

ITEM 2 DRAFT WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

This report presents the draft Wollongong City Council Annual Report 2023-2024. The report outlines Council's progress against the Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2023-2024.

The Annual Report is required to be endorsed by Council within five months of the end of the financial year and due to the Office of Local Government by 30 November 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

The draft Wollongong City Council Annual Report 2023-2024 and Attachment A Financial Statements be endorsed.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Brian Jenkins, Chief Financial Officer

Authorised by: Renee Campbell, Director Corporate Services - Connected + Engaged City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Draft Wollongong City Council Annual Report 2023-2024
- 2 Attachment A Financial Statements

BACKGROUND

Wollongong City Council's draft Annual Report 2023-2024 outlines our progress against the Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2023-2024. It is a key document advising the Wollongong community of Council's performance during 2023-2024. The report has been prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 (section 428) and the Local Government (General) Regulation (section 217). This is the second Annual Report of the 2022-2026 Delivery Program.

The draft Wollongong City Council Annual Report 2023-2024 demonstrates Council's continued effort on delivering benefits for our community. Some of the key highlights throughout 2023-2024 include:

- The opening of the All Ages All Abilities Playground at Stuart Park Wollongong.
- Cringila Hills Mountain Bike Park took out a national award for best park of the year at the Parks and Leisure Australia Conference Awards.
- Work commenced on Stage 2 of the netball courts at Fred Finch Park, Berkeley.
- Entered into a funding agreement for a \$5M affordable housing scheme with Head Start Homes.
- Adoption of a new Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-2030 that will drive the implementation of strategies and projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Wollongong.
- Secured funding for Stage 2 and 3 of our Open Coast Coastal Management Program and commenced Stage 2 technical studies.
- Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) service collected 33,387 tonnes of material that was processed into organic compost within our City and used on our sportsfields and gardens.
- Over 1,250 public bins were picked up across the Local Government Areas each week with more than 75% of these bins serviced five times a week.
- Drafted and publicly exhibited the Integrated Transport Strategy; a 10-year strategy to improve transport infrastructure and services across Wollongong.
- Commenced the Wollongong E-scooter trial in September 2023 with over 141,000 trips taken and a total distance travelled of over 277,000 kms (as at 18 June 2024).
- Developed *Safer Cities: Her Way* through a collaborative partnership with Transport for NSW to improve perceptions of safety for women, girls and gender diverse people when travelling to, through and within public spaces and transport hubs.

- Attracted over 12,000 attendees at the inaugural *Culture Mix* festival in October 2023 celebrating our diverse multicultural community.
- *Invest Wollongong* launched a digital marketing campaign to generate awareness and education that featured two articles in the Australian Financial Review.
- As a partner of *Invest Wollongong*, hosted *Celebrating Wollongong: where business and lifestyle grow together* at NSW Parliament House on 20 March with more than 160 attendees across the business and government sectors.
- Secured just under \$30M in State and Commonwealth grant funding toward delivery of essential local social infrastructure and urban road upgrades for West Dapto.
- Adoption of the post exhibition draft West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2024, for submission to IPART (Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal NSW) to review.
- Welcomed 470,918 visitors in our seven libraries, loaning 1,311,111 items.
- Completed 660 interments across our six operational cemeteries and gardens.
- Delivered a range of programs for young people including a 12-month Youth Artist in Residence opportunity and Youth Power Hour podcast.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Executive Management Committee

Senior Leadership Team

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 goal 4 “*We are a connected and engaged community*”. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan		Delivery Program 2022-2026
Strategy		Service
4.1	Provide our community with equitable access to information and opportunities to inform decision-making.	Corporate Strategy

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Full financial details are included in Attachment A Financial Statements.

CONCLUSION

This draft Wollongong City Council Annual Report 2023-2024 (and attachments) has been prepared following input and assistance from all Divisions. It is submitted for consideration and endorsement by Council.



Wollongong City Council

Annual Report 2023 - 2024



Image: Stuart Park Wollongong All Ages All Abilities Playground



Image: Aboriginal Smoking Ceremony, Blue Mile Tramway, Wollongong

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our city is built, Dharawal Country. We recognise and appreciate the deep connection to this land, waters and the greater community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and those emerging and extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who call this city home. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first people to live in the area. We respect their living cultures and recognise the positive contribution their voices, traditions and histories make to the city.



Contents

Lord Mayor's Message.....	6
General Manager's Message	8
Welcome to Wollongong City Council's Annual Report 2023-2024	10
Our City	11
Snapshot of the Wollongong Community	12
Integrated Planning and Reporting – Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program	14
Our Wollongong Our Future 2032.....	15
Values	15
Councillor Information	16
Our Executive	17
Our Workforce	18
Gender Pay Gap.....	19
Delivering everyday.....	20
Delivering Sustainable Services	22
Major Capital Works Projects	23
Council at Work.....	24
Financial Overview	25
Connecting With Our Community	26
Council's Supporting Document Roadmap.....	28
Council's Strategic Priorities	30
Reporting against the Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2023-2024	36
Summary of Progress by Goal.....	37
GOAL 1 WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT	38
GOAL 2 WE HAVE AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY	60
GOAL 3 WOLLONGONG IS A CREATIVE, VIBRANT CITY	70
GOAL 4 WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY	78



GOAL 5 WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY.....	96
GOAL 6 WE HAVE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT	114
SUPPORT SERVICES	122
Statutory Reporting.....	135
Index.....	185



Image: North Beach, Wollongong
Photo Caitlyn Phanith (Unsplash)

Lord Mayor's Message

In September, I was elected Lord Mayor of this wonderful city after seven years serving the community as a Councillor and, since 2019, as Deputy Lord Mayor.

It was a very proud moment and one that I shared with my family and friends as I took the Oath of Office in the Council Chambers.

While I'm no stranger to the business of Council, the early induction phase for a new term is always a stark reminder of the diversity of what Council does for its community.

Local Government is unique, and it is its connection to community that drives the work we do every day. I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the outgoing Councillors and former Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery AM for their service to community, their passion for Wollongong and focus on making our city better for everyone who call it home.

As Lord Mayor and a Councillor one of the things that gives me satisfaction about Council is that the work we do has a direct and grassroots impact on our community. We see the joy on kids' faces when we open a new playground, we see the benefit accessible amenities can have to an individual and their family's wellbeing, and we know library programs like our bilingual storytimes provide the opportunity to recognise and celebrate our cultural diversity with children provided the opportunity to hear songs and stories performed in English, Chinese and Taiwanese.

The 2023-2024 financial year has seen exciting community-focused events and the opening of new community spaces, alongside natural disasters, continued global instability in supply chains, and increasing costs. Like households right across the city, we're seeing our dollar buy less, and we're being asked to stretch our finances further than before.

We've worked hard to ensure Wollongong is in a good position for the future. This isn't always easy, but the organisation has a very positive energy that is continuing to drive the work of Council forward.

In 2023-2024 we continued to operate the services our community need, want and value. It's so hard to capture them all in a short column, but there are some highlights which speak to Wollongong being a community-focused space to live, work and play:

- We opened the award-winning All Ages All Abilities Playground at Stuart Park, which provides an important play and meeting space for everyone in our community.
- An estimated 1.5 million people visited and swam at our 17 flagged beaches under the watchful eye of Council's professional lifeguards between September and April.
- Our libraries continued to offer books to borrow, as well as activities and events for people of all ages, a space of connection, and to be an area to retreat from the weather be it hot, cold or wet.
- We continued our proactive work to support residents and their dogs to access selected beaches and parks as on-leash and off-leash areas. In addition to an ongoing public education campaign about good dog behaviours and practices in community spaces, and a compliance program with a focus on busy beaches and foreshore parks, we further improved beach signage.
- Our Botanic Garden continued to be a natural open space of retreat and relaxation, conservation and education.
- Cringila Hills Mountain Bike Park took out a national award for best park of the year at the Parks and Leisure Australia Conference Awards in Adelaide and continued the positive story of this space's rebirth into a real local gem.

- We launched a new recycling basket initiative in foreshore beaches and parks that encouraged people to leave behind their recyclable bottles and cans so that they are easily collected for the return and earn scheme.

This last initiative is one that's particularly close to my heart. Across our city, we've got differing levels of privilege and opportunity. I take great pride in the fact that this scheme responded to a community safety concern – people rummaging through bins for bottles – to deliver an outcome that provides both an environmental and financial benefit.

This focus on community was also so apparent in the Culture Mix event delivered by Council, with funding from the NSW Government, in October 2023. There was so much joy and a real sense of pride in the heart of Wollongong that day as people from across our community came together to celebrate their diverse cultural backgrounds. It was a riot of colour

on Crown Street, and the musical sounds and smells of the foods on offer was a treat to behold. All of this was done while Council continued to invest in important infrastructure works that focused on improving our roads, footpaths and cycleways, as well as maintaining our current assets into the future.

There is no doubt the 2024-2025 financial year will have some surprises ahead in it. However, there is no question in my mind that the passionate individuals within Council, along with a fresh team of Councillors, will continue to deliver for the community. They will build on the legacy of the dedicated Councillors and staff who always seek to do the best for our city.

Lord Mayor of Wollongong Councillor Tania Brown



*Image: Lord Mayor of Wollongong
Councillor Tania Brown and outgoing
Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery AM.*



Image: North Beach, Wollongong
Photo Caitlyn Phanith (Unsplash)

General Manager's Message

At Wollongong City Council, we consider ourselves privileged to come to work each day with a focus on meeting the needs of those who call Wollongong home.

We've a passionate community who want to see us do more to provide better roads, footpaths and cycleways, to ensure community facilities, spaces and venues are fit for purpose, and there are spaces for exercising, socialising and to feel a part of our community.

With that in mind, I'm proud to present the Annual Report 2023-2024 that digs into the detail of what Wollongong City Council has done for all those who live, work and play on Dharawal Country over the past 12 months.

It has been a hard year with Council being asked to deliver more for our community, but to also stretch our budget further than ever before. We're seeing increased costs for materials impacting the bottom line of projects, while also seeking to manage the unexpected costs that come up, like those associated with April's Natural Disaster.

In the 14 days after this event, our Customer Service team took a staggering 6,500 calls from residents needing support, advice and booking a kerbside flood waste collection.

We've a bill of more than \$5.6 million to address the immediate impact of the storm. However, the legacy of this event will be with us, and impacting Council's budget, for years to come. While we've \$26 million set aside for the next four years for stormwater improvements, we want to do more. We want to invest in our city's 680km-long stormwater pipe network to ensure that this infrastructure – some of which is up to 80 years old – is fit-for-purpose and in line with our ever-improving understanding of flood behaviour.

Natural disasters aside, over the past financial year, Council has focused on the delivery of key actions within the Operational Plan and Delivery Program.

We've continued work on the upgrade of Beaton Park's tennis hub that will, once finished, see it have 14 new courts including eight that meet the international standard. We've invested in our city's enthusiastic netball-playing community with the second stage of work on the courts at Fred Finch Park in Berkeley to make them more weather resilient and ensure they comply with Netball Australia's Technical Guidelines, and we're investing in better drainage for targeted sportsfields to manage the impacts of climate change.

We worked closely with Transport for NSW to launch the shared e-scooter trial in the city last September. In the planning of this trial, we were really clear that we wanted the e-scooters to be a realistic and viable alternative to cars, which linked people to public transport, places of work, learning and socialising. That's why our trial zone runs from Sandon Point through to the southern CBD, and west to areas around the University of Wollongong campus.

Better active transport is key not only in terms of improving how people can move around Wollongong, but to help us achieve our goals in terms of reducing the impact of climate change, providing alternatives to cars as a transport option but also supporting residents to incorporate activity and exercise into their daily routines.

This financial year, we've really focused on supporting affordable housing. We entered into a funding agreement for a \$5 million affordable housing scheme with Head Start Homes and continued our focus within the Wollongong Housing Strategy to improving housing opportunities across the city. We're committed to increasing the amount of housing available in the right location across our suburbs. As a local government, we can do this through our planning controls, how we purposefully allocate funds from developers and through the conversations we have with stakeholders including other levels of government.

This is a focus that will continue into the future and one that informs our strategic planning and advocacy work.

We're also continuing to build strong strategic relationships with key agencies as well as the State and Federal Government. These productive relationships are essential when it comes to positioning Wollongong as a city that is focused on doing the best by our residents.

We're grateful for the wide and varied funding opportunities we've received from both levels of government over the past year, which have supported us to deliver essential infrastructure upgrades, deliver community-focused events and continue to improve our road and sporting facilities. We look forward to continuing to build these connections and to ensure Wollongong is front-of-mind for opportunities into the future.

Our city is an exciting place and local government is a key player when it comes to supporting and advocating for its growth and development and maturity.

As we consider the opportunities facing Wollongong in the future, I would like to acknowledge and thank the outgoing Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery AM. Through

each of his 13 years as Lord Mayor he had a razor-sharp focus on serving the community, and supporting the organisation and all those who work within it. His leadership helped navigate the city to the positive position it's in now.

Similarly, I would also like to acknowledge the role each of the outgoing Councillors played in their advocacy to keep the City of Wollongong an extraordinary place to live, work and play. Their hard work, passion and dedication can be seen in the achievements of the 2021-2024 term of Council. I thank them for their efforts and look forward to continuing to deliver for our community into the future.

**Wollongong City Council General Manager
Greg Doyle**



Image: Bulli Beach



Welcome to Wollongong City Council's Annual Report 2023-2024

About this report

The Wollongong City Council Annual Report provides a summary of our performance over the 2023-2024 financial year against Council's Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2023-2024.

Council's 33 Services form the foundation of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, with Services presented under their best fit goal.

This is the second Annual Report against Council's Delivery Program 2022-2026 and has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*.

How to read this document

The Annual Report comprises five main sections presented as the following:

- An overview of our city, Council and a financial summary
- Strategic Priorities and progress against the Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2023-2024 through activities and actions within Council's 33 Services
- Additional statutory reporting
- Detailed audited financial statements, including General Purpose and Special Purpose Financial Statements (Attachment A).

Intended Audience

This report provides information to a broad range of stakeholders including the Wollongong community, government and non-government organisations, our partners and local businesses. It also provides our staff with information on how we have performed over the year and how their efforts are contributing to achieve our community's vision,

From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and will be leaders in building an educated, creative, sustainable and connected community.

How to obtain a copy of this document

A copy of this Annual Report and various other Council publications are available on our website:

[Plans and Reports | Wollongong City Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/plans-and-reports)

Hard copies of this report are also available for viewing in Council's community centres and libraries.



Our City

Located 80 kilometres south of Sydney, Wollongong covers 714 square kilometres and occupies a narrow strip bordered by the Royal National Park to the north, Lake Illawarra to the south, the Pacific Ocean to the east and the Illawarra escarpment to the west.

The name Wollongong originated from the local Aboriginal word *woolyungah* meaning five islands. Archaeological evidence indicates the Aboriginal people have lived here for at least 30,000 years. The area known today as Wollongong was originally a home for Aboriginal people of Dharawal country (also spelled Tarawal or Thuruwal), who remain the Traditional Custodians of this land.

Dr Charles Throsby first established a settlement here in 1815, bringing down his cattle from the Southern Highlands to a lagoon of fresh water located near City Beach. The earliest reference to Wollongong was in 1826, in a report written by John Oxley, about the local cedar industry. The area's first school was established in 1833, and just one year later the Surveyor-General arrived from Sydney to lay out the township of Wollongong on property owned by Charles Throsby-Smith.

Our local steel industry commenced in 1927 with Charles Hoskins entering into an agreement with the State Government to build a Steelworks at Port Kembla, thereby commencing a long history of steel production that still continues to this day. Operations began in 1930 with one blast furnace of 800 tonnes capacity. In 1936, BHP acquired Australian Iron and Steel Limited and production at Port Kembla increased rapidly. The steel industry was a catalyst for growth for many decades, and laid the foundations for the city's economy, lifestyle and culture. Wollongong is proud of its industry roots and is still known and acknowledged as one of Australia's leading industrial centres. While steel and other manufacturing industries remain an essential part of the local economy, the city has long recognised the need to diversify its economic base. Construction of the

spectacular Sea Cliff Bridge to the north has given more focus to the burgeoning tourism industry, and information technology, hospitality, health services and telecommunications continue to grow as key industries in the region. Wollongong is a diverse community, with people from more than 30 different language groups and 20 different religious groups calling Wollongong home. A deep respect for others' traditions and regular celebrations of diverse customs add to the vibrant tapestry of community life and provide another dimension to our increasingly sophisticated city.

The Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) is divided into three wards with four Councillors elected to represent each ward. The Lord Mayor is elected by all voters and represents the entire Wollongong LGA.

Dharawal County



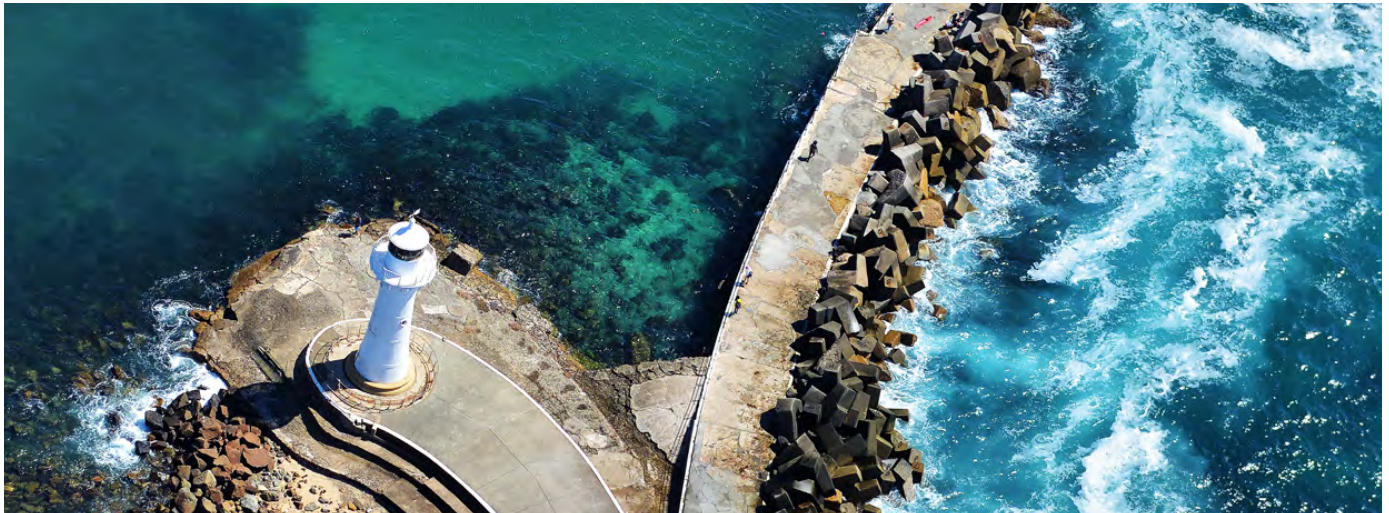


Image: Flagstaff Point
(Wollongong Head)
Lighthouse

Snapshot of the Wollongong Community



Wollongong is said to originate from the Aboriginal word Woolyungah, meaning Five Islands. The fourth largest city in New South Wales and 11th largest city in Australia in terms of population (ABS - significant urban areas).



The median age of the population of Wollongong was 39 years. We have an ageing population, 18.6% of our community are age 65+.



In 2021, 23.8% of households earned a high household income (\$3,000 per week or more) and 18.6% of households earned a low income (\$0 to \$650 per week).



In June 2024, 5.8% of Wollongong's working age population were eligible to receive jobseeker allowance or youth allowance (excluding students), up from 5.6% in January 2024.



A total of 74.9% of the population of Wollongong stated they were Australian born (4.8% not stated). Of the 20.3% born overseas the five main countries of birth were UK, North Macedonia, Italy, India, and New Zealand.



Separate housing provided accommodation for 68.4% of the Wollongong LGA population 20.5% occupied a medium density dwelling; while 12.3% occupied high density dwellings. In Wollongong City, 66.2% of households were purchasing or fully owned their home, 31% were renting privately, and 2.8% were in social housing in 2021.



In 2021, there were 214,700 people counted as living in Wollongong (estimated resident population). It is projected that the population will increase to 242,182 residents by 2032.

Information was taken from .id Community Demographic Resources 2024, 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, compiled and presented by .id



Image: Children on Corrimal Beach



In 2021, 43.4% were couple families with children, compared to 44.2% in 2016.



And 16.8% were one-parent households compared to 18.1% 2016.



26.4% of households were one person households, with almost half of these people over the age of 65.



74.7% of people employed in the Wollongong Local Government Area also reside in the Wollongong Local Government Area.



Wollongong LGA's unemployment rate is above the state average at 5.9% in June 2024 compared with 3.7% for New South Wales.



In 2021, there were 7,990 people in the Wollongong LGA who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, representing 3.7% of the total population (estimated resident population).



English was stated as the only language spoken at home by 79.8% of the population. The four most common languages other than English spoken at home are Macedonian, Italian, Mandarin and Arabic, with Mandarin as the fastest growing language.



In 2021, 51.3% of people who live in Wollongong indicated they travel to work in a motor vehicle, 0.7% travelled by train, 0.7% travelled by bus. 26.6% worked at home. 2% used active transport.

Information was taken from .id Community Demographic Resources 2024, 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, compiled and presented by .id



Image: Bulli Beach Reserve Playground

Integrated Planning and Reporting – Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program

Our Community Strategic Plan, Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 includes the community's vision, goals, objectives and strategies for the future. Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan outlines how those strategies for which it holds responsibility, will be translated into actions, delivered through 33 Council Services.

Council is not solely responsible for the implementation of the Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan. It is the community's Plan, and Council works together with business, government, community groups and individuals to deliver the community's aspirations.

The Delivery Program and Operational Plan is developed utilising the resources available through the Resourcing Strategy 2022-2032.

Reporting To Our Community

Wollongong City Council regularly tracks and monitors the Delivery Program and Operational Plan and reports to the community on progress on a quarterly and annual basis. Council also tracks progress towards the Community Strategic Plan through the State of our City Report. All reports are available on Council's website.



Our Wollongong Our Future 2032

Vision

From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and will be leaders in building an educated, creative, sustainable and connected community.

Goals

We value and protect our environment

We have an innovative and sustainable economy

Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city

We are a connected and engaged community

We have a healthy community in a liveable city

We have affordable and accessible transport

Our Values and Purpose

Wollongong City Council is committed to being a local government of excellence that enhances our City's quality of life and environment through effective leadership, community involvement and commitment to service. As a purpose-led, values driven organisation our values are part of everything we do every day and provide the foundation of our organisational culture and guide how we deliver the strategies and actions outlined in the Delivery Program.

We live these values through:

Enabling daily work that encourages collaboration, innovation, interdependence, belonging and inclusion

Living the values in everyday work through behaviours and interactions

Supporting and enabling people to deliver on the promise of an Extraordinary Wollongong

OUR VALUES IN ACTION


SUSTAINABLE
use our community's resources responsibly


RESPECT
inclusive and considerate


COURAGE
challenge the norm to be better


INTEGRITY
honest and reliable


ONE TEAM
together we deliver excellent service

Councillor Information

The following Councillors were in office for the period of this Report



Lord Mayor
Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM

Ward 1



Councillor Mithra Cox



Councillor Richard Martin



Councillor Janice Kershaw



Councillor Cameron Walters

Ward 2



Councillor Cath Blakey



Councillor Tania Brown
(Deputy Lord Mayor)



Councillor David Brown



Councillor John Dorahy

Ward 3



Councillor Elisha Aitken



Councillor Dom Figliomeni



Councillor Linda Campbell



Councillor Ann Martin

Our Executive



Greg Doyle
General Manager



Renee Campbell
Director
Corporate Services



Linda Davis
Director
Planning and Environment



Joanne Page
Director
Infrastructure and Works

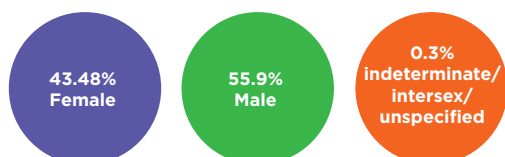


Kerry Hunt
Director
Community Services

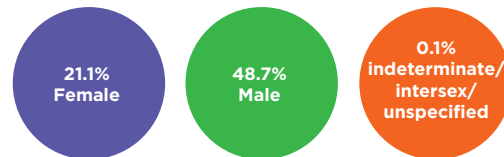
Our Workforce

Includes Permanent, temporary, term contract and contract employees as at 30 June 2024

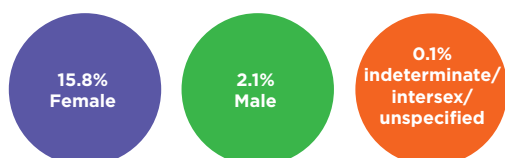
Our workforce is comprised of 1,305 employees



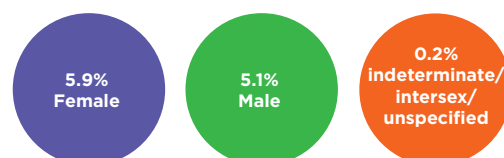
Full time permanent employees - 925



Part time permanent employees - 234



Total term contract (temporary, maximum and fixed term) - 146



Generations

39.8% of employees are Gen X and represent the highest generational group

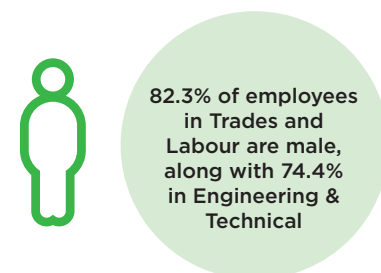
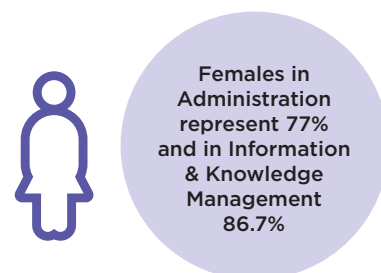
	Female	Male	Indeterminate/intersex/unspecified
Baby Boomers (1944 - 1966)	10.8%	13.7%	0%
Generation X (1967 - 1980)	18.2%	21.5%	0%
Generation Y and younger (Post 1981 - 1994)	10.5%	14.6%	0.2%
Generation Z (post 1994)	4.2%	6.1%	0.2%

38.7% of employees at Manager Level and above are women

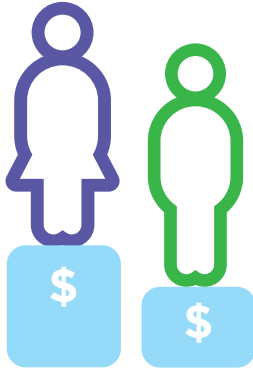
	Female	Male
General Manager		100%
Director	100%	
Senior Manager	35.3%	64.7%
Middle Manager	35.8%	64.1%



Job Families are dominated by



Wollongong City Council Gender Pay Gap



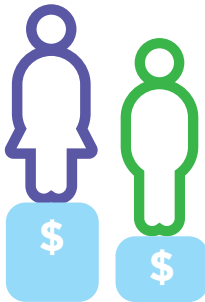
Full time Gender Pay Gap

Wollongong City Council's full time gender gap is 7.26% or \$6,701.66 in favour of women.



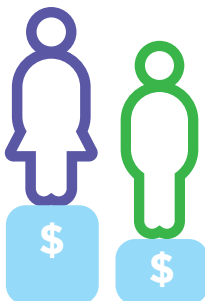
Base Salary Package per Job Family

At Wollongong City Council, a women's full time base salary across job family categories, on average is \$2,015.49 or 2.16% a year more than an average man's.



Overall Manager Category

At Wollongong City Council, women in management (leadership) roles are paid \$12,239.98 or 10.38% more than men as a base salary package. This category includes Directors, Senior Managers, other managers, coordinators and supervisors/leading hands.



Total Remuneration Gender Pay Gap

Women in Director and Senior Manager positions at Wollongong City Council are paid \$31,781.00 or 12.60% more than men as a total salary package.

Delivering everyday

Wollongong City Council delivers a diverse range of services for our community everyday. Some of these services – building and repairing roads, rubbish collection and maintenance of public spaces and facilities are recognised as Council's work.

Others might not be as well known.



660 interments completed across our 6 operational cemeteries and gardens



Ran 46 different programs and projects for young people



Seasonal patrols of 17 beaches including North Wollongong year-round



Care, maintenance and lifeguard services at 2 heated pools and 6 free public swimming pools



Manage 285 sports and playing fields and 9 turf wickets



Cleaning and maintenance of 9 ocean rock pools



Facilitating and supporting a wide range of community arts festivals and activations



Manage the Creative Wollongong Studios at Wollongong Town Hall providing workspaces for local artists



Over 1,250 public bins picked up across the Local Government Area each week with more than 75% of these bins serviced 5 times a week



Manage and operate 56 Council-owned community facilities including Neighbourhood Centres, Senior Citizens Centres, Childcare Centres, Libraries, Community Centres and Community Halls



Conducted 647 school zone parking patrols at our local primary schools



Expanded the Language Aide pool service to include Vietnamese and Italian language aides



Over 102,000 nights stayed at our three tourist parks



975 development applications were determined



Inspection of approximately 23,455 metres of stormwater pipe and 1,197 stormwater pits



302,136 attendances across all program areas including group exercise, learn to swim, competitive and social swimming, athletics, tennis, squash, fitness, table tennis, badminton across two commercially operated recreation centres



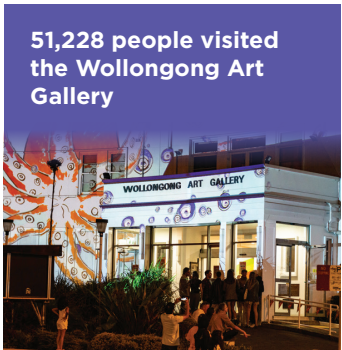
Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) program continues to divert organic material from landfill, with a total 32,914.74 tonnes of food organics and garden organics materials processed



745 environmental program/events workshops held



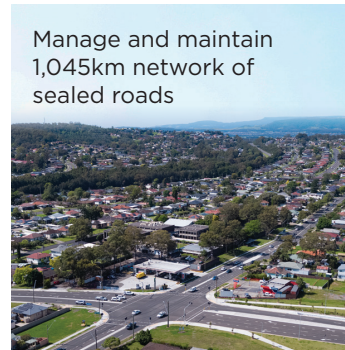
51,228 people visited the Wollongong Art Gallery



7 libraries with 470,918 visitors, loaning 1,311,111 items



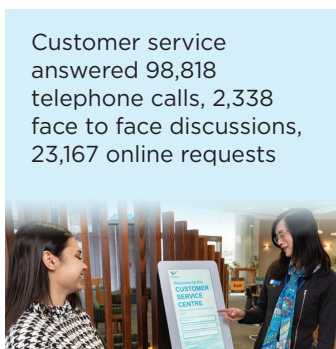
Manage and maintain 1,045km network of sealed roads



Manage over 620km of footpaths and cycleways



Customer service answered 98,818 telephone calls, 2,338 face to face discussions, 23,167 online requests



Supported 20 Cadets, 2 apprentices, 11 trainees and six school-based trainees through Cadet, Apprentice, Trainee and School-based Trainee (CATS) program



Delivering Sustainable Services

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, section 428(3) and the Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines Essential Element 5.3

Council has a strong history of reviewing services as part of its continuous improvement and innovation practices. The 2022–2023 financial year saw the development of Council's Service Optimisation Program, which delivers an evidence-based approach to the prioritisation of services to be included in the program.

The program philosophy focuses on assessing service delivery to ensure it:

1. is sustainable, relevant, aligned with community need and provides value,
2. delivers a good customer experience, and
3. operates efficiently and effectively.

In the 2023–2024 financial year, we completed the first review under this Program, which was in Development Assessment. The focus was to evaluate the *"customer experience around access to information related to the Development Application process"*.

During the review, significant effort was put in place to understand existing customer feedback provided over the last three to four years. This included in-depth analysis of thousands of customer requests, complaints, suggestions and other forms of feedback. Website analytics and search activity, feedback from relevant past community engagements, staff workshops, benchmarking with other councils and a review of legislative requirements were also a part of the process. We also considered Community Satisfaction and Community Wellbeing survey feedback.

The outcomes of the Service Optimisation will deliver a range of improvements aimed at directly addressing community feedback to improve customer service and the online user experience. The recommendations we'll implement in the 2024–2025 financial year include:

- revised website structure, with improved and streamlined content relating to the development application process,
- revised website content, correspondence and systems generated communications to better align with the principles of plain English (we'll make it easier to understand),
- improved usability of our online applications process,
- clearer information about the advice you can expect to receive from Council's Duty Officers,
- improved information about Council's Development Assessment (DA) notification and submission processes.

We'll continue to add information to our development application information registers, and more guidance on how the community can track and view DAs.

We'll also undertake a user survey after these improvements have been implemented, to gauge how the community and customers feel about the changes we're putting in place.

An improvement plan has been developed, and outcomes will be regularly reported to the community via Council's Quarterly Review and Annual Report.

Looking forward, in the 2024–2025 financial year, we'll be undertaking two evaluations:

1. Review the customer service journey across targeted, high priority operations, and
2. Complete an end-to-end evaluation of road signage management.

Image: Community Transport



Major Capital Works Projects



Wollongong City Council is the custodian of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment assets with a gross value of approximately \$5.98B, and a net carrying value of \$3.04B on behalf of the community.

During 2023-2024, Council delivered a capital works program worth \$97.2M across 573 projects throughout the Local Government Area. This includes \$55.9M on renewing and replacing existing assets and \$41.3M on upgrading, constructing or purchasing new assets.

Of this \$41.3M, \$12.3M was associated with land purchases for identified essential infrastructure in West Dapto.

Council received a further \$52.3M of contributed assets such as roads and drainage from new subdivisions constructed by developers. The following is a summary of the 2023-2024 expenditure program, highlighting some of the major projects undertaken during the year:

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Capital Works*	\$77.8M	\$89.7M	\$91.1M	\$97.2M

Major Capital Projects*

Bellambi Gully Flood Mitigation	\$4.1M
Whytes Gully New Cell Stage 2B-2	\$2.9M
Fred Finch Park Netball Courts Stage 2	\$2.0M
Stuart Park All-Ages, All-Abilities playground	\$2.0M
21 Cliff Pde, headwall reconstruction	\$1.6M
Oxford Road Causeway Reconstruction	\$1.6M
Princes Highway - Northcliffe Dr to West Dapto Rd	\$1.5M
Helensburgh Village Centre - Stage 3	\$1.4M
North Wollongong Beach, Seawall Renewal Stage 1	\$1.3M
Accessible Viewing Area on Hill 60	\$1.3M
West Dapto Rd – Yard St to Shone Ave (Stages 2-4)	\$1.0M
Montague St; Ralph Black Dr (South) to Bourke St Road Reconstruction	\$0.9M
Reddalls Rd; West Dapto Rd to Keevers Place Road Reconstruction	\$0.8M
N.Cycleway; Ursula Rd to Farrell Rd	\$0.8M

* Expenditure quoted above refers to the actual expenditure for 2023-2024, not the total cost of the project.

Projects across multiple locations^

Footpaths And Cycleways	115 projects	\$13.1M
Parks, Gardens and Sportsfields	67 projects	\$19.8M
Roads And Related Assets	178 projects	\$19.3M
Carparks	15 projects	\$0.4M
Buildings	58 projects	\$6.4M
Stormwater And Floodplain Management	75 projects	\$9.4M
Beaches And Pools	7 projects	\$0.6M
West Dapto	14 projects	\$3.9M
Commercial Operations	17 projects	\$0.8M
Library Books	1 project	\$1.3M
Waste Facilities	12 projects	\$4.6M
Plant And Equipment	2 projects	\$2.1M
Public Art	1 project	\$0.1M
Information Technology	6 projects	\$1.3M
Fleet	1 project	\$1.8M
Land Acquisitions	4 projects	\$12.3M

^ Number of projects refers to the number of projects Council spent money on and not necessarily constructed in 2023-2024

Council at Work

Council's revenue for 2023-2024 was \$430.3M, with the majority of revenue coming from general rates and annual charges. This funding supported more than 33 services and programs, as well as new investment in operational and strategic priorities for the city. The following information provides an overview of Council's revenue and expenditure in 2023-2024.

Where does the money come from?

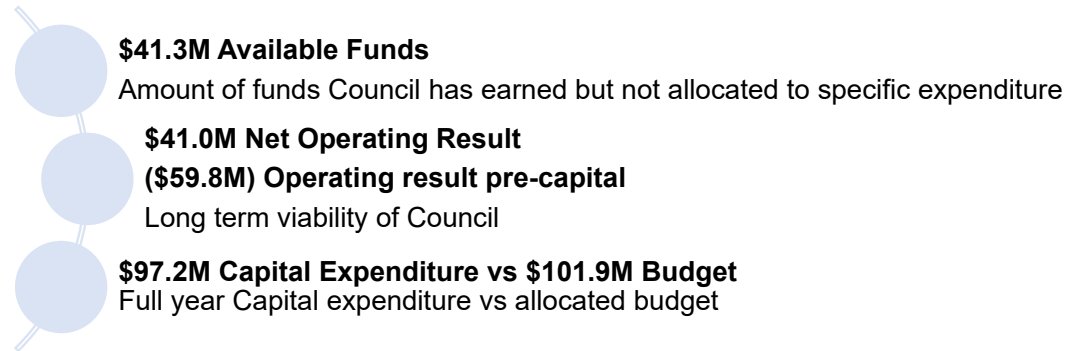
	%	Total \$'000 430,325
Rates and Annual Charges	54%	231,847
User Fees and Charges and Other Revenue	9%	38,578
Rental Income	1%	6,337
Grants and Contributions – Capital Purposes	24%	100,797
Grants and Contributions – Operating Purposes	8%	32,772
Interest and Investment Revenue	2%	10,322
Other revenues	2%	9,672

Where is the money spent? Expenditure by Service

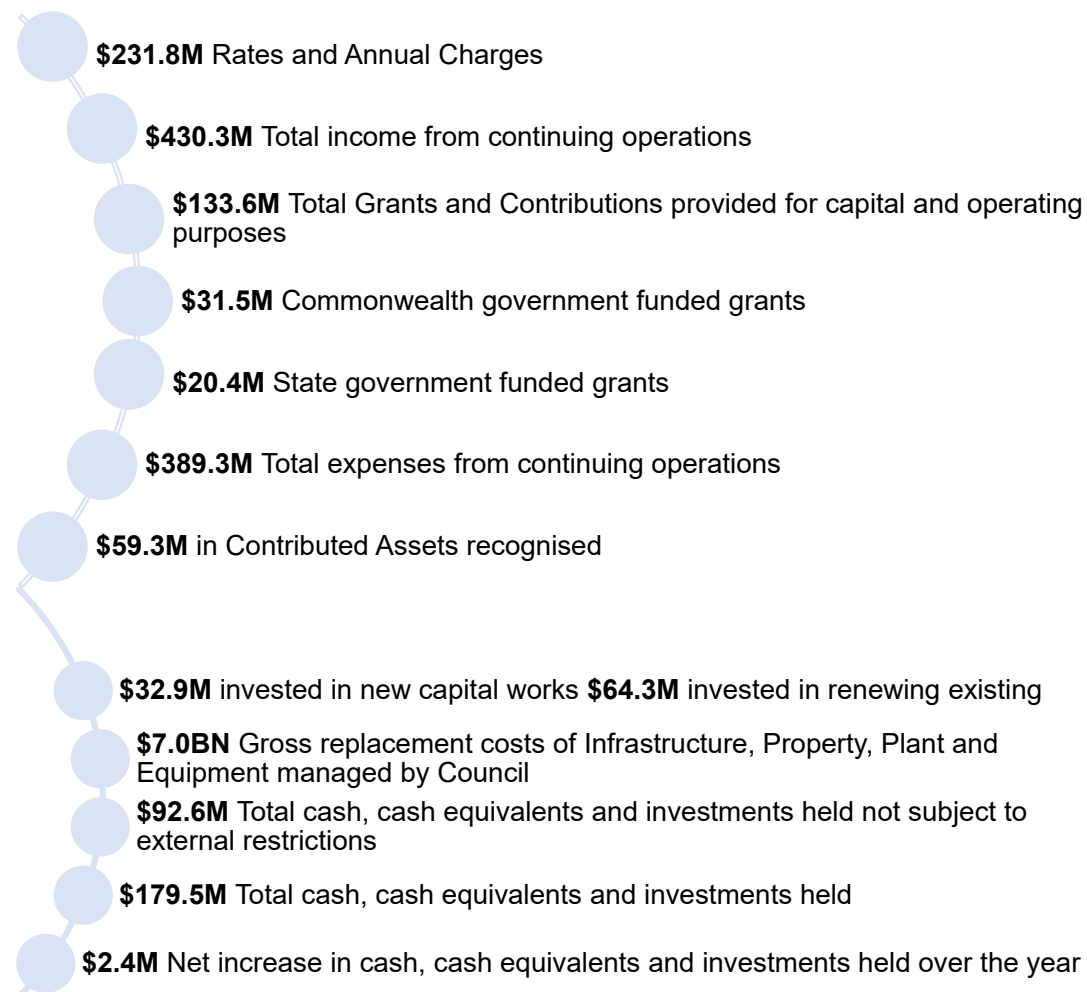


Financial Overview

Key Indicators



Financial Highlights



Connecting With Our Community

The Delivery Program and Operational Plan delivers in response to the aspirations outlined in the Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan. Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan is the community's Plan, and Council works together with business, government, community groups and individuals to deliver the community's aspirations.

The Delivery Program and Operational Plan have been prepared in response to community engagement and feedback and Council's legislative responsibilities.

Throughout 2023–2024, many online and face to face engagement methods have been used to hear the thoughts and ideas of our community about a range of Council's plans, projects and policies.

Community engagement undertaken throughout 2023–2024 includes:

Project name	Date
Urban Heat Strategy	July – August 2023
Library Strategy 2024-2028	July – August 2023
Pedestrian Safety Improvements at Railway Parade Woonona	July – August 2023
Draft Wollongong Industrial Lands Review 2023	July – September 2023
Draft Helensburgh Park Crown Reserves Plan of Management	July – August 2023
Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) charging Points Pilot	July – August 2023
Kembla Vision – children's engagement	July 2023
Revised Governance Council Policies	August 2023
Mobile Skate Park Options	August 2023
Data Breach Response Policy	August – September 2023
Let's Talk Creative Wollongong!	August – September 2023, October – December 2023 and May – June 2024
Community Satisfaction Survey	September 2023
Managing Flood Risk in the Allans Creek Catchment	September – October 2023
Draft Planning Agreement for the Former Port Kembla Public School	September – October 2023
Planning Proposal – Review of Large R2 Zoned Lots in the Illawarra Escarpment Foothills	September – October 2023
Shareway Bridge Replacement – Point Street Bulli	September 2023 - ongoing
Managing Flood Risk in the Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creek Catchment	September – October 2023
Review of Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 Chapter 17 – Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Facilities	September – October 2023
Climate Change Mitigation Plan	September – October 2023
Safer Cities Her Way	September – November 2023 and March – June 2024
Draft Planning Agreement – Wilkies Walk	October – November 2023
Young People and Recreational Space	October 2023 – January 2024
Wollongong and West Wollongong New Shared Paths	October – November 2023
Revised Debt Recovery and Hardship Assistance	October – November 2023
Culture Mix	October – November 2024
Stanwell Park Play Space	October 2023
Draft West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2024	November – December 2023
Port Kembla Community Centre Refurbishment – Stage 2	November 2023
Art Workshops for the All Abilities and All Ages Play Space	November 2023
Wilga Street Block, Corrimal – Draft Planning Strategy, Planning Proposal and Draft Development Control Plan	November – December 2023
Draft Development Control Plan – Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 Chapter 21 Tallawarra Lands	November – December 2023
Grand Pacific Walk, Austinmer	November – December 2023

Project name	Date
Planning Proposal – Reclassify 340 West Dapto Road, Stream Hill from Community Land to Operational Land	November – December 2023
Discover, Learn and Connect Wollongong City Libraries Strategy 2024-2028	November - December 2023
Yarning about Reconciliation	November – February 2024
Youth Week in Wollongong	November – April 2024
Planning Proposal – Road and Rail Corridor Rezoning and Land Reservation Acquisition Map Amendment	January – March 2024
Future West Dapto Centres	February – March 2024
Our 2024 Wellbeing Survey	February – March 2024
Draft Planning Agreement for Tallawarra	February – March 2024
Managing Flood Risk in the Collins Creek Catchment	February – March 2024
Ursula Road, Bulli Tree Planting	February – March 2024
West Dapto Urban Release Area Biodiversity Certification Application	March – April 2024
Revised Codes of Conduct	March – April 2024
Revised Codes of Business Ethics 2024	March – April 2024
Let's Talk Skateparks	March – May 2024
Port Kembla Community Skate Space	March – April 2024
Wollongong City Centre Skate Park	April 2024 - ongoing
Thirroul Skate Park	April 2024 - ongoing
Mobile Food Truck Trial	April - May 2024
Warrawong Laneways	April – May 2024
Draft Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2024-2025	April - May 2024
Unanderra Library Open Hours	April - May 2024
Proposed Cleveland Road Neighbourhood Plan Boundary Change	April - May 2024
Draft Wollongong Integrated Transport Strategy	April - May 2024
Multicultural Community Workshop	May 2024
Wilson Street Wollongong Shared Zone	May 2024
Talking Waste for 2024-2034	May – July 2024
Let's Chat Windang	June 2024
Let's Chat Thirroul	June 2024
Draft Affordable Housing Policy and Procedures	June – July 2024
Draft Planning Proposal Policy 2024	June – July 2024
Lake Illawarra Entrance Options Study	June – August 2024
Hill 60 Masterplan Implementation – Stage 1A upgrade	Ongoing
Wollongong Youth Services programs	Ongoing

Council's Supporting Document Roadmap

Council refers to its adopted strategies and plans as Supporting Documents. These direction setting documents support the development of the Community Strategic Plan, Council's Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plans.

These documents include goals, strategies and actions specific to project or location. However; until the actions are enabled through resourcing and included in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, they remain aspirational.

The following supporting documents have been endorsed by Wollongong City Council as priority documents and for the actions within them to be considered for inclusion through the annual planning process:

Community Services and Facilities

Discover Learn and Connect Wollongong City Libraries Strategy 2024-2028
Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2021-2025
Creative Wollongong 2019-2024
Cultural Tourism Strategy 2018
Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025
Economic Development Strategy 2019-2029
Framing Our Future - Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025
Places for People Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework 2018-2028
Places for the Future: Social Infrastructure Future Directions: 2023-2036
Animating Wollongong Public Art Strategy 2022 - 2032
Public Toilets Strategy 2019-2029
Reconciliation Action Plan 2021 - 2023
Destination Wollongong Major Events Strategy 2021 – 2026

Corporate Governance and Internal Services

Our Resourcing Strategy 2032
Long Term Financial Plan 2022-2032
Asset Management Strategy 2022-2032
Workforce Management Strategy 2022-2026
Information Management and Technology Strategy 2022-2024

Environment

Sustainable Wollongong 2030: A Climate Healthy City Strategy
Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-2030
Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2022
Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy
Illawarra Escarpment Management Plan 2015
Urban Greening Strategy 2017-2037

Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2022
Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program 2020–2030
Coastal Zone Management Plan 2017

Stormwater Management Plans

Floodplain Risk Management Plans

Planning and Engagement

A City for People – Public Spaces Public Life
West Dapto Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment 2023
Business Centre Strategy 2023
West Dapto Vision 2018
Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework
Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027
Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023
Wollongong Industrial Lands Review 2023
Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020

Town and Village Plans Including:

- Corrimal Town Centre
- Dapto Town Centre
- Figtree Town Centre
- Helensburgh
- Port Kembla Town Centre
- Port Kembla 2505
- Thirroul Village Centre
- Unanderra Town Centre
- Warrawong Town Centre
- Wollongong City Centre

Recreation and Open Space

Masterplans including:

- Beaton Park
- Blue Mile
- Botanic Garden and Plan of Management
- Bulli Showground
- Corrimal Heated Pool
- Cringila Hills Recreation
- Draft Bellambi Foreshore
- Figtree Oval
- Grand Pacific Drive
- Hill 60
- Kembla Grange Cemetery
- King George V Oval
- Memorial Gardens
- Stuart Park
- JP Galvin Park

Plans of Management including:

- Council Community Land
- Beaton Park
- Draft Bellambi Foreshore
- Coledale Beach Reserve
- Council Community Land Judbooley Parade Windang
- Mount Keira Summit Park Plan of Management
- Sandon Point and McCauleys Beach Crown Lands
- Sandon Point and McCauleys Beach Vegetation Management Plan
- Stanwell Park and Bald Hill
- Wollongong Botanic Garden
- Wollongong City Foreshore
- Helensburgh Reserves Plan of Management

Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027

The Future of Our Pools Strategy 2014-2024

Play Wollongong Strategy 2014-2024

Tourist Parks Improvement Strategy and Masterplan 2017-2022

Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2028

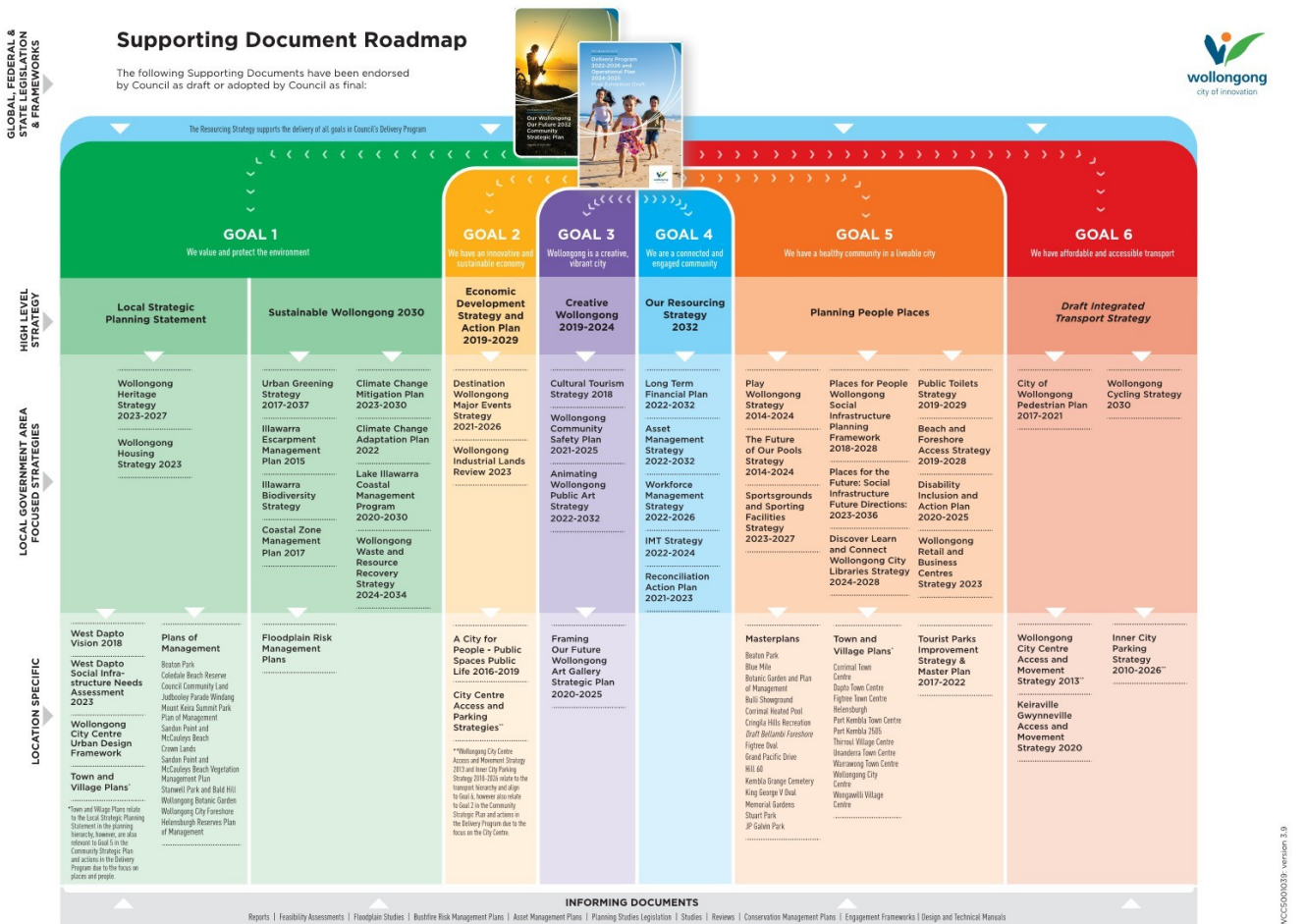
Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030

City of Wollongong Pedestrian Plan 2017-2021

Inner City Parking Strategy 2010-2026

Wollongong City Centre Access and Movement Strategy 2013

Keiraville Gwynneville Access and Movement Strategy 2020





To focus Council's attention the Councillors identified five key focus areas for the life of the Delivery Program. These are known as the Council's Strategic Priorities.

Localised Suburbs and Places

Our localised suburbs and places will be well planned so that they are liveable and safe. This includes important transport infrastructure and footpaths, as well as the necessary facilities and spaces are available for a variety of uses for communities. We will endeavour to maintain and protect the unique character of our local areas and encourage community spirit and civic pride through appropriate activities and land uses.

Sustainable Wollongong

Achieving a sustainable future and addressing a changing climate are a significant focus during this Council term. Our program includes the implementation of key priorities including reducing emissions and reducing waste to landfill, continuing urban greening and protecting our natural environment.

Active Transport and Connectivity

We are planning for and progressively working towards an integrated and active transport network with improved connectivity across the Local Government Area. We will continue to

facilitate the upgrade of our public transport, bicycle networks, pedestrian access routes and safety around our schools. This focus will see further investment into our footpaths and cycle ways, complementing our commitment to our suburbs and places.

Business and Investment

We will continue to grow the Wollongong economy through jobs growth, attracting business, investment, major events, and tourism to the region. We will continue to promote our local advantages, including our proximity to Sydney, supportive business environment, innovative ecosystem, world class university and suburb liveability. We will work with key stakeholders including peak business groups and state and federal governments to further promote our city and attract greater investment in infrastructure and other key assets.

West Dapto

We will continue to work in collaboration with key agencies to provide the infrastructure needed to support West Dapto's existing and growing community and employment lands of the urban release area. This will include coordinated planning for access improvements including new roads and bridges which are needed to support the expected 19,500 total housing lots and 8,500 jobs required over the next 30 years.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONTINUED

Localised
Suburbs and
Places

Sustainable
Wollongong

Active
Transport and
Connectivity

Business and
Investment

West Dapto

Strategic Priorities

Our Councillors have made a commitment to support our organisation and community in making Wollongong a better place to live, work, visit and play. To focus Council's attention to achieve this, Councillors have agreed to five Strategic Priorities. These are outlined in the Delivery Program 2022-2026. A summary of progress made in 2023-2024 is outlined below:

Localised
Suburbs and
Places

Council continues to invest in enhancing active transport across the local government area. Through investment in local infrastructure including Crown Street footpath upgrades from Railway Parade to Gladstone Avenue, and Corrimal Street to Kembla Street, North Cycleway upgrades in Bulli and Woonona, continuing delivery of the Grand Pacific Walk in Clifton, and completion of the Cringila Link Cycleway, these projects have strengthened network connectivity of Council's active transport network.

Connecting Neighbours Grants were available to support an event or activity that connects people to each other. Funding was provided to 40 activities across the local government area.

NAIDOC Week grants were provided to six community organisations to conduct place-based NAIDOC week activities and events.

The Youth Forum election was held in local high schools and community centres across the local government area. Eight young people were elected to be part of the young leader's program over the next 12 months.

Children and young people participated in engagement activities for the Stanwell Park Play Space, Creative Wollongong, Reconciliation Action Plan and the Stuart Park All Ages, All Abilities Play Space Artwork and skate parks.

The Paint the Gong REaD reading tent was delivered at the Port Kembla Community Christmas Feast, Saltwater Festival at Bundaleer Estate and Dapto Mall. Bright Spark, the mascot, attended Lake Heights Public School kinder orientation and the reading day for Paint Shellharbour REaD.

A range of programs were held in libraries including Dungeons and Dragons, First Nations weaving and Teenz Connect.

Safer Cities: Her Way is a collaborative partnership project between Transport for NSW and Council to improve perceptions of safety for women, girls and gender diverse people when travelling to, through and within public spaces and transport hubs. A range of interventions were implemented throughout the year to increase perceptions of safety in Wollongong, Port Kembla and Dapto.

A range of youth development opportunities were delivered at Bellambi, Bundaleer, Warrawong and Dapto.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONTINUED

Sustainable Wollongong

Policies and projects to support Council's commitment to sustainability and reducing greenhouse gas emissions continues to be a focus for Council.

Throughout the year, we maintained our accreditation under the Global Covenant of Mayors initiative and delivered a new Climate Change Mitigation Plan and adopted a Heat Management Strategy. From 2022 to 2023, our corporate emissions reduced by 19% mainly due to the commencement of our Power Purchase Agreement for the supply of renewable energy to Council's 19 large sites and street lighting. Work commenced on the transition of our fleet to Electric Vehicles (EV) and have supported the delivery of kerbside EV charging in the city and planning for community batteries.

Council has secured funding for stage 2 and 3 of our Open Coast Coastal Management Program and commenced stage 2 technical studies to map coastal hazards, littoral rainforest and Aboriginal cultural values.

Council continued a strong delivery of year three of the Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program. Throughout the year, all actions due to commence have been actively progressed and all project milestones are on track. Planning for the five-year review of implementation actions is underway.

Council publicly exhibited the Biodiversity certification package for West Dapto and has completed the environmental assessment of approximately 470 planning application referrals for new development in the city.

The kerbside Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) service collected 33,387 tonnes of material that was processed into organic compost within our city and used on our sportsfields and gardens. This diverted material resulted in eliminating up to 63,436 tonnes of CO₂-e production at our landfill.

Active Transport and Connectivity

The Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030 was adopted on 16 November 2020. The development of the four year Infrastructure Delivery Program (IDP) incorporates the initial implementation of the Strategy. In 2023-2024, 23% of Council's IDP was put towards non-motorised transport, which exceeds the United Nations target of 20%. Over the past two years, six new cycleways were constructed, delivering 3.2km of connections through joint funding by Wollongong City Council and NSW State Government.

Council progressed a Cycling Network Plan and Program which is delivering on multiple actions of the Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030. A final draft is anticipated to be finalised by end of 2024. The project will include a 10 year forward plan for the programming of new cycleways and will highlight the key strategic network to lobby and support grant funding applications. Routes that have been identified through our Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030 Map will be investigated through this study, with standard design details for aspects of cycling infrastructure, supplementary cost estimates for future options assessment and the types of facilities with consideration of the existing road environment.

The development of the Footpath Network Plan will commence once the Cycling Network Plan is completed. The Footpath Network Plan will identify the key priorities and missing links to complement active transport networks including for Safer Routes to School.

The draft Lake Illawarra shared path Master Plan is scheduled to be finalised in 2024.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONTINUED

The Wollongong E-scooter trial commenced on 29 September 2023, with 300 scooters. Over 141,000 trips have been taken with a total distance travelled of over 277,000kms (as of 18 June 2024).

On 8 April 2024, Council resolved to place the Draft Integrated Transport Strategy on public exhibition from 30 April to 27 May 2024. Council staff are currently reviewing the feedback received with the new Council to be briefed on the feedback received and proposed changes to the strategy following the September Council elections.

Business and Investment

Throughout the year, *Invest Wollongong* launched a digital marketing campaign to generate awareness and education around Wollongong as an ideal location for businesses and drive engagement. There were several elements of the campaign including two articles in the Australian Financial Review (AFR) our Google Ad-words campaign; LinkedIn advertising; and display advertising with all elements successful in raising awareness among key business and industry audiences.

The AFR digital partnership attracted more than 1.38M impressions through digital banners; the Google Search campaign delivered 108,755 impressions and 5,340 clicks to site; and LinkedIn advertising delivered 1,345,644 impressions and 540 clicks, leading to 297 Prospectus Downloads.

On 20 March, Council hosted an event *Celebrating Wollongong: where business and lifestyle grow* together at NSW Parliament House. More than 160 people representing the property sector, investors, the business community, and government gathered at the event for the launch of *Invest Wollongong's* 2024 Investment Prospectus. The evening showcased Wollongong's ongoing transformation as a strategic location for business.

Other highlights included: *Inside Industry* commenced their new 'Clean Energy tours' which showcase the activities underway in the clean energy sector; Council collaborated with Service NSW Business Bureau's Business Connect program to deliver 'Business Health Checks' throughout the year. During NSW Small Business Month (October 2023) a number of events were held for local businesses, including the Illawarra Aboriginal Business Expo, Cybersecurity workshop on 'How to protect your business' and a workshop on 'Planning your website for success'.

West Dapto

During 2023-2024 achievements have been made toward the West Dapto Strategic Priority for Council. Highlighted achievements include:

- Securing just under \$30M in State and Commonwealth grant funding toward delivery of essential local social infrastructure and urban road upgrades.
- Urban zoning providing an additional capacity for approximately 3,000 dwellings.
- Adoption of the post exhibition draft West Dapto Development Contributions Plan, 2024, for submission to IPART to review.
- Finalisation of a Master Plan package for the Marshall Mount Town and Fowlers Village centres to proactively guide outcomes for the two key centres. The project was led by Council staff and made possible via grant funding from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.
- Progress on construction works to upgrade West Dapto Road and continued significant infrastructure design work.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONTINUED

- Adoption of the West Dapto Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment providing a contemporary understanding and direction for open space and community facilities at West Dapto.
- Elm Park Neighbourhood Plan was adopted into Wollongong DCP, 2009.
- Continued assessment of the Iowna and Marshall Vale/Duck Creek Neighbourhood Plans in stage 5 of West Dapto.
- Continued assessment of three Concept Development Applications within stage 5 in lieu of Neighbourhood Plans.
- Sold land at Stream Hill in April 2024 with proceeds from the sale to go towards our plans to deliver new social, recreational and cultural amenities to the area.

To date, for the West Dapto release area, 2,918 lots have been approved for subdivision. This includes 162 new residential lots in 2022-2024 and an additional 78 multi-unit housing dwellings.








Image: Wollongong Botanic Garden





Summary of Progress by Goal Status of Actions as at 30 June 2024

Status		Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5	Goal 6	Support Services	Total %
On-Track		87% (26/30)	100% (8/8)	100% (10/10)	92% (24/26)	86.6% (26/30)	83% (5/6)	84.6% (11/13)	89% (110/123)
Complete		3% (1/30)	0% (0/8)	0% (0/10)	8% (2/26)	6.7% (2/30)	0% (0/6)	7.7% (1/13)	5% (6/123)
Deferred		3% (1/30)	0% (0/8)	0% (0/10)	0% (0/26)	0% (0/30)	0% (0/6)	7.7% (1/13)	2% (2/123)
Not scheduled to commence		0% (0/30)	0% (0/8)	0% (0/10)	0% (0/26)	0% (0/30)	0% (0/6)	0% (0/13)	0% (0/123)
Delayed		7% (2/30)	0% (0/8)	0% (0/10)	0% (0/26)	6.7% (2/30)	17% (1/6)	0% (0/13)	4% (5/123)

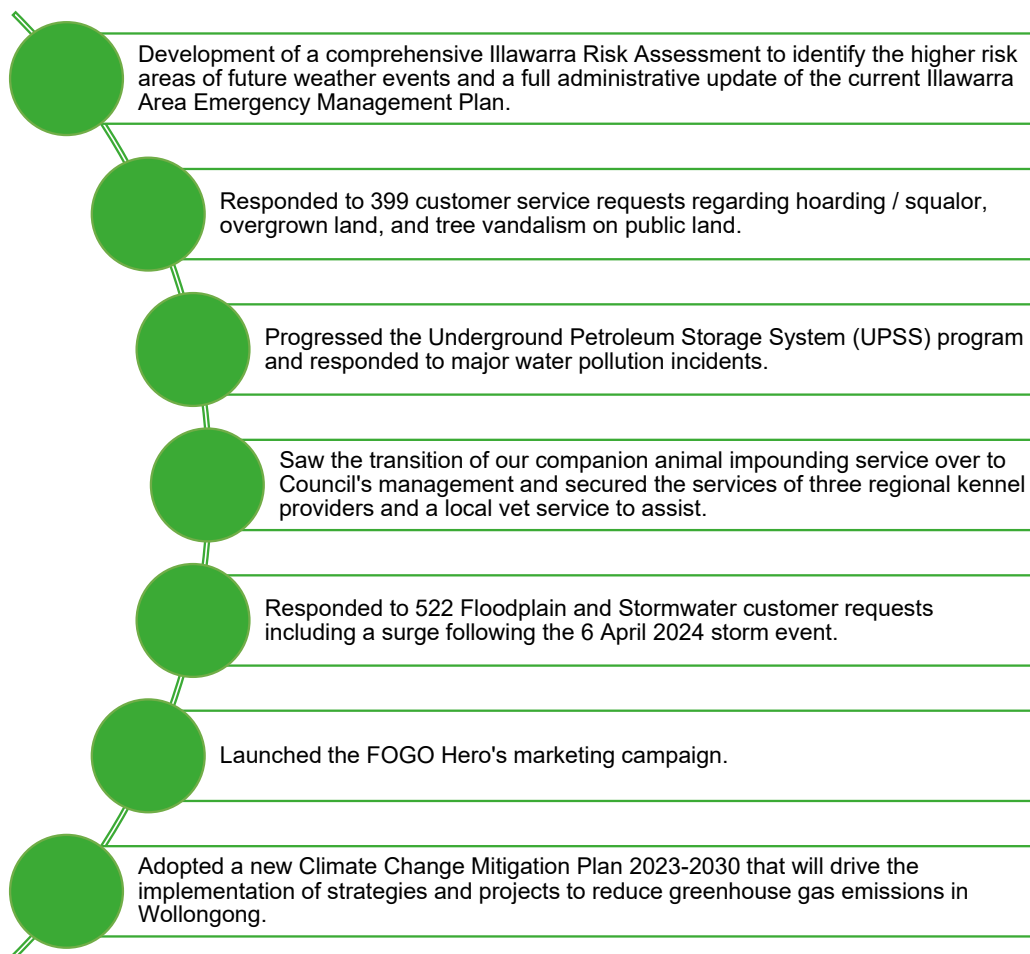
Result shown as number of actions.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Objectives

**We will work together to reduce emissions and the effects of a changing climate.
Our natural environments are protected and our resources will be managed effectively.
Development is well planned and sustainable and we protect our heritage.**

Achievements



Highlights



Plastic Free July clean up event at Puckeys Reserve.



Faecal pellet counting monitoring deer numbers as part of the Illawarra Feral Deer Management Program.



Council crews cleaning up debris at Russell Vale following the severe weather event on 6 April 2024.



Wollongong City Council Director, Corporate Services, Renee Campbell, plugs in the new addition to Council's fleet.



Council staff receiving the Local Government NSW Excellence in Environment Awards of the Tiny Forest program.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Development Assessment

Responsibility *Manager Development Assessment and Certification*

About this Service

The service undertakes assessment and determination of planning matters to facilitate balanced planning outcomes to serve the current and future community. This includes development applications, construction certificates, complying development, building and subdivision certificates, pre-lodgement advice, managing panels, Fire Safety Statements and upgrades, building compliance inspections, audits on completed buildings, providing expert evidence in Land and Environment Court Appeals, and advice to Council and stakeholders in all aspects of the development assessment process.

Annual Progress Update

Council continued to assess a diverse range of development applications during the year. Pre-lodgement advice was provided for a variety of stakeholders. Council also continued to provide a service as a Principal Certifying Authority for buildings and subdivisions as an alternative option to the private sector.

Council worked with the Design Review Panel to achieve design excellence through providing advice on 35 matters during the year.



The year saw the introduction of a new Local Planning Panel following the conclusion of the term of members and a return to in-person meetings, providing for greater community attendance. Work with the Wollongong Local Planning Panel saw the Panel consider and determine 38 matters during the year.

Work with the Southern Regional Planning Panel saw the Panel briefed on 38 applications during the year. Council worked continuously with the Panel throughout the year with updates and strategies for efficient assessments. There were six determinations.

Process improvement continued to be a focus with ongoing investment in resolving issues with the Planning Portal integration.

The Development Assessment Service Optimisation Program was completed with an objective to enhance the customer and stakeholder experience when accessing Council's publicly available information and services through Council's various points of contact. Actions arising from the recommendations of the review have commenced and will support improved access to clear planning and development information.




Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Carry out the OneCouncil integration project with the New South Wales planning portal	Delayed 	The OneCouncil Integration with the NSW Planning Portal has presented challenges with continual upgrades and adjustments made by NSW Planning requiring the Council project group to continually adapt and adjust the project. Council has highlighted the challenges to the Department and the subsequent prolonging of the project as a consequence. The Department has recently advised that updates will now be undertaken at more manageable intervals. Final testing is underway and a go live date is anticipated for July 2024.
Review the customer experience around access to information related to Development Assessment as part of the Service Optimisation Program	On-Track 	The aim of the evaluation was to consider accessibility to and understanding of the information Council provides to customers to help them through the development application journey. This included extensive data analysis of customer enquiries, peer reviews and benchmarking against other councils. Recommendations to Audit Risk and Improvement Committee and a Councillor briefing were completed in June 2024. Following endorsement of the recommendations, implementation of actions will commence.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Development Assessment Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Administer Design Review Panel in relation to key sites or significant development	On-Track 	Council has worked collaboratively with the Design Review Panel throughout the year. The Panel advice feeds directly into the development assessment process to achieve design excellence and high-quality built outcomes. The Panel provided advice on 35 matters during 2023-2024.
Administer the Wollongong Local Planning Panel	On-Track 	Council continues to work with the Wollongong Local Planning Panel to finalise the assessment and determination of Development Applications. The latter part of the year saw the introduction of a new Panel in response to directions from the Planning Minister for all NSW councils. Panel operations have also evolved from an online process, to in person attendance in the Council offices for both the community and expert Panel. The Panel determined 38 matters during 2023-2024.
In conjunction with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment administer the Southern Regional Planning Panel	On-Track 	Council continues to work with the Southern Regional Planning Panel to finalise the assessment and determination of significant Development Applications. Council actively liaises with the panel to establish effective timelines for assessment and provide ongoing updates on significant issues throughout the assessment process. The Panel determined six matters and was briefed on 38 applications during 2023-2024.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Emergency Management

Responsibility Manager Infrastructure Strategy and Planning

About this Service

The service provides support in the planning and preparation for significant emergencies that may impact the safety and security of residents and visitors to the city.


Annual Progress Update

Council continued to prioritise emergency management throughout the year, fulfilling its role of providing executive support to the Illawarra Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) in accordance with the Illawarra Emergency Management's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The Emergency Management Officer (EMO) has played a crucial role in enhancing the city's resilience. This includes undertaking a full administrative update to the Illawarra Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN) and the continued management of the LEMC's action register and doctrine review schedule in order to maintain legislated requirements. Council also led the development of a comprehensive Illawarra Risk Assessment to identify the higher risk areas of future weather events. Other initiatives include: managing activations of the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to coordinate NSW Government agency and Council response to declared emergency events across the city; including severe storms and landslips and coordinating after-action reviews for the LEMC following emergency events to identify improvement opportunities for future response.

Council also continues to work with NSW Government agencies to secure funding associated with the repair of infrastructure damaged during natural disasters including those experienced on 6 April and 4 June 2024 through joint Commonwealth-State Government Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Continue to progress design and construction of a new Wollongong State Emergency Services Unit	On-Track 	Council has agreed to partner with the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) to deliver minor upgrade works to the Wollongong SES Unit located at Montague Street, North Wollongong. The works will be funded by the NSW SES. The SES will continue to define their service requirements to support the Wollongong Local Government Area.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Services

Responsibility *Manager City Strategy*

About this Service

This service involves Council working with the community in relation to local climate change mitigation, adaptation, monitoring and reporting, coastal and estuary management, biodiversity planning, contaminated lands controls, development assessment for environmental impacts, environmental education, volunteer management and partnerships, waste minimisation and environmental advocacy.

Annual Progress Update

Throughout the year, 261,863 people visited the Botanic Garden and 15,636 people participated in tours and an array of special events such as Shakespeare in the Garden, Sunset Cinema and Botanic Garden Day. A total of 46 volunteers have contributed 4,939 hours through working bees, Budding Bookworms, Garden Tours, Willing Weeders and Discovery Centre activities. The nursery produced 51,928 plants and sold 25,217 plants through Greenplan Sales to a total of 2,912 customers.

Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) Hero's marketing campaign was developed and launched. The FOGO Roadshow was conducted over five weeks across libraries in July and then two weeks in September across shopping centres. The Plastic Free July event included Keira High School students doing a cleanup of Puckey's Estate focusing on microplastics and completing drone footage of 'Plastic Free Gong' on the beach spelt out with students themselves.

Council's Green Team continued to deliver many workshops including a focus on Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community communities. Workshops held throughout the year included talks on FOGO and some webinars to Stratas as well as re-usable nappy talks.

Promotional pop ups across the Local Government Area occurred weekly. Events and campaigns focused on International Compost Awareness week, Asbestos Awareness month, National Recycling Week, Plastic Free July, Household Chemical Cleanout, Community Recycling Centres and Stations.

The Summer Cleansing program concluded at the end of February resulting in 674 groups spoken with, engagements of 3,655 over 22 days reaching 25% locals to 75% visitors. International Compost Awareness week in May showcased Soilco Behind the Scenes tours for residents.

At the Botanic Garden, five new species of Hibiscus were sourced through ongoing collaboration with Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, four of which come from Fiji and are all threatened species with one likely even extinct in the wild. On-going seed collection continued to support Urban Greening and restoring natural areas. The Tiny Forests project received a NSW Local Government Excellence in The Environment Award.

Community cleanups continued under the Rise and Shine program culminating in Clean Up Australia Day which saw 113 groups register and participate. Council was onsite to support the groups, removing 1.6 tonne of waste in one day across the entire Local Government Area from Helensburgh to Windang.

Natural Area restoration continued throughout our reserves, supported by contractors and volunteer groups. Council was successful in acquiring \$410,000 in external funding aimed at supporting environmental restoration around Lake Illawarra, Port Kembla Dunes and Puckey's Dunes in Fairy Meadow.



Landcare Illawarra signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Council to undertake volunteer activities at Integral Energy Park. Volunteer Bushcare and training forums were held including one to highlight a new app, "Weedwise" which was developed by the Invasive Species Council. Post flooding works continued to reduce debris in our waterways following the storm disaster on 6 April. A Management of Private Watercourses and Creeklines project developed a best practice guideline to support the community in undertaking creekline management on private property, which will be available on Council's website.

The Illawarra Feral Deer Management Program is undertaking a new tender panel for contracted deer controllers. Symbio Wildlife Park's thermal drone monitoring program for Koalas and deer was trialled from September 2023. Council was involved in the Deer Faecal pellet count research project, along with Local Land Services, NSW Department of Primary Industries, contractors and volunteers with 100 sites surveyed to assist with measuring the overall distribution and abundance of deer in the Local Government Area.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Services Continued



Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver commitments made under the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) and support Council's climate emergency declaration	On-Track 	We have successfully met our requirement under GCoM this financial year and maintained badge compliance from previous years by adopting a new Climate Change Mitigation Plan and a Heat Management Strategy which is a priority action of our Climate Adaptation Plan. Wollongong community emissions reduced by 1% throughout 2023-2024 mainly attributed to electrification and de-carbonisation of the electricity grid.
Prepare the Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2022-2026	On-Track 	<p>In November 2023, Council adopted a new Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-2030 that will drive the implementation of strategies and projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Wollongong. The Plan adopts three key targets: net zero by 2030 for Council's corporate emissions, 50% decrease in community emission by 2030 and net zero by 2050 for our community emissions.</p> <p>Key actions delivered throughout 2023-2024 to decrease our corporate emissions include: transitioning our fleet to Electric Vehicles (EV), installation of EV charger infrastructure at Council facilities, development of a sustainable design toolkit to assist with Council's project delivery, and grant application to electrify key Council buildings.</p> <p>Key actions delivered to decrease our community emissions were the 'Electrify Wollongong' campaign and toolkit on our website, promotion of grants for solar, EV charging for community and businesses through various channels, support to deliver kerbside pole mounted EV chargers, development of procurement documentation with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation to deliver a Community renewable program, and collaboration with Endeavour Energy to participate in the community battery program.</p> <p>From 2022 to 2023, Council's corporate emissions reduced 19% mainly attributed to the commencement of the Power Purchase Agreement to supply renewable energy to 19 of Council's large facilities and street lighting.</p>

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Services Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Implement priority actions from the Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2023-2027	On-Track 	<p>Endorsement of the Urban Heat Strategy was a highlight of the implementation of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan in 2023-2024.</p> <p>Progress was made across a broad range of actions including the revision of the Local Emergency Management Plan to reclassify the risk of heatwaves which has implications towards future emergency responses and planning. Council has undertaken a range of communication and engagement activities to help increase community understanding of the increased risk of hazards from Climate Change. This work has included the development of a communications plan for messaging around heatwaves, engagement activities with vulnerable community members including Culturally and Linguistically Diverse groups and service providers for people with a disability and Surf Lifesaving Illawarra.</p>
Prepare and implement the Wollongong Coastal Management Program	On-Track 	<p>During the year, Council was successful in receiving funding from the NSW Coastal and Estuary Program to assist with the preparation of a Coastal Management Program (CMP). This funding is for a Coastal Wetlands and Littoral Rainforest Mapping project, an Identification and Vulnerability Assessment of Aboriginal Cultural Values and Assets Study, Coastal Hazards Studies and subsequent preparation of the CMP.</p> <p>Work has commenced on the innovative Aboriginal Cultural Values and Assets Study which is in collaboration with the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council. The significant project to undertake Coastal Hazards Studies has also commenced and will provide detail on where potential coastal hazards such as erosion and inundation, may impact our coast, now and into the future.</p>

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Land Use Planning

Responsibility *Manager City Strategy*

About this Service

Land Use Planning manages the plans, policies and certificates that help our community understand the role and function of land within Wollongong. The team undertakes detailed studies to make long term plans for how we can live, work and play sustainably, protecting what we value and ensuring development contributes to great places for our community.

Annual Progress Update

Throughout the year, Council delivered significant land use policies for the Local Government Area. This included the exhibition and adoption of the Industrial Lands Review and the Heritage Strategy.

A range of Planning Proposals were progressed over the year, including a resolution to finalise the Wilga Street, Corrimal Planning Proposal which will support improved commercial and residential development outcomes for the precinct. Other proposals included:

- to rezone land for 3,000 residential housing lots at Cleveland Road, West Dapto that was adopted for finalisation in two phases, with the phase 1 Local Environmental Plan (LEP) amendment being made.
- an amendment made to the LEP to heritage list Miala House at Marshall Mount.
- the re-classification of 340 West Dapto Road was exhibited and endorsed to be finalised.
- minor amendments to Bluescope lands at Kembla Grange finalised.
- zoning amendments to facilitate appropriate development outcomes for large residential lots in the Illawarra Escarpment was resolved to be finalised.
- a draft Planning Proposal to make minor zoning adjustments along Road and Rail Corridors was exhibited and endorsed to be finalised.

An updated Community Participation Plan and procedure for Council-related development applications was exhibited and adopted and an updated Planning Proposal Procedure was endorsed for exhibition. A draft Affordable Housing Policy and Procedure were endorsed for exhibition.

The Wollongong City-wide Development Contributions Plan 2023 was adopted and the draft Wollongong City-wide Development Contributions Plan 2024 was endorsed to be exhibited.

Council exhibited and finalised amendments to the Cleveland Road Neighbourhood Plan boundary to better support implementation.

A submission was made to the Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure on the Short-term Rental Accommodation Review. A submission was also sent to NSW Department of Planning and Environment - Crown Lands on the review of the Crown Lands Management Act 2016 identifying areas for improvement.

Progress on planning agreements included a draft Planning Agreement and draft Development Control Plan chapter for the Tallawarra Lands that were exhibited and endorsed to be finalised. A Planning Agreement for the former Port Kembla Public School site for 5% Affordable Rental Housing was adopted as well as a Planning Agreement for an accessway at Wilkies Walk, Thirroul being adopted.




The Plans of Management for 32 Crown Reserves and Helensburgh Park were exhibited and endorsed by Council and referred to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment - Crown Lands for authority to adopt. The draft Plans of Management for Wollongong Foreshore Reserves and Hill 60, Port Kembla were endorsed and referred to DPE - Crown Lands for permission to exhibit.

Throughout the year, Council supported over \$60,000 in heritage grants applications and issued over 7,000 Planning Certificates.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Land Use Planning Continued


Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Partner with the Greater Cities Commission with the development of the Region and Cities Plan	Complete 	<p>During the financial year, Council partnered with the Greater Cities Commission (GCC) on the development of the Region and Illawarra Shoalhaven City Plans. Council participated in vision setting workshops and provided feedback on the GCC Six Cities Discussion Paper.</p> <p>During development of the plans, Council provided advice to GCC regarding Wollongong's Housing and Centres Strategies and discussed opportunities for the City Plan to include key objectives and outcomes for the Wollongong City Centre, Corrimal, Dapto and Warrawong strategic centres.</p> <p>The Greater Cities Commission was disbanded in January 2024. Council continues to seek out opportunities to collaborate with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure on the development of strategic plans for the region. The timeline for progression of this work is unclear at this stage.</p>
Review the Local Strategic Planning Statement	On-Track 	The draft Local Strategic Planning Statement is being prepared for presentation to Council in 2025. The draft Statement is being informed by Council's adoption of the Wollongong Housing Strategy, Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy, Industrial Lands Review and other strategic documents. The draft Statement is also being guided by changes to State housing policy and housing targets.
Continue the review of West Dapto Land Release Area by developing a Local Infrastructure Plan	On-Track 	<p>On 15 April 2024, Council submitted an application to the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to review the draft West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2024. The IPART review is expected to continue into the 2024-2025 financial year with completion anticipated in March 2025.</p> <p>In addition to the ongoing work of Council on the West Dapto Development Contributions Plan, staff have been successful this year in securing Commonwealth and State infrastructure grants to contribute to the early delivery of important local West Dapto infrastructure. This includes a \$9M grant from the Commonwealth Priority Community Infrastructure Program toward stage 1 of the Darkes District Sporting facility and \$19.9M announced in the NSW 2024-2025 budget toward the first three stages of the Cleveland Road urban upgrade. The two projects will help meet the social infrastructure needs of the growing community while also helping to enable delivery of housing through the Cleveland Road upgrade.</p>

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Land Use Planning Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
In collaboration with key agencies, facilitate the West Dapto Review Committee to deliver the West Dapto Urban Release Area	On-Track 	<p>The West Dapto Review Committee is a component of Council's governance arrangements for delivery of the West Dapto Urban Release Area. The Committee is Chaired by the Lord Mayor and includes Ward 3 Councillors. The NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure has an ongoing invitation to attend committee meetings.</p> <p>The Lord Mayor and Ward 3 Councillors met during the quarter in early June 2024. Matters relating to West Dapto Urban Release Area are discussed as required.</p>
Progress the City Centre Planning Strategy	Deferred 	<p>The exhibition of the City Centre Planning Strategy was deferred by Council in December 2020. Staff have been progressing the actions of the 2020 resolution and considered a phased approach for implementation of the Strategy. Work on preparing the Phase 1 implementation package of revised planning controls for Wollongong City Centre is ongoing and scheduled to be reported early in the new term of Council.</p>
Develop and install the Sandon Point Aboriginal Place Interpretive Strategy and Indigenous Art Project	On-Track 	<p>The Sandon Point Interpretation Strategy has been completed and four interpretive signs have been erected.</p> <p>Delivery of the public art project will require further consultation with stakeholders associated with the Sandon Point Aboriginal Place before proceeding.</p>
Finalise the development of the Housing Strategy and commence implementation on initial priorities	On-Track 	<p>In February 2024 Council considered the first annual progress report of the Wollongong Housing Strategy endorsed in February 2023. A number of implementation actions have been completed or are in progress. These include Development Application fee and development contribution exemptions for Affordable Housing providers, Emergency Housing providers and Accessible Housing providers; Council approved a funding agreement for Head Start Homes for an Affordable Home package; The Cleveland Road LEP amendment (Phase 1) was made, and phase 2 endorsed to be finalised which has the potential for some 3,000 residential lots.</p> <p>Council endorsed exhibition of the draft Affordable Housing Policy and Procedures and progression of a Planning Proposal to facilitate appropriate development outcomes on larger residential lots in the Illawarra Escarpment foothills.</p> <p>Council also responded to State Government planning policy changes, including the introduction of Affordable Housing bonuses, Transport Oriented Development and the proposed Low- and Mid-Rise Housing initiatives. In June 2024 the State released an aspirational 5-year Housing Target for Wollongong of 9,200 dwellings which represents a significant increase from the number of dwellings produced in the previous 5-year period.</p>

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Natural Area Management

Responsibility Manager Open Space and Environmental Services

About this Service

Manage Council's natural areas restoration works program, carry out weed and pest management, and coordinate volunteer programs in natural areas. Management of natural areas under Council care and control. Activities undertaken as part of this service include restoration of natural areas, weed management, pest management, as well as the conservation of endangered ecological communities and threatened species. These activities are funded through a combination of Council's own operating funds, external grants, partnerships with other organisations and the support of community volunteers.


Annual Progress Update

Natural Area restoration continued throughout our reserves, supported by contractors and volunteer groups. Council was successful in acquiring \$410,000 in external funding aimed at supporting environmental restoration around Lake Illawarra, Port Kembla Dunes and Puckeys Dunes, Fairy Meadow. The End Of Year Environmental Volunteers Recognition and Celebration was held in December in conjunction with Rise and Shine, Bushcare, Dunecare and FiReady. Landcare Illawarra signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Council to undertake volunteer activities at Integral Energy Park. Volunteer Bushcare and training forums were held including one to highlight a new app, "Weedwise" which was developed by the Invasive Species Council.

Post flooding works continued to reduce debris in our waterways following the storm disaster on 6 April. A Management of Private Watercourses and Creeklines project developed a best practice guideline to support the community in undertaking creekline management on private property, which will be available on Council's website.

The Illawarra Feral Deer Management Program is undertaking a new tender panel for contracted deer controllers. Symbio Wildlife Park's thermal drone monitoring program for Koalas and deer was trialled from September. Council was involved in the Deer Faecal pellet count research project, along with Local Land Services, NSW Department of Primary Industries, contractors and volunteers with 100 sites surveyed to assist with measuring the overall distribution and abundance of deer in the Local Government Area.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Implement annual bushfire hazard reduction works program for Asset Protection Zones on Council managed lands	On-Track 	<p>Council continued implementing the Bushfire Management program during the year with \$35,000 external funds acquired from the Rural Fire Service towards the program. Across the city 120 Asset Protection Zone (APZ) maintenance contracts and a further 210 sites were slashed. 14 burn pile sites were attended to by Fire and Rescue NSW, from Mt Pleasant to Austinmer. Three community meetings were held in conjunction with the Rural Fire Service and partner agencies and 14 FiReady groups continue to be supported with 25 active volunteers.</p> <p>The Mt Kembla Community Protection Plan was adopted. Three free community green waste drop off events were held at Berkeley, Helensburgh and Corrimal to allow the community to prepare for bushfire season.</p> <p>A full review of bushfire risk within the LGA and Council's operational plan was completed in September 2023 and no additional APZs were recommended from the review. Operational service delivery</p>

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

		<p>adjustments such as "no mow zones" were established on extreme and catastrophic forecasted fire days near bushfire prone areas.</p> <p>A new Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation Bushfire network was formed to share knowledge and provide support between councils.</p> <p>All scheduled works were completed for the 2023-2024 Financial Year along with the development of the 2024-2025 annual works program. Council submitted \$80,000 of funding applications to the NSW Rural Fire Service for the 2024-2025 Financial Year to assist with implementing the program.</p>
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GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Regulatory Compliance

Responsibility Manager Regulation and Enforcement

About this Service

This service involves environment and development compliance, animal control and parking in accordance with statutory requirements and Council Policy. Providing education programs and information to raise community awareness also forms part of this service.

Annual Progress Update

Regulatory Compliance services, implementing various programs, continued over the 2023-2024 year including the management of companion animals and Development and Environment Compliance programs.

The 2023-2024 year saw a total of 708 animal control and behaviour general enquiries received. Council officers responded to 464 dog attack incidents and 1,242 nuisance barking dog requests, 929 stray roaming dogs and cats, and 54 roaming livestock requests where the roaming animal was either returned home safely or impounded. A total of 47 notices/orders were issued under the Companion Animals Act, and 53 companion animal fines issued.

General compliance officers responded to 399 customer service requests regarding hoarding/squalor, overgrown land, and tree vandalism on public land. 44 fines were also issued under the Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act.

Development and environment compliance programs were delivered across the 2023-2024 year. Over 1,600 customer requests for a range of development, building and environmental matters were received.


To achieve compliance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and Protection of the Environment Operations Act, officers issued 49 Notices / Orders to rectify non-compliances and issued 15 Fines for breaches of the relevant legislation.

During the year, officers progressed the Underground Petroleum Storage System (UPSS) program and responded to major water pollution incidents, utilising Council's reviewed Major Pollution Response Protocol.

Council worked to review and improve development consent conditions regarding construction noise. Following the review process, development consent conditions were amended, website materials were updated and the process for lodging a customer request regarding construction noise was streamlined to assist customers and improve Council's response.



At Easter 2024, our companion animal impounding service transitioned to Council's management. The services of three regional kennel providers and a local vet service were secured to provide capacity and capability for the service. These arrangements have been in place since the start of May 2024. Council staff have implemented a rehoming and adoption service for impounded companion animals and are trialling a foster care network. Since the service commenced, 99 animals have been adopted. A dedicated webpage and social media platform are in place to support the service.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Carry out a proactive surveillance and inspection program of known dumping hot-spots and implement education and awareness raising programs aimed at reducing illegally dumped waste	On-Track 	Council has continued involvement in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation RID program as a member council and continues to undertake investigations of illegal dumping incidents within Wollongong Local Government Area along with ongoing community education discussions.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT


Regulatory Compliance Continued

Maintain a proactive compliance program for companion animals in public places, including beaches, foreshore areas and parks.	On-Track 	During the 2023-2024 financial year, Council conducted 1,007 patrols of beach and foreshore locations and monitored dog and owner behaviour during these patrols. Additionally, 205 penalty notices were issued, 82 written warnings issued, and 111 verbal warnings issued. Council staff undertook 410 educational discussions.
Undertake a trial to target compliance of subdivision and residential building sites for sediment and erosion control, hours of operation, waste management (including storage and management of building materials) and dust control	On-Track 	<p>The Building Sites Compliance Program was implemented throughout the 2023-2024 year, with officers proactively inspecting building sites throughout the Wollongong Local Government Area. The focus of the program remained on compliance and education regarding erosion and sediment control, dust management and the management of construction waste.</p> <p>Throughout the year, officers completed over 600 inspections of building sites. To achieve compliance with the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act and Protection of the Environment Operations Act, Officers issued; 48 fines, 11 notices for improvements to be made on sites, over 130 warnings to builders and made 85 referrals to Private Certifiers for their review and follow-up action.</p> <p>To support the inspection program that was implemented, officers developed education materials that provided advice on managing building sites and implementing environmental controls that protect the environment. These materials included fact sheets, social media messaging and mailouts to building companies and developers along with presenting at building industry events.</p> <p>Officers worked on amending conditions of development consent that will help protect the environment during construction and assist Officers in taking compliance and enforcement action where it is required.</p> <p>The building sites program has been successful in achieving positive environmental outcomes through education initiatives and compliance action. This has led to an extension of the Building Sites Compliance Officer role and program for a further three years.</p>

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Regulatory Compliance Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Develop and implement an education and awareness raising program regarding swimming pool barriers	<p>On-Track</p> 	<p>The Swimming Pool Safety Barrier program implemented a proactive community education program, with a focus on the safety of children and compliance with the Swimming Pool Safety Act 1992.</p> <p>The education program included educational posters being displayed at Council's aquatic facilities, libraries and community facilities. Educational posters containing a QR code were also developed and delivered to businesses selling swimming pool supplies and equipment. The posters contained a QR code linked to Council's website where important information regarding swimming pool safety and compliance is available.</p> <p>During the year, officers completed over 760 inspections of swimming pool safety barriers, actioned 129 Compliance Certificate applications and responded to 219 customer service requests.</p> <p>Whilst compliance with the Swimming Pool Safety Act 1992 was high, non-compliance action taken included issuing 25 Notices/Orders and three fines for continued non-compliances.</p>

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Stormwater Services

Responsibility Manager Infrastructure Strategy and Planning



About this Service

This service strategically plans for a coordinated approach to floodplain risk management and stormwater management including protection of waterways, beaches, lakes, lagoons and creeks. This service manages and maintains 835 kilometres of drainage and associated infrastructure assets across the city that aim to be safe, efficient, effective and sustainable.

Annual Progress Update

The Floodplain and Stormwater Team managed core business activity and responded to 522 Customer Requests, with a significant surge following the major storm natural disaster event on 6 April 2024. The team also completed 22 stormwater design projects handed over for construction including both capital and technical review projects. Despite the challenges, particularly from the natural disaster event, the team maintained a strong focus on responding to residents' concerns and advancing stormwater infrastructure projects.





Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Develop and implement the Floodplain Risk Management Plans	On-Track 	Significant progress was made in developing and implementing Floodplain Risk Management Plans. The team conducted multiple community consultation sessions, refining draft studies and plans based on resident feedback and expert insights. They addressed localised issues, initiated the tendering process for new studies, and participated in workshops on updated flood risk management guidelines. Key plans, including those for Fairy, Cabbage Tree, Allans, and Collins Creeks, advanced through public consultation stages and received endorsements for adoption or exhibition. The team also engaged with the community on specific flood mitigation challenges, expanding their scope to incorporate additional feedback.
Develop an awareness campaign to educate the community on landowner's obligations for managing creeks and waterways on private land	On-Track 	Guidelines and a Frequently Asked Questions document for the management of waterways on private property have been published for communication to the community. This information will inform residents on how to better manage vegetation when they own a portion of a creek and will include practical workshops led by Council staff and/or contractors. Information about the Creek Care project is available on Council's webpage.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Stormwater Services Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Plan and deliver stormwater maintenance, renewal and upgrade works	Delayed 	Council completed 14 stormwater asset renewal projects across the 2023-2024 financial year, in addition to the construction of new water quality and flood mitigation infrastructure. This included debris control structures at Russell Vale Golf Course, Gordon Hutton Park, Bulli and Brompton Road, Bellambi, as well as flood mitigation works adjacent to Holy Spirit College, Bellambi. Engineering designs for future projects also progressed across the period, although some disruption was experienced due to impacts of the 6 April severe weather event, which was subsequently declared a natural disaster. Delivery of stormwater maintenance across the final quarter 2023-2024 was delayed due to the impacts of the 6 April event. Approximately 70% of work issued had been completed before works were impacted.
Deliver rolling program of flood and stormwater infrastructure condition and safety inspections	On-Track 	The Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) inspection program saw 1,243 pipes, totalling 23.4 kilometres inspected and condition rated throughout the 2023-2024 financial year. In addition, 1,197 pits and 123 headwalls were inspected and condition rated. Monthly surveillance inspections for Council's declared dams were completed, in accordance with obligations under the Dam Safety Act 2015.
Implement priority actions of the certified Coastal Management Program for Lake Illawarra	On-Track 	The Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program (CMP) Project Management Team and Implementation Group met on a regular basis throughout the year. 2023-2024 aligns with "Year 3" of the CMP Implementation Schedule. Throughout the year, all actions due to commence have been actively progressed and all project milestones are on track. Planning for the five-year review of implementation actions is underway. Effective collaboration has enabled significant progress of actions across a number of key strategy areas including water quality management, community engagement and recreational opportunities, Lake entrance options study and monitoring of the Lake's habitat and wildlife.
Enhance the management of Council owned water and wastewater assets	On-Track 	Water systems continued to be monitored via telemetry which provided early warning alerts to mitigate potential events during the year.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Waste Management

Responsibility Manager Open Space and Environmental Services

About this Service

Waste management includes the environmentally responsible, customer focused resource recovery, recycling and solid waste management. The service includes community education programs, waste collection and recycling, operation of the Wollongong Waste and Resource Recovery Park, public domain waste collection and facilities cleaning.

Annual Progress Update

Waste operations were significantly impacted by the natural disaster event experienced across the Local Government Area on 6 April 2024. These impacts included increased quantities of waste material entering the Whytes Gully facility and changes to the disposal charges following the declaration of a natural disaster.



Stormwater infrastructure within the Whytes Gully facility was also impacted by extreme weather and repairs within the facility are in progress. Construction of the next landfill cell continues to progress with some impact from the rain events.

The Draft Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2024–2034 was prepared and endorsed by Council to be placed on public exhibition.

The Domestic waste collection contract has been extended to allow for changes to local government tendering regulations and lead time for waste collection vehicles.

The construction of a future landfill cell at Whytes Gully Resource Recovery Centre commenced in 2023-2024 and is scheduled for completion 2025.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Educate and continue to deliver waste diversion programs aligned with problematic waste streams	On-Track 	Waste education programs continue to be actively delivered, targeting waste diversion and problematic waste streams. Activities during the quarter included promoting chemical waste drop-offs, consultation on the Waste Strategy and Food Organics Garden Organics tours. Throughout the period 37,140 rolls of free Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) liners were distributed. A joint flyer was developed to promote the Community Recycling Centre and Community Recycling Stations will be inserted into the July Council rates notice.
Continue to develop and implement the landfill gas management system at Whytes Gully	On-Track 	The expansion of the landfill gas network earlier in the financial year has resulted in an increase in the quarterly and annual landfill gas capture volumes, with approximately 20,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent captured. Currently, landfill gas generation is two-thirds of that required for energy production, a significant 12 month increase. Continued expansion of the landfill gas system is planned for next financial year.

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Measuring Success

Measure	Target/ Desired Trend	Comparative Data ¹	Current
Development Assessment			
Outstanding development assessments < 90 days	200	155	163
Outstanding development assessments >90 days	50	122	115
Median net determination days	50	39	39.5
Environmental Services			
Participation rate in education programs ²	Increase	8,700	9,577
Participation rate in environmental programs ²	Increase	66,468	66,399
Tonnes of waste collected from clean up activities ²	Decrease	34.53	19.8
Net zero emissions from Council operations by 2030 (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent)	Zero by 2030	129,600 tonnes CO ₂ -e ³	105,000 tonnes CO ₂ -e ³
Proportion of residents satisfied with environmental programs and education	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.50	3.40
Natural Area Management			
Average number of volunteers worked at Bushcare, Dunecare and FIReady sites	Increase	215	217
Ratio of trees planted versus trees removed	2:1	<i>Data unavailable</i>	4.4:1
Proportion of residents satisfied with protection of our natural environment	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.50	3.30
Regulatory Compliance			
Portion of residents satisfied with companion animal compliance	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.60	3.50
Portion of residents satisfied with compliance and regulation of parking	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.20	3.10

GOAL 1 | WE VALUE AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Measuring Success Continued

Measure	Target/ Desired Trend	Comparative Data ¹	Current
Waste Services			
Waste diverted from landfill %	Increase	53%	49% ⁴
Waste education workshops and events – number ²	Increase	125	150
Waste education workshops and events – participants ²	Increase	19,616	18,845
Tonnes of Waste removed from our creek and waterway stormwater quality improvement devices and trash racks ²	Decrease	146	157
Recycling contamination in public waste bins	Decrease	64%	31%
Proportion of residents satisfied with street cleaning	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.70	3.60
Proportion of residents satisfied with public bin collection	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.90	4.00
Proportion of residents satisfied with waste disposal depot facilities	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.00	3.80

¹ Comparative data is the result as at end of June 2023. This includes the results from the Wollongong City Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2021.

² Data (including comparatives) is an annual figure.

³ Carbon Dioxide Equivalent

⁴ Result impacted by the volume of flood damaged waste and sediment received from 6 April flood event.



Image: Austinmer Sunrise

GOAL 2 | WE HAVE AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Objectives

The region's industry base continues to diversify and local employment opportunities increase.

Wollongong is established as the regional capital of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven.

We are leaders in innovation and sustainable research and development of new industries.

Achievements



Highlights



The Hon Ryan Park MP, Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast, Wollongong Lord Mayor Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM and The Hon Paul Scully MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces at the launch of the 2024 Invest Wollongong Prospectus.



Crown Street Mall Wollongong events including City Skate 2024 and Lunar New Year.



Luke Willian, winner of the 2024 World Triathlon Cup, Elite Men category, April 2024.

GOAL 2 | WE HAVE AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

City Centre Management

Responsibility Manager Community Culture and Engagement



About this Service

From Wollongong Station to the foreshore, City Centre Management supports the revitalisation of the City Centre through the coordination and delivery of a range of strategies in collaboration with various stakeholders. The service also ensures the smooth operation of the City Centre, particularly Crown Street Mall which is funded by the Special Mall Levy.

Annual Progress Update

Across the year, City Centre Management continued to support both operational services: cleaning, security, waste management, graffiti mitigation and market operations; alongside business liaison and support and the delivery of an integrated marketing campaign and suite of events and activations. These included Christmas and school holiday activations, banner programs, and live music on the Mall stage across each week. Wollongong CBD's marketing strategy continued to focus on leveraging and engaging with Wollongong CBD's social media following to promote both the CBD experience and businesses.



Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver increased City Centre marketing and activation initiatives to support local and regional economic recovery in response to COVID-19	On-Track 	Acknowledging economic impacts including the economic downturn on the community and businesses within the City Centre, there has been a strong focus on activation activities and business support initiatives. These include family friendly free events such as <i>City Skate 2024</i> , Lunar New Year, and Christmas celebrations including Santa's arrival. Business support through marketing and promotion initiatives, and provision of information on available business support opportunities was also a key focus during 2023-2024. Council continued to meet with City Centre precinct-based food and beverage working groups to foster a collaborative approach that supports businesses and builds on the visitor experience.
Implement a range of activation initiatives across the City Centre Precincts	On-Track 	Strategies focused on activation initiatives to attract visitors back into the Wollongong CBD. This included both Crown Street Mall and the Arts Precinct receiving a boost of colour and vibrancy with new furniture, planter boxes refreshed plantings, and artwork. Globe Lane was established as a vibrant Matilda's Women's World Cup Soccer Fan Zone and offered projected screenings of Matilda matches, music, and a festive ambience. Christmas 2023 featured Australiana-themed decorations and key events including Santa's Arrival with a Christmas themed market, Biker's Toy Run, City of Wollongong Giving Tree and live music performances on the Crown Street Mall stage. <i>Live@Lunch</i> continued on the Mall Stage showcasing diverse local talent. During Spring, the second Saturday Swap initiative took place to encourage sustainable shopping. A partnership between Council and the Live Music Office to deliver a Live and Local Initiative commenced.

GOAL 2 | WE HAVE AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

City Centre Management Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver an integrated marketing campaign that reflects the 'city experience'	On-Track 	Various integrated marketing campaigns were delivered in support of City Centre activations including <i>City Skate 2024</i> and Lunar New Year, as well as campaigns for 'It's On in Wollongong' and 'Celebrate the Season' Christmas campaign. A range of marketing mediums were utilised in these campaigns including radio advertising, media releases, outdoor banners, signage, and dressing, as well as digital mediums including social media, Google ads, and website content. To support local economic recovery, a key focus continued to be leveraging and engaging with Wollongong CBD's social media following, to promote both the CBD experience and businesses. 2023-2024 saw over 180,000 page views on wollongongcbd.com.au content and a positive social media growth, with a 16% increase in Facebook followers and 26% increase in Instagram followers.
Develop and implement City Centre Wayfinding	On-Track 	Scoping for the Creative Wayfinding project in Ethel Hayton walkway has progressed. Ambient lighting elements will be included to contribute to the vibrancy of this site at night. The final design is due to be delivered in 2024-2025.

GOAL 2 | WE HAVE AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Economic Development

Responsibility *Director Planning and Environment*

About this Service

This service promotes sustainable economic development across the Wollongong Local Government Area working with business and industry to attract business, support educational and employment opportunities, to retain young people, local talent and create employment pathways for the unemployed. The service contributes to a number of economic development programs and initiatives in partnership with business, government, the University of Wollongong and a range of business and industry stakeholders.

Annual Progress Update

This year saw 99 business/investor enquiries ranging from business support and information to facilitating larger projects through *Invest Wollongong*.

Council collaborated with Service NSW Business Bureau's Business Connect program to deliver 'Business Health Checks' throughout the year.

Ninety-six percent of the 10-year jobs target has been achieved within the first five years of Council's Economic Development Strategy 2019-2029. The sectors with the largest job gains were health care and social assistance, construction, public administration and professional services.



The second Economic Insights Report was released in June, highlighting a range of economic data for the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA).

The monthly Economic Development business newsletter was sent to over 30,000 businesses across the LGA. Through this channel, we were also able to provide local businesses a range of information on relevant topics, including flooding resources and energy efficiency grants.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver the Economic Development Strategy 2019-2029	On-Track 	<p><i>Inside Industry</i> commenced their new 'Clean Energy tours' which showcase the activities underway in the clean energy sector. Tours are supported by Wollongong City Council and the Department of Regional NSW and run every third weekend of the month.</p> <p>Council collaborated with Business Connect to deliver 'Business Health Checks' for our local businesses throughout the year.</p> <p>During NSW Small Business Month (October 2023), a number of events were held for local businesses, including the Illawarra Aboriginal Business Expo, Cybersecurity workshop on 'How to protect your business' and a workshop on 'Planning your website for success'.</p> <p>In November, BlueScope unveiled its masterplan to develop 200 ha of surplus land adjacent to the Port Kembla steelworks - larger than the size of the Melbourne CBD with the potential to create up to 20,000 jobs.</p> <p>Council hosted a series of business events, including the Skills Roundtable in February, CEO Roundtable in March and Tourism Accommodation Roundtable in May.</p>

GOAL 2 | WE HAVE AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

		<p>Council, as partner of <i>Invest Wollongong</i>, hosted more than 160 stakeholders at Parliament House on 20 March to launch the <i>Invest Wollongong's</i> 2024 Investment Prospectus.</p> <p>Data released from 2022-2023 found there were 102,802 local jobs in the Wollongong Local Government Area. This represents 96% of the adopted jobs target set out in the Economic Development Strategy 2019-2029 and shows an increase of 10,161 jobs (11%) from 2017-2018 to 2022-2023.</p> <p>The RLB Crane index was released in the first quarter of 2024, showing 12 cranes across Wollongong and Shellharbour.</p>
In partnership with NSW Government and the University of Wollongong, deliver the Invest Wollongong program	<p>On-Track</p> 	<p><i>Invest Wollongong</i> launched a digital marketing campaign to generate awareness and education around Wollongong as an ideal location for businesses and drive engagement. There were several elements to the campaign, including two articles in the Australian Financial Review (AFR) and advertising on LinkedIn. LinkedIn advertising delivered 1.3M impressions and 297 downloads of the Investment Prospectus. The AFR digital partnership attracted more than 1.38M impressions through digital banners, contributing to successfully raising awareness among a key business and industry audience.</p> <p>On 20 March, Council hosted an event 'Celebrating Wollongong: where business and lifestyle grow together' at NSW Parliament House. More than 160 people representing the property sector, investors, the business community, and government gathered at the event for the launch of <i>Invest Wollongong's</i> 2024 Investment Prospectus. The evening showcased Wollongong's ongoing transformation as a strategic location for business.</p> <p><i>Invest Wollongong</i> hosted and was involved in a number of events throughout the year including Investment NSW Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement event, sponsor of the Business Illawarra Clean Energy, local <i>Invest Wollongong</i> Stakeholder event and the Wollongong Investor Forum.</p> <p><i>Invest Wollongong</i> launched a series of new videos featuring Green Gravity and Hysata this year, as well as a video showcasing the innovation in clean energy in Wollongong.</p>
Report against the five pillars of the Destination Wollongong Funding Agreement 2021-2026 including: Marketing, Major Events, Business Visitor Economy, Tourism Infrastructure and Product Development and Cycling	<p>On-Track</p> 	<p><i>Destination Wollongong</i> continued to focus on enhancing the region's appeal as a premier destination for both tourism and sports events. A key initiative included actively advocating for sustainable mountain bike trails in the Illawarra Escarpment to position Wollongong as a key destination for mountain biking in Australia.</p> <p>Wollongong successfully hosted the prestigious Australian Cruise Association Conference showcasing Wollongong's capabilities in accommodating and servicing cruise tourism. This is expected to have a positive long-term impact on local businesses and tourism infrastructure.</p> <p>Following the success of the 2022 UCI Road World Championships – Wollongong NSW, <i>Destination Wollongong</i> with the support of Wollongong City Council and Destination NSW, secured a three-year</p>

GOAL 2 | WE HAVE AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

		<p>deal with World Triathlon, and is welcoming the World Darts Masters for the third consecutive year.</p> <p>Throughout 2023-2024, <i>Destination Wollongong</i> reported Wollongong has surpassed pre-pandemic visitation numbers indicating a robust recovery and a renewed interest in the region.</p>
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GOAL 2 | WE HAVE AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Tourist Parks

Responsibility Manager Commercial Operations and Property

About this Service

Wollongong City Tourist Parks provide beachside accommodation for visitors to the Wollongong Local Government Area at Bulli, Corrimal and Windang. The three Tourist Parks compete in a commercial environment and operate accordingly to ensure they remain commercially viable and provide an acceptable return to Council.


Annual Progress Update

The tourist parks were awarded a five-year license to operate, following inspections of the parks this year. This ensures the parks are fully compliant with all legislation.

Improvements in service delivery have been implemented and include electronic sign in for guests on arrival and the Microsoft teams phone system which allows calls to be answered at any park, providing greater customer service.

The review and approval of the Domestic Pets/Dogs Policy was completed with dogs/pets continuing to be allowed and remaining very popular at Corrimal Tourist Park. Significant infrastructure upgrades to both power and street lighting at all three parks has also progressed with design finalised.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Commercially manage Council's three tourist parks at Bulli, Corrimal and Windang to optimise service delivery and contribute to Council's financial sustainability	On-Track 	The tourist parks continue to perform well with occupancy of cabins at 70% and powered sites at 53%. Over 102,000 people have stayed at the parks this year. The tourist parks implemented the Parks Marketing Strategy with a focus on an autumn promotion to increase occupancy over the cooler months. This has provided over \$200,000 and bolstered bookings during the quieter periods.

GOAL 2 | WE HAVE AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Measuring Success

Measure	Target/ Desired Trend	Comparative Data ¹	Current
City Centre Management			
Number of people movements within Crown Street Mall ²	Increase	<i>Data unavailable</i>	1,200,000 ³
Economic Development			
Business enquiries facilitated ²	Increase	75	98
Tourist Parks			
Tourist parks occupancy rate of cabins	Greater than 60%	62%	70%
Tourist parks occupancy rate of powered sites	Greater than 50%	43%	52%

¹ Comparative data is the result as at end of June 2023. This includes the results from the Wollongong City Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2021.

² Data (including comparatives) is an annual figure.

³ Estimated using Mall entry points where technology is available.



Image: Comic Gong

GOAL 3 | WOLLONGONG IS A CREATIVE, VIBRANT CITY

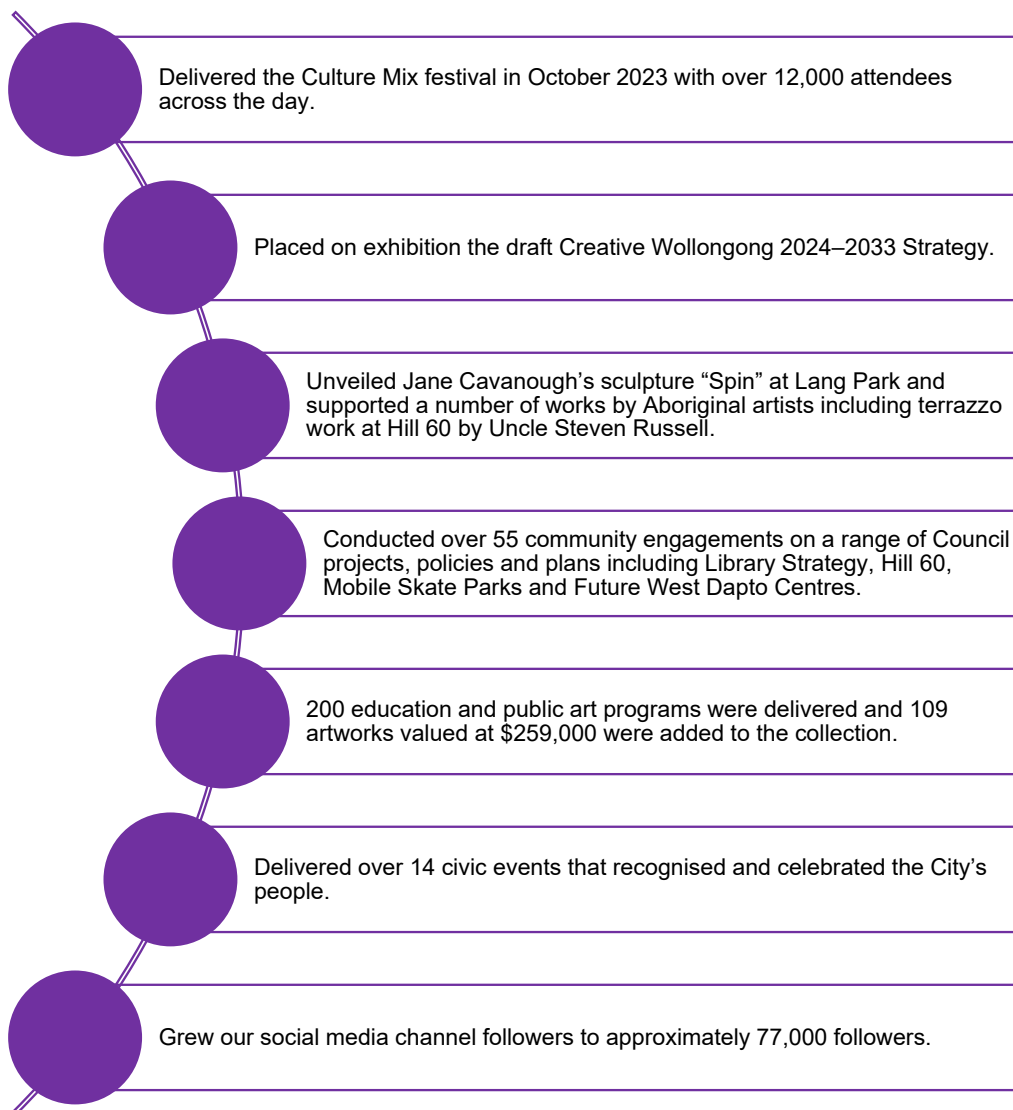
Objectives

Creative, cultural industries are fostered and thriving.

Community have access to the arts, and participation in events and festivals is increased.

Strong diverse cultures are supported.

Achievements



Highlights



From left: Young Citizen of the Year Morgan Clarke, Citizen of the Year Dr Aunty Barbara Nicholson, Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery AM and Senior Citizen of the Year Dr Munir Hussain at the City of Wollongong Awards Ceremony – January 2024.

The new Spin (2023) public artwork by Jane Cavanough at Lang Park, Wollongong.



The inaugural Culture Mix festival celebrated our diverse multicultural community attracting over 12,000 people with stage performances, food stalls, a cultural marketplace and workshops.

GOAL 3 | WOLLONGONG IS A CREATIVE, VIBRANT CITY

Cultural Services

Responsibility *Manager Community Culture and Engagement*

About this Service




Provide direction for the creative sector, support and grow creative industries and support community participation in creative life and celebrate our unique places and spaces.

Annual Progress Update

A key focus was the renewal of Council's arts and cultural plan *Creative Wollongong 2024–2033* with extensive community and stakeholder engagement undertaken. The plan was drafted over the year and endorsed by Council for public exhibition at the May 2024 Council meeting. This draft Strategy will provide a strategic framework which will guide Council to effectively respond to the opportunities and challenges presented by our city's cultural and creative landscape. It details the actions that will be delivered and demonstrates Council's commitment to creative life in Wollongong.

Throughout the year, various projects and programs were delivered. Highlights include the community-guided *Culture Mix* festival, funded in partnership with Multicultural NSW, and Merrigong Theatre Company's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Leland Kean, at the Wollongong Botanic Garden.



Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Implement priorities from Framing our Future: Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025	On-Track 	During the year, Wollongong Art Gallery hosted 17 new exhibitions in the main program and 11 exhibitions in the community access gallery. Over 200 education and public programs were delivered and 109 artworks were added to the collection. 51,468 people attended the gallery throughout the year.
Deliver annual community cultural development festival	On-Track 	The inaugural <i>Culture Mix</i> festival was delivered on 21 October 2023. The festival is part of Council's commitment to celebrating Wollongong's diverse multicultural community. The free event attracted over 12,000 attendees and included eight hours of free performances, workshops, installations and food from around the world across nine venues in the Wollongong CBD. The economic impact of the festival was estimated at \$500,000 and post-event surveys reflected a significant positive response. The event was funded in partnership with Multicultural NSW and will return in 2024.
Develop a new Cultural Plan	On-Track 	<i>Creative Wollongong 2019-2024</i> has guided Council to support, deliver and enhance arts, heritage and culture in Wollongong over the past five years. With this strategy at the end of its timeframe a new cultural strategy was drafted throughout the year, <i>Creative Wollongong 2024–2033</i> . The draft Strategy provides a strategic framework which will guide Council to effectively respond to opportunities and challenges presented by our city's cultural and creative landscape. It details the actions to be delivered and demonstrates Council's commitment to creative life in Wollongong. The draft Strategy was informed by an extensive community, creative industries, and internal engagement and was adopted by Council on 29 June.

GOAL 3 | WOLLONGONG IS A CREATIVE, VIBRANT CITY

Cultural Services Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver key strategies from Creative Wollongong Implementation Plan 2019–2024	On-Track 	<p>Council's commitment to support local creative industries and to provide new opportunities for artists and audiences was more important than ever, in light of challenging economic and social conditions. Financial assistance was provided in various forms, including the Small Cultural Grants program, the low-cost Creative Wollongong studios spaces, and direct opportunities for creatives through expressions of interest.</p> <p>The Creative Wollongong Short Film competition returned, through partnerships with Screen Illawarra and other community partners. Council continued to identify opportunities for professional and audience development for creatives, through programs including the Creative Dialogues series and ongoing engagement with industry and community networks. Advocacy for creative industries to industry and government continued, and opportunities for the enrichment of our community's cultural life were supported and championed.</p>
Implement the 'Animating Wollongong: Public Art Strategy 2022-2032'	On-Track 	<p>Council delivered a range of public art offerings throughout the year. Jane Cavanough's sculpture <i>Spin</i> was unveiled at Lang Park, Wollongong, to mark the UCI Road World Championships – Wollongong Event, held in September 2022.</p> <p>A number of works by Aboriginal artists were supported, including a terrazzo work at Hill 60, Port Kembla by Uncle Steven Russell and artwork panels by Coomaditchie artists at William Beach Reserve, Brownsville.</p> <p>Ongoing support for early career artists was provided through the Curio Gallery on Church Street, Wollongong and a new series of striking portraits was commissioned for the Bonacina Walkway, Wollongong in partnership with Illawarra Community Housing Trust.</p> <p>Public art maintenance continued throughout the year, repairing, maintaining and cleaning many of the works in the collection. Examples include refurbishments to Wentworth Street, Port Kembla mosaics, repairs to mosaic benches in Bellambi and maintenance on numerous works and murals.</p> <p>An ongoing and comprehensive review and refresh of Council's Public Art policy, asset management systems and procedures continued throughout the year, with the aim of understanding and improving the collection.</p>

GOAL 3 | WOLLONGONG IS A CREATIVE, VIBRANT CITY

Engagement, Communication and Events

Responsibility Manager Community Culture and Engagement

About this Service

The service is responsible for internal and external communications including media, community engagement, delivery of major community events (in particular New Year's Eve and Australia Day), management of Sister City Relations, coordination of Council's Financial Assistance Policy and the provision of graphic design, digital content, print and signage needs for the organisation.

Annual Progress Update

Over 1,352 graphic design, digital content, print and signage jobs were completed, ensuring the community received information about Council's decisions, activities and programs in an accessible manner. This included work for the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and Destination Wollongong.

A wide range of community engagement initiatives were delivered, sharing information with our community and listening to feedback, thoughts and ideas to inform decisions. A diverse range of online engagement tools were explored and implemented to increase accessibility and hear the voices of our harder to reach community members. The Community Engagement Strategy (Council Policy) was adopted, reflecting Council's commitment to social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights.

Using our established social media channels, website, and media networks external communications have sought ways to proactively tell Council's news, and share updates of key projects, events and the everyday business of Council in a meaningful and engaging way. Council's social media following grew to 77,000 and website views and shared information increased. Council continued strong engagement with local media organisations throughout the year.




Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Host six major events reflecting priority sectors and contribute to the acquisition and management of signature events	On-Track 	Destination Wollongong supported 19 major events representing our key priority sectors including the World Darts Masters, <i>Yours & Owls</i> Festival, UniSport Australia Indigenous Nationals and the <i>Tri the Gong</i> Triathlon World Cup. Council is a major partner for the Triathlon World Cup which will lead into the World Championships in October 2025.
Deliver civic activities which recognise and celebrate the city's people	On-Track 	Council delivered over 14 civic events throughout the year to recognise and celebrate the city's people. Highlights included hosting the Legacy Torch Relay, a commemorative tree planting to honour the late Councillor Vicky King, the Annual City of Wollongong Giving Tree and Bikers Run and the City of Wollongong Awards, which attracted a record number of nominations. In April, Council worked in partnership with the City of Wollongong Returned & Services League Sub-Branch to deliver the Anzac Day Dawn Services and March. The dawn service was held at the Wollongong Cenotaph on Church Street, Wollongong, and attracted approximately 5,000 people. The March started within the Crown Street Mall and concluded at the Cenotaph at Church Street via Kembla and Burelli Streets, Wollongong. The march attracted over 6,000 people.

GOAL 3 | WOLLONGONG IS A CREATIVE, VIBRANT CITY

Engagement, Communication and Events Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver a diverse range of community engagement opportunities to receive feedback and guide Council's services	On-Track 	<p>Council carried out a diverse range of engagement projects to provide an opportunity for the community to have input into strategies, plans and policies. Significant highlights include the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, Creative Wollongong, Integrated Transport Strategy and the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy.</p> <p>A range of plans, policies and projects were also placed on public exhibition, including Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans, pilot kerbside Electric Vehicle charging sites, mobile skate parks, Wollongong City-Wide Development Contributions Plan, Piccadilly Centre frontage footpath upgrade, Warrawong Town Centre streetscape upgrades, Safer Cities: Her Way, Public Interest Disclosure, Code of Conduct and Business Ethics, Tallawarra Planning Agreement and the Wollongong Development Control Plan Cleveland Road Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Targeted engagement was undertaken with local Aboriginal communities on a range of projects including: Allans Creek and Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creeks Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans, Hill 60 accessibility and viewing area upgrades, 26 January activities, Southern Suburbs District Community Centre and Library, Lake Illawarra Entrance options and William Beach Reserve signage.</p> <p>Full details of Council's engagement activities for the year can be found on page 28-29 of this report.</p>
Engage with the local community regarding the Draft Illawarra Escarpment Mountain Bike Strategy	On-Track 	NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services commenced construction of the first stage of the Illawarra Escarpment Mountain Bike trail network. To support the network, Council began construction of supporting infrastructure. Council continues to work with other landowners on future stages of work.
Develop and deliver an organisational Brand Strategy	On-Track 	Work was undertaken to improve and strengthen brand consistency and recognition of Council across a variety of services and projects throughout the year. Advice and support were provided for the marketing and promotion of a range of Council services, events and initiatives. Highlights include <i>Culture Mix</i> festival, the new animal rehoming service, Food Organics Garden Organics, Climate Change Mitigation Plan and branding identity uplift for Libraries and Lifeguard Services.

GOAL 3 | WOLLONGONG IS A CREATIVE, VIBRANT CITY

Measuring Success

Measure	Target/ Desired Trend	Comparative Data ¹	Current
Cultural Services			
Wollongong Art Gallery partnership projects engaging with First Nations and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities	2 per annum	13	9
Subsidised Artist Studio Space - opportunities accessed	6 per annum	6	9
Wollongong City Gallery visitation ²	Increase	44,449	51,228
Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and Town Hall visitation ²	Increase	98,803	123,202
Proportion of residents satisfied with Wollongong Art Gallery	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.20	4.10
Proportion of residents satisfied with Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and Town Hall	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.20	4.30
Engagement, Communications and Events			
Followers, reach and engagement across Council's social media channels ²	Increase	71,382	76,230
Proportion of residents satisfied with effectiveness in informing the community about its services, facilities and overall achievements	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.40	3.10
Participation rate in Council community engagement activities	Increase	32%	47%

¹ Comparative data is the result as at end of June 2023. This includes the results from the Wollongong City Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2021.

² Data (including comparatives) is an annual figure.



Image: Lunar New Year

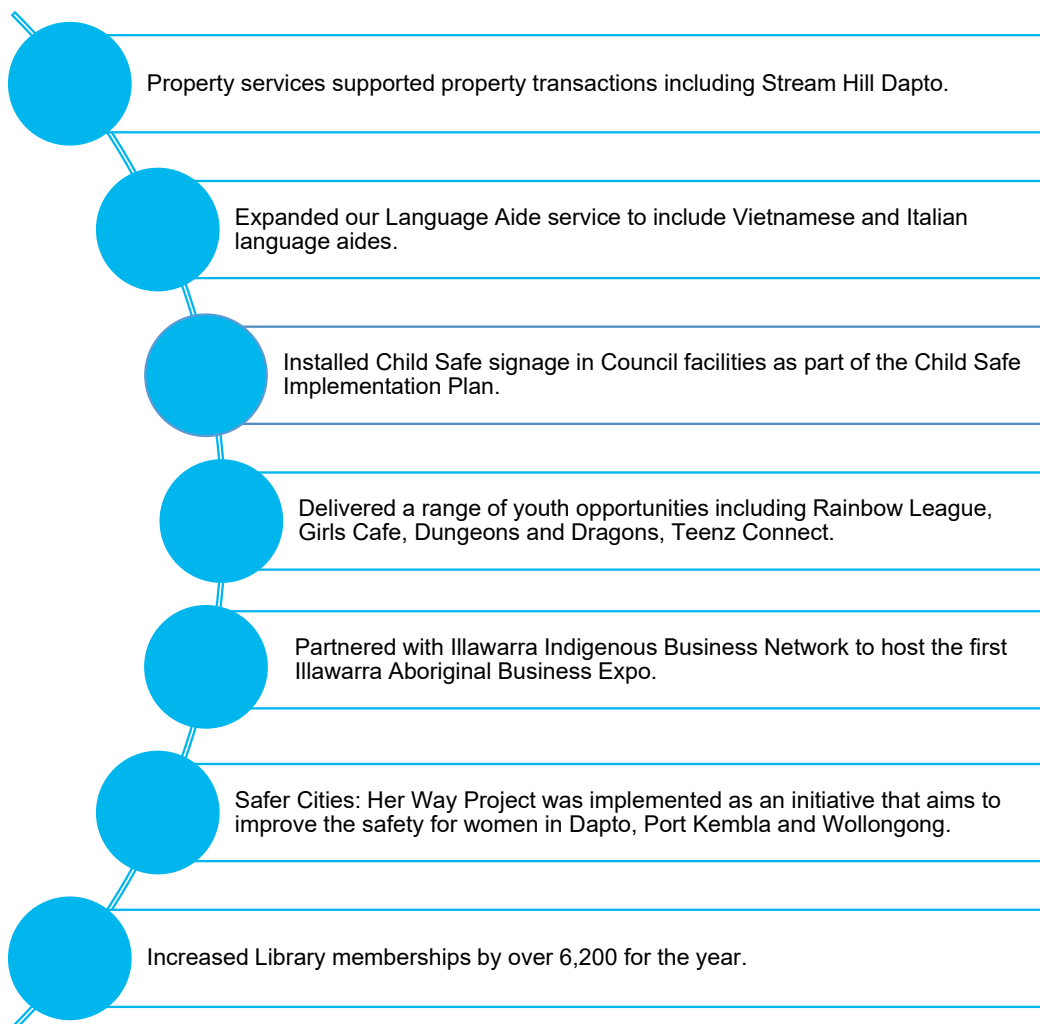
GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Objectives

Residents have easy and equitable access to information and play an active role in the decisions that affect our city.

There is greater awareness and understanding of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, heritage and histories. Our Council is accountable, financially sustainable and has the trust of the community.

Achievements



Highlights



Fairy lighting installed at MacCabe Park, Wollongong as part of the Safer Cities: Her Way community safety initiative.



Significant property transactions with contracts exchanged on the sale of 231 Sheaffes Rd, Stream Hill (left) and acquisition of 414 West Dapto Road, Stream Hill for road widening (right).



Council partnered with Illawarra Indigenous Business Network to host the first Illawarra Aboriginal Business Expo.

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Aged and Disability Services

Responsibility Manager Community Culture and Engagement




About this Service

Build the capacity of older people and people with disability to participate fully in community life. Enhance access to services for frail, older people and people with disability and their carers to enable them to continue to live independently in the community.

Annual Progress Update

Social Support Services have continued to deliver services to our care recipients. Support groups continue to provide meaningful interactions for our care recipients to reduce loneliness and isolation. Social Support Services transitioned to a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, CareMaster on 1 April 2024.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver the Community Transport Services Program across the Wollongong and Shellharbour Local Government Areas	On-Track 	The annual trips provided to our community was tracking to be 49,650, an increase of 4,681. The service contract with Transport for NSW will continue for a further 12 months with the extension of grant funding. This service is vital in maximising client independence and keeping them connected.
Develop and deliver a marketing strategy for community transport	On-Track 	Marketing and promotional activity continued throughout the year including online event listings, social media, radio advertising, newsletters and media releases. Promotion and uptake of subsidised bus hire for other community organisations ensured support to diverse community groups.
Investigate options for alternative service delivery models for Community Transport, in response to Commonwealth and NSW Government policy	On-Track 	The Commonwealth Government has delayed the new Aged Care Act beyond 1 July 2024, as it considers feedback from the community. The Department is currently surveying across the aged care sector to capture experiences of reform implementation and readiness for further reforms. This has led to delays in the release of relevant information about the new Support at Home model for community transport.

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Community Programs

Responsibility *Manager Community Culture and Engagement*

About this Service

Community programs deliver support to people living in the Wollongong Local Government Area. These services deliver community programs, building community capacity and wellbeing related to target groups and communities. Language Aide Services, placemaking, community safety and social planning.

Annual Progress Update

A range of community development activities and programs were delivered focusing on diversity, access, inclusion, capacity building and community safety.

Social impact and crime prevention through environmental design advice was provided on development, pre-lodgement and event applications.

Community safety and access advice was provided on a range of Council projects.


The Language Aid Service continued to be delivered. The service was expanded to include Vietnamese and Italian language aids. Key communications were translated including rock fishing compliance safety signs and State Emergency Services' Storm Safe brochures.

Language services were used to increase access to *Culture Mix* including multilingual voice overs for promotional videos and lanyards identifying bi-lingual festival volunteers.

The Children and Family Services Interagency and Illawarra Refugee Issues Forum (IRIF) meetings were convened.

Children and young people participated in engagement activities for the Stanwell Park Play Space, Creative Wollongong, Reconciliation Action Plan and the Stuart Park All Abilities, All Ages Play Space Artwork and skate parks.



Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Implement the Child Safe Implementation Plan	On-Track 	<p>Child Safe signage has been installed in Council facilities and training was provided to all new lifeguards as part of the onboarding process.</p> <p>To recognise National Child Protection Week, an event was held in Dapto Mall, in partnership with the South Coast Children's Wellbeing Group. Posters were displayed in libraries, leisure centres and facilities and social media posts focused on our commitment to child safety.</p> <p>Council participated in the Local Government Child Safe Network and the Child Safe Forum.</p> <p>The Statement of Attainment for Mandatory Reporters has been delivered.</p>

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Community Programs Continued




Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver the Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-2023	On-Track 	<p>Council delivered a range of initiatives and actions demonstrating the ongoing commitment to reconciliation.</p> <p>To recognise National Reconciliation Week, a thank you lunch and two screenings of the film <i>Winhanganha</i> were held and the Nandhi Ngara banners were flown in Crown Street Mall, Wollongong.</p> <p>During NAIDOC week, a Lord Mayor's Luncheon for Elder's was held, and a range of community led events were participated in by various Council teams.</p> <p>The Local Government Regional NAIDOC Awards were held and various Council teams participated in a range of community led events.</p> <p>Council partnered with Illawarra Indigenous Business Network to host the first Illawarra Aboriginal Business Expo. We continued to facilitate the Aboriginal Reference Group and undertake engagement with the community on a range of projects.</p> <p>Council commenced planning for the new Reconciliation Action Plan including extensive engagement with staff and Aboriginal community and organisations.</p>
Deliver a range of community development activities and programs that focus on diversity, access, inclusion, and capacity building	On-Track 	<p>Living Books was delivered at six schools and the Illawarra Refugee Challenge was delivered at Bulli High School in partnership with Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra. A 15 year celebration was held for Living Books volunteers.</p> <p>An Australian Early Development Census data planning day was held with children and family service providers. Guest speakers spoke on the data, emotional and social development post COVID-19 and strategies were developed by participants to improve outcomes for children.</p> <p>The <i>Paint the Gong REaD</i> reading tent was delivered at the Port Kembla Community Christmas Feast, Saltwater Festival at the Bundaleer Estate and Dapto Mall. Bright Spark, the mascot, attended Lake Heights Public School kinder orientation and the reading day for <i>Paint Shellharbour REaD</i>.</p> <p>The Lord Mayor's School starter picnic was re-scheduled and staged on 18 February.</p> <p>Council received the Welcoming Cities Award for Change in Local Government recognising our work in Multicultural Water Safety over the past 10 years.</p>

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Community Programs Continued




Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025	On-Track 	<p><i>Culture Mix</i> provided a range of access features to support the participation of people with disability including a social story, the Quiet Space and a program of activities with access to Auslan interpreters. Physical access inclusions across the festival were also provided.</p> <p>Site visits were undertaken at Wollongong Memorial Garden, Wollongong Cemetery, and the Crematorium to review access provisions for people with disability.</p> <p>As part of International Day of People with Disability, 'Conversations About Inclusion' were held with Council supervisors. A calendar of events to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disability was developed in partnership with Shellharbour City Council.</p> <p>Tours of access barriers for people who are blind and have low vision were provided by Guide Dogs NSW for Council officers in the Wollongong CBD. The tours provided participants with an understanding of common access barriers related to streetscapes and activity centres. As a result of the learnings, surface indicators were installed on the lower Crown Street crossing.</p> <p>The Quiet Space was delivered at the New Years Eve and Australia Day events. A quiet sensory space for young people has been created at Wollongong Youth Centre and accessible programs were provided to increase social connectedness and capacity of young people with disability.</p> <p>Online booking system for beach wheelchairs is being utilised by community. An additional wheelchair has been purchased for North Wollongong Beach to provide access for smaller people.</p>
Provide support and participate in the Illawarra Domestic and Family Violence Trauma Recovery Centre Consultative Working Group	On-Track 	<p>The Illawarra Domestic and Family Violence Trauma Recovery Centre successfully obtained \$25M in Commonwealth funding for its opening in 2024. Council congratulates the Illawarra Women's Health Centre, the Working Group and its supporters on this significant milestone.</p>
Deliver the Safer Cities: Her Way Wollongong Initiative, in partnership with the community	On-Track 	<p><i>Safer Cities: Her Way</i> project was developed through a co-design process. The design phase involved site audits, internal stakeholder meetings, development of design plans and scoping practices. A range of interventions were implemented throughout the year to increase perceptions of safety in Wollongong, Port Kembla and Dapto for women, girls and gender diverse people.</p> <p>The majority of maintenance and infrastructure interventions were completed. A lighting installation has commenced in Port Kembla.</p>

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Community Programs Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
In partnership with South32 develop a plan that reflects the values and aspirations of the Mt Kembla and Kembla Heights stakeholders.	On-Track 	Throughout the year workshops were held with the Kembla and Kembla Heights communities and stakeholders and a draft vision and guiding principles prepared.
Deliver Round 3 of the Commonwealth Funded Affordable Housing Grant Program	On-Track 	<p>This year a tender process was undertaken to determine the provider for Round 3 of the Program. The contract for Round 3 was executed for Head Start Homes to provide Affordable Housing, Rent to Buy and Empowerment Services.</p> <p>The Illawarra Housing Trust has commenced work at Dapto and 'turned the sod' at Wollongong site to deliver outcomes from Round 1 in the next financial year.</p>
Deliver the Community Safety Action Plan 2021- 2025	On-Track 	<p><i>The Safer Cities: Her Way</i> project, funded by Transport for NSW, was implemented.</p> <p>The <i>Reclaim the Night</i> event was held and support provided for the Action to Stop Gender-based Violence event. Community Safety Audits were conducted across the local government area.</p> <p>Graffiti prevention murals have been completed on traffic signal boxes and started on three bus shelters and a toilet block.</p> <p>Graffiti removal kits were distributed to the community and Council's graffiti removal program continued to remove graffiti from non-Council assets.</p>

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Corporate Strategy

Responsibility *Chief Financial Officer*

About this Service

Corporate Strategy monitors and reports on progress to our community, coordinates research and performance measurement and carries out strategic and business improvement projects.

Annual Progress Update


Four Quarterly Review Statements were completed and adopted by Council during 2023-2024. A significant achievement for the year was the development and subsequent adoption of Council's Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2024-2025 on 24 June 2024.

Council's first review under the Service Optimisation Program was completed during the year. The review covered the customer experience around access to information related to Development Assessment. A range of training sessions were delivered to the organisation to uplift capability with completing Service Reviews under the Service Optimisation Program.

Two major surveys were undertaken during the year the Community Satisfaction Survey and the Community Wellbeing Survey. These results from both surveys will inform the development of future plans.

The Project Management Framework, refreshed last financial year, continued to be embedded and promoted to the organisation during the year. This was primarily achieved by the delivery of six training sessions to 113 staff from a diverse range of Council teams. The training sessions have received positive feedback and will continue to be rolled out during 2024-2025.


Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Coordinate Council's Service Optimisation Program	On-Track 	<p>The 2023–2024 financial year saw the successful implementation of the Service Optimisation Program through the finalisation of the first (pilot) review. The focus of this optimisation was the information Council provides to customers to help them through the development application journey. The recommendations from this review have been endorsed, and improvements are being planned to be delivered in the 2024–2025 financial year.</p> <p>A prioritisation process was also undertaken, which resulted in two services being chosen to be reviewed in the next financial year: road signage management and the customer service journey across targeted, high priority operations. They have been published in the Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2024-2025. Training on “good evaluative practice” was rolled out to approximately 90 staff throughout the year. A post implementation review of the processes underpinning the program is currently being undertaken, with learnings to be used to deliver process efficiency.</p>

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Corporate Strategy Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Coordinate the preparation and review of Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan	Complete 	<p>The Delivery Program and Operational Plan is required to be reviewed and prepared annually and adopted by Council by 30 June. Initial planning for this project commenced in July 2023 with a timeline developed with key stakeholders. A cross organisational review of the status of all Supporting Documents was completed during the September quarter.</p> <p>Significant planning was undertaken to prepare for two Councillor strategic planning workshops to inform the development of the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Draft documents were informed by significant input and consultation with Councillors, Executive and officers across Council. Following development of the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan, the draft was endorsed by Council to be placed on public exhibition for 28 days from 10 April to 7 May 2024.</p> <p>One hundred and thirty-one (131) submissions were received from the community during the exhibition period that assisted and informed the finalisation of the Plan.</p> <p>On 24 June, Council adopted the Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2024-2025, including attachments: Budget 2024-2025, Infrastructure Delivery Program 2024-2025 to 2027-2028 and Revenue Policy, Rates, Annual Charges and Fees 2024-2025. Adoption by Council marks the completion of this Operational Plan action.</p>

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Integrated Customer Service

Responsibility *Manager Customer and Business Integrity*




About this Service

Provision of a professional and efficient customer service experience with Council through a variety of methods.

Annual Progress Update

Throughout the year, work progressed on the Customer Experience project plan and will be finalised in the first quarter of 2024-2025. The first year of the project plan includes the Service Optimisation project and implementing recommendations from the process.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Review and enhance Council's customer service and engagement channels with a focus on inclusion and participation	On-Track 	Work continues to increase accessibility into Council's processes. The upcoming Service Optimisation project commencing in July will provide recommendations on the priority of work and identify improvements that can be rolled out quickly.
Identify and implement customer service improvement opportunities	On-Track 	Work has continued with business units to create processes leading to First Contact Resolution through expanding the information available to Customer Service. Some functions have been moved to Customer Service to allow for quicker resolution; this releases resources in operational teams to focus on delivery.
Upgrade Customer Contact Centre System	On-Track 	Testing is in the final stages for the new Contact Centre software and is expected to be deployed in early July 2024.

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Libraries

Responsibility *Manager Libraries and Community Facilities*

About this Service

Wollongong City Libraries delivers information, learning outcomes and access to resources for residents and visitors to the Wollongong Local Government Area. The service is delivered from seven libraries and 10 street libraries, across the city, and through the Home Library Service, and a range of online services.

Annual Progress Update


Over 1.3 million items were loaned in physical and digital formats this financial year, from a diverse and extensive collection of over 417,000 items. The collection is managed to ensure it reflects community needs, and customer recommendations for purchase are welcomed and included.

The Local Studies Collection is a unique and important part of Wollongong City Libraries' Collection. This year, 1,071 items were added to the Local Studies Collection, and 194 items digitised. From the Illawarra Mercury Project, 635 print images were catalogued, 6,360 negatives were scanned, and 771 negatives were catalogued. Seventeen new oral history recordings were added to the Illawarra Stories collection.

Library membership continues to grow and this year it increased by over 6,200 for the year, and over 1,450 customer satisfaction surveys were returned with an average approval of 86%.




Wollongong City Libraries provides many opportunities for the community to gather, learn, celebrate and connect. One of the biggest events of this year was Comic Gong 2024, which was held on 11 May, celebrating comics, graphic novels, gaming and cosplay throughout the Illawarra. The event was successfully staged with over 9,000 attendees braving the rain to celebrate. Many regular events and programs were held for children and adults across the year including author talks, digital help sessions, multicultural events and baby and toddler literacy programs.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver the Comic Gong Festival	On-Track 	With the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre back open and the Arts Precinct available, Wollongong City Libraries presented Comic Gong 2024 on 11 May, celebrating comics, graphic novels, gaming and cosplay throughout the Illawarra. There were a variety of exhibitors, attractions, activities, cosplay competitions, dance workshops and music. All activities including entry to the event and entertainment were free. Highlights across the three venues included attendance of over 9,000, cosplay competition attendance of 729, 73 exhibitors and 28 activities.

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Libraries Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update		
Actions	Status	Comment
Implement the Wollongong Learning City Project based on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation framework and principles	On-Track 	<p>The Learning Strategy draft has been further refined, building on previous community engagement, Global Network of Learning Cities' requirements and existing Council strategies. The project aims to see Wollongong become a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Learning City in 2025.</p> <p>Council has contributed to the Australian Learning Communities Network, participating in networking, forums and learning from Wyndham City's Learning Festival.</p>
Deliver customer driven, evolving library collections	On-Track 	<p>This year saw consistently heightened collections usage rates along with a significant and consistent increase in reservations that library customers have placed on library collection titles.</p> <p>These heightened numbers of reservations are also reflected in the libraries online collections, which across 2023-2024 have also proven to be maintaining and increasing their importance. There were over 360,000 online loans throughout the year.</p> <p>Diversity in collections has continued to be prioritised, with significant specialised input in the areas of language, LGBTQI+, and Aboriginal material, as well as responsiveness to direct customer requests and alignment with promotional activities and events.</p>
Deliver tailored library programs to facilitate access and participation of people with disability	On-Track 	<p>Ten specific events facilitating access and participation for people with disability were held by the libraries throughout 2023-2024, drawing over 130 participants.</p> <p>These included: Greenacres Mock Interviews, <i>Culture Mix</i> for Deaf and Vision Impaired communities, Neurodiversity Awareness Talk, Christmas crafts for disability groups, and "Vision Impaired Yarners" sessions.</p> <p>Access and participation of people with disability were prioritised at this year's <i>Comic Gong</i> in the following ways: a Quiet Space, drawing 247 participants; an accessible viewing area for the Cosplay Competition; accessible parking options, toilets and paths of travel; a pre-tour for 50 High School students before the event to help them prepare for the expected large crowds and noise levels.</p>

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Libraries Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Deliver library programs that recognise, reflect and celebrate the cultural diversity of our community

On-Track



Over 170 culturally diverse regular events were held by the library this year, attracting well over 1,500 participants. These included: Chinese Community Outreach, Salvation Army English Conversation, Coomaditchie Homework Help, Multicultural Health Week, Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation Outreach, Indigenous Literacy Outreach, Multicultural Storytime, Japanese Language Fun Day, Voice Referendum Information Sessions, Persian Polymer Clay Workshops, Korean *Culture Mix*, Aboriginal Weaving, Japanese Taiko Drumming, Sushi Workshop, Turkish Mosaic Lamp Workshop, Multiculturally-focused "Tech Savvy", Multicultural Women's Group and Pedestrian Safety for the Serbian Community.

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Property Services

Responsibility Manager Commercial Operations and Property

About this Service


This service manages over 450 leases and licenses on behalf of Council and includes the management, development, maintenance and disposal of Council owned property in order to meet Council's statutory requirements and contribute to the expansion of Council's revenue base. Leases and licenses also ensure the effective management and coordination of community and business use of Council's public spaces, buildings and facilities.

Annual Progress Update

Property Services continue to progress a high volume of core business transactions including the continuous review of processes to ensure the optimisation of Council's Property Leasing Portfolio to increase revenue.

Throughout the year, Property Services finalised numerous property transactions which will support Council's delivery of essential infrastructure including roads and public recreation space required for West Dapto Urban Release Area. These included property at 414 West Dapto Road, Stream Hill, and 480 West Dapto Road, Kembla Grange.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Identify and implement business improvement initiatives to enhance commercial returns on Council's property portfolio	On-Track 	<p>The audit of OneCouncil's leasing data has been completed. Additionally, the commercial portfolio allocations have been finalised, enabling the team to concentrate on rent reviews for the commercial portfolio with the goal of increasing revenue.</p> <p>Continuous improvements have been made to the digitisation and automation of work processes. These include digitisation of the owner's consent process to deliver an improved customer experience and digitisation of routine property inspections.</p> <p>The Mobile Food Vending Trial was also completed and a Council report to be presented at the July 2024 meeting. This report recommends that Council adopt the policy and continue to support mobile food vending across the city.</p>

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Youth Services

Responsibility *Manager Community Culture and Engagement*

About this Service

Youth Services provides a program of recreation, cultural and education activities to meet the needs of young people aged 12 - 24 at Wollongong Youth Centre and across the Wollongong Local Government Area. These programs build social connections and inclusion, community engagement, information and referrals. Council funds the Neighbourhood Youth Work Program (NYWP) in two areas (Port Kembla and Berkeley) to support the needs of young people in the community.


Annual Progress Update

Throughout the year a program of recreation, cultural and education activities continued to be provided for young people aged 12 to 24 at Wollongong Youth Centre and across the Wollongong Local Government Area.

Sector support was provided including coordination of the Wollongong Youth Network, sector training for youth workers and funding was provided for the Neighbourhood Youth Work Program.

Youth Week was held with the theme Express, Empower, Get Loud! Activities and events included Wollongong Youth Week Awards, Raise the Volume, Youth Markets, Picnic in the Park, Rainbow Formal and film workshops.


Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver a range of youth development opportunities with a focus on engagement, inclusion, skill development, sector development and support.	On-Track 	<p>Throughout the year, a range of youth development opportunities were delivered, including <i>Rainbow League</i>, Bellambi Connect, Study Sessions, Budget Bites, Girls Cafe, Dungeons and Dragons, Youth in Fashion, Bundaleer Connect, Teenz Connect, Crafts and Chat, weekend music workshops and art, work readiness and wellbeing workshops.</p> <p>Young people were supported to participate in various engagement projects including the draft Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2024-2034, Port Kembla and Wollongong Skate Parks and the draft Integrated Transport Strategy.</p> <p>The Youth Forum has regularly met and have curated some of the Youth Week calendar of events including Raise the Volume Event in MacCabe Park, Wollongong. Two Living Skills Expos were delivered in local high schools.</p>

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Youth Services Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Provide opportunities for young people to develop skills, experience and exposure in creative industries	<p>On-Track</p> 	<p>Throughout 2023-2024 a range of weekly workshops have been delivered including guitar, live band jam, art, DJ and sound and lighting.</p> <p>A 12-month Youth Artist in Residence opportunity and Youth Power Hour podcast program were delivered.</p> <p>Team Ignite provided a platform for young people to inform live music, production activities and events at Wollongong Youth Centre.</p> <p>A fully equipped music rehearsal space continued to be provided and a weekly performance space hosted bands, open mic nights, world music nights and DJ's and a band jam weekend program.</p> <p>The Youth Power Hour podcast made by young people, for young people, developed 12 episodes and weekly broadcasting by young people continued on VOX FM.</p> <p>Through Our Lens was launched with an exhibition celebrating International Women's Day. The images included young women and gender diverse young people with messages of strength and power.</p>

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Measuring Success

Measure	Target/ Desired Trend	Comparative Data ¹	Current
Aged and Disability Services			
People over 65 using community transport – number ²	Increase	9,600 ³	10,770 ³
Hours of social support provided to people aged over 65 ²	Maintain	21,392	26,801
Proportion of residents satisfied with services for older people	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.50	3.40
Proportion of residents satisfied with services for people with disability	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.30	3.30
Community Programs			
Proportion of residents satisfied with Children's services	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.60	3.50
Proportion of residents satisfied with Inclusive services	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.70	3.50
Proportion of residents satisfied with Graffiti prevention and removal	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.60	3.40
Integrated Customer Service			
Telephone calls are answered within 30 seconds	80%	80%	38% ⁴
Correspondence met to target ⁵	90%	93%	90%
Proportion of residents satisfied with customer service centre	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.90	3.90

GOAL 4 | WE ARE A CONNECTED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Measuring Success

Measure	Target/ Desired Trend	Comparative Data ¹	Current
Libraries			
Library visitations ²	Increase	172,168 ⁶	470,918 ⁷
Library memberships	Increase	79,957	84,237
Library: total number of loans ²	Increase	1,292,710	1,311,111
Library programs: number of programs ²	Increase	1,979	2,497
Library programs: number of participants ²	Increase	39,343	46,646
Proportion of residents satisfied with libraries	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.40	4.40
Proportion of residents satisfied with library services	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.30	4.20
Property Services			
Occupancy rates of commercial buildings	90%	96%	97%
Youth Services			
Wollongong Youth Services - participation of young people in programs and projects ²	24,000 Per annum	24,788	27,074

¹ Comparative data is the result as at end of June 2023. This includes the results from the Wollongong City Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2021.

² Data (including comparatives) is an annual figure.

³ Comparative data corrected due to a prior period error.

⁴ Data has been prepared as an average on an annual basis. During the reporting period Council shifted focus to improve the customer experience by attempting to resolve calls at the first point of contact. This has had an expected reduction in speed of answering calls but reduces the likelihood for further calls from customers on the same topic. A new performance measure is included in Council's Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2024-2025 to reflect this change in practice and to measure first call resolution rates. This result was negatively impacted by call volumes experienced following the 6 April 2024 natural disaster, with staff being reallocated to recovery centres. In addition, significantly longer call durations are required when dealing with and supporting residents impacted by natural disasters.

⁵ Data has been prepared as an average, on an annual basis.

⁶ Data includes Wollongong Central Library only.

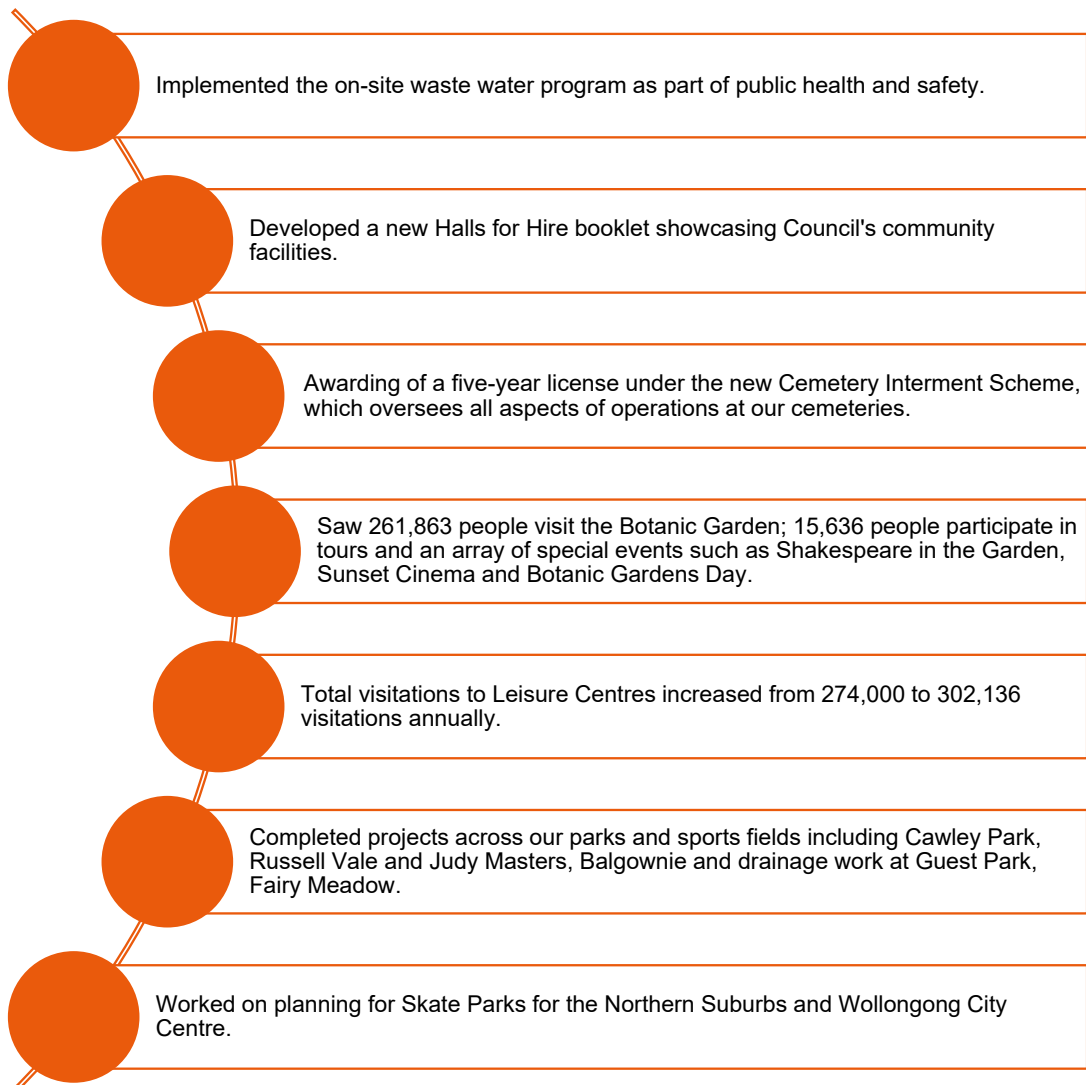
⁷ Data includes all library locations.

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Objectives

There is an increase in the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our community.
Our community participation in recreation and lifestyle activities increases.
Residents have improved access to a range of affordable housing options.
Suburbs and places are liveable and safe.

Achievements



Highlights



Stuart Park All Ages All Abilities Playground was officially opened on 18 December by dignitaries including Wollongong Lord Mayor Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM, Member for Cunningham, Ms Alison Byrnes MP, The Hon Paul Scully MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and Disability Trust CEO Carol Berry.



Work completed on Stage 1 of the North Wollongong Beach Seawall Renewal.



New ash walls and gardens at the Scarborough Cemetery, Scarborough.



Leisure Centre visitation and program offerings continue to be enjoyed across different generations.

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Aquatic Services

Responsibility Manager Sport and Recreation

About this Service




Wollongong City Council operates 17 patrolled beaches, two heated swimming pools at Dapto and Corrimal, six free public swimming pools located at Helensburgh, Thirroul, Western Suburbs (Unanderra), Continental Baths Wollongong, Port Kembla and Berkeley. We have nine ocean rock pools situated at Coalcliff, Wombarra, Coledale, Austinmer, Bulli, Woonona, Bellambi, Towradgi and Wollongong Gentleman's pool. Aquatic Services also provides ocean and pool lifeguard services and surf education programs.

Annual Progress Update

During the year, procurement was undertaken to learn to swim and coaching across Helensburgh, Corrimal and Dapto Swimming Pools with agreements now in place. Procurement for cash collection services was also completed for Corrimal Swimming Pool.


In 2023, Council identified the heating system was failing at Dapto Pool and determined no fees would be charged for entry until the heating system is permanently repaired/ renewed. Planning and procurement progressed throughout the year, with works anticipated to be finalised in early 2024-2025.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Plan, design and undertake renewal works at Council's Community, Commercial Pools and Ocean Rock Pools in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Program	On-Track 	The site concept plan for upgrade of the Helensburgh Pool facility is being finalised which includes the refurbishment of the 25m pool, water filtration and other supporting works. Council has received grant funding support under the NSW Government Multi Sport Community Facility Fund for this project. The existing pool heating system at Dapto Pool has reached end of life and is due for replacement. Council has awarded a contract for the replacement of the system with works commencing on site in August 2024.
Work with the North Wollongong Surf Life Saving Club to explore storage options	On-Track 	Council met with the Surf Life Saving Club to continue to progress and provide an update of the sites identified to date, and to reset discussions on expectations on this project. Council has identified this project as part of the 2024-2025 Operational Plan.
Progress concept plans, investigations, and detailed designs for a Community Recreation & Aquatic Centre at Cleveland to service the Southern Suburbs	On-Track 	Draft documentation has been prepared for potential functional brief for a new Community Recreation and Aquatic Centre to service the Southern Suburbs. Council will be developing an Aquatic Strategy in 2024-2025 financial year.

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Aquatic Services Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update		
Actions	Status	Comment
Design Stage 2 of the North Wollongong Beach Seawall Renewal	<p>On-Track</p> 	<p>Stage 1 of the seawall (in front of the North Wollongong Surf Life Saving Club building) was completed in December 2023.</p> <p>Stage 2 of the project which extends south to the North Beach Pavilion, has been designed with preliminary piling investigation works planned for winter 2024. The current program will allow for tenders to be called in 2025 with on-site construction programmed to commence early in 2026. Council has submitted a request under the Coastal and Estuary Grant Program for financial assistance in accordance with this program.</p>

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Botanic Garden and Annexes

Responsibility *Manager Open Space and Environmental Services*

About this Service



The Botanic Garden and Nursery service involves managing and promoting the conservation, education, recreation and aesthetic values of the main 30 hectare site in Keiraville, including the maintenance of the Gleniffer Brae grounds and the three natural area annexes of Mt Keira, Puckey's Estate and Korungulla Wetland. Environmental education programs and interpretation are conducted at the Discovery Centre.

Annual Progress Update

During the year, 261,863 people visited the Botanic Garden and 15,636 people participated in tours and an array of special events such as Shakespeare in the Garden, Sunset Cinema and Botanic Garden Day.

Forty-six volunteers have contributed 4,939 hours through working bees, *Budding Bookworms*, Garden Tours, *Willing Weeders* and Discovery Centre activities. The nursery produced 51,928 plants and sold 25,217 plants through Greenplan Sales to a total of 2,912 customers.




Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver priority actions from the Urban Greening Program	On-Track 	<p>Council continued planting trees across our natural areas, parks and streets. Council continues to replace removed trees at the ratio of 2:1 in public areas and 1:1 on private land as conditioned with Tree Permits. A new integrated Tree Management Policy and plain English Customer guide came into operation from 1 July. This provides a consistent incentive-based approach to tree management across both private and public realms, including free replacement trees from Council's Greenplan Nursery for Tree Permit customers.</p> <p>Forest plantings in collaboration with Red Room Poetry continued as a successful new Urban Greening initiative. Six thousand four hundred students (6,400) submitted poems written across the nation matched by 6,400 trees being planted in Wollongong, with a wrap up event and winners' presentation at William Beach Park, Brownsville.</p> <p>The first Koala Feed Forest was planted and is establishing well at Eleebana Parade, Koonawarra. This was completed with the local school community, volunteers and project partners Symbio Wildlife Park.</p> <p>Council's <i>Tiny Forests</i> project was awarded Highly Commended at the 2023 NSW Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards in the Natural Environment Protection & Enhancement: On Ground Works category.</p>
Enhance Botanic Garden visitor experience with programs, interpretation, education, events and priority actions from the Masterplan	On-Track 	<p>During the year, 261,863 people visited the Garden and 15,636 people participated in tours and an array of special events such as Shakespeare in the Garden, Sunset Cinema and Botanic Gardens Day. A total of 46 volunteers contributed 4,939 hours through working bees, <i>Budding Bookworms</i>, Garden Tours, <i>Willing Weeders</i> and Discovery Centre activities. This year the nursery has produced 51,928 plants and sold 25,217 plants through Greenplan sales to a total of 2,912 customers.</p>

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Botanic Garden and Annexes Continued

Operational Plan 2023 – 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Finalise the review of the Botanic Garden Plan of Management, including future uses of Gleniffer Brae	On-Track 	The draft Botanic Garden Master Plan and Conservation Management Plan have been updated based on stakeholder feedback and is ready for broad community consultation. Community consultation is planned to be undertaken after the new Council commences in late 2024/early 2025 prior to Council endorsement.
Implement priority actions from the Botanic Garden Masterplan	On-Track 	Three capital projects remain in design phase during the year: a new fully accessible amenities block, new rainforest boardwalk/accessible pathway and nursery propagation glasshouse renewals.
Manage the Mt Keira Summit Park in accordance with the Plan of Management	On-Track 	Council's partnerships with The Illawarra Aboriginal Land Council and Wollongong Rotary Club continued at Djeera/Mt Keira Summit Park. Plant expertise was provided by the Botanic Garden nursery staff. Council staff also worked with 11 corporate volunteers to undertake weeding, mulching and planting out the western car park garden beds at the Summit Park.

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Community Facilities

Responsibility Manager Libraries and Community Facilities

About this Service

This service manages and operates 56 Council-owned community facilities across the Wollongong Local Government Area. This includes Neighbourhood Centres, Senior Citizens Centres, Childcare Centres, Libraries, Community Centres and Community Halls.

Annual Progress Update

Community Facilities continue to rebuild community participation and hire post the COVID-19 pandemic. The district facilities at Dapto Ribbonwood, Corrimal and Thirroul are reporting and recording strong interest in bookings. A new Halls for Hire Booklet, that showcases all of Council's Community Facilities, was developed and deployed.

Highlighted community events hosted included the Thirroul Seaside Festival, NSW Reconstruction Authority Flood Recovery Centres at Warrawong, Dapto Ribbonwood and Thirroul, and Citizenship Ceremonies at Corrimal. Dapto Ribbonwood Centre also hosted the "RU OK Van". The district facilities were Polling Booths for the 2023 Australian Indigenous Voice Referendum that was held on 14 October 2023, and the Prime Minister visited the Dapto Ribbonwood Centre on this day.

Highlighted upgrade works completed included Cringila Multi-purpose Centre roof, Koonawarra Community Centre Roof replacement and fire compliance, Bulli Senior Citizen's Centre kitchen floor tiles replacement and new decking, stage lighting and a break out area established at Thirroul District Community Centre.


Planning continues for the Southern Suburbs Community Centre and Library and the Helensburgh Community Centre and Library.

A Governance Checklist was developed for all community facilities licencees to help with their licencing responsibilities. A Community Facilities Licensee Training Program was developed and delivered for the licencees.

Planning Area 7 Needs Assessment was completed which includes the suburbs of Figtree, Cordeaux Heights, Farmborough Heights, Kembla Heights, Mt Kembla and Unanderra.

The Yallah Marshall Mount Community Centre location feasibility study was completed along with completion of the Community Needs Analysis for social, cultural and recreational infrastructure for emerging West Dapto communities.





Operational Plan 2023 – 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Plan for a new Community Centre and Library to meet the needs of the community in Helensburgh and surrounding suburbs	Delayed 	The scope, site selection and budget for this project is being finalised for resolution in the next quarter.

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Community Facilities Continued

Operational Plan 2023 – 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Plan for a new Community Centre and Library at Warrawong to serve Wollongong's southern suburbs	On-Track 	Tenders for works closed earlier this year. Negotiations continue with the two remaining tenderers to finalise project deliverables prior to awarding contract. Tenants in the Warrawong Community Centre have been offered assistance to relocate.
Progress planning and construction of Wongawilli Hall extension and refurbishment	Delayed 	Design being developed in consultation with heritage officers to address identified building defects with engagement programmed to commence later in 2024. Design to be finalised 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 financial years with construction in 2026-2027 financial year.
Develop and deploy 'Places for People' Forward Directions Plan 2022-2036 (Implementation Plan)	On-Track 	May 2024 marked one year into the implementation phase for the strategy. Actions for 2023-2024 are underway, some actions finalised and the remainder in various stages of delivery.
Complete Social Infrastructure Feasibility Studies at Bong Bong Road, Yallah/Marshall Mount and Figtree	On-Track 	Feasibility studies for planned community facilities at Yallah/Marshall Mount Town Centre have been completed. A town centre master plan and neighbourhood plan are required to be completed prior to studies commencing for the Bong Bong Town Centre. The Area 7 Needs Assessment, which includes Figtree, is complete.

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Leisure Centres

Responsibility *Manager Sport and Recreation*

About this Service

This service involves the provision of commercially operated recreation centres at Beaton Park Wollongong and Lakeside Leisure Kanahooka.

Annual Progress Update


Throughout 2023-2024 there has been improvement and growth of participation in the centres programs, despite some interruptions during the Beaton Park Regional Tennis Centre construction.

The total visitations increased from 274,000 visitations to 302,136 visitations annually with programs continuing to improve within Learn to Swim and Fitness programs and attendances.

Leisure Centres provided a number of initiatives to continually improve the social and wellbeing outcomes of the community. Notably, a six week seniors gentle exercise program at Gwynneville Hall and a 12-week program of providing yoga and Pilates at MacCabe Park as part of the *Safer Cities: Her Way* Program. Our Aqua Aerobic Program has continued to be provided at Dapto Swimming Pool despite the centre's identified water heating issue. Classes were run on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays to great success.

Beaton Park and Lakeside Leisure Centres continuing to investigate opportunities to provide quality health and wellbeing activities across the two centres along with providing outreach services across the local government area. The centres will continue to invest and develop its service delivery and provide quality health and wellbeing services to the community and to drive participation.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver the renewal and relocation of Beaton Park Tennis Courts in accordance with the Beaton Park Masterplan	On-Track 	The redevelopment of Beaton Park Tennis Courts continues to be constructed and are earmarked to be completed by the end of the calendar year. It will see all courts completed, including new floodlighting, court surfacing, fencing and supporting infrastructure. Council is working closely with Tennis NSW and other partners to ensure operational issues are resolved prior to the opening of the new courts.

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries

Responsibility *Manager Commercial Operations and Property*

About this Service

This service provides memorial, burial and funeral service facilities at six sites across the Local Government Area.

Annual Progress Update

Council has been awarded a five-year license under the new Cemetery Interment Scheme, which oversees all aspects of operations at our Cemeteries.

Council staff conducted over thirteen community information talks to various groups across the local government area. This included talks at our popular Death Cafe in association with our libraries, participating in the Volunteer Expo to promote our Friends of the Cemetery groups as well as hosting a number of services including ANZAC Day and the Vietnam Veterans 50-year celebrations.

Over 600 interments were completed throughout 2023-2024. Two thousand Waterfall General Cemetery records have been catalogued and photography of all headstones at Bulli and Scarborough Cemeteries have been completed.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Manage Council's commercial businesses to optimise service delivery at Wollongong Memorial Gardens and cemeteries	On-Track 	Throughout the year, Council has constructed a number of areas to ensure the community's needs are continuing to be met. At Scarborough Cemetery, a new ash garden and niche wall have been constructed that will provide over 500 placements for the community. At Wollongong Memorial Gardens, two new rose gardens will also provide much needed ash interment spaces. Council staff have also identified a number of vacant sites at the previously closed Scarborough and Bulli Cemeteries have been made available for at-need interments.

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Parks and Sports Fields

Responsibility *Manager Sport and Recreation*

About this Service

This service operates 493 parks, 65 sports fields, 220 playing fields, seven outdoor fitness stations, nine turf wickets and 154 playgrounds across the Wollongong Local Government Area which includes Russell Vale Golf Course. Provision of passive access to community parks and playgrounds and affordable and equitable access to sports fields and facilities. Twenty two sports fields are licensed by volunteer or semi-professional sporting clubs.






Annual Progress Update

Council delivered a number of improvements to support continued and increased usage across our Parks and Sports Fields network.

Projects were completed at Guest Park, Fairy Meadow, Cawley Park, Russel Vale and Judy Masters Oval, Balgownie that will increase the utilisation at the sportsfields and participation and usage at these sites.







Council supported eight sports groups through the Council funded sport club grant program, as well as supporting local sports clubs applying for over 20 external grants.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Progress the planning and development of a Northern Suburbs Skate Park	On-Track 	Council continues to plan for a Northern Suburbs Skate Park, with planning and site selection underway.
Finalise the Bulli Showground Masterplan	On-Track 	Council continues to plan for the future renewal of Bulli Showground, with the development of a Masterplan. During the year, the NSW Government commenced engagement on the Bulli Bypass extension. Outcomes of this process will be taken into consideration for the future of the Showground.
Implement the Landscape Masterplan recommendations for Hill 60 Reserve, Port Kembla	On-Track 	Council continues to implement the Hill 60 Masterplan through the construction of Stage 1a due to be completed this year. These works include the construction of a viewing platform and car park. In addition to this, Council officers are continuing to investigate opportunities for the re-use of the tunnels within Hill 60.
Progress the development of the Lang Park Masterplan	On-Track 	Council officers have met with key internal and external stakeholders in relation to the development of a Masterplan for Lang Park. It is envisaged community consultation will take place later in 2024 to inform Masterplan.
Complete the drainage project at Guest Park, Fairy Meadow training ground of the Illawarra Stingrays	Complete 	The drainage project at Guest Park has now been completed.

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Parks and Sports Fields Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update		
Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver amenities upgrades at Figtree Oval and Thomas Gibson Park, Thirroul	On-Track 	Council has continued to progress the engagement and design stages of the amenities improvements at both Figtree Oval and Thomas Gibson Park, Thirroul. Council has met with sporting bodies associated with these projects and continued to progress the design work to approach the market for construction in the 2024-2025 financial year. Council was successful in receiving funding to support the delivery of the amenities improvements at Thomas Gibson Park, Thirroul.
Collaborate with Destination Wollongong and the Australian Baseball League to establish Wollongong as a home base location for a National Baseball League team	On-Track 	During the year, Council had investigated a number of sites that may be suitable for the hosting a team as part of the National Baseball League. Investigations included site suitability that incorporated electrical assessment, permanent and temporary amenities and other factors required to support a National Baseball League Competition. Further analysis and investigations to consider the feasibility will be undertaken in the 2024-2025 financial year.
Progress the planning and development of a Wollongong City Centre Skate Park	On-Track 	Council has engaged a consultant to support the identification of an appropriate site for a City Centre Skate Park as well as complete pre-design engagement. Further due diligence is to occur on the preferred site, prior to detailed design and construction.
Finalise the draft licence with Illawarra Stingrays for a home ground at JJ Kelly Park, Wollongong.	On-Track 	The Illawarra Stingrays advised Council the club wishes to enter into a joint agreement for the use of Lakelands Oval, Dapto, along with Dapto Phoenix Football Club. The Illawarra Stingrays were successful for significant improvements for Lakelands Oval from a NSW Grants program. Council has met with the Stingrays to progress this project.
Deliver funded sportsfield irrigation and drainage infrastructure projects	On-Track 	Council has completed improvements across three sporting fields in this financial year, including drainage and irrigation for Judy Masters, Balgownie and Cawley Park, Russel Vale with Guest Park, Fairy Meadow also receiving drainage on the sportsfield. Lakelands Oval, Dapto drainage project was deferred due to timing constraints and will be completed in the 2024-2025 financial year.
Preparation of the Bellambi Foreshore Precinct Plan	On-Track 	Investigations have progressed into land ownership, planning constraints, and cultural significance of the site. Council is continuing to meet with major stakeholders to coordinate the future planning of this precinct. Council has completed construction of a new amenities building at Bellambi Boat Ramp which is open to the public.

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

		Design options have been developed for refurbishment of the jetty adjacent to the boat ramp. Council is reviewing funding opportunities to carry out these works.
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GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Public Health and Safety

Responsibility Manager Regulation and Enforcement

About this Service

This service conducts and manages the registration, inspections and monitoring of regulated public and environmental health premises including public swimming pools and on-site sewerage management systems with the aim of ensuring compliance. Development of environmental and public health policies, community education programs and customer information.

Annual Progress Update

Public health and safety services were delivered throughout the 2023-2024 year. Council staff completed inspections, responded to customer service requests and monitored compliance across a range of public health and safety matters.


Inspection programs were conducted regarding cooling towers, beauty salons, skin penetration businesses and sex industry premises, with over 240 inspections conducted throughout the year to monitor compliance with the Public Health Act.

Customer requests were received and responded to regarding public health, amenity and environmental matters with over 510 customer requests actioned.

Council staff responded to a high number of customer requests regarding parking compliance, with over 3,600 customer requests being actioned. The school zone parking compliance program was implemented. 647 patrols of primary schools across the local government area were completed to monitor compliance and educate parents and care givers. During the patrols, 334 fines were issued, over 400 warnings were issued regarding parking and safety matters.

The on-site waste water program was implemented during 2023-2024. Approval to install as well as approval to operate applications were received and processed, with 110 and 4 applications being received respectively. Thirteen DA referrals and 54 customer service requests regarding waste water management were also received and actioned during the year.


Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Inspect all medium and high-risk retail food premises annually	On-Track 	<p>Council implemented the food surveillance program and completed all scheduled inspections as part of the Food Regulation Partnership with the NSW Food Authority.</p> <p>Throughout the year, over 2,000 food premises were inspected with a high level of compliance with the Food Act and Food Safety Standards achieved. Where non-compliances were observed, staff commenced regulatory action to rectify any identified issues. Across the year, officers issued 29 Improvement Notices, one Prohibition Order and 16 fines for breaches of the Food Act.</p> <p>During the year, 323 customer requests were actioned along with Development Application referrals to ensure conditions of development consent were appropriate for food businesses.</p> <p>A new Food Safety Standard was introduced to the Food Standards Code which saw staff working with businesses to educate and ensure a smooth transition to the new standard.</p>

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Public Health and Safety Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Maintain inspection programs for public swimming pools, places of shared accommodation and mortuaries	<p>On-Track</p> 	<p>Throughout the 2023-2024 year, Council implemented inspection programs for public swimming pools, shared accommodation premises and mortuaries.</p> <p>The inspection programs were focused on achieving compliance with the Public Health Act and maintaining public health and safety.</p> <p>Council staff completed all statutory inspections during the year with a high level of compliance being achieved. Three Notices were issued to rectify non-compliances with the Act.</p> <p>Customer service requests were also responded to by officers during the year regarding public health matters.</p>

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Measuring Success

Measure	Target/ Desired Trend	Comparative Data ¹	Current
Aquatic Services			
Council commercial heated pools visitation ²	At least 180,000 per annum	228,970	227,093
Proportion of residents satisfied with patrolled beaches	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.50	4.50
Proportion of residents satisfied with tidal rock pool	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.20	4.20
Proportion of residents satisfied with heated pools	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.10	4.10
Proportion of residents satisfied with public swimming pools (free)	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.10	4.10
Botanic Garden and Annexes			
Wollongong Botanic Garden visitation ²	At least 400,000 per annum	316,608	261,863
Proportion of residents satisfied with Botanic Garden	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.70	4.60
Community Facilities			
Utilisation of direct-run district level community facilities ²	Increase	32,431	34,793
Direct-run district level community facilities visitation ²	Increase	203,546	229,637
Community halls/ centres - hours of use ²	Increase	9,917	10,280
Community halls/ centres – visitation ²	Increase	46,732	32,412
Proportion of residents satisfied with community centre at Thirroul, Corrimal or Dapto	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.20	4.30
Proportion of residents satisfied with community hall/ centre	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.80	3.90

GOAL 5 | WE HAVE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN A LIVEABLE CITY

Measuring Success

Measure	Target/ Desired Trend	Comparative Data ¹	Current
Leisure Centres			
Proportion of residents satisfied with leisure centres	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.10	3.90
Parks and Sports Fields			
Proportion of residents satisfied with parks, open spaces and sports fields for active sport or recreation activities	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.10	4.00
Proportion of residents satisfied with parks, open spaces and sports fields for passive recreation purpose	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.10	4.10
Proportion of residents satisfied with children's playgrounds	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.90	3.90
Proportion of residents satisfied with hours Council public toilets are open	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.70	3.60
Proportion of residents satisfied with Russell Vale Golf Course	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	4.20	4.20

¹ Comparative data is the result as at end of June 2023. This includes the results from the Wollongong City Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2021.

² Data (including comparatives) is an annual figure.



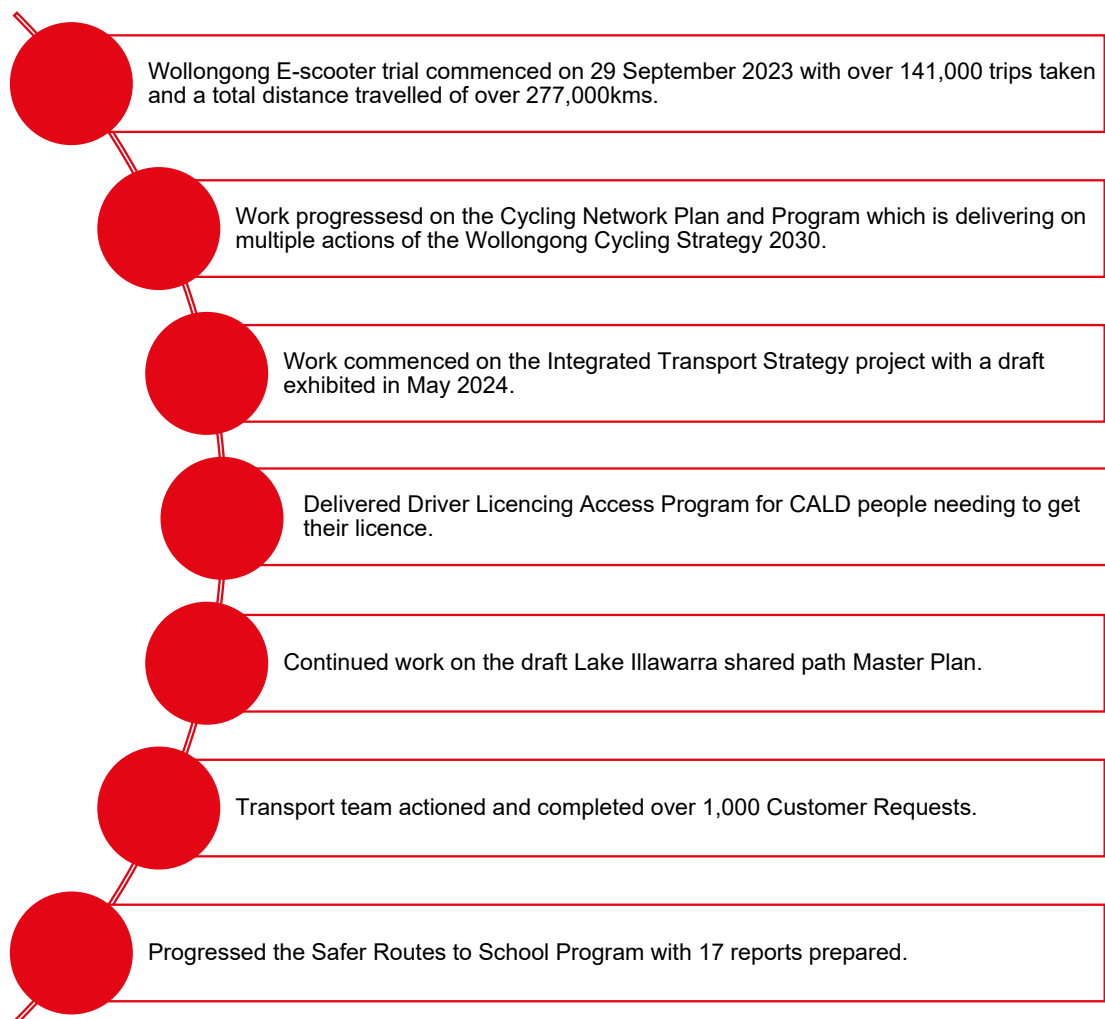
Image: Kids enjoying reading at Corrimal Library

GOAL 6 | WE HAVE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT

Objectives

There is an increase in sustainable transport use including public transport, walking, and cycling. Transport links and connection to Sydney, the South Coast and Southern Highlands are strengthened. The community have access to a safe, affordable and reliable transport network.

Achievements



Highlights



Emergency works being carried out on Whitty Road in Helensburgh, June 2024.



Delivering the Safer Routes to School Program.



141,000 trips have been taken as part of the Wollongong E-scooter trial.



Offord Causeway, Offord Road was reopened after being destroyed by heavy rainfall.



Footpath repairs at Murphys Avenue, Gwynneville.

GOAL 6 | WE HAVE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT

Transport Services

Responsibility Manager Infrastructure Strategy and Planning

About this Service

This service provides the delivery, management and advocacy of transport infrastructure. The service aims to provide a transport network that is safe, efficient, equitable, effective and sustainable. The service supports the community through creating the provision of transport access for residential, business, recreation, leisure and tourism activities. This Service also includes provision of road safety, traffic and integrated transport planning support and advice. Road Safety Education Programs and promotion is a critical activity implemented across all aspects of our transport services.

Annual Progress Update

Council's Safer Routes to School Working Group continued their onsite audits, collaboration with School Principals and Parents and Friends groups and preparation of Safer Routes to School Reports with seven Safer Routes to School reports finalised, three draft reports received back from schools with comments and drafted seven Reports that are currently being reviewed by local schools.


Over 1,000 Customer Requests were completed throughout the year. Sixteen Wollongong Traffic Committee meetings took place during 2023-2024 with over 100 items submitted for review, including items such as regulation of traffic, design, development, temporary delegation and general business. Council continued to work closely with Police, requesting patrols of key areas raised by the community as part of the *Dob in a Hoon* program.

Over 141,000 trips have been taken as part of the Wollongong E-scooter trial with a total distance travelled of over 277,000 kilometres.

Improvements to the Infrastructure Delivery Program planning and prioritisation process were made, strengthening alignment to the Community Strategic Plan goals, with an emphasis on improved road safety outcomes as well as active and sustainable transport goals.



Hundreds of consent requests from the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator were processed during the year. Requests covered a range of vehicle types including oversize, over mass, performance based, higher mass limit and b-double vehicle applications.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Work with key agencies and partners to progress the Illawarra Regional Transport Plan	On-Track 	<p>Forty-six of the 71 initiatives proposed in the Plan are of benefit to the Wollongong Local Government Area. Three major Transport for NSW initiatives continued: Mount Ousley Interchange, M1 south facing ramps at Dapto and Bulli Bypass.</p> <p>Council staff attended the first M1 Dapto South Facing Ramps project stakeholder workshop on 18 June 2024. This workshop involved discussions relating to the project process, key themes and objectives.</p> <p>Council continued its involvement in the Mount Ousley Interchange project as a key stakeholder. Council staff provided detailed design comments in response to the technical details of current design documentation. Council is preparing a separate submission to Transport for NSW highlighting the concerns raised by Councillors, community and technical staff regarding the removal of the pedestrian bridge, lack of crossing facilities, and the removal of a roundabout in the latest plan iterations. Council attended a Strategic Merit Test workshop run by Transport for NSW on 21 June 2024. The</p>




GOAL 6 | WE HAVE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT

Transport Services Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update		
Actions	Status	Comment
Work with key agencies and partners to progress the Illawarra Regional Transport Plan <i>(Continued)</i>	On-Track 	workshop was to help confirm the initial assessment and screening of options. Solutions progressed through the workshop will undergo further assessment and detailed analysis. Council staff attended the initial Transport for NSW Strategic Cycling Corridors network projects workshop. Council staff reviewed and provided comments and recommendations on the current proposal.
Develop road safety programs, education and promotion of sustainable multimodal transport options	On-Track 	Over 141,000 trips have been taken as part of the Wollongong E-scooter trial with a total distance travelled of over 277,000 kilometres. The trial is continually being monitored and additional designated e-scooter parking zones have been implemented throughout the trial area to reduce trip hazards and increase parking compliance. Council continues to advocate to Transport for NSW for a trial expansion to further increase multi-modal options across the Wollongong Local Government Area. A range of road safety and education programs were delivered including a driver licencing access program for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, Helping Learner Drivers Become Safer Drivers, Festival of Cycling <i>(Ride Wollongong)</i> and pedestrian safety sessions for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse community. Banners displayed on school fences highlighting road rules of parking issues around schools have been distributed across several locations on a rotating roster.

GOAL 6 | WE HAVE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT

Transport Services Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update		
Actions	Status	Comment
Collaborate with the New South Wales Government to fund and deliver the Safe Routes to School Program	On-Track 	<p>The Safer Routes to School working group are continuing to complete onsite audits and finalise reports for other schools across the Wollongong Local Government Area.</p> <p>A Council website is being prepared to go live towards the end of 2024 to deliver proactive messaging and outcomes of Program.</p> <p>Seven reports have been finalised (Lake Heights Public School, Bulli Public School, Corrimal High School, Dapto High School, Eltona Montessori School, Cedars Christian College and Corrimal East Public School). Three draft reports were received back with comments from reviews completed by schools (Woonona Public School, Holy Spirit College and Coniston Public School).</p> <p>Seven reports are with school principals and Parents and Friends' Associations for review (Dapto Public School, St Columbkille's Catholic Primary School, Corrimal, Nareena Hills and Hayes Park Public Schools, Figtree, Figtree Heights, Mount Saint Thomas Public School and Woonona High School).</p> <p>Council staff submitted grant funding applications for Transport for NSW Safer Roads Program funding, including 11 projects to provide new or upgraded infrastructure in school zones. These included high priority projects identified during site audits and by local school communities.</p>
Implement actions from the Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030	On-Track 	<p>Council is working closely with an engagement consultant on a Cycling Network Plan and Program to deliver on multiple actions of the Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030. Work is progressing and consolidated comments have been issued to the consultant, with the final draft expected to be finalised by end of calendar year 2024.</p> <p>The network plan and program will include a 10 year forward plan for the programming of new cycleways and will highlight the key strategic network to lobby and support grant funding applications. Routes identified through the Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030 Map will be investigated through this study, with standard design details for aspects of cycling infrastructure, supplementary cost estimates for future options assessment and the types of facilities with consideration of the existing road environment.</p>
Subject to funding, explore the installation of tactile and braille street signage to support navigation and wayfinding throughout the Wollongong Local Government Area	Delayed 	Council staff are continuing to explore potential grant funding for the design and implementation of tactile and braille street signage on Transport for NSW assets, to support navigation and wayfinding.

GOAL 6 | WE HAVE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Develop and implement the Integrated Transport Strategy	On-Track 	The Integrated Transport Strategy project commenced with stakeholder workshops being held in the September 2023 quarter. On 8 April 2024, Council resolved to place the Draft Integrated Transport Strategy on public exhibition for community input. The exhibition period ran from 30 April to 27 May 2024 and Council staff are currently reviewing the feedback received. Feedback received and proposed amendments will be shared with the new Council following the September 2024 local government elections.

GOAL 6 | WE HAVE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT

Measuring Success

Measure	Target/ Desired Trend	Comparative Data ¹	Current
Transport Services			
Proportion of residents satisfied with maintenance of local roads	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.20	2.80
Proportion of residents satisfied with maintenance of footpaths, cycle ways and shared use paths	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.40	3.30
Proportion of residents satisfied with availability of footpaths, cycle ways and shared use paths	At least 3.75 on a scale of 5.00	3.70	3.60

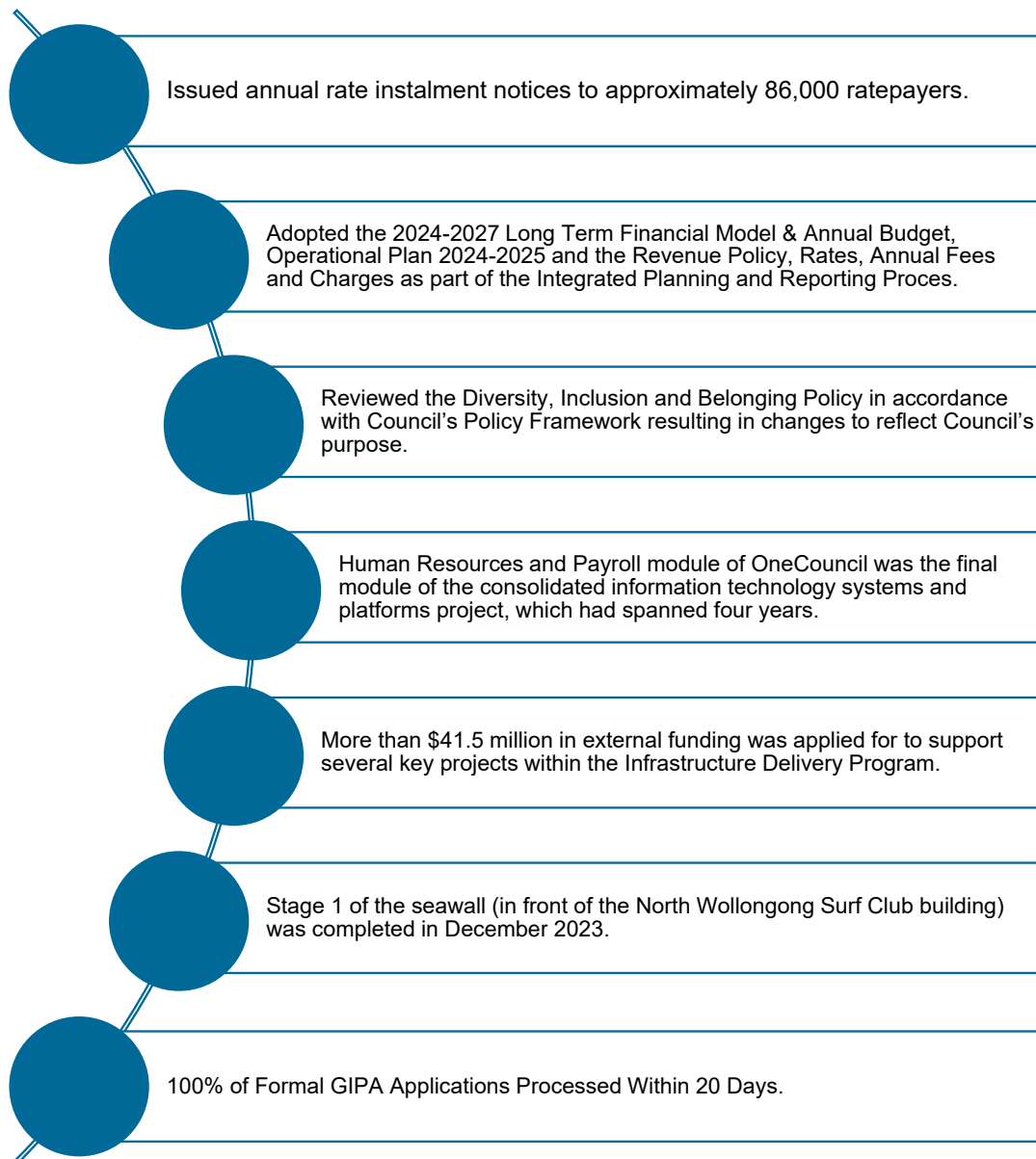
¹ Comparative data is the result as at end of June 2023. This includes the results from the Wollongong City Council Community Satisfaction Survey 2021.



Image: Illawarra Criterium Track

SUPPORT SERVICES

Achievements



Highlights

Right: Council staff Jasmine Marslew, Procurement Trainee and Cooper Tarlinton, Greenkeeping Apprentice attending the 2023 Apprenticeship/Traineeship and Jobs Expo at Berkeley promoting working at Council.



Portable Closed Circuit Television cameras installed at the Bald Hill Lookout as part of a trial.



Council adoption of the Budget 2024-2025, Infrastructure Delivery Program 2024-2025 to 2027-2028 and Revenue Policy, Rates, Annual Charges and Fees 2024-2025.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Employee Services

Responsibility *Manager People and Culture*

About this Service

Council's Employee Services provides support, advice and information to staff, including staff attraction and retention, health and wellbeing initiatives, and ongoing learning and development. This service fosters a safe and equitable work environment where people are skilled, valued and supported.

Annual Progress Update

Council has continued to focus on the delivery of the Workforce Management Strategy. This has included the achievement of a number of deliverables across the five workforce focus areas.


Council has relaunched a refined workforce planning approach to support divisional workforce plans being in place. A pilot of the Workforce Planning Tool was completed, with learnings and findings utilised to make improvements. Leaders have participated in training to understand and engage with the Workforce Planning Tool along with supporting guides and resources.

Council deployed an Employee Experience Framework delivering a number of actions in the Workforce Management Strategy, including implementation of Hybrid Work Guidelines and development of a draft Talent Acquisition Strategy and draft Capability Strategy.

The Human Resources and Payroll module within the OneCouncil system went live on 31 July 2024. This was a significant project and change piece for the organisation, with training rolled out to all staff.



Council completed a review of the performance appraisal system focusing on streamlining the process. Training has been delivered to support the development of employee Performance Plans that contain performance objectives and development goals aligned to the delivery of the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Enhance Council's Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Programs	On-Track 	<p>Council has continued to focus on diversity, inclusion and belonging and various other strategies and programs including the Reconciliation Action Plan, Disability Inclusion Action Plan and Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan.</p> <p>Council's Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy has been reviewed, resulting in changes to reflect Council's purpose. Council's definition of diversity has been refined to better reflect the community we serve.</p> <p>A number of procedures and guidelines that support diversity and inclusion were developed, including a gender affirmation guideline.</p> <p>Council participated in the Council for Intellectual Disability's (CID) program <i>Inclusion Works</i>. Working in collaboration with The Disability Trust, Council identified a position within Regulation and Enforcement and subsequently made an appointment, initially for a paid 12 week work experience opportunity. Due to the success of the appointment, the placement was extended. Ongoing coaching, training and support has been provided to improve accessible recruitment and employment for people with disability. This initiative aligns with inclusive employment priorities outlined in the Disability</p>


SUPPORT SERVICES

Employee Services Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update		
Actions	Status	Comment
Enhance Council's Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Programs <i>Continued</i>	On-Track 	<p>Inclusion Action Plan and Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan.</p> <p>Council's Learning Pathway program continues to provide entry level opportunities for the community including student work placements, cadetships, apprenticeships, traineeships and school-based traineeships. Council continues to provide and improve accessible recruitment practices along with targeted affirmative measure placements.</p> <p>Council continues to recognise significant diversity and inclusion days in celebration, solidarity, commemoration and awareness. Formal training continues to be deployed including Diversity Awareness, Cultural Intelligence, Autism Awareness and Bullying and Harassment. Informal learning is promoted through our Diversity Hub, LinkedIn Learning and Diversity Council of Australia membership.</p>
Implement Safety and Wellbeing Programs	On-Track 	<p>During the year, the Workforce Health and Safety Management System and operational procedures were finalised following an extensive review process. This system has now been finalised, with collaboration and endorsement from key stakeholders.</p> <p>The Strategic Safety Committee was established, with compliance and training being a key focus throughout the year. Safe Work Method Statements for high risk work areas within City Works are being reviewed and updated. This has been a priority due to the injury data and risk of this work area. Council staff have completed a series of seminars relating to the impacts of a poor safety framework and workplace injuries.</p> <p>A noise protection project plan and procedure were developed and a draft Psychosocial Hazard Procedure, Wellbeing Procedure and Occupational Violence Procedure. These will be due for broader collaboration and engagement within the organisation during the September 2024 quarter.</p>

SUPPORT SERVICES

Employee Services Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update		
Actions	Status	Comment
Implement the Workforce Strategy 2022-2026	<p>On-Track</p> 	<p>Council's Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy was reviewed in accordance with Council's Policy Framework resulting in changes to reflect Council's purpose. Council's definition of diversity has also been refined to better reflect our community.</p> <p>Council continued to build the capability of the workforce by delivering formal training including Extraordinary Leaders program; Leaders Connect; Diversity Awareness; Cultural Intelligence; Autism Awareness; Bullying and Harassment; Safety Leadership and Mental Health Awareness. With the implementation of new technology across the organisation, a bespoke training program was developed and deployed to support the workforce. Informal learning continues to be promoted through LinkedIn Learning and Diversity Council of Australia membership.</p> <p>Council deployed an Employee Experience Framework that aligns a number of deliverables in the Workforce Management Strategy including implementation of Hybrid Work Guidelines, development of a draft Talent Acquisition Strategy and draft Capability Strategy.</p>

SUPPORT SERVICES

Financial Services

Responsibility *Chief Financial Officer*

About this Service

Wollongong City Council is a large and diverse organisation that provides services from the funding it receives from its community through rates, fees, and charges. Financial Sustainability and efficiency are aims of this service. This is achieved through financial strategy, policy, budgets and controls; while ensuring Council meets its taxation obligations, investment return, and internal and external reporting that provides transparency about decision-making. Council's primary source of income is property rates and sundry debtors systems used for billing and recovery, and customer service relating to these areas.

Annual Progress Update


The Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2024-2025, Budget 2024-2025, and Revenue Policy, Rates, Annual Charges and Fees 2024-2025 have been adopted by Council as part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Process. The annual Fringe Benefits Tax return has been submitted to the Australian Taxation Office, along with other taxation compliance throughout the year.

Other functions have been broadly delivered as expected throughout 2023-2024. Functions included timely delivery of financial planning and reporting functions through the Budget, Quarterly Review Budget Statements and monthly financial reporting processes, along with other financial support services to the organisation during the year.

Council's supplier payment function continued with weekly payment cycles for all suppliers. Opportunities to expand the use of e-invoicing continued.

Financial and investment reports were provided monthly to Council and community, and Annual Rates Instalment notices for 2024-2025 issued to approximately 86,000 ratepayers.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Review the rating structure to align to legislative changes	Deferred 	This project was initiated to review proposed changes to Rating legislation and determine opportunities to improve Council's rating policy and structures. While some changes have been introduced to legislation and have been proclaimed, many others have not yet been proclaimed, do not have regulations, and cannot be implemented at this stage. These changes were not able to be implemented for 2023-2024 as anticipated.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Governance and Administration

Responsibility Manager Customer and Business Integrity


About this Service

The Governance and Administration Service includes policy, internal audit, legal, insurance, claims management, supply chain, risk management, business paper functions and corporate governance. The service also captures the Office of the General Manager and Executive Group, support for Councillors and the Professional Conduct Coordinator.

Annual Progress Update

Ongoing support continued to be provided to the organisation with the governance, Councillor support and risk management functions. Support was provided for ordinary Council meetings and Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meetings throughout the year. A number of policies such as the Code of Conduct and Code of Business Ethics were adopted by Council.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Deliver the Internal Audit Program	On-Track 	Five internal audit reports were completed during the year, and two others are nearing completion as of June 2024. The 2024-2025 internal audit plan was endorsed by the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee on 5 June 2024.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Information Management and Technology

Responsibility *Chief Digital and Information Officer*

About this Service

This service delivers digitally enabled, information driven and secure services that empower our customer community.

Annual Progress Update


The digitisation of business processes for the outdoor and mobile workforce was completed throughout the year through the implementation of OneCouncil and the mobility project, bringing online approximately 800 additional technology users. The Service Desk function has been introduced to depots, with regular tips and tricks released, and the tablet device interface was simplified.

The audio and video upgrade in the Council Chambers progressed during the year, with outstanding works to be completed during the caretaker period. The decades old analogue equipment will be replaced with fit for purpose, contemporary digital audio and video equipment.

A range of initiatives that utilise Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things technology were deployed. Intelligent Defect Management (which looked at managing road defects), Smart Bins (which used sensors to determine the need for a public bin to be emptied) and Sport Field Management (which used sensors to automatically determine if a field was too wet for play).

The frequency and severity of cyber security attacks in Australia and globally are increasing. Council worked to improve the organisation's cyber security maturity. Council has mandated cyber security training on an annual basis to all staff, which has been supported through the implementation of an integrated Learning Management System. Progress is regularly monitored through the use of the Australian Cyber Security Centre's Essential 8 and National Institute of Technology and Standards Framework.





Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Continue to consolidate information technology systems and platforms	Complete 	<p>The Human Resources and Payroll module of OneCouncil went live on 31 of July 2024. This was the final module of the consolidated information technology systems and platforms project, which had spanned four years.</p> <p>OneCouncil has fundamentally changed the way staff in Council work. OneCouncil facilitates data sharing between different functional areas, mitigating the need for data duplication. The project significantly increased the digitisation of business processes, reducing the reliance on paper-based processes and facilitates the capacity to work from any place, at any time on any device.</p> <p>An 'Embed and Optimise' project has been initiated which will review Council's business processes and investigate how these can be better enabled through our contemporary OneCouncil toolset.</p>

SUPPORT SERVICES

Information Management and Technology Continued

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Pilot and expand the use of robust SMART technologies across Council	On-Track 	<p>During the year, a significant amount of work has been undertaken in the Intelligent Defect Management project that aims to improve proactive maintenance of Council's transport assets. This has involved the validation of the transport network coverage, refinement for the works generation process, and having the required systems in place ready for the trial go-live.</p> <p>Continued enhancements and support have been provided for automated NSW Environment Protection Authority reporting and whole of Council emissions reporting. A comprehensive third party review has been completed on the Information Technology environment for Smart Cities initiatives to sustainably grow into the future.</p> <p>The Sportsfield Monitoring project completed the first of six installations to enable Council to investigate automating field closure notifications, and to better understand the servicing of sportsfield assets.</p> <p>Other projects include Workplace Health and Safety reporting, prescribed dam monitoring and smart parks.</p>
Implement the Cyber Security Strategy	On-Track 	<p>Council made progress in the implementation of the Cyber Security Strategy with improved collaboration across the councils in Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation, a substantial maturity uplift and an improved incident response capability.</p> <p>Council has worked with Cyber Security NSW and the Australian Cyber Security Centre to access services such as incident response plan testing, user awareness training and penetration testing to improve cyber incident responsiveness.</p>
Finalise the Information Technology Cloud Transformation Program	On-Track 	<p>Council's cloud-first strategy has reached a new level of maturity during the year. Following the introduction of Council's new cloud-hosted Enterprise Resource Platform system (OneCouncil), many other systems, servers and storage have been transformed or migrated to cloud based products. This will allow Council to reduce costs of on-premises infrastructure and increase flexibility and scalability of services for staff and the community. On-premises systems will be formally decommissioned throughout 2024-2025.</p>
Implement the Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Strategy	On-Track 	<p>The Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Strategy implementation progressed during the year with completion of site upgrades and storage of data at these sites transitioned to the cloud. This has resulted in improved security through centralised viewing and system overview. Council now has the ability to monitor remote sites ensuring CCTV remains online and operational.</p>

SUPPORT SERVICES

Infrastructure Strategy and Support

Responsibility Manager Infrastructure Strategy and Planning

About this Service

This service includes the strategic management and technical planning of Council's infrastructure that supports all Council Services. It also includes the development and review of Council's Asset Management Strategy, Asset Management Plans, the development and delivery of rolling capital works and planned annual maintenance programs.



Annual Progress Update

The Infrastructure Delivery Program 2023-2024 to 2027-2028 continued to be reviewed and updated, resulting in adoption by Council on 24 June 2024.


Grant funding opportunities to support delivery of programmed works continued to be sought. During the year, more than \$41.5 million in external funding was applied for to support several key projects within the Infrastructure Delivery Program.

The Wollongong Local Government Area experienced a severe weather event on 6 April 2024, which was subsequently declared a natural disaster, causing extensive damage to Council infrastructure. Council commenced recovery efforts and is sought funding from the joint Commonwealth-State Government Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements to repair damaged infrastructure. As of June 2024, 11 new projects have been introduced into Council's Infrastructure Delivery Program to address the damage caused from the severe weather event and ongoing advocacy continues to secure support.

Operational Plan 2023 - 2024 Update

Actions	Status	Comment
Develop and regularly review Asset Management Plans to ensure appropriate investment in Council's asset base	On-Track 	A comprehensive review was completed during the year and an asset management plan covering all assets drafted. The draft Plan considers future demands, challenges and risks that influence decisions regarding investment over the lifecycle of assets. The plan includes over 180,000 assets across transport, stormwater and floodplain, open space and recreation, buildings, property, plant and equipment, the library collection, information management and technology and the extensive artwork collection. The exhibition and adoption of the plan will be coordinated with the review of the Resourcing Strategy during 2024-2025.
Seek external funding to support core services that Council provides in the Infrastructure Delivery Program	On-Track 	More than \$41.5 million of funding has been applied for to support the delivery of projects across the city, including Southern Suburbs Community Centre and Library at Warrawong, North Wollongong Seawall, Darkes Sporting and Community Hub (Stages 1 and 2) at West Dapto, Thomas Gibson Park, Thirroul sporting amenities and the Ursula Road Flood Mitigation Scheme, Bulli. During the year, Council was awarded \$19.1 million worth of infrastructure grant funding; the largest of these being \$9 million towards Stage 1 of the Darkes Road Sporting and Community Hub project and \$4 million towards Stage 2 of the North Wollongong Beach Seawall project. Council was notified in May 2024 the application for \$15 million under the Growing Regions Program for the Southern Suburbs Community Centre and Library was unsuccessful. Council's \$10 million application under the Commonwealth Government's Regional Precincts and Partnerships

SUPPORT SERVICES

		program for the Warrawong Town Centre precinct is under assessment.
Progressively implement the Asset Management Improvement Program	<p>On-Track</p> 	The improvement plan includes 25 actions over three focus areas of Strong Leadership, Informed Decision Making and Robust Systems and Processes. Significant progress has been made on implementing all actions on the improvement program. A number of actions have been addressed as part of the review of the comprehensive asset management plan. A revised improvement plan, reflecting the current challenges and opportunities, has been included in the review of the asset management plan.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Measuring Success

Measure	Target/ Desired Trend	Comparative Data ¹	Current
Financial Services			
Available funds	3.5% to 5.5% of Operational Revenue	\$39.4M or 11.7%	\$40.2M or 12.5%
Operating result pre capital income, including depreciation	Small Operational Surplus (average over 3 years)	-\$4.3M	-\$39.3M
Information Management and Technology			
Formal Government Information Public Access (GIPA) Applications Processed Within 20 Days	100%	100%	98.6%
Records and Information Management Maturity (as defined by the NSW State Archives and Records Authority)	Increase	48% ²	65% ³

¹ Comparative data is the result as at end of June 2023.

² Comparative data corrected due to a prior period error.

³ Result exceeds the State benchmark of 60%.



Image: Towradgi Rock Pool



Statutory Reporting

Special Variation of Rating Income

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 508(2) s508(a)

In accordance with the Special Rate Variation Guidelines 7.1, Council must report on activities funded via a special rate variation of general income.

The tables below outline how the total amount of the rating increase has been allocated and expended during the 2023-2024 financial year, in accordance with Council's Financial Sustainability Program.

Capital Program Related to Special Rate Variation (SRV)					
30 June 2024					
SRV Renewal Program	Base Revenue	Allocation of SRV Revenue	Base + SRV	Total Renewal + Maintenance Actuals Expenditure of Revenue Funding	Difference of Expenditure to Base + SRV
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Public Transport - Bus Shelters	1,582,000	113,000	1,695,000	800,978	(894,022)
Roadworks - resurfacing	1,000,000	2,255,000	3,255,000	0	(3,255,000)
Roadworks - road reconstruction	4,276,000	5,198,000	9,474,000	9,640,082	166,082
Bridges, boardwalks and jetties	1,050,000	564,000	1,614,000	813,955	(800,045)
Footpaths	3,048,000	4,008,460	7,056,460	5,540,220	(1,516,240)
Cycle/shared paths	930,000	1,015,000	1,945,000	1,737,866	(207,134)
Car parks	900,000	282,000	1,182,000	325,336	(856,664)
Community buildings	10,354,000	6,427,000	16,781,000	4,643,593	(12,137,407)
Public Facilities (Shelters, Toilets etc.)	332,000	361,000	693,000	0	(693,000)
Crematoriums/Cemetery Facilities	175,000	56,000	231,000	497,101	266,101
Play Facilities	420,000	609,000	1,029,000	1,301,523	272,523
Recreation Facilities	488,000	541,000	1,029,000	117,866	(911,134)
Sporting Facilities	106,000	395,000	501,000	5,309,872	4,808,872
Aquatic Facilities (pools, etc.)	2,225,000	789,000	3,014,000	448,468	(2,565,532)
Loan repayments	0	0	0	19,745	19,745
TOTAL	26,886,000	22,613,460	49,499,460	31,196,605	(18,302,855)

Loan Repayments – Funds were borrowed under the NSW Government's Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS), a subsidised loan scheme that supported accelerated investment in footpath and community buildings renewal across the LGA.

Council has also invested an additional \$21.4M of revenue in stormwater infrastructure asset renewals above projected 2014-2015 figures. While these were not included in the original Special Rate Variation submission, Council's CCTV inspection program has identified more assets than were originally forecast as needing renewal.

When Stormwater Renewals are included, Council has spent \$3.4M above the projected Special Rate Variation over the ten-year period.

The following table provides a comparison of forecast operating result contained in the submission for the Special Rate Variation (SRV) that was approved by Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in June 2014 with the actual result for the year ending 30 June 2024.

Operating Statement Comparison of Special Rate Variation Forecast and Actual 2023-24 30 June 2024			
	SRV \$'000	Actual \$'000	Variation \$'000
Total Revenue	336,531	329,528	(7,003)
Total Expenses	338,308	389,336	(51,028)
Operating results excluding capital grants and contributions	(1,777)	(59,808)	(58,031)

Major Variations	\$M
Revenue Variation	
Variation in operational grants & contributions	(18.01)
Rating Income	0.33
Increase in fees and charges	0.62
Financial Assistance Grant	20.24
Improved revenue trends at Tourist Parks	2.92
Waste Facility Revenues partly due to operational efficiencies and removal of carbon tax	(15.71)
Domestic Waste Management Income (partly due to lower waste facility operational charges)	(7.16)
Rental Income	6.34
Interest on investments reflecting investment markets	5.86
Other income (sponsorship, legal recoveries, etc)	(2.26)
Various other	(0.16)
Expense Variation	
Waste Facility revaluation of remediation provision	(13.14)
Valuation of provisions for employee long term leave liabilities Workers Compensation	0.48
Depreciation expense	(16.21)
Loss on disposal of assets	(10.12)
Waste Facility operating costs including EPA levy and carbon tax repeal	(10.21)
Domestic Waste Revenue (reflecting lower operational largely associated with Waste Facility)	(8.05)
Utility costs	(2.41)
Current and prior year capital expenditure reclassified as operational	(8.14)
Additional projects funded from accumulated operational improvements and grants	1.18
Implementation of new financial management information systems platform	0.36
Development Assessment additional costs	1.45
Tourist Park Operations	1.27
Doubtful debts expense	(0.86)
Increases in consultancy costs	(2.10)
Various other	(0.63)
Total variation for year ending 30 June 2024	(58,031)

Senior Manager Remuneration

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217(1)(b)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v), the report must include a statement of the total remuneration package of the General Manager (GM).

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217(1)(c)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v), the report must include a statement of the total remuneration packages of all senior staff members (other than the General Manager), expressed as the total (not of the individual members).

As determined by a resolution of Council in September 2023, the General Manager, four directors and 17 senior managers are defined as senior staff under the *Local Government Act 1993, section 332*. The remuneration packages of senior staff include the:

- total value of the salary component of the package
- total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of the salary component
- total amount payable by Council by way of the employer contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the manager may be a contributor
- total value of any non-cash benefits for which the manager may elect under the package
- total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits,

Position	Period	Total Value \$
General Manager	1-07-23 to 30-06-24	505,876
Directors (4) Community Services Corporate Services Infrastructure + Works Planning + Environment	1-07-23 to 30-06-24	1,333,269
Senior Managers (17) Manager Commercial Development Strategy + Projects; Manager City Works; Manager Infrastructure, Strategy + Planning; Manager Project Delivery; Manager Open Space + Environmental Services; Manager Library + Community Facilities; Manager Customer + Business Integrity; Chief Financial Officer; Chief Digital + Information Officer; Manager Community, Culture + Engagement; Manager City Strategy; Manager Development Assessment and Certification; Manager Regulation + Enforcement; General Counsel; Manager People + Culture; Manager Sport + Recreation; Manager Commercial Operations + Property	1-07-23 to 30-06-24	3,686,624

Councillors

Councillors are not employees or officers of Council. Their role is to make decisions about the running of Wollongong City Council and ensure the General Manager and Council officers carry out decisions made at Council meetings.

Councillors Attendance at Meetings

Council has resolved that Councillor attendance at Ordinary and Extraordinary Council meetings, Section 355 Committees, as well as Councillor Briefing sessions, be recorded and reported in the Annual Report.

During the year, there were 14 Ordinary Council meetings and 25 Councillor briefings held.

Councillor	Council Meetings Attended	Councillor Briefings Attended
Lord Mayor, Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM	14	22
Councillor Cath Blakey	14	24
Councillor David Brown	14	25
Councillor Tania Brown	13	21
Councillor Mithra Cox	11	16
Councillor John Dorahy	9	22
Councillor Dom Figliomeni	14	23
Councillor Janice Kershaw	8	17
Councillor Ann Martin	14	25
Councillor Cameron Walters	13	17
Councillor Richard Martin	14	25
Councillor Linda Campbell	13	22
Councillor Elisha Aitken	13	25

Attendance at Section 355 Committees

Australia Day Committee	Meetings Held	Meetings Attended
Lord Mayor, Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM	4	4
Councillor Tania Brown	4	3

Expenses and Provisions of Facilities to Councillors

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217(1)(a1)(i),(ii),(iii),(iv),(v),(vi),(vii),(viii), the report must include the total cost during the year of the payment of expenses of, and the provision of facilities to Councillors in relation to their civic functions (as paid by the Council, reimbursed to the Councillor or reconciled with the Councillor).

The Lord Mayor and Councillors are paid an annual fee that is within the limit set by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

Council has adopted a policy on the payment of expenses and provision of facilities. The policy is addressed under the Statutory Reporting section. It outlines the services and facilities provided to the Lord Mayor and Councillors to enable them to carry out their civic duties.

The total cost of payment of fees and expenses and provision of facilities to the Lord Mayor and Councillors (from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024) is \$685,393. This consists of the following:

Fees	\$553,250
Expenses and facilities	\$132,143

Specific costs as required by Section 217(1)(a1) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* are as follows:

- ii Provision of dedicated office equipment, including mobile and data plans **\$12,905**
- iii Conferences and seminars **\$32,416**
- iv Other Training and Development **\$0**
- v Interstate travel **\$3,655**
- vi Overseas Travel **\$10,776**
- vii Partner, spouse or accompanying person **\$393**
- viii Care of child or immediate family member **\$498**

Other expenditure relating to expenses and facilities included in the total (above) are:

- a Superannuation paid to Councillors **\$60,857**
- b Attendance at meetings, functions and events **\$3,573**
- c Local Travel **\$5,296**
- d Newspaper subscriptions and other Civic expenses including insignia of office and local government body membership fees **\$1,774**

Councillors Induction, Training & Ongoing Professional Development

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 186, the report must include information about induction training and ongoing professional development for Councillors.

- The Lord Mayor and all 12 Councillors have been made aware of professional development opportunities available to them and have been involved in selecting appropriate opportunities to be undertaken towards their professional development.
- Council issued a total of 10 Office of Local Government Circulars to Councillors during 2023–2024.

Councillor attendance during 2023–2024 at seminars and other activities delivered as part of the ongoing professional development program include:

Detail	Councillors attending	Date/s
ICAC Fraud and Corruption Prevention Seminar	Cr Cath Blakey Cr David Brown Cr Richard Martin Cr Mithra Cox Cr John Dorahy Cr Dom Figliomeni Cr Janice Kershaw Cr Elisha Aitken Cr Ann Martin Cr Linda Campbell Cr Cameron Walters	21 August 2023

Overseas Visits by Councillors and Council Staff

There was one overseas visit undertaken by a Councillor in 2023-2024. This is detailed below.

Councillors: Gordon Bradbery AO, Lord Mayor

Event/location: Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) World Championship event, Glasgow Scotland.

Purpose of travel: This travel provides an opportunity to strengthen Wollongong's relationship with the international cycling organisation, promote Wollongong's Bike City status and engage with Glasgow City Council on sustainability initiatives. It also provided an opportunity for the Lord Mayor to directly advocate with the UCI regarding future events in Wollongong.

The travel took place from 3 to 13 August 2023.

Expenses incurred by Council include the following:

Expense	
Airfares + Transfers	\$6,630
Accommodation	\$2,248
Meals	\$262
Car Hire and Associated Costs	\$1,582
Event Attendance	\$55
Total	\$10,776

The following overseas visits were taken by staff:

Name and Position: Todd Hopwood - Manager Customer and Business Integrity

Division: Customer and Business Integrity

Name of Conference/Travel and Location: International City Managers Association (ICMA) Conference in Austin, Texas, USA

Purpose of Travel: Todd Hopwood was invited as a guest of the ICMA to attend the conference and also to undertake visits to the Cities of San Marcos, San Antonio, Austin, Fort Worth and Dallas Texas.

Dates: 28 September to 12 October 2023

Expense	
Registration	\$0 - covered by ICMA
Accommodation	\$0 - covered by ICMA
Flights	\$6,016
Expenses	\$270
Total	\$6,286

Cyber Security Annual Attestation Statement

I, Greg Doyle, General Manager of Wollongong City Council am of the opinion that Wollongong City Council has managed cyber security risks in a manner consistent with the requirements set out in the Cyber Security Guidelines for Local Government.

Governance is in place to manage the cyber security maturity and initiatives of Wollongong City Council. Risks to the information and systems of Wollongong City Council have been assessed and are managed.

There exists a current Cyber Incident Response Plan for Wollongong City Council which has been tested during the reporting period. Wollongong City Council has a Cyber Security Framework (CSF) in place.

Wollongong City Council has done the following to continuously improve the management of cyber security governance and resilience:

- Continued to work with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation and Chief Information Security Officer to implement the Wollongong City Council Cyber Security Strategy.
- Hiring of a Cyber Security Analyst-trainee is in-progress
- Assessed and continuously improving our cyber security maturity against the Australian Cyber Security Centre's Essential Eight.
- Regularly reported to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee identified threats and vulnerabilities and the corresponding Risk Treatments and / or mitigations.
- Implementation of a Learning Management System so regular training on cyber security awareness is actioned and monitored.
- Implemented controls for identified cyber threats and vulnerabilities in line with Council's Risk Appetite Statement.
- Actively worked with Cyber Security NSW and Council's Executive Management team in times of heightened cyber security risk.

Contracts Awarded

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217 (1)(a2), (i), (ii), the following is a list of contracts awarded (other than employment contracts & contracts less than \$150,000)

Tender No.	Name of Contractor	Contract Description	Estimated Contract Amount Payable (inc. of GST over the life of contract)
CN100935	DECC Pty Ltd	WWARRP Stage 2B-2 Cell and Associated Works	22,157,283.98
CN100836	Cadifern Pty Ltd	Bellambi Gully Flood Mitigation	6,543,720.36
CN100931	Oz Tech Security	Security Services for all of Council	5,578,170.00
CN100966	Benedict Recycling Pty Limited Recycling, P & D Envirotech Pty Ltd Waste Services, Avcon Projects Australasia Pty Ltd, TCE Contracting, Unicivil Pty Ltd	Panel for Council's Waste Management & Pollution Control	5,000,000.00
CN100907	ARA Fire Protection Services Pty Ltd	Fire Services - Inspection, Testing and rectifications	4,300,000.00
CN100869	Bartier Perry Pty Ltd, Kells The Lawyers Legal Consultant, Marsdens, Hall & Wilcox Workers Compensation, HWL Ebsworth Lawyers Legal Services	Panel for the Provision of Legal Services to Council	3,452,340.00
CN100908	Select Civil Pty Ltd	Fred Finch Park Netball Courts - Stage 2	2,224,038.80
CN100879	Mattrec Holdings Pty Ltd	Mattress Collection and Recycling	2,222,940.01
T1000137	Confident Services Pty Ltd	Façade Cleaning Services	1,798,258.00
CN100856	Dynamic Civil Pty Ltd	Headwall Reconstruction Cliff Pde Thirroul	1,648,904.40
CN100887	The Green Horticultural Group	Sports Ground Drainage and Irrigation	1,547,167.60
CN100843	Growth Civil Landscapes Pty Ltd Landscape Construction	Stuart Park All Ages All Abilities Playground	1,485,130.26
CN100941	GCM Enviro Pty Ltd Plant Purchase & Hire	Supply of Landfill Compactor	1,309,550.00
CN100858	Abergeldie Contractors Pty Ltd	Oxford Road Causeway Replacement	1,244,630.38
CN100867	Bellcorp Management Pty Ltd	WWARRP Stage 2B-2 - Project Management Support Services	1,048,440.25
CN100972	Allens Training, Australian Red Cross Employee Deductions, HIBBS, Licences 4 Work Training Services, Risk, Response and Rescue Pty Ltd Training & Development, Wollongong First Aid Training	Panel for Provision of WHS Compliance Training Programs	1,039,166.00
CN100934	Sullivans Constructions	Lindsay Maynes Park Amenities Building	819,335.00
CN100961	Salients Pty Ltd Environmental Services	Coastal Hazards Studies for Wollongong Coast	648,876.25

CN100973	Bellcorp Management Pty Ltd	West Dapto Road Upgrade Project Management Support Services	641,784.00
CN100944	RMA Contracting Pty Ltd Road & Civil Construction Services	HORCC Asbestos Removal	614,670.69
CN100911	Brewster Hjorth Architects	PJ-3946 Helensburgh Pool - Principal Design Consultant	600,066.85
CN100885	Batmac Constructions Pty Ltd	Koonawarra Community Centre Roof Replacement	554,247.38
CN100849	Total Drain Cleaning Services Pty Ltd, Pipe Management Australia Pty Ltd, Cleanaway Industrial Solutions Pty Ltd Hire of Equipment	Gross Pollutant Trap GPT Cleaning - Primary Supplier TDG	550,000.00
CN100884	Worley Consulting PTY LTD	Design Consultancy Services for Natural Disaster Recovery	533,434.00
CN100852	Centium	Internal Audit Services 2023-2027	515,000.00
CN100940	Australian Laboratory Services	Environmental Monitoring Services - Waste Facilities	506,097.73
CN100954	One Diversified (Aust.) Pty Ltd Maintenance Agreements	Council Chamber and Function Room AV Technology and Services	500,185.09
CN100977	Metrocorp Technologies Pty Ltd	Stanwell Park Brick Arch Culvert Renewal	488,087.15
CN100916	Central West Electrical Contractors Pty Ltd	Helensburgh Sport Field Lighting	475,053.70
CN100844	Batmac Constructions Pty Ltd	Corrimal Beach Tourist Park Amenities - Roof Replacement	452,769.41
CN100875	Batmac Constructions Pty Ltd	Towradgi Surf Life Saving Club Roof Replacement	425,885.30
CN100933	Batmac Constructions Pty Ltd	Old Courthouse Roof Replacement	423,012.78
CN100846	Batmac Constructions Pty Ltd	Stage 2 – Concrete and Site Services Construction Works	392,661.72
CN100970	Cadifern Pty Ltd	Shone Avenue Retaining Wall and Shared Pathway Construction	385,896.90
CN100968	Total Ventilation Hygiene Pty Ltd	Dapto Pool New Heating System	363,000.00
CN100967	Telstra Ltd Telephone Rental & Charges	Telecommunications Purchasing Agreement - Telecommunications	360,000.00
CN100904	J. Wyndham Prince Pty Ltd	Detailed Design - New Sharepath Grand Pacific Walk Austinmer	352,473.00
CN100957	Cleary Bros Bombo Pty Ltd	Channel and Verge Modifications, Kanahooka Rd, Brownsville	331,519.66
CN100880	Euro Civil Pty Ltd	Mt Keira Road Safety Upgrades - Guardrail	322,735.60
CN100909	Zipform Pty Ltd Other Consulting Services & Charges	Provision of Billing Notice Processing and Mailing Services	320,066.00
CN100953	Creative Recreation Solutions Pty Ltd Construction	Stanwell Park Beach Reserve Playground Renewal	318,445.85
CN100919	Cadifern Pty Ltd	Scarborough Cemetery Memorial Gardens	313,382.88
CN100868	Batmac Constructions Pty Ltd	Cringila Multipurpose Building - Roof Replacement	290,905.30
CN100950	Creative Recreation Solutions Pty Ltd Construction	Unanderra Park Playground Renewal	249,973.52
CN100888	Interflow Pty Ltd	1 Sturt Place Bulli Pipe Reline	248,076.06
CN100924	GHD Pty Ltd	Dam Safety Management Activities - 2023	236,720.00
CN100965	Programmed Property Services	Corrimal Steam Train Restoration	221,221.00
CN100866	GHD Pty Ltd	Construction Quality Assurance Engineer - WWARRP Stage 2B-2	199,149.50

CN100949	Easther Electrical Pty Ltd	Tennis Court Light Pole Replacements	197,886.70
CN100945	Encat Pty Ltd Drainage Grates and Spare Parts	Hill 60 - Stage 1A - Handrail and Fencing	197,616.13
CN100963	Corrimal Swim Squad Pty Ltd Cash Collection Services	Swim Coach/Learn to Swim Corrimal Pool	171,600.00
CN100897	Corrimal Swim Squad Pty Ltd Cash Collection Services	Operate Corrimal Pool Kiosk and Cash Collection Services	155,078.00
CN100927	Coast & Country Powersports	Purchase of 4 x ATV's for Lifeguard Services	153,160.00

Controlled Entities

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217(1)(a7), the report must include a statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which council held a controlling interest.

There are no controlled entities in the financial statements for 2023-2024.

Council has significant influence over the following entities but do not consolidate due to their immaterial value and nature:

- Illawarra Performing Arts Centre Limited;
- Wollongong City of Innovation Limited (trading as Destination Wollongong); and
- Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation.

Partnerships, Cooperatives or Joint Ventures

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217(1)(a8), the report must include a statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which Council participated during the year.

Wollongong City Council was part of joint ventures with CivicRisk Mutual Ltd, whose principal activities are insurance. From 1 July 2021, the CivicRisk entities were reconstituted to form CivicRisk Mutual Ltd, a company limited by guarantee. This entity is not recognised as a joint venture.

Financial Assistance to Persons for Council Functions

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217 (1) (a5) & Act section 356 the total amount contributed or otherwise to financially assist others include:

	\$
Community events and activities	5,459
Arts and cultural activities	-
Educational and environmental activities	-
Sporting activities	64,715
Heritage grants	51,949
Total	122,123

National Competition Policy

Council has adopted the principle of 'competitive neutrality' to its business activities as part of the National Competition Policy which is being applied throughout Australia at all levels of government.

The framework for its application is set out in the June 1996 Government Policy statement on the Application of National Competition Policy to Local Government.

The Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses 'A Guide to Competitive Neutrality' issued by the Office of Local Government in July 1997 has also been adopted.

The pricing and costing guidelines outline the process for identifying and allocating costs to activities and provide a standard of disclosure requirements. These disclosures are reflected in Council's pricing and/or financial reporting systems and include taxation equivalents; Council subsidies; return on investments (rate of return); and dividends paid.

Declared Business Activity

In accordance with Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses 'A Guide to Competitive Neutrality' Council has declared that the following are to be considered as business activities:

CATEGORY 1 (where gross operating turnover is over \$2 million):

- Waste Disposal - Manages the disposal of solid waste generated within the city.
- Tourist Parks - Operation, management and development of Tourist Parks at Bulli, Corrimal and Windang.
- Health and Fitness - Responsible for the management and upkeep of Council's Leisure Centres.

Competitive Neutrality Complaints

Underpinning competitive neutrality is the need to properly recognise the full costs of Council's business activities. This allows comparisons to be made with competitors in the same marketplace and provides information that will allow Council to determine pricing policies for each business.

Wollongong City Council has a process distributing indirect costs and overheads attributable to the declared business activities which are shown in the Special Purpose Financial Reports.

Rates and Charges Written Off

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 132, the report must outline the amount of rates and charges written off during the year

	\$
Postponed Rates	12,295
Postponed Interest	130
Council Voluntary Pension Rebate	269,747
Rates written off due to Crown Lease cancelled	-
Total	282,172

Companion Animal Management

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217 (1)(f), the report must include a statement on activities required relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with the Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2018.

Council submitted all Pound Data Returns to the Office of Local Government within required timeframes. These returns included information regarding dog attacks that occurred throughout the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) during the 2023-2024 year. The Pound Data returns included the following information:

- 464 dog attacks.
- Council seized 340 companion animals.
- Council returned 89 companion animals to their owners, the remaining animals were impounded.

Between 1 July 2023 and 31 March 2024, Council undertook its impounding activities in accordance with a Deed of Agreement with the NSW RSPCA, through their facility at Industrial Road, Unanderra. As of 1 April 2024, Council commenced the provision of the Animal Care and Impounding Service following the NSW RSPCA withdrawing their services in this area. The new service not only manages seized and impounded animals, it also has a focus on the rehoming of abandoned animals and implementing best practice solutions to managing impounded animals, such as placing animals in foster care rather than impound facilities. The Animal Care and Impounding Service rehomed 87 abandoned animals between 1 April 2024 and the end of the financial year.

Council also has a Hardship Policy that was utilised during 2023-2024. This Policy provides increased opportunities to coordinate payment options for owners who may be experiencing financial difficulty to have their animals released from Council's care and taken home.

During 2023-2024, Council expended \$2,417,889.00 on companion animal management activities. All companion animal registration income returned from the Office of Local Government's Companion Animal Fund was invested back into these companion animal management activities.

Council continued the implementation of the companion animal signage upgrade program that commenced early in 2019 with updated zone, demarcation and information signage being installed will continue into 2024-2025.

Council partnered with the RSPCA as part of the Companion Animal Welfare (CAWS) Program to facilitate a subsidised de-sexing and microchipping program for residents of Wollongong Local Government Area that are experiencing financial hardship.

Council's Foreshore Animal Compliance officers worked throughout 2023-2024 with a focus on the busy beaches and foreshore parkland areas. A tiered beach patrol program across the City's beaches was implemented, with the program operating seven days per week. The program focused on compliance and education around Council's Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy.

The current list of declared off-leash beaches are:

- Perkins Beach, Windang (extending from Shellharbour Road/Wattle Street beach walkway north to access way south of Port Kembla Surf Life Saving Club southern car park)
- MM Beach, Port Kembla
- Coniston Beach, Coniston (south of Bank Street)
- Beach area directly east of Puckey's Estate, Fairy Meadow (walkway north of Fairy Creek lagoon to walkway south of playground at Fairy Meadow Beach)
- East Corrimal Beach (from northern side of Bellambi Lagoon to Bellambi Point)
- Bellambi (between Bellambi ramp and ocean pool)
- McCauley's Beach, Bulli and Thirroul
- Little Austinmer Beach, Austinmer
- Sharkey's Beach, Coledale (from the car park, south toward the rock outcrop)
- Stanwell Park Beach (north of northern lagoon).

In addition, Council also has a number of off-leash dog areas in the following parks and reserves:

- Figtree Oval, Figtree
- Proud Park, Helensburgh
- Riley Park, Unanderra

- Eleebana Reserve, Koonawarra
- King George V Park, Port Kembla
- Reed Park, Dapto (fenced dog park)

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

In accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, section 7.5(5), the report must include particulars of compliance with and effect of planning agreements in force during the year.

Agreement Description	Property Description	Agreement Date	Particulars of compliance with and effect of
<i>Bulli Brickworks</i> Land dedication and onsite works.	Lot 2, DP 582940 and Lot 207, DP 228538, Princes Highway, BULLI	5/6/2013	No effect this period.
<i>Vista Park Subdivision</i> Monetary contributions, land dedication and onsite works.	Lots 1, 2, 5 and 6 DP 1169628, Lot 4 DP 1178706, Lot 2 DP 1175865, known as 60 Smiths Lane, WONGAWILLI	25/07/2013	Monetary contributions of \$1,828,539.79 received during the period.
<i>Alkira Estate, Horsley</i> Monetary contributions, land dedication and onsite works.	Lots 3, 5, 6 and 9 in DP 33650, Lot N in DP 103642 and Lot 4 in DP 661032 otherwise known as 80, 88, 94, 104 Shone Avenue and Lot 9 Iredell Road, Horsley.	8/09/2015	No effect this period.
<i>Calderwood</i> Monetary contributions of six staged payments toward the construction of Marshall Mount Road, Yallah Road and new road NR1-NR3	Lot 2 DP 2534, Lots 1-4 and 8 DP 259137, Lot 112 DP 851153, Lots 21,22 and 23 DP 1224293, Lots 21 and 22 DP 809156, Lot 1 DP 195342, Lot 1 DP 558196, Lot 10 DP 619547, Lot 42 DP 878122, Lots 1101-1175, 1177 and 1182 DP 1202087, Lots 1201, 1222-1225, 1227, 1233 and 1234 DP 1206166, Lots 1301-1377, 1379-1380 and 1382-1383 DP 1206167, Lots 1401-1450 DP 1206168, Lot 2 DP 158988, Lot 1 and Lot 2 DP 608238, Lot 1 DP 1044038, Lot 1 DP 998349.	13/12/2017	No effect this period.
<i>University of Wollongong</i> Public domain works.	Lot 2 DP 252694, Murphy's Avenue, KEIRAVILLE	7/9/2018	No effect this period.
<i>128 North Macquarie Road, Calderwood</i> Monetary contributions	Lot 8 DP 259137, 128 North Macquarie Road, Calderwood	14/8/2019	No effect this period.
Agreement Description	Property Description	Agreement Date	Particulars of compliance with and effect of
<i>81 Escarpment Drive, Calderwood</i> Monetary contributions	Lot 1 DP 558196, 81 Escarpment Drive, Calderwood	14/8/2019	Monetary contributions of \$149,100.80 received during the period.

347 Calderwood Road, Calderwood Monetary contributions	Lot 1 DP 608238, 347 Calderwood Road, Calderwood	3/11/2020	No effect this period
Corrimal Coke Works Public Open Space, Affordable Housing.	Corrimal Cokeworks Railway Street CORRIMAL	13/12/2022	No effect this period
Wilkie's Walk, Thirroul Modification to the existing pedestrian walkway and the dedication of land	Lot 101 DP 268549	08/01/2024	The agreement was entered into during the period.

Swimming Pool Inspections

In accordance with the Swimming Pools Act 1992, section 22F(2), and the Swimming Pools Regulation 2018, section 23, the report must include details of inspections of private swimming pools.

The *Swimming Pools Act 1992* and regulations together with Australian Standard 1926 establish the safety standards for 'backyard' swimming pools. Council's role in this regulatory program is to:

- Ensure notification and registration of all swimming pools in the City.
- Establish a swimming pool inspection program to assist in ensuring owner compliance.
- Investigate safety concerns and complaints.
- Promote awareness of the requirements in having a swimming pool.

Inspection of swimming pool safety barriers has continued with a focus on inspections generated by the sale or rental of residential properties and significant risk inspections following referral from Private Certifying Authorities.

As part of the Swimming Pool Safety Barrier program, an education program was developed and implemented which included social media messaging regarding the importance of swimming pool barrier safety being promoted.

Educational posters were also developed and displayed at Council's aquatic facilities, libraries and community facilities. The posters contained a QR code linked to Council's website where important information regarding swimming pool safety and compliance is available.

Educational posters containing a QR code were also developed and delivered to businesses throughout the Wollongong Local Government Area selling swimming pool supplies and equipment.

A mail out to all real estate agents throughout the Local Government Area was also conducted. The mailout contained information regarding the need for all swimming pools to be registered with Council prior to being sold or leased.

Inspections of pool barriers located at tourist and visitor accommodation	24
Inspections of pool barriers upon premises with two or more dwellings	24
Total number of compliance certificates issued	98
Total number of non-compliance certificates issued	31

Environmental Upgrade Agreements

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, section 54P(1), the report must include particulars of any environmental upgrade agreements entered into by Council.

Nil. This is not a service offered by Wollongong City Council.

Recovery and Threat Abatement Plans

Under the Fisheries Management Act 1994, section 220ZT(2), councils identified in a recovery and threat abatement plan as responsible for implementation of measures included in the plan, must report on actions taken to implement measures as to the state of the environment in its area

Nil. Wollongong City Council is not identified in a plan.

Coastal Protection Services

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217(1)(e1), the report must include a statement detailing the coast protection services provided (if levied).

Nil. Wollongong City Council do not have a levy for Coastal Protection Services.

Stormwater Management Services

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217(1)(e), the report must include a statement detailing the stormwater management services provided (if levied).

Stormwater Management Charge

Council levies a stormwater management charge on all parcels of rateable land within the urban area of the City of Wollongong categorised for rating purposes as 'Residential' or 'Business' (including all sub-categories), not being vacant land, or land owned by the Crown, or land held under a lease for private purposes granted under the *Housing Act 2001* or *The Aboriginal Housing Act 1998*.

The following charges apply:

- Land categorised as residential (not being a strata lot) \$25.00.
- Residential strata lot \$12.50.
- Land categorised as business (not being a business strata lot) \$25.00 per 350 sq metres or part capped at a maximum of \$100.00.
- Business strata lot \$25.00 per 350 sq metres or part of the area of land upon which the lot exists capped at a maximum of \$100.00 and divided by the number of business strata lots on that area of land.

Projected Versus Actual Expenditure on Stormwater Infrastructure

Stormwater Management Service	Expenditure \$'000	Funding * \$'000
Projected - Operational Plan 2023-2024	1,879	1,985
Actual costs 2023-2024	3,385	1,985
Difference	(1,506)	-

* Stormwater Management Service Charge revenue

Allocation of Stormwater Management Service Charge Funds

Income from the Stormwater Management Service Charge is allocated as follows:

Category	Planned Expenditure 2023-24	Final Expenditure 2023-24	Reasons for change
Stormwater Quantity Management		1,958,259	
Stormwater and Watercourse Quality Management	762,000	719,028	Inclement weather and site conditions reduced access, making difficult to complete some works.
Dam Safety Management	254,000	228,336	Contract progress prevented final completion of dam safety review and risk reports.
Stormwater Operational Management	296,944	49,284	Works across the year focused on design investigation and risk treatment options, rather than construction activities
Stormwater Asset Management	400,000	400,000	
Floodplain Structures	165,867	30,141	Some of the Flood Risk Management Studies and Plans have been delayed due to consultants getting involved in emergency projects as result of heavy storms.
Total:	1,878,811	3,415,518	

Stormwater Management Service Charge Funded Works

Stormwater Quantity Management

Construction of new or enhanced stormwater drainage services to address current needs.

Project Location	Work Description	Funding \$
Bellambi Gully Flood Mitigation - (Pioneer Road, Gladstone St)	Upgrades to the channel between Pioneer Road and Gladstone Street, culvert on Gladstone Street and improved drainage within Holy Spirit College.	1,958,259
Total		1,958,259

Stormwater and Watercourse Quality Management

Project Location	Work Description	Funding \$
Citywide Creek Vegetation maintenance	Construction or renewal of infrastructure for debris and/or pollution control; and creek bank clearing and revegetation with appropriate native species to maintain or improve stormwater flows, improve natural pollution control including siltation reduction and weed propagation as well as reducing blockage and flood risks	719,028
Total		719,028

Stormwater Infrastructure Restoration and Replacement

The replacement and/or upgrading of existing stormwater drainage assets due to the condition of the asset or to address current needs.

Project Location	Work Description	Funding \$
N/A		0
Total		0

Dam Safety Management

Planning, engineering investigations and undertaking operational activities associated with managing the risk of Council's Declared Dam Asset portfolio.

Project Location	Work Description	Funding \$
City Wide	Delivery of engineering studies and investigations for Council's Declared Dam asset portfolio.	228,336
Total		228,336

Stormwater Operational Management

Planning and undertaking operational activities including cleaning of debris, risk management and pollution control assets.

Project Location	Work Description	Funding \$
Stormwater Operational Management	Completing engineering assessments of stormwater Inlet Hazard Risk, and affecting both risk mitigation and maintenance works across the Local Government Area.	49,284
Total		49,284

Stormwater Asset Management System

Collection of asset management data on the stormwater drainage network, the urban drainage (pits and pipes), creeks/ waterways, flood attenuation and management structures and pollution/ debris control structures. This information is used to refine and update the asset management plan including maintenance, capital renewal and augmentation programs.

Project Location	Work Description	Funding \$
Citywide	Undertaking CCTV condition inspections of the stormwater drainage network across the Local Government Area	400,000
Total		400,000

Floodplain Structures

Planning and undertaking detailed design and reviews of floodplain risk management plans, required to inform future flood mitigation structures

Project Location	Work Description	Funding \$
<i>Koonawarra and parts of Koonawarra and Dapto</i>	Review of Brooks Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan	25,350
<i>Gwynneville, Keiraville, North Wollongong, Balgownie, Fairy Meadow, Fernhill, Mount Ousley, Mount Pleasant, and parts of Towradgi and West Wollongong</i>	Review of Fairy Cabbage Creeks Flood Risk Management Study and Plan	5,064
Total		30,141

Condition of Public Works

Financial information on the condition of public works is reported in the General Purpose Financial Statements through Note C1-8 - Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment, Note E2-1 - Fair Value Measurement; and Special Schedule - Report on Infrastructure Assets.

Work Carried Out On Private Land

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section, 217(1)(a4) and the Local Government Act 1993, section 67 and 67(2)(b), the report must include resolutions made concerning work carried out on private land.

During the year, Council did not complete any works on private lands applicable under Section 67 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Public Interest Disclosures

Public authorities are required to report annually to Parliament on their obligations under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022*. The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 (PID Act)* sets in place a system to encourage public officials to report serious wrongdoing. The conditions around this reporting are set out in Council's Internal Reporting Policy.

Public Interest Disclosures received and investigated by Council during 2023-2024 include:	
Number of public officials who made PIDs	0
Number of PIDs received	0
Alleged Corrupt Conduct	0
Number of PIDs finalised	0

During 2023-2024, Council undertook the following actions:

- Staff participated in annual Code of Conduct training.
- Council has undertaken a substantial amount of work in preparation for the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022* which came into effect on 13 October 2023. Council has updated the Public Interest Disclosures Policy, has reviewed its Disclosures Officers across the organisation and will deliver targeted education to staff and Disclosure Officers concerning the new PID Act and Disclosure Officers obligations.

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

The *Government Information (Public Access) Act* introduced on 1 July 2010 facilitates access to information that Council holds in the following ways: Mandatory release of information via Council's website (Open Access), authorised proactive release via Council's website, informal release subject to an informal access application and release subject to a formal access application.

Any person wishing to obtain information held by Council is encouraged to contact our Right to Information Officers for assistance. Several open access documents are easily accessible via our website, including Our Wollongong 2032 Community Strategic Plan, management plans, annual reports, annual budgets, plans and policies, meeting agendas and minutes and graffiti, contracts and land registers.

The following table specifies the number of formal access applications received during the 2023-2024 period.

Month	Number of Applications Received	Applications processed within the statutory timeframe of 20 working days
July	11	10*
August	10	10
September	9	9
October	11	11
November	8	6**
December	5	5
January	2	2
February	8	8
March	6	6
April	7	7
May	8	8
June	3	1***

Note:

* One application was deemed refused as it was not processed within the statutory timeframe.

** Two applications were withdrawn by the applicant prior to determination.

*** Two applications remain under assessment on 1 July 2024.

The above table does not include invalid or reviewed applications.

Where a formal access application is received, and it is likely to be of interest to members of the public, Council may make the details available by publishing the content to its disclosure log. The disclosure log contains non-personal information only and can be viewed on Council's website via the following link www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/your-council/access-to-information/information-registers/disclosure-log

Summary of Legal Proceedings

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217(1)(a3), the report must include a summary of the amounts incurred by the council in relation to legal proceedings.

Particulars	Finalised	Expenses Including GST \$	Receipts Excluding GST \$
Liability Litigation Against Council			
Commercial Litigation	No	\$63,202	
Personal Injury	Yes	\$100,000.00	
Personal Injury	No	\$35,504.65	
Professional Indemnity	Yes	\$0.00	
Professional Indemnity	No	\$37,435.20	
Council Initiated Litigation			
General Prosecutions	Yes	\$14,000	
Particulars	Finalised	Expenses Including GST \$	Receipts Excluding GST \$
Debt Recovery	N/A	\$4,765	
Planning Appeals Against Council			
Refusal of Development Applications	Yes	\$227,922	\$9,000
Refusal of Development Applications	No	\$293,199	

External Bodies That Exercise Functions Delegated By Council

During 2023-2024 the following external bodies assisted Council with the exercising of its functions as allowed under [Local Government \(General\) Regulation 2021, section 217 \(1\)\(a6\)](#) section 355 of the [Local Government Act, 1993](#).

Body	Function
Open Space and Environmental Services	
Allen Park Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Alvan Parade Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Arunta Drive, Thirroul	Asset Protection Zone Maintenance
Balmer Crescent FiReady	Asset Protection Zone maintenance
Banksia Bushcare (Stanwell Park)	Bushland restoration
Bill Madden Park	Bushland restoration
Bellambi Beach Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Bellambi Dune Bushcare	Dune/lagoon restoration
Blue Divers Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Blue Lagoon Bushcare	Coastal/riparian restoration
Brandy and Water Creeks Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Brickyard Point Bushcare	Coastal headland restoration
Brooks Creek Upper	Riparian restoration
Buttenshaw Place Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Byarong Creek (Mt Keira) Bushcare	Riparian restoration
City Beach Dunecare	Dune restoration

Clifton Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Coledale Bushcare	Sea cliff restoration
Colvin Street	Bushland restoration
Compton Street	Bushland restoration
Compton St FiReady	Asset Protection Zone maintenance
Emperor Court Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Farmborough Waterfall Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Figtree Oval Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Friends of the Botanic Gardens	Through active volunteering, the Friends foster community interest in the garden, promote the role of education in the garden, and support the development of the garden by raising funds for specific projects.
Garden Avenue Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Garden Avenue FiReady	Asset Protection Zone maintenance
Gilmore Park Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Greenhouse Park Bushcare	Revegetation
Guest Park Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Harry Morton Park - FiReady	Asset Protection Zone maintenance
Helensburgh Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Hewitts Creek Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Hewitts Ck (Armagh Parade) FiReady	APZ maintenance
Hooka Point Bushcare	Saltmarsh/riparian restoration
Judy Masters Oval Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Keira Oval Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Kelly Street Bushcare	Bushland Restoration
Kelvin Road Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Kulgoa Road Bushcare	Riparian Restoration
Kurrimul Creek Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Lower Hill Street FiReady	Asset Protection Zone maintenance
Mangerton Park Bushcare	Dry rainforest
Mangerton Park Project	Dry rainforest
Mount Kembla Pathway Project	Maintenance of Memorial Track
Melaleuca Park	Bushland restoration
Milne Crescent, Coniston	Bushland restoration
Murray Garden Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Nyrang Park Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Odenpa Road Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Port Beach Dunecare	Dune Restoration
Puckeys Estate Bushcare	Dune/lagoon restoration
Rae Crescent Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Reed Park Bushcare	Bushland Restoration
Richardson Park Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Riveroak Bushcare	Bushland restoration

Sharkies Beach Dunecare	Dune Restoration
Stephen Drive FiReady	Asset Protection Zone maintenance
Stockyard Slope Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Sunninghill Circuit FiReady	Asset Protection Zone maintenance
Tathra Park Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Throsby Drive Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Towradgi Dune Bushcare	Dune restoration
Underwood Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Upper Hill Street FiReady	Asset Protection Zone maintenance
Wharton's Creek Bushcare	Riparian restoration
Whipbird Reserve Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Windang Dunes South Dunecare	Dune restoration
Wisemans Park Bushcare	Woodland restoration
Wollomai Point Bushcare	Bushland restoration
Wollongong Surf Leisure Resort Dunecare	Dune restoration
Wombarra Creek Bushcare	Riparian Restoration
Wombarra Pool	Bushland restoration
Yanderra Bushcare	Riparian Restoration
Sport & Recreation	
Surf Life Saving Illawarra	To provide lifesaving and rescue services to Council in accordance with the executed service agreement.
Commercial Operations & Property	
Berkeley Pioneer Cemetery Restoration Group	Undertake minor maintenance and works to the grounds and improvements of Berkeley Pioneer Cemetery also utilising private equipment and labour from the Periodical Detention Centre.
Friends of Scarborough Cemetery	Undertake minor maintenance and works to the grounds and improvements of Scarborough cemetery.
Libraries & Community Facilities	
Friends of Wollongong Library	To encourage an interest in books, build links between the library and the community, promote library services and collections, and sponsor special events to build community interest in reading and the library.
Wollongong City Library Volunteers	Broadly working in libraries to gain skills undertaking administrative and customer service tasks such as IT training and events.
Community Culture & Engagement	
Community Transport Volunteers	To transport eligible older people and their carers and people that are transport disadvantaged in their own vehicles or Council's vehicles.
Living Books	To be a "living book" as part of Councils Living Book program which includes sharing their story with young people and members of the Community at Living Book events

Social Support Services Volunteers	To provide social support in the community for eligible people. To provide respite care for eligible carers of people living with dementia.
Culture Mix	To assist with set up and running of Culture Mix Festival
Wollongong Art Gallery Volunteers	<p>Gallery Guides facilitate discussion and provide information about the exhibitions for pre, primary and high schools students and other members of the community; including: adults, tertiary students, disability groups and community groups.</p> <p>Customer Service, assist at the Gallery reception desk, assist staff with general administration, assist visitors providing information regarding gallery programs and activities.</p>

Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section (1)(a9), the report must include a statement of activities undertaken to implement Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Plan.

Council's Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Policy, has a Statement of Commitment with states:

*Our strength is the diversity of our people.
Together our responsibility is to create an inclusive place where everyone
is welcome, valued and belongs.
We lead with courage, openness and curiosity.
Our conversations and actions celebrate diversity, inclusion and belonging.*

This Statement of Commitment continues to represent Council's commitment to diversity and inclusion following a review of the Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Policy. This Policy was approved by Council in December 2023.

In parallel, Council has adopted a refreshed Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Policy which aligns to Council's Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Statement of Commitment and underpins the development and implementation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan. The Management Policy outlines Council's commitment to:

- Attracting, recruiting and retaining people with diverse abilities, skills, experiences and backgrounds.
- Empower and enable our employees by removing barriers in our systems, policies and practices; building awareness; valuing and utilising the contributions of all our employees and supporting a flexible workplace.
- Creating an environment where everyone belongs and they can authentically represent themselves, where contributions are valued and recognised; and they feel they belong.

Ultimately, a workforce that reflects the diversity of our community is better positioned to understand the needs of our community and deliver high quality services.

The purpose of the EEO Management Plan is to promote equity and equal employment opportunity for underrepresented groups including peoples who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD); and living with disability. It is for this reason, the EEO Management Plan directly aligns our existing Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) and Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The combined approach of Council's Diversity Inclusion & Belonging Policy, EEO Management Policy, EEO Management Plan and the above-mentioned action plans articulate Council's commitment to diversity, inclusion and belonging and Council's legislative responsibilities.

During 2023-2024 financial year, we continued to deliver against the actions outlined in our Disability Inclusion Action Plan; Reconciliation Action Plan and Child Safe Policy and Implementation Plan. Council continued to deliver workforce diversity programs that operationalised Council's strategies and focused on equal employment opportunity initiatives in the community. Council also undertook a number of activities that provided and sustained opportunities for diverse groups in our community. Council's talent acquisition processes are being holistically reviewed with a focus on contemporary practices including accessibility and fit for purpose talent strategies. This includes a focus on the candidate experience; continued improvements in assessment methods to determine candidate capabilities and behaviours relative to the role; and customised recruitment approaches for each vacancy which provides greater accessibility. Council is also continuing to actively explore and implement various strategies to engage and attract diverse groups of people into our organisation. All of Council's recruitment information packs include our Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Statement of Commitment and encourage candidates who require reasonable adjustments to contact the Talent Acquisition team. Council has also attended a number of careers expos, promoting employment opportunities. Collectively, these opportunities have enabled Council to engage with job seekers and school leavers to learn more about the services and programs we provide the community and the diverse employment opportunities available.

Council participated in the Inclusion Works Project facilitated through *Council for Intellectual Disability* and the Human Rights Commission's Inclusion Works project. Council partnered with The Disability Trust to provide a temporary appointment for a person with intellectual disability. Council also created a second designated role for person with intellectual disability. The Inclusion Works project also provided staff with training and coaching on improving recruitment practices including the development of Easy Read Position Descriptions; applications and interview questions.

Council has reviewed and refined our Employee Performance and Recognition Program to ensure it is accessible to all staff. Training and resources continue to be provided and communicated regularly to all staff and leaders. All employees are encouraged to develop Development Goals and have ongoing performance conversations with their supervisor. All staff continue to have access to training via the Corporate Training Calendar; our Tertiary Assistance Scheme and LinkedIn Learning.

Council continued to build the capability of our staff through a number of learning experiences including Diversity Awareness; Cultural Intelligence and Autism Awareness. Council has continued to invest in membership to Diversity Council of Australia (DCA). Research papers, resources and other tools and guidelines continued to be accessed to further develop internal expertise. A targeted internal communication approach has included a Leaders Connect session and proactively registering all middle and senior leaders for membership. Alongside DCA membership, Council continues to invest in formal, informal, and social learning through LinkedIn Learning and our internal Diversity Hub. This platform provides staff with a range of resources to support a better understanding about the experiences of different demographics both in the workplace and community such as Aboriginal culture, history and learning; people with disability, LGBTQIA+ and their allies; and our multicultural communities. The Diversity Hub also includes links to internal tools and resources; information on DCA membership; Peer Collectives; and recommendations for further learning such as websites; and podcasts. Furthermore, in December 2023, a Learning Management System (LMS) was implemented with the intention to develop mandatory training and provide access to learning opportunities for all staff via an accessible platform. In facilitating training across the organisation, all training invitations now encourage staff to share adjustments required to support individual learning needs and all catering is provided by social enterprise.

Engendering a sense of inclusion and belonging for Council staff was evidenced across the year through a number of accessible experiences, platforms and activities. Council's Peer Collectives continued to engage for People with disability and carers' LGBTQIA+ and allies; Women and First Nations people. For International Day of Disability 2023, a morning tea was held by the Disability and Careers Peer collective to raise awareness. The 'Wear it Purple Day' the Pride Peer Collective also hosted a morning tea, providing an opportunity for staff to celebrate and build awareness. Peer Collective are also consulted on relevant workplace matters such as policies, procedures and guidelines.

Council also hosted events throughout the year including International Day of Disability 2023 where our Leadership team participated in small group conversations about inclusion with guest presenters who shared their stories and experience of disability. In September 2023, a Wellbeing Walk was facilitated raising awareness for World Suicide Prevention Day and RU Ok Day. Money was raised for Lifeline Australia. This complemented mental health training that has been deployed across 2023 and 2024 for staff and leaders. Additional staff were also trained as Mental Health First Aid Officers. For Reconciliation Week (May 2024), as part of our ongoing commitment to reconciliation and shared learning, staff were invited to attend a screening of a short film, "Winhanganha",

Other inclusive internal or national days celebrated during the year included National Aborigines and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week; International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT); and PRIDE month. The Progress Pride Flag continues to be flown on significant dates for the Pride community.

Council continues to identify and offer inclusive opportunities within our learning pathway program for Cadets, Apprentices and Trainees (CATS) such as identified positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. During the 2024 CAT Intake, eight new Cadets, Apprentices and Trainees commenced with Council, including the engagement of a trainee via Elsa Dixon Employment Grant Funding. Sixty placement opportunities were provided through Council's Work Experience and VET

program, with nine students identifying with disability. Council continued to work closely with schools to identify opportunities for students with disability to participate.

Council supported Wollongong Mentor Walks, a bi-monthly event that provides women with the opportunity to be mentored by a local senior female executive in businesses across the Illawarra. Since the inception of the program, a number of senior staff from Council have volunteered their time to act as mentors. Council continues to provide financial sponsorship across the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 financial years.

Council's continued commitment to achieving gender equity is exemplified in Council's Gender Equality Report which is in the main body of this Annual Report. The results highlight a gender pay gap, at 7.26% or \$6,701.66 in favour of women.

Council continued to review our employment policies and practices by developing a Gender Affirmation/Transitioning Guideline, alongside implementing inclusive amenities accessible for staff and the public. The uptake of gender and gender-neutral pronouns into staff email signatures and platforms such as Yammer and Microsoft Teams continue to increase during the year. Council also continues to provide and communicate flexible work arrangements to support the diverse needs of staff. Across Council there are several avenues that staff may be provided personalised support. This includes Hybrid Work Arrangements; Care Plans and Workplace Support Plans. In each instance the supervisor works with the employee to understand and identify supports that are required. External expertise is sought to support staff with reasonable adjustments in the workplace when required. Additional support is provided via Council's Wellbeing Hub and Lifeworks App platform which is underpinned by Council's Employee Assistance Program.

Council is a values and behaviours based organisation, committed to providing a positive, inclusive, supportive and fair work environment where employee differences are respected, valued and relied on to create a productive and collaborative workplace. Our values and supporting behaviours allow all employees to understand expectations regarding their own and others' behaviours in the workplace and when working with the community.

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging is the responsibility of all employees and reflects Council's values and purpose. By leveraging employees' diverse skills, experiences, cultures and attributes, Council optimises our collective organisational capability to sustainably generate creativity and enhance innovation to develop progressive strategies, services and outcomes for our community.

Human Service Agency /Carers Recognition

In accordance with the Carers Recognition Act 2010 (CR Act), section 8(2), councils considered to be 'human service agencies' must report on compliance with the CR Act for the reporting period.

Council is committed to supporting people with carer responsibilities. We acknowledge the role carers play in providing daily care and support to people with disability, medical conditions, mental illness or who are frail or aged.

Council continues to build a flexible and inclusive workplace from a foundation of care, support and responsiveness. This includes providing various flexible work arrangements to support individual needs such as:

- Hybrid work;
- Temporary work arrangements;
- Rostered Days Off and Flex Time;
- Employee Care Plans; and
- access to a variety of leave entitlements, including at short notice; to accommodate requests for carers.

In cases where staff have exhausted their leave entitlements, Council refers to relevant provisions in our Enterprise Agreement.

Council is continuing to develop a range of resources for leaders so they may independently understand and respond to issues. In 2023, Council appointed a Preventative Health Specialist and implemented Mental Health First Aiders to support staff and leaders with mental health conversations. The Disability and Carers Peer Collective also provides a network for employees with lived experience to meet and support each other. Our Wellbeing intranet hub provides various tools and resources relevant to carers. Additional support is provided by the platform Lifeworks App, which is underpinned by Council's Employee Assistance Service provider, which includes free and confidential counselling services.

Provisions in our Enterprise Agreement outline availability of Bereavement Leave for immediate family and extended family relationships to support employees who have experienced the loss of a loved one.

Report of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

In accordance with its Charter, the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) is required to report at least annually to Council on its activities, with a copy of the report included in Council's annual report. This report is provided below.

Background

This report covers the activities of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

The ARIC is a key component of Council's governance framework. The objective of the ARIC is to provide independent assistance and advice to the General Manager and Council by overseeing and monitoring Council's governance, risk and control frameworks, and its fulfilment of external accountability requirements.

Membership and Conduct

There was a quorum for each of the meetings held in 2023-2024.

Meetings were held on 22 August 2023, 5 September 2023, 13 October 2023, 5 December 2023, 12 March 2024 and 4 June 2024.

Two of these meetings (August and October) were extraordinary meetings to consider the financial statements.

Wollongong City Council's ARIC comprised a total of five members in 2023-2024— three independent members and two Councillor delegates.

All external independent members have completed written conflict of interest declarations and confidentiality agreements.

The ARIC membership and meeting attendance for the 2023-2024 financial year was:

Member	Role	Term Ends	Meetings Attended/ Eligible to Attend
Donna Rygate	Ind. Chair	31 Oct 2027	6/6
Carl Murphy	Ind. member	31 Oct 2025	6/6
Robert Lagaida	Ind. member	31 Oct 2026	5/6
Cr Dom Figliomeni	Councillor delegate	30 June 2024	5/6
Cr Tania Brown	Councillor delegate	14 September 2024	6/6

All independent members have extensive experience in corporate governance and/or risk management in addition to recent and relevant financial experience. Councillor members have appropriate qualifications and experience to allow them to undertake their roles.

Recognition of Council Achievements

While Council continued to respond to challenges in 2023-2024, particularly in relation to long term financial sustainability and the impact of natural disasters, its key achievements from a governance, risk and financial perspective include the following:

- Implementation of a fresh approach to the identification and mitigation of strategic risks
- Continued vigilance around cyber security
- Ongoing work to improve asset management
- Introduction of a Service Optimisation Program

Summary of ARIC's Role and Activities

The responsibilities and functions of the ARIC are to monitor and seek assurance on aspects of Council's operations such as its compliance and governance processes; risk management and fraud control frameworks; strategic plan implementation; delivery program and strategies; performance measurement systems; outcomes of service reviews and business improvement initiatives; financial management; and internal and external audit.

These arrangements have operated soundly during 2023-2024. As a result of activities undertaken during 2023-2024 (as outlined below), the ARIC is satisfied that management responses and actions in relation to the above Council operations have been effective.

Compliance and Governance processes

Key ARIC activities included:

- Bi-annual review of the Gifts and Benefits Register, Conflicts of Interest Register and Secondary Employment Registers
- Reviewing ARIC's Terms of Reference, strategic risks, risk mitigation, and code of conduct reports
- Monthly review of Executive KPI
- Monitoring Councillor Expenses

Risk management and fraud control.

The ARIC monitors Council's Strategic Risks to ensure that a comprehensive risk management framework is in place and that management is implementing a program to manage all significant risks by identification, prioritisation, and implementation of mitigation strategies.

In 2023-2024 ARIC considered reports on topics including:

- OLG's Risk Management and Internal Audit Guidelines
- Building Information Certificates
- Human Resources and Payroll (HRP) System Implementation
- Fraud and Corruption Prevention
- Development of 24/25 Delivery Program and Budget
- Asbestos Management
- Planning Risks
- Council Level Policies
- Internal Control Checklist and Results
- Code of Conduct Registers
- Natural Disasters
- Cyber Incident
- Telstra Outage
- Update on Business Continuity Process

The ARIC also seeks to ensure that Council has adequate fraud prevention strategies in place. It receives and discusses reports on the findings of any matters investigated by Council's Professional Conduct Coordinator in relation to:

- fraud
- corrupt conduct
- maladministration
- serious and substantial waste of public money.
- serious misconduct issues

Internal Audit

The Internal Auditors have reported at each quarterly ARIC meeting on the status of the internal audit plan. In 2023-2024 the ARIC has reviewed the following Internal Audit Reports, as well as the practicality of recommendations and the adequacy of management responses:

- Revocation of Dangerous and Menacing Dogs Declarations
- Management and Maintenance of Leisure Centres
- Fire Safety Regulatory Role
- Environmental Pollution and Incident Response
- Integrated Planning and Reporting
- Art Gallery Collections
- Light Fleet Vehicle Management
- Workers Compensation and Return to Work

Key ARIC activities in relation to Internal Audit included:

- Reviewing and endorsing the annual internal audit plan and monitoring its progress
- Monitoring the implementation by management of recommendations arising from audit reports
- Monitoring, through the results of internal and external audits, the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal control structure
- Holding 'in camera' meetings with the internal audit service provider

External Audit

The Audit Office of NSW has engaged EY as the External Audit provider for Wollongong City Council under the *Local Government Act 1993*. Key ARIC activities included:

- Reviewing the annual Engagement Plan
- Reviewing the management letter with a view to ensuring corrective action was planned and implemented as necessary
- Holding 'in camera' meetings with the External Auditors

Progress continues in implementing recommendations from both Internal and External Auditors and other relevant reviews. ARIC continues to monitor and review the progress in implementing recommendations, with particular focus on high priority issues. The ARIC reviews progress reports at each meeting.

Financial Management

Key activities for the ARIC this year included:

- Reviewing monthly and quarterly management financial, investment and performance reports
- Reviewing the annual financial statements for completeness and consistency with the Committee's knowledge of operations and application of accounting policies and principles.
- Reviewing Council's financial performance against the Budget as approved by Council (both operating and capital budgets)
- Reviewing strategies of management to achieve budget balance
- Reviewing long-term financial strategies developed by management
- Receiving briefings on significant matters with the potential to affect the financial position of Council
- Considering briefings on Council's investment strategy

Innovation and Improvement

Key activities for the ARIC this year included:

- Updates on Council's Service Optimisation Program and reviews undertaken
- Receiving briefings on Council's Asset Management Plan Approach and Program

OUTLOOK FOR 2023-2024

Council's Internal Audit Plan takes into consideration Council's strategic risks as well as issues currently faced by Council. Council, in conjunction with the ARIC, will continue to review the internal audit plan.

Management and the ARIC members are committed to remaining up to date with developments in the local government sector as well as ensuring current processes in audit, risk, finance and governance are challenged to ensure Council continues to develop best practice in its business models whilst maintaining robust internal controls.

2024-2025 will see the first full year of ARIC's operation under the Office of Local Government's long delayed reforms. The Committee looks forward to ongoing Councillor involvement, despite OLG mandating that they must now be observers rather than voting members.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Committee members past and present, management and staff, the internal auditor and external auditors for their valuable contributions.

Donna Rygate
Chairperson
Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
30 June 2024

Internal Audit and Risk Management Attestation Statement for the 2023-2024 financial year for Wollongong City Council

I am of the opinion that Council has an audit, risk and improvement committee, risk management framework and internal audit function that operate in compliance with the following requirements except as may be otherwise provided below:

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

Requirement		Compliance
1.	Council has appointed an audit, risk and improvement committee that comprises of an independent chairperson and at least two independent members (section 428A of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> , section 216C of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation</i>).	Compliant
2.	The chairperson and all members of Council's audit, risk and improvement committee meet the relevant independence and eligibility criteria prescribed under the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i> and have not exceeded the membership term limits prescribed under the Regulation (sections 216D, 216E, 216F, 216G of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	Compliant
3.	Council has adopted terms of reference for its audit, risk and improvement committee that are informed by the model terms of reference approved by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government and the committee operates in accordance with the terms of reference (section 216K of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	Compliant
4.	Council provides the audit, risk and improvement committee with direct and unrestricted access to the General Manager and other senior management and the information and resources necessary to exercise its functions (section 216L of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	Compliant
5.	Council's audit, risk and improvement committee exercises its functions in accordance with a four-year strategic work plan that has been endorsed by the governing body and an annual work plan that has been developed in consultation with the governing body and senior management (Core requirement 1 of the Office of Local Government's <i>Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW</i>).	Compliant
6.	Council's audit, risk and improvement committee provides the governing body with an annual assessment each year, and a strategic assessment each council term of the matters listed in section 428A of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> reviewed during that term (Core requirement 1 of the Office of Local Government's <i>Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW</i>).	Compliant – Annual Report on ARIC provided each year to Council. Strategic Assessment to occur for the next Council term commencing October 2024.

7.	The governing body of Council reviews the effectiveness of the audit, risk and improvement committee at least once each council term (Core requirement 1 of the Office of Local Government's <i>Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW</i>).	To occur for the next Council term commencing October 2024.
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Membership

The chairperson and membership of the audit, risk and improvement committee are:

Chair	Donna Rygate	30 October 2020	31 October 2027
Independent member	Robert Lagaida	1 November 2022	31 October 2026
Independent member	Carl Murphy	1 November 2022	31 October 2025
Councillor Representative	Cr Tania Brown	21 February 2022	13 September 2024
Councillor Representative	Cr Dom Figliomeni	31 August 2020	30 June 2024

Risk Management

Requirement		Compliance
8.	Council has adopted a risk management framework that is consistent with current Australian risk management standard and that is appropriate for the Council's risks (section 216S of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	Compliant
9.	Council's audit, risk and improvement committee reviews the implementation of its risk management framework and provides a strategic assessment of its effectiveness to the governing body each council term (section 216S of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	To occur for the next Council term commencing October 2024

Internal Audit

Requirement		Compliance
10.	Council has an internal audit function that reviews the council's operations and risk management and control activities (section 216O of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	Compliant
11.	Council's internal audit function reports to the audit, risk and improvement committee on internal audit matters (sections 216M, 216P and 216R of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	Compliant
12.	Council's internal audit function is independent and internal audit activities are not subject to direction by the council (section 216P of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	Compliant
13.	Council has adopted an internal audit charter that is informed by the model internal audit charter approved by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government and the internal audit function operates in accordance with the charter (section 216O of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	Compliant

14.	Council has appointed a member of staff to direct and coordinate internal audit activities (section 216P of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	Compliant
15.	Internal audit activities are conducted in accordance with the International Professional Practices Framework (Core requirement 3 of the Office of Local Government's <i>Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW</i>).	Compliant
16.	Council provides the internal audit function with direct and unrestricted access to staff, the audit, risk and improvement committee, and the information and resources necessary to undertake internal audit activities (section 216P of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	Compliant
17.	Council's internal audit function undertakes internal audit activities in accordance with a four-year strategic work plan that has been endorsed by the governing body and an annual work plan that has been developed in consultation with the governing body and senior management (Core requirement 3 of the Office of Local Government's <i>Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW</i>).	Compliant
18.	Council's audit, risk and improvement committee reviews the effectiveness of the internal audit function and reports the outcome of the review to the governing body each council term (section 216R of the <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</i>).	To occur for the next Council term commencing October 2024

Non-compliance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

At 30 June 2024, no item has been documented as a non-compliance on the Council.

This is due to the amendments made to the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* and the Office of Local Government "Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit" only coming into effect from 1 July 2024. Councils and joint organisations are required to comply with these requirements from 1 July 2024 and, commencing with the 2024-2025 annual report, to attest to their compliance with the requirements in their annual reports. Wollongong Council has adopted this approach early to ensure accountability and transparency.

Greg Doyle

General Manager

22 August 2024

Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Lord Mayor and Councillors - Council Policy

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires Council to adopt a policy that allows for Councillors to receive adequate and reasonable expenses and facilities to enable them to carry out their civic duties as elected representatives of their local communities. Below is a link to the Councillors' Expenses and Facilities Council Policy.

https://wollongong.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0029/8858/Councillors-Expenses-and-Facilities.pdf

Sponsorship of Wollongong City Council Events

The following table provides a list of all sponsorship, as per Council's Sponsorship Policy. (Figures reported excluding GST).

Sponsors	New Years Eve \$	Australia Day \$	Comic Gong \$	Book to Baton \$
For Health	10,000			
Cram Foundation	1,375	1,375		
Blue Scope		2,500		
Friends of Wollongong City Libraries			2,000	1,000
i98FM			9,910	
Illawarra Mercury			12,183	
Illustris Models & 3D Printing			1,200	

Unsolicited Proposals

From time to time, Council is presented with Unsolicited Proposals from the community, businesses or other government agencies. To assist in appropriately managing governance and probity issues that arise in such circumstances, as well as seeking to ensure that Unsolicited Proposals are of benefit to the City of Wollongong, Council publicly reports on all Unsolicited Proposals that progress to Stage 2 assessment under Council's Unsolicited Proposals Policy.

During 2023-2024, there were no unsolicited proposals that progressed to Stage 2 assessment.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020 -2025

In accordance with the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, section 13(1), the report must include information on the implementation of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Council is striving to make Wollongong an inclusive city that provides equal opportunity for people with disability to participate in all aspects of community life. Our aim is to be a leader in promoting and supporting the social and economic participation of people with disability. Our Disability Inclusion Action Plan (Plan) sets out what we will do to support inclusion of people with disability in our city. It was developed after extensive community engagement to make sure the priorities reflect what is important to our community.

The Plan will assist us to meet requirements for local Government in the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

Our Plan has 91 Actions across four focus areas

1. Create liveable communities
2. Improve access to services through better systems and processes
3. Promote positive community attitudes and behaviours
4. Support access to meaningful employment

Progress to date

Completed	Ongoing	In progress	Not started
20	47	21	3

Highlights for 2023-2024

This report provides a summary of what we did in the 2023-2024 financial year.

Create Liveable Communities

Council delivered a range of projects to improve access to the built environment for people with disability, including:

- Upgraded Hooka Point Footbridge and Jetty and Horsley Pond Jetty.
- Upgraded Bulli Tennis Club (access ramp and handrails) and Ian McLennan Park change rooms and amenities at Kembla Grange.
- Upgraded Scarborough Crematorium/ Cemetery.
- Upgraded seating in the IMB and Bruce Gordon Theatre at IPAC.
- Renewed four carparks including accessible car parking spaces.
- Installed six new footpaths and associated ramps.
- Upgraded 13 footpaths and associated ramps.
- Upgraded footpaths and cycleways in the CBD and Helensburgh Town Centre
- Installed an All Ages, All Abilities Playground at Stuart Park and renewed the picnic shelter adjacent to the playground.
- Installed three new cycles/ shared pedestrian paths and upgraded two cycles/ shared pedestrian paths.
- Installed five new bus shelters.
- Renewed three cabins at Corrimal Tourist Parks installing access ramps.
- Purchased a new beach wheelchair suitable for children and young people.

Council delivered a range of planning and design projects, including:

- Commenced the development of a footpath network plan, which will include the collation of 'missing links' across the network.
- Completed a condition assessment of footpaths/shared path to refine and update priorities for renewal.

Improve Access to Services through Better Systems and Processes

Council revised policy and planning documents to strengthen and support access and inclusion outcomes, including:

- Commenced the development of an Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Technical Manual.

Council undertook projects to increase access to information, including:

- Updated the map of accessible parking spaces on the website.
- Provided information on accessible features at major events such as Comic Gong, Culture Mix and New Year's Eve including accessible parking, bathrooms, dedicated viewing areas and quiet spaces.
- Improved access to information at libraries. All documents on the library website are being updated to include PDF and DOCX files to enable reading via screen reader. All website copy is being updated as plain English to increase accessibility.
- Promoted Council services at the Illawarra Disability Options Expo.
- Promoted the accessible features at Wollongong City Tourist Parks on the website.
- Developed communication boards across all libraries to increase non-verbal communication access for library customers.
- Updated the Wollongong Art Gallery website to meets access standards.

Council has continued to engage people with disability, including:

- Notified community members registered with the Join the Conversation Register of Interest – Access of community engagement projects. 997 community members are registered.
- Engaged people with disability on Skate Parks, All Ages, All Abilities Playspace, Integrated Transport Strategy, Creative Wollongong, Recreation Space for Young People and Urban Heat Strategy.
- Engaged the Deaf community using Auslan interpreters to improve access to cultural events and activities including Culture Mix and shows at the IPAC.
- Engaged people with disability in the Living Books program, learning and development sessions for staff such as Diversity Awareness Training and Conversations with Managers about Inclusion and in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan Coordination Group.

Promote Positive Community Attitudes and Behaviours

Council delivered a range of projects to promote positive community attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability, including:

- Supported the 'EMBER' program focused on emergency preparedness for people with disability and their carers.
- Partnered with the Disability Trust to deliver an exercise program at Lakeside Leisure Centre during school terms.
- Delivered the 'Water Rats' learn to swim programs weekly at Council's Aquatic facility. Eight students were enrolled per term.
- Supported the Academy of Sport 'Athletes with Disability' program for scholarship holders and coaches at Beaton Park and Lakeside Leisure Centres.
- Continued the monthly 'Visually Impaired Knitters' group at Wollongong City Library in partnership Guide Dogs NSW.
- Delivered a polymer clay session for the Deaf community at Wollongong City Library. 16 people attended.
- Provided access provisions at 'Comic Gong' including a viewing area for Cosplay competition, social stories, pre- tours for high school students, 'The Quiet Space' and accessible signage and information on the website.

- Provided access provisions at 'Culture Mix' including a social story, 'The Quiet Space' and a program of activities with access to Auslan interpreters. Physical access inclusions across the festival were provided, including continuous accessible paths of travel, accessible drop off zone, accessible toilets, accessible viewing area and access map, as well as community transport and seating for participating seniors.
- Delivered an Autism Awareness talk by a person with lived experience at Corrimal Library.
- Delivered 'Art & Dementia Tour' program for people with dementia to have meaningful engagement with Wollongong Art Gallery exhibitions and collections, this is supported by the 'Care for the Carer Program' where carers are invited to participate in art therapy as respite.
- Delivered interactive 'Access2Express Art' tours for primary and high school students with disability to experience Wollongong Art Gallery's major exhibitions.
- Welcomed an artist with disability to the Creative Wollongong Studios for a 12-month residency.
- Delivered tours and talks at Wollongong Art Gallery for the Deaf community and championed the work of artists with disability.
- Partnered with Bus Stop Films and commissioned a film for the Creative Wollongong Short Film festival.
- Delivered 'Belong Workshops' to support units and groups to assist transition to programs and post school.
- Delivered live music and events as part of youth week that included soft/ quiet starts to the event.
- Delivered 'Lego Build and Connect' program designed for young people who are neurodivergent.
- Delivered a quiet sensory space for young people at Wollongong Youth Centre.
- As part of International Day of People with Disability, Council:
 - Developed and promoted a calendar of events with Shellharbour Council;
 - Hosted Gingerbread House workshops, run by an Auslan Interpreter and Guide Dogs Australia;
 - Delivered an Adult Storytime in partnership with the Disability Trust at Dapto Library.

Support Access to Meaningful Employment

Council has provided opportunities for people with disability to gain employment and participate in work experience, including:

- Employed Cadet Trainee and School Based Trainees with 15% identifying as people with disability.
- Provided a 12-week temporary appointment in Regulation + Enforcement as part of the 'IncludeAbility' project. This placement has now been extended for 9 months. Also created a second designated role for a person with intellectual disability.
- Provided work experience for nine students with disability.
- Continued to support employment opportunities for people with disability as part of our commitment to social enterprises. This included procuring services through social enterprises that employ people with disability, continuing the contract with a social enterprise to provide the café in the Administration building and industry tours of agencies supporting employment for people with disability.
- Engaged external expertise to support the development of new resources such as Easy Read Position Descriptions
- Developed a Workforce Support Plan which is being implemented with employees.

Council has delivered a range of learning and development opportunities for Council officers to promote and support their understanding of disability, including:

- Participated in the 'Inclusion Works Project' facilitated by Council for Intellectual Disability where staff participated in training and are provided ongoing coaching and access to resources. This resulted in being nominated by the Disability Trust for the Prime Super Employee Award through Disability Employment Australia.
- Delivered eight Diversity Training sessions and two Autism awareness sessions for Council Officers.
- Organised for library staff to attend four training sessions including the Hidden Disability program, Sensory Processing Support Workshop, Communication Access and Awareness and Autism: A conversation with Carly-Denesh Jones.
- Organised accessible events training for staff delivered by Accessible Arts.
- Delivered a mental health awareness training program for employees and supervisors.
- Trained staff as Mental Health First Aid Officers.
- Continued the People with Disability and Carers Peer Collective which meets regularly, provides feedback on policy, procedures and guidelines and hosts events such as a morning tea to recognise International Day of People with Disability.
- Delivered a program of events including highlighting days of significance for people with disability via the General Manager's message and internal hub posts.
- Hosted Conversations with Managers about Inclusion.
- Maintained membership to the Diversity Council Australia and promoted the available resources to staff via the Diversity Hub.

Labour Statistics

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 217 (1)(d),(i),(ii),(iii),(iv) the report must include the total number of persons who performed paid work for them on a "relevant day" to be fixed by the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment each year.

The following provides a table under section 217 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* of the total number of persons who performed paid work for Council on the "relevant" day fixed by the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment each year. In 2023-2024, the "relevant" day for reporting was Wednesday, 14 February 2024.

No. of persons directly employed by Council:	
On a permanent full-time basis	918
On a permanent part-time basis	234
On a casual basis	415
On a term contract	186
Apprentices, Trainees and School-Based Trainees*	20
Senior staff for the purposes of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> (the Act). Does not include General Manager	21
No. of persons engaged by Council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, that is wholly or principally for the labour of the person	63
No. of persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, as an apprentice or trainee	0

* Apprentices, trainees and school-based trainees are also included under a term contract

Obligations Under the Modern Slavery Act 2018

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, section 428(4)(c)(d) the report must contain a statement detailing the action taken by the council in relation to any issue raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner and steps taken to ensure that goods and services procured by and for the council during the year were not the product of modern slavery within the meaning of the Modern Slavery Act 2018

A.1 Reporting Details	
Reporting entity	Wollongong City Council
Reporting period – start date	1 July 2023
Reporting period – end date	30 June 2024

A.2 Procurement Spend Details		
A.2.1 What was your entity's total procurement spend in this reporting period, to the best of your knowledge?		\$174,286,584
A.2.2 GRS Due Diligence Level	Identified procurement spend	Categories procured
Heightened	\$7,085,406	Uniform and Workwear, Cleaning, Cleaning Supplies, Food Catering and Consumables, Security Services, Flooring and Carpeting, General Fleet Vehicles, End user computing and Peripherals, Computer accessories, Medical Supplies & Consumables, Copies and Printer
Standard	\$28,561,864	Roadworks, Bridgeworks, Electrical Services, plumbing Repairs and Maintenance, Damage Repair and Flooding, Contingent Labour, Telecommunications, General Retail, Contractors Tier 2, Couriers, Interior decorating reconfigurations and repair,
Light	\$138,639,314	Funeral Services, Community Services, Educational Equipment, Educational, Sports and Recreation, Live Animals, Environmental Services, Weed Control, Equipment, Services & Maintenance, Specialized tools and trade items, Tools and trade items, Traffic Control Services, Architecture, Design Specialist, Civil Engineering, Planning Advisory Consulting, Land Surveying Spatial, Property Acquisition and Valuations, Demolitions, Rails & Fencing, Traffic Management, External Building Materials, Concrete, Steel, Industrial Equipment & Construction Equipment, General Plant & Equipment repair, Earthmoving & Excavations, Freight Carriers, Postage, Business related, Charity Organisations, Exempt other, Grants, Nonvendor/Staff Reimbursement, Not for Profit/NGO, Outbound Super Payments, Community Grants, HVAC, Elevators and Escalators, Fire Service and Maintenance, Landscaping and Arborists, Building and Grounds, Indoor Plant Flowers, Safety, painting, Pest Control, Lease and rental of property or building, Real Estate Management Services, Speciality Building Maintenance and Repairs, Carpentry and Joinery, Inspections and Other Remedial, Hygiene, Locksmiths, Roofing and Siding, Oil and Gas Utilities, Electric Utilities, Utilities, Council Waste Services,

A.2 Procurement Spend Details

		Corporate Fleet Management, Fuels and Lubes, Vehicles Registration, Vehicle Repairs and Maintenance, Government Agencies, Support Services, Talent Search, Conferences Seminars Events Special Meetings, Training Expenses, Data provision Services, ICT prof services, End User Devices, Software as a Service, Internet, Mobile, Advertising Agency, Magazine Newspaper, Radio TV Cable & Internet, Marketing Agencies, Promotional Gifts, Commercial Prints, Medical Gas, Furniture, Records Management, Office Equipment General & Accessories, General Office Supplies, Financial Services - Advisory and Accounting, Audit Quality Assurance Probity and Risk, Government and Business Strategy, Public Enterprise Management or Financial Services, Liability Insurances, Workers Compensation Insurance, Legal Services, Event Management - non educational, Interpreters and Transcript Services, Niche Professional Services, Temporary Allocation Laundry, Accommodation
Minimal	\$0	

B.1 Significant Operational Issues (section 31(1)(a) of the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (NSW))

Identify any 'significant operational issue' that has been identified as such to your entity, during the reporting period, by the NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner, and explain the steps taken to address this issue.	Council was not notified of any issues of concern with the operations of Council by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during the year
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B.2 Reasonable Steps

Reasonable Steps taken	Form of response for annual reporting	Wollongong City Council response
1 Commit		
1.1 Stakeholder Engagement		
What steps did your entity take to engage with stakeholders during this reporting period in relation to modern slavery?	Describe steps taken	Undertook Risk assessment as part of ISJO to gauge supplier knowledge and current level of Modern Slavery risk. Provided resources to those suppliers that were at risk to expand knowledge. Engaged with internal buyers regarding knowledge of MS risks Child Safety in procurement and sought information and resources from legislated buying entities and the MS Commissioner's office.
Did you engage with external stakeholders on modern slavery risks in this reporting period?	Yes/No	Yes

B.2 Reasonable Steps		
1.2 Identify salient risks at the organisational level		
What steps did your entity take to identify salient modern slavery risks at the organisational level (i.e. across all operational and procurement activities) during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	Undertook Risk assessment as part of Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO) to gauge supplier knowledge and current level of Modern Slavery risk. Provided resources to those suppliers that were at risk to expand knowledge. Analysed and coded supplier categories in line with the Modern Slavery Inherent Risk Tool.
Did you conduct or update a Salient Modern Slavery Risk Assessment in this reporting period?	Yes / No (Option to upload copy)	Yes
1.3 Modern Slavery Policy		
What steps did your entity take to adopt a Modern Slavery Policy during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	Included Modern Slavery within Council Code of Business Ethics. Included Modern Slavery into a new draft of Council's Purchasing Terms and Conditions, and draft Contract Management Framework.
Do you have a modern slavery policy, approved by your senior governing body (e.g. Agency Head / Secretary), in place?	Yes / No (Option to upload copy)	Yes (as part of the above policies and procedures)
1.4 Modern Slavery Risk Management Plan		
What steps did your entity take to adopt a Modern Slavery Risk Management Plan during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	None
Do you have a modern slavery risk management plan, approved by your senior management, in place?	Yes / No (Option to upload copy)	No
2 Plan		
2.1 Identify and map your supply-chain risks for each procurement		
What steps did your entity take to identify and map your modern slavery risks at the supply-chain level during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	Coded current supplier categories against salient Modern Slavery risk categories and identify risk levels. Working with legislated purchasing entities (Prescribed Entities) to allow buyers to identify suppliers Modern Slavery risk, currently available to buyers of established suppliers with Local Government Procurement.
2.2 Develop a risk-reducing sourcing strategy		

B.2 Reasonable Steps		
What steps did your entity take to develop a modern slavery risk-reducing sourcing strategy during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	Procured toolkits on modern slavery to assist buyers and Council in formatting documents and strategies. Working with our third party contractor accreditation supplier on how to identify and get feedback on Modern Slavery risks, currently new suppliers must identify if they are required to report on Modern Slavery.
3 Source		
3.1 Select appropriate suppliers		
What steps did your entity take to address modern slavery risks when selecting suppliers during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	New Suppliers commencing work with Council need to state if they are required to report on Modern Slavery under the Modern Slavery Act (Cth) 2018. Some suppliers on established contracts are badged with their Modern Slavery risk rating on our regularly used procurement platform. Investigating Modern Slavery training and education as part of Council procurement and contract management training for internal buyers.
3.2 Adopt a shared responsibility approach to contracting		
What steps did your entity take to adopt a shared responsibility approach to modern slavery risks, in contracting during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	Council offered suppliers with high Modern Slavery risk rating resources on lowering their risk.
4 Manage		
4.1 Monitor and evaluate supplier performance		
What steps did your entity take to monitor and evaluate supplier performance relating to modern slavery, during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	Modern Slavery information added to draft Contract Management Framework, explaining Modern Slavery and expected outcomes to Councils contract managers. Risk assessment of current suppliers completed by ISJO.
Has your entity required any of your Tier 1 suppliers to undergo an audit addressing modern slavery risks in this reporting period?	Yes / No	No
4.2 Develop supplier capabilities		
What steps did your entity take to develop supplier capabilities relating to modern slavery risks during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	Sharing information resources with identified high risk suppliers (not on supplier panels).
5 Remedy		

B.2 Reasonable Steps		
5.1 Provide or enable access to effective grievance mechanisms		
What steps did your entity take to provide or enable access to effective modern slavery grievance mechanisms during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	None specifically for Modern Slavery concerns, Council is currently working on making its complaints handling capabilities clearer and more effective, which can be accessed by all community members, suppliers and their workers.
5.2 Take safe immediate steps to remedy harm		
What steps did your entity take to safely and immediately remedy modern slavery harms to which you were connected during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	None
5.3 Use leverage to remediate deficient practices		
What steps did your entity take to use leverage to remediate deficient modern slavery risk management practices during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	None
5.4 Withdraw responsibly		
What steps did your entity take to withdraw responsibly during this reporting period, in connection to modern slavery risks?	Describe steps taken	None
6 Report		
6.1 Establish a victim-centred reporting protocol		
What steps did your entity take to establish a victim-centred modern slavery reporting protocol during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	None
Do you have a modern slavery reporting protocol in place that prioritises the interests of the victim/survivor?	Yes / No	No
6.2 Report on your modern slavery risk management efforts		
What steps did your entity take to report on your modern slavery risk management efforts during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	Coded and categorised suppliers to make annual reporting and risk assessments easier. Prepared this annual report of steps taken.
Did your entity report on modern slavery in its prior Annual Report?	Yes / No	Yes

B.2 Reasonable Steps		
During the period, did your entity comply with its obligations to report heightened modern slavery due diligence procurements valued at \$150,000 (inc. GST) or more within 45 days?	Yes / No	None
7 Improve		
7.1 Learn lessons from your performance and others'		
What steps did your entity take to learn lessons from your modern slavery performance and others' during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	More education is required for Council's buyers about what Modern Slavery is, how to identify it and deal with it is required. Council investigating including Modern Slavery evaluation considerations into Tender and Quotation documentation.
Has your entity updated its modern slavery policies or procedures based on stakeholder feedback or lessons from a grievance mechanism during this period?	Yes / No	No
7.2 Train your workforce		
What steps did your entity take to train your workforce during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	Basic information on Modern Slavery, investigating including a more robust education in procurement and/or contract management training.
What percentage of your workforce received modern slavery training in the period?	Percentage	0%
7.3 Cooperate with the Anti-slavery Commissioner		
What steps did your entity take to cooperate with the Anti-slavery Commissioner during this reporting period?	Describe steps taken	Met with the Commissioner at multiple information and investigative events to get a better understanding of, and dealing with, Modern Slavery risk in the supply chain and Council's responsibilities.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulations

In accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (EP&A Reg) cl 218A(1), (2)(a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f),(g), (3)(a),(b) the report must include particulars of development contributions and levies.

West Dapto Developer Contributions

Project Number	Project Description	Contributions Plan Reference	Amount Spent	Percentage funded from Contributions	Cross Borrowing	Monetary contributions used for project	Status of Project
Transport							
126636	Cleveland Rd Upgrade	TR13 - C1-C12, B45-B51, IN36-IN40	178,970	100%		178,970	In Design
126643	Concept Design - Sheaffes Road to Existing Northcliffe Drive	TR17	205,931	100%		205,931	In Design
126644	Hayes Ln Bridge Detailed Design	TR25 - B57, NR31, NR32	5,802	100%		5,802	Deferred
126649	Marshall Mount Road and Connecting Roads Upgrade	TR17	1,575,091	97%		1,532,663	In Design
126672	West Dapto Rd/Wongawilli Rd/bridge upgrade	TR06 - W1, B29, W2	176,864	76%		134,190	Practically Complete
127450	Bong Bong Rd -Station St traffic lights	TR10 - IN27, BB1	317,271	85%		269,407	In Design
128001	Northcliffe Dr Extension (S1) - Sheaffes Rd to West Dapto Rd	TR19	1,012	100%		1,012	Deferred Construction
128466	Shone Ave Shared Path missing link	TR08 - S4	61,790	100%		61,790	Pending
129606	Bong Bong Rd/Shone Ave Intersection Concept Design	TR17	11,057	100%		11,057	Scoped
129897	Acquisition of part 480 West Dapto Rd, Kembla Grange (Nobbs)	TR17	1,491,383	77%		1,143,383	Scoped
129926	Aquisition - Part of 414 West Dapto Road Stream Hill (Barham)	TR17	10,652,837	50%		5,322,564	Scoped
Total Transport			14,678,008			8,866,770	

Open Space and Recreation

128934	Darkes Town Centre Sporting and Community Hub - Stage 1	OS01	175,412	87%	151,777	In Scoping
128972	Community Recreation & Aquatic Centre Concept Plan West Dapt	OS13	23,984	100%	23,984	In Design
Total Open Space and Recreation			199,396		175,761	

Administration

129074	West Dapto Support for Additional Resources	AD01	615,441	30%	185,000	
123910	Developer Contributions Officer	AD01	146,150	89%	129,873	Recurrent
124823	LIRS 3- Interest subsidy-principal repayment WD	AD01	1,826,100	100%	1,826,100	Recurrent
124824	LIRS 3 Part 2- Interest subsidy-principal repayment WD	AD01	745,674	99%	737,930	Recurrent
Total Administration			3,333,365		2,878,903	

City Centre/City Wide Developer Contributions

Project Number	Project Description	Contributions Plan Reference	Asset Class (ie Category)	Amount Spent	Percentage funded from Contributions	Monetary contributions used for project	Status of Project
City Wide							
122085	Developer Contributions Admin Support - Finance	122085	Not Applicable	83,985	14%	11,895	No Project Status
123907	Developer Contributions Planner	123907	Not Applicable	813,392	14%	117,466	No Project Status
125125	Corrimal Memorial Park Fencing	125125	Parks Gardens And Sportfields	4,068	100%	4,068	Practically Complete
125126	Lakelands Oval Drainage	125126	Parks Gardens And Sportfields	1,321	0%		In Design
127515	Murray Rd; Duff Pde to Cawley St	127515	Roads And Related Assets	18,851	0%		In Scoping
127952	Phillips St near Ryan's Hotel Pedestrian Facility	127952	Roads And Related Assets	19,055	74%	14,175	Pre - Construction
128031	Grand Pacific Walk - Clifton	128031	Footpaths And Cycleways	782,987	0%		Complete
128131	Braeside Ave, Murphys Ave to Gipps Rd	128131	Footpaths And Cycleways	308,244	41%	125,000	Practically Complete
128134	Gipps Rd; Vickery St to Foley St, Southern side	128134	Footpaths And Cycleways	448,575	44%	197,036	Practically Complete
128633	Stuart Park Accessibility Enhancement	128633	Footpaths And Cycleways	404,540	0%		Complete
128653	216 Princes Highway Dapto LOT B DP156856	128653	Land Acquisitions		0%	4,300	In Scoping
129112	C - Gipps Rd; Foley St to Vickery St	129112	Roads And Related Assets	219,189	100%	219,189	Complete
	Total City Wide			3,104,206		693,129	
City Centre							
127713	Wollongong City Centre Wayfinding Signage	127713	Footpaths And Cycleways	8,813	0%		Complete
129027	Wollongong Skate Park	129027	Parks Gardens And Sportfields	11,919	0%		In Scoping
	Total City Centre			20,732			

Index

A

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (*see Acknowledgement of Country*) (p. 3, 11, 32-33, 45, 48, 64, 70, 73, 75, 78-79, 82, 89-90, 101, 151, 160-161)

Accessibility and Inclusion (p.28, 40, 74-75, 81-83, 87, 92, 122, 124-126, 160-162, 172-175, 184)

Activation (p. 42,62-63)

Active transport (p. 8, 30-32)

Age (d) (p. 12-13, 18, 80)

Aged and Disability Services (p. 24, 36, 80, 94, 162)

Amenities (p. 6, 34, 101, 107, 131, 143, 162, 172)

Amenity (p. 107, 109)

Aquatic Services (p. 24, 36, 98-99, 149, 173, 183)

Asset management (p. 28, 73, 131-132, 153, 167)

Awards (p.39, 71, 74, 82, 92, 100, 142, 175)

B

Biodiversity (p. 27-28, 32, 43)

Botanic Garden and Annexes (p. 6, 24, 28-29, 35, 36, 43, 72, 96, 100-101, 111, 157)

Budget management (p. 8, 25, 47, 86, 92, 102, 122-123, 127, 155, 165-166)

Business and investment (p. 10, 14, 24-28, 30-31, 33, 40, 44, 47, 53-54, 60, 62-65, 68, 74-75, 78-79, 82, 85, 87, 91, 105, 109, 116, 127-129, 131, 146, 149, 151, 162, 165, 171, 176-178)

C

Capital budget (p. 4, 23-25, 133, 136-137, 153, 166)

Capital works (p. 4, 23, 25, 54, 101, 131)

City Centre Management (p. 24, 36, 38, 60-61, 66)

Climate (p. 8, 28, 30, 38)

Climate change adaptation (p. 28, 44-45,)

Climate change mitigation (p. 26, 28, 38, 44, 75)

Coastal Management and Protection (p. 28, 32, 35, 45, 55, 142, 150, 156)

Companion Animal Management (p., 38, 51, 57, 147)

Competition Policy (p. 146)

Community engagement (p. 22, 26-27, 55, 70, 74-76, 89, 92, 172-173)

Community Facilities (p. 8, 24, 34, 36, 53, 88, 96, 102-103, 111, 138,149,158)

Community Programs (p. 81-84,94)

Community Strategic Plan (p. 4, 14, 24, 26, 28, 36, 116, 124, 155)

Condition of Public Works (p. 154)

Contact Council (p. 40, 87, 95, 155, 160)

Contracts Awarded (p.142-144)

Controlled Entities (p. 145)

Cooperatives (p. 145)

Corporate Strategy (p. 24, 36, 85-86)

Council Services (p. 14, 19-22, 24, 75, 131, 173)

Councillors (*see Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Lord Mayor and Councillors - Council Policy*) (p. 7, 11, 16, 30-31, 48, 86, 116, 128, 139-140, 170)

Cultural services (p. 24-25, 36, 72-73, 76)

Cyber Security (p. 129-130, 141, 164)

Customer Service (p. 8, 22, 24, 36, 38, 51, 53, 85, 87, 94, 110, 127, 158)

D

Delivery Program (p. 4, 8, 10, 14, 24, 26-28, 30-32, 36, 75, 85-86, 95, 98, 116, 122-124,127,131, 165)

Demographic information (p. 4, 12-13, 161)

Development Assessment (p. 24, 36, 40-41, 43, 57, 85, 137-138)

Development (p. 9, 22, 26, 32-34, 38, 40, 43, 46-48, 51-52, 57, 82-86, 91-92, 104, 106-107, 109, 116, 124, 126, 131, 137-142, 146, 156-157, 160-161, 165, 167, 172-174, 182)

Dharawal Country (p. 8, 11; see *Acknowledgement of Country*, 3)

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020 -2025 (p. 28, 83, 124, 160, 172-175)

Disaster management (p. 6, 8, 42-43, 49, 54-56, 95, 131, 143, 164-165)

Diversity (p. 81-82, 89-90, 122, 124-126, 160-162, 173, 175)

E

Economic Development (p. 24, 28, 36, 64-65, 68)

Education (p. 6, 33, 43, 51-53, 56-58, 64-65, 70, 72, 89, 92, 98, 100, 109, 116-117, 145, 147, 149, 154, 157, 176-177, 179, 181)

Emergency Management (p. 24, 36, 38, 42, 45, 151, 173)

Emissions (p. 30, 32, 38, 44, 57, 130)

Employee Services (p. 24, 36, 124-126, 160-163, 174-175)

Employment opportunities (p. 58, 122-123, 150-151, 160-162, 165, 172-175)

Engagement, Communications and Events (p. 24, 36, 74-76)

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (p. 51, 148-149)

Environmental Upgrade Agreements (p. 149)

Environmental Services (p. 24, 36, 43-45, 138, 142, 156, 176)

Escarpment (p. 11, 26, 28, 46, 48, 65, 75)

Equal Employment Opportunity Management (124-125, 160-162)

Executive (p. 4, 17, 42, 86, 128, 138, 141, 162, 168-169)

External Bodies That Exercise Functions Delegated By Council (p. 156-159)

F

Families (p. 6, 13, 18-19, 62, 81-83, 139, 163)

Fees (p. 24, 86, 98, 122-123, 127, 137, 139)

Financial management (p. 25, 122, 127, 133, 137, 166-170)

Financial Assistance (p. 73-74, 99, 145)

Financial Services (p. 25, 38, 62, 119-120, 127)

Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) (p. 32, 43, 56)

Funding (p. 7, 9, 24, 31-33, 42-43, 45, 48-50, 65, 80, 83, 92, 98, 107-108, 118, 122, 127, 131, 136, 151-153, 161)

G

General Manager (p. 4, 8-9, 128, 138-139, 141, 164, 168, 170, 175)

Goals (p. 8, 14-15, 24, 28, 36, 116, 124, 161)

Government (p. 7, 9-11, 14, 22-23, 26, 30-33, 42-43, 46, 48-49, 51-52, 56, 64-65, 67, 73, 80-82, 84, 88, 92, 98, 100, 102, 104-106, 109, 116-119, 131, 136, 138, 139-142, 145-147, 149-151, 153-156, 160, 166-172, 175-178)

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (p. 155)

Grants (p. 24-25, 31, 44, 46-47, 49, 64, 73, 106-107, 137, 145, 176)

H

Health(y) and wellbeing (p. 5-6, 11, 22, 27-28, 33, 61, 64, 81, 83, 85, 90, 92, 96-112, 124-126, 130, 146, 161-163, 171, 175)

Heritage (p. 28, 38, 46, 72, 78, 103, 145)

Households (p. 6, 8-9, 12-13, 27-28, 30, 33-34, 46-48, 73, 84, 96)

Housing (p. 9, 12-13, 2-28, 31-32, 37, 44, 54-56, 81-82, 93, 109, 134, 140, 142, 149, 151)

How to read this document (p. 10)

Human Services (p. 163)

I

Information Management and Technology (p. 28, 129-131, 133)

Infrastructure Strategy and Support (p. 131)

Integrated Customer Service (p. 24, 36, 87, 94)

Integrated planning and reporting (p. 4, 14, 22, 122, 127, 166)

Internal Audit (p. 128, 143, 164-170)

Irrigation (p. 107, 142)

J

Jobs (p. 30, 64-65, 74, 123)

L

Labour Statistics (p. 175)

Lake Illawarra (p. 11, 27-28, 32, 43, 49, 55, 75, 114)

Land use planning and management (p. 46-48)

Language (p. 11, 13, 19, 78, 81, 89, 90,)

Legal (p. 51, 128, 137, 142, 156, 177)

Leisure Centres (p. 24, 36, 81, 96-97, 104, 112, 146, 166, 173)

Libraries (p. 6, 9-11 19, 23-24, 26-28, 31, 36, 43, 53, 70, 75, 78, 81, 88-90, 95, 102-103, 105, 131, 149, 158, 171, 173)

Local Government Area (p. 6, 9-13, 22-23, 30-31, 39, 42-43, 46, 49, 51-52, 56, 64-65, 67, 80-82, 84, 88, 92, 100, 102, 104-106, 109, 116-118, 131, 147, 149, 153)

Localised Suburbs and Places (p. ,30)

Lord Mayor (p. 4, 6-7, 11, 48, 61, 71, 82, 97, 139-140, 170)

M

Maintenance (p. 19, 55, 73, 83, 91, 100, 120, 130-131, 136, 143, 152-153, 156-158, 166, 176-177)

Map (p. 11)

Masterplans (p. 27-29, 64, 100-101, 104, 106)

Measuring Success (p. 57-58, 67-68, 76, 95, 111-112, 120, 133)

Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries (p. 24, 28, 36, 96, 105, 143)

Modern Slavery Act (p. 176-181)

N

Natural Area Management (p. 24, 36, 49-50, 57)

O

Open Space (p. 6, 28, 34, 49, 56, 100, 112, 131, 138, 149, 156, 183)

Operational Plan (p. 4, 8, 10, 14, 24, 26-27, 36, 40-56, 62-67, 72-75, 80-95, 98-110, 116-119, 122-131, 151)

P

Parking (p. 29, 51, 57, 89, 109, 117, 172-173)

Parks and Sportsfields (p. 24, 36, 96, 106-107, 112, 184)

Partnerships (p. 43, 49, 73, 101, 131, 145)

Places (p. 8, 28, 30, 46, 52, 72, 96, 103, 110)

Planning (p. 4, 8-9, 14, 22, 26-28, 30, 32-33, 40-43, 45-48, 51-,55, 61, 64, 75, 81-82, 86, 96-98, 102-103, 106-107, 116, 122, 124, 127, 131, 138, 148, 152-153, 156, 165-166, 172-173, 175-176, 182)

Pools (p. 19, 23, 28-29, 53, 98, 104, 109-111, 134, 136, 143-144, 147, 149, 158)

Population (p. 12-13)

Property Services (p. 24, 36, 78, 91, 95, 143)

Public Health and Safety (p. 24, 36, 96, 109-110)

Public Interests (p. 75, 154)

Public toilets (p. 28,112)

Public transport (p. 8, 30, 114, 136)

Purpose (p. 8-10, 24-25, 102, 112, 122, 124, 126, 129, 140, 143, 146, 151, 154, 160, 162, 175)

R

Rates (p. 24-25, 56, 86, 89, 95, 122-123, 127, 146)

Recovery and Threat Abatement Plans (p. 150)

Regulatory Compliance (p. 24, 36, 51-53, 57)

Remuneration (p. 138-139)

Reporting (p 4-5, 10, 14, 22, 36-37, 43, 95, 102, 122, 127, 130, 135, 139, 141, 146, 154, 163, 166, 175-181)

Risk Management (p. 28, 54, 75, 128, 151, 153, 164-165, 168-170, 178, 180)

Resourcing Strategy (p. 14, 28, 131)

Road safety (p. 116-117, 143)

S

Safety around our schools (p. 117-118)

Senior Staff (p. 138, 162, 175)

Service Optimisation Program (p. 22, 40, 85, 87, 164, 167)

Services (p. 4-11, 14-15, 17, 20-22, 24-25, 27-28, 30, 34, 38-46, 49-51, 54-58, 62-64, 70-76, 80-82, 84-85, 88, 92-95, 98-101, 104, 109, 111, 116-118, 120, 124-133, 172-177)

Significant Contracts (p. 142-144 *see Contracts awarded*)

Social support (p. 80, 94, 159)

Special Variation of Rating Income (p. 136-137)

Sponsorship (p. 65, 137, 162, 171)

Statistics (p. 12-13, 175)

Statutory Reporting (p. 5, 10, 135, 139)

Stormwater Management (p. 28, 54, 151-153)

Strategic priorities (p. 4, 10, 24, 30-31)

Suburbs (p. 9, 30, 75, 96, 98, 102-103, 106, 131)

Supporting Documents (strategies and plans) (p. 28-29, 86)

Support Services (p. 5, 24, 36-27, 80, 122-133, 142-143, 159, 177)

Sustainability (p. 32, 67, 127, 136, 140, 164)

Sustainable Wollongong (p. 28)

Swimming Pool Inspections (p. 53, 149)

T

Tourist Parks (p. 24, 29, 36, 60, 67-68, 137, 146, 172-173)

Transport Services (p. 24, 36, 80, 116-118, 120)

Travel (p. 89, 139-140, 174)

U

Unemployment (p. 9, 13)

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (p. 89)

Unsolicited Proposals (p. 171)

V

Values (p. 4, 15, 32, 45, 84, 100, 162)

Vision (p. 10, 14, 23, 26, 28, 47, 84, 89)

Volunteers (p. 43, 49, 57, 81-82, 100-101, 158-159)

W

Wards (p. 11)

Waste Management (p. 24, 36, 52, 56, 62, 137, 142)

West Dapto (p. 23, 26-28, 30, 32-34, 46-48, 70, 79, 91, 102, 131, 143, 182-183)

Work Carried Out On Private Land (p. 154)

Workforce management (p. 28, 124, 126)

Y

Youth Services (p. 24, 27, 36, 92-93, 95)

Our Wollongong Our Future

From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and will be leaders in building an educated, creative, sustainable and connected community.

We value and protect our environment

We have an innovative and sustainable economy

Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city

We are a connected and engaged community

We have a healthy community in a liveable city

We have affordable and accessible transport



Wollongong City Council

Financial Report

Year Ended 30 June 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As General Manager of Wollongong City Council, I present the Annual Audited Financial Statements for 2023-2024.

The Income Statement shows a net operating surplus of \$41.0M compared to a surplus of \$60.8M in 2022-2023. This result includes income for grants and contributions for capital purposes of \$101M, which increase the asset base of Council, however, is not considered to truly reflect the underlying operating performance of the organisation.

The net operating result before capital grants and contributions was a deficit of \$59.8M. This result is inclusive of several one-off asset and valuation adjustments that will not impact the underlying financial position of Council going forward.

Council's Statement of Financial Position shows the vast extent of assets managed by Council for the community. The total value of Council's assets at 30 June 2024 was \$4.30B. During 2023-2024, Council completed capital works of \$97.2M including the construction and acquisition of \$32.9M of new assets and \$64.3M for the renewal of existing assets to meet the present and future needs of the city. The program included projects such as West Dapto Infrastructure Expansion, carpark, footpath and cycleway reconstruction and upgrades, as well as various upgrades to community centres, amenities and buildings at Council parks, gardens and sports fields across the Local Government Area.

We are continuing to experience significant increases in the value of Infrastructure Assets resulting from annual fair value adjustments. The asset valuations are based on existing asset management plans and accounting estimates that are currently being tested through a substantial review of Council's Asset Management Plans. Asset valuation changes have negatively impacted Council's Key Financial Performance Indicators (KPIs). Work continues in this area to manage the increasing costs of assets in the long term.

There were some significant increases in our provisions during the period, particularly for waste remediation, resulting from material changes in costs. The change in provisions captured the increase in future expenses in the current year operating result, noting there has been no impact on cash in the current year due to the changes in provision.

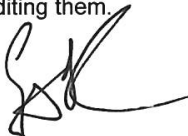
Council maintains a strong position in cash and investments, with holdings of \$179.5M at 30 June 2024 [\$177.1M in 2022-2023]. \$155.6M of Council's cash [\$156.0M in 2022-2023] is restricted in its use to specific purposes by external bodies, legislation and Council resolution.

Council's unrestricted current ratio increased from 2.61:1 in 2022-2023 to 2.70:1 in 2023-2024. This ratio, which measures Council's liquidity and ability to satisfy short-term obligations, is above the Local Government Benchmark of >1.5:1. Council's strategy to maximise the use of available funds and target a lean unrestricted current ratio, aims to bring the result closer to the benchmark.

Rates and Annual Charges outstanding decreased from 8.06% in 2022-2023 to 7.19% in 2023-2024. Council will continue to work with ratepayers as they navigate a high cost of living and interest rate environment. This work will continue towards achieving an outstanding percentage below the industry benchmark of 5%.

Council continues to have relatively low levels of borrowing and did not undertake any additional borrowings in 2023-2024. Low debt levels remain a financial strength of Council and adds flexibility in making financial decisions for the future. The 2023-2024 debt service ratio decreased to 0.97% compared to 1.39% in 2022-2023. This ratio is within Council's financial strategy to operate within a ratio of up to 4%.

Many thanks to the staff who prepared these Statements and to the Audit Office of NSW for their work in auditing them.



Greg Doyle
General Manager
Wollongong City Council



2023-2024 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

This report provides an overview of Council's 2023-2024 Financial Statements. The Financial Statements are prepared by Council to provide information in relation to Council's financial performance and position.

The Financial Statements comprise of five key financial reports:

- Income Statement
- Statement of Comprehensive Income
- Statement of Financial Position
- Statement of Changes in Equity Statement
- Statement of Cash Flows

The Statements are prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the NSW Local Government Act 1993 and the NSW Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting – 2023-2024. The Statements are reviewed by the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, independently audited by the Audit Office of NSW, reported to Council, placed on public exhibition and then lodged with the Office of Local Government.

The 2023-2024 Financial Statements show a positive Net Operating Result of \$41.0M. This result includes grants and contributions for capital purposes which increases the asset base of Council, however, is not considered to truly reflect the underlying operating performance of the organisation.

The Net Operating Result before Grants and Contributions provided for Capital Purposes is a deficit of \$59.8M, which is an unfavourable outcome compared to Council's March Quarterly Review targeted position of a deficit of \$48.6M. This result includes:

- end of year adjustments, including increases to waste remediation provisions reflected through the Income Statement, negative Land under Road valuations, loss on disposal of assets, the provision for employee leave entitlements, and workers' compensation;
- an increase in interest and investment revenue is due to higher interest rates experienced when compared to the prior year;
- fair value increment on investments;
- early payment of \$19.4M of the 2024-2025 Financial Assistance.

These variations do not change the underlying capacity of the organisation over time.

The largest impact on Council's financial statements in the past three years has been the increased net value of Land and Infrastructure. The value of these assets has increased by a total of \$1.36B; \$653.3M in 2021-2022, \$342.0M in 2022-2023 and \$361.0M in 2023-2024. Most of this movement was largely attributed to increases in these assets' fair value of \$643.4M in 2021-2022, \$287.0M in 2022-2023 and \$320.9M in 2023-2024, a total of \$1.25B. Additional depreciation has been incurred in 2023-2024, with further increases inevitable in 2024-2025.

Council's revised asset valuations and estimated lives have resulted in depreciation higher than previously forecast. While there is a negative impact on our Financial Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the short to medium term, it will not impact the current delivery program over the current four year planning period. These changes to financial performance will likely require adjustment to the longer term financial structure to ensure ongoing financial sustainability.

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

\$4.30B

Total Assets

PY \$3.91B

0.97%

Debt Service Ratio

PY 1.39%

\$32.9M

Capital Works - New

PY \$26.2M

\$64.3M

Capital Works - Renew

PY \$64.8M

\$41.0M Surplus

Net Operating Result

PY \$60.8M Surplus

\$59.8M Deficit

Net Operating Result Before Capital
Grants & Contributions

PY \$6.0M Deficit

\$59.3M

Contributed Assets Recognised

PY \$39.1M

2.70:1

Unrestricted Current Ratio

PY 2.61:1

\$179.5M

Cash Assets & Investments

PY \$177.1M

7.19%

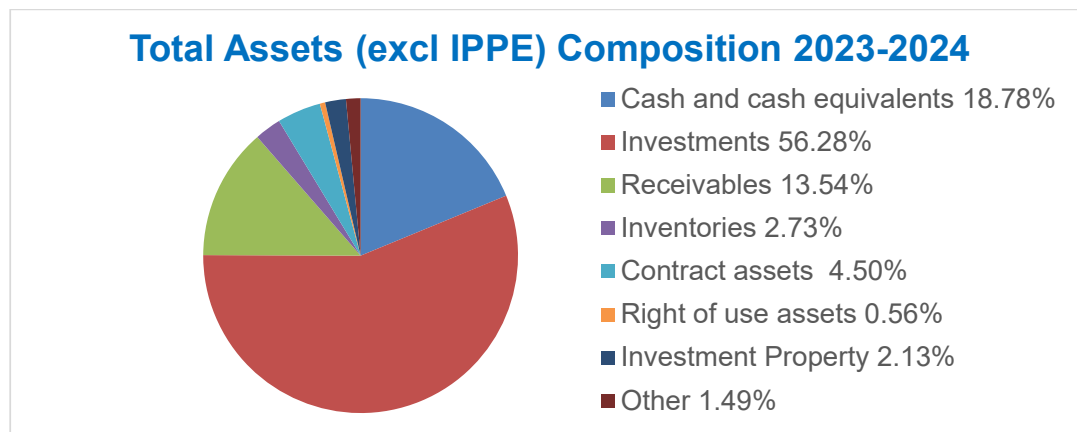
Rates, Annual Charges, Interest &
Extra Charges Outstanding

PY 8.06%

*PY= Prior Year

ASSETS

Council is the custodian of community assets with a total value of \$4.30B as at 30 June 2024. Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment (IPPE) makes up \$4.06B of the total asset value. The value of assets excluding IPPE was \$239.1M with the composition of these asset classes shown as follows:



Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment (IPPE)

With a carrying value of \$4.06B, IPPE is Council's most significant asset group representing 94% of total assets value. This asset group includes roads, drains, footpaths, community facilities, recreational facilities, parks and gardens.

During 2023-2024, Council delivered a capital works program of \$97.2M including the construction and purchase of \$32.9M of new assets and renewal of existing assets of \$64.3M. In addition, \$59.3M of assets were contributed to Council during 2023-2024. The gain on the revaluation of assets for 2023-2024 was \$320.9M. Further financial details of IPPE are shown at Note C1-8.

Cash and Investments

Council maintained robust levels of cash and investments, with holdings of \$179.5M at 30 June 2024. Cash and investment positions over the prior two financial years are as follows:

CASH, INVESTMENTS & AVAILABLE FUNDS (\$M)		
	YTD Actual 30 June 2024	YTD Actual 30 June 2023
TOTAL CASH & INVESTMENTS	179.474	177.107
Less Restrictions:		
External	86.881	94.280
Internal	68.674	61.684
CivicRisk Investment	3.117	2.862
AVAILABLE CASH	20.802	18.281
Adjusted for :		
Payables	(22.273)	(22.272)
Receivables	32.372	33.100
Other	10.445	6.277
AVAILABLE FUNDS	41.346	35.386

Council has an Investment Policy designed to ensure investments are made with regard to the prevailing Local Government Ministerial Investment Order and the Investment Guidelines.

While Council's cash and investment position is robust, a significant portion of these funds are subject to restriction. Council's true cash position is more accurately depicted by considering Available Funds which are uncommitted and not subject to restriction. External restrictions are funds held by Council that must be spent for a specific purpose and cannot be used by Council for general operations. Internal restrictions are funds that Council has determined will be available for specific future purposes.

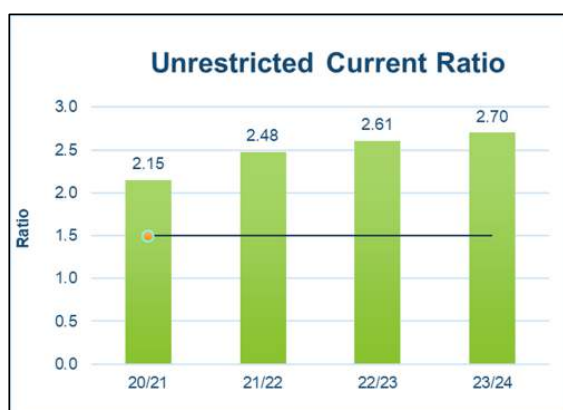
At 30 June 2024, Council achieved an available funds position of \$41.3M, which is higher than the Financial Strategy target range of 3.5% to 5.5% of operational revenue (pre-capital), which is primarily due to the early payment of the Financial Assistance Grant.

Unrestricted Current Ratio

Measures: Cash/Liquidity Position or Council's ability to satisfy obligations in the short term from its unrestricted activities.

Strategy: Council's strategy is to maximise the use of available funds for asset renewal by targeting a lean Unrestricted Current Ratio.

Performance: Council's performance is above the Local Government Benchmark of >1.5:1 and is consistent with the prior year.



Receivables

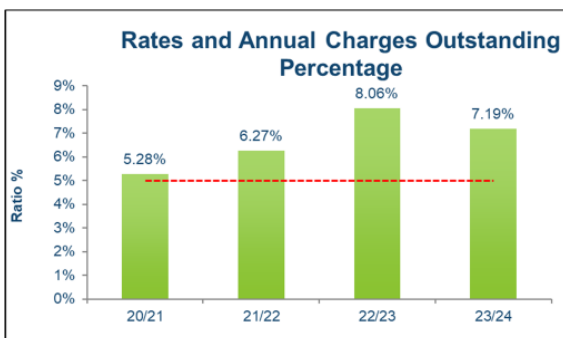
Receivables are the amount of money that is either owed to Council or funds that Council has paid in advance. At 30 June 2024, receivables totaled \$32.4M, a decrease of \$0.7M compared to the 2022-2023 reporting period. Full details of receivables are provided in Note C1-4.

Rates and Annual Charges Outstanding Percentage

Measures: The impact of uncollected rates and other charges on liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts.

Target: Industry standard of <5%

Performance: The performance of this measure has decreased from the prior year by 0.87%. Council will continue to work with ratepayers as they navigate a high cost of living and interest rate environment.

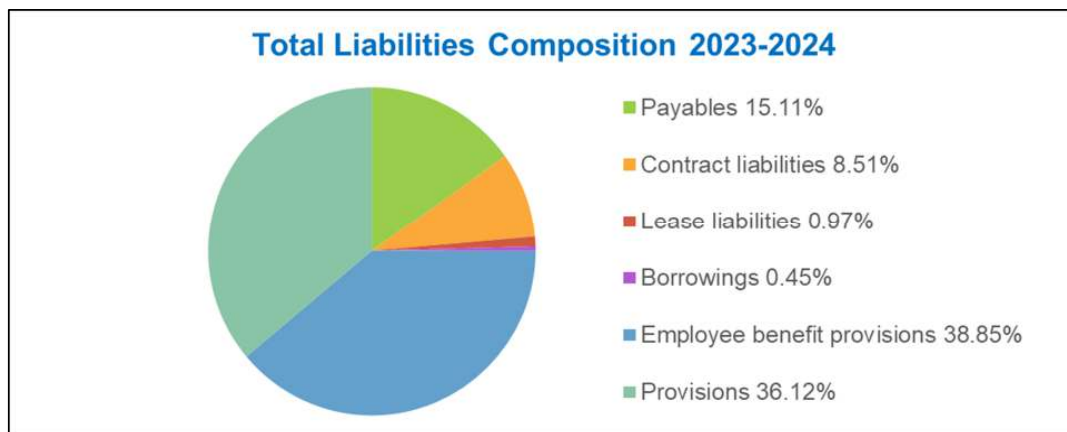


Contract Assets

Contract assets represent Council's right to payment in exchange for the delivery of works relating to grants and contributions. As at 30 June 2024, contract assets totaled \$10.8M in comparison to \$3.8M in 2022-2023, resulting from spend on capital projects where funding is still to be received. Refer to C1-6 of the financial statements for additional details.

LIABILITIES

At 30 June 2024, Council's Total Liabilities were \$147.4M. The composition of Council's Total Liabilities is shown below.



Payables

Payables account for 15% of Council's liabilities. The most significant payables being accrued expenditure and expenditure incurred but not yet paid.

Contract Liabilities

Contract Liabilities account for 9% of Council's liabilities. Contract liabilities represent unexpended grants and contributions and fees received in advance of the service being delivered.

Lease Liabilities

Lease Liabilities account for 1% of Council's liabilities. Lease liabilities are recognised for land and buildings that Council leases from other organisations. Further details of leases are provided in Note C2-1 and C2-2. These are primarily made up of Dapto Ribbonwood, Warrawong Library and State Emergency Services sites.

Borrowings

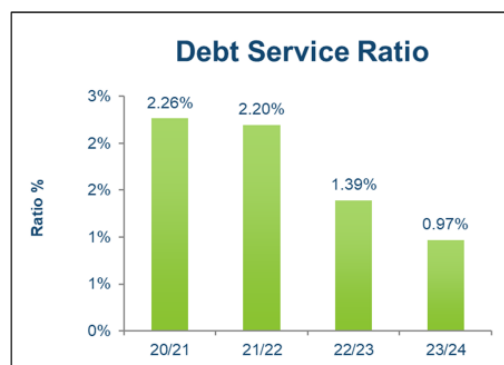
Borrowings account for 0.5% of Council's liabilities, down from prior year's 2.5%. Council continues to remain a relatively low debt user. In 2023-2024, Council did not undertake additional borrowings with all activity related to the repayment of previously secured loans.

The loan facilities which Council has in place are subsidised loans under the Local Government Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS). Funds were secured under LIRS rounds 1, 2 and 3. Repayment of LIRS loans will continue in accordance with the various payment schedules until 2025.

Measures: The proportion of revenues that is required to meet Council's annual loan repayments.

Target: Council's Financial Strategy allows for a ratio of up to 4%.

Performance: A low level of debt is reflected in Council's Debt Service Ratio of 0.97%. This remains low in comparison to the Local Government benchmark ratio of <10% and is within Council's own Strategy.



Provisions

Provisions represent the Council's obligation to make future payments as a result of past events. Provisions account for 75% of Council's Liabilities with the most significant provisions relating to Employee Benefits [\$57.3M], Waste Depot Remediation [\$39.3M] and Workers' Compensation [\$13.6M].

Provisions are revalued each financial year with any movements recognised through profit and loss. The value of provisions has increased from \$89.8M in 2022-2023 to \$110.5M in 2023-2024. This movement predominately relates to the revaluation of the waste remediation provision.

Council has a legal and public obligation to make, restore, rehabilitate and reinstate the open Whytes Gully Waste Disposal Depot and closed Helensburgh Waste Depot. A waste remediation provision is a liability recognised in a council's financial statements to represent the estimated costs of cleaning up and restoring a contaminated site, such as soil, groundwater, or surface water, due to past or current operations and construction of appropriate infrastructure (ie capping) to ensure compliance with EPA requirements. The provision was increased to \$39.3M in 2023-2024 across both sites as a result of increases to the forecast rehabilitation costs.

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE – INCOME & EXPENSES

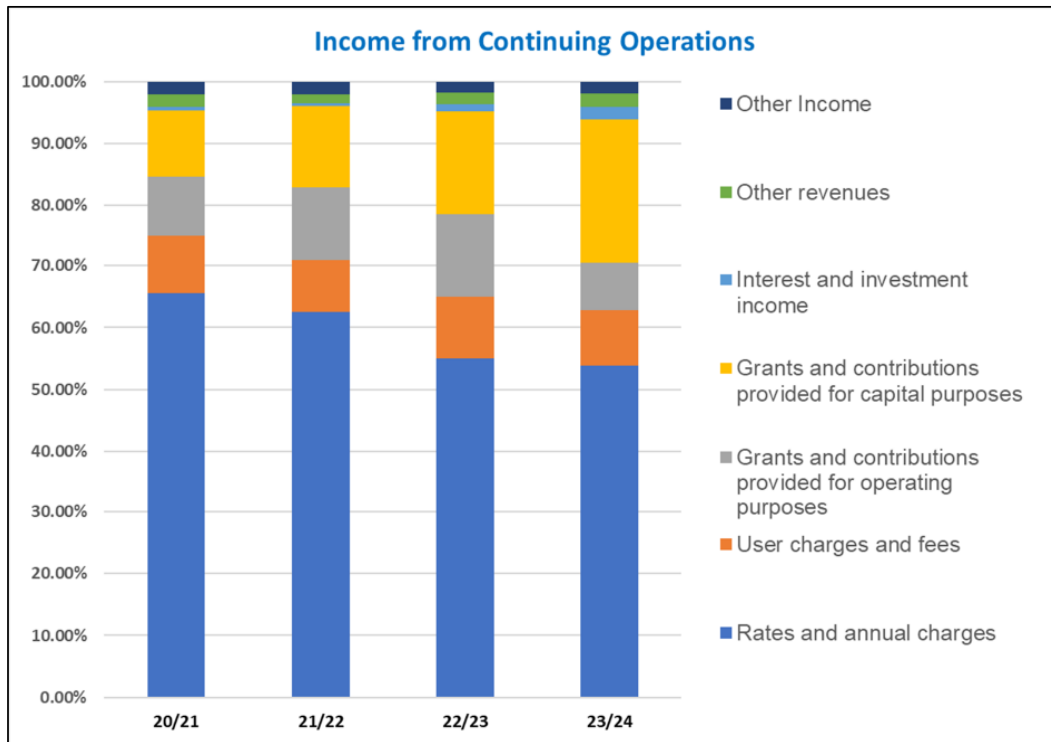
Council achieved a Net Operating Surplus from Continuing Operations of \$41.0M in 2023-2024 in comparison to a surplus of \$60.8M in 2022-2023. This result includes capital grants and contributions that were significantly higher in 2023-2024. Council's underlying measure of long-term operational performance, the Operational Result before Capital Grants and Contributions, reduced from a deficit of \$6.0M, to a deficit of \$59.8M in 2023-2024.

Material budget variations from the 2023-2024 year for income and expenditure items are detailed in Note B5-1 of the statements.

Income

Council's Income from Continuing Operations for 2023-2024 was \$430.3M compared to prior year result of \$403.3M. A significant increase in the level of capital grants & contributions received in 2023-2024 compared to 2022-2023 has impacted on this result. Refer to B2-4 within the financial statements for more detailed information.

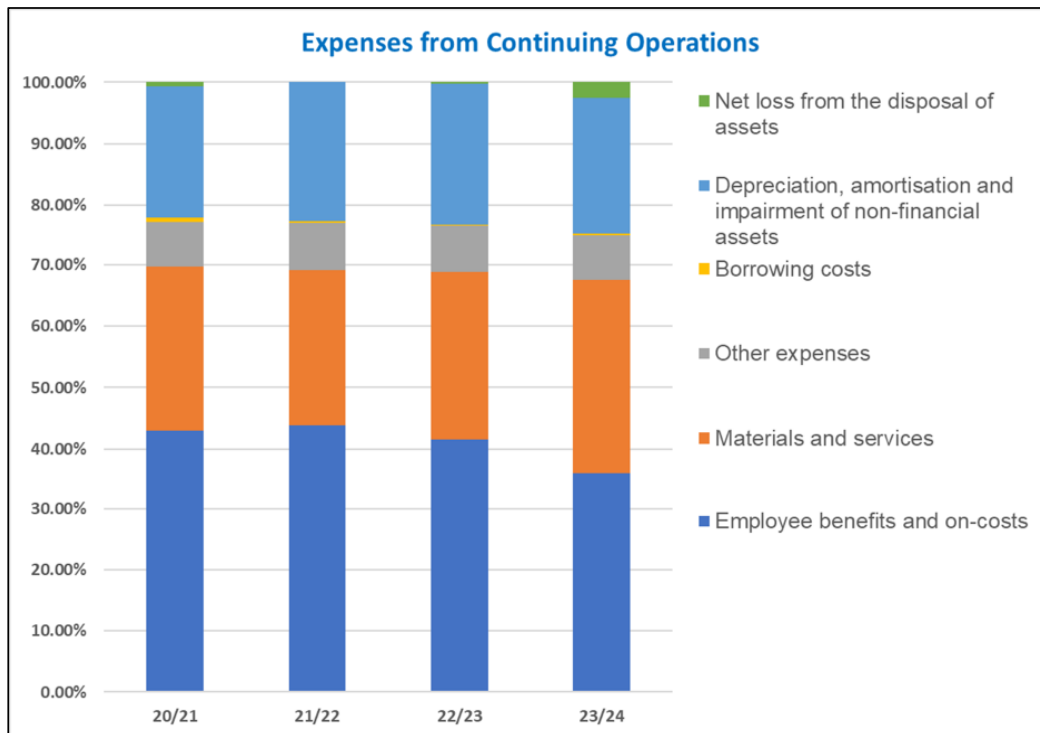
The composition of Council's revenue remained, other than the items noted above, reasonably consistent compared to previous years as depicted in the following table.



Expenses

Expenses from Continuing Operations for 2023-2024 totalled \$389.3M, an increase on prior year expenditure of \$46.8M.

The composition of Council's expenses remained consistent compared to previous years as depicted in the following table.



Wollongong City Council

Historical Financial Data

Income Statement

		Actual 2020/21 \$'000	Actual 2021/22 \$'000	Actual 2022/23 \$'000	Actual 2023/24 \$'000
	Notes				
Income from Continuing Operations					
Revenue:					
Rates & Annual Charges	B2-1	211,126	216,919	222,072	231,847
User Charges & Fees	B2-2	30,864	29,230	39,777	38,578
Other Revenues	B2-3	6,444	5,167	7,467	9,045
Grants & Contributions provided for Operating Purposes	B2-4	30,782	41,841	55,030	32,772
Grants & Contributions provided for Capital Purposes	B2-4	34,478	45,402	66,775	100,797
Interest and Investment Revenue	B2-5	1,986	1,689	4,695	8,711
Other Income	B2-6	6,672	6,448	7,467	8,575
Net gain from the disposal of assets	B4-1	-	563	-	-
Total Income from Continuing Operations		322,352	347,259	403,283	430,325
Expenses from Continuing Operations					
Employee Benefits & On-Costs					
Employee Benefits & On-Costs	B3-1	123,589	126,077	142,039	140,458
Materials & Services	B3-2	76,619	72,910	93,752	122,542
Borrowing Costs	B3-3	2,179	437	602	747
Depreciation & Amortisation	B3-4	61,203	65,329	78,339	86,023
Other Expenses	B3-5	21,755	23,054	26,782	29,446
Fair value decrement on investment properties		-	-	-	-
Net Losses from the Disposal of Assets	B4-1	1,995	-	990	10,120
Total Expenses from Continuing Operations		287,340	287,807	342,504	389,336
Operating Result from Continuing Operations		35,012	59,452	60,779	40,989
NET OPERATING RESULT FOR THE YEAR		35,012	59,452	60,779	40,989
Less:					
Grants & Contributions provided for Capital Purposes	B2-4	34,478	45,402	66,775	100,797
Net Operating Result for the year before Grants and Contributions provided for Capital Purposes		534	14,050	(5,996)	(59,808)

This Statement is to be read in conjunction with the Notes in the body of the financial statements.

Wollongong City Council

Historical Financial Data

Statement of Financial Position

	Notes	Actual 2020/21 \$'000	Actual 2021/22 \$'000	Actual 2022/23 \$'000	Actual 2023/24 \$'000
ASSETS					
Current assets					
Cash & cash equivalents	C1-1	52,320	34,118	44,371	44,900
Investments	C1-2	103,334	88,185	99,424	116,457
Receivables	C1-4	21,859	24,674	33,100	32,372
Inventories	C1-5	463	461	6,486	6,524
Contract Assets	C1-6	4,707	9,711	3,795	10,771
Non-current Assets held for sale	C1-7	111	65	65	-
Other		6,682	6,881	6,351	3,561
Total current assets		189,476	164,095	193,592	214,585
Non-current assets					
Cash assets	C1-1	-	-	-	-
Investments	C1-2	15,199	39,730	33,312	18,117
Inventories	C1-5	5,972	5,972	-	-
Receivables	C1-4	-	-	-	-
Infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	C1-8	2,665,790	3,347,445	3,680,312	4,056,151
Investments accounted for using the equity method		-	-	-	-
Investment property	C1-9	4,600	5,600	5,050	5,100
Intangible assets	C1-10	152	76	-	-
Right of use assets	C2-1	1,471	1,094	718	1,332
Non-current assets classified as 'held for sale'		-	-	-	-
Other		-	-	-	-
Total non-current assets		2,693,184	3,399,917	3,719,392	4,080,700
TOTAL ASSETS		2,882,660	3,564,012	3,912,984	4,295,285
LIABILITIES					
Current liabilities					
Payables	C3-1	26,621	27,376	22,272	22,273
Income received in advance		-	-	-	-
Contract Liabilities	C3-2	8,177	5,491	10,315	12,543
Lease Liabilities		377	403	129	460
Borrowings	C3-3	5,497	3,569	2,572	657
Employee benefits provisions	C3-4	56,768	51,705	58,175	56,385
Provisions	C3-5	2,621	3,891	3,262	4,440
Total current liabilities		100,061	92,435	96,725	96,758
Non-current liabilities					
Payables	C3-1	-	-	-	-
Lease Liabilities	C2-1	1,194	788	655	963
Borrowings	C3-3	6,942	3,374	657	-
Employee benefits provisions	C3-4	957	792	832	875
Provisions	C3-5	38,357	27,879	27,539	48,810
Total non-current liabilities		47,450	32,833	29,683	50,648
TOTAL LIABILITIES		147,511	125,268	126,408	147,406
NET ASSETS	\$	2,735,149	3,438,744	3,786,576	4,147,879
EQUITY					
Retained earnings	C4-1	1,518,472	1,576,459	1,637,513	1,681,518
Revaluation reserves	C4-1	1,216,677	1,862,285	2,149,063	2,466,361
Council Equity Interest		2,735,149	3,438,744	3,786,576	4,147,879
Minority Equity Interest		-	-	-	-
TOTAL EQUITY	\$	2,735,149	3,438,744	3,786,576	4,147,879

This Statement is to be read in conjunction with the Notes in the body of the financial statements.

Wollongong City Council

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

GENERAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Contents	Page
Statement by Councillors and Management	3
Primary Financial Statements:	
Income Statement	4
Statement of Comprehensive Income	5
Statement of Financial Position	6
Statement of Changes in Equity	7
Statement of Cash Flows	8
Contents for the notes to the Financial Statements	9
Independent Auditor's Reports:	
On the Financial Statements (Sect 417 [2])	82
On the Financial Statements (Sect 417 [3])	83

Overview

Wollongong City Council is constituted under the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* and has its principal place of business at:

41 Burelli Street
Wollongong NSW 2500

Council's guiding principles are detailed in Chapter 3 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* and include:

- principles applying to the exercise of functions generally by council,
- principles to be applied when making decisions,
- principles of community participation,
- principles of sound financial management, and
- principles for strategic planning relating to the development of an integrated planning and reporting framework.

A description of the nature of Council's operations and its principal activities are provided in Note B1-2.

Through the use of the internet, we have ensured that our reporting is timely, complete and available at minimum cost. All press releases, financial statements and other information are publicly available on our website: www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au.

Wollongong City Council

General Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2024

Statement by Councillors and Management made pursuant to Section 413(2)(c) of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*

The attached General Purpose Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* and the regulations made thereunder,
- the Australian Accounting Standards and other pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board,
- the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

To the best of our knowledge and belief, these statements:

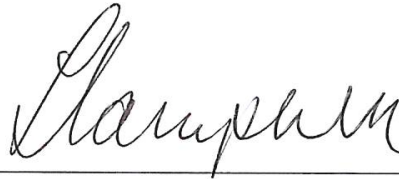
- present fairly the Council's operating result and financial position for the year,
- accord with Council's accounting and other records.

We are not aware of any matter that would render these statements false or misleading in any way.

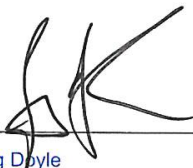
Signed in accordance with a resolution of Council made on 28 October 2024.



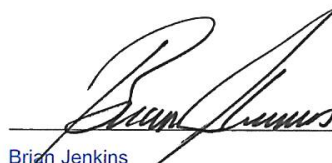
Tania Brown
Lord Mayor
28 October 2024



Linda Campbell
Deputy Lord Mayor
28 October 2024



Greg Doyle
General Manager
28 October 2024



Brian Jenkins
Responsible Accounting Officer
28 October 2024

Wollongong City Council | Income Statement | for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Income Statement

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Original unaudited budget 2024	\$ '000	Notes	Actual 2024	Actual 2023
Income from continuing operations				
232,236	Rates and annual charges	B2-1	231,847	222,072
39,001	User charges and fees	B2-2	38,578	39,777
6,001	Other revenues	B2-3	9,045	7,467
29,533	Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	B2-4	32,772	55,030
38,728	Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	B2-4	100,797	66,775
5,693	Interest and investment income	B2-5	8,711	4,695
6,533	Other income	B2-6	8,575	7,467
357,725	Total income from continuing operations		430,325	403,283
Expenses from continuing operations				
133,536	Employee benefits and on-costs	B3-1	140,458	142,039
92,673	Materials and services	B3-2	122,542	93,752
548	Borrowing costs	B3-3	747	602
79,116	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	B3-4	86,023	78,339
24,537	Other expenses	B3-5	29,446	26,782
–	Net loss from the disposal of assets	B4-1	10,120	990
330,410	Total expenses from continuing operations		389,336	342,504
27,315	Operating result from continuing operations		40,989	60,779
27,315	Net operating result for the year attributable to Council		40,989	60,779
Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes				
(11,413)			(59,808)	(5,996)

The above Income Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Wollongong City Council | Statement of Comprehensive Income | for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Statement of Comprehensive Income

for the year ended 30 June 2024

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
Net operating result for the year – from Income Statement		40,989	60,779
Other comprehensive income:			
Amounts which will not be reclassified subsequently to the operating result			
Gain on revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-8	320,912	287,053
Impairment (loss) relating to infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-8	(598)	–
Total items which will not be reclassified subsequently to the operating result		320,314	287,053
Total other comprehensive income for the year		320,314	287,053
Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to Council		361,303	347,832

The above Statement of Comprehensive Income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Wollongong City Council | Statement of Financial Position | as at 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2024

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	C1-1	44,900	44,371
Investments	C1-2	116,457	99,424
Receivables	C1-4	32,372	33,100
Inventories	C1-5	6,524	6,486
Contract assets	C1-6	10,771	3,795
Non-current assets classified as 'held for sale'	C1-7	–	65
Other		3,561	6,351
Total current assets		214,585	193,592
Non-current assets			
Investments	C1-2	18,117	33,312
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE)	C1-8	4,056,151	3,680,312
Investment property	C1-9	5,100	5,050
Right of use assets	C2-1	1,332	718
Total non-current assets		4,080,700	3,719,392
Total assets		4,295,285	3,912,984
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Payables	C3-1	22,273	22,272
Contract liabilities	C3-2	12,543	10,315
Lease liabilities	C2-1	460	129
Borrowings	C3-3	657	2,572
Employee benefit provisions	C3-4	56,385	58,175
Provisions	C3-5	4,440	3,262
Total current liabilities		96,758	96,725
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	C2-1	963	655
Borrowings	C3-3	–	657
Employee benefit provisions	C3-4	875	832
Provisions	C3-5	48,810	27,539
Total non-current liabilities		50,648	29,683
Total liabilities		147,406	126,408
Net assets		4,147,879	3,786,576
EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus	C4-1	1,681,518	1,637,513
IPPE revaluation reserve	C4-1	2,466,361	2,149,063
Council equity interest		4,147,879	3,786,576
Total equity		4,147,879	3,786,576

The above Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Wollongong City Council | Statement of Changes in Equity | for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024			2023		
		Accumulated surplus	IPPE revaluation reserve	Total equity	Accumulated surplus	IPPE revaluation reserve	Total equity
\$ '000							
Opening balance at 1 July		1,637,513	2,149,063	3,786,576	1,576,459	1,862,285	3,438,744
Restated opening balance		1,637,513	2,149,063	3,786,576	1,576,459	1,862,285	3,438,744
Net operating result for the year		40,989	–	40,989	60,779	–	60,779
Other comprehensive income							
Gain on revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-8	–	320,912	320,912	–	287,053	287,053
Impairment (loss) relating to IPPE	C1-8	–	(598)	(598)	–	–	–
Other comprehensive income		–	320,314	320,314	–	287,053	287,053
Total comprehensive income		40,989	320,314	361,303	60,779	287,053	347,832
Transfers between equity items		3,016	(3,016)	–	275	(275)	–
Closing balance at 30 June		1,681,518	2,466,361	4,147,879	1,637,513	2,149,063	3,786,576

The above Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Wollongong City Council | Statement of Cash Flows | for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Original unaudited budget 2024	\$ '000	Notes	Actual 2024	Actual 2023
Cash flows from operating activities				
<i>Receipts:</i>				
229,989	Rates and annual charges		232,873	218,108
39,001	User charges and fees		42,526	39,728
5,693	Interest received		8,575	3,685
60,385	Grants and contributions		68,654	93,816
–	Bonds, deposits and retentions received		886	464
12,244	Other		29,432	21,335
<i>Payments:</i>				
(130,997)	Payments to employees		(142,434)	(135,712)
(92,391)	Payments for materials and services		(138,853)	(108,385)
(104)	Borrowing costs		(127)	(217)
–	Bonds, deposits and retentions refunded		(1,352)	(529)
(24,537)	Other		1,578	(18,284)
99,283	Net cash flows from operating activities	G1-1	101,758	114,009
Cash flows from investing activities				
<i>Receipts:</i>				
72	Sale of investments		37,813	36,301
1,728	Proceeds from sale of IPPE		848	1,451
<i>Payments:</i>				
–	Purchase of investments		(38,090)	(34,248)
(99,037)	Payments for IPPE		(98,797)	(103,140)
(97,237)	Net cash flows from investing activities		(98,226)	(99,636)
Cash flows from financing activities				
<i>Payments:</i>				
(2,564)	Repayment of borrowings		(2,572)	(3,714)
(129)	Principal component of lease payments		(431)	(406)
(2,693)	Net cash flows from financing activities		(3,003)	(4,120)
(647)	Net change in cash and cash equivalents		529	10,253
122,902	Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		44,371	34,118
122,255	Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	C1-1	44,900	44,371
13,584	Add: Investments on hand at end of year	C1-2	134,574	132,736
135,839	Total cash, cash equivalents and investments		179,474	177,107

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Wollongong City Council

Contents for the notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2024

A About Council and these financial statements	11
A1-1 Basis of preparation	11
B Financial Performance	13
B1 Functions or activities	13
B1-1 Community Strategic Plan Goals – income, expenses and assets	13
B1-2 Components of Community Strategic Plan Goals	14
B2 Sources of income	15
B2-1 Rates and annual charges	15
B2-2 User charges and fees	16
B2-3 Other revenues	17
B2-4 Grants and contributions	18
B2-5 Interest and investment income	22
B2-6 Other income	22
B3 Costs of providing services	23
B3-1 Employee benefits and on-costs	23
B3-2 Materials and services	24
B3-3 Borrowing costs	25
B3-4 Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	26
B3-5 Other expenses	27
B4 Gains or losses	28
B4-1 Gain or loss from the disposal, replacement and de-recognition of assets	28
B5 Performance against budget	29
B5-1 Material budget variations	29
C Financial position	31
C1 Assets we manage	31
C1-1 Cash and cash equivalents	31
C1-2 Financial investments	31
C1-3 Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments	33
C1-4 Receivables	35
C1-5 Inventories	36
C1-6 Contract assets	37
C1-7 Non-current assets classified as held for sale	37
C1-8 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	38
C1-9 Investment properties	41
C1-10 Intangible assets	42
C2 Leasing activities	43
C2-1 Council as a lessee	43
C2-2 Council as a lessor	45
C3 Liabilities of Council	47
C3-1 Payables	47
C3-2 Contract Liabilities	48
C3-3 Borrowings	49
C3-4 Employee benefit provisions	51

Wollongong City Council

Contents for the notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2024

C3-5 Provisions	53
C4 Reserves	55
C4-1 Nature and purpose of reserves	55
D Council structure	55
D1 Results by fund	55
D2 Interests in other entities	55
D2-1 Subsidiaries, joint arrangements and associates not recognised	55
E Risks and accounting uncertainties	56
E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held	56
E2-1 Fair value measurement	59
E3-1 Contingencies	67
F People and relationships	70
F1 Related party disclosures	70
F1-1 Key management personnel (KMP)	70
F1-2 Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses	70
F1-3 Other related parties	70
F2 Other relationships	72
F2-1 Audit fees	72
G Other matters	73
G1-1 Statement of Cash Flows information	73
G2-1 Commitments	74
G3-1 Events occurring after the reporting date	74
G4 Statement of developer contributions	75
G4-1 Summary of developer contributions	75
G4-2 Developer contributions by plan	76
G4-3 Contributions not under plans	77
G4-4 S7.4 planning agreements	77
G5 Statement of performance measures	78
G5-1 Statement of performance measures – consolidated results	78
H Additional Council disclosures (unaudited)	79
H1-1 Statement of performance measures – consolidated results (graphs)	79
H1-2 Council information and contact details	81

A About Council and these financial statements

A1-1 Basis of preparation

These financial statements were authorised for issue by Council on 28 October 2024. Council has the power to amend and reissue these financial statements in cases where critical information is received from public submissions or where the Office of Local Government (OLG) directs Council to amend the financial statements.

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Basis of preparation

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Australian Accounting Interpretations, the *Local Government Act 1993 (Act)* and *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (Regulation)*, and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting. Council is a not-for-profit entity. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars.

Historical cost convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain infrastructure, property, plant and equipment and investment property.

Significant accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the Council's accounting policies. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that may have a financial impact on the Council and that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

Council makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year include:

- i. fair values of investment property – refer Note C1-9
- ii. fair values of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment – refer Note C1-8
- iii. tip remediation provisions – refer Note C3-5
- iv. employee benefit provisions – refer Note C3-4.

Significant judgements in applying the Council's accounting policies

- i. Impairment of receivables – refer Note C1-4.
- ii. Determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific and whether the contract is within the scope of AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* and / or AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* – refer to Notes B2-2 – B2-4.
- iii. Determination of the lease term, discount rate (when not implicit in the lease) and whether an arrangement contains a lease – refer to Note C2-1.

Monies and other assets received by Council

The Consolidated Fund

In accordance with the provisions of Section 409(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, all money and property received by Council is held in the Council's Consolidated Fund unless it is required to be held in the Council's Trust Fund.

The Consolidated Fund has been included in the financial statements of the Council.

Cash and other assets of the following activities have been included as part of the Consolidated Fund:

- general purpose operations

The Trust Fund

In accordance with the provisions of Section 411 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a separate and distinct Trust Fund is maintained to account for all money and property received by the Council in trust which must be applied only for the purposes

A1-1 Basis of preparation (continued)

of, or in accordance with, the trusts relating to those monies. Trust monies and property subject to Council's control have been included in these reports.

A separate statement of monies held in the Trust Fund is available for inspection at the council office by any person free of charge.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of associated GST, unless the GST incurred is not recoverable from the taxation authority. In this case it is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the Statement of Financial Position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities that are recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority, are presented as operating cash flows.

Volunteer services

Council is supported by a range of volunteers for services including surf lifesaving, bush care, community transport and library programs. Volunteer services are required to be recognised in the financial statements if they can be measured reliably, are material, and would be purchased if not provided by the volunteers. In most instances, Council would not purchase the service if it was not provided by volunteers.

New accounting standards and interpretations issued but not yet effective

Certain new accounting standards and interpretations (i.e. pronouncements) have been published by the Australian Accounting Standards Board that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2024 reporting period.

Council has elected not to apply any of these pronouncements in these financial statements before their operative dates.

As at the date of authorisation of these financial statements Council does not consider that any of these new (and still to be applied) standards and interpretations are likely to have a material impact on the Council's future financial statements, financial position, financial performance or cash flows.

New accounting standards adopted during the year

During the year Council adopted all accounting standards and interpretations (as issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board) which were mandatorily effective from the first time at 30 June 2024.

The following new standard is effective for the first time at 30 June 2024:

- **AASB 2021-2 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure of Accounting Policies and Definition of Accounting Estimates**
- **Equivalent standard for JO's is AASB 2021-6 Disclosure of Accounting Policies: Tier 2 and Other Australian Accounting Standards**

The most significant change introduced by this standard is to remove the requirement to disclose significant accounting policies and instead require disclosure of material accounting policy information.

"Accounting policy information is material if, when considered together with other information included in an entity's financial statements, it can reasonably be expected to influence decisions that the primary users of general purpose financial statements make on the basis of those financial statements."

In applying the new requirements, Council has after taking into account the various specific facts and circumstances applied professional judgement to ensure it discloses only material accounting policies as opposed to significant accounting policies throughout these financial statements.

B Financial Performance

B1 Functions or activities

B1-1 Community Strategic Plan Goals – income, expenses and assets ¹

Income, expenses and assets have been directly attributed to the following functions or activities. Details of those functions or activities are provided in Note B1-2.

\$ '000	Income		Expenses		Operating result		Grants and contributions		Carrying amount of assets	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
Functions or activities										
Goal 1 - We value and protect our environment	91,357	82,489	127,339	105,575	(35,982)	(23,086)	25,337	18,837	1,002,545	1,107,873
Goal 2 - We have an innovative and sustainable economy	11,164	11,438	13,908	12,995	(2,744)	(1,557)	25	1	5,886	4,594
Goal 3 - Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city	1,066	1,095	12,124	13,409	(11,058)	(12,314)	688	872	2,190	1,105
Goal 4 - We are a connected and engaged community	13,469	12,123	34,569	29,169	(21,100)	(17,046)	6,519	5,679	859,612	807,513
Goal 5 - We have a healthy community in a liveable city	16,879	12,715	63,501	58,872	(46,622)	(46,157)	7,370	3,322	786,886	420,050
Goal 6 - We have affordable and accessible transport	18,441	25,894	75,538	62,096	(57,097)	(36,202)	16,455	24,301	1,404,313	1,347,879
Support Services	218,657	218,403	62,357	60,388	156,300	158,015	17,883	29,667	233,853	223,970
Contributed Assets	59,292	39,126	—	—	59,292	39,126	59,292	39,126	—	—
Total functions and activities	430,325	403,283	389,336	342,504	40,989	60,779	133,569	121,805	4,295,285	3,912,984

(1) The functions/activities reported above are different to what has been reported in the past. The Goals listed above and described on the following page, align with Council's Community Strategic Plan – Our Wollongong Our Future 2032.

B1-2 Components of Community Strategic Plan Goals

Details relating to the Council's functions or activities as reported in B1-1 are as follows:

Goal 1 - We value and protect our environment

We will work together to reduce emissions and the effects of a changing climate. Our natural environments are protected, and our resources will be managed effectively. Development is well planned and sustainable and we protect our heritage.

Goal 2 - We have an innovative and sustainable economy

The region's industry base continues to diversify and local employment opportunities increase. Wollongong is established as the regional capital of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven. We are leaders in innovative and sustainable research and development of new industries.

Goal 3 - Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city

Creative, cultural industries are fostered and thriving. Community have access to the arts, and participation in events and festivals is increased. Strong diverse local cultures are supported.

Goal 4 - We are a connected and engaged community

Residents have easy and equitable access to information and play an active role in the decisions that affect our city. There is greater awareness and understanding of Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, heritage and histories. Our Council is accountable, financially sustainable and has the trust of the community.

Goal 5 - We have a healthy community in a livable city

There is an increase in the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our community. Our community participation in recreation and lifestyle activities increases. Residents have improved access to a range of affordable housing options. Suburbs and places are livable and safe.

Goal 6 - We have affordable and accessible transport

There is an increase in sustainable transport use including public transport, walking and cycling. Transport links and connection to Sydney, the South Coast and Southern Highlands are strengthened. The community have access to a safe, affordable and reliable transport network.

Support Services

Five services form an additional group called Support Services to demonstrate that these Services support the delivery of all Community Strategic Plan goals.

Support Services include: Employee Services; Financial Services; Governance & Administration; Infrastructure Strategy & Support and Information Management & Technology.

Contributed Assets

Contributed assets relate mainly to the handover of transport and stormwater assets from various subdivisions in the West Dapto area.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B2 Sources of income

B2-1 Rates and annual charges

\$ '000	2024	2023
Ordinary rates		
Residential	136,519	129,291
Farmland	495	353
Mining	1,046	996
Business	52,018	51,546
Less: pensioner rebates (mandatory)	(2,536)	(2,561)
Less: pensioner rebates (Council policy)	(263)	(299)
Abandonments ¹	(568)	(175)
Rates levied to ratepayers	186,711	179,151
Pensioner rate subsidies received	1,381	1,417
Total ordinary rates	188,092	180,568
Special rates		
City centre	–	451
Mall	1,260	1,272
Total special rates	1,260	1,723
Annual charges (pursuant to s496, 496A, 496B, 501 & 611)		
Domestic waste management services	40,949	38,326
Stormwater management services	1,898	1,889
Less: pensioner rebates (mandatory)	(840)	(904)
Pensioner annual charges subsidies received:		
– Domestic waste management	488	470
Total annual charges	42,495	39,781
Total rates and annual charges	231,847	222,072

Council has used 2022 year valuations provided by the NSW Valuer General in calculating its rates.

Material accounting policy information

Rates and annual charges are recognised as revenue when the Council obtains control over the assets comprising these receipts which is the beginning of the rating period to which they relate.

Prepaid rates are recognised as a financial liability until the beginning of the rating period.

Pensioner rebates (mandatory) relate to reductions in rates and certain annual charges for eligible pensioners' place of residence in the local government area that are subsidised by the NSW Government. Pensioner rebates (Council policy) relate to reductions in rates and certain annual charges for eligible pensioners' place of residence in the local government area that are not subsidised by the NSW Government.

Pensioner rate subsidies are received from the NSW Government to provide a contribution towards the pensioner rebates (mandatory) and are in substance a rates payment.

⁽¹⁾ Abandonments refer to amounts owed to Council that have been written off due to the property being exempted of rates, objections & ascertainment, postponed rates and voluntary conservation agreements as per the OLG Rating and Revenue Raising Manual 2007.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B2-2 User charges and fees

\$ '000	2024	2023
User charges		
Waste management services (non-domestic)	10,503	13,040
Total user charges	10,503	13,040
Fees		
Contestable building services	382	557
Inspection services	662	335
Planning and building regulation	3,375	3,072
Registration fees	204	224
Section 10.7 certificates (EP&A Act)	880	666
Section 603 certificate (rating certificate)	458	322
Section 611 charges (occupation of land)	337	468
Additional waste services	186	157
Art gallery	16	9
Car parking	1,635	1,582
Cemeteries	1,960	1,916
Credit card payment processing fee	126	123
Design review meeting application fees	203	82
Golf course	986	816
Health inspections	673	701
Library	45	38
Marketing	–	20
Outdoor dining	10	7
Parking meters	1,111	1,156
Pre-lodgement meeting fees	106	124
Recreation	4,375	4,341
Road opening permits	240	274
Stallholder fees	57	50
Tree management requests	96	87
Tourist parks	9,612	9,450
Other	340	160
Total fees	28,075	26,737
Total other user charges and fees	28,075	26,737
Total user charges and fees	38,578	39,777
Timing of revenue recognition for user charges and fees		
User charges and fees recognised over time	9,612	9,450
User charges and fees recognised at a point in time	28,966	30,327
Total user charges and fees	38,578	39,777

Material accounting policy information

Revenue arising from user charges and fees is recognised when or as the performance obligation is completed and the customer receives the benefit of the goods / services being provided.

The performance obligation relates to the specific services which are provided to the customers and generally the payment terms are within 30 days of the provision of the service or in some cases the customer is required to pay on arrival or a deposit in advance. There is no material obligation for Council in relation to refunds or returns.

Licences granted by Council are all either short-term or low value and all revenue from licences is recognised at the time that the licence is granted rather than over the term of the licence.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B2-3 Other revenues

\$ '000	2024	2023
Diesel rebate	248	169
Fines	555	620
Fines – parking	3,165	2,961
Insurance claims recoveries	365	39
Legal settlements	318	172
Outgoings reimbursements	83	79
Reimbursements	2,645	1,803
Sales – general	1,314	753
Sponsorship and promotional income	24	27
Other	328	844
Total other revenue	9,045	7,467

Timing of revenue recognition for other revenue

Other revenue recognised over time	–	–
Other revenue recognised at a point in time	9,045	7,467
Total other revenue	9,045	7,467

Material accounting policy information for other revenue

Where the revenue is earned for the provision of specified goods / services under an enforceable contract, revenue is recognised when or as the obligations are satisfied.

Statutory fees and fines are recognised as revenue when the service has been provided, the payment is received or when the penalty has been applied, whichever occurs first.

Other revenue is recorded when the payment is due, the value of the payment is notified, or the payment is received, whichever occurs first.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B2-4 Grants and contributions

\$ '000	Operating 2024	Operating 2023	Capital 2024	Capital 2023
General purpose grants and non-developer contributions (untied)				
Financial Assistance Grant				
Relating to current year	867	5,251	–	–
Payment received in advance for subsequent year	19,374	22,004	–	–
Amount recognised as income during current year	20,241	27,255	–	–
Special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)				
Cash contributions				
Arts and culture	366	416	–	2,421
Car parks	–	–	32	–
Community development and support	873	188	–	–
Community services and facilities	569	464	–	–
Economic development	3	–	–	–
Emergency services	429	573	–	–
Environmental management and enhancement	337	404	–	–
Environmental programs	82	72	–	–
Floodplain and stormwater management	280	1,380	328	2
Home and Community Care (HACC) community transport	3,151	3,070	–	–
Heritage and cultural	–	21	–	–
Information technology	–	–	1	–
Library	689	692	–	–
Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) subsidy	103	186	–	–
Local bus route subsidy	160	–	–	–
Natural area management	134	294	–	–
Parks, gardens and sports fields	181	247	5,410	1,791
Roads and bridges	233	–	–	–
Storm/flood damage	–	–	1,197	–
People and learning	54	375	–	–
Pollution minimisation	275	285	–	–
Recreation and culture	–	313	1,478	700
Social support programs	1,600	1,387	–	–
Strategic city planning	91	656	–	–
Street lighting	743	728	–	–
Transport (other roads and bridges funding)	–	11,971	7,957	5,664
Transport (roads to recovery)	–	–	1,731	1,859
Transport for NSW contributions (regional roads, block grant)	1,506	3,403	–	–
Waste performance improvement	–	20	2,014	–
Total cash contributions	11,859	27,145	20,148	12,437
Non-cash contributions				
Bushfire services	–	–	–	215
Dedications – subdivisions (other than by s7.4 and s7.11 – EP&A Act, s64 of the LGA)	–	–	58,757	38,911
Wollongong City Gallery collection	–	–	535	–
Volunteer Services	672	630	–	–
Total non-cash contributions	672	630	59,292	39,126
Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)	12,531	27,775	79,440	51,563
Total grants and non-developer contributions	32,772	55,030	79,440	51,563
Comprising:				
– Commonwealth funding	24,638	31,410	6,863	2,229
– State funding	6,560	21,693	13,820	10,423
– Other funding	1,574	1,927	58,757	38,911
	32,772	55,030	79,440	51,563

continued on next page ...

Page 18

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B2-4 Grants and contributions (continued)

Developer contributions

\$ '000	Notes	Operating 2024	Operating 2023	Capital 2024	Capital 2023
Developer contributions:					
(s7.4 & s7.11 - EP&A Act, s64 of the LGA):					
	G4				
Cash contributions					
S 7.4 – contributions using planning agreements		–	–	149	1,595
S 7.11 – contributions towards amenities/services		–	–	13,887	7,833
S 7.12 – fixed development consent levies		–	–	7,321	5,784
Total cash contributions		–	–	21,357	15,212
Total developer contributions		–	–	21,357	15,212
Total contributions		–	–	21,357	15,212
Total grants and contributions		32,772	55,030	100,797	66,775
Timing of revenue recognition for grants and contributions					
Grants and contributions recognised over time		2,956	4,222	20,148	12,437
Grants and contributions recognised at a point in time		29,816	50,808	80,649	54,338
Total grants and contributions		32,772	55,030	100,797	66,775

B2-4 Grants and contributions (continued)

Unspent grants and contributions

Certain grants and contributions are obtained by Council on the condition they be spent in a specified manner or in a future period but which are not yet spent in accordance with those conditions are as follows:

\$ '000	Operating 2024	Operating 2023	Capital 2024	Capital 2023
Unspent grants				
Unspent funds at 1 July	18,335	6,966	1,964	1,412
Add: Funds recognised as revenue in the reporting year but not yet spent in accordance with the conditions	5,205	10,892	–	7
Add: funds received and not recognised as revenue in the current year	372	3,044	1,569	1,429
Less: Funds recognised as revenue in previous years that have been spent during the reporting year	(13,094)	(2,535)	(7)	(101)
Less: funds received in prior year but revenue recognised and funds spent in current year	(1,117)	(32)	(1,497)	(783)
Unspent funds at 30 June	9,701	18,335	2,029	1,964
Unspent contributions				
Unspent funds at 1 July	1,984	73	45,284	40,199
Add: contributions recognised as revenue in the reporting year but not yet spent in accordance with the conditions	21	–	23,829	15,984
Add: contributions received and not recognised as revenue in the current year	–	1,911	206	54
Less: contributions recognised as revenue in previous years that have been spent during the reporting year	–	–	(12,990)	(10,941)
Less: contributions received in prior year but revenue recognised and funds spent in current year	(1,909)	–	(55)	(12)
Unspent contributions at 30 June	96	1,984	56,274	45,284

B2-4 Grants and contributions (continued)

Material accounting policy information

Grants and contributions – enforceable agreement with sufficiently specific performance obligations

Grant and contribution revenue from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised as or when control of each performance obligations is transferred.

The performance obligations vary according to the agreement. Payment terms vary depending on the terms of the grant, cash is received upfront for some grants and on the achievement of certain payment milestones for others.

Performance obligations may be satisfied either at a point in time or over time and this is reflected in the revenue recognition pattern. Point in time recognition occurs when the beneficiary obtains control of the goods / services at a single time (e.g. completion of the project when a report / outcome is provided), whereas over time recognition is where the control of the services is ongoing throughout the project (e.g. provision of community health services through the year).

Where control is transferred over time, generally the input methods being either costs or time incurred are deemed to be the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefit.

Capital grants

Capital grants received by Council under an enforceable contract for the acquisition or construction of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment to identified specifications which will be under Council's control on completion are recognised as revenue as and when the obligation to construct or purchase is completed.

For construction projects, this is generally as the construction progresses in accordance with costs incurred since this is deemed to be the most appropriate measure of the completeness of the construction project.

For acquisitions of assets, the revenue is recognised when the asset is acquired and controlled by the Council.

Developer contributions

Council has obligations to provide facilities from contribution revenues levied on developers under the provisions of sections 7.4, 7.11 and 7.12 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

While Council generally incorporates these amounts as part of a Development Consents Order, such developer contributions are only recognised as income upon receipt by Council, due to the possibility that individual development consents may not be acted upon by the applicant and, accordingly, would not be payable to Council.

Developer contributions may only be expended for the purposes for which the contributions were required, but Council may apply contributions according to the priorities established in work schedules for the contribution plan.

Other grants and contributions

Assets, including cash, received from other grants and contributions are recognised at fair value when the asset is received. Council considers whether there are any related liability or equity items associated with the asset which are recognised in accordance with the relevant accounting standard.

Once the assets and liabilities have been recognised then income is recognised for any remaining asset value at the time that the asset is received.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B2-5 Interest and investment income

\$ '000	2024	2023
Interest on financial assets measured at amortised cost		
– Overdue rates and annual charges (incl. special purpose rates)	1,252	663
– Cash and investments	7,459	4,032
Total interest and investment income (losses)	8,711	4,695

Material accounting policy information

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest rate at the date that interest is earned.

B2-6 Other income

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
Fair value increment on investment properties			
Fair value increment on investment properties		50	–
Total fair value increment on investment properties	C1-9	50	–
Rental income			
Investment properties			
Lease income (excluding variable lease payments not dependent on an index or rate)		528	491
Total Investment properties		528	491
Other lease income			
Room/Facility Hire		595	522
Leaseback fees - council vehicles		721	697
Other Council Properties		4,493	4,383
Total other lease income		5,809	5,602
Total rental income	C2-2	6,337	6,093
Fair value increment on investments			
Fair value increment on investments through profit and loss		1,306	1,042
Movement in interest in CivicRisk Mutual		255	332
Total Fair value increment on investments		1,561	1,374
Other			
Energy Saving Certificates		627	–
Total other		627	–
Total other income		8,575	7,467

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B3 Costs of providing services

B3-1 Employee benefits and on-costs

\$ '000	2024	2023
Employee leave entitlements (ELE)	16,664	23,559
Salaries and wages	119,813	115,720
Superannuation	14,364	13,219
Change in workers compensation provision	506	1,021
Workers compensation – self insurance	3,586	2,866
Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT)	182	183
Payroll tax	22	23
Training costs (other than salaries and wages)	901	822
Protective clothing	479	463
Labour hire	203	295
Other	451	308
Total employee costs	157,171	158,479
Less: capitalised costs	(16,713)	(16,440)
Total employee costs expensed	140,458	142,039

Material accounting policy information

Employee benefit expenses are recorded when the service has been provided by the employee.

Retirement benefit obligations

All employees of the Council are entitled to benefits on retirement, disability or death. Council contributes to various defined benefit plans and defined contribution plans on behalf of its employees.

Superannuation plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense as they become payable. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that a cash refund or a reduction in the future payments is available.

Council participates in a Defined Benefit Plan under the Local Government Superannuation Scheme, however, sufficient information to account for the plan as a defined benefit is not available and therefore Council accounts for its obligations to defined benefit plans on the same basis as its obligations to defined contribution plans, i.e. as an expense when it becomes payable – refer to Note E3-1 for more information.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B3-2 Materials and services

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
Advertising		297	299
Audit Fees	F2-1	286	310
Bank charges		808	636
Contractor costs ¹		71,415	70,823
Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses	F1-2	687	692
Insurance		4,812	4,575
Internal audit		118	172
Light, electricity and heating		2,796	2,520
Membership fees		170	168
Other expenses		6,982	1,571
Postage		490	407
Prior year works in progress 'write offs' ²		7,085	4,063
Provision for asset remediation ³		13,136	(2,118)
Provision for self insurance claims		11	(257)
Raw materials and consumables ¹		35,386	38,572
Rental agreements		4	(24)
Royalty payments		551	355
Sewerage charges		316	344
Software maintenance and support contractor		3,518	3,368
Street lighting		3,970	3,414
Telephone and communications		620	383
Valuation fees		531	494
Volunteer reimbursements		242	188
Waste contractor		27,540	26,355
Water rates		1,116	917
Legal expenses:			
– Buildings - commercial		–	3,000
– Planning and development		500	620
– Other		424	336
Total materials and services		183,811	162,183
Less: capitalised costs		(61,269)	(68,431)
Total materials and services		122,542	93,752

Material accounting policy information

Expenses are recorded on an accruals basis as the Council receives the goods or services.

- (1) The Contractor & Consultancy Costs and Raw Materials & Consumables includes expenditure related to the capital program. The delivery of capital projects is dependent on the types and size of works that may be delivered through contracts or internally. There are significant variations year on year in this allocation process.
- (2) Capital expenditure previously included in Works in Progress was transferred to operating expenses during 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. This includes capital works to deliver assets not under the control of Council such as traffic facilities and street lighting and identified operational expenses incurred and allocated to capital projects in the course of construction of associated assets.
- (3) Each financial year a provision for the remediation of Council's waste facility is calculated based on the forecast costs to rehabilitate the site. A review of the planned rehabilitation costs and changes to discount factors have resulted in an increase in the provision in 2023-2024.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B3-3 Borrowing costs

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
(i) Interest bearing liability costs			
Interest on leases		56	36
Interest on loans		71	181
Total interest bearing liability costs		127	217
Total interest bearing liability costs expensed		127	217
(ii) Other borrowing costs			
Discount adjustments relating to movements in provisions (other than ELE)			
– Remediation liabilities	C3-5	620	385
Total other borrowing costs		620	385
Total borrowing costs expensed		747	602

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B3-4 Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
Depreciation and amortisation			
Plant and equipment		4,267	4,547
Office equipment		1,280	1,789
Furniture and fittings		302	324
Infrastructure:	C1-8		
– Bridges		2,072	1,840
– Buildings – non-specialised		5,004	4,352
– Buildings – specialised		7,116	6,390
– Footpaths		5,405	4,788
– Other open space/recreational assets		7,020	5,983
– Other structures		707	720
– Roads		29,890	26,632
– Stormwater drainage		19,011	17,051
– Swimming pools		764	725
Right of use assets	C2-1	456	375
Other assets:			
– Library books		1,242	1,216
– Other		1,487	1,531
Intangible assets	C1-10	–	76
Total depreciation and amortisation costs		86,023	78,339
Impairment / revaluation decrement of IPPE			
Land under roads		–	–
Infrastructure:	C1-8		
– Buildings – specialised		598	–
Amounts taken through revaluation reserve	C1-8	(598)	–
Total IPPE impairment / revaluation decrement costs charged to Income Statement		–	–
Total depreciation, amortisation and impairment for non-financial assets		86,023	78,339

Material accounting policy information

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation and amortisation are calculated using the straight line method to allocate their cost, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives. Useful lives are included in Note C1-8 for IPPE assets, Note C1-10 for intangible assets and Note C2-1 for right-of-use assets.

Impairment of non-financial assets

Council assets held at fair value that are not held primarily for their ability to generate net cash flow, and that are deemed to be specialised, are not tested for impairment since these assets are assessed on an annual basis to ensure that the carrying amount is not materially different from fair value and therefore an impairment loss would be captured during this assessment.

Intangible assets not yet available for use, are tested annually for impairment, or more frequently if events or changes in circumstances indicate that they might be impaired.

Other non-financial assets that do not meet the criteria above are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use.

For the purposes of assessing impairment, assets are grouped at the lowest levels for which there are separately identifiable cash inflows that are largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets (cash-generating units).

Impairment losses for revalued assets are firstly offset against the amount in the revaluation surplus for the class of asset, with only the excess to be recognised in the Income Statement.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B3-5 Other expenses

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
Impairment of receivables			
User charges and fees		831	2,107
Total impairment of receivables	C1-4	831	2,107
Fair value decrement on investment properties			
Fair value decrement on investment properties		–	550
Total fair value decrement on investment properties	C1-9	–	550
Other			
Contributions/levies to other levels of government			
– Emergency services levy		1,023	597
– NSW fire brigade levy		4,251	3,610
– NSW rural fire service levy		840	840
– Waste and environment levy		12,252	13,169
Donations, contributions and assistance to other organisations (Section 356)			
– Affordable Housing ¹		5,654	–
– City Centre management		4	5
– Illawarra Institute of Sport		27	40
– Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation		58	58
– Illawarra Performing Arts Centre ²		1,355	1,651
– Neighbourhood youth program		80	75
– Illawarra Surf Life Saving		65	61
– Sponsorship fund		31	48
– Tourism		1,549	1,519
– Wollongong Shuttle Bus Service		396	369
– Wollongong 2022 - Union Cycliste Internationale		–	213
– Other		1,259	1,870
Total other		28,844	24,125
Less: capitalised costs		(229)	–
Total other expenses		29,446	26,782

Material accounting policy information

Other expenses are recorded on an accruals basis when Council has an obligation for the expenses.

Impairment expenses are recognised when identified.

(1) Allocation of grant received in a prior year for Affordable Housing.

(2) The 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 contribution to the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre includes the contribution for the management of the Town Hall.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B4 Gains or losses

B4-1 Gain or loss from the disposal, replacement and de-recognition of assets

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
Gain (or loss) on disposal of property (excl. investment property)			
Proceeds from disposal – property		45	–
Less: carrying amount of property assets sold/written off		(79)	–
Gain (or loss) on disposal		(34)	–
Gain (or loss) on disposal of plant and equipment			
	C1-8		
Proceeds from disposal – plant and equipment		803	1,451
Less: carrying amount of plant and equipment assets sold/written off		(600)	(631)
Gain (or loss) on disposal		203	820
Gain (or loss) on disposal of infrastructure			
	C1-8		
Proceeds from disposal – infrastructure		–	–
Less: carrying amount of infrastructure assets sold/written off		(10,289)	(1,810)
Gain (or loss) on disposal		(10,289)	(1,810)
Gain (or loss) on disposal of investments			
	C1-2		
Proceeds from disposal/redemptions/maturities – investments		37,813	36,301
Less: carrying amount of investments sold/redeemed/matured		(37,813)	(36,301)
Gain (or loss) on disposal		–	–
Net gain (or loss) from disposal of assets		(10,120)	(990)

Material accounting policy information

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with carrying amount. The gain or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has irrevocably passed to the buyer and the asset is de-recognised.

B5 Performance against budget

B5-1 Material budget variations

Council's original budget was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2023 and is not required to be audited. The original projections on which the budget was based have been affected by a number of factors. These include state and federal government decisions, including new grant programs, changing economic activity, environmental factors, and by decisions made by Council.

While these General Purpose Financial Statements include the original budget adopted by Council, the Act requires Council to review its financial budget on a quarterly basis, so it is able to manage the variation between actuals and budget that invariably occur during the year.

Material variations of more than 10% between original budget and actual results or where the variance is considered material by nature are explained below.

Variation Key: **F** = Favourable budget variation, **U** = Unfavourable budget variation.

\$ '000	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2024 ----- Variance -----	
Revenues				
Rates and annual charges	232,236	231,847	(389)	0% U
User charges and fees	39,001	38,578	(423)	(1)% U
Other revenues	6,001	9,045	3,044	51% F
Other Revenues includes a claim for funding through the NSW Government Natural Disaster Co-Funding Arrangements to partially cover works associated with the April 2024 Storm Event \$2.0M, sale of Energy Savings Certificates \$0.6M, and sale of land \$0.7M.				
Operating grants and contributions	29,533	32,772	3,239	11% F
Original budget has had a favourable impact from payments of grants not initially anticipated in the 2023-2024 Operational Plan.				
Capital grants and contributions	38,728	100,797	62,069	160% F
Capital grants and contributions include assets contributed to Council through development. A greater value of assets have been contributed to Council than anticipated in the 2023-2024 financial year.				
Interest and investment revenue	5,693	8,711	3,018	53% F
Interest and investment revenue is favourable due to changes in interest rates experienced during the 2023-2024 financial year.				
Other income	6,533	8,575	2,042	31% F
Other income is favourable due to the fair value increment on investments recognised through the profit and loss.				

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

B5-1 Material budget variations (continued)

\$ '000	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2024 ----- Variance -----	
Expenses				
Employee benefits and on-costs	133,536	140,458	(6,922)	(5)% U
Materials and services	92,673	122,542	(29,869)	(32)% U
Prior year work in capital expense, consultants and external plant hire were higher than expected against the 2023-2024 Operational Plan.				
Borrowing costs	548	747	(199)	(36)% U
Borrowing costs include the interest on the waste facility remediation. The original budget was set prior to receipt of the discount rates as at 30 June 2023 which are applied for the interest calculation in 2023-2024. The changes in the discount rates have resulted in a variance between the actuals and original budget.				
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	79,116	86,023	(6,907)	(9)% U
Revaluations on Council's Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment in 2023 which resulted in higher depreciation than expected in the Original Budget as the revaluations were after the adoption of the 2023-2024 Operational Plan and therefore excluded from the original budget.				
Other expenses	24,537	29,446	(4,909)	(20)% U
Other expenses have been impacted by increased payments within the Housing Affordability Program, funded from a grant received in a prior year.				
Net losses from disposal of assets	-	10,120	(10,120)	- U
Statement of cash flows				
Cash flows from operating activities	99,283	101,758	2,475	2% F
Cash flows from investing activities	(97,237)	(98,226)	(989)	1% U
Cash flows from financing activities	(2,693)	(3,003)	(310)	12% U
Lease payments were higher than expected over the period due to extension of the Warrawong Library lease.				

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C Financial position

C1 Assets we manage

C1-1 Cash and cash equivalents

\$ '000	2024	2023
Cash assets		
Cash on hand and at bank	21,431	1,487
Cash equivalent assets		
– Deposits at call	23,469	42,884
Total cash and cash equivalents	44,900	44,371

Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents

Total cash and cash equivalents per Statement of Financial Position	44,900	44,371
Balance as per the Statement of Cash Flows	44,900	44,371

Material accounting policy information

For Statement of Cash Flow presentation purposes, cash and cash equivalents include: cash on hand; deposits held at call with financial institutions; other short-term, highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value; and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the Statement of Financial Position.

C1-2 Financial investments

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Financial assets at fair value through the profit and loss				
Managed funds	9,400	–	8,685	–
Negotiable Certificate of Deposits and Floating Rate Notes (FRN) with maturities > 3 months	64,755	–	43,088	–
Mortgage backed securities	1,602	–	1,651	–
CivicRisk Mutual Limited	–	3,117	–	2,862
Total	75,757	3,117	53,424	2,862
Debt securities at amortised cost				
Long term deposits	40,700	15,000	46,000	30,450
Total	40,700	15,000	46,000	30,450
Total financial investments	116,457	18,117	99,424	33,312

C1-2 Financial investments (continued)

Material accounting policy information

Financial instruments are recognised initially on the date that the Council becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

On initial recognition, all financial instruments are measured at fair value plus transaction costs (except for instruments measured at fair value through profit or loss where transaction costs are expensed as incurred).

Financial assets

All recognised financial assets are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, depending on the classification of the financial assets.

Classification

On initial recognition, Council classifies its financial assets into the following categories – those measured at:

- amortised cost
- fair value through profit and loss (FVTPL)
- fair value through other comprehensive income – equity instrument (FVOCI-equity)

Financial assets are not reclassified subsequent to their initial recognition.

Amortised cost

Assets measured at amortised cost are financial assets where:

- the business model is to hold assets to collect contractual cash flows, and
- the contractual terms give rise on specified dates to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding.

Council's financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise trade and other receivables, term deposits, and cash and cash equivalents in the Statement of Financial Position. Term deposits with an initial term of more than 3 months are classified as investments rather than cash and cash equivalents.

Subsequent to initial recognition, these assets are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less provision for impairment.

Interest income, impairment and gains or loss on de-recognition are recognised in profit or loss.

Financial assets through profit or loss

All financial assets not classified as measured at amortised cost or fair value through other comprehensive income as described above are measured at fair value through profit or loss.

Net gains or losses, including any interest or dividend income, are recognised in profit or loss.

Council's financial assets measured at fair value through profit or loss comprise investments in FRNs, managed funds, mortgage backed securities and interest in CivicRisk Mutual in the Statement of Financial Position.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C1-3 Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments

\$ '000	2024	2023
(a) Externally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments		
Total cash, cash equivalents and investments	179,474	177,107
Less: Externally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments	(86,881)	(94,280)
Cash, cash equivalents and investments not subject to external restrictions	92,593	82,827

External restrictions

External restrictions included in cash, cash equivalents and investments above comprise:

Developer contributions – general ^A	55,949	45,109
Transport for NSW contributions ^B	422	2,158
Specific purpose unexpended grants ^C	11,730	20,299
Stormwater management ^D	1,507	2,907
Private contributions	6,943	6,848
Special rates levy – Wollongong mall	962	722
Special rates levy – city centre	94	94
Domestic waste management ^D	5,321	6,880
Housing Affordability	3,953	9,263
Total external restrictions	86,881	94,280

Cash, cash equivalents and investments subject to external restrictions are those which are only available for specific use by Council due to a restriction placed by legislation or third-party contractual agreement.

(A) Development contributions which are not yet expended for the provision of services and amenities in accordance with contributions plans.

(B) Transport for New South Wales contributions which are not yet expended for the provision of services and amenities in accordance with those contributions.

(C) Grants which are not yet expended for the purposes for which the grants were obtained.

(D) Domestic Waste Management and other special rates/levies/charges are externally restricted assets and must be applied for the purposes for which they were raised.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C1-3 Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments (continued)

\$ '000	2024	2023
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(b) Internal allocations

Cash, cash equivalents and investments not subject to external restrictions	92,593	82,827
--	---------------	---------------

Unrestricted and unallocated cash, cash equivalents and investments	23,919	21,143
--	---------------	---------------

Internal allocations

At 30 June, Council has internally allocated funds to the following:

Car parking strategy	1,223	1,348
Darcy Wentworth Park	18	18
MacCabe Park development	2,040	1,890
Sports Priority Program	524	893
Waste Disposal Facility	10,854	10,083
West Dapto Development	14,927	10,062
Strategic Projects	32,991	27,181
Property Investment Fund	5,396	9,531
Natural areas	173	173
Lake Illawarra Estuary Management Fund	528	505
Total internal allocations	68,674	61,684

Cash, cash equivalents and investments not subject to external restrictions may be internally allocated by resolution or policy of the elected Council.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C1-4 Receivables

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Rates and annual charges	16,127	–	16,867	–
Interest and extra charges	2,020	–	2,255	–
User charges and fees	7,493	–	6,826	–
Accrued revenues				
– Interest on investments	907	–	536	–
– Other income accruals	5,168	–	3,990	–
Government grants and subsidies	730	–	740	–
Net GST receivable	3,287	–	4,415	–
Total	35,732	–	35,629	–
Less: provision for impairment				
User charges and fees	(3,360)	–	(2,529)	–
Total provision for impairment – receivables	(3,360)	–	(2,529)	–
Total net receivables	32,372	–	33,100	–

Material accounting policy information

Receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. Receivables are generally due for settlement within 30 days.

Impairment

Impairment of financial assets measured at amortised cost is recognised on an expected credit loss (ECL) basis.

When estimating ECL, Council considers reasonable and supportable information that is relevant and available without undue cost or effort. This includes both quantitative and qualitative information and analysis based on Council's historical experience and informed credit assessment, and including forward-looking information.

Council uses the simplified approach for trade receivables where the expected lifetime credit losses are recognised on day one.

When considering the ECL for rates and annual charges debtors, Council takes into account that unpaid rates represent a charge against the rateable property that will be recovered when the property is next sold.

Credit losses are measured at the present value of the difference between the cash flows due to the entity in accordance with the contract, and the cash flows expected to be received. This is applied using a probability weighted approach.

Council writes off a receivable when there is information indicating that the debtor is in severe financial difficulty and there is no realistic prospect of recovery.

None of the receivables that have been written off are subject to enforcement activity.

Where Council renegotiates the terms of receivables due from certain customers, the new expected cash flows are discounted at the original effective interest rate and any resulting difference to the carrying value is recognised in profit or loss.

Rates and annual charges outstanding are secured against the property.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C1-5 Inventories

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Inventories at cost				
Real estate for resale	5,972	–	5,972	–
Stores and materials	552	–	514	–
Total inventories at cost	6,524	–	6,486	–
Total inventories	6,524	–	6,486	–
\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Details for real estate development				
Residential	5,972	–	5,972	–
Total real estate for resale	5,972	–	5,972	–
(Valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value)				
Represented by:				
Acquisition costs	5,972	–	5,972	–
Total costs	5,972	–	5,972	–
Total real estate for resale	5,972	–	5,972	–
Movements:				
Real estate assets at beginning of the year	5,972	–	–	5,972
– Re-classification of balances to current	–	–	5,972	(5,972)
Total real estate for resale	5,972	–	5,972	–

Material accounting policy information

Raw materials and stores, work in progress and finished goods

Raw materials and stores, work in progress and finished goods are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Costs are assigned to individual items of inventory on the basis of weighted average costs. Costs of purchased inventory are determined after deducting rebates and discounts. Net realisable value is the estimated selling price in the ordinary course of business less the estimated costs of completion and the estimated costs necessary to make the sale.

Land held for resale

Land held for resale is stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost is assigned by specific identification and includes the cost of acquisition, and development and borrowing costs during development. When development is completed, borrowing costs and other holding charges are expensed as incurred.

As at 30 June 2024, Council has entered into an agreement to sell a parcel of land held for resale. The sale is expected to be completed during the year ending 30 June 2025.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C1-6 Contract assets

Contract assets

\$ '000	2024	2023
Work relating to capital grants & contributions	10,537	3,372
Work relating to operational grants & contributions	66	331
Other	168	92
Total contract assets	10,771	3,795

Material accounting policy information

Contract assets

Contract assets represent Council's right to payment in exchange for goods or services the Council has transferred to a customer when that right is conditional on something other than the passage of time.

Contract assets arise when the amounts billed to customers are based on the achievement of various milestones established in the contract and therefore the amounts recognised as revenue in a given period do not necessarily coincide with the amounts billed to or certified by the customer. Once an invoice or payment claim is raised or the relevant milestone is reached, Council recognises a receivable.

Impairment of contract assets is assessed using the simplified expected credit loss model where lifetime credit losses are recognised on initial recognition.

C1-7 Non-current assets classified as held for sale

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Non-current assets held for sale				
Land	–	–	65	–
Total non-current assets held for sale	–	–	65	–

Details of assets

One parcel of land which was classified as 'held for sale' as at 30 June 2023 was sold during the year ended 30 June 2024.

Material accounting policy information

Non-current assets (or disposal groups) are classified as held for sale if their carrying amount will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through continued use and are measured at the lower of their carrying amount and fair value less costs to sell.

Non-current assets (including those that are part of a disposal group) are not depreciated or amortised while they are classified as held for sale.

C1-8 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

By aggregated asset class	At 1 July 2023			Asset movements during the reporting period												At 30 June 2024		
	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount	Additions renewals ¹	Additions new assets	Carrying value of disposals	Depreciation expense	Impairment loss / revaluation decrements (recognised in P/L)	Impairment loss (recognised in equity)	WIP transfers	Adjustments and transfers	Other movements - Transfer to Expense	Other movements - Waste Remediation Reassessmen t	Revaluation decrements to equity (ARR)	Revaluation increments to equity (ARR)	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount
\$ '000																		
Capital work in progress	81,382	—	81,382	53,776	24,434	—	—	—	—	(64,005)	—	(7,085)	—	—	—	88,503	—	88,503
Plant and equipment	46,506	(26,213)	20,293	4,110	—	(600)	(4,267)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	48,486	(28,950)	19,536
Office equipment	11,947	(9,038)	2,909	1,119	—	—	(1,280)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13,065	(10,319)	2,746
Furniture and fittings	3,184	(2,030)	1,154	73	—	—	(302)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,257	(2,332)	925
Land:																		
– Operational land	306,586	—	306,586	—	10,319	(10)	—	—	—	—	(348)	—	—	—	51,364	367,911	—	367,911
– Community land	367,196	(760)	366,436	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	280	—	—	(2,341)	—	365,135	(760)	364,375
– Crown land	120,906	—	120,906	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	120,906	—	120,906
– Land under roads (post 30/6/08)	8,579	—	8,579	—	3,092	(4)	—	(5,603)	—	—	68	—	—	(2,569)	—	3,562	—	3,562
Infrastructure:																		
– Buildings – non-specialised	281,037	(106,383)	174,654	131	—	(99)	(5,004)	—	—	2,306	(2,855)	—	—	—	68,949	429,019	(190,938)	238,081
– Buildings – specialised	419,151	(222,139)	197,012	3,220	—	(305)	(7,116)	—	(598)	3,176	2,109	—	—	—	81,439	533,215	(254,278)	278,937
– Other structures	18,821	(9,655)	9,166	561	—	(856)	(707)	—	—	379	397	—	—	—	6,414	21,358	(6,003)	15,355
– Roads	2,061,164	(1,142,210)	918,954	—	16,705	(5,947)	(29,890)	—	—	28,703	(14)	—	—	—	45,255	2,188,536	(1,214,770)	973,766
– Bridges	151,182	(49,984)	101,198	—	6,564	(720)	(2,072)	—	—	3,817	—	—	—	—	5,019	169,139	(55,334)	113,805
– Footpaths	387,729	(184,529)	203,200	—	6,657	(804)	(5,405)	—	—	11,532	122	—	—	—	10,256	423,100	(197,542)	225,558
– Stormwater drainage	1,716,026	(783,826)	932,200	—	23,770	(135)	(19,011)	—	—	5,673	—	—	—	—	46,420	1,832,317	(843,399)	988,918
– Swimming pools	48,964	(34,648)	14,316	—	—	—	(764)	—	—	136	—	—	—	—	877	52,247	(37,683)	14,564
– Other open space/recreational assets	248,989	(91,390)	157,599	—	—	(1,423)	(7,020)	—	—	6,858	241	—	—	—	9,829	270,698	(104,614)	166,084
Other assets:																		
– Heritage collections	15,991	—	15,991	—	630	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16,622	—	16,622
– Library books	8,667	(3,767)	4,900	1,345	—	—	(1,242)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10,012	(5,009)	5,003
– Other	58,135	(15,258)	42,877	—	—	—	(1,487)	—	—	1,425	—	—	—	—	—	59,561	(16,744)	42,817
Reinstatement, rehabilitation and restoration assets (refer Note C3-5):																		
– Tip assets	9,410	(9,410)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8,176	—	—	17,587	(9,410)	8,177
Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	6,371,552	(2,691,240)	3,680,312	64,335	92,171	(10,903)	(85,567)	(5,603)	(598)	—	—	(7,085)	8,176	(4,910)	325,822	7,034,236	(2,978,085)	4,056,151

(1) Renewals are defined as the replacement of existing assets (as opposed to the acquisition of new assets).

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C1-8 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (continued)

By aggregated asset class	At 1 July 2022			Asset movements during the reporting period								At 30 June 2023		
	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount	Additions renewals ⁽¹⁾	Additions new assets	Carrying value of disposals	Depreciation expense	WIP transfers	Adjustments and transfers	Waste Remediation reassessment	Revaluation increments to equity (ARR)	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount
\$ '000														
Capital work in progress	86,590	–	86,590	59,187	25,684	–	–	(86,016)	–	(4,063)	–	81,382	–	81,382
Plant and equipment	47,008	(24,900)	22,108	3,361	–	(629)	(4,547)	–	–	–	–	46,506	(26,213)	20,293
Office equipment	10,967	(7,376)	3,591	1,109	–	(2)	(1,789)	–	–	–	–	11,947	(9,038)	2,909
Furniture and fittings	3,114	(1,707)	1,407	71	–	–	(324)	–	–	–	–	3,184	(2,030)	1,154
Land:														
– Operational land	275,103	–	275,103	–	474	–	–	–	–	–	31,009	306,586	–	306,586
– Community land	328,141	(760)	327,381	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	39,055	367,196	(760)	366,436
– Crown land	109,447	–	109,447	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	11,459	120,906	–	120,906
– Land under roads (post 30/6/08)	7,898	–	7,898	–	10	–	–	–	–	–	671	8,579	–	8,579
Infrastructure:														
– Buildings – non-specialised	245,871	(93,507)	152,364	–	–	–	(4,352)	13,717	(10)	–	12,935	281,037	(106,383)	174,654
– Buildings – specialised	378,294	(198,051)	180,243	–	–	–	(6,390)	7,925	78	–	15,156	419,151	(222,139)	197,012
– Other structures	17,408	(8,198)	9,210	–	–	–	(720)	232	(284)	–	728	18,821	(9,655)	9,166
– Roads	1,869,502	(1,032,152)	837,350	–	10,835	(1,495)	(26,632)	29,441	130	–	69,325	2,061,164	(1,142,210)	918,954
– Bridges	138,910	(44,227)	94,683	–	99	–	(1,840)	355	–	–	7,901	151,182	(49,984)	101,198
– Footpaths	344,698	(165,784)	178,914	–	3,343	(256)	(4,788)	10,913	–	–	15,074	387,729	(184,529)	203,200
– Stormwater drainage	1,547,139	(705,375)	841,764	–	24,634	–	(17,051)	11,963	19	–	70,871	1,716,026	(783,826)	932,200
– Swimming pools	44,935	(31,147)	13,788	–	–	–	(725)	105	–	–	1,148	48,964	(34,648)	14,316
– Other open space/recreational assets	219,554	(78,845)	140,709	–	–	(59)	(5,983)	11,144	67	–	11,721	248,989	(91,390)	157,599
Other assets:														
– Heritage collections	15,912	–	15,912	–	79	–	–	–	–	–	–	15,991	–	15,991
– Library books	10,765	(5,969)	4,796	1,320	–	–	(1,216)	–	–	–	–	8,667	(3,767)	4,900
– Other	57,913	(13,726)	44,187	–	–	–	(1,531)	221	–	–	–	58,135	(15,258)	42,877
Reinstatement, rehabilitation and restoration assets (refer Note C3-5):														
– Tip assets	9,410	(9,410)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	9,410	(9,410)	–
Investment Property (refer to Note C1-9):														
Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	5,768,579	(2,421,134)	3,347,445	65,048	65,158	(2,441)	(77,888)	–	–	(4,063)	287,053	6,371,552	(2,691,240)	3,680,312

(1) Renewals are defined as the replacement of existing assets (as opposed to the acquisition of new assets).

C1-8 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (continued)

Material accounting policy information

Initial recognition of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE)

IPPE is measured initially at cost. Cost includes the fair value of the consideration given to acquire the asset (net of discounts and rebates) and any directly attributable cost of bringing the asset to working condition for its intended use (inclusive of import duties and taxes).

When infrastructure, property, plant and equipment are acquired by Council at significantly below fair value, the assets are initially recognised at their fair value at acquisition date.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to Council and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the Income Statement during the financial period in which they are incurred.

Useful lives of IPPE

Land is not depreciated. Depreciation on other assets is calculated using the straight-line method to allocate their cost, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Plant and equipment	Years	Other equipment	Years
Office equipment	2 to 25	Playground equipment	5 to 40
Office furniture	5 to 34	Benches, seats etc.	10 to 32
Computer equipment	2 to 10		
Vehicles	2 to 20	Buildings	
Heavy plant/road making equipment	3 to 34	Buildings: masonry	50 to 268
Other plant and equipment	2 to 34	Buildings: other	8 to 135
Stormwater assets		Other infrastructure assets	
Drains	20 to 170	Bulk earthworks	Indefinite
Culverts	20 to 170	Swimming pools	40 to 100
Flood control structures	20 to 170	Other open space/recreational assets	3 to 115
		Other infrastructure	10 to 105
Transportation assets			
Roads: seal	8 to 95		
Roads: base	15 to 145		
Roads: sub-base	15 to 145		
Bridge: concrete	80		
Bridge: other	20 to 80		
Kerb, gutter and footpaths	20 to 104		

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date. Gains and losses on disposal are determined by comparing proceeds with carrying amount. These are included in the Income Statement.

Revaluation Model

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment are held at fair value. Independent comprehensive valuations are performed at least every five years, however the carrying amount of assets is assessed by Council at each reporting date to confirm that it is not materially different from current fair value.

Increases in the carrying amounts arising on revaluation are credited to the revaluation reserve. To the extent that the increase reverses a decrease previously recognising profit or loss relating to that asset class, the increase is first recognised as profit or loss. Decreases that reverse previous increases of assets in the same class are first charged against revaluation reserves directly in equity to the extent of the remaining reserve attributable to the class; all other decreases are charged to the Income Statement.

Land under roads

Land under roads is land under roadways and road reserves including land under footpaths, nature strips and median strips.

Council has elected not to recognise land under roads acquired before 1 July 2008. Land under roads acquired after 1 July 2008 is recognised in accordance with the IPPE accounting policy.

C1-8 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (continued)

Crown reserves

Crown reserves under Council's care and control are recognised as assets of the Council. While ownership of the reserves remains with the Crown, Council retains operational control of the reserves and is responsible for their maintenance and use in accordance with the specific purposes to which the reserves are dedicated. Improvements on Crown reserves are also recorded as assets, while maintenance costs incurred by Council and revenues relating to the reserves are recognised within Council's Income Statement.

Rural Fire Service assets

Under Section 119 of the *Rural Fire Services Act 1997 (NSW)*, "all firefighting equipment purchased or constructed wholly or from money to the credit of the Fund is to be vested in the council of the area for or on behalf of which the firefighting equipment has been purchased or constructed".

These Rural Fire Service assets are recognised as assets of the Council in these financial statements.

C1-9 Investment properties

Owned investment property

\$ '000	2024	2023
At fair value		
Opening balance at 1 July	5,050	5,600
Net gain/(loss) from fair value adjustments	50	(550)
Closing balance at 30 June	5,100	5,050

Material accounting policy information

Investment property, principally comprising freehold office buildings, is held for long-term rental yields and is not occupied by the Council. Changes in fair values are recorded in the Income Statement as part of other income.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C1-10 Intangible assets

\$ '000	2024	2023
Software		
Opening values at 1 July		
Gross book value	2,345	2,345
Accumulated amortisation	(2,345)	(2,269)
Net book value – opening balance	–	76
Movements for the year		
Amortisation charges	–	(76)
Closing values at 30 June		
Gross book value	2,345	2,345
Accumulated amortisation	(2,345)	(2,345)
Total intangible assets – net book value	–	–

Material accounting policy information

IT development and software

Software development costs include only those costs directly attributable to the development phase (including external direct costs of materials and services, direct payroll, and payroll-related costs of employees' time spent on the project) and are only recognised following completion of technical feasibility, and where the Council has an intention and ability to use the asset. Amortisation is calculated on a straight-line basis over periods generally ranging from three to five years.

C2 Leasing activities

C2-1 Council as a lessee

Council has leases over land and buildings. Information relating to the leases in place and associated balances and transactions is provided below.

Land & Buildings

Council leases land and building for libraries and other operations; these leases are between 5 and 30 years and some include a renewal option to allow Council to renew the lease term. These leases contain an annual pricing mechanism based on either fixed increases or CPI movements at each anniversary of the lease inception.

Extension options

Council includes extension options in some of their leases to provide flexibility and certainty to Council operations and reduce costs of moving premises. These extension options are at Council's discretion.

At commencement date and each subsequent reporting date, Council assesses where it is reasonably certain that the extension options will be exercised.

There are \$6.2M in potential future lease payments which are not included in lease liabilities as Council has assessed that the exercise of the option is not reasonably certain.

(a) Right of use assets

\$ '000	Land & Buildings	Total
2024		
Opening balance at 1 July	718	718
Additions to right-of-use assets	1,032	1,032
Depreciation charge	(456)	(456)
Other movement	38	38
Balance at 30 June	1,332	1,332
2023		
Opening balance at 1 July	1,094	1,094
Depreciation charge	(375)	(375)
Other movement	(1)	(1)
Balance at 30 June	718	718

(b) Lease liabilities

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Lease liabilities	460	963	129	655
Total lease liabilities	460	963	129	655

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C2-1 Council as a lessee (continued)

(c) The maturity analysis

The maturity analysis of lease liabilities based on contractual undiscounted cash flows is shown in the table below:

\$ '000	< 1 year	1 – 5 years	> 5 years	Total	Total per Statement of Financial Position
2024					
Cash flows	460	948	31	1,439	1,423
2023					
Cash flows	129	628	31	788	784

(d) Income Statement

The amounts recognised in the Income Statement relating to leases where Council is a lessee are shown below:

\$ '000	2024	2023
Interest on lease liabilities	56	36
Depreciation of right of use assets	456	375
	512	411

(e) Statement of Cash Flows

Total cash outflow for leases	487	443
	487	443

(f) Leases at significantly below market value – concessionary / peppercorn leases

Council has a number of leases at significantly below market for land and infrastructure which are used for:

- pedestrian crossings and bridges
- boat ramp

The leases are generally for an extended period of time and require payments of a maximum amount of \$1,000 per year. Council does not believe that any of the leases in place are individually material from a statement of financial position or performance perspective.

Material accounting policy information

At inception of a contract, Council assesses whether a lease exists – i.e. does the contract convey the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration?

Council has elected not to separate non-lease components from lease components for any class of asset and has accounted for payments as a single component.

At the lease commencement, Council recognises a right-of-use asset and associated lease liability for the lease term. The lease term includes extension periods where Council believes it is reasonably certain that the option will be exercised.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises: the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration, less any lease incentives received. The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight-line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of asset accounting policy.

The lease liability is initially recognised at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease. The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease, however where this cannot be readily determined then the Council's incremental borrowing rate for a similar term with similar security is used.

C2-1 Council as a lessee (continued)

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is re-measured when there is a lease modification, or change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g. CPI).

Where the lease liability is re-measured, the right-of-use asset is adjusted to reflect the re-measurement.

Exceptions to lease accounting

Council has applied the exceptions to lease accounting for both short-term leases (i.e. leases with a term of less than or equal to 12 months) and leases of low-value assets. Council recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Leases at significantly below market value / concessionary leases

Council has elected to measure the right of use asset arising from the concessionary leases at cost which is based on the associated lease liability at initial recognition.

C2-2 Council as a lessor

Operating leases

Council leases out a number of properties; these leases have been classified as operating leases for financial reporting purposes and the assets are included in the Statement of Financial Position as:

- investment property – where the asset is held predominantly for rental or capital growth purposes (refer note C1-9)
- property, plant and equipment – where the rental is incidental, or the asset is held to meet Councils service delivery objective (refer note C1-8).

\$ '000	2024	2023
(i) Assets held as investment property		
The amounts recognised in the Income Statement relating to operating leases where Council is a lessor are shown below		
Lease income (excluding variable lease payments not dependent on an index or rate)	528	491
Total income relating to operating leases for investment property assets	528	491
Operating lease expenses		
Direct operating expenses that generated rental income	138	156
Total expenses relating to operating leases	138	156
(ii) Assets held as property, plant and equipment		
Lease income (excluding variable lease payments not dependent on an index or rate)	5,809	5,602
Total income relating to operating leases for Council assets	5,809	5,602
(iii) Maturity analysis of contractual lease income: investment property		
Maturity analysis of future lease income receivable showing the undiscounted lease payments to be received after reporting date for operating leases:		
< 1 year	278	136
1–2 years	133	21
2–3 years	77	–
3–4 years	41	–
Total undiscounted lease payments to be received	529	157

C2-2 Council as a lessor (continued)

Material accounting policy information

When Council is a lessor, the lease is classified as either an operating or finance lease at inception date, based on whether substantially all of the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the asset have been transferred to the lessee. If the risks and rewards have been transferred then the lease is classified as a finance lease, otherwise it is an operating lease.

When Council has a sub-lease over an asset and is the intermediate lessor then the head lease and sub-lease are accounted for separately. The classification of the sub-lease is based on the right-of-use asset which arises from the head lease rather than the useful life of the underlying asset.

If the lease contains lease and non-lease components, the non-lease components are accounted for in accordance with AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*.

The lease income is recognised on a straight-line basis over the lease term for an operating lease and as finance income using amortised cost basis for finance leases.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C3 Liabilities of Council

C3-1 Payables

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Prepaid rates	4,517	–	4,231	–
Goods and services – operating expenditure	1,207	–	927	–
Goods and services – capital expenditure	975	–	656	–
Accrued expenses:				
– Other expenditure accruals	12,821	–	13,218	–
Security bonds, deposits and retentions	2,087	–	2,553	–
Agency Funds	28	–	48	–
Other	638	–	639	–
Total payables	22,273	–	22,272	–

Current payables not anticipated to be settled within the next twelve months

\$ '000	2024	2023
Payables – security bonds, deposits and retentions	581	1,268
Total payables	581	1,268

Material accounting policy information

Council measures all financial liabilities initially at fair value less transaction costs, subsequently financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

The financial liabilities of the Council comprise trade payables and loans.

Payables

Payables represent liabilities for goods and services provided to Council prior to the end of financial year that are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C3-2 Contract Liabilities

\$ '000	Notes	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Grants and contributions received in advance:					
Unexpended capital grants (to construct Council controlled assets)	(i)	3,817	—	4,164	—
Unexpended operating grants (received prior to performance obligation being satisfied)	(ii)	999	—	1,172	—
Unexpended capital contributions (to construct Council controlled assets)	(i)	114	—	114	—
Unexpended operating contributions (received prior to performance obligation being satisfied)	(ii)	826	—	996	—
Total grants received in advance		5,756	—	6,446	—
Other contract liabilities:					
Upfront fees and charges	(iii)	3,887	—	3,869	—
Funds received prior to performance obligations being satisfied (upfront payments) - AASB 15	(iv)	2,900	—	—	—
Total user fees and charges received in advance		6,787	—	3,869	—
Total contract liabilities		12,543	—	10,315	—

Notes

(i) Council has received funding to construct assets. The funds received are under an enforceable contract which require Council to construct an identified asset which will be under Council's control on completion. The revenue is recognised as Council constructs the asset and the contract liability reflects the funding received which cannot yet be recognised as revenue. The revenue is expected to be recognised in the next 12 months.

(ii) The contract liability relates to operating grants received prior to the revenue recognition criteria in AASB 15 being satisfied since the performance obligations are ongoing.

(iii) Fees paid upfront for the delivery of specific Council services are recorded as a contract liability on receipt and recognised as revenue when the performance obligations are met.

(iv) Council has entered into a contract in relation to which the performance obligation is expected to be met during the year ending 30 June 2025. Payments made prior to the performance obligation being met are recorded as a contract liability on receipt and recognised as revenue when the performance obligation is met.

(i) Revenue recognised that was included in the contract liability balance at the beginning of the period

\$ '000	2024	2023
Capital grants (to construct Council controlled assets)	1,988	850
Operating grants (received prior to performance obligation being satisfied)	1,224	32
Operating contributions (received prior to performance obligation being satisfied)	399	142
Upfront fees	1,715	1,651
Total revenue recognised that was included in the contract liability balance at the beginning of the period	5,326	2,675

Significant changes in contract liabilities

The contract liabilities are higher than the previous year primarily due to the receipt of funds prior to performance obligation being satisfied.

Material accounting policy information

Contract liabilities are recorded when consideration is received from a customer / fund provider prior to Council transferring a good or service to the customer, Council presents the funds which exceed revenue recognised as a contract liability.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C3-3 Borrowings

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Loans – secured ¹	657	–	2,572	657
Total borrowings	657	–	2,572	657

(1) Loans are secured over the general rating income of Council. Disclosures on liability interest rate risk exposures, fair value disclosures and security can be found in Note E1.

(a) Changes in liabilities arising from financing activities

	2023		Non-cash movements				2024
\$ '000	Opening Balance	Cash flows	Acquisition	Fair value changes	Acquisition due to change in accounting policy	Other non-cash movement	Closing balance
Loans – secured	3,229	(2,572)	–	–	–	–	657
Lease liability (Note C2-1b)	784	(487)	1,032	–	–	94	1,423
Total liabilities from financing activities	4,013	(3,059)	1,032	–	–	94	2,080

	2022		Non-cash movements				2023
\$ '000	Opening Balance	Cash flows	Acquisition	Fair value changes	Acquisition due to change in accounting policy	Other non-cash movement	Closing balance
Loans – secured	6,943	(3,714)	–	–	–	–	3,229
Lease liability (Note C2-1b)	1,191	(443)	–	–	–	36	784
Total liabilities from financing activities	8,134	(4,157)	–	–	–	36	4,013

(b) Financing arrangements

\$ '000	2024	2023
Total facilities		
Total financing facilities available to Council at the reporting date are:		
Bank overdraft facilities ¹	600	600
Credit cards/purchase cards	350	1,035
Total financing arrangements	950	1,635

Drawn facilities

Financing facilities drawn down at the reporting date are:

– Credit cards/purchase cards	98	14
Total drawn financing arrangements	98	14

Undrawn facilities

Undrawn financing facilities available to Council at the reporting date are:

– Bank overdraft facilities	600	600
– Credit cards/purchase cards	252	1,021
Total undrawn financing arrangements	852	1,621

Additional financing arrangements information

Breaches and defaults

During the current and prior year, there were no defaults or breaches on any of the loans.

(1) The bank overdraft facility may be drawn at any time and may be terminated by the bank without notice.

C3-3 Borrowings (continued)

Material accounting policy information

Council measures all financial liabilities initially at fair value less transaction costs, subsequently financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

Fees paid on the establishment of loan facilities are recognised as transaction costs of the loan to the extent that it is probable that some or all of the facility will be drawn down.

Borrowings are removed from the Statement of Financial Position when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expired. The difference between the carrying amount of a financial liability that has been extinguished or transferred to another party and the consideration paid, including any non-cash assets transferred or liabilities assumed, is recognised in other income or borrowing costs.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C3-4 Employee benefit provisions

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Annual leave	13,136	–	15,425	–
Sick leave	25	–	63	–
Long service leave	41,208	875	40,699	832
Other leave	2,016	–	1,988	–
Total employee benefit provisions	56,385	875	58,175	832

Current employee benefit provisions not anticipated to be settled within the next twelve months

\$ '000	2024	2023
The following provisions, even though classified as current, are not expected to be settled in the next 12 months.		
Provisions – employees benefits	42,119	44,689
	42,119	44,689

\$ '000	ELE provisions	
	Employee Benefit Provisions	Total
2024		
At beginning of year	59,007	59,007
Additional provisions	15,422	15,422
Amounts used (payments)	(18,413)	(18,413)
Remeasurement effects	1,244	1,244
Total ELE provisions at end of year	57,260	57,260
2023		
At beginning of year	52,497	52,497
Additional provisions	21,325	21,325
Amounts used (payments)	(17,049)	(17,049)
Remeasurement effects	2,234	2,234
Total ELE provisions at end of year	59,007	59,007

Material accounting policy information

Employee benefit provisions are presented as current liabilities in the Statement of Financial Position if Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting date, regardless of when the actual settlement is expected to occur and therefore all annual leave and vested long service leave (or that which vests within 12 months) is presented as current.

Short-term obligations

Liabilities for wages and salaries (including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and accumulating sick leave expected to be wholly settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service) are recognised in respect of employees' services up to the end of the reporting period and are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled. The liability for annual leave and accumulating sick leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. All other short-term employee benefit obligations are presented as payables.

Other long-term employee benefit obligations

The liability for long-service leave and annual leave that is not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service is recognised in the provision for employee benefits and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the end of the reporting period using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures, and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the end of the reporting period on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

C3-4 Employee benefit provisions (continued)

On-costs

The employee benefit provisions include the aggregate on-cost liabilities that will arise when payment of current employee benefits is made in future periods. These amounts include superannuation which will be payable upon the future payment of certain leave liabilities which employees are entitled to at the reporting period.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

C3-5 Provisions

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-Current	2023 Current	2023 Non-Current
Other provisions				
Self insurance – workers compensation	4,023	9,602	2,931	10,188
Self insurance – claims incurred	292	–	281	–
Sub-total – other provisions	4,315	9,602	3,212	10,188
Asset remediation/restoration:				
Asset remediation/restoration (future works)	125	39,208	50	17,351
Sub-total – asset remediation/restoration	125	39,208	50	17,351
Total provisions	4,440	48,810	3,262	27,539

Description of and movements in provisions

\$ '000	Other provisions			Total
	Self Insurance: Workers compensation	Self Insurance: Claims incurred	Asset remediation	
2024				
At beginning of year	13,119	281	17,401	30,801
Unwinding of discount	–	–	620	620
Additional provisions	4,624	11	21,312	25,947
Amounts used (payments)	(5,333)	–	–	(5,333)
Remeasurement effects	1,215	–	–	1,215
Expenditure incurred attributable to provisions	–	–	–	–
Total other provisions at end of year	13,625	292	39,333	53,250
2023				
At beginning of year	12,097	539	19,134	31,770
Unwinding of discount	–	–	385	385
Additional provisions	3,669	–	–	3,669
Amounts used (payments)	(4,312)	–	–	(4,312)
Remeasurement effects	1,665	–	(2,118)	(453)
Unused amounts reversed	–	(258)	–	(258)
Expenditure incurred attributable to provisions	–	–	–	–
Total other provisions at end of year	13,119	281	17,401	30,801

Nature and purpose of provisions

Asset remediation

Council has a legal/public obligation to make, restore, rehabilitate and reinstate the open Whytes Gully Waste Disposal Depot and the closed Helensburgh Waste Depot.

Self-insurance - workers compensation

To recognise liabilities for outstanding claims (uninsured losses) arising from Council's decision to undertake self-insurance for excesses up to \$1,000,000 on any individual claim. Claims beyond this are supported by an external insurance policy.

Self-insurance - claims incurred

To recognise liabilities for both (i) claims expected to be incurred but not reported and (ii) claims reported and estimated as a result of Council being self insured up to an excess of \$100,000 on any individual claim.

Material accounting policy information

Provisions are recognised when Council has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events, it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation, and the amount has been reliably estimated.

Where there are a number of similar obligations, the likelihood that an outflow will be required in settlement is determined by considering the class of obligations as a whole. A provision is recognised even if the likelihood of an outflow with respect to any one item included in the same class of obligations may be small.

C3-5 Provisions (continued)

Provisions are measured at the present value of management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation at the reporting date. The discount rate used to determine the present value reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the liability. The increase in the provision due to the passage of time is recognised as a borrowing cost.

Asset Remediation/Restoration

Restoration

Close-down and restoration costs include the dismantling and demolition of infrastructure, and the removal of residual materials and remediation of disturbed areas. Estimated close-down and restoration costs are provided for in the accounting period when the obligation arising from the related disturbance occurs, whether this occurs during the development or during the operation phase, based on the net present value of estimated future costs.

Provisions for close-down and restoration costs do not include any additional obligations which are expected to arise from future disturbance. The costs are estimated on the basis of a closure plan. The cost estimates are calculated annually during the life of the operation to reflect known developments, e.g. updated cost estimates and revisions to the estimated lives of operations, and are subject to formal review at regular intervals.

Rehabilitation

Where rehabilitation is conducted systematically over the life of the operation, rather than at the time of closure, provision is made for the estimated outstanding continuous rehabilitation work at each reporting date, and the cost is charged to the Income Statement.

Provision is made for the estimated present value of the costs of environmental clean-up obligations outstanding at the reporting date. These costs are charged to the Income Statement. Movements in the environmental clean-up provisions are presented as an operating cost, except for the unwinding of the discount which is shown as a borrowing cost.

Remediation procedures generally commence soon after the time the damage, remediation process, and estimated remediation costs become known, and may continue for many years depending on the nature of the disturbance and the remediation techniques.

As noted above, the ultimate cost of environmental remediation is uncertain and cost estimates can vary in response to many factors, including changes to the relevant legal requirements, the emergence of new restoration techniques, or experience at other locations. The expected timing of expenditure can also change, for example in response to changes in quarry reserves or production rates. As a result, there could be significant adjustments to the provision for close down and restoration and environmental clean-up, which would affect future financial results.

Other movements in the provisions for close-down and restoration costs, including those resulting from new disturbance, updated cost estimates, changes to the estimated lives of operations, and revisions to discount rates, are capitalised within property, plant and equipment. These costs are then depreciated over the lives of the assets to which they relate.

Close-down and restoration costs are a normal consequence of tip and quarry operations, and the majority of close-down and restoration expenditure is incurred at the end of the life of the operations. Although the ultimate cost to be incurred is uncertain, Council estimates the respective costs based on feasibility and engineering studies using current restoration standards and techniques.

Self-insurance - workers compensation

Council holds a level of self-insurance in the form of an excess layer of \$1,000,000 on any individual claim for workers compensation. A provision for self-insurance has been made to recognise outstanding claims. Council also maintains a bank guarantee to meet expected future claims; refer to Note E3-1.

Self-insurance - claims incurred

Council holds a level of self-insurance in the form of an excess layer of \$100,000 on any individual claim for public liability and professional indemnity. A provision for self-insurance has been made to recognise outstanding claims.

C4 Reserves

C4-1 Nature and purpose of reserves

IPPE Revaluation reserve

The infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE) revaluation reserve is used to record increments and decrements in the revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment.

D Council structure

D1 Results by fund

Council utilises only a general fund for its operations.

D2 Interests in other entities

Subsidiaries, joint arrangements and associates not recognised

The following subsidiaries, joint arrangements and associates have not been recognised in this financial report.

Name of entity/operation	Principal activity/type of entity	2024	2024
		Net profit/(loss) (\$'000s)	Net assets (\$'000s)
Illawarra Performing Arts Centre	Theatre & Town Hall Management Associate	(624)	835

Reasons for non-recognition

Council has assessed this operation as not material for recognition in these statements.

E Risks and accounting uncertainties

E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held

The Council's overall risk management program focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the Council.

Council's objective is to maximise its return on cash and investments whilst maintaining an adequate level of liquidity and preserving capital. Council's finance area manages the cash and Investments portfolio with the assistance of independent advisors. Council has an investment policy which complies with s625 of the Act and the Ministerial Investment Order. This policy is regularly reviewed by Council and its staff and an investment report is tabled before Council on a monthly basis setting out the portfolio breakup and its performance as required by Local Government regulations.

Council does not engage in transactions expressed in foreign currencies and is therefore not subject to foreign currency risk.

Financial risk management is carried out by Council's finance section under policies approved by the Council.

The fair value of Council's financial assets and financial liabilities approximates their carrying amount.

The risks associated with the financial instruments held are:

- **Price risk** – the risk that the capital value of Investments may fluctuate due to changes in market prices, whether the changes are caused by factors specific to individual financial instruments or their issuers or are caused by factors affecting similar instruments traded in a market.
- **Interest rate risk** – the risk that movements in interest rates could affect returns and income.
- **Liquidity risk** – the risk that Council will not be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.
- **Credit risk** – the risk that the investment counterparty will not complete their obligations particular to a financial instrument, resulting in a financial loss to Council – be it of a capital or income nature.

Council manages these risks (amongst other measures) by diversifying its portfolio and only purchasing investments with high credit ratings or capital guarantees. Council also seeks advice from independent advisers before placing any funds in cash equivalents and investments.

(a) Market risk – interest rate and price risk

\$ '000	2024	2023
---------	------	------

The following represents a summary of the sensitivity of Council's Income Statement and accumulated surplus (for the reporting period) due to a change in either the price of a financial asset or the interest rates applicable.

It is assumed that the change in interest rates would have been constant throughout the reporting period.

Impact of a 1% movement in interest rates		
– Equity / Income Statement	856	1,347
Impact of a 10% movement in price of investments		
Possible impact of a 10% movement in price of investments	7,576	5,342

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held (continued)

(b) Credit risk

Council's major receivables comprise (i) rates and annual charges and (ii) user charges and fees.

Council manages the credit risk associated with these receivables by monitoring outstanding debt and employing stringent debt recovery procedures.

There are no significant concentrations of credit risk, whether through exposure to individual customers, specific industry sectors and/or regions.

Council makes suitable provision for the impairment of receivables as required.

There are no material receivables that have been subjected to a re-negotiation of repayment terms.

Credit risk profile

Receivables – rates and annual charges

Credit risk on rates and annual charges is minimised by the ability of Council to recover these debts as a secured charge over the land; that is, the land can be sold to recover the debt. Council is also able to charge interest on overdue rates and annual charges at higher than market rates which further encourages payment.

\$ '000	Not yet overdue	overdue rates and annual charges < 5 years	≥ 5 years	Total
2024				
Gross carrying amount	–	14,881	3,266	18,147
2023				
Gross carrying amount	–	17,802	1,320	19,122

Receivables - non-rates and annual charges and contract assets

Council applies the simplified approach for non-rates and annual charges debtors and contract assets to provide for expected credit losses, which permits the use of the lifetime expected loss provision at inception. To measure the expected credit losses, non-rates and annual charges debtors and contract assets have been grouped based on shared credit risk characteristics and the days past due.

The loss allowance provision is determined as follows. The expected credit losses incorporate forward-looking information.

\$ '000	Not yet overdue	Overdue debts 0 - 30 days	31 - 60 days	61 - 90 days	> 91 days	Total
2024						
Gross carrying amount	23,475	690	302	222	3,667	28,356
Expected loss rate (%)	0.39%	5.98%	14.20%	32.05%	84.90%	11.85%
ECL provision	92	41	43	71	3,113	3,360
2023						
Gross carrying amount	16,201	642	566	92	2,801	20,302
Expected loss rate (%)	0.31%	8.11%	5.76%	68.00%	83.23%	12.46%
ECL provision	50	52	33	63	2,331	2,529

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held (continued)

(c) Liquidity risk

Payables, lease liabilities and borrowings are both subject to liquidity risk – the risk that insufficient funds may be on hand to meet payment obligations as and when they fall due.

Council manages this risk by monitoring its cash flow requirements and liquidity levels and maintaining an adequate cash buffer.

Payment terms can (in extenuating circumstances) also be extended and overdraft facilities utilised as required.

Borrowings are also subject to interest rate risk – the risk that movements in interest rates could adversely affect funding costs and debt servicing requirements. Council manages this risk through diversification of borrowing types, maturities and interest rate structures. The finance team regularly reviews interest rate movements to determine if it would be advantageous to refinance or renegotiate part or all of the loan portfolio.

The timing of cash flows presented in the table below to settle financial liabilities reflects the earliest contractual settlement dates. The timing of expected outflows is not expected to be materially different from contracted cashflows.

The amounts disclosed in the table are the undiscounted contracted cash flows for non-lease liabilities (refer to Note C2-1(b) for lease liabilities) and therefore the balances in the table may not equal the balances in the Statement of Financial Position due to the effect of discounting.

\$ '000	Weighted average interest rate	Without defined maturity	≤ 1 Year	payable in: 1 - 5 Years	> 5 Years	Total cash outflows	Actual carrying values
2024							
Payables	0.00%	2,087	20,682	–	–	22,769	22,273
Borrowings	0.62%	–	663	–	–	663	657
Total financial liabilities		2,087	21,345	–	–	23,432	22,930
2023							
Payables	0.00%	2,553	17,587	–	–	20,140	22,272
Borrowings	0.62%	–	2,650	663	–	3,313	3,229
Total financial liabilities		2,553	20,237	663	–	23,453	25,501

E2-1 Fair value measurement

Council measures the following asset and liability classes at fair value on a recurring basis:

- Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment
- Investment property
- Financial assets and liabilities

The fair value of assets and liabilities must be estimated in accordance with various accounting standards for either recognition and measurement requirements or for disclosure purposes.

AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement* requires all assets and liabilities measured at fair value to be assigned to a 'level' in the fair value hierarchy as follows:

Level 1: Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the entity can access at the measurement date.

Level 2: Inputs other than quoted prices included within level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.

Level 3: Inputs for the asset or liability that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs).

Fair value measurement hierarchy							
\$ '000	Notes	Date of latest valuation		Level 3 Significant unobservable inputs		Total	
		2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
Recurring fair value measurements							
Financial assets							
Financial investments	C1-2						
At fair value through profit or loss – designated at fair value on initial recognition		30/06/24	30/06/23	78,874	56,286	78,874	56,286
Total financial assets				78,874	56,286	78,874	56,286
Investment property							
Commercial building	C1-9	30/06/24~	30/06/23*	5,100	5,050	5,100	5,050
Total investment property				5,100	5,050	5,100	5,050
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment							
	C1-8						
Roads		30/06/24*	30/06/23*	973,766	918,954	973,766	918,954
Bridges		30/06/24*	30/06/23*	113,805	101,198	113,805	101,198
Footpaths		30/06/24*	30/06/23*	225,558	203,200	225,558	203,200
Stormwater		30/06/24*	30/06/23*	988,918	932,200	988,918	932,200
Plant and equipment		N/A	N/A	19,536	20,293	19,536	20,293
Office equipment		N/A	N/A	2,746	2,909	2,746	2,909
Furniture and fittings		N/A	N/A	925	1,154	925	1,154
Operational land		30/06/24~	30/06/23*	367,911	306,586	367,911	306,586
Community land		30/06/24*	30/06/23*	364,375	366,436	364,375	366,436
Crown Land		30/06/24*	30/06/23*	120,906	120,906	120,906	120,906
Land under roads		30/06/24~	30/06/19~	3,562	8,579	3,562	8,579
Buildings		30/06/24~	30/06/23*	517,018	371,666	517,018	371,666
Other structures		30/06/24~	30/06/23*	15,355	9,166	15,355	9,166
Swimming pools		30/06/24*	30/06/23*	14,564	14,316	14,564	14,316
Library books		N/A	N/A	5,003	4,900	5,003	4,900
Other open space/recreational assets		30/06/24*	30/06/23*	166,084	157,599	166,084	157,599
Tip asset		30/06/24~	30/06/21~	8,177	–	8,177	–
Works in progress		N/A	N/A	88,503	81,382	88,503	81,382
Artworks		30/06/24~	30/06/19~	16,622	15,991	16,622	15,991
Other		30/06/21~	30/06/21~	42,817	42,877	42,817	42,877
Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment				4,056,151	3,680,312	4,056,151	3,680,312

(*~)(*) Valuation via an indexation review, (~) Valuation via a comprehensive review

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

Valuation techniques

Where Council is unable to derive fair value using quoted market prices of identical assets (i.e. Level 1 inputs), Council instead utilises a spread of both observable inputs (Level 2 inputs) and unobservable inputs (Level 3 inputs).

Level 2 inputs include;

- quoted prices for similar assets in active markets,
- quoted prices for identical or similar assets in markets that are not active,
- inputs other than quoted prices that are observable (e.g. interest rates, credit spreads etc.) and
- market corroborated inputs.

Level 3 inputs are unobservable inputs. If an observable input (Level 2) requires an adjustment using an unobservable input and that adjustment results in a significantly higher or lower fair value measurement, the resulting measurement is categorised within Level 3 of the fair value hierarchy. Council uses unobservable inputs to the extent relevant observable inputs are not available. But the objective remains the same; i.e. an exit price from the perspective of market participants. Therefore, unobservable inputs reflect the assumptions market participants would use when pricing, including assumptions about risk. Assumptions about risk include risk inherent in a particular valuation technique and risk inherent in inputs to the technique. Such an adjustment may be necessary if there is a significant measurement uncertainty.

Unobservable inputs have been developed using the best information available, which includes Council's own data. In some cases, Council adjusts its own data if reasonable available information indicates other market participants would use different data or if there is an entity specific synergy (i.e. not available to other market participants).

Level 3 inputs include;

- Unit Rates,
- Unit Price,
- Asset Condition,
- Remaining Useful Life,
- Future Demands,
- Borrowing Rates.

The Fair Valuation techniques Council has employed while utilising Level 2 and Level 3 inputs are as follows:

Financial assets

Valuation Technique – A portion of Council's investment portfolio is measured at fair value (i.e. market approach).

Fair Value Hierarchy – the fair value has been derived from the current price in an active market for similar assets. Emerald Reverse Mortgage investment securities form part of this portion of Council's portfolio. The market for Australian mortgage backed securities, regardless of the robustness of the structure, is highly illiquid as a direct consequence of the global financial crisis. This has caused difficulties in valuing the security as there is limited "price discovery" in the market. As such the level of valuation input for Council's fair valued investments was considered a level 3.

Investment property

Valuation Technique – Council's Investment Property is measured using sales direct comparison based on a market selling approach (i.e. market approach).

Fair Value Hierarchy - the fair value has been derived from the sales prices of comparable properties after adjusting for differences in key attributes such as property size. The most significant inputs into this valuation approach are rental yields and price per square metre. The level of evidence to support the critical assumptions of Council's investment property valuation was considered to be significant due to high levels of variability in the market for rental yields and future demands. As such the level of valuation input for these properties was considered level 3.

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE)

Infrastructure – Council's Infrastructure incorporates;

- Roads – Surface and bases, Car Parks, Kerb and Guttering and Traffic Facilities (speed humps, bollards and signs),
- Bridges – Road, Pedestrian and Jetties,
- Footpaths including shared pathways, and
- Stormwater Drainage.

Valuation Technique – Infrastructure assets are recognised using the cost method, which equates to the current replacement cost of a modern equivalent asset. The cost to replace the asset is to equal the amount that a market participant buyer of that asset would pay to acquire it.

Fair Value Hierarchy - the general valuation approach to determine the fair value of Council's infrastructure inventory is to determine a unit rate based on square metres or an appropriate unit corroborated by market evidence (Level 2 input). A process is then undertaken to compare these rates with internal unit rates derived by Council as a result of specific projects that have been undertaken. Further to this other input such as asset condition and useful life require a significant level of professional judgement and can impact significantly on the fair value. As such the level of valuation input for these assets was considered level 3.

Plant & Equipment, Office Equipment & Furniture & Fittings incorporate:

- Plant & Equipment – Trucks, Tractors, Graders, Rollers, Buses, Vans, Passenger Vehicles, Mobile Equipment (i.e. generators, hand mowers, tools), Fluid storage units (i.e. septic tanks, water tanks),
- Office Equipment – Electronic Whiteboards, Printing Equipment, Safes and I.T. equipment such as computers, printers and scanners,
- Furniture & Fittings – Chairs, Tables, Filing Cabinets, Bookshelves, Compactuses,

Valuation Technique – These assets are recognised at depreciated historical cost as an acceptable substitute for fair value because any difference between fair value and depreciated historical cost is unlikely to be material.

Fair Value Hierarchy – The key unobservable unit to the valuation of this category is asset condition and useful life. The condition of assets is reviewed on an annual basis and an assessment of remaining life undertaken based on these results.

Operational Land

Valuation Technique – Council's Operational Land is measured using a comparative market selling approach (i.e. market approach).

Fair Value Hierarchy – the fair value has been derived from the sales prices of comparable properties after adjusting for differences in key attributes such as property size. The most significant inputs into this valuation approach is price per square metre. The level of evidence to support the critical assumptions of Council's operational land valuation was considered to be significant due to high levels of variability in the market for similar properties and future demands. As such the level of valuation input for these properties was considered level 3.

Community & Crown Land

Valuation Technique – Council's Community & Crown Land is measured using comparative Land Values (LV) provided by the Valuer General (VG) or an average unit rate based on a comparable LV for similar properties (i.e. market approach).

Fair Value Hierarchy – the fair value has been derived from the LV's provided by the VG or an average unit rate based on the LV for similar properties where the VG did not provide a LV. The most significant input into this valuation approach is price per square metre. Valuations provided by the VG are not in the public domain and the application of an average rate requires a level of professional judgement. As such the level of valuation input for these properties was considered level 3.

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

Land Under Roads

Valuation Technique – Land is generally valued using comparative Land Values (LV) provided by the Valuer General (VG) or an average unit rate based on a comparable LV for similar properties (i.e. market approach).

Fair Value Hierarchy – The existing use fair value of land under roads is best expressed as undeveloped or englobo land (pre-subdivision). However, as sufficient sales evidence of englobo land with similar features to the land being valued is generally not available, it is appropriate to use a proxy to estimate the englobo value. Community land value is used as a reasonable proxy to value land under roads, as such land generally has no feasible alternative use, and it is undeveloped and is publicly accessible. As such the level of valuation input for these properties was considered level 3.

Buildings – Non-Specialised and Specialised

Valuation Technique – Buildings are recognised using the cost method, which equates to the current replacement cost of a modern equivalent asset. The cost to replace the asset is equal to the amount that a market participant buyer of that asset would pay to acquire it.

Fair Value Hierarchy – Specialised and Non-Specialised buildings are generally assessed at level 3 of the fair value hierarchy due to lack of market evidence. Key inputs are unit rates and remaining useful life. The exception is non-specialised residential properties which have been valued using sale prices of comparable properties (level 2). The most significant input into this valuation approach is price per square metre. The level of evidence to support the critical assumptions of Council's residential property valuation was considered to be significant due to high levels of variability in the market for rental yields and future demands. As such the level of valuation input for all buildings was considered level 3.

Other Structures

Other Structures incorporates Bus Shelters, Shade Structures, Picnic Shelters and BBQ Shelters.

Valuation Technique – Other Structures are recognised at depreciated historical cost as an acceptable substitute for fair value because any difference between fair value and depreciated historical cost is unlikely to be material.

Fair Value Hierarchy – The key unobservable unit to the valuation of this category is asset condition and useful life. The condition of assets is reviewed on an annual basis and an assessment of remaining life undertaken based on these results.

Other Open Space / Recreational Assets

Other Open Space/Recreational Assets incorporate Park Assets including Playgrounds, Skateboard Facilities, Tennis Courts, Furniture and Landscaping and Power Poles.

Valuation Technique – Other Open Space/Recreational Assets are recognised using the cost method.

Fair Value Hierarchy – while some elements of the cost method can be supported by market evidence (Level 2) other factors require professional judgement such as asset condition and useful life. As these inputs can have a significant impact on the fair value the valuation input all Other Open Space / Recreational Assets were considered level 3.

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

Swimming Pools – Structures

Valuation Technique – Swimming Pools and Rock Pools are valued using the cost approach, which equates to the current replacement cost of a modern equivalent asset.

Fair Value Hierarchy - the general valuation approach to determine the fair value of Council's swimming pool inventory is to determine a unit rate based on square metres corroborated by market evidence (Level 2 input). A process is then undertaken to compare these rates with internal unit rates derived by Council as a result of specific work that has been undertaken. Further to this other input such as asset condition and useful life require a significant level of professional judgement and can impact significantly on the fair value. As such the level of valuation input for these properties was considered level 3.

Artworks

Valuation Technique – Art Works are valued using the market approach, which equates to the current replacement cost of a modern equivalent asset. The cost to replace the asset is to equal the amount that a market participant buyer of that asset would pay to acquire it.

Fair Value Hierarchy - the general valuation approach to determine the fair value of Council's Artworks is to use the market price or purchase price of the original transaction or if the work is in the form of a donation an external valuation is undertaken corroborated by market evidence (Level 2 input). It is noted that the valuation process requires a significant level of professional judgement and this can impact significantly on the fair value. As such the level of valuation input for artworks was considered level 3.

Library Books

Valuation Technique – These assets are recognised at depreciated historical cost as an acceptable substitute for fair value because any difference between fair value and depreciated historical cost is unlikely to be material.

Fair Value Hierarchy – The key unobservable unit to the valuation of this category is asset condition and useful life. The condition of assets is reviewed on an annual basis and an assessment of remaining life undertaken based on these results.

Other Assets

Other Assets is a catch all for the remaining assets held by Council and includes Waste Assets such as Cell Development and Liners, Public Art and Crematorium and Cemetery Beams and Walls.

Valuation Technique - Other Assets are recognised using the cost method.

Fair Value Hierarchy – While some elements of the cost method can be supported by market evidence (Level 2) others factors require professional judgement such as asset condition and useful life. As these inputs can have a significant impact on the fair value the valuation input all Other Assets were considered level 3.

Tip Remediation Asset

Valuation Technique – Council's Tip Remediation Asset is measured using the cost method.

Fair Value Hierarchy – Whytes Gully Waste Disposal Depot will require remediation and restoration works to be carried out during and at the end of its useful life. The cash outflows relating to these remediation and restoration works have been modelled and recognised as an asset in Note C1-8 of Council's statements. Key unobservable inputs were the discount rate, cost escalation rate, timing of costs and future environmental management requirements. As such the level of valuation input for Council's tip asset was considered Level 3.

The tip remediation asset was adjusted in line with changes to the remediation provision.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

A summary of the Fair Valuation techniques Council has employed while utilising Level 2 and Level 3 inputs are as follows:

Asset Category	Valuation Frequency	Description of Process	Valuer*	Responsibility
Financial Assets	Monthly	Monthly valuation using the current price in an active market for similar assets	External	Finance Division
Investment Properties	Annually	Assessed each year for material change and adjusted accordingly	External	Property Division
Infrastructure	5 years	Full valuation using current unit rates and comparable work. Assessed each year for material change and adjusted accordingly	Internal	Infrastructure & Strategic Planning Division
Plant & Equipment	Annually	Assessment of remaining useful life undertaken with adjustments to consumption patterns that may impact fair value	Internal	Finance Division
Office Equipment & Furniture & Fittings	Annually	Assessment of remaining useful life undertaken with adjustments to consumption patterns that may impact fair value	Internal	Finance Division
Operational Land	5 Years	Full valuation every 5 years or index applied annually if material	External	Property Division
Community & Crown Land	5 Years	Valuer General Land Values or Average Unit Rate for similar properties if not available	Valuer General / Internal	Property / Finance Division
Land Under Roads	5 Years	Valuer General Land Values or Average Unit Rate used as proxy to derive en globo rate	Valuer General / Internal	Finance Division
Buildings – Non Specialised & Specialised	5 Years	Full valuation every 5 years or index applied annually if material	External / Internal	Infrastructure & Strategic Planning Division / Property Division
Intangibles	5 Years	Assessment of remaining useful life undertaken with adjustments to consumption patterns that may impact fair value	Internal	Finance Division
Other Structures	5 Years	Assessment of remaining useful life undertaken with adjustments to consumption patterns that may impact fair value	Internal	Infrastructure & Strategic Planning Division

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

Asset Category	Valuation Frequency	Description of Process	Valuer*	Responsibility
Other Open Space / Recreational Assets	5 Years	Full valuation every 5 years or index applied annually if material	Internal	Infrastructure & Strategic Planning Division
Swimming Pools - Structures	5 Years	Full valuation every 5 years or index applied annually if material	External / Internal	Infrastructure & Strategic Planning Division
Library Books	Annually	Assessment of remaining useful life undertaken with adjustments to consumption patterns that may impact fair value	Internal	Finance Division
Other Assets	5 years	Full valuation every 5 years or index applied annually if material	Internal	Various
Tip Remediation Asset	Annually	Reassessment of discount rate and application to discounted cash flows if material	Internal	Finance Division

*Internal Valuation refers to the utilisation of in-house expertise to value Council's assets.

E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

Fair value measurements using significant unobservable inputs (level 3)

A reconciliation of the movements in recurring fair value measurements allocated to Level 3 of the hierarchy is provided below:

\$ '000	Financial assets		Investment property		IPP&E		Total	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
Opening balance	56,286	56,965	5,050	5,600	3,680,312	3,347,445	3,741,648	3,410,010
Total gains or losses for the period								
Recognised in profit or loss – realised ¹	1,414	1,234	50	(550)	(5,603)	–	(4,139)	684
Recognised in other comprehensive income – revaluation surplus	–	–	–	–	320,912	287,053	320,912	287,053
Other movements								
Purchases (GBV)	29,600	7,500	–	–	156,507	130,206	186,107	137,706
Disposals (WDV)	(8,426)	(9,413)	–	–	(10,903)	(2,441)	(19,329)	(11,854)
Depreciation and impairment	–	–	–	–	(86,165)	(77,888)	(86,165)	(77,888)
Waste remediation reassessment	–	–	–	–	8,176	–	8,176	–
Transfer to expense	–	–	–	–	(7,085)	(4,063)	(7,085)	(4,063)
Closing balance	78,874	56,286	5,100	5,050	4,056,151	3,680,312	4,140,125	3,741,648

(1) Fair value gains recognised in the Income Statement relating to assets still on hand at year end total

E3-1 Contingencies

The following assets and liabilities do not qualify for recognition in the Statement of Financial Position, but their knowledge and disclosure is considered relevant to the users of Council's financial report.

ASSETS NOT RECOGNISED

1. Land under roads

As permitted under AASB 1051, Council has elected not to bring to account land under roads that it owned or controlled up to and including 30 June 2008.

LIABILITIES NOT RECOGNISED

1. Bank Guarantees

Council has provided Bank Guarantees totalling \$2,001,081 as security over damages for work that may impact a third party.

Council has provided security to Work Cover for outstanding workers compensation claims liability in the form of a bank guarantee to the sum of \$13,326,000.

2. Defined benefit superannuation contribution plans

Council is party to an Industry Defined Benefit Plan under the Local Government Superannuation Scheme (Active Super), named The Local Government Superannuation Scheme - Pool B (the Scheme) which is a defined benefit plan that has been deemed to be a 'multi-employer fund' for purposes of AASB119 Employee Benefits for the following reasons:

- Assets are not segregated within the sub-group according to the employees of each sponsoring employer.
- The contribution rates have been the same for all sponsoring employers. That is, contribution rates have not varied for each sponsoring employer according to the experience relating to the employees of that sponsoring employer.
- Benefits for employees of all sponsoring employers are determined according to the same formulae and without regard to the sponsoring employer.
- The same actuarial assumptions are currently used in respect of the employees of each sponsoring employer.

Given the factors above, each sponsoring employer is exposed to the actuarial risks associated with current and former employees of other sponsoring employers, and hence shares in the associated gains and losses (to the extent that they are not borne by members).

Description of the funding arrangements

Pooled Employers are required to pay future service employer contributions and past service employer contributions to the Fund.

The future service employer contributions were determined using the new entrant rate method under which a contribution rate sufficient to fund the total benefits over the working life-time of a typical new entrant is calculated. The current future service employer contribution rates are:

Division B	1.9 times member contributions for non-180 Point Members; Nil for 180 Point Members*
Division C	2.5% salaries
Division D	1.64 times member contributions

* For 180 Point Members, Employers are required to contribute 8.5% of salaries for the year ending 30 June 2024 (increasing to 9.0% in line with the increase in the Superannuation Guarantee) to these members' accumulation accounts, which are paid in addition to members' defined benefits.

The past service contribution for each Pooled Employer is a share of the total past service contributions of \$20.0 million per annum for 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024, apportioned according to each employer's share of the accrued liabilities as at 30 June 2023. These past service contributions are used to maintain the adequacy of the funding position for the accrued liabilities.

The adequacy of contributions is assessed at each triennial actuarial investigation and monitored annually between triennials.

Description of the extent to which Council can be liable to the plan for other Council's obligations under the terms and conditions of the multi-employer plan

E3-1 Contingencies (continued)

As stated above, each sponsoring employer (Council) is exposed to the actuarial risks associated with current and former employees of other sponsoring employers and hence shares in the associated gains and losses.

However, there is no relief under the Fund's trust deed for employers to walk away from their defined benefit obligations. Under limited circumstances, an employer may withdraw from the plan when there are no active members, on full payment of outstanding past service contributions. There is no provision for allocation of any surplus which may be present at the date of withdrawal of the Council.

There are no specific provisions under the Fund's trust deed dealing with deficits or surplus on wind-up.

There is no provision for allocation of any surplus which may be present at the date of withdrawal of an employer.

The amount of Council employer contributions to the defined benefit section of the Local Government Superannuation Scheme and recognised as an expense for the year ending 30 June 2024 was \$1,492,251.48. The last formal valuation of the Scheme was performed by fund actuary, Richard Boyfield, FIAA as at 30 June 2023.

Council's expected contribution to the plan for the next annual reporting period is \$1,146,381.50.

The estimated employer reserves financial position for the Pooled Employers at 30 June 2024 is:

Employer reserves only *	\$'000	Asset Coverage
Assets	2,237.5	
Past Service Liabilities	2,141.9	104.5%
Vested Benefits	2,159.8	103.6%

* excluding other accumulation accounts and reserves in both assets and liabilities.

The share of any funding surplus or deficit that can be attributed to Council is 4.88%

Council's share of that deficiency cannot be accurately calculated as the Scheme is a mutual arrangement where assets and liabilities are pooled together for all member councils. For this reason, no liability for the deficiency has been recognised in Council's accounts. Council has a possible obligation that may arise should the Scheme require immediate payment to correct the deficiency.

The key economic long term assumptions used to calculate the present value of accrued benefits are:

Investment return	6.0% per annum
Salary inflation	3.5% per annum
Increase in CPI	3.5% for FY 23/24 2.5% per annum thereafter

The contribution requirements may vary from the current rates if the overall sub-group experience is not in line with the actuarial assumptions in determining the funding program; however, any adjustment to the funding program would be the same for all sponsoring employers in the Pooled Employers group.

The estimated employer reserves financial position above is a preliminary calculation, and once all the relevant information has been received by the Fund's Actuary, the final end of year review, which will be a triennial actuarial investigation will be completed by December 2024

3. Third party claims

The Council is involved from time to time in various third party claims incidental to the ordinary course of business including claims for damages relating to its functions and services. Council believes that it ordinarily holds adequate insurance coverage in relation to these third party claims and would not expect any material liabilities to eventuate.

E3-1 Contingencies (continued)

4. Development Contributions

Council levies Development Contributions upon various development across the Council area through the required Contributions Plans. As part of these Plans, Council has received funds for which it will be required to expend the monies in accordance with those Plans.

As well, these Plans indicate proposed future expenditure to be undertaken by Council, which will be funded by making levies and receipting funds in future years or where a shortfall exists by the use of Council's General Funds.

These future expenses do not yet qualify as liabilities as of the Reporting Date, but represent Council's intention to spend funds in the manner and timing set out in those plans.

5. Greenhouse Park

Council owns and manages a former landfill site at Greenhouse Park. The landfill was constructed prior to contemporary environmental regulations and used as both a putrescible and builders waste landfill. Following the closure of the site as a landfill, remediation of the site has been progressively occurring to transform the site into a natural area.

Council is also working with the EPA and specialised consultants to manage the landfill waste which was placed on the site. Total remediation costs at this stage are unknown and will be dependent on the remediation strategies implemented. Council is currently working with the EPA and specialised consultants to determine the remediation actions required.

6. Native Title

In January 2018, the National Native Title Tribunal accepted registration of a native title claim that included the Wollongong LGA. The claim is now before the Federal Court, and Council is one of a number of defendants to those proceedings. Private freehold land, and certain other land owned by Council is not affected. The claim will take some time to determine before the Federal Court.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

F People and relationships

F1 Related party disclosures

F1-1 Key management personnel (KMP)

Key management personnel (KMP) of the council are those persons having the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the council, directly or indirectly. During the financial year 19 persons were identified as meeting the definition of a KMP.

The aggregate amount of KMP compensation included in the Income Statement is:

\$ '000	2024	2023
Compensation:		
Short-term benefits	2,693	2,578
Total	2,693	2,578

Other transactions with KMP and their related parties

Council has assessed other transactions with KMP and their related parties as not material for recognition in these statements.

F1-2 Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses

\$ '000	2024	2023
The aggregate amount of Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses included in materials and services expenses in the Income Statement are:		
Mayoral fee	107	104
Councillors' fees	507	490
Other Councillors' expenses (including Mayor)	73	98
Total	687	692

F1-3 Other related parties

\$ '000	Transactions during the year	Terms and conditions
2024		
Associates		
Marketing, events, business and investment in LGA	1,560	Amounts provided under a funding agreement.
Event sponsorship & support	18	Based on specific events.
Advertisement	6	
Performing Arts Centre management	826	Amounts provided under a funding agreement.
Town Hall management	544	Amounts provided under a funding agreement.
Asset Maintenance	115	
Community Subsidy	20	Amounts provided under a funding agreement.
Venue Hire	20	

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

F1-3 Other related parties (continued)

\$ '000	Transactions during the year	Terms and conditions
2023		
Associates		
Marketing, events, business and investment in LGA	1,550	Amounts provided under a funding agreement.
Event sponsorship & support	3	Based on specific events.
Advertisement	9	
Performing Arts Centre management	1,053	Amounts provided under a funding agreement.
Town Hall management	512	Amounts provided under a funding agreement.
Asset Maintenance	74	
Community Subsidy	—	Amounts provided under a funding agreement.
Venue Hire	9	

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

F2 Other relationships

F2-1 Audit fees

\$ '000	2024	2023
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During the year, the following fees were incurred for services provided by the auditor of Council, related practices and non-related audit firms

Auditors of the Council - NSW Auditor-General:

(i) Audit and other assurance services

Audit and review of financial statements

	261	300
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Remuneration for audit and other assurance services	261	300
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Total Auditor-General remuneration	261	300
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Non NSW Auditor-General audit firms

(i) Audit and other assurance services

Other audit and assurance services

	25	10
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Remuneration for audit and other assurance services	25	10
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Total remuneration of non NSW Auditor-General audit firms	25	10
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Total audit fees	286	310
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Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

G Other matters

G1-1 Statement of Cash Flows information

(a) Reconciliation of Operating Result

\$ '000	2024	2023
Net operating result from Income Statement	40,989	60,779
Add / (less) non-cash items:		
Depreciation and amortisation	86,023	78,339
(Gain) / loss on disposal of assets	10,120	990
Non-cash capital grants and contributions	(59,964)	(39,756)
Prior period WIP written off during year	7,085	4,063
IPP&E restoration write offs	—	—
Losses/(gains) recognised on fair value re-measurements through the P&L:		
– Investments classified as 'at fair value' or 'held for trading'	(1,306)	(1,042)
– Investment property	(50)	550
– Fair value movement on CivicRisk Mutual	(255)	(332)
Unwinding of discount rates on reinstatement provisions	620	385
Movements in operating assets and liabilities and other cash items:		
(Increase) / decrease of receivables	(103)	(10,533)
Increase / (decrease) in provision for impairment of receivables	831	2,107
(Increase) / decrease of inventories	(38)	(53)
(Increase) / decrease of other current assets	2,790	530
(Increase) / decrease of contract asset	(6,976)	5,916
Increase / (decrease) in payables	280	(552)
Increase / (decrease) in other accrued expenses payable	(397)	2,908
Increase / (decrease) in other liabilities	(201)	(270)
Increase / (decrease) in contract liabilities	2,228	4,824
Increase / (decrease) in employee benefit provision	(1,747)	6,510
Increase / (decrease) in other provisions	21,829	(1,354)
Net cash flows from operating activities	101,758	114,009

(b) Non-cash investing and financing activities

Bushfire grants	—	215
Other dedications	58,757	38,911
Contributed Art Works	535	—
Planning Agreement - Non-cash contribution	—	—
Total non-cash investing and financing activities	59,292	39,126

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

G2-1 Commitments

Capital commitments (exclusive of GST)

\$ '000	2024	2023
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Capital expenditure committed for at the reporting date but not recognised in the financial statements as liabilities:

Property, plant and equipment

Infrastructure	30,019	23,339
Total commitments	30,019	23,339

Details of capital commitments

Infrastructure includes Beaton Park Tennis Court Upgrade, WWARRP Stage 2B, Bellambi Gully Flood Mitigation, Lindsay Maynes Park Amenities Building, Helensburgh Pool - Design, Shone Avenue Retaining Wall and Shared Pathway, Sportsground Drainage and Irrigation, West Dapto Road Upgrade, Channel & Verge Modifications - Kanahooka Road, Corrimal Steam Train Restoration, Stanwell Park Beach Reserve Playground Renewal, and Unanderra Park Playground Renewal.

G3-1 Events occurring after the reporting date

Council is unaware of any material or significant 'non-adjusting events' that should be disclosed.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

G4 Statement of developer contributions

G4-1 Summary of developer contributions

\$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2023	Contributions received during the year			Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2024	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
		Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other					
Drainage	12,343	2,938	–	–	677	–	–	15,958	–
Roads	(5,718)	9,885	–	–	(265)	(11,583)	–	(7,681)	–
Open space	5,010	873	–	–	278	(23)	–	6,138	–
Community facilities	1,409	20	–	–	73	–	–	1,502	–
Administration	(1,824)	171	–	–	(99)	(315)	–	(2,067)	–
Public transport	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
S7.11 contributions – under a plan	11,220	13,887	–	–	664	(11,921)	–	13,850	–
S7.12 levies – under a plan	29,217	7,321	–	–	1,613	(693)	–	37,458	–
Total S7.11 and S7.12 revenue under plans	40,437	21,208	–	–	2,277	(12,614)	–	51,308	–
S7.11 not under plans	362	–	–	–	19	–	–	381	–
S7.4 planning agreements	4,310	149	–	–	177	(376)	–	4,260	–
Total contributions	45,109	21,357	–	–	2,473	(12,990)	–	55,949	–

Under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, Council has significant obligations to provide Section 7.11 (contributions towards provision or improvement of amenities or services) infrastructure in new release areas. It is possible that the funds contributed may be less than the cost of this infrastructure, requiring Council to borrow or use general revenue to fund the difference.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

G4-2 Developer contributions by plan ¹

	Opening balance at 1 July 2023	Contributions received during the year			Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2024	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
\$ '000		Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other					
CONTRIBUTION PLAN – WEST DAPTO									
Drainage	12,343	2,938	–	–	677	–	–	15,958	–
Roads	(5,718)	9,885	–	–	(265)	(11,583)	–	(7,681)	–
Open space	5,010	873	–	–	278	(23)	–	6,138	–
Community facilities	1,409	20	–	–	73	–	–	1,502	–
Administration	(1,824)	171	–	–	(99)	(315)	–	(2,067)	–
Total	11,220	13,887	–	–	664	(11,921)	–	13,850	–

(1) The opening balances have been adjusted between categories to reflect the allocation of non-cash contributions

S7.12 Levies – under a plan

CONTRIBUTION PLAN – WOLLONGONG ^{A, B}									
City Wide	24,792	3,484	–	–	1,315	(693)	–	28,898	–
City Centre	4,425	3,837	–	–	298	–	–	8,560	–
Total	29,217	7,321	–	–	1,613	(693)	–	37,458	–

(A) The Wollongong City-Wide Development Contributions Plan is a levy based plan that reflects development activity in the Local Government Area excluding areas covered by the West Dapto Development Contributions Plan.

(B) Figures provided include amounts collected under the Wollongong City-Wide Development Plan as well as contributions received from relevant development consents approved prior to 2006 that contained conditions for contributions to be made under now repealed Development Contribution plans. These are transferred and applied towards items within the Section 7.12 Plan works schedule as the Section 7.12 Plan is the replacement for the plans repealed in June 2006.

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

G4-3 Contributions not under plans

	Opening balance at 1 July 2023	Contributions received during the year			Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2024	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
\$ '000		Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other					
CONTRIBUTION PLAN – CALDERWOOD ^{A, B, C}									
Roads	362	–	–	–	19	–	–	381	–
Total	362	–	–	–	19	–	–	381	–

(A) The Calderwood Urban Release Area was historically in the Shellharbour City Local Government Area. However, the Urban Release Area was later expanded during the State Government's major project approval process to include land that straddles the local government boundary, which comprises 107 hectares of land in the Wollongong Local Government Area at Marshall Mount.

(B) In 2013, the Land and Environment Court imposed a development contribution condition on Stage 1 of the Calderwood development within Shellharbour City Council Local Government Area, requiring the payment of a contribution of \$1,320 per lot to Wollongong City Council to be used towards upgrades of Marshall Mount Road and Yallah Road. The payments reflected in the above relate to these court proceedings.

(C) Wollongong City Council and Lendlease Communities (Australia) Limited have entered into a Planning Agreement for the remainder of the contributions relating to the Calderwood development.

G4-4 S7.4 planning agreements

S7.4 planning agreements									
Roads	4,310	149	–	–	177	(376)	–	4,260	–
Total	4,310	149	–	–	177	(376)	–	4,260	–

Wollongong City Council | Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024

G5 Statement of performance measures

G5-1 Statement of performance measures – consolidated results

\$ '000	Amounts 2024	Indicator 2024	Indicators 2023 2022		Benchmark
1. Operating performance ratio					
Total continuing operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions less operating expenses ^{1,2}	(50,468)	(15.39)%	(1.11)%	4.89%	> 0.00%
Total continuing operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions ¹	327,917				
2. Own source operating revenue ratio					
Total continuing operating revenue excluding all grants and contributions ¹	295,145	68.84%	69.69%	74.76%	> 60.00%
Total continuing operating revenue ¹	428,714				
3. Unrestricted current ratio					
Current assets less all external restrictions ³	145,821	2.70x	2.61x	2.48x	> 1.50x
Current liabilities less specific purpose liabilities	54,058				
4. Debt service cover ratio					
Operating result before capital excluding interest and depreciation/impairment/amortisation ¹	36,302	9.68x	15.93x	12.75x	> 2.00x
Principal repayments (Statement of Cash Flows) plus borrowing costs (Income Statement)	3,750				
5. Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage					
Rates and annual charges outstanding	18,147	7.19%	8.06%	6.27%	< 5.00%
Rates and annual charges collectable	252,221				
6. Cash expense cover ratio					
Current year's cash and cash equivalents plus all term deposits	100,600	4.25	5.43	4.96	> 3.00
Monthly payments from cash flow of operating and financing activities	23,683	months	months	months	months

(1) Excludes fair value adjustments, reversal of revaluation decrements, net gain/(loss) on sale of assets, reversal of impairment losses on receivables, and net loss of interests in joint ventures and associates.

(2) Excludes impairment/revaluation decrements, net loss on sale of assets, and net loss on share of interests in joint ventures and associates

(3) Refer to Notes C1-1 to C1-5 inclusive. Excludes any real estate and land for resale not expected to be sold in next 12 months.

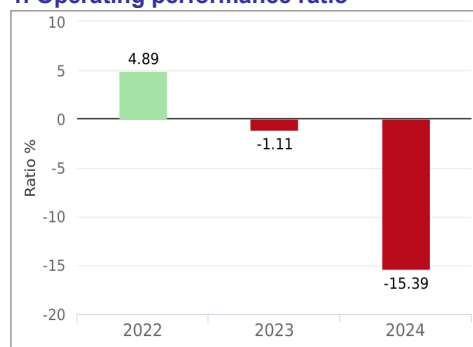
(4) Refer to Notes C3-1 to C3-5 inclusive. Excludes all payables and provisions not expected to be paid in the next 12 months (incl. ELE).

End of the audited financial statements

H Additional Council disclosures (unaudited)

H1-1 Statement of performance measures – consolidated results (graphs)

1. Operating performance ratio



Purpose of operating performance ratio

This ratio measures the extent to which Council's operating revenues have exceeded the operating expenditure within the year. Council's ongoing financial sustainability requires positive operating performance over time.

Commentary on 2023/24 result

2023/24 ratio (15.39)%

Council has an underlying deficit position forecast for the current and future years. This year's result has been impacted by significant year-end adjustments including: transfer of \$7.1M prior year and \$1.1M current year work in progress to operating expense in 2024, net impact of \$8.3M expense relating to asset disposals, increase of \$6.5M in depreciation compared to 2023 resulting from 2023 Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment revaluations, and \$13.1M expense relating to increases in waste facility remediation provision.

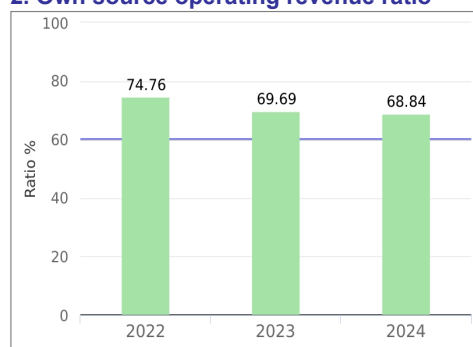
Benchmark: — > 0.00%

Source of benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark

2. Own source operating revenue ratio



Purpose of own source operating revenue ratio

This ratio measures fiscal flexibility. It is the degree of reliance on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions.

Commentary on 2023/24 result

2023/24 ratio 68.84%

This result is consistent with previous reporting periods with a significant portion of revenue being generated from Council's own sources. It is noted that the total revenue includes non-cash contributed assets which fluctuates from year to year and impacts the result.

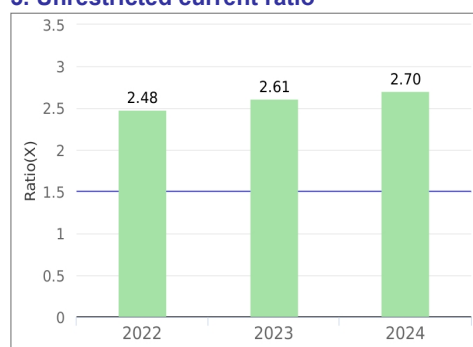
Benchmark: — > 60.00%

Source of benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark

3. Unrestricted current ratio



Purpose of unrestricted current ratio

To assess the adequacy of working capital and its ability to satisfy obligations in the short term for the unrestricted activities of Council.

Commentary on 2023/24 result

2023/24 ratio 2.70x

This benchmark remains above the benchmark. Council's strategy is to maximise the use of available funds and target a lean unrestricted ratio aims to bring the result closer to the benchmark.

Benchmark: — > 1.50x

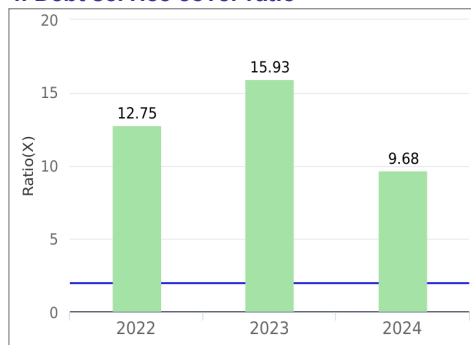
Source of benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark

H1-1 Statement of performance measures – consolidated results (graphs) (continued)

4. Debt service cover ratio



Benchmark: — > 2.00x

Source of benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

Purpose of debt service cover ratio

This ratio measures the availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments

Commentary on 2023/24 result

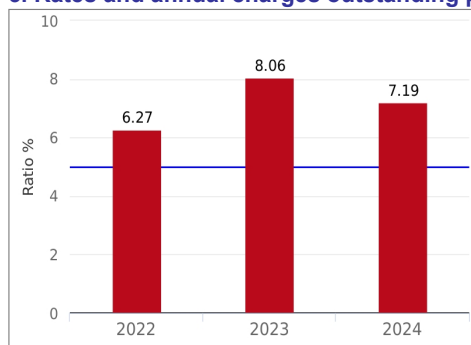
2023/24 ratio 9.68x

This results indicates that Council can adequately service its outstanding debt. The result has improved in the current year as Council paid \$2.6M in principal repayments and has not taken on additional debt facilities.

Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark

5. Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage



Benchmark: — < 5.00%

Source of benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

Purpose of rates and annual charges outstanding percentage

To assess the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on Council's liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts.

Commentary on 2023/24 result

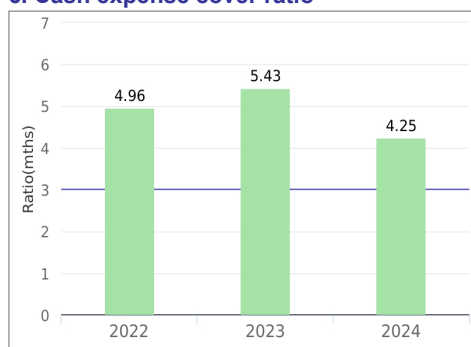
2023/24 ratio 7.19%

The performance of this measure has improved from the prior year by 0.87%. Council will continue to work with ratepayers as they navigate a high cost of living and interest rate environment. This work will continue towards achieving an outstanding percentage below the industry benchmark of 5%.

Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark

6. Cash expense cover ratio



Benchmark: — > 3.00months

Source of benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

Purpose of cash expense cover ratio

This liquidity ratio indicates the number of months a Council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow.

Commentary on 2023/24 result

2023/24 ratio 4.25 months

The result of this measure continues to reflect a high level of liquidity in Council's investment portfolio at the end of 2023-2024.

Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark

H1-2 Council information and contact details

Principal place of business:

41 Burelli Street
Wollongong NSW 2500

Contact details

Mailing Address:

Locked Bag 8821
Wollongong NSW 2500

Telephone: (02) 4227 7111

Facsimile: (02) 4227 7277

Opening hours:

Administration Building: 8:30am - 5:00pm

Internet: www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au

Email: council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au

Officers

GENERAL MANAGER

Greg Doyle

RESPONSIBLE ACCOUNTING OFFICER

Brian Jenkins

PUBLIC OFFICER

Todd Hopwood

AUDITORS

Audit Office of New South Wales
Level 19, Darling Park Tower 2, 201 Sussex Street,
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Elected members

LORD MAYOR

Tania Brown

COUNCILLORS

Ward 1

Dan Hayes
Richard Martin
Ryan Morris
Jess Whittaker

Ward 2

Andrew Anthony
David Brown
Kit Docker
Thomas Quinn

Ward 3

Linda Campbell
Ann Martin
Tiana Myers
Deidre Stuart

Other information

ABN: 63 139 525 939



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on the general purpose financial statements

Wollongong City Council

To the Councillors of Wollongong City Council

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Wollongong City Council (the Council), which comprise the Statement by Councillors and Management, the Income Statement and Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2024, the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2024, the Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information and other explanatory information.

In my opinion:

- the Council's accounting records have been kept in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Chapter 13, Part 3, Division 2 (the Division)
- the financial statements:
 - have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of this Division
 - are consistent with the Council's accounting records
 - present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Council as at 30 June 2024, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards
- all information relevant to the conduct of the audit has been obtained
- no material deficiencies in the accounting records or financial statements have come to light during the audit.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements' section of my report.

I am independent of the Council in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)' (APES 110).

Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of councils
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

I believe the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Other Information

The Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2024 includes other information in addition to the financial statements and my Independent Auditor's Report thereon. The Councillors are responsible for the other information. At the date of this Independent Auditor's Report, the other information I have received comprise the special purpose financial statements and Special Schedules (the Schedules).

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information. Accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the other information. However, as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, I have separately expressed an opinion on the special purpose financial statements and Special Schedule - Permissible income for general rates.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the other information, I must report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

The Councillors' Responsibilities for the Financial Statements

The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Local Government Act 1993* and for such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the financial statements.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf. The description forms part of my auditor's report.

The scope of my audit does not include, nor provide assurance:

- that the Council carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- on the Original Budget information included in the Income Statement, Statement of Cash Flows, and Note B5-1 'Material budget variations
- on the Special Schedules. A separate opinion has been provided on Special Schedule - Permissible income for general rates
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited financial statements on any website where they may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the financial statements.



David Daniels
Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

31 October 2024
SYDNEY



Councillor Tania Brown
Lord Mayor
Wollongong City Council
Locked Bag 8821
WOLLONGONG DC NSW 2500

Contact: David Daniels
Phone no: 02 9275 7103
Our ref: R008-2124742775-9197

31 October 2024

Dear Lord Mayor

Report on the Conduct of the Audit for the year ended 30 June 2024 Wollongong City Council

I have audited the general purpose financial statements (GPFS) of the Wollongong City Council (the Council) for the year ended 30 June 2024 as required by section 415 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act).

I expressed an unmodified opinion on the Council's GPFS.

This Report on the Conduct of the Audit (the Report) for the Council for the year ended 30 June 2024 is issued in accordance with section 417 of the Act. This Report should be read in conjunction with my audit opinion on the GPFS issued under section 417(2) of the Act.

INCOME STATEMENT

Operating result

	2024	2023	Variance
	\$m	\$m	%
Rates and annual charges revenue	231.8	222.1	↑ 4.4
Grants and contributions revenue	133.6	121.8	↑ 9.7
Operating result from continuing operations	41.0	60.8	↓ 32.6
Net operating result before capital grants and contributions	(59.8)	(6.0)	↓ 896.7

Rates and annual charges revenue (\$231.8 million) increased by \$9.7 million (4.4 per cent) in 2023–24 due to rate peg increase of 3.7 per cent and general increase in the number of rateable properties.

Grants and contributions revenue (\$133.6 million) increased by \$11.8 million (9.7 per cent) in 2023–24 due to:

- increase of \$7.7 million in special purpose capital grants for parks, gardens and sports fields, storm/flood damage, recreation and culture, transport assets and waste performance improvement
- increase of \$19.8 million in capital grants from the development of subdivisions, primarily relating to contributions of transport assets
- increase of \$6.1 million in developer contributions for amenities/services and fixed development consent levies
- partially offset by:
 - \$15.3 million decrease in special purpose operating grants for floodplain and stormwater management, transport assets including other roads and bridges funding and Transport for NSW contributions for regional roads
 - \$7.0 million decrease in financial assistance grants.

Council's operating result from continuing operations (\$41.0 million, including depreciation, amortisation and impairment expense of \$86.0 million) was \$19.8 million (32.6 per cent) lower than the 2022–23 result. This change was driven by the \$28.8 million increase in materials and services expenses, mainly from the movement in the provisions for landfill remediation and self-insurance and higher other expenses. This was offset by the \$11.8 increase in revenue from grants and contributions.

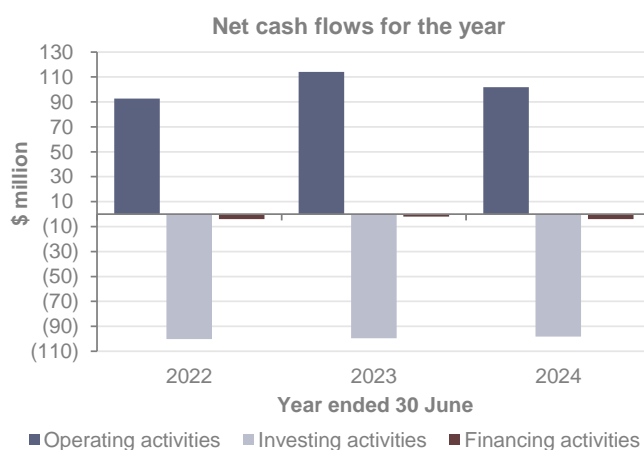
The net operating result before capital grants and contributions (loss of \$59.8 million) was \$53.8 million lower than the 2022–23 result (which was a loss of \$6.0 million). This change is mainly due to the \$22.3 million decrease in revenue from grants and contributions for operating purposes and the increase in materials and services expense and depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets expense.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

Cash flows from operating activities decreased to \$101.8 million, down from \$114.0 million in 2023. This was mainly due to:

- a decrease in receipts from grants and contributions (\$25.2 million)
- increases in payments to employees (\$6.7 million) and for materials and services (\$30.5 million)
- partially offset by:
 - increases in receipts from rates and annual charges (\$14.8 million), user charges and fees (\$2.8 million), interest (\$4.9 million) and other receipts (\$8.1 million); and
 - a decrease in other payments (\$19.8 million).

Cash outflows from investing activities and cash outflows from financing activities were materially in line with the prior period.



FINANCIAL POSITION

Cash and investments

Cash and investments	2024	2023	Commentary
	\$m	\$m	
Total cash, cash equivalents and investments	179.5	177.1	Council's cash, cash equivalents and investments at 30 June 2024 increased by \$2.4 million. This was mainly due to an increase in investments (\$1.8 million - current and non-current combined).
Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments:			Externally restricted balances primarily relate to developer contributions, specific purpose unexpended grants, private contributions, and domestic waste management.
• External restrictions	86.9	94.3	
• Internal allocations	68.7	61.7	Internal allocations primarily relate to strategic projects, West Dapto development, waste disposal facility and property investment fund.

Debt

At 30 June 2024, Council had:

- \$0.7 million in external borrowings (\$3.2 million in 2022–23)
- utilised \$98,000 of its \$350,000 credit card facility (2022–23: \$14,000)
- access to a \$600,000 bank overdraft facility (2022–23: \$600,000) which was undrawn at the reporting date.

PERFORMANCE

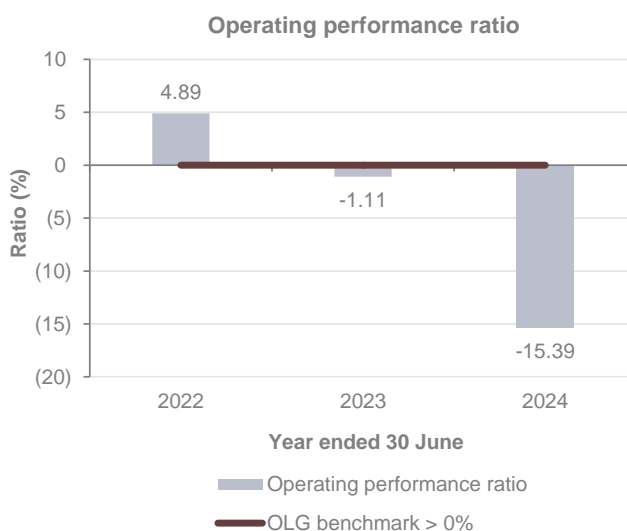
Performance measures

The following section provides an overview of the Council's performance against the performance measures and performance benchmarks set by the Office of Local Government (OLG) within the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

Operating performance ratio

Council did not meet the benchmark for the current reporting period primarily due to decrease in operating grants and increase in materials and services expense, depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets and other expenses.

The 'operating performance ratio' measures how well council contained operating expenditure within operating revenue (excluding capital grants and contributions, fair value adjustments, and reversal of revaluation decrements). The benchmark set by OLG is greater than zero per cent.



Own source operating revenue ratio

Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.

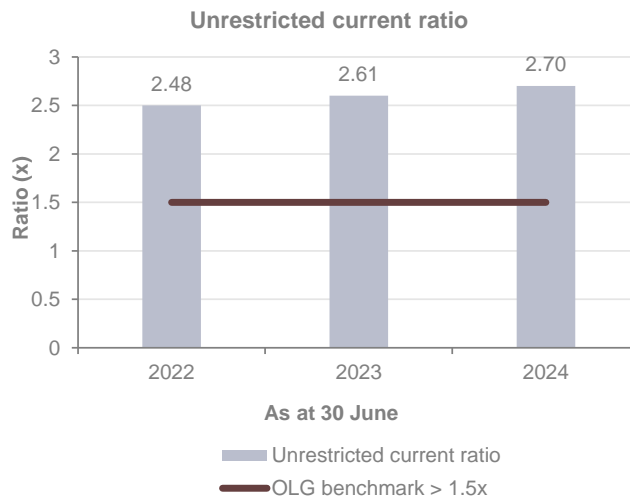
The 'own source operating revenue ratio' measures council's fiscal flexibility and the degree to which it relies on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 60 per cent.



Unrestricted current ratio

Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.

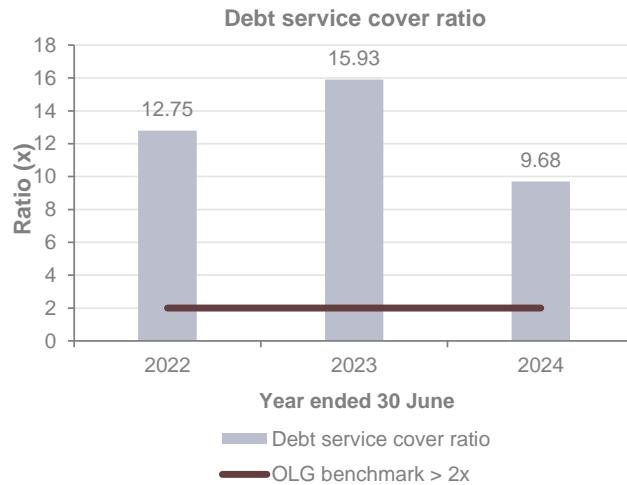
The 'unrestricted current ratio' is specific to local government and represents council's ability to meet its short-term obligations as they fall due. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 1.5 times.



Debt service cover ratio

Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.

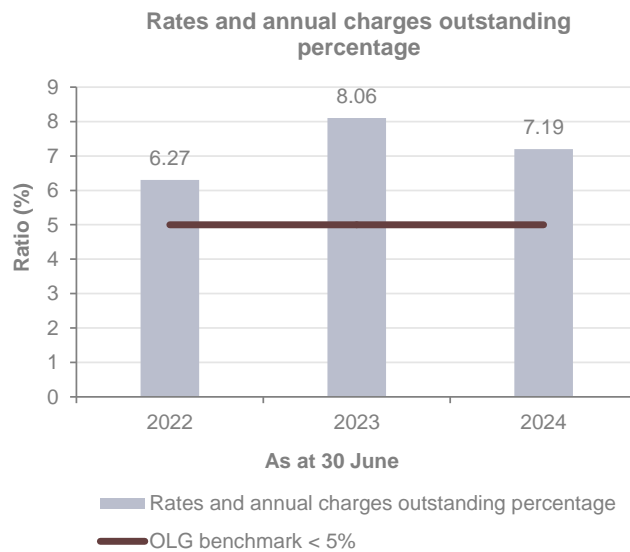
The 'debt service cover ratio' measures the operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than two times.



Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage

Council did not meet the benchmark for the current reporting period. The decrease from the prior year is primarily due to lower outstanding receivables at 30 June 2024 and an increase in rates and annual charges revenue in 2024.

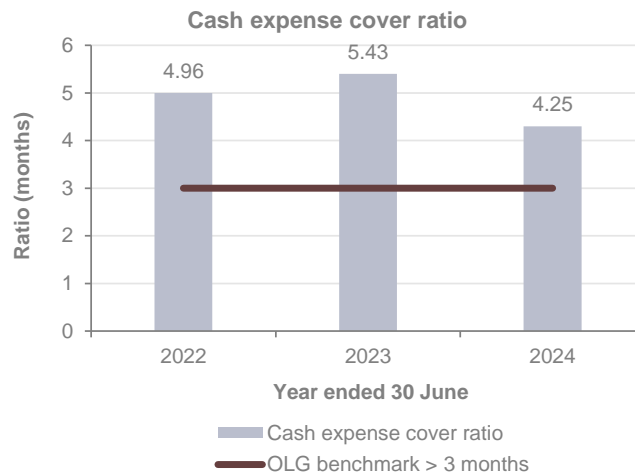
The 'rates and annual charges outstanding percentage' assesses the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on council's liquidity and the adequacy of debt recovery efforts. The benchmark set by OLG is less than 5 per cent for metropolitan councils.



Cash expense cover ratio

Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.

This liquidity ratio indicates the number of months the council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than three months.



Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment renewals

Council renewed \$64.3 million of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment during the 2023–24 financial year. This was mainly spent on capital work in progress, plant and equipment, office equipment, buildings and library books. A further \$92.2 million was spent on new assets including capital work in progress, operational land, land under roads, roads, bridges, footpaths and stormwater drainage. The main capital works programs in 2023–24 include Bellambi Gully Flood Mitigation, Whytes Gully New Cell, Fred Finch Park Netball Courts and Stuart Park and Playground.

Renewals in infrastructure, property and equipment were materially in line with 2023–24. Additions of new assets increased by \$27.1 million (41.6 per cent) in 2023–24 compared to last year, mainly relating to operational land, land under roads, roads, bridges and footpaths.

OTHER MATTERS

Legislative compliance

My audit procedures did not identify any instances of material non-compliance with the financial reporting requirements in Chapter 13, Part 3, Division 2 of the LG Act and the associated regulation or a material deficiency in the Council's accounting records or financial statements. The Council's:

- accounting records were maintained in a manner and form to allow the GPFS to be prepared and effectively audited
- staff provided all accounting records and information relevant to the audit.

David Daniels
Director, Financial Audit

Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

Wollongong City Council

SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Contents	Page
Statement by Councillors and Management	3
Special Purpose Financial Statements:	
Income Statement of Waste Disposal	4
Income Statement of Tourist parks	5
Income Statement of Health & Fitness	6
Statement of Financial Position of Waste Disposal	7
Statement of Financial Position of Tourist parks	8
Statement of Financial Position of Health & Fitness	9
Note – Material accounting policy information	10
Auditor's Report on Special Purpose Financial Statements	13

Background

- i. These Special Purpose Financial Statements have been prepared for the use by both Council and the Office of Local Government in fulfilling their requirements under National Competition Policy.
- ii. The principle of competitive neutrality is based on the concept of a 'level playing field' between persons/entities competing in a market place, particularly between private and public sector competitors.

Essentially, the principle is that government businesses, whether Commonwealth, state or local, should operate without net competitive advantages over other businesses as a result of their public ownership.

- iii. For Council, the principle of competitive neutrality and public reporting applies only to declared business activities.

These include **(a)** those activities classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as business activities being water supply, sewerage services, abattoirs, gas production and reticulation, and **(b)** those activities with a turnover of more than \$2 million that Council has formally declared as a business activity (defined as Category 1 activities).

- iv. In preparing these financial statements for Council's self-classified Category 1 businesses and ABS-defined activities, councils must **(a)** adopt a corporatisation model and **(b)** apply full cost attribution including tax-equivalent regime payments and debt guarantee fees (where the business benefits from Council's borrowing position by comparison with commercial rates).

Wollongong City Council

Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Statement by Councillors and Management made pursuant to the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

The attached Special Purpose Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with:

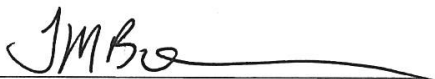
- the NSW Government Policy Statement '*Application of National Competition Policy to Local Government*',
- the Division of Local Government Guidelines '*Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses – A Guide to Competitive Neutrality*',
- the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting,

To the best of our knowledge and belief, these statements:

- present fairly the operating result and financial position for each of Council's declared business activities for the year, and
- accord with Council's accounting and other records.

We are not aware of any matter that would render these statements false or misleading in any way.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of Council made on 28 October 2024.



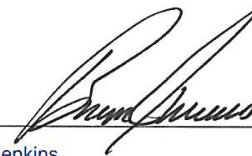
Tania Brown
Lord Mayor
28 October 2024



Linda Campbell
Deputy Lord Mayor
28 October 2024



Greg Doyle
General Manager
28 October 2024



Brian Jenkins
Responsible Accounting Officer
28 October 2024

Wollongong City Council | Income Statement of Waste Disposal | for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Income Statement of Waste Disposal

for the year ended 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024 Category 1	2023 Category 1
Income from continuing operations		
User charges	29,903	28,715
Rental Income	253	263
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	16	5
Other income	643	491
Total income from continuing operations	30,815	29,474
Expenses from continuing operations		
Employee benefits and on-costs	2,555	2,523
Borrowing costs	620	386
Materials and services ¹	17,821	4,899
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	1,338	1,365
Calculated taxation equivalents	539	598
EPA levy	12,252	13,169
Total expenses from continuing operations	35,125	22,940
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts	(4,310)	6,534
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts	(4,310)	6,534
Surplus (deficit) from all operations before tax	(4,310)	6,534
Less: corporate taxation equivalent (25%) [based on result before capital]	–	(1,634)
Surplus (deficit) after tax	(4,310)	4,900
Plus accumulated surplus	30,615	25,865
Plus adjustments for amounts unpaid:		
– Taxation equivalent payments	539	598
– Corporate taxation equivalent	–	1,634
– Dividend paid	(9,871)	(2,382)
Closing accumulated surplus	16,973	30,615
Return on capital %	(5.9)%	12.7%
Subsidy from Council	6,393	–

(1) Each financial year the provision for the remediation of Council's waste facility is calculated based on the forecast costs to rehabilitate the site. The movements in the provision are generally recognised against the value of the corresponding asset.

Wollongong City Council | Income Statement of Tourist parks | for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Income Statement of Tourist parks for the year ended 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024 Category 1	2023 Category 1
Income from continuing operations		
User charges	9,661	9,492
Rental Income	158	168
Other income	4	7
Total income from continuing operations	9,823	9,667
Expenses from continuing operations		
Employee benefits and on-costs	3,919	3,585
Materials and services	3,136	2,711
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	1,294	1,234
Calculated taxation equivalents	494	577
Total expenses from continuing operations	8,843	8,107
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts	980	1,560
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts	980	1,560
Surplus (deficit) from all operations before tax	980	1,560
Less: corporate taxation equivalent (25%) [based on result before capital]	(245)	(390)
Surplus (deficit) after tax	735	1,170
Plus accumulated surplus	8,425	8,673
Plus adjustments for amounts unpaid:		
– Taxation equivalent payments	494	577
– Corporate taxation equivalent	245	390
– Dividend paid	(2,947)	(2,385)
Closing accumulated surplus	6,952	8,425
Return on capital %	2.6%	5.0%
Subsidy from Council	671	–

Wollongong City Council | Income Statement of Health & Fitness | for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Income Statement of Health & Fitness

for the year ended 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024 Category 1	2023 Category 1
Income from continuing operations		
User charges	3,001	2,869
Rental Income	1	3
Other income	16	103
Total income from continuing operations	3,018	2,975
Expenses from continuing operations		
Employee benefits and on-costs	2,905	2,647
Materials and services	1,266	1,097
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	65	90
Calculated taxation equivalents	214	200
Total expenses from continuing operations	4,450	4,034
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts	(1,432)	(1,059)
Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts	(1,432)	(1,059)
Surplus (deficit) from all operations before tax	(1,432)	(1,059)
Surplus (deficit) after tax	(1,432)	(1,059)
Plus accumulated surplus	1,255	1,333
Plus adjustments for amounts unpaid:		
– Taxation equivalent payments	214	200
– Subsidy paid/contribution to operations	855	781
Closing accumulated surplus	892	1,255
Return on capital %	(17.9)%	(15.6)%
Subsidy from Council	1,775	1,331

Wollongong City Council | Statement of Financial Position of Waste Disposal | as at 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Statement of Financial Position of Waste Disposal

as at 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024 Category 1	2023 Category 1
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Investments	10,854	10,083
Total current assets	10,854	10,083
Non-current assets		
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	62,853	54,426
Total non-current assets	62,853	54,426
Total assets	73,707	64,509
LIABILITIES		
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	39,333	17,401
Total non-current liabilities	39,333	17,401
Total liabilities	39,333	17,401
Net assets	34,374	47,108
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	16,973	30,615
Revaluation reserves	17,401	16,493
Total equity	34,374	47,108

Wollongong City Council | Statement of Financial Position of Tourist parks | as at 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Statement of Financial Position of Tourist parks

as at 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024 Category 1	2023 Category 1
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	38,398	31,080
Total non-current assets	38,398	31,080
Total assets	38,398	31,080
Net assets	38,398	31,080
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	6,952	8,425
Revaluation reserves	31,446	22,655
Total equity	38,398	31,080

Wollongong City Council | Statement of Financial Position of Health & Fitness | as at 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Statement of Financial Position of Health & Fitness

as at 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024 Category 1	2023 Category 1
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	7,984	6,775
Total non-current assets	7,984	6,775
Total assets	7,984	6,775
Net assets	7,984	6,775
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	892	1,255
Revaluation reserves	7,092	5,520
Total equity	7,984	6,775

Note – Material accounting policy information

A statement summarising the supplemental accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the special purpose financial statements (SPFS) for National Competition Policy (NCP) reporting purposes follows.

These financial statements are SPFS prepared for use by Council and the Office of Local Government. For the purposes of these statements, the Council is a non-reporting not-for-profit entity.

The figures presented in these special purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement criteria of relevant Australian Accounting Standards, other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) and Australian Accounting Interpretations.

The disclosures in these special purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* (Act), the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (Regulation) and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

The statements are prepared on an accruals basis. They are based on historic costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, fair value of non-current assets. Certain taxes and other costs, appropriately described, have been imputed for the purposes of the National Competition Policy.

The Statement of Financial Position includes notional assets/liabilities receivable from/payable to Council's general fund. These balances reflect a notional intra-entity funding arrangement with the declared business activities.

The Council's declared business activities do not operate separate stand-alone bank accounts. The declared business activities do not include any assets or liabilities that are collected/settled by the Council (primarily receivables, payables and employee benefits). The Council does not recharge the declared business for liabilities settled on their behalf nor does it pass on cash or other assets for income of the declared business it has collected. Any net asset/liability position at the end of the period is accounted for as a notional dividend declared/contribution to/from the Council through equity (accumulated surplus).

National Competition Policy

Council has adopted the principle of 'competitive neutrality' in its business activities as part of the National Competition Policy which is being applied throughout Australia at all levels of government. The framework for its application is set out in the June 1996 NSW Government Policy statement titled 'Application of National Competition Policy to Local Government'. *The Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses – A Guide to Competitive Neutrality* issued by the Office of Local Government in July 1997 has also been adopted.

The pricing and costing guidelines outline the process for identifying and allocating costs to activities and provide a standard for disclosure requirements. These disclosures are reflected in Council's pricing and/or financial reporting systems and include taxation equivalents, Council subsidies, and returns on investments (rate of return and dividends paid).

Declared business activities

In accordance with Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses – A Guide to Competitive Neutrality, Council has declared that the following are to be considered as business activities:

Category 1

(where gross operating turnover is over \$2 million)

- a. Waste Disposal:** Manages the disposal of solid waste generated within the city.
- b. Tourist Parks:** Operation, management & development of tourist parks at Bulli, Corrimal & Windang.
- c. Health & Fitness:** Responsible for the management and upkeep of Council's Leisure Centres.

Category 2

(where gross operating turnover is less than \$2 million)

Nil

Taxation equivalent charges

Council is liable to pay various taxes and financial duties. Where this is the case, they are disclosed as a cost of operations just like all other costs.

However, where Council does not pay some taxes, which are generally paid by private sector businesses, such as income tax, these equivalent tax payments have been applied to all Council-nominated business activities and are reflected in Special Purpose Financial Statements.

Note – Material accounting policy information (continued)

For the purposes of disclosing comparative information relevant to the private sector equivalent, the following taxation equivalents have been applied to all Council-nominated business activities (this does not include Council's non-business activities):

Notional rate applied (%)

Corporate income tax rate – **25%** (22/23 25%)

Land tax – the first \$1,075,000 of combined land values attracts **0%**. For the combined land values in excess of \$1,075,000 up to \$6,571,000 the rate is **\$100 + 1.6%**. For the remaining combined land value that exceeds \$6,571,000 a premium marginal rate of **2.0%** applies.

Payroll tax – **5.45%** on the value of taxable salaries and wages in excess of \$1,200,000.

Income tax

An income tax equivalent has been applied on the profits of the business activities. Whilst income tax is not a specific cost for the purpose of pricing a good or service, it needs to be taken into account in terms of assessing the rate of return required on capital invested. Accordingly, the return on capital invested is set at a pre-tax level - gain/(loss) from ordinary activities before capital amounts, as would be applied by a private sector competitor. That is, it should include a provision equivalent to the corporate income tax rate, currently 25% (2022/23 25%).

Income tax is only applied where a gain/ (loss) from ordinary activities before capital amounts has been achieved. Since the taxation equivalent is notional – that is, it is payable to Council as the 'owner' of business operations - it represents an internal payment and has no effect on the operations of the Council. Accordingly, there is no need for disclosure of internal charges in the SPFS.

The rate applied of 25% is the equivalent company tax rate prevalent at reporting date. No adjustments have been made for variations that have occurred during the year.

Local government rates and charges

A calculation of the equivalent rates and charges for all Category 1 businesses has been applied to all assets owned, or exclusively used by the business activity.

Loan and debt guarantee fees

The debt guarantee fee is designed to ensure that Council business activities face 'true' commercial borrowing costs in line with private sector competitors. In order to calculate a debt guarantee fee, Council has determined what the differential borrowing rate would have been between the commercial rate and Council's borrowing rate for its business activities.

(i) Subsidies

Government policy requires that subsidies provided to customers, and the funding of those subsidies, must be explicitly disclosed. Subsidies occur where Council provides services on a less than cost recovery basis. This option is exercised on a range of services in order for Council to meet its community service obligations.

The activities reported in these financial statements are prepared notionally for external purposes only. Separate bank accounts are not held. The overall effect of subsidies received from Council is disclosed within individual income statements to reflect the net financial position of each business activity.

(ii) Return on investments (rate of return)

The NCP policy statement requires that councils with Category 1 businesses 'would be expected to generate a return on capital funds employed that is comparable to rates of return for private businesses operating in a similar field'.

Funds are subsequently available for meeting commitments or financing future investment strategies. The rate of return is disclosed for each of Council's business activities on the Income Statement.

The rate of return is calculated as follows:

Operating result before capital income + interest expense

Written down value of I,PP&E as at 30 June

Note – Material accounting policy information (continued)

As a minimum, business activities should generate a return equal to the Commonwealth 10 year bond rate which is 4.30% at 30/06/24.

(iii) Dividends

Council is not required to pay dividends to either itself (as owner of a range of businesses) or to any external entities. The activities reported in these financial statements are prepared notionally for external purposes only. Separate bank accounts are not held. The overall effect of dividends paid to Council is disclosed within individual income statements to reflect the net financial position of each business activity.

Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment

Buildings and other assets used in the operation of these business activities are owned and controlled by Council. A charge for their utilisation is included in the Income Statement and these assets have been excluded from the Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment in the Statement of Financial Position. The Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment figure consists operational equipment and land as these have not been captured through the Income Statement



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on the special purpose financial statements

Wollongong City Council

To the Councillors of Wollongong City Council

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying special purpose financial statements (the financial statements) of Wollongong City Council's (the Council) Declared Business Activities, which comprise the Statement by Councillors and Management, the Income Statement of each Declared Business Activity for the year ended 30 June 2024, the Statement of Financial Position of each Declared Business Activity as at 30 June 2024 and the Material accounting policy information note.

The Declared Business Activities of the Council are:

- Waste Disposal
- Tourist parks
- Health & Fitness.

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Council's declared Business Activities as at 30 June 2024, and their financial performance for the year then ended, in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards described in the Material accounting policy information note and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting 2023–24 (LG Code).

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements' section of my report.

I am independent of the Council in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)' (APES 110).

Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as the auditor of councils
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

I believe the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

Without modifying my opinion, I draw attention to the Material accounting policy information note to the financial statements which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements have been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Council's financial reporting responsibilities under the LG Code. As a result, the financial statements may not be suitable for another purpose.

Other Information

The Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2024 includes other information in addition to the financial statements and my Independent Auditor's Report thereon. The Councillors are responsible for the other information. At the date of this Independent Auditor's Report, the other information I have received comprise the general purpose financial statements and Special Schedules (the Schedules).

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information. Accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the other information. However, as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, I have separately expressed an opinion on the general purpose financial statements and Special Schedule 'Permissible income for general rates'.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the other information, I must report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

The Councillors' Responsibilities for the Financial Statements

The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements and for determining that the accounting policies, described in the Material accounting policy information note to the financial statements, are appropriate to meet the requirements in the LG Code. The Councillors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the financial statements.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf. The description forms part of my auditor's report.

The scope of my audit does not include, nor provide assurance:

- that the Council carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited financial statements on any website where they may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the financial statements.



David Daniels
Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

31 October 2024
SYDNEY

Wollongong City Council

SPECIAL SCHEDULES

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Special Schedules

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Contents

Page

Special Schedules:

Permissible income for general rates	3
Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024	4

Wollongong City Council | Permissible income for general rates | for the year ended 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Permissible income for general rates

\$ '000	Notes	Calculation 2023/24	Calculation 2024/25
Notional general income calculation ¹			
Last year notional general income yield	a	183,872	191,188
Plus or minus adjustments ²	b	537	820
Notional general income	c = a + b	184,409	192,008
Permissible income calculation			
Percentage increase	d	3.70%	5.00%
Plus percentage increase amount ³	f = d x (c + e)	6,823	9,600
Sub-total	g = (c + e + f)	191,232	201,608
Plus (or minus) last year's carry forward total	h	6	9
Less valuation objections claimed in the previous year	i	(44)	(2)
Sub-total	j = (h + i)	(38)	7
Total permissible income	k = g + j	191,194	201,615
Less notional general income yield	l	191,188	201,700
Catch-up or (excess) result	m = k - l	7	(84)
Plus income lost due to valuation objections claimed ⁴	n	2	89
Carry forward to next year ⁶	p = m + n + o	9	5

Notes

- (1) The notional general income will not reconcile with rate income in the financial statements in the corresponding year. The statements are reported on an accrual accounting basis which include amounts that relate to prior years' rates income.
- (2) Adjustments account for changes in the number of assessments and any increase or decrease in land value occurring during the year. The adjustments are called 'supplementary valuations' as defined in the *Valuation of Land Act 1916 (NSW)*.
- (3) The 'percentage increase' is inclusive of the rate-peg percentage, and/or special variation and/or Crown land adjustment (where applicable).
- (4) Valuation objections are unexpected changes in land values as a result of land owners successfully objecting to the land value issued by the Valuer General. Councils can claim the value of the income lost due to valuation objections in any single year.
- (6) Carry-forward amounts which are in excess (an amount that exceeds the permissible income) require Ministerial approval by order published in the *NSW Government Gazette* in accordance with section 512 of the Act. The OLG will extract these amounts from Council's Permissible income for general rates Statement in the financial data return (FDR) to administer this process.



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Special Schedule – Permissible income for general rates

Wollongong City Council

To the Councillors of Wollongong City Council

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying Special Schedule – Permissible income for general rates (the Schedule) of Wollongong City Council (the Council) for the year ending 30 June 2025.

In my opinion, the Schedule is prepared, in all material respects in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting 2023–24 (LG Code) and is in accordance with the books and records of the Council.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Schedule' section of my report.

I am independent of the Council in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)' (APES 110).

Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of councils
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

Without modifying my opinion, I draw attention to the special purpose framework used to prepare the Schedule. The Schedule has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Council's reporting obligations under the LG Code. As a result, the Schedule may not be suitable for another purpose.

Other Information

The Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2024 includes other information in addition to the Schedule and my Independent Auditor's Report thereon. The Councillors are responsible for the other information. At the date of this Independent Auditor's Report, the other information I have received comprise the general purpose financial statements, special purpose financial statements and Special Schedule 'Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024.

My opinion on the Schedule does not cover the other information. Accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the other information. However, as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, I have separately expressed an opinion on the general purpose financial statements and the special purpose financial statements.

In connection with my audit of the Schedule, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the Schedule or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the other information, I must report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

The Councillors' Responsibilities for the Schedule

The Councillors are responsible for the preparation of the Schedule in accordance with the LG Code. The Councillors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the Schedule that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the Schedule, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Schedule

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance whether the Schedule as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the Schedule.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the Schedule is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar8.pdf. The description forms part of my auditor's report.

The scope of my audit does not include, nor provide assurance:

- that the Council carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited Schedule on any website where it may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the Schedule.



David Daniels
Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

31 October 2024
SYDNEY

Wollongong City Council | Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024

Asset Class	Asset Category	Estimated cost to bring assets to satisfactory standard	Estimated cost to bring assets to agreed service level by Council	2023/24 Required maintenance ^a	2023/24 Actual maintenance	Net carrying amount	Gross replacement cost (GRC)	Assets in condition as a percentage of gross replacement cost				
		\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	1	2	3	4	5
Buildings	Buildings	8,361	12,397	23,905	12,236	517,018	962,233	19.7%	17.5%	54.2%	1.4%	7.2%
	Sub-total	8,361	12,397	23,905	12,236	517,018	962,233	19.7%	17.5%	54.2%	1.4%	7.2%
Other structures	Other structures	244	360	139	272	15,355	21,358	7.6%	51.4%	35.8%	2.9%	2.3%
	Sub-total	244	360	139	272	15,355	21,358	7.6%	51.4%	35.8%	2.9%	2.3%
Roads	Roads	149,097	220,124	14,143	18,285	973,766	2,188,536	24.8%	21.9%	41.9%	9.1%	2.3%
	Bridges	2,361	3,392	846	1,413	113,805	169,139	13.3%	38.3%	37.7%	3.3%	7.4%
	Footpaths	20,195	52,199	4,495	5,472	225,558	423,100	17.7%	14.4%	54.1%	11.5%	2.3%
	Sub-total	171,653	275,715	19,484	25,170	1,313,129	2,780,775	23.0%	21.8%	43.5%	9.1%	2.6%
Stormwater drainage	Stormwater drainage	18,731	26,821	4,863	3,330	988,918	1,832,317	14.0%	27.2%	57.4%	0.7%	0.7%
	Sub-total	18,731	26,821	4,863	3,330	988,918	1,832,317	14.0%	27.2%	57.4%	0.7%	0.7%
Open space / recreational assets	Swimming pools & Open Space/Recreation	37,048	51,406	23,706	19,175	180,648	322,945	35.5%	1.8%	23.5%	18.2%	21.0%
	Sub-total	37,048	51,406	23,706	19,175	180,648	322,945	35.5%	1.8%	23.5%	18.2%	21.0%
Total – all assets		236,037	366,699	72,097	60,183	3,015,068	5,919,628	20.3%	21.8%	48.4%	5.7%	3.8%

(a) Required maintenance is the amount identified in Council's asset management plans.

Infrastructure asset condition assessment 'key'

(1) Estimated Cost to Bring To Satisfactory Standard per Office of Local Government Requirements, reflects the estimated cost to restore all Council assets to condition '3'.

(2) Maintenance costs, per Office of Local Government Requirements, include both Maintenance and (appropriate) operational costs captured as Asset Operations in Council's financial system. Required maintenance reflects amounts calculated using benchmark data from other Group 5 Councils as % GRC.

(3) Cost to bring to agreed service level is defined as "The proportion of the GRC that have reached the intervention level based on condition." The outstanding renewal works compared to the total replacement cost of Councils assets. That is calculated as the cost of bringing condition 4 and 5 assets to condition 1.

continued on next page ...

Page 4

Wollongong City Council | Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024 (continued)

Asset Condition Definitions #

Rating	Status
1	Excellent
2	Very Good
3	Good (Satisfactory)
4	Average
5	Poor

Wollongong City Council | Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024

Wollongong City Council

Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024

Infrastructure asset performance indicators (consolidated) *

\$ '000	Amounts 2024	Indicator 2024	Indicators 2023 2022		Benchmark
Buildings and infrastructure renewals ratio					
Asset renewals ¹	55,900	72.05%	86.43%	66.42%	> 100.00%
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	77,587				
Infrastructure backlog ratio					
Estimated cost to bring assets to a satisfactory standard	236,037	7.61%	3.05%	2.62%	< 2.00%
Net carrying amount of infrastructure assets	3,103,571				
Asset maintenance ratio					
Actual asset maintenance	60,183	83.48%	82.06%	77.58%	> 100.00%
Required asset maintenance	72,097				
Cost to bring assets to agreed service level					
Estimated cost to bring assets to an agreed service level set by Council	366,699	6.19%	4.62%	4.02%	
Gross replacement cost	5,919,628				

(*) All asset performance indicators are calculated using classes identified in the previous table.

(1) Asset renewals represent the replacement and/or refurbishment of existing assets to an equivalent capacity/performance as opposed to the acquisition of new assets (or the refurbishment of old assets) that increases capacity/performance.