



BUSINESS PAPER

Ordinary Council Meeting Wednesday, 11 March 2026

Date: Wednesday, 11 March 2026

Time: 9.30 am

**Location: Gulargambone Central School
Yalcogrin Street
Gulargambone**

The Mayor and Councillors are bound by the Oath/ Affirmation of Office made at the start of the Council term to undertake their civic duties in the best interests of the people of Coonamble Shire and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities, and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act or any other Act, to the best of their skill and judgement. It is also a requirement that the Mayor and Councillors disclose conflicts of interest in relation to items listed for consideration on the Agenda or which are considered at this meeting in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice.

**Daniel Keady
Mayor**

Notice is hereby given that an Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held in the Gulargambone Central School, Yalcogrin Street, Gulargambone on Wednesday, 11 March 2026 at 9.30 am.

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1 OPENING MEETING**2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet today, the Wailwan people and the Gamilaroi people and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

3 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**4 APOLOGIES/APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS****5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****RECOMMENDATION**

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Coonamble Shire Council held on Wednesday, 11 February 2026 be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings of the meeting.

COONAMBLE

SHIRE COUNCIL

MINUTES

**Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday, 11 February 2026**

**MINUTES OF COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE SHIRE CHAMBER, COONAMBLE
ON WEDNESDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2026 AT 9.00 AM**

PRESENT: Mayor Daniel Keady, Deputy Mayor Steven Butler via video link, Cr Karen Churchill, Cr Adam Cohen, Cr Paul Fisher via video link, Cr Margaret Garnsey, Cr Phillipa Goldsmith, Cr Ahmad Karanouh, Cr Paul Wheelhouse

IN ATTENDANCE: Greg Hill (General Manager), Kerrie Murphy (Director Infrastructure), Tony Payne (Director Sustainability, Community & Planning), Jenni Maundrell (Member), Deb Tatton (Manager Finance & Procurement), Marina Colwell (Executive Support Officer), Rebecca Payne (Executive Assistant)

1 OPENING MEETING

The Mayor opened the meeting at 9.12 am, advising the attendees of the following:

- The meeting is being livestreamed and/or recorded for on-demand viewing via Council's website and a person's image and/or voice may be broadcast;
- Attendance at the meeting is to be taken as consent by a person to their image and /or voice being webcast (time will be allowed by the Chairperson for people to leave the meeting before it starts);
- All speakers should refrain from making any defamatory comments or releasing any personal information about another individual without their consent;
- Council accepts no liability for any damage that may result from defamatory comments made by persons attending the meetings – all liability will rest with the individual who made the comments;
- The recording will be available on Council's website for a minimum of 12 months and retained as a Council record;
- Individuals acting in a disorderly manner can be asked by the Chairperson to leave the meeting under the Council's Code of Meeting Practice;
- The meeting must not be recorded by others without the prior written consent of the Council in accordance with the Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet today, the Wailwan people and the Gamilaroi people and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

3 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Nil

4 APOLOGIES/APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS

Nil

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**RESOLUTION 2026/10**

Moved: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Coonamble Shire Council held on Wednesday, 10 December 2025 and the Extraordinary Council Meeting of the Coonamble Shire Council held on Thursday, 22 January 2026 be confirmed as a correct records of the proceedings of the meetings.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

6 DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr Karen Churchill declared a Pecuniary Interest declaration with:

Item 1.1 Write off of Council Debts as she is the owner of a property named in the report. She indicated she will leave the room for the discussion and for voting on the item.

Cr Adam Cohen declared a Significant Non-Pecuniary Interest declaration with:

Item 7.6 Communities & Planning works in progress report as he is a part owner of the business managing the Coonamble Pool. He indicated he will leave the room for the discussion and for voting on the item.

Cr Paul Wheelhouse declared a Pecuniary Interest declaration with:

Item 11.3 Tender 20260109DHS Tallegar Creek Causeway Upgrade report as he owns the business sub-contracting to supplying concrete for the project. He indicated he will leave the room for the discussion and for voting on the item.

Cr Ahmad Karanough declared a Pecuniary Interest declaration with:

Item 1.1 Write off of Council Debts as he is the owner of a property named in the report. He indicated he will leave the room for the discussion and for voting on the item.

7 MAYORAL MINUTE**MAYORAL MINUTE****RESOLUTION 2026/11**

Moved: Mayor Daniel Keady
Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

That the Mayoral Minute for December 2025 and January 2026 be noted.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

At 9:18 am, Cr Ahmad Karanouh left the meeting.

At 9:19 am, Cr Ahmad Karanouh returned to the meeting.

SECTION A - MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL**2.1 ACCESS TO PAEDIATRIC SERVICES IN COONAMBLE SHIRE****RESOLUTION 2026/12**

Moved: Cr Paul Wheelhouse
Seconded: Cr Margaret Garnsey

- 1. That Coonamble Shire Council actively supports the establishment of a regular visiting paediatric service through Aboriginal Health Service in partnership with the charity Little Wings.**
- 2. That Council contributes initial seed funding of \$9,000 and seeks matching funding from government or community sources for the first 12 months of service to commence as soon as practicable.**
- 3. That Council, in partnership with CAHS and other local organisations, continues to advocate for the ongoing funding and delivery of local paediatric services by the NSW Government.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

SECTION B - MATTERS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**3.2 CORRESPONDENCE****RESOLUTION 2026/13**

Moved: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

That the Correspondence Report for December 2025 and January 2026 be received and noted.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0**4.3 CORPORATE SERVICES - PROGRESS REPORT****RESOLUTION 2026/14**

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

Seconded: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

That Council note:

- 1. The information contained within the Corporate Services Progress Report.**
- 2. The investments from 1 December 2025 to 31 January 2026 and that these investments comply with section 625(2) of the Local Government Act 1993, Clause 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 and Council's Investment Policy.**
- 3. The change of the Public Auction for Unpaid Rates from Thursday, 5 March 2026 to a date to be decided in May 2026.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

5.4 COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS/ACTIONS UPDATE

RESOLUTION 2026/15

Moved: Cr Karen Churchill
 Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

That Council note the Council resolutions report and status.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

6.5 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES - WORKS IN PROGRESS

RESOLUTION 2026/16

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith
 Seconded: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

That Council note the report on the works in progress within Council's Infrastructure Directorate.

That a further report be bought back to the April meeting on the Town entrance signs and Way forward signs.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

At 9:59 am, Cr Adam Cohen left the meeting

At 9:59 am, Cr Ahmad Karanouh left the meeting.

7.6 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND PLANNING DIRECTORATE REPORT

RESOLUTION 2026/17

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

Seconded: Cr Paul Wheelhouse

That Council note the report on the activities of the Sustainable Communities and Planning Directorate; and that a report on the school holiday program and youth accommodation housing project be presented to the April meeting.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 7/0

At 10:10 am, Cr Adam Cohen returned to the meeting.

At 10:10 am, Cr Ahmad Karanouh returned to the meeting.

8 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Nil

9 REPORTS TO COUNCIL

9.1 QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW - DECEMBER 2025

RESOLUTION 2026/18

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey

Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

That Council

- 1. Adopt the variations to votes as listed in the budget review documents distributed under separate cover.**
- 2. Note that in the opinion of the Responsible Accounting Officer based on the information as presented in the September Budget review, that Council will be in a satisfactory financial position as at 30 June 2026.**
- 3. Note the classification and position of Council's estimated restricted (reserve) funds as at 31 December 2025.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

9.2 COONAMBLE ARTESIAN BORE BATHS (COONAMBLE ARTESIAN AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCE)

RESOLUTION 2026/19

Moved: Cr Karen Churchill

Seconded: Cr Margaret Garnsey

That Council:

1. Endorse the Coonamble Artesian Bore Baths Masterplan concept as the preferred framework for progressing the Coonamble Artesian and Cultural Experience project.
2. Note the project is supported by \$5.5 million in NSW Government funding under the Regional Tourism Activation Fund, together with councils \$1.25 million co-contribution, subject to the conditions of the executed funding deed.
3. Approve progression to the next stage of the project, including detailed design development, cost planning, and preparation and lodgment of Development Application documentation.
4. Authorise the General Manager to finalise and enter into further service agreements with GHD Group Pty Ltd, to deliver detailed design, cost estimates, statutory approval documentation, tender documentation and project management services.
5. Request the preparation of a detailed Operational Business Model, including pricing strategy and marketing plan prior to construction to confirm long-term financial sustainability.
6. Request regular progress reports be provided to Council outlining project milestones, financial status, risk management and compliance with funding conditions.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

Taken on notice

Cr Karen Churchill suggests the turf at the sportsground be inspected for insect/bug infestation.

Actioning Officer: Director Infrastructure

Cr Ahmad Karanouh suggest watering the younger trees around the town.

Actioning Officer: Director Infrastructure

Cr Paul Wheelhouse suggests putting the Saleyards & Truckwash on direct bore

water.

Actioning Officer: General Manager

Cr Karen Churchill suggested to the General Manager a report for a Reservoir for bore bath.

Actioning Officer: General Manager

10 NOTICES OF MOTIONS/QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE/RESCISSION MOTIONS

Nil

11 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

RESOLUTION 2026/20

Moved: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Seconded: Cr Margaret Garnsey

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993:

11.1 Closed (Public Excluded) Extraordinary Council Meeting of the Coonamble Shire Council - 22 January 2026

11.2 Write off of Council Debts

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - a of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors).

11.3 TENDER 20260109DHS TALLEGAR CREEK CAUSEWAY UPGRADE

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(i) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

11.1 CLOSED (PUBLIC EXCLUDED) EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL - 22 JANUARY 2026

RESOLUTION 2026/21

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

Seconded: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

That the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Coonamble shire council held on Wednesday, 22 January 2026 be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings of the meeting.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

At 10:26 am, Cr Ahmad Karanouh left the meeting.

At 10:32 am, Cr Karen Churchill left the meeting

11.2 WRITE OFF OF COUNCIL DEBTS

RESOLUTION 2026/22

Moved: Cr Margaret Garnsey

Seconded: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

- 1. That Council notes the information contained within this report.**
- 2. That in accordance with the *Regulation 131 and 213 of the NSW Local Government (General) Regulations 2021* that Council resolves to write off the of debts owed to Council.**
- 3. That the write of these debts be funded from the respective Bad Debt Expenses Budget allocations within Council's 2025-2026 Operational Budget.**
- 4. Further, that in accordance with the requirements of *Regulation 131 and 213 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021* that the particulars of the debts to be written off be recorded in Council's register of write off of bad debts.**

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 7/0

At 10:35 am, Cr Karen Churchill returned to the meeting.

At 10:35 am, Cr Ahmad Karanouh returned to the meeting.

At 10:35 am, Cr Paul Wheelhouse left the meeting.

11.3 TENDER 20260109DHS TALLEGAR CREEK CAUSEWAY UPGRADE

RESOLUTION 2026/23

Moved: Cr Phillipa Goldsmith

Seconded: Cr Margaret Garnsey

That Council award Tender 20260109DHS Tallegar Creek Causeway Upgrade to Conseth Solutions Pty.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Steven Butler, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith and Ahmad Karanouh

Against: Nil

CARRIED 8/0

At 10:40 am, Cr Paul Wheelhouse returned to the meeting.

At 10:43 am, Deputy Mayor Steven Butler left the meeting.

RESOLUTION 2026/24

Moved: Cr Ahmad Karanouh

Seconded: Cr Karen Churchill

That Council moves out of Closed Council into Open Council.

In Favour: Crs Daniel Keady, Karen Churchill, Adam Cohen, Paul Fisher, Margaret Garnsey, Phillipa Goldsmith, Ahmad Karanouh and Paul Wheelhouse

Against: Nil

CARRIED 8/0

12 CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING

The Meeting closed at 10.44am

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Council held on 11 March 2026.

.....
CHAIRPERSON

6 DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

7 MAYORAL MINUTE

MAYORAL MINUTE

File Number: M3
Author: Daniel Keady-Mayor
Authoriser: Daniel Keady, Mayor
Annexures: Nil

I am pleased to deliver the Mayoral report for March 2026, covering a period since our last meeting in February.

WATER RESTRICTIONS – Latest report

Coonamble residents have seen the first signs of relief following the severe water restrictions imposed earlier this year. Water restrictions have now eased slightly, allowing the relaxing of restrictions will apply to the East and West parts of the Coonamble township, defined by the Castlereagh River's natural division of the community. Residents in these areas will be permitted to water on alternative days between 7pm and 7am. This staged approach aims to balance community needs with the ongoing fragility of the water network a small but meaningful step toward normalising water use after weeks of critical supply pressures.

This easing follows operational improvements, including bringing an additional bore online to help stabilise the town's water system.

Further improvements are expected as Council completes essential upgrades at the Water Treatment Plant. It is noted that with the reservoir recently reaching 92% capacity, the best level in weeks, they hope to relax restrictions even further. While non-essential water use is still limited, the trend is positive, and the community can anticipate more gradual easing as infrastructure works conclude and supply continues to recover.

I want to express my deepest thanks to our community for the patience and understanding you have shown during this challenging period. I also want to recognise and wholeheartedly thank our Council staff, who have worked tirelessly—often behind the scenes—to fix these issues and ensure our water system is on a path to recovery. Their dedication truly reflects their care for this community.

ONGOING DRY CONDITIONS

Our region continues to face increasingly challenging dry conditions, with indicators showing a steady intensification across Western NSW. As reported recently, approximately 48% of New South Wales is currently classified within drought categories, reflecting a 3% increase since the end of December. Local producers across the Western Plains have been feeling these impacts for many months, and forecasts indicate dry conditions are likely to persist into the coming season.

Many have been proactively managing these conditions for some for time, but ongoing low rainfall and high evaporation are extending impacts beyond rural properties and into townships. The Bureau of Meteorology continues to forecast

below-average rainfall for autumn, underscoring the seriousness of the situation and the need for continued preparedness.

Within our broader region, councils are implementing proactive measures to preserve water security. While each community's situation is unique, the trend of tightening restrictions across the Western Plains highlights the importance of community-wide water awareness.

As a Council, we remain committed to supporting our communities through these ongoing challenges. We will continue monitoring conditions closely, advocating for necessary support, and working collaboratively to ensure resilience, preparedness, and long-term sustainability for the Coonamble Shire.

SENIORS WEEK

I have been warmly invited to attend and officially open the Coonamble Seniors Luncheon, to be held at the Coonamble Bowling Club Auditorium on Wednesday 18 March.

The program for the day will include a Welcome, food service by students from the National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy at Coonamble High School, wonderful entertainment by Royden Donohue, and a delicious roast lunch prepared by the Coonamble Bowling Club, followed by cake.

The theme this year is "Under the Sea," and guests are encouraged to dress up — although this is entirely optional.

ALLIANCE OF WESTERN COUNCILS

On Friday, 27 March, the General Manager and I attended the Alliance of Western Councils meeting in Warren. In addition to being an excellent opportunity to strengthen relationships and engage with neighbouring councils, the meeting delivered valuable insights on several key regional matters. One of the most significant outcomes was a detailed update on the Murray–Darling Basin Plan Review.

A highly informative discussion paper was presented, covering a wide range of critical topics including Surface Water Assessments, Groundwater Assessments, improving River Connectivity, enhancing Floodplain and Wetland Health, strategies for Managing Water Quality, and responses to the ongoing Native Fish Decline. The paper also addressed future planning for water infrastructure and considerations around critical human water needs, highlighting the complexity and importance of long-term water security across the Basin.

As a result of this discussion, Council has been formally invited to make a submission, providing us with an important opportunity to advocate for the needs and priorities of our community within the broader regional framework.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Mayoral Minute for March 2026 be noted.

8 SECTION B - MATTERS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

8.1 COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS/ACTIONS UPDATE

File Number: C17; C20

Author: Rebecca Payne-Executive Assistant

Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager

Annexures: 1. Council Actions Report (under separate cover)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to enable Council to keep track of important Council resolutions.

BACKGROUND

Important and significant Council resolutions will be added to the list of items below, and an update on the status will be provided by the responsible officer.

Updates will be based on the resolution across a monthly, quarterly, six monthly or annual range. By way of example, a Council resolution to construct a new Pound, with no funds approved, will be referred to the following year budget deliberations with a single comment. Similarly, a Council resolution seeking a quarterly financial report will be aligned with the mandatory quarterly financial reporting cycle and closed.

The agenda for Council Meetings close two weeks after the prior meeting resulting in some monthly updates not being provided due to priority being given to actioning the prior meeting resolutions.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Adopted Council resolutions should ideally link in with Council's suite of Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework documents.

(b) Financial Considerations

The financial considerations relating to each item mentioned below would have been considered by Council as part of the original report that dealt with the matter.

COMMENTARY

The outstanding Council resolutions' status and actions are detailed in the attachment.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the Council resolutions report and status.

8.2 CORRESPONDENCE**File Number: C20****Author: Rebecca Payne-Executive Assistant
Marina Colwell-Executive Support****Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager****Annexures: Nil****CORRESPONDENCE**

Each month a list of correspondence is sent out in the Business Paper to Councillors to ensure that they have not missed any information since the last Business Paper was produced.

Date	Information Sent	Author	In	Out	Sent
05/02/26	Water Update	G Hill		✓	✓
09/02/26	Welcome – New member of staff	M Colwell		✓	✓
16/02/26	Water Update	G Hill		✓	✓
16/02/26	Draft Minutes - February Ordinary Meeting	M Colwell		✓	✓
17/02/26	Quarry Committee meeting	G Hill		✓	✓
17/02/26	NSW State Government Grant Opportunities - 17th Feb 2026	G Hill	✓	✓	✓
17/02/26	Grant Connect - New Grant Opportunities and/or Forecast Opportunities	G Hill	✓	✓	✓
19/02/26	Submission of Committee Meeting reports from delegates	M Colwell		✓	✓
19/02/26	Saleyard Committee Meeting	R Payne		✓	✓
20/02/26	Coonamble Boil Water Alert Lifted	G Hill		✓	✓
24/02/26	Water Update	G Hill		✓	✓
03/03/26	Letter of Response – Public Works	M Colwell	✓	✓	✓
03/03/26	Correspondence from the Office of the Hon Paul Scully MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces	R Payne	✓	✓	✓
04/03/26	CMA Media Release: CMA and NSW Emergency Services Minister progress Red Fleet issue	R Payne	✓	✓	✓

06/03/26	Compliment from Coonamble Clay Target Club	R Payne	✓	✓	✓
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RECOMMENDATION

That the Correspondence Report for March 2026 be received and noted.

8 REPORTS TO COUNCIL

9.1 CORPORATE SERVICES - PROGRESS REPORT

File Number: Corporate Services - 20411

Author: Imogen Pawley-Finance Assistant

Kylie Fletcher-Revenue Officer

Deborah Tatton-Manager Finance & Procurement

Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager

Annexures: 1. Imperium markets monthly report. (under separate cover)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information on operations and activities currently in progress within Council's Corporate Services Directorate for the past month.

BACKGROUND

The progress report focuses on the performance of Council's Investment portfolio and its efforts in the collection of outstanding rates and charges for the past month.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

I.5.3 Develop and implement strategies and operations which deliver quality and well managed Council assets and infrastructure to the community.

L.1.3.2 Adopt the eight elements of good governance practices at the essence of operations and decision making.

L1.3.4 Achieve organisational decision making which is strategic and not ad hoc.

(b) Financial Considerations

Investments – Investment levels and interest rates are currently on par with the revised estimate calculations.

Rates & Charges – The annual rate charges are set out within Council's adopted Revenue Policy and 2025 / 26 Operational Plan.

COMMENTARY

Investment Status February 2026

The attached Investment Report was calculated on 28 February 2026 after all maturing dates for investments had passed.

The total Capital Value of Investments is \$28,250,000. This is broken down with \$26,250,000 invested in term deposits as shown in the attached report, and \$2,000,000 in an at call savings account.

Cash And Investment Account Summary

Account	Current Month Balance	Prior Month Balance	Movement	Interest Rate	Current Month Interest Received	YTD Interest Received
Operating Account*	\$1,870,425	\$966,534	+\$903,891	2.85%pa	\$2,868.64	\$27,116.92
Online Saving Account	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$0	3.55%pa	\$5,789.36	\$32,881.27
Term Deposits	\$26,250,000	\$22,750,000	+\$5,500,000	4.32%pa (avg)	\$66,606.71	\$643,759.19

*Balances exclude overdraft facility

Interest Rate

The average interest rate for Council's investments currently sits at approximately 4.28% reflecting three base rate cuts by the Reserve Bank Australia (RBA) so far this calendar year. While this represents a notable decline compared to last year's rates, the introduction of Council's new investment policy has provided greater flexibility, allowing investments to be strategically placed to secure the most competitive returns available. With indications that the RBA may increase interest rates in the near future, Council will endeavour to invest additional funds at improved rates when opportunities arise.

Available Working Funds

Restricted funds are reserves set aside by Council or external parties for specific purposes to meet identified future expenses. Unrestricted funds represent the portion of Council's cash holdings that are available to meet all other operational and financial obligations.

Based on the recently completed December Quarterly Budget Review for 2025 / 2026, the balance of unrestricted cash has been calculated at \$1,799,000.

Cash Outflows

The main areas of expenditure for December and January are in the below table:

Transport – Includes various sealing works and hire of plant, Tooraweenah Road project, state road work.	\$584,249.75
Plant Purchase plant and fuel.	\$131,633.69
Urban Services Cble pool contract	\$32,136.37
Corporate services Electricity and Insurance renewals.	\$178,046.71

Quarry Blasting contract works and Contractor support.	\$247,966.49
Special projects Bore baths and Youth Accommodation	\$363,594.00
Water and Sewer Bore renewal works	\$45,448.04

Of these areas totalling \$1,583,075.05 it is expected \$731,746.41 will be either funded through Grants or reimbursed to Council.

Rates and Charges Collections – February 2026

The below table summarises the Rates and Charges levied and paid which provides a total amount which remains outstanding at the end of the reporting period. This is compared to the same period last year.

	28 February 2026	28 February 25
Rates and charges in arrears as at 30 June 2025	1,627,752.89	1,431,587.79
Rates/charges levied & adjustments for 2025/26	9,246,351.98	8,605,546.21
Pension Concession	- 100,803.58	- 101,107.19
Amounts collected as at 27 February 2026	- 6,846,509.61	- 6,212,314.90
Total Rates and Charges to be Collected	3,926,791.68	3,723,711.91

The amount levied for rates and charges for 2025 / 26 includes the current year’s annual rates and charges and any interest added since the date the rates notices were issued. The amount received as of 27 February 2026 includes receipts for both arrears and the current year’s amounts outstanding.

It should be noted that the rates and charges 2025 / 26 levied amount is reduced by the pensioner concession of \$100,803.58; reducing the amount of income derived from these rates and charges. Of this concession, Council’s contribution is 45%, which represents an amount of \$45,361.61.

The rates and charges as of 28 February 2026 represent 36.11% of the total annual rates and charges levied and outstanding (compared with 37.10% on February 2025).

Water Consumption Charges

	28 February 2026	28 February 2025
Water Consumption Charges and arrears as at 30 June 2025	1,442,815.84	621,860.35
Water Consumption charges & adjustments 2025 / 26 year to date	186,596.48	68,117.02
Amounts collected as at 28 February 2026	- 1,144,113.59	- 446,511.38

Total Water Consumption Charges to be Collected	\$485,298.73	243,465.99
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The water consumption charges as of 28 February 2026 represents 29.78% of the total water consumption charges outstanding (compared to 35.29% on February 2025). Council will note the main variation between the two financial years is directly associated with the delay in generation of the water consumption charges for the 2024 / 25 year.

Council should also note that the 2nd Quarter Water notices have not been raised or issued due to the ongoing water restrictions within the Coonamble township. It is anticipated notices will be issued in the coming weeks once water restrictions are lifted. If ratepayers are concerned about the postponed release, we encourage them to reach out to the office and discuss options for payment to reduce potential bill shock.

Debt Recovery Agency

Council staff have continued to consult with Council's debt recovery agency with a view to continuing Council's process outlined within Council adopted Debt recovery policy. For Council's information during February,

- 10 cases were closed due to full payment or being below recovery threshold. For amounts paid in full this equated to approximately \$56,000
- 139 cases remain under various stages of debt recovery action; including
 - 39 Payment Arrangements through Debt Recovery Agency
 - 98 Rates/Water Cases in progress (Approx \$501,000)
 - 2 Sundry Debtor Cases in progress (Approx \$26,000)

A new round of referrals is due to be sent to the debt recovery agency within the coming weeks.

Sale of Land for Unpaid Rates Update

Notice of the intended Sale of Land appeared in the Government Gazette of the State of New South Wales Number 495 - Local Government Friday, 28 November 2025 and in the Coonamble Times, 10 December 2025 with the advertised date of the sale as Thursday, 5 March 2026.

A further letter of demand has been sent to the relevant ratepayers by SR Law on behalf of Council in December 2025.

SR Law has engaged with several persons including relevant ratepayers and other persons having an interest in the designated properties. Owners of the properties have been invited to enter payment arrangements agreeable to Council.

The 31 properties advertised in the Government Gazette remain on the list for sale.

To maximise the likelihood of a successful outcome from the auction, Council will be rescheduling the public auction to be 21st May 2026. Additional preliminary work will be undertaken and further options for the sale will be brought back to Council in April. Section 715 (1A) Local Government Act allows for the time fixed for the sale must be no later than six(6) months after the date on which an advertisement is first published.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Council staff comply with the directions provided by Council's suite of policies that governs this function of Council.

(b) Legal Implications

Council staff have complied with all regulatory and legislative requirements required for this function of Council.

(c) Social Implications

Council funds are used to provide services and infrastructure to the community, and, as a result, well managed funds maximise the level of financial resources available to support the community.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Sound economic management includes maximising Council's return on funds and the timely collections of monies owed to Council. These actions seek to ensure that Council maintains its ongoing ability to meet both its operational costs as well as any planned asset maintenance and renewal.

(f) Risk Implications

Council policies governing these areas are structured to guide staff in implementation of risk mitigation strategies.

CONCLUSION

This report provides updated information from the operations of the Corporate Services Department for Council's information.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note:

- 1. The information contained within the Corporate Services Progress Report.**
- 2. The investments from 1 February 2026 to 28 February 2026 and that these investments comply with section 625(2) of the Local Government Act 1993, Clause 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 and Council's Investment Policy.**

9.2 APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE UNDER COUNCIL'S DONATIONS POLICY

File Number: 78732

Author: Bruce Quarmby, Director Corporate Services

Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager

Annexures: 1. Draft Donations Committee Minutes 03/03/2026 (under separate cover)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to table to for Council's consideration and adoption of the recommendations from the recently convened Donations Committee meeting held the 3 March 2026.

BACKGROUND

Council's adopted Donations Policy sets out the guidelines to be followed and includes an acquittal form to be completed by each recipient of funding prior to 30 June in which the funds are granted.

At the commencement of the 2025-2026 financial year Council resolved to allocate \$76,100 in funding to towards the provision of financial assistance under the guidance of this policy. Of these funds, \$27,600 has been allocated towards pre-approved donations leaving a budget of \$48,500 for other donations.

The applications being considered by the committee today make up the second round of applications as per the policy.

A copy of the draft minutes from this meeting are attached as an annexure to this report for Council's information.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

L1.4.4 Governance is open and transparent

(b) Financial Considerations

An amount of \$76,100.00 has been included in the donations vote for the 2025-2026 financial year. Taking into consideration the financial assistance which has already been provided throughout the current financial year the current remaining budget for Council to fund any assistance from is as follows:

- Donations Unallocated - \$32,500.00
- Mayoral Donations - \$ 4,295.00

COMMENTARY

The Donations Committee comprising the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and Cr Churchill met on Tuesday 3 March 2026 to consider the valid applications received under this round of funding. All relative documentation provided by the applicants was presented to the Donations Committee to enable it to make its determination.

Details of the three (3) valid applications received are as follows:

- **Rotary Club Coonamble** – seeking a \$1,500 contribution towards costs associated with the provision of a free dinner for people attending the screening of Just a Farmer event planned to be held in Coonamble.

In addressing how the outcome benefits the community the application sites that's the event is a free community event that is targeted at improving mental health in the rural community. Council's assistance will enable Rotary to provide an affordable meal for all attendees, helping encourage participation and foster community connection.

- **Coonamble Children's Service** – seeking a \$5,000 contribution towards costs towards operational costs associated with the provision of the childcare services from their facility.

In addressing how the outcome benefits the community the applications sites that the assistance should it be provided, will assist the service in keeping its fees at a level that encourages families to keep sending their children the to Coonamble Children Service. Maintaining accessible childcare supports parents to increase their participation in the workforce, which benefits both family wellbeing and the broader community.

- **The Bank 2829** – seeking a \$5,000 contribution towards costs associated with establishing a Wellness Garden at *The Bank 2829*. The application states that the wellness and community garden spaces will support wellbeing, connection and engagement including a calming outdoor area for clients attending visiting services, and a functional space for small community activities

In addressing how the outcome benefits the community the applications sites that the installation of the Wellness Garden will provide a shared space that promotes mental wellbeing, inclusion and community connection. It will also serve to enhance the amenity of the main street, encourage foot traffic and support local events.

The Donations Committee discussed and noted that this was the second round of donation applications to be considered during the 2025-2026 financial year and that there would be one further round of applications to be received and considered prior to the end of this financial year.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Council's adopted Donations Policy provides the guidelines for considering and assessing the requests for financial assistance being tabled before Council today.

(b) Legal Implications

Council is complaint with Sections 23 and 24 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

(c) Social Implications

The financial assistance offered under Council's donation policy provides Council with the opportunity to assist various organisations in delivering programs designed to have a positive social impact on the community.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

There are no economic / asset management implications associated with this report.

(f) Risk Implications

There is no risk implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSION

Three (3) valid applications, totalling \$11,500 have been received under the second round of the 2025-2026 financial year funding in accordance with Council's Donations, have been received and considered by the Donations Committee on 3 March 2026 with the following recommendation made by the committee:

(a) Coonamble Rotary Club	\$ 1,500.00
(b) Coonamble Children Services	\$ 5,000.00

RECOMMENDATION**That Council:**

- 1. Notes the information in this report.**
- 2. Provide financial assistance in accordance with the recommendations from the Donations Committee as follows:**
 - (a) Coonamble Rotary Club \$ 2,000.00**
 - (b) Coonamble Children Services \$ 5,000.00**

9.3 ADOPTION OF LOCAL PREFERENCE PURCHASING POLICY

File Number: Policies - P15

Author: Jenni Maundrell-Executive Manager Corporate Governance
Deborah Tatton-Manager Finance & Procurement

Authoriser: Bruce Quarmby, Director Corporate Services

Annexures: 1. Local Preference Purchasing Policy (under separate cover)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council adoption of the Local Preference Purchasing Policy that was placed on public exhibition from 16th December for 28 days to invite comments / submissions from the community.

BACKGROUND

At the December 2025 Council meeting, the reviewed Local Preference Purchasing Policy was placed on public exhibition for 28 days, with submissions invited for a period of 42 days

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

E1.3 Increase entrepreneurial activity in agriculture, business and tourism

L2.1 Use expert, cultural, scientific and local knowledge to inform our decision-making and consultation.

L2.3 Proactively communicate decisions and the processes to reach them to relevant stakeholders

(b) Financial Considerations

Ensuring transparency and risk mitigation within procurement processes of Council.

COMMENTARY

REVIEW LOCAL PREFERENCE PURCHASING POLICY

The Coonamble Shire Community Strategic Plan outlines Council's commitment to the local economy with the following goal (G6):

"We support a resilient local economy by increasing its diversity and boosting opportunities for entrepreneurship and business"

The Local Preference Purchasing Policy identifies the importance of local suppliers within the Coonamble Shire Council Local Government Area (LGA) and the pivotal part they play in growing our local economy. The Policy recognises that "overall value-for-money" is about broader economic benefits to the area and not just the lowest price.

The revised policy is attached with the major sections identified below.

Non-Price Assessment

A non-price assessment criterion will be included and will be based on the locality of the business and its impact on the local and surrounding economy. The assessment

will be allocated up to 7% of the overall weighting for the non-price assessment criteria

Criteria	Score	Supporting Business
Business head office set up and run locally within the Coonamble Local Government Area (LGA), including Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone	7	With the commitment to local businesses and economy
Business branch operating within the LGA, with head office outside the LGA	5	With commitment to local economy
Business set up and run outside of the LGA but within a neighbouring Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warren LGA • Gilgandra LGA • Warrumbungle LGA • Walgett LGA • Narrabri LGA 	3	Minor impact on local economy
Business set up and run outside of the LGA and but within 250km of Coonamble	1	Within Central West NSW
Business operating outside of the above	0	

Following determination of the correct rating as defined above, a minimum weighting of 7% for local preference is applied to the rating to calculate the final score.

Local Supplier Discount

For suppliers who respond to Council’s Procurement Requests if at least 30% of the net cost of their response or tender includes or is attributable to local content, Council will reduce the total quoted cost by the allowance equivalent to the local content discount.

To be eligible for the discount, suppliers must specifically detail and explain in their response to Council’s procurement request the particular facts upon which they rely to establish their eligibility for the discount and must provide any evidence of such eligibility as reasonably required by the Council.

The assessment will be scored based on the following assessment:

Criteria	Rating	Supporting Business
Business provides details and nominates local suppliers and/or subcontractors for goods and services for use in the project to a minimum value of 50% of the contract sum (ex GST)	100%	Demonstrated commitment to using local suppliers and sub-contractors
Business provides details and nominates local suppliers and/or sub-contractors for goods and services for use in the project to a minimum of 30% of the contract sum	50%	Partial commitment to using local suppliers and sub-contractors

(ex GST)		
Business does not commit to using local suppliers and/or sub-contractors	0	

Amount Quoted	Allowance	Maximum Allowance applied
Below \$50,000	10.0%	\$5,000
\$50,001 - \$100,000	7.5%	\$7,500
\$100,001 - \$150,000	5.0%	\$10,000
\$150,001 - \$500,000	2.5%	\$25,000
Above \$500,000	2.5%	\$50,000

For Tenders over \$1Million the local content percentage target will be outlined in the Tender Probity and Evaluation Plan.

Where no sub-contractors are nominated by any tenderer, the tenderer local content criteria will be removed, and the weighting reallocated to a pre-determined evaluation criteria nominated within the Tender Probity and Evaluation Plan. Where this has not been nominated within the Tender Probity and Evaluation Plan, the default evaluation criteria will be price.

Once a supplier is awarded works under this policy, they will be required to provide Council with sufficient documentation to substantiate the utilisation of local content as outlined in their quotation/submission. All subcontractors MUST supply a subcontractor statement upon completion of the works which is to be submitted to Council as part of the completion report. Failure to supply a completion report and subcontractor statements may result in ineligibility for the Local Content Discount for future submissions.

For Council’s information and to avoid doubt, normal processes of assessment of non-price considerations still apply, and this policy does not require that the lowest cost tender is necessarily successful. ***The purpose of this policy is to give preference to local suppliers (compared to non-local suppliers) where all else is equal.***

Additional Commentary from external sources

The policy was reviewed by Council’s Audit and Risk Improvement Committee (ARIC) and compared to other Council’s Policies. ARIC have identified the 10% discount is ‘very generous’ when compared to other Council’s, however, have endorsed the revised policy as it stands. A similar sediment was received from the NSW Local Government Procurement specialist team regarding Council’s current policy and made comment that there is an increasing amount of Council’s moving away from Local Purchasing Discounts due to the risk it can pose to Council.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Once adopted by Council, the revised Local Preference Purchasing Policy will become policies of Council.

(b) Legal Implications

The procurement of goods and services by Council must comply with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993 (Section 55)* and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 (Clauses 177 and 178)*.

(c) Social Implications

The revised Local Preference Purchasing Policy Council's takes into consideration social implications.

(d) Environmental Implications

Nil

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

The objective of the Local Preference Purchasing Policy is to achieve the best value for money in its procurement of goods and services, where possible giving preference to local suppliers, and non-local suppliers using local content, to support the Council's economic development.

(f) Risk Implications

Through the implementation of these additional control measures included in the Policy, Council is seeking to reduce / minimise its exposure to risks associated with its procurement processes.

CONCLUSION

The objective of the Local Preference Purchasing Policy is to achieve the best value for money in its procurement of goods and services, where all other factors are equal, giving preference to local suppliers, and non-local suppliers using local content, to support the Council's economic development. The amendments to the policy have been designed to address the shortcomings identified after the Policy was introduced.

With no public submissions made during the exhibition period, it is now recommended that the policy is adopted

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the revised Local Preference Purchasing Policy

9.4 ADOPTION OF PERMANENT ROAD CLOSURE POLICY AND SHORT TERM ROAD LEASE POLICY

File Number: AM-POL-02

Author: Jenni Maundrell-Executive Manager Corporate Governance
Stuart Lloyd-Manager Assets

Authoriser: Bruce Quarmby, Director Corporate Services

Annexures:

1. DRAFT - PERMANENT ROAD CLOSURE POLICY (under separate cover)
2. DRAFT - SHORT TERM ROAD LEASE POLICY (under separate cover)

PURPOSE

To provide the Council with results from the public exhibition, in anticipation of adoption, of the following draft policies:

- Permanent Road Closure of Council public roads Policy, and
- Short-Term Lease of unused Council Public Roads Policy,

BACKGROUND

Coonamble Shire Council (the Council) is the roads authority for the purpose of managing Council public roads within the Local Government Area (LGA) as per *The Roads Act 1993*.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Community Strategic Plan point L2.3 Proactively communicate decisions, and processes to reach them, to relevant stakeholders.

(b) Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial impacts by these policies – Councils financial exposure is negligible.

COMMENTARY

Amendments to the *Roads Act 1993* on 1 July 2018, passed responsibility for the permanent closure of Council public roads to the Council. In Part 4 Division 3 of *The Roads Act 1993*, provisions exist for the permanent closure and disposal of Council public roads to adjoining land holders. In Part 10, Division 2 sections 153 - 157 of *The Roads Act 1993*, provisions exist for the short-term lease of unused public roads.

Draft policies and respective procedures were brought before the Council for consideration on 10 December 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting. Thereafter, the policies were placed on public exhibition for a period of no less than 28-days from 12 December 2025 until 28 January 2026. During the public exhibition, the community were welcome to provide submissions in response to the draft policy content. No submissions were received during the public exhibition period.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Upon adoption, these policies will provide both the community and the organisation with transparency in dealing with the closure or short-term lease of Council public roads.

(b) Legal Implications

The requirements for the permanent closure of a Council Public Road are specified in *The Roads Act 1993* under sections 38A to 38F. The requirements for the short-term lease of an unused Council Public Road are specified in *The Roads Act 1993* under sections 153 to 157.

Both proposed Policies and Procedures align with *The Roads Act 1993* and provide clarity to any applicant with regards to the processes and costs involved.

Successful applicants of the permanent closure of a given road shifts ownership, legal accountability and responsibility upon them, the landowner.

Successful applicants of short-term leases of unused council public roads are bound financially and legally by the contract agreed upon by both the Council and applicant.

(c) Social Implications

NIL – No submissions received during the public exhibition of these policies.

(d) Environmental Implications

NIL

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

All permanent road closures or short-term leases of under-utilised Council public roads are assessed on an individual basis.

(f) Risk Implications

Applicants seeking either the permanent closure or short-term lease of Council public roads, are not guaranteed a successful outcome.

The critical components in the processes are the assessments and public exhibition of permanent road closure or short-term lease proposals. These steps are used as a method of mitigation against any wrong permanent closures or leases.

CONCLUSION

The Roads Act 1993 makes provisions and determinations of the requirements for the permanent closure of Council public roads, and for the short-term lease of unused Council public roads. The two (2) draft policies were publicly displayed between the dates 12 December 2025 until 28 January 2026 for clarity and transparency. During this period no public submissions were made.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council Adopts:

- 1. The Permanent Road Closure of Council Public Roads Policy, without change.**
- 2. The Short-Term Lease of Unused Council Public Roads Policy, without change.**

9.5 BUSINESS ACTIVATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

File Number: 75210

Author: Jenni Maundrell-Executive Manager Corporate Governance
Lee O'Connor-Manager Economic Development & Growth

Authoriser: Tony Payne, Director Sustainable Communities and Planning

Annexures: 1. **DRAFT - BUSINESS ACTIVATION POLICY** (under separate cover)
2. **DRAFT - BUSINESS ACTIVATION PROCEDURE** (under separate cover)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to request the revision of Council's Business Activation Policy to promote business engagement and streamline administration of the Business Activation Fund.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Business Activation Fund aims to provide a limited financial incentive for small business development and expansion in the three urban areas of Coonamble Shire – Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone.

It supports a goal within the Community Strategic Plan that *“we support a resilient local economy by increasing its diversity and boosting opportunities for entrepreneurship and business.”*

The implementation of the Policy through the procedures and management of the Fund, balance the requirement for the applicant to be organised and have a sound business plan with Council managing the risk in expending public monies for business ventures outside of its control.

BACKGROUND

The Business Activation Policy was adopted at the September 2025 meeting of Council and was published on Council's website in January 2026.

In developing the guidelines and application process for the Business Activation Fund, it was determined that some of the documentation required was unnecessarily detailed, unrealistic for council staff to manage, and some components of the process would act as a disincentive to eligible businesses to participate.

The proposed changes aim to streamline the process, making the Fund more accessible and easier to manage while still maintaining appropriate risk management.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

CSP Goal 6: We support a resilient local economy by increasing its diversity and boosting opportunities for entrepreneurship and business.

(b) Financial Considerations

The proposed Business Activation Policy states that Council will make an allocation in each Operational Budget of a number of units of \$5,000 for

distribution to eligible businesses. The current Operational Budget has seven units of \$5,000, totalling \$35,000. There are no proposed changes to these financial parameters.

COMMENTARY

The following changes are proposed:

Current	Proposed	Rationale
<p>POLICY -</p> <p>Determination of any application for assistance through the Business Activation Policy will be made by the full membership or a quorum of the (elected) Council or by a committee whose membership it appoints, with determinations made several times each year in alignment with the timing of the determination of submissions under Council's Donations Policy.</p>	<p>Determination of any application for assistance would be made by a panel of 3 council staff members with appropriate level of delegated authority as appointed by the General Manager.</p> <p>Councillors will be notified of the successful applicants at the next ordinary meeting of Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preserves confidentiality of commercially sensitive information for local businesses. - Brings the Fund into closer alignment with Council's procurement Policies and procedures.
<p>POLICY –</p> <p>Definition of a Business Plan: A written document that substantiates and justifies the financial viability of an enterprise, usually comprising a Legal and Management Plan, a Marketing Plan, an Operational Plan and a Financial Plan.</p>	<p>Applicants can satisfy this requirement by completing a template application form which includes sections requesting relevant information on business size, structure, staffing, customers, goals revenue sources, PLUS outputs and expected benefits of the proposed project or activity to be supported for both the business and the wider community.</p> <p>Providing a detailed Business Plan remains an option.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of information more aligned to level of financial support on offer. - Information supplied provides clearer indication of how Council incentive will be spent.

<p>PROCEDURE –</p> <p>The successful business applicant will submit a financial report (prepared and verified by an accountant or bookkeeper), showing the ongoing viability of the venture.</p> <p>Definition of Financial Viability: Financial Reporting shows sufficient cashflow to cover all anticipated debts, without further revenue, for the next three calendar months (inclusive).</p>	<p>The business applicant will submit a statement signed by an accountant attesting to the ongoing viability of the venture as per the existing definition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced requirement for potential applicants to pay for preparation of special financial reports for the purposes of applying to better match the level of grant on offer. - More realistic method of assessing viability in accordance with expertise of Council staff and resources.
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(a) Governance/Policy Implications

The policy gives transparency and consistency to Council’s distribution of funds to stimulate economic activity across the Shire.

(b) Legal Implications

Provides stronger treatment of commercial-in-confidence information. Retaining eligibility criteria protects council from supporting an inappropriate applicant.

(c) Social Implications

Unchanged. Successful applicants are likely to support council’s community and economic goals.

(d) Environmental Implications

Unchanged

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Unchanged.

(f) Risk Implications

Unchanged. Implementation of the proposed Business Activation Policy aims to reduce risk implications to Council through the application of a set of criteria that determine applications worthy of consideration, based on a foundation of sound planning and good business practice, and the measured distribution of funding based on ongoing financial viability.

CONCLUSION

The proposed changes to the administration of the Business Activation Fund retains the intent of the original policy and aims to increase business engagement with the opportunity and progress the subsequent positive outcomes to be achieved through the provision of incentives.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council places the Draft Business Activation Policy and Draft Business Activation Procedure on public exhibition for 42 days.**
- 2. A further report be presented to Council if there are any substantial changes to the Draft Business Activation Policy.**
- 3. A further report be presented to Council if there are any substantial changes to the Draft Business Activation Procedure.**
- 4. If no substantial changes arise from the public exhibition, the Business Activation Policy and Business Activation Procedure be adopted and published on Council's website.**

9.6 COONAMBLE SHIRE DRAFT URBAN HOUSING STRATEGY

File Number: ABC1

Author: Tony Payne-Director Sustainable Communities and Planning

Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager

Annexures: 1. **DRAFT - Coonamble Shire Urban Housing Strategy (under separate cover)**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek the endorsement of the Coonamble Draft Urban Housing Strategy (the Strategy), prepared by HILLPDA Consulting on behalf of Council for public exhibition and comment for a period of 28 days.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Coonamble Draft Urban Housing Strategy sets clear direction for the future supply and type of housing required within the urban areas of the Coonamble shire to 2041.

The Strategy has been informed by Coonamble shire wide community engagement. Targeted engagement was undertaken with Council staff, some Councillors, the Local Aboriginal Land Council, Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Housing and some key worker housing providers.

Following engagement, a detailed summary of findings has been included in section 2.7 of the report.

The report identifies that housing affordability is a significant issue for the Coonamble Shire and is already contributing to negative social and economic impacts for the communities and the region.

Further, the Engagement Report highlighted that an increased diversity of housing typologies would contribute to the availability of more affordable housing options, whilst acknowledging that there is still a strong preference for single dwellings on standard sized lots.

It is recommended that the Strategy will be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days. The public exhibition will be promoted through various channels to ensure continued community engagement. NSW government agencies will be consulted, and endorsement of the Strategy will be sought from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. Following the exhibition period a Council report will be prepared summarising any submissions received.

BACKGROUND

Coonamble Shire is experiencing a mix of housing demand pressures, limited supply, and aging housing stock, which has prompted the need for a structured housing strategy. Regional housing shortages are a recognised issue across inland NSW, with national bodies such as the Housing Industry Association calling for stronger

regional housing planning to address worker shortages, planning delays, and rising demand.

Coonamble Shire Council's broader planning framework, such as its Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan, sets out long-term goals for community wellbeing, economic development, and asset management. These documents emphasise the need for sustainable growth, improved liveability, and infrastructure planning, all of which underpin the rationale for a dedicated housing strategy.

In May 2025, the NSW Government awarded Coonamble Shire Council almost \$70,000 specifically to support the development of an Urban Housing Strategy. The funding is intended to help Council:

- Identify local housing needs
- Map suitable areas for future residential development
- Fast-track planning to support new homes in the Barwon electorate

This grant signals state-level recognition of housing pressures in the region and provides the financial basis for preparing a formal draft strategy.

COMMENTARY

The attached draft document *Coonamble Shire Urban Housing Strategy* prepared by HILLPDA Consulting demonstrates the approach that Council plans to take to meet the Shire's housing objectives. It has been formulated through evidence-based research and with input from stakeholders and the community.

The Strategy explores housing gaps and needs analysis and options to support housing delivery.

The Strategy aligns with strategic plans and policies that have been developed for NSW, the Central West Orana Region and the Coonamble Shire Local Government Area.

The Strategy should be viewed in the context of the broader statutory planning framework being:

- Commonwealth and state legislation covering environmental protection, environmental planning and assessment, development and heritage.
- Environmental planning instruments, including State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) that apply across NSW.
- Coonamble Local Environmental Plan (LEP).
- Development Control Plans (DCPs) including DCP1 Coonamble Township and Surrounds and DCP2 Rural Small Holdings.

The projected vision for the Coonamble Shire is that by 2041, Coonamble Shire will provide a diverse, affordable and well-located range of housing that supports local communities, attracts new residents and enables people of all ages and incomes to live and thrive. Housing will be delivered in a way that respects the Shire's rural character, protects productive agricultural land, and integrates with essential infrastructure, services and employment opportunities. Through balanced and strategic planning, housing will contribute to a resilient population, a strong local economy and a high quality of life for current and future residents.

As part of this vision, a series of Directions has been developed in the Strategy for Council implementation:

- 1.1 Shift from land supply to housing delivery.
- 1.2 Seek to unlock infill land capacity.
- 1.3 Diversify housing types to better match household change.
- 1.4 Advocate for the expansion of social, affordable, crisis and transitional housing pathways.
- 1.5 Support Aboriginal and culturally appropriate housing outcomes.
- 1.6 Facilitate a planned release of additional rural lifestyle lots to respond to changing housing preferences.
- 2.1 Explore non-housing interventions to improve tenancy stability.
- 3.1 Activate village housing potential through place-based solutions.
- 4.1 Align housing delivery with infrastructure capacity to support efficient, feasible and sustainable growth.

Together, these Directions provide a comprehensive framework for guiding housing planning and delivery across the Shire. They position Council to respond proactively to demographic change, market conditions, community needs and regional opportunities, ensuring that Coonamble Shire is well-placed to support sustainable growth over the next two decades.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Coonamble Urban Housing Strategy directly supports Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework by aligning with the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan. It provides a strategic mechanism to address community wellbeing, economic development, infrastructure planning and land-use management priorities identified in these documents. The Strategy will inform future reviews of the Community Strategic Plan and guide the development of supporting plans, policies and asset management strategies. Its implementation will also contribute to Council's reporting obligations under the IP&R Framework by providing measurable actions and outcomes related to housing, growth management and community resilience.

(b) Financial considerations

The NSW Government has provided initial funding to support the development of the Urban Housing Strategy; however, implementation will require ongoing financial planning and resource allocation. Some actions may be delivered within existing budgets, while others such as infrastructure upgrades, planning studies, or LEP/DCP amendments may require additional funding or external grants. The Strategy will assist Council in prioritising investment, identifying cost-effective interventions, and strengthening advocacy for state and federal funding. Long-term financial implications will be incorporated into Council's budgeting processes, including the Long-Term Financial Plan and Asset

Management Plans, to ensure that housing-related infrastructure and services are delivered in a sustainable and financially responsible manner.

(c) Governance/Policy Implications

The Urban Housing Strategy provides a structured policy framework to guide Council's decision-making on land use, development assessment, infrastructure planning and community outcomes. Adoption of the Strategy will influence future amendments to the Local Environmental Plan (LEP), Development Control Plans (DCPs), and related strategic planning documents. It also strengthens Council's position when advocating to State and Federal agencies for funding, infrastructure investment and housing support programs. Implementation will require coordinated governance across planning, infrastructure, community services and asset management functions to ensure the Directions are embedded into operational and long-term planning processes.

(d) Legal Implications

The Strategy sits within the statutory planning framework established by the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, relevant State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs), and the Coonamble LEP and DCPs. While the Strategy itself is not a statutory document, its recommendations may lead to future legal processes such as LEP amendments, rezonings, planning proposals, or changes to development controls. Any such actions will need to comply with statutory requirements for consultation, assessment, and approval. The Strategy also supports Council in meeting its legal obligations to plan for housing diversity, environmental protection, and orderly development.

(e) Social Implications

The Strategy directly addresses social outcomes by seeking to improve housing affordability, diversity, accessibility and cultural appropriateness. It supports better housing pathways for vulnerable groups, including Aboriginal communities, key workers, older residents, and people requiring crisis or transitional accommodation. Improved housing supply and quality will contribute to community stability, population retention, and social wellbeing. The Strategy also promotes place-based planning in villages, strengthening local identity and community cohesion.

(f) Environmental Implications

The Strategy emphasises sustainable growth by aligning housing delivery with infrastructure capacity, environmental constraints and the protection of productive agricultural land. It supports compact and well-located development that reduces pressure on sensitive environments, minimises land fragmentation, and encourages efficient use of existing services. Consideration of environmental risks such as flooding, biodiversity impacts and climate resilience will be integrated into future planning and development decisions informed by the Strategy.

(g) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Improved housing supply and diversity will support local economic development by enabling population growth, attracting new residents, and addressing worker accommodation shortages that currently constrain local businesses and essential services. The Strategy also highlights the need for coordinated infrastructure planning to ensure that Council's assets including roads, water, sewer, community facilities can support future growth efficiently. Implementation may require staged investment, asset upgrades, and long-term financial planning to align infrastructure capacity with housing delivery.

(h) Risk Implications

Without a clear housing strategy, the Shire risks continued housing shortages, reduced workforce availability, population decline, and missed opportunities for investment. There is also a risk of uncoordinated or inefficient development if housing growth is not aligned with infrastructure capacity or environmental constraints. Adoption of the Strategy mitigates these risks by providing a structured, evidence-based framework for decision-making.

CONCLUSION

The Coonamble Shire Urban Housing Strategy provides a comprehensive and evidence-based framework to guide the Shire's housing planning and delivery over the next two decades. It responds directly to the significant housing pressures facing the community, including limited supply, ageing stock, affordability challenges and the need for more diverse and culturally appropriate housing options. Supported by NSW Government funding and aligned with state, regional and local planning frameworks, the Strategy positions Council to take a proactive and coordinated approach to addressing current and emerging housing needs.

Through its ten strategic Directions, the Strategy outlines clear priorities for improving housing outcomes, strengthening planning and delivery mechanisms, and ensuring that growth occurs in a sustainable, well-serviced and community-focused manner. It recognises the importance of supporting key workers, Aboriginal communities, village settlements and residents across all life stages, while also protecting the Shire's rural character and productive landscapes.

Implementation of the Strategy will require ongoing collaboration across government, industry and community stakeholders, as well as careful integration with Council's governance, legal, social, environmental and economic responsibilities. By adopting and acting on the Strategy, Council can mitigate future risks, unlock new opportunities for investment and population growth, and ensure that Coonamble Shire remains a resilient, liveable and thriving community into 2041 and beyond.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the Coonamble Shire Draft Urban Housing Strategy be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.**
- 2. Following the exhibition period a report be presented to Council on the submissions received.**

9.7 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND PLANNING DIRECTORATE REPORT

File Number: 81991

Author: Tony Payne-Director Sustainable Communities and Planning

Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager

Annexures: Nil

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information on the Sustainable Communities and Planning Directorate.

WASTE RECYCLING EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES REPORT

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of recent developments in waste management within the Coonamble Shire, with a focus on waste recycling and employment initiatives. It highlights key activities, challenges, and achievements over the reporting period, including updates on the construction of a new landfill cell and the Food and Organics (FOGO) program. The report also outlines financial implications and presents recommendations for council consideration.

Waste and Recycling Review

An initial briefing was provided to Councillors, covering the regulatory framework, NSW Government targets to 2030, and preliminary directions for waste and recycling.

Key (separate) reports include:

- Construction of New Landfill Cell (2026)
- Food and Organics (FOGO)
- Kerbside recycling (April Council Meeting)

Financial Implications

Council has responsibility for waste management and is subject to scrutiny by the EPA, which can result in charges and fines. Preliminary indications from the Review are that waste charges will need to increase to meet statutory requirements.

- Funding assistance of \$10,000 has been provided by TOMRA CLEANAWAY for the proposed automated Return and Earn machine for Coonamble Waste Facility.
- Priority funding opportunities continue to be sought for waste initiatives in 2026.

Waste Management Update

Key Activities (February 2026):

- **Community Recycling Centre:** Household products such as light globes, paints, and batteries are now free to drop off at Coonamble Waste Facility. Further community awareness and engagement initiatives are planned.
- **Net Waste Membership:** Continued access to contractors for removal of tyres, mattresses, and motor oils from landfill at subsidised a cost. Staff attended a Net Waste Forum in Narromine on 27 February 2026.
- **Green Waste:** New pad and stockpiles have improved public access for drop-off of green waste. Residential green waste disposal remains free for residents, with charges applying to business contractors.
- **Scrap Metal:** Stockpiling of scrap metal continues to build. Council sells scrap metal in order to bolster income once stockpile levels reach a threshold where it can be purchased in bulk.
- **Illegal Dumping:** Cleanup operations were completed in the first two (2) weeks of January, resulting in the removal of 265.5 cubic metres of illegally dumped materials from affected public land.
- **Cardboard Baler:** Training has been completed with staff, and the first bale has been successfully produced.
- **Drum Muster:** Chemical drum drop-off for farmers has been steady.

Operational Hours:

- Coonamble Waste Facility: Mon–Thu 7am–4pm, Sat–Sun 9am–4pm
- Gulargambone Transfer Station: Tue, Thu, Sat 2–5pm
- Quambone Transfer Station: Tue, Fri 2–5pm, Sat 8am–12pm

Networks, Partners, and Contractors:

- **Return and Earn (TOMRA CLEANAWAY):** Site visit by General Manager and Regional Manager to discuss an automated machine for Coonamble. The result of the meeting was an agreement to secure a machine for Coonamble's Waste Facility in addition to \$10,000 funding assistance to be put toward wages.
- **Paper Resources:** Productive meeting with Gilgandra Carlinga Enterprises) to establish cardboard partnerships and logistics.

Waste Management Services

The table below provides the income and revenue of all waste disposal facilities in the Coonamble Shire.

Waste Disposal

Income	January	February	Year to Date
Gate Fees – Domestic	5,460	3,287	29,689
Gate Fees – Commercial	18,052	5,475	103,265
Sales – New Bins	190	950	3,756
Return & Earn Commission	11,765	11,321	31,781
Sales – Recyclables	17,188	24,461	72,891
Private Works	676	944	21,268
Total Revenue	\$53,331	\$45,600	\$261,812
Expenditure	January	February	Year to Date
Insurance	0	0	2,909
Electricity	1,108	50	2,974
Telephone & Communications	484	248	2,718
Rates and Charges	0	0	523
General Expenses	121	28	1,512
Plant & Equipment Maintenance	0	0	1,067
Waste Depot Operations	31,895	70,810	344,421
Waste Depot Wages	21,442	32,288	296,462
Building Maintenance	43	0	4,354
Private Works	3,573	1,233	15,741
Plant & Equipment	186	0	2,144
Total Expenditure	58,852	104,657	674,825

Return and Earn – 2025/2026

Site	January		February		Year to Date	
	Items	Amount	Items	Amount	Items	Amount
Coonamble	111,301	\$11,130.10	99,243	\$9,924.30	629,890	\$62,890.60
Quambone	6,353	\$635.30	13,969	\$1,396.90	67,370	\$6,737.00
TOTAL					697,260	\$69,627.60

PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES REPORT**Regulatory Services**

The Regulatory Officer's Report is provided for February 2026.

The following is a summary of companion animal statistics as at 26 February 2026:

Seizure Activities:	Dogs	Cats
Seized	4	0
Returned to Owner	7	0

Impounding Activities:	Dogs	Cats
Animals in pound at start of month	3	0
Incoming Animals	Dogs	Cats
Transferred from seizure activities	4	0
Abandoned or Stray	1	0
Surrendered	37	0
Total Animals in Pound	56	0

Outgoing Animals	Dogs	Cats
Released to Owner	7	0
Euthanised	6	0
Released to Rehoming Organisation	19	0
Sold	0	0
Died at Pound	0	0
Stolen from Pound	0	0
Escaped from Pound	0	0
Total Animals Leaving Pound	32	0
Animals in Pound at end of Month	1	0

Dog Attacks

There was 1 dog attack reported to Council up to 26 February 2026.

Planning Services

The following is a summary of applications determined under delegated authority:

February 2026			
Application Number	Description of Works	Address of Proposed Works	Approved Date
Development Applications			
DA031/2025	Rural Workers Dwelling	Lot 71 DP 754240 3536 Carinda Rd Coonamble	11/02/2026
Building Information Certificates			
BIC001/2026	Building Certificate – Golf Club	Lot 212 DP 754199 212 Caswell St Coonamble	03/02/2026
BIC003/2025	Shed Slab	Lot 107 DP754199 145 Carinda Rd Coonamble	04/02/2026
Construction Certificates			
	NIL		
Occupation Certificates			
OC007/2025	Detached Shed	Lot 126 DP 1184651 91 Munnell St Gulargambone	04/02/2026
OC003/2025	Detached Shed	Lot 107 DP 754199 145 Carinda Rd Coonamble	10/02/2026
Local Government Approvals			
LA024/2025	Transportable Home	Lot 71 DP 754240 3536 Carinda Rd Coonamble	11/02/2025
LA003/2026	Primitive Camping Ground	Lot 29 DP754266 10079 Pilliga Rd Coonamble	12/02/2026

Saleyards

During February 2026, the Coonamble Regional Livestock Market conducted one prime cattle sale, with a total of 1,529 cattle sold.

	January	February	Year to Date	
Income	0	(26,447)	(155,266)	
Expenditure	9,479	14,153	140,036	
Total	9,479	(8,294)	(15,230)	Surplus

Truck Wash

	January	February	Year to Date
Income*	0	(2,362)	(43,850)
Expenditure	1,580	589	50,834
Total	1,580	(1,773)	6,984 Deficit

* Please note that income for the Truck Wash is not reconciled until after the end of each month.

Community Development

Staffing and Human Resources

Recruitment of casual staff to support commencement of the After School Care Program is complete. Subject to completion of staff orientation, the program is expected to commence in the third week of March.

A team meeting will follow commencement to confirm operational arrangements and the forward roadmap.

Youth Engagement Program – Premier’s funding initiative through the Summer Holiday Program

The Premier’s funding supported extended youth engagement activities across the 2025–26 summer holiday period. The initiative was designed to keep young people engaged, safe and supported during a period commonly associated with increased risk behaviours and youth offending.

Key points:

- Program end date: 6 February 2026.
- Financial and narrative acquittal report is in preparation for the Premier’s Department.
- All service providers have been paid; service delivery reports have been received and filed.
- A debrief meeting will be scheduled with participating service providers.

Funding summary:

Total funding \$80,000

- Expenditure \$72,572.57
- Unspent balance \$7,427.43.

The underspend is primarily due to a number of changes in the delivery by service providers and one of the activities “the Gym Program (AMS)” not proceeding. The unspent balance will be used for staff time in management and delivery of the activities to ensure there is no unspent funds remaining.

Activity Snapshot

Activity	Provider	Impact/outcome	Participants
Pool parties Christmas Eve; New Year; Australia Day (Coonamble pool and Quambone breakfast)	Lee and Co	High attendance. Families expressed appreciation for the lunch and activities. Facility remained open on New Year's Day, providing vital recreational opportunities.	Christmas Eve: 65 New Year: 45 Australia Day (Coonamble): 254 Australia Day (Quambone): 42
Pool operations –free entry; extended hours (Coonamble and Gulargambone); pool games and activities	Council/ Lee and Co	Enabled access regardless of financial circumstances. Provided heat relief with operating hours extended to 8:00 pm. Delivered three weeks of inflatable and swimming activities.	Total attendances: 4,377 Peak daily attendance: 416 (7 Jan 2026)
Christmas lights tour and night patrol	Lee and Co	Two nights of Christmas lights tours. Drop-offs at 8:00 pm to support participant safety, including during peak heat periods.	Tours: 19 Night patrol: 7 runs
Dinner nights (BBQs)	Lee and Co	Friday and Wednesday night dinners delivered 5 Jan–5 Feb; some lunches also provided	Average 70–80 per night
Pool inflatables	Council	High utilisation across Coonamble (two weeks) and Gulargambone (one week).	1,000+
Totem skateboard workshop	Council/ Totem Skateboarding	Highly popular. Participants designed their own decks, received safety equipment and instruction.	36
3×3 basketball	Headspace / David Liddiard Group	Teams ran throughout the holidays and concluded when school resumed. Supported mateship,	Coonamble: 16 Gulargambone: 4 Quambone: 2

		fitness and attendance.	
DLG boxing	David Liddiard Group	Delivered at REDI. Three sessions in Coonamble and one session each in Gulargambone and Quambone	16 attendees across three time slots
All-ages disco	Outback Arts / Lions Club / MTM FM	Supported school readiness and reconnection ahead of term. Delivered with multiple community partners; strong teenage turnout. Refreshments provided	50+ youth 20+ carers/hosts
Walkabout barber	Walkabout Barber/ Council	Well attended, particularly by school-aged children preparing for the new school term.	100+
Family History Day	CLALC	Education and culture activity; no attendees on the day (to be reviewed for future planning/promotion).	0
White Card training	JobLink Plus	Improved job readiness by providing essential workplace qualification.	8
Art and lunch (JobLink Plus)	JobLink Plus	Two sessions in Coonamble focused on skills development and registering young people for art competitions.	5
Songwriting workshop	JobLink Plus / Lovesick Studios	Facilitated creative expression; participant work was featured on local community radio via Lovesick Studios	Coonamble:10 Gulargambone: 4
Girls Glow Up Program	CAHS / CNC	Confidence-building and holistic wellbeing program for young women.	4

Clean Up Australia Day (CUAD)

- Held on Thursday, 26 February 2026.
- Community Development team registered with Clean Up Australia.
- Partners: Clontarf Foundation; Coonamble High School.
- Focus areas: school surrounds; riverside area at “the Cutting” (Toooloon Street side).
- Waste Department provided operational support and removed collected waste.
- Collected items included: a tyre, fishing line, glass, a wheelbarrow, a pool ladder, and more than 15 bags of rubbish.
- Attendance: approximately 30 participants.

Upcoming events and planning**Seniors Week-**

- The Annual Seniors Week Luncheon will be held on Wednesday 18 March at 11am at the Coonamble Bowling Club. The National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy has confirmed they will be attending again to serve the luncheon and do the Welcome to Country and cut the cake.
- On Thursday 12 March, an excursion to Siding Springs Observatory outside of Coonabarabran with a stop at the Warrumbungles Visitor Information Centre is planned utilising successful funding from NSW Government. This funding enables Council to offer the excursion completely free with transport, guided tour and luncheon free

Autumn/Winter Holiday Program grant

- Grant applications closed on 13 February 2026.
- Community Development submitted a full program application with support from the Grants Team.
- Outcome of the funding round is pending.

Youth Week 2026 (April)

Youth Week coincides with the April school holiday period. Activities will target young people aged 12–24, with a focus on:

- Job readiness
- Upskilling
- Positive engagement

Library Services

As a valued member of the Community Development Team, the Librarian has supported an array of CD team operations such as close out the Premier’s Department Summer Holiday Program and planning and delivery of Seniors Week activities.

Library Statistics

	January 2026	
Service	Coonamble	Gulargambone
Loans	413	22
New Memberships	4	0
Wi-Fi (People)	61	245
Internet (people)	73	
Internet (hours)	126.7	
Kids Comp (children)	51	
Junior Visits	109	
Adult Visits	358	

Manual Statistics

Coonamble	# of People
Library Visits	467
Reference Enquiries	13
Technology Enquiries	38
Local History	1

Activity Statistics

Coonamble	# of People – Feb 2026
Senior Craft	0
Pre-School Visits/Storytime	0
Seniors Tech	29
Seniors Cinema	0
Other	8

For noting

1. Close-out of the Summer Holiday Program and its under-budget delivery.
2. Progress on staffing to support commencement of the After School Care Program.
3. Partnerships and delivery of Clean Up Australia Day.
4. Submission of the Autumn/Winter Holiday Program grant application
5. Planned activities for Youth Week 2026 (April).
6. Library operations and service statistics.

Economic Development and Growth

Staffing

With the transfer of Communications and Grants roles, the team currently consists of Manager, Economic Development and Growth (EDG); Visitor Information Centre (VIC) officer (single person fulfilling 2 part-time roles); Tourism Officer (incumbent currently on maternity leave); Project Officer (currently a contract role, fulfilling mostly Tourism Officer duties).

Economic Development

Coonamble Main Street Enhancement (grant funded)

- Painting of three (3) buildings is well underway.
- Request for assistance received from another building owner.
- Seeking clarity on budget remaining and criteria for assistance.

Next steps:

- Pending available funds, consider assistance to other eligible property owners.

Sons of the Soil site redevelopment (budgeted + staff time)

- Undertaking immediate action to prevent further damage to the building. Trees have been removed. Site further secured to prevent unlawful entry/vandalism, pigeon infestation and weather damage. Drone inspection of roof.
- Preparing to commence process for development of site options with council as owner and developer.

Business Activation Fund (budgeted)

- Guidelines on how to apply and template application/business plan summary prepared and made available on council website.
- One successful applicant to date.
- Three (3) other inquiries received (2 Coonamble, 1 Gulargambone).
- **Report requesting revisions to Business Activation Policy is attached.**

Welcome to Coonamble Event (budgeted)

- Event date is Saturday 14 March, 6pm at Coonamble Bowling Club hosted by combined service clubs and charities with CWA branch as 2026 lead group.
- EDG team is co-ordinating 'welcome bags' along with Chamber of Commerce.
- VIC is accepting RSVP's and is drop-off point for business merchandise for inclusion in bags.
- EDG is preparing a New Resident Survey to capture data for future projects.
- A welcome video is being prepared which will subsequently be used to promote local lifestyle to potential new residents.

Dental Services (staff time only at this stage)

- Facilitating a meeting with local stakeholders - set for 26 February but postponed to Wednesday 8 April due to unavailability of two key parties. The purpose of the meeting is to identify and consider short and long term options for the provision of dental services to whole of community.
- Council has been offered an option to purchase a single chair dental van from a company currently in liquidation. We are advised the van is currently in storage in Coonamble.

Next steps:

- Continue to consult with various local and external stakeholders.
- Clarify possible cost of purchase of dental van.

Paediatric Service (staff time only at this stage)

- Council staff are collaborating with Coonamble AMS to secure matching funds to allow AMS to engage Little Wings to provide a visiting monthly paediatric clinic.
- Met with NIAA representatives to seek assistance and advice for project funding and planning for long term service provision.
- Spoke with Marathon Health and Eleanor Bryant Foundation.

Next steps:

- Contact Public Health Network, and other agencies.

Industrial Land Provision - Rezoning

- A Planning Proposal, PP-2025-345 to amend the Coonamble Local Environmental Plan 2011 to rezone the Old Sheep Yard site from RU1 Primary Production to E4 General Industrial and remove the minimum lot size on the land has been lodged.
- The proposed rezoning was placed on public exhibition on 12 February 2026 with submissions to close on 13 March 2026.
- A notice re public exhibition was placed in the Coonamble Times on 11 February 2026.

Next steps:

- Consider any submissions against assessment criteria.
- Prepare finalisation report and liaise with Department of Planning.
- Await sign-off and declaration by the Minister.
- Prepare subdivision plan for site.

Business Support

- Respond to inquiries from businesses. This month include: two eight two eight café Gulargambone; Quambone Store; 4Barrels Firearms & Ammunition.
- Australia Post proposal to set-up of parcel locker in Coonamble. Provides 24/7 access, free delivery and collection option. Requires suitable location.

Next steps: Discuss with Australia Post re site requirements and potential for co-location with other freight depot options.

Youth Accommodation – Coonamble and Gulargambone (staff time only at this stage)

- Construction is almost complete at both sites.
- Commencing procurement process to engage a suitable Property Manager for all three buildings.
- Operations Plan needs council to set criteria for occupancy including: eligibility in terms of age, relationship/family status, referral from external parties, duration of stay, involvement in individual casework support and other conditions. A report will be provided to the April Council Meeting.

Tourism & Events

Tourism Signage: (budgeted)

- Signage audit: for Quambone is complete; for Gulargambone is started; for Coonamble is started. Audit will result in (1) a replacement schedule for visitor signage and (2) an improvement strategy with budget for council consideration.
- Town entry signs: Quambone signs are installed. Coonamble (x3) have been ordered. Gulargambone (x2) have been ordered.
- Flagpoles and banners. Poles have been supplied. Banners have been designed and quote for production has been received.

Artesian Bore Baths (budgeted)

Overall concept design approved.

- Project Brief and procurement process is underway to secure a suitably qualified consultant/contractor to help compile Operations & Marketing Plan for the facility.

Next steps: Seek quotes to prepare Operations & Marketing Plan.

Riverside Caravan Park (budgeted)

- Contacted Belgravia to re-commence payment for share of cabin rental. \$37,084.55 + GST owing to council.
- Received initial verbal request from Belgravia regarding expansion plans.

Next steps: Arrange meeting with Belgravia to understand their plans.

Warrena Weir Recreational Reserve Masterplan (staff time only at this stage)

- Review underway – early stages.

Coonamble Regional Art Trail (grant-funded)

- Project Manager visited on 12 & 13 February.
- Quambone Contemplation Circle – concept being prepared for community feedback.
- Gulargambone Metal Galah sculptures – artist identified request for quote made
- Smith Park murals (amenities block and bore shed) – muralist Lukas Kasper engaged.
- Tin Town Contemplation Circle – initial discussions with CLALC, CAHS Men's Group, former residents and other stakeholders.

Next steps:

- Main meeting for discussion on Tin Town concepts to be held Thurs 5 March with focus on former residents.
- Muralist scheduled for June 2026.

Coonamble Reflections – Heritage Review (budgeted)

- The project is for the review of the Coonamble Community-Based Heritage Study completed in 2014 with the aim of identifying key sites for inclusion in the Coonamble Local Environmental Plan 2011. The project also aims to identify sites suitable for interpretation.
- Initial review completed by heritage architect. **See attached report and next steps for councillor review and feedback.**
- Preparing database of property owners to enable direct contact.

Next steps:

- Invite property owners to workshops with heritage architect 21 – 23 April.
- Report to May 2026 meeting.

Coonamble Museum Emergency Building Repairs (not budgeted)

- Report received from heritage architect with proposed remediation approach recommended. **See attached for information.**
- Process commenced to engage structural engineer to confirm and scope works and quantity survey to provide cost estimates.

Next steps:

- Appoint suitably qualified structural engineer and quantity surveyor.
- Report to April 2026 meeting with scope of works and estimated cost.

Cowchella event – (formerly known as Vision Splendid) grant-funded

- This will be the third and final year under the current grant.
- Met with Tourism Officer (previous event co-ordinator) to determine best way forward, given low turnout in 2025.
- Agreed to re-brand as Cowchella for more effective marketing; confirming date as Saturday of October Long Weekend (pending CSC outdoor staff availability and Union Picnic day agreed date)
- Confirming event co-ordination arrangements before commencing artist booking.

Next steps:

- Confirm event management staff and resources required.
- Book artists and commence marketing and other organisation.

Destination Management Plan

- Previous DMP is under review.

Real Country Regional Tourism Collaboration

- This project is an ongoing collaboration with Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shires.
- Real Country Destination Strategic Plan adopted.
- Real Country project, Warrena Creek Reserve development business case adopted in principle.
- Real Country gift hampers created and sold over the Christmas period and available for purchase at our Information & Exhibition Centre going forward.
- Instagram account: @thisisrealcountry active with engagement increasing.

Next Steps:

- Creation of Warrena Creek Reserve Masterplan with the incorporation of the Real Country infrastructure works.
- Creation of Warrena Creek Reserve Plan of Management

Country Heartline – Regional Drought Resilience Program Grant consortium project

This is a collaborative initiative between Bogan and Warren Shires, led by Warren Shire staff, with a similar objective to the Real Country Regional Tourism partnership involving Coonamble, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shires.

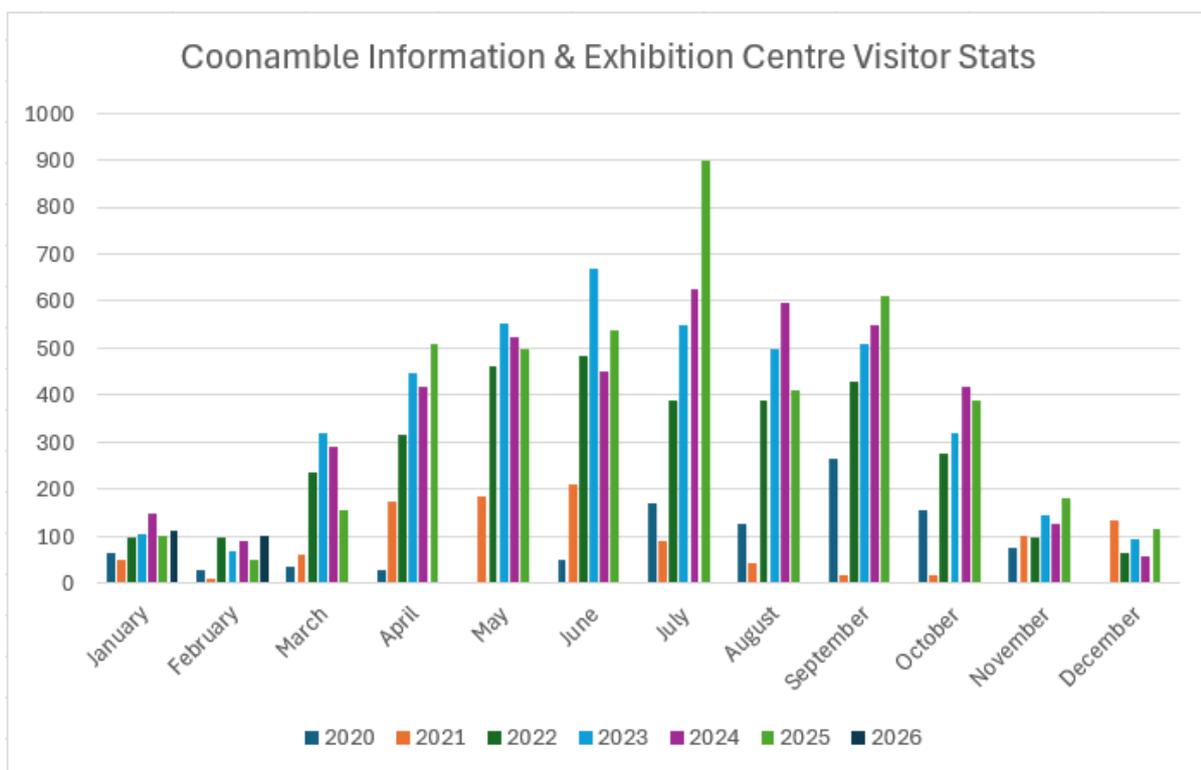
The initial funded phase is now complete, delivering a comprehensive suite of resources including a digital media implementation plan, strategic marketing plan, Agritourism Start-Up Handbook, Country Heartline map and brochure, signage templates, website and social media platforms, as well as three workshops delivered across the three participating shires.

Next steps:

- Meet with Bogan & Warren Shires to discuss next steps and funding going forward to keep the momentum of this project going.

Coonamble Information and Exhibition Centre

- Since December 2025, the Coonamble Information and Exhibition Centre has welcomed a total of 325 visitors.
- Visitor numbers in February showed an increase compared to previous years, with 99 people attending the Centre during the month.
- The year-to-date total last year reached 4,451 visitors, representing growth compared to 2024 figures.
- The ongoing rise in visitor engagement underscores the Centre’s importance as a key asset in enhancing the experience of travellers to the region.



(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

E6 – We support a resilient local economy by increasing its diversity and boosting opportunities for entrepreneurship and business.

E.2 – Develop a visitor economy through the provision of related infrastructure, services and experiences

L2.3 – Proactively communicate decisions, and the processes to reach them, to relevant stakeholders.

(b) Financial Considerations

Activities undertaken as described in this report are within approved operational budget allocations for tourism and economic development activities, and capital projects or are funded through grant monies.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

This report provides Council with opportunities to understand governance and policy implications across the Community, Planning, Development and Environment Directorate. There may be risk implications depending on the nature of the activity.

(b) Legal Implications

There are no current legal implications arising from this report.

(c) Social Implications

Providing information that is open and transparent to the community will provide positive social implications for the community to understand the work that Council does.

(d) Environmental Implications

The progress report allows for environmental management to be an area of focus for Council and subsequently providing positive environmental benefits. This specifically relates to the area of public health, environmental sustainability, and waste management.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

There may be asset management implications depending on the nature of the issue.

(f) Risk Implications

There may be risk implications depending on the nature of the issue.

CONCLUSION

This report provides updated information on the core activities of the Sustainable Communities and Planning Directorate for Council's information.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the report on the activities of the Sustainable Communities and Planning Directorate.

9.8 WASTE UPDATE - FOGO

File Number: G 1-1

Author: Tony Payne-Director Sustainable Communities and Planning

Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager

Annexures: Nil

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information relating to the NSW Government's mandated collection of food and organics from all NSW households by 2030.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Coonamble Shire Council is required under the NSW Government's Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy (WaSM) to introduce a Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) kerbside collection service for all households by 2030, with commercial premises required to comply by 2026. Implementing this service in Coonamble would involve purchasing and rolling out approximately 2,000 new bins, establishing a weekly collection service, and transporting all collected material to the nearest processing facility in Dubbo due to the absence of local infrastructure.

The estimated first-year cost of establishing and operating a FOGO service is \$354,477.60, with ongoing annual costs of \$254,477.60. These costs would require a significant increase to the Domestic Waste Management Charge (DWMC). Given the Shire's low population density, low organic waste volumes, long transport distances, and limited community capacity to absorb additional costs, the service is not financially viable or environmentally efficient.

The NSW EPA has established a custom exemption framework for councils facing unique challenges. Coonamble Shire Council's circumstances align with the criteria for exemption, as compliance would impose an unreasonable financial burden without delivering proportional community or environmental benefit.

BACKGROUND

As part of the NSW Government's Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy (WaSM), a target has been set to halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030. To support this target, the NSW Government has mandated the separate collection of food and organics from all NSW households by 2030.

In addition, commercial premises, including supermarkets and hospitality businesses, will be required to have a source-separated food organics (FO) waste collection service in place from 1 July 2026.

Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) is a kerbside collection service that allows food waste to be placed in the green-lid garden organics bin, enabling recycling into compost products.

COMMENTARY

Implications for Coonamble Shire Council

For Coonamble Shire Council, compliance with the FOGO mandate would require the introduction of an additional bin and a weekly kerbside collection service, as stipulated by the EPA.

Due to the anticipated low volume of food and organics generated and the absence of local processing infrastructure, Council would be required to transport collected material to an external processing facility. The nearest suitable facility is the Whylandra Organics Processing Facility in Dubbo.

Estimated Costs

Based on approximately 2,000 residential assessments in Coonamble, not including Gulargambone or Quambone, the estimated costs to implement and operate a weekly FOGO service are as follows:

One-off Establishment Costs

- Purchase of bins @ \$50 per bin (2,000 bins): \$100,000
- Freight (estimate): TBC
- Bin roll-out: \$5,000

Total Estimated establishment cost: \$105,000 (excluding freight)

Ongoing Operational Costs (Annual)

- Weekly kerbside collection (estimate): \$200,000
- Driver, plant and transport to Dubbo:
 - Plant rate: \$122.78/hour
 - Labour rate: \$55.98/hour (including internal oncosts)
 - Total hourly rate: \$178.76
 - 5 hours per trip: \$893.80

Annual cost (52 weeks): \$46,477.60

- Processing fee at Whylandra Composting Facility:
 - \$125–\$150 per tonne
 - Estimated 10 kg per household per week (2,000 households)

- Approx. 20 tonnes per annum
- Estimated cost: \$3,000 (estimate)

Total estimated annual operational cost: \$254,477.60

Total Estimated Cost (Year 1): \$354,477.60, including establishment and first year of operation.

Financial Impact

Council would be required to fund the purchase and rollout of bins, ongoing collection and transport costs, and processing fees. As a result, the Domestic Waste Management Charge (DWMC) would need to increase to reflect the additional cost of providing this service.

Exemptions and Regulatory Considerations

While generic exemptions have been granted by the EPA to address common challenges, these may not apply in all circumstances. To support councils facing specific or complex challenges, the EPA has developed a custom exemption framework.

The EPA may grant a custom exemption where compliance with the FOGO mandates is demonstrated to be unreasonably burdensome or unfeasible, considering the timeframes and requirements under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act, 1997*.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

CSP E1.3 – Improve our strategies, plans and programs so that we successfully balance the sustainable waste expectations of our community within the resources available to us.

(b) Financial Considerations

To comply with the NSW Government's mandate Council would be required to commit up front funding of \$354,477.60 with an ongoing annual cost of \$254,477.60. The initial and ongoing costs prohibit Coonamble Shire Council from providing the required FOGO service.

(c) Governance/Policy Implications

Sections 24, 25 and 125 of the *Local Government Act, 1993* require councils to provide adequate waste management services, protect health, safety and amenity and manage services in an environmentally responsible way.

(d) Legal Implications

Council has onerous regulatory responsibilities in respect of waste management. These regulatory responsibilities are expected to increase as the implementation of the Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041: Stage 1 – 2021-2027 gains momentum.

(e) Social Implications

There are social implications in the education of the public in use of FOGO as well as the burden of additional cost to ratepayers for the service during a documented cost of living crisis.

(f) Environmental Implications

A staged approach to the environmental challenges, including EPA compliance, has been identified.

(g) Economic/Asset Management Implications

In providing the required FOGO service, Coonamble Shire resident's Domestic Waste Management Charge (DWMC) would need to increase to reflect the additional cost of providing the service.

(h) Risk Implications

Risks associated with the mandated FOGO service include high contamination rates in addition to the final composted product not being utilised by the public as intended.

CONCLUSION

Introducing a FOGO service in Coonamble Shire is currently impractical due to high establishment and operational costs, limited waste volumes, lack of local processing facilities, and the significant financial impact on ratepayers. While Council remains committed to responsible waste management and environmental compliance, the mandated FOGO model does not align with the Shire's scale, geography, or available resources.

Applying for a custom exemption is the most appropriate course of action, ensuring Council meets its regulatory obligations while protecting the community from unsustainable cost increases and operational inefficiencies.

RECOMMENDATION**Council:**

- 1. Notes and receive the report.**
- 2. That Council apply for a custom exemption from the FOGO mandates for both residential and commercial services, on the basis that population density and waste volumes do not support a financially viable or beneficial service for the community.**

9.9 PROPOSED LANDFILL CELL

File Number: G 1-1

Author: Tony Payne-Director Sustainable Communities and Planning

Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager

Annexures: 1. **Coonamble Waste Facility Review October 2025 (under separate cover)**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information relating to the construction of a new landfill cell at the Coonamble Waste Facility, in accordance with Council's adopted Long Term Plan of Management.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As identified at the Council Waste Review Workshop held on 8 October 2025 (refer to annexure 1), the current active landfill cell at the Coonamble Waste Facility is nearing the end of its operational life, with less than six months of available void space remaining. The construction of a new landfill cell is therefore required to ensure continuity of waste disposal services within the Coonamble Shire.

BACKGROUND

The Coonamble Waste Facility provides an essential service to the community, supporting residential, commercial, and rural waste disposal needs. Ongoing waste generation within the Shire requires forward planning to ensure adequate landfill capacity and compliance with environmental and regulatory obligations.

Council staff have identified an area of undisturbed (virgin) ground suitable for the construction of new landfill cells (refer Figure 1) and have undertaken ground-truthing of the proposed location. Early development of a new cell will avoid operational risks associated with capacity shortfalls and unplanned waste management measures.

COMMENTARY

Proposed Landfill Cell Layout

The proposed landfill development area is approximately 165 metres long by 60 metres wide. It is proposed that this area be developed into four individual landfill cells, each measuring approximately 60 metres long by 50 metres wide and excavated to a depth of approximately 8 metres.

This configuration is estimated to provide a total void space of approximately 80,000 cubic metres over the life of the four cells, inclusive of material available for intermediate and final capping.



Figure 1: Proposed Landfill Cell Layout

Need for a New Landfill Cell

The construction of a new landfill cell is required due to:

- The imminent exhaustion of available void space in the current active cell
- Ongoing waste generation within the Shire
- The need to maintain compliance with NSW EPA environmental requirements
- Long-term planning for sustainable and cost-effective waste management
- Avoidance of emergency waste transport or disposal outside the Shire

Failure to proceed with the construction of a new cell may result in increased costs, regulatory non-compliance, and service disruption.

Environmental and Regulatory Considerations - Leachate Barrier Requirements

In accordance with the EPA *Environmental Guidelines: Solid Waste Landfills* (Second Edition, 2016), all landfill cells are required to incorporate a leachate barrier system to contain leachate and prevent contamination of surface water and groundwater over the life of the landfill.

The guidelines require that the base and walls of solid waste landfill cells be lined with a durable, low-permeability barrier to isolate waste from groundwater, soil, and underlying substrata. This is typically achieved through the installation of either:

- a geosynthetic liner system, or
- a compacted clay liner with a minimum thickness of 1,000 millimetres and an in-situ hydraulic conductivity of less than 1×10^{-9} metres per second.

While the guidelines allow for alternative leachate barrier systems, Council must demonstrate that any proposed alternative design meets the performance requirements of the Solid Waste Landfill Guidelines.

Geotechnical Investigation

To assess the suitability of the existing substrata as a leachate barrier, Council engaged Macquarie GeoTech to undertake a geotechnical investigation. This investigation included the drilling of three boreholes — two within the proposed Cell 1 footprint and one within the proposed Cell 2 footprint.

At the time of writing, Macquarie Geotech were waiting on the laboratory results in order to finalise the report. Once the results are known, Council will be in a position to determine which leachate barrier system will be required to meet the performance requirements of the Solid Waste Landfill Guidelines.

Sump Pit and Leachate Management

To manage leachate generated within the proposed landfill cell, a leachate collection sump will be constructed in the lowest corner of Cell 1. The sump will be designed to facilitate effective collection and removal of leachate and to prevent ponding within the landfill cell.

Leachate will be extracted from the sump via a pump system and transferred to a purpose-built leachate storage dam located on cell number two. The leachate dam will be constructed with a small earth bund mound to prevent leakage and environmental contamination.

Leachate management will be undertaken in accordance EPA requirements and operational procedures, including monitoring, storage, reuse or disposal.

Resourcing and budget allocation

Unfortunately, Council is not sufficiently resourced to carry out the proposed works in-house. It is instead intended to advertise an Expression of Interest (EOI) or Request for Quotation (RFQ) with the cost of works estimated to be up to \$200k.

Approximately \$160k is currently available from Council's waste capital budget, however additional funds may be required from general reserves subject to quotation and where alternative funding cannot be acquired prior to the development of the cell. Council has consultants currently investigating grant opportunities and preparing applications in this regard.

Should funding allocation be required from Council's general fund, a further report will be prepared for Council consideration and a budget adjustment made at the following Quarterly Budget Review (QBR).

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

CSP E1.3 – Improve our strategies, plans and programs so that we successfully balance the sustainable waste expectations of our community within the resources available to us.

(b) Financial Considerations

The construction of a new landfill cell represents a significant capital investment for Council. Funding options may include allocation from Council's capital works budget, use of waste reserve funds, and grant funding (where available).

(c) Governance/Policy Implications

Sections 24, 25 and 125 of the *Local Government Act, 1993* require councils to provide adequate waste management services, protect health, safety and amenity and manage services in an environmentally responsible way.

(d) Legal Implications

Council has onerous regulatory responsibilities in respect of waste management. These regulatory responsibilities are expected to increase as the implementation of the Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041: Stage 1 – 2021-2027 gains momentum.

(e) Social Implications

The construction of the new landfill cell is expected to have minimal impact on the community. Any short-term impacts, such as increased vehicle movements, noise, or dust, will be managed through standard construction controls and site management practices.

The project will deliver long-term benefits by ensuring continued waste disposal services for residents and businesses within the Coonamble Shire.

(f) Environmental Implications

A staged approach to the environmental challenges, including EPA compliance, has been identified.

(g) Economic/Asset Management Implications

A detailed cost estimate and funding strategy will be provided to Council as part of the detailed design or quotation process once completed.

(h) Risk Implications

Key risks associated with the project include construction delays, cost overruns, regulatory approval delays, and adverse weather conditions. These risks will be managed through appropriate project planning, contractor selection, compliance monitoring, and staged construction.

CONCLUSION

The construction of a new landfill cell at the Coonamble Waste Facility is necessary to maintain essential waste management services, ensure environmental compliance, and support long-term planning objectives. The proposed development utilises suitable natural materials, complies with EPA guidelines, and provides a staged approach to future landfill capacity.

RECOMMENDATION**That Council:**

- 1. Notes the information contained in this report regarding the construction of a new landfill cell at the Coonamble Waste Facility; and**
- 2. Endorse proceeding with detailed design, regulatory approvals, and construction of the new landfill cell, subject to budget availability and compliance with EPA requirements.**
- 3. Report to Council following engagement of the preferred contractor with cost of the construction of new landfill cell and how it will be funded.**

9.10 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES - WORKS IN PROGRESS

File Number: Folder 20419
Author: Kerrie Murphy-Director Infrastructure Services
Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager
Annexures: Nil

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information on operations and other works in progress within Council's Infrastructure Directorate.

BACKGROUND**(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework**

- I1.1 Employ a strategic approach to the management of our critical road network.
- I1.2 Strengthen our strategic approach to the management of our water infrastructure and services.
- I1.3 Improve our strategic approach to the management of our sewerage infrastructure and services.
- I1.4 Strengthen our strategic approach to the management of our urban drainage infrastructure and services.
- I1.5 Adopt successful strategies which maximises our community's access to quality infrastructure and assets.
- P3.1 Provide support to our sporting, recreation and community organisations which drives improved sporting and recreational opportunities for our community.
- P3.2 Improve the quality of our parks, open spaces, sporting, and recreational facilities, including the MacDonald Park Precinct.

(b) Financial Considerations

Provision is made within the 2025 / 2026 Operational Plan and Budget to fund the associated works and programs listed in this report.

COMMENTARY

This report aims to inform Council of the works in progress in the Infrastructure Directorate. Updates are provided for each Departmental area which includes Roads, Water and Sewer and Urban Services.

UTILITIES

The Utilities team have undertaken the following work since the December Council meeting:

- Number 3 bore has been recommissioned with replacement motor, cabling and hose.
- Bore 4 has had chlorination injectors installed which will allow for the pumping of chlorinated water direct into the reticulation.
- Overhead feed installation at Reservoir 4 has been completed.
- Several water main breaks and leaking services have been repaired in and around Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone.
- Sewer Pump station blockages cleared in Coonamble, due to materials being flushed that don't break down.
- Installation of a new flow meter at the Gulargambone STP.
- Ongoing maintenance at the Coonamble Water Treatment Plant.

A separate report is also presented to this Council meeting regarding the recent boil water alert and associated water restrictions.

Upcoming works:

- *Chlorination system to be installed at Bores 3 and 5;*
- *Filter arms at the Sewer Treatment Plant (STP) to be installed.*
- *Installation of flow meter at head of sewer treatment plant works in Coonamble.*

URBAN SERVICES

The Parks and Urban Services staff have been manning the bottled water stations and the provision of river water while the boil water alert and water restrictions have been in place.

Mowing including Ovals, Parks, Town approaches and urban streets, tree trimming, and removals as requested by the community and for safety reasons has been reduced due to the drier weather.

Aerodrome

The animal exclusion fence has been completed.

ROADS

Regional and Local Roads Maintenance

Work has commenced on the Back Gulargambone Road in preparation of the trial seal project on this road.

Final Sealing work has been completed on Quambone, Pilliga and Baradine Roads. These final seals are over heavy patches that were done last year.

RMCC

Maintenance is being completed in accordance with the Routine Maintenance Annual Plan (RMAP), (agreed schedule with TfNSW). This includes potholes patching, rest area cleaning, routine inspections, sign repairs and roadside slashing. Heavy patching and shoulder widening has taken place on the Castlereagh Highway north of Coonamble. Council has undertaken reseals on sections of the highway.

Upcoming works (now to end Financial Year):

- *Heavy patching south of Coonamble;*
- *Reseals on Castlereagh Highway (19km in length) north of Coonamble;*
- *Castlereagh Highway/Warren Road Intersection upgrade;*
- *Heavy Patching on Tooraweenah and Gulargambone Roads*
- *Maintenance grading and shoulder grading on local and regional roads where conditions permit;*
- *Kerb and gutter replacement in King Street and Pages Terrace;*
- *Dish drain maintenance in Auburn and Wingadee Streets;*
- *Gulargambone Streets and Back Gulargambone Road – trial seals project*
- *Quambone Streets – Seal extension project.*

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Maintenance of Council's infrastructure assets is carried out in accordance with Council's adopted management plans.

(b) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

(c) Social Implications

Maintenance works are programmed where practical, to minimise social impacts.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Works are scheduled in accordance with Council's adopted 2025 / 2026 Operational Plan and Budget.

(f) Risk Implications

Maintenance works are programmed to minimise the risk to Council and the public.

CONCLUSION

This report provides updated information on the projects and planned works within the Infrastructure Department for Council's information.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the report on the works in progress within Council's Infrastructure Directorate.

9.11 BOIL WATER ALERT

File Number: W1-1

Author: Kerrie Murphy-Director Infrastructure Services

Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager

Annexures: Nil

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with information regarding the recent Boil Water Alert issued for the Coonamble town water supply on 29 January 2026.

BACKGROUND

Coonamble Shire Council issued a Boil Water Alert for the Coonamble town water supply on 29 January 2026.

The primary cause was the inability to backwash the filters that form an integral part of the treatment at the Water Treatment Plant. The lack of backwashing caused the filters to become blocked and impeded the flow of water through the plant which resulted in low reservoir levels and poor quality of water. This also had an effect on the water pressure around town.

In order to perform a backwash on the filters, 22m head in the reservoir is ideal to provide the pressure to undertake the task. This is the way the plant was designed to operate.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

11.2 Strengthen our strategic approach to the management of our water infrastructure and services.

11.5 Adopt successful strategies which maximises our community's access to quality infrastructure and assets.

(b) Financial Considerations

Provision is made within the 2024 / 2025 Operational Plan and Budget to fund the associated works and programs listed in this report.

COMMENTARY

As Council would be aware, water restrictions were implemented on 27 January 2026 and a Boil Water Alert for the Coonamble town water supply was issued on 29 January 2026.

The primary cause was the inability to backwash the filters that form an integral part of the treatment at the Water Treatment Plant (WTP). The lack of backwashing caused the filters to become blocked and impeded the flow of water through the plant which resulted in low reservoir levels and poor quality of water. This also had an effect on the water pressure around town.

The reservoir at the Water Treatment Plan is approximately 1ML in capacity and 22m high. This full 22m of head is what has been used as the design parameter to undertake a backwash of the filters. Having the 22m for the purpose of the backwash

allows for an additional minute of high-rate backwash to address accumulated solids from the filter. A backwash can be undertaken with 20m of head, however, does not allow for the additional minute of high-rate backwash.

Less than the 22m of head pressure in the reservoir reduces the ability to undertake a backwash. When a back wash is done, it uses approximately 4.9m of the water in the reservoir, which equates to approximately 22% of water in the reservoir.

Flow of up to 70L/s can be expected through the filters when they are backwashed regularly. Given the backwash has not been able to take place for over a week, the flow had been reduced to less than 30L/s. This reduced flow, combined with the additional demand in the hot weather has meant that the reservoir could not fill to allow for backwashes. This in turn meant that the water was not being treated adequately.

After consulting with NSW Health and Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEE), it was determined that the best course of action was to issue a boil water alert.

This has allowed Council to direct the bore supply from bores 4 and 5 direct into the reticulation to ensure an adequate supply to the community.

After some extensive investigations and efforts, the WTP is keeping up with current demand.

The following work has been undertaken:

- Bores 4 and 5 isolated to feed direct into the reticulation system. Bore 4 has since been reallocated to the WTP. Bore 5 is currently offline.
- Supply of non-potable (river) water to community members.
- Overhead feed installed at Reservoir number 4. This allows for direct filling of the reservoir from Bore 4.
- Provided bottled water to residents.
- Filter media in the filtration tank has been inspected.
- Bore 3 has been recommissioned and feeding to the WTP.
- Chlorine dosing system has been installed at Bore 4. Bore 5 will also be connected to a chlorination system once the booster pump has been received.
- Supernatant tank has been vacuumed to remove the accumulation of pollutants. This is being programmed to occur on a very regular basis going forward.
- Council is participating in a tender with Dubbo Regional Council for the inspection and cleaning of all Council reservoirs.
- Telemetry audit initiation visit took place on 4 March 2026. Once the audit/gap analysis is complete, allocations will be made in future Operational Plans to undertake these necessary upgrades.

Further to this work, Council is working towards the installation of backwash pumps which will allow for backwashes to occur when the reservoir is lower than desired level. Investigations are also underway into the potential for installation of a clear water tank onsite at the WTP which will provide further redundancy to the system.

Council has been fortunate to engage the services of a subject matter expert to assist on an operational and technical level at the WTP. This engagement includes the

training of staff on efficient and appropriate operations of the WTP and operational documentation and user manuals for the operations of the WTP.

Further discussions will be held regarding the WTP and opportunities to potentially change the wat.

Bore 5 was turned off in mid-February with concerns regarding the ongoing operation of the pump. An attempt was made to lift and remove the pump from Bore 5 in late February, however, the drop pipe/well screen became removed from the main shaft and dropped into the borehole. A camera will be onsite in early March to be put into the borehole to investigate what the options are for the bore going forward. The screen and pump may be able to be retrieved, however, in the event that this cannot take place, a new screen and pump will need to be installed.

The boil water alert was able to be lifted on Friday 20 February after multiple meetings with DCCEEW and NSW Health. Maintained chlorine and turbidity (clarity/cloudiness) levels needed to be within a nominated parameter to demonstrate to both government departments that the water supply was safe to drink in order to lift the boil water alert. This took some time, however, this was achieved by late afternoon on 20 February 2026.

Furthermore, the water restrictions were reduced to allow the use of irrigation on Wednesday 25 February 2026 after it was demonstrated that the WTP was able to meet the demand. This will need to be monitored closely however, especially given that Bore 5 is currently not online.

The General Manager and Mayor met with representatives of DCCEEW on Wednesday 25 February 2026 to discuss the infrastructure requirements of the Coonamble Water supply, including essential works.

Some preliminary estimates have been collated to provide an indication of the investments that Council will need to make in both short and longer term. These are listed below in priority order:

1.	Upgrades to WTP (including clearwater tank, pump and other modifications)	\$400,000
2.	Dedicated 300mm rising main from WTP to Reservoir 5	\$1,000,000
3.	Replacement Bore 3	\$300,000
4.	New Reservoir at Coonamble Sporting Fields to replace Reservoir 3 (#6)	\$1,500,000
5.	Dedicated 300mm rising main from WTP to new Reservoir (#6)	\$600,000
6.	Dedicated main to Hospital and Koonambil	\$500,000
7.	Upgrades to Telemetry/SCADA	\$500,000
8.	Raw Water main from new bore (#6) to Saleyards, truckwash, standpipe and WTP	\$1,500,000
9.	Chlorine dosing on Bore 4*	\$40,000
10.	Chlorine dosing on Bore 5*	\$40,000
11.	Chlorine dosing on bore 3	\$40,000
12.	Rebuild Bore 5*	\$100,000

13. Inspection and cleaning of reservoirs \$500,000

Total \$7,020,000

- *Denotes that this work is already in progress due to necessity of the situation.*

In order for Council to maintain adequate supply and quality, the above works are required to be undertaken. To improve redundancy, further investment is required at the WTP. Council needs to ensure that enough capacity remains for backwashing, even in periods of high demand. Investigations are underway on potential ways to remediate/amend the way the plant currently operates to increase efficiencies and reduce operating costs.

The rising main between the WTP and Reservoir 5 is necessary to provide adequate pressure to the towns reticulation system. As it currently stands, water from Bore 5 is fed to the WTP, with treated water only reaching Reservoir 5 through the reticulation system. This means that Reservoir 5 is only being used to a maximum 25% of capacity at any given time.

Given the age and condition of Bore 3, it is also prudent that Bore 3 is redrilled to provide further redundancy in the event one of the other Bores has issues. Bore 3 is relatively old at 108 years. Another necessary component will be the construction of a new rising main from the new Bore at Bore 3 to the WTP which will provide a backup in the even either of the other bores is not working.

As previously advised, when the Reservoir at the sports fields was decommissioned, the capacity of the water reticulation system was reduced. Constructing an additional reservoir at the sports fields (behind the original) will give the system further capacity and provide much better water pressure to the eastern side of town.

The recent situation, while less than ideal, has provided the management team a very good understanding of the water infrastructure in Coonamble. This has allowed the team to reach out to contacts who are leaders in the industry for the assistance in moving forward to address the issues facing the Coonamble water supply infrastructure. This includes the NSW Water Directorate and the Western Councils Water Alliance. This assistance includes on the ground support from adjoining Councils and advocacy within the Water Directorate and Alliance networks for further technical and operational support and funding advocacy.

The WTP is currently operating seamlessly after having adjustments made to the operating process. Improving efficiency of the WTP is ongoing in an effort to ensure we are operating it appropriately and to capacity.

(a) Governance/Policy Implications

Nil.

(b) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

(c) Social Implications

The boil water alert has caused concern in the community, however, was necessary to ensure continuous water supply to the community.

(d) Environmental Implications

Nil

(e) Economic/Asset Management Implications

Water treatment and reticulation infrastructure needs are being reassessed given the issues identified.

(f) Risk Implications

Failure to improve infrastructure may result in further critical incidents.

CONCLUSION

This report provides information regarding the recent Boil Water Alert issued for the Coonamble town water supply on 29 January 2026.

Recommendation

That the report regarding the recent Boil Water Alert issued for the Coonamble town water supply on 29 January 2026 be received and noted.

9.12 TOORAWEEENAH ROAD UPGRADE - MONTHLY STATUS UPDATE**File Number:** R-8-32-1**Author:** Kerrie Murphy-Director Infrastructure Services**Authoriser:** Greg Hill, General Manager**Annexures:** Nil**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a status update on the Tooraweenah Road Upgrade Project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council resolved to appoint MAAS Civil Pty Limited as the successful contractor at their Extraordinary meeting held on 22 January 2026.

Works are scheduled to commence in May 2026 (12 weeks from Council acceptance as advised) once all programming has been completed and management plans and safety documentation has been reviewed.

BACKGROUND

Tooraweenah Road is the most direct route from the town of Coonamble to the Warrumbungle National Park.

The section of road to be upgraded commences from the end of the sealed section at Coonamble and continues to the boundary with Gilgandra Shire Council.

The 56.8 km road currently consists of 30.1 km sealed pavement of varying width, followed by 26.7 km of unsealed road with an average width of 7m. The unsealed section includes two short-sealed sections that total 1.3km.

The project originally aimed to provide 56.8 km of sealed road with a 9.9m wide pavement and 7.5m wide seal with guideposts, centreline, and edge marking. The focus is now on the unsealed section, which is approximately 27km long.

(a) Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

11.1.5 Complete the Tooraweenah Road upgrade project, on time and on budget.

(b) Financial Considerations

The capital cost of the project is funded by the Federal Government's Roads of Strategic Importance Program (ROSI). The funded budget is \$41.2 million.

COMMENTARY

The following work has been undertaken since Council has resolved to accept the successful tenderer's submission:

- Letter of Award issued (30 January 2026).
- Contract sent for execution.

- Pre-construction phase commenced (coordination, administration and program review).
- Contractor construction program received (approx. 60-week delivery timeframe indicated).
- Review of Contractor Management Plans underway prior to site establishment.
- Continued delivery of precast stormwater culvert components.
- Pre-construction community consultation commenced; residents notified of upcoming works.
- Planning commenced for sod-turn event (subject to Minister availability).
- Ongoing monitoring of project risks including weather, harvest period impacts and final seal funding gap.
- Project Start-Up meeting scheduled for early to mid-March with Maas, Projence and Council Project Representatives.

A request for the release of the remainder of the grant funding has also been submitted to the Federal Government, as per advice received from representatives of same. At the time of writing this report, we are waiting on a response.

CONCLUSION

Mostly administrative work has been undertaken since the resolution to engage Maas Civil Pty Limited to undertake the Tooraweenah Road project. Further details will be defined and determined further at the Project Start-up meeting in mid-March. A request for the remainder of the funding has also been submitted as per advice from representatives of the Federal Government.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the report and the progress on the Tooraweenah Road Upgrade Project.

9.13 MT MAGOMETON QUARRY-INDEPENDENT OPERATIONAL, FINANCIAL & STRATEGIC REVIEW

File Number: C-69

Author: Greg Hill-General Manager

Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager

Annexures: 1. Mt Magometon Quarry Report Final (under separate cover)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council commissioned Manthey Consulting Engineers to undertake an independent operational, financial and strategic review of Mt Magometon Quarry. The review confirms the quarry has a substantial remaining resource life in excess of 30 years at the current extraction limit.

The assessment concludes that the current Council-operated fixed-plant dominant operating model is not financially sustainable over the medium to long term. Incremental upgrades to the existing plant will not materially improve performance.

The review supports a transition toward mobile crushing-based production under a hybrid operating model incorporating contractor-operated mobile crushing and rationalised Council site operations.

BACKGROUND

Mt Magometon Quarry is a strategic infrastructure asset supplying basalt-based products to Council projects and external markets. Council engaged Manthey Consulting Engineers to provide an independent assessment of operational performance, financial sustainability, plant configuration and operating model options.

REPORT

1. Resource & Strategic Position

The quarry contains approximately 3.02 million tonnes of extractable basalt, equating to more than 30 years of remaining life at the current EPA licence limit of 100,000 tonnes per annum. Resource availability is not a constraint on future operations, but is subject to change Development Application EPA licence to increase extraction volumes

2. Operational Performance

The existing fixed crushing plant has a practical capacity of approximately 65 tonnes per hour (650 tonnes 10hr day) and is materially below contemporary NSW hard-rock quarry benchmarks. The plant is feed-limited and maintenance intensive, contributing to production volatility.

Observed contractor-operated mobile crushing has demonstrated sustained daily outputs exceeding 1,100–1,500 tonnes per day (10hr/day), confirming throughput constraints can be materially removed under a mobile configuration.

3. Financial Performance

Historical data demonstrates significant variability in production and fully loaded operating costs, ranging from approximately \$12 per tonne to \$27 per tonne across

assessed financial years. Higher production volumes do not consistently result in lower unit costs, confirming structural inefficiency.

Continued reliance on the fixed plant exposes Council to medium-term capital replacement risk estimated at approximately \$1.0 million.

4. Plant Configuration Assessment

Three configurations were assessed: retention of fixed plant, full mobile crushing, and a combined model. Full mobile crushing provides the strongest long-term reduction in lifecycle risk, capital exposure and structural inefficiency.

5. Operating Model Assessment

Three operating models were evaluated: Council-operated, contractor-operated and hybrid. The hybrid model incorporating contractor-operated mobile crushing and rationalised Council operations provides the strongest overall balance of financial sustainability, operational resilience and governance oversight.

a. Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The recommended transition aligns with Council's Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Long-Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Strategy by strengthening financial sustainability, reducing lifecycle risk and ensuring continued reliable supply to support infrastructure delivery.

b. Financial Considerations

The Independent Review confirms that the existing fixed-plant dominant model embeds high fixed costs and exposes Council to capital replacement risk. Transition to a mobile-based hybrid model is expected to reduce unit costs, improve budget predictability and eliminate medium-term fixed-plant replacement exposure.

c. Governance/Policy Implications

Council retains ownership, planning and environmental compliance responsibilities. The hybrid model strengthens governance by formalising contractor performance arrangements while reducing direct operational exposure.

d. Legal Implications

Council remains responsible under the *Local Government Act 1993*, Work Health and Safety legislation, Environmental Protection Licence conditions and planning approvals. Contract arrangements will clearly allocate operational responsibility.

e. Social Implications

Improved operational reliability supports local infrastructure delivery and regional development. The hybrid model maintains opportunities for local employment while strengthening long-term sustainability.

f. Environmental Implications

The recommended model does not increase environmental risk and may improve environmental performance through modern equipment standards, improved fuel efficiency and structured rehabilitation planning.

g. Economic/Asset Management Implications

Transitioning away from ageing fixed infrastructure aligns with asset rationalisation principles and reduces lifecycle exposure while preserving the long-term quarry resource asset.

h. Risk Implications

The hybrid mobile-based model materially reduces lifecycle, capital, workforce and production volatility risks. Retention of the fixed plant would continue to expose Council to escalating refurbishment and compliance risk.

CONCLUSION

Mt Magometon Quarry remains a strategically valuable long-life asset. However, the former fixed-plant dominant operating model is structurally inefficient and financially unsustainable. Adoption of a mobile crushing-based hybrid model provides a credible and defensible pathway to improved financial sustainability, operational resilience and strengthened governance.

RECOMMENDATION**That Council:**

- 1. Note the findings of the Independent Operational, Financial & Strategic Review.**
- 2. Transition away from reliance on the existing fixed crushing plant.**
- 3. Adopt mobile crushing as the dominant production strategy.**
- 4. Formalise in the next 12 months a hybrid operating model incorporating contractor-operated mobile crushing.**
- 5. Cease discretionary capital investment in the existing fixed crushing plant beyond safe-operation requirements.**

9.14 COONAMBLE ARTESIAN BORE BATHS (COONAMBLE ARTESIAN AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCE)

File Number: 2025CF004

Author: Greg Hill-General Manager

Authoriser: Greg Hill, General Manager

Annexures:

1. Statement of Approval (under separate cover)
2. Notice of Approval (under separate cover)
3. Finyr95to22 (under separate cover)
4. Calyr95to22 (under separate cover)
5. Finyr95to09 (under separate cover)
6. Works Program (under separate cover)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council continues to progress the Coonamble Artesian Bore Baths project as a strategic tourism and economic development initiative for the Shire.

The project is supported by \$5.5 million in NSW Government funding under the Regional Tourism Activation Fund (RTAF), together with Council's \$1.25 million co-contribution. The funding deed requires completion by December 2026, with a potential extension to June 2027 subject to demonstrated delivery progress.

Detailed design, quantity surveying and Development Application preparation are underway. The bore is being designed at 16L/s capacity; however, the issued Water Supply Works Approval limits annual extraction to 126 ML per annum. This is below the minimum operational requirement and will require potentially pump testing and regulatory reassessment.

Council is also investigating detailed hydraulic modelling and design of a rising water main to supply artesian reuse water to the Truck Wash, Cattle Saleyards and a regulated standpipe, subject to licensing confirmation.

This report provides an update on project progress, water licensing constraints and next steps, and seeks Council endorsement to proceed with detailed hydraulic modelling and associated regulatory processes.

BACKGROUND

The Coonamble Artesian Bore Baths project has been under consideration since 2008 as a strategic tourism and economic development initiative aimed at leveraging the region's artesian water resource to deliver a destination wellness facility for the Shire.

In November 2022, Council secured \$5.5 million under the NSW Government's Regional Tourism Activation Fund (RTAF), with Council committing a \$1.25 million co-contribution. The funding deed requires completion by December 2026, with a potential extension to June 2027 subject to demonstrated progress.

Following planning constraints at the previously acquired River Road site, Council resolved in 2025 to relocate the project to the Racecourse Reserve precinct (Lot 212 DP 754199). Council has since been appointed Crown Land Manager for the site, providing statutory authority to manage and progress the development.

At its meeting of 10 December 2025 (Resolution 2025/298), Council resolved to proceed with compulsory acquisition of land associated with the project. The General Manager will report to the April Council meeting regarding Freehold versus Crown Land options and associated tenure matters.

Council engaged GHD Group Pty Ltd in November 2025 to prepare the concept design and masterplan. Detailed design, quantity surveying and Development Application documentation are now progressing.

In September 2025, Council applied for a water supply works approval seeking 350 ML per annum extraction. Approval 50CA514989 was issued on 10 February 2026 with an annual extraction limit of 126 ML per annum. This limit is below the operational design requirement and will require pump testing and potential reassessment.

Council is also investigating a rising water main to supply treated artesian reuse water to the Truck Wash, Cattle Saleyards and a regulated standpipe, subject to hydraulic modelling and licensing confirmation.

REPORT- PROJECT UPDATE

Site & Land Status

Council previously resolved at its meeting of 10 December 2025 (Resolution 2025/298) to proceed with compulsory acquisition of land for the bore baths project under the Local Government Act 1993 and the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991.

Council has also been appointed Crown Land Manager for the Racecourse Reserve precinct, providing statutory authority to manage, approve and operate the facility.

The General Manager will report to the April Council meeting on options regarding Freehold versus Crown Land arrangements.

Bore & Design Progress (GHD)

- Bore design proceeding at 16L/s capacity
- Bore design issue – 20 March 2026
- QS estimate received 27 February 2026
- Planning documentation completion – 16 March 2026
- Development Application lodgement from 23 March 2026

The 16L/s design provides hydraulic capacity beyond bath requirements; however, regulatory extraction is currently limited.

WATER LICENSING POSITION

Council applied for 350 ML per annum extraction under Application A033001.

The issued Approval 50CA514989 imposes:

Annual extraction limit of 126 ML/year

The Department has advised Council may submit a new application for reassessment supported by compliant pump testing, noting there is no guarantee the limit will increase.

The current 126 ML limit is below the minimum approximately 150 ML required for the baths design and does not provide capacity for supply to additional facilities.

Therefore, potentially pump testing and reassessment may be required.

WATER ACCESS LICENCE (WAL) POSITION

Council holds:

- WAL 15692 – 1,200 ML
- WAL 21434 – 50 ML
- Total Allocation – 1,250 ML

Historic usage analysis:

- Average usage – 1,059.6 ML
- Combined average demand with baths – 1,181.1 ML
- Average surplus – 68.9 ML

Peak year usage reached 1,353.2 ML, representing a deficit exposure of 103.2 ML.

Holding WAL shares does not override the 126 ML extraction cap on the new bore.

RISING WATER MAIN – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Council is investigating the design of a rising water main to distribute treated artesian reuse water to:

- Coonamble Truck Wash (livestock transport washdown)
- Cattle Saleyards (yard cleaning and operational use)
- Regulated public standpipe (metered non-potable supply)

The purpose is to:

- Reduce reliance on potable town water
- Improve water security for agricultural infrastructure
- Strengthen drought resilience
- Support saleyards viability

Detailed hydraulic modelling will confirm demand volumes, pipe sizing, pump requirements and compliance with extraction limits.

Progression of the rising main remains contingent upon confirmation of extraction volumes and regulatory compliance.

Relevance to Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Bore Baths project aligns with the Coonamble Shire Community Strategic Plan 2022–2032 and draft 2025–2035 update, particularly objectives relating to economic diversification, tourism development, infrastructure investment and water sustainability.

The project is incorporated within Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan and supports long-term infrastructure, financial sustainability and asset management planning.

Financial Considerations

The project is supported by \$5.5 million in NSW Government funding under the Regional Tourism Activation Fund (RTAF), with Council contributing \$1.25 million.

Additional financial considerations include:

- Pump testing and regulatory reassessment costs;
- Extended hydraulic modelling and design services;
- Potential Water Access Licence acquisition;
- Capital costs associated with the rising water main (subject to detailed costing).

Any construction commitment or licence acquisition will be subject to a further report to Council once costs and regulatory outcomes are confirmed.

Governance / Policy Implications

The project is being progressed in accordance with:

- *Water Management Act 2000*
- *Crown Land Management Act 2016*
- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991*
- Executed RTAF Funding Deed

Council's Resolution 2025/298 regarding compulsory acquisition remains active, with further advice to be provided to the April Council meeting regarding Freehold versus Crown Land arrangements.

Legal Implications

Approval 50CA514989 imposes an annual extraction limit of 126 ML per annum. Extraction beyond this limit would constitute a breach under the *Water Management Act 2000*.

Any increase in extraction capacity requires compliant pump testing and formal reassessment by the Department. There is no guarantee an increase will be granted.

All bore operation and rising main infrastructure must comply strictly with licence and approval conditions.

Social Implications

The project provides:

- Enhanced community recreation and wellness facilities;
- Increased visitor attraction and regional profile;
- Improved resilience of agricultural infrastructure;
- Strengthened community confidence through infrastructure investment.

Clear communication regarding water use during drought conditions will remain important.

Environmental Implications

The bore approval includes strict conditions relating to aquifer protection, water quality monitoring and contamination prevention.

Bore Bath artesian water reduces reliance on potable supply and supports sustainable water management consistent with the NSW Great Artesian Basin Groundwater Sharing Plan.

Economic / Asset Management Implications

The project represents a strategic long-term tourism and community asset.

The proposed rising water main supports the viability of the Cattle Saleyards and Truck Wash, key economic assets within the Shire.

Asset lifecycle, maintenance and operational modelling will be incorporated into Council's Asset Management Plans once final regulatory parameters are confirmed.

Risk Implications

Key risks include:

- Insufficient extraction limit to meet design requirements;
- Regulatory reassessment not resulting in increased allocation;

- Funding milestone pressure under RTAF;
- Capital cost escalation;
- Peak-year water allocation exceedance;
- Land tenure or acquisition delays.

These risks are being managed through staged design, potential pump testing, regulatory engagement, allocation analysis and regular reporting to Council.

CONSOLIDATED RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
Extraction limit insufficient (126 ML cap)	High	High	Commission pump testing and seek reassessment
Reassessment does not increase limit	High	Medium	Operational redesign within cap
Peak year WAL exceedance	High	Medium	Allocation management; consider additional WAL share
Funding milestone delays (RTAF)	High	Medium	Maintain delivery program; demonstrate commitment
Capital cost escalation	High	Medium	QS review; staged delivery
Planning or regulatory delays	High	Medium	Early engagement; concurrent processes
Land tenure uncertainty (Freehold vs Crown)	Medium	Low	Report to April meeting; confirm pathway
Community perception during drought	Medium	Medium	Transparent communication
Water quality compliance risk	Medium	Low	Ongoing monitoring and treatment

CONCLUSION

The Bore Baths project continues to progress through design and planning stages. The primary constraint currently is the approved extraction limit of 126 ML per annum, which is below operational requirements and may be necessary to be addressed through pump testing and reassessment.

The rising water main concept presents strategic benefits but remains dependent on regulatory confirmation.

Council remains committed to progressing the project within funding timeframes while ensuring full regulatory compliance and sound governance.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note the current Water Access Licence position and allocation analysis.**
- 2. Endorse progression of detailed hydraulic modelling and design for the rising water main to supply the Truck Wash, Cattle Saleyards and standpipe, noting that the rising main will utilise artesian water from the Bore Bath bore to reduce reliance on potable town supply and strengthen agricultural infrastructure.**
- 3. Authorise the General Manager to extend the engagement of GHD Group Pty Ltd for the detailed hydraulic modelling and design for the rising water main.**
- 4. Note that the General Manager will report back to the April Council meeting regarding the following resolutions from the 10 December 2025 Council meeting (Resolution 2025/298), including advice on Freehold versus Crown Land arrangements and associated land acquisition matters.**
- 5. Note that construction and any Water Access Licence acquisition or extraction limit reassessment will be subject to a further report to Council following confirmation of capital costs and licensing and water purchasing requirements.**

**9 NOTICES OF MOTIONS/QUESTIONS WITH
NOTICE/RESCISSION MOTIONS**

Nil

10 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

RECOMMENDATION

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993:

10.1 Closed (Public Excluded) Council Meeting of the Coonamble Shire Council - 11 February 2026

11 CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING