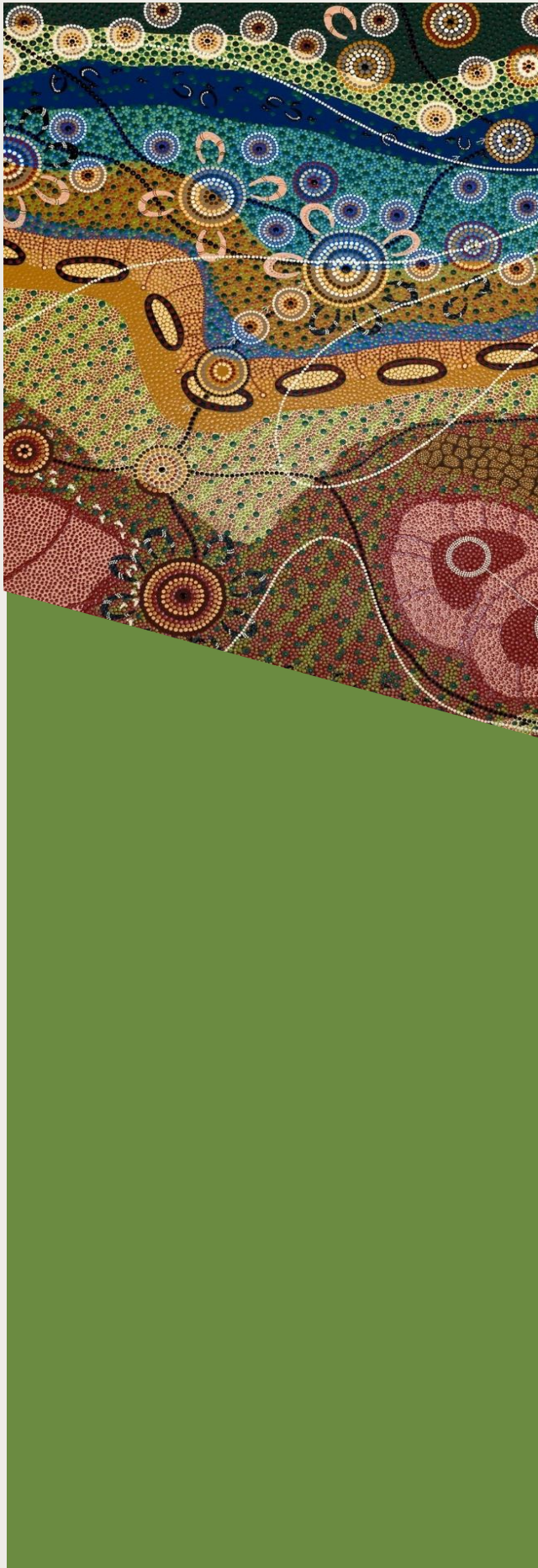




END OF TERM REPORT

2021-2024



Acknowledgement of Country

The original inhabitants and traditional owners of Glen Innes and surrounding areas are the Ngarabal people. The indigenous name of the area of Glen Innes town is Gindaaydjín, meaning “plenty of big round stones on clear Plains”.

The Ngarabal people lived within a tribal boundary (including the area of Ashford, Tenterfield and Glen Innes), moving within this area due to the seasonal resources available. The value Aboriginal people place on natural resources stems from the strong relationship and respect they have for the land.

As the original occupants of this continent, Aboriginal people used the natural resources according to their ‘lore’ in order to maintain systems and species. The health of the land and the maintenance of biodiversity continue to be linked to the wellbeing of Aboriginal people, both physically and spiritually (from Land of the Beardies).

Councils Vision Statement and Values

Council Vision

A prosperous connected community that nurtures its people and places.

Values

RESPECT for each other

INTEGRITY as a foundation

COURAGE to make the right decisions

HONESTY in all dealings

TRANSPARENCY to support accountability

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	2
Councils Vision Statement and Values.....	2
Council Vision	2
Values	2
The elected Councillors (2021 – 2024).....	4
Organisational Chart.....	5
Overview	5
Reporting on the Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032	5
Our Strategic Objectives.....	6
Goals that support the Strategic Objectives.....	6
Performance indicators	9
Strategic indicators/monitoring	9
Financial indicators (as at 30 June 2024)	9
Highlights and achievements.....	10
Community Services (CS).....	11
Economic Development (ED).....	23
Infrastructure Management (IM)	31
Environment Heritage (EH).....	37
Council Sustainability, Transparency and Communication (STC)	42
Grants received	47
Awards and recognition	48
Contact and Connect.....	49

The elected Councillors (2021 – 2024)

At the Glen Innes Severn Council (Council) local government election, held on Saturday 4 December 2021, the following Councillors were elected to represent the Glen Innes Severn Local Government Area (LGA) for the Council term, which concluded on 14 September 2024:

Councillor (Cr) Tim Alt, Cr Troy Arandale, Cr Rob Banham, Cr Lara Gresham, Cr Jack Parry, Cr Andrew Parsons and Cr Carol Sparks.

The new Council included five first time Councillors along with two returning Councillors in Cr Parsons and Cr Sparks. Cr Gresham held the position of Councillor until her resignation on 9 May 2024. No by-election was held due to the close proximity to the September 2024 local government elections.

The following Councillors held the positions of Mayor and Deputy during the term:

January 2022 – September 2023

Mayor - Cr Rob Banham
Deputy Mayor - Cr Troy Arandale

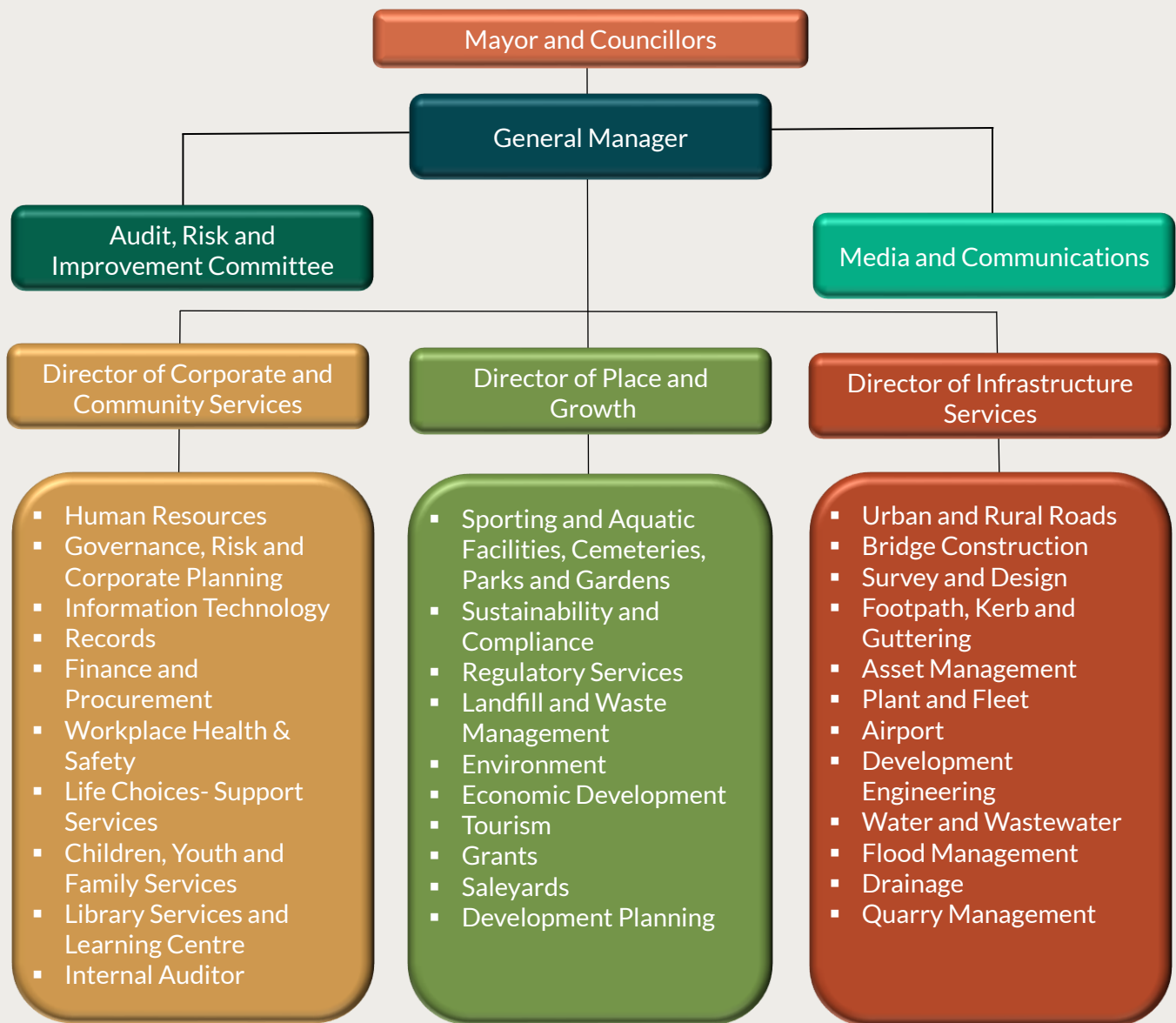
September 2023 – September 2024

Mayor – Cr Rob Banham
Deputy Mayor – Cr Troy Arandale



Cr Andrew Parsons, Cr Tim Alt, Cr Carol Sparks, Cr Troy Arandale (Deputy Mayor), Cr Rob Banham (Mayor), Cr Lara Gresham (resigned) and Cr Jack Parry.

Organisational Chart



Overview

Reporting on the Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032

This report (formerly referred to as End of Term Report) provides progress of implementation and the effectiveness of the Community Strategic Plan and must be presented to and endorsed at the second meeting of a newly elected council.

The Community Strategic Plan 2022 – 2032 is structured around five strategic objectives with supporting goals for each objective. These goals and objectives were developed from the community and other stakeholder feedback.

This report focuses on achievements completed between 1 July 2022 (when the current Delivery Program commenced) through to 30 June 2024. Generally, this report would cover close to four years. Due to the delay in the local government elections from September 2020 until December 2021, this report focuses on a two-year period.

Our Strategic Objectives

These Strategic Objectives are prepared by Council but guided by the community. The Strategic Objectives are a product of feedback from community surveys, ‘town hall’ style meetings and public exhibition of Council documents. Council has worked with residents, service providers, local businesses and community groups to shape our community’s priorities and developed a plan to deliver these for our community.

The five main objectives are as follows:



An Attractive Quality of Life



A Prosperous Local Economy



Fit for Purpose Public Infrastructure



An Appealing Sense of Place



Recognised for Local Leadership

Goals that support the Strategic Objectives

The Goals as listed below cover all of Council’s operations and have been distilled from a number of the contributing strategies developed by Council over the years in consultation with the community. The time frame for accomplishing goals is typically long-term, depending on the complexity of obstacles standing in the way.

Goals provide direction, highlight priorities and support effective decision-making and enable programs, projects and services to be identified and resourced towards their achievement over time. They have also been framed to address the issues and opportunities identified in the Strategic Challenges facing the LGA and in support of the Regional Plans of other government agencies.



Community Services – *An attractive Quality of Life* - that is enhanced by cultural expression, an active inclusive community, with accessibility to the best possible services and facilities in a high-country climate.

Goal Reference	Goal
1.1	Encourage an Inclusive Active Lifestyle
1.2	Encourage Community Connectivity and Cohesion
1.3	Encourage Opportunities for Cultural Expression
1.4	Increase Community Transport Access to Services
1.5	Support the Voluntary and Not-For-Profit Sector to strengthen its capability
1.6	Support an Increase of housing options
1.7	Support for improved medical services



Economic Development - *A Prosperous Local Economy* - that is encouraged and supported by sustainable investment opportunities, in a diversified business environment with accessibility to a trained and willing labour market.

Goal Reference	Goal
2.1	Support Agricultural Diversification and Resilience
2.2	Support the Growth of the Visitor Economy
2.3	Enable an Attractive Industry Investment Environment
2.4	Support Skills Development for Existing, Expanding and Emerging Industries
2.5	Support Workforce Attraction and Retention
2.6	Optimise Returns from Council Trading Enterprises



Infrastructure Management - *Fit for Purpose Public Infrastructure* - that is designed, constructed and appropriately maintained to keep our community and visitors connected, safe and able to access the amenities and services they require.

Goal Reference	Goal
3.1	Construct or renew capital works projects and programs to quality, time and budget
3.2	Maintain Council's infrastructure assets to adopted standards, time and budget
3.3	Build Resilience and maintain capability to repair Council's infrastructure assets following extreme weather damage
3.4	Design, maintain, manage and improve water and sewerage services
3.5	Strengthen the digital and communication footprint covering the LGA
3.6	Optimise Underutilised Assets



Environment Heritage - An Appealing Sense of Place - that is protected and preserved so that our authentic natural and built assets are showcased and enhanced for the enjoyment of all and enriched by new developments.

Goal Reference	Goal
4.1	Land use planning instruments and Policies regulate and support the LGA's Vision and encourage population growth
4.2	Support the protection, conservation, enhancement, accessibility and interpretation of the cultural heritage of habitation sites
4.3	Support the protection, conservation, enhancement accessibility and interpretation of World Heritage National Parks
4.4	Support the protection, conservation, enhancement accessibility and interpretation of Sites of High Conservation Value
4.5	Encourage the community's use of renewable energy in the LGA and reduce Council's carbon footprint and energy costs
4.6	Encourage waste minimisation and recycling and regulate waste management practices to protect the environment
4.7	Support Weed Management and Control
4.8	Strengthen Resilience to the Negative Impacts of Extreme Weather
4.9	Regulatory Services are Provided to Support the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of the Community
4.10	Encourage Cultural Practices



Council Sustainability, Transparency and Communication - Recognised for Local Leadership - that upholds its values and responsibilities, is focused on the community through the custodianship of its assets and empowerment of its employees, to deliver the best value services and projects in partnership with others and within the means of Council.

Goal Reference	Goal
5.1	Maintain the focus, importance and relevance of the CSP
5.2	Councillors and employees demonstrate appropriate Capabilities and Behaviours
5.3	Councillors and staff uphold budget and financial accountability
5.4	Responsible custodianship of the community's assets
5.5	Enhance an ethos of customer service
5.6	Deliver best value services
5.7	Recruit, empower, assess and develop employees whilst maintaining accountability
5.8	Information Technology Systems are integrated, resilient and support customer service and efficiency
5.9	Collaborate with partners to deliver the Community Strategic Plan's Goals and Priorities

Performance indicators

Strategic indicators/monitoring

Monitoring Council's performance is a fundamental component of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. The *Local Government Act 1993* legislates that Council must, at a minimum, report every six months on the progress of activities detailed in the Delivery Program and provide that update to the elected body of Council.

Council met these reporting requirements with reports provided to Council, detailing its progress in meeting performance targets for activities detailed in the annual Operational Plan. In addition, Council reports annually to Council and the Community in its Annual Report.

The below data summarises Council's number of goals and achievements in meeting identified performance targets as at 30 June 2024.

	Completed		Progressing		Not Progressing		Not Completed	
Strategic Priority	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Community Services								
Financial Year 2023	27	62	14	33	2	5	1	1
Financial Year 2024	27	75	9	25	0	-	0	-
Economic Development								
Financial Year 2023	42	57	25	34	6	8	1	1
Financial Year 2024	20	74	6	22	1	4	0	-
Infrastructure Management								
Financial Year 2023	22	61	13	36	1	3	0	-
Financial Year 2024	13	37	20	57	2	6	0	-
Environment Heritage								
Financial Year 2023	14	61	9	39	0	-	0	-
Financial Year 2024	10	53	9	47	0	-	0	-
Council Sustainability, Transparency and Communication								
Financial Year 2023	27	44	33	54	0	-	1	2
Financial Year 2024	51	85	9	15	0	-	0	-

Performance reports on the Delivery Program and the Operational Plan as well as the Annual Report for the full term for which this report relates to are available on Council's website at www.gisc.nsw.gov.au.

Financial indicators (as at 30 June 2024)

Ratio	Most recent result	Benchmark
Operating Performance ratio	-11.16%	>0%
Own source operation revenue ratio	39.09%	>60%
Unrestricted current ratio	2.64x	>1.50x
Debt service cover ratio	2.89x	>2.00x
Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage	13.07%	<10%
Cash expense cover ratio	11.22 months	>3 months



Highlights and achievements





Community Services (CS)

An attractive Quality of Life

CS 1.1 Encourage an Inclusive Active Lifestyle

The **Glen Innes Highlands Business & Community Hub**, located in the transformed “Old Holden Building,” was developed to create a central space where the community and Council could come together to support a thriving local economy and a socially prosperous community.

This initiative was a key component of the new Economic Development Strategy 2020-2040 and Action Plan 2020-2025 for the region. Funded by a \$616,861 grant from the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund, jointly provided by the Commonwealth and NSW Governments, the Hub was officially opened in October 2022.

Offering a versatile range of spaces, from hot desks to meeting rooms and a community co-working lounge, available for hire by the hour, day, week, or longer. The facility became a vital resource for business development, learning, and community engagement, supporting both local businesses and residents.

The Hub acts as a drawcard for visitors by offering a range of events, information and resources that enhance the experience of exploring the Glen Innes Highlands.



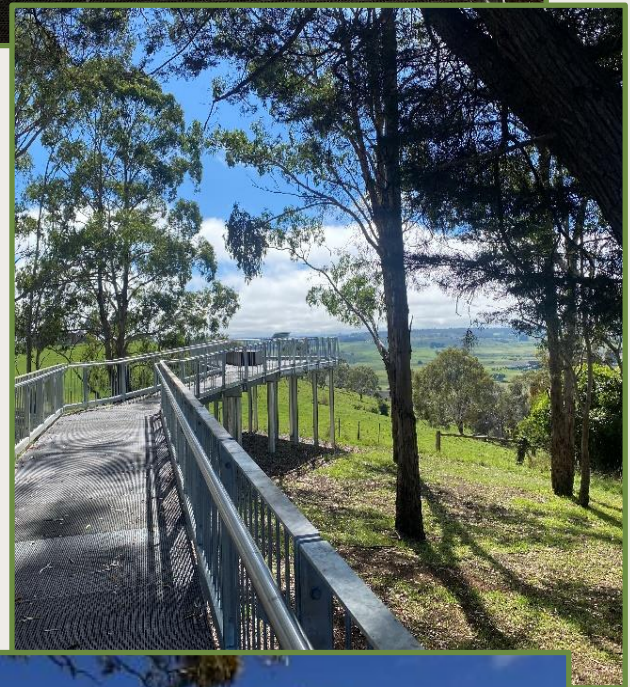
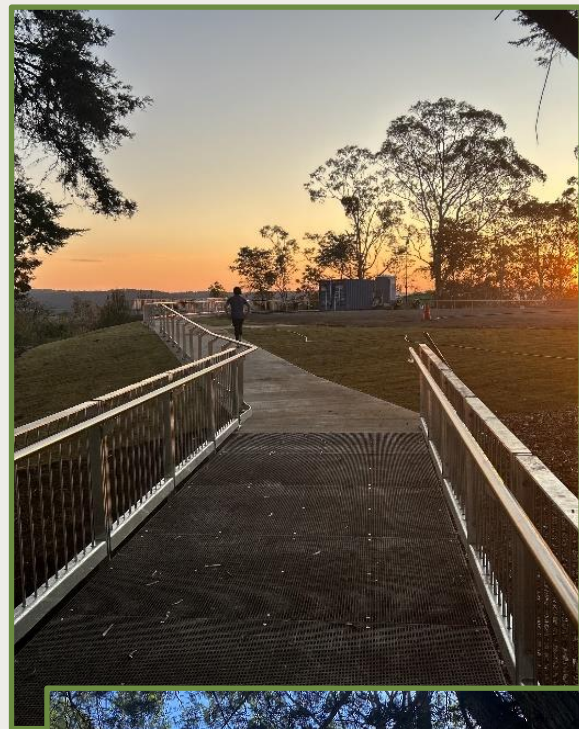
The \$2 million **Glen Innes Highlands Skywalk** project, funded by the NSW Government through the Public Spaces Legacy Program and supported by Glen Innes Severn Council, officially opened in January 2024, offering a new and immersive visitor experience.

This project showcases the cultural connections of the Celtic and Ngarabul peoples, with each of the three viewing points telling its own unique story, shared through voices from local Traditional Custodians, astronomers, geologists, and historians.

As part of the project, the master concept plan focused on enhancing Centennial Parklands to increase its attraction and usability. The 80-metre-long boardwalk provides visitors with spectacular views of the surrounding Glen Innes rural landscape and township.

The Skywalk introduces a ground-breaking geotourism experience, featuring 22 audio stories and 360-degree drone footage integrated into a hyper-local mapping platform accessible via QR code.

This initiative aims to draw both tourists and locals, offering a rich perspective on the region's history, culture, and natural beauty.



As part of the \$1.44 million project funded by the Australian Government through the Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grants Program (BSBR) and supported by Glen Innes Severn Council, significant upgrades have been made to **Centennial Parklands**.

In a momentous stride toward community enhancements the addition of a modern, all-abilities access amenities block, complemented by newly constructed outdoor seating areas, and a children's playground were designed to enrich the park's role as a community space.

Located adjacent to the Croft Celtic Cultural Learning Centre and Café (Crofters Cottage), these improvements are expected to support a range of local events, including the Australian Celtic Festival.

These developments represent a major step in revitalising the park for both residents and visitors alike.



The **Glen Innes Multipurpose Indoor Sports Centre** stands as a testament to the power of government funding, local collaboration, and community vision in creating long lasting infrastructure that benefits people of all ages. A central hub for sport and recreation in the area, helping to keep the community active and engaged for years to come.

With a total investment of \$5.42 million from the State and Federal Governments, the Glen Innes Multipurpose Indoor Sports Centre stands as a powerful symbol of collaboration between different levels of government and the local community.

The centre features two full-size indoor courts facilitating five separate indoor sports that accommodate for both local and regional competitive and recreational sports.

It also includes amenities such as commercial kitchen, conference room, accessible change rooms, and ample seating and parking, making it a versatile space for both sporting events and community gatherings.

The centre provides long lasting benefits contributing to the economic and social vitality of Glen Innes.



In addition, Council secured an extra \$811,059 in State Government funding to construct **two new outdoor multi-purpose courts** adjacent to the Glen Innes Multipurpose Indoor Sports Centre. These courts have expanded the capacity for local netball and basketball associations, allowing them to extend their competitions and accommodate more teams.



The installation of the **new playground** at the Multipurpose Indoor Sports Centre is another fantastic example of community collaboration and support. This project was made possible through the combined efforts of several organisations and funding sources:

- Glen Innes Netball Association: Sourced the initial funding for the playground, showing a strong commitment to enhancing the community's recreational facilities
- Glen Innes Severn Council: Played a key role in the installation of the playground

- NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund: Provided essential funding, helping to make the playground a reality for local families.
- Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grant: Contributed to the playground's soft fall area, ensuring the safety and comfort of children using the space.



The re-gelling of the 25 metre and Learn to Swim pools at the **Glen Innes Aquatic Centre** is a key maintenance project is aimed to protect the structure and maintain the pool's appearance, durability, and safety ensuring the pool remains in good condition for the community's continued use and enjoyment.

This project was fully funded by the NSW Government under the Stronger Country Communities Fund – Round 5 program.



External contractors were engaged for the **Glen Innes Skate Park** redevelopment utilising the existing skate slab and mini ramp. The new features vary in height and targeted skill level to appeal to a broad range of skate park users. The open and flowing layout combines street and transition skate obstacles in an open arrangement to create both looping and linear lines and allow users to link the new features with the existing ones for skaters to showcase their skills and creativity.

Every detail was carefully considered, from classic elements to modern architecture with artistic elements that safely push the boundaries of skating.

A table with seating and a Buddy Bench was also installed at the Skate Park.

The project received funding of a total of \$738,523 as part of the Black Summer Bushfire Recovery (BSBR) Youth and Sports Precinct Upgrades and Connectivity grant, and was delivered in two components:

- Skate Park Upgrade
- Construction of the shared pathway route - connecting the Sports Precinct with Taylor Street, up to Glen Innes Public School and St Joseph's School (Delivered by Infrastructure)



Funded by the Australian Government and supported by Glen Innes Severn Council, the \$592,376 **Rural Address Signage** project,

conducted in partnership with GLENRAC, has successfully installed rural address signage for up to 2,700 eligible rural properties within the LGA.

This project enables emergency services to quickly locate properties and their entrances during critical events, ultimately reducing response times and improving service delivery during emergency situations. The project aims to improve outcomes for emergency crews, volunteers and rural landholders during high-stress periods, such as bushfires and other disasters.

Glen Innes Severn Council and Armidale Regional Council made significant progress on the New England Rail Trail following a key meeting at Parliament House on 13 March 2024. Council representatives met with state officials, including the Premier, Treasurer, and Minister for Regional Transport, to discuss repurposing the disused rail corridor.

The primary outcome of these discussions was the affirmation that there is no intention or expectation for the return of rail infrastructure in the region. Instead, the focus shifted to advancing collaborative efforts between local councils and state authorities to expedite the implementation of the New England Rail Trail project. This development paved the way for the project's advancement, promising long-term benefits to the region through enhanced tourism and recreation opportunities.

CS 1.2 Encourage Community Connectivity and Cohesion

Youth Services

The Youth Booth Team have been diligent in their efforts to attend to the 2022-2023 Youth Strategy Actions. The Youth Booth is functioning well with increased numbers attending daily and a very positive 'vibe'.

The Youth Booth partnership with Hunter New England Health continues to deliver monthly activities to support youth mental health which was identified as the number one priority for young people within our Local Government Area (LGA) in the Youth Strategy document. The Youth Team have delivered numerous grant funded activities for the young people of the Local Government Area (LGA) that align with Council's Youth Strategy 2021-2025



Children and Family Services

The Children, Youth and Family Services continues to deliver high quality of service and programs for children and parents with the assistance of external funding.

Children and Family Services continues to operate Out of School Hours (OOSH) care with a high quality of service and programs for both children and parents. In 2024, the library celebrates 70 years of continuous operation in Glen Innes.

Annual Family Picnic Day

The Annual Family Picnic Day was delivered at the Centennial Parklands in each year. The event received additional financial support from the Reconnecting Regional NSW grant funds sitting with both Life Choices - Support Services and Youth. Fantastic day filled with games, activities and laughter by all with great community participation.



There has been limited progress this reporting period with limited **Safe In Our Town (SIOT)** Meetings held. Council staff have engaged in passive advertising of domestic violence awareness for the community by utilising the SIOT gazebo at activities such as the Family Picnic Day. Information brochures pertaining to domestic violence were also made available to families attending those events. The focus on youth programs needs to be re-visited during the next reporting period.

The local **Community Drug Action Team (CDAT)** remains short on membership despite some networking for new members. The committee almost solely consists of Council staff at the end of June 2023. Despite the lack of broader community membership, the committee has delivered five successful awareness functions for the community. Two of the committee attended the Annual CDAT Conference and made connections from which to further benefit the community into the future.

The **Library and Learning Centre** community connectivity and cohesion has been improved and encouraged by connecting with internal and external stakeholders within the community and Council. Some of these stakeholders have been the Northern Tablelands Cooperative Library Services, Centacare, Glen Innes Toy Library, GLENRAC, Glen Innes Family and Youth Services, Mosman Council, UNE Science and Technology unit, Council's Family and Children Services, Home Schooling providers and several small cultural service providers such as 'Art Skool' with Jo Duck and Aboriginal Cultural workshop with Daniel Bell-Levy. All these organisation and groups have contributed to maintaining a high level of library and cultural services during this reporting period.



Improvements in the equity of access to information, education and recreation and safety have been made throughout the year through grant submissions, researching and joining e-Resource Consortia, Disability and Dyslexic Resources sites, and an emphasis on updating the Library's Code of Conduct to include the new legislative requirements for children's protection.

Life Choices - Support Services (LC-SS) promotes community awareness via their Facebook page providing updates of the activities and available services delivered by LC-SS staff. The LC-SS newsletters capture some of the exciting activities and outings delivered during the reporting period while also raising awareness of the services available at LC-SS. The Children and Family Services Team update their flyers for Playgroups, OOSH and Vacation Care and displayed at different venues within the community.



Life Choices - Support Services staff successfully completed a NDIS registration audit in January 2023. The audit results were forwarded to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission during February 2023 with the outcome of the Provider Registration still being considered. The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission have advised of progression of the registration request which should be finalised soon.

The Mobility Brochure remains in the final stages of production with the Glen Innes Access Committee. The committee will need to return their focus to the completion in the next reporting period.

CS 1.3 Encourage Opportunities for Cultural Expression

Life Choices – Support Services facilitated successful Harmony Day celebrations. The bright colours in the many cultural costumes, traditional dance performances and cultural foodstuffs made for spectacular and successful events.



A new **Public Arts Advisory Committee** was established to allow for better community consultation. Revitalisation Plans were completed for the CBD, New England Highway, Wentworth Street Bridge and Indoor Sports Centre, which identifies areas where public art is appropriate within those precincts.



Improved funding sustainability and several successful grant submissions: with NSW State Library and Telstra for Tech Savvy Senior computer classes, and the Friends of the Library Australia for Aboriginal Cultural Awareness workshops, Mosman Council Community Grant, Australian Friends of the Library, Essential Energy, Glen Innes Opportunity Shop and the Local Government Youth Grant have added more stimulating cultural programs and inclusivity to Council's Library's Annual Programs.



The successful Mosman Council Community Grant application 2022-2023 for 'Building Skills for future Opportunities in Industry or Business' facilitated creative workshops with local Aboriginal people. These workshops helped to build their confident, skills and employment opportunities.

The **Library and Learning Centre** completed several Cultural Plan actions while delivering a culturally inclusive Annual Library Program for the First Nation People, LGBTQIA+ community, people with disability, children and youth, fragile and aged community members.

CS 1.4 Increase Community Transport Access to Services

Council successfully facilitated the delivery of the **Glen Innes Mobility Brochure** engaging the Glen Innes Community Access Committee to provide key transport information to the community. Council continues to deliver the "Community Access Bus" via Life Choices - Support Services.

The availability and choice of transport mechanisms within the LGA has declined during this reporting period despite the best attempts of the Glen Innes Community Access Committee and other focus groups.

CS 1.5 Support the Voluntary and Not-For-Profit Sector to strengthen its capability

Council continued to seek grants and inform community groups via a monthly newsletter and direct emails as well as working closely with Community Committees of Council and community groups to identify potential grants and encourage them to be shovel ready to assist them when opportunities became available.

In 2022-2023 Council secured \$301,708 in grant funding from the **Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program**. This program promoted the social and economic recovery of regional communities, by renewing social connections and providing a revenue-boost to local businesses, following the extended COVID-19 restrictions across regional NSW and impacts of border closures. Glen Innes Severn Community Cohesion and Business Assistance Events Program promoted eleven community event programs which were included in the funding application. A combination of community partnered and Council managed events were:

- CWA 100th Anniversary Event
- Rotary Markets in the Highlands
- Vegetable Creek MPS (Hospital) 20 year anniversary and Emmaville Village 150 year anniversary celebrations
- Glen Innes Severn Council Inclusive Family Event
- Gemorama
- A Night Out on Us Concert Series

- School Holiday LGA Swimming Pools Activities
- Community Classes and Workshops - Highlands Business and Community Hub
- Aged & Engaged Community Event

In 2023-2024 Council partnered with the following:

- GLENRAC for Pinkett resilience which was first aid training and supply and install an AED at the Pinkett Hall
- Black Summer Bushfire Recovery with a grant to upgrade facilities at Pinkett Recreation Reserve
- Stronger Country Communities Fund grant for upgrades to Emmaville War memorial Hall
- Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund community led grants program which funded Emmaville Vegetable Creek Hospital auxiliary, Emmaville Central School, Deepwater hall, Glen Elgin Sports Federation committee, Glen Innes Arts Council, Glen Innes District Community Centre and the Reach out Toy Library.
- Council partnered with GLENRAC funding for Attract Connect Stay

Council's Grants Officer consulted with various community groups on potential grant opportunities that they could apply for outside of Council.

With an identified underspend with the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund (BCRRF), the following organisations were funded for community projects:

- Glen Innes and District Community Centre and Reachout Toy Library
- Gymini Crickets Toddlers Recreational Activities

Council developed a **Volunteer Policy** to steer Council's commitment to supporting volunteers and not-for-profits in the community. Furthermore, Council secured membership with the peak volunteering body for NSW and is focused on continuous improvement through volunteer management.

CS 1.6 Support an increase of housing options

Financial Year 2022-2023 summary:

- Council worked closely with Regional NSW and Department of Planning to develop a region-wide affordable housing strategy. Gyde Planning was engaged by the NSW State Government to undertake research and guide planning/policy at a regional level.
- Housing Assessment and Affordable Housing Strategy was shared with the industry through the Economic Development Newsletter. A Workforce Attraction and Retention Strategy workshop was delivered at the Highlands HUB to encourage the increase of apprenticeships and work opportunities.
- Total of 16 single dwellings, 12 subdivisions, and 3 multi-unit dwellings were determined in 2022-2023. All buildings are assessed to comply with the minimum energy and water reduction requirement in NSW with an online tool called BASIX.
- Detailed quarterly development activity reports for the Glen Innes Severn Local Government Area are presented to Council and the community.
- Daily ongoing assistance is provided to businesses for development assessment advice. A weekly Development Assessment Unit meeting is provided to businesses for more complex enquiries that require additional consultation.

Financial Year 2023-2024 summary:

- Council applied for three separate grants with a focus on increasing housing supply in the Local Government Area - unfortunately Council was not successful in receiving any grants funds. However, at the June Ordinary Council meeting, Council resolved to undertake an Expression of Interest (EOI) process for landowners to submit lots for consideration which are currently below the minimum lot size and do not have a

dwelling entitlement. Subject to EOIs being received, appropriate Council assessment and NSW Government approval, the process is designed to release more land for residential housing.

- A new planning framework and guidelines to help regional councils plan housing for temporary and seasonal workers was on exhibition from 16 August to 27 September 2023. The proposed changes aimed to give councils more certainty and clarity around how to plan and deliver worker accommodation. The exhibition package also included proposed changes to support the delivery of construction worker accommodation within designated Renewable Energy Zones (REZ). The proposed changes would allow accommodation for construction workers in certain rural zones within certain REZs when supporting renewable energy projects. This approach was intended to provide a clear permissibility pathway to improve certainty for industry, councils and the community.



CS 1.7 Support for Improved Medical Services

Continued ongoing discussions with Hunter New England Health and the Primary Health Network regarding options for improved medical services. Council continues to lobby the State Government with the Mayor making several direct representations.

Councils' participation in Country Mayors is another element in advocacy activities.





Economic Development (ED)

A Prosperous Local Economy

ED 2.1 Support Agricultural Diversification and Resilience

Glen Innes Severn Council and Tenterfield Shire Council together with the NSW and Australian Governments are joining forces to better prepare for soaring temperatures and dry conditions thanks to the **Regional Drought Resilience Planning (RDRP)** program funded under the Future Drought Fund, which will assist Council to work towards a drought- resilient future.

Council will facilitate the implementation of strategic measures aimed at enhancing water security, promoting agricultural sustainability, and bolstering community well-being. Together, Councils are laying the foundation for a more resilient and thriving region. The development of these plans is underway and involve stakeholder and community consultation as a key element.

Council worked with other Mayors and General Managers in the **New England Renewable Energy Zone** to create a collaborative approach to benefit the community financially.

Council continues to leverage the New England Renewable Energy Zone to drive industry growth and economic diversification and recently reviewed the NSW Department of Planning & Environment Energy Policy Framework. The framework includes a series of guidelines that promote faster decisions and provide communities and the energy industry with greater certainty.

The guidelines provide clarity on how the impacts of renewable energy projects and transmission infrastructure should be assessed and managed through the development assessment process.

They also include measures to ensure regional communities benefit from the transition to renewable energy, as well as tools for landowners who are thinking about hosting development. The policy framework includes the following: Wind Energy Guideline, Transmission Guideline, Solar Energy Guideline, Benefit-Sharing Guideline and Private Agreement Guideline.



Council partnered with GLENRAC for community members to take part in the **Creating Capability and Confidence for Community Champions** project a fully funded course by the Australian Government's Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) Round Five. The course was developed for existing, emerging and future leaders who are working or volunteering in community, business or government roles including sport and recreation, art, culture and community groups. Participants gained knowledge, skills, motivation and networked to lead change in their business, community and volunteer groups.

ED 2.2 Support the Growth of the Visitor Economy

Council collaborates monthly with the **New England High Country (NEHC)** Group to discuss and plan partnered marketing opportunities. The group also develop strategies to leverage the region and improve on tourism products. The group completed a Cycling marketing campaign and completed a development plan to create a new suite of marketing assets to assist with the promotion of the region, highlighting the region. Recent campaigns include the Australian Traveller Magazine, Australian Caravan and Camping World and FOUND Regional magazine as well as social media campaigns, weekly postings, engagement with community, reporting and promotion of each town's major events on the NEHC Instagram which has a following of 6616 and Facebook followers of 19K. Monthly reporting and analysis of the NEHC website and social media has seen a steady increase in engagement.



The **Australian Celtic Festival (ACF)** continues to go from strength to strength. The ACF held in May 2023 celebrated the Year of Scotland. ACF improved accommodation through partnerships with LJ Hooker homestay as well as partnering with New England High Country to assist with promoting accommodation options.

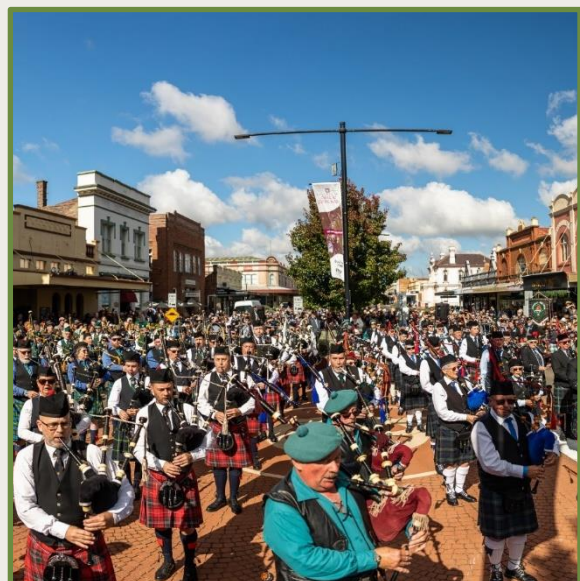
Regional Events Acceleration Fund grant funding of \$110,000 was utilised for improved accessibility, international performers and infrastructure.

The weekend was a great celebration which has a local economic benefit to the community estimated at \$2,815,000.



The Australian Celtic Festival held in May 2024 celebrated the Ireland and the Isle of Man in alignment with the ACF Strategic plan. Attendance was 5,000 visitors despite a wet weather plan being enacted on the Sunday morning and the reduction of some events.

Overall, the 2024 Australian Celtic Festival generated an impressive economic impact, injecting nearly \$2.7 million into the local economy. This boost extended beyond Glen Innes, supporting tourism providers, local enterprises, and neighbouring towns within the New England High Country. Feedback from traders, performers, and attendees was overwhelmingly positive



The **Minerama Fossicking, Gem and Jewellery Show**, the largest gem, jewellery and fossicking festival in NSW. The Glen Innes Severn Council is a major sponsor of this event. Council supported workshops, demonstrations, entertainment and field trips as well as the attendance of the University of New England who held classes on geology and fossils.

In 2023 Minerama teamed up with the Glen Innes Motor Sports Club and Vintage Machinery group which proved very popular.

Minerama was held at the Showgrounds and achieved high attendee records including an increase of children attending the event. There were more children's activities provided including a climbing wall, rock painting, Jurassic wheels, ask an expert and an informative and fun display from the University of New England.

In 2024 a fresh branding and marketing campaign not only invigorated the event's identity but also drove its tourism impact, injecting around \$480,000 into the local visitor economy.

It was a wonderful celebration of local, Australian and global geology as well as artisanal crafts, drawing in over 100 traders from across the country. With attendance of 2,500 adults and 500 enthusiastic kids.



The *reVITALise* program, a NSW Government initiative focused on community-driven placemaking, collaborated with Glen Innes Severn Council to trial creative interventions and activations of transport-owned sites and assets to support the case for positive long-term change.

Council held the **Margarita and Taco Festival** in November 2023 which invigorated the Glen Innes Railway Station with markets, food stallholders and entertainment. Attendance was 2,500 people with a tourism impact into the visitor economy of \$342,000.

Council submitted social media and post event report to Transport of NSW. Key findings from Transport for NSW on the event stated that 95% of attendees want to see events and festivals at the Glen Innes Railway Station and gave the event 8 out of 10 for experience.

The data collected pre and post event strengthened community, highlighted a heritage asset, gave a better understanding of community and future use of the transport precinct for markets and events.

Respondents agreed that this event made Glen Innes a more interesting place to live, that the precinct and station is important to the local area, they enjoy food and things for the family to do.



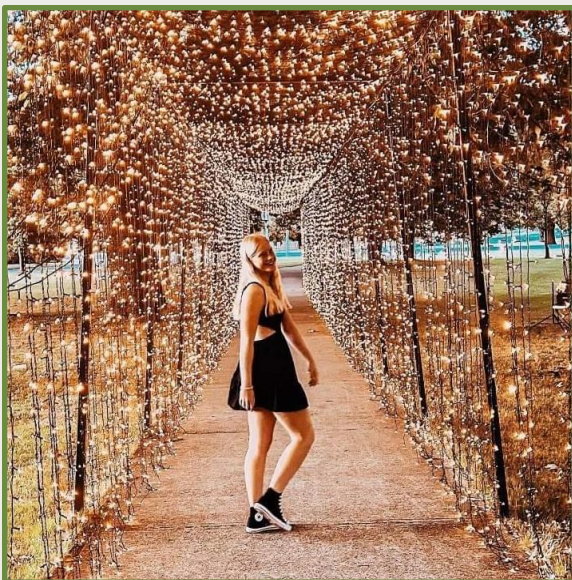
The **Christmas in the Highlands** event held annually for one evening in early December each year where the Glen Innes Town Centre fills with festive cheer, inviting residents and visitors to kick off the holiday season in the Glen Innes Highlands and enjoyed the markets, food stalls and live entertainment.

A standout is the "Walk of Light," supported by White Rock Wind Farm grant funding, transforming Glen Innes into a vibrant holiday wonderland. The event showcased local businesses that took advantage of extended Friday night shopping. Highlights included a visit from Santa, the ceremonial lighting of the Christmas displays, and lively entertainment from local schools and community groups, keeping the festive spirit alive.

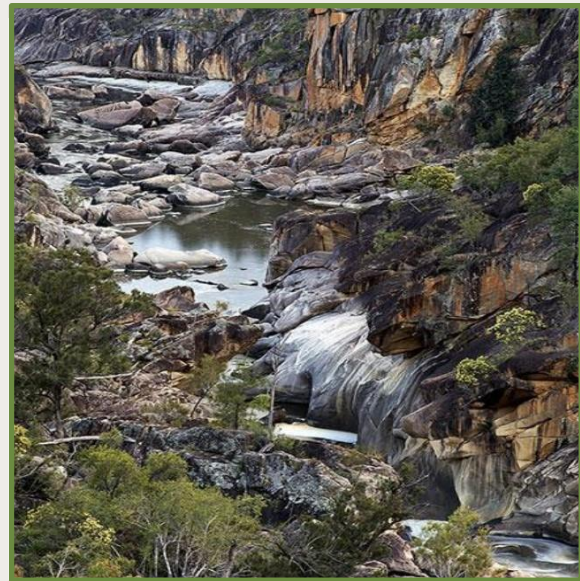
Further enhancing the holiday cheer, the Red Cross Christmas Tree Display, and the Glen Innes Business Chamber's "Spend in Glen" campaign launched during the markets, adding to the sense of community, support of local businesses and celebration.

Throughout December and January, Glen Innes was lit with temporary and permanent lighting installations across the CBD, Parklands, Railway Station precinct, and surrounding side streets. These glowing displays not only illuminated the town but also created a welcoming, festive atmosphere, drawing residents and visitors together in a magical seasonal experience.

The event attracts up to 1,500 visitors.



Council was successful in receiving support from the Geological Survey of NSW for the 'Glen Innes Highlands GeoRegion' project. The Department of Regional NSW stated that Glen Innes is a good basis for developing the geological potential of the geotrails. The Glen Innes Highlands GeoRegion now joins with the Ku-ring-gai (NSW) and Murchison (WA) as pilot projects of the National Geotourism Strategy.



The Glen Innes Highlands Skywalk's Geotourism visitor experience (an all-time first for the region) delivers 22 audio stories and 360-degree drone footage integrated into a hyper-local mapping platform which visitors can access through a QR code.

Interactive Digital & Audio Display

To activate the Skywalk, simply scan the QR code at the lookout viewpoint, with your device, to unlock immersive stories and insightful narratives.

When you see this image on your device, it will link you to the individual audio stories as well as Glen Innes Highlands Digi Map homepage, where you can discover more places to explore on your visit by pressing each point of interest.

The **New England Rail Trail** project is progressing with an assessment being carried out to consider Council's proposal to complete the section between Glen Innes and Glencoe.

The **Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre** continues to be accredited and provides essential information such as up to date road closures and bespoke information to tourists and community.

Partnerships with Local Cultural Tourism operators to improve First Nations tourism initiatives. Contributed to newsletters and attended interviews and radio spots to promote tourism and events in Glen Innes.

Several activity brochures have been updated including:

- Birdwatching
- Country Drives
- Old Grafton Road 4WD
- Fossicking
- Fishing

The Visitor Information Centre was freshly painted and new tourism signage installed to make the centre more visible to visitors. Tourism assistants have produced new flyers with QR codes to assist during out of business hour enquiries. Council will be seeking enhancements of our digital technology platform to ensure high quality visitor services continue to meet customer expectations and needs.



The Visitor Information Centre has completed the Tourism Group audit and received accreditation from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. The accreditor from the Tourism Group commented that the Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre was a highly professionally run centre.

The **Glen Innes Highlands** brand refresh, concepts and collateral have been gradually implemented. Council has engaged the services of EJ Freelance to manage the existing marketing campaign, website, newsletters and Glen Innes Highlands (GIH) social media campaign and rebranding onboarding as well as Cloud Concepts to refresh palette and logos on the GIH website.

Marketing support has been provided by uploading events onto Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) and/or encouraging event organisers to upload as Glen Innes Highlands website is a distributor. Local events continue to be supported through display marketing at the Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre.

Council has supported the growth of the visitor economy by operating the **Glen Innes Highlands Hub** and engaging organisations to hold their meetings, events and functions in the Hub's conferencing facilities. Examples of use include, Woolworths, the New England Writers Festival and Committee strategic planning meetings. The Glen Innes Highlands Hub has and will continue to advertise and include its conferencing facilities in its marketing strategy. Council continues to engage businesses, interagency to host workshops and conferences.



ED 2.3 Enable an Attractive Industry Investment Environment

Council has worked with the Regional Australia Institute and other government and non-government sectors to promote our region and leverage our positional advantages for emerging industry development.

Council incorporated programs and initiatives to drive local socio-economic prosperity at the Glen Innes Highlands Hub and supporting the facilitator Ian Mason from HUMBLE to facilitate three masterclasses. The masterclasses delivered were:

1. Building an online business
2. Customer acquisition strategies
3. Understanding your customer

These masterclasses were strategically chosen to encourage social mobility via enabling community to increase their self-efficiency and skills in starting a business.



Emmaville and Deepwater have been identified locations to receive improved internet services through the construction of new fixed wireless broadband towers. These areas will receive faster, more reliable internet, which means a boost to education and job opportunities, opening more healthcare options, connecting more people, and making everyday tasks easier.

Council is partnering with Ethical Fields and other participants in the Place Based Capital Program.

Ethical Fields offers programs designed to foster local economic inclusion, leadership, ownership, resilience, and wellbeing. These programs aim to transform local economies to benefit local communities by providing structured and facilitated approaches. A key initiative is the Place Based Capital Program, which empowers local people and places to access and manage capital, fostering financial self-reliance and prosperity. This program encourages collaboration with various stakeholders, including government, businesses and other organisations to build local financial capacity and achieve share impact goals.



ED 2.4 Support Skills Development for Existing, Expanding and Emerging Industries

Council collaborates with **Glen Innes TAFE** to increase workforce skills to meet industry needs. Council meets regularly with TAFE Service Coordinator to compare strategies on supporting skills development for existing, expanding and emerging industries.

TAFE's main objective is to increase enrolment numbers and courses offered at the Glen Innes Campus. Council supports the current TAFE free course initiative through Council channels, workshops at the Highlands Hub and engages business and community as well as continuing partnerships and support in skills development. Highlands Hub maintains a Facebook page to increase awareness of the services, co working spaces and events that are facilitated at the Highlands Hub. Council encourages TAFE students to build connections with businesses and community through the Highlands Hub.



The Council has successfully gained membership in the **Regional Activators Alliance**, which enables a partnership with the **Regional Australia Institute** for their 'Move to More' campaign. This collaboration allows the Council to leverage the resources and opportunities provided by the Alliance to promote regional growth and highlighting the area's potential and contributing to the broader regional development efforts.

ED 2.5 Support Workforce Attraction and Retention

Council's Highlands Hub hosted several workshops designed for senior school students and the community to increase engagement in learning and furthering career prospects. Council's professional staff are engaging in high school projects to bring a 'real world' and career perspective to the student learning program. Council has also recently hosted High School work placements in a variety of Council work areas.



The Highlands Hub continues to support local businesses to promote the Glen Innes Highlands as a great place to live and work. Evaluating the "invest" profile of the town and working with the Business Chamber as it acquires and merges with the Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Association, creating a source of truth for businesses to attract and retain workers.

ED 2.6 Optimise Returns from Council Trading Enterprises

Council called for Expressions of Interest regarding the sale or lease of the Glen Innes Saleyards. Council did not proceed with the single interest shown.

Glen Innes Aggregates continues to be a profitable enterprise.



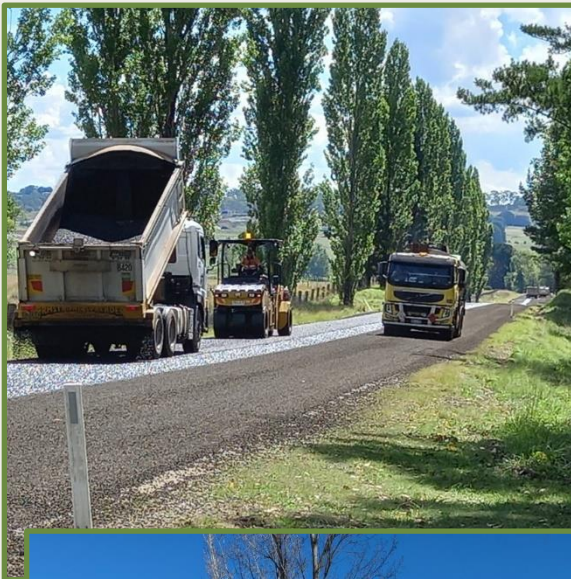


Infrastructure Management (IM) Fit for Purpose Public Infrastructure

IM 3.1 Construct or renew capital works projects and programs to quality, time and budget

Council has been successful in obtaining grant funding for many projects under programs such as the Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package (\$13.7M), the Regional and Local Roads Repair Program (\$2.099M) and the Regional Airports Program (\$1.1M).

Major capital works projects completed include gravel re-sheeting of Nine Mile Road, Caerleon Road, Mt Slow Road, Shannon Vale Road, Donnelly's Rd, Bullock Mountain Road, Ilparran Road, Ten Mile Road and Jenkins Road.



Sealed road rehabilitation included Red Range Road, Shannon Vale Road, Emmaville Road segment 210, Lang St/Furacabad Road and Emmaville Road Segment 180.



A major upgrade of Bald Nob Road was completed, while 80km of unsealed road was converted to bitumen seal on Pinkett, Maybole, Mt Mitchell, Yarraford, Ten Mile, Tent Hill, Strathbogies Rd, Gordons and West Furacabad roads.

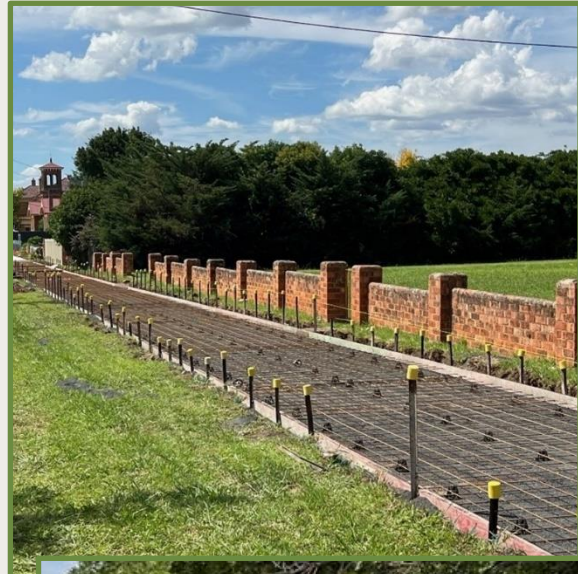


Applications for Essential Public Asset restoration of Pinkett Road and Yarraford Rd have been successful.

Bridge renewal works included Shannon Vale Rd over Mann River, Mt Mitchell Rd over Yarrow Creek and Wentworth Street over Rocky Ponds Creek bridge.



1.3km of **shared pathways** was completed, linking the new Indoor Sports Centre to other recreation facilities along Taylor Street and West Avenue, and a shared pathway connection from the sporting facilities to the two primary schools on Church Street.



Council has undertaken significant work to capture data and refine the Infrastructure Backlog.

The National Transport Research Organisation's survey of the sealed road network was completed in August 2023. Council is currently assessing providers of artificial intelligence methods that will provide consistent road condition data and be less time consuming for review.

Work is underway on the Mt Mitchell Road over Mann River and Furracabad Rd bridges.

IM 3.2 Maintain Council's infrastructure assets to adopted standards, time and budget

The unsealed **road maintenance** has been tracked in a progress register. The Northern grading team has been completing their program loop in 274 days, with Southern grading lagging behind after significant natural disasters impacted the maintenance program.

The bitumen seal condition inspections for the reseal program have been completed through the Metrix asset management application. Periodic risk management inspections as per the formal inspection program as part of the Risk Management - Roads and Carparks Procedure, have not historically been completed well. An automated inspection process has been commenced using artificial intelligence processes to identify and categorise road defects from video footage.

The **Roads Asset Management Plan** is being implemented through the delivery of both maintenance and capital works programs, and the Infrastructure Customer Service function. In addition, the **Road Infrastructure Backlog Plan** has been addressed through the targeted scoping of projects and grant funding applications for the Regional Roads and Transport Recovery (RRTRP) package, and Council's heavy patching and bitumen reseal program. In October, Council was awarded \$13M for projects in the RRTRP grant.

The **Plant and Fleet Asset Management Plan** has been implemented through the purchase of new plant, and the ongoing maintenance of existing plant. Ongoing demand on plant and fleet, driven by an increase in road network works caused by natural disasters has placed additional strain on existing assets. The condition of plant and fleet is continuously being monitored to ensure it is fit for purpose and downtime is minimised.



An improved maintenance program for **Cemeteries** has increased resources to get the areas all to a presentable level. Procedures for new and reserved grave plot allocation, as well as a monumental permission procedure have been implemented across all cemeteries. Old paper plot maps are all being updated to electronic plot files to ensure safety of records kept by Council and cross referenced against Council's Database.

Maintenance of Council's buildings is being carried out in accordance with the **Building, Structures and Land Asset Management Plan** and the **Maintenance Register**. Cleaning is also being carried out regularly.

The Recreation and Open Spaces Committee has recommended that a **Recreation and Open Spaces Strategic Plan** be developed. This is a significant project recommended in the new Delivery Program.

A landscaping plan to revitalise the CBD has been implemented with works underway. Further, landscaping for the Glen Innes Indoor Sports Centre has passed design phase and is scheduled to commence works in FY25.

IM 3.3 Build Resilience and maintain capability to repair Council's infrastructure assets following extreme weather damage

Council's Manager of Asset Services acts as the **Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO)**. The Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) meet quarterly each year.

The Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN) for the Local Government Area was reviewed and was endorsed by the Regional Emergency Operations Controller (RECON). Further plans will be reviewed in the next reporting period. These plans are the Pre-event Recovery Plan and the Disaster Adaptation Plan.

The recent review and endorsement of the **Drought Management Plan** by Council indicates a proactive approach to managing the impacts of drought on the community. Such plans are crucial for ensuring that water resources are used efficiently and that the community is prepared for potential drought conditions.

Council's drainage crews are working their way through the rural network performing routine open drain maintenance and installing new culverts.

Gravel re-sheeting projects have been delivered with improved drainage capacity. Council is still sourcing funding to review and update the flood management strategy. Drainage works were carried out in the urban areas as required.



IM 3.4 Design, maintain, manage and improve water and sewerage services

In FY23, significant improvements were made to the **sewer system**, including the completion of 2 kilometers of sewer relining, 40 manhole repairs, and several pump renewals at the Sewer Treatment Plant.

The sewer relining assists in preventing leaks and extends the life of the infrastructure without extensive works being undertaken. The manhole repairs addressed damage and wear. The pump renewals at the treatment improve efficiency, energy usage, and system reliability. These projects collectively enhance the overall performance and sustainability of the sewer system, ensuring safer wastewater management and reducing the risk of system failures.

The completion of the **Oliver Street water main upgrade** signifies an important improvement to the local water infrastructure. Such upgrades are essential for ensuring a reliable and efficient water supply to the community. The project would have contributed to greater water security, reduced disruptions, and better service for residents and businesses.

Council's **wastewater services** are managed in compliance with the conditions set by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) license. This means Council is required to meet specific environmental standards and regulations related to wastewater treatment, discharge, and management.

Similarly, Council's water services are managed according to regulatory requirements, which likely include adherence to health and safety standards for water supply, quality testing, and ensuring the sustainability of water resources for residents and businesses.

The finalisation of the **Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan (IWCM) 'issues paper'** marks an important step in addressing the management of water resources within the community. The issues paper serves as a foundational document that identifies and outlines key challenges, opportunities, and priorities related to water management.

IM 3.5 Strengthen the digital and communication footprint covering the LGA

Emmaville and Deepwater have been announced as locations to receive improved internet services through the construction of new fixed wireless broadband towers.

These areas will receive faster, more reliable internet, which means a boost to education and job opportunities, opening more healthcare options, connecting more people, and making everyday tasks easier.

IM 3.6 Optimise Underutilised Assets

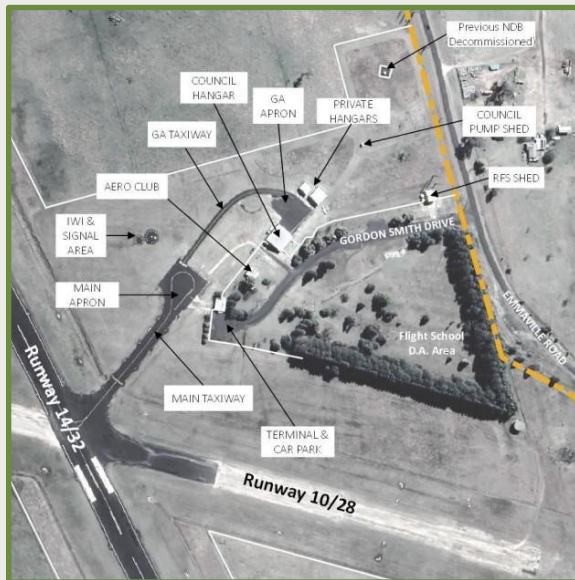
The **Airport Master Plan** has been adopted by Council and allows for 3 stages:

- Stage 1: Immediate development
- Stage 2: Medium term development
- Stage 3: Long term development

Stage 1 has commenced with rehabilitation of the existing runway, taxiway and apron pavement, replacing and upgrading the airfield lighting, upgrading the drainage network, establishment of an aviation refuelling facility and provision of hangar lots that are suitable for larger commercial businesses.

Stage 2: Medium term development is more speculative and will depend on operational needs and business cases and could include an Aviation Business Park, Aeromedical patient transfer facility, events arena and non-aviation activities zone.

Stage 3: Long term development is anticipated to include runway and taxiway changes to allow larger aircraft to land and expansion of the multi-use precinct apron for aviation event or a possible future flight training school.

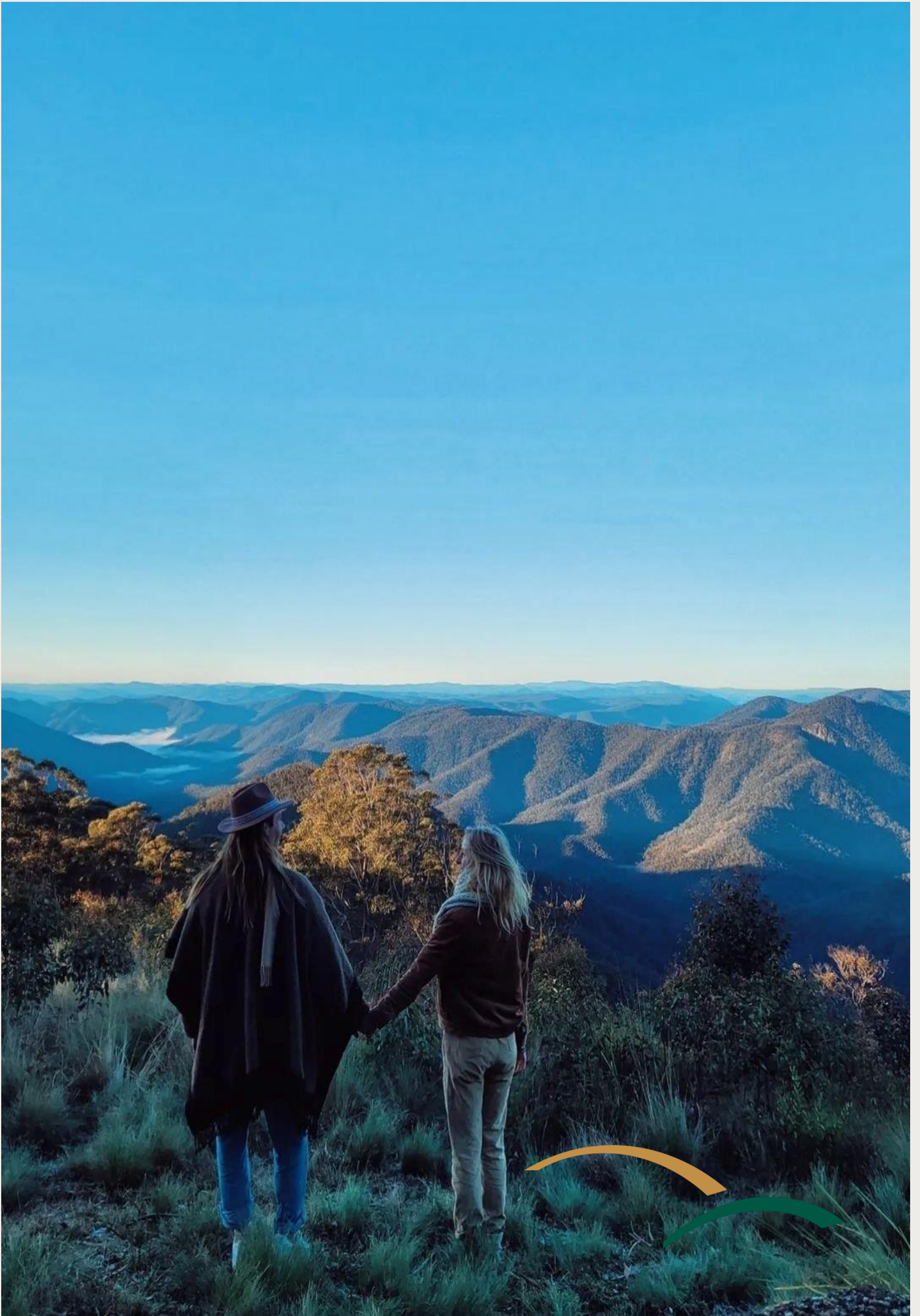


Two assets have been identified for sale by Council - 23 Bourke Street, Deepwater and 181 Bourke Street, Glen Innes.

The sale of 23 Bourke Street, Deepwater is expected to be completed within the first six months of the financial year 2024-2025. This property is likely being sold to streamline Council assets and generate funds for other community projects or services.

Meanwhile, 181 Bourke Street, Glen Innes is currently under review for a potential reclassification from Community Land to Operational Land. This process involves a legal and procedural review to change the land's designation, which would allow Council to use or sell it for operational purposes rather than for community use.

If the reclassification is approved, the land could then be sold contributing to Council's strategic asset management.





Environment Heritage (EH)

An Appealing Sense of Place

EH 4.1 Land use planning instruments and Policies regulate and support the LGA's Vision and encourage population growth

In the FY23 Council progressed the subdivision of the **Dumaresq Street Industrial Subdivision**. The Glen Innes Dumaresq Street Industrial Subdivision is a key development project aimed at expanding the town's industrial capacity. Located in a strategic area, the subdivision is designed to attract new businesses and foster economic growth in the region. By offering well-planned industrial lots, the project aims to provide opportunities for local businesses to expand and for new industries to establish a presence in Glen Innes. This initiative is part of broader efforts to stimulate job creation, support regional development, and strengthen the local economy.



The Community Participation Plan, Land Use Management Strategy, Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan are all due for review with some progress made in reviewing these documents.

EH 4.2 Support the protection, conservation, enhancement, accessibility and interpretation of the cultural heritage and habitation sites

Council provides a Heritage Advisor service to provide regular and ongoing expertise to not only Council but the community and owners of heritage properties. The Heritage Advisor assists in promoting urban design and heritage in our Local Government Area.

A Local Heritage Assistance Fund has been established by Glen Innes Severn Council with the aid of a grant from the NSW Heritage Office. These initiatives help safeguard the cultural heritage of Glen Innes while supporting local councils in their efforts to maintain and enhance heritage areas.

Five projects totalling \$7,360 were paid from the Heritage Assistance Fund 2022-2023 and four projects totalling \$5,720 in 2023-2024.

EH 4.3 Consult with National Parks and Wildlife regarding opportunities to increase signage of the National Parks in the LGA

Four seasonal meetings were held with National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). Signage recommendations were discussed and sent to NPWS. Findings to be incorporated in final Council signage audit.

EH 4.4 Support the protection, conservation, enhancement accessibility and interpretation of Sites of High Conservation Value

Council works with partners, to encourage, appropriate protection, conservation, enhancement, interpretation and accessibility of nominated sites of high environmental conservation value including, biodiversity corridors, water tables, waterways and freshwater fish habitats as identified by the NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment and the NSW Department of Primary Industry and Council.

An Emissions Reduction Plan has been created but deferred by Council.

EH 4.5 Encourage the community's use of renewable energy in the LGA and reduce Council's carbon footprint and energy costs

The audit of actions from the current Renewable Energy Action Plan has been completed. Further works is required in FY25 to finalise the draft Renewable Energy Action Plan.

EH 4.6 Encourage waste minimization and recycling and regulate waste management practices to protect the environment

Continuous improvement measures are being implemented at all Council's waste landfills. Site improvements and practices at the **Glen Innes Waste Management Centre** via new internal roads, daily cover practices, and recycling have been a key focus.

In FY24 Council commenced the Glen Innes Landfill assessment with consultants to determine the remaining life of the current site and future development opportunity. Options are being investigated for long term landfilling and processing of recycling

End of life was reached for the cell in use at Emmaville and a local contractor was engaged to dig a new cell to continue to provide localised waste disposal services to the Emmaville residents.



The waste and recycling collection service has been contracted to J R Richards and the recycling processing has been contracted to Glen Industries for the community. Northern Inland Regional Waste Group and Glen Industries have been providing an education program to encourage waste minimisation and recycling, sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Glen Innes Waste Facility hosted all of Year 9 from Glen Innes High School to assist in unit studies on Sustainable Biomes This excursion was to educate students on how recyclable and waste products are processed in our local area. They had some fantastic questions about how the landfill operates and many students displayed a keen interest in a future career in waste management and sustainability.



In November 2023 Council participated in Australia's **Garage Sale Trail**.

Community members hit the streets to shop from garages, gardens, car boots, etc in search of pre-loved bargains. From vintage Jenny Kee jumpers to classic Australian Women's Weekly cookbooks, cult vinyl and rare collectables, there was something for everyone at the Garage Sale Trail.

The program delivered triple bottom line benefits:

Community: Partner governments can expect between 3%-5% of their residents to be actively engaged in the program each year

Waste avoidance: On average partner Local Governments invest 150-300 dollars for every tonne reused is a result of the weekends of garage sales

Economic development: for every \$1 invested in the program, 2-4 dollars will be generated for the local economy through the sale of dormant goods

Benefits to Council

- Increasing community participation in the circular economy
- Reducing waste generation saving over 3 million kilograms of good stuff from landfill every year
- Educating the community about reuse
- Preventing illegal dumping
- Building a more connected community
- Engaging new audiences



On 10 March 2024 the Glen Innes Waste Management Facility participated in the **Household Chemical Cleanout Day** for the residents of Glen Innes to get rid of any unwanted chemicals, batteries, paint, smoke detectors, fluorescent lights, poisons and gas bottles free of charge.

Council has been awarded \$145,500 under the NSW Government's Go FOGO grants program to prepare for the implementation of a new food organics and garden organics (FOGO) collection service for residents. The initiative aims to help reduce food waste in the region contributing to broader sustainability efforts across New South Wales.

The size of the grants is based on the number and types of households gaining a FOGO service. Council can use the funding to suit the needs of their residents, including purchasing kerbside bins and kitchen caddies or rolling out waste audits, educational materials and trials before delivering a full FOGO collection service to their community. Going FOGO presents an exciting opportunity for Glen Innes Severn households to get on board with organics recycling, and help NSW divert half a million tonnes of food waste from landfill by 2027.

Over the next 3 years Glen Innes Severn Council is looking forward to making a significant step forward in council's efforts to create a greener, more sustainable future for the community. Council will utilise the funding to conduct waste audits, provide educational materials and initiate trials before the full rollout of the FOGO collection service in the Glen Innes Severn local government area, which is likely to occur in 2027.

With the introduction of the FOGO service, residents will have the opportunity to recycle all their food scraps and garden waste, significantly reducing the amount of waste destined for landfill mitigating harmful emissions.



EH 4.7 Support Weed Management Control

Council's weed management had been outsourced to the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA). Since NEWA was put into administration by the Office of Local Government in 2024, Council has been working with member Councils to develop a weeds management program.

EH 4.8 Strengthen Resilience to the Negative Impacts of Extreme Weather

Drainage has been improved on a large portion of the network through works associated with Capital projects such as re-sheets, rehabilitations and heavy patching, as well as routine open drainage maintenance performed by Council's internal drainage team.



EH 4.9 Regulatory Services are provided to support the health, safety and wellbeing of the community

Annual **Food Safety inspections** in the area have been conducted in accordance with the NSW Food Authority's Food Regulation, ensuring compliance with health and safety standards.

These inspections are part of ongoing regulatory efforts to maintain public health and safety within the community. The Council continues to provide essential regulatory and public health services, monitoring food vendors and other businesses to ensure that food handling practices meet the required hygiene and

safety standards for the protection of public wellbeing.

A NSW **Companion Animals Register** is available on the Office of Local Government website, and Council is responsible for regularly updating and maintaining this register to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

An animal registration audit was completed during 2023-2024 resulting in 1200+ letters being sent to residents requesting update of registration details.



Council continued to provide town planning and development assessment advice to the general public on a wide range of town planning issues, development applications to ensure that proposals comply with local planning policies and regulations. This service aims to support sustainable growth and development while maintaining the integrity of the community's built and natural environment.

EH 4.10 Encourage Cultural Practices

Council did not undertake any specific work in relation to this goal, noting that resources were focused on other areas.

However, it is important to note that Council may consider addressing this goal in future through programs or initiatives celebrating and promoting local culture, arts and heritage.





Council Sustainability, Transparency and Communication (STC) Recognised for Local Leadership

STC 5.1 *Maintain the focus, importance and relevance of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP)*

Glen Innes Severn Council's **Community Strategic Plan (CSP)** is a critical document that guides the long-term vision, goals, and priorities of the community. Its focus, importance, and relevance are maintained through several key strategic objectives.

The CSP progress is monitored each year with two interim progress reports and an Annual Report providing a transparent and comprehensive overview of the Council's activities, achievements, financial performance, and challenges throughout the year to the community. Council continues to meet the statutory reporting requirements under the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Ongoing training is offered to both Councillors and staff on the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPRF) to ensure they are well-informed and able to effectively contribute to the planning and reporting processes.

STC 5.2 *Councillors and employees demonstrate appropriate capabilities and behaviours*

Councillors undertook refresher training in the Code of Conduct and further professional development by attending various workshops and seminars.

Council implemented a **Public Interest Disclosure (PID) Policy** to ensure transparency, integrity, and accountability within its operations. In line with this, Council provided in-depth training for all staff on the new **PID Act**, which governs the reporting of wrongdoing or misconduct in the public sector.

This training equipped staff with the knowledge and tools needed to identify and report any issues of concern in a safe and confidential manner fostering a culture of ethical conduct and ensuring compliance with the legislation. This proactive approach helps protect public interest and ensures that any potential issues are addressed appropriately and transparently.

A **Governance Framework** document was completed to help the community better understand local government democracy and how they can actively participate in the Council decision-making processes.

In addition, several important policies were endorsed to strengthen governance and accountability, including the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy, Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy, Privacy Management Plan, and Data Breach Policy. These policies aim to ensure ethical conduct, protect privacy, and establish clear procedures for addressing any data breaches or conflicts of interest.

As part of ongoing efforts to improve administrative efficiency, the **Manex (Management Executive)** team conducted a review of the Council's policy register, resulting in the rescinding of several outdated policies. This streamlined approach helps create greater efficiencies in the Council's operations and improve overall governance.

A comprehensive review of the Council's **Enterprise Risk Management Framework** was conducted, leading to the development and implementation of a new policy, plan, and system to better manage and mitigate risks across the organisation. This updated framework ensures that risks are identified, assessed, and controlled in a consistent and effective manner.

support the successful adoption of the new framework, Enterprise Risk Management training was provided to key staff in collaboration with Statewide Mutual.

Council has adopted a new **Records Management Plan** to systematic review policies, procedures, guidelines, strategies and plans. As part of this initiative, the project to upgrade the Council's records management system is progressing well, aiming to enhance efficiency and compliance.

Additionally, Council has implemented a Legislative Compliance module to streamline the legislative obligations to ensure staff are informed on changes to legislation. The implementation of the Delegations module has also assisted to streamline and automate sophisticated delegation structures for Council.

Council has also started the development of two new **Risk Management Systems**—one for Enterprise Risk and another for Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Risk—to strengthen its approach in managing risks across the business.

STC 5.3 Councillors and staff uphold budget and financial accountability

Council has experienced difficulties with the implementation of a new **Business Information System**. Most of the issues have arisen in the water and rates billing modules. Other modules are operating effectively; however, the uncertainty in the data resulted in Council receiving a disclaimed opinion on FY23 Financials with this likely to repeat in FY24 Financials (audit still being conducted and to be finalized by late December 2024). It may take some time for Council to return to an unqualified audit opinion.

Council, with guidance from the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC), has been actively working to address the identified deficiencies in its new **Business Information System**.

To resolve these issues, Council has engaged external expertise to develop a solution, which is likely to involve purchasing

an add-on system to enhance capabilities in rates and water management.

In addition, Council has engaged a consultant to design a dynamic management reporting system, which has significantly improved the ability of managers to monitor and manage financial performance. This new system has provided managers with more accurate, real-time financial data, greatly enhancing their financial management responsibilities and decision-making processes. These efforts demonstrate the Council's commitment to improving its information systems, streamlining operations, and ensuring better service delivery.

Council has established a comprehensive **Procurement and Contracts Management Framework** to ensure that all procurement activities are conducted efficiently, transparently, and in accordance with best practices.

Relevant staff have undergone specialised training to support the effective implementation of this framework. This training aligns with the recently revised **Sustainable Procurement and Contracts Policy**, which emphasises responsible and sustainable purchasing practices.

Additionally, Council has developed two key policies: **Grants Management** and **Contracts Management**, which provide clear guidelines for managing grants and contracts in a consistent and compliant manner. These policies aim to enhance transparency, accountability, and the efficient use of public funds, further strengthening the Council's governance and operational capabilities.

A new **draft Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP)** has been completed by Council, outlining the financial strategies and goals for the coming years. This plan provides a framework for managing Council's finances in a sustainable and strategic manner, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to meet community needs and support long-term growth.

Alongside the LTFP, a **Financial Sustainability Review** has been conducted, assessing the financial health of Council and

identifying areas for improvement and provides a solid foundation for future decision making.

Quarterly Budget Reviews continue to be delivered by Council in strict accordance with statutory requirements and reported to the community for transparency and accountability. These reviews provide an ongoing assessment of the Council's financial position and ensures that Council remains financially responsible.

Council has implemented significant improvements in its **debt collection** processes, aiming to enhance efficiency and reduce outstanding debts. These improvements are part of a broader strategy to ensure financial sustainability and responsible management of public funds.

Additionally, the **Financial Hardship Policy** has been reviewed to ensure it is fair, accessible, and aligned with best practices. The updated policy provides a framework for supporting residents facing financial difficulties.

STC 5.4 Responsible custodianship of the community's assets

Council's designated staff oversee the management of Council's assets, ensuring they are properly maintained and comply with relevant legislation. This includes monitoring the condition of Council-owned properties and assets, managing leases, licenses, and ensuring that all agreements are in line with legal requirements and Council policies.

Council continues to maintain adequate **insurance cover** to protect its assets, safeguarding against potential risks and ensuring financial security in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

In addition, Council has developed a **Business Continuity Plan** to ensure that essential services can continue operating during disruptions, such as natural disasters or other emergencies. To strengthen the plan, Council provided training for staff and has engaged professional services

to review and update the plan, ensuring it remains effective and aligned with best practices.

Council conducts a **Continuous Improvement Pathway** self-assessment desktop audit through Statewide Mutual to assess and enhance its risk management practices. This audit is part of an ongoing effort to identify areas for improvement, ensure compliance with best practices, and strengthen Council's approach to managing risks.

The following areas have been self-assessed during the reporting period:

- Claims Management
- Trees and Tree Roots
- Building Assets
- Business Continuity Planning

Council continues to seek opportunity to secure **grant funding opportunities** (as highlighted) to help offset the operational expenditure for community assets. This helps reduce the financial burden on the Council and ensures that community assets, such as parks, sporting and recreational facilities can be maintained and enhanced without relying solely on local rates or budget allocations.

STC 5.5 Enhance an ethos of customer service

Overall, the period saw an improvement in **complaints management** through further internal rigorous consultation. More oversight on reporting obligations was implemented regarding mandatory reporting to the Office of Local Government and NSW Ombudsman for certain complaints.

Staff attended workshops and a national symposium on complaints handling and investigations. This has already seen marked improvements in the approach to complaints handling and plans to drive further improvements through the significant reviews of the **Complaints Management Policy and Procedures** and the **Code of Conduct**.

Significant complaints requiring formal investigation were received and resolved during the period with multiple

other complaints resolved without requiring investigation. During the period there was one complaint received from the NSW Ombudsman which was resolved at first instance.

Council provides regular and timely **media releases** to ensure the community remains well informed.

There has been a notable surge in media attention across various platforms, including print media, radio, television, and local and state online news sources. This increase in coverage can be attributed to the increased dissemination of our media releases by Council.

By regularly sharing important information with the community on Facebook, Council has significantly increased our outreach and engagement. In FY24 our Facebook page has reached nearly 200,000 users, reflecting a 116% increase compared to the previous year.



Between March and April 2024, Council successfully launched our new community engagement platform, Engagement HQ. This has greatly diversified our communication opportunities, allowing us to connect and collaborate with our community more effectively.

Our previous methods for public exhibitions were outdated and less effective, typically garnering only an average of 4-5 responses. With EHQ, our public exhibition engagement has significantly increased, with over 100

responses for the Towards 2034 Have Your Say.

In addition to this, Council has successfully rolled out **new branding**, which includes a refreshed logo, visual identity, and messaging to better represent Council and its services. The rebranding aims to enhance the Council's public image, improve community engagement, and create a more cohesive and modern presence. This new branding reflects Council's commitment to growth, innovation, and a forward-looking vision, while also ensuring that its identity resonates with residents and stakeholders.

The new branding incorporated new email signatures, templates, and Council themed backgrounds for Microsoft Teams. The website commenced undergoing a full revamp along with the design concepts for cars, uniforms, signage, and business cards.



STC 5.6 Deliver best value services

A **Service Review Plan** has been developed and steps undertaken to commence its implementation in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Guidelines.

This plan outlines the process for evaluating and improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of the services provided by Council. By systematically reviewing services, Council can identify areas for improvement, ensure resources are being used effectively.

STC 5.7 Recruit, empower, assess and develop employees whilst maintaining accountability

In 2023-2024, Council completed several key actions outlined in the **Workforce Management Strategy**. These included improving recruitment processes to meet the six week vacancy target, reviewing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment to meet Equal Employment Opportunity targets, completing staff performance appraisals, and updating leave management practices. Other achievements included conducting an employee engagement survey, reviewing and preparing a corporate training plan, and linking skills and performance to total rewards.

The Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) action plan was completed in draft form, and the well-being program was reviewed.

Council also made progress in reviewing induction procedures, internal communication and leadership training. Some areas, such as mature-age workforce actions, position description reviews, injury management, and succession planning for critical roles, are ongoing or require further work.

A review of recruitment procedures has commenced and underway as part of the **Human Resources Policy Statement Register** review.



Training for managers and supervisors was delivered in key areas, including Finance for Non-Finance Managers, Procurement, and Performance Management, as outlined in the 2023-2024 training plan and Workforce Management Strategy. Towards the end of the year, six emerging leaders were enrolled in the Objective Leader program, a coaching-based initiative designed to develop leadership skills. Another group of emerging leaders is scheduled to be enrolled early in 2024-2025 to continue building leadership capacity.

Council endorsed the Glen Innes Severn Council **Child Safe Policy** in May 2023. This policy now serves as an official Council framework, outlining the steps and actions required for the Council to become a **Child Safe Organisation**. The policy provides a clear guide for enhancing practices, policies, and procedures to better protect children and ensure their safety in all Council activities and services.



STC 5.8 Information Technology Systems are integrated, resilient and support customer service and efficiency

All actions in the **ICT Strategic Plan** for 2022-2023 have either been completed or are progressing towards completion. Key actions include:

- Advancing to Maturity Level Two in the Essential Eight cyber security framework (on track)
- Implementing multi-factor authentication, mobile device

- management, and the new ICT policy system (completed)
- Providing relevant training and upgrading the mobile fleet and plans (completed)
- Reviewing password complexity, disaster recovery/backup plans, and privileged access (completed or underway)
- Moving the library to the admin domain and implementing encryption for all storage devices (completed or underway)
- Ongoing work on pen testing, synchronising local drives with Azure cloud, and completing a new website (completed or underway).

These efforts reflect significant progress in enhancing the Council's ICT infrastructure and security measures.

STC 5.9 Collaborate with partners to deliver the Community Strategic Plan's Goals and Priorities

The **Highlands Business & Community Hub** provided support, connection, and access to resources aimed at improving leadership, growth, and employment outcomes, while also reducing local economic leakage and fostering local partnerships. A variety of community and business programs were held at the Hub, continuing to support local development and collaboration.

2023-2024 Highland Hub booking information:

- Bookings - 482 (Total of all)
- Business Bookings - 338
- Private Bookings - 57
- Bookings by Council - 87
- Permanent bookings - 2 clients (24 bookings per year)
- Permanent Council Office - 1 client (12 bookings per year)
- 31 Programs delivered
- Attendees - average 15 per course - 465 attendees

Grants received

The 2021-2024 Term was very successful for Glen Innes Severn Council attracting combined grant funding of \$81.8M.

Council received Operating Grants of \$13.163M and Capital Grants of \$9.722M. Funding contributed to the Capital projects for Road and Bridge renewals, infrastructure developments and enhancements. Natural Disaster Recovery also provided for operating assistance to rebuild the community through various activities.

In 2022-2023 disaster relief continued and provided the rebuilding of infrastructure that was destroyed during flood and bushfire events. Grants consisted of Operating \$15.974M and Capital \$11.978M.

In 2023-2024 there was rise in Capital Grant Funding for Roads and Bridges. Grants consisted of Operating Grants of \$10.194 and Capital Grants of \$20.683M.

Specific Grants in the 2021-2024 term funded projects in: Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund, Regional Tourism Bushfire Recovery, Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund, Building Better Regions, Black Summer Bushfire Recovery, Regional Event Fund, Regional Sports Facility Fund, Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events, Stronger Country Communities Round Five, Festival of Place, Safe and Secure Water Program, Local Roads Community Infrastructure Program (LRCI), Regional Airports Program Round Three, Roads to Recovery Streams, Fixing Local Rounds, Essential Public Asset Reconstruction Works, NSW Safer Roads Program, Fixing Country Bridges, Local Government Recovery Grants Program - March 2022 Flood Event, Infrastructure Betterment Fund.

Awards and recognition

Glen Innes Severn Council had a successful night at the New South Wales Local Government Awards in Sydney on June 6, winning multiple accolades. The Council's Rural Management Challenge (RMC) team, the 'Highlanders,' triumphed as State Champions, beating 24 other Councils.

The team, consisting of staff from various departments, had already won the regional heat in Bellingen in November 2023 and advanced to the State Final in February 2024. Their performance in the final demonstrated strong strategic thinking and problem-solving skills in addressing rural management challenges.



Additionally, the Council received the Asset and Infrastructure Award for its successful construction of the Yarrow Creek Bridge on Mount Mitchell Road. This award recognised Council's efforts to upskill staff, enabling them to complete complex projects internally and reduce dependence on external contractors.

Council representatives, including Mayor Rob Banham and General Manager Bernard Smith, expressed pride in the team's accomplishments, emphasising that these awards reflect the hard work and dedication of Council's staff.



Contact and Connect

The community is encouraged to keep up to date on Council news and to access opportunities to learn more and have their say on Council matters:



Visit Council's website for all Council information and updates.
www.gisc.nsw.gov.au



Register to 'Have Your Say' to learn more about Council projects seeking community feedback, have your say and contribute to decision making at a time and place that suits you.

[Have Your Say Glen Innes Severn \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://HaveYourSayGlenInnesSevern.nsw.gov.au)



Follow Council on social media.

[Glen Innes Severn Council | Glen Innes NSW | Facebook](#)



Watch livestreamed Council meetings or read minutes from Council meetings.

[Council Meetings | Glen Innes Severn Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)



View advertised Development Applications (DAs) – A DA is a formal request for consent to carry out proposed development. This could include change of use of land, subdividing land, carrying out work on a building, and landscaping.

[Advertised Development Applications | Glen Innes Severn Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Council Contact Information

Correspondence

All correspondence to Glen Innes Severn Council should be forwarded to:

The General Manager
Glen Innes Severn Council
PO Box 61
GLEN INNES NSW 2370

Main Administration Centre (Town Hall Office)
265 Grey Street Glen Innes NSW 2370
Phone: (02) 6730 2300
Office Hours: 8.30 am - 4.30 pm Mon - Fri

Email: council@gisc.nsw.gov.au

