

Business Paper



Ordinary Meeting of Council
to be held at
Council Administration Centre
180 Mort Street, Lithgow
on
Monday 29 June 2026
at 6:30 PM

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Mayoral Minutes.....	6
1.1. Mayoral Minute - 29/06/2026 - Great Western Highway Median Strip Maintenance	6
2. Administration Reports.....	7
2.1. GM - 29/06/2026 - LGNSW Annual Conference 2026	7
2.2. GM - 29/06/2026 - Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program - Grant Approval....	9
2.3. P&P - 29/06/2026 - DA047/26, Geotechnical Investigations, Lithgow Council Road Reserve, Sunny Corner Road/Portland Sunny Corner Road.....	14
2.4. P&P - 29/06/2026 - Exemption from Tender - Seven Valleys Destination Campaign .	18
2.5. I&PD - 29/06/2026 - Exemption from Tender Traffic Control for Hartley Vale Road ...	22
2.6. I&PD - 29/06/2026 - Access to Private Property off Honeysuckle Falls Road	25
2.7. I&PD - 29/06/2026 - Proposed Road Naming - Karoo Drive Meadow Flat.....	30
2.8. I&PD - 29/06/2026 - Transfer of Unformed Road - Tooral Street, Glen Davis	32
2.9. F&G - 29/06/2026 - 2026/27 Operational Plan	35
2.10. F&G - 29/06/2026 - Making of Annual Rates and Charges 2026/2027	40
2.11. F&G - 29/06/2026 - Proposal to Enter Licence Agreement with LSMR Limited	54
2.12. F&G - 29/06/2026 - May 2026 Investment Report	56
3. Council Committee Reports	60
3.1. P&P - 25/05/2026 - Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - 13 May 2026.....	60
3.2. EXEC - Emerging Economy Committee Meeting Minutes - 19 May 2026	61
3.3. F&G - Finance Committee Meeting Minutes - 20 May 2026	62
3.4. I&PD - Infrastructure Committee Meeting Minutes - 2 June 2026	64
3.5. I&PD - Local Transport Forum Meeting Minutes - 4 June 2026.....	66
3.6. F&G - Audit Risk Improvement Committee (ARIC) Minutes - 9 June 2026.....	68
3.7. I&PD - Sports Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - 10 June 2026.....	70
4. Delegates Reports	71
4.1. GM - 29/06/2026 - CNSWJO Board Meeting - Delegate Report 26 May 2026	71
5. Questions with Notice	81
5.1. QWN - 29/06/2026 - Cr C Coleman - Honeysuckle Falls Road	81

5.2. QWN - 29/06/2026 - Cr M Ticehurst - NSW Parliamentary Legislative Council Questions	82
6. Notices of Motion.....	86
6.1. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Cr M Ticehurst - Civil Class Action over ongoing closure of Great Western Hwy.	86
6.2. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Cr Fredericks - State Significant Developments	88
6.3. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Cr M Ticehurst - OLG Circular - Consultation on Councillor Conduct Reforms.....	90
6.4. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Cr E Fredericks - Traffic Management During Great Western Highway Closure and Diversion Routes.....	92
6.5. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Lithgow Council's Position In Regards to the Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Project	95
6.6. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Cr E Mahony - Reactivation of Eskbank Rail Heritage Centre / Wolgan Valley Wilderness Railway Committee	95
7. Business of Great Urgency.....	97

Acknowledgement of Country

Acknowledgement of Country

Lithgow City Council acknowledges Wiradjuri Elders past and present of the Wiradjuri nation - the original custodians of the land on which the Lithgow's communities reside. The Council also extends our respects to our neighbouring nations.

Declaration of Webcasting

I inform all those in attendance at this meeting, that the meeting is being webcast and that those in attendance should refrain from making any defamatory statements concerning any person, Councillor or employee, and refrain from discussing those matters subject to Closed Council proceedings as indicated in clause 14.1 of the code of meeting practice.

Public Attendance

In accordance with the mandatory requirements of the NSW Local Government Code of Meeting Practice, clause 15.20, members of the public attending a meeting of Council

- (a) must remain silent during the meeting unless invited by the chairperson to speak,
- (b) must not bring flags, signs or protest symbols to the meeting, and
- (c) must not disrupt the meeting.

Council Meeting Emergency Procedures

Procedures to be outlined in the meeting.

Present

Apologies

Declaration of Interest

Ethical Decision Making and Conflicts of Interest

A guiding checklist for Councillors, officers and community committees

Oath or Affirmation of Office

Councillors are reminded of the Oath or Affirmation taken of office, made under section 233A of the *Local Government Act 1993* when elected.

Ethical decision making

- Is the decision or conduct legal?
- Is it consistent with Government policy, Council's objectives and Code of Conduct?
- What will the outcome be for you, your colleagues, the Council, anyone else?
- Does it raise a conflict of interest?
- Do you stand to gain personally at public expense?
- Can the decision be justified in terms of public interest?
- Would it withstand public scrutiny?

Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest is a clash between private interest and public duty. The test for conflict of interest:

- Is it likely I could be influenced by personal interest in carrying out my public duty?
- Would a fair and reasonable person believe I could be so influenced?
- Conflict of interest is closely tied to the layperson's definition of 'corruption' – using public office for private gain.
- Important to consider public perceptions of whether you have a conflict of interest.

There are two types of conflict:

- **Pecuniary** – regulated by the *Local Government Act 1993* and Office of Local Government. A person with a pecuniary interest should at least disclose and not vote, but it would also in these cases be appropriate to leave the chamber.
- **Non-pecuniary** – regulated by Codes of Conduct and policy. ICAC, Ombudsman, Office of Local Government (advice only). If declaring a Non-Pecuniary Conflict of Interest, a person with a non-pecuniary interest can choose to either disclose and vote, disclose and not vote or leave the Chamber.
- Local Government Act 1993 and Model Code of Conduct
For more detailed definitions refer to the *Local Government Act 1993*, Chapter 14 Honesty and Disclosure of Interest and adopted Code of Conduct.

Identifying problems

1st Do I have private interests affected by a matter I am officially involved in? **2nd** Is my official role one of influence or perceived influence over the matter? **3rd** Do my private interests conflict with my official role?

Disclosure of pecuniary interests / non-pecuniary interests

Under the provisions of Section 440AAA(3) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (pecuniary interests) and the Model Code of Conduct it is necessary for you to disclose the nature of the interest when making a disclosure of a pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary conflict of interest at a meeting.

A Declaration form should be completed and handed to the General Manager as soon as practicable once the interest is identified. Declarations are made at Item 3 of the Agenda: Declarations - Pecuniary, Non-Pecuniary and Political Donation Disclosures, and prior to each Item being discussed.

Confirmation of Minutes

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 25 May 2026.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Council held 10 June 2026.

1. Mayoral Minutes

1.1. Mayoral Minute - 29/06/2026 - Great Western Highway Median Strip Maintenance

Report by Mayor – Councillor Cassandra Coleman

Commentary

Council has historically maintained the median strip of the Great Western Highway within the 70 km/h zone of the urban Lithgow precinct. However, Council no longer has the capacity to continue to maintain this length of roadway, which is a NSW Government asset.

Following a resolution of Council at the Ordinary Meeting held on 28 April 2025, the then Director of Infrastructure and Project Delivery wrote to Transport for NSW (TfNSW) to enquire about alternative maintenance arrangements.

TfNSW subsequently advised Council that, should Council cease maintaining the median, it would be returned to a concrete or gravel surface at TfNSW's cost.

The Councillor Group acknowledged this advice; however, they expressed a strong preference that TfNSW retain and enhance the established landscaped character of this corridor.

Councillors are particularly concerned about preserving mature trees wherever possible, recognising their significant contribution to the identity, amenity, and streetscape quality of the entrance to Lithgow's town centre.

Negotiations with TfNSW to date have not been successful. The matter has been escalated, including correspondence with the Coordinator-General for Transport for NSW, Mr Howard Collins, and discussions with the Office of the Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP, Minister for Transport.

Given the significant disruption currently affecting the Great Western Highway, including detour traffic through the heart of Lithgow, it is considered reasonable to request that Transport for NSW reassume responsibility for its asset and, wherever practicable, preserve the mature trees.

Attachments

Nil

Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Return responsibility for the median strip of the Great Western Highway within the 70 km/h zone of the urban Lithgow precinct to Transport for NSW immediately.
2. Formally request that Transport for NSW preserve the mature trees located on the median strip wherever possible.
3. Endorse a public awareness campaign advocating for the preservation of mature trees and encourage the wider community to lobby Transport for NSW and the Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP, Minister for Transport.

2. Administration Reports

2.1. GM - 29/06/2026 - LGNSW Annual Conference 2026

Strategic Context for this matter:

[Responsible Governance & Civic Leadership](#) To develop community confidence in the organisation by the way it is directed, controlled and managed.

Author: Ross Gurney - General Manager

Responsible Officer: Ross Gurney - General Manager

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to confirm Council's position on attendance for the LGNSW Annual Conference.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Note the deadline for submitting motions for the 2026 LGNSW Annual State Conference and that proposed motions are sought from Councillors for inclusion in a future report.
2. Determine Councillor attendance, together with a supporting Executive senior staff member, for the LGNSW Annual Conference. The registrations would be funded from 2026/27 budgets, in accordance with Policy.

Attachments

Nil

Reference to any relevant previous minute

N/A

Background and discussion

The LGNSW Annual Conference is the supreme policy-making body of LGNSW and an opportunity for Councillors to come together to share ideas and debate issues that shape how LGNSW is governed and how it advocates on behalf of the local government sector.

The Annual Conference will be held from Sunday 22 November to Tuesday 24 November 2026 at WIN Sports & Entertainment Centre, Wollongong.

As a member of Local Government NSW, Lithgow City Council can nominate three voting delegates to the conference and three voting delegates for the Board election.

It is anticipated that the cost (registration, conference dinner, accommodation) will be approx. \$2,300 per attendee (with early bird registration). The key dates are as follows:

- 1 July 2026 - Early Bird Registration opens.
- 30 September 2026 - Early Bird offer ends.
- 30 September 2026 - Preferred deadline for submitting motions.
- 30 October 2026 - Voting delegates (for motions and the Board election) must be nominated.

Council-submitted motions will be debated and resolved to set the advocacy priorities for the year ahead, while a tradeshow, workshops, and training sessions will also be held to support delegates in their efforts to effectively represent their communities.

Motions

With only about 100 motions able to be debated at the conference, members are encouraged to submit a maximum of three of their most important motions for consideration. Motions must meet the criteria endorsed by the LGNSW Board and be supported by your council.

Proposed motions are sought from Councillors. These will be presented to Council no later than the 28 September 2026 Ordinary Meeting of Council for endorsement to be lodged by the preferred deadline of 30 September 2026.

Consultation and Communication

N/A

Policy

Policy 9.5 Councillor Expenses and Facilities allow for a separate budget for State and National Local Government conferences.

Legal

N/A

Risk Management

N/A

Financial

- Budget approved - separate budget provided for State and National Local Government Conferences.
- Cost centre - 800154-8130-63205
- Expended to date - nil
- Future potential impact - nil

2.2. GM - 29/06/2026 - Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program - Grant Approval

Strategic Context for this matter:

Strengthening Our Economy: To provide for sustainable and planned growth through the diversification of the economic base, the development of diverse job opportunities and the provision of a broad range of formal and non-formal educational services.

Author: Bruce Mills - Emerging Economy Manager

Responsible Officer: Ross Gurney - General Manager

Executive Summary

Council has been informed that its application under the Australian Government's Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program, Stream One: Precinct development and planning, has been successful.

The approved funding is \$1,500,000 for a *Lithgow Industrial Lands Renewal Precinct* enabling planning project. The project would undertake the technical planning, feasibility, due diligence, and stakeholder engagement work required to better understand and address barriers preventing the activation of strategically located former and underutilised industrial land in Lithgow.

The project directly supports the Council's economic development and renewal agenda and is a direct outcome of the Lithgow Emerging Economy Plan. It will assist Council in preparing key employment lands for future investment by examining matters such as contamination, heritage, access, drainage, infrastructure, servicing, planning constraints, and land economics.

The project does not involve construction or physical redevelopment works. It is an enabling planning project intended to create a stronger evidence base for future investment, funding, planning, and partnership decisions. The intent of Stream One enabling work (grants up to \$5M) is to inform future Stream 2 capital works (grants up to \$20M).

Council's endorsement is required to proceed with accepting the successful grant application, amending the budget to recognise the grant income and related expenditure, and authorising the General Manager to finalise and execute the funding deed and associated documentation.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Accept the successful grant application under the Australian Government's Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program, Stream One: Precinct Development and Planning.
2. Approve the creation of project income and expenditure budgets for the Lithgow Net Zero Transition Precinct project, comprising:
 - \$1,500,000 in Australian Government grant funding; and
 - Council cash co-contribution of \$360,000 from the Lithgow Emerging Economy Plan budget.
3. Note that the project also includes in-kind and partner contributions identified in the grant application, and that these will be managed and reported in accordance with the final funding deed and project plan.
4. Authorise the General Manager to finalise, execute and administer the funding deed and any associated documentation required to give effect to the successful grant application.
5. Notes that public communications regarding the grant approval will be held until after Council's resolution on the matter.

Attachments

1. RPPP I 000030 - Lithgow City Council [2.2.1 - 2 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min. No. 24-282 - Council resolution to proceed with the Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program grant.

Background and discussion

At the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 11 December 2024, Council resolved that the execution of any successful grant applications by Council officers will not proceed until the successful outcomes are reported to Council and Council's endorsement to proceed with the grants is obtained (Min. No. 24-282).

Following the resolution of Council, an application was submitted under the Australian Government's Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program (RPPP), Stream One: Precinct Development and Planning.

The project responds to a key constraint identified through the Lithgow Emerging Economy Plan and related economic development work: the shortage of 'ready-for-market' employment lands in Lithgow.

This constraint significantly limits the Lithgow LGA's capacity to attract high-value industries and new investment at the scale required to support economic diversification as coal mining and coal-fired power generation declines over time.

The project focuses on strategically located former and underutilised industrial land within Lithgow, including:

- the former State Mine Material Deposits site, known as the Hermitage;
- the former NSW State Railyards, known as the Pacific National site;
- the land adjacent to the former NSW State Railyards; and
- the former Commonwealth Defence Manufacturing Complex, known as the Thales Australia site.

Together, these sites represent approximately 237,000 square metres of redundant or underutilised former industrial land. The sites have the potential to contribute to future employment, investment and economic renewal. Still, they are affected by a combination of constraints, including contamination, heritage matters, access limitations, drainage, servicing, infrastructure gaps and planning complexity.

The RPPP project will undertake the enabling planning work needed to identify, quantify and develop costed pathways to address these barriers. The project scope includes:

- Heritage and cultural assessments;
- Contamination and environmental studies;
- Planning and accessibility review;
- Infrastructure needs analysis;
- Land economics assessment; and
- Preparation of a consolidated feasibility report.

The work is intended to support future decisions and grant applications regarding industrial land activation, investment attraction, infrastructure funding and potential partnerships. The project will also provide a stronger evidence base for discussions with government, industry, landowners and investors.

The project aligns with the Lithgow Emerging Economy Plan, which identifies employment land activation, strategic precinct planning, investment attraction, workforce adaptation and economic resilience as central to Lithgow's transition. It also supports the Council's broader Economic Development, Renewal and Transition agenda by laying the groundwork for new employment-generating land uses, including logistics, advanced manufacturing, rail-related industries, defence supply chains, renewable energy supply chain opportunities, and related emerging sectors.

The grant approval is subject to execution of a funding deed and compliance with funding conditions. Council endorsement is sought to accept the grant, establish the relevant project budgets, and authorise the General Manager to finalise and execute the funding deed.

Consultation and Communication

The project was the subject of an internal briefing and discussion with Councillors through Council Committee processes, as well as a confidential Council report (noted above) associated with the development of the RPPP application.

The grant application was also supported by extensive stakeholder engagement. Importantly, the application included support from the landowner or relevant land-controlling entity for each of the sites included in the grant application, being:

- Thales Australia, as owner and proprietor of the Lithgow Small Arms Facility / former Commonwealth defence manufacturing complex site;
- Pacific National, as the owner of the Lithgow rail freight site at the time of the application;
- Sanish Pty Ltd, as owner of the site adjacent to the Pacific National rail freight site; and
- Lithgow City Council, confirming authority for use of the Council-owned Hermitage site.

The application was further supported by letters from Bathurst Local Aboriginal Land Council, Centennial Coal, FastAid, Litecorp, Lithgow High School, the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Regional Development Australia Central West, Solve Civil, and the University of Notre Dame Rural Medical School.

The project plan identifies further consultation and engagement during delivery with landowners, industry partners, First Nations stakeholders, government agencies, education and training providers, the Emerging Economy Committee, and the wider community. This future engagement will inform the technical investigations, feasibility work and consolidated project recommendations.

Public communication regarding the successful grant approval will be held until after Council has considered this report and resolved whether to accept the funding. A media release has been prepared that renames the project the *Lithgow Industrial Lands Renewal Precinct*.

Policy

The recommendation is consistent with the Council's adopted policy framework for economic transition, employment land activation, investment attraction and planned growth.

The project gives effect to the *Lithgow Emerging Economy Plan*, which identifies the need for proactive economic diversification as Lithgow transitions from coal mining and coal-fired power generation.

The project is also consistent with the *LEEP Action Plan Refresh 2025-2035*, particularly the priority relating to an Employment Land Enabling Program. That action identifies the need to plan for, identify the subsidy gap, and seek funding to deliver enabling works, utilities, civil works and due diligence across industrial sites. It also identifies advanced manufacturing, defence, logistics, renewable energy supply chains and eco-tourism hubs as target opportunities.

The RPPP project is a direct implementation step because it funds the due diligence, feasibility, planning and business case work required before future enabling works or investment attraction can occur.

The project is consistent with the *Lithgow Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022*, which emphasises the importance of a diverse and robust economy, a skilled workforce, and strengthening investment in regional development. The project supports this policy direction by addressing the shortage of ready-for-market employment land and preparing key sites for future industry and jobs.

The project is also consistent with the Council's land use and strategic planning framework, including the *Lithgow 2040 Local Strategic Planning Statement* and the *Lithgow Land Use Strategy 2010-2030*, to the extent that it supports planned investigation of employment land opportunities, infrastructure requirements, land use constraints and future development pathways. The project does not rezone land or approve development. Rather, it provides the evidence base required to inform future planning, infrastructure, and investment decisions.

At the regional level, the project aligns with the NSW State Government's:

- *Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2041*, particularly objectives relating to supporting the State's transition to net zero, planning for resilient places and communities, and supporting employment lands and economic development. The NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development specifically noted this alignment in its letter of support, including the relevance of Objectives 2, 7 and 18 of the Regional Plan.
- *Lithgow Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022*, which identifies the need to diversify Lithgow's economy, strengthen investment attraction, support a skilled workforce and make better use of the region's industrial, transport and locational advantages. The project advances these objectives by funding the enabling studies needed to unlock underutilised industrial sites and prepare them for future employment-generating investment.

Legal

The subject matter of this report is a function of Council conferred by the *Local Government Act 1993*.

The grant funding will be subject to the terms and conditions of a funding deed. The General Manager will be required to ensure that the funding deed and associated documentation are reviewed and administered in accordance with Council's delegations, procurement requirements, financial management obligations and any conditions imposed by the funding body.

Risk Management

The principal risks associated with accepting the grant are delivery, compliance, budget and stakeholder risks.

Delivery risk arises from the need to procure and coordinate multiple technical studies within the project timeline. This will be managed through project governance, milestone reporting, procurement planning and regular monitoring of consultant deliverables.

Compliance risk arises from the need to meet funding deed conditions, milestone reporting, acquittal requirements and eligible expenditure rules. This will be managed through the Council's grant administration processes and under the oversight of the project manager and the responsible Directorate.

Budget risk arises from potential changes to project scope and consultant costs. This will be managed through budget controls, financial reporting and alignment of expenditure with the final approved funding deed and project plan.

Stakeholder risk arises because the project involves multiple landowners, agencies, industry partners and community interests. This will be managed through structured engagement, clear communication, and transparent reporting.

There is also a strategic risk if the grant is not accepted by Council. Without the enabling planning work, Council will have a weaker evidence base to unlock key employment lands and attract future investment or funding. This may constrain Lithgow's capacity to respond to economic transition and diversify its employment base.

Financial

- Budget approved - The grant approval provides \$1,500,000 in Australian Government funding. Council's required cash co-contribution is \$360,000, proposed to be funded from the Lithgow Emerging Economy Plan budget.
- Cost centre - To be created upon project initiation.
- Expended to date - \$0. There were works-in-kind costs associated with staff time to prepare the RPPP plan, undertake required consultation and prepare the grant application.
- Future potential impact - The project budget will recognise \$1,500,000 in grant income and corresponding project expenditure, together with Council's \$360,000 cash co-contribution, and any eligible in-kind or partner contributions required under the final funding deed.
- The project is an enabling planning project and does not commit Council to future construction, land acquisition, remediation works or infrastructure delivery. Any future capital works, land transactions or additional funding applications arising from the project will be subject to separate Council consideration.

If resolved to accept the grant, budget adjustments will be made during quarterly reviews of the 2026/2027 Budget and the development of the 2027/2028 Budget, based on the anticipated delivery of the program. A portion of Council's contribution will come from the Transitions Management SRV allocation arising from prior year transfers to the relevant Reserve and from allocations from future SRV allocations, dependent upon the finalised timing of delivery.

2.3. P&P - 29/06/2026 - DA047/26, Geotechnical Investigations, Lithgow Council Road Reserve, Sunny Corner Road/Portland Sunny Corner Road

Strategic Direction:

Developing Our Built Environment: To provide a choice of effective public and private transport options, suitable entertainment and recreational facilities, and lifestyle choices while enhancing the existing rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Author: Lauren Stevens – Development Planner

Department: Development

Responsible Officer: Shaun Elwood - Director People and Place

Property Details Lithgow Council Road Reserve, Sunny Corner Road and Portland Sunny Corner Road, Sunny Corner/Meadow Flat

Property Owner Lithgow City Council

Applicant Papich Danielle on behalf of LFB Resources NL

Executive Summary

This report is submitted to Council for consideration and determination of Development Application DA047/26 (DA), which seeks consent for Geotechnical Investigations on a Lithgow Council Road Reserve.

The purpose of the geotechnical works is to inform the McPhillamys Gold Project - Water Supply Pipeline, for which a separate planning approval is sought (SSI-99419963). Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the McPhillamys Water Supply Pipeline project were issued by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) on 15 December 2025.

Assessment

Council's Development Planner has prepared an Assessment Report, which is included as Attachment 1 to this report. The Assessment Report provides details of matters that must be considered during assessment of the development application, and identifies the legislation, environmental planning instruments, standards and controls that apply to the development. The Assessment Report also includes proposed conditions of consent.

The DA was referred to Endeavour Energy and Council's Development Engineers for assessment. No objections were received for the proposal with recommended conditions applied to the consent, if Council approves the DA.

The DA was publicly exhibited from 28 April to 21 May 2026, with no submissions received.

There are minimal environmental considerations arising from the proposal, and it is recommended that the development application be approved with appropriate conditions.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT:

1. Development Application DA047/26 be APPROVED subject to conditions of consent as detailed in the attached planning assessment report.
2. A DIVISION be called in accordance with the requirements of Section 375A(3) of the Local Government Act 1993.

Attachments

1. Site Plans - Lithgow Council Road Reserve, Sunny Corner Road/Portland Sunny Corner Road [2.3.1 - 5 pages]
2. Development Assessment Report - Lithgow Council Road Reserve [2.3.2 - 35 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min No. 25-241 Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 22 September 2025

25 -241 RESOLVED

THAT Council:

1. *Approve the Deed of Variation of Access Licence Deed, and*
2. *Delegate authority to the General Manager to sign all documents and do all things necessary to give effect to the Deed of Variation of Access Licence Deed.*

Background and discussion

Council is in receipt of Development Application No. DA047/26 (DA) seeking consent for Geotechnical Investigations within Council's road reserve along Sunny Corner Road and Portland Sunny Corner Road, Sunny Corner/Meadow Flat.

Nine test pits are proposed at approximately 0.7 - 1.8 km spacing along the proposed Water Supply Pipeline alignment, with a focus on potential thrust block locations and trenched crossings at creeks and roads.

Test pits would be excavated using a backhoe or small excavator to a maximum depth of 3m. Test pits may be substituted with a large diameter (300 to 450 millimetres) auger, where necessary, to reduce site disturbance. The topsoil horizon would be excavated and stockpiled separately from the remainder of the excavated material to facilitate reinstatement.

Upon completion, the excavated spoil would be returned to the hole or pit in reverse sequence (where feasible), with topsoil (where present) backfilled last. Excavated spoil would be tamped in 0.5 m lifts and tracked at the surface.

Additional testing would include dynamic cone penetration (DCP) testing at each test pit location to a maximum depth of 2m, or prior refusal.

The proposed works would have a minor and temporary disturbance footprint. As the sites are located adjacent to public roads, no access tracks or landform levelling is expected to be necessary.

The duration of works is anticipated to be less than two weeks and involve two to four workers on site at any one time. Works would be undertaken during daylight hours from 7.00 am to 5.00 pm.

Siting of pits and/or boreholes would avoid existing trees. Portable plant and facilities would be used to meet requirements, such as power and water. Any generated waste would be removed and disposed of by appropriate waste management services.

Description of Site and Surrounds

The development is to be undertaken within the Council's road reserve along portions of Sunny Corner Road and Portland Sunny Corner Road, Sunny Corner/Meadow Flat.

The surrounding areas consist of large rural residential properties with scattered dwellings, farm sheds and agricultural uses.

Sunny Corner Road and Portland Sunny Corner Road are bitumen sealed roads with the road reserve consisting of vegetated areas and electricity easements.

Development background

The geotechnical investigations are required to enable the development of the approved McPhillamys Gold Project (**MGP**) located approximately 8 kilometres (km) north-east of Blayney in central-western New South Wales (NSW).

On 11 September 2025, the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces made an order under section 5.12(4) of the EP&A Act to declare development for the purposes of the McPhillamys Gold Infrastructure Project (**MGIP**) to be State Significant Infrastructure (**SSI**) under the EP&A Act. This order commenced on 19 September 2025, and the associated SSI declaration provides a clear approvals pathway for critical enabling infrastructure required for the MGP.

The proposed works are to support of the water supply pipeline (**WSP**), a component of the MGIP, which would ensure that a viable and reliable source of water to the MGP can be realised.

The WSP would comprise a water supply pipeline transferring approximately 16 megalitres of water per day from Centennial Coal's Angus Place Colliery and Springvale Coal Service Operations, and EnergyAustralia's Mount Piper Power Station to the approved MGP for mining and processing activities.

While the approved MGP includes a water supply pipeline, the WSP is proposed to address landowner and constructability constraints for the approved pipeline alignment.

Council has previously approved an Access Licence Deed and related Licence Fee for the water supply pipeline.

The proposed geotechnical investigation works program would make geotechnical information available to the SSI development consent authority and inform relevant management and mitigation methods.

Consultation and Communication

Lithgow Community Participation Plan

Pursuant to the Lithgow Community Participation Plan, the proposed development was placed on public exhibition, with nearby landowners being notified of the proposal. The proposed documents were placed on public exhibition for 21 days in accordance with the Participation Plan, commencing 28 April 2026 and ending 21 May 2026.

During the notification period, no submissions were received.

Policy

Council's Policy 7.6 Development Applications by Councillors and Staff or on Council Owned Land requires that any application that proposes to dedicate land or an asset to Council be considered and determined by Council if the recommendation is for approval of that application. Given that the

proposed geotechnical investigation works are to be undertaken within the Council's road reserve, the application is to be determined by the elected Council.

Legal

The subject matter of this report is a function of Council conferred by the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and under the Lithgow Local Environmental Plan 2014.

The proposed development requires consent in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and under the Lithgow Local Environmental Plan 2014. In determining a development application, Council, as the consent authority, is required to take into consideration the matters of relevance under Section 4.15 of the Act. These are addressed in the attached Planning Assessment Report. The application is recommended for approval and has been assessed as achieving compliance with relevant regulatory requirements.

Risk Management

Nil.

Financial

There are no financial implications in relation to the assessment of the DA aside from the DA fees paid by the applicant at the time of submission.

2.4. P&P - 29/06/2026 - Exemption from Tender - Seven Valleys Destination Campaign

Strategic Direction: **Strengthening Our Economy:**
To provide for sustainable and planned growth through the diversification of the economic base, the development of diverse job opportunities and the provision of a broad range of formal and non-formal educational services.

Author: Simon Francis - Tourism Manager

Department: Tourism

Responsible Officer: Shaun Elwood – Director People and Places

Executive Summary

The Seven Valleys ‘Echo Your Freedom’ campaign commenced in the market in March 2026 and is demonstrating exceptionally strong performance across key metrics when compared alongside other Regional NSW tourism campaigns (including significant growth in social media engagement, website traffic, and overall brand awareness).

This campaign launch in March 2026 represents the culmination of more than two years of strategic planning, research, and implementation led by Destination Store, following its appointment through a competitive tender process in May 2023 to develop the Destination Action Plan.

It is recommended that Council approve a direct engagement of Destination Store for a further one-year period (July 2026 to June 2027) to ensure continuity, maximise return on investment, and enable completion of the campaign objectives, based on:

- the demonstrated success of the campaign,
- the advanced stage of implementation, and
- the depth of strategic knowledge held by the current provider.

A tender process would then be undertaken after this period, if required.

Council approval is sought, as the total engagement cost for Destination Store, including this proposed engagement, exceeds the tender threshold, in accordance with Section 55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act, 1993.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Approve the direct engagement of Destination Store for delivery of Stage 2 of the Seven Valleys ‘Echo Your Freedom’ campaign, for an engagement period of one year (July 2026-June 2027), under Section 55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act, 1993, for the reasons that engagement of another organisation would result in operational and financial inefficiencies, and a risk of campaign disruption.
2. Note the justification for the direct engagement as detailed within this report.
3. Note the strong performance of the campaign as indicated in Confidential Attachment 1; and
4. Note that most of the prior expenditure has been on strategic development and digital platform establishment, forming the foundation for current campaign success.

Attachments

1. CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENT 1 - 7V Campaign Report [2.4.1 - 17 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

N/A

Background and discussion

Destination Store was initially engaged via competitive tender to deliver:

- Seven Valleys Destination Action Plan 2024-2030.
- Seven Valleys Destination Marketing Plan.

The current 'Echo Your Freedom' campaign is the direct implementation of these adopted strategies.

Since May 2023, total engagement with Destination Store has amounted to \$466,869.46 (ex GST). It is important to note that:

- Much of this investment has been in strategic planning, research, brand development, and foundational marketing infrastructure, and
- A significant portion has also supported ongoing social media activity and audience development, rather than direct campaign advertising spend.

This foundational work has been essential to establishing the Seven Valleys brand and enabling the current campaign to perform strongly in the market.

Current Campaign Performance

The 'Echo Your Freedom' campaign, which commenced in March 2026, is achieving strong and measurable success, including:

- Significant uplift in digital engagement and brand visibility,
- Strong growth in website traffic and user interaction,
- Positive resonance with both visitors and local tourism operators, and
- Increasing recognition of the Seven Valleys as a destination brand.

Detailed performance metrics and outcomes are provided in Confidential Attachment 1, which demonstrates the campaign's overwhelming success and the associated digital and social media activity.

Proposal

It is proposed that Destination Store be directly engaged for Stage 2 delivery of the 'Echo Your Freedom' campaign for a further one year (July 2026 – June 2027) at an estimated cost of \$130K (SRV funded), subject to Council adoption in the Operational Plan.

Justification for Direct Engagement

Under Section 55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act, 1993, a tender is not required for *"a contract where, because of extenuating circumstances, remoteness of locality, or the unavailability of competitive or reliable tenderers, a council decides by resolution (which states the reasons for this decision) that a satisfactory result would not be achieved by inviting tenders"*.

The justification of the extenuating circumstances that demonstrate why a satisfactory result would not be achieved by inviting tenders is outlined below.

1. Protection of Strategic Investment

Council has made a substantial investment in developing:

- Brand strategy,
- Consumer research,
- Market positioning, and
- Digital infrastructure.

Changing providers mid-implementation risks undermining this investment, as a new supplier would not have the same depth of understanding or continuity of approach.

2. Demonstrated Campaign Success

The campaign is currently in a critical growth phase, with demonstrated strong performance as outlined in Confidential Attachment One.

Interrupting delivery at this stage presents a high risk of:

- Loss of momentum in the market,
- Decline in brand visibility and engagement, and
- Reduced return on prior investment.

3. Continuity of Knowledge and Capability

Destination Store holds extensive institutional knowledge, including:

- Detailed understanding of the Seven Valleys brand and positioning,
- Insights from market research, workshops, and stakeholder engagement, and
- Data and performance learnings from campaign delivery to date.

A new provider would require significant time and cost to:

- Rebuild this knowledge base,
- Reinterpret strategy, and
- Re-establish campaign direction.

4. Operational and Financial Inefficiencies

Proceeding to open tender at this stage presents material risks and inefficiencies, including:

- Duplication of work already completed under the current engagement,
- Increased transition costs and delays as a new contractor becomes familiar with the strategy and assets,
- Reduced effectiveness of marketing expenditure due to loss of continuity and learning, and
- Potential requirement to redevelop or realign campaign strategy, impacting timing and outcomes.

These inefficiencies would directly reduce the impact of the Council's marketing investment.

5. Risk of Campaign Disruption if Tender Outcome Changes Provider

Should an open tender be undertaken and Destination Store not be successful:

- Campaign delivery would likely be interrupted or delayed,
- A new provider may reinterpret or redesign elements of the campaign, and
- Market presence and messaging consistency could be compromised.

This poses a significant strategic risk at a critical stage in the campaign's maturity.

6. Alignment with Campaign Lifecycle

The proposed one-year engagement period:

- Aligns with the natural lifecycle of the existing campaign,
- Provides sufficient time to fully realise strategic objectives, and
- Enables proper evaluation of outcomes prior to any future procurement.

This approach ensures Council moves to a possible future open tender from a position of:

- Completed strategy execution,
- Established benchmarks, and
- Clear evidence of outcomes.

Consultation and Communication

Internal consultation has occurred within the People and Places Directorate. Campaign performance data has been reviewed and supports continuation of the current delivery model.

Policy

The seeking of an exemption to tender under S.55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act, is in accordance with the objective of 1.4 Tendering Policy.

Legal

Under Section 55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act, 1993, a tender is not required for *“a contract where, because of extenuating circumstances, remoteness of locality, or the unavailability of competitive or reliable tenderers, a council decides by resolution (which states the reasons for this decision) that a satisfactory result would not be achieved by inviting tenders”*.

Risk Management

Key risks of proceeding to open tender at this stage include:

- Loss of campaign momentum,
- Reduced market awareness and engagement,
- Duplication of work and inefficient use of funds,
- Delays in campaign delivery,
- Misalignment with established strategy, and
- Loss of strategic insights gathered to date.

Conversely, direct engagement mitigates these risks and supports continuity and performance.

The risk of direct engagement not achieving market value is mitigated as a tender was undertaken in May 2023, and the demonstrably strong outcomes achieved, as outlined in Confidential Attachment One.

Financial

- Budget approved - \$130,000 (SRV funded)
- Cost centre - 600310
- Expended to date - \$130,000
- Future potential impact - \$130K, subject to Council adoption of 2026/27 Operational Plan.

The previous investment in relation to Stage One, comprising the development of the strategic direction and the digital and social platforms, totals \$466,869.46.

2.5. I&PD - 29/06/2026 - Exemption from Tender Traffic Control for Hartley Vale Road

Strategic Direction: **Developing Our Built Environment:** To provide a choice of effective public and private transport options, suitable entertainment and recreational facilities, and lifestyle choices while enhancing the existing rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Author: Paul Creelman – Transport Manager

Responsible Officer: Paul Smith – Interim Director Infrastructure and Project Delivery

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the expenditure to date incurred for the traffic control on Hartley Vale Road, required for safety measures implemented due to the closure of the Great Western Highway (GWH) at Victoria Pass. Over time, the cost has exceeded the tender threshold, and this report seeks Council's approval of an exemption from tender under Section 55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act (Act) due to extenuating circumstances.

The traffic control costs incurred are fully claimable from Transport for NSW (TfNSW).

Once an announcement is made of the likely timeframe for the closure of the GWH and the associated timeframe during which Hartley Vale Road traffic control will be required, the appropriate procurement process will be undertaken.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Note that, due to the developing Great Western Highway closure situation, expenditure to date for traffic control on Hartley Vale Road has exceeded the tender threshold, and that the appropriate procurement process could not be followed due to these extenuating circumstances.
2. Adopt the continued direct engagement of the current traffic control company to ensure continuity of service and public safety, and due to the uncertainty of the length of engagement required, under Section 55(3)(i) of the Act.
3. Note that an appropriate procurement process will be undertaken once a likely timeframe for the engagement is known, after the announcement of the solution to reopen GWH, expected shortly.

Attachments

Nil

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Nil.

Background and discussion

Shortly after the closure of the GWH at Victoria Pass, TfNSW approached Council and requested that traffic control measures be implemented on Hartley Vale Road to ensure public safety. It was

confirmed that TfNSW would reimburse Council for the associated costs. At the time, staff were used to provide traffic control because the duration of the closure was unknown.

After it became evident that the GWH closure would be for an extended timeframe, quotes were sought, and a company was engaged on a week-to-week basis, awaiting confirmation and the relevant funding agreement from TfNSW, which was received on 26 May 2026. This ensured that Council was not committed for a cost that may not be reimbursed.

With the funding agreement now in place, costs have been reimbursed through the end of May 2026 and will be claimed monthly thereafter.

The costs incurred for the contracted traffic controllers at this point were \$299K, which exceeded the tender threshold of \$250K. The 29 June Ordinary Meeting is the first opportunity since the funding agreement was received to be able to seek an exemption from tendering under Section 55(3)(i) of the Act.

Under Section 55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act, 1993, a tender is not required for *“a contract where, because of extenuating circumstances, remoteness of locality, or the unavailability of competitive or reliable tenderers, a council decides by resolution (which states the reasons for this decision) that a satisfactory result would not be achieved by inviting tenders”*.

The justification for not inviting tenders at this stage is that the duration of the engagement is unknown and is likely to be known shortly. A more certain timeframe may result in lower rates, as the fixed costs can be recovered over a longer time. In collaboration with TfNSW, the Council can also review daily traffic control hours.

The average weekly cost is \$37K and increases during weeks with public holidays. It is anticipated that approximately an additional \$449K in traffic control contractor costs will be incurred to allow time for the announcement and a subsequent procurement process. It is to be noted that the current contractor is on the Traffic Management Services Local Government Procurement Panel (LGP 113-3).

Consultation and Communication

Nil.

Policy

The seeking of an exemption to tender under S.55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act, is in accordance with the objective of 1.4 Tendering Policy.

Legal

Under Section 55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act, 1993, a tender is not required for *“a contract where, because of extenuating circumstances, remoteness of locality, or the unavailability of competitive or reliable tenderers, a council decides by resolution (which states the reasons for this decision) that a satisfactory result would not be achieved by inviting tenders”*.

Risk Management

Key risks of proceeding to open tender at this stage include:

- Commitment for a longer time than needed, and
- Higher rates arising from the uncertainty of time period of commitment.

The risk of not achieving market value has been mitigated because the contractor is an approved supplier on LGP Panel (LGP113-3), which has undergone the appropriate due diligence and market assessment.

Financial

- Budget approved nil – costs fully recoverable under funding agreement with TfNSW.
- Cost centre - 101035
- Expended to date - \$373,498 expended with a further \$188,849 committed.
- Future potential impact - \$37K on average per week expenditure, to be reimbursed from TfNSW monthly. Costs will be in staff time to undertake the procurement exercise, manage contractor performance, process invoices and submit claims.

2.6. I&PD - 29/06/2026 - Access to Private Property off Honeysuckle Falls Road

Strategic Context for this matter:

Developing Our Built Environment: To provide a choice of effective public and private transport options, suitable entertainment and recreational facilities, and lifestyle choices while enhancing the existing rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Author: Richard Jane – Interim Director of Infrastructure and Project Delivery

Responsible Officer: Richard Jane – Interim Director of Infrastructure and Project Delivery

Executive Summary

This report is provided for Council to consider the matter of access to private property off Honeysuckle Falls Road. The report summarises the information gathered by the Administration to date.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT no budget be reallocated from other scheduled roadworks to construct new access to Lot 35 DP 757076, and that the owner be advised.

Attachments

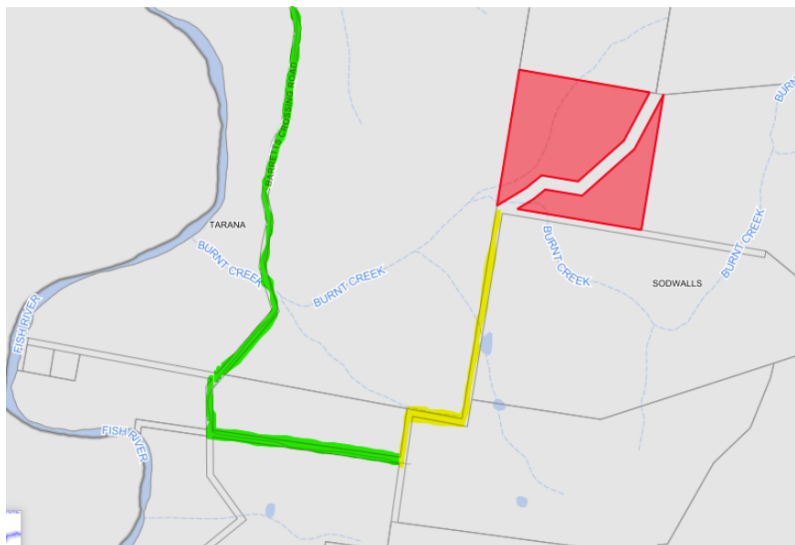
Nil

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min. No. 26-39 Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 23 February 2026

Background and discussion

Lot 35 DP 757076 (Lot 35) is on Barretts Crossing Road off Honeysuckle Falls Road. The property was purchased the property around 2007, when two Crown roads provided legal access. NSW Crown Lands later sold one to an adjoining owner, and, due to the steep terrain, it is not suitable for a traversable road. The second was transferred to Council and is now a dedicated public road under Council's control. It is unconstructed and commonly referred to as a paper road. As shown below, the paper road is highlighted in yellow and is approximately 980 metres long and 20 metres wide. The property is shown in red, and the existing constructed gravel road is shown in green.



The information above shows that there is legal access to Lot 35 and is therefore not landlocked. A gravel road could be constructed along the paper road shown above, suitable for a small two-wheel-drive vehicle, although this is not considered the preferred location. The estimated cost to build the road to Council standards is about \$250,000, including earthworks, drainage structures, and a 100mm thick gravel surface. The following photo shows the approximate location of the paper road.



The owner of Lot 35 currently uses an unformed access track over a neighbouring property. Council staff did not contact the owner of this track to confirm what arrangements, if any, were in place.

In May 2026, the Interim Director of Infrastructure and Project Delivery spoke with the owner of Lot 35 by phone and advised that Council is not obliged to construct a gravel road to the property boundary. The owner was also advised that, under the Local Government Act, the only available option would be to construct the road on a Council-controlled dedicated public road, as Council has no legal authority to build roads on private land.

The following photo shows part of the private access road to 35 over the neighbouring property. The photo shows a section of the access track around 500 metres east of Barretts Crossing Road.



The following snip from Google Earth shows the approximate alignment of the private access track over the neighbouring property to Lot 35. The length of this track from Barretts Crossing Road to the boundary of Lot 35 is approximately 870 metres.



The following photograph shows the intersection of the private access road Lot 35 and Barretts Crossing Road. It was taken looking east across the neighbouring property. There is no boundary fence or gate restricting access to this private road.

As shown in the photograph, there is no rural addressing post or mailbox, making it difficult for first-time visitors to locate the private access. The lack of signage could also make it harder for emergency services to find Lot 35. This is further complicated by Lot 35's listed address being 35 Honeysuckle Falls Road, Tarana, while the access is from Barretts Crossing Road.



Consultation and Communication

Council has been in regular contact with the owner of Lot 35, before and after the transfer of the unnamed Crown road providing access from Honeysuckle Falls Road to Lot 35 to Council.

Council staff have also spoken with adjoining landholders.

Policy

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 23 February 2026, Council resolved that the current matter of 35 Honeysuckle Falls Road, Tarana, is not included in the draft Unformed and Unmaintained Road Policy (Min. No. 26-39).

Adoption of the Unformed and Unmaintained Road Policy is the subject of a separate report to the 29 June 2026 Ordinary Meeting.

Legal

The Council is under no obligation to construct a built road on a Council controlled dedicated public road, but if a constructed road is built it must then be maintained to a traversable and safe standard.

Risk Management

Construction of an access road to private property off Honeysuckle Falls Road would add to the Council's financial sustainability and asset management risks, both in the construction of a new road and ongoing maintenance and depreciation expenses.

Financial

- Budget approved - No budget approved. Any funds spent on this matter would need to be redirected from other critical road projects, thereby delaying the completion of other gravel resheeting or bitumen road projects.
- Expended to date - Nil
- Future potential impact - The construction of a new road would increase the Council's road network and maintenance obligations. This would also increase the Council's overall road depreciation expense.

2.7. I&PD - 29/06/2026 - Proposed Road Naming - Karoo Drive Meadow Flat

Strategic Context for this matter:

Caring for Our Community: To retain, respect and strengthen both our overall sense of community, and the unique linked communities of groups, rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Author: Leanne Kearney – Assets and Infrastructure Planning Manager

Responsible Officer: Richard Jane – Interim Director infrastructure and Project Delivery

Executive Summary

This report provides details of a request to name a section of the Old Great Western Highway between Curly Dick Road and the Great Western Highway at Meadow Flat as “Karoo Drive”.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council:

Advertise the proposed road name “Karoo Drive” on Council's website and local media outlets, calling for submissions to be made for the statutory period of twenty-eight (28) days after which:

- b) If no submissions against the proposal are submitted, Council proceed with the gazette process of the naming of “Karoo Drive”, Meadow Flat and notify all residents and emergency authorities accordingly; and
- b) If submissions against the proposal are received, a report is furnished to the next available Council meeting for resolution.

Attachments

Nil

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Nil

Background and discussion

Council has received a request from a resident to name the section of the Old Great Western Highway between Curly Dick Road and the Great Western Highway at Meadow Flat as “Karoo Drive” (shown in red below).



The property "Karoo" is the western gateway to the Lithgow LGA on the Great Western Highway, with the Karoo homestead being built in 1938. Karoo is currently operated as a beef cattle farm and still has the original Cobb and Co house at the gateway.

The history of the area now known as "Karoo" in Meadow Flat is linked to early colonial and coaching inns, with the Durack family's inn and a Cobb and Co depot located there in the mid-1800s. More recently, the property became the location of Karoo Angus, a family-run Angus stud, which began in 1988 when John and Monica Reen purchased the land, eventually replacing the original Hereford herd with Angus cattle and establishing the stud in 1990. The property and the modern Karoo Angus stud are now run by the next generation: John's daughter, Annie Scott, and her family.

Council has undertaken a preliminary assessment, with the name "Karoo Drive" meeting all the approval criteria and endorsed by the Geographical Names Board. This will mean that if Council approves the road name, gazetting can occur without delays.

Consultation and Communication

Council has formally notified all adjoining landowners of the request and has received no comments or feedback. Council will undertake a 28-day public exhibition period of the proposal, and, at the conclusion of the public exhibition period, if there are no objections received, Council will proceed with the proposed naming process. If objections are received, a report will be presented to Council for further discussion and determination.

Policy

The proposed naming has been assessed in accordance with Council's Policy 10.10, Addressing, road naming and locality naming, and the proposed actions comply with Policy 10.4, Community Engagement and Communications Policy.

Legal

The subject matter of this report is a function of Council conferred under Part 10, Section 162 of the Road Act 1993 and the Geographical Names Board's NSW Address Policy.

Risk Management

Formal naming of Council Public Roads reduces the risk of navigational delays by emergency service agencies when responding to incidents, allows online mapping systems to accurately route traffic during emergency events such as bushfires, floods or other natural disasters, provides improved delivery of goods and mail by utility services, and aids in legal identification of properties to simplify land titles.

Financial

Council will incur some minor administrative and installation costs in accordance with its Policy 10.10 Addressing, road naming and locality naming, and the costs of the naming can be funded from Council's Traffic Facilities Budget.

- Budget approved - \$127,438
- Cost centre - PJ800188
- Expended to date - \$100,674
- Future potential impact - \$951.53

2.8. I&PD - 29/06/2026 - Transfer of Unformed Road - Tooral Street, Glen Davis**Strategic Context for this matter:**

Caring for Our Community: To retain, respect and strengthen both our overall sense of community, and the unique linked communities of groups, rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Author: Leanne Kearney – Assets and Infrastructure Planning Manager

Responsible Officer: Richard Jane – Interim Director Infrastructure and Project Delivery

Executive Summary

This report provides details of a request to transfer a Council Public Road to the National Parks and Wildlife Service for incorporation into the Wollemi National Park (NP).

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council

Advertise the proposed transfer of Tooral Street, Glen Davis from Yarool Street to the end to National Parks and Wildlife Service for incorporation into the Wollemi National Park (NP) on Council's website and local media outlets, and directly notify emergency authorities, local community groups and adjoining residents in the area, calling for submissions to be made for the statutory period of twenty-eight (28) days after which:

- a. If no submissions against the proposal are submitted, Council proceed with the gazettal process of the road transfer to NPWS and notifies all residents and emergency authorities accordingly; and
- b. If submissions against the proposal are submitted, a report will be furnished to the next available Council meeting.

Attachments

Nil

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Nil

Background and discussion

National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) have identified that a section of Tooral Street, Glen Davis, from Yarool Street to the end (shown in red below) is suitable for incorporating into Wollemi National Park (NP).

Status of Tooral Street, Glen Davis



Road found to be a council road

The road was declared to be a public road under Section 14 of the *Glen Davis Act 1939*, via government gazette 5 March 1943.

This road is listed in the Council's Roads Asset Register as an Unformed Rural Road and has a total length of 201.3 metres, with no annual maintenance budget allocated to the asset. The valuation of the unformed road is also minimal, at less than \$1,000.

All seven (7) properties with boundaries adjacent to the section of Tooral Street proposed to be transferred have direct access from other Council public roads (noting that these are also listed in the Roads Asset Register as Unformed Rural Roads). Of these properties, five (5) are Crown Land and two (2) are freehold properties with no dwellings constructed.

The road is unformed but includes part of the Pipeline Track, a trail currently used to access Wollemi NP.

Consolidating suitable public roads as part of the adjoining reserve will improve NPWS's ability to effectively manage public access to the land it administers, as well as allowing NPWS to undertake appropriate management activities under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 without the need for obtaining Council concurrence for each activity.

With Council's concurrence, a Council road that is reserved under the NPW Act 1974, after 1 July 1993 (commencement of the Roads Act 1993), has the effect of extinguishing the road and transferring it to NPWS for future management.

Should Council agree that the road is suitable for incorporation, NPWS can publish a gazette notice reserving the road as part of Wollemi NP. Under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, the gazette notice has the effect of extinguishing the Council road without needing to undertake a formal road closure under the Roads Act 1993.

Consultation and Communication

Should Council concur that the section of Tooral Street, Glen Davis between Yarool Street and the end is suitable for transfer to NPWS, Council will undertake a 28-day public exhibition period of the proposal, as well as provide direct written notification of the proposal to the adjoining land owners and the Glen Davis Progress Association. At the conclusion of the public exhibition period, if no

objections are received, Council will proceed with the proposed transfer to NPWS. If objections are received, a report will be presented to Council for further discussion and determination.

Policy

The proposed transfer has been assessed in accordance with Council's Policy 1.3 Asset Disposal and Policy 1.3 Asset Management, and proposed actions comply with Policy 10.4 Community Engagement and Communications Policy.

Legal

The subject matter of this report is a function of Council conferred by the Road Act 1993 and the Local Government Act 1993.

Transfer of ownership is permitted under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.

Risk Management

The reservation of suitable Council roads also simplifies ownership and management of access in the future and absolves Council of any liability or maintenance responsibilities. Incorporating road corridors with environmental characteristics that are comparable to the adjoining reserve means the land can be managed according to reserve management principles under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974; and any environmental, heritage, cultural or social values that are attributed to that reserve. The direct responsibility for the conservation and restoration of the road corridor is transferred from the road authority to NPWS.

Financial

- Budget approved - \$0
- Cost centre - not required
- Expended to date - \$0
- Future potential impact – There will be minimal non-cash adjustment to dispose of the asset from Council's asset register and also will ensure no future maintenance or renewal costs are required to be funded.

2.9. F&G - 29/06/2026 - 2026/27 Operational Plan

Strategic Direction: **Caring for Our Community** To retain, respect and strengthen both our overall sense of community, and the unique linked communities of groups, rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Developing Our Built Environment To provide a choice of effective public and private transport options, suitable entertainment and recreational facilities, and lifestyle choices while enhancing the existing rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Strengthening Our Economy To provide sustainable and planned growth through the diversification of the economic base, the development of diverse job opportunities, and the provision of a broad range of formal and non-formal educational services.

Enhancing Our Natural Environment To balance, protect and enhance our diverse environmental elements, both natural and built, for the enjoyment and support of both current and future generations

Responsible Governance & Civic Leadership To develop community confidence in the organisation by the way it is directed, controlled and managed

Author: Deborah McGrath – Manager Organisational performance and Communication

Responsible Officer: Vanessa Browning - Director Finance and Governance
Shaun Elwood - Director People and Places

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform the Council of submissions received regarding the draft 2026/27 Operational Plan, which was placed on exhibition for public comment from 30 April to 1 June 2026. The report recommends adoption of the draft Operational Plan, included as Attachment One. The Operational Plan also encompasses the Revenue Policy and Fees and Charges, which are included in a separate report for Council to consider for adoption.

While there are no proposed changes in relation to the draft Operational Plan, or associated budget amendments, an overview of changes that are likely to be required as part of the annual carryovers process, and the September 2026 Quarterly Budget Review is provided. The changes cannot be included in the draft Budget, as they await finalisation of programming of works and the final determination of estimates, based on information to be received and macroeconomic conditions.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Adopt the draft 2026/27 Operational Plan as attached, noting that the Revenue Policy and Fees and Charges are addressed in a separate report to Council.
2. Receive and note the Community Engagement Report and submissions summary.

3. Provide submitters with a response comprising this Council report and the Community Engagement Report.

Attachments

1. 2026/27 Operational Plan [2.9.1 - 114 pages]
2. 2026/27 Operational Plan - Community Engagement Report [2.9.2 - 37 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min No. 26-79 Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 29 April 2026.

Background and discussion

Community Engagement and Submissions Received

The Draft 2026/27 Operational Plan, Draft 2026/27 Revenue Policy and Draft 2026/27 Fees and Charges were placed on public exhibition for a period of 32 days between 1 May and 1 June 2026. The documents were made available to community members online via the Let's Talk Seven Valleys Engagement Portal and for viewing at the Council Administration Centre and the Libraries.

Community Engagement

Council used the following media and social media to publicly invite the community to provide feedback to the documents:

- Let's Talk Seven Valleys subscriber eNewsletter.
- Council website link from Have Your Say to the Let's Talk Seven Valleys website.
- Radio advertising on Radio 2LT and MOVE FM.
- Council Connections eNewsletter.
- Inclusion in the fortnightly Council Column, Village Voice and Lithgow Mercury.

An overview of the response from Council's [Let's Talk Seven Valleys Website](#) during the exhibition of the Draft 2026/27 Operational Plan is provided below:

- The website recorded 488 visits, equating to 63 visitors per day.
- 362 participants were "aware", meaning they visited a project page or tool.
- 181 participants were "informed".
- Of the informed participants, 90 downloaded a document, 29 visited the key dates page, 157 visited multiple project pages, and 9 contributed to an engagement tool.

Community Submissions

There were 16 submissions received from our community and/or community organisations. The submissions have been considered, and it has been determined that no adjustment to the exhibited Operational Plan is required. Attachment Two to this report provides detailed submissions and officers' responses. If so resolved, the providers of the submissions will be provided with a response, being this Council Report and Community Engagement Report.

2026/27 Draft Budget

Budgetary Challenges and Updates

As outlined at the April 2026 Council Meeting, Council's draft 2026/27 budget projects a deficit General Fund operating result of (\$3.0M). The consolidated operating result (before capital) is a deficit of (\$1.2M). The deficit results from a \$2.3M increase in depreciation, primarily due to the

reevaluation of infrastructure assets undertaken in 2024/25. The balance of the deficit relates to funding operating business cases that will either:

- Achieve future cost savings,
- Enhance potential to attract grant funding,
- Lead to better informed future investment decisions and asset management decisions,
- Enhance public safety, and/or
- Generate additional income, and/or reduce reliance on rates and annual charges.

Council is taking a longer-term approach to decision making to ensure the financial, economic and social sustainability of our community.

Although no changes are proposed to the draft Operational Plan or associated Budget at this stage, future budget adjustments are likely as works programming, final estimates and macroeconomic conditions are confirmed.

It is to be noted that the main general funded income source is rates, and the 3.1% rate peg is projected to generate an additional \$663K in income. This income increase has been more than offset by the NSW industry award increase, now confirmed at 4% (draft budget had 3.5%), an increase of \$848K. The additional \$106K from the draft Budget will be included in the September Quarterly Review.

Aside from the confirmed Award increase, the following will be considered when the budget is reviewed:

- The estimate for Workers Compensation Insurance is \$1.4M, compared to \$1.05M for 2025/2026, an increase of 33% (draft Budget has \$1.06M). This is mainly due to current salaries and wages, as well as a nation-wide increase in psychosocial claims.
- The estimate for Council's remaining insurance coverage is \$1.4M compared to \$1.2M for 2025/2026 (draft Budget has \$1.3M).
- The conflict in the Middle East may continue to impact upon Council's program and budget, both in terms of delivery timeframes associated with the availability of supplies, and costs (particularly in relation to fuel). Associated with this is the fact that the draft budget assumed 3.2% CPI, whereas the March 2026 CPI was already at 4.4%.
- The Financial Assistance Grant has been announced at 0.49% of Commonwealth taxation revenue, compared to 0.51% in 2025/2026. The impact of this is unknown as each Council's allocation changes from year to year, based on the allocation methodology and in comparison to other Councils. Advice has been received that 80% of the 26/27 allocation will be prepaid in June 2026.
- Several projects will continue into 2026/27, and adjustments to the budget will be required, dependent upon the unrestricted cash position as at the end of 2025/26. Deferral of some projects scheduled to commence in 2026/27 may be required to complete the 2025/26 works. Council has been successful in securing several grants and contributions, some of which are still embargoed, totalling over \$3.4M, with other applications still pending. Delivery programs are being finalised, and budget adjustments will be made once this is complete.

The updated information and further challenges that have been encountered since the development of the draft budget have been outlined to the Finance Committee on 20 May 2026 and at the Councillor Information Session held on 17 June 2026.

As details of these updates are finalised, those requiring adjustment prior to the September Quarterly Review, scheduled to be considered at the November 2026 Ordinary Meeting, will be tabled at monthly Finance Committee Meetings for adoption at the next available Council Meeting. This will ensure that Council can be agile and proactively respond to changes.

To ensure agility, the commencement of works programs and capital works will be staggered based on prioritisation, and deferral of lower priority works may be required, depending on the accumulation of the challenges and changes outlined above, as well as the Council's cash position. If project deferrals are required, reports outlining the deferrals will be tabled at Finance Committee Meetings and included for resolution of Council at the next available Council Meeting.

Financial Assistance Program

An allocation of \$105K has been incorporated into the 2026/27 Budget and will be used for:

Purpose	Amount
Contribution to Portland Pool operations	\$46,000
Contribution to Lithgow Show	\$15,000
Membership of Arts Out West	\$14,000
School End of Year Awards	\$2,000
Facility Hire Fee Waivers	\$13,000
Sports and Recreation	\$15,000

The Financial Assistance Program and measures of value for money will continue to be reviewed through 2026/27.

Seven Valleys Community Grants Program (Centennial Coal Community Contributions)

Each year, Council receives contributions from Centennial Coal to fund works and programs to benefit the community. A review has been undertaken, and the following has been proposed and will be incorporated into the budget once the program timing has been determined.

Purpose	Amount	Funding Source
Disability Access Fund	\$25,000	26/27 contribution
Local Events	\$10,000	26/27 contribution
Wellbeing Projects	\$20,000	26/27 contribution
'16 Days' Domestic Violence Campaign	\$10,000	26/27 contribution
Place Projects	\$30,000	26/27 contribution
Disability Access Hoist Lithgow Pool	\$40,000	Prior year contributions
Disability Access Hoist QE Park	\$40,000	Prior year contributions

Consultation and Communication

Community consultation was undertaken through the public exhibition process outlined earlier in this Report, with engagement outcomes and submissions summarised in Attachment Two.

Policy

Nil arising from this report.

Legal

The Local Government Act 1993, the Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Bill 2009, and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 outline the requirements for the

preparation, exhibition, and adoption of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. The Draft documents must be exhibited for a minimum period of 28 days.

Risk Management

The draft plans presented for public exhibition address and respond to a range of medium to long-term financial, asset, and service provision risks, while the Capital Works Program addresses some of Council's assets at greatest risk of failure.

Financial

The Draft Operational Plan 2026/27 presents a financially prudent and balanced cashflow position. Council needs to review the Financial Sustainability Plan actions and conduct service reviews to target a balanced operating result (before capital) budget for the General Fund in future years.

The review of the Financial Sustainability Plan will include measures to:

- Improve rates resilience,
- Improve income resilience,
- Review cost recovery/subsidisation,
- Review services – what are delivered and how,
- Review assets to identify surplus / under-used assets, and
- Review optimisation of Council's property portfolio.

2.10. F&G - 29/06/2026 - Making of Annual Rates and Charges 2026/2027

Strategic Context for this matter:

Responsible Governance & Civic Leadership: To develop community confidence in the organisation by the way it is directed, controlled and managed.

Author: Rhiannan Whiteley – Senior Revenue Officer – Rates and Water

Responsible Officer: Vanessa Browning - Director Finance and Governance

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to make the rates and annual charges for the 2026/27 financial year in accordance with Section 535 of the Local Government Act 1993.

The report encompasses the rates and annual charges, as well as the fees and charges that are included in the 2026/27 Revenue Policy and updated fees and charges register, which require formal adoption by Council.

The full listing of rates, fees and charges, fees relevant to statutory regulations and the proposed income generated is contained in the Revenue Policy and the Fees and Charges documents included as attachments to this report.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Adopt the maximum rate of interest payable on overdue rates and charges for the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027 (inclusive) as 9.5% per annum.
2. Adopt the following Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) documents:
 - a) Fees and Charges 2026/27,
 - b) Revenue Policy 2026/27, and
 - c) Rating Maps 2026/27.
3. Declare a category and sub-category of ordinary rate for each proposed category and sub-category set out in columns 2 and 3 of the Rates Categorisation Table in this Report on the corresponding basis set out in Column 4 of the table.
4. Make the Rates and Annual charges for 2026/27 rating year as detailed in the 2026/27 Revenue Policy and as listed in the tables within this report.
5. Adopt the following changes to the rating structure from 1 July 2026:
 - a) Harmonisation of the Residential Lithgow, Wallerawang and Portland sub-categories into the Lithgow Urban category, and
 - b) Harmonisation of the Business Lithgow, Wallerawang and Portland sub-categories into the Business Urban category.

Attachments

1. Updated Fees and Charges 2026-27 [2.10.1 - 84 pages]
2. Revenue Policy 2026-27 [2.10.2 - 17 pages]
3. 2026 Residential Urban [2.10.3 - 1 page]
4. 2026 Residential Other [2.10.4 - 1 page]
5. 2026 Business Urban [2.10.5 - 1 page]
6. 2026 Business Power Station [2.10.6 - 1 page]
7. 2026 Business Other [2.10.7 - 1 page]
8. 2026 Farmland [2.10.8 - 1 page]
9. 2026 Quarries [2.10.9 - 1 page]
10. 2026 Mines [2.10.10 - 1 page]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min No 26-79 Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 29 April 2026

Background and discussion

Fees and Charges

The proposed Fees and Charges Register has been prepared having regard to Council's pricing principles and forms an important component of Council's overall revenue framework for 2026/27.

Council has undertaken a comprehensive review of the Fees and Charges Register for 2026/27 to ensure that fees remain aligned with the cost-of-service delivery, legislative requirements, market conditions, and community expectations.

Where appropriate, fees and charges have been increased generally in line with movements in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the cost of providing services. In addition, several fees have been reviewed individually to better reflect actual service delivery costs, legislative requirements and contemporary market conditions.

The 2026/27 Fees and Charges Register incorporates several amendments, including the introduction of a formal Fee Waivers and Reductions framework, revisions to facility hire charges, updates to animal management fees and adjustments to a range of operational fees across Council services. Several fees have also been reviewed to improve cost recovery and ensure consistent application of charges.

Significant changes include the reduction of animal adoption fees to support improved rehoming outcomes, the introduction of revised community and not-for-profit facility hire arrangements, and the removal of credit card transaction fees for Visa, Mastercard, and EFTPOS transactions from 1 October 2026, in accordance with regulatory changes.

During the exhibition period, it was identified that several adjustments were required to the draft Fees and Charges to align with what was exhibited. An overview of these fees is outlined below.

- *Section 68 (D-1 and F-7) Local Government Act 1993 – Annual approval (per year) in public place or community land [Mobile Food Vending or Temporary Food Stall]*

Reason: The rounding of the fee was not implemented.

Exhibited fee \$165.12, proposed to reduce to \$165.00.

- *Food Premises Annual Administration Charges*

Reason: The fees set at exhibition were set at the maximum level set by legislation. These fees were unintentionally omitted from 2025/2026 Fees and Charges. To ease the costs to businesses, the fees have been adjusted to reflect only CPI increases since 2024/2025.

- Annual administration charge - up to and including 5 FTE – exhibited \$570.00, proposed to reduce to \$241.00,
- Annual administration charge - more than 5 but not more than 50 FTE – exhibited \$1,170.00, proposed to reduce to \$485.00, and
- Annual administration charge - more than 50 FTE – exhibited \$5,115.00, proposed to reduce to \$3,012.

- *Section 68 (D-1 and F-7) Local Government Act 1993 – Annual approval (per year) in public place or community land [Mobile Food Vending or Temporary Food Stall]*

Reason: The rounding of the fee was not implemented.

Exhibited fee \$165.12, proposed to reduce to \$165.00.

- *Reconditioning of Bronze Plaque – Per Plaque \$110.00*

Reason: to introduce a new fee for cemetery plaques, in line with service requests made.

This fee will be exhibited separately for 28 days until 31 July 2026, and if no submissions are received that warrant a review of the proposed fee, it will be effective from 1 August 2026.

Rates and Annual Charges

The Ordinary Rates structure incorporates the rate peg increase in Council's General Rating Income of 3.1% for 2026/27.

The draft Revenue Policy presented in this report has been updated from the version originally placed on public exhibition. These amendments reflect supplementary valuations received from the NSW Valuer General since the exhibition period, together with minor amendments to certain rates, annual charges, fees and charges. The amendments ensure that the final Revenue Policy reflects the most current information available prior to adoption and enables Council to meet its legislative and statutory obligations under the Local Government Act 1993 and associated regulations. The changes do not alter the overall intent of the Revenue Policy but ensure the accuracy of the rates, charges and revenue estimates proposed for 2026/27 and support Council's compliance with its statutory obligations.

The 2026/27 financial year is also a General Valuation year, with land values having a base date of 1 July 2025 to be applied for rating purposes from 1 July 2026. While changes in land values do not increase the total amount of rates collected by Council, changes in valuations result in a redistribution of rates between properties, depending on how individual land values have changed relative to other properties in the same rating category.

Council may calculate and distribute rates among categories of rateable land using one of three methods:

- **Option 1** – entirely on land value (ad valorem);
- **Option 2** – a combination of land value and a fixed amount per property (base amount plus ad valorem); or
- **Option 3** – ad valorem with a minimum rate.

Lithgow City Council continues to utilise **Option 2**, which is considered the most equitable method of rating across the Local Government Area.

Under this method, all rateable properties contribute a base amount, while the ad valorem component ensures that properties contribute in proportion to their land value.

In accordance with Section 497 of the Act, the structure of the Ordinary Rate consists of a base amount and an ad valorem amount.

1. Understanding the Impact of Changes to the Rating Structure

It is important to note that changes to the base amount do not directly equate to an equivalent increase in a ratepayer's total rates. Council's Ordinary Rates are calculated using two components:

- a fixed base amount; and
- an ad valorem amount calculated on the land value of the property.

Council is required to raise a fixed amount of total rates income, determined by the rate peg approved by IPART. The way this income is distributed between the base amount and ad valorem component influences how rates are shared across properties.

Where the base amount is increased, the ad valorem rate must generally decrease to ensure that the Council raises only the income permitted under the rate peg. As a result, while the fixed component of the rate may increase, the amount charged based on land value may decrease.

This is particularly relevant during a General Valuation year. When land values increase across the Local Government Area, maintaining the same base amount would require a higher proportion of rates to be collected through the ad valorem component, potentially resulting in larger increases for some properties. By increasing the base amount and reducing the ad valorem rate, Council can moderate the impact of valuation increases and provide a more balanced distribution of rates across the community.

For many properties, the reduction in the ad valorem component may exceed the increase in the base amount. For example, a property that pays an additional \$50 on the base amount may receive a \$60 reduction in the ad valorem component, resulting in an overall reduction in the rates payable.

Accordingly, the impact on any individual property cannot be determined by considering the base amount in isolation. The total rate payable depends on the combined effect of the base amount, the ad valorem rate, and the property's land valuation.

2. Proposed Rates Structure

It is recommended that, in accordance with the Act and using land values with a base date of 1 July 2025, the Ordinary Rates detailed in the Revenue Policy be made for the 2026/27 rating year commencing 1 July 2026. The table below shows the rating categories and sub-categories proposed for use from 1 July 2025 for rating purposes. Current maps of each category and sub-category are included as an attachment to this report.

Type	Category	Sub-Category	Basis
Ordinary	Residential	Urban	Each parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment which can be categorised as Residential in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1993 within the LGA Urban areas being Lithgow, Portland & Wallerawang urban areas as set out in the individual Residential Rate Categorisation Maps.
Ordinary	Residential	Other	Each parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment which can be categorised as Residential in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1993 but cannot be categorised as 'Residential – Urban as set out in the individual Residential Rate Categorisation Maps.
Ordinary	Farmland		Each parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment which can be categorised as Farmland in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1993.

Type	Category	Sub-Category	Basis
Ordinary	Mining		Each parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment which can be categorised as Mining in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1993.
Ordinary	Business	Urban	Each parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment which can be categorised as Business in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1993 within the LGA Urban areas being Lithgow, Portland & Wallerawang urban areas as set out in the individual Business Rate Categorisation Map.
Ordinary	Business	Other	Each parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment which can be categorised as Business in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1993 but cannot be categorised as Business Urban located in either Lithgow, Portland Wallerawang' or 'Business – Large Scale Power Generation or Storage', Business – Wind Power Generation, Business – Rail Related Manufacture, Maintenance or Storage, or any of the business sub-categories related to quarrying.
Ordinary	Business	Large Scale Power Generation or Storage	Each parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment which cannot be categorised as farmland, residential or mining and if its dominant use is as a centre for any of the following activities: a) the generation of electricity provided that the generator (or a combination of generators) has a rated power capacity of more than 25 megawatts; b) the storage of, or capacity to store, more than 100 megawatts of electricity at any time.
Ordinary	Business	Wind Power Generation	Each parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment which cannot be categorised as farmland, residential or mining and if its dominant use is as a centre for electricity generation from wind turbines provided that the turbine or turbines have a combined rated power capacity of more than 1 megawatt.
Ordinary	Business	Rail Related Manufacture, Maintenance or Storage	Each parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment which cannot be categorised as farmland, residential or mining and if its dominant use is as a centre for rail related manufacture maintenance or storage and more particularly set out in the Lithgow Rail Manufacturing, Maintenance and Storage Area as part of the Rate Categorisation Map.
Ordinary	Business	Quarrying – Clarence Newnes Junction Wallerawang Marangaroo Hartley Round Swamp	Each parcel of rateable land valued as one assessment which cannot be categorized as farmland, residential or mining and if its dominant use is as a centre for quarrying or works ancillary or properly incidental to quarrying and more particularly set out in the Lithgow Clarence, Newnes Junction, Wallerawang, Marrangaroo, Hartley, Round Swamp, Clarence/Lithgow Quarry Areas as part of the Quarry Rate Categorisation Maps.

Type	Category	Sub-Category	Basis
		Clarence Colliery	

3. Proposed Changes to the Rating Structure

Each year, Council evaluates the impact of rates and seeks to ensure that the system used to calculate rates is the most equitable for the whole Local Government Area (LGA). The total amount of rates collected by Council remains the same regardless of changes in land values; it is the rating structure chosen that determines how rates are shared among all property owners.

As part of the 2026/27 Revenue Policy, Council has reviewed the existing rating structure and proposes to harmonise the Residential and Business rating sub-categories. Historically, separate sub-categories existed for Lithgow, Portland, Wallerawang and Other areas. While these sub-categories reflected historical rating arrangements, they have resulted in differing rate burdens across properties with similar characteristics.

The proposed harmonisation will simplify the rating structure by consolidating these sub-categories into Residential Urban and Residential Other, and Business Urban and Business Other. This approach promotes greater equity and transparency by ensuring that ratepayers in similar land use categories contribute more consistently across the Local Government Area.

The 2026/27 financial year is considered an appropriate time to implement this change as it coincides with the introduction of new land valuations issued by the NSW Valuer General. Implementing rating structure changes during a General Valuation year allows the impacts of updated land values and rating harmonisation to occur simultaneously, reducing the need for multiple adjustments to rate assessments over successive years and providing a smoother transition for ratepayers.

Council considers that the harmonised rating structure provides a fairer and more easily understood approach to the distribution of rates while maintaining compliance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and ensuring the overall rate yield remains within the rate peg determined by IPART.

4. Estimated Yield

The proposed Ordinary Rates structure is estimated to generate total rate income of **\$24,934,295**, distributed across rating categories as detailed in the Revenue Policy.

Category/Sub-Category	Estimated No. Properties	Base Amount (\$)	Base Amount % of total levy	Ad Valorem Amount (c in the \$)	Estimated Yield
Residential					
Residential/Urban	7299	402.38	32.56%	0.0039618	\$9,019,174
Residential/Other	3258	402.38	25.34%	0.0023069	\$5,147,105
Farmland					
Farmland	496	590.72	20.14%	0.0017970	\$1,467,847
Business					
Business/Urban	384	778.73	9.56%	0.0195284	\$3,133,880
Business/Other	147	539.41	33.05%	0.0025511	\$240,817

Category/Sub-Category	Estimated No. Properties	Base Amount (\$)	Base Amount % of total levy	Ad Valorem Amount (c in the \$)	Estimated Yield
Business/Power Generation or Storage	1	14,646.96	3.35%	0.1406383	\$104,037
Business Quarry - Clarence	1	16,850.35	14.92%	0.0261139	\$113,211
Business Quarry - Wallerawang	1	16,850.35	27.82%	0.0262691	\$60,720
Business Quarry - Marrangaroo	1	16,850.35	24.40%	0.0224800	\$69,229
Business Quarry - Hartley	1	16,850.35	7.55%	0.0259103	\$223,615
Business Quarry - Round Swamp	1	12,906.09	42.64%	0.0332760	\$30,343
Business Quarry - Clarence / Lithgow	1	10,544.89	43.51%	0.0590130	\$24,295
Business - Rail Manufacture, Maintenance, Storage	1	778.73	0.75%	0.0645364	\$104,037
Mining					
Mining	11	16,853.27	3.80%	0.0216810	\$4,862,082
Total Estimated Yield					\$24,934,295

5. Submissions

Council received one submission during the public exhibition period regarding the proposed rating structure.

The submission raised matters relating to the affordability and equity of the proposed rating structure, the impact of land valuations on rates, industry contributions and concession arrangements. These matters were considered as part of the review of the Revenue Policy and the development of the proposed rating structure.

Council has reviewed the balance between the base amount and ad valorem components of the ordinary rate as part of the 2026/27 Revenue Policy. This approach helps moderate the impact of land valuation movements during a General Valuation year and promotes a more equitable distribution of rates across the Local Government Area.

Having considered the matters raised during the exhibition period, it is considered that the proposed Revenue Policy strikes an appropriate balance between the Council's legislative obligations, revenue requirements, equity principles and affordability considerations. No changes to the exhibited policy are recommended because of the submission.

6. Interest on Overdue Accounts

In accordance with Section 566(3) of the Local Government Act 1993, the Minister for Local Government has determined the maximum interest rate payable on overdue rates and charges for the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027 to be **9.5% per annum**, charged daily.

It is recommended that Council adopt the maximum rate of interest payable of 9.5%, consistent with previous years.

7. Domestic Waste Management Service Charge

Domestic Waste Management Charges have been determined in accordance with the Reasonable Cost Guidelines issued by the NSW Office of Local Government.

The proposed charges recover the costs associated with waste collection, processing, and disposal services, including the introduction and ongoing operation of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) services, as well as compliance with State Government waste reform requirements.

It is recommended that, in accordance with Sections 496 and 501 of the Local Government Act 1993 and as identified in Council's proposed Revenue Policy, the annual Domestic Waste Management Charges be made for the 2026/27 rating year commencing 1 July 2026.

Waste Charges			
Type of Service	No. of Charges	Charge (\$ (GST ex))	Estimated Yield (\$)
Vacant Land/Kerbside Availability Charge	538	\$316.40	\$170,223.20
Waste Disposal - Rural	1895	\$366.40	\$694,328.00
Vacant Access Charge - Business	158	\$316.40	\$49,991.20
Garbage Service - Residential (RYG)	8692	\$656.80	\$5,708,905.60
Additional Full Service –(RYG) Residential	1	\$754.70	\$754.70
Additional Waste and Recycling Service (RY) - Residential	370	\$612.90	\$226,773.00
Additional Waste Service only-(R) Residential	28	\$312.10	\$8,738.80
Additional Recycling Service Only-(Y) Residential	9	\$104.50	\$940.50
Additional FOGO Service Only (G) - Residential	9	\$153.50	\$1,381.50
Garbage Service - Business	386	\$656.80	\$253,524.80
Additional Full Service –(RYG) Business	229	\$754.70	\$172,826.30
Additional Waste and Recycling Service (RY) - Business	103	\$612.90	\$63,128.70
Additional Waste Service only-(R) Business	9	\$312.10	\$2,808.90
Additional Recycling Service Only (Y)- Business	16	\$104.50	\$1672.00
Additional FOGO Service Only – (G) Business	-	\$153.50	-
Garbage Service - Non Rateable (RYG)	103	\$656.80	\$67,650.40
Garbage Service - Non Rateable/Business FOGO (GGG)	1	\$656.80	\$656.80
Additional Full Service –(RYG) Non Rateable	2	\$754.70	\$1,509.40
Additional Waste and Recycling Service (RY) - Non Rateable	13	\$612.90	\$7,967.70
Additional Waste Service only-(R) Non Rateable	2	\$312.10	\$624.20
Additional Recycling Service Only –(Y) Non Rateable	1	\$104.50	\$104.50
Additional FOGO Service Only –(G) Non Rateable	-	\$153.50	-
Garbage Service - MUDS (Mixed Use Developments)	38	\$656.80	\$24,958.40
Total Estimated Yield			\$7,459,468.60

8. Water Charges

Water access charges have been reviewed for 2026/27 to ensure the long-term sustainability of Council's water utility. The most common 20mm water access charge will increase from \$455.00 to \$515.00 per annum, representing a 13.19% increase. This increase reflects the rising costs associated with operating, maintaining and renewing water infrastructure while ensuring compliance with best practice pricing principles.

The maximum annual concession rebate for eligible pensioner customers will remain at \$222.50 (Mandatory Rebate Annual Water Access Charge \$87.50 plus \$135 Council rebate).

It is recommended that, in accordance with Sections 501 and 502 of the Local Government Act 1993 and as identified in Council's proposed Revenue Policy, the following water access and consumption charges be made and that such charges be in respect of the 2026/27 rating year commencing 1 July 2026.

Water Charges - Rateable				
Type	Annual Access Charge		Charge (\$)	Estimated Yield (\$)
	Number of Charges			
20mm Connection	8426		\$515.00	\$4,339,390.00
25mm Connection	117		\$565.00	\$66,105.00
32mm Connection	14		\$850.00	\$11,900.00
40mm Connection	34		\$1,420.00	\$46,860.00
50mm Connection	60		\$1,910.00	\$114,600.00
80mm Connection	1		\$3,660.00	\$3,660.00
100mm Connection	13		\$5,240.00	\$68,120.00
200mm Connection	-		\$5,850.00	-
300mm Connection	-		\$6,160.00	-
Unpottable Water	20		\$272.00	\$5,440.00
Vacant Land Water Access	254		\$505.00	\$128,270.00
Total Estimated Yield				\$4,785,765.00

Water Charges - Non - Rateable				
Type	Annual Access Charge		Charge (\$)	Estimated Yield (\$)
	No. of Charges			
20mm Connection	89		\$515.00	\$45,835.00
25mm Connection	23		\$565.00	\$12,995.00
32mm Connection	-		\$850.00	-
40mm Connection	14		\$1,420.00	\$19,880.00
50mm Connection	28		\$1,910.00	\$53,480.00
80mm Connection	1		\$3,660.00	\$3,660.00

ter Charges – Non - Rateable				
Type	Annual Access Charge		Charge	Estimated Yield (\$)
	No. of Charges	of (\$)		
100mm Connection	9		\$5,240.00	\$47,160.00
200mm Connection	-		\$5,850.00	-
300mm Connection	-		\$6,160.00	-
Total Estimated Yield				\$183,010.00

Water Usage Charges - Residential	
Kilolitres Used	Charge (\$)
0 - 250 Residential	3.85 / kl
251+ Residential	7.71 / kl

Water Usage Charges - Business	
Kilolitres Used	Charge (\$)
40 - 500 Business	3.85 / kl
500+ Business	7.71 / kl

Water Usage Charges - Unpotable	
Kilolitres Used	Charge (\$)
Unpotable	1.25 / kl

9. Wastewater Charges

Council levies wastewater charges to recover the cost of providing wastewater collection, treatment and disposal services to properties where a wastewater service is connected or available.

Wastewater access and usage charges have been reviewed for 2026/27 to ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of Council's wastewater utility. The residential wastewater access charge will increase by 12.73% from \$1,100.00 to \$1,240.00 per annum. The most common non-residential wastewater access charge (20mm connection) will increase by 13.11% from \$610.00 to \$690.00 per annum. In addition, the wastewater usage charge will increase from \$2.69 per kilolitre to \$3.04 per kilolitre.

The non-residential wastewater access charge remains lower than the residential access charge, as non-residential customers also contribute to the cost of the wastewater system through usage-based charges. These charges are calculated by applying a Sewer Discharge Factor (SDF) to metered water consumption, ensuring that businesses contribute in proportion to the volume of wastewater discharged to Council's sewerage system. This approach is consistent with the user-pays principle and NSW Government best-practice pricing guidelines.

The proposed increases reflect the rising costs associated with the operation, maintenance and renewal of wastewater infrastructure and ensure the long-term financial sustainability of Council's wastewater utility.

It is recommended that, in accordance with Sections 501, 502, 552 and 553 of the Local Government Act 1993 and as identified in Council's proposed Revenue Policy, the following wastewater access

and usage charges be made and that such charges be in respect of the 2026/27 rating year commencing 1 July 2026.

Wastewater Charges Rateable Properties				
Annual Wastewater Access Charge				
Type	Number of Charges (\$)	Charge (\$)	Estimated Yield (\$)	
Residential	7569	\$1,240.00	\$9,385,560.00	
Non-Residential 20mm	284	\$690.00	\$195,960.00	
Non-Residential 25mm	40	\$690.00	\$27,600.00	
Non-Residential 32mm	9	\$755.00	\$6,795.00	
Non-Residential 40mm	17	\$825.00	\$14,025.00	
Non-Residential 50mm	47	\$915.00	\$43,005.00	
Non-Residential 80mm	-	\$1,010.00	-	
Non-Residential 100mm	7	\$1,080.00	\$7,560.00	
Non-Residential 200mm	-	\$7,020.00	-	
Non-Residential 300mm	-	\$9,360.00	-	
Non Residential Vacant	11	\$1,240.00	\$13,640.00	
Residential Vacant	7	\$1,240.00	8,680.00	
Total Estimated Yield			\$9,702,825.00	

Wastewater Usage Charges	
Business (most commonly 95% of water usage)	\$3.04/kl

Type	Wastewater Charges Non-Rateable Properties		
	Annual Wastewater Access Charge		
	Number of Charges	Charge (\$)	Estimated Yield (\$)
Non-Rateable 20mm	54	\$690.00	\$37,260.00
Non-Rateable 25mm	5	\$690.00	\$3,450.00
Non-Rateable 32mm	-	\$755.00	-
Non-Rateable 40mm	10	\$825.00	\$8,250.00
Non-Rateable 50mm	19	\$915.00	\$17,385.00
Non-Rateable 80mm	1	\$1,010.00	\$1,010.00
Non-Rateable 100mm	5	\$1,080.00	\$5,400.00
Non-Rateable 200mm	-	\$7,020.00	-
Non-Rateable 300mm	-	\$9,360.00	-
Total Estimated Yield			\$72,755.00

Wastewater Usage Charges	
Non-Residential (most commonly 95% of water usage)	\$2.69/kl

10. Sewerage Trade Waste Charges

The annual trade waste charges for commercial premises reflect the actual costs of treating the liquid trade waste. The annual trade waste charge appears on the annual Rates Notice, while the usage charge is issued with the quarterly water accounts.

It is a recommendation and as detailed in Council's proposed revenue Policy that the following Trade Waste Charges be made and that such charges be in respect to the 2026/27 rating year commencing 1 July 2026.

Sewerage Trade Waste Charges		
Fee description	Trade Waste Charge Charge (\$)	Category
Application Fee - category A / A2	\$62.00	Low risk - Includes commercial premises not preparing hot food
Application Fee - category B	\$90.00	Medium risk - Includes commercial premises preparing hot food
Application Fee - category C	\$188.00	High risk - less complex pre-treatment
Annual Charge - category A / A2	\$208.00	Low risk - Includes commercial premises not preparing hot food
Annual Charge - category B	\$310.00	Medium risk - Includes commercial premises preparing hot food
Annual Charge - category C	\$570.00	High risk - less complex pre-treatment
Discharge Fee - category A	\$2.45	Discharger with approved pre-treatment
Discharge Fee - category A	\$11.70	Discharger without approved pre-treatment
Discharge Fee - category B	\$2.45	Discharger with approved pre-treatment
Discharge Fee - category B	\$25.73	Discharger without approved pre-treatment
Discharge Fee - category C	\$2.45	Discharger with approved pre-treatment
Discharge Fee - category C	\$25.73	Discharger without approved pre-treatment
Total Estimated Yield		\$113,000

11. Onsite Sewerage Management Systems

Council administers an Onsite Sewerage Management (OSSM) program to ensure domestic and commercial onsite sewerage systems are managed to protect public health and the environment.

The annual OSSM Administration Fee will increase from \$70.00 to \$72.00 per annum for domestic systems and from \$346.00 to \$357.07 per annum for commercial systems. The charges contribute

to the administration and regulation of onsite sewerage systems across the Local Government Area and assist Council in meeting its legislative responsibilities.

Council intends to implement a risk-based inspection program for onsite sewerage systems as resources permit. The proposed program will prioritise inspections based on factors such as system type, location and potential environmental and public health risks.

It is recommended that, in accordance with Section 608 of the Local Government Act 1993 and as identified in Council's proposed Revenue Policy, the following Onsite Sewerage Management Charges be made and that such charges be in respect of the 2026/27 rating year commencing 1 July 2026.

Onsite Sewerage Management Charges			
Type	Number of charges	Charge (\$)	Estimated Yield (\$)
OSSM Administration Fee	2,834	\$72.00	\$204,048.00
Commercial AWTs Administration Fee	41	\$357.07	\$14,639.87
Total Estimated Yield			\$218,687.87

12. Stormwater Levy

The stormwater levy will remain at \$25.00 per residential assessment, \$12.50 per strata unit, and \$25.00 per 350 square metres, or part thereof, for business properties, subject to a maximum charge of \$1,500.00 per assessment for 2026/27. The Stormwater Management Service Charge will raise an estimated yield of \$241,587.50 in 2026/27.

It is recommended that all urban properties, except vacant land, that are within the residential and business categories for rating purposes and for which Council provides a stormwater management service, be charged an annual stormwater levy under the provisions of the Local Government Amendment (Stormwater) Act 2005 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, and that such charges be in respect of the 2026/27 rating year commencing 1 July 2026.

Consultation and Communication

At its 29 April 2026 meeting, Council endorsed the Draft 2026/27 Revenue Policy to be placed on public exhibition as part of the Draft Operational Plan. The exhibition period closed on 1 June 2026. This is an integral part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) document suite. The documents outline the Council's rating structure and the fees and charges to apply for the 2026/27 financial year.

Policy

This report meets Council's legislative obligations and the requirements of the NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

Legal

Council is required to pass a resolution to make rates before it can levy rates and charges on properties each year. The resolution must be passed by 31 July each year, which is the last date

that a Council can 'make' a rate or charge for the 2026/27 financial year. The recommendations comply with the statutory requirements set out in the Local Government Act 1993.

Risk Management

The primary risk associated with this report is non-compliance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993. Failure to make rates and annual charges by the statutory deadline may impact Council's ability to levy rates and charges for the 2026/27 financial year. This risk is mitigated through the adoption of the rates, annual charges and fees detailed in the Revenue Policy, which have been prepared in accordance with legislative requirements and relevant NSW Government guidelines.

Council has also undertaken public exhibition of the Revenue Policy and considered any submissions received, mitigating the risk of community misunderstanding regarding the proposed rating structure and charges.

Financial

The making of the rates and annual charges and adoption of the fees and charges will allow Council to raise the income required to undertake the works and programs included in the 2026/27 Operational Plan.

2.11. F&G - 29/06/2026 - Proposal to Enter Licence Agreement with LSMR Limited

Strategic Context for this matter:

Responsible Governance & Civic Leadership: To develop community confidence in the organisation by the way it is directed, controlled and managed.

Author: Vanessa Browning - Director Finance and Governance

Responsible Officer: Vanessa Browning - Director Finance and Governance

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to consider a request from Lithgow State Mine Railway Limited (LSMR) to enter into a licence agreement for a portion of Lot 1 / DP 433264 for the purposes of temporary storage of one locomotive and three wagons.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Grant preliminary approval to enter a 12-month licence agreement with Lithgow State Mine Railway Limited for the Rail Line Section of Lot 1 in DP433264.
2. Authorise the General Manager to negotiate the terms and conditions of a licence agreement having regard to Council's Leasing and Licensing Policy 10.20.
3. Give public notice of the proposed licence agreement and place it on public exhibition for 28 days, in accordance with section 47 of the Local Government Act 1993.
4. Authorise the General Manager to sign all documents and do all things necessary to give effect to the licence agreement, if no submissions are received during the public exhibition period.
5. Note that the matter will be returned to Council for further consideration, if any submissions are received during the public exhibition period.
6. Commence action to re-classify the Rail Line Section of Lot 1 in DP433264 from "community" to "operational" land via LEP amendment under section 30 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Attachments

1. 28 January 2026 Council Report - Request from LSMR [2.11.1 - 4 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min. No. 22-238 Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 28 November 2022

Min. No. 23-95 Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 22 May 2023

Min. No. 24-171 Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 22 July 2024

Min. No. 26-11 Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 28 January 2026

Background and discussion

LSMR is a local non-profit organisation committed to protecting and promoting Lithgow's rail and industrial heritage. Plans include operating a rail heritage experience from State Mine to Eskbank Station.

In November 2025, LSMR requested permission to temporarily store one locomotive and three wagons on the Council Land, as the current storage location is now under a licence agreement with

the Southern Shorthaul Railway (SSR) that restricts access. It is anticipated that an Expression of Interest process for a more suitable, long-term location will commence in July 2026.

While the Administration has not been able to locate documentation in Council's records, previous advice was that, in 2001, a rail extension was constructed to connect the tourist rail line from the Eskbank branch to the railway workshop at State Mine Gully. The rail connection was part of a joint project between LSMR and Council, and the project was supported by a grant awarded under the Centenary of Federation scheme.

A detailed report on the request was tabled at the 28 January 2026 Council Meeting and is included as an attachment. Council resolved as follows:

"THAT the proposal to enter into a licence agreement with LSMR Limited is referred to both the Finance Committee and Planning Working Party for consideration".

The proposal was tabled at the 20 May 2026 Finance Committee Meeting, where the Committee recommended to: *"support Council endorsing a 12-month lease agreement with LSMR for a portion of the land"*.

It was outlined at the Finance Committee Meeting that, without the rail bridge in place, this piece of land is the only land available for the storage of the locomotive and wagons while awaiting the commencement and determination of the EOI. The terms of the licence agreement will stipulate that it is for a 12-month period only and outline insurance requirements and actions to be taken if the agreement defaults.

Consultation and Communication

The report recommends that the proposed licence agreement with LSMR be placed on public notice and exhibition for a period of 28 days. If any submissions are made, a further report will be tabled to Council.

Policy

Policy 9.16 - Compliance Policy.
Policy 10.20 - Leasing and Licensing Policy.

Legal

The subject matter of this report is a function of Council conferred by the Local Government Act 1993 and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

Risk Management

Entering into a licence agreement will mitigate the risks associated with the proposal.

Financial

Any legal costs incurred to enter into the licence agreement are to be borne by LSMR. There will be unbudgeted income generated in terms of licence fees, which will be immaterial, in accordance with Policy 10.20, under Category C – being the minimum base rent under the Crown Management Act 2016.

2.12. F&G - 29/06/2026 - May 2026 Investment Report

Strategic Context for this matter:

Responsible Governance & Civic Leadership: To develop community confidence in the organisation by the way it is directed, controlled and managed.

Author: Jonathon Reid – Financial Services Manager

Responsible Officer: Vanessa Browning - Director Finance and Governance

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of investments held as at 31 May 2026 and to note the certification of the Responsible Accounting Officer that funds have been invested in accordance with legislation, regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

The report also provides commentary on the cash and investments balance compared with the funding required for internally and externally restricted reserves. A key aspect of the report is that while Council has total investments and cash of \$54.5M, most of this amount is restricted (internally or externally). Restricted funds are not available for any purpose beyond that for which they have been restricted. The balance of \$629K is unrestricted and available as the Council's working capital.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT:

1. Investments of \$51,400,000 and cash of \$3,066,102 (which is restricted for specific purposes) for the period ending 31 May 2026 be noted.
2. The enclosed certificate of the Responsible Accounting Officer be noted.
3. The commentary on cashflow and funding requirements for restricted reserves be noted.

Attachments

1. May 2026 Investment Report Attachment [2.12.1 - 1 page]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min No 26-84 Ordinary Meeting of Council held 29 April 2026.

Background and discussion

Movements in the Cash and Investments Balance

Council's total investment portfolio as at 31 May 2026, when compared to 30 April 2026, has increased from \$43,300,000 to \$51,400,000. Cash in the Council's bank account increased from \$562,041 to \$3,066,102.

May is usually a cashflow positive month, with the final quarter of rates instalments due, and significant grant funding as the main funding types received. In May 2026, there were high cash inflows resulting in an increased cash position.

If the movement in the bank account is negative, this is shown as a net redemption. If the movement in the bank account is positive, this is shown as a net new investment.

The movements in Investments for the month of May 2026 were as follows:

Opening Balance of cash and investments as of 1 May 2026	\$43,862,041
Plus New Investments – May 2026	\$19,604,061
Less Investments redeemed – May 2026	\$9,000,000
Closing Balance of cash and investments as at 31 May 2026	\$54,466,102

The attachment to this report provides an overview of the current market value of investments held with each financial institution. The difference between the value quoted in the attachment and within the report relates to the recognition of interest earned but not yet received by Council.

Responsible Accounting Officer comment on the cash and investments balance – there was a \$10.6M increase in cash and investments in May 2026, arising from the receipt of the final rates instalment and a \$5.5M prepayment relating to Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) projects. High cash inflows, combined with lower-than-normal payments to suppliers (\$3.9M), have resulted in an increase in the cash balance.

Cash outflows continue to be managed to ensure that the timing of grant funding milestones matches the pace of works undertaken.

High value supplier payments included:

- \$454K Sewerage Pumping Station South Bowenfels (Sewer Fund),
- \$280K Domestic Waste collection for April 2026 (Waste Fund),
- \$233K Footpath upgrade of Main St, Lithgow (loan and grant funded),
- \$225K Wolgan Valley Access Road design and project management (DRFA funded),
- \$115K Water Mains Refurbishment Works, Air Scour of Mains (Water Fund),
- \$113K Plant Replacement Isuzu Tipper (SRV funded).

Funding Requirements for Restricted Reserves

A large proportion of the Council's investments are held as restricted assets for specific purposes. Restricted assets may consist of externally restricted assets, which must be spent for the purpose for which they have been received (e.g. water, wastewater, domestic waste) or internally restricted assets, which have been set aside by Council resolution. Some internal restrictions are held to fund specific liabilities such as employee leave entitlements, bonds, and deposits.

Responsible Accounting Officer comment on restricted reserves – Council had sufficient cash and investments as at 31 May 2026 to fund \$45.7M of externally restricted reserves and \$8.1M of internally restricted reserves. The Council's working capital (used to fund outgoing payments) was \$629K as at 31 May 2026. Council is maintaining the cash management measures outlined previously until the unrestricted cash balance maintains a stable, satisfactory level, to ensure that Council does not use externally restricted reserves.

As at 31 May 2026, the period during which General Fund expenses could be met with available unrestricted cash was estimated at five weeks. It should be noted that cash inflows and outflows can vary substantially from month to month due to a range of factors. The end of month balance does not accurately reflect the liquidity of the Council's current assets. Based on the budgeted position, management actions, and known information at the time of this report, it is projected that Council will have sufficient unrestricted cash at year end.

The table below shows the current balances of internal and external reserves. As shown, the Sewer Reserve is currently at (\$118K) deficit, due to the timing of capital works in prior financial years and this financial year. As adopted by Council at the April 2026 Council Meeting, a loan of \$5.5M will be drawn down by 30 June 2026 to cover the projected shortfall for both 2025/2026 and 2026/2027,

predominantly arising from the differences in timing between the construction of development enabling infrastructure and the associated developer contributions towards this infrastructure.

Cash and Investments Statement (\$'000)					
	30 June	30 September	31 December	31 March	31 May
	2025	2025	2025	2026	2026
	Position	Position	Position	Position	Position
Externally Restricted					
Developer Contributions	1,913	2,060	1,979	2,307	2,390
Special Purpose Grants	33,822	30,667	26,749	23,558	28,462
Water Supplies	3,864	4,922	4,298	4,194	4,714
Sewerage Services	294	410	(316)	(197)	(118)
Domestic Waste	8,531	9,857	9,547	9,526	9,707
Unexpended Loans	1,700	984	593	380	577
	50,124	48,901	42,849	39,768	45,732
Internally Restricted					
Land & Buildings	85	85	80	72	41
FAGs	3,359	-	-	-	0
Plant & Equipment	-	-	-	-	0
Bonds, Deposits & Retentions	400	352	261	318	302
Works in Progress	137	137	137	137	137
Carry Over Works	63	66	43	26	24
Commercial Waste	2,769	3,910	4,225	4,492	4,703
ELE	661	661	161	161	161
Election	77	77	77	77	77
Other	1,223	350	2,545	2,618	2,660
Internal Borrowing to General Fund	0	(2,196)	(3,264)	0	0
Total Internally Restricted	8,774	3,442	4,266	7,902	8,105
Unrestricted (working capital)	-	-	-	333	629
Total Cash and Investments	58,898	52,343	47,115	48,003	54,466

CERTIFICATION OF THE RESPONSIBLE ACCOUNTING OFFICER

I hereby certify that the investments listed in the report have been made in accordance with Section 625 of the Local Government Act 1993, clause 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 and Council's Investments Policy.

Both internally and externally, restricted reserves are managed in accordance with legislation, regulations, Council resolutions, and the Council's endorsed budget allocations to / from reserves.

Vanessa Browning
Director Finance and Governance - Responsible Accounting Officer

Consultation and Communication

N/A

Policy

Investments are held in accordance with the Council's Investment Policy at the date of investing funds. On 23 March 2026, the Council adopted a revised Investment Policy, which includes the Minister's Investment Order of 12 January 2011.

Legal

Council's Investment Policy complies with the Minister's Investment Order of 12 January 2011.

Risk Management

Risk is managed by adopting a conservative approach to the Council's investments, investing only in term deposits.

Financial

- Budget approved \$2,103,000
- Cost centre 800152-8130-41500
- Earned to date \$1,984,675
- Future potential impact Nil.

Council's original budgeted investment interest income for 2025/2026 was \$2.8M, approximately \$653K less than the 2024/25 actual interest received. The original forecast of \$2.8M has been reduced to \$2.1M due to lower than budgeted cash balances. In May, the average rate achieved was 5.29% on an investment balance of \$50M, 52% of which is attributable to the remaining balance of the \$39.3M in advance payments received for natural disaster restoration works.

Interest is paid on the maturity date of the investment. The budget for interest income is determined by the average level of funds held and the rate of return. Adjustments to the budget estimate are processed through the Council's Quarterly Budget Review process. Interest returns are determined by the average funds invested and the interest rate.

3. Council Committee Reports

3.1. P&P - 25/05/2026 - Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - 13 May 2026

Strategic Context for this matter:**Enhancing Our Natural Environment:**

To balance, protect and enhance our diverse environmental elements, both natural and built, for the enjoyment and support of both current and future generations

Author: Ailis Chapman - Natural Areas Management Officer

Responsible Officer: Shaun Elwood - Director People and Places

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide details of the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Committee held on 13 May 2026.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council note the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Committee held on 13 May 2026.

Attachments

1. Draft Minutes Environmental Advisory Committee 13 May 2026 [3.1.1 - 9 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min. No 26-71 Resolved at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 29 April 2026.

Background and discussion

At the Environmental Advisory Committee held on 13 May 2026, a number of items were discussed:

- Water Treatment Plant Water Quality Testing – Presentation: the Committee noted the presentation.
- Roaming Cat Impacts on Bushland: the Committee noted the initial program and approach being undertaken by Council to reduce the impact of roaming cats. The Committee requested that Council staff prepare a motion for the LGNSW Conference 2026 to advocate for the control of feral and roaming cats in residential areas in NSW.
- Lithgow Healthy Waterways Program: the committee noted the update on the Lithgow Healthy Waterways Program. Opportunities, as they are recognised, are considered for program expansion into other streams within the LGA.
- Feral Pet Animal Interagency Field Day and Control Program: the committee noted the staff update.
- General Business
 - Update from Lithgow Community Nursery.
 - Future Items for discussion.

Financial

N/A

3.2. EXEC - Emerging Economy Committee Meeting Minutes - 19 May 2026

Strategic Context for this matter:

Strengthening Our Economy: To provide for sustainable and planned growth through the diversification of the economic base, the development of diverse job opportunities and the provision of a broad range of formal and non-formal educational services.

Author: Trinity Newton – Executive Assistant

Responsible Officer: Ross Gurney - General Manager

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide details of the minutes of the 19 May 2026 Emerging Economy Committee Meeting.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Note the minutes of the 19 May 2026 Emerging Economy Committee Meeting.
2. Endorse the use of the three-pillar approach of Economic Transition, Economic Renewal and Economic Development as the strategic framework for the Council's emerging economy work (Item 6.1).
3. Endorse the preparation of a 2026-2031 roadmap using the three-pillar framework to organise priorities, actions, delivery and reporting (Item 6.1).

Attachments

1. Draft Minutes Emerging Econom Meeting 19 May 2026 [3.2.1 - 6 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min 26-47 Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 23 February 2026

Background and discussion

At the Emerging Economy Committee meeting held on 19 May 2026, the following items were discussed by the Committee:

- Development of the 3 Pillar Approach to Support Economic Renewal and Development – the Committee endorsed the use of the three-pillar approach of Economic Transition, Economic Renewal and Economic Development as the strategic framework for the Council's emerging economy work and endorsed the preparation of a 2026-2031 roadmap using the three-pillar framework to organise priorities, actions, delivery and reporting (for the consideration of Council).
- Draft Terms of Reference - Working Group - Energy Change Opportunities - the Committee endorsed the draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group.
- Transitions Management Budget & Work Program - Remainder of 2025/26 & 2026/27 Budget – the Committee endorsed the proposed 2026/27 LEEP work program and budget, subject to Council's budget approval. The Committee also endorsed the use of the three-pillar approach - economic transition, economic renewal and economic development - as the organising framework for the five-year program. The Committee supported in principle a number of budget items. subject to further information being presented at a future EEC meeting and endorsement of Council.

Financial

As detailed in the Emerging Economy Committee meeting minutes.

3.3. F&G - Finance Committee Meeting Minutes - 20 May 2026

Strategic Context for this matter:

Responsible Governance & Civic Leadership: To develop community confidence in the organisation by the way it is directed, controlled and managed.

Author: Vanessa Browning - Director Finance and Governance

Responsible Officer: Vanessa Browning - Director Finance and Governance

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of matters discussed and considered at the Finance Committee Meeting held on 20 May 2026 and recommends that Council note the attached minutes.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council note the minutes of the Finance Committee held on 20 May 2026 and endorse the business paper recommendations arising from the Committee meeting.

Attachments

1. DRAFT Minutes - Finance Committee Meeting - 20 May 2026 [3.3.1 - 6 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min. No. 26-61 Ordinary Meeting held 23 March 2026.

Background and discussion

At the 20 May 2026 Finance Committee Meeting, the following reports were discussed by the Committee:

- Cash Management and Budgetary Pressures – the Committee noted the report.
- March 2026 Quarterly Budget Review – the Committee noted the report.
- April 2026 Investment Report – recommendation provided below for the endorsement of Council.
- Lithgow Golf Club Lease and Business Plan – the Committee considered the Business Plan and provided feedback that a meeting with the Golf Club to settle the terms of the lease is required, and a report is to be tabled at the July 2026 Council Meeting.
- Proposal to enter Licence Agreement with LSMR Limited – recommendation provided below for the endorsement of Council. A separate report is provided in the 29 June Ordinary Meeting business paper.
- General Business – the Committee noted the General Business, being:
 - VRA Building,
 - Charles Hoskins Building, and
 - PCYC Pop Up Shop.

The following business paper recommendations were endorsed by the Committee for Council's consideration.

5.3 April 2026 Investment Report

THAT:

1. Investments of \$43,530,000 and cash of \$562,041 (which is restricted for specific purposes) for the period ending 30 April 2026 be noted.
2. The enclosed certificate of the Responsible Accounting Officer be noted.
3. The commentary on cashflow and funding requirements for restricted reserves be noted.

5.5 Proposal to enter a Licence Agreement with LSMR Limited

THAT the Finance Committee support Council endorsing a 12-month lease agreement with LSMR for the portion of Council land.

Financial

As detailed in the attached Finance Committee Meeting Minutes.

3.4. I&PD - Infrastructure Committee Meeting Minutes - 2 June 2026

Strategic Context for this matter:

Caring for Our Community: To retain, respect and strengthen both our overall sense of community, and the unique linked communities of groups, rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Developing Our Built Environment: To provide a choice of effective public and private transport options, suitable entertainment and recreational facilities, and lifestyle choices while enhancing the existing rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Author: Kaitlin Cibulka – Cemeteries & Administration Supervisor

Responsible Officer: David Anderson – A/Director of Infrastructure and Project Delivery

Executive Summary

This report provides details of the minutes of the Infrastructure Committee meeting held on 2 June 2026.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Note the minutes of the Infrastructure Committee meeting held on 2 June 2026; and
2. Endorse the Calare Civil Report on the Kremer Park Wall, dated 21 May 2026. and the recommendations to continue to monitor the wall and drainage matters (Item 7.1).

Attachments

1. Minutes Infrastructure Committee Meeting 2 June 2026 [3.4.1 - 7 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Nil

Background and discussion

At the Infrastructure Strategic Review Committee held on 2nd June 2026, there were numerous items discussed by the Committee including:

- Item 7.2 - Information Item Magpie Hollow Road and Sodwalls Road Patching and Resealing Contract.
ACTION: the Committee noted the ten (10) contract variations totalling \$617,384.10 (ex GST) that have been approved for contract 13/25, Road Patching and Sealing, Magpie Hollow Road and Sodwalls Road.
- Item 7.3 - Information Item Portland Sunny Corner Road Patching and Resealing Contract.
ACTION: the Committee noted the ten (10) contract variations totalling \$384,770.46 (ex-GST) that have been approved for contract 18/25, Road Patching and Sealing, Portland Sunny Corner Road.

- Item 7.4 Roads Renewal Survey Update.
ACTION: the Committee received and noted the report on Roads Renewal Survey Design and the variation to the budget.
- Item 7.5 Infrastructure Projects and Grant Applications / Outcomes.
ACTION: the information on Infrastructure Project Grant Applications / Outcomes was noted.
- Item 7.6 Hartley Vale Road Improvements.
ACTION: the Committee noted the information provided on the Hartley Vale Road Improvements.

The following item was outside the Committee's delegations and require Council to formally approve the recommendation:

- Item 7.1 - Kremer Park Wall – Update (confidential report).
RECOMMENDATION: that Council endorse the Calare Civil Report on the Kremer Park Wall, dated 21 May 2026, and the recommendations to continue to monitor the wall and drainage matters.

Financial

As detailed in the Infrastructure Committee meeting reports.

3.5. I&PD - Local Transport Forum Meeting Minutes - 4 June 2026

Strategic Context for this matter:

Caring for Our Community

To retain, respect and strengthen both our overall sense of community, and the unique linked communities of groups, rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Author: Kaitlin Cibulka – Cemeteries & Administration Supervisor

Responsible Officer: Dave Anderson – A/ Director of Infrastructure and Project Delivery

Executive Summary

This report provides details of the minutes of the Local Transport Forum held on 4 June 2026

Administration's Recommendation

THAT:

1. Council note the minutes of the Local Transport Forum (LTF) held on 4 June 2026; and
2. A further report detailing any changes on Hartley Vale Road be brought back to the Forum once Transport for NSW have assessed the Council's suggestions (item 9.1); and
3. The request for a pedestrian crossing to be installed in Bridge Street be investigated and considered in Eskbank Precinct Local Area Traffic Management Plan (Item 9.3); and
4. The current 5 minute parking zone in Lithgow Street (St Patricks School) be timed from 8:00am to 9:30am school days, and operated as an informal drop off zone, reverting to 1 hour between 9:30am and 6:00pm weekdays (Item 9.4).

Attachments

1. Minutes LTF 4 June 2026 [3.5.1 - 6 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Nil

Background and discussion

At the Local Transport Forum held on 4 June 2026, there were numerous items discussed by the Forum including:

- Item 9.2 Browns Gap Road – Proposed Traffic Changes
ACTION – the information regarding the changes to traffic flows on Browns Gap Road was noted.

The following items were outside the Forum's delegations and require Council to formally approve the recommendation:

- Item 9.1 Hartley Vale Road – Proposed Changes
Recommendation - THAT a further report detailing any changes on Hartley Vale Road be brought back to the Forum once Transport for NSW have assessed the Council's suggestions.
- Item 9.3 Request for Pedestrian Crossing – Bridge Street, Lithgow
Recommendation - THAT the request for a pedestrian crossing to be installed in Bridge Street be investigated and considered in the Eskbank Precinct Local Area Traffic Management Plan.

- 9.4 Request for Kiss and Drop Zone – St Patricks School
Recommendation - THAT the current 5-minute parking zone in Lithgow Street be timed from 8.00am to 9.30am school days, and operated as an informal drop off zone, reverting to 1 hour between 9.30am and 6.00pm weekdays.

Financial

N/A

3.6. F&G - Audit Risk Improvement Committee (ARIC) Minutes - 9 June 2026

Strategic Context for this matter: To develop community confidence in the organisation by the way it is directed, controlled and managed.

Author: Vanessa Browning - Director Finance and Governance

Responsible Officer: Vanessa Browning - Director Finance and Governance

Executive Summary

This report summarises the business discussed at the Audit Risk & Improvement Committee (ARIC) meeting held on 9 June 2026 and recommends that Council note the minutes.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council note the minutes of the 9 June 2026 ARIC Meeting.

Attachments

1. Draft Minutes ARIC 9 June 2026 [3.6.1 - 7 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Min. No. 26-64 Ordinary Meeting held 23 March 2026

Background and discussion

At the ARIC meeting held on 9 June 2026, the following items were presented and discussed:

- **Business Arising:** ARIC noted and discussed items within the Recommendations Tracking List.
- **External Audit:** the Committee discussed the Audit Readiness Plan, the status of management actions identified as part of the 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 Management Letters, progress of the 2025/2026 Interim Audit, and the NSW Audit Office data collection exercise.
- **Financial Management:** the Committee discussed the April 2026 Investment Report, the March 2026 Quarterly Budget Review and received an update on cash management and budgetary pressures.
- **Internal Audit:** the Committee discussed the progress on the Annual and Strategic Audit Plan, the findings of the Project Management Framework Internal Audit, formally endorsed the scope of the Complaints Handling Internal Audit, and received an update on management actions from prior internal audits.
- **Management Reviews, Self-Assessments and Non-ARIC Audits:** the uplift of Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework documents, the outcomes of a review on the Strategic Risk: Poor Workplace Culture and Practices, and updates on the management actions arising from prior management reviews and self-assessments were discussed.
- **Risk Management:** the Committee received a presentation from the Governance and Risk Manager on an update on the review of the Business Continuity Management Arrangements, and Council's Information and Communications Technology resilience was discussed. Concerns were raised by the Committee about the progress of cyber security deliverables to be received via the Central NSW Joint Organisation.
- **Asset Management:** the progress on the development of the Transport Asset Management Plan was noted.
- **Service Reviews:** an update on Service Reviews was received and noted.

- **Policies / Standard Work Procedures (SWPs):** an update was presented and noted by the ARIC, on the status of Policies and SWPs.
- **Strategic Planning – IP&R Framework Documents:** an update regarding the Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) Frameworks was provided and noted.
- **Major Projects Review:** an update regarding the Wolgan Road Project was received and noted, including the outcome of a tender for the engagement of a contractor to deliver works to temporarily reopen the old Wolgan Road.
- **Standing Items:** the following matters are addressed at each ARIC Meeting:
 - Non-Compliance,
 - Fraud and Corruption,
 - Conflicts of Interest,
 - Change in Risk Profile, and
 - OLG Circulars.

Financial

As detailed within the report and the attached Minutes.

3.7. I&PD - Sports Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - 10 June 2026

Strategic Context for this matter:

Caring for Our Community

To retain, respect and strengthen both our overall sense of community, and the unique linked communities of groups, rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Developing Our Built Environment

To provide a choice of effective public and private transport options, suitable entertainment and recreational facilities, and lifestyle choices while enhancing the existing rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow LGA.

Author: Kaitlin Cibulka – Cemeteries and Administration Supervisor
Responsible Officer: Paul Smith – Interim Director infrastructure and Project Delivery

Executive Summary

This report provides details of the minutes of the Sports Advisory Committee meeting held on 10 June 2026.

Administration's Recommendation

THAT Council note the minutes of the Sports Advisory Committee Meeting held on 10 June 2026.

Attachments

1. Minutes Sports Advisory Committee 10 06 2026 [3.7.1 - 12 pages]

Reference to any relevant previous minute

Nil

Background and discussion

At the Sports Advisory Committee meeting held on 10 June 2026, there were numerous items discussed by the Committee, including:

- Item 7.1 Financial Assistance Requests
ACTION: that the information regarding financial assistance be noted.
- Item 8.1 - 2026 LJ Hooker Reg Cowden Memorial Sports Star of the Year Awards
ACTION: this item is to be held over to the next meeting for further nominations to be received.
- Item 9 – Booking Requests
ACTION: the Committee noted that all bookings in Item 9 have been approved.
- Item 10 – New Members
ACTION: the committee noted the information provided.

Financial

N/A

4. Delegates Reports

4.1. GM - 29/06/2026 - CNSWJO Board Meeting - Delegate Report 26 May 2026

Report by Ross Gurney - General Manager

Executive Summary

This report is provided to give advice from the recent meeting of the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board held in Sydney on 27 May 2026. The minutes from the meeting are included as an attachment.

Attachments

1. 260527 CNSWJO Board Minutes draft [4.1.1 - 8 pages]

Recommendation

THAT Council note the report from the General Manager on the Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO) Board meeting on 27 May 2026 held in Sydney.

Commentary

This report provides advice from the recent meeting of the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board held in Sydney on 27 May 2026.

Presentations were received from:

- Liverpool City Council and NSW Dept of Primary Industries and Regional Development on the Western Sydney International Airport and how the region can leverage opportunities,
- Penrith City Council regarding the Castlereagh Corridor Business Case, and
- Transport for NSW on the Great Western Highway issue.

Further details on reports to the meeting are below. The agenda can be found on the [CNSWJO website: www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/business-papers-agendas/](http://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/business-papers-agendas/)

NSW Parliament Visit

The Board attended State Parliament in Sydney on 28 May 2026 and met with an excellent line-up of local Members, State Ministers and MLCs.

The Board met with:

- The Hon. Courtney Houssos MLC - Minister for Domestic, Manufacturing and Government Procurement, and for Natural Resources,
- The Hon. Jihad Dib MP - Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government and for Emergency Services,
- The Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC - Minister for Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Heritage,
- The Hon. Paul Scully MP - Minister for Planning and Public Spaces,
- The Hon. Ryan Park MP - NSW Minister for Health and for Regional Health,
- The Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP - Minister for Roads and Regional Transport,
- The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP - Minister for Local Government,
- The Hon. Tara Moriarty MLC - Minister for Agriculture, and for Regional NSW and Western NSW,
- Mr Roy Butler MP - Member for Barwon,
- Mr Phil Donato, MP - Member for Orange,
- The Hon Paul Toole, MP - Member for Bathurst, and
- Mr Scott Barrett, MLC.

Unfortunately, Minister Rose Jackson, Minister Janelle Saffin and Minister Prue Car were apologies on the day.

The Mayors of the CNSWJO region have been meeting in Parliament House in Sydney for the past decade. The event provides an important opportunity for the region to hear the NSW Government's vision, for Ministers to receive feedback from the region, and to discuss the priorities of the communities.

Ministerial Discussions and Key Issues Raised by Mayor Coleman

Minister Courtney Houssos MLC

- Future Jobs Investment Authority and concerns regarding the NSW Government's noise policy for industry, specifically the acoustic constraints being applied by the EPA and their impact on industrial development.

Minister Jihad Dib MP

- The DRFA system requires improvement, and needs clear, achievable, and reasonable guidelines.
- Lithgow City Council is still owed \$7.2 million following the determination that it was ineligible for emergency works funding.

Minister Penny Sharpe MLC

- Raised concerns regarding the NSW Government's noise policy for industry, particularly the acoustic constraints being applied by the EPA and their impact on industry and development.

Minister Paul Scully MP

- Discussed the Development Coordination Authority, scheduled to commence on 1 July 2026.
- Sought clarification regarding the hierarchy of authority and decision-making responsibilities under the new structure.

Minister Ryan Park MP

- Lithgow sits at the western end of the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District.
- Concerns were raised that, due to the closure of Mount Victoria Pass, health services based in Penrith are reportedly not visiting Lithgow in person.
- Concerns were also expressed about the ongoing travel requirements for health workers commuting between Lithgow and Penrith.

Minister Ron Hoenig MP

- Asked what the next steps would be following the Legislative Council's disallowance of the 2025 Code of Meeting Practice.
- The Minister advised that legislation would be brought back before Parliament in the near future.

Minister Jenny Aitchison MP

- Raised concerns regarding the maintenance of the Great Western Highway median strips between Lithgow and Bathurst, noting a perceived lack of upkeep.

Minister Tara Moriarty MLC

- Discussed the Regional Trust and the importance of targeted grant programs that support coal mining communities, such as Resources for Regions.
- Raised concerns regarding the NSW Government's noise policy for industry, specifically the acoustic constraints being applied by the EPA, and the potential impact on regional development, particularly in post-mining and energy-producing regions.

2026/2027 Statement of Budget and Revenue

The Board adopted the 2026/2027 Statement of Budget and Revenue, available on the JO's website.

Executive Officer Recruitment

The Board received a report concluding the recruitment process for the Executive Officer. Ms Kate Barker was congratulated on her appointment to the role.

Shared ARIC

The CNSWJO has been working alongside the Hunter JO and the Illawarra Shoalhaven JO to form a shared Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee. The Board endorsed the independent members of the ARIC.

Cr Bruce Reynolds, Mayor of Blayney, will represent the CNSWJO as the Non-Voting Member.

The first meeting of the ARIC is scheduled for 18 June.

Procurement

CNSWJO continues to grow its contract offering to member councils, with the following procurement underway:

- Solar asset audit, followed by solar asset maintenance,
- Destination marketing services,
- Project management services panel,
- Asset management of sewer pipes,
- Restocking of first aid kits and maintenance of fire extinguishers,
- Traffic control services, and
- Bitumen emulsion.

Advocacy

Health

The Position Statement for Priority 3: Health and Ageing was endorsed by the Board at this meeting.

The Board also resolved to:

- Write to Dr Joe McGirr MP in support of the *Better Care, Closer to Home Alliance* campaign and *Rural Health Action Plan*, and
- Write to LGNSW in support of the "*Caring for our regions*" *Action Plan for Rural and Regional Health*.

Transport

Following the recent Commonwealth Government announcement to discontinue the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail project north of Parkes, the CNSWJO responded through the Chair with a media release on behalf of member councils, expressing deep concern about the decision, which came without warning and has significant implications for the region.

The media release reinforced that Inland Rail has long been considered nationally significant infrastructure underpinning freight capacity, investment confidence and long-term regional economic resilience. It also highlighted concerns about how the decision was made, including the lack of transparency and engagement with regional communities regarding infrastructure of this scale.

The advocacy position statement for transport was updated to include additional wording around:

- strengthening the Board's position on Inland Rail, supporting reinstatement of funding for the full Melbourne to Brisbane corridor, and
- reaffirming the need for increased passenger rail connectivity between Sydney and the Central West.

The Board agreed to write to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, expressing disappointment and concern in relation to the cancellation of the Inland Rail north of Parkes and seeking the reinstatement of funding to complete the Parkes to Brisbane sections of the Inland Rail project as originally committed.

Correspondence has been sent to the Minister for Roads and Regional Transport, along with the Executive Director Partnerships and Integration at Transport for NSW, in relation to the Sydney to Central West Corridor White Paper. The feedback focused on:

- Shift from planning to delivery - moving beyond repeated studies and committing to a clear, staged implementation of upgrades.
- Corridor not fit for purpose - the current road conditions create congestion, safety risks, and unreliable travel times that limit productivity.
- State-significant role – the corridor is critical to NSW's economy, freight network, and connection between regional areas and Sydney.
- Resilience and reliability – the infrastructure lacks redundancy and is vulnerable to disruptions, requiring proactive long-term planning.
- Western Sydney Airport impact underestimated - future demand from the airport is not adequately planned for, risking missed opportunities.
- Freight efficiency and policy alignment – there needs to be clearer alignment with freight policy and upgrades to support modern freight vehicles.
- Road design constraints (grades & emissions) – the steep grades reduce efficiency, increase emissions, and pose safety issues.
- Tourism impacts – the poor corridor performance undermines visitor experience and regional tourism growth.
- Rail and multimodal gaps – the limited rail capacity increases reliance on roads, highlighting the need for a stronger integrated freight network.

The Board agreed to develop a strategy for advocacy regarding the Great Western Highway, highlighting its strategic importance and advocating for ongoing investment. This was particularly pertinent in respect to the presentation on the opportunities to be leveraged through the Western Sydney Airport.

Drought

As of 11 May 2026, 63.4% of the Central Tablelands is drought affected with conditions forecast to intensify.

Key advocacy messages endorsed by the Board for drought include:

- recognition of drought in the State Disaster Mitigation Plan (SDMP) to reflect Central NSW's diverse risks,
- explicit inclusion of Water Supply and Sewer Assets in State and Commonwealth Disaster Recovery Funding. This is contingent on recognition of drought as a disaster, and
- reinstatement of the Regional Town Water Supply Coordinator to manage critical water shortages in drought.

Submissions

The following submissions have been lodged since the last meeting and were endorsed by the Board:

- [Submission to the Department of Housing Planning and Infrastructure \(DPHI\) New Approach to Strategic Planning.](#)

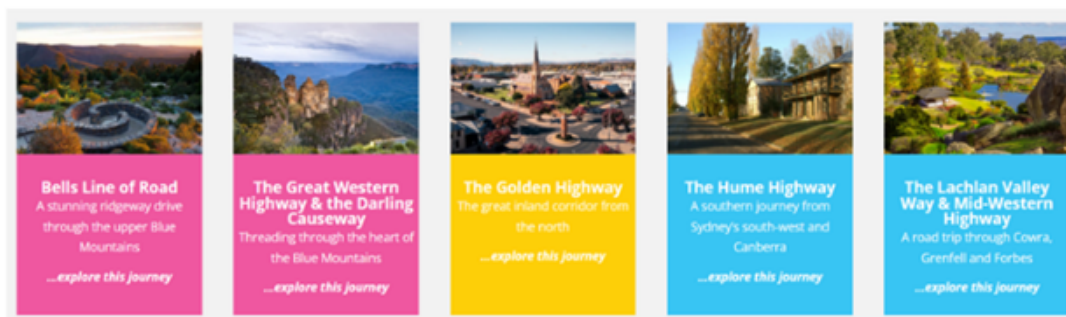
- [Submission to the Department of Housing Planning and Infrastructure \(DPHI\) on the Climate Change and Natural Hazards State Environmental Planning Policy \(Explanation of Intended Effect\).](#)
- [Submission to the Federal Productivity Commission on National Water Reform 2026, and](#)
- [Submission to the Murray Darling Basin Plan Review 2026](#)

Great Western Highway Detour Support – “Other Ways to the West”

In response to requests from member Councils and recognising the need to address fragmented messaging associated with the detour of the Great Western Highway at Victoria Pass ahead of the Easter long weekend, the Central NSW Joint Organisation led the development of the *Other Ways to the West* marketing campaign. The campaign was established in collaboration with member councils, Destination Network Central West, Business NSW (Western), and RDA Central West to address the significant and ongoing regional impacts of the detour.

Launched on 20 March, the *Other Ways to the West* campaign aims to reassure travellers that the region is accessible, open and ready to welcome visitors - despite a road detour on the Great Western Highway at Victoria Pass. It directly addresses community and visitor confusion about how to reach the region and reframes the routes as a scenic road trip opportunity.

The campaign includes a toolkit that shows stakeholders how to use the messaging in their marketing. It has been widely shared by CNSWJO Tourism Managers and other partners with businesses and tourism operators for use on social and digital channels. The toolkit includes logos, images and suggested travel routes into the region. The toolkit is available [here](https://www.visitcentralnsw.com.au/). All other assets can be found at Visit Central NSW: <https://www.visitcentralnsw.com.au/>



Regional Prosperity

Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Planning System Reforms) Act 2025

On 17 March, the CNSWJO facilitated a session in Bathurst attended by 29 representatives from 10 member councils to examine the NSW Planning Reforms. The session provided elected representatives and General Mand planners with clear insights into the proposed reforms and their implications for regional councils. It was led by planning specialist Mr Paul Crennan OAM, with input from Cr Phyllis Miller, regional NSW representative on the Planning Minister's Planning Systems Reform Reference Group. The session was well received and generated constructive discussion. CNSWJO will continue to support regional planners through further engagement as the reforms progress.

The Welcome Experience

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) has advised that Skillset's contract to deliver *The Welcome Experience* in the Central West has been extended to 30 June 2027.

From 1 July 2026, the program will also be expanded to include the previously excluded LGAs of Forbes, Cabonne and Blayney, following advocacy by CNSWJO on behalf of member councils.

Between September 2024 and January 2025, Skillset supported the relocation of 159 essential workers and 341 family members to the Central West. As part of the expanded contract, Skillset will increase its Local Connector workforce from one to three positions, with staff based in Orange, Parkes and Bathurst to improve local coverage across the region.

Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing

The Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia (SEGRA) Foundation's National Summit was held in Lithgow on 25-26 March. In addition to sponsoring the *Big Ideas Panel*, CNSWJO co-hosted an invitation-only *New Horizons* workshop with the Lithgow Emerging Economy Project (LEEP) on 24 March.

The purpose of the *New Horizons* workshop was to develop a draft set of shared principles to guide community and social benefit expectations for renewable energy development (usually State Significant Development (SSD)) outside Renewable Energy Zones (REZs). The workshop sought to bring together elected representatives, council staff, and regional leaders to strengthen collective leverage and reduce fragmented, project-by-project Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) negotiations with developers.

The ten draft shared principles agreed by attendees are listed below. The Board endorsed the Event Report.

1. Statement of Expectations/Rules of Engagement: Councils can set expectations about how developers engage with communities and the bare minimum requirements for Planning Agreement negotiations.
2. A clear distinction is needed between payments that go towards accommodating the development, offsetting the impacts of development, and providing additional benefits to the community.
3. When projects and their impacts affect more than one LGA – as is usually the case with State Significant Development, whether they are in REZs or not – it is incumbent on the State and Federal Governments to provide financial and other supports to identify, plan for, and mitigate cumulative impacts.
4. 'Benefits' should benefit everyone because developers understand the value in what they are contributing and are reassured on outcomes, communities have agency in how outcomes are decided and delivered, and councils are meaningfully serving their communities.

5. With community input, councils are to define 'benefits' and how Community Benefit Sharing funds can tangibly deliver on these benefits.
6. Community Benefit Funds should be for items/outcomes that communities need, expect, and want, but these items go beyond what councils can directly deliver.
7. Councils do not want to be saddled with non-legacy infrastructure and assets and their associated maintenance costs.
8. Community Benefit Sharing plans need to have links to established plans, e.g. Community Strategic Plans, Housing Strategies, Local Strategic Planning Statements.
9. Councils must be able to pool funds from multiple and disparate Community Benefit Sharing arrangements/VPAs into a centralised Community Benefit Sharing Fund, to optimise councils' ability to deliver genuinely beneficial, legacy projects/initiatives/infrastructure.
10. A regional Community Benefit Sharing Framework provides the tools, but not the requirement, for local councils to adopt a particular approach to Community Benefit Sharing and VPA negotiations.

Health

Health Workforce Policy Lab

At the request of the Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO) Board, and in collaboration with Charles Sturt University (CSU), a Policy Lab on Regional Health Workforce was held in Orange on 5 March 2026. The Policy Lab provided Councillors and staff from member councils across the region with an opportunity to collaboratively discuss the challenges and opportunities for regional communities related to the health workforce.

The event culminated in the development of the event report, which synthesised discussion and produced a refined set of advocacy position statements for the CNSWJO Board's consideration and endorsement.

The following actions have been identified as what councils and/or the Joint Organisation can do, mostly centred around advocacy:

1. Consider joining Dr Joe McGirr MP's "Better Care, Closer to Home" Alliance,
2. Collaborate with other Joint Organisations and other regional local government bodies, and councils to align regional initiatives and messaging,
3. Work with key stakeholders to clarify roles and responsibilities between council, health services and partners at the local level by undertaking a mapping exercise with key stakeholders, and
4. Work with key stakeholders to develop a graphic showing local government's role vs what local governments are delivering in relation to health services

The Board endorsed the event report, including the actions noted above.

CSU Medical Scholarship

Following the success of the initial scholarships awarded to three CSU medical students, the CNSWJO Board resolved at its May 2025 meeting to fund scholarships for an additional three students. To maintain a steady pipeline of graduating recipients, the scholarships have been staggered across future years, enabling one graduate to receive a scholarship each year. Each scholarship is for \$6k per student per year.

The recipients of the 3 scholarships in 2026 include:

- Brett Causer - 1st year student / 5 year scholarship,
- Joseph Pearce - 4th year student / 2 year scholarship, and
- Tabitha Jones - 5th year student / 1 year scholarship.

Telecommunications

The Board has previously endorsed the development of a Regional Digital Plan, including individual LGA plans, to be delivered in partnership with nbn Local, Regional Development Australia Central West (RDACW), and other providers, such as Telstra.

The Plan aligns with the Statement of Strategic Regional Plan (SSRP) Priority Four, supporting collaboration with RDACW to improve telecommunications outcomes. It will inform a regional Position Statement and advocacy priorities to:

- Future-proof regional telecommunications,
- Ensure long-term broadband accessibility,
- Support adequate workforce capacity, and
- Improve mobile phone coverage across the region.

The Regional Digital Plan will establish a baseline of digital connectivity, identify regional priorities, and provide a coordinated framework for advocacy on behalf of Central NSW communities. Based on the Mid-Western Regional Council Digital Plan, it will be prepared for external distribution, cover a three-year horizon, be updated annually, and include agreed actions and an implementation roadmap.

Of note is the announcement by Communications Minister Anika Wells of a new industry standard developed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), which, for the first time, sets uniform signal strength thresholds for how telcos advertise their coverage to consumers. Taking effect on 30 June, this will force Telstra to strip about 1 million square kilometres from its mobile coverage maps – an area about the size of NSW - and a third of its claimed coverage.

Endorsement of the Regional Digital Plan will be sought at the Board's August meeting.

Water

NSW Australian Water Association Award

The CNSWJO's Water Loss Management and Efficiency Hub Project won the Organisational Excellence Award at the Australian Water Association's NSW Heads of Water Gala Dinner on 13 March 2026. The award recognises outstanding leadership, collaboration and innovation in the NSW water sector.

This award reflects a decade of work that has shaped the current WLME project and is supported by strong relationships, trust, and collaboration between the Water Utilities Alliance and NSW DCCEEW. These long-standing partnerships have enabled the delivery of meaningful outcomes and continue to innovate.

Climate Change Mitigation – Net Zero

EVenturemap

The public launch of EVenturemap commenced on 13 April 2026 in response to ongoing fuel supply challenges and strong alignment with regional visitor-economy initiatives such as *Other Ways to the West*.

EVenturemap operates statewide, with CNSWJO leading the project on behalf of a collaboration of Joint Organisations. The tool draws on an NSW Government EV-charger database and the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse, with the Central NSW region well positioned to leverage it alongside existing destination-marketing campaigns.

Circular Economy Initiatives

On 19 February 2026, CNSWJO supported RDA Central West to deliver the Circular Economy Precinct Accelerator Workshop in Orange. Facilitated by Circular Australia, the workshop brought together councils, industry and community stakeholders to explore circular-economy concepts in a Central West context.

Following the workshop, CNSWJO's Executive Officer will co-chair the emerging Circular Economy Precinct working group, continuing to work with RDA Central West and Circular Australia to support coordination, capability-building and next steps toward precinct development.

Climate Change Adaptation - Regional Resilience

Disaster Adaptation Plan update

The following is a summary of key activities underway in the development of the Central NSW Disaster Adaptation Plan (DAP) by the NSW Reconstruction Authority, with CNSWJO continuing to provide support to member councils.

- Infrastructure Resilience and Community Impacts Assessment (IRCI) - Builds on earlier work in Central NSW, using a systems-based approach to understand better how infrastructure failures impact communities across different hazard scenarios, supporting improved risk identification and future investment planning.
- Field surveys to strengthen disaster risk intelligence - Collects detailed building and asset data to improve the accuracy of risk modelling and address key data gaps in the region.
- Community sentiment research - Engages communities to understand priorities, risk awareness and attitudes to disaster adaptation, informing future engagement and planning activities.
- Local adaptation engagement (Adaptation Stories and Conversations) - Includes short films, community events and discussions to showcase local resilience and gather insights to support adaptation planning.

Quarterly Review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priorities

Value for members

The following table provides a snapshot of the highlighted quantitative KPIs as identified in the SSRP.

Highlight KPIs	Q1 (Jul-Sept)	Q2 (Oct-Dec)	Q3 (Jan-Mar)	Q4 (Apr-Jun)	Total for FY
# new contracts	3	1	3		7
\$ income through contract management fees	\$136,859	\$76,082	\$105,602		\$318,543
\$ spent by member councils	\$5,866,394	\$8,749,736	\$6,672,478		\$21,288,608
\$ saved for member councils	\$312,389	\$255,610	\$649,006		\$1,217,005
# training courses delivered	1	0	2		3
# staff/Councillors trained	18	0	36		54
\$ grant funding applied for	\$6,293,687	\$0	\$0		\$6,293,687
\$ grant funding received	\$85,780	\$0	\$0		\$85,780
# submissions	3	4	5		12
# media releases	11	3	3		17
# contractors inducted through online WHS program	215	307	228		750
# regional team meetings	18	18	18		54
# PR activities through tourism program	48	9	36		93

Spend on aggregated contracts

The following table and graph show the spend by member councils under regional contracts facilitated by CNSWJO for the 2025/26 FYTD:

SPEND	Water Utilities Alliance Contracts	HR Contracts	WHS contracts	Supply contracts	Energy contracts	RDOCS contracts	Training	Total
Bathurst	\$375,219	\$61,722	\$0	\$1,038,320	\$2,806,977	\$20,852	\$1,475	\$4,304,565
Blayney	\$0	\$14,961	\$0	\$257,223	\$240,735	\$5,650	\$5,360	\$523,929
Cabonne	\$0	\$20,381	\$0	\$1,023,951	\$294,225	\$0	\$7,625	\$1,346,183
Central Tablelands Water	\$0	\$4,459	\$0	\$37,111	\$351,134	\$0	\$0	\$392,705
Cowra	\$273,883	\$26,330	\$5,579	\$657,534	\$854,627	\$0	\$8,385	\$1,826,337
Forbes	\$788,300	\$37,655	\$0	\$1,210,097	\$898,106	\$8,623	\$3,590	\$2,946,372
Lachlan	\$0	\$18,888	\$0	\$641,520	\$594,379	\$0	\$4,290	\$1,259,077
Lithgow	\$0	\$16,925	\$0	\$614,053	\$6	\$0	\$2,090	\$633,074
Oberon	\$0	\$13,617	\$5,101	\$365,739	\$212,063	\$5,465	\$0	\$601,986
Orange	\$1,211,986	\$105,074	\$38,372	\$536,682	\$3,117,121	\$23,256	\$11,990	\$5,044,481
Parkes	\$76,430	\$6,645	\$0	\$840,289	\$1,923,587	\$20,173	\$4,790	\$2,871,914
Central Tablelands Weeds Authority	\$0	\$297	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$297
Weddin	\$139,636	\$12,186	\$7,752	\$292,121	\$143,606	\$4,524	\$3,295	\$603,120
Total	\$2,865,455	\$339,140	\$56,804	\$7,514,639	\$11,436,567	\$88,543	\$52,890	\$22,354,038

Savings on aggregated contracts and other programming

The following table and graph show the savings by member councils under regional contracts and other regional programs that create efficiencies for the 2025/26 FYTD:

SAVINGS	Water Utilities Alliance Contracts	HR Contracts	WHS contracts	IT contracts	Supply contracts	Roads/Transport contracts	Energy contracts	Training	Legal advice re Procurement	Participation in regional procurement	Total
Bathurst	\$19,748	\$1,790	\$0	\$0	\$27,192	\$0	\$53,477	\$225	\$5,495	\$12,000	\$119,928
Blayney	\$0	\$1,766	\$0	\$0	\$5,792	\$0	\$11,456	\$3,568	\$5,495	\$11,000	\$39,077
Cabonne	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$71,969	\$0	\$37,126	\$225	\$5,495	\$8,000	\$122,815
Central Tablelands Water	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,123	\$0	\$6,804	\$0	\$1,760	\$10,000	\$22,687
Cowra	\$18,294	\$1,766	\$2,391	\$0	\$12,418	\$0	\$40,954	\$8,340	\$5,495	\$16,000	\$105,658
Forbes	\$41,489	\$904	\$0	\$0	\$144,331	\$0	\$61,513	\$3,830	\$5,495	\$20,000	\$277,561
Lachlan	\$0	\$1,183	\$0	\$0	\$15,301	\$0	\$55,720	\$2,459	\$5,495	\$20,000	\$100,158
Lithgow	\$0	\$1,693	\$0	\$0	\$9,914	\$0	\$0	\$1,834	\$5,495	\$11,000	\$29,936
Oberon	\$0	\$343	\$2,186	\$0	\$4,918	\$0	\$19,418	\$0	\$5,495	\$15,000	\$47,360
Orange	\$66,412	\$3,658	\$16,445	\$0	\$19,694	\$0	\$86,844	\$6,455	\$5,495	\$10,000	\$215,003
Parkes	\$4,023	\$665	\$0	\$0	\$24,407	\$0	\$50,549	\$100	\$5,495	\$12,000	\$97,238
Central Tablelands Weeds A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,760	\$0	\$1,760
Weddin	\$8,319	\$0	\$3,322	\$0	\$15,161	\$0	\$8,961	\$3,855	\$5,495	\$7,000	\$52,113
Sub Total	\$158,285	\$13,765	\$24,345	\$0	\$355,219	\$0	\$432,822	\$30,892	\$63,965	\$152,000	\$1,231,293
									Cost to members		\$315,750
										Total	\$915,543

5. Questions with Notice

5.1. QWN - 29/06/2026 - Cr C Coleman - Honeysuckle Falls Road

Report by Councillor Cassandra Coleman

Commentary

The Crown Road recently transferred back to Council is now a dedicated public road under Council's control. The road is approximately 980 metres in length and 20 metres in width.

It has been estimated that the cost of constructing this road to Council standards would be approximately \$250,000, including earthworks, drainage infrastructure, and a 100 mm gravel surface.

Question

If Council chooses to allocate \$250,000 from the Capital Roads Budget to construct this new road, which would primarily provide access to a private property off Honeysuckle Falls Road:

1. Which currently planned road projects would no longer be funded, deferred, or reduced as a result of this allocation?
2. How many residents live on each of the road projects that would be affected by this funding decision?
3. What assessment has Council undertaken to determine whether allocating public funds for this project represents the best outcome for the broader community?

Attachments

Nil

Management Comment

1. Which currently planned road projects would no longer be funded, deferred, or reduced as a result of this allocation?

- a. Coerwull Road Upgrade.
- b. Bayonet Road Upgrade.

2. How many residents live on each of the road projects that would be affected by this funding decision?

- a. Coerwull is a through road, and approximately 55 properties will be affected. Also, multiple businesses will be affected, including Lithgow Tourist and Van Park, TfNSW Depot, Endeavour Energy and Redding's Motor Repairs, to name a few.
- b. Bayonet has approximately 51 properties and is also a major thoroughfare for Lithgow shopping centres.

3. What assessment has Council undertaken to determine whether allocating public funds for this project represents the best outcome for the broader community?

The roads program has been developed based on condition assessments, investigative procedures, function of road and risk profiles prepared in conjunction with external expert advisers. It also included consideration of optimal and long-term outcomes, particularly for roads requiring reconstruction following natural disasters, with partial funding from the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, which currently expire on 30 June 2027.

Reassigning capital funds to the Crown Road to benefit a single property would reduce the funding available for other critical road projects, which affect many more properties.

Paul Smith - Interim Director of Infrastructure and Project Delivery

5.2. QWN - 29/06/2026 - Cr M Ticehurst - NSW Parliamentary Legislative Council Questions

Report by Councillor Martin Ticehurst

Questions with Notice - Ordinary Meeting of Lithgow City Council Monday 29 June 2026.

I request that the General Manager and Senior Council staff provide detailed answers to the following Question with Notice.

Background:

On 12 June 2026, the following Questions were asked in the NSW Parliamentary Legislative Council.

5519 - Local Government - LITHGOW CITY COUNCIL (LCC) AND LITHGOW GOLF CLUB – Mark Latham to the Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Western New South Wales representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Can you (LCC) explain why \$7.2 million of the Lithgow City Council's natural disaster claims were rejected, as noted in the Auditor General's Local Government 2025 Financial Audit Report?

(2) Do you (LCC) consider it normal that the (LCC) Council can only meet its expenses out of the General Fund for 1.5 months, as noted in (LCC) Council's own Auditor's Report for 2024-2025?

(3) How is the (LCC) Council meeting its operational requirements under the circumstances noted in (1) and (2) above?

(a) What future longer-term plans have been made to ensure that expenses can be met out of the (LCC) General Fund, going forward?

(b) What (LCC) local services will be impacted by this financial strife?

(c) What (LCC) strategies are in place to remedy this situation?

(4) Given the matters raised in (1) to (3) above, how do you (LCC) respond to the fact that the (LCC) Council has provided ratepayer funding to Lithgow Golf Club (the Club), a publicly listed company?

(a) How can it be justified that the (LCC) Council continue to be liable for the ground maintenance of the golf course, given the property lease between the (LCC) Council and the Club expired three years ago?

(b) Will you and the Office of Local Government (and LCC) consider having the (LCC) Council terminate their lease with the Club, and put the Golf Course to a new public tender?

(5) What systems are in place to review all New South Wales Council and Shire Property Leases (including LCC), to ensure that they are not unnecessarily burdening ratepayers and residents?

(a) When was the last time these leases were reviewed?

(b) Are the results of these reviews available to the public?

Reference: <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lc/papers/pages/qanda-tracking-details.aspx?pk=108546>

Attachments

Nil

Question on Notice

Notwithstanding that the Minister for Local Government and NSW Office of Local Government will be separately providing their own answers to the NSW Parliamentary Legislative Council; could Council's General Manager and Director of Finance and Governance provide detailed responses to the above 5 Questions, noting the inserting of (LCC) to reflect a similar response by Lithgow City Council?

Management Comment

Management responses are provided below:

1) Can you (LCC) explain why \$7.2 million of the Lithgow City Council's natural disaster claims were rejected, as noted in the Auditor General's Local Government 2025 Financial Audit Report?

The Mayor and General Manager have raised the matter of \$7.2M of rejected emergency works claims with Minister The Hon. Janelle Saffin, Minister for Recovery and recently with the CEO of the NSW Reconstruction Authority.

The Council has made it clear that the requirements asked of the Council regarding the claiming of DRFA related expenses changed over time. The Minister has responded with a statement that the Reconstruction Authority has reviewed Transport for NSW's determinations for the claims and is satisfied that the decision regarding ineligible works was made in accordance with DRFA eligibility requirements.

A detailed report regarding the contributory factors was tabled at the 1 April 2025 Infrastructure Committee Meeting and the 17 November 2025 Combined Finance and Infrastructure Committee Meeting.

The Mayor continues to advocate for a payment of \$7.2M from the NSW Government to Council.

(2) Do you (LCC) consider it normal that the (LCC) Council can only meet its expenses out of the General Fund for 1.5 months, as noted in (LCC) Council's own Auditor's Report for 2024-2025?

It is not usual for Council's unrestricted current ratio to fall below the average for regional councils. The 2024/25 Auditor's Report stated - "*The significant decline was mainly due to using natural disaster money received in 2023–24 for various projects, thereby reducing the current assets and current liabilities*".

The Auditor-General's Local Government 2025 report noted that total cash and investments have declined in rural councils. The report also noted that Lithgow Council's cash balances were adversely affected by \$7.2 million in rejected natural disaster claims, resulting in an operating loss. Three Councils were reported as having "financial sustainability risks due to low levels of available cash". Lithgow Council was not one of these three Councils.

It should also be noted that this financial measure reflects the cash position of Council as at 30 June 2025 only, as it is a point-in-time indicator. Unrestricted cash continues to be carefully monitored as outlined at each monthly Finance Committee Meeting, each Quarterly Budget Review tabled to Council and monthly Investment Reports.

The Office of Local Government has removed performance indicators from the Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting while they are under review.

(3) How is the (LCC) Council meeting its operational requirements under the circumstances noted in (1) and (2) above?

Cashflow continues to be carefully managed to ensure that Council has sufficient liquid funds available to make payments on time. Management's actions have ensured that cash inflows match cash outflows. Regular updates are provided at each monthly Finance Committee Meeting, at each Quarterly Budget Review tabled to Council, and in monthly Investment Reports.

The following cash measures have been put into place:

- Executive review of all requests for expenditure greater than \$25K,
- Executive review of all requests to recruit vacancies,
- Executive review of contract variations greater than \$25K,
- Review of works and program scheduling,
- Recovery action to encourage payment of outstanding accounts, and
- Submission of claims for grant funded works completed.

(a) What future longer-term plans have been made to ensure that expenses can be met out of the (LCC) General Fund, going forward?

The 2026/27 year has been identified as a strategic reset year, with Council committing to:

- A comprehensive review of the Community Strategic Plan,
- Service reviews and asset rationalisation to ensure sustainability and value for money,
- Reviewing and strengthening the Council's Financial Sustainability Program, including:
 - Improve rates resilience,
 - Improve income resilience,
 - Review cost recovery/subsidisation,
 - Review services – what are delivered and how,
 - Review assets to identify surplus / under-used assets,
 - Review optimisation of Council's property portfolio,
- Embedding organisational values and improving operational efficiency, and
- Completing key recovery and resilience programs related to natural disasters.

Further financial sustainability strategies will be identified in the update of the Council's Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP).

(b) What (LCC) local services will be impacted by this financial strife?

At this stage, no local services have been directly impacted. Adjustments to service delivery and the number of services will be considered as part of the Financial Sustainability Review and update of the LTFP scenarios. This is a main component of many Councils' long-term sustainability measures.

As outlined in the December Quarterly Budget Review tabled at the February 2026 Council Meeting, the following projects were deferred to address the cash situation:

- \$464K for the Enfield Avenue Intersection Stormwater Project,
- \$171K for Great Western Highway Stormwater Drainage (subsequently reinstated via reserve funding),
- \$160K for La Salle Stormwater Drainage,
- \$150K for the Sport Lighting Infrastructure Project (EOI submitted for grant funding and contribution request has been accepted, and
- \$103K for the Wallerawang Cemetery Road Project.

As outlined in the draft 2026/2027 Operational Plan Report tabled at the April 2026 Council Meeting, the following steps were undertaken to ensure works and programs were within the project's available cash funding:

- Employment costs - estimated savings due to time taken to fill vacancies and a pause on vacancies with limited-service impacts - \$1.6M,
- Materials and Services – a total of \$1.4M savings from reviews undertaken and targeted savings targets,
- Several priority operational business cases were not included – saving \$225K, and
- Capital Works – a total of \$9.3M of capital works were unable to be funded and were excluded based on prioritisation.

(c) What (LCC) strategies are in place to remedy this situation?

Please refer to the response to Question 3 (a).

(4) Given the matters raised in (1) to (3) above, how do you (LCC) respond to the fact that the (LCC) Council has provided ratepayer funding to Lithgow Golf Club (the Club), a publicly listed company?

The Council provides no direct ratepayer funding to Lithgow Golf Club. The Council funds a golf course maintenance program (as provided in the lease agreement). The Golf Club pays annual rent to the Council, as well as 20% of profit as a contribution towards the cost of materials for maintaining the golf course.

There are a number of sporting facilities owned by Council that are under agreements with incorporated not-for-profit organisations, like Lithgow Golf Club. Grounds maintenance is a common service provided by the Council to these organisations. This is the only agreement in which a profit contribution is made to the Council.

(a) How can it be justified that the (LCC) Council continue to be liable for the ground maintenance of the golf course, given the property lease between the (LCC) Council and the Club expired three years ago?

The Lithgow Golf Club lease agreement has continued on a month-to-month basis, as specified in the agreement. This is standard practice while the terms of leases considered for renewal are being negotiated.

(b) Will you and the Office of Local Government (and LCC) consider having the (LCC) Council terminate their lease with the Club, and put the Golf Course to a new public tender?

The Administration is planning to submit a new lease to the 24 August 2026 Ordinary Meeting for Council's consideration, subject to the finalisation of the terms of the new draft licence agreement. This will require public exhibition and consideration of submissions, as was undertaken when the current lease agreement was entered into.

(5) What systems are in place to review all New South Wales Council and Shire Property Leases (including LCC), to ensure that they are not unnecessarily burdening ratepayers and residents?

(a) When was the last time these leases were reviewed?

(b) Are the results of these reviews available to the public?

Advice from the NSW Office of Local Government is that the lease of community land, including the terms setting out the responsibilities and maintenance obligations for community land and assets, is a matter for Council at a local level.

Ross Gurney – General Manager
Vanessa Browning – Director Finance and Governance

6. Notices of Motion

6.1. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Cr M Ticehurst - Civil Class Action over ongoing closure of Great Western Hwy.

Report by Councillor Martin Ticehurst

Commentary

As Council would be aware, in early March this year, a catastrophic engineering failure to the 194-year-old Mitchells Convict-built Bridge on the Victoria Pass closed the Great Western Hwy (GWH) between the Central West / Western NSW and Sydney. Presently, the best estimate for any future reopening of the GWH is some two to three years, well after the next NSW State Election to be held on Saturday 13 March 2027.

Additionally, the Council would be aware that the NSW Premier Chris Minns State Labor Government after more than 10 weeks announced on the 21 May 2026, very limited financial support packages of \$10,000 for small businesses in just the town and villages of Mount Victoria, Little Hartley, Hartley and Hartley Vale and similarly a very limited amount of funding to 11 Local Councils and Shires, including Lithgow Council.

However, since early March this year, a number of public statements and media reports in the public domain indicate that there may be a case for a Civil Class Action to be undertaken on behalf of all those severely financially impacted by the original and ongoing closure of the Great Western Hwy and as such I am making several recommendations to initiate that action.

On the 15 May 2026, our Federal Member Mr Andrew Gee said, "Our local businesses are going broke because of the indefinite closure of the Great Western Highway at Victoria Pass and there was not one dollar of support for them in the budget. This is as appalling and heartless as it is disgraceful. **For years, successive governments knew this 200-year-old bridge built by convicts was going to fail. They did nothing but watch it crumble and kick the can down the road to save money.**"

Additionally, WINTV News reported on the 20 March 2026 that, 'A local group (**Blackheath Chamber of Commerce**) says it's been warning the State Government for nearly a decade that **Convict Bridge at Mount Victoria will fail.**'

Further, ABC News online reported on the 10 March 2026, that, '**(Blackheath) Chamber of Commerce President Michael Paag said if the Government had acted on its earlier warnings about the fragility of the nearly 200-year-old bridge the closure could have been avoided.** A letter addressed to Ms Aitchison on December 19, 2025, requested, in addition to the sensors, a structural investigation to determine the durability, resilience and remaining life span of Convict Bridge. **[Transport for NSW] must ... acknowledge the real possibility of failure," stated the letter from Blackheath and District Chamber of Commerce. The Group said its request had gone unanswered.**'

ABC News online reported on the 3 March 2023, that, '**Labor would pause plans for Australia's longest road tunnel, diverting the money to regional and Western Sydney roads if it won the state election.**' (It won the 2023 NSW State Election, stopped the Blue Mountains GWH Tunnel and diverted the money.)

Attachments

1. [ABC News Report 10 March 2026](#) [6.1.1 -]
2. [ABC News Report 3 March 2023](#) [6.1.2 -]
3. [WIN TV News Report 20 March 2026](#) [6.1.3 -]

4. [Federal Member for Calare Social Media Post 15 May 2026](#) [6.1.4 -]

Recommendation

THAT Council liaise with Blue Mountains City Council, NSW Regional Councils and Shires in Central West NSW (CENTROC), Western NSW and impacted residents and businesses to consider Civil Class Action over ongoing closure of Great Western Hwy.

Management Comment

Council is continuing to work collaboratively with TfNSW and the Reconstruction Authority while lobbying and advocating to several NSW Ministers and agencies to represent our community, including the local business community, to address the negative impacts of the closure of the Great Western Highway at Victoria Pass.

Council resources are fully committed to delivering business-as-usual services to our community, the works and programs in the 2025/2026 Operational Plan, and planning for the works and programs being considered in the 2026/2027 Operational Plan. Implementing this NOM would involve redirecting resources away from these activities, requiring deferral of project/s or program/s or a reduction in service levels to our community.

As a class action requires significant input, takes extensive time to be considered within the legal system, and may not result in a favourable ruling, it is not considered prudent for Council's financial and staff resources to be diverted for this purpose.

Social, Financial and Legal Implications

Socially, the recommendation acknowledges the significant disruption being experienced by residents, businesses and visitors as a result of the ongoing closure of the Great Western Highway at Victoria Pass. Council advocacy may help demonstrate support for affected communities, however, Council involvement in potential legal action may also create expectations that Council can influence or secure compensation outcomes that are beyond its control.

Financially, progressing the recommendation would require officer time and external legal advice, with an initial estimated cost of \$10,000. Further costs may arise depending on the scope of advice, stakeholder engagement and any subsequent action. As no budget allocation currently exists for this purpose, funding would need to be identified from an existing discretionary budget or through a future budget adjustment, which may require the deferral or reduction of other services, projects or programs.

From a legal perspective, Council would need to obtain independent advice before taking any further steps to determine whether it has an appropriate role, standing, and risk position in relation to any proposed class action. The advice would need to consider case law, potential exposure to costs, prospects of success, reputational implications, conflicts with existing advocacy relationships with NSW Government agencies, and whether affected businesses or industry associations may be better placed to pursue legal avenues independently of Council.

Vanessa Browning - Director of Finance and Governance

6.2. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Cr Fredericks - State Significant Developments

Report by Councillor Elizabeth Fredericks

Commentary

As Council is aware, a number of State Significant Developments (SSDs) are either proposed or expected within the Lithgow Local Government Area.

Given the scale and long-term impacts of these developments on the Lithgow Local Government Area, its infrastructure, future planning and Council resources, it is important that Council establishes a clear and consistent position on each proposal before formal submissions are prepared and lodged.

This approach would help avoid confusion regarding Council's position and ensure that future submissions accurately reflect the views of the elected Council. It would also provide an opportunity for Councillors, community members and project proponents to engage in meaningful discussion regarding the benefits, impacts and expectations associated with each development.

While the approval of State Significant Developments ultimately rests with the NSW Government, Councillors remain responsible for the stewardship of the Lithgow Local Government Area.

Whether a proposal is approved or rejected, the consequences of that decision will ultimately fall upon Council. The impacts on infrastructure, services, future planning and community expectations will remain long after individual Councillors have left office. For this reason, Council should take a proactive and informed approach to each proposal and determine a clear position before any formal submissions are prepared or lodged.

A thorough assessment should be undertaken of each proposal, including consideration of financial impacts, infrastructure requirements, environmental impacts, impacts on future land use and planning, and any proposed community benefit, compensation or voluntary planning agreement arrangements.

Engagement should also occur with project proponents to ensure Council fully understands the scope of each development, while providing an opportunity to advocate for outcomes that appropriately recognise the impacts these projects may have on the Lithgow Local Government Area.

Attachments

Nil

Recommendation

1. That Council prepare a report outlining all current and proposed State Significant Developments within the Lithgow Local Government Area, including:
 - The nature and scale of each development;
 - The type of renewable energy or associated infrastructure proposed;
 - The amount of land required or proposed to be cleared;
 - Expected construction and operational timeframes;
 - Anticipated impacts on local infrastructure and services;
 - Anticipated impacts on future planning and land use; and
 - Any proposed community benefit, compensation or voluntary planning agreement arrangements.
2. That Councillors participate in a workshop with the proponents of each State Significant
3. Development proposed within the Lithgow Local Government Area.

4. That Councillors participate in a workshop with community groups and stakeholders representing a range of views regarding the proposed developments.
5. That following the completion of the report and workshops, Council consider and determine its position on each State Significant Development and establish guiding principles for any future Council submissions relating to those proposals.

Management Comment

State Significant Developments (SSDs) are the responsibility of the NSW Government.

All SSD applications are assessed under Division 4.7 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The Department of Planning coordinates the assessment. This includes carrying out relevant administrative functions, coordinating inputs from State and Commonwealth agencies and working with Councils to ensure local and regional issues are considered.

Community involvement is an important part of the process. All SSD applications are publicly exhibited for at least 28 days (or 14 days for relevant residential applications), as specified by the Department of Planning's community participation plan.

Although the Administration receives regular updates from SSD proponents, staff receive only publicly released information. The Council has neither the staff capacity nor expertise to provide a report on current and proposed SSDs. Should Council resolve to receive such a report, the Administration will need to consider engaging a consultant to prepare a report. Further, the Administration will need to advise Council on 2026/27 Operational Plan project/s which would need to be deferred or cancelled to allocate resources to points 1,2 and 3 of the recommendation.

It would be appropriate to request the Hon Paul Scully MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, to provide the requested report on SSDs and to facilitate Councillor workshops (points 1, 2 and 3 of the recommendation).

As proposed projects progress, the Administration will discuss with each proponent community benefits, compensation and/or voluntary planning agreement arrangements.

Ross Gurney - General Manager

6.3. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Cr M Ticehurst - OLG Circular - Consultation on Councillor Conduct Reforms.

Report by Councillor Martin Ticehurst

Commentary

The NSW Office of Local Government (OLG) has issued Councillor Circular 26-08 relating to Consultation on Councillor Conduct Reforms.

In part the Circular advises that the OLG is inviting feedback from the Local Government sector on the next steps of the NSW Government's proposed reforms to the regulation Councillor Conduct.

The proposed changes are detailed in a Councillor Conduct Reform Policy Statement and a draft Model Code of Conduct for Councillors, which are available on OLG's website.

Under the proposed new framework, the handling of complaints against Councillors will be centralised through OLG ensuring a more consistent, efficient and independent process. This will allow trivial complaints to be dismissed early, ensure serious matters receive timely attention, and remove Councils from investigating complaints about their own Councillors.

Also, a new Privileges Committee of experienced Mayors and Councillors will assess less serious complaints of unsatisfactory Councillor Conduct, while serious misconduct will be investigated by OLG and, where appropriate, referred to the Land and Environment Court.

As part of the reforms, the existing Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW will be split into two with a dedicated Code for Councillors and a separate Code for Council Staff, Delegates and Committee Members. Breaches of the Councillor Code will be managed under the new Conduct framework.

The new Councillor Code has been designed to reflect the political nature of elected Councillor roles, support the implied Freedom of Political Communication, simplify Conflict-of-Interest rules, and remove provisions that could be misused or "weaponised" in complaints.

The reforms will also modernise how Councillors disclose their personal interests, aligning requirements with those applying to Members of NSW Parliament.

The proposed changes respond to growing concerns that the current Councillor Conduct Framework has been overwhelmed by trivial and vexatious complaints leading to delays in complaint resolution and undermining confidence in local democracy.

The proposed new framework will be finalised following public consultation before legislation is introduced to Parliament.

Attachments

1. council-circular-26-08-consultation-on-councillor-conduct-reforms [6.3.1 - 2 pages]

Recommendation

THAT Council note NSW Office of Local Government Circular 26 – 08, seeking Consultation on Councillor Conduct Reforms.

Management Comment

The Office of Local Government (OLG) invited councils to attend a webinar on reforms to the regulation of Councillor conduct, held on Friday 26 June. The OLG will make a recording available within two weeks following the webinar.

Ross Gurney - General Manager

6.4. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Cr E Fredericks - Traffic Management During Great Western Highway Closure and Diversion Routes

Report by Councillor Elizabeth Fredericks

Commentary

The recent long weekend once again highlighted the significant impacts being experienced by residents, businesses and road users throughout the Lithgow Local Government Area as a result of the current Great Western Highway closure and associated diversion routes.

On Monday, 8 June 2026, approximately 15,000 maybe more, vehicles travelled through the Lithgow LGA. The level of congestion experienced throughout Lithgow demonstrated that the current diversion arrangements are not adequately managing traffic volumes during peak holiday periods.

Further concerns were raised regarding traffic leaving the Great Western Highway from the 100km/h zone and entering Coerwull Road in an attempt to avoid congestion on the designated diversion route. This behaviour resulted in significant volumes of traffic being redirected onto local roads that were never intended to accommodate such traffic loads

I received reports of vehicles travelling at speeds estimated to be as high as 80km/h along Coalbrook Street, during the weekend, creating serious safety risk for residents, pedestrians and other road users. The use of residential streets as unofficial bypass routes has generated considerable concern within the community and highlights the inadequacy of the current traffic management arrangements.

In addition, reports were received that some motorists attempted to continue along the Great Western Highway and access Hartley Valley Road and Hartley Vale Road via incorrect entry points in an effort to avoid congestion. Such behaviour presents a significant road safety risk to motorists, residents and emergency services and demonstrates the extent to which drivers are seeking alternative routes outside the intended diversion arrangements. The volume of through traffic attempting to access these roads resulted in a NSW Police vehicle being stationed on the section of road adjacent to Red Rooster with emergency lights activated and a warning display advising motorists that the road ahead was closed. The need for police resources to be deployed in this manner further highlights the inadequacy of the current traffic management arrangements and the strain being placed on emergency services as a result of the diversion route.

Traffic congestion extended well beyond the designated diversion route, with significant delays reported from the Miners Lamp area through Coalbrook Street, Sandford Avenue, Tank Street, Main Street, Bridge Street, Eskbank Street and numerous connecting streets feeding into Mort Street. The scale of the congestion impacted the ability of residents to move safely throughout the city, prevented some residents from safely entering or exiting their properties, and raised concerns regarding access for emergency services should an incident have occurred during peak traffic periods.

Of particular concern was the failure of traffic signals at the Mort Street and Bridge Street intersection, resulting in three NSW Police officers being required to manually direct traffic for an extended period. While their efforts were appreciated, police resources should not be relied upon to manage predictable traffic congestion arising from a planned diversion route. Police officers should be available to undertake their primary responsibilities relating to community safety and law enforcement.

This marks the second consecutive long weekend where Transport for New South Wales has not had a visible operational presence within the community despite the known traffic impacts

associated with the highway closure. Moving forward, it is essential that Transport for New South Wales works closely with Lithgow City Council and gives proper consideration to local knowledge and concerns regarding traffic management arrangements.

The events of the long weekend demonstrated that the impacts of the current diversion arrangements are not limited to inconvenience. The level of congestion, rat-running through residential areas, reported speeding on local streets and attempts to access restricted roads through incorrect entry points posed genuine public safety risks. Furthermore, the ongoing disruption is contributing to increasing community concern regarding the effectiveness of the current traffic management response and whether sufficient influence is being exercised to ensure local concerns are being addressed by Transport for New South Wales.

While many of the decisions relating to the Great Western Highway closure and associated diversion routes are made by agencies outside the direct control of Lithgow City Council, it is the elected councillors of Lithgow City Council who remain accountable to the community for the impacts experienced within the Local Government Area. Regardless of whether current councillors remain in office in the future, the decisions made and positions taken during this period will continue to be associated with Council and its elected representatives. It is therefore essential that Council remains actively engaged in the decision-making process and continues to advocate strongly for measures that protect the safety, accessibility and amenity of the community. The events of 8 June 2026, including reports of residents being unable to safely access or exit their properties due to traffic rat-running through residential streets, demonstrate the need for stronger traffic management measures. It also hasn't helped the communities faith in council or the state government after the minister for transport and roads, Jenny Aitchison stated on June 15th on seven news central west, "on a normal day it's an extra 25 minutes, but of course it's going to be longer on a long weekend".

Attachments

Nil

Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Write to Transport for New South Wales requesting that traffic controllers be stationed and available for deployment during peak traffic periods, public holidays and long weekends at the Main Street and Mort Street intersection and the Mort Street and Bridge Street intersection, to ensure traffic can be managed safely and efficiently when congestion reaches critical levels.
2. Request that Transport for New South Wales maintain a visible operational presence within the Lithgow LGA during future long weekends and other forecast peak traffic periods (eg, The Bathurst 1000) associated with the Great Western Highway closure and diversion route.
3. Receive a written report following each Great Western Highway Taskforce meeting from Council representatives who attend, detailing matters discussed, decisions made, actions proposed and any issues of significance affecting the Lithgow LGA.
4. Investigate, in consultation with Transport for New South Wales, NSW Police and relevant stakeholders, the feasibility of implementing temporary resident-only access restrictions or other appropriate traffic control measures on residential streets impacted by rat-running during periods of significant traffic congestion.
5. Advocate strongly to Transport for New South Wales that local knowledge and concerns raised by Lithgow City Council be incorporated into future traffic management planning associated with the Great Western Highway closure and diversion arrangements.
6. Request that Transport for New South Wales provide Lithgow City Council with a written traffic management plan prior to each long weekend, public holiday period, or other forecast peak traffic event while the Great Western Highway closure and diversion route remain in place. The plan should detail proposed traffic management measures, staffing resources, traffic control locations, communication arrangements, contingency plans for traffic signal failures or incidents, and the anticipated operational presence of Transport for New South Wales personnel within the Lithgow Local Government Area.

Management Comment

The Administration met with senior Transport for NSW (TfNSW) representatives on 10 June 2026 to discuss TfNSW's approach to managing traffic flow through Lithgow on long weekends and during regional events. Traffic is managed both locally and via the Transport Management Centre (including the use of drones). TfNSW advised that lessons learned from the June long weekend will be implemented for the October long weekend, in consultation with NSW Police. Improvements are likely to include temporary resident-only access to key side streets used as "rat-runs". When these closures are posted on Live Traffic NSW, the routes no longer appear as vehicle travel options on Google Maps.

TfNSW has undertaken to present proposed traffic management improvements to Councillors in the near future.

The General Manager and senior staff meet weekly with senior TfNSW representatives to progress improvements to safety and traffic flow along the detour route and through Lithgow. The General Manager also attends the fortnightly Community Coordination Taskforce meetings. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor have regularly strongly advocated on behalf of businesses and residents to Ministers Aitchison and Saffin. Local knowledge and concerns raised by Lithgow City Council are being incorporated into traffic management planning associated with the Great Western Highway closure and diversion arrangements.

The Administration can request that the minutes of each Community Coordination Taskforce meeting be forwarded to Councillors.

Ross Gurney - General Manager

6.5. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Lithgow Council's Position In Regards to the Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Project

Report by Councillor Ray Smith

Commentary

As Council is aware a number of questions on Notice were requested regarding the Project at the May Ordinary Meeting. With respect to the Administration's request, the Endorsed Submission now stands as the sole Council Submission. At a recent Energy Australia Community Consultation Committee Meeting a briefing of the Project was given. The Proponents were reluctant to give details of the High Impacts that will occur. Various points were requested regarding Water levels, Geotechnics, permanent Spoil emplacements, Opposing Submissions of the Project and Community Engagement. All answers left a lot to be desired and with most of the committee it was their first knowledge of some facts, let alone the wider community to be informed

Attachments

Nil

Recommendation

THAT Lithgow Council:

1. Request the Project Proponents to make Public all project details, especially the High Impact areas impacting Lake Lyell's future, such as 13.5m water level variation, environmental studies, and Geotechnical results.
2. Support all preapprovals recommended by all Government Departments such as EPA, Water NSW, NPWS and Dept of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water. If approval occurs, then Council support all post approvals as well.
3. Support the overwhelming submission responses OPPOSING the Project and support the ongoing viability of the Council's asset at Lake Lyell.
4. Engage with the present Operator of the Lake Lyell Camping Ground as to what the High Impacts will hold for the future of Council's asset and the Operator's long-term business aspirations.

Management Comment

The only Management Comment concerns Recommendation Point 4.

A Caretaker Deed for the Lake Lyell Recreation Area (LLRA) is in place and expires on 27 February 2028.

Council resolved as follows at the 24 February 2025 Ordinary Meeting:

25 -55 RESOLVED

THAT Council:

1. Enter a Caretaker Deed with Lake Lyell Recreation Park Pty Ltd.
2. Authorise the General Manager to execute the Caretaker Deed and do all things necessary to give effect to the Caretaker Deed.
3. **Council begin the process of new lease on 1st January 2027.**

Opportunities to implement a more direct management approach whereby Council shares in the profits of the camping ground will be considered from early 2027. Subject to the approval of Council, it will be proposed to put a different option for the management of LLRA to tender or EOI in 2027.

Ross Gurney - General Manager

6.6. NOM - 29/06/2026 - Cr E Mahony - Reactivation of Eskbank Rail Heritage Centre / Wolgan Valley Wilderness Railway Committee

Report by Councillor Eric Mahony

Commentary

Rail tourism is an important segment of the local tourism industry and in turn an important economic contributor across the Lithgow region, attracting visitors, supporting local businesses, and preserving the area's rich rail heritage.

Key experiences include the Zig Zag Railway's heritage steam train experience, Lithgow State Mine Railway and regional rail trip journeys from Lithgow to heritage towns as part of Lachlan Historic Rail excursions and heritage attractions such as State Mine Heritage Park and Eskbank House Museum, which showcase Lithgow's significant industrial and railway history.

Commentary:

That the Eskbank Rail Heritage Centre/Wolgan Valley Wilderness Railway Committee be activated to reestablish a rail tourism forum coordinated by the committee, to bring together key stakeholders, drive collaboration, effective advocacy and enhance visitor experiences, and further unlock tourism and economic opportunities across the Lithgow Local Government Area.

Attachments

Nil

Recommendation

THAT:

1. The Mayor and Administration provide support to reactivate the Eskbank Rail Heritage Centre / Wolgan Valley Wilderness Railway Committee to provide a forum for rail tourism across the Lithgow local government region.
2. As part of the reactivation process and in partnership with stakeholders, Council review the Committee's terms of reference to maximise its representative role for rail tourism ventures in the region and improve linkages with key Council committees.

Management Comment

Nil.

7. Business of Great Urgency

The General Manager / Acting General Manager publicly confirms, that before and during this Ordinary / Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Lithgow City Council, that they have provided all Councillors with full access to all relevant information necessary for the performance of their official functions and necessary to effectively discharge their official functions.

The General Manager / Acting General Manager is aware that Council Staff Members have provided full and timely relevant information to all Councillors, sufficient to enable them to exercise their official functions and in accordance with Council Procedures.

Ross Gurney
General Manager

In accordance with Clause 241 of the Local Government Act (General) Regulations 2021 business may be transacted at a meeting of Council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the Councillors. However, this can happen only if:

- a) A motion is passed to have the business transacted at the meeting; and
- b) The business proposed to be brought forward is ruled by the Chairperson to be of great urgency.