

Annual Report 2017/18



Murrumbidgee
COUNCIL

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OUR PURPOSE

To deliver quality services to create a friendly and welcoming community

OUR VISION

A community built by innovative and reliable services

OUR VALUES

Creative, Quality, Traditional, Energetic

Murrumbidgee Council values creativity and innovation, to reliably deliver quality services and facilities to its communities. It does this through traditional principles and forward thinking that provide strong, positive leadership to nurture who we are, where we live and what we have built. Our communities are welcoming and energetic, providing fun and friendly places that appeal to all.



Murrumbidgee
COUNCIL

Part 1 - Overview



About this Report

Under the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), all Councils in NSW are required to report on their progress in implementing their Delivery Program and the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives in their Community Strategic Plan.

The Annual Report must be prepared in accordance with the Act and *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*, and include a copy of the Council's audited financial reports. Once adopted, the Annual Report must also be posted on Council's website.

As a new Council, which held its first election in 2017, Murrumbidgee Council is exempt from the statutory requirements under section 428A of the Act to include the following in its Annual Report 2017-18:

- A State of the Environment Report.

Council, during the 2017-18 year, developed and adopted a 10 year Community Strategic Plan, which informs its four-year Delivery Program and Resourcing Strategy and future annual Operational Plans. Council is required to detail its achievements in implementing the Community Strategic Plan over the previous two years in its annual report of the year in which an ordinary election of Councillors is held, ie 2020.

This report provides an overview of key projects which have been completed in the 2017-18 reporting year, budget alignment and Council's current position in relation to its service delivery to the community.



The Year in Review

Mayor's Report

The 2017-2018 year saw the election of the inaugural Murrumbidgee Council.

It is reassuring to have elected representatives back at the Council table.



The privilege of being Murrumbidgee Council's first Mayor is an honour, and it is my hope that I am able to represent and advocate fairly across the three communities of Jerilderie, Coleambally and Darlington Point.

The completion of Council's Organisational Structure continues to be a work in progress. I am assured that both the structure and the new salary system are nearing finalisation.

Ensuring Council is adequately and capably resourced, enabling prompt and appropriate service delivery, is our expectation. A cohesive, settled workforce will be Council's greatest asset and our communities' strongest voice into the future.

Murrumbidgee Council has much on the go. There is significant investment in our new rural Council. The original \$10 million from the Stronger Communities Fund is being rolled out in small projects (\$1.3 million) with many completed, and the Community Infrastructure Fund has seen some projects undertaken.

Another funding opportunity is the Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 1 – with grant funding provided across our three communities.

While the footprint of Murrumbidgee Council finds itself at the mercy of this significant drought, we are still finding opportunity is presenting itself. We have 1 significant Solar Farm development in Coleambally, substantially underway and due for commissioning at the end of 2018.

We see the growth of the cotton industry - with a new Gin in Coleambally slated for development in early 2019, and proposed operation in 2020.

There is proposed growth expected across the chicken, nut and tourism industry.

Council is mindful of developing and enhancing relationships with key stakeholders that ensure our residents have access to, and are well-resourced across, essential areas, namely health, education, employment, social services, aged care and emergency services.

We seek to encourage and support the development of small business.

Murrumbidgee Council has joined the Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO).

Joint Organisations (JO) are the State Government's way of formalising regional co-operation between Councils. The Government made it clear they intend to engage with Councils as groups, in strategic planning particularly. The Government is looking for Councils to provide advocacy as groups. Government departments are keen to engage with Local Government at regional levels into the future on a more formal basis.

JO's are a legislated structure arising out of Councils' creation of regional groups of Councils, in our case RAMROC, over the last 25 years', which have provided a successful forum for Councils to work co-operatively.

Council's greatest challenges ongoing are:

- Broad and reliable connectivity, both NBN and mobile phone coverage;
- Affordable and accessible electricity;
- WATER - to live, to produce, to be sustainable. Recognising our key economic driver is agriculture and we NEED water;
- Small voices produce a hollow echo, a collective voice with a strategic approach can achieve a workable outcome. The newly formed Joint Organisation will provide us the vehicle for the collective voice.

While Council is, and continues to operate, in a "Change Environment" the challenges this presents also offers significant opportunity. And we choose opportunity every time.

Council thanks the committed and hard-working staff of Murrumbidgee Council for their service and pride.



I congratulate the Coleambally community on celebrating its 50 very busy and productive years over the June long weekend. A weekend that covered formality on the Friday evening, with the "cutting of the cake" by Mrs Gladys Black and Mrs Margaret

Sheppard. This was followed by a fashion parade-50 years of the most beautiful bridal gowns was a great way to start the weekend.

A packed Coleambally Community Club demonstrated the community's togetherness-the attribute that has enabled the growth, development, resilience and pride in this great town. Saturday and Sunday were jam packed with exhibitions of craft, art, sport, education, industry and entertainment. The bonfire and fireworks were a highlight, and the street parade and markets on Sunday showcased the depth of community engagement and resources that exist.

My congratulations to the organising committee. Your commitment, long hours and dedication were very evident. To the community, not only do you know how to work to make things happen, you know how to celebrate, recognise and party.

Vale Terry Hogan



Sadly, long serving former Jerilderie Shire Councillor Mr Terry Hogan passed away on 27 September 2017. He was elected to serve as Councillor for the former Jerilderie Shire Council in 1971 and continued his service to Jerilderie Shire Council until merger in May 2016. Terry then served the newly formed Murrumbidgee Council as a Local Representation Committee member. He did not stand for re-election with Murrumbidgee Council. His service to Local Government spanned 45 years, and Terry was awarded the honorary title of Emeritus Mayor and received an Outstanding Service Award from Local Government NSW.

Terry was an innovative irrigation farmer and community minded stalwart. He shared his passion and expertise with a number of organisations over the years, including the Coleambally Branch of the Ricegrowers Association of Australia, SunRice, Coleambally Irrigation, State Water Murrumbidgee Customer Services Committee and Murrumbidgee Environmental Water Allocation Reference Group.

On Australia Day 2003, Mr Hogan was made a Member of the Order of Australia for Services to Local Government.

Terry was a true gentleman and a passionate community advocate. He will be greatly missed.

Cr Ruth McRae
MAYOR

General Manager's Report

Welcome to Murrumbidgee Council's Annual Report for 2017-18.

The Murrumbidgee Council has been in existence since 12 May 2016.

This Annual Report outlines Council's performance and achievements over the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

Administrator, Austin Evans continued in office until the election took place in September 2017, with the newly elected Councillors taking office at the Council meeting on 21 September 2017.



Terry sadly was unable to stand for election and lost his health battle, passing away on 27 September 2017. A great loss to his family, community and Council, after 45 years involvement in public life.

It has been a busy year with focus on continued development of the new Council, setting strategic plans, adopting new and improved policies, and allocating significant financial resources to major projects.

The creation of a Major Projects Register has been the guiding document for the allocation of \$10M, provided as part of the merger assistance, together with funds allocated from the Stronger Country Communities Fund, has seen Council grapple with community recommendations and funding source requirements to achieve the best long term outcomes for asset replacement and improvement.

This process has seen commitment to the redevelopment of the sports ground in Darlington Point; redevelopment of Brolga Place and the sports precinct additional development in Coleambally; and replacement of the Jerilderie Swimming Pool and water filtration plant, and commitment to units in the Jerilderie Independent Living complex. These larger projects, together with a large number of smaller improvement works, continue to have the workforce and local resources stretched beyond limits.

Changes in staff structure have occurred as a result of movements within the workforce, some taking up redundancy, others moving to new locations and taking advantage of the changes in Local Government. We said goodbye to the Director of Technical Services, Mr David Tamlyn, after a career of 48 years with Jerilderie Shire Council and Murrumbidgee Council. David's departure from Council saw the loss of substantial corporate knowledge, and this void is almost impossible to fill. I wish David and his family all the best for the future. My thanks to all staff for their patience and resilience during these difficult times.

By the time you read this, I will have retired from Local Government, having reached the end of my contract period after 13 years with Murrumbidgee Council and the previous Jerilderie Shire Council.

I wish Council and staff success into the future, knowing that great things can be achieved with the team available.

Craig Moffitt,
GENERAL MANAGER

Our Council

Murrumbidgee Council was proclaimed on 12 May 2016, following the amalgamation of the former Jerilderie Shire Council and Murrumbidgee Shire Council into one strong, cohesive and efficient organisation. Murrumbidgee Council is located in the Riverina Region of south-western NSW, about 640 kilometres west of Sydney, and 420 kilometres north of Melbourne.

The Council area is located between the fertile irrigation and river systems of the Riverina and the dryland agricultural area of the Hay Plains. It covers a geographical area of 6,880 square kilometres and its major industries are agriculturally based. Connected by the Kidman Way, with links to major freight transport routes, the communities of Jerilderie, Coleambally and Darlington Point are steeped in iconic images of Australian history.

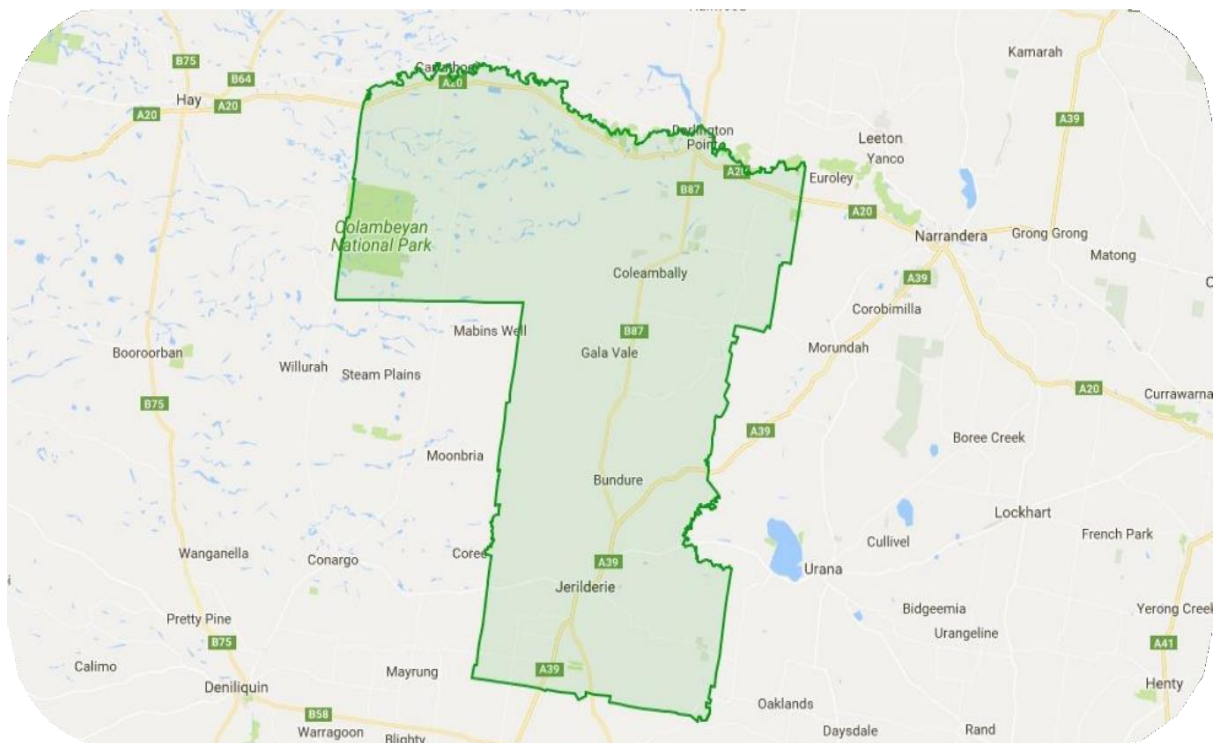
The area also hosts innovative irrigation-based agriculture, and is home to the river system that shares its name. The Council has a strong role in providing services and facilities to support those agricultural activities and the families and businesses within the respective communities of the region.

Just over 24 per cent of the population is aged between 0 and 17, and 23.4 per cent 60 years and over, compared with 22.1 % per cent and 27.2 % respectively for Regional NSW. In Murrumbidgee Council, 6.1 % of the population earned an income of \$1,750 or more per week in 2016 and Murrumbidgee Council's Gross Regional Product is estimated at \$21 billion.

Murrumbidgee Council is a dynamic region filled with natural beauty, historical significance and untapped potential for growth.

Working closely with residents, Council seeks to establish and strengthen networks to build a robust, vibrant and cohesive community.

Council employs 82 full time equivalent staff and provides service and support for a population of 4,047. Community and infrastructure assets include health, aged care support, access to modern library services, swimming pools and a range of quality education facilities.



Our Councillors

Mayor and Councillors 2017-2020

The inaugural Murrumbidgee Council election was held on 9 September 2017. Nine Councillors were appointed to the new Council, three Councillors from each of the three wards of Murrumbidgee, Murrumbidgee East and Jerilderie.

Councillors in newly merged Councils are elected for a 3 year term only, until 2020. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are elected by the Councillors for a two year period at the September 2017 meeting. Councillor Ruth McRae was elected Mayor and Councillor Robert Black Deputy Mayor.



Newly elected Councillors, left to right: Councillors Phillip Wells, Robert Curphey, Gavin Gilbert, Robert Black, Ruth McRae, Christine Chirgwin, Faith Bryce and Gaila Smith. Absent Councillor Austin Evans.

In December 2017, elected member, Councillor Austin Evans, tendered his resignation from Council. This resignation triggered a Murrumbidgee East Ward by-election on 10 March 2018. Three candidates nominated for the vacancy, with Mr Pat Brown declared elected.

ELECTION RESULTS

Murrumbidgee Council By-Election - Murrumbidgee East Ward

Saturday, 10 March 2018

The election for the Murrumbidgee East Ward was closely contested, with the following results:

- 1. **BROWN Pat (34.39% of total votes)**
- 2. **FRASER Shane (33.76% of total votes)**
- 3. **LAYCOCK Haidee (30.27% of total Votes)**

Council meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of every month, excluding December and January, and commencing at 10.00am. The meeting venues alternate between Jerilderie and Darlington Point Chambers until suitable facilities are available in Coleambally.

Members of the public are welcome and invited to attend.

JERILDERIE WARD



Mayor Cr Ruth McRae



Cr Faith Bryce



Cr Gaila Smith

MURRUMBIDGEE EAST WARD



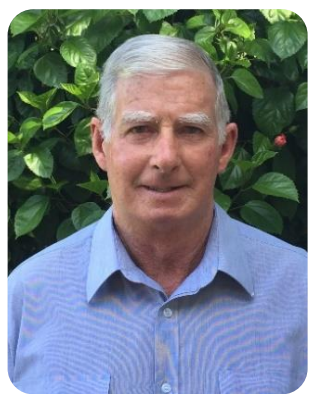
Deputy Mayor Cr Robert Black



Cr Christine Chirgwin



Cr Austin Evans (resigned)



Cr Pat Brown

MURRUMBIDGEE WARD



Cr Phillip Wells



Cr Robert Curphey



Cr Gavin Gilbert

Organisational Structure

Murrumbidgee Council has created positions for two Assistant General Managers, reporting directly to Council's General Manager.



Ms Alison Coe has been appointed to the position of Assistant General Manager, Corporate and Community Services, and commenced duties with Council on 3 July 2017. Corporate & Community Services incorporates Corporate Services, Finance, Information Services, Community Services and Aged & Youth. Alison has over 16 years' experience in all levels of Government. She has delivered major initiatives in the Victorian Treasury Department, State Library of Victoria and Moira Shire Council. More recently, she has worked to introduce a number of budget and ICT projects at Forbes Shire Council.

The position of Assistant General Manager, Infrastructure & Environment, has been filled by Mr Peter Chudek, who commenced duties with Council on 10 July 2017. Peter came to Murrumbidgee Council from Coonamble Shire Council, where he was employed as a Director of Engineering Services for three (3) years. Peter has over 25 years of experience in municipal engineering including planning, design, construction, maintenance and operations management. He gained his municipal management experience working with Coonamble Shire Council, Brisbane City Council and Melbourne Water. The Infrastructure & Environment portfolio encompasses Projects, Utilities & Waste, Infrastructure, Facilities, Regulatory & Health and Planning.



Council is currently working to assess all Position Descriptions.

Work on the new Salary System, including Salary Structure is progressing.

Murrumbidgee Council has 87 staff, made up of 76 full time and 11 part time positions.



Retirement

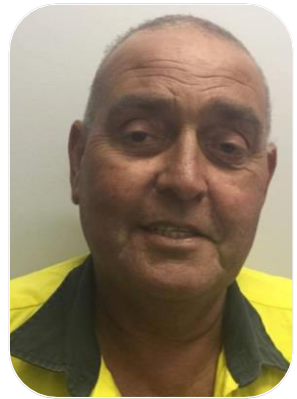
Director of Technical Services, Mr David Tamlyn retired on 24 July 2017. David commenced work with Jerilderie Shire Council in February 1969, and took over the role of Council's Director of Technical Services in 1998. His career in Local Government has spanned 48 years and 5 months, an incredible achievement. I thank David for his professionalism, commitment, hard work, long hours, mentoring and support, and I wish him well in his future endeavours.

Murrumbidgee Councillors and staff were saddened by the loss of two valued employees. We extend sincere sympathy to family and friends of Shawn Smith and Mark Shaxson.

Vale Shawn Smith

Shawn Smith, passed away on Saturday 2 June, 2018 after losing a hard-fought battle with cancer.

Shawn became a Council staff member in early 2011. He worked with the Darlington Point outdoor staff as a labourer, and later tallyman. He also worked in parks and gardens in Coleambally. After being diagnosed in late 2016, Shawn could not return to his full-time position. He refused to let his illness stop him from working and he spent a few hours a day in the Darlington Point office, helping in any way he could.



Vale Mark Shaxson

Mark commenced duties with Council on 17 January 2011. He was initially employed as a tar-patching labourer, and later went on to work in the Coleambally parks and gardens area.

Mark passed away on 3 April, 2018.

Project Management Office (PMO)

The Project Management Office (PMO) was tasked with making recommendations to the General Manager, and ultimately Council, on a wide range of matters that are relevant to the integration and harmonisation of the merged Council. These matters include defining and realising the outcomes and benefits of the transition, monitoring risks, quality of outcomes and deliverables, timelines and budget implications.

In December, 2017 the PMO handed over to the Assistant General Managers the remaining elements of the Implementation Plan, which was developed to transition the former Jerilderie and Murrumbidgee Shire Councils. In conjunction with this hand over, most members of the Project Management Office (PMO) have come to the end of their contract with Council.

We thank the staff of the PMO for their work during the last 18 months, and acknowledge their achievements:

- ✓ New phone system to allow the efficient transfer of calls across the three branch offices;
- ✓ Videoconferencing facilities in each of the three branch offices;
- ✓ Construction of the Bundure Tower-a 50 metre telecommunications tower
- ✓ Construction of the Darlington Point and Coleambally monopoles
- ✓ Wide Area Network (WAN) data communications network completed between Jerilderie, Coleambally and Darlington Point;
- ✓ New computers and servers installed;
- ✓ Rebranding, including new Council logo, signage, etc.
- ✓ New Council Website





Murrumbidgee
COUNCIL

Part 2 - Operational Plan



Integrated Planning & Reporting

The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework legislation is embedded in the Local Government Act 1993 and requires all NSW Councils to prepare and implement a Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The CSP sets out the long term aspirations of the community of the Murrumbidgee Council area for the next 10 years. It is the key reference to guide Council decision-making during this period.

The Community Strategic Plan must be reported upon by the outgoing Council and the incoming Council must undertake a review of the Plan. At this time the Community Strategic Plan has to be rolled forward four years to maintain a minimum long term 10-year strategic focus.

During 2016-17, Murrumbidgee Council continued to implement and operate in accordance with the former Jerilderie Shire and Murrumbidgee Shire Council CSPs.

In early 2018, Council undertook an extended community engagement process for the Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027. Surveys were delivered to each household in Council's area, as well as being available on Council's website www.murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au. Community meetings were held in each town, and were well attended. The engagement process captured information from the community about their long-term vision for the future of the whole Council area, as well as being able to identify town specific priorities.

Feedback from the meetings included:

Jerilderie: Promoting 'regional destination' experience, capability building and partnerships for grants, tourism to retain people in town for longer, improving water and sewerage infrastructure—particularly at the showgrounds, development and consolidation of (light) industrial land, transport improvements (main street), the importance of a broad economic development and a focus/strategy of jobs and growth to retain youth in the town. The meeting also confirmed the importance of transparent Council leadership and considering all aspects in decision making.

Coleambally: Criticality of alternative energy options (solar), recycling, waste management, animal controls, population retention and meeting community transport and connections, as well as a more simplistic CSP, road maintenance (gravel), disabled parking, infrastructure (repaving footpaths, painting) and access, ongoing communication between Council and the community (newsletters, social media) and partnerships linking state and federal stakeholders for industry and investment.

Darlington Point:

Development of residential and industrial land vital to support potential town and business growth, a need to increase community facilities—aged care and youth drop in centre to support the community, consideration of infrastructure (low level weir), maintenance of walking tracks and gravel roads and using partnerships to achieve these projects.

The Community Strategic Plan was adopted by Council at its meeting of 26 June 2018.

The Community Strategic Plan can be viewed on Council's website: www.murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au



Asset Management Policy, Plans and Strategy

As part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP & R) requirements, Council is required to prepare an Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plans to support its Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Programme and Operational Plan.

Council officers, in conjunction with consultants Jeff Roorda & Associates, a division of Technology One, have now completed the Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Strategy (AMS) and Asset Management Plans for Council's major asset groups, those being Buildings, Land Improvements, Water Supply, Sewer Services, Stormwater & Drainage and Transport Infrastructure. The Plans have been compiled from the 2016 financial statements, together with the Long Term Financial Plan, Delivery Programme and Operational Plan, and will be updated annually following completion of the annual financial statements. This will then allow for incorporation into the next annual IP & R documentation.

The Asset Management Strategy identifies crucial assets that are critical to the operations of Council and provides risk management strategies for such. It also contains specific actions to be undertaken in order to improve the asset management capability and probable resource requirements within certain timeframes.

The Asset Management Plans identify asset service standards and contain long term projections for asset maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement costs for the next 10 years.

The AMS forecasts operating, maintenance, renewal and upgrade outlays necessary to sustain the current service levels for all infrastructure assets to be \$93.40 over the next 10 years. The funding of such is estimated at \$76.9m which is only 82% of the costs to sustain the current service levels. The funding shortfalls average some \$1.6m per year.

The Asset Management Plans and Strategy were adopted by Council at its meeting of 27 February 2018. The Asset Management Policy was placed on Public Exhibition in accordance with Section 160 of the Local Government Act, and will be adopted at an upcoming meeting of Council.

Workforce Management Strategy

The Workforce Management Strategy (WMS) makes up one of three components of Council's **Resourcing Strategy** as required under the NSW Local Government **Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework**.

Council was to develop and implement a Workforce Management Strategy to support the achievement of its Delivery and Operating Programs, by addressing the human resources issues required to deliver the Delivery and Operating programs over a four-year period. It considers what people, skills, experience and expertise are required to implement the programs, and enables Council to plan workforce adjustments to meet changing priorities and new technologies. The document complements other NSW Government guidance material for merging Councils, including the National Workforce Strategy 2013-2020.

Peter Evans, who is consulting to staff from Local Government NSW, has assisted Council to develop its Workforce Management Strategy and performance appraisal system;

Consultation with staff on the Workforce Management Strategy has occurred, and feedback from these consultation sessions is incorporated into the Strategy.

The Strategy addresses issues, including:

1. An ageing workforce and succession planning;
2. How to provide opportunities to create and retain positions for local young people;
3. Incentives supporting the Council to be an employer of choice;
4. Learning and development;
5. Performance management;
6. Workforce diversity; and
7. Recruitment strategies to fill skills gaps.

The deliverables identified in the Workforce Management Strategy will form the basis of the HR functions workload over the next four years, and are aligned to Council's various plans under the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, and the recently approved Local Government Capability Framework, developed and implemented by Local Government NSW.

The Strategy will be adopted in the 2018-19 financial year.

Internal Audit & Risk Improvement Committee

Council's Internal Audit & Risk Improvement Committee was formed in June 2018.

The Committee comprises:

Chair, Mr David Maxwell, Councillor Gaila Smith and Mr John Burge.

Merger Implementation Fund

The Merger Implementation Fund – Stronger Communities Grant – of \$10M has continued to deliver to community organisations funding to upgrade, renew or provide for improved community facilities. \$727,176 was expended during 2017/18, bringing the total amount expended on community grants to \$1,302,184.

Community infrastructure projects undertaken as part of the Stronger Communities Fund were:

Jerilderie

Solar lighting of walkway
Reconstruction of netball courts and surrounds
Central Coree Hall upgrade and provision of playground equipment
Tidy Towns Committee equipment and ride on mower
Installation of playground equipment at Luke Park
Installation of outdoor exercise stations around Lake Jerilderie
Construction of footpath through Luke Park

Darlington point

Installation of solar panels to Heritage Darlington Point building

Coleambally

Resurfacing of squash club walls
Upgrade of netball courts

Expenditure during 2017/18 amounted to \$522,036, bringing the total amount expended to date of \$775,243.

This leaves a remaining balance of \$7,922,573 of the Stronger Communities Fund monies to be expended into the future.



COLEAMBALLY NETBALL COURTS

Construction and associated works of the Coleambally Netball courts were completed as part of the NSW State Government's Stronger Communities Fund. The Coleambally Netball Club played their first game for the season on the new courts on Saturday 21 April, 2018.

Infrastructure & Environment

Technical Services

This year has been very productive. Council’s road network and infrastructure has been maintained to standards as required by the Murrumbidgee Council community, including rehabilitation works on parts of Council’s road networks. Various Council roads have been upgraded continually with road base materials and prior stream gravel within Council’s normal gravel road maintenance program. The town infrastructure has been improved, including with new cycle ways, PAMP’s, kerb and guttering program and rehabilitation of the drainage works. Council has maintained the sealed and unsealed road network, town infrastructure, water and sewerage to the standard expected within our community.

Construction and Maintenance

Main Roads and State & National Highway

During the past 12 months, Council has continued to carry out maintenance on Main Road 321 (Kidman Way) - length 86.94 km, and on State Highway 17 (Newell Highway) - length 4.71km, under the Road Maintenance Council Contract (RMCC) for Roads & Maritime Services (RMS).

The RMCC was in place from 2008-2012, and has been extended until a new contract is prepared. The RMCC continues to be an important part of Council’s workforce budget. Roads & Maritime Services has again continued the RMCC for all Councils in 2018. Council will continue to maintain Main Road 321 (Kidman Way) to the Council boundary and part of State Highway 17 (Newell Highway) within the town limits of Jerilderie.

Council’s RMCC with the RMS has a significant benefit to Council’s works program, enabling maintenance works, heavy patching works, resealing works and rehabilitation works on both Main Road 321 (Kidman Way) and State Highway 17 (Newell Highway) within Council’s area. RMCC helps to ensure staff stability, allows better utilisation of Council’s plant and equipment, training, and also helping to achieve a safer road network within Murrumbidgee Council.

Regional Roads (RR)

Council’s Regional Roads network is made up of the following roads:

Oaklands Road – Regional Road 323	31.90km
Conargo Road – Regional Road 552	19.30km
Morundah Road/Main Canal Road/Yamma Road -Regional Road 596	28.80km
Berrigan/Oaklands Road – Regional Road 356	6.35km
Berrigan Road – Regional Road 564	15.05km
Urana Road – Regional Road 59	16.05km
Whitton Road 183	1.80km

Total **119.25km**

Maintenance works (resealing, shoulder widening and traffic facilities) have been carried out on all of the above Regional Roads located within Murrumbidgee Council. This year the Regional Road Repair Program funding was spent on rehabilitation on RR 356 (Berrigan - Oaklands Road) and RR596 (Morundah Road).

Council Roads

Maintenance works have been performed on all Council roads - heavy patching, sign maintenance, guidepost maintenance, shoulder grading, fire breaking in specific areas, maintenance grading and resealing of various roads.

Minor heavy patching works were completed on various roads during the year, and road base and road gravel material carted to various locations to restore the road network, as per normal maintenance. Council's graders, construction crews and road maintenance crews continued to patrol the road network. Maintenance grading was undertaken as required, with particular notice taken of school bus routes.

Under the Fixing Country Roads Program, reconstruction works were carried out on Conargo Road (0.70km) and the final seal on reconstruction works on Main Canal Road (4km).

Roads to Recovery Program (R2R)

The Roads to Recovery Program has assisted Murrumbidgee Council to provide a better foundation for Council's road network, enabling Council to add a better standard of road making material to our existing prior stream gravels and providing the opportunity to upgrade the road network and town infrastructure. Road base materials help to strengthen and reduce the maintenance of our network, and also provide better safety in all weather conditions for school buses, residents and visitors to our Council area.

During the 2017-2018 financial year, R2R funding was utilised as follows:

South Coree Road	Finalisation of reconstruction and sealing of 7km
Donald Ross Drive	Widen shoulders and construct pavement (2.3km) Reseal 3.3km
Innes Bridge Road	Resheeting (5.4km)
Six Mile Lane	Resheeting (10.0km)
Four Corners Road	Reseal 4.20km
Pine Drive	Reseal 1.60km
Wallin Road	Resheeting 2.7km
Main Canal Road	Resheeting 1.5km
Steele Road	Resheeting 1.0km
Various Streets, Jerilderie	Kerb and Guttering

Council Road Maintenance Program

Council's gravel re-sheeting program has covered various roads, or section of roads, in both the northern and southern areas of the Council during the 2017/18 financial year; including Main Canal Road, Fraser Road, Ercildoune Road, Culley Road, Harveys Well Road, Greenswamp Road, Wilson Road, Kelmscott Lane, Leary Lane and Moonbria Lane.

Grader maintenance of local roads over the Council road network this year has been consistent with previous years. Currently, the infrastructure within our Council is in good condition, however an increase in funding is required to help maintain Council's resealing program of the sealed road network. At present, Council's resealing cycle has slightly increased, with 46.70% of the network now on a twelve (12) years resealing cycle, 26.00% on a fifteen year resealing cycle and 27.30% slightly above fifteen years.

Town Area

The town maintenance programs continue, with maintenance of town streets and amenities. Works included tree lopping and installation of new trees, bitumen road maintenance, kerb and gutter maintenance and cleaning, replacement of kerb and gutter, cleaning of storm water drainage lines, signs maintenance, and also slashing within the town areas and entrances, all to maintain and beautify our towns.

The toilet block in John McInnes Square, Coleambally has been refurbished.

A bus bay has been installed at St Peters Primary School in Coleambally.

Water Supplies

Coleambally's town water is supplied from two bores, the water is filtered and chlorinated. Minor repairs have been carried out to the water mains over the past 12 months. One of the bores has been refurbished.

Darlington Point's town water is supplied from two bores. The water system has recently been upgraded, including the installation of a gas chlorinator. Minor repairs have been carried out, water mains have been flushed, the water supply bore has been refurbished and the bores have been cleaned.

Jerilderie's town water comes from the Billabong Creek. Council's water supply system provides residents with filtered and chlorinated water for internal use and raw water for external use.

Minor raw and filtered water repairs to mains and services were conducted during the 2017-18 year. Upgrading of Jerilderie's older raw water mains with PVC pipe will be continued into the future to help infrastructure maintenance.

Regular flushing of the filtered water mains was performed approximately every 3 weeks and regular water quality testing is performed. Raw water mains are flushed approximately 4 times per year.

Sewerage Systems

The Coleambally, Darlington Point and Jerilderie town sewerage systems have been maintained, and have continued to provide first-rate service to the community.

Existing settling ponds and sludge ponds have been maintained, and are adequate for the community's needs into the foreseeable future. Council is licensed to provide waste water from the Jerilderie sewerage treatment plant to the adjacent Racecourse to help maintain its turf track.

Council's sewerage mains and rising mains are performing adequately. No major repairs were undertaken during the past year.

The North Jerilderie sewerage extension works were completed during this year, this extension connects properties in McDougall Street and Showground Road to Council's sewage system.

Drum Muster

During the year Council received a number of chemical drums and will continue with the program in 2018/2019.

Companion Animals

Staff members in each Council office continue to complete the registrations of dogs and cats under the Companion Animals Ac. A dog pound is operated in each of our towns and ensures that any animals impounded can be dealt with and returned to their owners quickly.

Jerilderie Saleyards

During the year 12,196 sheep were sold at the Jerilderie Saleyard. Regular maintenance at the yards has been performed during the year.

The truck wash at Jerilderie continues to benefit Council, with the Avdata system providing an income stream to help cover maintenance costs and equipment replacement. The truck wash is available to the travelling transport industry.

Stock Control

Various incidents of straying stock were dealt with during the year, on Council roads, Main Roads and State Highways.

Parks and Gardens

Our parks and gardens staff continue to maintain, to a high standard, the extensive parks and gardens and within our town areas.

The parks, gardens and sports ground areas are a major asset to our communities in providing residents and the travelling public with a place to relax and play sport when visiting our towns.

Council has, and will continue to upgrade and maintain watering systems in its parks and gardens as a means of reducing water consumption, and to assist with grounds maintenance.

Depot/ Plant and Equipment

The Works Depots continued to maintain Council's plant, equipment and infrastructure in excellent order, with minor repairs to various areas undertaken during the past year.

Plant and vehicle replacement purchase during the 2017/18 financial year included the following equipment:

- Management vehicles and work force vehicles;
- John Deere Motor Grader;
- Hyundai Excavator;
- Self Propelled Smooth Drum Roller
- Mack Tipping Truck
- Volvo Tipping Truck
- Case IH Puma Tractor

The stores and amenities are kept in excellent order, providing facilities for Council's stock items, training area and staff facilities.

Bush Fire Services

Council has continued to support the NSW Rural Fire Service, with the Jerilderie Depot carrying out maintenance of the Mid Murray Zone bush fire tankers and equipment together with fabrication requirements as needed.

Council will continue to support this Service as required.

Private Works

Private works carried out with Council’s plant and equipment has been steady during the past year, including road maintenance in neighbouring Councils. Council will continue to source various areas of private works each year.

Additional private works help to keep our workforce, skills and workmanship at its current high level.



Infrastructure & Environment

Environmental Services

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Environmental Services Department are numerous and varied. They include:

- Environmental Planning
- Development
- Health
- Heritage
- Environmental protection
- Sports Centre
- Swimming Pools
- Public Halls and Council Venues

Achievements and Aims for Environmental Services

Achievements for 2017/18

- Continued Food Premises Inspections in the Local Government area
- Expansion of intranet for use in 3 Council Offices
- Continuation of the compulsory swimming pool inspections throughout the Local Government area
- Delivery and management of Stronger Community Fund Grants
- Commencement of Darlington Point Urban Flood Study
- Expansion of trade waste processes into Coleambally and Darlington Point
- Onsite Sewage Management inspections throughout the Local Government area

Aims for 2018/2019

- Continued delivery and management of Stronger Community Fund Grants, Community Infrastructure Grants and Stronger Country Community Grants
- Continued Onsite Sewage Management inspections throughout the Local Government area
- Completion of Amendments to the Jerilderie and Murrumbidgee LEPs
- Commencement of a Strategic Landuse Plan for entire Murrumbidgee Council area
- Completion of the Darlington Point Flood Study
- Full review and merger of Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans for the three towns
- Development of plans of management for all Crown Reserves managed by Council.

Condition of Council and Public Buildings

The building maintenance program for the 2017-18 period was valued at over \$220,000.

Gradual and progressive implementation of budget recommendations has continued within the Council's Delivery Plan / Budget. This has ensured the maintenance of existing swimming pools, public halls, public conveniences, recreation reserves, housing and other assets, whilst portraying a positive image of responsible management of Council owned buildings for the Local Government area.

Routine maintenance, storm water repairs, painting, pest control and fire equipment servicing at various locations were undertaken as necessary.

Significant work and improvements have been undertaken in public buildings throughout the Local Government area. Council staff have continued to work closely with the Committees on areas of visual improvement, security, disabled accessibility, safety and convenience.

Development and Building Control

Applications received by Murrumbidgee Council from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 inclusive.

Type of Construction	Number of Applications	Total Value
Commercial		
- Shops/Offices	8	\$4,797,000
- Additions/Alterations	3	\$71,500
- Other (including accommodation)	6	\$1,830,000
Dwellings	8	\$2,921,946
- Dwelling Additions/Alterations (includes attached carports and garages, verandahs and pergolas)	13	\$194,900
- Detached shed/garage/carports	11	\$217,228
- Flats/Units		
- Dwellings Demolished		
Factories/workshops/warehouses	Nil	Nil
- Additions/alterations	Nil	Nil
Other		
- Includes fences, rural buildings, farm dams and irrigation works, septic tanks, signs, swimming pools, etc.	18	\$2,448,589
TOTAL	67	\$12,481,163

In addition, one State Significant Development application within the Murrumbidgee Council area was received by the Department of Planning and Environment during the reporting period. This was for a \$407 million solar farm at Darlington Point.

Subdivisions	No. of Lots Created	No. of Lots Formally Registered
Subdivision Applications 3 applications	6	2

Biosecurity

Destruction and eradication of noxious weeds within our Council area is still of major importance, and we continue to canvas for funding. Changes to funding for weed control remains a concern to Council.

Changes have taken place with the introduction of the new Biosecurity Act covering environmental weeds. The Biosecurity Officers have been attending workshops and training to ensure they remain current with the requirements of the Act.

During the year, Council's Biosecurity Officers have helped to encourage and promote environmental weed control and provided support by participating at field days, distributing leaflets to property owners and providing relevant information to land owners, as and when required, for the destruction of various noxious weeds.

Spiny Burr Grass, Boxthorn and St John's Wort eradication continues to be vigorously supported by Council and the community. Council continues to slash and spray road shoulders to help with weeds, and also for reduction of fire hazards within the road network. An eradication program each year continues to be a very important part of Council's budget.

Waste Minimisation and Management

Council residences in all three towns are provided with a weekly garbage collection service, utilizing 240L mobile garbage bins. Darlington Point and Coleambally also have a fortnightly recycling collection.

Council participates in the RAMJO Waste Management Group to develop regional waste strategies. Council continues to operate the DrumMuster programme for clean, empty farm chemical containers. In addition, Council is involved in the mobile muster and ink cartridge recycling programs.

No container deposit facilities have been made available in the Council area since the Container Deposit scheme was commenced in NSW in late 2017.

Public Swimming Pools

The Coleambally and Darlington Point Swimming Pools were both managed by operators for the 2017/18 season, with reasonable patronage.

The Jerilderie Swim Centre was once again operated using a waiver system (unsupervised). The 2017/2018 year saw patronage remain steady.

Jerilderie Sports Stadium

In 2012/13 Council resolved to open the Sports Centre to the public for unsupervised use, provided users signed a waiver. Usage of the Sports Centre has increased during the 2017/2018 year due to upgraded equipment provided by the Stronger Community Fund and input from the Jerilderie Community Gym Committee.



Corporate & Community Services

Corporate and Community Services covers a broad range of functions including financial management, customer services, rates, revenue collections, information and records management, payroll, library and community services.

An ATM was installed in the Council's Darlington Point office late in the financial year, allowing greater access for the community of Darlington Point and enhancing the operations of the Bendigo Bank Agency. Bendigo Banking facilities are available in all three towns within the Local Government area.

Community Services

Murrumbidgee Council has different community service models in the north and south of the Council area:

- Direct CHSP-funded service provision within the former Murrumbidgee Shire Council; and
- Services provided by the Berrigan and District Home and Community Support Services (BDH&CSS) is grant funded by the Commonwealth Government (My Aged Care), to deliver a range of services and programs to constituents within the former Jerilderie Shire.

Services offered are similar including:

- i. Community transport
- ii. Meals on wheels
- iii. Home modifications and maintenance
- iv. Social support e.g. art groups, one on one social support to access their communities
- v. Domestic assistance (South)
- vi. Personal care (South)

Council staff successfully operate the home modification/maintenance service, which covers Darlington Point, Coleambally and the Griffith area. This service provides minor to major home modifications, and has successfully assisted many of our ageing residents reside in their homes for longer periods. Services offered include home lawn mowing, edging, trimming of trees, cleaning of gutters, major home modifications including bathrooms, ramps, and rails which help the over 65 clients, or under 65 with a disability client, stay in their homes for a longer period of time. Council works with a number of different contractors as well as the Occupational Therapist and hospitals in Griffith and Wagga, and with different disability organisation which help fund equipment such as wheelchairs, lifts, etc. which are essential to our clients.

Community Transport is a critical service for our community and transports clients, helping to meet their needs. The service provides transport for medical and follow-up appointments as far as Wagga and Albury, social outings including regular trips to Griffith.

Many of the clients would not be able to attend these cultural and social activities without this service; given the distance and the fact many cannot drive at night. This valuable Council service provides many positive benefits to its community and groups.

Seniors Week Activities

A successful Seniors' Week was held, with a number of activities, which included a lunch and entertainment at Coleambally for around 100 seniors, a ukulele workshop, eco-dyeing workshop, wellbeing workshop and Men's Shed Carving Workshop.



Wood Carving Workshop at the Coleambally Men's Shed



Wellbeing for All Workshop



A pamper session at the Hand Massage & Pretty Nails Workshop



Residents enjoying a musical piece from the "Mugs" and local Ukulele group at the Seniors Lunch in Coleambally

A Seniors' Luncheon was also held in Jerilderie, with approximately 100 guests attending. Theme for the lunch was 'Rock 'n' Roll', with entertainment provided by Ray Macartney.



Thank you to St Joseph's Primary School, for allowing their senior students to wait tables at the Jerilderie Seniors' Luncheon. The students did a fantastic job and were wonderful ambassadors for the School and a credit to their families.



Jerilderie Seniors' Lunch 2018

Council is particularly proactive in working with and connecting its senior residents, and has achieved many successes in the 2017/2018 reporting period through the dedication of its co-ordinators and respite programs across the region. These including organising weekly meetings (35 seniors in Darlington Point and 40 in Coleambally), bus trips, bingo events, movies and shopping. The respite groups have also been proactive in raising awareness and donations towards Cancer Council, Pink Ribbon Day, Dignity Day and Hearing Awareness. Both groups have enjoyed Christmas in July and their Christmas parties included a visit from Santa or Mrs. Clause.

The weekly Murrumbidgee Arts Kinship Enterprise (MAKE) continues to meet once a week for art with its Darlington Point and Coleambally residents. The group provides support, social connectivity and leadership throughout the Coleambally and Darlington Point communities. The group held two exhibitions 2017/2018 at the Griffith Regional Art Gallery in Griffith and "Warangesda".

MAKE members visited the Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery where they participated in a weaving workshop facilitated by talented local artists Ann Evers and James Bourne. Council partnered with Tirkandi Inaburra, who loaned their bus and provided a driver. Council is grateful for the support from Transport for NSW and Tirkandi Inaburra.



Verona Harrison with Tirkandi Inaburra's Adrian Andreazza



The MAKE Group

International Women's Day, 8 March 2018

Council hosted a very successful International Women's Day event at the Darlington Point Club on Thursday 8 March 2018, with over 60 people in attendance. We were fortunate to secure a fantastic guest speaker, Ms Kate O'Callaghan, General Manager of Southern Cotton. Kate gave an inspirational address on her "Work Journey".



Youth Week Skate Park League Events

Murrumbidgee Council held two skate events in partnership with the YMCA and Skate Park League to celebrate Youth Week 2018. Events were held at Darlington Point on 14 April and Coleambally 15 April. In total over 37 youths participated. Various age groups in three competitions (skateboard, scooter and BMX) were held on each day and the crowd saw some amazing performances and skill. The passion and commitment of the participants was inspiring, as was the enthusiasm of the parents and supporters.

Murrumbidgee Council would like to acknowledge and thank participants, parents and communities, and the following supporters who helped make the days a success: Griffith Rotary Club, Peaches, Country Hope, Bridgett McNeilly, Kerri Weymouth, YMCA & Skate Park Leagues and Coleambally RFS volunteers.



Coleambally Skate Park League competitors

2017 Sir John Monash Dinner

The tenth annual Sir John Monash Dinner and Lecture, held at the Jerilderie Civic Hall on Friday, 24 November, saw 100 people in attendance.

Military historian Ashley Ekins enthralled the crowd with his talk on "General Sir John Monash, Master of the Battlefield—an Appreciation".

A stunning portrait of Sir John Monash, donated by Mrs Miriam Berman, was also unveiled on the night.

Murrumbidgee Council thanks the community for their interest and support of this annual event.



Dr Debbie Lackerstein, Mr Ashley Ekins, Mayor, Councillor Ruth McRae and Member for Murray, Mr Austin Evans

Community Assistance

Murrumbidgee Council has committed staff who work closely with our community across diverse programs and services. In alignment with the Murrumbidgee community vision, Council also delivered and supported a number of key community activities and projects, including:

- Taste Coleambally Food and Farm Festival
- Australia Day events across our 3 communities
- Darlington Point Riverina Classic Catch & Release Competition
- Portsea Camp
- Jerilderie Show N Shine & Tractors
- League of Silent Flight
- Coleambally 50th Birthday Celebrations
- Jerilderie Gold Cup Race Meeting

Education Support

Council provided support for students residing within the Murrumbidgee Council Local Government Area, through the following Scholarships:

- Monash Bursary
- CSU Foundation Scholarship
- Community Scholarships

Coleambally 50th Birthday Celebrations



Economic, Tourism & Community Development

Community groups and Council worked diligently on putting together a number of community-based projects in 2017. Many of these have focused on the Stronger Communities Fund grant program. Netball courts and goal posts in Jerilderie, solar panels and sewing machines in Darlington Point and Coleambally, are just a few of the projects adding value and improving the Murrumbidgee lifestyle.

Over the past months Council has been helping community groups submit applications for an array of smaller and larger projects as other funding from the NSW Government becomes available. During the Christmas / New Year period, the communities of Yamma and Jerilderie received news that projects under the Community Building Partnership program were successful. Member for Murray, Mr Austin Evans, announced \$5,000 for improvements to the play area at Yamma Hall. Member for Albury, Mr Greg Aplin, announced \$13,000 to keep bowlers and sport players hydrated with bubble taps, fans, seating and equipment at the Jerilderie Sports Club. Meanwhile thanks to a Heritage Near Me Activation Grant, Council completed work to maintain the integrity of "The Willows" building at Jerilderie.

In January 2018 the 'big win' came for Darlington Point with the announcement of \$450,000 for the proposed Darlington Point boat ramp on the Murrumbidgee River. The partnership between community, Council and Government is supported through the 'Boating Now' Program. The ramp will improve recreational fishing and boating amenity for the community, and also help to attract visitors to the township. This project has received solid support thanks to the hard work of the Darlington Point APEX Club. Partnership projects are the result of volunteers 'rolling up their sleeves' and working with Council to make Murrumbidgee Council a great place to live, work and play.

In 2018 Council is continuing to source funding for projects identified as priorities by the community. Consultation with Coleambally sports precinct user groups, Brolga Place businesses and the Chamber of Commerce are informing major community developments. In Jerilderie a swimming pool upgrade is being investigated. Major priorities include securing a safe and dependable water supply in Darlington Point and Jerilderie.

Murrumbidgee Council tourism and lifestyle has been showcased in recent film productions. First-up has been a focus on Darlington Point with national and international television coverage. A partnership between Altina Wildlife Park and Murrumbidgee Council saw Altina and Darlington Point showcased on national and international television in November 2017.

Council and Altina worked with travel industry expert Greg Grainger of Grainger TV to get footage and produce a paid-for segment that was aired on Channel 7TWO, which is the highest-rating Australian free-to-air digital television multichannel. The video segment has a YouTube 'life' beyond the original to-air story, and is being used by Council in other promotions.

In December 2017 Riverina RDA and Council collaborated on a video segment produced for the 'Country Change' initiative. This project seeks to entice 'tree-changers' to Riverina including the Murrumbidgee Council area. Riverina company Blue Clay Productions filmed a story in Murrumbidgee Council focused on the Walsh family's move back to Coleambally. This was an opportunity to promote the Murrumbidgee Council lifestyle. The story was largely focused on Coleambally. Further opportunities to promote the lifestyle advantages and business opportunities in Darlington Point, Jerilderie and the entire Council area will happen in 2018 as Council promotes:

"Live Work and Play...the Murrumbidgee Way"

Library Overview

The Western Riverina Libraries (WRL) is a co-operative of five (5) Councils, being Murrumbidgee Council, Griffith City Council, Narrandera Shire Council, Carrathool Shire Council and Hay Shire Council. In addition, it operates two Mobile Libraries. The WRL provides up-to-date library services across an area of 42,895 square kilometres, serving a combined population of approximately 41,603.

Griffith City Council and Murrumbidgee Council operate a shared Mobile Library, servicing those who are unable to visit the library due to distance or disability.

The mobile service visits Coleambally on Wednesday from 2.00pm to 4.40pm, and Darlington Point on Thursday from 2.00pm to 4.15pm.



Jerilderie Library continued to provide a much valued service to residents and ratepayers in 2017/18.

Jerilderie Library Branch Report

At a glance:

- New members – 53
- Total members - 629
- Visits made to the library – 6,698
- Loans borrowed – 13,361
- Items loaned to member branch libraries - 188
- Items added to Jerilderie Collection – 418
- Public PC usage – 857
- Wi-fi usage – 1,273
- People attending events/programs – 581

The continual need for guidance with technology by members of the public has increased over the past 12 months. Enquiries on how to improve their knowledge about the devices they own is in demand and is quite time consuming. With more people owning their own devices, wi-fi usage has increased. Our patrons are also able to ePrint to the printer from their devices.

Regular community programs at the library, ie monthly movie and weekly knitting group, are well attended. Blankets made through the knitting group have been distributed throughout the community by different charity organisations.

Monash artwork – The Tenth Annual Monash Dinner saw the official unveiling of a portrait of Sir John Monash by renowned artist Peter Smeeth. The artwork has been generously donated to Murrumbidgee Council by Mrs Miriam Berman and now resides in the Banksi Room at the Library.

New blinds have been fitted in the Banksi Room and on the western windows of the library to keep out the summer heat. This has helped the library be a comfortable place to visit.

Storytime held every Wednesday morning can attract between 10-20 under 5 year olds with stories and craft, it makes for a very busy morning. Storytimers attendance for this year at the library was a whopping 265. In November we held our Christmas craft over 4 weeks. Each week offered a different activity. Screen printing being the most popular craft. During the Summer holidays we participated in the Summer Reading Club and had children attending different events including movies, game days, frog racing and paper plane making. The children thoroughly enjoyed themselves at each event.



We had another wonderful day for the Biggest Morning Tea. The community raised \$2322.35. WOW!!! Raising vital funds for the Cancer Council. Morning tea was delivered to business houses serving 119 people and afternoon tea was enjoyed by 49 attendees. The continuous raffle had a super 95 prizes. The lucky door prize was donated by Pine Rise Pumps and the raffle for a crocheted blanket (made by Catie Purtell) raised \$582.



Our annual book sale in September, was held in the Monash Room with locals and visitors passing through attending the event. Discarded items are sold throughout the year in the library, and are popular with travellers.

Local historian and other genealogy researchers can often be seen in the Banksi room using the microfilm and other resources in the collection. This year we have added debutante photos to the collection.

Jerilderie Library provides a home library service for users who are unable to access the library through disability, illness or limited mobility. Library members have used this service on a regular basis.

RFID process has started, with pre tagging underway.

The Activities Co-Ordinator for the Jerilderie Multi-Purpose Service has been bringing some of the residents into the library so they can select items to borrow. This is a great initiative and the outing is invigorating for the residents. The staff and other patrons enjoy their visit.



Jerilderie Library, 41-43 Jerilderie Street, Jerilderie NSW 2716

Opening Hours:

Monday, Thursday, Friday	10.00am to 5.00pm (closed 12.00pm – 12.30pm)
Wednesday	10.00am to 6.00pm (closed 12.00pm – 12.30pm)
Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday:	Closed

Phone: 03 58 861868



Murrumbidgee
COUNCIL

Annual Report 2017/18

Part 3 – Statutory Reporting



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STATUTORY REPORTING

S428 (2) A Financial Reports

Clause 217 (1) Local Government (General) Regulations

OVERVIEW

Murrumbidgee Council's general reporting requirements are set out in section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Local Government Act) and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005. Copies of the Act and Regulation can be accessed from www.legislation.nsw.gov.au.

This section also meets Council's reporting requirements under the Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2008 and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

As a new Council, which held its first election in 2017, Murrumbidgee Council is exempt from the statutory requirements under section 428A of the Act to include the following in its Annual Report 2017-18:

- State of the Environment Report; and
- an outline of our progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan.

Council undertook various engagements with the community, including public meetings, in order to formalise its Community Strategic Plan. This Plan was adopted in June 2018. We will report on our achievements in implementing our Community Strategic Plan in future Annual Reports.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993-Section 428 (1)-STATEMENT OF COUNCIL PERFORMANCE 2017/18

Achieving our Operational Plan 2017/18

The Local Government Act requires Council to report on the effectiveness of the principal activities in implementing the Delivery Program and Operational Plan in its Annual Report.

As Council was proclaimed on 12 May 2016, our Operational Plan for 2017/18 sought to delivery on the priorities set out in the Community Strategic Plans and Delivery Programs of the former Murrumbidgee and Jerilderie Shire Councils. The development of a new Community Strategic Plan was completed during 2017/18.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 – Section 428 (4) (a) – FINANCIAL REPORT 2017/18

A copy of Council's audited Financial Reports can be found in Appendix 1 – Murrumbidgee Council Financial Statements 2017/18.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION CLAUSE 132-AMOUNT OF RATES AND CHARGES WRITTEN OFF

An amount of \$112,749 was written off as rates during the 2017/18 year, made up of:

- Pensioner abandonments (Section 575) \$110,157
- Levy Adjustments \$ 2,592

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005-SECTION 217 (1) (A1) – PAYMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF, AND THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO, COUNCILLORS IN RELATION TO THEIR CIVIC FUNCTIONS

Council's Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities Policy allows for the payment of expenses incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, Councillors in relation to their roles as elected representatives and members of the governing body of Council.

During the reporting period, the governing body of Council comprised an Administrator for the period 1 July 2017 to 8 September 2017.

The total amount of remuneration paid to the Administrator during this period was \$19,319.

During the reporting period, Council also paid remuneration to members of Council's Local Representation Committee (LRC), and to Councillors following the September 2017 election, totaling \$104,130.

The table below details the amount spent on providing facilities to the Administrator/LRC members and Councillors payment of expenses during the reporting period.

Administrator and LRC/Councillor Expenses and provision of Facilities	
Category	Amount
Office Equipment	Nil
Telephone Calls	\$1,200
Conference and Seminar Attendance	\$2,498
Training and Skills Development	Nil
Interstate Visits	Nil
Overseas Visits	Nil
Travelling costs to attend meetings	\$11,985
Spouse Expenses	Nil
Childcare provision	Nil
Total	\$15,683

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005-Section 217 (1) (a2) CONTRACTS IN EXCESS OF \$150,000 AWARDED BY COUNCIL

Council is required to disclose the details of each contract awarded for amounts greater than \$150,000, including the name of the contractor, the nature of goods or services supplied, and the total amount payable under the contract. The following major contracts for works and services were awarded during the reporting period:

Major Contracts Awarded for Works and Services		
Contractor	Purpose	Value
Porter Equipment Pty Ltd	Supply Hyundai Excavator	\$191,853
Semco Equipment Sales	Supply Hamm Self Propelled Smooth Drum Roller	\$189,108
Wagga Trucks	Supply Mack 500hp Tipping Truck with Nelmac Body	\$233,042
Wagga Trucks	Supply Volvo FMX13 Tipping Truck with Nelmac Body	\$257,825
Wagga Trucks	Supply Case IH Puma 155 Tractor	\$178,800
Hitachi Construction Machinery (Australia) Pty Ltd	Supply and deliver John Deere 770GP Motor Grader	\$470,250
Idwala Pty Ltd	Reconstruction of Coleambally Netball Courts	\$218,411

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005-Section 217 (1) (a3) – AMOUNTS INCURRED IN RELATION TO LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

During 2017/18 Council did not incur any expenses in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against Murrumbidgee Council. However, \$18,190 for legal costs relating to various contracts, agreements and orders have been incurred.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005-Section 217 (1) (a4) SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS MADE UNDER SECTION 67 CONCERNING WORKS CARRIED OUT ON PRIVATE LAND

Coleambally Solar Pty Ltd-Stage 2 Private Works

05/01/18- Resolved on the motion of Councillors Bryce and Chirgwin that Council's participation in the Bouygues Construction Australia stage 2 civil works be approved.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005-Section 217 (1) (a5) CONTRIBUTIONS & GRANTS UNDER SECTION 356

During 2017/18 Council made grants to the following persons, local community groups and regional organisations:

Recipient	Value
Portsea Camp Committee	\$327.00
Local Schools	\$700.00
Student Scholarships	\$3,400.00
Riding For The Starrs	\$1,000.00
Tidy Towns Committee	\$220.00
CSU Foundation Scholarship	\$4,000
Grants for Community Groups	\$23,242.00
Grants under Stronger Communities Fund	\$539,832.00

Standing and Special Committees of Council

Internal Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee
General Manager's Review Committee
Darlington Point Caravan Park Committee
Darlington Point Floodplain Risk Management Committee (formerly DP Levee Committee)
Traffic Committee
Local Emergency Management Committee

Section 355 Committees of Council

Coleambally Australia Day Committee
Jerilderie Australia Day Committee
Coleambally Townlife Committee
Darlington Point Townlife / Australia Day Committee
Heritage Darlington Point
Tiddalik Wetlands Committee
Alf Hanna Legacy Units
Balmeringa Management Committee
Central Coree Sports Complex Management Committee
Yamma Recreation Reserve Management Committee
Jerilderie Tidy Towns Committee

Advisory Committees

Monash Park Users
Coleambally Sports Precinct Advisory Committee
Boat Ramp Darlington Point-Advisory Committee

External Committees with Council Representation

CICL/Coleambally Environmental and Reference Committee (CERC)
Kidman Way Promotional Committee
Newell Highway Promotional Committee
Mid Murray Zone Bushfire Management Committee
MIA Zone Bushfire Management Committee
MIA Zone Rural Fire Service Liaison Committee
Murray Darling Association
Western Riverina Libraries Committee
Western Riverina Arts
Thrive Riverina
Roads and Maritime Services Consultative Committee
RAMROC
Western Region Joint Planning Panel

Council did not hold any controlling interest in any companies during 2017/18.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005 – Section 217 – (1)(a8) – CORPORATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, TRUSTS, JOINT VENTURES, SYNDICATES OR OTHER BODIES IN WHICH THE COUNCIL PARTICIPATED

During 2017/18 Council was involved in a joint venture for the provision of library services. The Western Riverina Libraries is a co-operative of five (5) Council, being Murrumbidgee Council, Griffith City Council, Narrandera Shire Council, Carrathool Shire Council and Hay Shire Council, which provides up-to-date library services to all areas, and particularly to people in remote locations.

The mobile library services the township of Coleambally on Wednesdays and Darlington Point on Thursdays of each week.

Council expenditure on Library Services amounted to a total of \$273,791 in 2017/18.

Council also has an interest or membership of the following organisations, facilities and arrangements in accordance with the under-listed arrangements:

- Riverina & Murray Regional Organisation of Councils (RAMROC) – to explore resource sharing, strategic alliances, lobbying and promotion opportunities.
- Statewide Mutual – a mutual pool scheme providing liability and general insurance cover to NSW Councils.
- StateCover Mutual – a company providing workers compensation insurance cover to NSW Councils.
- Joint Regional Planning Panel - which provides merit-based decision making on regional development within the framework of the NSW planning system.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005 – Section 217 – (1)(a9) – EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Council's Equal Employment opportunity plan provides:

- A commitment to eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination in employment on the grounds of race, sex, religion, marital status, sexual preference and physical and/or intellectual impairment in Council; and
- A commitment to promote equal employment opportunities for everyone, including women, members of racial minorities and physically handicapped persons.

During 2017/18 an extensive review of all staff related policies commenced to ensure compliance with the objectives of Council's EEO Management Plan.

All practices related to employment, including recruitment and selection, training and development, promotion and temporary transfer, along with terms and conditions of employment are based on job requirements and the merit, skills and abilities of the person occupying that position. This has seen an increased awareness of this important issue throughout the organisation.

It is important to recognise that Council is committed to Equal Employment Opportunities principles, not affirmative action. It is the responsibility of Murrumbidgee Council to ensure equal access to all people for positions, however the most suitable applicant will be appointed without discrimination.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005 – Section 217 – (1)(b) and (1) (c) REMUNERATION PACKAGE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

During the 2017/18 financial year, Council employed the General Manager at a total remuneration cost of \$285,414, including salary, fringe benefits and on costs.

Fringe benefits include private use of a Council vehicle by way of a lease. On cost includes employer's superannuation contribution.

General Manager

- Total value of the salary component of the package was \$226,309
- Total amount of any bonus was nil
- Total amount payable by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the General Manager may be a contributor was \$47,731
- Total value of any non-cash benefits for which the General Manager may elect under the package was \$5,960
- Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits \$5,414

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005 – Section 217 – (1)(b) and (1) (c) REMUNERATION PACKAGE OF ALL SENIOR STAFF

During the 2017/18 financial year, Council employed 2 Assistant General Manager's at a total remuneration cost of \$371,318, including salary, fringe benefits and on costs.

Fringe benefits include private use of a Council vehicle by way of a lease. On cost includes employer's superannuation contribution.

Assistant General Manager Infrastructure & Environment

- Total value of the salary component of the package was \$160,823
- Total amount of any bonus was Nil
- Total amount payable by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the Assistant General Manager Infrastructure & Environment may be a contributor was \$15,278
- Total value of any non-cash benefits for which the Assistant General Manager Infrastructure & Environment may elect under the package was \$9,000
- Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits \$606

Assistant General Manager Corporate & Community

- Total value of the salary component of the package was \$162,293
- Total amount of any bonus was Nil
- Total amount payable by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the Assistant General Manager Corporate & Community may be a contributor was \$14,318
- Total value of any non-cash benefits for which the Assistant General Manager Corporate & Community may elect under the package was \$9,000
- Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits was Nil

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005 – Section 217 – (1) (e) STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SERVICES PROVIDED BY COUNCIL

During the 2017/18 reporting period, Council levied a storm water management charge on all applicable assessments within the former Jerilderie Shire Council area, with the aim of raising additional funds in order to complete future storm water upgrades of the CBD and surrounding areas of the Jerilderie township. A total of \$10,900 was levied and funds of \$7,704 were expended on drainage maintenance, leaving a balance to be carried forward of \$3,196.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005 – Section 217 – (1)(e1) COASTAL PROTECTION SERVICES (if levied)

Council does not levy an annual charge for coastal protection services.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993-Section 428 A (1) STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

As a new Council, Murrumbidgee Council is not required to report on this.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993-Section 508 SPECIAL VARIATION EXPENDITURE

Section 508 Special Variation Expenditure does not apply.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993-CAPITAL WORKS PROJECTS

No capital works projects in excess of \$1,000,000 or 10% of Council's ordinary rate revenue were undertaken during the financial year.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (General) REGULATION 2005-Section 2017-(1) (f) STATEMENT ON ACTIVITIES RELATING TO ENFORCING AND ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPANION ANIMALS ACT AND REGULATIONS

During 2017/18 Council expended \$39,000 on management and control of companion animals within the Council area. Local staff were utilised to follow up complaints and to ensure compliance with the Companion Animals Act. Pound data collection returns were lodged with the Department of Local Government and off leash areas are provided in Darlington Point, Coleambally and Jerilderie.

Background

The GIPA Act became operational on 1 July 2010 and introduced a new right to information approach for access to Government information. The GIPA Act replaced the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*, and creates new rights to information that are designed to meet the community's expectation of more open and transparent Government. It encourages the routine and proactive release of Government information, including information held by providers of goods and services contracted by Government agencies.

Council is required to prepare an annual report in accordance with the requirements of Section 125 of the GIPA Act and clause 7 of the Government Information (Public Access) Regulation (GIPA Regulation). In the annual report we are required to include statistical information on formal access applications in the form required by Schedule 2 of the GIPA Regulation.

Under the GIPA Act, there are four ways in which Government information can be released:

1. **Open Access Information** – this information is made available on Council's website and is available free of charge, for example Council policies, meeting agendas and minutes, media releases and annual reports;
2. **Proactive Release** – Council is encouraged to make as much information of public interest as possible publicly available, free of charge or at minimal cost. Examples include frequently requested information or information of public interest;
3. **Informal Release of Information** - Council is encouraged to make as much information of public interest as possible publicly available, free of charge or at minimal cost. Examples include frequently requested information or information of public interest;
4. **Formal Release of Information (Formal Access Information)** – The release of all other information not made available by either mandatory, proactive or informal release can be made by way of submitting an Application for Information (Formal Application). Standard fees and charges and time frames are applicable for such applications. Examples include personal information relating to a third party where consultation is required or where information is of a confidential nature.

Review of Proactive Release Program

Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009 Reg (7) (a)

Under section 7 of the GIPA Act, Council is required to review its program for the release of Government information to identify the kinds of government information held by Council that should, in the public interest, be made publicly available and that can be made publicly available without imposing unreasonable additional costs on Council. This review must be undertaken at least once every 12 months.

Council undertook the following initiatives as part of its review of the proactive release program for the reporting period:

- Reviewing the information published on Council's website to ensure that information featured is up-to-date, informative and relevant;
- Commencing a review of Council's Policy Register, which resulted in a significant number of policies being developed and adopted by Council during the reporting period.
- Monitoring matters of public interest to determine whether Council can proactively release further information about those matters.
- Publishing a monthly community newsletter, The Murrumbidgee Magazine, featuring content promoting Council decisions, projects, programs and activities and distributed to residents throughout the Murrumbidgee Council Local Government Area via post;
- Publishing a monthly Administrator's Message in local newspapers, the Coly Point Observer and Southern Riverina News, featuring content promoting projects, programs and activities.
- Seeking community feedback on draft strategies and policies through public exhibition notices published in Coly- Point Observer and Southern Riverina News.

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

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

Murrumbidgee Council's program for the proactive release of information involves display of Council's Publication Guide and available records, including Council's business papers, minutes and annual reports, and maintaining Council's website. Information regarding accessing information is also available on the website. During the reporting period we reviewed this program by ensuring records are available, and updating records/existing information where needed. As a result of this review, we released the following information proactively: NIL new information was required to be released.

Clause 7B: The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year (including withdrawn applications but not including invalid applications)

Total number of applications received
0

Clause 7C: The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year that the agency refused either wholly or partly, because the application was for the disclosure of information referred to in Schedule 1 to the Act (information for which there is conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure)

Number of Applications Refused	Wholly	Partly	Total
	0	0	0
% of Total	0%	0%	

Schedule 2 Statistical information about access applications to be included in annual report

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

	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Private sector business	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of the public (other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
% of Total	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		

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

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

	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Personal information applications*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
% of Total	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		

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

Table C: Invalid applications

Reason for invalidity	No of applications	% of Total
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	0	0%
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0	0%
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0	0%
Total number of invalid applications received	0	0%
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	0	0%

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

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

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

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

	Number of times consideration used*	% of Total
Responsible and effective government	0	0%
Law enforcement and security	0	0%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	0	0%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	0	0%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0	0%
Secrecy provisions	0	0%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0%
Total	0	

Table F: Timeliness

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

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

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

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

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

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

Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies.

	Number of applications transferred	% of Total
Agency-Initiated Transfers	0	0%
Applicant - Initiated Transfers	0	0%
Total	0	

MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT – Procedures for Administration Clause 12.1

In accordance with Clause 12.1 of the Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW, the Complaints coordinator must report annually to Council on Code of Conduct Complaints.

A summary of Code of Conduct Complaints for the financial year 2017/18 is as follows:-

The total number of code of conduct complaints made about Councillors and the General Manager under the code of conduct in the year to September	0
The number of code of conduct complaints referred to a conduct reviewer	0
The number of code of conduct complaints finalised by a conduct reviewer at the preliminary assessment stage and the outcome of those complaints	0
The number of code of conduct complaints investigated by a conduct reviewer	0
The number of code of conduct complaints investigated by a conduct review committee	0
The outcome of code of conduct complaints investigated by a conduct reviewer or conduct review committee under these procedures	0
The number of matters reviewed by the Division and the outcome of the reviews	0
The total cost of dealing with code of conduct complaints made about Councillors and the General Manager in the year to September, including staff costs	0

COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE IN RELATION TO ACCESS AND EQUITY ACTIVITIES

Council undertakes the following activities to promote services and access to services for residents and other users:

1. The Community Care Co-Ordinators aim to ensure effective service provision to the elderly and disabled in regard to meals on wheels, respite care, home modifications and community transport services;
2. During Seniors' Week, Council organises 2 senior citizen luncheons, which provide an opportunity to make senior citizens aware of activities and services available to them throughout the Council area;
3. The weekly mobile library service to both Darlington Point and Coleambally ensures all ratepayers are provided with library services, which would otherwise not be available;
4. Council newsletters are issued regularly throughout the year, updating ratepayers on various issues and activities within the Council area, and social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are also utilised as a means of keeping residents updated.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS PER ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & ASSESSMENT ACT
1979 – Section 7.5(5)

Council did not have any planning agreements in force during 2017/18.

CONTACT ARRANGEMENTS

Enquiries in relation to access to documents held by Council may be made to:

The Public Officer - Corporate & Community Services Manager
Murrumbidgee Council
21 Carrington Street
DARLINGTON POINT NSW 2706
