LOCKHART SHIRE

Annual Report 2023 – 2024

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Image: Matt Beaver 2023

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CONTENTS

MAYORAL ANNUAL REPORT 3
COUNCIL's DIRECTION 5
OUR COUNCILLORS 7
OUR COMMUNITY 8
OUR ORGANISATION 9
BUSINESS ACTIVITY 10
FINANCIAL SUMMARY 19
OUR PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE DELIVERY PROGRAM 23
OUR PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 40

MAYORAL ANNUAL REPORT

I am honoured to present Lockhart Shire Council's Annual Report for 2023/24. This report highlights a year filled with progress, collaboration, and dedication towards making our Shire a better place for all.

Recognising Our Past Leaders

I would like to acknowledge the remarkable service of former Mayor Greg Verdon, former Deputy Mayor Andrew Rockliff, and former General Manager Peter Veneris. Their leadership, dedication, and significant contributions have left a lasting legacy that we continue to build upon today.

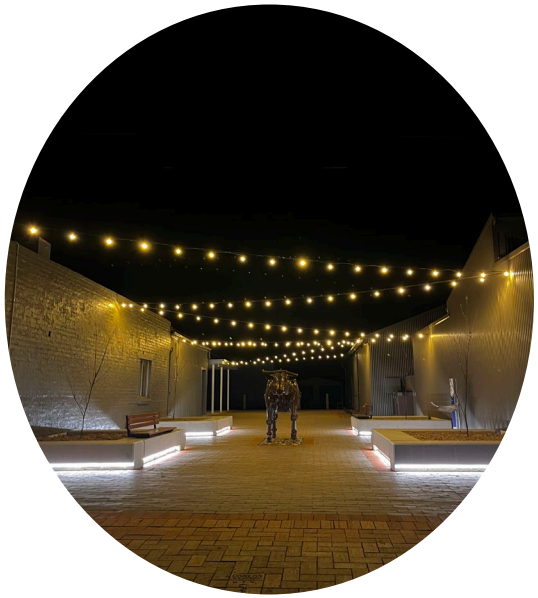
Welcoming New Leadership

In August, we welcomed Gavin Rhodes as our new General Manager. Gavin has returned to his origins of the Riverina and brings a wealth of local government experience. I have no doubt that Gavin will make a positive contribution to Council to achieve great outcomes for our community.

I am also pleased to welcome new Councillors Erica Jones and Bobby Rushby. Their energy and input will undoubtedly be a tremendous asset to our Shire. At the same time, I would like to warmly welcome back our returning Councillors: Gail Driscoll, Ian Marston, Bob Mathews, Fran Day, James Walker, and Jane Hunter. Their continued commitment and experience will provide stability and vision as we move forward.

Achievements and Community Projects

This year, we have continued to focus on delivering projects that improve the lives of our residents and strengthen our community:



George the Friesian Bull, winner of the 2023 Spirit of the Land Farm Art Award, takes pride of place at the newly completed precinct at 109 Green Street, Lockhart.

Photo: © Lockhart Shire Council

Infrastructure Upgrades: Major roadworks and facility improvements have enhanced safety and accessibility throughout our Shire. These works include:

- Henty Pleasant Hills Road sealing
- Galore Hill seal internal roads
- Mittagong Yerong Creek Road culvert upgrade
- Lockhart Kywong Road, Lockhart culvert upgrade
- Osborne Yerong Creek Road, Osborne shoulder widening
- The Rock Mangoplah Road shoulder widening
- Prichard Place, Lockhart sealing
- O'Connell Street and Hebden Street, Lockhart footpaths
- Crawford Street footpath and bus bay, Pleasant Hills
- Completed Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan

Community Investment: New recreational spaces and the revitalisation of public areas have created vibrant gathering places for residents. Such as:

- 109 Green St Lockhart redevelopment – public toilets & community space
- New all abilities cabin at Lockhart Caravan Park
- Tennis court upgrade at Pleasant Hills
- The Rock Avenue of Honour
- Pleasant Hills Esplanade
- Upgrade to oval lighting at Osborne, The Rock and Lockhart Recreation Grounds
- CCTV cameras at Lockhart, Osborne, The Rock and Yerong Creek Recreation Reserves and the main streets in Lockhart and The Rock

Economic Development and Tourism: We have supported local businesses through marketing initiatives and opportunities that attract visitors and stimulate economic growth.

Environmental Sustainability: Initiatives focused on waste management, renewable energy, and community tree-planting efforts highlight our commitment to preserving our environment.

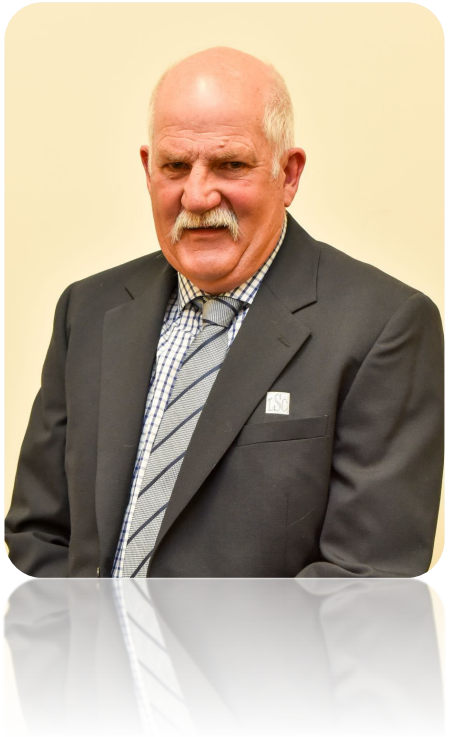
With the commencement of the new term of Council, our immediate focus in 2024/25 will be on the identification and prioritisation of key local community needs and aspirations, as well as the consideration of regional priorities. This will be achieved through community consultation and the review and update of the Community Strategic Plan, Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

In closing, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my fellow Councillors, our hardworking Council staff, and the countless volunteers who contribute to making Lockhart Shire a wonderful place to live. Together, we will continue to foster a strong, connected, and prosperous community.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Peter. G. Sharp.

Cr Peter Sharp
Mayor



COUNCIL'S DIRECTION

Our Vision

Provide an environment where people may enjoy a quality of life to which they aspire.

Our Mission

Provide leadership and meet the community's needs in an equitable and inclusive way that enhances the area's environmental, social and economic qualities.

Our Values

- Leadership
- Integrity
- Progressiveness
- Commitment
- Accountability
- Adaptability

Community Strategic Plan

This plan builds on the original plan developed in 2012 which set out the community aspirations current at the time and follows a review of the 2017-2027 plan, which was developed by engaging and listening to our community.

The review of the CSP was undertaken bearing in mind that the term of office of the current council will be shorter i.e. two years and nine months instead of the normal four-year term as a result of the postponement of the last elections. A more comprehensive review of the CSP is foreshadowed for the beginning of the next full four-year term in 2024.

Whilst the objectives and key themes reflected in previous iterations of the CSP and retained in this plan continue to remain relevant, new initiatives and principal activities are required to be developed to achieve the community's aspirations. These initiatives and activities are contained in the 2022-2024 Delivery Plan.

Our Community Vision

The 2022-2032 Community Strategic Plan reflects the community's vision that in 2032 we are:

- Deeply connected to the land and proud of our independence
- Dynamic, resilient and have a strong sense of community
- Passionate for innovation and diverse opportunities; and
- Welcoming, vibrant, inclusive, accessible and value the rights of people equally.

Delivery Program

The Delivery Plan is a statement of commitment to the community from our newly elected council. This is the point where the community's strategic objectives are systematically translated into actions. The 2022-2024 Delivery Plan should be read in conjunction with the Community Strategic Plan and includes, amongst other things:

- A review of the effectiveness of the Council's flood mitigation schemes
- Restoration of the Shire's road network following recent significant weather events
- Re-development of 109 Green Street Lockhart (former GrainCorp building) into a community space
- The establishment of a business/community centre at The Rock
- A review of the Lockhart Shire Local Environmental Plan to guide land use planning and development into the future.

- Continued improvements to our sporting and recreational facilities and community infrastructure.

Consistent with the community's vision reflected in the ten-year Community Strategic Plan, the objectives of the Delivery Program are:

- Strong leadership and governance
- A connected and resilient community
- A dynamic and prosperous economy
- An environment that is respected and protected and
- Infrastructure that meets the long term needs of the community.

Our desired vision for our community and Delivery Program objectives can only be achieved through close co-operation, support and partnerships between Council, state agencies, private industry, community groups and individuals in the implementation of our Plan.

To ensure that we achieve our desired community vision, we will also undertake asset management, service provision and workforce management planning and prepare a delivery program and operational plan to service the key strategy items highlighted in our Plan.

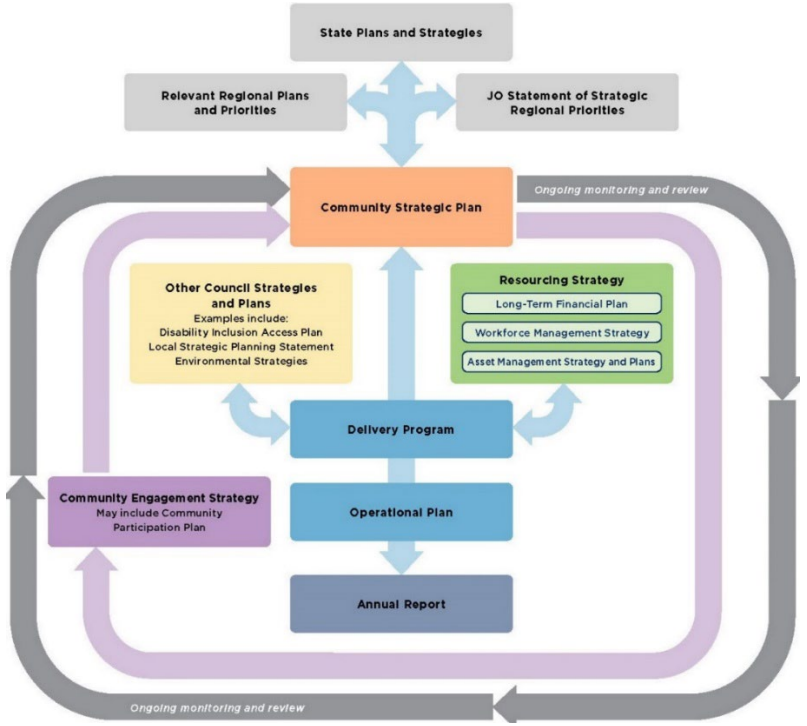
Our Planning Framework

Our planning framework is guided by the NSW Government Integrated Planning and Reporting legislation and framework. In undertaking long-term planning, we recognise that people across our community share similar aspirations and our people hold the key to how we should best respond to these aspirations. Our planning framework allows us to draw various plans together, understand how they relate and get the maximum benefit by collectively planning for the future.

Lockhart Shire acknowledges and reflects the NSW Government's social justice principles in its planning process.

- Equity – there should be fairness in decision making, and prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances.
- Access – all people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.
- Participation – everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.
- Rights – equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

A Disability Inclusion Action Plan has been developed and progress reports have been incorporated into the Delivery Program.



OUR COUNCILLORS

Lockhart Shire residents and ratepayers were represented in 2023/24 by the nine-member Lockhart Shire Council equally across three wards.

Cr. Greg Verdon (Mayor)
Phone: 0408 213 586
Email: gverdon@lockhart.nsw.gov.au

Cr. Gail Driscoll
Phone: 0427 203 580
Email: gdriscoll@lockhart.nsw.gov.au

Cr. Bob Mathews
Phone: 0429 205 608
Email: rmathews@lockhart.nsw.gov.au

Cr. Andrew Rockliff (Deputy Mayor)
Phone: 0447 105 564
Email: arockliff@lockhart.nsw.gov.au

Cr. Jane Hunter
Phone: 0428 414 705
Email: jhunter@lockhart.nsw.gov.au

Cr. Peter Sharp
Phone: 0428 828 003
Email: psharp@lockhart.nsw.gov.au

Cr. Fran Day OAM
Phone: 0427 205 526
Email: fday@lockhart.nsw.gov.au

Cr. Ian Marston
Phone: 0429 202 453
Email: imarston@lockhart.nsw.gov.au

Cr. James Walker
Phone: 0427 814 689
Email: jwalker@lockhart.nsw.gov.au

OUR COMMUNITY

Lockhart Shire nestles in the heart of the Riverina and is one of the region's most productive agricultural and pastoral areas. The Shire offers visitors a relaxed country atmosphere that is steeped in history.

The Lockhart Shire covers an area of 2,942km2 and with a population of 3,319 the Shire includes the major townships of Lockhart and The Rock and the smaller villages of Milbrulong, Osborne, Urangeline, Yerong Creek and Pleasant Hills.

Lockhart is situated 62km southwest of Wagga Wagga, 62km east of Narrandera and 105km north of Albury. The Rock is on the Olympic Highway 25km south of Wagga Wagga with Yerong Creek another 15km down the Highway.

The Shire, which is traditionally Wiradjuri land, has a vibrant and varied history and has been an area that has long captured the interest of both Indigenous and European cultures. Renowned for the majestic landform, Galore Hill and The Rock Hill have influenced the development of townships over many years.

The Shire, which offers the full range of lifestyle options, has grown in popularity, both as a place to live and as a place of business. Close to the major regional centres of Wagga Wagga and Albury, the Shire still relies on a strong primary industry supported by a number of secondary and service industries. Tourism, especially heritage and eco-tourism, have seen good positive growth over recent years.

L-R: Australia Day Ambassador, Mr Craig Goozee OAM; Majella Day – Sportsperson of the Year; Natasha Gowland – Australia Day Award, Larraine Hoffmann – Citizen of the Year; and Lockhart Shire Mayor, Cr Greg Verdon.

Lockhart Shire is the centre of farming excellence. Fertile soils led to agriculture flourishing, firstly as a grazing district and, with the advent of cropping, became a prosperous mixed farming area. Today, its proud history is reflected in the agricultural initiatives and distinction for which the Shire has become renowned. The Shire's agriculture continues to produce quality grain, prime lamb and beef, with the wool industry still an integral part of its agricultural diversity.

The Shire's population as recorded in the 2021 Census is 3,319 which represents a 6.41% for the five-year Census period or an annual average population growth of 1.28%.

Notably the Department of Planning and Environment has released its population projections and has forecast that Lockhart Shire's population will grow to approximately 4,500 by 2041 representing an average annual population growth of over 1.5%.

According to DPIE in the Lockhart Shire Local Government Area (LGA) births are exceeding deaths i.e. natural increase, and net migration is positive i.e. more people are moving to the LGA than are leaving it.

OUR ORGANISATION

The following diagram shows the organisational structure and key function areas of the departments within Lockhart Shire Council:

COUNCIL

GENERAL MANAGER

Austin Morris
Director Engineering

- Road/Bridge Construction & Maintenance
- Drainage Construction & Maintenance
- Sewerage Construction
- Traffic Management
- Municipal Emergency Control
- Asset Management - Swimming Pools, Roads, Cemeteries, Aerodrome, Caravan Park, Quarries
- Parks and Reserves
- Depots and Stores
- Fleet Management
- Advice, support, planning and communications

Jesse Rapley
Director Planning and Environment

- Environment and Pollution Monitoring
- Building Regulation & Advice
- Food Inspections
- Animal Control
- Waste Management and Recycling
- Subdivision & Development Control
- Statutory Town Planning
- Local Environment Plan
- Sewerage Operation & Maintenance
- Land Management Plans
- Advice, support, planning and communications

Gavin Rhodes
General Manager

- Integrated Planning & Reporting
- Council Meeting Management
- Human Resources
- Work Health & Safety
- Economic Development
- Tourism
- Land Sales
- Organisation Development
- Communication/Media Interface

Craig Fletcher
Director Corporate and Community Services

- Financial Management (AAS27) & Corporate Planning
- Finance and Internal Auditing
- Statutory Reporting
- Rates
- Information Technology
- Records Management
- Purchasing
- Maximising Potential Grant Income
- Insurance Portfolio
- Asset Management
- Land Register
- Youth Services
- Advice, support, planning and communications
- Payroll/Creditors
- Property Management

BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Mayoral and Councillors Fees and Expenses

During the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 the following expenses were incurred:

Mayoral Allowance	$	28,430.00
Councillor Fees (9 Councillors)	$	102,960.00
Councillor Superannuation	$	10,992.63
Communication exp. (iPads etc.)	$	7,109.49
Training & development (incl. conferences & seminars)	$	14,993.32
Spouse/partner expenses	$	416.81
Intrastate travel within LGA – council meetings	$	7,100.14
Intrastate travel - other	$	7,196.84
Overseas travel	$	0.00
Council Meals	$	885.05
Care and other related expenses incl. uniform	$	70.00
Total	$	180,154.28

These payments were made in accordance with the annual fees determined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal, Council's policy for the Payment of Councillors and Mayoral Fees, Expenses and Facilities and with the Local Government Act 1993.

Interstate and Overseas Visits Undertaken by Councillors, Council Staff or other Persons Representing the Council

No interstate or overseas visits were undertaken on Council's behalf by councillors, council staff or other persons representing the Council.

Senior Staff

The position of General Manager is the only position classified as senior staff. This position was occupied by Mr Peter Veneris in 2023/24.

The total annual remuneration package in respect of the employment of the General Manager, including money payable for salary, superannuation, motor vehicle and associated on-costs connected with their employment was $275,222.00.

Councillor Training and Professional Development

In 2018/19 Council adopted a program of professional development for Councillors. The program provides for one additional councillor to accompany the Mayor (who is Council's voting delegate) to the annual conference of Local Government NSW, local government's peak industry body.

In addition to providing access to numerous one-day courses offered by Local Government NSW and other organisations, the program also allows for one councillor each year to undertake the Executive Certificate in Local Government (4-day course) also offered by Local Government NSW.

Details of induction, training and professional development opportunities provided to and undertaken by Councillors in 2023/24 is set out below:

Local Government NSW Annual Conference

Council nominated the Mayor, Cr Verdon, as its voting delegate and Crs Sharp and Day as attendees to the LGNSW Annual Conference held in Rosehill from 12 to 14 November 2023.

NSW Country Mayors Association

The Mayor attended meetings of the NSW Country Mayors' Association held in Sydney as follows:

- 22 March 2024
- 10 May 2024

Other Training and Professional Development

Training Course	Provider	Attendees	Date
Social Media for Councillors	LG NSW (online)	Cr Fran Day	4 December 2023
Mayoral Forum	LG NSW	Cr Peter Sharp	30 November 2023
Taxation Considerations for Councillors	LG NSW (online)	Cr Peter Sharp	25 March 2024
Code of Meeting Practice for Councillors	LG NSW (online)	Cr Peter Sharp	27 May 2024
CMA Meeting	NSW Country Mayors Assoc	Cr Ian Marston	4 August 2023
Energy & Innovation Conference	REROC	Cr R Mathews	13-14 September 2023
LG NSW Annual Conference	LG NSW	Crs Sharp and Day	12-14 November 2023
Bush Summit	Herald Sun	Cr Greg Verdon	18 August 2023
Regional Health Forum	MLHD and NSW Country Mayors Association	Cr Greg Verdon Cr Fran Day Cr Jane Hunter	15 September 2023
Rural and Regional Waste Conference	REROC	Cr R Mathews Cr F Day	18-20 October 2023
Annual Conference	ALGWA	Cr F Day	14-16 March 2024
Housing Forum	NSW Country Mayors Association	Cr G Verdon Cr P Sharp	8-9 April 2024
Rural and Regional Summit	LG NSW	Cr P Sharp	9 May 2024
Meeting	NSW Country Mayors Association	Cr P Sharp	10 May 2024
Destination and Visitor Economy Conference		Cr F Day	28-30 May 2024

External Bodies Exercising Council Functions

Lockhart Shire Council has a number of Management Committees appointed under Section 355 of the Local Government Act and delegated authority to undertake management of functions of Council. Those operative during 2023/24 are listed below:

- Bidgeemia Public Hall Committee
- Lockhart & District Historical Society
- Lockhart Airstrip Management Committee
- Lockhart Golf Club Management Committee
- Lockhart Recreation Ground Management Committee
- Lockhart Showground & Racecourse Management Committee
- Magnolia Lodge Tenancy Committee
- Milbrulong Hall & Recreation Ground Committee
- Osborne Recreation Ground Committee
- Pleasant Hills Public Hall Committee
- Pleasant Hills Recreation Ground Committee
- The Rock Regional Observatory
- The Rock Recreation Ground Committee
- The Rock Showground & Golf Course Committee
- The Rock Town Hall and Museum Committee
- Tootool Recreation Reserve Committee
- Tootool Roadside Rest Stop Committee
- Tourism & Economic Development Committee
- Yerong Creek Public Hall Committee
- Yerong Creek Recreation Ground Management Committee

Pursuant to section 380 of the Local Government Act each council must review all its delegations during the first 12 months of each term of office.

In accordance with this requirement Council reviewed its delegations in May 2022 following the Local Government Elections held in December 2021

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Contracts Awarded

During the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 Council awarded the following contracts in excess of $150,000:

Contracted Party	Contract Description	Estimated Value (Incl. GST)
1. Orange Hire Leeton - Earthmoving 2. Smallmon Bros Wagga Wagga - Waste 3. Grid logistics St Marys – Earthmoving 4. Aqua Assets Revesby - Drains 5. Coates Hire - Earthmoving 6. Summit Open Space Services Glendenning – Earthmoving 7. Double Gully Services Lavington – Slashers, mowers 8. Superior Crane Hire Wagga Wagga 9. Spicer Earthmoving Armidale 10. Rollers Pty Ltd Wagga Wagga 11. Boots Civil – Earthmoving 12. R & L Holyoake - Earthmoving 13. RW & LM Thomson – Water Truck 14. Campo's Earthworks - Earthmoving 15. Solomons Provisions (A & S Mulholland) – Gravel trucks	Approved contractors for the dry and wet hire of plant and equipment.	N/A
Country Wide Group	Spray sealing services	$600,000
J & J Building & Construction	Construction of The Rock Community Centre	$602,789
Hounsell & Son Pty Ltd	Construction of Lockhart Community Gym	$273,672

Private Works – Statutory

During the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 Council did not undertake any subsidised work on private land in terms of Section 67 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Residents can obtain quotes from Council to undertaken Private Works. Council is to ensure appropriate Private Works charges are set at Delivery Program preparation time. Any Private Works are integrated into Council's Works Program.

Rates and charges written off during the year

During the 2023/24 financial year rates and charges (exclusive of Pensioner concessions) totalling $122.69 were written off.

Council provided rate relief to Pensioners during the financial year in the sum of $75,447.57. Council did however receive $41,497.20 in Pensioner Concession Rebate from the NSW State Government.

CWA Park in Green Street, Lockhart, is just one of many spaces to spot local birdlife like the Blue-faced Honeyeater, attracted by the native plantings.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance was provided pursuant to section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 to numerous organisations during 2023/24 as listed below.

Bidgeemia Hall	$	2,100	Annual Subsidy
Milbrulong Hall	$	2,100	Annual Subsidy
Pleasant Hills Public Hall	$	4,200	Annual Subsidy
The Rock Hall & Museum	$	7,000	Annual Subsidy
Urangeline Peace Hall	$	2,100	Annual Subsidy
Yerong Creek Public Hall	$	4,500	Annual Subsidy
Lockhart & District Historical Society	$	3,700	Annual Subsidy
The Rock Regional Observatory	$	4,500	Annual Subsidy
Lockhart Recreation Ground	$	17,500	Annual Subsidy
Osborne Recreation Ground	$	17,500	Annual Subsidy
Pleasant Hills Recreation Reserve	$	2,100	Annual Subsidy
The Rock Recreation Ground	$	17,500	Annual Subsidy
Yerong Creek Recreation Ground	$	9,800	Annual Subsidy
Lockhart Showground & Racecourse	$	4,900	Annual Subsidy
The Rock Showground & Golf Course	$	2,600	Annual Subsidy
Lockhart Airstrip	$	1,500	Annual Subsidy
Lockhart Golf Course	$	4,000	Annual Subsidy
Pleasant Hills Community Hotel	$	6,000	Annual Subsidy
NSW Rural Doctors Network	$	3,000	23-24 Bush Bursary
Southern Sports Academy	$	400	Sponsorship
Spirit of the Land Festival	$	12,000	Donation, incl. in-kind
Lockhart Lions Club	$	201	Rates – depot facility
Lockhart Lions Club	$	3072	Freight costs
Lockhart Progress Association	$	500	Christmas Lights
The Rock Progress Association	$	500	Christmas Lights
The Rock Golf Club	$	18,000	Building Improvements
The Rock Recreation Ground Mgt C'ttee	$	3,500	Host Australia Day
The Rock & District Meals on Wheels	$	500	Host Seniors Expo
The Rock Recreation Ground Mgt C'ttee	$	1963	Shade Sales
The Rock Observatory	$	2164	50% Contrib. Roller Door
Yerong Creek Public Hall	$	1000	Fundraising Event
J & R Swift	$	500	S Swift – NSW Swimming Titles
Total Subsidies, Contributions and Donations	**$**	**160,900**	

Animal Control

To ensure a good level of compliance with respect to keeping of companion animals and livestock, Lockhart Shire Council strive to:

- Ensure that complaints are investigated expeditiously and with appropriate action
- Improve the community's level of knowledge of the care and control of animals
- Implement strategies to promote the de-sexing of dogs and cats
- Maximise the number of registered animals
- Record and lodge pound data and dog attacks
- Implement strategies to ensure compliance with the requirements under s64 (Companion Animals Act)
- Seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals; and
- Provide off leash areas throughout council areas.

Companion animals identified and registered in Lockhart Shire during 2023/24 include 119 identified and 75 registered.

Council's employs a Compliance Officer and in 2023/24 compliance activities resulted in:

- 8 dogs and nil cats being seized
- 2 dogs placed with Dunroamin Animal Rescue
- 6 dogs returned to their owners
- 4 feral cats euthanised
- 2 dog attacks, with infringements issued

Public Interest Disclosures

Council has a Public Interest Disclosures Policy in place, a copy of which is available on Council's website.

It is reported that during 2023/24:

a) There were no public interest disclosures made by public officials in performing their day-to-day functions

b) There were no public interest disclosures not within paragraph a) made under a statutory or other legal obligation

c) There was one public interest disclosure referred to Council by another agency.

Government Information (Public Access) Applications

Council is an 'agency' for the purposes of the Government Information (Public Access) Act (GIPA Act).

It is reported that during 2023/24 Council received and determined access applications under the GIPA Act as follows:

Number of applications by type of applicant	Access granted in full	Access denied	Information not held	Application Withdrawn	Total number of applications received
Media					
Private sector businesses					
Not for profit organisations or community groups					
Members of the public (application by legal representative)	22		2		24
Applications from members of the public (other)					
Total	22		2		24

It is further reported that:

- All applications were for other than personal information.
- No applications were deemed to be invalid applications pursuant to sections 14, 43 or 110 of the GIPA Act.
- Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure in accordance with Schedule 1 of the GIPA Act was not a consideration for any of the applications.
- No other public interest considerations against disclosure in accordance with Section 14 of the GIPA Act were applied to any of the applications.

Amounts Incurred by the Council during the Year in Relation to Legal Proceedings Taken by or against the Council

Council incurred no legal costs relating to obtaining legal advice.

The balance of Council's legal costs amounting to $10,810.15 related to conveyancing costs associated with the sale or acquisition of real property and general legal work including the preparation of legal documents.

A statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which the Council (whether alone or in conjunction with other councils) held a controlling interest

Council did not participate in any entities in which it held a controlling interest.

A statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which the Council participated

Council participates in a number of entities for resource sharing and related purposes. A list of all such entities Council participates in or is a member of are listed below:

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils (REROC)

REROC is a voluntary association of seven general purpose councils and one water county council located in the eastern Riverina region of NSW.

The members of REROC are the councils of: Bland, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Greater Hume, Junee, Lockhart, Temora and Goldenfields Water.

REROC provides an opportunity for member councils to work more closely together to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness in service delivery.

REROC is an incorporated association in NSW.

Riverina Joint Organisation

The Riverina Joint Organisation (Riverina JO) brings together eight general purpose councils and two water county councils located in the eastern Riverina of NSW.

Joint Organisations are a new type of local government-based collaborative organisation. Joint Organisations operate only in regional NSW and will increase opportunities for local government and the State to work more closely together to bring about better outcomes for the communities the JO's Member Councils represent. The Riverina JO is one of 13 Joint Organisations constituted under the Local Government Act 1993 that were proclaimed in 2018.

The Riverina JO's Member Councils are Bland, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Greater Hume, Junee, Lockhart, Temora, Wagga Wagga, Goldenfields Water and Riverina Water County Councils.

The principal functions of the Riverina JO are to:

- establish regional strategic priorities and develop strategies and plans to deliver those priorities;
- promote regional leadership and be an advocate for our regional strategic priorities; and
- identify and take up opportunities for intergovernmental co-operation on matters relating to the Joint Organisation area.

Riverina Regional Library (RRL)

The Riverina Regional Library (RRL) is the largest regional library service in NSW. It provides library services to approximately 86,846 constituents of 10 local government areas, those being the shires of Berrigan, Bland, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Federation, Greater Hume, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Snowy Valleys and Temora. The service consists of 21 stationary library branches and a mobile library spread over an area of 46,324sq km.

RRL operates under sections 11 and 12 of the NSW Library Act 1939 which provide for the joint provision of library services by two or more councils under the Executive Council model. This is the only model under which a regional library may operate in NSW and requires participating councils to appoint an Executive Council to administer library services on their behalf. Coolamon Shire has acted as the Executive Council of the Library since 1 July 2023.

Riverina Water

Riverina Water County Council is a body corporate established under the Local Government Act for the purposes of water supply. Lockhart Shire Council is one of four constituent councils and neither controls, nor significantly influences the County Council. Riverina Water County Council is governed by a body of nine Councillors. Council members consist of five elected members from Wagga Wagga City Council and one each from Lockhart and Federation Councils, and two from Greater Hume Shire Council.

Statewide Mutual

With a membership of 113 NSW Local Government councils, including Lockhart, Statewide Mutual is the largest local government self-insurance pool in Australia.

The five schemes offered by Statewide Mutual are:

- Liability scheme
- Property Mutual scheme
- Crime (Fidelity Guarantee) scheme
- Councillors' and Officers' cover
- Motor Vehicle cover.

StateCover Mutual

StateCover Mutual Limited has been operating since 2001 as a Specialised Insurer, supporting the workers compensation needs of NSW Councils and other local government entities. StateCover insures 134 local government entities, including Lockhart, covering a workforce of approximately 38,000 employees.

StateCover was established as a public company by Local Government NSW (LGNSW), which remains as StateCover's majority shareholder. In addition StateCover policy-holding Members are each shareholders in the Mutual.

Local Government NSW (LGNSW)

LGNSW is the peak organisation that represents the interests of NSW general and special purpose councils.

LGNSW provides support to and advocates on behalf of member councils. LGNSW also delivers a range of services including representing councils in industrial disputes and award matters, providing policy advice, executive recruitment, performance reviews, organisation reviews as well as professional development for councillors and staff.

LGNSW is a registered organisation pursuant to the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act.

Murray Darling Association

The MDA is an incorporated body which aims to provide effective representation of local government and communities at state and federal level in the management of the Murray Darling Basin's resources. It seeks to achieve this by providing information, facilitating debate and seeking to influence government policy.

Activities undertaken by Council during the year to implement its equal employment opportunity (EEO) management plan

Council has an EEO Policy (Policy 3.10) which is subject to review in accordance with Council's adopted Policy Review Timetable as well as an EEO Management Plan. The objectives of the updated EEO management plan are:

- To inform all employees, potential employees and the general community at large that the Council is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
- To ensure the active participation of all management, employees and relevant unions in the EEO Management Plan.
- To review recruitment and selection procedures and practices to ensure they support EEO principles.
- To ensure that all council employees involved in the interview process adopt a technique which is non-discriminatory i.e., questioning, non-verbal gestures etc.
- To encourage applicants for positions to demonstrate an awareness of EEO principles and practices at interview. The level of awareness and knowledge is to be varied according to the level and nature of the position and the number of staff to be supervised.
- To ensure all employees are treated in a fair and consistent manner in relation to matters pertaining to appointment, promotion and transfer within Council.
- To ensure that all employees have equal opportunities to relieve/act in higher positions.

- To identify opportunities for providing positions for people of all abilities in Council employment.
- To ensure that all employees have equal opportunities for promotion and career path development within the Council.
- To remove any barriers to part-time positions within the Council.
- To encourage opportunities for full-time and part-time trainee positions within Council for people under 21 years.
- To ensure staff receive training and developmental opportunities based on policies and procedures which confirm EEO principles.
- To review and monitor conditions of service and practices to ensure they conform with EEO principles and demonstrate fair practice.
- To encourage and maintain a harmonious work environment by introducing an effective mechanism for the resolution, of grievances, accessible to all staff.

The EEO Management Plan was reviewed in November 2021.

All new staff are provided with a copy of Council's EEO Policy as part of the induction process.

A copy of Council's EEO Policy was also displayed in staff rooms and on Council's public notice board.

Report on proposed capital works projects where a capital expenditure review had been submitted

There were no capital works projects undertaken in 2023/24 that were the subject of a capital expenditure review.

Total number of persons who performed paid work for the council

There were 50 employees undertaking paid work on the relevant date of 14 February 2024.

Permanent Full Time	40
Permanent Part Time	3
Casual	6
Senior Staff (Full time)	1
Total	50

Details of Inspections of Private Swimming Pools

a) Number of inspections of tourist and visitor accommodation – Nil

b) Number of inspections of premises with more than two dwellings – Nil

c) Number of inspections under Swimming Pools Act 1992 that resulted in the issuance of a certificate of compliance under 22D of the Act – 11

d) Number of inspections under Swimming Pools Act 1992 that resulted in the issuance of a certificate of non-compliance under 18BA of the Regulations – 4.

Fraud Control Activities

Council maintains a Fraud Control Policy and Fraud Control Action Plan.

Council has a Policy Review Schedule which provides for all policies to be reviewed at least every three years. Individual policies are reviewed and amended in advance of the scheduled review date when circumstances warrant. This may be prompted by factors such as a change in legislation, a change in government policy or because of a need identified by the Council, management and staff or internal and external audit activities.

In 2023/24 Council undertook the following fraud control activities:

- New staff inductions (online Code of Conduct training etc)
- Existing staff Code of Conduct sign-off
- Existing staff Secondary Employment sign-off
- Public Interests Disclosures Policy Review

- Public Interests Disclosures training for GM, Disclosure Officers and all supervisors

Codes and Policies

The following policies with fraud control related provisions were reviewed in 2023/24:

- Policy 3.18 Use of Credit Cards (18/3/2024)

Training and Annual Sign-Off

Council's induction program for new employees includes online training in the Code of Conduct for all new employees.

Council's annual Employee Performance Review system includes an annual sign-off by all existing employees in relation to the Code of Conduct.

The General Manager participated in the following training opportunities:

- Module 1 – Public Interest Disclosures – Disclosure Officers, May 2024.

Internal Audit

Council participates in an Internal Audit Alliance comprising five other councils in the region to share the services of a contracted Internal Auditor.

Internal Audit Reviews undertaken by the Internal Auditor in 2023/24 focused on commercial leases and property, developer contributions and recruitment and staffing.

"Reportable incidents" are a standing agenda item at all Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) meetings.

The Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Charter provides for the following documents to be tabled at an ARIC meeting on an annual basis:

- Gifts and Benefits Register
- Fraud Control Policy and Fraud Control Action Plan
- Local Government Act Compliance Checklist
- Audit Management Letter
- Risk Register

Lockhart Picnic Races Committee (pictured) organised another fantastic race meet in October 2023. The historic grandstand is a great place to watch the races from.

Image © Matt Beaver 2023

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The Local Government Act (The Act) requires Council to produce General Purpose Financial Statements and Special Purpose Financial Statements for inclusion in Council's Annual Report. These statements are to be externally audited prior to being adopted by Council for publication.

The 2023/24 Audited Financial Statements were presented at a Council meeting held on 25 November 2024 in accordance with the legislative requirements for presentation of the audited financial statements and auditor's reports to the public, as outlined in section 413 of the Act.

The 2023/24 Audited Financial Statements are available for inspection at:

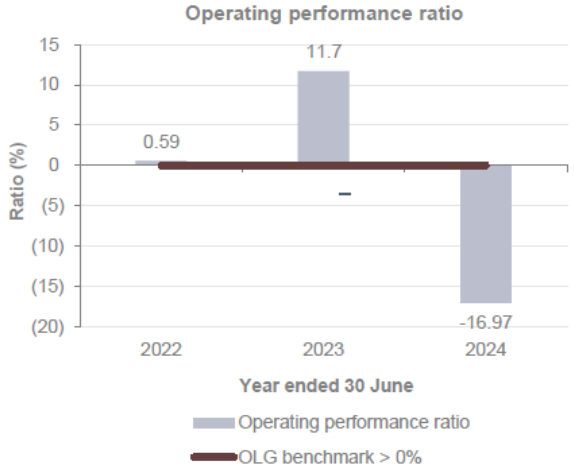
Council's office: 65 Green Street Lockhart NSW 2656
Council's website: www.lockhart.nsw.gov.au

Performance measures

The following section provides an overview of the Council's performance against the performance measures and performance benchmarks set by the Office of Local Government (OLG) within the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

Operating performance ratio

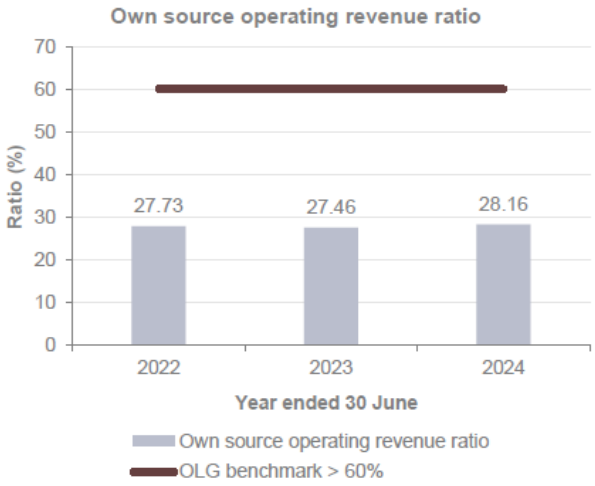
- Council did not meet the benchmark for the current reporting period.
- The 'operating performance ratio' measures how well council contained operating expenditure within operating revenue (excluding capital grants and contributions, fair value adjustments, and reversal of revaluation decrements). The benchmark set by OLG is greater than zero per cent.



- The operating performance ratio decreased by 28.67% due to an increase in materials and services expenditure of $5.6 million.

Own source operating revenue

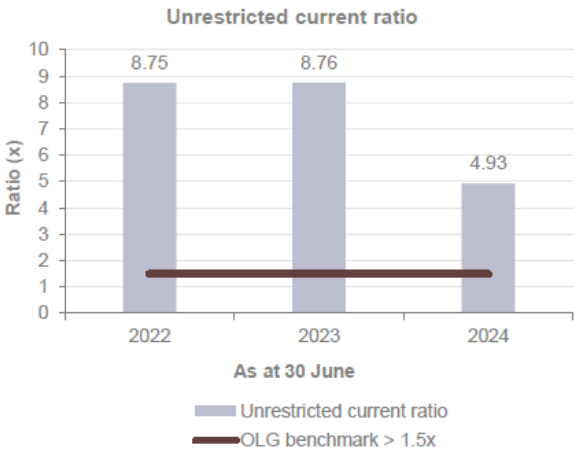
- Council did not meet the benchmark for the current reporting period.
- The 'own source operating revenue ratio' measures council's fiscal flexibility and the degree to which it relies on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 60 per cent.



- The ratio has remained consistent across the period.

Unrestricted Current Ratio

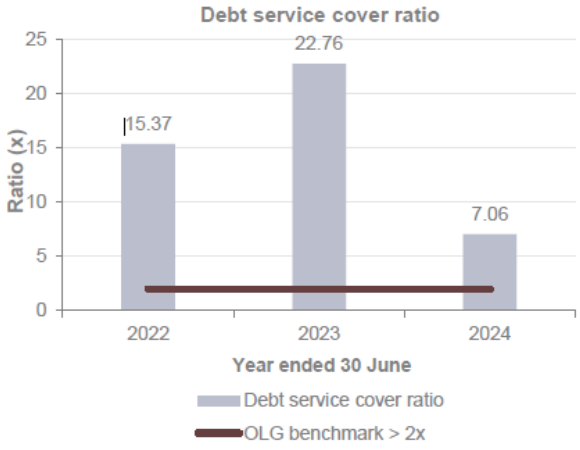
- Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.
- The 'unrestricted current ratio' is specific to local government and represents council's ability to meet its short-term obligations as they fall due. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 1.5 times.



- The ratio has decreased by 3.83 due to a $0.9 million increase in payables.

Debt service cover ratio

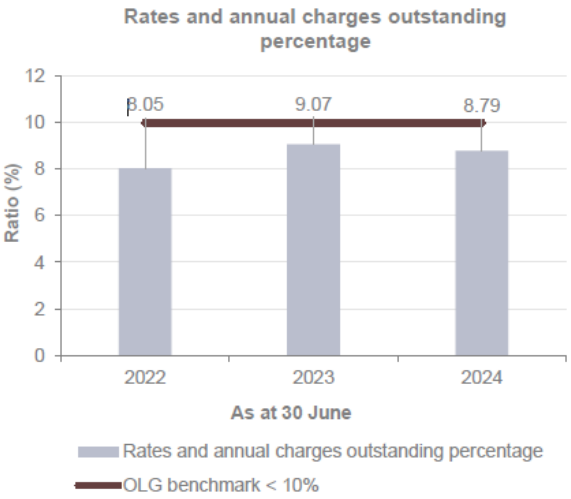
- Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.
- The 'debt service cover ratio' measures the operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than two times.



- The debt service cover ratio decreased by 15.7% due to an increase in materials and services expenditure of $5.6 million.

Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage

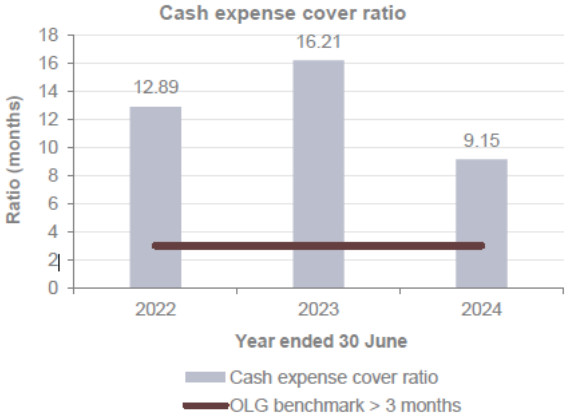
- Council is below the benchmark for the current reporting period.
- The 'rates and annual charges outstanding percentage' assesses the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on council's liquidity and the adequacy of debt recovery efforts. The benchmark set by OLG is less than 10 per cent for regional and rural councils.



- The ratio has remained consistent across the period.

Cash expense cover ratio

- Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.
- This liquidity ratio indicates the number of months the council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than three months.



- The Council's cash expense cover ratio was 10 months, which is above the industry benchmark of greater than 3 months. This indicates that Council had the capacity to cover 10 months of operating cash expenditure without additional cash inflows at 30 June 2024.

OUR PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE DELIVERY PROGRAM

This Lockhart Shire Council Delivery Program activates our 10-year Community Strategic Plan and details the services, program and projects that we will deliver in the four years of the current term of Council.

In this annual report we will report on the progress of the strategic objectives within Delivery Program. The status of the objectives has been listed as follows:

Completed – projects and actions that were one-offs and have been finalised.

Ongoing – activities that have commenced and are now ongoing parts of operations.

Progressing – projects that are under way but will be finalised.

Not Progressing – projects that were scheduled to have commenced but have been delayed.

Lockhart Shire undertook further works in the development of the Avenue of Honour in Urana Street at The Rock, commemorating many facets of our Defence Forces.

2022-2025 Delivery Plan

Progress Report to 30 June 2024

OBJECTIVES AT A GLANCE

A: A CONNECTED & RESILIENT COMMUNITY

A1. We value spending time with each other and want more opportunities to come together.

A2. Our community services and facilities meet the needs of our communities.

A3. People of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds participate in community life.

B: A DYNAMIC & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY

B1. Our Shire is attractive and welcoming to businesses, industry, residents and visitors.

B2. Our community has a robust retail offering, strong tourism sectors, and a range of job opportunities.

B3. We develop, attract and retain skilled individuals in our community.

C: AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS RESPECTED AND PROTECTED

C1. Our environmental practices are sustainable.

C2. Flora and fauna are protected across the Shire.

C3. Our open space and natural environment are protected for future generations.

D: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE LONG-TERM NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

D1. Our assets and infrastructure are well planned and managed to meet the needs of the community now and in the future.

D2. Our planning and development controls work to attract new residents and investment.

E: STRONG LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

E1. Council is strong, sustainable, and able to stand-alone.

E2. Council actively engages with its residents to support and facilitate decision making.

E3. Council responds collectively and responsibly to community needs.

A1: WE VALUE SPENDING TIME WITH EACH OTHER AND WANT MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO COME TOGETHER.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Facilitate and support our community to deliver vibrant and dynamic community events.	Provide support to events held within the community.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
	Compile and promote a comprehensive calendar of events.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
Build capacity, capability, and partnerships to encourage sustainable community groups and clubs. *	Provide support and advice to community groups, clubs, and volunteers.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
	Within financial means, support and fund Section 355 Committees to manage and maintain Council facilities.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
	Facilitate and support programs and projects within the community to make them accessible to people with all abilities. DIAP – Attitudes and behaviours	Director Corporate and Community Services	In progress All abilities audit of buildings currently being undertaken by consultant engaged by Council.
	Undertake community consultation and seek grant funding opportunities for the establishment of a community centre at The Rock.	General Manager	In progress The Rock Community Centre currently under construction.
Provide or partner to provide cultural and sporting participation opportunities.	Support cultural and sporting opportunities that respond to the needs of the community.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing

A2: OUR COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Work with stakeholders to ensure our community is safe and well prepared to respond to adversity. *	Ensure that Lockhart Shire is well prepared to respond to adversity.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	In progress Review of The Rock Flood Study commenced.
	Strengthen mechanisms that support access and inclusion for our community. DIAP – Liveable communities	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing.
	Promote community safety initiatives within the community.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	In progress. CCTV Camera installation 90% completed. Drought resilience Plan currently being developed in conjunction with WWCC.
	Convene a Police and Community Consultation Group in the Shire	General Manager	Ongoing
	Advocate for sufficient provision of policing, ambulance, and fire services.	General Manager	Ongoing
	Investigate the development of a community reflection space at The Rock.	General Manager	In progress.
Support, or partner to provide, welcoming and well-maintained community spaces and facilities. *	Plan, develop and maintain facilities, parks and gardens that respond to the needs of the community. DIAP – Liveable communities	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	Ongoing. Brookong Creek Masterplan adopted on 18/03/2024. 109 Green St, Lockhart community space completed. The Rock Avenue of Honour 75% complete. Implementation of Lockhart Caravan Park Masterplan 80% complete.
	Redevelop 109 Green Street Lockhart into a community space.	Director Corporate and Community Services Director Engineering and Environmental Services	Complete
	Implement a beautification plan for the Pleasant Hills Esplanade	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	In progress.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Provide and advocate for services that respond to the needs of our community. *	Lobby government, business, and service providers to provide accessible services to meet the needs of the community. DIAP – Liveable communities	General Manager	Ongoing
	Improve understanding of the services available in the community, and work with service providers to promote and encourage community use of services.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing Telstra and NBN Digital Connectivity Plans complete. New Telstra small cell solution for Yerong Creek installed.
	Work with service providers and government to improve access to quality health, and medical life-stage facilities and services to meet the long-term needs of the community.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing.
	Advocate to ensure our residents can access a quality education experience.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing

A3: PEOPLE OF ALL AGES, ABILITIES, AND BACKGROUNDS PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY LIFE.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Support our children and young people.	Understand and respond to the needs of young people in the Shire through engagement and provision of a Youth Officer.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Recruitment of a Youth and Community Services Officer completed April 2024.
	Support the provision of pre-school, playgroup, and childcare services within the community.	Director Corporate and Community Services	In progress Currently working with stakeholders to establish childcare services following closure of privately operated childcare centre.
	Continue to monitor and assess the need for before and after school care in Lockhart.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Lockhart OOSH trial period suspended due to low numbers.
	Provide young residents with greater access to youth services.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
Provide support and opportunities to celebrate our older residents.	Provide opportunities for older residents to come together.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing. Lockhart Men's Shed 95% complete.
	Continue to support, advocate, and plan for high quality services and accommodation for our aged population.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
	Provide fit–for–purpose accommodation for the Lockhart Men's Shed.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Complete.
Provide support for people with a disability and their families and carers. *	Provide support for people with a disability, their families and carers. DIAP – Liveable communities	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
	Work with community partners to lobby government and to seek funding to support people with disabilities to reach their full potential and to lead fulfilling lives. DIAP – Liveable communities	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing.
	Work in partnership with community organisations to improve opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in education, training and employment. DIAP – Employment	Director Corporate and Community Services	Not commenced. No opportunities identified to date.
	Work with partners to identify opportunities to support the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. DIAP – Systems and processes	Director Corporate and Community Services	Not commenced. No opportunities identified to date.
	Participate in a collective approach within Lockhart Shire's disability sector to improve the understanding, access and operation of the sector. DIAP – Attitudes and behaviours	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing.

B1: OUR SHIRE IS ATTRACTIVE AND WELCOMING TO BUSINESSES, INDUSTRY, RESIDENTS, AND VISITORS.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Manage and improve the appearance of our towns, in line with their desired identities	Develop and implement a long-term beautification plan for each of the Shire's towns.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	Ongoing. Brookong Creek Masterplan adopted on 18/03/2024. 109 Green St, Lockhart community space completed. The Rock Avenue of Honour 75% complete. Implementation of Lockhart Caravan Park Masterplan 80% complete.
	Implement the Avenue of Honour Masterplan at The Rock	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	In progress 75% complete
	Seek funding opportunities for the staged implementation of the Lockhart CBD Masterplan	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	
Improve the convenience and amenity of our towns. *	Ensure that there is sufficient and accessible parking for cars and trailers in the centre of each town. DIAP – Liveable communities	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	Complete.
	Encourage a diverse retail mix within the Shire to respond to the community's and visitors needs and tastes.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
	Better understand the retail and commercial sector to assist and support a response to filling service gaps.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
	Co-ordinate activities and services in town to attract local shoppers and visitors to town centres.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
Improve services and infrastructure that supports our rural business.	Advocate to improve television, mobile and internet coverage.	General Manager	Ongoing. Digital Connectivity Plan 75% complete. New Telstra small cell solution for Yerong Creek 95% complete.
	Lobby to increase the use of rail for agricultural transportation.	General Manager	Ongoing
	Strive to assist development of strong farming businesses.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Provide business support to our community.	Promote and provide networking opportunities for businesses.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
	Improve the capacity of businesses through training and business sessions.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
	Build an informed response to supporting businesses through the collection of timely and relevant local data.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
	Celebrate the achievements of our businesses.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Complete
Work in partnership with stakeholders to grow existing and attract new businesses.	Provide strong strategic direction for economic development.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Complete
	Maintain a Tourism and Economic Development Steering Committee with business, community and Council representation.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Complete
	Support the growth of the business and industry sector.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Complete
	Seek development consent for Stage 3 of Lockhart Industrial Estate.	General Manager	Complete DA approved.
	Consult the community and seek grant funding opportunities for the establishment of a community centre at The Rock.	General Manager	In progress The Rock Community Centre currently under construction
	Promote positive images of the Lockhart Shire as a dynamic and innovative community.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
Exercise leadership by championing the value of access and inclusion across Lockhart's business and tourism community. *	Promote benefits of being fully accessible and inclusive for businesses. DIAP - Attitudes and behaviours	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing.

B2: OUR COMMUNITY HAS A STRONG TOURISM SECTOR.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Create a thriving tourism economy in Lockhart Shire. *	Improve the image of Lockhart Shire for tourists.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing Phase 1 of new "Visit Lockhart Shire" website 100% complete.
	Use our natural strengths and assets to build our tourism sector.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
	Prepare a masterplan for Galore Hill Scenic Reserve	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Not commenced. Quotes were sourced for the preparation of a masterplan which significantly exceeded Council's budget and has been deferred pending completion of the Brookong Creek masterplan.
	Prepare a masterplan for Brookong Creek	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Complete
	Prepare a masterplan for the former PWP (Government dam) at The Rock	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Not commenced. To be reviewed due to issues relating to gazette purpose of the reserve and Native Title issues.
	Complete the implementation of the Lockhart Caravan Park Masterplan	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	In progress – 80% complete
	Support and develop infrastructure for our tourism sector. DIAP – Liveable communities	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing The Rock Regional Observatory complete. Sulky display at Pleasant Hills complete. Walk of Fame inductees complete Chaff cart display at Yerong Creek progressing.
	Develop partnerships that support our tourism industry.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing

B3: WE DEVELOP, ATTRACT AND RETAIN SKILLED INDIVIDUALS IN OUR COMMUNITY.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Develop the skills and employment opportunities of our residents. *	Support and communicate pathways to employment for all residents. DIAP – Employment	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
Attract and retain skilled people to the region.	Support young people to return to the region after completing education and training.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
	Promote the Shire and available skilled and professional positions throughout the region.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer.	Ongoing
	Work with local industry and government agencies to identify and address skill shortages.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing

Council undertook the addition of an all-abilities cabin at Lockhart Caravan Park. The cabin provides accommodation for visitors with mobility requirements such as wheelchair users.

C1: OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES ARE SUSTAINABLE.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Ensure that Council buildings and facilities are environmentally sensitive.	Where practical improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings.	Director Corporate and Community Services	In progress
	Implement Council's adopted Energy Savings Plan including installation of solar panels at the sewerage treatment plants and swimming pool complexes.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	In progress. Solar panels installed at swimming pools and The Rock Sewerage Treatment Plant.
	Develop and implement a strategy that works towards Lockhart Shire being carbon neutral.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	In progress Phase 1 of Lockhart Renewable Energy Project 100% complete.
Explore opportunities to utilise renewable energy and water saving practices.	Investigate programs and initiatives that promote renewable energy options for households and industry.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	In progress Phase 1 of Lockhart Renewable Energy Project 100% complete.
	Promote initiatives that support water wise practices and products throughout the community.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	Ongoing
	Continue to explore the feasibility of water conservation practices throughout all Council works and incorporate water saving and reuse features to Council facilities.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	Ongoing
Utilise effective waste management practices.	Provide efficient and sustainable waste management practices	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	Ongoing
Ensure responsible development practices are exercised.	Through our Local Environmental Plan, incorporate environmentally sustainable design principles into all new residential, rural and commercial developments, and subdivision plans.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	Ongoing

C2: FLORA AND FAUNA ARE PROTECTED ACROSS THE SHIRE.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Increase the amount of native flora, fauna and protect threatened species.	Encourage native plant choices throughout the community.	Director Planning & Environment	Ongoing
	Support the increase of food and habitat sources for threatened and endangered species.	Director Planning & Environment	Ongoing
	Map local population of threatened and endangered plant species and protect where practical.	Director Planning & Environment	Ongoing
Decrease occurrence, spread and impact of weeds and pests throughout our Shire.	Implement weed management practices within Council controlled land and support practices on all other land.	Director Planning & Environment	Ongoing
	Implement pest management practices within Council controlled land and support practices on all other land.	Director Planning & Environment	Ongoing

The Esplanade Nature Reserve at Pleasant Hills has been developed as a place for observing our local wildlife, in particular our local birds.

C3: OUR OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ARE PROTECTED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Provide nature reserves and protected areas for our community.	Provide protection, management and promotion of Galore Hill Scenic Reserve.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Advocate to, and support the National Parks Wildlife Service, in their management of The Rock Nature Reserve – Kengal Aboriginal Place.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Provide protection, management and promotion of nature reserves under the control of Council.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Promote the protection of our water catchment and riparian zones.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Protect the environment by continual monitoring to detect possible breaches of relevant legislation or standards.	Director of Planning & Environment	Ongoing

D1: OUR ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE ARE WELL PLANNED AND MANAGED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Plan sustainable transport strategies. *	Continue to implement the Lockhart Shire Active Transport Plan that plans for the future maintenance and development of pathways throughout the Shire. DIAP – Liveable communities	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Provide effective street lighting within the villages of the Shire to support safety and security for pedestrians and vehicular traffic.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Advocate for community and public transport options. DIAP – Liveable communities	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
Strategically plan for our sports and recreation infrastructure, as well as cemeteries.	Ensure appropriate provision, planning and use of all open space and recreation facilities and cemeteries.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
Improve the safety of people on our roads.	Continue to participate in road safety education, and efficient use and planning of the road network.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing New Road Safety Officer recruited and commenced in June 2024.
	Provide and maintain efficient and safe road and bridge infrastructure.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Undertake road repair works following 2021/22 wet weather and flood events.	Director of Engineering	In progress 50% Complete
Reduce the effects of flooding in our towns and villages.	Review the Flood Risk Management Study and Plan at The Rock.	Director of Engineering	In progress
	Undertake a Flood Risk Management Study and Plan for Yerong Creek.	Director of Engineering	Not commenced Grant application was submitted but unsuccessful. Awaiting next round of grant program to resubmit application.
	Continue to advocate for the raising of the railway bridge at Lockhart.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
Advocate for diverse and affordable housing options within Lockhart Shire.	Work with developers, investors and service providers to realise the development of diverse housing options to address affordable housing across the Shire. DIAP – Liveable communities	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing Liaising with Department of Housing regarding potential to expand Magnolia Lodge and Youth Flats.

D2: OUR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS WORK TO ATTRACT NEW RESIDENTS AND INVESTMENT.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Develop infrastructure that supports growth within our community. *	Provide and maintain efficient sewage systems that allows for current and future community needs.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing IWCM Strategy adopted on 21/11/23.
	Ensure maintenance, accessibility and safety of the Lockhart air strip. DIAP – Liveable communities	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Support Riverina Water in quality town water supply that is sustainable in line with potential growth.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Ensure guttering and drainage infrastructure are planned, maintained and developed to meet the demands of the community.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing Funding secured for drainage improvements at Green Street West, Lockhart; Emily Street, The Rock; and Cole Street, Yerong Creek.
	Advocate for natural gas supply to our communities.	General Manager	Discontinued
Land use that supports the development of our community.	Clearly define land use requirements and developments in line with State Government regulations.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	Ongoing
	Continue to remain updated on potential mining and quarry developments.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Review the Lockhart Shire Council Local Environmental Plan 2012 and associated documents.	Director Planning & Environment	In progress
Our built heritage and our public art are enhanced to support our strong town and village identities.	Provide a public art experience that reflects our community identity.	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
	Advocate for the protection of our historic buildings, landmarks, and artefacts.	Director Engineering and Environmental Services	Ongoing

E1: COUNCIL IS STRONG, SUSTAINABLE AND ABLE TO STAND ALONE.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Plan for the long-term sustainability of the Shire.	Advocate and prepare for the long-term sustainability of our Shire.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
	Promote the increased participation of local people in local government and the community.	General Manager	Ongoing
	Continue to enhance sound financial management policies and practices.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
	Continue the development of asset management strategy and plans.	Director of Engineering	Ongoing
	Meet all governance and regulatory requirements in the conduct of Council operations.	General Manager	Ongoing
	Minimise Council's exposure to risk and promote a strong risk management culture within Council.	General Manager HR/Enterprise Risk Manager	Ongoing
	Ensure appropriate IT systems are in place to support service delivery and accountability requirements.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
	Attract and retain a quality workforce.	HR/Enterprise Risk Manager	Ongoing

E2: COUNCIL ACTIVELY ENGAGES WITH ITS RESIDENTS TO SUPPORT AND FACILITATE DECISION MAKING.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Use effective community engagement processes. *	Provide effective community engagement practices with the community.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing Social Media Strategy awaiting funding approval.
	Increase opportunities and provide support for people with disabilities to exercise their rights for civic participation. DIAP – Systems and processes	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
Ensure the community is informed by improving access to information. *	Apply access and inclusion principles to improve access to Council services, programs, events and communications. DIAP – Systems and processes	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing

E3: COUNCIL RESPONDS COLLECTIVELY AND RESPONSIBLY TO COMMUNITY NEEDS.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE? STRATEGY	WHAT WILL COUNCIL DO OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS? ACTION	RESPONSIBLE POSITION	STATUS
Actively seek strong involvement in state and regional planning for the region.	Advocate for the appropriate representation of the needs of the Lockhart Shire community at a state and regional level.	General Manager	Ongoing
Represent and acknowledge the needs, challenges, and characteristics of our communities. *	Remain updated and informed on current demographic and social data pertaining to Lockhart Shire communities and population groups. DIAP – Systems and processes	Tourism and Economic Development Officer	Ongoing
	Continue to lead and advocate on key social and community issues. DIAP – Attitudes and behaviours	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
	Regularly provide up to date and accurate community information to relevant program and service providers.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
Provide opportunities for relationship building and development.	Promote strong and beneficial relationships between local government and service providers, other levels of government and the community.	Director Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
	Ensure Council staff and councillors participate regularly in professional development to support high quality customer service and professional skills.	General Manager HR/Enterprise Risk Manager	Ongoing

OUR PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

Promote positive attitudes and behaviours

IP&R REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNERS	TIMING	STATUS
A1	Build capacity, capability and partnerships to encourage sustainable community groups and clubs.	Facilitate and support programs and projects within the community to make them accessible to people with all abilities.	Council Community groups Community	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Complete	Financial support was provided to community/volunteer-based committees including section 355 management committees, to support access to programs and events. Access requirements are also applied to projects and developments through Council's strategic planning documents, namely the DCP. Incorporated access and inclusion principles in event management plans approved by Council. Incorporated access and inclusion principles in Council's development application assessment processes. An all-abilities cabin is currently under construction for installation in the Lockhart Caravan Park.
A3	Provide support for people with a disability and their families and carers.	Participate in a collective approach within Lockhart Shire's disability sector to improve the understanding, access and operation of the sector.	Council Service providers	Ongoing Ongoing	Council has adopted a Disability Inclusion Action Plan as well as requirements for all abilities access in its planning documents such as the DCP. A progress report on the implementation of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan was submitted to the Minister by the legislative deadline.
B1	Exercise leadership by championing the value of access and inclusion across Lockhart's business and tourism community.	Promote the benefits of being fully accessible and inclusive for businesses.	Council	Ongoing Ongoing	Included all abilities access to local businesses in the masterplan for the Lockhart main street upgrade which formed the basis of consultation with local businesses and the broader community. Council liaised with shop owners on the benefits of investing in all abilities access to their premises. Consultant was engaged and has provided Council with an Access Audit Report regarding accessibility across the Shire.
E3	Represent and acknowledge the needs and challenges and characteristics of our community.	Continue to lead and advocate on key social and community issues.	Council	Ongoing Ongoing	Council continues to promote inclusion within the community via its newsletters and events. Incorporated access and inclusion principles in event management plans approved by Council.

Create liveable communities

IP&R REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNERS	TIMING	STATUS
A2	Work with stakeholders to ensure our community is safe and well prepared to respond to adversity.	Strengthen mechanisms that support access and inclusion for our community.	Council, Service providers	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Council's Emergency Management Plan has been approved by the Regional Emergency Management Committee. Council works with stakeholders through its Local Emergency Management Committee and Interagency Group meetings held every four months. Council provides funding for Seniors Week activities on an annual basis.
	Support, or partner to provide, welcoming and well-maintained community spaces and facilities.	Plan, develop and maintain facilities, parks and gardens that respond to the needs of the community.	Council State Government	Complete Ongoing Ongoing Complete	A property has been acquired in the Lockhart central business area and concept plans have been produced to convert the property into a community space and public toilets with all abilities access. Masterplans have been developed for the Lockhart Caravan Park and The Rock Avenue of Honour. Council parks are maintained and improved to allow access to all. An all-abilities cabin is currently under construction for installation in the Lockhart Caravan Park.
	Provide and advocate for services that respond to the needs of our community.	Lobby government, business and service providers to provide accessible services to meet the needs of the community.	Council	Ongoing Ongoing	Council continues to promote inclusion within the community via its newsletters and events. Incorporated access and inclusion principles in event management plans approved by Council
A3	Provide support for people with a disability and their families and carers.	Work with community partners to lobby government and to seek funding to support people with disabilities to reach their full potential and to lead fulfilling lives.	Council Service providers	Ongoing Ongoing	Council assisted Valmar Support Services with the establishment of a group home in Lockhart. Council continually reviews grant programs to seek potential funding.
		Provide support for people with disability, their families and carers.	Council Service providers	Ongoing	Council continues to advocate for all members of the community.
B1	Improve the convenience and amenity of our towns	Ensure that there is sufficient and accessible parking for cars and trailers in the centre of each town.	Council	Ongoing	Additional RV parking has been incorporated into the Lockhart CBD masterplan along with accessible parking upgrades.
B2	Create a thriving tourism economy in Lockhart Shire.	Support and develop infrastructure for our tourism sector.	Council	Ongoing Ongoing Complete	Incorporate access and inclusion principles in Council's development application assessment processes. Incorporate access and inclusion principles in Council's event management plan assessment processes. An all-abilities cabin is currently under construction for installation in the Lockhart Caravan Park.

IP&R REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNERS	TIMING	STATUS
D1	Plan sustainable transport strategies.	Continue to implement the Lockhart Shire Active Transport Plan that plans for the future maintenance and development of pathways throughout the Shire.	Council	2022/23	A five-year Footpath Plan is being prepared. A footpath masterplan was presented to Council for adoption in June 2023.
		Advocate for community and transport options.	Council	Ongoing Complete Ongoing	Representations are made as opportunities arise. Council has received grant funding to construct a new bus stop at the Pleasant Hills School under the Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grants Scheme. Funding is currently being sought for a new bus stop at Yerong Creek.
	Advocate for diverse and affordable housing options within the Lockhart Shire.	Work with developers, investors and service providers to realise the development of diverse housing options to address affordable housing across the Shire.	Council State Government Developers	Ongoing Ongoing 2021/22 2021/22 2022/23 2022/23, ongoing	Options currently available include Magnolia Lodge independent living units, Youth Flats and vacant residential land developed by Council. Council continues to provide one of its properties in Lockhart for housing for the physically and intellectually disabled. Council participated in the development of a Regional Housing Strategy by REROC. Council has provided input in the development of a Regional Housing Delivery Plan by the Department of Regional NSW. A Residential Land Use Study and Housing Strategy is being incorporated into the review of Council's LEP. Council's Housing & Employment Strategy was adopted in 2023. Council commenced discussions with the NSW Land and Housing Corporation regarding further development of the Magnolia Lodge and Youth Flats sites.
	Develop infrastructure that supports growth within our community.	Ensure maintenance, accessibility and safety of the Lockhart air strip.	Council	Ongoing	The Air Strip is inspected monthly, and any required maintenance carried out. A s.355 Committee has been appointed to manage the airstrip on Council's behalf.

Support access to meaningful employment

IP&R REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNERS	TIMING	MANEX ACTIONS
A3	Provide support for people with a disability and their families and carers.	Work in partnership with community organisations to improve opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in education, training and employment.	Council Service providers	Ongoing Ongoing 2021/22, ongoing 2021/22, ongoing	Council continues to provide employment and work experience opportunities to all members of the community when opportunities arise. Council participates in the RDA Riverina platform 'Jobs Riverina' to promote local opportunities. Council is participating in a "Skills Shortages in Local Government" project facilitated by the Riverina Joint Organisation. Council has also promoted the dedicated platform for local businesses to register an interest in relation to Project EnergyConnect and Inland Rail. Council continues to liaise with the project coordinators for both these projects.
B3	Develop the skills and employment opportunities of our residents.	Support and communicate pathways to employment for all residents.	Council Service providers	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing 2021/22, ongoing	Council continues to provide employment and work experience opportunities to all members of the community. Council liaises with Riverina Business Enterprise Plus to promote local and regional training opportunities. Council participates in the RDA Riverina platform 'Jobs Riverina' to promote local opportunities. Council is participating in a "Skills Shortages in Local Government" project facilitated by the Riverina Joint Organisation. Council has also promoted the dedicated platform for local businesses to register an interest in relation to Project EnergyConnect and Inland Rail. Council continues to liaise with the project coordinators for both these projects.

Improve access to services through improved systems and processes

IP&R REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNERS	TIMING	MANEX ACTIONS
A3	Provide support for people with a disability and their families and carers.	Work with partners to identify opportunities to support the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.	Service providers Council	Ongoing	Council continues to provide employment and work experience opportunities to all members of the community.
E2	Use effective community engagement processes.	Increase opportunities and provide support for people with disabilities to exercise their rights for civic participation.	Council	2022/23 Complete 2022/23 Ongoing	Funds have been allocated by Council for upgrading the technology in Council's meeting chamber to facilitate remote participation in meetings. The technology upgrade was completed in May 2023. Hearing loop in Council's administration building. Council's website is being upgraded to ensure compliance with relevant standards. Council's new website was activated in June 2023. Council monthly newsletters is distributed to all households to ensure access to information (especially for those who do not have internet access).
	Ensure the community is informed by improving access to information.	Apply access and inclusion principles to improve access to Council services, programs, events and communications.	Council	Ongoing Ongoing 2022/23 2022/23	Council's website is being upgraded to ensure compliance with relevant standards. Council's new website was activated in June 2023. Incorporate access and inclusion principles in event management plans approved by Council. Council engaged with Telstra and NBN Co regarding telecommunications blackspots in the Shire. A Digital Connectivity Plan has been developed for the Local Government Area in conjunction with Telstra. The Regional Digital Strategy was signed by Council, Telstra and NBNCo in July 2023 and February 2024 respectively.
A3	Represent and acknowledge the needs and challenges and characteristics of our community.	Remain updated and informed on current demographic and social data pertaining to Lockhart Shire communities and population groups.	Council	Annually	Demographic data from the 2021 Census is being accessed by Council as it is progressively released by the ABS.