



Ordinary meeting business paper

Wednesday, 19 June 2024

commencing 10.00 am

Rous Administration Centre (L4), 218-232 Molesworth Street, Lismore

Rous County Council Meeting 19 June 2024

OPENING OF THE MEETING

In accordance with clause 5.21 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, attendees at today's Council meeting are advised that this meeting is being 'live' streamed (except for the confidential session).

- All speakers should refrain from making any defamatory comments or releasing any personal information about another individual without their consent.
- Council accepts no liability for any damage that may result from defamatory comments made by persons attending meetings. All liability will rest with the individual who made the comments.
- This meeting must not be recorded by others without the prior written consent of the Council in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

Please ensure that mobile phones and other electronic devices are turned off or are in silent mode for the duration of the meeting.

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS

In accordance with clause 3.23 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, councillors are reminded of their Oath or Affirmation of Office made at or before their first meeting of the council made under section 233A of the Act, to undertake their civic duties in the best interests of the people they represent and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the *Local Government Act 1993* or any other Act, to the best of their ability and judgement.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Councillors are reminded of their obligations under Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest in matters being considered at council meetings. All declarations of conflicts of interest will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

APPLICATIONS TO ATTEND BY AUDIO VISUAL LINK

In accordance with clause 5.18 and 5.19 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, Councillors may attend and participate in meetings by audio-visual link with the approval of the Council.

Requests by Councillors for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the General Manager prior to the meeting in question and provide reasons why the Councillor will be presented from attending the meeting in person.

Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link are reminded that they must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Note: Consistent with clause 5.44 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, attendance by Council staff at meetings of the Council by audio-visual link shall be with the approval of the General Manager.

Copy of: CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE / CODE OF CONDUCT

AGENDA

1. **Opening of the meeting**
 2. **Acknowledgement of Country**

Council would like to show its respect and acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Land, of Elders past and present on which this meeting takes place.
 3. **Apologies and applications for a leave of absence or attendance by audio-visual link**
 4. **Confirmation of Minutes of previous meeting**

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 7. **Matters of urgency**

Nil.
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Nil.
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Public Document Pack

MINUTES OF ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, 17 APRIL 2024 AT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, 218-232 MOLESWORTH STREET, LISMORE

1 OPENING OF MEETING

The Chair opened the meeting at 10.06 am.

In attendance:

Voting Committee:

- Cr Robert Mustow, Richmond Valley Council (Chair)
- Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Ballina Shire Council (Deputy Chair)
- Cr Andrew Gordon, Lismore City Council
- Cr Big Rob, Lismore City Council
- Cr Sandra Humphrys, Richmond Valley Council
- Cr Michael Lyon, Byron Shire Council (*via 'Teams'*)

Rous County Council:

- Phillip Rudd, General Manager
- Helen McNeil, Group Manager People and Performance
- Geoff Ward, Group Manager Corporate and Commercial
- Andrew Logan, Group Manager Delivery and Planning
- Jonathan Patino, Finance Manager
- Lauren Edwards, Governance and Risk Manager
- Robyn Saurine, Risk and Assurance Specialist
- Robyn Waldron, Executive Assistant

Apologies

- Cr Sarah Ndiaye, Byron Shire Council
- Cr Rod Bruem, Ballina Shire Council

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Council showed its respect and acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the Land, of all Elders, on which this meeting took place.

3 APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE OR ATTENDANCE BY AUDIO - VIRTUAL LINK

RESOLVED (Cadwallader/Gordon) that Cr Sarah Ndiaye, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Rod Bruem attend the Council meeting by audio-visual link due to being unable to attend in person.

Apologies and applications for leave of absence by audio - virtual link (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	5
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	3
Carried		

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED [08/24] (Cadwallader/Gordon) that the Minutes of the meeting held 21 February 2024 be approved as presented.

Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	5
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	3
Carried		

5 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil.

6 CHAIR'S MINUTE(S)

Nil.

7 MATTERS OF URGENCY

Nil.

8 NOTICES OF MOTION / QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil.

9 GROUP MANAGER CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL REPORTS

9.1 Proposed changes to business rules for Quarterly Budget Review Statement reporting

RESOLVED [09/24] (Rob/Humphrys) that Council note the proposed business rules in relation to the preparation and reporting of the Quarterly Budget Review Statements and authorise the General Manager to implement them as required.

Proposed changes to business rules for Quarterly Budget Review Statement reporting (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	5
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	3
Carried		

9.2 Quarterly Budget Review Statement Quarter ending 31 March 2024

RESOLVED [10/24] (Gordon/Cadwallader) that Council note the results presented in the Quarterly Budget Review Statement as at 31 March 2024 and authorise the variations to the amounts from those previously estimated.

Quarterly Budget Review Statement Quarter ending 31 March 2024 (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	5
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	3
Carried		

9.3 Public exhibition: Draft Operational plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy)

RESOLVED [11/24] (Rob/Humphrys) that:

1. Council endorses the draft Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) attached to this report, for public exhibition.
2. Council note that adjustments approved at this meeting as part of the March 2024 Quarterly Budget Review Statement report will be included in the exhibited Operational Plan as appropriate.
3. If public submissions are made during the public exhibition period, a report be furnished to Council's June 2024 meeting, including staff comment on how the submissions have been considered, for Council to determine a position on endorsement of the Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy).
4. If no public submissions are made during the public exhibition period, the version of the draft Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) placed on public exhibition, is deemed to be adopted by Council.
5. Subject to any variations arising as a result of '3' above, Council approve external borrowings of \$30M for capital works projects for 2024/25 and authorise the General Manager to negotiate with financial institutions to accept the preferred loan offer including the term and type of borrowing.
6. Council authorise associated loan documentation to be signed by the General Manager (or under seal if required).

Public exhibition: Draft Operational plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	5
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	3
Carried		

Cr. Michael Lyon joined the meeting 10.13am

10 POLICIES

10.1 Financial Reserves Policy

RESOLVED [12/24] (Gordon/Humphrys) that Council -

1. Revoke the 'Financial Reserves' policy dated 19 June 2019 and any other policy revived as a result of this revocation, and
2. Approve the revised 'Financial Reserves' policy attached to this report.

Financial Reserves Policy (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	6
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	2
Carried		

10.2 Risk Policy

RESOLVED [13/24] (Rob/Cadwallader) that Council –

1. Revoke the Risk Management Policy dated 17 February 2021 (Attachment 1) and any other policies revived as a result of the revocation; and
2. Approve the revised policy of the same name outlined in and attached to this report.

Risk Policy (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	6
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	2
Carried		

10.3 Media and Social Media Policy

RESOLVED [14/24] (Humphrys/Cadwallader) that Council –

1. Revoke the Media Interaction Policy dated 22 August 2007 (Attachment 1) and any policy revived as a result of the revocation.
2. Adopt the Media and Social Media Policy attached to this report (Attachment 2).

Media and Social Media Policy (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	6
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	2
Carried		

Cr Michael Lyon left the meeting 10:17am and rejoined at 10:18am due to technical issues.

11 INFORMATION REPORTS (COVER REPORT)

MOTION (Rob/Humphrys) that Item 4 of the Information Reports - Audit, Risk and Implementation Committee meeting – 2 April 2024 be dealt with separately.

CARRIED

RESOLVED [15/24] (Humphrys/Gordon) that the following information reports 1, 2, 5 and 6 be received and noted.

1. Investments – March 2024
2. Tenders awarded by General Manager under delegation
3. ~~Water, production and consumption – March 2024~~ (excluded)
4. ~~Audit, Risk and Implementation Committee meeting – 2 April 2024~~ (see 11.1)
5. International Women’s Day
6. Reports/Actions pending.

Information Reports (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	6
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	2
Carried		

11.1 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee - meeting update

RESOLVED [16/24] (Rob/Cadwallader) that Council:

1. receive and note the attached minutes from the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting of 5 April 2024;
2. make a submission to the Office of Local Government seeking to permit county councils to include capital revenue in the assessment of financial performance; and
3. Prepare a submission for the 2024 LGNSW Annual Conference seeking to permit county councils to include capital revenue in the assessment of financial performance, to be further considered by council at the June council meeting.

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee - meeting update (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	6
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	2
Carried		

Cr Rod Bruem joined the meeting 10:27am and stated he had been trying to join via link without success until near the closure of the meeting.

APOLOGIES

RESOLVED [17/24] (Humphrys/Cadwallader) due to audio-virtual link technical issues, apologies were received from Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Bruem.

Apologies (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	7
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Sarah Ndiaye	1
Carried		

12 CLOSE OF BUSINESS

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.29 am.

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD WEDNESDAY, 15 MAY 2024 AT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, 218-232 MOLESWORTH STREET, LISMORE

The Chair opened the meeting at 10.19 am.

In attendance:

Councillors

- Cr Robert Mustow, Richmond Valley Council (Chair)
- Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Ballina Shire Council (Deputy Chair)
- Cr Rod Bruem, Ballina Shire Council
- Cr Michael Lyon, Byron Shire Council
- Cr Sarah Ndiaye, Byron Shire Council
- Cr Andrew Gordon, Lismore City Council
- Cr Big Rob, Lismore City Council
- Cr Sandra Humphrys, Richmond Valley Council

Council Officers

- Phillip Rudd, General Manager
- Helen McNeil, Group Manager Organisational Services
- Geoff Ward, Group Manager Transformation and Strategy
- Adam Nesbitt, Group Manager Operations
- Andrew Logan, Group Manager Planning and Delivery
- Jonathan Patino, Finance Manager
- Marit Schallert, Assets Systems Project Manager

Apologies

Nil

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Council showed its respect and acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the Land, of all Elders, on which this meeting took place.

2 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil.

3 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

MOVED TO CLOSED COUNCIL

RESOLVED [18/24] (Cadwallader/Rob) that Council move into Closed Council with the press and public excluded from the meeting based on the grounds detailed below:

Section 10A(2)(d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

CARRIED

3.1 Digital Transformation

RESOLVED [19/24] (Gordon/Cadwallader) that Council:

1. Accept the tender submitted by Exco Partners for the provision of a new Enterprise Resource Planning, Enterprise Asset Management and Customer Relationship Management system and associated processes.
2. Delegate the General Manager authority to finalise and execute the project contract(s) with Exco Partners (and /or their sub-contractors) up to the amount shown on Table 1.

Digital Transformation (Resolution)		
For	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Big Rob	8
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

RESUME TO OPEN COUNCIL

RESOLVED [20/24] (Cadwallader/Rob) that the meeting resume to Open Council.

CARRIED

The meeting moved to Open Council at 10.38am

The General Manager read to the meeting the following resolution of Council.

RESOLVED [19/24] (Gordon/Cadwallader) that Council:

1. Accept the tender submitted by Exco Partners for the provision of a new Enterprise Resource Planning, Enterprise Asset Management and Customer Relationship Management system and associated processes.
2. Delegate the General Manager authority to finalise and execute the project contract(s) with Exco Partners (and /or their sub-contractors) up to the amount shown on Table 1.

4 CLOSE OF BUSINESS

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.40 am.

Final draft Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy)

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Organisational Services (Helen McNeil)

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Note no submissions were lodged by members of the public during the exhibition period.
2. Receive and note staff submissions as outlined in this report.
3. Adopt the final draft Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) as attached to this report.

Background

Council approved public exhibition of the draft Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) at its 17 April 2024 meeting.

No submissions were received.

Staff have requested the following additional budget items:

- (1) Grant funding under the North Coast Water and Wastewater Repair and Recovery Program for the Wilsons River Source;
- (2) Woodburn Groundwater Treatment Plant (GWTP) site as part of the Future Water Program; and
- (3) Chlorine and Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Dosing at Woodburn.

1. North Coast Water and Wastewater Repair and Recovery Program

In June 2022, NSW Public Works provided Council with \$1.6M (excl GST) in funding under the North Coast Water and Wastewater Repair and Recovery Program. This is the first time that water and wastewater infrastructure has received funding following a natural disaster in New South Wales (NSW).

During 2022 and 2023, Council staff managed repairs to more than 25 Council water assets, which resulted in \$374,351.27 (excl GST) being drawn down from the initial \$1.6M of funding, leaving \$1,225,684.72 (excl GST) available for future works. Rous' financial system 'NAV' shows a spend of \$381,055 (excl GST) during 2022/23 on the flood recovery projects.

NSW Public Works and Council have since entered Phase 2 of the Program where assets required investigation, design and procurement activities to be undertaken, to allow repair and reinstatement to pre-flood condition. In the Quarterly Budget Review Statement that was adopted by Council at its meeting on 17 April 2024, the unspent \$1,225,684.72 and other budgets identified for the Woodburn Groundwater Treatment Plant Site were inadvertently returned to Reserves. However, \$941,945 is still required for this project and should have been kept for this purpose.

Comment

This budget change is effectively a partial reversal of the error made returning these funds back to cash reserves in the Quarterly Budget Review Statement to 31 March 2024.

2. Woodburn Groundwater Treatment Plant (GWTP)

This work is necessary to provide early elements of a proposed future groundwater treatment plant at the site. The work will include demolition of the damaged concrete tank at the site and provision of a small building to house the water dosing equipment and electrical infrastructure.

Comment

This budget change is for new and important works that are required but were not identified as part of the draft budget process. The required funds are available for this purpose.

3. Chlorine and Carbon Dioxide (CO2) Dosing at Woodburn

This work has been identified as necessary to ensure that Operations staff can periodically boost chlorine and carbon dioxide in the water supplied to Evans Head. This area is at the end of the Rous supply network. The age of the water once it reaches this point, having come from the Nightcap Water Treatment Plant at Dorrroughby, can contribute to the water being outside of preferred levels for chlorine, pH and other criteria. The dosing site incorporated into other works at Woodburn will allow for the provision of a more stable water quality supply to the area.

Comment

This budget change brings forward these planned works from a later year. The required funds are available for this purpose.

Update of Statement of Revenue Policy to reflect changes in OLG Circular 24-05

The Office of Local Government (OLG) released Circular 24-05 Information about rating 2024-25 on 19 April 2024. This prescribes the amount to be charged for specific fees and charges that are set under the *Local Government Act 1993*. The following fees and charges have been amended in the draft Revenue Policy accordingly:

- Property information certificates – this fee has increased fee from \$95.00 to \$100.00 as prescribed by section 603 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- Interest on overdue water accounts – increased from 9.0% to 10.5% as prescribed by section 566(3) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Other

Various edits and minor amendments to the draft Operational Plan are proposed and have been highlighted in red text for ease of reference (Attachment 2). The proposed changes do not impact Council’s budget or Long-Term Financial Plan.

Governance

- **Finance**

Staff submissions for three items have been received and it is recommended that they be endorsed.

Total Budget Request	Amount \$
North Coast Water and Wastewater Repair and Recovery Program	941,945.00
Woodburn Groundwater Treatment Plant (GWTP)	550,000.00
Chlorine and Carbon Dioxide (CO2) Dosing at Woodburn	212,000.00
	1,703,945.00

The provision of the budget is important to allow the continuation of works and contract executions for flood repair and new works associated with Council's key water assets. It should be noted that approving this request will not negatively impact the Long-Term Financial Plan as Council is expecting a favourable actual result when compared to the current budget. Any changes to the capital works program for 2024/25 due to approved carryovers will result in the program being reassessed and reprioritised. If approved, the amendment will be incorporated into the final draft Operational plan.

- **Legal**

Adoption of an Operational Plan before the beginning of each financial year is a requirement of the *Local Government Act 1993*. The Operational Plan is a sub-plan of the Delivery Program and includes Council's 'Revenue' policy containing proposed fees and charges for the upcoming financial year. A draft Operational Plan must be publicly exhibited for at least 28 days, and Council must accept and consider any public submissions made on the draft before its adoption.

Consultation

Notice of public consultation was provided on Council's website on 22 April 2024 with the closing date for lodgement of submission being 4:30pm on 24 May 2024. No submissions were received.

Conclusion

The draft Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) is recommended to Council for adoption.

Attachments

1. Long-Term Financial Plan 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2034 (concise)
2. Draft Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and Revenue policy)



Long-Term Financial Plan

1 July 2024 – 30 June 2034

Bulk water | Retail water
Flood mitigation | Weed biosecurity
Property

Concise version

23 May 2024

Version	Description	Person responsible	Reviewed by	Approved by / Date
0.1	Draft	J. Patino	G. Ward	Council 31/03/2024
0.2	Approved for public exhibition	J. Patino	G. Ward	Council 17/04/2024
0.3	Staff submission and adoption	J. Patino	H. McNeil	

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NOTE: the full version of the Long-Term Financial Plan can be [found here](#).

1. Introduction

1.1. The Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP)

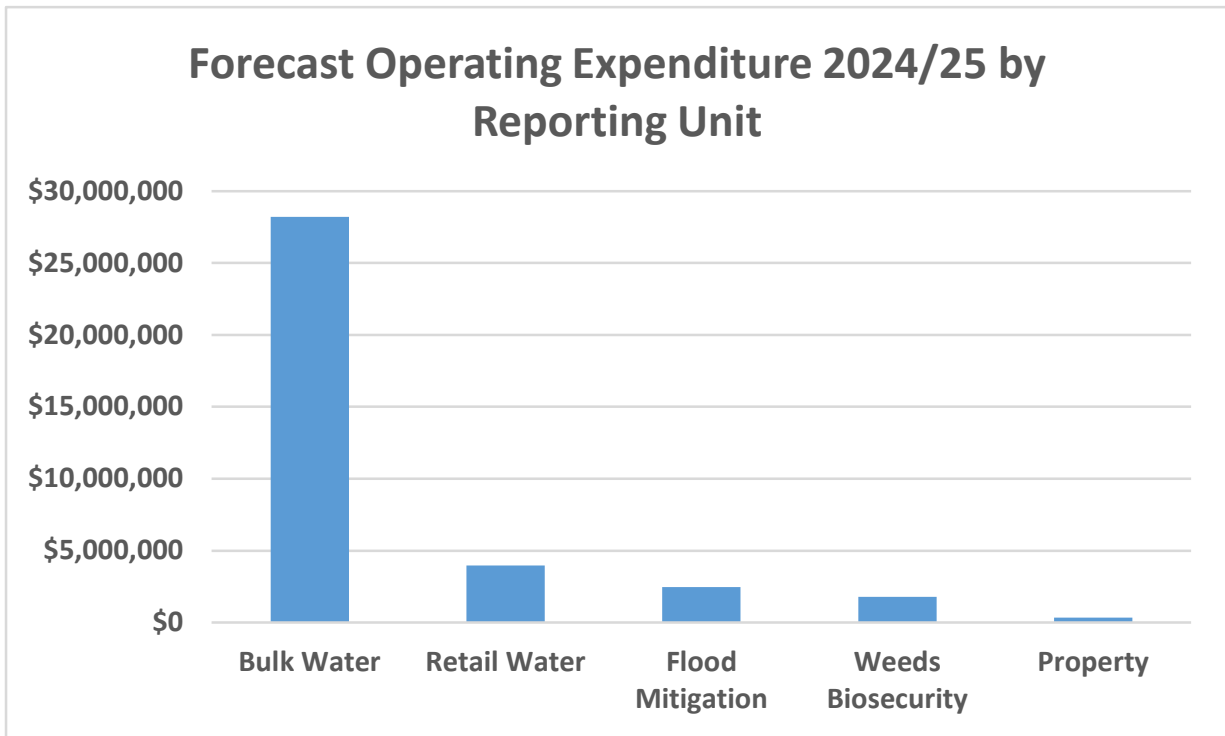
- i. Is a regulatory requirement and forms part of Rous County Council's (Rous) Resourcing Strategy within its Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework.
- ii. Is based on a financial planning period of ten years from 2024/25 to 2033/34. It is relevant to note that Rous also prepare a 30-year financial plan (not presented as part of this document) that provides an intergenerational financial outlook and meets the guidelines of the Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy (IWCMS) administered by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Water (DPIE).
- iii. Is designed to assist financial decision making. It includes revenue and expenditure forecasts and asset projections, all of which are based on several assumptions.
- iv. Is used to test whether Rous has the financial capacity to satisfy the goals set out in the Business Activity Strategic Plan (part of the IP&R Framework).
- v. Measures short, medium, and long-term sustainability.
- vi. Is expected to identify if there is an unacceptable risk in one or more of these time horizons, with sufficient foresight to enable a remedial strategy to be agreed.
- vii. Is updated annually in conjunction with the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

2. Rous' financial position

Rous has five distinct reporting units that are combined to form one entity referred to as the consolidated organisation. The 'bulk water reporting unit' is the dominant entity and in a financial sense comprises over 76% of the consolidated organisation.

Graph 1: Forecast operating expenditure 2024/25 shows the forecast operating expenditure of each of the reporting units in the 2024/25 financial year.

Graph 1: Forecast operating expenditure 2024/25



The chart illustrates how the bulk water reporting unit dominates the financial landscape of the consolidated organisation. Therefore, it is relevant to note that a summary of the financial position of the consolidated organisation tends to primarily reflect this unit.

Main income source: Constituent council contributions for the supply of bulk water

This income source is considered to be reliable and secure. The contributions payable by each constituent council are calculated based on the previous year’s water consumption. The actual income to be received by Rous in the forthcoming financial year is known by approximately March of the preceding financial year.

The reliable nature of the income allows Rous to plan for sufficient funds to be raised to meet known expenditures, and to create a cash reserve buffer for unexpected financial events. Given the asset-intensive nature of the bulk water business, financial planning is very important.

Expenditure can vary with the main costs relating to labour, chemicals, electricity and maintenance of an extensive array of assets.

Control and management of assets valued >\$770 million

These assets include dams, treatment plants, pipes, land, buildings and plant and equipment. Both financial and operating planning are critical to ensure that essential services are maintained to satisfactory standards.

Main water source is Rocky Creek Dam, but new water sources are needed

Rocky Creek Dam and associated treatment and reticulation infrastructure currently carry no debt. However, due to the regional population growth and climate change, Rous will need to invest in new water sources or demand for water will exceed supply.

The LTFP anticipates significant expenditure on new groundwater sources, referred to as the Future Water Program (FWP). Expenditure is currently estimated at \$103 million over the next ten years. The FWP includes years of investigations into the best water source alternatives, increases

to the price of bulk water to accommodate external borrowings and research into possible grant funding from higher government tiers.

In summary, it is a challenging time for the organisation both operationally and financially. In addition to managing all existing operations, alternative water supply options and financial management strategies are ongoing. A focus of financial planning is for Rous to continue to meet its service charter and remain financially sustainable into the future.

2.1. Historical financial data

Table 1: Historical performance provides consolidated historical financial information for the three-year period 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. This information is useful to assess Rous's previous performance and financial position.

Table 1: Historical performance

	Actuals		
	2020/21 (\$000)	2021/22 (\$000)	2022/23 (\$000)
Operating Result			
Operating Revenue	30,575	34,562	36,088
Operating Expenditure	26,251	31,199	31,883
Operating Result	4,324	3,363	4,205
Adjusted Operating Result excluding Capital Grants and Contributions	(911)	(2,268)	(971)
Cash and Investments			
Total Cash and Investments	49,380	40,554	37,772
Other Balance Sheet			
Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment	497,086	510,498	569,037
Outstanding Loan Principal	32,358	28,960	25,355
Performance Indicators			
Operating Performance Ratio (Benchmark >0.00%)	-4.92%	-5.58%	-0.88%
Own Source Operating Revenue Ratio (Benchmark >60.00%)	78.85%	73.82%	79.50%
Unrestricted Current Ratio (Benchmark >1.50x)	7.03x	4.26x	4.02x
Debt Service Cover Ratio (Benchmark >2.00x)	1.59x	1.65x	1.71x
Cash Expense Cover Ratio (Benchmark >3.00 months)	25.80 months	19.90 months	15.24 months
Performance Indicators (including Capital Revenue)			
Operating Performance Ratio (Benchmark >0.00%)	14.14%	9.73%	11.65%
Debt Service Cover Ratio (Benchmark >2.00x)	2.80x	2.73x	2.71x

3. Financial modelling

3.1. Methodology

The LTFP forecasts the ten years from 2024/25 to 2033/34, which meets the requirements of the Office of Local Governments Integrated Planning and Reporting.

The plan presented aims to:

- Determine the funding requirements of both the operational and capital works programs.
- Identify funding sources to meet those funding requirements.
- Document other life-cycle costs associated with system assets and business operations.
- Ensure appropriate levels of cash and liquidity are maintained.
- Forecast the long-term pricing structure.
- Forecast the estimated financial position of the organisation.
- Measure financial performance indicators against industry accepted benchmarks.

The development of this LTFP is continually refined and adjusted to reflect the most current information. Therefore, it is important to note that this document presents the LTFP as at the time of development, being the adopted changes in the Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the quarter ended 31 March 2024.

The estimates shown in the LTFP are expressed in 'future dollars'. This means that the figures in the LTFP are inflated to reflect the actual dollar value that will be received or expended in that year. This is calculated based on the assumed level of inflation based on the Consumer Price Index.

The LTFP is premised on various combinations of historical and current information as well as known and estimated future events.

The accuracy of forecasting contained in the LTFP tends to decline annually as the closer the forecast is to the current day, the more accurate the estimated income or expense. This is because the number of unknown variables reduces annually.

Every effort is made to update the LTFP regularly so that the current base case for each reporting unit and the consolidated organisation is as accurate as reasonably possible at all times.

Due to size and scale, the bulk water supply reporting unit has been selected as the 'host' entity, which accepts all direct costs associated with corporate overheads such as management, finance, information services, human resources, etc. These costs are then apportioned to other reporting units, based on size and scale, existing practice and a sustainable path to full cost recovery.

3.2. How to read the LTFP

This version of the LTFP has been shaped to reflect the primary structure of the organisation on a consolidated basis. A detailed version of the LTFP exists that explores the various functions of the organisation, which are known as reporting units. The detailed version is [available here](#).

The reporting units are:

- Bulk water supply
- Retail water supply
- Flood mitigation
- Weed biosecurity
- Property.

The LTFP can be viewed over three time periods:

1. One-year Operational Plan – 2024/25 budget and is the primary focus (presented in blue in the report tables).
2. Four-year Delivery Program – designated time under the *Local Government Act 1993* that is intended to provide a medium-term financial vision for the organisation (presented in yellow for years two to four in the report tables).
3. Ten-year LTFP – expands on the Delivery Program to provide a broader perspective of where the organisation is heading and what the threats and opportunities may be over ten years (presented in white for the remaining years within this report).

Table 2: Colour scheme

LTFP category	Time period	Colour scheme
Operational Plan	2024/25	
Delivery Program	2025/26 – 2027/28	
LTFP	2028/29 – 2033/34	

It will be noted that the **net cash movement** (*Table 4: Consolidated organisation operating performance*) forecasts a zero in all years. This is because the annual cash movement is balanced via a transfer to or from reserve. Therefore, the **net reserve movement** indicates whether the cash reserve has increased or decreased over the period.

It is important that the reserve balance for the organisation is sufficient to meet current operating requirements, forward capital works and debt servicing. Adequate cash reserves ensure the necessary liquidity to meet short-term obligations, i.e., creditor payments, loan servicing costs and payroll expenditure.

Further, it is prudent that the cash reserve is at a level that includes tolerance for unforeseen events (budget shocks) that may impact Council's ability to maintain service levels. Council has adopted a '[Financial Reserves' policy](#) that sets a target for a minimum reserve balance for each reporting unit. This policy assists discussion when considering financial strategies and is referred to in different financial reports.

3.3. Budget assumptions

The budget contains numerous assumptions that are embedded within the figures. This document does not endeavour to summarise them all.

Primary assumption: That Rous will continue to function in 2024/25 and beyond in a similar fashion to the current financial year.

Table 3: Main budget assumptions provides a summary of the budget assumptions and presents the forecast price path of the primary income source for bulk water supply, retail water, flood mitigation and weed biosecurity.

The projected price path will have a significant impact on the customers of Rous, namely, constituent councils.

Table 3: Main budget assumptions

Main Assumptions and Projected Price Paths	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Consumer Price Index	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Rate Pegging	104.60%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%
Depreciation Movement	101.50%	101.50%	101.50%	101.50%	101.50%	101.50%	101.50%	101.50%	101.50%	101.50%
Salary and Wages	102.00%	103.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%
Bulk Water Cost for Retail	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	101.00%	102.00%
Loan Interest Rate	6.50%	6.00%	5.50%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	4.95%
Investment Interest Rate	4.50%	4.00%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	2.05%
Flood Council Contributions	108.00%	105.00%	104.00%	104.00%	103.00%	103.00%	102.50%	102.50%	102.50%	102.50%
Weeds Council Contributions	104.60%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%	102.00%
Bulk Water Council Contributions	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	107.00%	102.00%	102.00%
Retail Water	108.00%	108.00%	108.00%	108.00%	108.00%	108.00%	108.00%	108.00%	102.00%	102.50%

3.4. Other assumptions

Cost of living: Assumptions around rate pegging and salary and wages are based on different indices published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other financial journals. Consumer Price Index increases have been frozen throughout the LTFP in an effort to reduce operating expenditure. The estimates are updated as new information is received.

Depreciation: The assumption of 1.5% is an approximate average for the useful life of an asset, with only basic intervention, of 66 years. Obviously, the actual lifespan varies depending on the asset and the reality is that the depreciation figures included in the LTFP are primarily based on the depreciation figures used in the annual financial statements. The figures in the financial statements represent the culmination of detailed work, per reporting unit, from individual asset registers.

Loan interest rate: Premised on research with different banks and financial institutions.

Investment interest rate: The rates are based on market-based predictions of the future.

Contribution price paths: The proposed price path for each reporting unit is determined by assessing the financial performance and position of each 'business'. The aim is to ensure that each business remains financially sustainable over the long term without any reduction to service levels nor any unnecessary accumulation of cash reserves. It is assumed that the constituent council's will be in a position to service their payments to Rous when they fall due.

Future Water Program (FWP): Based on Rous’s decision in 2021, the current version of the plan includes new groundwater sources at Alstonville, Woodburn and Tyagarah.

Estimates of capital and operational expense associated with the FWP are continually being refined and modified.

This is due to both the high likelihood of financial adjustments being required and the impact of those changes on the organisations financial plan.

Population growth: Most Rous revenue streams are calculated by methods that are independent of growth. However, growth is very important when forecasting developer contribution income and strategic asset expenditure.

Assessing growth for Rous involves research on each constituent council individually as they all have different projections. The results for each council are amalgamated to provide the Rous forecast.

4. Financial Plan

The tables shown in this section of the LTFP are current as of March 2024. The commentary that accompanies the tables is intended to be very general in nature, giving an overview perspective only. A detailed version of the LTFP is [available here](#) and commentary will be contained in the report that accompanies the LTFP when presented to Council.

Table 4: Consolidated organisation operating performance shows the forecast operating performance of the consolidated organisation, including capital movements, reserve transfers and the estimated cash reserve balance at year’s end.

Table 4: Consolidated organisation operating performance

Rous County Council - Whole of Organisation

Name	Long-Term Financial Plan									
	Operational Plan	Delivery Program								
	2025 Estimate	2026 Estimate	2027 Estimate	2028 Estimate	2029 Estimate	2030 Estimate	2031 Estimate	2032 Estimate	2033 Estimate	2034 Estimate
Operating Income										
Flood Mitigation	1,910,300	1,224,900	1,270,300	1,315,900	1,353,100	1,389,800	1,421,700	1,456,200	1,492,400	1,526,300
Weeds Biosecurity	1,632,500	1,611,800	1,627,200	1,641,700	1,663,000	1,685,100	1,707,800	1,730,400	1,752,600	1,773,700
Retail Water Supply	3,966,700	4,214,300	4,485,200	4,778,400	5,099,400	5,447,800	5,818,300	6,221,100	6,353,800	6,496,400
Property	162,600	96,900	140,200	166,300	166,100	165,800	165,400	165,000	164,500	164,500
Bulk Water Supply	31,058,300	33,171,200	33,359,300	35,362,700	42,607,200	44,995,700	47,594,000	50,253,600	51,254,900	52,274,800
Fleet Operations	123,500	117,500	115,100	109,500	108,800	110,400	114,200	118,100	122,200	122,200
Total Operating Income	38,853,900	40,436,600	40,997,300	43,374,500	50,997,600	53,794,600	56,821,400	59,944,400	61,140,400	62,357,900
Operating Expense										
Flood Mitigation	2,461,600	1,744,600	1,739,800	1,761,300	1,789,000	1,887,900	1,870,300	1,898,900	1,902,900	1,932,400
Weeds Biosecurity	1,794,400	1,553,300	1,429,400	1,442,900	1,458,600	1,481,000	1,509,500	1,561,300	1,596,600	1,616,200
Retail Water Supply	3,959,000	4,379,300	4,532,300	4,737,300	4,954,600	5,184,900	5,428,600	5,686,900	5,770,500	5,887,300
Property	333,400	230,300	220,500	160,400	153,800	155,300	157,700	159,300	162,100	163,800
Bulk Water Supply	28,211,300	26,904,200	28,969,400	29,594,400	29,684,300	28,905,300	28,857,500	30,837,500	30,893,200	31,040,100
Fleet Operations (*net of internal income)	225,300	234,100	242,100	250,200	258,500	266,900	275,500	284,200	293,000	302,000
Total Operating Expense	36,985,000	35,045,800	37,133,500	37,946,500	38,298,800	37,881,300	38,099,100	40,428,100	40,618,300	40,941,800
Operating Result	1,868,900	5,390,800	3,863,800	5,428,000	12,698,800	15,913,300	18,722,300	19,516,300	20,522,100	21,416,100
Less Depreciation	8,756,500	9,039,400	9,333,300	9,834,800	10,099,500	10,268,300	10,489,800	10,852,500	11,357,700	11,606,200
Operating Result Excluding Non Cash	10,625,400	14,430,200	13,197,100	15,262,800	22,798,300	26,181,600	29,212,100	30,368,800	31,879,800	33,022,300
Add: Loan Drawdown	30,000,000	0	10,000,000	10,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Less: Loan Repayments	4,256,900	4,661,900	4,350,600	2,605,000	2,255,000	2,369,800	2,491,100	2,619,200	2,754,500	2,897,400
Less: Capital Expense	38,305,600	15,516,400	16,421,800	19,442,500	21,901,900	15,527,000	9,101,200	26,070,500	29,147,600	10,569,600
Add: Reserve Transfers	1,937,100	5,748,100	(2,424,700)	(3,215,300)	1,358,600	(8,284,800)	(17,619,800)	(1,679,100)	22,300	(19,555,300)
Estimated Reserves Whole Organisation										
Description	2025 Estimate	2026 Estimate	2027 Estimate	2028 Estimate	2029 Estimate	2030 Estimate	2031 Estimate	2032 Estimate	2033 Estimate	2034 Estimate
Estimated Reserves Whole Organisation	19,704,900	13,956,800	16,381,500	19,596,800	18,238,200	26,523,000	44,142,800	45,821,900	45,799,600	65,354,900
Net Reserve Movement	(1,937,100)	(5,748,100)	2,424,700	3,215,300	(1,358,600)	8,284,800	17,619,800	1,679,100	(22,300)	19,555,300

Key points on operating performance

Recent history

An operating loss before capital grants and contributions has occurred in each of the last three years. Capital revenue through Section 64 contributions is Council's second largest source of revenue and with this revenue included, surpluses have occurred.

The Bulk Water price continues to increase to improve Council's financial performance and allow for the additional capital works associated with the Future Water Program.

Rous is currently providing administrative services to the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation under a fee for service arrangement.

Ten-year forecast

The forecast is for a continuation of operating deficits (excluding capital revenue) until 2028/29.

There are numerous factors influencing this forecast, but the predominant issue is a need to borrow funds externally to pay for new capital works within 'Bulk water'. The plan anticipates raising loans of \$50 million over the next ten years. The price of bulk water is increased to raise funds to repay the debt, however there is a lag where recurrent operating losses are anticipated until revenue reaches a satisfactory level. Cash reserves remain reasonably stable despite funds being applied to capital works and then replenished by new borrowings.

It is not preferable to forecast operating deficits on a recurrent basis, however it is sustainable because income from constituent council contributions for bulk water is elevated to match the new operating and capital expense requirements. Some of the pressure is released in 2027/2028 when the majority of the existing loans expire, which results in saving of approximately \$4 million per annum in loan repayments. The outlook for the whole organisation tends to be dominated by the bulk water reporting unit and more detailed information is provided in that section of the document.

Forecast ratios

Several ratios do not meet the Office of Local Government benchmarks predominantly due to the increased costs of the FWP, the associated loan borrowings and a focus on constructing new assets rather than renewing existing assets.

The selected ratios below are from those required by the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice. A definition for each ratio is included in the detailed version of the LTFP [available here](#). Rous's forecast performance against the benchmarks are detailed in *Table 5: Consolidated organisation forecast ratios*.

Table 5: Consolidated organisation forecast ratios

	Long-Term Financial Plan									
	Operational Plan	Delivery Program								
Rous County Council - Whole of Organisation	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Financial Ratios	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Operating Performance Ratio Expressed as a Percentage <u>Operating Income less Operating Expense</u> Operating Income	(12.40)	(5.24)	(5.18)	(1.24)	14.70	20.22	24.24	23.98	24.98	25.72
Benchmark	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0
Result	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Comment	This benchmark is met from 2028/29 onwards primarily due to the Bulk Water price path which enables operating revenue to exceed operating expenditure.									
Own Source Operating Revenue Expressed as a Percentage <u>Operating Income less Grants and Contributions</u> Total Operating Income	93.12	97.54	97.67	97.80	87.02	87.73	88.41	89.03	89.22	89.41
Benchmark	>60	>60	>60	>60	>60	>60	>60	>60	>60	>60
Result	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Comment	This benchmark is met in every year as Rous' revenue is primarily from non-Grant sources.									
Debt Service Cover Ratio <u>Operating Result excluding Loan Interest and Depreciation</u> Loan Repayments Principal/Interest	1.07 6,549,900	1.36 9,859,400	1.44 10,346,200	2.18 12,477,800	3.76 19,682,100	4.34 22,737,300	4.85 25,426,200	5.01 26,226,500	5.22 27,365,900	5.37 28,121,100
Benchmark	>2	>2	>2	>2	>2	>2	>2	>2	>2	>2
Result	Fail	Fail	Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Comment	This benchmark is met from 2027/28 onwards as existing loans are repaid and operating results improve.									
Unrestricted Current Ratio <u>Current Assets less External Restrictions</u> Current Liabilities Less Specific Purpose Liabilities	2.22 25,881,200	1.81 20,256,700	2.37 22,807,600	2.78 26,151,500	2.58 24,923,900	3.36 33,342,500	5.01 51,098,700	5.04 52,916,900	4.92 53,036,500	6.55 72,736,500
Benchmark	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5
Result	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Comment	This ratio exceeds the benchmark in all years.									
Buildings and Infrastructure Renewals ratio <u>Asset Renewals</u> Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	67.95 5,950,180	62.01 5,605,175	55.15 5,147,300	78.85 7,755,000	151.60 15,310,900	82.95 8,517,500	22.12 2,319,900	92.05 9,990,200	32.51 3,692,350	20.31 2,357,200
Benchmark	>100%	>100%	>100%	>100%	>100%	>100%	>100%	>100%	>100%	>100%
Result	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
Comment	The benchmark is generally not met due to a focus on new assets. Renewal expenditure varies depending on the life cycle of existing assets which are generally long-lived and do not require renewal in the short-term.									

Table 5a: Select consolidated organisation forecast ratios (total revenue)

	Long-Term Financial Plan									
	Operational Plan	Delivery Program								
Rous County Council - Whole of Organisation	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Financial Ratios (including Capital Revenue)	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Operating Performance Ratio Expressed as a Percentage <u>Operating Income less Operating Expense</u>	4.81	13.33	9.42	12.51	24.90	29.58	32.95	32.56	33.57	34.34
Operating Income										
Benchmark	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0
Result	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Comment	This ratio exceeds the benchmark in all years.									
Debt Service Cover Ratio	2.04	2.35	2.23	3.22	4.92	5.55	6.10	6.30	6.56	6.75
<u>Operating Result excluding Loan Interest and Depreciation</u>	12,499,800	16,996,000	16,040,100	18,371,000	25,781,600	29,050,100	31,959,300	32,987,900	34,363,600	35,363,200
Loan Repayments Principal/Interest	6,131,300	7,227,700	7,193,600	5,713,200	5,238,300	5,238,300	5,238,300	5,238,300	5,238,300	5,238,300
Benchmark	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5	>1.5
Result	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Comment	This ratio exceeds the benchmark in all years.									

Forecast balance sheet

That fixed assets, specifically infrastructure assets and borrowings, will increase significantly over the next ten years. This forecast reflects the FWP and the associated groundwater infrastructure that will be constructed.

Council's borrowing capacity has been assessed in developing the plans as infrastructure expansion requires significant investment.

Over time the net equity (surplus of asset values over liabilities) of the organisation grows, which reflects, amongst other things, repayment of outstanding loans.

This information is shown in *Table 6: Consolidated organisation forecast balance sheet*.

Table 6: Consolidated organisation forecast balance sheet

	Long-Term Financial Plan									
	Operational Plan	Delivery Program								
	2025 Estimate	2026 Estimate	2027 Estimate	2028 Estimate	2029 Estimate	2030 Estimate	2031 Estimate	2032 Estimate	2033 Estimate	2034 Estimate
ASSETS										
Current Assets										
Cash and Cash Equivalents	5,215,600	6,230,000	6,539,600	6,326,200	6,378,600	6,266,400	6,862,500	6,378,300	6,506,700	5,763,200
Investments	14,489,300	7,726,800	9,841,900	13,270,600	11,859,600	20,256,600	37,280,300	39,443,600	39,292,900	59,591,700
Receivables	4,424,100	4,512,700	4,603,100	4,695,200	4,789,100	4,885,000	4,982,700	5,082,300	5,184,000	5,287,600
Inventories	413,000	421,200	429,700	438,300	447,000	455,900	465,000	474,300	483,700	493,400
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Investment Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Current Assets Classified as Held for Sale	1,339,200	1,366,000	1,393,300	1,421,200	1,449,600	1,478,600	1,508,200	1,538,400	1,569,200	1,600,600
Total Current Assets	25,881,200	20,256,700	22,807,600	26,151,500	24,923,900	33,342,500	51,098,700	52,916,900	53,036,500	72,736,500
Non-Current Assets										
Investments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Receivables	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inventories	1,440,300	1,469,100	1,498,500	1,528,500	1,559,100	1,590,300	1,622,100	1,654,500	1,687,600	1,721,300
Infrastructure	576,779,600	581,827,600	589,246,000	599,076,300	611,122,800	616,797,200	615,831,000	631,478,200	649,704,200	649,110,700
Property, Plant and Equipment	31,058,400	31,514,100	32,089,500	32,762,400	33,426,200	33,955,100	34,490,200	35,031,700	35,579,700	36,134,400
Investments Accounted for Using Equity Method	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Investment Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Intangible Assets	3,431,400	5,064,300	4,864,000	4,659,700	4,451,300	4,238,700	4,021,900	3,800,700	3,575,100	3,345,000
Other	438,500	447,300	456,200	465,300	474,600	484,100	493,800	503,700	513,800	524,100
Total Non-Current Assets	613,148,200	620,322,400	628,154,200	638,492,200	651,034,000	657,065,400	656,459,000	672,468,800	691,060,400	690,835,500
TOTAL ASSETS	639,029,400	640,579,100	650,961,800	664,643,700	675,957,900	690,407,900	707,557,700	725,385,700	744,096,900	763,572,000
LIABILITIES										
Current Liabilities										
Payables	3,743,200	3,818,200	3,894,600	3,972,500	4,051,900	4,133,000	4,215,700	4,300,100	4,386,100	4,473,900
Contract Liabilities	528,500	539,100	549,900	560,900	572,100	583,500	595,200	607,100	619,200	631,600
Lease Liabilities	267,100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Borrowings	4,661,900	4,350,600	2,605,000	2,255,000	2,369,800	2,491,100	2,619,200	2,754,500	2,897,400	3,048,400
Provisions	2,462,500	2,511,800	2,562,000	2,613,200	2,665,500	2,718,800	2,773,200	2,828,700	2,885,300	2,943,000
Income Received in Advance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Current Liabilities	11,663,200	11,219,700	9,611,500	9,401,600	9,659,300	9,926,400	10,203,300	10,490,400	10,788,000	11,096,900
Non-Current Liabilities										
Payables	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Borrowings	42,611,200	38,260,700	45,655,700	53,400,600	51,031,100	48,539,900	45,920,700	43,166,200	40,268,800	37,220,300
Provisions	70,400	71,800	73,200	74,700	76,200	77,700	79,300	80,900	82,500	84,200
Total Non-Current Liabilities	42,681,600	38,332,500	45,728,900	53,475,300	51,107,300	48,617,600	46,000,000	43,247,100	40,351,300	37,304,500
TOTAL LIABILITIES	54,344,800	49,552,200	55,340,400	62,876,900	60,766,600	58,544,000	56,203,300	53,737,500	51,139,300	48,401,400
NET ASSETS	584,684,600	591,026,900	595,621,400	601,766,800	615,191,300	631,863,900	651,354,400	671,648,200	692,957,600	715,170,600

Forecast statement of cash flows

That cash levels are significantly impacted by additional loan borrowings (which are required to fund the FWP) and the impact of repaying these borrowed funds.

The forecast predicts how changes in balance sheet accounts and income effect cash and cash equivalents. It provides information that enables users to evaluate the changes in net assets, financial structure (including liquidity and solvency) and the amounts and timing of cash flows to adapt to changing circumstances and opportunities.

This report is particularly useful in assessing the overall health of the forecasts in the LTFFP. Operating activities produce surplus results while investing activities depict a season of significant capital expenditure. The financing activities further highlights the model's reliance on borrowings and the impact of repaying these funds.

This information is shown in *Table 7: Consolidated organisation forecast statement of cash flows*.

Table 7: Consolidated organisation forecast statement of cash flows

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Consolidated										
Cash Flows from Operating Activities										
<u>Receipts</u>										
User Charges and Fees	27,461,400	29,359,100	31,391,700	33,568,700	35,900,400	38,398,000	41,073,200	43,938,800	44,808,000	45,721,000
Investment and Interest Revenue Received	858,500	801,900	707,000	640,000	666,200	691,800	767,000	738,500	770,200	770,200
Grants and Contributions	10,094,100	9,905,900	8,524,700	8,787,500	14,048,200	14,317,400	14,589,100	14,870,100	15,160,200	15,459,600
Other	1,466,600	1,396,400	1,400,600	1,405,000	1,409,500	1,414,100	1,418,800	1,423,700	1,428,700	1,433,800
<u>Payments</u>										
Employee Benefits and On-Costs	(12,486,600)	(12,547,400)	(12,085,400)	(12,265,300)	(12,435,700)	(12,588,800)	(12,798,300)	(13,041,500)	(13,287,100)	(13,537,800)
Materials and Services	(16,869,700)	(14,033,700)	(16,160,200)	(16,184,900)	(16,396,400)	(15,953,000)	(16,055,000)	(18,113,700)	(17,720,200)	(17,751,500)
Borrowing Costs	(1,874,400)	(2,565,800)	(2,843,000)	(3,108,200)	(2,983,300)	(2,868,500)	(2,747,200)	(2,619,100)	(2,483,800)	(2,340,900)
Other	1,975,500	2,113,800	2,261,700	2,420,000	2,589,400	2,770,600	2,964,500	3,172,000	3,203,800	3,267,900
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities	10,625,400	14,430,200	13,197,100	15,262,800	22,798,300	26,181,600	29,212,100	30,368,800	31,879,800	33,022,300
Cash Flows from Investing Activities										
<u>Receipts</u>										
Redemption of Term Deposits	15,000,000	8,000,000	10,000,000	13,500,000	12,500,000	20,500,000	37,500,000	39,500,000	39,500,000	60,000,000
Sale of Investment Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sale of Real Estate Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sale of Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Payments</u>										
Acquisition of Term Deposits	(15,000,000)	(8,000,000)	(10,000,000)	(13,500,000)	(12,500,000)	(20,500,000)	(37,500,000)	(39,500,000)	(39,500,000)	(60,000,000)
Purchase of Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment	(35,704,800)	(13,901,100)	(16,369,800)	(19,389,500)	(21,847,900)	(15,472,000)	(9,045,200)	(26,013,500)	(29,089,600)	(10,510,600)
Purchase of Real Estate Assets	(50,000)	(51,000)	(52,000)	(53,000)	(54,000)	(55,000)	(56,000)	(57,000)	(58,000)	(59,000)
Purchase of Intangible Assets	(2,550,800)	(1,564,300)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities	(38,305,600)	(15,516,400)	(16,421,800)	(19,442,500)	(21,901,900)	(15,527,000)	(9,101,200)	(26,070,500)	(29,147,600)	(10,569,600)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities										
<u>Receipts</u>										
Proceeds from Borrowings	30,000,000	0	10,000,000	10,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Payments</u>										
Repayment of Borrowings	(4,256,900)	(4,661,900)	(4,350,600)	(2,605,000)	(2,255,000)	(2,369,800)	(2,491,100)	(2,619,200)	(2,754,500)	(2,897,400)
Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities	25,743,100	(4,661,900)	5,649,400	7,395,000	(2,255,000)	(2,369,800)	(2,491,100)	(2,619,200)	(2,754,500)	(2,897,400)
Net Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents	(1,937,100)	(5,748,100)	2,424,700	3,215,300	(1,358,600)	8,284,800	17,619,800	1,679,100	(22,300)	19,555,300
Cash and Cash Equivalents at Beginning of Year	21,642,000	19,704,900	13,956,800	16,381,500	19,596,800	18,238,200	26,523,000	44,142,800	45,821,900	45,799,600
Cash and Cash Equivalents at End of the Year	19,704,900	13,956,800	16,381,500	19,596,800	18,238,200	26,523,000	44,142,800	45,821,900	45,799,600	65,354,900

5. Capital works program: 10-year forecast

The capital works program is forecast for the current year and the following ten years in *Table 8: Capital works program*. The current year is taken directly from this year's budget while later years are based on directions from Council and information in Council's asset registers.

As with all aspects of the LTFP, the program is based on the best information available at the time of preparation. The current elected council cannot bind future councils, so it is quite feasible, indeed likely, that the program will change as Council priorities alter and new information is received.

Table 8: Capital works program

	Long Term Financial Plan									
	Operational Plan	Delivery Program								
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Capital Works Program	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Bulk Water										
Future Water Program	8,590,000	9,000,000	10,500,000	10,000,000	4,000,000	6,520,000	6,734,300	14,239,200	25,157,600	8,681,300
Gallans Road	19,500,000	1,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Digital Transformation	2,575,800	1,564,300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ICT	282,000	338,500	266,000	179,000	217,000	668,500	666,500	590,800	233,000	233,000
Other Bulk Water Capital Works	6,774,100	2,948,000	4,463,200	8,258,400	16,665,900	7,034,600	831,500	10,368,600	2,481,100	775,200
Retail Water										
Reticulation Renewal	0	0	400,000	0	0	400,000	0	0	400,000	0
Other Retail Water Capital Works	168,200	90,800	92,600	94,500	96,400	98,300	100,300	102,300	104,300	106,400
Flood Mitigation										
Flood Mitigation Capital Works	219,500	225,800	236,700	332,600	358,600	405,600	367,600	367,600	368,600	369,700
Weed Biosecurity										
Weed Biosecurity Capital Works	21,000	0	22,000	44,000	44,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Property										
Property Capital Works	50,000	51,000	52,000	53,000	54,000	55,000	56,000	57,000	58,000	59,000
Fleet										
Fleet Capital Works	125,000	298,000	389,300	481,000	466,000	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000
TOTAL	38,305,600	15,516,400	16,421,800	19,442,500	21,901,900	15,527,000	9,101,200	26,070,500	29,147,600	10,569,600

6. Scenario modelling

A number of scenarios have been modelled to inform how significant changes to the forecast assumptions and projects would impact the LTFP.

6.1. No capital grants scenario

What the model forecasts: The impact of Rous receiving no capital grants for future capital works.

What the model means: Forecast grant revenue could be reduced by \$30 million and the current price path could still be maintained. The price path required is shown in *Table 9: Price path – No capital grants scenario*.

Table 9: Price path – No capital grants scenario

Year	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Proposed % Increase	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	2.0%	2.0%

No changes would be made to the Bulk Water price path if this scenario eventuated. Rous would produce an operating surplus from 2024/25 onwards with estimated reserves of \$35.4 million at the end of 2033/34.

Refer to *Table 10: Consolidated operating performance – No capital grants scenario*.

Table 10: Consolidated operating performance – No capital grants scenario

Rous County Council - Whole of Organisation

Name	Long-Term Financial Plan									
	Operational Plan	Delivery Program								
	2025 Estimate	2026 Estimate	2027 Estimate	2028 Estimate	2029 Estimate	2030 Estimate	2031 Estimate	2032 Estimate	2033 Estimate	2034 Estimate
Operating Income										
Flood Mitigation	1,910,300	1,224,900	1,270,300	1,315,900	1,353,100	1,389,800	1,421,700	1,456,200	1,492,400	1,526,300
Weeds Biosecurity	1,632,500	1,611,800	1,627,200	1,641,700	1,663,000	1,685,100	1,707,800	1,730,400	1,752,600	1,773,700
Retail Water Supply	3,966,700	4,214,300	4,485,200	4,778,400	5,099,400	5,447,800	5,818,300	6,221,100	6,353,800	6,496,400
Property	162,600	96,900	140,200	166,300	166,100	165,800	165,400	165,000	164,500	164,500
Bulk Water Supply	31,058,300	33,171,200	33,359,300	35,362,700	37,607,200	39,995,700	42,594,000	45,253,600	46,254,900	47,274,800
Fleet Operations	123,500	117,500	115,100	109,500	108,800	110,400	114,200	118,100	122,200	122,200
Total Operating Income	38,853,900	40,436,600	40,997,300	43,374,500	45,997,600	48,794,600	51,821,400	54,944,400	56,140,400	57,357,900
Operating Expense										
Flood Mitigation	2,461,600	1,744,600	1,739,800	1,761,300	1,789,000	1,887,900	1,870,300	1,898,900	1,902,900	1,932,400
Weeds Biosecurity	1,794,400	1,553,300	1,429,400	1,442,900	1,458,600	1,481,000	1,509,500	1,561,300	1,596,600	1,616,200
Retail Water Supply	3,959,000	4,379,300	4,532,300	4,737,300	4,954,600	5,184,900	5,428,600	5,686,900	5,770,500	5,887,300
Property	333,400	230,300	220,500	160,400	153,800	155,300	157,700	159,300	162,100	163,800
Bulk Water Supply	28,211,300	26,904,200	28,969,400	29,594,400	29,684,300	28,905,300	28,857,500	30,837,500	30,893,200	31,040,100
Fleet Operations (*net of internal income)	225,300	234,100	242,100	250,200	258,500	266,900	275,500	284,200	293,000	302,000
Total Operating Expense	36,985,000	35,045,800	37,133,500	37,946,500	38,298,800	37,881,300	38,099,100	40,428,100	40,618,300	40,941,800
Operating Result	1,868,900	5,390,800	3,863,800	5,428,000	7,698,800	10,913,300	13,722,300	14,516,300	15,522,100	16,416,100
Less Depreciation	8,756,500	9,039,400	9,333,300	9,834,800	10,099,500	10,268,300	10,489,800	10,852,500	11,357,700	11,606,200
Operating Result Excluding Non Cash	10,625,400	14,430,200	13,197,100	15,262,800	17,798,300	21,181,600	24,212,100	25,368,800	26,879,800	28,022,300
Add: Loan Drawdown	30,000,000	0	10,000,000	10,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Less: Loan Repayments	4,256,900	4,661,900	4,350,600	2,605,000	2,255,000	2,369,800	2,491,100	2,619,200	2,754,500	2,897,400
Less: Capital Expense	38,305,600	15,516,400	16,421,800	19,442,500	21,901,900	15,527,000	9,101,200	26,070,500	29,147,600	10,569,600
Add: Reserve Transfers	1,937,100	5,748,100	(2,424,700)	(3,215,300)	6,358,600	(3,284,800)	(12,619,800)	3,320,900	5,022,300	(14,555,300)
Estimated Reserves Whole Organisation										
Description	2025 Estimate	2026 Estimate	2027 Estimate	2028 Estimate	2029 Estimate	2030 Estimate	2031 Estimate	2032 Estimate	2033 Estimate	2034 Estimate
Estimated Reserves Whole Organisation	19,704,900	13,956,800	16,381,500	19,596,800	13,238,200	16,523,000	29,142,800	25,821,900	20,799,600	35,354,900
Net Reserve Movement	(1,937,100)	(5,748,100)	2,424,700	3,215,300	(6,358,600)	3,284,800	12,619,800	(3,320,900)	(5,022,300)	14,555,300

6.2. NSW Treasury Corporation loans scenario

What the model forecasts: The impacts of forecast interest rates decreasing to the levels on offer from NSW Treasury Corporation.

What the model means: Savings would be made on finance costs associated with the planned loan borrowings of \$50 million resulting in an improved financial performance. The price path required is shown in *Table 11: Price path – NSW Treasury Corporation loans scenario*.

Table 11: Price path – NSW Treasury Corporation loans scenario

Year	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Proposed % Increase	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	2.0%	2.0%

No changes would be made to the Bulk Water price path if this scenario eventuated. Rous would produce an operating surplus from 2024/25 onwards with estimated reserves of \$65.9 million at the end of 2033/34

Refer to *Table 12: Consolidated operating performance – NSW Treasury Corporation loans scenario*.

Table 12: Consolidated operating performance – NSW Treasury Corporation loans scenario

Rous County Council - Whole of Organisation

Name	Long-Term Financial Plan									
	Operational Plan	Delivery Program								
	2025 Estimate	2026 Estimate	2027 Estimate	2028 Estimate	2029 Estimate	2030 Estimate	2031 Estimate	2032 Estimate	2033 Estimate	2034 Estimate
Operating Income										
Flood Mitigation	1,910,300	1,224,900	1,270,300	1,315,900	1,353,100	1,389,800	1,421,700	1,456,200	1,492,400	1,526,300
Weeds Biosecurity	1,632,500	1,611,800	1,627,200	1,641,700	1,663,000	1,685,100	1,707,800	1,730,400	1,752,600	1,773,700
Retail Water Supply	3,966,700	4,214,300	4,485,200	4,778,400	5,099,400	5,447,800	5,818,300	6,221,100	6,353,800	6,496,400
Property	162,600	96,900	140,200	166,300	166,100	165,800	165,400	165,000	164,500	164,500
Bulk Water Supply	31,058,300	33,171,200	33,359,300	35,362,700	42,607,200	44,995,700	47,594,000	50,253,600	51,254,900	52,274,800
Fleet Operations	123,500	117,500	115,100	109,500	108,800	110,400	114,200	118,100	122,200	122,200
Total Operating Income	38,853,900	40,436,600	40,997,300	43,374,500	50,997,600	53,794,600	56,821,400	59,944,400	61,140,400	62,357,900
Operating Expense										
Flood Mitigation	2,461,600	1,744,600	1,739,800	1,761,300	1,789,000	1,887,900	1,870,300	1,898,900	1,902,900	1,932,400
Weeds Biosecurity	1,794,400	1,553,300	1,429,400	1,442,900	1,458,600	1,481,000	1,509,500	1,561,300	1,596,600	1,616,200
Retail Water Supply	3,959,000	4,379,300	4,532,300	4,737,300	4,954,600	5,184,900	5,428,600	5,686,900	5,770,500	5,887,300
Property	333,400	230,300	220,500	160,400	153,800	155,300	157,700	159,300	162,100	163,800
Bulk Water Supply	28,886,300	26,607,100	28,675,900	29,355,100	29,449,600	28,675,700	28,634,000	30,621,000	30,684,800	30,840,900
Fleet Operations (*net of internal income)	225,300	234,100	242,100	250,200	258,500	266,900	275,500	284,200	293,000	302,000
Total Operating Expense	37,660,000	34,748,700	36,840,000	37,707,200	38,064,100	37,651,700	37,875,600	40,211,600	40,409,900	40,742,600
Operating Result	1,193,900	5,687,900	4,157,300	5,667,300	12,933,500	16,142,900	18,945,800	19,732,800	20,730,500	21,615,300
Less Depreciation	8,756,500	9,039,400	9,333,300	9,834,800	10,099,500	10,268,300	10,489,800	10,852,500	11,357,700	11,606,200
Operating Result Excluding Non Cash	9,950,400	14,727,300	13,490,600	15,502,100	23,033,000	26,411,200	29,435,600	30,585,300	32,088,200	33,221,500
Add: Loan Drawdown	30,000,000	0	10,000,000	10,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Less: Loan Repayments	4,730,900	4,746,600	4,431,800	2,666,300	2,311,800	2,421,500	2,536,700	2,657,700	2,785,000	2,918,700
Less: Capital Expense	38,305,600	15,516,400	16,421,800	19,442,500	21,901,900	15,527,000	9,101,200	26,070,500	29,147,600	10,569,600
Add: Reserve Transfers	3,086,100	5,535,700	(2,637,000)	(3,393,300)	1,180,700	(8,462,700)	(17,797,700)	(1,857,100)	(155,600)	(19,733,200)
Estimated Reserves Whole Organisation										
Description	2025 Estimate	2026 Estimate	2027 Estimate	2028 Estimate	2029 Estimate	2030 Estimate	2031 Estimate	2032 Estimate	2033 Estimate	2034 Estimate
Estimated Reserves Whole Organisation	18,555,900	13,020,200	15,657,200	19,050,500	17,869,800	26,332,500	44,130,200	45,987,300	46,142,900	65,876,100
Net Reserve Movement	(3,086,100)	(5,535,700)	2,637,000	3,393,300	(1,180,700)	8,462,700	17,797,700	1,857,100	155,600	19,733,200

6.3. Return to cyclical interest rates scenario

What the model forecasts: The impacts of forecast interest rates decreasing to the cyclical levels on offer in previous years.

What the model means: No changes to the planned price path as long-term cost savings on borrowings are balanced out by a reduction in short-term investment revenue. The price path required is shown in *Table 13: Price path – Return to cyclical interest rates scenario*.

Table 13: Price path – Return to cyclical interest rates scenario

Year	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Proposed % Increase	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	7.0%	2.0%	2.0%

No changes would be made to the Bulk Water price path if this scenario eventuated. Rous would produce an operating surplus from 2024/25 onwards with estimated reserves of \$70.4 million at the end of 2033/34.

Refer to *Table 14: Consolidated operating performance – Return to cyclical interest rates scenario*.

Table 14: Consolidated operating performance – Return to cyclical interest rates scenario

Rous County Council - Whole of Organisation

Name	Long-Term Financial Plan									
	Operational Plan	Delivery Program								
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Operating Income										
Flood Mitigation	1,910,300	1,224,900	1,270,300	1,315,900	1,353,100	1,389,800	1,421,700	1,456,200	1,492,400	1,526,300
Weeds Biosecurity	1,632,500	1,611,800	1,627,200	1,641,700	1,663,000	1,685,100	1,707,800	1,730,400	1,752,600	1,773,700
Retail Water Supply	3,966,700	4,214,300	4,485,200	4,778,400	5,099,400	5,447,800	5,818,300	6,221,100	6,353,800	6,496,400
Property	162,600	96,900	140,200	166,300	166,100	165,800	165,400	165,000	164,500	164,500
Bulk Water Supply	31,058,300	33,171,200	33,359,300	35,362,700	42,607,200	44,995,700	47,594,000	50,253,600	51,254,900	52,274,800
Fleet Operations	123,500	117,500	115,100	109,500	108,800	110,400	114,200	118,100	122,200	122,200
Total Operating Income	38,853,900	40,436,600	40,997,300	43,374,500	50,997,600	53,794,600	56,821,400	59,944,400	61,140,400	62,357,900
Operating Expense										
Flood Mitigation	2,461,600	1,744,600	1,739,800	1,761,300	1,789,000	1,887,900	1,870,300	1,898,900	1,902,900	1,932,400
Weeds Biosecurity	1,794,400	1,553,300	1,429,400	1,442,900	1,458,600	1,481,000	1,509,500	1,561,300	1,596,600	1,616,200
Retail Water Supply	3,959,000	4,379,300	4,532,300	4,737,300	4,954,600	5,184,900	5,428,600	5,686,900	5,770,500	5,887,300
Property	333,400	230,300	220,500	160,400	153,800	155,300	157,700	159,300	162,100	163,800
Bulk Water Supply	28,436,300	26,164,100	28,090,900	28,631,600	28,741,300	27,984,600	27,962,100	29,970,700	30,058,300	30,240,900
Fleet Operations (*net of internal income)	225,300	234,100	242,100	250,200	258,500	266,900	275,500	284,200	293,000	302,000
Total Operating Expense	37,210,000	34,305,700	36,255,000	36,983,700	37,355,800	36,960,600	37,203,700	39,561,300	39,783,400	40,142,600
Operating Result	1,643,900	6,130,900	4,742,300	6,390,800	13,641,800	16,834,000	19,617,700	20,383,100	21,357,000	22,215,300
Less Depreciation	8,756,500	9,039,400	9,333,300	9,834,800	10,099,500	10,268,300	10,489,800	10,852,500	11,357,700	11,606,200
Operating Result Excluding Non Cash	10,400,400	15,170,300	14,075,600	16,225,600	23,741,300	27,102,300	30,107,500	31,235,600	32,714,700	33,821,500
Add: Loan Drawdown	30,000,000	0	10,000,000	10,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Less: Loan Repayments	4,878,000	4,886,700	4,612,900	2,885,000	2,515,200	2,607,700	2,703,600	2,803,200	2,906,500	3,013,800
Less: Capital Expense	38,305,600	15,516,400	16,421,800	19,442,500	21,901,900	15,527,000	9,101,200	26,070,500	29,147,600	10,569,600
Add: Reserve Transfers	2,783,200	5,232,800	(3,040,900)	(3,898,100)	675,800	(8,967,600)	(18,302,700)	(2,361,900)	(660,600)	(20,238,100)
Estimated Reserves Whole Organisation										
Description	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Estimated Reserves Whole Organisation	18,858,800	13,626,000	16,666,900	20,565,000	19,889,200	28,856,800	47,159,500	49,521,400	50,182,000	70,420,100
Net Reserve Movement	(2,783,200)	(5,232,800)	3,040,900	3,898,100	(675,800)	8,967,600	18,302,700	2,361,900	660,600	20,238,100



Statement of Revenue Policy – 2024/25

This policy details the basis for the determination of Constituent Council contributions and other relevant revenue streams that inform Council’s financial plans. It is designed to ensure funding is available to maintain agreed levels of service and to provide adequate financial capacity for planned capital works and therefore sustainability of services for the region.

This policy forms part of Council’s long term financial plan, which requires a balance of funds from existing operations, established restricted cash assets, and new sources of revenue including loan funds for those assets required due to growth.

Income

Bulk water

Bulk water sales revenue from member councils and direct retail customers, is calculated on the gross dollar yield required to fund bulk water supply activities. For 2024/25, the gross dollar yield is \$25,506,300, which is an increase of \$1,668,600 (7.0%) on the previous year.

Supply Area	Proportional Weighting	2024/25 \$
Lismore City Council	26.95%	6,873,500
Byron Shire Council	24.99%	6,374,300
Richmond Valley Council	5.82%	1,483,900
Ballina Shire Council	34.50%	8,799,100
Rous County Council Direct Retail	7.74%	1,975,500
	100.00%	25,506,300

Member councils’ contribution of required revenue is calculated based on prior year consumption.

In 2024/25 the notional price per kilolitre of water charged to member councils and Council’s Retail Water Fund is \$2.34 per kilolitre.

Retail Customers

In accordance with Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) and NSW State Government’s ‘Best Practice Management of Water and Sewage Guidelines’, Council applies the principle of two-part tariff with quarterly meter reading and billing.

For 2024/25, the price per kilolitre will increase by 8% in line with the Long-Term Financial Plan to \$3.28 per kilolitre. Fixed fee facility charges will also increase by 8%.

Development Servicing Plan

Section 64 of the *Local Government Act 1993* allows Council to levy developers with a contribution charge to provide a source of funds devoted to the augmentation program resulting from increased demand.

The Bulk Water Supply and Retail Water Supply Development Servicing Plans were adopted by Council at its February 2023 meeting, effective 1 July 2023. The plan is in accordance with the ‘best practice’ guidelines as issued by the NSW Office of Water.

For 2024/25, in accordance with the plan, the bulk water charge increases by \$408 (4.1%) to \$10,359 per Equivalent Tenement. The retail water charge increases by \$16 (4.1) to \$400 per Equivalent Tenement.

Weed Biosecurity

Council levies assessments on member Councils based on the following formula, which was adopted in 1994 and confirmed by review in 2003 and 2004. The formula is on the basis of 50% Part A and 50% Part B:

Part A: area % + length of roads % + number of rural holdings % + population %.

Part B: number of property inspections % + weed control costs %.

Since July 2013 the contribution weighting has been fixed with the contribution amount increased annually by the rate peg percentage which is determined annually by IPART.

Effective 1 July 2016 services for Kyogle and Tweed councils are now provided under a service level agreement. Their fee is based on the same contribution calculation.

For 2024/25, contributions will increase by rate pegging, which is 4.6%. Amounts listed are exclusive of GST.

Service Area	2024/25 \$
Ballina Shire Council	128,700
Byron Shire Council	128,700
Lismore City Council	169,100
Richmond Valley Council	140,000
<i>Kyogle Council*</i>	<i>141,100</i>
<i>Tweed Shire Council*</i>	<i>193,700</i>
	901,300

**Service level agreement.*

Council regularly attracts government funding for weed biosecurity. Council considers grant-funding matching requirements on a case-by-case basis.

Flood Mitigation

Council levies assessments on member Councils within the Richmond River Floodplain area based on an even portion of gross revenue.

For 2024/25, contributions will increase by 8%. Amounts listed below are exclusive of GST.

Service Area - Flood Mitigation	2024/25 \$
Ballina Shire Council	326,900
Lismore City Council	326,900
Richmond Valley Council	326,900
	980,700

Ex-Drainage Union

Council levies assessments on member Councils for works undertaken on ex- drainage union assets, based on the existing contribution amounts, increased annually by the rate peg percentage which is determined annually by IPART.

For 2024/25, contributions will increase by the rate peg, which is 4.6%. Amounts listed below are exclusive of GST.

Service Area - Ex-Drainage Union	2024/25 \$
Ballina Shire Council	43,700
Lismore City Council	43,700
Richmond Valley Council	4,200
	91,600

Council regularly attracts government funding for flood and estuary related projects. Council considers grant-funding matching requirements on a case-by-case basis.

Borrowings

Council conducts its operations with an approved overdraft limit of \$100,000 provided by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. This facility is designed to cover short-term liquidity gaps.

Council intends to borrow \$30M from an approved financial institution in 2024/25.

Fee Determination

Factors considered in determining fees and charges include: the cost of providing the service or goods; legislative requirements; market conditions and prices; and whether there is a community service obligation.

The codes contained in the following table have been adopted to assist in explaining the rationale behind the calculation of fees.

Code	Description	
L	Regulatory	A statutory charge set by the government.
Z	Zero Cost Recovery	Priced at 'no cost'; met entirely from general-purpose income.
P	Partial Cost Recovery	Priced to make a considerable (between 50% and 75%) contribution towards the operating costs, both direct and indirect, of providing the good/service. The remainder of the costs are met from general-purpose income.
F	Full Cost Recovery	Priced to make a significant (between 75% and 100%) contribution towards the operating costs, both direct and indirect, of providing the good/service. The remainder of the costs are met from general-purpose income.
M	Market	Priced in accordance with the prevailing market.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

The following schedule of fees and charges has been prepared using the most current GST information. The impact of GST on Fees and charges is subject to change by legislation. Fees and charges are shown with GST included where appropriate at the time of writing.

T = Deemed to be taxable and fees/charges include GST

N = Deemed to be non-taxable and fees/charges exclude GST

E = Deemed to be exempt as the fee/charge is not a consideration.

Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (\$)	2024/25 (\$)
Property Information				
L	Property information certificate (section 603 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		95.00	100.00
F	Property information certificate (section 603 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>) URGENCY fee ** # ** Subject to confirmation that service is available # This fee is in addition to applicable certificate fee	E	95.00	100.00
P	Cancellation/min. processing fee (section 603 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		47.50	50.00
Photocopying and Printing				
F	Photocopying A4 (black)	M	1.45 per page	1.45 per page
	Photocopying A3 (black)		1.50 per page	1.50 per page
	Photocopying A4 (colour)		1.55 per page	1.55 per page
	Photocopying A3 (colour)		1.60 per page	1.60 per page
Dishonoured Payments or Direct Debits				
F	The dishonour fee charged by financial institutions for dishonoured payments or direct debits may be passed on to the customer where payments have been rejected from the nominated financial institution	N	As charged	As charged
Credit Card Surcharge				
P	Council is charged a fee based on a percentage of the payment amount by the credit card provider when a payment is made by credit card. Council will raise a surcharge against the credit card user at point of sale to recover costs incurred by Council.	U	As charged	As charged
Conduct Money				
F	Subpoena to produce	E	Price on application	Price on application
	Subpoena to attend to give evidence* *Generally, the cost of salary and any additional expenses associated with attendance.		Price on application	Price on application

Government Information (Public Access) Fees and Charges

Code	Description		Application fee	Other charges	Fee refund	Charge reduction	Fee and charge waiver, reduction or refund
L	Open Access Information		No	Photocopying charges as per Fees and Charges schedule.	N/A	N/A	By written application to the General Manager and based on the circumstances of the case.
L	Proactive Release		No	Photocopying charges as per Fees and Charges schedule.	N/A	N/A	
L	Informal Release (on Request)		No	Photocopying charges as per Fees and Charges schedule.	N/A	N/A	
L	Formal Access Application	Personal Information	First 20hrs free then \$30.00 for each hour thereafter (ss. 64(1) and 67).	\$30.00/hr for each hour in excess of the initial 20 hours.	Application not dealt with in time (s. 63(1)). Application invalid (s. 52(5)).	A maximum discount of up to 50% on processing charges where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant can demonstrate financial hardship (by producing evidence that they hold a Pensioner Concession card, are a full-time student, or a non-profit organisation (including a person applying for or on behalf of a non-profit organisation) - (s.65 and clause 9 of Regulation). The information applied for is of special benefit to the public generally (s.66). 	Full waiver of charges will apply where the information is publicly released before or within 3 working days after being given to the applicant.
L		Other Information	\$30.00 (incl. first hour of processing) (ss. 41 and 64(3)).	\$30.00/hr (s.64(1)).			
L	Review	Internal Review	\$40.00 unless a review of a deemed refusal in which case there is no charge (section 85).	No	If review not decided within specified period (section 86).	N/A	

Legislation references in this table are to the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* and *Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018*.

Note: No fee is payable for an external review by the Information Commissioner. Information regarding the applicable fees for review by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal can be obtained by visiting the Tribunal's website at: <http://www.ncat.nsw.gov.au/> or contacting the Tribunal directly on 1300 006 228.

General Purpose Revenues				
Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (\$)	2024/25 (\$)
F	Rous retail consumers are levied with a per kilolitre charge (section 399 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)	N	3.04	3.28
	Annual facility charge 20mm water meter connection (section 501 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		201.30	215.35
	Annual facility charge 25mm water meter connection (section 501 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		318.40	339.50
	Annual facility charge 32mm water meter connection (section 501 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		527.00	562.10
	Annual facility charge 40mm water meter connection (section 501 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		823.50	879.70
	Annual facility charge 50mm water meter connection (section 501 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		1,288.30	1,376.10
	Annual facility charge 65mm water meter connection (section 501 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		2,177.70	2,328.70
	Annual facility charge 80mm water meter connection (section 501 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		3,301.30	3,529.60
	Annual facility charge 100mm water meter connection (section 501 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		5,164.30	5,522.50
	Backflow device annual charge		196.00	196.00
L	Interest on overdue water charges (section 566(3) <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>) <i>Note: The maximum rate of interest payable on overdue rates and charges for the period 1 July to 30 June determined by the Minister for Local Government will be charged.</i>		9.0%	10.5%
L	Restrictor devices – fee to disconnect any restriction device, which may have been installed due to non-payment of account		354.00	369.00
F	Pensioner rebate (section 575 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)	N	Refer to 'Description'	Refer to 'Description'
L	Dialysis machine concession of 200 kilolitres per annum without consumption charges (section 502 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)	N	Refer to 'Description'	

Operations

Consumer Services				
Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (\$)	2024/25 (\$)
F	Outstanding Notices certificate (section 735A <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)	E	50.00	50.00
	Outstanding Notices certificate (section 735A <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>) URGENCY fee ** # ** Subject to confirmation that service is available # This fee is in addition to applicable certificate fee		50.00	50.00
	Testing of 20mm water meter	N	388.00	395.00
	Special meter reading	E	88.00	88.00
	Special meter reading – URGENCY fee**# ** Subject to confirmation that service is available # This fee is in addition to applicable certificate fee		88.00	88.00
	Consumer connection fee for a standard 20mm service (section 608 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)	N	1,430.00	1,430.00
	Consumer activation fee for a standard 20mm service where water meter already connected (section 608 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		267.00	275.00
	Consumer activation fee for a standard 20mm service where water meter connection also required (section 608 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		437.00	440.00
	Consumer connection fee equal to the estimated actual cost + 10% to provide other than a standard 20mm service to property boundary (section 608 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		Price on application	Price on application
	Disconnection fee (section 608 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)		146.00	146.00
Reconnection fee (section 608 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)	Price on application	Price on application		
Water Filling stations				
Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (\$)	2024/25 (\$)
P	Annual permit fee charged to bulk water carrier for potable water (section 501 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>). Fee may be pro-rata from approval date. with min. 3 month increments (Non-refundable)	E	675.00	700.00
	Annual permit fee charged to bulk water carrier for non-potable water (section 501 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>) Fee may be pro-rata from approval date. with min. 3 month increments (Non-refundable)		675.00	700.00
	Price of water per kilolitre (section 610A <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>)	N	6.28	6.57
F	Filling station access key	E	80.00	80.00
F	Filling station pre-paid credit refund fee	E	51.00	53.00
Temporary Water Supply				
Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (\$)	2024/25 (\$)
P	Special Approved Connections – retail consumers with a temporary connection or, non-payment of capital headworks fee(s), are levied with a per kilolitre charge	N	5.19	5.43

Contract Works				
Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (%)	2024/25 (%)
F	Administration charge % – where the GST exclusive value of the construction work undertaken on behalf of other parties or as part of a mains extension which requires a financial contribution by other parties is \$20,000 or less	T	15	15
	Administration charge % – where the GST exclusive value of the construction work undertaken on behalf of other parties or as part of a mains extension which requires a financial contribution by other parties exceeds \$20,000.		10	10

Development Servicing Charges				
Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (\$ per e.t)	2024/25 (\$ per e.t)
P	Bulk Developer charge	E	9,951.00	10,350.00

Development Servicing Charges				
Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (\$ per e.t)	2024/25 (\$ per e.t)
P	Retail Developer charge	E	384.00	399.00

Water Service Capital Connection Fees				
Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (\$ per e.t)	2024/25 (\$ per e.t)
P	Bulk Headworks connection fee	E	9,951.00	10,350.00

Note: Water Service Capital Connection fees will be reduced by any applicable contribution paid in relation to supply of water through a development approval process.
 e.t means equivalent tenement.

Permissible Activities on Operational Land				
Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (\$)	2024/25 (\$)
F	Permit processing fee. Charged in addition to a temporary permit fee (*)	E	177.00	177.00
	Ecotourism – temporary permit fee*		265.00	265.00
	Seed collection – temporary permit fee*		151.00	157.00
	Personal fitness training – temporary permit fee*		103.75	108.00
L	Commercial filming and photography fees will be charged in accordance with the Local Government Filming Protocol under the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>		Price on application	Price on application
F	Wedding ceremony booking fee	T	183.00	183.00

Recovery of Fees under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*

Code	Description	GST	2023/24 (\$)	2024/25 (\$)
F	Recovery of fees charged, or costs or expenses incurred, in connection with the exercise of functions by an authorised officer (see section 373 of <i>Biosecurity Act 2015</i>).	E	COST	COST

Sustainable delivery		External relationships		Our people		Leadership and innovation		Delivery objectives	Activities to get there	Actions	What is being measured	Target	Lead
1.1.2 Sustainable river system health through natural resource management.		Deliver the activities in the <u>Catchment Management and Coastal Zone Management plans</u> .		1.1.2.1 Undertake scheduled 2024-25 actions in the <u>Catchment Management Plan</u> .		% of scheduled Rous activities completed.		At least 90%.		CCAM			
				A1: Catchment landholder education and awareness.									
				A2: On-site sewerage management system planning and policy review.									
				A3: Development planning and policy review.									
				A4: Spills and contamination emergency response and notification protocol.									
				A5: Rous catchment water quality monitoring program.									
				A6: Rous catchment surveillance program.									
				A7: Intensive pesticide sampling program.									
				A8: Investigate potentially harmful contaminants.									
				A9: Performance monitoring and review of actions.									
RC10: Rocky Creek Dam on-going catchment controls.													
RC12: Rocky Creek buffer zone maintenance.													
RC13: On-going collaboration with National Parks and Wildlife Service.													
WR14: Wilsons River Source on-going catchment controls.													
WR16: River Reach Plan extension.													
WR17: Wilsons River Source buffer zone maintenance.													
EC18: Emigrant Creek Dam on-going catchment controls.													
EC20: River Reach Plan extension.													
EC21: Emigrant Creek Dam buffer zone maintenance.													
EC22: Trial farm-based erosion management plan.													
EC23: Pesticide notification.													
DD24: Potential Dunoon Dam buffer zone maintenance.													
1.1.2.2 Undertake scheduled activities in Stages 2-4 of the Richmond River <u>Coastal Zone Management Program</u> (on behalf of Rous, Ballina, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Kyogle councils).		Stage 2: Determine risks, vulnerabilities and opportunities. Stage 3: Identify and evaluate options. Stage 4: Prepare, exhibit, finalise, certify and adopt the Coastal Management Program.		% of scheduled activities in Stages 2-4 completed.		At least 90%.		CCAM					
1.1.2.3 Undertake Year 1 actions (planning phase).		Project plans and agreements in place for all program areas.		100%		CCAM							
1.1.3 Enhance the region's biosecurity through combatting the spread of targeted weeds.		Deliver the activities of the <u>Weed Action Plan and program</u> .		1.1.3.1 Deliver scheduled 2024-25 actions in the <u>Weed Action Plan</u> .		% of scheduled WAP actions completed.		At least 95%.		WBBRM			
				1.1.3.2 Deliver weed biosecurity services in accordance commercial fee-for-service arrangements (Kyogle Shire Council, Tweed Shire Council).		% of service level agreement requirements delivered.		100%.		WBBRM			
1.2.1 Achieve carbon neutrality.		Develop and commence delivery of our <u>Renewable Energy and Emissions Reduction Plan</u> .		1.2.1.1 Deliver scheduled 2024-25 actions in the <u>Renewable Energy and Emissions Reduction Plan</u> .		% of listed actions completed.		At least 90%.		IPM			
				Nightcap Water Treatment Plant - solar photovoltaic and battery energy storage system.		Installation completed.		By 30 June 2025.		IPM			
				Review opportunities for demand scheduling optimisation on existing assets.		Internally produced report completed.		By 30 June 2025.		SPE DEM			
				Investigate the types and number of electric vehicle (EV) chargers to be installed at Gallans Road administration building and other potential priority sites.		Internally produced report completed.		By 30 June 2025.		SPE			
				Implement trial program of electric vehicle (EVs) within motor vehicle fleet.		Number of EVs in fleet.		At least 1.		HSELM			
				Plant trees to contribute to offsetting Rous's carbon emissions.		# of trees planted (for future sequestration on Council land).		4000		WBBRM			
						# of trees planted (on non-Council land).		2500		CCAM WBBRM			
				Implement measures to support the resilience of vegetation against fire.		% of scheduled actions in the Buffer Zone Management Plan completed.		At least 90%.		WBBRM			

Sustainable delivery		External relationships		Our people		Leadership and innovation		Delivery objectives	Activities to get there	Actions	What is being measured	Target	Lead
								1.2.2 We are prepared and able to respond to climate change impacts.	Deliver strategic review of Flood Mitigation function, incorporating data arising from 2022 flood events, and confirm Rous's role in the region.	1.2.2.1 Strategic review of Flood Mitigation function complete.	Review reported to Council and Rous's role confirmed.	By June 2025.	GMPD
										1.2.2.2 Progress the transfer the Lismore Levee Scheme to Lismore City Council as per Council resolution [37/23].	Position agreed between Rous and Lismore City Council.	By June 2025.	GMPD
								1.3.1 Short-term (to 2040) water supply demands are able to be met.	Deliver the Future Water Project.	1.3.1.1 Deliver scheduled 2024-25 actions in the <u>Future Water Project 2060</u> .	% of scheduled actions completed.	At least 90%.	FWPM
										Stage 1 Continue the implementation of the Alstonville groundwater scheme. Continue the implementation of the Woodburn groundwater scheme. Stage 2 Continue the planning and investigations for a groundwater scheme at Tyagarah (Stage 2 of the Future Water Project). General Review Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy.			
								1.3.2 Source options to meet long-term water supply demands are better understood.	Undertake further investigations of Stage 3 sources.	1.3.2.1 Investigate potential to source groundwater from the Richmond Area Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Source.	Initial results available.	By 30 June 2025.	FWPM
										1.3.2.2 Investigate options to optimise the Wilsons Rivers source licence.	Report on options and feasibility completed.	By 30 June 2025.	FWPM
										1.3.2.3 Undertake Cultural Heritage and Biodiversity Assessments for the potential Dunoon Dam.	Reports completed.	By 30 June 2025.	FWPM
								1.3.3 Our water supply is valued and used responsibly. 2.3.2 Water consuming businesses and industry are engaged to promote sustainable water consumption.	Deliver the <u>Regional Demand Management Plan</u> .	1.3.3.1 Undertake scheduled 2024-25 actions in the <u>Regional Demand Management Plan</u> .	% of scheduled actions completed.	At least 90%.	WSO
										RES1: Implement behaviour change pilot to understand community attitudes to responsible water use.	Pilot program designed, approved and implemented.	By 30 June 2025.	WSO
										RES2: Implement residential rebate/incentive program.	Number of rainwater tank rebates approved.	Within approved budget.	WSO
											Number of instances of promotional opportunities.	Where participants heard about the program.	WSO
										NRES2: Implement sustainable water partner program; NRES3: Implement audit of Council facilities and operations.	Number of water audits completed for target non-residential users.	Upward trend on previous year.	WSO
											Number of non-residential users that have completed works and accessed a rebate.	Upward trend on previous year.	WSO
											Number of instances of promotional opportunities (program and users).	Upward trend on previous year.	WSO
										DMR3: Reporting of customer data and consumption.	Water loss indicators and targets developed and reporting commenced.	By 30 June 2025.	WSO
										EDU1: Implement education and engagement tools.	Number of education and engagement tools prepared and channels disseminated (where and how many).	Trend compared to previous year.	WSO
											Number of education and engage opportunities delivered.	Trend compared to previous year.	WSO
											Feedback received and level of stakeholder satisfaction as indicated through survey.	Trend compared to previous year.	WSO
								1.4.1 Our resources are planned, prioritised and implemented to ensure Rous's sustainability.	Maintain and implement the <u>Resourcing Strategy</u> .	1.4.1.1 Undertake scheduled 2024-25 actions in <u>Asset Management Plans</u> as per LTFP and QBRs adjustments.	% of scheduled actions in Capital Works program completed on time and within original budget.	At least 70%.	IPM
											% of Fleet replacement program completed.	100%.	HSELM
										Flood mitigation Drains and canals. Floodgate outlets. Floodgate replacement program (high/medium risk). Lifting gear replacement program. Levee inspection and heavy maintenance.			FMM
										Retail water Bulk water filling stations - power supply upgrade.			IPM
										Bulk water - trunk Broadwater 150 upgrade (at reservoir). Byron 200 - mains renewal - 375. Valve replacement program. St Helena 300 upgrade - 375. Wilsons River elevated crossing Bexhill.			Various DE DE DE IPM DE
										Source - Emigrant Creek Dam Outflow monitoring / causeway safety access - construction of retaining wall and causeway.			

Sustainable delivery				External relationships		Our people		Leadership and innovation			
Delivery objectives	Activities to get there	Actions	What is being measured	Target	Lead						
		Water - treatment plant - Nightcap			Various						
		Nightcap WTP: Main Switchboard and DAFF saturator upgrade.			EPE						
		Nightcap WTP: Biological activated carbon turbidity meters and ozone sidestream dosing.			PE						
		Nightcap WTP: Biological activated carbon renewals.			IPM						
		Nightcap WTP: Wastewater renewals.			IPM						
		Bulk chemical storage.			IPM						
		Water - treatment plant - Emigrant Creek			PE						
		Emigrant Creek WTP: Floatation.									
		Emigrant Creek WTP: HCl dosing.									
		Emigrant Creek WTP: Lime pH correction.									
		Water - general			DEM						
		Bulk meter renewal program.									
		Water loss implementation (Rous network).									
		1.4.1.2 Define optimum delivery model for strategic procurement (including regional leverage through the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation).		Model developed and trial implemented.		By 30 June 2025.	GM				
		1.4.1.3 Stores, inventory and fleet business operation review and process re-engineering.		Delivery of process efficiency improvements and improved risk management.		Reduction in time, cost, and/or risk.	HSELM				
1.4.1.4 Create and embed organisation KPIs / targets and incorporate into performance processes		Key KPI metrics defined and baseline obtained.		By June 2025.	GMTS FM						
1.4.1.5 Better education and consistency instilled into IP&R process, so staff know where their work fits in terms of broader strategic direction of the business.		Review and enhance internal education and awareness.		By November 2024.	GMOS						
1.4.1.6 Progress steps to finalise Perradenya development as per Council resolution [42/23].		Application lodged.		By December 2024.	PMRP						
		Action plan informed by application outcome.		By June 2025.	PMRP						
1.4.1.7 Secure long-term debt financing.		Debt financing facility in place.		By December 2024.	GMTS FM						
1.4.1.8 Review effectiveness and clarity of Rous's constituting proclamation and identify opportunities for improvement.		Review completed and position paper prepared.		By December 2024.	GMOS						
1.4.1.9 Review Fleet operation and update governance documents incl. development of a Fleet Asset Management Plan.		Review completed, revised business processes implemented and Fleet Asset Management Plan approved.		By 30 September 2024.	HSELM						
1.4.3 A positive risk management culture is embedded and sustained.	Implement Enterprise Risk Management Framework.	1.4.3.1 Enterprise Risk Management Framework in place.	% of the activity plan completed.	100% of phase one.	RAS						
				50% of phase two.	RAS						
1.4.4 Ongoing service reviews, audits and business improvements achieve enhanced organisational outcomes.	Implement internal and external audit.	1.4.4.1 Complete prioritised service reviews based on recommended focus areas identified by Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.	# of service reviews completed.	At least 1.	GRM						
			% of review recommendations implemented.	At least 80% within 12 months of date of recommendation.	GRM						
			% of scheduled audits completed as per Internal Audit program.	100%.	GRM						
		1.4.4.2 Revise and update internal audit arrangements.	New internal audit program developed and internal auditor consultant engaged.	By June 2025.	RAS						
		1.4.4.3 Review and update of Dam Safety Management System documents and plans.	Annual completion of surveillance inspections, undertake studies and updating of dam safety documents and plans as required in the Dam Safety Management System document.	By December 2024.	GMO SPE DTEM						
2.1.1 Effective collaboration and communication with our constituent councils.	Review and refresh Service Level Agreements (or similar) with constituent councils.	2.1.1.1 Partner with constituent councils in a service review to determine the value and effectiveness of the Service Level Agreement incl. alternative options.	Number of arrangements reviewed and refreshed.	100% by June 2025.	GMO GRM						
		2.1.1.2 Perform a parallel run of alternative pricing methodology.	Completed and a report to Council on results.	By March 2025.	FM						
		2.1.1.3 Governing body induction program revised and effective for onboarding purposes incl. business processes and systems.	Induction program updated.	By August 2024.	GMOS						
2.2.1 Communities across our region are kept informed of Rous's work and have opportunities to engage with us.	Deliver the Communications and Engagement Strategy.	2.2.1.1 Provide opportunities for engagement through face-to-face activities, social media, website and customer service offerings.	Increase in social media followers.	At least 3000 in total across all social media platforms.	CCM						
2.3.4 Local community groups are positively engaged to support the achievement of shared objectives.			# of telephone call-backs received. Website visitation. Use of available online tools, i.e., e-forms, SMS alert registrations, 'report a weed' form, views of Issuu documents.	At least 25% upward trend on previous year.	CCM						
		2.2.1.2 Monitor Rous website to ensure content complies with WCAG level AA standards.	Compliance.	100%.	CCM						
		2.2.1.3 Provide timely and accurate information using appropriate media.	Number of media releases.	≥ 8 per year.	CCM						
			Number of social media posts.	≥ 100 per year.	CCM						
			Number of website news articles.	≥ 20 per year.	CCM						

Sustainable delivery		External relationships		Our people		Leadership and innovation		Delivery objectives	Activities to get there	Actions	What is being measured	Target	Lead
										2.2.1.4 Support Rous projects and activities through the development and implementation of communication and marketing campaigns.	Number of projects and activities supported.	≥ 8 per year.	CCM
										2.2.1.5 Implement a new Rous website.	Website delivered according to scope, on time and on budget.	By June 2025.	CCM
										2.3.4.1 Implement the Branding and Marketing Strategy.	Increase in brand awareness.	Upward trend on baseline survey results.	CCM
										2.3.4.2 Scope the purpose and design of an engagement space at Ballina Campus site (Gallans Road).	Purpose and design approved, subject to Building B progressing at the same time as Building A.	By September 2024.	CCM
								2.3.1 Our positive working relationships support the achievement of regional outcomes.	Actively participate in the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation.	2.3.1.1 Provide end to end support for the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation.	Statutory compliance.	100%.	GM
								2.3.3 Local Aboriginal history and culture is respected, and we positively engage with our First Nations communities.	Deliver the Reconciliation Action Plan.	2.3.3.1 Implement Rous's 2024/25 Reconciliation Action Plan.	Complete scheduled actions.	By assigned due date.	CCAM
								4.1.1 Embed reconciliation in Rous's culture through its people and partners.		2.3.3.2 Prepare the Rous 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan 2025/29.	Draft submitted to Council and Reconciliation Australia.	By 30 June 2025.	CCAM
								2.3.5 Regional collaboration informs policy and innovative approaches to priority issues.	Participate in regional forums with key stakeholders to inform local policy.	2.3.5.1 Actively contribute to the Weeds and Pest Advisory Committees as part of our flood and water policy contribution.	# of meetings participated in.	At least 90%.	GM
										2.3.5.2 Collaborate with State and other agencies including NSW Health, NSW Local Land Services, NSW Department of Primary Industries, NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, and Water Services Association of Australia.	Nature of outcomes achieved.	Report by occurrence.	GM
											Nature of collaboration outcomes.	Report by occurrence.	WBBRM DTEM DEM
								3.1.1 We know our workforce and skills requirements to achieve our Delivery Program commitments.	Refresh and implement the Workforce Management Strategy and action plan taking into account: (a) the human resources required by the Delivery Program (b) specialist and hard-to-recruit skills.	3.1.1.1 Conduct organisational benchmarking review and provide recommendations to ensure right-sizing of Future Rous (e.g., people structure).	Benchmarking recommendations endorsed.	By December 2024.	PCTL
								3.2.1 Specialist and hard-to-recruit skills are available to Rous when needed.		3.1.1.2 Conduct salary system review, develop framework, KPIs and implement recommendations, including the adjustment of salaries and benefits where required.	Achieved.	By June 2025.	PCTL
										3.1.1.3 Design the 'future-state' Rous organisational structure based on the right roles skills, capabilities and needs for the future (including rollout and implementation plan).	Structure designed and endorsed by the Leadership Team.	By June 2025.	PCTL
										3.1.1.4 Review, update and expand the visibility of the Employee Value Proposition.	Employee Value Proposition endorsed and visible (internal and external stakeholders).	By October 2024.	PCM
										3.2.1.1 Identify and create an organisation-wide succession plan for business-critical roles.	Succession plan identified and inflight for all business-critical roles.	By August 2024.	PCM
										3.2.1.2 Design, develop and implement alternative employment strategies and pathways (e.g., First Nations employment, scholarships, cadetships, graduate or trainee programs.)	Individual measures per alternative employment strategy.	By December 2024.	PCM
										3.2.1.3 Conduct capability and competency review, develop framework to support future-state Rous roles, skills and capabilities.	New framework endorsed.	By June 2025.	PCTL
								3.3.1 Our leaders and emerging leaders are provided with development opportunities.	(c) leadership development.	3.3.1.1 Design and implement Leadership Program (Leadership Team and Leadership Group) to bridge gaps and create cohesion (incl. KPIs).	Program in place.	By December 2024.	PCTL
											Positive shift in employee satisfaction of leadership.	Upward trend.	PCM
										3.3.1.2 Review and design a 'fit for purpose' learning and development offering to support the future-state Rous culture, skills and capability requirements.	System improvements made, processes mapped and implemented.	By June 2025.	PCTL PCM
								3.4.1 Our staff are proud to work for Rous.	(d) workplace culture and employee satisfaction.	3.4.1.1 Design and implement a program to drive desired values, behaviours and increase employee engagement.	Sentiment rating assessed via pulse surveys.	Upward trend.	PCM
										3.4.1.2 Identify and implement a suite of People and Culture KPIs to measure, drive desired behaviours and organisational effectiveness.	KPIs endorsed and implemented.	By June 2025.	PCM
										3.4.1.3 Design and implement an employee engagement strategy to provide a holistic view and purpose of engagement activities and initiatives across Rous.	Sentiment rating assessed via pulse surveys.	Upward trend.	PCM
										3.4.1.4 Design and rollout a Rous Change Management Framework (incl. tools and templates) to support change initiatives.	75% of employees are aware of the Change Management Framework and where to access relevant resources	By 30 June 2025.	PCTL
								3.4.2 Our workplace is accessible, inclusive and safe.	Refresh and implement relevant plans incl. > Disability Inclusion Action Plan > Work Health Safety and Environment protocols.	3.4.2.1 Design and implement a Diversity Equity and Inclusion Strategy.	75% of employees are aware of the Strategy.	By December 2024.	PCM
										3.4.2.2 Investigate and implement a sustainable waste management solution for handling contaminated waste that arises from Rous operations.	100% compliance with applicable waste management regional and national environmental regulations.	By 30 June 2025.	HSELM
										3.4.2.3 Implement Council's Health Safety and Environment policy and systems.	Integrate LTI tracking into BAU procedures.	0 lost time injuries.	HSELM
											Annual targets set for increased event reporting.	Upward reporting trend year on year.	HSELM

Sustainable delivery				External relationships		Our people		Leadership and innovation			
Delivery objectives	Activities to get there	Actions	What is being measured	Target	Lead						
		3.4.2.4 Review and update internal business processes and procedure to promote awareness and consideration of environmental and cultural heritage factors.	Review existing business processes to identify potential environmental impacts (e.g., resource consumption, waste generation, pollution). Assess potential interactions with cultural heritage (e.g., historical sites, indigenous practices, traditional knowledge).	By 30 June 2025.	HSELM						
		3.4.2.5 Implement Health and Wellbeing program.	Employee engagement in program activities.	Upward trend year on year.	PCM						
			Absence / sick days data.	Downward trend by comparison to previous year.	PCM						
		3.4.2.6 Identify and implement technology solutions or business process improvement to enhance worker safety.	Instances of technology solutions or business process improvement reducing or eliminating risk to worker health and safety.	By occurrence.	HSELM						
		4.1.2 <i>Demonstrate effective leadership through the delivery of our commitments and reporting on our progress and results.</i>	<i>Deliver the commitments of the Delivery Program and report annually to our regional community and key stakeholders on our progress and results.</i>	4.1.2.1 Periodic updates to keep our regional community and stakeholders informed about our ongoing efforts.	Annual report completed.	By 30 November 2024.	CCM				
				4.1.2.2 Report on Service Level Agreement implementation and performance.	Periodic updates delivered. Reports provided to constituent councils.	Quarterly. 6-monthly.	CCM GMO				
			% of Service Level Agreement obligations met.	100%.	GMO						
	4.1.3 <i>Business efficiencies are achieved through service delivery on behalf of and in partnership with our constituent councils.</i>	<i>Deliver feasibility study and recommendations related to end-to-end water supply and sewerage authority role for Rous.</i>	4.1.3.1 Feasibility scope and timing informed by completion of initial work with relevant constituent councils.	Workshop with Rous governing body on work underway or planned.	By 31 July 2024.	GM					
	4.2.1 <i>Our business systems and data support us to achieve organisational results.</i>	<i>Review data and transform business systems.</i>	4.2.1.1 Implementation of digital transformation - Release 1 and 2.	Release 1 - Payroll implemented.	By September 2024.	GMTS					
				Release 2 - Enterprise Resource Planning system design and build complete.	By June 2025.	GMTS					
			4.2.1.2 Accurately map and inspect all water supply network assets.	% of water supply network assets mapped and inspected.	100% by June 2025.	DEM					
			4.2.1.3 Implement QA and QC processes for development servicing plans (Bulk Water and Retail Water).	Liability developments are accurately assessed and incur applicable fees.	100%.	IPM FM					
				Partner with constituent council in review of development application process.	1 x Constituent council.	IPM FM					
			4.2.1.4 Refresh and update People and Culture policies and procedures to ensure 'fit for purpose' for Future Rous.	100% current.	By June 2025.	PCTL					
			4.2.1.5 Streamline and update People and Culture processes to ensure 'fit for purpose' for Future Rous.	Core People and Culture processes document and mapped, e.g., recruitment, onboarding, offboarding, etc.	By June 2025.	PCTL					
	4.3.1 <i>Successful consolidation of Rous administration and depots to achieve business improvements and optimisation.</i>	<i>Consolidate premises.</i>	4.3.1.1 Workplace consolidation.	Complete relocation to Gallans Road project on time and on budget.	Achieved.	PMRP					
				Implement workplace consolidation options for impacted properties.	Achieved.	PMRP					
				Recurrent probity reporting.	Quarterly.	PMRP					
	4.3.2 <i>Continuous improvement in our delivery of a bulk water supply.</i>	<i>Review and update operational maintenance plans for bulk water assets.</i>	4.3.2.1 Maintenance plans current for all water supply network assets.	Plans updated and implemented.	100% by December 2024.	DEM					
			4.3.2.2 Finalise commissioning of smart metering across retail water connections.	% of retail water connections with a smart meter installed.	95%.	GMPD					
			4.3.2.3 Implement ongoing backflow inspection and maintenance program for retail water connections.	% of retail water connections with a backflow device installed receive a site visit and test.	100% by 30 June 2025.	GMO					
	4.3.3 <i>Proactive contribution as part of a regional response to flood mitigation.</i>	<i>Actively participate in ongoing flood response initiatives.</i>	4.3.3.1 Renewal of Rous flood mitigation urban levee assets under NSW Public Works Levee Assessment and Improvement Program.	Subject to funding, renewal works commenced on levees: Bungwalbin, Tuckombil Canal, South Lismore \ Lismore CBD.	By 30 June 2025.	FMM IPM					

2024 Local Government NSW Annual Conference motion

Responsible Officer: Group Manager, Organisational Services (Helen McNeil)

Recommendation

That Council support the submission of the proposed motion outlined in this report to the Local Government NSW Annual Conference being held on 17-19 November 2024.

Background

Local Government NSW ('LGNSW') accepts motions each year from Member Organisations (made up of New South Wales (NSW) councils and county councils) to be considered at its annual conference.

Where motions are endorsed, they become resolutions and amend the LGNSW Policy Platform. The LGNSW Policy Platform is the document on which the organisation lobbies the NSW State Government for changes to legislation and policy as it impacts the local government sector in NSW.

The recommendation to make the below motion was made by Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee at its meeting on 5 April 2024 and ratified by Council at its ordinary meeting held on 17 April 2024 [16/24].

Proposed Motion

Financial Performance Indicators for County Councils

That Local Government NSW lobby the NSW Government to amend the Office of Local Government's protocols for the calculation of the Operating performance ratio and the Debt service ratio to include capital revenue from Section 64 contributions when assessing the financial performance of County Councils. The proposed change is not intended to include revenue from capital grants.

Rationale for proposed motion

These financial performance ratios were introduced to Local Government as part of the NSW Government's Fit for the Future program in 2014 and were informed by the participating general purpose councils.

County Councils were not required to participate in the Fit for the Future program, however these financial performance ratios and their associated benchmarks were implemented across the Local Government sector, inclusive of County Councils, despite being designed for general purpose councils.

Consequently, with respect to Council, they do not account for the (1) long-lived nature of water source and supply infrastructure, and (2) obligation and criticality of securing additional water sources to meet increasing demand for water across the region.

Council's bulk water supply function is its biggest area of operations and is the subject of the majority of infrastructure renewal and maintenance programs in order to ensure continued service delivery. Capital revenue from developer contributions in relation to water supply works¹ represent Council's second largest source of revenue. As such, Council has difficulty in meeting these financial performance ratios and benchmarks unless a significant operating surplus is achieved.

¹ Section 64 *Local Government Act 1993*.

The only reasonable way to achieve this surplus would be through significantly increased charges to Constituent Councils for the supply of bulk water. As these costs are passed on to the Constituent Council customers it would place a financial burden upon residents already facing challenges from recent flood events and the current cost of living crisis. This is not seen as an acceptable option for our wider community.

Governance

- **Finance**

The motion seeks to address Council's future financial performance as assessed by the Office of Local Government's financial ratios and benchmarks. There is no financial cost associated with submitting the motion.

- **Legal**

Council's accounting records and practices are required to accord with the Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting (the Code) published by the Office of Local Government² which outlines the assessment of key financial performance indicators or ratios.

Consultation

This motion is supported by Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

Conclusion

Should the motion outlined above be endorsed and provided to the Minister for Local Government, with the support of LGNSW, it is envisaged that this will produce financial ratios that are designed specifically county councils.

² Section 206 *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.

Retail Water Bad Debt Write-off

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Organisational Services (Helen McNeil)

Recommendation

That Council approve the write-off of \$7,922.94 in water charges from Oats' account (10625-10000-2).

Background

As per Council resolution [50/22], charges greater than \$5,000 (incl. GST) may be written off only by resolution of Council and in accordance with sections 131 or 213 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.

Due to suspected damage to the water meter and private service line by a third party, staff are seeking to reduce water usage charges for the property 10625-10000-2, owned by R & C F Oates to the average usage and write-off the remaining amount.

Circumstances giving rise to the water charges

- During Rous' quarterly meter reading, the meter reader noticed that water was running down the hill from this customer's water connection on 20 February 2024. The customer was not home, so Rous staff turned the tap off at the meter. The customer contacted Rous on 16 March 2024 after receiving a very high water bill (\$8,008.48) for usage of 2,617kL, with an average daily usage of 27.2604kL compared to the usual usage pattern around 0.00 to 0.59kL per day.
- The Operations Enquiry Group investigated the situation and discovered that during the latter half of 2023 Rous engaged a contractor to install swale rock into the head of Weigel Creek. This was required to slow the velocity of stormwater and reduce erosion of the access track and creek banks at this location. It appears that the contractor may have inadvertently damaged the poly pipe which may have contributed to the undetected discharge of water through the water meter.
- Rous' Infrastructure Program Manager confirmed that whilst it appeared that the damage may have been caused by the works undertaken by Rous' contractor, it was difficult to confirm that was the sole cause for the damage. The work was undertaken prior to December 2023. In addition, the frame that was used for the meter supplied by Rous displayed signs of poor workmanship and would likely have contributed to this issue. As such, Rous bears some responsibility for the damage as the meter and associated infrastructure has been installed in a non-standard way.
- The customer has been advised that once a Smart Meter is installed, they will be responsible for the service line behind the meter. They have also been advised that the current installation of their plumbing should be checked by a licensed plumber for adequacy and compliance with relevant standards.
- Staff recommend writing-off the excess water usage as a result of the work performed by Rous and the inability to identify the cause of the leak with absolute certainty.

Calculation of the proposed credit adjustment

Estimated Usage for 16/11/2023 to 20/02/2024 using same quarter last year average daily usage (ADU)

Estimated ADU	0.1122
Number of days	96
Estimated usage	10.7712
Estimated charge	\$32.74
Actual billed amount	\$7,955.68
Less estimated charge	<u>\$32.74</u>
Proposed credit adjustment	<u>\$7,922.94</u>

Governance

- **Legal**

The proposal has been assessed against the write-off criteria under clause 131 and 213 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* and it satisfies the requirements of that provision, being a charge not lawfully recoverable.

- **Finance**

Rous does not encounter many instances where debt write-off is required through active debtor management or through water meter malfunction. This write-off is immaterial to Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

Conclusion

It is recommended that Council approve the write-off of \$7,922.94 as per the recommendation.

Woodburn Flood Recovery and Water Quality Improvement Program - Tender Award

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Planning and Delivery (Andrew Logan)

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Accept the tender submission made by Ledonne Constructions Pty Ltd of \$1,580,623.30 incl. GST (lump sum contract price) for the Woodburn Bores Replacement Infrastructure Design and Construct contract (Contract); and
2. Authorise the General Manager to sign the Contract on behalf of Council.

Background

The NSW Government has provided \$145 million in funding to address the impacts of the 2022 floods on critical water and wastewater systems in the Northern Rivers area, under the North Coast Water and Wastewater Repair and Recovery Program.

The Woodburn Groundwater Treatment Plant Site has been approved as an eligible project under this funding program. However, some assets were non-operational prior to the 2022 flood which resulted in some existing assets being ineligible for funding.

The funding program enabled the replacement of the damaged infrastructure, but also required these new assets to be future flood resilient. The site also accommodated chemical dosing assets used to maintain drinking water quality standards, given the distance from the Nightcap Water Treatment Plant. As a part of a review into this bulk water supply zone, Rous was seeking to reactivate this existing functionality as part of Rous's existing Drinking Water Quality Management program.

Adding further complexity to execution of this funding program, the scope of works needed to account for the planned future Groundwater Treatment Plant as part of stage 1 of the Future Water Project. To ensure that this requirement did not result in significant reconstruction works, Rous sought to self-fund this separate scope under the same contract as the flood funded scope.

To account for the re-activation of chemical dosing and the integration of the future Groundwater Treatment Plant, the following funding split has been agreed to by Rous and NSW Public Works.

Funding Partner	Funding Amount ¹
NSW Public Works Water and Wastewater Repair and Recovery Program	\$809,229.95
Rous County Council Future Water Project and Chlorine and Carbon Dioxide Dosing at Woodburn Project	\$771,393.35

Under this engagement, both parties agreed that Rous would be the Principal under the contract and NSW Public Works acting as the Principal's Authorised Person under the contract.

¹ Funding amounts incl. GST

Woodburn Bores Replacement Infrastructure Design and Construct Contract Tender

NSW Public Works conducted the end-to-end tender process for the Contract on behalf of Rous including the tender evaluations, with a Rous representative continuously involved.

Invited Tenderers from a Preferred NSW Government Panel and other recommended contractors were invited to make a submission using the NSW eTendering platform. Tenders opened on 6 February 2024 and closed at 10:00am on 19 March 2024. The pre-tender estimate was \$1,301,538 (incl. GST) and the optional additional works pre-tender estimate was \$159,500 (incl. GST). The combined total pre-tender estimate was \$1,461,038 (incl. GST).

Three tenderers made submissions as outlined below:

Tenderer	A.B.N.
Ledonne Constructions Pty Ltd	68 003 117 717
Ferrycarrig Construction Pty Ltd	70 612 915 367
Quay Civil Pty Ltd	42 167 246 399

Tenders received from Quay Civil Pty Ltd and Ferrycarrig Constructions Pty Ltd were considerably higher than the pre-tender estimate.

The Ledonne Constructions Pty Ltd recommended tender amount was \$1,580,623.30 (incl. GST), which is \$119,585.30 above the combined pre-tender estimate. Accordingly, this submission was determined to be value for money following the tender evaluation process.

The Tender Evaluation Report is included as Attachment 1 as a confidential document as it contains commercial in confidential information.

Governance

- **Finance**

The funding requirements for this contract have been specified in the Agenda Item 9.1 - Final draft Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) of the 9 June 2024 Council Meeting business papers. In June 2022, Rous received \$1.6M (excl GST) in funds under the North Coast Water and Wastewater Repair and Recovery Program. The NSW Public Works funding contribution (\$809,229.95 incl GST) will be sourced from this amount. Approved variations during the execution of the works will be funded from the NSW Public Works and Rous funding pool as required under the Contract.

The allocated budget in the 2024/25 Operational Plan for this project provided through the North Coast Water and Wastewater Repair and Recovery Program and Rous' contributions are sufficient for the awarding of this contract and for contingencies under the Contract.

- **Legal**

Contained in the body of *confidential Attachment 1*.

Should Council resolve to accept the tender submitted by Ledonne Constructions Pty Ltd, the details of the contract will be recorded in Council's contracts register available on its website in accordance with legislative requirements.

Consultation

No specific consultation has been undertaken as a part of this report.

Conclusion

Invited Tenders were called for the Woodburn Bores Replacement Infrastructure Design and Construct Contract. The most advantageous tender submission, following an evaluation process, was provided by Ledonne Constructions Pty Ltd for an amount \$1,580,623.30 (incl. GST). It is recommended Council resolve to accept this tender.

Attachment

1. Tender Evaluation Report

Confidential due to *Local Government Act, 1993*:

Section 10A(2)(d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:

- (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

Document is Restricted

Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Planning and Delivery (Andrew Logan)

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the proposed arrangements for Stage 1 implementation of the Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative.

Background

The Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative (NRWI) was originally developed by Rous County Council (Rous) in 2019 in response to community concerns with respect to river health in the Northern Rivers and the high level of interest in natural flood management techniques.

The NRWI is a catchment and estuary restoration program that has been specifically devised for the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation (NRJO) footprint to address ecosystem health, water security and flood risk issues across the Tweed, Brunswick, Richmond and Evans River systems in an integrated fashion. The NRWI is based on a holistic approach to the management of water within the catchments that will utilise modern, best practice approaches in catchment modelling and natural flood mitigation to target improvements in stream bank condition and river health that also contribute to reduced flood risk within the catchments.

The NRWI is a strategy that requires large-scale investment in catchment works in upper catchment areas that restore natural hydrologic functions that deliver both improvements in stream bank condition and river health and that also contribute to reduced flood risk within the catchment. In addition, it would also involve implementation of coastal zone management actions to address high priority estuarine health issues. These measures would deliver a range of environmental, social and economic benefits.

Preliminary scoping of the scale of work needed to effect landscape-scale change indicated at that time that a budget in the order of \$150 million over 10 to 15 years would be required to effect the necessary change.

The NRWI was considered at the December 2018 meeting of Rous and it was resolved that Council (119/18):

1. *Provides in-principle support of the proposed Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative discussion paper in relation to funding under the NSW Government's Snowy-Hydro Legacy Fund as attached to the report.*
2. *Note that the discussion paper forms the basis of consultation with constituent councils/key stakeholders.*
3. *Note that the finalised discussion paper following consultation will be supplied to the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation for its February 2019 meeting.*

A copy of the 2019 strategy can be viewed at the following link:

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:ap:7fe8a3eb-5e8a-4fc7-b83f-b7cf2918b1c8>

Over the intervening period, Rous has sought funding from the NSW Government and other funding opportunities for implementation of the strategy. The Hon Janelle Saffin MP (Member for Lismore) also made direct representations to the former NSW Government and also emphasised the importance of the NRWI in the Legislative Assembly.

During the 2023 election campaign, the current NSW Government committed to investing in a number of individual projects. The Hon Janelle Saffin MP secured \$5M dedicated to the implementation of a package of 'shovel-ready' works for the NRWI, which represents the first funding package secured for implementation of the NRWI.

These election commitments are being administered through guidelines established by the Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW). In accordance with these guidelines, Rous lodged the detailed project plan for this \$5M funding package on 20 May 2024.

The project plan provides for a 2 year program of works as described below.

1. *Soil health improvement program*: Orchard floor management, drainage and soil stabilization plans on an estimated 25 macadamia farms/implementation of identified earthworks/site stabilisation measures. Targeted at areas of high water quality risk (sediment, nutrients). Additional support for 20 landholders to understand, measure and improve soil carbon.
2. *Riparian restoration and catchment revegetation program*: Improvements in waterway condition to establish self-sustaining vegetated buffer zones requiring minimal maintenance, generating water quality/ecological benefits. Weed removal, off-stream water, cattle exclusion, fencing, stabilization of riverbanks and planting 100,000 trees.
3. *Redesigned floodplain drainage to meet contemporary standards*: The management of agricultural lands in catchments/floodplains influences water quality/riparian vegetation. This project involves minimising environmental impacts from floodplain drainage infrastructure whilst maintaining levels of service. Working with landholders/local councils to conduct on-ground works within Keith Hall drainage system; and additional hydrological options studies for drainage modifications at Boggy Creek (Bungawalbyn Creek floodplain).
4. *Landscape hydration program*: Using natural flood management techniques, this project aims to slow flows, retain soil fertility, and reduce runoff in rural catchments. Working in partnership with landholders using natural sequence farming methods and conducting landscape hydration works, we will engage landholders trained in natural sequence farming to complete site plans/execute works on their properties.

Governance

- **Finance**

The DRNSW funding will provide all required funds for execution of the on-ground works. The project will be implemented in partnership with the majority of the NRJO Councils (with the exception of Clarence Valley Council as the Clarence River was not part of the original strategy adopted). There will be in-kind contributions by these Northern Rivers Councils in executing these works, although the majority of the funds can be administered by existing Council staff through existing natural resource management incentives programs.

- **Environment**

The works that are the subject of this \$5M investment will lead to positive and lasting environmental outcomes within the Northern Rivers catchments.

- **Legal**

Implementation of the identified program of works is consistent with the types of works that all of the Councils involved already undertake within their respective areas and so can be implemented in accordance with existing policies and procedures.

Consultation

After endorsement by Rous on 8 February 2019, the NRJO members comprising Ballina Shire Council, Byron Shire Council, Kyogle Council, Lismore City Council, Richmond Valley Council, Rous County Council and Tweed Shire Council endorsed the landmark agreement to restore the Tweed, Brunswick, Richmond and Evans River systems via the NRWI. It is now a key regional strategy under the NRJO 'Thriving, healthy and biodiverse natural environments' theme: <https://www.northernriversjo.nsw.gov.au/prioritiesand-projects/biodiverse-natural>

Prior to submission of the detailed project plan to DRNSW, consultation was undertaken with all Councils to establish agreed arrangements for implementation. Under these arrangements and following execution of the funding deed, funds would be allocated to the partner Councils (and several other catchment partners) to implement the program of works.

Conclusion

The Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative - adopted by Council in February 2019 and subsequently endorsed by the NRJO, involves undertaking works in the Richmond, Evans, Brunswick and Tweed catchments to improve river health and restore natural hydrologic functioning to deliver environmental, social and economic benefits. It includes soil health improvement/soil conservation on macadamia/grazing farms; riparian restoration and catchment revegetation; redesigned floodplain drainage and natural flood mitigation/landscape hydration.

Whilst preliminary scoping of the scale of work needed to effect landscape-scale change indicated that a budget in the order of \$150 million over 10 to 15 years would be required to affect the necessary changes, a \$5M funding commitment was secured by the Hon Janelle Saffin ahead of the 2023 NSW State election as an initial series of actions. This commitment was based on a submission to deliver 4 headline ('shovel-ready') projects to the value of \$5M. Based on this package, a detailed project plan has now been lodged with DRNSW. It is anticipated that a funding deed will be entered into with DRNSW early in 2024/25.

Mullumbimby connection to the Rous bulk water supply

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Planning and Delivery (Andrew Logan)

Recommendation

That Council resolves that:

1. Byron Shire Council will not be required to make capital connection contributions, should they request to permanently connect the Mullumbimby local water supply area to the Rous County Council bulk water supply.
2. Any requests to permanently connect to the Rous bulk water network will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis utilising the methodology within this report.

Background

Byron Shire Council (BySC) has commenced community consultation on their Mullumbimby Water Supply Strategy. This long-term strategy is seeking to address water supply security for the local supply area of Mullumbimby.

The strategy considers four possible scenarios to meet the town's needs for water for both existing customers and future developments over time. The executive summary for the BySC Mullumbimby Water Supply Strategy is [Attachment 1](#) to this report.

The purpose of this report is to clarify for BySC what the potential costs of a connection to the Rous supply would be, in lieu of historical development contributions within this local supply area, so that the information can be incorporated into their comparison of potential options for the Mullumbimby local supply area.

Mullumbimby Water Capacity and Demand – Current State

Water is currently sourced and supplied to Mullumbimby by BySC from its Laverty's Gap Weir. The pattern of demand for water in Mullumbimby is shown in Table 1 and matches approximately the secure yield available from the Laverty's Gap Weir.

Should there be a recurrence of a drought equivalent to the worst drought on record, Laverty's Gap Weir will experience significant stress in meeting current unrestricted water demands.

Table 1 Byron Shire Council Water supply

	Units	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Mullumbimby local supply	mega litres	346	338	410	384	417	439	415
Rous bulk supply - BySC	mega litres	2528	2287	2465	2653	2672	2704	2565

Source: NSW Local Water Utility Performance Reporting - Water Supply and Sewerage Data.

Current Emergency Water Supply Arrangements

Rous and BySC have an arrangement in place whereby up to 183 megalitres (ML) of water per year can be supplied to Mullumbimby via an emergency pipeline connection. This arrangement has been in place since the Millennium drought in the mid-2000's.

The fee arrangement for this emergency connection to Mullumbimby is different to Rous's long-term position for its bulk water supply charge. The Mullumbimby emergency connection is charged on actual water supplied at a Special Approved Connection rate (currently \$5.19 per kilolitre), given

its temporary nature and that no development contributions have been historically collected by Rous for this supply area.

Bulk Water - Development Servicing Plan

Rous has a Bulk Water Development Servicing Plan (DSP) which outlines the up-front levies to be charged in order to recover part of the capital infrastructure costs incurred in servicing new developments or additions to existing developments.

Rous would impose these levies (if applicable) on new developments in Mullumbimby should BySC seek to permanently connect to the Rous bulk water supply. Equally, some existing BySC development contributions would decrease or cease to be levied.

In considering whether Rous should impose these levies on BySC for the permanent connection of Mullumbimby to the Rous water network, the following are relevant:

- The permanent infrastructure connection costs would be fully funded by BySC.
- There would be no requirement/s to augment the Rous bulk distribution network to enable the permanent connection of Mullumbimby.
- Development contributions collected to date from the Byron Shire Local Government Area (excluding Mullumbimby) have been used to fund augmentations to the Rous bulk water supply, which has provided additional capacity to supply bulk water to new water connections.
- BySC's total water demand from the Rous bulk water supply has remained consistent for the last 15-20 years, due in-part to both councils' ongoing water conservation and water recovery programs.
- Mullumbimby supply would be a small portion of the Rous bulk water supply.
- BySC is a founding constituent Council of Rous and is integral to the long-term viability of the regional bulk water supply system.

Given the factors outlined above, it is considered reasonable to not seek an upfront capital connection contribution if BySC were to seek a permanent water connection for Mullumbimby.

Comment

Any future requests to permanently connect additional areas to the Rous bulk water network will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. It is not the intention of this report to establish a standing position on the imposition of capital developer contribution levies when in receipt of any similar connection requests in the future.

The key differentiating factor in the current Mullumbimby context is that no capital works or augmentations would be required to make the existing emergency water supply connection permanent.

Governance

• Integrated Planning and Reporting

The addition of Mullumbimby local supply to the Rous bulk water supply would represent a small percentage of bulk water supply and would not influence the direction of Council's Business Activity Strategic Plan, including any of its resourcing strategies, such as the Future Water Project 2060.

The Regional Drought Management and Demand Management Plans will need to be amended to reflect a permanent connection to Mullumbimby if it is sought and granted.

The Drought Management Plan is not scheduled to be updated until the future operating philosophy of Rous's Stage 1 future water sources is known and the Demand Management Plan is due to be updated in 2025/26 as the current Plan comes to an end. Interim arrangements for clarity would need to be put in place should the permanent connection proceed.

- **Finance**

This emergency connection has been charged based upon the temporary water supply charge in Rous's 'Revenue policy.' This fee is charged on a per kilolitre rate and is higher than the bulk water price per kilolitre in lieu of developer contributions being paid. If a decision is made to connect this supply permanently, then an appropriate fee structure will need to be determined. This may include incorporating the usage within the bulk water charges for Byron Shire Council. These charges are set annually and an interim fee structure may be required in the short-term.

- **Legal**

It is unclear whether Mullumbimby currently sits outside of Rous's proclamation area for the purposes of exercising a bulk water supply function. Further investigations in this respect will be required should BySC seek to permanently connect to the Rous bulk water supply.

In the interim, a formal delegation in accordance with section 377 of the *Local Government Act 1993* would need to be made by BySC and formally accepted by resolution of Rous, to provide bulk water services to Mullumbimby.

Consultation

An overview of the BySC request outlined in this report was provided at the May 2024 councillor workshop. No other specific consultation has been undertaken as a part of this report.

Conclusion

Byron Shire Council is currently seeking community feedback on its Mullumbimby Water Supply Strategy. BySC staff are endorsing the findings of the Strategy's multicriteria assessment which determined that a permanent connection to the Rous bulk water supply represents the best scenario to address water supply security for Mullumbimby.

The estimated total unrestricted average annual demand for water in Mullumbimby is approximately 450 megalitres (ML) per year. The additional demand on the Rous bulk water supply that would be created through a permanent connection to Mullumbimby would represent approximately 4 percent of current bulk water supplies to the region. Considering the projected population growth of the region, the portion Mullumbimby represents would be expected to be closer to 5 per cent by 2050.

Given the factors outlined in this report, it is recommended that should BySC request that Mullumbimby be permanently connected to the Rous bulk water supply, that Rous would not apply any capital connection contributions resulting from this process.

Attachment

1. Mullumbimby Water Supply Strategy - Executive Summary



Mullumbimby Water Supply Strategy

Executive Summary



Final Draft Report for Public Exhibition

December 2021 (updated May 2024)

Disclaimer:

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Acknowledgement of Country

Hydrosphere Consulting recognises the traditional owners of the land discussed in this report, the Bundjalung of Byron Bay, Arakwal people, the Widjabal people, the Minjungbul people and the wider Bundjalung Nation.

Cover photo: Lavertys Gap weir, September 2018

Hydrosphere Consulting Pty Ltd
Suite 6, 26-54 River Street
PO Box 7059, BALLINA NSW 2478
hydrosphere.com.au

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20-020 MULLUMBIMBY WATER SUPPLY STRATEGY

REV	DESCRIPTION	AUTHORS	REVIEW	APPROVAL	DATE
0	Draft for Council review	R. Campbell, J. Fullerton, K. Menzies	K. Pratt, M. Howland	M. Howland	17 June 2021
1	Final draft	R. Campbell	M. Howland	M. Howland	17 Dec 2021
2	Minor edits for public exhibition	R. Campbell	M. Howland	M. Howland	21 May 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Mullumbimby's drinking water supply is sourced from the upper reaches of Wilsons Creek. Water is extracted from Lavertys Gap Weir on Wilsons Creek where it flows by gravity through an open channel, via a tunnel to the Mullumbimby water treatment plant (WTP) as shown on Figure 1. The channel and tunnel were the original raw water transfer system to the Mullumbimby Hydroelectric Power Station (now decommissioned). There is an emergency supply pipeline from the Rous County Council (RCC) bulk supply system with agreement to supply up to 0.5 ML/d to the lower areas of the Mullumbimby distribution system. The Mullumbimby water supply currently services approximately 1,620 residential properties (3,600 people) and 270 non-residential properties. Approximately 13 customers along Wilsons Creek Road are connected to the trunk main from the WTP.

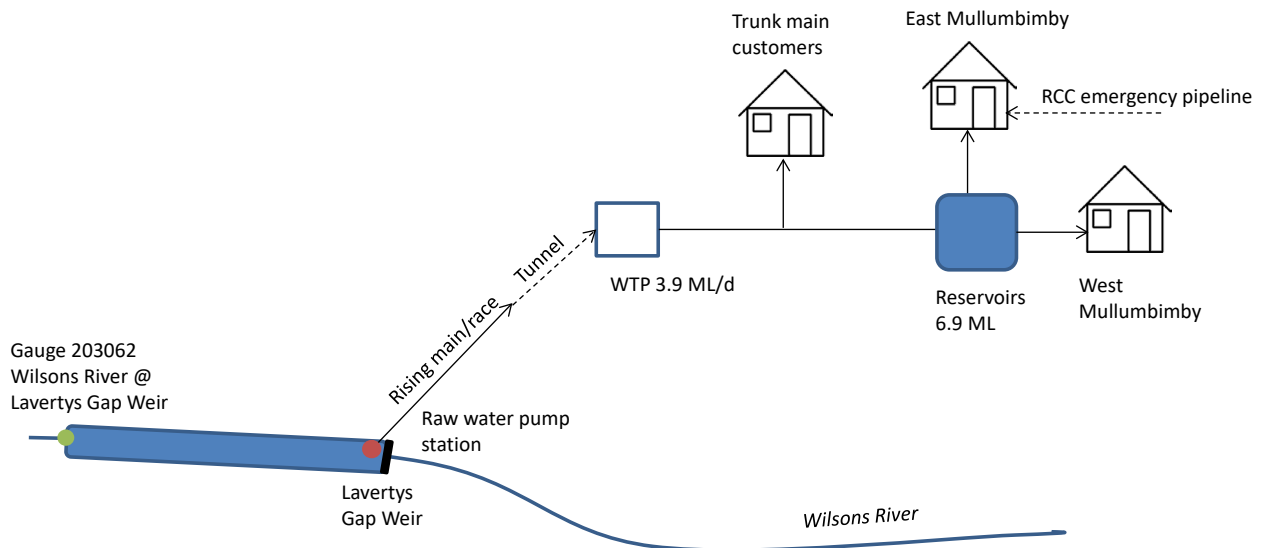


Figure 1: Mullumbimby water supply schematic diagram

Byron Shire Council (BSC) has engaged Hydrosphere Consulting to prepare a long-term strategy for Mullumbimby water supply. The key issue to be addressed is water supply security (servicing existing customers and future development over the long-term). The current demand for water is similar to the secure yield at Lavertys Gap Weir and if the worst drought on record were to repeat, the current supply would not meet demand. BSC has prepared growth management strategies for urban land, rural areas and business/industrial land which include future development that will increase the demand for potable water. The strategy also considers the following issues:

- Asset condition and performance - the raw water channel (constructed in the 1920s) has exceeded its useful life. The likelihood of failure is considered very high and on the basis that structural failure of the channel would cause extended interruption to the water supply, upgrading the raw water transfer system is a high priority while the weir supply continues to be used. In addition, due to the age of the Mullumbimby WTP (originally constructed in 1940), the WTP requires replacement in the next five to ten years. In addition, WTP upgrades are required to ensure removal of pathogens in the short-term.

- Drought management and emergency response - restrictions are currently introduced based on the water level and inflows in Lavertys Gap weir. Restrictions were imposed in Mullumbimby during the droughts of 2002/03, 2006/07 and 2019/20. An emergency supply from the Rous County Council (RCC) regional supply can supply water to lower elevation areas (East Mullumbimby) and was used for 30 days during summer 2019/20.
- Heritage considerations and management obligations - Lavertys Gap Weir and the channel (as part of the Mullumbimby hydro-electric power complex) are listed on the NSW State Heritage Register. In addition, the WTP has heritage significance at a local level.

This report assesses the security of the existing water supply system based on its secure yield and current demand. Options to increase the supply and reduce potable water demand have been identified and analysed and scenarios have been developed using combinations of the options to achieve the required secure yield in 2050. An integrated water cycle management (IWCM) approach has been used to compare options and scenarios and identify the preferred supply augmentation scenario to meet the predicted 2050 demand.

Security of Current Water Supply

'Secure yield' is defined as the highest annual water demand that can be supplied from a water supply headworks system whilst water restrictions are not too severe, not too frequent, nor of excessive duration. A model has been developed using GoldSim 12.1 (Monte Carlo simulation software) to simulate the Mullumbimby water supply and assess the secure yield for various Global Climate Models using the methodology prescribed by the draft *Guidelines on Assuring Future Urban Water Security* (NSW Office of Water, 2013). Water security is achieved if the secure yield of a water supply is at least equal to the unrestricted dry year annual demand.

The historical demand for potable water in a 'dry year' (a year with low rainfall) and an 'average year' (a year with average rainfall) were calculated using the data on existing customers and demand. The predicted residential, business and industrial development was used to estimate the additional number of future connected properties in Mullumbimby and the total demand over the next 30 years. Reduced water losses are predicted as a result of pressure reduction measures to be implemented as part of Council's water loss management program.

Mullumbimby's demand for water is increasing with development and population growth. The current (2020) and 2050 dry year unrestricted demand are compared to the secure yield in Table 1. The RCC emergency supply pipeline improves the water supply security although it is not intended to operate any more than an emergency supply. Assuming that water loss reduction measures are implemented and the emergency supply is available, the supply will be secure until 2027 (Figure 2). After this time, the existing system cannot meet forecast demand without the potential for more frequent, longer and severe water restrictions. The supply deficit at 2050 (excluding the emergency supply) will be 377 ML/a.

Table 1: Comparison of demand and secure yield

Component (ML/a)	2020	2050
Dry year unrestricted demand (including water loss reduction)	483	754
Secure yield - weir supply	440	377
RCC emergency supply	183	183
Total system yield	623	560
Supply deficit (excluding emergency supply)	+43	377

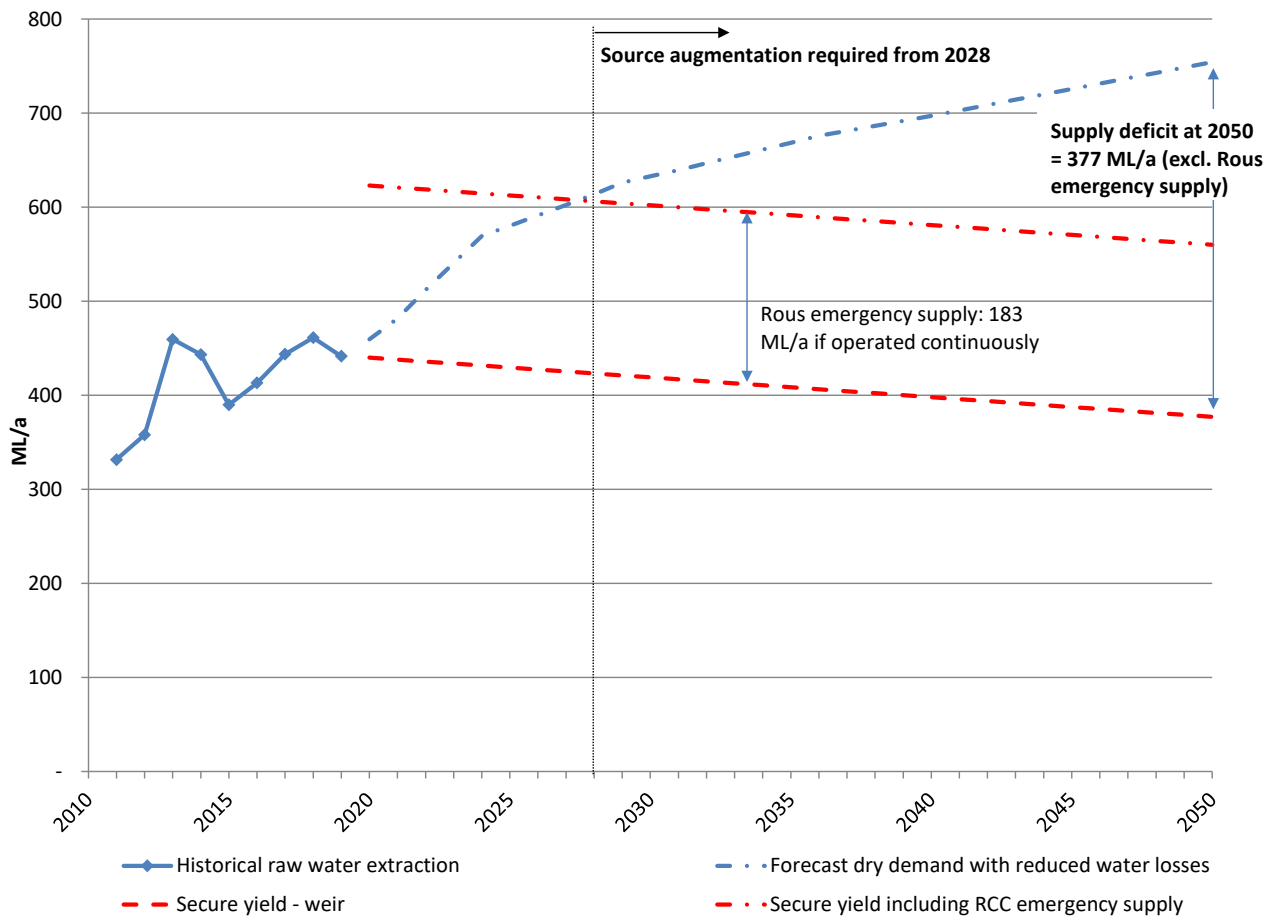


Figure 2: Comparison of forecast raw water demand and secure yield

Demand-Side Options

Implementation of demand-side options (demand management, urban effluent reuse and private supplies) will form part of the long-term strategy through the implementation of parallel initiatives including the NSW government BASIX program, BSC’s recycled water strategy (currently being reviewed and updated), the Regional Demand Management Plan (RDMP, including rainwater tank rebates, the Sustainable Water Partner Program, smart metering and community engagement and education) and Council’s water loss reduction measures. Increased drought restrictions are not proposed as part of the long-term strategy but may be required until water security is resolved.

Water Supply Options and Supply Scenarios

A coarse screening assessment considered a range of new as well as previously identified supply options. The following options passed the coarse assessment and are further assessed and discussed in detail in this report:

- Option 1. Do nothing (for comparison with augmentation options).
- Option 2. Raising Lavertys Gap weir.
- Option 3. Off-stream storage.
- Option 4. A: Permanent connection to the RCC bulk water supply.
B: Emergency connection to regional supply
- Option 5. Groundwater.

Following a detailed assessment of these options, Option 2 (raising Lavertys Gap weir) was not recommended for further consideration due to the minimal yield benefit, high costs and significant impacts on terrestrial biodiversity as well as downstream users and the environment.

Four scenarios have been developed from combinations of the remaining options that would achieve the required secure yield over the long term (754 ML/a, an increase of 377 ML/a at 2050). All scenarios include the following common components:

- Continued use of the weir supply and Mullumbimby WTP until the preferred source augmentation strategy is implemented.
- Short- term WTP upgrades to ensure consistent supply of microbially safe water until the preferred source augmentation strategy is implemented.
- Extension of the RCC emergency bulk water supply connection to service all Mullumbimby water supply customers to be used as a secure emergency response measure when required to supplement the weir supply (Option 4B).
- An increase in the Lavertys gap weir licence extraction limit (likely to be required from 2023 unless an alternative source is implemented).
- Review and update of the drought management plan based on the performance of the supply and drought management regime during the recent drought.
- Implementation of the demand management measures in the RDMP.
- Water loss reduction measures.
- Continued investigation of the long-term impacts of climate change on the secure yield of the weir supply.
- Resolution of the heritage management requirements for the weir, channel and WTP.
- Development of alternative supply options for the trunk main customers.
- Continued identification and implementation of urban effluent reuse opportunities (future demand will be reduced with potable water savings and yield deficit will be reduced accordingly).

No local options have been identified for Mullumbimby that do not require major infrastructure solutions. The potentially feasible water supply augmentation scenarios are (Table 2):

- Scenario S1: Base case: Improvements to the existing raw water transfer system, a new WTP and full emergency connection to the regional supply. This scenario would provide secure yield until 2027. Beyond 2027, restrictions may become more frequent and/or more severe.
- Scenario S2: Off-stream storage: Improvements to the existing raw water transfer system, full emergency connection to the regional supply, construction of a 200 ML off-stream storage and new WTP. High stream flows would be transferred to fill the off-stream storage. Water from the storage will be treated at the new WTP and transferred to the township.
- Scenario S3: Permanent connection to RCC regional supply: In this scenario, Mullumbimby would form part of the RCC regional supply network with bulk treated water transferred to the Azalea Street reservoirs.
- Scenario S4: Supplementary groundwater: Improvements to the existing raw water transfer system, a new WTP, full emergency connection to the regional supply, construction of new bores to the south-west of Mullumbimby with raw water transferred either to the weir or the new WTP for treatment and distribution to the township.

Table 2: Water supply scenarios

Scenario	S1	S2	S3	S4
Upgrade raw water transfer system from weir ¹	✓	✓		✓
WTP replacement	✓	✓		✓
Option 1 - Do Nothing	✓			
Option 3 - Off-stream Storage		✓		
Option 4A - RCC (permanent)			✓	
Option 4B - RCC (emergency extension)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Option 5 - Groundwater				✓

1. The preferred option to upgrade the raw water transfer system from the weir (for S1, S2 and S4) is a new pumped pressure pipeline following an alternative alignment that is independent of the channel.

Environmental Impacts

All surface water options considered for Mullumbimby (Wilson's Creek extraction for S1 and S2 and Rocky Creek extraction for S3) rely on existing infrastructure and extraction from the Richmond River system. Although there are significant initial impacts associated with dam and weir construction, the ecology within the storage area and downstream eventually adapts to the changed flow regime with subsequent loss of habitat for many native species. The terrestrial environments impacted by the existing surface water supplies have been modified through increased water level in the storages and land clearing to varying extents. All proposed supply augmentations for each scenario will require infrastructure development that is not expected to significantly impact on the terrestrial environment. Scenarios relying on groundwater supplies (S4 – potentially a local fractured rock groundwater supply and S3 – proposed future coastal sand aquifer

supply at Tyagarah) have the potential to impact on groundwater dependent ecosystems. However, these impacts are expected to be adequately managed through site selection and extraction regimes. Similarly, any impacts on the terrestrial environment due to establishment of groundwater sources are expected to be adequately managed through site selection.

The dominant environmental impacts are largely related to the existing water supply arrangements and are not expected to be altered with ongoing use of these supplies. The impacts of proposed system augmentation to achieve secure yield requirements (off-stream storage in S2 and groundwater in S3 and S4) are expected to be adequately managed.

Preferred Scenario

As the environmental impacts of the four scenarios are expected to be adequately managed, assessment of the scenarios to date has focused on security of supply and economic considerations. The water supply scenarios are compared in Table 3 on the basis of security of supply and costs.

Table 3: Comparison of supply scenarios

Scenario	Security of supply	Capital cost (2021\$) ¹	30-year operation and maintenance cost (2021\$) ¹
S1: Base case: Improvements to the existing raw water transfer system, a new WTP and full emergency connection to the regional supply and new WTP.	Secure until 2027. Beyond 2027, restrictions may become more frequent and/or more severe.	\$14,430,000 (weir supply, WTP, emergency supply)	\$4,862,000 (operation of weir supply)
S2: Off-stream storage: Improvements to the existing raw water transfer system, full emergency connection to the regional supply, construction of a 200 ML off-stream storage and new WTP.	A 200 ML storage is expected to provide a secure supply until approximately 2060.	\$35,830,000 (weir supply, WTP, emergency supply, 200 ML storage)	\$5,363,000 (operation of weir supply)
S3: Permanent connection to RCC regional supply: Mullumbimby would form part of the RCC regional supply network with bulk treated water transferred to the Azalea Street reservoirs.	The secure yield would be determined by the RCC bulk supply system, as with the remainder of Byron Shire.	\$4,264,000 (emergency supply, pipeline duplication)	\$20,910,000 (purchase of water)
S4: Supplementary groundwater: Improvements to the existing raw water transfer system, new WTP, full emergency connection to the regional supply, construction of new bores to the south-west of Mullumbimby with raw water transferred either to the weir or the new WTP for treatment and distribution to the township.	A supplementary groundwater supply with a yield of 1.1 ML/d is expected to provide a secure supply until 2050. Higher groundwater yields would reduce reliance on the weir supply and increase the security of the groundwater option.	\$18,149,000 (weir supply, groundwater bores, WTP, emergency supply)	\$5,497,000 (operation of weir and groundwater supply)

1. The costs do not include current operating costs, staff costs or costs of infrastructure modifications for heritage preservation as these are common to all scenarios.

A triple-bottom-line (TBL) assessment has been used to compare the scenarios (Table 3).

Table 4: TBL assessment criteria

Criteria	Description	Information used
Environmental (ranked considering the biodiversity management hierarchy - avoid, minimise, rehabilitate, offset)		
Aquatic	Impact on groundwater and surface water quality and aquatic ecology and measures to offset those impacts.	Aquatic biodiversity impacts (e.g. high value aquatic ecosystems, threatened species, water quality, groundwater dependent ecosystems) and offsets proposed (e.g. environmental flows).
Terrestrial	Impact on terrestrial ecology and measures to offset those impacts.	Terrestrial biodiversity impacts (e.g. high value terrestrial ecosystems, threatened species) and offsets proposed (e.g. stewardship/compensation).
Energy consumption	Energy requirements	Operational energy consumption (comparative).
Social		
Community acceptance	Predicted community acceptance	Community consultation has not yet been undertaken.
Security of supply	Year of augmentation required (following implementation of the scenario)	Secure yield assessment of each option.
Economic		
Net present value (NPV)	NPV of capital and operating costs (80 years) at 5% discount rate.	Estimated capital and operating costs.
Life-cycle cost	Total cost over 30 years	Estimated capital and operating costs.

A weighted score (higher is better) has been calculated for each scenario. Ranking has been calculated as follows:

$$(\text{Environmental Score} + \text{Social Score})/\text{NPV}$$

Weightings are assigned to each criterion based on relative importance so that the sensitivity of the weightings can be tested.

A summary of the TBL assessment (with equal weighting for each criterion) is provided in the following table. Changing the weightings does not change the outcomes of the multi-criteria analysis (MCA) ranking.

Table 5: Summary of MCA outcomes

Scenario	Weighted environmental score (/5)	Weighted social score (/5)	NPV (\$ million, 30 years @ 5%)	Total score (per \$ NPV)	Rank (based on MCA)
S1: Base Case	4.50	1.00	13.41	205	3
S2: Off-stream Storage	3.67	3.50	29.54	121	4
S3: Permanent connection to RCC regional supply	4.67	4.00	13.75	315	1
S4: Groundwater	3.67	3.25	15.78	219	2

Based on the TBL assessment, the most favourable scenario is S3: Permanent connection to the RCC regional supply (Figure 3). This scenario would have minimal environmental impact and the security of supply is only limited by the security of the RCC regional supply. Social acceptance of this scenario has not yet been determined but when other factors such as energy consumption, infrastructure modifications and required investment are considered, the regional supply has significant benefit over the local scenarios. The NPV of the regional scenario is the lowest of all scenarios. There are significant capital cost savings in avoiding the need to replace the Mullumbimby WTP and upgrade the weir supply in addition to constructing new infrastructure, however, the ongoing costs of a regional supply are higher than local scenarios.

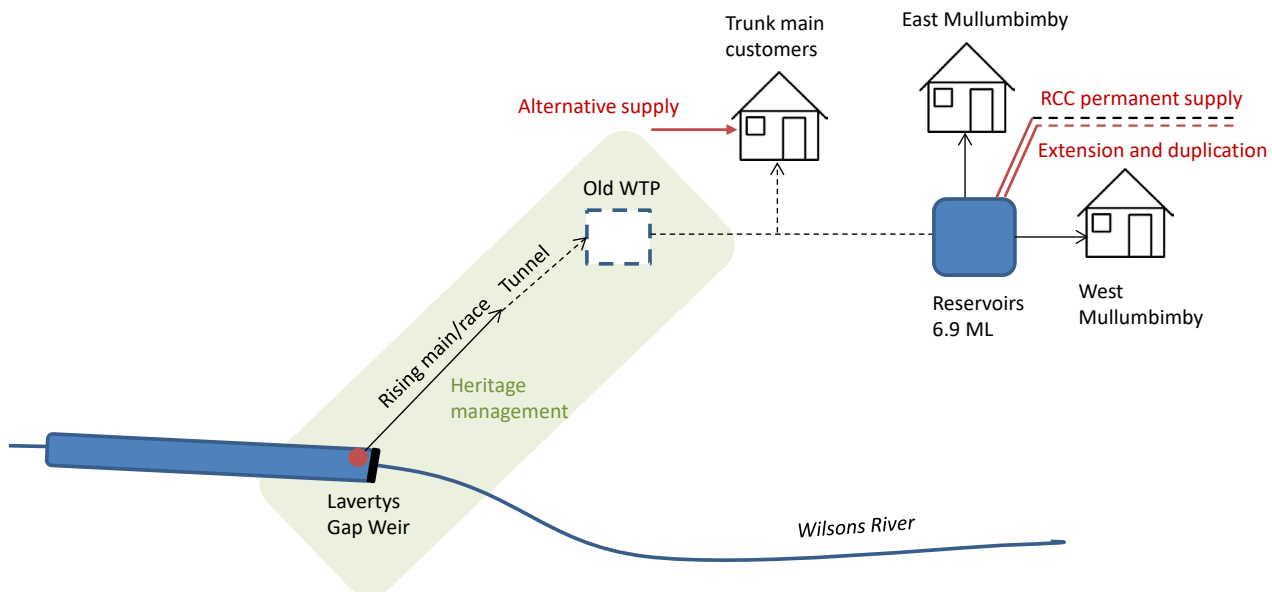


Figure 3: Preferred scenario S3: Permanent connection to RCC regional supply

The benefits of centralisation of water supplies and regional interconnection have been recognised in a previous study undertaken by the Northern Rivers Regional Organisation of Councils (now Joint Organisation) including improved financial outcomes through economies of scale, access to a wider range of options to improve efficiency, system resilience and operational flexibility. Financial benefits would result from regional opportunities for staging of water source development, increased flexibility in scheme development, reduced duplication of infrastructure and sharing of costs over a larger customer base. There is also the potential to reduce the risk of supply shortage in the region through supply diversity, supply

redundancy, climate resilience and system flexibility. A regional scheme also allows access to a wider range of options to improve environmental and social outcomes than a local scheme.

Implementation Plan

A secure water supply is critical to ensure the Mullumbimby community's health and quality of life as well as a sustainable environment and continued economic prosperity. Council has a duty to ensure that there is enough water available to meet the long-term needs of Mullumbimby. Based on the current demand and secure yield forecasts, investment in new water sources cannot be continuously deferred and by 2027 new sources of water will be required to meet the town's long-term water needs.

The Mullumbimby Water Supply Strategy includes a diversified portfolio of actions to meet the community's water needs based on connection to the RCC regional supply:

- Priority actions: improved drought resilience and treatment performance:
 - Emergency pipeline extension to service the whole town.
 - Duplication of RCC regional supply pipeline to provide supply redundancy.
 - WTP upgrades to ensure consistent supply of microbially safe water in the short-term.
 - Asset management planning for existing water supply assets that are not required as part of the regional scheme.
 - Drought management and emergency response planning.
 - Consultation with RCC, the community, trunk main customers, Essential Energy and government agencies regarding the preferred strategy and implementation requirements.
 - Heritage investigations to provide guidance on long-term maintenance and management of the weir, channel and WTP.
 - Financial planning to develop funding strategies and ensure affordability of the preferred scenario.
- Ongoing actions: reducing potable water demand including water loss management and the increased use of recycled water.

The expected delivery of the preferred scenario (capital and operating cost estimates and timing) is shown in Table 5. The cost estimates do not include staff time or existing strategic planning or operational expenditure which are not influenced by the preferred water supply strategy for Mullumbimby. The implementation plan assumes that the permanent connection to the regional supply will be available from 2025.

Strategic planning actions such as financial planning and demand management would be undertaken for all BSC water supplies as part of existing budgets and have not been included here. Effluent reuse opportunities are currently unknown and costs have not yet been estimated. These actions are part of Council's shire-wide water supply strategic planning and delivery and would be included in all future water supply scenarios.

On-going monitoring and review are required to ensure the strategy actions effectively resolve the identified issues. The Council-wide *Water Supply and Sewerage Strategic Plan* (draft, 2017) and financial plan should be reviewed to incorporate the adopted strategy for Mullumbimby water supply. Annual reviews of capital and operating expenditure and financial planning should also be undertaken.

Table 6: Mullumbimby water supply strategy implementation - cost estimates

Delivery Program year		Year 5	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 1
Year		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Action/cost estimate (2021 \$'000)	Ten-year cost	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Emergency pipeline extension - planning, design and approval	100	100									
Emergency pipeline extension - construction	1,182		1,182								
Pipeline duplication - planning, design and approval	100		150								
Pipeline duplication - construction	1,182			2,500							
Emergency water supply - purchase of water (allowance)	170	50	60	60							
WTP upgrades	330	106	112	112							
Regional water supply - purchase of water	4,800				650	660	670	690	700	710	720
Asset management planning	200		100	100							
Drought management plan review	50	50									
Consultation	170	50	50	50	20						
Heritage management	100		50	50							
Totals	9,751	356	1,704	2,872	670	660	670	690	700	710	720

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Planning and approvals	Construction	Operation
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Policy review - Pensioner Concession policy, Retail Water Customer Account Assistance policy

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Organisational Services (Helen McNeil)

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Revoke the [Pensioner Concession policy](#) dated 19 November 2014 and any policy revived as a result of the revocation.
2. Publicly exhibit the revised draft Retail Water Customer Account Assistance policy ([Attachment 1](#)) for a period of 28 days, and:
 - (a) Should no public submissions be received:
 - (i) The [Retail Water Customer Account Assistance policy](#) dated 17 August 2022 is revoked and any policies revived as a result of the revocation effective 19 June 2024; and
 - (ii) The revised Retail Water Customer Account Assistance policy is adopted effective 19 June 2024.
 - (b) Should any public submission be received, those submissions, and the proposal in relation to the revocation and adoption of the Retail Water Customer Account Assistance policy, be considered by Council at its next meeting.

Background

Council's policies are continually reviewed for suitability and currency to promote and deliver continuous improvement and ensure legislative compliance.

The policies outlined below were reviewed as part of the ordinary review cycle or due to legislative triggers.

1. Pensioner Concession policy – proposed for revocation

The concessions available for pensioners in relation to rates and charges (including water charges) are regulated by and detailed in the *Local Government Act 1993* ('LG Act')¹.

The pensioner concession rebate program under the LG Act is administered by councils. At the end of each financial year councils can claim back from the NSW State Government 55% of the pensioner concessions granted during the period.

To complement the requirements of the LG Act, Council maintains comprehensive [Pensioner Concession Guidelines](#) ('Guidelines') and a 'pensioner concession rebates' landing page on its website². This information is in plain English and relates to eligibility criteria, rebate amounts, and the application process.

The Pensioner Concession policy currently in-force ([Attachment 1](#)) is a pre-Rous Water, Far North Coast Weeds, and Richmond River County Council amalgamation document. The content of the policy does not add anything further to the requirements already detailed in the LG Act and captured in a more accessible and informative format within Council's Guidelines.

For these reasons, this policy is recommended for revocation.

¹ See [Chapter 15, Part 8, Division 1 Local Government Act 1993](#).

² <https://rous.nsw.gov.au/pensioner-concession-rebates>

2. Retail Water Customer Account Assistance (RWCAA) policy – proposed for exhibition

The RWCAA policy ([Attachment 2](#)) operates predominantly as an annual program of financial assistance offered by Council to its eligible retail water customers who incur high water usage due to an undetected leak or natural disaster.

This policy has been reviewed as part of its regular review cycle and remains compliant with legislative requirements and Council objectives.

It is recommended that Council approve the public exhibition of the policy.

If no submissions are received, it is proposed that the policy be deemed to be adopted as at 19 June 2024, being the Council meeting at which it was considered. If submissions are received, the policy and submissions will be reported to the next scheduled Council meeting for consideration.

Governance

- **Finance**

A recurring, annual budget allocation of \$25,000 for the RWCAA program is adopted by Council as part of its Operational Plan/Annual Budget each year.

Approximately \$8,203.91 remains available in the 2023/24 RWCAA program budget.

- **Legal**

As the RWCAA policy operates to grant financial assistance, for transparency and to promote the objectives of [section 356](#) of the LG Act, public exhibit of this policy for a period of 28 days is recommended.

Applications for assistance under the RWCAA policy/program are granted by the General Manager under delegated authority in accordance with [section 377\(1A\)](#) of the LG Act.

Consultation

The review of the policies outlined in this report was undertaken by Council's Finance team.

Conclusion

The above policies have been reviewed having regard to legislative and regulatory requirements, and Council objectives. The Pensioner Concession policy is recommended for revocation and the RWCAA policy is recommend for public exhibition.

Attachments

1. Pensioner concession policy ((**for revocation**))
2. Retail Water Customer Account Assistance policy (**for exhibition**) no changes are proposed.

ROUS WATER POLICY	Pensioner Concession		
OVERVIEW	Providing assistance to eligible pensioners with the payment of water rates.		
AUTHORISED BY COUNCIL	ROUS	RRCC	FNCW
	19/11/2014	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
REVIEW DATE	Term of Council.		
FILE	172	843	1294

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this Policy is allow eligible pensioners to receive their entitled concession under section 575 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

POLICY

Definitions

rating year - Council's rating year runs from 1 October through to 30 September.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the pension concession, the:

- i). Applicant must hold a Centrelink Concession Card, a Department of Veteran's Affairs ('DVA') Concession Card, a letter from the DVA or be in receipt of another concession as outlined by the *Social Security Act 1991*;
- ii). Applicant must be solely or jointly liable for the charges; and
- iii). Property must be the principal place of residence.

Application process

Each applicant must fully complete the Office of Local Government's Pensioner Concession Application Form and applicants must sign the customer consent, which allows Council to confirm with Centrelink or the DVA the accuracy of the details provided by the applicant. A copy of the Centrelink or DVA Concession Card or letter from the DVA must accompany the Application form.

No rebate will be provided without this evidence.

Applicants are encouraged to read the Pension Concession Information Guidelines available prior to applying.

Amount of rebate

The total annual amount of the pension concession rebate is determined by the *Local Government Act 1993*. This is then applied at a rate of 50% of the total water and facility charges until the entire rebate is used or the rating year finishes.

Where applications are received for a property owned by two or more persons, the rebate allowed will be limited to the proportion of interest held in the property by the eligible pensioner.

Where the eligible pensioner has multiple water accounts for the same property the applicable water account for the Pensioner Concession rebate needs to be nominated.

Secretarial use only		V. 2.1 9/11/2014
Rous Policy	RRCC	FNCW
Authorised Council: 19/11/2014	Authorised Council: N/A	Authorised Council: N/A

Retrospective claims for pensioner concessions

Retrospective claims for pensioner concession rebates are limited to the previous two financial years. A retrospective claim must be accompanied by a completed statutory declaration confirming that the property has been the applicant’s principal place of residence for the previous 2 rating years. This statutory declaration must also outline the reasons for the applicant not submitting the correct application previously.

Each application for a retrospective claim will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Note: Any statutory declaration provided to Council must be signed by an authorised witness. An authorised witnesses may include:

- Justices of the Peace;
- A notary public; or
- A solicitor or barrister with a current New South Wales or interstate practising certificate.

Pensioner concession funding

Council receives a Pension Concession Subsidy of 55% of all concessions granted for a rating year from the Office of Local Government. The subsidy represents both State and Commonwealth funding. Council funds the balance of 45% of the pensioner concessioners granted.

RELATED POLICIES

Retail Water Customers’ Account Assistance policy.

LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1993.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Pensioner Concession Guidelines.

Pensioner Concession Application Form.

Statutory Declaration – Retrospective Pensioner Concession Application.

CONTACT OFFICER

Finance Officer (Water Billing).

Secretarial use only		V. 2.1 9/11/2014
Rous Policy	RRCC	FNCW
Authorised Council: 19/11/2014	Authorised Council: N/A	Authorised Council: N/A



Statutory Declaration

OATHS ACT 1900 (NSWS), NINTH SCHEDULE

I
[name of declarant]

of
[residence]

do hereby solemnly declare and affirm that I have lived in the abovementioned address for the previous years and have been a pensioner
[insert number of years]

for at [at least three (3) years / less than three (3)] years. *(delete inapplicable)*

The reason(s) I have not made an application for the pensioner concession rebate to date is as follows:

.....
.....
.....
.....

And I make this solemn declaration, as to the matter (or matters) aforesaid, according to the law in this behalf made – and subject to the punishment by law provided for any wilfully false statement in any such declaration.

Declared at: [place]

On: [date]

Signature:

in the presence of an authorised witness, who states:

I,
[name of declarant]

a
[qualification of authorised witness]

certify the following matters concerning the making of this statutory declaration by the person who made it: [**please cross out any text that does not apply*]

Secretarial use only		V. 2.1 9/11/2014
Rous Policy	RRCC	FNCW
Authorised Council: 19/11/2014	Authorised Council: N/A	Authorised Council: N/A

1. *I saw the face of the person OR *I did not see the face of the person because the person was wearing a face covering, but I am satisfied that the person had a special justification for not removing the covering, and
2. *I have known the person for at least 12 months OR I have confirmed the person's identity using an identification document and the document I relied on was

.....[documentation relied on]

.....
[signature of authorised witness]

.....
[date]

Secretarial use only		V. 2.1 9/11/2014
Rous Policy	RRCC	FNCW
Authorised Council: 19/11/2014	Authorised Council: N/A	Authorised Council: N/A

Policy



Retail Water Customer Account Assistance

Approved by Council: FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITION

To provide a framework with uniform and transparent rules for the assessment and determining of requests for account assistance.

Safety

Teamwork

Accountability

Respect

Background

Council recognises that there are circumstances where our retail water customers may need assistance to meet their responsibility of paying their water account. The objective of this Policy is to ensure uniform and transparent rules for providing account assistance. This Policy establishes the circumstances in which assistance will be provided, while applying the principles of fairness, integrity and confidentiality.

Policy statement

The *Local Government Act 1993* allows Council to provide account assistance to its customers as needed. Council has determined that it will voluntarily provide the following account assistance to its retail water customers:

- Payment arrangements, including payment extensions (section 564);
- Writing off or reducing interest (section 564 and 567);
- Extension of pensioner concession to avoid hardship (section 577);
- Granting of financial assistance due to a natural disaster event (section 356);
- Granting of financial assistance due to a concealed or undetected water leak or for the use of water dependent medical equipment (section 356); and
- Abandonment of pensioner rates and charges due to a concealed or undetected water leak (section 582).

1. Payment arrangements, including payment extensions

- 1.1. It is Council's practice to provide customers with payment extensions and payment arrangements of due dates in the first instance. However, where this is inappropriate, Council will consider other forms of assistance, as outlined in this Policy.

2. Writing off or reducing interest

- 2.1. There are two circumstances in which Council will write off or reduce interest:
 - 2.1.1. Where the customer is compliant with a payment arrangement; and
 - 2.1.2. Where the payment of accrued interest would cause the customer hardship.

3. Extension of pensioner concession to avoid hardship

- 3.1. Where Council considers it appropriate in the circumstances to avoid hardship, Council may extend that annual pensioner concession rebate of up to \$87.50 to an individual living with a pensioner who would otherwise be ineligible.

4. Granting of financial assistance – concealed or undetected water leak

4.1. Council has determined that a customer may be eligible for financial assistance due to a concealed or undetected water leak if:

- 4.1.1. The customer is solely or jointly liable for the water charges; and
- 4.1.2. The recorded consumption for the quarter in which the leak occurred is in excess of 500kL; and
- 4.1.3. The leak was above 200% of the daily average usage for the previous four (4) quarters; and
- 4.1.4. The leak was repaired in accordance with the relevant Standards; and
- 4.1.5. A licensed plumber has completed Council’s ‘Water Use Audit Report’ and returned to Council.

4.2. The financial assistance that may be provided is calculated as follows:

$[(\text{Recorded consumption for the period}) \text{ less } 500\text{kL base consumption amount}] \times 75\%$

- 4.3. This assistance is only available to customers once per property, per ownership.
- 4.4. Council will not accept an application more than 60 days after the original due date of the water account that relates to the period of the concealed or undetected leak.
- 4.5. Property owner contact details will be forwarded to Council’s Demand Management section who may contact the property owner about water saving initiatives.
- 4.6. Council will not apply this policy where there is no available budget.

5. Granting of financial assistance – water dependent medical equipment

- 5.1. Council may provide a rebate of up to 200kL per rating year to customers who require the use of home-based haemodialysis or other water dependent health care equipment.
- 5.2. This assistance is available to customers for the duration of the use of home base haemodialysis or other water dependent health care equipment, provided that this confirmed by a registered medical practitioner every rating year.

6. Granting of financial assistance – Natural disaster event

- 6.1. Council may, in its discretion, agree to financial relief in the form of adjusting water charges where a Natural Disaster (as declared by the Federal Government) could reasonably be considered to have contributed to an excess water use reading/charge.
- 6.2. Financial relief will be assessed based on a historical water consumption comparison. Water charges will be adjusted to reflect the customers usual water usage.
- 6.3. Council staff will identify properties impacted by a natural disaster event and will apply 6.2 above to determine eligibility.

7. Abandonment of pensioner rates and charges – concealed or undetected water leak

7.1. Council has determined that a customer may be eligible for financial assistance due to a concealed or undetected water leak if:

- 7.1.1. The property is the customer’s sole or principal place of living; and
- 7.1.2. The customer is solely or jointly liable for the water charges; and
- 7.1.3. The recorded consumption for the quarter in which the leak occurred is in excess of the base consumption (kL) threshold for pensioners, calculated as follows:

Age pension amount (\$) : single, including maximum pension supplement and energy supplement (per week)	x	=	base consumption (kL) threshold for pensioners
National minimum wage amount (\$) (per week)	500kL		

and

- 7.1.4. The leak was above 200% of the daily average usage for the previous four (4) quarters; and
- 7.1.5. The leak was repaired in accordance with the relevant Standards; and
- 7.1.6. A licensed plumber has completed Council's 'Water Use Audit Report' and returned to Council.

7.2. The financial assistance that may be provided is calculated as follows:

$\frac{[(\text{Recorded consumption for the period}) \text{ less the base consumption threshold for pensioners amount}]}{75\%}$

- 7.3. This assistance is only available to customers once per property, per ownership.
- 7.4. Council will not accept an application more than 60 days after the original due date of the water account that relates to the period of the concealed or undetected leak.
- 7.5. Property owner contact details will be forwarded to Council's Demand Management section who may contact the property owner about water saving initiatives.
- 7.6. Council will not apply this policy where there is no available budget.

Contact officer

Group Manager Corporate and Commercial.

Related documents

Policies

[Pensioner Concession.](#)

[Privacy Management.](#)

Debt Management and Financial Hardship

Legislation

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009.

Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002.

Local Government Act 1993.

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.

Social Security Act 1991.

Veterans' Entitlement Act 1986.

Other

[Retail Water Customers' Account Assistance application form](#)

[Retail Water Customers' Account Assistance Guidelines.](#)

[Water Use Audit Report.](#)

<i>Office use only</i>	File no.: 172/13	Next review date: 1 year	
Version	Purpose and description	Date adopted by Council	Resolution no.
1.0		18/03/2015	
2.0		06/05/2015	
3.0		19/09/2018	88/18
4.0	Amended to include provision for excess water charges connected to a natural disaster	17/08/2022	TBC
5.0	FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITION	19/06/2024	

Information reports

Responsible Officer: General Manager and Group Managers

Recommendation

That the following information reports be received and noted:

1. Water production and consumption – May 2024
2. Investments
3. Audit, Risk and Implementation Committee meeting – 30 April 2024
4. Councillor Ndiaye's Delegate Report – Myall Creek Massacre Commemoration Trip with Rous County Council
5. Councillor Ndiaye's Delegate Report – Rainforest Connections 2024 Conference
6. Reports/Actions pending

Background

Copies of the abovementioned reports are attached for information.

Consultation

The reports have been prepared in consultation with the General Manager, relevant Group Managers and staff.

Attachments

1. Information reports 1- 6

Water production and consumption - May 2024

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Operations (Adam Nesbitt)

Recommendation

That the report be received and noted.

Background

The table below is the May 2024 bulk water sales to the constituent councils in kilolitres compared to the corresponding May sales for 2023 and 2022

Council	May 2022 (kL)	May 2023 (kL)	May 2024 (kL)	% of Total Sales
Ballina Shire Council	284,140	305,501	285,144	39.08%
Byron Shire Council	171,100	216,971	160,762	22.03%
Lismore City Council	232,026	236,930	244,790	33.55%
Richmond Valley Council	39,627	48,881	39,031	5.35%
TOTAL MONTHLY CONSUMPTION BY CONSTITUENT COUNCILS	726,893	808,283	729,727	

Water usage - all constituent councils

Figure 1 shows the combined monthly bulk water consumption and rainfall at Rocky Creek Dam for the previous two years.

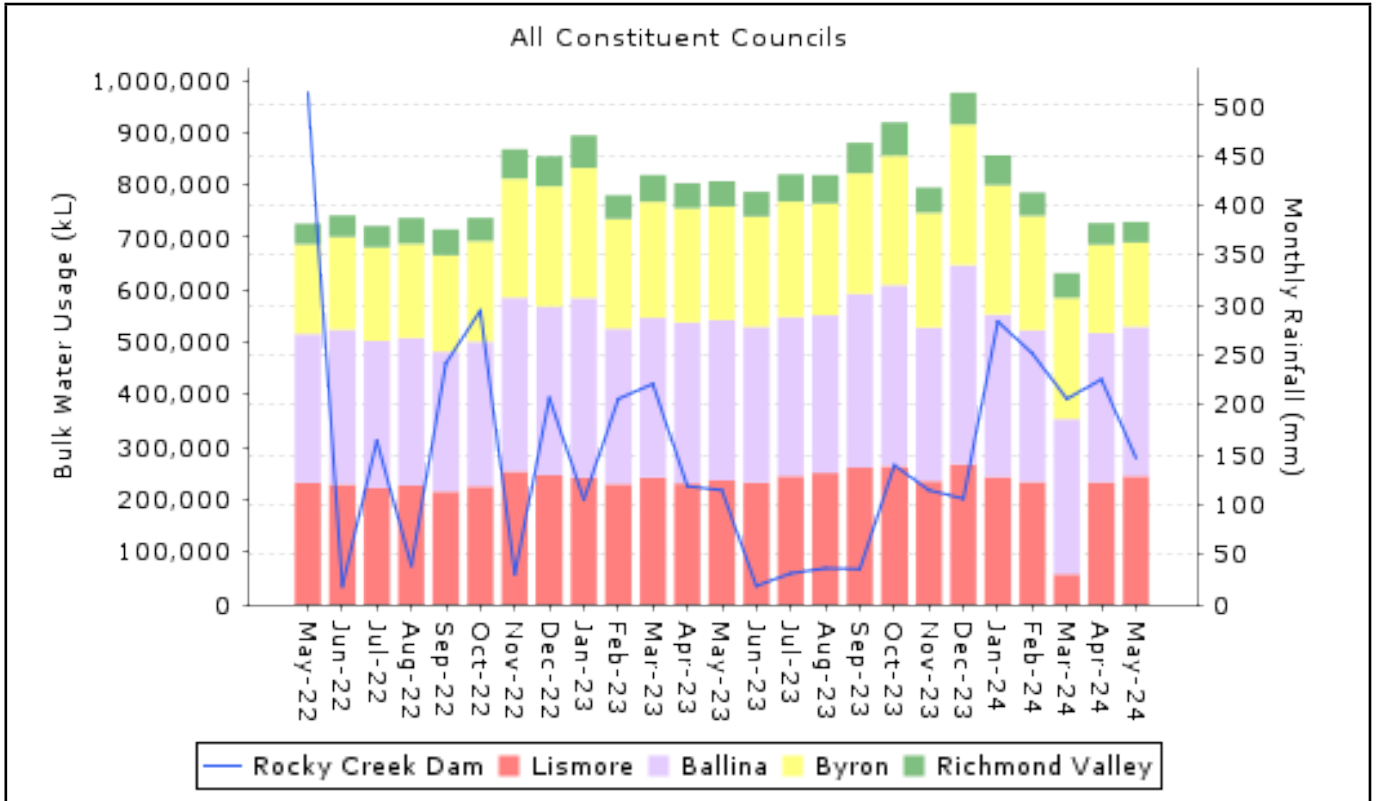


Figure 1: Total monthly consumption by constituent council and rainfall.

Figure 2 shows the total bulk water sales for the financial year to date compared with the previous two years.

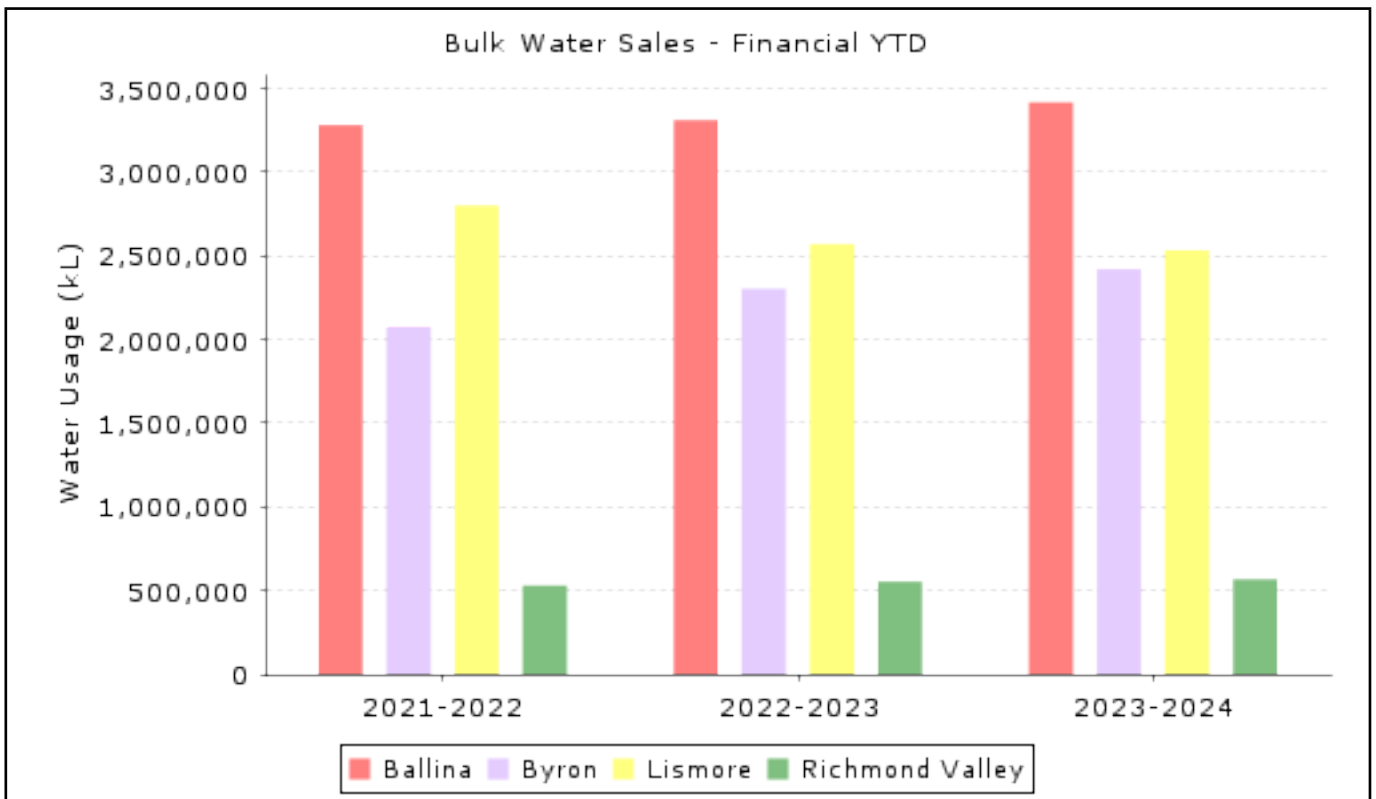


Figure 2: Bulk water sales by constituent council - 1 July to 31 May

Figure 3 and 4 shows the total usage of individual commercial water fill stations for the financial year to date compared with the previous two years.

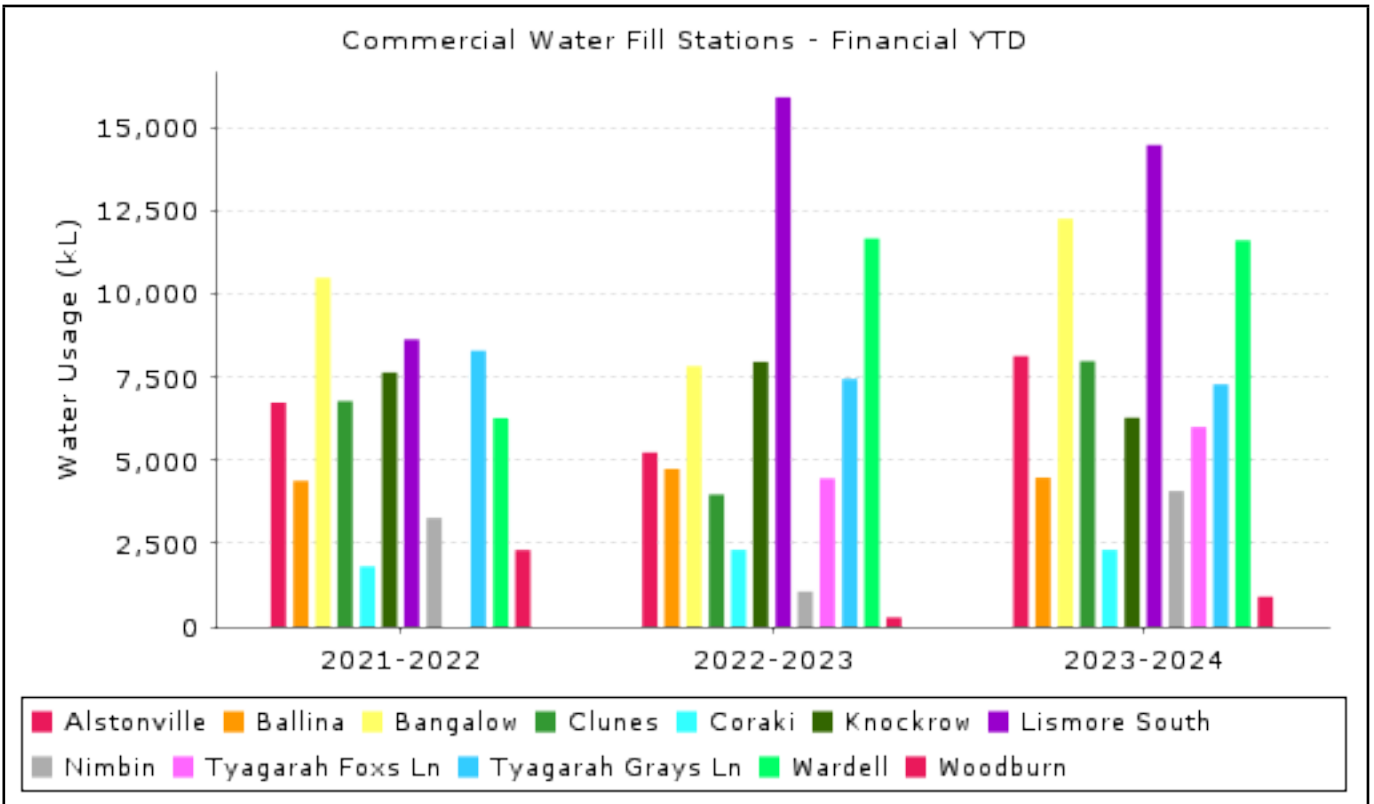


Figure 3: Comparison of commercial water fill stations total consumption - 1 July to 31 May

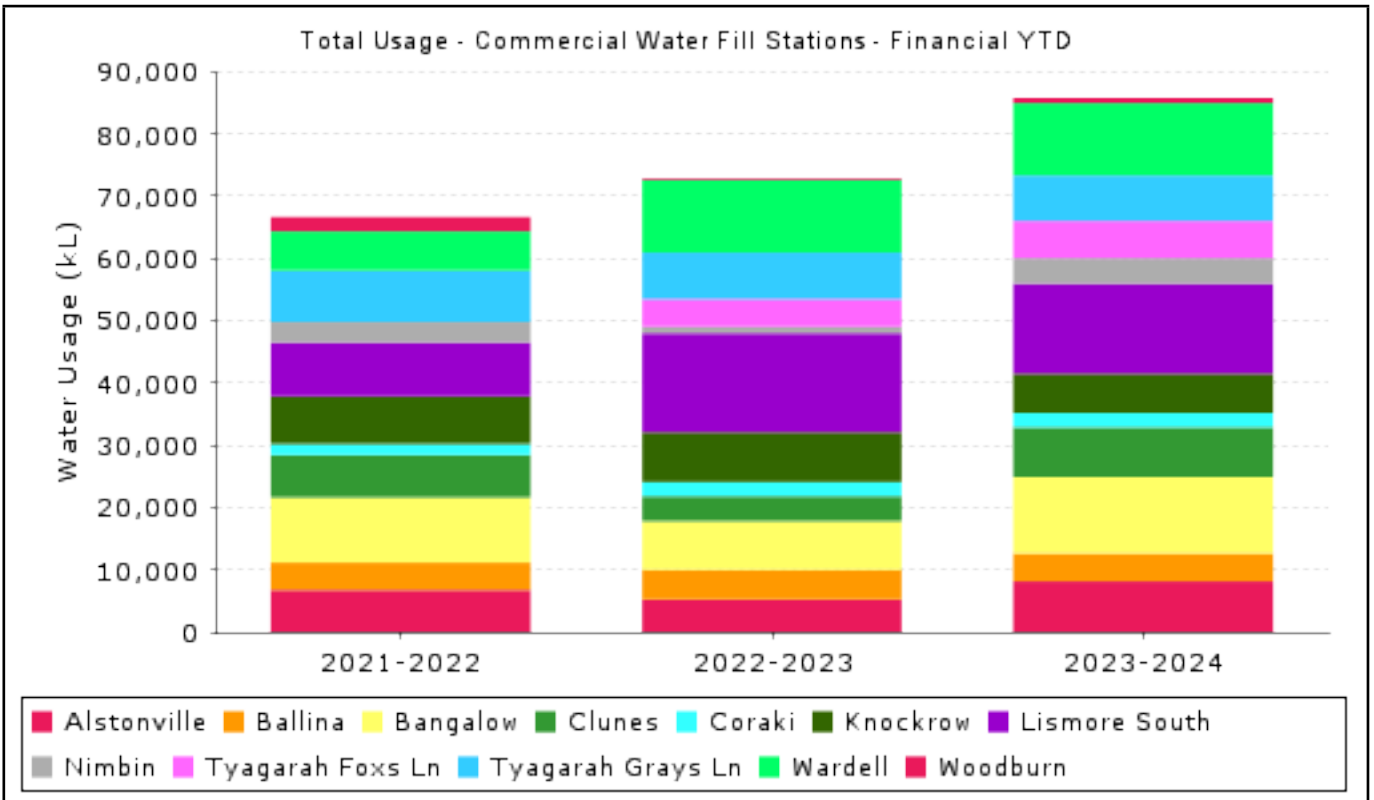


Figure 4: Total usage of commercial water fill stations - 1 July to 31 May

Figure 5 shows the combined water fill station monthly consumption for the previous two years. Rainfall data is from the rain gauge at Rocky Creek Dam.

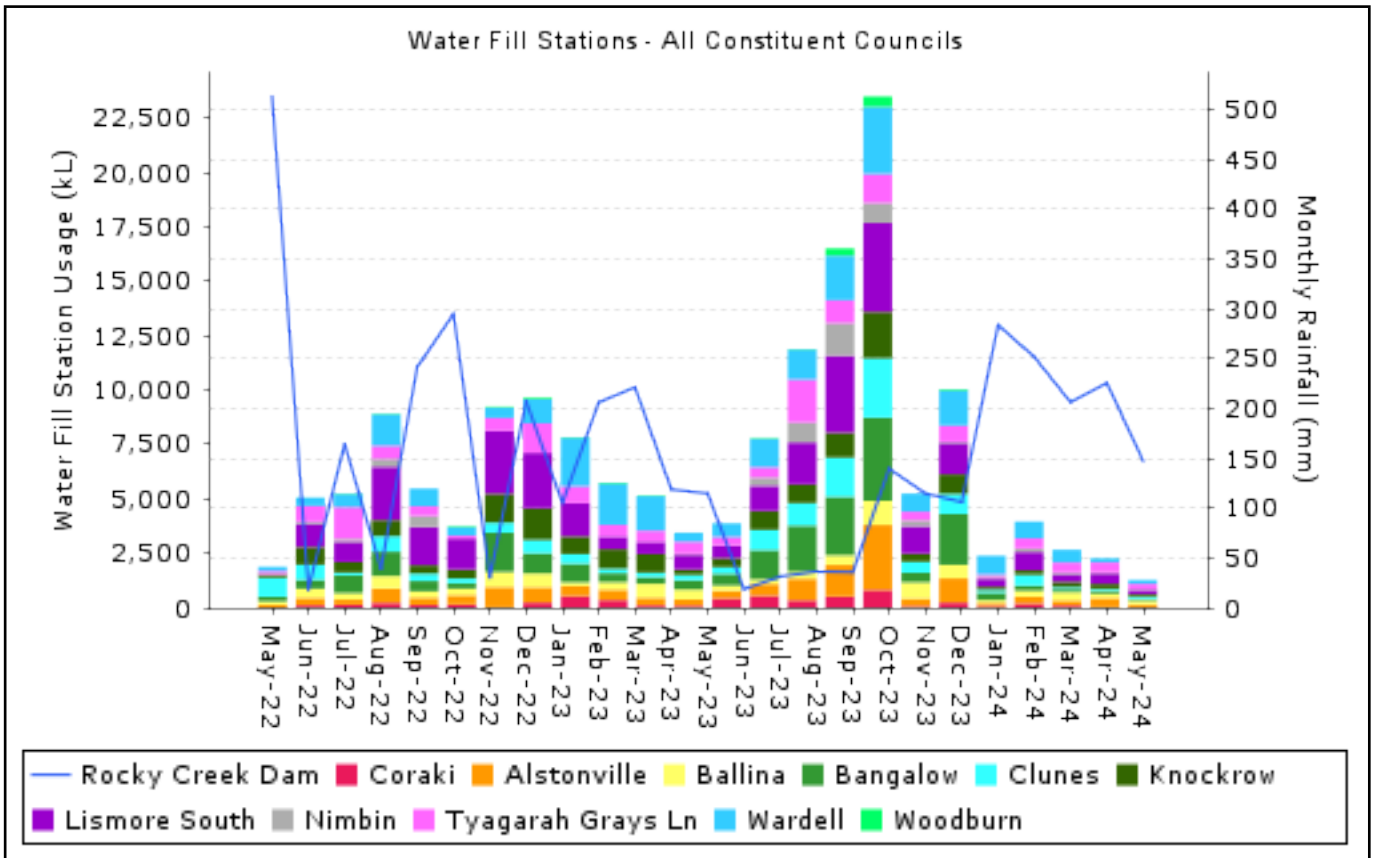


Figure 5: Total monthly consumption for commercial water fill stations and rainfall.

Source Contribution

Rocky Creek Dam capacity as of 31 May 2024 was 100.0%
 Emigrant Creek Dam capacity as of 31 May 2024 was 102.4%

Source	May 2024 (kL)		Cumulative total 2023-2024 (kL)	
Rocky Creek Dam	823,444	97.19%	9,311,742	90.23%
Wilson River	3,910	0.46%	616,055	5.97%
Emigrant Creek Dam	19,902	2.35%	392,120	3.80%
Alstonville Plateau Bores	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Coastal Sands	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	847,256		10,319,917	

Rocky Creek Dam

Figure 6 shows Rocky Creek dam current water level and compares to previous years when levels reached lowest recorded dam level. Rainfall data is for the current financial year only.

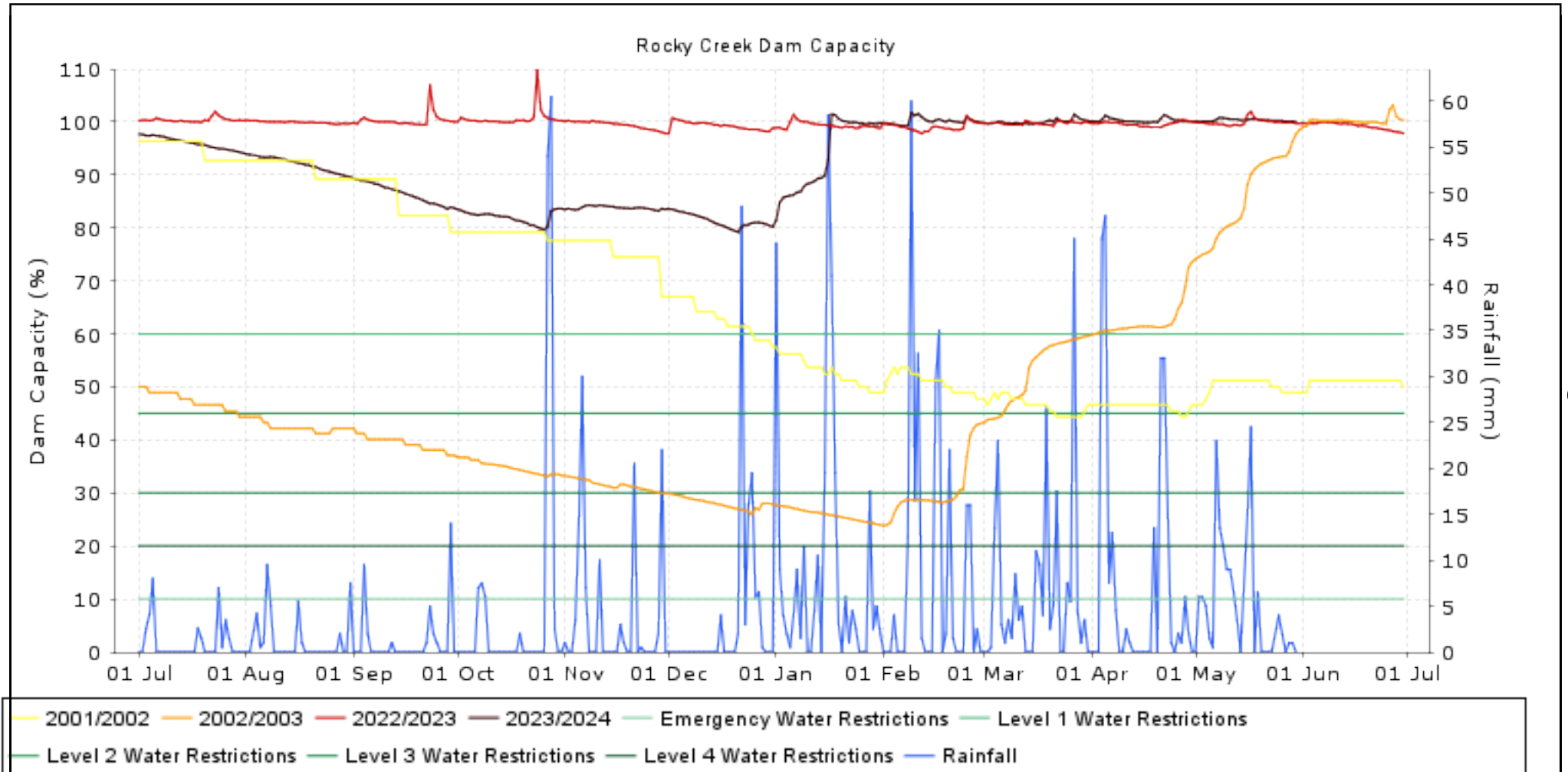


Figure 6: Rocky Creek Dam capacity and rainfall

Emigrant Creek Dam

Figure 7 show Emigrant Creek dam current water level and compares to previous two years. Rainfall data is for the current financial year only.

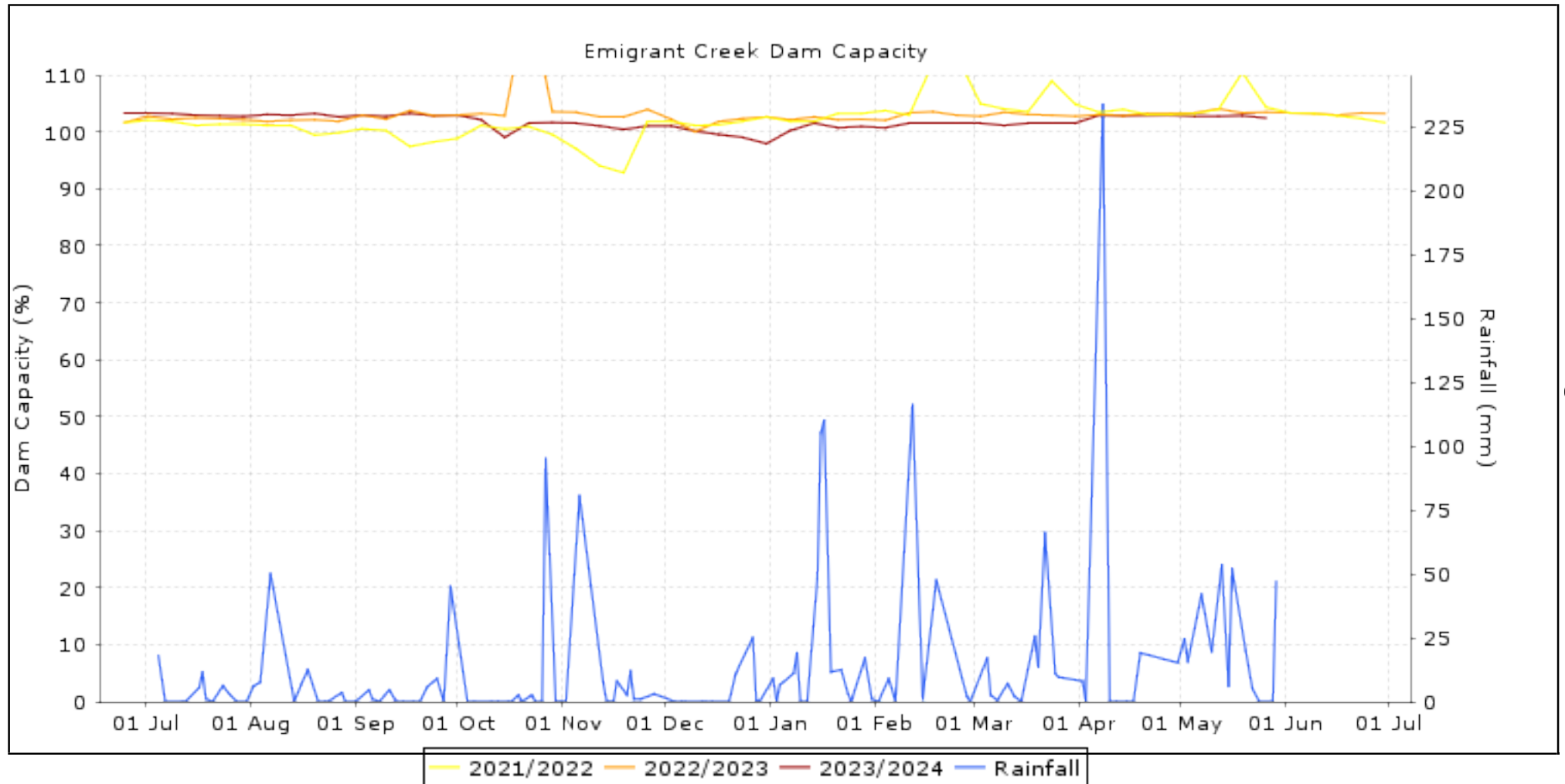


Figure 7: Emigrant Creek Dam capacity and rainfall

Monthly consumption by constituents - Ballina Shire Council

Figure 8 shows the monthly consumption for Ballina Shire Council area for the previous two years. Rainfall data is from the Bureau of Meteorology rainfall station Ballina Airport.

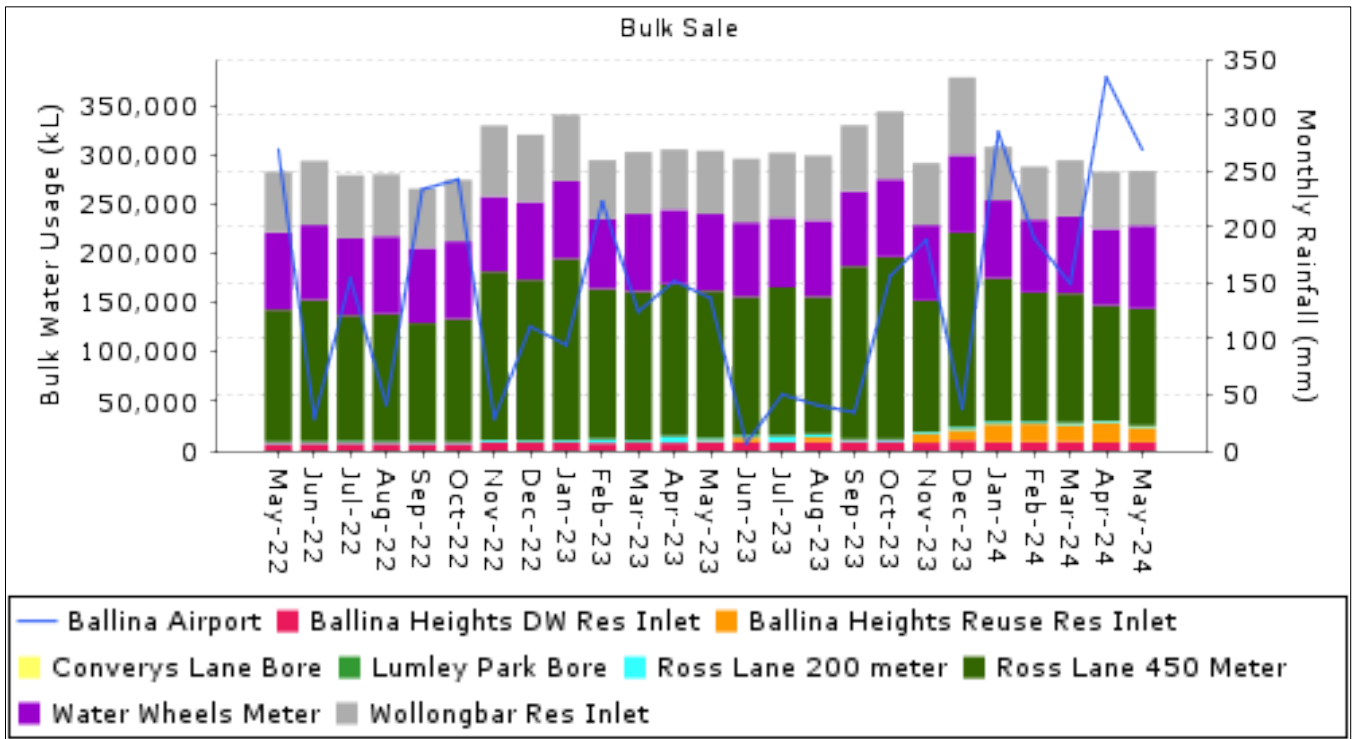


Figure 8: Monthly consumption and rainfall - Ballina Shire Council.

Figure 9 shows the monthly consumption for water fill stations for Ballina Shire Council and the rainfall for the previous two years.

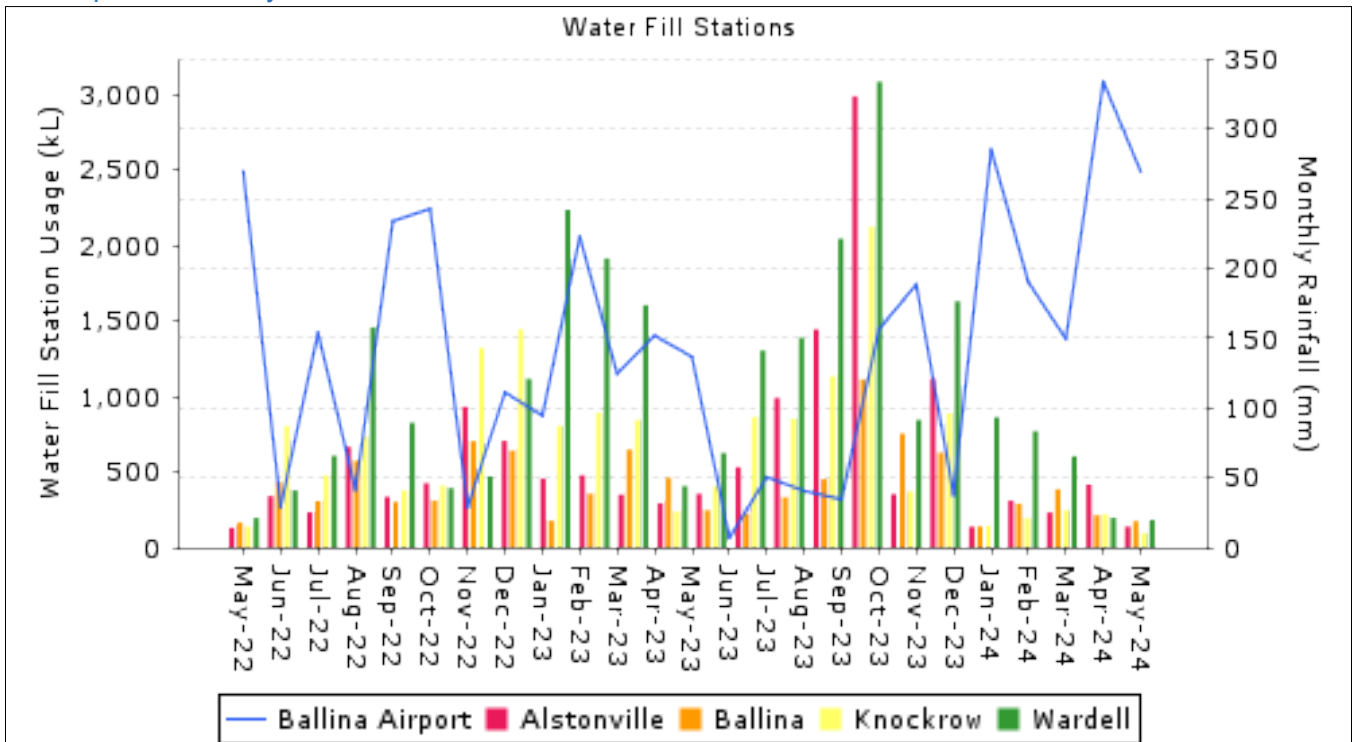


Figure 9: Monthly consumption commercial water fill station and rainfall.

Figure 10 shows the total usage of individual commercial water fill stations for the financial year to date compared with the previous two years.

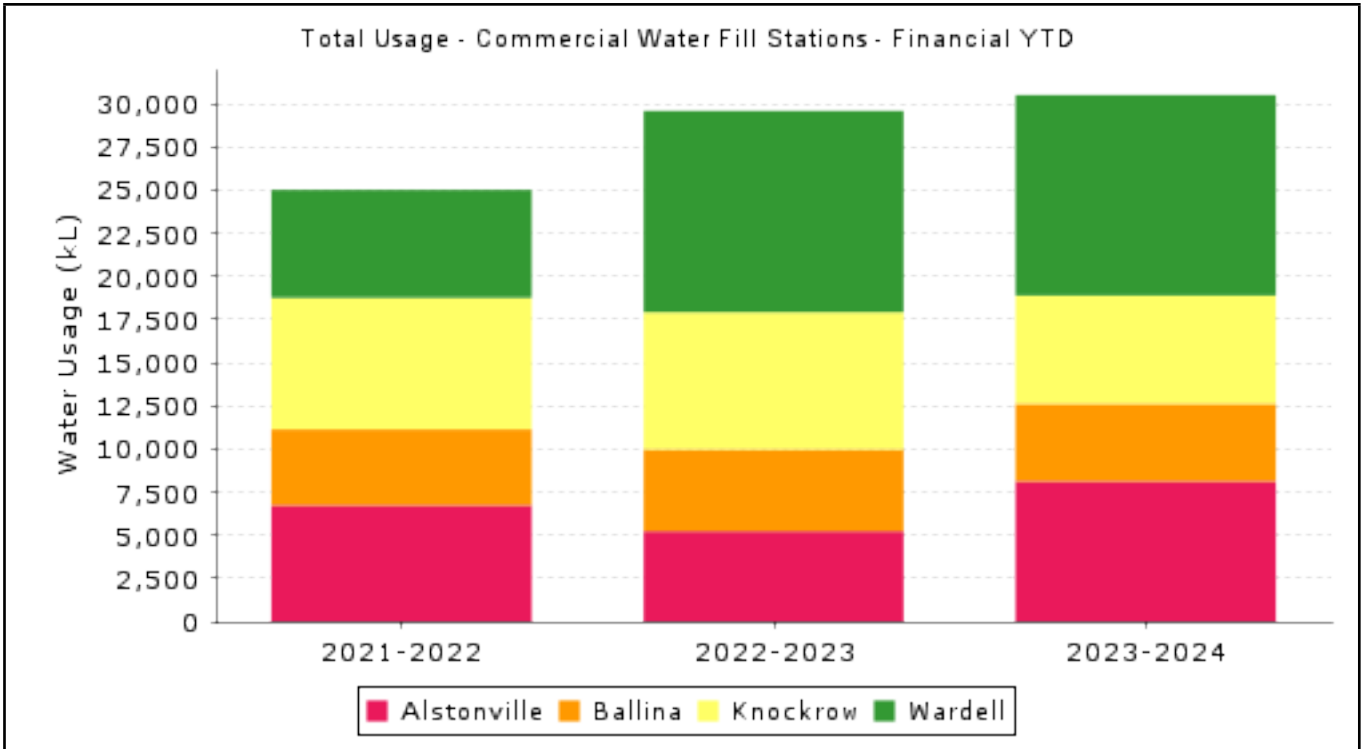


Figure 10: Total usage of commercial water fill stations. 1 July to 31 May

Monthly consumption by constituents - Byron Shire Council

Figure 11 shows the monthly consumption for Byron Shire Council area for the previous two years. Rainfall data is from the Bureau of Meteorology rainfall station Cape Byron.

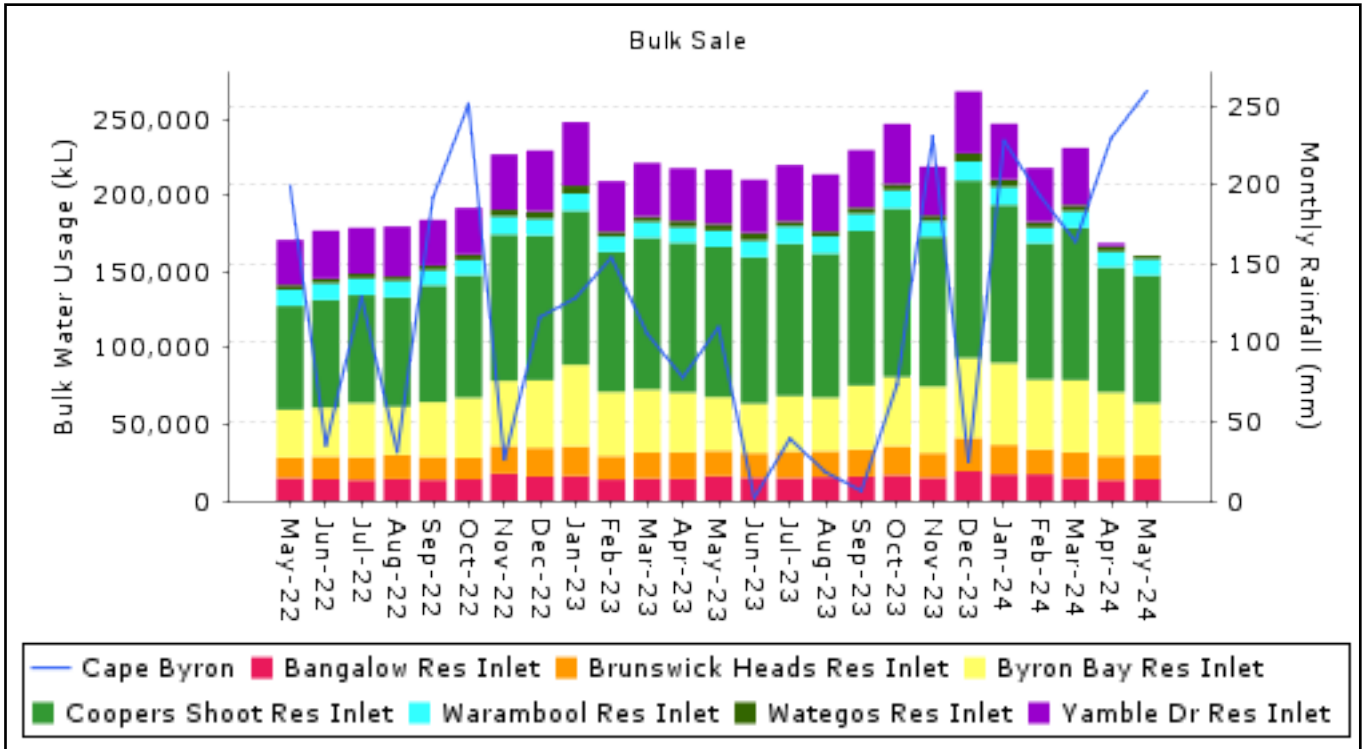


Figure 11: Monthly consumption and rainfall - Byron Shire Council.

Figure 12 shows the monthly consumption for water fill stations for Byron Shire Council and the rainfall for the previous two years.

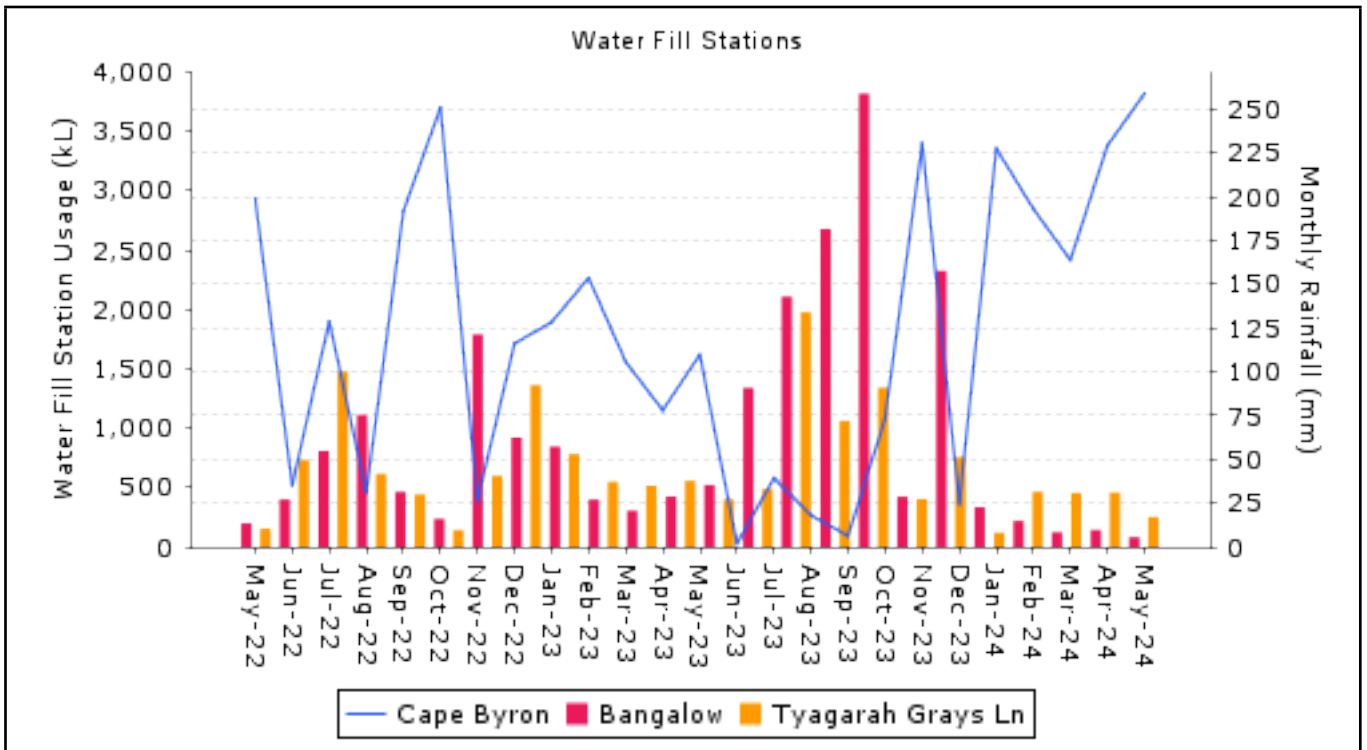


Figure 12: Monthly consumption commercial water fill station and rainfall.

Figure 13 shows the total usage of individual commercial water fill stations for the financial year to date compared with the previous two years.

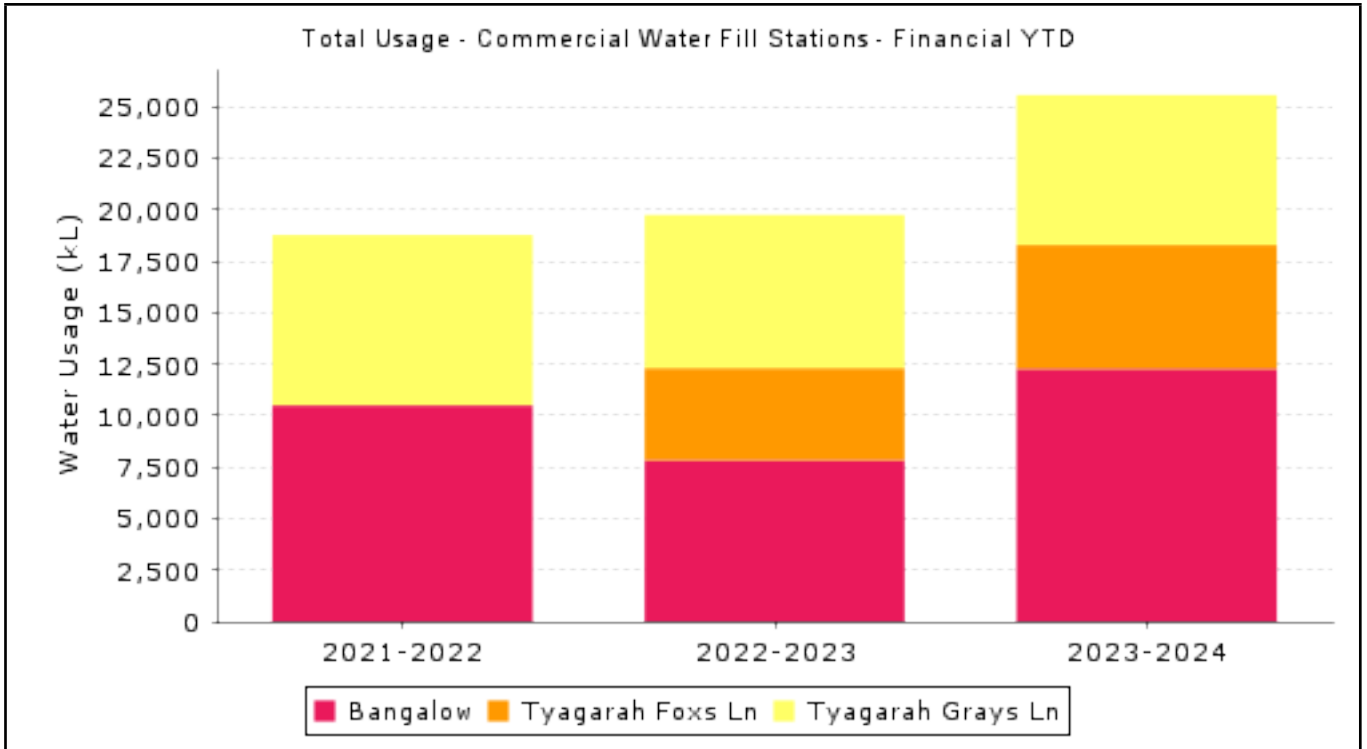


Figure 13: Total usage of commercial water fill stations. 1 July to 31 May

Monthly consumption by constituents - Lismore City Council

Figure 14 shows the monthly consumption for Lismore City Council area for the previous two years. Rainfall data is from the Bureau of Meteorology rainfall station Lismore Airport.

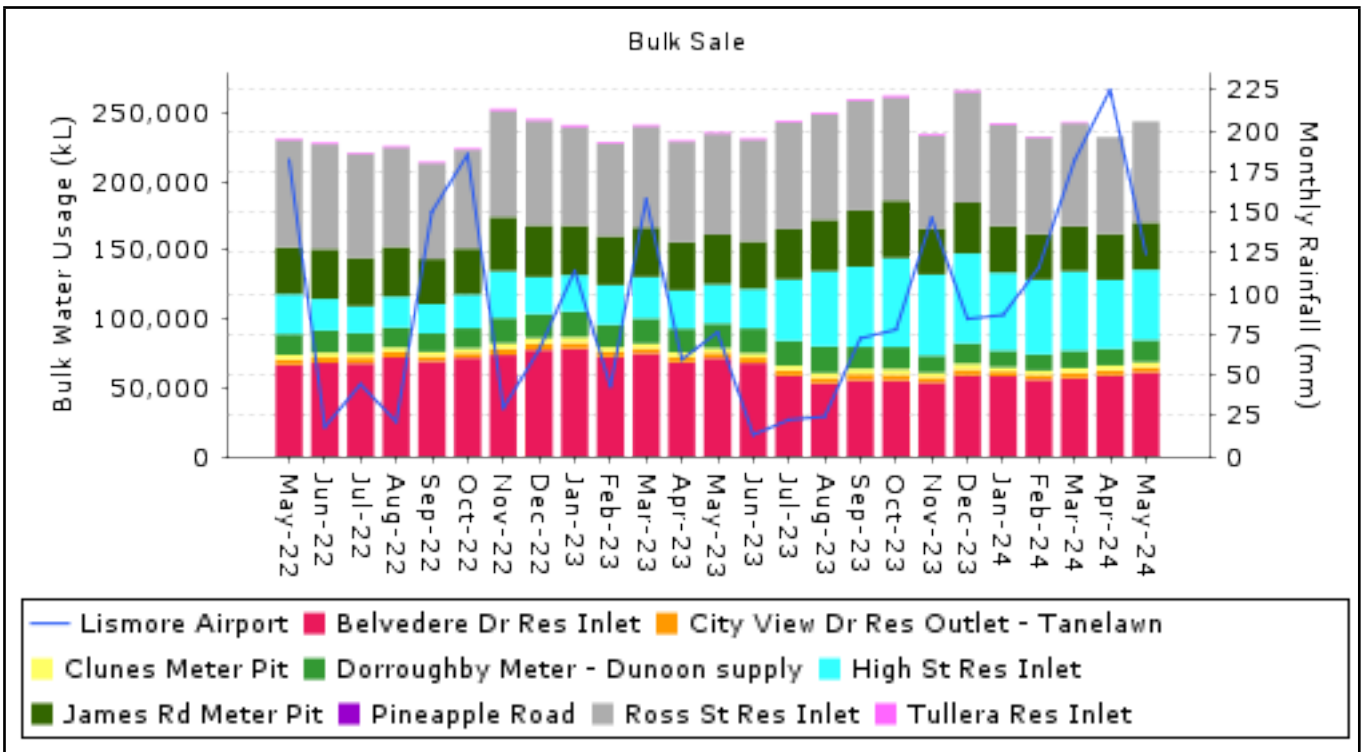


Figure 14: Monthly consumption and rainfall - Lismore City Council.

Figure 15 shows the monthly consumption for water fill stations for Lismore City Council and the rainfall for the previous two years.

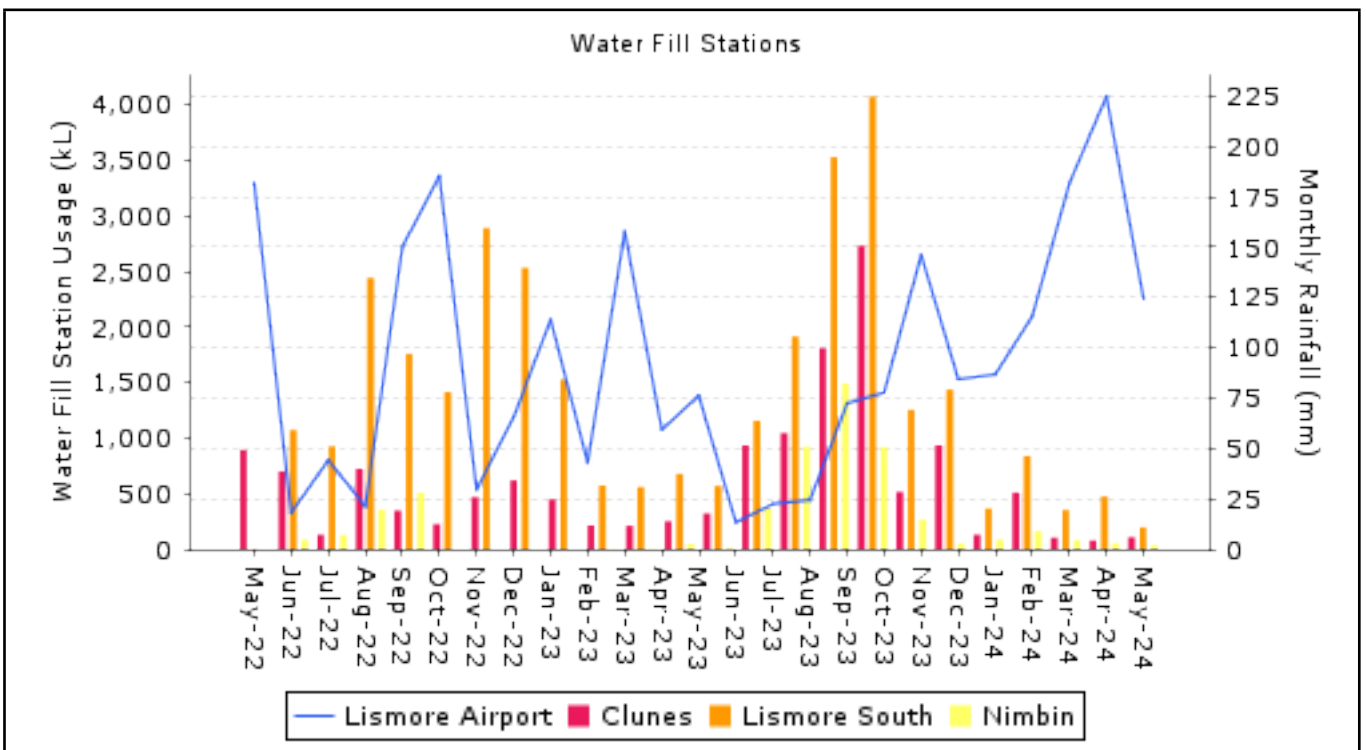


Figure 15: Monthly consumption commercial water fill station and rainfall.

Figure 16 shows the total usage of individual commercial water fill stations for the financial year to date compared with the previous two years.

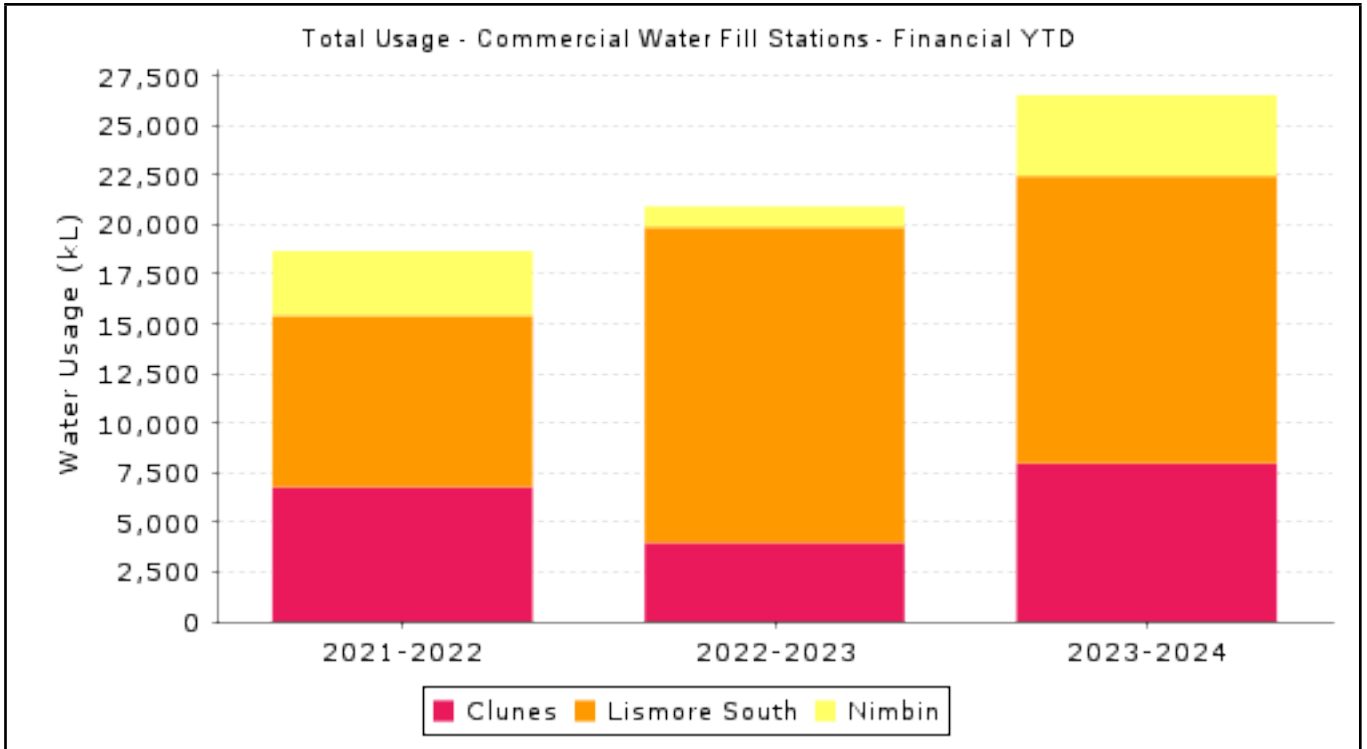


Figure 16: Total usage of commercial water fill stations. 1 July to 31 May

Monthly consumption by constituents - Richmond Valley Council

Figure 17 shows the monthly consumption for Richmond Valley Council area for the previous two years. Rainfall data is from the Bureau of Meteorology rainfall station Evans Head.

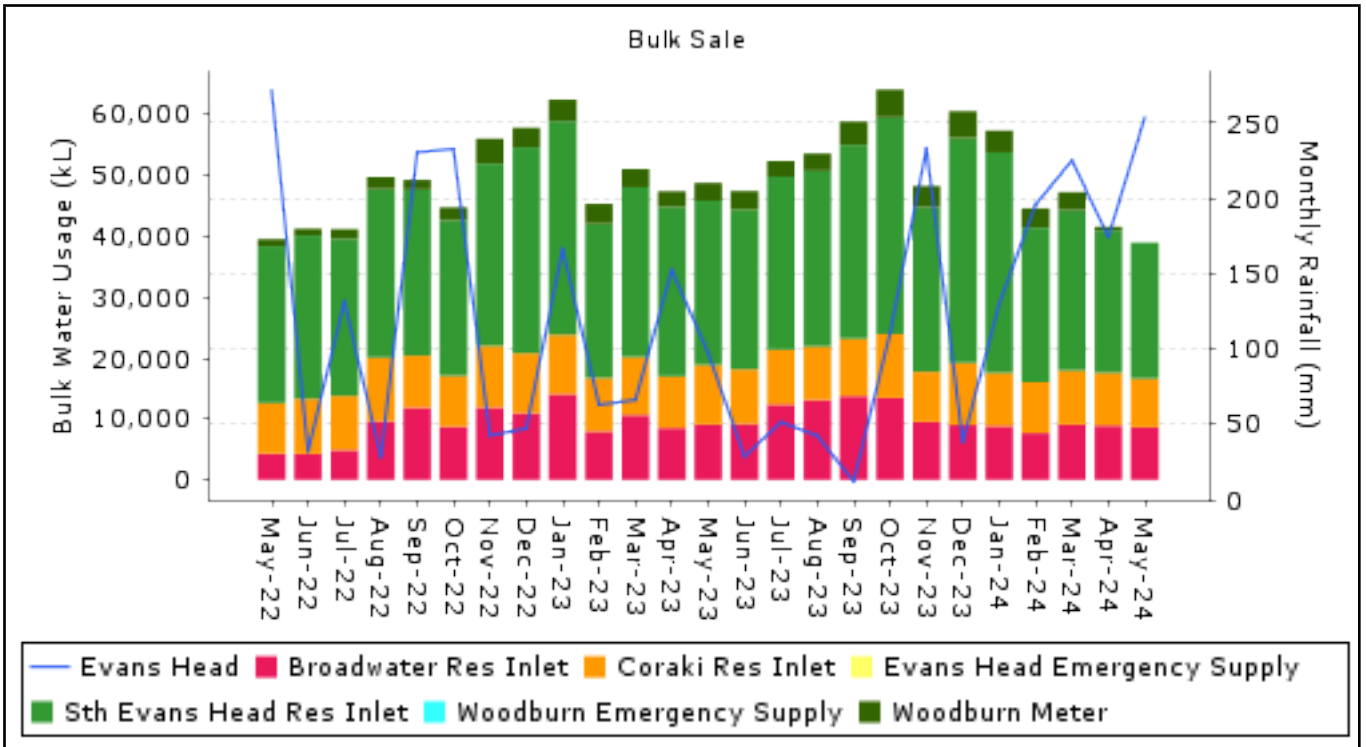


Figure 17: Monthly consumption and rainfall - Richmond Valley Council.

Figure 18 shows the monthly consumption for water fill stations for Richmond Valley Council and the rainfall for the previous two years.

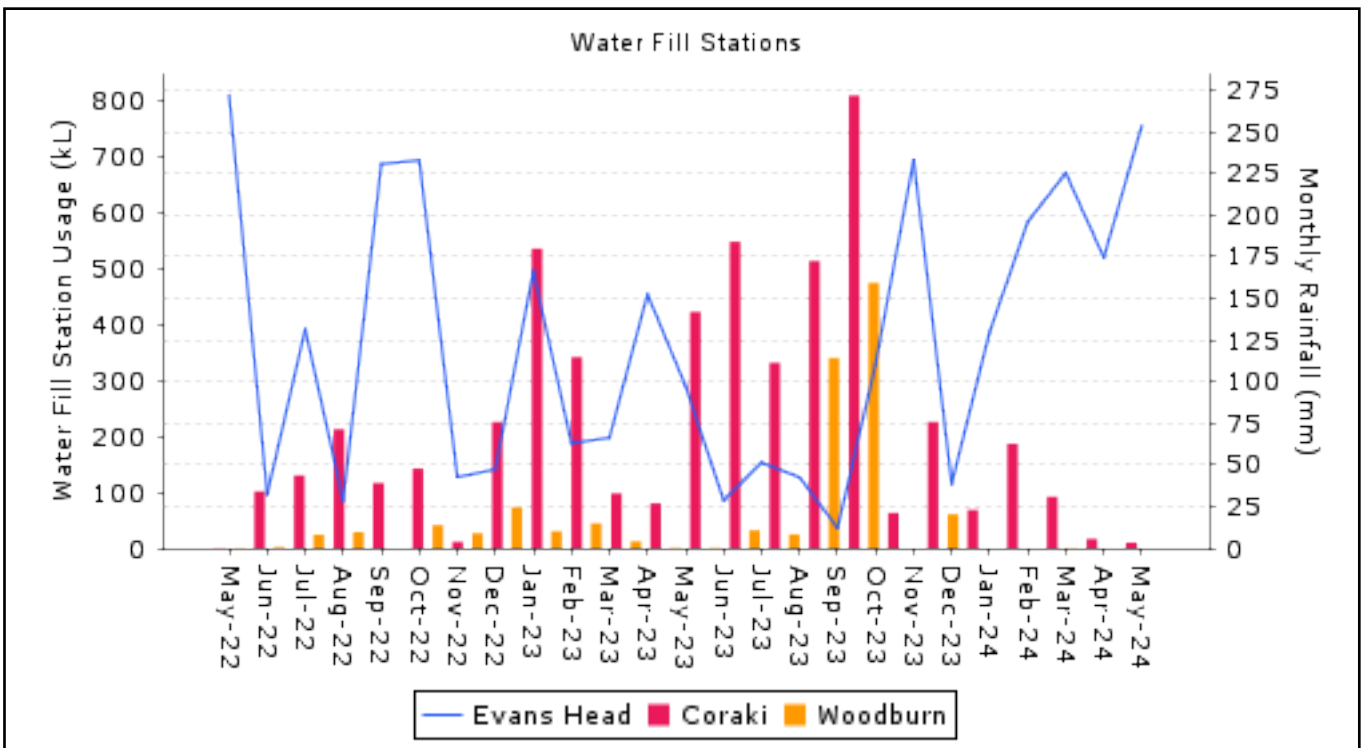


Figure 18: Monthly consumption commercial water fill station and rainfall.

Figure 19 shows the total usage of individual commercial water fill stations for the financial year to date compared with the previous two years.

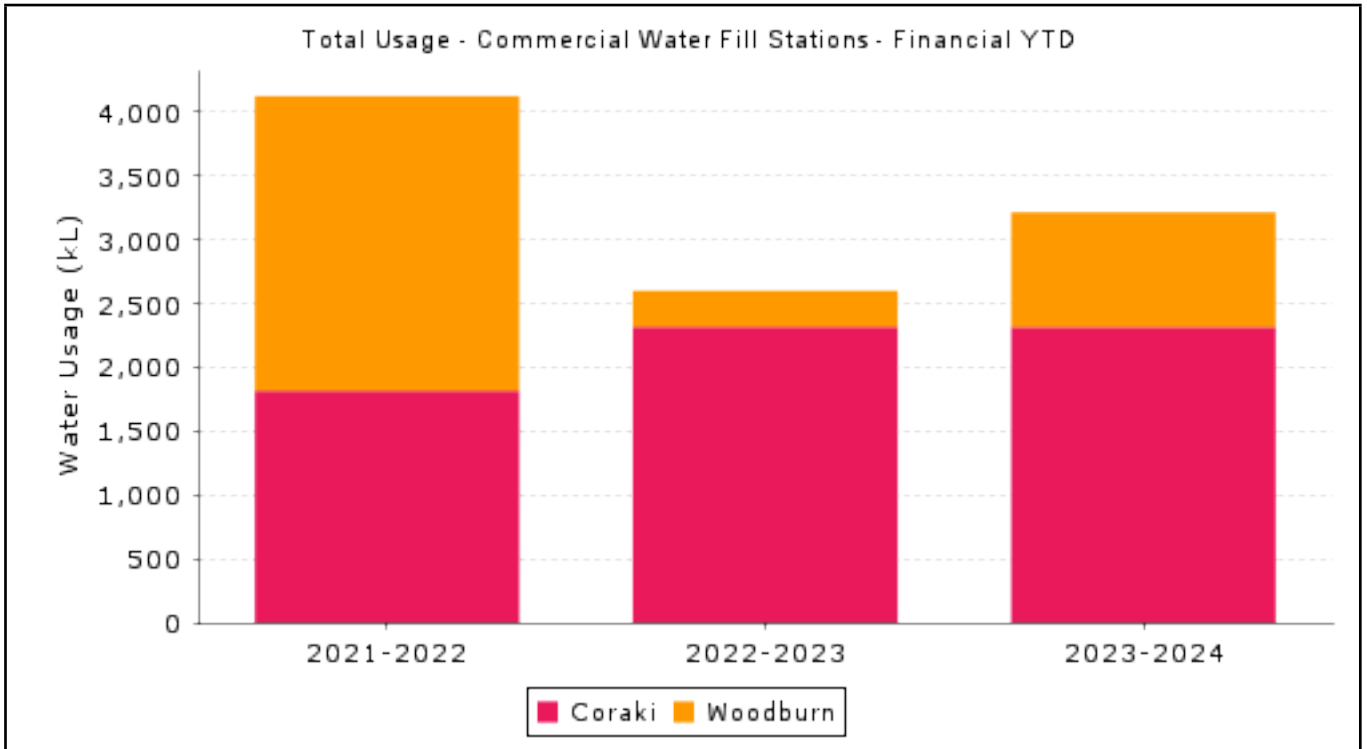


Figure 19: Total usage of commercial water fill stations. 1 July to 31 May

Investments May 2024

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Organisational Services (Helen McNeil)

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the Investments for May 2024.

Background

Clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* ('Regulation') and Council's 'Investments' policy require that a report detailing Council's investments be provided. This report has been prepared as at 31 May 2024.

Snapshot

BANK ACCOUNT SUMMARY	TOTAL
Cheque Account Balance	\$794,094
Weel Account Balance – Cuscal Ltd (Pre-paid Corporate Cards)	\$35,563
TOTAL	\$829,657

INVESTMENT SUMMARY	TOTAL
Business Online Saver Account Balance	\$2,875,401
Term Deposits with Institutions not supporting the Fossil Fuel Industry <i>The assessment of Ethical Financial Institutions is undertaken using www.marketforces.org.au which is an affiliate project of the Friends of the Earth Australia (Refer: Graph D4 - Attachment D).</i>	\$4,500,000 13.69% of current holdings
Other Term Deposits	\$25,500,000
Total Funds Invested <i>Excluding Cheque Account and Weel Balance</i>	\$32,875,401

OTHER INVESTMENT INFORMATION	TOTAL
<p>Interest Earned</p> <p><i>Interest earned compared to the original budget is \$395,487 above the pro-rata budget. (Refer: Attachment A).</i></p>	\$145,990
<p>Weighted Average Return</p> <p><i>This represents an increase of 41 basis point compared from the April 2024 result (4.54%) and is 60 basis points above Council's benchmark (the average 90-day BBSW rate of 4.35%) (Refer: Graph D2 - Attachment D).</i></p>	4.95%
<p>RBA Cash Rate</p>	4.37%
<p>The 90-day average bank bill swap rate (BBSW)</p>	4.35%

Comment

Following the 7 May 2024 meeting of the RBA, the cash rate remained at 4.35%.

The CPI grew by 3.6 per cent over the year to the March quarter, down from 4.1 per cent over the year to December.

Recent information indicates that inflation continues to moderate but is declining more slowly than expected. In the near term, inflation is forecast to be higher because of the recent rise in domestic petrol prices, and higher than expected services price inflation, which is now forecast to decline more slowly over the rest of the year. Inflation is, however, expected to decline over 2025 and 2026.

Governance

- **Legal**

In accordance with section 212(1)(b) of the Regulation, the Responsible Accounting Officer (currently the Finance Manager) certifies the investments identified in this report have been made in accordance with section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, section 212 of the Regulation, and the provisions of Council's 'Investments' policy.

Conclusion

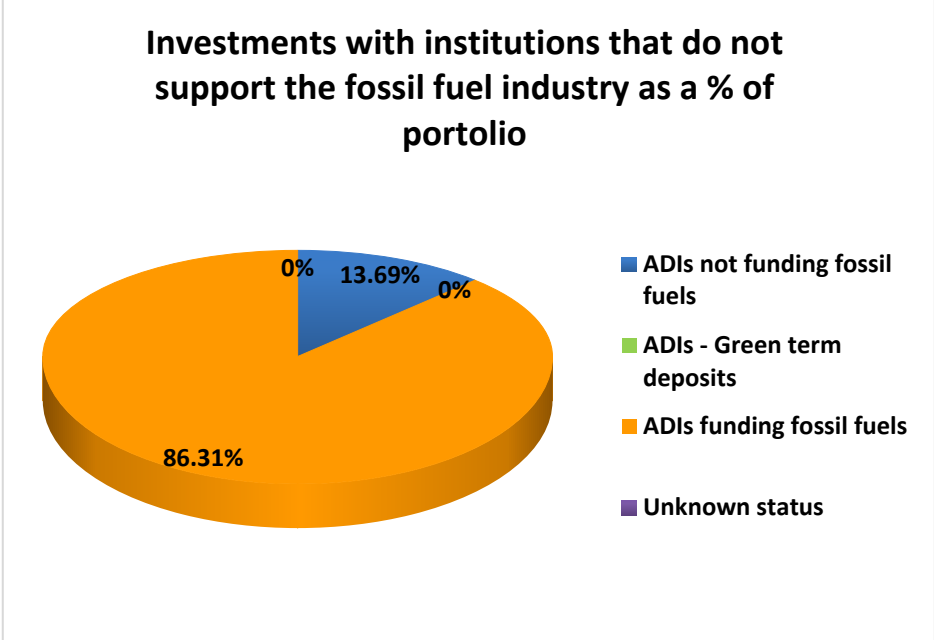
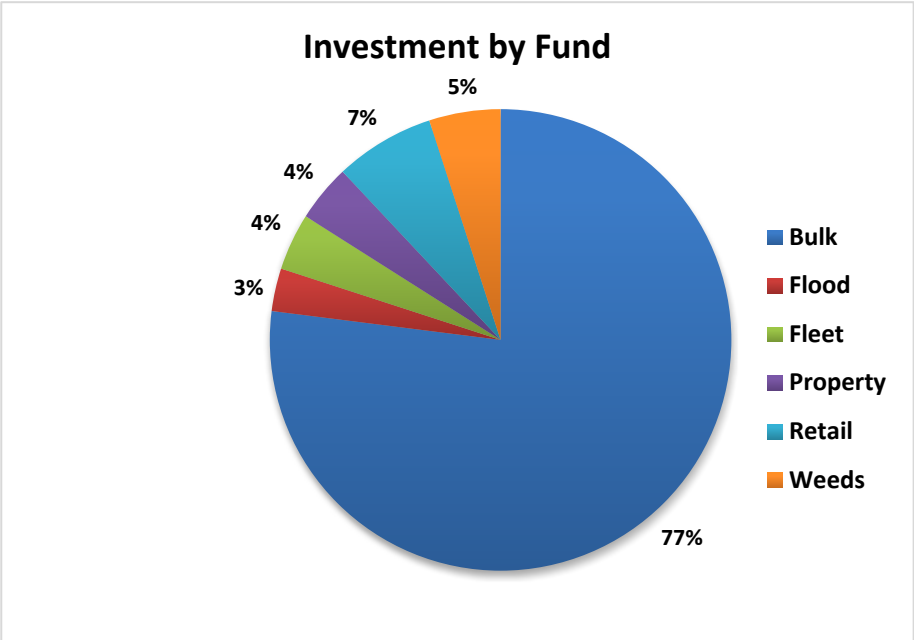
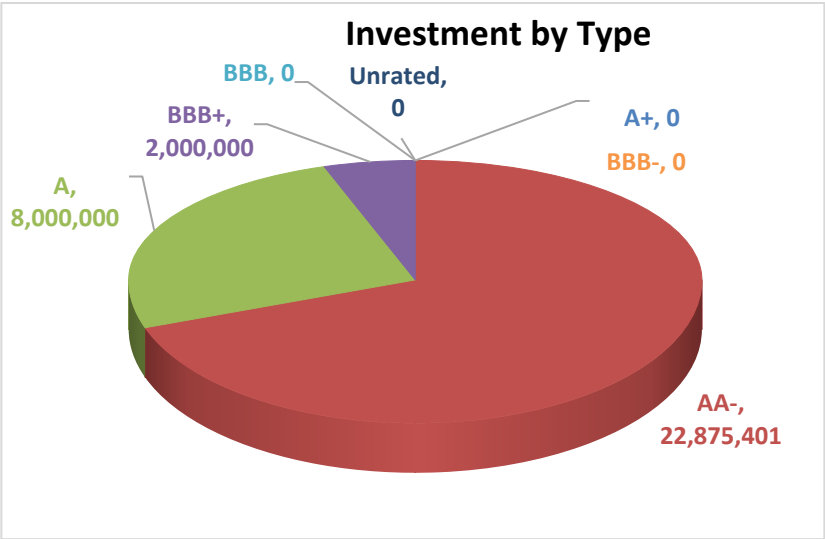
A report on investments is required to be submitted to Council. As at 31 May 2024, investments total \$32,875,401 and the average rate of return is estimated at 4.95%.

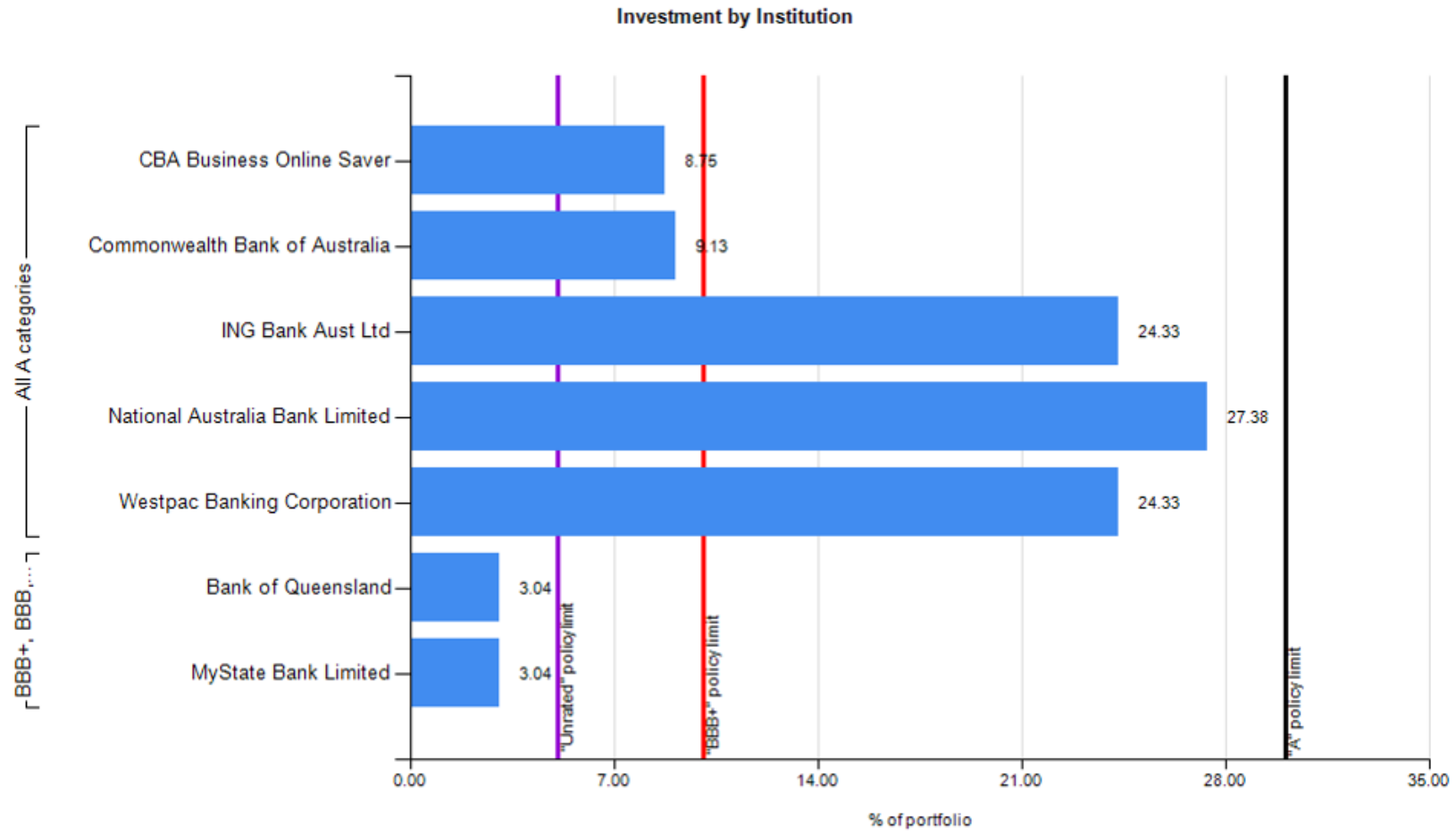
Attachments

- A. Investment analysis
- B. Investment by type
- C. Investment by Institution
- D. Total funds invested - comparisons
- E. Summary of indebtedness

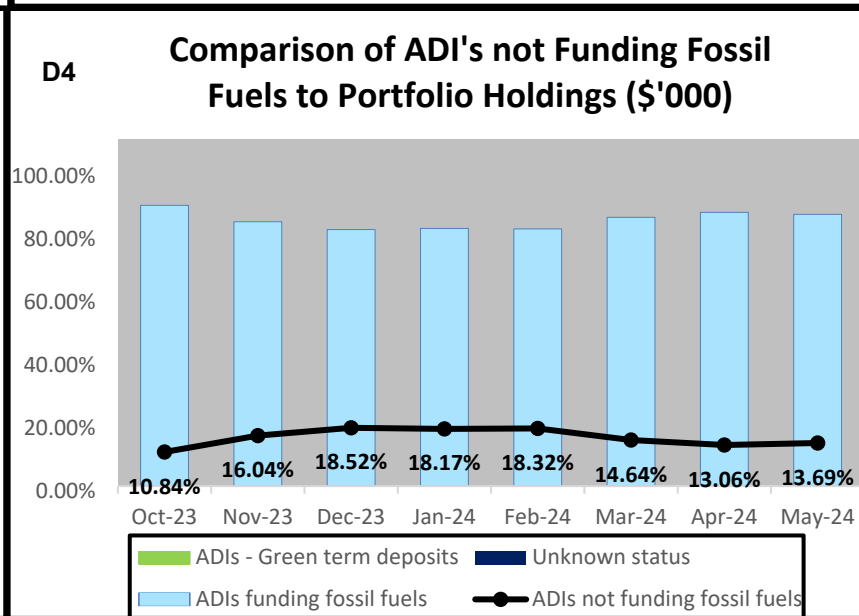
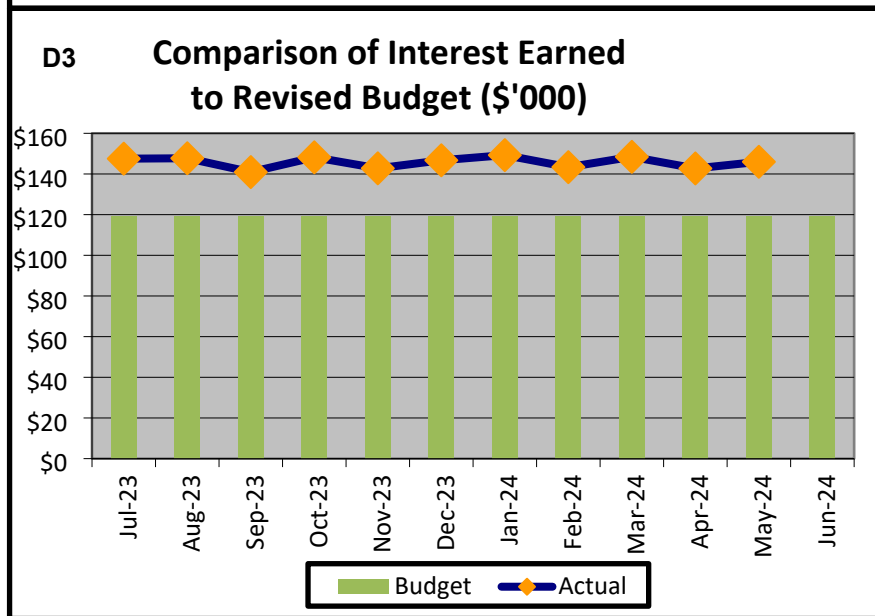
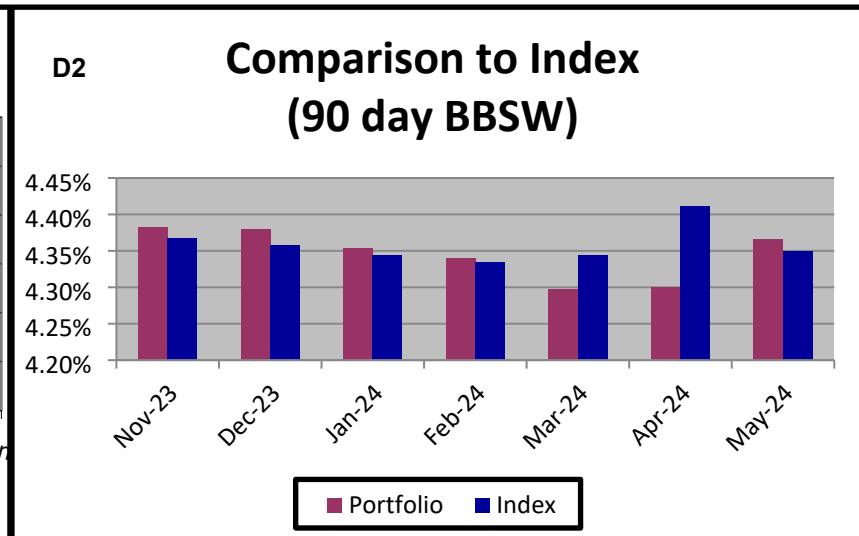
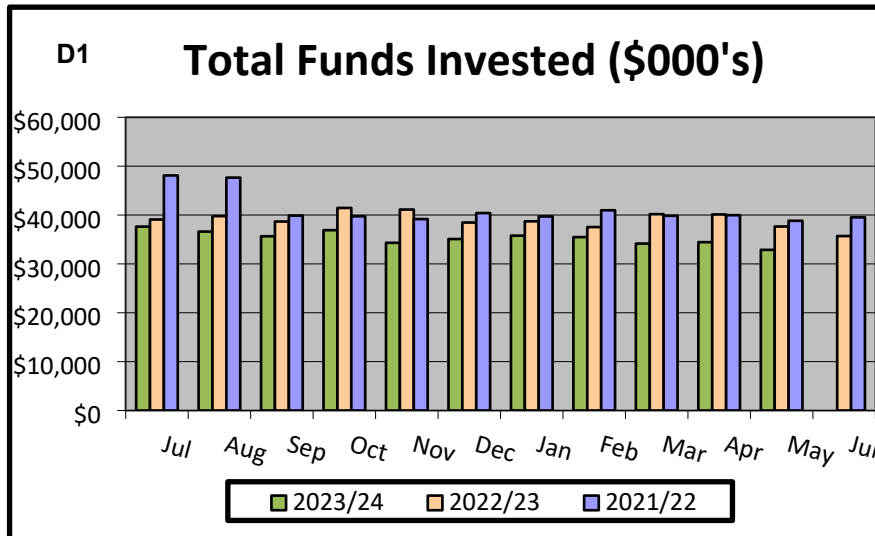
Investment Analysis

Funds Invested With	S & P Local Long Term Rating	Product Name	Not Fossil Fuel ADIs	Lodgement Date	Maturity Date	% of Portfolio	31 May Balance	Rate of Return	Monthly Interest	Year-to-Date Interest
CBA Business Online Saver	AA-	CBA-BOS	No	At call		14.27	2,875,400.65	1.95	17,123.12	216,797.17
ING Bank Aust Ltd	A	TD	No	27/6/2023	25/6/2024	2.86	1,000,000.00	5.62	4,773.15	51,734.79
ING Bank Aust Ltd	A	TD	No	4/7/2023	2/7/2024	8.57	3,000,000.00	5.67	14,446.85	155,187.12
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA-	TD	No	23/8/2023	22/8/2024	5.72	2,000,000.00	5.47	9,291.51	84,822.47
National Australia Bank Limited	AA-	TD	No	13/9/2023	17/9/2024	4.29	1,500,000.00	5.18	6,599.18	55,773.70
National Australia Bank Limited	AA-	TD	No	19/9/2023	17/9/2024	2.86	1,000,000.00	5.22	4,433.42	36,611.51
National Australia Bank Limited	AA-	TD	No	17/10/2023	16/7/2024	2.86	1,000,000.00	5.07	4,306.03	31,670.14
MyState Bank Limited	BBB+	TD	Yes	31/10/2023	4/6/2024	2.86	1,000,000.00	5.22	4,433.42	30,604.93
Westpac Banking Corporation	AA-	TD	Yes	28/11/2023	3/12/2024	4.29	1,500,000.00	5.44	6,930.41	41,582.47
Westpac Banking Corporation	AA-	TD	Yes	5/12/2023	5/9/2024	2.86	1,000,000.00	5.23	4,441.92	25,648.49
National Australia Bank Limited	AA-	TD	No	23/1/2024	22/10/2024	2.86	1,000,000.00	5.12	4,348.49	18,235.62
National Australia Bank Limited	AA-	TD	No	23/1/2024	25/6/2024	2.86	1,000,000.00	5.02	4,263.56	17,879.45
National Australia Bank Limited	AA-	TD	No	30/1/2024	29/10/2024	4.29	1,500,000.00	5.07	6,459.04	25,627.81
National Australia Bank Limited	AA-	TD	No	6/2/2024	6/8/2024	5.72	2,000,000.00	5.12	8,696.99	32,543.56
Westpac Banking Corporation	AA-	TD	No	13/3/2024	18/6/2024	10.00	3,500,000.00	4.93	14,654.93	37,819.18
Westpac Banking Corporation	AA-	TD	No	26/3/2024	2/7/2024	5.72	2,000,000.00	4.90	8,323.29	17,989.04
ING Bank Aust Ltd	A	TD	No	2/4/2024	4/6/2024	5.72	2,000,000.00	4.49	7,626.85	14,761.64
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA-	TD	No	10/4/2024	11/6/2024	2.86	1,000,000.00	4.54	3,855.89	6,467.95
ING Bank Aust Ltd	A	TD	No	7/5/2024	25/6/2024	5.72	2,000,000.00	4.46	6,109.59	6,109.59
Bank of Queensland	BBB+	TD	Yes	14/5/2024	18/6/2024	2.86	1,000,000.00	4.35	2,145.21	2,145.21
MATURED TDs									2,726.85	676,674.52
						100.00	32,875,400.65	4.95	145,989.70	1,586,686.35
Total Investment Holdings						100.00	32,875,400.65		145,989.70	1,586,686.35
									Total YTD Interest	1,586,686.35
Yes										
Deposits with Australian Deposit-taking institutions (ADI) are Government.								Budget Interest @ 31 May 2024	1,309,825.00	
Guaranteed for balances totalling up to \$250,000 per customer, per institution.								Budget variance	276,861.35	





Note: Institutions shown with "xxx" and in red are in breach of council policy.



Summary of indebtedness

Information	Loan #1	Loan #2	Loan #3	Loan #4	Loan #5	Loan #6	Loan #7	Total
Institution	CBA	CBA	CBA	Dexia	NAB	NAB	Tcorp	
Principal Borrowed	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 13,500,000	\$ 58,500,000
Date Obtained	9-Jun-04	31-May-05	31-May-06	21-Feb-07	31-May-07	25-Sep-07	7-Jun-21	
Term (Years)	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	
Interest Rate	6.82%	6.25%	6.37%	6.40%	6.74%	6.85%	2.68%	
Date Due	10-Jun-24	31-May-25	31-May-26	21-Feb-27	31-May-27	25-Sep-27	7-Jun-41	
Annual Commitment	\$ 184,785	\$ 264,921	\$ 891,595	\$ 893,507	\$ 917,390	\$ 925,933	\$ 876,390	\$ 4,954,520
Principal Repaid LTD	\$ 1,910,646	\$ 2,746,968	\$ 8,349,888	\$ 7,595,346	\$ 7,528,748	\$ 7,152,562	\$ 1,321,418	\$ 36,605,575
Interest Incurred LTD	\$ 1,692,663	\$ 2,286,525	\$ 7,698,825	\$ 7,596,840	\$ 8,066,876	\$ 8,125,327	\$ 869,557	\$ 36,336,613
Principal Outstanding	\$ 89,354	\$ 253,032	\$ 1,650,112	\$ 2,404,654	\$ 2,471,252	\$ 2,847,439	\$ 12,178,582	\$ 21,894,426
Interest Outstanding	\$ 3,039	\$ 11,889	\$ 133,078	\$ 276,320	\$ 301,614	\$ 405,216	\$ 3,158,247	\$ 4,289,402

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee - meeting update

Responsible Officer: Group Manager Organisational Services (Helen McNeil)

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the attached minutes from the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting of 30 April 2024.

Background

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee ('Committee') met on 30 April 2024. A copy of the meeting minutes are attached ([Attachment 1](#)).

This Committee meeting was rescheduled from 6 May 2024 to accommodate availability of Committee Members to achieve maximum attendance.

Key Messages

1. Financial Management

The Committee received and noted the information presented in the Financial Management Report regarding:

- The Annual Engagement Plan for year ending 30 June 2024 presented on behalf of the NSW Audit Office at the Committee meeting on 5 April 2024.
- The Quarterly Budget Review report furnished to Council's April 2024 meeting applicable for the quarter ending 31 March 2024.
- The investment report furnished to Council's April 2024 meeting applicable for the month of March 2024.
- The updated Financial Reserves policy approved by Council on 17 April 2024.

2. Internal Audit – Record Management

The Committee received a presentation from Council's Internal Audit (IA) consultant, InConsult, on the findings of the review conducted on records management at Council during February – March 2024.

The review assessed Council's record management and information management maturity using the [Records Management Assessment Tool](#) (RMAT) issued by State Records NSW. The RMAT incorporates five (5) maturity levels, with Level 3 considered by State Records NSW to be the baseline compliance level.

The average RMAT score across the public sector in 2022 (2.67 out of 5) was below the baseline score of Level 3. The average score for the local government sector during this period was 2.63.

The draft IA report presented to the Committee assesses Council's RMAT score as 2.26 and its overall residual risk rating in relation to records management as 'Low' with some opportunities for improvement to elevate Council's RMAT score to a baseline Level 3.

3. Health Safety and Environment

The Committee considered reporting performance and insights relating to health and safety matters over the period November 2023 – April 2024, including statistical reporting on frequency / type of incidents, near misses, and injuries.

During this period, an increase in reports of safety events when compared to the previous period was observed. This is reflective of an improvement in reporting culture and trend towards an overall proactive approach to safety.

4. Section 355 Committee governance – Volunteer Floodgate Operator program

A copy of the rolling minutes of the volunteer floodgate operator program (section 355 committee) were provided to the Committee together with confirmation of the completion of the annual recommitment and safety reviews for all volunteers.

5. Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) Update

A progress update was provided on activities undertaken under the hardware renewal plan, Wifi and AV replacement activities, and trends in Cyber Security reports/requests for the period November 2023 – March 2024.

6. Performance statistics

The Committee was provided with the annual statistical summary of all Code of Conduct complaints (reported to Council at its meeting on 13 December 2023) and public interest disclosures made over the preceding year – refer to the table below:

Office of Local Government	Model Code of Conduct complaints	1 September 2022 – 31 August 2023	0
NSW Ombudsman	Public Interest Disclosures	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023	0
Independent Commission Against Corruption	Section 11 ICAC Act reports	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023	0

Conclusion

This report provides a summary of the key messages from the 30 April 2024 Committee meeting.

Attachment

1. Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting minutes 30 April 2024.

**MINUTES OF ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL AUDIT RISK AND IMPROVEMENT
COMMITTEE HELD TUESDAY, 30 APRIL 2024 AT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, 218-232
MOLESWORTH STREET, LISMORE**

1 OPENING OF MEETING

The Chair opened the meeting at 10.00 am.

In attendance:

Voting Committee

- Laurie Lefcourt (Chair)
- Andrew MacLeod, Independent member
- Raymond Wong, Independent member (via 'Teams')

Non-Voting Committee

- Cr Big Rob, Rous Councillor

Rous County Council

- Phillip Rudd, General Manager (via 'Teams')
- Helen McNeil, Group Manager Organisational Services
- Geoff Ward, Group Manager Transformation and Strategy
- Jonathan Patino, Finance Manager
- Joseph Yeadon, Manager ICT (via 'Teams')
- Lauren Edwards, Governance and Risk Manager
- Vicky Scott, Financial Accountant
- John Nasser, Health Safety Environment and Logistics Manager (via 'Teams')
- Robyn Waldron, Secretary

Other attendees

- Mitchell Morley, InConsult (via 'Teams')
- Quentin Wong, Audit Office of NSW (via 'Teams')

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Council showed its respect and acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the Land, of Elders past and present, on which this meeting took place.

3 APOLOGIES

- Richard Watkinson, Thomas Noble & Russell
- Ben Rogers, Thomas Noble & Russell
- Dane Parsons, InConsult

4 CONFIRMATION MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Copy of Minutes of the meeting held 5 April 2024 were provided for information.

5 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil.

6 ARIC SCHEDULE OF REPORTING

Copy of workplan/schedule of reporting provided as information only.

7 REPORTS

7.1 Financial Management

RESOLVED (Wong/MacLeod) that the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee receive and note the information presented in the Financial Management Report - April 2024 regarding:

1. Annual Engagement Plan issued by the Audit Office of NSW for the year ending 30 June 2024.
2. The Quarterly Budget Review report furnished to Council's April 2024 meeting applicable for the quarter ending 31 March 2024 (including the cash reserves workpaper – this was not presented to the Council meeting).
3. The Investment report furnished to Council's April 2024 meeting applicable for the month of 31 March 2024.
4. Financial Reserves Policy

Financial Management (Resolution)		
For	Laurie Lefcourt, Andrew MacLeod and Raymond Wong	3
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

Quentin Wong, Audit Office NSW left the meeting at 10.06am

Mitchell Morley, InConsult joined the meeting at 10.06am

7.2 Audit

RESOLVED (MacLeod/Wong) that the Audit, risk and Improvement Committee receive and note the information presented in this report on the draft records management internal audit.

Audit (Resolution)		
For	Laurie Lefcourt, Andrew MacLeod and Raymond Wong	3
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

Mitchell Morley, InConsult left the meeting at 10.26am

7.3 Health Safety and Environment

RESOLVED (MacLeod/Wong) that the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee receive and note the information presented in this report regarding Health Safety and Environment (HSE) systems, compliance and reviews.

Health Safety and Environment (Resolution)		
For	Laurie Lefcourt, Andrew MacLeod and Raymond Wong	3
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

Noted: Next meeting to have an update on the progression on actions stated in the report.

John Nasser left the meeting 11.12am

7.4 Governance

RESOLVED (Wong/MacLeod) that the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee receive and note the information presented in this report on the governance of Council's section 355 Committee.

Governance (Resolution)		
For	Laurie Lefcourt, Andrew MacLeod and Raymond Wong	3
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

Cr Big Rob left the meeting 11.17am

7.5 ICT Report

RESOLVED (MacLeod/Wong) that the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee receive and note the ICT Report as presented.

ICT Report (Resolution)		
For	Laurie Lefcourt, Andrew MacLeod and Raymond Wong	3
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

7.6 Performance and improvement initiatives

RESOLVED (Wong/MacLeod) that the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee receive and note the information presented in this report.

Performance and improvement initiatives (Resolution)		
For	Laurie Lefcourt, Andrew MacLeod and Raymond Wong	3
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

8 NON-STANDARD REPORTS

Nil.

9 OTHER MATTERS

RESOLVED (MacLeod/Wong) that the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee receive and note this report.

Other matters (Resolution)		
For	Laurie Lefcourt, Andrew MacLeod and Raymond Wong	3
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

10 OTHER BUSINESS ARISING

Nil.

11 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting minutes 30 April 2024

REVOLVED (MacLeod/Wong) that the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed as presented.

Confirmation of Minutes (Resolution)		
For	Laurie Lefcourt, Andrew MacLeod and Raymond Wong	3
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

12 NEXT MEETING: 22 July 2024

13 CLOSE OF BUSINESS

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.50 am.

Councillor Ndiaye's Delegate Report: Myall Creek Massacre Commemoration Trip with Rous County Council

Recommendation:

That Council receive and note Councillor Ndiaye's delegate report on the Myall Creek Massacre Commemoration Trip with Rous County Council.

Date: 8 - 9th of June 2024

Introduction:

In my role as Chair of the Rous County Council Reconciliation Action Plan Advisory Group (RAPAG), I went on a trip the Myall Creek Massacre commemoration.

It was an enlightening and deeply impactful experience for all involved. Accompanied by Rous staff members and local Aboriginal elders who sit on the RAPAG and family members, the journey provided a profound opportunity to reflect on the significance of the event and the importance of reconciliation in Australian history.

Significance of the Event:

The Myall Creek Massacre, like many other massacre sites across the country, represents a dark chapter in Australia's history of colonisation and Indigenous relations. The massacre, which occurred in 1838, resulted in the brutal killings of at least 28 Aboriginal men, women, and children by a group of European settlers. The significance of the Myall Creek Massacre lies in the fact that it was one of the few instances in Australian history where white men were actually convicted and punished for the murder of Aboriginal people. It was not the first instance of violence against Indigenous Australians by any means - or the last, but it was one of the first times that the perpetrators were brought to justice under colonial law. The trials and subsequent convictions marked a significant departure from the prevailing attitudes of the time, which often condoned or ignored violence against Aboriginal people. What was particularly moving was that families of both those who were killed and those who were involved in the killings participate in commemorative events. They made pledges of reconciliation, call on the spirits of the ancestors and hug. It was hard not to shed a tear. The involvement of families from both sides can be a powerful symbol of healing, understanding, and reconciliation.

The Myall Creek Massacre and its legal aftermath therefore serve as a landmark in the ongoing struggle for justice and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The commemoration serves as a reminder of the atrocities committed against Indigenous Australians and the ongoing journey towards reconciliation and healing.

There was also a strong participation from students coming from a variety of schools in QLD, NSW, ACT and Victoria.

Importance of Reconciliation:

Reconciliation is essential for Australians to come to terms with the injustices of the past and build a more inclusive and equitable future. The trip provided a platform for meaningful conversations about the impacts of colonisation, the legacy of the Stolen Generations, and the ongoing effects of intergenerational trauma experienced by Indigenous communities.

Enlightening Conversations:

Throughout the journey to and from the event, as well as during dinner discussions, we all shared personal stories and insights, some of those really shed light on the lived experiences of Indigenous Australians. Stories of growing up under the welfare act, being denied access to basic rights, and experiencing the pain of having siblings removed from their families highlighted the profound injustices faced by Indigenous communities.

Shared Moments of Joy and Resilience:

Despite the sombre nature of the event, there were also moments of joy, laughter, and cultural celebration. Participants engaged in singing, dancing, and storytelling, showcasing the resilience and strength of Indigenous cultures. These shared moments fostered a sense of connection and solidarity among attendees, reinforcing the importance of cultural exchange and mutual understanding.

Recommendation for Further Engagement:

The organisers of the Myall Creek Massacre commemoration expressed a desire for other councils to participate and become involved in similar reconciliation initiatives. They suggested exploring opportunities to establish local sites where reconciliation activities can take place, fostering dialogue, understanding, and healing within communities.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the trip to the Myall Creek Massacre commemoration was a profoundly moving and enlightening experience that underscored the importance of reconciliation in Australian society. I would highly recommend that others seize the opportunity to participate in similar events and engage in meaningful dialogue with Indigenous communities. By acknowledging the past, honouring Indigenous perspectives, and working towards a more just and inclusive future, we can contribute to the ongoing process of reconciliation in Australia.





Councillor Ndiaye's Delegate Report: Rainforest Connections 2024 Conference

Recommendation:

That Council receive and note Councillor Ndiaye's delegate report on the Rainforest Connections 2024 Conference

Date: Wednesday 5 June 2024

Introduction:

I saw the opportunity to attend the Rainforest Connections 2024 conference and was very keen after seeing who was going to be presenting. I thank Rous for supporting me to attend. I only went for one of the four days but I wish I'd had time to emerge myself in it further.

The Rainforest Connections 2024 conference held in Ballina at the RSL marked a significant milestone as the first event in over two decades dedicated to the restoration, rehabilitation, and management of Australia's unique rainforest habitats.

Key Themes and Discussions:

The conference provided a comprehensive exploration of key themes and topics related to rainforest conservation and management. Discussions ranged from species recovery programs to cutting-edge environmental research and weed management, showcasing the diverse array of initiatives aimed at preserving and restoring rainforest ecosystems.

Highlights and Takeaways:

Several presentations and discussions left a lasting impression, offering valuable insights and practical strategies for addressing the challenges facing rainforest conservation.

Highlights included:

- Case studies of successful on-ground action and restoration efforts.
- Innovative techniques and tools for managing rainforest habitats.
- The importance of recognizing the connection between nature and culture in conservation efforts.
- Engaging people in nature through art and cultural stories.

Speaker Highlights:

The conference featured an impressive lineup of speakers who shared their expertise and experiences in rainforest conservation:

- **Sean Dooley:** Author, comedian, and birdman, Sean Dooley's passion for connecting people with nature was evident in his presentation. He shared anecdotes from his experiences in birdwatching and highlighted the significance of rainforest habitats for bird diversity.
- **Dr. Tony Parkes AO:** As the founder and past president of Big Scrub Landcare, Dr. Tony Parkes AO's leadership in rainforest restoration has been instrumental in advancing conservation efforts in northern New South Wales. His insights into community-based conservation initiatives were particularly enlightening.

- Prof. Maurizio Rossetto: Leading the Research Centre of Ecosystem Resilience at the Botanic Garden of Sydney, Prof. Maurizio Rossetto's research integrates molecular ecology, environmental modelling, and innovative approaches to understanding rainforest ecosystems. His presentation on landscape genomic projects shed light on cutting-edge conservation strategies.
- Professor Carla Catterall: Professor Emeritus in environmental sciences at Griffith University, Prof. Carla Catterall's research into rainforest restoration processes has informed land management practices and biodiversity outcomes. Her expertise in plant-animal interactions and ecological processes was evident in her engaging presentation.
- Prof. Brendan Mackey: Director of the Climate Action Beacon at Griffith University, Prof. Brendan Mackey's contributions to forest ecology, biogeography, and conservation biology have shaped our understanding of climate and ecosystem dynamics. His presentation on the impacts of climate change on rainforest habitats provided valuable insights into future challenges.
- Dr. Robert Kooyman: Honorary Research Fellow at Macquarie University, Dr. Robert Kooyman's extensive research in rainforest ecology has contributed to our understanding of species distribution and assembly processes. His presentation on rainforest assembly dynamics provided a deeper appreciation of the complexity of rainforest ecosystems.
- Dr. Bill McDonald: Honorary Research Associate at Queensland Herbarium, Dr. Bill McDonald's expertise in rainforest vegetation surveying and mapping has been invaluable for conservation efforts in Queensland. His presentation on rainforest communities highlighted the diversity and ecological importance of these habitats.
- Hugh and Nan Nicholson: Renowned conservationists and authors, Hugh and Nan Nicholson's pioneering work in rainforest propagation and advocacy has had a lasting impact on rainforest conservation in Australia. Their presentation on the role of activism and community engagement underscored the importance of grassroots movements in driving environmental change.
- Oliver Costello: Executive Director of Jagun Alliance and Conservation Futures project co-manager at Bush Heritage Australia, Oliver Costello's leadership in Indigenous-led conservation initiatives has been transformative. His presentation on the role of Aboriginal culture in land management highlighted the importance of traditional ecological knowledge in achieving sustainable outcomes.
- Byron Shire Council's "No Bat No Me" Presentation: It was great to see Byron Shire Council's engaging presentation titled "No Bat No Me." Liz Caddick's creative portrayal as a bat, coupled with Claudia Caliarì's insightful sharing of knowledge and experiences, captivated the audience. Their innovative approach to raising awareness about bat conservation highlighted the importance of community engagement in environmental initiatives.

Networking Opportunities:

One of the most valuable aspects of the conference was the opportunity to connect with fellow delegates from diverse backgrounds, including scientists, program managers, practitioners, and community members. Networking sessions facilitated meaningful exchanges of ideas and fostered collaborations that hold the potential to drive positive environmental outcomes. I wish I had more time there.

Inspiration and Motivation:

Attending the conference left me feeling inspired and motivated to contribute to rainforest conservation efforts in my professional capacity. The passion and dedication of the speakers served as a powerful reminder of the importance of collective action in safeguarding our precious rainforest environments.

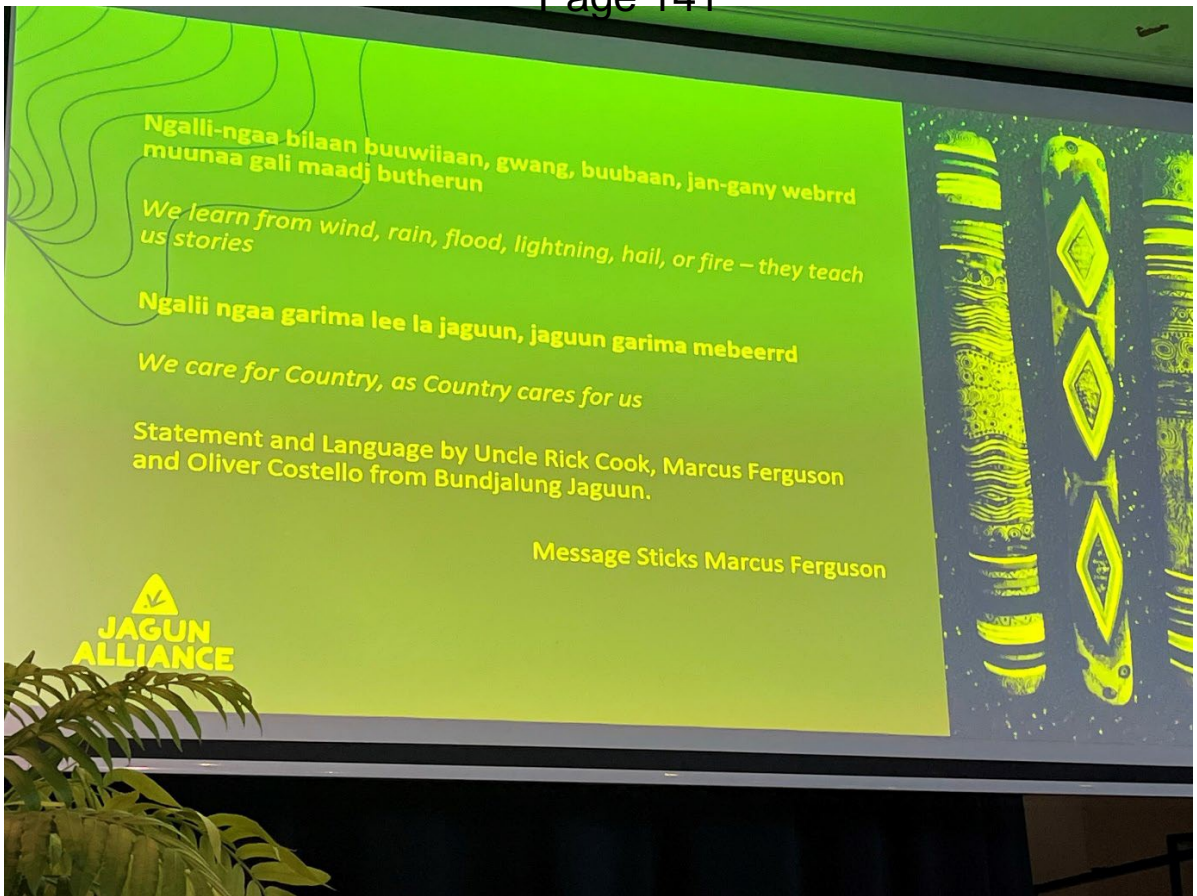
Recommendations for Future Participation:

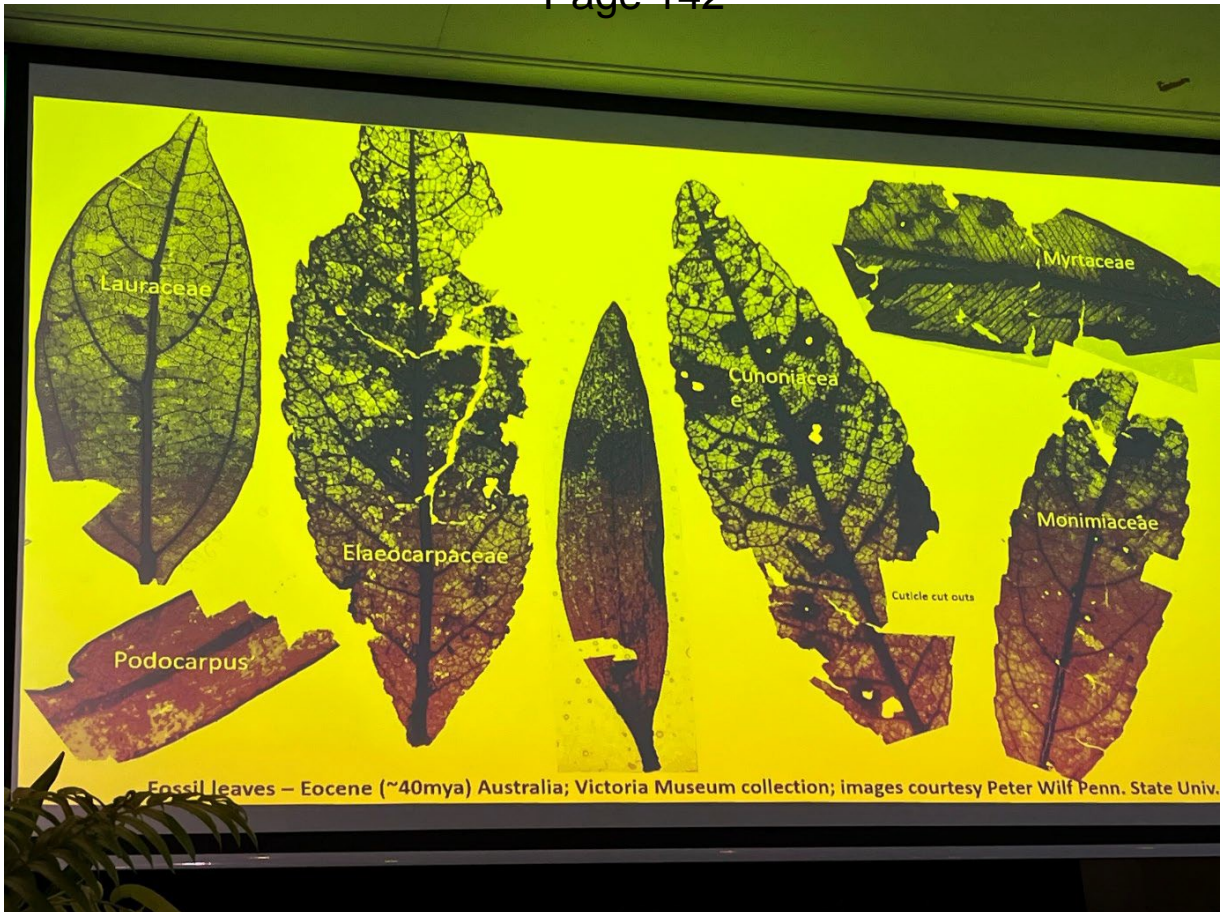
Based on the success of Rainforest Connections 2024, I wholeheartedly encourage council, councillors and anyone interested in rainforest conservation and management, weed management and community management to attend future iterations of the conference. The event offers a unique opportunity to stay informed about the latest developments in the field and engage with fellow practitioners and experts.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the Rainforest Connections 2024 conference provided a vital platform for advancing dialogue, sharing knowledge, and fostering collaboration in the realm of rainforest conservation. I am grateful for the opportunity to have participated in this event and encourage councillors and staff to attend if it happens again anytime soon.







Reports / Actions Pending

Responsible Officer: General Manager (Phillip Rudd)

Recommendation

That the report be received and noted.

Background

Following is a list of pending resolutions with individual comments provided on current position and expected completion date.

COUNCIL MEETING 11-12-2019

Report	Richmond River Cane Growers Association submission: Review of Tuckombil Canal fixed weir (Letters 118585 / 53238)
	<i>Responsible Officer: Group Manager Planning and Delivery (Andrew Logan)</i>
ACTION	<p>October 2023 – Richmond Valley Council has recently adopted a report on the <i>Richmond Valley Flood Study</i> which includes a new flood model. With this work now finalised, Rous can consider relevant results from this work, the scope of the review of the Tuckombil Canal fixed weir and how the work will be funded as part of a future budget.</p> <p>The review of the Tuckombil Canal fixed weir and a budget will be considered as part of the annual budget process commencing in November 2023 for the 2024/25 year. Council will be able to consider this in April 2024, as part of the draft budget for 2024/25.</p> <p>June 2024 - The most likely source of funding for an investigation into the Tuckombil Fixed Weir is the State Government Floodplain Management Program. To be eligible for funding under this program, the State Government requires works and investigations to be identified within a Floodplain Risk Management Plan before they will be considered. With Richmond Valley Council (RVC) now commencing the development of a Floodplain Risk Management Plan for the Richmond River, this presents the best option for funding. Rous will be a member of the Project Control Group for the Plan development and will be able to advocate for its inclusion. Further updates will be provided as RVC develop the Plan and Rous becomes involved. Given this, a budget for the Review of the Tuckombil Canal Fixed Weir was not included in the draft 2024/25 budget considered by Council at the April 2024 Council meeting.</p>

COUNCIL MEETING 13-12-2023

Report	Proposed Dunoon Dam - acquisition of properties
	<i>Responsible Officer: Group Manager Planning and Delivery (Andrew Logan)</i>
Resolution	<p>(Breum/Cadwallader) that Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To reconfirm its prior position in relation to acquisition of land in the Proposed Dunoon Dam area as shown in the Attachment 1 and land of strategic interest to the Future Water Strategy 2060.

ACTION	<p>b. The terms of such acquisition are to be in accordance with Council's current 'Land Management' policy, Item 4 (Attachment 2), namely:</p> <p>c. Acquisition to be upon offer of sale by existing landowner.</p> <p>d. Meets the proposed operational need or strategic objective of the future water strategy 2060.</p> <p>e. Such acquisition costs to be calculated with due consideration to market and strategic value.</p> <p>June 2024 - An update to Council regarding strategic land purchases for the Future Water Strategy 2060 will be provided at the December 2024 Council meeting.</p>
Report	Update on interim arrangements for Lismore Levee Scheme
	<i>Responsible Officer: Group Manager Planning and Delivery (Andrew Logan)</i>
Resolution	<p>(Rob/Cadwallader) that Council in addition to previous resolutions on the matter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive and note this update. 2. Authorise the General Manager to approve access to the Lismore Levee Scheme assets by Lismore City Council (LCC) for the purposes of progressing new asset construction and renewal and upgrade work under the <i>Northern Rivers Recovery and Resilience Program(NRRRP)</i>, subject to LCC's written confirmation that they will assume ownership of the new, upgraded and renewed assets.
ACTION	Receive a further update before end of August 2024.
Report	Staff investigation and response - Notice of Motion "Acquisition of low-lying, high-risk rural floodplain areas"
	<i>Responsible officer: Group Manager Planning and Delivery (Andrew Logan)</i>
Resolution	<p>(Bruem/Ndiaye) that Council adopts the following position regarding the acquisition of low-lying, high-risk rural floodplain areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge the challenges associated with coastal riverine floodplain land uses, particularly those relating to the lowest lying land (i.e. less than 1m above mean sea level). 2. Write to the State Government requesting a review of current floodplain land uses and development of a long-term strategic direction on how different areas of the floodplain will be used, acknowledging all stakeholders, including First Nations, interests. <p>This position also be referred to the State and Federal Government seeking funding.</p>
ACTION	<p>Write to the State Government requesting a review of current floodplain land uses as in point (2) and seek funding from State and Federal Government.</p> <p>June 2024 – Rous provided a response to the State Government's <i>MEMS Coastal Floodplain Drainage Options Report (2023)</i> in April 2024. Rous suggested that the State Government undertakes a review of current floodplain land uses, particularly those relating to the lowest lying land (i.e. less than 1m above mean sea level) which are primary sources of both acidity and deoxygenated water and develops a long-term strategic direction on how different areas of the floodplain will be used, acknowledging all stakeholders including First Nations.</p>

	Funding to progress this work will be sought as relevant programs and opportunities become available.
COUNCIL MEETING 17-04-2024	
Report	Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee – meeting update
Resolution	<p>(Rob/Cadwallader) that Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. receive and note the attached minutes from the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting of 5 April 2024; 2. make a submission to the Office of Local Government seeking to permit county councils to include capital revenue in the assessment of financial performance; and 3. Prepare a submission for the 2024 LGNSW Annual Conference seeking to permit county councils to include capital revenue in the assessment of financial performance, to be further considered by council at the June council meeting.
ACTION	<p>Make a submission to the Office of Local Government seeking to permit county councils to include capital revenue in the assessment of financial performance.</p> <p>Prepare a submission for the 2024 LGNSW Annual Conference for consideration by Council at June meeting.</p> <p>COMPLETED – refer to report furnished to 19 June 2024 Council meeting.</p>

Confidential matters

Responsible Officer: General Manager (Phillip Rudd)

Recommendation

That Council move into Closed Council to consider the following matters and the meeting be closed to members of the public and press based on the grounds detailed below:

Report	Workplace consolidation – property disposal
Grounds for closure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Section 10A(2)(d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i). prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or (ii). confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the Council, or (iii). reveal a trade secret, and 2. (g) matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property,
Report	Annual Performance Review – General Manager
Grounds for closure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Section 10A(2) personal matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors).

Section 10A, Local Government Act, 1993:

A Council may close to the public only so much of its meeting as comprises the receipt or discussion of any of the following:

Section 10A(2):

2. personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors),
3. the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,
4. information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,
5. commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
 - (i). prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - (ii). confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the Council, or
 - (iii). reveal a trade secret,
6. information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,
7. matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property,
8. advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,
9. information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land.

Section 10A(4):

Council may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

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