



MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING

Held on Tuesday 8 April 2025

Commencing at 12:30 pm

in the Roxy Conference Room

Present

Councillors:	Cr Tiffany Galvin (Mayor), Cr Sean Coleman (Deputy Mayor), Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Rachel Sherman
Staff:	Max Eastcott (General Manager), Helen Thomas (Manager Finance), Alex Eddy (Director Engineering Services) and Justin Hellmuth (Director Business and Strategy)
Public:	
Visitors:	

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WEBCASTING OF MEETING

This meeting will be recorded for placement on Council's website.

All speakers must ensure their comments are relevant to the issue at hand and to refrain from making personal comments or criticisms or mentioning any private information.

No other persons are permitted to record the meeting, unless specifically authorised by Council to do so.

Content	Page No.
1 Official Opening and Welcome - Mayor	4
2 Apologies	4
3 Confirmation of the Minutes	4
4 Presentation	4
5 Call for the Declarations of Interests, Gifts Received and Conflicts of Interest	4
6 Mayoral Minute	5
7 Officers' Reports	10
7.1 Executive Services Report.....	10
7.2 Organisation and Community Services Report.....	24
7.3 Technical Services Report.....	45
7.4 Business and Strategy Report	55
7.5 Council's Investment Report	81
7.6 Double Payment for Crown Land Acquired by Local Government	84
7.7 Budget Workshop Recommendations	93
8 Councillors' Reports	96
9 Committee of the Whole - Confidential Items	97
9.1 Adoption of the Recommendations of the Confidential Session.....	97
10 Closure	98

1 OFFICIAL OPENING AND WELCOME - MAYOR

The Mayor welcomed all present to the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Crs Crispin and Willmot and Mrs Leeah Daley.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT the apologies received from Crs Crispin and Willmot and Mrs Daley are accepted.

Moved Cr Sarah Crump, Seconded Cr Rachel Sherman

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

3 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 20th March 2025 as circulated be taken as read and **CONFIRMED**.

(Moved Cr Michael Collins, Seconded Cr Sarah Crump)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

4 PRESENTATION

Nil

5 CALL FOR THE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS, GIFTS RECEIVED AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

6 MAYORAL MINUTE

Ability of local governments to fund infrastructure and services

At the last Country Mayors' Association meeting the group resolved to endorse all 17 recommendations of the subject report.

The full report has already been distributed to all Councillors via email and will be tabled at the Council Meeting.

The report was prepared by a cross-party Standing Committee on State Development. The Committee undertook the reparation of the report at the request of the Minister for Local Government.

The Terms of Reference were:

That the Standing Committee on State Development inquire into and report on the ability of local governments to fund infrastructure and services, and in particular:

- a. the level of income councils require to adequately meet the needs of their communities*
- b.*
- c. examine if past rate pegs have matched increases in costs borne by local governments*
- d.*
- e. current levels of service delivery and financial sustainability in local government, including the impact of cost shifting on service delivery and financial sustainability, and whether this has changed over time*
- f.*
- g. assess the social and economic impacts of the rate peg in New South Wales for ratepayers, councils, and council staff over the last 20 years and compare with other jurisdictions*
- h.*
- i. compare the rate peg as it currently exists to alternative approaches with regards to the outcomes for ratepayers, councils, and council staff*
- j.*
- k. review the operation of the special rate variation process and its effectiveness in providing the level of income Councils require to adequately meet the needs of their communities*
- l.*
- m. any other related matters.*

This Report's recommendations are all extremely sensible and should be strongly supported.

I recommend that the Council also endorses the CMA's position, and that the Council's strong support is conveyed to the Minister for Local government and the Council's local State Member, Mr Brendan Moylan MP.

The recommendations are outlined below:

Recommendation 1

That the NSW Government conduct a comprehensive review of the rate exemptions and concessions under the Local Government Act 1993 to:

- *better target the eligibility criteria for rate exemptions and concessions*
-
- *achieve a better balance between local council financial sustainability, community benefits and principles of equity.*
-

Recommendation 2

That the NSW Government redesign the local government rating system, including reassessing council base rates, and seek to:

- *implement measures, such as greater use of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework and rates benchmarking, to provide local government greater flexibility and latitude to set their own rates*
-
- *emphasise the importance of continual evaluation and service delivery*
-
- *keep rates affordable and maintain safeguards to ensure rates meet community needs*
-
- *examine the use of capital improved value, rather than unimproved land value, to set the variable component of rates.*
-

Recommendation 3

That the NSW Government seek to improve the special variation process, should the rate peg be retained in its current form, to:

- *make it less resource and time-intensive for local councils*
-
- *streamline the process for the assessment of special variation applications*
-
- *consider alternatives to special variations that allow councils to raise additional rates to maintain existing service levels.*
-

Recommendation 4

That the NSW Government conduct an audit of, and seek to update, the statutory fees and limits that apply to local government annual charges and user fees and charges to better reflect and account for increases in market costs and pressures, including inflation.

Recommendation 5

That the NSW Government advocate to the Australian Government to increase the federal taxation revenue distributed via Federal Financial Assistance Grants from 0.5 per cent to 1 per cent and amend the current commonwealth grant guidelines per capita distribution method, that disproportionately benefits inner city councils.

Recommendation 6

That the NSW Government consider grant models that:

- *provide a more secure and sustainable source of funding to local councils to achieve more equitable distribution of grants funding and provide councils with greater discretion in relation to how funding is spent*
- *take into account the preference of local councils for predictable grants that are determined in a timely manner and assist councils to receive grants within appropriate timeframes to support the delivery of infrastructure programs.*

Recommendation 7

That the NSW Government implement changes to the developer contributions framework to better financially support local councils to fund the ongoing costs at the completion of new infrastructure and works deemed essential to support development including community facilities as determined by the council on behalf of the local community.

Recommendation 8

That, as part of the process of redesigning the local government rating system as outlined in Recommendation 2, the NSW Government have regard to the findings and recommendations of Portfolio Committee No. 8 – Customer Service's Pounds in New South Wales report and ensure councils are able to properly fund pounds and companion animal services.

Recommendation 9

That the NSW Government continue to improve the timeliness of disaster recovery assistance funding to local councils by utilising funding agreements such as tripartite arrangements which have provided councils with faster access to the funds they require to cover the cost of natural disaster recovery efforts.

Recommendation 10

That the NSW Government centralise disaster recovery funding within the NSW Reconstruction Authority to assist in improving expenditure on mitigation and preparedness and create dedicated and ongoing funding streams for communities, councils and community organisations to support their work on mitigation and preparedness.

Recommendation 11

That the NSW Government continue to advocate to the Commonwealth Government to incorporate betterment funding into disaster recovery funding arrangements.

Recommendation 12

That the NSW Government seek amendment to the Rural Fires Act 1997 such that Rural Fire Service assets are vested in the Rural Fire Service, with consequential amendment to the duties of councils as public authorities to prevent the occurrence of bushfires on, and to minimise the danger of the spread of a bush fire on or from land under its control or management.

Recommendation 13

That the NSW Government review the depreciation methodology that applies to depreciation rates.

Recommendation 14

That the NSW Government consider excluding depreciation expenses from the calculation of the Operating Performance Ratio.

Recommendation 15

That the NSW Government:

- *identify opportunities to reduce cost shifting to local government undertake greater consultation with local government prior to making decisions that may result in cost shifting*
-
- *review the practice of discounting infrastructure and other funding applications by border councils due to use by interstate residents*
-
- *use its waste levy review to examine how the Waste Levy can better support infrastructure and services that support the transition to a circular economy.*
-

Recommendation 16

That the NSW Government review the financial reporting guidelines and accounting model for local government.

Recommendation 17

That the NSW Government review the performance measurement ratios for local councils.

MAYORAL RECOMMENDATION

THAT all 17 Recommendations of the report *Ability of local governments to fund infrastructure and services* are endorsed by the Council.

FURTHER that the Council's strong support be conveyed to Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP and the Council's local State Member, Mr Brendan Moylan MP

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT all 17 Recommendations of the report Ability of local governments to fund infrastructure and services are endorsed by the Council.

FURTHER that the Council's strong support be conveyed to Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP and the Council's local State Member, Mr Brendan Moylan MP

(Moved Cr Tiffany Galvin, Mayor)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

7 OFFICERS' REPORTS

7.1 Executive Services Report

File Reference: NA

Delivery Program

Goal: 5. Organisational management

Outcome: 5.1 Corporate management

Strategy: 5.1.3 Administrative and support functions

Author: Max Eastcott, General Manager

STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST Nil

IN BRIEF/SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

This report is for reception.

TABLED ITEMS Nil

BACKGROUND

COMMUNITY ASSETS

Gwydir Learning Region (GLR)

February and March Report

Heavy Vehicle Training and Assessment

Units of Competence on GLR Training's scope:

- TLIC3004 - Drive heavy rigid vehicle
- TLIC3005 - Drive heavy combination vehicle
- TLIC4006 - Drive multi-combination vehicle
- TLILIC 2014 – Licence to drive a Light Rigid Truck
- TLILIC 2015 – Licence to drive a Medium Rigid Truck
- TLILIC 2016 – Licence to drive a Heavy Rigid Truck
- TLILIC 3017 – Licence to drive a Heavy Combination Truck
- TLILIC 3018 – Licence to drive a Multi-Combination Truck

July 2024 – March 2025 Heavy Vehicle Training statistics are as follows:

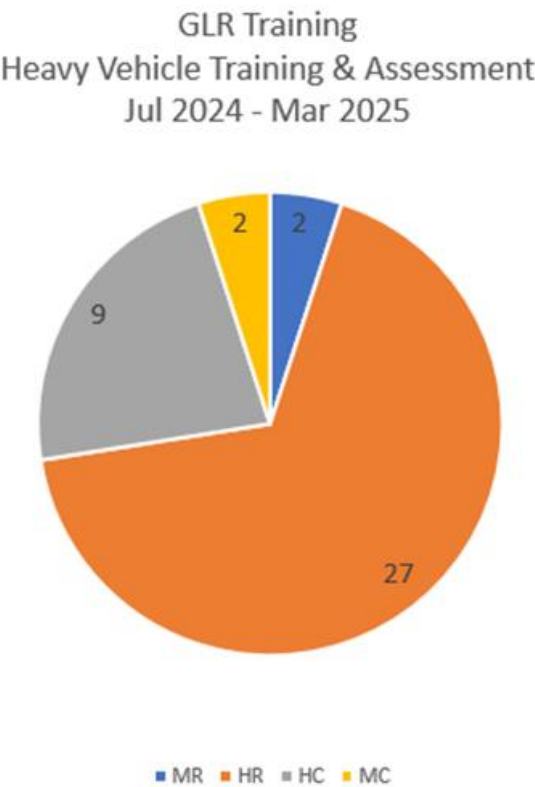
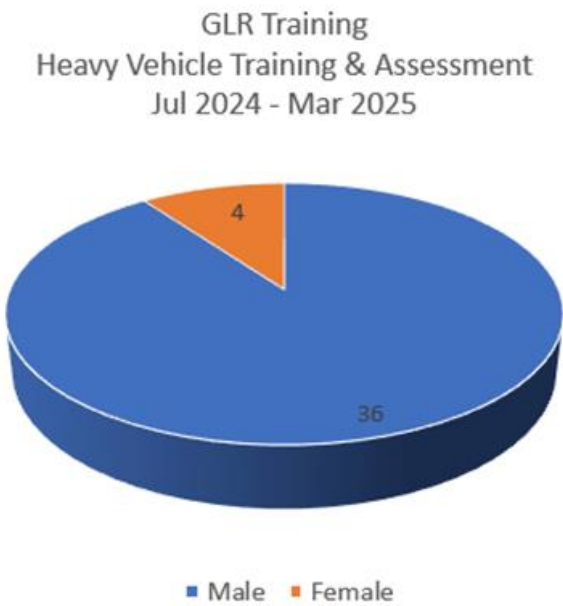
	Enquiries	Applications for S&S Funding Submitted	Applications for S&S Funding approved	Paying Clients	Training completed	Future bookings
July 2024	7	1	0	3	3	2
August	39	7	3	3	3	5

2024						
September 2024	14	4	8	1	5	3
October 2024	8	3	5	1	4	10
Nov 2024	12	2	1	3	7	7
December 2024	3	2	3	2	5	5
January 2025	12	0	0	4	5	5
February 2025	12	3	2	3	5	6
March 2025	7	5	0	1	3	6

Training and assessment has been completed for a total of 40 clients in 2024/2025 financial year to 31 March.



The graph above shows the number of clients participating in heavy vehicle training and assessment over the past nine years. 2020 and 2021 depict a substantial rise in participation due to an increase in promotion and the availability of an additional trainer/assessor. A significant decline is indicative of the withdrawal of the smart and skilled 'Drought Package' in 2022, however the 2024/25 projection was promising with an influx of enquiries following the 'Agskilled' funding review.



Learner Driver Tuition

Learner driver lessons undertaken from July 2024 – March 2025:

July 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025
3	4	7	6	2	2	1	1	

Automotive Trade Training Centre

In addition to GLR Training's use of the Automotive Trade Training Centre (ATTC) for heavy vehicle training, the facility is also utilised by Warialda High School for curriculum courses, Community College who provide welding courses, and a private trainer who holds whip making courses.

Gwydir Career Start Program

Gwydir Shire Council currently employs ten school based trainees, six trainees, 23 full time apprentices and two cadets. Gwydir Career Start participants constitute 16% of Council's full time equivalent workforce.

Position	Course of Study	Number of SBT/T/A
School Based Trainee – Finance	Certificate III Accounts Administration	1
School Based Trainee Gardener	Certificate II Horticulture	1
School Based Trainee – Information Services	Certificate III Information Technology	1
School Based Trainee Early Childhood Educator	Cert III Early Childhood Education and Care	2
School Based Trainee – Aged Care	Certificate III Individual Support	1
School Based Trainee Librarian	Cert III Business Administration	1
School Based Trainee Carpenter	Certificate III Carpentry	1
School Based Trainee – People & Culture	Certificate III Business	1
School Based Trainee – Community Assets	Certificate III Business	1
Trainee – Aged Care (FT)	Certificate III Individual Support	1
Trainee Early Childhood Educator (FT/PT)	Certificate III Early Childhood Education and Care	2
Trainee – People & Culture (FT)	Certificate III Business	1
Trainee Librarian (PT)	Certificate III Library & Information Services	1
Trainee – Water Operator	Certificate III Water Industry Operations	1
Apprentice Carpenter	Certificate III Carpentry	2
Apprentice Plumber	Certificate III Plumbing	1
Apprentice Mechanic	Certificate III Heavy Commercial Vehicle Mechanical Technology	2
Apprentice	Certificate III Civil Construction – Road Construction &	5

	Maintenance	
Apprentice Plant Operator	Certificate III Civil Construction – Plant Operations	10
Apprentice Gardener	Certificate III Parks & Gardens	3

Training is being provided by a number of registered training organisations including TAFE, Australian Training Plus, Community College Northern Inland, International Childcare College, Upskilled, Fusion Training Solutions.

The following table outlines the subsidies claimed by Gwydir Shire Council for current trainees and apprentices. These figures include *Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements wage subsidy*, *Completing Apprenticeship Commencements wage subsidy*, *Priority Wage Subsidy* (The Priority Wage Subsidy is a wage subsidy for employers of Australian Apprentices training towards an occupation listed on the [Australian Apprenticeships Priority List](#). Employers can claim 10% of wages paid to the Australian Apprentice for the first and second 12-month period (up to \$1,500 per quarter) and 5% of the wages paid to the Australian Apprentice for the third 12-month period (up to \$750 per quarter), and *Hiring Incentive* (The Hiring Incentive supports Australian Apprentices undertaking a Certificate II or above qualification that is not listed on the [Australian Apprenticeships Priority List](#). A payment of \$1,750, for a full-time Australian Apprentice and \$875 for part-time Australian Apprentice is made at 6 and 12 months.)

<i>Period</i>	<i>No. of employees</i>	<i>Claimed/Paid</i>
01/07/2024 – 30/09/2024	18	\$25,291.30
01/10/2024 – 31/12/2024	9	\$12,194.60
01/01/2025 – 31/03/2025	8	\$7,445.56

NSW Government ‘A Fresh Start for Local Government Apprentices, Trainees & Cadets’ Program

The NSW Government has launched a new funding program in line with its goal to increase the local government workforce and employ an additional 1,300 apprentices, trainees and cadets. \$252.2 million over six years has been committed to directly support local councils and the local government sector to developing sustainable workforces.

The program, ‘A Fresh Start for Local Government Apprentices, Trainees & Cadets’ seeks to:

- Increase the local government workforce through the employment of apprentices, trainees and cadets (recruits) over the next six years.
-
- Build capacity in councils and a stronger local government sector.
-
- Create positive social outcomes by generating local education and employment opportunities particularly targeting youth.

- Successful applicants will receive funding that supports 100% of the applicable award wage for a new apprentice, trainee or cadet, as well as 15% of the on-costs associated with the new employee's hiring.

Round 1 of the program closed on 8 November 2024.

Council received notification on 27 November 2024 from the program team that conditional approval had been granted for the following positions:

- **Mechanic (A)**
- **Plant Operator (A x 2)**
- **Individual Support (T)**
- **Early Childhood Education & Care (T)**
- **Business Administration (T)**
- **Planner (C)**

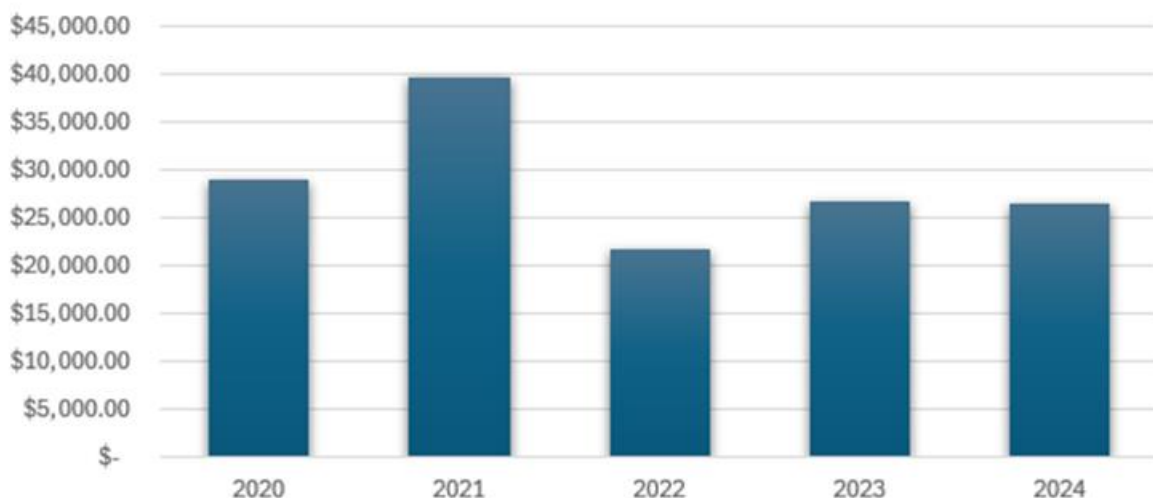
Following a clarification meeting, the Senior Grants Officer of Office of Local Government advised of conditional approval. Subsequently, Round 1 commencement documentation has been submitted for all seven positions and Council awaits final approval and receipt of the funding agreement.

Gwydir Country Education Foundation (GLR CEF)

Gwydir CEF is providing financial assistance to 11 local students in 2025. Recipients have the opportunity to claim reimbursement for education related expenses including laptops, computer accessories, textbooks, uniforms and work boots, fuel and accommodation. Total funds distributed to recipients to 31 March 2025 amount to \$7,488.32.

A total of \$22,500 local CEF Gwydir funds have been committed for 2025 recipients. In addition, two of our recipients were successful in obtaining extra scholarships through Country Education Foundation Australia. Two students have received significant awards. One the Audi Foundation Scholarship to the value of \$5,000 and another has been awarded the Ian McGregor Scholarship to the value of \$5,000.

Total Funds Distributed by CEF Gwydir by Calendar Year



A total of \$143,705 has been distributed from the period January 2020 to December 2024.

Did you know:

- 81% of CEF students report no financial assistance from family
- 65% of young Australians think it is likely they will not be able to afford a place to live in 12 months
- 67% of students say CEF support is very important when considering further education
-

Gwydir's schools recently participated in the CEF annual Boot Bash fundraiser. Bingara Central School, Warialda High School and Warialda Public School students contributed a gold coin donation and wore their boots to school. \$423 has been collected to date.



Aged Units

All aged units at Holden and Plunkett Streets, Warialda, and Whitfield Place, Bingara, are currently occupied.

Low Income Community Housing – Warialda

Community houses at 75 Queen Street and 113 Long Street, Warialda are currently occupied. The Community house at 50 Market Street, Warialda has recently been vacated. Council's Building Services team will undertake minor repairs and maintenance prior to its vacancy being advertised.

8 Olive Pyrke Terrace

Currently unoccupied.

84 Finch Street

During the reporting period a new oven was installed at the home, and the bathroom fully renovated.

6-8 Saleyards Road Bingara

Council purchased 6-8 Saleyards Road Bingara with the sale settling on 17 March 2025.

Crown Lands Plans of Management

The draft Plan of Management (PoM) for Community Land - Gwydir Local Government Area (LGA) was on public exhibition commencing from 9am, Thursday 20 February 2025 to 5pm, Thursday 20 March 2025.

A PoM is a requirement under the *Local Government Act 1993* and *Crown Land Management Act 2016* for all public land classified as community land. It provides strategic planning and governance for the ongoing management and use of the land.

Section 40A of the *Local Government Act 1993* required Council to hold a public hearing as this plan establishes the category of Council owned lands within the Community Land Gwydir Local Government Area PoM.

The public hearing about the proposed categorisation was held at the Bingara Customer Service Centre between 9.30am and 11.00am on Tuesday 18 March 2025. No persons attended.

Submissions will be received until 5pm, Thursday 6 April 2025.

No submissions have been received at the close of business 31 March 2025.

Caravan Parks

Both Warialda and Bingara Caravan Parks continue to be contracted under 12-month licences.

Swimming Pools

The lifeguard course which was to be held on 8 and 9 March 2025 was cancelled due to Cyclone Alfred. Council will consider running the course again at the commencement of the 2025/26 swimming season.

Council has organised for both complexes to be audited by the Royal Life Saving Society during October 2025.

Both complexes closed on 31 March 2025.

Cranky Rock Recreation Reserve

Council has been successful in gaining \$24,000 funding under the NSW Government Local Small Commitments Allocation (LSCA) Program for the installation of an additional shade structure at the Reserve.

Contribution of Gwydir News

The Mayor's Column in the Gwydir News March edition was very well received by the community with significant positive feedback. The column will continue to update the community of Council happenings, events and achievements.

Design Work

- John Wood and Dave Allen Welcome Flyer
- School Holiday Sewing Club Invite
- Orange Festival Competition Flyer
- Seniors Exercise Classes Flyer for Warialda and Bingara
- ANZAC Day in the Gwydir
- PFAS Bore Testing Warialda – Letter Box Drop
- Road Closures – Social Tile
- Warialda Gym – Notice of Power Supply Interruption – Placed on the Gym Door
- School Performances Flyer
- Telstra Petition – Social Tile
- Coolatai Landfill – Access Changes – Social Tile

Warialda Private Test Bore

Council staff collaborated with Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to provide information to the Warialda community regarding testing of private bores. The processes of drafting communications, creating a web page and social media posts, creating online forms, and printing and folding letters were all completed in one day ready for distribution.

Event Planning

Council staff are assisting with the event management of the Crooble, Warialda and Gravesend ANZAC Day ceremonies.

Facebook Post Statistics

Views are the number of times the content is displayed. The reach score is the amount of people that saw the post at least once. The engagement rating is the number of reactions, comments, clicks or shares on a post.

On 3 March 2025, Council announced that Mrs Leeah Daley would be the Acting General Manager from 5 July 2025. This post had 13,964 views, reached 4,724 people and had an engagement score of 2,475.

Additionally on 3 March 2025, Council advertised that John Wood and Dave Allen would be performing at the Roxy on 13 March 2025. This post had 8,139 views, a reach of 4,505 and an engagement score of 589.

On 5 March 2025, Council published the Telstra Petition information to the GSC Facebook page. This post had 8,946 views, reached 3,370 people and had an engagement score of 682.

On 21 March, Council published the Happy Days Festival advertising to the GSC Facebook page. This content included the day's activities. The post had 6,894 views, reached 2,411 people and had an engagement score of 852.

Myall Creek

The stolen items have still not been released to Council. Council staff persist in this matter.

The site continues to be presented in a consistent, neat, and tidy manner.

The Living Classroom

The high voltage electricity installation works have been delayed by the contractor due to staffing shortages. The new date for installation is now 2 April 2025.

Works continue at The Living Classroom. Wet weather has caused some delays however it is hoped all will be completed by the end of April. These works include all access pathways, new cabin concreted common area, cabin driveways, and site cleanup and rehabilitation.

The Roxy Complex

The Roxy presented the John Wood & Dave Allen – Rock'n'roll Journey show on Thursday 13 March to celebrate Seniors' Week. Tickets were \$20 and included morning tea. The event was enjoyed by those who attended however numbers were very low which is disappointing.

Bingara Riverfront Project

Soil Conservation Service have still not commenced works onsite. The Service has recently appointed a new Project Manager. This Manager has stated site work will commence mid-April. Council staff have kept the funding bodies updated.

Regional Drought Resilience Planning (RDRP) Program

Gwydir and Inverell Shire Councils have been granted \$250,000 under the RDRP Program. This amount, and an additional amount of \$70,601 (which has been rolled over from the funded pilot program) will be used to install an additional water standpipe and to upgrade an existing standpipe. Gwydir's allocation is \$250,601.

Gravesend Community Group

A meeting of the Gravesend Community Group was held on 4 March 2025. Council staff attended and spoke to the meeting regarding the governance structure of a Section 355 Committee of Council.

Following the meeting three committee members resigned.

Another meeting (which has been broadly advertised) will be held on 2 April 2025 to discuss the future of the Group, its governance structure and its objectives.

TLC and the Roxy Complex

Both TLC and the Roxy Complex continue to be well utilised and presented to a high standard. See attached March calendar as to use.

The Councillors' activity schedule for X 2024

The Councillors' activity schedule for October 2024 to March 2025 is outlined below

October 2024 to March 2025		
Councillor	Event	Date
Cr T Galvin (Mayor)	Mayors Meeting	06/03/2025
	SES Western Zone meeting	07/03/2025
	with regional Mayors –	08/03/2025
	Cyclone Alfred	09/03/2025
	– x4	10/03/2025
	Northern Road Tour	
	Meeting – Barnaby Joyce	
	LEP Workshop	07/03/2025
	GSC and MPSC Catch Up	12/03/2025
	Executive Catch Up	13/03/2025
	Essential Energy meeting	18/03/2025
	Council Meeting –	18/03/2025
	Warialda	18/03/2025
	Judging – Bingara Show	20/03/2025
	Bingara Show	
	Bingara Building	21/03/2025
	CMA Meeting - Sydney	22/03/2025
		27/03/2025
		28/03/2025
Cr Sean Coleman (Deputy Mayor)	IB Bore Project	14/11/2024
	Completion	
	Inland Rail CEO Visit	11/12/2024
	PFAS meeting	16/12/2024
	Local Traffic Committee	25/02/2025
Cr Adrian Willmot	Northern Road Tour	07/03/2025
	ARIC Meeting – Bingara	11/03/2025
	Planning Workshop	13/03/2025
	Council Meeting	20/03/2025
Cr John Bishton	Value NSW webinar	06/02/2025
	Bingara Admin Building	27/02/2025
	meeting	
Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM	Council Meeting	20/03/2025
	Bingara Preschool	06/12/2024
	Presentation	
	Value NSW Webinar	06/02/2025
Cr Michael Collins	Safety, Extremism and	25/02/2025
	Disruption in Councils	
	webinar	
Cr Michael Collins	IB Bore Road Opening	14/11/2024

Cr Rachel Sherman	IB Bore Road Opening Naroo Xmas Party Southern Road Tour Warialda Historical Society Meeting Value NSW webinar Bingara Admin Building workshop Northern Road Tour ARIC Meeting – Bingara Planning Workshop Council Meeting Bingara Admin Building workshop	14/11/2024 05/12/2024 13/12/2024 11/12/2024 06/02/2025 27/02/2025 07/03/2025 11/03/2025 13/03/2025 20/03/2025 27/03/2025
Cr Sarah Crump	Bingara Preschool Presentation Bingara Central Primary Presentation Bingara Central Infants Presentation Southern Road Tour Australia Day ceremony – Bingara Value NSW webinar Bingara Admin working group meeting Council Meeting – Warialda	06/12/2024 11/12/2024 13/12/2024 13/12/2024 26/01/2025 06/02/2025 27/02/2025 20/03/2025
Cr Scot Crispin	OLG webinar OLG webinar Events Committee Meeting Remembrance Day Ceremony – Bingara Bingara Showground Group Committee Meeting OLG webinar OLG webinar OLG webinar Southern Road tour Australia Day Ceremony – Bingara Value NSW webinar Showground Committee Meeting Safety, Extremism and	17/10/2024 24/10/2024 29/10/2024 11/11/2024 12/11/2024 21/11/2024 28/11/2024 05/12/2024 13/12/2024 26/01/2025 06/02/2025 18/02/2025 25/02/2025

	Disruption in Councils webinar	26/02/2025
	Murray Darling Association Region Meeting II	
	Bingara Admin Working Group Meeting	27/02/2025
	Interview	27/02/2025
	Northern Road Tour	07/03/2025
	Council Meeting	20/03/2025

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report be received.

ATTACHMENTS

1. CA - Calendar - Roxy and TLC - March 2025 [7.1.1 - 1 page]

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT the report be received.






































































(Moved Cr Sean Coleman, Seconded Cr Michael Collins)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

2025 . MARCH

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2  REHEARSALS
3  BINGARA CHOIR PRACTICE	4	5  HNEH MEETING  REHEARSALS	6	7	8  LIFE SAVING COURSE	9  LIFE SAVING COURSE  REHEARSALS
10  UNAVAILABLE  UNAVAILABLE  MEETING  BINGARA CHOIR PRACTICE	11  MEETING X2  JOHN WOOD SHOW	12  JOHN WOOD SHOW	13  QUILTERS RETREAT  QUILTERS RETREAT  JOHN WOOD SHOW	14  QUILTERS RETREAT  QUILTERS RETREAT  JOHN WOOD SHOW  ROXY TOUR X2	15  QUILTERS RETREAT  QUILTERS RETREAT	16  QUILTERS RETREAT  QUILTERS RETREAT  REHEARSALS
17  COUNCIL WORKERS  COUNCIL WORKERS  BINGARA CHOIR PRACTICE  REHEARSALS	18  COUNCIL WORKERS  COUNCIL WORKERS  WORKSHOP	19  COUNCIL WORKERS  WORKSHOP  COUNCIL WORKERS  MEETING X2  REHEARSALS	20  COUNCIL WORKERS  COUNCIL WORKERS  MEETING	21  COUNCIL WORKERS  COUNCIL WORKERS  MEETING	22  PRIVATE FUNCTION  PRIVATE FUNCTION	23  REHEARSALS
24  UNAVAILABLE  BINGARA CHOIR PRACTICE  REHEARSALS  MEETING	25  QUANTUM LEAP WORKSHOP 	26  QUANTUM LEAP WORKSHOP  MEETING  REHEARSALS	27  QUANTUM LEAP WORKSHOP  MEETING	28  QUANTUM LEAP WORKSHOP  ROXY TOUR X2	29  QUANTUM LEAP WORKSHOP 	30  QUANTUM LEAP WORKSHOP  REHEARSALS  FILM CLUB
31  QUANTUM LEAP WORKSHOP  BINGARA CHOIR PRACTICE  REHEARSALS						

Legend - Roxy: Theatre - Kitchen - Conference Room

TLC: Classroom - Bunkhouse



7.2 Organisation and Community Services Report

File Reference: NA

Delivery Program

Goal: 5. Organisational management

Outcome: 5.1 Corporate management

Strategy: 5.1.3 Administrative and support functions

Author: Leeah Daley, OCD Director

STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST Nil

IN BRIEF/SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The monthly Organisation and Community Services Report details the activities carried out by the Department during March 2025.

TABLED ITEMS Nil

BACKGROUND

The monthly Organisation and Community Services report forms part of a regular reporting regime. The purpose of the report is to inform Council of the activities carried out within the Department.

COMMENT

AGED CARE – NAROO FRAIL AGED HOSTEL

March 2025

Staff Meeting

We were informed of the building works update and the fact that room 26 would now be turned into a training room and extra office space. The works are coming along nicely and things are starting to take shape which is exciting to see. Residents will get an input into the furnishings when the time comes.

We would be looking for a new model of care for the high care wing once completed as it will now be a 12-bed wing. There is also a possibility of applying for another grant which would involve the northern end of the facility making 7 more rooms and onsite staff accommodation available.

We are moving forward in the background with the RN recruitment from overseas which will help with the current lack of RN's to fill roles.

We currently have a desktop audit happening with Health & Aging, Food Safety Audit and will be completed by 2 April 2025.

Resident Meeting

One new resident was welcomed into the facility.

Naroo Committee have donated towards the purchasing of furniture. We also hope that some of our green thumb employees will help with the selection of plants when the time comes to planting the gardens.

We also welcomed 2 trainees' one normal trainee working 4 days a week and 1 day study and one school-based trainee who will be here 2 days a week, studying and going to school.

Residents News & Outings

How are we at the end of March already?! This month we have been preparing for Easter by doing some craft and organising some fun visits from the preschool and WPS next month.

This month we had an outing to the park and enjoyed the current beautiful weather as our days start to cool down a little.

We tested out the new café in town and everyone enjoyed some lovely fish and chips.



Loves fish & chips

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) – Warialda/Delungra

Meetings

Next meeting with CHSP Manager will be in May 2025.

Volunteers

The Meals on Wheels roster for April, May, and June has been sent out. Our clients truly appreciate seeing our wonderful volunteers, it's often the highlight of their day. This is also a great opportunity to stay connected, share a friendly conversation, and ensure their well-being.

Transport and trips

This month was filled with exciting outings! Clients enjoyed two trips to Inverell for a bit of shopping, always a favorite activity. CHSP Transport provided service across Armidale, Tamworth, Moree, and Inverell. A special highlight was the trip to Bingara's iconic Roxy Theatre for *Our Rock & Roll Journey*, a fantastic show that had everyone tapping their toes and reminiscing about the golden days of music. It was truly a blast from the past!

Social support

Social support was provided in many meaningful ways this month, including companionship at Day Centers, engaging outings, and the delivery of Meals on Wheels. Volunteers also stayed connected through friendly phone calls, assisted with client inquiries, provided transport, and made home visits, ensuring everyone felt supported, valued, and connected to their community.

Day centers

Clients attending the Warialda Day Center on Mondays and Fridays, as well as the Delungra Center on Wednesdays, truly appreciate the wonderful services they receive. They thoroughly enjoy socialising, sharing laughter over morning tea, savoring a delicious two-course meal and engaging in fifteen lively games of bingo.

A special celebration is in order as the Delungra CHSP Building has been repaired from the water leak. A huge thank you to the incredible team who made it happen!

Food service

Meals on Wheels clients have been informed of the upcoming price adjustment, with meal costs increasing from \$8 to \$10, and package clients seeing a change from \$10 to \$12. So far, there has been no feedback or concerns raised by clients regarding this update.

Warialda/Delungra CHSP March 2025 Report		
	Delungra	Warialda
Day Centre		
Total Active Clients	16	98

Clients Receiving Service	14	49
Total Meals	59	192
Hours Clients Receive in Centre	140	482
Social Support		
Number of Clients	14	49
Individual Hours	25	125
Group Hours	115	357
Total Hours Received	140	482
Food Service – Meals on Wheels		
Clients	0	13
Meals	0	222
Individual hours – MOW	0	67
Transport		
Number of Clients	1	28
Number of Trips	8	132
Access Bus to Inverell		
Number of Clients	1	14
Number of Trips	2	2
Volunteers		
Number of Volunteers – March	1	33
Monthly Volunteer Hours	16	517
Outings and Functions		
Number of clients	8	Clients attended the John Wood and Dave Allen show at The Roxy

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) – Bingara

Volunteers

In March, Bingara CHSP received incredible support from dedicated volunteers, contributing a total of 403 service hours. Their efforts made a meaningful impact through Out of Town Transport, local transport, Meals on Wheels deliveries, and assisting with Group Social Support, including morning tea and lunch on Tuesdays.

The time volunteers give is measured by the invaluable moments spent with clients, whether through transportation, group activities or one-on-one social support. Their kindness and commitment help create a strong, connected community. A heartfelt thank you to all who contribute!

Transport and Trips

Out of Town Transport had a bustling month, completing 146 trips and providing essential services to 42 clients. Meanwhile, the Access Bus took passengers on a much-enjoyed shopping day out with trips to Inverell and Tamworth.

Our dedicated volunteers go above and beyond with not only assisting with transport but also ensuring the vehicles are well-maintained. They carry out regular maintenance checks whenever possible and take care of routine cleaning after every trip, helping to keep everything running smoothly and safely. A big thank you to all who make these services possible!

Social Support

Group Social Support continues to thrive, with a wonderful group of ladies gathering every Tuesday in the Lingalonga Room for morning tea, lunch and great company. Their generosity shines through as they stay busy knitting squares for the *Wrapped with Love* charity, creating heartfelt gifts for those in need.

March was filled with fantastic outings! On the 11th, we enjoyed a delicious lunch at the Delungra Pub, and on the 18th, clients, staff and volunteers attended the incredible John Wood and David Allen performance at The Roxy. It was a truly memorable experience and everyone cherished the chance to enjoy live entertainment and social outings. These special moments bring so much joy to all involved!

Food Service

Meals on Wheels remain the same with 4 regular clients receiving meals.

Meals on Wheels is coordinated by the Bingara CHSP Staff and the Meals provided by the Bingara MPS.

Bingara CHSP March 2025 Report	
Day Centre	
Total Active Clients	11
Clients Receiving Service	15
Total Meals	18
Hours Clients Receive in Centre	90
Social Support	
Number of Clients	50
Individual Hours	221
Group Hours	182
Total Hours Received	403
Food Service – Meals on Wheels	
Clients	4

Meals	92
Transport	
Number of Clients	42
Number of Trips	146
Transport – Youth	
Number of Clients	0
Number of Trips	0
Access Bus to Inverell	
Number of Clients	12
Number of Trips	2
Volunteers	
Number of Volunteers – March 2025	9
Monthly Volunteer Hours	43

SOCIAL SERVICES

Bingara Neighbourhood Centre

Funding Body – NSW Department of Communities and Justice

Bingara Neighbourhood Centre continues to assist community groups with grant applications and attend to the needs of the general public through advocacy and referral to other services. Family Referrals to the Benevolent Society for assistance with mediation and family breakdown have featured strongly this month.

S355 Committee

The Bingara Community Op Shop

Our monthly meeting was held on the 17 March, with guest speaker Suzy Webber, who joined us to discuss the Code of Conduct.

Funding Requests

We received two funding requests this month:

- **Anglers Club** – Donated \$1,000.
- **Bingara Central School** – We approved a \$2,000 donation to support students involved in The Cattle Club, allowing them to participate in upcoming shows.

St. Patrick's Day Volunteer Lunch

On 16 March, we hosted a special St. Patrick's Day lunch for our wonderful volunteers. The menu included: Irish Stew, Cornbread and Damper and Dessert

It was a fantastic afternoon filled with delicious food and relaxed conversations.

Pantry & Shop Updates

The pantry is running well. We held a \$1 sale on all summer clothing to clear stock and make room for winter items. We aim to have all winter stock available in the

shop one week before Easter. The stock transition will take place on Sunday and Monday of that week.

Volunteers & Sorting Shed

We are excited to welcome a few new volunteers to the team! More staff is always appreciated.

A big thank you to the sorting shed team, who are doing a fantastic job sorting through the generous donations we receive.

The shop staff continue to rotate stock and bring in new items regularly to keep things fresh for our customers.

Centrelink

Funding body – Services Australia

This month, we have seen consistent visitor numbers, with Silver Service providing excellent and prompt responses to all inquiries. Additionally, there has been a positive shift in customers' willingness to join MyGov, enabling them to access Centrelink and other essential services more efficiently.

Unfortunately, our Centrelink Agent has sustained an injury and is currently unable to work. In the meantime, casual staff are ensuring the community's needs continue to be met until her return.

Youth Services

Funding body – NSW Department of Communities and Justice

Warialda Toy Library	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025
Total daily attendance counts for children, adults (calculating each child, each day over the month – total points of contact).	88	78	70
Full borrowing memberships (new and/or renew)	0	0	0
Non borrowing memberships (new and/or renew)	0	0	0
Casual borrowing memberships (new and/or renew)	0	0	0
Commemorative Birth Certificate applications received	0	0	0
Toys returned	3	0	3
Toys borrowed	3	6	0
Groups using the service (FDC carer, Pharmacy)	1	0	0

Monday group morning session x 2	36	6	0
Tuesday group morning session x 2	16	2	0
Wednesday group morning session x 4	24	12	16
Thursday group morning session x 4	12	41	41
Friday group morning session x 4		17	13

Gwydir Willoughby Youth Exchange

Planning for the 2025 Youth Exchange Program is well underway, with staff working closely with Willoughby to refine the itinerary for both ends of the exchange. This year, fresh ideas and valuable input from Mayor Tiffany Galvin have helped shape an exciting and enriching experience for participants.

In the coming month, preparations will ramp up as staff gear up for the application process to officially open. The program will once again welcome 8 students from each council, providing a unique opportunity for young people to engage in cultural exchange, leadership development, and community connection.

With anticipation building, staff are eager to see the incredible group of students who will take part in this year's journey.

Supported Playgroup Development Worker

Funding body – NSW Department of Communities and Justice

Attendance numbers remained steady this month, with a slight drop due to daily closures.

In March, the Warialda Toy Library introduced new opening days:

- Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday
- Every second Wednesday at the local library

Community Engagement & Activities

- The Toy Library participated in an incursion, joining daycare for a visit. This provided children with an opportunity to engage in play-based learning and build relationships with their peers. Families attending also had the chance to learn more about the new daycare and its operations.
- Miss Helen from Warialda Library joined the visit for Harmony Day, reading a story to the children.
- Children enjoyed sensory play with Oobleck, incorporating farm animals, painting, drawing, and free play to foster social connections.
- Families and children have also begun colouring for the local newsagency's Easter Colouring Competition.

A big thank you to everyone who has supported and participated in the Toy Library's activities this month!

Bingara Toy Library

Funding body- NSW Department of Communities and Justice and NSW Department of Education - Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate

Particulars	February 2025	March 2025
Total daily attendance count for children, (calculating each child, each day over the month –total points of contact).	49	96
Full borrowing memberships (new and/or renew)	0	1
Non borrowing memberships (new and/or renew)	1	1
Casual borrowing memberships (new and/or renew)	0	0
Commemorative Birth Certificate – Voucher memberships	1	0
Toys returned	2	1
Toys borrowed	6	3
Children/Group using the service (FDC carer, pharmacy)	8	4
Monday group morning session x 5	29	19
Tuesday group morning session x 4	11	17
Wednesday group morning session x 3	47	21
KSK group afternoon session x 9	45	50

With all rooms now fully set up, the building is busy every day, hosting a variety of programs:

- Monday to Wednesday – Playgroup, Kool Skool Kids, and Toy Library
- Thursday, Friday, and every second Wednesday – Day Care Centre

A huge congratulations to the dedicated staff for their hard work in bringing everything together so smoothly!

Playgroup Update

- Families are still adjusting to finding the best day that suits them.
- The play space is working well, with small layout changes each day keeping children engaged and intrigued.
- From this month, the program calendar has been adjusted:
 - Each week of the month will now follow a consistent schedule across all days.
 - Previously, activities varied each day, leading to families missing events they were interested in.
 - Feedback on this change has been overwhelmingly positive.

Kool Skool Kids Program

Children have enjoyed a variety of activities, including:

Noughts & crosses, Lego, Home corner play, Guessing games, Drawing activities, Headbands game, Go Fish, Colouring in, Dolls house and Free play

One family has reduced attendance to Tuesdays only, adjusting group sizes to nine children on Mondays and eight on Tuesdays.

Service Closures

Families were notified via text message and posters about upcoming closures on:

- Wednesday, 12 March
- Tuesday, 25 March
- Monday, 7 April

Playgroup Sessions & Activities


- Floor time play with various items for children to reach, roll, or crawl toward.
- Paint & stamp craft on brown paper bags, which could be used for gift wrapping or morning tea storage.
- Colour matching activity using nuts and bolts to sort and screw together.
- Free play with items from the shelves is always encouraged.
- A planned visit to Bingara Preschool on Wednesday, 26 March, had to be cancelled due to illness.

Bingara Preschool

Funding Body – NSW Department of Education - Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate

Days	March 2025
<i>Monday</i>	17
<i>Tuesday</i>	17
<i>Wednesday</i>	22
<i>Thursday</i>	22
<i>Friday</i>	8

The Bingara Show: During this term, the children at Bingara Preschool have been exploring the life cycle of a butterfly. The children found a caterpillar, a cocoon and some beautiful butterflies in our Preschool yard. When the Educators discussed with the children what sort of artwork they wanted to create for the Bingara Show, they were keen to make a special butterfly print. Each day, the children chose a different set of colours to make their butterfly prints. At the end of the week, the children were able to choose which one of their prints they would like to enter in the Bingara Show.

 **EYLF 2.4: The children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.**

The children also entered their self-portraits into the Bingara Show. This term the children have been learning about emotions and this experience was a natural progression. The children looked into mirrors and identified different parts of their face. It was interesting to see that some children naturally added a body to their artworks.

The children also made and created healthy biscuits. Using healthy ingredients, the children decorated their biscuits. Bingara Preschool used healthy ingredients as it encourages healthy eating habits and it is in line with our Nutrition Policy.

New Trainee Educators: In March, Bingara Preschool welcomed two new Trainee Educators to the team. The new Trainee Educators will gain practical experience in the service, learning to support children's holistic development whilst under the guidance of the experienced Educators. They will also study the Certificate 111 in Early Childhood Education and Care through the International Childcare College.

Each of the Trainee Educators will be allocated three hours of study per week, within their weekly roster.

✧ **EYLF Principle: The Gwydir Shire Council encourages and supports ongoing professional learning.**

Change of Operational Days: Bingara Preschool now operates five days per week from the 7th of March. There was an identified need from some families to have the option of sending their child to Preschool on a Friday, so the service's team worked together to make this happen. Although the bookings are small on a Friday, it meets the community's needs.

✧ **NQS 6.2: Bingara Preschool continues to build partnerships with their families and services their community.**

Hudson and Marlene from Muster Dogs: On Monday the 17th of March, Bingara Preschool had some special visitors. One of the Bingara Preschool children brought along her Grandma Marlene and her working dog Hudson. Marlene and Hudson are part of the television series 'Muster Dogs'. Marlene told the children how Hudson learnt to round up the cows and sheep, and he even tried to round up the Preschool children. After morning tea, the Educators found the ABC Muster Dog series on the smartboard and watched Hudson when he was smaller.

✧ **EYLF 2.1: The children develop a sense of connectedness to groups and communities.**

Hatching Chickens at Preschool: There has been lots of excitement this month, as the children, families and Educators have been incubating eggs at the service. The Educators asked if any families had any fertilised chicken eggs that they could donate. There were three families that donated fertilised eggs and another family donated the use of the incubator. The Educators created a hatching calendar, and the children watched on and counted down the days until the eggs hatched. It was hatching day this week, and the service now proudly has five very healthy chickens at Preschool.

✧ **EYLF 2.4: The children and Educators care for Country and connect with animals, plants, lands and waterways.**

Wear Your Boots to Preschool: On Thursday the 13th and Friday the 14th of March, the children and Educators at Bingara Preschool wore their boots to Preschool to fundraise for the Country Education Foundation. This organisation continues to help the older children within our community who are getting ready for further studies with financial support, which helps to remove some of the barriers of being a rural and remote student. One child liked wearing her rainbow boots and showing everyone her flashing lights. Another child liked wearing her boots to Preschool because: '*It is so much fun for my feet*'. Another child shared that she liked wearing her boots because they make her feet warm. Bingara Preschool raised a total of \$31.10 for the Country Education Foundation.

✧ **National Quality Standard 1.1.1: The children at Bingara Preschool are learning valuable life lessons for example empathy, problem solving, responsibility etc.**

Tharawonga Mobile Resource Unit

Funding body – Australian Government Department of Education

Days and Venues	February 2025
Monday at Croppa Creek	12 (2 extra casual places)
Tuesday at North Star	15 (1 extra casual places)
Wednesday at Yallaro	16 (0 extra casual places)
Thursday at Yetman	7 (0 extra casual places)
Friday at Warialda	11 (0 extra casual places)

Significant Celebrations & Events

The service participated in Harmony Week with a range of engaging learning experiences for the children. Educators planned activities such as puzzles, storytelling, and craft to celebrate cultural diversity and promote respect and inclusion in Australian society.

Emergency Procedures

To start the new year and ensure compliance with regulations, the service has begun conducting emergency procedure drills across all venues.

Compliance & Assessment

- The Warialda venue, which operates at the Catholic School, recently underwent a post-approval visit by a Department representative on Friday, 14 February 2025.
- The service successfully demonstrated full compliance with the National Law and Regulations.
- The Social Services Manager has updated all seven Quality Areas in the Self-Assessment document throughout the month.

Parent Fundraising Committee

The committee has announced that their Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on Tuesday, 8 April at 9 AM.

School Transition

Educators have introduced learning experiences aimed at enhancing children's concentration, problem-solving, and cognitive skills.

Activities include:

- o Matching puzzles
- o Memory games
- o Structured problem-solving activities

Site-Specific Updates

Croppa Creek

- The service facilitated two enrolment orientations on Monday, 17 and 24 March—one for a returning family and one for a new family to the community.
- The obstacle course has been extended to focus on core motor strength and balance, particularly emphasizing heel-to-toe walking in a straight line.
- The home corner now features Velcro fruits and vegetables, allowing children to explore mathematical concepts such as fractions and portioning.
- ✨ **Outcome 5.1 – Children interact verbally and non-verbally for a range of purposes, including understanding measurement, size, length, volume, and capacity.**

North Star

- The service has recommenced its collaboration with the school, with children visiting to engage in activities and storytime with preschoolers.
- The school and service have agreed to rotate activities each term, maintaining a focus on small-group learning.
- The principal has invited the service to participate in the school's Easter Parade.
- Children initiated their own learning in the block corner, incorporating mathematical concepts while building structures.
- ✨ **Outcome 4.1 – Children are confident and involved learners in flexible, open-ended learning environments.**

Yallaroi

- Children participated in a science experiment called "Wiggly Worm," where they observed how water made paper worms grow and move. This activity helped them explore measurement concepts and critical thinking.
- The main topic for this term is sustainability. An educator introduced a solar-powered water sprinkler, demonstrating how sunlight generates energy to make water flow. The children were curious and engaged in exploring how this worked in their play.
- ✨ **Outcome 2.4 – Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.**

Yetman

- Educators have extended children's emerging interests in nature by incorporating magnifying glasses and hidden bug/lizard figurines in the school garden for discovery play.
- A movement and role-play experience was introduced through the story "We're Going on a Bear Hunt," where children actively participated in various elements of the adventure.

- ✦ **Outcome 3.1 – Children develop a strong sense of well-being by building on their own ideas and imagination.**

Warialda

- Educators are focusing on activities that encourage children to follow instructions through musical experiences such as tapping stick songs and "She'll Be Coming Around the Mountain". These activities also help children develop gross motor skills like galloping.
- Cooking activities were introduced based on children's emerging interests in outdoor play. Together with educators, they made frozen fruit smoothie cubes using fresh fruit.
- ✦ **Outcome 3.2 – Children become strong in their physical and mental well-being, improving core strength and coordination.**

Tharawonga Mobile Resource Unit – Daycare

Funding body – Australian Government Department of Education, Skills, and Employment.

Days and Venues	February 2025
Monday at Warialda	8 (1 extra casual places)
Tuesday at Warialda	6 (1 extra casual places)
Wednesday at Warialda (Week 1)	7 (extra casual places)
Wednesday at Bingara (Week 2)	9 (extra casual places)
Thursday at Bingara	10 (1 extra casual places)
Friday at Bingara	7 (3 extra casual places)

Service Launch & Orientation

The new long day care service officially commenced on:

- Monday, 3 March 2025**
- Thursday, 6 March 2025**

The Service Director conducted group orientation sessions on the first day at both Bingara and Warialda, with 10–12 families attending each session. Additional orientation and enrolment sessions have since been held for families unable to attend the initial sessions. The service continues to welcome new families weekly.

Significant Celebrations & Events

As part of Harmony Week, educators designed engaging activities to celebrate diversity and inclusion, including:

- Yellow cloud dough sensory play, sparking curiosity as children explored its unique texture, squishing, and moulding it.
- Handprint art using yellow, orange, and green paint, creating a Tree of Belonging that celebrates each child's birthday and sense of community.

Compliance & Assessment

- The Warialda venue, located at the Toy Library, is one of the service's newest daycare locations.
- A compliance visit was conducted by a Department representative on Friday, 14 February 2025.
- The service successfully demonstrated full compliance with the National Law and Regulations.

Warialda & Bingara Program Highlights

Building Relationships

Educators have been focusing on relationship-building with children and families, ensuring continuity of care between home and daycare.

Storytime & Emotional Development

- Children engaged in a guided reading of *When I'm Feeling Kind*, where an educator facilitated a meaningful discussion about emotions and kindness.
- Children actively participated by pointing out details in the illustrations and sharing their thoughts.

Sensory & Hands-On Learning

- Sensory play activities encouraged creativity and exploration.
- Puzzle activities were introduced to enhance problem-solving skills and cognitive development.

Personalised Learning Journeys

- Each child has participated in meaningful activities that will be compiled into individual portfolios to document their learning journey throughout the year.

COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING AND TOURISM, AND ROXY THEATRE COMPLEX

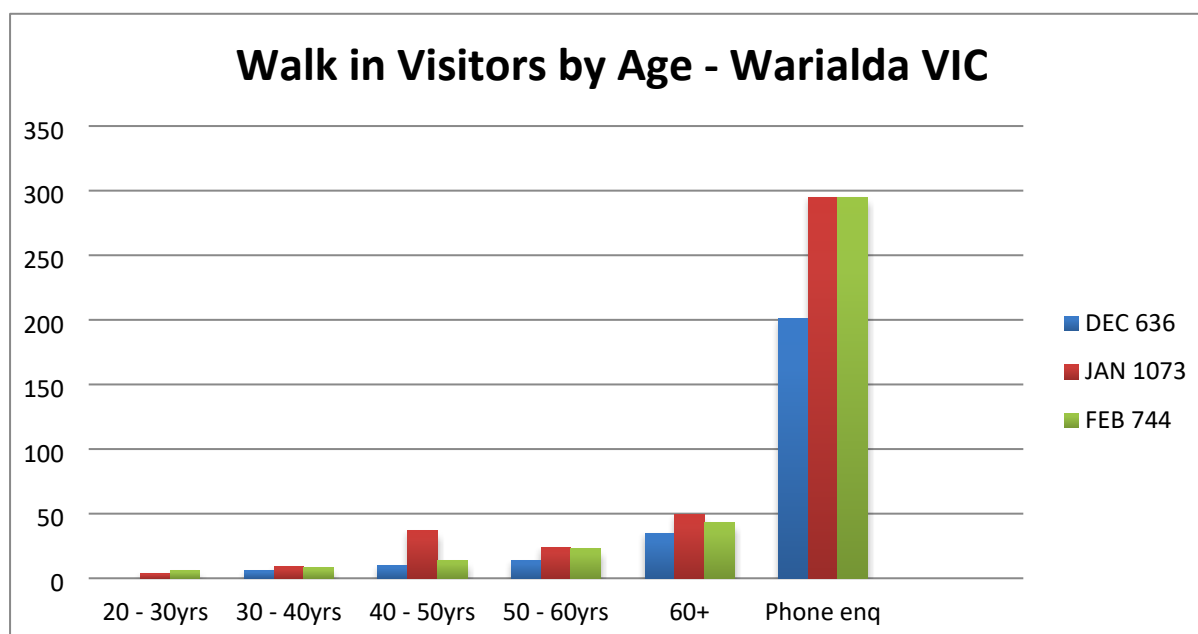
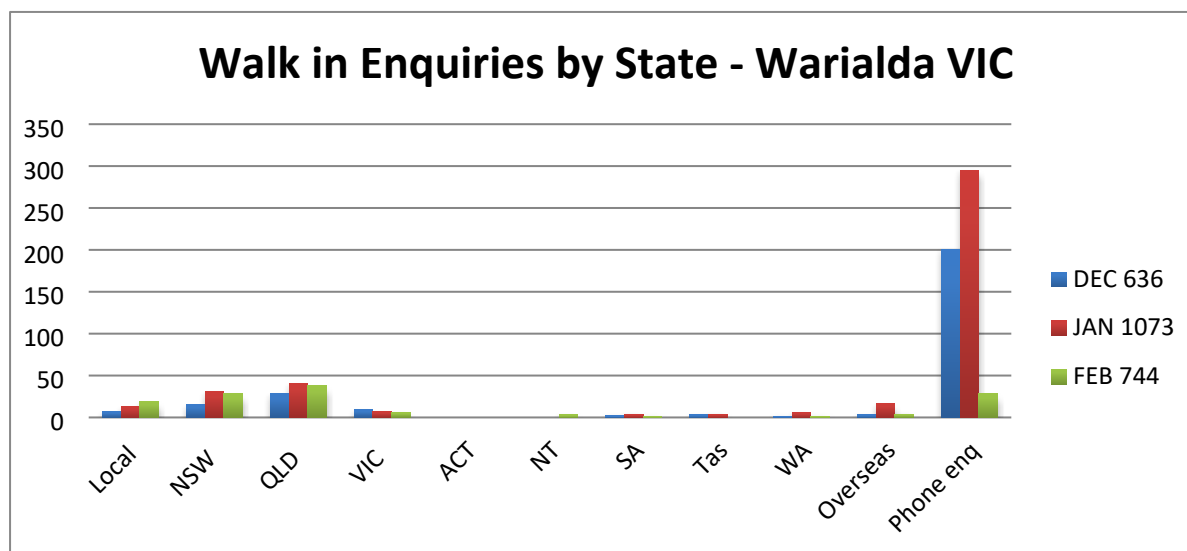
Tourism

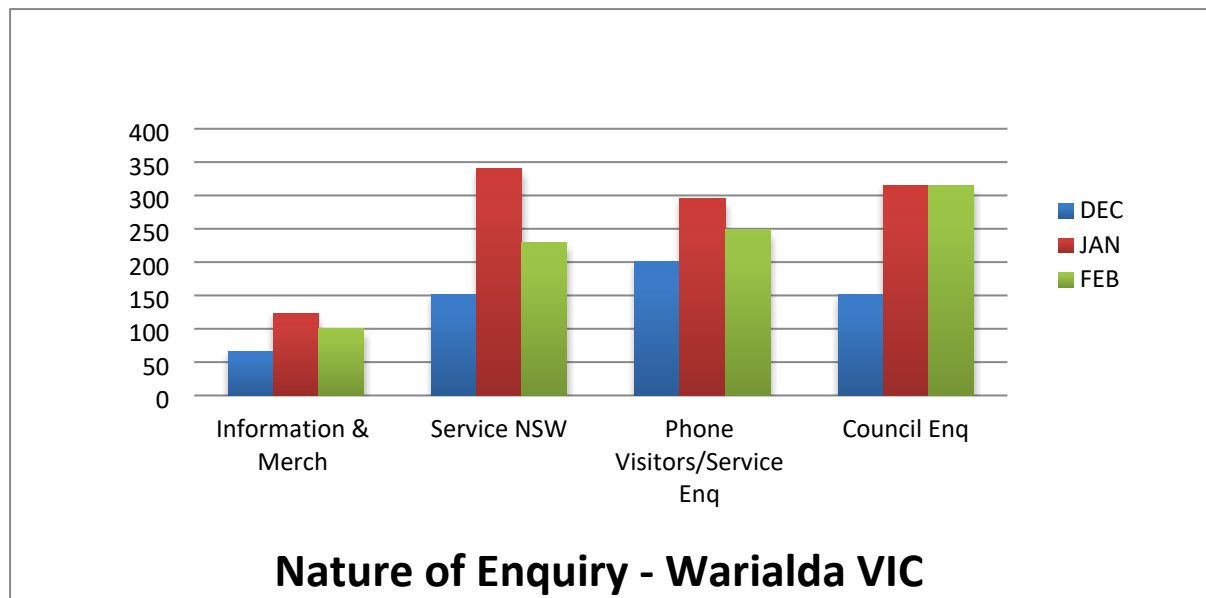
Warialda Visitor Information Centre

December 2024		January 2025		February 2025	
Opening Hours	116	Opening Hours	154	Opening Hours	114
Volunteering Hours	8	Volunteering Hours	7	Volunteering Hours	8

Income	DEC	JAN	FEB
Merchandise Sales	\$952.32	\$740.18	\$395.18
Total Monthly Income	\$952.32	\$740.18	\$395.18

Visitors at Warialda VIC	DEC	JAN	FEB
Visitors	66	123	100
Service NSW	218	340	229
Council	151	315	166
Phone Enquiries	201	295	249
Total	636	1073	744





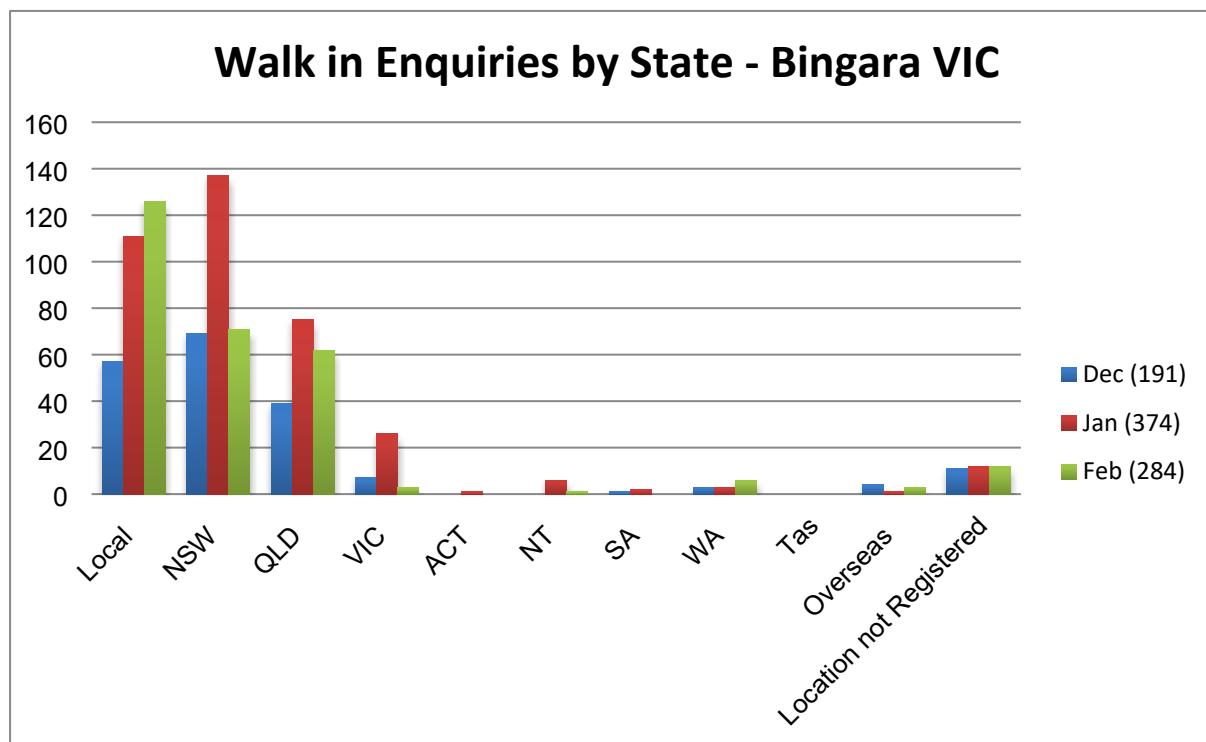
Bingara Visitor Information Centre

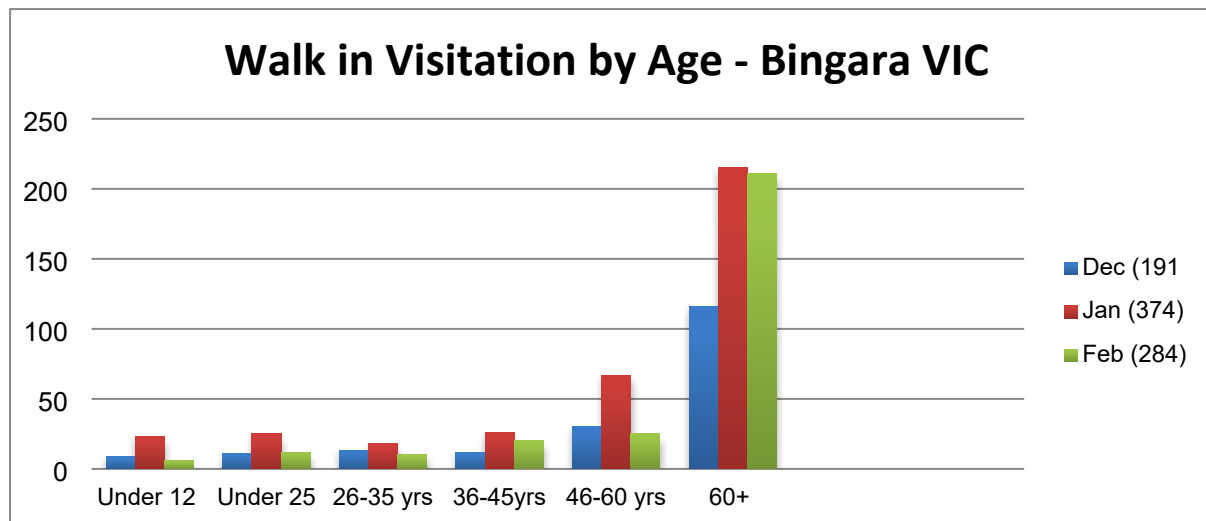
December 2025		January 2025		February 2025	
Opening Hours	107.5	Opening Hours	136.5	Opening Hours	130
Volunteering Hours	24	Volunteering Hours	26.5	Volunteering Hours	29.5

Income	DEC	JAN	FEB
Merchandise Sales	\$445.00	\$610.50	\$383.50
Total Merchandise Sales	\$445.00	\$610.50	\$383.50
VIC Commission received on Event bookings undertaken on behalf of Community Groups – Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Monthly Income Bingara VIC	\$445.00	\$610.50	\$383.50
Roxy Tour Income	\$70.00	\$190.00	\$70.00
Visitors at Bingara VIC	191	392	285

COMMENTS			
TOURISM			
Tourism Visitation number		285	Down on previous months – could be due in part the hot weather conditions
Merchandise Sales income	\$	383.50	Down on previous months
Roxy Tour income	\$	70.00	Down on previous month
CAMPING DONATIONS			
Camping Donations - collected by Council rangers and from individuals receipted by the VIC	\$	161.00	Down on previous months – could be due in part the hot weather conditions
THE LIVING CLASSROOM - ONLY			
The Living Classroom Hire Receipted at VIC	\$	100.00	Hire fess Gwydir Ark workshop

TLC BUNKHOUSE - ONLY			
TLC Bunkhouse Hire Invoice requests to Finance	\$	180.00	Anaiwan Local Aboriginal Land Council CEO Greg Livermore and representatives from Taronga Park Zoo
TLC 3 DAY PACKAGE			
TLC 3 Day Package Hire Direct Deposit	\$	1,350.00	3 day package - Di Brown Quilting Workshop
COMMUNITY GROUP EVENTS			
Community Groups - ticketing/booking site setup and web design			NWTC - ticketing/booking site setup for One Act Plays x 2 – Funny Business at the Roxy for April 2025
Community Groups - ticketing sales and assistance via the Visitor Information Centre	\$	40.00	NWTC – Ticket sales for Find Your Voice Workshops
Community Groups - ticketing sales and assistance via ON-Line at Trybooking	\$	80.00	NWTC – Ticket sales for Find Your Voice Workshops
Community Groups - ticketing sales and assistance via the VIC	\$	100.00	NWTC – Ticket sales for Find Your Voice Workshops
Community Groups - ticketing sales and assistance via the VIC	\$	Nil	
Community Groups - ticketing sales and via ON-Line at Trybooking	\$	100.00	Gwydir Shire Council –Showground Camping site bookings sales Bingara RSL Club - Country Music Festival
COMMUNITY GROUP MERCHANDISE			
Community Groups - Merchandise sales:- Bingara Special events committee	\$	20.00	Over the Counter Sale Orange Festival Stubby Holders





CUSTOMER SERVICE REQUESTS (CRMs)

CRMs carried forward from:

Department	Outstanding as at 25 February 2025	Completed since 26 February 2025	Outstanding as at 24 March 2025
Technical Services	27	13	14
Environment and Sustainability	54	25	29
Town Utilities	0	0	0
Urban Infrastructure	21	6	15
Building Services	10	4	6
Total Outstanding	112	48	64

CRM's – 26 February 2025 to 24 March 2025:

Department	Received 26 Feb to 24 Mar 2025	Completed 26 Feb to 24 Mar 2025	Outstanding as at 24 Mar 2025
Technical Services	30	10	20
Environment and Sustainability	27	13	14
Town Utilities	16	14	2
Urban Infrastructure	18	4	14
Building Services	12	1	11
Executive & Community Assets	3	2	1
Organisation and Community Services	0	0	0

Totals	106	44	62
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CRMs received since 26 February 2025 and still outstanding as at 24 March 2025:

Department	Open
Technical Services	34
Environment and Sustainability	43
Town Utilities	2
Urban Infrastructure	29
Building Services	17
Executive and Community Assets	1
Organisation and Community Services	0
Total	126

CONSULTATION

Consultation has occurred within the Organisation and Community Development Directorate.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Policy implications are those relating to the 2024/2025 Operational Plan and the Policies of Gwydir Shire Council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The activities carried out by the Organisation and Community Services Department are in line with the 2024/2025 Operational Plan.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The activities undertaken by the Organisation and Community Services Department regarding social and environmental factors are targeted in line with the 2024/2025 Operational Plan.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report be received.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT the report be received.

(Moved Cr Sarah Crump, Seconded Cr Rachel Sherman)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

7.3 Technical Services Report

File Reference:	NA
Goal:	5. Organisational management
Outcome:	2.1 Our economy is growing and supported
Strategy:	2.1.1 Plan for and develop the right assets and infrastructure
Author:	Alexander Eddy, Director of Engineering Services

STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST Nil

IN BRIEF/SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

This report is for reception

TABLED ITEMS Nil

BACKGROUND

The Monthly Technical Services report has been identified by Council as the process of reporting the activities carried out monthly by the Technical Services Department. This report is for the month of March 2025.

COMMENT

Warialda CBD Park

Works have been ongoing at the Warialda CBD Park with the installation of the new fence beginning after a six week delay in the supply of materials. The retaining wall along the fence with Telstra is complete and ready for the colourbond fence.

The electrical cabling has commenced along with the under-boring of the existing concrete in preparation for the irrigation system.

The old hairdresser/ bakery shops have been demolished. No well or evidence of one could be found. The foundations of the shops were much lower than the existing grounds creating a sump type effect under the building this may have been a part cause of the moisture infiltration and goes somewhat to explaining why there was a pump under the building



Warialda CBD Park

IB Bore Road

Crews continue carrying out works for Moree Plains Shire Council on the final two km's of the IB Bore Road. Moree Plains secured funding under the NSW Governments Fixing Local Roads Program, Council is carrying out these works on behalf of Moree Plains as private works. Once completed there will be a complete sealed link from the Newell Highway to North Star. Wet weather has slowed progress, although stabilisation of the subbase has been completed and the base layer will be completed by the middle of April. The project is within budget and on time.



IB Bore Road

Croppa Creek Road Rehabilitation

This project is jointly funded by the State Government's Restart NSW Fund (\$7.057 million) with Council contributing \$200,000 and DRFA flood damage funding of \$500,000. The Restart NSW Fund was established in 2011 to enable the funding and delivery of high priority infrastructure projects that improve economic growth and productivity.

Contractors continue to mix and stabilise the 18km which should be completed early April weather permitting.



Croppa Creek Road

Maintenance

General maintenance continues on Regional and State roads, including vegetation control, slashing, whipper snipping and spraying of guideposts and guard rails and sign maintenance.

Seal maintenance is ongoing on all State, Regional and Local Roads as potholes continue to develop.

All parks and gardens continue to be maintained. Mowing, weed control, irrigation, hedging, and trimming are routinely undertaken as well as daily cleaning of the public toilets. Staff continue to maintain our sporting fields and facilities for use of various sporting groups and schools. Sporting fields and parks in Warialda are currently being watered by automatic sprinklers at night based on there being only 100 KL per day production available to be used by P&G from the two remaining bores in operation. The sporting fields have been recently fertilised and are responding well to the recent rain.

Maintenance Grading and Resheeting

During March maintenance grading or resheeting was carried out on the following roads

- Scotts Road
- Yallaroi Road
- Currangandi Road
- Whitlow Road
- Tucka Tucka Road
- Baroma Road
- Upper Whitlow Road
- Bristol Lane
- Ironbark Creek Road

Slashing

During March slashing was carried out on the following roads

- Gwydir Highway
- Gravesend Road

- Warialda Airstrip Road
- Mosquito Creek Road
- County Boundary Road
- Eulourie Road
- Elcombe Road
- Warialda Road

Asset Protection Zone Maintenance

Regular slashing work is being undertaken on APZs in Bingara, Coolatai and Warialda with the last round of work programmed for May 2025.

Roads Maintenance Council Contract – Works Orders issued by TfNSW

All Work Orders issued by Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW) are quality assurance schedule of rates projects carried out by Council staff under the Roads Maintenance Council Contract with TfNSW.

All heavy patching works on MR63 Fossickers Way and HW12 Gwydir Highway have now been completed with the final patches near Gravesend being sealed early in the month. The bitumen resurfacing program started this month with almost all reseal segments being completed on MR63 Fossickers Way. Bitumen resealing works were programmed for completion by the end of March, however, have now been delayed due to the wet weather and will continue into early April. Wendouree pavement works continue south of Bingara on MR63 Fossickers Way this month, with crews completing all sub-base layer works, including the importation of DGS20 road base material for shape correction and the mixing and recompacting of the existing pavement. Delays have occurred this month due to wet weather and poor pavement testing results. Furthermore, all drainage, sediment and erosion control and revegetation works were completed prior to the wet weather later this month. Crews have now started importing DGB20 roadbase material for the 150mm base layer of the pavement. Once all pavement works are completed, new guardrail will be installed and a primerseal will be placed over the new pavement. Works are expected for completion now by the end of April, weather permitting.

Routine maintenance continues each week undertaking inspections, rest area services, vegetation control, guardrail repairs and bitumen repairs.



Drainage works completed at the box culvert on the Wendouree Rehabilitation Project.

Local Emergency Management Committee

The LEMC had a regular quarterly meeting in February that was well attended. Fire and Rescue NSW advises that there are 6 members now fully trained in Bingara, which is a big improvement in numbers.

Water and Sewer

Water and Sewerage operators carry out routine operational tasks such as water testing, grounds maintenance at the water treatment plants, reservoirs, both sewerage treatment plants, sewer pump stations, Warialda truck wash and truck wash ponds.

Reactive maintenance includes service line repairs, water main breaks and sewer blockages. All tasks are recorded and entered into a central database. The database is used to identify common failure areas enabling planning for repairs as well as being used for asset condition rating which is used to correlate annual performance reports for State Government.

March 2025 Water and Sewer Works Summary

Classification	Total
Meter Replacement	8
New Service Line	1
Service Line Repairs	18
Sewer Block	10
New Sewer Connection	1
New Water Connection	0
Main Break	1
Equipment Repairs	3

Stop Valve Repairs	1
Customer Request Response	4
Other Work	32
Total	79

Other work was undertaken at Bingara Golf Course, IB Bore Road, new dump point at Bingara, Holden Street units, Saleyard toilets, Bingara Showground, Warialda Recreation Ground, Captain Cook Park, Bingara Toy Library, Railway Park North Star, off leash dog park Bingara, Toy Library Bingara, Community College Warialda, The Living Classroom, Koala Park, Ridley Street, Herbert Street and Bombelli Street Bingara, Warialda airstrip amenities, Warialda truck wash, Medical Centre and CBD Greenspace, Bingara sewerage and water treatment plants.



New water supply line to Greenspace

Testing for PFAS was undertaken again in March and results show all bores and reservoirs were clear except Hospital Park bore. The application for new test bore has been approved By Department of Climate change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW). A contract driller has been engaged and the test bore should be drilled before the end of April, weather permitting. General Location of test bore will be in the vicinity of the truck wash exact location to be confirmed.

DCCEEW funded an external water loss assessment during March the report recommends SCADA – Telemetry improvements, the use of dataloggers on high users, undertaking reservoir drop tests and participating in active leak detection program. Council is moving forward with the recommendations which will reduce the unaccounted for water and losses in the systems.



Copeton Dam Road dump point road construction

Warialda Truck Wash

The truck wash facility was used by 176 trucks during March with an average wash down time of 57 minutes and total water used was 889kL. The estimated income for the reporting period of March is \$13,227.00 less monitoring fees and expenses.

Grants Projects

Name	Funding Program	Status	Funding Acquittal
Batterham Lookout	Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Phase 1	In Progress Additional drainage work completed in March	Final claim to be submitted
Upper Horton Amenities Building	Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Phase 3	Complete	Final claim to be submitted
Bingara Showground Camp draft arena Upgrade	Stronger Country Communities Rd 5	Complete	Final claim to be submitted
CWA Park Playground Upgrade	Stronger Country Communities Rd 5	Complete	To be submitted
Warialda Recreation Ground landscaping	Stronger Country Communities Rd 5	In Progress Sandstone blocks delivered to site	

Bingara Showground

The annual Bingara Show was held at the earlier time of March this year with a view to attracting larger crowds. While wet weather caused the campdraft to be called off, the rest of the show was well received and supported. The Bingara Show is again scheduled for March in 2026. A permanent fence was installed at the Bingara showground to keep cattle in the extremities, previously electric fence separated the areas.



Bingara showground permanent fence

Plant

New speed radar lights were delivered in March.

Fire fighting trailer for landfills was purchased

Disposals:

P2022 – KIA Carnival wagon sold at pickles auctions

P1045 – RFS Cat 7 – sold at pickles auctions

P1039 – RFS Cat 7 - sold at pickles auctions



Speed indicator lights

Workshops and Depots

Workshop Services and Jobs	Jan	Feb	Mar
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Total number of services in Workshops	22	23	21
Total number of repairs in Workshops	133	137	175

Major repairs and maintenance undertaken in the workshops during March included:

7 Graders and 2 jet patcher trucks fitted with GPS systems

P1933 - Lime spreader repairs to conveyor system

P1713 - Jet master repairs to PTO system

P2033 - Truck drive shaft repairs

P1963 - Tractor repairs to wiring on the engine fan

P1691 - Loader first service after engine rebuild

P1989 - Mower deck repairs

P2018 - Grader hydraulic repairs

P1884 - Bus air -conditioner repairs

P1663 - Rock crusher fit all new belts and anvils

P1469 - Forklift fit new battery adjust gear lever

P1841 - Excavator repair to hydraulics line

P1905 - Mower ignition problem fit new steering control valve

P1914 - Loader fit new isolation switch

P1446 - Jet patcher hydraulic cooler repair wires

P2005 - Mower repair spindle

P1841 - Excavator hydraulic repairs

P2135 – Caterpillar loader repairs

CONCLUSION

The activities carried out by the Technical Services Department are in line with the 2024/25 Management Plan and as otherwise directed.

CONSULTATION

Consultation is carried out within the Technical Services Department during the monthly Technical Services Team Meetings and with other relevant persons.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report be received.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT the report be received.

(Moved Cr Sean Coleman, Seconded Cr Sarah Crump)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

7.4 Business and Strategy Report

File Reference: NA

Delivery Program

Goal: 3. An environmentally responsible shire

Outcome: 3.1 Our community understands and embraces environmental change

Strategy: 3.1.1 Encourage respectful planning, balanced growth and good design

Author: Justin Hellmuth, Director of Business and Strategy

STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST Nil

IN BRIEF/SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

This report is for reception.

TABLED ITEMS Nil

BACKGROUND

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The following Development (D/A) and Development Modification (s4.55/s96) applications were approved during the month of March 2025.

No.	Property Description	Development/Work	\$	DA	s4.55
DA 2024/45	29 Martyn Street Bingara	install manufactured dwelling and attached carport	\$331,226	✓	
DA 2024/48	25 Moore Street Bingara	Construction of an 81m ² garage/storage shed with bathroom an attached 36m ² carport	\$62,486	✓	
DA 2025/2	14 Byrnes Street Bingara	7m x 7m shed	\$19,000	✓	
DA 2025/3	18 Ridley Street Bingara	Construction of a 10mW x 10mL x 4.2mH (to eave) garage/shed for with toilet	\$41,915	✓	

There were no Development (DA) or Development Modification (s4.55/s96) applications approved in the previous months and not previously reported to Council.

There were two Development Modification (s4.55/s96) application(s) that were returned to the applicant prior to lodgement (RET) or withdrawn (W) during the month of March 2025.

No.	Property Description	Development/Work	Type	Reason
2022/62	163 Fairford Road	Change of size and	MOD	Returned - application incomplete

	Warialda	floor plan of dwelling and additions to existing shed		and technical difficulties with NSW Planning Portal are preventing the editing of the application
2022/62	163 Fairford Road Warialda	Change of size and floor plan of dwelling and additions to existing shed	MOD	Withdrawn by applicant - advised by Council to withdraw due to inconsistencies with development consent 62/2022. Applicant will relodge an amended application.

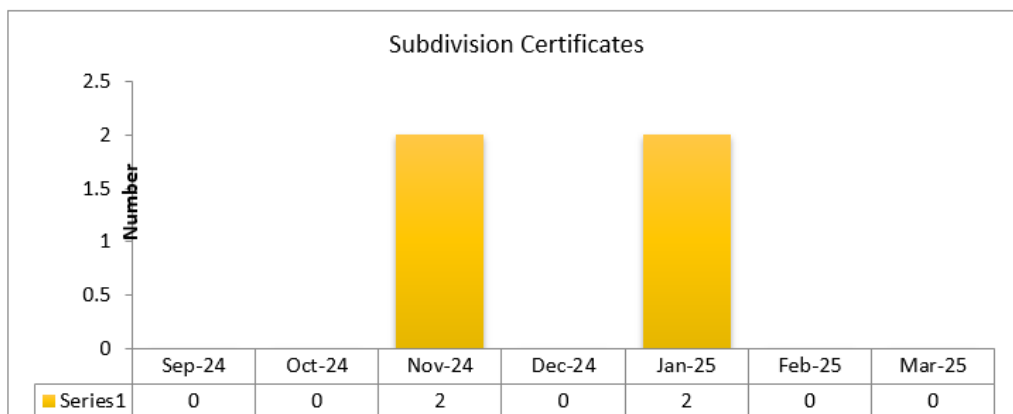
There were no Development (D/A) applications determined where there has been a variation in standards under clause 4.6 of the Gwydir Local Environmental Plan 2013 during the month of March 2025.

The following table shows all Development (D/A) and Development Modification (s4.55/s96) applications that were submitted on the NSW Planning Portal, that were lodged with Council after the payment of lodgement fees and those that remain unlodged with Council, during and prior to 28 March 2025 and remain undetermined as at the 28 March 2025:

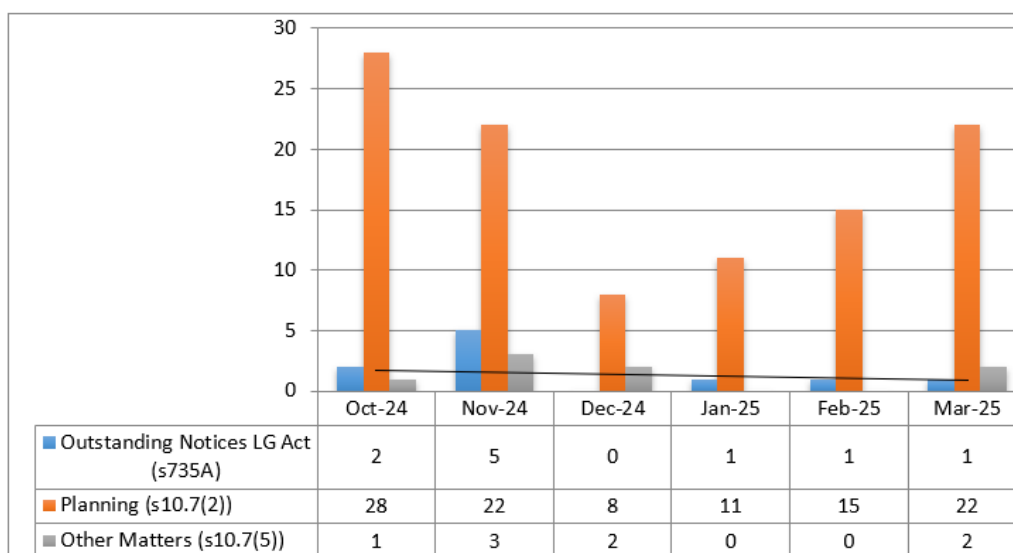
Application No.	Applicant	Owner	Property Address	Description of Work	Date received on the NSW Planning Portal	Date Lodged with Council	Reason for time between submission & lodgement	Current Status	Type of Application
35/2024	P Taylor (SMK Consultants)	L M Smith	16489 Gwydir Highway Gravesend	Quarry	11/10/2024	19/12/2024	Request of Additional Information prior to lodgement and awaiting payment of fees invoice	Under assessment with Wakefield Planning	DA
37/2024	N J Beel	N J Beel & L B Beel	1462 Oregon Road Warialda	2 Lot Rural Subdivision	18/10/2024	15/11/2024	Request Additional Information prior to lodgement	Under assessment with Wakefield Planning	DA
41/2024	SMK Consultants Pty Ltd	D F Picton	5 East Street Bingara	2 Lot Urban Subdivision	12/11/2024	18/11/2024	Invoice for fees issued and awaiting payment prior to lodgement of application	Under assessment with Wakefield Planning	DA
46/2024	Coggs Contracting	Coggs Contracting	Elcombe Road Bingara	4-bay Garage with attached awning	6/12/2024	17/01/2025	Invoice for fees issued and awaiting payment prior to lodgement of application	Under assessment with Wakefield Planning	DA
47/2024	Abode Building Design	J E Bishton & K E Bishton	227 Allan Cunningham Road Bingara	Manufacture Dwelling	13/12/2024	27/12/2024	Invoice for fees issued and awaiting payment prior to lodgement of application	Draft Determination - awaiting final approval	DA
36/2024/2	Jillian Cumberland	St Johns Anglican Church	8a Frazer Street Bingara	Modification - Change of location of shed	10/01/2025	3/03/2025	Pre-lodgement review and request for additional information	Draft Determination - awaiting final approval	MOD
2025/4	Abode Building Design	R Carruthers	58a Keera Street Bingara	Manufactured Dwelling	18/02/2025	6/03/2025	Pre-lodgement review and payment of fees	Under assessment with Wakefield Planning	DA
2025/5	Abode Building Design	D & B Newman	27 Geddes Street Bingara	alterations and additions to	18/02/2025	14/03/2025	Pre-lodgement review and payment	Under assessment with Wakefield	DA

				existing dwelling			of fees	Planning	
2022/38/2	SMK Consultants Pty Ltd	Stahman Property Trust	1507 River Road Pallamallawa	Change of floor plan in accommodation building	20/02/2025	21/03/2025	Pre-lodgement review and payment of fees	Under assessment with Wakefield Planning	MOD
2025/6	Matt Baker	S Kruse	77 Riddell Street Bingara	Two bay shed with attached carport/awning	20/02/2025	17/03/2025	Pre-lodgement review and payment of fees	Under assessment with Wakefield Planning	DA
2025/10	Rod Davis - RDC Engineers	Doolin Farming Pty Ltd	2513 Getta Getta Road North Star	Feedlot Expansion from 999 head to 3000 head	22/02/2025	-	Pre-lodgement review	Application fees invoiced and awaiting payment	DA
2025/9	SMK Consultants Pty Ltd	K B Butler	996 Whitlow Road Whitlow	2 Lot Rural Subdivision	5/03/2025	27/03/2025	Pre-lodgement review and payment of fees	Under assessment with Wakefield Planning	DA
2025/7	Abode Building Design	T L Rose	7 Inverell Road Warialda	Change of Building Classification - Conversion of shed to principal dwelling	14/03/2025	27/03/2025	Pre-lodgement review and payment of fees	Under assessment with Wakefield Planning	DA
2025/8	Abode Building Design	P J Thurston	17 Railway Pde Warialda Rail	manufactured dwelling and shed	25/03/2025	27/03/2025	payment of fees	Under assessment with Wakefield Planning	DA

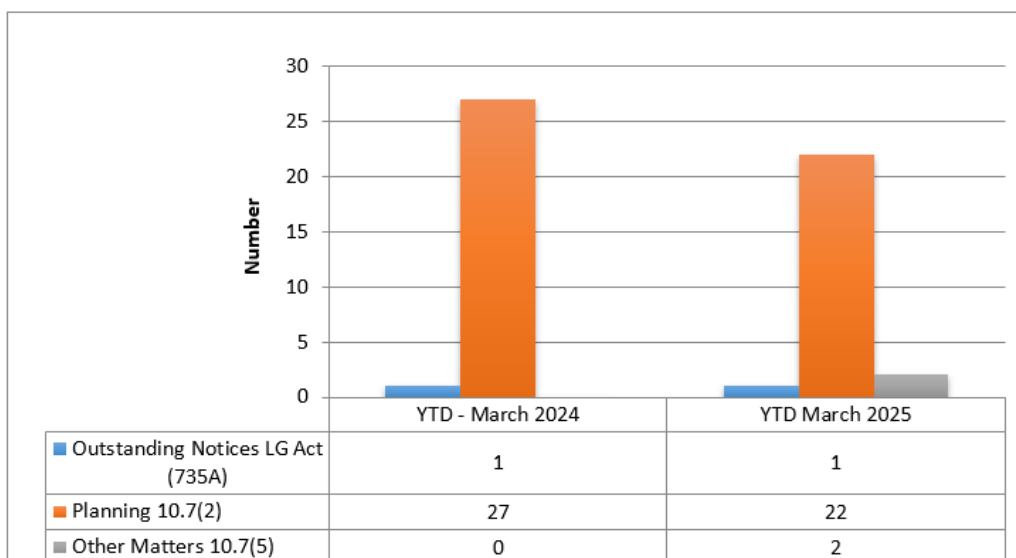
The following graph shows the Subdivision Certificates issued during the month of March 2025 and in the preceding six months.



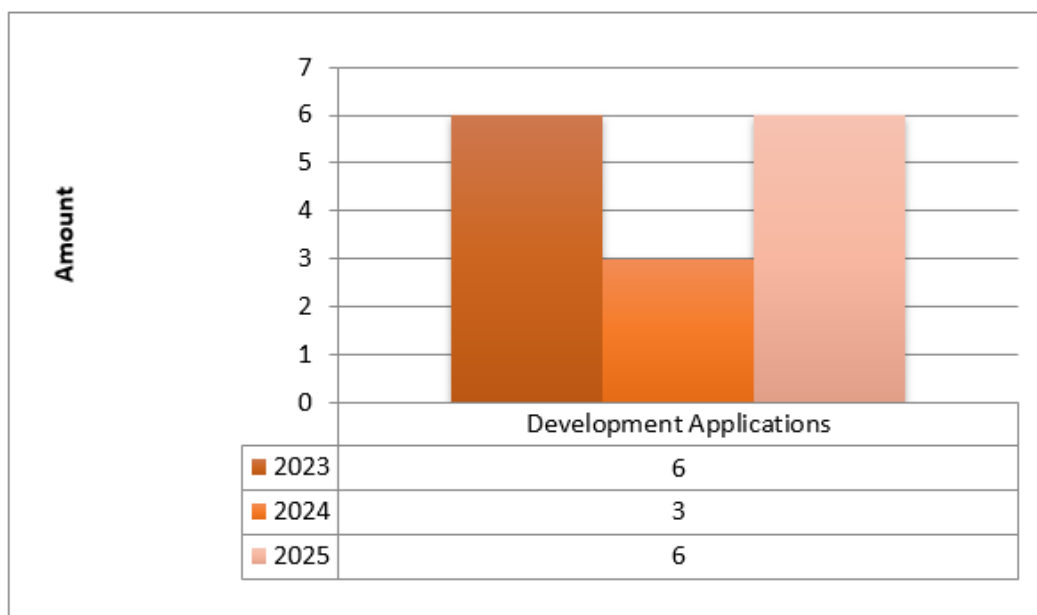
The following graph shows the Conveyancing Certificates issued during month of March 2025 compared to the previous six months:



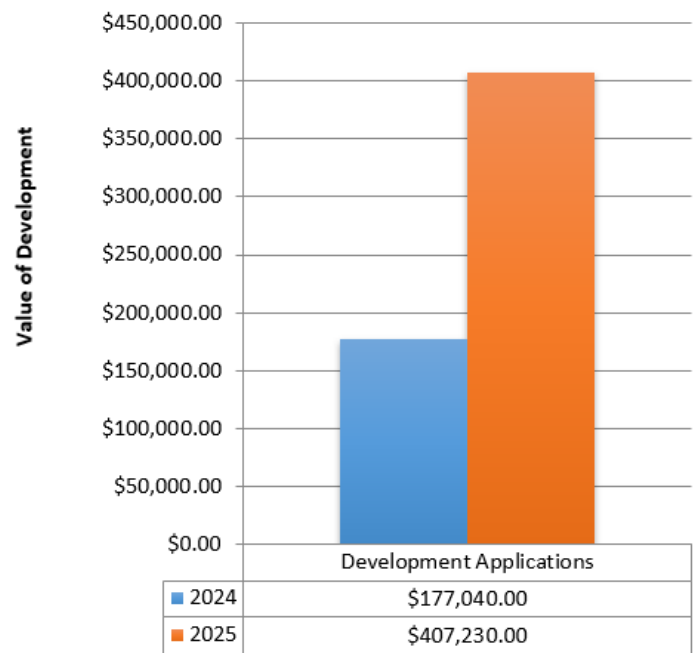
The following graph shows the Conveyancing Certificates issued up to and including the month of March 2025 compared with the same period in 2024:



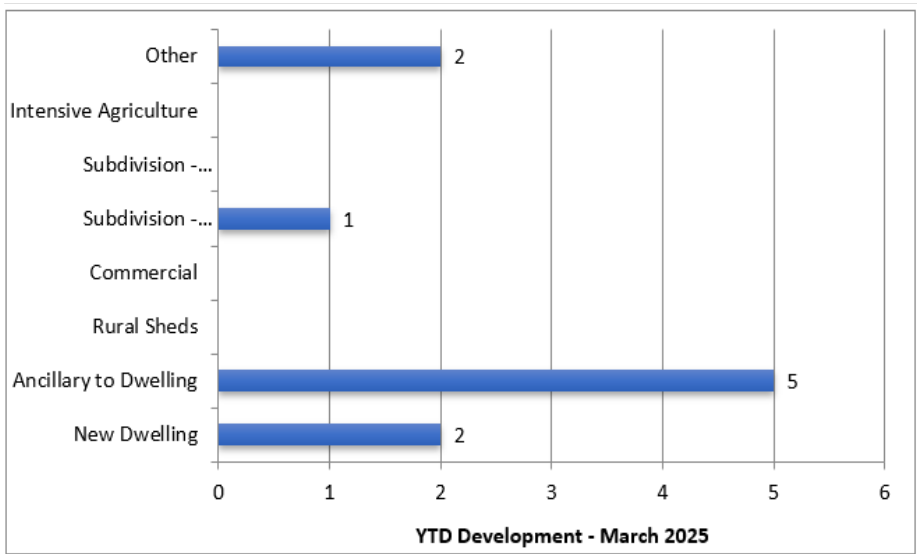
The table below shows a comparison between total development applications (excluding s4.55/s96 modification applications) lodged during the month of March 2025 compared to the same period in the previous two years:



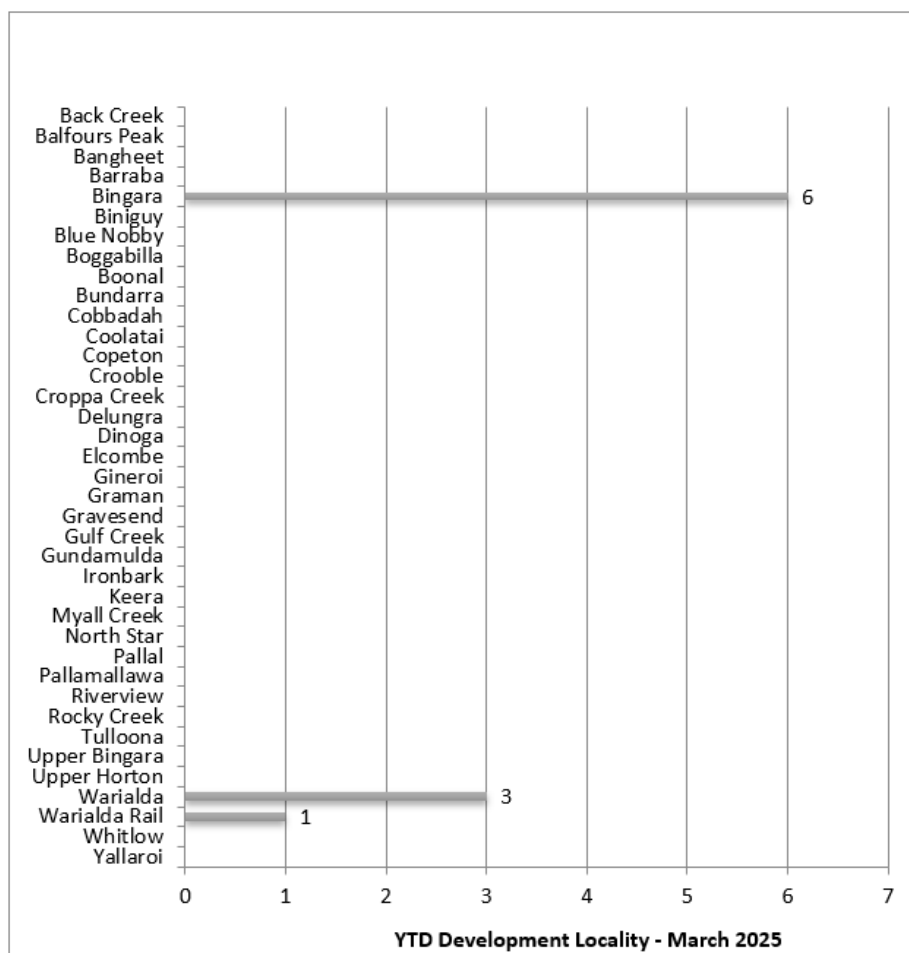
The table below shows a comparison between total value of development applications (excluding s4.55/s96 modification applications) lodged during the month of March 2025 compared to the same period in the previous year.



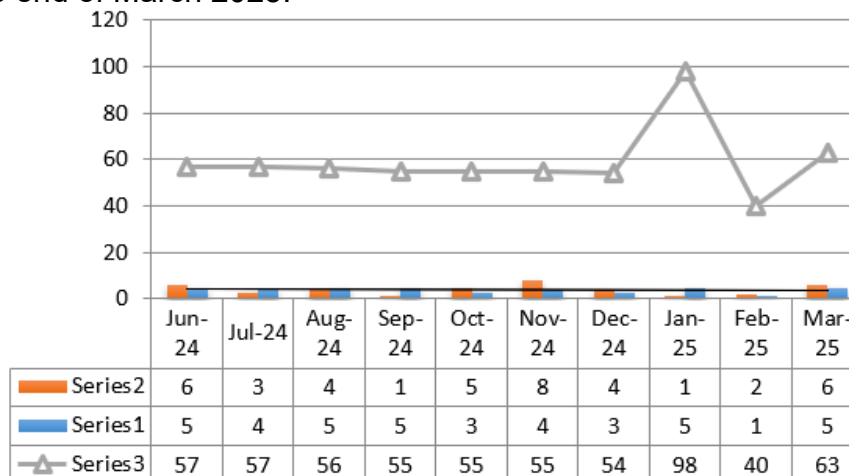
Development Applications (excluding s4.55/s96 modification applications) lodged for the year by type – YTD March 2025, the variance in the number of application types to total applications received is attributed to applications for combined development types ie: a dwelling and detached shed:



Development Applications (excluding s4.55/s96 modification applications) lodged for the year by locality – YTD March 2025:



Development Application Analysis (excluding s4.55 applications) – for the nine (9) months up to the end of March 2025.



The Planning and Development Department Report for March 2025 was compiled with information available at the time of writing the report.

BUILDING SERVICES

The Department continues to receive enquiries and provide advice on a range of planning and building matters including:

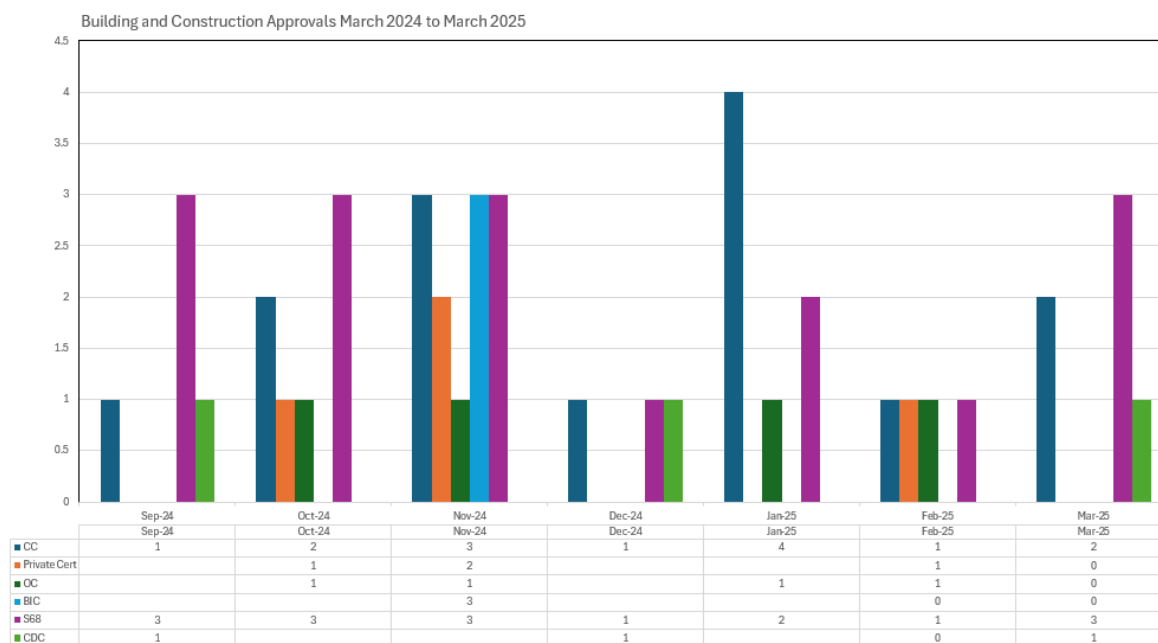
- Minor structure construction e.g., sheds

- Exempt and Complying Development
- Commercial opportunities and construction
- Basix (Building Sustainability Index)
- Bushfire requirements
- Building construction standards and requirements
- Stormwater
- Licensing and owner builder requirements
- Fees and charges
- NSW Planning Portal advice and assistance with the application process

The department receives all applications via the NSW Planning Portal. It is mandatory that all applications for Construction Certificates (CC), Complying Development (CDC), Principal Certifier Appointments (PCA), Occupation Certificates (OC) and Building Information Certificates (BIC) be lodged with Council via the NSW Planning Portal. Section 68 (S68) Applications are currently lodged directly with Council but as of 1st January 2025 will be through the Planning Portal, this is not mandatory at this stage but is the preferred method of application.

There are currently **111 active** applications that are at varying stages of the assessment/construction process and working towards their completion, and issue of an Occupation Certificate.

The graph below summarises the approvals for the current month and the previous 6 months, and the following tables show the details of the approvals that have been issued for the month of March 2025.



CONSTRUCTION CERTIFICATES			
No.	Property Description	Development/Work	\$
17/2024	1 Poverty Flat Lane Warialda	12.1mW x 24mL x 5mH storage shed	\$50,000
44/2024	75 Riddell Street	Retaining Wall	\$5,000

	Bingara		
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COMPLYING DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATES			
No.	Property Description	Development/Work	\$
2025/1	27 Moore Street Bingara	Dwelling	\$220,000

OCCUPATION CERTIFICATES		
No.	Property Description	Development/Work
Nil		

BUILDING INFORMATION CERTIFICATES		
No.	Property Description	Development/Work
Nil		

PRIVATE CERTIFIER – CERTIFICATE REGISTRATION		
No.	Property Description	Development/Work
Nil		

SECTION 68 APPROVALS		
No.	Property Description	Development/Work
2025/3	29 Martyn Street Bingara	Install manufactured dwelling subject to DA 45/2024
2025/5	12565 Gwydir Highway Warialda	Install onsite sewerage management system and sanitary plumbing and drainage for dwelling
2025/7	26 Bowen Street Bingara	2025 Bingara Show – install and operate amusement devices

NO. OF COMPLAINTS/INSPECTIONS March 2025

Type	No.	Yr. to Date	Actioned	Pending
Construction/Building & Building Maintenance	47	436	410	26

NOTE - 10 of the open items are the result of annual repairs and maintenance inspections of the aged accommodation units and are general non urgent repairs.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

The Department continues to receive requests to carry out minor maintenance and these are generally dealt with in a timely manner. Otherwise, the work is scheduled into maintenance staff building activities including new works for attention.

MAJOR PROJECTS WORKED ON

Living Classroom – Wellness and Interpretive Centre

The Wellness & interpretive Centre construction is continuing, with all wall and roof framing now complete as is the installation of roof cladding, guttering and facias. Ruffin of lighting & electrical, data, AV and mechanical services is in progress. External cladding has commenced and will continue over the next couple of weeks.



Common room



Interpretive Centre

Bingara Administration Building – progress report

The Bingara Administration Centre project is progressing well, although rain has delayed progress by 2-3 weeks. Shay Brennan is confident that they can pick up the lost time and the completion date remains at September.

Work on site completed to date includes:

- Installation of underfloor sanitary drainage and connection to sewer main.
- Installation of stormwater drainage.
- Completion of most the building footings.
- Installation of concrete block fire wall adjacent to Pally Styles building.
- Pouring of concrete slab 1.
- Installation of 5 x inground concrete stormwater detention/re-use tanks.

Work is also progress off site with fabrication of the structural steelwork, and the fabrication of the concrete tilt panels, the first of which are due to arrive on site on 8th April.



Preparation of foundations for concrete slab 1



Preparation of foundations for concrete slab 1



Preparation of foundations for concrete slab 1



Pouring of concrete slab 1



Pouring of concrete slab 1

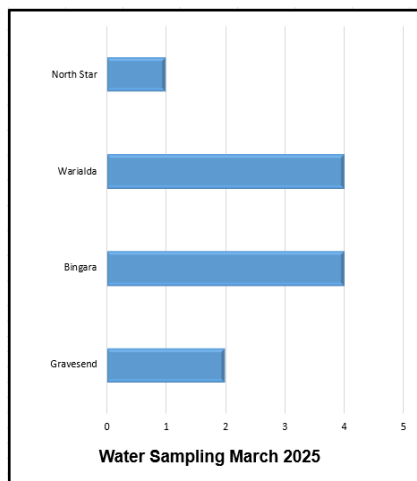
ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY DEPARTMENT**MARCH 2025**

The Department continues to receive enquiries and provide advice on a range of health matters including:

- Overgrown properties
- Food premises design and fit-out
- Food handling practices
- Mobile food vendors
- Food business notification
- Pet Ownership

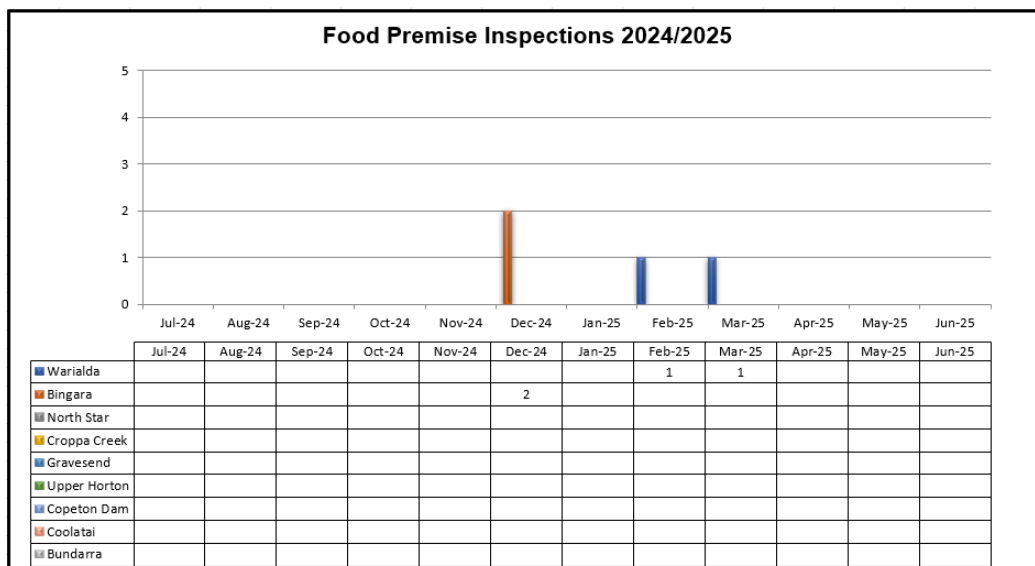
DRINKING WATER TESTING

The Department continues to carry out routine sample collection for microbiological and chemical testing of the water supplies in the towns of Warialda and Bingara, fortnightly sampling of Gravesend and monthly sampling at North Star.

**FOOD INSPECTIONS**

Food Premise Inspections are carried out on an annual basis for each food business. There are approximately 40 registered food service businesses within the Council area including supermarkets, clubs/pubs, motels, bakeries, cafés and takeaway food shops, mobile food vendors and school canteens. Depending on the nature of the food being served some businesses are exempt from inspection unless a complaint or issue arises.

The graph below shows inspections that have been carried out for the current financial year.

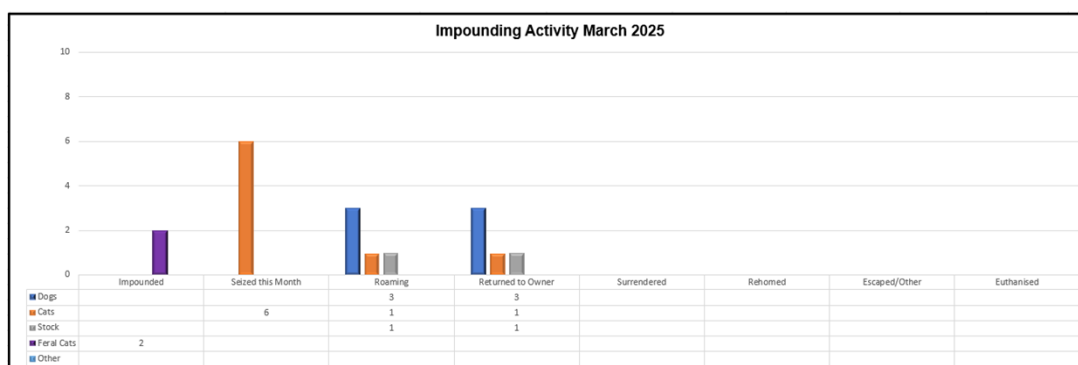


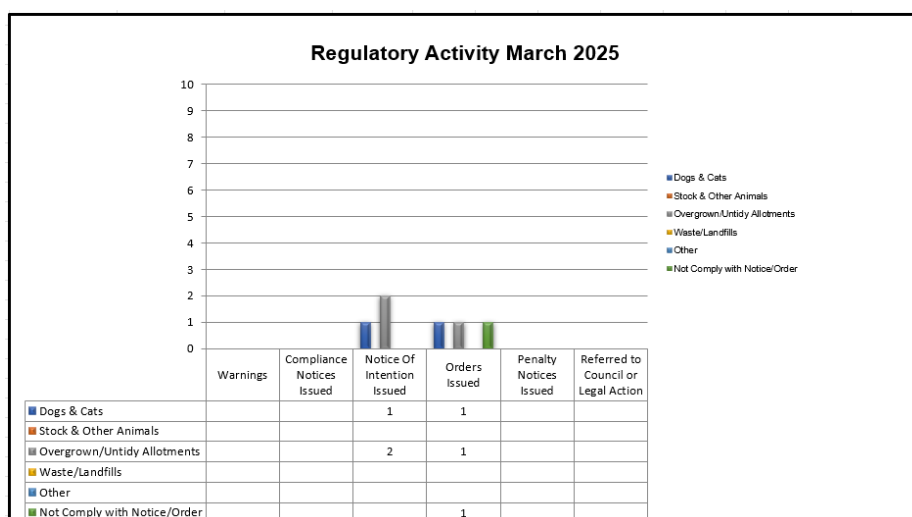
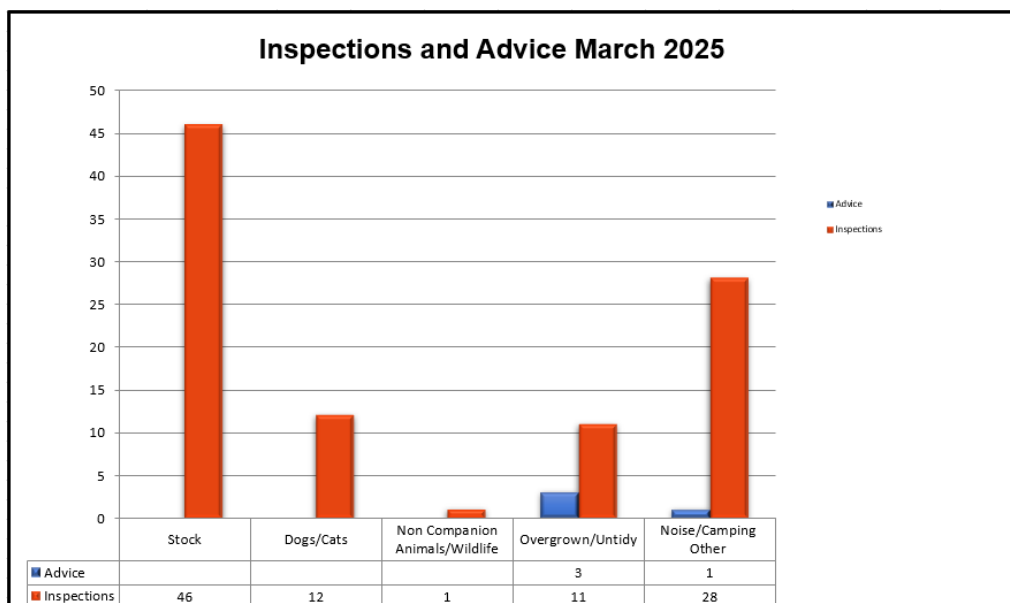
COMPLIANCE AND REGULATORY CONTROL

Council has received customer requests regarding overgrown blocks, roaming dogs, roaming stock, noise, the keeping of animals and other concerns during the month of March 2025. These are investigated and actioned as necessary.

Notice to give effect to the order

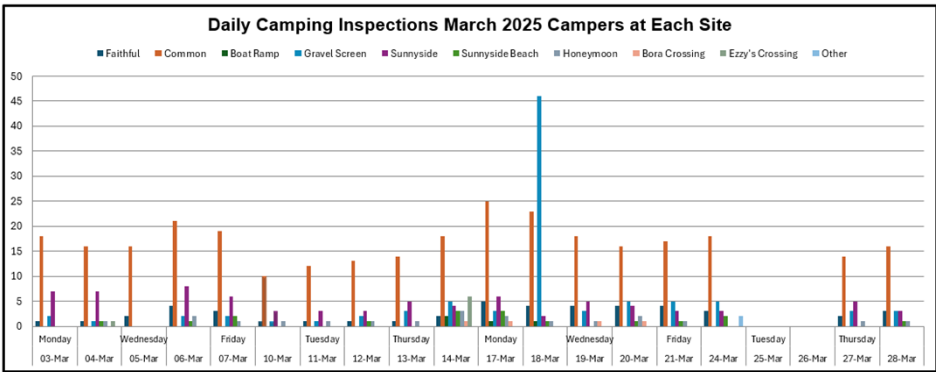
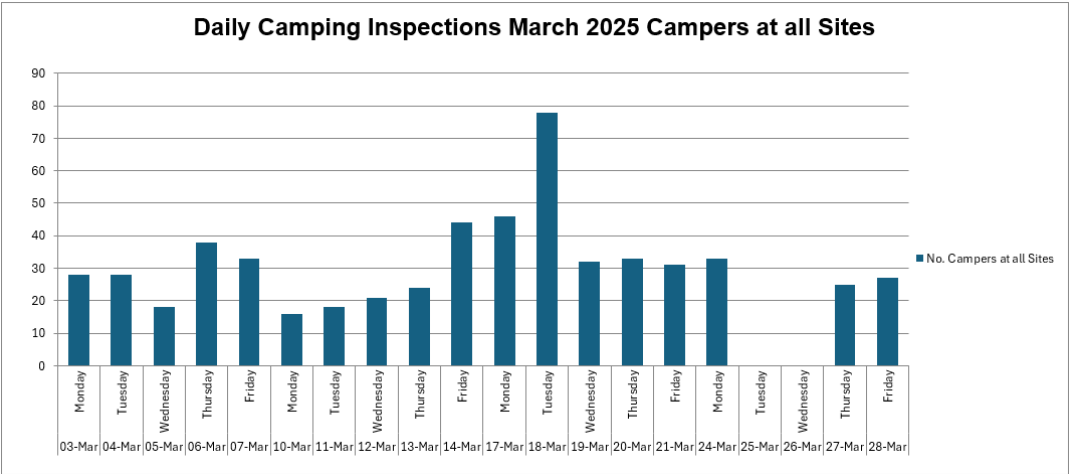
After years of ongoing compliance issues and complaints about two properties in Gwydir Shire being overgrown and untidy, the Council served notices to enter the properties and conduct a cleanup. Notices were served on March 18th, with the cleanup beginning on March 25th. It was a joint effort with our two compliance officers working with six staff from Parks and Gardens, utilizing two trucks and an excavator. The cleanup took two days, during which the Council removed excessive vegetation, excess building materials, rubbish, and various articles and sundry items.



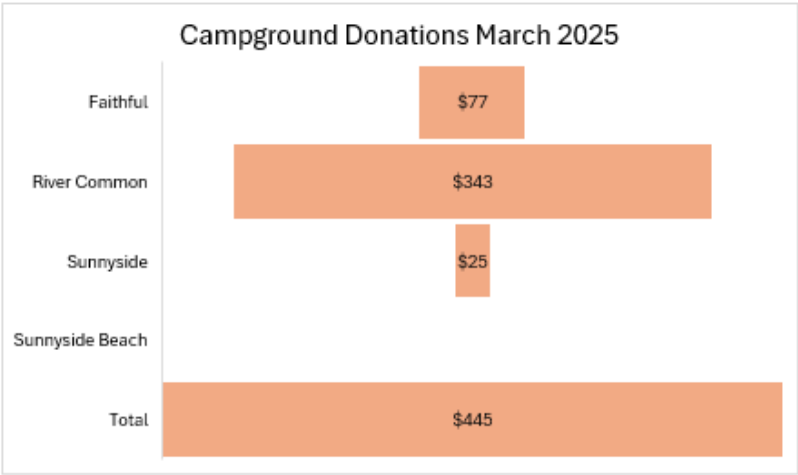


RIVERSIDE CAMPING

Council's Compliance Officers aim to carry out daily checks along the river to ensure that camping is being conducted in a safe and hygienic manner. Flyers promoting local events and services are distributed to campers and enquiries from campers are addressed as required. The graphs below show total numbers of campers and the distribution of campers at the different campsites.



CAMPING AREA DONATIONS COLLECTED



LANDFILL REPORTS

Landfill Access

Coolatai Landfill will be the next site to have its gates locked, requiring an access code for entry. The lock will be installed on Monday, April 7th, 2025. Residents in the

catchment area have already received letters with their access codes. The Council will host an information session at the Wallaroo Hotel in Coolatai on Wednesday, April 2nd, to inform residents about the changes, demonstrate how to use the lock, and answer any questions they may have.

Bingara Landfill

Drum Muster: The compound has been cleared. Planning is underway to move and enlarge the current cage due to its small size. Approximately 1500 drums from Upper Horton landfill are being processed at Bingara.

Green Waste: Shredding of green waste piles and mattresses will begin next week. Contractor has started moving equipment onsite and will begin work as soon as the weather improves.

E-Waste: Contractor will pick up and recycle E-Waste and batteries next week.

Tyres: Tyre cages are full and scheduled for removal by contractor.

Accessibility: All waste areas are accessible, but wet weather has made maintenance challenging.



Large pile of drums to be moved from Upper Horton to Bingara.

Warialda Landfill

Drum Muster: The compound will be cleared on the next run.

Green Waste & Concrete Piles: Contractor will move to Warialda after Bingara to process green waste & concrete piles. Crushed concrete material will be used to improve access for future use.

E-Waste: Contractor will pick up and recycle E-Waste and batteries next week.

Tyres: Tyre cages are full and scheduled for removal by contractor.

Accessibility: All waste areas are accessible, but wet weather has made maintenance challenging.

Warialda Rail

Gates: Gates are working correctly, with some mud in the tracks that has been cleaned out but will need regular checking for buildup; battery voltage levels are good.

Household Waste: Household waste will need pushing up next week, weather permitting, and a contractor will attend to this.

Accessibility: All waste piles and other areas are easily accessible.

Waste Volumes: There has been minimal change in waste volumes since the last inspection.

Scheduled Works: Scheduled works have been put on hold until the landfills dry out.

Coolatai

Household Waste: Household waste pit pushed up.

Fire Monitoring: Small amount of smoke from a recent fire escaping from underground; notified RFS and they will monitor.

Accessibility: All waste piles and areas are accessible. Still plenty of room in the pit and easy access.

Surveillance: Surveillance camera and signage installed in preparation for the gate to be locked on April 7th. Camera working well.

Information Session: Information session with local users to be held at the Wallaroo Hotel on April 2nd to discuss the restricted access.

Croppa Creek

Tyres: More tyres dumped, obviously from a tyre repair company, with writing visible on at least 8 of the tyres. A trail cam will be installed to identify the offender.

Drum Muster: The Drum Muster baler has removed all drums from the site.

Recycle Bins: Recycle bins have been emptied.

Internal Roads: Due to the recent amount of rainfall, the internal roads at the landfill are very wet, with a high risk of getting bogged. Internal roads will need attention as they are in a poor state.

Household Waste: Household waste needs pushing up and will be attended to when the rain stops, and the site is accessible by heavy plant.

Fire Monitoring: It appears there has been a recent fire in the pit. The local RFS are aware of the situation and are monitoring for flare-ups. Some waste near the edge of the pit needs pushing in but will have to wait until the fire situation is under control.

Information Signs: Information signs need replacing. They have been ordered with Council's internal sign maker and are awaiting delivery.



Sign that needs replacing at Croppa Creek Landfill



Fire at Croppa Creek.

North Star Transfer Station

Skip Bins: All skip bins were emptied. Waste had to be taken to Warialda landfill because Croppa Creek landfill is too wet and boggy for disposal.

Area Condition: The area is tidy and accessible. A larger volume of waste is expected due to the conditions at Croppa Creek, and bins will be monitored for overfilling.

Cardboard: Cardboard boxes were not picked up when recycle bins were emptied and had to be put in the skip bins. There were far too many to fit in the recycle bins. Waste contractor will be contacted to see if this can be collected when the recycle bins are emptied. All recycle bins are full.

Signage: New signs have been erected and decals put on bins.



New signs erected at North Star Transfer Station.

Upper Horton

Lock and Cameras: Lock and cameras working correctly. Only a couple of issues with people not using the lock correctly and not being able to get access. They have been talked through the process and are now confident in using it.

Waste Oil: Large volume of waste oil dumped which had to be removed to Bingara oil bunker.

Dumping Outside Gates: Dumping outside the gates has occurred a few times. Will go through surveillance footage to see if anything can be identified.

Waste Volume: Amount of waste being deposited has dropped dramatically since the restricted access was initiated.

Weather Conditions: Very wet and boggy. Will need pushing up when weather permits.



Large volume of oil dumped at Upper Horton Landfill.



Items being dumped outside the gate at Upper Horton Landfill.

Gravesend

Gates: Gates are working correctly, with tracks clean. The gate exit button is malfunctioning occasionally and will be replaced. Battery voltage checked and is good.

Waste Piles: Household waste is spilling out onto the access road.

Green Waste: Green waste is starting to spill onto the road, with a large amount dumped after recent winds.

Weather Conditions: Too wet and muddy for any works to proceed.

KOALA PARK DONATIONS

Koala Park Donations
March 2025
\$10.80

PRIORITY WEED CONTROL

Property Inspection Program

Staff continue to assist land holders and the community with:

- Advice on the control of Priority Weeds and Biosecurity Duties
- Private and Public Property inspections
- Spraying of priority weeds and emerging weeds

Training and Development for Weeds Officers

March was a significant month for the weeds officers, who balanced their usual work of inspections and spraying with extensive training to enhance their skills and knowledge. These training sessions covered various aspects of their roles, from grass identification to software management and regulatory compliance. In addition to their training, the officers also held a booth at the 2025 Bingara Show to engage with the community and provide information on weed management.

Grass Identification

Grass identification training was conducted in East Maitland. This two-day course taught participants to recognize features and attributes of various local native and exotic grass species. It included training in the use of field guides and plant keys for grass identification, and methods for describing these species.

Compliance and Regulatory Training

Compliance and regulatory training took place in Port Macquarie. This five-day workshop, provided by the Australian Centre for Financial and Environmental Compliance (ACFEC), covered core duties and functions of Authorised Officers under the Biosecurity Act 2015. The training included understanding delegations, certificates of authority, and the use of biosecurity directions and other statutory tools. This training improved their ability to handle compliance issues, ultimately leading to better management of weed-related problems in the field.

Iconyx Software Training

A two-day training session on the new weeds management program, Iconyx, was held in Narrabri. This training aimed to familiarize the team with the software's features and capabilities to enhance their efficiency in managing weed-related issues.

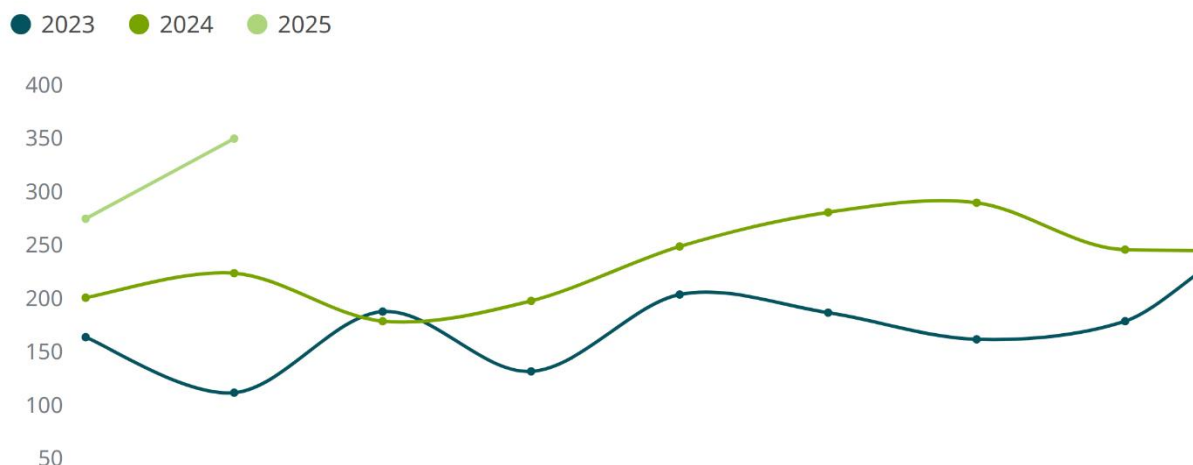
The Planning & Environment Department report for March 2025 was compiled with information available at the time of preparing the report.

INFORMATION SERVICES**MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 2025**

The Information Services help desk continues to provide essential support to staff across the organisation, ensuring the smooth operation of core systems, including IT, GIS, and Records management. This support encompasses technical issue resolution, data management, and system accessibility. Below is a summary of key service desk activities for the reporting period:

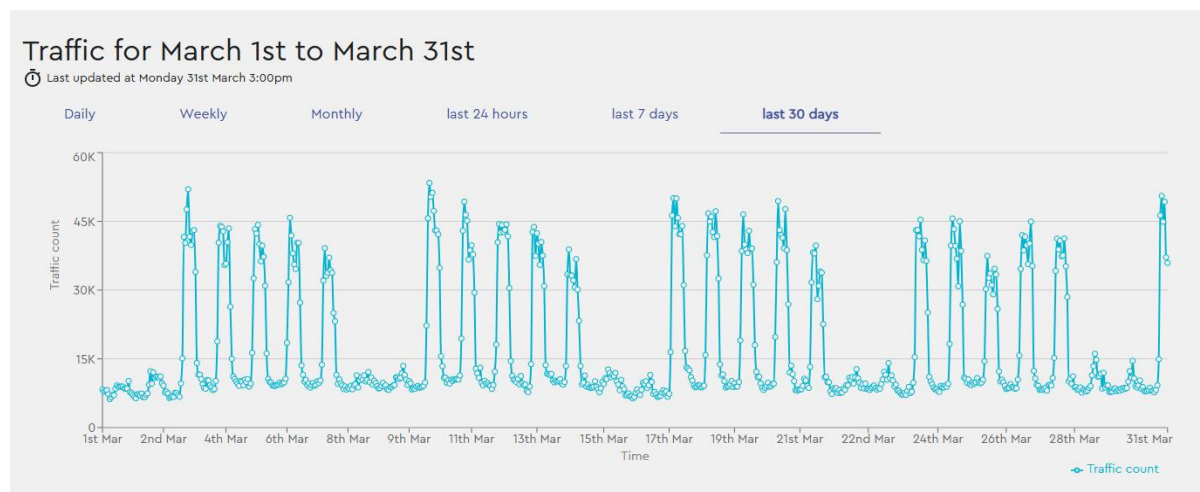
A total of 303 support tickets were logged during the period, with 333 resolved in total, including those carried over from previous periods. The median resolution time for support tickets was 3.7 hours, reflecting overall efficiency in issue resolution. 91 per cent of the tickets are related to IT, 4% were informational status reports from third parties, while GIS accounts for 3% and Records for 2%.

There has been a significant increase in support tickets compared to the same period last year, rising from 179 to 333. This increase is partly due to the inclusion of GIS and Records-related requests in the help desk system, as well as a deliberate effort to ensure that nearly all help desk inquiries are properly logged and monitored.

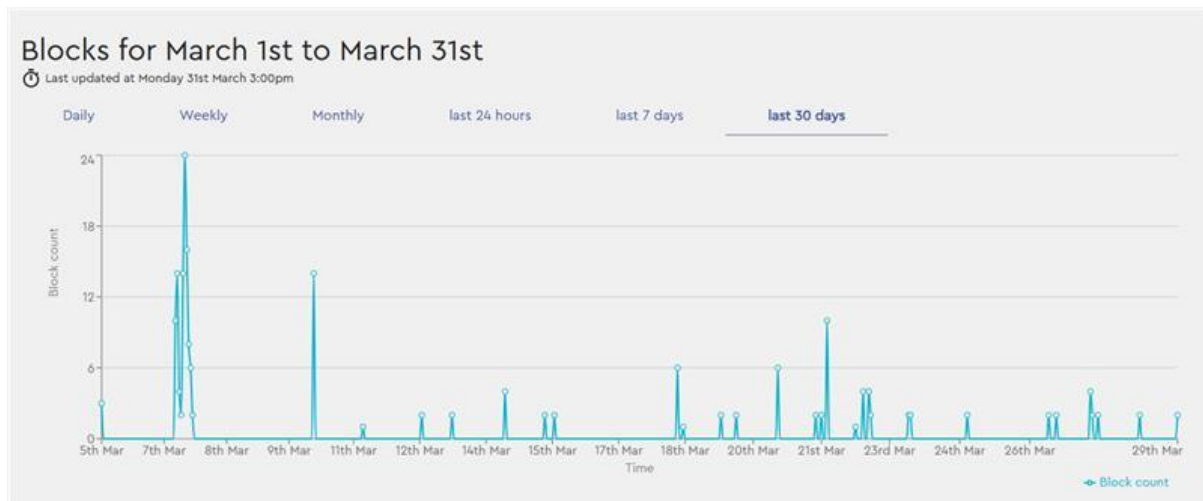


Cyber Security – AUPDNS Implementation

Council has recently implemented the Australian Government’s Protective Domain Name System (AUPDNS) across its on-premise network infrastructure as part of an ongoing commitment to strengthen cyber resilience. AUPDNS is a threat-blocking service provided by the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC), designed to prevent access to known malicious domains at the DNS level. The initial rollout targets Council’s on-site network devices, with plans underway to expand coverage to all Council-managed devices, regardless of location, in the coming months. This staged approach ensures Council can progressively enhance its protection against phishing, malware, and other cyber threats, while monitoring effectiveness and adapting deployment strategies as needed. The below graphs highlight the total traffic requests over the on-premise infrastructure and threats blocked for the month of March.



Total traffic requests sent to AUPDNS



Total threats blocked by AUPDNS

RISK & WHS ACTIVITY REPORT

MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 2025

Council recorded two property damage incidents and two injuries for March 2025. Six workers compensation cases are currently being managed, with three employees on suitable (modified) duties. In terms of risk claims, there have been three external claims against Council—primarily related to vehicle and tyre damage—and two claims on Council's own insurance arising from property or storm damage.

Insurance Renewal Period (2025–2026) Update

Council is currently finalising its insurance renewals with Statewide for the 2025–2026 period. This process is being managed through the iRIS platform, which consolidates all renewal questionnaires and allows users to view, update, and submit relevant information securely. Nine of the ten questionnaires have already been completed, with only one final questionnaire remaining, due April 14.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report be received.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT the report be received.

(Moved Cr Rachel Sherman, Seconded Cr Sarah Crump)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

7.5 Council's Investment Report

File Reference: NA

Delivery Program

Goal: 5. Organisational management

Outcome: 5.1 Corporate management

Strategy: 5.1.1 Financial Management and accountability systems

Author: Helen Thomas, Chief Financial Officer

STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST NA

IN BRIEF/SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

At each monthly Ordinary Meeting, the Council is presented with the schedule relating to Investments, as at the end of the previous month.

TABLED ITEMS Nil

BACKGROUND

In accordance with Clause 19(3) of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulation 1993, the following information provides details of Council's funds invested as at 31st March 2025.

Cash and Investments

Total Investments

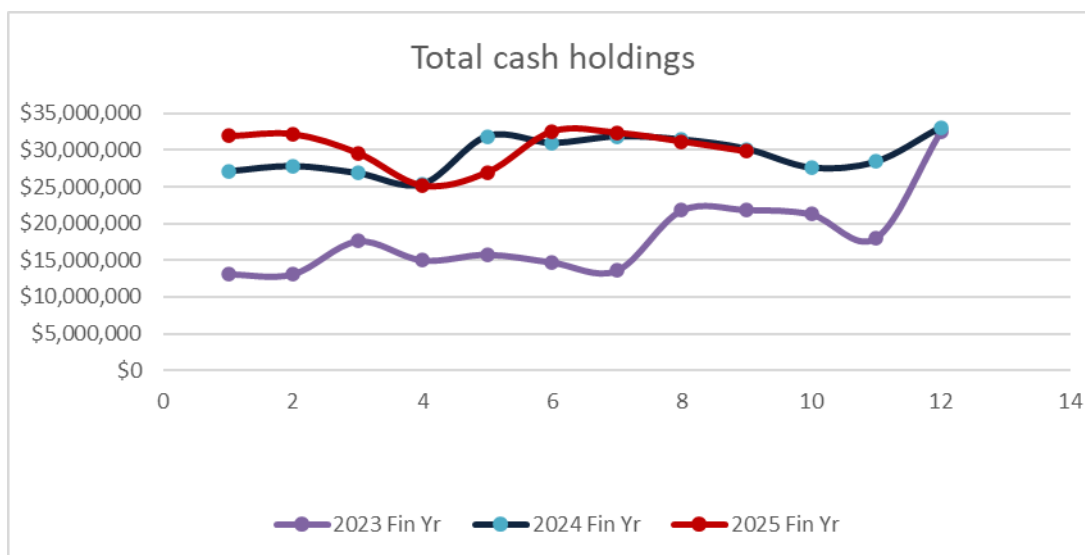
Managed Funds	\$3,511,311.36
Grand Total Investments	\$3,511,311.36

Total Cash and Investments

Investments	\$3,511,311.36
Cash at bank	\$26,316,713.83
Grand Total Cash and Investments	\$29,828,025.19

General Fund Cash

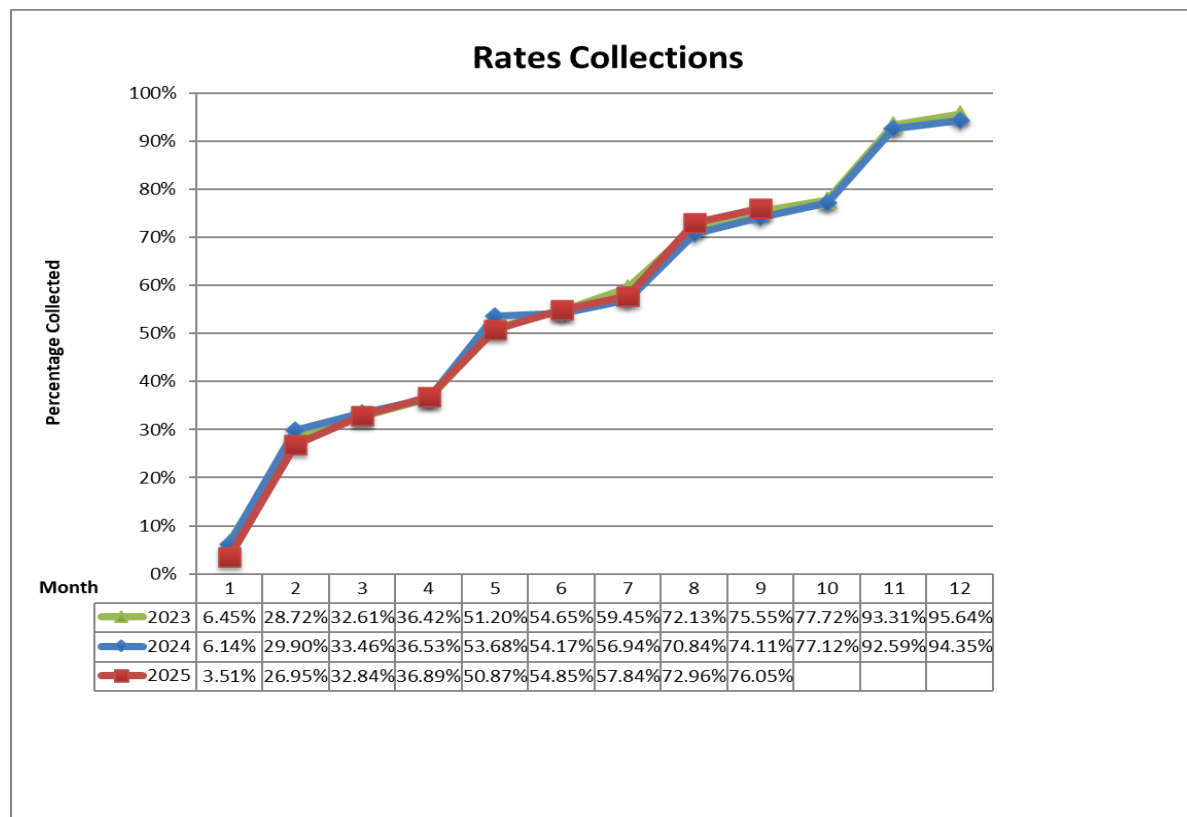
Total cash and investments	\$29,828,025.19
LESS:	
Water fund*	-\$1,351,828.00
Sewer fund*	-\$1,258,766.00
Waste fund*	-\$4,554,905.00
Other restrictions:	
Employee leave entitlements*	-\$1,000,000.00
Bonds and deposits	-\$1,565,280.00
Unexpended grants*	-\$6,626,379.00
Developer contributions	-\$617,673.00
Asset Replacement Program	-\$347,238.00
Internal Restrictions*	-\$5,341,776.00
Admin Building Funding	-\$5,000,000.00
Discretionary General Fund Cash	\$2,164,180.19



I, Helen Thomas, CFO and Responsible Accounting Officer for Gwydir Shire Council, certify that the Council's investments have been made in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 and Council's Investment Policy, as amended.

RATES COLLECTIONS

The graph below represents a comparative of the percentage collections for the current year against the two previous rating years. The current years collections are up to 31st March 2025.



OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

THAT the March 2025 Monthly Investment and Rates Collection report be received.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT the March 2025 Monthly Investment and Rates Collection report be received.

(Moved Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Seconded Cr Sean Coleman)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

7.6 Double Payment for Crown Land Acquired by Local Government

File Reference: NA

Delivery Program

Goal: 4. Proactive regional and local leadership

Outcome: 4.2 We work together to achieve our goals

Strategy: 4.2.2 Work in partnership to plan for the future

Author: General Manager

STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST Nil

IN BRIEF/SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

This report is for information.

TABLED ITEMS Nil

BACKGROUND

Policies of the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's, Crown Lands and Office of Local Government branches have resulted in the subversion of the intention of the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* and the requirement for Local Government to pay double and sometimes more for land required to meet service functions.

COMMENT

Gwydir Shire has submitted the attached submission to the Country Mayors' Association for that group's consideration.

It is scheduled for consideration at its May 2025 Meeting.

The recommendation being submitted for the Association's determination is:

It is recommended that a delegation of the Country Mayor's Association is sent to meet the Minister for Lands and Property and the Minister for Local Government seeking a solution to the double payment of compensation by Local Government for acquired land under Aboriginal Land Claim.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

THAT the information is noted.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Country Mayors' Association Submission [7.6.1 - 7 pages]

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT the information is noted.

FURTHER that the information also be conveyed to the Shire's local State Member for his information.

(Moved Cr Rachel Sherman, Seconded Cr Sean Coleman)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

Double Payment for Crown Land Acquired by Local Government

Issue

Policies of the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's, Crown Lands and Office of Local Government branches have resulted in the subversion of the intention of the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* and the requirement for Local Government to pay double and sometimes more for land required to meet service functions.

Recommendation

It is recommended that a delegation of the Country Mayor's Association is sent to meet the Minister for Lands and Property and the Minister for Local Government seeking a solution to the double payment of compensation by Local Government for acquired land under Aboriginal Land Claim.

A. Local Government Acquisition

A significant portion (over 40%) of the State of New South Wales remains Crown land, and while most of this land is in the Western Division, around 8% of the Eastern and Central Divisions continues to be Crown land.

This Crown land is often underdeveloped or underutilised, is close to council infrastructure and/or adjoining existing transport infrastructure (ie roads). This can mean that in meeting service functions under the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act) a council will need to acquire Crown land. Authority to acquire land is provided to local government through the LG Act and the *Roads Act 1993* and is required to be undertaken consistent with the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* (LA Act).

The combined legislative requirement under these acts provides that a council must receive the approval of the Minister for Local Government and the Governor to effect an acquisition. This approval is managed by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure – Office of Local Government (OLG).

OLG will not process an application by a council, to the Minister for Local Government and the Governor, to acquire NSW Government land (including Crown land) without the consent of the nominal landowner (the government entity responsible for the management of the land).¹ In the case of Crown land this nominal owner is the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure – Crown lands (DPHI-CL). It should be noted that the OLG position in this regard is a policy position rather than a legislated requirement.

¹ In recent years these nominal landowners have refused to provide consent, in favour of concurring to receive a Proposed Acquisition Notice (PAN) under the LA Act. OLG now processes acquisition application based on this concurrence.

This position of OLG has resulted in a council being required to apply to DPHI-CL for approval to acquire Crown land.²

B. Aboriginal Land Claims

Crown land in NSW may be claimed by an Aboriginal Land Council under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* (ALR Act). These claims are termed Aboriginal land claims (ALC)s. On receiving an ALC, where the Crown land meets certain criteria³ (ie is *claimable crown land*) the Minister for Lands and Property is required to grant the land in freehold to the claimant Aboriginal Land Council.⁴

DPHI-CL is the agency responsible for assessing whether an ALC is over *claimable crown land* and make recommendation to the Minister for Lands and Property regarding whether the ALC should be granted. Since the introduction of the ALR Act the DPHI-CL (and its predecessors) has not been able to assess the ALCs in a timely fashion. This has resulted in there currently being between 30,000 and 40,000 outstanding undetermined ALCs across the State, a significant number of which have been outstanding for many years.

It is clear that there exists a significant segment of the Crown land portfolio that, if assessed, would be determined as *claimable crown land* for the purposes of the ALR Act. In this segment of the Crown land portfolio, the **equity interest** of the State in the land is **nil**.

The DPHI-CL will not process an application to acquire Crown land that is subject to an undetermined ALC. It should be noted that the DPHI-CL position in this regard is a policy position rather than a legislated requirement.

This position of the DPHI-CL has resulted in a council being required to:

1. abandon the proposal to acquire the Crown land and possibly abandon the intention to provide a service function, or
2. wait until the DPHI-CL can be persuaded to assess and determine the ALC, for an unspecified period and an uncertain outcome,⁵ or
3. negotiate with the claimant aboriginal land council for the withdrawal of the ALC.

² Or to seek the concurrence of DPHI-CL to receive a PAN.

³ Generally, this means Crown land that is not lawfully used and occupied. The definition of lawful use and occupation has been extensively defined by the courts and is further being considered by the High Court of Australia at the time of writing.

⁴ The New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council may claim land on behalf of a Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). In this case the land would be granted to the LALC. The Minister for Lands and Property does not have discretion in the determination of an ALC. An Aboriginal Land Council may appeal to the Courts to review the decision of the Minister in this regard.

⁵ Waiting for the determination of an ALC involves considerable risk. Section 42B of the ALR Act provides that land vested in an Aboriginal Land Council cannot be appropriated except by an Act of Parliament. For the majority of this land, even if the Aboriginal Land Council is supportive of a sale, it cannot be achieved without a determination of native title under the *Native Title Act 1993* by the Federal Court of Australia.

C. Withdrawal of Aboriginal Land Claims

Withdrawal of the ALC can only be achieved with the agreement of the Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). Obtaining that agreement, even with a co-operative LALC, can be time consuming. Concurrence of the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council is also required. The negotiation of withdrawal of an ALC will generally involve:

1. enacting an agreement whereby the LALC agrees to withdraw the claim and not place any further claim on the land (at least for the period required to undertake the acquisition), and
2. payment by the council to the LALC of the market value of the land, and
3. payment by the council of the legal and administrative costs of the LALC.

This may be required regardless of whether the ALC would have been determined to be over *claimable crown land*.

D. Restoration of State's Equity Interest

Once the ALC has been withdrawn, the council can apply for the concurrence of the DPHI-CL to receive a Proposed Acquisition Notice (PAN) and then to the OLG for Ministers and Governor's approval for the compulsory acquisition.

However, with the withdrawal of the ALC, the State's equity interest in land, which was previously nil, has been restored to market value.

The council is required to issue a PAN to the DPHI-CL including a claim for compensation form. The DPHI-CL has the option not to make this claim for compensation but does not. The DPHI-CL position is that they are required to claim compensation under Treasury guidelines unless they receive special Treasury approval. The DPHI-CL will not apply for this special Treasury approval on behalf of a council.

The claim for compensation is assessed and determined by the NSW Valuer General, another branch of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. The council is required to pay the fees of the NSW Valuer General in assessing the compensation.

E. Result

These policy positions of the OLG and the DPHI-CL have resulted in Local Government paying, for a specific parcel of land:

- double the market value of the land, being once each to DPHI-CL and the respective LALC,
- two sets of valuation fees, for the negotiation of the withdrawal of the land claim and for the claim for compensation assessment by the NSW Valuer General,
- the legal and administrative costs of the LALC,
- the administrative costs of the DPHI-CL and the NSW Valuer General,
- the council's own costs.

This result is a significant subversion of the intention of the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms) Acquisition Act 1991* whereby a council is required to pay far more than what could be considered to be "Just Terms" compensation for accessing its rights under the legislation.

It also provides a perverse incentive for the DPHI-CL and NSW Treasury, not to meet its obligations in assessing ALCs under the ALR Act in a timely fashion.

F. NSW Government Responsibility

As noted, the responsible agency for this matter is the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure through three branches being:

- Crown Lands
- Office of Local Government
- NSW Valuer General

The Ministers responsible for these branches are the Minister for Lands and Property, currently The Hon. Stephen Kemper and the Minister for Local Government, currently The Hon. Ron Hoenig.

G. Recommendation

It is recommended that a delegation of the Country Mayor's Association is sent to meet the Minister for Lands and Property and the Minister for Local Government seeking a solution to the double payment of compensation by Local Government for acquired land under Aboriginal Land Claim.

It should be noted and clearly articulated that this is not an issue created by local government or an issue of local government seeking to subvert State revenue. It is an issue arising from:

- a failure of the State to address Aboriginal land claims in a timely fashion, and
- a failure of State accounting, where land under Aboriginal land claim has value, or at least where the value is not marked as qualified, in the State accounts.⁶

H. Options

There are a number of options that could be considered to address this issue.

Option 1 – Valuer General to account for compensation paid for withdrawal of claim.

The simplest of these would be for the Minister for Lands and Property to instruct the NSW Valuer General that a determination of compensation under Section 41 of the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* must accept:

1. evidence of an agreement having been executed between the acquiring authority (the council) and Aboriginal Land Council(s) constituted under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*, for the purpose of effecting the withdrawal of an ALC under that Act
2. payment by the acquiring authority (the council) to the Aboriginal Land Council for the purpose of effecting the withdrawal of the ALC, as part or whole payment of compensation assessed as payable to the Crown, regardless that the payment was made prior to the date of acquisition.⁷

While this approach is reasonably simple it should not be allowed to result in the DPHI-CL unreasonably refusing to concur with receiving a Proposed Acquisition Notice.

Where the DPHI-CL considers the land not to be *claimable crown land* it would have the opportunity to assess and determine the ALC in a reasonable period. Regardless, the council would pay not compensation twice.

Option 2 – Removal of the requirement of consent from DPHI-CL to compulsory acquisition.

⁶ In this regard a Crown lands officer should not have to explain the situation where payment for this land was not received, but rather explain the situation where payment was received

⁷ In a separate but somewhat related issue, the NSW Valuer General should be instructed to address native title appropriately as part of their consideration. Currently, it is assessing the Crown compensation as being the market value of the land and that if, in the future, native title is determined to have existed the council will pay that compensation as well. This position is inequitable. The Crown's current interest in the land is the land value, less any value ascribed to native title. If in the future, a value is placed on native title, the Crown having already been paid market value should be responsible for native title compensation.

In this option the Minister for Lands and Property would instruct the DPHI Secretary that consent to receive a PAN be discontinued in favour of a notice of proposed acquisition. The Minister for Local Government would instruct the Office of Local Government that the consent of DPHI-CL was not required.

1. On receiving such a notice the DPHI-CL would, within one month, advise of any ALCs and of it's intention to have the ALC determined within 4 months on the basis the land is not claimable crown land. On this basis the acquiring authority would wait for this period prior to approaching a claimant Aboriginal Land Council.
2. Where the DPHI-CL considers the ALC is over *claimable crown land* or does not respond to the notice of proposed acquisition, the council writes to the claimant Aboriginal Land Council seeking their concurrence to the compulsory acquisition, on the basis they will be compensated at market value for the land.
3. Following approval of the Minister and the Governor the acquisition would be effected with the ALC in place. The NSW Valuer General would subsequently determine compensation based on the equity interest of those parties claiming compensation.

Option 3 – Removal of the DPHI-CL compensation claim.

In this option the Minister for Lands and Property would instruct the DPHI Secretary that a claim for compensation should not be lodged, regardless of a PAN being issued, in the circumstance where an Aboriginal Land Council has received compensation for the withdrawal of an ALC.

It should be noted that this option may require the Minister for Lands and Property to consult with the Treasurer or NSW Treasury.

7.7 Budget Workshop Recommendations

File Reference: NA

Delivery Program

Goal: 5. Organisational management

Outcome: 5.1 Corporate management

Strategy: 5.1.1 Financial Management and accountability systems

Author: General Manager

STAFF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST Nil

IN BRIEF/SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

This report will be circulated following the Budget Workshop

TABLED ITEMS Nil

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

TBA

ATTACHMENTS

1. Budget Workshop Recommendations [7.7.1 - 1 page]

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

Draft Integrated Planning and Reporting documentation

THAT the General Manager is authorised to finalise the formatting of the following documents incorporating any required alterations prior to placing them on public exhibition:

- Revised Community Strategic Plan;
- Draft 2025/2026 Operational Plan;
- Draft 2025/2026 Delivery Plan; and;
- Draft 2025/2026 Proposed Actions.

Draft Budget, Fees and Charges and Donations List

THAT the following draft budgetary documents with the changes as agreed are advertised for public submissions:

- The Council's draft Fees and Charges for 2025/2026 with the Truck Wash fees being increased to \$1.65 per minute;
- The Council's draft Donation allocations;

- The Council's draft 2025/2026 Budget (With and without depreciation); and;
- The Council's draft Capital Expenditure Program be updated to include the potential acquisition cost of the Warialda By-Pass corridor.

FURTHER that the draft budget includes taking out a loan for \$1,500,000 to finalise the funding for the Bingara Administration Centre.

Other matters

THAT the Council supports the proposal to assist the Croppa Creek Primary School P & C with an interest free loan to purchase a Community Bus to operate the school bus run.

FURTHER that the former Bingara Boy Scout Hall be made available to the not-for-profit local pottery group.

(Moved Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Seconded Cr John Bishton)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM BUDGET WORKSHOP

Item 1 Draft Integrated Planning and Reporting documentation

THAT the General Manager is authorised to finalise the formatting of the following documents incorporating any required alterations prior to placing them on public exhibition:

- **Revised Community Strategic Plan;**
- **Draft 2025/2026 Operational Plan;**
- **Draft 2025/2026 Delivery Plan; and;**
- **Draft 2025/2026 Proposed Actions.**

Item 2 Draft Budget, Fees and Charges and Donations List

THAT the following draft budgetary documents with the changes as agreed are advertised for public submissions:

- **The Council's draft Fees and Charges for 2025/2026 with the Truck Wash fees being increased to \$1.65 per minute;**
- **The Council's draft Donation allocations;**
- **The Council's draft 2025/2026 Budget (With and without depreciation); and;**
- **The Council's draft Capital Expenditure Program be updated to include the potential acquisition cost of the Warialda By-Pass corridor.**

FURTHER that the draft budget includes taking out a loan for \$1,500,000 to finalise the funding for the Bingara Administration Centre.

Other matters

THAT the Council supports the proposal to assist the Croppa Creek Primary School P & C with an interest free loan to purchase a Community Bus to operate the school bus run.

FURTHER that the former Bingara Boy Scout Hall be made available to the not-for-profit local pottery group.

8 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cr Collins

The following matters were raised by Cr Collins:

How did the meetings at Coolatai go regarding the operation of the Coolatai Tip? The meeting was advised that a further meeting is scheduled.

The meeting was advised that the Croppa Creek community are very grateful for the co-operation it has received from Council regarding the school bus issue.

Regarding the recent damage to the Warialda Recreation Ground from vehicles, is possible to lock the facility at night?

Is it possible to repair the severe washout that has occurred to the Hope Street Warialda culvert?

The public address speakers at the Warialda Recreation Ground require maintenance, is it Council's responsibility?

There is a leaking pipe at the Koala Park.

At 84 High Street Warialda there is a dangerous situation with vegetation encroaching onto the road.

The road from North Star to Boggabilla requires maintenance to the many potholes.

At the North Star Park area is it possible to have shade areas created over the playground equipment and picnic tables?

There is damage that requires attention at the entrance to the service station in Edward Street North Star.

Could the access to the Mobinbry Creek area be tidied up (grass slashed, etc) with possibly also the positioning of seating?

Could the culvert about 5 kilometres from North Star along the North Star road be replaced?

Could speed humps be used to slow traffic through the build up area of North Star?

Could the Council approach the current owners of the North Star Hotel and request that the site be cleaned up?

Cr Bishton

When will the toilets located in Maitland Street be available for use again?

Cr Crump

Cr Crump advised the meeting that she has received complaints from two residents:

One regarding noise from a next door neighbour; and;

One regarding some homestead signage, which has been removed and not replaced.

The meeting was advised the background regarding each issue and what action has been taken.

Cr Dixon OAM

Cr Dixon asked if it was intended to hold any community meetings in the near future and also whether any Council Meetings could be held in rural areas.

The meeting was advised that community meetings will be held in conjunction with the development of the next Community Strategic Plan and that it is problematic to hold remote Council Meetings due to the need to record the meetings.

Cr Coleman

Cr Coleman advised the meeting that the residents of Croppa Creek were grateful to the Council for its support of the recent Rugby Gala Day held at Croppa Creek.

9 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT the Council resolve into Confidential Session, Committee of the Whole and that in the public interest and in accordance with Section 10A (2) of the Local Government Act, 1993, the public and press be excluded from the meeting to consider Item(s) listed on the Agenda.

(Moved Cr Sarah Crump, Seconded Cr John Bishton)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

9.1 Adoption of the Recommendations of the Confidential Session

The meeting was re-opened to the public at 2.13 pm.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

THAT the recommendations of the Confidential Session, namely:

Confidential Organisation and Community Services Report

THAT the report be received.

Recruitment Information

THAT the information is noted.

are adopted.

(Moved Cr Rachel Sherman, Seconded Cr John Bishton)

CARRIED

For: Cr John Bishton, Cr Michael Collins, Cr Rachel Sherman, Cr Sean Coleman, Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, Cr Sarah Crump and Cr Tiffany Galvin

Against: Nil

10 CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 2.15 pm.