



NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993* that a **Meeting of Singleton Council** will be held in the **Council Chambers, Queen Street Singleton**, on **Tuesday 17 February 2026**, commencing after the Public Forum at **6.00PM**.

Emergency Evacuation - Council Chambers

In case of an emergency, for example a fire, please evacuate the building via the marked exit doors (*Mayor points to the doors*). The order to evacuate may be signified by an alarm siren or by a Council officer or myself. Please proceed to the green "emergency assembly area" signs either near the cycleway on Queen Street (*Mayor points in direction of Queen Street*) or at the other side of the carpark towards the Gym & Swim (*Mayor points again*). An instruction to evacuate to a marked area should be followed without delay to assist Council in ensuring the Health and Safety of all staff and visitors.

Privacy/Webcasting

In accordance with the *NSW Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act, 1998*, you are advised that all discussion held during the Open Council Meeting is public information. This will include any discussion involving the Mayor, a Councillor, staff member or a member of the public. All persons present or attending via audio-visual link should withhold from making public comments about another individual without seeking the consent of that individual in the first instance.

Please be aware that Council webcasts its Open Council Meetings via its website. All persons should refrain from making any remarks that could potentially be considered defamatory. Council accepts no liability for any defamatory remarks made during the course of the Council Meeting. No other persons are permitted to record the Meeting, unless specifically authorised by Council to do so.

General

All persons present either in the Council Chambers or via audio-visual link are requested to turn their mobile devices to silent during the course of the Council Meeting. Any persons attending via audio-visual link are required to have their camera on at all times.

Statement of Ethical Obligations

The Mayor and Councillors are reminded that they remain bound by the Oath or Affirmation of Office made at the beginning of the Council term to undertake their civic duties in the best interests of the people of the Singleton community and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act or any other Act, to the best of their ability and judgement.

Council Officials are also reminded of the requirement to declare and appropriately manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to matters considered at this meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice.

AGENDA

PAGE

Opening of Meeting

Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to begin by paying my respects to Elders past and present of the Wanaruah, Wonnarua people and acknowledge their custodianship of the land on which we are meeting today. I also pay my respects to all Aboriginal people from other nations that are here today and live in Wanaruah, Wonnarua country.

Apologies and applications for a leave of absence by Councillors

Confirmation of Minutes

1. 09 Dec 2025

Matters Arising from Minutes

Disclosures of Interests

Withdrawal of Items/Late Items of Business

Mayoral Minute(s)

Presentations

Notices Of Motion

- | | | |
|--------|--|---|
| NM1/26 | Notice of Motion - Cr Jenkins - Reporting of Council Projects Over \$100,000 | 6 |
|--------|--|---|

General Manager's Report (Items Requiring Decision)

- | | | |
|--------|--|---|
| GM1/26 | Minutes - Sustainability Advisory Committee - 04/12/2025 | 7 |
|--------|--|---|

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision)

ED3/26	ALGA - 2026 Conference Motions	21
ED8/26	Request for Leave of Absence - Cr Daniel Thompson - 23/02/2026 to 20/03/2026	53
ED2/26	2026 Conference Attendance by Councillors	54
CC2/26	Transport NSW update	57
ED1/26	Draft Complaint Handling Policy	58
ED9/26	Draft Compliments and Concerns Policy.....	151

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision)

DCCS13/26.....	Road Naming - Chanticleer Avenue Branxton	166
DCCS14/26	Road Naming - Albatross Street, Birdie Street, Fade Street, Greenside Street, Marg	
DCCS3/26	Minutes - Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Joint Management Board - 18/12/2025.....	177
DCCS4/26	Minutes - Singleton Arts & Culture Advisory Group - 03/12/2025	191
DCCS6/26	December 2025 Quarterly Budget Review Statement.....	204

Infrastructure & Planning Report (Items Requiring Decision)

DI&P2/26	Tender HRR 0001B – Receiving and Processing of Domestic Kerbside Recycling Product	226
DI&P1/26	Minutes - Roads Advisory Committee - 11/12/2025.....	232

General Manager's Report (Items for Information)

GM2/26	Minutes - Australia Day Committee - 10/12/2025.....	238
GM3/26	Minutes - Singleton Legacy Fund Governance Panel and Quarterly Fund Progress Reports - December 2025.....	243
GM4/26	Arts Upper Hunter	261
GM5/26	Update on the Implementation of the Floodplain Risk Management Plan	274

Executive Director's Report (Items for Information)

ED4/26	Conference Report - Councillor Patrick Thompson - 2025 LGNSW Annual Conference	277
ED5/26	Conference Report - Councillor Patrick Thompson - 2025 Adapt Forum	281
ED6/26	Conference Report - Councillor Hollee Jenkins - 2025 Water Conference	287
ED7/26	Councillor Expenses & Facilities - 01/07/2025 to 31/12/2025	301

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items for Information)

DCCS7/26	Investment Report - December 2025	303
DCCS8/26	Investment Report - January 2026	315
DCCS12/2625m Pool Mechanical Audit and Recommissioning	327
DCCS9/26	Minutes - Singleton Property Advisory Panel - 19/11/2025	329
DCCS10/26	Minutes - Compliments, Complaints & Customer Experience Review Committee - 20/11/2025	330
DCCS11/26	Minutes - Singleton & District Disability Advisory Committee - 02/12/2025	340

Infrastructure & Planning Report (Items for Information)

DI&P3/26	Minutes - Sports Advisory Committee - 11/12/2025	345
DI&P4/26	Response to Notice of Motion - Cr P Thompson - Engineering Design Guidelines - NM20/25	354

Questions Given

QG1/26	Questions of Which Notice Has Been Given - 9 December 2025	358
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Questions with Notice

Closed Council

CC4/26	Tender HRR 0001B - Receiving and Processing of Domestic Kerbside Recycling Products	
CC1/26	Singleton Council v Transport for New South Wales - Class 3 Land & Environment Court Proceedings - Compulsory Acquisition of the Waterworks Lane Water Depot	

Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr
GENERAL MANAGER

MEETING PRINCIPLES

Council and Committee meetings should be:

- *Transparent:* Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.
- *Informed:* Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.
- *Inclusive:* Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.
- *Principled:* Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.
- *Trusted:* The community has confidence that councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.
- *Respectful:* Councillors, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.
- *Effective:* Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.
- *Orderly:* Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

NM1/26. Notice of Motion - Cr Jenkins - Reporting of Council Projects Over \$100,000
Author: Governance Lead

FILE: 26/00215

Councillor Hollee Jenkins will move:

That Council resolves that, for all future Council projects with a value exceeding \$100,000, a report be provided to Council upon project completion addressing:

- final project outcomes
- Initial tender price / budget
- total expenditure
- any variations
- delivery timeframes
- whether the project was completed within the approved budget.
- The total of grant funding and the source
- Any additional funds required, and the source.
-

BACKGROUND: Notes that, at various closed Council meetings in recent years, alternate recommendations have been required to request a report back to Council on individual projects valued at over \$100,000, outlining:

- total expenditure
- any variations
- whether the project was completed on time
- whether the project was completed on budget.

Acknowledges that requesting these alternate recommendations on a project-by-project basis is inefficient and results in inconsistent reporting.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

**GM1/26. Minutes - Sustainability Advisory Committee -
04/12/2025**
Author: Coordinator Sustainable Services

FILE:
25/00542/001

Executive Summary

The Sustainability Advisory Committee held its ordinary meeting on 4 December 2025. The minutes of the meeting are shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's consideration.

RECOMMENDED that Council:

1. Notes the minutes of the Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting held on 4 December 2025.
2. Adopts the following recommendation of the Sustainability Advisory Committee:

5.6 Agenda Item from Community Member - Wendy Lawson – Fire Management Plan

Work with the RFS to prepare a Fire Management Plan for the Singleton Local Government area that can be developed and used by Council employees to handle fire issues in a unified manner.

Community Strategic Plan

Strategy:	2	Our Places
Deliverable:	2.1	Our Places are sustainable, adaptable and inclusive
Action:	2.1.1	Provide facilities, infrastructure and land that are accessible to the whole community

Council Policy/Legislation

The Committee functions under adopted Terms of Reference.

Financial Implications

The action will not result in any out of budget expenditure. Any financial impacts will be absorbed within current resources.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that Council does not have appropriate processes and	High	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes

General Manager's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - GM1/26

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
communication channels in place to support the community during a bushfire event, which may lead to increased risk to life, property, and community wellbeing.				
There is a risk that Council may experience reputational damage following a bushfire event if community and Council infrastructure losses and environmental impacts are not effectively managed and/or communicated.	High	Adopt the recommendation	Medium	Yes
There is a risk that limited preparedness and coordination between the community, emergency agencies, and Council staff during a bushfire event may lead to increased impacts on infrastructure, the environment, and the local economy.	Medium	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Minutes - Sustainability Advisory Committee - 4 December 2025

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025**



Present	Cr Godfrey Adamthwaite - Singleton Council (Chair) (Cr GA) Cr Anne McGowan - Singleton Council (Cr AM) Jonathan Wood - Department of Planning & Environment (JW) Wendy Lawson - Community Member (WL) Mary-Anne Crawford - Manager Community Evolution and Growth, Singleton Council (MC) Chiala Hernandez Silva - Coordinator Sustainable Services, Singleton Council (CH)
In Attendance	Sania Afrose - Sustainability Projects Officer, Singleton Council (SA) Frances Giepmans - Sustainability Projects Officer, Singleton Council (FG) Conor Byrne - Manager Infrastructure Services (CB) Joel Dalberger - BMWHI Chief Executive Officer (JD) Katie Brassil (KB) – EnergyCo Stephanie Lewis (SL) - EnergyCo
Meeting Location	Library Meeting Room

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Welcome
- Acknowledgement of Country by Chair
- Apologies – Meg Drinan, Chris Knight

2 Disclosure of Interests

- Nil

3 Confirmation of Minutes

- The minutes of the Singleton Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting held on Thursday 11 September 2025, were confirmed.

MOVED Mrs Lawson **SECONDED** Mr Wood

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Note any matters arising from the minutes.

WL: Asked if council owned the site where the equestrian centre is proposed

MC: Clarified Council does not own the site

5 Agenda Items

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025**



**5.1 Singleton Equestrian Centre - Project Update
Executive Summary**

FILE:25/00542

At its meeting on 11 September 2025, Cr McGowan presented a research paper with suggested sustainable design options for the proposed equestrian centre. A member of the Infrastructure Services Team will attend the meeting to provide an update on the Singleton Equestrian Centre having regard to the attached report on sustainable design.

NOTED

CB: progress had been made to take the feasibility assessment

Feasibility awarded to a consultant

Infrastructure needs definition and community engagement are going to be included, Community consultation will be conducted first. Then the appropriate needs will be defined.

Environment and sustainability will be included in the design.

Cr GA: Will the report presented in this meeting be considered? The report was presented as a way to ensure the project is aligned with the transition happening in Singleton.

CB: confirmed that the aim was to ensure economic and operational sustainability for the project.

Infrastructure Services will provide future updates.

MC: what frequency an update could be provided?

CB: quarterly update will be provided - Action

5.2 Greater Blue Mountains Stewardship Program FILE:25/00542/001

Singleton has over 150,000 ha of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage property within its LGA, with a boundary interface extending over 100 km. This area is critical for maintaining ecological connectivity and the integrity of the World Heritage Area. Singleton Council is a key stakeholder in achieving long-term resilience and positive environmental outcomes for the World Heritage site and its surrounding landscapes, both locally and regionally.

The Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute (BMWHI) is developing a program to optimise efforts to protect, manage, and celebrate the Outstanding Universal Value of the area, including its breathtaking landscapes, enduring cultural heritage, and vital ecosystem services. To achieve this, BMWHI is inviting Local Councils across the World Heritage Area, along with other key stakeholders involved in conservation, to participate in the Greater Blue Mountains Stewardship Program.

MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025



Joel Dalberger, BMWHI Chief Executive Officer, will provide an overview of the Stewardship Program.

JD: provided a presentation of the GBMWH Stewardship Alliance.

Disclosed potential conflict of interest Staff at BMCC and GBMWH

13% of the GBMWH is in Singleton. Singleton is the third largest LGA in the GBMWH area.

JD: will circulate the link to the symposium. Looking for a collaborative model.

Link to [Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area Symposium 2025 – Reflect, Renew, Reimagine](#)

CrGA: what is the grey area in the centre of the presented map.

JD: to be investigated

MC: Putty and private land.

JD: this buffer areas are important to support the heritage area. Work to enhance them is important for the GBMWH area

MC: in the Draf Rural Land Strategy this areas were identified as potential biodiversity conservation areas.

JD: what challenges have been identified to protect this areas?

MC: from the development perspective, landowner conservatism. There is potential to work with National Parks (NP). Putty has been identified as potential ecological.

JD: NP is part of the board and work closely with GBMWH. The collaboration with Cessnock and Muswellbrook is key.

MC: potential to collaborate with DCCEEW and the Hunter Transmission Project.

JD: Will prepare and send a forma report.

MC: the best way to communicate the information is through the committee.

WL: member of Singleton Shire Lancare Network applied for funding and received funds by GBMWH.

5.3 Presentation Update - Hunter Transmission Project FILE:25/00542
Executive Summary

Members of the Hunter Transmission Project Team have been invited to give a presentation to the Committee on the status of the Project.

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025**



NOTED

The Hunter Transmission Project (HTP) Team Provided a presentation of the project. Presentation to be added to the minutes.

HTP overview: Planning process for 110 km of transmission infrastructure, 600kV. The Environmental Impacts Assessment received 188 submissions and it is currently in active consultation. Preparing a submission report.

The proposed realignment alignment crosses mining land, government land and private property. It considered reduction of impact in Agricultural land in Mount Thorley and additional adjustments to protect biodiversity.

The amendment report will be submitted to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure in 2026.

The community engagement program had delivered 14 face to face sessions, received 400 emails, communicated through social media. Engaging over 4000 people.

Feedback received includes: ongoing consultation required, protect biodiversity and the environment, obtain permits to access property, traffic impact, understanding of industry interactions.

If EIS is approved works will start in late 2026.

WL: Eraring Power Station is supposed to close before the completion of the project.

KB: power station supposed close this year but was extended. However does not impact the project.

CrAM: is EnergyCo happy with the progress of the project.

KB: it is important to deliver the HTP to be able to provide the service to the region.

**5.4 Sustainability Advisory Committee - Liveability
Survey Results**

FILE:25/00542

Executive Summary

At the Committee meeting on 11 September 2025, the Committee resolved to seek presentations from council staff preparing strategies for review during the 2025/2026 Operational Plan on the following items:

- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy
- Liveability Assessment Review
- Singleton Development Control Plan 2014
- Aboriginal Heritage Guidelines
- Report on constraints, opportunities and impacts associated with establishing

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025**



renewable energy production facilities within the LGA (subject to funding)

- Post Mining Land Use Framework
- Singleton Sustainability Strategy

A member of the Community Growth and Evolution Business Unit will present a short overview of the 2025 PlaceScore Liveability Survey.

DEFERED

**5.5 Sustainability Advisory Committee - Post Mining
Land Use/ Net Zero Strategic Framework
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

FILE:25/00542

At the Committee meeting on 11 September 2025, the Committee resolved to seek presentations from council staff preparing strategies for review during the 2025/2026 Operational Plan on the following items:

- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy
- Liveability Assessment Review
- Singleton Development Control Plan 2014
- Aboriginal Heritage Guidelines
- Report on constraints, opportunities and impacts associated with establishing renewable energy production facilities within the LGA (subject to funding)
- Post Mining Land Use Framework
- Singleton Sustainability Strategy

A member of the Community Growth and Evolution Business Unit will provide the committee with an overview of the Post Mining/Net Zero Land Use Framework. This report also includes a report that was provided to Council at the August 2025 Council meeting.

NOTED

MC: provided a presentation of post mining land / Net zero use strategy. Presentation to be added to the minutes.

WL: 10 years ago contacted Glencore. Provided an example from Germany. Has council contacted mining operations to understand their support?

MC: The land is private. It has value for owners as it has coal. Some companies have

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025**



commitments pre approved and want to maintain those commitments. It is important to identify companies interested in maintain or adjust their commitments.

WL: current residence in Braxton has bigger impact from dust that previous residence in Broke.

CrAM: has any opportunity with mining companies been identify?

MC: not yet. Council is early in the process and in the planning stage.

CrAM: there are great examples overseas in mining closure and transition.

5.6 Agenda Item from Community Member - Wendy Lawson

FILE:25/00542

Executive Summary

Community member Wendy Lawson has raised an item for consideration of the Committee and Council.

At a recent Singleton Shire Landcare Network meeting a discussion took place about local burns/fires and it appears there might be some inconsistency within Council employees about fires in general as apparently a number of employees are involved, and it has led to some issues.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Council work with the RFS to prepare a Fire Management Plan for the Singleton Local Government area that can be developed and used by Council employees to handle fire issues in a unified manner.

NOTED

WL: discussed in Lancare meeting. There is no responsible person in council to provide recommendation.

MC: Council to work with RFS to prepare a Fire Management Plan for the Singleton Local Government

MOVED Mrs Lawson **SECONDED** Member A McGowan

5.7 Proposal to Attract Sustainable Over 55s Retirement Communities to Singleton

FILE:25/00542

Executive Summary

Councillor McGowan has prepared a report for the Committee's consideration to attract a sustainable over 55s retirement community or communities to the Singleton local government area.

NOTED

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025**



Am: over 55s developments are popular as provide security and comfort for residents. Other areas has the developments however no singleton.

MC: suggested committee to prepare a report to Council

5.8 Schedule of Meeting Dates for 2026

FILE:25/00542

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with proposed meeting dates for 2026.

Recommendation:

That the Singleton Sustainability Advisory Committee endorse the meeting dates for 2026 as follows:

- Thursday, 12 March 2026 – Seniors Festival 2026 from 2 March to 15 March
- Thursday, 11 June 2026 – Long weekend on Monday 14 June 2027
- Thursday, 10 September 2026
- Thursday, 10 December 2026

Moved: Wendy Lawson and Seconded: Cr Anne McGowan with adjustments to avoid Seniors Festival 2026 and June's Long weekend

Proposed new dates:

- Thursday, 19 March 2026
- Thursday, 04 June 2026
- Thursday, 10 September 2026
- Thursday, 10 December 2026

5.9 Singleton Revolving Energy Fund - Amendment to the Terms of Reference

FILE:25/00542

FOR INFORMATION

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025**



NOTED

MC: Council resolved the governance of the Singleton Revolving Energy Fund should be with the Committee. Current budget is \$0.

5.10 Christmas on John Street update FILE:25/00542/001

The Sustainable Services Team will provide an update on the program and activities planned for Christmas on John Street, as part of the 10-year celebration of the Singleton Sustainability Advisory Committee.

SA: The 10-year celebration of the Singleton Sustainability Advisory Committee (SSAC) during Christmas on John Street will include:

10-year celebration logo, business that have sustainable practices will be given an recognition card to be displayed, Sustainable Christmas decoration workshop, SSAC bunting.

**5.11 Public Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure – EVX
ARENA Program: Power Pole Chargers in Singleton
LGA FILE:25/00542/001**

Executive Summary

Singleton Council is participating in the ARENA Driving the Nation Program, delivered by EVX, which funds the installation of dual 22kW power pole EV chargers across regional NSW and selected metro areas. This initiative addresses the growing demand for electric vehicles by providing accessible charging infrastructure in key locations across the Singleton LGA.

NOTED

**5.13 Regional Household Electrification Program (RHEP):
Singleton Council Participation FILE:25/00542/001**

Executive Summary

Singleton Council will participate in the **Regional Household Electrification Program (RHEP)**, led by the Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO), which aims to support the electrification of regional households through initiatives such as solar PV installation, battery storage, energy efficient electric appliances, and related household upgrades

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025**



NOTED

**5.14 Upcoming Sustainable Services Events and
Workshops: January to June 2026**

FILE:25/00542/001

The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with information regarding the proposed community engagement and education program for January to June 2026.

NOTED

**5.15 Good for the Hood @HOME Program – Singleton
Council Membership**

FILE:25/00542/001

Executive Summary

Singleton Council's Good for the Hood membership provides residents with free access to the @HOME online program, offering expert led sustainability workshops, resources, and webinars to support practical sustainable living.

NOTED

**5.16 Update on Garage Sale Trail 2025
Executive Summary**

FILE:25/00542/001

Singleton LGA participated in the Garage Sale trail 2025, held across two weekends on 8-9 and 15-16 November.

NOTED

6 Other Business

MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025



CrAM: Can the committee continue to discuss the Over 55's development and the Sustainable Equestrian centre?

MC: CB will provide quarterly updates and same action will be taken for Over 55's development in Singleton.

WL: are the Rodeo Grounds on Singleton or Cessnock?

MC: the Rodeo Grounds are owned by the Braxton Rodeo Committee.

CrGA: it is a local venue and attracts people and visitors.

WL: parking is difficult.

MC: Recognition to SSAC members for the contribution for a Sustainable Singleton

We would like to take a moment to acknowledge and honour the incredible people who have contributed their time, expertise, and passion to the Sustainable Advisory Committee.

The strength of this committee comes from the dedication of its members; people who not only believe in a sustainable future for Singleton, but who commit themselves to helping shape it. Their guidance, leadership, and collaborative spirit have been essential in driving our sustainability goals forward.

Each of you has made a meaningful contribution whether through strategic insight, thoughtful advocacy, or a willingness to roll up your sleeves and support sustainable initiatives across our community. Your involvement has helped shape the direction of this committee and has left a lasting impact on the work we are able to achieve.

On behalf of Singleton Council, and on behalf of our community, we extend our sincere gratitude. Thank you for your commitment, your energy, and your belief in a more sustainable future.

Today, we recognise and thank the following members for their service:

- Allison Warry
- Cr Anne McGowan
- Chris Knight
- Cr Godfrey Adamthwaite
- Irene Perez Lopez
- Jonathan Wood
- Meg Drinan
- Mary-Anne Crawford
- Sophie Nicholas
- Wendy Lawson

MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025



7 Action List

Pulse/Action No	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date
SAC25-3	13/03/2025	Approach CCC to obtain additional funding Amended to: Provide key messages to GA and AM regarding supporting sustainability initiatives of Council through mining and related CCCs	MAC	31/07/2025
SAC25-6	12/06/2025	Follow up with waste services about disposal of soft plastic at the Waste Management Facility	Chiala	11/09/2025
	11/09/2025	Confirm with Recycle Smart program that blister packs will be collected for whole LGA	Aaron	Next Meeting
	11/09/2025	Research Report on Sustainable Equestrian Centre to be tabled at next meeting	MAC	Next Meeting
	11/09/2025	Request a presentation from EnergyCo on Hunter Transmission Project	MAC	Next Meeting
	04/12/2025	Coordinate the Equestrian Centre Project quarterly update	Chiala Hernandez Silva	Next meeting
	04/12/2025	Work with GBMWH Institute to present a project report.	Chiala Hernandez Silva	Next meeting
	04/12/2025	Coordinate the Over 55s Development investigation quarterly update	Mary-Anne Crawford	Chiala Hernandez Silva
	04/12/2025	Work with RFS to prepare a Fire Management Plan for the Singleton LGA	Chiala Hernandez Silva	4 June 2026
	04/12/2025	Change meeting dates to avoid Seniors Festival 2026 and long weekend in June	Chiala Hernandez Silva	Complete— New dates proposed in section 5.8

8 Next Meeting

- TBA

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2025**



The meeting closed at 11:08 am.

Cr Godfrey Adamthwaite
Chair

ED3/26. ALGA - 2026 Conference Motions**FILE:** 26/00006**Author:** Governance Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to consider proposed motions for submission to the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) for consideration at the 2026 National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA)

RECOMMENDED that Council submit the following motions for consideration at the 2026 ALGA NGA:

1. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Directly support Local Government actions and strategic planning that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that:
 - Identify future land-use options where the mining industry operates such that economic diversification opportunities to provide jobs aligned to a net zero future;
 - Create skills and employment pathways within local government that facilitate the broader National policy framework around Net Zero;
 - De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction.
2. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Lead systems reform for grant funding within Federal Government to:
 - Reform grant funding to non-competitive, multi-year block funding aligned to Local Government election cycles and Community Strategic Plans.
 - Build consistency in the governance frameworks, systems and documentation required across various funding programs to reduce the administrative burden on Local Government.
 - Improve the delivery of grant funding to councils across Australia to ensure equity.
3. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Update Federal road funding programs so they properly account for regional realities such as longer road networks, heavier freight use, and higher weather vulnerability.
4. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Amend disaster recovery funding rules to allow repairs to council owned water and sewer infrastructure.
5. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Lead comprehensive systems reform across all three levels of government to:

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED3/26

- Establish consistency in governance frameworks, systems, and documentation required across funding programs and agencies, reducing administrative burden on local governments nationwide.
- Improve the delivery of grant funding to councils across Australia to ensure equity, certainty, and sustainability for effective long-term strategic planning.
- Ensure equitable allocation of grant funding by linking funding levels to each Local Government Area's demonstrated capacity to raise revenue through rates, while upholding the principles of the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995* and maintaining horizontal fiscal equalisation.

Report

The NGA is the premier national gathering of local governments, and provides councils with the opportunity to come together, share ideas, debate motions, and most importantly unite and further build on the relationship between local government and the Australian Government.

Council will consider at the February 2026 Council meeting, whether to send delegates to attend the NGA.

All members can put forward motions to be considered at the Conference. Members have been invited to submit motions using the online portal from Monday 12 January 2026 to Friday 27 February 2026.

Proposed motions must address the 2026 conference theme of "Stronger Together: Resilient. Productive. United" and comply with the criteria stated in the 2026 National General Assembly Discussion Paper (**Attachment 1**). Motions are categorised into 10 priority areas: Financial sustainability • Emergency management • Housing and planning • Roads and infrastructure • Closing the Gap • Jobs and skills • Environment • Cyber security • Climate change • Intergovernmental relations.

Suggested Motions

In collaboration with the Hunter Joint Organisation, the following motions have been prepared on the basis that they are consistent with the ALGA guidelines for valid motions, as well as being relevant to the HJO objectives and Singleton Council's Advocacy Agenda.

1. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Directly support Local Government capacity building, actions and strategic planning that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closure and adjustment in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that:
 - Identify future land-use options where the mining industry operates such that economic diversification opportunities to provide jobs aligned to a net zero future.
 - Create skills and employment pathways within local government that facilitate the broader National policy framework around Net Zero
 - De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction.
2. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Lead systems reform for grant funding within Federal Government to:

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED3/26

- Reform grant funding to non-competitive, multi-year block funding aligned to Local Government election cycles and Community Strategic Plans.
 - Build consistency in the governance frameworks, systems and documentation required across various funding programs to reduce the administrative burden on Local Government.
 - Improve the delivery of grant funding to councils across Australia to ensure equity.
3. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to: Update Federal road funding programs so they properly account for regional realities such as longer road networks, heavier freight use, and higher weather vulnerability.
4. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to: Amend disaster recovery funding rules to allow repairs to council owned water and sewer infrastructure.
5. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to: Lead comprehensive systems reform across all three levels of government to:
- Establish consistency in governance frameworks, systems, and documentation required across funding programs and agencies, reducing administrative burden on local governments nationwide.
 - Improve the delivery of grant funding to councils across Australia to ensure equity, certainty, and sustainability for effective long-term strategic planning.
 - Ensure equitable allocation of grant funding by linking funding levels to each Local Government Area's demonstrated capacity to raise revenue through rates, while upholding the principles of the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995* and maintaining horizontal fiscal equalisation.

Background***Motion 1***

Conference Priority Area: Jobs and Skills

ALGA has an existing policy position to support this motion, being:

ALGA is calling for the Federal Government's National Skills Plan to acknowledge the vital role of Local Governments as employers in training and skills development.

ALGA also seeks funding opportunities for council employees to access training for identified skills shortage areas, especially in regional and remote communities.

Additionally, it is important for the Commonwealth to undertake a national audit of institutions offering urban and land use planning, building surveyors, and engineering qualifications, and to identify more readily available pathways for regional and remote study.

This is a national issue for debate at the NGA because:

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED3/26

There are 303,300 direct jobs related to mining, with significant indirect jobs at risk as the industry adjusts to a global transition to net zero. This is the reality for every existing and future mining region in Australia.

The Resources Sector Plan to transition to net zero relies on becoming a leader in global supply of low-emission commodities needed for global transition to net zero and ensuring Australians benefit through a fair and equitable process. Local government is best placed to ensure this transition meets expectations and doesn't lead to legacy outcomes currently experienced with premature closure of mining facilities.

Background information and supporting arguments:

Current strategic planning for mining in Australia does not include planning with the end in mind. Without strategic forward planning ahead of the approval process, all Australians will be burdened with the consequences currently felt in regional Australia through the decisions of multi-national, multi-commodity corporations, operating on a global scale, and not necessarily with Australian communities' long term interests as a priority.

For example, there is currently 92,000ha of mining-related land in the Singleton LGA that is planned on an ad hoc, case by case basis under current legislation which inhibits the ability for a strategic approach to facilitate the repurposing of these lands including realising the enormous potential of these assets for supporting the region's transformation, creating new jobs and their contribution to Australia's economy.

Motion 2

Conference Priority Area: Financial Sustainability

ALGA has an existing policy position, being:

ALGA is advocating for a return to 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue for Local Government over the next three years.

ALGA also proposes five new, untied funding streams to be distributed to all councils on a formula basis, including:

- *\$1.1 billion per year for enabling infrastructure to unlock housing supply,*
- *\$500 million per year for community infrastructure,*
- *\$600 million per year for safer local roads,*
- *\$900 million per year for increased Local Government emergency management capability and capacity, and*
- *\$400 million per year for climate adaptation.*

This is a national issue for debate at the NGA because:

Councils and Joint Organisations need stable, predictable funding. A shift to non-competitive, multi-year block funding aligned to Local Government election cycles and Community Strategic Plans would enable strategic, place-based delivery; reduce administrative burden; build workforce capability and resilience; encourage regional collaboration; and strengthen community trust through lasting, locally driven outcomes.

Background information and supporting arguments:

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED3/26

Local Governments rely on grant funding to deliver up to 60% of assets and services in regional areas, yet the current system creates significant challenges. Short-term, competitive grants are often misaligned with councils' legislated Community Strategic Plans, forcing delivery of projects that do not reflect local priorities and reducing efficiency.

The application and reporting burden absorbs scarce staff time, disadvantaging smaller regional councils with limited capacity. Short funding cycles also drive workforce turnover, skill loss, service disruption, and inflated contractor costs, while inconsistent governance requirements add further administrative strain. Over time, this weakens council capability, frustrates communities, and leads to fragmented outcomes, particularly where councils compete rather than collaborate.

Motion 3

Conference Priority Area: Roads and Infrastructure

ALGA has an existing policy position, being:

ALGA is calling for \$600 million per year safer roads fund – with \$500 million for infrastructure improvements and \$100 million for road safety programs – to support all councils to play a more effective role reducing deaths on Australian roads.

ALGA is proposing a \$500 million per year community infrastructure fund – to be provided to all councils – to build, (and importantly), maintain and upgrade the local facilities that make communities great.

This is a national issue for debate at the NGA because:

Regional councils across Australia are struggling to maintain road networks following extreme weather events.

Recent NSW and Commonwealth Inquiries demonstrate Local Governments are facing mounting financial risks that threaten their long-term sustainability.

Existing federal road funding programs often use legacy formulas that fail to account for actual condition, usage, or network scale in rural areas.

Background information and supporting arguments:

We appreciate that in 2025–26, the Commonwealth will contribute \$630 million in road funding to 128 NSW councils through programs such as Roads to Recovery and Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure.

This will be complemented by the NSW Government's Budget pledge of \$3 billion over 10 years, equivalent to \$300 million per year, for road safety and weather-related transport infrastructure recovery in regional NSW. Together this totals \$930m for NSW roads. Whilst the funding support is welcomed, it will not adequately address the backlog in road repairs. In May 2025, the NRMA reported that NSW councils are facing an immediate backlog in road repairs valued at \$3.4 billion.

Motion 4

Conference Priority Area: Emergency Management

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED3/26

ALGA has an existing policy position, being:

ALGA is asking for \$900 million per year to help councils improve their disaster response and resilience. They also want the Commonwealth to fully implement the recommendations from the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and other major reviews, including the Independent Review of National Natural Disaster Governance Arrangements (the Glasser Review) and the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (the Colvin Review)

This is a national issue for debate at the NGA because:

Under current disaster recovery funding arrangements, the repair of water and sewer assets is ineligible for cost recovery under natural disaster declarations, due to their classification as “commercial activities”. Across Australia, in metropolitan, rural and regional communities, water and sewer infrastructure assets are often owned and managed by the Local Council. Council managed water and sewer infrastructure are vital public assets, every bit as essential as roads, bridges, or community facilities that do qualify for recovery funding.

These Council managed water and sewer services are fundamental to public health, safety, and liveability. With natural hazards and disasters becoming more frequent and severe, the lack of financial support risks undermining councils’ ability to maintain these essential services.

Background information and supporting arguments:

When Council managed water and sewer services are required to restore and repair water and sewer infrastructure damaged by natural disasters they must do so at short notice to restore essential drinking water and sanitation, with limited funds that must be diverted from existing operations and/or alternate planned capital projects and at greater cost than usual due to the time critical nature of water and sewer services and the increasing severity of natural hazards and disasters.

This increases the cost burden on, often small, customer bases as well as necessitating the deferral of planned renewals due to a lack of available funds. This means that customers may experience lower levels of service both now and in the future and increases the future chance of failure and emergency repairs. The essential nature of water and sewer services should be given the same priority and funding equity as other asset types.

Motion 5

Conference Priority Area: Financial Sustainability

In 2025, Singleton Council and a number of HJO member council submitted a motion calling for systems reform across all levels of government to establish consistency, improve delivery of grant funding and ensure equitable allocation of grant funding. This motion was not included for debate at the 2025 conference due to being determined as too narrowly focused. With consideration to the importance of this outcome, this 2025 motion has been re-worded for consideration again in 2026.

This is a national issue for debate at the NGA because:

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED3/26

Local governments across Australia face increasing administrative complexity and uncertainty in accessing funding from state and federal programs. Inconsistent governance requirements and fragmented systems create inefficiencies and divert resources away from service delivery. Furthermore, the current funding model does not adequately account for the varying capacity of Local Government Areas to raise revenue through rates. Aligning funding distribution with revenue-raising capacity, while maintaining horizontal fiscal equalisation, will ensure fairness, sustainability, and improved strategic planning for all councils.

Background information and supporting arguments:

Local governments are critical to delivering essential services and infrastructure that underpin community wellbeing and economic development. However, the administrative burden associated with navigating multiple funding programs and compliance frameworks limits councils' ability to focus on strategic priorities. A nationally consistent approach to governance and documentation will streamline processes and reduce duplication.

Equity in funding allocation is equally important. Councils in rural and regional areas often have limited capacity to generate revenue through rates due to smaller populations and lower property values. Linking grant funding to revenue-raising capacity ensures that councils with fewer resources receive appropriate support, while still adhering to the principles of horizontal fiscal equalisation under the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995*. This approach promotes fairness, strengthens financial sustainability, and enables all councils—regardless of size or location—to plan effectively for the future.

Housing and Planning

It is noted that ALGA's existing policy position relating to Housing and Planning is:

ALGA is calling for a new five-year, \$1.1 billion annual fund that would be provided to all councils to get the foundations right for increasing Australia's housing supply.

We are advocating for Local Governments to be provided with \$500 million per year for critical and community infrastructure and assets that will help create more liveable communities.

ALGA is also seeking a seat at the table for national discussions on housing policy, including full membership of National Cabinet and the Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council.

ALGA's motion already includes advocacy for enabling infrastructure aligned to our priority. Therefore, the HJO and Singleton Council are not recommending any further motions for ALGA to advocate to Federal Government under this theme.

Community Strategic Plan

Strategy:	5	Our Leadership
Deliverable:	5.2	Our Council is trusted, responsible and transparent
Action:	5.2.1	To lead, govern and regulate in an ethical, equitable and transparent way

Council Policy/Legislation

The following legislation and documents are relevant:

- *Local Government Act, 1993*
- *Create Singleton 2035*
- *Advocacy Agenda 2025 - 2029*

Financial Implications

The proposed motions are intended to generate additional revenue and increased efficiencies, not any increased financial obligations.

Consultation

Consultation occurred between members of Council's Executive Leadership Team and Leadership Team with consideration of our current Advocacy Agenda.

Sustainability

The proposed motions are intended to generate positive social, environmental and economic impacts.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that not following motion guidelines may lead to proposed motions not being considered which may lead to community dissatisfaction and reputational damage.	Medium	Create motions that fit within the guidelines	Low	Yes
There is a risk to Council in not submitting the proposed motion which may lead to significant future environmental and financial implications for the Singleton LGA as well as reputational implications for Council.	High	Adopt the recommendation	High	Yes

Options

The following options are available to Council:

1. Resolve to submit the following five motions to the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) for consideration at the 2026 National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA):
 1. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED3/26

Directly support Local Government actions and strategic planning that address imminent and substantial job losses arising from large scale industry closures in regional economies rapidly transforming to net zero by directly investing in Council led, place-based initiatives that:

- Identify future land-use options post mining and economic diversification opportunities to provide jobs of the future.
- Create skills and employment pathways within local government that facilitate the broader National policy framework around Net Zero
- De-risk industry investment and strategically inform and accelerate industry attraction

2. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Lead systems reform for grant funding within Federal Government to:

- Reform grant funding to non-competitive, multi-year block funding aligned to Local Government election cycles and Community Strategic Plans.
- Build consistency in the governance frameworks, systems and documentation required across various funding programs to reduce the administrative burden on Local Government.
- Improve the delivery of grant funding to councils across Australia to ensure equity.

3. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Update Federal road funding programs so they properly account for regional realities such as longer road networks, heavier freight use, and higher weather vulnerability.

4. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Amend disaster recovery funding rules to allow repairs to council owned water and sewer infrastructure.

5. This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
Lead comprehensive systems reform across all three levels of government to:

- Establish consistency in governance frameworks, systems, and documentation required across funding programs and agencies, reducing administrative burden on local governments nationwide.
- Improve the delivery of grant funding to councils across Australia to ensure equity, certainty, and sustainability for effective long-term strategic planning.
- Ensure equitable allocation of grant funding by linking funding levels to each Local Government Area's demonstrated capacity to raise revenue through rates, while upholding the principles of the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995* and maintaining horizontal fiscal equalisation.

2. Resolve to submit different motion/s, noting the ALGA criteria requirements, for consideration at the 2026 National General Assembly.

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED3/26

3. Resolve to not submit any motions for consideration at the 2026 National General Assembly.

Option one is recommended.

Conclusions

The motions detailed in this report have been developed with careful consideration of Singleton Council's Advocacy Agenda and priorities in Community Strategic Plan along with regionally significant collaboration with our fellow HJO member Councils. It is recommended that Council approve the submission of at least one relevant motion for consideration at the 2026 National General Assembly. Council can resolve to submit alternative motion/s to the motions that have been suggested, consistent with the ALGA guidelines for valid motions.

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) 2026 National General Assembly Discussion Paper

**Stronger Together:
Resilient. Productive. United**

**2026
National
General
Assembly
Discussion Paper**

National Convention Centre Canberra



ALGA
Australian Local
Government Association

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is pleased to convene the 32nd National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA), to be held in Canberra in June 2026.

As convenor of the NGA, the ALGA Board warmly invites all councils to send representatives to this important national event.

The NGA is the premier national gathering of local governments. It gives councils a chance to come together, share ideas, debate motions, and strengthen the relationship between local government and the Australian Government.

This discussion paper contains essential information for Australian councils considering submitting motions for debate at the 2026 National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA).

It is recommended that all councils and delegates intending to attend the 2026 NGA familiarise themselves with the guidelines for motions contained in this paper.

KEY DATES

24 October 2025 | Opening of Call for Motions

27 February 2026 | Acceptance of Motions closes

TO SUBMIT YOUR MOTION

VISIT: [ALGA.COM.AU](https://alga.com.au)

ALGA AND THE NGA – WORKING FOR YOU

Established 1947, ALGA is a federation of member state and territory associations. Its mission is to achieve outcomes for local government through advocacy with impact, and maximise the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of councils and our communities.

Since 1994, the NGA has raised the profile of local government on the national stage, showcasing the value of councils and demonstrating – particularly to the Australian Government – the strength and value of working with local government to deliver on national priorities.

Debate on motions was introduced to the NGA as a vehicle for councils from across the nation to canvas ideas. Outcomes of these debates (NGA Resolutions) can be used by councils to inform their own policies and priorities, as well as their advocacy when dealing with federal politicians.

At the same time, they help ALGA and its member state and territory associations gain valuable insight into council priorities, emerging national issues, and the level of need and support for new policy and program initiatives.

Given ALGA's structure, Constitution, and resources, the NGA resolutions do not bind ALGA. However, NGA resolutions are carefully considered by the Board to determine ALGA's policies, priorities and strategies to advance local governments within the national agenda.

This is your NGA, and ALGA is pleased to act as the convenor. ALGA's policies and priorities will continue to be determined by the ALGA Board in the interests of all councils.

We encourage councils to consider the topics and guidance in this paper as you develop your motions.

The ALGA Board thanks all councils for attending the NGA 2026 and those who submit motions for debate.

SUBMITTING MOTIONS

The National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA) gives you and your council an important opportunity to influence the national policy agenda.

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Secretariat has prepared this short discussion paper to help you identify motions that address the NGA 2026 theme of “Stronger Together: Resilient. Productive. United.” This theme encourages debate on how councils across Australia can become more resilient, contribute to the nation’s productivity agenda, and present a united voice to the federal government on key issues in the national sphere.

We encourage you to read all the sections of the paper. We have included guiding questions to assist in developing your motion, but you do not have to respond to every question. You can address one or more of the issues identified in the discussion paper with your motion.

Your NGA motion should focus on how local governments can work in partnership with the Australian Government to address the challenges our communities face or seize the opportunities that are national priorities.

Each year the Secretariat receives a high volume of motions. Councils are encouraged to submit only their highest-priority motions and ensure it meets the criteria below. Multiple motions on a similar topic may be re-written into a single strategic motion, and councils will be invited by the Secretariat to put their council name to the proposal.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- Each motion requires a contact officer, a clear national objective, a summary of the key arguments in support of the motion, and endorsement of your council.
- You can lodge motions electronically using the online portal available at www.alga.asn.au
- **Motions should be received no later than 11:59 pm AEST on Friday 27 February 2026.**

WHO CAN SUBMIT A MOTION

- Any council that is a financial member of their state or territory local government association can submit a motion.
- We will not accept motions submitted on behalf of external third parties that may seek to use the NGA to apply pressure to Board members or gain national political exposure for positions that are not directly relevant to the work of, or in the national interests of, local government.

CRITERIA FOR MOTIONS

To be eligible for inclusion in the NGA Business Papers, and debate it on the floor of the NGA, you must meet the following criteria:

- > Submit a new motion that has not been debated at an NGA in the preceding two years as found in previous business papers on the ALGA website.
- > Ensure your motion is relevant to the work of local government across the nation, not focused on a specific location or region, unless the project has national implications.
- > Align your motion with the policy objectives of your state and territory local government association.
- > Propose a clear action and outcome on a single issue, calling on the Australian Government to take action. Motions covering more than one issue will not be accepted.
- > Ensure the motion does not seek to advantage one or a few councils at the expense of others.
- > Avoid being prescriptive in directing how the matter should be pursued.

WRITING TIPS

Motions should seek the NGA's support for a particular action or policy change at the federal level which will assist local governments to meet local community needs.

- > Start with: "This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to...".
Be concise, clearly worded, and unambiguous.
- > Use the background section of the form to help delegates understand your issue.
- > Keep your motion to 100 words, the national objective to 100 words, and the key arguments to 150 words.

PROCESS OF SELECTION

The ALGA Secretariat will review motions for quality control and consistency with the criteria.

- > With the agreement of the relevant council, we may edit motions to ensure consistency.
- > If we have any questions about the substance or intent of a motion, we will raise these with the nominated contact officer.
- > Where there are multiple motions on a similar issue, the Secretariat may combine them into a single overarching strategic motion and invite the council to attach their name to the strategic motion.
- > Motions that reflect existing ALGA policy will be noted in the Business papers—but will not be included for debate, as they have already been covered in existing ALGA advocacy and policy positions.

The ALGA Board provides final decision on which motions are included in the Business paper.

- > The ALGA Board and state and territory local government associations will review all submitted motions to determine their eligibility.
- > The ALGA Board will consider the importance and relevance of the issue to local government and whether the motions meet all the criteria.
- > The ALGA Board will refer any motion primarily concerned with local or state issues to the relevant state or territory local government association and it will not include it in the NGA Business Papers.

WHO WILL SPEAK TO THE MOTION AT NGA?

We expect any council that submits a motion to be present at the National General Assembly to move and speak to the motion. The decision on the speaker is at the discretion of the council.

AFTER THE NGA

The resolutions of the NGA will be referred to the relevant federal Minister as an outcome of the NGA.

Resolutions passed at the NGA do not become binding policy on ALGA, with policy positions to remain at the discretion of the ALGA Board.

All NGA resolutions will be published on www.NGA26.com.au.

As the host of the NGA, ALGA will communicate resolutions to the relevant Australian Government Minister and publish Ministerial responses as they are received on the ALGA website.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

- > It is important to complete the background section of the submission form. Do not assume NGA delegates will know the background of the proposal. This section helps all delegates to understand your motion and informs decision making. Please note, motions should not be prescriptive in directing how the matter should be pursued.
- > Keep motions practical, focussed and can be implemented. This ensures that relevant Australian Government Ministers can respond thoughtfully and promptly. Avoid complex motions with multiple points that require cross-portfolio implementation.
- > If there are any questions about a motion, ALGA will contact the nominated officer. With the council's agreement, these motions may be edited before being included in the NGA Business Papers.
- > Debate will follow the rules published in the Business Papers and will focus on the strategic motions.

SETTING THE SCENE

In the face of evolving challenges and opportunities, local governments around Australia stand at the forefront of driving resilience and productivity. Local governments know we are stronger together and the importance of unity across all levels of government. The theme for this year's NGA, **Stronger Together: Resilient. Productive. United**, underscores the pivotal role councils play in shaping the nation's future and delivering national priorities.

As the backbone of local communities, councils are uniquely positioned to implement place-based solutions that address both local needs and national priorities. This year's NGA encourages debate on how councils can enhance their resilience, contribute meaningfully to the nation's productivity agenda, and present a cohesive voice to the federal government on critical issues.

By fostering collaboration and innovation, local governments can lead the way in creating sustainable and thriving communities.

The 2026 NGA provides you - the elected representatives of Australia's local councils and communities - with the opportunity to engage with the Federal Government and key Ministers, ensuring that the voices of local communities are heard at the national level.

In this context, this year's call for motion focusses on ten priority areas:

- Financial sustainability
- Emergency management
- Housing and planning
- Roads and infrastructure
- Closing the Gap
- Jobs and skills
- Environment
- Cyber security
- Climate change
- Intergovernmental relations.

1. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Financial sustainability is the biggest challenge facing Australia's local governments which is why it remains one of ALGA's top priorities. Sustainably funded, councils can play a key role delivering local solutions to national priorities.

The 2025 Parliamentary inquiry interim report into local government sustainability confirmed that the role of councils has evolved and expanded over time, putting significant pressure on local government budgets. It is critical the Federal Government reinstates and finalises the Parliamentary inquiry into local government sustainability.

For almost one in four councils, federal Financial Assistance Grants make up at least 20 per cent of their annual operating revenue. This funding is untied, meaning it can be used to address local priorities.

Over the past 30 years, the value of Financial Assistance Grants as a percentage of Commonwealth taxation revenue has dropped from 1% in 1996 to just 0.5% today. To address this, ALGA is advocating for **a return to 1% of Commonwealth taxation revenue for local government over the next three years.**

ALGA also proposes five new, untied funding streams to be distributed to all councils on a formula basis, including:

- \$1.1 billion per year for enabling infrastructure to unlock housing supply,
- \$500 million per year for community infrastructure,
- \$600 million per year for safer local roads,
- \$900 million per year for increased local government emergency management capability and capacity, and
- \$400 million per year for climate adaptation.

Additionally ALGA advocates for permanent, full membership of National Cabinet, the Council on Federal Financial Relations and the Local Government Ministers' Forum to ensure local perspectives are considered in national decision making.

What are the opportunities to address financial sustainability across councils, and support their capacity to deliver local solutions to national priorities?

Are there improvements to be made to existing federal funding programs and arrangements that would support improved local government financial sustainability?

2. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The frequency, duration, and severity of natural disasters in Australia are a major concern for local governments.

Between 2019 and 2023, 434 of Australia's 537 councils faced natural disasters. Since 2020, 346 councils have dealt with at least two or more natural disasters. These numbers highlight that Australia will likely face more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters in the future, as noted by the 2025 Australian National Climate Risk Assessment (NCRA). Regional communities, which have the least capacity to plan and respond to natural disasters, are often hit the hardest. However, the NCRA also warns that even areas that have never experienced disasters will face one at some point as the climate continues to warm.

More frequent disasters will further strain emergency services and disaster response and recovery efforts at all levels of government. Natural disasters currently cost Australia \$38 billion per year in direct physical damage, economic disruption, and social impacts, affecting millions of people. This figure is forecast to rise to approximately \$73 billion by 2060.

Councils are crucial in supporting their communities during and after disasters, but do not have enough funding to carry out these functions. They are already stretched thin, with many councils facing financial instability, and the increasing frequency of disasters has a cumulative financial impact.

Investing more in disaster prevention and resilience, as well as boosting local government emergency management response funding, will save money in the long run and better protect lives, homes, and businesses. Every dollar spent on reducing the impact of climate-related disasters saves the government up to \$8 in the long term.

ALGA is asking for \$900 million per year to help councils improve their disaster response and resilience. They also want the Commonwealth to fully implement the recommendations from the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and other major reviews, including the Independent Review of National Natural Disaster Governance Arrangements (the Glasser Review) and the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (the Colvin Review)

The Independent Reviews by Colvin and Glasser support a strategic shift towards disaster risk reduction and resilience. The Colvin Review recommended a major capacity uplift for local government and an enhanced national training and exercise regime which tests and builds local government capability. However, while ALGA notes the need to invest in risk-reduction and resilience-building initiatives, embedding recovery at all points along the emergency management continuum, should always be at the front of mind for all levels of government. ALGA's response to these Reviews reiterated the need for a sustainable funding model for disasters through a non-competitive pathway, and dedicated funding for local government.

Councils are encouraged to draw on their practical experience of the improvements that could be made to better support them in preparing, responding to, and recovering from, natural disasters.

Please note that many aspects of emergency management are state or territory responsibilities, and your motions should focus on how the Australian Government could assist.

What new programs, or improvements to existing programs, could the Australian Government develop to partner with local government to improve the current natural disaster management systems to further assist in recovery and build resilience?

How can the Government best support Australian councils to prepare for, respond to and recover from natural disasters?

3. HOUSING AND PLANNING

Australia is experiencing an affordable housing crisis, with a lack of housing supply impacting on homeowners and renters.

The crisis is leading to more people experiencing homelessness and struggling with housing insecurity and affordability.

In many jurisdictions, local government performs a key role in zoning and approving housing and delivering enabling infrastructure. However, councils are often unfairly blamed for delays in housing approvals when most applications that meet the requirements are processed quickly and efficiently.

One of the biggest barriers to building more homes is a lack of funding for enabling infrastructure, including the roads, power and water connections necessary for new developments.

The National Housing Accord – which ALGA is a signatory to on behalf of local government - sets an ambitious national target of 1.2 million new, well-located homes over the next five years. According to ALGA's research, it will cost at least \$5.7 billion to build the infrastructure needed to meet the national housing target. This is in addition to the existing funding gaps for local government infrastructure, which is estimated to be between \$50-\$55 billion for replacing infrastructure in poor condition (2024 National State of the Assets Report).

The 2024 Addressing the Housing Crisis: Unlocking Local Government's Contribution Report by Equity Economics found that 40% of surveyed local governments have reduced new infrastructure developments due to insufficient funding for enabling infrastructure required to support new housing, further exacerbating the housing crisis.

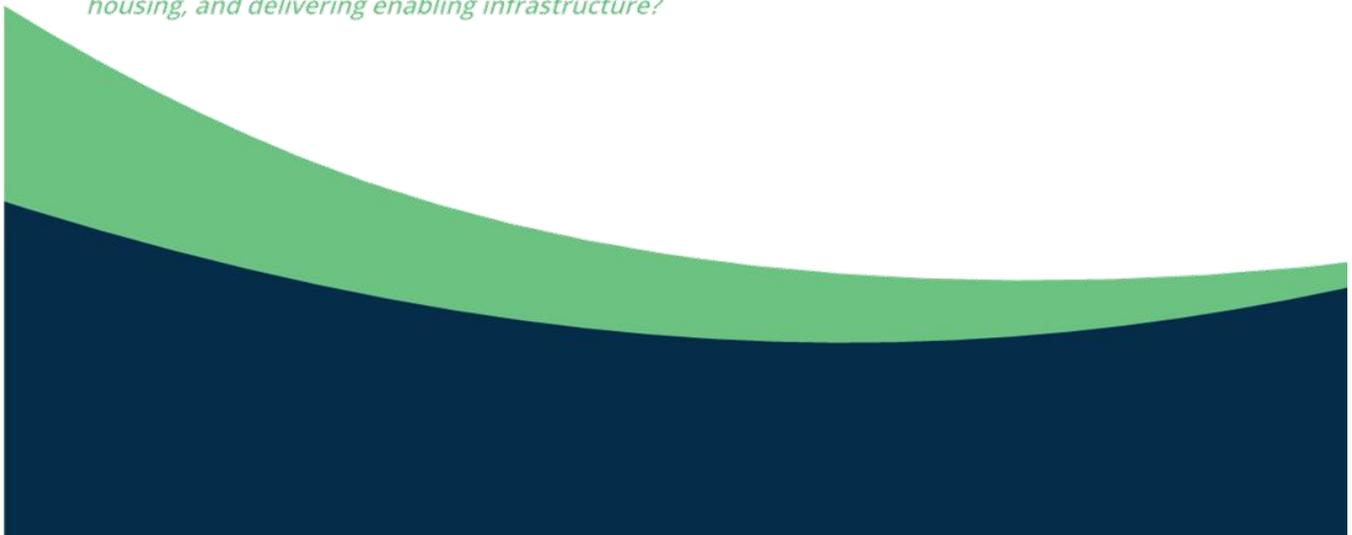
ALGA is calling for a new five-year, \$1.1 billion annual fund that would be provided to all councils to get the foundations right for increasing Australia's housing supply.

We are advocating for local governments to be provided with \$500 million per year for critical and community infrastructure and assets that will help create more liveable communities.

ALGA is also seeking a seat at the table for national discussions on housing policy, including full membership of National Cabinet and the Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council.

What new programs and policies could the Australian Government develop to partner with local government to support the provision of more affordable housing?

How can local governments be better supported in their role in planning and approving housing, and delivering enabling infrastructure?



4. ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Local governments are responsible for about one-third of Australia's public infrastructure, including local roads, buildings, facilities, airports, water and land.

According to ALGA's 2024 National State of the Assets report, Australia's councils manage over \$600 billion worth of assets and infrastructure, which is about ten times their annual revenue.

This makes local governments the most asset-intensive level of government. Councils manage local roads, which make up around 75% of the national road network, totalling more than 650,000 km. These roads serve every Australian and business daily, and are key to Australia's productivity.

Safer roads

The unacceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on Australian roads has continued to rise every year since 2020.

Tragically, around half of all fatal road crashes occur on local roads in regional areas. During the 12 months ending August 2025 there were 1,353 road deaths, 4.3% higher than the same time in the previous year, according to national road safety data.

Effectively funding the maintenance and necessary safety upgrades of Australia's local road network is a big challenge, and despite recent increases in the federal Roads to Recovery funding, there is still a \$500 million per year shortfall, according to the 2023 Grattan Institute's Potholes and Pitfalls report.

ALGA is calling for \$600 million per year safer roads fund – with \$500 million for infrastructure improvements and \$100 million for road safety programs – to support all councils to play a more effective role reducing deaths on Australian roads.

Community infrastructure

Local government libraries, playgrounds, bike paths and community centres are vital to the wellbeing and liveability of communities. However, many of these facilities need significant attention and upgrades.

According to ALGA's 2024 National State of the Assets report, around \$8.3 billion of local government buildings and facilities and \$2.9 billion of parks and recreation assets are in poor condition.

On a positive note, since 2021, the amount of local government buildings and facilities in poor condition has fallen from 10 per cent to eight per cent. This is the result of increased federal investment through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program, from both the Coalition and Labor governments since 2020.

Unfortunately, this program has ceased and there is an urgent need for ongoing and significant community infrastructure. ALGA is proposing a \$500 million per year community infrastructure fund – to be provided to all councils – to build, (and importantly), maintain and upgrade the local facilities that make communities great.

Are there new programs or initiatives that the Australian Government could adopt to improve the long-term sustainability of local government roads and community infrastructure?

Are there programs or initiatives that the Australian Government could provide to improve the sector's capacity to manage local government infrastructure and to integrate these plans into long-term financial plans?

Are there opportunities for the Australian Government to support councils to invest in local infrastructure that will help address national priorities?

5. CLOSING THE GAP

Local governments play a crucial role in closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. ALGA is a signatory to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap Partnership, which focuses on four priority reform targets and 19 socio-economic targets in areas like education, employment, health, justice, safety, housing, land and waters, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Local governments are uniquely positioned to support partnerships that address long-term service gaps and ensure their delivery. However, the Productivity Commission Review of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap found that Federal and state governments are not adequately supporting or involving local governments in these reforms.

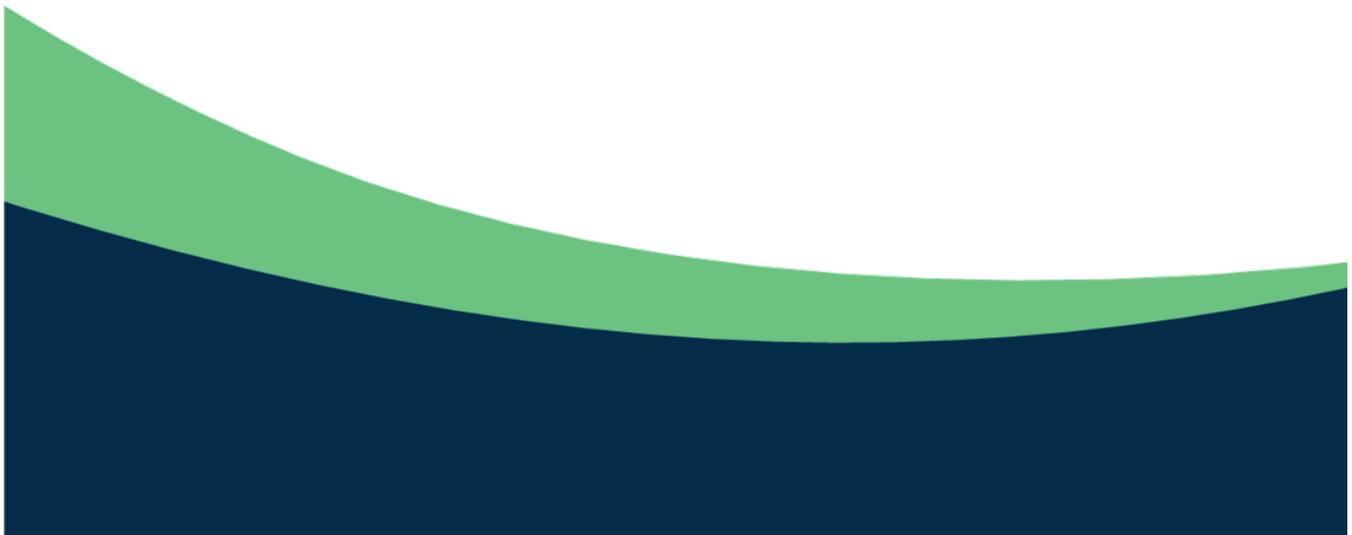
ALGA is calling for more resourcing and funding for local government, to support place-based initiatives or broader programs to enable councils to better facilitate and meet Closing the Gap objectives in their communities.

ALGA is also advocating for the Commonwealth to:

- Establish a national framework/set of protocols outlining which Federal Government departments/agencies should engage with local government in place-based initiatives, and planning for community-level projects or expenditure.
- Seek greater local government input in programs that impact on Closing the Gap targets to better shape programs with local knowledge and the needs of specific communities.
- Develop programs, with state and territory governments, to include funded support positions for local government coordination and partnership efforts (including member associations).
- Recognise councils with majority or all Aboriginal-elected members as key service delivery bodies in policy and program development.

Are there programs or initiatives that the Australian Government could adopt to assist local government to advance reconciliation and close the gap?

Are there practical programs or initiatives that local government and the Australian Government could introduce to maintain, build and strengthen the level of trust between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and governments?



6. JOBS AND SKILLS

Australia's jobs and skills crisis is significantly impacting local governments, which employ around 213,000 people nationwide. ALGA's 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey found that nine out of ten Australian councils face jobs and skills shortages, hindering project and service delivery.

Town planners, building surveyors, and engineers are the most in-demand professions. These roles are crucial for supporting and enabling communities to become more resilient and to help boost local economic growth and national productivity. National priorities, such as increasing housing supply, cannot be achieved without local government support and the right professionals to undertake this work.

Several factors drive these skill shortages, including difficulty attracting young people to local government jobs, lack of available training courses, wage competition, and insufficient resources to upskill the current workforce. This includes access to training facilities for rural and remote councils, workplace supervisors, subject matter experts, and contextualized training resources.

Councils urgently need more federal funding to invest in workforce development and training programs, attract workers to regional areas, and address broader skills shortages in the national economy. ALGA is calling for the Federal Government's National Skills Plan to acknowledge the vital role of local governments as employers in training and skills development. ALGA also seeks funding opportunities for council employees to access training for identified skills shortage areas, especially in regional and remote communities.

Additionally, it is important for the Commonwealth to undertake a national audit of institutions offering urban and land use planning, building surveyors, and engineering qualifications, and to identify more readily available pathways for regional and remote study.

Are there programs or initiatives that the Australian Government could implement that would enhance local government's capacity to attract and retain appropriately skilled staff now and into the future?

Are there programs or changes to existing programs that would increase local government's ability to employ apprentices and trainees?

Are there other initiatives that the Australian Government could provide to improve the sector's ability to plan and develop skills fit for the future?

7. ENVIRONMENT

Local governments play a crucial role in protecting our local environment including places, flora and fauna.

Councils spend more money on environmental protection than any other level of government. According to SGS Economics and Planning, councils spent \$6.75 billion in 2021-22 on biodiversity, biosecurity, water management, and waste management. By comparison, states and territories spent \$6.62 billion, and the Commonwealth allocated \$6.7 billion over the same period.

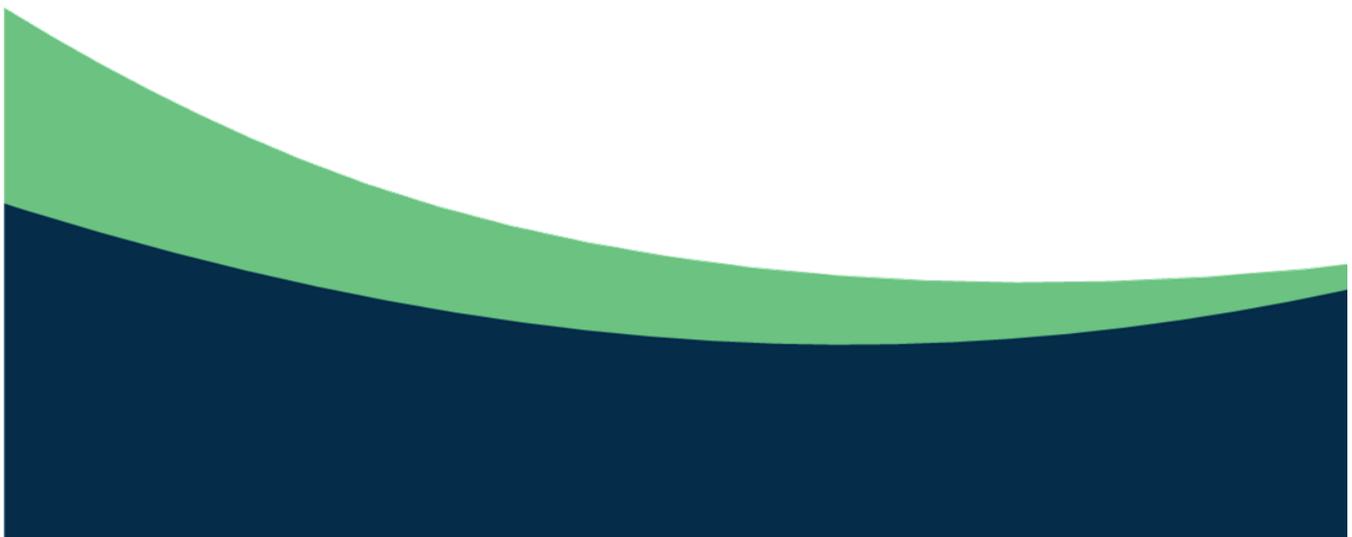
Local government is also key in improving waste management and resource recovery to reduce pollution, maintain communities and keep people healthy. However, as the Australian Government recently reported, we are running out of viable landfill space and circular economy solutions are required.

Local governments are ideal partners for on-the-ground action to deliver environmental priorities and outcomes, but they need better funding and support.

Councils bring a local, community-based and integrated approach to managing environmental issues, including weed and pest management, monitoring and protecting threatened species, contributing to water security and enhancing biodiversity.

ALGA is calling on the Federal Government to:

- Fund councils to support the delivery of national environmental outcomes. This includes outcomes stipulated in international conventions, threatened species action plans, matters of national, state, and local environmental significance, and any new obligations/expectations under reforms to the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act.
- Fund local governments to manage environmental threats, including pests, weeds, and biosecurity threats.
- Ensure local government is appropriately recognised and engaged through environmental law reform processes.
- Seek agreement, under the National Water Initiative, on the overarching social, cultural, economic and environmental outcomes and goals for water on a national and holistic basis, and action planning and funding and achieve these outcomes and goals.



Waste management and resource recovery

Collecting, treating, and disposing of waste costs local governments an estimated \$3.5 billion annually.

The 2022 National Waste report revealed waste generation has increased 20 per cent over the last 15 years (8.3 per cent coming from municipal waste). Although, recycling and recovery of Australia's core waste has increased by 57 per cent since 2006-07, Australia still has one of the lowest rates of recycling among OCED countries.

The responsibility and cost for waste reduction in Australia should be borne by industry, and not local governments.

Implementing mandatory product stewardship, including payments to local governments for any residual resource recovery services, would ensure producer responsibility is operationalised and reduce the cost and risk burden on councils.

ALGA is advocating for the Federal Government to:

- Establish a mandatory product stewardship approach for waste materials and ensure product stewardship schemes include, and are effective, in regional and remote areas.
- Ban the importation and manufacturing of products containing identified contaminants.
- Prioritise national policy attention to waste streams with the highest potential to improve environmental outcomes, reduce costs to local government, and create economic opportunity.
- Introduce a 'local government impact assessment' into national waste policy and reform processes to ensure council interests are systematically incorporated into policy design.

How could the Australian Government partner with local government to strengthen Australia's environmental services and infrastructure?

What new programs could the Australian Government partner with local government in to progress local regional and national objectives?

What actions and investments should the Australian Government prioritise to improve resource recovery rates?

What initiatives and approaches should the Australian Government take to improve waste, recycling and resource recovery in regional, rural and remote LGAs?

What are the most significant opportunities in the circular economy and how can the Australian Government engage with local governments to leverage these opportunities?

8. CYBER SECURITY

Cyber security is a growing risk for all Australian governments and businesses, and councils are not immune. However many local governments are under-resourced and struggle to deal with increasingly sophisticated cyber threats and attacks.

Local governments manage large amounts of sensitive data about communities and community members, including private information from the aged care, health, and social services they deliver. Furthermore, most councils are responsible for managing critical infrastructure, including water, waste, power networks, and transport systems.

Councils need greater support to strengthen their cyber security preparedness and response capability, and protect valuable data.

ALGA is calling for greater funding and support from the federal government to improve cyber security capability and capacity across the local government sector.

Drawing upon your council's experience, and your knowledge of other councils within your state or territory, are there programs and initiatives that the Australian Government could implement to help local government develop its digital technology services and infrastructure?

Are there actions the Australian Government could take to improve cyber security within the local government sector?

9. CLIMATE CHANGE

The impacts of climate change – including from more frequent and severe natural disasters, coastal erosion and rising temperatures – are being felt right across every community.

Councils, being the closest government to communities, are crucial in creating a sustainable future and helping the Federal Government achieve net zero emissions by 2050. However, they need support to manage these impacts.

Climate adaptation

Local governments are on the frontline of climate adaptation. They build public swimming pools to keep people cool, plant trees for shade, and upgrade stormwater systems to handle heavy rains. With their local knowledge and leadership, they play a vital role in addressing climate risks and seizing new opportunities from new industries and achieving national climate adaptation objectives.

Councils are already investing significantly in climate adaptation, but they need more support to match the scale of the challenges. ALGA's modelling shows that councils deliver \$0.8 to \$3.1 in benefits for every \$1 invested. A \$2 billion investment by 2030 could benefit local communities by \$2.2 to \$4.7 billion.

ALGA is calling for a new \$400 million per year climate adaptation fund, to be distributed across all councils to provide local, place-based solutions to Australia's changing climate.

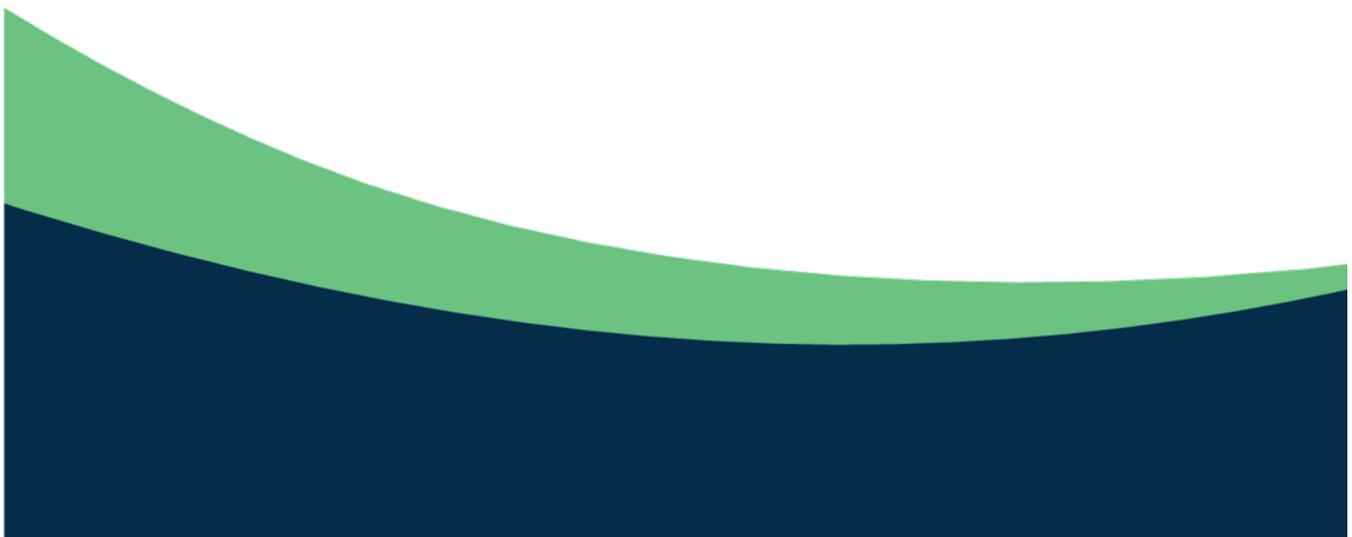
We are also asking the Federal Government to:

- Streamline and make it easier for local governments to undertake climate risk management. This should involve implementing a voluntary climate risk framework for local government which supports consistent climate risk assessment, reporting, decision making and expenditure.
- Develop, operate and maintain an information and data suite designed specifically for local government adaptation use (on an opt-in basis).

Emissions reduction

The Australian Local Government Climate Review 2024 found that 86% of councils (out of 120 respondents) had an emissions inventory. However, they face barriers in reducing corporate emissions, such as internal resourcing (69%), funding (64%), and staff capability (40%).

While councils are committed to reducing emissions locally, they need more funding to avoid burdening ratepayers and to allow communities to benefit from low-emissions technologies sooner.



ALGA is asking the Federal Government to:

- Collaborate with local governments as part of a multi-level governance approach (per the Australian Government's pledge to the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships) to undertake strategic planning and prioritisation of net zero projects, infrastructure and service needs on a regional level.
- Fund emissions reduction plans with local governments across states and territories to facilitate a place-based approach to achieving net zero communities.
- Expand, and make more accessible, existing funding programs which enable local governments to reduce emissions and support community emissions reduction.
- Provide councils with accessible and nationally harmonised tools to maintain pace with trends in emissions measurement and reporting.
- Ensure local governments are compensated where emissions reduction processes place additional pressure on services and infrastructure (e.g, heavier EV truck impact on maintenance/standards of roads/bridges).

Renewable energy transition

Local governments are crucial partners in the transition to net zero. They engage with project proponents, negotiate community benefits, provide trusted information to residents, and manage the impacts of large projects on roads, housing, and local skills.

Councils strive to create a positive long-term legacy while balancing the immediate risks and impacts of the transition.

ALGA is asking the Federal Government to:

- Create a program of work dedicated to understanding local government experiences with renewable energy transition in their local area and region and develop specific supports for local governments.
- Establish a national approach and mechanism for cost recovery to local governments for the role of brokering benefits between project proponents and their communities, benefitting all Australians.
- Develop and maintain regional plans and a national map demonstrating zoning for prospective and proposed renewable energy projects and transmission corridors.

Noting the Australian Government's approach to reducing emissions, are there partnerships, programs, and initiatives that local government and the Australian Government can form to achieve Australia's 2050 net zero emissions target?

What are the opportunities to support councils to increase community resilience to the impacts of climate change?

What support do councils need to ensure that renewable energy projects deliver lasting benefits to the communities that house them?

What are the most significant climate risks being faced by local governments and what approach should the Australian Government take to supporting councils?

What roles and responsibilities for emissions reduction and climate risk management is your council shouldering that should be primarily managed by other levels of government? How should this responsibility be shared or rebalanced?

What are the most significant emissions reduction opportunities for your council and what could the Commonwealth provide to enable you to implement these opportunities?

10. INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

ALGA has unique access and insight into government decision-making in Australia.

We represent local government at Ministerial Councils and forums on a range of key issues including transport, emergency management, energy, climate, environment, planning, culture and Closing the Gap.

At these meetings, ALGA's leaders provide a powerful and strong voice for councils and communities, and ensure local perspectives are considered in national policy development.

However, ALGA does not have a permanent voice on National Cabinet – the main forum linking all governments across the nation.

For almost 30 years, ALGA was a valued member and contributor to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). However, ALGA's membership did not carry over when COAG transitioned to National Cabinet in 2020, and ALGA now only attends one meeting each year as an observer. ALGA is also invited to attend one meeting per year of the Council on Federal Financial Relations.

ALGA is calling on the Federal Government to return ALGA as a full member of National Cabinet with ongoing membership and voting rights. This will enable local government leaders to provide local perspectives on national decision making and ensure the views of Australian communities are understood and considered.

We are also seeking full membership of the Local Government Ministers' Forum, which ALGA currently attends in an ex-officio capacity.

Given the important role councils play delivering local solutions to national priorities, how can intergovernmental arrangements be further improved in Australia?

Are there new initiatives and programs that could be adopted to improve the level of cooperation and collaboration between the Australian Government and local government?



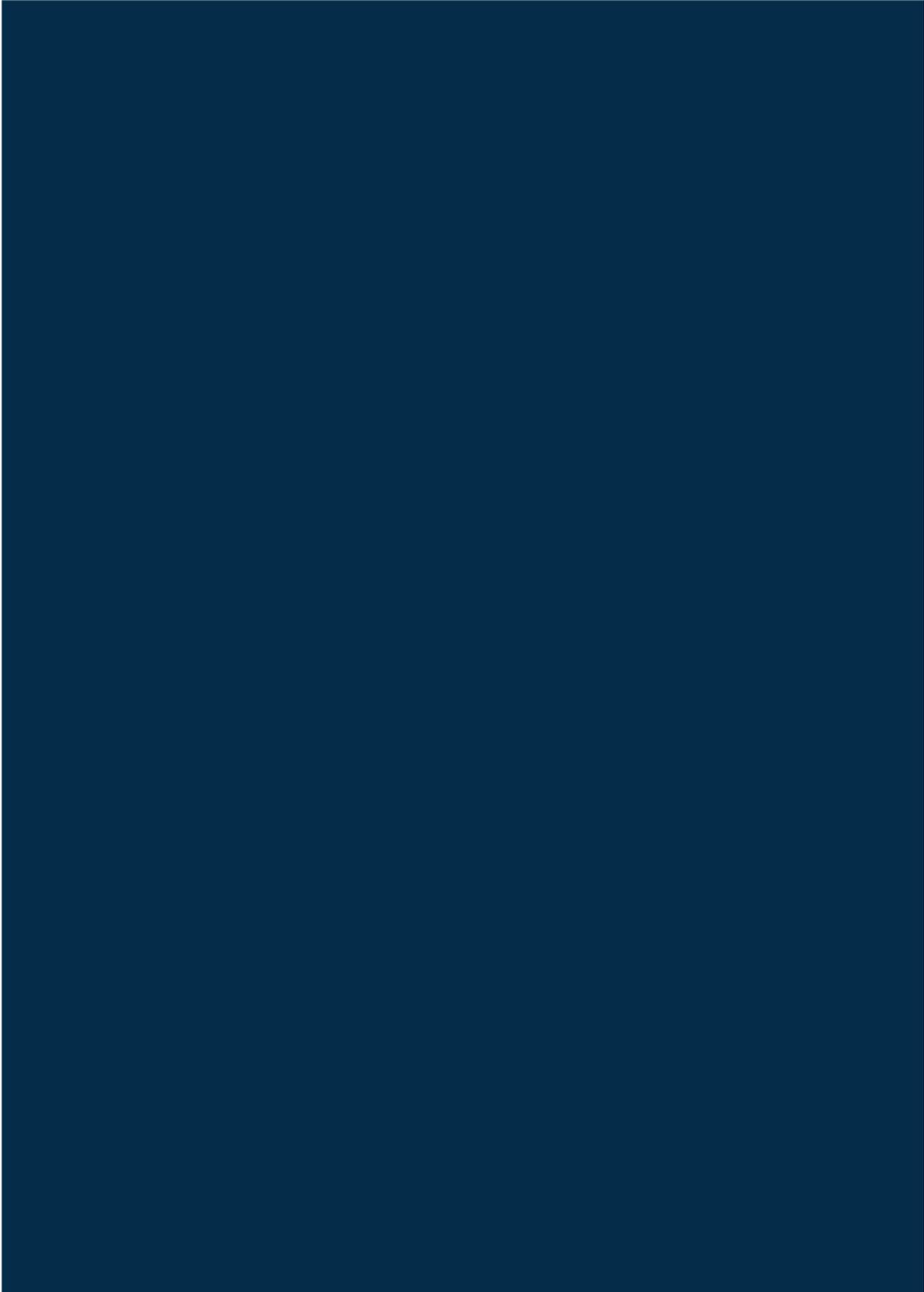
CONCLUSION

Thank you for taking the time to read this discussion paper and your support for the 2026 National General Assembly of Local Government.

A final reminder:

- Motions should be lodged electronically at www.alga.com.au and received no later than **11.59pm AEST on 27 February 2026**.
- Motions must meet the criteria published in this paper.
- Motions should commence with the following wording: *This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to...*
- Motions should not be prescriptive in directing how the matter should be pursued.
- Motions should be practical, focussed and relatively simple.
- It is important to complete the background section on the form.
- Motions must not seek to advance an outcome that would result in a benefit to one group of councils to the detriment of another.
- When your council submits a motion there is an expectation that a council representative will be present at the 2026 National General Assembly to move and speak to that motion if required.
- Resolutions of the National General Assembly do not automatically become ALGA's national policy positions. The resolutions are used by the ALGA Board to inform policies, priorities and strategies to advance local governments within the national agenda.

We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at the 2026 National General Assembly in Canberra.



ED8/26. Request for Leave of Absence - Cr Daniel Thompson - FILE: 21/00157
23/02/2026 to 20/03/2026
Author: Governance Lead

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise that Councillor Daniel Thompson has requested a leave of absence for the period 23 February 2026 to 20 March 2026 for travel.

RECOMMENDED that Council grant leave of absence to Councillor Daniel Thompson for the period 23 February 2026 to 20 March 2026 for travel.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report

ED2/26. 2026 Conference Attendance by Councillors
Author: Executive Assistant

FILE: 25/00006

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider annual conference attendance by Councillors in accordance with the Councillors Expenses & Facilities Policy.

RECOMMENDED that Council

1. Councillors nominate to attend as delegates each of the following conferences being held in 2026:
 - a. Local Government NSW (LGNSW) Annual Conference – The Mayor and two (2) delegates
 - b. Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly of Local Government - The Mayor and one (1) delegate.
 - c. Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) NSW Conference – One (1) delegate.
2. That voting by show of hands, to appoint a Councillor from the nominations to attend each conference.
3. Reimburse expenses in accordance with the Councillors Expenses and Facilities Policy.
4. Councillor delegates provide a written report for the information of Council within three months of conference attendance.

Report

Attendance at sector conferences provides Councillors with opportunities to engage with peers, contribute to sector-wide advocacy, and remain informed of emerging issues, legislative changes, and best-practice governance. These conferences support informed decision-making and strengthen Council's capacity to represent the community effectively.

It is proposed that Councillors be nominated to attend the following conferences in 2026:

- Local Government NSW (LGNSW) Annual Conference. Attendance by the Mayor and two (2) Councillor delegates.
- Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly of Local Government. Attendance by the Mayor and one (1) Councillor delegate.
- Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) NSW Conference. Attendance by one (1) Councillor delegate.

These conferences represent key forums for advocacy, policy discussion, and professional development within the local government sector.

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED2/26

Councillors will be invited to nominate to attend each conference. Where more nominations are received than available delegate positions, it is recommended that appointments be determined by a show of hands.

Councillors who nominate to attend a conference may be offered the opportunity to address Council for up to three (3) minutes to outline their interest in attending and the value their participation would bring to Council.

Following the presentations, Council will conduct voting by a show of hands to determine which nominated Councillor(s) will attend each conference. This process ensures a transparent and democratic appointment of delegates where multiple nominations are received.

Conference	Date	Location
LGNSW Annual Conference 2026	22 November until 24 November 2026	City of Wollongong WIN Entertainment Centre
ALGA National General Assembly 2026	23 to 25 June 2026	Canberra
Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) NSW Conference 2026	26 March to 28 March 2026	Blacktown City

Community Strategic Plan

Action:	5	Our Leadership
	5.2	Our Council is trusted, responsible and transparent
	5.2.1	To lead, govern and regulate in an ethical, equitable and transparent way
Deliverable:	5	Our Leadership
	5.2	Our Council is trusted, responsible and transparent

Council Policy/Legislation

- *Local Government Act, 1993*
- POL/1008 – Councillors Expenses and Facilities Policy
- POL/1023 – Councillor Induction and Professional Development Policy

Financial Implications

Financial commitments are accommodated in the Councillors Expenses and Facilities Policy and can be met within the 2025/2026 operational budget.

Consultation

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED2/26

In accordance with the adopted Code of Meeting Practice, no direct information has been provided to Councillors

Sustainability

Nil.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that non attendance may lead to reputational damage and a perception of lack of support.	Low	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes
There is a risk that non attendance may lead to a loss of opportunity to engage in professional development.	Low	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes

Options

The following options are available to Council:

1. Appoint Councillor delegates to attend the various conferences held throughout 2026 and reimburse expenses in accordance with the Councillors Expenses and Facilities Policy.
2. Resolve that no Councillors attend the conferences held throughout 2026.

Option one is recommended.

Conclusions

It is recommended that Council consider delegates for the various conferences to be held throughout 2026 to provide Councillors with valuable networking and professional development opportunities.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report

CC2/26. Transport NSW update
Author: Property Services Officer

FILE: 23/00708

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise Council that a report has been prepared for Council's consideration in Closed Council as the report contains advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege.

RECOMMENDED that the report on Transport NSW Update be considered in Closed Council with the press and public excluded in accordance with Section 10A(2) (g) of the Local Government Act, 1993, on the grounds that the report contains advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

ED1/26. Draft Complaint Handling Policy
Author: Governance Lead

FILE: POL/40007

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider placing the draft Complaint Handling Policy on public exhibition.

The draft policy has been developed to provide clear guidance on the management of complaints, ensuring processes are consistent, transparent, and aligned with best-practice principles.

The draft policy clearly defines what constitutes a complaint and establishes consistent internal procedures to support effective complaint management. It also strengthens accountability and transparency, providing structured guidance for both staff and the community.

Exhibiting the draft policy allows the community to provide feedback before it is formally adopted, supporting continuous improvement and ensuring Council's complaint handling framework meets the expectations of the NSW Ombudsman and community members.

RECOMMENDED that:

1. Council place the draft POL/40019 Complaint Handling Policy on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days and provide public notice of its intention to adopt the reviewed strategy subject to consideration of submissions received
2. The draft POL/40019 Complaint Handling Policy be adopted following the public exhibition period, provided that no submissions or objections are received or that no alterations are required to the draft document and POL/40007 Compliments and Complaints Handling Policy be rescinded.
3. Should any objections or submissions be received or any alterations be required to the draft document, a further report be presented to Council prior to adopting draft POL/40019 Complaint Handling Policy.

Report

Council previously maintained a Compliments and Complaint Handling Policy POL/40007. Following a comprehensive service review undertaken in accordance with the NSW Ombudsman's *Effective Complaint Management Guidelines*, Council has completely replaced this policy with a new Complaints Handling Policy.

The review identified opportunities to further enhance clarity within the policy. In particular, the combined approach to compliments and complaints has, at times, made it less clear how complaints are defined and managed, which may have contributed to some variability in practice. The review also highlighted opportunities to strengthen guidance for both staff

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED1/26

and the community, supporting clearer understanding of complaint pathways, timeframes, escalation processes, and accountability.

As a result, Council has developed a standalone Complaints Handling Policy that is purpose-built to clearly define complaints, establish consistent and transparent internal processes, and align with contemporary best-practice complaint management standards. This represents a substantive change, rather than a minor update, to Council's previous approach.

An effective complaints handling framework is a critical governance and risk management function. A clear, dedicated Complaints Handling Policy improves accessibility for the community, supports consistent and lawful decision-making, strengthens accountability and oversight, and reduces the risk of maladministration or regulatory non-compliance. It also enables Council to better identify systemic issues, drive service improvements, and enhance public trust.

Community Strategic Plan

Strategy:	5	Our Leadership
Deliverable:	5.1	Our Council is customer focused and collaborative
	5.2	Our Council is trusted, responsible and transparent
Action:	5.1.2	Collaborate with our community stakeholders and Council to create an informed community and better outcomes
	5.2.1	To lead, govern and regulate in an ethical, equitable and transparent way

Council Policy/Legislation

- *Local Government Act, 1993*
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act, 1994 2022*
- *Ombudsman Act, 1974*
- *Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) Act, 1988*
- *Government Information (Public Access) Act, 2009*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, 1998*

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications in relation to this matter.

Consultation

The Leadership Team, ARIC Committee and the Compliments, Complaints and CX Committee have considered the policy prior to referral to Council for adoption.

Sustainability

Nil.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that Council's complaint management policy will be inconsistent with NSW Ombudsman guidelines which may lead to legal action and reputational damage.	Medium	Adoption of the recommendation	Low	Yes
There is a risk that Council will have poor or unclear policy and process which may lead to service delivery implications and reputational damage.	Medium	Adoption of the recommendation	Low	Yes
There is a risk to Council of complaint investigations which may lead to service delivery and financial implications.	Medium	Adoption of the recommendation	Low	Yes

Options

The following options are available to Council:

1.
 - a) Council place the draft POL/40019 Complaint Handling Policy on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days and provide public notice of its intention to adopt the reviewed strategy subject to consideration of submissions received
 - b) The draft POL/40019 Complaint Handling Policy be adopted following the public exhibition period, provided that no submissions or objections are received or that no alterations are required to the draft document and POL/40007 Compliments and Complaints Handling Policy be rescinded.
 - c) Should any objections or submissions be received or any alterations be required to the draft document, a further report be presented to Council prior to adopting draft POL/40019 Complaint Handling Policy.
2. Not adopt the revised draft policies and retain the current policies while further review is carried out.

Option one is recommended.

Conclusions

It is recommended that Council endorse the draft Complaint Handling Policy POL/40019 being placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

Attachments

- AT-1** [↓](#) DRAFT - POL/40019 - Complaints Handling Policy
- AT-2** [↓](#) NSW Ombudsman - Effective Complaint Management Guidelines



COMPLAINT HANDLING POLICY

POLICY | Executive Director

This Policy will facilitate a consistent, fair, transparent and equitable resolution to customer complaints made to Council

Policy No:	POL/40019	Version:	1
Service Unit:	General Manager		
Responsible Officer:	Governance Lead		
Responsible Director:	Executive Director		
Authorisation Date:		Review Date:	
Minute No:			

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	SCOPE	4
1.1	Purpose of the Policy	4
2	OBJECTIVE	5
2.1	Complaint Management Framework.....	5
2.2	Making a complaint	5
2.2.1	How to make a complaint	5
2.2.2	Anonymous complaints.....	5
2.2.3	Assistance in making a complaint.....	6
3	FACILITATING COMPLAINTS	6
3.1	What is a complaint.....	6
3.2	What is not a complaint	6
3.3	Making a complaint	7
3.4	Responding to complaints	7
3.5	Managing complaints involving a child.....	9
3.6	Managing the parties to a complaint.....	9
3.7	Complaints involving multiple parties.....	10
3.8	Training and support for staff.....	10
3.9	Staff support and wellbeing	10
3.10	Unreasonable Complainant Conduct.....	11
3.11	Commitment to continuous improvement	12
3.12	Transparency and reporting	12
4	DEFINITIONS	12
5	DELEGATIONS AND AUTHORISATIONS	14
6	RELEVANT LEGISLATION	14
7	RELATED DOCUMENTS	14
8	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / POLICY OWNER	15
9	RESPONSIBILITIES	15
10	APPROVAL	17
11	MONITORING	17
12	REVIEW DATE	17

13 RECORD KEEPING, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY 18

14 BREACHES AND SANCTIONS 18

15 DOCUMENT HISTORY 18

APPENDIX A - LEVEL 1 – PROCESS MAP 19

APPENDIX B - LEVEL 2 – PROCESS MAP 20

APPENDIX C - LEVEL 3 – PROCESS MAP 21

1 SCOPE

This Policy applies to members of the public who wish to lodge a complaint in regard to Council's services and performance. The Policy also applies to a Council Official (Councillors, Administrators, members of staff of Council, Council Committee members, Conduct Reviewers and Delegates of Council) who lives in the Singleton local government area and wish to make a complaint in their private capacity.

Where relevant, a complaint regarding a Council Official will be considered in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct and the associated procedure

1.1 Purpose of the Policy

This Policy will facilitate a consistent, fair, transparent and equitable resolution to customer complaints made to Council.

This Policy:

- Provides a framework for managing complaints from the public in a fair and consistent manner, as a means of improving customer service in all areas of Council's operations.
- Ensures that issues which are the subject of complaints are addressed promptly and in a manner which, as far as possible, ensures that such issues will not be the subject of future complaints;
- Ensures that all complaints are investigated thoroughly; and
- Provides transparency and awareness to the community regarding Council's policy and procedures.

Through this Policy, Council will:

- Recognise the customers right to raise concerns about their dealings with Council;
- Establish a complaint management process that is open, consistent, fair and transparent, ensuring that all complaints are well documented;
- Ensure complaints are dealt with professionally, within specified timeframes and complainants are kept informed;
- Improve public confidence that complaints are dealt with and that relevant legislation, regulations and Council policies, including the Code of Conduct, will be enforced;
- Recognise the importance of complaints in providing feedback about Council's services and performance to ensure accountability and utilise such information to improve services and identify appropriate training needs; and
- Outline Council's approach to managing unreasonable complaint conduct.

This Policy forms part of Council's Code of Conduct framework and ensures the appropriate mechanisms are in place to protect the integrity, security and reputation of Council.

2 OBJECTIVE

2.1 Complaint Management Framework

Council is committed to achieving best practice in delivering services to the community. Council has followed the Ombudsman's Guidelines and model approach to implementing a Complaint Management Framework and procedures that will:

- Ensure that all complainants are treated with courtesy, dignity and respect;
- Ensure that the information about how to make a complaint will be accessible and easy to understand;
- Ensure that complainants are kept informed throughout the complaint process;
- Ensure that Council takes responsibility for resolving complaints and provides clear contact points for complainants;
- Ensure that complaints are acknowledged and resolved promptly, with progress updates provided as required;
- Ensure that Council is transparent about how complaints are managed and how complaint information is used to drive improvement.

2.2 Making a complaint

2.2.1 How to make a complaint

It is Council's preference that complaints are made in writing, in accordance with this Policy and its three level approach. Initially, a complaint is made in the first instance (level 1) to Customer Service. If the complaint cannot be resolved as first point of contact resolution or the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, then the complainant can write to the Public Officer (level 2) outlining their concerns about the handling of their complaint or the outcome of their complaint. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at the second level, then a further complaint may be sent to an external agency (level 3).

In situations where complaints are made directly to Councillors rather than Council Officers, Councillors are required to forward the complaint to the Governance Lead to be dealt with in accordance with this Policy and procedures.

2.2.2 Anonymous complaints

Where appropriate, Council will record anonymous complaints and act on them where the matter is of a serious nature, or where there is sufficient information provided at the time the complaint is lodged. For issues related to Council's assets and services, an inspection or investigation will be carried out. For other issues, further investigation of anonymous complaints will be undertaken at the discretion of the responsible officer where sufficient information has been provided.

2.2.3 Assistance in making a complaint

Council is committed to ensuring its complaint process is accessible to all members of the community.

Council will

- Provide interpreters, accessible documents, and communication support as needed;
- Accept complaints through a variety of accessible formats, including in person, online, in writing or via telephone;
- Use inclusive, respectful, and culturally safe approaches when communicating with complainants;
- Apply practices where complaints involve sensitive issues;
- Encourage representatives to assist complainants if requested.

If a person prefers or needs another person or organisation to assist or represent them in the making and/or resolution of their complaint, Council will communicate with them through their representative.

3 FACILITATING COMPLAINTS

3.1 What is a complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Council's services, performance, the conduct of a Council official, or dissatisfaction with the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. This includes dissatisfaction with the outcome of a decision, undue delay in a decision or action, level of quality of service, the failure to adhere to a policy or procedure, dissatisfaction with an administrative process, behaviour of a Council official, which can be investigated and acted upon.

3.2 What is not a complaint

A complaint covered by this Policy can be distinguished from:

- Staff grievances;
- Public interest disclosures made by our staff (see Public Interest Disclosures Policy);
- Code of Conduct complaints (see Code of Conduct);
- Responses to requests for feedback about the standard of our service provision;
- Reports of problems or wrongdoing merely intended to bring a problem to our notice with no expectation of a response;
- Service requests;
- Requests for information;
- Feedback – opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly to or about Council, about Council's services or complaint handling where a response is not explicitly or implicitly or legally required; and
- Service requests – the definition of a service request includes:
 - Requests for the provision of services and assistance
 - Requests for approval

- Request for action
- Routine enquiries about the organisations business
- Reports of failure to comply with laws regulated by the organisation
- Requests for explanation of policies, procedures and decisions

A complaint is not:

- An expression of disagreement with a lawfully made decision by Council;
- An appeal or representation against a decision by Council, other than that made as the result of a complaint;
- The lodging of an appeal or objection in accordance with a statutory process, procedure or policy;
- A matter where the issue is outside Council's area of responsibility, or the responsibility of another authority or service provider;
- Reports of hazards or damaged / faulty infrastructure; and
- The dissatisfaction in relation to a development application by a development applicant, or an objector to an application with the determination made.

3.3 Making a complaint

Complainants who wish to make a complaint to Council will:

- Be provided with information about our complaint handling process;
- Be provided with accessible ways to make complaints;
- Be listened to and treated with respect by staff and actively involved in the complaint process where possible and appropriate;
- Not be adversely affected because of a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf; and
- Be provided with reasons for our decisions and any options for redress or review in a timely manner.

3.4 Responding to complaints

Council has adopted a three level approach in responding to complaints.

Level 1 – Frontline complaint handling and early resolution of complaints by Council.

Level 2 – Internal review of complaints and/or complaint handling by the Public Officer.

Level 3 - External review of complaints and/or complaint handling by organisations.

Level 1

Council aims to resolve complaints promptly, by responsible section of Council. Wherever possible staff will be adequately equipped to respond to complaints, including being given appropriate authority, training and supervision. The first level of complaint handling will provide for the following:

- A prompt acknowledgement of the complaint and an explanation of the process;
- The expected timeframe for dealing with the complaint;
- The progress of the complaint and reasons for any delay; and
- An outcome.

Level 2

Where a complaint is not resolved at Level 1, the complainant may complain to the Public Officer, who will assess the complaint to determine whether it is a matter it will investigate. The complaint may then be investigated by the Public Officer, or by an investigator appointed by the Public Officer. This second level of complaint handling will provide for the following:

- A prompt acknowledgement of the complaint and an explanation of the complaints process;
- The expected timeframe for dealing with the complaint;
- An assessment and possible investigation of the complaint and decision already made;
- The progress of the complaint and reasons for any delay; and
- An outcome (where a person not connected with the complaint reviews the matter and attempts to find an outcome acceptable to the relevant parties and provides reasons for our decision/s and any options for redress or review).

The Public Officer handles complaints lodged with an independent body regarding Council's administrative conduct, unethical behaviour, misconduct, or maladministration. Any allegations of corrupt conduct made to the Public Officer will be referred to the Independent Commission Against Corruption in accordance with legal requirements.

The Public Officer can only investigate a complaint if it has been firstly reviewed or investigated in accordance with this Policy. Matters within the Public Officers jurisdiction include:

- All Council administrative processes;
- Delay / inaction in relation to a Council decision (but not the decision itself);
- Failure to comply with Council's policies, including the Code of Conduct; and
- Poor administration and unreasonableness.

In some circumstances in which the complaint is serious, the Public Officer may commence it enquiries in relation to a complaint prior to it being investigated at Level 1 level of this Policy. The General Manager may also refer a complaint directly to the Public Officer without having being investigated at Level 1.

The Public Officer is unable to investigate when:

- The complaint has not been considered at the first level of this Policy (except when it involves a serious complaint);
- There is insufficient information provided about the complaint;
- The complaint does not relate to a Council function;
- The complainant had knowledge of the matter for more than three months without taking any action;
- The nature of the complaint requires that it is referred to an external organisation such as the NSW Ombudsman, the Independent Commission Against Corruption or the Office of Local Government;
- The complaint is of low priority or resources are not available; and
- The complaint is frivolous, vexatious, not made in good faith or concerning a trivial matter.

Investigating officers will address complaints with integrity in a fair and reasonable, equitable, objective and unbiased manner.

Where relevant, a complaint regarding a Council official will be reviewed in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct and associated Procedure.

Level 3

Where a person making a complaint is dissatisfied with the outcome of Council's review of their complaint and the review conducted by the Public Officer, they may seek an external review of the decision through an external body such as the NSW Ombudsman, Office of Local Government or the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

3.5 Managing complaints involving a child

Council upholds and promotes the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our community and Council recognises that Child Protection is everybody's business.

Complaints and allegations involving a child or young person, made against Council officials, contractors and subcontractors, work experience participants, volunteers, students on placement, facility hirers, or lessees, will be managed by the Public Officer in accordance with the *Children's Guardian Act 2019* and the Council's Child Safe Policy. All matters will be handled promptly, confidentially, and in a manner that prioritises the safety, wellbeing, and protection of children and young people, ensuring compliance with all legislative and policy requirements.

3.6 Managing the parties to a complaint

To ensure a consistent approach, Council's complaints handling team will be responsible for managing complaints in accordance with this Policy, including complaints concerning Council's external service providers and/or its contractors.

Council will assess each complaint on its merits and involve people making complaints and/or their representative in the process as far as possible.

Council will protect the identity of people making complaints where it is practical and appropriate. Personal information that identifies individuals will only be disclosed or used by Council as permitted under Council's Privacy Management Plan, with an individual's consent or under any other relevant legislation requirement.

3.7 Complaints involving multiple parties

Where similar complaints are made by related parties, Council will arrange communication with a single representative of the group with the consent of those involved.

Where a complaint involves multiple organisations, Council will work with the other organisation/s where possible, to ensure that communication with the person making a complaint and/or their representative is clear, consistent and coordinated.

Subject to privacy and confidentiality considerations, communication and information sharing between parties will also be organised to facilitate a timely response to the complaint.

Where a complaint involves multiple areas within Council, responsibility for communication with the person making the complaint and/or their representative will also be coordinated by the complaints handling team in accordance with this Policy.

Where Council services are contracted out, Council expects contracted service providers to have accessible and comprehensive complaint management system and to comply with Council's Code of Conduct in the performance of their functions. Council takes complaints not only about the actions of our staff but also the actions of service providers.

3.8 Training and support for staff

Council recognises that effective complaint handling requires skilled, supported and confident staff. To support this:

- All staff involved in complaint handling will receive regular training in areas such as customer service, conflict resolution, cultural awareness and dealing with unreasonable conduct.
- Frontline staff will be provided with appropriate delegation and authority to resolve complaints as first point of contact resolution.
- Staff are supported to escalate complaints that are complex, sensitive or involve unreasonable complainant conduct.

3.9 Staff support and wellbeing

Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff engaged in the complaints handling process. In accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act, 2011* appropriate measures will be implemented to identify, access and manage psychosocial risks that may arise during the course of handling complaints.

3.10 Unreasonable Complainant Conduct

Council is committed to being accessible and responsive to all people who provide feedback or make complaints. At the same time, Council's success depends on:

- The ability to do its work and perform functions in the most effective and efficient way possible;
- The health, safety and security of all staff;
- The ability to allocate resources fairly across all the complaints it receives.

When people behave unreasonably in their dealings with Council, their conduct can significantly affect the progress and efficiency of Council's work. As a result, the General Manager will take proactive and decisive action to manage any conduct that negatively and reasonably affects Council staff and will support all staff to do the same in accordance with this Policy.

Council uses the Ombudsman's Managing Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Practice Manual as a guide for both identifying unreasonable conduct and establishing strategies to address that conduct.

Unreasonable Complainant Conduct (UCC) is any behaviour by a current or former complainant which, because of its nature or frequency raises substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues for the organisation staff, other service users and complainants and includes the complainant themselves.

UCC can be divided into five categories of conduct:

1. Unreasonable persistence
2. Unreasonable demands
3. Unreasonable lack of cooperation
4. Unreasonable behaviour
5. Unreasonable arguments

When complainants behave in ways Council considers to be unreasonable complainants conduct, that is they:

- Become aggressive and verbally abusive towards Council staff;
- Threaten harm and violence;
- Inundates Council offices with unnecessary and excessive phone calls and emails;
- Make inappropriate demands on Council's time and resources;
- Refuse to accept Council decisions and recommendations in relation to their complaints;
- Submit offensive comments through Council's social media.

In accordance with Council's Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Policy, Council may consider limiting or adapting the ways it interacts with and/or delivers services to complainants by placing restrictions around their interactions with Council staff.

3.11 Commitment to continuous improvement

Council will use complaints as a valuable source of feedback to improve services, processes and decision making. To support this:

- Complaint data will be regularly monitored and analysed to identify trends, systemic, issues and areas for improvement.
- Reports on complaint outcomes and trends will be provided to Leadership Team and used to inform policy or services changes.
- The Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure will be reviewed and updated at least every four years.

3.12 Transparency and reporting

Council will maintain transparency in its complaints management by:

- Recording and tracking all complaints and their resolution outcomes; and
- Reporting to the Customer Compliments and Complaints and Customer Experience Committee, complaint volumes, categories, timeframes and resolution.

4 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

Term	Meaning
Complaint	<p>An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Council, our services, staff or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. A complaint covered by this policy can be distinguished from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff grievances - see our Grievance and Dispute Resolution Procedure • Public Interest Disclosures made by Council staff - see Council's Public Interest Disclosures (PID) Internal Reporting Policy • Code of Conduct complaints - see Council's Code of Conduct • Responses to requests for feedback about the standard of our service provision - see the definition of 'feedback' below • Reports of problems or wrongdoing merely intended to bring a problem to our notice with no expectation of a response - see definition of 'feedback' below • Service requests - see definition of 'service request' below; and

Term	Meaning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests for information see Council's website for information on the <i>Government Information Public Access (GIPA) Act, 2009</i>
Complainant	Means a person or entity (or their representative) that made a complaint
Complaint Management System	All policies, procedures, practices, staff, hardware and software used by Council in the management of complaints.
Contractors	Third parties contracted to perform work on behalf of Council.
Council	Means Singleton Council
Council Officials	Includes Council staff, Councillors and their delegates, volunteers, consultants and contractors.
Dispute	An unresolved complaint escalated either within or outside of Council.
Feedback	Opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, to or about Council, about our services or complaint handling where a response is not explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
Front line staff	Council staff and their teams who have the authority in their role to manage simple complaints. This is typically staff who have direct contact with customers or complainants..
Service Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests for approval Requests for action Routine inquiries about Council's business Requests for the provision of services and/or assistance Reports of failure to comply with laws regulated by Council Requests for explanation of policies, procedures and decisions
Grievance	A clear, formal written statement by an individual staff member about another staff member or a work-related problem.
Policy	A statement of instruction that sets out how we should fulfil our vision, mission and goals.
Procedure	A statement or instruction that sets out how our policies will be implemented and by whom.
Public Officer	Executive Director

Term	Meaning
Public Interest Disclosure (PID)	A report about wrongdoing made by a public official in New South Wales that meets the requirements of the <i>Public Interest Disclosures Act, 2022</i>
Compliments, Complaints & Customer Experience Review Committee	A Committee established by Singleton Council to support the monitoring, reporting, continuous improvement, positive acknowledgement and accountability of the Compliment & Complaint Handling and Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Policies and ensure alignment with the Customer Experience Framework and Strategy.

5 DELEGATIONS AND AUTHORISATIONS

There are no Delegations or Authorisations relating to this Policy.

6 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Ombudsman Act 1974*
- *Children's Guardian Act 2019*
- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*
- *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1998*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022*

7 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Number	Title
POL/1011	Code of Conduct
POL/40008	Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Policy
POL/1020	Public Interest Disclosures (PID) Internal Reporting Policy
PLO/1028	Child Safe Policy
14/7406	Grievance & Dispute Resolution Procedure
17/88402	Customer Service Charter
	Compliment and Concern Policy
	NSW Ombudsman Complaint Management Framework
21/79795	Complaint Handling Process Map
21/46113	Complaint Acknowledgement Letter Template
21/46114	Complaint Response Letter – Level 1 Template

21/46115	Complaint Response Letter – Level 2 Template
20/48138	Conflicts of Interest Procedure

8 RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / POLICY OWNER

Ownership of this policy rests with the Governance Lead.

9 RESPONSIBILITIES

Singleton Council expects staff at all levels to be committed to fair, effective and efficient complaint handling.

Parties or Persons	Responsibilities
General Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that an effective Complaint Management Framework is in place. • Reviewing and overseeing of the adoption and implementation of the Procedure supporting this Policy. • Encouraging an environment where Complaints are handled diligently and comprehensively. • Ensure that there is a process in place for timely and appropriate notification to the management or the Executive Leadership Team of any significant complaints or systemic issues identified through Complaints. • Promoting awareness of this policy and supporting Procedure, as amended from time to time, and for cultivating a people-focus throughout Council, • Ensure information about this Policy is easily accessible to members of the public and communicated in a manner that easy to understand. • Provide adequate support and direction to key staff responsible for handling complaints. • Review reports about complaint trends and issues arising from complaints. • Encourage all staff to be alert to complaints and assist those responsible for handling complaints resolve them promptly. • Encourage staff to make recommendations for system improvements. • Support recommendations for service, staff and improvements arising from the analysis of complaint data.
Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure recommendations arising out of complaint data analysis are canvassed and implemented where possible.

Parties or Persons	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit, train and empower staff to resolve complaints promptly and in accordance with Singleton Council's policies and procedures. • Encourage staff managing complaints to provide suggestions on ways to improve the organisation's complaint management system. • Encourage all staff to be alert to complaints and assist those responsible for handling complaints resolve them promptly. • Recognise and reward good complaint handling by staff.
Staff whose duties include complaint handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat all people with respect, including people who make complaints. • Assist people make a complaint, if needed. • comply with this policy and associated procedures. • Keep informed about best practice in complaint handling. • Provide feedback to management of issues arising from complaints. • Provide suggestions to management on ways to improve the organisation's complaints management system. • Implement changes arising from individual complaints and from the analysis of complaint data as directed by management.
All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat all people with respect, including people who make complaints. • Be alert to complaints and assist staff handling complaints resolve matters promptly. • Provide feedback to management on issues arising from complaints. • Implement changes arising from individual complaints and from the analysis of complaint data as directed by management.
Complainants (or their representatives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act reasonably in their interaction with Council Officials. • Provide relevant information in relation to their Complaint.
Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance with the lodgement of Complaints and requests for review of Complaints where necessary.

Parties or Persons	Responsibilities
Public Officer – Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving and allocating Level 1 Complaints where appropriate. • Receiving and handling Level 2 Complaints in accordance with this Policy and Procedure. • Receiving and handling Level 3 Complaints in accordance with this Policy and Complaints Handling Procedure, or as agreed with the relevant external agency. • Establishing a process of performance monitoring, evaluation and reporting to the Executive Leadership Team in accordance with the Procedure.
Executive Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing and maintaining a positive complaint management environment that encourages Feedback and Complaints. • Providing adequate resources, training and support for staff handling Complaints. • Facilitating assistance for people who have difficulty making a Complaint. • Ensure clear lines of responsibility are maintained. • Handling any escalated Complaints that cannot be resolved at Manager level.
Governance Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a consistent complaints management procedure is followed by Council staff and service standards are achieved. Training of Council staff on effective frontline complaints handling. • Maintenance of Council's Complaints Register and complaints reporting • Responsible for the ongoing monitoring and reporting of Level 1 Complaints.

10 APPROVAL

As per cover sheet.

11 MONITORING

This policy will be monitored by the Governance Lead to ensure compliance.

12 REVIEW DATE

This policy, once adopted, is to remain in force until it is reviewed by Council. This policy is to be reviewed approximately every four (4) years to ensure that it meets legislative requirements.

13 RECORD KEEPING, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

This policy is to be made available for public viewing as required under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act, 2009*.

14 BREACHES AND SANCTIONS

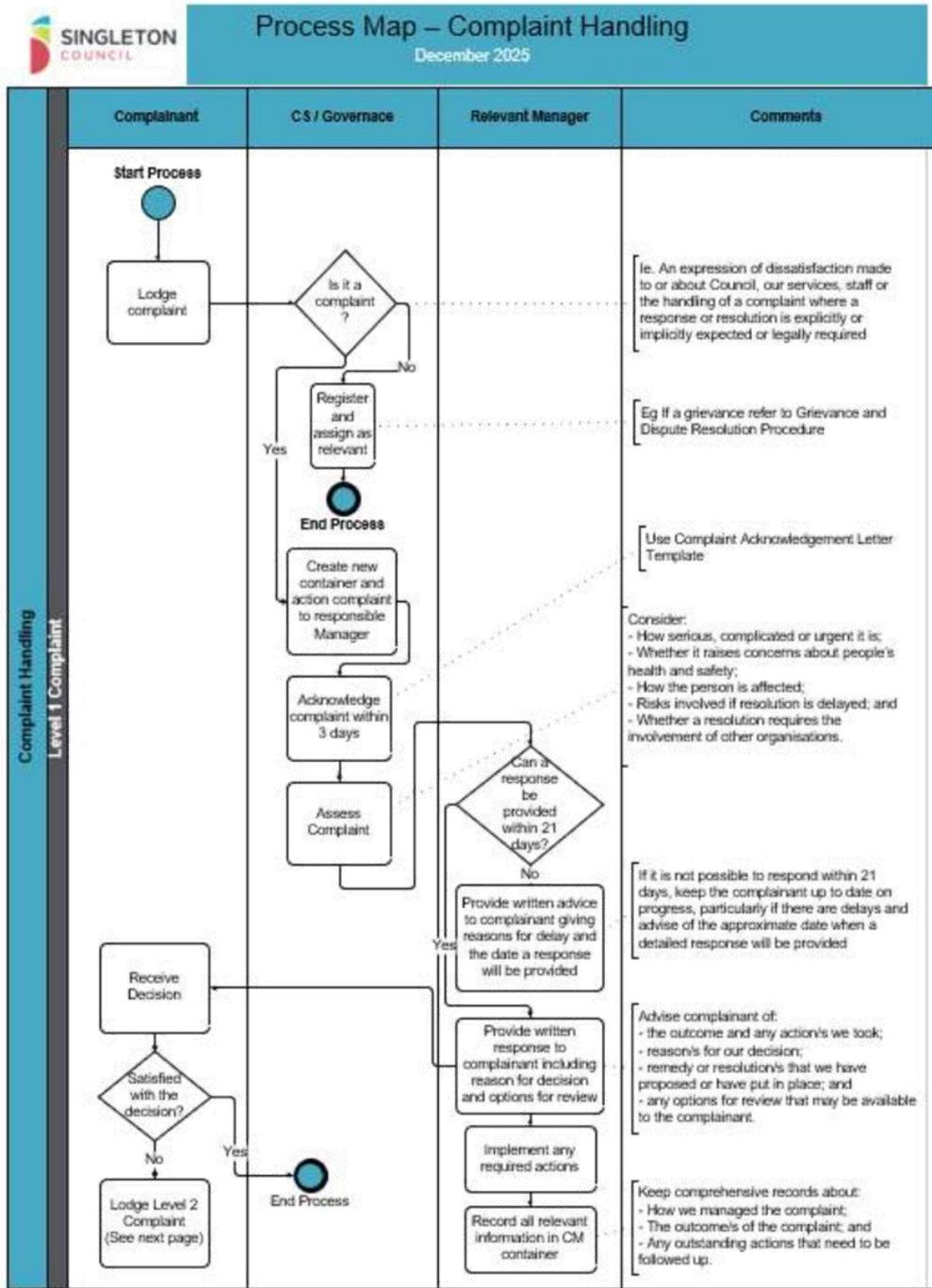
Any breaches of this Policy will be referred to the General Manager for appropriate action.

15 DOCUMENT HISTORY

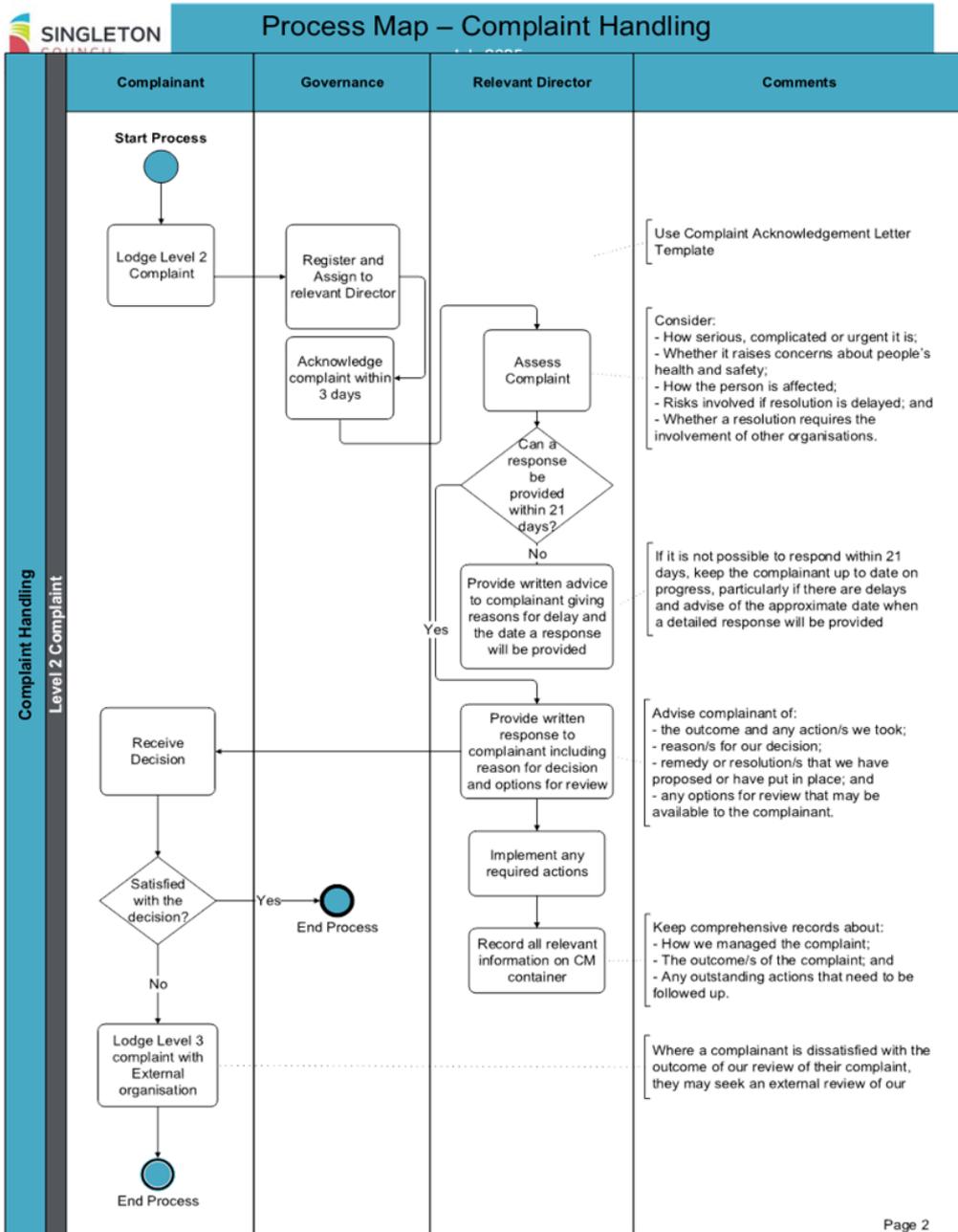
The below table provides a summary of changes and amendments to this document.

Version	Date Amended	Author	Comments (eg reasons for review)
1	July 2025	R Bailey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New Policy

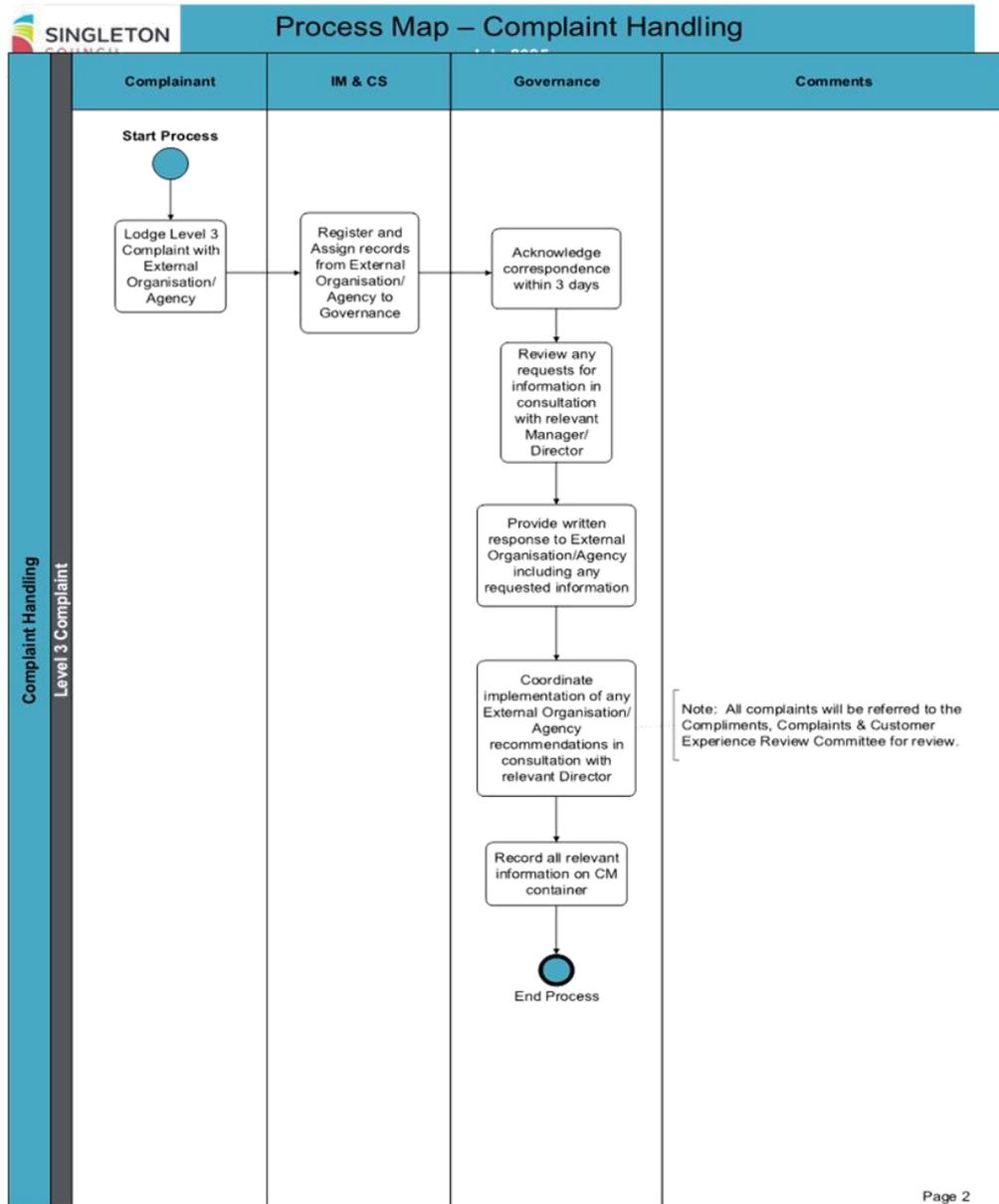
APPENDIX A - LEVEL 1 – PROCESS MAP



APPENDIX B - LEVEL 2 – PROCESS MAP



APPENDIX C - LEVEL 3 – PROCESS MAP



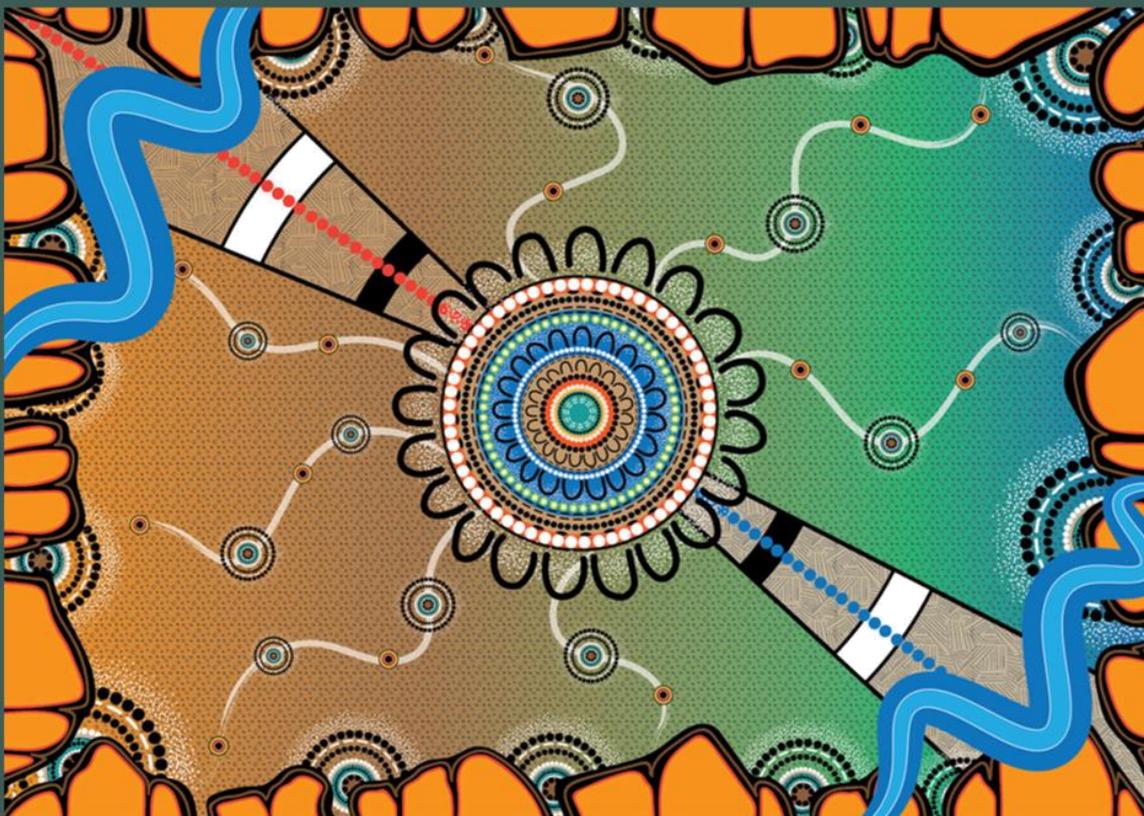


Effective Complaint Management Guidelines

A practical guide to developing a complaint management system and handling complaints

November 2024

 **Ombudsman**
New South Wales



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and pay our respects to all Elders past and present, and to the children of today who are the Elders of the future.

Artist: Jasmine Sarin, a proud Kamilaroi and Jerrinja woman.

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November 2024

4th Edition

Contents

Foreword	5
Introduction	6
Part A: What makes an effective complaint management system?	7
1 Define what is and isn't a complaint	9
1.1 What is a complaint?	9
1.2 What isn't a complaint	10
2. Understand the barriers to making a complaint	12
3. Embed the 6 principles for effective complaint management	13
3.1 Respectful treatment	14
3.2 Information and accessibility	14
3.3 Communication	15
3.4 Taking ownership	15
3.5 Timeliness	16
3.6 Transparency	16
4. Create a positive complaint management culture	17
4.1 Leaders champion a positive culture	17
4.2 Everyone experiences the benefits	18
5. Design a clear policy and procedures	19
5.1 Document who's responsible for what	19
5.2 Make your policy widely accessible	21
6. Introduce a 3-level model for escalating complaints	22
6.1 Address a complaint at the first point of contact	22
6.2 Escalate a complaint	24
6.3 Refer the complainant to an external review mechanism	26
7. Enable a skilled and supported team	29
7.1 Recruit and train frontline staff	29
7.2 Support frontline staff	31
7.3 Provide frontline staff with the resources they need	32
8. Commit to continuous improvement	33
8.1 Monitor complaints	33
8.2 Audit complaint data	34
8.3 Analyse the underlying cause of complaints	35

Part B: How do you manage complaints?	36
9. Step-by-step process	38
9.1 Is it a complaint?	39
9.2 Receive, clarify and acknowledge the complaint	39
9.3 Record the complaint	41
9.4 Assess the complaint	42
9.5 Decide what to do	44
9.6 Finalise the complaint and apologise when things go wrong	45
10. Specific types of complaints	48
10.1 Complainants with challenging or complex behaviours	48
10.2 Complainants with diverse needs	50
10.3 Complaints from staff members	52
10.4 Anonymous complainants	53
10.5 Complaints about criminal or corrupt conduct	53
10.6 Complaints about staff members	54
10.7 Complaints involving multiple organisations	55
10.8 Complaints about contractors	55
Resources	56
Checklist for developing a complaint management system	57
Key terms	64
References	67
Australian Standards	67
NSW Ombudsman resources	67
Other resources	67

Foreword

The NSW Ombudsman is an independent integrity agency that pursues fairness for the people of NSW. We strive to ensure that those entrusted with public power and resources fulfil their responsibilities and treat everyone fairly.

The NSW Ombudsman has nearly half a century of experience in managing complaints and supporting public sector organisations to improve their own complaint management systems. Over this time, there have been positive changes in the way complaints are perceived and managed. It is now accepted that complaints are important customer feedback that can help organisations to continuously improve service delivery and the way they engage with their customers.

One of my office's key strategic outcomes is that improvements in public administration and community service delivery occur as a result of our work. One way we pursue this is by providing guidance, education and training to government agencies and service providers to encourage good administrative practice and build capability. Under the Ombudsman Act (for public authorities) and CS CRAMA (for service providers), we are also able to conduct a proactive review into their complaint management system, to ensure it is functioning effectively and fairly, and in accordance with good practice.

In their fourth edition, these guidelines have been updated to align with Standards Australia's *Guidelines for complaint management in organizations* (AS 10002:2022). They also outline the 6 principles for effective complaint management – respectful treatment, information and accessibility, communication, taking ownership, timeliness and transparency.¹ These principles highlight to the public what they can expect when they complain to an organisation. Organisations should apply these principles to ensure all customers can easily lodge a complaint, feel listened to and respected, have clear expectations of the complaints process and have their matter finalised in a timely way.



Paul Miller
NSW Ombudsman

¹ The 6 complaint handling 'commitments' were originally part of a collaboration between the NSW Ombudsman and State government to lift complaint handling across the sector. The Ombudsman will continue to promote these 'commitments,' renamed the '6 complaint management principles,' as they have an enduring value outside of any time-bound complaint handling improvement program.

Introduction

A complaint is made whenever a person expresses dissatisfaction – usually about an organisation’s services, or how they have been treated by staff – in circumstances where they (implicitly or explicitly) expect or are entitled to expect a response to their concerns.

Complaints can range from very informal to the very formal. For example, they can be an oral complaint about a decision or action of frontline staff which those staff may be able to address and resolve immediately. They can also be a written complaint about an organisation to an external oversight body.

Effective complaint management systems need to provide for the full spectrum of complaints – recognising that, in most cases, early resolution at the first point of contact will be the most effective way of handling a complaint.

Everyone has the right to make a complaint.

How an organisation responds to a complaint can be just as important to a customer as the issue that they complained about. To help your organisation manage complaints effectively, the NSW Ombudsman has created these guidelines with practical advice about developing a strong complaint management system.

The guidelines have been designed for senior executives, managers and frontline staff in NSW departments and agencies, local councils and community service providers (organisations).

They are consistent with Standards Australia’s *Guidelines for complaint management in organizations* (AS 10002:2022). This standard sets the benchmark for what members of the public should expect when raising a concern about an organisation, local council or community service provider.

In **Part A**, we explain what makes an effective complaint management system:

- what is and isn’t a complaint
- understanding the barriers to making a complaint
- the 6 principles for effective complaint management
- a positive complaint management culture
- a clear policy and procedures
- a 3-level model for escalating complaints
- a skilled and supported team
- a commitment to continuous improvement.

In **Part B**, we provide step-by-step instructions for handling complaints, including how to:

- receive, clarify and acknowledge complaints
- make records of a complaint and how it has been handled
- assess a complaint
- decide what to do
- finalise a complaint and take corrective action when things go wrong
- monitor, analyse and report on complaint data.

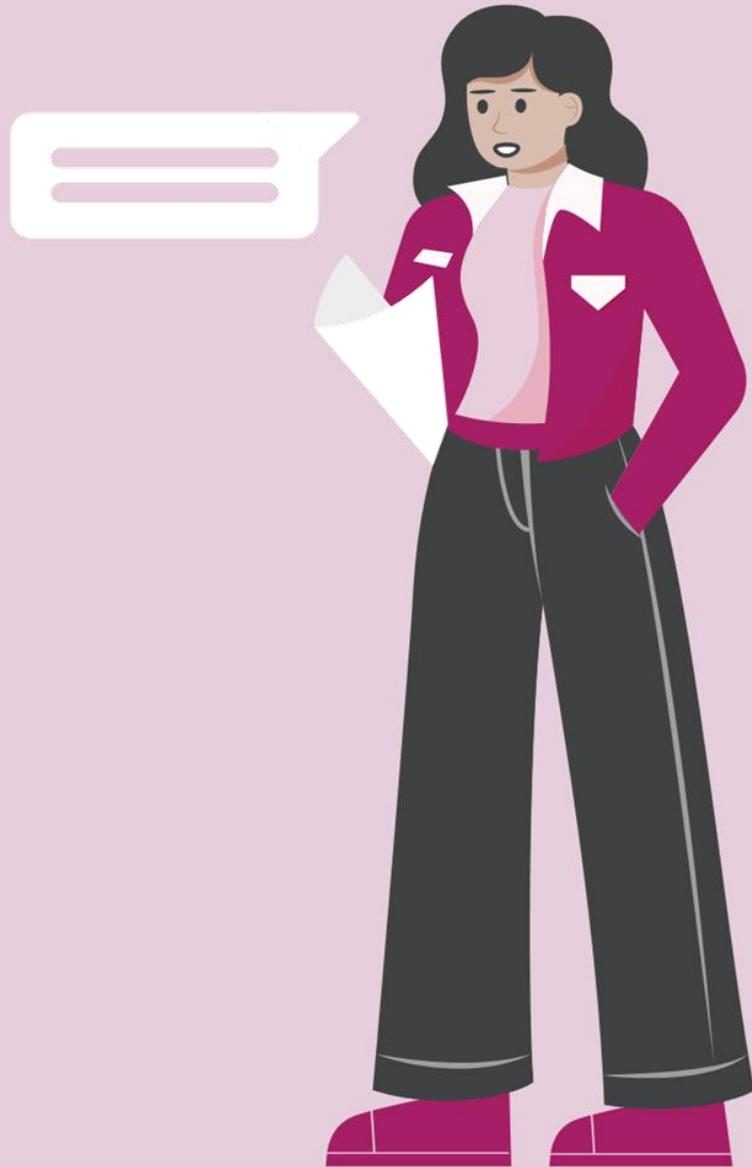
Part B also includes helpful advice for dealing with specific types of complaints and complainants. For example, how to respond compassionately to complainants who are in distress, need additional support or have diverse needs.

At the end of these guidelines, you’ll find a:

- checklist for developing a complaint management policy
- list of key terms used in these guidelines and for writing your complaint policy and procedures
- list of resources to help you develop and implement a complaint policy and procedures.

Part A:

What makes an effective complaint management system?



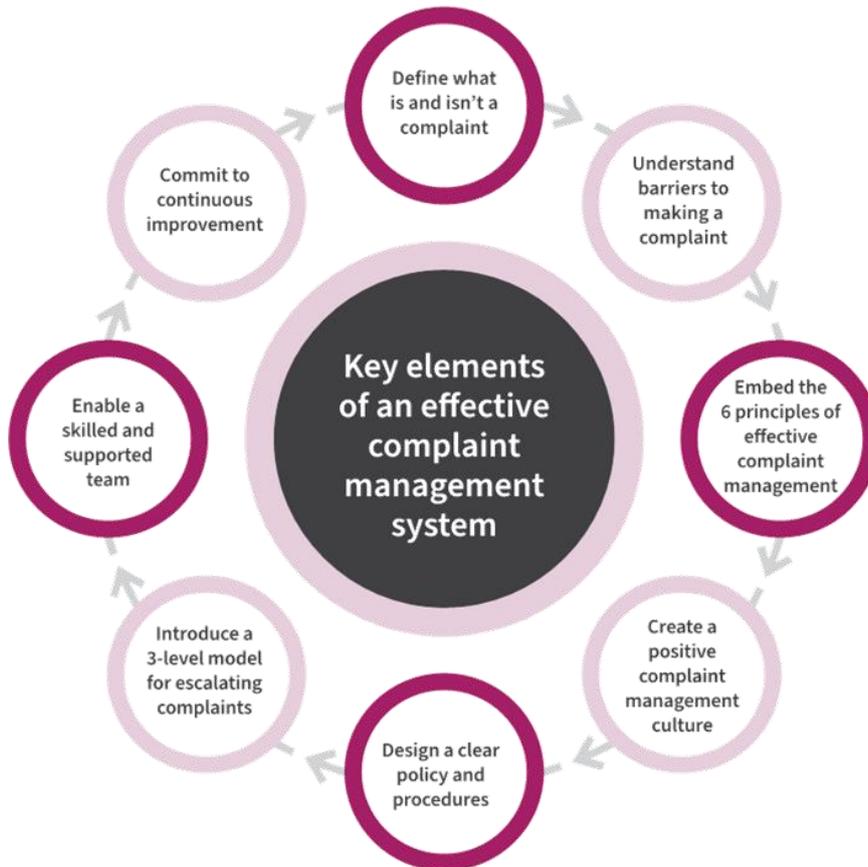
An effective complaint management system is tailored to your organisation’s needs. We suggest that you use these guidelines to design your system to suit:

- your organisation’s size and statutory functions
- your financial, operational and organisational requirements
- the number, demographics and characteristics of the people accessing your services
- the nature and breadth of your interactions with the public
- the number and type of complaints your organisation receives.

Consult with staff and other stakeholders for insights into complainants’ potential needs and how to address them.

The following figure highlights key elements of an effective complaints management system. Each element is detailed below.

Figure 1: Key elements of implementing an effective complaint management system



1. Define what is and isn't a complaint

Being able to identify a complaint (or what isn't a complaint) is an important first step in developing an effective complaint management system. Clearly defining what a complaint is, how it will be managed and by whom, will help your organisation to consistently respond to your customers.

In these guidelines we refer to **customers** and **complainants**. A customer is anyone who lives, works, visits or invests in NSW. A **customer** becomes a **complainant** when they make a complaint to a NSW organisation or business. See the [Key terms](#) section for full definitions.

1.1 What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation related to its products, services, staff or management of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.² Customers may complain either directly to your organisation or to a third party.

Customers make complaints when their expectations are not met, standards are not upheld or when they perceive they, or someone else, has been unfairly treated. Adopting a broad definition of a complaint recognises the range of concerns that your customers may have.

It might sometimes be difficult to distinguish, particularly during frontline interactions, whether a customer is making a complaint or an enquiry, or requesting a service. Often it is the customer's language or tone that indicates if a complaint is being made.

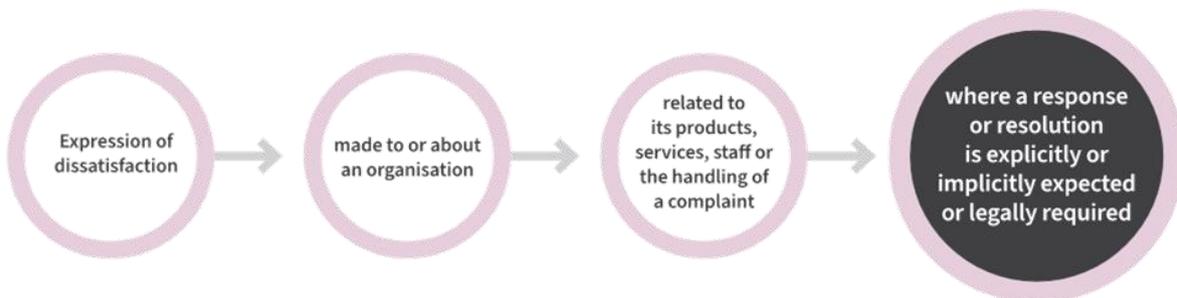
Organisations should not seek to downplay a complaint by characterising it simply as 'feedback.' The difference between feedback and a complaint is that:

- feedback can be positive, negative or neutral, whereas a complaint always involves an expression of dissatisfaction
- with a complaint, a response to that dissatisfaction is expected.

Understanding what a complaint is can help improve:

- decision-making
- relationships with customers dissatisfied about the fairness of a decision
- service delivery
- information given to customers
- staff conduct.

Figure 2: Definition of a complaint (adapted from AS10002:2022)



2. Standards Australia, *Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organizations (AS 10002:2022)*, 25 March 2022 ('AS 10002:2022').

Table 1: Common complaint areas (adapted from the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Better Practice Complaint Handling Guide).

Common complaint areas	Examples
Service, program or product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service, program or product accessibility • service, program or product quality • treatment by staff, such as poor customer service
Actions or decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • customer felt actions or decisions were incorrect or unfair • organisation didn't properly explain its reasons for an action or decision
Inaction or delay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organisation didn't respond to requests or applications • services were delayed • organisation didn't explain inaction or delays
Policy or process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • customer disagrees with policy or process • organisation didn't properly explain policy or process

1.2 What isn't a complaint

Your organisation also needs to consider what you won't register as a complaint. It is generally not a complaint when a customer:

- asks for services. However, a repeat request for service may be a complaint about inaction or delay.
- asks for an update. However, some repeat requests for updates may be complaints about inaction or delay.
- asks for information about, or an explanation of, policies or procedures.
- provides feedback or expresses an opinion and doesn't explicitly or implicitly expect a resolution or outcome.
- applies for an internal review of an administratively reviewable decision. If no legislated review or appeal rights exist, an expression of dissatisfaction with a decision or a decision-making process would be a complaint. Some organisations may choose to combine their recording and reporting on complaints and legislated internal review requests.

You can build a clearer picture of what your customers like and don't like by recording suggestions, inquiries and compliments separately to complaints. This creates a more balanced view of how they perceive and experience your programs and services than if you were to only record complaints.



Case study: understand what is and isn't a complaint

A local council receives a phone call from a resident about rubbish being dumped in a creek. They report that it has attracted rats and flies and smells unpleasant. The caller wants to know who they can contact to get the creek cleaned up.

Local councils are responsible for removing rubbish, so this is a request for a service rather than a complaint.

If the resident called again and said that the rubbish was still there, the council should consider this a complaint.

Don't assume that a lack of complaints means you are doing a good job. Relatively few disgruntled customers are motivated to complain. Every complaint you receive could represent a much larger group of dissatisfied people.³

If your organisation isn't receiving any complaints at all, this might be because your complaint management system doesn't let or doesn't encourage or make it easy for the public to give feedback or make complaints – or customers might be afraid of detrimental action if they do complain.

Figure 3: Language people use when making a complaint



³ L Abdol Latif, R Bahroom and P Fard, *Improving Accessibility and Responsiveness in a Complaints Management System*, E-Leader, Singapore, 2010.

2. Understand the barriers to making a complaint

Some customers may find it difficult to complain. It is important to understand what barriers they may face, and doing this will help your organisation:

- improve accessibility
- simplify the complaints process
- be more receptive and responsive to complaints.

The following table outlines some of the barriers customer may face.

Table 2: Barriers customers may face

Barrier	Explanation
Power imbalance	A customer may fear or distrust government authorities or feel powerless to complain to a government agency.
Fear of detrimental action	A customer may fear that complaining will lead to detrimental action, damage to their reputation or strained relationships. If a customer is relying on your organisation to provide them with a service, including income or social support, they may be concerned that their service could be negatively impacted if they make a complaint.
Lack of support or guidance	A customer may not have the support they need to successfully navigate the complaint process.
Complex complaint procedures	Lengthy or complicated procedures can stop customers from making a complaint if they see the process as difficult or time consuming.
Lack of awareness	A customer may not be aware of their right to complain. Also, they may not understand the complaint process or the different channels for voicing their concerns.
Feeling that making a complaint is pointless	A customer may think that nothing will change and not be motivated to complain. They may believe that the organisation won't take them seriously.
Previous negative experiences	If a complaint involves reliving a negative or traumatic experience, it can lead to uncomfortable or distressing emotions. These emotions may stop a customer from complaining altogether. Also, a customer may have had previous negative experiences when complaining to another organisation. This may stop them from complaining in other contexts.
Cultural differences	Some cultures consider complaining to be inappropriate or impolite. A complaint system may not suitably accommodate cultural differences or preferences.

To overcome and mitigate these barriers, apply the NSW Government's [6 principles for effective complaint management](#).

3. Embed the 6 principles for effective complaint management

Effective complaints management needs both a proactive and a person-first approach.

A **proactive approach** involves anticipating and preventing complaints. Organisations can do this by seeking customer feedback, monitoring customer satisfaction and expectations, and acting to improve service quality and performance.

A **person-first approach** involves considering and meeting the needs of individual customers where possible. It also involves providing convenient and accessible ways to complain.

This chapter outlines how the 6 principles for effective complaint management contribute to a person-first approach.

Figure 4: 6 principles for effective complaint management



The 6 principles were originally 'commitments' and were developed in collaboration with NSW Government organisations to ensure that they were practical and responsive to a range of organisational environments, as well as what complainants want. They are equally relevant for NSW Government departments, local councils and community service providers.

All organisations should ensure that their complaint management system helps them fulfil these principles.



01 | Respectful treatment

3.1 Respectful treatment

Applying this principle will mean that your organisation will:

- treat complainants with courtesy and respect
- require staff to treat complainants with courtesy and respect in your complaint policy
- be responsive
- train public contact staff in customer service, complaint handling and management of complex complaints and complaints from people in distress, who require additional support or have diverse needs
- take appropriate action when your organisation receives complaints about its staff
- ensure that people can complain without fear of detrimental action.



For more information, see:

- NSW Ombudsman, [Respectful treatment](#)
- NSW Ombudsman, [Managing unreasonable conduct by a complainant](#)
- NSW Government, [Act with empathy](#).



02 | Information and accessibility

3.2 Information and accessibility

Applying this principle will mean that your organisation will:

- make it easy for customers to complain, and help them to lodge their complaints
- provide easy-to-access information about the complaints process in different formats and channels
- tell customers about:
 - how to complain, for example, online, email, in person or in writing
 - what information you need from customers to assess their complaints
 - what to expect from the complaints process
 - who to contact for more information
 - how complaints have helped improve your organisation's service.



For more information, see:

- NSW Ombudsman, [Information and accessibility](#)
- NSW Government, [Easy to access](#)
- NSW Government, [Social media guidelines](#)
- World Wide Web Consortium, [Web content accessibility guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#).



03 | Communication

3.3 Communication

Applying this principle will mean that your organisation will:

- keep complainants informed about the status of their complaint
- acknowledge that you've received their complaint, and tell the complainant:
 - who to contact for more information about their complaint
 - what the next steps will be in the complaint process
 - how long your organisation will likely need to finalise the complaint
- use the most appropriate channel to communicate with the complainant, and:
 - update them about their complaint's progress regularly (as specified in your procedure)
 - tell them the outcome of their complaint and explain the reason for it (for example, tell them what action was taken and how you reached your decision)
 - explain and apologise when things go wrong.



For more information, see:

- NSW Ombudsman, [Communication](#)
- NSW Government, [Explain what to expect.](#)



04 | Taking ownership

3.4 Taking ownership

Applying this principle will mean that your organisation will:

- make sure that staff who manage complaints are suitably trained and skilled
- allocate a complaint to one person (or one team) and give complainants their contact details
- generally, have frontline staff resolve a complaint themselves and escalate serious or complex complaints to a more appropriate officer or team
- let the complainant know if you transfer the complaint to another person or team.



For more information, see:

- NSW Ombudsman, [Taking ownership](#)
- NSW Government, [Resolve the situation.](#)



05 | Timeliness

3.5 Timeliness

Applying this principle will mean that your organisation will:

- do your best to deal with complaints as quickly as possible
- set and make public expected timeframes for finalising complaints
- set these timeframes to reflect the different levels of seriousness, urgency and complexity across the complaints you receive
- contact the complainant and, if there are unavoidable delays when dealing with a complaint, explain why.



For more information, see:

- NSW Ombudsman, [Timeliness](#)
- NSW Government, [Respect my time.](#)



06 | Transparency

3.6 Transparency

Applying this principle will mean that your organisation will:

- let complainants know that you record and analyse information from your complaints process
- explain that this includes the:
 - number of complaints received
 - number of complaints finalised
 - percentage of complaints acknowledged and finalised within your key performance indicators (KPIs)
 - issues raised by complaints
 - actions and improvements taken in response to complaints
 - systemic issues identified
 - number of requests received for internal or external review.



For more information, see:

- NSW Ombudsman, [Transparency](#)

4. Create a positive complaint management culture

For a complaint management system to be effective, it needs a positive complaint management culture. Organisations with this culture understand that:

- people receiving public services or publicly funded community services have a democratic right to complain if they are dissatisfied with their service or treatment
- complaints provide valuable feedback
- complaints present an opportunity to improve systems, services and staff
- recording and analysing complaint data supports system and service improvement.

To foster a positive culture, leaders should place value on a complaint management system and invest in resources to sustain it.

This chapter sets out the 2 key tasks for building a positive complaint management system:

1. championing a positive complaints management culture
2. understanding the benefits.

4.1 Leaders champion a positive culture

A positive complaint management culture is reflected in the attitudes and decisions of an organisation's leaders. Senior leaders need to champion the complaint management system and demonstrate that complaints are welcomed and valuable. They encourage all staff to actively commit to developing and improving the system.

A strong leadership team prioritises and champions effective complaint management by:

- establishing a robust governance and operational framework
- sending a clear message to staff that complaints are valuable
- sending a clear message to staff that they won't tolerate reprisal or other detrimental action against complainants
- being active in requesting and analysing data about complaints
- changing services, systems, practices, procedures or products if complaint data identifies issues, and communicating these changes to staff and the public
- emphasising that the primary purpose of complaint management is to address issues and improve systems, not to attribute blame. This includes reassuring staff that mistakes can be seen as an opportunity to improve, rather than to reprimand. However, leaders should be prepared to take action, including disciplinary or performance management action, on substantiated cases of misconduct.

The best complaint management systems are reflective, self-critical and innovative. They foster a culture that looks for opportunities to continuously improve programs and services.⁴

⁴ Commonwealth Ombudsman, *Better Practice Complaint Handling Guide*, February 2023, p 33 <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/290365/Better-Practice-Complaint-Handling-Guide-February-2023.pdf> ('Complaint Handling Guide').

4.2 Everyone experiences the benefits

A well-managed complaint system benefits complainants, staff and the organisation.

For complainants, an effective complaint management system can:

- provide solutions
- address problems before they escalate⁵
- increase satisfaction, enhance trust and improve interactions with the organisation
- provide reassurance that the organisation is committed to addressing and resolving problems.

Often the relationship with a member of the public (customer) is ongoing because they continue to rely on your organisation's services. If a complaint isn't managed well, it can negatively impact customers who access your services, and your relationship with them.

On the other hand, customers whose complaints are managed well report higher than average overall customer satisfaction. Building rapport with and helping to resolve problems for customers can positively impact job satisfaction.⁶ When an organisation supports its staff to help these complainants, staff attitudes to the complainant and the organisation are more positive.⁷

For organisations, an effective complaint management system can:

- increase organisational efficiency and cost effectiveness
- help your organisation understand your customers' behaviour, needs and preferences
- produce data and insights that support continuous improvement
- inform decisions about future services and programs
- enhance your organisation's reputation and strengthen public trust in government and the services funded by government
- reduce escalation to external dispute resolution agencies (for example, ombudsman offices, tribunals or courts).

The investment by a public organisation on effective complaint management generates a positive return; the benefits include those listed above. On the other hand, inadequate investment in effective frontline complaint management imposes greater costs for organisations, including those arising because of:

- the extra resources needed for complaint escalation
- the potential negative impact on staff morale.⁸

⁵ Adapted from Commonwealth Ombudsman, *Complaint Handling Guide* (n 4), p 4.

⁶ NSW Department of Customer Service, *NSW Whole-of-government Complaint Experience Survey: Detailed Report*, February 2015.

⁷ NSW Department of Customer Service, *NSW Whole-of-government Complaint Experience Survey: Detailed Report*, February 2015, p 13.

⁸ T Sourdin et al, *Return on Investment of Effective Complaints Management: Public Sector Organisations*, June 2020, p 13 <<https://www.socap.org.au/public/98/files/Documents/Research/Report%20Summary%20ROI-Report-Public%20Org%20-June%202020.pdf>>. The Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals Australia (SOCAP) in association with Australasian Ombudsman Offices commissioned this research.

5. Design a clear policy and procedures

This chapter explains what an organisation needs to do to make their policy and procedures clear and consistent. This includes:

- documenting who's responsible for what
- making your policy widely accessible.

5.1 Document who's responsible for what

Make sure that your policy clearly states your commitment to managing complaints effectively. Then support your policy with procedures that cover:

- how you manage complaints
- who is involved in the process
- the specific roles and responsibilities of all those involved in finalising a complaint.

When developing policy and procedures, consider your organisation's:

- relevant statutory and regulatory requirements
- financial, operational and other organisational requirements.

It is also critical to seek input from complainants, staff and other stakeholders in designing the system.⁹

Your complaints policy and procedures need to describe:

- relevant terms and definitions, including the definition of a complaint (see [Key terms](#)).
- guiding principles (see [chapter 3: The 6 principles for effective complaint management](#))
- end-to-end process for managing complaints, with relevant timeframes and clear expectations about communication points with complainants
- how to record the receipt, handling, decision-making and outcomes of complaints
- procedures for monitoring trends in complaints
- steps for analysing, reporting and reviewing complaint topics and outcomes.

Make sure that your staff have access to the policy and procedures and know how to implement them. Documenting who is responsible for what will help staff do this. Also make sure that you regularly review and update your policy and procedures in line with current practice.

The following table outlines complaint management responsibilities and authority at each level in an organisation. It is adapted from AS 10002:2022.¹⁰

⁹ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2).

¹⁰ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), pp 7–9.

Table 3: Complaint management responsibilities and authority

Level in organisation	Responsibilities
Governing body (that is, executive, board or committee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approves the policy and its review schedule • receives regular reports about complaint volumes, average response timeframes, number of open complaints, systemic issues and media reports • ensures that the complaints system is adequately funded and resourced • ensures that relevant regulators and agencies receive reports and disclosures.
Head of organisation (that is, Chief Executive Officer or Secretary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develops and promotes awareness about the complaint management policy and procedures within the organisation • ensures that the public can easily access and understand the policy • appoints a complaint management manager where possible and appropriate • ensures a process for escalating any significant complaints or systemic issues identified through complaints • ensures a process for regular reporting to the governing body (that is, executive, board or committee).
The manager who is responsible for the complaint management system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishes a process for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the complaint management system's performance • reports to senior management about the system's operation • identifies and allocates the resources needed for an effective system • reports to staff and other stakeholders about any concerns identified through complaints • implements and maintains the system, including staff recruitment, training and guidance, and technology implementation • sets and meets key performance indicators • implements internal and external escalation procedures for unresolved complaints.
Operational managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensures that the system is implemented in their respective areas • liaises with the manager responsible for the complaint management system • ensures that staff are aware of the system and the benefits of complaints • ensures that staff and the public can easily access the policy • reports to management about staff actions and decisions • ensures monitoring data is recorded and available for senior management to review.
Staff who manage complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participates in training in complaint management and the procedures relevant to their roles • identifies and responds effectively to complainants' support and communication needs and preferences • treats complainants with respect and courtesy • follows all complaint management reporting, policy and procedural requirements.



For more information, see our [checklist for developing a complaint management policy](#).

5.2 Make your policy widely accessible

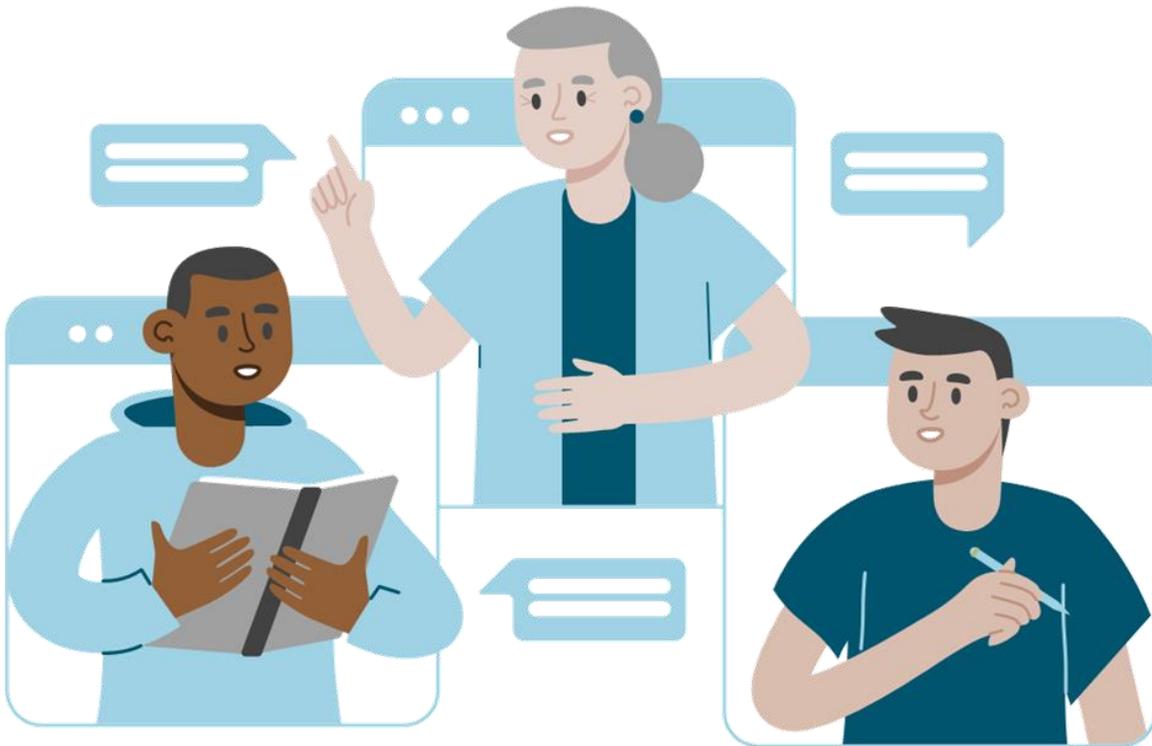
Public information

An effective complaint management system makes the process easy for customers. It provides clear, publicly available information about how to complain and what types of support are available.¹¹

Make sure that your policy is available to the public, especially to your customers.

Complainants need to know about the entire complaint process, including who they can talk to if they're dissatisfied with how their complaint is managed or the outcome of it.¹²

We discuss accessibility in more detail in [section 10.2](#) (under the heading 'Make your complaints policy as accessible as possible').



¹¹ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), p 20.

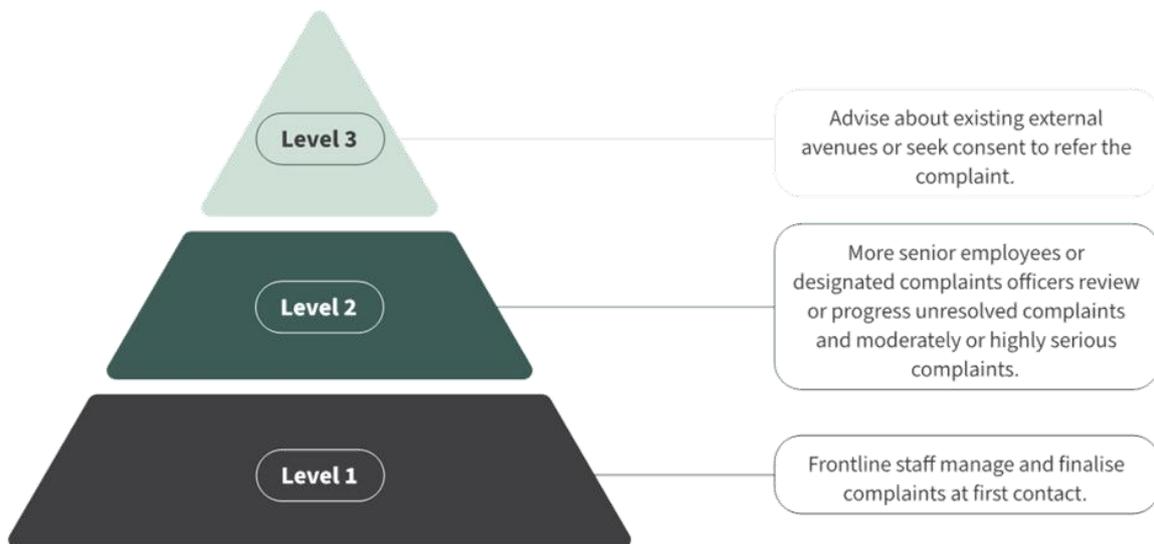
¹² Consistent with Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), p 7.

6. Introduce a 3-level model for escalating complaints

This chapter explains how to escalate complaints when a complainant disagrees with your decisions, outcomes or actions.

An effective complaint management system has 3 levels of escalation. Make sure that you tell the complainant when you escalate their complaint. The following figure summarises what happens at each level, and highlights that most complaints are dealt with at the first point of contact.

Figure 5: 3-level model for complaint escalation



6.1 Address a complaint at the first point of contact

Ideally, your organisation's frontline or first-point-of-contact staff will resolve most complaints. This is known as early resolution. A situation where the complainant only has to explain their situation once benefits both your organisation and the complainant.

To achieve early resolution wherever possible, clearly explain to frontline staff:

- what types of complaints they can deal with directly
- what options they have to address a complaint
- what authority they have
- when they should delegate or escalate a complaint to a colleague or senior employee for help with early resolution.

You'll also need to train and supervise your frontline staff. This training should include clear guidance about which complaints they should escalate to level 2: to their line manager, dedicated complaint management officer or senior management.¹³

For more information on frontline complaint management see [chapter 7: Enable a skilled and supported team](#) and [chapter 9: Step-by-step process](#).



Case study: address a complaint at the first point of contact

You receive a complaint that your organisation has deducted a payment plan instalment from the complainant's account twice.

The complainant explains that they are a single parent on a pension and only have \$12 in their account. Organisational policy permits that, in extenuating circumstances, a refund can be actioned immediately by a frontline complaint handler. Taking this into account, the complaint handler agrees to issue a refund, clarifying that it may take 2 days for the complainant to receive this in their account.

This is an appropriate response because the:

- complainant's request is reasonable
- request is in line with organisational policy
- complaint doesn't need to be escalated to a team leader or senior manager.



¹³ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), pp 38–39.

6.2 Escalate a complaint

Sometimes frontline staff need to refer complaints to level 2 management. This includes complaints that are:

- unresolved
- fall outside a staff member's delegation or expertise
- involve serious allegations, complex issues or multiple staff members
- likely to result in significant disciplinary or other action by your organisation.

When creating your complaint management policy and procedures, make sure that you consider and include what a reasonable timeframe for escalation is.

A level-2 escalation can include:

- a review of the original complaint decision by a more senior staff member
- a facilitated resolution
- an investigation.

When a more senior officer or specialist officer reviews the initial decision that was made in response to a complaint, they may confirm or change the original decision.

Generally, senior officers have the power to overturn previous decisions and apply remedies as they have delegated authority to do so.

Facilitated resolutions involve resolving the complaint in a way that both the organisation and the complainant agree with. A representative of your organisation might speak to the complainant, or an independent conciliator might speak with both parties. Where appropriate, the facilitation may be a discussion between a frontline staff member, who is the subject of a complaint, and the person who complained about them.

An investigation may be appropriate when complaints raise significant issues for your organisation or the complainant. Depending on the circumstances, the investigation may be conducted by an appropriate manager, staff from an internal audit, ethical standards or investigation unit, or a contracted external investigator.¹⁴

For more information about investigations, see [section 9.5: Decide what to do](#).

¹⁴ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2) pp 38–39.



Case study: escalating a complaint

A customer attended a service centre and transferred to themselves ownership of a vehicle along with personalised number plates that had been in their father's name for 50 years. Sometime later, the customer realised that since they transferred ownership, they were being charged for the personalised number plate costs annually.

When they looked into the fees, they found out that the vehicle registration body's policy stipulated that when ownership of a vehicle with personalised plates was transferred between immediate family members, and the right process was followed, no annual fee would be charged. However, the customer had not been told at the time of the transfer that they needed to complete a specific form before they could be exempted from the fee.

The customer raised concerns with the service centre several times. Although the service centre consulted with the vehicle registration body, the issue remained unresolved. The service centre was responsible for processing the paperwork submitted by the complainant, while the vehicle registration body was responsible for the administration of number plates, including the policy and procedure relating to fees.

The customer was unhappy that neither agency had taken ownership of the matter, and they were unable to get a satisfactory outcome despite months of actively pursuing the matter, including by making a formal complaint.

Following receipt of the formal complaint, the service centre decided to escalate the complaint for review by a senior officer, who had no prior involvement with the matter.

The senior officer engaged with the vehicle registration body and worked effectively with the service centre staff to identify what went wrong, and how the problem could be resolved. The senior officer also found that navigating the complaint management process was made more difficult for customers because functions were split between the two agencies.

The recurring annual fee requirement was removed, and the complainant received a refund of past fees paid and an apology. The senior officer also recommended re-engineering the complaint process to make handover between the agencies more seamless.

6.3 Refer the complainant to an external review mechanism

If you cannot address a complaint satisfactorily at level 2, you may need to advise the complainant about any existing external avenues of review or seek their consent to refer their complaint.

External review mechanisms could involve:

- externally facilitated alternative dispute resolution (ADR)
- external investigation
- external review or appeal.

Sometimes a neutral or independent third party can help settle an escalating dispute. This is where externally facilitated ADR comes in.

Both private and public sector organisations use professional mediators to facilitate formal face-to-face discussion to help parties clarify issues and reach a solution everyone agrees with.

The processes involved with ADR are mediation, conciliation, expert evaluation and arbitration. This information is adapted from AS 10002:2022.¹⁵

ADR processes

Mediation is when an independent person:

- helps parties listen to each other
- defines the disputed issues
- determines what everyone agrees on
- clarifies what is important to each person
- develops options that resolve each issue and consider each person's wants and needs.

The aim is to reach an outcome that satisfies everyone.

Conciliation is when a third-party conciliator helps parties communicate their concerns and develops options for a resolution.

This is an opportunity for both parties to openly discuss and identify the relevant issues. A conciliator may advise the parties and help them move towards an acceptable outcome. A conciliator will not force an outcome on the parties.

Expert evaluation is when a person with substantive expertise gives advice about appropriate standards for and approaches to the disputed issues. Use an expert when you can't resolve an outcome using the dispute resolution process.

Arbitration is when a third-party arbitrator imposes an outcome. Arbitration often happens after you've already tried mediation or conciliation.¹⁶

¹⁵ Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022, (n 2) 37.

¹⁶ Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022, (n 2) 37.

Accountability organisations exist that externally investigate allegations within their jurisdictions.¹⁷ What they can do varies.

Government and industry accountability bodies receive and assess complaints from the public about individuals or organisations. Where appropriate, you should refer dissatisfied complainants to these bodies, for example, the NSW Ombudsman or the Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC).

Make sure staff know about complainants' options for external reviews and appeals. If a complainant is dissatisfied, staff should let them know about appropriate escalation options, including:

- external reviews and appeals
- any relevant time limits.¹⁸

Also make sure that your staff are aware of the duty to report or notify information arising from certain complaints to external agencies, such as referring criminal allegations to the police and corrupt conduct to the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). These duties to report or notify can arise at any stage of the complaint process. See [section 10.5: Complaints about criminal or corrupt conduct](#) for further information and other types of conduct that may need to be reported to external agencies.



¹⁷ Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022 (n 2) p 40.

¹⁸ Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022 (n 2) p 40.

External organisations

Parliamentary or industry ombudsman. Examples include:

- NSW Ombudsman manages complaints about most NSW government agencies, local councils and community service providers.
- Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) is the government-approved dispute resolution scheme for NSW electricity and gas customers, and some water customers.

Professional oversight bodies or professional registration bodies responsible for maintaining standards within professions. Examples are:

- Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC) acts to protect public health and safety by resolving, investigating and prosecuting complaints about health care.
- Office of the NSW Legal Services Commissioner receives all complaints about lawyers in New South Wales.
- Psychology Council of NSW manages complaints about the clinical care and treatment, professional behaviour or health of registered psychologists and students in NSW.

Anti-corruption commissions. Examples are:

- NSW Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC) is an independent organisation to protect the public interest, prevent breaches of public trust and guide the conduct of public officials in the NSW public sector.
- Law Enforcement Conduct Commission (LECC) encourages members of the public and public officials to report suspected serious misconduct or serious maladministration involving the NSW Police Force or NSW Crime Commission.

Independent industry regulatory bodies and government regulatory bodies. Examples are:

- NSW Fair Trading is responsible for the administration of consumer protection laws in NSW.
- NSW Safe Work is the workplace health and safety regulator in NSW.
- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian implements the Reportable Conduct Scheme and Child Safe Scheme and oversees accreditation and child-safe practices in voluntary and statutory out-of-home care, children's employment and other child-related organisations.

Civil and administrative tribunals. Examples are:

- NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) is a tribunal that hears and decides civil and administrative cases in New South Wales.
- NSW Office of the Registrar General reviews decisions if a person is not satisfied with a decision of the Registrar General or NSW Land Registry Services (NSW LRS) made in the exercise of a titling and registry function.
- NSW Land and Environment Court reviews certain local and State government decisions under planning or environmental laws or mining laws.

Alternative dispute resolution service providers. There are many ADR providers. They range from government provided and publicly funded dispute resolution organisations to private professional organisations.

Other trade or industry bodies.

7. Enable a skilled and supported team

A skilled and supported frontline team is essential for managing complaints effectively. It's important to hire and retain experienced and customer-focused complaints staff.¹⁹

How these staff interact with customers who have become complainants shapes their perceptions of your organisation. When they feel that they have been treated respectfully and fairly, they are more likely to:

- trust your organisation
- be satisfied with your services and programs
- have a positive experience with complaint handlers, increasing complainant and staff satisfaction.

Frontline staff need the knowledge, skills, experience and support to respond sensitively to all complainants, and help customers who might need additional support to complain.

This chapter explains:

- what attributes to look for when recruiting frontline staff
- what types of training usually benefit frontline staff
- how your organisation can support its frontline staff, especially in cases of vicarious trauma
- what resources frontline staff need to be effective.

7.1 Recruit and train frontline staff

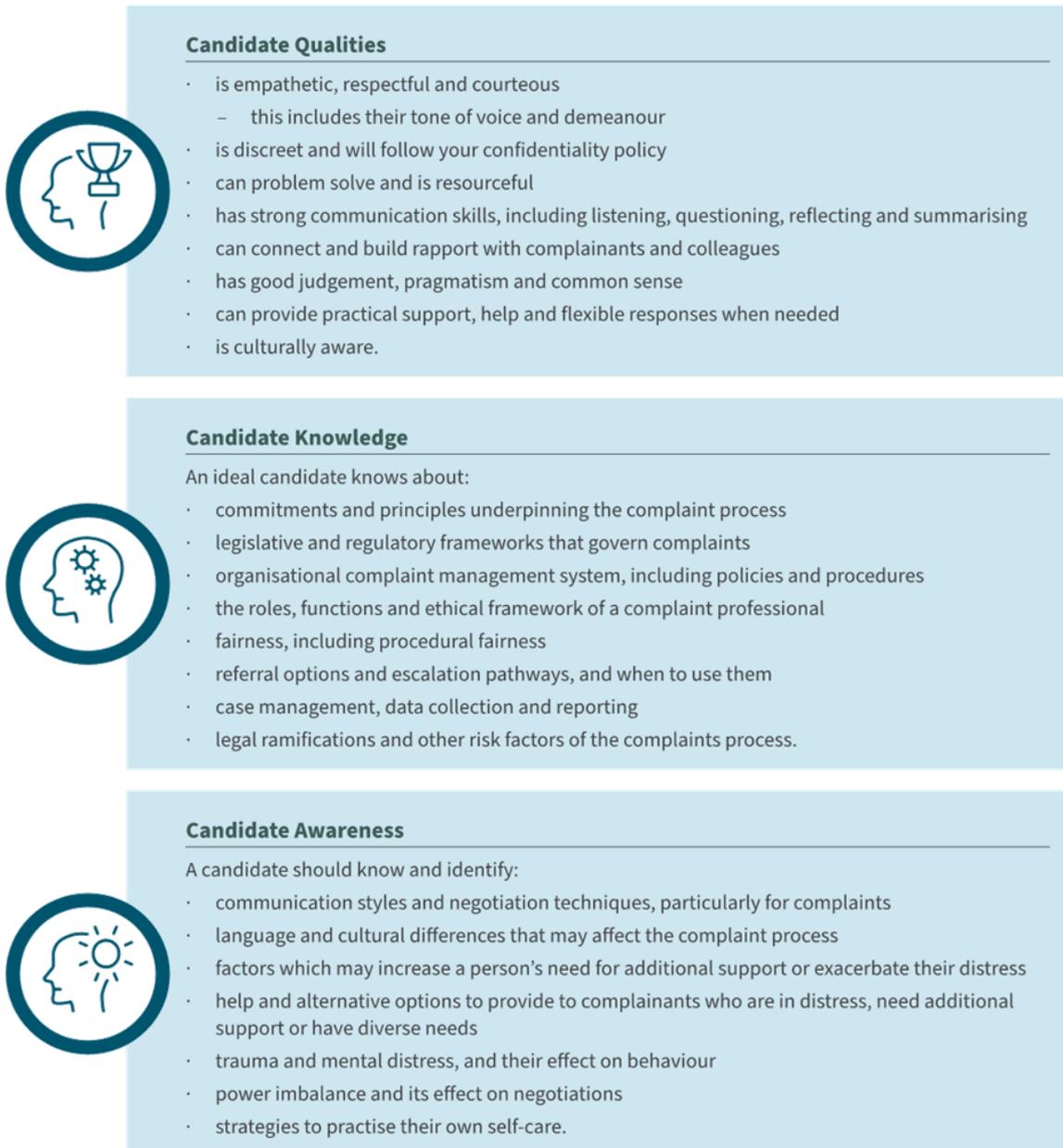
When recruiting new complaint management staff, look out for the attributes of an effective complaint handler. We've adapted the following 3 lists from AS 10002:2022.²⁰



¹⁹ T Sourdin et al (n 8), p 6.

²⁰ Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022 (n 2), App F.

Figure 6: Attributes of an effective complaint handler



Once your organisation has recruited complaint management staff, managers are responsible for their induction and ongoing complaint management training. Best practice is to provide all new complaint management staff with training during their onboarding, then provide regular refresher training while they work for your organisation.

A mix of internal and external training may suit your staff. Larger organisations may prefer to deliver their own internal training to address specific skill and knowledge gaps. Peers can also support each other and share what they know and have learned on the job – this can be a valuable training tool too.²¹

To make your complaints process more accessible, consider training frontline staff in:

- mental health first aid
- disability confidence
- cultural competence
- trauma-informed approaches to complaint management
- enabling and managing storytelling by the complainant.

Make sure your organisation records what training your complaint management staff receive.²²



²¹ T Sourdin et al (n 8), p 45.

²² Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022, (n 2), p 17.

²³ Knowmore, *Taking Care of You; For Workers in the Field*, 2013, p 1.

7.2 Support frontline staff

Frontline complaint handlers are susceptible to stress, which can occur in response to a single event or can accumulate over time. Everyone reacts differently to stressful events – some people react immediately after an event, while others react much later. Stress may also cause a staff member to react strongly to a minor event that follows a series of stressful events. If not managed properly, staff or team stress can lead to:

- professional burnout
- decreased productivity
- increased sick leave and absenteeism
- poor team morale
- team dysfunction
- increased work-related stress claims.

Responding to complainants can be difficult, especially when complainants are distressed or angry or behave unreasonably, for example being abusive or threatening. It is normal for staff to feel stressed or anxious in these situations. Managers need to help and support staff to recognise and respond to complainants presenting with heightened emotions and complex or challenging behaviours. See [section 10.1: Complainants with challenging or complex behaviours](#) for more information.

Frontline staff are also at risk of vicarious trauma, also known as secondary trauma or compassion fatigue. When frontline staff listen and respond to customers who have experienced trauma, they might take on those feelings which may be anger, but also sadness or a sense of hopelessness. It's a normal response to being repeatedly exposed to and empathetically engaging with customers experiencing trauma.²³ The more a person is exposed to this trauma or traumatic material, the greater their risk of experiencing their own trauma or stress.

Staff experiencing vicarious trauma may be more likely to develop a mental illness (such as anxiety or depression) and misuse drugs or alcohol.

Through constant exposure to other's experiences, frontline staff might experience:

- cognitive changes that affect their belief systems
- intrusive thoughts
- disturbed thoughts
- difficulties setting boundaries
- withdrawal from others
- loss of pleasure in life.²⁴

You have a responsibility to support staff who are experiencing stress due to workplace situations, including vicarious trauma. Acting preventatively can also assist to reduce the chances of frontline staff becoming traumatised.

To foster a culture that supports staff to care for themselves, prioritising wellbeing and self-care is crucial. Self-care strategies vary from person to person, so it's important that managers support their staff to do what works best for them. Managers need to:

- identify what type of support staff members need
- ensure that staff and management know and recognise signs of stress or burnout
- consider structuring workloads to rotate staff through positions with high exposure to stressful situations
- create a work culture that supports staff wellbeing, builds resilience and celebrates achievements
- manage leave planning and honour scheduled breaks
- monitor and manage workload
- implement mechanisms that support staff to speak up about concerns and issues in the workplace.

Managers should also encourage staff to:

- use self-care strategies, and provide guidance to staff on helpful self-care strategies
- access employee assistance programs (EAPs) for regular supervision, debriefing and individualised support
- reflect critically by talking to a colleague, manager, counsellor or support person, or reflect on their own, for example by writing in a journal.²⁵

It is also very important that your organisation supports staff members who have been complained about. Being complained about can significantly affect the health, wellbeing and work practices of staff members. Treat complaints about staff members objectively and fairly to minimise any trauma or harm to the staff member being complained about. See [section 10.6: Complaints about staff members](#) for more information.

7.3 Provide frontline staff with the resources they need

An effective complaint management system needs to be adequately resourced. This includes:

- enough staff to manage the volume and complexity of complaints
- trained staff
- adequate materials and equipment, such as computer software to support your human resources.²⁶

²⁴ Victoria State Government, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, *Framework for Trauma-informed Practice*, 2022, p 4 <<https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/publications/framework-trauma-informed-practice>>.

²⁵ Victoria State Government, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, *Framework for Trauma-informed Practice*, 2022, p 46 <<https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/publications/framework-trauma-informed-practice>>.

²⁶ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), p 13.

8. Commit to continuous improvement

An effective complaint management system provides organisations with valuable insights into trends, particularly when there are a lot of complaints. This chapter explains how to monitor complaints and review complaint data. Regularly reviewing complaint data shows your organisation's commitment to continuous improvement through:

- evaluating the effectiveness of your complaint management system
- identifying any problems, gaps or areas for improvement in your system
- adapting quickly to changes in what complainants want and need
- understanding trends
- measuring the quality of your services.

8.1 Monitor complaints

Recording complaints in a systematic way will help your organisation monitor, analyse and report on them more easily.

You can monitor and report on the number or proportion of:

- complaints received
- complaints addressed at the point at which they are made
- complaints acknowledged after an agreed time
- complaints finalised after a set time
- complaints referred to external dispute resolution agencies
- repeat complaints or recurrent issues that have been complained about
- improvements in procedures due to complaints.²⁷

You can also monitor complaints by surveying or auditing complainant satisfaction.

Managers need to regularly report to senior management about complaint trends and systemic issues. They should also report about how well the system is working and how to improve it.²⁸

When senior management considers complaint trends and issues, this fosters an organisational culture that values complaints as a source of feedback on the organisation's performance.

The complaint system should be subject to organisational cyber security controls and action protocols for managing risks and breaches, and privacy and confidentiality policies and procedures.²⁹

²⁷ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022*, (n 2) p 54.

²⁸ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022*, (n 2) p 9.

²⁹ NSW Department of Customer Service, *Towards a Customer-centric Government*, May 2021, p 14 <<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/towards-a-customer-centric-government.pdf>>.



Case study: monitor, analyse and report on complaint data

An organisation receives multiple complaints from separate customers because the organisation denied their applications for a funding grant. In all these complaints, the applicants were not aware that they had to provide specific documents.

The organisation investigates the complaints and identifies that it needs to improve the information on its website about how to apply for a grant.

Make sure that you monitor the impact of any changes made as a result of information and insights gained from the complaints process.

To help reduce complaints, proactively and clearly communicate with the public about your new programs and policies, and reasons for decisions. If you change a policy, procedure or process because of a complaint or feedback, let staff and complainants know. This helps to overcome the perception that ‘nothing ever seems to change.’

8.2 Audit complaint data

You can audit complaint data to improve the complaint management process.

An audit can help you assess whether:

- complaint management procedures follow organisational policy and objectives
- staff follow the complaint management procedures
- the current process achieves your objectives.

Audits also highlight the strengths and weaknesses of your process and show you any areas for improvement.

Interpret complaint data carefully. Quantitative data, such as response times, may tell you how well a system is working, but this doesn't provide the complete picture. For example, it may not tell you how satisfied complainants are. Similarly, you might notice an increase in complaints after you introduce a new complaint management process. This may indicate that the process is effective rather than an increase in dissatisfied complainants.³⁰

You should also audit your complaint management system. You can do this as part of a quality management system audit.³¹ To do this, you'll need to evaluate your processes against a set of criteria and objectives.³² In this case, you might audit your policies, procedures and standards for complaint management.³³

30 Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022*, (n 2) p 55.

31 Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022*, (n 2) p 56.

32 Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022*, (n 2) p 56.

33 Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022*, (n 2) p 56.

8.3 Analyse the underlying cause of complaints

A system focused analysis of complaints can help to determine the cause of a problem so that you can address and prevent any underlying issues. It looks beyond any human causes to find potential gaps in an organisation’s processes and systems.³⁴

It is important to look at what is generating complaints, especially where:

- several customers complain about a similar issue
- a single complaint could point to a major service delivery problem.

A systems analysis of complaints usually involves a team of staff from different levels in your organisation, from frontline staff to senior management. Your organisation’s size and available resources may dictate whether a systems review can be completed.

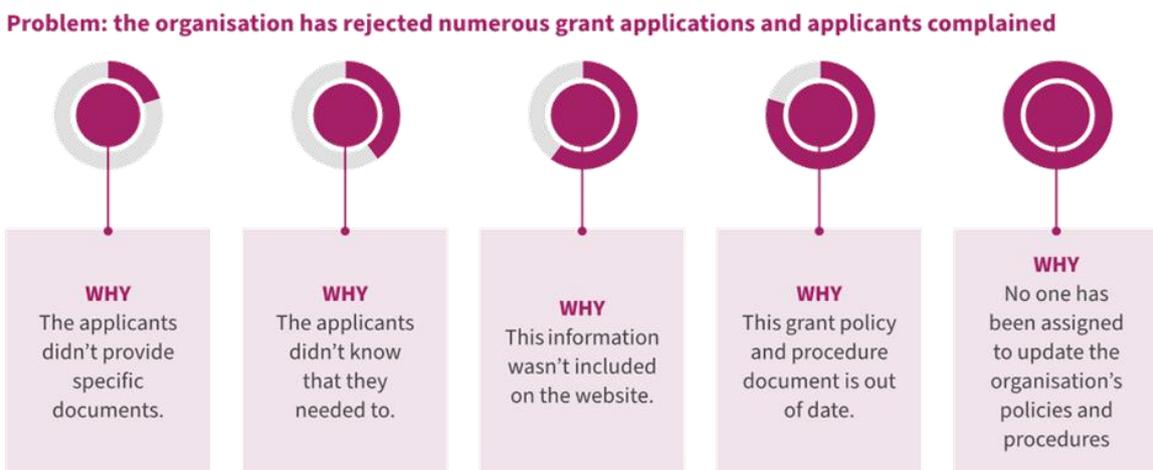
The team reviews complaint and feedback data and other information, such as risk registers, to identify problems with:

- extra, avoidable organisational costs
- reputational damage
- a regulatory approach
- service quality
- staff skill sets.³⁵

Make sure you report to management about the outcomes from any root cause analysis process.³⁶ After the analysis is complete, it is good practice for your organisation to develop a plan to implement any actions and delegate the responsibility for managing the plan to someone with appropriate authority and knowledge.

One tool that can be helpful in analysing the cause of complaints is the ‘5 whys.’ This involves asking why a problem happened 5 times. The answer to the 5th why should be the root cause of the problem. The following diagram provides an example.

Figure 7: The ‘5 whys’ root cause analysis process



34 Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022, (n 2) p 45.

35 Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022, (n 2) p45

36 Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022, (n 2) p45

Part B:

How do you manage complaints?



Part B explains how to manage complaints. This information is most relevant for:

- frontline staff
- managers who supervise and manage frontline staff.

Part B starts with a step-by-step process for handling complaints. It covers everything from understanding what is and what isn't a complaint to finalising complaints and keeping detailed records.

We've also included advice about how to deal with specific types of complainants and complaints. For example, how to respond to complainants who are in distress, need additional support or have diverse needs, or complaints alleging criminal conduct.



9. Step-by-step process

This chapter explains how to manage complaints in 6 steps.

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

01

Understand what is and isn't a complaint

A complaint is made whenever a person expresses dissatisfaction usually about your organisation's services, or how they have been treated by staff - in circumstances where they (implicitly or explicitly) expect or are entitled to expect a response to their concerns.

02

Receive and acknowledge the complaint

Clarify why the complainant is dissatisfied or concerned.

Determine what outcome they want, and whether you can help.

Let the complainant know that you've received their complaint.

Give them the key information they need, such as your initial assessment, timeframes and how and when you will be in contact with them about next steps.

03

Record the complaint

Record the complaint details using a unique identifier. You might need to use the complainant's own words when describing the issues.

04

Assess the complaint

Determine what the complaint is about and clarify its complexity, severity and urgency. Are there any risks or statutory requirements you need to consider? Talk to the complainant to assist your assessment and keep them informed.

05

Decide what to do

Consider whether to finalise the complaint at the first point of contact, gather more information or investigate the complaint.

Tell the complainant about the steps you will take.

06

Finalise the complaint

Advise the complainant about the outcome, actions, reasons and options for redress or appeal. Make sure to record the outcome and any actions taken. Acknowledge when things go wrong and apologise to the complainant. Consider whether redress is appropriate.

9.1 Is it a complaint?

You will need to identify whether the concern raised is a complaint, as defined in your organisation's policy and procedures. See [section 1: Define what is and isn't a complaint](#).

9.2 Receive, clarify and acknowledge the complaint

You might receive complaints through various channels:

- online or via social media
- by phone or email
- in person.

How to clarify a complaint

To manage a complaint well, clarify why the complainant is dissatisfied or concerned – it isn't always clear. You should also clarify what they want to happen or believe should have happened. To do this, encourage complainants to:

- send in any documents that support the complaint or can help in assessing the complaint
- state clearly what they think is wrong with a decision, action or inaction and what should have happened
- describe what they have already done to address the issue
- decide what outcome they want to achieve by formally complaining
- understand what the complaints process involves, and how long it is expected to take.

Remember to check that you are the right organisation for this complaint. Ask yourself: 'is the person complaining about my organisation's services, policies or decisions?'

You might need to help the complainant find the right pathway. This might involve:

- referring them to another organisation
- giving them contact details for the complaints department at another organisation
- giving them details of an advocate or support service.

Always use the most appropriate channel to communicate with the complainant. Ask the complainant what their preference is and aim to accommodate that.

Wherever possible, ensure you provide additional support to customers who need it. If the complainant needs communication support, translation services or has a disability that impacts on communication, consider what the best channel will be for communicating with them.³⁷ For more information, see [section 10.2: Complainants with diverse needs](#).

³⁷ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), p 13.

How to acknowledge a complaint

When you receive a complaint, let the complainant know that you have received it as soon as you can, or within 3 business days.³⁸ Keep copies of all acknowledgements. If your acknowledgement was verbal, record the details in the complaint file.

When letting the complainant know that you've received their complaint, also include:

- what their complaint unique identification number is (assign this when you receive the complaint)
- how the complaints process works and how long it takes (provide a realistic timeframe)
- how long will be needed to complete tasks related to the complaint
- who to contact for more information (name and contact details)
- what will happen next
- what the complainant needs to do, how and when (for example, send you more information)
- what the expectations and responsibilities are of the case officer, your organisation and the complainant.

Make sure you are clear about what you personally can and can't do: outline the possible outcomes and any limitations to achieving them. Don't make promises you can't keep – unmet expectations are a key cause of frustration and dissatisfaction with service delivery and complaint management.

If you can finalise a complaint promptly, you might be able to acknowledge the complaint and provide an outcome at the same time. Some complainants prefer or benefit from written communication, for example, if the complaint is complex or likely to be internally or externally reviewed.

Automated written responses acknowledging a complaint can ensure high quality and consistent acknowledgements.³⁹ It is important that a complaint handler or manager checks that these automated acknowledgements:

- have the right content
- are delivered in an appropriate way
- meet the needs of the complainant.



Case study: acknowledge the complaint

A person complained using your website's complaint form and indicated that they are deaf.

The person handling the complaint decides to acknowledge the complaint via email. In the acknowledgement email, the staff member asks the complainant to confirm if email is their preferred way to communicate or if text telephone (TTY), video call or sign language (AUSLAN) would be more appropriate.

The person emails back saying that email is their preference. The staff member then uses email to communicate with the complainant until the complaint is closed.

³⁸ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), p 4.

³⁹ Commonwealth Ombudsman, *Complaint Handling Guide* (n 4).

9.3 Record the complaint

After receiving, clarifying and acknowledging the complaint, start recording the complaint. This means tracking the complaint's progress from now until you finalise it.⁴⁰

Collecting complaint data effectively is fundamental to organisational accountability and improved service delivery. The 6 principles for effective complaint management set an expectation that NSW Government organisations will record and analyse complaint handling information.

What complaint data is used for

Organisations should keep full records about any complaints they receive. This allows organisations to analyse their complaints data effectively to help:

- streamline tasks
- identify complaint issues or trends and actions in response to them
- identify system issues or trends and actions in response to them
- assess whether complaint handling complies with your organisation's policies and procedures
- monitor complaint management timeframes
- improve communication with the public.

For example, if a complaint is formally investigated, the records you made early in the process could help the investigation.

Key information to record

- ✓ Unique identifier for each complaint
- ✓ Complainant's name, address and contact details
- ✓ Reason for the complaint, including a description of the complaint
- ✓ Information provided by the complainant (both verbal and written)
- ✓ Underlying causes of the complaint
- ✓ Dates you received and finalised the complaint
- ✓ Date and method used to contact the complainant
- ✓ Outcome requested and actual outcome
- ✓ Complainant's support or accessibility needs
- ✓ Actions responding to the complaint
- ✓ Organisations you referred the complainant to
- ✓ Information you gave the complainant
- ✓ Complainant's satisfaction with outcome
- ✓ Other complaints about the same issue or from the same complainant
- ✓ Free text 'comments' field.⁴¹

When recording the complaint description, consider using the complainant's words, including direct quotes, rather than summarising the complaint.

⁴⁰ Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022 (n 2), p 13.

⁴¹ Standards Australia, AS 10002:2022 (n 2), p 15.

How to manage personal information

Complaints can include personal information about:

- complainants
- staff who are the subject of a complaint
- third parties.

It is important to maintain the confidentiality of complaints and complainants. Any disclosure or use of personally identifiable information must adhere to NSW Government privacy laws and ethical obligations – only use relevant information to manage a complaint or address a system issue raised in a complaint, and only share personal information with staff on a need-to-know basis.

Make sure that your organisation's policy and procedure cover how to respond to requests for records made by a complainant or someone acting on their behalf. This might include:

- what time limits apply
- what statutory rights apply
- what type of information you can provide
- who you can give information to
- what format the information can be in
- how and when de-identified complaint data can be shared with the public or other organisations involved with the complaint.⁴²

Your organisation's policy and procedure should also clearly state the data collection policies that apply when complaint processes involve social media.

For more information about recordkeeping, see [section 9.6: Finalise the complaint and apologise when things go wrong](#).

9.4 Assess the complaint

After the initial steps outlined above, your next task is to assess the complaint. Use the questions below to guide your assessment.

How to assess the complainant's needs

Some complainants will be upfront and make their needs clear to you. Others will be more likely to come forward if you ask them what you can do to make the complaints process easier.

Start by considering the following questions:

- Is the complainant in distress? Do they need cultural, language or other supports? Is there anything about their current situation which is particularly stressful or difficult? What can you do to ensure the complaint process is accessible and sufficiently flexible to meet this person's needs or circumstances?
- Has someone complained on behalf of another person? Do you need consent from the impacted person themselves before investigating or asking for more information?
- Has the complainant already complained about this to your organisation, or another organisation, and received an outcome? If so, do not automatically dismiss their concerns but consider why they are making another complaint.

⁴² Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), p 51.

How to assess the complaint itself

Clarify the complexity of the issue with the following questions:

- Is the complaint simple to address? For example, is it based on a misunderstanding? Can the complaint be resolved with information or advice? Does the complaint cover multiple issues?
- Are other business units, departments or organisations involved? Do they need to be?
- Are there multiple complaints about the same issue? Is it more effective for one person or selected staff members to handle these complaints?

Decide how urgent the issue is with the following questions:

- Does the complaint raise potentially criminal or corruption allegations?
- Does the complaint raise allegations of staff misconduct?
- Do you need to prioritise or act urgently? For example, are there any health, safety or welfare concerns?
- Is the complainant concerned about facing reprisal or detrimental action for making a complaint? How can you address these concerns?
- Is there potential for the complaint to escalate?

Finally, use these questions to consider any broader issues:

- Is the complaint about events that happened a long time ago? Is it possible or practical to do anything about this now?
- Does the complaint potentially cover any systemic issues or administrative errors?
- Does the nature of the complaint – for example, an allegation of corrupt or illegal activity, or staff misconduct – mean you need to refer it to a specific person or team?
- Is the complaint from a staff member? If so, consider whether it is a Public Interest Disclosure (PID) – a PID is a report about a NSW public official's wrongdoing that meets the requirements of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022*. See [section 10.3: Complaints from staff members](#) for more information.
- Has the complainant copied in other agencies or stakeholders that could address the issue better? For example, members of parliament.
- Is the complainant's desired outcome achievable? Will you need to manage their expectations? Will you need to refer them elsewhere?
- What adverse impacts on any individual, the public and your organisation are possible? What are these impacts and how serious or urgent are they?

9.5 Decide what to do

After [assessing the complaint](#), decide how to address the issues it raises. You might decide to:

- resolve the complaint early, including referring it or the complainant to your specialist complaint handling team, another organisation or oversight body
- gather more information
- investigate the complaint.

How to resolve the complaint at the first point of contact

Where possible, manage and finalise complaints at the first point of contact. To do this, you'll need to:

- understand the key issues in the complaint
- understand the outcomes the complainant wants
- have enough information to make a sound decision
- be authorised to decide.

Your response to the complainant needs to be prompt, fair and reasonable. For example, you could use early resolution when the complaint involves a misunderstanding. Resolve this by explaining the misunderstanding at the first point of contact.

If a complaint is outside your organisation's responsibilities or jurisdiction, let the complainant know this as soon as possible and refer them to other agencies that might be able to help. Explain to the complainant, or their advocate or support person, that you have assessed their complaint, and another organisation would manage their complaint better. If needed, refer the complainant to a resource that explains the role of your organisation and the services it provides.

Ask the complainant if they agree to their complaint being referred to another agency. If they don't, you can decide that you can't do anything about the complaint and close it. Let the complainant know that you will close their file and not take any further action. You should also send the complainant details of your recommended referral so that they can contact the appropriate organisation.

Remember to consider if a complainant needs additional support and provide it if needed. For more information about complainants who are in distress, need additional support or have diverse needs, see [section 10.2: Complainants with diverse needs](#).

Consider whether you can and need to notify a relevant government agency about the complaint, such as NSW Police.

How to gather more information about the complaint

You need enough information to decide what to do. As a result, you might need more information from:

- the complainant
- the person, department or unit the complaint is about
- internal contacts, including subject matter experts
- colleagues with experience in similar matters
- legal counsel.

This might involve speaking or writing to the complainant or other parties to ask for more information.

Your information management system can help you identify:

- how your organisation managed similar complaints
- whether the complainant has previously contacted your organisation about this or similar issues
- what records are relevant to the complaint, for example, correspondence with the complainant or notes about the relevant decision or process.

If the complainant has already contacted your organisation, check whether their behaviour was challenging, complex or aggressive. You might need to consider this when asking for more information.

We discuss this further in [chapter 10: Specific types of complainants](#).

How to investigate the complaint

If you can't finalise the complaint early or after gathering more information, you might need to investigate it. Investigations are usually best for serious, complex or systemic issues.

Plan the investigation so that it's focused and stays on track. A plan is also useful if you need to hand the investigation over to someone else to complete, or if the complaint is appealed or reviewed.

An investigation plan defines the 'how', 'why' and 'when' of the investigation. How long and complex the plan is depends on what the complaint is about, how serious it is and how many issues it raises.

If the complaint is about staff misconduct, you might need to refer it to a specialist area within your organisation.

When investigating, remember to apply procedural fairness. This means that before you decide, you must give anyone under investigation an opportunity to:

- provide their version of events
- present relevant information.

The following section 'Finalise the complaint and apologise when things go wrong' discusses procedural fairness in more detail.



For more information, see:
Independent Commission Against Corruption,
[Factfinder: A guide to conducting internal investigations.](#)

9.6 Finalise the complaint and apologise when things go wrong

After deciding what to do, you'll need to finalise the complaint. When finalising a complaint, base your decision on fact and sound logic. To see whether the issues in a complaint are substantiated, weigh them against the available information.

Consider whether you can or need to do anything to fix the issues. You might also need to act on issues you find when gathering extra information, which are beyond the scope of the original complaint.

Questions to consider when finalising a complaint

- Has the complaint identified systemic issues?
- Does your organisation need to improve any systems, processes or policies?
- What caused the problem, and what could have prevented it?
- Do you need to repair the relationship with the complainant?
- What can you do to avoid escalating a difficult situation (if anything)?
- What support do staff who have been complained about need?
- Has your organisation supported other staff through the complaint or investigation process?
- Do staff need further training, counselling or supervision?

Once you've made your decision, contact the complainant using the most appropriate channel to let them know about your decision and acknowledge how the complaint affected them. Tell them the:

- outcome
- reasons for your decision
- actions taken to fix the issues in the complaint
- reasons for not acting, or reasons you couldn't achieve the complainant's desired outcome
- trends or systemic issues the complaint highlighted
- other options to resolve the complaint: ask for an internal review or appeal or complain to an external complaint management body.

In some jurisdictions, complainants have the right to an external review of your organisation's decisions. If this is the case, you must tell complainants about their rights.

Also ensure that your organisation implements, monitors and reports on outcomes in line with any reporting requirements.⁴³

Before you close a complaint, make sure you have recorded the key details of any:

- actions taken to address the complaint
- actions you could not take
- outcomes, including any substantiated aspects of the complaint, recommendations and decisions to approve or reject the recommendations
- follow-up actions needed.⁴⁴

How to ensure procedural fairness

Procedural fairness – or natural justice – is an important principle of good complaint handling and decision-making. You must observe the minimum legal requirements for procedural fairness in the complaint management process.

An organisation with a procedurally fair system:

- bases decisions on facts and acts without bias
- gives complainants reasons for decisions
- shows complainants the evidence that supports decisions
- explains reasons for not accepting a complainant's claims or information
- communicates clearly with complainants and preferably in a way that complainants can understand
- gives complainants an opportunity to respond to a decision (if applicable)
- allows complainants to provide supporting information before finalising the complaint (if applicable)
- has a review process available to complainants.⁴⁵

⁴³ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), p 15.

⁴⁴ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), p 15.

⁴⁵ Adapted from Commonwealth Ombudsman, *Complaint Handling Guide* (n 4), p 39.

How to apologise and offer a remedy when things go wrong

Be open to criticism or complaints about your organisation or yourself. Acknowledge when things go wrong and apologise to the complainant.

When deciding how to apologise, consider the circumstances of the case and the harm to or effect on the complainant. In your apology:

- describe what went wrong
- acknowledge that the action or inaction was incorrect, inappropriate or unreasonable
- acknowledge that the complainant has been affected by their experience
- accept responsibility for the wrong (this is protected from civil liability in NSW)
- include any actions or steps to address the grievance or problem
- commit to improve systems, procedures or practices.

Also, consider offering redress if a complainant experiences loss, damage or injury due to:

- a poor-quality service or program
- an employee's actions or inaction.

To fix this, you can:

- communicate with the complainant and apologise where appropriate
- stop the action that should not have happened or cancel an intended action
- change the outcome of a decision
- change a process, service or product to prevent further issues
- correct records, waive or refund fees and charges
- ensure future compliance with legal or policy obligations
- support the complainant appropriately
- act to prevent unnecessary loss, damage or injury
- compensate the complainant – this may include reimbursement and ex gratia payments.

Make sure you choose the most appropriate action, whether that be apologising, improving systems and practices, or disciplinary action against a staff member. Help the person lodge a further complaint if that's what they want.



For more information, see [NSW Ombudsman, Apologies guide](#)

10. Specific types of complaints

This chapter explains how to handle specific complaints when:

- complainants
 - have challenging or complex behaviours
 - have diverse needs
 - are staff members
 - include multiple parties
 - are anonymous
- a complaint:
 - alleges criminal or corrupt conduct
 - is about a staff member
 - involves multiple organisations
 - involves a third-party contractor.

10.1 Complainants with challenging or complex behaviours

Customers complain when they are unhappy with a decision, the quality or level of a service, or the behaviour of staff. Complainants might react emotionally with frustration, annoyance or anxiety. In some situations, this reaction goes beyond what is acceptable.

An individual’s behaviour at any point in time may be impacted by a range of factors. These factors may be permanent (including some disabilities or enduring mental health conditions) or temporary (like illness or stress). Staff should aim to show empathy and sensitivity and understand that whatever the cause of heightened behaviour, the conduct itself is generally managed according to the same principles.

To help staff distinguish between behaviour that is challenging or complex but acceptable, and behaviour that is unacceptable (such as abusive behaviour) you should have a clear policy. This policy should:

- prioritise staff safety
- include clear guidance about staff rights and options in abusive or aggressive situations
- include simple steps for responding when complainants become abusive or aggressive
- state clearly that your organisation will not tolerate abusive, threatening or violent behaviour.

Support your staff by:

- allowing them to debrief
- helping them access counselling
- providing other support where needed
- making sure staff are aware of their own wellbeing and their right to work without abuse or threats.

For more information about supporting frontline staff, see [chapter 7: Enable a skilled and supported team](#).

The following figure summarises what we consider to be normal, difficult and unacceptable behaviour.

Figure 8: Indicators of normal, difficult and unacceptable behaviour by a complainant



The following table highlights what difficult, challenging or complex behaviour might look like.

Table 4: Characteristics of difficult, challenging or complex behaviour by a complainant

Behaviour	Description
Being overly persistent	People who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> frequently contact your organisation by phoning, emailing, writing letters or visiting in person refuse to accept an outcome.
Being overly demanding	People who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are manipulative or have unrealistic expectations don't respond to sensitive, reasonable attempts to challenge an unrealistic preferred outcome.
Being uncooperative	People who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not comply with reasonable requests to provide information, documents etc. do not wish to act on advice or consider other avenues for resolving their complaint who blame, undermine or personally attack the complaint handler.
Being overly argumentative	People who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> constantly challenge reasonable advice, decisions or responses persistently object to advice about policy or procedure that may explain the issue are dismissive of attempts to resolve the complaint if action does not fully meet their demands.
Engaging in unacceptable behaviour	People who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> try to control the complaint handling process by making threats or being aggressive. This includes intimidating or bullying a complaint handler into complying with their views or desired outcome.



For more information about recognising and responding to difficult, challenging or complex behaviour, see the NSW Ombudsman's manual for frontline staff: [Managing unreasonable conduct by a complainant.](#)

10.2 Complainants with diverse needs

The average complainant doesn't exist. Every complainant has individual needs and preferences that vary depending on the:

- person and their individual circumstances
- nature of their complaint
- relationship they have with your organisation.

Frontline staff must assess and respond to complaints on a case-by-case basis. Use this approach rather than assuming a person's needs based on their characteristics or membership of a particular group.

Complainant's needs, including a need for additional support, may be linked to:

- personal characteristics (age, LGBTQIA+ status, cultural identity, being Aboriginal)
- health and abilities (physical and mental health, disability)
- access and skills (language, literacy, mobility, rural and remote locations)
- life events (financial stability, shock, traumatic experiences, homelessness, abuse)
- external conditions (economic, organisational behaviour, natural disaster).⁴⁶

A person who doesn't usually need support may need it when their personal circumstances change. For example, when they experience:

- sudden illness
- relationship breakdown
- financial hardship
- death of a family member.⁴⁷

How to respond to people with diverse needs who may need additional support

When complainants feel safe and welcome, they are more likely to share details of their situation. Responding compassionately to complainants helps staff gather information and communicate effectively with complainants.

You don't need comprehensive knowledge about a person's situation to handle their complaint effectively. There is generally no need for detailed information about, for example, a complainant's disability, mental health, medical condition or cultural background.

Instead, frontline staff can ask all complainants if there is anything they need to make the complaint process easy for them. Depending on their response, staff might also inquire about whether they:

- need additional support
- need a support person
- have specific needs when it comes to communicating or the physical environment.

A person might need additional support if their personal circumstances mean that they are:

- less likely to be able to access or use complaint management services
- more likely to experience harm, loss, injury or disadvantage without additional support.⁴⁸

Frontline staff should let complainants know that they will consider and provide for their additional needs where possible. NSW and Commonwealth laws promote accessibility and fairness, and unlawful discrimination against a person based on their disability is an offence. This includes the failure to make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a person with disability.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Standards Australia, *Consumer Vulnerability: Requirements and Guidelines for the Design and Delivery of Inclusive Service (ISO 22458:2022)*, April 2022

⁴⁷ Standards Australia, *Consumer Vulnerability: Requirements and Guidelines for the Design and Delivery of Inclusive Service (ISO 22458:2022)*, April 2022.

⁴⁸ Commonwealth Ombudsman, *Complaint Handling Guide* (n 4), p 42.

⁴⁹ *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) s 6.

Take time to connect with the complainant so that they feel comfortable and confident enough to share information and tell you what they need. People with diverse needs commonly experience discrimination and victimisation. Building rapport with complainants helps:

- develop trust
- encourage an open conversation about the complaint
- ease any concerns or fears the complainant might have.

Building rapport with the complainant might take time, but it can prevent matters from escalating unnecessarily later in the process.⁵⁰

When planning future contact with a complainant:

- be flexible about when you call, where you meet and whether you use letters or emails
- listen to advice from the complainant about the best way to schedule communication
- consider the best time of day to call based on the complainant's commitments, such as:
 - work, childcare or other care responsibilities
 - appointments
 - medication schedule
 - fatigue levels.



For more information, see:

NSW Ombudsman and National Office for Child Safety, [Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people](#)

NSW Government, [Taking action to help customers in distress: A best practice guide for NSW Government](#).

Digital.NSW, [Accessibility and Inclusivity Toolkit](#)

[NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014](#)

Make your complaints process as accessible as possible

An accessible complaints process is one that is available to as many people as possible. Your organisation needs to ensure its staff are aware of common barriers to complaining, and able to offer solutions or alternatives which accommodate complainants' needs.

It is becoming standard practice for organisations to improve the accessibility of their complaint management processes by:

- setting up a toll-free number
- providing contact information about how to use text telephone (TTY) and the National Relay Service (NRS) for people who have a speech or hearing impairment
- funding and promoting access to interpreting and translation services
- allowing a complainant to bring a support person to interpret for them
- providing information in alternative formats: large print, braille, audio format, sign language (AUSLAN or online video), plain English, illustrations, animations and videos⁵¹
- providing access to your website for people using screen readers, including a resizing option for online text
- locating your premises in places close to public transport and accessible for people with limited mobility where possible
- having flexible opening hours where possible
- allowing complaints to be made through an authorised representative (family, friends, members of parliament, legal representatives and advocates), while still including the complainant as much as possible if they want to be included.

Staff also need to:

- routinely ask complainants what they need
- listen to complainants
- be empowered to respond with flexibility and creativity to individual circumstances.

⁵⁰ NSW Government, *Taking Action to Help Customers in Distress*, February 2023 <<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/Taking-action-to-help-customers-in-distress.pdf>>.

⁵¹ Consistent with Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), pp 22–23.

Sometimes multiple people complain about the same or related things. For example, multiple people may complain about the same incident. If the people complaining are part of the same identifiable group (for example, a cause-based advocacy group), communicate with a single representative of the group. If this isn't possible, make sure that you give consistent information and advice to all complainants. For example, you could meet with the complainants as a group or send standardised correspondence to everyone involved in the complaint.

[Section 3.2: Information and accessibility](#) provides guidance about how to make your complaint management system accessible.

10.3 Complaints from staff members

Your organisation needs a policy and procedure about how to deal with employee complaints and grievances. A grievance is when an employee formally complains about a work-related problem or concern.

Your policy and procedures should ensure that employee complaints are managed:

- appropriately
- fairly
- transparently
- promptly.

For internal complaints, follow the internal processes appropriate to the complaint.

Also ensure that your organisation explains how to recognise and refer complaints from staff members that come through the organisation's external complaint handling channels.

Generally, internal complaints are about relatively minor workplace issues or concerns. It's important to know the difference between these grievances and more serious matters, such as:

- bullying and harassment
- work health and safety
- criminal matters
- misconduct.

Your organisation should address these matters in line with your relevant policies and procedures.

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022* (PID Act) helps public officials report serious wrongdoing in the public sector and protects them when they report. A public interest disclosure (PID) is a report about an NSW public official's wrongdoing that meets the requirements of the PID Act. All NSW public sector agencies must adhere to the requirements.

You can report to:

- a disclosure officer within your agency
- the head of an agency
- your manager
- a disclosure officer within another agency, such as integrity agencies.

The PID Act's definition of 'agency' includes:

- public service agencies
- local government authorities
- public universities
- integrity agencies
- statutory bodies
- local Aboriginal land councils.



For more information about what a 'public official' is, see [Core concepts in the PID Act](#).

For more information about what an 'agency' is, see [Core concepts in the PID Act](#).

For more information about responding to public interest disclosures, visit the [NSW Ombudsman's website](#).

10.4 Anonymous complainants

Some complainants choose to remain anonymous. This may be because they fear that detrimental action will be taken in response to their complaint. Where no contact information is provided, address the content where there is sufficient information for your organisation to act on the complaint. Where a complaint is lodged anonymously (in that it does not identify the complainant) but includes a way for the complainant to be contacted, you should follow the usual steps of acknowledging the complaint and responding as appropriate.⁵²

10.5 Complaints about criminal or corrupt conduct

Suspend a complaint and consider telling NSW Police when:

- a complaint alleges criminal conduct
- the complaint management process shows someone may have committed a crime and there is some information available supporting this.

Involving the police may feel like a big step to take, especially early in the complaint process. You may worry that you're treating a person suspected of committing a crime unfairly by involving the police before you've confirmed all the facts.

It is unlikely that calling the police too early will cause harm. Rather, if you delay telling the police or don't tell them at all, evidence may be contaminated or destroyed. This would slow down a future police investigation.

Unless it is an emergency, you should discuss your decision to contact the police with an appropriate manager or supervisor. Make sure that your policy includes information about what staff should do if they think someone has committed a crime.

Report any issues of corruption to the relevant anti-corruption agency as soon as possible. If the corruption involves or affects a NSW public official or public sector organisation, report it to the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).

Corrupt conduct can be difficult to recognise. ICAC encourages you to report it whenever you reasonably suspect corrupt conduct. Follow your internal reporting pathways for notifying ICAC or referring matters to the police.

You should be aware of any specific reports or notifications your organisation is required to make. For example, if your organisation works with children you need to comply with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) reportable conduct scheme and the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) mandatory reporting requirements.



For more information, see:

NSW Police Force, [Contact Us - NSW Police Public Site](#)

NSW ICAC, [How and what to report.](#)

NSW OCG, [Reportable Conduct Scheme, Office of the Children's Guardian \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

NSW DCJ, [ChildStory Reporter Community](#)

⁵² Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2022* (n 2), p 3.

10.6 Complaints about staff members

Both complainants and staff complained about have a right to be heard, understood and respected. Treat complaints about staff members objectively and fairly to minimise any trauma or harm to the staff member being complained about.

You need to separate your complaint management procedures from staff misconduct procedures. Respond to the complaint in line with any relevant policies and procedures.

To respond appropriately to the complaint, recognise when a staff member's behaviour:

- is inconsistent with their employee obligations or duties
- breaches your organisation's policies or procedures
- is unacceptable or improper.

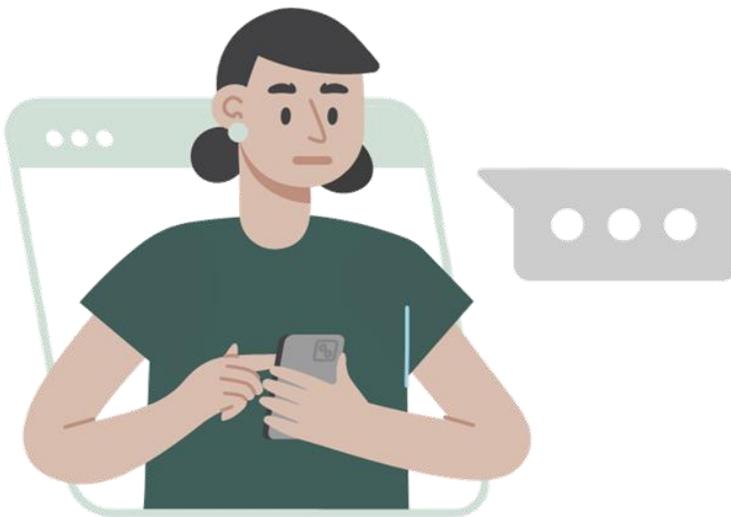
You also need to be aware that being complained about can significantly affect the health, wellbeing and work practices of staff members. When managing a complaint about a staff member, apply:

Fairness – both the complainant and staff member complained about should have the opportunity to say what happened regarding a complaint and whether they agree or not with a complaint decision. Fairness also means that the person making the decision about the complaint should not prejudge the complaint or favour either the complainant or the staff member complained about.

Transparency – the complainant and staff member complained about should both be kept advised about how the complaint will be dealt with, the progress of the complaint and the reasons for the decision relating to the complaint outcome.

Confidentiality – this is essential. Confidentiality includes maintaining the complainant's confidentiality and explaining to them the importance of confidentiality generally. It does not mean secrecy, and you should always tell a staff member when a complaint has been received about them, unless there is a reason not to do so. Ensure legal requirements and other policies are complied with.

Efficiency – a complaint should be progressed without delay. The longer it takes to deal with a complaint the more stressful it can be for all concerned.⁵³



⁵³ University of Glasgow, *Being Complained About – Good Practice Principles Guidelines*, February 2019, p 4.

10.7 Complaints involving multiple organisations

Complaints that involve multiple divisions or organisations can be difficult to manage. The public doesn't always know who is responsible for addressing a complaint.

Organisations should work together to:

- handle complaints efficiently
- inform complainants about who is responsible for their concern
- explain the complaints process to complainants.

Where possible, one organisation should be responsible for ongoing communication with the complainant.

Establish business rules or arrangements with other organisations to:

- make clear who leads certain matters
- involve all relevant organisations
- share relevant information appropriately (often you can only share information with the complainant's express and informed consent)
- plan for conflict resolution between organisations
- discuss and agree processes and timeframes
- make decisions in line with processes and timeframes
- record and implement all agreed decisions.

Where organisations frequently need to work together, consider:

- whether to improve public knowledge about which organisation to contact for specific issues
- whether to include feedback about complaints in regular meetings or correspondence
- how to record information about complaints involving multiple organisations.

10.8 Complaints about contractors

Many organisations use third party contractors to provide services to the public. All contracts with third parties need to include a way to deal with complaints – it can be one of the following:

- the contractor must satisfactorily apply their own complaints management process
- the complainant can contact the organisation directly and follow their complaints management process.

Resources

This final part of our guidelines includes extra information to help you develop an effective complaint management system. This includes a checklist for developing a complaint management system. We've also defined key terms you may need when reading these guidelines or writing your complaint management policy and procedures. Lastly, we've added a list of useful resources for writing your own complaint management policy and procedures.



Checklist for developing a complaint management system

EFFECTIVE COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONAL CHECKLIST

Organisation:

Name/Title of person completing:

Date completed:

PART A: What makes an effective complaint management system?

This section is for senior executives/leadership team and senior managers to consider.

Define what is and isn't a complaint

- Your organisation adopts a broad definition of a complaint to recognise the range of concerns that your customers may have.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation related to its products, services, staff or management of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. Customers may complain directly to your organisation or to a third party.

- All staff know what a complaint is (and isn't), how it will be managed and by whom.

Understand the barriers to making a complaint

- Your organisation is aware that there are barriers that make it difficult for some customers to complain.

- Your organisation proactively seeks to reduce or remove these barriers by embedding the 6 principles for effective complaint management.

Embed the 6 principles for effective complaint management

- Your organisation's complaint management system enables and helps your staff to fulfil the 6 principles.

1. Respectful Treatment
4. Taking Ownership

2. Information and Accessibility
5. Timeliness

3. Good Communication
6. Transparency

- Your complaint policy and procedures include information about the 6 principles, and guidance for staff to apply them in managing complaints.

Create a positive complaint management culture

- Senior leaders champion the complaint management system and demonstrate that complaints are welcomed and valuable.

- Senior leaders and managers encourage reflection and innovation to support continuous improvement of your complaint management system and service/s.

Design a clear policy and procedures

- Your complaints policy clearly states your commitment to managing complaints effectively.

- Your policy is supported by procedures that provide detailed guidance about how your organisation manages complaints and who is involved in the process at all stages.

- Your policy and procedures are in line with your organisation's:
 - relevant statutory and regulatory requirements
 - financial, operational and other requirements.

- Your policy and procedures are developed in consultation with complainants, staff and other stakeholders, where possible.

- All staff have access to your policy and procedures and know how to implement them.

- You regularly review and update your policy and procedures.

- Your policy is available and accessible to the public – especially to your customers.

- Complainants know about your complaints process, including who they can talk to if they're dissatisfied with how their complaint is managed or the outcome of it.

Introduce a 3-level model for escalating complaints

- Your organisation has developed and implemented a 3-level model for escalating complaints and there is clear written guidance about how the model works.

- Frontline staff are trained to achieve early resolution where possible, and they know:
 - the types of complaints they can deal with directly
 - what options they have to address a complaint
 - what authority they have
 - when they should delegate or escalate a complaint to a colleague or senior employee for help with early resolution.

- Frontline staff know when to escalate a complaint to level 2 – to their line manager, dedicated complaint management officer or senior management.

- Senior staff and specialist officers know the processes for level 2 escalation options, and how to conduct them:
 - internal review of the original complaint decision
 - internally facilitated resolution
 - internal investigation.

- Senior staff and specialist officers know when to escalate a complaint to level 3 – for external complaint management – and which option is the most appropriate:
 - externally facilitated alternative dispute resolution
 - external investigation
 - external review or appeal.

- Your complaint policy and procedures include reasonable timeframes for escalation.

Enable a skilled and supported team

- When recruiting complaint handling staff, you look out for candidates who have suitable:
- **attributes** (for example, empathy, negotiation and strong communication)
 - **knowledge** (for example, relevant legislative frameworks, procedural fairness and case management)
 - **awareness** (for example, identify communication styles, cultural differences and diverse needs).
-
- Complaint handling staff receive induction training during their onboarding and regular refresher training throughout their employment.
-
- Complaint handling staff receive specific training and skill development in:
- mental health first aid
 - disability confidence
 - cultural competence
 - trauma-informed approaches to complaint management
 - enabling and managing storytelling by the complainant.
-
- Your organisation records what training your complaint management staff receive.
-
- Managers are trained to be aware of the warning signs and impacts of stress, burnout and vicarious trauma.
-
- Managers can identify the type of self-care strategies and supports that frontline staff need in response to stress, burnout and vicarious trauma, for example:
- rotating staff in positions that have high exposure to stress
 - supporting staff to access regular supervision
 - individualised support through Employee Assistance Programs.
-
- You have enough staff to manage the volume and complexity of complaints your organisation receives, and these staff are appropriately trained.
-
- You have adequate materials and equipment, such as computer software.

Commit to continuous improvement

- Your organisation has systems in place to record and document complaint information to help monitor, analyse and report on complaints.
-
- Your organisation's complaint policy and procedures detail how to use its complaint management system and you train your staff how to use it in practice.
-
- Managers regularly report to senior management about complaint trends, systemic issues, how well the system is working and how to improve it.
-
- Your organisation's complaint management system is subject to organisational cyber security controls and action protocols for managing risks and breaches, and privacy and confidentiality policies and procedures.
-
- You use tools like customer satisfaction surveys, audits and root cause analysis to facilitate continuous improvement.

PART B: How do you manage complaints?

This section is for frontline staff and managers who supervise and manage frontline staff to consider.

Understand what is and isn't a complaint

- You know what a complaint is and apply the definition consistently:
- an expression of dissatisfaction, made to or about an organisation, about its products, services, staff or complaint handling, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
-
- You can recognise what **isn't** a complaint – for example, is the customer asking for a service or information instead of making a complaint?
-
- You are aware of barriers that exist to people making a complaint. You can provide additional assistance to people with accessibility barriers, wherever possible.

Receive, clarify and acknowledge the complaint

- You can receive complaints in various ways, for example, online or via social media, by phone, email or in person.
-
- You clarify **why** a complainant is dissatisfied or concerned by encouraging them to:
- send you a written record of what has happened, where possible
 - state clearly what they think is wrong and what should have happened
 - describe what they have already done to address the issue
 - decide what outcome they want to achieve by formally complaining
 - understand what the complaints process involves and how long it will take.
-
- You can help a complainant find the right pathway if your organisation is not the right one to manage the complaint by:
- referring them to another organisation
 - giving them contact details for the complaints department at another organisation
 - giving them details of an advocate or support service.
-
- You let the complainant know that you have received their complaint either as soon as possible or within 3 business days of receipt. You use the most appropriate channel for communicating with the complainant.
-
- You keep copies of your acknowledgements, and if your acknowledgement is verbal, you record the details in the complaint file.
-
- When letting the complainant know that you've received their complaint, you also include:
- what their complaint identification number is (assign this when you receive the complaint)
 - how the complaints process works and how long it takes
 - how long your organisation will need to complete tasks related to the complaint
 - who to contact for more information
 - what will happen next
 - what the complainant needs to do, how and when
 - what the expectations and responsibilities are of the case officer, your organisation and the complainant.
-
- If you use an automated written acknowledgement, you or your manager checks that the content is right, it is delivered in an appropriate way and meets the needs of the complainant.

Record the complaint

- You record key information from complainants to help manage their complaint, track its progress and assist your organisation to be accountable and improve service delivery.
-
- You maintain the confidentiality of complaints and complainants by adhering to NSW Government privacy laws, your organisation's policy and procedures and ethical obligations when disclosing or using any personally identifiable information.
-
- You respond to requests for records made by a complainant in line with your organisation's policy and procedures – for example, can you provide the whole record or does it need to be in another format?

Assess the complaint

- You assess a complainant's needs by considering things like whether they need additional supports – for example, do they need an interpreter?
-
- You clarify the complexity of the complaint issues – for example, is it a simple singular issue or are there multiple complex issues?
-
- You decide how urgent the complaint issue/s are – for example, are there any health and safety concerns?
-
- You then consider any broader issues that may be relevant – for example, is the complainant's desired outcome achievable? Will you need to manage their expectations? Will you need to refer them elsewhere?

Decide what to do

- You consider if it is possible to **resolve the complaint at first point of contact** by:
- understanding the key issues in the complaint
 - understanding the outcomes the complainant wants
 - having enough information
 - being authorised to decide.
-
- If the complaint can be resolved at first point of contact, your response to the complainant is prompt, fair and reasonable.
-
- You consider if a referral to another organisation is required – for example, the complaint falls outside your organisation's responsibilities or jurisdiction.
- If a referral is required, you:
- inform the complainant as soon as possible
 - obtain their consent to a referral
 - consider what additional assistance or support the complainant might need.
-
- You consider whether the complaint can or needs to be notified to a relevant government agency – for example, NSW Police for any criminal allegations.
-
- You **consider if you need to gather more information** by speaking or writing to the complainant or other parties.
-
- If the complainant has previously contacted your organisation, you check your system to see whether their behaviour was challenging, complex or aggressive.

- You consider if you need to consult internal contacts, including subject matter experts, colleagues with experience in similar matters or legal counsel.

- You consider if an investigation is appropriate – this is usually reserved for complaints involving serious, complex or systemic issues.

- If an investigation is appropriate, you determine whether it will be conducted internally or by an external investigator.

- If the complaint is investigated internally, a written investigation plan is developed that defines the how, why and when of the investigation.

- The investigator applies procedural fairness by giving anyone involved in the investigation an opportunity to provide their version of events and present relevant information before a final decision is made.

Finalise the complaint

- You consider if the issues raised in the complaint are substantiated by weighing them up against the available information. You base your decision on fact and sound logic.

- You consider if there is anything you can or need to do to fix the issues. You also consider if any additional issues you came across when gathering extra information, which are beyond the scope of the original complaint, need addressing.

- Once you've decided to finalise a complaint, you contact the complainant using the most appropriate channel and tell them the:
 - outcome
 - reasons for your decision
 - actions taken to fix the issues in the complaint
 - reasons for not acting or reasons why you couldn't achieve the complainant's desired outcome
 - trends or systemic issues the complaint highlighted
 - other options to resolve the complaint: ask for an internal review or appeal, or complain to an external complaint management body.

- Before you close a complaint, you record:
 - any actions to address the complaint
 - any actions you could not take
 - any outcomes including substantiated aspects of the complaint, recommendations and responses to recommendations
 - any follow-up actions needed.

- You are aware of and have observed the minimum legal requirements for procedural fairness in the complaint management process.

- You have followed your organisation's policies and procedures for procedural fairness in the complaint management process.

Apologise when things go wrong

- You are open to criticism or complaints about your organisation or yourself.
-
- If you decide an apology is appropriate, in your apology you:
- describe what went wrong
 - acknowledge that the action or inaction was incorrect, inappropriate or unreasonable
 - acknowledge that the complainant has been affected by their experience
 - accept responsibility for the wrong (this is protected from civil liability in NSW)
 - include any actions or steps to address the grievance or problem
 - commit to improve systems, procedures or practices.
-
- You consider offering redress if a complainant experiences loss, damage or injury due to a poor quality service or program or an employee's actions or inaction.

Specific types of complainants

- You have a policy that explains how to respond to complainants with challenging behaviour – including how to distinguish between normal, difficult and unacceptable behaviour.
-
- Staff know how to respond to complaints from people who have diverse needs, and your complaints process is as accessible as possible.
-
- You have a policy that explains how to manage complaints or grievances from staff in an appropriate, procedurally fair, transparent and timely way.
-
- Staff are aware of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022* (PID Act) and the protections it affords to staff reporting serious wrongdoing.
-
- Staff know how to manage complaints from anonymous complainants.
-
- Staff know what action to take when complaints allege criminal or corrupt conduct – for example, do reports need to be made to NSW Police or ICAC.
-
- You have a policy about how to manage complaints about staff members in an appropriate, procedurally fair, transparent and timely way.
-
- Staff know how to manage complaints involving multiple organisations.
-
- Staff know how to manage complaints about contractors.

Key Terms

Term	Description
Accessibility	is how available a service or system is to as many people as possible. This includes how easy it is for people from diverse backgrounds to complain.
Alternative dispute resolution (ADR)	is an umbrella term for the processes an impartial ADR practitioner uses to help people in dispute resolve their issues. These processes include mediation, arbitration and conciliation. ADR doesn't include judicial determinations, such as court or tribunal decisions.
Communication channels	are avenues for complaining, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • over the phone or verbally • in writing (email, text message, letter, online complaint forms and electronically) • through an authorised representative (family, friends, members of parliament, legal representatives and advocates) • anonymously.⁵⁴
Complaint	is when someone says they are dissatisfied with an organisation's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • products • services • staff • complaint management. People may complain to the organisation or a third party and explicitly or implicitly expect a response or resolution. The organisation may be legally required to respond or offer a resolution. ⁵⁵
Complainant	is the person or organisation that complains, including customers, clients, consumers and service users/receivers or their advocates.
Complaint management system	is the policies, procedures, practices, staff, hardware and software that an organisation uses to manage its complaints.
Complaint handling	is part of complaint management and applies when frontline staff handle a complaint using the step-by-step process discussed in these guidelines.
Continuous improvement	is the ongoing process of using complaint insights and data to improve program administration, service delivery and complaint management processes. Organisations can draw on complaint data to fix systemic issues and improve the complainant experience.
Customer (of the NSW Government)	is anyone who lives, works, visits or invests in NSW. This includes businesses. Also referred to as service receivers/users, clients, residents, etc. Customers may interact with the NSW Government under different circumstances – because they want or need to. In some cases, customers won't interact directly with the government at all. Instead, they receive the benefits of policies and regulations, such as clean environments and safe neighbourhoods. ⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2002* (n 2), pp 20–21.

⁵⁵ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2002* (n 2), p 2.

⁵⁶ NSW Government, *Towards a Customer-centric Government*, May 2021 <<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/towards-a-customer-centric-government.pdf>>.

Term	Description
Customer-centric organisations	<p>are organisations that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are there for people and businesses when they need support • are easy to deal with • work hard in the background to make customers' lives better. <p>When organisations encourage customers to actively engage with their services, they notice an increase in service uptake and fulfilment of obligations and entitlements. When organisations' services meet customer needs, they notice that escalations and crisis situations decrease.</p> <p>When organisations design and refine services using data and customer and behavioural insights, they notice that service effectiveness improves.</p> <p>Customer-centric organisations have more efficient budgets and are more productive. They avoid wasting resources on what doesn't have an impact and see returns on investment through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved customer compliance • reduced cost of escalations • reuse of service delivery models for providing a connected experience.⁵⁷
Disputes	are unresolved complaints that are escalated internally, externally or both.
Distress	is when someone shows signs of being anxious, frustrated, sad, hopeless or worn out.
Diverse needs	<p>are the needs of people due to disability, age, cultural background, literacy levels, gender and trauma and stress.⁵⁸</p> <p>People with diverse needs may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less likely to be able to access or use complaint management services • more likely to experience harm, loss, injury or disadvantage without additional support.
Feedback	<p>is opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern. People may give feedback directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly to or about an organisation about its:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • products • services • staff • complaint management.
Frontline staff	in the context of complaint handling are employees who directly engage with customers to address their issues, concerns or grievances. These staff are critical in maintaining customer satisfaction and loyalty by effectively managing complaints.
Organisation	is an individual NSW department, agency, office or service provider.
Person-centred	involves seeing the person first and providing a service that is relevant and tailored to the person. This approach values the person as an individual and respects their choices, needs and wishes.
Procedural fairness	is the fairness of the process used to reach a decision. This is not about the substantive or perceived fairness of the decision itself.
Public interest disclosure (PID)	is a report about a NSW public official's wrongdoing that meets the requirements of the <i>Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022</i> .

⁵⁷ NSW Government, *Towards a Customer-centric Government*, May 2021 p 6 <<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/towards-a-customer-centric-government.pdf>>.

⁵⁸ Standards Australia, *AS 10002:2002* (n 2), p 3.

Term	Description
Satisfaction	is whether a complainant feels that an organisation has met their expectations.
Social media	are online social networks used to send information through online social interactions.
Trauma-informed approach	is based on the understanding that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a significant number of people living with mental health conditions have experienced trauma in their lives • trauma may be a factor for people in distress • the impact of trauma may be lifelong • trauma can impact the person, their emotions and relationships with others.
Unreasonable complainant conduct (UCC)	is any behaviour, that because of its nature and frequency, raises substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues for people involved in the complaint process.
Vicarious trauma	is the accruing effect of being exposed to someone else's trauma. It can also be known as secondary traumatic stress.

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ED9/26. Draft Compliments and Concerns Policy
Author: Manager Community Experience & Events

FILE: 23/00151

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider placing the draft *Compliments and Concerns Policy* on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.

The draft policy has been developed following the creation of a new draft *Complaints Handling Policy*. As part of this review, it was identified that retaining compliments, concerns, and complaints within a single policy created ambiguity and reduced procedural clarity. Separating these matters into distinct policies ensures clearer definitions, improved internal consistency, and stronger governance.

The draft *Compliments and Concerns Policy* provides clear guidance on the management of compliments and concerns, ensuring processes are consistent, transparent, and aligned with best-practice principles. The policy defines what constitutes a compliment and a concern and establishes consistent internal procedures for recording, responding to, and monitoring both.

Public exhibition of the draft policy will allow the community to provide feedback prior to adoption, supporting continuous improvement and ensuring Council's approach to managing compliments and concerns meets community expectations.

RECOMMENDED that:

1. Council place the draft Compliments and Concerns Policy on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days and provide public notice of its intention to adopt the reviewed Policy, subject to consideration of submissions received.
2. The draft Compliments and Concerns Policy be adopted following the public exhibition period subject to submissions received, provided that no submissions or objections are received or that no alterations are required to the draft document and POL/40007 Compliment & Complaint Handling Policy be rescinded.
3. Should any objections or submissions be received or any alterations be required to the draft document, a further report be presented to Council prior to adopting the draft Compliments and Concerns Policy.

Report

Council previously maintained a combined *Compliments and Complaint Handling Policy*. Following a comprehensive service review undertaken in accordance with the NSW Ombudsman's *Effective Complaint Management Guidelines*, Council has replaced this policy with a standalone draft *Complaints Handling Policy*.

The review identified that combining compliments and complaints within a single policy created ambiguity around what constitutes a complaint, reduced procedural clarity, and contributed to inconsistent internal practices.

Executive Director's Report (Items Requiring Decision) - ED9/26

As a result, it was determined that a separate *Compliments and Concerns Policy* should be developed to sit alongside the new *Complaints Handling Policy*. This approach clearly differentiates complaints from concerns, while ensuring all customer feedback is appropriately acknowledged, recorded, and monitored.

The *Compliments and Concerns Policy* will be administered by the Customer Experience team, with all compliments and concerns recorded within Council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

As defined within the policy:

- **Compliments** are expressions of praise or positive feedback regarding a service or staff performance and play an important role in recognising and celebrating staff and team achievements.
- **Concerns** are matters of dissatisfaction or issues raised by community members that do not meet the formal definition of a complaint but still require response, tracking, and monitoring to identify emerging themes or service improvement opportunities.

Community Strategic Plan

Strategy:	5	Our Leadership
Deliverable:	5.2	Our Council is trusted, responsible and transparent
	5.1	Our Council is customer focused and collaborative
Action:	5.2.1	To lead, govern and regulate in an ethical, equitable and transparent way
	5.1.2	Collaborate with our community stakeholders and Council to create an informed community and better outcomes

Council Policy/Legislation

- *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 (NSW)*
- *Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW)*
- *Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) Act 1988 (NSW)*
- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)*
- NSW Ombudsman – Effective Complaint Management Guidelines
- Draft Complaints Handling Policy

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this matter.

Consultation

The Leadership Team and Compliments, Complaints and Customer Experience Committee has considered the draft policy prior to referral to Council for public exhibition.

Sustainability

The policy supports governance sustainability by improving transparency, accountability, and consistency in Council's management of customer feedback, contributing to continuous service improvement and strengthened community trust.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
Risk that the Compliments and Concerns Policy is inconsistent with the Complaints Handling Policy, which may lead to reputational impacts.	Low	Adoption of the draft policy aligned with the Complaints Handling Policy.	Low	Yes
Risk that unclear or inconsistent processes may lead to service delivery issues or reputational damage.	Low	Adoption of the draft policy and consistent internal application.	Low	Yes

Options

The following options are available to Council:

Option 1:

- a) Council place the draft Compliments and Concerns Policy on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days and provide public notice of its intention to adopt the reviewed Policy, subject to consideration of submissions received.
- b) The draft Compliments and Concerns Policy be adopted following the public exhibition period subject to submissions received, provided that no submissions or objections are received or that no alterations are required to the draft document and POL/40007 Compliment & Complaint Handling Policy be rescinded.
- c) Should any objections or submissions be received or any alterations be required to the draft document, a further report be presented to Council prior to adopting the draft Compliments and Concerns Policy.

Option 2:

- a) Do not place the draft policy on Public exhibition and request further amendments.

Option one is recommended.

Conclusions

It is recommended that Council place the draft *Compliments and Concerns Policy* on public exhibition to allow for community feedback prior to adoption. The policy provides a clear, transparent, and consistent framework for managing compliments and concerns, complements the new draft *Complaints Handling Policy*, and strengthens Council's customer experience governance framework.

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Draft Compliments and Concerns Policy 2025



COMPLIMENTS AND CONCERNS POLICY

POLICY | Customer Experience

To ensure that compliments and concerns are handled fairly, efficiently and effectively.

Policy No:	POL/	Version:	1.0
Service Unit:	Customer Experience		
Responsible Officer:	Manager Community Experience & Events		
Responsible Director:	Director Corporate and Community Services		
Authorisation Date:	Date adopted by Council	Review Date:	1 October 2029
Minute No:	XXXX		

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Before utilising a printed copy of this document, verify that it is the most current version by referencing Council's intranet.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	BACKGROUND	4
	1.1 Title of the Policy and Commencement Date	4
	1.2 Purpose of the Policy	4
2	OBJECTIVE	4
	2.1 Objectives and Coverage of the Policy	4
3	APPLICATION	4
	3.1 Application of this Policy	4
4	DEFINITIONS	5
5	COMPLIMENTS	5
	5.1 Submitting a Compliment	5
	5.2 Acknowledgement	6
	5.3 Handling of Compliments	6
	5.4 Monitoring and Reporting	6
6	CONCERNS	6
	6.1 Submitting a Concern	7
	6.2 Acknowledgement	7
	6.3 Handling of Concerns	7
	6.4 Monitoring and Reporting	7
7	RELEVANT LEGISLATION	8
8	DOCUMENT INFORMATION	8
	8.1 Related Documents	8
9	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / POLICY OWNER	8
10	RESPONSIBILITIES	8
11	APPROVAL	10
12	MONITORING	10
13	REVIEW DATE	11
14	RECORD KEEPING, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY	11

15 BREACHES AND SANCTIONS 11
16 DOCUMENT HISTORY 11

DRAFT

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Title of the Policy and Commencement Date

The Compliments and Concerns Policy takes effect upon adoption by Council.

1.2 Purpose of the Policy

Singleton Council (Council) is committed to being a leading customer focused organisation and to continually improve the quality of the services and experience we provide to our customers and our community.

This policy is intended to ensure that Council will manage compliments and concerns guided by the principles of fairness, transparency, accessibility and continuous improvement.

Council's compliment and concern management system is intended to:

- Enable Council to celebrate and recognise staff or teams which receive compliments
- Enable Council to record and respond to concerns being expressed by customers (if required)
- Enable Council to identify themes arising from compliments and concerns being expressed by customers
- Boost public confidence in Council's administrative process; and
- Provide information that can be used by Council to deliver quality improvements in our services, staff performance and compliment and concern handling.

2 OBJECTIVE

2.1 Objectives and Coverage of the Policy

The objective of this policy is to:

- Ensure Council handles compliments and concerns fairly, efficiently and effectively
- Promote a high standard of customer service in all areas of Council's operations by responding to compliments and concerns
- Inform Council's customer and the community on Council's handling process; and
- Recognise the importance of compliments and concerns in providing feedback about Council's performance, and to utilise that information to provide recognition, improve services and identify appropriate training needs.

3 APPLICATION

3.1 Application of this Policy

This policy applies to all staff receiving or managing compliments and concerns from the public made to or about Council, regarding our services and staff.

Complaints, staff grievances, Code of Conduct complaints and Public Interest Disclosures are dealt with through separate policies and mechanisms.

4 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

Term	Meaning
Compliment	An expression of praise or regard for a service received or a performance given.
Concern	A concern is an expression of dissatisfaction, request for clarification, or report of an issue that may be resolved promptly and informally.
Complaint	A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Council, our services, staff or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
Council	Means Singleton Council
Service Request	Requests for approval Requests for action Routine enquiries about Council's business Requests for the provision of services and/or assistance Reports of failure to comply with laws regulated by Council Requests for explanation of policies, procedures and decisions
Policy	A statement of instruction that sets out how Council should fulfil its vision, mission and goals.
Procedure	A statement or instruction that sets out how our policies will be implemented and by whom.
Compliments, Complaints and Customer Experience (CC&CX) Committee	A Committee established by Singleton Council to support the monitoring, reporting, continuous improvement, positive acknowledgement and accountability of the Compliment & Concern Policy, Complaint Handling Policy and Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Policies and ensure alignment with the Customer Experience Framework and Strategy.

5 COMPLIMENTS

Compliments are valuable as they give Council an opportunity to identify services and areas of best practice which can then be adopted across other areas to enhance the customer experience and overall performance.

5.1 Submitting a Compliment

Compliments can be made to Council via any of the following means:

- Online via Council's website - [Compliments and Complaints | Singleton Council](#)
- Mail to PO BOX 314, Singleton NSW 2330

- Email to council@singleton.nsw.gov.au
- In person at 12-14 Queen Street, Singleton
- Phone by calling (02) 6578 7290
- Feedback survey by completing a Singleton Council feedback survey; or
- [Report It](#) by completing a Report an Issue form on the Council website

Where required, Council staff will provide assistance with verbal compliments and the completion of our online compliments form.

5.2 Acknowledgement

We will be in contact with the customer regarding their compliment, via their preferred contact method, either the same day or the next business day, unless they have requested not to be contacted or have chosen to remain anonymous. Council will acknowledge compliments within one (1) business day, unless anonymity is requested.

5.3 Handling of Compliments

Compliments will be registered in Council's customer request management (CRM) system and actioned to the appropriate Business Unit Manager for communication to the relevant team or staff member/s and recognition.

5.4 Monitoring and Reporting

Compliments will be reported to the Leadership Team and the Compliments, Complaints and Customer Experience Committee on a regular basis to ensure that staff are recognised, and examples of best practice are identified and acknowledged. Any personal information received with compliments will only be used for the purposes of addressing any compliment received.

Council may also include de-identified trends and examples of compliments and concerns in public reporting, such as the Annual Report or Council's website.

6 CONCERNS

A concern is any issue, query, or feedback raised by a customer that requires investigation or follow-up by our team. Concerns may relate to service delivery, product quality, communication, or other aspects of the customer experience. We will only contact the customer with an outcome or resolution if the customer has explicitly requested to be informed.

In referring to information provided in the Complaints Handling Policy, a complaint cannot be defined as the reporting of problems or wrongdoing intended merely to bring a problem to our notice with no expectation of a response, service requests or responses to requests for feedback about the standard of our service provision. These instances could instead be recorded as concerns.

6.1 Submitting a Concern

Concerns can be made to Council via any of the following means:

- Online via Council's website - [Compliments and Complaints | Singleton Council](#)
- Mail to PO BOX 314, Singleton NSW 2330
- Email to council@singleton.nsw.gov.au
- In person at 12-14 Queen Street, Singleton
- Phone by calling (02) 6578 7290
- Feedback survey by completing a Singleton Council feedback survey; or
- [Report It](#) by completing a Report an Issue form on the Council website

Where required, Council staff will provide assistance with verbal concerns and the completion of our online form.

6.2 Acknowledgement

We will be in contact with the customer regarding their concern, via their preferred contact method, either the same day or the next business day, unless they have requested not to be contacted or have chosen to remain anonymous. Council will acknowledge concern within one (1) business day, unless anonymity is requested.

6.3 Handling of Concerns

Concerns will be registered in Council's Customer Request Management (CRM) system and actioned to the appropriate Business Unit Manager for review and/or investigation.

In most cases there is not a reasonable expectation of a response the outcome of the concern unless specifically requested and will not need to be communicated to the customer.

The outcome of the concern could be the identification of an improvement opportunity, communication to the relevant team or staff member/s, monitor for themes, lodgement of a service request or no action required.

Where your feedback does not relate to a matter involving council, the concern may be passed on to the relevant authority or government body.

6.4 Monitoring and Reporting

Concerns will be reported to the Executive Leadership Team and the Compliments, Complaints and Customer Experience Committee on a regular basis to ensure that issues identified are monitored, actioned as required and improvement opportunities are identified. Concerns are deidentified and personal information is not divulged in concern reporting.

Council may also include de-identified trends and examples of compliments and concerns in public reporting, such as the Annual Report or Council's website.

7 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*
- *Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)*

8 DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Related documents and reference information in this section provides a single reference point to develop and maintain site compliance information.

8.1 Related Documents

Related documents, listed in Table 8-1 below, are internal documents directly related to or referenced from this document.

Number	Title
POL/1011	Code of Conduct
24/79346	Customer Service Charter
	Standard Operating Procedure – Compliments and Concerns Handling
POL/	Complaint Handling Policy
	Complaint Handling Procedure
POL/1020	Public Interest Disclosures (PID) Internal Reporting Policy

Table 8-1 – Related documents

9 RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / POLICY OWNER

Ownership of this policy rests with the Manager Community Experience and Events.

10 RESPONSIBILITIES

Parties or Persons	Responsibilities
Compliments, Complaints and Customer Experience Committee (CC&CX)	As per the Committee's Terms of Reference
General Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report publicly on Council's compliment and concern handling as required. • Provide adequate support and direction to key staff responsible for handling compliments and concerns. • Review reports about compliment and concern trends and issues arising from concerns.

Parties or Persons	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage all staff to be alert to concerns and assist those responsible for handling compliments and concerns. • Encourage staff to make recommendations for system improvements. • Support recommendations for service, staff and improvements arising from the analysis of compliment and concern data. • Promoting awareness of this policy and supporting Procedure, as amended from time to time, and for cultivating a people-focus throughout Council. • Ensuring information about this Policy is easily accessible to members of the public and communicated in a manner that easy to understand.
Leadership Team / Business Unit Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate any received compliments to the relevant staff member/team as per the lodged compliment CRMs. • Investigate, respond or action any received concern CRMs as required. • Provide regular reports to the General Manager on issues arising from compliment and concern handling work. • Ensure recommendations arising out of compliment and concern data analysis is canvassed with the General Manager and implemented where possible. • Recruit, train and empower staff to address compliments and concerns in accordance with Council's policies and procedures. • Encourage staff managing compliments and concerns to provide suggestions on ways to improve the organisation's compliment and complaint management system.
Manager Community Experience and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the compliments and concerns process • Provide guidance and advice to other staff on the process • Management of the CC&CX Committee
Frontline Customer Service Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat all people with respect, including people who make compliments, concerns and complaints. • Assist people to make a compliment or complaint, if needed. • Comply with this policy and any associated procedures. • Keep informed about best practice in compliment and concern handling. • Provide feedback to People Leader on issues arising from concerns who will escalate if required. • Provide suggestions to management on ways to improve the organisation's compliments and concerns management system. • Implement changes arising from individual compliments or concerns and from the analysis of compliment and concern data, as directed by management.

Parties or Persons	Responsibilities
Customer Service Coordinator / Senior Customer Service Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance with the lodgement of compliments or concerns and requests where necessary. • Triage feedback as per the definitions and levels laid out in this document. • Acknowledge compliments and concerns as required. • Assign compliments and concerns to the relevant Business Unit Manager, within CRM set timeframes.
Information Management (IM) staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lodge concerns received via email or mail to the relevant CRM as per the definitions laid out in this document. • Lodge compliments received via email or mail as a compliment CRM, as per the definition laid out in this document
Customer Experience staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lodge concerns received via organic feedback or Voice of the Customer (VoC) surveys to the relevant CRM, as per the definitions set out in this document. • Lodge compliments received via organic feedback or Voice of the Customer (VoC) surveys as a compliment CRM, as per the definitions set out in this document.
All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct themselves in a way that is conducive to having compliments lodged about them and not concerns or complaints. • Treat all people with respect. • Be aware of Singleton Council's compliment and concern policy and any associated procedures. • Provide assistance with lodgement of Complaints and requests for review of Complaints where necessary. • Be alert to concerns and assist staff handling concerns resolve matters promptly. • Provide feedback to management on issues arising from concerns.

11 APPROVAL

As per cover sheet.

12 MONITORING

This policy will be monitored by the Manager Community Experience and Events, to ensure compliance.

13 REVIEW DATE

This policy, once adopted, is to remain in force until it is reviewed by Council. This policy is to be reviewed approximately every four (4) years to ensure that it meets legislative requirements.

14 RECORD KEEPING, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

This policy is to be made available for public viewing as required under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

15 BREACHES AND SANCTIONS

Any breaches of this Policy will be referred to the General Manager for appropriate action.

16 DOCUMENT HISTORY

The below table provides a summary of changes and amendments to this document.

Version	Date Amended	Author	Comments (eg reasons for review)
1.0	September 2025	Business Improvement Specialist	New document following the removal of Complaints from this Policy.

DCCS13/26. Road Naming - Chanticleer Avenue Branxton
Author: Geographical Information Systems Officer

FILE:
121.2025.5/004

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the naming of an unnamed road as part of DA 8.2011.143.6 at Branxton.

RECOMMENDED that:

1. Council endorse the road name Chanticleer Avenue and call for public submissions on the proposed name for a period of at least 28 days.
2. Council formally adopts the name Chanticleer Avenue and publishes a notice of the new name in the NSW Government Gazette should no submissions or objections be received that require reconsideration of the proposed name.
3. Should any submissions requiring reconsideration of the proposed name be received, a further report be reconsidered by Council prior to adoption of the name.

Report

The current unnamed road is situated within Lot 700 DP 1272452 and extends in a westerly direction for a distance of 457m from Claret Avenue to Robinia Drive. If approved, this name will be a unique road name in the Singleton Local Government Area (LGA).

The name Chanticleer has been chosen by the developer, named after the proposed street tree *Pyrus Calleryana* Chanticleer - Chanticleer Callery Pear. The proposed name is in keeping with the flora type of street names already used in the Radford Park subdivision.

The above name has been reviewed and approved for use within the Singleton Local Government Area (LGA) by the Geographical Names Board (GNB) which reviews and monitors usage of road names, as well as the NSW Address Policy and User Manual.

A map of the proposed Chanticleer Avenue is provided below.

Community Strategic Plan

Strategy:	3	Our Environment
Deliverable:	3.1	Our Environment is protected, valued and respected
Action:	3.1.3	Increase the planning and preparedness for natural disasters
	3.1	Our Environment is protected, valued and respected

Council Policy/Legislation

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DCCS13/26

The adoption of this road name will be carried out in accordance with the following:

- *Roads Act, 1993*;
- *Roads Regulation (2018)*; and
- NSW Address Policy and User Manual – October 2024.

Financial Implications

The expense to Council is minimal and is allowed for in Council's operating budget.

The naming of this road does not change the ownership, rights or obligations and there will be no further financial implications.

Consultation

The proposal if endorsed by Council, will be advertised in the Singleton Argus and Hunter River Times, and the community will be given 28 days to provide submissions on the name.

Any submissions received that require further reconsideration of the name will be the subject of a further report to Council. If no feedback is received, the name will be recommended by Council and will be made official via a notice of the new name in the NSW Government Gazette.

Sustainability

There are no social, environmental or economic considerations.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk to Council that roads will not be named which may lead to residents not being found / or emergency services being delayed to a property.	Medium	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes
There is a risk that Council will not name a road in accordance with current processes / legislation which may lead to Council's reputation being negatively impacted.	Medium	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes
There is a risk of that Council incurs legal implications and associated costs if we do not name in accordance with current processes.	Medium	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes

Options

The following options are available to Council:

1. Council endorse the road name Chanticleer Avenue and call for submissions on the proposed name for a period of at least 28 days.

Council formally adopts the name Chanticleer Avenue and publishes a notice of the new name in the NSW Government Gazette should no submissions or objections be received that require reconsideration of the proposed name.

Receive a further report regarding the adoption of the name, should any submissions be received requiring reconsideration of the proposed name.

2. Reject the proposed road name and seek an alternate name.

Option one is recommended.



<p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singleton LGA Boundary Affected Properties Existing Roads Proposed Roads 	<p>Proposed Road Name - Chanticleer Avenue</p>		 <p>SINGLETON COUNCIL</p>
	<p>Created By: D Fleming (GIS Officer)</p> <p>20/11/2025</p>	 <p>Kilometers</p>	

Conclusions

It is recommended that Council endorse the road name Chanticleer Avenue for public submissions and community consultation.

If no submissions are received on the proposed name, it is recommended that the name is adopted and published in the NSW Government Gazette.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

DCCS14/26. Road Naming - Albatross Street, Birdie Street, Fade Street, Greenside Street, Margaret Close, Stableford Street, Teebox Street Gowrie **FILE:** 121.2025.5/004
Author: Geographical Information Systems Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the naming of seven (7) unnamed roads as part of DA 8.2013.127.3 at Gowrie.

RECOMMENDED that:

1. Council endorse the road names Albatross, Birdie, Fade, Greenside, Margaret, Stableford and Teebox and call for public submissions on the proposed names for a period of at least 28 days.
2. Council formally adopts the names Albatross, Birdie, Fade, Greenside, Margaret, Stableford and Teebox and publishes a notice of the new names in the NSW Government Gazette should no submissions or objections be received that require reconsideration of the proposed names.
3. Should any submissions requiring reconsideration of the proposed names be received, a further report be considered by Council prior to adoption of the names.

Report

The current unnamed roads are situated within Lot 100 DP 1304818. The names have been chosen by the developer, which has a golfing theme in keeping with existing road names already in use at Fairways Estate. If approved, these names will be unique road names in the Singleton Local Government Area (LGA).

Proposed Names	Origin
Albatross	A Golfing Term - scoring three strokes under par on a single hole — an extremely rare and impressive feat.
Birdie	Refers to a score of one stroke under par on a hole. Each hole on a golf course has a par, which is the expected number of strokes a skilled golfer should take to complete it. If a golfer completes the hole in one stroke less than par, it's called a birdie
Fade	Fade is a controlled shot that curves gently from left to right for right-handed players (or right to left for left-handed players)
Greenside	Greenside refers to the area immediately next to the putting green. It's commonly used to describe features or shots that occur near the green, such as a greenside bunker or a greenside chip
Margaret	Margaret Ann Worms joined Singleton Golf Club in 1950. She was a life member and was inducted into the Golf NSW Honour Roll in recognition of more than 60 years involvement in golf.
Stableford	Stableford is a golf scoring system where players earn points based on their

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DCCS14/26

	performance on each hole relative to par, aiming for the highest score rather than the lowest. - Invented by Dr. Frank Stableford in 1932, this system was designed to discourage players from giving up after a few bad holes. Instead of counting total strokes, points are awarded per hole based on how well a player scores relative to par.
Teebox	Teebox refers to the designated area at the start of each hole where players take their first shot. The tee box is a closely mown, flat area at the beginning of each hole. It contains the tee markers that define the boundaries of the teeing area.

A map of the proposed Albatross Street, Birdie Street, Fade Street, Greenside Street, Margaret Close, Stableford Street and Teebox Street is provided below.

Community Strategic Plan

Strategy:	3	Our Environment
Deliverable:	3.1	Our Environment is protected, valued and respected
Action:	3.1.3	Increase the planning and preparedness for natural disasters

Council Policy/Legislation

The adoption of these road names will be carried out in accordance with the following:

- *Roads Act, 1993*;
- *Roads Regulation (2018)*; and
- NSW Address Policy and User Manual – October 2024.

Financial Implications

The expense to Council is minimal and is allowed for in Council's operating budget.

The naming of these roads does not change the ownership, rights or obligations and there will be no further financial implications.

Consultation

The proposal if endorsed by Council, will be advertised in the Singleton Argus and Hunter River Times, and the community will be given 28 days to provide submissions on the names.

Any submissions received that require further reconsideration of the names will be the subject of a further report to Council. If no feedback is received, the names will be recommended by Council and will be made official via a notice of the new names in the NSW Government Gazette.

Sustainability

There are no social, environmental or economic considerations.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk to Council that roads will not be named which may lead to residents not being found / or emergency services being delayed to a property.	Medium	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes
There is a risk that Council will not name a road in accordance with current processes / legislation which may lead to Council's reputation being negatively impacted.	Medium	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes
There is a risk of that Council incurs legal implications and associated costs if we do not name in accordance with current processes.	Medium	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes

Options

The following options are available to Council:

1. Council endorse the road names Albatross, Birdie, Fade, Greenside, Margaret, Stableford and Teebox and call for submissions on the proposed names for a period of at least 28 days.

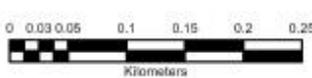
Council formally adopt the names Albatross, Birdie, Fade, Greenside, Margaret, Stableford and Teebox and publishes a notice of the new names in the NSW Government Gazette should no submissions or objections be received that require reconsideration of the proposed names.

Receive a further report regarding the adoption of the names, should any submissions be received requiring reconsideration of the proposed names.

2. Reject the proposed road names and seek alternate names.

Option one is recommended.



<p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singleton LGA Boundary Affected Properties Existing Roads Proposed Roads 	<p>Proposed Road Names - Albatross, Birdie, Fade, Greenside, Margaret, Stableford & Teebox</p>		 <p>SINGLETON COUNCIL</p>
	<p>Created By: D Fleming (GIS Officer)</p> <p>24/11/2025</p>	 <p>Kilometers</p>	

Conclusions

It is recommended that Council endorse the road names Albatross, Birdie, Fade, Greenside, Margaret, Stableford and Teebox and call for public submissions and community consultation.

If no submissions are received on the proposed names, it is recommended that the names are adopted and published in the NSW Government Gazette.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

DCCS3/26. Minutes - Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Joint Management Board - 18/12/2025**FILE:**
25/00151/002**Author:** Executive Assistant - Directors

Executive Summary

The Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Joint Management Board (CEDF-JMB) held its ordinary meeting on 18 December 2025. The minutes of the meeting are shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's consideration.

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement of the meeting minutes and Council's approval of Round Five funding applications recommended by the CEDF-JMB.

RECOMMENDED that Council:

1. Note the minutes of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Joint Management Board meeting held on 18 December 2025.
2. Approve the allocation of \$275,000 to the following Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Round Five applicants:
 - a. Broke Fordwich Wine Tourism Association; project: A Little Bit of Broke – allocate funding: \$30,000
 - b. Business Singleton; project: Shop Local Marketing Campaign – allocate funding: \$17,000
 - c. Nova Skill; project: Building Local Futures - allocate funding: \$66,470
 - d. PCYC Singleton; project: ActiveAbility Hub Accessible Fitness Program – allocate funding: \$35,565
 - e. Witmore Limited; project: Inclusive Eats Coffee Van / Mobile Café – allocate funding: \$125,965.

Report

In partnership with Glencore and The Bloomfield Group, Singleton Council established the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund (CEDF) to ensure the best use of Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) monies for the Singleton community now and into the future.

The CEDF-JMB at its July 2025 meeting, recommended (to Council) \$275,000 per annum for the 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28 annual rounds, which was subsequently approved by Council. Distribution of the funds will be fluid, across multi-year and annual projects. Council will provide an updated budget each year for the Board's and Council's consideration.

Round Five funding applications were opened for the period 1 September to 31 October 2025. During this period four information sessions were held, with 47 people attending the sessions. Twenty (20) applications were received with combined funding requests of \$1,445,033, with a seven-thirteen split between for-profit business and not-for-profit.

Applications were assessed against predefined criteria to ensure they demonstrated economic, social and/or environmental benefit to the community within the Singleton Local Government Area (LGA), consistent with the requirements of the Singleton Community Economic Development Fund Deed.

In accordance with the Singleton CEDF Deed, applications underwent the following assessment process, prior to consideration by Council for approval:

- 1st Assessment – The CEDF Joint Management Team (CEDF-JMT – consisting of two Council staff representatives, along with a representative each from Glencore and Bloomfield) reviewed all applications individually and independent of each other, against the defined criteria to ensure they met the intent of the Deed.
- 2nd Assessment – The CEDF-JMT met to discuss individual assessments and agreed on a shortlist of applications to be provided to the CEDF-JMB for consideration.
- 3rd Assessment – The CEDF-JMB reviewed and considered the shortlist and determined a final list of applications to be recommended to Council for approval.

At its meeting on 8 December 2025, the CEDF-JMT determined that all twenty applications had merit. However, the maximum funding of \$275,000 meant only a limited number could be recommended. Therefore, five (5) applications with a combined requested value of \$281,465 were determined to have met the requirements of the Deed and were the highest-ranking applications against the assessment criteria. One of those applications was recommended for a lesser amount (than the application), as this did not materially impact the outcome and allowed the recommended applications to come in at the \$275,000 approved funding cap.

The CEDF-JMB met on 18 December 2025 and were provided with an overview of the shortlisting process by the CEDF-JMT and rationale for each assessment. The CEDF-JMB acknowledged that all applications had merit. However, its role is to determine and recommend projects within available resources (\$275,000 approved funding). It was also acknowledged by the CEDF-JMB that there are other funding opportunities for some of the applications and that Council will provide advice to these organisations to assist in identifying other grant opportunities.

Following its deliberations, the CEDF-JMB agreed to recommend to Council five (5) applications with a total value of \$275,000 for funding under Round Five of the CEDF program.

A summary of applications received, but not recommended for funding, is shown as **Attachment 2** for Council's information.

An overview of the recommended funding applications (by the CEDF-JMB) is as follows.

a) Broke Fordwich Wine Tourism Association

Project	Grant Amount	Co-contribution
Broke Fordwich – Little Bit of Broke	\$30,000	\$124,675

The grant application is for assistance to fund “A Little Bit of Broke”, a multi-venue festival, which is the flagship promotion for winemakers of the Broke Fordwich region. Previously known as “Little Bit of Italy”, it was renamed “A Little Bit of Broke” in 2023, moving away from a purely wine-focused festival, to enable greater participation as a community event. The application is for funding over 3 years, i.e. \$10,000 annually.

Broke, the longest established wine growing area in the Singleton LGA, has always been an outlier to the wider Hunter wine-producing area of Pokolbin, with a reputation for high quality, single vineyard, award winning wines. A Little Bit of Broke aims at encouraging the target market to stay longer when visiting, increasing their contribution to the visitor economy & assisting the region to grow.

Broke’s market position has been difficult to maintain in the economic and tourism environment over the last 5 years. Distance, market competition and the scale of other Hunter Valley operations limit Broke’s ability to grow with the region’s economy.

A Little Bit of Broke, as an annual event, provides the single most important opportunity for promoting the region.

This project was assessed by the JMT and JMB as a highly valuable event for the Singleton LGA, the tourism industry and visitor economy. The application is well supported by the local community and has significant co-contribution.

The JMB recommends funding this project to the value of \$30,000

b) Business Singleton

Project	Grant Amount	Co-contribution
Shop Local Marketing Campaign	\$17,000	\$38,500

The grant application is to fund the “Beyond the Bypass Shop Local Marketing Campaign”, a marketing strategy and networking series that promotes patronage of Singleton businesses. The development, promotion and growth of local businesses is core to the economic sustainability of the Singleton LGA.

Business Singleton has a sound track-record of delivering programs, events, and initiatives that support the local business community & economy. Economic growth and prosperity are key objectives of Council’s Community Strategic Plan.

This project was assessed by the JMT and JMB as a highly valuable initiative and is supported by good co-contribution, offering economic benefit to the community.

The JMB recommends funding this project to the value of \$17,000

c) Nova Skill

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DCCS3/26

<i>Project</i>	<i>Grant Amount</i>	<i>Co-contribution</i>
Building Local Futures	\$66,470	\$15,960

The grant application is for the “Building Local Futures” project, to fund short hands-on courses in construction/carpentry, Whitecard, Responsible Service of Alcohol, Responsible Conduct of Gambling, Food Safety, Barista and First Aid (Aged & Disability Support Focused). These short courses are designed for rapid employability, providing practical skills without the time and arduous paperwork required for full qualifications. This approach enables participants to enter the workforce quickly while offering clear pathways to gain further skills.

By training and employing people locally, the project keeps skills, jobs, and income within the Singleton LGA, contributing directly to the long-term community vision of a strong, inclusive, and resilient economy.

The application demonstrated strong alignment to Council’s Community Strategic Plan, particularly economic and social development, by equipping participants with in-demand skills vital for economic growth, creating employment pathways in alternate industries as the economy moves away from its reliance on mining.

This project was assessed by the JMT and JMB as a highly valuable initiative, which improves trade skills and qualifications by the provision of free training in a time of significant skills shortages. The applicant has outlined a structured approach to monitor both the social and economic impacts of the program. The proposal is supported by a co-contribution by the applicant. Overall, the application was well structured with clear evidence of the project’s benefits to the individual, community and diversification of the economy.

The JMB recommends funding this project to the value of \$66,470

d) PCYC Singleton

<i>Project</i>	<i>Grant Amount</i>	<i>Co-contribution</i>
“ActiveAbility” Accessible Fitness Program	\$42,030	\$17,900

The grant application is to fund the ActiveAbility Hub, a disability-focused activity program for young adults in Singleton. The ActiveAbility Hub expands the former Friday Afternoon Fun program, which was largely focused on fitness and recreational activities for individuals and groups. The ActiveAbility Hub structure has been co-designed based on lived experience and local need, including structured volunteering as a pathway to entering the workforce.

The project is not only a social initiative, it also supports engagement and productivity to contribute to the region’s economic growth. Benefits of the project include:

- Job stability through employment of qualified staff, including disability support workers, fitness instructors, youth mentors, and PCYC program staff.

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DCCS3/26

- Volunteering opportunities at PCYC, offering structured training and mentoring to help build a more skilled and diverse workforce, especially among a cohort often excluded from traditional employment pathways.

The program integrates the provision of structured 'fee free' access to scheduled PCYC activities and group fitness sessions with individual access when convenient.

The application demonstrated strong alignment to the Community Pillar of Council's Community Strategic Plan and addressed focus areas within the Disability Access Inclusion Plan 2022-26. The range of social, recreational and skill development opportunities the program offers through Singleton PCYC, will contribute to improving liveability and lifestyle for young people living with disability. The program will also be looking to employ Singleton locals for the delivery of the program.

This project was assessed by the JMT and JMB as a valuable initiative that focuses on quality of liveability and lifestyle for young adults living with disability. The application outlined a previously successful program with proven outcomes and provided a robust project plan for the proposed program. The proposal is supported by a co-contribution from the applicant and NSW Government Stronger Country Communities Grant Funding. The JMT recommended funding this project but reducing the applied funding amount by \$6,465 (to \$35,565) to allow the CEDF to meet the targeted budget of \$275,000 for Round 5. The JMT and JMB believes the applicant has various other funding sources available to them, noting there was flexibility in the proposed program budget.

The JMB recommends funding this project to the value of \$35,565

e) Witmore Limited

<i>Project</i>	<i>Grant Amount</i>	<i>Co-contribution</i>
Inclusive Eats Coffee Van / Mobile Café	\$125,965	\$50,000

The grant application is for the establishment of a coffee van / mobile café as an extension to the existing "Inclusive Eats" program. Inclusive Eats is a catering service social enterprise. It supports people with disability in the Hunter region to learn valuable skills and establish themselves on a pathway to employment.

The "Inclusive Eats Coffee Van" project will be a mobile coffee and food van operated by people with disability, assisting them to gain employment, skills & confidence for their future. The project builds on the existing enterprise at Riverside Park, "Riverside Kiosk".

The application demonstrated strong alignment to the Community Pillar of Council's Community Strategic Plan and addressed focus areas within the Disability Access Inclusion Plan 2022-26. This project encourages people with disability to consider their hopes for the future and to consider working in hospitality, undertaking training or employment or the establishment of small business or social enterprise. The application directly supports economic growth and productivity within the Singleton LGA, targeting an identified skill shortage industry, while developing skills and experience that are transferable beyond hospitality.

This project was assessed by the JMT and JMB as a highly valuable initiative that focuses on improved quality of mental health, physical health, self-confidence and personal growth

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DCCS3/26

for young adults living with disability. The application outlined a robust three-fold assessment plan. The plan will measure the number of people with disability trained and employed through the program, noting their training journey and job placement. Secondly, the plan will measure overall client satisfaction. Thirdly, the plan will measure the interest generated by the mobile café amongst people with a disability, regarding how positive role models can influence the hopes and aspirations of others. The proposal is supported by a significant co-contribution.

The JMB recommends funding this project to the value of \$125,965

Summary of recommended applications

Organisation	Organisation Status	Grant Application	Funding Recommendation
Broke Fordwich Wine Tourism Association – A Little Bit of Broke	Not for Profit	\$30,000 Yr 1 = \$10,000 Yr 2 = \$10,000 Yr 3 = \$10,000	\$30,000
Business Singleton – Shop Local Marketing Campaign	Not for Profit	\$17,000	\$17,000
Nova Skill – Building Local Futures	Not for Profit	\$66,470	\$66,470
PCYC Singleton – ActiveAbility Hub Accessible Fitness Program	Not for Profit	\$42,030	\$35,565
Witmore Limited – Inclusive Eats Coffee Van / Mobile Café	Not for Profit	\$125,965	\$125,965
Total		\$281,465	\$275,000

Table 1 - Summary of recommended applications

Community Strategic Plan

Strategy:	1	Our Community
	4	Our Economy
Deliverable:	1.3	Our Community is connected, sustainable and prosperous
	4.2	Our Economy will be smart, embrace growth and provide security for the future
Action:	1.5.1.1	Provide opportunities for our community to be prepared and embrace jobs for the future
	4.2.1	Support the capacity of Singleton businesses to be flexible, adaptable and prepared for change

Council Policy/Legislation

- *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act, 1979*
- *Local Government Act, 1993*
- POL/6017 Singleton Community & Economic Development Fund Policy
- Singleton Community Economic Development Fund Deed.

Financial Implications

Contributions to the Community and Economic Development Fund are managed as an Internal Restricted Asset Account. Proposals approved by Council are recognised as an operating expense in Council's Operating Budget and are funded through transfers from the Internal Restricted Asset Account.

As at 31 December 2025, the CEDF held a balance of \$7,107,048 in the Internal Restricted Asset Account. The Board manages and recommends allocations based on the principle of ensuring the long-term sustainability of the fund.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that Council will not approve the recommended projects which may lead to a lack in community confidence regarding the process and establishment of the CEDF.	Low	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes
There is a risk that Council will not meet the requirements of the Deed, which may lead to reputational damage and the ability to negotiate future Voluntary Planning Agreements.	Low	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes
There is a risk that Council will impact the provision of needed support to the community which may lead to reputational damage.	Low	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes

Options

The following options are available to Council:

- Note the minutes of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Joint Management Board meeting of 18 December 2025; and

Approve the allocation of \$275,000 to the following, Round Five applicants of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund:

- Broke Fordwich Wine Tourism Association; project: A Little Bit of Broke – allocate funding: \$30,000

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DCCS3/26

- Business Singleton; project: Shop Local Marketing Campaign – allocate funding: \$17,000
 - Nova Skill; project: Building Local Futures - allocate funding: \$66,470
 - PCYC Singleton; project: ActiveAbility Hub Accessible Fitness Program – allocate funding: \$35,565
 - Witmore Limited; project: Inclusive Eats Coffee Van / Mobile Café – allocate funding: \$125,965
2. Note the minutes of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Joint Management Board meeting of 18 December 2025 and not adopt the allocation recommendations of the Joint Management Board.

Option one is recommended.

Conclusion

The objectives of the Community Economic Development Fund are to proactively manage the impacts of mining by directing funding contributions toward initiatives that increase economic growth and productivity and promote the health and wellbeing of communities across the Singleton LGA. The proposed projects represent a diverse range of initiatives that respond to current social, health, economic, and environmental challenges within the Singleton LGA.

Attachments

- AT-1** [↓](#) Minutes - Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Joint Management Board 18122025
- AT-2** [↓](#) CEDF Round 5 Applications Not Recommended



MINUTES
COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND JOINT MANAGEMENT BOARD
1PM - 3PM THURSDAY 18 DECEMBER 2025

Present	Cr Sue George, Deputy Mayor (Chair) – Singleton Council Cr Sue Moore, Mayor – Singleton Council Cr Godfrey Adamthwaite, Councillor – Singleton Council Ashley McLeod – Glencore Thomas Holz – Bloomfield Group Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr, General Manager – Singleton Council (Ex-Officio)
In Attendance	Dwight Graham, Director Corporate & Community Services – Singleton Council Nicole Rindal, Manager Community Experience & Events – Singleton Council Alex Richards – Bloomfield Group Nick Slater – Glencore <i>Virtual</i> Kirsten Torrance, Executive Assistant – Singleton Council
Meeting Location	Committee Room & Virtual via Microsoft Teams

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Welcome
- Acknowledgement of Country by Chair
- Apologies – Nil

2 Disclosure of Interests

- Nil

3 Confirmation of Minutes

- The minutes of the Community Economic Development Fund Joint Management Board meeting held on Wednesday 3 December 2025, were confirmed.

Moved: Cr Godfrey Adamthwaite **Seconded:** Thomas Holz
All in favour **CARRIED**

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Nil.

5 Agenda Items

**5.1 Singleton Community and Economic Development
Fund Reconciliation 31 October 2025.**

The Singleton Community Economic Development Fund - Joint Management Board (CEDF-JMB) was provided a with financial balance of the CEDF at 31 October 2025 and status of grants.

**MINUTES****COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND JOINT MANAGEMENT BOARD
1PM - 3PM THURSDAY 18 DECEMBER 2025****NOTED****5.2 Singleton Community and Economic Development
Fund - Community Application Assessment Round
Five - 2025/2026**

Dwight Graham, Director Corporate and Community Services, presented a summary of the Community Economic and Development Fund Joint Management Team's (CEDF-JMT) assessment of applications received for Round Five of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund. The CEDF-JMB was provided with a summary of recommended applications in the agenda and the report was taken as read.

The assessment process followed by the CEDF-JMT was explained and discussed. CEDF-JMT members confirmed the assessment scoring tools and discussion process promote transparency and due diligence, making them highly effective. CEDF-JMT members confirmed the existing process is audit-resilient and does not require any updates at this time.

Dwight confirmed the annual distribution for allocated funds of \$275,000 will be fluid across multi-year and annual projects. The budget for multi-year projects will be allocated to the year the funding is awarded. A full reconciliation of the CEDF will be presented at the next JMB meeting, including the balances of Rounds Three and Four grant recipients' projects.

Recommendation

That the Singleton Community Economic Development Fund Joint Management Board endorse Broke Fordwich Wine Tourism Association, Business Singleton, Novaskill, PCYC Singleton and Witmore Limited applications (total amount of funding approved \$275,000) being recommended to Council for funding, from Round Five of the Singleton Community Economic Development Fund.

Moved: Cr Godfrey Adamthwaite **Seconded:** Mayor Sue Moore
All in favour **CARRIED**

6 Other Business

- Cr Sue George advised that she attended graduation ceremonies for the Top Blokes Foundation Round Four CEDF Project on Wednesday December 10, with excellent feedback.
- The next meeting for the CEDF-JMB will be scheduled for early March 2026. Meeting date and time to be confirmed.
- The Chair closed the meeting and wished everyone the compliments of the season.



MINUTES
COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND JOINT MANAGEMENT BOARD
1PM - 3PM THURSDAY 18 DECEMBER 2025

7 Action List

Pulse/Action No	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date
CEDF25-03	18/12/2025	Provide full CEDF reconciliation report including Rounds 3 & 4.	D Graham	March 2026
CEDF25-04	18/12/202	Coordinate CEDF-JMB meeting date for March 2026.	K Torrance	February 2026

8 Next Meeting

To be confirmed – early March 2026

The meeting closed at 1:30pm.

Cr Sue George, Deputy Mayor
Chair

CEDF-JMT Round Five Applications Not Recommended for Funding

The following eight (8) applications were not recommended to the JMB:

For profit

- | | |
|--|----------|
| • Belgravia Leisure
Para-mobility pool hoist replacement | \$15,500 |
| • Veridian Developments
Community land affordable housing program study | \$75,000 |
| • Winmark Wines
Covered seating sites & misting jets | \$15,000 |

Not For Profit

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| • Jerrys Plains Rodeo Association
Upgrade to grounds and facilities | \$84,720 |
| • Singleton Cancer Appeal Committee
Refurbishment of rooms at Singleton District Hospital | \$200,000 |
| • Singleton Strikers Football Club
Clubhouse upgrade & fitout | \$10,000 |
| • Singleton Town Band
Hall upgrade & restoration | \$8,234 |
| • The Groundswell Collective
Tiny forest ecology community project | \$47,208 |

In addition, the following seven (7) applications were assessed by the JMT as worthy projects aligning to various Pillars within Council's Community Strategic Plan, however, were not recommended due to stronger submissions within a highly competitive field.

For Profit Organisations

Bright Start Supports – One Year Funding	\$26,850
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The application was for an inclusive lawn care business, a project to create meaningful and ongoing job opportunities for people with disability in Singleton. The funding application was to purchase fully battery-operated lawn mowers, whipper snippers, blowers and a fitted trailer. The equipment would enable the team to work safely and efficiently, and each participant would complete essential training such as Traffic Control, White Card, and First Aid, assisting them with valuable qualifications for future work.

The JMT assessed this as a strong and worthy application and has identified this as the next program prioritised should those recommended (by the JMT) not be supported.

Detour Youth Services – Multi-Year Funding \$80,619

This application was for “Sidetrack Mentoring Pit Crew Drift Team Project”. The funding was to support a youth services program delivered through hands-on vehicle-based activities to foster resilience, self-worth & life skills. The program was aimed at people aged 14 through 16 providing holistic mental health support in a safe & inclusive environment. The JMT agreed the program was good in principle but not recommended due to stronger applications.

Mai-Wel Limited – One Year Funding \$50,000

This application was for “Confidence in the Kitchen Inclusive Training & Employment” facility. The funding was for the establishment of a fully functional accessible kitchen & training facility at Mai-Wel’s Singleton site. “Confidence in the Kitchen” is an existing program and the application was to upgrade Mai-Wel’s existing kitchen for inclusive and accessible programs along with funding towards program marketing, signage and reporting. The JMT agreed the program was good in principle but not recommended due to stronger applications.

Redfloor Productions – Multi-Year Funding \$315,188

The application was for the “Young Gums Expansion” Project & “Dashville Skilled Workforce” Traineeship Program. The program was aimed at high school students in the Singleton LGA aged 13 – 17 years that targets emerging creatives interested in music festival production and performance. The JMT agreed this is very good in principle but not recommended due to stronger applications.

Not For Profit Organisations

Dyson Family Foundation – One Year Funding \$55,700

This application was for the “Backpack Pals” Program. The funding application was to purchase a van to distribute prepacked food provisions to local schools for the weekends. These packs are discretely distributed to children and families experiencing financial hardship, acting as a weekend hunger buster. The JMT agreed this is a worthwhile cause but not recommended due to stronger applications.

Ourcare Services Limited – One Year Funding \$116,109

This application was for an upgrade to commercial kitchen facilities at Ourcare Services. The application was for funding to upgrade the existing kitchen facilities. The JMT deemed this a good application as the facility is utilised by Singleton Senior Citizens, Hunter Valley Conservatorium of Music, local dance academies and is available to the Singleton community at large, but was not recommended due to stronger applications.

Upper Hunter Homeless Support – One Year Funding \$63,440

This application was for the “New Lease On Life” Project. The application was for funding to lease two properties in Singleton, providing safe housing for up to 12 months for families experiencing homelessness and/or domestic, family and sexual violence. The JMT deemed this a worthy application strongly aligned to Council’s Community Strategic Plan, however, was not recommended due to stronger applications.

DCCS4/26. Minutes - Singleton Arts & Culture Advisory Group - 03/12/2025 **FILE: 22/00156**
Author: Executive Assistant - Directors

Executive Summary

The Singleton Arts and Culture Advisory Group held its ordinary meeting on 3 December 2025. The minutes of the meeting are shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's consideration.

RECOMMENDED that Council:

1. Note the minutes for the Singleton Arts and Culture Advisory Group meeting of 3 December 2025.
2. Adopt the proposed updates to the committee Terms of Reference as recommended by the Singleton Arts and Culture Advisory Group at its ordinary meeting of 3 December 2025.

Report

The Singleton Arts & Culture Advisory Group provides strategic and operational advice to Council in relation to the Singleton Arts & Cultural Centre and associated programming.

As part of its ongoing role, the Advisory Group has identified the need to establish a working group to assess potential acquisitions for the Civic Art Collection. The current Terms of Reference do not explicitly provide for the involvement of non-Committee members in such working groups, limiting Council's ability to formally engage external subject matter expertise in an advisory capacity.

The proposed amendment enables community members with relevant professional or technical expertise to be invited as affiliated members of working parties where appropriate. This strengthens the quality of advice provided to Council while maintaining appropriate governance arrangements, as all recommendations remain subject to Council consideration and approval.

In addition, a number of Council position titles referenced in the Terms of Reference are no longer current following internal structural changes. Updating these titles will improve clarity, accountability, and transparency regarding staff responsibilities.

The proposed amendments were presented to, and endorsed by, the Singleton Arts & Culture Advisory Group at its meeting of 3 December 2025. The updated Terms of Reference are provided at Attachment 2 for Council's consideration.

Community Strategic Plan

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DCCS4/26

Strategy:	1	Our Community
	5	Our Leadership
Deliverable:	1.1	Provide services and facilities that meet the needs of our community at different stages of life
	5.1	Our Council is customer focused and collaborative
Action:	1.1.1	Create and provide social, recreational and cultural services which educate, innovate, inspire and entertain
	5.1.2	Collaborate with our community stakeholders and Council to create an informed community and better outcomes

Council Policy/Legislation

- *Local Government Act (NSW), 1993*
- Council Committees Policy
- Arts & Culture Policy
- Arts & Culture Strategy 2020 – 2030
- Arts & Culture Centre Strategy 2025 – 2029

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with adopting the proposed updates to the Singleton Arts & Culture Advisory Group Terms of Reference.

The amendments are administrative in nature and relate to governance arrangements only. They do not establish new programs, create additional positions, or commit Council to any new expenditure. Any participation of affiliated community members in working parties would be managed within existing resources and approved budgets.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
Failure to update the Terms of Reference may limit Council's ability to engage appropriate subject matter experts and community stakeholders in an advisory capacity for specialised initiatives, which may lead to the reduction of quality of advice and community confidence in Council decision-making.	Low	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes
Maintaining outdated Terms of Reference, including obsolete position titles and limited participation provisions, may result in governance ambiguity, reduced	Low	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DCCS4/26

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
operational clarity, and misalignment with Council's current organisational structure, which may lead to reputational risk and reduced transparency.				
Lack of clarity regarding working party participation arrangements may create inconsistent practices across advisory activities, which may lead to perceived inequity in community engagement processes.	Low	Adopt the recommendation	Low	Yes

Options

The following options are available to Council:

1.
 - a) Note the minutes for the Singleton Arts and Culture Advisory Group meeting of 3 December 2025.
 - b) Adopt the proposed updates to the committee Terms of Reference as recommended by the Singleton Arts and Culture Advisory Group at its ordinary meeting of 3 December 2025.
2. Note the minutes for the Singleton Arts and Culture Advisory Group meeting of 3 December 2025 and not adopt the proposed updates to the committee Terms of Reference as recommended by the Singleton Arts and Culture Advisory Group at its ordinary meeting of 3 December 2025.

Option one is recommended.

Conclusions

The proposed addition to include affiliated community members with relevant expertise in working parties will improve the quality and relevance of recommendations while maintaining appropriate governance. Further, the proposed update of outdated position titles increases Council's transparency and substantiates staff responsibilities. Option one is therefore recommended.

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Minutes - Arts & Culture Advisory Group 03122025

AT-2 [↓](#) Draft Singleton Arts and Culture Advisory Group Terms of Reference - August 2025

MINUTES
ARTS AND CULTURE ADVISORY GROUP
1:30PM - 2:30PM WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2025



Present	Cr Danny Thompson (Chair) – Singleton Council Cr Patrick Thompson, Councillor – Singleton Council Dwight Graham, Director Corporate & Community Services – Singleton Council Nicole Rindal, Manager Community Experience & Events – Singleton Council Courtney Wagner, Coordinator Arts & Culture (Gallery Director) – Singleton Council Christine McKanna-Farr – Community Member Debbie Becker – Community Member Hannah Dewar – Community Member Jan Fallding – Community Member <i>Virtual</i> Wendy Mason-Jones – Community Member John O'Brien – Observer <i>Virtual</i>
In Attendance	Kirsten Torrance, Executive Assistant – Singleton Council
Meeting Location	Committee Room & Virtual via Microsoft Teams

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Welcome
- Welcome to Country by Debbie Becker
- Apologies - Helen Sharrock, Kerri-Anne Taggart, Kim Lundy
- Dwight introduced Courtney Wagner, Council's newly appointed Coordinator Arts & Culture (Gallery Director). Members of the Arts & Culture Advisory Group introduced themselves for Courtney's information.

2 Disclosure of Interests

- Nil

3 Confirmation of Minutes

- The minutes of the Arts and Culture Advisory Group meeting held on Tuesday 26 August 2025, were confirmed.

Moved: Cr Patrick Thompson **Seconded:** Hannah Dewar
CARRIED

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Nil

5 Agenda Items

**MINUTES
ARTS AND CULTURE ADVISORY GROUP
1:30PM - 2:30PM WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2025**



**5.1 Revisions to Arts & Cultural Advisory Committee
Terms of Reference**

Nicole Rindal, Manager Customer Experience & Events, presented updated Committee Terms of Reference to the Arts & Culture Advisory Group. The Committee Terms of Reference have been updated to allow for the inclusion of affiliated members in working parties and to revise outdated position titles to reflect Council's current organisational structure.

Council is seeking the Advisory Group's endorsement of the revised Terms of Reference.

Recommendation:

That the Arts and Culture Advisory Group endorse the proposed updates to the Singleton Arts & Culture Advisory Committee Terms of Reference to include affiliated community members in working parties and reflect current organisational position titles and recommend submission to Council for formal adoption.

Moved: Wendy Mason-Jones **Seconded:** Jan Fallding
CARRIED

**5.2 Proposal to Establish an Aboriginal Engagement
Contact List**

Nicole Rindal, Manager Customer Experience & Events, presented a proposal to the Advisory Group around establishing a voluntary contact list of Aboriginal people and organisations interested in receiving direct engagement opportunities from both internal and external stakeholders.

In recent years, Council has received an increasing number of requests from external organisations seeking to engage with Aboriginal community members and groups. Historically, such opportunities have been referred to the Aboriginal Reconciliation Committee for sharing through existing networks. While this practice will continue, Council is proposing an additional mechanism to support more direct engagement with the establishment of an Aboriginal Engagement Contact List.

Council invites members of the Advisory Group to consider whether they wish to be included.

NOTED

5.3 Singleton Bypass Artwork Update

Nicole Rindal, Manager Customer Experience & Events, provided an update on

MINUTES
ARTS AND CULTURE ADVISORY GROUP
1:30PM - 2:30PM WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2025



discussions with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) regarding potential cultural artwork opportunities on pylons or surfaces beneath the Singleton Bypass.

TfNSW is supportive in principle of artwork being placed on pylons or other surfaces beneath the Bypass once the project is complete, however, is not in a position to provide funding.

Committee members agreed preliminary work on this project will commence in the New Year, noting possible artwork includes cultural history as well as Indigenous artwork.

Please find most-recent link to Singleton Bypass Flyover as follows:

[Map | Singleton Bypass | Transport for NSW \(RMS\)](#)

NOTED

5.4 Shadowgram Bike Rack Imagery

Nicole Rindal, Manager Customer Experience & Events, provided an overview of the Shadowgram public art activation and its evolution into functional bike rack sculptures as part of the Living Laneways Program.

The history of the Shadowgram Bike Racks was provided to the Group following the previous committee meeting.

NOTED

5.5 Singleton Arts & Cultural Centre Quarterly Update

Courtney Wagner, Coordinator Arts & Culture (Gallery Director), provided an update on programs, exhibitions and activities at the SACC.

Courtney provided a comprehensive overview of activities at the SACC, including a summary of completed exhibitions and workshops from February to November 2025, and upcoming events from August 2025 to January 2026.

A summary of Courtney's presentation is attached to these minutes for the information of the Committee.

Public Art – Installation of sculptures for reactivation R4R Round 9 to be completed and installed by 10 December with a launch date in February 2026.

The collection & analysis method for visitation data and foot traffic through the gallery is currently under review.

6 Other Business

6.1 Singleton Sisters of Mercy Convent Site Update.....Jan Fallding

**MINUTES
ARTS AND CULTURE ADVISORY GROUP
1:30PM - 2:30PM WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2025**



The Sisters of Mercy Convent has been closed for five years. St Catherine's Catholic College Principal is currently compiling a business plan around future use for the convent.

Jan is currently compiling a report around cultural use of the convent for the previous 25 years and future support required for the site. The point of contact for the convent is the Institute of Sisters of Mercy, and the Institute will hopefully advise an outcome regarding second point of contact in the near future.

The Diocese approached Council in 2024 exploring planning and expansion from a heritage aspect.

Christine advised she has been previously involved in an architectural case study and can provide a copy as required.

It was noted the convent has been a site for music programs for over 20 years and is important for the cultural development of the community.

6.2 General Business

- The SATS production for 2026 will be "The Boy from Oz".
- Noeline Millar will be judging the 2026 Singleton Art Prize and conducting artist workshops.
- A Visual Arts Camp is scheduled to be held at Minimbah Teaching Place on 17 – 18 April 2026. This is a day camp for community members of the Singleton & Muswellbrook LGA.
- Four LGAs will collaborate on the "Death Cycle of a Ruined Piano" project.
- Grace Barnes will be presenting at the next 'NEXT Studio' workshop / event.
- Songs of the Hunter will call out for a playlist, with the potential to list on Spotify.
- Robert Harris is scheduled to hold a concert on 15 February 2026 and is seeking a venue.
- LiddellWORKS has received a Highly Commended Award for Exhibition Projects at the Museums & Galleries of NSW IMAGinE Awards of NSW 2025.

7 Action List

Pulse/Action No	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date
AC25-06	03/12/2025	List Hunter Valley Website on future meeting agenda	N Rindal	24/02/2026

**MINUTES
ARTS AND CULTURE ADVISORY GROUP
1:30PM - 2:30PM WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2025**



8 Next Meeting

- Tuesday 24 February 2026 12:00pm – 1:30pm

The meeting closed at 2:30pm.

Cr Danny Thompson
Chair

Terms of Reference Singleton Arts & Culture Advisory Group

1. Establishment

Singleton Council, through its Arts and Culture Strategy 2020-2030, recognise that 'local government is a critical leader in supporting the aspirations of the community to create and participate in arts and culture'.

The name of the Committee shall be the 'The Singleton Arts and Culture Advisory Group' hereafter referred to as 'the Committee.'

2. Authority

The Committee is established to only advise or refer matters to Council for a decision. The Committee is not vested with the authority to make decisions.

3. Functions and Responsibilities

The Committee's functions are to:

- Support Council in the delivery of the Arts and Culture Strategy 2020-2030
- Assist Council to promote and celebrate the arts, culture, and heritage of Singleton and to build connection between arts, culture and heritage groups and individuals in the community
- Provide advice and recommendations to Council on arts, culture, and heritage issues
- Contribute to the development and enhancement of a strong, identifiable public profile for arts and culture across the Singleton LGA
- To assist Council in developing, monitoring, and revising the Arts and Culture Strategy 2020-2030.

4. Referral of Matters

All Committee minutes will be reported to Council for information and for adoption of recommendations as required.

5. Membership and Length of Term

The Committee will consist of:

- Two (2) Councillors, one holding the position of Chairperson
- Director ~~Organisation and Corporate and~~ Community ~~Capacity Services~~
- Manager ~~Organisation Excellence/Strategy & Engagement~~ ~~Community Experience and Events~~
- Council's Arts and Culture Coordinator (~~Gallery Director~~)
- Twelve (12) community members that reflect the breadth of arts, culture and heritage diversity across the LGA, with four positions being identified as:
 - Two positions to be filled only by a Wanaruah/Wonnarua person who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, who

is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, and who are accepted by the community as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

- One position to be filled only by a person who identifies as having a disability
- One position to be filled only by a person aged between 16 and 21 years of age as a youth delegate.

Community members of the Committee will be appointed by Council following a publicly advertised expression of interest process. Council also has the discretion to invite community members and stakeholders to nominate. Nominations will be sought using the Council Committee Nomination Form.

The Committee members will serve for the following term:

- Councillors – all Councillor appointments will cease upon commencement of the Caretaker period, four (4) weeks prior to a general Local Government Election
- Director ~~Organisation Community Capacity~~Corporate and Community Services – ongoing
- Manager ~~Organisation Excellence/Strategy & Engagement~~Community Experience and Events – ongoing
- Arts and Culture Coordinator (Gallery Director) – ongoing
- Community Members – two years (with the ability to re-nominate for a further two-year term, up to a maximum of four years).

A Community Member's appointment may be ended because of one of the following:

- Resignation in writing by the member
- Regular non-attendance at meetings (note: members shall be considered to have vacated their position if they have been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings, without having submitted an apology to the Chair).
- Failure to comply with the Singleton Council Code of Conduct.

• Working Parties or Sub-Committees may be established by the Committee to support specific initiatives or projects. These groups may include members of the Committee as well as affiliated community members invited by Council. Affiliated members are not formal members of the Advisory Committee but contribute on a voluntary basis to specific tasks, such as acquisition assessment for the Civic Art Collection.

6. Operation

- The Committee shall comply with Council's adopted Code of Meeting practice and Committee Procedure.
- The Committee will meet at least quarterly.
- Meetings can be held in person or virtually, at the discretion of the Chair.
- All decisions and recommendation shall be determined preferably by consensus, however, if this cannot be achieved, decision shall be reached by a majority vote of members present.
- If voting on a motion is tied, the Chair of the Committee will have the casting vote.



7. Quorum

- A quorum is 50% of members plus the Chair.
- If a quorum is not achieved the meeting will be held over until the following meeting date.



8. Conduct

- All Committee members must comply with the applicable provisions of Council's Code of Conduct in performing their duties and must:
 - Not engage in bullying behaviour (as defined in the Code of Conduct) towards the Chair, other Council officials or any members of the public during Committee Meetings.
 - Not engage in conduct that disrupts Committee Meetings, or that would otherwise be inconsistent with the orderly conduct of meetings
 - Disclose the nature of any pecuniary or non-pecuniary conflicts of interest to the Chair as soon as practicable in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.
- Councillors must always comply with the Interactions Between Councillors and Staff Policy and only contact staff that are nominated in the Councillors/Staff Liaison listing. Should they wish to contact a Council staff member outside of a Committee meeting they may do so via the General Manager or relevant Director.
- It is important for Committee members to recognise that meetings are not a suitable forum for making requests for Council staff. All meeting requests outside of the Committee's Terms of Reference must be made via the appropriate channel.
 - i.e. customer request.

9. Meetings

- Committee meetings are carried out in accordance with these Terms of Reference and Council's Committee Procedure.
- Committee members are required to be fully prepared for each meeting and make every reasonable effort to attend or participate in each meeting.
- Committee meetings will be conducted with due consideration for each person with a disability and in an environment, which is accessible to all members.

10. Observers and Visitors

- A Councillor who is not a member of the Committee may attend a meeting as an observer. However, the Councillor is not entitled to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, to move or second a motion or vote at a meeting. The Councillor will as a courtesy advise the Chair by email of their intention to attend a meeting.
- The General Manager or their representative may also attend and speak at a meeting. Other Council staff may attend at the invitation of the General Manager or Director to speak on a particular agenda item. Council staff attending in this capacity cannot move or second a motion at the meeting or vote at the meeting.
- A representative of Arts Upper Hunter may attend and speak at the meeting as an observer. They may not move or second a motion or vote at a meeting.

11. Agendas and Minutes

- Agendas and minutes are to be prepared and circulated in accordance with the



- Committees Procedure.
- All meeting records are to be recorded in the relevant Content ManagerM9 container.
- Minutes will be reported to Council for decisions, adoption and information.

12. Evaluation and Review

- The Committee will review its Terms of Reference and provide them to Council for adoption at the beginning of each term of Council or when initiated by the Chair.
- The Chair of the Committee will initiate a review of the performance of the Committee at the end of every term of Council. The review will be conducted on a self-assessment basis (unless otherwise determined by the Chair). With appropriate input from the relevant Director and any other relevant stakeholders as determined by the Chair.

Version Control

No	Date	Updated By
1	15 March 2021	Director Organisation Community Capacity
2	15 February 2022	Director Organisation Community Capacity
3	30 August 2022	Director Organisation Community Capacity
4	January 2025	Director Organisation Community Capacity
<u>5</u>	<u>19 August 2025</u>	<u>Manager Community Experience and Events</u>



DCCS6/26. December 2025 Quarterly Budget Review Statement
Author: Chief Financial Officer

FILE: 25/00401

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for the December 2025 Quarterly Budget Review Statement (QBRs). As a result of this review, Council's projected Net Operating Result before capital items for the year is a deficit of \$4.787 million, a decrease from the original budgeted surplus of \$0.114 million. The main driver has been the significant increase in depreciation resulting from the recent revaluation of roads and drainage assets.

Capital expenditure is proposed to decrease to \$64.427 million but remains significantly higher than the original budgeted amount of \$49.678 million.

RECOMMENDED that Council adopt the recommended budgetary changes presented in the December 2025 Quarterly Budget Review Statement at Attachment 1.

Report

The Quarterly Budget Review Statement (QBRs) offers a comprehensive summary of Council's financial performance at the close of each quarter, along with projections for the remainder of the financial year. It is a vital tool for keeping both Councillors and the community updated on Council's progress against the Operational Plan Budget, while also highlighting key variances and proposing any necessary adjustments.

The QBRs outlines changes in income and expenditure, which have been impacted by various factors, including decisions by other levels of government regarding grant programs, shifts in economic conditions, weather events, and Council's own policy decisions.

In the 2024/2025 financial year, Council undertook the required comprehensive revaluation of its Roads and Road Infrastructure. This resulted in a net increase in depreciation of \$4.846 million, coming from an increase for roads and road infrastructure offset with a decrease in depreciation for tip asset, which was also revalued.

Shown as **Attachment 1** is the December 2025 QBRs.

Community Strategic Plan

Strategy:	5	Our Leadership
Deliverable:	5.2	Our Council is trusted, responsible and transparent
Action:	5.2.1	To lead, govern and regulate in an ethical, equitable and transparent way
	5.2.2	All council activities are managed in a financial sustainable way

Council Policy/Legislation

- *Local Government Act, 1993*
- *Local Government (General) Regulation, 2021*

Financial Implications

The December 2025 QBRS shows a projected year end operating deficit of \$4.787 million before capital items, compared to Council's 2026 Original Budget of \$0.114 million surplus. Capital expenditure is projected to be \$64.427 million compared to the original budget of \$49.678 million. The commentary below explains a summary of the variations that are contained within the December 2025 QBRS, as shown as **Attachment 1**.

Council is currently implementing a Financial Improvement Project aimed at enhancing financial sustainability and efficiency. Efforts are underway, aimed at returning to a balanced budget, ensuring sound financial management and strategic allocation of resources for the future. However, Singleton Council like all rural and regional councils, is experiencing cost pressures beyond its capped revenue increases and returning to a balanced budget will be challenging.

Council is currently preparing the 2026/2027 budget and looking at ways to reduce the impact of depreciation by critically reviewing both expense items and income streams along with understanding the impact of large capital works projects on the operating result. Council is re-forecasting the long-term financial plan and integrating the asset management plans to understand the future impacts of depreciation and life cycle costing.

The revaluation data has been uploaded into Council's financial system. Depreciation actuals have been updated and will reflect in the March quarterly report.

Income and Expense

A summary of significant budgetary changes to operating income and expense for the December 2025 QBRS deterioration of \$4.846 million before capital income include:

- The deterioration is driven by a \$4.857 million net increase in depreciation - \$5.857 million increase in roads and road infrastructure offset with an improvement of \$1.122 million in the tip asset and \$0.122 million increase for other minor adjustments. This is a result of the revaluations completed last year.

Other smaller variations are:

- \$456k increase in tipping fees, based year to date actuals.
- \$0.807 million decrease in waste bottom-line due to budget assumptions related to the introduction of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) not eventuating.
- Additional \$0.839 million income and \$0.839m expense in water and sewer due to the Singleton ByPass Project.
- \$0.420 million increased expense for natural disaster clean-up and emergency work which may be partially recoverable under the Disaster Relief Funding

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DCCS6/26

Arrangements; as well as \$0.400 million increased expense offset fully with additional grant income for emergency management projects.

Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure is forecast to decrease from the September QBR approved budget of \$69.082 million to \$64.427 million for the December QBR. The revised budget remains significantly higher than the original budgeted amount of \$49.678 million.

The decrease in capital expenditure is primarily due to projects being deferred to 2026/2027.

A summary of significant budgetary changes to capital expenditure for the December 2025 QBRS movement of (\$4.655) million include:

- Causeway and Bridge Rehabilitation Program – \$0.800 million increase due to market pricing received on tender exceeding grant funding available. An increase to grant funding is currently pending approval with Transport for NSW via a deed variation.
- Building Program – \$0.468 million increase due to new energy efficiency upgrades occurring at the Gym and Swim and Lake St Clair funded 50% by the Community Energy Upgrades Fund grant, Resources For Regions grant and existing loan.
- Natural Disaster Recovery Program – \$0.500 million increase to align budget with expected actuals. Disaster Relief Funding Arrangement grant was deferred in the prior financial year at the March 2025 quarterly budget review and is funding these projects.
- Waste Services Program – (\$3,458) million decrease due to deferral of western cell construction to 2027 financial year, the planning and site establishment phases is still on track for this financial year.
- Water Supply Services – (\$1.000) million decrease due to deferral to 2027 financial year as a result of the contractor capacity this financial year.
- Sewerage Supply Services – (\$3.000) million decrease due to deferral of the treatment plant to 2027 financial year in line with the program of the awarded contract for the works.

Consultation

The December QBRS has been developed in consultation with the Finance Team, Leadership Team, Executive Leadership Team, and other relevant staff. The December QBRS will be presented to the Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee on Monday 16 February 2026.

Sustainability

Nil.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DCCS6/26

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that major budget variations are not reported to Council prior to the finalisation of annual accounts which may result in the community's perception of financial mis-management leading to reputational damage.	Medium	Adoption of the recommendation.	Low	Yes
There is a risk of Councillors and management not having a good oversight over the financial affairs of Council which may lead to reputational damage to Council.	Medium	Adoption of the recommendation.	Low	Yes
There is a risk of Council operations and projects being delayed due to not having budget variations approved by Council leading to reputational damage.	Medium	Adoption of the recommendation.	Low	Yes
There is a risk that increasing costs and capped revenue increases make Council's financial sustainability more challenging in the medium term.	High	Adopt the recommendation and implement the Financial Improvement Program	Medium	Yes

Options

The following options are available to Council:

1. That Council adopts adopt the recommended budgetary changes presented in the December 2025 Quarterly Budget Review Statement at Attachment 1.
2. That Council amends the recommended budgetary changes presented in the December 2025 Quarterly Budget Review Statement.
3. That Council does not adopt the recommended budgetary changes presented in the December 2025 Quarterly Budget Review Statement.

Option one is recommended.

Conclusions

Responsible Accounting Officer Statement (by the Chief Financial Officer):

Following this review, Council's Net Operating Result before capital items for the year is projected to show a deficit of \$4.787 million, compared to the original budgeted surplus of \$0.114 million for the 2026 financial year. Capital expenditure is projected to total \$64.427 million, compared to the original budget of \$49.678 million.

In my opinion, the QBRS for Singleton Council for the quarter ending 31 December 2025 indicate that the projected financial position at 30 June 2026 will be satisfactory, considering the estimated income and expenditure forecasts. However, I place a qualification on this statement, taking into account the ongoing Financial Improvement Program being implemented by Council.

The outcomes of this project may have an impact on the final financial position, and while it is expected to improve Council's financial standing, the full effects will not be fully realised until later stages of implementation. Therefore, the projected financial position should be reviewed in light of the progress of the Financial Improvement Program.

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Attachment 1 December 2025 Quarterly Budget Review



**QUARTERLY
BUDGET REPORT**
December 2025

[W singleton.nsw.gov.au](http://www.singleton.nsw.gov.au)



Introduction

The QBRS is the mechanism whereby Councillors and the community are informed of Council's progress against the Operational Plan (original budget) and the recommended changes and reasons for major variances.

The QBRS is composed of the following Statements:

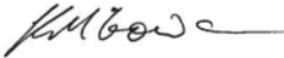
1. Responsible Accounting Officer Statement
2. Quarterly Budget Review Financial Overview Statement
3. Income and Expense Budget Review Statements
4. Capital Budget Review Statement
5. Cash and Investments Budget Review Statement
6. Developer Contribution Summary.

Responsible Accounting Officer Statement

Budget review for the quarter ended 31 December 2025.

In accordance with clause 203(2) of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005, it is my opinion that the Quarterly Budget Review Statement for Singleton Council for the quarter ending 30 September 2025 indicates that Council's projected financial position at 30 June 2026 will be satisfactory at year-end, having regard to the projected estimates of income and expenditure and the original budgeted income and expenditure. However, I would like to place a qualification on this statement, taking in to account the ongoing Financial Improvement Project being implemented by Council.

The outcomes of this project may have an impact on the final financial position, and while it is expected to improve Council's financial standing, the full effects will not be fully realised until later stages of implementation. Therefore, the projected financial position should be reviewed in light of the progress of the Financial Improvement Project.



Kelly McGowan
Responsible Accounting Officer, Singleton Council

QBRS FINANCIAL OVERVIEW											
Singleton Council											
Budget review for the quarter ended 31/12/25											
DESCRIPTION	Previous Year	Current Year Original	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Revised	Recommended changes	Projected Year End (PYE)	VARIANCE	ACTUAL YTD	
	Actual	Budget	Review	Review	Review	Budget	for council resolution	Result	ORIGINAL budget v PYE	2025/26	
	2024/25 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	Q 1 \$000's	Q 2 \$000's	Q 3 \$000's	\$000's	\$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	
Net Operating Result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	General Fund	-7,299	-3,625	-376	0	0	-4,001	-4,406	-8,407	-4,782	15,770
	Water Fund	2,622	1,246	202	0	0	1,448	-466	982	-264	-122
	Sewer Fund	2,273	1,556	39	0	0	1,595	135	1,730	174	2,658
	Consolidated	-773	114	-55	0	0	59	-4,846	-4,787	-4,901	19,193
Operating Result from continuing operations (with capital grants and contributions) excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	Consolidated	44,510	25,725	11,619	0	0	37,344	2,894	40,238	14,513	35,358
Borrowings	Total borrowings	15,603	21,425	0			21,425	0	21,425	0	14,123
	External restrictions	86,774	61,333	0	0	0	61,333	8,355	69,688	8,355	85,477
	Internal Allocations	42,302	38,503	0	0	0	38,503	5,727	44,230	5,727	49,641
	Unallocated	426	323	0	0	0	323	-61	262	-61	270
	Total Cash, Cash Equivalents and Inv	129,502	100,159	0	0	0	100,159	14,021	114,180	14,021	135,387
Capital	Capital Funding	38,388	49,678	19,404	0	0	69,082	-4,655	64,427	14,749	16,363
	Capital Expenditure	38,388	49,678	19,404	0	0	69,082	-4,655	64,427	14,749	16,363
	Net Capital	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	Opening Balance	Total Cash Contributions Received	Total Interest Earned	Total Expended	Total Internal Borrowings (to)/from	Held as Restricted Asset	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
	As at 1 July 2025 \$000's	As at this Q \$000's	As at this Q \$000's	As at this Q \$000's	As at this Q \$000's	As at this Q \$000's	As at this Q \$000's
Developer Contribution		20,266	1,002	461	71	0	21,658
Total Developer Contributions		20,266	1,002	461	71	0	21,658

Note: Borrowings, Liquidity and Developer Contributions were incorrectly stated in the September 2025 quarterly budget review. The correct figures are re-stated above. The error was due to transition issues with the introduction of the new Office of Local Government QBR templates.

Income and Expenses Budget Review Statement

Singleton Council

Budget review for the quarter ended 31/12/2025

Consolidated Fund

Description	Previous Year	Current Year Original	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Revised	Recommended changes	Projected Year End (PYE)	VARIANCE	ACTUAL YTD
	Actual	Budget	Review	Review	Review	Budget	for council resolution	Result	ORIGINAL budget v PYE	
	2024/25	2025/26	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3			2025/26	2025/26	2025/26
	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's
INCOME										
Rates and Annual Charges	39,287	43,108	-56			43,052	-1,247	41,805	-1,303	41,789
User Charges and Fees	27,855	24,623	-571			24,052	1,015	25,067	444	12,951
Other Revenue	1,014	1,669	179			1,848	755	2,603	934	695
Grants and Contributions - Operating	9,876	11,422	186			11,608	495	12,103	681	3,987
Grants and Contributions - Capital	26,623	7,379	11,674			19,053	2,884	21,937	14,558	7,820
Interest and Investment Income	5,051	5,890	-1,437			4,453	-75	4,378	-1,512	2,562
Other Income	3,378	603	1,714			2,317	127	2,444	1,841	2,030
Net gain from disposal of assets	266	0	0			0	0	0	0	598
Total Income from continuing operations	113,350	94,694	11,689	0	0	106,383	3,953	110,336	15,642	72,432
EXPENSES										
Employee benefits and on-costs	30,455	31,731	61			31,792	1,269	33,061	1,330	17,437
Materials & Services	34,725	32,530	25			32,555	299	32,854	324	18,218
Borrowing Costs	710	659	0			659	0	659	0	238
Other Expenses	2,950	2,577	1			2,578	-189	2,389	-188	1,181
Net Loss from Disposal of Assets	0	1,472	-17			1,455	-320	1,135	-337	0
Total Expenses from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	68,840	68,969	70	0	0	69,039	1,059	70,098	1,129	37,073
Operating Result from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	44,510	25,725	11,619	0	0	37,344	2,894	40,238	14,513	35,358
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	18,660	18,232	0			18,232	4,857	23,089	4,857	8,346
Operating result from continuing Operations	25,850	7,493	11,619	0	0	19,112	-1,963	17,149	9,656	27,012
Net Operating Result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	-773	114	-55	0	0	59	-4,846	-4,787	-4,901	19,193

Singleton Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
for the period 01/10/25 to 31/12/25

Income & expenses budget review statement
Recommended changes for council resolution

Items noted below in the column titled "Resolutions Outside of QBR" have already been adopted by Council.

Budget Variations being recommended include the following material items:

	Resolutions outside of QBR	December QBR adjustments for council resolution
	\$'000	\$'000
Rates and Annual Charges		
Reduce waste income as budget assumptions related to the introduction of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) have not eventuated	0	(1,341)
User Charges and Fees		
Additional income realised on State Road contracts. Offset with additional Materials expenditure.	0	480
Increased tipping fee income for year expected based on actuals to date	0	456
Other revenues		
Additional income from Singleton Bypass project. Offset with additional employee costs.	0	839
Decrease budget as no insurance claim income expected to be received	0	(95)
Grants and Contributions - Operational Purposes		
Increase in budget in line with income received for Disaster Ready Fund grant	0	557
Decrease grant income to zero. Grant from Hunter Central Coast Regional Illegal Dumping Program should not have been budgeted for as all income received in prior years.	0	(72)
Grant income for OLG Fresh Start Program reallocate from general fund to water and sewer fund	0	(194)
Grant income for OLG Fresh Start Program reallocate from general fund to water and sewer fund	0	194
Grants and Contributions - Capital Purposes		
Additional income received for general fund developer contributions	0	417
Additional income received for water fund developer contributions	0	109
Additional income received for sewer fund developer contributions	0	91
Additional Resources for Regions grant income recognition in line with revised capital expenditure forecasts	0	102
New grant - Community Energy Upgrades Fund (CEUF) - funding existing project for Sewage Treatment Plant Electrical Upgrade	0	206
New grant - Community Energy Upgrades Fund (CEUF) - funding various new upgrade projects for the Gym & Swim	0	206
Additional Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement grant income recognition in line with revised capital expenditure forecasts for various projects	0	498
Additional Active Transport Program grant income recognition in line with revised capital expenditure forecasts for Combo Lane pedestrian bridge	0	826
Additional OLG Recovery Grant income recognition in line with revised capital expenditure forecasts for Wilf Allan Walk Erosion	0	131
Decrease grant income to zero. Creative Capital grant for Singleton Arts and Cultural Centre recognised fully as income in prior years. No further income to be recognised.	0	(170)

	Resolutions outside of QBR	December QBR adjustments for council resolution
	\$'000	\$'000
Interest and Investment revenue		
Water fund interest income budget reallocated to Other Income for market value movement on managed fund investment in line with actuals	0	(100)
Other income		
Water fund interest income budget reallocated to Other Income for market value movement on managed fund investment in line with actuals	0	100
Employee benefits and on-costs		
Voluntary Planning Agreement reserve interest back payment taken from risk mitigation provision per resolution GM77/25 December 2025 meeting	(233)	0
Water Fund - reallocation of labour hire for Singleton Bypass Project to employee costs	0	600
Sewer Fund - reallocation of labour hire for Singleton Bypass Project to employee costs	0	600
Costs funded by OLG Fresh Start Program reallocated from general fund to water and sewer fund	0	(194)
Costs funded by OLG Fresh Start Program reallocated from general fund to water and sewer fund	0	194
Waste - reduce budget for capitalised wages in line with expected actuals	0	149
Waste - increase budget for labour hire which should be getting costed to Materials and Services. There is an offsetting reduction in budget for Materials and Services.	0	154
Materials and Services		
Water Fund - reallocation of labour hire for Singleton Bypass Project to employee costs	0	(600)
Sewer Fund - reallocation of labour hire for Singleton Bypass Project to employee costs	0	(600)
Water Fund - increased costs Singleton Bypass Project. These are recoverable from Acciona and Transport For NSW.	0	514
Sewer Fund - increased costs Singleton Bypass Project. These are recoverable from Acciona and Transport For NSW.	0	325
Water Fund - revised corporate over head allocation	0	451
Sewer Fund - revised corporate over head allocation	0	(544)
Water Fund - potential court hearing. Mostly recoverable upon judgement.	0	182
Waste - reduce budget in line with actuals and revised forecast	0	(688)
General Fund - additional costs for State Road contracts. Offset with additional income.	0	480
General Fund - costs incurred for natural disaster clean up and emergency works. Claim for reimbursement to be submitted under Disaster Relief Funding Arrangements but will not be fully recoverable as Council is required to co-contribute.	0	420
Increased budget for grant funded emergency management projects	0	400
Depreciation		
Increase in depreciation on roads as a result of the revaluation at the end of the 2025 financial year. The impact on actuals will be posted to the ledger in the March quarter.	0	5,857
Decrease in depreciation on the tip asset as a result of the revaluation at the end of the 2025 financial year	0	(1,122)
Other minor adjustments	0	122

	Resolutions outside of QBR	December QBR adjustments for council resolution
	\$'000	\$'000
Other expenses		
Reduction in EPA waste levy	0	(129)
Decrease in emergency services contributions based on actual bills paid	0	(57)
Net gain from disposal of assets		
Additional income from sale of land vacant land	0	(70)
Additional proceeds from Bridgman Ridge Joint Venture	0	(250)

Income and Expenses Budget Review Statement										
Singleton Council										
Budget review for the quarter ended 31/12/2025										
General Fund										
Description	Previous Year	Current Year Original	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Revised	Recommended changes	Projected Year End (PYE)	VARIANCE	ACTUAL YTD
	Actual	Budget	Review	Review	Review	Budget	for council resolution	Result	ORIGINAL budget v PYE	
	2024/25 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	Q 1 \$000's	Q 2 \$000's	Q 3 \$000's	\$000's	\$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's
INCOME										
Rates and Annual Charges	32,458	35,849	-183			35,666	-1,226	34,440	-1,409	34,440
User Charges and Fees	18,399	15,947	-572			15,375	1,054	16,429	482	10,393
Other Revenue	801	373	179			552	12	564	191	341
Grants and Contributions - Operating	9,834	11,404	186			11,590	300	11,890	486	3,983
Grants and Contributions - Capital	25,168	6,170	11,674			17,844	2,477	20,321	14,151	7,487
Interest and Investment Income	2,395	2,781	-737			2,044	20	2,064	-717	1,490
Other Income	2,114	594	792			1,386	20	1,406	812	1,033
Net gain from disposal of assets	266	0	0			0	0	0	0	598
Total Income from continuing operations	91,435	73,118	11,339	0	0	84,457	2,658	87,115	13,997	59,765
EXPENSES										
Employee benefits and on-costs	26,426	27,354	61			27,415	-125	27,290	-64	14,420
Materials & Services	28,991	25,414	-4			25,410	711	26,121	707	14,680
Borrowing Costs	587	551	0			551	0	551	0	182
Other Expenses	3,355	2,577	1			2,578	-189	2,389	-188	1,181
Net Loss from Disposal of Assets	0	1,054	-17			1,037	-320	717	-337	0
Total Expenses from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	59,359	56,950	41	0	0	56,991	76	57,067	117	30,463
Operating Result from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	32,076	16,168	11,298	0	0	27,466	2,581	30,047	13,879	29,302
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	14,207	13,623				13,623	4,510	18,133	4,510	6,045
Operating result from continuing Operations	17,869	2,545	11,298	0	0	13,843	-1,929	11,914	9,369	23,257
Net Operating Result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	-7,299	-3,625	-376	0	0	-4,001	-4,406	-8,407	-4,782	15,770

Income and Expenses Budget Review Statement										
Singleton Council										
Budget review for the quarter ended 31/12/2025										
Water Fund										
Description	Previous Year	Current Year Original	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Revised	Recommended changes	Projected Year End (PYE)	VARIANCE	ACTUAL YTD
	Actual	Budget	Review	Review	Review	Budget	for council resolution	Result	ORIGINAL budget v PYE	
	2024/25 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	Q 1 \$000's	Q 2 \$000's	Q 3 \$000's	\$000's	\$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's
INCOME										
Access Charges	1,725	1,844	73			1,917	-8	1,909	65	1,904
User Charges	7,553	7,082	1			7,083	0	7,083	1	1,815
Fees	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Grants & Contributions - Operating	13	7	0			7	97	104	97	8
Interest and Investment Income	1,758	1,863	-300			1,563	-98	1,465	-398	714
Other Income	1,284	695	580			1,275	518	1,793	1,098	861
Net gain from disposal of assets	0	0	0			0		0	0	0
Total Income from continuing operations	12,333	11,491	354	0	0	11,845	509	12,354	863	5,303
EXPENSES										
Employee benefits and on-costs	2,159	2,123	0			2,123	697	2,820	697	1,606
Materials & Services	3,854	4,442	84			4,526	497	5,023	581	2,392
Borrowing Costs	66	58	0			58	0	58	0	30
Water purchase charges	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Calculated taxation equivalents	874	416	68			484	-155	329	-87	0
Debt guarantee fee	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Other Expenses	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Net Loss from Disposal of Assets	0	209	0			209	0	209	0	0
Total Expenses from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	6,953	7,248	152	0	0	7,400	1,039	8,439	1,191	4,028
Operating Result from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	5,380	4,243	202	0	0	4,445	-530	3,915	-328	1,275
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	2,758	2,997				2,997	-64	2,933	-64	1,397
Surplus / (Deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts	2,622	1,246	202	0	0	1,448	-466	982	-264	-122
Grants and Contributions - Capital	1,039	1,145				1,145	109	1,254	109	178
Surplus / (Deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts	3,661	2,391	202	0	0	2,593	-357	2,236	-155	56

Income and Expenses Budget Review Statement										
Singleton Council										
Budget review for the quarter ended 31/12/2025										
Sewer Fund										
Description	Previous Year	Current Year Original	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Revised	Recommended changes	Projected Year End (PYE)	VARIANCE	ACTUAL YTD
	Actual	Budget	Review	Review	Review	Budget	for council resolution	Result	ORIGINAL budget v PYE	
	2024/25 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	Q 1 \$000's	Q 2 \$000's	Q 3 \$000's	\$000's	\$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's
INCOME										
Access charges	5,104	5,416	54			5,470	-13	5,457	41	5,445
User charges	1,667	1,594	0			1,594	-39	1,555	-39	743
Liquid trade-waste charges	236	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Fees	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Grants and contributions - Operating	29	10	0			10	97	107	97	-4
Interest and Investment Income	898	1,246	-400			846	2	848	-398	358
Other Income	598	608	342			950	333	1,283	675	489
Net gain from disposal of assets	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Total Income from continuing operations	8,532	8,874	-4	0	0	8,870	380	9,250	376	7,031
EXPENSES										
Employee benefits and on-costs	1,870	2,254	0			2,254	697	2,951	697	1,411
Materials & Services	1,879	2,673	-56			2,617	-908	1,709	-964	1,146
Borrowing Costs	57	50	0			50	0	50	0	26
Calculated taxation equivalents	758	519	13			532	45	577	58	886
Debt Guarantee fee	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Other Expenses	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Net Loss from Disposal of Assets	0	209	0			209	0	209	0	0
Total Expenses from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	4,564	5,705	-43	0	0	5,662	-166	5,496	-209	3,469
Operating Result from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	3,968	3,169	39	0	0	3,208	546	3,754	585	3,562
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	1,695	1,613				1,613	411	2,024	411	904
Surplus / (Deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts	2,273	1,556	39	0	0	1,595	135	1,730	174	2,658
Grants and Contributions - Capital	416	64				64	297	361	297	155
Surplus /(Deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts	2,689	1,620	39	0	0	1,659	432	1,956	336	2,812

Capital Budget Review Statement

Singleton Council

Budget review for the quarter ended 31/12/2025

Description	Previous Year	Current Year Original	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Revised	Recommended changes	Projected Year End (PYE)	VARIANCE	ACTUAL YTD
	Actual	Budget	Review	Review	Review	Budget	for council resolution	Result	ORIGINAL budget v PYE	
	2024/25 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	Q 1 \$000's	Q 2 \$000's	Q 3 \$000's	\$000's	\$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's
CAPITAL FUNDING										
Rates & other untied funding	367	3,156	0			3,156	0	3,156	0	676
Capital Grants & Contributions	20,017	9,156	8,467			17,623	2,436	20,059	10,903	8,755
Reserves - External Restrictions	9,296	23,060	5,165			28,225	-7,178	21,047	-2,013	4,138
Reserves - Internally Allocated	1,081	2,720	5,612			8,332	20	8,352	5,632	513
New Loans	4,000	8,537	0			8,537	0	8,537	0	1,935
Proceeds from sale of assets	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Other	3,627	3,049	160			3,209	67	3,276	227	346
Total Capital Funding	38,388	49,678	19,404	0	0	69,082	-4,655	64,427	14,749	16,363
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE										
WIP	38,388	49,678	19,404			69,082	-4,655	64,427	14,749	16,363
New Assets	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Asset Renewal	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0
Total Capital Expenditure	38,388	49,678	19,404	0	0	69,082	-4,655	64,427	14,749	16,363
Net Capital Funding - Surplus/(Deficit)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	Previous Year Actuals	Original Budget	Quarter 1			Quarter 2	Projected Year End Result	Actuals to 31st December	Available Budget at 31st December
			Carry Over from previous year	Resolutions outside of QBR	Approved Changes September QBR	December QBR adjustments for council resolution			
Capital Program	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Design Program	510	400	0	0	0	4	404	167	237
Local Roads Program	4,816	3,290	2,331	0	(585)	52	5,088	984	4,104
Regional Roads Program	363	612	280	0	0	(0)	892	169	723
Causeway & Bridge Rehabilitation Program	5,692	10,081	1,113	0	2	803	12,000	4,181	7,819
Building Program	11,442	9,587	3,074	0	2,960	616	16,237	3,933	12,304
Transportation Program	370	200	334	0	140	136	810	379	431
Drainage Program	78	610	403	0	226	146	1,386	619	766
Plant Program	824	1,210	0	0	627	0	1,837	364	1,473
Natural Disaster Recovery Program	1,216	0	832	0	0	506	1,338	463	874
Open Space & Reserves Program	3,526	375	1,069	295	48	53	1,839	620	1,219
Waste Services Program	1,376	6,690	1,085	0	347	(2,978)	5,144	328	4,816
Library books and digital collection	70	78	0	0	0	0	78	32	46
Water Supply Services	3,111	6,046	1,593	0	(258)	(996)	6,386	714	5,672
Sewerage Supply Services	4,993	9,689	1,565	0	1,923	(2,998)	10,178	3,405	6,774
Inventory - Real Estate for Resale	0	810	0	0	0	0	810	5	805
Total Capital Works	38,388	49,678	13,679	295	5,430	(4,655)	64,427	16,363	48,064

Singleton Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
for the period 01/10/25 to 31/12/25

Capital budget review statement
Recommended changes for council resolution

Budget variations being recommended include the following material items:

Details			\$'000
Causeway & Bridge Rehabilitation Program			
Location	Scope	Reason for movement	
Combo Lane	New pedestrian bridge construction	Additional grant funding required due to market pricing received under tender exceeding grant funding available. An increase to grant funding is currently pending approval through a TNSW deed variation.	800
Building Program			
Location	Scope	Reason for movement	
Gym & Swim	Upgrades for amenities blocks hot water system, main switchboard & electrical infrastructure and spa pool heater	New grant from Community Energy Upgrades Fund	183
Lake St Clair	Solar and Battery installation and disability amenities upgrade works	New grant from Community Energy Upgrades Fund for solar and battery installation and funding increase in Resources for Region grant for disability amenities upgrade works	285
Transportation Program			
Location	Scope	Reason for movement	
Bourke Street - Hunter Street to York Street	Cycling and Walking Activation Project	Funding increase in Resources for Regions grant	109
Drainage Program			
Location	Scope	Reason for movement	
Various	Various	Funding increase for Resources for Regions grant for various urban roads relining and drainage and pipe renewal work at Boundary and Gipp Streets.	132
Natural Disaster Recovery Program			
Location	Scope	Reason for movement	
Lilavale Track Bridge	Flood Rectification Works	Increase to align budget with expected actuals. Disaster Relief Funding Arrangement grant was deferred in the prior financial year at the March 2025 quarterly budget review and is funding this project.	350
Putty Road	Natural disaster restoration	Increase to align budget with expected actuals. Disaster Relief Funding Arrangement grant was deferred in the prior financial year at the March 2025 quarterly budget review and is funding this project.	150
Waste Services Program			
Location	Scope	Reason for movement	
Waste Management Facility	Plant Replacement	New concover machine, leachate evaporator and generator	480
Waste Management Facility	Western cell construction	Moved to 2027 Financial Year budget	(3,458)

Details			\$'000
Water Supply Services			
Location	Scope	Reason for movement	
Water Network	Rixs Creek Reservoir Refurbishment	Moved to 2027 Financial Year Budget	(500)
Water Network	Water Main Pipes Renewal - Multiple Streets	Moved to 2027 Financial Year Budget	(500)
Sewerage Supply Services			
Location	Scope	Reason for movement	
Sewage Treatment Plant	Control system replacement, UV disinfection pre-filters installation and electrical upgrade works for Sewage Treatment Plant.	Moved to 2027 Financial Year Budget in line with program of awarded contract.	(3,000)

Cash and Investments Budget Review Statement

Singleton Council

Budget review for the quarter ended 31/12/2025

Description	Previous Year	Current Year Original	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Approved Changes	Revised	Recommended changes	Projected Year End (PYE)	VARIANCE	ACTUAL YTD
	Actual	Budget	Review	Review	Review	Budget	for council resolution	Result	ORIGINAL budget v PYE	
	2024/25 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	Q 1 \$000's	Q 2 \$000's	Q 3 \$000's	\$000's	\$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's	2025/26 \$000's
Total Cash, Cash Equivalents & Inves	129,502	100,159				100,159	14,021	114,180	14,021	135,387
EXTERNALLY RESTRICTED										
Water Fund	31,052	25,189				25,189	3,075	28,264	3,075	31,027
Sewer Fund	15,172	4,402				4,402	4,435	8,837	4,435	13,169
Developer contributions - General	6,155	6,155				6,155	-4,452	1,703	-4,452	1,636
Developer contributions - Water	11,942	11,942				11,942	1,673	13,615	1,673	13,177
Developer contributions - Sewer	6,146	6,146				6,146	704	6,850	704	6,845
Transport for NSW Contributions	0	0				0	0	0	0	0
Domestic waste management	5,357	1,093				1,093	2,824	3,917	2,824	10,685
Stormwater management	0	0				0	0	0	0	0
Other	10,950	6,406				6,406	96	6,502	96	8,937
Total Externally Restricted	86,774	61,333	0	0	0	61,333	8,355	69,688	8,355	85,477
Cash, cash equivalents & investments not subject to external restrictions	42,728	38,826	0	0	0	38,826	5,666	44,492	5,666	49,911
INTERNAL ALLOCATIONS										
Employee entitlements	0	0				0	0	0	0	0
Financial Assistance Grant Paid in Advance	2,714	2,714				2,714	97	2,811	97	1,357
Infrastructure Management Fund	0	0				0	4,345	4,345	4,345	5,251
Voluntary Planning Agreements	12,961	12,961				12,961	432	13,393	432	14,042
Roads Fund	19,298	19,500				19,500	170	19,670	170	22,344
Property Reserve	2,684	1,230				1,230	876	2,106	876	2,941
Other	4,645	2,098				2,098	-193	1,905	-193	3,706
Total Internally Allocated	42,302	38,503	0	0	0	38,503	5,727	44,230	5,727	49,641
Unallocated	426	323	0	0	0	323	-61	262	-61	270

Note: Cash and Investments were incorrectly stated in the September 2025 quarterly budget review. The correct figures are re-stated above. The error was due to transition issues with the introduction of the new Office of Local Government QBR templates.

Developer Contributions Summary																									
Singleton Council																									
Budget review for the quarter ended 31/12/2025																									
Purpose	Opening Balance As at 1 July 2025 \$000's	Developer Contributions Received									Interest Earned			Monetary Amounts Expended			Internal Borrowings (to)/from			Held as Restricted Asset As at this Q \$000's	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from				
		Cash			Non-Cash Land			Non-Cash Other			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q1	Q2	Q3		Q1	Q2	Q3	As at this Q	As at this Q
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q1	Q2	Q3	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's		\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's
Drainage	0	0	0								0	0		0	0							0			
Roads	0	108	226								1	5		9	0								331		
Traffic facilities	0	0	0								0	0		0	0								0		
Parking	0	0	0								0	0		0	0								0		
Open space	0	53	40								1	1		0	0								95		
Community facilities	0	47	26								0	1		0	0								74		
Other	1,000	8	149								11	8		43	19								1,114		
Total S7.11 Under plans	1,000	216	441	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	15	0	52	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,614	0	
S7.11 Not under plans	10	0	0								0	0		0	0								10		
S7.12 Levies	0	0	12								0	0		0	0								12		
S7.4 Planning agreements	0	0	0								0	0		0	0								0		
S64 Contributions	19,256	38	295								219	214		0	0								20,022		
Other	0	0	0								0	0		0	0								0		
Total Developer Contributions	20,266	254	748	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	232	229	0	52	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21,658	0	

Note: Developer Contributions were incorrectly stated in the September 2025 quarterly budget review. The correct figures are re-stated above. The error was due to transition issues with the introduction of the new Office of Local Government QBR templates.

DI&P2/26. Tender HRR 0001B – Receiving and Processing of Domestic Kerbside Recycling Product
Author: Manager Waste and Circular Economy

FILE: 23/00708

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise Council that a report has been prepared for Council's consideration in Closed Council for Tender HRR0001B which called for a suitable contractor for Receiving and Processing of Domestic Kerbside Recycling Product.

RECOMMENDED that Council:

1. Note the contents of this report; and
2. In relation to the report on Tender HRR 0001B – Receiving and Processing of Domestic Kerbside Recycling Product, undertake consideration in Closed Council with the press and public excluded in accordance with Section 10A(2)(d) of the *Local Government Act, 1993* on the grounds that the report contains commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it; or (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council; or (iii) reveal a trade secret..

Report

Council provides a kerbside recyclables collection and processing service through its membership of Hunter Resource Recovery (HRR). HRR is a company jointly owned by Cessnock, Maitland, Lake Macquarie and Singleton Councils.

The contract for providing the kerbside recyclables collection and processing service is currently held by Solo Waste P/L, trading as Solo Resource Recovery (Solo).

That contract expires on 1 January 2027 or can be extended up to and including 30 June 2028 depending on alignment with the collections contract or transitional arrangements to be finalised via HRR Board approval.

Council delegates authority to HRR to procure recycling services for Singleton Council together with other member Councils as per the declaration of Trust that has been entered into since 2012.

Unlike the previous recycling contracts, which were for the collection, receiving and processing of recyclable material combined, this contract is only for:

- (a) the receiving and processing of recyclable material, including all responsibility for transportation and transfer to end markets, and disposal of residual waste;
- (b) the provision of transparent data regarding end markets for processed recyclables (including by polymer type for plastics, and quantities and quality of product) and for disposal of residual waste;
- (c) continuous improvement throughout the contract term of processing methods, quantities of materials recycled and output; and
- (d) maintenance of the performance levels specified in Specifications.

Infrastructure & Planning Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DI&P2/26

The splitting into two separate contracts (one for collections and the other for receiving, processing and distribution) enables increased competition, noting as a combined service, contractors could not previously tender if they did not have the ability to do all functions.

Hence, two separate providers may result, one for each contract. A collections tender is currently under development in readiness for a separate procurement process later in the year.

The HRR Board authorised the tender for “Receiving and Processing of Domestic Kerbside Recycling Product HRR0001B” (the Tender) to be advertised on 10 December 2024 and released on 8 April 2025.

Tender submissions were evaluated by a panel comprising a representative from each member Council and HRR. An independent waste industry expert and a probity advisor further assisted the panel as the Tender Evaluation Committee (TEC).

The TEC assessed and ranked the submissions received via the agreed criteria and weightings process. Following a financial and performance assessment, including referee checks, the TEC reached a unanimous view on the preferred tenderer.

Upon agreement of all four member Councils, it is proposed to award a contract in accordance with the specification set out in the Tender, and as may be amended in the report recommendation.

The contract would be for a period of 15 years with two five-year extensions available.

The Tender included:

- A newbuild Material Recovery Facility (MRF) at an existing licensed location within the HRR region, licensed for 80,000 tonnes /pa; and
- The regional MRF to generate local employment opportunities;
- Secondary glass processing in Sydney and secondary plastics in Somersby, NSW.

It is recommended the Tender be considered in Closed Council with the press and public excluded in accordance with Section 10A(2)(d) of the *Local Government Act, 1993* on the grounds that the report contains commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it; or (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council; or (iii) reveal a trade secret..

Community Strategic Plan

Strategy:	3	Our Environment
Deliverable:	3.2	Our Environment is preserved through circular economy
	3.2.1	Promote efficient water, energy and waste management and increase reuse and recycling

Council Policy/Legislation

The recommendation of this report will assist in implementing the goals of Council’s adopted Long Term Waste Strategy. That being:

Infrastructure & Planning Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DI&P2/26

1. *Avoid Waste and Manage Resources*
2. *Protect the Environment*
3. *Leading by Example*
4. *Planning for the Future.*

The preferred outcome was for a regional MRF facility to be provided by the new recycling processing contractor and have the capacity to sort and process an initial 30,000 tonnes per annum (tpa) of recyclable material, allowing for growth to an estimated 40,000 tonnes per annum (tpa) over a period of fifteen (15) years.

The benefits of providing opportunities for increased local employment and a circular economy for glass and plastics processing have been recognised. While not mandatory, proposals offering this service were evaluated more favorably.

Also relevant to the Tender is the NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy, which establishes a target 66% diversion of municipal waste from landfill.

Since the introduction of the FOGO service, Council is achieving an average of 50% diversion through its existing kerbside service, though it is known the contribution of recyclables to that target could be increased.

This is best shown through the bin audits undertaken in the Council during 2020 where recyclables were found to represent about 16.4% of the content of the mixed waste bin.

Financial Implications

The receiving and processing of domestic kerbside recycling represents a significant cost for Council. This service is essential to reducing the Council's environmental footprint and, increasingly, to limiting Council's exposure to waste levies. The Tender has delivered a favourable financial outcome and is expected to reduce the cost of the service for all member Councils.

Consultation

The Tender specification and draft contract were prepared over a period of almost three years to accommodate significant interaction between the participating member Councils, regional non-member Councils, HRR executive and engaged experts including legal experts. The process also benefitted from the knowledge gained through industry consultation, probity advice, tender documentation and expert advice.

Sustainability

Singleton Council residents recycled 1,314 tonnes of dry recyclable materials through the kerbside service in 2024/25. That was an increase of 2.2% over the previous year and represents growth higher than population.

Recycling paper, metals and plastics through the HRR service delivers substantial environmental benefits by conserving virgin materials and reducing the resources required for manufacturing.

Producing goods from recycled feedstock typically uses significantly less energy than manufacturing from raw materials — for example, up to 95% less for aluminum and around 30% less for glass. This improved energy efficiency directly reduces greenhouse gas emissions and water consumption, supporting broader climate and sustainability

Infrastructure & Planning Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DI&P2/26

objectives.

Recycling also plays a critical role in preserving landfill capacity. By diverting materials that do not require landfilling, methane emissions are reduced and also alleviates pressure on landfill space, which is an increasingly valuable resource.

These outcomes contribute to a circular economy by keeping products and materials in use for as long as possible, maximising resource value and minimising environmental impact.

Awarding the Tender as recommended will support the continuation of Council's current recycling performance and create opportunities to increase both the total volume and proportion of the waste stream diverted from landfill.

It will also align with Council's journey towards more affordable solutions for core services, whilst adding social, environmental and economic benefits consistent with a best practice recycling service model.

Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
There is significant financial exposure to Council associated with a contract of this duration and value, which could result in financial damage to Council.	High	Corporate Scorecard was engaged to conduct an independent review of each Tenderer's financial viability, capacity and risk in relation to the contract.	Low	Yes
There is risk that the contractor may not successfully perform or deliver, which could lead to reputational damage.	Medium	Referee checks were undertaken as part of the tender evaluation process. The contract document contains performance criteria including financial security, and dispute resolution procedures. Contract administration through HRR will mitigate this risk further.	Low	Yes
There is inherent exposure to work health and safety risks for the	Medium	The WHS systems of each tenderer were evaluated as part of the tender assessment	Low	Yes

Infrastructure & Planning Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DI&P2/26

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
employees of the contractor, which could lead to an incident.		process and the recommendation reflects the result of that evaluation		
There is a risk that Federal or State government regulations, policies or mandates may change during the term of this contract, which will affect the service that is being provided under this contract.	High	To mitigate this risk, the contract document contains both a change of law provision and dispute resolution procedures.	Low	Yes
There is a risk that due to the regulations regarding local government tendering being complex and subject to change over time, the tender processes may not comply with current requirements, which could lead to contractual issues.	High	To mitigate this risk, an experienced and qualified Probity Officer supervised all relevant aspects of the tender and provided advice during the tender process.	Low	Yes
Due to the nature of the service provided under this contract there is potential for damage to the environment or property by the contractor, which could affect service continuity and lead to reputational damage.	Medium	Tenderers were required to submit currency of existing insurance coverage and commit to the maintenance of that cover. Insurance and indemnity of the Councils is also prescribed in the contract.	Low	Yes

Options

The following options are available to Council:

- 1) Notes the contents of the report;
- 2) That the report on Tender HRR 0001B – Receiving and Processing of Domestic Kerbside Recycling Product be considered in Closed Council with the press and public excluded in accordance with Section 10A(2)(d) of the *Local Government Act, 1993* on the grounds that the report contains commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it; or (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council; or (iii) reveal a trade secret..
- 3) Resolve to not enter closed council and not consider the Tender.

Option one is recommended.

Conclusions

The tender process conducted by HRR has been completed in accordance with the tendering provisions of the *Local Government Act, 1993*.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report

DI&P1/26. Minutes - Roads Advisory Committee - 11/12/2025**FILE:** 25/00200**Author:** Executive Assistant - Directors**Executive Summary**

The Roads Advisory Committee held its ordinary meeting on 11 December 2025. The minutes of the meeting are shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's consideration.

RECOMMENDED that Council:

1. Notes the minutes of the Roads Advisory Committee meeting held on 11 December 2025.
2. Adopts the following recommendation of the Roads Advisory Committee:

5.1 Broke - Crown Road Transfers

1. Notes the Crown Lands Transfer of unnamed laneway, Archer Street and Howe Street, Broke.
2. Classifies the unnamed laneway off Singleton Street as Low Maintenance Road.
3. Classifies Archer Street and Howe Street as Urban Local 2 Road.
4. Not carry out any upgrade works to the transferred laneway unless wholly funded through grants.

Community Strategic Plan

Strategy:	1	Our Community
Deliverable:	1.2	Our Community is safe, healthy and educated
Action:	1.2.2	Advocate and Collaborate with Government and other agencies to improve services relating to but limited to health, education, housing, integration, connectivity, security and well-being

Council Policy/Legislation

Nil

Financial Implications

Nil

Risk Implications

Infrastructure & Planning Report (Items Requiring Decision) - DI&P1/26

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Proposed Risk Ranking	Within Existing Resources?
5.1 Broke - Crown Road Transfers				
There is a risk that Council is not able to financially fund regular maintenance on a road with a hierarchy classification of low maintenance which may lead to reputational damage.	High	Maintain road as per the hierarchy assigned to that road	Low	Yes - currently
There is a risk that Council may not be able to deliver the same level of service across the network of low maintenance roads if the unnamed laneway is classified to a different level which may lead to reputational damage.	Medium	Adoption of preferred recommendation	Low	Yes
There is a risk that Council could set a precedent and level of expectation to the community which may lead to reputational damage.	Medium	Adoption of preferred hierarchy of the road	Low	Yes

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Minutes - Roads Advisory Committee - 11 December 2025

**MINUTES
ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



Present	Cr Sue Moore, Mayor – Singleton Council (Chair) (Cr SM) Cr Godfrey Adamthwaite – Singleton Council (Cr GA) Cr Hollee Jenkins – Singleton Council (Cr HJ)
In Attendance	Mike Duff – Director Infrastructure & Planning Services, Singleton Council (MD) Conor Byrne – Manager Infrastructure Services (CB) Warren Vandermeer – Coordinator Assets, Singleton Council (WV) Sam Masoomi – Coordinator Engineering Services, Singleton Council (SMA) Leigh Hall – Coordinator Civil Operations, Singleton Council (LH) Natasha Hain – Asset Management Officer, Singleton Council (NH) Kellie Doherty – Minute Taker, Singleton Council
Meeting Location	Committee Room

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Welcome
- Acknowledgement of Country by Chair
- Apologies
 - David Maunder – Singleton Council

2 Disclosure of Interests

- Nil

3 Confirmation of Minutes

- The minutes of the Roads Advisory Committee meeting held on Thursday 19 June 2025, were confirmed.

Moved Cr GA Seconded Cr HJ

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Cr HJ queried the progression of the CCTV installation at Sunnyside & Starvation Lanes including the consultation with landowners – WV advised this has not progressed nor has consultation occurred due to an oversight.
- WV advised that this remains an ongoing issue and a call was received this week from a road user complaining about the road closures.
- WV added that Police will need to be contacted regarding enforcement.

**MINUTES
ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



5 Agenda Items

5.1 Broke - Crown Road Transfers FILE:25/00200

- WV advised Council has already been maintaining Archer and Howe Streets which are Crown roads.
- The unnamed laneway has been used as access for many years by the General Store and residents of 3 Singleton Street.
- Cr SM queried how this request came to Council, WV confirmed the resident at 3 Singleton Street as there are stormwater issues.
- Cr SM also queried if the residents could be granted approval to undertake works on the road and the road type, WV confirmed it is a gravel road and that works appear likely to be internal run-off works and not the road.
- WV noted that the Crown's argument will be that Council has approved the dwellings.

Recommendation:

That the Roads Advisory Committee recommends that Council:

1. Notes the Crown Lands Transfer of unnamed laneway, Archer Street and Howe Street, Broke.
2. Classifies the unnamed laneway off Singleton Street as Low Maintenance Road.
3. Classifies Archer Street and Howe Street as Urban Local 2 Road.
4. Not carry out any upgrade works to the transferred laneway unless wholly funded through grants.

Moved Cr GA Seconded Cr HJ

**5.2 Roads Advisory Committee - Schedule of Meeting
Dates for 2026 FILE:25/00200**

- Thursday 19 March 2026 to be changed to Thursday to 12 March 2026.

Recommendation:

That the Roads Advisory Committee endorse the meeting dates for 2026 as follows:

- Thursday, 12 March 2026.
- Thursday, 18 June 2026.

**MINUTES
ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



- Thursday, 17 September 2026.
- Thursday, 17 December 2026.

Moved Cr SM Seconded Cr HJ

5.3 Mitchells Flat Crossing Update

FILE:25/00200

- Cr HJ expressed concerns with scope of works regularly not taking into consideration inspections at the beginning. CB advised staff are currently working through the dilapidation report to ensure the causeway approaches are fit for purpose and noted that the causeway approaches failed a lot faster than expected possibly due to weather
- Cr SM agreed with Cr HJ and also noted that Glendon Lane received a lot of additional traffic from the diversion.
- Cr SM also acknowledged the community frustration as the Brunners Bridge closure was originally for 12 months, however will be 18 months by the time the bridge opens.
- Cr SM believed that when the project was approved by Council that the existing bridge would remain open. SMA advised that had been one of the options, however due to high voltage power lines and required clearances it was not feasible to do so once this had been determined in detailed design.
- Cr HJ queried that if this was a determination by Council, then shouldn't this decision have come back to Council for consideration. CB confirmed yes and this will occur moving forward for any determinations of Council.
- Cr SM asked if there was funding left over from the Brunners Bridge project. CB confirmed yes and staff are currently working with the State Government.
- Cr SM suggested that the causeway needs to be concreted all the way. SMA confirmed that what we currently have is insufficient. Hamilton's Crossing and Goorangoola causeways have recently been completed with the concrete extended to the approach
- Cr GA suggested running fibre reinforcing across instead of grid reinforcement as there are staples and it would bind. CB advised that design and construction would be to engineering specification and the slab would be designed with sufficient cover to protect the reinforcement.
- Cr SM requested that a report is provided at the next meeting to detail the timeline and decisions made for Brunners Bridge as well as costings and proposed scope and potential funding to rectify Mitchells Flat.
Moved Cr HJ Seconded Cr GA.
- Cr SM also added that if funding can't be used on Mitchells Flat as it was not the designated detour route, suggest looking at Glendon Road to allocate these funds to, and obtain funding from elsewhere for Mitchells Flat.

**MINUTES
ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9:30AM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



NOTED

6 Other Business

- Nil

7 Action List

Pulse/Action No	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date
	19 June 2025	Sunnyside & Starvation Lanes – Consultation with landowners to commence regarding CCTV installation	Warren Vandermeer	27 March 2026

8 Next Meeting

- Thursday 12 March 2026 at 9:30am in the Committee Room.

The meeting closed at 9:53am.

Cr Sue Moore, Mayor
Chair

GM2/26. Minutes - Australia Day Committee - 10/12/2025**FILE:** 25/00203**Author:** Executive Assistant

Executive Summary

The Australia Day Committee held its ordinary meeting on 10 December 2025. The minutes of the meeting are shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's information.

FOR INFORMATION**Attachments**

AT-1 [↓](#) Minutes - Australia Day Committee Meeting - 10 December 2025

**MINUTES
AUSTRALIA DAY COMMITTEE
12:00PM WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2025**



Present	Cr Danny Thompson (Chair) Cr Sue Moore (Mayor) Pam Dicks (Singleton Lioness Club) Wendy Love (Community Representative) Margaret Walton (Singleton Lions Club) Courtney Bendall (Rotary Singleton) (Virtual) David Andrews (PCYC Representative) (Virtual) Nigel Korff (2025 Citizen of the Year) Jason Hayes (School of Infantry – RSM)
In Attendance	Sam Calleja (Executive Assistant)
Meeting Location	Committee Room

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Welcome
- Acknowledgement of Country by Chair
- Apologies - Melinda Curtis (Executive Director), Mitch Madden (Singleton Diggers Club), Peter Knight (Cultural Organisation), Malcolm Franks (Singleton Aboriginal Reconciliation Committee Representative), Jean Hands (Singleton Aboriginal Reconciliation Committee Representative), Jared Lawrence (2025 Young Achiever of the Year), Chris Petersen (Singleton Ministers Association), Ellen Papanicolaou (Coordinator Events)

2 Disclosure of Interests

- Cr Danny Thompson declared a conflict of interest and did not vote in the Citizen of the Year category due to working with several nominees through organisations he volunteers with.
- Margaret Walton declared a conflict of interest and did not vote in the Citizen of the Year category due to working with several nominees through organisations she belongs to.
- Nigel Korff declared a conflict of interest and did not vote in the Young Achiever category as one of the nominees is his daughter.

3 Confirmation of Minutes

MOVED Pam Dicks **SECONDED** Wendy Love The minutes of the Australia Day Committee meeting held on Wednesday 10 September 2025, were confirmed.

CARRIED

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Note any matters arising from the minutes.

**MINUTES
AUSTRALIA DAY COMMITTEE
12:00PM WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2025**



5 Agenda Items

5.1 Planning for Australia Day 2026 FILE:25/00203

1. An update was provided on the following Australia Day Activities:
 - Mayoral Reception – 25/1/2026 5.30pm to 7.30pm
 - Family Friend Event “Twilight” – 25/1/2026 6.00pm to 9.30pm
 - Australia Day Breakfast – Rotary Singleton – 26/1/2026 8.00am to 9.15am
Confirmed 8am serving time and expecting 160 guests. Rotary Singleton will process the invoice in early January.
 - Official Ceremony – 26/1/2026 9.30am

ACTION: Mitch Madden to confirm Aboriginal and Australian flags will be handed out by the Singleton Diggers.
2. Citizenship
Contact has been made with the Department of Home Affairs to ascertain how many candidates are eligible to attend the Citizenship Ceremony on 26/1/2026. 19 conferees have been confirmed.
3. Draft Run Sheet – Mayoral Reception – Civic Centre Foyer – Sunday, 26 January 2025 from 5.30pm to 7.30pm
4. Draft Official Program – Monday, 26 January 2025. 8.00am BBQ supplied by the Rotary Singleton. 9.30am Official Ceremony
5. Australia Day Guest – Dr James Wilson-Miller – Confirmed

NOTED

5.2 Consideration of Nominations - Young Achiever of the Year and Citizen of the Year FILE:25/00203

There were two nominations received for Young Achiever of the Year Award and nine nominations received for Citizen of the Year Award.

Young Achiever of the Year Award

Nominee
Brandon Cox
Layla Korff

**MINUTES
AUSTRALIA DAY COMMITTEE
12:00PM WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2025**



Citizen of the Year Award

Nominee
Mary-Anne Holland
Jessica Stewart
Kevin Lomax
Dr Tuan Au
Coral Francis
Phillip Reid
Leonie Ball
Michelle Thomson
Tim Merrick

A ballot was conducted for Citizen of the Year and Young Achiever of the Year resulting in a majority win for both categories.

The awardee for Citizen of the Year and Young Achiever of the Year will be announced during the official ceremony on 26 January, 2026.

The committee noted the high quality of applications received this year.

NOTED

6 Other Business

- The Chair and the Mayor thanked the Committee for their contribution in 2025 and wished everyone a Happy Christmas.
- The Chair and the Mayor thanked Nigel Korff and Dr Jared Lawrence for their contribution as the 2025 Citizen and Young Achiever of the Year, acknowledging this would be their last meeting with the Committee.
- The Communications Team proposes promoting the Citizen and Young Achiever of the Year nominations throughout the year, rather than only immediately prior to the nomination period.
The committee is being notified in advance of this change in approach.
Proposed nomination timeline:
Opening date: Friday, 30 October 2026
Closing date: Friday, 27 November 2026
Committee review of nominations: Wednesday, 9 December 2026
- The Mayor provided additional comments regarding the action to seek funding through AGL for the upcoming Twilight Event. This request stemmed from community members asking whether Singleton Council would follow Maitland Council's initiative of offering residents free Australian flags. As a government organisation, Council was not eligible for this funding. Although grant funding could not be obtained, the Committee noted that eligible organisations and residents can submit flag requests to the Federal Member for Hunter.

**MINUTES
AUSTRALIA DAY COMMITTEE
12:00PM WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2025**



7 Action List

Pulse/Action No	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date
	10 Dec 2025	Mitch Madden to confirm Aboriginal and Australian flags will be handed out by the Singleton Diggers.	Mitch Madden / Sam Calleja	26/01/2026

8 Next Meeting

- TBC – March 2026 (Debrief Meeting)

The meeting closed at 12.19PM.

Cr Danny Thompson
Chair

**GM3/26. Minutes - Singleton Legacy Fund Governance Panel
and Quarterly Fund Progress Reports - December 2025**
Author: Executive Assistant

FILE:
22/00153/001

Executive Summary

The Singleton Legacy Fund Governance Panel held its meeting on Thursday 11 December 2025. The minutes of the meeting are shown as (**Attachment 1**).

The Quarterly Fund Progress Report for each of the following four (4) components of The Singleton Legacy Fund are also attached for Council's information:

- Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund (**Attachment 2**)
- Roads Fund (**Attachment 3**)
- Infrastructure Management Fund (**Attachment 4**)
- Commercial Property Fund (**Attachment 5**)

FOR INFORMATION

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Minutes - Singleton Legacy Fund - 11 December 2025

AT-2 [↓](#) CEDF Legacy Fund - Governance Report October 2025

AT-3 [↓](#) Legacy Fund - Roads Fund - Quarterly Report - December 2025

AT-4 [↓](#) Legacy Fund - Infrastructure Management Fund - Quarterly Report - December 2025

AT-5 [↓](#) Legacy Fund - Property Reserve Report - Dec 2025

**MINUTES
SINGLETON LEGACY FUND
3PM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



Present	Cr Sue Moore (Mayor) (Chair) Cr Sue George (Deputy Mayor) Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr (General Manager) Mike Duff (Director Infrastructure & Planning Services)
In Attendance	Sam Calleja (Executive Assistant) Kirsten Torrance (Executive Assistant) Catherine Bradley (Coordinator Financial Planning and Reporting)
Meeting Location	Committee Room

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Welcome
- Acknowledgement of Country by Chair
- Apologies - Mel Curtis (Executive Director), Dwight Graham (Director Corporate & Community Services)

2 Disclosure of Interests

- Nil

3 Confirmation of Minutes

- **MOVED** Cr Sue George **SECONDED** Mayor Sue Moore The minutes of the Singleton Legacy Fund meeting held on Thursday 18 September 2025, were confirmed.

CARRIED

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Nil

5 Agenda Items

**1.1 Singleton Community and Economic Development
Fund Update - December 2025 FILE:22/00153/001**

The Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund update as at 31 October 2025 was circulated with the agenda.

Applications for Round 5 of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund will be consider by the committee at the 18 December 2025 meeting.

NOTED

**MINUTES
SINGLETON LEGACY FUND
3PM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



2.2 Commercial Property Fund Update - December 2025 FILE:22/00153/00

The Commercial Property Fund Quarterly update as at 31 October 2025 was circulated with the agenda.

NOTED

3.3 Singleton Roads Fund Update - December 2025 FILE:22/00153/001

The Singleton Roads Fund Update for December 2025 was circulated with the agenda.

43% of the Roads program projects have been delivered by end of October.
i.e. the figure of 43% relates to the actual count of the jobs irrespective of their value.

The Roads Program will be presented at the March 2026 Roads Advisory Meeting.

Most carryover works have now been completed, and the team is continuing with the 2025/26 program.

NOTED

**4.4 Singleton Infrastructure Management Fund Update -
December 2025 FILE:22/00153/001
Executive Summary**

The Singleton Infrastructure Management Fund Update for December 2025 was circulated with the agenda.

NOTED

6 Other Business

- Nil

7 Action List

Nil Outstanding

8 Next Meeting

- 12 March 2026, Thursday 3PM (Committee Room)

The meeting closed at 3.06PM.

Sue Moore, Mayor
Chair

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As per the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Plan of Management, the purpose of this report is to provide the Legacy Fund Governance Panel a report on the quarterly achievements of the fund including:

- Meetings held
- Outcomes achieved
- Expenditure of funds
- Balance of funds
- Key success indicators for the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund.

MEETINGS HELD

The Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund – Joint Management Board (CEDF-JMB) was established in June 2021 following the signing and execution of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Deed in December 2020.

The below table provides an overview of the CEDF-JMB meetings held since the last report to the Legacy Fund:

Date of meeting	Quorum met
3 December 2025	Scheduled
18 December 2025	Scheduled

The Singleton CEDF is made up of five Voluntary Planning Agreements consisting of:

- Mount Thorley Warkworth (MTW) \$4.4million
- Mt Owen \$1.15million
- United Collieries \$1.325million
- Bloomfield \$ 432,000
- Bulga \$1.130million

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

The following outcomes have been achieved by the CEDF-JMB:

- Establishment of CEDF grant funding and assessment criteria
- CEDF communication brand and marketing assets, including website page and engagement assets
- Development of three-year grant funding program and principles
- Review and update of the CEDF Deed to allow inclusion of “for-profit” organisation applications
- Council funded a range of initiatives from the MTW component including:
 - Bicentenary celebrations and events officer
 - Strategic Storytelling project and implementation
 - Arts + Culture Specialist (12 months)
 - Economic impacts of COVID analysis
 - Community Support Program and rates rebate during COVID
 - Destination of Choice Project
 - Aboriginal and cultural events
 - Social enterprise project – Witmore Limited
- Development of Reporting Power BI Dashboard for the fund
- Update of CEDF Policy and CEDF Plan of Management reflecting changes related to the distribution of CEDF funds previously occurring outside of funding rounds
- Opened and closed (now in assessment phase) Round 5.

EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS AND BALANCE

Since the inception of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund, a total sum of \$2,000,000 has been available for eligible projects, and to date a total of \$1,393,361 has been endorsed by the CEDF-JMB and approved by Council.

Table 1 provides an overview of the status of each of the Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) funding contributions and expenditure against the Singleton Community Economic Development Fund as at 31 October 2025.

KEY SUCCESS INDICATORS FOR THE SINGLETON COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

VPA Title	Amount Committed	Amount Paid	Expenditure	Balance
Mt Thorley Warkworth (MTW) - June 2017	4,400,000	3,900,000	1,062,652	2,837,348
Interest MTW		746,011	285,377	460,635
United Collieries - Dec 2020	1,325,253	1,325,253	206,649	1,118,605
Interest United Collieries		185,719	Nil	185,719
Bloomfield	432,000	432,000	112,029	319,971
Interest Bloomfield		52,935	Nil	52,935
Mt Owen Variation - 2021	1,150,000	770,000	151,849	618,151
Interest Mt Owen		119,083	Nil	119,083
Bulga Continued Operations	1,130,000	1,130,000	189,729	940,271
Interest Bulga		135,043	Nil	135,043
Total	8,437,253	8,796,045	2,008,285	6,787,761

Table 1 Life to date totals as at 31 October 2025

Funding for Round Four of \$295,650 was recommended by the CEDF-JMB and endorsed by Council. Currently, the CEDF has paid \$168,818 towards Round Four applications tracking against project agreements and milestones.

Over the four grant rounds for the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund, 71 applications were received with a combined value of \$5.3 million, demonstrating the perceived value by the Singleton Community. The CEDF-JMB has approved 26 projects and programs with a combined value of \$1.4million.

ROUND FIVE – SINGLETON COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

Round Five of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund opened for applications on 1 September 2025 and closed on 31 October 2025. Four information sessions were held between early September and mid-October, with excellent attendance. There is an allocation of \$275,000 for Round Five applications, to be distributed across single-year and multi-year applications at the discretion of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund Joint Management Board.

Twenty applications were submitted for Round Five of the Singleton Community and Economic Development Fund, consisting of 7 for-profit/business applications and 13 not-for-profit applications. The combined total value of applications received for Round Five is \$1,445,033.

The CEDF Joint Management Team will review and assess funding applications in December and present their recommendations to the CEDF-JMB on 18 December 2025. Applications recommended for funding approval will be presented to Council at the February 2026 meeting.



QUARTERLY FUND PROGRESS REPORT

Singleton Roads Fund Update

December 2025



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As per the Singleton Road Funds plan of management, the purpose of this report is to provide the Legacy Fund Governance Committee a report on the year-to-date achievements of the fund including:

- Meeting held
- Outcomes achieved
- Expenditure of funds
- Balance of funds
- Key success indicators for the Road Fund.

PURPOSE OF THE FUND

The RF has been established to ensure the proceeds from the closure and sale of public roads will be managed in a manner that is consistent with the *Roads Act (NSW), 1993*.

The RF will assist in securing the long-term financial sustainability of Council.

MEETING(S) HELD

As per the RF Plan of Management, no meetings were held in this period, as Council's Infrastructure Team meets in the second quarter of each financial year to develop a draft Roads and Bridges Capital Works Program (Program) for the approaching financial year. This draft Program is subsequently reported to Council's Roads Advisory Committee (RAC) for endorsement. The 2025/26 Program was reported to the RAC on 5 December 2024. Similarly, it is anticipated that the 2026/27 Program will be reported to the RAC in December 2025 or March 2026.

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

As at 31 October 2025, approximately 43% of the adopted 2025/26 Program was delivered, with the successful commencement of the causeway and bridge rehabilitation program (significant budget items).

EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

Council's expenditure against budget during the 2025/26 financial year (to 31 October 2025) is summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Roads, Bridge and Causeway Capital Expenditure Against Budget for 2025/26 year to date (to 31 October 2025).

Program	2025/26 (Year to Date)	
	Budget	Actuals
Local Road Program	\$5,036,231	\$782,579
Regional Roads Program	\$891,958	\$1,810
Causeway & Bridge Rehabilitation	\$11,196,579	\$2,377,983
Natural Disaster Recovery	\$831,701	\$15,216
Total	\$17,956,468.82	\$3,177,586.76

BALANCE OF FUNDS

The RF is reported as an Internal Allocation in Council's Annual Financial Statements. The RF balance, as reported in the September 2025 Quarterly Budget Review, is summarised below in Table 2.

Table 2: RF balance at 30 June for 2022/23 to 2025/26

Financial Year	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 ¹
RF Balance	\$18,420,744.07	\$22,985,000	\$19,297,742	\$21,061,000

Note 1: As per the September 2025 Quarterly Budget Review

The movement in the RF balance between July 2022 and June 2025 is primarily due to Council accounting for several unforeseen and grant funded projects and activities in the 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years, with corresponding funds received or expected to be received by Council in the 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.

KEY SUCCESS INDICATORS FOR THE ROADS FUND

Approximately 43% of the adopted 2025/26 Program has been delivered to 31 October 2025.

The RF has provided Council with a source of funds to support the undertaking of several road related projects during the 2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years, with the RF being reimbursed once the corresponding funds were received or expected to be received by Council in the 2023/24, 2024/25, 2025/26 financial years.



QUARTERLY FUND PROGRESS REPORT

Singleton Infrastructure Management Fund Update

December 2025



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As per the Singleton Infrastructure Management Fund (IMF) Plan of Management, the purpose of this report is to provide the Legacy Fund Governance Committee with a report on the year-to-date achievements of the fund including:

- Annual Capital Works funded through the IMF
- Outcomes achieved
- Expenditure of funds
- Balance of funds; and
- Key success indicators for the Road Fund.

PURPOSE OF THE FUND

The IMF has been established to ensure the future financial sustainability of Council's asset management processes and programs. The IMF is supported by an Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) decision on 17 May 2016 to approve a Special Rate Variation (SRV) for Council.

The SRV was endorsed on the grounds of it being a mechanism to provide critical funds to address Council's identified infrastructure renewal backlog.

It is noted that Council is no longer required to report the SRV funds separately in the financial statements, as the SRV time period has lapsed. Regardless, the Plan of Management for the IMF states that:

The SRV was endorsed on the grounds of it being a mechanism to provide critical funds to tackle Council's identified infrastructure renewal backlog. The infrastructure works funded by the SRV each year are detailed in Council's Annual Report.

The SRV that was approved by IPART in 2016 resulted in an increase in Council's annual general income of 39.80% over four years, commencing 2016/2017. This SRV increase remains in Council's general income base permanently.

Additionally, as per the March 2025 Council resolution adopting the Singleton Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan and rescinding the Developer Contributions Plan, 2008, from 1 July 2025:

- \$1 million was allocated toward Plan Management to be held in an externally restricted reserve and to be used for the purpose of maintaining and administering the Singleton Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan; and
- The remaining funds collected as of 30 June 2025 were allocated to the IMF, under the terms set out in the adopted Legacy Fund Policy.

Funds from the IMF will be allocated in accordance with Councils annual works programs as detailed in Council's Asset Management Plans for the various infrastructure classes: roads, transportation, drainage, buildings and open space and reserves.

MEETING(S) HELD

As part of the annual Operational Budget process, Council's Infrastructure Services Team develops an appropriate Capital Works Program in the second quarter of each financial year. A series of interactive meetings are then held between Council's Infrastructure and Planning Services Directorate and Corporate and Community Services Directorate in the third quarter of the corresponding year to agree on SRV and Repealed Developer Contributions funding requirements to support the proposed Capital Works Program for the forthcoming financial year. The draft Operational Budget, including the proposed Capital Works Program, is then reported to Council for consideration each year.

The expenditure and outcomes achieved through the utilisation of the IMF monies, along with key success indicators, has been reported through Council's Annual Report and Annual Financial Statements. As noted above, Council is no longer required to report on this in the Annual Report past the 2022/23 Financial Year.

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

The outcomes achieved through utilisation of the IMF each year, since 2016, are demonstrated through the IMF-funded projects listed in Council's Annual Report. The corresponding key asset management ratio relating to infrastructure backlog, which is reported in the Annual Financial Statements, provides an overview of the success of the IMF.

EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

As the SRV is no longer reported separately in the financial statements, funds used to support the Infrastructure Management Fund are consolidated into the General Fund. From the 2024/25 reporting period, infrastructure projects funded in this way are reported as General Fund programs for this report.

The 2025/26 infrastructure works funded through the (historic) SRV are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Budget Allocation and Actuals from (historic) SRV with Proportion of General Funds as part of Budget Allocation for 2025/26 Capital Works Program

Program	Project	Budget Allocation		Actuals at 30 October 2025	
		Total	General Fund Proportion	Total	General Fund Proportion
Local Road	Gravel Re-sheeting	881,639	570,000	\$110,394	110,394
	Rural Road Resealing	983,712	920,000	27,667	27,667
	Urban Road Resealing	535,617	250,000	85,724	85,724
	Emergency Works	165,000	165,000	9,037	9,037
	Various Kerb and Gutter Replacement	150,000	150,000	\$0	\$0
	Sub-total	\$2,715,968	\$2,055,000	\$232,822	\$232,822
Design Program	Various	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$103,904	\$103,904
Drainage Program	Combo Lane - Drainage swale construction	\$60,000	\$22,936	\$0	\$0
	Maison Dieu Road - Drainage Repairs	\$30,450	\$5,000	\$1,411	\$0
	Various urban roads - Pipe Relining	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$0	\$0
	Sub-total	\$260,000	\$222,936	\$1,411	\$0
Plant	Building security installation	\$190,000	\$30,000	\$40,359	\$0
Total		\$3,596,418	\$2,712,936	\$378,496	\$336,726

The 2025/26 infrastructure works funded through the repealed Developer Contributions Plan are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Budget Allocation and Actions with Proportion of Repealed Developer Contributions Plan General Funds as part of Budget Allocation for 2025/26 Capital Works Program

Program	Project	Budget Allocation		Actuals at 30 October 2025	
		Total	Repealed Funds Proportion	Total	Repealed Funds Proportion
Building	Civic Centre auditorium - Disability access upgrades - amenities, stage access	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$67	\$67
	Rose Point Park - Changing Places facility	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$161	\$80

Program	Project	Budget Allocation		Actuals at 30 October 2025	
		Total	Repealed Funds Proportion	Total	Repealed Funds Proportion
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>\$950,000</i>	<i>\$800,000</i>	<i>\$228</i>	<i>\$147</i>
Transport	Council contribution for potential grant funding	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$0	\$0
	Total	\$1,150,000	\$1,000,000	\$228	\$147

BALANCE OF FUNDS

The IMF is reported as an Internal Allocation in Council's Annual Financial Statements with a current balance of \$5,200,000 (consisting entirely of repealed Developer Contributions Plan) at 31 October 2025.

The IMF balance, prior to 1 July 2025, has been reported as zero. This is because, historically, all the SRV funds received each year since the IPART decision in 2016 have been allocated to infrastructure renewal projects that tackle the identified infrastructure backlog. As the SRV funds are consolidated into the General Fund, this will continue to be the case for this portion of the IMF.

KEY SUCCESS INDICATORS FOR THE INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT FUND

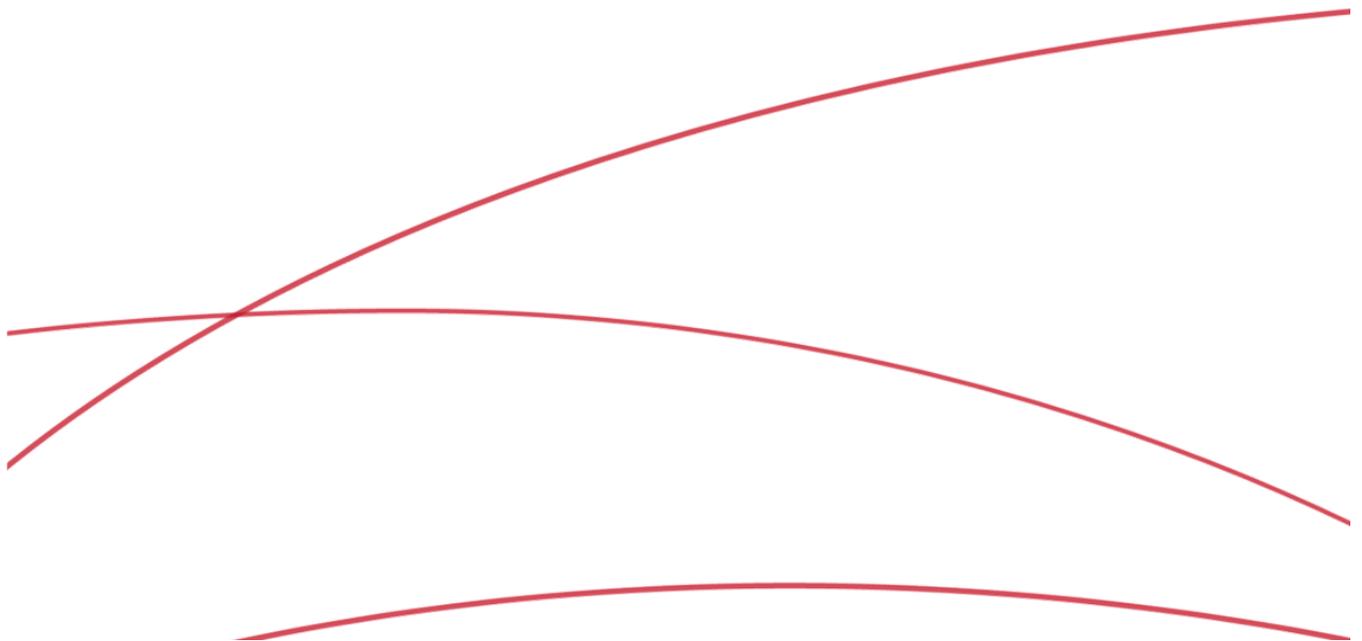
The key success indicators for the IMF are best shown through the asset management ratios that are reported in Council's Annual Financial Statements.



QUARTERLY FUND PROGRESS REPORT

Commercial Property Fund Update

31 October 2025



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As per the Commercial Property Fund plan of management, the purpose of this report is to provide the Legacy Fund Governance Committee a report on the quarterly achievements of the fund including:

- Meetings held
- Outcomes achieved
- Expenditure of funds
- Balance of funds
- Key success indicators for the Commercial Property Fund.

MEETING HELD

Since the last Legacy Funds meeting (18 September 2025) the Property Advisory Panel (PAP) has held one meeting:

Date of meeting	Quorum meet
19 November 2025	Yes

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

At its meeting on 19 November 2025, the PAP received updates on:

- Council’s Bridgman Ridge Estate, stages 9-14 development. The development application (DA) for this proposed 88 lot subdivision on Pioneer Road, was submitted on 16 September 2024, had a hearing on 15 April 2025 and submitted further information in July 2025. The finalised DA assessment info is scheduled to be submitted to the Regional Planning Panel prior to Xmas.
- A number of other more minor property matters.

EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

Income into this fund is largely from property sales and a small amount of lease income. Income from 1 July 2025 to 31 October 2025 was \$194,898, coming from:

- Lease income
- Council’s share of the sale of a lot in stage 8 of the joint venture of Bridgman Ridge Estate and
- Interest earned on the fund balance.

Expenditure of \$401,033 includes:

- Council rates (\$228k) for all Property portfolio properties
- Costs associated with the development of the DA for Bridgman Ridge Estate, stages 9-14 development (\$167k) and
- Other miscellaneous costs.

BALANCE OF FUNDS

The balance in the Property Reserve as at 31 October 2025 was \$2,477k.

KEY SUCCESS INDICATORS FOR THE XXX FUND.

Success factors for the fund are:

1. Return on funds employed. As Council has no commercial property at this point the only return is the returns on Council's general investments. This return is 6.95% for the 12 months ended 31 October 2025, which is 2.84% above the benchmark (BBSW) of 4.11% for the same period.
2. Sale of Council lots. Where Council staff believe it is appropriate to sell land, then it will propose this to the PAP and Council. Sales in the 2025/26 financial year include:
 - a. The sale of several lots in stages 6/8 of the joint venture of Bridgman Ridge Estate. It is expected that these will flow through the Property Reserve in the next few months.

GM4/26. Arts Upper Hunter
Author: Executive Assistant

FILE: 17/00618

Executive Summary

Attached for Councillors information is the following:

1. Minutes – Arts Upper Hunter Board Meeting held on 16 June 2025 (shown as **Attachment 1**)
2. Minutes – Arts Upper Hunter Board Meeting held on 22 September 2025 (shown as **Attachment 2**)
3. Letter to the General Manager providing an update on Arts Upper Hunter (shown as **Attachment 3**)

FOR INFORMATION

Attachments

- AT-1** [↓](#) Minutes – Arts Upper Hunter Board Meeting - 16 June 2025
- AT-2** [↓](#) Minutes – Arts Upper Hunter Board Meeting - 22 September 2025
- AT-3** [↓](#) December 2025 Letter to the General Manager providing an update on Arts Upper Hunter

8.2. Create NSW AUH 4-year application submitted on 1 December 2025. AUH successful for \$217,000 per year 2026 to 2028.

John reported:

- Good news that AUH was successful, bad news it was less than applied for.
- Main implication is that some of the program activities listed in the application / 2026-2028 Business Plan won't go ahead unless additional funding is secured. The five main components of the Plan will still exist. General impacts:
 - Little or no impact on Blak Arts In the Upper Hunter - funded by IVAIS grant
 - Creative Valleys – we will seek Tourism funding and possibly some free workshop: ATDW workshops to go ahead
 - AUH's advocacy role will continue
 - We will continue to focus on priority groups eg youth.
 - See ED report for what programs won't go ahead unless we get additional funding.
 - CASP & Microgrants are in question however because they are so valuable to the region, John is considering rolling them together with reduced total funding on offer.
 - Will know more once revised the 2026 Budget.
- Update on the outcome for the RADO network.

10.15am – Roz Thompson left meeting.

- John asked board members to keep sending him ideas.
- Developing more partnerships is another option, as is seeking applying for other grant rounds. AUH is not eligible to apply for Create NSW Project funding, but can apply for Regional Touring from Create NSW. Ivan mentioned Community Grants Program.
- AUH has to apply to Create NSW for a variation due for the \$217,000. Create NSW has yet to advise due date, and this might affect the date of the next board meeting.

8.3. Auspicing Policy. Deferred.

8.3.1. Sculpture on the Farm. John reported that he approached Create NSW to fund Sculpture on the Farm \$18,000 for plinths and other work, and was successful. AUH to devolve the grant from Create NSW.

8.4. Review of AUH Constitution. See next item.

8.5. DGR & Philanthropy:

8.5.1. **Bank account for Gift Fund** has been opened and is accessible to the signatories.

8.5.2. **Fundraising Committee** awaiting DGR.

John reported on 8.4 & 8.5 together:

- He reported he received a call from the ATO regarding the DGR application, 2 issues.
 - Wasn't clear we were devoted to certain artforms
 - Failed to include "It does not receive any other money or property" in AUH Constitution.

Motion moved to hold a phone ballot in 2 weeks to vote on adding the appropriate clause to the AUH Constitution.

McGill / Carruthers Carried

Assuming AUH gets DGR approval John will organise a meeting of the people who put up their hands when successful.

8.6. Creative Valleys

- Flyer provided to Kim Lundy
- Suzannah to run ATDW workshops with funding received from cultural tourism funding of around \$4,000. First LGA will be Dungog. Talking in depth with Karen Varker (Singleton) and Jenny Lee (UHSC) and will contact Steven Wright (MSC).
- Martha raised the question whether there is technology available (AI?) that can automate listings on CV populating ArtSparks? John and Sandra to look into this. Maybe an option when AUH signs up for Salesforce being offered by RANSW.
- Discussed the challenges of compiling ArtSparks, Martha suggested sending regularly contributors a group reminder email and potentially adding the event to ATDW.
- Peter mentioned UHSC & MSC did a massive rebranding and ended up a new tag line of “Uh” (Upper Hunter Country Tourism).

8.7. Branding and website review. Tagline, logo. Discussed

- Have received one quote to do a complete re-branding vs a stabilising of the current AUH logo.
- Given the reduction in funding from Create NSW it was decided to proceed with the stabilising of the current logo and put other funding into the upgrade of the AUH website.
- Peter advised Anita Faulkner from Murrurundi is a graphic designer.

9. Financial Report

9.1 Financial Report

McGill / Moderitz Carried

Louise queried the \$3,00 travel expense for the IVAIS project. This is Travel Expenses to send a local First Nation artist to the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair 2025.

AUH Office – update given following MSC advising the construction work taking place in the vicinity. Louise gave an update on Loxton House renovations.

Louise would like a meeting with Ivan, John and Sandra. To be held Wednesday 26 June. To consider strategies to increase creative engagement in Muswellbrook Shire.

12.02 – Louise left the meeting.

10 ED report.

12.19 – Roz Thompspon rejoined the meeting.

- 10.1 LiddellWORKS: monumental bench, NEXT // Studios, demolition, acquittal, Bayswater visit by John with potential for a new longer-term program.
- 10.2 Creative Valleys: handover, Destination Australia conference, Dungog September Itinerary, & Cultural Tourism project (ATDW workshops). Issues filling the site.
- 10.3 First Nations program – website, IVAIS "variation", market stalls, talks in schools, Youth Event, strong relationship with LALC, Travelling Totems.
- 10.4 Local opportunities: This Here Then Now at Tocal, Muswellbrook Precinct opening, Museum of Rural Life.

That the board formally extends their appreciation to Suzannah Jones, Project Officer on the THTN, for her outstanding work in the management of this project. Suzannah is to be commended for her efforts.

Skaines / Moderitz Carried.

Ivan mentioned applications for the Crown Lands Grant is expected to open later this year (affecting Museum of Rural Life or Sculpture on The Farm).

- 10.5 Sculpture On The Farm Dungog – auspicing and Create strategic funding.
- 10.6 Potential touring program, music focus.

John mentioned Uncle Richie is interested in a music project and Peter advised he spoke with him the other day. Uncle Richie has been working with children in Scone schools and trying to get into the Murrurundi Primary School.

- 10.7 Other matters from ED report: Dungog grant; ED salary.

Moved that John O'Brien receives a 2.4% CPI increase in salary effective from the pay period commencing 30 June and paid on the 15 July 2025.

McGill / Skaines Carried.

Dungog Country Biennale not going ahead due to committee unable to raise the funds. AUH will promote September events in Dungog through an Itinerary on Creative Valleys.

AUH has cancelled our HR Central subscription and will be signing up to RANSW's NFP Connect HR support service.

John mentioned he attended Singleton Firelight and Muswellbrook Gather in the Glow.

McGill / Moderitz Carried

11 Chair's report. Danny reported:

- Danny is on the Singleton Arts & Culture Committee. An issue that has arisen involves the Reconciliation Committee and the consultation process by the NSW government regarding the artwork to go on the sound barriers of the Singleton Bypass.
- The government consulted with a surprisingly small number of groups and FN creatives. Members of the Reconciliation Committee, among others, are upset because they were not consulted.
- Danny wondered if the RADO network could be involved. It was suggested John take this to the RANSW & RADO network.

12 Board Member Reports:

12.1 Ivan Skaines

- Thanked AUH for working with the Upper Hunter Conservation of Music and council on a grant application for a sound art project. Another round closes 10 October, so will be applying then.
- Thanked AUH for involvement reference group for the Community Improvement District Programme within the Hunter Innovation Precinct.
- Dungog Shire Community Centre fundraiser had to be cancelled due to low ticket sales.
- Entries for the 2025 Mullens Photographic Prize closed 14 June.

12.2 Roz Thompson

- Advised has a extra staff member. Jordan Collins is the Community Partnership Officer and will have an Aboriginal trainee from 1 July.
- Muswellbrook Shire Council is funding a free LGBTQIA+ awareness training for community members on 25 June, followed the following day with one for community workers.
- Last week MSC held a successful Indigenous Community Consultation.

12.3 Martha Moderitz

- Attended the talk by Gloria Loughman held by the Singleton Quilters, supported by CASP. There was a very good turnout.
- Attended the recent Singleton Arts + Culture Centre's Chat.
- Entries for the Singleton Art Prize close today,

12.4 Peter McGill

- Upper Hunter Literary Festival happened March, Scone Horse Festival in May, Merriwa Festival of Fleeces June long weekend, Murrurundi Museum has a quilt show on now.
- Train disaster at Murulla Memorial. Des from the MDI museum advised they have a film coming out on the train disaster, and Fran and Peter are well advanced on the Murulla Memorial Sculpture which is being located near Burning Mountain.
- Last weekend Murrurundi Arts & Crafts Council held their annual prize. Some 97 entries. Consideration is being given to the number of categories due to the broad range of art & craft mediums.
- Murrurundi Festival committee held first meeting. Planning for 28 & 29 March 2026.

12.5 Alexandria Carruthers

- She presented awards at the Dungog Art Society's recent Archies Exhibition
- Sculpture on the Farm is coming up.
- Gresford Community Gallery recently launched their Winter Exhibition, 120 people attended.
- Dungog Shire Council Economic Development Manager has resigned.

12.6 Danny Thompson

- Singleton Amateur Theatrical Society's production of the Little Mermaid is on now.
- Singleton Art Prize, hosted by Singleton on Hunter Rotary, is coming up. Usually, 650 to 700 entries.

13 **General Business:**

- 13.1 No urgent business.
- 13.2 Next Board meeting. John to consult with Annie. Date and venue to be advised.
Possible AUH office in Muswellbrook between 22 to 29 September.

Closed: 1.19pm.

arts UPPER HUNTER

To provide, support and promote arts and cultural opportunities for all people in the Upper Hunter.

Arts Upper Hunter Board General Meeting

10 am Monday 22 September 2025

Donald Horne Building meeting room 140 Bridge St Muswellbrook

The day was followed by Fundraising Training session.

Commenced: 10:10am

1. **Welcome/Acknowledgment of Country given by Danny Thompson.**
2. **Present:** : Cr Dan Thompson (Vice Chair and Singleton Council), Cr Peter McGill (Upper Hunter Shire Council), Cr Louise Dunn (Muswellbrook Shire Council), Martha Moderitz (Treasurer), Ivan Skaines, Roz Thomson, Kim Lundy and Cr Alexandria Carruthers (Dungog Shire Council).
3. **Apologies:** Jacqui Bakewell.
4. **Not present:** Annie Rodgers advised would be late.
Moderitz / McGill Carried
5. **Also in attendance:** John O'Brien and Sandra Reichel
6. **Call for conflicts of interest:** None declared.
7. **Confirmation of minutes from previous meeting 16 June 2025**
Skaines / McGill Carried
8. **Business arising from the minutes of 16 June 2025**
 - 8.1. Board membership. Reminder to review clause 8.10 of the Constitution at the next AGM (on cessation of membership).

10.17am: Annie Rodgers joined the meeting.

- 8.2. **AUH program for 2026** on, with reduced Create NSW funding of \$217,000 per year 2026 to 2028. John reported on program and budget implications. The core work of AUH will continue, including servicing LGAs and providing advice and advocacy. Our projects will be dependent on grants and sponsorship, which we are assiduously seeking.

8.2.1 Executive Director's hours

Moved that the Executive Director's hours be reduced from 35 to 28 per week, hourly rate and other benefits remaining the same, for 2026, and that this be reviewed in mid 2026 by the Board.

Lundy / McGill Carried

Martha asked for John to present a report at the next meeting on his plan of activities for 2026 and how he intends to achieve this working 8 days per fortnight (pay period). In addition, John to identify “normal” working days for the fortnight in light of personal leave and public holidays.

AUH to call for EOI for Part time Project Officer and Comms Officer to have on hand for potential positions for example when grants are successful.

8.2.2 Revised 2026 budget

McGill /Moderitz Carried

8.3. Auspicing Policy. Deferred.

8.4. Review of AUH Constitution. Amended Constitution has been provided to GMs. See also special July meeting minutes below.

8.5. DGR & Philanthropy: DGR successful as of 16 July 2025.

- Fundraising training this afternoon for board.
- AusArts Day on 23 October.
- Gift Fund has \$20 in it from our first donation.
- Board needs to have policies and procedures in place regarding:
 - How we raise funds
 - What we are raising funds for
 - What we are going to tell potential donors we are raising funds for
 - Who we want involved eg AUH and outsiders
 - What is the process going to be
 - Danny recommended consulting with Australian Sports Foundation, John advised the Australian Cultural Fund also accepts donations on behalf of individuals and organisations who don't have DGR.

8.6. Creative Valleys – ATDW workshops "Share Your Story". John reported:

- Workshop held in Dungog very successful. Muswellbrook will be held 25 September and Scone 2 October. Date for Singleton still be determined.
- Event organisers in Dungog were very enthusiastic about the new Itineraries on the CV website. Dungog was a test case. There are plans to offer this service to other LGAs.
- AUH seeking inspiring artists/cultural organisations/events to create “Stories” for the CV website. Refer ideas onto Sandra.

8.7. Branding and website review. Logo has been tweaked for better usage in print and online. See ED Report.

9. Confirmation of minutes from special meeting 16 July 2025

McGill / Carruthers Carried.

10. Business arising from the minutes of special meeting 16 July 2025

None

11. Financial Report including Revised 2025 Budget

Rodgers / Moderitz Carried

12 ED report.

12.1 CASP and Micro Grants – two assessors needed from Board plus 1 independent

- Board members and backups are: Jacqui, Ros, Danny and Alexandria.
- Independent member: John to approach Dawn Thompson, with Robert Booth and Phillipa Graham as back up.

12.2 Alive In the Upper Hunter: theatre, music. We are applying for Regional Touring Funding, matchmaking various venues with a selection of good affordable shows.

11.30 Louise Dunn left the meeting.

11.40 am Meeting paused for break/coffee run.

12.00pm: Meeting resumed.

12.3 Creative Valleys: upcoming ATDW workshops. See 8.6

12.4 First Nations – talks in schools, Pop-Up Gallery, Youth Leadership Day Camp in April 2026, Travelling Totems, artist directory are all happening slowly. We haven't run Market Stalls but Wanaruah LALC have so we may fund a couple more with them.

ICIP (Indigenous Cultural & Intellectual Property) training coming to the region thanks to AUH on 6 November.

12.5 Regional Cultural Plan working group – Creative Hubs and Opening up TfNSW and TAFE spaces.

Board reviewed the LGAs discussed potential hubs, unused and unutilised buildings.

Peter McGill mentioned Lake Glenbawn Museum of Rural Life.

12.15pm – Louise Dunn returned.

12.6 Comms report – use of AI – declining ArtSparks opening – website revamp.

- ArtSparks. Suggestions made to reduce the length and also the time taken to compile by:
 - Rather than list the grants and opportunities, list the funding bodies with links to their websites, and have a link to AUH's website's Grants and Prizes page.
 - Reduce the number of events by having a link to Creative Valleys Events page, and AUH's What's On page.
 - Consider grouping events by LGA.
- AI and the Arts. Review RANSW draft AI Policy when they release it with a view to modifying it for AUH.

12.7 Regional Arts NSW – funding update – the RALLY program. **Deferred**

Lundy / Carruthers Carried

13 Chair's report.

McGill / Thomson Carried

14 Board Member Report(s):

- 14.1 Peter McGill: UHSC now has banner poles in Merriwa, Scone, Aberdeen and Murrurundi. Banners are simultaneous displayed across the region for each event promoted.
- 14.2 Kim Lundy: reported that Mt Hutton Shopping Centre approached local art organisation to run a popup shop because of many shops closing over a short period of time. The artists have the space rent free.
- 14.3 Ros reported the Darwin Aboriginal Art Festival was fabulous and thanked AUH for the opportunity. There was a lot of art and culture on display, she attended a couple of workshops wans is very pleased with sales of her artwork. She will provide the board with a report.

15 General Business:

- 15.1 Hunter New England Health have contacted AUH to manage aspects of the new wing's artworks, mainly for the relocated Community Health's consulting rooms and waiting room. The program will begin very soon.
- 15.2 Expanding AUH's Footprint. John suggested this may be good timing given what's happening in state government and the Regional Cultural Plan.

Moved that AUH approach Cessnock City Council with the possibility of joining AUH.

Skaines / Thompson Carried

- 15.3 Next Board meeting: Tuesday 2 December 2025, 10.30am, Singleton. Venue TBA.

Closed: 12.57pm



12 December 2025

Mr Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr
General Manager, Singleton Council
PO Box 314
Singleton NSW 2330

Dear Justin,

Please find attached the ratified minutes of our June and September Board meetings. I am also pleased to advise that the Arts Upper Hunter Annual Report for 2024 is now available online at: <https://artsupperhunter.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2024-Arts-Upper-Hunter-Annual-Report.pdf>.

Here are some highlights since I last wrote on 1 August 2025, especially as concerns Singleton LGA.

Creative Achievements and Local Impact

- **NEXT // Studio:** Our youth digital creativity workshops at Singleton Arts + Cultural Centre were a great success, led by Grace Barnes and Juniper Martin. We are hoping to fund the program again in 2026, this time under the Visual program.
- **Cultural Tourism:** Suzannah Jones delivered the Share Your Story ATDW workshop at Singleton Civic Centre in November, with 14 very focused participants. This training helps local creatives and venues list on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse, boosting cultural tourism.
- **CASP and Micro Grants:** Two grants have been awarded to Singleton groups for 2026:
 - *Song Flow – Unlock your creativity one lyric at a time* (Singleton Library) – a songwriting workshop with Saralyn in May 2026.
 - *Bands In Concert* (Singleton Town Band) – supporting their annual end-of-year celebration.
- **First Nations Engagement:** We attended Singleton NAIDOC Family Day and continue to work with Ungooroo and local creatives on the Blak Arts program. Planning is underway for the Dare 2B Deadly Youth Day Camp in April 2026, at Minimbah Teaching Place. Singleton High a likely repeat participant to our schools program. We're also near completion on a video for the Creative Valleys website in our First Stories program, featuring father and daughter Warren and Kerri-Ann Taggart

visiting Country and speaking about their connection to the land and to each other. It's a lovely documentary.

- **Advisory and Networking:** We've provided advice on music and theatre possibilities, and continue to liaise with SACC on future collaborations. I continue to have a role in your Cultural Advisory Group.

Regional Highlights Benefiting Singleton

Visuaural Program: AUH secured a Regional Arts Fund grant for Visuaural, supporting Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre's Listen To Art residencies and including workshops such as Telling Your Story by Painting and Playing. Singleton venues are part of the delivery plan. Most exciting will be a resurrected piano sustainability project called *Death Cycle of a Found Piano*, which has interest from Dashville and other Singleton district groups.

Alive In The Upper Hunter: Our major regional theatre touring application is awaiting outcome, but we already have two productions confirmed for March 2026 (Flat Pack and Little Wing) – the former has a Singleton showing booked in March.

First Stories: The first video in our series capturing First Nations stories won Best Cinematography at the Blue Heeler Film Festival.

Organisational Updates

We've moved offices to Campbell's Corner in Muswellbrook and are preparing for a busy 2026 program despite reduced core funding. I'll be shifting to a four-day work week from January to manage workload and sustainability.

Our Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status is now in place, opening new opportunities for philanthropy.

Singleton continues to play a vital role in the region's creative life, and Arts Upper Hunter is proud to support this thriving cultural landscape. Thank you for your ongoing partnership and funding—it makes all the difference.

Wishing you and your team a joyful festive season.



John O'Brien, Executive Director

GM5/26. Update on the Implementation of the Floodplain Risk Management Plan**FILE:** 23/00186**Author:** Coordinator Strategic Planning**Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the implementation of the recommendations of the Singleton Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan 2023 (Flood Study) and to provide details on the next steps required to implement the actions that relate to the amendment of the Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013 and Singleton Development Control Plan 2014.

FOR INFORMATION

At its Ordinary Meeting on 21 May 2024, Council endorsed the Singleton Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan 2023. The resolution included the following key actions required to implement the plan:

Recommendation	Status update
a. <i>The Design Flood (DF), Flood Planning Level (FPL) and Flood Planning Area (FPA) recommended in the Singleton Flood Risk Management Study & Plan 2023 will be applied as relevant.</i>	In progress. The flooding related terminology changes will be included in a flood specific Planning Proposal.
b. <i>The Singleton Flood Risk Management Study & Plan 2023 will be made available on the Council website.</i>	Completed.
c. <i>The mapping of the Design Flood, Flood Planning Level, Flood Planning Area and Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) will be made available on the Council website.</i>	The Council website was updated to provide access to the information identified in the motion.
d. <i>The current Singleton Floodplain Risk Management Study 2011 and Singleton Floodplain Risk Management Plan 2012 will be rescinded and replaced by the adopted Singleton Flood Risk Management Study & Plan 2023.</i>	Completed. The Singleton Floodplain Risk Management Study 2011 and Singleton Floodplain Risk Management Plan 2012 was rescinded and replaced by the adopted Singleton Flood Risk Management Study & Plan 2023.
e. <i>A planning proposal will be prepared to update the Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013 and</i>	In progress. Clause 7.3(1) currently provides

General Manager's Report (Items for Information) - GM5/26

<p><i>Development Control Plan 2014 to align with the adopted Singleton Flood Risk Management Study & Plan 2023.</i></p>	<p>proponents with two (2) different minimum floor heights, i.e. Flood Planning Level and heights specified on the Floor Height Restrictions Map.</p> <p>The Flood Study found that the minimum floor heights resulted from Council's earlier decision to set floor levels at the 1955 flood level plus 300 mm freeboard in Singleton, Camberwell and Broke. The current Flood Study provides up to date flood data for Singleton and Camberwell, while the most recent Broke flood data was compiled in 2016.</p> <p>Similarly, Clause 7.3(2) allows for habitable floor levels below the FPL which is inconsistent with the 'Floodplain Development Manual' (NSW Government, 2005). The Flood Study recommends that the subclause be removed from the SLEP and included in a flood specific chapter in the Singleton Development Control Plan (SDCP).</p> <p>The recommended amendments to the SLEP will be included in a flood specific Planning Proposal to remove the clause from the SLEP.</p>
<p><i>f. An amendment of the Singleton Local Strategic Planning Statement will be made to be consistent with the recommendations of the Singleton Flood Risk Management Study & Plan 2023.</i></p>	<p>To be commenced.</p> <p>The scheduled review of the Singleton Local Strategic Planning Statement will be commenced in mid-2026 and will include the changes recommended in Flood Study.</p>
<p><i>g. Seek confirmation from Transport for NSW that:</i></p> <p><i>(i) Consideration has been given in the design for the Singleton Bypass to minimise flood impacts and to enable it to be suitable for flood evacuation to at least the 1% AEP flood level.</i></p> <p><i>(ii) TfNSW will undertake an updated Flood Study of the final bypass design that integrates with the Singleton Flood Risk Management Study & Plan 2023 and provide Council with all updated mapping.</i></p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Council staff sought confirmation from TfNSW that the adopted flood data was included in the detailed design of the Singleton Bypass.</p>
<p><i>h. Council prepares a housekeeping</i></p>	<p>In progress.</p>

General Manager's Report (Items for Information) - GM5/26

<i>amendment to the Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013 to include Special Flood Consideration Clause 5.22 of the Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plan.</i>	The inclusion of a standard Special Flood Consideration clause into the SLEP will be included in a flood specific Planning Proposal.
<i>i. Council includes in the housekeeping amendment, the recommended changes to the Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013 within the Flood Risk Management Study and Plan.</i>	In progress. The recommended amendments to the SLEP will be included in a flood specific Planning Proposal.
<i>j. Council notes that adoption of the Flood Risk Management Study and Plan includes adoption of the Design Flood, Flood Planning Level and Flood Planning Area.</i>	In progress. The flooding related terminology changes will be included in a flood specific Planning Proposal.
<i>k. Council places on its public website the Flood Planning Area Maps</i>	Completed. The Council website was updated to provide access to the information identified in the Flood Study.

Recommendations a, e, h, l and j above relate to the amendment of the LEP and DCP. To implement these actions, council staff are preparing the relevant documents including a draft planning proposal and draft DCP provisions for consideration by the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (NSW DPHI).

A Gateway Determination will be sought from DPHI to progress the amendments.

Should a Gateway Determination be issued, a further report that seeks a resolution to publicly exhibit a draft planning proposal (the written component of an LEP amendment) and draft DCP amendment will be sent to a subsequent Council Meeting.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

**ED4/26. Conference Report - Councillor Patrick Thompson -
2025 LGNSW Annual Conference**
Author: Executive Assistant

FILE:
24/00441/013

Executive Summary

Councillor Patrick Thompson attended the 2025 Local Government NSW Conference in Penrith from 23 to 25 November 2025. A copy of his report on the event is shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's information.

FOR INFORMATION

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) 2025 LGNSW Annual Conference Report - Cr Thompson

2025 LGNSW Annual Conference Report

November 23-25

Overview.

This was a conference that revolved around housing, and the current situation regarding housing availability and housing affordability. It dominated most motions, most presentations, and informed a bulk of the motions passed. The Housing crisis was the main topic of conversation amongst councillors throughout the state. It was one of the few universal issues amongst people from areas that have greatly different issues and circumstances. While many thoughts were had on the best practices and approaches to be used, everyone agreed that more needed to be done to address the crisis.

Day one began with a Professional Developmental workshop on the topic of:

Affordable Housing Contribution Schemes for councils.

Speakers:

Cr Brad Bunting Blacktown City

Rebecca Pinkstone: chief executive office Homes NSW

Esther Cheong: Director Atlas Economics

Cr Jack Dods: Dept Mayor Byron shire

The Workshop began with Rebecca Pinkstone from Homes NSW giving an Overview of the current programs in the 'Federal Government Space' Notably how there is \$6.6 billion earmarked for 'predominantly social and affordable housing' and that subsidised housing programs were being explored.

Relevant to Singleton was that the Federal Government is looking at their land holdings and potential pairings with rural and regional councils. In practical terms they have targets of refreshing 2000+ existing homes, and building more that 6000+ new homes, while also providing direct funding into communities.

Other projects listed were potential joint-ventures with councils with Forbes and Tamworth councils being listed as examples.

The Government is also currently providing advice on contribution schemes with the goal of more Community based social and affordable housing.

Esther Cheong from Atlas Economics then attempted to define the various forms of affordable housing and what an affordable housing contribution scheme looks like, and the importance of CHP's (Community Housing Providers) as partners. The practical benefits of CHP's was that they have specialist expertise, due to their non-profit status they can often deliver completed projects cheaper than other groups, and can leverage that into delivering over 20% more finished homes than a regular developer with the same funding. A further stated benefit of councils working with CHP's is that they are better able to leverage existing housing stock than councils are themselves.

The steps Councils can take to help deliver on affordable housing were said to be consistent and fit for purpose Zoning within an LGA, ensuring that Developer contribution plans deliver value for money, having contribution Schemes in place before rezoning and that there are incentives for developers to deliver on affordable housing.

Councillor Brad Bunting talked about Blacktown's experiences with developing affordable housing. Namely setting up the 'Western Sydney Planning Partnership' with 5-8 neighbouring councils and pooling resources, working with Community Housing Providers, and having them bid to the partnership of Councils. He talked about how certainty, clear lead time, and unified responses offset a lot of the pushback from developers, and how these programs helped see Blacktown being the site of more than 20% of all new housing in Sydney.

Councillor Jack Dods from Byron Shire spoke to regional issues, how each region features different issues and challenges regarding affordable housing, and how place centred responses were called for. Using the Byron area as an example he pointed out the region has a comparatively small rate base, but sees huge numbers of tourists annually, and how the combination of 'short term accommodation' and 'Digital Nomads' leaving cities were driving costs in the region and that the cost of housing was causing employment issues with workers being both priced out of the region and having to commute longer and longer distances. Dods talked about how over the years Byron in trying to maintain the character of its region had intentionally not built new developments or facilities, and how this just exacerbated current costs and pressures. As a response the council has spent the past decade working on multiple affordable housing contribution schemes, looked at a number of projects on what is Council owned laned, exploring developer incentives, and encouraging infill development.

After the developmental workshops a 'Welcome to Country' was held by Julie Jones Webb ad Dharug Knowledge holder, before welcomes from the President of the LGNSW Councillor Phyllis Miller OAM, and Councillor Todd Carney the Mayor of Penrith city council. The A.R. Bluett Awards for Council excellence and progress was awarded to Camden Council in the major category, and Leeton Shire Council in the Rural/Regional category.

This was followed by speeches by the Honourable Cristopher Rath the Shadow Special Minister of State, and Shadow Minister for Local Government, and the Honourable Ron Hoenig MP, Minister for Local Government. Both talked about the ongoing housing crisis, how it was effecting families within our communities and how both they on a state level plan on tackling it, whilst making it clear that it was vital to be addressed at a local and council level too.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the LGNSW and NSW Country Mayors Association by Cr Phyllis Miller OAM, LGNSW president, and Cr Rick Firman OAM, Chairman of the Country Mayors Association, and Mayor of Temora Shire Council.

The first day was rounded out with a keynote address by Nick Abrahams from AI Strategy Advice on the 'Opportunities and Risks for local government with rapid AI development' which unfortunately was heavily informed by the tech sectors mantra of 'Move fast and break things', which didn't seem to factor in the consequences that comes from planning and services that directly effects peoples lives. He advocated heavily for 'non coding, non-technical staff' to use AI output in technical areas that they were unfamiliar in. How people would be expected to identify errors and correct them in projects where they lacked the technical expertise to verify the output in the first place was not addressed. To the credit of the Council staff the current standards used by Singleton Council regarding AI tools and output seems to be more vigorous and stringent than what was being advocated for.

Sunday Morning saw a Breakfast by ALGWA NSW. It was networking and socialisation event that saw a Karla Grant deliver a Keynote speech on her life, her heritage, the media, and the power of both representation and perseverance. This was followed by the opening for voting on the open LGNSW positions.

The rest of the day was spent voting on the motions brought forth by the various local councils throughout the state. Once again the housing crisis was the main topic and drive behind many of the motions voted on. It was noteworthy that motions that took a collaborative and 'reasonable' approach often found co-sponsorship and support by large numbers of LGA's before even being brought to vote. Motions that seemed reactionary or idiosyncratic did not find support in being sponsored and often failed. Debate on the motions was lively, though the practice of people repeatedly speaking against motions as some kind of intellectual exercise then voting 'for' them was called out by the LGNSW President as it resulted in 21 motions going unpassed due to time pressures.

On Monday the 25th of November I attended the Trade Hall section of the conference, gaining information and contact details regarding various statewide projects, and materials on infrastructure and service providers.

**ED5/26. Conference Report - Councillor Patrick Thompson -
2025 Adapt Forum**
Author: Executive Assistant

FILE:
24/00441/011

Executive Summary

Councillor Patrick Thompson attended the 2025 Adapt Forum in Sydney on the 26 November 2025. A copy of his report on the event is shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's information.

FOR INFORMATION

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Conference Report - AdaptNSW 2025 Report - Cr P
Thompson

2025 AdaptNSW Forum Report

November 25th-26th 2025.

Overview.

A two-day forum to discuss how communities can plan to mitigate the risk and impact of both climate change and extreme weather events as much as possible.

It was structured as a series of presentations centred on 'Other ways of Knowing, Thinking, Feeling and Doing' with a predominantly academic focus, with more targeted breakout presentations throughout the day for topics such as 'From survival tactics to transformational adaptation: Building thriving regional economies for a changing climate.', 'How NSW DCCEE (Department of Climate change, Energy, the Environment, and Water) of is engaging on the international stage', 'Grounded in place: Climate risks and adaption across regions' to 'cultural incident management exercises', and 'Pop culture and climate adaptation'

The overarching argument was that human efforts could no longer stop the effects of climate change, and that planning, and efforts would be needed to mitigate the worst of it's impacts. The secondary argument was that no 'one-size-fits-all' approach would work or even be appropriate and that more 'place centred' strategies would be needed to address the unique needs and situations of various communities.

The following are notes from a selection of the various panels and presentations.

Beyond Data: How Community values shape adaptation

Speakers:

Dan Etheridge: Engagement Director at Living Lab Northern Rivers

Claudine Mautou: Team Leader Social Science at NSW DCCEEW

Mari Jaevis: Senior Social Researcher at NSW DCCEEW

Katherine Kerr: NSW DCCEEW

Focusing on both dealing with natural disasters and existential threats, and how access to places and services determines where we live. This panel asked 'what are the costs?' and 'what are the risks?' for both people and the Environment using a number of small scale studies and projects in Lismore and the Northern Rivers region of NSW to examine how a changing climate is effecting communities, what groups need the most assistance, how ready both peoples homes and the community are, and what actions have individuals taken.

The studies were a collaboration between the Reconstruction Authority, Southern Cross University and UTS, and found that people are generally concerned with the Environment, with young people significantly more concerned. It found that renters were an especially vulnerable subsection of the community, and that they lacked agency compared to homeowners. It also found that people were generally less concerned by the potential health impacts.

The studies questioned what people valued within their community, what did they know about nature, and looked at what issues received more media attention.

They argued that "Sometimes what communities care most about isn't what the data suggests they should worry about most"

Taking risk to reduce risk

Speakers:

Ben Hart: Managing Director at Fireside Agency

Dan Etheridge: Engagement Director at Living Lab Northern Rivers

Oliver Costello: Executive Director and NSW Net Zero Commissioner at Jagun Alliance Aboriginal Corporation and NSW Net Zero Commission

Ingrid Emery: Executive Director Regional Delivery at Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

This panel was on risk and governance, specifically “How do we create circumstances where leaders can take informed risks?” whilst noting that circumstances are challenging especially as trust in Government is low.

It was acknowledging there are issues that surround programs and policy such as ‘Cultural burning’, ‘Net Zero’, and the ‘Resilient homes program’. It talked about the risks involved, and the political and community responses to them.

It noted that relationships between scientists, communities, and politicians are vital, and that while ‘Risk aversion is what people are incentivised to do’ sometimes the ‘perceived risk’ comes from when both knowledge and understanding is lacking.

Regarding issues such as ‘cultural burning’ the panel argued that understanding is needed before people and decision makers will take on responsibility. Regulatory and policy issues exist. Resourcing is an issue. Decision makers often *don’t* understand, and that understanding changes decisions.

On this issue the panel argued that while political pressures can impact risk that “You can do a lot without involving ministers. Ministers are under significant pressure, and that many civil servants do not understand the pressure. Knowing where they can operate without ministerial intervention, but whilst also keeping them informed”, before arguing that the ‘control of the flow of information is an issue’. No one will have perfect information, but people need to be clear about the issues and where they stand.

The panel then shifted to ‘how to get out of the way of people doing the work.’ And focused on a more place centred approach to risk management. That overly generalised risk management programs created significant issues themselves and that ‘Finding the right balance without overcorrecting is an issue. An example was given of staff being required to wear hardhats as part of their risk management plan, despite the project in question taking place’ in an open field with nothing above the heads of the workers presenting any risk.

From survival tactics to transformational adaptation: Building thriving regional economies for a changing climate.

Speakers:

Reece Proudfoot: Co-founder/director at Regen Labs

Gaye White: Deputy Chair at WinZero-Wingecarribee Net Zero Emissions

Jeff Aston: Manager at Tractorless Vinyard & Regenerative Agriculture

Belinda Morrissey: CEO at English Family Foundation

This was a presentation on making local communities more resilient to outside risks. Unlike most of the Forum this panel discussed financial and logistical risks and threats beyond purely environmental ones.

It gave the hypothetical of a future supply chain shock and what potential steps could be made by a community to mitigate the fallout of such an event, with a focus in Circular manufacturing, governance, energy, food and agriculture, biodiversity (with health and wellbeing). They talked how local business ventures that were interconnected with the local community were essentially 'anti-fragile' and resistant to outside forces. They argued for businesses 'de-globalising' to an extent and encouraging businesses to transition from seeking 'competitive advantages' in favour of 'community advantages.'

The presentation focused on 'Small-Medium Enterprises' and how they were both vital to the community yet most vulnerable to outside forces. It highlighted how important they were to private sector jobs, and how they were some of the main drivers of 'adaptation' within a community, albeit in ways that were not obvious to most people.

Small businesses having issues with staffing due to housing affordability making it hard for workers to live within a region was used as an example of real time pressures on both businesses and communities, and that Theorists and Academics needed "tools that actually show councils and investors the system benefits – not just what they currently see" in regards to both adapting to change and creating 'Positive feedback loops(that) can make things more profitable and reduce risk.' Mind you, 'profitable' was defined in a community

sense and not an economic one, as the presentation heavily encouraged small to medium business owners to de-prioritise 'financial incentives' in favour of more community focused approaches.

The case study they used was with 'Virtual energy networks' where local farms rather than selling their excess solar power back into the grid used it to subsidise the running costs of local 'high energy users' such as local cafes.

**ED6/26. Conference Report - Councillor Hollee Jenkins - 2025
Water Conference
Author: Executive Assistant**

FILE:
24/00441/012

Executive Summary

Councillor Hollee Jenkins attended the 2025 Water Conference in Albury from 9 to 11 September 2025. A copy of her report on the event is shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's information.

FOR INFORMATION

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Waterwise Conference Albury - Cr H Jenkins Report

Waterwise Conference Albury – September 2025

Councillor H Jenkins Report

Day 1: Regulatory Reform for Regional NSW Local Water Utilities

Prepared by NSW Water Directorate

Purpose

This presentation aimed to inform councillors about the current challenges facing Local Water Utilities (LWUs) in regional NSW, reform priorities, and recommended actions relating to the regulation, planning, and funding of these utilities.

Background

The NSW Water Directorate represents all 90 regional LWUs, responsible for delivering water and sewerage services to 1.9 million people and managing assets valued at \$32 billion. Over the past two decades, numerous reviews—including those by the Audit Office, Armstrong Gellatly, Aither, and the Productivity & Equality Commission—have consistently identified persistent issues in the areas of regulation, planning, and funding. Despite several reform attempts, the sector continues to face significant structural challenges, limiting its capacity to deliver safe, secure, and affordable services.

Key Issues for Councils

1. Regulatory Complexity
2. LWUs operate within overlapping regulatory frameworks such as IWCM, RAF, IP&R, and Section 60. Section 60 approvals remain slow and unclear, which delays essential infrastructure projects. New IWCM guidelines have been released while LWUs are still required to operate under the previous framework.
3. Strategic Planning Burden
4. Up to 60 LWUs must still complete IWCMs under the old system by 2026. Departmental capacity to assess the large volume of plans is limited, resulting in missed opportunities to integrate LWU planning into the IP&R cycle for another four years.
5. Financial Sustainability
6. Councils are constrained by rate pegging, which limits their ability to recover costs. Estimated funding gaps include \$5–10 billion to meet service levels and \$15 billion for asset renewals. Funding models for small and remote LWUs

remain unclear.

7. Workforce and Operational Risks
8. Small LWUs struggle to attract and retain skilled staff, increasing operational risks due to insufficient training and support.

Opportunities

There is growing recognition that a one-size-fits-all regulatory approach does not suit small councils. Successful pilot programs—such as Regional Leakage Reduction, Advanced Operational Support, workforce development, and micro-credentials—demonstrate value. Stronger regional collaboration is occurring through Joint Organisations, alliances, and county councils.

Reform Principles Supported by the Water Directorate

- Co-design of regulation with councils, rather than imposing it upon them
- Outcomes-focused regulation aligned with the NSW Guide to Better Regulation
- Adaptive planning, rather than rigid and deterministic plans
- Integration with IP&R to reduce duplication and improve accountability

Unfinished Business

- Review of the Safe and Secure Water Program remains incomplete
- The Regulatory and Assurance Framework requires revision
- A review of LWU powers under the Local Government Act is overdue
- The Government's response to PEC recommendations is still in its early stages

Recommended Actions for Councillors

- Advocate for reform or removal of Section 60 to streamline infrastructure approvals
- Support integration of LWU strategic planning into IP&R, reducing duplication and compliance burden
- Seek clarity on long-term funding models, including capital subsidies and operational support
- Promote regional collaboration through Joint Organisations, alliances, and shared services
- Encourage embedding of successful pilot programs into permanent support structures
- Request an independent review of regulatory performance across agencies
- Support a review of LWU powers and duties under the Local Government Act

Implications for Council

- Improved regulatory clarity and reduced administrative burden

- Faster delivery of essential water and sewerage infrastructure
- Better alignment between council planning and water utility planning
- Enhanced financial sustainability and workforce capability
- Stronger regional resilience and service reliability

Day 1 Afternoon: Current Status of the Local Water Utility Sector – Regulatory Update, Grant Programs, and Reform Activities

Purpose

To provide councillors with an overview of the current regulatory environment, key government programs, and sector reforms affecting LWUs, based on the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's (DCCEEW) latest update.

Background

The NSW Government continues to implement reforms and support programs to strengthen the performance, capability, and regulatory compliance of regional LWUs. The department's responsibilities include strategic planning assurance, infrastructure approvals, performance oversight, and administration of major grant programs.

Key Points

1. Regulatory Update
2. The department's regulatory functions underpin its support for LWUs in managing risks and delivering essential services. These functions include Strategic Planning Assurance (SPA), Section 60 Works Approvals, inspections and compliance monitoring, dividend payment oversight, trade waste regulation, and performance reporting. These activities aim to ensure safe, reliable, and sustainable water and sewerage services across regional NSW.
3. Regulatory & Assurance Framework (RAF) – Implementation Review
4. Sector consultation was held from 8 May to 17 June 2025, involving 34 LWUs, 54 individuals, interviews, feedback sessions, and an online survey. A report will be released in October 2025, focusing on implementation issues, with the next stage shifting to solutions development. A broader five-year review of the entire RAF will follow. Councillors should expect recommendations that may influence planning, reporting, and assurance obligations.
5. LWU Grant Programs
6. The department administers several major funding programs, including the Safe and Secure Water Program (SSWP), Yass Election Commitment, Drought Response Programs, Advanced Operational Support, Emergency Water Grants, National Water Grid, and Connections Pathways. Current focus

areas include extending SSWP “Up to Tender Ready” and “Strategic Planning” projects, updating funding deeds with clearer milestones, prioritising delivery within the financial year, and working closely with councils to ensure timely project outcomes.

7. SSWP Funding Status
8. All SSWP funding is fully committed based on estimated project costs. Projects must progress through gateway stages to secure subsequent funding. The program operates until 2028 or until all funds are contracted and delivered. Full project funding is not guaranteed, highlighting the importance of strong project management and timely progression.
9. Town Water Risk Reduction Program – Phase 3
10. This program runs through 2028 and includes Advanced Operational Support (on-site technical support for LWUs, \$2 million in grants for additional treatment plants), LWU sector reform (developing responses to PEC review of funding models), and Workforce Futures (implementing competency benchmarks and workforce strategies). These initiatives aim to strengthen operational capability and reduce risks to town water supplies.

Implications for Council

- Greater focus on regulatory compliance, especially around planning assurance and Section 60 approvals
- Need for robust internal project management to meet grant milestones and prevent funding lapses
- Potential changes to LWU funding models and regulatory obligations following upcoming RAF reviews
- Opportunities to access technical support and workforce development initiatives
- Requirement for advocacy around resources, staffing, and regional collaboration to meet new demands

Recommended Actions for Councillors

- Monitor progress of the council’s SSWP and other grant-funded projects to ensure milestones are achieved
- Seek briefings from staff regarding RAF review implications
- Support workforce development initiatives, including training and recruitment strategies
- Engage with the department during the next phase of RAF reform to ensure local needs are represented
- Promote regional collaboration to enhance capability and reduce risk exposure

Day 2 Morning: Regional Water Loss Management & Water Efficiency Program

Purpose

To brief councillors on the regional Water Loss Management & Efficiency Program, highlight its benefits, report on current progress, and outline opportunities for council participation and advocacy.

Background

Regional NSW is experiencing increasing pressure on town water supplies due to population growth, ageing infrastructure, staff shortages, and poor data quality. Up to 25% of treated water is lost as non-revenue water. The Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO), Western Councils Water Alliance (WCWA), and RAMJO partnered with DCCEEW to pilot a Regional Water Loss Management Hub, delivering a co-designed, regionally coordinated approach to reducing water loss and improving efficiency across 35 LWUs and one county council.

The Problem

- Water security risks
- Rising demand
- Ageing and damaged assets
- Financial sustainability challenges
- Limited skilled workforce
- Incomplete or inaccurate data

Optimising existing infrastructure is the most cost-effective way to save water, energy, and operational costs.

The Regional Solution

The pilot program introduced a structured, scalable model called “The Wedge”, supporting councils to embed water loss management into business-as-usual operations. Key features include recognition of LWU maturity levels, capability building through a Knowledge Hub, peer mentoring, regional collaboration, improved data and asset management, aggregated procurement for cost savings, readiness for state and federal funding, and reduced risk of regression through oversight and reporting.

Program Components

1. Local Council Steps
2. Councils move through a structured maturity pathway encompassing water system understanding, accurate data, asset management and verification, and planning for next steps. Activities include schematic diagrams, GIS

mapping, meter assessment, customer data cleansing, full water balance, and field verification.

3. Regional Support
4. Support is provided through monthly meetings of Regional Water Loss & Efficiency Champions, project officer assistance (“the Cogs”), shared procurement of equipment, regional reporting, automated data updates, and integration with DCCEEW programs.

Progress to Date

By August 2025, participating councils have completed maturity assessments, full water balances, system schematics and GIS maps, customer data and meter assessments, and asset management and field verification, representing a significant uplift in capability and readiness.

Value for Money

Independent analysis found the CNSWJO pilot delivered excellent value for money, with a Benefit–Cost Ratio of 9.98.

Incentivisation & Collaboration

State-funded alliance programs such as the Bridges Assessment have delivered lower costs, more assets assessed, less bureaucracy, and a small income stream for the region. Aggregated procurement has achieved 30% savings across 15 councils. The Productivity & Equality Commission recommends testing the alliance model, funding incentives for collaboration, flexible place-based program design, targeted funding, and optimising existing regional structures.

Opportunities for Council

- Endorse participation in the Regional Water Loss & Efficiency Program to strengthen water security, reduce operating costs, and improve asset management
- Support integration of water loss management into business-as-usual to ensure long-term sustainability and reduce consultant reliance
- Advocate for state funding incentives to support regional collaboration and reduce financial burden on small councils
- Leverage aggregated procurement for cost savings and better technology access
- Use the Knowledge Hub for workforce development to build internal capability and reduce vulnerability to staff turnover

Implications for Council

- Improved water security and service reliability
- Reduced water loss and operational costs
- Better data for decision-making and stronger regional collaboration

- Increased eligibility for future funding and enhanced community confidence in water stewardship

Day 2 Afternoon: NSW Government Response to PEC Review of Funding Models for LWUs

Purpose

To inform councillors of the NSW Government's response to the Productivity and Equality Commission (PEC) Review of Funding Models for Local Water Utilities, and outline the implications for councils over the next two years.

Background

The PEC Review (July 2024) examined how NSW funds regional LWUs and recommended major reforms to improve sustainability, efficiency, and equity. The Government's formal response was released on 28 August 2025. A two-year policy design phase (FY25/26–FY26/27) is now underway, featuring extensive engagement across the sector.

Key Findings of the PEC Review

- Shift from project-based capital grants to a predictable, needs-based funding system
- Develop a new LWU Funding Policy with clear principles
- Introduce a Community Service Obligation (CSO) mechanism to support LWUs unable to fully recover costs for basic service levels
- Improve regulation, especially strategic planning, pricing, and minimum service standards
- Create a Sector Priorities Plan to guide investment over 1–4 years
- Review customer affordability supports, including pensioner rebates
- Explore structural and delivery model improvements, particularly for Western NSW

NSW Government Response

- Broad support for PEC recommendations and funding principles
- Considering a shift to CSO-based funding (pending further analysis and budget decisions)
- Strengthening regulation of strategic planning and pricing
- Reviewing affordability support schemes, including pensioner rebates
- Working with Western NSW LWUs on governance, capability, and structural options

Parallel Reform Work

- Improvements to sector performance and efficiency
- Enhancements to strategic planning requirements
- Measures to support LWUs' own-source revenue capacity

Implementation Timeline

1. FY25/26 – Year 1
2. Develop an LWU Investment Framework (CSO options, minimum standards, methods for assessing expenditure and revenue)
3. Review customer affordability schemes
4. Begin work on water security service level standards and undertake a statewide stocktake
5. Begin Western NSW strategic planning gap analysis and co-design a support program
6. FY26/27 – Year 2
7. Continue detailed policy design
8. Prepare for implementation of new funding and regulatory arrangements from FY28/29
9. Develop the first Sector Priorities Plan
10. Implement strategic planning support programs in Western NSW

Stakeholder Engagement

- Government Agencies Review Panel for strategic oversight
- Stakeholder Working Groups for broad reform input
- Stakeholder Focus Groups for targeted policy design
- General sector consultation through workshops, submissions, and tailored engagement

Councils will have multiple opportunities to contribute to these processes.

Implications for Our Council

- Potential shift to CSO-based funding may offer more predictable support but requires evidence of efficient costs and revenue constraints
- Increased expectations for strategic planning aligned with minimum service standards
- More formalised pricing, service levels, and compliance obligations
- Possible changes to affordability settings, including pensioner rebates
- Early engagement will help shape reforms and ensure council needs are considered

Recommended Actions for Councillors

- Monitor reform progress and request regular updates from staff
- Support investment in strategic planning capability, including asset management, financial modelling, and water security planning

- Engage proactively with NSW Government consultation processes
- Consider future financial implications, including changes to revenue, pricing, and service obligations

Day 3 Morning: PFAS Detection and Interim Treatment Response at Cascade Water Filtration Plant

Prepared by Blue Mountains Council

Purpose

This presentation informed councillors about the detection of PFAS in the Cascade Water Filtration Plant (WFP) supply, Sydney Water's immediate and interim response, customer impacts, and the status of water quality and treatment performance.

Background

In mid-2024, updated international and draft Australian guidelines significantly reduced acceptable PFAS levels in drinking water. Sydney Water's routine sampling (June 2024) and WaterNSW exploratory sampling (July 2024) detected elevated PFAS levels in raw water sources. Australian Drinking Water Guidelines were updated in June 2025, confirming much lower limits for PFOS, PFOA, and PFHxS. Cascade WFP lacked PFAS treatment capability at the time.

Key Issues

1. PFAS Levels and Regulatory Change
2. New guideline values are much lower (PFOS 8 ng/L; PFOA 200 ng/L). PFAS detected in Cascade raw water exceeded these values, necessitating urgent action.
3. Customer and Community Impact
4. High community concern resulted in 130 enquiries, 82 complaints, 12 letters to the Minister, two to Sydney Water, and 65 media enquiries. Five community drop-in sessions were held (Sept–Oct 2024). PFAS results were published weekly for transparency. Federal and NSW Parliamentary inquiries took place in early 2025.
5. Risk Assessment
6. Sydney Water identified a very high reputational risk and potential public health risk from long-term exposure if PFAS levels remained above guidelines.

Sydney Water's Response

- Immediate isolation of affected dams (Medlow and Greaves Creek)
- Increased supply from Orchard Hills WFP to reduce reliance on Cascade WFP
- Conversion of one filter to granular activated carbon (GAC) for PFAS removal testing
- Adjusted system balance so Cascade WFP supplied only the upper Blue Mountains
- Strict sampling regime and expanded monitoring
- Continued community engagement and public reporting

Interim Treatment Implementation

Rapid procurement and installation of an ECT2 PFAS treatment system at Cascade WFP included GAC for organic carbon removal and ion exchange (IX) for PFAS removal. Four treatment trains were installed, providing 4–6 ML/day capacity, and commissioned in December 2024 with NSW Health and WaterNSW oversight. SCADA integration allows real-time monitoring and control.

Outcomes

- PFOS levels in treated water have significantly decreased
- PFAS levels at Katoomba and Blackheath reservoirs are now well below updated guidelines
- The system is operating reliably, with additional filters supporting the new treatment trains
- Sydney Water is planning for medium- and long-term PFAS treatment solutions

Key Learnings

- Early identification of regulatory and operational risks enabled rapid response
- Collaboration across agencies was critical
- Leveraging existing assets reduced cost and delivery time
- Regular project meetings and defined hold points ensured safe commissioning
- The model demonstrates effective utility response to emerging contaminants

Implications for Council

- Water supplied to the upper Blue Mountains complies with updated PFAS guidelines
- Ongoing monitoring and reporting will continue
- Councillors may receive further community enquiries and can respond with the facts presented here
- Future investment decisions by Sydney Water may require council engagement

Recommendation

Councillors are advised to note the actions taken by Sydney Water to address PFAS contamination at Cascade WFP and the successful commissioning of the interim treatment system, which has restored compliance with updated drinking water guidelines.

Day 3 Afternoon: Cyclone Alfred – Boil Water Alerts Response, Issues and Lessons Learned

Prepared for Tweed Shire Councillors

Date: [Insert Date]

Purpose

To brief councillors on the sequence of events, decision-making, communications challenges, and key lessons arising from the Boil Water Alerts (BWAs) issued during Cyclone Alfred.

Background

Cyclone Alfred led to widespread power outages in the Tweed water supply network, causing loss of pressure, reservoir depletion, and multiple mains breaks. These conditions posed a significant risk of contamination, prompting the issuance of Boil Water Alerts.

Boil Water Alerts Issued

- BWA #1 – Bilambil Heights
- Issued Friday 7 March, 9:07pm
- Decision at 7:30pm due to complete loss of pressure, empty reservoir, unknown break location, and power outages
- NSW Health approval at 8:50pm; public release at 9:07pm
- Communications hampered by limited power and connectivity; reliant on radio, Starlink, and SMS

BWA #2 – Terranora & Parts of Banora Point

Issued Saturday 8 March, 2:42pm

Decision between 1:30–2:30pm due to empty reservoirs, widespread breaks, and inability to maintain positive pressure

NSW Health prompt approval; public release at 2:42pm

Communications Timeline & Issues

- Multiple requests for geo-targeted SMS alerts were made but initially declined, as BWAs were not considered “immediate life-threatening emergencies” by state agencies
- Delays resulted in a 46-hour gap between BWA #1 and the first correct SMS, and a 28-hour gap for BWA #2
- Initial SMS contained errors (incorrect area, no links); final corrected SMS issued Sunday 9 March, 6:59pm
- Delays and inaccuracies led to resident confusion, increased calls to emergency services, and pressure on council communications

Affected Population

Area	Properties	Estimated Population
Bilambil Heights	1,390	3,614
Terranora	1,361	3,538
Banora Point (affected areas only)	741	1,926
Total	3,492	9,078

Note: The whole-of-Banora Point population is approximately 17,000, including major medical and aged-care facilities, emphasising the need for accurate geographic targeting.

Key Issues Identified

1. SMS Criteria and Escalation Pathways
2. Current state criteria do not recognise BWAs as urgent public health risks. There is a lack of clarity on escalation processes for local authorities.
3. Communications Under Infrastructure Failure
4. Power and telecommunications outages severely limited council's ability to communicate. Reliance on external agencies created bottlenecks.
5. Accuracy of Messaging
6. Initial SMS messages contained geographic errors and lacked links, causing confusion. There is a need for pre-approved templates and clearer workflows.
7. System Vulnerability
8. Loss of power to pumping stations created cascading failures across the network, with reservoir depletion occurring rapidly and little time for preventative communication.

Lessons Learned

- Advocate for BWAs to be recognised as public health emergencies eligible for immediate geo-targeted SMS
- Develop and pre-clear SMS templates with NSW Health and emergency agencies
- Establish clear escalation pathways for urgent public health messaging

- Expand use of satellite communications and local broadcast channels during outages
- Review power backup arrangements for critical infrastructure
- Increase public education about BWAs and appropriate responses

Next Steps / Recommendations for Councillors

- Support advocacy to NSW Government for updated SMS criteria and improved emergency communications protocols
- Endorse a review of council's emergency communications capability
- Endorse a technical review of water network resilience under prolonged power loss
- Consider resources for additional backup power systems and enhanced community engagement

Thank you to Singleton councillors for allowing me to represent them at such a worthwhile conference.

Cr H Jenkins

**ED7/26. Councillor Expenses & Facilities - 01/07/2025 to
31/12/2025**
Author: Governance Lead

FILE: 21/00172

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide details of expenditure in accordance with the Councillors Expenses & Facilities Policy for the six months from 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025.

FOR INFORMATION

The Councillors Expenses & Facilities Policy requires that detailed reports on the provision of expenses and facilities to Councillors be publicly tabled at a Council meeting every six months and published in full on Council's website. Details including expenditure summarised by individual Councillor and totals for all Councillors for expenses received from 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025 are shown as **Attachment 1**.

In addition, Council will report on the provision of expenses and facilities to Councillors annually in the Annual Report as required by the Local Government Act and Regulations.

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Councillor Expenses - 1 July to 31 December 2025

	Professional Development	Seminars and conferences	Mayoral allowance	Councillor fees	Interstate and International travel	Accommodation	Meals	Carer exp	Information technology	Motor vehicle allowance	Superannuation	General travel exp	Telephone allowance	Corporate wardrobe	Total
Cr Jenkins		1,312.26		11,610.00							1,393.20	2,145.23	240.00		16,700.69
Cr George		1,336.36		11,610.00							1,393.20	136.65	240.00		14,716.21
Cr McLachlan				11,610.00				427.50			1,393.20		240.00		13,670.70
Cr D Thompson				11,610.00							1,393.20		240.00		13,243.20
Cr P Thompson		1,320.45		11,610.00							1,393.20		240.00		14,563.65
Cr Adamthwaite				11,610.00							1,393.20	161.30	240.00		13,424.50
Cr McGowan		155.00		11,610.00							1,393.20		240.00		13,398.20
Cr Watson		1,578.18		11,610.00			95.45				1,393.20		240.00		14,916.83
Cr Yeomans				5,265.00									240.00		5,505.00
Cr Moore		301.76	25,339.98	11,610.00			(97.95)			11,275.02	5,787.00	2,510.60	240.00		56,966.41
Total	0.00	6,004.01	25,339.98	109,755.00	0.00	0.00	(2.50)	427.50	0.00	11,275.02	16,932.60	4,973.78	2,400.00	0.00	177,105.39

7. Investment Report - December 2025**FILE:** 25/00405**Author:** Finance Officer - Treasury
Chief Financial Officer**Executive Summary**

In accordance with clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation, 2021* the following funds are invested under section 625 of the *Local Government Act, 1993* as at 31 December 2025.

FOR COUNCIL'S INFORMATION**Report**

For the last 12 months to 31 December 2025, the investment portfolio returned 6.26% versus the bank bill index benchmark's 3.97%.

Council's total portfolio of investments was \$128.105 million with an additional \$5.241 million held in Council's operational account, as of 31 December 2025.

Without marked-to-market influences, Council's investment portfolio yielded 4.27% pa for the month. This is based on the actual interest rates being received on investments and excludes the underlying changes to the market values of the bonds and TCorp growth fund.

During December, Council had \$8.0m in deposits mature and Council invested a total of \$6.0m during the month. These new investments are detailed in the following table:

Amount	Investment Type	Period	Rate
\$2,000,000	Term Deposit	336 Days	4.53%
\$2,000,000	Term Deposit	365 Days	4.47%
\$2,000,000	Term Deposit	336 Days	4.62%

The NSW TCorpIM Long Term Growth Fund recorded a gain of +0.35%(actual) for the month of December. This result is reflective of solid returns in equity markets, along with further rises in long-term interest rates, which impacted the market value of Council's directly held bonds and those in the NSW TCorp Long Term Growth Fund.

Council has a well-diversified portfolio invested predominantly among a range of term deposits and senior ranked bonds from highly rated Australian bank issuers. Council also has exposure to growth classes, including listed property and international and domestic shares, via NSW TCorp's Long Term Growth Fund. It is expected that Council's portfolio will achieve above benchmark returns over the medium/long term with prudent investment selection and holding the securities for the recommended time horizons of their asset classes. However, short-term fluctuations should be expected.

The TCorpIM Long Term Fund's investment strategy is to provide high exposure to growth assets, with a high return potential over the long term, with a high risk of negative annual returns. The investment object is to provide returns of CPI +3.5% pa over rolling 10-year

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items for Information) - DCCS7/26

periods. Council's investment in TCorp's IM Funds (long-term) is 26% of its portfolio. Council can therefore expect some fluctuations to its portfolio returns.

The size of the investment portfolio varies from month to month as a result of cash flow for the period. Cash outflows (expenditure) are typically relatively stable from one month to another. Cash inflows (income) are cyclical and are largely dependent on the rates instalment due dates and the timing of grant payments, including receipts of the Financial Assistance Grant.

Attachment 1 to this report provides Council's Investment Summary Report for December 2025.

Certification by the Responsible Accounting Officer:

In accordance with clause 212(1)(b) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation, 2021* the investments listed in this report have been made in accordance with:

- i) the *Local Government Act, 1993*
- ii) the Regulations, and
- iii) Council's Investment Policy.

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Singleton Investment Report - December 2025



**Investment Summary Report
December 2025**



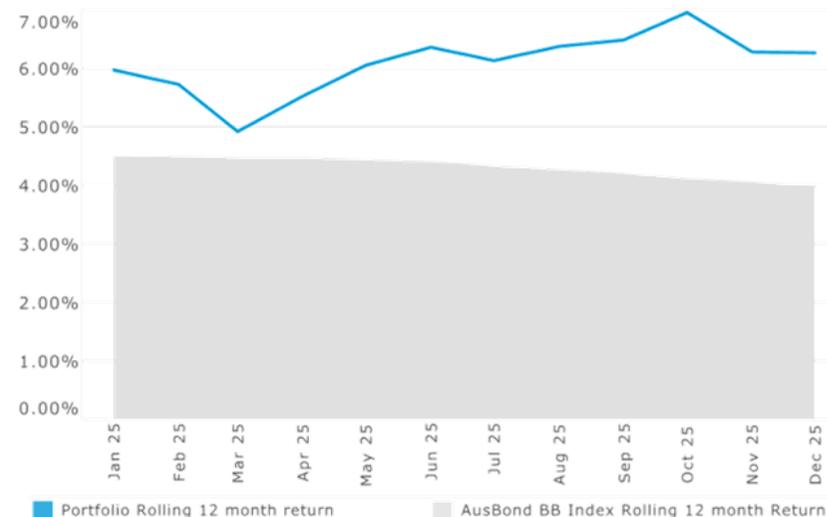
Singleton Council

Executive Summary - December 2025

Investment Holdings

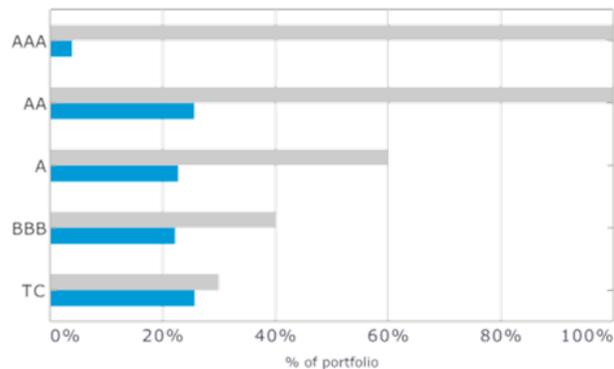
	Face Value (\$)	Current Value (\$)
Bonds	7,000,000	6,969,250
Cash	6,207,853	6,207,853
Floating Rate Note	36,050,000	36,185,092
Managed Funds	32,847,691	32,847,691
Term Deposit	46,000,000	46,000,000
	128,105,544	128,209,886

Investment Performance

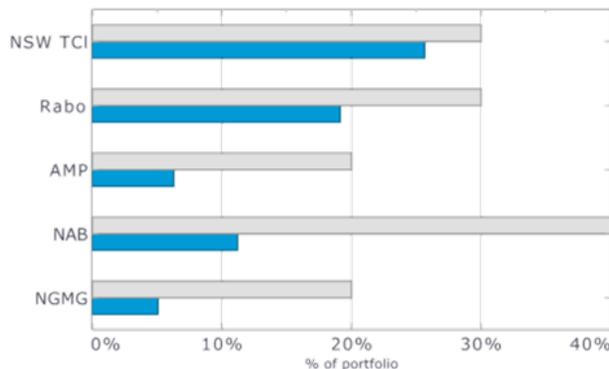


Investment Policy Compliance

Total Credit Exposure



Individual Institutional Exposures



Term to Maturities

	Face Value (\$)	Policy Max
Between 0 and 1 years	99,255,544	77% 100% ✓
Between 1 and 10 years	28,850,000	23% 80% ✓
	128,105,544	

Specific Sub Limits

Between 3 and 10 years	8,900,000	7% 50% ✓
Between 5 and 10 years	0	0% 25% ✓

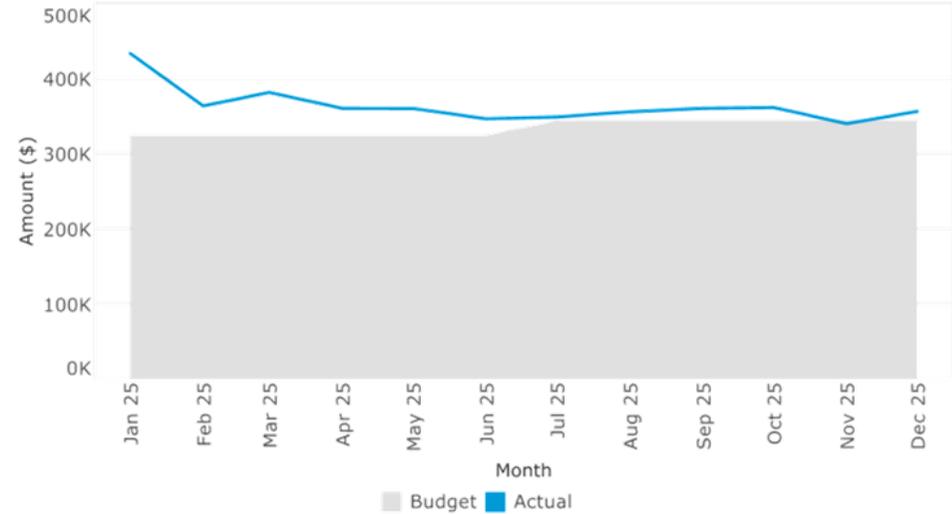
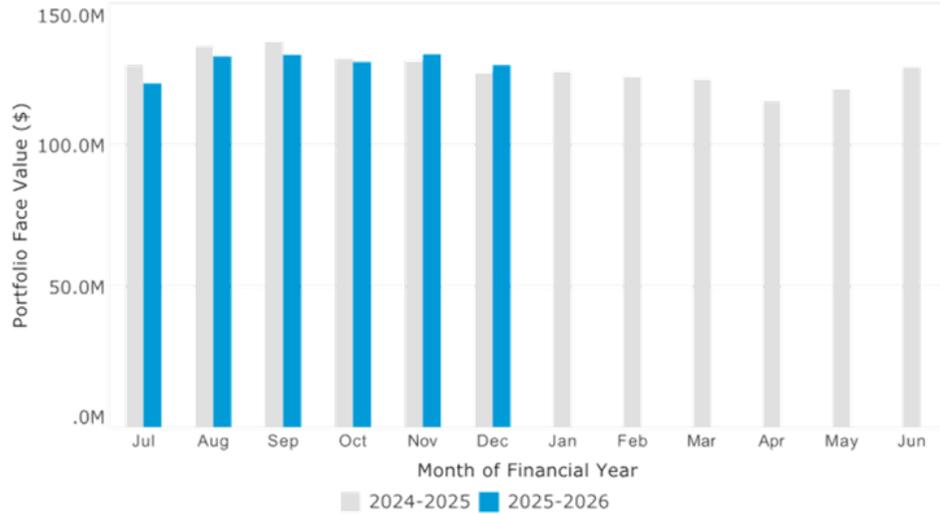
■ Portfolio Exposure ■ Investment Policy Limit

Singleton Council

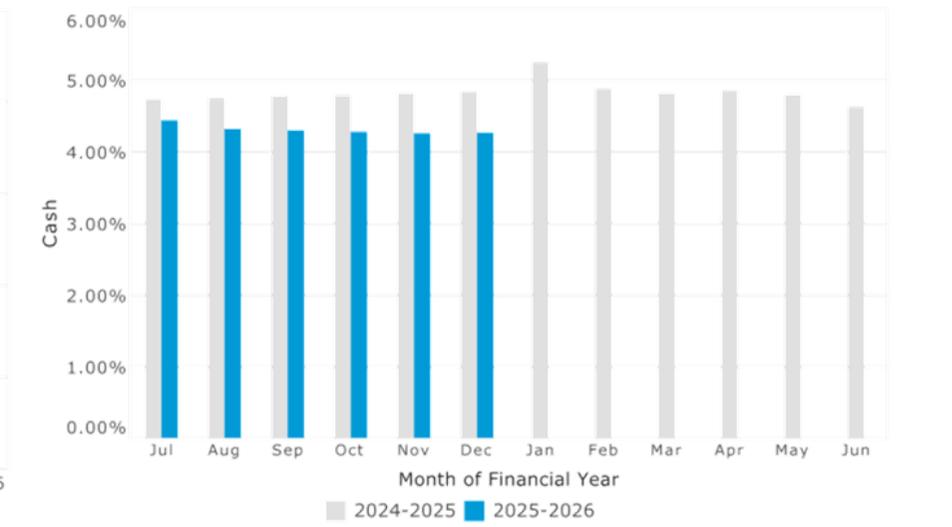
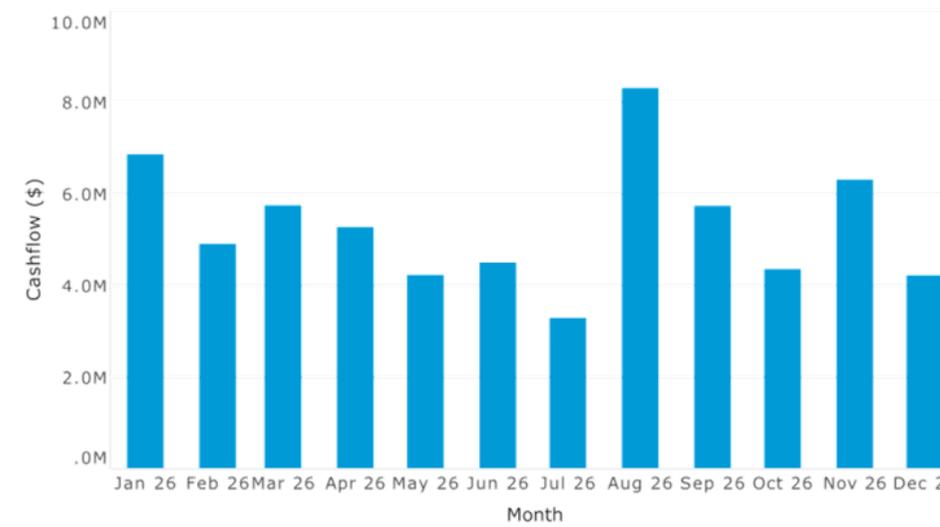
Executive Summary - December 2025



Historical Portfolio Balance | **Interest Earned Rolling 12 months**



Upcoming Investment Cashflow Summary | **Weighted Average Return**



Singleton Council

Investment Holdings Report - December 2025



Cash Accounts

Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Reference
1,259,147.15	4.2500%	AMP Bank	BBB+	1,259,147.15	540079	31d Notice
1,989,801.54	3.9000%	Macquarie Bank	A+	1,989,801.54	540145	Accelerator
2,958,904.49	3.7000%	National Australia Bank	AA-	2,958,904.49	546234	Prof Acct
6,207,853.18	3.8757%			6,207,853.18		

Managed Funds

Face Value (\$)	Monthly Return (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Funds Name	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Reference
32,847,690.73	0.3477%	NSW T-Corp (LT)	TCI	Long Term Growth Fund	32,847,690.73	544559	
32,847,690.73	0.3477%				32,847,690.73		

Term Deposits

Maturity Date	Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Purchase Price (\$)	Purchase Date	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest (\$)	Next Interest Date	Reference
8-Jan-26	500,000.00	4.3000%	AMP Bank	BBB+	500,000.00	6-Aug-25	508,717.81	546308	8,717.81	At Maturity	
8-Jan-26	1,000,000.00	4.7500%	Bank of Queensland	A-	1,000,000.00	20-Mar-25	1,037,349.32	545941	37,349.32	At Maturity	
13-Jan-26	3,000,000.00	4.3000%	AMP Bank	BBB+	3,000,000.00	12-Aug-25	3,050,186.30	546330	50,186.30	At Maturity	
29-Jan-26	2,000,000.00	4.9500%	AMP Bank	BBB+	2,000,000.00	29-Jan-25	2,091,405.48	545757	91,405.48	At Maturity	
5-Feb-26	500,000.00	4.3000%	Rabobank Australia	A	500,000.00	6-Aug-25	508,717.81	546307	8,717.81	At Maturity	
5-Feb-26	2,000,000.00	4.4500%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	9-Jul-25	2,042,915.07	546249	42,915.07	At Maturity	
10-Feb-26	2,000,000.00	4.3400%	Suncorp Bank	AA-	2,000,000.00	11-Jun-25	2,048,512.88	546156	48,512.88	At Maturity	
19-Mar-26	2,000,000.00	4.2700%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	5-Jun-25	2,049,134.25	546135	49,134.25	At Maturity	
26-Mar-26	1,000,000.00	4.1500%	Westpac Group	AA-	1,000,000.00	28-Aug-25	1,014,326.03	546390	14,326.03	At Maturity	
8-Apr-26	2,000,000.00	4.7500%	National Australia Bank	AA-	2,000,000.00	7-Feb-25	2,085,369.86	545780	85,369.86	Annually	
16-Apr-26	1,000,000.00	4.2000%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	4-Sep-25	1,013,693.15	546423	13,693.15	At Maturity	
30-Apr-26	2,000,000.00	4.1500%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	5-Jun-25	2,047,753.42	546136	47,753.42	At Maturity	
7-May-26	2,000,000.00	4.3000%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	8-Oct-25	2,020,027.40	546661	20,027.40	At Maturity	
21-May-26	2,000,000.00	4.2700%	Suncorp Bank	AA-	2,000,000.00	16-Jun-25	2,046,560.55	546169	46,560.55	At Maturity	

Singleton Council

Investment Holdings Report - December 2025



Maturity Date	Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Purchase Price (\$)	Purchase Date	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest (\$)	Next Interest Date	Reference
4-Jun-26	1,000,000.00	4.2500%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	1-Aug-25	1,017,815.07	546297	17,815.07	At Maturity	
11-Jun-26	1,000,000.00	4.3600%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	13-Nov-25	1,005,853.15	546839	5,853.15	At Maturity	
9-Jul-26	1,000,000.00	4.2000%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	19-Jun-25	1,022,553.42	546183	22,553.42	Annually	
23-Jul-26	2,000,000.00	4.0800%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	26-Jun-25	2,042,253.15	546209	42,253.15	Annually	
6-Aug-26	2,000,000.00	4.1800%	National Australia Bank	AA-	2,000,000.00	4-Sep-25	2,027,255.89	546422	27,255.89	Annually	
13-Aug-26	1,000,000.00	4.1300%	Westpac Group	AA-	1,000,000.00	22-Aug-25	1,014,935.89	546375	14,935.89	At Maturity	
10-Sep-26	1,000,000.00	4.2300%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	9-Jul-25	1,020,396.71	546250	20,396.71	Annually	
23-Sep-26	1,000,000.00	4.1000%	National Australia Bank	AA-	1,000,000.00	24-Jul-25	1,018,084.93	546285	18,084.93	Annually	
23-Sep-26	2,000,000.00	4.2000%	National Australia Bank	AA-	2,000,000.00	10-Sep-25	2,026,005.48	546463	26,005.48	Annually	
5-Nov-26	2,000,000.00	4.5300%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	4-Dec-25	2,006,950.14	546913	6,950.14	At Maturity	
12-Nov-26	2,000,000.00	4.6200%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	11-Dec-25	2,005,316.16	546936	5,316.16	At Maturity	
26-Nov-26	2,000,000.00	4.0800%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	26-Jun-25	2,042,253.15	546210	42,253.15	Annually	
2-Dec-26	2,000,000.00	4.4700%	Westpac Group	AA-	2,000,000.00	2-Dec-25	2,007,347.95	546908	7,347.95	At Maturity	
10-Dec-26	1,000,000.00	4.2300%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	9-Jul-25	1,020,396.71	546251	20,396.71	Annually	
25-Mar-27	2,000,000.00	3.9500%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	26-Jun-25	2,040,906.85	546211	40,906.85	Annually	
	46,000,000.00	4.3257%			46,000,000.00		46,882,993.98		882,993.98		

Floating Rate Notes

Maturity Date	Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Security Name	Credit Rating	Purchase Price (\$)	Purchase Date	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest (\$)	Next Coupon Date	Reference
4-Mar-26	2,500,000.00	4.3058%	NPBS Snr FRN (Mar26) BBSW+0.63%	BBB+	2,500,000.00	4-Mar-21	2,508,804.50	540982	8,257.70	4-Mar-26	
15-Sep-26	1,500,000.00	4.1920%	SUN Snr FRN (Sep26) BBSW+0.48%	AA-	1,500,000.00	15-Sep-21	1,503,648.66	541879	2,928.66	16-Mar-26	
23-Oct-26	1,200,000.00	5.0994%	GSB Snr FRN (Oct26) BBSW+1.60%	BBB+	1,200,000.00	23-Jan-24	1,220,946.81	544801	11,735.61	23-Jan-26	
27-Oct-26	1,000,000.00	4.3025%	BoQ Snr FRN (Oct26) BBSW+0.80%	A-	1,000,000.00	21-Oct-21	1,010,389.86	542004	7,779.86	27-Jan-26	
30-Oct-26	2,000,000.00	5.1491%	BOz Snr FRN (Oct26) BBSW+1.50%	BBB+	2,020,540.00	7-Jun-24	2,030,396.98	545154	17,774.98	30-Jan-26	
23-Dec-26	1,000,000.00	4.1398%	CBA Green Snr FRN (Dec26) BBSW+0.41%	AA-	1,000,000.00	23-Sep-21	1,001,180.77	541918	1,020.77	23-Mar-26	
14-Jan-27	2,000,000.00	4.2593%	CBA Snr FRN (Jan27) BBSW+0.70%	AA-	2,000,000.00	14-Jan-22	2,024,117.52	542237	18,437.52	14-Jan-26	
25-Jan-27	1,000,000.00	4.2025%	WBC Snr FRN (Jan27) BBSW+0.70%	AA-	1,000,000.00	25-Jan-22	1,010,429.04	542257	7,599.04	26-Jan-26	

Singleton Council

Investment Holdings Report - December 2025



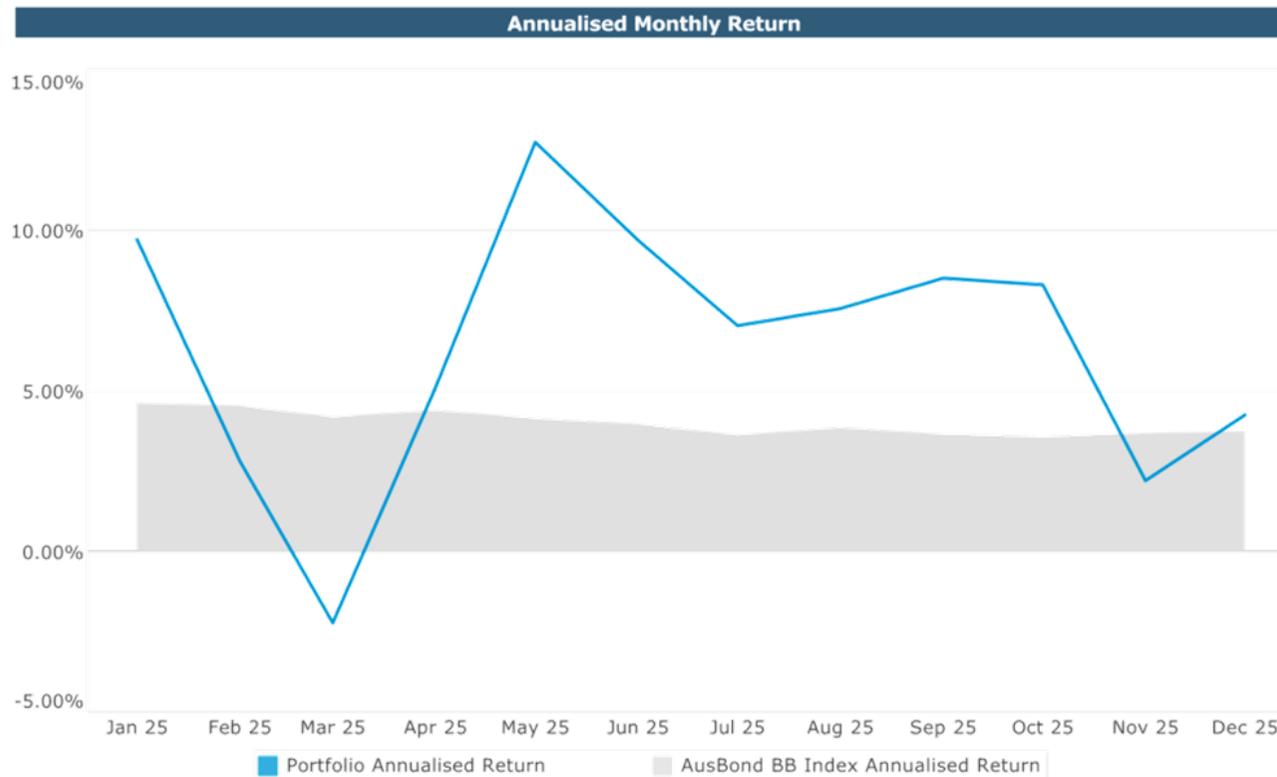
Maturity Date	Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Security Name	Credit Rating	Purchase Price (\$)	Purchase Date	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest (\$)	Next Coupon Date	Reference
25-Jan-27	1,800,000.00	4.2825%	SUN Snr FRN (Jan27) BBSW+0.78%	AA-	1,800,000.00	25-Jan-22	1,819,410.66	542262	13,938.66	26-Jan-26	
8-Feb-27	1,400,000.00	5.2448%	HPC Snr FRN (Feb27) BBSW+1.60%	BBB+	1,400,000.00	8-Feb-24	1,423,242.86	544823	10,460.86	9-Feb-26	
10-Feb-27	1,000,000.00	4.6448%	NPBS Snr FRN (Feb27) BBSW+1.00%	BBB+	996,250.00	28-May-24	1,009,587.25	545104	6,617.25	10-Feb-26	
14-May-27	600,000.00	4.6549%	BEN Snr FRN (May27) BBSW+1.00%	A-	600,000.00	14-May-24	607,002.91	545078	3,672.91	16-Feb-26	
21-Jun-27	1,000,000.00	5.0275%	TMB Snr FRN (Jun27) BBSW+1.30%	BBB+	1,000,000.00	21-Jun-24	1,009,777.40	545188	1,377.40	23-Mar-26	
13-Sep-27	1,000,000.00	5.0420%	AusW Snr FRN (Sep27) BBSW+1.33%	Baa2	1,000,000.00	13-Sep-24	1,002,348.33	545463	2,348.33	13-Mar-26	
13-Sep-27	1,300,000.00	4.9820%	AMP Snr FRN (Sep27) BBSW+1.27%	BBB+	1,300,000.00	13-Sep-24	1,310,673.50	545482	3,016.50	13-Mar-26	
14-Dec-27	1,100,000.00	4.9620%	SUN Snr FRN (Dec27) BBSW+1.25%	AA-	1,100,000.00	14-Dec-22	1,116,127.18	543634	2,542.18	16-Mar-26	
15-May-28	1,500,000.00	5.1549%	MMB Snr FRN (May28) BBSW+1.50%	BBB	1,500,000.00	14-May-25	1,510,168.57	546024	10,168.57	16-Feb-26	
3-Oct-28	1,500,000.00	4.5350%	TMB Snr FRN (Oct28) BBSW+0.95%	BBB+	1,500,000.00	1-Oct-25	1,516,593.29	546598	16,773.29	5-Jan-26	
3-Nov-28	2,000,000.00	4.5650%	GSB Snr FRN (Nov28) BBSW+0.93%	BBB+	2,000,000.00	3-Nov-25	2,012,427.78	546745	14,758.08	3-Feb-26	
27-Nov-28	750,000.00	4.6978%	BOz Snr FRN (Nov28) BBSW+1.03%	BBB+	750,000.00	27-Nov-25	752,672.05	546852	3,378.55	27-Feb-26	
22-Mar-29	2,000,000.00	4.6275%	NAB Snr FRN (Mar29) BBSW+0.90%	AA-	2,000,000.00	15-Mar-24	2,016,773.62	544957	2,535.62	23-Mar-26	
5-Nov-29	1,500,000.00	4.6949%	HPC Snr FRN (Nov29) BBSW+1.05%	BBB+	1,500,000.00	5-Nov-25	1,511,867.64	546771	10,997.64	5-Feb-26	
21-Jan-30	3,000,000.00	4.7440%	NPBS Snr FRN (Jan30) BBSW+1.25%	BBB+	3,023,670.00	18-Aug-25	3,051,834.08	546339	28,074.08	21-Jan-26	
18-Mar-30	2,400,000.00	4.5520%	NAB Snr FRN (Mar30) BBSW+0.83%	AA-	2,400,000.00	18-Mar-25	2,415,055.13	545902	4,190.33	18-Mar-26	
	36,050,000.00	4.6538%			36,090,460.00		36,395,476.39		210,384.39		

Fixed Rate Bonds

Maturity Date	Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Security Name	Credit Rating	Purchase Price (\$)	Purchase Date	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest (\$)	Purchase Yield	Reference
15-Jun-26	2,000,000.00	1.0000%	NT T-Corp Bond (Jun26) 1.00%	Aa3	2,000,000.00	12-Feb-21	2,010,934.07	541004	10,934.07	1.00000%	
24-Aug-26	5,000,000.00	3.2500%	SUN Cov Bond (Aug26) 3.25%	AAA	5,527,000.00	28-Apr-21	5,026,524.59	541284	57,274.59	1.30500%	
	7,000,000.00	2.6071%			7,527,000.00		7,037,458.66		68,208.66	1.2179%	

Singleton Council

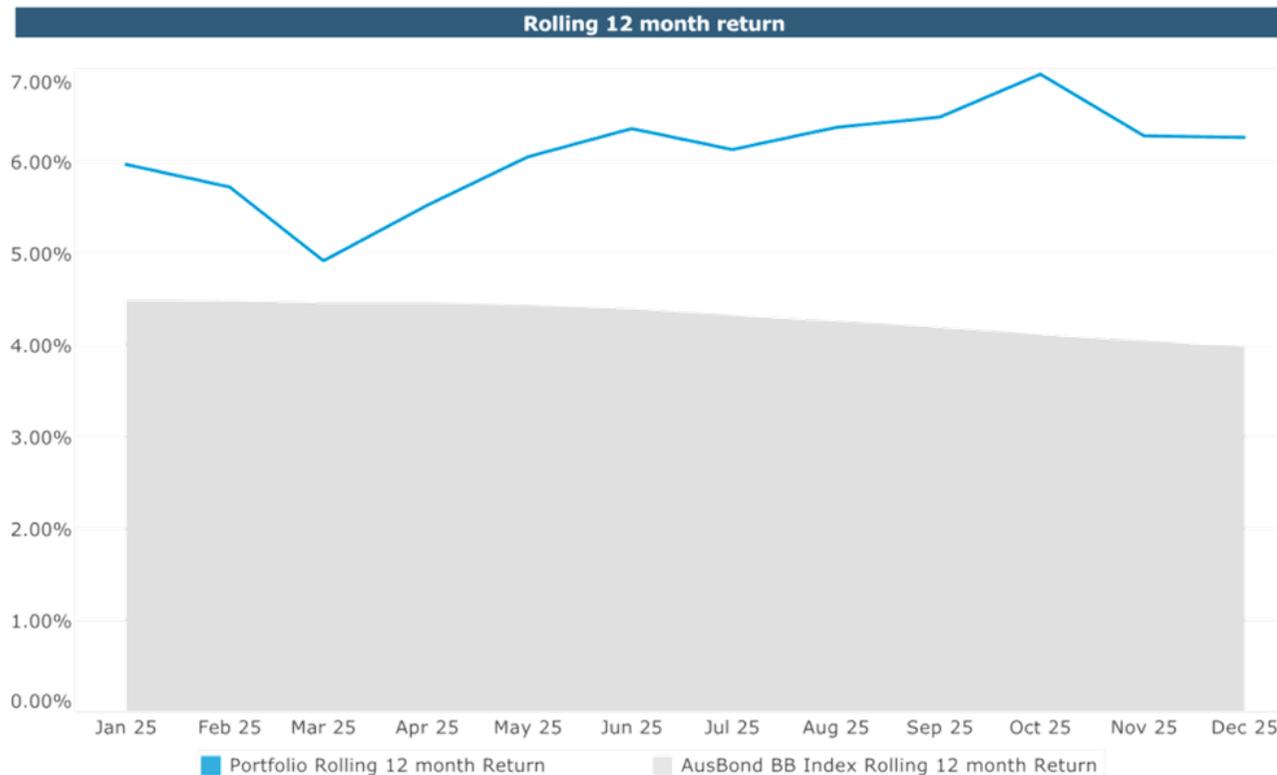
Investment Performance Report - December 2025



Historical Performance Summary (%pa)			
	Portfolio	Annualised BB Index	Outperformance
Dec 2025	4.25%	3.71%	0.54%
Last 3 months	4.92%	3.64%	1.28%
Last 6 months	6.29%	3.66%	2.63%
Financial Year to Date	6.29%	3.66%	2.63%
Last 12 months	6.26%	3.97%	2.29%

Singleton Council

Investment Performance Report - December 2025

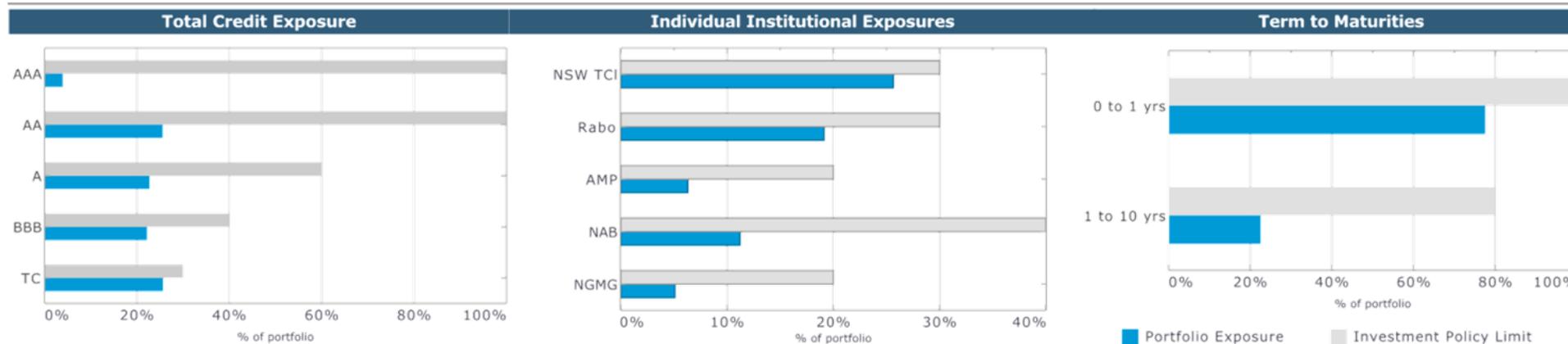


Historical Performance Summary (% actual)			
	Portfolio	Annualised BB Index	Outperformance
Dec 2025	0.35%	0.31%	0.04%
Last 3 months	1.22%	0.90%	0.32%
Last 6 months	3.12%	1.83%	1.29%
Financial Year to Date	3.12%	1.83%	1.29%
Last 12 months	6.26%	3.97%	2.29%



Singleton Council

Investment Policy Compliance Report - December 2025



Credit Rating Group	Face Value (\$)	% of Portfolio	Policy Max	Compliance
AAA	5,000,000	4%	100%	✓
AA	32,758,904	26%	100%	✓
A	29,089,802	23%	60%	✓
BBB	28,409,147	22%	40%	✓
TC	32,847,691	26%	30%	✓
Total	128,105,544			

Institution	% of Portfolio	Investment Policy Limit	Compliance
NSW T-Corp (TCI)	26%	30%	✓
Rabobank Australia (A)	19%	30%	✓
AMP Bank (BBB+)	6%	20%	✓
National Australia Bank (AA-)	11%	40%	✓
Newcastle Greater Mutual Group (BBB+)	5%	20%	✓
Suncorp Bank (AA-)	7%	40%	✓
Great Southern Bank (BBB+)	3%	20%	✓
Heritage and People's Choice (BBB+)	2%	20%	✓
Bank Australia (BBB+)	2%	20%	✓
Teachers Mutual Bank (BBB+)	2%	20%	✓
Westpac Group (AA-)	4%	40%	✓
Suncorp Bank Covered (AAA)	4%	40%	✓
Maitland Mutual Limited (BBB)	1%	20%	✓

Term	Face Value (\$)	% of Portfolio	Policy Max	Compliance
Between 0 and 1 years	99,255,544	77%	100%	✓
Between 1 and 10 years	28,850,000	23%	80%	✓
Total	128,105,544			

Specific Sub Limits	Face Value (\$)	% of Portfolio	Policy Max	Compliance
Between 3 and 10 years	8,900,000	7%	50%	✓
Between 5 and 10 years	0	0%	25%	✓

✓ = compliant
 ✗ = non-compliant

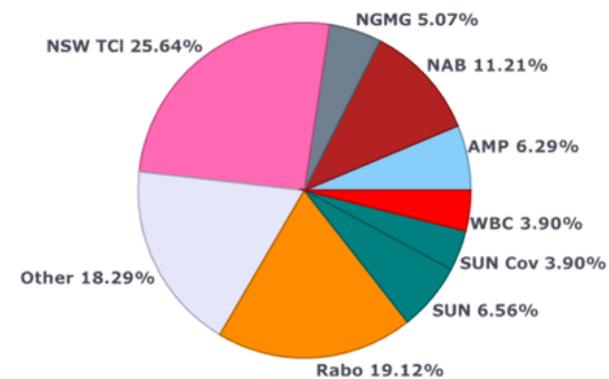
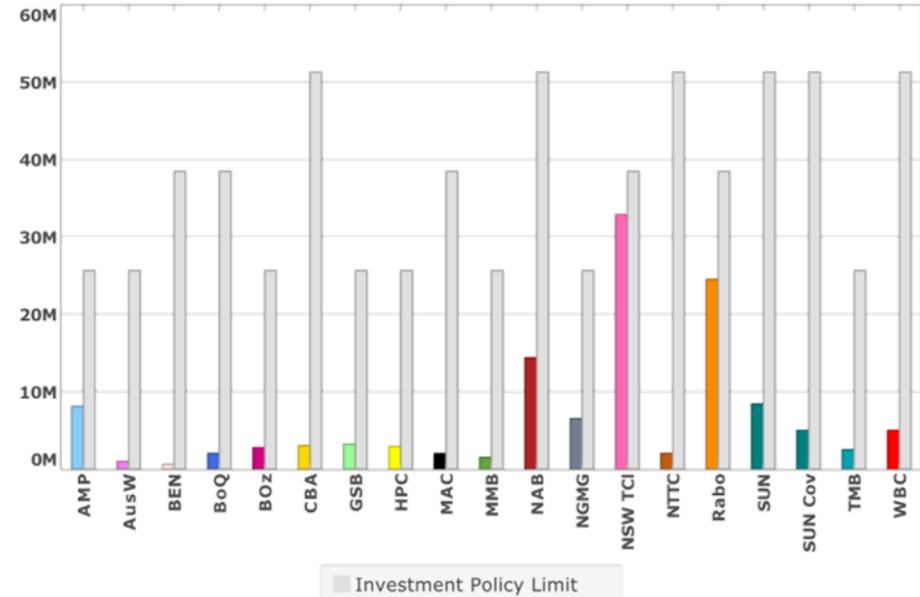


Singleton Council

Individual Institutional Exposures Report - December 2025

Individual Institutional Exposures **Individual Institutional Exposure Charts**

	Current Exposures		Policy Limit		Capacity
AMP Bank (BBB+)	8,059,147	6%	25,621,109	20%	17,561,962
Auswide Bank (Baa2)	1,000,000	1%	25,621,109	20%	24,621,109
Bank Australia (BBB+)	2,750,000	2%	25,621,109	20%	22,871,109
Bank of Queensland (A-)	2,000,000	2%	38,431,663	30%	36,431,663
Bendigo and Adelaide Bank (A-)	600,000	0%	38,431,663	30%	37,831,663
Commonwealth Bank of Australia (AA-)	3,000,000	2%	51,242,218	40%	48,242,218
Great Southern Bank (BBB+)	3,200,000	2%	25,621,109	20%	22,421,109
Heritage and People's Choice (BBB+)	2,900,000	2%	25,621,109	20%	22,721,109
Macquarie Bank (A+)	1,989,802	2%	38,431,663	30%	36,441,861
Maitland Mutual Limited (BBB)	1,500,000	1%	25,621,109	20%	24,121,109
National Australia Bank (AA-)	14,358,904	11%	51,242,218	40%	36,883,314
Newcastle Greater Mutual Group (BBB+)	6,500,000	5%	25,621,109	20%	19,121,109
NSW T-Corp (TCI)	32,847,691	26%	38,431,663	30%	5,583,972
NT T-Corp (Aa3)	2,000,000	2%	51,242,218	40%	49,242,218
Rabobank Australia (A)	24,500,000	19%	38,431,663	30%	13,931,663
Suncorp Bank (AA-)	8,400,000	7%	51,242,218	40%	42,842,218
Suncorp Bank Covered (AAA)	5,000,000	4%	51,242,218	40%	46,242,218
Teachers Mutual Bank (BBB+)	2,500,000	2%	25,621,109	20%	23,121,109
Westpac Group (AA-)	5,000,000	4%	51,242,218	40%	46,242,218
128,105,544					



8. Investment Report - January 2026**FILE:** 25/00405**Author:** Finance Officer - Treasury
Chief Financial Officer**Executive Summary**

In accordance with clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation, 2021* the following funds are invested under section 625 of the *Local Government Act, 1993* as at 31 January 2026.

FOR COUNCIL'S INFORMATION**Report**

For the last 12 months to 31 January 2026, the investment portfolio returned 5.93% versus the bank bill index benchmark's 3.89%.

Council's total portfolio of investments was \$128.025 million with an additional \$3.176 million held in Council's operational account, as of 31 January 2026.

Without marked-to-market influences, Council's investment portfolio yielded 4.33% pa for the month. This is based on the actual interest rates being received on investments and excludes the underlying changes to the market values of the bonds and TCorp growth fund.

During January, Council had \$6.5m in deposits mature and Council invested a total of \$5.15m during the month. These new investments are detailed in the following table:

Amount	Investment Type	Period	Rate
\$2,000,000	Term Deposit	364 Days	4.70%
\$1,750,000	Floating Rate Note	1826 Days	4.47%
\$1,400,000	Floating Rate Note	1836 Days	4.94%

The NSW TCorpIM Long Term Growth Fund recorded a positive gain of 0.82% (actual) for the month of January. This was based on solid return in both the domestic and international equity markets.

Council has a well-diversified portfolio invested predominantly among a range of term deposits and senior ranked bonds from highly rated Australian bank issuers. Council also has exposure to growth classes, including listed property and international and domestic shares, via NSW TCorp's Long Term Growth Fund. It is expected that Council's portfolio will achieve above benchmark returns over the medium/long term with prudent investment selection and holding the securities for the recommended time horizons of their asset classes. However, short-term fluctuations should be expected.

The TCorpIM Long Term Fund's investment strategy is to provide high exposure to growth assets, with a high return potential over the long term, with a high risk of negative annual returns. The investment object is to provide returns of CPI +3.5% pa over rolling 10-year

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items for Information) - DCCS8/26

periods. Council's investment in TCorp's IM Funds (long-term) is 26% of its portfolio. Council can therefore expect some fluctuations to its portfolio returns.

The size of the investment portfolio varies from month to month as a result of cash flow for the period. Cash outflows (expenditure) are typically relatively stable from one month to another. Cash inflows (income) are cyclical and are largely dependent on the rates instalment due dates and the timing of grant payments, including receipts of the Financial Assistance Grant.

Attachment 1 to this report provides Council's Investment Summary Report for January 2026.

Certification by the Responsible Accounting Officer:

In accordance with clause 212(1)(b) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation, 2021* the investments listed in this report have been made in accordance with:

- i) the *Local Government Act, 1993*
- ii) the Regulations, and
- iii) Council's Investment Policy.

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Singleton Investment Report - January 2026



**Investment Summary Report
January 2026**

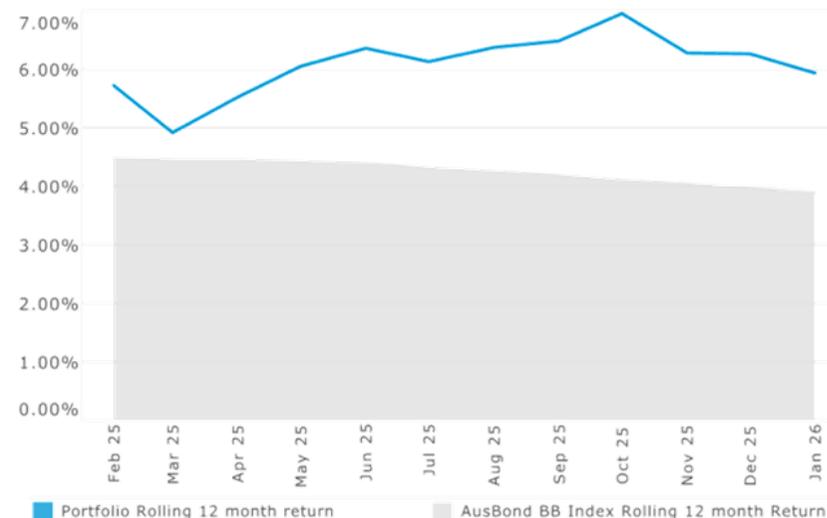


Singleton Council
Executive Summary - January 2026

Investment Holdings

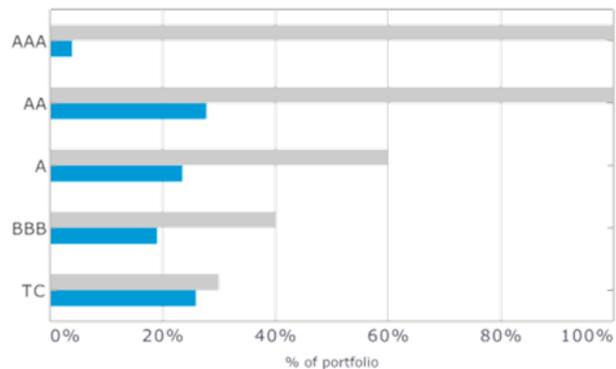
	Face Value (\$)	Current Value (\$)
Bonds	5,000,000	4,969,950
Cash	9,207,600	9,207,600
Floating Rate Note	39,200,000	39,348,447
Managed Funds	33,118,268	33,118,268
Term Deposit	41,500,000	41,500,000
	128,025,868	128,144,265

Investment Performance

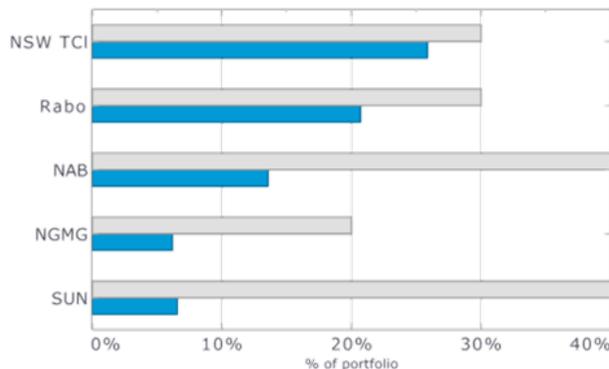


Investment Policy Compliance

Total Credit Exposure



Individual Institutional Exposures



Term to Maturities

	Face Value (\$)	Policy Max
Between 0 and 1 years	100,825,868	79% 100% ✓
Between 1 and 10 years	27,200,000	21% 80% ✓
	128,025,868	

Specific Sub Limits

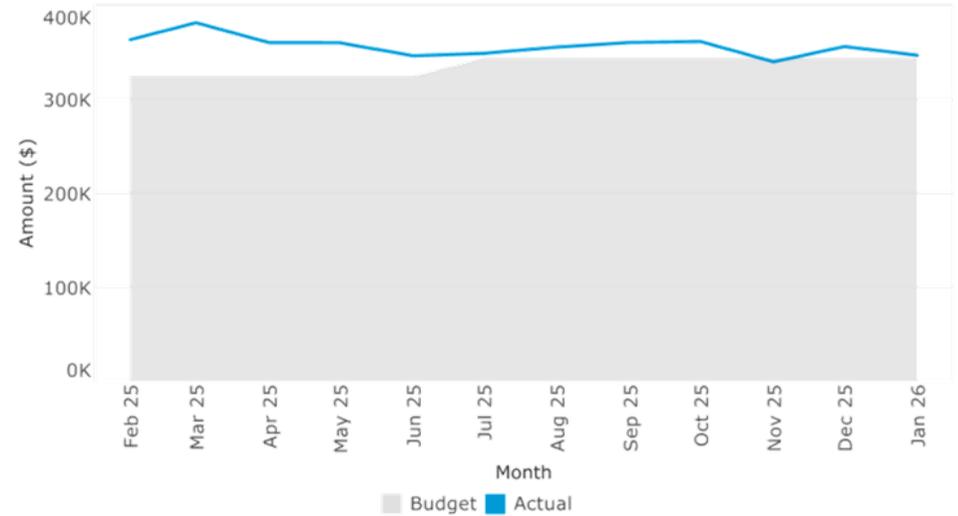
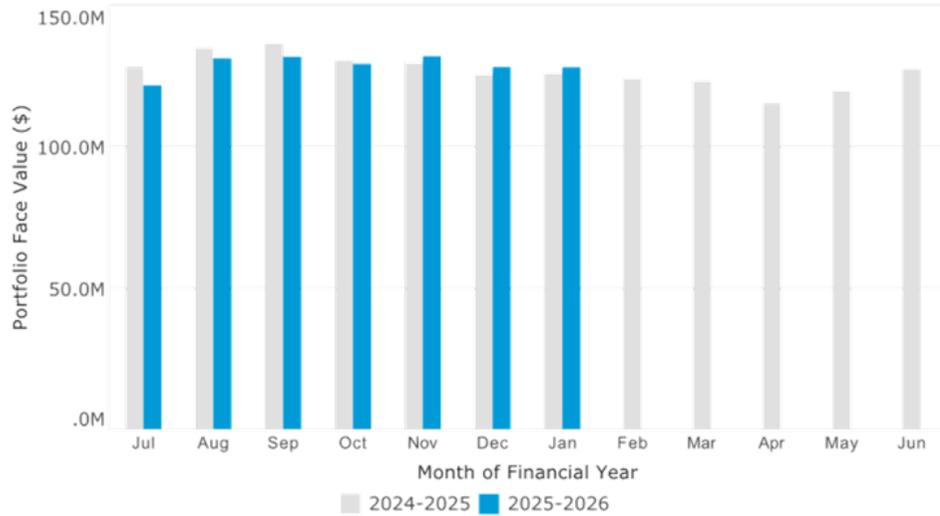
Between 3 and 10 years	12,050,000	9% 50% ✓
Between 5 and 10 years	0	0% 25% ✓

Singleton Council

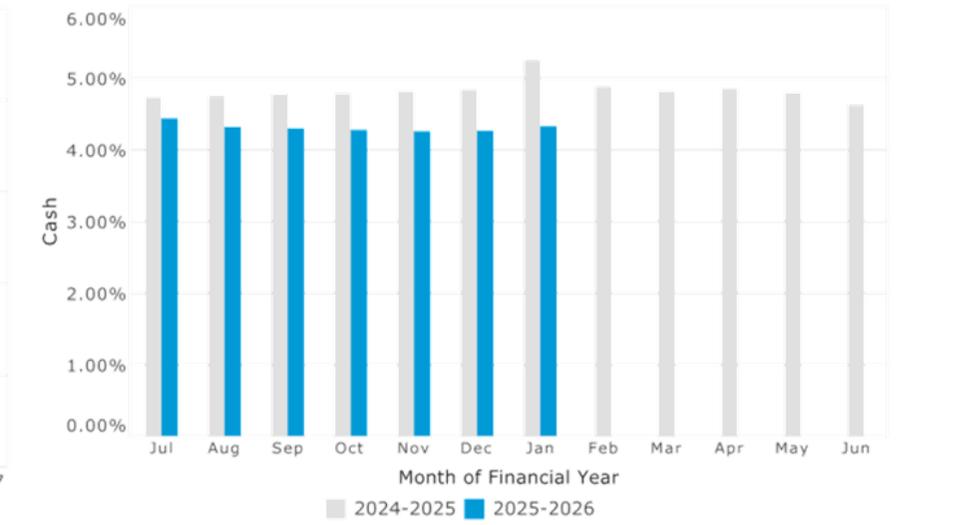
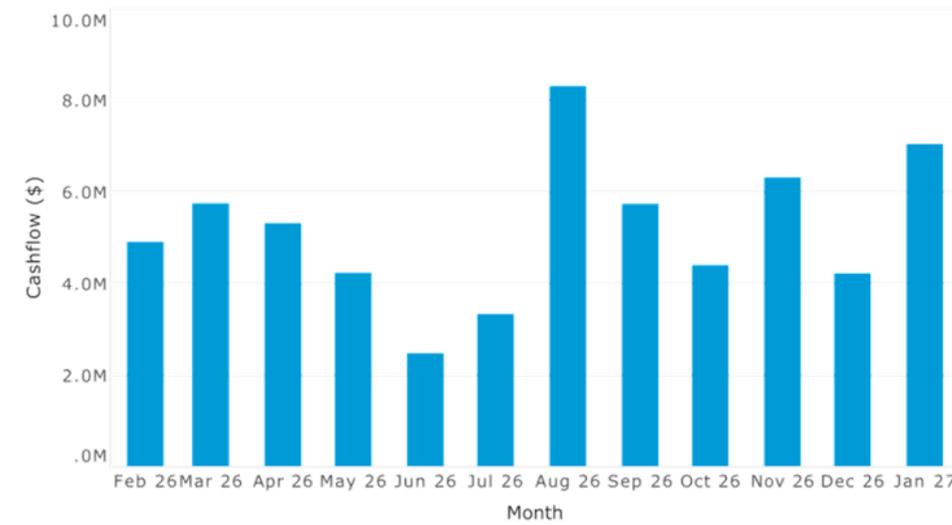
Executive Summary - January 2026



Historical Portfolio Balance | **Interest Earned Rolling 12 months**



Upcoming Investment Cashflow Summary | **Weighted Average Return**



Singleton Council

Investment Holdings Report - January 2026



Cash Accounts

Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Reference
1,263,692.15	4.2500%	AMP Bank	BBB+	1,263,692.15	540079	31d Notice
1,976,005.44	3.9000%	Macquarie Bank	A+	1,976,005.44	540145	Accelerator
5,967,902.80	3.7000%	National Australia Bank	AA-	5,967,902.80	546234	Prof Acct
9,207,600.39	3.8184%			9,207,600.39		

Managed Funds

Face Value (\$)	Monthly Return (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Funds Name	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Reference
33,118,267.58	0.8237%	NSW T-Corp (LT)	TCI	Long Term Growth Fund	33,118,267.58	544559	
33,118,267.58	0.8237%				33,118,267.58		

Term Deposits

Maturity Date	Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Purchase Price (\$)	Purchase Date	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest (\$)	Next Interest Date	Reference
5-Feb-26	500,000.00	4.3000%	Rabobank Australia	A	500,000.00	6-Aug-25	510,543.84	546307	10,543.84	At Maturity	
5-Feb-26	2,000,000.00	4.4500%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	9-Jul-25	2,050,473.97	546249	50,473.97	At Maturity	
10-Feb-26	2,000,000.00	4.3400%	Suncorp Bank	AA-	2,000,000.00	11-Jun-25	2,055,884.93	546156	55,884.93	At Maturity	
19-Mar-26	2,000,000.00	4.2700%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	5-Jun-25	2,056,387.40	546135	56,387.40	At Maturity	
26-Mar-26	1,000,000.00	4.1500%	Westpac Group	AA-	1,000,000.00	28-Aug-25	1,017,850.68	546390	17,850.68	At Maturity	
8-Apr-26	2,000,000.00	4.7500%	National Australia Bank	AA-	2,000,000.00	7-Feb-25	2,093,438.36	545780	93,438.36	Annually	
16-Apr-26	1,000,000.00	4.2000%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	4-Sep-25	1,017,260.27	546423	17,260.27	At Maturity	
30-Apr-26	2,000,000.00	4.1500%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	5-Jun-25	2,054,802.74	546136	54,802.74	At Maturity	
7-May-26	2,000,000.00	4.3000%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	8-Oct-25	2,027,331.51	546661	27,331.51	At Maturity	
21-May-26	2,000,000.00	4.2700%	Suncorp Bank	AA-	2,000,000.00	16-Jun-25	2,053,813.70	546169	53,813.70	At Maturity	
4-Jun-26	1,000,000.00	4.2500%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	1-Aug-25	1,021,424.66	546297	21,424.66	At Maturity	
11-Jun-26	1,000,000.00	4.3600%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	13-Nov-25	1,009,556.16	546839	9,556.16	At Maturity	
9-Jul-26	1,000,000.00	4.2000%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	19-Jun-25	1,026,120.55	546183	26,120.55	Annually	
23-Jul-26	2,000,000.00	4.0800%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	26-Jun-25	2,049,183.56	546209	49,183.56	Annually	

Singleton Council

Investment Holdings Report - January 2026



Maturity Date	Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Purchase Price (\$)	Purchase Date	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest (\$)	Next Interest Date	Reference
6-Aug-26	2,000,000.00	4.1800%	National Australia Bank	AA-	2,000,000.00	4-Sep-25	2,034,356.16	546422	34,356.16	Annually	
13-Aug-26	1,000,000.00	4.1300%	Westpac Group	AA-	1,000,000.00	22-Aug-25	1,018,443.56	546375	18,443.56	At Maturity	
10-Sep-26	1,000,000.00	4.2300%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	9-Jul-25	1,023,989.32	546250	23,989.32	Annually	
23-Sep-26	1,000,000.00	4.1000%	National Australia Bank	AA-	1,000,000.00	24-Jul-25	1,021,567.12	546285	21,567.12	Annually	
23-Sep-26	2,000,000.00	4.2000%	National Australia Bank	AA-	2,000,000.00	10-Sep-25	2,033,139.73	546463	33,139.73	Annually	
5-Nov-26	2,000,000.00	4.5300%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	4-Dec-25	2,014,644.93	546913	14,644.93	At Maturity	
12-Nov-26	2,000,000.00	4.6200%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	11-Dec-25	2,013,163.84	546936	13,163.84	At Maturity	
26-Nov-26	2,000,000.00	4.0800%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	26-Jun-25	2,049,183.56	546210	49,183.56	Annually	
2-Dec-26	2,000,000.00	4.4700%	Westpac Group	AA-	2,000,000.00	2-Dec-25	2,014,940.82	546908	14,940.82	At Maturity	
10-Dec-26	1,000,000.00	4.2300%	Rabobank Australia	A	1,000,000.00	9-Jul-25	1,023,989.32	546251	23,989.32	Annually	
7-Jan-27	2,000,000.00	4.7000%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	8-Jan-26	2,006,180.82	547011	6,180.82	At Maturity	
25-Mar-27	2,000,000.00	3.9500%	Rabobank Australia	A	2,000,000.00	26-Jun-25	2,047,616.44	546211	47,616.44	Annually	
	41,500,000.00	4.3055%			41,500,000.00		42,345,287.95		845,287.95		

Floating Rate Notes

Maturity Date	Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Security Name	Credit Rating	Purchase Price (\$)	Purchase Date	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest (\$)	Next Coupon Date	Reference
4-Mar-26	2,500,000.00	4.3058%	NPBS Snr FRN (Mar26) BBSW+0.63%	BBB+	2,500,000.00	4-Mar-21	2,517,550.33	540982	17,400.15	4-Mar-26	
15-Sep-26	1,500,000.00	4.1920%	SUN Snr FRN (Sep26) BBSW+0.48%	AA-	1,500,000.00	15-Sep-21	1,509,019.15	541879	8,269.15	16-Mar-26	
23-Oct-26	1,200,000.00	5.4085%	GSB Snr FRN (Oct26) BBSW+1.60%	BBB+	1,200,000.00	23-Jan-24	1,209,759.12	544801	1,600.32	23-Apr-26	
27-Oct-26	1,000,000.00	4.6116%	BoQ Snr FRN (Oct26) BBSW+0.80%	A-	1,000,000.00	21-Oct-21	1,003,211.73	542004	631.73	28-Apr-26	
30-Oct-26	2,000,000.00	5.3362%	BOz Snr FRN (Oct26) BBSW+1.50%	BBB+	2,020,540.00	7-Jun-24	2,011,806.79	545154	584.79	30-Apr-26	
23-Dec-26	1,000,000.00	4.1398%	CBA Green Snr FRN (Dec26) BBSW+0.41%	AA-	1,000,000.00	23-Sep-21	1,004,806.77	541918	4,536.77	23-Mar-26	
14-Jan-27	2,000,000.00	4.4358%	CBA Snr FRN (Jan27) BBSW+0.70%	AA-	2,000,000.00	14-Jan-22	2,009,835.04	542237	4,375.04	14-Apr-26	
25-Jan-27	1,000,000.00	4.5116%	WBC Snr FRN (Jan27) BBSW+0.70%	AA-	1,000,000.00	25-Jan-22	1,003,698.03	542257	618.03	28-Apr-26	
25-Jan-27	1,800,000.00	4.5916%	SUN Snr FRN (Jan27) BBSW+0.78%	AA-	1,800,000.00	25-Jan-22	1,807,198.18	542262	1,132.18	28-Apr-26	
8-Feb-27	1,400,000.00	5.2448%	HPC Snr FRN (Feb27) BBSW+1.60%	BBB+	1,400,000.00	8-Feb-24	1,428,541.14	544823	16,697.14	9-Feb-26	
10-Feb-27	1,000,000.00	4.6448%	NPBS Snr FRN (Feb27) BBSW+1.00%	BBB+	996,250.00	28-May-24	1,013,302.15	545104	10,562.15	10-Feb-26	

Singleton Council

Investment Holdings Report - January 2026

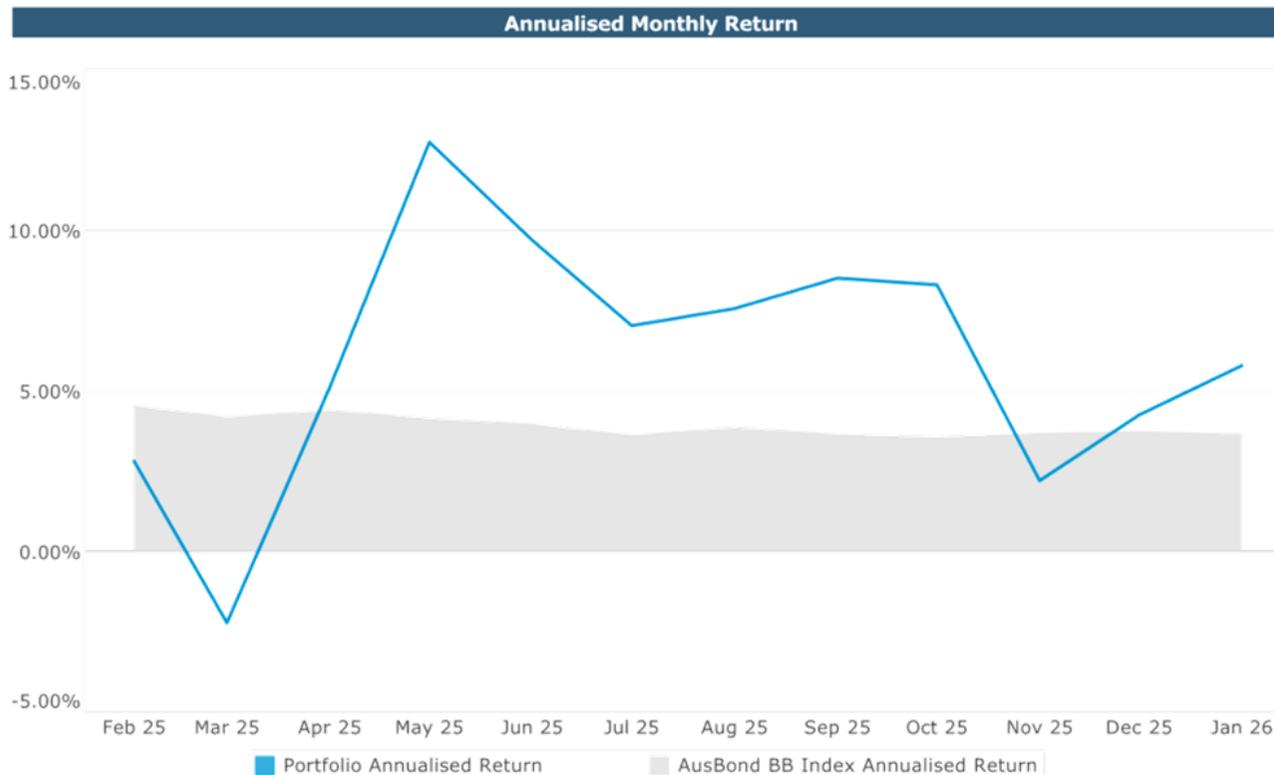


Maturity Date	Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Security Name	Credit Rating	Purchase Price (\$)	Purchase Date	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest (\$)	Next Coupon Date	Reference
14-May-27	600,000.00	4.6549%	BEN Snr FRN (May27) BBSW+1.00%	A-	600,000.00	14-May-24	609,428.99	545078	6,044.99	16-Feb-26	
21-Jun-27	1,000,000.00	5.0275%	TMB Snr FRN (Jun27) BBSW+1.30%	BBB+	1,000,000.00	21-Jun-24	1,013,197.33	545188	5,647.33	23-Mar-26	
13-Sep-27	1,000,000.00	5.0420%	AusW Snr FRN (Sep27) BBSW+1.33%	Baa2	1,000,000.00	13-Sep-24	1,006,630.58	545463	6,630.58	13-Mar-26	
13-Sep-27	1,300,000.00	4.9820%	AMP Snr FRN (Sep27) BBSW+1.27%	BBB+	1,300,000.00	13-Sep-24	1,315,901.17	545482	8,517.17	13-Mar-26	
14-Dec-27	1,100,000.00	4.9620%	SUN Snr FRN (Dec27) BBSW+1.25%	AA-	1,100,000.00	14-Dec-22	1,120,883.91	543634	7,177.91	16-Mar-26	
15-May-28	1,500,000.00	5.1549%	MMB Snr FRN (May28) BBSW+1.50%	BBB	1,500,000.00	14-May-25	1,516,735.77	546024	16,735.77	16-Feb-26	
3-Oct-28	1,500,000.00	4.6907%	TMB Snr FRN (Oct28) BBSW+0.95%	BBB+	1,500,000.00	1-Oct-25	1,506,404.75	546598	5,204.75	3-Apr-26	
3-Nov-28	2,000,000.00	4.5650%	GSB Snr FRN (Nov28) BBSW+0.93%	BBB+	2,000,000.00	3-Nov-25	2,019,996.27	546745	22,512.33	3-Feb-26	
27-Nov-28	750,000.00	4.6978%	BOz Snr FRN (Nov28) BBSW+1.03%	BBB+	750,000.00	27-Nov-25	756,857.74	546852	6,370.99	27-Feb-26	
22-Mar-29	2,000,000.00	4.6275%	NAB Snr FRN (Mar29) BBSW+0.90%	AA-	2,000,000.00	15-Mar-24	2,028,090.03	544957	10,396.03	23-Mar-26	
5-Nov-29	1,500,000.00	4.6949%	HPC Snr FRN (Nov29) BBSW+1.05%	BBB+	1,500,000.00	5-Nov-25	1,519,018.82	546771	16,978.82	5-Feb-26	
21-Jan-30	3,000,000.00	4.9792%	NPBS Snr FRN (Jan30) BBSW+1.25%	BBB+	3,023,670.00	18-Aug-25	3,031,771.74	546339	4,501.74	21-Apr-26	
18-Mar-30	2,400,000.00	4.5520%	NAB Snr FRN (Mar30) BBSW+0.83%	AA-	2,400,000.00	18-Mar-25	2,427,436.93	545902	13,468.93	18-Mar-26	
15-Jan-31	1,750,000.00	4.4654%	CBA Snr FRN (Jan31) BBSW+0.74%	AA-	1,750,000.00	6-Jan-26	1,757,095.27	547005	3,639.61	15-Apr-26	
23-Jan-31	1,400,000.00	4.9385%	NPBS Snr FRN (Jan31) BBSW+1.13%	BBB+	1,400,000.00	13-Jan-26	1,402,208.80	547032	1,704.80	23-Apr-26	
	39,200,000.00	4.7375%			39,240,460.00		39,550,386.53		201,939.20		

Fixed Rate Bonds

Maturity Date	Face Value (\$)	Current Rate (%)	Security Name	Credit Rating	Purchase Price (\$)	Purchase Date	Current Value (\$)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest (\$)	Purchase Yield	Reference
24-Aug-26	5,000,000.00	3.2500%	SUN Cov Bond (Aug26) 3.25%	AAA	5,527,000.00	28-Apr-21	5,040,988.25	541284	71,038.25	1.30500%	
	5,000,000.00	3.2500%			5,527,000.00		5,040,988.25		71,038.25	1.3050%	

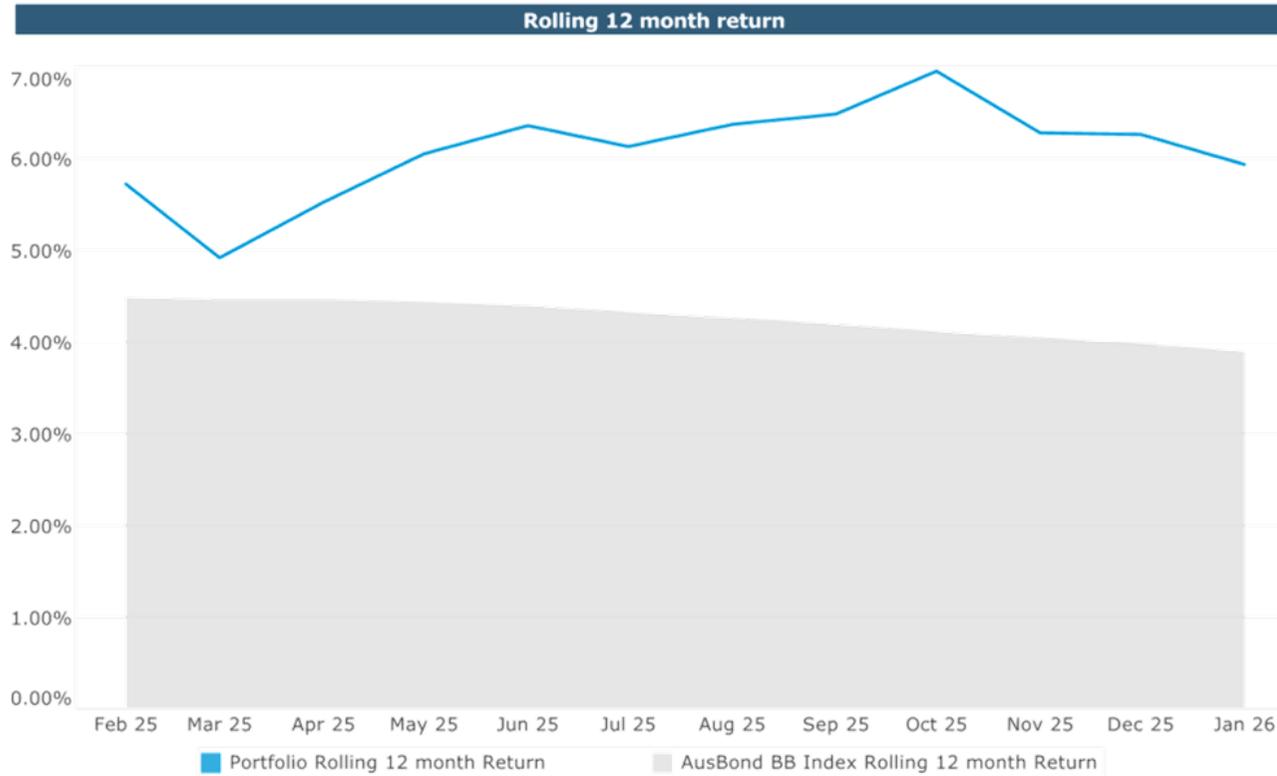
Singleton Council
Investment Performance Report - January 2026



Historical Performance Summary (%pa)			
	Portfolio	Annualised BB Index	Outperformance
Jan 2026	5.79%	3.64%	2.15%
Last 3 months	4.09%	3.67%	0.42%
Last 6 months	6.08%	3.67%	2.41%
Financial Year to Date	6.22%	3.66%	2.56%
Last 12 months	5.93%	3.89%	2.04%

Singleton Council

Investment Performance Report - January 2026



Historical Performance Summary (% actual)			
	Portfolio	Annualised BB Index	Outperformance
Jan 2026	0.48%	0.30%	0.18%
Last 3 months	1.02%	0.91%	0.11%
Last 6 months	3.02%	1.83%	1.19%
Financial Year to Date	3.62%	2.14%	1.48%
Last 12 months	5.93%	3.89%	2.04%



Singleton Council

Investment Policy Compliance Report - January 2026



Credit Rating Group	Face Value (\$)	% of Portfolio	Policy Max	Compliance
AAA	5,000,000	4%	100%	✓
AA	35,517,903	28%	100%	✓
A	30,076,005	23%	60%	✓
BBB	24,313,692	19%	40%	✓
TC	33,118,268	26%	30%	✓
Total	128,025,868			

Institution	% of Portfolio	Investment Policy Limit	Compliance
NSW T-Corp (TCI)	26%	30%	✓
Rabobank Australia (A)	21%	30%	✓
National Australia Bank (AA-)	14%	40%	✓
Newcastle Greater Mutual Group (BBB+)	6%	20%	✓
Suncorp Bank (AA-)	7%	40%	✓
Great Southern Bank (BBB+)	2%	20%	✓
Heritage and People's Choice (BBB+)	2%	20%	✓
Bank Australia (BBB+)	2%	20%	✓
AMP Bank (BBB+)	2%	20%	✓
Suncorp Bank Covered (AAA)	4%	40%	✓
Westpac Group (AA-)	4%	40%	✓
Teachers Mutual Bank (BBB+)	2%	20%	✓
Commonwealth Bank of Australia (AA-)	4%	40%	✓

Term	Face Value (\$)	% of Portfolio	Policy Max	Compliance
Between 0 and 1 years	100,825,868	79%	100%	✓
Between 1 and 10 years	27,200,000	21%	80%	✓
Total	128,025,868			

Specific Sub Limits	Face Value (\$)	% of Portfolio	Policy Max	Compliance
Between 3 and 10 years	12,050,000	9%	50%	✓
Between 5 and 10 years	0	0%	25%	✓

✓ = compliant
 X = non-compliant

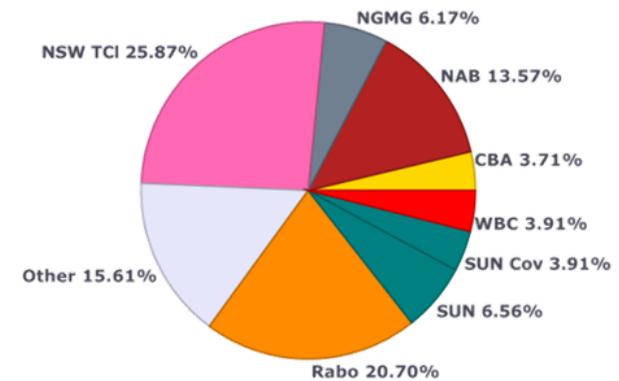
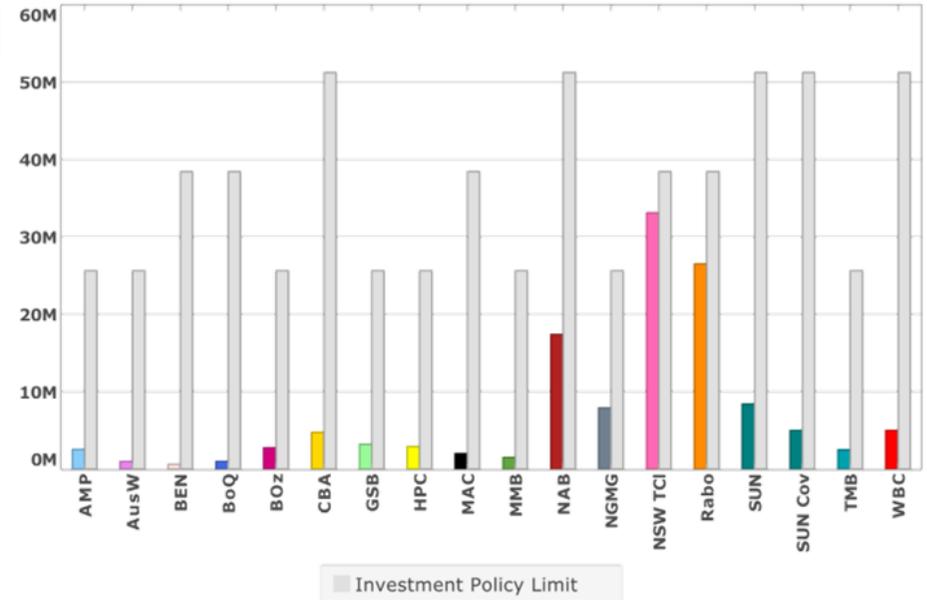


Singleton Council

Individual Institutional Exposures Report - January 2026

Individual Institutional Exposures **Individual Institutional Exposure Charts**

	Current Exposures		Policy Limit		Capacity
AMP Bank (BBB+)	2,563,692	2%	25,605,174	20%	23,041,482
Auswide Bank (Baa2)	1,000,000	1%	25,605,174	20%	24,605,174
Bank Australia (BBB+)	2,750,000	2%	25,605,174	20%	22,855,174
Bank of Queensland (A-)	1,000,000	1%	38,407,760	30%	37,407,760
Bendigo and Adelaide Bank (A-)	600,000	0%	38,407,760	30%	37,807,760
Commonwealth Bank of Australia (AA-)	4,750,000	4%	51,210,347	40%	46,460,347
Great Southern Bank (BBB+)	3,200,000	2%	25,605,174	20%	22,405,174
Heritage and People's Choice (BBB+)	2,900,000	2%	25,605,174	20%	22,705,174
Macquarie Bank (A+)	1,976,005	2%	38,407,760	30%	36,431,755
Maitland Mutual Limited (BBB)	1,500,000	1%	25,605,174	20%	24,105,174
National Australia Bank (AA-)	17,367,903	14%	51,210,347	40%	33,842,444
Newcastle Greater Mutual Group (BBB+)	7,900,000	6%	25,605,174	20%	17,705,174
NSW T-Corp (TCI)	33,118,268	26%	38,407,760	30%	5,289,492
Rabobank Australia (A)	26,500,000	21%	38,407,760	30%	11,907,760
Suncorp Bank (AA-)	8,400,000	7%	51,210,347	40%	42,810,347
Suncorp Bank Covered (AAA)	5,000,000	4%	51,210,347	40%	46,210,347
Teachers Mutual Bank (BBB+)	2,500,000	2%	25,605,174	20%	23,105,174
Westpac Group (AA-)	5,000,000	4%	51,210,347	40%	46,210,347
Total	128,025,868				



DCCS12/26. 25m Pool Mechanical Audit and Recommissioning
Author: Manager Community Services Delivery**FILE:** 25/00380

Executive Summary

In Council's 2025/26 Operational Plan there is a project to replace the 25m heated indoor swimming pool roof. The early stages of the work are an audit to understand the condition of the pool, the pipes and filtration systems, and the condition of the dome structure. These works/investigations are required to understand the full depth of the work required and necessitated closing the pool during the work. This was done in consultation with the operator, Belgravia.

While not complete, these early works have identified issues, which will require additional time and likely additional cost. At this point the pool is being recommissioned to allow for learn to swim and other activities in the 25m pool to recommence, while the audit/early works are completed and the project plan adjusted. The aim is to keep the 25m pool open until 2026/27 summer and then undertake the roof replacement works over that summer period. However, this will be subject to further audit/early works, which allow the pool to remain open, a suitable project plan and budget being approved.

FOR INFORMATION

Mechanical audit and upgrade works at the 25-metre pool identified additional issues with pool infrastructure, requiring further specialist inspections and technical advice to inform recommissioning. During this process, an asbestos pipe was identified, prompting testing and precautionary closure of the pool over the past six weeks. Testing has now confirmed that it is safe to proceed with recommissioning the pool from this perspective.

Belgravia Leisure has been advised to recommission the pool from 4 February 2026, noting that this process will take several days to complete.

Separate to the above, issues have also been identified with the pool dome structure, which require expert structural assessment to determine its status and inform whether continued use is safe. These investigations are ongoing and being undertaken as quickly as possible. They include an elevated work platform inspection of the dome structure and external surface. Formal structural certification outcomes may result in further closures, should continued use not be advised (by external assessment).

Council is progressing planning for the roof replacement, concurrently with efforts to enable continued pool operation in the immediate term, subject to safety and certification outcomes. Investigations are also underway into potential operational options should the pool need to operate without the roof, including equipment and heating requirements.

The aim is to continue the operation of the pool through the winter, then close for the 2026/27 summer to replace the roof. As noted above, Belgravia has been advised and are working to recommission the pool, acknowledging the potential for reclosure should structural certification not be able to be extended. If this occurs the roof replacement works

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items for Information) - DCCS12/26

will commence immediately, with budget and procurement actions and will result in an extended closure period.

Other options were considered but no other practical option allowed the 25m indoor pool to open before the outdoor pool became too cool to use.

While considerable effort has been made to ensure timeframes are accurate, they remain indicative only, as they are subject to structural advice, funding availability, procurement processes, material supply, and contractor scheduling.

However, external advice may force an alternate option to be undertaken.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

**DCCS9/26. Minutes - Singleton Property Advisory Panel -
19/11/2025**
Author: Executive Assistant - Directors

FILE:
20/00126/002

Executive Summary

The Singleton Property Advisory Panel held its ordinary meeting on 19 November 2025. The minutes of the meeting are shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's information.

FOR INFORMATION

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Minutes Property Advisory Panel 19112025

**MINUTES
PROPERTY ADVISORY PANEL
1:00PM - 2:00PM WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2025**



Present	Cr Sue Moore, Mayor (Chair) – Singleton Council Cr Sue George, Deputy Mayor – Singleton Council Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr, General Manager – Singleton Council Phu Nguyen – Independent Member <i>Virtual</i> Nick Lane – Independent Member <i>Virtual</i>
In Attendance	Dwight Graham, Director Corporate & Community Services – Singleton Council Mark Wiblen, Manager Corporate Services – Singleton Council Frances Lang, Property Services Officer – Singleton Council <i>Virtual</i> Kirsten Torrance, Executive Assistant – Singleton Council
Meeting Location	Committee Room & Virtual via Microsoft Teams

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Welcome
- Acknowledgement of Country by Chair
- Apologies – Cr Mel McLachlan

2 Disclosure of Interests

- Nil

3 Confirmation of Minutes

- The minutes of the Property Advisory Panel meeting held on Wednesday 27 August 2025, were confirmed.

Moved: Phu Nguyen **Seconded:** Nick Lane
CARRIED

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Nil

5 Agenda Items

5.1 Other Property Update

Mark Wiblen, Manager Corporate Services, provided the Property Advisory Panel with an update of properties whose significance do not warrant individual reports.

Corner of Bridgman Road and Gardner Circuit

This property has been marketed by a local agent through an EOI process, receiving several enquiries and a markedly low offer. Council has met with the sales office and they are reaching out to previous enquirers.

**MINUTES
PROPERTY ADVISORY PANEL
1:00PM - 2:00PM WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2025**



16 Philip Street

Council staff are currently investigating the potential sale of 16 Philip Street, a parcel of land classified as operational adjoining the Caracourt Caravan Park.

Council received a reasonable offer [REDACTED] in line with the market valuation and likely development restrictions of the property. A report was presented to Council on 21 October 2025, where it was resolved to sell the property.

The sale is progressing and is expected to be completed in early December 2025.

39 Patridge Place

This is a medium sized vacant residential parcel of land that was not subdivided when the subdivision was created. Council has engaged a Planning Consultant to prepare and lodge a subdivision application and it is understood at least one neighbouring property owner has lodged objections to the proposed subdivision.

If the subdivision is approved Council will seek a valuation and list the property for sale on the open market.

Mt Thorley Industrial Land

Council recently marketed and sold several industrial blocks along Kannar Road and O'Hara Place in Mt Thorley. Council continues to own approximately 26 hectares of Operational Land, and the subdivided blocks that front McMenamain Avenue are not serviced nor is the road constructed.

Council has met with a sales agent regarding future development of the land, taking ecological constraints and the fall of the land into consideration. Panel members discussed the location of Hunter Transmission Lines, potential of the land and the cost of forming the road versus the yield of the sale of the land.

5.2 Property Advisory Strategy

Dwight Graham, Director Corporate and Community Services, provided an update on the Property Reserve.

As at 30 September 2025, the Property Reserve balance was \$2.42m.

The interest rate is performing well with shares, property and bonds contributing to positive returns the majority of the time.

5.3 Independent Members Items

**MINUTES
PROPERTY ADVISORY PANEL
1:00PM - 2:00PM WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2025**



Independent members of the Property Advisory Panel provided matters of interest to the Panel.

Phu Nguyen

The property reserve balance is encouraging. Well done to the team and all involved.

Nick Lane

Nick submitted an EOI for Maitland City Council's Property Advisory Panel, however, will not be joining.

Nick recently visited New Zealand and confirms the housing crisis is comparative to Australia. Similar to Singleton, Newcastle and Maitland LGAs are awaiting an increase in accommodation. There is enormous interest in Sydney to move to the Hunter.

Cr McGowan has written a paper on Over 55s Living and this will be added to the agenda for the next meeting. Dwight will liaise with providers to gauge if they have an appetite for this market. The completion of the bypass may open up this market and create opportunity.

The Homelessness Policy was adopted by Council at their ordinary meeting on 18 November 2026 and is now on public exhibition. Stats how seniors in bigger houses wanting to downsize. Feasibility regarding development of seniors living / smaller properties discussed.

Panel members discussed seniors' living and smaller properties, noting the inherent cost of development is the major impact on holding back projects. Development of seniors' living, townhouses, etc. in outlying suburbs have halted, whereas in the towns & cities it is better. This is also impacting affordable housing projects.

5.4 Bridgman Ridge Land Development Update

Dwight Graham, Director Corporate and Community Services, provided an update on the Bridgman Ridge Land Development Project.

This report is the quarterly progress update on the project, focussing on completing responses to planning requests for information and chasing the progress of the DA. All internal referrals for the DA have been completed and approved and the Project Team is currently waiting on responses to planning requests for information, Aboriginal cultural heritage matters and sewer infrastructure.

All three items remain ongoing and Council is hopeful the next Regional Planning Panel hearing will be early 2026.

Dwight presented the development project via GIS (Geographical Information System), explaining Stage 6 on the map and highlighting the 88 lots.

Dwight will refine the costs of the project for the February 2026 meeting, working on a new business case.

**MINUTES
PROPERTY ADVISORY PANEL
1:00PM - 2:00PM WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2025**



Mayor Moore requested clarification around the arrangement with ISOA – Langham Estate regarding the sewer pump station. Dwight explained this agreement is to share the cost of a sewer pump station and is currently progressing. The process has been delayed by the finding of cultural artefacts.

6 Other Business

- Panel members discussed the proposed site for Woolworths Glass Parade. Mark Wiblen advised he has made contact with the developer and they are committed to the project, the DA has been approved & activated.

7 Action List

Pulse/Action No	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date
PAP25-01	19/11/2025	List Cr McGowan's Over 55s Living Paper	D Graham	25/02/2026
PAP25-02	19/11/2025	Provide updated Bridgman Ridge Project costings & Business Case	D Graham	25/02/2026

8 Next Meeting

- Tuesday 25 February 2026 2:00pm – 4:00pm

The meeting closed at 1:42pm.

Cr Sue Moore, Mayor
Chair

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items for Information) - DCCS10/26

DCCS10/26. Minutes - Compliments, Complaints & Customer Experience Review Committee - 26/11/2025
Author: Executive Assistant - Directors

FILE: 23/00151

Executive Summary

The Compliments, Complaints & Customer Experience Review Committee held its ordinary meeting on 26 November 2025. The minutes of the meeting are shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's information.

FOR INFORMATION

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Minutes - Compliments Complaints & Customer Experience Review Committee - 26/11/2025

**MINUTES
COMPLIMENTS COMPLAINTS & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
REVIEW COMMITTEE**



2:00PM - 3:00PM DOCVARIABLE "dvDateMeeting" \@ "dddd d MMMM yyyy" *
Charformat * Upper **WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2025**

Present	Cr Sue Moore, Mayor (Chair) Cr Anne McGowan, Councillor Dwight Graham, Director Corporate & Community Services Melinda Curtis, Executive Director Nicole Rindal, Manager Community Experience & Events
In Attendance	Kirsten Torrance, Executive Assistant
Meeting Location	Committee Room & virtual via Microsoft Teams

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Welcome
- Acknowledgement of Country by Chair
- Apologies - Cr Mel McLachlan, Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr

2 Disclosure of Interests

- Nil

3 Confirmation of Minutes

- The minutes of the Compliments Complaints & Customer Experience Review Committee meeting held on Tuesday 29 July 2025, were confirmed.

Moved: Cr Anne McGowan **Seconded:** Mel Curtis
CARRIED

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Nil

5 Agenda Items

5.1 Compliments and Concerns Received July 2025 to November 2025

Nicole Rindal, Manager Community Experience and Events, presented an overview of compliments and concerns received from 19 July 2025 to 19 November 2025.

Council tracks compliments and concerns seeking any patterns and escalating to the Governance Team as appropriate.

Discussion around concern raised regarding rubbish on a lawn in Kelso Street. Council Rangers and staff are working with the resident to manage the outcome.

Discussion around music events and anonymous complaints received regarding these functions. The advice received is to contact NSW Police in the event of concerns for

**MINUTES
COMPLIMENTS COMPLAINTS & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
REVIEW COMMITTEE**

2:00PM - 3:00PM DOCVARIABLE "dvDateMeeting" \@ "dddd d MMMM yyyy" *
Charformat * Upper **WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2025**

safety.

During the reporting period, there were 22 compliments, some of which related to a positive experience on the phone or during a customer service encounter. Regulatory Services received the most concerns due to the nature of their work.

Discussion around the equestrian centre, noting concerns around this issue have been lodged anonymously. There is currently no active complaint regarding the equestrian centre and Council is exploring other avenues to address this issue.

Moved: Dwight Graham **Seconded:** Cr Anne McGowan

CARRIED

5.2 Complaints Received July 2025 to November 2025

Mel Curtis, Executive Director, presented an overview of complaints received for the period of 19 July 2025 to 19 November 2025.

Corporate Governance have been working in the complaints space to address the NSW Ombudsman's review of the complaints handling framework.

Discussion around a complaint relating to earthworks on a private property that has been escalated to a Level 2 Complaint. As this is a civil matter, Council do not have authority in this matter under Legislation. This is an example of complex issues around complaints. Madam Mayor has spoken with the customer regarding the matter and explained the Dividing Fences Act.

Discussion around a complaint relating to suspended bin service. The bins were utilised by those working on the Singleton Bypass project and the rubbish was removed by Council's Waste Department, resulting in a good outcome.

Discussion around a complaint relating to a safety hazard at the cemetery. This issue was lodged as a complaint and then referred back to Integrated Risk as it relates to an insurance claim.

Discussion around a complaint relating to a beginner-friendly bike workshop, noting the main issue was around communication style.

Committee members noted there has been continuous improvement around concerns that are escalated to complaints.

Moved: Cr Anne McGowan **Seconded:** Dwight Graham

CARRIED

**MINUTES
COMPLIMENTS COMPLAINTS & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
REVIEW COMMITTEE**

2:00PM - 3:00PM DOCVARIABLE "dvDateMeeting" \@ "dddd d MMMM yyyy" *
Charformat * Upper **WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2025**

5.3 Customer Experience Update

Nicole Rindal, Manager Community Experience and Events, advised the Committee that the usual Customer Experience (CX) update is not available for this meeting. Following the recent organisational realignment of the new Community Experience & Events business unit, bringing together Customer Experience and Customer Service, CX reporting frameworks and initiatives are currently being reviewed and realigned.

Nicole is currently working on an updated CX road map for customer experience improvement. Nicole explained that there is an option for accepting customer feedback via customer sentiment through our phone system, incorporating this into our reporting process.

A full CX update will be presented at the next Committee meeting once this work is complete.

Moved: Dwight Graham **Seconded:** Cr Anne McGowan
CARRIED

5.4 New Complaints Handling Policy

Mel Curtis, Executive Director, advised the Committee the draft *Complaints Handling Policy* will be presented to Council for consideration of adoption following a period of public exhibition.

The Committee was invited to review and provide comment on the draft Policy, noting the Policy is currently with Council's Leadership Team for review and the Audit Risk and Review Committee have also provided feedback.

The new draft *Complaints Handling Policy* has improved connections to the Unreasonable Complainant Policy and links complaints levels 1,2 & 3.

A Committee member provided feedback regarding a typo in Section 2.2.1, "than" to be corrected to "then".

The Committee provided feedback, noting the policy will be forwarded for public exhibition following final receipt of feedback and comments.

NOTED

5.5 New Draft Compliments and Concerns Policy

Nicole Rindal, Manager Community Experience and Events, advised the Committee the draft *Compliments and Concerns Policy* will be presented to Council for consideration of adoption following a period of public exhibition. The Committee was invited to review and provide comment on the draft Policy.

**MINUTES
COMPLIMENTS COMPLAINTS & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
REVIEW COMMITTEE**



2:00PM - 3:00PM DOCVARIABLE "dvDateMeeting" \@ "dddd d MMMM yyyy" *
Charformat * Upper **WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2025**

The draft *Compliments and Concerns Policy* is a holistic policy with all reference to complaints removed. Under the previously adopted *Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Policy*, complaints were managed alongside compliments and concerns. Council has now created a dedicated draft *Complaints Handling Policy* to provide clearer processes, improved accountability, and alignment with best practice and Ombudsman guidance.

The draft *Compliments and Concerns Policy* and the draft *Complaints Handling Policy* will be placed on public exhibition at the same time.

NOTED

6 Other Business

- It was noted that the microphone and speakers in the main auditorium were not fully functional during the Wambo Coal Hall of Fame event, causing customer dissatisfaction when the speeches could not be heard.
- Cr McGowan provided a feedback sheet regarding the Wambo Hall of Fame Event. Cr McGowan congratulated the team on organising a successful event, supplying a list of concerns and key suggestions around equipment for future reference. The list was provided to the appropriate team members.
- Committee members discussed a concern raised by a community member regarding neighbouring dogs accessing his property and chasing his cattle. Mayor Moore will recommend for the customer to submit a complaint for this to be appropriately reviewed and investigated.
- Action list discussed & outcomes explained.

7 Action List

Pulse/Action No	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date
N/A	26/11/2025	Mayor Moore to submit a CRM regarding neighbouring dogs accessing property.	Cr S Moore	19/12/2025
CCCX25-05	26/11/2025	Review technical equipment in Civic Centre auditorium.	N Rindal	25/02/2025
CCCX25-06	26/11/2025	Provide feedback to Wambo Coal Hall of Fame Committee re 2025 event.	N Rindal	25/02/2025

8 Next Meeting

**MINUTES
COMPLIMENTS COMPLAINTS & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
REVIEW COMMITTEE**



2:00PM - 3:00PM DOCVARIABLE "dvDateMeeting" \@ "dddd d MMMM yyyy" \\
Charformat * Upper **WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2025**

- Wednesday 18 February 2026 2pm – 3pm

The meeting closed at 3:00pm.

Cr Sue Moore, Mayor
Chair

Corporate and Community Services - Report (Items for Information) - DCCS11/26

DCCS11/26. Minutes - Singleton & District Disability Advisory Committee - 02/12/2025 **FILE:** 26/00032
Author: Executive Assistant - Directors

Executive Summary

The Singleton & District Disability Advisory Committee held its ordinary meeting on 2 December 2025. The minutes of the meeting are shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's information.

FOR INFORMATION

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Minutes - Singleton and District Disability Advisory Committee - 02/12/2025

**MINUTES
SINGLETON AND DISTRICT DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
1:30PM - 2:30PM TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2025**



Present	Cr Patrick Thompson, Councillor – Singleton Council (Chair) Dwight Graham, Director Corporate & Community Services – Singleton Council Kristy Murphy, Senior Community Development Specialist – Singleton Council Sandra Cruickshanks – Community Member <i>Virtual</i> Jenna Barwick – Singleton PCYC Joss Davies – Community Member Brianna Fogarty – Community Member Matthew Hourn – Community Member
In Attendance	Nicole Rindal, Manager Community Experience & Events – Singleton Council Kirsten Torrance, Executive Assistant – Singleton Council Sharni Goldman, Team Leader Disaster Risk Reduction – Singleton Council Courtney Wagner – Coordinator Arts & Culture (Gallery Director) – Singleton Council
Meeting Location	Committee Room & virtual via Microsoft Teams

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Welcome
- Acknowledgement of Country by Chair
- Apologies - Janice Lawrence, Maxine Smith
- Absent - Cr Mel McLachlan, Tasmin Young, Jenna Sunerton, Tina Holz, Zac Lloyd, Zoe Collins
- Tony Ovington passed away peacefully on 20 November 2025

2 Disclosure of Interests

- Nil

3 Confirmation of Minutes

- The minutes of the Singleton and District Disability Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday 3 June 2025, were confirmed.

Moved: Joss Davies **Seconded:** Brianna Fogarty
CARRIED

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Nil

5 Agenda Items

**MINUTES
SINGLETON AND DISTRICT DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
1:30PM - 2:30PM TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2025**



5.1 Singleton Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy

Sharni Goldman, Team Leader Disaster Risk Reduction, presented on the development of the Singleton Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy.

As the strategy progresses, Council is seeking advice and input from this Committee to ensure we are including the needs from people living with disability, their carers and family members.

Council is working on the Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Framework (DIDRR) to support those in the Singleton LGA who are at higher risk or require extra assistance to get prepared during an emergency or disaster. The community and local stakeholders have input into Council's DIDRR. Council has been unsuccessful in a grant application for a designated team member for this project.

Sharnie demonstrated the DIDRR interactive platform, inviting Committee members to provide input and feedback. Committee members discussed a website 'widget' that is available to assist people with accessibility requirements. The widget allows visitors to the site to be able to choose options for easier viewing (e.g. dyslexia friendly text, removing animations, change text font size etc.) Sharnie will liaise with the appropriate Council staff member around this.

The platform will be available for consultation until May 2026 at which time consultants will collate the data and information to conclude the project milestone. GHD, the consulting firm undertaking the DIDRR interactive platform project, will consult face to face at various locations throughout the LGA with targeted stakeholders.

Please provide comments to Sharni at sgoldman@singleton.nsw.gov.au

**5.2 Meeting Notes - Singleton and District Disability
Advisory Committee Meetings 05/08/2025 and
14/10/2025**

The Singleton and District Disability Advisory Committee was scheduled to meet on 5 August 2025 and 14 October 2025. As a quorum was not reached for either meeting, there were no formal meetings held and minutes were not recorded.

Meeting notes of brief discussions held are shown as **Attachment 1** and **Attachment 2** for the committee's information.

NOTED

**5.3 International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD)
Program Update**

International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 3 December. For 2025 celebrations, Council, in collaboration with

MINUTES**SINGLETON AND DISTRICT DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
1:30PM - 2:30PM TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2025**

Belgravia Leisure, has developed a program of events to include something for everyone.

The 2025 Program for IDPwD is headlined by the Singleton Arts and Cultural Centre's (SACC) sensorial exhibition, a fully immersive exhibition curated by Blue Mountain's Cultural Centre. "Embrace all your senses. Move beyond sight. Engage through touch and play."

Courtney Wagner, Coordinator Arts & Culture (Gallery Director), presented on *sensorial*, a touring exhibition. *Sensorial* is a fully immersive exhibition curated by Blue Mountain's Cultural Centre.

The SACC has several workshops coming up, the two main events being "Gelli Printing" on 17 January 2026, and "Building Bodies" scheduled for January 2026, date to be confirmed.

In addition to the events at the SACC, the community is encouraged to participate in the following programs scheduled for 3 December 2025 as follows:

Pop-up Aqua Class

Singleton Gym + Swim - 9.30am

Sensory Storytime

Singleton Public Library - 10am

Assistive Technology Workshop

Singleton Public Library 11am – 1pm

Details on IDPwD can be found on Councils website [International Day of People with Disabilities 2025 | Singleton Council](#)

5.4 Sport4All Presentation

Kristy Murphy, Senior Community Development Specialist, presented on Sport4All, a national initiative designed and delivered by people with disability and lived experience. Singleton Council has taken an opportunity to partner with Sport4All, securing an Inclusion Coach for 18 months to work directly with stakeholders and increase participation in sport and recreation by people living with disability.

The program is designed to continue the work commenced by Harry Kirkwood, in his role as Access & Inclusion Officer. Sport4All is partnered with the Dylan Alcott Foundation and is a stable and well-resourced organisation. The program supports the delivery of actions in Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).

More information can be found at [Sport4All - Disability Inclusion in Sport Across Australia](#)

Sandy Cruickshanks left the meeting at 2:07pm

**MINUTES
SINGLETON AND DISTRICT DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
1:30PM - 2:30PM TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2025**



5.5 Community Feedback for Discussion

Kristy Murphy, Senior Community Development Specialist, provided the Committee with an overview of several matters Council has been made aware of regarding accessibility within the community. Council sought feedback and comment from the Committee regarding these items.

Council's maps and Visitor Information Guide will include locations of accessible toilets once they are redesigned and upgraded accordingly.

The Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSI) located out the front of the medical centre at the Singleton Heights Shopping Centre require maintenance. Council will write to the Centre Management on behalf of the Committee.

Council has been asked to conduct an audit throughout the township regarding kerbed ramps. Committee members will provide feedback to Kristy out of session & audit outcomes will be included in a future DIAP.

6 Other Business

- Nil

7 Action List

The current action list was completed and confirmed.

Pulse/Action No	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date
DAC25-07	02/12/2025	Write to Singleton Heights Shopping Centre management regarding TGSI maintenance.	K Murphy	03/02/2025

8 Next Meeting

- Tuesday 3 February 2026, 1:00pm – 2:00pm

The meeting closed at 2:22pm

Cr Patrick Thompson
Chair

DI&P3/26. Minutes - Sports Advisory Committee - 11/12/2025
Author: Executive Assistant - Directors

FILE: 25/00185

Executive Summary

The Sports Advisory Committee held its ordinary meeting on 11 December 2025. The minutes of the meeting are shown as **Attachment 1** for Council's information.

FOR INFORMATION

Attachments

AT-1 [↓](#) Minutes - Singleton Sports Advisory Committee - 11 December 2025

MINUTES
SINGLETON SPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
7:00PM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025



Present	Cr Danny Thompson – Singleton Council (Chair) (Cr DT) Luke Holz – Senior Rugby League (LH) Mal Draper – Singleton AFL (MD) Tom Katur – Singleton Junior Rugby Club (TK) Pete Flockhart – Singleton AFL (PF) Alan Fletcher – SMTBC (AF) Carol Burgmann – Singleton Park Run (CB) Ian O'Brien – Singleton Tri Club (IO) Mark Austin – SSFC – Community (MA) Mark Rix – Howe Park Tennis (MR)
In Attendance	Mike Duff – Director Infrastructure & Planning Services, Singleton Council (MD) Conor Byrne – Manager Infrastructure Services, Singleton Council (CB) Amanda McMahon – Coordinator Recreation & Facilities, Singleton Council (AM) Sue Stewart – Coordinator Recreation & Facilities, Singleton Council (SS)
Meeting Location	Committee Room

1 Welcome and Apologies

- Welcome
- Acknowledgement of Country by Chair
- Apologies
 - Cr Mel McLachlan – Singleton Council
 - David Andrews – Singleton PCYC

2 Disclosure of Interests

- Nil

3 Confirmation of Minutes

- The minutes of the Singleton Sports Advisory Committee meeting held on Thursday 16 October 2025, were confirmed.

Moved Mal Draper **Seconded** Alan Fletcher

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

- Nil

5 Agenda Items

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
7:00PM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



5.1 Financial Report

FILE:25/00185

The Singleton Sports Advisory Committee - Financial Report for November 2025 was reviewed by the Committee.

NOTED

5.2 Sports Advisory Committee - Meeting Dates for 2026 FILE:25/00185

- Thursday, 19 February 2026
- Thursday, 16 April 2026
- Thursday, 18 June 2026
- Thursday, 20 August 2026
- Thursday, 15 October 2026
- Thursday 17 December 2026

Recommendation:

That the Singleton Sports Advisory Committee will meet bi-monthly in 2026 and the dates shown above are endorsed.

Moved Cr Danny Thompson **Seconded** Mark Rix

5.3 Strategic Planning Update

FILE:25/00185

AM provided an update on the progression of Strategic Planning.

Fees & Charges Review

- A consultant has been engaged to review and cost the fees and charges for Council owned sports and recreational buildings and open spaces to ensure they are equitable, sustainable, and aligned with community expectations, usage levels and maintenance costs

Equine Feasibility Study

- A consultant has been engaged to identify the requirements for the establishment of a Council owned equestrian facility (in which all community organisations will have access to) and assess the suitability of a Council owned site, considering viability and sustainability

NOTED

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
7:00PM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



5.4 Capital Works Planning

FILE:25/00185

Nil.

NOTED

5.5 Capital Works Delivery

FILE:25/00185

CB provided an update on the progression of the Capital Works Delivery.

Cook #4 Amenities Extension (\$2.2M)

- Building works are complete
- The new septic system design is under construction and will be completed early next year
- As a result, the opening event will be held at the start of the season if confirmed by the Aussie Rules club

Replacement of Cook #3 Cricket Wicket (\$60,000)

- Construction has been completed and the wicket should be available for use again early next year

Replacement of Cook #2 and Cook #4 Cricket Wicket (\$120,000)

- Construction has been completed and the wicket should be available for use again early next year

Alroy Oval and Amenities Upgrade (\$8.2M)

- Building defect works are completed. Access to the building has been given to the Strikers
- Field maintenance remains the responsibility of the contractor until play ready. It is planned to top dress before the end of the year
- The facility will be available for use from April 2026 with the opening scheduled for February 21 2026

Gym & Swim Indoor Pool Dome Roof Replacement (\$4M)

- Tender process was unsuccessful and Council Officers are considering options to progress the project

Gym & Swim Splash Pad (\$1.5M)

- Works have commenced with temporary features installed. Completion has been delayed until end of January due to world economic conditions

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
7:00PM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



Allan Bull Spectator Seating (\$50,000)

- Site meeting has been held with the club and investigations into options has commenced

NOTED

5.6 Maintenance Activities

FILE:25/00185

AM advised there were 6 CRM's received in October – November.

Date	Customer	Request	Outcome
15/10/25	Singleton Netball Association	The singleton netball courts have been vandalised over the school holidays. The N word has been sprayed between court 4 and 5. Electric bikes have been used to make holes in the paint in front of court 4 and also on other courts	The graffiti was removed and the holes are being investigated.
15/10/25	Singleton Netball Association	Spiders sprayed in clubhouse	Contractors booked on 20/10/25 and have attended
15/10/25	Singleton Netball Association	Bin Issues	Waste arranged for an additional red bin and to empty the bins 21/10/25
30/10/25	Singleton Junior Touch Football	Lights at Civic, we have 7 out now and it's impacting our night games	This was missed and will be actioned asap
12/11/25	Singleton Track and Field	Our discus throwing area has had some trees down the sides, these trees have grown and now impact our throwing area, this has become evident only recently due to the regeneration of the leaves this year. Would we be able to arrange a visit to discuss potential for trimming to be conducted to allow for a clear throwing area? We have our Large Zone Carnival Planned for the 13-14 December, this is a Major event for our club and this is potential the only impact to us not being able to hold this event. Thanks for considering this request.	Trees were cut back 27/11/25
12/11/25	Singleton Track and Field	When submitting the last Request form we changed the contact detail to the person that we wanted to coordinate for that request. This somehow changed our Full Profile Details which wasn't our intent. As the Profile requires property details and the like to change this information (to which the club doesn't have any) we are submitting this request to get the contact details corrected. We have learnt not to do this in the future. Sorry to submit this form just to correct this error.	Councils officer reviewed the NAR details along with the contact information on 19/11/25 - there has been no changes and comparing this information against the UAT environment has shown no difference.

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
7:00PM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



- Light globes (one for Howe Park and one for Cook #4) have been replaced
- Sporting fields have been aerated this week
- Contractors will be conducting weed maintenance for Wilf Allan Walk every two weeks going forward

NOTED

5.7 Grant Programs

FILE:25/00185

AM provided an update on the open sports grants funding opportunities.

[Singleton Council Sports Grant Program Round 2 2025/2026](#)

- Council endorsed the payment of the following grants in November and funding agreements have been forwarded to the below successful applicants
- Round 2 is open from 23 February – 20 March 2026 with \$153,297 available

Applicant	Project	Project Cost (ex GST)	Grant Requested (ex GST)
Singleton MTB Club	Adaptive mountain bike loop upgrade	\$19,905	\$9,952
PCYC	Singleton PCYC Amateur Boxing Competition Event	\$15,471	\$7,735
Total		\$35,376	\$17,687

[Clubgrants Category 3](#)

- Applications open 24 November 2025 and Close 15 December 2025
- Grants of \$50,000 to \$300,000
- Council applications need to match the funding amount requested

[Play our Way Program](#)

- Funding of up to \$191.8M over three years from 2024-25
- Aims to address the barriers women and girls face when participating in sport and physical activity by delivering quality facilities and sport participation experiences where the need is greatest, and in a manner that is safe, equitable, accessible, inclusive, sustainable and enduring.

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
7:00PM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



- Facilities – applications between \$50,000 and \$1.5M
- Participation and equipment – applications between \$50,000 and \$1M
- Projects must be completed by 30 June 2027
- Round 1 closed 29 April 2024

	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	Total
Stream 1 : Facilities	\$60M	\$54M	\$22M	\$136M
Stream 2 : Participation and Equipment	\$30M	\$16M	\$9.8M	\$55.8M

Current Grant Applications

- Nil

Successful Grant Applications

- Nil

NOTED

5.8 Sports Club Updates

FILE:25/00185

David Andrews – Singleton PCYC (via email)

- All term-based activities (fencing, basketball, gymnastics, junior boxing) drawing to a close
- Christmas closure between 23 Dec – 5 Jan
- Planning for Amateur Boxing Competition on Sat 21 Feb 2026 well under way
- For the first time since Covid, we will finish the year with >1000 members

Mal Draper – Singleton AFL

- Senior teams have started training
- The clubs AGM has been held
- The club is looking forward to using the new clubrooms

Carol Burgmann – Park Run

- Park Run is glad that Wilf Allen Walk has reopened
- Park Run didn't operate the 13 December due to the Athletics Zone Carnival

Ian O'Brian – Tri-Club

- The clubs third event was held last Sunday with 60 competitors (including 45 seniors and 15 juniors)

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
7:00PM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



- The rubble that has been laid in the accessway for the construction works has been causing a few issues

Mark Rix – Howe Park Tennis

- The contractor that constructed the synthetic courts is currently investigating defects with the surface
- Pickleball line marking has been installed on the hot shot courts and has been programmed for games on a Sunday morning.

Alan Fletcher - SMTBC

- Races have finished for the year
- 295 school aged primary and high school aged children raced at Maison Dieu on the 14 November
- Pioneer MTB Trails are still getting good reviews and defects are being addressed.
- Thanks to Council for the grant to undertake work on the adaptive MTB trail loop.

Tom Kotzur – Singleton Junior Rugby Union

- Registration have opened with 50 received in the first week
- Registration fees are \$50 and subsidised
- The club will be maintaining the line marking over summer with additional carrot tops required

Mark Watson – Singleton Strikers (Community)

- The club has relocated back from Cook Park to Alroy Oval
- They are chasing quotes and grants for additional work and sponsors for the shirts
- Registrations will open on 01/01/26 with an open day being planned for the 21/02/26

Luke Holz – Senior Rugby League

- Firsts, Reserves and U18 all won their premierships
- Ladies tackle played in the Grand Final and league tag made the elimination final
- The club is looking at going to 7 teams (from 6) with an additional mens team
- Regos are currently open with 80 people attending the first training
- The club would like to work with Council on field maintenance e.g. accessing the contractor for aeration when they are in Singleton for Council.

**MINUTES
SINGLETON SPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
7:00PM THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025**



NOTED

6 Other Business

- Amanda will be on leave for the next 6 – 12 months with Susan (Sue) Stewart filling the role during this time
- Mitch Moy is currently on leave until 18 January and Mason Craig is filling the role during this time

7 Action List

Pulse/Action No	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date

8 Next Meeting

- 19 February 2026 at 7pm in the Committee Room

The meeting closed at 8.02pm.

Cr Danny Thompson
Chair

**DI&P4/26. Response to Notice of Motion - Cr P Thompson -
Engineering Design Guidelines - NM20/25**
Author: Executive Assistant - Directors

FILE: 25/00593-
1

Executive Summary

At the November 2025 Council meeting, Councillor P Thompson put forward the following Notice of Motion (NOM) that:

With the intention to bring forward the review of the Engineering Design Guidelines from 2028 to commence in 2025/2026 financial year, a report to be provided to Council, by the February 2026 Council Meeting, which details:

- What capital works and strategies will need to be deferred if the review is brought forward?
- How long will the items in point 1 be deferred for?
- The impacts (potential or actual) on the Asset Management Plans and Development Control Plan?
- What is the resourcing impact if the Asset Management Plans and Development Control Plan needs to be amended?

In considering the NOM, Council endorsed the motion as put by Cr P Thompson. This report is provided in response to the motion.

FOR INFORMATION

Report

1. What capital works and strategies will need to be deferred if the review is brought forward?

Bringing forward the review of the Engineering Design Guideline (EDG) to the 2025/2026 financial year would require the reallocation of staff resources from the following areas:

- Infrastructure Engineering
- Asset Management
- Planning and Development

Functions and activities impacted by bringing forward the review would include:

- Council's Forward Investigation, Planning & Design Program:
 - Current resources are focused on investigation, planning and design activities for the 2026/27 and 2027/28 Capital Works Projects (CWP's). Any change to the current resource allocation is likely to impact the delivery of these projects in the relevant financial years, as required documentation may not be completed within the scheduled timeframes.

Infrastructure & Planning Report (Items for Information) - DI&P4/26

- This would have an impact on Council's Operational Plans and four-year Delivery Program regarding CWP's. In turn, this could impact Council's ability to support grant funding applications due to submissions not containing adequate levels of investigation, planning and design.

- Asset Management Strategies:
 - The current road geometry specifications in the EDG are linked to Council's Asset Management Plan (AMP). Any changes to the EDG would require corresponding amendments to the AMP prior to implementation, which would require allocation of additional staff resources within the Asset Management team.
 - This reallocation of resources would impact items such as the development of policy and strategy documents, completion of internal audit actions, as well as outcomes and recommendations relating to levels of service, risk and registers for Council structures.
 - Changes to the EDG would also have potential implications for asset valuation, depreciation costs, and maintenance requirements, as road assets are currently calculated on a square-metre basis.

- Traffic & Transportation Strategy and Walking & Cycling Plan:
 - Strategic transport documents have been adopted by Council in the previous year, and the Engineering team is currently focused on prioritising and scheduling works to deliver the identified priority action lists. Reallocating resources away from the Engineering team would impact the planning and delivery of these actions.

2. How long will the items in point 1 be deferred for?

The duration of deferrals would depend on the scope, complexity, and consultation requirements of the EDG and AMP review, which in turn will be defined by a review of the referenced documents and standards.

Indicative timeframes are provided below, noting these periods may extend further if subsequent amendments to the DCP are required:

- Short-term deferrals of approximately 3 to 9 months may occur where projects are paused to allow staff resources to be reallocated; and
- Medium-term deferrals of up to 12 to 18 months may occur where CWP's require realignment with significantly revised engineering standards and associated AMP updates.

3. (What are) the impacts (potential or actual) on the Asset Management Plans and Development Control Plan?

Infrastructure & Planning Report (Items for Information) - DI&P4/26

- Impacts on the Asset Management Plans (AMP):
 - The AMP's are directly linked to the EDG in terms of infrastructure design standards, asset specifications and construction requirements. Significant variation to the EDG may:
 - Alter asset design standards, materials, and performance requirements;
 - Impact asset lifecycle assumptions, renewal costs, and maintenance regimes; and
 - Require reassessment of capital and operational expenditure forecasts contained in the AMPs.
 - Any significant change to the EDG will trigger a review of the AMP's and the 10-year CWP forward program, which may impact Council's long term financial plan (LTFP).

- Impacts on the Development Control Plan (DCP):
 - The DCP references the EDG which underpins engineering and infrastructure requirements. Bringing forward the EDG review may trigger a gap analysis and change in timeline for review to ensure the DCP remains aligned to the EDG, and addresses:
 - Amendments to engineering specifications and technical references;
 - Infrastructure contribution assumptions and servicing requirements for development; and
 - Risk of misalignment between planning controls and engineering standards.

- Any amendments to the EDG, AMP, and DCP would require formal statutory processes, including public exhibition, consultation, and formal adoption. It is anticipated that the exercise of reviewing the EDG, AMP and DCP (if required) would take between 12 and 18 months.

4. What is the resourcing impact if the Asset Management Plans and Development Control Plan needs to be amended?

Amendments to the AMP and DCP arising from an early EDG review would place additional demand on:

- Engineering and Asset management staff;
- Strategic and statutory planning staff;
- Legal and governance support services;
- External consultants (if required); and
- Community engagement and communications resources.

This would require reprioritisation of existing workloads across the above listed functional areas of Council, potentially reducing Council's capacity to deliver capital works, development assessment support, continuous improvement, and business-as-usual functions.

Infrastructure & Planning Report (Items for Information) - DI&P4/26

Whilst not practical to be completed within the current 2025/26 program, to bring forward the EDG review into the next financial year would require approximately \$200,000 to be advanced into the 2026/27 budget, to ensure sufficient funding is available for engagement of consultants necessary to facilitate parts of the review process.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

**QG1/26. Questions of Which Notice Has Been Given - 9
December 2025****FILE: 25/00140****Author:** Governance Lead
Manager Corporate Services**1. Cr Watson – Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program and Singleton Saleyards****FOR COUNCIL'S INFORMATION****1. Cr Watson – Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program and Singleton Saleyards**

Following the recent announcement by Singleton Council of successful funding under the Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program, can a report please come to council on the Singleton Saleyards which includes the following:

1. Current Asset value and projected value in 2026/27
2. Expenditure on asset last 5 years - both capital and operational
3. Projected expenditure next 5 years - both capital and operational
4. Any associated grant agreements
5. Income from the asset for last 5 years - split by rent and any other appropriate categories
6. Details of proposed or agreed rent increases based on improvement to facilities
7. Current rent agreement

Answer

1. Current Asset value and projected value in 2026/27.

Current Asset Value:	\$7,638,236.62
Projected value 26/27:	\$7,999,360.77
2. Expenditure on asset last 5 years- both capital and operational.

Capital:	\$0
Operational:	\$262,495.81
3. Projected expenditure next 5 years - both capital and operational.

Capital:	\$2,000,000.00
Operational:	\$588,095.00
4. Any associated grant agreements.
 Not available as the grant deed is yet to be finalised
5. Income from the asset for last 5 years - split by rent and any other appropriate categories

Rent:	\$43,571.40
Other:	\$1,541.64
6. Details of proposed or agreed rent increases based on improvement to facilities.

The works carried out were part of the negotiations for the current agreement, therefore are built into the resulting rent.

7. Current rent agreement.

Under Section 14 of the *Government Information Public Act, 2009* Council is unable to release this information due to both the Public interest considerations against disclosure and the Commercial in confidence provisions. Council has no proposed future variations planned for this agreement.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.