



Gunnedah Community Strategic Plan 2013 - 2023



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Gunnedah Community Strategic Plan

FOREWORD

Gunnedah Shire Council presents the Community Strategic Plan for 2013-2023 which sets the course for the Community, Government Agencies and Council over the next ten years. To ensure that the plan is achieved, ongoing effort will be required from all sectors of the Community together with our partners in surrounding areas and with Government.

It has been apparent from our continued dialogue with the community that the goals and aspirations outlined in the Your Say, Our Future Community Strategic Plan continue to be relevant and Council is pleased to continue endorsing them. The Plan was originally developed from consultations with the Gunnedah Community and with the assistance of key stakeholders, many of whom have been engaged for the past year in refining specific actions needed to deliver the Plan.

Consultation with the community has determined the role council will take in delivering the outcomes outlined in the Plan. Council has engaged with the community on important considerations such as affordability of works and services, necessary revenue to achieve sustainable services, prioritisation of services along with preferred solutions to identified revenue gaps.

The community made it clear that it believes Gunnedah to be one greatest places in the world to live, to work and to visit. We are committed to taking the steps necessary to ensuring “a prosperous, caring and proud community reflected in the achievements and aspirations of the people”.

Your Say, Our Future has been divided up into four sections that encompass the themes, responsibilities and desired outcomes identified during the extensive consultation process: Engaging and Supporting the Community, Building Our Shire’s Economy, Retaining Our Quality of Life and Protecting and Enjoying Our Beautiful Surrounds.

While the Community Strategic Plan paints the big picture, Council continually supports its achievement with reviews of associated delivery plans. These include the detailed actions set out in the 2013/14 to 2016/17 Delivery Program and in the annual Operational Plan, both publicly available on Council’s website.

Council and staff look forward to working on initiatives outlined in the Community Strategic Plan in partnership with all who enjoy all that this region has to offer.



Owen Hasler
Mayor



Robert Campbell
General Manager



The Gunnedah Community Strategic Plan

ABOUT THE PLAN

The *Your Say, Our Future* Gunnedah Community Strategic Plan is a 10 year plan, identifying the Community's priorities. The plan identifies themes and objectives relating to the Gunnedah area focusing on key issues facing the Community now and in the future.

The plan relies on participation by all members of our Community including government to achieve desired outcomes. This Plan determines the priorities for our area and the services and projects that Council will deliver over the next 10 years. This will be achieved through Council's resourcing strategies, delivery and operational plans.

A range of key stakeholders also play a vital role. These include our residents, local businesses, community organisations and government organisations, both state and federal. The achievement of outcomes in this plan relies heavily on funding provided from State and Federal Governments. Through a coordinated approach we hope to achieve our community's needs and priorities.

COUNCIL ROLE

Council and others will play different roles in delivering the community outcomes. The role(s) identified for Council through consultation with the community have been listed against each strategy within *Your Say, Our Future*, as one or more of the following:

- **Advocate** - where Council may have no direct control over outcomes but where it will represent the community and lobby on its behalf,
- **Facilitator** - Council will provide opportunities or facilities to allow members of the community to come together to pursue the identified strategy,
- **Participant** - where a more direct involvement in working with community groups with shared responsibility is required,
- **Provider** - where Council is directly responsible for achieving results against the strategy identified.

NSW STATE PLAN

This plan has been developed with reference to the NSW State Plan, *NSW 2021*, that defines the goals and outcomes desired for State Policy over a 10 year period. It sets actions and priorities that provide direction for various NSW Government agencies, with the purpose of delivering better results for the community provided through NSW Government Services.

OUR VISION

A prosperous, caring and proud community reflected in the achievements and aspirations of the people.

OUR COMMUNITY VALUES

Community Spirit

We have welcoming towns, villages and rural areas working in partnership to share the good times and bad, looking out for, and supporting, one another. We genuinely care.

Environmental Care

We embrace preservation of our heritage, our natural resources and our social fabric to achieve sustainability.

Lifestyle Access

We enjoy access to services and facilities in Gunnedah and Tamworth yet benefit from the peace, tranquillity, safety, security, beauty and friendliness of our rural community.



“ Advertise and promote community meetings - really listen to people. ”

Engaging and Supporting the Community



Engaging and Supporting the Community

VALUES AND CHALLENGES

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are actively involved in so many activities that contribute to our high quality of life; they give so much of their own time.

The number of active volunteers is declining. We must encourage a younger generation of individuals to participate in group activities and organisations. Leadership training for those who have an interest in joining our local organisations is crucial.

Local services and facilities

The community identified that greater funding is required from higher levels of government. In particular, a reasonable portion of royalties gained from mining in the Shire. Funds should be allocated back to fund essential local improvements.



The community has identified a need to develop a community fund to support the retention of local services and facilities, such as subsidising of doctor's accommodation.

People

We must create an environment which is attractive to our younger generations so that they decide to stay here. To do so, we need to keep our younger population employed – by developing incentive programmes supported by Council, business, agriculture and the mining industries; involved – by encouraging participation in community planning, events and entertainment, such as increasing social activities – teenage movie nights and PCYC. Safe transport is also necessary for our young people.

We must provide our older residents – those who have contributed so much to the Shire – with quality of life. This may entail encouraging our youth to seek careers in caring for the aged community. The ageing population is a major challenge for our community.

Our Identity

The community believes that there are numerous opportunities to build our reputation and actively promote the Shire to potential investors, jobseekers, residents, consumers and tourists.

This can be achieved by actively promoting jobs through national and state media – jobsites; developing an exchange programme with larger population centres to showcase our advantages and encourage their residents to visit and stay; become known for farmers markets and local produce; embrace multiculturalism and plan for the settlement of migrant communities and by embracing our Aboriginal heritage and culture.



Our Council

Council ensures that the services it provides to the community are efficient, provide best value, meet the community's expectations and provide access to the community in the decision making processes. Council strives to empower community members through involvement in decision-making and by applying principles of fairness, equity, transparency and probity in all its dealings. Gunnedah will have a leading council, successfully planning and advocating on

behalf of its community and maintaining strong links with other councils, government departments and regional networks.

Council aims to be a highly effective local government body, providing best value to residents and ratepayers by delivering quality services, identifying innovative solutions

“ We must involve all areas of the community, from young to old, through consultation and various committee groups. ”

SNAPSHOT

Gunnedah Liveable Communities Assessment

A large proportion of current residents feel a strong sense of belonging to their neighbourhood and it is a good place to live.

Census data indicates that volunteering rates in the rural areas are higher than rates reported for the other two study areas; and that volunteering rates are higher compared to the overall NSW rate.

The Community Telephone Survey results show that respondents from the rural areas volunteer at a higher rate compared to the Gunnedah township and villages.

More than 80% of respondents across all age groups attend community events within the Gunnedah Shire.

The villages and rural areas have the highest proportion of respondents who have participated in consultations about the future of their community. Satisfaction with level of consultation varied from 66.3% among participants in the villages to 83.2% among participants in the Gunnedah township.

COMMUNITY

to issues, supporting local groups and organisations, prudently managing resources and safeguarding community assets.

Council has embraced continuous improvement and best practice in service delivery and will continue to follow a path of improvement in respect to community needs.

Community Directions

A broad range of challenges and initiatives were highlighted, including:

- Facilitating periodic community leadership forums – with a village focus too – perhaps council meetings outside of Gunnedah as well – and with the State and Federal MPs
- Council to facilitate the community leadership required to address common issues facing the shire in the future
- Providing a role for young people in planning and delivering community events
- Providing training programmes for community leadership such as public speaking and guest lectures
- Developing youth pride by encouraging ownership of community spaces
- Developing community priorities and sticking to them – fund them, dedicate effort, resolve the issues
- Intelligence gathering as to how other mining communities are adapting to impacts and balancing interests
- Integrating aged care planning and service delivery into one organisation
- Celebrating community leadership by recognition of leaders and volunteers
- Supporting direct funding of local communities by the Federal Government – a fixed proportion of income tax revenues to apply to regions
- Supporting the ability and autonomy of local government to raise revenues for community benefit
- Supporting regional planning of village services and facilities
- Improving communication between businesses – to ensure mutual support for the benefit of the shire and region



- Continued effective consultation and involvement of the Gunnedah community in the development of new industries led by Council
- Allowing/enabling the development of centrally-located, multi-use, flexible spaces and places that encourage social interaction, to be useable for a wide range of ages and are welcoming to a wide range of cultural groups. Providing information to new residents about available services may also assist in removing barriers to health services
- Work with the medical leaders to ensure liaison between all levels of health professionals to ensure access of eligible residents to State and Federal funded benefits and services
- Advocate improved access to aged care assessments, Community Health Services and Home Care Services for those located outside Gunnedah township

What Council Provides

Council provides the following to assist in meeting community needs:

- Council service provision guided by policies and procedures to ensure the highest levels of governance across the organisation
- A 10 year Financial Plan to ensure financial sustainability and the meeting of demands for services including infrastructure and services into the future
- A Workforce Development Plan to ensure that organisational skills and capabilities continue to meet organisational responsibilities
- Strategic Asset Management to ensure all assets are managed in a sustainable manner for current and future generations
- Financial and in kind support to Community Groups including the Small Grants for Community Groups scheme
- Support to Local Events, for example, AgQuip and Porchetta Day



COMMUNITY

Outcomes	Strategies	Council Role	Link to NSW 2021	Responsibility
1.1 - Community leadership encouraged and strengthened	1.1.1 - Increase opportunity for and number of, community volunteers, particularly young people.	Advocate Facilitator Provider	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities <i>- Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities</i>	Council Community Organisations Churches Clubs
	1.1.2 - Celebrate role models and Volunteers through positive community and media campaigns.	Facilitator Provider		
	1.1.3 - Develop the capacity of community organisations to provide leadership and deliver best practice community programs.	Advocate Facilitator		
	1.1.4 - Encourage and support Village Progress Associations and Action Groups.	Advocate Facilitator		
1.2 - Council as an Organisation	1.2.1 - Identify initiatives to enhance transparency of Council decision-making and performance, including the implementation of Council resolutions, policies, plans and financial strategies.	Provider	Restore Account ability to Government <i>- Restore trust in State and Local Government</i> Government as a service provider - <i>Improve Government transparency by increasing access to Government information</i> Rebuild the Economy <i>- Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW</i>	Council Namoi Councils (ROC) Division of Local Government
	1.2.2 - Implement a fully integrated planning framework that aligns to Council plans and guides the development of Gunnedah area.	Provider		
	1.2.3 - Foster a strong organisational culture which strives for best practice in all operations.	Provider		
	1.2.4 - Share resources and undertake more collaborative projects with other councils.	Participant Advocate Provider		
	1.2.5 - Identify continuous improvements to Council's business, processes and systems including Customer Service delivery.	Provider		
	1.2.6 - Council is an employer of choice, promoting a safe, healthy and innovative working environment.	Provider		
	1.2.7 - Improve relationships with all levels of Government and pro-actively seek to be involved in decision making processes impacting our area.	Participant Advocate Provider		
	1.2.8 - Council is a financially sustainable organisation, delivering value services to the Community.	Provider		
	1.2.9 - Promote to the public how and where they can source information on Council programs and current decisions being made.	Provider		
	1.2.10 - Support Council's operation by providing financial, human resources and information technology services.	Provider		
1.3 - Local co-ordination of funding from national, state and local sources	1.3.1 - Take the lead in bringing together Government and community agencies to discuss ways of achieving better coordination and seamless delivery of services.	Participant Advocate Facilitator	Rebuild the Economy <i>- Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW</i>	Federal Government State Government Council
1.4 - Funding of local facilities and services through mining royalties	1.4.1 - Strongly advocate our local interests with the State and Federal Government on issues such as planning and development, and the provision of services and facilities.	Advocate	Rebuild the Economy <i>- Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW</i> <i>- Strengthen the NSW skill base</i> Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities <i>- Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities</i> Return Quality Services <i>- Increase opportunities for people with a disability by providing supports that meet their individual needs and realise their potential</i>	Federal Government State Government Council Community Organisations

Outcomes	Strategies	Council Role	Link to NSW 2021	Responsibility
1.5 - Population increases through targeted promotion of the shire identity and opportunities	1.5.1 - Ensure new residents and families are welcomed and integrated into the community.	Advocate Facilitator	Rebuild the Economy - Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW	Federal Government State Government Council
1.6 - Retention of our young population through increased employment and social opportunities	1.6.1 - Continue to provide access to the Council Scholarship Fund to assist youth to access further education opportunities.	Participant Advocate Facilitator	Rebuild the Economy - Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW - Strengthen the NSW skill base Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities Return Quality Services - Increase opportunities for people with a disability by providing supports that meet their individual needs and realise their potential - Improve education and learning outcomes for all students	Federal Government State Government Council Community Organisations
	1.6.2 - Consider development of a Community Education Trust to provide support for disadvantaged youth to continue their education.	Facilitator Provider		
	1.6.3 - Encourage apprenticeships for training based on industry need.	Advocate Facilitator		
	1.6.4 - Council as an organisation will provide access to Council traineeships and on the job training strengthening the local skill base.	Provider		
1.7 - A well engaged community that is involved in decision making processes	1.7.1 - Provide more opportunities for the community to have a say in decision making and widely communicate these opportunities.	Facilitator Provider	Restore Account ability to Government - Involve the community in decision making on Government policy, services and projects Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Fostering opportunity and partnership with Aboriginal people	Federal Government State Government Council Community Organisations
	1.7.2 - Encourage and support Aboriginal community involvement in leadership roles.	Advocate Facilitator		
	1.7.3 - Undertake an annual community leadership roundtable to engage the community to verify the success measures and monitor progress of the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan strategies.	Facilitator Provider		
	1.7.4 - Instigate annual forums (to coincide with Council's required annual progress report) to consider progress of the Community Strategic plan.	Provider		
	1.7.5 - Establish a community leaders group with representatives from community interest groups and people under 25.	Provider Facilitator		
	1.7.6 - Encourage and support community action groups and progress associations.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
1.8 - Access to education and training opportunities	1.8.1 - Identify and develop partnership opportunities with education and training service providers including early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.	Advocate Facilitator	Rebuild the Economy - Strengthen the NSW skill base Return Quality Services - Improve education and learning outcomes for all students - Increase opportunities for people with a disability by providing support that meet their individual needs and realise their potential	Federal Government State Government Council Community
	1.8.2 - Promote access to education services to groups most in need, including scholarships, traineeships and retraining opportunities.	Advocate Facilitator		
	1.8.3 - Work on establishing a strong tertiary education base in the Council area in partnership with Universities and TAFE.	Advocate Facilitator		

COMMUNITY - WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Participate on a Council Committee as a community representative
- Regularly visit Council's website and read local media to keep up to date with Council's activities
- Provide feedback to council regarding services and customer service
- Volunteer and take part in community groups
- Enrol in an education program



Building Our Shire's Economy



Building Our Shire's Economy

VALUES AND CHALLENGES

Being located near Tamworth enables us to attract workers and visitors to our Shire and provides local residents with options for work in the city. On the other hand, our local businesses are exposed to pressures from the proximity to a larger commercial and retail centre.

It is important to realise that Council has some limitations in its role in economic development which is influenced by a number of external trends and forces that are often beyond Council's influence.

One of the greatest challenges is to diversify our economic base to provide resilience and reduce dependence on any one industry.

Farming

We have a strong and diverse agricultural economy, which has helped create support industries. Our farming industry, in particular,

has contributed so much to our lifestyle and values but will it be enough if our economy is to remain resilient?

Mining

Mining also brings significant benefits to our economy, creating jobs in that sector and supporting sectors and providing benefits to the Shire, overall. Yet, there is a concern that, as the mining sector booms and eventually declines, we as a community need to effectively prepare for a downturn.

A diverse economic base is one area we must focus on if we are to overcome the trend of Gunnedah Shire losing its younger people. A diverse economy is also important if we are to effectively manage the risk of one or more industries experiencing a decline. Providing industry helps to attract and retain people of all income levels, skills and experience.

Our economy is also advantaged by being quite central, or close, to Narrabri, Quirindi,



and Coonabarabran, providing opportunities for service based industries in Gunnedah.

Transport

To build a strong economy, we must ensure that we prioritise the maintenance and/or improvement of key roads throughout the Shire, drainage near these roads as well as rail lines.

Whilst these must be prioritised to grow our economy, other infrastructure must be maintained or improved to retain our quality of life.

An all-of-government approach to dealing with growing demands on transport by both mining and agriculture is required. Competition by users, conflict with existing road and rail users and impacts on local amenities are all important considerations.

“ *Reduce the cost of Development Applications and reduce or minimise the time in which it takes to process them* ”



A SNAPSHOT

Gunnedah Liveable Communities Assessment

Respondents to the Community Telephone Survey did not report high levels of unemployment. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population within Gunnedah has over twice the rate of unemployment compared to the non-Indigenous population.

Most people travel less than 30 minutes to their employment.

Rural areas report a very high percentage of managers and the villages report the highest proportion of labourers or machinery operators.

Residents from rural areas reported the highest proportion of household members who had to leave Gunnedah Shire to get employment.

There is a high proportion of households that have internet connection in all three study areas, though broadband connection is lower than the NSW average.

Residents of the villages and rural areas reported a significantly lower level of mobile phone access compared to Gunnedah township residents.

Residents commented on the need for adequate infrastructure to support development and expressed a desire for progress and making it easier for new industries to contribute to the Shire's economy.



Community Directions

The Shire is developing ways to speed up the development and assessment approvals process. If the economy is to grow, government must facilitate this in a sustainable manner:

- Better transport between Gunnedah and other centres including Tamworth
- Grow businesses and provide them with support
- Better roads and rail infrastructure
- Overpass to minimise conflict between rail services and traffic in Gunnedah
- Explore solar and other alternative energy sources for the area

What Council Provides

Council plays an important role in supporting economic opportunities for the business

community and ensuring business areas are attractive and welcoming. These include:

- Ongoing collaboration with Gunnedah District Development Board and local businesses
- Partnerships with the Namoi Councils (ROC) to extend the economic value and potential of the region
- Work with Village Progress Associations
- Strategies for encouraging the growth of industry in the area including appropriately zoned and serviced land

“ The immediate challenge is to provide the necessary infrastructure to accommodate our new growth, specifically the movement of traffic across the railway within the town will have more movements in the future. ”

Outcomes	Strategies	Council Role	Link to NSW 2021	Responsibility
2.1 - Our economic employment base diversified	2.1.1 - Develop a marketing strategy to position Gunnedah as an attractive place for business and investment.	Provider Facilitator	Renovate Infrastructure <i>- Invest in critical infrastructure</i> Return Quality Services <i>- Improve education and learning outcomes for all students</i> Rebuild the Economy <i>- Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW</i> <i>- Increase the competitiveness of doing business in NSW</i> <i>- Improve the performance of the NSW economy</i> <i>- Strengthen the NSW skill base</i>	Federal Government State Government Council Community Organisations Industry Groups
	2.1.2 - Create opportunities for after school care for children to support parents participating in the local workforce.	Advocate Facilitator		
	2.1.3 - Advocate for out of school hours care programs to be provided by a variety of service providers and promote home-based child care businesses.	Advocate		
	2.1.4 - Foster partnerships between Farming, Business, Mining, Community and Government to identify economic opportunities.	Participant Advocate Facilitator		
	2.1.5 - Support a diversified economy that is a balance of all current economic contributors and encourage new industry to set up in the area.	Provider Participant Advocate Facilitator		
	2.1.6 - Encourage new residents with skills to the area to supplement our skilled workforce shortage.	Advocate Facilitator		
	2.1.7 - Lobby for training opportunities in secondary and tertiary sectors for facilities and courses which meet our regional training needs.	Advocate Facilitator		
	2.1.8 - Identify and support small business across the shire.	Advocate Facilitator		
	2.1.9 - Support viable business in the main street, industrial area and villages.	Advocate Facilitator		
2.2 - Our infrastructure strategically managed	2.2.1 - Provide and maintain safe and serviceable public facilities and infrastructure including roads, footpaths and storm water drains.	Participant Advocate Facilitator	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities <i>- Ensure NSW is ready to deal with major emergencies and natural disasters</i> Return Quality Services <i>- Reduce travel times</i> <i>- Grow patronage on public transport by making it a more attractive choice</i> <i>- Improve Road Safety</i> Rebuild the Economy <i>- Improve the performance of the NSW economy</i> <i>- Increase the competitiveness of doing business in NSW</i> <i>- Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW</i>	Federal Government State Government Council
	2.2.2 - Provide and maintain efficient sewerage systems that allow for required expansion.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	2.2.3 - Secure and provide quality water to serviced premises and provide for future expansion.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	2.2.4 - Develop best practice asset registers and management plans and practices for infrastructure and assets.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	2.2.5 - Investigate and pursue opportunities to improve the public domain, including Gunnedah and village town entrances, main streets and business areas, parks and open space.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	2.2.6 - Facilitate improvements to car, bicycle and pedestrian safety.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	2.2.7 - Identify innovative funding and partnerships to provide for new and upgraded assets and infrastructure.	Advocate Facilitator		
	2.2.8 - Implement and maintain developer contribution plans which require appropriate contributions for development impact upon infrastructure so as not to unfairly burden existing ratepayers or future developers.	Provider		
	2.2.9 - Develop strategies for sustainable local road network and regional transport, including options for public transport to connect with existing transport services.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		

Outcomes	Strategies	Council Role	Link to NSW 2021	Responsibility
2.3 - Access to our goods, services and markets	2.3.1 - Maximise the use of existing parking spaces to access business premises.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Ensure NSW is ready to deal with major emergencies and natural disasters Return Quality Services - Reduce travel times - Grow patronage on public transport by making it a more attractive choice - Improve Road Safety Rebuild the Economy - Improve the performance of the NSW economy - Increase the competitiveness of doing business in NSW - Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW	Federal Government State Government Council
	2.3.2 - Review street parking controls to maximise vehicle turn over and review public car park availability in the Gunnedah CBD.	Provider		
	2.3.3 - Lobby for the provision of upgraded rail infrastructure. This includes an additional overpass or diversion of Coal trains in Gunnedah township and review of impacts on surrounding villages and neighbouring Councils.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	2.3.4 - Develop an airport master plan to assess future viability of the facility and options for future use.	Provider		
2.4 - Our identity and reputation promoted to tourists	2.4.1 - Undertake visitor analysis to better understand what attracts tourists to the area and identify opportunities to attract more visitors.	Provider Facilitator	Rebuild the Economy - Improve the performance of the NSW economy - Increase the competitiveness of doing business in NSW - Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities - Fostering opportunity and partnership with Aboriginal people - Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities	Federal Government State Government Council Community Business Organisations
	2.4.2 - Continue to explore social and cultural events and activities in partnership with businesses and organisations to encourage the community to meet, socialize, support and understand each other and attract income to the region.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	2.4.3 - Extend improved access to telecommunication and broadband services.	Advocate		
	2.4.4 - Support effective communication and promotion of services in the area.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	2.4.5 - Actively seek to bring business, sporting and cultural events to the area, eg Sundowner Bicycle Race.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	2.4.6 - Review and better establish branding of Gunnedah area to facilitate marketing by Council, business and industry.	Advocate Facilitator		
	2.4.7 - Gunnedah is a welcoming place for tourists and visitors alike. We provide accessible areas for all travellers including caravans and recreational vehicles.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
2.5 - Entrepreneurs and developers contribute to local economic growth	2.5.1 - Strengthen marketing and referral services to help people locate the services and information that they need.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Rebuild the Economy - Improve the performance of the NSW economy - Increase the competitiveness of doing business in NSW - Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW Restore Account ability to Government - Restore confidence and integrity in the planning system Renovate Infrastructure - Invest in critical infrastructure	State Government Council Community Business Industry Developers
	2.5.2 - Review the LEP and DCP to ensure unnecessary barriers to business establishments are removed.	Provider		
	2.5.3 - Encourage business investment in property/shops to maintain attractiveness to workers and visitors.	Advocate Facilitator		
	2.5.4 - Encourage investment in Environmentally sustainable industries.	Advocate Facilitator		
	2.5.5 - Encourage growth in the boom times to ensure that we are able to be sustainable in the event of a downturn in mining and economic activity.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		



COMMUNITY - WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Shop locally to support our local economy
- Create opportunities for traineeships, work experience and apprenticeships
- Report safety/maintenance issues to Council regarding our services





Retaining Our Quality of Life



Retaining Our Quality of Life

VALUES AND CHALLENGES

The Shire is a fantastic place in which to live. It is centrally located with access to a range of services. Workshop participants identified how great it is to live in a community with strong friendships, friendly people and a safe environment in which to raise children. In a small community like ours, it does not take long to get to anywhere within the Shire. In addition, we are close to Tamworth, Narrabri, Coonabarabran and Quirindi and consequently, from a regional perspective there are a range of lifestyle opportunities.

We need to hang onto the values that characterise the Shire – a strong sense of community, a balance between farming and mining and good services and facilities for our population size.

Our challenges include an ageing population, mobile youth, limited access to health services and transport. Other concerns raised at



workshops included anti-social behaviour and alcohol related crime and violence.

We not only need to consider the consequences of an ageing population, but also provide an environment in which we retain more of our younger people.

Furthermore, we must manage more effectively the significant opportunities and impacts associated with a potentially temporary, but large, mining population.

We are already well known for our koala population and have a number of museums and the wildlife park for tourists to explore and enjoy. The Shire has much to offer and more work is needed to promote and showcase all that we have to offer to those outside our local area.

How we live

We need to provide a range of accommodation so people can be independent in their own homes, regardless of age. We have to decide whether we want a larger population and the challenges that will bring.

Our village residents are justly proud of their initiative and leadership to seek improvements in the wellbeing of their communities, overall. However, they believe that, with the social, economical and environmental challenges faced, they need greater involvement and delivery of services from Council and other government agencies if their needs are to be met.

If we are to retain our residents within the Shire as well as attract new residents, we must have housing available for individuals and families of all income levels. This is particularly the case where the boom in



mining will impact upon supply and demand and consequently influence house prices and rental fees.

Important contributors to our lifestyle are a variety of health services, employment opportunities, recreational facilities, retail services and education facilities.

Our Wellbeing

While our geographical closeness to Tamworth, in particular, offers us access to many essential services, we still require many essential services locally. In particular, the community requires a stable, high-quality educated workforce, secure access to medical and health care providers (for example, doctors, allied health and aged care services), local policing and public transport (locally, between Gunnedah, villages and Tamworth).

We need to continue to offer a diverse range of entertainment for kids of all ages including sports, recreation, arts and cultural activities.

Community Directions

- A specific section in the community strategic plan should outline the strategic actions to be taken for each village – a village sub-plan for the next 10 to 20 years
- Promote preventative health measures through proactive education – particularly in schools
- New releases of land could be targeted to home owners not investors
- Our ageing population means we also must have purpose built accommodation for our aged community

“ I think the big challenge is to get the balance right between economic considerations for the future and keeping our country quality of life intact. ”

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Address the reasons for alcohol and substance abuse
- Invite the police to attend periodic council meetings, village meetings, Progress Committee meetings – and build a partnership based on mutual support
- Promote and provide more events in the area to encourage visitors and showcase the area
- Aboriginal programs
- Support of the Gunnedah Rural Health Centre aimed at attracting, retaining and training health professionals
- Collections, cultural events, programs and exhibitions offered through the Civic
- Gallery and Exhibition space within the Civic and Town Hall
- A range of sporting facilities to provide venues for community activities
- Extensive community care services including aged and disability care, Aboriginal and youth programs

What Council Provides

Council plays a key role in developing and promoting the Quality of life within the shire. This includes:

- Crime Prevention Committee
- Support to local cultural groups and events
- Country Week representation to encourage people to the Gunnedah area
- Support for cultural events including Porchetta Day, Week of Speed, Dorothea Mackellar National Poetry Competition

“Sporting and recreation facilities must be kept up to scratch to urge young to participate.”

A SNAPSHOT

Gunnedah Liveable Communities Assessment

Residents in both Gunnedah township and the rural areas are experiencing most difficulty in accessing childcare and preschool services.

The main difficulties in accessing childcare and preschool were associated with waiting times and services being full.

A higher proportion rural resident and those living in the villages reported difficulties in accessing community health services.

While Gunnedah is relatively well supplied with aged care accommodation, respondents still expressed some difficulty in accessing Aged Care Accommodation, especially those aged 60-69 years.

Residents in the rural areas found the greatest level of difficulty in accessing home care services, which is possibly due to their distance from major centres.

The villages and rural areas have the highest proportion of respondents who have participated in consultation about the future of their community.

More than 80% of respondents across all age groups attend community events within the Gunnedah Shire.

Several residents expressed concerns that the villages were not being adequately serviced.

The state of roads, traffic and road safety issues were raised by numerous respondents.



QUALITY OF LIFE

Outcomes	Strategies	Council Role	Link to NSW 2021	Responsibility
3.1 - Our older residents provided with the comfort and respect they deserve	3.1.1 - Provide education and training facilities for older people including employment re-training and leisure opportunities.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Increase opportunities for seniors in NSW to fully participate in community life Return Quality Services - Improve education and learning outcomes for all students	Federal Government State Government Council Community Organisations
3.2 - Enhanced access to essential services	3.2.1 - Improve community information and referrals to existing services and lobbying for increased government support.	Advocate	Return Quality Services - Provide world class clinical services with timely access and effective infrastructure - Keep people healthy and out of hospital. - Better protect the most vulnerable members of our community and break the cycle of disadvantage - Increase opportunities for people with a disability by providing support that meets their individual needs and realise their potential - Improve education and learning outcomes for all students	Federal Government State Government Council Community Business Organisations
	3.2.2 - Partner with health agencies in promoting healthy lifestyles and disease prevention.	Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	3.2.3 - Identify and address gaps in health services for the community, including gaps in mental health services and medical facilities.	Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	3.2.4 - Examine the integration of school facilities to maximise use of resources.	Advocate		
	3.2.5 - Investigate options to increase access to health services from the centre of Gunnedah given the increase in train traffic.	Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	3.2.6 - Continue to provide quality services that meet changing needs of our residents, including key services, such as library and community services.	Provider		
	3.2.7 - Create a better understanding within the community of the services and facilities Council provides.	Provider		
	3.2.8 - Lobby for the provision of a safe house in the Gunnedah area so that persons at risk do not need to travel to Tamworth.	Advocate Facilitator		
3.3 - Improved housing affordability	3.3.1 - Ensure a mix of housing types and encourage housing that is affordable, adaptable and accessible suited to the needs of our community.	Advocate Facilitator	Rebuild the Economy - Place downward Pressure on the cost of living Restore Account ability to Government - Restore confidence and integrity in the planning system Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities	State Government Council Community Developers
	3.3.2 - Encourage the provision of aged care facilities and promote the availability of programs that support aged persons in their own home.	Advocate Facilitator Provider		
	3.3.3 - Remove any impediments to, and encourage the supply of affordable housing.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	3.3.4 - Encourage workers in the area where possible, to live in the local area.	Advocate Facilitator		
3.4 - Villages are sustainable	3.4.1 - Implement initiatives for encouraging vital, friendly well serviced villages with a view to retaining the unique identity of each location.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities	Council Community
	3.4.2 - Encourage involvement of village residents in village improvement programs.	Facilitator Advocate		
3.5 - Police continue to work in partnership with the community	3.5.1 - Foster crime prevention through partnerships with the police and increased police presence 24 hours a day.	Advocate Facilitator	Return Quality Services - Prevent and reduce the level of crime - Prevent and reduce the level of re-offending - Improve community confidence in the justice system	State Government

Outcomes	Strategies	Council Role	Link to NSW 2021	Responsibility
3.6 - Reduced crime and anti-social behaviour within the Shire	3.6.1 - Identify joint opportunities with government agencies to strengthen community self regulation and compliance with local laws.	Advocate Facilitator	Return Quality Services - Prevent and reduce the level of crime - Prevent and reduce the level of re-offending - Improve community confidence in the justice system Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments	State Government Council Community Community Groups Community Organisations
	3.6.2 - Increase community use of major areas by encouraging appropriate activity and use of public places during the weekends and at night.	Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	3.6.3 - Encourage crime prevention by incorporating appropriate design principles in new development.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	3.6.4 - Working in partnership with state government and local organisations to identify and develop solutions to address anti-social behavior including alcohol related incidents.	Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	3.6.5 - Investigate and implement strategies to reduce vandalism across the shire.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant		
3.7 - Our younger people attracted, retained and developed	3.7.1 - Develop creative activities for young people after school and during school holidays.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities Rebuild the Economy - Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW	Federal Government State Government Business Council Community Organisations
	3.7.2 - Encourage and develop strategies to attract young people and families to our area to maintain the population balance.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	3.7.3 - Provide education and training facilities for youth including employment re-training and leisure opportunities.	Advocate Facilitator		
3.8 - Entertainment facilities, cultural development opportunities, equipment and stimulation for community members of all ages	3.8.1 - Provide innovative and enhanced library services using multimedia options that encourage lifelong learning.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities - Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities	Council Community Organisations
	3.8.2 - Review Council and community programs and facilities in maximising the participation of all community members.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	3.8.3 - Improve the marketing and promotion of existing facilities to people from different demographic groups.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
3.9 - Enhanced delivery of key services within our villages	3.9.1 - Review programs and facilities available in villages that increase the participation of all community members.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities	Council Community
3.10 - Recognise and Support our Cultural activities	3.10.1 - Support and promote Dorothea Mackellar National Poetry Competition, celebration of NAIDOC Week, the Red Chief Relief; the Oxleys Memorials, Ben Hall's Wall and the 150 th meridian.	Advocate Facilitator Participant	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities - Fostering opportunity and partnership with Aboriginal people - Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities	Federal Government State Government Business Council Community Organisations
	3.10.2 - Assess opportunities for better use, functionality and accessibility of existing cultural facilities and spaces.	Provider		
	3.10.3 - Recognise and resource Council's role in supporting and facilitating arts and cultural programs in partnership with the community.	Provider		
	3.10.4 - Enhance open spaces, villages and facilities with a broad range of arts and cultural activities.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	3.10.5 - Assess opportunities for funding for existing or identified cultural activities.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		

QUALITY OF LIFE

Outcomes	Strategies	Council Role	Link to NSW 2021	Responsibility
3.11 - Our community values retained over time	3.11.1 - Partner with the community and other agencies to extend opportunities for best practice cultural and event programs e.g. Porchetta Day, Week of Speed and AgQuip.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities - Fostering opportunity and partnership with Aboriginal people	Federal Government State Government Business Council Community Organisations
	3.11.2 - Extend programs to promote Aboriginal heritage and culture.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	3.11.3 - Lobby to secure funding for culture and creative expression from government, private individuals and companies.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
3.12 - Create opportunities for people to participate in active and healthy recreational activities	3.12.1 - Encourage cycling and walking through developing safe tracks and paths.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities - Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities Return Quality Services - Keep people healthy and out of hospital	Federal Government State Government Business Council Community Organisations
	3.12.2 - Identify new activities, promotions and incentives to attract a broad range of people to use recreational areas and open space.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		

COMMUNITY - WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Attend and enjoy local festivals and events
- Use local facilities and services
- Participate in local healthy lifestyle activities
- Be aware of your safety and the safety of others
- Report Crimes to the Police



Protecting and Enjoying Our Beautiful Surrounds





Protecting and Enjoying Our Beautiful Surrounds

Values and Challenges

We are justly proud of our Shire's beauty. Whilst our Shire is known for its koalas we have so much to be proud of including the Namoi and Mooki Rivers, Porcupine Lookout, the heritage of Maitland Street and the Shire's well maintained open spaces. We also have attractive quality parklands and urban spaces.

Challenges

There are concerns that this beauty could be tarnished due to industry which could impact upon water quality and sustainability, as well as native vegetation and potentially our heritage. Coal mining and coal seam methane extraction are significant concerns of the community. There is concern that coal dust could create air pollution as well as contaminate rainwater tanks and groundwater resources. Our community is heavily reliant on water and contamination of ground and surface waters would create

significant problems for the whole community. Maintaining the health of the Namoi River and ground water supplies is therefore a high priority.

Not only do the trees and plants contribute so much to our Shire's beauty, but they also play a fundamental role as shelters, burrows and other kinds of homes for native wildlife with continued clearing of trees, the diversity of wildlife found in the area will drop dramatically.

Maintaining balanced and sustainable ecosystems is critical. Coexistence of mining, agriculture and other industries is a major challenge facing our community.

Our heritage has contributed so much to our identity and will continue to do so. It is vital that any development within the Shire takes all reasonable means to protect items or buildings of heritage significance.





A SNAPSHOT

Gunnedah Liveable Communities Assessment

Respondents in the rural areas and villages are more likely to participate in the recommended level of physical activity, than the Gunnedah township.

Residents of Gunnedah township reported the highest use of sporting facilities, neighbourhood parks, picnic areas, playgrounds and reserves and swimming pools compared to village and rural residents.

Area of residence is significantly associated with satisfaction in the amount of open space in neighbourhoods, with residents of Gunnedah township reporting higher levels than residents of the villages.

Respondents from the Gunnedah township and the villages reported high levels of satisfaction with the number of trees in the neighbourhood.

Respondents from the villages reported least satisfaction with the water quality of rivers, lakes and creeks in the neighbourhood.

Satisfaction with air quality is currently high amongst the majority of respondents from all three study areas.

Almost all respondents across the three areas reported having a rainwater tank.

Higher proportions of respondents from the villages reported re-using water.

A high proportion of respondents from the Gunnedah township and villages reported recycling all or most of their recyclable waste. The proportion among rural residents is lower, most likely because of the non-availability of waste collection services.

A number of residents commented on the need to clean water ways/ preserve water supplies, improved garbage collection services and needing more trees.

A number of residents expressed desire for the maintenance of rural character and concern regarding the possibility of increased mining activities.

Community Directions

- Balance ecology and mining
- Ensure post mining rehabilitation is effective
- Keep the main street a main feature that is maintained properly and is attractive for locals and tourists
- Make towns and villages pretty - flowers and plants enhance public mental health.
- Clean up river foreshores and make Namoi River part of the township
- Continue our excellent parks, gardens and waste management
- Develop koala sanctuaries and keep mining development well away from koala areas.
- Support community groups working to regenerate landscapes
- Increase the number of pedestrian and cycle ways in future
- Protecting our natural and built heritage
- Protect and enhance green spaces such as parks, national parks and reduce the impact of development on the natural environment

What Council Provides

Council plays an important role in managing the environment we enjoy.

- Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan to facilitate and guide development
- Development and asset planning in response to population growth
- Waste management and Recycling programs
- Traffic management plans and road safety programs
- Stormwater management
- Programs for management and upgrade of cycleways, street lighting and roads
- Programs for control of noxious weeds and feral animals
- Plans for the management of waterways
- Environmental health control and management

“
*We must protect our environment
 without it we can do nothing.*”



ENVIRONMENT

Outcomes	Strategies	Council Role	Link to NSW 2021	Responsibility
4.1 - Balance between development and environmental protection	4.1.1 - Investigate and promote incentives for reductions in energy and water consumption in developments.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Protect our natural environment - Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities - Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities Return Quality Services - Keep people healthy and out of hospital	Federal Government State Government Business Council Community Organisations
	4.1.2 - Ensure adequate green space in residential developments and encourage green space in commercial developments.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	4.1.3 - Ensure that green spaces support and encourage our valuable Koala population to traverse the area and encourage animal health and breeding.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	4.1.4 - Lobby for planning controls that balance the need for mining, agriculture and protection of the environment which reflects the long term future for the environment.	Advocate Facilitator		
4.2 - Enhance the coverage of native vegetation within the Shire	4.2.1 - Develop a community education program to encourage residents and visitors to reduce their impact on vegetation including the management of pests and weeds.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Protect our natural environment - Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities - Ensure NSW is ready to deal with major emergencies and natural disasters Rebuild the Economy - Improve the performance of the NSW economy. - Increase the competitiveness of doing business in NSW - Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW	Federal Government State Government Business Council Community Organisations
	4.2.2 - Continue to develop and implement management and rehabilitation programs with high priority to wildlife corridors, stands of remnant vegetation and significant natural landscapes and soil types.	Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	4.2.3 - Encourage co-operation between industry (including mining) and environmental groups to rehabilitate negatively impacted areas.	Advocate Facilitator		
	4.2.4 - Review management systems for effective management of bushfires and the potential threats to residential areas.	Advocate Facilitator Participant		
4.3 - Secure our native fauna and encourage biodiversity in the Gunnedah shire	4.3.1 - Enhance and increase wildlife habitat on public and private land.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Protect our natural environment	Federal Government State Government Council Community Organisations
	4.3.2 - Identify and protect local populations of threatened species.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	4.3.3 - Provide the Shire with strategies to protect and nurture the koala population.	Provider Facilitator		
4.4 - A secure and high quality water supply	4.4.1 - Lobby government and participate in reviews and catchment management partnerships.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant	Rebuild the Economy - Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW Renovate Infrastructure - Invest in critical infrastructure - Secure potable water supplies - Build liveable centres Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Protect our natural environment	Federal Government State Government Council Community Organisations
	4.4.2 - Implement catchment management strategies to protect and rehabilitate waterways, artesian and river supplies.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	4.4.3 - Ongoing community education campaign about water sustainability.	Provider		
	4.4.4 - Investigate opportunities to harvest storm water runoff.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	4.4.5 - Secure a permanent water allocation to a level that will ensure that our community is sustainable and allows for future growth.	Provider Advocate Participant		
	4.4.6 - Provide education and technology to reduce the amount of rubbish entering our waterways.	Provider Facilitator Participant		

Outcomes	Strategies	Council Role	Link to NSW 2021	Responsibility
4.5 - Protect our heritage	4.5.1 - Assess impact of flooding on the community.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Protect our natural environment - Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities - Ensure NSW is ready to deal with major emergencies and natural disasters - Fostering opportunity and partnership with Aboriginal people	State Government Council Community Organisations
	4.5.2 - Identify opportunities to record and promote our natural heritage in partnership with the community in particular Aboriginal groups in the area.	Advocate Participant		
4.6 - Investment in new technologies and renewable energy	4.6.1 - Lobby the state and federal governments for greater investment in renewable energy operations.	Advocate Facilitator Participant	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Protect our natural environment Rebuild the Economy - Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW Rebuild the Economy - Place downward Pressure on the cost of living	Federal Government State Government Council Community Business Organisations
	4.6.2 - Identify opportunities to introduce new technology across the Shire in all areas.	Provider Participant		
4.7 - Dealing with our waste	4.7.1 - Regular and efficient recycling service.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant	Rebuild the Economy - Place downward Pressure on the cost of living Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Protect our natural environment - Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments	State Government Council Community
	4.7.2 - Identify opportunities for increasing community recycling both volume and type of waste.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	4.7.3 - Investigate ways to reduce waste produced by households and industry in the community.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	4.7.4 - Develop and implement a strategy that provides for future waste disposal.	Provider		
4.8 - Manage our exposure and contribution to the changing climate	4.8.1 - Develop strategies to address Climate Change.	Provider Advocate Facilitator Participant	Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities - Protect our natural environment - Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments - Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities - Ensure NSW is ready to deal with major emergencies and natural disasters	Federal Government State Government Council Community Business Organisations
	4.8.2 - Implement a comprehensive education program to promote sustainable living including sustainable environmental practices for homes, workplaces, and public and open spaces.	Advocate Facilitator Participant		
	4.8.3 - Reduce the energy consumption of Council as an organisation.	Provider		
4.9 - Enhance our Streetscapes in Gunnedah and Villages	4.9.1 - Identify and implement strategies that make streetscapes appealing and useful to visitors and residents.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Rebuild the Economy - Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW	Council Community Business Organisations
	4.9.2 - Protect and maintain our older buildings recognising their value to our community.	Advocate Facilitator		
	4.9.3 - Investigate and act on preservation of our natural and built environment.	Provider Advocate Facilitator		
	4.9.4 - Provide attractive town entrances to Gunnedah and Villages.	Provider Facilitator		

Outcomes	Strategies	Council Role	Link to NSW 2021	Responsibility
4.9 - Enhance our Streetscapes in Gunnedah and Villages <i>continued</i>	4.9.5 - Provide access, information and facilities to a wide variety of people using reserves in our shire and support the introduction of National parks in future.	Advocate Facilitator	Rebuild the Economy <i>- Drive Economic Growth in Regional NSW</i>	Council Community Business Organisations

COMMUNITY - WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Take ownership of our natural environment and protect its resources
- Reduce consumption of energy, fossil fuels, water and consider alternative resources
- Join a local Landcare group
- Install energy efficient appliances in your home
- Participate in recycling initiatives
- Plant and or retain vegetation and trees on private property
- Consider alternative transport options, particularly for short distance journeys
- Celebrate Koala Day in September

“Main street especially around traffic lights is ugly. Paint curb and renew pots. It is where traffic (tourists) stop and look at our main street and it could be made much more attractive.”





Consultation Process

How will we measure our success?

THEME	KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES
Engaging and Supporting the Community	* Please refer to Delivery Plan
Building Our Shire's Economy	* Please refer to Delivery Plan
Retaining Our Quality of Life	* Please refer to Delivery Plan
Protecting and Enjoying Our Beautiful Surrounds	* Please refer to Delivery Plan

* Delivery Plan currently under development.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Council's commitment to this processes is demonstrated in Council's procedures including the Community Engagement Strategy, that ensures the needs of social justice groups are considered when consulting on the Community Strategic Plan. A variety of consultation methods were used in the development of this plan to ensure all sections of the Community were able to participate. These included Workshops, Surveys and competitions.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The principles adopted by Gunnedah Shire Council below are based on the NSW Government's social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights. These principles form the basis of all consultation and decisions involving the community and support Council's values.

Inform

It is essential to provide the community with concise, factual and sufficient information to be involved in the decision making process. The information should be presented in plain English in a format that is easily interpreted.

Purpose

The policy will provide clear direction for consultation to define why it is occurring and the context.

Clear Intention

It is important that the community is consulted prior to decision making and if a decision has already been made, inform the community of the reasons why this action was necessary.

**Moderation**

Do not over consult the community. Their time and knowledge is invaluable on a wide range of issues. When considering a consultation ensure that existing research has not been gathered about the issue.

Transparency

Council will be clear on the intention and the outcome required from consultation.

Commitment

Council commits to the process of keeping the community informed regarding projects including delays and achievements.

Inclusive

The aim for all community consultation is to involve a representative sample of the community. This may involve interest groups and in such a case the interest group should be representative. Particular reference is made to include persons in vulnerable circumstances.

Timeliness & Resources

The physical and financial resources involved in carrying out consultation will be considered for individual projects and the needs of individual Council Departments.

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Levels of engagement in the Community Engagement Strategy are based on the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum. This spectrum covers 5 main areas, these being Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower. In relation to the development of the Community Strategic Plan the following activities have been undertaken:

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	AUDIENCE	METHOD OF ENGAGEMENT
Inform	Gunnedah Shire Community Councillors Council staff Community Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic media release • Newspaper advertisement • Mayoral letter to Community Group Leaders • Website content • Workshop Posters displayed in Gunnedah and Villages • Flyers Distributed in Gunnedah, Villages and Rural Areas • Business Visits (Gunnedah and Villages) • Brochures sent to Ratepayers • Information at events (AgQuip, Porchetta Day)
Consult	Gunnedah Shire Community Councillors Council staff Ratepayers Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Workshops • Stakeholder Workshops • Issues Workshops • Internet Survey • <i>Your Say Our Future</i> Survey
Involve	Gunnedah Shire Community Councillors Council staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues Paper distributed to workshop participants • Big Picture Photo Competition
Collaborate	Gunnedah Shire Community Councillors Council staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of Draft Community Strategic Plan • Community Workshops
Empower	Gunnedah Shire Community Councillors Council staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of Community Strategic Plan • Reporting on Outcomes of the Community Strategic Plan • Identify actions in plan for all residents to participate



WORKSHOPS

During January to March 26th, 2011 workshops were conducted throughout the Gunnedah Shire, facilitated by Blackadder Associates.

Over 340 Gunnedah Shire people were involved in these initial consultations as follows:

Community Workshops

- Carroll community workshop - 21st February, 2011
- Gunnedah community workshop - 22nd February, 2011
- Kelvin community workshop - 23rd February, 2011
- Curlewis community workshop - 23rd February, 2011
- Breeza community workshop - 24th February, 2011
- Mullaley community workshop - 24th February, 2011
- Tambar Springs community workshop - 7th March, 2011



Stakeholder Workshops

- Gunnedah Shire Council staff workshops - 19th and 20th January, 2011
- Gunnedah Shire Council Councillors - 7th February, 2011
- Aged Care and Services workshop - 21st February, 2011



- Aboriginal Residents workshops (3) - 21st February, 2011
- School Interviews:
 - Primary schools – 22nd February, 2011
 - High schools – 22nd February, 2011

Issues Workshops

- Community Leadership workshop
8th March, 2011
- Economic Development and Sustainability workshop - 8th March, 2011
- Social Development and Sustainability workshop - 9th March, 2011
- Local Environment and Amenity workshop - 9th March, 2011

Your Say, Our Future Surveys

338 surveys returned.

Big Picture Photo Competition

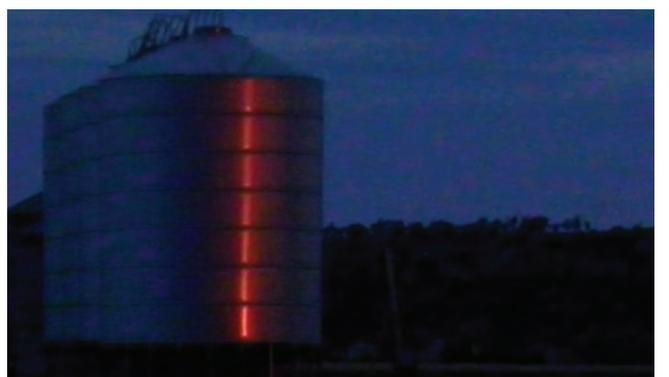
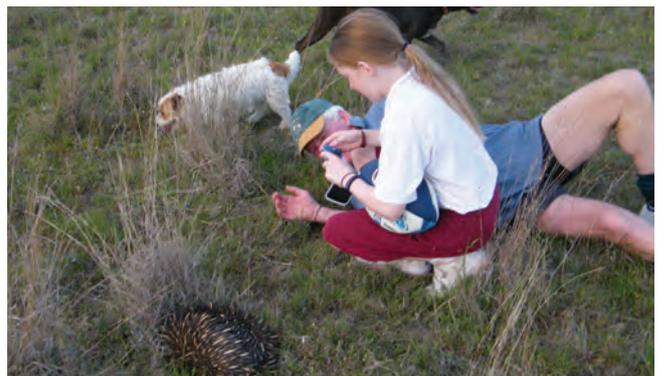
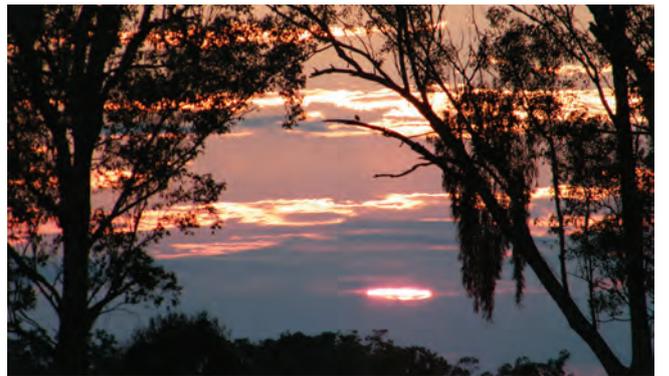
37 submissions (some of which are represented in this plan)

Review Workshops

- Carroll community workshop
21st February, 2012
- Gunnedah community workshop
21st and 22nd February, 2012
- Kelvin community workshop
20th February, 2012
- Curlewis community workshop
23rd February, 2012
- Breeza community workshop
23rd February, 2012
- Mullaley community workshop
22nd February, 2012
- Tambar Springs community workshop
20th February, 2012

PARTICIPATION RATE

The total number of participants in this project to date total 780 representing 7% of the Gunnedah LGA population.





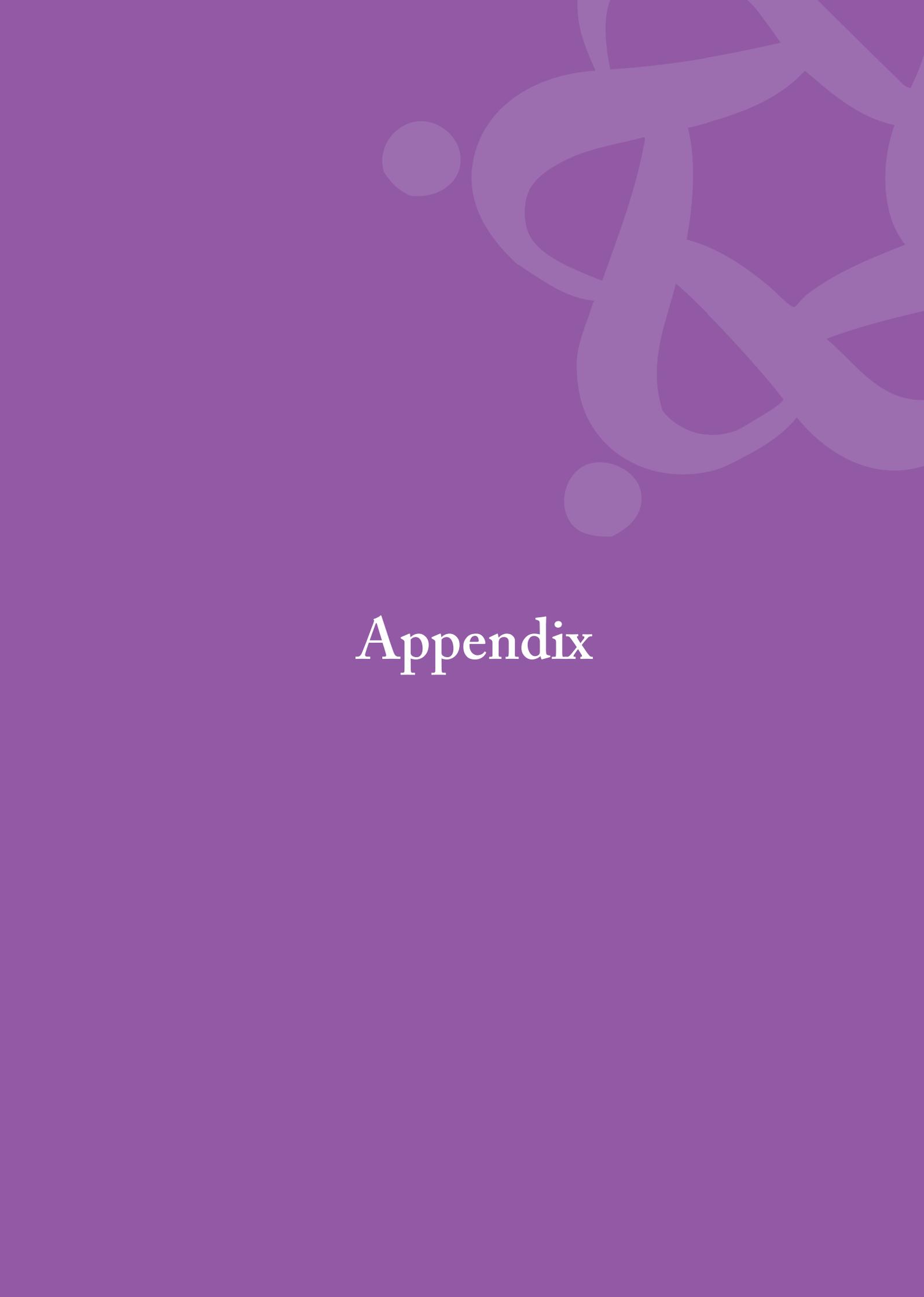


Monitoring and Review Process

To assess the implementation and effectiveness of the community’s actions and Council’s contribution in achieving the long term goals set out in the Community Strategic Plan the outgoing elected Council must prepare a report to the community detailing achievements over their four year term.

The Community Strategic Plan will be formally reviewed every four years by each newly elected council and the community will have the opportunity to revisit the priorities and objectives to ensure they still reflect the community’s needs and aspirations.

NAME	WHAT DO WE MEASURE?	HOW IS IT REPORTED, AND WHAT PERIOD DOES IT COVER?
COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN		
Objectives/Strategic indicators	Progress towards achieving community aspirations	Status Report (every 4 years) from outgoing Council
DELIVERY PROGRAM		
Strategic Actions	Outcomes – progress towards achieving strategic indicators Performance – implementation of agreed priorities and delivery of program activities	Report to Council (6 months) July – December January – June July – June (financial year)
OPERATIONAL PLAN		
Service indicators	Performance – delivery of agreed services	Report to Council (3 months) July – September October – December January - March April - June
COUNCIL’S ANNUAL REPORT		
Review of Council action	Progress – Council meeting its indicators and performance, in managing its budgets and delivering programs and services	Annual Report (every year)



Appendix

Definitions of Terms Used in the Plan

Advocate: To speak, write or stand up for something or someone. This does not include contribution of resources in achieving this outcome.

Affordable Housing: Low cost housing for sale or rent.

Biodiversity: The diversity of plant and animal life in the natural environment.

Climate Change: Warming of the Earth's Climate resulting from the build up of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere.

Community Engagement/ Consultation: The process of receiving input/feedback from the community on an issue or project in order that these views can be taken into consideration in Council's decision making processes.

Community Well Being: A community's satisfaction with life, incorporating physical, mental, social and spiritual aspects.

Facilitator: A person or group responsible for leading or coordinating outcomes. This can be the work of a group, leading a group discussion or providing a central place to collect and distribute information.

Governance: The values, systems, policies and procedures used to assist organisations in ethical, open and accountable decision making.

Infrastructure: Physical structures and services supporting a community such as roads, transport, buildings, drainage, pipes etc.

Local Environment Plan: A plan that establishes the rules and policies for development in a council area.

Open Space: A term used to describe the collection of parks, gardens, reserves, foreshore area, and sportsgrounds in an area.

Participant: Take or have a part or share in providing an outcome, including providing information and resources.

Provider: Supply means of support. Including labour, administration, technical expertise and financial support.

Quadruple Bottom Line: Consideration of social, environmental, economic and governance issues in decision making.

Streetscapes: The appearance of the street as a whole incorporating the road, footpath, kerb and gutter, nature strips, fences and trees.

Sustainability: Protecting the natural environment and enriching the living environment by promoting environmental, economic and social improvements to our community for the benefit of current and future generations.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who participated in this project by attending workshops, submitting surveys and providing photographic content.

Images by local residents and entrants in the *Big Picture* photography competition

Front Cover	Fonda Shae Rowland - <i>The Centre of Town</i>	Page 25	Chris Burgess - <i>After School Stroll</i>
Page 2	Karen Cull - <i>Pensioners Hill by Day</i>	Page 27	Vera Banks - <i>African Dancing Class</i>
Page 3	Paul Mathews - <i>Adam Marshall</i>		Maree Kelly - <i>Gunnedah Library</i>
	Paul Mathews - <i>Robert Campbell</i>	Page 30	Janelle Wilkinson - <i>Girl and her Horse</i>
Page 4	Sue Cox - <i>Kelvin</i>	Page 31	Chris Blackwell - <i>Roads of Purple</i>
Page 6	Paul Mathews - <i>Porchetta Day</i>	Page 32	Cathy Riley - <i>Place of Reflection, Mullibah Lagoon</i>
Page 7	Paul Mathews - <i>Australia Day</i>	Page 33	Narelle Rowland - <i>Springtime in Gunnedah</i>
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