



# **ATTACHMENTS**

**UNDER SEPARATE COVER**

**Ordinary Council Meeting**

**21 February 2023**





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## Tourism Stimulus Projects

Item	Project	Status	Comments
1	Joint Marketing Initiative - Murrumbidgee Trails	<p>Collaboration of Narrandera, Leeton, Lockhart and Murrumbidgee Councils. Graphic Designer/ Copy writer engaged.</p> <p>Development of Booking form and advertising prospectus - Advertisers currently being sort.</p> <p>Developing information for guide.</p>	<p>Draft content now being reviewed and graphic designer laying out pages for adverts and content.</p> <p>Joint initiative underway with 21 local Narrandera businesses taking up advertising, local council owned operated places ads for as well</p> <p>(including Parkside, Lake Talbot, etc)</p> <p>Murrumbidgee Trails posters to be placed in high traffic areas in Narrandera.</p> <p>Social Media Campaign on-going.</p> <p><b>Social Media Report – July to September Report Attached</b></p>
2	Social Media	<p>Facebook and Instagram Creation of posts using new imagery</p> <p>#visitnarrandera</p> <p>#lovenarrandera</p>	<p>Video being edited to be displayed in Visitor Centre and via social media channels</p> <p>Riverina Outdoor Art trail Instagram /Facebook posts being created regularly.</p> <p>Visitor Centre staff creating Narrandera Tourism posts with new photo catalogue.</p> <p>Summer Campaign Complete</p> <p>Visit Wagga Social Media Campaign Launched.</p> <p>Narrungdera Earth Fest Campaigns Finalised</p>

Item	Project	Status	Comments
			<p>Creating Spring Campaign Content</p> <p>Summer Campaign Underway – Nov 1 imagery focused on Lake Talbot Water Park</p> <p>Photography itinerary for updated image library underway sites will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local AirBnbs (special stays)</li> <li>- Natural Assets &amp; Sites</li> <li>- Marie Bashir Park</li> <li>- Lake Talbot Water Park</li> <li>- East Street &amp; Eateries</li> </ul>
3	Tourism Website	<p>Developing and posting blog posts to interact with travelers Auditing website pages.</p> <p>Developing information and product for pages</p>	<p>Blog posts have begun.</p> <p>Web page information is being audited and updated as needed.</p>
4	Tourism Newsletter	<p>Currently monthly, communicate information and resources.</p> <p>Business NSW, Tourism Australia, Destination</p>	<p>Successfully getting information out to tourism operators and business</p> <p>Goal to gain more subscribers Tourism newsletter growth and information sharing.</p>

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Item	Project	Status	Comments
		Networks (DRM, DNSW)	
5	Australian Regional Tourism	Current member of ART  Valuable resource for information	Current Financial Member of Australian Regional Tourism. Networking and information on Visitor Centre's, Marketing Opportunities and events.
6	Visit Riverina	Current board member  Involvement in campaigns - Social Media, Newsletters, website Using #DreamNowVisitLater  Riverina Outdoor Art Trail - social media platforms	Partnership program with member councils for a big promotional campaign – draft of destination audits was completed by participating Councils and a campaign is being developed for review.  Visit Riverina Facebook/ Instagram posts – series of posts organized over the coming months.  Thrive updating website with Narrandera information.  Regional Maps produced by participating LGAs – Copy at End of Report  Visit Riverina to attend Canberra Caravanning and Camping Expo – October 2022 Narrandera to take King Bee Honey and Big River Herbs product Visit Riverina attendee Canberra Caravan Camping & Lifestyle Expo – The expo was held over three days and attendee numbers were over 15,000. The event was a success and the board is currently considering attending a larger number of consumer facing shows.
7	Destination Riverina Murray	Supporting the campaigns developed by DRM #LoveNSW	Scheduled a series of posts that DRM and DNSW, thrive via visit Riverina Social Page Facebook page analytics below table Love NSW Campaign is underway. Influencers – The Blonde Nomads visited Narrandera and posted frequently. Posts and stories included content on Narrandera Koalas, Murrumbidgee River & The Water Tower Art Work  Campaign Completed

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Item	Project	Status	Comments
			<p>Destination Riverina Murray Conducting a Review of Visit Riverina in order to establish a better working relationship/increase engagement.</p> <p>Destination Management Plan Review to be completed. Destination Management Plan Feedback Provided to DRM</p> <p>DRM has been working closely with regional councils to determine the impact of NSW Flooding on tourism operators to escalate to Resilience NSW, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the Cross Border Commissioner, DNSW and other relevant stakeholders and groups. Visitation Statistics and accommodation occupancy statistics have been provided to DRM. Results of DRM Flood Impact Assessment Survey Attached</p>
8	Narrandera – Leeton Airport	<p>Tourism initiatives – branding entry point</p> <p>Airport signage</p>	<p>The application of tourism and marketing collateral within the airport can have the potential to help generate a positive mood and attitude of passengers enhancing their experience from the start.</p> <p>Quote is being developed for design concepts with a graphic designer, Narrandera Signs have measured and are quoting on installation costs.</p> <p>Signage complete</p>
9	Narrandera – Welcome Banners	<p>Tourism initiatives – branding entry point</p> <p>Narrandera Welcome Banners</p>	<p>Replacement of existing banners at Gillenbah island and entry from Newell Highway as previous banners are faded and damaged. Newly designed image banners &amp; replacement banners at printers. Updated Banner images below with Narrandera Signs for Printing Banners to be placed on new banner poles along Irrigation Way – awaiting banner printing Narrandera Signs.</p>

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Item	Project	Status	Comments
			Gillenbah Ooh Media Billboard Refaced Awaiting Reopening of Lake Talbot Water Park for high-res Imagery of Water slides for Sandigo board.
10	Narrandera Destination and Discovery Hub	<p>A multi- faceted project that will be the tourism showpiece in the region.</p> <p>Scheduled to commence construction in November 2021 for completion in October 2022.</p> <p>Significant employment during construction and continuing employment in the Visitor Information Centre component and in other active workspaces within</p>	<p>Project team has been formed</p> <p>Generation of ideas for planning spaces Out for public viewing and feedback on concept plans.</p> <p>Review of needs of new Centre including staffing, deliver of services, stock, activities and experiences.</p> <p>S2 Architects have been engaged, updated plans to be delivered in May.</p> <p>Meeting to discuss internal fit out of NDDH with S2 Architects to occur in July. Fit out for Visitor Information Centre area determined. Meeting with Narrandera Fisheries to discuss fish tank fit out requirements</p> <p>Exhibition Space Designer selected and engaged. Consultation Arranged Interpretive Design Layout Complete – Awaiting Build Commencement. Interpretive content under review.</p>

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Item	Project	Status	Comments
		the Hub.	
11	Upcoming Advertisements	List of all advertisements Narrandera Tourism Team under work or in publication	<p>Caravan and camping Magazine – Autumn advert &amp; editorial complete</p> <p>Out and About – Autumn advert &amp; editorial complete</p> <p>Central West Lifestyle Magazine segment &amp; advertisement complete</p> <p>Caravanning Australia Spring Edition Complete</p> <p>Out &amp; About Spring Edition – Complete</p> <p>Out &amp; About Summer Edition –Editorial &amp; Advert</p> <p>HerCanberra – December Digital Marketing Campaign Complete – Preview Below</p> <p>Visit Wagga Digital Marketing Campaign – Launched 29 March</p> <p>Caravanning Australia Editorial &amp; Advert Spring Edition- Content Submitted Awaiting Publication</p> <p>HerCanberra Spring Editorial, Social Media &amp; Digital Advertising Package – Launch Aug 8th</p> <p>Murrumbidgee Trails Feature in Daily Advertiser – content submitted - awaiting publication date</p> <p>Visit Wagga Wagga – What's On Guide – Spring Events Listed – Barellan Clydesdales &amp; Narrandera Koala Festival.</p> <p>Out &amp; About Summer Edition Published</p>

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Item	Project	Status	Comments
			  
12	REA Wagga Wagga Horse Trials Report	Councils Tourism & Economic Development	<p>Council resolved to support the ambulance fees for the event. Wagga REA Horse Trials were provided a feedback form by council to distribute to event participants.</p> <p>Assisting REA Horse Trials with grant funding opportunity to host Horse Trials at Narrandera in 2022.</p>

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Item	Project	Status	Comments
		Coordinator assisted Wagga REA Horse Trials in submitting a report to council for support.	Wagga Horse Trials Successful in obtaining Community Events Program Funding
13	Upcoming Events	Upcoming Events in Narrandera Shire supported or ran by Narrandera Shire Council	<p>April 10&amp;11 - Free Family Fun Nights Narrandera Sportsground</p> <p>April 17 – Narrandera Rod Run Show N Shine Easter Event</p> <p>May 20 -22 Narrandera EarthFest</p> <p>Awaiting Outcome of Reconnecting Regional NSW – Community Events Program</p> <p>Community Events Program</p> <p>Engaged Lee Longmire &amp; Co to assist event organisers in managing and promoting events Lee will run free social media and design workshops for applicants on Aug 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 4<sup>th</sup> 2022.</p> <p>Awaiting outcome from Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program to determine successful applicants.</p> <p>Upcoming Event</p> <p>August</p> <p>Narrandera Races</p> <p>Wagga REA Narrandera Horse Trials</p> <p>September</p> <p>Narrandera Koala Festival ( Awaiting Funding Outcome)</p>

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Item	Project	Status	Comments
			<p><b>Narrandera Koala Fest</b> event will be on Saturday September 17th and will run from 10am to 9pm. The day sessions will include Food Vendors (some local, some visiting), market stalls, amusement rides including climbing wall, giant slide &amp; mechanical rides. Attractions for the day sessions would include Koala Tours, Petting Zoo, performance group (Boomstars), Roving Characters, Magician, Circus Acts with interactive workshops in circus, art, and nature. The evening session would include the rides and food vendors, Magician floor show, Boomstar Show and family bush dance with Tin Shed Rattlers.</p> <p>October</p> <p>Barellan Clydesdales</p> <p>Rockin On East</p> <p>November</p> <p>A Little Bit Country &amp; BBQ</p> <p><b>A Little Bit of Country &amp; BBQ</b> is a free to attend family friendly event highlighting local country rock talent supported by a headliner act Southbound XO. Local talent will include two country bands plus an open microphone session mid-afternoon in Maree Bashir Park from 11am to 8pm on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November. The day will consist of various BBQ themed cooking demonstrations including a BBQ</p> <p>Competition Butcher and Michael Lyons with an indigenous BBQ style. BBQ theme will not only include cooking demonstrations but a selection of food vendors ie local community BBQs and American Style BBQ plus other international flavours.</p> <p>Approximately 300 attendees at event</p>

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Item	Project	Status	Comments
			<p>December 17 Narrandera Race Club Community Race Day</p> <p>January Australia Day</p> <p>February Narrandera Rodeo Malibu Ski Tournament</p> <p>March Narrandera Business Group Event Lions Community Fun Day</p> <p>April Narrandera Rod Run</p>

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## Economic Stimulus Projects

Item	Project	Status
1	Yarrabee Solar farm	<p>Directors of Yarrabee advise that, as at July 2020, they are still confident of financial closure by the end of 2020 and commencement of construction in the first half of 2021.</p> <p>Directors Tony Concannon and David Webster address Council on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Yarrabee Solar on track for commencement mid to late 2021.</p> <p>Directors Tony Concannon and David Webster address Council Briefing session on 15 June and advise that revised commencement of construction is expected to occur in 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2022</p> <p>Directors of Yarrabee advise that as at 28 April 2022 the Yarrabee Park solar farm project has been sold to Origin Energy and representatives of the new owners will be introduced to Council by Reach Solar directors on 1 June 2022 in Narrandera.</p> <p>Representatives of Origin meet with GM and Council reps on 1 June and provide list of key contacts. Construction unlikely for a year or more.</p>
2	Avonlie Solar farm	<p>Executive representative of RES confirms in July that Siemen/Gamesa have withdrawn as preferred EPC as the whole company representation has withdrawn from Australia. RES will appoint a replacement EPC and are hopeful of construction commencement in first half of 2021.</p> <p>As at 28 June 2021 construction commencement is expected to be imminent. Further delays due to Covid restrictions. Possible commencement now likely in September 2021.</p> <p>As at September 29 by Press Release RES advises that it has sold its Avonlie Solar farm development to Iberdrola.</p> <p>Road constructions works associated with construction commencement are imminent as at 25 October.</p> <p>Contact made with Beon (the EPC) the solar farm builder. In Narrandera week of 8 November.</p> <p>Various meetings with Beon project team headed by Justin Coburn. Beon hold information evening at Ex services Club about 40 people attend.</p> <p>As at 15 February Beon has appointed two Indigenous Community Engagement Employees to make recruited workforce job-ready.</p> <p>March 2022-Beon commence work on site.</p> <p>March 10 Small Business Month event-familiarisation tour of Avonlie with approx. 30 people attending. Partnership event with Narrandera Business Group and TAFE CLC.</p> <p>As at 1 June 2022 construction work progressing.</p> <p>Beon have installed the initial panels known as the 'Golden Rows'. Installation delayed because of weather. Completion of construction estimated early 2023.</p>
3	AAPA at Narrandera/Leeton airport	<p>Briefing facility established in Council owned airport residence on \$0 rental arrangement for 12 months lease, Sign established by AAPA describes the facility as 'Briefing Centre Narrandera Campus. Casa approves use of facility, Narrandera airport and airspace around Narrandera for AAPA training requirements.</p> <p>Briefing Facility on Narrandera Campus officially opened by Chris Hine CEO of AAPA and Mayor Kschenka of Narrandera and Mayor Maytom from Leeton.</p> <p>As at 23 April 2021 Chris Hine, CEO of AAPA, advises that AAPA has received preliminary funding approval, subject to submission of more details, from NSW Job Creation Fund for development of a further AAPA Campus.</p> <p># Confidential memo attached.</p> <p>As at June 2021 no further developments.</p>



Item	Project	Status
		<p>As at September 2021 no further developments  As at October 25<sup>th</sup> 2021 no further developments  Zoom meeting held late December 2021 with Chris Hine CEO of AAPA who advises that as a result of successful intake of overseas students AAPA will be increasing flying training activities at Narrandera airport and airspace  February 2022 increased flying training activities in airspace at Narrandera and at the airport and briefing Centre.</p> <p>Dale Hall, Engineering Adviser to Chairman REX and AAPA, visited Narrandera on Friday 23 September to inspect potential short term accommodation needs (up to 12 months) for AAPA for current cohort of around 20 flying training students from S/E Asia. Inspected Newell caravan park and Yanco Agricultural Institute motel and bunkhouse accommodation. Dale Hall likely to negotiate a proposal with Yanco Ag Institute. Dale also inspected briefing Centre at airport and potential site at airport for new campus facility. Dale is in charge of all major projects for REX and AAPA.  As at 30 November AAPA still not entered into any accommodation arrangements at YAI.</p>
4	Parallel taxiway at the airport	<p>Preferred quotation received for taxiway design and technical services team negotiating variations to the taxiway proposal.  Funding application submitted as at December 2020 to Regional Airports program for funds to build the parallel taxiway.  As at June 2021 no word on the funding submission.  Council successful with funding application and planning underway for parallel taxiway. AAPA advised.  Finalising detailed design work-Commencement of work to construct the taxiway is imminent.</p>
5	Energy Connect-High voltage interconnect between S.A and NSW	<p>This project is progressing although it will not pass through Narrandera Shire although it will pass approximately 50kms from the Shire.  Significant advertising of this project has offered opportunity for locals in Narrandera Shire to obtain employment.  Early works commenced.</p>
6	Development at Red Hill Industrial Estate-	<p>Significant sales activity on Red Hill Industrial Estate. Lot 71 Driscoll sold to a purchaser who plans to develop modular factory units for lease, lot 72 has been sold to a trucking company, lot 73 has been sold to a purchaser who proposes to develop a recreational vehicle storage facility; lot 75 has been sold to a modular home building group, lot 76 has been sold to the same modular home group for major factory development; 2 adjoining sites of 3.5ha each have been sold and contracts progressing for a major engineering group. The latter two developments are relocations from Metro Sydney and are potential big employers.  Offer to purchase 28ha for a leading- edge technology development being submitted to April Council meeting. Final 2ha on the Red Hill Industrial Estate under offer.  All land on the industrial estate is sold with all contracts exchanged.  Draft plans received from Bhullar for extensive factory development.  Roadworks for access well advanced.  Bhullar Group negotiating with DGMI for pre lodgment DA requirements  Dharmasena granted additional 90 days from 14 November 2022 to lodge DA and obtain approval from Essential Energy for access to the electricity grid.  Awaiting DA from Solar Switch Renewables</p>

Item	Project	Status
7	Independent Living Village Concept. Cnr Elwin and Crescent Streets Narrandera	<p>Noel Thomson Architect prepares concept report from brief provided and presents options for consideration by ELT. Proposal referred back to Noel for expansion of concept proposal and resubmission to Council in due course. Council approves marketing strategy for this land with preference for an Independent Living Village with community facility.</p> <p>Expressions of Interest to be invited from various providers through direct letters and advertisements in metro, regional and local media as well as online. Commencing Jan 19 2021 and submissions close on 26 Feb 2021.</p> <p>No Expressions of Interest received. Discussions continuing with several potential developers.</p> <p>As at June 2021 discussions are being held with the CEO of Argyle Housing and a private builder to examine the feasibility of a mixed housing development on the subject site.</p> <p>As at 1 September 2021 Further discussions being held with Anglicare as to their possible interest in a mixed housing development on the site.</p> <p>As at October 25<sup>th</sup> discussions have occurred with QPL Real Estate on possible interest by a potential developer which is considering a mixed housing development on the site incorporating Independent Living components.</p> <p>As at February 2022 continuing discussions are being held with Argyle Housing which group is interested in possible mixed development on the site including Independent Living and affordable housing.</p> <p>As at May 2022 management is assessing options for the type of development that could be undertaken on the subject lot.</p> <p>EDM meeting with Argyle Housing CEO and Board members in Griffith on 27 September.</p> <p>EDM met with CEO of Argyle. Argyle has had several key changes at senior management level but new CEO and property manager still interested to examine development proposal for Cnr Elwin and Crescent sts.</p>
8	Affordable Housing	<p>Several meetings have been held with Argyle Housing a major developer of affordable housing in NSW. Argyle considering the feasibility of developing a mixed housing estate on Cnr Elwin and Crescent Streets. and is discussing the prospects for this with a known builder/developer.</p> <p>No further contact as at 25 October 2021.</p> <p>See comment in 7 above.</p> <p>Refer point 7 above</p>
9	Playground on the Murrumbidgee	<p>Project management team established under Emily Currie as Project Manager. Initial meeting held and timelines and activities matrix accepted. Various additional meetings held to consider operational and space usage issues.</p> <p>Review of Pre-design report by project team for Destination and Discovery Hub-report provided by Studio S2 architects of Melbourne.</p> <p>Review of Pre-design report by project team for Destination and Discovery Hub-report provided by Studio S2 architects of Melbourne. Further visit by architects planned for July.</p> <p>Meeting held on 2 September with Martin Asmus, Narrandera Fisheries, to discuss specifications for the proposed aquarium and arrangements for subsequent population of the aquarium by rare native freshwater fish species.</p> <p>As at 25 October Draft MOU prepared for consideration by the parties</p> <p>MOU signed by Council and Narrandera Fisheries for the provision of endemic fish varieties for the proposed aquarium planned for installation in the Destination and Discovery Hub.</p> <p>As at 1 June 2022 the foundations have been laid for the Destination &amp; Discovery Hub.</p> <p>Construction progressing</p>

Item	Project	Status
		The skywalk project has been adopted by Council at its 17 May meeting. Tender for construction awarded at Council's July 19 meeting.
10	Grant funded projects and projects in budget	Over \$30 million in projects will provide much need work for many locals. Emerging opportunities with road work projects associated with improvements to the Newell Highway. Overview of Council projects presented in a power-point presentation to a Regional Outreach meeting of RDA Riverina held in Narrandera on 3 June.



1. Planning for the economy of the future  
Initiative 1: Our Shire is 'Open for Business'

A 'can do' attitude is fundamental to stimulating economic growth. To attract new business and investment and to ensure that our existing businesses continue to grow and prosper, Council will provide a positive, supportive and responsive investment environment.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
1.1	Be a proactive, supportive and coordinated Council	1.1.1	Continue to employ an Economic Development Manager and provide funds and resources for economic development.	Achieved
		1.1.2	Establish an Economic Development Taskforce to drive economic development and implement this Strategy with Council, key industry and key community membership	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Note: No industry or community members Committee to consider frequency of ED taskforce meetings on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.</p> <p>Ed Taskforce meetings to be held bi-monthly with next meeting scheduled for 22 Feb 2022.</p> <p>Discuss scheduling for new Council in 2022</p> <p>Meetings to be held bi monthly</p> <p>Update of Council's Economic Development Strategy proposed for 2023-2026. Terms of Reference developed and brief and request for quotes delivered to 4 qualified consultants. Budget \$50,000. Quotes due by 30 November.</p> <p>Consultants are:</p> <p>Urban Enterprise</p> <p>Lucid Economics</p> <p>Remplan</p> <p>NDP</p>
		1.1.3	Review Council's policies, plans and regulations to ensure that they facilitate and support development.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>EDM has drafted a Business Recovery Plan as a short/medium term measure to indicate how Council can support local businesses during the Covid 19 emergency. This plan is designed to dovetail with the current Economic Development Strategy 2017-2020 which will be fully reviewed and updated when the health emergency is considered to be over.</p> <p>Narrandera Energised-Business Recovery Strategy 2020 will be presented to Council's briefing session and then to regular meeting on July 21 meeting for adoption.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Narrandera Energised-Business Recovery Strategy 2020 adopted by Council at its meeting on 21 July.</p> <p>Separate report tables recording Economic Development Stimulus projects and Tourism Stimulus projects reported under separate cover.</p> <p>Pol ES 270 reviewed and now new Pol 048 Red Hill Industrial Estate has been adopted by Council and is active in the register.</p> <p>Small Business Incentive Strategy Pol 010 adopted by Council and submitted for public exhibition.</p> <p>Policy placed on register and unchanged following exhibition.</p> <p>Review terms of reference for various committees</p> <p>Terms of reference for Koala Advisory Committee and Australia Day Advisory Committee adopted by Council at its May 17 Meeting.</p>
		1.1.4	Ensure that Council's systems and procedures for handling and processing development and investment enquiries are welcoming, stream-lined and customer service focussed.	Ongoing
		1.1.5	Purchase access to online, interactive statistical data and modelling tools (eg id profile, REMPLAN) to provide comprehensive demographic, social and economic data for the Shire.	<p>REMPAN subscription renewed to 2022</p> <p>REMPAN Training session for staff on 9 July (subject to Covid restrictions)</p> <p>Training session conducted by zoom connection.</p> <p>REMPAN subscription renewed to June 2023</p>
		1.1.6	Produce information and data that will assist businesses, investors and potential residents in their decision-making, and enable Council to monitor performance.	<p>Effective use of REMPLAN into the future for development applications, grant applications etc.</p> <p>January 2019: REMPLAN introduces Business Analysis Model (BAM) Current data transferred from ABR and now available in Economy/Business tab in Remplan.</p> <p>Businesses within selected local geography reported to committee</p> <p>Survey of attendees at 39<sup>th</sup> National Cavy Show to inform future event arrangements.</p> <p>ED team through Marketing Tourism and ED Coordinator have produced a Facebook initiative called Narrandera Takeaway and Delivery Service and Business as usual in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group as well as creating a business online directory which is under development. The</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Facebook initiative is to assist business to keep operating and it has been very well received with 500 followers. As at June 2020 there are 640 followers As at July there are 700+ followers.</p> <p>Updated quarterly Small Area labour market data for Narrandera. December qtr. 2019 reveals unemployment rate of 5.9% and 180 unemployed out of total workforce of 3075. March qtr. 2020 reveals unemployment rate of 6.3% and 194 unemployed out of a total workforce of 3093. This is consistent with trend across the Riverina and is considered not yet reflecting impact of Covid 19 pandemic.</p> <p>June qtr. 2020 SALM data reveals unemployment rate of 6.7% and 202 unemployed out of labour force of 3003. Sept.2020 SALM data reveals unemployment rate of 7.4% 218 unemployed out of labour force of 2937. Dec. 2020 SALM data reveals unemployment rate of 6.6% 193 unemployed out of labour force of 2930. March 2021 QTR SALM data reveals unemployment rate of 5.5% with 158 unemployed out of labour force 2898. June 2021 QTR SALM reveals unemployment rate of 4.1% with 120 unemployed out of labour force of 2905. Sept 2021 reveals unemployment rate of 3.3% with 96 unemployed out of a labour force of 2878 December 2021 reveals unemployment rate of 3% with 86 unemployed out of a labour force of 2875. March quarter 2022 reveals unemployment rate of 3.7% with 107 unemployed out of a labour force of 2900 June quarter 2022 reveals unemployment rate of 4.4% with 122 unemployed out of a labour force of 2795. Data is now produced by the National Skills Commission</p> <p>Council has provided a letter of support to RDA Riverina for the proposal to establish a Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA) for RDA Riverina addressing workforce and critical labour shortages in the region.The proposal</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>involves the geographical expansion of the Orana Region DAMA to include Riverina and the advantages in this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The speed in which the proposed expanded DAMA can be established</li> <li>• Less reporting to government</li> <li>• Similar needs across the two regions.</li> </ul> <p>Specific advantages of having a DAMA in place for our region include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplification of visa application system for employers</li> <li>• The ability to bring semi-skilled labour into the region to meet and address real labour shortages</li> <li>• The ability to bring in semi-skilled labour which will cut the retraining costs associated with using holiday worker visas to fill unfilled job vacancies currently unrecognised in the Australian Skill Shortages lists</li> <li>• The ability to allow our aging population to continue to live in the region where they have grown up and had their working life, will be underpinned by access to a professional workforce and</li> <li>• Provide an opportunity for overseas workers to embed in our region, supporting the possibility of permanent residency and addressing population decline, particularly in our rural communities.</li> </ul>
		1.1.7	Include comprehensive information on economic development and business assistance on Council's website.	<p>Economic Development Department has contributed to planning of Council's Website upgrade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development Strategy on Website.</li> <li>• REX Community fare on website</li> <li>• Information on BEC workshops for business on website/Facebook</li> </ul>
1.2	Continue to build partnerships and strategic alliances	1.2.1	<p>Strengthen relationships with Government Agencies, regional organisations and service providers through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active participation in regional programs, forums and workshops.</li> <li>• Briefing and updating these organisations on the Shire's needs and priorities.</li> <li>• Advocating strongly for improved facilities, infrastructure and services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ED participates in RDA Riverina forums, RAMROC, Destination Riverina Murray and Thrive meetings.</li> <li>• EDM attended Economic Development Officers Forum in Temora-27/9. Various speakers and networking.</li> <li>• Shire's priorities contained in Western Riverina Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) officially completed as at February 2019.</li> <li>• Council facilitated Bee Forum to address issues arising from any accidents and emergencies on our region's roads involving the transportation of live bees with the aim of identifying gaps, finding solutions and increasing preparedness.</li> </ul>



Strategies		Key Actions	Progress
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that the Shire's priorities and projects are recognised in regional plans and strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forum formulates and endorses a 3 point action plan for positive outcome.</li> <li>DPI representative Daryl Cooper working with Apiarists to develop an Action List Protocol that can be used by all emergency services responding to a vehicle accident involving the transportation of live bees in hives.</li> <li>Wed 22 April EDM participated in regional zoom forum of Economic Development officers from Western Riverina Councils organised by Nicola James-AusIndustry.</li> <li>EDM to participate in Skills Forum as a component of the Riverina Skills Audit conducted by CSU research team ( 9 October zoom meeting)</li> <li>EDM participated in RDA Skills Forum with report due from CSU in due course.</li> <li>EDM to participate in Regional Australia Institute presentation of Deputy PM pre budget speech on 30 September</li> <li>RDA Riverina committee holds Regional Outreach meeting in Narrandera on 3 June 2021 at Arts and Community Centre. Mayor gives welcome and EDM makes power-point presentation on economic development, business activity and capital works.</li> <li>Meeting with NBN new development team by zoom 23 March 2022 to discuss emerging connectivity needs for Narrandera, Grong Grong Etc</li> <li>NBN to convene a public forum in 2<sup>nd</sup> half 2022 to update business/community on NBN services in Narrandera Shire.</li> <li>NBN confirm that they will hold a public information day on Wednesday 17 August at the Exies Club. An open public session will be available from 2pm to 5pm and people can make one on one appointments if required. A session for business proprietors will be held from 6pm to 8pm with refreshments supplied.</li> <li>Information day and evening presented by NBN representatives but poorly attended.</li> <li>GM and EDM attended a planning meeting in Griffith for the update of the Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) update for Council's Functional Economic Region (FER). On- line workshops/information sessions have been conducted also. Council has provided input and the Draft REDS will be available in the near future for review.</li> <li>AS a result of a project with RAMJO Field Solutions Group (FSG) have advised that they have secured a site East of Grong Grong for a Telecommunications tower and that they are investigating two further sites</li> </ul>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>at Square Nob and another near Grong Grong. The first tower is expected to be completed and commissioned for service before 30 June 2023.</p> <p>EDM attends webinar on 17 November 2022 presented by NSW Government Regional Housing Supply Unit to discuss the Regional Housing Delivery Plan, tranche 2. The Western Riverina is included in the second tranche and work will commence in December 2022 and progress to site visits by Supply Unit team in February 2023 for face to face meetings. Emphasis on the REDS and the FER(Functional Economic Region).</p>
		1.2.2	Build and strengthen strategic alliances with Councils within the Riverina Region and along strategic road and rail corridors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrandera and Leeton representatives noted above agree to the strategic alliance between Narrandera and Leeton being called 'The Narrandera/Tocumwal Rail Line &amp; Intermodal Support Alliance.'</li> <li>Council provided letter of support for Wagga Wagga City Council's bid for the Qantas Cadet Training facility.</li> <li>Working relationships with Western Riverina Councils known as Functional Economic Regions</li> <li>Council working on Tourism joint initiative for digital visitors guide with Murrumbidgee Leeton and Lockhart Shires. Presentation to Councillors at briefing session 19 Nov 19.</li> <li>Development of marketing prospectus and strong support from advertisers.</li> <li>Murrumbidgee Trails name and logo adopted.</li> <li>Strong response across the targeted region for advertising in the new guide which is scheduled for launch in November 2020.</li> <li>Official launch of guide on 18 November.</li> <li>The Murrumbidgee Trails Council Group has made a submission to the NSW Local Government Excellence Awards for the Murrumbidgee Trails Visitor Guide initiative in the 'Special Projects' category. Submission identified as a Finalist in the Excellence Awards.</li> <li>The above submission was unsuccessful</li> <li>The Murrumbidgee Trails Council Group has made a joint bid for the March 2022 Destination NSW Tourism Conference to be held at Whitton Malthouse with accommodation and tours shared between Narrandera, Leeton, Lockhart and Murrumbidgee.</li> <li>The above submission was unsuccessful</li> </ul>
1.3	Engage pro-actively with	1.3.1	Build knowledge and understanding of local economic sectors and businesses, including	Ongoing

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
	<b>local businesses and business / industry organisations</b>		organising a program of industry briefings and tours for Councillors and Council staff.	<p>17/9 Visit to Glendale completed ED team working closely with Narrandera Business Group to provide assistance to business during Covid 19 business closures and limitations.</p> <p>As at June 2020 proposed new Narrandera Business Chamber not yet functional. Narrandera Business Group meetings suspended during Covid 19 health crisis. Narrandera Business Group to reconvene at meeting on 10 August . Narrandera Business Group meets on 10 August. Christmas Fun fair and Markets to be discussed at September meeting. Industry tours to recommence when Covid 19 emergency has passed. Council members and staff toured the Agri Australia facility on 14 April. Manager Claudio Cavallini briefed the tour on the operations at the farm which grows and propagates hazelnuts.</p> <p>Tour on 7 July of Australian Mohair Marketing Organisation (Deferred until July 2022) Further deferred until November 2022. EDM attends AMMO morning tea on 25 Nov 2022. Mohair auction cancelled through lack of overseas buyers resulting from oversupply of product.</p>
		1.3.2	Encourage and facilitate opportunities for professional development, networking and innovation.	<p>EDM attends Narrandera Business Group. Attended Narrandera Business Group meeting 14 October Planning progressed for Small Business Month October with arrangements in place and invitations issued for Narrandera Connected (2) on 23 October at TAFE CLC. Sponsorships received from Service NSW, Business Group, TAFE and Articulate Pear. Workshop planned for 28 October at TAFE CLC to be delivered by BEC. NSC and Narrandera Business Group jointly sponsor Social Media Connectivity. Successful Small Business October events with 30 people in attendance at each event in 2019. Tiffany attends Regional Economic Development Officers Forum at Whitton Malthouse on 19 November.</p> <p>EDM and Toneale attend RDA Regional Forum for EDOs at Temora.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Networking Event held on 9 Dec 2021 in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group and BEC</p> <p>Networking event is planned for 10 March 2022 in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group and TAFE CLC Narrandera-as part of Small Business Month March.</p> <p>Successful Small Business Month Events on March 10 including coach familiarisation tour to Avonlie Solar farm 33 people attending. Surprise visit by NSW Govt Minister The Hon Alistair Henskens, Minister for Science Technology and Innovation and Minister for Skills and Training.</p> <p>Welcome to Country and Smoking ceremony and presentations to Iberdrola officials by Aboriginal Elder Uncle Michael Lyons.</p> <p>Evening networking function at TAFE CLC with address by Geoff Reardon Regional manager for ICN.</p> <p>Council is collaborating with Narrandera Business Group to promote an event for Small Business Month November. 2 workshops will be presented at TAFE CLC on 14 and 15 November in the evenings. Presenter will be Jenn Donovan of Social Media and Marketing Australia on topics of <i>2023 Marketing Goal Planning and Instagram and Facebook Bootcamp</i>. Grant funding is being sought from the Small Business Month NSW Government fund.</p> <p>Council and Narrandera Business Group were successful in obtaining funding via the Small Business Commissioner's Grant program to conduct the above 2 workshops in November.</p> <p>Two successful events were held on 14 and 15 November with workshops presented by Jenn Donovan of Social Media and Marketing Australia. 16 people attended each event. These events were funded by the NSW Small Business Commissioner and Council and Narrandera Business Group were each funded for \$2375 covering the cost of the workshops and light refreshments on each evening.</p>
		1.3.3	Establish effective networks and communication channels.	<p>Bi-monthly newsletter for business prepared and circulated by EDM since start of 2019. Most recent circulation in March 2021.</p> <p>Newsletter published in June 2021.</p> <p>Business Newsletter circulated October 2021</p> <p>Business articles published in Council newsletter from time to time.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
		1.3.4	Support business groups and networks.	<p>Ongoing. Arrange business breakfast with CEO of Tomra James Dorney 6 Sept in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group. 34 people attend successful breakfast. Involve Business Group in Small Business Month October event planned for 23 October at TAFE CLC-Narrandera Connected (2)</p> <p>Acting Secretary for Narrandera Business Group upon resignation of Secretary until new Secretary appointed-...Josie Marks appointed Secretary on 14 October 2019.</p> <p>Formation meeting for Narrandera Business Chamber held on 3 Feb 2020 and interim committee established. Questionnaire in circulation early July</p> <p>Regular distribution of information and advice on business recovery to business database. Information received from State and Federal Government, EDA, Regional Australia Institute, Business NSW, AusIndustry, BEC, etc on recovery and support initiatives during covid 19 pandemic.</p> <p>Ongoing interaction with Narrandera Business Group (NBG). Tiffany Thornton communicates training needs strategy information to NBG.</p> <p>Attend special NBG meeting 26 October to arrange Christmas brochure insert to Argus with support and cooperation from the Editor and Krystal Maytom from Leeton BEC.</p> <p>Support publication of Christmas brochure insert to promote "Shop Locally" initiative. Attend Business Group AGM.</p> <p>Assist in Christmas Stocking prize draw.</p> <p>Present Vibe survey results to April meeting on Narrandera Business Group</p> <p>Continuing attendance at Narrandera Business Group meetings.</p> <p>September meeting cancelled-Covid impact</p> <p>Partnered with Riverina Murray Business (BEC) and Narrandera Business Group to hold a networking gathering on 9 December at TAFE CLC Narrandera.</p> <p>Planning well underway for Small Business Month March 2022 events including bus familiarisation tour of Avonlie Solar farm on 10 March for potential employees and trades plus networking function at TAFE CLC in the evening. Partners for the day's events are NSC, NBG and TAFE CLC.</p> <p>Continuing attendance at Narrandera Business Group meetings. Acting Secretary for 14 March meeting.</p> <p>EDM acts as Returning Officer for Narrandera Business Group AGM. John Foster re-elected unopposed as Chairman and Josie Marks as Secretary.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
		1.3.5	Harness skills and experience available in the Shire and surrounding region (eg through forming task forces and working groups) to address specific challenges and realise opportunities.	<p>To be addressed as opportunities and shared purposes arise.</p> <p>Negotiate with Klaus Baumgartel of ICN for audit of services in Narrandera Shire to support the imminent development requirements for the 3 new solar farms.</p> <p>Organise small taskforce from the community to address the goods and services audit for solar farm development.</p> <p>Klaus Baumgartel contacts all people on EOI list to ensure they have direct registration particulars for Avonlie Solar.</p> <p>Organised Steering Committee for Central West Lifestyle Magazine project.</p> <p>Mr Rick Shaw of Finley is working with regional EPCs to mobilise service providers to take advantage of work at the various solar farms, including those proposed for Narrandera.</p> <p>Survey of motels in Dec 2019 indicates approx. 60 solar farm workers from Darlington Point project staying in Narrandera facilities.</p> <p>February survey reveals 30+ Darlington Point Solar farm workers accommodated in Narrandera.</p> <p>Solar Farm Reference Group considers final draft of Accommodation and Employment Strategy for Avonlie Solar farm.</p> <p>Strategy adopted and endorsed by Dept of Planning</p>
1.4	<b>Build a strong, positive profile for Narrandera Shire</b>	1.4.1	Implement the branding strategy and signage strategy.	<p>Council agrees on style, wording and location of 6 new town entry sign at its 18 June 2019 meeting.</p> <p>Designs of signs agreed and signs ordered. Installation around end of August/early September.</p> <p>All 6 signs installed as at 16 September.</p> <p>3 signs installed at prominent locations promoting the Easter Rod Run Show and Shine</p> <p>Planning underway for new banners and window decals at the airport promoting Narrandera. Window decals installed.</p> <p>Draft design for Wiradjuri welcome message prepared and approved by elders group.</p> <p>New pole banners designed and ready to go into production. Installation due in March 2022. New signage under development by Tourism and ED Coordinator.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
		1.4.2	Develop and implement a communications strategy, including articulating key messages.	<p>Reinforce process with ED staff for communicating event arrangements to ensure no breakdown in arrangements.</p> <p>EDM prepares media releases as appropriate as well as items for Council communicate and newsletter.</p> <p>Items prepared from time to time for Council's community newsletter and media releases as appropriate.</p>
		1.4.3	Build the Shire's digital presence, including launching a new Council website, embracing social media and capitalising on opportunities provided by third party data bases, websites and apps.	<p>Development of Council website underway. EDO is on development team.</p> <p>New website launched</p> <p>Partnership with BEC for a digital and online marketing workshop on 6 December 2018.</p> <p>Review Federal Government's National Digital Economy Strategy released Dec 2018 titled "Australia's Tech Future". Review Federal Government Small Business Digital taskforce Report March 2018.</p> <p>Review Business Listings category for new website. Prepare new list and content.</p> <p>FSG researching potential sites in Grong Grong for installation of a communications tower.</p> <p>No progress in this matter as at 31 July</p> <p>FSG still researching possible sites at Grong Grong as at 24 November 2022</p>
		1.4.4	Effectively market and promote the Shire, to raise its profile and increase awareness of its strengths, assets and opportunities.	<p>Ongoing. Progressive and targeted distribution of Winter Edition 2019 of Central West Lifestyle Magazine featuring Narrandera o people of influence in various organisations.</p> <p>Provide comment for NRMA Annual Report 2019 on invitation from NRMA regarding installation of EV fast Charger at Narrandera.</p> <p>Australia post announces that it has developed a postage stamp featuring the image of the lizard on the National Award -winning Narrandera Water Tower. Supporting postcard also produced depicting the Koala fascia of the water tower.</p> <p>Enter the Reverse Vending Machine-Return and Earn project in the relevant section of the Keep Australia Beautiful Awards.</p> <p>CEO of Keep Australia Beautiful Council visits Narrandera in September and inspects town and the RVM</p> <p>Judging of applications in KAB awards deferred until March 2021.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Council advised that it is a finalist in the Return and Earn prize category and will either be the overall winner or highly commended.</p> <p>Council receives award in Local Government category Return and Earn litter prevention award and is commended for social, economic and environmental outcomes. EDM accepts award on behalf of Council at KAB Awards function in Murrurundi on Saturday 13 March.</p> <p>Tiffany organises several key publication advertisements.</p> <p>Advertisement prepared for Regional Lifestyle Magazine Collectors Edition 2 due for publication in October 2021 featuring Lake Talbot Award Winning Water Park and Water Tower art.</p> <p>Regional Lifestyle Magazine published October 21 including Narrandera feature.</p> <p>Continuing marketing and promotions actioned by Tourism and Economic Development Coordinator</p> <p>Narrandera feature in Autumn 2022 Country Change Magazine</p>
		1.4.5	Encourage the community to be advocates for the Shire, including speaking about the positives.	Ongoing
		1.4.6	Re-develop the Narrandera Visitor Information Centre as focal point for both tourism and economic development.	<p>Awaiting response from 'Playground on the Murrumbidgee' NSW State Funding application.</p> <p>Considering application for current round of funding with BBRF.</p> <p>Funding confirmed from NSW Government of \$8 Million for Playground on Murrumbidgee project including the replacement of the VIC with the Narrandera Destination and Discovery Hub.</p> <p>VIC closed during Corona Virus Pandemic and staff either working from home or redeployed.</p> <p>Possible reopening 1 June 2020</p> <p>VIC reopens on 1 June with strict social distancing requirements in place.</p> <p>Perspex barriers installed to protect staff and customers.</p> <p>Enquiry levels reduced compared to normal times but public is travelling again in reduced numbers.</p> <p>23/7 First meeting of project team to progress the construction of the Destination and Discovery Hub-Emily Curry as Project Manager. Project plan and timelines established.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>April/May meetings with Amy Smedley from Studio S2 Architects to review pre-design report for Narrandera Destination and Discovery Hub. Further meeting with architects in July.</p> <p>Preparations underway for vacating the VIC on 10/11 September and moving into the Arts and Community centre.</p> <p>Transition from old VIC to Arts and Community Building completed as planned and excellent temporary facility established.</p> <p>Architects engaged, Interpretive design and fitout consultants engaged and builder selected ready to commence construction as at March 2022.</p> <p>March 10 sod turning ceremony to mark commencement of the D&amp;DH</p> <p>As at 1 June 2022 foundations laid.</p> <p>AS at 31 July construction progressing</p> <p>As at 30 September steel framework in place-work progressing.</p> <p>AS at 24 November construction progressing. Tourism and Economic Development Coordinator working with consultants on interpretive panels for discovery hub and Events and Visitor Services Team Leader fine tuning staffing needs for completed facility and planning retail strategy.</p>

✓ Additional resources required in Year 1 to build the framework to support implementation in Years 2 and 3.

## Initiative 2: Enhancing our Liveability

Lifestyle and work-life balances play a major role in relocation and investment decisions. Working with our community, Narrandera Shire Council will continue to develop, position and promote Narrandera Shire as:

- A welcoming, caring and safe community.
- Having quality, comprehensive facilities and services.
- Offering a contemporary, vibrant, affordable lifestyle in a physically attractive setting.
- Providing a positive business environment with strong locational advantages and diverse investment opportunities.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
2.1	Continue to improve presentation – creating	2.1.1	Implement the Narrandera CBD Masterplan – subject to funding and staging –further developing the town centre as an attractive place to shop and	Ongoing



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
	<b>positive first impressions</b>		socialise, including provision of free public WIFI in main street.	
		2.1.2	Develop attractive gateway arrival points and entry corridor to the Shire, Narrandera and villages.	Refer 1.4.1 for Town entry signage Pole banners installed at Grong Grong highway entry point.  Window decals promoting Narrandera are now in place at the airport and new Community Fare Banner on display.
		2.1.3	Improve the presentation of the Shire's industrial areas.	Ongoing. 4 new poles and banners erected at entry to Red Hill Industrial Estate at Cnr Driscoll Rd and Barellan Rd. Impending development will greatly improve appearance of the RH Industrial Estate in due course. Progress report on sales of industrial land on Red Hill Industrial Estate: Lot 71 sold to Di Donato and settled. For industrial units for lease. Lot 72 sold to Serendipity and settled. For truck depot Lot 73 sold to Dawson and settled. For large recreational vehicle storage. Lot 66 sold to Dharmasena subject to contract. For 2ha solar farm Lot 67 sold to Solar Switch Energy for 28ha green solar digital asset management facility. Subject to contract Lots 75 & 76 Sold to Mod Pod Homes for modular home building enterprise. Contracts exchanged. Lots 43 and 44. 7 hectares in total sold to Bhullar Group for steel fabrication factory and industry training facility. Contract exchange is imminent. Deposit paid, contracts signed. Bhullar contracts exchanged. Council sale to Dharmasena for lot 66 (2ha)-solar farm-contracts exchanged Council sale to Solar Switch Renewables lot 67 (28ha)-contracts exchanged. New road construction approximately 500m well advanced on Red Hill industrial estate.. New Road named Drover's Road has been sealed and almost complete as at 24 November  'Land Sale' pole mounted banners at entrance to Driscoll Road to be replaced with suitable message now all Council land is sold.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
2.2	Enhance lifestyle	2.2.1	Continue to improve and expand recreation, sporting and leisure facilities within the Shire.	Ongoing
		2.2.2	Develop and diversify arts and cultural activities.	Ongoing Festival application included in the Community Events Program allocation- awaiting funding advice. Funding approved for all ten Community Events program 80% funding received in accordance with funding deed. Balance on completion of events. 2 events successfully completed. Wagga REA Horse Trials and Koala Fest. Separate reports to be provided on these events. <i>Living Well Narrandera</i> Event on program to be presented by Narrandera Arts and Cultural Committee early 2023.
		2.2.3	Continue to develop and promote a dynamic and vibrant program of events and activities.	Express support for possible future Annual General Meeting of NSW National Party in Narrandera in 2020. Arrange 2 events for Small Business Month October in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group. Marketing Tourism and Economic Development Coordinator making contact with National Party Conference Organiser to offer support. National Party Conference deferred till health emergency passes Cavy Show cancelled Good old Days cancelled Rockin' on East cancelled Fully booked pop - up drive in theatre event for 3 October with 120 vehicles booked to attend. Highly successful event with 135 in attendance and positive feedback from patrons. Successful Show 'n Shine event in conjunction with Easter Rod Run 2021. 5,000 tickets issued for Shown N Shine on Easter Sunday. 350 vehicles on display at Narrandera Sportsground. Positive feedback on the event from organisers Steve and Ray Aldric. Discussions with Rockin on East committee around possible festival on October long weekend 2021. Rockin on east planning progressing. Events and Visitor Services Team leader Brenda Hartmire assisting Rockin on East committee. Rockin on East Event cancelled-Covid impacts

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Good ol' Days Barellan Cancelled-Covid impacts</p> <p>Preparations in hand for Rod Run easter 2022. Planning meeting held on 4 Feb 2022 with Rod Run Organisers/promoters.</p> <p>Discussions with Narrandera Business Group on support activities for Rockin on East October Long Weekend</p> <p>10 Events identified from various community groups and Council for consideration by Council to participate in the NSW Govt Reconnecting Regional NSW-Community Events program.</p> <p>Council endorses 10 events and submission made to funding body for 10 events-awaiting advice on approval. To be conducted between now and 31 March 2023.</p> <p>Funding approved for all 10 events as submitted. Events program commenced.</p>
2.3	<b>Advocate for the retention and expansion of facilities and services</b>	2.3.1	Advocate for improved childcare, health care, aged care and social assistance facilities and services within the Shire.	<p>Preparing for Health Alliance meeting to bring together primary health and aged care and associated agencies in Narrandera Shire.</p> <p>EDM to meet with Dr Romeo who is unavailable until end of July 2019.</p> <p>Requested meeting with Dr and Mrs Romeo</p> <p>Meeting with Dr and Mrs Romeo held, and support expressed for Alliance meeting.</p> <p>Alliance meeting arranged for 29 November in Narrandera with representatives of agencies will discuss proposal for a Narrandera Health Alliance.</p> <p>Meeting arranged with Federal MP Sussan Ley and State MP Stephanie Cooke to discuss Health issues 29 November at 2pm</p> <p>Narrandera Health Advisory Group formed at meeting held on 29 November in Narrandera.</p> <p>Meeting with Minister Mark Coulton Thurs 13<sup>th</sup> Feb at which he advises that the MLHD has had its 'Pathway' GP trainee program approved.</p> <p>Meeting of Narrandera Health Advisory Group convened for 5 March to consider pilot Pathway program developed by MLHD.</p> <p>CEO of MLHD outlines Rural Generalist GP Training pilot that will provide doctors in GP practice and at hospitals in rural area of the MLHD.</p> <p>New Doctor commences at Dr Romeo's practice in May 2020 for 12 months.</p> <p>2 new Doctors to commence at Dr Romeo's Practice early in new financial year 2020 on long term contract.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Dr Sonia Volante has finished as at 26 October 20 with Dr Romeo Practice and she has left Narrandera and is practising in Canberra. She has vacated 19 Argyle st and a new Doctor at the Romeo practice, Dr Abdallah, is renting the house for \$150 per week for 6 months initially from commencement on 22 Dec 2020.</p> <p>Jill Ludford advises that a new VMO is commencing in Narrandera in 2021</p> <p>Narrandera Health Advisory Group in recess during Covid pandemic recognising the significant workload on all those in the health sector.</p> <p>NHAG holds first meeting on 2 Dec 2021 by zoom . Meetings in recess since start of Covid Pandemic in recognition of workload stress on health sector participants in NHAG. Next meeting scheduled for 4 March 2022</p> <p>NHAG met on 4 March by Zoom. Noting Mayor and GM have requested through Steph Cooke office a meeting with NSW Minister for Health to discuss local needs for a dialysis service.</p> <p>NHAG meeting scheduled for Friday 3 June by zoom</p> <p>Next NHAG meeting scheduled for 2 September subject to date confirmation</p> <p>NHAG meeting held on 2 September</p> <p>NHAG meeting scheduled for 2 December (zoom)</p> <p>Council has supported the Rural Doctors Network and CWA Scholarship program with \$3,000 for two Bush Bursaries. RDN advise that two students will be placed in Narrandera from 9<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023, one student is a trainee nurse and the other student doctor.</p> <p>Narrandera medical service is managing their placements and their accommodation</p>
		2.3.2	Ensure that facilities and services have the capacity to support 'aging in place'.	<p>Strategy included in Western Riverina REDS.</p> <p>Council considering at its March meeting the preferred quote to develop a concept plan for an Independent Living Village at 1.4 ha site at Cnr Crescent and Elwin Streets.</p> <p>Council accepts quote from Noel Thomson Architecture of Wagga Wagga.</p> <p>Prerequisite reports required by Noel Thomson include land survey, environmental report and geotechnical report. Qualified providers engaged and work in progress.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>All reports completed and provided to Noel Thomson. Concept plans (Draft) expected to be presented to seniors' group in July.</p> <p>3 Options of concept plan prepared by Noel Thomson are to be refined and together with a report presented to ELT on 11 August then to the seniors' group on 17 August prior to Council briefing and Council meeting on 18 August.</p> <p>Noel Thomson concept plans presented to ELT and referred back to architect to further develop alternative concepts for development of the subject land. It is expected that amended submission will be available for Council in October. Final drafts expected to be presented to ELT on 13 October and then to Council.</p> <p>Final drafts presented to Council briefing session by EDM and Noel Thomson architect. Proposals to be presented to seniors' group and to November Council with emphasis on marketing plan for Independent Living complex.</p> <p>Marketing Plan adopted by Council and invitations to provider organisations to provide Expressions of Interest in negotiating the purchase of land at Cnr Elwin and Crescent to develop an Independent Living Village were circulated on 18 January 2021 supported by metro, regional and local media with closing date for submissions being 26 February 2021.</p> <p>No Expressions of interest received but discussions continuing with possible interested parties. Meeting with seniors' group and surveys issued to members to determine preferred model.</p> <p>Meetings held with Argyle Housing CEO Wendy Middleton to discuss possible mixed housing model with independent living and affordable housing. Discussions commenced with recognised builder to work in conjunction with Argyle. Ongoing discussions.</p> <p>Further discussions with Anglicare as a possible interested developer of a mixed housing complex on Elwin/Crescent Streets site.</p> <p>Discussions with QPL real estate about making an approach to a developer to determine if they might be interested in a proposal to develop land at Cnr and Elwin to meet Independent Living Village requirements with a possible mixed development approach.</p> <p>Ongoing discussions with Argyle Housing through their chief Properties Officer Justin Nyholm. Provision of current residential leasing figures and home sales figures to Justin</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				EDM met with Argyle Housing CEO and Board in Griffith 27 September at AGM function for stakeholders and clients. Argyle Housing CEO still interested in assessing Elwin/Crescent Street site for suitable development although there have been significant personnel changes at Argyle which may slow any progress for this.
		2.3.3	Explore options / advocate for improved education outcomes within the Shire, including the re-opening of the Grong Grong Public School (if warranted), and the redevelopment of the TAFE campus as a ONE TAFE Flexible Learning Centre.	The Grong Grong School Building was sold in 2017.
2.4	Encourage and support opportunities for community development	2.4.1	Explore opportunities for providing information, activities and programs that will help new residents and people on temporary work visas assimilate into the community.	Liaise with RDA skilled migration unit. EDM attended multicultural meeting in Leeton with all relevant agencies present to evaluate what services might be available to Narrandera residents as an outreach service. Focus on migrants and refugees. PIC piggeries apply for Labour agreement for skilled piggery workers that could see as many as 40 workers over the 5year period of the agreement with 19 potential permanent residents in years 4 and 5 of the agreement.
		2.4.2	Continue to support activities (eg events, sport, creative arts etc) that encourage engagement and social inclusion and build pride in, and commitment to, the local community.	Easter Rod Run and Shown N Shine a huge success. Council de-brief held with external group debrief to follow. Corona Virus response advocated by Federal Government and Senior Health Officials includes avoiding gatherings in excess of 500 people. This will impact proposed events such as Folk Festival on 20-22 March and Rod Run Events on 11-12 April. These events have been cancelled. Meeting held with Ray and Steve Aldrick late 2020 and confirmed that the Rod Run will be held at Easter 2021 under closely managed arrangements to satisfy any Covid restrictions in place at the time. Show and Shine to be conducted at the Sports Ground on Easter Sunday. Successful Show and Shine event. New Events and Visitor Services Team Leader Brenda Hartmire commences at VIC in June. EOIs invited from community to participate in the NSW Governments Community Events program see item 2.2.3

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				Submission made to Community Events Program. Awaiting approval as at 31 July Funding approved for all 10 CEP events Program progressing with 3 events completed as at 30 November 2022
		2.4.3	Support community initiatives to develop, grow and enhance the liveability of the Shire.	ED Dept. continues to contribute to preparation of funding applications such as Stronger Country Communities, Fixing Country Roads Regional Growth Fund etc. Narrandera Imperials Football Netball Club has been invited to apply for funds to build a new Club House through the NSW Government's Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund. ED staff have assisted with preparation of the Business Case and other requirements where needed.
2.5	Attract new residents	2.5.1	Develop and implement a Resident Attraction and Retention Strategy.	Winter Edition 2019 of Central West Lifestyle Magazine highlights opportunities in Narrandera for new residents. New promotional videos produced Narrandera is feature month in January 2021 for Country Change program with Facebook banner proclaiming 'Live the Dream in Narrandera'. Narrandera is feature month for Country Change in July 2021.

### Initiative 3: Economic Growth and Diversification

Economic growth will come through growing and strengthening existing economic activities and businesses, and attracting new businesses and investment.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
3.1	Encourage and nurture business start-ups	3.1.1	Provide access to information and business advisory services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information received from a variety of agencies eg: RDA, Business Connects, RDA, EDA, Regional Australia Institute and others disseminated to Narrandera Business database from time to time as received.</li> </ul>
		3.1.2	Assess feasibility of hosting business start-up events to link people with business ideas to business advisory and support services (eg Many Rivers, BEC etc).	Ongoing Hosting Small Business month October on 14 October 2021 at TAFE CLC in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group and TAFE-speakers and networking-eats/drinks. TAFE will be a financial contributor to this event if it can proceed-depends on Covid restrictions.



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Small Business Month October 2021 postponed by State Government until March 2022 when an event to be developed in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group and Narrandera TAFE CLC</p> <p>Successful conduct of Small Business Month events on March 10</p> <p>Successful conduct in partnership with Narrandera Business Group of two events for Small Business Month November 2022.</p>
3.2	Support and nurture existing businesses	3.2.1	Provide access to information, advice and leverage opportunities for information sharing.	<p>Distribute information cards for NSW Business Connect eg through Business Group and at NSC front counter</p> <p>Refer public enquiries to Remplan Community and Economic profile</p> <p>Electronically distribute via group emails to local business, advice on Corona Virus support programs from AusIndustry, Business NSW, RDA, EDA and others.</p> <p>Continuing distribution electronically of business advice and programs received from various agencies.</p>
		3.2.2	Encourage and support 'buy local' initiatives.	<p>Installation of new RVM at Narrandera Landfill will provide vouchers redeemable at Coles Narrandera.</p> <p>Last 3 weeks data from RVM as follows:</p> <p>Week ended 5/4 \$1496.90</p> <p>Week ended 12/4 \$1367.60</p> <p>Week ended 19/4 \$2649.20#</p> <p>Total voucher redemptions in May as advised by Coles is \$17,500(over 5 weeks)</p> <p>This is increased spending at Coles by locals thereby contributing to local employment and minimising shopper bleed to Leeton etc.</p> <p>Total voucher redemptions in June total \$12,500 (over 4 weeks)</p> <p>Total voucher redemptions in July total \$12,522 (over 4 weeks)</p> <p>Total Voucher redemptions for August total \$15,081(over 5 weeks)</p> <p>CEO of Tomra advises that as at September 2020 over 1,100,000 containers deposited in Narrandera RVM (approx. 35,000 per week)</p> <p>Total voucher redemptions for September \$13,178.80 (4 weeks)</p> <p>Total Voucher redemptions for October, November and December 2020 are \$13,983, \$19,439, and \$16,804 respectively.</p> <p>RVM total voucher redemptions for January 2021 are \$23,480 (5 weeks)</p> <p>RVM total voucher redemptions for February 2021 are \$18,593 (4 weeks)</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>RVM voucher redemptions for March 2021 are \$14,799 (4 weeks)</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for April 2021 are \$16,255 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for May 2021 are \$15,294 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for June 2021 are \$15,983 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for July 2021 are \$13,025 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for August 2021 are \$9,348 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for September 2021 are \$20,402 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for October 2021 are \$16,499 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for November 2021 are \$15,126 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for December 2021 are \$23,663 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher Redemptions for January 2022 are \$21,594 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher Redemptions February 2022 are \$17,053 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for March 2022 are \$18,613 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for April 2022 are \$18,394 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for May 2022 are \$16,708 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for June are \$15,132 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for July are \$16,590 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for August are \$14,426 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for September 22 are \$14,960 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for October 22 are \$20,006 over 5 weeks</p> <p>Licence renewed with TOMRA Cleanaway with licence fee payable by Tomra negotiated at \$5,200 per annum with CPI increase after second year, until January 2027.</p> <p>Assist with advice to Mayor on controversial issue of Marketplace in Wagga Wagga seeking to provide free bus from Narrandera to their shopping complex and provision of gifts, vouchers etc. to shoppers from Narrandera. Temora, Cootamundra, and Tumut also targeted.</p> <p>Lobbying by the Mayors stops this potentially very negative impact on our retailers in Narrandera and similarly in the other towns.</p> <p>Early 2020 investigate 'Why leave Town Promotions' Community Gift Card program in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group.</p> <p>Join COSBOA Facebook group to access campaign digital content and supporter material and toolkit for a Government supported "Go Local First" campaign-no cost to Council. This complements the Narrandera 'Buy Local' initiative.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				Tiffany to attend 9 December Narrandera Business Group meeting to again discuss Why Leave Town Gift Card initiative as a 'buy local' initiative. Official opening by Mayor of new IGA supermarket postponed because of Covid lockdown. Supermarket is open to the public effective 18 August
		3.2.3	Raise awareness of business advisory and support services and encourage businesses to participate in business and skills development programs.	ED maintains a business distribution list and uses it to share information re opportunities for businesses in the Shire. Small Business Month October activities and facilitate BEC Skills for Business Success Workshops. Advise business database of series of short courses available at TAFE at no cost to people who enrol. Circulate business recovery material from various government agencies to local business database as received. Ongoing
		3.2.4	Facilitate opportunities for professional development, networking and innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site at landfill confirmed as suitable for 4- point RVM kiosk. Site plans prepared and execution of licence agreement with Tomra/Cleanaway completed by Council. Site plans and construction plan and power supply design commenced.</li> <li>Partnership with Tomra/Cleanaway and Council to mount a display in the Exhibition Hall at Narrandera Show on 7 September. This display will inform the public of the operational and container deposit requirements for the RVM.</li> <li>CEO of Tomra/Cleanaway to attend and address a business breakfast on 6 September. Joint venture Council and Narrandera Business Group.</li> <li>CEO of TOMRA/Cleanaway addresses a business breakfast with 34 in attendance on 6 September.</li> <li>TOMRA/Cleanaway and Council join to manage a stand at Narrandera Show with information on the Return and Earn program and the RVM.</li> <li>Preparation of site progressing at Narrandera Landfill entrance to accommodate the RVM.</li> <li>Actively promote Small Business Month October activities for professional development, networking and business tips.</li> <li>RVM scheduled for installation on 25 Feb 2020.</li> <li>RVM installed and operational with generator power on 28 Feb 2020 with solid use over first weekend.</li> </ul>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EDM and Marketing Tourism and ED Coordinator attend webinars by Economic Development Australia, Treasury on Covid 19 business support and recovery strategies</li> <li>Partner with Riverina Murray Business (BEC) and NRG for networking event to be held at TAFE CLC on 9 December.</li> <li>Event successfully held at Gallery room at Arts and Community centre</li> <li>March 10 SBM events</li> <li>Council's Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator Toneale O'Connell attends intense one week course with Economic Development Australia 29/8 to 2/9.-</li> </ul>
		3.2.5	Identify training programs and resources available on-line from Government Agencies and training providers and provide links to these from the Economic Development page of Council's website.	Local Government NSW sponsors Inclusive Tourism: Economic Opportunities. A new online learning course now available to explain how you can better service this market. VIC staff to undertake.
		3.2.6	Raise the profile of local businesses by providing opportunities to showcase, market and promote businesses products and services.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Narrandera to feature in November 2019 Country Change program.</p> <p>In response to Covid 19 challenges to all business the Ed team through Tiffany Thornton has developed an online strategy through Facebook that at last report (July) had over 700 followers.</p> <p>Recurring opportunity provided through the Easter Rod Run Events.</p> <p>Circulate information from Geoff Reardon Manger ICN Southern Region on opportunities arising from proposed construction works for Energy Connect project.</p> <p>Narrandera Business Group staging an event early 2023 as part of the CEP program-Bonanza in Narrandera</p>
		3.2.7	Encourage businesses to list on relevant industry data bases and websites and participate in programs such as trade missions.	As advised to NRG
		3.2.8	Encourage and assist local businesses to register on Federal, State and Council procurement data bases.	<p>Developing relationship with Klaus Baumgartel, Regional Manager for Industry Capability Network to assist local industry connect with procurement data bases. Klaus to make contact with Uarah Fisheries and solar power companies considering locating in Narrandera Shire.</p> <p>Klaus Baumgartel has retired, and his replacement is Geoff Reardon.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				Circulate advice from Geoff Reardon to local business database about registration of EOIs for provision of goods and services to Energy Connect project.
		3.2.9	Work with major project proponents to identify the goods and services required and provide introductions to local businesses.	<p>Database provided to Siemens/Gamesa the EPC for Avonlie Solar at Sandigo. Siemens Gamesa provide direct email contact address for expressions of interest from businesses wanting to register to provide their services to solar farm construction.</p> <p>Beon Energy takeover construction of Avonlie from Siemens Gamesa to be finalised before end of 2019.</p> <p>As at 18 Feb 2020 information received which points to delay in Avonlie project which is unlikely to commence before May/June as a result of grid capacity constraints. Confirmed by Mike Whitbread of RES.</p> <p>As at May 2020 RES advises that Siemens/Gamesa is confirmed as their EPC and Accommodation and Employment Strategy finalised for sign-off by the Department.</p> <p>As at July 2020 Siemens /Gamesa withdraws from Australia and therefore from Avonlie project. RES to appoint new EPC and advise Council in due course.</p> <p>Register via ICN for opportunities associated with the Energy Connect project-new transmission line from South Australia to Wagga Wagga.</p> <p>Ongoing contact with Regional Manager of ICN Mr Geoff Reardon in relation to industry development in Narrandera. Provided Geoff with contact details for Bhullar and Mod Pod Homes.</p> <p>Opportunities at Avonlie solar farm promoted through the NSW Industry Capability Network (ICN)</p>
		3.2.10	Encourage and assist businesses to prepare for the NBN and embrace digital / on-line business and marketing opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local businesses were offered the opportunity to attend Digital Ready Course and free face to face merchandising consult during 2017.</li> <li>GM provide report on meeting with NBN.</li> <li>Met with Field Solutions personnel together with NSC IT personnel to discuss range of their alternative telecommunications and digital services.</li> <li>Partner with BEC Small Business Advisory Service to present a Digital and Online Marketing workshop on 6 December.</li> <li>NSC and Narrandera Business Group sponsor the BEC Social Media Masterclass on 28 October with approx. 25 attending at TAFE CLC.</li> </ul>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Mark Wilkie to discuss future meeting of Digital Economy Group.</li> <li>Work with RAMJO to participate in Regional Connectivity program to improve online data capabilities.</li> <li>Arrange meeting with NBN new development team to include DGMI and other relevant staff. Preliminary arrangements for a business forum after Easter 2022.</li> <li>Date for NBN Business Forum to be advised by Sean O'Reilly of NBN</li> <li>Business Information session 17 August at Exies 2pm-5pm and 6pm-8pm</li> <li>Information session presented by NBN representatives with very poor attendance.</li> </ul>
		3.2.11	Facilitate access by business and community groups to funding programs.	<p>A data base of funding programs is maintained and provided to community groups. Media releases and funding program announcements emailed to business group database.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Community Events program publicly advertised.</p>
3.3	Strengthen and grow key sectors	3.3.1	<b>Agriculture and Agri Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a producer data base and establish networks and communication channels.</li> </ul>	<p>Sandigo Solar farm.</p> <p>2018-01-30 – Developers have met with Council on the proposal. Sandigo or Avonlie Solar project, an initiative of Renewable Energy Systems (RES), was explained during community consultation sessions. RES has proposed a \$250,000 community fund component as one of its initiatives. This proposal is currently being reviewed by staff. Avonlie scheduled to provide notice to proceed in March 2019 with commercial operation May 2020. Avonlie awarded Development Consent on 8 August 2019.</p> <p>Council representatives meet with Jacobs Consulting appointed by Siemens/Gamesa, the EPC for Avonlie Solar, to review the Accommodation and Employment Strategy. Updates strategy presented for review to solar reference group.</p> <p>Accommodation and Employment Strategy reviewed and completed.</p> <p>Avonlie development now not expected to commence until H1 2021 as EPC Siemens Games has withdrawn from Australian projects and therefore RES need to appoint a new EPC (solar farm builder).</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>As at September 2021 commencement of construction of "Avonlie" Solar farm is believed to be imminent.</p> <p>As at 29 September RES advises that it has sold its interest in the Avonlie Solar farm to Iberdrola which operates one of the largest portfolios of renewable energy assets in Australia. Iberdrola senior management has already made contact with the General Manager.</p> <p>Beon Energy Solutions appointed as EPC to commence construction in March 2022 and recruitment program underway as at February 2022</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to advocate for water security.</li> </ul>		<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Lake Coolah placed on agenda for Western Riverina REDS update</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage and support adoption of new activities and technologies, sustainable land management practices, and innovative business models.</li> </ul>		<p>EV fast charger installed January 2019</p> <p>Negotiate sale of Council land on the Red Hill Industrial Estate for a leading-edge digital technology development.</p> <p>Contacts negotiated and exchanged for sale of 28 ha of land on the Northern extremity of the Industrial Estate.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for and assist producers to develop strategies to address labour and skills shortages and develop the local workforce.</li> </ul>		<p>EDM attended Workforce Futures Forum presented by RDA Riverina in Griffith on 10 May.</p> <p>Piggery Forum held in Narrandera addressed by industry experts on 30 August. 45 people present.</p> <p>Explore possible opportunities for the pig industry resulting from the African Swine Fever sweeping China and other Asian countries.</p> <p>Advice received from DPI International Engagement Division that Australia does not have a pork export arrangement with China.</p> <p>PIC Australia apply for Pork Industry labour Agreement for Grong Grong Piggery. Letter of support provided.</p> <p>EDM to participate in focus group on 9 October for CSU Research project being Riverina Skills Audit.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities for and encourage development of new processing and value-adding opportunities and utilisation of waste products.</li> </ul>		<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Enquiry from investor about establishing pig abattoir on Red Hill Industrial Estate. Investor provided with development guidelines.</p>
		3.3.2	<b>Aquaculture</b>	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the expansion of the aquaculture industry within the Shire.</li> </ul>	<p>Preliminary discussions held with Uarah Fisheries on Old Wagga Rd. Dr John Yu. He is planning expansion at the fishery estimated to cost \$2.5 million.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Arranged for Wayne Murphy, Export Adviser to contact John Yu. Also arranged for Klaus Baumgartel of ICN to contact Dr Yu to offer him assistance with his expansion planning. Advised possible sources of funding. Uarah advises late May that DA is imminent.</p> <p>Assist Dr Yu with information on how to source an apprentice in aquaculture.</p> <p>14 Jan 2021 Dr Yu submits Development Application for large shed at Uarah Fisheries.</p> <p>DA approved and consent issued to applicant. April 26 2021.</p> <p>EDM Assisted Uarah Fisheries to obtain Government Funding support through the Regional Job Creation Fund to the value of \$140,000 to expand activity at the fishery.</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build skills and knowledge about the industry within Council and the local community.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the possibility of positioning the Narrandera Fisheries Research Centre as a Centre of Excellence for the Murray Cod industry.</li> </ul>	<p>Under consideration</p> <p>Meet with Manager Narrandera Fisheries and establish partnership arrangement for development of large inland fish aquarium at proposed Narrandera Destination and Discovery Hub.</p> <p>Murray cod to feature on stage 2 mural for Narrandera water tower. Completion of the mural delayed as a result of Covid restrictions.</p> <p>Narrandera Fisheries selected as safe facility to relocate distressed Murray Cod and other species transferred from other environments under stress as a result of the drought.</p> <p>Centrepiece aquarium planned for new Destination &amp; Discovery Hub to feature endemic varieties from the Murrumbidgee River including cod. This is a promotional feature to draw attention to the Narrandera Fisheries as a Centre of Excellence and tourist attraction.</p>
		3.3.3	<b>Retail &amp; Wholesale</b>	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position and promote Narrandera as a lifestyle centre.</li> </ul>	<p>Central West Lifestyle Magazine Winter Edition launched on 24 May 2019 and targeted distribution by Council to strategic individuals and organisations commenced.</p> <p>Reserved 12 pages dedicated to Narrandera in Collector's Edition no. 2 of Regional Lifestyle Magazine. \$4500. Free one page advert and 20</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				complimentary issues for Council. To be circulated October. 6000 copies to be printed. Estimated readership 25,000 to 30,000. One page advertisement featuring Lake Talbot Water Park and Water Tower Murals prepared and lodged with Regional Lifestyle magazine. Due for publication in October 2021. Special feature on Narrandera appears in Collector's Edition of Regional Lifestyle Magazine October 2021. Narrandera feature in Autumn 2022 Country Change Magazine. Ongoing through marketing program across various publications
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage and facilitate training (customer service, merchandise display, e.commerce etc)</li> </ul>	Ongoing
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage development of and participation in cooperative marketing and promotional campaigns.</li> </ul>	Invited Griffith, Leeton and Lockhart to send brochures with staff to Adelaide for Caravan and Camping Expo. New Country Change promotion by RDA is imminent. Country Change program launched by RDA. Enrolled in Country change for 2020. Country Change magazine launched by Deputy PM in September 2020 Country Change participant for 2021. Narrandera as feature location January 2021. Narrandera Koalas and lifestyle issues to feature in Whatsup Downunder documentary filmed in Narrandera on 22 April.
		3.3.4	<b>Tourism / Visitor Economy</b>	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop products, experiences and activities, including events.</li> </ul>	Ongoing Tourism team organising pop-up drive-in cinema experience for 3 October with good early registrations. At Henry Mathieson Oval. 120 vehicles registered to comprise a full house. Successful movie event as reported. REA Wagga Horse Trials conducted in Narrandera weekend 24/25 October with very positive feedback. Possible future development of this event in Narrandera is being researched by events team. Communication from Emily of Wagga Horse Trials 13 Jan 2021 indicated desire to stage next major event in Narrandera in August 2021 and in subsequent years. Events and Tourism team to make contact and facilitate arrangements between Narrandera Pony Club and the Wagga Horse Trials

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>people. Pony Club representative indicates that are happy to host the Wagga Horse Trials event in August 2021.</p> <p>EDM and team finalise artwork with Apparition Media for stage 2 mural on the water tower and schedule the artwork for 23 August following completion of remedial paintwork to the water tower in June. Painting of the mural delayed indefinitely due to Covid restrictions.</p> <p>Painting rescheduled for around end of January 2022</p> <p>Apparition media commence the third artwork on 31 Jan 2022 and complete the impressive mural in 4 days.</p> <p>Funding application made to the Regional Tourism Activation Fund to establish formal mountain bike trails on Rocky Waterholes Crown lands precinct. Expecting an announcement in November</p> <p>As at February 2022 it appears that the application has been unsuccessful</p> <p>Discuss Koala Research Centre proposal with Tourism Team and arrange to attend Koala Committee meeting to discuss the proposal on 3 November</p> <p>Attend Koala Committee and update the committee on Council's decision to facilitate the establishment of a Koala Research centre in Narrandera. As at February 2022 negotiations underway and continuing with Charles Sturt University School of vet Science to progress the Research Centre idea.</p> <p>Two DPIE funded film nights on 10 and 11 April at Sports ground free event and free activities.</p> <p>Team from NSW Parks and Wildlife Koala Biodiversity and Ecological Health Branch visit Narrandera in June and over several days to conduct extensive field research and detailed health screening of 18 Koalas. Health indicators and population indicators excellent. Full results available in September.</p> <p>NSW Parks and Wildlife Team booked to present preliminary findings of research to October 18 Council meeting.</p> <p>NSW Parks and Wildlife present preliminary findings to October Council briefing. Power Point Presentations received and will be presented to Koala Regeneration Committee by Events and Visitor Services Team Leader Brenda.</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to improve infrastructure, facilities and services for visitors</li> </ul>	<p>Awaiting outcome of 'Playground on the Murrumbidgee' funding application under NSW funding program.</p> <p>Funding of \$8 million approved by NSW State Government</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>VIC closed during health emergency</p> <p>VIC reopens to public on 1 June 2020</p> <p>Positive feedback from participants in REA Equestrian competition held in Narrandera on 24/25 October. Future development of this event being explored by events team.</p> <p>Wagga REA Horse Trials stage successful event on as a CEP funded event over 20/21 August.</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update and improve information and promotional collateral.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Purchased promotional backpacks for insertion of information on Narrandera supported by vouchers redeemable at local businesses. Backpacks to be distributed F.O.C from time to time by V.I.C. staff to visiting caravanners and campers at Brewery Flats. Survey box to be installed on amenities block at Brewery Flats for survey collection.</li> <li>Survey Box installed and positive responses being received. Data collected will be advised to the Taskforce in due course</li> <li>New Riverina Touring Map published featuring 12 LGAs in the greater Riverina</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively market and promote the Shire, including implementing the branding strategy and expanding the Shire's on-line presence and capitalising on digital and social media opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Joint promotion between Narrandera, Murrumbidgee, Lockhart and Leeton to utilise digital capacity to develop a state-of-the-art visitors guide for the sub region</li> <li>Plan new banners/flags at Airport terminal as a branding exercise</li> <li>Distinctive painted images promoting Narrandera on side curtains of Hayllars semi-trailer.</li> <li>Regular Newsletters prepared and distributed throughout the close down of Narrandera Argus prior to it changing hands. Newsletters continuing to be prepared and distributed by Communications Officer</li> <li>ongoing</li> </ul>
		3.3.5	<p><b>Transport and Logistics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage off Narrandera's strategic location to position and develop the Shire as a road transport hub.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Discussions with Janus Electrics GM on the desirability of establishing Narrandera as a changeover hub for batteries for electric trucks. To be addressed in stage 2 or 3 of Janus Electrics strategy.</li> <li>Accept invitation from Janus to attend a showcase event in Sydney on 5 April.</li> </ul>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EDM attended the Janus Showcase and met with Managing Director Lex Forsyth &amp; other executives to promote the case for Narrandera to be an ideal battery changeover location also a location for truck conversions from diesel to battery(electric).</li> </ul>
		3.3.6	<b>Health Care &amp; Social Assistance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for continued improvements in health, aged care and social assistance services, programs and facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate with local health sector agencies to seek support for program initiated by the Gwydir Health Alliance. Proposal is to convene a meeting in Narrandera to form a local health alliance. Little indication of support and limited response to petition aimed at bringing shortages of rural doctors to the attention of Government.</li> <li>Plan for Health Alliance meeting after Easter 2019 break. Meet with Dr Romeo, obtain feedback from RAMJO Health Group to prepare for possible meeting in June/July.</li> <li>Meeting with Dr Romeo and Liz completed.</li> <li>Health Alliance meeting planned for 29 November in Narrandera</li> <li>Narrandera Health Advisory Group (NHAG) established on 29 November 2019.</li> <li>NHAG meeting on 5 March to consider pilot Pathway program developed by MLHD and approved by Government.</li> <li>CEO of MLHD outlines program that will provide more trainee Generalist Pathway trainee doctors into local health system as GPs and at the hospital</li> <li>New GP commencing in Narrandera at Dr Romeo's practice on 9 May 2020. Dr Sonia Volante is coming from another NSW rural location and is independent of the MLHD Generalist Pathway program.</li> <li>Dr Volante has left Dr Romeo practice as at 26 October 2020.</li> <li>Dr Abdallah has commenced with Dr Romeo Practice as at 22 December 2020 and is occupying 19 Argyle St as tenant at \$150/week with Council subsidy \$100 per week (market rent \$250 per week)</li> <li>Mayor lobbying for provision of a dialysis facility in Narrandera</li> <li>Council supports the Rural Doctors' Network and CWA Program for Bush Bursaries in 2022 by providing \$3,000+GST for two bush bursaries for student medical(nursing) students.</li> </ul>
3.4	Target and attract new businesses and activities	3.4.1	Investigate possible investment attraction incentives and formulate an Economic Development Assistance Policy that	<p>Policy ES 270 under review and going to ELT Jan 2021. Investigating new subdivision potential for Paterson Place in Red Hill Industrial Estate.</p> <p>POL ES 270 to new number POL 048 endorsed by Council for public exhibition. Exhibition period concludes 26 April 2021. Policy now in the policy register.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions	Progress
		articulates the support that Council can offer new businesses and investors.	<p>New Small Business Incentive Scheme adopted by Council and operational as Policy POL 010.</p> <p>EDM attends Direct Foreign Investment Training in Sydney presented by Andreas Dressler an international identity, formerly with KPMG for 23 years, who has extensive experience representing countries and large corporations seeking foreign investment opportunities. Arranged by DPC.</p> <p>Council provides response to EOI request from Australian Airline Pilot Academy and Rex Group for extended flying school academy. Narrandera/Leeton Airport facility submitted as ideal location in extensive proposal.</p> <p>Council representatives meet with senior Rex and AAPA officials on 27 Feb in Sydney. Strong indication that Narrandera will be selected as a training campus with facility development to occur at the airport.</p> <p>AS at April 16 CEO of AAPA planning visit to Narrandera in near future as a requirement to provide information to CASA authorising AAPA use of facilities at the airport.</p> <p>2 May inspect airport house with AAPA senior representatives Andrew Messer Head of Operations at Ballarat and Geoff Cook head of Operation at Wagga Wagga. Discuss other aspects of airport for AAPA use.</p> <p>15 May arrange zoom meeting with above AAPA representatives with key users Craig day from Aero Club and Steve Burgess of Millbrae Quarries. Craig Day provides AAPA with aerial map of South Western training area at Narrandera.</p> <p>Airport residence lease signed by AAPA and they take possession on 1 June. Awaiting confirmation of media opportunity for announcement of AAPA use of the residence as a briefing facility. AAPA awaiting CASA confirmation of arrangements.</p> <p>July 2020 CASA formally approves use of airport facilities and Narrandera airspace by AAPA. AAPA have commissioned construction and installation of a sign at front of airport residence. This will provide a media opportunity with AAPA involvement.</p> <p>AAPA sign completed and installed in front of airport residence now promoted as "AAPA Briefing centre-Narrandera Campus" Awaiting advice from AAPA as to a mutually convenient date for a media event.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>AAPA briefing centre officially opened with Chris Hine CEO of AAPA and Mayor Kschenka and Mayor Maytom of Leeton. Extensive and positive media exposure for this event</p> <p>Small Business Incentive Policy prepared and presented to Council for adoption and public exhibition. Policy 010 refers.</p> <p>5 blocks of industrial land on Red Hill Estate in process of sale to various business developers. New businesses expected to be developed include a truck depot, an apiary business, a storage facility for large recreational vehicles, a modular home construction business, a milling facility for modular homes construction.</p> <p>3 blocks on RH Estate have proceeded to settlement. One large site contracts exchanged for modular home factory. One large 7ha site draft plan of subdivision prepared,, contracts signed, deposit paid, awaiting exchange. Negotiated sale of 28 ha of land on RH Industrial Estate for leading edge digital technology development, remaining 2ha sold for small scale solar farm. Red Hill Estate sold out.</p>
		3.4.2	Produce information and promotional collateral – in both digital and print formats.	See above – collateral: Industry Prospectus, Redhill Prospectus, Lifestyle Insert, 4 Redhill Videos, billboard sign, Land For Sale signs.
		3.4.3	Participate in forums, expos, trade missions etc that have the potential to bring new businesses / investment into the Shire.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>EDM attends Direct Foreign Investment training in Sydney in March organised by DPC. Program emphasises the importance of thoroughly developing and communicating Narrandera's value proposition.</p> <p>Local forum organised July 2019 for hospitality/accommodation sector to exchange information and learn of assistance available through Destination NSW to attract conferences to Narrandera.</p> <p>Facilitated Bee Forum 17/7/19. Ref 1.2.1</p> <p>Participated in Service NSW Regional Engagement Forum August 2019</p> <p>Participated in Ernst Young Inland Rail Regional Opportunities Forum 12 August.</p> <p>Participated in Dept of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development Forum at Wagga Wagga on 9 Oct 2019 on Inland Rail—Inland Rail Interface Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Attend National Renewables in Agriculture Conference and Expo 14 Nov 19</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Attending Janus Electrics Showcase in Sydney on April 5<sup>th</sup>-Electric truck technology-battery changeover and conversions.  Attended Showcase ref 3.3.5</p>
		3.4.4	Explore opportunities to leverage off Council's Sister City programs.	<p>Current relationship with Urumqi is problematic given ongoing serious ethnic unrest in that city and its region, Xinjiang.  As at November no response to August 2018 Communication to Chinese Ambassador seeking support for relationship with Urumqi.  Feb 2019 still no communications from Chinese Ambassador  Current diplomatic relations and trade relations with China are likely to preclude any further relationship with the Peoples Republic of China for continuance of a sister city relationship.  Redundant</p>
		3.4.5	<p>Investigate the potential of emerging / new activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government and service sector</li> <li>• Intensive agriculture</li> <li>• Niche / boutique agriculture and agri-businesses</li> <li>• Manufacturing – value-adding and processing</li> <li>• Renewable energy and use of waste products</li> </ul>	<p>Opportunities discussed to capitalise on the Smart Cities funding program, in particular the opportunity to develop projects around the renewable energy, solar farm developments planned for Narrandera Shire.  Ongoing development with 3 renewable energy companies developing major solar farms in the Shire.  Wrote to Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) to seek opportunity to discuss Narrandera's unique position in the Renewables development in Australia i.e., 3 Solar Farms and TransGrid duplication of 330KV line S.A to NSW. As at 19 June 2019.  ARENA response from Alison Wiltshire, Director Business Development by phone 12/7/19 advising that this is not an issue for ARENA and we should contact Clean Energy Council and possibly Minister Taylor.  Contact made with Clean Energy Council and Meeting arranged with key personnel.  Met with CEC representatives in Melbourne (see separate report).  Attended Renewables in Agriculture National Conference in Wagga wagga and obtained valuable information and made useful contacts with experts from the renewable energy sector,  Arranging teleconference with Jessica Berry of Pitt and Sherry to assess solar farm development opportunities on Council land.  Recent purchase of lots 163 and 164 Driscoll Road to accommodate an industrial development involving road construction materials manufacture with</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>site construction expected to commence early 2021 and up to 13 employees over time.</p> <p>Lot 169 Driscoll Road sold to owner of two adjoining lots. Under contract. Sale of lot 169 settled.</p> <p>New enquiry for industrial process on lot 12 Driscoll Road (1.98 ha). Power availability being researched through Essential Energy.</p> <p>Discussions held with Geoff Reardon on potential business opportunities around solar farm construction in the Shire-eg waste disposal associated with solar components packaging.</p> <p>New developments in manufacturing with two new industries planned for the Red Hill Industrial Estate. 2 new renewable energy developments to be developed on Red Hill Industrial Estate over total 30ha area.</p>
		3.4.6	Market the Shire's strengths, assets and opportunities.	See above. Also, recent launch of new Visitor Information Booklet. ongoing

#### Initiative 4: Planning for the Economy of the Future

Economic development is dependent upon having suitable land and premises and utility and transport infrastructure to accommodate and facilitate growth as well as access to a work force. The focus will be on ensuring that these 'foundation blocks' are in place.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
Land & Premises				
4.1	Ensure sufficient supply of land and premises to facilitate and support growth	4.1.1	Annually review land use plans and strategies to ensure sufficient land is zoned to accommodate growth for industrial and residential activities.	<p>Reviewed 2017</p> <p>Ref 3.4. Investigating an overlay plan for Paterson Place to provide for future subdivision to provide small to medium industrial zoned land for sale. 10,000 sq metres of land being part lot 12 Driscoll Road sold by agents QPL for trucking depot. Endorsed by Council with conditions.</p> <p>6000 square metres of land sold on Cnr Driscoll Rd and Paterson Place for large vehicle (Caravans/motor homes) storage. Endorsed by Council with conditions.</p> <p>DAs approved for subdivision to provide the above two parcels of land. Contracts exchanged in both sales. Awaiting roadworks, K&amp;G and land clearing to commence in Driscoll Rd. Western end.</p>

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Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Future subdivision plans for Red Hill Industrial Estate being reviewed to accommodate increasing enquiry.</p> <p>Continuing interest in Red Hill Industrial Estate as at February 2022 will necessitate the identification of further land for zoning and subdivision for industrial purposes.</p> <p>Investigations proceeding to identify further land suitable for industrial zoning and residential zoning. DGMI pursuing this.</p>
		4.1.2	Investigate the need for a light industrial / business park land and/or premises in Narrandera, and if needed, encourage owners of vacant and/or underutilised land in the Narrandera West (Leeton Road) and Pine Hill Industrial Estates to bring this land into production (subdivision, sale, lease or development).	<p>To be reviewed.</p> <p>As at September 2020 review opportunity to subdivide some small/medium sized lots in Red Hill Industrial Estate to be made available to small to medium enterprises. Presently only one subdivided lot available for sale.</p> <p>See 4.1.1 The need has now arisen to identify potential future land suitable for industrial zoning and subdivision.</p> <p>Under investigation by DGMI</p> <p>Narrandera Local Housing &amp; Employment Zone Land Strategy on exhibition.</p>
4.2	Facilitate further development of the Red Hill Industrial Estate	4.2.1	Retain general / heavy industry zoning and preserve buffer areas around the Estate.	<p>Buffers are noted as an important selling point in our Redhill Marketing and Communications Strategy.</p> <p>Current offer to purchase lot 169 Driscoll Rd to be communicated to ELT and then to Council at 21 July meeting</p> <p>Offer to purchase lot 169 Driscoll Rd accepted by Council and contracts prepared and provided to purchaser's solicitors. Contracts exchanged and deposit paid.</p> <p>Sale settled</p> <p>Ref 3.4 and 4.1.1</p> <p>Red Hill industrial Estate Council land sold out. Only 7 ha approx. of privately owned land for sale.</p> <p>Narrandera Local Housing and Employment Zone Land Strategy on exhibition.</p>
		4.2.2	Develop a sales policy for Council-owned land in the Estate that provides incentives for developers, fosters a quick development timeline, and discourages land banking.	<p>Under consideration</p> <p>To be addressed in update of Policy ES 270 currently under review.</p> <p>New Policy POL048 submitted to March 2021 Council meeting. Endorsed for public exhibition which ends on 26 April. Policy now in the register.</p> <p>Draft Business Incentive Policy developed and presented to ELT and then to Council in July with amendments.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				Ref. 3.4.1. New Small Business Incentive Policy adopted by Council and submitted for public exhibition POL 010. Policy now fully endorsed and accessible on Councils online policy register. <b>Achieved</b>
		4.2.3	Formulate and implement a marketing plan for the Estate that includes quality promotional material and supporting information, as well as conceptual subdivision layouts and servicing plans.	Current. See earlier comments. New bright 'for sale' signs and 3mx2m billboard erected on Red Hill Industrial Estate. Gateway entrance poles and banners installed. Promotional flyer provided to real estate agents who have listed Red Hill Industrial Estate for sale. Industrial Estate sold out
		4.2.4	Organise famils of the Estate (and Narrandera) for regional development agency (eg RDA, Industry NSW, BEC) staff and regularly update these agencies regarding the availability of commercial and industrial land and premises within Narrandera.	Under consideration. Review the signage on the estate to reflect the current sales and availability of remaining land as at February 2022. Future tour of the Red Hill Industrial Estate when approx. 500meter new road constructed to enable access for new industries.
		4.2.5	Advocate for Government Funding to assist in providing enabling infrastructure to facilitate subdivision and development.	ED Dept contributed to successful submission re Truckwash under Fixing Country Truckwash Grant. Nothing currently available at NSW state level-enquiry through Dept of Regional Development.
4.3	Ensure that the power supply can accommodate growth	4.3.1	Advocate for on-going improvements in the power supply in Narrandera Shire.	Consideration being given as a component of the Smart Cities funding program. Power extension negotiated with Essential Energy to service proposed RVM at Landfill site. Power to site in progress. Low voltage completed. Investigations continuing to assess Red Hill Ind Estate as a location to develop a solar farm initiative. Power supply to Red Hill industrial estate to be upgraded in response to power needs of major new industry.
		4.3.2	Advocate for and assist local businesses access grant funds for 'last mile' infrastructure.	For consideration

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
		4.3.3	Support the development of renewable / green energy producers within the Shire.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Assessing Council land suitability for solar farm development.</p> <p>Various briefings by the proponents of the Haystack Solar Farm at Grong Grong known as solar gardening. Formation of a cooperative imminent and construction work expected to commence early 2021.</p> <p>Engaged in discussions with Reach Solar (David Webster) to examine mutually beneficial opportunities that may present through accessing the Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund (Federal) for Microgrids. Explore suitability of Red Hill Industrial Estate,</p> <p>Reach Solar not interested in involvement in Microgrid projects development</p> <p>Negotiations underway to finalise special condition in contract for for the sale of 28 ha of land on Red Hill Industrial Estate for a leading edge technology development also separate negotiations for sale of final 2ha as solar farm.</p> <p>Final 2 lots being 2ha and 28ha sold for development of renewable energy projects on the Red Hill Industrial Estate</p>
4.4	Improve telecommunications	4.4.1	Develop and implement a Digital Strategy in consultation with industry and community groups.	<p>Monitor development of National Digital Strategy for compatibility.</p> <p>National Digital Strategy released December 2018. Under review.</p>
4.5	Increase the capacity of the road network in the Shire to accommodate increased truck movements and higher productivity vehicles	4.5.1	Develop a Road Improvement Strategy, identifying strategically important production and freight routes within and through the Shire and the works required to remove 'pinch points' and expand capacity to accommodate HPVs.	<p>Flood-proofing of Sturt Hwy at Gillenbah included in Regional Economic Development Strategy for Western Riverina.</p> <p>Road improvement included in Council's submission for update of Western Riverina REDS</p>
		4.5.2	Advocate for the Shire's road needs to be included in regional and State freight and transport strategies.	<p>Refer Draft NSW Ports and Freight Plan and Western Riverina REDS.</p> <p>Submission made to the Dept of Regional NSW responsible for updating the Western Riverina Regional Economic Development Strategy</p>
		4.5.3	Advocate for and seek funding to upgrade and maintain strategically important roads.	<p>As above. Brought to attention of Federal Minister for Local Government the Hon Dr John McVeigh at a RAMROC Councils meeting held in Albury on 15 May</p>
4.6	Provide infrastructure and facilities to support the road transport sector.	4.6.1	Plan for improved infrastructure and/or facilities for trucks in Narrandera – Gillenbah and Barellan.	<p>Truckwash to be constructed at Redhill.</p> <p>DA now in the planning system.</p> <p>Construction commences June 2019</p> <p>Narrandera Stock and Bitumen Truckwash completed March 2020. Update industrial estate signage with Truckwash details.</p> <p>1ha of Industrial land on Red Hill Industrial Estate planned for truck depot.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				New Mobil service station is now open at Gillenbah.
4.7	Continue to improve rail infrastructure	4.7.1	Advocate for ongoing improvements to the Hay Branch line (Junee through to Griffith via Narrandera), taking the line from Class C to Class A to facilitate longer and heavier trains.	ARTC proposing to improve the line to accommodate 80ft flat top rolling stock with 25 tonne axle capacity to take 2x40ft containers. Govt allocates \$60 million for line improvements. New lines and upgrades being planned at Illabo/Stockinbingal as part of Inland Rail connectivity to other rail systems.
		4.7.2	As required, support rail and freight service providers secure 'paths' for rail freight from the Western Riverina.	Ongoing. Refer Western Riverina REDS. EDM and GM attend National Supply Chain Freight and Logistics Strategy Scenario Planning workshop in Griffith on 9 Oct. Meet with Hermione Parsons of Deakin University to discuss possibility of future alternative study for Narrandera if Lycopodium study unable to be used. Executive summary from Transport NSW received Feb 2019. Localised and independent freight demand study under consideration in partnership with Leeton and Griffith. Consultant engaged and work commenced.  Attend Port of Melbourne briefing on 15 April in Wagga. PoM announces \$300 million investment on Melbourne Port to bring 4 dual rail sidings onto the dock each to accommodate 600m trains that will be deconstructed from longer trains at outlying intermodals. This eliminates 'last mile' transfer costs from train to truck. Attend Inland Rail Forum in Wagga on 9 Oct-Details of Inland Rail Interface Improvement Program.
4.8	Plan for freight infrastructure to meet growing demand	4.8.1	Liaise with local producers (eg Agri Australis, Proten, Grants Sawmilling, Hutchins Bros Engineering) to determine likely future freight transport requirements.	Discussions with Paterson's Transport re local/regional freight task. Consider in context of Lycopodium report. Document remains confidential to Council. Participate in forums on Inland Rail presented by CSIRO and Ernst Young and Dept of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development. Highlight Narrandera's industries as potential freight sources.
		4.8.2	Advocate to have the Narrandera-Tocumwal rail corridor recognised as strategic infrastructure and protected and preserved for future use.	Finalised. 15 September 2020-Mayoral letter of support to Strathbogie Shire in Victoria supporting their proposal with other stakeholders to reopen the Tocumwal to Narrandera Rail Line to complement an intermodal facility under consideration at Mangalore VIC. Letter of support addresses Strathbogie's submission of an EOI to the Federal Government's Inland Rail Interface Improvement program



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>in a bid to gain funding for a business case for the conversion to standard gauge of the Goulburn Valley rail line between Mangalore Junction and Tocumwal and the refurbishment of the rail line between Tocumwal and Narrandera. No financial involvement is contemplated for Narrandera Shire Council.</p> <p>No further action on this proposal</p>
		4.8.3	Plan for a small intermodal terminal / freight receival site in Narrandera.	<p>Amazon has been provided with relevant information highlighting Narrandera as a potential site for an Amazon distribution facility. 22/3/18.</p> <p>Shooters Fishers and Farmers party negotiating to have the Narrandera Tocumwal rail study declassified as confidential so findings can be publicly released. Ongoing.</p>
4.9	Retain commercial air services to Narrandera	4.9.1	Continue to upgrade the Narrandera – Leeton Airport to ensure on-going compliance.	<p>Give consideration to future proofing the airport infrastructure with possible aircraft type obsolescence.</p> <p>Potential development opportunity with Wagner Group interest in freight opportunities.</p> <p>Assess potential producers and processors, types of exports and tonnages and frequency of export for advice to Wagners. Advice again provided to Wagners on export task potential from Narrandera-Leeton airport, as at February 2019.</p> <p>John Wagner advised of KPMG study, as advised by DPC.</p> <p>Contacted Deputy Chair of Rex The Hon John Sharp to determine Rex Airline future fleet requirements and operations. Fleet of SAAB 340s not expected to be replaced for 10-15 years. Discussions with Warrick Lodge of Rex (General Manager-Network Strategy) regarding upgrade to main runway to accommodate foreseen RPT traffic movements. Rex will assist in developing case for funding if required</p> <p>Contact specialist consultancy group BECA who provide outline for a Draft Airport Masterplan and Business Case for Narrandera/Leeton Airport in context of \$100million Regional Airport Fund soon to be opened.</p> <p>Regional Airport Fund announced 11 Oct 2019. Under consideration by Manager Works and EDM.</p> <p>Funding application being developed for \$950,000 main runway reseal at airport.</p> <p>Banners commissioned to advertise community fares.</p> <p>Rex supported by Council during Covid 19 emergency through waiving head taxes between 1 April 2020 and 31 December 2020.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Rex operating 3 flights per week through Covid emergency.</p> <p>Funding received to re-seal main runway and improve lighting &amp; fencing.</p> <p>Quotes imminent for design of parallel taxiway to support AAPA training activities.</p> <p>Quotes received for parallel taxiway and under consideration by technical services team</p> <p>Design proposal accepted and preliminary studies have commenced-eg survey, geotechnical etc.</p> <p>Funding application to Regional Airports program for construction of parallel taxiway -December 2020.</p> <p>Qantas announces commencement of a Griffith/Sydney service scheduled for February 2020.</p> <p>Seeking meeting with REX and AAPA to discuss aviation matters impacting Narrandera/Leeton airport.</p> <p>Meeting held with REX and AAPA (Warrick Lodge and Chris Hine) on 12 Jan 2021 when assurances given by REX that there will be a continuation of services to Narrandera for foreseeable future and they don't expect the commencement of Qantas service into Griffith will impact Rex services to Narrandera/Leeton airport.</p> <p>July 2021 \$1.1 million approved by Federal Government through Regional Airports Fund Round 2. Council approves matching funding to enable work to proceed to construct a parallel taxiway. This will future proof the airport and provide opportunity for future aviation business expansion.</p> <p>Narrandera /Leeton Airport not on current list for any service withdrawal by Rex. As at 31 May 2022</p> <p>No service withdrawal by REX in recent announcements..</p> <p>Construction of parallel taxiway imminent.</p>
		4.9.2	Implement the Airport Strategic Plan.	Ongoing
		4.9.3	Build patronage on the route by diversifying the market base – eg through growing the conference, meetings and events markets.	<p>Venue guide produced in 2017.</p> <p>Community fare agreement negotiated with Rex for the benefit of airline commuters out of Narrandera/Leeton Airport. Five (5) year agreement with Rex commencing 4 October 2018.</p> <p>AS at 20 April 2020 Rex confirms it has received Government support to enable 2 services per week to be continued for next 6 months.</p> <p>Currently up to 4 services per week into Narrandera/Leeton airport.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Full services resume to/from Narrandera as at 29 March 2021.</p> <p>Services affected mid 2021-current- as a result of Covid lockdowns across the State.</p> <p>Limited services continuing in and out of Narrandera as at February 2022</p> <p>Regular services resumed</p>
4.10	<b>Diversify and improve accommodation available in the Shire</b>	4.10.1	Monitor demand for motel and hotel accommodation and, when needed, advocate for the development of new accommodation within the Shire.	<p>Tourism activities will now be reported to Council via this Strategic Plan Report.</p> <p>Barellan has gained recognition as an RV Friendly destination.</p> <p>Early November 30-60 electricians from Darlington Point expected to occupy local motels until February-organised by Rick Shaw.</p> <p>Survey of Motels in December 2019 reveals approx. 60 workers from Darlington Point project accommodated in Narrandera.</p> <p>Survey Feb 2020 reveals 30+ Darlington Point workers still in accommodation in Narrandera.</p> <p>Motels generally reporting excellent occupancy through Autumn. One motel reporting 100% occupancy for 56 consecutive days.</p>
		4.10.2	Advocate for improved supply of rental housing and other accommodation for temporary and seasonal workers and position Narrandera as the accommodation hub to service the Narrandera – Leeton area.	<p>EDM attends Workforce Futures Forum in Griffith on 10 May when discussion was held about overall accommodation shortages in the Western Riverina and consideration given to possible strategies to address.</p> <p>Discussions commenced with appointed EPC for RES Solar (Siemens/Gamesa) and their appointed consultants Jacobs to commence preparation of the Employment and accommodation strategy required as condition of consent</p> <p>Met with Zara Duman Senior Consultant for Jacobs on 20 August and discussed 1<sup>st</sup> draft of accommodation and employment strategy which is to be reviewed by Solar Reference Group.</p> <p>Strategy reviewed by Solar farm Reference Group and submitted to Jacobs.</p> <p>Accommodation and Employment Strategy finalised.</p> <p>August 2021 made a submission to the NSW Housing Taskforce outlining the current and likely future housing needs in Narrandera.</p> <p>Rental and housing supply in Narrandera and regional NSW generally under pressure with low vacancy rates, increasing rents.</p>
		4.10.3	Undertake a review of camping areas and facilities in the Shire to maximise economic benefits.	<p>For consideration.</p> <p>Survey box with forms to be installed on amenities block at Brewery Flats and complimentary branded information bag with information and vouchers to be distributed to campers/travellers from time to time.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<a href="#">Ref.3.3.4</a> Survey box installed and branded information backpacks being distributed to campers/travellers at Brewery Flats. Camping areas closed due to Corona Virus related Government direction Camping areas reopened as at 1 June 2020 subject to social distancing requirements. Upgrade of brewery flats facilities and management arrangements being implemented.
4.11	<b>Grow the local workforce, ensuring that it is aligned with local and regional industry needs</b>	4.11.1	Profile and articulate existing and future local and regional workforce requirements and jobs and skills gaps.	<a href="#">Refer 4.10.2</a> <a href="#">RDA Riverina offering services in this area for workers and employees</a>
		4.11.2	Work with regional organisations and education and training providers to address job and skill gaps and formulate and deliver 'job readiness' and skills development opportunities.	<a href="#">Refer 4.10.2</a> Participate in RDA skills survey Facilitate contact between TAF at Narrandera and Avonlie project owners RES and EPC Siemens /Gamesa to discuss development of relevant courses to support solar farm works.
		4.11.3	Participate in relevant employment and skills development programs and initiatives (eg the 'Grow our Own' program being implemented in the Western Riverina).	<a href="#">Refer 4.10.2</a> <a href="#">Riverina Skills audit involvement in focus group.</a>
		4.11.4	Encourage proponents of major developments to 'grow their own' workforce by employing local residents and investing in training and skills development.	<a href="#">Refer 4.10.2</a> <a href="#">Ref. 4.11.2</a> <a href="#">Bhullar new development on Red Hill Industrial Estate contains an industry training component.</a>
		4.11.5	Work with the Shire's Aboriginal community and residents who are socially disadvantaged, to improve training and employment outcomes.	For consideration Two Aboriginal Community Engagement Officers employed by Beon to assist Aboriginals in Beon workforce to be job ready.
		4.11.6	Work with industry and businesses to attract skilled workers to the Shire to fill vacant positions and address skills gaps.	For consideration <a href="#">Riverina Skills Audit ref 4.11.3</a>
		4.11.7	Investigate opportunities to harness skills of visitors to the Shire (eg retirees, back packers) to address labour shortages,	For consideration



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
			particularly for seasonal work (eg harvesting, picking, truck drivers).	
		4.11.8	Advocate for improved access to education and training services and flexible approaches to workplace training, apprenticeships and traineeships.	Use event opportunities to promote TAFE and its services and courses and to utilise TAFE Narrandera Connected Learning centre e.g. Small Business Month October events
		4.11.9	Retain young people within the community, through programs such as school based vocational training, transition to work / work ready, offering apprentice and traineeships and providing access to tertiary training.	For consideration
		4.11.10	Develop and implement programs to welcome and orientate new employees and integrate them into the community.	For consideration

## Tourism Stimulus Projects

Item	Project	Status	Comments
1	Joint Marketing Initiative - Murrumbidgee Trails	<p>Collaboration of Narrandera, Leeton, Lockhart and Murrumbidgee Councils. Graphic Designer/ Copy writer engaged.</p> <p>Development of Booking form and advertising prospectus -Advertisers currently being sort.</p> <p>Developing information for guide.</p>	<p>Draft content now being reviewed and graphic designer laying out pages for adverts and content.</p> <p>Joint initiative underway with 21 local Narrandera businesses taking up advertising, local council owned operated places ads for as well</p> <p>(including Parkside, Lake Talbot, etc)</p> <p>Murrumbidgee Trails posters to be placed in high traffic areas in Narrandera.</p> <p>Social Media Campaign on-going.</p> <p><b>Social Media Report – Oct to December Attached</b></p>
2	Social Media	<p>Facebook and Instagram</p> <p>Creation of posts using new imagery</p> <p>#visitnarrandera</p> <p>#lovenarrandera</p>	<p>Video being edited to be displayed in Visitor Centre and via social media channels</p> <p>Riverina Outdoor Art trail Instagram /Facebook posts being created regularly.</p> <p>Visitor Centre staff creating Narrandera Tourism posts with new photo catalogue.</p> <p>Summer Campaign Complete</p> <p>Visit Wagga Social Media Campaign Launched.</p> <p>Narrungdera Earth Fest Campaigns Finalised</p> <p>Creating Spring Campaign Content</p> <p><b>Summer Campaign Underway – Nov 1 imagery focused on Lake Talbot Water Park Completed – Results Below</b></p>

Item	Project	Status	Comments
3	Tourism Website	Developing and posting blog posts to interact with travelers Auditing website pages.  Developing information and product for pages	Blog posts have begun.  Web page information is being audited and updated as needed.
4	Tourism Newsletter	Currently monthly, communicate information and resources.  Business NSW, Tourism Australia, Destination Networks (DRM, DNSW)	Successfully getting information out to tourism operators and business  Goal to gain more subscribers Tourism newsletter growth and information sharing.
5	Australian Regional Tourism	Current member of ART  Valuable resource for information	Current Financial Member of Australian Regional Tourism. Networking and information on Visitor Centre's, Marketing Opportunities and events.
6	Visit Riverina	Current board member  Involvement in campaigns - Social Media, Newsletters, website Using #DreamNowVisitLater  Riverina Outdoor Art Trail -	Partnership program with member councils for a big promotional campaign – draft of destination audits was completed by participating Councils and a campaign is being developed for review.  Visit Riverina Facebook/ Instagram posts – series of posts organized over the coming months.  Thrive updating website with Narrandera information.

Item	Project	Status	Comments
		social media platforms	<p>Regional Maps produced by participating LGAs – Copy at End of Report</p> <p>Visit Riverina to attend Canberra Caravanning and Camping Expo – October 2022</p> <p>Narrandera to take King Bee Honey and Big River Herbs product</p> <p>Visit Riverina attendee Canberra Caravan Camping &amp; Lifestyle Expo – The expo was held over three days and attendee numbers were over 15,000. The event was a success and the board is currently considering attending a larger number of consumer facing shows.</p> <p>Visit Riverina – RFQ for socials sent out to local digital marketing businesses – submissions closing 29 February</p>
7	Destination Riverina Murray	Supporting the campaigns developed by DRM #LoveNSW	<p>Scheduled a series of posts that DRM and DNSW, thrive via visit Riverina Social Page</p> <p>Facebook page analytics below table</p> <p>Love NSW Campaign is underway. Influencers – The Blonde Nomads visited Narrandera and posted frequently.</p> <p>Posts and stories included content on Narrandera Koalas, Murrumbidgee River &amp; The Water Tower Art Work</p> <p>Campaign Completed</p> <p>Destination Riverina Murray Conducting a Review of Visit Riverina in order to establish a better working relationship/increase engagement.</p> <p>Destination Management Plan Review to be completed.</p> <p>Destination Management Plan Feedback Provided to DRM</p> <p>DRM has been working closely with regional councils to determine the impact of NSW Flooding on tourism operators to escalate to Resilience NSW, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the Cross Border Commissioner, DNSW and other relevant stakeholders and groups.</p>



Item	Project	Status	Comments
			<p>Visitation Statistics and accommodation occupancy statistics have been provided to DRM. Results of DRM Flood Impact Assessment Survey Attached</p> <p>Narrandera Shire Council has joined Riverina Murray Tourism Working Group (RMTWG) – Flood Recovery The establishment of this advisory group provides three levels of government and industry with a forum for economic development and advice on rebuilding the tourism industry in the Riverina Murray region of NSW following the weather and flood events in 2022. The agenda for the Advisory Group will be twofold: 1. Rebuild the Riverina Murray (infrastructure and visitor perception) followed by; 2. Visitor Economy Development</p>
8	Narrandera – Leeton Airport	<p>Tourism initiatives – branding entry point</p> <p>Airport signage</p>	<p>The application of tourism and marketing collateral within the airport can have the potential to help generate a positive mood and attitude of passengers enhancing their experience from the start.</p> <p>Quote is being developed for design concepts with a graphic designer, Narrandera Signs have measured and are quoting on installation costs.</p> <p>Signage complete</p>
9	Narrandera – Welcome Banners	<p>Tourism initiatives – branding entry point</p> <p>Narrandera Welcome Banners</p>	<p>Replacement of existing banners at Gillenbah island and entry from Newell Highway as previous banners are faded and damaged. Newly designed image banners &amp; replacement banners at printers. Updated Banner images below with Narrandera Signs for Printing Banners to be placed on new banner poles along Irrigation Way – awaiting banner printing Narrandera Signs.</p>

Item	Project	Status	Comments
			<p>Gillenbah Ooh Media Billboard Refaced            Awaiting Reopening of Lake Talbot Water Park for high-res imagery of Water slides for Sandigo board.</p> <p>Waving Koala Signs – Initial Design Concept</p> 

Item	Project	Status	Comments
10	Narrandera Destination and Discovery Hub	<p>A multi- faceted project that will be the tourism showpiece in the region.</p> <p>Scheduled to commence construction in November 2021 for completion in October 2022.</p> <p>Significant employment during construction and continuing employment in the Visitor Information Centre component and in other active workspaces within the Hub.</p>	<p>Project team has been formed</p> <p>Generation of ideas for planning spaces</p> <p>Out for public viewing and feedback on concept plans.</p> <p>Review of needs of new Centre including staffing, deliver of services, stock, activities and experiences.</p> <p>S2 Architects have been engaged, updated plans to be delivered in May.</p> <p>Meeting to discuss internal fit out of NDDH with S2 Architects to occur in July.</p> <p>Fit out for Visitor Information Centre area determined. Meeting with Narrandera Fisheries to discuss fish tank fit out requirements</p> <p>Exhibition Space Designer selected and engaged.</p> <p>Consultation Arranged</p> <p>Interpretive Design Layout Complete –</p> <p>Awaiting Build Commencement.</p> <p>Interpretive content under review.</p>

Item	Project	Status	Comments
11	Upcoming Advertisements	List of all advertisements Narrandera Tourism Team under work or in publication	<p>Caravan and camping Magazine – Autumn advert &amp; editorial complete</p> <p>Out and About – Autumn advert &amp; editorial complete</p> <p>Central West Lifestyle Magazine segment &amp; advertisement complete</p> <p>Caravanning Australia Spring Edition Complete</p> <p>Out &amp; About Spring Edition – Complete</p> <p>Out &amp; About Summer Edition –Editorial &amp; Advert</p> <p>HerCanberra – December Digital Marketing Campaign Complete – Preview Below</p> <p>Visit Wagga Digital Marketing Campaign – Launched 29 March</p> <p>Caravanning Australia Editorial &amp; Advert Spring Edition- Content Submitted Awaiting Publication</p> <p>HerCanberra Spring Editorial, Social Media &amp; Digital Advertising Package – Launch Aug 8th</p> <p>Murrumbidgee Trails Feature in Daily Advertiser – content submitted - awaiting publication date</p> <p>Visit Wagga Wagga – What's On Guide – Spring</p> <p>Events Listed – Barellan Clydesdales &amp; Narrandera Koala Festival,</p> <p>Facebook Ad Set – Results Below</p>
12	REA Wagga Wagga Horse Trials Report	Councils Tourism & Economic Development Coordinator assisted Wagga REA Horse Trials in	<p>Council resolved to support the ambulance fees for the event. Wagga REA Horse Trials were provided a feedback form by council to distribute to event participants.</p> <p>Assisting REA Horse Trials with grant funding opportunity to host Horse Trials at Narrandera in 2022.</p> <p>Wagga Horse Trials Successful in obtaining Community Events Program Funding</p>



Item	Project	Status	Comments
		submitting a report to council for support.	
13	Upcoming Events	Upcoming Events in Narrandera Shire supported or ran by Narrandera Shire Council	<p>April 10&amp;11 - Free Family Fun Nights Narrandera Sportsground</p> <p>April 17 – Narrandera Rod Run Show N Shine Easter Event</p> <p>May 20 -22 Narrungdera EarthFest</p> <p>Awaiting Outcome of Reconnecting Regional NSW – Community Events Program</p> <p>Community Events Program</p> <p>Engaged Lee Longmire &amp; Co to assist event organisers in managing and promoting events Lee will run free social media and design workshops for applicants on Aug 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 4<sup>th</sup> 2022.</p> <p>Awaiting outcome from Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program to determine successful applicants.</p> <p>Upcoming Event</p> <p>August</p> <p>Narrandera Races</p> <p>Wagga REA Narrandera Horse Trials</p> <p>September</p> <p>Narrandera Koala Festival ( Awaiting Funding Outcome)</p> <p><b>Narrandera Koala Fest</b> event will be on Saturday September 17th and will run from 10am to 9pm. The day sessions will include Food Vendors (some local, some visiting), market stalls, amusement rides including climbing wall, giant slide &amp; mechanical rides. Attractions for the day</p>

Item	Project	Status	Comments
			<p>sessions would include Koala Tours, Petting Zoo, performance group (Boomstars), Roving Characters, Magician, Circus Acts with interactive workshops in circus, art, and nature. The evening session would include the rides and food vendors, Magician floor show, Boomstar Show and family bush dance with Tin Shed Rattlers.</p> <p>October</p> <p>Barellan Clydesdales</p> <p>Rockin On East</p> <p>November</p> <p>A Little Bit Country &amp; BBQ</p> <p><b>A Little Bit of Country &amp; BBQ</b> is a free to attend family friendly event highlighting local country rock talent supported by a headliner act Southbound XO. Local talent will include two country bands plus an open microphone session mid-afternoon in Maree Bashir Park from 11am to 8pm on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November. The day will consist of various BBQ themed cooking demonstrations including a BBQ</p> <p>Competition Butcher and Michael Lyons with an indigenous BBQ style. BBQ theme will not only include cooking demonstrations but a selection of food vendors ie local community BBQs and American Style BBQ plus other international flavours.</p> <p>Approximately 300 attendees at event</p> <p>December 17</p> <p>Narrandera Race Club Community Race Day</p> <p>January</p>

Item	Project	Status	Comments
			<p>Australia Day</p> <p>February</p> <p>Narrandera Rodeo</p> <p>Malibu Ski Tournament</p> <p>April</p> <p>Narrandera Rod Run</p> <p>May</p> <p>Lions Community Fun Day</p>
<p>June</p> <p>July</p> <p>August</p> <p>Narrandera Horse Trials – 5 + 6</p>			

Untitled report Dec-7-2022 to Jan-22-2023		Report Period: Dec 7, 2022 - Jan 22, 2023													
Campaign name	Ad set name	Delivery status	Delivery level	Reach	Impressions	Frequency	Attribution setting	Result Type	Results	Amount spent (AUD)	Cost per result	Starts	Ends	Reporting starts	Reporting ends
Summer Campaign	All		campaign	80384	199317	2.48	7-day click or 1-day view	Page likes or followers	2540.00	919.53	0.36			2022-12-07	2023-01-22



# **Murrumbidgee Trails Social Media Report**

**Q4 2022: October to December**



# Glossary

Here's a few terms you'll find throughout the report, and what they mean.

## Followers

The number of users (also known as people or accounts) who are following (or have 'liked') your social accounts.

## Follower growth

The growth in the number of users who are following (or have 'liked') your account as a percentage (month on month).

## Reach

The number of users who have seen your content.

## Impressions

The number of times users have seen your content. This differs from reach as people can see a piece of content multiple times so they'll count as 1 towards your reach and could be 2 or more impressions.

## Engagements

An interaction with your content by a user. This could be a like on a post, a comment, share, save or even a click on your post to see more if part of the caption is hidden initially.

## Engagement rate (per impression)

The number of engagements as a percentage of your impressions. That is, how many users who saw your content interacted with it in some way.

# Quick glance: The numbers



Platform	Measure	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Growth	Shift %
Facebook	Followers	2,610	2,737	127	4.9%
	Engagements	10,650	13,057	2,407	22.6%
	Total impressions	204,475	317,618	113,143	55.3%
Instagram	Followers	1,506	1,535	29	1.9%
	Engagements	2,825	2,643	-182	-6.4%
	Total impressions	43,664	59,698	16,034	36.7%

# Quick glance: Past 12 months



Platform	Measure	Jan '22	Feb '22	Mar '22	Apr '22	May '22	Jun '22	Jul '22	Aug '22	Sep '22	Oct '22	Nov '22	Dec '22
Facebook	Followers	1,986	2,114	2,225	2,311	2,369	2,438	2,491	2,568	2,610	2,668	2,703	2,737
	Follower growth	4.9%	6.4%	5.3%	3.9%	2.5%	2.9%	2.2%	3.1%	1.6%	2.2%	1.3%	1.3%
	Engagements	2,822	5,032	4,941	3,247	3,708	2,539	3,926	3,176	3,548	4,310	5,727	3,020
	Impressions	74,970	108,202	88,756	52,105	63,296	69,623	65,455	59,979	79,041	135,224	113,165	69,229
Instagram	Followers	1,284	1,310	1,334	1,390	1,419	1,430	1,450	1,487	1,506	1,516	1,528	1,535
	Follower growth	2.5%	2.0%	1.8%	4.2%	2.1%	0.8%	1.4%	2.6%	1.3%	0.7%	0.8%	0.5%
	Engagements	1,200	987	1,176	878	917	786	938	1,064	823	943	871	829
	Impressions	14,600	15,920	23,241	19,132	11,899	12,003	11,009	20,857	11,798	17,662	19,979	22,057


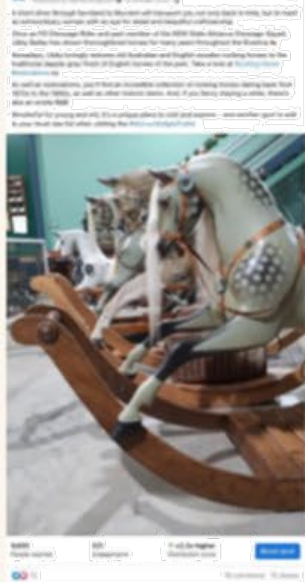



# Facebook: Key statistics

Measure	Last quarter			This quarter				
	<i>Jul 2022</i>	<i>Aug 2022</i>	<i>Sep 2022</i>	<i>Total*</i>	<i>Oct 2022</i>	<i>Nov 2022</i>	<i>Dec 2022</i>	<i>Total*</i>
Followers	2,491	2,568	2,610	2,610	2,668	2,703	2,737	2,737
Posts	18	18	20	56	18	18	19	55
Engagements	3,926	3,176	3,548	10,650	4,310	5,727	3,020	13,057
Engagement rate (per Impression)	7.3 %	9.2 %	5.0 %	7.2 %	3.8 %	6.6 %	4.9 %	5.1 %
Organic impressions	65,119	59,689	78,787	203,595	134,921	112,803	68,996	316,720
Total impressions	65,455	59,979	79,041	204,475	135,224	113,165	69,229	317,618

\*An average is used for engagement rate in the 'Total' column.

# Facebook: Best performing posts

Reach	Post #1	Post #2	Post #3
11,836 people	9,590 people	9,440 people	
<a href="https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/656005975884038/">https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/656005975884038/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/636979474453355/">https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/636979474453355/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/647426753408627/">https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/647426753408627/</a>	
			

# Facebook: Best performing posts

## Engagements

### Post #1

1,225 (inc. 220 reactions, 19 comments + 28 shares)

<https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/656005975884038/>



### Post #2

811 (inc. 177 reactions, 40 comments + 36 shares)

<https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/670687284415907/>






### Post #3

705 (inc. 304 reactions, 43 comments + 15 shares)

<https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/665907518227217/>



# Facebook: Best performing posts

Engagement rate			
Post #1	Post #2	Post #3	
9.9%	9.7%	9.4%	
<a href="https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/656005975884038/">https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/656005975884038/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/670687284415907/">https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/670687284415907/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/690337162450919/">https://www.facebook.com/107029294115045/posts/690337162450919/</a>	
			



- Q4 includes a number of events which have impacted results:

## Key takeaways:

October to mid-December).

- Flooding events around the region and neighbouring regions (we included messaging on our posts from mid-

## Facebook

• In our experience, the festive season from the end of November sales (Black Friday and Cyber Monday) through to January generally impacts negatively on socials as feeds are saturated with retail sales and Christmas content. These are often the most difficult months to stand out.

- Follower growth slowed this quarter but with the abovementioned events, it's not unexpected. We're still continuing to attract new people to our audience, so we hope to see slightly higher growth return in the new year.
- Our impressions were up 55% on last quarter, hitting more than 300k for the first time ever. Our total engagements were also the best result ever (13k), just beating out Q2 2022 which was 12.7k. We had a great October and November while December was a little quieter, as we've experienced in 2021.
- Content contributing to the increase in impressions and engagements included Altina Wildlife Park (posts about the park being open despite the Sturt Highway closure in Oct), Rocking Horse Restorations (this is a post we've recycled a number of times and continue to get great results!), public art, the Lake Talbot Water Park and Bundy Cultural Tours (for their NSW Tourism Awards accolades).
- Our engagement rates weren't as good as usual, though not a huge drop compared to past months.

- Our strategy of sharing content into targeted Facebook groups continues to deliver, and we're seeing a number of operators and local community pages sharing our posts.
- Posting in the evening between 7-8pm seems to give our content the best chance of performing well in terms of impressions, there's a small number of alternate times that work when it comes to best engagements but again majority of our best are between 7-8pm. The style of post does seem to impact with those posts featuring a link preview (rather than an image or video) consistently among our worst performing.

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# Instagram: Key statistics



Measure	Last quarter			This quarter				
	<i>Jul 2022</i>	<i>Aug 2022</i>	<i>Sep 2022</i>	<i>Total*</i>	<i>Oct 2022</i>	<i>Nov 2022</i>	<i>Dec 2022</i>	<i>Total*</i>
Followers	1,450	1,487	1,506	1,506	1,516	1,528	1,535	1,535
Posts	18	17	16	51	18	17	18	53
Total engagements	938	1,064	823	2,825	943	871	829	2,643
Engagements per media	52.1	62.6	51.4	55.4	52.4	51.2	46.1	49.9
Engagement rate (per Impression)	8.7 %	5.3 %	7.6 %	7.2 %	5.8 %	4.2 %	3.9 %	4.6 %
Total impressions	11,009	20,857	11,798	43,664	17,662	19,979	22,057	59,698

\*An average is used for engagement rate and engagements per media in the 'Total' column.

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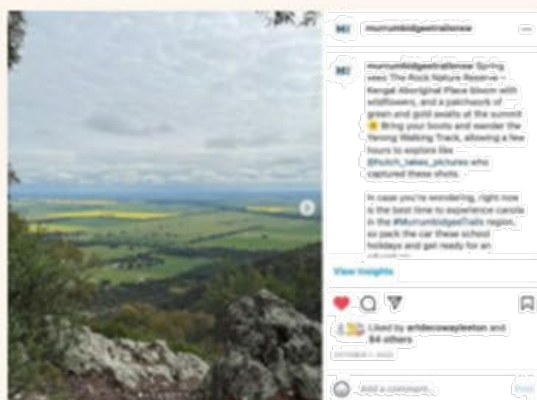
# Instagram: Best performing posts

## Engagements

### Post #1

92 (inc. 86 reactions, 4 comments + 2 saves)

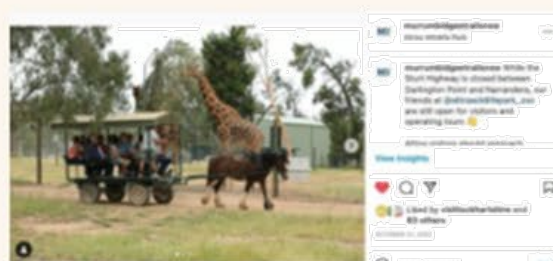
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CjKskgXPfPq/>



### Post #2

91 (inc. 84 reactions, 6 comments + 1 save)

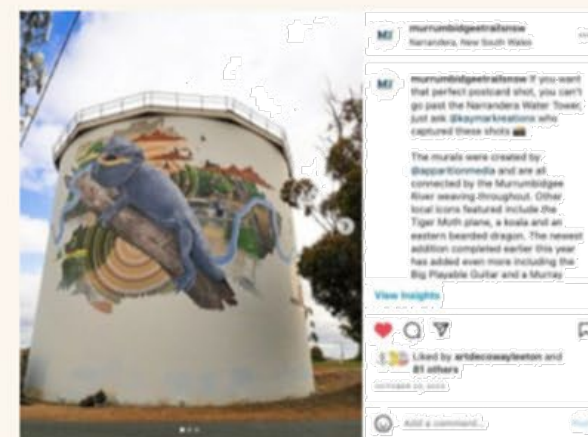
[https://www.instagram.com/p/Cj87R\\_mhNB3/](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cj87R_mhNB3/)



### Post #3

88 (inc. 82 reactions, 5 comments + 1 save)

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CkDKCeTverg/>



# Instagram: Best performing posts

## Engagement rate

### Post #1

11.6%

<https://www.instagram.com/tv/CmBMwpvgZ/>



### Post #2

10.6%

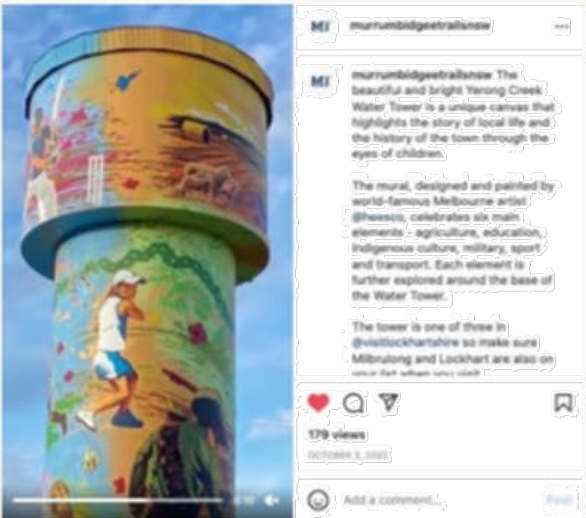
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CmLIbUEvCKH/>



### Post #3

10.5%

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CgWbcnoPwbU/>



- We saw similar trends in both the Facebook and Instagram results for Q4.

## Key takeaways:

- Follower growth slowed like Facebook, though we can likely attribute this in part

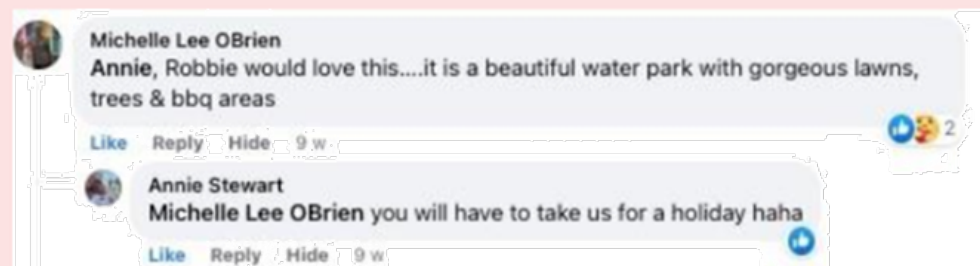
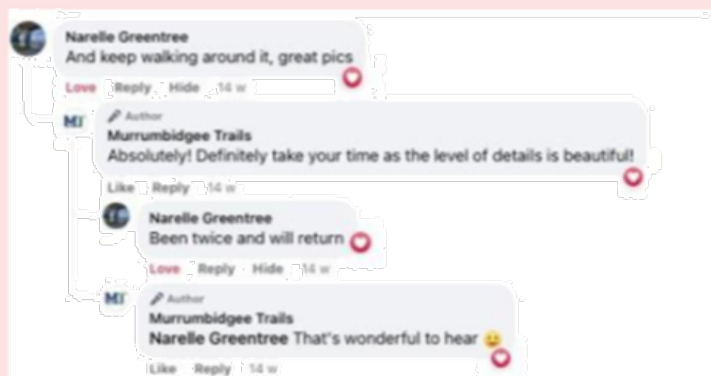
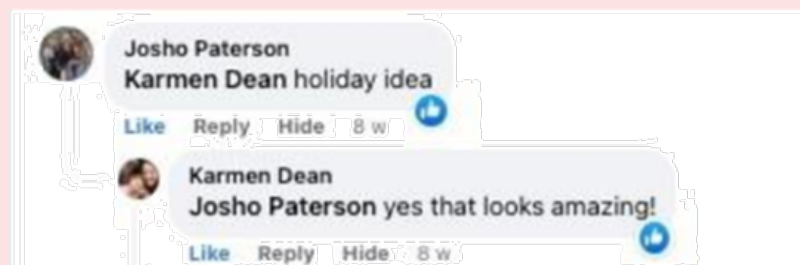
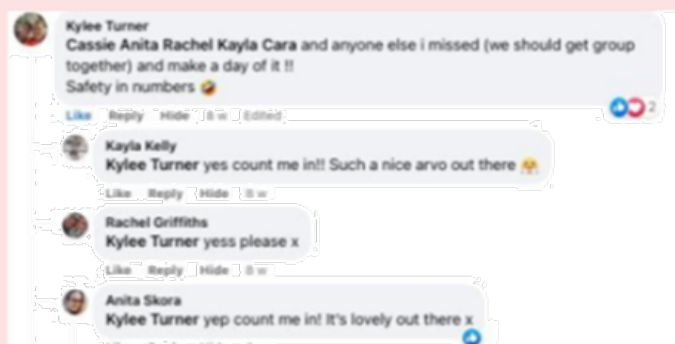
## Instagram

December 2021, so not a cause for concern.  
to the events like flooding and the festive season. We also saw a similar drop in

- Our total engagements were on par with last quarter while impressions were up 36% which is great. Similar to Facebook, it was our best quarter ever for impressions on Instagram.
- In spring, Instagram announced some changes to their algorithm to reverse previous favouring of reels and video content and rebalance this across static images and carousel posts. This may have contributed to our improvement in impressions.
- There was diversity in our top Instagram posts this month with the only post appearing twice the Altina Wildlife Park one (with the Sturt Highway closure info). A mix of public art, nature, history and foodie-related content were among our top performers.
- We deliberately scheduled one of our hero locations for Boxing Day (The Rock) as a way to cut through retail sales content from other brands and also to capture our audience's imagination with an adventure they could look forward to after Christmas. It worked well and was our third best post for impressions in Q4.
- Across our top 5 posts by impressions, hashtags accounted for more than 75% of the total impressions on each post. Our targeted hashtag strategy is really paying off to amplify our best content!

# Highlights

We're continuing to see people enjoying the beauty of the region they live in (locals), making plans or adding locations to their bucket lists after being prompted by our posts!



UPPER



# Website snapshot

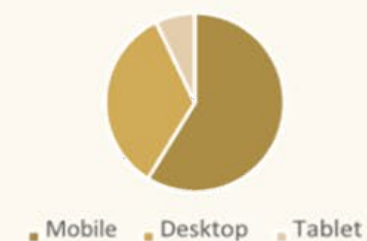
## Overview

Measure	Last quarter	Current quarter
Users	534	391
Sessions	759	480
Page views	1,271	791

## Most visited pages

Page	Views	Users
Home	167	122
Maps and trails	134	113
Visitor Guide	133	88
Our region	54	39
Lockhart, The Rock, Yerong Creek and surrounds	50	39

## Users by device



## Traffic sources



Source	Users	Sessions
Google	137	168
Direct	99	128
m.facebook.com	75	76
lm.facebook.com	29	29
l.facebook.com	18	24

## Summary

- While Q4 was challenging with plenty of external influences at play, we do continue to see strong results from our continued commitment to high quality content. We're seeing similar impacts across other Assembl'd clients so you can be reassured it's industry-wide.
- Our gains in impressions are excellent and demonstrate our strategies to share content into the right groups on Facebook and amplify content with the right hashtags on Instagram are paying off.
- As mentioned in past reports, UGC is an important content pillar though has been impacted by Instagram's prioritization of original content. If councils do have any content they haven't yet shared, please consider going back through your past photoshoots and sharing those files.
- The website results are lower than last quarter. We did share less links as our blogs are aging and haven't been updated, the camping map is also one of our most popular which was unable to be shared as many spots were flooded. Once flooding had moved on from the region and more locations became accessible once again, we began sharing more of the general visitor guide and maps and trails pages and will continue this into summer.

## Focus for the quarter ahead

- As we head into the summer holidays and a new year, we can (hopefully) leave flooding behind and encourage our audience to plan a visit. In particular, we'll begin sharing more of the 2023 calendar.
- Share more links on Facebook to help drive website traffic – in the past, it's worked well to share a photo with the link as part of the caption rather than using the automatically generated link preview.
- Focus on engaging with user-generated content to continue driving greater usage of #MurrumbidgeeTrails.

## Client action items

- Continue to share any new imagery, upcoming 2023 events and news items from your region
- Continue to share posts from your council or tourism pages
- Don't forget to regularly check Trello

- Consider setting aside time to update old blogs or create new ones for the MT website

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assemblid.com.au  
rach@assemblid.com.au

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## Economic Stimulus Projects

Item	Project	Status
1	Yarrabee Solar farm	<p>Directors of Yarrabee advise that, as at July 2020, they are still confident of financial closure by the end of 2020 and commencement of construction in the first half of 2021.</p> <p>Directors Tony Concannon and David Webster address Council on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Yarrabee Solar on track for commencement mid to late 2021.</p> <p>Directors Tony Concannon and David Webster address Council Briefing session on 15 June and advise that revised commencement of construction is expected to occur in 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2022</p> <p>Directors of Yarrabee advise that as at 28 April 2022 the Yarrabee Park solar farm project has been sold to Origin Energy and representatives of the new owners will be introduced to Council by Reach Solar directors on 1 June 2022 in Narrandera.</p> <p>Representatives of Origin meet with GM and Council reps on 1 June and provide list of key contacts. Construction unlikely for a year or more.</p>
2	Avonlie Solar farm	<p>Executive representative of RES confirms in July that Siemen/Gamesa have withdrawn as preferred EPC as the whole company representation has withdrawn from Australia. RES will appoint a replacement EPC and are hopeful of construction commencement in first half of 2021.</p> <p>As at 28 June 2021 construction commencement is expected to be imminent. Further delays due to Covid restrictions. Possible commencement now likely in September 2021.</p> <p>As at September 29 by Press Release RES advises that it has sold its Avonlie Solar farm development to Iberdrola.</p> <p>Road constructions works associated with construction commencement are imminent as at 25 October.</p> <p>Contact made with Beon (the EPC) the solar farm builder. In Narrandera week of 8 November.</p> <p>Various meetings with Beon project team headed by Justin Coburn. Beon hold information evening at Ex services Club about 40 people attend.</p> <p>As at 15 February Beon has appointed two Indigenous Community Engagement Employees to make recruited workforce job-ready.</p> <p>March 2022-Beon commence work on site.</p> <p>March 10 Small Business Month event-familiarisation tour of Avonlie with approx. 30 people attending. Partnership event with Narrandera Business Group and TAFE CLC.</p> <p>As at 1 June 2022 construction work progressing.</p> <p>Beon have installed the initial panels known as the 'Golden Rows'. Installation delayed because of weather. Completion of construction estimated early 2023.</p>
3	AAPA at Narrandera/Leeton airport	<p>Briefing facility established in Council owned airport residence on \$0 rental arrangement for 12 months lease, Sign established by AAPA describes the facility as 'Briefing Centre Narrandera Campus. Casa approves use of facility, Narrandera airport and airspace around Narrandera for AAPA training requirements.</p> <p>Briefing Facility on Narrandera Campus officially opened by Chris Hine CEO of AAPA and Mayor Kschenka of Narrandera and Mayor Maytom from Leeton.</p> <p>As at 23 April 2021 Chris Hine, CEO of AAPA, advises that AAPA has received preliminary funding approval, subject to submission of more details, from NSW Job Creation Fund for development of a further AAPA Campus.</p> <p># Confidential memo attached.</p> <p>As at June 2021 no further developments.</p>

Item	Project	Status
		<p>As at September 2021 no further developments  As at October 25<sup>th</sup> 2021 no further developments  Zoom meeting held late December 2021 with Chris Hine CEO of AAPA who advises that as a result of successful intake of overseas students AAPA will be increasing flying training activities at Narrandera airport and airspace  February 2022 increased flying training activities in airspace at Narrandera and at the airport and briefing Centre.</p> <p>Dale Hall, Engineering Adviser to Chairman REX and AAPA, visited Narrandera on Friday 23 September to inspect potential short term accommodation needs (up to 12 months) for AAPA for current cohort of around 20 flying training students from S/E Asia. Inspected Newell caravan park and Yanco Agricultural Institute motel and bunkhouse accommodation. Dale Hall likely to negotiate a proposal with Yanco Ag Institute. Dale also inspected briefing Centre at airport and potential site at airport for new campus facility. Dale is in charge of all major projects for REX and AAPA.  As at 30 November AAPA still not entered into any accommodation arrangements at YAI.  Reached out to Chris Hine who is arranging a time for us to meet.</p>
4	Parallel taxiway at the airport	<p>Preferred quotation received for taxiway design and technical services team negotiating variations to the taxiway proposal.  Funding application submitted as at December 2020 to Regional Airports program for funds to build the parallel taxiway.  As at June 2021 no word on the funding submission.  Council successful with funding application and planning underway for parallel taxiway. AAPA advised.  Finalising detailed design work-Commencement of work to construct the taxiway is imminent.</p>
5	Energy Connect-High voltage interconnect between S.A and NSW	<p>This project is progressing although it will not pass through Narrandera Shire although it will pass approximately 50kms from the Shire.  Significant advertising of this project has offered opportunity for locals in Narrandera Shire to obtain employment.  Early works commenced.</p>
6	Development at Red Hill Industrial Estate-	<p>Significant sales activity on Red Hill Industrial Estate. Lot 71 Driscoll sold to a purchaser who plans to develop modular factory units for lease, , lot 72 has been sold to a trucking company, lot 73 has been sold to a purchaser who proposes to develop a recreational vehicle storage facility; lot 75 has been sold to a modular home building group, lot 76 has been sold to the same modular home group for major factory development; 2 adjoining sites of 3.5ha each have been sold and contracts progressing for a major engineering group. The latter two developments are relocations from Metro Sydney and are potential big employers.  Offer to purchase 28ha for a leading- edge technology development being submitted to April Council meeting. Final 2ha on the Red Hill Industrial Estate under offer.  All land on the industrial estate is sold with all contracts exchanged.  Draft plans received from Bhullar for extensive factory development.  Roadworks for access well advanced.  Bhullar Group negotiating with DGMI for pre lodgment DA requirements  Dharmasena granted additional 90 days from 14 November 2022 to lodge DA and obtain approval from Essential Energy for access to the electricity grid.  Awaiting DA from Solar Switch Renewables</p>



Item	Project	Status
7	Independent Living Village Concept. Cnr Elwin and Crescent Streets Narrandera	<p>Noel Thomson Architect prepares concept report from brief provided and presents options for consideration by ELT. Proposal referred back to Noel for expansion of concept proposal and resubmission to Council in due course. Council approves marketing strategy for this land with preference for an Independent Living Village with community facility.</p> <p>Expressions of Interest to be invited from various providers through direct letters and advertisements in metro, regional and local media as well as online. Commencing Jan 19 2021 and submissions close on 26 Feb 2021.</p> <p>No Expressions of Interest received. Discussions continuing with several potential developers.</p> <p>As at June 2021 discussions are being held with the CEO of Argyle Housing and a private builder to examine the feasibility of a mixed housing development on the subject site.</p> <p>As at 1 September 2021 Further discussions being held with Anglicare as to their possible interest in a mixed housing development on the site.</p> <p>As at October 25<sup>th</sup> discussions have occurred with QPL Real Estate on possible interest by a potential developer which is considering a mixed housing development on the site incorporating Independent Living components.</p> <p>As at February 2022 continuing discussions are being held with Argyle Housing which group is interested in possible mixed development on the site including Independent Living and affordable housing.</p> <p>As at May 2022 management is assessing options for the type of development that could be undertaken on the subject lot.</p> <p>EDM meeting with Argyle Housing CEO and Board members in Griffith on 27 September.</p> <p>EDM met with CEO of Argyle. Argyle has had several key changes at senior management level but new CEO and property manager still interested to examine development proposal for Cnr Elwin and Crescent sts.</p>
8	Affordable Housing	<p>Several meetings have been held with Argyle Housing a major developer of affordable housing in NSW. Argyle considering the feasibility of developing a mixed housing estate on Cnr Elwin and Crescent Streets. and is discussing the prospects for this with a known builder/developer.</p> <p>No further contact as at 25 October 2021.</p> <p>See comment in 7 above.</p> <p>Refer point 7 above</p>
9	Playground on the Murrumbidgee	<p>Project management team established under Emily Currie as Project Manager. Initial meeting held and timelines and activities matrix accepted. Various additional meetings held to consider operational and space usage issues.</p> <p>Review of Pre-design report by project team for Destination and Discovery Hub-report provided by Studio S2 architects of Melbourne.</p> <p>Review of Pre-design report by project team for Destination and Discovery Hub-report provided by Studio S2 architects of Melbourne. Further visit by architects planned for July.</p> <p>Meeting held on 2 September with Martin Asmus, Narrandera Fisheries, to discuss specifications for the proposed aquarium and arrangements for subsequent population of the aquarium by rare native freshwater fish species.</p> <p>As at 25 October Draft MOU prepared for consideration by the parties</p> <p>MOU signed by Council and Narrandera Fisheries for the provision of endemic fish varieties for the proposed aquarium planned for installation in the Destination and Discovery Hub.</p> <p>As at 1 June 2022 the foundations have been laid for the Destination &amp; Discovery Hub.</p> <p>Construction progressing</p>

Item	Project	Status
		The skywalk project has been adopted by Council at its 17 May meeting. Tender for construction awarded at Council's July 19 meeting.
10	Grant funded projects and projects in budget	Over \$30 million in projects will provide much need work for many locals. Emerging opportunities with road work projects associated with improvements to the Newell Highway. Overview of Council projects presented in a power-point presentation to a Regional Outreach meeting of RDA Riverina held in Narrandera on 3 June.

1. Planning for the economy of the future  
**Initiative 1: Our Shire is 'Open for Business'**

A 'can do' attitude is fundamental to stimulating economic growth. To attract new business and investment and to ensure that our existing businesses continue to grow and prosper, Council will provide a positive, supportive and responsive investment environment.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
1.1	<b>Be a proactive, supportive and coordinated Council</b>	1.1.1	Continue to employ an Economic Development Manager and provide funds and resources for economic development.	Achieved
		1.1.2	Establish an Economic Development Taskforce to drive economic development and implement this Strategy with Council, key industry and key community membership	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Note: No industry or community members Committee to consider frequency of ED taskforce meetings on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.</p> <p>Ed Taskforce meetings to be held bi-monthly with next meeting scheduled for 22 Feb 2022.</p> <p>Discuss scheduling for new Council in 2022</p> <p>Meetings to be held bi monthly</p> <p>Update of Council's Economic Development Strategy proposed for 2023-2026.</p> <p>Terms of Reference developed and brief and request for quotes delivered to 4 qualified consultants. Budget \$50,000. Quotes due by 30 November.</p> <p>Consultants are:</p> <p>Urban Enterprise</p> <p>Lucid Economics</p> <p>Remplan</p> <p>NDP</p> <p>Quotes Received:</p> <p>Urban Enterprise</p> <p>Lucid Economics</p> <p>NDP</p> <p>Remplan – contacted, however not quoting</p> <p>Establishing a criteria for quote evaluation.</p> <p>This process will be completed February looking to engage in March 2023.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions	Progress
		<p><b>1.1.3</b> Review Council's policies, plans and regulations to ensure that they facilitate and support development.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>EDM has drafted a Business Recovery Plan as a short/medium term measure to indicate how Council can support local businesses during the Covid 19 emergency. This plan is designed to dovetail with the current Economic Development Strategy 2017-2020 which will be fully reviewed and updated when the health emergency is considered to be over.</p> <p>Narrandera Energised-Business Recovery Strategy 2020 will be presented to Council's briefing session and then to regular meeting on July 21 meeting for adoption.</p> <p>Narrandera Energised-Business Recovery Strategy 2020 adopted by Council at its meeting on 21 July.</p> <p>Separate report tables recording Economic Development Stimulus projects and Tourism Stimulus projects reported under separate cover.</p> <p>Pol ES 270 reviewed and now new Pol 048 Red Hill Industrial Estate has been adopted by Council and is active in the register.</p> <p>Small Business Incentive Strategy Pol 010 adopted by Council and submitted for public exhibition.</p> <p>Policy placed on register and unchanged following exhibition.</p> <p>Review terms of reference for various committees</p> <p>Terms of reference for Koala Advisory Committee and Australia Day Advisory Committee adopted by Council at its May 17 Meeting.</p>
		<p><b>1.1.4</b> Ensure that Council's systems and procedures for handling and processing development and investment enquiries are welcoming, stream-lined and customer service focussed.</p>	Ongoing
		<p><b>1.1.5</b> Purchase access to online, interactive statistical data and modelling tools (eg id profile, REMPLAN) to provide comprehensive demographic, social and economic data for the Shire.</p>	<p>REMPAN subscription renewed to 2022</p> <p>REMPAN Training session for staff on 9 July (subject to Covid restrictions)</p> <p>Training session conducted by zoom connection.</p> <p>REMPAN subscription renewed to June 2023</p>
		<p><b>1.1.6</b> Produce information and data that will assist businesses, investors and potential residents in their decision-making, and enable Council to monitor performance.</p>	Effective use of REMPLAN into the future for development applications, grant applications etc.



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>January 2019: REMPLAN introduces Business Analysis Model (BAM) Current data transferred from ABR and now available in Economy/Business tab in Remplan.</p> <p>Businesses within selected local geography reported to committee</p> <p>Survey of attendees at 39<sup>th</sup> National Cavy Show to inform future event arrangements.</p> <p>ED team through Marketing Tourism and ED Coordinator have produced a Facebook initiative called Narrandera Takeaway and Delivery Service and Business as usual in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group as well as creating a business online directory which is under development. The Facebook initiative is to assist business to keep operating and it has been very well received with 500 followers.</p> <p>As at June 2020 there are 640 followers</p> <p>As at July there are 700+ followers.</p> <p>Updated quarterly Small Area labour market data for Narrandera. December qtr. 2019 reveals unemployment rate of 5.9% and 180 unemployed out of total workforce of 3075. March qtr. 2020 reveals unemployment rate of 6.3% and 194 unemployed out of a total workforce of 3093.</p> <p>This is consistent with trend across the Riverina and is considered not yet reflecting impact of Covid 19 pandemic.</p> <p>June qtr. 2020 SALM data reveals unemployment rate of 6.7% and 202 unemployed out of labour force of 3003.</p> <p>Sept.2020 SALM data reveals unemployment rate of 7.4% 218 unemployed out of labour force of 2937.</p> <p>Dec. 2020 SALM data reveals unemployment rate of 6.6% 193 unemployed out of labour force of 2930.</p> <p>March 2021 QTR SALM data reveals unemployment rate of 5.5% with 158 unemployed out of labour force 2898.</p> <p>June 2021 QTR SALM reveals unemployment rate of 4.1% with 120 unemployed out of labour force of 2905.</p> <p>Sept 2021 reveals unemployment rate of 3.3% with 96 unemployed out of a labour force of 2878</p> <p>December 2021 reveals unemployment rate of 3% with 86 unemployed out of a labour force of 2875.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions	Progress
			<p>March quarter 2022 reveals unemployment rate of 3.7% with 107 unemployed out of a labour force of 2900</p> <p>June quarter 2022 reveals unemployment rate of 4.4% with 122 unemployed out of a labour force of 2795.</p> <p>Data is now produced by the National Skills Commission</p> <p>September quarter 2022 reveals unemployment rate of 4.9% with 137 unemployed out of a labour force of 2,786</p> <p>Council has provided a letter of support to RDA Riverina for the proposal to establish a Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA) for RDA Riverina addressing workforce and critical labour shortages in the region. The proposal involves the geographical expansion of the Orana Region DAMA to include Riverina and the advantages in this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The speed in which the proposed expanded DAMA can be established</li> <li>• Less reporting to government</li> <li>• Similar needs across the two regions.</li> </ul> <p>Specific advantages of having a DAMA in place for our region include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplification of visa application system for employers</li> <li>• The ability to bring semi-skilled labour into the region to meet and address real labour shortages</li> <li>• The ability to bring in semi-skilled labour which will cut the retraining costs associated with using holiday worker visas to fill unfilled job vacancies currently unrecognised in the Australian Skill Shortages lists</li> <li>• The ability to allow our aging population to continue to live in the region where they have grown up and had their working life, will be underpinned by access to a professional workforce and</li> <li>• Provide an opportunity for overseas workers to embed in our region, supporting the possibility of permanent residency and addressing population decline, particularly in our rural communities.</li> </ul> <p>Attending NSW Regional Skilled Migration Information Session – business and industry by RDA Riverina representatives from NSW Department of Enterprise Investment and Trade, Home Affairs and Migration Alliance, as well as RDA Riverina to receive latest information on NSW Regional Skilled Migration Information.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
		1.1.7	Include comprehensive information on economic development and business assistance on Council's website.	<p>Economic Development Department has contributed to planning of Council's Website upgrade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development Strategy on Website.</li> <li>• REX Community fare on website</li> <li>• Information on BEC workshops for business on website/Facebook</li> </ul>
1.2	Continue to build partnerships and strategic alliances	1.2.1	<p>Strengthen relationships with Government Agencies, regional organisations and service providers through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active participation in regional programs, forums and workshops.</li> <li>• Briefing and updating these organisations on the Shire's needs and priorities.</li> <li>• Advocating strongly for improved facilities, infrastructure and services.</li> <li>• Ensuring that the Shire's priorities and projects are recognised in regional plans and strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ED participates in RDA Riverina forums, RAMROC, Destination Riverina Murray and Thrive meetings.</li> <li>• EDM attended Economic Development Officers Forum in Temora-27/9. Various speakers and networking.</li> <li>• Shire's priorities contained in Western Riverina Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) officially completed as at February 2019.</li> <li>• Council facilitated Bee Forum to address issues arising from any accidents and emergencies on our region's roads involving the transportation of live bees with the aim of identifying gaps, finding solutions and increasing preparedness.</li> <li>• Forum formulates and endorses a 3 point action plan for positive outcome.</li> <li>• DPI representative Daryl Cooper working with Apiarists to develop an Action List Protocol that can be used by all emergency services responding to a vehicle accident involving the transportation of live bees in hives.</li> <li>• Wed 22 April EDM participated in regional zoom forum of Economic Development officers from Western Riverina Councils organised by Nicola James-AusIndustry.</li> <li>• EDM to participate in Skills Forum as a component of the Riverina Skills Audit conducted by CSU research team ( 9 October zoom meeting)</li> <li>• EDM participated in RDA Skills Forum with report due from CSU in due course.</li> <li>• EDM to participate in Regional Australia Institute presentation of Deputy PM pre budget speech on 30 September</li> <li>• RDA Riverina committee holds Regional Outreach meeting in Narrandera on 3 June 2021 at Arts and Community Centre. Mayor gives welcome and EDM makes power-point presentation on economic development, business activity and capital works.</li> <li>• Meeting with NBN new development team by zoom 23 March 2022 to discuss emerging connectivity needs for Narrandera, Grong Grong Etc</li> <li>• NBN to convene a public forum in 2<sup>nd</sup> half 2022 to update business/community on NBN services in Narrandera Shire.</li> </ul>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NBN confirm that they will hold a public information day on Wednesday 17 August at the Exies Club. An open public session will be available from 2pm to 5pm and people can make one on one appointments if required. A session for business proprietors will be held from 6pm to 8pm with refreshments supplied.</li> <li>Information day and evening presented by NBN representatives but poorly attended.</li> <li>GM and EDM attended a planning meeting in Griffith for the update of the Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) update for Council's Functional Economic Region (FER). On- line workshops/information sessions have been conducted also. Council has provided input and the Draft REDS will be available in the near future for review.</li> <li>AS a result of a project with RAMJO Field Solutions Group (FSG) have advised that they have secured a site East of Grong Grong for a Telecommunications tower and that they are investigating two further sites at Square Nob and another near Grong Grong. The first tower is expected to be completed and commissioned for service before 30 June 2023.</li> </ul> <p>EDM attends webinar on 17 November 2022 presented by NSW Government Regional Housing Supply Unit to discuss the Regional Housing Delivery Plan, tranche 2. The Western Riverina is included in the second tranche and work will commence in December 2022 and progress to site visits by Supply Unit team in February 2023 for face to face meetings. Emphasis on the REDS and the FER(Functional Economic Region).</p> <p>EDM to attend Riverina Economic Development forum opportunity to network and receive updates on economic development activities and trends across the Riverina.</p>
		1.2.2	Build and strengthen strategic alliances with Councils within the Riverina Region and along strategic road and rail corridors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrandera and Leeton representatives noted above agree to the strategic alliance between Narrandera and Leeton being called 'The Narrandera/Tocumwal Rail Line &amp; Intermodal Support Alliance.'</li> <li>Council provided letter of support for Wagga Wagga City Council's bid for the Qantas Cadet Training facility.</li> <li>Working relationships with Western Riverina Councils known as Functional Economic Regions</li> </ul>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council working on Tourism joint initiative for digital visitors guide with Murrumbidgee Leeton and Lockhart Shires. Presentation to Councillors at briefing session 19 Nov 19.</li> <li>• Development of marketing prospectus and strong support from advertisers.</li> <li>• Murrumbidgee Trails name and logo adopted.</li> <li>• Strong response across the targeted region for advertising in the new guide which is scheduled for launch in November 2020.</li> <li>• Official launch of guide on 18 November.</li> <li>• The Murrumbidgee Trails Council Group has made a submission to the NSW Local Government Excellence Awards for the Murrumbidgee Trails Visitor Guide initiative in the 'Special Projects' category. Submission identified as a Finalist in the Excellence Awards.</li> <li>• The above submission was unsuccessful</li> <li>• The Murrumbidgee Trails Council Group has made a joint bid for the March 2022 Destination NSW Tourism Conference to be held at Whitton Malthouse with accommodation and tours shared between Narrandera, Leeton, Lockhart and Murrumbidgee.</li> <li>• The above submission was unsuccessful</li> </ul>
1.3	<b>Engage pro-actively with local businesses and business / industry organisations</b>	1.3.1	Build knowledge and understanding of local economic sectors and businesses, including organising a program of industry briefings and tours for Councillors and Council staff.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>17/9 Visit to Glendale completed ED team working closely with Narrandera Business Group to provide assistance to business during Covid 19 business closures and limitations.</p> <p>As at June 2020 proposed new Narrandera Business Chamber not yet functional. Narrandera Business Group meetings suspended during Covid 19 health crisis. Narrandera Business Group to reconvene at meeting on 10 August. Narrandera Business Group meets on 10 August. Christmas Fun fair and Markets to be discussed at September meeting. Industry tours to recommence when Covid 19 emergency has passed. Council members and staff toured the Agri Australia facility on 14 April. Manager Claudio Cavallini briefed the tour on the operations at the farm which grows and propagates hazelnuts.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Tour on 7 July of Australian Mohair Marketing Organisation (Deferred until July 2022)</p> <p>Further deferred until November 2022.</p> <p>EDM attends AMMO morning tea on 25 Nov 2022. Mohair auction cancelled through lack of overseas buyers resulting from oversupply of product.</p>
		1.3.2	Encourage and facilitate opportunities for professional development, networking and innovation.	<p>EDM attends Narrandera Business Group.</p> <p>Attended Narrandera Business Group meeting 14 October</p> <p>Planning progressed for Small Business Month October with arrangements in place and invitations issued for Narrandera Connected (2) on 23 October at TAFE CLC.</p> <p>Sponsorships received from Service NSW, Business Group, TAFE and Articulate Pear.</p> <p>Workshop planned for 28 October at TAFE CLC to be delivered by BEC. NSC and Narrandera Business Group jointly sponsor Social Media Connectivity.</p> <p>Successful Small Business October events with 30 people in attendance at each event in 2019.</p> <p>Tiffany attends Regional Economic Development Officers Forum at Whitton Malthouse on 19 November.</p> <p>EDM and Toneale attend RDA Regional Forum for EDOs at Temora.</p> <p>Networking Event held on 9 Dec 2021 in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group and BEC</p> <p>Networking event is planned for 10 March 2022 in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group and TAFE CLC Narrandera-as part of Small Business Month March.</p> <p>Successful Small Business Month Events on March 10 including coach familiarisation tour to Avonlie Solar farm 33 people attending. Surprise visit by NSW Govt Minister The Hon Alister Henskens, Minister for Science Technology and Innovation and Minister for Skills and Training.</p> <p>Welcome to Country and Smoking ceremony and presentations to Iberdrola officials by Aboriginal Elder Uncle Michael Lyons.</p> <p>Evening networking function at TAFE CLC with address by Geoff Reardon Regional manager for ICN.</p> <p>Council is collaborating with Narrandera Business Group to promote an event for Small Business Month November. 2 workshops will be presented at TAFE</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>CLC on 14 and 15 November in the evenings. Presenter will be Jenn Donovan of Social Media and Marketing Australia on topics of <i>2023 Marketing Goal Planning and Instagram and Facebook Bootcamp</i>. Grant funding is being sought from the Small Business Month NSW Government fund.</p> <p>Council and Narrandera Business Group were successful in obtaining funding via the Small Business Commissioner's Grant program to conduct the above 2 workshops in November.</p> <p>Two successful events were held on 14 and 15 November with workshops presented by Jenn Donovan of Social Media and Marketing Australia. 16 people attended each event. These events were funded by the NSW Small Business Commissioner and Council and Narrandera Business Group were each funded for \$2375 covering the cost of the workshops and light refreshments on each evening.</p>
		1.3.3	Establish effective networks and communication channels.	<p>Bi-monthly newsletter for business prepared and circulated by EDM since start of 2019. Most recent circulation in March 2021.</p> <p>Newsletter published in June 2021.</p> <p>Business Newsletter circulated October 2021</p> <p>Business articles published in Council newsletter from time to time.</p> <p>Plan to continue the use of a bi-monthly newsletter</p> <p>Announcing new EDM via Council newsletter</p>
		1.3.4	Support business groups and networks.	<p>Ongoing. Arrange business breakfast with CEO of Tomra James Dorney 6 Sept in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group. 34 people attend successful breakfast. Involve Business Group in Small Business Month October event planned for 23 October at TAFE CLC-Narrandera Connected (2)</p> <p>Acting Secretary for Narrandera Business Group upon resignation of Secretary until new Secretary appointed-..Josie Marks appointed Secretary on 14 October 2019.</p> <p>Formation meeting for Narrandera Business Chamber held on 3 Feb 2020 and interim committee established. Questionnaire in circulation early July</p> <p>Regular distribution of information and advice on business recovery to business database. Information received from State and Federal Government, EDA, Regional Australia Institute, Business NSW, AusIndustry, BEC, etc on recovery and support initiatives during covid 19 pandemic.</p> <p>Ongoing interaction with Narrandera Business Group (NBG). Tiffany Thornton communicates training needs strategy information to NBG.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Attend special NBG meeting 26 October to arrange Christmas brochure insert to Argus with support and cooperation from the Editor and Krystal Maytom from Leeton BEC.</p> <p>Support publication of Christmas brochure insert to promote "Shop Locally" initiative. Attend Business Group AGM.</p> <p>Assist in Christmas Stocking prize draw.</p> <p>Present Vibe survey results to April meeting on Narrandera Business Group</p> <p>Continuing attendance at Narrandera Business Group meetings.</p> <p>September meeting cancelled-Covid impact</p> <p>Partnered with Riverina Murray Business (BEC) and Narrandera Business Group to hold a networking gathering on 9 December at TAFE CLC Narrandera.</p> <p>Planning well underway for Small Business Month March 2022 events including bus familiarisation tour of Avonlie Solar farm on 10 March for potential employees and trades plus networking function at TAFE CLC in the evening. Partners for the day's events are NSC, NBG and TAFE CLC.</p> <p>Continuing attendance at Narrandera Business Group meetings. Acting Secretary for 14 March meeting.</p> <p>EDM acts as Returning Officer for Narrandera Business Group AGM. John Foster re-elected unopposed as Chairman and Josie Marks as Secretary.</p> <p>Announcing new EDM to business group</p> <p>Arranging meetings with local businesses to engage and be proactive</p>
		1.3.5	Harness skills and experience available in the Shire and surrounding region (eg through forming task forces and working groups) to address specific challenges and realise opportunities.	<p>To be addressed as opportunities and shared purposes arise.</p> <p>Negotiate with Klaus Baumgartel of ICN for audit of services in Narrandera Shire to support the imminent development requirements for the 3 new solar farms.</p> <p>Organise small taskforce from the community to address the goods and services audit for solar farm development.</p> <p>Klaus Baumgartel contacts all people on EOI list to ensure they have direct registration particulars for Avonlie Solar.</p> <p>Organised Steering Committee for Central West Lifestyle Magazine project.</p> <p>Mr Rick Shaw of Finley is working with regional EPCs to mobilise service providers to take advantage of work at the various solar farms, including those proposed for Narrandera.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Survey of motels in Dec 2019 indicates approx. 60 solar farm workers from Darlington Point project staying in Narrandera facilities.</p> <p>February survey reveals 30+ Darlington Point Solar farm workers accommodated in Narrandera.</p> <p>Solar Farm Reference Group considers final draft of Accommodation and Employment Strategy for Avonlie Solar farm.</p> <p>Strategy adopted and endorsed by Dept of Planning</p>
1.4	<b>Build a strong, positive profile for Narrandera Shire</b>	1.4.1	Implement the branding strategy and signage strategy.	<p>Council agrees on style, wording and location of 6 new town entry sign at its 18 June 2019 meeting.</p> <p>Designs of signs agreed and signs ordered. Installation around end of August/early September.</p> <p>All 6 signs installed as at 16 September.</p> <p>3 signs installed at prominent locations promoting the Easter Rod Run Show and Shine</p> <p>Planning underway for new banners and window decals at the airport promoting Narrandera. Window decals installed.</p> <p>Draft design for Wiradjuri welcome message prepared and approved by elders group.</p> <p>New pole banners designed and ready to go into production. Installation due in March 2022.</p> <p><b>New signage under development by Tourism and ED Coordinator.</b></p>
		1.4.2	Develop and implement a communications strategy, including articulating key messages.	<p>Reinforce process with ED staff for communicating event arrangements to ensure no breakdown in arrangements.</p> <p>EDM prepares media releases as appropriate as well as items for Council communicate and newsletter.</p> <p><b>Items prepared from time to time for Council's community newsletter and media releases as appropriate.</b></p>
		1.4.3	Build the Shire's digital presence, including launching a new Council website, embracing social media and capitalising on opportunities provided by third party data bases, websites and apps.	<p>Development of Council website underway. EDO is on development team.</p> <p>New website launched</p> <p>Partnership with BEC for a digital and online marketing workshop on 6 December 2018.</p> <p>Review Federal Government's National Digital Economy Strategy released Dec 2018 titled "Australia's Tech Future". Review Federal Government Small Business Digital taskforce Report March 2018.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Review Business Listings category for new website. Prepare new list and content.</p> <p>FSG researching potential sites in Grong Grong for installation of a communications tower.</p> <p>No progress in this matter as at 31 July</p> <p>FSG still researching possible sites at Grong Grong as at 24 November 2022</p> <p>FSG contacted – helping with making contact with owner or Grong Grong site Feb 2023</p>
		1.4.4	Effectively market and promote the Shire, to raise its profile and increase awareness of its strengths, assets and opportunities.	<p>Ongoing. Progressive and targeted distribution of Winter Edition 2019 of Central West Lifestyle Magazine featuring Narrandera o people of influence in various organisations.</p> <p>Provide comment for NRMA Annual Report 2019 on invitation from NRMA regarding installation of EV fast Charger at Narrandera.</p> <p>Australia post announces that it has developed a postage stamp featuring the image of the lizard on the National Award -winning Narrandera Water Tower. Supporting postcard also produced depicting the Koala fascia of the water tower.</p> <p>Enter the Reverse Vending Machine-Return and Earn project in the relevant section of the Keep Australia Beautiful Awards.</p> <p>CEO of Keep Australia Beautiful Council visits Narrandera in September and inspects town and the RVM</p> <p>Judging of applications in KAB awards deferred until March 2021.</p> <p>Council advised that it is a finalist in the Return and Earn prize category and will either be the overall winner or highly commended.</p> <p>Council receives award in Local Government category Return and Earn litter prevention award and is commended for social, economic and environmental outcomes. EDM accepts award on behalf of Council at KAB Awards function in Murrurundi on Saturday 13 March.</p> <p>Tiffany organises several key publication advertisements.</p> <p>Advertisement prepared for Regional Lifestyle Magazine Collectors Edition 2 due for publication in October 2021 featuring Lake Talbot Award Winning Water Park and Water Tower art.</p> <p>Regional Lifestyle Magazine published October 21 including Narrandera feature.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				Continuing marketing and promotions actioned by Tourism and Economic Development Coordinator Narrandera feature in Autumn 2022 Country Change Magazine Looking into greater Digital advertising (Social/ Google etc) and promotion avenues with Tourism and Economic Development Coordinator.
		1.4.5	Encourage the community to be advocates for the Shire, including speaking about the positives.	Ongoing
		1.4.6	Re-develop the Narrandera Visitor Information Centre as focal point for both tourism and economic development.	<p>Awaiting response from 'Playground on the Murrumbidgee' NSW State Funding application. Considering application for current round of funding with BBRF. Funding confirmed from NSW Government of \$8 Million for Playground on Murrumbidgee project including the replacement of the VIC with the Narrandera Destination and Discovery Hub. VIC closed during Corona Virus Pandemic and staff either working from home or redeployed. Possible reopening 1 June 2020 VIC reopens on 1 June with strict social distancing requirements in place. Perspex barriers installed to protect staff and customers. Enquiry levels reduced compared to normal times but public is travelling again in reduced numbers. 23/7 First meeting of project team to progress the construction of the Destination and Discovery Hub-Emily Curry as Project Manager. Project plan and timelines established. April/May meetings with Amy Smedley from Studio S2 Architects to review pre-design report for Narrandera Destination and Discovery Hub. Further meeting with architects in July. Preparations underway for vacating the VIC on 10/11 September and moving into the Arts and Community centre. Transition from old VIC to Arts and Community Building completed as planned and excellent temporary facility established. Architects engaged, Interpretive design and fitout consultants engaged and builder selected ready to commence construction as at March 2022.</p> <p>March 10 sod turning ceremony to mark commencement of the D&amp;DH As at 1 June 2022 foundations laid.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>AS at 31 July construction progressing</p> <p>As at 30 September steel framework in place-work progressing.</p> <p>AS at 24 November construction progressing. Tourism and Economic Development Coordinator working with consultants on interpretive panels for discovery hub and Events and Visitor Services Team Leader fine tuning staffing needs for completed facility and planning retail strategy.</p>

- ✓ Additional resources required in Year 1 to build the framework to support implementation in Years 2 and 3.

### Initiative 2: Enhancing our Liveability

Lifestyle and work-life balances play a major role in relocation and investment decisions. Working with our community, Narrandera Shire Council will continue to develop, position and promote Narrandera Shire as:

- A welcoming, caring and safe community.
- Having quality, comprehensive facilities and services.
- Offering a contemporary, vibrant, affordable lifestyle in a physically attractive setting.
- Providing a positive business environment with strong locational advantages and diverse investment opportunities.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
2.1	Continue to improve presentation – creating positive first impressions	2.1.1	Implement the Narrandera CBD Masterplan – subject to funding and staging –further developing the town centre as an attractive place to shop and socialise, including provision of free public WIFI in main street.	Ongoing
		2.1.2	Develop attractive gateway arrival points and entry corridor to the Shire, Narrandera and villages.	<p>Refer 1.4.1 for Town entry signage</p> <p>Pole banners installed at Grong Grong highway entry point.</p> <p>Window decals promoting Narrandera are now in place at the airport and new Community Fare Banner on display.</p>
		2.1.3	Improve the presentation of the Shire's industrial areas.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>4 new poles and banners erected at entry to Red Hill Industrial Estate at Cnr Driscoll Rd and Barellan Rd.</p> <p>Impending development will greatly improve appearance of the RH Industrial Estate in due course.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Progress report on sales of industrial land on Red Hill Industrial Estate:                      Lot 71 sold to Di Donato and settled. For industrial units for lease.                      Lot 72 sold to Serendipity and settled. For truck depot                      Lot 73 sold to Dawson and settled. For large recreational vehicle storage.                      Lot 66 sold to Dharmasena subject to contract. For 2ha solar farm                      Lot 67 sold to Solar Switch Energy for 28ha green solar digital asset management facility. Subject to contract                      Lots 75 &amp; 76 Sold to Mod Pod Homes for modular home building enterprise. Contracts exchanged.                      Lots 43 and 44. 7 hectares in total sold to Bhullar Group for steel fabrication factory and industry training facility. Contract exchange is imminent. Deposit paid, contracts signed.                      Bhullar contracts exchanged.                      Council sale to Dharmasena for lot 66 (2ha)-solar farm-contracts exchanged                      Council sale to Solar Switch Renewables lot 67 (28ha)-contracts exchanged.                      New road construction approximately 500m well advanced on Red Hill industrial estate..                      New Road named Drover's Road has been sealed and almost complete as at 24 November</p> <p>'Land Sale' pole mounted banners at entrance to Driscoll Road to be replaced with suitable message now all Council land is sold.</p> <p>Leaving sold banners in place for now</p>
2.2	Enhance lifestyle	2.2.1	Continue to improve and expand recreation, sporting and leisure facilities within the Shire.	Ongoing
		2.2.2	Develop and diversify arts and cultural activities.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Festival application included in the Community Events Program allocation-awaiting funding advice.                      Funding approved for all ten Community Events program 80% funding received in accordance with funding deed. Balance on completion of events.                      2 events successfully completed. Wagga REA Horse Trials and Koala Fest.                      Separate reports to be provided on these events.                      Living Well Narrandera Event on program to be presented by Narrandera Arts and Cultural Committee early 2023.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions	Progress
		2.2.3	<p>Continue to develop and promote a dynamic and vibrant program of events and activities.</p> <p>Express support for possible future Annual General Meeting of NSW National Party in Narrandera in 2020.</p> <p>Arrange 2 events for Small Business Month October in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group.</p> <p>Marketing Tourism and Economic Development Coordinator making contact with National Party Conference Organiser to offer support.</p> <p>National Party Conference deferred till health emergency passes</p> <p>Cavy Show cancelled</p> <p>Good old Days cancelled</p> <p>Rockin' on East cancelled</p> <p>Fully booked pop - up drive in theatre event for 3 October with 120 vehicles booked to attend.</p> <p>Highly successful event with 135 in attendance and positive feedback from patrons.</p> <p>Successful Show 'n Shine event in conjunction with Easter Rod Run 2021. 5,000 tickets issued for Shown N Shine on Easter Sunday. 350 vehicles on display at Narrandera Sportsground. Positive feedback on the event from organisers Steve and Ray Aldric.</p> <p>Discussions with Rockin on East committee around possible festival on October long weekend 2021.</p> <p>Rockin on east planning progressing. Events and Visitor Services Team leader Brenda Hartmire assisting Rockin on East committee.</p> <p>Rockin on East Event cancelled-Covid impacts</p> <p>Good ol' Days Barellan Cancelled-Covid impacts</p> <p>Preparations in hand for Rod Run easter 2022. Planning meeting held on 4 Feb 2022 with Rod Run Organisers/promoters.</p> <p>Discussions with Narrandera Business Group on support activities for Rockin on East October Long Weekend</p> <p>10 Events identified from various community groups and Council for consideration by Council to participate in the NSW Govt Reconnecting Regional NSW-Community Events program.</p> <p>Council endorses 10 events and submission made to funding body for 10 events-awaiting advice on approval. To be conducted between now and 31 March 2023.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Funding approved for all 10 events as submitted. Events program commenced.</p> <p>CEP event funding - remaining events - Narrandera Rodeo, CWA Food event, Lions Family Fun Day and Soroptimist Wellness Day</p>
2.3	<b>Advocate for the retention and expansion of facilities and services</b>	2.3.1	Advocate for improved childcare, health care, aged care and social assistance facilities and services within the Shire.	<p>Preparing for Health Alliance meeting to bring together primary health and aged care and associated agencies in Narrandera Shire.</p> <p>EDM to meet with Dr Romeo who is unavailable until end of July 2019.</p> <p>Requested meeting with Dr and Mrs Romeo</p> <p>Meeting with Dr and Mrs Romeo held, and support expressed for Alliance meeting.</p> <p>Alliance meeting arranged for 29 November in Narrandera with representatives of agencies will discuss proposal for a Narrandera Health Alliance.</p> <p>Meeting arranged with Federal MP Sussan Ley and State MP Stephanie Cooke to discuss Health issues 29 November at 2pm</p> <p>Narrandera Health Advisory Group formed at meeting held on 29 November in Narrandera.</p> <p>Meeting with Minister Mark Coulton Thurs 13<sup>th</sup> Feb at which he advises that the MLHD has had its 'Pathway' GP trainee program approved.</p> <p>Meeting of Narrandera Health Advisory Group convened for 5 March to consider pilot Pathway program developed by MLHD.</p> <p>CEO of MLHD outlines Rural Generalist GP Training pilot that will provide doctors in GP practice and at hospitals in rural area of the MLHD.</p> <p>New Doctor commences at Dr Romeo's practice in May 2020 for 12 months.</p> <p>2 new Doctors to commence at Dr Romeo's Practice early in new financial year 2020 on long term contract.</p> <p>Dr Sonia Volante has finished as at 26 October 20 with Dr Romeo Practice and she has left Narrandera and is practising in Canberra. She has vacated 19 Argyle st and a new Doctor at the Romeo practice, Dr Abdallah, is renting the house for \$150 per week for 6 months initially from commencement on 22 Dec 2020.</p> <p>Jill Ludford advises that a new VMO is commencing in Narrandera in 2021</p> <p>Narrandera Health Advisory Group in recess during Covid pandemic recognising the significant workload on all those in the health sector.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>NHAG holds first meeting on 2 Dec 2021 by zoom . Meetings in recess since start of Covid Pandemic in recognition of workload stress on health sector participants in NHAG. Next meeting scheduled for 4 March 2022</p> <p>NHAG met on 4 March by Zoom. Noting Mayor and GM have requested through Steph Cooke office a meeting with NSW Minister for Health to discuss local needs for a dialysis service.</p> <p>NHAG meeting scheduled for Friday 3 June by zoom</p> <p>Next NHAG meeting scheduled for 2 September subject to date confirmation</p> <p>NHAG meeting held on 2 September</p> <p>NHAG meeting scheduled for 2 December (zoom)</p> <p>Council has supported the Rural Doctors Network and CWA Scholarship program with \$3,000 for two Bush Bursaries. RDN advise that two students will be placed in Narrandera from 9<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023, one student is a trainee nurse and the other student doctor.</p> <p>Narrandera medical service is managing their placements and their accommodation</p>
		2.3.2	Ensure that facilities and services have the capacity to support 'aging in place'.	<p>Strategy included in Western Riverina REDS.</p> <p>Council considering at its March meeting the preferred quote to develop a concept plan for an Independent Living Village at 1.4 ha site at Cnr Crescent and Elwin Streets.</p> <p>Council accepts quote from Noel Thomson Architecture of Wagga Wagga. Prerequisite reports required by Noel Thomson include land survey, environmental report and geotechnical report. Qualified providers engaged and work in progress.</p> <p>All reports completed and provided to Noel Thomson. Concept plans (Draft) expected to be presented to seniors' group in July.</p> <p>3 Options of concept plan prepared by Noel Thomson are to be refined and together with a report presented to ELT on 11 August then to the seniors' group on 17 August prior to Council briefing and Council meeting on 18 August.</p> <p>Noel Thomson concept plans presented to ELT and referred back to architect to further develop alternative concepts for development of the subject land. It is expected that amended submission will be available for Council in October. Final drafts expected to be presented to ELT on 13 October and then to Council.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Final drafts presented to Council briefing session by EDM and Noel Thomson architect. Proposals to be presented to seniors' group and to November Council with emphasis on marketing plan for Independent Living complex.</p> <p>Marketing Plan adopted by Council and invitations to provider organisations to provide Expressions of Interest in negotiating the purchase of land at Cnr Elwin and Crescent to develop an Independent Living Village were circulated on 18 January 2021 supported by metro, regional and local media with closing date for submissions being 26 February 2021.</p> <p>No Expressions of interest received but discussions continuing with possible interested parties. Meeting with seniors' group and surveys issued to members to determine preferred model.</p> <p>Meetings held with Argyle Housing CEO Wendy Middleton to discuss possible mixed housing model with independent living and affordable housing. Discussions commenced with recognised builder to work in conjunction with Argyle. Ongoing discussions.</p> <p>Further discussions with Anglicare as a possible interested developer of a mixed housing complex on Elwin/Crescent Streets site.</p> <p>Discussions with QPL real estate about making an approach to a developer to determine if they might be interested in a proposal to develop land at Cnr and Elwin to meet Independent Living Village requirements with a possible mixed development approach.</p> <p>Ongoing discussions with Argyle Housing through their chief Properties Officer Justin Nyholm. Provision of current residential leasing figures and home sales figures to Justin</p> <p>EDM met with Argyle Housing CEO and Board in Griffith 27 September at AGM function for stakeholders and clients.</p> <p>Argyle Housing CEO still interested in assessing Elwin/Crescent Street site for suitable development although there have been significant personnel changes at Argyle which may slow any progress for this.</p>
		2.3.3	Explore options / advocate for improved education outcomes within the Shire, including the re-opening of the Grong Grong Public School (if warranted), and	<p>The Grong Grong School Building was sold in 2017.</p> <p>Meeting date/time to be confirmed with Narrandera TAFE Services Coordinator</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
			the redevelopment of the TAFE campus as a ONE TAFE Flexible Learning Centre.	
2.4	Encourage and support opportunities for community development	2.4.1	Explore opportunities for providing information, activities and programs that will help new residents and people on temporary work visas assimilate into the community.	<p>Liaise with RDA skilled migration unit.</p> <p>EDM attended multicultural meeting in Leeton with all relevant agencies present to evaluate what services might be available to Narrandera residents as an outreach service. Focus on migrants and refugees.</p> <p>PIC piggeries apply for Labour agreement for skilled piggery workers that could see as many as 40 workers over the 5year period of the agreement with 19 potential permanent residents in years 4 and 5 of the agreement.</p>
		2.4.2	Continue to support activities (eg events, sport, creative arts etc) that encourage engagement and social inclusion and build pride in, and commitment to, the local community.	<p>Easter Rod Run and Shown N Shine a huge success. Council de-brief held with external group debrief to follow.</p> <p>Corona Virus response advocated by Federal Government and Senior Health Officials includes avoiding gatherings in excess of 500 people. This will impact proposed events such as Folk Festival on 20-22 March and Rod Run Events on 11 -12 April. These events have been cancelled.</p> <p>Meeting held with Ray and Steve Aldrick late 2020 and confirmed that the Rod Run will be held at Easter 2021 under closely managed arrangements to satisfy any Covid restrictions in place at the time. Show and Shine to be conducted at the Sports Ground on Easter Sunday.</p> <p>Successful Show and Shine event.</p> <p>New Events and Visitor Services Team Leader Brenda Hartmire commences at VIC in June.</p> <p>EOIs invited from community to participate in the NSW Governments Community Events program see item 2.2.3</p> <p>Submission made to Community Events Program. Awaiting approval as at 31 July</p> <p>Funding approved for all 10 CEP events</p> <p>Program progressing with 3 events completed as at 30 November 2022</p> <p>CEP event funding - remaining events - Narrandera Rodeo, CWA Food event, Lions Family Fun Day and Soroptimist Wellness Day</p>
		2.4.3	Support community initiatives to develop, grow and enhance the liveability of the Shire.	<p>ED Dept. continues to contribute to preparation of funding applications such as Stronger Country Communities, Fixing Country Roads Regional Growth Fund etc.</p> <p>Narrandera Imperials Football Netball Club has been invited to apply for funds to build a new Club House through the NSW Government's Regional Sports</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				Infrastructure Fund. ED staff have assisted with preparation of the Business Case and other requirements where needed. Winter Edition 2019 of Central West Lifestyle Magazine highlights opportunities in Narrandera for new residents. New promotional videos produced Narrandera is feature month in January 2021 for Country Change program with Facebook banner proclaiming 'Live the Dream in Narrandera'. Narrandera is feature month for Country Change in July 2021.
2.5	Attract new residents	2.5.1	Develop and implement a Resident Attraction and Retention Strategy.	

### Initiative 3: Economic Growth and Diversification

Economic growth will come through growing and strengthening existing economic activities and businesses, and attracting new businesses and investment.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
3.1	Encourage and nurture business start-ups	3.1.1	Provide access to information and business advisory services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information received from a variety of agencies eg: RDA, Business Connects, RDA, EDA, Regional Australia Institute and others disseminated to Narrandera Business database from time to time as received.</li> </ul>
		3.1.2	Assess feasibility of hosting business start-up events to link people with business ideas to business advisory and support services (eg Many Rivers, BEC etc).	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Hosting Small Business month October on 14 October 2021 at TAFE CLC in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group and TAFE-speakers and networking-eats/drinks.</p> <p>TAFE will be a financial contributor to this event if it can proceed-depends on Covid restrictions.</p> <p>Small Business Month October 2021 postponed by State Government until March 2022 when an event to be developed in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group and Narrandera TAFE CLC</p> <p>Successful conduct of Small Business Month events on March 10</p> <p>Successful conduct in partnership with Narrandera Business Group of two events for Small Business Month November 2022.</p> <p>Continual communication with Narrandera Business Group</p>
3.2	Support and nurture	3.2.1	Provide access to information, advice and leverage opportunities for information sharing.	<p>Distribute information cards for NSW Business Connect eg through Business Group and at NSC front counter</p> <p>Refer public enquiries to Remplan Community and Economic profile</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
	<b>existing businesses</b>			<p>Electronically distribute via group emails to local business, advice on Corona Virus support programs from AusIndustry, Business NSW, RDA, EDA and others.</p> <p>Continuing distribution electronically of business advice and programs received from various agencies.</p>
		3.2.2	Encourage and support 'buy local' initiatives.	<p>Installation of new RVM at Narrandera Landfill will provide vouchers redeemable at Coles Narrandera.</p> <p>Last 3 weeks data from RVM as follows:</p> <p>Week ended 5/4 \$1496.90</p> <p>Week ended 12/4 \$1367.60</p> <p>Week ended 19/4 \$2649.20#</p> <p>Total voucher redemptions in May as advised by Coles is \$17,500(over 5 weeks)</p> <p>This is increased spending at Coles by locals thereby contributing to local employment and minimising shopper bleed to Leeton etc.</p> <p>Total voucher redemptions in June total \$12,500 (over 4 weeks)</p> <p>Total voucher redemptions in July total \$12,522 (over 4 weeks)</p> <p>Total Voucher redemptions for August total \$15,081(over 5 weeks)</p> <p>CEO of Tomra advises that as at September 2020 over 1,100,000 containers deposited in Narrandera RVM (approx. 35,000 per week)</p> <p>Total voucher redemptions for September \$13,178.80 (4 weeks)</p> <p>Total Voucher redemptions for October, November and December 2020 are \$13,983, \$19,439, and \$16,804 respectively.</p> <p>RVM total voucher redemptions for January 2021 are \$23,480 (5 weeks)</p> <p>RVM total voucher redemptions for February 2021 are \$18,593 (4 weeks)</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for March 2021 are \$14,799 (4 weeks)</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for April 2021 are \$16,255 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for May 2021 are \$15,294 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for June 2021 are \$15,983 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for July 2021 are \$13,025 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for August 2021 are \$9,348 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for September 2021 are \$20,402 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for October 2021 are \$16,499 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for November 2021 are \$15,126 over 4 weeks</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>RVM Voucher redemptions for December 2021 are \$23,663 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher Redemptions for January 2022 are \$21,594 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher Redemptions February 2022 are \$17,053 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for March 2022 are \$18,613 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for April 2022 are \$18,394 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for May 2022 are \$16,708 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for June are \$15,132 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for July are \$16,590 over 5 weeks</p> <p>RVM voucher redemptions for August are \$14,426 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for September 22 are \$14,960 over 4 weeks</p> <p>RVM Voucher redemptions for October 22 are \$20,006 over 5 weeks</p> <p>Licence renewed with TOMRA Cleanaway with licence fee payable by Tomra negotiated at \$5200 per annum with CPI increase after second year, until January 2027.</p> <p>Assist with advice to Mayor on controversial issue of Marketplace in Wagga Wagga seeking to provide free bus from Narrandera to their shopping complex and provision of gifts, vouchers etc. to shoppers from Narrandera. Temora, Cootamundra, and Tumut also targeted.</p> <p>Lobbying by the Mayors stops this potentially very negative impact on our retailers in Narrandera and similarly in the other towns.</p> <p>Early 2020 investigate 'Why leave Town Promotions' Community Gift Card program in conjunction with Narrandera Business Group.</p> <p>Join COSBOA Facebook group to access campaign digital content and supporter material and toolkit for a Government supported "Go Local First" campaign-no cost to Council. This complements the Narrandera 'Buy Local' initiative.</p> <p>Tiffany to attend 9 December Narrandera Business Group meeting to again discuss Why Leave Town Gift Card initiative as a 'buy local' initiative.</p> <p>Official opening by Mayor of new IGA supermarket postponed because of Covid lockdown. Supermarket is open to the public effective 18 August</p>
		3.2.3	Raise awareness of business advisory and support services and encourage businesses to participate in business and skills development programs.	<p>ED maintains a business distribution list and uses it to share information re opportunities for businesses in the Shire.</p> <p>Small Business Month October activities and facilitate BEC Skills for Business Success Workshops.</p> <p>Advise business database of series of short courses available at TAFE at no cost to people who enrol.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				Circulate business recovery material from various government agencies to local business database as received. <b>Ongoing</b>
		3.2.4	Facilitate opportunities for professional development, networking and innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site at landfill confirmed as suitable for 4- point RVM kiosk. Site plans prepared and execution of licence agreement with Tomra/Cleanaway completed by Council. Site plans and construction plan and power supply design commenced.</li> <li>Partnership with Tomra/Cleanaway and Council to mount a display in the Exhibition Hall at Narrandera Show on 7 September. This display will inform the public of the operational and container deposit requirements for the RVM.</li> <li>CEO of Tomra/Cleanaway to attend and address a business breakfast on 6 September. Joint venture Council and Narrandera Business Group.</li> <li>CEO of TOMRA/Cleanaway addresses a business breakfast with 34 in attendance on 6 September.</li> <li>TOMRA/Cleanaway and Council join to manage a stand at Narrandera Show with information on the Return and Earn program and the RVM.</li> <li>Preparation of site progressing at Narrandera Landfill entrance to accommodate the RVM.</li> <li>Actively promote Small Business Month October activities for professional development, networking and business tips.</li> <li>RVM scheduled for installation on 25 Feb 2020.</li> <li>RVM installed and operational with generator power on 28 Feb 2020 with solid use over first weekend.</li> <li>EDM and Marketing Tourism and ED Coordinator attend webinars by Economic Development Australia, Treasury on Covid 19 business support and recovery strategies</li> <li>Partner with Riverina Murray Business (BEC) and NBS for networking event to be held at TAFE CLC on 9 December.</li> <li>Event successfully held at Gallery room at Arts and Community centre</li> <li>March 10 SBM events</li> <li>Council's Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator Toneale O'Connell attends intense one week course with Economic Development Australia 29/8 to 2/9.-</li> </ul>
		3.2.5	Identify training programs and resources available on-line from Government	Local Government NSW sponsors Inclusive Tourism: Economic Opportunities.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
			Agencies and training providers and provide links to these from the Economic Development page of Council's website.	A new online learning course now available to explain how you can better service this market. VIC staff to undertake.
		3.2.6	Raise the profile of local businesses by providing opportunities to showcase, market and promote businesses products and services.	Ongoing Narrandera to feature in November 2019 Country Change program. In response to Covid 19 challenges to all business the Ed team through Tiffany Thornton has developed an online strategy through Facebook that at last report (July) had over 700 followers. Recurring opportunity provided through the Easter Rod Run Events. Circulate information from Geoff Reardon Manger ICN Southern Region on opportunities arising from proposed construction works for Energy Connect project. Narrandera Business Group staging an event early 2023 as part of the CEP program-Bonanza in Narrandera Meeting scheduled (6 Feb 2023) with new Business Advisor with Enterprise plus- Business Connect – discuss Jobs creation grant and what help is available for small businesses
		3.2.7	Encourage businesses to list on relevant industry data bases and websites and participate in programs such as trade missions.	As advised to NBG
		3.2.8	Encourage and assist local businesses to register on Federal, State and Council procurement data bases.	Developing relationship with Klaus Baumgartel, Regional Manager for Industry Capability Network to assist local industry connect with procurement data bases. Klaus to make contact with Uarah Fisheries and solar power companies considering locating in Narrandera Shire. Klaus Baumgartel has retired, and his replacement is Geoff Reardon. Circulate advice from Geoff Reardon to local business database about registration of EOIs for provision of goods and services to Energy Connect project.
		3.2.9	Work with major project proponents to identify the goods and services required and provide introductions to local businesses.	Database provided to Siemens/Gamesa the EPC for Avonlie Solar at Sandigo. Siemens Gamesa provide direct email contact address for expressions of interest from businesses wanting to register to provide their services to solar farm construction. Beon Energy takeover construction of Avonlie from Siemens Gamesa to be finalised before end of 2019.



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>As at 18 Feb 2020 information received which points to delay in Avonlie project which is unlikely to commence before May/June as a result of grid capacity constraints. Confirmed by Mike Whitbread of RES.</p> <p>As at May 2020 RES advises that Siemens/Gamesa is confirmed as their EPC and Accommodation and Employment Strategy finalised for sign-off by the Department.</p> <p>As at July 2020 Siemens /Gamesa withdraws from Australia and therefore from Avonlie project. RES to appoint new EPC and advise Council in due course.</p> <p>Register via ICN for opportunities associated with the Energy Connect project-new transmission line from South Australia to Wagga Wagga.</p> <p>Ongoing contact with Regional Manager of ICN Mr Geoff Reardon in relation to industry development in Narrandera. Provided Geoff with contact details for Bhullar and Mod Pod Homes.</p> <p>Opportunities at Avonlie solar farm promoted through the NSW Industry Capability Network (ICN)</p>
		3.2.10	Encourage and assist businesses to prepare for the NBN and embrace digital / on-line business and marketing opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local businesses were offered the opportunity to attend Digital Ready Course and free face to face merchandising consult during 2017.</li> <li>GM provide report on meeting with NBN.</li> <li>Met with Field Solutions personnel together with NSC IT personnel to discuss range of their alternative telecommunications and digital services.</li> <li>Partner with BEC Small Business Advisory Service to present a Digital and Online Marketing workshop on 6 December.</li> <li>NSC and Narrandera Business Group sponsor the BEC Social Media Masterclass on 28 October with approx. 25 attending at TAFE CLC.</li> <li>Meeting with Mark Wilkie to discuss future meeting of Digital Economy Group.</li> <li>Work with RAMJO to participate in Regional Connectivity program to improve online data capabilities.</li> <li>Arrange meeting with NBN new development team to include DGMI and other relevant staff. Preliminary arrangements for a business forum after Easter 2022.</li> <li>Date for NBN Business Forum to be advised by Sean O'Reilly of NBN</li> <li>Business Information session 17 August at Exies 2pm-5pm and 6pm-8pm</li> </ul>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information session presented by NBN representatives with very poor attendance.</li> </ul>
		3.2.11	Facilitate access by business and community groups to funding programs.	<p>A data base of funding programs is maintained and provided to community groups. Media releases and funding program announcements emailed to business group database.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Community Events program publicly advertised.</p>
3.3	Strengthen and grow key sectors	3.3.1	<b>Agriculture and Agri Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a producer data base and establish networks and communication channels.</li> </ul>	<p>Sandigo Solar farm.</p> <p>2018-01-30 – Developers have met with Council on the proposal. Sandigo or Avonlie Solar project, an initiative of Renewable Energy Systems (RES), was explained during community consultation sessions. RES has proposed a \$250,000 community fund component as one of its initiatives. This proposal is currently being reviewed by staff. Avonlie scheduled to provide notice to proceed in March 2019 with commercial operation May 2020. Avonlie awarded Development Consent on 8 August 2019. Council representatives meet with Jacobs Consulting appointed by Siemens/Gamesa, the EPC for Avonlie Solar, to review the Accommodation and Employment Strategy. Updates strategy presented for review to solar reference group.</p> <p>Accommodation and Employment Strategy reviewed and completed. Avonlie development now not expected to commence until H1 2021 as EPC Siemens Games has withdrawn from Australian projects and therefore RES need to appoint a new EPC (solar farm builder).</p> <p>As at September 2021 commencement of construction of "Avonlie" Solar farm is believed to be imminent.</p> <p>As at 29 September RES advises that it has sold its interest in the Avonlie Solar farm to Iberdrola which operates one of the largest portfolios of renewable energy assets in Australia. Iberdrola senior management has already made contact with the General Manager.</p> <p>Beon Energy Solutions appointed as EPC to commence construction in March 2022 and recruitment program underway as at February 2022</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to advocate for water security.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Lake Coolah placed on agenda for Western Riverina REDS update</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage and support adoption of new activities and technologies, sustainable land management practices, and innovative business models.</li> </ul>	<p>EV fast charger installed January 2019</p> <p>Negotiate sale of Council land on the Red Hill Industrial Estate for a leading-edge digital technology development.</p> <p>Contacts negotiated and exchanged for sale of 28 ha of land on the Northern extremity of the Industrial Estate.</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for and assist producers to develop strategies to address labour and skills shortages and develop the local workforce.</li> </ul>	<p>EDM attended Workforce Futures Forum presented by RDA Riverina in Griffith on 10 May.</p> <p>Piggery Forum held in Narrandera addressed by industry experts on 30 August. 45 people present.</p> <p>Explore possible opportunities for the pig industry resulting from the African Swine Fever sweeping China and other Asian countries.</p> <p>Advice received from DPI International Engagement Division that Australia does not have a pork export arrangement with China.</p> <p>PIC Australia apply for Pork Industry labour Agreement for Grong Grong Piggery. Letter of support provided.</p> <p>EDM to participate in focus group on 9 October for CSU Research project being Riverina Skills Audit.</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities for and encourage development of new processing and value-adding opportunities and utilisation of waste products.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Enquiry from investor about establishing pig abattoir on Red Hill Industrial Estate. Investor provided with development guidelines.</p>
		3.3.2	<b>Aquaculture</b>	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the expansion of the aquaculture industry within the Shire.</li> </ul>	<p>Preliminary discussions held with Uarah Fisheries on Old Wagga Rd. Dr John Yu. He is planning expansion at the fishery estimated to cost \$2.5 million. Arranged for Wayne Murphy, Export Adviser to contact John Yu. Also arranged for Klaus Baumgartel of ICN to contact Dr Yu to offer him assistance with his expansion planning. Advised possible sources of funding. Uarah advises late May that DA is imminent.</p> <p>Assist Dr Yu with information on how to source an apprentice in aquaculture.</p> <p>14 Jan 2021 Dr Yu submits Development Application for large shed at Uarah Fisheries.</p> <p>DA approved and consent issued to applicant. April 26 2021.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				EDM Assisted Uarah Fisheries to obtain Government Funding support through the Regional Job Creation Fund to the value of \$140,000 to expand activity at the fishery.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build skills and knowledge about the industry within Council and the local community.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the possibility of positioning the Narrandera Fisheries Research Centre as a Centre of Excellence for the Murray Cod industry.</li> </ul>	<p>Under consideration</p> <p>Meet with Manager Narrandera Fisheries and establish partnership arrangement for development of large inland fish aquarium at proposed Narrandera Destination and Discovery Hub.</p> <p>Murray cod to feature on stage 2 mural for Narrandera water tower. Completion of the mural delayed as a result of Covid restrictions.</p> <p>Narrandera Fisheries selected as safe facility to relocate distressed Murray Cod and other species transferred from other environments under stress as a result of the drought.</p> <p>Centrepiece aquarium planned for new Destination &amp; Discovery Hub to feature endemic varieties from the Murrumbidgee River including cod. This is a promotional feature to draw attention to the Narrandera Fisheries as a Centre of Excellence and tourist attraction.</p>
		3.3.3	<b>Retail &amp; Wholesale</b>	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position and promote Narrandera as a lifestyle centre.</li> </ul>	<p>Central West Lifestyle Magazine Winter Edition launched on 24 May 2019 and targeted distribution by Council to strategic individuals and organisations commenced.</p> <p>Reserved 12 pages dedicated to Narrandera in Collector's Edition no. 2 of Regional Lifestyle Magazine. \$4500. Free one page advert and 20 complimentary issues for Council. To be circulated October. 6000 copies to be printed. Estimated readership 25,000 to 30,000.</p> <p>One page advertisement featuring Lake Talbot Water Park and Water Tower Murals prepared and lodged with Regional Lifestyle magazine. Due for publication in October 2021.</p> <p>Special feature on Narrandera appears in Collector's Edition of Regional Lifestyle Magazine October 2021.</p> <p>Narrandera feature in Autumn 2022 Country Change Magazine.</p> <p>Ongoing through marketing program across various publications</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage and facilitate training (customer service, merchandise display, e.commerce etc)</li> </ul>	Ongoing
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage development of and participation in cooperative marketing and promotional campaigns.</li> </ul>	<p>Invited Griffith, Leeton and Lockhart to send brochures with staff to Adelaide for Caravan and Camping Expo. New Country Change promotion by RDA is imminent.</p> <p>Country Change program launched by RDA.</p> <p>Enrolled in Country change for 2020.</p> <p>Country Change magazine launched by Deputy PM in September 2020</p> <p>Country Change participant for 2021. Narrandera as feature location January 2021.</p> <p>Narrandera Koalas and lifestyle issues to feature in Whatsup Downunder documentary filmed in Narrandera on 22 April.</p>
		3.3.4	<b>Tourism / Visitor Economy</b>	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop products, experiences and activities, including events.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Tourism team organising pop-up drive-in cinema experience for 3 October with good early registrations. At Henry Mathieson Oval. 120 vehicles registered to comprise a full house.</p> <p>Successful movie event as reported.</p> <p>REA Wagga Horse Trials conducted in Narrandera weekend 24/25 October with very positive feedback. Possible future development of this event in Narrandera is being researched by events team.</p> <p>Communication from Emily of Wagga Horse Trials 13 Jan 2021 indicated desire to stage next major event in Narrandera in August 2021 and in subsequent years. Events and Tourism team to make contact and facilitate arrangements between Narrandera Pony Club and the Wagga Horse Trials people. Pony Club representative indicates that are happy to host the Wagga Horse Trials event in August 2021.</p> <p>EDM and team finalise artwork with Apparition Media for stage 2 mural on the water tower and schedule the artwork for 23 August following completion of remedial paintwork to the water tower in June. Painting of the mural delayed indefinitely due to Covid restrictions.</p> <p>Painting rescheduled for around end of January 2022</p> <p>Apparition media commence the third artwork on 31 Jan 2022 and complete the impressive mural in 4 days.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Funding application made to the Regional Tourism Activation Fund to establish formal mountain bike trails on Rocky Waterholes Crown lands precinct. Expecting an announcement in November</p> <p>As at February 2022 it appears that the application has been unsuccessful</p> <p>Discuss Koala Research Centre proposal with Tourism Team and arrange to attend Koala Committee meeting to discuss the proposal on 3 November</p> <p>Attend Koala Committee and update the committee on Council's decision to facilitate the establishment of a Koala Research centre in Narrandera. As at February 2022 negotiations underway and continuing with Charles Sturt University School of vet Science to progress the Research Centre idea.</p> <p>Two DPIE funded film nights on 10 and 11 April at Sports ground free event and free activities.</p> <p>Team from NSW Parks and Wildlife Koala Biodiversity and Ecological Health Branch visit Narrandera in June and over several days to conduct extensive field research and detailed health screening of 18 Koalas. Health indicators and population indicators excellent. Full results available in September.</p> <p>NSW Parks and Wildlife Team booked to present preliminary findings of research to October 18 Council meeting.</p> <p>NSW Parks and Wildlife present preliminary findings to October Council briefing. Power Point Presentations received and will be presented to Koala Regeneration Committee by Events and Visitor Services Team Leader Brenda.</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to improve infrastructure, facilities and services for visitors</li> </ul>	<p>Awaiting outcome of 'Playground on the Murrumbidgee' funding application under NSW funding program.</p> <p>Funding of \$8 million approved by NSW State Government</p> <p>VIC closed during health emergency</p> <p>VIC reopens to public on 1 June 2020</p> <p>Positive feedback from participants in REA Equestrian competition held in Narrandera on 24/25 October. Future development of this event being explored by events team.</p> <p>Wagga REA Horse Trials stage successful event on as a CEP funded event over 20/21 August.</p> <p>Wagga REA Horse Trials confirmed for 2023- Tourism and Economic Development Coordinator in contact with group</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update and improve information and promotional collateral.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Purchased promotional backpacks for insertion of information on Narrandera supported by vouchers redeemable at local businesses. Backpacks to be distributed F.O.C from time to time by V.I.C. staff to visiting caravanners and campers at Brewery Flats. Survey box to be installed on amenities block at Brewery Flats for survey collection.</li> <li>Survey Box installed and positive responses being received. Data collected will be advised to the Taskforce in due course</li> <li>New Riverina Touring Map published featuring 12 LGAs in the greater Riverina</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively market and promote the Shire, including implementing the branding strategy and expanding the Shire's on-line presence and capitalising on digital and social media opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Joint promotion between Narrandera, Murrumbidgee, Lockhart and Leeton to utilise digital capacity to develop a state-of-the-art visitors guide for the sub region</li> <li>Plan new banners/flags at Airport terminal as a branding exercise</li> <li>Distinctive painted images promoting Narrandera on side curtains of Hayllars semi-trailer.</li> <li>Regular Newsletters prepared and distributed throughout the close down of Narrandera Argus prior to it changing hands. Newsletters continuing to be prepared and distributed by Communications Officer</li> <li>ongoing</li> </ul>
		3.3.5	<b>Transport and Logistics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage off Narrandera's strategic location to position and develop the Shire as a road transport hub.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Discussions with Janus Electrics GM on the desirability of establishing Narrandera as a changeover hub for batteries for electric trucks. To be addressed in stage 2 or 3 of Janus Electrics strategy.</li> <li>Accept invitation from Janus to attend a showcase event in Sydney on 5 April.</li> <li>EDM attended the Janus Showcase and met with Managing Director Lex Forsyth &amp; other executives to promote the case for Narrandera to be an ideal battery changeover location also a location for truck conversions from diesel to battery(electric).</li> </ul>
		3.3.6	<b>Health Care &amp; Social Assistance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for continued improvements in health, aged care and social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate with local health sector agencies to seek support for program initiated by the Gwydir Health Alliance. Proposal is to convene a meeting in Narrandera to form a local health alliance. Little indication of support and</li> </ul>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
			assistance services, programs and facilities.	<p>limited response to petition aimed at bringing shortages of rural doctors to the attention of Government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for Health Alliance meeting after Easter 2019 break. Meet with Dr Romeo, obtain feedback from RAMJO Health Group to prepare for possible meeting in June/July.</li> <li>• Meeting with Dr Romeo and Liz completed.</li> <li>• Health Alliance meeting planned for 29 November in Narrandera</li> <li>• Narrandera Health Advisory Group (NHAG) established on 29 November 2019.</li> <li>• NHAG meeting on 5 March to consider pilot Pathway program developed by MLHD and approved by Government.</li> <li>• CEO of MLHD outlines program that will provide more trainee Generalist Pathway trainee doctors into local health system as GPs and at the hospital</li> <li>• New GP commencing in Narrandera at Dr Romeo's practice on 9 May 2020. Dr Sonia Volante is coming from another NSW rural location and is independent of the MLHD Generalist Pathway program.</li> <li>• Dr Volante has left Dr Romeo practice as at 26 October 2020.</li> <li>• Dr Abdallah has commenced with Dr Romeo Practice as at 22 December 2020 and is occupying 19 Argyle St as tenant at \$150/week with Council subsidy \$100 per week (market rent \$250 per week)</li> <li>• Mayor lobbying for provision of a dialysis facility in Narrandera</li> <li>• Council supports the Rural Doctors' Network and CWA Program for Bush Bursaries in 2022 by providing \$3,000+GST for two bush bursaries for student medical(nursing) students.</li> </ul>
3.4	Target and attract new businesses and activities	3.4.1	Investigate possible investment attraction incentives and formulate an Economic Development Assistance Policy that articulates the support that Council can offer new businesses and investors.	<p>Policy ES 270 under review and going to ELT Jan 2021. Investigating new subdivision potential for Paterson Place in Red Hill Industrial Estate.</p> <p>POL ES 270 to new number POL 048 endorsed by Council for public exhibition. Exhibition period concludes 26 April 2021. Policy now in the policy register.</p> <p>New Small Business Incentive Scheme adopted by Council and operational as Policy POL 010.</p> <p>EDM attends Direct Foreign Investment Training in Sydney presented by Andreas Dressler an international identity, formerly with KPMG for 23 years, who has extensive experience representing countries and large corporations seeking foreign investment opportunities. Arranged by DPC.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Council provides response to EOI request from Australian Airline Pilot Academy and Rex Group for extended flying school academy. Narrandera/Leeton Airport facility submitted as ideal location in extensive proposal.</p> <p>Council representatives meet with senior Rex and AAPA officials on 27 Feb in Sydney. Strong indication that Narrandera will be selected as a training campus with facility development to occur at the airport.</p> <p>AS at April 16 CEO of AAPA planning visit to Narrandera in near future as a requirement to provide information to CASA authorising AAPA use of facilities at the airport.</p> <p>2 May inspect airport house with AAPA senior representatives Andrew Messer Head of Operations at Ballarat and Geoff Cook head of Operation at Wagga Wagga. Discuss other aspects of airport for AAPA use.</p> <p>15 May arrange zoom meeting with above AAPA representatives with key users Craig day from Aero Club and Steve Burgess of Millbrae Quarries.</p> <p>Craig Day provides AAPA with aerial map of South Western training area at Narrandera.</p> <p>Airport residence lease signed by AAPA and they take possession on 1 June. Awaiting confirmation of media opportunity for announcement of AAPA use of the residence as a briefing facility. AAPA awaiting CASA confirmation of arrangements.</p> <p>July 2020 CASA formally approves use of airport facilities and Narrandera airspace by AAPA. AAPA have commissioned construction and installation of a sign at front of airport residence. This will provide a media opportunity with AAPA involvement.</p> <p>AAPA sign completed and installed in front of airport residence now promoted as "AAPA Briefing centre-Narrandera Campus" Awaiting advice from AAPA as to a mutually convenient date for a media event.</p> <p>AAPA briefing centre officially opened with Chris Hine CEO of AAPA and Mayor Kschenka and Mayor Maytom of Leeton. Extensive and positive media exposure for this event</p> <p>Small Business Incentive Policy prepared and presented to Council for adoption and public exhibition. Policy 010 refers.</p> <p>5 blocks of industrial land on Red Hill Estate in process of sale to various business developers. New businesses expected to be developed include a</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>truck depot, an apiary business, a storage facility for large recreational vehicles, a modular home construction business, a milling facility for modular homes construction.</p> <p>3 blocks on RH Estate have proceeded to settlement. One large site contracts exchanged for modular home factory. One large 7ha site draft plan of subdivision prepared,, contracts signed, deposit paid, awaiting exchange. Negotiated sale of 28 ha of land on RH Industrial Estate for leading edge digital technology development, remaining 2ha sold for small scale solar farm. Red Hill Estate sold out.</p>
		3.4.2	Produce information and promotional collateral – in both digital and print formats.	See above – collateral: Industry Prospectus, Redhill Prospectus, Lifestyle Insert, 4 Redhill Videos, billboard sign, Land For Sale signs.
		3.4.3	Participate in forums, expos, trade missions etc that have the potential to bring new businesses / investment into the Shire.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>EDM attends Direct Foreign Investment training in Sydney in March organised by DPC. Program emphasises the importance of thoroughly developing and communicating Narrandera's value proposition.</p> <p>Local forum organised July 2019 for hospitality/accommodation sector to exchange information and learn of assistance available through Destination NSW to attract conferences to Narrandera.</p> <p>Facilitated Bee Forum 17/7/19. Ref 1.2.1</p> <p>Participated in Service NSW Regional Engagement Forum August 2019</p> <p>Participated in Ernst Young Inland Rail Regional Opportunities Forum 12 August.</p> <p>Participated in Dept of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development Forum at Wagga Wagga on 9 Oct 2019 on Inland Rail—Inland Rail Interface Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Attend National Renewables in Agriculture Conference and Expo 14 Nov 19</p> <p>Attending Janus Electrics Showcase in Sydney on April 5<sup>th</sup>-Electric truck technology-battery changeover and conversions.</p> <p>Attended Showcase ref 3.3.5</p>
		3.4.4	Explore opportunities to leverage off Council's Sister City programs.	<p>Current relationship with Urumqi is problematic given ongoing serious ethnic unrest in that city and its region, Xinjiang.</p> <p>As at November no response to August 2018 Communication to Chinese Ambassador seeking support for relationship with Urumqi.</p> <p>Feb 2019 still no communications from Chinese Ambassador</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				Current diplomatic relations and trade relations with China are likely to preclude any further relationship with the Peoples Republic of China for continuance of a sister city relationship. <b>Redundant</b>
		3.4.5	Investigate the potential of emerging / new activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government and service sector</li> <li>• Intensive agriculture</li> <li>• Niche / boutique agriculture and agri-businesses</li> <li>• Manufacturing – value-adding and processing</li> <li>• Renewable energy and use of waste products</li> </ul>	<p>Opportunities discussed to capitalise on the Smart Cities funding program, in particular the opportunity to develop projects around the renewable energy, solar farm developments planned for Narrandera Shire.</p> <p>Ongoing development with 3 renewable energy companies developing major solar farms in the Shire.</p> <p>Wrote to Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) to seek opportunity to discuss Narrandera's unique position in the Renewables development in Australia i.e., 3 Solar Farms and TransGrid duplication of 330KV line S.A to NSW. As at 19 June 2019.</p> <p>ARENA response from Alison Wiltshire, Director Business Development by phone 12/7/19 advising that this is not an issue for ARENA and we should contact Clean Energy Council and possibly Minister Taylor.</p> <p>Contact made with Clean Energy Council and Meeting arranged with key personnel.</p> <p>Met with CEC representatives in Melbourne (see separate report).</p> <p>Attended Renewables in Agriculture National Conference in Wagga wagga and obtained valuable information and made useful contacts with experts from the renewable energy sector,</p> <p>Arranging teleconference with Jessica Berry of Pitt and Sherry to assess solar farm development opportunities on Council land.</p> <p>Recent purchase of lots 163 and 164 Driscoll Road to accommodate an industrial development involving road construction materials manufacture with site construction expected to commence early 2021 and up to 13 employees over time.</p> <p>Lot 169 Driscoll Road sold to owner of two adjoining lots. Under contract.</p> <p>Sale of lot 169 settled.</p> <p>New enquiry for industrial process on lot 12 Driscoll Road (1.98 ha).</p> <p>Power availability being researched through Essential Energy.</p> <p>Discussions held with Geoff Reardon on potential business opportunities around solar farm construction in the Shire-eg waste disposal associated with solar components packaging.</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				New developments in manufacturing with two new industries planned for the Red Hill Industrial Estate. 2 new renewable energy developments to be developed on Red Hill Industrial Estate over total 30ha area.
		3.4.6	Market the Shire's strengths, assets and opportunities.	See above. Also, recent launch of new Visitor Information Booklet. ongoing

#### Initiative 4: Planning for the Economy of the Future

Economic development is dependent upon having suitable land and premises and utility and transport infrastructure to accommodate and facilitate growth as well as access to a work force. The focus will be on ensuring that these 'foundation blocks' are in place.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
Land & Premises				
4.1	Ensure sufficient supply of land and premises to facilitate and support growth	4.1.1	Annually review land use plans and strategies to ensure sufficient land is zoned to accommodate growth for industrial and residential activities.	<p>Reviewed 2017</p> <p>Ref 3.4. Investigating an overlay plan for Paterson Place to provide for future subdivision to provide small to medium industrial zoned land for sale. 10,000 sq metres of land being part lot 12 Driscoll Road sold by agents QPL for trucking depot. Endorsed by Council with conditions.</p> <p>6000 square metres of land sold on Cnr Driscoll Rd and Paterson Place for large vehicle (Caravans/motor homes) storage. Endorsed by Council with conditions.</p> <p>DAs approved for subdivision to provide the above two parcels of land. Contracts exchanged in both sales. Awaiting roadworks, K&amp;G and land clearing to commence in Driscoll Rd. Western end.</p> <p>Future subdivision plans for Red Hill Industrial Estate being reviewed to accommodate increasing enquiry.</p> <p>Continuing interest in Red Hill Industrial Estate as at February 2022 will necessitate the identification of further land for zoning and subdivision for industrial purposes.</p> <p>Investigations proceeding to identify further land suitable for industrial zoning and residential zoning. DGMI pursuing this.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
		4.1.2	Investigate the need for a light industrial / business park land and/or premises in Narrandera, and if needed, encourage owners of vacant and/or underutilised land in the Narrandera West (Leeton Road) and Pine Hill Industrial Estates to bring this land into production (subdivision, sale, lease or development).	<p>To be reviewed.</p> <p>As at September 2020 review opportunity to subdivide some small/medium sized lots in Red Hill Industrial Estate to be made available to small to medium enterprises. Presently only one subdivided lot available for sale.</p> <p>See 4.1.1 The need has now arisen to identify potential future land suitable for industrial zoning and subdivision.</p> <p>Under investigation by DGM</p> <p>Narrandera Local Housing &amp; Employment Zone Land Strategy on exhibition.</p>
4.2	Facilitate further development of the Red Hill Industrial Estate	4.2.1	Retain general / heavy industry zoning and preserve buffer areas around the Estate.	<p>Buffers are noted as an important selling point in our Redhill Marketing and Communications Strategy.</p> <p>Current offer to purchase lot 169 Driscoll Rd to be communicated to ELT and then to Council at 21 July meeting</p> <p>Offer to purchase lot 169 Driscoll Rd accepted by Council and contracts prepared and provided to purchaser's solicitors. Contracts exchanged and deposit paid.</p> <p>Sale settled</p> <p>Ref 3.4 and 4.1.1</p> <p>Red Hill industrial Estate Council land sold out. Only 7 ha approx. of privately owned land for sale.</p> <p>Narrandera Local Housing and Employment Zone Land Strategy on exhibition.</p>
		4.2.2	Develop a sales policy for Council-owned land in the Estate that provides incentives for developers, fosters a quick development timeline, and discourages land banking.	<p>Under consideration</p> <p>To be addressed in update of Policy ES 270 currently under review.</p> <p>New Policy POL048 submitted to March 2021 Council meeting. Endorsed for public exhibition which ends on 26 April. Policy now in the register.</p> <p>Draft Business Incentive Policy developed and presented to ELT and then to Council in July with amendments.</p> <p>Ref. 3.4.1. New Small Business Incentive Policy adopted by Council and submitted for public exhibition POL 010.</p> <p>Policy now fully endorsed and accessible on Councils online policy register.</p> <p>Achieved</p>
		4.2.3	Formulate and implement a marketing plan for the Estate that includes quality promotional material and supporting	<p>Current. See earlier comments. New bright 'for sale' signs and 3mx2m billboard erected on Red Hill Industrial Estate. Gateway entrance poles and banners installed.</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
			information, as well as conceptual subdivision layouts and servicing plans.	Promotional flyer provided to real estate agents who have listed Red Hill Industrial Estate for sale. Industrial Estate sold out
		4.2.4	Organise famils of the Estate (and Narrandera) for regional development agency (eg RDA, Industry NSW, BEC) staff and regularly update these agencies regarding the availability of commercial and industrial land and premises within Narrandera.	Under consideration. Review the signage on the estate to reflect the current sales and availability of remaining land as at February 2022. Future tour of the Red Hill Industrial Estate when approx. 500meter new road constructed to enable access for new industries.
		4.2.5	Advocate for Government Funding to assist in providing enabling infrastructure to facilitate subdivision and development.	ED Dept contributed to successful submission re Truckwash under Fixing Country Truckwash Grant. Nothing currently available at NSW state level-enquiry through Dept of Regional Development.
4.3	Ensure that the power supply can accommodate growth	4.3.1	Advocate for on-going improvements in the power supply in Narrandera Shire.	Consideration being given as a component of the Smart Cities funding program. Power extension negotiated with Essential Energy to service proposed RVM at Landfill site. Power to site in progress. Low voltage completed. Investigations continuing to assess Red Hill Ind Estate as a location to develop a solar farm initiative. Power supply to Red Hill industrial estate to be upgraded in response to power needs of major new industry.
		4.3.2	Advocate for and assist local businesses access grant funds for 'last mile' infrastructure.	For consideration
		4.3.3	Support the development of renewable / green energy producers within the Shire.	Ongoing. Assessing Council land suitability for solar farm development. Various briefings by the proponents of the Haystack Solar Farm at Grong Grong known as solar gardening. Formation of a cooperative imminent and construction work expected to commence early 2021. Engaged in discussions with Reach Solar (David Webster) to examine mutually beneficial opportunities that may present through accessing the Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund (Federal) for Microgrids. Explore suitability of Red Hill Industrial Estate,

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				Reach Solar not interested in involvement in Microgrid projects development Negotiations underway to finalise special condition in contract for the sale of 28 ha of land on Red Hill Industrial Estate for a leading edge technology development also separate negotiations for sale of final 2ha as solar farm. Final 2 lots being 2ha and 28ha sold for development of renewable energy projects on the Red Hill Industrial Estate
4.4	Improve telecommunications	4.4.1	Develop and implement a Digital Strategy in consultation with industry and community groups.	Monitor development of National Digital Strategy for compatibility. National Digital Strategy released December 2018. Under review. Meet with David Saunderson Regional Engagement Manager Southern NSW Team – looking forward
4.5	Increase the capacity of the road network in the Shire to accommodate increased truck movements and higher productivity vehicles	4.5.1	Develop a Road Improvement Strategy, identifying strategically important production and freight routes within and through the Shire and the works required to remove 'pinch points' and expand capacity to accommodate HPVs.	Flood-proofing of Sturt Hwy at Gillenbah included in Regional Economic Development Strategy for Western Riverina. Road improvement included in Council's submission for update of Western Riverina REDS
		4.5.2	Advocate for the Shire's road needs to be included in regional and State freight and transport strategies.	Refer Draft NSW Ports and Freight Plan and Western Riverina REDS. Submission made to the Dept of Regional NSW responsible for updating the Western Riverina Regional Economic Development Strategy
		4.5.3	Advocate for and seek funding to upgrade and maintain strategically important roads.	As above. Brought to attention of Federal Minister for Local Government the Hon Dr John McVeigh at a RAMROC Councils meeting held in Albury on 15 May
4.6	Provide infrastructure and facilities to support the road transport sector.	4.6.1	Plan for improved infrastructure and/or facilities for trucks in Narrandera – Gillenbah and Barellan.	Truckwash to be constructed at Redhill. DA now in the planning system. Construction commences June 2019 Narrandera Stock and Bitumen Truckwash completed March 2020. Update industrial estate signage with Truckwash details. 1ha of Industrial land on Red Hill Industrial Estate planned for truck depot. New Mobil service station is now open at Gillenbah.
4.7	Continue to improve rail infrastructure	4.7.1	Advocate for ongoing improvements to the Hay Branch line (Junee through to Griffith via Narrandera), taking the line from Class C to Class A to facilitate longer and heavier trains.	ARTC proposing to improve the line to accommodate 80ft flat top rolling stock with 25 tonne axle capacity to take 2x40ft containers. Govt allocates \$60 million for line improvements. New lines and upgrades being planned at Illabo/Stockinbingal as part of Inland Rail connectivity to other rail systems.

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
		4.7.2	As required, support rail and freight service providers secure 'paths' for rail freight from the Western Riverina.	<p>Ongoing. Refer Western Riverina REDS. EDM and GM attend National Supply Chain Freight and Logistics Strategy Scenario Planning workshop in Griffith on 9 Oct. Meet with Hermione Parsons of Deakin University do discuss possibility of future alternative study for Narrandera if Lycopodium study unable to be used. Executive summary from Transport NSW received Feb 2019. Localised and independent freight demand study under consideration in partnership with Leeton and Griffith. Consultant engaged and work commenced.</p> <p>Attend Port of Melbourne briefing on 15 April in Wagga. PoM announces \$300 million investment on Melbourne Port to bring 4 dual rail sidings onto the dock each to accommodate 600m trains that will be deconstructed from longer trains at outlying intermodals. This eliminates 'last mile' transfer costs from train to truck.</p> <p>Attend Inland Rail Forum in Wagga on 9 Oct-Details of Inland Rail Interface Improvement Program.</p>
4.8	Plan for freight infrastructure to meet growing demand	4.8.1	Liaise with local producers (eg Agri Australis, Proten, Grants Sawmilling, Hutchins Bros Engineering) to determine likely future freight transport requirements.	<p>Discussions with Paterson's Transport re local/regional freight task. Consider in context of Lycopodium report. Document remains confidential to Council.</p> <p>Participate in forums on Inland Rail presented by CSIRO and Ernst Young and Dept of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development. Highlight Narrandera's industries as potential freight sources.</p>
		4.8.2	Advocate to have the Narrandera-Tocumwal rail corridor recognised as strategic infrastructure and protected and preserved for future use.	<p>Finalised.</p> <p>15 September 2020-Mayoral letter of support to Strathbogie Shire in Victoria supporting their proposal with other stakeholders to reopen the Tocumwal to Narrandera Rail Line to complement an intermodal facility under consideration at Mangalore VIC. Letter of support addresses Strathbogie's submission of an EOI to the Federal Government's Inland Rail Interface Improvement program in a bid to gain funding for a business case for the conversion to standard gauge of the Goulburn Valley rail line between Mangalore Junction and Tocumwal and the refurbishment of the rail line between Tocumwal and Narrandera. No financial involvement is contemplated for Narrandera Shire Council.</p> <p>No further action on this proposal</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
		4.8.3	Plan for a small intermodal terminal / freight receipt site in Narrandera.	Amazon has been provided with relevant information highlighting Narrandera as a potential site for an Amazon distribution facility. 22/3/18. Shooters Fishers and Farmers party negotiating to have the Narrandera Tocumwal rail study declassified as confidential so findings can be publicly released. Ongoing.
4.9	Retain commercial air services to Narrandera	4.9.1	Continue to upgrade the Narrandera – Leeton Airport to ensure on-going compliance.	<p>Give consideration to future proofing the airport infrastructure with possible aircraft type obsolescence. Potential development opportunity with Wagner Group interest in freight opportunities. Assess potential producers and processors, types of exports and tonnages and frequency of export for advice to Wagners. Advice again provided to Wagners on export task potential from Narrandera-Leeton airport, as at February 2019. John Wagner advised of KPMG study, as advised by DPC. Contacted Deputy Chair of Rex The Hon John Sharp to determine Rex Airline future fleet requirements and operations. Fleet of SAAB 340s not expected to be replaced for 10-15 years. Discussions with Warrick Lodge of Rex (General Manager-Network Strategy) regarding upgrade to main runway to accommodate foreseen RPT traffic movements. Rex will assist in developing case for funding if required</p> <p>Contact specialist consultancy group BECA who provide outline for a Draft Airport Masterplan and Business Case for Narrandera/Leeton Airport in context of \$100million Regional Airport Fund soon to be opened. Regional Airport Fund announced 11 Oct 2019. Under consideration by Manager Works and EDM. Funding application being developed for \$950,000 main runway reseal at airport. Banners commissioned to advertise community fares. Rex supported by Council during Covid 19 emergency through waiving head taxes between 1 April 2020 and 31 December 2020. Rex operating 3 flights per week through Covid emergency.</p> <p>Funding received to re-seal main runway and improve lighting &amp; fencing. Quotes imminent for design of parallel taxiway to support AAPA training activities. Quotes received for parallel taxiway and under consideration by technical services team</p>



Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				<p>Design proposal accepted and preliminary studies have commenced-eg survey, geotechnical etc.</p> <p>Funding application to Regional Airports program for construction of parallel taxiway -December 2020.</p> <p>Qantas announces commencement of a Griffith/Sydney service scheduled for February 2020.</p> <p>Seeking meeting with REX and AAPA to discuss aviation matters impacting Narrandera/Leeton airport.</p> <p>Meeting held with REX and AAPA (Warrick Lodge and Chris Hine) on 12 Jan 2021 when assurances given by REX that there will be a continuation of services to Narrandera for foreseeable future and they don't expect the commencement of Qantas service into Griffith will impact Rex services to Narrandera/Leeton airport.</p> <p>July 2021 \$1.1 million approved by Federal Government through Regional Airports Fund Round 2. Council approves matching funding to enable work to proceed to construct a parallel taxiway. This will future proof the airport and provide opportunity for future aviation business expansion.</p> <p>Narrandera /Leeton Airport not on current list for any service withdrawal by Rex. As at 31 May 2022</p> <p>No service withdrawal by REX in recent announcements..</p> <p>Construction of parallel taxiway imminent.</p>
		4.9.2	Implement the Airport Strategic Plan.	Ongoing
		4.9.3	Build patronage on the route by diversifying the market base – eg through growing the conference, meetings and events markets.	<p>Venue guide produced in 2017.</p> <p>Community fare agreement negotiated with Rex for the benefit of airline commuters out of Narrandera/Leeton Airport. Five (5) year agreement with Rex commencing 4 October 2018.</p> <p>AS at 20 April 2020 Rex confirms it has received Government support to enable 2 services per week to be continued for next 6 months.</p> <p>Currently up to 4 services per week into Narrandera/Leeton airport.</p> <p>Full services resume to/from Narrandera as at 29 March 2021.</p> <p>Services affected mid 2021-current- as a result of Covid lockdowns across the State.</p> <p>Limited services continuing in and out of Narrandera as at February 2022</p> <p>Regular services resumed</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
4.10	<b>Diversify and improve accommodation available in the Shire</b>	4.10.1	Monitor demand for motel and hotel accommodation and, when needed, advocate for the development of new accommodation within the Shire.	<p>Tourism activities will now be reported to Council via this Strategic Plan Report. Barellan has gained recognition as an RV Friendly destination.</p> <p>Early November 30-60 electricians from Darlington Point expected to occupy local motels until February-organised by Rick Shaw.</p> <p>Survey of Motels in December 2019 reveals approx. 60 workers from Darlington Point project accommodated in Narrandera.</p> <p>Survey Feb 2020 reveals 30+ Darlington Point workers still in accommodation in Narrandera.</p> <p>Motels generally reporting excellent occupancy through Autumn. One motel reporting 100% occupancy for 56 consecutive days.</p> <p>Plans to make follow a regular task.</p>
		4.10.2	Advocate for improved supply of rental housing and other accommodation for temporary and seasonal workers and position Narrandera as the accommodation hub to service the Narrandera – Leeton area.	<p>EDM attends Workforce Futures Forum in Griffith on 10 May when discussion was held about overall accommodation shortages in the Western Riverina and consideration given to possible strategies to address.</p> <p>Discussions commenced with appointed EPC for RES Solar (Siemens/Gamesa) and their appointed consultants Jacobs to commence preparation of the Employment and accommodation strategy required as condition of consent</p> <p>Met with Zara Durnan Senior Consultant for Jacobs on 20 August and discussed 1<sup>st</sup> draft of accommodation and employment strategy which is to be reviewed by Solar Reference Group.</p> <p>Strategy reviewed by Solar farm Reference Group and submitted to Jacobs.</p> <p>Accommodation and Employment Strategy finalised.</p> <p>August 2021 made a submission to the NSW Housing Taskforce outlining the current and likely future housing needs in Narrandera.</p> <p>Rental and housing supply in Narrandera and regional NSW generally under pressure with low vacancy rates, increasing rents.</p>
		4.10.3	Undertake a review of camping areas and facilities in the Shire to maximise economic benefits.	<p>For consideration.</p> <p>Survey box with forms to be installed on amenities block at Brewery Flats and complimentary branded information bag with information and vouchers to be distributed to campers/travellers from time to time.</p> <p>Ref.3.3.4</p> <p>Survey box installed and branded information backpacks being distributed to campers/travellers at Brewery Flats.</p> <p>Camping areas closed due to Corona Virus related Government direction</p>

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
				Camping areas reopened as at 1 June 2020 subject to social distancing requirements. Upgrade of brewery flats facilities and management arrangements being implemented.
4.11	Grow the local workforce, ensuring that it is aligned with local and regional industry needs	4.11.1	Profile and articulate existing and future local and regional workforce requirements and jobs and skills gaps.	Refer 4.10.2  RDA Riverina offering services in this area for workers and employees
		4.11.2	Work with regional organisations and education and training providers to address job and skill gaps and formulate and deliver 'job readiness' and skills development opportunities.	Refer 4.10.2 Participate in RDA skills survey Facilitate contact between TAF at Narrandera and Avonlie project owners RES and EPC Siemens /Gamesa to discuss development of relevant courses to support solar farm works.
		4.11.3	Participate in relevant employment and skills development programs and initiatives (eg the 'Grow our Own' program being implemented in the Western Riverina).	Refer 4.10.2 Riverina Skills audit involvement in focus group.
		4.11.4	Encourage proponents of major developments to 'grow their own' workforce by employing local residents and investing in training and skills development.	Refer 4.10.2 Ref. 4.11.2  Bhullar new development on Red Hill Industrial Estate contains an industry training component.
		4.11.5	Work with the Shire's Aboriginal community and residents who are socially disadvantaged, to improve training and employment outcomes.	For consideration Two Aboriginal Community Engagement Officers employed by Beon to assist Aboriginals in Beon workforce to be job ready.
		4.11.6	Work with industry and businesses to attract skilled workers to the Shire to fill vacant positions and address skills gaps.	For consideration Riverina Skills Audit ref 4.11.3
		4.11.7	Investigate opportunities to harness skills of visitors to the Shire (eg retirees, back packers) to address labour shortages, particularly for seasonal work (eg harvesting, picking, truck drivers).	For consideration

Strategies		Key Actions		Progress
		4.11.8	Advocate for improved access to education and training services and flexible approaches to workplace training, apprenticeships and traineeships.	Use event opportunities to promote TAFE and its services and courses and to utilise TAFE Narrandera Connected Learning centre e.g. Small Business Month October events
		4.11.9	Retain young people within the community, through programs such as school based vocational training, transition to work / work ready, offering apprentice and traineeships and providing access to tertiary training.	For consideration
		4.11.10	Develop and implement programs to welcome and orientate new employees and integrate them into the community.	For consideration



# **RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL AUDIT for local government in NSW**

## **Guidelines**

December 2022



## **GUIDELINES FOR RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL AUDIT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NSW**

2022

### **ACCESS TO SERVICES**

The Office of Local Government is located at:

Street Address: Levels 1 & 2, 5 O'Keefe Avenue, NOWRA NSW 2541

Postal Address: Locked Bag 3015, Nowra, NSW 2541

Phone: 02 4428 4100

Fax: 02 4428 4199

TTY: 02 4428 4209

Email : [olg@olg.nsw.gov.au](mailto:olg@olg.nsw.gov.au)

Website: [www.olg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au)

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# Background

## Background

The *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* and these Guidelines require each council in NSW to have an audit, risk and improvement committee, a robust risk management framework, and an effective internal audit function

## Background

The *Local Government Act 1993* ('Local Government Act'), the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* ('Local Government Regulation') and these Guidelines require each council in NSW to have:

- an audit, risk and improvement committee that continuously reviews and provides independent advice to the council on how it is functioning and managing risk
- a robust risk management framework that accurately identifies and mitigates the risks facing the council and its operations, and
- an effective internal audit function that provides independent advice as to whether the council is functioning effectively and the council's internal controls to manage risk are working.

These three mandatory governance mechanisms are key to ensuring that councils are doing things the best way they can for their communities and are on track to delivering their community's goals and objectives.

Communities themselves will ultimately be the greatest beneficiaries.

If implemented effectively, audit, risk and improvement committees, risk management and internal audit will lead to councils:

- achieving their strategic objectives in the most efficient, effective and economical manner
- having better and more efficient levels of service delivery
- having increased accountability and transparency
- achieving better decision-making and having the confidence to make difficult decisions
- having increased financial stability
- achieving and maintaining compliance with all laws, regulations, internal policies and procedures, and
- better safeguarding their public assets.

## Purpose

These guidelines have been developed to assist councils, county councils and joint organisations to comply with statutory requirements under the Local Government Act and Local Government Regulation.

They also seek to strengthen risk management and internal audit practices in NSW councils by setting a minimum standard that reflects a 'best practice' approach.

The Guidelines have been issued under section 23A of the Local Government Act which confers on the "Departmental Chief Executive" of the Office of Local Government the power to prepare, adopt or vary guidelines relating to the exercise by a council of any of its functions.

Councils are required to consider these Guidelines when implementing the requirements prescribed under the Act and the Regulation relating to audit, risk and improvement committees, risk management and internal audit.

These Guidelines replace the NSW Government's *Internal Audit Guidelines for Local Government in NSW* issued in 2010.

The three core requirements outlined in the Guidelines reflect international standards and the recommendations and opinions of internal audit practitioners, councils, councillors, audit, risk and improvement committee members, risk management practitioners, government agencies, experts and community members.

They are also informed by practices in other Australian jurisdictions and give effect to the recommendations of the:

- Independent Commission Against Corruption in its inquiries into Burwood Council (2011) and Botany Bay Council (2017)
- Local Government Acts Taskforce in its review of the *Local Government Act 1993* (2013)
- Independent Local Government Review Panel in its *Revitalising Local Government inquiry* (2013), and
- various performance audits and other reviews conducted by the NSW Auditor-General since 2010.

Based on these recommendations:

- the core requirements outlined in the Guidelines relating to the operation of a council's audit, risk and improvement committee have been modelled on the *Internal Audit and Risk Management Policy for the General Government Sector (TPP 20-08)* developed by NSW Treasury and best practice in the public and private sectors
- the core requirements relating to risk management have been modelled on the current Australian risk management standard, *AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management – Guidelines*, and
- the core requirements relating to a council's internal audit function have been modelled on the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* (the 'International Professional Practices Framework') and best practice in the public and private sectors.

The framework balances these professional standards and best practice approaches with the unique structure, needs and operating environments of metropolitan, regional and rural councils, county councils and joint organisations across NSW.

The release of these Guidelines follows an extensive consultation process. The Office of Local Government thanks all the individuals, councils and bodies involved in the development of these Guidelines and the risk management and internal audit regulatory framework.

### Further resources

There has been a wide range of information and guidance developed in recent times by government agencies, experts, practitioners and other bodies to help organisations establish effective audit, risk and improvement committees, risk management frameworks and internal audit functions.

As a starting point, a list of further resources has been included at the end of each core requirement. These resources provide practical information and tools such as examples, templates, checklists and sample documents that councils may find useful when implementing these Guidelines.

### Terminology

When a joint organisation is applying these Guidelines, it should substitute the term "council" for "joint organisation", "governing body" for "board", "chairperson" for "mayor", "voting representative" for "councillor" and "executive officer" for "general manager" and "annual report" for "annual performance statement", where appropriate.

Where a county council is applying these guidelines, it should substitute the terms "county council" for "council", "chairperson" for "mayor", and "member" for "councillor", where appropriate.

References to the "Departmental Chief Executive" in these Guidelines refers to the person exercising the functions of the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government under the Local Government Act and Regulation.

## Statutory framework

The Local Government Act and Local Government Regulation provide the statutory foundations and prescribe the desired outcomes for councils' audit, risk and improvement committees, risk management frameworks and internal audit functions.

Relevant provisions of the Local Government Act and Local Government Regulation are detailed below.

## Guiding principles of local government

The guiding principles of the Local Government Act (sections 8A, 8B and 8C) require each council to carry out its functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers.

The guiding principles also specify that councils are to:

- spend money responsibly and sustainably, and align general revenue and expenses



- invest in responsible and sustainable infrastructure for the benefit of the local community
- effectively manage their finances and assets and have sound policies and processes for performance management and reporting, asset maintenance and enhancement, funding decisions, and risk management practices
- ensure the current generation funds the cost of its services and achieves intergenerational equity, and
- manage risks to the local community, area or council effectively and proactively.

- implementing, without undue delay, the lawful decisions of the council
- advising the governing body on the development and implementation of the council's plans, programs, strategies and policies, and
- ensuring that the mayor and other councillors are given timely information and advice and the administrative and professional support necessary to effectively discharge their functions.

The Local Government Regulation (section 209) also requires the general manager to ensure that:

- the council complies with all legal financial obligations, including the keeping of accounting records
- effective measures are taken to secure the effective, efficient and economical management of financial operations within each division of the council's administration
- authorised and recorded procedures are established to provide effective control over the council's assets, liabilities, revenue and expenditure and secure the accuracy of the accounting records, and
- lines of authority and the responsibilities of members of the council's staff for related tasks are clearly defined.

## Role of the governing body

To achieve these guiding principles, the Local Government Act (section 223) provides that the role and responsibilities of the governing body include:

- directing and controlling the affairs of the council in accordance with the Local Government Act
- ensuring, as far as possible, the financial sustainability of the council
- ensuring, as far as possible, that the council complies with the guiding principles of the Local Government Act
- keeping the performance of the council under review
- making the decisions necessary to ensure the council properly exercises its regulatory functions, and
- being responsible for ensuring that the council acts honestly, efficiently and appropriately.

## Role of a joint organisation

The Local Government Act establishes joint organisations as a strategic regional body of councils.

The role and responsibilities of a joint organisation under the Local Government Act (section 400R) are to:

- establish regional priorities for the joint organisation area and strategies and plans to deliver these priorities
- provide regional leadership for the joint organisation area and advocate for strategic regional priorities, and
- identify and take-up opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation.

## Role of the general manager

The Local Government Act (section 335) provides that the general manager is responsible for:

- conducting the day-to-day management of the council in accordance with the strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies of the council – this includes establishing the council's organisational structure and appointing and dismissing council staff (section 332)

Joint organisations also deliver services and provide assistance to, or on behalf of, councils, and councils are able to delegate certain functions to their joint organisation (sections 355, 379 and 400S).

The Local Government Act (section 400Y) provides that the executive officer of a joint organisation is to:

- conduct the day-to-day management of the joint organisation in accordance with the strategic regional priorities and other plans, programs, strategies and policies of the organisation, and
- appoint, direct and dismiss staff.

## Audit, risk and improvement committee

The Local Government Act (section 428A) requires each council to establish an audit, risk and improvement committee to continuously review and provide independent advice to the general manager and the governing body of the council on:

- whether the council is complying with all necessary legislation, regulations and other legal requirements
- the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's risk management framework, fraud and corruption prevention activities, financial management processes, and the council's financial position and performance
- the council's governance arrangements
- the achievement by the council of the goals set out in the council's community strategic plan, delivery program, operational plan and other strategies
- how the council delivers local services and how it could improve the performance of its functions more generally
- the collection of performance measurement data by the council, and
- any other matters prescribed by the Local Government Regulation (including internal audit).

The Local Government Act (section 428B) allows councils to establish a joint audit, risk and improvement committee with other councils including through joint or regional

organisations of councils to function as a shared committee.

The requirements for shared committees in these Guidelines are detailed in core requirement 1.

The Local Government Regulation prescribes the following requirements in relation to the membership and operations of councils' audit, risk and improvement committees:

- Councils must by resolution appoint an audit, risk and improvement committee comprising of a chair and at least two or more other persons as voting members of the committee.
- Commencing 1 July 2024, the chair and other voting members of a council's audit, risk and improvement committee must satisfy the independence and eligibility criteria specified in these Guidelines. Councils must not appoint a person to be the chair or a voting member of the council's audit, risk and improvement committee unless they satisfy the independence and eligibility criteria specified in these Guidelines.
- Councils may appoint one councillor as a non-voting member of its audit risk and improvement committee. Councillors appointed as a non-voting member of an audit, risk and improvement committee must satisfy the eligibility criteria for councillor members of committees specified in these Guidelines.
- For the purposes of section 428A(2)(i) of the Local Government Act, councils' audit, risk and improvement committees are to keep under review internal audit activities.
- The Departmental Chief Executive may approve model terms of reference for councils' audit, risk and improvement committees.
- Councils must adopt by resolution, terms of reference for their audit, risk and improvement committees that are consistent with the model terms of reference for committees approved by the Departmental Chief Executive contained in these Guidelines.

- A council's audit, risk and improvement committee must exercise its functions in accordance with the terms of reference adopted by the council.
- Councils must provide their audit, risk and improvement committee with such access to the general manager and other senior management staff of the council, and any information and resources of the council as may be necessary for the committee to exercise its functions.

The requirements for audit, risk and improvement committees in these Guidelines are detailed in core requirement 1.

## Risk management

The Local Government Regulation prescribes the following requirements in relation to risk management:

- Commencing on 1 July 2024, councils must adopt and implement a framework for identifying and managing risk that is consistent with the requirements specified by these Guidelines.
- A council's audit, risk and improvement committee must keep the implementation of the council's risk management framework under review and provide advice to the council on its implementation.

The requirements for risk management in these Guidelines are detailed in core requirement 2.

## Internal audit

The Local Government Regulation prescribes the following requirements in relation to internal audit:

- Commencing 1 July 2024, councils must have an internal audit function to keep under review the council's operations and risk management and control activities.
- Councils' internal audit functions must operate in accordance with the requirements specified in these Guidelines.
- The Departmental Chief Executive may approve a model internal audit charter for councils to guide the performance of their internal audit function.

- Councils must adopt by resolution, an internal audit charter that is consistent with the model internal audit charter approved by the Departmental Chief Executive contained in these Guidelines.
- A council's internal audit function must be undertaken in accordance with the internal audit charter adopted by the council.
- Commencing 1 July 2024, councils' general managers must appoint a member of staff of the council to direct and coordinate internal audit activities for the council.
- Councils are not required to appoint a member of staff to direct and coordinate their internal audit activities if the council has entered into an agreement with other councils to share the internal audit function and one of the participating councils has appointed a member of staff to direct and coordinate internal audit activities on behalf of all the participating councils.
- A council's internal audit activities are to be undertaken under the oversight and direction of the council's audit, risk and improvement committee.
- The member of staff appointed by the general manager to direct and coordinate internal audit activities is to report to the audit, risk and improvement committee on those activities.
- The member of staff of a council appointed to direct and coordinate internal audit activities is not to be subject to direction in the performance of internal audit activities by anyone other than the audit, risk and improvement committee.
- All internal audit personnel must have direct and unrestricted access to council staff, the audit, risk and improvement committee and council information and resources necessary to undertake their role and responsibilities.
- The general manager must consult with the chair of the council's audit, risk and improvement committee on any decision affecting the employment of the staff member appointed to direct and coordinate the council's internal audit activities and must consider the chair's views before making the decision.



- The audit, risk and improvement committee must review the performance and efficacy of the council's internal audit activities once in each term of the council and report to the governing body of the council on the outcome of its review and make recommendations.

The requirements for internal audit in these Guidelines are detailed in core requirement 3.

An attestation certificate template is provided at Appendix 1 and attestation requirements are highlighted with this symbol throughout these Guidelines.



The details of each member of the council's audit, risk and improvement committee must also be included in the attestation statement.

Attestation operates to ensure that the council takes independent assurance and risk management seriously and is accountable to the community for how it has implemented these requirements.

As noted above, the council's compliance status is to be self-assessed by the general manager, in consultation with the audit, risk and improvement committee.

The general manager must consider the views of the chair of the council's audit risk and improvement committee on the content of the attestation statement when preparing the statement.

If the chair disagrees with the content of the attestation statement prepared by the general manager, they may prepare their own report and submit this to the Departmental Chief Executive.

## Annual attestation

Commencing with the 2024-2025 annual report, general managers will be required under the Local Government Regulation to publish an attestation statement each year in the council's annual report indicating whether, during the preceding financial year, the council's audit, risk and improvement committee, risk management framework and internal audit function complied with these Guidelines.

The Local Government Regulation prescribes the following requirements in relation to attestation:

- Commencing with the 2024-2025 annual report, the general manager must cause to be published in the council's annual report an attestation statement in the form specified in these Guidelines on the council's compliance with the Guidelines with respect to the membership and operations of its audit, risk and improvement committee, its risk management framework and internal audit function.
- The general manager must consult with the chair of the council's audit, risk and improvement committee on the content of the attestation statement and must consider the chair's views when preparing the statement.
- If the committee chair disagrees with the content of the attestation statement prepared by the general manager, they may prepare their own attestation statement and submit this to the Departmental Chief Executive.

## Exemptions

There may be times where a council may not be able to comply with all requirements relating to the audit, risk and improvement committee, risk management framework or internal audit function.

In these circumstances, the Local Government Regulation confers on the Departmental Chief Executive the power to exempt councils from compliance with a requirement under these Guidelines where the council or joint organisation requests such an exemption.

The Regulation provides that the Departmental Chief Executive may, on an application by a council, exempt the council from compliance with a requirement under these Guidelines for such a period specified by the Departmental Chief Executive where they are satisfied that:



- the council cannot comply with the requirement because of temporary extenuating circumstances or resourcing constraints that will significantly impact the council's budget,
- the council cannot enter into an agreement with another council to share the performance of activities necessary to satisfy the requirement, **and**
- current or proposed alternative arrangements will achieve outcomes equivalent to the requirement under these Guidelines.

A council's application to the Departmental Chief Executive for an exemption must be in the form and contain the information specified in these Guidelines.

The Regulation provides that where the Departmental Chief Executive exempts a council from compliance with a requirement under these Guidelines, the council must publish the Departmental Chief Executive's approval of the exemption in their annual report.

A council is not prevented from applying for a further exemption when a previous exemption expires.

## Accountability

Councils that do not comply with these Guidelines and are not granted an exemption may face enforcement action under the Local Government Act.

## Monitoring

Councils' compliance with the core requirements of the Local Government Act, Local Government Regulation and these Guidelines will be monitored by the Office of Local Government.

The NSW Auditor-General may also undertake an assurance role in monitoring councils' compliance. This may include conducting sector-wide performance audits, or compliance audits of individual councils and undertaking reviews of exemptions granted by the Departmental Chief Executive.

# Core requirement 1:

## **Audit, risk and improvement committee**

- Each council and joint organisation has an audit, risk and improvement committee that reviews the matters referred to in section 428A of the Local Government Act

## Guiding principles for audit, risk and improvement committees

- ❖ The audit, risk and improvement committee is independent of the council.
- ❖ The committee is equipped with the relevant expertise and has access to the council resources and information necessary to fulfil its role and responsibilities effectively.
- ❖ Each council receives relevant and timely advice and assurance from the committee on the matters listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act.
- ❖ The work of the committee is thoroughly planned and executed, risk-based and linked to the council's strategic goals.
- ❖ The committee adds value to the council and is accountable to the governing body for its performance.
- ❖ The council is accountable to the community for complying with statutory requirements and these Guidelines relating to the committee.

## Role and functions

Under section 428A of the Local Government Act, each council (including county councils and joint organisations) must have an audit, risk and improvement committee to independently review and advise on the following aspects of the council's operations:

- (a) compliance
- (b) risk management
- (c) fraud control
- (d) financial management
- (e) governance
- (f) implementation of the strategic plan, delivery program and strategies
- (g) service reviews

- (h) collection of performance measurement data by the council, and
- (i) any other matters prescribed by the regulation.

The committee must also provide information to the council for the purpose of improving the council's performance of its functions.

The Local Government Regulation (section **rtbc**) also requires a council's audit, risk and improvement committee to review and provide advice on the council's internal audit activities.

The audit, risk and improvement committee's role also extends to any entities established by or operated by the council.

The exact nature of each audit, risk and improvement committee's role and the specific activities it reviews on behalf of a council under section 428A of the Local Government Act will vary depending on the council's needs, risks and business functions.

These activities are to be agreed between the audit, risk and improvement committee and the council during the development of the committee's terms of reference. Suggested activities are provided in **Appendix 2**.

## Level of assurance

Audit, risk and improvement committees are to have an advisory and assurance role only. They are to exercise no administrative functions, delegated financial responsibilities or any management functions for a council.

It is expected that each audit, risk and improvement committee will provide independent advice to the council that is informed by the council's internal audit and risk management activities and information and advice provided by council staff, relevant external bodies and other subject matter experts.

## Terms of Reference

It is important that each audit, risk and improvement committee has clear guidance on how it should serve the council, and that the

council has input into how the committee will operate given its investment.

This will ensure clarity in the relationship between the council and the audit, risk and improvement committee, and that the council can measure the committee's performance.

**The Local Government Regulation (section 428B) requires a council's audit, risk and improvement committee to operate according to terms of reference that are consistent with the approved Model Terms of Reference provided at Appendix 3.**



The audit, risk and improvement committee's terms of reference can include additional provisions that are not inconsistent with the approved Model Terms of Reference or other requirements.

The terms of reference are to be approved by resolution of the governing body and reviewed annually by the audit, risk and improvement committee, and once each council term (i.e. four years) by the governing body.

## Structure

Each council will have different audit, risk and improvement committee requirements depending on the council's size, needs, budget and the complexity of its operations.

For this reason, councils can either:

- establish an audit, risk and improvement committee for their exclusive use, or
- share their committee with another council, county council or joint organisation under section 428B of the Local Government Act.

When deciding the most appropriate way to structure a council's audit, risk and improvement committee, the council should consider the viability and capacity of a shared committee to achieve its terms of reference given the:

- size of the council in terms of both staffing levels and budget

- geographical and functional distribution of the council's operations
- complexity of the council's core business
- risk profile of the council
- expectations of stakeholders, and
- likely demands placed on the committee by other councils in the shared arrangement.

## Shared committees

As noted above, under the Local Government Act (section 428B) councils can share an audit, risk and improvement committee. Councils can:

- share their committee with another council/s, county council/s and/or joint organisation/s as part of an independent shared arrangement
- utilise a committee established by their joint organisation that is shared with all member councils
- for county councils - share their committee with a member council where possible or another council
- for joint organisations - share their committee with a member council where possible or another council or joint organisation.

These options allow councils to establish and operate their audit, risk and improvement committee in a more cost-effective way.

For all shared audit, risk and improvement committees:

- the committee must operate as an individual committee for each council in any shared arrangement and exercise their functions for each council individually
- a shared committee should only be established and utilised by councils where the committee can maintain a strong understanding of each participating council's assurance needs and is able to meet these needs
- a shared committee should only be established and utilised by councils where the committee can maintain an effective working and reporting relationship with



the general manager and governing body of each participating council

- councils that share their internal audit function can, but are not required to, also share their committee
- councils that share their committee can, but are not required to, also share the committee's secretariat, and
- councils should develop and sign a formal agreement with the other councils in the shared arrangement which outlines how the shared arrangement will operate and costs shared.

Where a joint organisation establishes an audit, risk and improvement committee to serve its member councils, it is at each member council's discretion whether they utilise the shared committee.

## Shared councillor members

It is important to note that where an audit, risk and improvement committee is shared between councils as part of an independently established shared arrangement, or an arrangement established by a joint organisation, and the councils elect to have a councillor member on the committee, the councillor member will not be shared by councils.

To maintain the confidentiality of the business of each council in the shared arrangement considered by the shared committee:

- the governing body of each council is to appoint one councillor member to serve on the audit, risk and improvement committee for that council only
- the councillor member is to only attend committee meetings for their council, and
- the councillor member is to receive information pertaining to their council only.

For joint organisations, the elected councillor member will be a voting representative of the board.

## Shared independent members

Unlike councillor members, the independent chair and members of shared audit, risk and improvement committees will serve all councils participating in the shared arrangement.

For audit, risk and improvement committees appointed as part of an independent shared arrangement, the councils in the shared arrangement are to mutually agree to the independent members that will be appointed to these roles, and each council is to confirm their appointment by resolution.

For audit, risk and improvement committees appointed as part of an arrangement established by a joint organisation by its member councils, the board of the joint organisation will appoint the chair and independent members of the committee by resolution on behalf of member councils under delegation from the member councils.

## Size and composition

Each council, county council and joint organisation is required to have an audit, risk and improvement committee that is appropriate for the council's size, risk profile, operational complexity, resources, and its ability to attract suitably qualified committee members.

**Each council is required to appoint an audit, risk and improvement committee that comprises of an independent chair and at least two independent members that meet the independence and eligibility criteria in these Guidelines.**



**At a minimum**, audit risk and improvement committees **must** comprise of the following:

- **an independent chair** who meets the independence criteria **and** the eligibility criteria for committee chairs set out below, **and**
- **at least two independent members** who meet the independence criteria **and** the

eligibility criteria for independent committee members set out below

Councils also have the option of appointing one non-voting councillor member to their committee who meets the eligibility criteria for councillor members of committees set out below. The mayor cannot be appointed as a councillor member of a council's audit, risk and improvement committee.

The size and composition requirements of a committee are the same whether the committee is established by a council for its exclusive use or as part of a shared arrangement.

Councils can establish larger committees and appoint more committee members than the minimum required should they choose to do so but may only appoint one non-voting councillor member.

The governing body is to determine the exact size of the audit, risk and improvement committee in consultation with the chair of the committee and general manager, taking into account the needs and risk profile of the council, and likely workload of the committee.

## County councils

Whilst a county council can establish an audit, risk and improvement committee for its own exclusive use, for administrative and cost efficiency, it is recommended that county councils utilise the committee of a member council/s under an independent shared arrangement (see above).

## Joint organisations

Where a joint organisation has not established an audit, risk and improvement committee for its member councils as part of a joint organisation led shared arrangement, for administrative and cost efficiency, it is recommended that, where possible, a joint organisation utilise a committee established by one of its member councils as part of an independent shared arrangement (see above).

To ensure the audit, risk and improvement committee has an understanding of the interrelationships and needs of the joint

organisation and its member councils, and of wider regional priorities, ideally joint organisations should enter into an independent shared arrangement with a member council/s. If this is not possible, it is open to joint organisations to enter into a shared arrangement with another joint organisation or a council from outside of its area.

## Roles of committee members

### Chair

The position of the chair of an audit, risk and improvement committee is pivotal to the committee's effectiveness and is the focal point for the committee's relationship with the council, the internal audit function and external auditor.

The chair acts as the interface between the audit, risk and improvement committee and the general manager and other staff, the governing body, the external auditor, and the internal audit function.

Any individual audit, risk and improvement committee member who wishes to meet with the general manager or governing body of the council to discuss any issues relating to the committee's responsibilities is to do so through the chair of the committee, and vice versa.

To be successful in their role, a chair must:

- have strong leadership qualities
- have the personal courage to raise and deal with tough issues and express opinions frankly, and to support other committee members to do the same
- be able to recommend the appointment of committee members to the governing body
- maintain effective working relationships between committee members and with the council
- keep the governing body and general manager informed and brief them on the

- strategic and technical aspects of internal audits and risk and control issues
- lead effective committee meetings including:
    - planning for and setting agendas for meetings, ensuring committee members are adequately informed of matters to be considered prior to meetings and allowing sufficient time for discussion of those matters at the meeting
    - ensuring the meeting runs smoothly and that the views of members are heard
    - focus the committee's deliberations on the most important issues
    - seek the input of advisers, observers and other experts to maximise committee deliberations
    - summarise discussion outcomes and actions, including assigning responsibility and timeframes for actions
  - maintain an effective working relationship with the council's external auditor
  - oversee the internal audit function and be alert to external accountability and internal audit concerns
  - arrange for all committee members to maintain an up-to-date knowledge of the council and its activities, including any financial or regulatory developments, and
  - know the strengths and weaknesses of the committee, and individual committee members and how this may affect the opinions of the committee.

## Independent members

Independent audit, risk and improvement committee members are expected to be able to assess information provided to them about the council and to identify and assess key risks and issues.

Each member should be capable of making a valuable contribution to the committee.

To be successful in their role, a member must:

- take a professional approach to their responsibilities, including an appropriate commitment of time and effort

- know the business, culture and values of the council and take the time to understand changes that affect how the council operates and its risks
- have sufficient understanding of the council's financial reporting responsibilities to be able to contribute to the committee's consideration of the annual financial statements
- understand the role of the committee and the expectations of the council
- act in the best interests of the council
- take a professional approach
- be a good communicator and build effective relationships with the council and other committee members, and
- have the personal courage to raise and deal with tough issues, express opinions frankly, ask questions that go to the fundamental core of the issue and pursue independent lines of inquiry.

## Councillor members

Councillor members of audit, risk and improvement committees are non-voting members of committees. This is to ensure that decision making by the committee is independent of the council.

Councillor members of committees act as an important link between the governing body and the committee.

Their role is to:

- relay to the committee any concerns the governing body may have regarding the council and issues being considered by the committee
- provide insights into local issues and the strategic priorities of the council that would add value to the committee's consideration of agenda items
- advise the governing body (as necessary) of the work of the committee and any issues arising from it, and
- assist the governing body to review the performance of the committee each council term.

Issues or information councillor members raise with or provide the audit, risk and improvement committee must relate to the



matters listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act, the committee's terms of reference and issues being considered by the committee.

Councillor members of audit, risk and improvement committees are not entitled to receive information about audit, risk and improvement committee activities outside of established reporting requirements.

Councillor members of audit, risk and improvement committees must conduct themselves in a non-partisan and professional manner.

Councillor members of committees must not engage in any conduct that seeks to politicise the activities of the committee or the internal audit function or that could be seen to do so.

Where a councillor member of an audit, risk and improvement committees engages in such conduct or in any other conduct that may bring the committee and its work into disrepute, the chair may recommend to the council, that the councillor member be removed from membership of the committee.

Where the council does not agree to the chair's recommendation, it must give reasons for its decision in writing to the chair.

## Independence criteria for committee chairs and independent members

The chair and all independent voting members of audit, risk and improvement committees must be independent to ensure they have no real or perceived bias or conflicts of interest that may interfere with their ability to act independently and can provide the council with robust, objective and unbiased advice about how the council is functioning.

**Each council must ensure that the chair and independent members of the council's audit, risk and improvement**



### committee meet the following independence criteria.

The chair and independent voting committee members **must not**:

- currently be a councillor of any NSW council
- be a non-voting representative of the board of the joint organisation
- be a candidate at the last election of the council
- be a person who has held office in the council during its previous term
- be currently employed by the council or joint organisation, or been employed during the last 12 months
- conduct audits of the council on behalf of the Audit Office of NSW
- have a close personal or business relationship with a councillor or a person who has a senior role in the council that may lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest
- currently, or within the last three years, provided any material goods or services (including consultancy, legal, internal audit and advisory services) to the council which directly affect subjects or issues considered by the audit, risk and improvement committee
- be (or have a close family member who is) a substantial shareholder, owner, officer or employee of a company that has a material business, contractual relationship, direct financial interest or material indirect financial interest with the council or a related entity which could be considered a real or perceived conflict of interest, or
- currently or have previously acted as an advocate of a material interest on behalf of the council or a related entity which could be considered a real or perceived conflict of interest.

Current staff of councils may serve as an independent member of another council's audit, risk and improvement committee but not as its chair. Current council staff may only serve on another council's audit, risk and improvement committee if they meet the independence and eligibility criteria for membership of the committee and their



employer is not participating in a shared arrangement with the other council in relation to the audit, risk and improvement committee or the internal audit function.

General managers will require the approval of their council under section 353 of the Local Government Act before they can serve as an independent member of another council's audit, risk and improvement committee. Other council staff will require the approval of their general manager.

Both the governing body of the council and the general manager must ensure that adequate procedures are in place to preserve the independence of the chair and members of the audit, risk and improvement committee.

Likewise, the chair and members must notify the governing body and/or general manager if a real or perceived threat to their independence arises.

## Eligibility criteria for committee chairs and members

The persons appointed as a chair or a member of an audit, risk and improvement committee must possess the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to undertake their roles on the committee effectively and to ensure the committee can operate appropriately and effectively to support the council.

A poorly skilled audit, risk and improvement committee may not be able to provide the assurance needed by the council and may lead to sub-optimal outcomes that jeopardise the council's capacity to achieve its strategic objectives.

The following eligibility criteria for audit, risk and improvement committee chairs and members reflect the minimum standards persons must meet to be appointed as the chair or member of a council's audit, risk and improvement committee. Councils may require audit, risk and improvement committee chairs

and members to satisfy more onerous eligibility criteria if they choose to do so.

**Councils must ensure that the chair and other members of the council's audit, risk and improvement committee meet the below minimum eligibility criteria.**



## Eligibility criteria for committee chairs

In addition to meeting the independence requirements specified above, the chair of an audit, risk and improvement committee must satisfy the following minimum eligibility criteria to be appointed as a chair. Ideally, they will also be able to demonstrate the desirable criteria.

### Essential criteria

Audit, risk and improvement committee chairs must demonstrate the following:

- leadership qualities and the ability to promote effective working relationships in complex organisations
- an ability to communicate complex and sensitive assessments in a tactful manner to the head of the council's internal audit function, senior management and the mayor and councillors
- a sound understanding of:
  - the principles of good organisational governance and capacity to understand local government accountability, including financial reporting
  - the business of the council or the environment in which it operates
  - internal audit operations, including selection and review of the head of the council's internal audit function, and
  - risk management principles
- extensive senior level experience in governance and management of complex organisations, an ability to read and understand financial statements and a capacity to understand the ethical requirements of government (including potential conflicts of interest)

- functional knowledge in areas such as risk management, performance management, human resources management, internal and external auditing, financial reporting, accounting, management control frameworks, internal financial controls, governance (including planning, reporting and oversight), or business operations
- a capacity to form independent judgements and a willingness to constructively challenge/question management practices and information, and
- a professional, ethical approach to the exercise of their duties and the capacity to devote the necessary time and effort to the responsibilities of the chair of an audit, risk and improvement committee.

### Desirable criteria

Possession of a relevant professional qualification or membership (e.g., Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), CPA Australia (CPA) and Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CA)) is desirable.

## Eligibility criteria for independent committee members

In addition to meeting the independence requirements specified above, independent members of an audit, risk and improvement committee must satisfy the following eligibility criteria to be appointed as an independent committee member. Ideally, they will also be able to demonstrate the desirable criteria.

### Essential criteria

Independent members of audit, risk and improvement committee members must demonstrate the following:

- an ability to read and understand financial statements and a capacity to understand the ethical requirements of government (including potential conflicts of interest)
- functional knowledge in areas such as risk management, performance management, human resources management, internal

- and external auditing, financial reporting, accounting, management control frameworks, internal financial controls, governance (including planning, reporting and oversight), or business operations
- a capacity to form independent judgements and willingness to constructively challenge/question management practices and information
- a professional, ethical approach to the exercise of their duties and the capacity to devote the necessary time and effort to the responsibilities of an independent member of an audit, risk and improvement committee, and
- preparedness to undertake any training on the operation of audit, risk and improvement committees recommended by the chair based on their assessment of the skills, knowledge and experience of the independent member.

### Desirable criteria

Ideally, independent members of audit, risk and improvement committees should also meet the following criteria, but these are not essential:

- extensive senior level experience in governance and management of complex organisations, and
- possession of a relevant professional qualification or membership (e.g., Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), CPA Australia (CPA) and Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CA)).

### Criminal record and financial status checks

Councils must undertake a criminal record and a financial status (bankruptcy) check of audit, risk and improvement committee chairs and independent members before their appointment.

Audit, risk and improvement committee chairs and independent members must not be undischarged bankrupts or have been charged with or convicted of a serious criminal offence.

## Eligibility criteria for councillor members

To be appointed as a non-voting audit, risk and improvement committee member a councillor must demonstrate the following:

- an ability to read and understand financial statements and a capacity to understand the ethical requirements of government (including potential conflicts of interest)
- a good understanding of one or more of the following: risk management, performance management, human resources management, internal and external auditing, financial reporting, accounting, management control frameworks, internal financial controls, governance (including planning, reporting and oversight), or business operations
- a capacity to form independent judgements and willingness to constructively challenge/question management practices and information
- a professional, ethical approach to the exercise of their duties and the capacity to devote the necessary time and effort to the responsibilities of a councillor member of an audit, risk and improvement committee, and
- preparedness to undertake any training on the operation of audit, risk and improvement committees recommended by the chair based on their assessment of the skills, knowledge and experience of the councillor member.

The mayor cannot be appointed as a councillor member of a council's audit, risk and improvement committee.

## Appointment

Audit, risk and improvement committee chairs and members are appointed by a resolution of the governing body of the council.

The governing body should first appoint the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee, who is to then assist in the

selection and appointment of the other independent committee members.

## Skills mix

When selecting individual audit, risk and improvement committee members, the council should ensure the committee has the appropriate mix of skills, knowledge and experience necessary to successfully implement its terms of reference and add value to the council.

The audit, risk and improvement committee should have:

- at least one member with financial expertise (for example, a qualified accountant or auditor or other financial professional with experience of financial and accounting matters), and
- a mix of skills and experience in:
  - business
  - financial and legal compliance
  - risk management, and
  - internal audit, and
  - any specialised business operations of the council, where the committee would benefit from having a member with skills or experience in this area (for example, IT skills or experience where IT systems have an important role in the council's business).

All audit, risk and improvement committee members should have sufficient understanding of the council's financial reporting responsibilities to be able to contribute to the committee's consideration of the annual financial statements.

Each committee member should also have sufficient time to devote to their responsibilities as an audit, risk and improvement committee member.

Where possible, the governing body should ensure that at least one other audit, risk and improvement committee member is also qualified to act as the chair if this is ever required.



## Letter of appointment

The appointment of chairs and members of audit, risk and improvement committees should be formalised in an official letter of appointment signed by the mayor of the council.

The letter of appointment should set out the terms and conditions of the appointment including:

- duration of appointment
- role and responsibilities
- timing and location of meetings
- time commitment
- remuneration
- the management of conflicts of interest
- confidentiality
- performance appraisal, and
- termination of appointment.

## Induction

Induction of all new audit, risk and improvement committee members is vital to ensure they 'hit the ground running' in their role.

The chair is to provide a thorough induction to each new member of the audit, risk and improvement committee to ensure they understand:

- the committee's role, responsibilities and terms of reference
- the business, operations, culture, risks and controls of the council, and
- the expectations of the council about their responsibilities and performance.

This will include providing new members with any background information or documentation necessary to ensure they understand the work of the audit, risk and improvement committee.

It may also be appropriate for more detailed information or presentations to be provided from various senior staff to assist the new member to understand the operations of the council and any key challenges.

New audit, risk and improvement committee members also have an obligation to ensure

that they have an appropriate understanding of the council, including its:

- operations, functions, service delivery
- key areas of risk
- internal controls, and
- financial reporting systems.

The mayor, general manager and existing chair (where appropriate) will induct a new chair.

## Membership terms

### Voting members

To ensure the audit, risk and improvement committee continues to offer new perspectives and remains independent, it is important that committee members are rotated periodically to maintain a fresh approach and avoid any perceptions of bias or conflicts of interest.

Councils are to ensure that chairs and members serve the following time-limited terms to facilitate a rotation of knowledge and perspectives.



The initial term of membership on an audit, risk and improvement committee is four-years.

Audit, risk and improvement committee members can be reappointed for up to one further term but the total period of continuous membership on the committee cannot exceed eight years (two terms). This includes any term as chair of the committee.

Chairs or members who have served an eight-year term must have a two-year break from serving on the same council's audit, risk and improvement committee before being eligible to be appointed to that council's committee again.

Care is to be taken to ensure that membership renewal dates are staggered so knowledge of the council's operations, financial reporting structure and other important aspects are not lost to the audit, risk and improvement committee when members change.



Ideally, no more than one member should leave the committee because of rotation in any one year.

### Exemptions

If a council is unable to replace the chair or members of its audit, risk and improvement committee when their maximum term limit has been reached, the council can seek the approval of the Departmental Chief Executive to extend their term or to reappoint the chair or committee member for a further term.

The council's request must:

- be in writing
- describe the efforts the council has made to appoint a different member, and
- explain why the council has been unsuccessful.

Exemptions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

### Chair

To ensure that the committee maintains a fresh approach, the initial term of a chair of an audit, risk and improvement committee on any one audit, risk and improvement committee is four-years (one term).

The chair can be reappointed as chair for up to one further term, but the total period served by a chair on the same committee cannot exceed eight years (two terms).

Where the chair's term expires and another chair is appointed, it is the responsibility of the outgoing chair to ensure the incoming chair is fully briefed on the ongoing work of the audit, risk and improvement committee.

This includes advising the incoming chair of:

- any activity that may be relevant to the ongoing functioning of the committee, and
- any outstanding matters of high risk to the council and outstanding audit recommendations.

### Councillor members

The initial term of a councillor member of an audit, risk and improvement committee is four years, coinciding with the term of the council.

The councillor member can be reappointed for another term (i.e. four-years), if re-elected at the council's next ordinary election, but the total period of continuous membership on the committee cannot exceed eight years (two council terms).

The councillor member is to be appointed by the governing body at the first meeting of the council after the ordinary election.

The councillor member's term ends at the end of the council term.

### Reappointment

Prior to approving the reappointment or extension of the chair or an independent member's term, the governing body of the council must undertake an assessment of the chair's or committee member's performance.

The council may engage an external reviewer to undertake this assessment if they choose.

In undertaking the assessment, the council, or any person appointed to undertake the assessment on behalf of the council, must consult with and consider the views of the chair (in the case of the reappointment or extension of the term of a committee member other than the chair), the general manager and any councillor member of the committee.

The council, or any person appointed to undertake the assessment on behalf of the council, should also consider whether the person's skills, knowledge and experience align with the council's requirements, as set out in the committee's terms of reference and four-year strategic work plan (see below), to ensure that they continue to add value to the committee.

The reappointment of the chair or a committee member is also subject to that person still meeting independence and eligibility requirements.

## Resignation of committee members

Where the chair or a member of an audit, risk and improvement committee is unable to complete their term or does not intend to seek reappointment after the expiry of their term, they should give sufficient notice to the chair (in the case of a committee member) and the governing body (in the case of the chair) prior to their resignation to enable the council to ensure a smooth transition to a new committee member or chair.

The notice period is to be agreed by the governing body of the council and the committee.

A member of an audit, risk and improvement committee should have the opportunity to have an exit meeting with the chair to discuss their reason for leaving and to provide feedback on their experience serving on the committee as well as any other issues.

Resigning chairs should have the opportunity to have an exit meeting with the mayor and general manager (if appropriate).

## Dismissal of committee members

The governing body of a council can terminate the appointment of the chair and any member of the audit, risk and improvement committee by resolution before the expiry of their terms under certain circumstances.

The dismissal of the chair or an independent member of a committee is to be reported to the Office of Local Government.

### Dismissal criteria

The chair or an independent member of the audit, risk and improvement committee can be dismissed by the governing body before the expiry of their term where they have:

- breached the council's code of conduct

- performed unsatisfactorily or not to expectations
- declared, or are found to be in, a position of a conflict of interest with is unresolvable
- been declared bankrupt or are found to be insolvent
- experienced an adverse change in business status
- been charged with a serious criminal offence
- been proven to be in serious breach of their obligations under any legislation, or
- experienced an adverse change in capacity or capability.

## Councillor members

The appointment of a councillor member to an audit, risk and improvement committee can be terminated at any time by the governing body by resolution.

## Fees

The fees a council pays to the chair and independent members of its audit, risk and improvement committee are to be agreed between the council and the chair or member and reflect the time, commitment and responsibility involved in serving on the committee.

Chairs and members can serve on a committee on a voluntary basis if they choose to.

## Superannuation

Councils are obliged under the *Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992* to make compulsory superannuation guarantee contributions on behalf of audit, risk and improvement committee chairs and independent members where they are remunerated.

## Insurance

Councils should determine whether professional indemnity and public liability

insurance is required for the chair and independent members of their audit, risk and improvement committee.

In some cases, the chair or a member of an audit, risk and improvement committee may already be covered by the council's professional indemnity and public liability insurance policies or by their own insurance.

This will need to be ascertained by the council and chair or member on a case-by-case basis having regard to the terms of any relevant insurance policy.

Where a council determines that professional indemnity or public liability insurance may be required, the chair or member can obtain their own insurance, or the council can consider obtaining it on their behalf.

## Learning and development

Audit, risk and improvement committee chairs and members are encouraged to keep informed of current developments and to maintain and develop the skills, knowledge and capabilities necessary to exercise their functions effectively.

Several professional development networks and programs are available, for example, through organisations such as:

- the Institute of Internal Auditors
- the Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand
- The Actuaries Institute, and the
- Local Government Professionals Association.

Audit, risk and improvement chairs and members are also encouraged to serve on more than one local government committee to extend the breadth of their experience and understanding of councils and their operations and risks.

## Conduct

Audit, risk and improvement committee members are required to observe the same ethical and behavioural standards as other council officials and must comply with the council's code of conduct.

As required under the council's code of conduct, audit, risk and improvement committee members must declare and appropriately manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being dealt with by the committee.

Declarations of conflicts of interest and the actions taken to manage them must be recorded in the minutes of meetings.

Councils should identify the chair and independent members of their audit risk and improvement committee as 'designated persons' for the purposes of the council's code of conduct and require them to complete and submit returns of interests.

Complaints of breaches of the council's code of conduct by audit, risk and improvement committee members are to be dealt with in accordance with the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*.

Under the Procedures, the general manager is responsible for managing code of conduct complaints about the chair and independent members of the audit, risk and improvement committee. However, as a safeguard, the general manager should consult with the governing body of the council before taking disciplinary action under the Procedures against the chair or an independent member of the council's audit, risk and improvement committee.

## Meetings

The audit, risk and improvement committee must meet at least quarterly over the course of each year.

The chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee is to decide the frequency and



timing of the committee's meetings and plan them annually in advance to ensure the availability of all members and observers.

Generally, meetings should correspond with major phases of the council's financial reporting, external audit and internal audit cycles.

For example, the audit, risk and improvement committee should meet to review the council's financial statements before they are certified by the council.

Audit, risk and improvement committee meetings should also correspond with meetings of the governing body, and allow sufficient time between audit, risk and improvement committee meetings and council meetings for the committee to action any items and prepare any reports that are to be provided to the governing body at the council meeting.

Special meetings may be held, if needed, to review the council's financial statements prior to them being submitted to the governing body of the council, or to consider the audit, risk and improvement committee's annual or four-yearly assessments (see below).

Audit, risk and improvement committee meetings can be held in person, by telephone or videoconference.

The audit, risk and improvement committee can hold additional meetings when significant unexpected issues arise, or if the chair is asked to hold an additional meeting by a committee member or the general manager.

The governing body can also resolve to request the audit, risk and improvement committee to hold an additional meeting.

Where such a request is made, the chair can decide whether the additional meeting is required, taking into consideration the issues that the governing body has requested the audit, risk and improvement committee to consider at the meeting.

## Proxies

As audit, risk and improvement committee members are appointed on the basis of their

skills, knowledge and personal qualities, proxies are not permitted to attend meetings on behalf of members who are unable to attend.

## Quorum and voting

A quorum consists of a majority of audit, risk and improvement committee independent voting members.

Where the vote is tied, the chair has the casting vote.

## Agenda

### Forward agenda

The chair should prepare a 12-month forward meeting agenda to ensure that the audit, risk and improvement committee covers all its responsibilities at the appropriate time of the year.

For example, the forward agenda will set out, at the appropriate meeting, the various internal and external audit reports and management responses to be tabled and discussed.

It will also allocate appropriate time for a review of the progress of the internal audit function against the annual work plan, and to follow-up the implementation of corrective actions.

### Meeting agenda

The chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee is to determine the agenda for each committee meeting.

It is recommended that the chair consult with other committee members, the general manager, the head of the internal audit function and external auditor prior to setting the agenda so that any urgent issues or risks that arise can be included.

The chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee is to decide an appropriate timeframe for receiving the final agenda in the lead-up to the meeting.



## Papers

The audit, risk and improvement committee is to decide in consultation with the general manager and the head of the internal audit function an appropriate timeframe for receiving papers and other necessary information to support agenda items to be considered at each committee meeting.

## Minutes

Each audit, risk and improvement committee meeting must be minuted to preserve a record of the issues considered and the actions and decisions taken by the committee.

Audit, risk and improvement committee meeting minutes must:

- include a record of attendance
- cover each agenda item and document the discussion held and the outcome of discussions, including any recommendations, action points and/or allocation of tasks to relevant people
- be approved by the chair before circulation
- be provided to committee members, the governing body of the council, the general manager, the head of the internal audit function and external auditor
- be provided soon after the meeting date to ensure relevant persons are made aware of any significant issues discussed at the meeting that need to be dealt with. The exact time period is to be determined by the committee and the general manager.

The minutes must be confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting at the next meeting of the audit, risk and improvement committee.

If any important details have been incorrectly recorded or omitted, they can be discussed and the minutes amended, prior to confirmation at a subsequent meeting.

After the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting, they must be signed by the chair.

All audit, risk and improvement committee members and observers should receive a copy of the minutes of all meetings.

## Attendance of observers

Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the issues to be discussed, audit, risk and improvement committee meetings should not be open to the public.

In addition to audit, risk and improvement committee members, the general manager and the head of the internal audit function should attend committee meetings as non-voting observers.

The NSW Auditor-General, as council's external auditor, or their representative, is to be invited to each committee meeting as an independent non-voting observer and can choose whether to attend.

The chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee can request the following people to attend a committee meeting or to meet with the committee to provide additional information relevant to its role:

- ⇒ council's chief financial officer (or equivalent) given their knowledge of, and responsibility for, council's financial management
- ⇒ the head of the council's risk management function
- ⇒ senior managers
- ⇒ any councillor
- ⇒ any employee or contractor of the council (with the general manager's permission), and/or
- ⇒ any external independent expert or external party whose advice is needed (subject to confidentiality considerations).

These persons must attend meetings where requested and must, as far as is practicable, provide the information requested.

Observers have no voting rights at audit, risk and improvement committee meetings and can be excluded from a meeting by the chair of the committee at any time where necessary.

## Private meetings

The audit, risk and improvement committee can hold closed meetings whenever it needs to discuss confidential or sensitive issues with

only voting members of the committee present.

In addition to attending audit, risk and improvement committee meetings, the committee can meet privately at any time with the head of the internal audit function and/or external auditor without the general manager present. At least one private meeting must occur annually.

- supporting the chair to prepare reports for the council
- arranging appropriate meeting facilities and equipment
- keeping members informed of developments affecting the council that may relate to the work of the committee
- maintaining a record of when member's terms of appointment are due for renewal or termination
- ensuring new members receive appropriate induction, and
- managing expenditures relating to the committee.

## Confidentiality

It is at the discretion of the council to decide whether audit, risk and improvement committee agendas, business papers, minutes and other reports are made publicly available.

Given its potential sensitivity, it is recommended that all information pertaining to the audit, risk and improvement committee and internal audit activities is treated as confidential unless otherwise determined by the committee or a resolution of the council.

Councils and audit, risk and improvement committees should also consider the guiding principles of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* and whether it is in the public interest to proactively disclose or release information and whether there is an overriding public interest against doing so.

## Shared arrangements

If the audit, risk and improvement committee has been established by a joint organisation, the executive officer of the joint organisation is responsible for organising secretariat support.

Councils that share their audit, risk and improvement committee can also share their secretariat function if they choose to.

## Key relationships

### General manager

A key role of audit, risk and improvement committees is to act as an independent source of advice and opinion to both the governing body and the general manager, and to act as a forum for the resolution of any disagreements between the council and internal audit function.

The general manager, in turn, also has a key role in supporting the work and effectiveness of the audit, risk and improvement committee.

To be effective, audit, risk and improvement committees need to maintain a positive working relationship with the general manager (and vice versa) and view them as a valuable source of advice and information about the council and its operations.

Chairs of audit, risk and improvement committees should meet regularly with general

## Secretariat

The general manager is to appoint a council staff member to provide secretariat support to the audit, risk and improvement committee.

The main functions of this role are:

- liaising with the chair to prepare agendas for audit, risk and improvement committee meetings
- ensure that committee papers are of an appropriate standard and provided with enough time to allow appropriate review and consideration
- recording minutes of meetings
- providing assistance to the chair in arranging meetings and council site visits

managers to discuss key issues and review performance.

## External audit

There are strong linkages between the work of councils' audit, risk and improvement committees and their external auditor and committees should actively engage with the external auditor.

Councils' external auditor can offer valuable insights on issues such as the effectiveness of the council's risk, controls, financial reporting, and compliance frameworks.

For the external auditor, communication with the audit, risk and improvement committee can in turn facilitate an effective and efficient audit and assist the communication of matters arising from the external audit to the council.

Audit, risk and improvement committees should:

- provide input on, and discuss, planned financial and performance audit coverage
- monitor councils' responses to financial statement management letters and performance audit reports, including the implementation of audit recommendations
- provide advice to the council on action taken on significant issues raised in relevant external auditor reports or better practice guides, and
- have a voting-members only meeting with the external auditor at least once per year so that the committee can obtain the views of the external auditor without internal audit or management advisers being present.

## Internal audit

The audit, risk and improvement committee should maintain a strong, positive relationship with the council's internal audit function and view it as a significant source of information about what is going on in the council.

The internal audit function can also assist the audit, risk and improvement committee to develop the annual work plan and four-year strategic work plan that will guide the

committee's and internal audit function's work (see below).

The chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee should routinely meet with council staff undertaking internal audit activities to discuss key issues and review performance if needed.

At least one private meeting should be held each year and any potential compromises to the internal audit activity's independence reported.

More information about this is provided in core requirement 3.

## Access to council, staff, resources and information

It is essential for the audit, risk and improvement committee to be able to access the staff and information about the council it needs to review the matters listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act and the resources necessary to undertake its other responsibilities.

## Council staff

**A council's audit, risk and improvement committee must have direct and unrestricted access to the general manager and senior management of the council in order to fulfil its responsibilities.**



Should the audit, risk and improvement committee need to meet with another council staff member or contractor to obtain information to undertake its role, the chair of the committee is to obtain permission from the general manager before inviting the staff member or contractor to meet with the committee.

Subject to the general manager's permission being given, the staff member or contractor must attend.



Any disputes between the general manager and audit, risk and improvement committee regarding access to council staff are to be resolved by the governing body.

## Council resources and information

**A council's audit, risk and improvement committee must have direct and unrestricted access to any council resources or information it needs to fulfil its responsibilities.**



In its dealings with the council, the audit, risk and improvement committee should be mindful of the environment the council is operating in and the priorities that the general manager needs to manage.

The audit, risk and improvement committee should therefore keep to a minimum the demands it places on the council and utilise as far as is practicable, existing information to obtain the necessary level of assurance in relation to its responsibilities.

The audit, risk and improvement committee may only release council information to external parties that are assisting the committee to fulfil its responsibilities with the approval of the general manager, except when it is being provided to an external investigative, audit or oversight agency for the purpose of informing that agency of a matter that may warrant its attention.

After their engagement ends with a council, a chair or member of an audit, risk and improvement committee must not disclose or make use of any confidential information acquired in the course of their engagement with the council without the approval of the council.

## External advice

The audit, risk and improvement committee can obtain any external legal or other professional/expert advice it needs to exercise its responsibilities. For example, where a council has implemented a specialised IT system, the committee can seek the expert

opinion of an IT specialist to assist its review of its implementation.

To minimise the potential costs to the council, the governing body and the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee must agree at the start of each council term how costs are to be met, i.e.:

- the governing body will set a fixed budget at the start of each council term for external expenses, or
- the committee will seek the governing body's permission prior to engaging external advice.

## Disputes

Members of an audit, risk and improvement committee should maintain an effective working relationship with each other and the council and try to resolve any differences they may have professionally.

In the event of a disagreement between the audit, risk and improvement committee and the general manager or other senior managers (for example, about findings or recommendations of audits), the dispute is to be resolved by the governing body of the council.

Unresolved disputes regarding compliance with these Guidelines are to be referred to the Departmental Chief Executive in writing.

## Workplans

### Strategic work plan

It is essential that the work of the audit, risk and improvement committee is thoroughly planned and executed to ensure that no council activity or function is missed by the committee and that councils receive value for money from their assurance investment.

**A council's audit, risk and improvement committee must develop a strategic work plan every four years to ensure that**





**all the matters listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act are reviewed by the committee and considered by the internal audit function when developing their risk-based program of internal audits.**

The plan must be developed by the audit, risk and improvement committee in consultation with the governing body, general manager, the head of the internal audit function and senior managers (where appropriate) and adopted by the governing body of the council at the start of the council term.

To maintain the independence of the audit, risk and improvement committee, the governing body of the council must be careful when adopting the strategic work plan not to direct the committee's work over the council term.

## Content

The nature of the strategic work plan will be commensurate with the size and operational complexity of the council and its risk profile, and consistent with the requirements of the International Professional Practices Framework.

At a minimum, it should document:

- the goals and expected outcomes of the audit, risk and improvement committee for the council term
- key organisational issues and risks faced by the council and how the committee will review these, and
- key performance indicators to measure progress across the council term.

When developing the council's strategic work plan, the audit, risk and improvement committee should consider at a minimum:

- the council's strategic objectives
- risks facing the council
- the work of other review activities or functions (for example, external and performance audits, and reviews or audits by other government agencies)
- an assurance map of the council's assurance activities which may assist to determine where the committee's and internal audit function's work should focus, and
- stakeholder expectations.

There should also be sufficient flexibility in the strategic work plan to accommodate the need for additional audits on emerging risks from time to time.

The audit, risk and improvement committee may, in consultation with the council's governing body, vary the strategic work plan at any time to address new or emerging risks.

The governing body of the council may also, by resolution, request the committee to approve a variation to the strategic work plan. However, any decision to vary the strategic work plan will rest with the committee.

When considering whether to vary the strategic work plan, the committee must consider the impact of the variation on the internal audit function's existing workload and the completion of pre-existing priorities and activities identified under the strategic work plan.

## Review

The audit, risk and improvement committee must review the four-year strategic plan at least annually to ensure that it is dynamic, relevant and aligns with the council's risk profile.

This will also ensure that the council remains on track with its audits and any delay in progress can be quickly addressed.

## Annual work plan

**A council's audit, risk and improvement committee must develop an annual work plan to guide its work over the forward year.**



The annual work plan must be developed by the audit, risk and improvement committee in consultation with the governing body, general manager, head of the internal audit function and senior managers (where appropriate).

The annual work plan must be consistent with the requirements of the International Professional Practices Framework and identify:

- the internal audits that will be carried out during the year to support the work of the audit, risk and improvement committee

- the key goals, objectives and scope of the proposed audits
- the resources needed for each audit (for example, staffing, budget, technology), and
- key performance indicators to measure annual progress against.

The annual work plan must be flexible enough to allow it to be reviewed and adjusted as necessary throughout the year in response to any changes to the council's risks or operations.

The audit, risk and improvement committee may, in consultation with the council's governing body vary the annual work plan to address new or emerging risks.

The governing body of the council may also, by resolution, request the committee to approve a variation to the annual work plan. However, any decision to vary the annual work plan will rest with the committee.

When considering whether to vary the annual work plan, the committee must consider the impact of the variation on the internal audit function's existing workload and the completion of pre-existing priorities and activities identified under the annual work plan.

## Performance measurement

The performance of each council's audit, risk and improvement committee and internal audit function must be able to be assessed to measure progress and improvement.

The audit, risk and improvement committee must establish key performance indicators for the council's four-year strategic work plan and annual work plan to allow the council to gauge the:

- performance of the committee and internal audit function and the value they are providing to the council, and
- council's performance regarding the matters listed in s428A so that the council can assess whether it is improving each council term in these areas.

These key performance indicators are to be reviewed and refreshed by the audit, risk and improvement committee for each annual work plan and four-year strategic work plan to

ensure they reflect the changing needs of the council and the increased capacity of the committee and internal audit function as they mature.

The general manager, in consultation with the audit, risk and improvement committee, must ensure that a data collection or performance management system is established and maintained to collect the data needed to measure progress against these key performance indicators.

## Providing advice to the governing body

### Quarterly updates

Ongoing reporting by the audit, risk and improvement committee to the governing body (and general manager) is essential for accountability and will ensure that the governing body is kept informed of matters considered by the committee and any emerging issues that may influence the strategic direction of the council or the achievement of the council's goals and objectives.

It will also ensure strong linkages between the audit, risk and improvement committee, the governing body and the general manager and lead to a better functioning assurance mechanism.

The audit, risk and improvement committee must provide an update to the governing body of the council of its activities and opinions after every committee meeting.

The audit, risk and improvement committee must also provide its quarterly update to the general manager to ensure they are kept informed of issues raised and can answer any questions the governing body may have about the committee's opinions and recommendations.

The mayor can request to meet with the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee at any time to discuss any issues relating to the work of the committee during the quarter.



The chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee can also request to meet with the mayor at any time.

### Content

The nature and content of the audit, risk and improvement committee's quarterly updates is to be determined by the governing body and the committee.

It could simply be providing a copy of the audit, risk and improvement committee's meeting minutes to the governing body if appropriate, or something more formal such as a report for noting by the governing body, or a face-to-face meeting between the committee, governing body and general manager to discuss important issues that have been identified.

Whatever the nature and form the update takes, the governing body and general manager must be advised, at a minimum, of:

- any formal resolutions of the audit, risk and improvement committee
- the committee's assessment of any audits conducted, including any breaches or deficiencies in controls that require an immediate response from the council
- progress on the implementation of corrective actions
- opportunities for longer-term improvement, and
- any key opinions or 'take-outs' from the committee's meeting.

Should the governing body require additional information, a request for the information may be made to the chair by resolution. The chair is only required to provide the information requested by the governing body where the chair is satisfied that it is reasonably necessary for the governing body to receive the information for the purposes of performing its functions under the Local Government Act.

Individual councillors are not entitled to request or receive information from the committee.

## Annual assessment

**A council's audit, risk and improvement committee must provide an annual assessment to the governing body each year.**



This will ensure that the governing body of the council is fully informed of the audit, risk and improvement committee's work and its opinion on how council is performing.

The annual assessment must include:

- a summary and assessment of the work the audit, risk and improvement committee performed to discharge its responsibilities during the preceding year
- an overview and assessment of the work of the internal audit function
- progress against key performance indicators
- advice on the appropriateness of the committee's terms of reference
- an independent assessment and advice on the matters considered by the committee during the year that, in the committee's opinion, and based on the level of risk facing the council, the governing body should be informed of, and
- other views or opinions on the council that the committee wishes to share.

Before providing their annual assessment to the governing body, the audit, risk and improvement committee must provide a copy of its annual assessment report to the general manager to allow them to develop an action plan to address any issues identified.

Both the audit, risk and improvement committee's annual assessment and the general manager's action plan can then be considered jointly by the governing body at an annual assurance meeting with the committee and the general manager.

### Annual assurance meeting

It would be beneficial for the audit, risk and improvement committee, the governing body and general manager to come together annually to discuss the committee's annual assessment of the council, how the council

proposes to respond to the committee's recommendations for corrective actions and other important internal audit and risk management matters.

The governing body may wish to hold an extraordinary or additional meeting each year for this purpose.

The annual assurance meeting should also discuss:

- the audit, risk and improvement committee's annual plan and review priorities for the upcoming year, for the approval by resolution of the governing body
- any resourcing issues for the internal audit or risk management functions that the committee considers the governing body should be informed of
- any updated committee terms of reference, for approval by resolution by the governing body, and
- the general manager's annual assessment of the council's risk management function (see core requirement 2).

The mayor, chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee and general manager can invite observers or other participants to the meeting where appropriate.

## Strategic assessment

**A council's audit, risk and improvement committee must provide to the governing body of the council a comprehensive independent assessment every council term (i.e. four years) of all the matters listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act that have been reviewed during the council term.**



This will ensure that the governing body of the council is fully informed of the council's performance in relation to the matters specified in section 428A of the Local Government Act and what corrective actions are required to address any issues identified.

It will also provide the governing body with essential information that will assist with

strategic decision-making and resource allocation during the next council term.

Before providing its strategic assessment to the governing body, the audit, risk and improvement committee must provide a copy of its report to the general manager to allow the general manager to develop an action plan to address any issues identified during the next council term.

Given the audit, risk and improvement committee's functional responsibility for the internal audit function of the council, the committee must also develop an action plan for the governing body to address any internal audit issues identified by the committee.

The audit, risk and improvement committee's strategic assessment and the action plans can be considered jointly by the governing body at a strategic assurance meeting held every four years.

## Strategic assurance meeting

It would be beneficial for the audit, risk and improvement committee, the governing body and general manager to come together at the close of the council term or commencement of the new council term to discuss the committee's strategic assessment of the council, how the council proposes to respond to the committee's recommendations during the next council term and any other important internal audit and risk management issues.

This discussion can also inform the strategic plans to be made through the integrated planning and reporting process for the next council term.

The governing body may wish to hold an extraordinary or additional meeting for this purpose.

The four-yearly assessment meeting could also discuss:

- the audit, risk and improvement committee's four-year strategic work plan for the upcoming council term for approval by resolution of the governing body
- a four-yearly review of the committee's terms of reference, for noting by the governing body and where applicable, an



updated terms of reference for approval by resolution

- the governing body's four-yearly review of the committee's performance and action plan to address any issues identified, for approval by resolution of the governing body (see below).

## Review of committee performance

It is important that the work of the audit, risk and improvement committee is regularly assessed, and that the committee is accountable for its performance.

This will ensure that the audit, risk and improvement committee is making a valuable contribution to the council and allow the governing body to determine whether any changes to the committee's terms of reference or membership are required.

**At least once each council term (i.e. four years) the governing body of the council is to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the audit, risk and improvement committee in conformance with the International Professional Practice Framework.**



This will ensure that audit, risk and improvement committees are assessed consistently across all councils and allow councils to have confidence in the work of their committees.

To conduct the review, the governing body can:

- engage a suitably qualified external assessor or peer to undertake the review, or
- undertake the review itself and engage an external assessor or peer to conduct an independent evaluation of the findings.

The external assessor or peer should have specific skills relevant to the major risks of the council and a strong understanding of what constitutes best practice in relation to the operations and performance of audit, risk and improvement committees.

## Review criteria

The review of the audit, risk and improvement committee's performance must consider:

- the appropriateness of the committee's terms of reference and whether these have been complied with
- the processes and procedures undertaken by the committee
- the collective performance of the committee – for example:
  - the quality and timeliness of assurance and advice provided by the committee to the governing body and general manager
  - the effectiveness of the committee in meeting its responsibilities
  - the relationship and quality of communication with the council and other stakeholders
- the individual performance of each member – for example, their:
  - understanding of the council, its key risks and internal controls
  - ability to act objectively and independently
  - preparation for committee meetings
  - contribution to the work of the committee through their participation in discussion and decision-making, skills and experience
- the performance of the chair, including whether the chair has (in addition to their performance as a member of the committee):
  - demonstrated positive leadership
  - maintained effective working relationships among audit, risk and improvement committee members and with the council, council's external auditor and the internal audit function
  - ensured the governing body and general manager was well informed and briefed on the strategic and technical aspects of internal audits and risk and control issues, and
  - lead effective committee meetings.
- the way the committee, external auditor, council and internal audit function work

- together to manage risk and support the council and how effective this is
- whether the committee has effectively reviewed the matters identified in section 428A of the Local Government Act and contributed to an improvement in these areas, and
- whether the composition of the committee is appropriate.

When conducting the review, the governing body is to consider feedback on each member's performance by the chair and councillor member of the committee and the general manager.

Self-assessments by the chair and members of the audit, risk and improvement committee can also be used.

The governing body of council can also request the chair of the committee to address the council and answer any questions about the operations of the committee.

The chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee is to develop an action plan for the governing body of the council to address any issues identified in the performance review and present it to the governing body at the four-yearly assessment meeting.

independence criteria required of their position, and have been appointed in accordance with prescribed membership term limits

- the council's audit, risk and improvement committee operates according to terms of reference approved by the governing body of the council that are consistent with the approved Model Terms of Reference contained in these Guidelines
- the council's audit, risk and improvement committee operates according to annual and four-year strategic work plans endorsed by the governing body of the council
- council's audit, risk and improvement committee provides an annual assessment to the governing body each year, and a strategic assessment of all the matters listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act to the governing body each council term
- the council provides the committee with direct and unrestricted access to the general manager, senior management, council information and council resources so it can fulfil its responsibilities, and
- at least once each council term the governing body of the council reviews the effectiveness of the audit, risk and improvement committee.

## Annual attestation

It is important that councils are accountable to their communities for the efficacy of their internal controls and assurance mechanisms and the operations of their audit, risk and improvement committees.

Commencing with the 2024-2025 annual report, the general manager will be required under the Local Government Regulation to attest each year in the council's annual report whether the council has complied with the following requirements in relation to its audit, risk and improvement committee, as detailed in these Guidelines:

- the council's audit, risk and improvement committee is independent of the council and has three or more members
- the chair and all members of the committee meet the eligibility and

Further information on annual attestation requirements is detailed in the statutory framework section of these Guidelines.

## Further resources

The following resources may be useful to councils seeking more information about the establishment and operation of their audit, risk and improvement committee.

This is not an exhaustive list but provides a useful starting point for councils that seek to better understand what audit, risk and improvement committees do, and how they can be supported to add maximum value to councils.

**[Audit Committees – A Guide to Good Practice \(3<sup>rd</sup> edition\)](#)** – Auditing and Assurance Standards Board, Australian Institute of Company Directors and The Institute of Internal Auditors-Australia (2017)

Provides a checklist to assess the performance of audit, risk and improvement committees and members.

**[Audit Committees – A Guide to Good Practice for Local Government](#)** – Victorian Government, Department of Planning and Community Development (2011)

Provides detailed information on the activities audit, risk and improvement committees can perform in relation to external audit, financial management, risk management and internal audit.

**[Audit Committee Guidelines – Improving Accountability and Performance](#)** – The State of Queensland (Queensland Treasury and Trade) (2012)

Provides sample:

- letter of appointment for audit, risk and improvement committee members
- self-assessment questionnaire for committee members, external peer review checklist and management feedback questionnaire when assessing committee performance, and
- committee meeting agenda.

**[Audit Committees \(RM-G2\)](#)** – Australian Government, Department of Finance

Provides a list of professional peak bodies councils could contact to source audit, risk and improvement committee members.

**[Chairing an Audit Committee](#)** – KPMG

Provides information about the role of audit, risk and improvement committee chairs, particularly in relation to:

- leadership, and
- managing the work of audit, risk and improvement committee members.

**[Dealing with Corruption, Fraud and the ICAC: the role of public sector Audit and Risk Committees](#)** – Independent Commission Against Corruption (2020)

Provides information about the role of audit, risk and improvement committees and risk management in relation to fraud and corruption.

**[Establishing a skills-based audit committee](#)** – Institute of Internal Auditors-Australia (2020)

Provides an analysis matrix template to assess the skills mix of an audit, risk and improvement committee when appointing committee members.

**[Guide for Audit & Risk Committees: Understanding Financial Statements](#)** – NSW Treasury (2017)

Provides information on activities audit, risk and improvement committee can undertake when reviewing financial statements.

**[How can audit committee members add value?](#)** – PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2011)

Provides a checklist for measuring the performance of audit, risk and improvement committees.



**Internal Audit and Risk Management Policy for the General Government Sector (TPP-20-08) – NSW Treasury (2020)**

Provides information on the NSW public sector risk management and internal audit policy, including:

- the operation of shared audit, risk and improvement committees in the NSW public sector
- matters to consider when deciding whether to enter into a shared arrangement, and
- recommended content for shared use agreements.

**Public Sector Audit Committees: Independent assurance and advice for Accountable Authorities – Australian National Audit Office (2015)**

Provides information about the role and functions of audit, risk and improvement committees, including:

- member roles and responsibilities
- how to foster good relationships between the council and committee, and
- checklists for:
  - secretariat actions
  - planning forward meeting agendas, and
  - assessing the performance of members.

**Service Delivery Review: A how to manual for local government (second edition) – Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (2015)**

Outlines the factors councils and audit, risk and improvement committees may consider when reviewing service delivery by the council.

**Setting up the Audit Committee – PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2011)**

Provides information on:

- how a council might assess the financial literacy of an audit, risk and improvement committee member, and
- best practice for inducting new committee members.

**The Role of the Audit Committee Chair – KPMG (2019)**

Provides information on the role of audit, risk and improvement committee chairs, particularly in relation to:

- running committee meetings, and
- overseeing risk management.



# Core requirement 2:

## Risk management

- Each council and joint organisation must implement a risk management framework that is consistent with current Australian standards for risk management

## Guiding principles for risk management

- ❖ Each council must accept responsibility and accountability for risk management in the council.
- ❖ Each council has a risk management framework that is appropriate for that council and is consistent with the accepted Australian risk management standard.
- ❖ Risk management is an integral part of all council management, operations, functions and activities and it is clear who is responsible for managing each risk.
- ❖ Each council supports the development of a positive risk culture.
- ❖ Councils regularly review their risk management framework and can flexibly adapt their risk management activities to suit their operations and risk profiles.
- ❖ Each council is accountable to the community for complying with its statutory obligation to adopt and maintain a risk management framework.

## Standards

Each council must manage its strategic and operational risks and implement a risk management framework that is consistent with the current Australian risk management standard, and appropriate for the council's risks.



It is recognised that each council will have different risk management requirements depending on its size, needs, budget, operational complexity and risk management maturity.

Councils have the flexibility under the Australian risk management standard to adapt the size, scope and delivery of their risk management framework provided it reflects the principles, key elements and processes set out in the standard for managing risks in any sized council or organisation.

Councils can adopt additional requirements that supplement those in the standard provided they do not conflict with the standard.

The current risk management standard at the time of the release of these Guidelines is *AS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management – Guidelines*.

Under current licensing and copyright requirements, each council will need to purchase an individually licensed copy of *AS ISO 31000:2018* from Standards Australia to obtain a full copy of the standard.

The following is a summary of the definitions, principles, key elements and process of *AS ISO 31000:2018*.

## Definitions

The definition of 'risk' and 'risk management' adopted by councils as part of their risk management framework will be the same as that adopted in the current Australian risk management standard.

At the time of printing, *AS ISO 31000:2018* defines:

- risk as the "effect of uncertainty on objectives, where an effect is a deviation from the expected. It can be positive, negative or both, and can address, create or result in opportunities and threats", and
- risk management as "coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regard to risk".

## Principles

In summary, *AS ISO 31000:2018* requires a council's approach to risk management to be based on the following eight specific principles to ensure it is effective:

- **integrated** – risk management is integrated into all council activities and decision-making processes
- **structured and comprehensive** – risk management is a structured and comprehensive process that achieves consistent and comparable results

- **customised** – the risk management framework and process are customised to the council
- **inclusive** – risk management is inclusive of all stakeholders and enables their knowledge, views and perceptions to be considered
- **dynamic** – risk management is dynamic and able to respond to changes and events in an appropriate and timely manner
- **best available information** – risk management decisions are based on the best available information and take into account any limitations and uncertainties
- **human and cultural factors** – risk management takes into account human and cultural factors, and
- **continual improvement** – risk management is continuously and periodically evaluated and improved through learning and experience.

## Key elements

To achieve these principles, *AS ISO 31000:2018* requires each council to ensure its risk management framework demonstrates the following six elements:

### Leadership and commitment

*AS ISO 31000:2018* requires risk management to be supported by a positive culture that promotes and communicates risk management as part of everyday activities and decision-making.

The standard states that this culture can only exist when management (i.e. the governing body, general manager and senior staff) demonstrate strong leadership and commitment to risk management.

Practical measures the governing body and/or general manager can take under *AS ISO 31000:2018* to exhibit strong leadership in risk management are set out further below.

### Integration

*AS ISO 31000:2018* requires that risk management is fully integrated within a council and made part of the council's

purpose, governance, leadership, strategy, objectives and operations.

Risk is to be managed in every part of the council's organisational structure and every council employee is to be responsible for managing risk.

### Design

*AS ISO 31000:2018* requires that the design of a council's risk management framework:

- is based on the unique needs, characteristics and risks of the council, and its external and internal context
- demonstrates the council's continual commitment to risk management
- assigns risk management roles, responsibilities and accountabilities within the council
- allocates appropriate council resources for risk management, and
- effectively documents and communicates risk management across the council.

### Implementation

*AS ISO 31000:2018* requires that each council implements its risk management framework by:

- developing a risk management plan that provides structure for how the council will implement its risk management policy and conducts its risk management activities, and
- ensuring the council's risk management activities are clearly understood and practiced.

The plan should identify decision makers for risk within the council and ensure risk management processes and arrangements are well understood by the council and practiced.

### Evaluation

*AS ISO 31000:2018* requires that each council regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its risk management framework and determines whether it remains suitable.



## Improvement

*AS ISO 31000:2018* requires that each council continually adapts and improves the design of its risk management framework and how it is integrated throughout the council to help the council move to a higher level of risk maturity.

## Process

*AS ISO 31000:2018* provides each council with a systematic process to identify, assess and prioritise risks, decide how they will be managed, and document and communicate them across the council.

The process defined in *AS ISO 31000:2018* consists of the following steps:

- defining the scope of the council's risk management activities to assist in planning the council's risk management approach
- establishing the internal and external context to ensure that the council understands the internal and external environment it operates in and how risk management will impact, and be impacted by these
- deciding the performance indicators that the council will use to measure the effectiveness of its risk management framework and identify gaps between its actual and desired performance
- defining the council's risk criteria/appetite – that is, the amount and type of risk that the governing body is willing to take, or not take, in order to achieve its strategic plan and objectives
- conducting risk assessments to determine what risks need to be managed
- deciding risk treatment options
- developing risk treatment plans that document how controls will be implemented, and
- writing risk reports that will document and communicate the risk management framework to all staff and be used by the council to regularly review the risk management framework.

## County councils and joint organisations

County councils and joint organisations have a lower risk profile than larger and more operationally complex general-purpose councils.

However, they are still responsible for the expenditure of public money, providing services (in the case of county councils), and delivering outcomes on behalf of their member councils and regions (in the case of joint organisations), and need to identify and manage risks appropriately.

Given their lower risk profiles, county councils and joint organisations can share the administration of their risk management framework with another council to reduce costs.

Alternatively, joint organisations can undertake the coordination and administration of their member councils' risk management frameworks on behalf of the councils.

Any shared risk management function must operate as an individual resource for each council in the shared arrangement and implement the requirements in these Guidelines for each council individually.

A shared risk management function should only be established and utilised by a county council or joint organisation where the shared function can maintain a high level of understanding and fulfilment of each council's risk management needs, as well as effective working and reporting relationships with the general manager and senior staff of each council in the shared arrangement.

Councils that establish a shared risk management function should develop and sign a formal agreement with the other councils in the shared arrangement which outlines how the shared arrangement will operate and costs are shared.



## Resourcing

*AS ISO 31000:2018* requires each council to ensure sufficient resources are allocated to implement the council's risk management framework and deliver the internal controls needed to ensure the council's risks are appropriately managed.

In practice, this responsibility will fall to the governing body and/or general manager of the council.

These resources include the necessary:

- human resources (with appropriate skills and experience)
- technology, equipment, tools and information management systems for managing risk
- documented processes and procedures, and
- professional development and training for staff to ensure they can fulfil their risk management responsibilities.

To ensure that the governing body and/or general manager makes informed budgeting decisions, the audit, risk and improvement committee is to advise of the resources it considers that the council needs to effectively implement its risk management framework, having regard to any budgetary constraints facing the council and the council's operational environment.

## Roles and responsibilities

*AS ISO 31000:2018* requires that each council assign risk management roles and responsibilities to all relevant roles within the council.

To ensure effective implementation, the standard also requires each council to demonstrate strong leadership and commitment to risk management.

In practice, this will see the general manager, governing body and council staff take on the following responsibilities:

## Governing body – strategic leadership

Consistent with the governing body's strategic leadership role under section 223 of the Local Government Act, the governing body is responsible for establishing the foundational elements of the council's risk management framework and setting the 'tone at the top'.

This includes approving by resolution the council's risk criteria/appetite – a statement that conveys how much risk will be tolerated by the governing body in the pursuit of the strategic objectives for the council, and how risk is to be managed and decisions made within this context.

The council's risk criteria/appetite is to be approved in consultation with the audit, risk and improvement committee.

## General manager – operational leadership

Consistent with the general manager's role under section 335 of the Local Government Act to conduct the day-to-day management of the council, the general manager has ultimate responsibility and accountability for risk management in the council.

A council's general manager is responsible for implementation of the council's risk management framework. This includes:

- overseeing the council's risk management framework and ensuring it is effectively communicated, implemented and reviewed regularly
- approving the council's risk management policy, plans and risk reports (where applicable)
- promoting and championing a positive risk culture
- assigning authority and accountability for risk management at appropriate levels and to appropriate staff in the council, and ensuring they are held accountable for these responsibilities
- annually attesting that the council's risk management framework complies with these Guidelines (see below), and

- approving the council's implementation of corrective actions recommended by the council's internal audit function, external audit and audit, risk and improvement committee.

Depending on the council's needs, resources and organisational structure, and to assist the integration of risk management across the council, the general manager may wish to delegate responsibility for key aspects of the council's risk management framework to a senior manager or group of senior managers established for this purpose.

The delegate would report to the general manager on risk management issues.

An example risk management policy is provided at **Appendix 4**.

## Risk management function – oversight and facilitation

Each council is to establish a risk management function responsible for the day-to-day activities required to implement the council's risk management framework and provide specialist risk management skills and knowledge.

The council's risk management function is a key support to the general manager in meeting their risk management responsibilities and reports directly to the general manager or their delegate.

Each council will have the flexibility to establish its risk management function based on its structure, resourcing, risk management needs and risk management maturity.

Regardless of its structure and composition, the role and responsibilities of the risk management function should include:

- supporting the general manager by coordinating and providing clear and concise risk information, advice and/or reports that can be used in planning and decision-making
- coordinating the various activities relating to risk management within the council
- helping to build a risk management culture within the council, including facilitating and driving risk management at the

strategic and operational level within the council and ensuring consistency in practice

- ensuring there are easily accessible systems and processes in place to enable all staff to conveniently undertake risk management in their day-to-day work
- ensuring risk management processes are applied consistently across the council
- organising appropriate staff risk management training and development
- developing and maintaining a risk reporting framework to enable regular advising/reporting of key risks, and the management of those risks, to the general manager or their delegate
- supporting council staff with their risk management obligations and providing staff with advice and tools to ensure risk management compliance
- implementing effective risk management communication mechanisms and information system/s
- establishing and maintaining an ongoing monitoring system to track the risk management activities undertaken within the council and assessing the need for further action
- assessing risk management information for completeness, accuracy and consistency (for example, risk registers, risk treatment plans), and
- preparing advice or reports for the audit, risk and improvement committee and attending committee meetings (where requested).

In order to fulfil its role, the risk management function needs to:

- have a well-developed understanding of the council and its operations
- have the skills, knowledge and leadership qualities required to support and drive risk management
- have sufficient authority to intervene in instances where risk management efforts are being hampered by a lack of cooperation or through lack of risk management capability or maturity, and
- be able to add value to the risk management process by providing guidance and support in managing difficult

risk, or risks spread across a number of the council's business units or operational areas.

### Dual responsibilities

It is important that the risk management function is independent of line management to reduce the potential for management influence on the risks that are reported on, and to ensure independence.

Where risk management oversight or facilitation activities are performed by council staff with other council responsibilities, the council must put safeguards in place to limit any cognitive bias (which can lead to faulty risk assessments and decision-making errors).

Depending on the specific needs and circumstances of the council, these safeguards could include:

- the audit, risk and improvement committee being informed of the other council responsibilities the risk management function has, including reporting lines, responsibilities and expectations related to the role/s
- any potential issues or conflicts of interest arising from these other roles being formally documented and communicated to the committee
- risk management staff being prohibited from undertaking risk management evaluations and reviews in relation to the council operations they are responsible for, and/or
- the committee regularly assessing that the safeguards put in place are effective.

### Internal audit function – review and assurance

Councils' internal audit function is responsible for reviewing and providing advice to the audit, risk and improvement committee and the council on the effectiveness of the council's risk management framework.

Given the need to maintain the independence and objectivity of the internal audit function, the following boundaries are to apply with respect to the role of the internal audit

function in relation to the council's risk management framework:

- it is to be clear that council management remains responsible for risk management
- the internal audit function is to provide advice and challenge and support management's decision-making, as opposed to taking risk management decisions themselves
- the internal audit function should not:
  - manage any of the risks on behalf of the council
  - set the council's risk criteria/appetite
  - impose risk management processes
  - decide or implement risk responses, or
  - be held accountable for risk management activities.

### Audit, risk and improvement committee – advice and assurance

An audit, risk and improvement committee's role in relation to risk management is to support the governing body and general manager and to ensure that the council's risk management framework is appropriate and operationally effective.

The breadth and depth of this assurance role is to be determined by the council and the audit, risk and improvement committee and could include:

- assessing whether risks at all levels are identified, assessed and reviewed regularly by the council
- being involved in the regular review of the council's risk register
- reviewing the integration of risk management into business planning and program implementation activities, and/or
- providing assurance in relation to the management of risk or governance arrangements on individual projects, programs or activities.

Appendix 3 provides further examples of the activities the audit, risk and improvement committee could perform in relation to risk management.



## Review and reporting

### Quarterly reporting

Each council should ensure its risk management framework is regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure it is relevant, effective and complies with the current Australian risk management standard.

Each council should base its ongoing monitoring and review process on its own needs. However, this should include at a minimum, providing quarterly advice from the risk management function to the general manager or their delegate.

This will ensure that risks are being correctly identified, prioritised and treated, and any emerging problems are known and rectified quickly.

- the council's internal controls are effective and appropriate
- the council's risk register and risk profile are current and appropriate
- risk information is captured and communicated in a timely manner across the council, enabling management and staff to carry out their responsibilities, and
- the council's risk management policies, procedures and plans are being complied with.

The general manager should discuss the annual assessment of the council's risk management function with the governing body and audit, risk and improvement committee at the council's strategic assurance meeting held each council term.

### Strategic assessment

The Local Government Regulation (section 4.10) requires councils' audit, risk and improvement committees to keep the implementation of a council's risk management framework under review and provide advice to the council on its implementation.

### Annual assessment

Each council's risk management function is to conduct an annual self-assessment of the council's risk management framework.

The annual self-assessment is to report to the general manager whether the council's risk management framework:

- complies with these Guidelines
- is sufficiently resourced
- operates effectively, this includes whether:
  - the internal control framework appropriately reflects the council's risk criteria/appetite
  - risks are formally considered when developing and implementing all council policies, programs, projects and other activities, including procurement
  - risk management covers all relevant risk categories including strategic, operational, compliance, reputational and reporting risks
  - major risks have been identified and assessed by the council and appropriate risk treatments have been implemented that reflect the council's risk criteria

**A council's audit, risk and improvement committee must provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the council's risk management framework to the governing body each council term, as part of the committee's four-yearly strategic assessment.**



As part of the audit, risk and improvement committee's assessment of the council's risk management function, it should consider whether:

- the council is providing sufficient resources for risk management
- the council's risk management framework complies with these Guidelines, and
- the council's risk management framework operates effectively, is being complied with and supports the achievement of the council's strategic goals and objectives.



The general manager is to develop an action plan for the governing body to address any risk management issues identified by the committee.

The audit, risk and improvement committee and general manager should discuss the strategic assessment and action plan with the governing body at the council's strategic assurance meeting held each council term (see above).

## Performance measures

To ensure the effectiveness of the council's risk management activities can be regularly monitored and reviewed, each council must ensure that it:

- assigns performance targets to risk management activities that can be measured against goals and objectives, and
- can obtain the data needed to measure the impact of the council's risk management framework.

## Annual attestation

Commencing with the 2024-2025 annual report, the general manager will be required under the Local Government Regulation to attest each year in the council's annual report whether the council has complied with the following requirements in relation to its risk management activities:

- the council has adopted a risk management framework that is consistent with current Australian risk management standards and is appropriate for the council's risks, and
- the council's audit, risk and improvement committee reviews the implementation of the council's risk management framework and issues an assessment of the effectiveness of the council's risk management framework to the governing body each council term.

Further information on annual attestation requirements is detailed in the statutory framework section of these Guidelines.

## Further resources

The following resources may be useful to councils seeking more information about the establishment and operation of their risk management framework. They provide examples, checklists, samples, templates and other practical tools councils could use.

This is not an exhaustive list but provides a useful starting point for councils that seek further information.

### **[A Guide to Risk Management – The State of Queensland \(Queensland Treasury\) \(2020\)](#)**

Provides guidance on how to apply the Australian risk management standard, including checklists for each stage of the risk management process.

### **[AS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management – Guidelines – International Standards Organisation \(2018\)](#)**

The current Australian risk management standard at the time of printing (for purchase from the International Standards Organisation)

### **[Audit Committee Guidelines – Improving Accountability and Performance – The State of Queensland \(Queensland Treasury and Trade\) \(2012\)](#)**

Provides checklists of the matters audit, risk and improvement committees are to consider when reviewing a council's risk management framework and internal controls.

### **[Dealing with Corruption, Fraud and the ICAC: the role of public sector Audit and Risk Committees – Independent Commission Against Corruption \(2020\)](#)**

Provides information about the role of risk management in relation to fraud and corruption.

### **[Risk Management Toolkit for Public Sector Agencies \(TPP 12-03\) – NSW Treasury \(2012\)](#)**

Consists of three parts:

- Executive Guide (TPP 12-03a)

- Volume 1 – Guidance for Agencies (TPP 12-03b), and

- Volume 2 – Templates, Examples and Case Study (TPP 12-03c).

Provides detailed and practical advice on the various elements of the Australian risk management standards (ISO 31000), templates and worked examples.

### **[The Three Lines of Defense in Effective Risk Management and Control – Institute of Internal Auditors \(2013\)](#)**

Outlines the three lines of defence approach to risk management and the role of management and internal audit in risk management.

### **[The Role of Internal Auditing in Enterprise-Wide Risk Management – Institute of Internal Auditors](#)**

Outlines what enterprise risk management is, how it can be implemented and the role of internal audit in risk management.

### **[Victorian Government Risk Management Framework Practice Guide – Victorian Managed Insurance Agency](#)**

Provides guidance on how to apply the Australian risk management standard, including examples of a risk appetite/criteria statement.

# Core requirement 3:

## Internal audit

- Each council and joint organisation must have an independent internal audit function that reports to the audit, risk and improvement committee and is consistent with current international standards for internal audit

## Guiding principles for internal audit

- ❖ The internal audit function operates independently and with appropriate expertise in a manner that is appropriate for the council.
- ❖ The internal audit function has access to all council information necessary to fulfil its role and responsibilities.
- ❖ The internal audit function is appropriately positioned in the council's governance framework to ensure its work complements the work of other internal and external assurance providers.
- ❖ The internal audit function has a comprehensive work plan linked to the council's strategic objectives and current and emerging risks.
- ❖ The audit, risk and improvement committee receives relevant and timely advice from the internal audit function to ensure the committee can fulfil its role and responsibilities.
- ❖ The internal audit function operates in a manner consistent with accepted international standards.
- ❖ The work of the internal audit function is thoroughly planned and executed, risk-based, client-focused and linked to the council's strategic goals.
- ❖ The internal audit function adds value to the council and is held accountable by the committee and governing body for its performance.
- ❖ Each council is accountable to the community for the effective implementation of its internal audit function.

assessment of the council's operations and risk and control activities.

Internal audit is defined in the International Professional Practices Framework issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors as *'an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objective by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes'*.

**A council's internal audit function must operate independently of the council and internal audit activities cannot be subject to direction by the council.**



**To ensure that the internal audit function remains independent from council management it must have a dual reporting line that reports:**



- administratively to the general manager or a sufficiently senior role in the council to ensure the internal audit function fulfils its responsibilities, and
- functionally to the audit, risk and improvement committee.

## Resourcing

The governing body and general manager of the council must ensure that the council's internal audit function is sufficiently resourced to effectively carry out its work. The chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee should be consulted on the resourcing required.

The audit, risk and improvement committee's resourcing recommendations are to be minuted by the committee.

## Independence

**Each council in NSW, (including county councils and joint organisations) must have an internal audit function to provide an independent unbiased**





## Internal audit charter

It is important that council's internal audit function has clear guidance on how it should support the audit, risk and improvement committee and the council, and that the committee and council has input into how the internal audit function will operate.

This will ensure there is clarity in the relationships between the audit, risk and improvement committee, the council and the internal audit function and that the performance of the internal audit function can be assessed.

**The Local Government Regulation (section 313c) requires each council to adopt an internal audit charter to guide how internal audit will be undertaken by the council that is consistent with the approved Model Internal Audit Charter provided at Appendix 5.**



The internal audit charter is to be developed by the audit, risk and improvement committee in consultation with the general manager and the head of the internal audit function and approved by resolution by the governing body of the council.

Councils may include additional provisions in their internal audit charter so long as they are not inconsistent with the approved Model Internal Audit Charter.

The audit, risk and improvement committee is to review the council's internal audit charter annually in consultation with the general manager and the head of the internal audit function.

## Role of the general manager

Consistent with their role under the Local Government Act (section 355) to conduct the day-to-day management of the council, the general manager has administrative responsibility for internal audit.

This means that the general manager is responsible for:

- advising the governing body on the resources required for the effective functioning of the internal audit function
- ensuring appropriate administrative support is provided to support the work of the internal audit function - for example, access to council's human resources networks, payroll, work health and safety, office facilities and resources, council information etc
- ensuring that the internal audit function is appropriately positioned within the council to work with external bodies and internal business units and to fulfil its role and responsibilities
- ensuring the internal audit function complies with the International Professional Practices Framework, and
- annually attesting, on behalf of the council, that the council is complying with these Guidelines in relation to internal audit.

The general manager has no role in the performance of the internal audit function (e.g. the conduct of internal audits, the audit techniques used and the reporting of internal audit findings to the audit, risk and improvement committee).

## Delegation

The general manager can, in consultation with the governing body of the council and the audit, risk and improvement committee, delegate their functions in relation to the oversight of the council's internal audit function to another role in the council that is sufficiently senior to ensure the internal audit function meets its responsibilities.

In making a delegation, consideration should be given to how the delegation will influence the internal audit function's ability to achieve the internal audit charter considering the:

- seniority and expertise of the delegate and demands placed on them by their other roles and responsibilities in the council
- support available to the delegate to successfully execute their delegation in relation to internal audit
- complexity of the council's core business

- risk profile of the council
- expectations of stakeholders, and
- likely demands placed on the internal audit function.

## Role of the audit, risk and improvement committee

Under the Local Government Regulation (section #tbc), the audit, risk and improvement committee exercises functional oversight of a council's internal audit function to ensure it operates independently from the council.

This means that the audit, risk and improvement committee is responsible for:

- assisting the governing body to identify the resources necessary for the effective functioning of the internal audit function
- setting the annual and four-year strategic work plans for the internal audit function, including the audits that will be completed
- assessing the findings and recommendations of completed audits and providing the committee's advice and opinion on issues raised to the general manager and governing body of the council
- developing the internal audit charter that will guide the work of the internal audit function and how it operates, and
- reviewing the performance of the internal audit function.

For cost and administrative efficiency, councils may also:

- establish an in-house internal audit function comprising of council staff (supplemented with contractors as may be required), and/or
- outsource their internal audit function to an external provider/s – for example, a private sector accounting firm, internal audit firm, internal audit contractor etc.

These options will assist councils, county councils and joint organisations:

- to establish their internal audit function in the most cost-effective way
- to source expert internal audit personnel in locations where it may be difficult to recruit staff with the necessary skill set
- to access a larger resource pool than would be available to a single council, and
- create efficiencies through common systems, shared knowledge and internal audit tools.

When deciding the most appropriate way to structure a council's internal audit function, the general manager should consider the viability and capacity of a shared internal audit function to achieve the council's internal audit charter given the:

- size of the council in terms of both staffing levels and budget
- geographical and functional distribution of the council's operations
- complexity of the council's core business
- risk profile of the council
- expectations of stakeholders, and
- likely demands placed on the internal audit function by other councils in the shared arrangement.

## Structure

Each council will have different internal audit requirements depending on the council's size, needs, budget and operational complexity and can either:

- establish an internal audit function for their own exclusive use, or
- share their internal audit function with another council, county council or joint organisation.

**Whatever structure is adopted, the head of a council's internal audit function must:**



- be a council employee and cannot be outsourced, other than through a shared arrangement with another council, and
- meet the eligibility and independence criteria for the position.

This is to ensure that the council retains strategic control of the internal audit function and can actively monitor its performance.

## County councils

County councils may enter into a shared arrangement with one of their constituent councils or another council.

## Joint organisations

Joint organisations that do not host a shared internal audit function for the use of their member councils can enter into a shared arrangement with a member council or, if this is not possible, with another council or joint organisation.

- specialist skills may not be available in-house
- reduced flexibility, and
- the need to provide council facilities and office space for internal audit personnel.

Councils that establish an in-house internal audit function are not limited to employing staff members and can supplement the internal audit team's work with audits undertaken by external providers where necessary.

Metropolitan and larger regional councils are encouraged to establish an in-house internal audit function given their:

- significant assets
- higher risk profiles
- higher levels of expenditure, and
- more complex transactions and operations.

## In-house internal audit function

An in-house internal audit function is one where internal auditors and other staff (where required) are employed by the council to conduct the internal audits and other activities in the audit, risk and improvement committee's annual and four-year strategic work plans.

The advantages of establishing an in-house internal audit function may include:

- council retaining ownership of internal audit information
- confidentiality of sensitive information contained in audits
- stronger direction and oversight by the council of the internal audit function with more direct control over the quality of audits conducted
- internal auditors having council-specific knowledge and experience that delivers better audit results
- greater agility to respond quickly to emerging issues, and
- the retention of corporate knowledge within the council.

Disadvantages may include:

- challenges attracting and retaining suitable staff

## Head of an in-house internal audit function

Each council's internal audit function must be led by a staff member with sufficient skills, knowledge, experience and integrity to ensure it undertakes its role appropriately, fulfils its responsibilities to the audit, risk and improvement committee and makes a valuable contribution to the council.

The head of an in-house internal audit function (described as the 'chief audit executive' in the International Professional Practices Framework) also needs to report to the general manager or a sufficiently senior role in the council that ensures the internal audit function fulfils its responsibilities.

For some councils with larger budgets and higher risks, the head of the internal audit function will require the support of a dedicated internal audit team to fulfil the internal audit charter.

For other smaller councils, their size and risk profile may not justify additional internal audit staff and the head of the internal audit function will be sufficient.

The head of the internal audit function may also have other council responsibilities outside of internal audit.



## Role and responsibilities

For all in-house internal audit functions, regardless of size, the key responsibilities of the head of the internal audit function include:

- managing the day-to-day activities of the council's internal audit activities to ensure they add value to council
- managing the council's internal audit budget
- supporting the operation of the audit, risk and improvement committee
- approving internal audit project plans, conducting or supervising audits and assessments and providing independent advice to the audit, risk and improvement committee
- monitoring the council's implementation of corrective actions that arise from the findings of audits
- fulfilling the committee's annual and four-year strategic work plans
- ensuring the council's internal audit activities comply with these Guidelines
- managing internal audit personnel and ensuring that they have the skills necessary to fulfil the role and responsibilities of the internal audit function (where appropriate), and
- contract management and oversight of supplementary external providers (where appropriate).

### Eligibility criteria

To fulfil these responsibilities, the head of the internal audit function:

- must be a council employee and cannot be outsourced, other than through a shared arrangement with another council – this is to ensure that the council retains strategic control of the internal audit function and is able to actively monitor the performance of the internal audit function
- must be independent, impartial, unbiased and objective when performing their work and free from conflicts of interest
- should possess the following skills, knowledge and experience to effectively carry out their role:

- the credibility to ensure they can negotiate on a reasonably equal footing with the general manager (or their delegate), governing body and audit, risk and improvement committee
- the skills, knowledge and personal qualities necessary to lead credible and accepted internal audit activities in the council
- strong experience overseeing internal audit
- appropriate qualifications and professional certifications, and
- local government experience (preferred).

The head of the internal audit function must also operate and conduct the internal audit activities in accordance with the International Professional Practices Framework, including its Code of Ethics.

As a council employee, the head of the internal audit function must comply with all relevant council policies and procedures, including the council's code of conduct.

### Independence

It is important that the head of an in-house internal audit function has the functional independence necessary to independently assess and report on the way the council operates.

As a safeguard, the Local Government Regulation (section #tbc) requires the general manager to consult with the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee on any decisions affecting the employment of the head of the internal audit function (including disciplinary measures).

If the head of the internal audit function is dismissed, the general manager must report the reasons for their dismissal to the governing body of the council.

Where the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee has any concerns about the treatment of the head of the internal audit function, or any action taken that may compromise the head of the internal audit function's ability to undertake their functions



independently, they can report their concerns to the governing body of the council.

The head of the internal audit function is required to confirm at least annually to the audit, risk and improvement committee the independence of internal audit activities from the council.

### Access to council staff and information

**All internal audit personnel, including the head of an in-house internal audit function have direct and unrestricted access to council staff, the audit risk and improvement committee and council information and resources necessary to undertake their role and responsibilities.**



All council staff and contractors should have unrestricted access to the head of the internal audit function to allow them to alert them to emerging risks or internal audit related issues.

### Internal audit team

Any other staff members appointed to council's in-house internal audit function report directly to the head of the internal audit function.

As council employees, internal audit staff must comply with all relevant council policies and procedures including the council's code of conduct.

In-house internal auditors must also conduct internal audit activities in accordance with the International Professional Practices Framework.

Internal audit should be performed by professionals with an appropriate level of understanding of the council's culture, systems and processes to provide assurance that the internal controls in place are sufficient to mitigate risk, that governance processes are adequate, and that organisational goals and objectives are met.

In-house internal auditors should therefore possess the following skills, knowledge and experience to effectively carry out their role:

→ the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to conduct internal audit activities in the council – for example:

- accounting
- finance
- economics
- governance
- management
- law
- taxation
- fraud and corruption
- IT

→ effective interpersonal and communication skills to ensure they can engage with council staff effectively and collaboratively

→ honesty, integrity and due diligence, and

→ appropriate qualifications and professional certifications.

Local government experience or expertise is also strongly preferred.

### Dual responsibilities

To ensure the internal audit function's independence and objectivity, it is best practice that the head of the in-house internal audit function and any other members of an in-house internal audit team have no other council responsibilities other than internal audit.

However, it is recognised that some councils may find it difficult to employ a stand-alone head of an in-house internal audit function or other supporting internal auditors because of the cost involved, or because the council's location, size and risk profile may not warrant stand-alone employees.

Councils can combine the role of the head of the internal audit function and/or members of the internal audit team with other responsibilities provided there are adequate safeguards put in place by the council to limit any real or perceived bias or conflicts of interest that may lead to faulty decision-making and cognitive bias.

An internal audit role must not be combined with the role of the general manager, chief

financial officer or risk management function as it will create conflicts of interest that cannot be resolved.

Councils can also share their head of the internal audit function with another council, county council or joint organisation as part of a shared arrangement.

Depending on the specific needs and circumstances of the council, safeguards could include:

- any potential issues or conflicts of interest arising from a dual role being formally documented in the council's internal audit charter
- the audit, risk and improvement committee, or another suitably qualified and independent party, reviewing internal audit briefs, findings and recommendations before they are finalised where they concern any key risks overseen by the head of the internal audit function or internal audit team member in another role
- the head of the internal audit function or an internal audit team member not having responsibility for managing any risks or implementing any audit recommendations or corrective actions in their other role/s, and/or
- the audit, risk and improvement committee including an assessment of the independence and objectivity (for internal audit purposes) of the head of the internal audit function or any internal audit team members exercising a dual role in their annual assessment report to the governing body.

The endorsement of the governing body, in consultation with the audit, risk and improvement committee is also required for any combined roles.

Where the head of the internal audit function has a dual role in a council, they are to remain independent and report functionally to the audit, risk and improvement committee on their internal audit responsibilities.

For other council responsibilities, the head of the internal audit function reports functionally through normal council reporting lines to the general manager.

## Outsourced internal audit function

Where a council outsources their internal audit function, the internal audits programmed by the audit, risk and improvement committee are undertaken by an external provider such as an internal audit or accounting firm, or an individual practitioner.

Contract management is overseen by an employee within the council.

The advantages of using external providers for internal audit activities may include:

- flexibility
- access to a wide range of expertise and experience that the council may not otherwise have in-house
- provides a window to better practice methods for smaller councils they may otherwise find difficult to access
- the ability to purchase services as and when required
- can increase internal audit's independence from the council
- overcoming challenges recruiting a head of an internal audit function and internal audit staff, and
- potential to negotiate lower fee-for-service costs.

Disadvantages may include:

- increased costs
- potential loss of corporate knowledge from the council
- difficulty building and maintaining professional relationships between council management and external contractors
- reduced oversight and control of internal audit activities
- additional in-house staff time required to source and manage external providers and contracts
- the external provider lacking council-specific knowledge
- internal audit coordinator is unlikely to be audit trained and may not have the knowledge to ensure audit quality is maintained, and

- potential confidentiality breaches.

Given their size, resources, geographical isolation and risk profiles, rural and smaller regional councils are encouraged, at a minimum, to establish an outsourced internal audit function.

## Head of an outsourced internal audit function

Compared to the head of an in-house internal audit function which directly conducts or supervises internal audits and provides opinions and recommendations to the audit, risk and improvement committee, the head of an outsourced internal audit function will, in practice, primarily be a coordination and administrative role.

The key responsibilities of any council staff member assigned responsibility for leading an outsourced internal audit function include:

- contract management
- managing the internal audit budget
- ensuring the external provider completes internal audits in line with the audit, risk and improvement committee's annual and four-year strategic work plans
- forwarding audit reports by the external provider to the audit, risk and improvement committee
- acting as a liaison between the external provider and the audit, risk and improvement committee
- monitoring the council's implementation of corrective actions that arise from the findings of audits and reporting progress to the audit, risk and improvement committee, and
- assisting the audit, risk and improvement committee to ensure the council's internal audit activities comply with these Guidelines.

To fulfil these responsibilities, the head of an outsourced function:

- reports functionally to the audit, risk and improvement committee
- must be free from conflicts of interest
- must be a council employee and cannot be outsourced, other than through a shared

arrangement with another council, county council or joint organisation – this is to ensure that the council retains control of the internal audit function and is able to actively monitor the performance of the external provider

- should possess the following skills, knowledge and experience to effectively carry out their role:
  - a good understanding of the work of audit, risk and improvement committees and internal audit, and
  - the skills, knowledge and personal qualities necessary to manage the council's contract with the external provider and liaise between the external provider and the audit, risk and improvement committee.

As a council employee, the head of an outsourced function must comply with all relevant council policies and procedures, including the council's code of conduct.

## Dual responsibilities

The head of an outsourced internal audit function can be assigned other roles and responsibilities in the council.

Where the head of an outsourced function has a dual role in a council, they are to remain independent and report functionally to the audit, risk and improvement committee in relation to their internal audit responsibilities.

For other council responsibilities, the head of an outsourced function reports functionally through normal council reporting lines to the general manager.

Councils can combine the head of an outsourced internal audit function's role with other responsibilities provided there are adequate safeguards put in place by the council to limit any real or perceived bias or conflicts of interest.

Depending on the specific needs and circumstances of the council, safeguards could include:

- any potential issues or conflicts of interest arising from a dual role being formally



documented in the council's internal audit charter

- the audit, risk and improvement committee endorsing the dual roles
- the head of the outsourced function not having responsibility for managing any risks or implementing any audit recommendations or corrective actions in their other role/s, and/or
- the committee including an assessment of the independence and objectivity (for internal audit purposes) of the head of the outsourced function in their annual assessment report to the governing body.

## External provider/s

It is important that any external provider engaged by a council is independent and can objectively assess and report on the way council operates.

To ensure the independence of an external provider, the head of an outsourced internal audit function must ensure the external provider:

- does not conduct any audits on specific council operations or areas that they have worked on within the last two years
- is not the same auditor conducting the council's external audit
- is not the auditor of any contractors of the council that may be subject to the internal audit, and
- can satisfy the requirements in these Guidelines relating to internal audit.

The head of the outsourced function must also consult with the audit, risk and improvement committee and general manager regarding the appropriateness of the skills, knowledge and experience of any external provider before they are engaged by the council.

## Chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee

The chair of an audit, risk and improvement committee overseeing an outsourced internal audit function is likely to have greater responsibilities than a chair overseeing an in-house internal audit function. Because the

head of an outsourced internal audit function is largely a coordination/administrative role, the chair and members of the audit, risk and improvement committee will do much of the 'heavy lifting' and will be the primary source of advice on the findings and recommendations of audits conducted by the external provider and assurance to the council.

Councils that establish an outsourced internal audit function must ensure that their audit, risk and improvement committee has the capacity and capability to undertake this enhanced role.

## Shared internal audit function

Councils can:

- share an internal audit function with another council or joint organisation as part of an independent shared arrangement
- utilise the internal audit function established by their joint organisation that is shared by member councils
- for county councils – share an internal audit function with a constituent council where possible, or with another council
- for joint organisations – share an internal audit function with a member council where possible or with another council or joint organisation.

Councils can establish an in-house or outsourced internal audit function as part of a shared arrangement.

A shared internal audit function must operate as a standalone internal audit function for each participating council in the shared arrangement and satisfy the requirements of these Guidelines for each participating council.

A shared internal audit function should only be established and utilised where all participating councils can be confident that the shared function can deliver a high level of understanding and fulfilment of each council's internal audit needs and maintain effective working and reporting relationships with each participating council in the shared arrangement.



Councils that establish a shared internal audit function should develop and sign a formal agreement with the other councils in the shared arrangement that outlines how the shared arrangement will operate and how costs will be shared.

## Implementation

Given the administrative complexity of an internal audit function shared between and reporting to different councils, the following arrangements are recommended:

- the internal audit function is hosted by one of the councils, county councils or joint organisations in the shared arrangement
- the head of the internal audit function and any other internal audit team members are employees of the host council
- the head of the internal audit function reports administratively to the general manager (or their delegate) of the host council, and
- the general manager of the host council can only appoint or dismiss the head of the internal audit function in consultation with the general managers and audit, risk and improvement committees of each participating council.

For internal audit functions established by joint organisations and shared between member councils it is recommended that:

- the internal audit function is physically located at the offices of the joint organisation or a member council
- the head of the internal audit function reports administratively to the executive officer of the joint organisation
- the head of the internal audit function and any internal audit staff are employees of the joint organisation, and
- the executive officer of the joint organisation can only appoint or dismiss the head of the internal audit function in consultation with the general managers and audit, risk and improvement committees of each member council.

## Head of a shared internal audit function

### In-house function

The head of a shared in-house internal audit function needs to be able to:

- liaise with the governing body and general manager of each participating council about that council's internal audit activities
- implement the annual and four-year strategic work plans for each council
- conduct or oversee the individual audits of each council and monitor the implementation of corrective actions
- manage any contractual arrangements with external providers on behalf of each council (where required)
- attend the audit, risk and improvement committee meetings of each respective council on behalf of that council, and
- maintain separate and confidential information for each council.

### Outsourced function

The head of a shared outsourced internal audit function needs to be able to:

- manage contracts with external providers on behalf of all councils in the shared arrangement
- liaise with the audit, risk and improvement committee and general manager of each council
- coordinate the completion of audits by the external provider in line with each council's annual and four-year strategic work plans
- provide audit reports by the external provider to the relevant audit, risk and improvement committee and general manager and coordinate council responses
- monitor implementation by each council of corrective actions arising from the findings of audits and report progress to the audit, risk and improvement committee
- assist each council's audit, risk and improvement committee to ensure the council's internal audit activities comply with these Guidelines, and

- maintain separate and confidential information for each council.

## Work plans

The work of each council's internal audit function will be guided by the four-year strategic work plan and annual work plan developed by the audit, risk and improvement committee (see core requirement 1).



## Performing internal audits

It is essential that a council's internal audit function performs the council's internal audits to a high and consistent standard and that the findings and recommendations that arise from audits can be relied upon by the audit, risk and improvement committee and the council.

Each council's internal audits must be performed in accordance with the requirements of the International Professional Practices Framework.



The internal audit tools, techniques and methodologies used by the internal audit function must be approved by the audit, risk and improvement committee.

Where risk information or ratings are used during the internal audit process, they must be developed and applied consistently with the current Australian risk management standard.

## Audit reports

The head of the internal audit function must report the findings and recommendations of internal audits to the audit, risk and improvement committee when they are finalised.

The audit, risk and improvement committee will determine whether audit reports should be

distributed to committee members out-of-session as they are completed, or at each quarterly meeting of the committee.

Each internal audit report must reflect the requirements of the International Professional Practices Framework.

This includes:

- necessary background information, including the objective and scope of the audit
- the audit processes and methodology used
- findings and recommendations based on the audit's objectives, prioritised according to their level of risk
- recommended remedial actions to address problems identified which have been prioritised according to risk, and
- a response or action plan from the general manager and/or responsible senior managers of the council.

Before reports are finalised, the head of the internal audit function must provide a draft of each report to the responsible senior manager/s for comment so that a response to each recommendation from each relevant business unit is included in the final report submitted to the audit, risk and improvement committee.

Timeframes for management responses to internal audit recommendations are to be agreed between the general manager and the head of the internal audit function and chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee.

Responsible senior managers may reject recommended corrective action/s on reasonable grounds but should discuss their position with the head of the internal audit function or the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee before finalising the council's position with the general manager. Reasons for rejecting the recommendation/s must be included in the final audit report.

For the recommendations that are accepted, responsible senior managers are required to ensure that:

- an action plan is prepared for each recommendation that assigns responsibility for implementation to a

council staff member/s and timeframes for implementation

- all corrective actions are implemented within proposed timeframes, and
- the head of the internal audit function is provided regular updates in relation to the implementation of the internal audit action plan.

Where corrective actions are not implemented within agreed timeframes, the audit, risk and improvement committee can invite the responsible senior manager to explain why implementation has not occurred and how the resulting risk is being addressed in the interim.

The audit, risk and improvement committee can raise any concerns it may have about the council's response to internal audit reports with the general manager and in the committee's quarterly report to the governing body so that they are aware of the risks posed to the council.

## Ongoing monitoring

The head of the internal audit function should establish an ongoing monitoring system to track the internal audits undertaken for the council and follow-up the council's progress in implementing corrective actions.

Key risks or emerging issues must be reported to the audit, risk and improvement committee and general manager to ensure they can be rectified quickly before their consequences escalate.

The audit, risk and improvement committee can raise any concerns it has that may arise between meetings with the governing body via an additional report where needed. The chair of the committee can also request to meet with the mayor.

This will ensure that the governing body is kept informed of significant emerging risks posed to the council.

## Policies and procedures

The general manager, in consultation with the audit, risk and improvement committee, must develop and maintain policies and procedures to guide the operation of the council's internal

audit function and the performance of internal audits.

These policies and procedures could include:

- the structure and resourcing of the internal audit function
- how internal audits will be conducted, reported, implemented and monitored
- audit methodology
- timeframes for reporting and the council's response to recommendations
- how any internal audit-related disputes are to be resolved
- the internal audit function's access to council staff, resources and information
- how the performance of the internal audit function will be reviewed
- communication between the audit, risk and improvement committee and internal audit function, and the internal audit function and the general manager, and
- information management including document retention, security and access to audit reports.

## Providing advice to the audit, risk and improvement committee

Ongoing reporting to the audit, risk and improvement committee is essential to ensure that the committee is kept informed of matters considered by the internal audit function and any emerging issues that may require reporting to the governing body or general manager.

## Quarterly updates

The head of the internal audit function is to ensure that the audit, risk and improvement committee is advised at each of the committee's quarterly meetings of

- the internal audits completed during that quarter



- progress in implementing the annual work plan, and
- progress made implementing corrective actions arising from any past internal audits.

The way this information is communicated is to be decided by the audit, risk and improvement committee in consultation with the head of the internal audit function.

## Ongoing advice

The head of the internal audit function can meet with the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee at any time, as necessary, between committee meetings.

This is particularly important to ensure that any urgent or emerging issues identified by the internal audit function can be quickly reported to the audit, risk and improvement committee for consideration and action before their consequences escalate.

- can be accessed by the governing body by resolution, subject to the approval of the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee (any disputes can be referred to the Office of Local Government for resolution)
- subject to the GIPA Act, can only be released to an external party with the approval of the general manager and the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee, except where the information is being provided to an external oversight or investigative body for the purposes of informing that agency of a matter that may warrant its attention.

Any internal audit documentation provided to any individual, including members of the governing body, should be treated as strictly confidential.

The chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee may refuse to provide access to internal audit documents or information to anyone who has previously released such information without authorisation.

## Internal audit documents

Internal audit documentation includes any information or documents produced or obtained by a council's internal audit function that relates to the internal audit activities of the council.

All internal audit documents:

- are for internal use only, subject to the requirements of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act)
- are to remain the property of the audited council, including where internal audit services are performed by an external provider – all rights reside with the audited council
- must be documented, retained and controlled in accordance with the International Professional Practices Framework and council policies
- can be accessed by the audit, risk and improvement committee and external auditor without restriction

## Review of internal audit function performance

It is important that the work of each council's internal audit function is regularly assessed, and that internal auditors are accountable for their performance.

This will ensure that the internal audit function is making a valuable contribution to the council and allows the audit, risk and improvement committee and the council to understand how the council is performing in relation to the matters listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act.

It will also ensure that the audit, risk and improvement committee and council can determine whether any changes to the internal audit function are required.

## Annual assessment

The audit, risk and improvement committee must review the performance of the internal



audit function each year and report its findings to the governing body as part of the committee's annual assessment.

The annual assessment is to ensure that any concerns regarding the operation of the internal audit function and compliance with the International Professional Practices Framework can be dealt with before they are identified in the four-yearly strategic review, by which time their consequences may have escalated.

An annual assessment will also encourage continuous improvement of the council's internal audit activities.

The audit, risk and improvement committee is to determine the nature of this assessment. It could be conducted, for example, via a self-assessment performed by the head of the internal audit function.

More information about the audit, risk and improvement committee's annual assessments is provided under core requirement 1.

#### Four-yearly strategic assessment

**A council's audit, risk and improvement committee is to provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the council's internal audit function to the general manager and governing body in each term of the council, as part of the committee's four-yearly strategic assessment.**

This assessment is to occur regardless of whether the council has established an in-house or outsourced internal audit function, as the assessment focuses on how the council has implemented its internal audit function.

As part of the audit, risk and improvement committee's assessment of the council's internal audit function, it should consider:

- the views of an independent external party with strong knowledge of internal audit operation
- the independence of the internal audit function
- whether resourcing is sufficient
- whether the internal audit function complies with these Guidelines and the

International Professional Practices Framework

- the appropriateness of annual and strategic work plans based on the risks facing the council
- progress against key performance indicators
- whether the internal audit function adds value and delivers outcomes for the council, and
- the appropriateness of the internal audit charter.

To ensure the views of the external party consulted are robust, the external party should have:

- strong skills, knowledge and expertise in internal audit
- a working knowledge of the International Professional Practices Framework, and
- no conflicts of interest that may result in bias or a lack of objectivity.

The audit, risk and improvement committee, in consultation with the general manager, is to develop an action plan for the governing body to address any issues identified by the committee in relation to the performance of the internal audit function.

The audit, risk and improvement committee's strategic assessment and action plan is to be discussed with the governing body and general manager at the strategic assurance meeting held each council term.

More information about the audit, risk and improvement committee's strategic assessment is provided under core requirement 1.

## Reporting concerns about councillors or council staff

Given the nature of internal audit, there may be times when the internal audit function identifies concerns about the conduct of council staff.

Where the head of the internal audit function has concerns regarding a staff member, they can:

- raise their concerns with the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee (if it relates to the effectiveness of the internal audit function)
- report breaches of the council's code of conduct to the general manager, or by the general manager to the mayor, as required by the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*
- report their concerns through the council's internal reporting policy, complaints handling policy or other associated protocols, and/or
- make a public interest disclosure under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* to the:
  - Independent Commission Against Corruption (concerning corrupt conduct)
  - NSW Ombudsman (concerning maladministration)
  - NSW Auditor General (concerning serious and substantial waste of public money)
  - Office of Local Government (concerning serious and substantial waste in local government and breaches of pecuniary interest obligations), and/or
  - Information and Privacy Commissioner (concerning government information contraventions).
- the council's internal audit function reports to the audit, risk and improvement committee on internal audit matters
- the internal audit function operates independently of the council
- the council's internal audit function operates according to an internal audit charter, which is consistent with the approved Model Internal Audit Charter contained in these Guidelines
- the council has appointed an appropriately skilled and eligible staff member to direct the council's internal audit activities or is part of a shared arrangement where a participating council has appointed a staff member to lead internal audit
- internal audit activities are conducted in accordance with the International Professional Practices Framework
- council's internal audit function operates according to the annual and four-year strategic work plans adopted by the governing body of the council
- the council provides the internal audit function with direct and unrestricted access to the general manager and other staff, council information and resources so it can fulfil its responsibilities, and
- at least once each council term (i.e. four years) the audit, risk and improvement committee conducts a review of the effectiveness of the council's internal audit function.

Further information on annual attestation requirements is detailed in the statutory framework section of these Guidelines.

## Annual attestation

Commencing with the 2024-2025 annual report, the general manager will be required under the Local Government Regulation to attest each year in the council's annual report whether the council has complied with the following internal audit requirements:

- the council has an internal audit function that provides an independent unbiased assessment of the council's operations and risk and control activities

## Further resources

The following resources may be useful to councils seeking more information about the establishment and operation of their internal audit function.

This is not an exhaustive list but provides a useful starting point for councils seeking to better understand internal audit, how it can be used by councils to improve performance, and practical tools, examples and templates to adapt for their own use.

### [International Professional Practices Framework \(mandatory guidance\)](#) – Institute of Internal Auditors (2017)

Outlines the mandatory requirements for undertaking internal auditing under the International Professional Practices Framework.

Consists of four parts:

- Core Principles for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing
- Definition of Internal Auditing
- Code of Ethics, and
- International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing

### [International Professional Practices Framework \(recommended guidance\)](#) – Institute of Internal Auditors (2017)

Provides detailed guidance on how to implement the International Professional Practice Framework.

Consists of two parts:

- Implementation Guide – assists an internal audit function to apply the standards and understand how compliance will be measured by the audit, risk and improvement committee, and

- Supplemental Guide (Practice Guides) – provides detailed processes and procedures for the internal audit function.

### [How can audit committee members add value?](#) – PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2011)

Provides a checklist for measuring the performance of an internal audit function.

### [Internal Audit in Australia](#) – Institute of Internal Auditors Australia (2016)

Provides an overview of the role of internal audit and the internal audit function, including:

- the different types of work plans that can be used to guide internal audit activity
- the skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications/certifications required of internal auditors
- performing, reporting and monitoring internal audits, and
- how to review the performance of an internal audit function, including performance measures that could be used

### [Practice Guide – Talent Management: Recruiting, Developing, Motivating and Retaining Great Team Members](#) – Institute of Internal Auditors (2015)

Provides guidance on how to establish an effective internal audit team (for purchase from the Institute of Internal Auditors).

### [Quality Assessment Manual for the Internal Audit Activity](#) – Institute of Internal Auditors (2017)

Outlines how the performance of council's internal audit function can be assessed both internally and externally against the International Professional Practices Framework.

# Implementation

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Under the Local Government Act, all councils and joint organisations are required to have appointed an audit, risk and improvement committee by **4 June 2022**.

Councils and joint organisations have a further two years, until **1 July 2024**, to comply with these Guidelines.

## Audit, risk and improvement committees

### New committees

Councils and joint organisations are required under section 428A of the Local Government Act to appoint an audit, risk and improvement committee by **4 June 2022**.

Councils and joint organisations that do not have an audit, risk and improvement committee must take immediate steps to appoint a committee or to enter into an arrangement with another council or joint organisation to share a committee.

### Existing committees

Councils and joint organisations that already have an audit, risk and improvement committee will already comply with the requirement under the Local Government Act to appoint a committee.

### Transitional arrangements

Councils and joint organisations with existing committees have until **1 July 2024** to ensure the membership and operations of their committee comply with the requirements in these Guidelines.

## Risk management framework

Councils and joint organisations have until **1 July 2024** to establish a risk management framework and to ensure it complies with these Guidelines.

Councils and joint organisations that already have a risk management framework are encouraged to comply sooner.

## Internal audit function

Councils and joint organisations have until **1 July 2024** to establish an internal audit function and to ensure it complies with these Guidelines.

Councils and joint organisations that already have an internal audit function are encouraged to comply sooner.

## Attestation

Commencing with the **2024-2025 annual report**, general managers of councils and executive officers of joint organisations will be required to publish an attestation statement each year in the annual report indicating whether, during the preceding financial year, the council's or joint organisation's audit, risk and improvement committee, risk management framework and internal audit function complied with these Guidelines.

Councils and joint organisations with an established audit, risk and improvement committee, internal audit function and/or risk management framework may wish to consider publishing attestation certificates in their annual reports sooner.

# Appendices

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# Appendix 1:

## Attestation and exemption templates

## Internal audit and risk management attestation statement for the [years] financial year for [council/joint organisation]

I am of the opinion that [council/joint organisation] has an audit, risk and improvement committee, risk management framework and internal audit function that operate in compliance with the following requirements except as may be otherwise provided below:

### Audit, risk and improvement committee

	Requirement	Compliance
1.	[Council/joint organisation] has appointed an audit, risk and improvement committee that comprises of an independent chair and at least two independent members.	[compliant or non-compliant]
2.	The chair and all members of [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee meet the relevant independence and eligibility criteria specified in the Departmental Chief Executive's Guidelines and have not exceeded the membership term limits specified in the Guidelines.	[compliant or non-compliant]
3.	[Council/joint organisation] has adopted terms of reference for its audit, risk and improvement committee that are consistent with the model terms of reference approved by the Departmental Chief Executive and the committee operates in accordance with the terms of reference.	[compliant or non-compliant]
4.	[Council/joint organisation] provides the audit, risk and improvement committee with direct and unrestricted access to the [general manager/executive officer] and other senior management and the information and resources necessary to exercise its functions.	[compliant or non-compliant]
5.	[Council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee exercises its functions in accordance with a four-year strategic work plan that has been endorsed by the governing body and an annual work plan that has been developed in consultation with the governing body and senior management.	[compliant or non-compliant]
6.	[Council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee provides the governing body with an annual assessment each year, and a strategic assessment each council term of the matters listed in section 428A of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> reviewed during that term.	[compliant or non-compliant - include date of last strategic assessment provided]
7.	The governing body of [council/ joint organisation] reviews the effectiveness of the audit, risk and improvement committee at least once each council term.	[compliant or non-compliant - include date of last review]



*Membership*

The chair and membership of the audit, risk and improvement committee are:

Chair	[name]	[start term date]	[finish term date]
Independent member	[name]	[start term date]	[finish term date]
Independent member	[name]	[start term date]	[finish term date]
[Councillor/board] member <sup>1</sup>	[name]	[start term date]	[finish term date]

**Risk Management**

	Requirement	Compliance
8.	[Council/joint organisation] has adopted a risk management framework that is consistent with current Australian risk management standard and that is appropriate for the [council's/joint organisation's] risks.	[compliant or non-compliant]
9.	[Council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee reviews the implementation of its risk management framework and provides a strategic assessment of its effectiveness to the governing body each council term.	[compliant or non-compliant - include date of last strategic assessment provided]

**Internal Audit**

	Requirement	Compliance
10.	[Council/joint organisation] has an internal audit function that reviews the council's operations and risk management and control activities.	[compliant or non-compliant]
11.	[Council's/joint organisation's] internal audit function reports to the audit, risk and improvement committee on internal audit matters.	[compliant or non-compliant]
12.	[Council's/joint organisation's] internal audit function is independent and internal audit activities are not subject to direction by the [council/joint organisation].	[compliant or non-compliant]
13.	[Council/joint organisation] has adopted an internal audit charter that is consistent with the model internal audit charter approved by the Departmental Chief Executive and the internal audit function operates in accordance with the charter.	[compliant or non-compliant]
14.	[Council/joint organisation] has appointed a member of staff who satisfies the independence and eligibility requirements specified in the Departmental Chief Executive's Guidelines to direct and coordinate internal audit activities or is part of a shared arrangement where a participating [council/joint organisation] has appointed a staff member to direct and coordinate internal audit activities for all participating councils.	[compliant or non-compliant]
15.	Internal audit activities are conducted in accordance with the International Professional Practices Framework.	[compliant or non-compliant]

	Requirement	Compliance
16.	[Council/joint organisation] provides the internal audit function with direct and unrestricted access to staff, the audit, risk and improvement committee, and the information and resources necessary to undertake internal audit activities.	[compliant or non-compliant]
17.	[Council's/joint organisation's] internal audit function undertakes internal audit activities in accordance with a four-year strategic work plan that has been endorsed by the governing body and an annual work plan that has been developed in consultation with the governing body and senior management.	[compliant or non-compliant]
18.	[Council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee reviews the effectiveness of the internal audit function and reports the outcome of the review to the governing body each council term.	[compliant or non-compliant - include date of last strategic assessment provided]

### Exemptions from compliance

I advise that [council's/joint organisation's] [audit, risk and improvement committee/risk management/internal audit processes] (delete where relevant) have been exempted from compliance with the following requirements by the Departmental Chief Executive:

Non-compliance	Reason	Alternative measures being implemented	Exemption granted by the Departmental Chief Executive
[requirement]	[detailed description of reasons giving rise to the non-compliance]	[detailed description of the practicable alternative measures implemented to achieve equivalent level of assurance]	[yes/no]

These processes, including the alternative measures implemented, demonstrate that [council/joint organisation] has established and maintained frameworks, systems, processes and procedures for appropriately managing audit and risk within [council/joint organisation].

[signed]

[name and position]

[date]

## Exemption from compliance with risk management and internal audit requirements

I am advised that [council/joint organisation] has not complied with the following requirements with respect to the operation of its [audit, risk and improvement committee/risk management/internal audit processes] (omit where relevant):

Requirement	Reason for non-compliance
[requirement]	[detailed description of reasons giving rise to the non-compliance]

I note that the following alternative arrangements have been implemented to achieve outcomes equivalent to the relevant requirement/s:

Summary of alternative arrangements	How they will achieve equivalent outcomes
[summary of alternative arrangement]	[summary of how they will achieve equivalent outcomes]

I am satisfied that these alternative arrangements will achieve outcomes equivalent to the requirement/s.

This exemption from compliance with the requirements listed above is valid for the [years] financial year.

[signed]

[name and position]

[date]

[Office of Local Government officer's contact details]

# Appendix 2:

## **Audit, risk and improvement committee – role and responsibilities**



Under section 428A of the Local Government Act, each council (including county councils and joint organisations) must have an audit, risk and improvement committee to independently review and provide advice to the council regarding the following aspects of the council's operations:

- compliance
- risk management
- fraud control
- financial management
- governance
- implementation of the strategic plan, delivery program and strategies
- service reviews
- collection of performance measurement data by the council, and
- any other matters prescribed by the regulation (i.e. internal audit).

The committee must also provide information to the council for the purpose of improving the council's performance of its functions.

The audit, risk and improvement committee and the council are to agree on the specific activities the committee is to review based on the council's needs, risks and business functions.

The following is a list of activities audit, risk and improvement committees and councils should consider as part of the committee's 'audit', 'risk' and 'improvement' roles based on the requirements of section 428A of the Local Government Act.

This is not an exhaustive list and audit, risk and improvement committees and councils are encouraged to carefully consider the council's business operations, service delivery, financial management processes, internal audit function, external accountability requirements, risk management framework, governance arrangements and integrated planning and reporting framework to maximise the advice and assistance the committee can provide to the council.

## Audit

### Internal audit

Section 428A(2)(i) of the Local Government Act

#### Principle

The council has an effective internal audit function and receives maximum value from its internal audit activities.

#### Committee's role

- Provide overall strategic oversight of internal audit activities.
- Act as a forum for communication between the governing body, general manager, senior management, the internal audit function and external audit.
- Coordinate as far as is practicable, the work programs of internal audit and other assurance and review functions.
- Advise the general manager and governing body of the council:
  - whether the council is providing the resources necessary to successfully deliver the internal audit function
  - if the council is complying with internal audit requirements, including compliance with the International Professional Practices Framework
  - if the council's internal audit charter is appropriate and whether the internal audit policies and procedures and audit/risk methodologies used by the council are suitable
  - of the strategic four-year work plan and annual work plan of internal audits to be undertaken by the council's internal audit function
  - if the council's internal audit activities are effective, including the performance of the head of the internal audit function and the internal audit function
  - of the findings and recommendations of internal audits conducted, and corrective actions needed to address issues raised

- of the implementation by the council of the corrective actions
- on the appointment of the head of the internal audit function and external providers, and
- if the internal audit function is structured appropriately and has sufficient skills and expertise to meet its responsibilities.

## External audit

### Principle

The council receives maximum value from its external audit activities.

### Committee's role

- Act as a forum for communication between the governing body, general manager, senior management, the internal audit function and external audit.
- Coordinate as far as is practicable, the work programs of internal audit and external audit.
- Provide input and feedback on the financial statement and performance audit coverage proposed by external audit and provide feedback on the audit services provided.
- Review all external plans and reports in respect of planned or completed audits and monitor council's implementation of audit recommendations.
- Provide advice to the governing body and/or general manager on action taken on significant issues raised in relevant external audit reports and better practice guides.

## Risk

### Compliance framework

Section 428A(2)(a) of the Local Government Act

#### Principle

The council has an effective compliance framework that ensures it is complying with its legal obligations and other governance and contractual requirements when undertaking its functions.

#### Committee's role

Advise the general manager and governing body of the council of the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's compliance framework, including:

- if the council has appropriately considered legal and compliance risks as part of the council's risk management framework
- how the council manages its compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, codes, and contractual arrangements, and
- whether appropriate processes are in place to assess compliance.

### Risk management

Section 428A(2)(b) of the Local Government Act

#### Principle

The council has an effective risk management framework and internal controls that successfully identify and manage the risks it faces.

#### Committee's role

Advise the general manager and governing body of the council on the following:

##### Risk management framework

- whether the council is providing the resources necessary to successfully implement its risk management framework

- if the council has in place a current and appropriate risk management framework that is consistent with the Australian risk management standard
- whether the council's risk management framework is adequate and effective for identifying and managing the risks the council faces, including those associated with individual projects, programs and other activities
- if risk management is integrated across all levels of the council and across all processes, operations, services, decision-making, functions and reporting
- of the adequacy of risk reports and documentation, for example, the council's risk register and risk profile
- whether a sound approach has been followed in developing risk management plans
- whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations
- if the council has taken steps to embed a culture that is committed to ethical and lawful behaviour
- if there is a positive risk culture within the council and strong leadership that supports effective risk management
- of the adequacy of staff training and induction in risk management
- how the council's risk management approach impacts on the council's insurance arrangements
- of the effectiveness of the council's management of its assets, and
- of the effectiveness of business continuity arrangements, including business continuity plans, disaster recovery plans and the periodic testing of these plans.

#### Internal control framework

- if the internal controls in place are appropriate for the risk the council faces
- whether staff are informed of their responsibilities and processes and procedures to implement controls are complied with
- if the council's monitoring and review of controls, including policies and procedures, is sufficient, and

- if internal and external audit recommendations to correct internal control weaknesses are implemented appropriately.

## Fraud and corruption control framework

Section 428A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act

### Principle

The council has an effective fraud and corruption control framework in place that minimises the incidence of fraud and corruption.

### Committee's role

Advise the general manager and governing body of the council of the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's fraud and corruption prevention framework and activities, including whether the council has:

- a fraud and corruption policy
- clearly defined responsibilities for managing fraud and corruption
- risk-based preventative and detective controls
- policies, systems and processes to respond to, investigate and report suspected fraud and corruption
- employee awareness/education measures
- robust third-party management systems
- appropriate processes and systems in place to capture and effectively investigate fraud-related information
- regular review of the fraud and corruption control framework and reporting, and
- implemented applicable guidance and other better practice measures by the Independent Commission Against Corruption.



## Financial management framework

Section 428A(2)(d) of the Local Government Act

### Principle

The council has an effective financial management framework, sustainable financial position and positive financial performance.

### Committee's role

Advise the general manager and governing body of the council on the following:

#### External accountability and financial reporting framework

- if the council is complying with accounting standards and external accountability requirements
- of the appropriateness of the council's accounting policies and disclosures
- of the implications for the council of the findings of external audits and performance audits and the council's responses and implementation of recommendations
- whether the council's financial statement preparation procedures and timelines are sound
- the accuracy of the council's annual financial statements prior to external audit, including:
  - management compliance/representations
  - significant accounting and reporting issues
  - the methods used by the council to account for significant or unusual transactions and areas of significant estimates or judgements
  - appropriate management signoff on the statements
- if effective processes are in place to ensure financial information included in the council's annual report is consistent with signed financial statements.

#### Financial management framework

- if the council's financial management processes are adequate

- the adequacy of cash management and credit card use policies and procedures
- if there are adequate controls over financial processes, for example:
  - appropriate authorisation and approval of payments and transactions
  - adequate segregation of duties
  - timely reconciliation of accounts and balances
  - review of unusual and high value purchases.

#### Financial position and performance

- if policies and procedures for management review and consideration of the financial position and performance of the council are adequate.

#### Grants and tied funding policies and procedures

- if the council's grants and tied funding policies and procedures are sound.

## Governance framework

Section 428A(2)(e) of the Local Government Act

### Principle

The council has an effective governance framework to ensure it is appropriately directing and controlling the management of the council.

### Committee's role

Advise the governing body and general manager if the council's governance framework is sound, including the council's:

- decision-making processes
- implementation of governance policies and procedures
- reporting lines and accountability
- assignment of key roles and responsibilities
- committee structure
- management oversight responsibilities
- human resources and performance management activities
- reporting and communication activities



- information and communications technology (ICT) governance, and
- management and governance of the use of data, information and knowledge.

## Improvement

### Strategic planning

Section 428A(2)(f) of the Local Government Act

#### **Principle**

The council has an effective framework that ensures it achieves its strategic plans and objectives under the integrated planning and reporting (IP&R) framework.

#### **Committee's role**

Advise the general manager and governing body of the council:

- of the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's IP&R processes
- if appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure progress against objectives, and
- whether the council is successfully implementing and achieving its IP&R objectives and strategies.

### Service reviews and business improvement

Section 428A(2)(g) and section 428A(3) of the Local Government Act

#### **Principle**

The council has an effective framework to ensure it is delivering services and conducting its business and functions to an expected standard.

#### **Committee's role**

- Act as a forum for communication and monitoring of any audits conducted by external bodies and the implementation of corrective actions (for example, NSW

government agencies, Commonwealth government agencies, insurance bodies).

- Advise the general manager and governing body of the council:
  - if the council has robust systems to set objectives and goals to determine and deliver appropriate levels of service to the community and business performance
  - if appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure service delivery to the community and overall performance, and
  - how the council can improve its service delivery and the council's performance of its business and functions generally.

### Performance data and measurement

Section 428A(2)(h) of the Local Government Act

#### **Principle**

The council's performance management framework ensures the council can measure its performance and if it is achieving its strategic goals.

#### **Committee's role**

Advise the general manager and governing body of the council:

- if the council has a robust system to determine appropriate performance indicators to measure the achievement of its strategic objectives
- the performance indicators the council uses are effective, and
- of the adequacy of performance data collection and reporting.

# Appendix 3:

## **Model terms of reference for audit, risk and improvement committees**

## Model terms of reference for local government audit, risk and improvement committees

[Council/joint organisation] has established an audit, risk and improvement committee in compliance with section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993*, section (#tbc) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* and the Departmental Chief Executive's *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*. These terms of reference set out the committee's objectives, authority, composition and tenure, roles and responsibilities, reporting and administrative arrangements.

### Objective

The objective of [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee is to provide independent assurance to [council/joint organisation] by monitoring, reviewing and providing advice about the [council's/joint organisation's] governance processes, compliance, risk management and control frameworks, external accountability obligations and overall performance.

### Independence

The committee is to be independent to ensure it has no real or perceived bias or conflicts of interest that may interfere with its ability to act independently and to provide [council/joint organisation] with robust, objective and unbiased advice and assurance.

The committee is to have an advisory and assurance role only and is to exercise no administrative functions, delegated financial responsibilities or any management functions of the [council/joint organisation]. The committee will provide independent advice to the [council/joint organisation] that is informed by the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit and risk management activities and information and advice provided by staff, relevant external bodies and subject matter experts.

The committee must always ensure it maintains a direct reporting line to and from the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit function and act as a mechanism for internal audit to report to the governing body and the [general manager/executive officer] on matters affecting the performance of the internal audit function.

### Authority

[Council/joint organisation] authorises the committee, for the purposes of exercising its responsibilities, to:

- access any information it needs from the [council/joint organisation]
- use any [council/joint organisation] resources it needs
- have direct and unrestricted access to the [general manager/executive officer] and senior management of the [council/joint organisation]
- seek the [general manager's/executive officer's] permission to meet with any other [council/joint organisation] staff member or contractor
- discuss any matters with the external auditor or other external parties
- request the attendance of any employee at committee meetings, and

- obtain external legal or other professional advice in line with councils' procurement policies.  
[Detail any prior approval needed or pre-determined budget for costs].

Information and documents pertaining to the committee are confidential and are not to be made publicly available. The committee may only release [council/joint organisation] information to external parties that are assisting the committee to fulfil its responsibilities with the approval of the [general manager/executive officer], except where it is being provided to an external investigative or oversight agency for the purpose of informing that agency of a matter that may warrant its attention. [amend if documentation is to be made available to the public].

## Composition and tenure

The committee consists of an independent chair and [two] independent members who have voting rights and [one non-voting councillor/board member], as required under the *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*.

The governing body is to appoint the chair and members of the committee. Current committee members are:

[name]	Independent chair (voting)
[name]	Independent member (voting)
[name]	Independent member (voting)
[name]	[Councillor/board] member (non-voting) (if applicable) [cannot be the mayor]

All committee members must meet the independence and eligibility criteria prescribed in the *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*.

Members will be appointed for up to a four-year term. Members can be reappointed for one further term, but the total period of continuous membership cannot exceed eight years. This includes any term as chair of the committee. Members who have served an eight-year term (either as a member or as chair) must have a two-year break from serving on the committee before being appointed again. To preserve the committee's knowledge of the [council/joint organisation], ideally, no more than one member should retire from the committee because of rotation in any one year.

The terms and conditions of each member's appointment to the committee are to be set out in a letter of appointment. New members will be thoroughly inducted to their role and receive relevant information and briefings on their appointment to assist them to meet their responsibilities.

Prior to approving the reappointment or extension of the chair's or an independent member's term, the governing body is to undertake an assessment of the chair's or committee member's performance. Reappointment of the chair or a committee member is also to be subject to that person still meeting the independence and eligibility requirements.

Members of the committee must possess and maintain a broad range of skills, knowledge and experience relevant to the operations, governance and financial management of the [council/joint organisation], the environment in which the [council/joint organisation] operates, and the contribution that the committee makes to the [council/joint organisation]. At least one member of the committee must have accounting or related financial management experience with an understanding of accounting and auditing standards in a local government environment. All members should have sufficient understanding of the [council's/joint organisation's] financial reporting responsibilities to be



able to contribute to the committee's consideration of the [council's/joint organisation's] annual financial statements.

[Add any relevant details about shared arrangements, if applicable].

## Role

As required under section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), the role of the committee is to review and provide independent advice to the [council/joint organisation] regarding the following aspects of the [council's/joint organisation's] operations:

- compliance
- risk management
- fraud control
- financial management
- governance
- implementation of the strategic plan, delivery program and strategies
- service reviews
- collection of performance measurement data by the [council/joint organisation], and
- internal audit.

The committee must also provide information to the [council/joint organisation] for the purpose of improving the [council's/joint organisation's] performance of its functions.

The committee's specific audit, risk and improvement responsibilities under section 428A of the Act are outlined in Schedule 1 to this charter.

The committee will act as a forum for consideration of the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit function and oversee its planning, monitoring and reporting to ensure it operates effectively.

The committee has no power to direct external audit or the way it is planned and undertaken but will act as a forum for the consideration of external audit findings.

The committee is directly responsible and accountable to the governing body for the exercise of its responsibilities. In carrying out its responsibilities, the committee must at all times recognise that primary responsibility for management of the [council/joint organisation] rests with the governing body and the [general manager/executive officer].

The responsibilities of the committee may be revised or expanded in consultation with, or as requested by, the governing body from time to time.

## Responsibilities of members

### Independent members

The chair and members of the committee are expected to understand and observe the requirements of the *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*. Members are also expected to:

- make themselves available as required to attend and participate in meetings
- contribute the time needed to review and understand information provided to it
- apply good analytical skills, objectivity and judgement

- act in the best interests of the [council/joint organisation]
- have the personal courage to raise and deal with tough issues, express opinions frankly, ask questions that go to the fundamental core of the issue and pursue independent lines of inquiry
- maintain effective working relationships with the [council/joint organisation]
- have strong leadership qualities (chair)
- lead effective committee meetings (chair), and
- oversee the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit function (chair).

### **[Councillor/board] members (if applicable)**

To preserve the independence of the committee, the [councillor/board] member of the committee is a non-voting member. Their role is to:

- relay to the committee any concerns the governing body may have regarding the [council/joint organisation] and issues being considered by the committee
- provide insights into local issues and the strategic priorities of the [council/joint organisation] that would add value to the committee's consideration of agenda items
- advise the governing body (as necessary) of the work of the committee and any issues arising from it, and
- assist the governing body to review the performance of the committee.

Issues or information the councillor member raises with or provides to the committee must relate to the matters listed in Schedule 1 and issues being considered by the committee.

The [councillor/board] member of the committee must conduct themselves in a non-partisan and professional manner. The [councillor/board] member of the committee must not engage in any conduct that seeks to politicise the activities of the committee or the internal audit function or that could be seen to do so.

If the [councillor/board] member of the committee engages in such conduct or in any other conduct that may bring the committee and its work into disrepute, the chair of the committee may recommend to the [council/joint organisation], that the [councillor/board] member be removed from membership of the committee. Where the [council/joint organisation] does not agree to the committee chair's recommendation, the [council/joint organisation] must give reasons for its decision in writing to the chair.

### **Conduct**

Independent committee members are required to comply with the [council's/joint organisation's] code of conduct.

Complaints alleging breaches of the [council's/joint organisation's] code of conduct by an independent committee member are to be dealt with in accordance with the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*. The [general manager/executive officer] must consult with the governing body before taking any disciplinary action against an independent committee member in response to a breach of the [council's/joint organisation's] code of conduct.

### **Conflicts of interest**

Once a year, committee members must provide written declarations to the [council/joint organisation] stating that they do not have any conflicts of interest that would preclude them from being members of the committee. Independent committee members are 'designated persons' for the purposes of the [council's/joint organisation's] code of conduct and must also complete and submit returns of their interests.

Committee members and observers must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary conflicts of interest they may have in a matter being considered at the meeting at the start of each meeting or as soon as they become aware of the conflict of interest. Where a committee member or observer declares a pecuniary or a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest, they must remove themselves from committee deliberations on the issue. Details of conflicts of interest declared at meetings must be appropriately minuted.

## Standards

Committee members are to conduct their work in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors and [current Australian risk management standard], where applicable.

## Work plans

The work of the committee is to be thoroughly planned and executed. The committee must develop a strategic work plan every four years to ensure that the matters listed in Schedule 1 are reviewed by the committee and considered by the internal audit function when developing their risk-based program of internal audits. The strategic work plan must be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate.

The committee may, in consultation with the governing body, vary the strategic work plan at any time to address new or emerging risks. The governing body may also, by resolution, request the committee to approve a variation to the strategic work plan. Any decision to vary the strategic work plan must be made by the committee.

The committee must also develop an annual work plan to guide its work, and the work of the internal audit function over the forward year.

The committee may, in consultation with the governing body, vary the annual work plan to address new or emerging risks. The governing body may also, by resolution, request the committee to approve a variation to the annual work plan. Any decision to vary the annual work plan must be made by the committee.

When considering whether to vary the strategic or annual work plans, the committee must consider the impact of the variation on the internal audit function's existing workload and the completion of pre-existing priorities and activities identified under the work plan.

## Assurance reporting

The committee must regularly report to the [council/joint organisation] to ensure that it is kept informed of matters considered by the committee and any emerging issues that may influence the strategic direction of the [council/joint organisation] or the achievement of the [council's/joint organisation's] goals and objectives.

The committee will provide an update to the governing body and the [general manager/executive officer] of its activities and opinions after every committee meeting.

The committee will provide an annual assessment to the governing body and the [general manager/executive officer] on the committee's work and its opinion on how the [council/joint organisation] is performing.

The committee will provide a comprehensive assessment every council term of the matters listed in Schedule 1 to the governing body and the [general manager/executive officer].



The committee may at any time report to the governing body or the [general manager/executive officer] on any other matter it deems of sufficient importance to warrant their attention. The [mayor/chairperson] and the chair of the committee may also meet at any time to discuss issues relating to the work of the committee.

Should the governing body require additional information, a request for the information may be made to the chair by resolution. The chair is only required to provide the information requested by the governing body where the chair is satisfied that it is reasonably necessary for the governing body to receive the information for the purposes of performing its functions under the Local Government Act. Individual [councillors/board members] are not entitled to request or receive information from the committee.

## Administrative arrangements

### Meetings

The committee will meet at least [number (minimum of 4)] times per year, [including a special meeting to review the [council's/joint organisation's financial statements]].

The committee can hold additional meetings when significant unexpected issues arise, or if the chair is asked to hold an additional meeting by a committee member, the [general manager/executive officer] or the governing body.

Committee meetings can be held in person, by telephone or videoconference. Proxies are not permitted to attend meetings if a committee member cannot attend.

A quorum will consist of a majority of independent voting members. Where the vote is tied, the chair has the casting vote.

The chair of the committee will decide the agenda for each committee meeting. Each committee meeting is to be minuted to preserve a record of the issues considered and the actions and decisions taken by the committee.

The [general manager/executive officer] and the [head of the internal audit function] should attend committee meetings as non-voting observers. The external auditor (or their representative) is to be invited to each committee meeting as an independent observer. The chair can request the [council's/joint organisation's] [chief finance officer or equivalent], [head of risk management function or equivalent], [senior managers or equivalent], any [councillors/board members], any employee/contractor of the council and any subject matter expert to attend committee meetings. Where requested to attend a meeting, persons must attend the meeting where possible and provide any information requested. Observers have no voting rights and can be excluded from a meeting by the chair at any time.

The committee can hold closed meetings whenever it needs to discuss confidential or sensitive issues with only voting members of the committee present.

The committee must meet separately with the [head of the internal audit function] and the [council's/joint organisation's] external auditor at least once each year.

### Dispute resolution

Members of the committee and the [council's/joint organisation's] management should maintain an effective working relationship and seek to resolve any differences they may have in an amicable and professional way by discussion and negotiation.



In the event of a disagreement between the committee and the [general manager/executive officer] or other senior managers, the dispute is to be resolved by the governing body.

Unresolved disputes regarding compliance with statutory or other requirements are to be referred to the Departmental Chief Executive in writing.

### Secretariat

The [general manager/executive officer] will nominate a staff member to provide secretariat support to the committee. The secretariat will ensure the agenda for each meeting and supporting papers are circulated after approval from the chair at least [number] weeks before the meeting and ensure that minutes of meetings are prepared and maintained. Minutes must be approved by the chair and circulated within [agreed timeframe] of the meeting to each member.

### Resignation and dismissal of members

Where the chair or a committee member is unable to complete their term or does not intend to seek reappointment after the expiry of their term, they should give [agreed timeframe] notice to the chair and the governing body prior to their resignation to allow the [council/joint organisation] to ensure a smooth transition to a new chair or committee member.

The governing body can, by resolution, terminate the appointment of the chair or an independent committee member before the expiry of their term where that person has:

- breached the council's code of conduct
- performed unsatisfactorily or not to expectations
- declared, or is found to be in, a position of a conflict of interest which is unresolvable
- been declared bankrupt or found to be insolvent
- experienced an adverse change in business status
- been charged with a serious criminal offence
- been proven to be in serious breach of their obligations under any legislation, or
- experienced an adverse change in capacity or capability.

The position of a [councillor/board] member on the committee can be terminated at any time by the governing body by resolution.

### Review arrangements

At least once every council term, the governing body must review or arrange for an external review of the effectiveness of the committee.

These terms of reference must be reviewed annually by the committee and once each council term by the governing body. Any substantive changes are to be approved by the governing body.

## Further information

For further information on [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee, contact [name] on [email address] or by phone [phone number].

Reviewed by chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee

[signed]

[date]

Reviewed by [council/joint organisation] in accordance with a resolution of the governing body.

[signed]

[date]

[resolution reference]

Next review date: [date]

DRAFT

## Schedule 1 – Audit, risk and improvement committee responsibilities

*[Note: each council/joint organisation is to determine the responsibilities of its committee related to each matter listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act 1993 and list them in Schedule 1 to the committee's terms of reference. Suggested responsibilities are provided below and further detailed in core requirement 1 and Appendix 2 of these Guidelines.]*

### Audit

#### Internal audit

- Provide overall strategic oversight of internal audit activities
- Act as a forum for communication between the governing body, [general manager/executive officer], senior management, the internal audit function and external audit
- Coordinate, as far as is practicable, the work programs of internal audit and other assurance and review functions
- Review and advise the [council/joint organisation]:
  - on whether the [council/joint organisation] is providing the resources necessary to successfully deliver the internal audit function
  - if the [council/joint organisation] is complying with internal audit requirements, including conformance with the International Professional Practices Framework
  - if the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit charter is appropriate and whether the internal audit policies and procedures and audit/risk methodologies used by the [council/joint organisation] are suitable
  - of the strategic four-year work plan and annual work plan of internal audits to be undertaken by the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit function
  - if the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit activities are effective, including the performance of the head of the internal audit function and the internal audit function
  - of the findings and recommendations of internal audits conducted, and corrective actions needed to address issues raised
  - of the implementation by the [council/joint organisation] of these corrective actions
  - on the appointment of the head of the internal audit function and external providers, and
  - if the internal audit function is structured appropriately and has sufficient skills and expertise to meet its responsibilities

#### External audit

- Act as a forum for communication between the governing body, [general manager/executive officer], senior management, the internal audit function and external audit
- Coordinate as far as is practicable, the work programs of internal audit and external audit
- Provide input and feedback on the financial statement and performance audit coverage proposed by external audit and provide feedback on the audit services provided
- Review all external plans and reports in respect of planned or completed audits and monitor council's implementation of audit recommendations
- Provide advice to the governing body and/or [general manager/executive officer] on action taken on significant issues raised in relevant external audit reports and better practice guides

## Risk

### Risk management

Review and advise the [council/joint organisation]:

- if the [council's/joint organisation's] has in place a current and appropriate risk management framework that is consistent with the Australian risk management standard
- whether the [council/joint organisation] is providing the resources necessary to successfully implement its risk management framework
- whether the [council's/joint organisation's] risk management framework is adequate and effective for identifying and managing the risks the [council/joint organisation] faces, including those associated with individual projects, programs and other activities
- if risk management is integrated across all levels of the [council/joint organisation] and across all processes, operations, services, decision-making, functions and reporting
- of the adequacy of risk reports and documentation, for example, the [council's/joint organisation's] risk register and risk profile
- whether a sound approach has been followed in developing risk management plans for major projects or undertakings
- whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations
- if the [council/joint organisation] has taken steps to embed a culture which is committed to ethical and lawful behaviour
- if there is a positive risk culture within the [council/joint organisation] and strong leadership that supports effective risk management
- of the adequacy of staff training and induction in risk management
- how the [council's/joint organisation's] risk management approach impacts on the [council's/joint organisation's] insurance arrangements
- of the effectiveness of the [council's/joint organisation's] management of its assets, and
- of the effectiveness of business continuity arrangements, including business continuity plans, disaster recovery plans and the periodic testing of these plans.

### Internal controls

Review and advise the [council/joint organisation]:

- whether the [council's/joint organisation's] approach to maintaining an effective internal audit framework, including over external parties such as contractors and advisors, is sound and effective
- whether the [council/joint organisation] has in place relevant policies and procedures and that these are periodically reviewed and updated
- whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations
- whether staff are informed of their responsibilities and processes and procedures to implement controls are complied with
- if the [council's/joint organisation's] monitoring and review of controls is sufficient, and
- if internal and external audit recommendations to correct internal control weaknesses are implemented appropriately



## Compliance

Review and advise the [council/joint organisation] of the adequacy and effectiveness of the [council's/joint organisation's] compliance framework, including:

- if the [council/joint organisation] has appropriately considered legal and compliance risks as part of the [council's/joint organisation's] risk management framework
- how the [council/joint organisation] manages its compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, codes, and contractual arrangements, and
- whether appropriate processes are in place to assess compliance.

## Fraud and corruption

Review and advise the [council/joint organisation] of the adequacy and effectiveness of the [council's/joint organisation's] fraud and corruption prevention framework and activities, including whether the [council/joint organisation] has appropriate processes and systems in place to capture and effectively investigate fraud-related information.

## Financial management

Review and advise the [council/joint organisation]:

- if the [council/joint organisation] is complying with accounting standards and external accountability requirements
- of the appropriateness of the [council's/joint organisation's] accounting policies and disclosures
- of the implications for the [council/joint organisation] of the findings of external audits and performance audits and the [council's/joint organisation's] responses and implementation of recommendations
- whether the [council's/joint organisation's] financial statement preparation procedures and timelines are sound
- the accuracy of the [council's/joint organisation's] annual financial statements prior to external audit, including:
  - management compliance/representations
  - significant accounting and reporting issues
  - the methods used by the [council/joint organisation] to account for significant or unusual transactions and areas of significant estimates or judgements
  - appropriate management signoff on the statements
- if effective processes are in place to ensure financial information included in the [council's/joint organisation's] annual report is consistent with signed financial statements
- if the [council's/joint organisation's] financial management processes are adequate
- the adequacy of cash management policies and procedures
- if there are adequate controls over financial processes, for example:
  - appropriate authorisation and approval of payments and transactions
  - adequate segregation of duties
  - timely reconciliation of accounts and balances
  - review of unusual and high value purchases
- if policies and procedures for management review and consideration of the financial position and performance of the [council/joint organisation] are adequate
- if the [council's/joint organisation's] grants and tied funding policies and procedures are sound.

## Governance

Review and advise the [council/joint organisation] regarding its governance framework, including the [council's/joint organisation's]:

- decision-making processes
- implementation of governance policies and procedures
- reporting lines and accountability
- assignment of key roles and responsibilities
- committee structure
- management oversight responsibilities
- human resources and performance management activities
- reporting and communication activities
- information and communications technology (ICT) governance, and
- management and governance of the use of data, information and knowledge

## Improvement

### Strategic planning

Review and advise the [council/joint organisation]:

- of the adequacy and effectiveness of the [council's/joint organisation's] integrated, planning and reporting (IP&R) processes
- if appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure progress against objectives, and
- whether the [council/joint organisation] is successfully implementing and achieving its IP&R objectives and strategies.

### Service reviews and business improvement

- Act as a forum for communication and monitoring of any audits conducted by external bodies and the implementation of corrective actions (for example, NSW government agencies, Commonwealth government agencies, insurance bodies)
- Review and advise the [council/joint organisation]:
  - if the [council/joint organisation] has robust systems to set objectives and goals to determine and deliver appropriate levels of service to the community and business performance
  - if appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure service delivery to the community and overall performance, and
  - how the [council/joint organisation] can improve its service delivery and the [council's/joint organisation's] performance of its business and functions generally

### Performance data and measurement

Review and advise the [council/joint organisation]:

- if the [council/joint organisation] has a robust system to determine appropriate performance indicators to measure the achievement of its strategic objectives
- if the performance indicators the [council/joint organisation] uses are effective, and
- of the adequacy of performance data collection and reporting.

# Appendix 4:

## Example risk management policy

## Example risk management policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to express [council's/joint organisation's] commitment to implementing organisation-wide risk management principles, systems and processes that ensure the consistent, efficient and effective assessment of risk in all [council's/joint organisation's] planning, decision-making and operational processes.

### Risk management framework

[Council/joint organisation] provides critical services and infrastructure to the residents, ratepayers and visitors to [area]. [Council/joint organisation] also has service agreements and contractual obligations with government and non-government agencies and organisations and has its own strategic goals and objectives that it seeks to achieve on behalf of the [area] community.

It is therefore incumbent on [council/joint organisation] to understand the internal and external risks that may impact the delivery of these services, contracts and strategic objectives and have processes in place to identify, mitigate, manage and monitor those risks to ensure the best outcome for [council's/joint organisation's], staff and the community. It is also our responsibility to ensure the efficient, effective and ethical use of resources and services by ratepayers, residents, staff and visitors.

[Council/joint organisation] has developed a risk management framework consistent with [Australian standard] to assist it to identify, treat, monitor and review all risks to its operations and strategic objectives and apply appropriate internal controls.

[Council/joint organisation] is committed to the principles, framework and process of managing risk as outlined in [Australian standard] and commits to fully integrating risk management within the [council/joint organisation] and applying it to all decision-making, functions, services and activities of the [council/joint organisation] in accordance with our statutory requirements.

### Responsibilities

[Council/joint organisation] aims to create a positive risk management culture where risk management is integrated into all everyday activities and managing risks is an integral part of governance, good management practice and decision-making at [council/joint organisation]. It is the responsibility of every staff member and business area to observe and implement this policy and [council's/joint organisation's] risk management framework.

All staff are responsible for identifying and managing risk within their work areas. Key responsibilities include:

- being familiar with, and understanding, the principles of risk management
- complying with all policies, procedures and practices relating to risk management
- alerting management to risks that exist within their area, and
- performing any risk management activities assigned to them as part of their daily role.



Risk management is a core responsibility for all senior staff/management at [council/organisation]. In addition to their responsibilities as staff members, senior staff/management are responsible for:

- ensuring all staff manage their risks within their own work areas. Risks should be anticipated, and reasonable protective measures taken
- encouraging openness and honesty in the reporting and escalation of risks
- ensuring all staff have the appropriate capability to perform their risk management roles
- reporting to the [general manager/executive officer] on the status of risks and controls, and
- identifying and communicating improvements in [council's/joint organisation's] risk management practices to [council's/joint organisation's] risk management function.

[Council's/joint organisation's] risk management function is available to support staff in undertaking their risk management activities.

To ensure [council/joint organisation] is effectively managing its risk and complying with its statutory obligations, [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee and internal audit function is responsible for reviewing the [council's/joint organisation's]:

- risk management processes and procedures
- risk management strategies for major projects or undertakings
- control environment and insurance arrangements
- business continuity planning arrangements, and
- fraud control plan.

## Monitoring and Review

[Council/joint organisation] is committed to continually improving its ability to manage risk. [Council/joint organisation] will review this policy and its risk management framework at least annually to ensure it continues to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, and the [council's/joint organisation's] requirements.

## Further information

For further information on [council's/joint organisation's] risk management policy, framework and process, contact [name] on [email address] or by phone [phone number].

[signed – General Manager/Executive officer]

[name]

[date]

[review date]

# Appendix 5:

## Model internal audit charter

## Model internal audit charter for local government

[Council/joint organisation] has established the [name of internal audit function] as a key component of the [council's/joint organisation's] governance and assurance framework, in compliance with the Departmental Chief Executive's *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*. This charter provides the framework for the conduct of the [name of internal audit function] in the [council/joint organisation] and has been approved by the governing body taking into account the advice of the [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee.

### Purpose of internal audit

Internal audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the [council's/joint organisation's] operations. It helps the [council/joint organisation] accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes<sup>1</sup>.

Internal audit provides an independent and objective review and advisory service to provide advice to the governing body, [general manager/executive officer] and audit, risk and improvement committee about the [council's/joint organisation's] governance processes, risk management and control frameworks and its external accountability obligations. It also assists the [council/joint organisation] to improve its business performance.

### Independence

[Council's/joint organisation's] [name of internal audit function] is to be independent of the [council/joint organisation] so it can provide an unbiased assessment of the [council's/joint organisation's] operations and risk and control activities.

[Name of internal audit function] reports functionally to the [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee on the results of completed audits, and for strategic direction and accountability purposes, and reports administratively to the [general manager/executive officer] to facilitate day-to-day operations. Internal audit activities are not subject to direction by the [council/joint organisation] and the [council's/joint organisation's] management has no role in the exercise of the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit activities.

The audit, risk and improvement committee is responsible for communicating any internal audit issues or information to the governing body. Should the governing body require additional information, a request for the information may be made to the chair by resolution. The chair is only required to provide the information requested by the governing body where the chair is satisfied that it is reasonably necessary for the governing body to receive the information for the purposes of performing its functions under the Local Government Act. Individual [councillors/board members] are not entitled to request or receive information from the committee.

<sup>1</sup> As defined by the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing (2017)

[Detail any delegations made by the general manager/executive officer regarding their internal audit responsibilities].

The [general manager/executive officer] must consult with the chair of the [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee before appointing or making decisions affecting the employment of the [head of internal audit function]. If the [head of internal audit function] is dismissed, the [general manager/executive officer] must report the reasons for their dismissal to the governing body.

Where the chair of the [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee has any concerns about the treatment of the [head of internal audit function], or any action taken that may compromise their ability to undertake their functions independently, they can report their concerns to the governing body.

The [head of internal audit function] is to confirm at least annually to the audit, risk and improvement committee the independence of internal audit activities from the [council/joint organisation].

## Authority

[Council/joint organisation] authorises the [name of internal audit function] to have full, free and unrestricted access to all functions, premises, assets, personnel, records and other documentation and information that the [head of internal audit function] considers necessary for the [name of the internal audit function] to undertake its responsibilities.

All records, documentation and information accessed while undertaking internal audit activities are to be used solely for the conduct of those activities. The [head of internal audit function] and individual internal audit staff are responsible and accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of the information they receive when undertaking their work.

All internal audit documentation is to remain the property of [council/joint organisation], including where internal audit services are performed by an external third-party provider.

Information and documents pertaining to the [name of the internal audit function] are not to be made publicly available. The [name of the internal audit function] may only release [council/joint organisation] information to external parties that are assisting the [name of the internal audit function] to undertake its responsibilities with the approval of the [general manager/executive officer], except where it is being provided to an external investigative or oversight agency for the purpose of informing that agency of a matter that may warrant its attention.

## Role

The [name of internal audit function] is to support the [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee to review and provide independent advice to the [council/joint organisation] in accordance with section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993*. This includes conducting internal audits of [council/joint organisation] and monitoring the implementation of corrective actions.

The [name of internal audit function] is to also play an active role in:

- developing and maintaining a culture of accountability and integrity
- facilitating the integration of risk management into day-to-day business activities and processes, and
- promoting a culture of high ethical standards.



[Name of internal audit function] has no direct authority or responsibility for the activities it reviews. [Name of internal audit function] has no responsibility for developing or implementing procedures or systems and does not prepare records or engage in [council/joint organisation] functions or activities (except in carrying out its own functions).

## [Head of internal audit function]

### Option 1: In-house internal audit function

[Council's/joint organisation's] [name of internal audit function] is to be led by a member of [council's/joint organisation's] staff with sufficient skills, knowledge and experience to ensure it fulfils its role and responsibilities to the [council/joint organisation] and the audit, risk and improvement committee. The [head of internal audit function] must be independent, impartial, unbiased and objective when performing their work and free from any conflicts of interest.

Responsibilities of the [head of internal audit function] include:

- managing the day-to-day activities of the [name of internal audit function]
- managing the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit budget
- supporting the operation of the [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee
- approving internal audit project plans, conducting or supervising audits and assessments and providing independent advice to the audit, risk and improvement committee
- monitoring the [council's/joint organisation's] implementation of corrective actions that arise from the findings of audits
- implementing the audit, risk and improvement committee's annual work plan and four-year strategic work plan
- ensuring the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit activities comply with the *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*, and
- contract management and oversight of supplementary external providers (where appropriate).

[Details of any dual responsibilities and independence safeguards]

[Details of any shared arrangements]

### Option 2: Outsourced internal audit function

[Council's/joint organisation's] [name of internal audit function] is to be led by a member of [council's/joint organisation's] staff with sufficient skills, knowledge and experience to ensure it fulfils its role and responsibilities to the [council/joint organisation] and the audit, risk and improvement committee. The [head of internal audit function] must be independent, impartial, unbiased and objective when performing their work and free from any conflicts of interest.

Responsibilities of the [head of internal audit function] include:

- contract management
- managing the internal audit budget
- ensuring the external provider completes internal audits in line with the audit, risk and improvement committee's annual work plan and four-year strategic work plan
- forwarding audit reports by the external provider to the audit, risk and improvement committee
- acting as a liaison between the external provider and the audit, risk and improvement committee
- monitoring the [council's/joint organisation's] implementation of corrective actions that arise from the findings of audits and reporting progress to the audit, risk and improvement committee, and

- assisting the audit, risk and improvement committee to ensure the [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit activities comply with the *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*.

[Details of any dual responsibilities and independence safeguards]

[Details of any shared arrangements]

## [Name of internal audit team]

### Option 1: In-house internal audit team

Members of the [name of internal audit function] are responsible to the [head of internal audit function].

Individuals that perform internal audit activities for [council/joint organisation] must have:

- an appropriate level of understanding of the [council's/joint organisation's] culture, systems and processes
- the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to conduct internal audit activities in the [council/joint organisation]
- effective interpersonal and communication skills to ensure they can engage with [council/joint organisation] staff effectively and collaboratively, and
- honesty, integrity and diligence.

[Details of any dual responsibilities and independence safeguards]

[Details of any shared arrangements]

### Option 2: Out-sourced internal audit team

[Council/joint organisation] is to contract an external third-party provider to undertake its internal audit activities. To ensure the independence of the external provider, the [head of internal audit function] is to ensure the external provider:

- does not conduct any audits on specific [council/joint organisation] operations or areas that they have worked on within the last two years
- is not the same provider conducting the [council's/joint organisation's] external audit
- is not the auditor of any contractors of the [council/joint organisation] that may be subject to the internal audit, and
- can meet the [council's/joint organisation's] obligations under the *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*.

The [head of internal audit function] must consult with the audit, risk and improvement committee and [general manager/executive officer] regarding the appropriateness of the skills, knowledge and experience of any external provider before they are engaged by the [council/joint organisation].

[Details of any shared arrangements].

## Performing internal audit activities

The work of the [name of internal audit function] is to be thoroughly planned and executed. The [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee must develop a strategic work plan every four years to ensure that the matters listed in Schedule 1 are reviewed by the committee and considered by the internal audit function when developing their risk-based program of internal audits. The strategic work plan must be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate.

The committee must also develop an annual work plan to guide the work of the internal audit function over the forward year.

All internal audit activities are to be performed in a manner that is consistent with relevant professional standards including the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors and [current Australian risk management standard].

The [head of internal audit function] is to provide the findings and recommendations of internal audits to the audit, risk and improvement committee at the end of each audit. Each report is to include a response from the relevant senior manager.

The [head of internal audit function] is to establish an ongoing monitoring system to follow up [council's/joint organisation's] progress in implementing corrective actions.

The [general manager/executive officer], in consultation with the audit, risk and improvement committee, is to develop and maintain policies and procedures to guide the operation of the [council's/joint organisation's] [name of internal audit function].

The [head of internal audit function] is to ensure that the audit, risk and improvement committee is advised at each of the committee's meetings of the internal audit activities completed during that quarter, progress in implementing the annual work plan and progress made implementing corrective actions.

## Conduct

Internal audit personnel must comply with the [council's/joint organisation's] code of conduct. Complaints about breaches of [council's/joint organisation's] code of conduct by internal audit personnel are to be dealt with in accordance with the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*. The [general manager/executive officer] must consult with the [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee before any disciplinary action is taken against the [head of internal audit function] in response to a breach of the [council's/joint organisation's] code of conduct.

Internal auditors must also comply with the Code of Ethics for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors.

## Administrative arrangements

### Audit, risk and improvement committee meetings

The [head of internal audit function] will attend audit, risk and improvement committee meetings as an independent non-voting observer. The [head of internal audit function] can be excluded from meetings by the committee at any time.

The [head of internal audit function] must meet separately with the audit, risk and improvement committee at least once per year.

The [head of internal audit function] can meet with the chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee at any time, as necessary, between committee meetings.

### External audit

Internal and external audit activities will be coordinated to help ensure the adequacy of overall audit coverage and to minimise duplication of effort.

*Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW issued under section 23A of the Local Government Act 1993*



Periodic meetings and contact between internal and external audit shall be held to discuss matters of mutual interest and to facilitate coordination.

External audit will have full and free access to all internal audit plans, working papers and reports.

### Dispute resolution

[Name of internal audit function] should maintain an effective working relationship with the [council/joint organisation] and the audit, risk and improvement committee and seek to resolve any differences they may have in an amicable and professional way by discussion and negotiation.

In the event of a disagreement between the [name of internal audit function] and the [council/joint organisation], the dispute is to be resolved by the [general manager/executive officer] and/or the audit, risk and improvement committee. Disputes between the [name of internal audit function] and the audit, risk and improvement committee are to be resolved by the governing body.

Unresolved disputes regarding compliance with statutory or other requirements are to be referred to the Departmental Chief Executive in writing.

### Review arrangements

The [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee must review the performance of the internal audit function each year and report its findings to the governing body. A strategic review of the performance of the [name of internal audit function] must be conducted each council term that considers the views of an external party with a strong knowledge of internal audit and reported to the [governing body/board].

This charter is to be reviewed annually by the committee and once each council term by the governing body. Any substantive changes are to be approved by the governing body.

### Further information

For further information on [council's/joint organisation's] internal audit activities, contact [name] on [email address] or by phone [phone number].

Reviewed by [head of internal audit function]

[sign and date]

Reviewed by chair of the [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee

[sign and date]

Reviewed by [general manager/executive officer]

[sign and date]

Reviewed by [council/joint organisation] in accordance with a resolution of the governing body

[sign and date]

[resolution reference]



## Schedule 1 – internal audit function responsibilities

*[Note: each council/joint organisation is to determine the responsibilities of its internal audit function in relation to each matter listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act 1993 and list them in Schedule 1 to the council's/joint organisation's internal audit charter. Suggested responsibilities are provided below and further detailed in core requirement 3 and Appendix 2 of these Guidelines.]*

### Audit

#### Internal audit

- Conduct internal audits as directed by the [council's/joint organisation's] audit, risk and improvement committee.
- Implement the [council's/joint organisation's] annual and four-year strategic internal audit work plans.
- Monitor the implementation by the [council/joint organisation] of corrective actions.
- Assist the [council/joint organisation] to develop and maintain a culture of accountability and integrity.
- Facilitate the integration of risk management into day-to-day business activities and processes.
- Promote a culture of high ethical standards.

#### External audit

- Provide input and feedback on the financial statement and performance audit coverage proposed by external audit and provide feedback on the audit services provided.
- Review all external plans and reports in respect of planned or completed audits and monitor the [council's/joint organisation's] implementation of audit recommendations.
- Provide advice on action taken on significant issues raised in relevant external audit reports and better practice guides.

### Risk

#### Risk management

Review and advise:

- if the [council's/joint organisation's] has in place a current and appropriate risk management framework that is consistent with the Australian risk management standard
- whether the [council's/joint organisation's] risk management framework is adequate and effective for identifying and managing the risks the [council/joint organisation] faces, including those associated with individual projects, programs and other activities
- if risk management is integrated across all levels of the [council/joint organisation] and across all processes, operations, services, decision-making, functions and reporting
- of the adequacy of risk reports and documentation, for example, the [council's/joint organisation's] risk register and risk profile
- whether a sound approach has been followed in developing risk management plans for major projects or undertakings
- whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations

*Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW issued under section 23A of the Local Government Act 1993*

- if the [council/joint organisation] has taken steps to embed a culture which is committed to ethical and lawful behaviour
- if there is a positive risk culture within the [council/joint organisation] and strong leadership that supports effective risk management
- of the adequacy of staff training and induction in risk management
- how the [council's/joint organisation's] risk management approach impacts on the [council's/joint organisation's] insurance arrangements
- of the effectiveness of the [council's/joint organisation's] management of its assets, and
- of the effectiveness of business continuity arrangements, including business continuity plans, disaster recovery plans and the periodic testing of these plans.

### Internal controls

Review and advise:

- whether the [council's/joint organisation's] approach to maintaining an effective internal audit framework, including over external parties such as contractors and advisors, is sound and effective
- whether the [council/joint organisation] has in place relevant policies and procedures and that these are periodically reviewed and updated
- whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations
- whether staff are informed of their responsibilities and processes and procedures to implement controls are complied with
- if the [council's/joint organisation's] monitoring and review of controls is sufficient, and
- if internal and external audit recommendations to correct internal control weaknesses are implemented appropriately.

### Compliance

Review and advise of the adequacy and effectiveness of the [council's/joint organisation's] compliance framework, including:

- if the [council/joint organisation] has appropriately considered legal and compliance risks as part of the [council's/joint organisation's] risk management framework
- how the [council/joint organisation] manages its compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, codes, and contractual arrangements, and
- whether appropriate processes are in place to assess compliance.

### Fraud and corruption

Review and advise of the adequacy and effectiveness of the [council's/joint organisation's] fraud and corruption prevention framework and activities, including whether the [council/joint organisation] has appropriate processes and systems in place to capture and effectively investigate fraud-related information.

### Financial management

Review and advise:

- if the [council/joint organisation] is complying with accounting standards and external accountability requirements
- of the appropriateness of the [council's/joint organisation's] accounting policies and disclosures

- of the implications for the [council/joint organisation] of the findings of external audits and performance audits and the [council's/joint organisation's] responses and implementation of recommendations
- whether the [council's/joint organisation's] financial statement preparation procedures and timelines are sound
- the accuracy of the [council's/joint organisation's] annual financial statements prior to external audit, including:
  - management compliance/representations
  - significant accounting and reporting issues
  - the methods used by the [council/joint organisation] to account for significant or unusual transactions and areas of significant estimates or judgements
  - appropriate management signoff on the statements
- if effective processes are in place to ensure financial information included in the [council's/joint organisation's] report is consistent with signed financial statements
- if the [council's/joint organisation's] financial management processes are adequate
- the adequacy of cash management policies and procedures
- if there are adequate controls over financial processes, for example:
  - appropriate authorisation and approval of payments and transactions
  - adequate segregation of duties
  - timely reconciliation of accounts and balances
  - review of unusual and high value purchases
- if policies and procedures for management review and consideration of the financial position and performance of the [council/joint organisation] are adequate
- if the [council's/joint organisation's] grants and tied funding policies and procedures are sound.

## Governance

Review and advise of the adequacy of the [council/joint organisation] governance framework, including the [council's/joint organisation's]:

- decision-making processes
- implementation of governance policies and procedures
- reporting lines and accountability
- assignment of key roles and responsibilities
- committee structure
- management oversight responsibilities
- human resources and performance management activities
- reporting and communication activities
- information and communications technology (ICT) governance, and
- management and governance of the use of data, information and knowledge.

## Improvement

### Strategic planning

Review and advise:

- of the adequacy and effectiveness of the [council's/joint organisation's] integrated, planning and reporting (IP&R) processes

- if appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure progress against objectives, and
- whether the [council/joint organisation] is successfully implementing and achieving its IP&R objectives and strategies.

### **Service reviews and business improvement**

Review and advise:

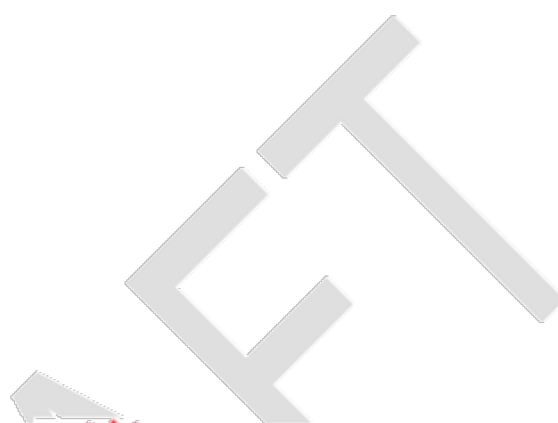
- if the [council/joint organisation] has robust systems to set objectives and goals to determine and deliver appropriate levels of service to the community and business performance
- if appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure service delivery to the community and overall performance, and
- how the [council/joint organisation] can improve its service delivery and the [council's/joint organisation's] performance of its business and functions generally

### **Performance data and measurement**

Review and advise:

- if the [council/joint organisation] has a robust system to determine appropriate performance indicators to measure the achievement of its strategic objectives
- if the performance indicators the [council/joint organisation] uses are effective, and
- of the adequacy of performance data collection and reporting.







## Section 355 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee

**DRAFT** TERMS OF REFERENCE



**NARRANDERA SHIRE COUNCIL**

**Chambers:** 141 East Street Narrandera NSW 2700  
**Email:** council@narrandera.nsw.gov.au

**Phone:** 02 6959 5510  
**Fax:** 02 6959 1884



<b>Committee Name</b>	<b>Audit Risk and Improvement Committee</b>
<b>Committee Type</b>	Section 355
<b>Responsible Section</b>	Corporate & Community
<b>Document ID</b>	593582
<b>Date Adopted</b>	DD Month 202Y
<b>Introduction</b>	Council has established an Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee in compliance with section 428A of the Local Government Act 1993, section (#tbc) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 and the Departmental Chief Executive's Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW. These terms of reference set out the Committee's objectives, authority, composition and tenure, roles and responsibilities, reporting and administrative arrangements.
<b>1. Objective</b>	The objective of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee is to provide independent assurance to Council by monitoring, reviewing and providing advice about the Council governance processes, compliance, risk management and control frameworks, external accountability obligations and overall performance.
<b>2. Independence</b>	<p>The Committee is to be independent to ensure it has no real or perceived bias or conflicts of interest that may interfere with its ability to act independently and to provide Council with robust, objective and unbiased advice and assurance.</p> <p>The Committee is to have an advisory and assurance role only and is to exercise no administrative functions, delegated financial responsibilities or any management functions of the Council. The Committee will provide independent advice to the Council that is informed by the Council internal audit and risk management activities and information and advice provided by staff, relevant external bodies and subject matter experts.</p> <p>The Committee must always ensure it maintains a direct reporting line to and from the Council internal audit function and act as a mechanism for internal audit to report to the governing body and the General Manager on matters affecting the performance of the internal audit function.</p>
<b>3. Authority</b>	<p>Council authorises the Committee, for the purposes of exercising its responsibilities, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access any information it needs from the Council</li> <li>• use any Council resources it needs</li> <li>• have direct and unrestricted access to the General Manager and senior management of the Council</li> <li>• seek the General Manager permission to meet with any other Council staff member or contractor</li> <li>• discuss any matters with the external auditor or other external parties</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• request the attendance of any employee at committee meetings, and</li> <li>• obtain external legal or other professional advice in line with Councils' budget and procurement policies.</li> </ul> <p>Information and documents pertaining to the committee are confidential and are not to be made publicly available. The Committee may only release Council information to external parties that are assisting the Committee to fulfil its responsibilities with the approval of the General Manager, except where it is being provided to an external investigative or oversight agency for the purpose of informing that agency of a matter that may warrant its attention.</p>								
<b>4. Composition and Tenure</b>	<p>The Committee consists of an independent chair and two independent members who have voting rights and one non-voting councillor, as required under the Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW.</p> <p>The governing body is to appoint the chair and members of the committee. Current committee members are:</p> <table> <tr> <td>John Batchelor</td><td>Independent chair (voting)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Gayle Murphy</td><td>Independent member (voting)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Vacant</td><td>Independent member (voting)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Cr Cameron Lander</td><td>Councillor member (non-voting)</td></tr> </table> <p>All Committee members must meet the independence and eligibility criteria prescribed in the Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW.</p> <p>Members will be appointed for up to a four-year term. Members can be reappointed for one further term, but the total period of continuous membership cannot exceed eight years. This includes any term as chair of the committee. Members who have served an eight-year term (either as a member or as chair) must have a two-year break from serving on the committee before being appointed again. To preserve the Committee's knowledge of the Council ideally, no more than one member should retire from the Committee because of rotation in any one year.</p> <p>The terms and conditions of each member's appointment to the Committee are to be set out in a letter of appointment. New members will be thoroughly inducted to their role and receive relevant information and briefings on their appointment to assist them to meet their responsibilities.</p> <p>Prior to approving the reappointment or extension of the Chair's or an independent member's term, the governing body is to undertake an assessment of the Chair's or Committee member's performance. Reappointment of the chair or a committee member is also to be subject to that person still meeting the independence and eligibility requirements.</p> <p>Members of the committee must possess and maintain a broad range of skills, knowledge and experience relevant to the operations, governance and financial management of the Council, the environment in which the Council operates, and the contribution that the Committee makes to the Council. At least one member of the Committee must have accounting or related financial management experience with an understanding of accounting and auditing standards in a Local Government environment. All members should have sufficient understanding of the Council's financial reporting responsibilities to be able to contribute to the Committee's consideration of the Council's annual Financial Statements.</p>	John Batchelor	Independent chair (voting)	Gayle Murphy	Independent member (voting)	Vacant	Independent member (voting)	Cr Cameron Lander	Councillor member (non-voting)
John Batchelor	Independent chair (voting)								
Gayle Murphy	Independent member (voting)								
Vacant	Independent member (voting)								
Cr Cameron Lander	Councillor member (non-voting)								



<p><b>5. Role</b></p>	<p>As required under section 428A of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act), the role of the committee is to review and provide independent advice to the Council regarding the following aspects of the council's operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance</li> <li>• risk management</li> <li>• fraud control</li> <li>• financial management</li> <li>• governance</li> <li>• implementation of the strategic plan, delivery program and strategies</li> <li>• service reviews</li> <li>• collection of performance measurement data by the Council, and</li> <li>• internal audit.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee must also provide information to the Council for the purpose of improving the Council's performance of its functions.</p> <p>The Committee's specific audit, risk and improvement responsibilities under section 428A of the Act are outlined in Schedule 1 to this charter.</p> <p>The Committee will act as a forum for consideration of the Council's internal audit function and oversee its planning, monitoring and reporting to ensure it operates effectively.</p> <p>The Committee has no power to direct external audit or the way it is planned and undertaken but will act as a forum for the consideration of external audit findings.</p> <p>The Committee is directly responsible and accountable to the governing body for the exercise of its responsibilities. In carrying out its responsibilities, the committee must at all times recognise that primary responsibility for management of the Council rests with the governing body and the General Manager.</p> <p>The responsibilities of the Committee may be revised or expanded in consultation with, or as requested by, the governing body from time to time.</p>
<p><b>6. Responsibilities of Members</b></p>	<p><b>6.1 Independent members</b></p> <p>The Chair and Members of the Committee are expected to understand and observe the requirements of the Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW. Members are also expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make themselves available as required to attend and participate in meetings</li> <li>• contribute the time needed to review and understand information provided to it</li> <li>• apply good analytical skills, objectivity and judgement</li> <li>• act in the best interests of the Council</li> <li>• have the personal courage to raise and deal with tough issues, express opinions frankly, ask questions that go to the fundamental core of the issue and pursue independent lines of inquiry</li> <li>• maintain effective working relationships with the Council</li> <li>• have strong leadership qualities (Chair)</li> <li>• lead effective committee meetings (Chair), and</li> <li>• oversee the Council's internal audit function (Chair).</li> </ul>

	<p><b>6.2 Councillor members</b></p> <p>To preserve the independence of the committee, the Councillor member of the Committee is a non-voting member. Their role is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relay to the Committee any concerns the governing body may have regarding the Council and issues being considered by the Committee</li> <li>• provide insights into local issues and the strategic priorities of the Council that would add value to the Committee's consideration of agenda items</li> <li>• advise the governing body (as necessary) of the work of the Committee and any issues arising from it, and</li> <li>• assist the governing body to review the performance of the Committee.</li> </ul> <p>Issues or information the Councillor member raises with or provides to the Committee must relate to the matters listed in Schedule 1 and issues being considered by the Committee.</p> <p>The Council member of the Committee must conduct themselves in a non-partisan and professional manner. The Councillor member of the Committee must not engage in any conduct that seeks to politicise the activities of the Committee or the internal audit function or that could be seen to do so.</p> <p>If the Councillor member of the Committee engages in such conduct or in any other conduct that may bring the Committee and its work into disrepute, the chair of the Committee may recommend to the Council that the Councillor member be removed from membership of the Committee. Where the Council does not agree to the committee chair's recommendation, the Council must give reasons for its decision in writing to the Chair.</p>
	<p><b>6.3 Conduct</b></p> <p>Independent Committee members are required to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Complaints alleging breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct by an independent committee member are to be dealt with in accordance with the Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW. The General Manager must consult with the governing body before taking any disciplinary action against an independent committee member in response to a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct.</p>
	<p><b>6.4 Conflicts of Interest</b></p> <p>Once a year, Committee members must provide written declarations to the Council stating that they do not have any conflicts of interest that would preclude them from being members of the committee. Independent Committee members are 'designated persons' for the purposes of the Council's Code of Conduct and must also complete and submit returns of their interests.</p> <p>Committee members and observers must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary conflicts of interest they may have in a matter being considered at the meeting at the start of each meeting or as soon as they become aware of the conflict of interest. Where a Committee Member or Observer declares a pecuniary or a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest, they must remove themselves from Committee deliberations on the issue. Details of conflicts of interest declared at meetings must be appropriately Minuted.</p>

	<p><b>6.5 Standards</b></p> <p>Committee members are to conduct their work in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors and current Australian risk management standard, where applicable.</p>
<b>7. Work Plans</b>	<p>The work of the Committee is to be thoroughly planned and executed. The Committee must develop a strategic work plan every four years to ensure that the matters listed in Schedule 1 are reviewed by the committee and the internal audit function. The strategic work plan must be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate.</p> <p>The Committee may, in consultation with the governing body, vary the strategic work plan at any time to address new or emerging risks. The governing body may also, by resolution, request the Committee to approve a variation to the strategic work plan. Any decision to vary the strategic work plan must be made by the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee must also develop an annual work plan to guide its work, and the work of the internal audit function over the forward year.</p> <p>The Committee may, in consultation with the governing body, vary the annual work plan to address new or emerging risks. The governing body may also, by resolution, request the committee to approve a variation to the annual work plan. Any decision to vary the annual work plan must be made by the Committee.</p> <p>When considering whether to vary the strategic or annual work plans, the Committee must consider the impact of the variation on the internal audit function's existing workload and the completion of pre-existing priorities and activities identified under the work plan.</p>
<b>8. Assurance Reporting</b>	<p>The Committee must regularly report to the Council to ensure that it is kept informed of matters considered by the Committee and any emerging issues that may influence the strategic direction of the Council or the achievement of the Council's goals and objectives.</p> <p>The Committee will provide an update to the governing body and the General Manager of its activities and opinions after every committee meeting.</p> <p>The Committee will provide an annual assessment to the governing body and the General Manager on the Committee's work and its opinion on how the Council is performing.</p> <p>The Committee will provide a comprehensive assessment every council term of the matters listed in Schedule 1 to the governing body and the General Manager.</p> <p>The Committee may at any time report to the governing body or the General Manager on any other matter it deems of sufficient importance to warrant their attention. The Mayor and the Chair of the Committee may also meet at any time to discuss issues relating to the work of the Committee.</p> <p>Should the governing body require additional information, a request for the information may be made to the Chair by resolution. The Chair is only required to provide the information requested by the Governing Body where the Chair is satisfied that it is reasonably necessary for the governing body to receive the information for the purposes of performing its functions under the Local Government Act. Individual Councillors are not entitled to request or receive information from the Committee.</p>



<p><b>9. Administrative Arrangements</b></p>	<p><b>9.1 Meetings</b></p> <p>The Committee will meet at least four times per year, including a special meeting to review the Council's Financial Statements.</p> <p>The Committee can hold additional meetings when significant unexpected issues arise, or if the Chair is asked to hold an additional meeting by a committee member, the General Manager or the Governing Body.</p> <p>Committee meetings can be held in person, by telephone or videoconference. Proxies are not permitted to attend meetings if a Committee member cannot attend.</p> <p>A quorum will consist of a majority of independent voting members. Where the vote is tied, the Chair has the casting vote.</p> <p>The Chair of the Committee will decide the agenda for each Committee meeting. Each Committee meeting is to be minuted to preserve a record of the issues considered and the actions and decisions taken by the Committee.</p> <p>The General Manager and the Internal Audit Officer should attend Committee meetings as non-voting observers. The external auditor (or their representative) is to be invited to each Committee meeting as an independent observer. The Chair can request the Council's Finance Manager, head of Risk Management function, Senior Managers, any Councillors, any employee/contractor of the Council and any subject matter expert to attend Committee meetings. Where requested to attend a meeting, persons must attend the meeting where possible and provide any information requested. Observers have no voting rights and can be excluded from a meeting by the Chair at any time.</p> <p>The Committee can hold closed meetings whenever it needs to discuss confidential or sensitive issues with only voting members of the Committee present.</p> <p>The Committee must meet separately with the Internal Audit Officer and the Council's external auditor at least once each year.</p>
	<p><b>9.2 Dispute resolution</b></p> <p>Members of the Committee and the Council's management should maintain an effective working relationship and seek to resolve any differences they may have in an amicable and professional way by discussion and negotiation.</p> <p>In the event of a disagreement between the committee and the General Manager or other Senior Managers, the dispute is to be resolved by the governing body.</p> <p>Unresolved disputes regarding compliance with statutory or other requirements are to be referred to the Departmental Chief Executive in writing.</p>
	<p><b>9.3 Secretariat</b></p> <p>The General Manager will nominate a staff member to provide secretariat support to the Committee. The secretariat will ensure the agenda for each meeting and supporting papers are circulated after approval from the Chair at least one week before the meeting and ensure that minutes of meetings are prepared and maintained. Minutes must be approved by the Chair and circulated within two business day of the meeting to each member.</p>



	<p><b>9.4 Resignation and dismissal of members</b></p> <p>Where the Chair or a Committee Member is unable to complete their term or does not intend to seek reappointment after the expiry of their term, they should give three months' notice to the Chair and the Governing Body prior to their resignation to allow the Council to ensure a smooth transition to a new Chair or Committee Member.</p> <p>The Governing Body can, by resolution, terminate the appointment of the Chair or an independent Committee member before the expiry of their term where that person has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• breached the Council's Code of Conduct</li> <li>• performed unsatisfactorily or not to expectations</li> <li>• declared, or is found to be in, a position of a conflict of interest which is unresolvable</li> <li>• been declared bankrupt or found to be insolvent</li> <li>• experienced an adverse change in business status</li> <li>• been charged with a serious criminal offence</li> <li>• been proven to be in serious breach of their obligations under any legislation, or</li> <li>• experienced an adverse change in capacity or capability.</li> </ul> <p>The position of a Councillor member on the Committee can be terminated at any time by the Governing Body by resolution.</p>
	<p><b>9.5 Review arrangements</b></p> <p>At least once every council term, the Governing Body must review or arrange for an external review of the effectiveness of the Committee.</p> <p>These Terms of Reference must be reviewed annually by the Committee and once each Council term by the Governing Body. Any substantive changes are to be approved by the Governing Body.</p>
<b>10. Further information</b>	For further information on Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, contact Government & Engagement Manager on and <a href="mailto:council@narrandera.nsw.gov.au">council@narrandera.nsw.gov.au</a> or by phone 02 69595510.
<b>Reviewed by Chair Audit Risk and Improvement Committee</b>	Signed ..... DD Month YYYY
<b>Reviewed by Council in accordance with a resolution of the governing body</b>	Signed ..... DD Month YYYY Resolution reference
<b>Next review date</b>	DD Month YYYY

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Schedule 1	Audit Risk Improvement Committee Responsibilities
<b>Note</b>	[Note: each council/joint organisation is to determine the responsibilities of its committee related to each matter listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act 1993 and list them in Schedule 1 to the committee's terms of reference. Suggested responsibilities are provided below and further detailed in core requirement 1 and Appendix 2 of these Guidelines.]
<b>A. Audit</b>	<p><b>A.1 Internal Audit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide overall strategic oversight of internal audit activities</li> <li>• Act as a forum for communication between the governing body, General Manager, Senior Management, the internal audit function and external audit</li> <li>• Coordinate, as far as is practicable, the work programs of internal audit and other assurance and review functions</li> <li>• Review and advise the Council:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ on whether the Council is providing the resources necessary to successfully deliver the internal audit function</li> <li>◦ if the Council is complying with internal audit requirements, including conformance with the International Professional Practices Framework</li> <li>◦ if the Council's Internal Audit Charter is appropriate and whether the internal audit policies and procedures and audit/risk methodologies used by the Council are suitable</li> <li>◦ of the strategic four-year work plan and annual work plan of internal audits to be undertaken by the Council's internal audit function</li> <li>◦ if the Council's internal audit activities are effective, including the performance of the head of the internal audit function and the internal audit function</li> <li>◦ of the findings and recommendations of internal audits conducted, and corrective actions needed to address issues raised</li> <li>◦ of the implementation by the Council of these corrective actions</li> <li>◦ on the appointment of the head of the internal audit function and external providers, and</li> <li>◦ if the internal audit function is structured appropriately and has sufficient skills and expertise to meet its responsibilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p><b>A.2 External audit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as a forum for communication between the governing body, General Manager, Senior Management, the internal audit function and external audit</li> <li>• Coordinate as far as is practicable, the work programs of internal audit and external audit</li> <li>• Provide input and feedback on the Financial Statements and performance audit coverage proposed by external audit and provide feedback on the audit services provided</li> <li>• Review all external plans and reports in respect of planned or completed audits and monitor council's implementation of audit recommendations</li> <li>• Provide advice to the Governing Body and/or General Manager on action taken on significant issues raised in relevant external audit reports and better practice guides</li> </ul>
<b>B. Risk</b>	<p><b>B.1 Risk management</b></p> <p>Review and advise the Council:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if the Council has in place a current and appropriate risk management framework that is consistent with the Australian risk management standard</li> <li>• whether the Council is providing the resources necessary to successfully implement its Risk Management framework</li> <li>• whether the Council's Risk Management Framework is adequate and effective for identifying and managing the risks the Council faces, including those associated with individual projects, programs and other activities</li> <li>• if risk management is integrated across all levels of the Council and across all processes, operations, services, decision-making, functions and reporting</li> <li>• of the adequacy of risk reports and documentation, for example, the Council's Risk Register and Risk profile</li> <li>• whether a sound approach has been followed in developing risk management plans for major projects or undertakings</li> <li>• whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations</li> <li>• if the Council has taken steps to embed a culture which is committed to ethical and lawful behaviour</li> <li>• if there is a positive risk culture within the Council and strong leadership that supports effective risk management</li> <li>• of the adequacy of staff training and induction in risk management</li> <li>• how the Council's risk management approach impacts on the Council's insurance arrangements</li> <li>• of the effectiveness of the Council's management of its assets, and</li> <li>• of the effectiveness of business continuity arrangements, including business continuity plans, disaster recovery plans and the periodic testing of these plans.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>B.2 Internal controls</b></p> <p>Review and advise the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether the Council's approach to maintaining an effective internal audit framework, including over external parties such as contractors and advisors, is sound and effective</li> <li>• whether the Council has in place relevant policies and procedures and that these are periodically reviewed and updated</li> <li>• whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations</li> <li>• whether staff are informed of their responsibilities and processes and procedures to implement controls are complied with</li> <li>• if the Council's monitoring and review of controls is sufficient, and</li> <li>• if internal and external audit recommendations to correct internal control weaknesses are implemented appropriately</li> </ul>
	<p><b>B.3 Compliance</b></p> <p>Review and advise the Council of the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council compliance framework, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if the Council has appropriately considered legal and compliance risks as part of the Council's Risk Management Framework</li> <li>• how the Council manages its compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, codes, and contractual arrangements, and</li> <li>• whether appropriate processes are in place to assess compliance.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>B.4 Fraud and corruption</b></p>



	<p>Review and advise the Council of the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's fraud and corruption prevention framework and activities, including whether the Council has appropriate processes and systems in place to capture and effectively investigate fraud-related information.</p>
	<p><b>B.5 Financial management</b></p> <p>Review and advise the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if the Council is complying with accounting standards and external accountability requirements</li> <li>• of the appropriateness of the Council's accounting policies and disclosures</li> <li>• of the implications for the Council of the findings of external audits and performance audits and the Council's responses and implementation of recommendations</li> <li>• whether the Council's financial statement preparation procedures and timelines are sound</li> <li>• the accuracy of the Council's annual Financial Statements prior to external audit, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ management compliance/representations</li> <li>◦ significant accounting and reporting issues</li> <li>◦ the methods used by the Council to account for significant or unusual transactions and areas of significant estimates or judgements</li> <li>◦ appropriate management signoff on the statements</li> </ul> </li> <li>• if effective processes are in place to ensure financial information included in the Council's Annual Report is consistent with signed Financial Statements</li> <li>• if the Council's financial management processes are adequate</li> <li>• the adequacy of cash management policies and procedures</li> <li>• if there are adequate controls over financial processes, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ appropriate authorisation and approval of payments and transactions</li> <li>◦ adequate segregation of duties</li> <li>◦ timely reconciliation of accounts and balances</li> <li>◦ review of unusual and high value purchases</li> </ul> </li> <li>• if policies and procedures for management review and consideration of the financial position and performance of the Council are adequate</li> <li>• if the Council's grants and tied funding policies and procedures are sound.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>B.6 Governance</b></p> <p>Review and advise the Council regarding its governance framework, including the Council's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decision-making processes</li> <li>• implementation of governance policies and procedures</li> <li>• reporting lines and accountability</li> <li>• assignment of key roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• committee structure</li> <li>• management oversight responsibilities</li> <li>• human resources and performance management activities</li> <li>• reporting and communication activities</li> <li>• information and communications technology (ICT) governance, and</li> <li>• management and governance of the use of data, information and knowledge</li> </ul>
<b>C. Improvement</b>	<p><b>C.1 Strategic planning</b></p> <p>Review and advise the Council:</p>



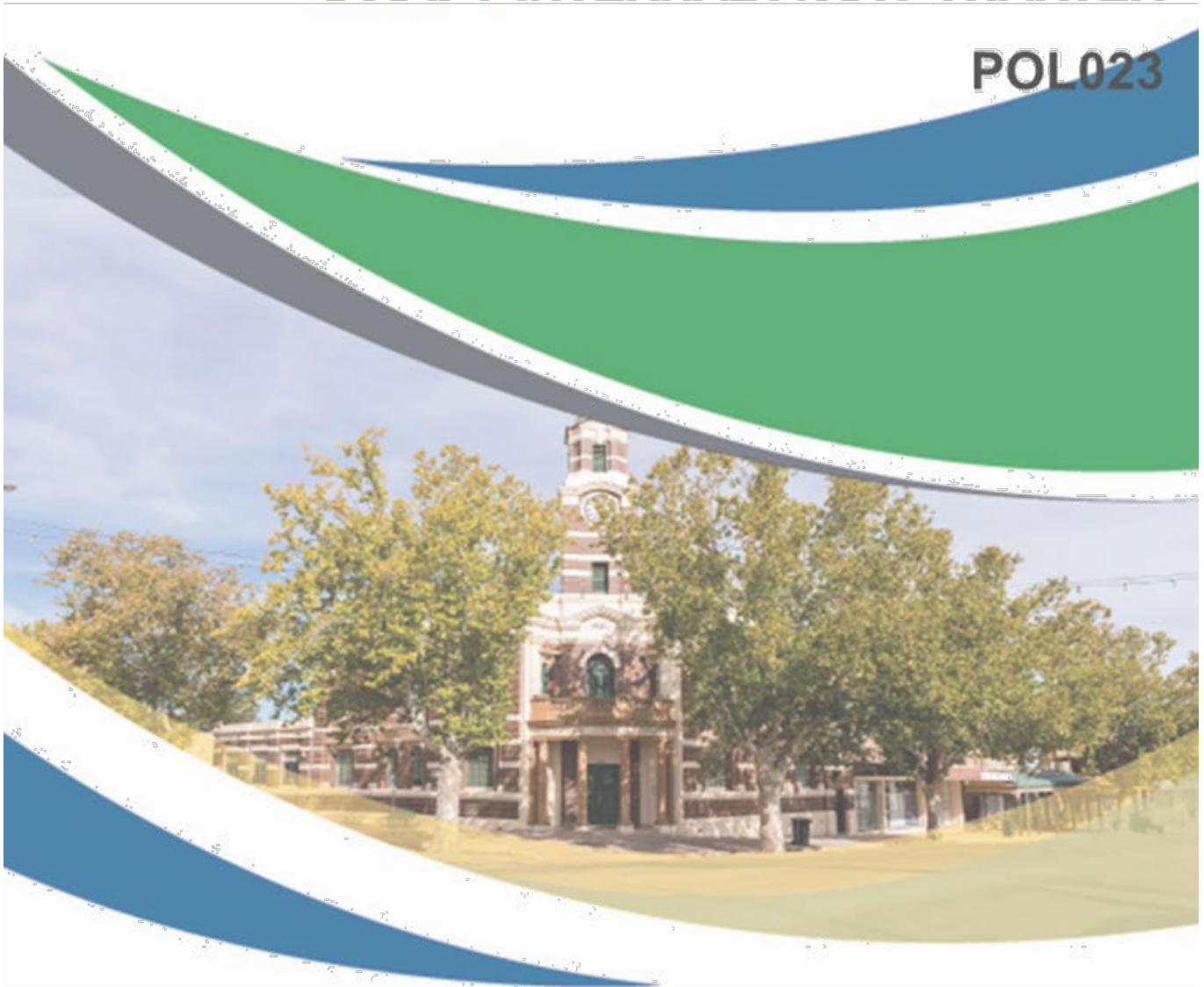
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's integrated, planning and reporting (IP&amp;R) processes</li> <li>• if appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure progress against objectives, and</li> <li>• whether the Council is successfully implementing and achieving its IP&amp;R objectives and strategies.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>C.2 Service reviews and business improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as a forum for communication and monitoring of any audits conducted by external bodies and the implementation of corrective actions (for example, NSW Government agencies, Commonwealth Government agencies, insurance bodies)</li> <li>• Review and advise the Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If the Council has robust systems to set objectives and goals to determine and deliver appropriate levels of service to the community and business performance</li> <li>○ if appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure service delivery to the community and overall performance, and</li> <li>○ how the Council can improve its service delivery and the Council's performance of its business and functions generally</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p><b>C.3 Performance data and measurement</b></p> <p>Review and advise the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if the Council has a robust system to determine appropriate performance indicators to measure the achievement of its strategic objectives</li> <li>• if the performance indicators the Council uses are effective, and</li> <li>• of the adequacy of performance data collection and reporting.</li> </ul>



## Section 355 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee

### **DRAFT** INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER

**POL023**



**NARRANDERA SHIRE COUNCIL**

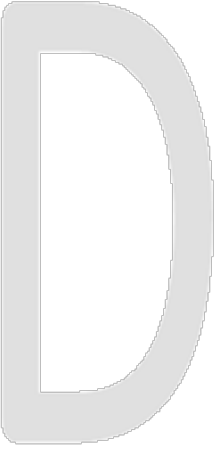
**Chambers:** 141 East Street Narrandera NSW 2700  
**Email:** council@narrandera.nsw.gov.au

**Phone:** 02 6959 5510  
**Fax:** 02 6959 1884



<b>Committee Name</b>	<b>Audit Risk and Improvement Committee</b>
<b>Responsible Section</b>	Corporate & Community
<b>Document ID</b>	650868
<b>Date Adopted</b>	DD Month 202Y
<b>Introduction</b>	Council has established the Internal Audit Officer as a key component of the Council's governance and assurance framework, in compliance with the Departmental Chief Executive's Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW. This Charter provides the framework for the conduct of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee in the Council and has been approved by the Governing Body taking into account the advice of the Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.
<b>1. Purpose of internal audit</b>	<p>Internal audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the Council's operations. It helps the Council accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes (as defined by the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing 2017).</p> <p>Internal audit provides an independent and objective review and advisory service to provide advice to the Governing Body, General Manager and Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee about the Council's governance processes, risk management and control frameworks and its external accountability obligations. It also assists the Council to improve its business performance.</p>
<b>2. Independence</b>	<p>Council's Internal Audit Officer is to be independent of the Council so it can provide an unbiased assessment of the Council's operations and risk and control activities.</p> <p>Internal Audit Officer reports functionally to the Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee on the results of completed audits, and for strategic direction and accountability purposes, and reports administratively to the General Manager to facilitate day-to-day operations. Internal audit activities are not subject to direction by the Council and the Council's management has no role in the exercise of the Council's internal audit activities.</p> <p>The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee is responsible for communicating any internal audit issues or information to the Governing Body. Should the Governing Body require additional information, a request for the information may be made to the chair by resolution. The chair is only required to provide the information requested by the Governing Body where the chair is satisfied that it is reasonably necessary for the Governing Body to receive the information for the purposes of performing its functions under the Local Government Act. Individual Councillors are not entitled to request or receive information from the committee.</p>



	<p>[Detail any delegations made by the general manager/executive officer regarding their internal audit responsibilities]. (To be added upon completion of position PD at a later date.)</p> <p>The General Manager must consult with the Chair of the Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee before appointing or making decisions affecting the employment of the Internal Audit Officer. If the Internal Audit Officer is dismissed, the General Manager must report the reasons for their dismissal to the Governing Body.</p> <p>Where the Chair of the Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee has any concerns about the treatment of the Internal Audit Officer, or any action taken that may compromise their ability to undertake their functions independently, they can report their concerns to the Governing Body.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Officer is to confirm at least annually to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee the independence of internal audit activities from the Council.</p>
<p><b>3. Authority</b></p> 	<p>Council authorises the Internal Audit Officer to have full, free and unrestricted access to all functions, premises, assets, personnel, records and other documentation and information that the Internal Audit Officer considers necessary for the Internal Audit Officer to undertake their responsibilities.</p> <p>All records, documentation and information accessed while undertaking internal audit activities are to be used solely for the conduct of those activities. The Internal Audit Officer and individual internal audit staff are responsible and accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of the information they receive when undertaking their work.</p> <p>All internal audit documentation is to remain the property of Council, including where internal audit services are performed by an external third-party provider.</p> <p>Information and documents pertaining to the Internal Audit Officer are not to be made publicly available. The Internal Audit Officer may only release Council information to external parties that are assisting the Internal Audit Officer to undertake its responsibilities with the approval of the General Manager, except where it is being provided to an external investigative or oversight agency for the purpose of informing that agency of a matter that may warrant its attention.</p>
<p><b>4. Role</b></p>	<p>The Internal Audit Officer is to support the Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee to review and provide independent advice to the Council in accordance with section 428A of the Local Government Act 1993. This includes conducting internal audits of Council and monitoring the implementation of corrective actions.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Officer is to also play an active role in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing and maintaining a culture of accountability and integrity</li> <li>• facilitating the integration of risk management into day-to-day business activities and processes, and</li> <li>• promoting a culture of high ethical standards.</li> </ul> <p>Internal Audit Officer has no direct authority or responsibility for the activities it reviews. The Internal Audit Officer has no responsibility for developing or implementing procedures or systems and does not prepare records or engage in Council functions or activities (except in carrying out its own functions).</p>
<p><b>5. Internal Audit Officer</b></p>	<p><b>5.1 Outsourced internal audit function</b></p>



	<p>Council's Internal Audit Officer is a member of Council's staff with sufficient skills, knowledge and experience to ensure it fulfils its role and responsibilities to the Council and the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee. The Internal Audit Officer must be independent, impartial, unbiased and objective when performing their work and free from any conflicts of interest.</p> <p>Responsibilities of the Internal Audit Officer include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contract management</li> <li>• managing the internal audit budget</li> <li>• ensuring the external provider completes internal audits in line with the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee's annual work plan and four-year strategic work plan</li> <li>• forwarding audit reports by the external provider to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee</li> <li>• acting as a liaison between the external provider and the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee monitoring the Council's implementation of corrective actions that arise from the findings of audits and reporting progress to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, and</li> <li>• monitoring the Council's implementation of corrective actions that arise from findings of audits and reporting progress to the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee, and</li> <li>• assisting the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee to ensure the Council's internal audit activities comply with the Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW.</li> </ul> <p>[Details of any dual responsibilities and independence safeguards]</p> <p>[Details of any shared arrangements]</p>
	<p><b>5.2 Out-sourced internal audit team</b></p> <p>Council is to contract an external third-party provider to undertake its internal audit activities. To ensure the independence of the external provider, the Internal Audit Officer is to ensure the external provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not conduct any audits on specific Council operations or areas that they have worked on within the last two years</li> <li>• is not the same provider conducting the Council's external audit</li> <li>• is not the auditor of any contractors of the Council that may be subject to the internal audit, and</li> <li>• can meet the Council's obligations under the Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW.</li> </ul> <p>The Internal Audit Officer must consult with the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee and General Manager regarding the appropriateness of the skills, knowledge and experience of any external provider before they are engaged by the Council.</p>
<p><b>6. Performing internal audit activities</b></p>	<p>The work of the Internal Audit Officer is to be thoroughly planned and executed. The Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee must develop a strategic work plan every four years to ensure that the matters listed in Schedule 1 are reviewed by the committee and the internal audit function. The strategic work plan must be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate.</p> <p>The committee must also develop an annual work plan to guide the work of the internal audit function over the forward year.</p>

	<p>All internal audit activities are to be performed in a manner that is consistent with relevant professional standards including the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors and [current Australian risk management standard]. ISO 31000:2018 International Standard on Risk Management?</p> <p>The Internal Audit Officer is to provide the findings and recommendations of internal audits to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee at the end of each audit. Each report is to include a response from the relevant Senior Manager.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Officer is to establish an ongoing monitoring system to follow up Council's progress in implementing corrective actions.</p> <p>The General Manager, in consultation with the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, is to develop and maintain policies and procedures to guide the operation of the Council's Internal Audit Officer.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Officer is to ensure that the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee is advised at each of the Committee's meetings of the internal audit activities completed during that quarter, progress in implementing the annual work plan and progress made implementing corrective actions.</p>
<b>7. Conduct</b>	<p>Internal audit personnel must comply with the Council's Code of Conduct. Complaints about breaches of Council's Code of Conduct by internal audit personnel are to be dealt with in accordance with the Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW. The General Manager must consult with the Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee before any disciplinary action is taken against the Internal Audit Officer in response to a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Internal auditors must also comply with the Code of Ethics for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors.</p>
<b>8. Administrative Arrangements</b>	<p><b>8.1 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Meetings</b></p> <p>The Internal Audit Officer will attend Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meetings as an independent non-voting observer. The Internal Audit Officer can be excluded from meetings by the committee at any time.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Officer must meet separately with the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee at least once per year.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Officer can meet with the Chair of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee at any time, as necessary, between committee meetings.</p>
	<p><b>8.2 External Audit</b></p> <p>Internal and external audit activities will be coordinated to help ensure the adequacy of overall audit coverage and to minimise duplication of effort.</p> <p>Periodic meetings and contact between internal and external audit shall be held to discuss matters of mutual interest and to facilitate coordination.</p> <p>External audit will have full and free access to all internal audit plans, working papers and reports.</p>
	<p><b>8.3 Dispute Resolution</b></p> <p>The Internal Audit Officer should maintain an effective working relationship with the Council and the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee and seek</p>

	<p>to resolve any differences they may have in an amicable and professional way by discussion and negotiation.</p> <p>In the event of a disagreement between the Internal Audit Officer and the Council, the dispute is to be resolved by the General Manager and/or the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee. Disputes between the Internal Audit Officer and the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee are to be resolved by the Governing Body.</p> <p>Unresolved disputes regarding compliance with statutory or other requirements are to be referred to the Departmental Chief Executive in writing.</p>
	<p><b>8.4 Review Arrangements</b></p> <p>The Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee must review the performance of the internal audit function each year and report its findings to the Governing Body. A strategic review of the performance of the Internal Audit Officer must be conducted each Council term that considers the views of an external party with a strong knowledge of internal audit and reported to the Council.</p> <p>This charter is to be reviewed annually by the committee and once each council term by the Governing Body. Any substantive changes are to be approved by the Governing Body.</p>
<b>9. Further information</b>	<p>For further information on Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, contact Government &amp; Engagement Manager on and <a href="mailto:council@narrandera.nsw.gov.au">council@narrandera.nsw.gov.au</a> or by phone 02 69595510.</p>
<b>Reviewed by Internal Audit Officer</b>	<p>Signed .....</p> <p>DD Month YYYY</p>
<b>Reviewed by Chair Audit Risk and Improvement Committee</b>	<p>Signed .....</p> <p>DD Month YYYY</p>
<b>Reviewed by General Manager</b>	<p>Signed .....</p> <p>DD Month YYYY</p>
<b>Reviewed by Council in accordance with a resolution of the governing body</b>	<p>Signed .....</p> <p>DD Month YYYY</p> <p>Resolution reference</p>
<b>Next review date</b>	<p>DD Month YYYY</p>

**NOTE: This is a controlled document. If you are reading a printed copy, please check that you have the latest version via Council's website (external) or MagiQ (internal). Printed or downloaded versions of this document are uncontrolled.**



Schedule 1	Audit Risk Improvement Committee Responsibilities
<b>Note</b>	[Note: each council/joint organisation is to determine the responsibilities of its committee related to each matter listed in section 428A of the Local Government Act 1993 and list them in Schedule 1 to the committee's terms of reference. Suggested responsibilities are provided below and further detailed in core requirement 1 and Appendix 2 of these Guidelines.]
<b>A. Audit</b>	<p><b>A.1 Internal Audit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide overall strategic oversight of internal audit activities</li> <li>• Act as a forum for communication between the governing body, General Manager, Senior Management, the internal audit function and external audit</li> <li>• Coordinate, as far as is practicable, the work programs of internal audit and other assurance and review functions</li> <li>• Review and advise the Council:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ on whether the Council is providing the resources necessary to successfully deliver the internal audit function</li> <li>◦ if the Council is complying with internal audit requirements, including conformance with the International Professional Practices Framework</li> <li>◦ if the Council's Internal Audit Charter is appropriate and whether the internal audit policies and procedures and audit/risk methodologies used by the Council are suitable</li> <li>◦ of the strategic four-year work plan and annual work plan of internal audits to be undertaken by the Council's internal audit function</li> <li>◦ if the Council's internal audit activities are effective, including the performance of the head of the internal audit function and the internal audit function</li> <li>◦ of the findings and recommendations of internal audits conducted, and corrective actions needed to address issues raised</li> <li>◦ of the implementation by the Council of these corrective actions</li> <li>◦ on the appointment of the head of the internal audit function and external providers, and</li> <li>◦ if the internal audit function is structured appropriately and has sufficient skills and expertise to meet its responsibilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p><b>A.2 External audit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as a forum for communication between the governing body, General Manager, Senior Management, the internal audit function and external audit</li> <li>• Coordinate as far as is practicable, the work programs of internal audit and external audit</li> <li>• Provide input and feedback on the Financial Statements and performance audit coverage proposed by external audit and provide feedback on the audit services provided</li> <li>• Review all external plans and reports in respect of planned or completed audits and monitor council's implementation of audit recommendations</li> <li>• Provide advice to the Governing Body and/or General Manager on action taken on significant issues raised in relevant external audit reports and better practice guides</li> </ul>
<b>B. Risk</b>	<p><b>B.1 Risk management</b></p> <p>Review and advise the Council:</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if the Council has in place a current and appropriate risk management framework that is consistent with the Australian risk management standard</li> <li>• whether the Council is providing the resources necessary to successfully implement its Risk Management framework</li> <li>• whether the Council's Risk Management Framework is adequate and effective for identifying and managing the risks the Council faces, including those associated with individual projects, programs and other activities</li> <li>• if risk management is integrated across all levels of the Council and across all processes, operations, services, decision-making, functions and reporting</li> <li>• of the adequacy of risk reports and documentation, for example, the Council's Risk Register and Risk profile</li> <li>• whether a sound approach has been followed in developing risk management plans for major projects or undertakings</li> <li>• whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations</li> <li>• if the Council has taken steps to embed a culture which is committed to ethical and lawful behaviour</li> <li>• if there is a positive risk culture within the Council and strong leadership that supports effective risk management</li> <li>• of the adequacy of staff training and induction in risk management</li> <li>• how the Council's risk management approach impacts on the Council's insurance arrangements</li> <li>• of the effectiveness of the Council's management of its assets, and</li> <li>• of the effectiveness of business continuity arrangements, including business continuity plans, disaster recovery plans and the periodic testing of these plans.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>B.2 Internal controls</b></p> <p>Review and advise the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether the Council's approach to maintaining an effective internal audit framework, including over external parties such as contractors and advisors, is sound and effective</li> <li>• whether the Council has in place relevant policies and procedures and that these are periodically reviewed and updated</li> <li>• whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations</li> <li>• whether staff are informed of their responsibilities and processes and procedures to implement controls are complied with</li> <li>• if the Council's monitoring and review of controls is sufficient, and</li> <li>• if internal and external audit recommendations to correct internal control weaknesses are implemented appropriately</li> </ul>
	<p><b>B.3 Compliance</b></p> <p>Review and advise the Council of the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council compliance framework, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if the Council has appropriately considered legal and compliance risks as part of the Council's Risk Management Framework</li> <li>• how the Council manages its compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, codes, and contractual arrangements, and</li> <li>• whether appropriate processes are in place to assess compliance.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>B.4 Fraud and corruption</b></p>

	<p>Review and advise the Council of the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's fraud and corruption prevention framework and activities, including whether the Council has appropriate processes and systems in place to capture and effectively investigate fraud-related information.</p>
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