

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20



Murrumbidgee
COUNCIL



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We would like to show respect and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, Elders past and present, and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Pictured is the incredible mural which graces the walls of the Council Chambers at Jerilderie. The mural is titled 'Coming Together', and was created for the 2000 Olympic Games, where it was hung in Parliament House to provide a visual welcome to visitors and wish them peace and safe travel.

The painting depicts various Aboriginal design elements, including the Eaglehawk, which is the Barundji/Barkindji totem. It also depicts a white feather to symbolise safe travel.

The mural was created by four Barundji/Barkindji artists: Elise Black, Gertrude Gittins, Eileen Ballangarry and Sos Hawkins. These women can trace their family back at least 700 years as direct matriarchal descendants of the tribe.

It measures 8 metres by 4 metres and is available for viewing.



Postal address: PO Box 96 Jerilderie NSW 2716
 T: 1300 MRMBGE (676 243)
 E: mail@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au
 W: www.murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au

Coleambally Office: 39 Broлга Place Coleambally NSW 2707
 Darlington Point Office: 21 Carrington Street Darlington Point NSW 2706
 Jerilderie Office: 35 Jerilderie Street Jerilderie NSW 2716

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WELCOME

Welcome to Murrumbidgee Council's Annual Report 2019-20. This report provides a summary. The Annual Report is prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, and includes a copy of the Council's audited financial reports (Attachment A).

How to read this document

This annual report comprises six main sections:

1. An overview of our area and Council. It includes messages from the Mayor and General Manager, a snapshot of our community, details on our Councillors and Council's organisational structure (pages 1-9).
2. Our response to managing COVID-19 (pages 10-11)
3. Major projects being undertaken and planned for the future (pages 12-13)
2. The highlights and work of our Council teams throughout the year (pages 14-30)
3. A glossary of acronyms used in this document (page 32)
4. Attachment A: Audited Financial Statements
5. Attachment B: Additional Local Government Requirements
6. Attachment C: Information on how Council has performed in regard to the meeting goals within the Operational Plan

How to obtain a copy of this document

- ❖ Council's website: www.murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au
- ❖ Any Murrumbidgee Council office (see address details on page 2). Telephone Murrumbidgee Council at 1300 676 243 and request a copy to be mailed to you.

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



It is my pleasure to present the 2019-2020 Annual Report for Murrumbidgee Council.

Council's day to day business involves a myriad of regulatory and community functions that is both complex and varied. The 2019-20 reporting year is the 4th year in the short, but action packed, evolution of Murrumbidgee

Council. The reality is that it is still a huge challenge, and is no less confronting, than it has been since the merger. But with challenge comes opportunity, and this is where we need to maintain our focus

Council's staff, ably led by General Manager John Scarce, have worked diligently through these exceptional COVID-19 circumstances. They have delivered our essential services and managed to still deliver on major projects and the many plans of programmed works that Council is mandated to develop and deliver.

The well health of our communities has at all times been front and centre as we have navigated this difficult path. Guided by and strictly adhering to Public Health Orders have informed our actions as we adapt to the new normal. It is our hope that 2021 will see the reinstatement of many of our services.

We have been the beneficiaries of some opportunistic funding rounds, namely Drought Relief, Crown Lands, additional Roads 2 Recovery, RFS Flood Study and Safe and Secure funding. These monies, have been coupled with our Stronger Country Communities Rounds 1,2 and 3 our Stronger Communities Funding. Merger funds are slowly but surely addressing vital infrastructure upgrades/ replacements for our small but progressive Council.

While navigating a global pandemic, our region has been lucky to have experienced a welcome break from our unrelenting drought years. Our agricultural season has been a bright beacon in an otherwise trying year and

it is hoped that the return for our many farmers is due reward for their resilience and investment.

In a rural Council where our road network is not only our major asset, but an enabler for our key economic driver, a large amount of our resources are invested in this valuable maintenance program. We have many reconstruction, resealing and capital works projects delivered and ready to be rolled out.

Economic Development and Tourism is a key focus for Council as we avail and equip ourselves to be shovel ready and capable of taking up the many opportunities. I am sure that COVID-19 stimulus will provide. Encouraging our communities to be their best promoters of where we live and abreast of current initiatives Council has helped facilitate the creation of Business Murrumbidgee which will have a unique voice for each community and a collective voice for our Council area.

Streamlining compliance and process has been a big part of making our Council "Planning Ready" for 2021. Adopting the electronic lodgement capability for DA's, Construction Certificates etc should and will allow a more user friendly approach for all concerned, and hopefully a more expedient turn around for this area of business.

It is Council's intention to continue to plan and manage our diverse Council footprint. We value and thank our Local and Federal Members of Parliament who advocate for us across health, education, law enforcement and most importantly water.

My thanks to all Murrumbidgee Council staff for your commitment to our communities.

My thanks to my fellow Councillors and in particular Deputy Mayor Rob Black.

And, lastly, my thanks to each and every one of our community members who give generously of their time allowing our Council the best it can be.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "R. McRae". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ruth McRae
Mayor



MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



Business as usual and then ... more of that later!

The financial year 2019-20 was blessed with unexpected additional grant funds which has been the theme for the past couple of years.

Stronger County Community Funds allocated \$1,244,519 towards Coleambally Sports Precinct, Splash Park Darlington Point, Public School Darlington Point, Pump Track Skate Park Jerilderie and rehabilitation of the banks of Lake Jerilderie by the Aquatic Club.

We also saw increases in road funds for Fixing Country Roads and a COVID stimulus of over an additional \$2 million allocated to Bencubbin Avenue and Channel 9 Road.

Much of the above you will see delivered in the next financial year.

The year started out as business as usual - completing our programmed budgeted works, travelling to advocate for the Local Government Area, meeting politicians, other Council's members, sharing ideas, learning from others, shaking hands, even the odd kiss on the cheek, and then, we became a state of restrictions!

Worrying about making payments of salary and bills, worrying if the income for the work you have done arrives, or are they in financial stress and struggling to pay. Knowing COVID-19 is contagious and looking sideways at everyone you meet. Are the protocols you put in place enough to keep everyone safe? Picking up a common cold a little hayfever and going off to get tested. Thinking "am I the statistic?" I am sure you can all relate to this.

Everyone in varying degrees carried the stress of the unknown. It was a time of survival, suspending things, ceasing services, and focusing on the essential to ensure everyone was safe. At time of writing this message we are fortunate, our numbers have been low. Were we lucky? Did we all do the right thing? Whichever it is, we should not waste time on analysing things that could have been done differently, but we should focus on the future, not be complacent and appreciate that we may need to go back to restrictions in order to stay safe again.

As a final note, Murrumbidgee Council is in a strong financial position to deliver on most programs for 2020-21 and beyond.

John Scarce
General Manager

OUR COMMUNITY

Our Purpose

We aim to deliver quality services to create a friendly and welcoming community.

Our Community Vision

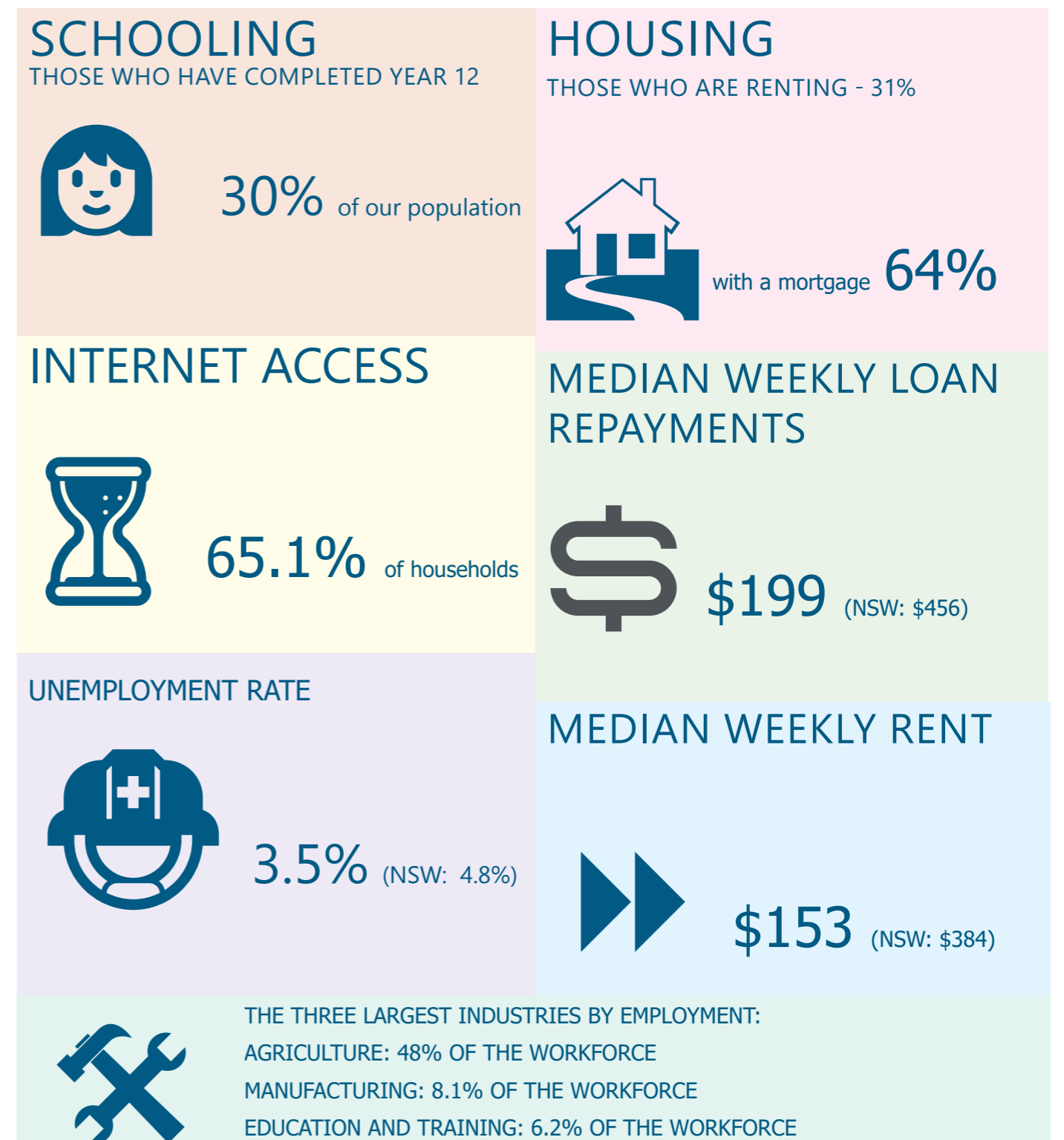
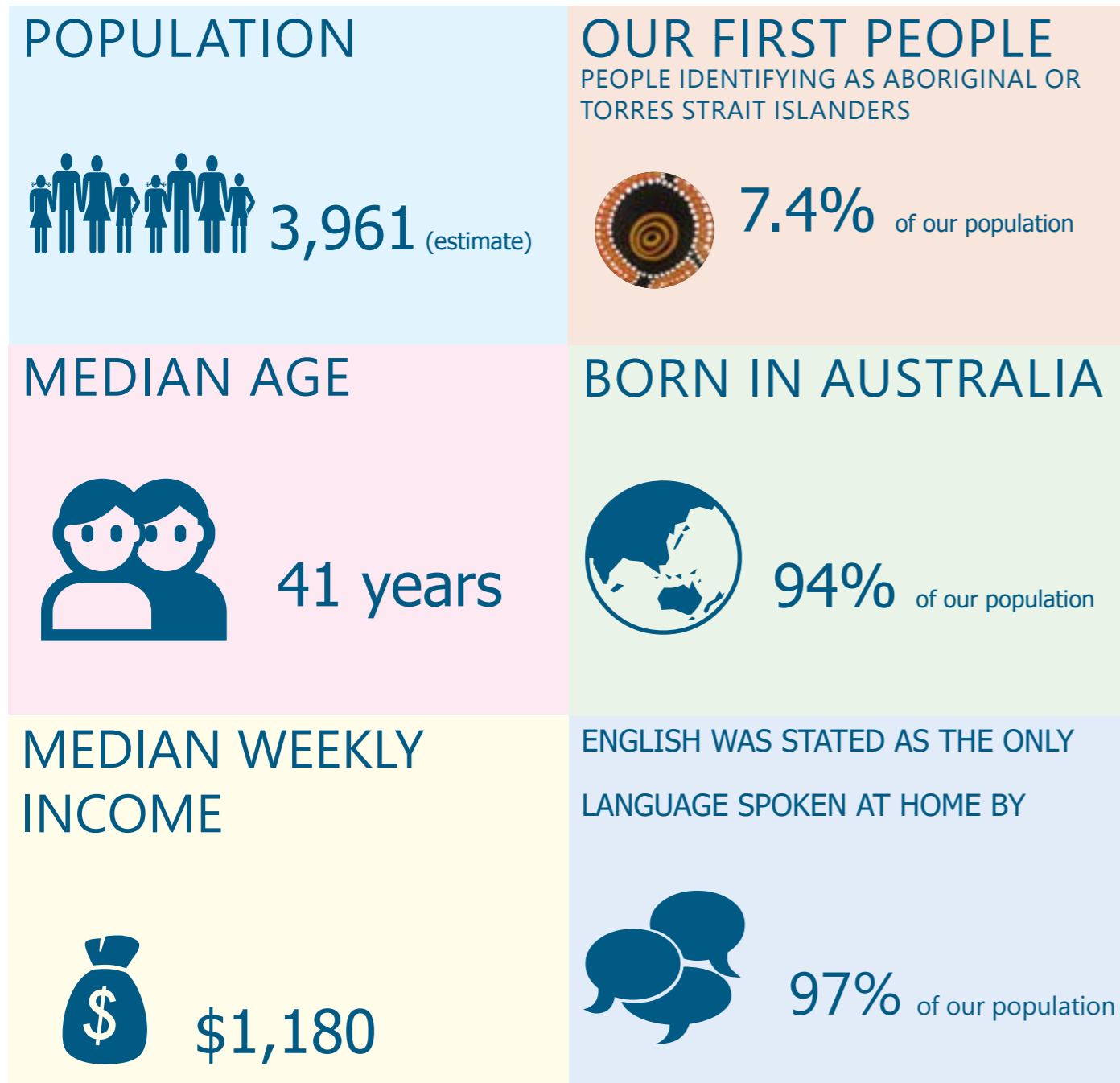
We strive for a community built by innovative and reliable services.

Our Values

Creativity, quality, tradition and energy.



The following graphics provide a snapshot of our community, taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census and the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research 2018 data.





OUR COUNCILLORS


The Murrumbidgee Local Government area (LGA) is divided into three wards, with three councillors elected to represent each ward. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are elected by the Councillors. Our Mayor throughout 2018-19 was Cr Ruth McRae, and Deputy Mayor was Cr Robert Black.

The Councillors make decisions about what happens across our LGA and ensure decisions adopted are implemented.

During 2018-19, there were eleven Ordinary Council meetings and three Extraordinary Council meetings.

Ordinary Council meetings are generally held the fourth Tuesday of each month, alternately in Darlington Point and Jerilderie. The community are welcome to attend.

The meeting schedule, agendas and minutes are available on Council's website or at any Council office.

JERILDERIE WARD		RUTH McRAE, Mayor 0428 861 767 ruthm@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au As Mayor, Cr McRae represents the entire Murrumbidgee LGA.		GAILA SMITH 0428 861 513 gailas@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au
		FAITH BRYCE 0438 108 803 faithb@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au		
MURRUMBIDGEE EAST WARD		ROBERT BLACK, Deputy Mayor 0428 696 102 robertb@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au		PAT BROWN 0427 546 151 patb@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au
		CHRISTINE CHIRGWIN 0467 544 724 christinec@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au		
MURRUMBIDGEE WARD		ROBERT CURPHEY 0448 629 502 robertc@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au		PHILLIP WELLS 0408 445 339 phillipw@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au
		GAVIN GILBERT 0439 255 448 gaving@murrumbidgee.nsw.gov.au		

OUR FOOTPRINT



Our community includes:

- ❖ A population of 3,961 people
- ❖ 3 townships of Coleambally, Darlington Point and Jerilderie, and surrounding rural localities (or part) of Argoon, Bundure, Carrathool, Coree, Four Corners, Gala Vale, Logie Brae, Mabins Well, Mairjimmy, Nyora, Oaklands, Steam Plains, Waddi and Yamma, encompassing an area of 6,880 km².
- ❖ 3 offices, 3 depots
- ❖ 122 machines and vehicles
- ❖ 1,721 kms of roads
- ❖ 1 library, 1 mobile library
- ❖ 3 waste depots and 950 bins per week
- ❖ 10 halls and facilities
- ❖ 9 public toilets
- ❖ 2 skate parks
- ❖ 3 sporting ovals
- ❖ 2 sporting complexes
- ❖ 3 swimming pools
- ❖ 1 river, 1 lake, 1 billabong
- ❖ Nature trails and walks
- ❖ 3 cemeteries

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Murrumbidgee Council has offices in Coleambally, Darlington Point and Jerilderie. The Council is a major employer in the area, with a total of 86 staff.

Mr John Scarce is the General Manager. Council is currently planning for a restructure. This will commence in the 2020-21 financial year.

Currently, a Senior Manager oversees each Council department, with the exception of Operations, which has two senior managers. The team of senior managers meet regularly to oversee strategy, policy development and the overall management of Council.

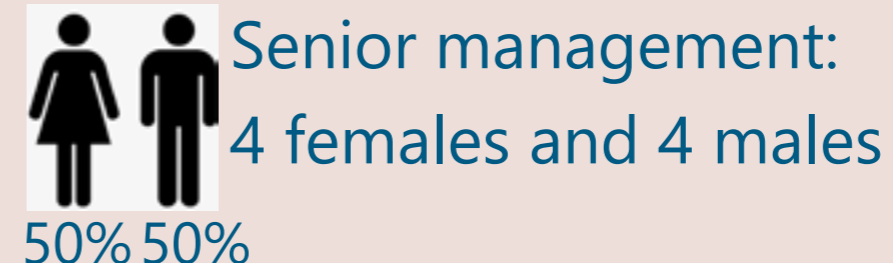
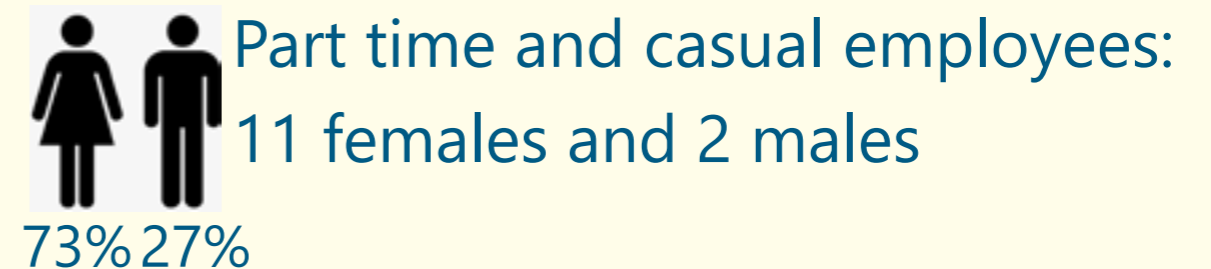
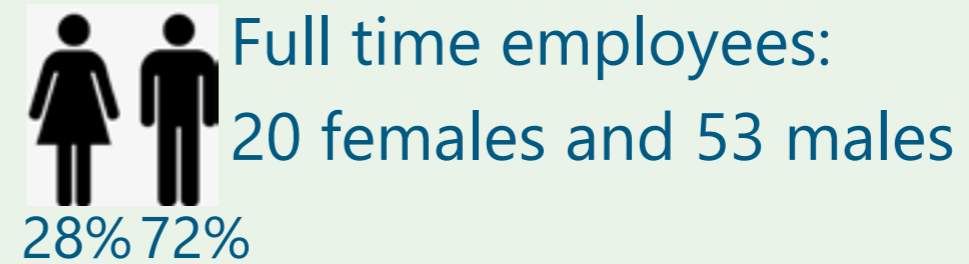
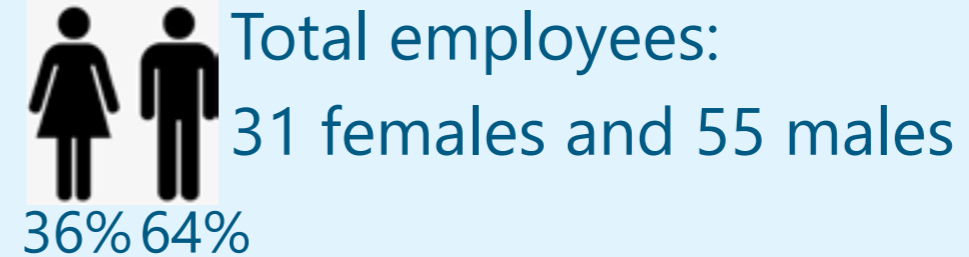
The senior management team also attends all Council meetings and provides information and advice to the Councillors to enable them to make informed decisions on strategic and policy issues.

It was with great sadness that we lost a colleague and friend, Colin Dowell. Colin is sadly missed by all at Council.



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Our workforce is comprised of a total of 86 employees.





RESPONDING TO COVID

A WHOLE OF COMMUNITY EFFORT

COVID-19 has thrown many challenges into our daily lives. In true community spirit we have faced these challenges head on and rallied as a community to keep COVID-19 at bay. It has not been easy and many of us have found it difficult on a personal level, but also on a business level.

As a Local Government organisation, we played a key role in keeping the community safe. The essential part Councils played in the community was mandated in the NSW Human Influenza Pandemic Plan. Here's some of the ways we responded.



To keep our community safe and allow us to implement a strict cleaning routine, only one set of toilets were open in each town. Staff undertook hourly cleaning of each of these facilities. The response from these staff was phenomenal and we truly thank them for this as it's not a pleasant job, but one that was vital in ensuring the safety of our community. Pictured is Troy Heath.

- ❖ Development of and regular updates to a COVID-19 Action Plan specifying Council services that were both critical and essential to the community and how these would be safely maintained. The critical services were water supply, waste water and water collection.
- ❖ The essential services included Bendigo Bank (by appointment only), Development and Building Applications and inspections (by appointment only), road maintenance, maintaining public areas, finance and corporate functions, maintenance of plant and fleet, weed control, responding to menacing dogs, managing funeral and grave sites, Meals on Wheels, emergency management, stock control, public health inspections, responding to safety requests and also opening, closing and access to roads.
- ❖ It was necessary to immediately close many of our facilities. These included Jerilderie Library, our three swimming pools, gymnasiums, John McInnes Square, skate parks, water fountains, halls, museums, playgrounds, outside exercise equipment, public BBQs and all public toilets except one block in each town. A strict cleaning routine was implemented for offices and the public toilets that were open.
- ❖ Many of our indoor staff worked from home and this required a quick response to ensure they had the access to the required technology and connectivity to allow this. Working hours were staggered for our depot staff.
- ❖ In recognition of the financial hardship the pandemic was inflicting on our community and would continue to do so post COVID, Council adopted a COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy on 28 April 2020. The policy provided a process



RESPONDING TO COVID

A WHOLE OF COMMUNITY EFFORT

to assist ratepayers, businesses, individuals and community groups who may, due to the economic impacts of the pandemic, encounter difficulties with payments of their rates, fees and charges.

- ❖ An important role of Council was to ensure the community was kept well informed of the many changes that occurred to Council operations and other aspects of our lives as a result of the pandemic. We immediately implemented an Emergency Communications Strategy which clearly outlined the strategies and actions to ensure external and internal stakeholders were kept informed, included and supported during and after the pandemic. We kept our community informed with letterbox drops to houses and businesses, regular updates on social media, statements to the media, advertisements in the media, community newsletters and community e-newsletters, posters and information on our website. Our Councillors and staff were an important part of this and they were kept well informed as well.
- ❖ We also kept our business community informed of any updates and developments that affected them. This was achieved through e-newsletters, emails and social media.
- ❖ Our Community Services staff played an integral part in making sure senior residents were safe and that they understood the many changes in our community. Our staff kept in contact with clients through phone calls. We also delivered care packages to our residents. They were very appreciative of these calls.
- ❖ With Community transport severely impacted, we worked with our older residents and encouraged them to use family were possible

and to use local services such as grocers, butchers, chemists who are mostly are happy to take phone orders and deliver to our elder members of the community. We felt very proud and lucky to live in small communities who are there to support one another in these tough times.

- ❖ Delivery of Meals on Wheels saw an increase in demand.
- ❖ Our resident artist, Kerri Weymouth is planning to put together an Art therapy project called "Corona the Light Forward" to help support the wellbeing and mental health of our clients.
- ❖ Art doesn't just unify us, it physically benefits us, too. Studies show spending just 45 minutes on an art project can relieve stress, strengthen critical thinking skill, improve and sustain memory and contribute to improved wellbeing.
- ❖ The process encourages experimentation and mindfulness over making a finished art piece. The clients will be using the natural pigments from food (no technical skills required) Ingredients will be easily assessable from the pantry like coffee, beetroot, paprika, turmeric, blueberry juice, etc - whatever they may have on hand.
- ❖ The name of the project "Corona the circle of light" stands for the hope and ending of this pandemic in coming full circle and towards the light of health, love and community.
- ❖ We look forward to seeing the results and hope to have these artworks as an exhibition in the future.



MAJOR PROJECTS

The past 12 months have been very busy for Council, with a range of Government funding programs sourced for many different projects right across our Local Government Area. Here's a snapshot of what's been completed and what's ahead:

Coleambally

- ❖ Amenities/Junior Change Rooms (pictured above under construction)
- ❖ Drought funding #1: footpaths (Bellbird and Sandpiper Sts, shade structures, seating)
- ❖ Morundah Road reconstruction
- ❖ Resheeting/resealing: Commins Rd, Hardy Rd, Eulo Rd, Jimmy Cull Rd, Kidman Way, Four Corners Rd, Graham Rd

Darlington Point

- ❖ Goanna Walking Track signage
- ❖ Town entrance signs
- ❖ Drought funding #1: footpaths (McAllister Street, Barwidgee Blvd) shade structures, seating
- ❖ Britts Road reconstruction
- ❖ Sports Facilities upgrade: change rooms, kiosk, toilets, kitchen

Jerilderie

- ❖ Independent Living units
- ❖ Coree Hall Playground shelter
- ❖ Greens Road reconstruction
- ❖ Resheeting/resealing: Green Swamp Rd, Harris Lane, Oaklands Rd, Conargo Road, Willows Rd, Wilson Rd, Old Corowa Rd, Telephone Gate Rd
- ❖ Showground amenities
- ❖ Flood lights at Monash Park
- ❖ Drought funding #1: footpath (Jerilderie St) kerb and guttering (Jerilderie St, Nowranie St),

seating, Monash Park fence and seating, tree/bin guards



The new lights going up at Monash Park in Jerilderie were a welcome addition for all users and spectators.

Scheduled for completion in 2020-21

- ❖ Resealing program across the Council area: Resealing: Kidman Way, Willows Rd, Wilson Rd, Main Canal Rd, Oaklands Rd, Morundah Rd, Boerema Rd, Gilbert Rd, Four Corners Rd, South Coree Rd, Jimmy Cull Rd, Brolga Pl.
- ❖ Resheeting program: Harveys Well Rd, North Coree Rd, Old Corowa Rd, Four Corners Rd, Elliott Ln, Colombo Creek Rd, McGrath Rd, Gaston Rd, Wood Rd, Rolfe Rd.

Coleambally

- ❖ Drought funding #2: Town Revitalisation Project (John McInnes Square, solar lighting, town seating, Christmas decorations)



MAJOR PROJECTS

- ❖ Bencubbin Avenue and Channel Nine Road reconstruction
- ❖ Sports precinct: new player and umpire change rooms/amenities, Clubhouse upgrades, netball change rooms/amenities, gymnasium, youth hall upgrade and cricket nets.
- ❖ Brolga Place structure and landscaping
- ❖ Town entrance pillars
- ❖ Drought funding #2: Town Revitalisation Project
- ❖ Christmas decorations

Jerilderie

- ❖ Yamma Hall upgrade
- ❖ Swimming Pool upgrade
- ❖ Racecourse grandstand roof
- ❖ Jerilderie Lake Bank rehabilitation
- ❖ Drought fund #2 Town
- ❖ Revitalisation Project
- ❖ Long Day Care
- ❖ Bundure Tower mobile phone coverage project
- ❖ Town entrance pillars
- ❖ Jerilderie stadium studio construction
- ❖ Bolton Street Reconstruction

- ❖ Christmas decorations
- ❖ Oaklands Road reconstruction

Darlington Point

- ❖ Boat ramp and floating pontoon
- ❖ Lions Park toilet and display
- ❖ Drought funding #2: Town Revitalisation Project
- ❖ Wiradjuri Walk project (public art, story boards, improvements in shared spaces/connectivity)
- ❖ Town entrance pillars
- ❖ Young Street Subdivision
- ❖ Shire Hall upgrade and restoration
- ❖ Museum upgrade
- ❖ Christmas decorations

Future years

- ❖ Jerilderie Pump Track
- ❖ Darlington Point Splash Park
- ❖ Coleambally Hall upgrade
- ❖ Water and Sewerage Treatment works upgrades in each town
- ❖ Local Community Champions Youth Project
- ❖ Shared Spaces Project (elements in each town)



The new \$1.1 million boat ramp and floating pontoon is being built on the southern side of the Murrumbidgee River, opposite the Darlington Point Caravan Park and adjacent to the Darlington Point flood levee bank. The project is funded through a \$450,000 grant through the NSW Government's Boating Now Program, with the remainder funded by the NSW Government's Stronger Communities Fund.



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

MANAGING COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND ASSETS

Highlights

- ❖ Completion of the Darlington Point Floodplain Management Project for the \$10 million levee bank (managed by NSW Public Works).
- ❖ Close involvement with the whole-of-Council response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ Manage the annual Transport for NSW works and maintenance
- ❖ Manage bushfire mitigation works for the Murrumbidgee Council area. Council is currently part of two Bushfire Zones and Management Committees, the Mid Murray and the MIA.
- ❖ Manage the Building Maintenance Program valued at over \$220,000. Routine maintenance, storm water repairs, painting, pest control and fire equipment servicing at various locations was undertaken as necessary.
- ❖ Updated signage for the Goanna Walking Track.

Future Directions

- ❖ Implement Council's System Management Plan.
- ❖ Implement Work Health and Safety systems.
- ❖ Improve on Risk Management with assets.
- ❖ Improve GIS requirements.
- ❖ Improve Asset Management System. As part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements, Council prepares an Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Plans to support its Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Council has these policies, strategies and plans in place for the major asset groups of Buildings,

Land Improvements, Water Supply, Sewer Services, Stormwater & Drainage and Transport Infrastructure. These plans are updated annually.

Jerilderie Saleyards

Council conducted two sheep sales throughout the year. The first was held on 2 October, the John Wells Memorial sale. A total of 8,964 sheep were sold, 83 not sold and the top price reached \$382.00. May-June drop merino ewes and best presented pen went Craig and Caroline Heath (Wiraki). The second sale was held on 2 November. A total of 5,497 were sold. The sale top was \$350.00 for merino ewes.

New fencing was installed to create a laneway for easier movement of sheep within the yards. Additionally, the fencing on the eastern side of holding paddocks was replaced.

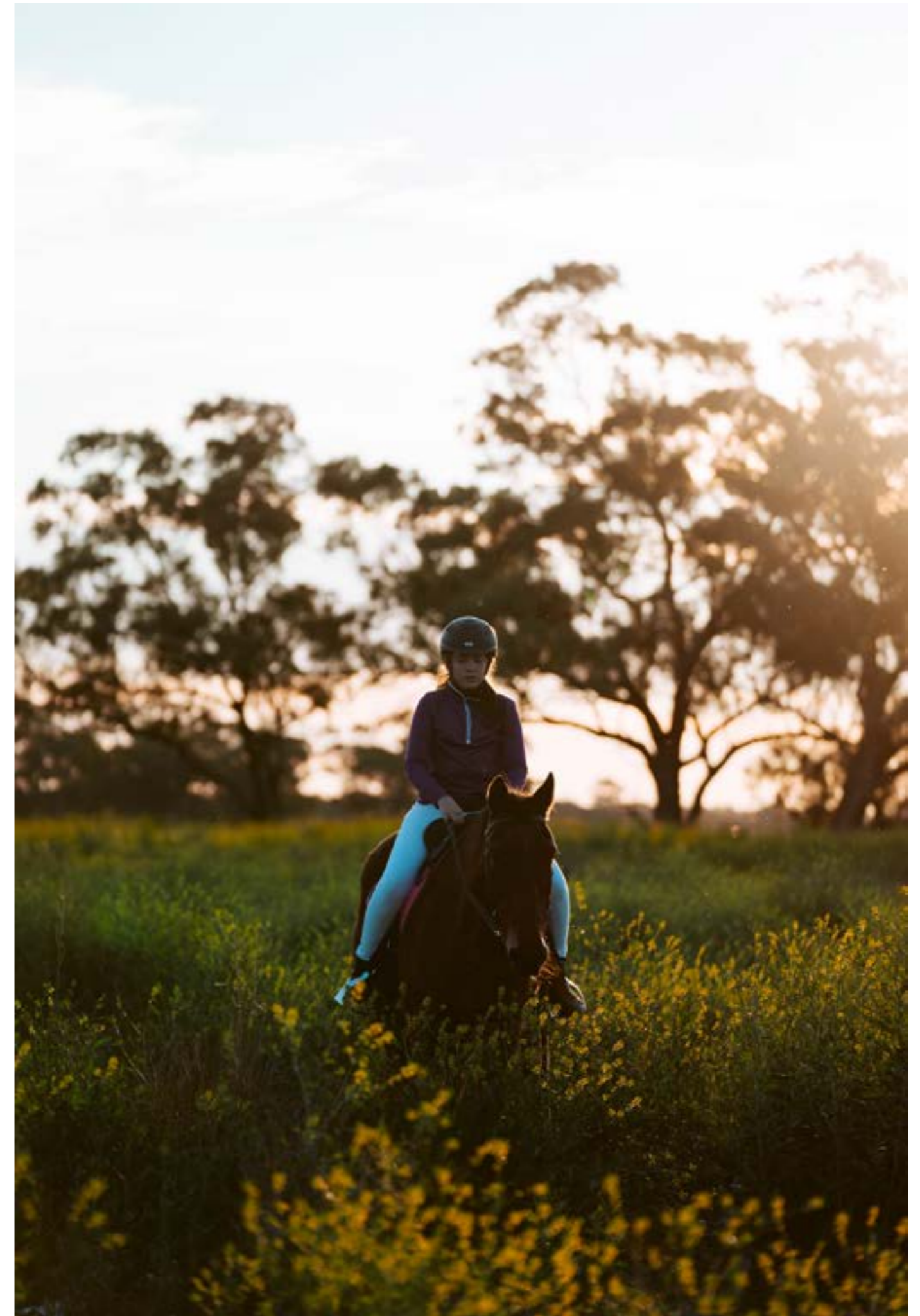
The truck wash has not had any major issues throughout the year and will continue to benefit the transport industry.

Jerilderie Sports Stadium

The Sports Centre is open to the public for unsupervised use, provided users signed a waiver. Refurbishing works are to be undertaken in the 2020-21 financial year.

Public Swimming Pools

The communities of Coleambally, Darlington Point and Jerilderie each have a Council owned public swimming pool. Council made entry to the pool free for the 2019-20 season. This was very successful with pool patronage up considerably. Council also engaged lessees to run each pool. Thank you to the lessees who did an excellent job. At Coleambally, it was Kristy-Lee Payne, at Darlington Point it was Bec Norris and at Jerilderie, it was Paige Nash.





ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

At Council we are closely involved with the community in many different ways. Here are some examples:

Bendigo Bank Agencies

Bank agencies are located at the Darlington Point and Jerilderie offices and are available during office hours. As these were seen as an essential service, they were maintained during the COVID Coleambally residents are able to utilise the Coleambally Community Bank.

Citizenship ceremonies

We take great pride in our role in conferring Citizenship ceremonies on behalf of the Australian Government.

Three citizenship ceremonies were held and the following people officially took the pledge in front of Mayor Ruth McRae to become Australian citizens.



L-R: Mohan Kaigala, Bhargav Lavu, Nag Kaigala, Mayor Ruth McRae, Chelsea Baumann, Haizel De Peralta, Shane DePeralta and Eduardo De Peralta at their Citizenship Ceremony on 26 September 2019.

Congratulations to Sunil Desham, Edgar Orquillas and William Hannah.

Community grants

We proudly provide community grants under the Murrumbidgee Council Community Grants Program. There is a total of \$20,000 available with the maximum for each grant of \$2,000.

Congratulations to the recipients for 2019-20:

- ❖ Coleambally/Darlington Point Junior Rugby - training and safety equipment: \$1,941
- ❖ Coleambally Pre School Association – Outdoor kitchen: \$900
- ❖ Darlington Point Landcare - replanting of trees: \$2,000
- ❖ Darlington Point Public School P & C Association - Breakfast Club: \$2,000
- ❖ Jerilderie APEX Club - Racecourse solar lighting: \$2,000
- ❖ Jerilderie Race Club - Racecourse solar lighting: \$2,000
- ❖ Jerilderie Pre-School Kindergarten - Smart board: \$2,000
- ❖ Riverina Classic Catch & Release Fishing Competition - Fingerlings: \$2,000
- ❖ St Joseph's Primary School Jerilderie Social & Fundraising Committee – Compost area/oiling cubbies: \$1,300
- ❖ Cypress View Lodge – Internet server: \$2,000



ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

- ❖ Country Education Foundation of Coleambally-Darlington Point - Education grants: \$1,859

We also administer the grants through the Coleambally Solar Farm Community Fund, sponsored by Coleambally Solar Farm and Neoen who provide \$20,000 each calendar year to support local projects that benefit and strengthen the region.

Of these funds, \$10,000 is distributed to the Murrumbidgee Community Experimental/Demonstration Farm and a further \$10,000 is distributed to projects through an open and competitive program.

Congratulations to the successful recipients for the 2020 program:

- ❖ Cypress View Lodge – Server hardware and licensing: \$3,000
- ❖ Coleambally Central School P & C - Covered outdoor learning area: \$3,000
- ❖ St Peter's Primary School, Coleambally - Goal posts: \$3,000
- ❖ Taste Coleambally Food & Farm Festival - Advertising: \$1,000
- ❖ Murrumbidgee Community Experimental/Demonstration Farm: \$10,000

Community services and support for senior residents

Community services are provided by direct CHSP-funded service provision on the northern side of the LGA, and Berrigan & District Home and Community Support Services (BDH&CSS) on the southern side of the LGA.

Services offered include Community transport, Meals on wheels, Home modifications and maintenance, and social support.

The home modifications service provides minor to major home modifications, and has assisted many of our ageing residents to stay living in their homes for longer. This service continued during COVID.

Community Transport is a critical service for our community. The service provides transport for various appointments and outings. This service was stopped during COVID.

We were very disappointed with the need to cease some of our services to the elderly due to Public Health Orders relating to COVID. *Pictured is Cherie Chirgwin from our Community Services team delivering a care package to John Wilkinson.*





COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Our staff made up care packages and delivered these to our senior residents who were very appreciative.

Two Seniors Week functions had been planned for the Council area but these were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Pre-COVID, a respite get-together was held each Wednesday in Coleambally and Darlington Point. Unfortunately, the weekly respite events were cancelled with the outbreak of COVID in line with Public Health Orders. The groups also get together for lunches and other activities.

Coleambally Community Farm

Murrumbidgee Council is fortunate to have a 379 ha not-for-profit working Demonstration Farm. This exciting and original concept has been operating since 1996 and has provided a structure for community associations to engage in agricultural pursuits for experimental, demonstration and local fundraising purposes. The farm is a wonderful place to trial all agricultural ideas and for the community to be able to fundraise on a large scale. It is a great community initiative and an ongoing asset for our Council area.

Community events

Council delivered and/or supported a number of key community activities and projects, including:

- ❖ Local Government Week Cuppa with a Councillor events: Jerilderie Library (29 July), Darlington Point Council Chambers (30 July) and Coleambally Post Office Café (31 July) (pictured below).



Pictured are the Darlington Point residents enjoying lunch at Rivedestra Restaurant in pre COVID times.



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

- ❖ Australia Day events across our three communities
- ❖ Darlington Point Spring Festival
- ❖ Darlington Point Riverina Classic Catch & Release Competition
- ❖ Portsea Camp

A number of events that Council normally assists with were cancelled due to COVID-19: Jerilderie Show N Shine, League of Silent Flight and Jerilderie Gold Cup Race Meeting.

Drought support

Council received two rounds of \$1 million in funding through the Drought Communities Programme.

This funding was used to:

- ❖ Make improvements to kerb and guttering, shelters, seating, grandstands for sporting events and footpaths. Local contractors were used for these projects.
- ❖ Employ a Drought Support Officer.
- ❖ Hosted or assist with over 20 community well-being and information events, including:
 - ◇ Escape the Drought events in Jerilderie (29 November), Darlington Point (5 December) and Coleambally (6 December 2019). Each event had a range of support services and guest speakers in attendance.
 - ◇ International Women's Day luncheon in Jerilderie on 13 March 2020. Guest speaker was Paralympian Dr Hannah McDougall.
 - ◇ AFL VIC/NSW "Tackle your feelings" program for mental health.
 - ◇ Farm budgeting masterclasses.

- ◇ FloYo in the pool at Jerilderie and Darlington Point.

Education Support

Council provided support for students residing within the Murrumbidgee LGA through the following scholarships:

- ❖ Monash Bursary – awarded to Grace Leeds
- ❖ CSU Foundation Scholarship – awarded to Jayden Wensing and Zachary Leach-Deahm
- ❖ Murrumbidgee Council Student Scholarship Program – awarded to Danielle Mannes, Anna Pinnuck and Claire Robb.



Pictured at the Monash Dinner receiving the 2019 Monash Bursary is Grace Leeds with her father David, Cr Ruth McRae and guest speaker Michael Bennett.

Jerilderie Library

The library is the hub of many community activities and resources, including:



ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

- ❖ Weekly storytime, which keeps growing with parents, Jerilderie preschool and local family day carers attending. Some days we have over 20 children.
- ❖ Weekly scrabble games.
- ❖ Weekly knitting group who donated 20 blankets to the Savernake Bushfire Appeal.
- ❖ Monthly seniors movie.
- ❖ Lego table with storage trays with loads of Lego.
- ❖ Xbox, board games, colouring pages, etc.
- ❖ Cuppa with a councillor during local government week. This enabled the community to be in contact with the councillors.
- ❖ Annual Book Sale in the Monash room.
- ❖ Author visit from Anna Feinberg.
- ❖ Public computers and internet. There have been many year 7 students accessing these services to complete assignments and to submit them online.
- ❖ A wide variety of large print and audiobooks from Bolinda. The collection was added to during a visit from Bolinda client relationship manager, Joseph Camilleri.

- ❖ Tagging items in the "Doing the bolt" exhibition of convicts and bushrangers in The Old Printery.
- ❖ Purchasing and cataloguing resources for the library.

Sir John Monash Dinner

The 12th annual Sir John Monash Dinner and Oration was held on 20 September 2019 at the Jerilderie Civic Hall. The dinner celebrates Monash and the special place he holds in Jerilderie's history. Over 130 people attended.

Council was privileged to welcome Sir John Monash's great grandson, Michael Bennett to deliver the oration. Mr Bennett joins a very impressive list of past guest speakers, including Hon Tim Fischer, AC, former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, Hon Marie Bashir, AD, CVO, former Governor of NSW, and Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, AC, AFC (Ret'd), past Chief of Defence.

Youth activities

Council celebrates Youth Week and the contribution our youth make. With the onset of COVID-19, the events that were planned had to be changed to suit a virtual format.

A "Stay at Home" colouring-in competition was held. Congratulations to the winners who received shop local vouchers:

- ❖ Under 4 - Agnes Bruton and Jobe Marshall
- ❖ 5-6 year olds - Olivia Hardy and Willow Pound
- ❖ 7-8 year olds - Zavier Rorato and Tom Demamiel
- ❖ 9-10 year olds - Chloe Demamiel and Baxta Demamiel
- ❖ 11-12 year olds - Kizzi Moore and Maggie Maynard

The Library was closed following Public Health Orders from 26 March to 31 May 2020. The Library team found different ways to give service to our community while the library was physically closed.

- ❖ A key part of this was Café time, where customers could phone or order online to pick up at the Library door or have their borrowings delivered to their door. It was important to have this service still available.

Other activities undertaken during the closure were:

ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

- ❖ 13-15 year olds - Travis Lawton and Reagan Cullen

A "Tackling ISO Life" creative arts competition was held for 12-24 year olds.

Congratulations to:

- ❖ Media: 1st place – Chelsea Winn 'A day in my life' and runner up – Travis Lawton 'Isolation film'
- ❖ Artwork/Sculpture: 1st place – Charlie Simpson 'Business as usual' and runner up – Justin Lawton 'Can Tractor'



The winners received a set of Beats headphones and the runners up received a wildlife encounter voucher to redeem at Altina Wildlife Park.

"Mid summer bashes" were also held at each of the three swimming pools. These were very popular with the inflatable slip and slide, free sausage sizzle and games and activities.

These events were funded by the Rural and Regional Youth Participation Grants.



The winning entry by Charlie Simpson in the "Tackling ISO Life" creative arts competition.



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

ATTRACTING VISITORS AND BUSINESS

Highlights

Key achievements in the Economic Development area were:

- ❖ Adoption and implementation of actions of the Murrumbidgee Council Economic Development Strategy 2019.
- ❖ Communicating with and assisting local businesses during COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ 'Keep it Local' feature in the Southern Riverina News on Jerilderie businesses.

Key achievements in the Tourism area were:

- ❖ Promoting the Murrumbidgee Council area through the Caravanning Australia magazine.
- ❖ Promoting the Council area by attending the Victoria Caravan and Camping Show with the Kidman Way.
- ❖ Updating the Ned Kelly Touring Route brochure through the Ned Kelly Touring Route.
- ❖ Adding Darlington Point (combined with Coleambally businesses) as a town in its own right for the VisitNSW website.

Future Directions

Over the next 12 months, the Economic and Tourism Development team will work towards:

- ❖ Updating the tourism image gallery for Murrumbidgee Council for inclusion across different mediums including website, social media, print advertising, Council publications
- ❖ Development and launch of the Murrumbidgee Trails Visitor Guide and

tourism marketing campaign to encourage

- ❖ Establishment of Business Murrumbidgee (Chamber of Commerce) with chapters in Darlington Point, Coleambally and Jerilderie.
- ❖ Continuing membership and support for their marketing activities for Thrive Riverina, Ned Kelly Touring Route, Kidman Way Promotional Committee, Newell Highway Promotions Committee
- ❖ Participation in the Thrive Riverina joint marketing campaign
- ❖ Development of tourism and business guide for Murrumbidgee Council
- ❖ Support for local businesses throughout and post the COVID-19 pandemic
- ❖ Development of an Investment Attraction Prospectus for Murrumbidgee Council





IMPROVING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

Highlights for the Operations team

- ❖ Completion of the Darlington Point Boat Ramp.
- ❖ Expansion of the Darlington Point Cemetery – new lawn section established with a rose garden.
- ❖ Jerilderie Lake bank rehabilitation: bank was repaired and erosion protection was put along the eastern side starting at Luke Park. There was 500m of bank rehabilitated and hot mix walking track replaced.
- ❖ Footpaths constructed as part of the drought funding in all three towns.
- ❖ New kerb and guttering in all three towns
- ❖ Management and sterilisation of public toilets and amenities such as part of Council's COVID Plan
- ❖ Bulky kerbside waste collection in all three towns
- ❖ Bush fire management – grading/slashing of asset protection zones, slashing vegetation, mowing of the sides of levee bank
- ❖ Commenced the preparation of an Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan for Murrumbidgee Council. A 30-year IWCM Strategy addresses the complex linkages between elements of the urban water cycle (water supply, sewage and stormwater) and community expectations. This is done within the urban area and between its water related physical and legislative operating environment. This multi-level approach enables cost-effective

integration of these urban water systems in consultation with the local community. Funded by NSW DPIE

- ❖ Installation of automated watering systems in Luke Park Jerilderie.
- ❖ Heavy Patching of the Kidman Way (MR321) was completed for Transport for NSW on various segments between Darlington Point to Jerilderie
- ❖ Shoulder grading of the Kidman Way (MR321) was completed for Transport for NSW on various segments between Darlington Point to Jerilderie

Future directions

- ❖ Completion of the Boat Ramp and Floating Pontoon at Darlington Point. This \$1.1 million project is being funded through a \$450,000 grant through the NSW Government's Boating Now Program, with the remainder funded by the NSW Government's Stronger Communities Fund.
- ❖ Commencement of groundworks for the Young Street Subdivision in Darlington Point.
- ❖ Development of the Sustainable Waste Strategy.
- ❖ Darlington Point Cemetery - new plinths and sprinkler system.
- ❖ Continued work on the Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan.

Departmental review - Roads

Main Roads and State and National Highway
Council maintains 86.94 km of Main Road 321 (Kidman Way) and 4.71 km of State Highway 17 (Newell Highway) under the Road Maintenance



IMPROVING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

Council Contract (RMCC) for Roads & Maritime Services (RMS).

Regional Roads (RR)

Council's Regional Roads network comprises 119.25 km and is made up of the following roads:

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

Maintenance works (resealing, shoulder widening and traffic facilities) have been carried out on all of the above regional roads located within Murrumbidgee Council area.

Council Roads

Maintenance works have been performed on all Council roads. This includes heavy patching, sign maintenance, guidepost maintenance, shoulder grading, maintaining fire breaks, maintenance grading and resealing of various roads.

Minor heavy patching works were completed on various roads during the year. Road base and road gravel material was 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.

Roads to Recovery Program (R2R)

The Roads to Recovery Program has assisted Council to provide a better foundation for Council's road network. This enables Council to add a higher standard of road making material to our existing prior stream gravels and provides 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.

Council received total income of \$1,512,031 in R2R funding 2019-20. It was utilised as follows:

Resheeting

- ❖ Graham Road – 10.65km
- ❖ Old Corowa Road – 4.52km
- ❖ Hardy Road – 3.61km
- ❖ Green Swamp Road – 4.5km
- ❖ Harveys Well Road – 2km
- ❖ North Coree Road – 4km
- ❖ Four Corners Road – 2.86km
- ❖ Telephone Gate Road – 4km

Resealing

- ❖ Jimmy Cull Road – 2.07km
- ❖ Willows Road – 5.53km
- ❖ Wilson Road – 4.2km

Reconstruction

- ❖ Greens Lane – 1.7km
- ❖ Britts Road – 1km



IMPROVING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

Council's Unsealed Road Program

Council's gravel re-sheeting program has covered various roads including Main Canal Road, Fraser Road, Ercildoune Road, Culley Road, Harvey Wells Road, Green Swamp 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.

Crown Land Management

We are responsible for managing crown lands in our Council area. We would like to acknowledge the following funding through the NSW Government Crown Reserves Improvement Fund:

- ❖ \$39,350 to replace the boundary fence at Adrian Douglas Park.
- ❖ \$33,000 to upgrade the Darlington Point Museum.

Town maintenance

The town maintenance programs include maintenance of town streets and amenities, such as tree lopping and new tree plantings, 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.

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, including the flushing of the water mains, refurbishment of the water supply bore and cleaning the bores.

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

Minor raw and filtered water repairs to mains and services were undertaken. Jerilderie's older raw water mains will continue to be upgraded with PVC pipe.

Raw water restrictions were introduced in Jerilderie and these were well received by residents and businesses.

The filtered water mains were flushed approximately every three weeks, with regular water quality testing carried out. Raw water mains are flushed approximately four times per year.

Sewerage systems

The sewerage systems in each town have been maintained to a high standard. Existing settling ponds and sludge ponds have been maintained. Council is licensed to provide waste water from the Jerilderie sewerage treatment plant to the adjacent Racecourse to help maintain its turf track.

Parks and gardens

Our parks and gardens staff continue to maintain the extensive network of parks and gardens to a high standard.

The parks, gardens and sports ground areas are a major asset to our communities and our visitors.



IMPROVING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

A program is in place to upgrade and maintain watering systems in parks and gardens as a means of reducing water consumption, and to assist with grounds maintenance.

Companion animals

Staff members in each Council office continue to complete the registrations of dogs and cats under the Companion Animals Act. A dog pound is operated in Jerilderie and Darlington Point. Staff ensure that any lost animals can be dealt with and returned to their owners quickly.

Stock control

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

Fleet Management

The Works Depots continued to maintain Council's plant, equipment and infrastructure in excellent condition.

Plant and vehicle replacement purchased during the 2019-20 financial year included the following equipment:

- ❖ Toyota Landcruiser VC Wagon from Owen Toyota.
- ❖ Holden Trailblazer from Leo Franco, Griffith.
- ❖ Ford Ranger Dual Cab XL 4x4 from Blacklocks Ford
- ❖ Holden Colorado LS 4x2 Single Cab 2.8L from McRae Motors.
- ❖ Holden Colorado LS 4x2 Dual Cab 2.8L from McRae Motors.
- ❖ 2 x Ford Ranger Space Cab 3.2L 4x4 from Blacklocks Ford.

- ❖ 2 x Kenworth T410 trucks from Inland Truck Centres, Wagga.
- ❖ John Deere 6125M from Hutcheon & Pearce.
- ❖ JCB 215W skid steer loader from Intersales.
- ❖ Isuzu FRR 110 240 MWB Tipper from Blacklocks Trucks.
- ❖ 2 x Wacker Neuson RR280T3 multi tyred rollers from Conplant.
- ❖ 2 Mack Metroliner 340 water trucks from Wagga Trucks.

Waste minimisation and management

Waste initiatives include:

- ❖ A weekly garbage collection service to the three towns.
- ❖ A fortnightly recycling collection service in Darlington Point and Coleambally.
- ❖ Participation in the RAMJO Waste Management Group to develop regional waste strategies.
- ❖ Mobile phone muster and toner cartridge recycling program at each Council office, with Jerilderie also accepting fluorescent globes, smoke detectors and household batteries.
- ❖ Waste depots in each of the three towns.

Private Works

Private works carried out with Council's plant and equipment, including road maintenance, has remained steady during the past year and Council will continue to source these works in the future.



PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

Highlights for the year

- ❖ The Planning and Environment Department undertook various operational duties throughout the year such as inspection of food premises, swimming pools, on-site sewage management, and development and building projects.
- ❖ The Liquid Trade Waste process was continued and expanded into the Coleambally and Darlington Point area.
- ❖ Several projects within the Stronger Community Fund Grants, Community Infrastructure Grants and Stronger Country Community Grants were managed by Council's Development Officer.
- ❖ An amendment to the Murrumbidgee LEP was successfully finalised with Toganmain Woolshed Precinct being listed as a heritage item in Schedule 5 of the LEP.
- ❖ Work commenced on preparing comprehensive strategic planning documents for the Council.
- ❖ Following extensive consultation, the Murrumbidgee River at Darlington Point and Environs Flood Study was also completed and adopted by Council. The second phase of this project also commenced.

Objectives for 2020-21

- ❖ Adopt the electronic lodging of Development Applications, Construction Certificates and Complying Development Applications by 31 December 2020. All development documentation will be lodged through the NSW Planning Portal. This is a NSW Government requirement. We will actively educate and assist our community to adopt this new system.
- ❖ Improve development assessment times by 5%.

- ❖ Improve the systems and inspection schedules for private swimming pools and septic tanks. We are aiming to inspect 30% of onsite sewage systems and 30% of domestic swimming pools annually.
- ❖ To deliver and manage grant funded capital works across the Local Government Area.
- ❖ Work towards developing a strategy to ensure annual fire safety statements are submitted.

Biosecurity

Destruction and eradication of noxious weeds within our Council area is extremely important. Weeds has been very busy with the break in the weather and persistent showers. This has resulted in all of our localised weeds thriving. The Department of Primary Industries is researching into feathertop Rhodes grass for control which has become more widespread along our high risk pathways. Weeds receive Weeds Action Program (WAP) funding increase for 20/21 for southern end of council Murray WAP funding for 2019-20 financial year of five year program was \$18,928.91. New funding for 2020-21 is \$30,840 (GST exc). Council continues to slash and spray road shoulders to help with weeds, as well as fire hazard reduction.

Development and Building Control

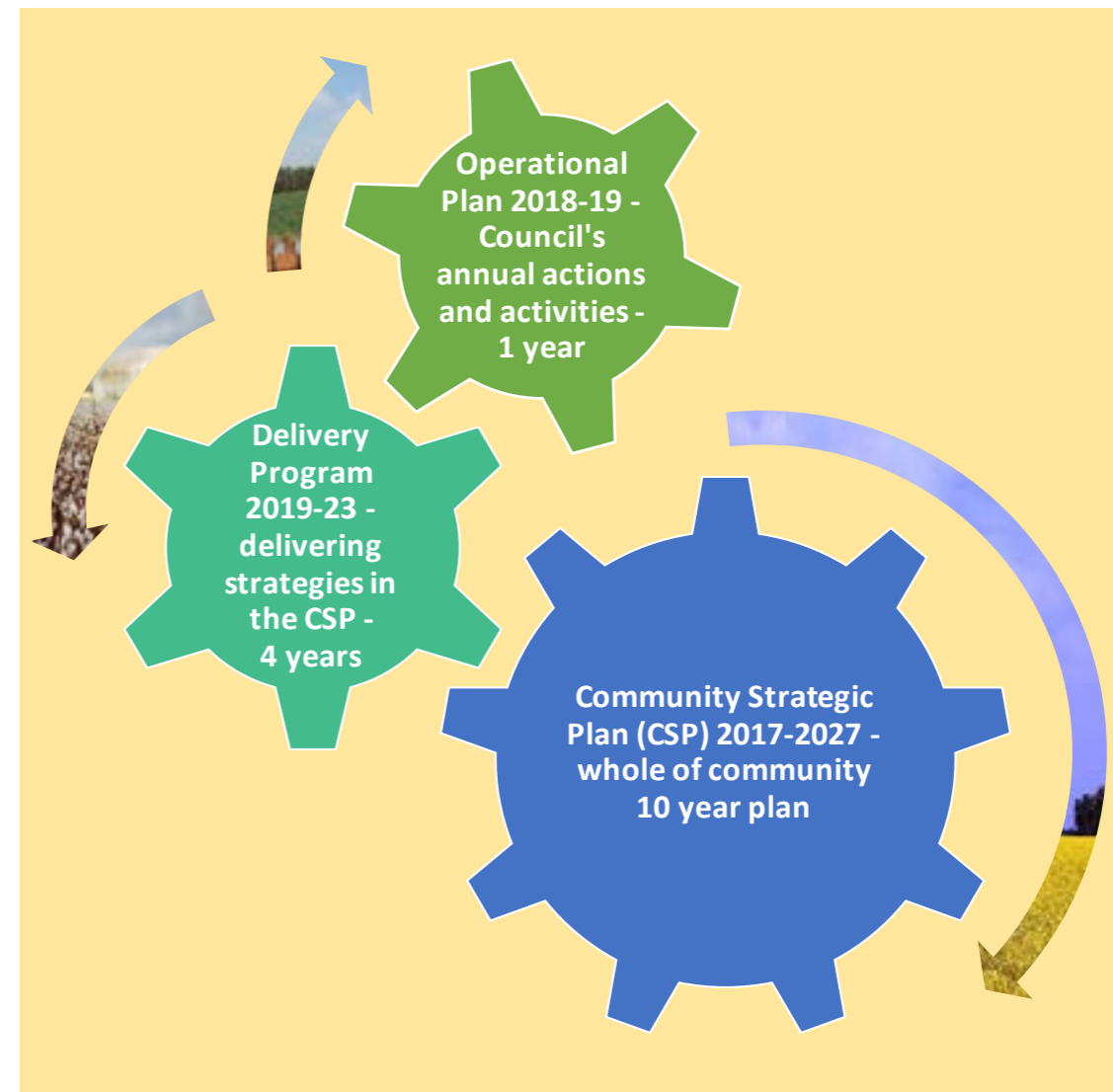
Applications received by Murrumbidgee Council from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 inclusive are shown in the table below.

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

Type of Construction	Number of Applications	Total Value
Commercial		
Shops/offices	1	\$10,000
Additions/Alterations	3	\$504,500
Other (including accommodation)	1	\$15,000
Dwellings	5	\$1,864,954
Dwelling Additions/Alterations (includes attached carports and garages, verandahs and pergolas)	8	\$51,000
Detached shed/garage/carports	8	\$205,500
Flats/Units	-	-
Dwellings Demolished	2	\$93,519
Factories/workshops/warehouses	-	-
Additions/alterations	-	-
Other		
Includes fences, rural buildings, farm dams and irrigation works, signs, swimming pools, etc.	15	\$6,694,110
On site sewage management systems	3	N/A
TOTAL	46	\$9,438,583
Subdivisions	Number of lots created	Number of lots formally registered
Subdivision applications: 5 applications	3	-

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK



The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework legislation is embedded in the Local Government Act 1993. It 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's decision-making during this period. It is developed through community consultation and includes the community's vision, goals, objectives and strategies for the future.

The Community Strategic Plan must be reported upon by the outgoing Council and the incoming Council must undertake a review of the Plan.

Council's Delivery Program is a three year program that outlines how these strategies will be translated into actions. It has detailed operational deliverables for each year. The Councillors review the progress of the Delivery Program every three months.

The Council also has an annual Operational Plan that sets out the annual actions and activities. As part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting

(IP&R) requirements, Council is also required to prepare an Annual Report, as well as an Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plan to support its Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Council is also required to report regularly on our progress towards implementing the objectives and actions with our Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

More information can be found at Attachment C.



GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

ADWG - Australian Drinking Water Guidelines

EPA - Environmental Protection Authority

ICT - Information and Communication Technologies

LEP - Local Environmental Plan

LGA - Local Government Area

LTFP - Long Term Financial Plan

LTSP - Long Term Strategic Plan

RAMJO - Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation

SCCF - Stronger Country Communities Fund

TAFE - Technical and Further Education

WHS - Work Health and Safety

WRL - Western Riverina Libraries