

WALGETT SHIRE COUNCIL

2022/2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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MAYOR JANE KEIR OAM

Foreword

To the Ratepayers and Residents of Walgett Shire,

On behalf of my fellow Councillors and the staff of Walgett Shire Council, it is my pleasure to present the 2022/2023 annual report.

It has been yet another challenging year for our community, grappling with floods that have once again damaged our road infrastructure, causing delays in the completion of many projects and has left our communities further isolated.

In the face of these setbacks, our Shire has demonstrated remarkable resilience, cohesiveness and community spirit.

From our capital works program, we have completed and commenced various projects, including the Walgett Splash Park, the reconstruction and sealing of Lorne Road & Burranbah Road at Lightning Ridge. The Come By Chance road upgrade has commenced as well as the resealing of the flood affected parts of the Cumberland Way.

The Collarenebri Artesian Hot Spring project is about to commence, we were able to complete the sealing of the Miners Road and the road inside the Walgett Showground Complex and Camping area is now sealed.



The new Goangra Bridge has been constructed & is now open for all traffic, linking the south of the Shire again to the north & east of the Shire.

Council has also completed the installation of new restroom facilities, including toilets and showers, at both Alex Trevallion Park in Walgett and Lions Park in Lightning Ridge. We anticipate that these additions will significantly improve the overall experience for our tourists to the Shire.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the residents of Walgett Shire, it is through our collective efforts that we continue to overcome challenges and build a stronger, more resilient community.

Kind Regards

Jane Keir OAM

Mayor

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

where we live.... where we work.... where we grow:

We sincerely acknowledge the first people, the Gamilaroi and Yuwaalaraay people, traditional custodians of the land & waterways, the spiritual & cultural connectors within our Local Government Area.

Over the last fifty or more years significant steps towards reconciliation have been undertaken, this journey is ongoing. We all have a role to play in building resilience and determination in maintaining the importance of our first peoples.

The cultural connections, identity and traditions are vital in acknowledging and respecting the world's oldest living culture. We pay our respect to Elders both past, present and emerging.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS



JANE KEIR OAM
MAYOR
COME BY CHANCE



GREG RUMMER
DEPUTY MAYOR
WALGETT



SUE CURREY
COUNCILLOR
WALGETT



ALF SEATON
COUNCILLOR
LIGHTNING RIDGE



IAN WOODCOCK OAM
COUNCILLOR
LIGHTNING RIDGE



COLIN HUNDY
COUNCILLOR
LIGHTNING RIDGE



DANIEL WALFORD
COUNCILLOR
WALGETT

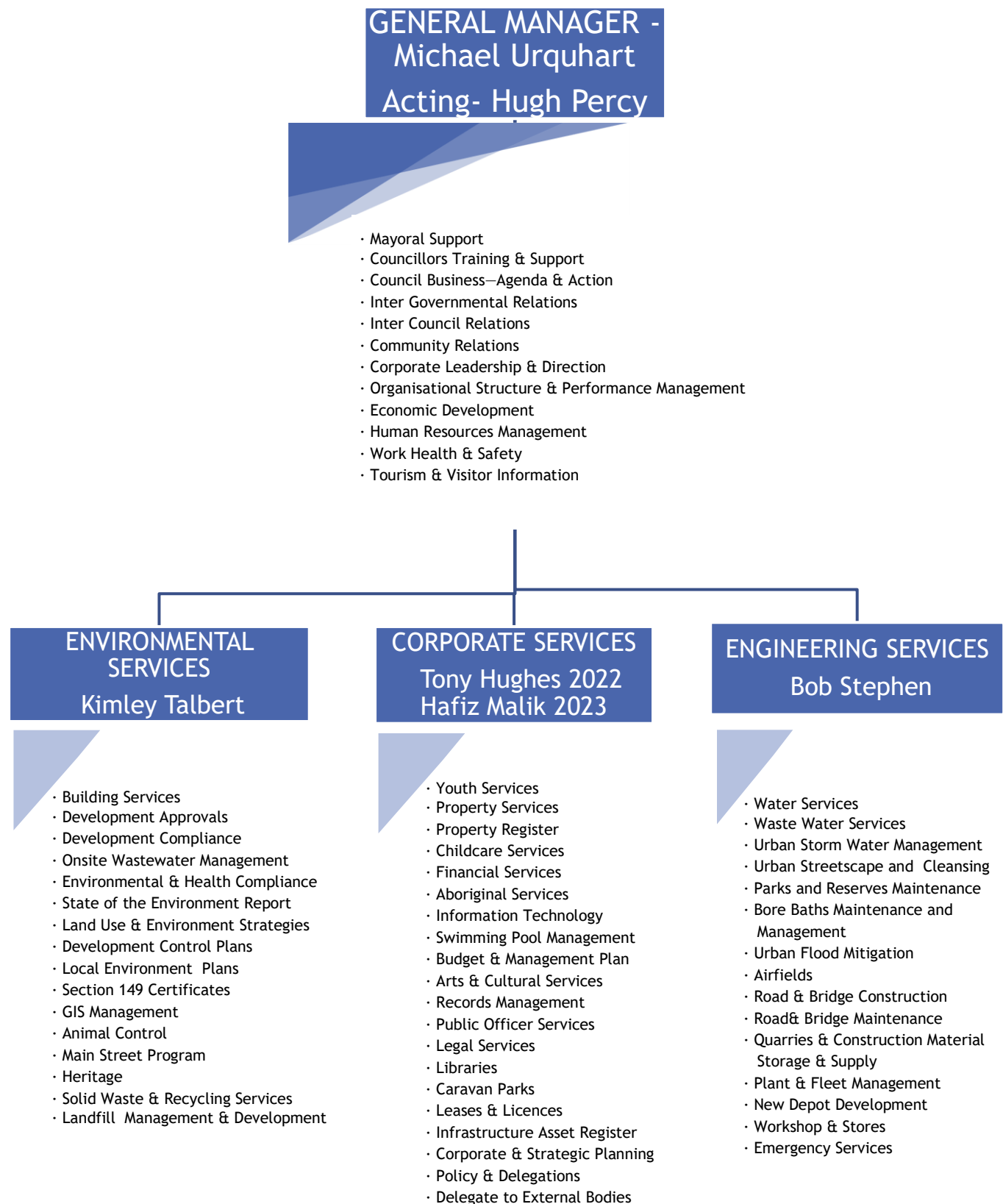


JASEN RAMIEN
COUNCILLOR
COLLARENEBRI



MICHAEL COOKE
COUNCILLOR
LIGHTNING RIDGE

COUNCIL ORGANISATIONAL CHART



SNAPSHOT OF SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS

Listed below are key achievements during 2022/2023 in implementing initiatives outlined in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan across the quadruple bottom line - encompassing economic, social, environmental, and civic leadership.

- Commencement of works on Walgett Splash Park
- Completion of Goangra Bridge
- Commencement of Lorne Road reconstruction and sealing
- Delivery of Jimmy Little Festival event in June
- Burren Junction Hall Roof Completed
- Commencement of Burranba Road Sealing
- Commencement of Come By Chance Road sealing
- Sealing of Cumberland Way (Carinda Road) continued
- “Everyone Can Play Park” in the works for Lightning Ridge
- Sealing of Walgett Showground caravan and camping area
- Completion of new toilet and shower blocks at Alex Trevallion and Apex Parks, Walgett and Lions Park in Lightning Ridge
- Extensive flood damage repair to both sealed and unsealed roads across the shire
- Construction has now commenced for the Collarenebri Artesian Hot Springs complex
- Cryon Road grant received and in design process for sealing
- Rowena Flood Mitigation Works in progress
- Miners Road, Grawin completed seal 700m
- Opal Street, Lightning Ridge footpath completed
- Finalists in NSW Youth Week 2023
- Series of successfully funding submissions to Office of Regional Youth NSW
- Hosted Outback arts exhibitions
- Support and facilitation of WAMS 2023 Health Expo
- Promotion of Council services and community teams at health promotional G.R.O.W. events across communities
- Support for drug awareness during Youth Week
- Highest number of services partnering in NAIDOC series of programs throughout the Shire
- Installation of two new pumps for the levee pump station
- Planning commenced for upgrade at primitive campground in Collarenebri
- Scope of works being prepared to replace part of main bore line from No.1 bore
- Kerb and gutter works have been completed in High Street and Herbert street

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Local Government Act Section
428 (4) (a)

A copy of the Council's audited financial reports.

These will be attached at a later date.

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES DELIVERY PROGRAM

Local Government Act Section
428 (4) (a)

A report on the Council's actual performance of its Principal Activities during 2022/2023 against the Actions detailed in the Delivery Program.

See attachment (B): 2022/2023 Principal Activities Delivery Program

RATES AND CHARGES WRITTEN OFF

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 132

Rates and Charges written off by Walgett Shire Council during 2022/2023

Description	Amount
Rates - Pension Rebates	\$176,468
(S 356 Local Government Act 1993)	
Rates - Donations	\$21,536
(S 356 Local Government Act 1993)	
S 713 Sale of Land Abandonments	\$84,047
Sundry rates and charges abandonments	\$3,642
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Clause 131 and council resolutions	
TOTAL	\$285,693

MAYORAL AND COUNCILLORS

MAYORAL AND COUNCILLORS FEES

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clauses 217 (i) (a1) (i-viii)

A statement of the total amount of money expended during the year on Mayoral fees and Councillor fees, the Council policy on the provision of facilities for use by Councillors and the payment of Councillor's expenses, together with a statement of the total amount of money expended during the year on the provision of such facilities and the payment of such expenses for the 12 month period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

In addition it is necessary to provide separate details of the total cost of;

- Dedicated office equipment allocated to Councillors
- Attendance at conferences and seminars by Councillors
- Training of Councillors and provision of skill development
- Interstate visits by Councillors (including transport, accommodation and out of pocket expenses)
- Overseas visits by Councillors (including transport, accommodation and out of pocket expenses)
- Expenses of any spouse or partner who accompanied a Councillor
- Expenses involved in the provision of childcare for a Councillor or immediate family member

	Mayoral / Councillor Fees	Office expenses	Accommodation Travel expenses	Training	Interstate Visits	Overseas Visits	Totals
Mrs J T Keir	\$33,350	\$990	\$1,961	\$21	\$3,993	\$0	\$40,315
Mr G L Rummary	\$19,550	\$990	\$207	\$0	\$1,018	\$0	\$21,765
Mr I J Woodcock	\$12,650	\$1,080	\$1,343	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,073
Mr D R Walford	\$12,650	\$1,080	\$117	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$13,847
Mr M A Cooke	\$12,650	\$2,015	\$4,486	\$0	\$1,386	\$0	\$20,537
Ms S K Currey	\$12,650	\$1,986	\$811	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,447
Mr C J Hundy	\$12,650	\$990	\$2,939	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$16,579
Mr J A Ramien	\$12,650	\$1,759	\$3,475	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17,884
Mr A C Seaton	\$12,650	\$1,759	\$2,073	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$16,482
	\$141,450	\$12,649	\$17,412	\$21	\$6,397	\$0	\$177,929

MAYORAL AND COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE

There was a total of 10 Ordinary Meetings from 1st of July 2022 to 30th June 2023. The Ordinary meeting scheduled for June 2023 was postponed until the 5th of July 2023.

1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 Council Meetings Attendance		
Councillor	Ordinary Meetings	Extra-Ordinary Meetings
<i>Clr Jane Keir</i>	9	2
<i>Clr Greg Rummery</i>	10	2
<i>Clr Michael Cooke</i>	9	2
<i>Clr Susan Currey</i>	9	1
<i>Clr Colin Hundy</i>	10	2
<i>Clr Jasen Ramien</i>	9	2
<i>Clr Alf Seaton</i>	10	2
<i>Clr Daniel Walford</i>	10	2
<i>Clr Ian Woodcock</i>	8	2

MAYORAL AND COUNCILLOR OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Local Government Act Section 428 (4) (b)
Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 217 (1) (a)

Details (including the purpose) of overseas visits undertaken during the year by Councillors, Council Staff or other persons representing the Council (including visits sponsored by other organisations).

No overseas travel was undertaken during 2022/2023 by Councillors, Council Staff or persons representing Council.

CONTRACTS AWARDED

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 132

Details of each contract awarded by the Council during 2022/2023 (whether as a result of a tender or otherwise), other than;

- a. Employment contracts (that is, contracts of service but not contracts for service), and
- b. Contracts for less than \$150,000 or such other amount as may be prescribed by the regulations for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

Included is the name of the contractor, the nature of the goods or services supplied by the contractor and the total amount payable to the contractor.

Name of Contractor	Goods / Services	Amount Paid in 2022/2023 incl GST
Batterline Earthmoving	Casual Plant Hire & Minor Works	\$2,746,972
Batterline Earthmoving	Reconstruction & Sealing	\$1,243,384
Phil's Grader Hire	Casual Plant Hire	\$214,198
PW Concrete & Gravel	Construct Footpath	\$341,321
RA & JM Ramien	Casual Plant Hire & Minor Works	\$694,851
Riley Aquatics Management	Casual Plant Hire & Minor Works	\$473,391
Rollers Australia	Casual Plant Hire & Minor Works	\$918,963
Wintergreen Investments	Casual Plant Hire & Minor Works	\$511,773
GD & A Lane Earthmoving & Waste	Casual Plant Hire & Minor Works	\$938, 670
Park equip	Casual Plant Hire & Minor Works	\$161,123
TracServ #20/014	Casual Plant Hire & Minor Works	\$244,183
TracServ #20/105	Casual Plant Hire & Minor Works	\$299,312
Westrac #20/009	Casual Plant Hire & Minor Works	\$250,461

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 217 (1) (a3)

A summary of the amount expended by the Council during 2022/2023 in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against the Council (including amounts, costs and expenses paid or received by way of court settlements, other than those the terms of which are not to be disclosed) and a summary of the state of progress of each legal proceeding (if it has been finalized) the result, for the 12 monthly period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

Council incurred \$919,699 in legal costs in 2022/2023, comprising of;

MATTER	DEPARTMENT	AMOUNT PAID
Contract	Engineering and Technical Services	\$0
Safework	Governance	\$861,871
Code of Conduct	Governance	\$2,025
Planning	Environmental, Planning & Regulatory	\$0
General Legal	Corporate Services	\$50,839
Other Matters		\$4,964
Total		\$919,699

PRIVATE WORKS

Local Government Act Section 67(3)
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 Clause 217 (1) (a4)

Details of a summary of resolutions made during 2022/2023 under Section 67 concerning work carried out on private land and details or summary of such works if the cost of the work has been fully or partly subsidised by the Council, together with a statement of the total amount by which the Council has subsidised any such work during 2022/2023.

Council received \$24,823 (exc GST) for private works carried out in 2022/2023, with an expenditure of \$8975 (exc GST).

CONTRIBUTIONS

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 217 (1) (a5)

Council contributed a total of \$524,769.09 under Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993. The expenditure is listed in the table below;

Organisation	Donation
<i>Lightning Ridge Complex - (Olympic pool, theme park, diving pool & sports centre)</i>	<i>\$434,077</i>
<i>Fees & charges rebates, local not-for-profit organisations</i>	<i>\$15,313</i>
<i>Walgett Country Education Foundation</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>
<i>Outback Radio 2WEB</i>	<i>\$4,164</i>
<i>Barwon Group CWA (Medical Grant)</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>
<i>Lightning Ridge Jewellery Design Awards</i>	<i>\$3,500</i>
<i>Walgett Show Photo Competition</i>	<i>\$380</i>
<i>Track in use</i>	<i>\$7,989</i>
Total	\$485,423

Council also contributed a further \$16,2770 of grants under its Community Assistance Scheme.

Organisation	Donation
<i>Soroptimist International of Lightning Ridge</i>	<i>\$909</i>
<i>Walgett District Pony Club</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>
<i>Walgett & District Garden Club</i>	<i>\$500</i>
<i>Walgett Amateur Swimming Club</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>
<i>Rotary Club of Lightning Ridge</i>	<i>\$3,000</i>
<i>Lightning Ridge Pony Club</i>	<i>\$3,000</i>
<i>Balonne Barwon Junior Rugby League</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>
<i>Lightning Ridge Community Radio</i>	<i>\$1,368</i>
<i>Walgett Charity Bushmans Carnival</i>	<i>\$1,500</i>
Total	\$16,277

Other Donations

Organisation / Description	Donation
<i>Local Heritage Fund - Lightning Ridge Historical Society</i>	<i>\$330</i>
<i>Local Heritage Fund - DLB Carpentry and Renovation</i>	<i>\$3,905</i>
<i>Cls Geoffrey 'Dick' Colless Scholarships</i>	<i>\$7,980</i>
<i>Regional Arts</i>	<i>\$10,854</i>
Total	\$23,069

EXTERNAL BODIES

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 217 (1) (a6)

A statement of all external bodies (such as County Councils) that during 2022/2023 exercised functions delegated by the Council.

Organisation	Donation
<i>Castlereagh Macquarie County Council</i>	\$113,629
<i>Mining & Energy Related Councils NSW (MERC)</i>	\$7,301
<i>Regional Library</i>	\$153,389
<i>Mid-Western Regional Council (OWUA)</i>	\$8,473
<i>Murray Darling Association</i>	\$2,196
<i>Narromine Shire Council</i>	\$5,000
<i>Country Mayors Association of NSW</i>	\$563
<i>Far North West Joint Organisation</i>	\$23,035
Total	\$313,586

Far North West Joint Organisation

The Far North West Joint Organisation (FNWJO) is a separately constituted entity pursuant to Part 7 (Sections 4000 to 400ZH) of the Local Government Act (NSW) 1993, as amended, and the Local Government (General Regulation 2008).

The Charter of the FNWJO can be found here: [GOVERNANCE \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/governance)

FNWJO comprises the Councils of the Shires of Bourke, Cobar and Walgett in northwestern NSW. The Board of the FNWJO comprises 3 voting members being the Mayors of the three member Councils, and non-voting members being the General Managers of the Shires of Bourke and Walgett, as well as 3 appointed members from the State Government and Cabinet (non-voting).

Council's powers of control or influence over the Joint Organisation Walgett Shire Council, as a member of the FNWJO, has a one third voting right in respect to the decisions of the Board. Council's financial obligations to the Joint Organisation In accordance with the Charter each member of the FNWJO contributes annual fees towards the operation of the joint organisation.

In 2022/2023 the contribution made by Walgett Shire Council was \$23,035 Council's liability obligations in relation to the Joint Organisation Members of the FNWJO are indemnified from liability for functions and duties carried out or omitted honestly, in good faith and with due care and diligence.

CONTROLLING INTEREST IN COMPANIES

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 217 (1) (a7)

A statement of all companies in which the Council (whether alone or in conjunction with other Councils) held a controlling interest during 2022/2023.

Walgett Shire Council held no controlling interest in any company during 2022/2023.

JOINT VENTURES

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 217 (1) (a8)

A statement of all corporations partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies to which the Council participated during 2022/2023.

Council was involved in the following joint ventures:

- Big Sky Libraries—Cooperative Library Service
- Outback Arts Corporation
- Statewide Mutual Insurance Group
- Rural Fire Service NSW
- Western Division of NSW Shire Association
- Netwaste
- Castlereagh Macquarie County Council
- Walgett Local Emergency Management Committee
- Lower Macquarie Water Utilities Alliance—Water Management
- Far North West Joint Organisation
- StateCover Mutual Insurance Group

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 217 (1) (a9)

A statement of the activities undertaken by the Council during 2022/2023 to implement its Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan.

Activities undertaken during the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 to ensure Council continues to apply the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity legislation;

- Continual review of Job Descriptions, Policies and Induction programs
- Monitoring of advertisements and selection criteria by General Manager to ensure advertising is non-discriminatory.
- School to Work Programs to assist student transition into the workforce
- Provide assistance to employees and supervisors regarding EEO issues and grievances through Council's Human Resources Manager
- Continuation of Council's Employee Assistance Program through Converge International
- Engagement of professionals to provide counselling, support and/or mediation to staff if required
- Creation of apprentice and trainee opportunities to provide career paths in Local Government

EMPLOYMENT OF SENIOR STAFF

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 217 (b)
Clause 217 (1) (b) (i-iv)
Clause 217 (1) (c)
And Clause 217 (1) (c) (i-iv)

A statement of the number of Senior Staff employed by the Council during 2022/2023, together with a statement of the total amount of money payable in respect of the employment of Senior Staff, including money payable for salary, for the provision of fringe benefits and for all other on-costs connected with their employment.

Council employs four (4) senior staff as defined under the requirements of the Local Government Act with these being the General Manager, the Director of Corporate, Director of Environment and Planning and the Director of Engineering/Technical Services.

The total amount spent on employing these senior staff was \$1,407,516.00. This amount includes salaries, fringe benefits tax, private use of a Council vehicle and employer's superannuation contributions.

Senior staff positions and salary;

Position	Salary	House Rent (non- cash)	Motor Vehicle (non- cash)	Other	Super- annuation	Fringe Benefits Tax	Total
<i>General Manager</i>	\$681,023	\$14,040	\$10,852	\$0	\$27,280	\$12,272	\$745,467*
<i>Senior Staff</i>	\$519,115	\$22,479	\$5,1576	\$0	\$35,565	\$20,616	\$662,049

**Includes termination payment and leave entitlements*

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Local Government Act Section
428A (1)

State of the Environment Report

A report as to the State of the Environment in the area, and in particular in relation to the following environment sectors;

- i. Land
- ii. Air
- iii. Water
- iv. Biodiversity
- v. Waste
- vi. Noise
- vii. Aboriginal Heritage
- viii. Non-Aboriginal Heritage

With particular reference, with regard to each such environmental sector to;

- i. Management plans relating to the environment
- ii. Speed Council projects relating to the environment
- iii. The environment impact of Council activities

See attachment (C): State of the Environment Report

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

With Special Variations Approved Conditions

Instrument of Approval Under Section 508(2) of the Local Government Act 1993

- Special Rate Variation 2013/14 (3% Permanently Retained)

Compliance Reporting Period: 2013/2014 to 2022/2023 (i.e. over a 10 year period)

Program of Expenditure:

TABLE - Walgett Council's Program of Expenditure 2013/2014 to 2022/2023

Category	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
School Bus Routes - Rehabilitation (rounded)				100,000	470,000					
School Bus Routes - Upgrades (rounded)		140,000	440,000							
Other Road Restoration/Upgra ding Works (rounded)	420,000	290,000		360,000		490,000	446,000	447,000	295,000	448,000
TOTAL	420,000	430,000	440,000	460,000	470,000	490,000	446,000	447,000	295,000	448,000
Attributable Actual Expenditure	420,000	430,000	440,000	460,000	470,000	490,000	446,000	447,000	295,000	448,000
SRV Income Component (rounded)	150,000	153,000	156,000	159,000	162,000	165,000	170,000	174,000	178,000	182,000
Other Income Sources Component	270,000	277,000	284,000	301,000	308,000	325,000	276,000	273,000	117,000	266,000

COMPANION ANIMALS AND REGULATION

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021 Clause 217 (1) (f)
And Companion Animal Guidelines

Statement on activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with the Companion Animals Act and Regulations (including information on pound data, data relating to dog attached, funding spent on companion animal management and activities, community education programs, strategies to promote the de-sexing of dogs and cats, strategies to comply with Section 64 to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals, off leash areas provided by Council area and detailed financial information on the use of companion animals fund money).

Companion Animals Act and Regulation

Council lodges an annual return with the Department of Local Government which shows the numbers of impounded companion animals. Key aspects of this year's return include:

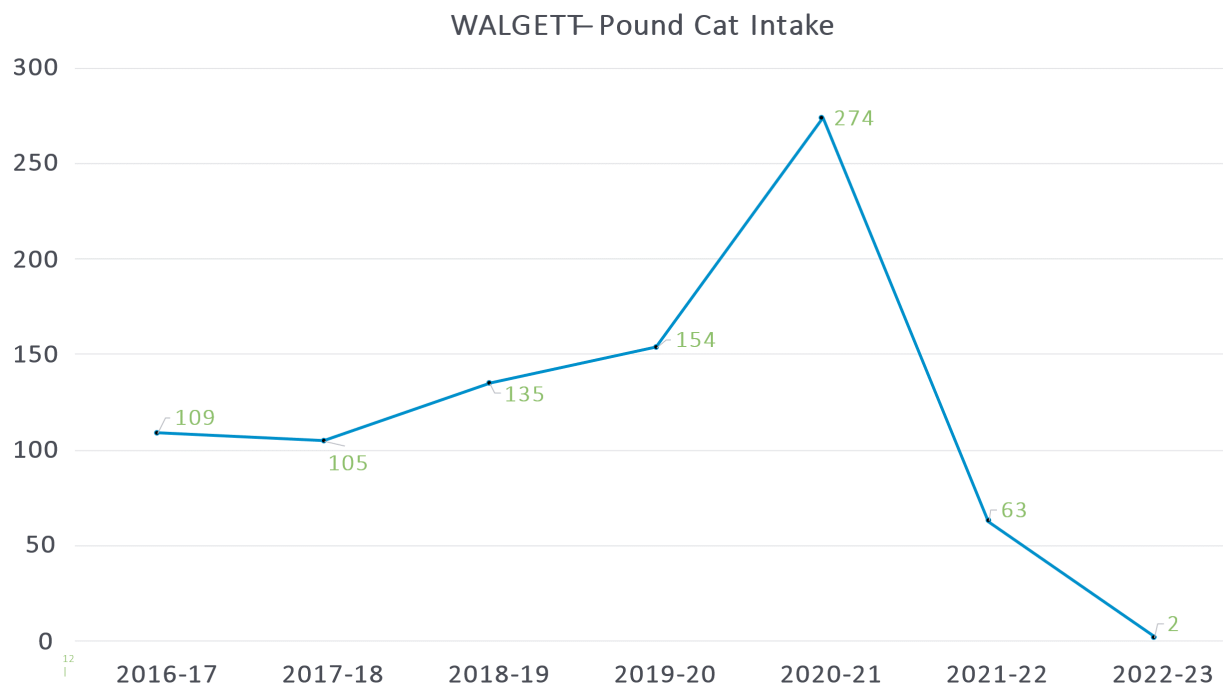
- 50 dogs and 0 cats were seized, with 8 dogs and 0 cats returned to their owners.
- 230 dogs and 2 cats were surrendered.
- 261 Dogs were re-homed, 0 Cat's re-homed.
- 11 dogs were unsuitable to re-home.

Council spent \$171,726 on companion animal management related activities during 2022/2023, including the employment of a Regulatory Officer and vehicle running costs.

The vast majority of companion animals surrendered to, or seized by, Council were rehomed by volunteers from generous rescue groups who undertook regular visits to the Walgett pound to retrieve and re-home unclaimed dogs.

Council continues to support the public with subsidised de-sexing vouchers which are used at Shire local veterinary practices.

Walgett shire Regulatory became involved with the RSPCA Keeping Cats Safe at Home Program over 4 years. The figures are impressive for Walgett Shire. 143 cats were De-Sexed throughout the year. All of the cats we desexed last FY were passively acquired, i.e., they were obtained for free by people who hadn't planned to get a cat. Mainly they were strays or were a gift from friend/relative/neighbour, 92% of the cats desexed it was their first visit to a vet. This has resulted in a 91% drop in cat complaints in the shire.



SWIMMING POOLS ACT 1992

In 2013, the New South Wales Government updated the Swimming Pools Act of 1992 to improve safety and reduce drowning incidents in private pools. The changes included a new statewide online pool register, mandatory owner registration, and a certification system for compliance. Authorised officials and private certifiers could conduct inspections. The amendments also required inspections for pools in multi-occupancy dwellings and tourist accommodations. Properties with pools needed compliance certification before sale or lease (extended to April 2016). Councils had to create affordable inspection programs and report yearly on inspections and compliance.

During the 2022/2023 year there were 4 Swimming Pool compliance Certificates issued and 1 commercial.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

Public Access Act 2009

Government Information (Public Access) Act
2009 S125 (1)

Authorised proactive release of Government Information.

An agency must, at intervals of not more than 12 months, review its program for the release of Government Information to identify the kinds of Government Information held by the agency that should in the public interest be made publicly available without imposing unreasonable additional costs on the agency.

Walgett Shire Council's program for proactive release of information involves;

- Progression of the systems and mechanisms utilised by the organisation to increase the effective access by members of the public to information that they have a right to view, download or copy (where applicable)
- Working towards ensuring all government information is available to the public on the Council website
- Ensuring that if information is not available on the Council website that it may be accessed by other means.
- Reviewing the types of information requested via Formal Access applications and via customer contact with Council's Customer Service Centre and deciding if the information should be made readily available to all members of the public.

For the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, Council received no (0) Formal Applications and two (2) Informal Applications of which partial access was granted.

ENVIRONMENT PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979

Planning agreements under the Environmental Planning Assessment Act 1979

Details of compliance with and effect of planning agreements in force during the year.

A planning agreement was entered into by Council during 2021/2022 to work on-line with the NSW Planning system in conjunction with an ancillary company Solorient “Horizon”. The initial cost set-up was contributed by NSW Planning. The second layer has also been contributed by NSW Planning, as Council is now required to have the second API layer installed which was completed in May 2023.

TOURISM

Tourism activities 2022/2023:

Participation in 2023 Inaugural Careers on Country Expo & Local Government Week Showcase.

Collaboration on delivery of the Jimmy Little Festival

Lightning Ridge Visitor Information Centre

Visitors - 49,076

Started our financial year with the first Opal Festival after COVID lockdowns.

“Opal Miner’s Daughter” Book Launch and Signing by Fiona McArthur in August. A book featuring Lightning Ridge will be launched in 2024.

Kamilaroi Highway Group AGM - toured Narran Lakes, Pubs in the Scrub and Lightning Ridge.

Zoom meeting for Great Inland Way AGM and other agendas eg. updating Brochure.

New images and drone footage by Fabian Norrie for Lightning Ridge, Grawin, Glengarry and Sheepyard for future projects.

Meeting in Narrabri - Kamilaroi Highway Group to discuss events in 2023.

Organised the Christmas Light Competition Lightning Ridge. Judged by Alannah Dean.

Attended the Newcastle Caravan, Camping and Lifestyle Expo representing Walgett Shire at the Kamilaroi Highway Stand. “Outback Opal Hunter” Pete Cooke attended as an advocate for Walgett Shire and was interviewed by 2HD Radio during the Expo.

Replaced missing and damaged banners in the main streets of Lightning Ridge in preparation for Easter.

Mark Greaves from The Tourism Group came to run a Workshop on the rewards of being an Accredited Information Centre, which includes Lightning Ridge. Touching base on customer service skills and general duties to enhance their knowledge and capabilities. All staff and Volunteers attended.

Easter starts our Tourism Season for the year. LRVIC had the largest number of visitors in April to date.

Entered Lightning Ridge into the annual Best Tourism Town in NSW awards and was selected as a finalist.

Walgett Visitor Information Centre

Numbers - 3,509

Worked on the new Website, doing research and entering content.

New Residents Events in Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri.

Updated Community Directory and New Residents Guide.

Promotion of all local community events, activities and workshops.

Walgett Community Markets with help from Brenda. In addition, Brenda manned a stall to sell merchandise for the Walgett VIC.

Provide Weekly Newsletter to promote all Shire events and information.

Making sure all visitors have required information and brochures.

Dispatched boxes of Walgett Regional Visitor Guide to over 50 Visitor Information Centres.

Developed and designed information for posting on all Social Media platforms.

Walgett Shire Quarterly Newsletter for local mail drops.

Organised inaugural Walgett Council Christmas T-Shirt Day in December, in participation with Moree, Brewarrina and Armidale Shires.

ABORIGINAL & MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS AND PROMOTIONS

Details of programs, initiatives, relationship building opportunities and events undertaken by the Council during 2022/2023 to promote services and access for people with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Council views our diverse population as a strength and utilises the knowledge and understanding of our community members encouraging and seeking residents' input into decisions that affect them. Our community development department, libraries and youth development staff again implemented a best practice delivery model with the forming of "working groups" for specific events, programs and opportunities across the Shire.

The 2022/23 year has again seen many events and opportunities well attended with community members engaged in meaningful ways. Council demonstrates an understanding of the issues faced by minority and marginalised groups regarding access and inclusion and endeavours to include ALL residents in programs and promotional events and initiatives.

Programs and initiatives aligned with Councils overarching *Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027* (CSP) and the suite of strategies and plans underpinning the CSP. Council recognises the importance of cultural events in building social capacity and strengthening relationships within a diverse community incorporating people from different backgrounds with celebrations across the Shire showing increased participation.

National Harmony Day celebrations across three communities again coincided with the United Nations International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination and a day of cultural respect for all who call Australia home. Many local people across all communities participated in the events which promoted living in Harmony and working together for common goals.

Our Council plays a crucial role in community-focused initiatives. We use various media channels including email updates, bulletins, our website and social media, to keep communities informed about upcoming opportunities for connection.

The Walgett Shire celebrated the 2023 NAIDOC Week, organised by local committees. Events and recognition ceremonies throughout the Shire focused on the theme "For Our Elders," highlighting their importance and significance in our communities. Performers and guest speakers emphasised the role of Elders in various events.

Successful grant outcomes have provided many opportunities to share and showcase our diversity and cultural differences and shine the light of the positivity of our unique Local Government Area.

Successful programs and events held throughout the year included Seniors Week, International Women's Day, Youth Week, NAIDOC Week, International Harmony Day, and inclusion events. Statistics show a notable increase in attendance at all events in 2023, both in-person and through e-services.

HUMAN RESOURCE ACTIVITIES

A statement of the Human Resource activities undertaken by Council during 2022/2023.

The major human resource related activities undertaken within the Organisation during the 2022-2023 period included:

Human Resources Activities

The major human resource related activities undertaken within the Organisation during the 2022-2023 period included:

- Industrial and Employee Relations
- Recruitment, selection and induction
- School to Work Program
- Consultative Committee administration
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Training and development programs
- Salary Administration and Job evaluation
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Workers compensation, Injury management and rehabilitation

A statement of total number of persons who performed paid work on Tuesday 22nd November 2022.

On a permanent fulltime basis - 77

On a permanent part time basis - 6

On a casual basis - 23

Under a fixed term contract - 4

Work Health and Safety

The major Work Health and Safety related activities undertaken within the organisation from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 included:

- WHS training for committee members
- Investigated breakdown of colly pool filtration
- Conducted General induction day for roads construction staff (annually)
- Inspected Carinda racecourse, landfill, pool, 'depot' sports field
- Attended Risk meetings in Bingara (Northern Inland Risk Group)
- Continued interviews as part of the Cryon incident
- Conducted A.E.D inspections at Shire placement areas around the shire
- Designed, ordered and installed steps for the STP
- Investigated a road accident south of Burren Junction
- Attended traffic control training.
- Conducted fire extinguisher inspections throughout the Shire

- Reviewed numerous policies eg. WoF, SWMS, COR, surveillance policy etc
- Investigated signage at Lightning Ride bore bath following a fatality
- Conducted WoF training as required
- Organised Union Picnic Day for staff
- Organised 'stand up' desks for staff as requested
- Coordinated airport activities during floods
- Attended SWMS workshops
- Distributed flood packages around Shire during flood event
- Investigated incident involving garbage truck in Lightning Ridge
- Conducted 'yard meetings' for staff
- Conducted training and distribution of COVID 19 test procedures
- Inspections at Collarenebri - pool, landfill, filtration works, river pumps, depot
- Inspection/ risk assess new Walgett weir
- Inspected/repair duress alarms Lightning Ridge
- Attended 'Work near Powerlines' refresher
- Attended First Aid refresher
- Conducted site inspections at all road works sites
- Conducted training day for CMCC staff
- Inspections at Burren Junction - Bore baths, pool, town hall, landfill
- Distributed Snake Bite kits to settlements - Grawin, Sheeppyard and Glengarry, Burren Junction and Rowena. Placed in the A.E.D's
- Organised and hosted a Psychologist for staff involved in the Cyron incident
- Attended regional safety summit hosted by TfNSW
- Conducted fire extinguisher testing for Show Committee prior to show
- Worked with Occupational therapist for two workers comp cases -ongoing.
- Offered advice as requested on various WHS/ Risk activities

Assisting the Tech Officer for Highways during the period of flooding that occurred in November also proved to be valuable as another set of eyes for flood intelligence was available.

The airports role has been a full on learning experience with required training being completed, liaising with CASA, providing NOTAMS, grant funding, equipment sourcing/purchasing.

Workers Compensation, injury management and rehabilitation

The Work-Health and Safety Officer and Rehabilitation Co-Ordinator, in conjunction with the Human Resources Manager, provides advice, guidance and support to managers, supervisors and employees to help prevent injury or illness related to work activities. Where injury or illness did occur assistance was given to assist in a timely and safe return to pre-injury duties.

Appropriate controls were actioned to return injured workers to the workplace and to prevent further injury.

Where injury resulted in a claim for workers Compensation the claims were proactively managed in line with Council's obligations under the legislation.

Medical providers contributed to the management of workplace injuries and illness through the provision of expert medical advice and pre-employment health checks.

Industrial Relations

Support and guidance was provided to managers, supervisors and employees during performance management, disciplinary and industrial matters to ensure procedural fairness and effective outcomes were achieved. Advice and guidance was provided to managers, supervisors in regard to the Local Government (State) Award 2020 and legislation surrounding employment.

Health and Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee is representative of the broader workforce and considers issues relating to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. The committee met on seven (7) occasions during 2022/2023 financial year.

The Consultative Committee

The Consultative Committee is representative of the broader workforce and considers issues relating to the Local Government (State) Award 20120. There was one (1) meeting held during the 2022/2023 financial year.

Recruitment, selection and induction

The turnover rate for the period 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 was 24.24%, up by 10.17% from the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. Council continues to implement flexible working conditions, training and development opportunities, corporate uniform and subsidised housing rental to support the recruitment, retention and development of suitable staff.

Recruitment activity for the period 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 totalled 32 new appointments. Council continues to recruit, develop and train employees engaged through traineeships and apprenticeship employment options. During the 2022/2023 year two (2) apprentice mechanics and one (1) traineeship (water & waste water and) continued on with their studies. Two additional traineeships were commenced in Administration.

In managing recruitment, selection and induction processes, Council was conscious of the application of fair and equitable processes and preservation of the principles of merit and Equal Employment Opportunity.

School to Work Program

Walgett Shire Council continued the School to Work Program in partnership with Walgett Community College, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge High Schools. This program was introduced to assist students in choosing a career path within Local Government. Students are assigned to a 'buddy' to assist them whilst at work and are offered training and development to improve their skills. Six (6) students participated in the program for the 2022/2023 financial year.

Participants were all placed with Youth Services.

Training Programs

Council continues to encourage employees to participate in training and development. During the period 2022/2023. Council expended \$200,072.22 including outdoors staff wages costs on training, accommodation, travel and registration expenses. An additional amount of \$7,766 was expended on conference attendance and travel to assist staff to improve their skills and remain up to date with legislative requirements.

Training undertaken included but not limited to

- ♦ RMS Traffic control tickets - Traffic Controller, Implement Traffic Control Plans, Prepare Workzone & Traffic Management Plan (Initial and refreshers)
 - ♦ Truck licencing Heavy Rigid
 - ♦ Certificate III water operations (enrolled)
 - ♦ First Aid
 - ♦ Chlorine training
 - ♦ Workers on Foot
 - ♦ Apprentice mechanic x2 (ongoing)
 - ♦ Trainee - Water Operations (ongoing)
- ♦ Certificate IV Business Records Management
 - ♦ Assistant Agents Course
 - ♦ Aerodrome Reporting
 - ♦ IXOM Chemical Certificate (new and refresher)
 - ♦ Food authority Training
 - ♦ Work Near Power lines and CPR
 - ♦ Plant operations backhoe
 - ♦ Content Management Training (Records)
 - ♦ Work at heights and Confined spaces

Salary Administration

The Human Resources Manager administered the salary system on behalf of the entire organisation to ensure compliance with Local Government (State) Award 2020. Several position descriptions were revised, developed and evaluated through the Mercer Evaluation System to ensure appropriate grading.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT & CHILDREN SERVICES

Details of programs undertaken by the Council during 2022/2023 to develop and promote services and programs that provide for the needs of children.

Council's commitment to developing, engaging and creating leadership opportunities for our youth and young people remains a strong focus on our agenda as our youth development team continue to plan, initiate and deliver services to children and youth across our Shire.

Our youth and community development teams work with children and youth guided by its strategy of diversion, engagement and leadership as the model of service delivery working alongside local and regional services, organisations and agencies endeavouring to make a positive difference in the lives of our future leaders. Councils Youth Centres in Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri operate after-school programs from 3pm to 6pm, involving up to 25 young people each afternoon providing a various array of activities to engage our young people, showcasing areas, we know (via consultation) that the groups of young people are keen to engage in and participate.

Holiday programs continue to be well attended throughout the year with programs developed with input from young people on all occasions from planning to delivery.

Several successful funding submissions has seen delivery of all school holiday programs across the Shire, with the programs 'Youth Autumn Activation (YAAP)'. Wet-Set-Connect, 'Art attack in the Outback, and Connect, Share, Participate engaging an average of 35 young people at each youth centre a day These programs offered new skills, life skills, education and social engagement and most importantly fun.

This year's youth week created opportunities for social connection, recreation, creating provision for youth to play the key role in not just participating but celebrating the diversity of young people.

For the remarkable seventieth consecutive year, Council's Youth Week 2023 program has been acknowledged as a best practice in NSW, making it a finalist in two out of four categories. These categories include "NSW Best Small Council with the most outstanding youth week program" and "Council with the most ongoing commitment to Youth Week NSW." Although the Council did not secure a win, being named among the top 5 LGAs is outstanding, showcasing sustained excellence in program delivery, a streak unbroken since 2007.

A successful funding submission targeting Youth Mental Health created provision and opportunities for our youth teams to support the implementation of the Goanna Academy's Program. Over 150 young people across the Shire participated and developed skill sets in dealing and recognising youth mental health issues supported by NRL star Greg Inglis.

The "School to Work" initiative by the Council involved 12 young individuals throughout the year, providing diverse work experiences, fostering new skills, and instilling work ethics. Notably, two participants have advanced to become employed as youth workers within the team. The achievements of the children and young people in our Shire in 2023 are evident through positive feedback and statistical data on program attendance, reflecting the success of our initiatives.

The Council maintains ongoing collaboration with external agencies and services to enhance support and advocacy for young people transitioning into adulthood. This partnership relies on the crucial support of service providers and organisations, recognising the significance of succession planning for sustained and active youth involvement.

Highlights of youth development and children's services in 2023:

- Excellent participation in Mural programs and anti-graffiti initiatives across the Shire
- Finalists in NSW Youth Week 2023
- Increased numbers of young people involved and attending centres.

- Huge numbers involved in Beat the Heat programs and Family Fun Days
- Outstanding participation in Council partnered Careers on Country Expo
- Maintained partnerships with Schools across the Shire
- Delivery of life skills and personal protection programs across

PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Details of programs undertaken by Council during 2022/2023 to develop and promote the use of library and information services

Our Libraries located in Walgett and Lightning Ridge, supported by deposit stations in Collarenebri, Burren Junction are welcomed and well utilised community assets. As a partner in the Big Sky Libraries Group our delivery and service provision to community members and visitors alike are tangible and accessible to all.

Council's vision in developing and facilitating safe, welcoming spaces driven by community needs has seen an increase in membership and participation across the Local Government Area during the last year.

Ongoing Library upgrades, and refurbishments has created provision for all community members to attend the spaces and engage in a multitude of offerings from activity groups, mums and bubs programs, book clubs' art groups and more.

The Library Act 1939, Section 10, sets out that public libraries are to offer free basic reference services to the community. Reference assistance is a core service and is one of the facets of library service that is a point of difference between libraries and other agencies. Collecting and reporting data for this important indicator of use assists to demonstrate the value of public libraries.

Improved Library spaces allows continuous use for workshops, exhibitions, evening functions and meetings. Lightning Ridge Library has been through a beautification/refurbishment program allowing more space including outdoor area furnishings and state of the art technology supported by NSW State Library.

Service development and participation of groups continue to grow with refurbishments contributed to significant increases in families with young children visiting the libraries and the number of young people participating in activities. Council's outreach programs continue to provide the link between people in remote areas and their connection to our Libraries and resources. The now established Library space at Collarenebri operates at times to suit the community.

The council is an active participant in the NSW Public Libraries and Regional Library service, working with other member Councils to provide a service that responds to the communities' needs and interests.

A focus on improving early literacy levels has witnessed implementation of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in which the program supplies books to each newborn child up until the age of 5 years old. Our Shire has one of the highest participation rates in the state with over 100 families signed up on the program.

Connection and information remains at the forefront of our services also with eSmart Library offering a wide variety of free resources, such as books, newspapers and magazines, DVD's and audio books, eBooks, eMagazines and even movies. 24/7 access to our eResources are available through applications such as Libby, BorrowBox, Kanopy, IndyReads and Wheelers.

Library Highlights 2023:

- Increased numbers for Walgett Knitters Group (Knitting for charities)
- Adults & Children's art workshops with Sarah Dugan (Fully booked out)
- New patron computers at both sites
- Walgett Art Group exhibition and charity raising events.
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library (Over 100 babies registered)
- Increased numbers for Walgett Art Group.
- Seniors Week 2023 morning tea & activities in larger communities of Walgett, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge
- Hosted Outback arts exhibitions
- Book give aways for Childrens Week & Youth Week events.
- Book give aways for International Women's Day events.
- Increased numbers for Walgett Library Book Club
- Increase in local artist works for promotion.
- Supporting all community events and celebrations

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Community wellbeing is the combination of conditions identified by individuals and their communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfill their potential.

Council is dedicated to enhancing community well-being through collaborative efforts. We prioritise resilience, self-efficacy and daily challenges, contributing to good mental health and

healthy behaviors. Our teams work with local and regional partners, agencies, and organisations to promote residents' well-being. We engage in various partnerships and initiatives to address community needs and support health and well-being events with organisations like NSW Health and Walgett Aboriginal Medical Services. Council staff take a lead role in aligning events with our Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 objectives.

Ongoing education and awareness of health issues are crucial, and our teams collaborate with various services to deliver programs covering physical, emotional, mental and social well-being across the Shire. Our Community, Youth, Aboriginal & Multicultural Affairs and Library teams' partner and collaborate with local health, family support, domestic violence, educational, sporting, cultural and law and order services across the Shire in delivery of programs addressing, physical, emotional, mental and social wellbeing.

Council staff represent on both Walgett and Lightning Ridge Interagency groups ensuring we are well informed of issues and gaps and needs across community in turn working on an informed basis when it comes to community needs.

In the past year, we partnered on several events addressing Domestic Violence, White Ribbon and Ocher Ribbon awareness, Child Protection Week, Mental Health initiatives, transport programs, youth employment readiness, sexual and emotional health, Cultural harmony, and social inclusion. Council's teams actively support or collaborate on program delivery across the Walgett Shire communities. We also back facility improvements for sports and exercise, maintaining outdoor gym equipment and supporting infrastructure. Our community development staff successfully organized annual events and programs for advocacy, awareness, education, and social connection, addressing specific needs for International Women's Day, Youth Week, Children's Week, Grandparents Day, Seniors Weeks, Carers Week, Suicide Prevention, skill enhancement, and education to support the health and well-being of residents.

Highlights- Health and Wellbeing 2022/2023

- Support and facilitation of WAMS 2023 Health Expo
- Delivery of four R U OK DAY events - Suicide /Mental Health education/awareness
- Partnerships with Creative Community Connections
- Successful grant to implement the Goanna Academy Program for youth Mental Health
- Sustained healthy eating options / life-skill promotions at all youth centres.
- Promotion of Council services and community teams at G.R.O.W. events
- Continued support for Community Garden programs and healthy eating
- Support for drug awareness during Youth Week
- Animal welfare and responsibility

COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING

Community identity, sense of belonging, skills & empowerment, communities to address their own concerns.

Community capacity building involves fostering the ability of local communities and individuals to recognise, develop, implement and sustain their own solutions to problems, enabling them to exert control over their physical, social, economic, and cultural environments. The council's primary focus is to enhance residents' capacity, providing opportunities for community improvement while embracing diversity and preserving culture.

The council plays a crucial role in providing, supporting, and encouraging capacity-building opportunities throughout the Shire. Engaging and facilitating well-attended events and programs across the LGA communities are part of the services to diverse communities.

Forming sustainable community working groups allows for genuine community input, building capacity and showcasing strengths.

Council prioritises skill enhancement, talent identification and various programs in arts, sports, social awareness, education, employment, and inclusivity.

Council actively participates in Freedom Rides celebrations, Harmony Day events, and numerous skill development and social connection opportunities. The 'School 2 Work' program has supported ten young people in acquiring vital skills for the workforce.

For seventeen successive years, Council has been recognised at the state level during Youth Week, showcasing sustainability in service provision. Council leads the Careers on Country Expo, strengthening partnerships and achieving outstanding attendance.

Highlights of 2022-2023 include the successful Freedom Rides celebration, strengthened partnerships, exceptional attendance at the Careers on Country Expo, and the largest-ever Jimmy Little Music & Arts Festival.

Walgett Shire Council collaborates with various services and agencies to achieve the best outcomes. Relationships have strengthened over the years, fostering formidable partnerships for community benefit.

The following list showcases the services, agencies, and organizations with which the Council has partnered during the 2022-2023 year, working together for improved outcomes for residents:

- Department Communities and Justice NSW
- Dreamtime Housing
- Office of Regional NSW
- Murrumbidgee Regional Enterprise
- Office of Regional NSW (Youth)
- Community Church Groups
- Juvenile Justice NSW
- Riley Aquatic Management
- PCYC- Walgett -NSW
- Outback Division General Practices
- Transport NSW
- Wirringahs Women's Group
- Department Aboriginal Affairs
- Revenue NSW
- Walgett Aboriginal Land Council
- Spectator Media
- Lightning Ridge Aboriginal Land Council
- Buzz Bidstrup
- Collarenebri Aboriginal Land Council
- Jimmy Little Foundation
- NSW State Land Council
- Thumbs Up Organization
- All schools within our LGA
- Goanna Academy
- TAFE Walgett /Lightning Ridge - NSW
- Live Better NSW
- Lightning Ridge RFS
- Australian Unity NSW
- Ranger Services -Walgett Shire Council
- Little Diggers Childcare
- NSW Animal Welfare
- Walambaa Dhurruli
- Mission Australia NSW
- LR Community Gardens
- Center-Care NSW
- Housing Plus NSW
- Walgett Aboriginal Land Council
- Uniting
- Office of Sport NSW
- NSW State Library
- Australian Performers and Recording Big Sky Libraries
- Artists
- Brewarrina Shire Council
- Indigenous Reading Program
- Bourke Shire Council
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- DEG
- Aboriginal Legal Service
- Walgett Aboriginal Medical Services
- Community Working Party Walgett
- Creative Community Concepts
- Local CDAT teams
- Wellways - NSW
- Community Working Part - L/ Ridge
- My Supports
- Forum Youth Development Officers
- NSW Disability Council
- Australian Defense Force
- YAPA
- Arts NSW
- Yalari - Indigenous Education
- Outback Arts
- Department Education and Training
- Australia Day Council
- NSW Pathways
- R U OK Organization
- Mackillop Rural Services
- NSW Police
- Thiyama-Li
- OLG
- NSWRL
- Korean Church Group (Strathfield)
- Lightning Ridge Community Church
- Healthy Communities
- CWA- Walgett
- NSW HEALTH
- JITA
- Australian Drug Foundation
- Community Working Party Collarenebri
- Royal Flying Doctors
- Resilience NSW
- Reconnecting NSW

ACCESS AND EQUITY

A report on the Council's performance in relation to access and equity to meet residents needs outlined in Council's Delivery Program undertaken in 2022/2023

The council is dedicated to ensuring equal access and opportunities for all residents, acknowledging the importance of meeting their needs and expectations. The Council's community services team is acknowledged as responsive and connected, consistently aligning programs and initiatives with overarching strategies and plans in response to resident feedback.

The current Community Strategic Plan and Disability Inclusion Action Plans guide and inform the work we delivery across communities. Our community team's work alongside many services that support and work towards supporting marginalised groups across our Shire.

During the current year Council supported a range of initiatives to support access, inclusion and equality for those people with a disability and their careers and also marginalised groups throughout our Shire.

Communication between Council, services and residents within our Local Government Area is paramount for successful achievable outcomes regardless of the target area.

Through involvement in local Interagency groups and working groups Council is well placed to assist where able to promote and advocate for positive outcomes for all.

The council meets these needs by.

- Working towards outcomes of its adopted Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Open communication and Informing community of changes, updates and news
- Consulting and communicating decisions effectively through Council's website and social platforms, regular media releases and information flow to Interagency groups across communities, local Aboriginal Working Parties and community groups with an interest or when the information aligns with core work.
- Working with Council driven focus groups relating to issues, events and betterment of the community's welfare and direction
- Delivering annual Local Government Week promotions across communities promoting access to councils' services and support networks
- Providing opportunities for the public to address agenda items at Council meetings.
- Strengthening and maintaining the community's involvement in the delivery of services through a transparent process of networking and partnerships.
- A consultation framework that promotes and values engagement with all community sectors
- Providing opportunities for residents to have input into programs and initiatives facilitated by the youth and community development team.
- Installation and maintenance of areas for recreation and accessibility for all people across the Shire
- Ongoing audit and assessment of Council facilities

CATEGORY 1 BUSINESS ACTIVITIES & STATEMENT

A list of the Category 1 Business activities of the Council 2022/2023.

Council's significant business activities are as follows:

- Category 1 (annual sales turnover \$2 million and above)

Walgett Shire Council does not have any Category 1 Business Activities for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

A statement of expenses, revenues and assets in relation to each Category 1 business activity.

Council does not have any Category 1 business activities.

CATEGORY 2 BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

Local Government (General)
Regulation 2021
Clause 217 (1) (d) (iii)

A list of the Category 2 business activities of the Council.

The following business activities have been identified as Category 2 Businesses (annual sales turnover less than \$2 million):

- Council has two (2) business activities declared as Category 2 business activities with total annual operating revenue less than \$2 million. These businesses units are Walgett Shire Water Services and Walgett Shire Sewerage Services as contained in the Special Purpose Financial Report attached to the Annual report.

IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY

A summary of the progress of the Council in implementing the principals of Competitive Neutrality.

The disclosure requirements are reflected in Council's pricing and financial reporting systems and include taxation equivalents, Council subsidies, rate of return on investments in business units and dividends paid.

Competitive Neutrality Pricing Requirements

A statement as to whether the Competitive Neutrality requirements have or have not been applied to each Category 1 business activity of the Council.

Council does not have any Category 1 Business Activities.

Complaint Handling Mechanism for Competitive Neutrality

A statement regarding the establishment of a complaints handling mechanism for Competitive Neutrality complaints, and as to the manner in which the Council publicises and makes the mechanism known to the public.

In July 2016 Council implemented a new Customer Action Request system called EnviroCAR. This online service request system allows members of the public and also Council staff to lodge requests/complaints for a variety of service needs such as road maintenance, animals, parks and gardens, building enquiries, rates etc.

With EnviroCAR implemented a new streamline process is now in place with comprehensive workflow and reporting capabilities, customer notifications via SMS, e-mail or letter and integration into Councils existing corporate systems.

Members of the public can access this system by navigating to Councils website at www.walgett.nsw.gov.au and selecting Customer Request from the quick link button on the right hand side of the website or alternatively you can call Council on (02) 6828 6100 and submit one over the telephone.

Council has adopted a Complaints Management Policy which would also respond to complaints in relation to Competitive Neutrality.

Summary of Competitive Neutrality Complaints

A summary of Competitive Neutrality that have been made against the Council during the year (including details of the number of complaints received and the subject matter or nature of the complaints) and a statement as to the outcome of those complaints (including details as to the number of complaints disposed of during the year and the number still outstanding at the end of the year).

No complaints in relation to Competitive Neutrality have been made against the Council in 2022/2023.

MODERN SLAVERY ACT 2018

Section 428(4) of the Local Government Act 1993, requires Council to include in their Annual Reports:

- a statement of the action taken by the council in relation to any issue raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during the year concerning the operations of the council and identified by the Commissioner as being a significant issue, and
- a statement of steps taken to ensure that goods and services procured by and for the council during the year were not the product of modern slavery within the meaning of the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (NSW).

Under Section 438ZE of the Local Government Act 1993, Council has a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure goods and services procured are not the product of Modern Slavery within the meaning under section 5 of the Act.

Walgett Shire Council has included in their 'Sustainable Procurement and Contracts Policy' the following statement:

Modern slavery is a serious violation of an individual's dignity and human rights. Exploitative practices including human trafficking, slavery, servitude, forced labour, debt bondage and forced marriage are all considered modern slavery and are serious crimes under Australian law. Council officers should consider this Act and the ethical treatment of all contractors and supply chains when purchasing on behalf of Council.

Walgett Shire Council aims to include a statement in their next review of their Statement of Business Ethics which will place the onus on both Council and contractors to act towards ensuring these standards are adhered to.

PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION ACT

The annual report of each public sector agency must include;

- a. statement of the action taken by the agency in complying with the requirements of the Act;*
- Council has adopted an Internal Reporting Policy under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1994. The Policy details the actions and processes for making a disclosure under this legislation
- b. Statistical details of any review conducted by or on behalf of the agency under Part 5;*
- No reviews were undertaken by Council under Part 5 of the Act.