



Gunnedah Shire Council End of Term Report 2016-2021

YOUR SAY
OUR FUTURE

FREE ENTRY
SATURDAY 15TH
SUNDAY 16TH

GUNNEDAH
MEMORIAL
POOL

Introduction and Overview

The end of term report is a report on Council’s progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan during its term. The Community Strategic Plan (CSP), through Council focussed Delivery Program and Operational Plan, took effect from 1 July 2016. This report will focus on the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2021.

The CSP has four themes with a community focussed outcome for each. These themes and outcomes are as follows:

Theme—Engaging and Supporting the Community

- 1.1 Community leadership encouraged and strengthened.
- 1.2 Council as an organisation.
- 1.3 Local coordination of funding from national, state and local sources.
- 1.4 Funding of local facilities and services through mining royalties.
- 1.5 Population increases through targeted promotion of the Shire identity and opportunities.
- 1.6 Retention of our young population through increased employment and social opportunities.
- 1.7 A well engaged community that is involved in decision making processes.
- 1.8 Access to education and training opportunities.

Theme—Building our Shire’s Economy

- 2.1 Our economic employment base diversified.
- 2.2 Our infrastructure strategically managed.
- 2.3 Access to goods, services and markets.
- 2.4 Our identity and reputation promoted to tourists.
- 2.5 Entrepreneurs and developers contribute to local economic growth.

Theme—Retaining our Quality of Life

- 3.1 Our older residents provided with the comfort and respect they deserve.
- 3.2 Enhanced access to essential services.
- 3.3 Improved housing affordability.
- 3.4 Villages are sustainable.
- 3.5 Police continue to work in partnership with the community.
- 3.6 Reduced crime and anti-social behaviour within the Shire.
- 3.7 Our younger people attracted, retained and developed.
- 3.8 Entertainment facilities, cultural development opportunities and stimulation for community members of all ages.
- 3.9 Enhanced delivery of key services within our villages.
- 3.10 Recognise and support our cultural activities.
- 3.11 Our community values retained over time.
- 3.12 Create opportunities for people to participate in active and healthy recreational activities.

Theme—Protecting and Enjoying our Beautiful Surrounds

- 4.1 Balance between development and environmental protection.
- 4.2 Enhance the coverage of native vegetation within the Shire.
- 4.3 Secure our native fauna and encourage biodiversity in the Gunnedah Shire.
- 4.4 A secure and high quality water supply.
- 4.5 Protect our heritage.
- 4.6 Investment in new technologies and renewable energies.
- 4.7 Dealing with our waste.
- 4.8 Manage our exposure and contribution to the changing climate.
- 4.9 Enhance our streetscapes in Gunnedah and Villages.



Introduction from the Mayor and General Manager

We are pleased to present the end of term report for Gunnedah Shire Council, for what has been an unprecedented term in many respects, not the least of which has included the challenges of a record drought and the Covid-19 pandemic, along with the opportunities presented by economic stimulus through local government by the State and Federal governments not seen since the Second World War.

The current Council was elected in September 2016, representing the second full term Council with responsibility for delivery of the outcomes in our Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Covid-19 also saw the current Council term extended by fifteen (15 months), and consequently the term of the incoming Council shortened by the same amount. Significant progress against the CSP outcomes are outlined in this report, under each of the four themes; Engaging and Supporting the Community, Building our Shire’s Economy, Retaining our Quality of Life and Protecting and Enjoying our Beautiful Surrounds.

A few highlights of achievements detailed in the report include:

- Bedding down of an enterprise wide audit and risk management framework, including internal audit and audit and risk committee which in many ways already meets the requirements of recently communicated NSW Office of Local Government requirements;
- Continued financial security and sustainability despite the significant environmental challenges faced during the term;
- Delivery of a works program unparalleled in both scope and volume for Council;
- Tremendous success in attracting grant funding for infrastructure and community service projects which have enabled significant project delivery which would otherwise not have been possible;
- The delivery of a large tranche of strategic planning including finalising Council’s Local Strategic Planning Statement and substantial progress on the Economic Development Strategy, Housing Strategy, Open Space Strategy and Destination Management Plan review.

The works delivered during this term of Council include a number of projects which were identified in the respective Delivery Programs for the period as Unfunded Priority Projects. It is unusual to identify such projects in a delivery program for local government, representing projects which the Council recognise as being desirable but which are not able to be funded within the long term financial plan. We are in the very fortunate position as a Community that the majority of these works have now been funded and either delivered or in the process of being delivered.

Our community’s economy continues to grow and diversify. Council and the Gunnedah and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chamber are committed to ensuring that Gunnedah not only has a strong economy in the immediate future, but one which is not tied too closely to any specific industry and that extends well into the future.

We would like to acknowledge the hard work and collaboration of all Councillors, staff and volunteers in realising all of the achievements outlined in this report.



Jamie Chaffey
Mayor



Rob Hooke
Deputy Mayor



John Campbell
Councillor



Colleen Fuller
Councillor



Owen Hasler
Councillor



Ann Luke
Councillor



David Moses
Councillor



Murray O’Keefe
Councillor



Gae Swain
Councillor



Eric Groth
General Manager



Colin Formann
Director
Corporate and
Community Services



Andrew Johns
Director
Planning and
Environmental Services



Jeremy Bartlett
Director
Infrastructure
Services



Bruce Mercer
Executive Manager
GoCo

Acknowledgement of Country

Council would like to acknowledge the Kamilaroi people as the traditional custodians of the Land on which we gather today. Council would also like to pay respect to Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal community members present.

Key Strategic Challenges 2016-2021

Key Strategic Challenges

These challenges included:

- Funding and delivering infrastructure to support an increasing population;
- Planning for the projected continued growth of the community over the next 20 years;
- Balancing the positive and negative impacts of mining and developing a diversified economy;
- Ensuring community assets are maintained to a satisfactory standard;
- Addressing revenue challenges to fund Council's ongoing operations and increasing demands for services;
- Ensuring the Council organisation is efficient, always improving and achieving operational cost savings;
- Meeting key state government sustainability targets and benchmarks to protect local democracy;
- Drought resilience; and
- COVID-19 pandemic.

Curlewis Pipeline

Council lodged an application under the Federal Governments Building Better Regions Funding for grant funding to assist in the construction of a 15.8km water supply pipeline from Gunnedah to Curlewis to improve the quality of the water supply for residents of Curlewis. Funding was announced in 2017 with the Federal Government funding 50% (\$2.6 million) of the project, with works commencing in July 2018. The project involved installation of 15.86km of pipeline from Wandobah Road, (via Blackjack Forest Road, Booloocooro Road and Preston Road) to Curlewis, the construction of 2 x 500 kilolitre concrete storage reservoirs and a disinfection dosing station to improve the water quality and storage capacity for Curlewis.



Official opening of the Curlewis Pipeline

Future 2040—Gunnedah Shire Local Planning Statement

The Future 2040 – Gunnedah Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement was endorsed. An extensive community consultation program was undertaken over a three month period via a variety of methods to ensure the wider community was given the opportunity to provide input. This significant document forms the basis for:

- Strategic planning in the area, having regard to economic, social and environmental matters;
- Planning priorities for the area;
- Actions required for achieving those planning priorities; and
- Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the actions within the document.

Resources for Regions

Gunnedah Shire received \$1,403,305 from the NSW State Government Resources for Regions program as acknowledgement of the contribution mining makes to the economy of the region. The funding was utilised for economic infrastructure including roads, rail, facilities that improve the movement of freight, airports, local water and sewerage projects. It was also invested in recreational facilities, childcare centres and other infrastructure related to the delivery of community services.

Community Resilience Program

Gunnedah Shire Council's Community Resilience Program was initiated to support the economy and community during the drought. The Program consisted of seven key objectives: deliver economic stimulus to the local economy; provide local employment and support local purchasing; address water and other utility conservation; sustain the community social fabric, health and wellbeing; provide a public benefit and lasting legacy, strengthen long-term community resilience; and support and co-ordinate efforts with others (government and non-government). The two main actions within the Program were funding for community grants that met the objectives, and the establishment of a temporary Council workforce that recognised that many people, including farmers, farm workers, suppliers and employees in related industries, had their regular income affected by the ongoing drought conditions. The work provided income across a diverse range of locations and jobs, and also provided an opportunity for people to learn new skills and new qualifications through a partnership with Training NSW. A program of projects that will deliver long-term benefits was developed and included projects such as tree planting, fencing, tree maintenance, footpath building and painting. The workforce was designed to provide flexible hours which were capped to spread opportunities among participants.

Covid 19 Pandemic

The impact of COVID-19 resulted in the activation of Council's Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and extended the Community Resilience Program, which was initiated to support the economy and community during the drought, however assumed an even greater importance during the Coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has had a significant impact on the Gunnedah Shire economy due to economic uncertainty, supply limitations and lockdown measures. Council is mindful of the social and health impacts the pandemic has on our community. The first restrictions on trade commenced on 16 March 2020, which included bans on non-essential gatherings. By the end of March, Australians were encouraged to stay home with travel restrictions being implemented. Some industry specific measures were enacted, including restrictions on trade for pubs and clubs as well as hair and beauty services. Council has been mindful of the economic impacts of the pandemic and resultant partial lockdown. With this in mind, a Community Resilience Business Recovery Support Package was developed and implemented. The purpose of the Package was to provide assistance to local businesses that have been negatively impacted by the pandemic and the Invigorate Gunnedah program has:

- Provided fees and charges relief to small business;
- Provided relief from interest on overdue rates, annual charges and fees during Council's BCP;
- Support for local employment and local purchasing;
- Encouraged business diversification and capacity building;
- Communicated updates from all tiers of Government and Non-Government to the business sector; and
- Further supported those businesses in need where significant gaps were identified in the Federal and State packages.



Gunnedah Waste Water Management Facility

Gunnedah Waste Water Management Facility

The Gunnedah Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), had not been updated since 1968. A \$8 million upgrade was funded by Council and \$1.98 million secured from the NSW Government through the Restart NSW Resources for Regions Program. The STP uses a trickling filter and maturation pond to treat sewage. Under normal operation conditions, all of the treated effluent from the works is transferred for irrigation under a reuse agreement. Whilst the old plant met the water quality requirements specified by the EPA, it needed to be upgraded to improve reliability and increase treatment capacity. The upgrade aimed to extend the working life of the existing treatment assets until 2038; provide additional hydraulic capacity to service population growth and a planned expansion of the sewage network to service an industrial estate; and improve workplace safety at the site. This major project included decommissions of existing infrastructure, constructing new facilities, refurbishing existing assets units, construction of a new amenities building and new service water system, and an electrical

Key Strategic Challenges 2016-2021

Koala Park

An allocation of \$80,000 was endorsed for the development of a feasibility study, business case and application for the Infrastructure NSW Regional Growth – Environment and Tourism Grant Program. The application for funding to establish a world class Koala Park and Education Centre in Gunnedah was submitted and, in June 2018, the Deputy Premier and Member for Tamworth announced \$6.48 million had been allocated towards the project from the state budget.



Artists Impression of Gunnedah Koala Sanctuary

Livvi's Place

Council was awarded \$850,000 as the result of an application for the Strong Country Communities Program for the development and construction of an inclusive playground in Wolseley Oval. The Inclusive Playground Working Group worked tirelessly towards the Livvi's Place Inclusive Playground project, which supports access for children and adults of all abilities and provides extensive recreational, social and community benefits to local families. The location of the playground enhances local events including community markets, NAIDOC community days and Grandparents Day.

Gunnedah Memorial Pool

Work on the multi-million dollar upgrade of the Gunnedah Memorial Pool Complex started in October 2017 with the contractor taking possession of the site. The walls, floor and residual rubble of the two pools was removed and demolition works exposed the limited life of the old pools, with evidence of concrete cancer and failing pipe work revealed. Various sections of the pavilion retained, however some areas required redevelopment to ensure the walls and the memorial tower were not compromised. Construction on the 50 metre pool and new main pavilion commenced in January with the renewed and upgraded facility completed by December 2018. More than 3,000 people descended on the Gunnedah Memorial Pool Complex as it reopened to the public in December 2018. The Complex supports Council's vision of creating liveable communities, by providing a modern, family friendly pool complex which encourages participation in recreational activities and promotes community wellbeing. The start-of-the-art facility is the largest single Council funded capital works project undertaken in the Shire. The project saw the construction of a brand new eight-lane, 50 metre outdoor pool, kids wet play area, new pavilion, filtration system and plant room, as well as the refurbishment of the indoor 25 metre heated pool and improved disability access across the Complex.

Gunnedah Showground Project

Council celebrated the completion of significant works at the Gunnedah Showground, with the multi-purpose facility transformed into an exciting major event venue. The Showground redevelopment received \$1.79 million in funding through the NSW Public Reserve Management Fund and two rounds of the NSW Government's Stronger Communities Fund, supported by Council co-contributions of \$442,775. Completed work includes new rodeo and camp draft arenas, new grand stand seating, new amenities and shower block, and refurbishment of existing amenities buildings. Enhancing safety and access was a key aim of the refurbishment, which also features a disability access upgrade to the gymnasium and the addition of 5 wheelchair accessible picnic tables and shelters. The upgrades create a better experience for Showground users and brings more major events. Accessibility upgrades support Gunnedah Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan, helping foster a welcoming community space for visitors and volunteers and creates opportunities for local groups to grow their participation base. This redevelopment ensures Gunnedah continues to attract a wide range of new and expanded events, encouraging visitors to stay, play and spend in our Shire.

Saleyards Masterplan

Following the implementation of the Saleyards Masterplan, Council secured funding from the NSW Government for \$14 million towards the saleyards precinct upgrade with works including: state of the art office, café and education centre; construction of major structures to place under roof an entire hectare of primary work areas and cattle holding yards; major biosecurity improvements; upgrade to truck wash bay; installation of technology infrastructure; fenced containment of the site; sealing internal roads; upgrades to lighting and load ramp facilities; and installation of solar panels and stormwater harvesting capabilities.



Upgraded Arenas at Gunnedah Showground

Farmer Army

In November 2019, Council resolved to allocate \$1,000,000 towards a Community Resilience Program to provide economic stimulus and employment opportunities within the Gunnedah Shire. This contribution was subsequently matched by both State and Federal Governments to create the Community Resilience Fund, comprised of the Community Grants, Community Infrastructure and Farmer Army sub-programs. Under the "Community Resilience – Farmer Army Projects", \$60,000 was allocated for the Establishment of the Koala Park's Eucalypt Plantation, and completion of Stock Road and the Community Garden Project adjacent the Smithhurst Theatre.

Cultural Precinct Master Plan

Extensive community consultation was undertaken in relation to the development and final endorsement of the Cultural Precinct Master Plan. An Advisory Group was convened, consisting of community and user group representatives to assist with the process. A strategic framework was prepared that would guide the work with the overarching principles of: community buildings for everyone; sharing our culture; easy, economical and sustainable; the heart of the town; interesting architecture and support the thriving cultural activity of the town.

Fluoridation of Water Supply

Council determined to pursue water fluoridation in the Gunnedah water supply following extensive investigations and research. Council received information from all stakeholder groups both in support and opposing fluoridation, including the Fluoride Action Network and the Australian Dental Association NSW Branch and the Australian Medical Association. The consultation process provided the community with reliable information about water fluoridation and to allow community members to have their say. Residents were notified via a letter and fact sheet included in rates notices, and public notices were posted to the Council website and social media. The Gunnedah community survey conducted by NSW Health resulted in 73% of residents supporting fluoridation and 23% indicated they did not support it. Council secured funding to support the implementation and delivery of this major community health improvement strategy.

Rural Doctors

It is well established that rural, regional and remote communities have lower levels of access to health services and, alarmingly, the gap continues to widen. Gunnedah Shire has for many years suffered a chronic shortage of General Practitioners (GP's), an ageing hospital facility (now slated for future upgrade) and an ongoing gradual reduction of essential local health services through centralisation of services to regional centres and cities. This reduction in services and chronic shortage of GP's has been compounded by continuing increases in the local population and demographic challenges associated with an ageing population and a high proportion of indigenous residents with complex health needs. With GP's unable to cope with the local demand for services, a large proportion of Gunnedah residents are now forced to travel outside the area to seek professional medical services. This has escalated to an extent that pressure is being added to medical practices in surrounding communities. For those that don't have the means to travel, an additional demand is placed upon the local hospital emergency ward, clogging up the hospital system. Council has continued to lobby on behalf of Gunnedah residents, to both State and Federal Government, to find a solution to address this ongoing issue.



Library staff rewarded for Bookend Program

90,105
hours GoCo social support provided



Boundary Road Roundabout on the Oxley Highway

676,884km
Travelled GoCo community transport



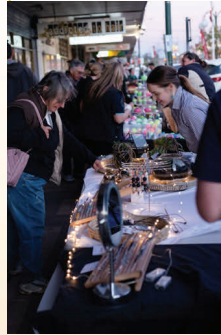
Australia Day 2017 Raft Race

Works being completed on the South Street Reservoir



Bridge Street kerb and gutter construction works

Nightquip 2018



Boundary Road Roundabout on the Oxley Highway



1,416
Resolutions were adopted by Council

Citrus Field Day



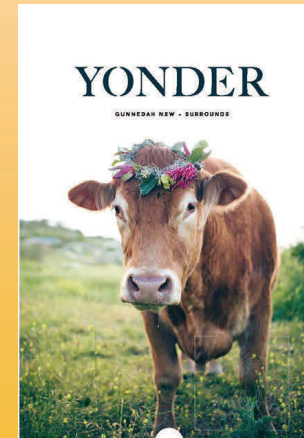
Council staff completing kerb and gutter works in Bloomfield Street

128km
of sewer mains in Gunnedah Shire



Australia Day Church Service conducted in ANZAC Park 2020

\$97,122.34
distributed to community scholarship recipients from



Yonder Magazine Cover



Australia Day 2018 Citizen Ceremony

Celebrating NAIDOC Week 2017



121,969
hours of support provided by GoCo volunteers



Gunnedah participants in the Commonwealth Games Baton Relay



Hay Mate Drought Relief Concert in Wolseley Park 2018

\$92,880.50
provided to community groups under Section 356

\$410,738.05
provided to local businesses under the Business Partner Program



Construction of Hunter and Rodney Streets roundabout

571
GoCo home care package clients



Australia Day 2017 Raft Race

23,239
customer requests processed from 2016 to 2021 averaging **387** per month



Recipients of the 2018 Section 356 Community and Sports Grants funding

\$79,946.67
provided to sporting groups under Section 356



Participants in the 2017 school holiday program

Eastern overtaking lane on Oxley Highway, Carroll



Celebrating one of the murals created as part of the Vibrant Precinct Project



Member for Parkes, Mark Coulton, Mayor Jamie Chaffey and Council staff at the official opening of Simon Bridge

You said . . .

- As a community, increase opportunities and number of volunteers, celebrate role models, develop capacity of community organisations to provide leadership and support village progress associations and action groups.
- Enhance transparent Council decision-making, implement Council plans, policies and financial strategies.
- Implement the integrated planning and reporting to guide development of Gunnedah, identify continuous improvements, be an employer of choice, deliver value services and remain financially sustainable.
- Advocate local interests with State and Federal Governments.
- Welcome new families and residents.
- Provide access to the Community Scholarship Fund.
- Provide traineeship opportunities.
- Ensure the community has opportunities to have a say in decision making.

So we . . .

- Council engaged the services of a Returning Officer, Mr Ian Horwood, and Assistant Returning Officer, Mr Terry Curran, to conduct the 2016 Local Government Election. Staff contributed a significant amount of time to assist in the conduct of the election, with the total cost being \$56,200, well under the allocated budget of \$60,000. As the only Council in NSW to successfully conduct the election in-house, Council was asked to provide a report providing an insight into advantages and cost savings of coordinating an election utilising staff and appropriately trained returning officers.
- The Mayor and Director Planning and Environmental Services visited China to: showcase the opportunities Gunnedah has to offer; encourage joint venture partnerships; strengthen ties between Gunnedah agribusiness and potential business partners in China; investigate opportunities for our agribusiness sector to increase trade and investment that will be mutually beneficial; and research the potential to establish sister city relationships that will enable social, cultural and education cooperation that is supported by Government.

Fluoridation Water Supply

Council received NSW Government endorsement to go ahead with its preferred option for a centralised fluoridation dosing system. Council approved the introduction of fluoridation to the Gunnedah town water supply in December 2017 and subsequently presented a case to the State Government to meet the costs of a new centralised fluoridation dosing system instead of making use of the current three-dosing point system for the introduction of fluoride. The NSW Ministry of Health confirmed it would meet the costs of a centralised fluoridation dosing system including a new chlorination system and pumping station. A centralised system will mean improved water quality outcomes, better water management, and will minimise the ongoing costs. A Council-owned site on Kelvin Road reserve for the new plant has been identified.

- Council supported the 16 days of activism against gender violence in November 2016.
- The Hunter Street Roundabout funded from Roads and Maritime Services, was constructed and included realignment of Hunter and Marquis Streets kerb, installation of concrete blisters and concrete centre circle.
- A review of Council's ten year Community Strategic Plan was undertaken.
- Weekly meetings held with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce.
- Production of two editions of the YONDER magazine undertaken with dissemination to Gunnedah businesses as well as 66 selected Visitor Information Centres across NSW. The magazine was designed for the greater Gunnedah region and to profile the local area, business, community, residents and goings-on within Gunnedah and surrounds.
- A website for lodgement of applications under the Community Scholarship Fund was launched, providing a more efficient and effective method for applicants to apply for funding.
- The Access Committee was reformed to advocate for people with access issues, with the Committee's purpose to support obligations under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.
- The protection and enhancement of the racecourse along with improvements to the quality of horse racing and training facilities were outlined as key outcomes in the Racecourse Master Plan, which was completed in late 2016.
- Councillor Professional Development Program Guidelines was introduced by the Office of Local Government.
- Extensive work was undertaken of 1.782km of Goolhi Road including: stabilising existing road depth, strengthen pavement, primer seal and final seal.
- Financial support provided to the Koori Kids School Initiatives Program.
- Council was contracted by the RMS to extend the overtaking lane 47.9km west of Tamworth from 400m to 715m.
- The ANZAC Park Sewer Main Realignment Project was completed and addressed several issues around the Band Hall, Dorothea Mackellar Centre and the Gunnedah Memorial Pool.
- The Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan was adopted following public exhibition. The Plan guides the future provision and management of pedestrian facilities within the Gunnedah shire Local Government Area.
- The Gunnedah Urban and Land Use Strategy was adopted by Council and is a comprehensive review of strategies dealing with residential, commercial and industrial land uses in Gunnedah.
- The Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country Policy was implemented.
- Gunnedah Branch of the Riding for the Disabled received financial and in-kind support for costs associated with the license fees of the Gunnedah Showground.
- Councillor J Campbell appointed Chair of the Murray Darling Association Region 11 which consists of 16 regional Councils.
- The newly formed Joint Organisation of Councils, Namoi Unlimited, appointed Mayor J Chaffey to the role of Chair.
- In addition to the above, Council has also been able to secure funding from the State Government to assist in the sealing of the remaining unsealed length of Kelvin Road. Council has committed \$0.54 million, whilst securing \$4.053million from the State Fixing Local Roads Program

- Council provided significant financial and in-kind support for the inaugural Energy, Innovation and Mining Expo conducted by the Gunnedah Show Society.
- A Memorandum of Understanding with Lianyungang Agricultural Development Group Co Ltd was entered into, with the agreement cementing long-term cooperation in the field of meat production, processing and sales.
- In conjunction with NSW Department of Primary Industries, a Citrus Field Day was hosted in Gunnedah in 2018.
- Newly formed Economic Development Working Group commenced in 2018 and brings together groups with an interest in driving economic growth in the Gunnedah Shire.
- The Town Hall kitchen hot water system was replaced as a result of the increased use of the Hall for major functions utilising the services of catering businesses. This has ensured the facility will cater for these large events into the future.
- Funding was secured under the Country Passenger Infrastructure Grants Scheme for a new bus shelter installed at the corner of Hunter and Wilga streets totalling \$16,000.
- Shaping, stabilising and sealing the pavement to eliminate defects and enhance ride safety was undertaken on Black Stump Way from Bando Gate towards Tambar Springs.
- Funding of \$198,000 from the Federal Government's Regional Airports Program for safety and security upgrades was received, with Council allocating 50% contribution to support the grant requirements.
- A comprehensive pavement inspection was carried out of the Gunnedah Airport.
- A new disability access lift has been installed at the pool complex.

Vibrant Precinct

Council received funding under the NSW Government's Regional Development Framework—Future Towns Project. The project included four murals in the CBD area, exhibition space in shop windows for art and photography, planter box and seating for the front of a local business, a painted shopfront and wheelbarrow of flowers, board games, cushions and blankets installed in the CBD, fair lighting, the Gunnedah Youth Council Dessert Bar, increased seating for local businesses and a community noticeboard.

Oxley Highway Overtaking Lane

A new eastern overtaking lane was constructed at Carroll on the Oxley Highway, 52km west of Tamworth under contract to the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS). The works consisted of installing new culvert, benching to allow for the impact of new material construction layers, and stabilising the subgrade. Total cost of the works was \$1,382,189.86 which was funded by the RMS.

- 3km of pavement renewal works were completed west of Marys Mount and Goolhi Road.
- Culvert widening and pavement works were undertaken on Howes Road and Oxley Highway intersection at Carroll.
- Reshaping the Lincoln Street table drain to remove edge drop from pavement was completed.
- Pavement reconstruction including overlay 150mm, stabilising and comparing undertaken on the Oxley Highway from Tamworth roundabout to Boundary Road.
- Reshaping and overlay completed on Kelvin Road to enhance and strengthen pavement.
- Gravel resheeting works were completed on Marys Mount Road from Colligra intersection to the Oxley Highway.
- Realignment of pavement including adding gravel and installing levee bank was completed on Gunnembene Lane.
- Footpath paving was completed in Elgin Street to align with the Main Street beautification program.
- Carpet replacement works were completed in the Adult and Community Education building behind the Gunnedah Shire Library.

We also . . .

- 330m of water mains were replaced in Railway Avenue, Stock Road, Little Barber Street, McAndrew Street and Jaeger Avenue.
- Simson’s Bridge Replacement was completed
- Flood mitigation works were completed at Tommy Swamp and Hoss Causeway at Carroll, with 150 box culverts installed and a value of \$3,285.547.
- A new enterprise control management system (electronic records management) was implemented which provides a modern, easy to use platform for staff to access electronic records.
- A Planning Agreements Policy was developed and adopted, and it provides structure around how voluntary planning agreements are made and provides certainty to developers of the process that leads to a final Planning Agreement being made.
- Supported by GoCo, the Elder’s Group participated in the Elders Olympics held in Port Macquarie and NAIDOC Week activities.
- An audit review was undertaken of Council’s WHS policies and planning including: hazard identification and control, training, emergency preparedness, inspection and testing and incident investigation with Council scoring fair in 8 of the 14 areas reviewed and good in the remaining 6 areas.
- A major Risk Management Action Plan was completed in relation to IT Security, including reset user and administrator passwords process, backup and recovery system review, and these measures ensure the security and integrity of Council’s electronic data.
- Lighting replaced in the Depot Workshop to LED for improved vision and energy savings.
- A replacement of the Gunnedah Town Water Supply Bore No 5 in Studdy Lane was completed.

Simson Bridge

Simson’s Bridge Replacement was completed on time and under budget, with the project including design and construction of new reinforced concrete bridge, design of vertical and horizontal alignment of approaches to tie in to existing road way, traffic control, erosion/sediment control measures and demolition of the existing timber and reinforced concrete bridge.

- Council applied for and was successful in a number of Federal and State Government funded grant opportunities including: Fixing Country Roads, Heavy Vehicle Safety Productivity Program and Building Better Communities. During 2018/19 grant applications to the value of \$7,789,411.00 were submitted, with six applications successful.
- Kerb and gutter works were completed in several areas of the Shire.
- Maintenance was completed on several rural sealed roads including: reconstruction of Goolhi Road, gravel resheeting of Watermark Road and Quia Station Road, reconstruction of pavement Bluevale Road and Clifton Road, and lane widening of Little Barber Street.
- New roundabout constructed on the intersection of Barber and Chandos Streets.
- New gates were installed at the Gunnedah Airport.
- Major upgrade works were completed on the South Street Water Storage Reservoir including: installation of an internal ladder, complete replacement of the roof structure, installation of security fence, coating of internal walls, and upgrade of the workplace safety of the site.
- The extension of the main extension in McCall’s Road was completed.
- Council accepted \$211,750 on a 50% co-contribution basis towards the South Street Cycleway project under the Transport NSW Active Transport Program.
- Design and construction of water main through Mornington Heights subdivision was completed.
- Major internal refurbishment and fitout completed at the Library, including new carpet throughout.
- CCTV inspections and sewer relining undertaken in various residential areas of the Shire.
- Sewer main installation and/or pavement restoration undertaken in Farrar Road, Elgin Street, Abbott Street, Howes Road, Baxter Street, Chandos Street and Barber Street.
- In collaboration with local businesses, Council conducted the inaugural Wellness for Working Women event with the aim of creating a forum for local women to come together, make connections and support each other.
- Completed implementation of the Gunnedah Shire Council Vendorpanel portal in conjunction with Namoi Unlimited with preparations including community engagement, launch to the Chamber of Commerce, scheduled supplier training and in-house training. This procurement portal will result in more money being spent with local Gunnedah suppliers as well as regionally within the Namoi Unlimited catchment.
- Council made a submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal regarding the potential benefits and impacts contained within the Review of the Local Government Rating system. The recommendations within the report were drafted to promote a stronger and more sustainable rating system that would benefit ratepayers and Councils.
- The Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Person Protection Policy was endorsed by Council and ensures compliance with current State and Federal Government child protection legislation.
- Following community consultation, Council adopted the Community Participation Plan which outlines how and when Council will undertake community participation when exercising its planning function.
- Council awarded two local businesses \$13,000 under the Sister Cities and Friendly Relationships Program.
- Changes were made to quarry management, including improvements to administration, financial management, and production practices, and have resulted in an increase in material quality and consistency.

Water Meter Infrastructure Upgrade

A major water meter infrastructure upgrade was completed in Gunnedah Shire with the installation of automatic water meter devices at Gunnedah, Curlewis, Tambar Springs and Mullaley. Fully funded by Council, the project saw automatic water meter devices fitted at approximately 4,500 homes and businesses throughout the Shire. The automatic water meter devices will be a useful tool for both Council and residents to more accurately monitor water usage and identify issues, such as leaks, faster. Council and customers will be able to use a web-based management tool to constantly measure volumetric use and identify water leaks whilst more accurately monitoring pressure and flow throughout the network, ultimately reducing water bills and operational costs. The data collected from the devices, such as daily and target usage, as well as cost per day will be a great asset to allow Council to better monitor peak demand and plan for water upgrades, as well as be notified if the water meter devices are tampered with. The automatic water meter devices replace existing meter devices and need to be installed by hand on every property with access to town water. The data will also be used for billing purposes.

- Construction of the Apex Road Reservoir was completed to meet the additional storage requirements of the growing population. The \$2.6 million project improved the water storage capacity.
- The construction of a wash bay facility at the Shire Depot was completed.
- Council supported the Australian Local Government Association’s call to restore the national value of financial assistance grant funding to provide a fairer share of federal funding to the community.
- Council endorsed a financial contribution of \$5,000 towards the Gunnedah Rural Museum to assist with operational costs.
- Facilitated discussions with TAFE and local businesses to identify opportunities to improve training facilities and ongoing employment for residents of the Gunnedah district supporting the announcement of State Government funding for upgrades to the Gunnedah Campus.
- Works were completed on Regional roads, including: completion of Grain Valley Road resheeting program; widening shoulder and pavement overlay on Blackjack Stump Way; and design plans completed for Boundary Road Roundabout on the Oxley Highway.

Grain Valley Road

Works commenced on a major upgrade of Grain Valley Road, with 1.7km of the road sealed for the first time through \$3.8 million each from the Federal Government’s Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program and the NSW Government’s Restart NSW Fixing Country Roads Program, with Council providing additional funding. The project improved safety, cut down on wear and tear on vehicles and secured a more reliable freight and domestic traffic link between Mullaley and Boggabri.

Clifton Road

An upgrade of Clifton Road worth almost \$10 million commenced after Council’s application for a NSW Government Contribution was approved. \$8,563,986 funding towards the project was awarded through the Fixing Country Roads Program, with the project including upgrading and sealing of 1.35km of Clifton Road, widening of 5km and replacement of the bridge at Maitland Street in Breeza.

COVID Response Strategy

Council implemented the Response Strategy to COVID-19 and immediately: authorised the freeing of accrual against rates, fees and charges that were outstanding for the duration of COVID-19; authorised the departure from the Debt Recovery Policy and ceased the escalation of any outstanding accounts for formal recovery process for the duration of COVID-19; and authorised the waiving of fees and charges in exceptional circumstances where it is determined safer to provide a service free of charge.

Vickery Extension Project

The Voluntary Planning Agreement—Vickery Extension Project was endorsed by Council. The Agreement provides for the payment of: \$500,000 on the grant of development consent for the Vickery Extension Project; \$500,000 on the mine construction commencement date; and a percentage per tonne of product coal during a financial year.

We also . . .

- Council entered into a contract arrangement with Liverpool Plains Shire Council to tender for sewer main rehabilitation services. The tender resulted in a better outcome due to the increased volume of the relining contract being offered and establishment costs being shared.
- Council won the Local Government Award in the NSW Resilient Australia Awards in October 2020. The Awards were open to everyone including individuals, not for profit organisations, small and large businesses, local and state government, schools, education institutions, research bodies and emergency service agencies. The national program recognised initiatives that strengthen community disaster resilience coordinated by the Office of Emergency Management.
- Annual donations of prizes were provided to various schools in the Gunnedah Shire in support of their annual presentation events.
- Prizes were also donated to Swimming Gunnedah Inc for their fundraising raffle.
- Financial assistance provided to the Gunnedah and District Chamber of Commerce for their Spirit of Christmas Fair and the COVID safe Christmas Shop Local Campaign. The Fair is an initiative of the Chamber, has been delivered for five years and provides a boost to the economy by kicking off the Christmas trade. The Shop Local Campaign was initiated in response to COVID restrictions and proved to be a successful alternative.
- Council entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Gunnedah Ministers Fraternal in relation to the annual Carols by Candlelight event. The MOU will ensure that the Ministers Fraternal can run the event with financial and in-kind support from Council, as well as under appropriate insurance coverage as per Council's insurance policy.
- Council provided financial support for the establishment of a new volunteer based, not for profit group called Multicultural Gunnedah. The aim of the group is to assist people from other nations to find their feet and become established within the Gunnedah Shire.

- Works were completed on the replacement of the Tambar Springs and Carroll Bore and installation pilot test bore and construction, development and commissioning of new bores at Breeza, Kelvin and Emerald Hill.
- Urgent works were completed on stormwater renewal following the failure of the stormwater network near Kamilaroi Road and Wentworth Street which resulted in a large sink hole and on investigation, staff discovered a collapsed galvanised steel stormwater line.
- Council engaged several local contractors in a preferred supply panel for the delivery of plant and equipment hire services. The panel will operate for a two year term with an option for a third and will provide opportunities for local businesses to provide these services to Council.
- The Annie Egan Memorial Project was supported by Council through in-kind works up to the value of \$10,000. Annie Egan lived in Gunnedah and enlisted in the Australian Army Nursing Service after completing her nursing studies. After contracting Spanish Flu, while still actively caring for soldiers, Annie collapsed and passed away.
- Council advised the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to incorporate the proposed Natural Disasters Clause into the Gunnedah Local Environmental Plan 2012. This will ensure that development consent can be granted for the repair or replacement of a dwelling that was damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster despite any provisions in the relevant LEP which would otherwise prevent the consent authority from allowing a dwelling on the land. This clause was borne out of the 2019/20 NSW bushfires.
- Successful negotiations with Whitehaven Coal were undertaken in relation to the development of a Voluntary Planning Agreement for the Narrabri Underground Project Stage 3.
- Council resolved to allocate a portion of the Section 356 Small Grants to Access Incentives. These funds will be allocated to a specific grant fund round, aimed at supporting businesses and community groups to enhance access for people with disability within their premises.

Community Resilience Projects

The projects for funding (under the Drought Communities Program, Drought Stimulus Program and Council funding) consideration included:

- Ooranga FMRU Assoc Inc – toilet facilities at the Ooranga Curlewies Preschool venue;
- Gunnedah Rural Museum – update facilities;
- Gunnedah Motorcycle Club (Balcaray Park Raceway) – water catchment and retention and upgrade of facilities;
- Carroll Progress Association – restore the Carroll sportsground;
- Gunnedah Tennis Club – new lights at Wolseley Oval tennis courts;
- Gunnedah Junior Rugby Club – upgrade of the canteen facility;
- Gunnedah Tennis Club – replacement of fencing;
- Black n Blue Boxing Gym – upgrade of facilities;
- Arts Gunnedah – Mural project for the CBD;
- Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society – Silo art on the Maize Mill;
- Kelvin Hall Inc – Improve water supply;
- Gunnedah Conservatorium – Two community projects;
- Gunnedah Headquarters RFS – Upgrade facilities;
- Gunnedah & District Historical Society – Completion of veteran mural project;
- Yallabee Gunnedah Homes for the Aged – New watering system;
- Gunnedah Urban Landcare Group – underground watering system on Pensioners Hill;
- Gunnedah Urban Landcare & Gunnedah Motoring Enthusiasts – Upgrades to porcupine reserve;
- Gunnedah Shire Band – bathroom upgrade to include disabled toilet access; and
- Riding for the Disabled Gunnedah – Three-seat carriage and horse float.

Gunnedah Shire Council committed \$1.2 million to the Community Resilience Program which, following lobbying by the council, was matched by State and Federal funding, bringing the total to \$3.2 million. The Farmer Army, another initiative through the program, already in operation, working with primary producers and those who worked with primary producers, to supplement their incomes with Council work.

Policy Review

- The Policy Development Framework was amended in order to achieve uniformity, provide further clarification in relation to the distinction between policies, management directives and procedures and includes reference to legislative provisions and additional responsibilities.
- The Community Engagement Policy was reviewed to make the policy more succinct and to avoid the duplication of operational detail in other policy documents. Key changes to the document included the introduction of two classes of engagement activity, being operations that are considered routine and non-routine. A formal community engagement plan will only be required for non-routine activities. A revision of the roles and responsibilities section was also undertaken.
- The Media Policy was reviewed to make the policy more succinct and to provide for the delegation of media authorisation by the General Manager. With increasing volume of content being produced, particularly for social media and ongoing maturity of Council's communications processes, provision in the policy has been made for the General Manager to authorise designated social media administrators and designed approved officers within Council Departments.
- A new Model Code of Meeting Practice issued by the Office of Local Government was endorsed by Council.
- Legislative changes to the upper dollar limit for tenders took effect and as a result, the Policy—Procurement and Tendering was reviewed in order to incorporate the new tender threshold.
- The Model Internal Reporting Policy was updated to reflect changes in Public Interest Disclosures Act. The policy provides for receiving, assessing and dealing with public interest disclosures.
- Following a review of Council's Policy Register, 14 policies were retired as they were identified as being no longer relevant to current operations.

- Council has progressed the removal of the Flood Planning Area from the properties that are no longer identified as being subject to flooding along and nearby Wandobah Road following the reconstruction of Blackjack Creek. A Gateway Determination has been issued pending the finalisation of a new Blackjack Flood Study.
- Council resolved to provide a significant financial contribution as well as in-kind support for the conduct of the next Energy Innovation Mining Expo (eIMEx) which has been delayed for 2 years due to the pandemic.

GoCo Clinical Governance Committee

GoCo has been under the auspice of Council since 1990. This has proven to be a productive arrangement, bringing benefits to eligible residents of Gunnedah Shire and the North West area of NSW. GoCo has grown and successfully adapted to the many changes that have taken place in the Aged Care and Disability Service Sectors. This success is largely due to Council's support and expertise. In 2019, the Aged Care Quality Standards were introduced which provide the framework for all approved aged care providers in the delivery of aged care services. In order to gain or retain accreditation as an aged care provider, agencies are required to meet these standards as determined by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. The new standards changed the accountability requirements in the aged care sector and an independent external audit of GoCo's compliance with the Clinical Governance requirements was completed. The audit determined that Councillors are accountable for the safe and quality care and services to GoCo clients, therefore it was recommended that a Clinical Governance Committee would be established with qualified persons appointed to Committee positions. A Charter was established, interest sought from qualified external persons to serve on the Committee and the inaugural meeting was held in early 2020.



New playground equipment at Mullaley Park

286,957
visits to the Library

Footage from one of the CCTV installations in Conadilly Street



Dorothea Mackellar Centre



Gunnedah Shire Library display

23,802
trips delivered by Community Transport

121,969
Hours delivered by volunteers for GoCo clients

Youth Week promotion



Shade sail installed at Kitchener Park



1,906
Library member household deliveries



Library 'Bat Cave' display during the Summer Reading Club

33,541
Library members



Entrant in the 2016 Waste to Art Competition

7,671
GoCo lawn mowing hours delivered



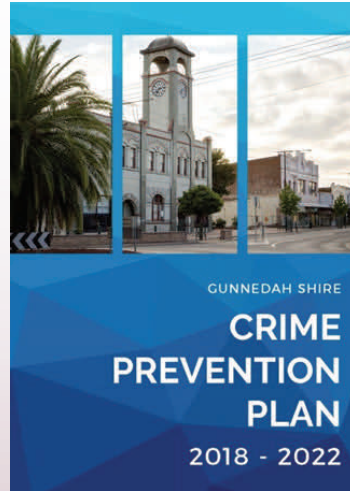
Painting of Emerald Hill Hall



GoCo finalists at the Gunnedah Chamber of Commerce Business and Service Awards

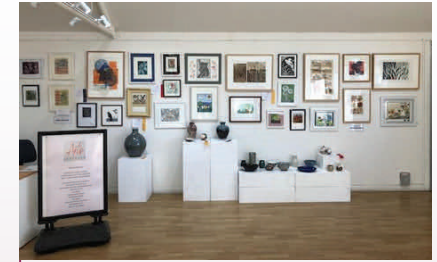


Elders at the Elders Olympics in Inverell



Crime Prevention Plan

137,081
Library loans



Arts Gunnedah 49th Annual Arts and Ceramic Exhibition held in the Gallery, 2019



Promoting GoCo in Narrabri.

13

public toilets
Maintained
by Council

11,774
new library
materials acquired



Staff utilising the new loading ramp at the Cultural Precinct

Councillor Swan and Mr Steven Betts from the House with No Steps participating in the Form Our Perspective Event



Getting ready to dive into the new pool

4,209

GoCo CHSP and Community
Transport clients



Gunnedah Shire Library celebrated Library Lover's Month

2,618
events held at
the Library



Celebrating 150 Years of Gunnedah embroidery wall hanging being installed at the Library

You said . . .

- Provide education and training facilities for older people.
- Provide aged care facilities and promote programs to support aged persons in their home.
- Encourage involvement in village improvement programs.
- Partner with the police to foster crime prevention.
- Encourage use of public places.
- Develop strategies to reduce vandalism.
- Create activities for young people after school and in holidays.
- Provide innovative and enhanced library services.
- Support and promote Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society and NAIDOC Week.
- Improve access to existing cultural facilities and spaces.
- Enhance open spaces.
- Partner with the community to deliver events such as Ag-quip and Week of Speed.
- Encourage cycling and walking by developing safe tracks and paths.

So we . . .

- GoCo Packages brokered a range of support services for customers from a panel of suppliers across five Local Government Areas. These support services include case management, personal care, domestic assistance, respite care, social support (both group and individual), transport, assistive equipment and allied health services.
- GoCo was accredited as complying with the National Aged Care Standards by the Aged Care Quality Agency in August 2016.
- Council and GoCo facilitated Gunnedah's Young Access Group to participate in the 'Putting the Pieces Together' project supported by Arts North West and Accessible Arts. Young Access provides a chance for artists and young people with disabilities to explore and socialise through art and various hobbies in a supported environment.
- Council provided financial support to the Koori Kids organisation, which engages young people in a range of school initiatives to promote education and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.
- Youth Week 2017 included a Youth Expo held at the Gunnedah Town Hall.

- The Community Hub Program provided accessible single point access for information, resources and services for a wide variety of individuals, groups and other local and visiting community services. The Hub acts like a drop-in service where anyone can get information to access local services to help them, particularly those members of the community who are financially or socially disadvantaged or of aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background.
- Following public exhibition, Council adopted a Smoke Free Environment Policy. Specific notification was provided to building owners and businesses located within the Smoke Free Zone. The purpose of the policy is to identify indoor and outdoor smoke free areas regulated by the Smoke Free Environment Act 2000 as well as establish a Smoke Free Zone within a portion of the Gunnedah Central Business District.
- Council's Library staff made a presentation on Brain Training at the NSW Public Libraries Association SWITCH Conference. Over 300 Librarians attended the conference and over 70 information packs outlining the program were disseminated to Libraries across Australia. The program is open to all ages and seeks to assist participants to stimulate brain activity by offering a series of timed activities.
- Advocacy provided through the delivery of the Connecting Our Communities Forum, which identifies gaps in services and makes recommendations for service enhancement. Support was provided for specific awareness raising events, for example, drug and alcohol initiatives, domestic and family violence, child safety.
- Council supported the Say No to Drugs event, 'Walk Around Wolseley'. The Crime Prevention working Group and the Gunnedah Community Action Team also supported the event.
- The shade sail installation program was implemented with sails installed at Wolseley Oval, Kitchener Park, Carroll Park and Mullaley Park. The sails ensure children are protected from the sun whilst utilising the various play equipment.
- Council provided over \$190,039.00 in financial contributions to the Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society.
- The focus of the School Holiday Program activities shifted to encompass the previously disengaged age bracket of 12-25 year olds. Activities included all-night movie nights, Xbox afternoons, youth forums, skateboarding, yoga classes and dance workshops resulting in an increase in engagement.
- Representatives of Council's youth along with volunteer staff, attended the 2016 Luminosity Youth Summit. The aim of the Summit is to inspire youth to follow their dreams, challenge the to be the best person they can be and take a chance on themselves, and excel and exceed in their chosen journey.
- The following year, representatives participation in the Luminosity Summit held in Port Macquarie.
- Gunnedah Youth Council's Dessert Bar was a success. The pop-up style dessert bar was a youth initiative and raised money for the Gunnedah Community Scholarship Fund. The concept was created by members and they planned, organised, cooked and served at the event.
- The Homework Centre was revamped following a change to the Department of Education's homework guidelines. The change shifted the focus from homework based to general learning which was identified as a need.
- Council contributed \$5,000 to the Gunnedah Conservatorium to assist the community to engage with and experience the arts through music related skill development, performance and tuition.
- Council was successful in securing funding of \$50,000 from the NSW Government Department of Industry for the Future Towns Program. The funding allocated aims to deliver site activation through a number of ways, including improving the CBD and developing skill sets and practices of local business owners within the Gunnedah Shire.
- GoCo's social support group enjoyed a 3 day trip to Inverell, with our Elders participating in the Elders Olympics.
- A new Community Transport software system was implemented which includes mobile devices in all vehicles which has streamlined how transport is booked and delivered.

- Council has two units in Goodwin Road and four units in Reservoir Street specifically to house members of the community who are vulnerable financially and socially. The units have home to long-term tenants for a number of years.
- Council resolved to provide up to \$20,000 assistance for Village Hall Associations/ Committees to assist in meeting public liability and other insurance requirements. These types of insurances are required in the normal running of an incorporated association, which is a requirement of Council's license agreement.
- Upgrade works were undertaken at Mullaley Hall, including installation of security lighting for the entry to the Hall, amenities light switches, repairs to the Hall annex ceiling and painting, improvements to the front doors and painting of the Hall toilets.
- Improvements and protective strips were applied to the Tambar Springs Hall doors as well as vermin protection and treatment undertaken.
- A concrete ramp and rails for access to the toilets was installed at Curlewis Hall. A lighting upgrade was also undertaken. New guttering was also installed
- Structural works associated with supporting the brick front entrance were undertaken at Curlewis Hall.
- Power supply upgrade works and internal/ external painting to the amenities block was completed at Hamilton Park, Curlewis.
- CCTV network equipment was upgraded at the Gunnedah Saleyards, taking the number of cameras up to 12 to ensure that the high need areas on the site are covered.

GoCo

GoCo accepted an offer of novation from Tamworth Regional Council I 2017/18, which saw the transition of all Tamworth Council aged Care and Carer Support Services transition to Gunnedah Shire Council. This included: three new office spaces in Kootingal, Barraba and Nundle; three new services types: Meals on Wheels, the Carer Support Program and Commonwealth Home Support Sector support and Development funds, 5 new staff, 50 new volunteers; and just over 200 new clients.

Drought Extension Funding

As part of the Federal Government Drought Extension Funding, several major works were undertaken on water and Village Hall related projects to generate long term environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits for Gunnedah Shire. All projects employed local contractors and suppliers and will result in increased events and visitor numbers which will add value into the future, and included:

- Major upgrade of the Mullaley Memorial Hall including air-conditioning and internal fit out;
- New amenities block at Emerald Hill;
- New rainwater tanks installed at Curlewis Hall;
- New rainwater tanks and hot water system installed at Pialloway Hall and Reserve;
- A drinking fountain installed in Gunnedah CBD;
- Impactful Vietnam War themed artwork around the outside wall of the four-storey Water Tower Museum which depicts iconic elements including soldiers, helicopters and the Long Tan Cross,
- Significant upgrade to the Lake Keepit Sailing Club clubhouse and surrounds, with a structural extension to provide an increase in boat storage, and provide the area with improved shower and toilet amenities, a new in-ground watering system on the lawn and rigging area to improve water use efficiency, upgrade to the guard rails demarcating the disability access road and parking area to ensure inclusive and safe amenities for drivers and people with mobility challenges;
- A country music event supported by the Gunnedah Show Society which offered five days of music for visitors;
- A Day with the Devils hosted by the Gunnedah Rugby Club which was a gated day/night festival with invited country music artists, boutique markets and food stalls to attract locals and visitors;
- An automatic watering system installed at Gunnedah Jockey Club Riverside Racecourse to reduce the risk of weather affecting race days and support preparation of the course for the safety of horses and jockeys; and
- Installation of automatic water dispensing units in the Villages with units installed in Gunnedah, Curlewis, Mullaley and Tambar Springs.

We also . . .

- The Gunnedah Shire Crime Prevention Plan 2018-2022 was endorsed by Council in April 2018. The four year plan reflects the ongoing priorities and actions that will continue to enhance community safety and reduce crime within the Shire. As a result of the Plan, Gunnedah Shire was endorsed as a Safer Community Compact by the NSW Attorney General until 2021.
- Council implemented a new disaster recovery and backup system that will allow quicker recovery of key systems in the event of a disaster and completely renewed the system that provides our CCTV services, allowing for the rollout of further CCTV coverage across the CBD and office locations. The new WiFi network was installed, utilising a base station on the lookout has allowed high speed connectivity to Council buildings not previously able to connect to the corporate network.

Dorothea Mackellar Centre

September 2016 saw the opening of the Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Centre. Council also financially supported the Centre to provide adequate lighting, hanging systems and roofing upgrades to ensure the security of the collection. The Centre has been developed as an interpretive centre to celebrate Dorothea Mackellar, promote Australian literature and poetry and also to permanently house the Jean Isherwood 'My Country' watercolour collection.

- A revised Cultural Precinct Venue Hire Policy was exhibited for public consultation. The revised fees now cater for not-for-profit, community based organisations. The Policy relates to use of multiple venues including:
 - Civic Theatre
 - Town Hall
 - Smithurst Theatre
 - Creative Arts Meeting Room
 - Studio Room
 - Mooki Room
 - Art Gallery.

- A new software program, Veezi was installed at the Cultural Precinct which accurately correlates data, tracks revenue and improves the customer service experience.
- The supply and installation of lighting at Donnelly Fields was completed with the \$770,000 project fully funded by Council. The lighting will accommodate the needs of current sporting groups and create an opportunity for increased use by organisations that will be able to utilise the facility under lights.
- A concrete slab was poured at Lions Park and gym equipment installed.
- The School Holiday Program continues to provide various activities and events for school aged children including: theatre sports, photo scavenger hunt, NAIDOC Week art, cartooning art workshop, Club Y (Xbox, board games, movies) dance workshops, contemporary music writing workshop, excursions, puppet pals, junior brain games, crafty creations, story telling, fitness and tennis and move days.
- Council secured funding from the NSW Community Building Partnership Program, which is aimed at community infrastructure projects that deliver positive social, environmental and recreational outcomes and promote community participation, inclusion and cohesion. This project saw the installation of a loading ramp at the rear of the gallery to enable the safe transfer of art work, sculptures and gallery pieces into the gallery storage bay.
- The Arts and Cultural Grants Policy was developed to ensure that arts funding was being allocated as a consistent, reoccurring amount each year to lessen the impact on the ability of various arts and cultural groups within the Shire to plan ahead. The policy was exhibited seeking feedback from the community and it has streamlined how we provide grants in this area to members of the community.
- The Access Working Group facilitated the 'From Our Perspective' disability awareness event involving Councillors, staff and local retailers in the Gunnedah CBD. The activity is designed to highlight the every day challenges faced by people with disability while undertaking activities that most take for granted.

Gunnedah Shire Library

Our amazing Library team has achieved outstanding results and been the recipient of many accolades including:

- The Brain Training Program has been taken up by many other libraries throughout Australia, nursing homes and retirement villages, and aged care centres;
- Bookends has also been taken up by many other Libraries;
- 2015—Winner NSW LIAC Centre for Excellence Awards, Law and Justice Foundation;
- 2016—Short Listed, NSW Local Government Excellence Awards, Community Services for Brain Training at the Library;
- 2017—Winner—National Summer Reading Cub Space Activation Award for a Heroes and Villains Display. presented by the State Library of Queensland;
- 2018 Nominee—Australia Day Awards, Community Organisational Achievement Award;
- 2019 Winner—IIOS Innovations in Outreach (NSW) for Bookends Literacy Assist Program;
- 2019—Short Listed, NSW Local Government Excellence Awards for Bookends Literacy Assist;
- 2020—Highly Commended, Local government Excellence Award for Brain Training Expanded;
- 2020—Winner—Local Government NSW RH Dougherty Award for Outstanding Individual Contribution—Christiane Birkett;
- 2021—Nominee—Australia Day Awards, community Achievement Award;
- 2021—Short Listed, Local Government Excellence Awards for Panorama Project;
- Gunnedah Shire Library achieved eSmart Library Accreditation in 2016/17, with Gunnedah identified as the first library in the north east zone and fourth regional library service in Australia to achieve this status; and
- Following Gunnedah Shire Library's lead in 2014, the State Library of Victoria launched the same program as part of their library service across the State.

- Council has two units in Goodwin Road and four units in Reservoir Street specifically to house members of the community who are vulnerable financially and socially. The units have home to long-term tenants for a number of years.
- Council resolved to provide up to \$20,000 assistance for Village Hall Associations/ Committees to assist in meeting public liability and other insurance requirements. These types of insurances are required in the normal running of an incorporated association, which is a requirement of Council's license agreement.
- Upgrade works were undertaken at Mullaley Hall, including installation of security lighting for the entry to the Hall, amenities light switches, repairs to the Hall annex ceiling and painting, improvements to the front doors and painting of the Hall toilets.
- Improvements and protective strips were applied to the Tambar Springs Hall doors as well as vermin protection and treatment undertaken.
- A concrete ramp and rails for access to the toilets was installed at Curlewis Hall. A lighting upgrade was also undertaken.
- Council entered into an agreement with Service NSW to sign up to the Easy to Do Business Program. The program aims to streamline the customer experience and reduce time involved when starting a new business by providing a concierge service to navigate the large number of approvals, licenses, etc that are required across three levels of Government.
- Purchased dinner settings for up to 300 patrons increasing the calibre of functions at the Cultural Precinct.
- New storage installed in the dressing rooms and staging areas of the Smithurst Theatre which has increased the functionality of the stage resulting in creased usage of this venue for live theatre and rehearsals.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

The final Gunnedah Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 Enhancing Access: Cultivating Inclusion was adopted by Council and the Access Working Group has been advocating for people with a disability so that they can access general support and services available in the community and can participate fully in the community.

- Hanging system installed in the Mooki Room which has enabled the space to be used for exhibitions of artwork, historical and social artefacts and displays from the Rural Museum and Pop-Up Library.
- Sound and lighting has been installed that can be used as a portable unit throughout the Precinct.
- New air conditioning units were installed in The Civic and the CCTV has been upgraded.
- Council received 100% funding under the NSW Community Safety Fund to deliver two projects including the design and installation of domestic violence and bullying focussed street banners and new 'skins' for Council's waste and water fleet.
- The Young Ambassador's Program was launched and attracted 10 young people to apply for the program which includes development opportunities over the course of 9 months including public speaking, resume building, community service and participating in fundraising for the Community Scholarship Fund.
- Council parks and gardens staff prepared the Gunnedah Showgrounds for the Australian Hunter Horse Association's National Horse Show, which was the first time the event had been held in a rural area, with positive feedback indicating the grounds were prepared to a very high standard for the event.
- Playground equipment was installed at Mullaley Park, Jae High Park in Gunnedah and Hamilton Park in Carroll, including shade sails.
- Breeza Hall exterior and roof painting of the Hall and amenities block was completed and new doors installed.
- Three solar exhaust fans were fitted to Emerald Hill Hall.
- Electrical switch upgrades completed at Ghoolendaadi Hall.
- The Wandobah Road cycleway, from George Street to Memorak Park Cemetery, was completed.
- Council was successful in securing \$20,000 in grant funding through the Safer Streets Program delivered by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department. The funding was utilised to extend the CBD CCTV network and resulted in the installation of six closed circuit television cameras and associated signage to the eastern end of the Gunnedah Central Business District.

We also . . .

- An innovative Cultural Precinct Masterplan was developed following an extensive community consultation process. The blueprint for the Precinct includes the Town Hall, Smithurst Theatre, Civic Theatre, Bicentennial Creative Arts Centre, Visitors Information Centre and the empty block of land next to the Smithurst Theatre. The Masterplan includes a concept which sees significant changes, including a relocation of the library to the Precinct, replacement of the current Smithurst Theatre with a Smithurst Hall, a community courtyard space and a new façade that complements the iconic Town Hall.
- Council provided support of the Gunnedah Rural Museum following proposed changes to the NSW Firearms Regulation which would have significantly impacted the Museum's large private owned firearms collection and their ability to showcase this centrepiece of their collection.
- Multicultural Gunnedah was established to provide support to migrants in a range of areas including education, housing, employment and language difficulties. The volunteer group also provides a link for people with similar stories and helps promote harmony and inclusion in our Shire.
- Council extended a welcome to new residents at a Welcome to Gunnedah stall at the markets in Wolseley Park. New residents were invited to stop by and collect a goodie bag, which featured a new resident kit and other information about local services and community groups.
- On behalf of the community, Council lobbied the State Government to progress funding for the planning and construction of the new Gunnedah Hospital and the sealing of Rangari Road.
- Facility hire fees were waived for the conduct of flu clinics in the Showground to ensure that the community was provided the opportunity to receive a vaccination with minimal contact.
- Two concrete burial beams were constructed at the Gunnedah Memorial Park Cemetery to cater to growth of service requirements.
- Upgrade to the irrigation system at Donnelly Fields following identification of repairs required to ensure efficient and effective water flow and the increase in dry areas across the field.
- Council provided financial assistance to Yallabee Homes for the Aged to offset their water bill.

Showground Working Group

The Showground Working Group was re-established following the transition from Reserve Trust Management to Crown Land Management in accordance with the Crown Lands Management Act 2016. The Act changes the way Crown Reserves such as the Showground, are maintained. To maintain communication with the Showground User Groups, the Working Group will consist of a representative from each user group of the reserve and advise Council on key aspects and provide community perspective on key considerations for the Showground and be a sounding board for project deliverables.

- In 2019 Arts Gunnedah celebrated the 49th Annual Arts and Ceramics exhibition. The exhibition opened in August with 85 guests and continued for two weeks with 175 visitors to the gallery. Artists from the local area, North West, Newcastle and the South Coast entered pieces in to the exhibition in what was a colourful display of talent. The outstanding success of the opening night, which was planned and run by Arts Gunnedah volunteers, is a tribute to their dedication.
- Council supported the NSW Public Libraries Association and the Local Government NSW to establish a library funding advocacy initiative. The Renew Our Libraries strategy was rolled out to persuade the Government that its network of 368 public libraries has reached a funding flashpoint and without significantly increased and sustained funding, it is at risk of imminent service reduction.
- Council provided financial assistance to the Gunnedah Eisteddfod Society in conducting the first ever officially-sanctioned online eisteddfod in Australia in 2020. The event attracted 669 entries resulting in an increase in the program to include sections for indigenous music, golden oldies, pre-schoolers, participants with special needs, original composition, sibling duets and family/households.
- Council provided financial assistance for the conduct of the Community Information Day regarding Health and Support Services. The event was held to highlight health service providers and counselling services available for the community.

- Council provided financial support to Jobs Australia for the development of a violence crisis accommodation refuge with a suitable property identified in Abbott Street.
- Council purchased a 'blanket buddy' to cover the heated pool when the facility is closed. The blanket removes WHS risks associated with manual handling and assists with maintaining the pool to its required temperature and thereby keeping electricity costs at an acceptable level.
- Financial support was provided to the Gunnedah Cricket Association by way of reduced fees for their summer cricket season.
- Financial contributions totalling \$17,974 were provided to the Two Rivers Arts Council from 2016 to 2021 to support their operations and ongoing viability.
- Financial contributions totalling \$49,160.00 were provided to Arts Gunnedah from 2016 to 2021 to support their operations and ongoing viability.
- Council renewed its agreement with Arts Gunnedah. The agreement allows for a provision of 24 hours of meeting space in the Creative Arts Centre Meeting Room, use of the front gallery of the Creative Arts Centre for the exhibition and sale of art.
- Council waived the user fees for the use of the Gunnedah Showground to conduct drive through COVID-19 vaccination clinics.

Fixing Local Roads

Council accepted a Fixing Local Roads grant totalling \$411,375 from Transport NSW for the Stock Road pavement upgrade project. Along with a co-contribution from Council of \$137,125, the project will include addressing long standing issues in the area as well as make improvements to drainage.



*Harmony Day Markets
Festival of Place—Summer Fund*

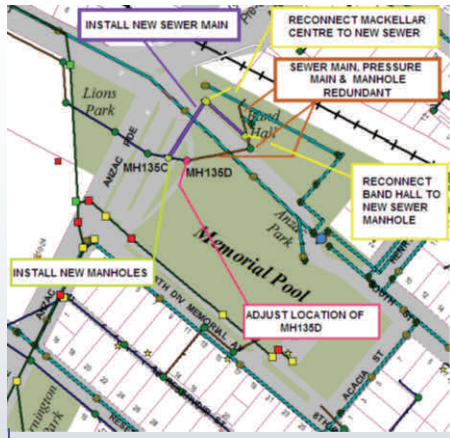


Rainbow Serpent Water Fountain

Rainbow Serpent Award

The Rainbow Serpent Water Fountain was constructed and completed with the official opening held in September 2020. The concept of the water feature was as a result of workshops and consultations with representatives from the Kamilaroi people and Elders, with particular mention to Red Chief Land Council. Stage 1 of the Rainbow Serpent Water Fountain project was the concept designs and resolution to allocate funding towards the development of the plans. Further funding was allocated towards the construction of the fountain. It was nominated in the 2020 Australian Street Art Awards, and won the Silver Award. The Awards are a celebration of outdoor art that is sanctioned (legal) art and publicly visible from or in a street, laneway, park or other public or publicly-accessible space. Eligible works include wall and utility murals, permanent audio-visual and lighting installations, commissioned graffiti, pavement art, sculpture collections, single sculptures, street installations, monuments and memorials. The entry must be an original artwork specifically created for the site where it is located.

Boundary Road Roundabout completed by Council staff.



ANZAC Park sewer main replacement map.



Gunnedah Drought Management Plan implemented in 2016/17

479.09km
of sealed local roads in
Gunnedah Shire

Launch of Localised online business



Business Partner funding recipients 2018/19



Electronic signage installed at Kitchener Park



Participant of the Farmer Army undertaking maintenance at the Memorial Cemetery



305.8km
of Regional Roads in
Gunnedah Shire

8.0%
unemployment in
2016

5.1%
unemployment as
at end June 2021

\$806 million
Gross Domestic Product in
2016

\$734 million
Gross Domestic Product year
ending June 2020

Spirit of Christmas Fair



Aerial photograph of the 2018 CMCA Rally at the Gunnedah Showground



12,491
estimated population as
in 2016

12,690
estimated population as
at June 2020

Investment Prospectus



You said . . .

- Develop a marketing strategy for business and investment.
- Foster partnerships between farming, mining, community and government to identify economic opportunities.
- Support a diverse economy and support small business.
- Maintain high quality public facilities, efficient sewerage system and ensure quality water services.
- Maintain sustainable local road network.
- Review parking controls and maintain car parks.
- Develop an airport master plan.
- Analyse tourism trends and provide accessible areas for all travellers.
- Communicate and promote services.
- Review the Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plans.
- Encourage business investment and environmentally sustainable industries.
- Encourage growth.

So we . . .

- Reviewed the Business Partner Program improving the flexibility of the program, increasing the amount of money available and clarifying the application process.
- Runway 11-29 of the Gunnedah Airport was resealed and line marked with minor defects repaired.
- The Gunnedah Drought Management Plan was adopted. The Plan outlines the various demand and supply drought response actions that should be employed at various stages during an extended drought period.
- Extensive work was undertaken at the Town Hall, including replacement of all exit doors, handles and locking mechanisms, upgrade to surface of stairs to slip resistant surface, provision of extra emergency exit signage, walls and ceiling painted, carpet removed and replaced, existing workstations dismantled and new workstations installed.
- The strategic acquisition of 158 Conadilly Street, which is located adjacent to the Smithurst Theatre, was finalised. This property is strategically positioned to Council’s main cultural area and represents an opportunity to expand cultural facilities in the future.

- Council collaborated with the Gunnedah and District Chamber of Commerce to develop an investment prospectus that has been translated into the Mandarin, Japanese and Korean languages.
- A memorial plaque was placed on Pensioners’ Hill by the Nurturing Evolutionary Development Foundation in honour of Mr Ned Icton. Mr Icton’s family has a strong link to Gunnedah, particularly his mother, whose support of members of the community and leadership during the Great Depression was highly regarded.
- Many live performances were conducted including Earth Dinosaur Zoo, Music of War and Peace, Comedy Hypnotist.
- Support was provided to the Gunnedah Eisteddfod for the conduct of their yearly events.
- Collaborations with the Gunnedah Conservatorium, Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society, Two Rivers Arts Council, Arts Gunnedah, Acting Out, Totally Dance Studio, 2TK and Rhana’s Academy of Dance.

Water Main Replacements

Significant works were undertaken in maintenance of Council’s water mains across the Shire, including the replacement of water mains in Hopedale Avenue, Barber Street, Little Bloomfield Street, Conadilly Street, Beulah Street and McDonagh Place. A water main extension was also completed in O’Neil Road. Council’s water and sewer services were recognised in meeting all the Best Practice Management Guidelines developed by the Department Primary Industries.

- Council endorsed a proposal to allow a third party telecommunications company to use Council infrastructure for the purpose of providing commercial wireless internet services, primarily catering to local businesses, with high-use internet requirements.
- Gunnedah hosted the NSW Trade Commissioner to Shanghai and Northern China as part of a regional tour to discuss trade and investment options with members of the local business community.
- Council’s Organisational Improvement Action Plan was implemented and it identified a number of actions that enhanced the skills of the Council workforce and help ensure the organisation is an employer of choice.

Work Works

- Footpath trip hazards were remediated in Conadilly Street, Bloomfield Street and Barber Street.
- Kerb and gutter works were completed in Links Road, Johnson Street, Barber Street, Gallen Avenue, Bloomfield Street, Little Barber Street and Elgin Street.
- Shoulder widening and pavement renewal on rural sealed roads including Bluevale Road, Black Stump Way, Kelvin Road and Goolhi Road.

- Extensive work was undertaken on approximately 1.782km of Goolhi Road including: stabilising existing road to a depth of 200mm; strengthen pavement with 150mm of overlay gravel; 200mm of stabilising overlay; provision of a 9m pavement with a 7m bitumen; seal; 10mm primer seal; and 14mm C240 final seal.
- Council was also contracted by the RMS to extend the overtaking lane 47.9km west of Tamworth from 400m to 715m. Due to obstructions on the western extension discovered in the early construction stages, it was determined to build a lane on the eastern side of the existing highway, realigning at completion. The works consisted of culvert widening, 600m benching to allow for the import of new material constructing in 150mm layers, 1,550m³ of general earthworks, import of 2,080m³ selected material, 1,040m³ of subbase and 1,040m³ of base materials. To ensure the uniformity of the project, it was stabilised utilising hydrated lime and tri blend additive.
- Establishment of Western Sewerage Zone to support industrial and commercial development in the north west industrial area.
- Renewal of the Economic Development Strategy commenced with new actions points to be collated for the new strategy to guide Gunnedah for the next four years.

Overtaking Lane on Oxley Highway

A new eastern overtaking lane was constructed at Carroll on the Oxley Highway, 52km west of Tamworth under contract to the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS). The works consisted of installing a new culvert, 500mm benching to allow for the import of new material construction of 150mm layers, and stabilising the subgrade. The total cost of the works was \$1,382,189.86, which was funded by the RMS, which included 3,970m³ of general earthworks, import of 1,860m³ selected material, 930m³ of subbase and 930m³ of base materials.

Road Revaluations

Road revaluations were undertaken ahead of the 5 year schedule in order to ensure Council’s road infrastructure is valued correctly in accordance with local government fair value account requirements. The revaluation resulted in an overall decrease in the value of some of the road components, which, combined with a lower price of bitumen over the last 4 years has also resulted in a lower annual depreciation which demonstrates that Council remains sustainable in the management of its road infrastructure assets.

- The 50th Anniversary of the Veteran and Vintage Chevrolet Association was held in Gunnedah and Council contributed financially with the cost of the metal badges for the vehicles commemorating the event. Over 90 vehicles and close to 200 people attended the seven day event.
- The ANZAC Park Sewer Main Realignment Project was undertaken in 2016/17. The Project addressed several issues around the Band Hall, Dorothea Mackellar Centre and the Gunnedah Memorial Pool to ensure that all buildings have appropriate and effective access to the sewer main system. The works involved sewer main works plus installation of three new manholes. The existing sewer main extending to the Band Hall and the rising main from the Dorothea Mackellar Centre were terminated and made redundant. The budget for the works was \$70,000, which included the reinstatement of infrastructure disturbed by installation of the realigned sewer main, however the project was delivered under budget for \$62,361.

- Provided both financial and in-kind support towards the conduct of the Fire Rescue NSW Regional Championships 2018 held in Gunnedah at the Woolshed Reserve. This event attracted over 1,500 to Gunnedah over the course of the weekend.
- Tamworth Drag Racing Association held several events at the Gunnedah Airport with Council supporting the events both

Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan

The Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan was adopted in March 2017, following public exhibition. The Plan was prepared to guide the future provision and management of pedestrian facilities within the Gunnedah Shire Council Local Government Area. The aim of the Plan is to develop a long-term strategy and action plan for the development of pedestrian facilities within the Gunnedah region, in a coordinated and strategic approach that provides safe, convenient and connected pedestrian routes and infrastructure to the community. Extensive consultation was undertaken with various community groups and organisations, including: taxi companies, primary and high schools, health services, bus services, as well as the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of NSW.

- A Position, Branding and Marketing Plan for Gunnedah Shire was completed, with the aim of the plan to ensure that Council employs a clear positioning, branding and marketing strategy in order to cater to evolving ratepayers needs.

We also . . .

- The Economic Development Working Group has prioritised the actions within the Economic Development Strategy, with various projects and initiatives carried out by Council to boost our economy and attempt to diversify and grow the Gunnedah Shire economy.
- The Hay and Harvest Working Group was convened to coordinate the Hay and Harvest Festival. The Festival is as a result of funding received via the Building Better Regions Fund by Council and the Gunnedah Jockey Club.

Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia Rally

Gunnedah Shire hosted the 2018 Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia Rally in October, with over 800 campervans and motorhomes arriving from around Australia to participate in the Rally held over 8 days. The event were 12 months in the planning and organisers worked with Council to create a packed program full of events for visitors to experience Gunnedah. The injection into the local economy was estimated at \$2 million.

- Ongoing support and promotion of regular events including Week of Speed, Jockey Club meetings, ANZAC Day, Gunnedah Show, Dog Shows, Gunnedah Conservatorium, Ag-Quip Field Days, horse events, art exhibitions and workshops, Christmas Lights competition, Gunnedah Country Music Muster, Water Tower Museum, Rural Museum, and movie fundraisers.
- Financial and in-kind support provided to the Gunnedah and District Chamber of Commerce to conduct the Spirit of Christmas Fair with the event re-marketed as a Shop Local campaign during the pandemic. The Fair is a family focused community event aimed at encouraging local shopping over the Christmas period.
- Upgrade of the Tambar Springs Memorial Park with celebrations undertaken at the Tambar Springs Remembrance Day Commemoration Service with a plaque unveiled along with signage and a booklet documenting the event.
- Council conducted and co-hosted Small Business Month. Councillors and staff attended the Small Business Friendly Councils Inaugural Conference which included business experts presenting workshops on retail activation, regional economies and building digital capabilities.

- Council launched Localised, an online business network which provides businesses with greater access to local opportunities and increases their visibility by building connections with fellow business owners and new customers. The platform is free and benefits include: access to a library of resources and articles by local business experts, opportunities to attend networking and professional development events in Gunnedah Shire; free listing on the local business directory; and access to an online community noticeboard where local businesses can collaborate and share positive news stories.
- Council engaged REPLAN product to assist in measuring the impact of large developments, such as mining, on Council's services and infrastructure.
- The Sister Cities and Friendly Relationships Working group continues to meet on an regular basis.
- Council introduced a new business support initiative to help local businesses optimise their online presence during the COVID-19 pandemic. In partnership with Tourism Tribe and Destination Country and Outback NSW, Council offered businesses in Gunnedah Shire free online training targeted at enhancing local businesses’ digital marketing platforms.
- Council resolved to support the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) Recreational Vehicle Park in Chandos and Maitland Streets. The facility is specifically for self contained vehicles and with the exception of a single caretaker site, there are no formal sites, helping cater to a wider range of vehicles. The park will add to the region’s tourist credentials and draw anew visitor demographic to the Shire.
- Councillor representatives participated in the Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia Conference held in Barrooga. The Conference provided a meeting place for regional, rural and remote Australia to discuss the key issues facing regional Australia and workshop that can be done at national, state and local levels to further drive sustainable regional economic activity.
- Councillor representatives also attended the LGNSW Tourism Conference with the annual event providing an opportunity for Council to obtain valuable up to date strategies on tourism initiatives which will assist in driving strategic direction.
- Support was provided to Narrabri Shire Council for their application for the Inland Rail Productivity Enhancement Program.
- Council provided in kind and financial support to the first NightQuip event to encourage locals and visitors to support the business community by shopping in town as well as giving the wider community a reason to spend time together along with their families and friends. The hugely successful event with over 23 retail stores extending their trading hours, 10 food outlets in operation, 44 market stalls set up in Conadilly Street and busking groups entertaining the crows.
- Development of an International Engagement Strategy commenced and will investigate and prioritise the opportunities to expand export opportunities to key international markets and attract foreign direct investment to the Gunnedah Shire. The strategy seeks to support, consolidate and expand on the work that Council has already undertaken in fostering better international trade relationships. The strategy will define the role Council must play to leverage prospective investments, ensuring our local economy and its businesses are able to explore relevant global markets and seize opportunities to generate economic activity through trade.
- Council established a Skills and Training Working Group, with the aim of the group to set objectives to ensure Gunnedah Shire has high quality skills that are accessible and responsive to the needs of employers and employees, both future and current.

eIMEx

Council supported, financially and in-kind, the inaugural eIMEx held in the Gunnedah Showground. The Energy, Innovation and Mining Expo was coordinated by the Show Society and showcased Gunnedah and the Region at the forefront of coal mining development as well as renewal energy projects and provided a platform for these industries to demonstrate the contributions their business could provide to the region. The event consisted of exhibitors on indoor and outdoor trade sites, with seminars, workshops, demonstrations, a formal dinner, breakfast and guest speakers participation in the event.

Outdoor Dining

Application fees for all street trading and footpath dining were waived and the NSW Outdoor Dining Policy adopted. Following identification of an increased downturn in the Gunnedah Shire economy, discussions were held with community and business operators in order to identify an opportunity to increase their trade whilst reducing costs, with the program and adoption of the NSW Policy resulting in an easier process for local businesses to encourage their customers to enjoy an outdoor dining experience.

Investment Prospectus

The Investment Prospectus and associated collateral were endorsed following the completion of a detailed economic analysis of Gunnedah Shire. The Prospectus demonstrates Gunnedah’s key location in the thriving agriculture sector of the Liverpool Plains and is also rich in coal and natural gas reserves. The document also highlights the opportunities for further expansion to bring significant investment to the Shire and job opportunities. The Invest in Gunnedah is part of a marketing campaign to: attract skilled workers to Gunnedah; showcase the diversity of job opportunities; build awareness of Gunnedah’s economic diversity; demonstrate successful business; and highlight opportunities for working and setting up in Gunnedah.

Invigorate Gunnedah—Business Recovery Package

In order to assist in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and associated trading restrictions impact on the Gunnedah Shire business community, Council adopted the Invigorate Gunnedah—Business Recovery Package with \$40,506 being disseminated to 45 local businesses and organisations. The key objectives of the package was to bring vibrancy back into the CBD and to strengthen our business community and encourage resilience. A maximum of \$1,000 in funding was available for each eligible applicant through a simplified, online submission process.

- An electronic event sign has been approved for installation in a suitable location within the CBD.
- Development of Housing Strategy commenced, with the Strategy to consider demographics, housing supply and demand, local land use opportunities and constraints, as well as identify areas of cultural, environmental, heritage or local character significant.
- An in-kind construction was made to the 2021 Annual Country Music Muster.
- Implementation of a new procurement platform, VendorPanel, which includes a Marketplace environment which result in staff being able to procure readily from local businesses and provides our local businesses with the first opportunity to provide goods/works/services to Council. Local businesses were invited to register with this new procurement platform and several training sessions were conducted by VendorPanel.

Gunnedah Shire Workforce Plan

Following extensive community consultation, Council endorsed the Gunnedah Shire Community Workforce Plan. The Plan aims to assist in diversifying the economy by providing training opportunities to diversify the skill set of residents and will deliver a skilled workforce and quality local educational opportunities by supporting:

- Learners to gain the skills they need to access opportunities;
- Job seekers accessing opportunities;
- Industry training to allow them to recruit locally; and
- Training providers working collaboratively to develop local skills.

Official sod turning for construction of the Curlewis Pipeline



179,199
Users delivered waste to the Waste Management Facility



Identification of Alligator Weed prior to eradication



2017 Garage Sale Trail

7
sporting fields are maintained by Council



Gym equipment installed at Lions Park

12,141
tonnes of waste diverted to recycling at the Waste Management Facility

450ha
of parks, sports fields, open space/bushland reserves and cemeteries maintained by Council staff



Light poles installed at Donnelly Fields

Turning the first sod for construction of the Rainbow Serpent water feature



2019 Waste into Art opening in the Gallery

141,391
tonnes of commercial and industrial waste received at the Waste Management Facility

43,182
tonnes of domestic waste received at the Waste Management Facility

10,032
customers visited the Bower Bird Shop at the Waste Management Facility

Installation of playground equipment at Donnelly Fields



34
recreation parks maintained by Council

Member of the Farmer Army working on Stock Road



Noxious Weeds Display at Ag-Quip



Gunnedah Community Recycling Centre



You said . . .

- Lobby for controls that balance the need for mining, agriculture and protection of the environment.
- Management of pests and weeds.
- Enhance and increase wildlife habitat on public and private land.
- Lobby government and participate in catchment management partnerships.
- Educate the community on water sustainability.
- Assess impact on flooding in the community.
- Identify opportunities to utilise renewable energy.
- Provide regular and efficient recycling service and promote increase in volume and type of waste.
- Implement strategy that provides for future waste disposal.
- Reduce the energy consumption of Council as an organisation.
- Make streetscapes appealing and useful.
- Protect and maintain our older buildings.

So we . . .

- In conjunction with the Gunnedah Lions Club, Council resolved to provide financial assistance in the installation of gym equipment adjacent to the playground at Lions Park to enhance the park's community use. Two sets of gym equipment were installed.
- Quarterly inspections to identify noxious weeds were undertaken at grain handling sites, rural outlets and machinery dealers, nurseries, state highways and local roads and rest areas.
- Local noxious weeds programs are ongoing through the year, with African Boxthorn and Tree Pear specifically targeted.
- A Noxious Weeds Field Day was conducted by Council staff for the Carroll Fishing Club and Keepit Fishing Club.
- The Noxious Weeds Team secured grants for the eradication of weeds in our region including: \$20,000 for Alligator Weed; \$79,000 Action Grant Program; \$13,000 for Tree Pear Program; \$17,000 for Honey Locust Education; and \$32,000 for Alligator Weed.

NSW Local Land Services

Council submitted formal comment on the NSW Local Land Services proposed NSW Travelling Stock Reserves (TSR) Review. The Review sought feedback on the use and community values surrounding TSR's and the criteria used to assess individual proposals to access. The popularity of the Gunnedah network is primarily based on the route traversing relatively flat terrain, making it suitable for stock to travel, contains suitable vegetation for grazing and has a number of water points, providing adequate water supplies for travelling stock. Council's submission requested that the Review give consideration to the use of some TSR's as a Category 2 (recreational purposes) to enable recreational use in accordance with the Local Government (Manufactured Home Estates, Caravan Parks, Camping Grounds and Moveable Dwellings) Regulation 2005 and improved management practices be incorporated into the Review.

- REMPLAN, a software program that estimates the impact of mining activity and development on service levels and infrastructure was procured to analyse population data, phases of mining activity, demand for additional services and housing, regional benchmarks for selected health, education and safety and security service works, and the impacts on road infrastructure. The program assists Council in negotiations relative to Voluntary Planning Agreements.
- Council adopted the Water Conservation and Demand Management Plan, which has been prepared in accordance with Best Practice Guidelines issued by the NSW Department of Primary Industry. The Plan aims to encourage efficient water use through the adoption of various demand management measures that are to be employed in order to ensure that town water demand levels are both efficient and sustainable.
- Tree planting programs were carried out in Tambar Springs and Mullaley.
- The turf surrounding the Cenotaph was replaced with a more suitable sustainable variety.
- The Mornington Park amenities block was painted internally and externally.

New England North West Regional Plan

Council submitted comment on the Draft New England North West Regional Plan, which was prepared by the NSW Planning and Environment Department. The Draft Plan proposed to identify a holistic approach to land, environmental, water and natural resource management through an overarching framework to guide development and investment in the New England North West to 2036. A thorough review of the Plan was undertaken, with several issues included in Council's submission including: stronger focus on growth and development of smaller communities in the region, vision should acknowledge what specific towns/areas are doing to leverage foreign markets for the betterment of their communities, rural residential lot sizes in relation to housing stock, expanding on poultry and livestock development within the region, and acknowledgement of GoCo which provides home care services to Tamworth, Narrabri, Moree and Gunnedah.

- Several major regional noxious weed identification and eradication programs were undertaken, including: Peel and Namoi Rivers from Sandy Creek, Somerton, to Narrabri boundary as part of the Regional Alligator Weed Program; contract work carried out for New England Weeds Advisory MacLeay River and Moree Plains Shire Council at Gravesend.
- A review of Council's Asbestos Waste Disposal Management Policy was undertaken in March 2017, with Council resolving to adopt the Policy. The Policy is based on the Model Asbestos Policy for NSW Councils developed by the Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities to promote a consistent Local Government approach to asbestos management across NSW. It provides advice on the role of Council, development approval processes, waste management procedures and other general information.
- Construction of three turfed cricket wicket tables at Namoi Playing Fields.
- Replacement of ageing, unserviceable and inefficient air conditioning units in Council's building assets completed.
- Namoi Unlimited convened an energy and sustainability group which will identify opportunities for Councils in the New England North West Climate Adaption Plan and how Councils can assist each other in delivering more energy efficient technologies and funding in collaboration with member Councils. The Group will also review street lighting funding across the region.
- Stage 2 of the Street Tree Strategy was completed, with the removal of trees in Conadilly Street between Rosemary Street and Blackjack Creek and rees were planted in the corridor.
- Council endorsed the formation of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and Working Group. The RAP program was launched by Reconciliation Australia to provide a framework for organisations to support the national reconciliation movement and to develop actions and outcomes that contribute to 'closing the gap' through key areas of relationships, respect and community.

Blackjack Creek

Tenders were awarded for the reconstruction of Blackjack Creek. The reconstruction spans a length of 1.9km of Blackjack Creek, from approximately 200m south of the Oxley Highway to approximately 200m north of Lincoln Street and traverses Wandobah Reserve. The reconstruction is as a result of the Blackjack Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan which recommended channel realignment, reconstruction, with the aim of mitigating the impacts of flooding. The Project was delivered under budget and ensures that a one-in-100 year flood event is contained and surrounding properties protected.

- The design and construction of a 4 megalitre reservoir on Apex Road adjacent to the existing reservoir in Bottlebrush Park was completed. The reservoir will address current water security issues and cater for the predicted population growth within the town of Gunnedah.
- Water is drawn from 16 bores and the Upper Namoi Groundwater sources.
- The water supply network comprises 8 service reservoirs, 4 pumping stations, 30km of transfer and trunk mains and 175km of reticulation mains.
- Council provides an after-hours emergency service for water and sewer issues 365 days a year.
- The Gunnedah Shire sewer system consists of 2 treatment plants, 6 transfer pump stations and 100km of reticulation mains and 160km of rising mains.
- The parkland at the front of the Railway Station underwent a revamp, with the installation of an automatic irrigation system, new gardens, seating and the installation of pebble crete pots.
- Construction of plant wall gardens on the town entrances on the Oxley Highway and both entrances on the Kamilaroi Highway were completed, with solar lighting also installed.
- Gunnedah Shire Council and local residents shared the reuse and recycle message at Council's mega garage sale in 2017. This opportunity for residents to declutter or make some extra money also educates and provides a way for people to keep unwanted items out of landfill.
- Council collaborated with the Gunnedah Golf Club in lodging an application to secure funding for the high black chain link fence around the perimeter of the Club.

Drinking Water Management Strategy

Council adopted a Drinking Water Management Strategy to ensure that the water supply is high quality and safe to drink, meeting expectations of the community and regulatory agencies. Under the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines, Council ensures a commitment to drinking water quality management through system analysis; supporting requirements such as employee awareness and training; community involvement and awareness; documentation and reporting; and provides a review and continual improvement program.

We also . . .

- he Waste Capital Works and Maintenance Programs have been reviewed with future review/remediation action required in relation to surface water management, infrastructure installed to manage windblown litter, sedimentation control measures reviewed and additional storage bunkers constructed.
- The Waste and Recycling Group held its inaugural meeting in December 2018 and the aim of the group is to assist staff in reviewing the existing kerbside waste collection arrangements, and develop strategies, practices and policies to reduce the amount of waste disposed of landfill, increase re-use, recycling and assist in reducing illegal dumping of waste.
- New wells have been installed at the Gunnedah Landfill and existing monitoring wells have been decommissioned.
- Strategies have been developed to increase recycling and reduce waste including education programs, diverting more water from landfills improving how problem wastes are managed, reducing waste generated by industry and container deposit scheme implementation.
- A Pollution Incident Response Management Plan for the Gunnedah Waste management Facility was implemented to comply with requirements introduced by the Protection of the Environment Legislation Amendment Act 2011. The purpose of the Plan is to assist employees and management of the facility to identify the potential risk of a pollution incident occurring and to introduce measures to mitigate that risk.

Welcome to Country

In recognition of all levels of Government throughout Australia now formalising recognition of Australia's traditional custodians of the land, Council adopted a policy which demonstrates respect for the unique position and contribution of Aboriginal people to our own community's rich culture and history. The Policy sets out guiding principles for Council, committees and employees to observe the appropriate protocols for the acknowledgement of traditional custodians at Council activities and events and celebrations and in Council

- Council supported the From the Ground Up initiative which is an indigenous community driven, web based education platform for Kamilaroi protocols and culture.

Waste Collection

Council's waste management is the provision of collection, transport, processing/disposal of wastes (garbage, recyclables and organics) from the kerbside. The contracts for these services were renewed in 2020/21, which required extensive community consultation via a survey to determine the community's expectations and requirements for the delivery of these services Shire wide. The final outcome of the survey indicated that the community wanted to be able to recycle more, needed weekly household waste collection and were satisfied with the current green waste collection. The contracts included collection and transport and the provision of mobile garbage bins and some ancillary waste transport from outlying waste transfer stations to the Gunnedah Waste Management Facility. Recycling collection services was also reviewed and the contract subsequently renewed with Gunnedah Workshop Enterprises.

- A bulky waste day was held to assist in improving management of the Shire waste by engaging and supporting community needs through offering a free service to assist residents dispose of larger items, and to encourage residents to properly dispose of bulkier items and to combat illegal dumping.
- Council entered into a single source supply contract for the disposal of used mattresses received at the Gunnedah Waste Management Facility. Prior to this contract arrangement, mattresses were disposed as landfill for burial, however this was a problematic waste stream. The contract has resulted in recovery and recycling of valued components of the used mattresses and diversion of waste from landfill.
- An offsite stormwater catchment assessment for the Gunnedah Waste Facility was completed. The assessment addressed issues in relation to water running through the middle of the site causing operational issues and access to the landfill disposal area in peak rainfall events.

- Council recognised that charitable organisations provide the community with significant social benefits, while helping to divert valuable resources from being sent to landfill. By providing these services, the charities are often burdened with the costs of disposing illegally dumped, unusable waste items deposited in charity bins. Therefore, Council endorsed the Exemption from Charges for Non-for-Profit Charities Policy which eliminates waste fees applicable for waste disposal at the Gunnedah Waste Management Facility.
- To protect the interests of Gunnedah ratepayers, the Waste Generated Outside Gunnedah Shire Council Local Government Area Policy was adopted. This Policy prohibits wastes generated outside of the Gunnedah Local Government Area being disposed of at the Gunnedah Waste Facility to ensure waste depots and transfer stationers are for the exclusive use of residents of Gunnedah This minimises the social, environmental and economic costs of waste management to Shire residents and ratepayers, and excludes Gunnedah as an option for the disposal of waste generated outside the Shire, thereby prolonging the life our landfills.

Open Space Strategy

The development of a Shire wide Open Space Strategy commenced, with the first draft going on exhibition in October 2021. The Strategy will:

- Identify status/standard of each open space area and its elements;
- Determine ideal standard and service levels;
- Create maintenance programs;
- Identify future demand and opportunities;
- Provide best practice planning and design guidelines; and
- Identify areas that require improvement or redevelopment.

An extensive community consultation process was undertaken prior to the release of the draft document for consideration.

- The Crown Land Management Act 2016 came into effect on 01/07/18 with Councils given 12 months to enact the legislation. In accordance with the requirements of the legislation, Council appointed a Native Title Manager and has commenced identifying all Crown Land within the Shire in preparedness for plans of management for each to be drafted.
- Council contributed \$119,308.00 to the Gunnedah Jockey Club to assist with operational costs during the period 2016 to 2021.
- Council also contributed \$15,000 as a co-contribution to the Gunnedah Jockey Club's application in the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund. The project included installation of a booster pump, and electricity, pipework and sprinklers to the second half of the track.
- Playground equipment was installed at Donnelly Fields, following a community survey to determine what the community deemed appropriate for the area.
- Cricket nets were installed at Kitchener Park.
- A new portable grandstand was installed at the Gunnedah Showground.
- Financial support provided to the Gunnedah and District Pony Club to ensure their ongoing viability and confirm the use of the Gunnedah Showground.
- In December 2019, a bulk LED upgrade to the streetlight network within the Gunnedah LGA was completed. The new lighting lowers the costs for Council whilst delivering safer, better quality lighting for the community.
- A five year licence agreement with the Gunnedah Basketball Association was finalised for the ongoing use of the basketball stadium within the Gunnedah Showgrounds.
- New automated irrigation systems were installed in the Gunnedah Showground and on Pensioners Hill.
- Council has waived the user fees for the use of the Showground facilities for the Riding for the Disabled Gunnedah Centre.

- Council invested in an unmanned vehicle to assist the Weeds Department in locating and identifying noxious weeds along river corridors whilst reducing manual handling and unstable surface issues.
- Council adopted the Water Usage Charge Reduction Requests Policy which provides for special dispensation requests to Council for leniency if customers are experiencing difficulties following high water consumption charges as a result of unidentified leaks.
- A significant enhancement and beautification project commenced in Stock Road and was completed by the Farmer Army. Native vegetation and drought tolerant species were used to develop biodiversity and brighten the streetscape. Tree planting was also completed to create a succession of ageing trees along the islands. Numerous native plants provide cheerful spring colours, with several species featured.

Green Waste Processing

Green waste materials suitable reprocessing received at the Gunnedah Waste Management Facilities, is stockpiled and mulched by an external contractor. Such works are normally completed to divert these wastes from landfill burial. To comply with local government procurement requirements and to share costs burdens, the Northern Inland Regional Waste group of Councils. The objectives of the greenwaste processing contract are to:

- Maximise diversion of waste from landfill through resource recovery;
- Protection of the environment;
- Provide efficient green waste processing services to the Councils;
- Reduce cost to the Councils through the regional coordination of service contracts;
- Provide a means to accessing resource recovery services for the regional community.

Rainbow Serpent

The construction of the Rainbow Serpent at the front of the Civic was completed, with the finished water feature 9.2m long and highlighting Gunnedah's connection to the river, local fauna and flora. This project recognises the integral and important role of indigenous heritage in our Shire and is recognised as a meeting place to share stories. The feature incorporates mosaic tiles made over a six year period by a dedicated group of local indigenous women.

