services.	Ongoing	The Women's Health Services provides a range of services, specifically targeting women.

## OLDER PEOPLE

Description	Recommendation	Target Date	What's happened?
HACC volunteer recruitment	Support a program to recruit more volunteers to the HACC program, or change volunteer structure to incorporate community organisations to the HACC program and regularly review the level of support required to meet the growing demand for services to older people.	As required	This service relies heavily on volunteers. The dilemma is that many volunteers are getting older and despite efforts to attract new people, they are not volunteering. Volunteer Day held in Railway Square, Quirindi
Advocacy for respite services	Extend the role of the Committee which initiated the disabled mobility map (referred to in Strategy for Disabled People), extend its role to include advocacy for respite services for older people and their carers.	Ongoing	The Disability Access plan has been implemented. Recreation Centre, RFS and SES building access provided for disabled. Council paving works provided disabled standard access points. Werris Creek Public Toilets rekeyed for 24hr disabled access.  Rose Lee Park toilets constructed with disabled access.

## PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Description	Recommendation	Target Date	What's happened?
HACC volunteer recruitment	Support a program to recruit more volunteers to the HACC program, or change volunteer structure to incorporate community organisations to the HACC program and regularly review the level of support required to meet the growing demand for services to older people.	As required	This service relies heavily on volunteers. Unfortunately, many volunteers are getting older and despite efforts to attract new people, younger people are not volunteering.
Advocacy for respite services	Extend the role of the Committee which initiated the disabled mobility map (referred to in Strategy for Disabled People), extend its role to include advocacy for respite services for older people and their carers.	Ongoing	The Disability Access plan has been implemented. Council lobbied for expansion of and funding for HACC Services to Willow Tree.

## ABORIGINAL

Description	Recommendation	Date	What's happened?
Identification of needs of the indigenous community	Utilise the Nungaroo Lands Council planning document as the principal source to identify community needs for the formation of strategies in future Community Plans		Council maintains Waste Contract with Quirindi Aboriginal Corporation to manage Quirindi, Werris Creek and Willow Tree tips. Entered contract to sort recyclables.
Community directory	Include Aboriginal organisations in Council's community directory	Ongoing	Indigenous organisations have been included in the current directory.
Centrelink services for Liverpool Plains Shire through Nungaroo Lands Council	Encourage and assist Nungaroo Lands Council to improve Centrelink services in Quirindi through the provision of touch screen computer terminals, as technological advances follow.	Ongoing	Walhallow Aboriginal corporation was the successful tender to provide Centrelink Services in Quirindi.

## HEALTH

Description	Recommendation	Target Date	What's happened?
Psychotherapy services	Assist Premier Clinic, in kind or financially, in its efforts to provide psychotherapy to local residents	Ongoing	Council funds building maintenance works on Centre.
North West Division of General Practice Forum	Support Division	Ongoing	Regular contact by Council, Senior Staff with Doctors
Community transport	Continue role with Oxley Community Transport		Link maintained
Medical Liaison Committee	Strengthen the Medical Liaison Committee role in continuing to address health planning issues for Liverpool Plains Shire residents	Ongoing	Regular meetings to facilitate development of a new Medical Centre for Quirindi. HealthOne to commence construction in 2010.

## COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Description	Recommendation	Target Date	What's happened?
Liverpool Plains Shire library opening hours	Review current opening hours with a view to altering or extending according to user demand	Ongoing	Library hours have been extended at Werris Creek.
Internet access at Premer	Investigate the provision of Internet access to make it available as a community resource through NEHS, CNL, Liverpool Plains Shire Council and the Department of Education and Training.	Ongoing	Premer now has a CTC
Distribute new residents information package	Package for new residents, make available through Tourist Centre, Library, Real estate Agents, Taxis and commercial outlets.	Ongoing	Information available and distributed.
Liverpool Plains Shire Council website	Continue to include and update information about the town/district, Council's operations, activities and other information relevant to new residents on the Council's website.	Ongoing	Council has a website available for public to read information.

## CULTURAL

Description	Recommendation	Target Date	What's happened?
Arts North West	Continue membership of Arts North West and encourage community groups and individual artists to use its services.	Ongoing	Ongoing Membership retained
Use of the Internet to promote events	Promote cultural activities in the shire through the Council's website.	Review regularly	Events listed

## SPORT AND RECREATION

Description	Recommendation	Target Date	What's happened
Swimming pool hours	Review the hours of opening and adjust to maximize public use	Annual	Hours reviewed-earlier opening hours in Quirindi are now in place.
Playground plantings	Consider planting shade trees and gardens in parks with existing playground equipment and involve the community in planting and maintenance.	Ongoing	All new playground equipment areas to incorporate shade shelters

## EDUCATION

Description	Recommendation	Target Date	What's happened?
TAFE	Support the TAFE campus, citing the positive effect on the community in increasing the level of training and employability of the young people and the long-term possibilities for a community to offer school leavers an opportunity to stay in town.	Ongoing	Attend public meeting on training activities
Traineeships	Develop a training strategy for young people.	Ongoing	Discuss with Mining Companies
Promotion of TAFE	Promote TAFE open learning programs to increase youth participation in education opportunities	Ongoing	Meetings have been held with TAFE.



# Cultural Plan 2009- 2014

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# 1. Background

## Legislative requirements

The Local Government (General) Amendment (Community and Social Plans) Regulation 1999 requires that Councils develop a social or community plan in accordance with Departmental guidelines, and report on identified access and equity activities in their annual reports.

The State Government has identified that there is a need for a more formalised cultural planning process as a means of ensuring that councils consider cultural aspects of community life as a strategic component of corporate planning.

As a consequence, councils must submit a Cultural Plan to the Department of Local Government every five years.

## Purpose

Cultural planning is a “purposeful, strategic approach to cultural development” (Australia Council, 1997). In the case of this Plan, its purpose is to provide a framework for the Shire’s role in cultural development through identifying:

- A cultural vision for the Shire
- Aims
- Key result areas
- Suggested strategies/means to achieve the identified aims and key result areas

## Scope

This Plan seeks to identify the various cultural needs of the Liverpool Plains community, determine whether it is Council’s responsibility to take action upon

them, and recommend action plans to meet those needs.

The Plan defines “culture” as “the cumulative expression of community identity through the natural and built environment; heritage and shared languages; through the arts and crafts; recreation and leisure activities and the many other ways by which creative identity is expressed, interpreted and acknowledged”.

## The Planning Process

The following process has been used in the preparation of this Plan:

- Develop a workable definition of “culture”
- Prepare a community profile
- Develop a database of cultural assets and resources
- Develop a Cultural Map
- Review the vision and set of aims
- Review Council’s policies on major subjects affecting several strategies (eg. access and equity, culture, community management, urban design)
- Develop a list of key result areas
- Prepare a set of strategies/means covering the key result areas
- Integrate the Action Plans and proposed projects into Council’s future management plans.

## Target Groups

Although this Plan is essentially a whole of community plan, it does recognise that there are a number of groups within the community that require special consideration either because of past and present disadvantage or because of the particular benefits they can obtain from cultural activities.



The following target groups are given special consideration in this Plan:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Children Young people
- People with Disabilities
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

## Key Result Areas

The following six Key Result Areas are addressed in the Cultural Plan:

### 1. Cultural Spaces

To provide and maintain well-located, adaptable spaces for activities to which access is easy for all community members.

### 2. Cultural Diversity

To identify and celebrate our differences in ways appropriate to the needs of the different groups.

### 3. Cultural Education

To inform people about our diverse cultures and how we encourage them to learn about each other.

### 4. Cultural Heritage

To preserve our unique character, recognizing all its differences.

### 5. Cultural Events

To involve as many people as possible in planning, running and attending community cultural events.

### 6. Cultural Links

To form cultural links with other communities, other regions and other cultures thereby recognising that Liverpool Plains is part of a wider society with broader cultural traditions

## Action Plans

For each of the six Key Result Areas there is a set of action plans. These action plans have a standard layout as follows:

- Objectives – these are related to the Cultural Vision and to Council's Vision and Objectives.
- Goals – these set out the individual actions by which the key result area objective will be achieved.
- Means – these indicate how the Goals will be achieved.
- Year – this represents the operating year in which it is planned to commence a strategy.
- Plan Ref. – this is the individual budget number allocated in the Management Plan that is responsible for carrying out the actions.

Performance indicators that measure the achievements of the goals in each of the Key Result Areas are set out in the Management Plan and reported in Council's Annual Report.

## 2. Liverpool Plains Shire Council

### Council's Vision

That the Liverpool Plains Shire area achieves higher levels of growth and generates improved quality of life through expanded opportunities for economic and social development being realised within an environmentally and financially sustainable framework.

### Council's Commitment to Cultural Needs

Council is committed to the following principles:

#### (a) Identity and Sense of Place

Liverpool Plains will be a community which recognises that places have cultural meanings for people that contribute to their sense of identity and belonging;



**(b) Creativity and Innovation**

Liverpool Plains will be a community that values and encourages creativity and innovation.

**(c) Acceptance and Diversity**

Liverpool Plains will be a community that promotes acceptance and diversity.

**(d) Access and Opportunity**

Liverpool Plains will be a community that provides access and opportunity to all individuals and groups.

**(e) Conservation and Sustainability**

Liverpool Plains will be a community that values its heritage and that actively promotes its preservation and conservation.

**(f) Co-operation and Participation**

Liverpool Plains will be a community where people can give support and encouragement to each other to participate in the cultural life of the community.

## Council's Cultural Vision

That the Liverpool Plains community maintains and develops art and cultural opportunities, which have an emphasis on lifestyle enhancement and participation from all segments of the community.

## Programs

Council operates a varied range of activities and services generally described as programs or budget subject areas. It is Council's plan to continue to operate all these programs in 2009/10 at existing service levels. However, all programs and service levels are subject to regular review and some changes may occur during the year.

## Programs

Community Leadership & Governance

100-120 Members Facilities & Expenses

100-130 Senior Administration

100-140 Finance & Administration

Safe & Sustainable Environment

300-110 Environmental Serv Admin

300-120 Public Health

300-130 Built Environment

300-140 Natural Resources

300-150 Waste Management

300-160 Emergency Services

300-170 Ordinance Control

300-180 Buildings

Vibrant Lifestyle

200-110 Tourism & Economic Development

200-120 Rail Journeys Museum

300-190 Library Services

300-190 Aged & Disabled Services

300-200 Youth & Children's Services

300-190 Cultural & Community Services

300-200 Child Care Services

Well-maintained Infrastructure

400-110 Works Administration

400-120 Works Depot

400-150 Parks & Reserves

400-180 Sewer Services

400-130 Infrastructure Maintenance

400-160 Infrastructure Construction

400-170 Water Services



### 3. The Liverpool Plains Community

#### Overview

Liverpool Plains Shire is a progressive multipurpose rural Council, located on the rich agricultural lands of the Liverpool Plains.

The Shire has a population of around 7,540 people with the major urban centres being Quirindi and Werris Creek – the first and last railway town.

Situated on the North/West Slopes and Plains, the main town of Quirindi is 66kms south of Tamworth and 410kms north of Sydney. The major road link is the New England Highway which traverses the country side 12kms east of Quirindi.

The Shire currently has an economic base focused on agricultural pursuits. These include cropping of maize, sorghum, Lucerne, Soya beans, chick peas, sunflowers, wheat, corn, oats, canola and vegetables. Two (2) major intensive cattle feedlots operate in the Shire as well as a number of poultry farms. Cattle and sheep grazing are also undertaken.

However the shire is experiencing significant growth through timber processing and gas and coal exploration currently taking place.

The shire also has strong sporting and cultural traditions and has many clubs and societies contributing to society. Among the more well-known cultural organisations are the Wallaby Art Group, the Quirindi and District Historical Society, the Liverpool Plains Arts Council, the Rural Heritage Village, Blackville Art Show, Currabubula Red Cross Art Show, Quirindi Arts & Crafts Group and the ARM Management Inc.

#### Population Profile

The following profile of the Liverpool Plains Shire is based on data obtained from the 2006 Census.

**Table 1: Selected Averages (2001 Census)**

	Liverpool Plains	Australia
Median age	43	37
Median monthly housing loan repayments	\$758	\$1,300
Median weekly rent	\$100	\$190
Median weekly individual income	\$351	\$466
Median weekly family income	\$857	\$1,171
Median weekly household income	\$666	\$1,027
Mean household size	2.4	2.6
Dwellings fully owned	44.2%	32.6%
Dwellings being purchased	21.5%	32.2%
Dwellings being rented	25.1%	27.2%

**Table 2: Selected Characteristics (2006 Census)**

	Males	Females	Persons
Total persons	3761	3779	7540
Aged 15 yrs and over	3000	3026	6026
Aged 65 yrs and over	680	712	1392
Indigenous persons			715
Born in Australia			6,638
Born overseas			316
Speaks English only			6976
Australian citizen			6827
Employed full-time			1,875
Employed part-time			908
Unemployed			192
Unemployment rate			6%



## Changes in Liverpool Plains Shire's Population

The main changes since 1986 have been in the size and composition of the population, and aspects of the economic life of the shire such as employment, industry and income.

In summary, the following changes have occurred:

- The Shire's population has declined by nearly 9%;
- Most of the loss in population is attributable to decline in agricultural and rail employment;
- The number of indigenous people in the population has increased from 582 in 1986 to 715 in 2006;
- The population is older than it was in 1986 ie. median age is 43 as opposed to 32 in 1986;
- Family and household sizes have become smaller from 3.15 persons to 2.4 persons;
- Traditional industries such as agriculture continue to decline but are still the major employment sector for the Shire.

Most of these changes reflect changes in the broader Australian population, which is now feeling the effects of the post World War Two "baby boom". The trend downwards in population numbers is one area where Liverpool Plains differs from the broader population, which has grown during the period. However, the decline in population has slowed markedly and in centres such as Quirindi and Werris Creek has grown substantially.

## The Future

On the basis of data obtained from the 2006 Census, the trends set out above appear negative in many aspects. However recent economic development within the Shire suggests that the following may occur:

- The population is likely to increase by about 4% per year and a best case of about 6 %;
- The number of older people in the population is likely to continue to increase;
- The number of younger people in the population is likely to increase with increased employment opportunities;
- Female numbers will be similar to male numbers;
- Household sizes will stabilise with the ageing of the population and preferences for smaller families;
- Median income will remain static or rise slightly as higher incomes in for example mine employment are offset by the increasing number of people on aged pensions and other social security benefits;
- Full-time employment will continue to grow due to restructuring of the economy from a largely agricultural base to one that includes mining, tourism, manufacturing and service industries base.



## 4. Action Plans

### Key Result Area 1:

### Cultural Spaces

**Objective: To provide and maintain well-located, adaptable cultural spaces for activities to which access is easy for all community members.**

Goal	Means	Year	Plan Ref
Continue to grow and develop the Australian Railway Monument & Rail Journeys Museum at Werris Creek offering the wider community an educational and recreational resource associated with the history of rail.	Operate a national museum and provide a range of public programs and exhibitions. Utilise the Railway monument amphitheatre for performances and events.	ongoing	200-120
	Investigate the possibilities of extending the Museum into the top floor space of the Railway Station.	2009/10	200-120
	Seek funding for the construction of exhibits from private and public sources.	ongoing	200-120
To provide the community with public libraries that are functional, accessible and attractive.	Operate public libraries that provide a range of facilities, resources and services and which are accessible physically and electronically.	Ongoing	300-190
To provide a quality, functional and accessible cultural space at the Royal Theatre primarily devoted to the holding of drama and music events, film and live theatre.	Seek funding to refurbish the Royal Theatre for use as an events area.	2009/10	300-190
	Develop a plan for marketing the Royal Theatre to various cultural groups.	2009/10	300-190
	Develop subcommittees to manage and market the Royal Theatre	2009/10	
To promote and manage the use of streets and public open spaces as performance and event venues.	Maintain Busker's policy which clearly sets out the requirements placed by Council on individuals or organisations that seek to use the shire's streets or public spaces for their activities.	Ongoing	200-110
	Promote the use of the Railway Town Square and Library Courtyard as public performance venues.	Ongoing	200-110
To provide venues for meetings, performing arts events and social functions.	Maintain and promote the Quirindi Pavilion as a venue for events and set fees and charges that balance financial return against affordability.	Ongoing	300-180
	Develop a plan for refurbishing the Pavilion to include air conditioning.	2010/11	300-180
	Establish a Committee or Association to operate and develop the Royal Theatre as a place of public entertainment for the benefit of the local community.	2009/10	200-110

Goal	Means	Year	Plan Ref
To provide the community with suitable exhibition spaces in which to express their artistic endeavours or issues of cultural importance to them.	Provide an exhibition venue at the Currabubula Hall to maintain the Annual Red Cross Art Show.	Ongoing	200-110
	Provide a venue at the Pavilion and Railway Institute Building for the display and promotion of local artists and their artwork	Ongoing	200-110
	Provide space in the shire libraries for small exhibitions by community groups.	Ongoing	300-190
	Provide space at Royal Theatre for small exhibitions	2010/11	200-110
	Provide assistance in promoting Quirindi Rural Heritage Village as a suitable exhibition space	Ongoing	200-110
	Promote The Basement as a suitable exhibition space	Ongoing	300-190
	Develop a Cultural Centre for Liverpool Plains Shire Council to promote local artists and bring art exhibitions to the Shire. A Cultural Centre will also provide a space to host workshops regularly throughout the year.	2010/11	300-190



## Key Result Area 2:

## Cultural Diversity

**Objective: To identify and celebrate our differences in ways appropriate to the needs of the different groups in our community.**

Goal	Means	Year	Plan Ref
To utilise the arts as a way of exploring and expressing the various Liverpool Plains cultures.	Ensure that any art exhibitions programs encourage a diversity of media and subjects from a range of individuals and groups.	Ongoing	200-110
To celebrate the differences in ways appropriate to the needs of the different groups in our community.	Encourage cross-generational cultural interaction by developing a program in which young people record oral histories of older members of the community. Funding required to be sought.	2010/11	300-190
To promote harmonious relations between the various groups that comprise the Liverpool Plains Shire community.	Plan and conduct Australia Day celebrations.	Ongoing	300-190
	Support NAIDOC Week and Harmony Day activities.	Ongoing	300-190
	Support the Rural Heritage Village in its further development	Ongoing	300-190
	Support the Quirindi and District Historical Society Inc in its activities	Ongoing	300-190
	Provide funding for cultural activities through the Community Initiative Program and Youth Scholarship Program	Ongoing	300-200
To provide opportunities for different groups in the community to provide information about their beliefs and activities.	Provide public noticeboards in the Town Square and the Library for community groups to advertise their activities at no cost.	Ongoing	300-190
	Provide space in the Libraries for small exhibitions by community groups.	Ongoing	300-190
	Provide space at the Railway Institute and Pavilion for exhibitions and events	Ongoing	300-190
To promote the artistic endeavours of the local Indigenous community.	Seek an appropriate location and establish a permanent exhibition space in which local Indigenous artists can display their work.	2010/11	300-190





## Key Result Area 3:

## Cultural Education

**Objective: To inform people about the diverse aspects of culture generally and the Liverpool Plains Shire culture specifically.**

Goals	Means	Year	Plan Ref
To promote the development of art works through an acquisitive art exhibition.	Council to acquire art works at the Currabubula Art Show annually and ensure that it continues to be recognized as a professionally run exhibition.	Ongoing	200-110
To promote an interest in and improve technical expertise in a wide range of literary activities.	Encourage local writers groups and activities.	Ongoing	300-190
To educate the community on the heritage of Australia and the Liverpool Plains and promote its conservation.	Promote Heritage Week and maintain and construct new interpretive signage in towns and villages.	Ongoing	200-110
	Promote the First & Second Fleet Memorial Gardens, Quirindi Rural Heritage Village and Australian Railway Monument & Rail Journeys Museum	Ongoing	200-110
	Develop an Interpretive Centre at Willow Tree.	2009/10	200-110
	Support the Rural Heritage Village.	Ongoing	200-110
	Support the Quirindi and District Historical Society Inc	Ongoing	200-110



## Key Result Area 4: Cultural Heritage

**Objective: To promote and preserve the distinctive character of the Liverpool Plains both past and present.**

Goals	Means	Year	Plan Ref
To encourage research into the history and culture of the Liverpool Plains.	Offer assistance to historical and genealogical researchers at the various libraries and Historical Society.	Ongoing	300-190
	Support the Quirindi and District Historical Society Inc.	Ongoing	300-190
	Provide a comprehensive local study collection for students and visitors in conjunction with the libraries and Quirindi and District Historical Society.	Ongoing	300-190
To encourage the preservation of the historical aspect of the Liverpool Plains' industrial, commercial and residential structures.	Employ a Heritage Consultant for implementation of heritage controls and community education.	Ongoing	300-110
	Implement the provisions of the Liverpool Plains Local Environmental Plan that relate to heritage matters.	Ongoing	300-110
	Maintain and install new interpretative signs at Werris Creek, Willow Tree and Wallabadah.	2010/11	200-110
To promote the preservation of public art works	Develop a Public Art Policy.	2011/12	200-110
	Maintain a register of all public art works and memorials in the Liverpool Plains.	Ongoing	200-110
To assist the National Railway Museum to develop its collection and to raise standards through training and advice.	Seek funding for the employment of a Museum Director.	2011/12	200-120
To encourage the preservation of Indigenous heritage in the Liverpool Plains	Maintain an Indigenous Local History Collection.	Ongoing	300-190



## Key Result Area 5:

## Cultural Events

**Objective:** *To involve as many people as possible in community cultural events including organisation and participation.*

Goals	Means	Year	Plan Ref
To assist in the successful conduct of community-based cultural and social events in the Liverpool Plains.	Provide local support for event organisers including liaison with local suppliers.	Ongoing	200-110
	Develop a Special Events Policy to provide guidance to event organisers on Council and other legal requirements.	Ongoing	200-110
	Provide financial assistance to organisations seeking to conduct small community cultural and social events through the Community Initiative Program.	Ongoing	300-190
To provide a quality venue at the Pavilion to attract financially viable performing arts events.	Set aside funding to upgrade the pavilion and then market the venue to local and other groups.	Ongoing	200-110
Organise and conduct a number of community cultural and social events each year.	Organise and conduct Australia Day celebrations.	Ongoing	300-190
	Assist with the annual Quirindi Eisteddfod by providing support funding.	Ongoing	300-190
	Assist the Liverpool Plains Arts Council to grow the annual cultural festival Art & all that Jazz.	Ongoing	200-110
	Assist in the promotion of the Red Cross Currabubula Art Show.	Ongoing	200-110
	Continue to undertake a Christmas Lights Competition in conjunction with Country Energy.	Ongoing	300-190
	Assist with the staging of street parades in towns and villages.	Ongoing	400-130
	Assist the Blackville Art Show	Ongoing	200-110



## Key Result Area 6:

## Cultural Links

**Objective: To form cultural links with other communities, other regions and other cultures thereby recognising that Liverpool Plains is part of a wider society with broader cultural traditions.**

Goals	Means	Year	Plan Ref
To be involved in wider cultural planning and coordination activities	Continue membership of Arts North West and lobby for new projects through the regional arts development officer.	Ongoing	200-110
	Commence membership of the Museums & Galleries Foundation to enhance the Railway Museum.	Ongoing	200-110
	Maintain membership of the NSW Country Public Libraries Association and participate in the Association's regional activities.	Ongoing	300-190
To operate a library service that shares its resources for the benefit of other communities and for itself	Participate in an interlibrary loans service with Tamworth Regional Council library	Ongoing	300-190
	Provide access to the Internet and to a range of online information sources through participation in NSW.Net.	Ongoing	300-190
To maintain cultural and sporting contacts with other communities in Australia and overseas.	Maintain existing Blacktown Sister City relationship and explore new opportunities	Ongoing	200-110
	Commence sporting and cultural exchange with Blacktown	Ongoing	200-110
	Join the Australian Sister Cities Association.	Ongoing	200-110





# DISABILITY ACTION PLAN 2012/13





## FOREWORD

Liverpool Plains Shire Council is strong in its commitment to provide opportunities for all community members. It proposes to build on the infrastructure that already exists, resulting in a shire that is fair and equitable in terms of physical and attitudinal access for all people regardless of any disabling condition.

This plan aims to identify any inequities that may exist by pinpointing areas of concern upon which Council can work with the community with a view to achieving best practice in the delivery of all services.

Subject to budget constraints, Council will attempt to improve in the provision of physical access enabling all community members to participate in and utilize public facilities within the Community.

As a Local Government Authority Council is committed to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, by observing the following Principles;

- Residents with a disability have the same rights and responsibilities as those residents who do not have a disability;
- All facilities, public space, services, information, programs and areas under Council's control should be accessible to all residents; and
- Promotion of the needs of residents with disabilities.

Cr. Ian Lobsey OAM  
Mayor  
LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL



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Draft Action Plan	



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The majority of the information in this plan comes from consultation with community members, ie. people with all types of disabilities including those with sensory difficulties.

People who have expertise in the areas of access and safety, Vis -a- Vis Police and RMS members and Council staff members were also consulted.

The preparation of this plan would not have been possible without the following reference sources:

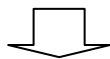
- The Disability Services Act, Federal (1986) and State (1991) respectively.
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- The Local Government (General) Regulation 1993 and its Social/Community Plan Amendment.
- Members of the Liverpool Plains Shire Council Access Committee.



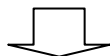


# LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL'S ACCESS PLAN DEVELOPMENT FLOWCHART

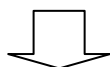
Gain active participation from General Manager and council staff in the planning and implementation of this Access Plan.



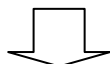
Report to Council on requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act



Form an Access Committee with objectives to consult consumers, educate and evaluate 'consumers' and community members alike



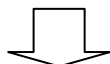
In conjunction with Council staff, compile a list of access 'Black Spots'.



Establish a draft plan, consult staff and seek public comments and those of Service Providers in the caring field. Advertise draft plan and invite public submissions.



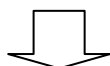
Review submissions and amend plan.



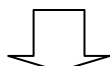
Access Committee to review plan and then present to Council for adoption



Present Final Plan to Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission and the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care



Compile directories, pamphlets, guides and maps with a view to assisting people to access their communities.



Liverpool Plains Shire Council's disABILITY Access Committee Monitor/Review Plan through Community Survey and provide recommendation to Council.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992 is underpinned by the fact that all people regardless of age or disability should have equity of access to all services that are enjoyed by people without a (perceived) disability.

The concept of “Access” comes in many forms. It is about people with mobility restrictions being able to get themselves safely to and into buildings and other facilities, be able to do their own shopping thus fostering integration, and not ‘special treatment’ which still draws attention to people typically seen as apart from mainstream communities. The Plan, once implemented will also make it more achievable for people with challenges to pursue and enjoy recreational and other activities.

Liverpool Plains Shire Council welcomes the opportunity to develop and implement an Access Plan for its local government area (LGA). While it is true that the impetus for formulating this plan originates from a requirement of the DDA, Council has been aware for some time now of the need to formulate and endeavor to implement such a plan.

The Community, Council and Staff members understand the rights and responsibilities of all people to be able to *choose* to live as fully an integrated and ‘typical’ life as they wish. This is of course dependent on the abilities of the individual people involved and ubiquitously, council resources.

This Disability Action Plan outlines what Liverpool Plains Shire is currently undertaking to ensure that its services and activities are accessible to all residents of the Shire.

Council seeks the following outcomes through this Plan:

- **ACCESSIBLE FACILITIES:**

To provide access to all people in the community to Council services, facilities, and public buildings.

- **CUSTOMER SERVICE:**

To continue to provide quality service to all community members.

- **EMPLOYMENT:**

That no discriminatory practices will be engaged in by Council and its staff members be this conscious or unconscious.

- **IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW:**

That this plan will be implemented under Council’s banner of implementation, monitoring, and review.



# THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 makes it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, facilities or services, against people on the basis that they have or may have a disability. The Act also makes it unlawful to discriminate in any way, conscious or unconscious, on the basis that an associate of a person with a disability, may have, or has, a disability.

The Act states that an Action Plan may be developed within an organisation with a view to eliminating any discriminatory practices. The Act seeks to have the Action Plan lodged with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HEROC).

For the purpose of the plan disability, in no order of prominence is defined as:

- Psychiatric
- Physical
- Intellectual
- Sensory
- Neurological
- Learning (slow)
- Physical disfigurement
- The presence in the body of disease causing organisms

The definition includes a disability that:

- presently exists
- previously existed but no longer exists, (eg, a person who has had a heart attack, an episode of mental illness or a back injury);
- may exist in the future, (eg, a person with a genetic predisposition to Huntingtons disease or a person who is HIV positive or who carries the AIDS virus)
- is imputed to a person, (eg, assuming that a person living with someone who has an infectious disease, also has the disease and it is thought that the second person may infect others. Thus attitudes and assumptions can also underpin discrimination.
- **DISABILITY**: is a reduction or loss of typical functional ability that results from impairment/s.
- **IMPAIRMENT**: a functional or anatomical abnormality, that may or may not manifest as a disability.



- **HANDICAP:** the resultant disadvantage caused by a disability and or negative or un-accepting attitudes to a person who happens to have a disability.

Impairments can result in disability of a physical kind, sensory, intellectual, and psychiatric or an acquired impairment (e.g. brain damage from an accident)

- **DISCRIMINATION:** briefly this means any treatment directly with, or negative talk or actions about, a person with a disability that results in him or her being treated less favourably than people without a disability under the same circumstances.

Discrimination also occurs when people with a disability are excluded from accessing employment, education or goods and services by an imposed requirement. This requirement may be the same for everyone but if it results in exclusion for people with a disability it is a discriminatory practice.

Treatment that is different for people with a disability is NOT unlawful if it can be proved that it was reasonably intended to try to ensure that they have equal opportunities and that their support needs, be they low or high, are being met.

## ACRONYMS USED IN THIS PLAN

A/C	Access Committee
CMP	Council's Management Plan
DAC	Disability Action Committee
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DSA	Disability Services Acts
GM	General Manager
DECD	Director - Economic & Community Development
DES	Director - Environmental Services
DCS	Director -Corporate Services
DW	Director - Works
HRO	Human Resource Officer
HACC	Home & Community Care
RMS	Roads & Maritime Services



## COMMUNITY INCLUSION STATEMENT

In 1992 as an offshoot from the Disability Services Acts (Federal 1986) and (State/NSW 1991) the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 was implemented. This Act makes it unlawful to engage in any discriminatory practices to people with a disability.

By preparing this plan Liverpool Plains Shire Council demonstrates support for the above legislation. This support is reflected in Council's Management Plan, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, Council's Vision Statement and now with this Access and Equity Plan.

**The Liverpool Plains Shire Council will continue to promote and facilitate effective integration for all community members by:**

- Education of all staff on the rights and responsibilities of people who because of physical impairment/s are most affected by these Acts of Parliament.
- Consultation with the wider community be they people with mobility or sensory challenges or health professionals.
- Ensuring adequate access to service facilities within Council for people with a disability.
- Responding to the needs of people with a disability Council by continually monitoring their needs and the needs of their carers. Council will make every attempt to respond to those needs in a positive manner where possible.
- Proactively taking the lead in promoting 'inclusion for all' community values and actively seeking to provide solutions in the community and local government.



# COUNCIL'S PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

Council's principal activities are set out in the table below:

## GOVERNANCE

- Members Facilities and Expenses
- Public Relations
- Human Resources
- Administration Support

## ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE:

- Information Technology
- Insurance and Risk Management
- Customer Services
- Records Management
- Financial Services
- RMS Agency

## COMMUNITY SERVICES:

- Library
- Cultural
- Youth & Children
- Aged Care
- Disability Services
- Recreation Centre

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

- Community Protection
- Landuse Planning
- Public Health
- Natural Resource Management
- Built Environment
- Waste Management

## ENGINEERING SERVICES

- Infrastructure Planning
- Plant Services
- Depot Services
- State Roads
- Rural Roads
- Survey and Design
- Engineering Administration
- Urban Streets
- Ancillary Services
- Public Recreation

## TOURISM & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Visitor Information Centre
- Caravan Park
- Residential & Industrial Subdivisions

## BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

- Airport
- Private works
- Gravel Pits
- Swimming Pool
- Property Rental
- Cemeteries
- Water Supplies
- Sewer Services
- Showground / Racecourse



## COUNCIL SERVICES & FACILITIES BEING UTILISED

The following is a list of community services currently being used by, and being assessed for people with disabilities and their service providers and/or carers.

- Rate Payments
- Airport
- Waste Removal/Recycling
- Cemetery
- Street Lighting
- Traffic Management and Control
- Community Information
- Health Inspections
- Community Information
- Caravan park (under lease)
- Street Signs
- Community Halls & Centres
- Library
- Public Seating
- Visitor Information Centre
- Control of Stray Animals
- Parks Furniture and Equipment
- Footpaths
- Building Control
- Companion Animals Licensing
- Town Planning & Development Control
- Administration Centre & Council Chambers
- Home and Community Care Centres
- Parks and Reserves
- Waste Depots
- Accessible Parking Spaces
- Swimming Pool
- Public Toilets
- Roads and Traffic Authority Agency



# THE ACTION PLAN

This action plan has been developed:

- To eliminate discrimination
- As a sound and equitable business practice as the development of such a plan can only improve council's performance as it sets about fulfilling its responsibilities to the community, a large proportion of which is made up of people with disabilities and their families.
- To reduce the likelihood of complaints lodged against council via The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC-Federal)

Senior Managers within council will be responsible for action strategies contained within Council's Management that flow from this plan.

Private businesses, commercial ventures and industry in the Shire are responsible for their individual liability under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Areas of concern raised by community members are sometimes not under control of Council; eg privately owned and operated retail outlets. When this occurs Council will write to the owners of services and retail outlets and advise them of the concern/s raised.

In case of a concern about a government service that is outside the jurisdiction of Council, that concern will be referred to the appropriate level of government.

The Action Plan is appended as Appendix 1

Council will initiate Community Consultations with the Shire community, regarding the contents of the draft Action Plan.

Council will also advertise for community comment on the Draft Plan and place it on public exhibition seeking further community-based comments prior to the Plan's consideration for adoption by Council.





# APPENDIX 1





***“ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL”***

## **DISABILITY ACTION PLAN**





# ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

This is a strategic plan that covers all of Council's services, facilities, buildings and functions and Council's role as an employer.



The Plan contains Goals being:

1. Organisation Culture - Ensure that all council staff are aware of the needs of people with disabilities.
2. Participation - ensure that all people with disabilities, along side other community members are able to participate in Council activities, including representation on Council and Council Advisory Committees, etc.
3. Employment Opportunities - Ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to employment opportunities within Council and are afforded access to facilities, services and opportunities to meet their specific needs.
4. Community Development - Ensure that Council continues to provide quality services to people with disability. That it continues to support positive change with in the community services sector and that it continues to resource and support local organisations and services.
5. Direct Service Provision - Ensure that all services provided by Council reflect the needs of the community and that services endeavour to continue to be responsive towards those needs.
6. Education and Promotion.
7. Waste Management - Ensure all sections of the community are able to use and take maximum advantage of, all services provided by Council in the disposal of household garbage and recyclables.
8. Asset Management - ensure ease of access to all Council owned and leased assets.
9. Urban Development - to encourage the design for urban spaces that reflect best practice for everyday life within the Liverpool Plains Shire area. Ensure that there is no reason to give rise to discrimination claims on the grounds of disability.
10. Lobbying - Council will lobby Federal and State Governments to provide services and facilities that are their responsibility.

These issues have been addressed by the goal that states, "Council will lobby Federal and State Governments to provide services and facilities beyond its responsibility." See the relevant action strategies for this goal.



# OBJECTIVE 1

**Systemic organisational change - Ensure that all Council staff are aware of the needs of people with disabilities.**

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Council as Leader Council has a responsibility to act as a role model on all access issues and can influence other Councils and organisations in this regard	Lead by example through all Council activities/functions	Immediate	GM	Ongoing
Councillor's Briefing Articulate this Plan & the D.D.A to all old and new Councillors	Report to Council	Immediate	GM	Ongoing
Briefing of Senior Management- Articulate this Action Plan & the articles and principles of the D.D.A to old and new Senior Managers	Arrange briefing for General Manager, Directors Senior Management and other relevant staff	Immediate	GM	Ongoing
Training Training of staff on the principles of the DDA and on concepts within this plan	Provide training	Immediate	- Directors - HRO	Ongoing



## OBJECTIVE 2

**Participation - Ensure that all people with disabilities, along side other community members are able to participate in Council activities, including representation on Council and Council Advisory Committees, etc.**

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
General Information In the community in a range of formats widely distribute information regarding Council meetings, committees and other activities.	As outlined in Education and Promotion develop strategies to ensure wider links with the community on Council activities	Short term	DECD/HACC Services	Ongoing
Customer Service Receive feedback from Council Customers	Monitor requests for specific services from people with disabilities	Immediate	DECD	Ongoing



## OBJECTIVE 3

Ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to employment opportunities within Council and are afforded access to facilities, services and opportunities to meet their specific needs.

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Affirmative Action & EEO Policy Implementation of above principles to be current and utilised for employment of people with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop strategies that focus on encouraging people with disability to apply for and participate in employment and training opportunities within Council.</li><li>• Consult with local employment services</li></ul>	Immediate	HRO/Directors	Ongoing



## OBJECTIVE 4

**Community Development - Ensure that Council continues to provide quality services to people with disability. That it continues to support positive change within the community services sector and that it continues to resource and support local organisations and services**

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Feedback from and to Community	Distribute plain English surveys to clients regarding the service provided  Utilise the local press, Council and community notice boards, in and out [of] house newsletters to do so	Mid term  Immediate	Manager HACC	yearly





## OBJECTIVE 5

**Direct Service Provision - ensure that all services provided by Council reflect the needs of the community and that services endeavour to continue to be responsive towards those needs.**

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
<b>Accessible Toilets</b> Provide accessible toilets that are able to be used 24hrs a day both in the community and at major community functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major community events should be held in locations where fully accessible toilets are provided.</li> <li>Werris Creek Toilet - keyed for 24hr access</li> </ul>	Short term	DES	Council facilities are continually being monitored and upgraded when funds become available.
<b>Sports and Recreation</b> Coordination of sport and recreation activities for people with disability.	Lobby local sporting organisations to improve access to services and facilities.  Access funding for upgrade of Quipolly Dam Recreation facilities- disabled access to toilets and foreshore.  Encourage and support people with disabilities to participate in sporting and recreational activities.	Short term  Short term	DECD	Ongoing
<b>Car Parking</b> Increase number and policing of designated parks for pwd especially in front of high use areas such as doctors surgeries.	Liaise with Council's Traffic Engineer	Long term	DW	Improved carparking space Quirindi/Werris Creek/Willow Tree



## OBJECTIVE 5 (Cont.)

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Adult Fiction Section Provide large print books for people with literacy problems. As well as Talking and Braille books for people with sight impairments.	Ensure Adult Fiction section is updated regularly according to the ongoing needs of the people who use it.	Mid term	Librarians	Ongoing



## OBJECTIVE 6

**Education and Promotion - In the spirit of “Quirindi Inclusive for All” ensure that all information provided by Council is accessible to all residents, that it is user friendly and allows people with disability to show that they actively develop to our community**

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Community Education Council to pro-actively lead in terms of education on disability issues.	Devise strategy to more effectively advertise Council initiated/run Community events	Yearly Immediate	DECD GM / DECD	Ongoing
Car Parking Continue education re who can use designated parking spaces	Include education in Council and non-council newsletters that not only people in wheelchairs have the right to use parks. Educate re. Eligibility Sticker  Educate people with a disability that they need a permanent or temporary-parking sticker from the R.M.S before being eligible to use parks.	Immediate  Immediate	GM / DECD / DW  DECD	Ongoing  Ongoing
Communication Education of staff on effectively communicating with people with disability.	Include in Staff Induction Process	Immediate	GM / HRO	Ongoing



## OBJECTIVE 6 (Cont.)

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
<p>Consultation</p> <p>Effective consultation between Council and the Disability Action Committee to occur regularly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council Literature</li> <li>Greater distribution, -more accessible,</li> <li>in appropriate format</li> </ul> <p>Access issues to be included in Council Agendas.</p> <p>Increase use of local media</p>	<p>Ensure effective consultation occurs between DAC and all appropriate players.</p> <p>Ensure relevant Council literature is prepared in an appropriate format that is easy to attain.</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>Mid term</p> <p>Immediate</p>	<p>DECD</p> <p>GM</p> <p>Appropriate Directors</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Public Information</p> <p>To be available in formats that meet the needs of people with disability from English &amp; non-English speaking background (NESB)</p>	<p>As Above</p>	<p>Long term</p>	<p>GM</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Information</p> <p>Information to be user friendly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased information regarding access issues.</li> <li>Further Develop database with peak organisations, networks including plain English &amp; NESB</li> </ul>	<p>As above- adapt all correspondence/publications to include messages indicating opportunities for people who need large type or taped information.</p> <p>Investigate feasibility of Disability Access Newsletter</p>	<p>Long term</p> <p>Mid term</p>	<p>GM</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>



## OBJECTIVE 7

**Waste Management - ensure all sections of the community are able to use and take maximum advantage of all services provided by council in the disposal of household garbage and recyclables.**

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
<b>Heavy Items</b> Heavy item movement to be made available to those people who cannot manage to place these items on footpath.	Review current practice  Investigate further options.	Long term	DES  DES	No Action
<b>Garbage Bins</b> Give assistance with handling of these bins as required.	Review Current Practice  Assess community needs	Long term	DES  DES	No Action



## OBJECTIVE 8

**Asset Management- ensure ease of access to all new Council owned and leased assets.  
Review current assets to ensure they are upgraded to at least required standards.  
Endeavour to incorporate objectives of the DDA as per current legislation, codes and standards in all future developments.**

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Access- Review the existing Council building to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Building Code Australia (BCA).	Report on compliance with BCA to Council Chambers.  Utilise optimum standards for disability access taking into account cost of renovations to Council building.	Mid term  Immediate	DES  DES	Council has allocated funds on the 2012-13 for Chamber refurbishment
Access- Existing Council Buildings may not provide access/required aids for people with disabilities	Develop priority listing for upgrading of Council facilities.  Endeavour to ensure optimum access for people with disabilities.  Review this list regularly, or in response to new information	Mid term  Immediate	DES / DW  DES / DW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RFS Zone Headquarters access provided</li> <li>• Quirindi Rec Centre - access provided</li> </ul> Ongoing
Lighting in Parks	Review, check if they meet required standards.  It is required that all pathways have lighting.	Long term	DW	Ongoing



## OBJECTIVE 8 (Cont.)

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Paving/Pathways Surface treatment	Ensure these meet all required standards  Investigate the feasibility of non slip paving/pathways within CBD.	Immediate  Ongoing	DW	Ongoing
Toilets Accessibility	Ensure that at least two public toilets are fully accessible by all people with disabilities 24hours a day.  Investigate feasibility of updating Council's toilets to meet required standards.	Immediately  Mid term	DES  DES	Council has met standards at Quirindi and Werris Creek
Swimming Pools Accessibility	Update/rebuild to meet required standards.  Ramps into the building & into the pools, or a hoist provided to enable people with disabilities access to the pool.  Ramping/non-slip pathways provided outside the pool from parking area.  Designated sites to be made available in front of the pool for people with the appropriate RMA sticker.	Long term  Long term  Long term  Long term	DW	Portable access steps have been installed at Quirindi and Werris Creek Pools
Road Markings	Ensure road markings are maintained so that they are visible to people with visual impairment.	Long Term	DW	



## OBJECTIVE 8 (Cont.)

Issue/Barrier	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Swimming pools Continued-Signage Toilets	Provide signage in pictorial manner. Raised signage for people with sight impairments.	Mid term Long term	DW	To be reviewed
All Entertainment venues Access	Access to be provided to all of these venues by way of ramps or lifts. Appropriate signage.-Pictorial and raised Accessible toilets	Short term Short term	DES DES	Provided - Qdi Rec Centre Provided Royal Theatre Provided - Qdi Rec Centre Grant currently submitted for disabled access to Quipolly Dam Recreation Area.
HACC Centre- Access	Ensure that venue is fully accessible to meet the needs of all people with disabilities. Maintain footpaths and kerbs in an appropriate manner.	Mid term Short term	DECD DW	Ongoing as budget allocation within Works Program
Library- Access  Signage-	Review front door access Investigate feasibility of another designated parking space in front of library. Ensure paving to Library remains in good condition.  Signage to meet all standards	Mid term Short term Short term Mid term	DES DW DW DECD	Done Done Ongoing





## OBJECTIVE 8 (Cont.)

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Council Chambers- Access     Mobility Work Aids-   Maintenance	Allocation of Designated Parking in front of Council building. Appropriate ramping from gutter to footpath. Ensure footpath is smooth as it leads up to the ramp.	Mid term	DW	Done
	Keep vegetation from hanging over ramp and blocking access.	Short term	DES	
	Access provided to toilets and tea room facilities.	Long term	DW	Done
	Requisition/Installation of a hearing loop in council chamber.	Long term	DES	To be reviewed
	Appropriate signage. Large light switches to be installed.			To be reviewed
	Re-paint all step endings with white paint	Long term	DES	To be reviewed
		Short term	DES	
Visitor Information Centre, Royal Theatre & RMA- Access	Designed to meet all required standards.	Short term	DECD	Completed



## OBJECTIVE 8 (Cont.)

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Trees Keep trimmed for ease of access and for appropriate vision for pedestrians and drivers of vehicles	Council Officers to identify such vegetation with a view to limiting impediment of access, or which pose a hazard to the public.	Long term	DW	Ongoing
Pathways and Surfaces	Design and maintain to meet all relevant standards.	Long term	DW	Ongoing
Pedestrian Crossings	Ensure appropriate gradients, surfaces and Keri ramps meet relevant standards.	Long term	DW	Ongoing
Lighting Roads, park, pathways	Provide and maintain adequate lighting along all streets and intersections that meet required standards	Long term	DW	Ongoing
General Signage	Ensure appropriate signage at all intersections  Signage provided to indicate disability services/ facilities/parking/toilets	Long term	DW	Ongoing
Aids to assist hearing and sight impediments Pedestrian crossings/footpaths/ramps	Provide appropriate devices to assist people with hearing and/or sight loss to safely access pedestrian crossings and Council facilities.	Long term	DW	Ongoing
Parking	Provide adequate Designated Parking at all public facilities.	Long term	DW	Ongoing



## OBJECTIVE 9

**Urban Development-** to encourage the design of urban spaces that reflect best practice for everyday life within the town of Quirindi and the Local Government Area. Ensure that there is no reason to give rise to discrimination claims on the grounds of disability

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
<p><b>Awareness</b></p> <p>Developer may not be aware of and/or design infrastructure that meets requirements of the DDA.</p> <p><b>Access-</b></p> <p>Historically, urban design has not always accommodated the needs of people with disabilities</p>	Council to make developers aware of Council's commitment of ensuring access to all new buildings/facilities is available and appropriate for people with disabilities.	Immediate	DES	Ongoing
	Council, as a matter of course, to include standard note referencing DDA requirements at level of planning approval.	Immediate	DES	Ongoing
<p><b>Contractors and Agents</b></p> <p>It is the responsibility of Council to ensure that works and activities undertaken by contractors and other agents adhere to the requirements of the DDA.</p>	Incorporate practically enforceable clauses into contracts and specifications for works to be undertaken by Council that ensure that the principles and requirements of the DDA are followed at all times.	Immediate	GM / All Directors	Ongoing
<p><b>Information and Education</b></p> <p>Availability of material relating to requirements of the DDA.</p>	Council's building and planning department to readily have information regarding DDA's requirements.	Immediate	DES	Ongoing



## OBJECTIVE 10

**Lobbying - council will lobby Federal and State Governments to provide services and facilities that are their responsibility.**

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
Community Transport Limited access to community transport if not a HACC client. (this is Oxley Community Transports responsibility)	Investigate available options.	Immediate	DECD	Ongoing
Maintenance Services Provide home maintenance/gardening services that offer assistance with the removal of unwanted goods and heavy items (this is provided by Home Care through Hunter New England Area Health).	Lobby state government for existing Home Maintenance and Modification Service	Immediate	DES	Ongoing
Carer's Financial Support Increased financial support needed for Carers	Lobby Commonwealth Departments on this issue.	Immediate	DECD	Ongoing
Service Access	Identify gaps in or issues for existing service.	Immediate	DECD	Ongoing
	Representation of local issues at regional meetings.	Immediate	DECD	Ongoing
	Lobby appropriate government Departments for continued and expansion of, funding.	Immediate	Council	Ongoing



## OBJECTIVE 10 (Cont.)

Issue	Strategies	Time Frame	Responsibility	Status
<b>Advocacy</b> Council to lead as an advocate on behalf of people with disabilities with service providers in the disability field.	Lobby as appropriate	Immediate	Council / GM / Directors	Ongoing
<b>Accommodation</b> Appropriate accommodation needed for people with disabilities.	Lobby state government for appropriate residences to accommodate the housing needs of people with disabilities.	Immediate	Council / GM / Directors	Ongoing
<b>Social Activities</b> Availability of recreational/social activities for people with disabilities.	Lobby Government Departments for increased funding of existing services. Continue to support Liverpool Plains Shire Council HACC	Immediate	Council / GM / Directors	Ongoing



## **APPENDIX "C"**

### **Policy – Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors**

# **LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL**

## **POLICY REGISTER**

**Policy No. 1.24**

**POLICY TITLE: PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND PROVISION  
OF FACILITIES TO COUNCILLORS**

**File Reference No.: C.50**  
**Date Adopted 12<sup>th</sup> July 2004**  
**Minute No: 9102**  
**Last Updated: 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013**

### **History of Policy Review**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Adoption Date</b>	<b>Minute No</b>	<b>Details of Review</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> July 2004</b>	<b>9102</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> February 2005</b>	<b>9468</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> November 2006</b>	<b>10675</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>27<sup>th</sup> June 2007</b>	<b>11059</b>	
<b>5</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> April 2008</b>	<b>11641</b>	<b>DLG review of policies</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> October 2008</b>	<b>11988</b>	<b>New Council</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> December 2009</b>	<b>12794</b>	<b>Compliance with DLG guidelines</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> November 2010</b>	<b>13317</b>	<b>Annual Review Changes of Facilities for the Mayor</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> November 2011</b>	<b>13878</b>	<b>Annual Review Changes of Facilities for the Mayor</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> November 2012</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>Changes to name of Conference</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>26<sup>th</sup> November 2013</b>		<b>Annual Review</b>

### **PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**

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

**POLICY TITLE:            PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND            Policy No. 1.24**  
**PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO**  
**COUNCILLORS**

**INTRODUCTION**

**OBJECTIVES**

To detail the circumstances whereby the payment of expenses incurred by or to be incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, the Mayor and Councillors in discharging the functions of Civic Office.

**MAKING AND ADOPTION OF THE POLICY**

Council implements this policy in accordance with section 253 of the Local Government Act 1993 by giving public notice of its intention to adopt or amend the policy and shall allow at least 28 days for public submissions.

Public notice is not needed if a proposed amendment is not substantial and this means minor changes to wording, the standard of equipment of facilities provided or changes in the monetary provisions that are less than 5%.

Council will promote the policy on the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to councillors to the community by placing the policy on its website and making it readily accessible.

Council shall review the policy on an annual basis and submit this policy to the Director-General of the Division of Local Government within 28 days of adoption by Council, even if it is proposed to adopt an unchanged policy. Current policies must be submitted to the Division of Local Government by 30 November each year.

**REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

In accordance with section 428 of the *Local Government Act 1993* Council shall report on the following in its annual report.

- (a) *details (including the purpose) of overseas visits undertaken during the year by councillors, council staff or other persons while representing the council (including visits sponsored by other organisations),*
- (a1) *details of the total cost during the year of the payment of the expenses of, and the provision of facilities to, councillors in relation to their civic functions (as paid by the council, reimbursed to the councillor or reconciled with the councillor), including separate details on the total cost of each of the following:*
  - (i) *the provision during the year of dedicated office equipment allocated to councillors on a personal basis, such as Ipads, laptop computers, mobile telephones and landline telephones installed in councillors' homes (including equipment and line rental costs and internet access costs but not including call costs),*
  - (ii) *telephone calls made by councillors, including calls made from mobile telephones provided by the council and from landline telephones installed in councillors' homes,*
  - (iii) *the attendance of councillors at conferences and seminars,*
  - (iv) *the training of councillors and the provision of skill development for councillors,*



**POLICY TITLE:            PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND            Policy No. 1.24**  
**PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO**  
**COUNCILLORS**

- (v) *interstate visits undertaken during the year by councillors while representing the council, including the cost of transport, the cost of accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses,*
- (vi) *overseas visits undertaken during the year by councillors while representing the council, including the cost of transport, the cost of accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses,*
- (vii) *the expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor in the performance of his or her civic functions, being expenses payable in accordance with the Guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities for Mayors and Councillors for Local Councils in NSW prepared by the Division of Local Government from time to time.*

**Expenses**

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

**Provision of facilities**

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

**OTHER GOVERNMENT POLICY PROVISIONS**

Local Government Act 1993 & Regulations

Division of Local Government Guidelines for the Payment of Expenses & Provision of Facilities to Councillors.

Division of Local Government Circulars to Councils

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**APPROVAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The Mayor and Councillors may attend local meetings within the Shire without approval. Attendance at conferences or seminars outside the Shire requires the following approval:

- Discretionary conferences and trips are to be approved by a full meeting of Council
- Non-discretionary conferences or trips for Councillors are to be approved by the Mayor and General Manager
- Non-discretionary conferences or trips for the Mayor are to be approved by the Deputy Mayor, one other Councillor and the General Manager

When travel involves overnight accommodation, an “Authority to Travel” form must be completed at least one week prior to the event and forwarded to the General Manager (see attached form).

**PAYMENT OF EXPENSES GENERALLY**

The Mayor and Councillors must have authorisation to travel outside the Shire (see approval arrangements).

Payment of expenses to Councillors shall be limited to:

- (a) Payment of travelling expenses for private vehicle use.
- (b) Payment of accommodation, travelling, sustenance, telephone and car parking expenses whilst attending conferences and seminars.
- (c) **Payment of training/development expenses**
- (d) Reimbursement of costs paid by the Councillors for which Council is liable under this policy, **including carer expenses.**

**Travel**

Councillors will be entitled to travel by the most practical conveyance to the following:

- (a) Attendance at Ordinary, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings of an organisation where the Councillor has, by Council resolution, been duly elected as a Council delegate.
- (b) Attendance at conferences and seminars when such attendance by Councillors has been approved by Council resolution or by the Mayor under delegated authority.

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- (c) Attendance at inspections, within or outside the area as authorised by Council resolution or by the Mayor under delegated authority.
- (d) Attendance at official Council functions authorised as Council business by a resolution of Council or by the Mayor under delegated authority.

When suitable, Council will provide Councillors with a motor vehicle to attend any of the above.

An allowance will be payable to Councillors for the use of their own private vehicles and is the maximum as advised by the Local Government NSW from time to time.

**Accommodation**

Council will pay actual reasonable costs of overnight accommodation for stays outside the Shire. Reimbursement shall be limited to accommodation for the nights of the meeting conference, night before and night after where necessary.

**Telephone Expenses**

When a Councillor is attending an approved conference/seminar/meeting or other official engagement outside the Shire, Council will pay/reimburse telephone calls from Councillors to their family or place of work and to Council. (See the daily limit table 1.0 Monetary Limits and Standards)

**Sustenance Expenses**

Council will reimburse to Councillors the reasonable cost of breakfast, lunch, dinner, carparking and other out-of-pocket expenses for attendance at conferences, seminars, meetings, etc.

**Reimbursement and Reconciliation of Expenses**

Council will reimburse the Mayor and Councillors for all reasonable expenses, subject to the provision of supporting receipts or documents. Claims are to be made on the appropriate claim form.

A Councillor will be entitled to reimbursement of expenses necessarily incurred for the cost of facilities which the Council has agreed to provide as part of this policy.

Claim for reimbursement of expenses must be made within three (3) months of incurring the expense and are to be made on the appropriate claim form **supported by receipts or documents**.

The General Manager will authorise claims for travel and the reimbursement of other expenses.

**Payment in Advance**

A Councillor may wish payment in advance in anticipation of expenses to be incurred in attending approved conferences, seminars and meetings outside the Shire.

Councillors shall reconcile the expenses to the advance and submit a claim (on the appropriate claim form) supported by receipts or documents to the General Manager for approval within one (1) month of incurring the expense.

***NO allowance type payment is permitted.***

**POLICY TITLE: PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO COUNCILLORS** **Policy No. 1.24**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF MONETARY LIMITS AND STANDARDS**

Council will reimburse to the Mayor and Councillors expenses incurred in the execution of their civic duty having consideration to the following limits and standards.

**Table 1.00 Monetary Limits and Standards**

Travel/Facility	Recipient	Details/Limit/Standards
Domestic air travel within Australia (must be greater than 4 hours travel by motor vehicle)	Mayor/Councillor	Economy class
International air travel	Mayor/Councillor	Business class
Rail	Mayor/Councillor	First class (Sleeper when necessary)
Private vehicle	Mayor/Councillor	Maximum per kilometer as advised by the LGSA
Coach and taxi	Mayor/Councillor	Actual cost
Meals and associated refreshments when not provided at conference/seminar	Mayor/Councillor	A maximum of \$150 per day
Accommodation within Australia	Mayor/Councillor	Government/Corporate accommodation rates (where applicable)
Accommodation overseas	Mayor/Councillor	In accordance with Council resolution authorising travel
Mobile phone costs	Mayor	Maximum \$1,500 pa
Telephone expenses while at a conference/seminar outside the Shire	Mayor/Councillor	Maximum \$15 per day
Carer Costs	Mayor/Councillor	Maximum \$2,000 per annum
Clothing	Mayor/Councillor	Maximum \$400 Councillor pa
Training/Development	Mayor/Councillor	Maximum \$15,000 pa
Meals and Refreshments	Mayor/Councillor	Maximum \$40 per head per meeting
Stationery	Mayor/Councillor	\$500 per Councillor pa

**SPOUSE AND PARTNER EXPENSES**

Councillors may invite his/her spouse to accompany them on a business trip however Council will not pay for any spouses expenses, with the exception of registration and dinner at the annual Local Government NSW Conference.

**FACILITIES**

Council will provide to Councillors, subject to the various conditions and terms outlined, the following facilities:

**(1) Insurance**

Council will effect an appropriate level of insurance for Councillors in the following areas:

**POLICY TITLE: PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO COUNCILLORS**      **Policy No. 1.24**

- (a) Personal Accident – coverage of Councillor and spouse while on Council business;
- (b) Defamation.

**(2) Seminars and Conferences**

Council will provide the following facilities to Councillors attending conferences or seminars which have been authorised by Council resolution or by the Mayor under delegated authority.

- (a) Registration Fees** – the payment of registration fees for attendance at conference/seminar sessions;
- (b) Accommodation** – the payment of accommodation costs on the following basis:
  - (i) Accommodation will be selected by the Council on the basis of cost and convenience of location to the conference venue. A Councillor may choose accommodation at a different location but which is at the same cost or less.
  - (ii) The number of accommodation days provided under this policy will be limited to:
    - A. Registration day; and
    - B. Each day on which official sessions of the conference/seminar are held.
  - (iii) Any additional accommodation costs incurred as a result of the attendance of partners and/or children, shall be borne by the Councillor.

**(c) Car Parking Fees**

Council will meet the cost of the following car parking fees:

- (i) Hotel/motel parking – additional carparking fees not included in accommodation costs.

**(d) Transportation**

Council will provide a Councillor with transportation to and from conferences and seminars. Transportation may be by:

- (i) Aircraft – economy class
- (ii) Hire car – up to standard 6 cylinder
- (iii) Private vehicle
- (iv) Train
- (v) Council vehicle

**(e) Councillor Training/Development**

A maximum of \$15,000 will be provided in annual budgets for training/development of Councillors to assist them to become effective community leaders.

**(f) Carer Expenses**

For Councillors responsible to care for dependent children or other dependents including people with a disability and the elderly, Council will reimburse the cost of a carer to a maximum of \$2,000 per annum while attending Council meetings, conferences, training and other business of Council. Claims must be accompanied by a receipt from the care provider showing the day and time care was provided and details of the reason care was needed on such an occasion.

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**(g)      General**

The General Manager is granted delegated authority to exceed the terms of (b) above (accommodation) if such action will result in a more economical cost effective solution for the Council.

**(3)      Legal Costs**

Councillors are entitled to reimbursement of reasonable legal expenses in the circumstances, and to the extent, described in this clause.

In the event of:

- (i) any enquiry, investigation or hearing into the conduct of a Councillor by any of:
  - the Independent Commission Against Corruption;
  - the Office of the Ombudsman;
  - the Division of Local Government, Department of Premier & Cabinet
  - the NSW Police;
  - the Director of Public Prosecutions;
  - the Local Government Pecuniary Interest & Disciplinary Tribunal;
  - a Parliamentary Committee;
  - Council's Conduct Review Committee/Reviewer
  - or the like; or
- (ii) legal proceedings being taken against a Councillor; or
- (iii) a Councillor being compelled to appear before any of the bodies referred to above to give evidence on matters arising out of or in connection with the Councillor's performance of their civic duties or exercise of their functions as a Councillor, Council shall reimburse such Councillor at the conclusion of such enquiry, investigation, hearing or proceeding, for all legal expenses properly and reasonably incurred, given the nature of the enquiry, investigation, hearing or proceeding, on a solicitor/client basis, PROVIDED THAT
  - (a) the Councillor did not initiate the legal action;
  - (b) the amount of such reimbursement shall be reduced by the amount of any monies that may be or are recouped by the Councillor on any basis;
  - (c) the enquiry, investigation, hearing or proceeding results in a finding substantially favourable to the Councillor; or
  - (d) the enquiry, investigation, hearing or proceeding does not result in a finding that the Councillor acted in bad faith.

**PROVISION OF FACILITIES**

**Provision of Facilities Generally**

Council will provide the following support facilities to Councillors for use by Councillors in the conduct of their duties of office:

**Clothing**

Councillors will be provided with one jacket and tie/scarf (with embroidered Council Logo) during a term of office. **Maximum total cost not to exceed \$400 per Councillor.**

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**Badge**

Each Councillor is provided with a standard name badge during a term of office.

**Secretarial and IT Support**

Secretarial/typing assistance will be made available to the Mayor and other Councillors for work directly related to the duties of office. IT support will be made available to the Mayor and Councillors to ensure the effective and efficient operation of computer equipment.

**Office/Meeting Room Facilities**

Office/meeting room facilities are available at the Administrative Centre for use by Councillors in the conduct of their duties of office.

**Meals and Refreshments**

Council will provide to Councillors appropriate light meals and refreshments at meetings of Council and Committees. The cost of meals and refreshments per meeting will not exceed \$40 per head.

**Computer**

Each Councillor will be supplied with an appropriate Ipad (or equivalent) and Council will maintain the equipment.

**Stationery**

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

Writing and note pads, writing pens, business sachet, business cards, diary, promotional materials and any other stationery deemed appropriate by the General Manager. Maximum cost not to exceed \$500 per Councillor per annum.

**Private Use of Equipment and Facilities**

Council facilities and equipment **are not** to be used for private purposes as set out in the provisions of this policy and Council's Code of Conduct which states:

*7.12 You must use council resources ethically, effectively, efficiently and carefully in the course of your public or professional duties, and must not use them for private purposes (except when supplied as part of a contract of employment) unless this use is lawfully authorised and proper payment is made where appropriate.*

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- 7.14    *You must be scrupulous in your use of council property including intellectual property, official services and facilities and should not permit their misuse by any other person or body.*
- 7.15    *You must avoid any action or situation that could create the appearance that council property, official services or public facilities are being improperly used for your benefit or the benefit of any other person or body.*
- 7.16    *You must not use council resources, property or facilities for the purpose of assisting your election campaign or the election campaign of others unless the resources, property or facilities are otherwise available for use or hire by the public and any publicly advertised fee is paid for use of the resources, property or facility.*
- 7.17    *You must not use council letterhead, council crests and other information that could give the appearance it is official council material for:*  
          *a) the purpose of assisting your election campaign or the election campaign of others, or*  
          *b) for other non-official purposes.*
- 7.18    *You must not convert any property of the council to your own use unless properly authorised.*
- 7.19    *You must not use council's computer resources to search for, access, download or communicate any material of an offensive, obscene, pornographic, threatening, abusive or defamatory nature.*

**PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES FOR MAYOR**

In addition to the facilities, equipment and services provided to Councillors the Council shall provide to the Mayor a mobile phone in accordance with Council's mobile phone policy.. A maximum expense of \$1,500 per annum is assigned to the provision of this equipment (see above section limits and standards).

From time to time when unaccompanied by the General Manager / Director, the Mayor will incur expenses in carrying out the role, eg, attendance at functions, conferences, delegations outside the shire. For convenience, a corporate credit card with a limit of \$5,000 is made available, if required, for the Mayor to use while discharging the functions of the Mayor. All credit card expenditure must be supported by receipts, invoices or tax invoices. Supporting documentation must be accompanied by a credit card reconciliation sheet providing a description and occasion for the expense. The reconciliation sheet and supporting documents must be handed to the Director Corporate Services by the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the month. (See attached Reconciliation Sheet)

Council will provide a vehicle for use by the Mayor under Council's motor vehicle lease back agreement in accordance with conditions currently applicable to the General Manager and Directors.



**POLICY TITLE:            PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND            Policy No. 1.24**  
**PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO**  
**COUNCILLORS**

**OTHER MATTERS**

**ANNUAL FEES**

**a.        Mayor**

In accordance with Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1993, Council will pay the Mayor an annual fee monthly in arrears, with the fee to be determined annually. This fee will be paid in addition to the fee paid to the Mayor as a Councillor. Such amount is to be determined by Council in accordance with the Remuneration Tribunal's Guidelines.

**b.        Deputy Mayor**

In accordance with Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1993, Council may pay the Deputy Mayor an allowance for such time as the Deputy Mayor acts in the office of the Mayor. The amount of the fee paid to the Deputy Mayor would be deducted from the Mayor's annual fee. Such amount to be determined by Council in conjunction with the decision in respect of (a) above (Mayor).

**ACQUISITION AND RETURN OF EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES BY COUNCILLORS**

Councillors shall return to Council all equipment and other facilities at the completion of their term of office, while on extended leave of absence or at the cessation of their civic duty.

A Councillor finishing office may also have the option of purchasing the Council Ipad (or equivalent) at an agreed fair market value. Council will acquire an appraisal from a reputable dealer in support of the agreed value.

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**LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL**

**AUTHORITY TO TRAVEL**

---

**DATE:** ..... **COUNCILLOR:** .....

**PURPOSE OF JOURNEY:**.....

*N.B. PLEASE ATTACH COPY OF PROGRAMS, REGISTRATION FORM, AGENDA OR OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION.*

**DESTINATION:** .....

Expected time of departure: ..... Date of departure: .....

Expected time of return: ..... Date of return: .....

**TRANSPORT TO BE ORGANISED?** Yes ☐ No ☐  
(Air ☐) (Bus ☐) (Train ☐) (Car ☐)

**ACCOMMODATION TO BE ORGANISED?** Yes ☐ No ☐  
Check in date: ..... Motel Preference: .....  
Check out date: .....  
Single ☐ Double ☐ Twin ☐ .....

**REGISTRATION FEE AND FORM TO BE ORGANISED?** Yes ☐ No ☐  
Please attach completed registration form.

**HIRE CAR AT DESTINATION?** Yes ☐ No ☐

**SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS TO BE ORGANISED?** Yes ☐ No ☐  
Please supply details

.....  
.....

**BUDGET ALLOCATION NO.** ..... **CURRENT BALANCE** .....

**APPROVED BY:** .....  
MAYOR and GENERAL MANAGER or MINUTE NO

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**DECLARATION:** I confirm that actual details of my journey were undertaken as claimed above.

**(To be signed by Councillor on return)**

.....  
.....  
COUNCILLOR'S SIGNATURE. DATE.

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**LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL**

**AUTHORITY TO TRAVEL**

---

**DATE:** .....

**MAYOR:** .....

**PURPOSE OF JOURNEY:**.....

*N.B. PLEASE ATTACH COPY OF PROGRAMS, REGISTRATION FORM, AGENDA OR OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION.*

**DESTINATION:** .....

Expected time of departure: ..... Date of departure: .....

Expected time of return: ..... Date of return: .....

**TRANSPORT TO BE ORGANISED?** Yes ☐ No ☐  
(Air ☐) (Bus ☐) (Train ☐) (Car ☐)

**ACCOMMODATION TO BE ORGANISED?** Yes ☐ No ☐  
Check in date: ..... Motel Preference: .....  
Check out date: .....  
Single ☐ Double ☐ Twin ☐ .....

**REGISTRATION FEE AND FORM TO BE ORGANISED?** Yes ☐ No ☐  
Please attach completed registration form.

**HIRE CAR AT DESTINATION?** Yes ☐ No ☐

**SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS TO BE ORGANISED?** Yes ☐ No ☐  
Please supply details

.....  
.....

**BUDGET ALLOCATION NO.** ..... **CURRENT BALANCE** .....

**APPROVED BY:** .....  
DEP MAYOR COUNCILLOR GEN MAN or MINUTE NO

---

**DECLARATION:** I confirm that actual details of my journey were undertaken as claimed above.

**(To be signed by Councillor on return)**

.....

MAYOR'S SIGNATURE.

DATE.

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**LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL**

**EXPENSES CLAIM**

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**Councillor:** .....

**Vehicle greater than 2500cc:**                      **Yes**    ☐                      **No**        ☐

<b>Council/Committee Meeting</b>	<b>Kms</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Travelling</b>			
<b>Other</b>			

<b>Meetings Attended as a Council Delegate</b>	<b>Kms</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Travelling</b>			
<b>Sustenance (attach receipts)</b>			
<b>Other (e.g. car parking fees)</b>			

**Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....

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**LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL**  
**CREDIT CARD RECONCILIATION SHEET**

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**MAYOR:** .....

**MONTH:** ..... **20** .

<b>Description of Mastercard expenditure</b>	<b>Occasion</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>\$ Total Amount</b>
<b>Eg:</b> Accommodation Wentworth Hotel	LGNSW Conference	30/06/2011	\$880.00

MAYOR

Signature: .....  
MAYOR

Date: .....

General Manager / Director Corporate Services

Signature: .....

Date: .....