

# 2024 Annual Report



LEETON  
SHIRE COUNCIL





### **Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners**

Leeton Shire Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri People and their continued input on our Community.

We acknowledge their connection to the land, water and sky.

We acknowledge all Aboriginal people who have made the Leeton Shire their home.

As such we pay our respects to all Aboriginal Elders, past, present and emerging of our Shire.



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# About Leeton Shire

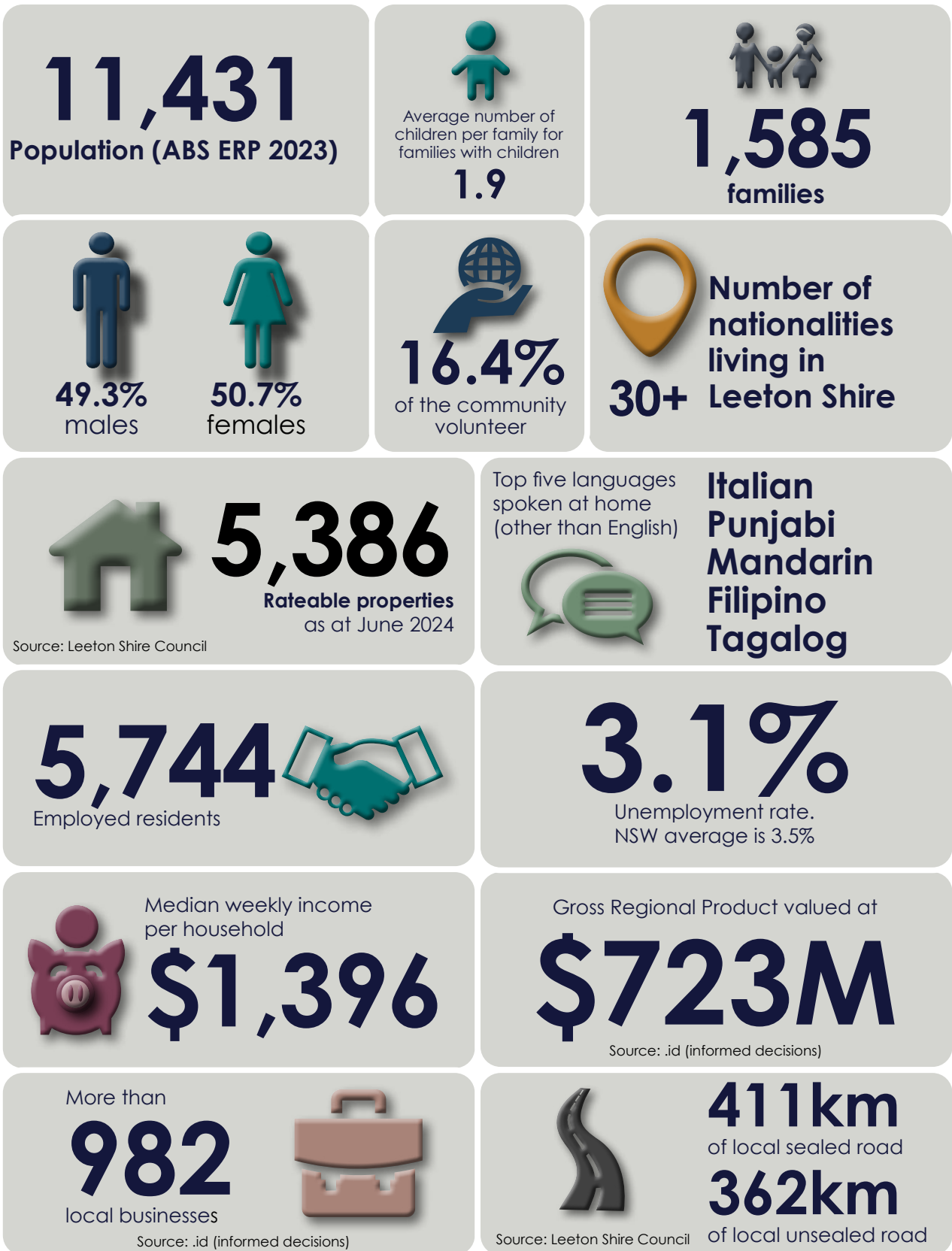


Leeton Shire is located in southwest New South Wales, 584km from Sydney, 470km from Melbourne and 371km from Canberra. It covers 1,167km<sup>2</sup> and includes the towns of Leeton, Yanco and Whitton and the villages of Murrami and Wamboon.

With a population of 11,452 (ABS 2021), Leeton is the second largest regional centre in the Western Riverina region and plays an integral role in value-added agricultural processing, agriculture, education and research, transport and logistics.

Leeton Shire has a proud history as the birthplace of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. It celebrates its multicultural diversity and welcomes new settlers, migrants and refugees. Leeton is also the Art Deco Capital of regional Australia.

# Snapshot of Leeton Shire



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), unless otherwise indicated (correct as at 1 July 2024)



*Leeton Sunrice Festival*

# Welcome and Context

## Welcome to the Leeton Shire Council Annual Report 2024

The Annual Report is a key point of accountability between Leeton Shire Council and the Leeton Shire community. It provides the community with an update on Council's progress in implementing the Delivery Program 2022–2025 through the actions and activities set out in the Operational Plan 2023/24.

The Delivery Program and Operational Plan (DPOP) formalised Council's commitment to the community. It documented the actions and activities Council said it would undertake in order to progress the objectives set out in the Community Strategic Plan (CSP): *Liveable Leeton 2035*.

*Liveable Leeton 2035* has steered the Leeton Shire community's journey towards the future. It documents the community's vision and lists 25 outcomes which are grouped into five key focus areas:

**Focus Area 1. A connected, inclusive and enriched community** – good health, lifelong learning, friendliness and inclusivity, safety, and access to a range of quality affordable housing

**Focus Area 2. A safe, active and healthy community** – participation in sports and leisure, enjoyment in arts and culture, and valuing heritage

**Focus Area 3. A thriving regional economy** – a thriving irrigated agricultural sector, strong business and employment, great attractions and events, and a vibrant town centre

**Focus Area 4. A quality environment** – reliable water and sewerage services, good transport infrastructure, sustainable natural environment, and attractive towns and parks

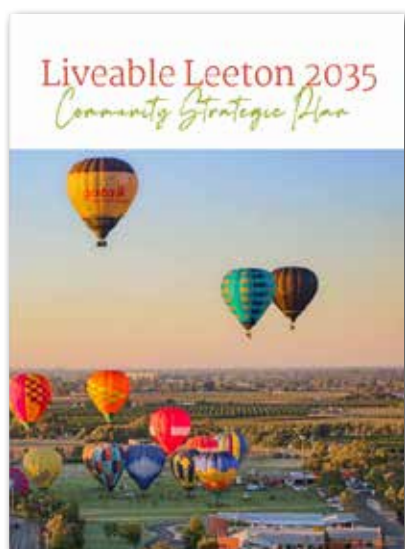
**Focus Area 5. Strong leadership and civic participation** – politicians who act and listen, a community that speaks up and gets involved, and a community that is always on the front foot.

To enable Council to more accurately track its progress, the activities detailed in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan were grouped by functional areas with the links to the Community Strategic Plan (CSP): *Liveable Leeton 2035* identified against each action.

In addition to information on Council's performance in delivering on its Delivery Program and Operational Plan commitments, the Annual Report includes information prescribed in the Local Government Regulation that councils must report on annually, as well as a snapshot of Council's finances. More detailed financial information can be found in the Leeton Shire Council Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2024.

The Annual Report is also an opportunity to acknowledge the great things that have happened across the Shire and note the challenges that have marked the year.

We hope you enjoy reading about our activities during the 2023/24 financial year and we thank our community for the continued support and direction.





# Message from Our Mayor and General Manager

**It is our pleasure to present the 2023/24 Annual Report, which is the final annual report for the 2021 – 2024 term of Council.**

It's been another big year for Leeton Shire, with the elected Councillors and various operational teams regularly going above and beyond to deliver for the community. We are pleased to report that Council has made some excellent progress, sometimes under very challenging circumstances. Please take the time to reflect on the wide variety of functions Council delivers, noting too the high levels of compliance obligations that must be reported each year.

Our sincere thanks to the outgoing Council and retiring Councillors, as well as the senior staff / managers and their amazing teams who have and continue to contribute to an abundantly livable Leeton Shire. We also appreciate greatly the many community members who are actively engaged with Council – including the youth of Leeton – and have helped shape our strategic direction. Your voices are important and we continue to make it our priority to listen and learn.

Some of our more significant results for this year include:

- **Rating Structure Review**

To increase fairness and rebalance the rates from 01 July 2024, a 2-year adjustment has been adopted that will see the rate peg from farmland temporarily distributed across business. Further, a new 'business industrial' rating category will be permanently introduced that will see larger businesses pay a higher portion of business rates than small business.

- **Fiduciary Responsibility**

Completed a review of five (5) Asset Management Plans and updated the Long Term Financial Plan accordingly. While the year ended with a strong cash position of \$51.4M, the General Fund continues to be unsustainable and will need to be addressed by the next term of Council.

- **Grant Funding and Developer Contributions**

Council benefitted from \$17.14M in grants and contributions, with \$423K of that from various developer contributions.

- **Major Capital Works**

- Completed WaterSlide at Leeton Aquatic Centre
- Completed Wamoon Sewerage Scheme and Wamoon Park Public Toilets
- Completed Leeton Early Learning Centre Expansion, with 136 children now enrolled
- Completed Canal Street heavy vehicle by-pass upgrade

- Completed new Pound with capacity for 16 dogs and cats
- Progressed Chelmsford Town Square redevelopment
- Progressed development of new Landfill Cell
- Progressed Roxy Community Theatre Redevelopment
- Commenced Phase 1 of Vance Industrial Estate Stage 3

- **Development Planning**

Approved 141 development applications with a combined value of \$19.5M; held 27 pre-lodgement meetings; and issued 67 Construction Certificates, 3 Subdivision Certificates, 2 Complying Development Certificates and 401 Planning Certificates.

- **Strategic Planning**

Commenced development of an Integrated Land Use, Transport and Infrastructure Plan to complement Leeton Shire's newly adopted Housing Strategy. Adopted a new Active Transport Plan.

- **Library**

There were 20,371 visits made to the Library, with 18,328 books loaned to 3,004 active library members. An Enhancement Project was completed that has delivered upgraded technology and new furnishings for the benefit of the community.

- **Leeton Museum & Art Gallery**

Attracted 3,476 visitors to eleven exhibitions and hosted a variety of workshops and events, including the Acacia Quartet, renowned as one of Australia's most esteemed string ensembles. Sponsored the annual Penny Paniz Art Competition in association with the Leeton Art Society. Benefitted from \$192K of grant funding raised for Leeton Shire by Western Riverina Arts.

- **Open Space and Recreation**

There were 32,414 entries to the Leeton Aquatic Centre and 2,733 at the Whitton Pool. Over 18,564 rounds were played at the Leeton Golf Course. Planted 83 new street trees.

**We are pleased to report that Council has made some excellent progress, sometimes under very challenging circumstances.**



- **Regulatory Services**

Rehomed 153 dogs; responded to 21 dog attacks; micro-chipped 168 animals; conducted 120 inspections (food, skin penetration remedies and private swimming pools) and continued with the annual mosquito surveillance program. Secured \$55K in noxious weeds grant funding from Riverina Local Lands Services and undertook 131 weed inspections.

- **Roads and Footpaths**

Surveyed 410km of sealed roads using advanced video imaging technology. Rehabilitated 6.1km of sealed roads; resealed 16.6km of roads; resheeted 9.7km of gravel roads; completed 13km of new line marking; and undertook various road safety / driver safety activities. Undertook \$180K worth of works for TfNSW on Irrigation Way.

- **Water and Sewer**

Supplied 2180ML of potable water across the Shire; upgraded all filtration plants including new launders and a chemical storage shed at the Leeton plant. Telemetry upgrades to pump stations and water main replacement in Whitton. Undertook 67 liquid trade waste inspections, with 91% of businesses now compliant.

- **Solid Waste Management**

Successfully diverted 41.36% of waste from landfill through recycling efforts. Reopened the Leeton Tip Shop which is now managed by Reviva. Collected 5,166 drums through a Drum Muster. Undertook detailed planning, preparation, education and procurement in anticipation of launching FOGO from 01 July 2024. Through a successful joint tender process with RAMJO, Council secured the (new) 3rd bin for only an extra \$15 per household per annum.

- **Energy Savings**

Generated 400 kWh of solar power through solar arrays (equivalent of powering 142 households), reducing Council's electricity costs. Completed solar inverter replacement and remote monitoring system on the main Council Administration building and a major Power Factor Correction (PFC) installation at the Leeton Sewer Treatment Plant. Commenced a Power Purchase Agreement procurement process in association with Joint Organisations (RAMJO and Hunter JO) for major electricity sites.

- **Events**

Our full suite of events (including Art Deco Festival, SunRice Festival, Outback Band Spectacular, Chill & Grill, Fiesta La Leeton, Light Up Leeton etc) continues to bring entertainment, life and soul to the Shire and offers fabulous opportunities for community to come together to celebrate all that is good about Leeton. We are very fortunate to have so many partnerships with the community making the events so successful. Welcomed 28 new citizens.

- **Fivebough Wetlands**

Collaborated with Crown Lands as a member of the management advisory group. New visitor and interpretive signage has been installed and the walking paths upgraded.

- **Community Engagement**

Over 128 media releases, 829 social media posts, 10 Have Your Say surveys, two 'Chat with your Councillor' sessions and launched a Council newsletter for the community. Held two meetings of a very high calibre Youth Council made up of students from three schools. Council continues to enjoy a really respectful and constructive relationship with the Leeton and Districts Aboriginal Lands Council and has commenced the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan.

- **Growing Our Own**

Offered 11 traineeships across childcare, parks, water / waste water, events, library and customer service and 15 school based work experience opportunities. Council spends 1% of employee costs on staff training and professional development.

- **Advocacy**

Continued to advocate for water security, including helping to organise a rally against water buybacks. Began discussions with the Dept of Health about commencing a Collaborative Care Program for Leeton. Met with six (6) Federal and State Ministers covering mainly health, water security and funding for major projects. Submitted and had unanimous support for 6 motions across peak NSW and Australian Local Government Associations, covering housing, energy costs, Pacific Labour Scheme challenges, weeds management and cybersecurity. Active involvement with RAMJO, the MDA (Murray Darling Association) and Country Mayors where our combined voices are better heard by other tiers of government. Initiated the Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific with Welcoming Australia.

### Closing Remarks from Mayor Tony Reneker

*It has been my privilege to serve as Mayor of Leeton Shire Council and I strongly believe our Shire continues to punch well above its weight. I'd like to thank the Councillors for working together constructively, especially when we were faced with some very challenging financial decisions. I believe we have made a positive difference to the communities we represent over our term, and we've done our best to set aside our individual preferences in favour of focusing on what is important for the greater good. That said, it hasn't been easy making an 'unpopular decision' and we now leave it to the next Council to find a way forward with the General Fund. It would be fair to say that balancing needs, wants, expectations and jobs imposed on us by other tiers of government (usually without consultation) has been difficult to navigate. If there is one thing I know for sure, this is a challenge for councils across NSW and is not peculiar to Leeton.*



Mayor Tony Reneker

### Closing Remarks from General Manager Jackie Kruger

*On behalf of the staff, we thank the elected Council for their direction and guidance. Of course, implementation is key to the work a Council does and we are fortunate to have the services of many highly experienced and motivated staff. Council remains committed to their safety and the development of their careers and I am delighted to report that several staff have participated in leadership programs, with 4 graduating from the LG Professionals Aspiring Leaders Program. We also celebrate milestone work anniversaries, with Justin Davidson celebrating 20 years, David Harrison and Dennis Irvine 25 years each, and William Ingram close to a whopping 43 years at his retirement. Leeton Shire teams were also finalists in five (5) categories in the 2024 LG Professionals Annual Awards night. Well done everyone!*



General Manager Jackie Kruger





Message from Our Mayor and General Manager cont.



*Chelmsford Town Square progress in April 2024*







# Highlights for 2023/24 by Community Strategic Plan Theme

## A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community

- Welcomed 28 new Australian Citizens
- Coordinated the Survival Day Mural at Gossamer Park
- Commenced development of a Leeton Shire Reconciliation Plan
- Completed works on the expansion of the Leeton Early Learning Centre
- Progressed the Roxy Community Theatre redevelopment
- Completed the Library's Technology and Community Hub Enhancement Project

## A Safe, Active and Healthy Community

- Completed and held the official opening of the water slides at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre
- Hosted the 22nd Annual Riggz Cup Riverina Skate Championships
- Coordinated the new 'Gamechanger', an innovative sports and wellbeing program for school students
- Supported a successful Sunrice Festival and Fiesta La Leeton

## A Thriving Regional Economy

- Approved 141 Development Applications valued at \$19.47M
- Held two free microchipping days with a total of 91 animals microchipped
- Hosted the Inaugural Leeton Recruitment Summit in partnership with Leeton Business Chamber, GROW Riverina and Workforce Australia
- Adopted the Leeton Housing Strategy 2024
- Completed the WRConnect Masterplan
- Coordinated the Australian Art Deco Festival Leeton 2023 program with approximately 3,606 participants across 40 events

## A Quality Environment

- Completed the Wamoon Sewerage Scheme
- Advanced preparations for the rollout of FOGO and its three bin system across the community
- Progressed works on the Leeton CBD Enhancement Project Phase 3 - Chelmsford Place Town Square
- Completed the off leash dog park at McCaughey Bicentennial Park in Yanco
- Completed road rehabilitation works on Canal Street as part of the 'Heavy Vehicle Bypass' upgrade
- Completed a significant electrical upgrade at Leeton Sewerage Treatment Plant providing enhanced operational efficiency and reliability

## Strong Leadership and Civic Participation

- Advocated for the local community on a range of issues including health, water security and additional funding
- Endorsed a 2-Year Rate Rebalancing Program to improve fairness
- Awarded 15 Community Strengthening Grants to a total value of \$22,496.90, four Quick Response Grants to a total value of \$6,269 and 17 Youth Development Grants to a total value of \$4,250
- Made 17 successful grant applications to the value of \$784,264 (excluding road grant funding).

Images left from top: *Chelmsford Place Upgrade, Leeton Recruitment Summit, Survival Day Mural at Gossamer Park, Leeton Waterslides*

# Finance Snapshot

## Our Status as at 30 June 2024

The net operating result, before capital grants and contributions, for the year ended 30 June 2024 is a surplus of \$119K compared to a surplus of \$1.55M for the year ended 30 June 2023.

The decrease of \$1.43M compared to last year is mainly due to decrease in the financial assistance grant revenue and increase in depreciation expenses caused by revaluations as well as increase in materials and services.

### Cash and Investments

Council's total cash and investments as at 30 June 2024 were \$51.4 million. All of these funds are not available for discretionary use, as the amount includes items that are externally (by Statute) or internally (by Council policy) restricted in their use:

- Council is holding \$42.8 million of externally restricted funds. This amount includes developer contributions, deposits/bonds, unexpended grants, and water, sewerage, and domestic waste cash and investments.
- The \$9.88 million remaining cash is internally restricted. These are amounts set aside for purposes such as future asset replacement and accrued employee leave entitlements. Some of the key internal restrictions as at 30 June 2024 were as follows:
  - Plant and vehicle replacement – \$0.6 million
  - Leeton Museum & Art Gallery – \$0.3 million
  - Land development – \$0.255 million
  - Employee leave entitlements – \$1.391 million
  - FAGs in advance – \$5.188 million
  - Unfinished work – \$1.449 million
  - Other grants – \$0.697 million.

| Assets and Liabilities        | 2023/24              | 2022/23<br>for comparison |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Assets</b>                 |                      |                           |
| Total current assets          | \$43,789,000         | \$46,740,000              |
| Total non-current assets      | \$381,589,000        | \$356,024,000             |
| <b>Total assets</b>           | <b>\$425,378,000</b> | <b>\$402,764,000</b>      |
| <b>Liabilities</b>            |                      |                           |
| Total current liabilities     | \$11,809,000         | \$9,367,000               |
| Total non-current liabilities | \$7,066,000          | \$6,867,000               |
| <b>Total liabilities</b>      | <b>\$18,875,000</b>  | <b>\$16,234,000</b>       |
| <b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>           | <b>\$406,503,000</b> | <b>\$386,530,000</b>      |



## Our 2023/24 Income and Expenditure

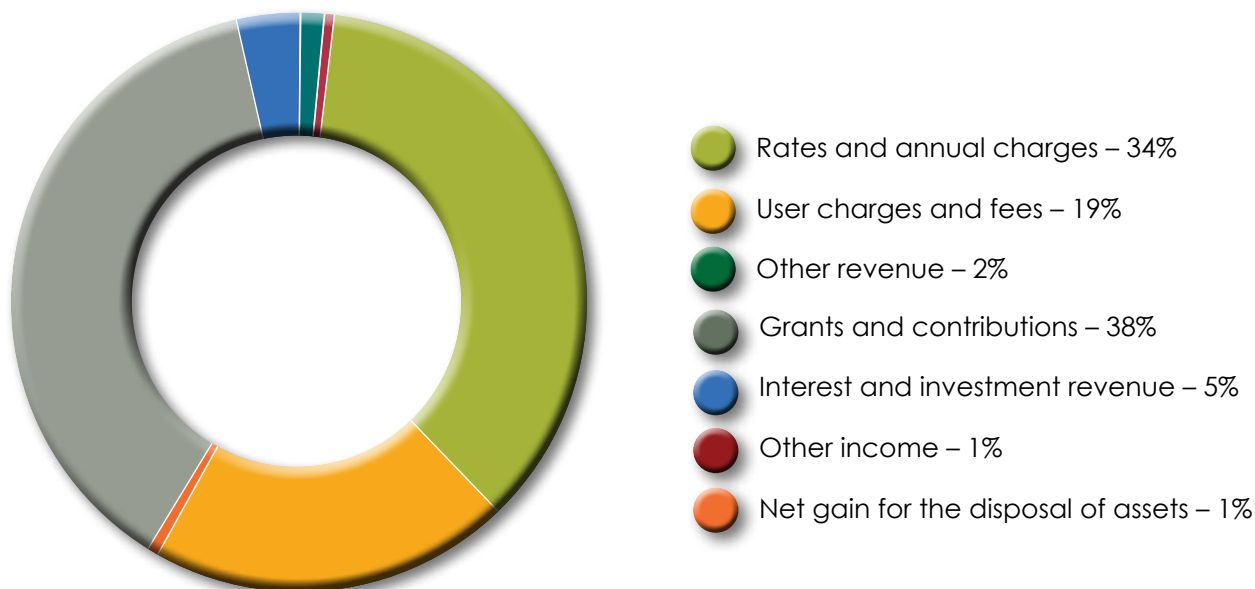
For the financial year ended 30 June 2024, Leeton Shire Council's total income from continuing operations, including grant income, was \$44.75 million. The expenditure was \$38.35 million.

| Income and Expenditure  | 2023/24            | 2022/23<br>for comparison |
|---|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Income</b>   |                    |                           |
| Total income from continuing operations                                     | \$44,748,000       | \$41,389,000              |
| <b>Expenditure</b>  |                    |                           |
| Total expenses from continuing operations                                   | \$38,352,000       | \$34,890,000              |
| <b>Operating Result</b>   |                    |                           |
| <b>Net operating result (counting grants and contributions)</b>             | <b>\$6,396,000</b> | <b>\$6,499,000</b>        |
| <b>Net operating result (not counting capital grants and contributions)</b> | <b>\$119,000</b>   | <b>(\$1,551,000)</b>      |

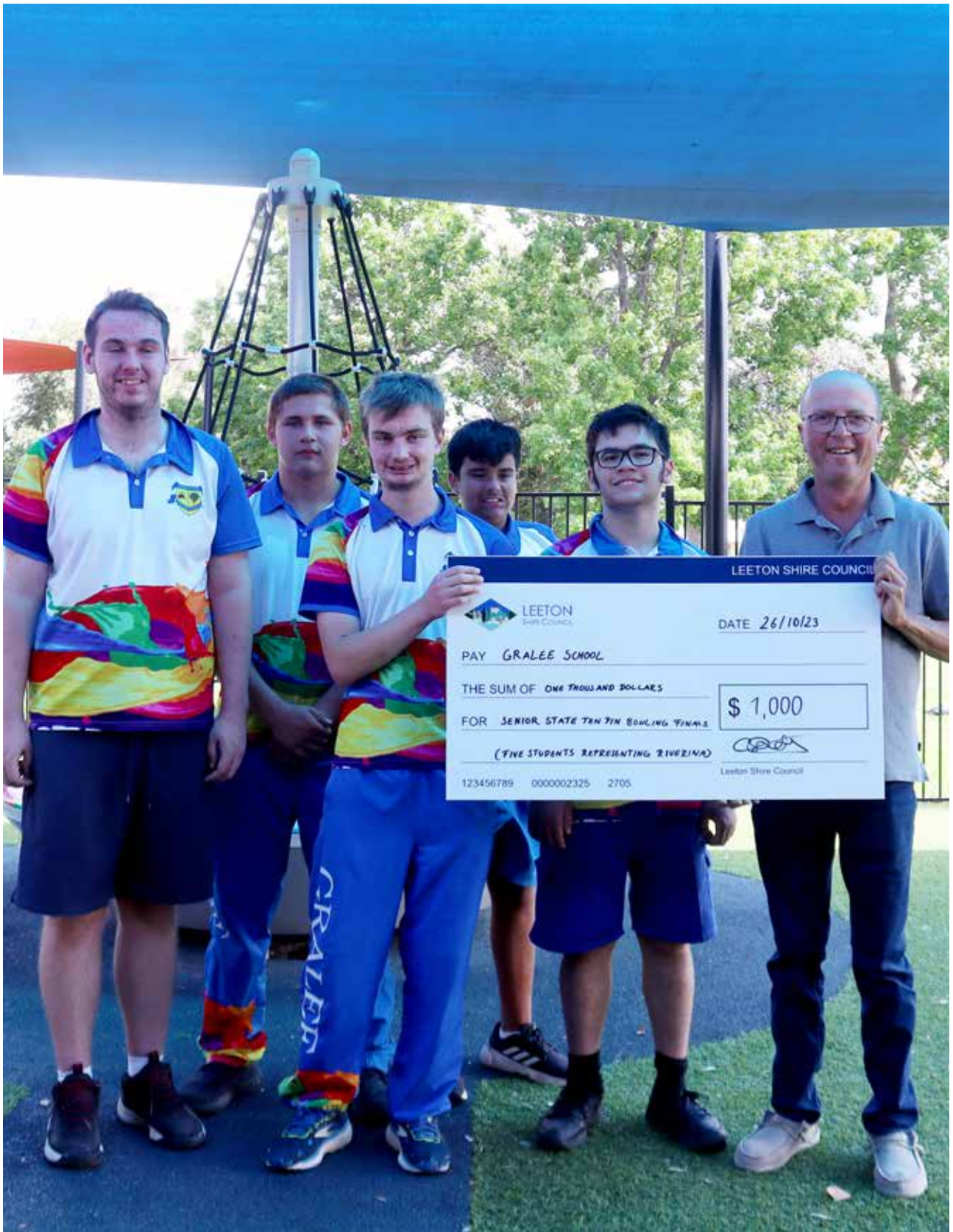
## Our 2023/24 Income

Leeton Shire Council receives the bulk of its operating income from three main sources:

- Rates and annual charges – \$15.01 million
- User charges and fees – \$8.68 million
- Grants and non-developer contributions – \$17.135 million



For further information on Council's finances, please see the Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2024, available on Council's website.



*Gralee School – Recipients of a Community Development Grant*

## Grants and Contributions Income

In 2023/24 Leeton Shire Council received grants and contributions of \$17.14 million. The Federal Government provided \$2.37 million, the State Government provided \$12.06 million of this amount (\$5.5 million in Federal Assistance Grants). Developer contributions provided a further \$423,000.

| 2023/24 Grants and Contributions Income                                     | Operating Grants    | Capital Grants     |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>General purpose grants (untied)</b>                                      |                     |                    |
| <b>Current year allocation</b>  |                     |                    |
| Financial assistance – general component                                    | \$307,000           | 0                  |
| Financial assistance – local roads component                                | \$55,000            | 0                  |
| <b>Payments in advance – future year allocations</b>                        |                     |                    |
| Financial assistance – general component                                    | \$4,024,000         | 0                  |
| Financial assistance – local roads component                                | \$1,164,000         | 0                  |
| <b>Other</b>  |                     |                    |
| Other grants  | 0                   | \$24,000           |
| <b>Total general purpose grants recognised as income in 2023/24</b>         | <b>\$5,550,000</b>  | <b>\$24,000</b>    |
| <b>Special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)</b>        |                     |                    |
| <b>Previously specific grants</b>   |                     |                    |
| Sewerage services   | \$0                 | \$679,000          |
| Childcare   | \$77,000            | 0                  |
| Community care  | \$0                 |                    |
| Economic development  | \$475,000           | 0                  |
| Employment and training programs  | \$118,000           | 0                  |
| Environmental programs  | \$4,000             | 0                  |
| Heritage and cultural   | \$0                 | \$829,000          |
| Library   | \$3,000             | 0                  |
| Library per capita  | \$79,000            | 0                  |
| Library – special projects  | \$97,000            | 0                  |
| LIRS subsidy  | \$7,000             | 0                  |
| Noxious weeds   | \$50,000            | 0                  |
| NSW Rural Fire Services   | \$78,000            | 0                  |
| Recreation and culture  | \$25,000            | \$1,757,000        |
| Storm/Flood damage  | \$398,000           | 0                  |
| Youth services  | \$0                 | 0                  |
| Street lighting   | \$66,000            | 0                  |
| Transport (Roads to Recovery)   | \$804,000           | 0                  |
| Transport (other roads and bridges funding)                                 | \$2,387,000         | \$18,000           |
| Other specific grants   | \$377,000           | \$92,000           |
| <b>Previous contributions</b>   |                     |                    |
| Roads and bridges   | 0                   | \$2,074,000        |
| Transport for NSW contributions (regional roads, block grant)               | \$263,000           | \$93,000           |
| <b>Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (cash)</b>  | <b>\$5,308,000</b>  | <b>\$5,542,000</b> |
| <b>Non-cash contributions</b>   |                     |                    |
| Child care  | 0                   | \$288,000          |
| <b>Total other contributions – non-cash</b>                                 | <b>0</b>            | <b>\$288,000</b>   |
| <b>Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)</b>  | <b>\$5,308,000</b>  | <b>\$5,830,000</b> |
| <b>Total grants and non-developer contributions - operating and capital</b> | <b>\$10,858,000</b> | <b>\$5,854,000</b> |
| Comprising:   |                     |                    |
| – Commonwealth funding  | \$935,000           | \$1,439,000        |
| – State funding   | \$9,389,000         | \$2,677,000        |
| – Other funding   | \$534,000           | \$1,738,000        |

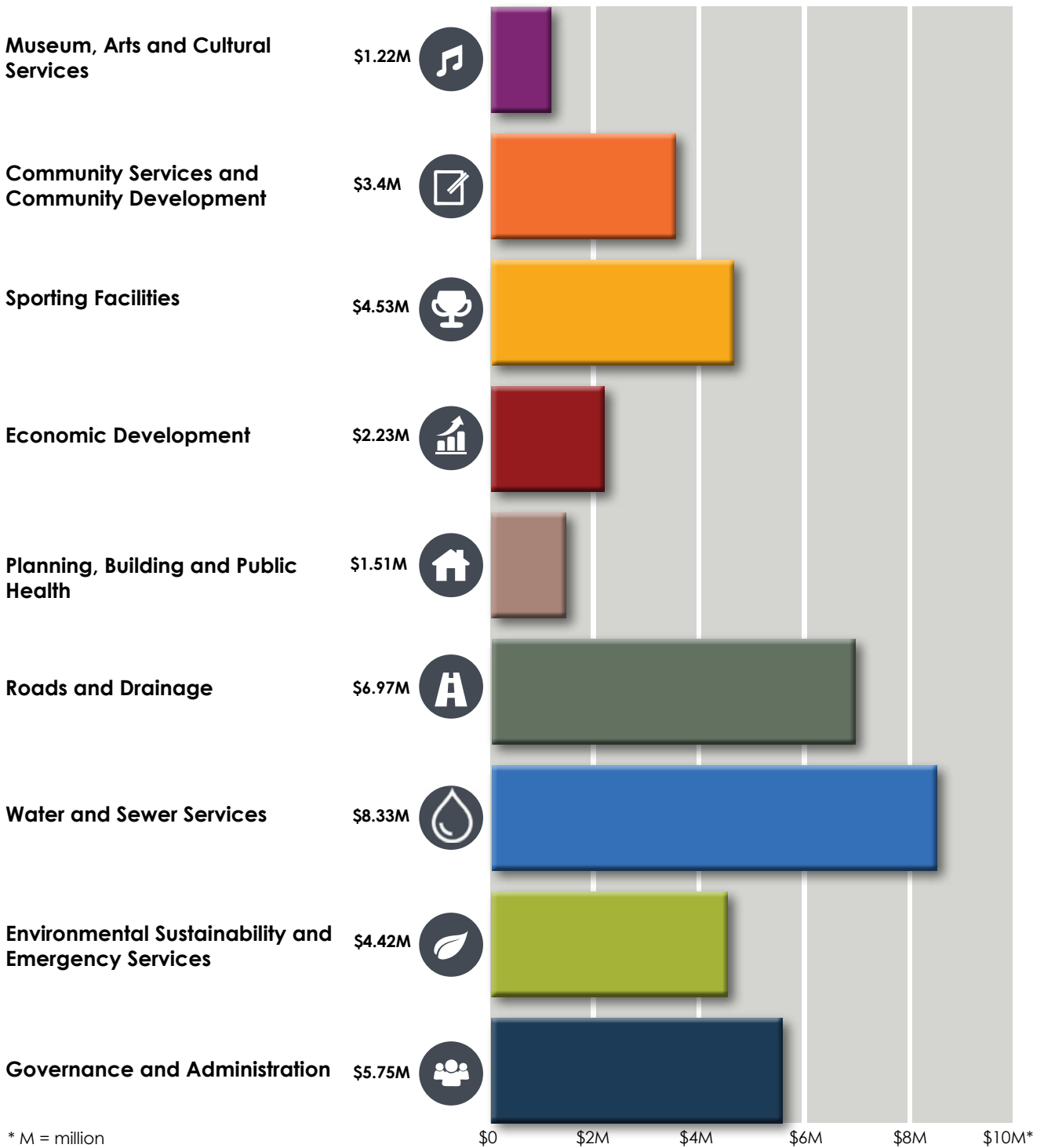
Some of that grant funding was received this year and is included in the table above. In other cases, Council has received notification that its application has been successful but the actual funding won't be received until a future financial year. Leeton Shire Council extends its thanks to all funding providers.



## Our 2023/24 Expenditure

Council spends its funds on behalf of the community in a variety of ways. The following table provides a breakdown of our allocation of expenditure by function. The function categories used in the table are based on the categories defined by the NSW Office of Local Government's Code of Accounting Practice.

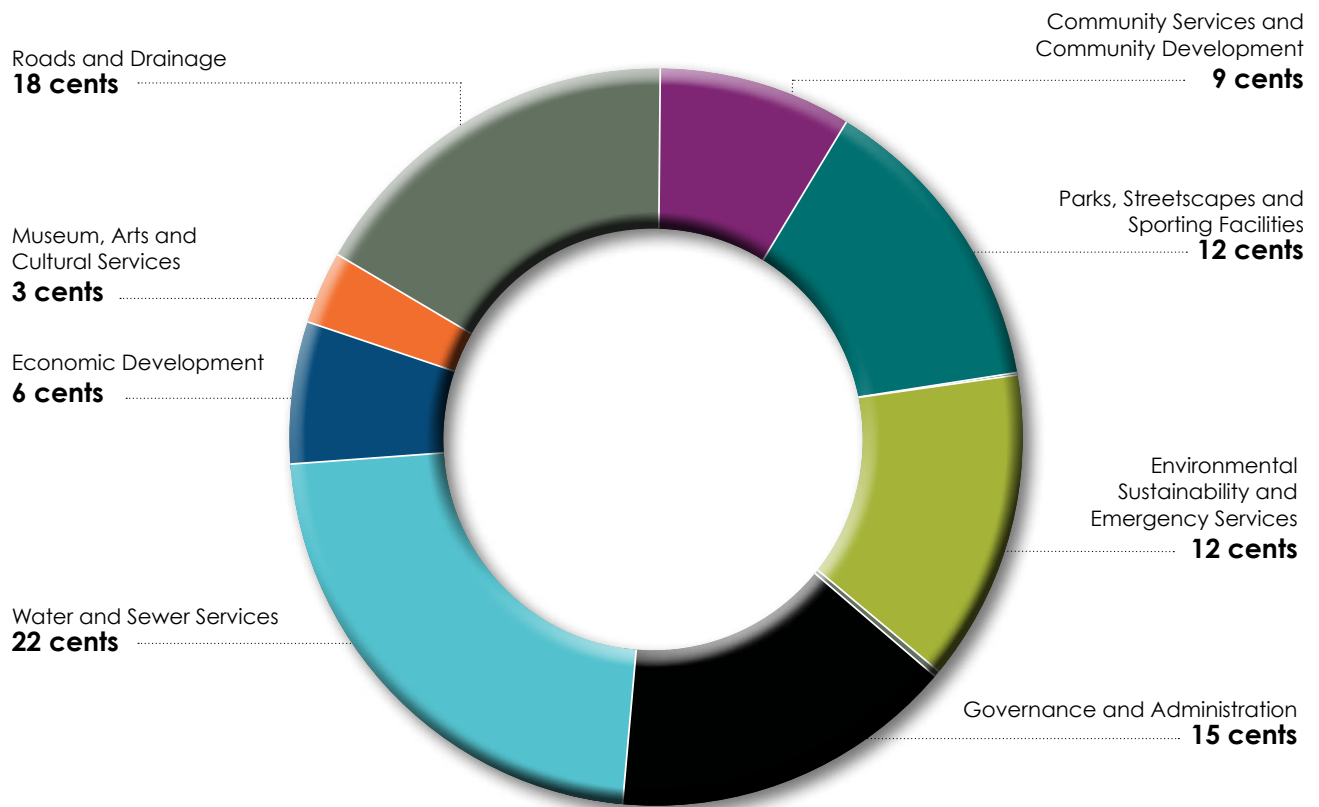
### Expenditure by Council Function



## Where Does Every Dollar Go?

The graph below shows how each dollar (or every cent in each dollar) Council spends is allocated according to function. The function categories are based on those defined by the NSW Office of Local Government's Code of Accounting Practice.

### Expenditure by Council function – expressed as cents in the dollar (rounded to the nearest cent)



## Our Council



Left to right: Cr Paul Smith, Cr George Weston, Cr Tracey Morris, Deputy Mayor Michael Kidd, Mayor Tony Reneker, Cr Krystal Maytom, Cr Sandra Nardi, Cr Tony Ciccia (Absent – Cr Matt Holt)

### How Council Operates

Local Government is the third level of government and is directly accountable to the local community. Council is the governing body at a local level and its powers and responsibilities are conferred upon it by the New South Wales Government. It generates its revenue from local rates, charges and fees along with grant funds from the State and Commonwealth

Governments. While the *Local Government Act 1993* provides Council with the framework and powers to provide community services and facilities, there are now in excess of 70 pieces of legislation which direct how Council carries out its functions within the community.



Our Council cont.

## Our Councillors

### Councillor Portfolios

As a lead voice for the community, this term of Council has allocated portfolios across the team of elected representatives. This spreads the workload across the team and enables nominated Councillors to become the elected Council's subject experts, champions and go-to people on the specific topic(s) in their portfolios.

**Cr Tony Reneker**  
**Mayor**  
**Elected to Council 2016**

**Portfolios:** Police Liaison,  
Aboriginal Liaison, WRConnect  
Intermodal

tonyr@leeton.nsw.gov.au  
0448 535 004



**Cr Michael Kidd**  
**Deputy Mayor**  
**Elected to Council 2004–2008**  
**Elected to Council 2012**

**Portfolios:** Housing,  
Arts and Culture

michaelk@leeton.nsw.gov.au  
0427 536 065



**Cr Tony Ciccio**  
**Elected to Council 2016**

**Portfolio:** Health

tonyc@leeton.nsw.gov.au  
0410 899 479



**Cr Matt Holt**  
**Elected to Council 2021**

**Portfolio:** Education

matth@leeton.nsw.gov.au  
0459 202 749



**Cr Krystal Maytom**  
**Elected to Council 2021**

**Portfolios:** Business, Tourism

krystalm@leeton.nsw.gov.au  
0476 118 079



**Cr Tracey Morris**  
**Elected to Council 2012**

**Portfolios:** Financial Sustainability,  
Yanco Agricultural Institute

traceym@leeton.nsw.gov.au  
0428 5589 442



**Cr Sandra Nardi**  
**Elected to Council 2016**

**Portfolio:** Youth

sandran@leeton.nsw.gov.au  
0481 116 286



**Cr Paul Smith**  
**Elected to Council 2016**

**Portfolios:** Water Security

pauls@leeton.nsw.gov.au  
0428 276 486



**Cr George Weston**  
**Elected to Council 1995**

**Portfolios:** Heritage, CBD  
Enhancement Strategy,  
Environment and Climate  
Change

georgew@leeton.nsw.gov.au  
0417 519 580



## Councillor Representation on Committees

Councillors each take a role in representing Council on a number of committees, organisations and working groups and in liaising with external groups. The full list of Council's committees and working groups, as well as the shared and/or external committees with which it is involved is provided on page 19.

### Cr Tony Reneker, Mayor

#### Section 355 Committees

- Murrumbidgee Community Hall Committee
- Whitton Community Hall Committee
- Yanco Community Hall and Markets Committee

#### Advisory Committees/Working Groups

- General Manager Review Committee
- Leeton Flood Plain Management Committee
- Leeton Weeds Committee
- Leeton Youth Council

#### Action Committees

- Leeton Australia Day Committee
- Sporting Walk of Fame Committee
- Whitton Town Improvement Committee
- Yanco Town Improvement Committee
- Health Advisory Committee (Internal)

#### External Committees/Organisations

- Country Mayors Association
- Bushfire Management Committee
- Fivebough and Tuckerbil Wetlands Advisory Committee
- Murray-Darling Association

#### Shared Services Committees/Organisations

- Narrandera-Leeton Airport Management Committee
- Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation

#### Liaisons

- Aboriginal Strategic Liaison
- Murrumbidgee Irrigation Strategic Liaison
- Police Strategic Liaison

### Cr George Weston

#### Section 355 Committees

- Light Up Leeton Committee
- SunRice Festival Committee

#### Advisory Committees/

#### Working Groups

- CBD Enhancement Advisory Committee

- Gogeldrie Weir Recreational Facilities Committee
- Leeton Shire Heritage Committee

#### Action Committees

- Leeton Australia Day Committee
- Henry Lawson Cottage Committee

#### External Committees/Organisations

- Leeton Business Chamber

### Cr Michael Kidd, Deputy Mayor

#### Section 355 Committees

- Whitton Court House and Historical Museum Committee
- Yanco Community Hall and Markets Committee

#### Advisory Committees/

#### Working Groups

- General Manager Review Committee
- Infrastructure Working Group
- Leeton Tree Advisory Committee
- Roxy Redevelopment Committee

#### Shared Services Committees/Organisations

- Riverina Regional Library Advisory Committee

### Cr Tony Ciccio

#### Advisory Committees/ Working Groups

- Gogeldrie Weir Recreational Facilities Committee
- Infrastructure Working Group
- Leeton Local Traffic Committee
- Leeton Shire Heritage Committee
- Leeton Weeds Committee

#### Action Committees

- Henry Lawson Cottage Committee
- Health Advisory Committee (Internal)

### Cr Matthew Holt

#### Advisory Committees/Working Groups

- Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) – Non-voting
- CBD Enhancement Advisory Committee
- Community Grant Funding Working Group
- General Manager Review Committee
- Leeton Local Traffic Committee
- Leeton Tree Advisory Committee

### Cr Krystal Maytom

#### Section 355 Committees

- Light Up Leeton Committee
- Whitton Court House and Historical Museum Committee

### Cr Tracey Morris

#### Advisory Committees/

#### Working Groups

- Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) – Voting
- CBD Enhancement Advisory Committee
- Roxy Redevelopment Committee

#### External Committees/Organisations

- Leeton Business Chamber

### Cr Sandra Nardi

#### Section 355 Committees

- SunRice Festival Committee

#### Advisory Committees/

#### Working Groups

- Community Grant Funding Working Group
- Leeton Youth Council
- Roxy Redevelopment Committee

### Cr Paul Smith

#### Section 355 Committees

- Whitton Community Hall Committee

#### Advisory Committees/Working Groups

- Community Grant Funding Working Group
- Infrastructure Working Group
- Leeton Flood Plain Management Committee

#### Action Committees

- Whitton Town Improvement Committee
- Yanco Town Improvement Committee

#### Shared Services Committees/Organisations

- Narrandera-Leeton Airport Management Committee

Our Council cont.

## Council Meetings

Ordinary Council Meetings are generally held on the fourth Wednesday of every month. Meeting agendas are available on the Council website, as are minutes of meetings. Hard copies are available at the Council office reception in Chelmsford Place. Residents wishing to address the Councillors on an agenda item can do so by registering their request by midday on the working day before the scheduled meeting by contacting Council on (02) 6953 0911 or council@leeton.nsw.gov.au. Meetings can be viewed online the day after the meeting.

During 2023/24, eleven Ordinary Council Meetings and one Extraordinary Meetings were held.

### Council Meetings attended

| Councillors                                      | Period of Office           | Ordinary Meetings Attended | Extraordinary Meetings Attended |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cr Tony Ciccia                                   | 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 | 11/11                      | 1/1                             |
| Cr Matthew Holt                                  | 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 | 11/11                      | 1/1                             |
| Cr Michael Kidd, Deputy Mayor from December 2021 | 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 | 10/11                      | 1/1                             |
| Cr Krystal Maytom                                | 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 | 10/11                      | 1/1                             |
| Cr Tracey Morris                                 | 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 | 10/11                      | 1/1                             |
| Cr Sandra Nardi                                  | 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 | 9/11                       | 1/1                             |
| Cr Tony Reneker, Mayor from December 2021        | 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 | 11/11                      | 1/1                             |
| Cr Paul Smith                                    | 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 | 11/11                      | 1/1                             |
| Cr George Weston                                 | 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024 | 11/11                      | 1/1                             |

## Council's Committees and Working Groups

| Section 355 Committees  | Advisory Committees and Working Groups   | Action Committees  |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light Up Leeton Committee</li> <li>SunRice Festival Committee</li> <li>Whitton Court House and Historical Museum Committee</li> <li>Whitton Community Hall Committee</li> <li>Yanco Community Hall and Markets Committee</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CBD Enhancement Advisory Committee</li> <li>Gogeldrie Weir Recreational Facilities Committee</li> <li>Infrastructure Working Group</li> <li>Leeton Flood Plain Management Committee</li> <li>Community Grant Funding Working Group</li> <li>Henry Lawson Cottage Committee</li> <li>Leeton Local Traffic Committee</li> <li>Leeton Shire Heritage Committee</li> <li>Leeton Tree Advisory Committee</li> <li>Leeton Weeds Committee</li> <li>Leeton Youth Council – in set-up phase</li> <li>Roxy Community Theatre Advisory Committee – in hiatus</li> <li>Roxy Redevelopment Committee</li> <li>Whitton Town Improvement Committee</li> <li>Yanco Town Improvement Committee</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leeton Australia Day Committee</li> <li>Sporting Walk of Fame Committee</li> </ul>  |
| <b>External Committees and Associations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Country Mayors Association</li> <li>Leeton Business Chamber</li> <li>Leeton Local Emergency Management Committee</li> <li>Local Government New South Wales Local Government Professionals NSW – for staff</li> <li>MIA Zone Liaison Committee (Rural Fire Service)</li> <li>Murray Darling Association</li> <li>Western Riverina Arts</li> </ul> |  | <b>Shared Service Committees</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrandera–Leeton Airport Management Committee</li> <li>Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO)</li> <li>Riverina Regional Library (RRL)</li> </ul> |
|   |  | <b>Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, ARIC</b>   |



# Our Community

## Our Community's Vision

To enjoy outstanding lifestyles and prosperous livelihoods within a caring and inclusive community and a healthy environment. To be inspirational leaders leaving a legacy in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area of which we are enormously proud.

The community's goals and the strategies to achieve them are documented in the Community Strategic Plan Liveable Leeton 2035.



Leeton Chill and Grill



Our Community cont.

## Australia Day Awards

The 2024 Leeton Australia Day Awards recognised, celebrated and acknowledged the achievements and positive contribution community groups and individuals make to our community. Leeton's 2024 Australia Day Ambassador was Lindy Milan OAM.

Awards were presented at the Australia Day Ceremony on 26 January 2024 to:

Gregory (Joey) Longford – **Citizen of the Year**  
University of the Third Age (U3A) –  
**Organisation of the Year**  
Jack Crowe – **Young Citizen of the Year**  
Arnie Fazekas – **Sportsperson of the Year**  
Shane Leighton – **Achiever of the Year**

Miah Weymouth – **Junior Sportsperson of the Year**  
Ellena Halloran – **Young Achiever of the Year**  
Sheree Wilesmith – **Lifelong Citizen of the Year**  
Leeton Rainbow Pride Festival – **Event of the Year**  
St Francis College Boarders – **Group of the Year**



Above and below: Australia Day Award recipients Below right: Australia Day Pool Party





## Citizenships

Australian Citizenship Ceremonies are hosted by Council for Shire residents who have applied to become Australian citizens through the Department of Home Affairs. Ceremonies are held throughout the year with one major ceremony on Australia Day.

During 2023/24, Council hosted four citizenship ceremonies, one on Australian Citizenship Day (17 September 2023), one on Australia Day (26 January

2024), one on Harmony Day (21 March 2024) and one on 18 June 2024 to mark Refugee Week. Leeton Shire welcomed a total of 28 new citizens at these ceremonies (23 adults and 5 children). The new citizens originated from various countries including the Phillipines, Sri Lanka, South Korea, New Zealand, India, Bangladesh, Argentina, Pakistan and Afghanistan.



Mayor Tony Reneker welcomes new citizens



Our Community cont.

## Community Grants Program

### Contributions and Donations

*Local Government Act 1993 s 356*

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a5)*

### Community Strengthening Grants

Council's Community Strengthening Grants Program is made available bi-annually for community projects. Community groups and organisations can apply for financial assistance, resources and/or covering the costs of hiring Council facilities under Council's Grants Policy. In 2023/24, funding was provided to the following groups.

| Recipient   | Purpose                                    | Amount             |
|---|--|--------------------|
| Gogeldrie RFS Community Gym                                 | Blower Vacuum for the gym                  | \$659.00           |
| Leeton Aqua Exercise  | Equipment for aerobics program             | \$2,000.00         |
| Leeton Connect  | Purchase of two mobile phones              | \$1,845.90         |
| Leeton Show Society   | Purchase of printer, cabinets and ladders  | \$1,000.00         |
| Jim Grahame Re-enactment Committee                          | Project development                        | \$1,500.00*        |
| Leeton Jockey Club  | Purchase of storage container              | \$2,000.00         |
| Yanco Wamoon Rugby League<br>Football Club Ladies Auxiliary | Purchase of coffee machine                 | \$1,499.00         |
| Leeton Lions Club   | Purchase of a camera system                | \$1,500.00         |
| Leeton Town Band  | Recruitment Day, workshop and concert      | \$850.00           |
| Leeton United Football Club                                 | Foldable football                          | \$1,300.00         |
| MIA Bootleggers   | Purchase of top dressing for area          | \$500.00           |
| Murrumbidgee Carriage Driving Club                          | Purchase of tables and chairs              | \$1,200.00         |
| Yanco Powerhouse Museum                                     | Shade for the miniature train station      | \$2,000.00         |
| Rapid Relief Team   | Leeton Winter Comfort Project              | \$1,000.00         |
| Rotary Club of Leeton                                       | Stage 3 - Upgrade of Showground Main Gates | \$1,500.00         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |  | <b>\$22,496.90</b> |

\*Jim Grahame Re-enactment Committee (auspiced by WRA) returned their grant funds (minus \$150 for a WRA auspicng fee).

### Quick Response Grants

Council's Community Strengthening Grants includes a 'Quick Response' Grant Category which aims to support activities that arise unexpectedly, with limited notice, outside the window of the twice-yearly Community Grants Scheme. Applications within this category are capped at a maximum of \$2,000. Council provided funding in the form of Quick Response Grants to the following organisations in 2023/24.

| Recipient                   | Purpose   | Amount         |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------|
| Yanco Public School P and C | Year 4-6 attend Wakakiri performance                            | \$2,000        |
| Leeton Rainbow Pride Inc    | GlamUp Workshop   | \$1,770        |
| Leeton Show Society Inc     | Purchase of a laptop  | \$1,499        |
| Gralee School               | Send five students to the Ten Pin Bowling State<br>Championship | \$1,000        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                |   | <b>\$6,269</b> |

## Our Community cont.



Miah Weymouth – Recipients of a Youth Development Grant and Cr Nardi



Wesley Wate – Recipient of a Youth Development Grant

### Youth Development Grants

The Community Strengthening Grants program includes a 'Youth Development' Grant Category which is offered at a set amount of \$250 per applicant and is available to support high achievement in a cultural, academic or sporting activity that requires attendance at a State, National or International level event. Council awarded the following Youth Development Grants during 2023/24.

| Recipient       | Event  | Amount         |
|-----------------|--|----------------|
| Jaxon Steele    | Under 15s Schoolboys National Championships (AFL)              | \$250          |
| Indie Dunn      | Riverina PSSA Primary girls 7s Rugby Union State Championships | \$250          |
| Miah Weymouth   | National State Championships U12s in AFL representing NSW      | \$250          |
| Harriet Naylor  | 2023 NSW/QLD/ACT State Interschool Snowsports Championships    | \$250          |
| Phoebe Naylor   | 2023 NSW/QLD/ACT State Interschool Snowsports Championships    | \$250          |
| Jason Mulloy    | 2023 NSWCHS Athletics State Championships                      | \$250          |
| Ellena Halloran | 2023 NSWCHS Athletics State Championships                      | \$250          |
| Jesse Watson    | 2023 NSWCHS Athletics State Championships                      | \$250          |
| Ibraheem Alix   | 2023 NSWCHS Boys Cricket State Championships                   | \$250          |
| Timoci Radovu   | Pacifica Youth Rugby Cup NSW U14 Fijian juniors                | \$250          |
| Wesley Wate     | Murrumbidgee U13 youth cricket                                 | \$250          |
| Kian Henman     | 2024 NSWCHS Swimming and Diving State Championships            | \$250          |
| Jack Miller     | 2024 NSWCHS Swimming and Diving State Championships            | \$250          |
| Tallis McMillan | 2024 NSWCHS Touch Football and Basketball Championships        | \$250          |
| Ruby Miller     | Deaf Football Australia International Event Colorado USA       | \$250          |
| Sophie Cross    | Hart NSW State Netball Carnival 2024                           | \$250          |
| Bridget Arel    | NSW School Spectacular 2024 in Sydney                          | \$250          |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>   |  | <b>\$4,250</b> |

Our Community cont.

## Other Contributions, Donations and Sponsorship

| Recipient  | Purpose   | Amount             |
|--|---|--------------------|
| Leeton Shire Men's Shed Inc  | Members insurance and contents insurance                      | \$2051.40          |
| Leeton High School, MET School (Leeton Campus), St Francis De Sales Regional College, Yanco Agricultural High School   | Annual donation towards end-of-year awards – \$100 per school | \$400.00           |
| Leeton Public School, Parkview Public School, St Joseph's Primary School, Wamoon Public School, Whitton Murrumbidgee Public School, Yanco Public School, Gralee School | Annual donation towards end-of-year awards – \$75 per school  | \$525.00           |
| TAFE – Leeton Campus   | Annual donation – towards end-of-year awards                  | \$100.00           |
| Leeton Business Chamber  | Sponsorship of the Business Awards                            | \$1,800.00         |
| Leeton Town Band   | Rent for practice space and insurance                         | \$5,967.00         |
| Leeton Town Band   | Outback Band Spectacular                                      | \$3,647.00         |
| Koori Kids   | NAIDOC School Initiative                                      | \$450.00           |
| Annual Penny Paniz Memorial Art Competition  | Art prize sponsorship   | \$1,200.00         |
| Yanco Town Improvement Committee   | Jumping castle hire for Twilights Market                      | \$791.00           |
| NSW Rural Doctors Network  | Bush Bursary Scholarship                                      | \$3,000.00         |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>  |   | <b>\$19,931.40</b> |



Left: Ibraheem Ali – Recipient of a Youth Development Grant  
 Above: Timoci Radovu – Recipient of a Youth Development Grant  
 Above right: Indie Dunn – Recipient of a Youth Development Grant



## Celebrating Our Volunteers

Council would like to thank the 193 people who volunteered their time, skills and expertise to assist at various Council facilities and on Council Committees such as the Leeton Golf Course, Whitton and Yanco Town Improvement Committees and various hall committees. Council would also like to thank those who assisted with Council programs, events and festivals in 2023/24.

The table below shows the number of volunteers who assist at each of the Council facilities listed.

| Council Facility                  | Number of Volunteers |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Leeton Golf Course                | 40                   |
| Leeton Museum and Art Gallery     | 12                   |
| Leeton Shire Major Dooley Library | 6                    |
| Visitor Information Centre        | 4                    |
| Committee participation           | 131                  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                      | <b>193</b>           |

Council also auspices payroll services to two valuable community groups including JumpStart and Leeton Connect. These roles are grant funded and make positive contributions to the community. Council is proud to support these community groups in their endeavours to building capacity across the community and we thank the volunteers who contribute to these groups for their hard work.



Art Deco Festival Parkrun Volunteers



Karen Barrett & LMAG Volunteer, Judy Sheather



Yanco Town Improvement Committee Volunteers



Roxy Development Committee Volunteers and Councillors



Our Community cont.



Leeton Lions Club volunteering their services at Leeton Chill and Grill



Rapid Relief Team volunteering at the Survival Day event





Staff presenting to Council at Councillor Workshop. From top left to right: Avi Singh, Chris Lashbrook, Monica Armanini, Michelle Evans, Ben Curley, Gerard Simms, Silas Darby, Luke Tedesco

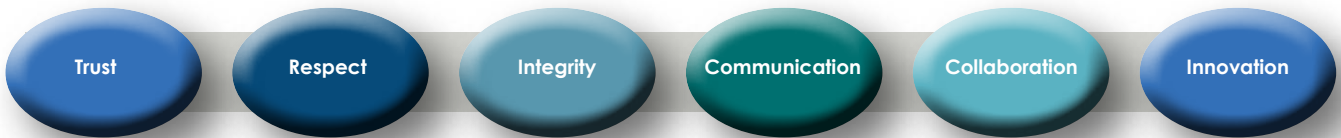


# Our Organisation

## Our Staff Mission

To be proudly trusted by the Councillors and the Community to deliver for them the very best outcomes in the most effective manner while enjoying a harmonious workplace that values and rewards its workforce for service excellence.

## Our Staff Values



## Our Senior Management Team



### **General Manager**

#### **Jackie Kruger**

Jackie commenced as General Manager of Leeton Shire Council in August 2015. Jackie came to the Riverina from Tamworth, where she held the position of Director Planning and Community Services.

Her formal qualifications are in natural resource management (BSc Forestry/Conservation) and a Masters in Environmental Education.

Jackie was elected to the Boards of LG Professionals in 2018 and Statewide Mutual in 2022. She also serves on the Board of the Country Universities Centre, Western Riverina. Jackie is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a member of the Murray Riverina Regional Advisory Council for Business NSW, and a member of the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA).



### **Director Operations**

#### **Silas Darby**

Silas commenced with Council in March 2024 as Director Operations. He has a Degree in Quantity Surveying (QS) and a Masters of Business Administration. Silas worked as a Project Manager for Wagga Wagga City Council for 7 years before taking up the role at Leeton Shire Council. He is also a Member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

Prior to moving to Australia in 2010, Silas worked in Cape Town in QS and property development. He was the Design Delivery Manager for the Cape Town Stadium, constructed for the FIFA World Cup 2010.



### **Director Corporate/CFO**

#### **Avtar (Avi) Singh**

Avtar commenced at Council in February 2024 as Director Corporate/Chief Financial Officer.

He has over two decades of professional experience in financial management, corporate services and procurement. Avi has held senior management roles across various sectors including local government, not-for-profit, and commercial organisations in the Northern Territory, Victoria, New South Wales, and North America.

Avtar holds a Bachelor of Commerce, a Master of Business Administration, and is a proud member of CPA Australia.



### **Director Economic and Community Development**

#### **Michelle Evans**

Michelle joined Council in May 2021 as Economic and Strategic Development Manager before being appointed to the role of Executive Manager Economic and Community Development in January 2023 and then as Director Economic and Community Development in December 2023.

Michelle holds a Diploma in Business Management. Prior to entering local government, Michelle held management positions in the banking sector with over 24 years' experience.



### **Executive Manager People and Culture**

#### **Tracy Pearce-Brambley**

Tracy commenced at Council in July 2022 as Supervisor Library before being appointed to the role of Executive Manager People and Culture in January 2023.

Before entering local government, Tracy had over 23 years' experience in senior management roles in the customer service sector.

*Caption for pic*



## Our Staff

Leeton Shire Council provided employment to 168 people, equivalent to 157.7FTE (in various capacities across the organisation).

Of the 168 staff:

- 122 were employed on a full-time basis
- 27 were employed on a part-time basis
- 16 were employed on a casual basis
- 3 were employed on a fixed-term contract basis.

## Organisational Development

### Staff Turnover

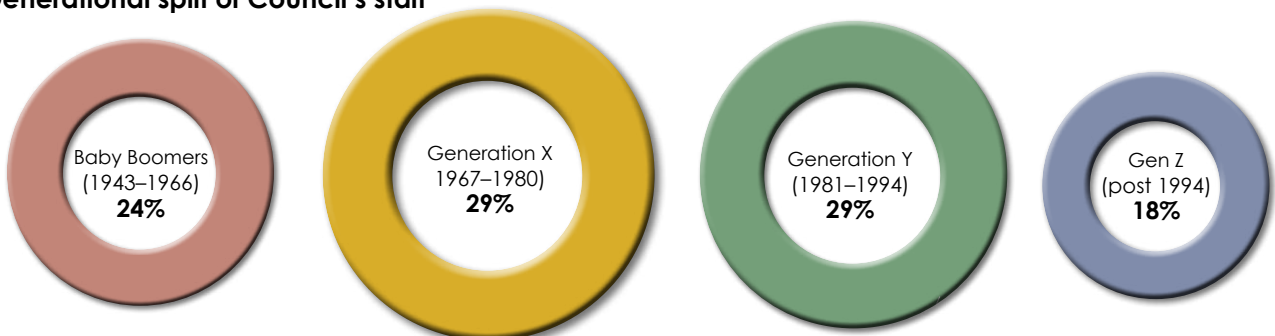
While staff turnover can be influenced by a number of factors, it is a common barometer of an employer's ability to attract and retain staff. At 12.68% for the past year, Council remains well below the average local government range of 18% (LGNSW HR Metrics survey of councils in 2022-23). This level of turnover provides growth opportunities for internal staff and the ability to bring in fresh ideas, while not being so high that new staff are always still trying to learn the job.

### Ageing Workforce and Succession

The ageing workforce in local government is more acute than in other sectors, and more so in rural areas than cities. Council is aware that a number of skilled staff are approaching retirement and has embarked on a strategy to address the risk by ensuring that the next generation is trained and mentored with the skills to ensure continuity.

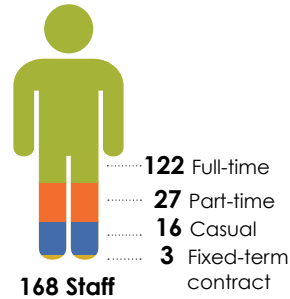
This strategy is helping to address the health and safety component of the ageing workforce, as 40% of our Workers Compensation claims were incurred by staff aged 55 and over, a significant decrease from the 62% incurred during the same period last year. There has been an increased focus on Council discharging its Duty of Care under the Act by ensuring that staff are fit for duties. Staff are provided the opportunity to transition-to-retirement as provided for in the LG Award.

### Generational split of Council's staff



\*this information was correct as at 30 June 2024

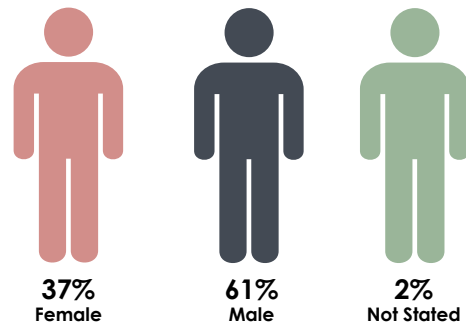
### Total number of staff



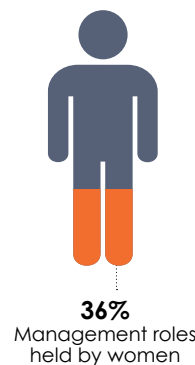
### Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Staff



### Gender split



### Percentage of Management roles held by women



### Staff turnover rate



## Performance Management

Council further simplified its annual performance review process for 2024 and will continue to monitor results and feedback to ensure the best possible process and outcomes. The Pulse system provides the important opportunity for staff and their supervisors to agree what is expected over the year ahead, and then to review actual performance against expectations, and have a conversation about what is working well and what can be developed.

This helps to guard against 'staleness' in a role, and also provides a process for evaluating staff progress along the four salary steps within their grade. Just as the community evaluates the performance of Council, so Council cascades this process through the staff levels, to align delivery against expectations.

## Training and Development

Leeton Shire Council is committed to ensuring each employee has the opportunity to reach his or her full potential through the development of skills and knowledge acquired in training.

All employees of Leeton Shire Council are required to participate in training and development activities that are deemed mandatory and in training and development activities that have been identified as being integral to their role.

Annual performance appraisals of Leeton Shire Council staff also result in identification of gaps in training requirements, with the People and Culture unit identifying the most cost-effective means of meeting those requirements.

The training requirements that are identified are directly linked to the objectives of the Leeton Shire Council Operational/Delivery Plan and reference Performance Reviews, Pay Bands and Position Descriptions.

Training is delivered through four main avenues:

- Internal training, with line managers and peers providing on-the-job training
- Accredited training, using registered training organisations
- Non-accredited training, using industry-appropriate providers
- Training delivered through tertiary institutions such as universities and TAFEs.

There are two distinct categories of training within Leeton Shire Council – essential/compulsory

training and professional development training. This training is divided into seven sub-categories. The sub-categories, along with examples of training undertaken in 2023/24, are as follows:

- Mandatory/Safe Work/Legislative
- Confined Spaces, Traffic Control and Working Safely at Heights
- Technical Skills
- Water Treatment Operations, Fluoridation of Water Supply and Authorised Officer Food Surveillance.
- Governance – Code of Conduct, Government Information (Public Access) Introduction and Advanced
- Office Support – Asset Management Fundamentals, Pulse Software Performance & Development
- Building, Health and Environment



*Shante Smith – Customer Service Trainee*



*General Manager, Jackie Kruger (centre) celebrating with Bhanuka Viduranga, Ali Mehdi, Rachel Cody and Sarah Graham - Aspiring Leaders Program Graduation*

## Our Organisation cont.

- QGIS Essentials and Pursuit, Swimming Pool Regulations and Operational Playground Inspection
- Leadership – Aspiring Leaders Program, Australian Rural Leadership Program and Rural Management Challenge

- Community Services – Child Protection, My Time Our Place and Dealing with Difficult Customers.

A total amount of \$113,276.36 was spent on training across the organisation during the 2023/24 reporting year.

| Training Category                | No. of Participants | Cost                |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Mandatory/Safe Work/Legislative  | 275                 | \$73,096.25         |
| Technical Skills                 | 11                  | \$2,190.00          |
| Governance                       | 1                   | \$693.00            |
| Office Support                   | 5                   | \$2,338.18          |
| Building, Health and Environment | 12                  | \$11,745.13         |
| Leadership                       | 10                  | \$22,394.56         |
| Community Services               | 6                   | \$819.20            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                     | <b>318</b>          | <b>\$113,276.36</b> |

### Service Awards – Internal

Acknowledged the contribution of our employees through the presentation of service awards to seven employees who celebrated long service milestones in the organisation. The awards were presented in late 2023 by General Manager, Jackie Kruger.

#### 10 year awards

- Kabe Stockton – Open Space and Recreation
- Lauren Nelson – Children's Services, Out of School Hours Care



#### 15 year awards

- Shayne Roden – Water and WasteWater

#### 20 year awards

- Justin Davidson – Open Space and Recreation

#### 25 year awards

- David Harrison – Open Space and Recreation
- Dennis Irvine – Open Space and Recreation

Just as we honour and recognise our long-service employees, we are delighted to have a new generation of skilled and qualified staff to contribute their energies and talents to the emerging needs of our Shire.



Above: 10 Year award recipient – Lauren Nelson

Left: 10 Year award recipient – Kabe Stockton, Open Space and Recreation





10 Year award recipient Shayne Roden – Water and WasteWater



20 year award recipient, Justin Davidson – Open Space and Recreation



25 year award recipient, David Harrison – Open Space and Recreation

### Retirement Acknowledgement

This year we farewelled a long serving and deeply respected member of our 'Parks and Gardens' team, William Ingram. We thank William for his incredible 42 years and 8 months service to Council and wish him all the best.

### Awards – External

- Ken Dachi – Community Recognition Statement by Member for Murray, Helen Dalton MP
- Victoria Morgan-Smith – SQUAD Spotlight Award and Excellence in Training by her RTO



External Award recipients, Ken Dachi – Community Recognition Statement by Member for Murray, Helen Dalton MP Victoria Morgan-Smith – SQUAD Spotlight Award and Excellence in Training by her RTO



25 year award recipient, Dennis Irvine – Open Space and Recreation

Finalist in five categories at the LG Professionals Annual Awards for population under 150,000 including:

- Community Development: Leeton Early Learning Centre Expansion Project
- Asset and Infrastructure: Wamoon Sewerage Scheme Project (Projects Over \$1.5 million)
- Community Partnerships: Leeton Living – A between Leeton Shire Council, the Leeton Business Chamber and Leeton Connect
- Environmental Leadership: Leeton Shire Council Actively Reduces Energy Costs and CO<sup>2</sup> Emissions
- People, Workplace, Wellbeing: Leeton Shire Council promotes staff engagement and wellbeing through the 'Council Connect' internal newsletter



Mayor Tony Reneker congratulates retiring 'Parks and Garden's' team member William Ingram – Almost 43 years

Our Organisation cont.

## Work Health and Safety

Leeton Shire Council views the Wellbeing, Health and Safety of Council's employees, community and contractors as more than a priority, it's a commitment embedded within our values.

Council continues to see consistent reporting of incidents, injuries, nearmisses, observations, inspections, risk assessment and closing out of corrective actions. This allows Council to identify, mitigate and improve health and safety risk across all levels of Council.

Key safety and risk initiatives undertaken during 2023/24 included:

- Back saver powered lifting units installed on four Council utes and one truck to eliminate and reduce hazardous manual task risk
- Chemical handling station design change for substances used for the Jet Patcher truck to reduce the risk of hazardous manual tasks
- Duress button installation at the Depot
- Implementation of a Plant risk assessment program utilising the Plant Assessor system
- Safer transporting and handling processes for the chlorine gas cylinders used in our Water and Wastewater area
- Gas tech unit bump test and charging station install
- Publishing regular health and safety communications in the 'Council Connect' staff newsletter and safety alerts
- Completion of the Continuous Pathway audit conducted by StateWide which focused on risk reduction for building assets, Playgrounds and Business Continuity
- Completion of the StateCover WHS audit which follows ISO 45001:2018 methodology – context of the organisation, leadership, planning, support, operation, performance evaluation and improvement
- LSC involvement in the SafeWork Hazardous Manual task program assessment and review to reduce risk associated with musculoskeletal injuries.



Lifting units for the utes to alleviate manual labour



Bitumen emulsion tank purchased to improve safety

## Employee Health and Wellbeing

With a commitment to encourage mental health, physical health and overall wellbeing, Council has been regularly distributing 'Wellbeing Matters' newsletters to all our employees. These newsletters contain important information along with very useful tips.

The aim is to build, motivate, maintain and provide health and wellbeing awareness to our valuable employees.

All of Council's 'Health and Wellbeing' initiatives are funded through a rebate received from one of our insurers – StateCover. This figure is dependent on the completion of Council's annual WHS self-audit and our overall result.

Council once again engaged the services of R & R Corporate to deliver a Health and wellbeing day in July – Sessions covered physical wellbeing, activity and movement, psychological health and nutrition. Very positive feedback and well attended especially by outdoor staff.

Council also engaged the services of R & R Corporate in September - Recognise, Empathise, Assist, Connect, Hindsight (REACH program), on site wellbeing support and managing mental health for leaders sessions.

Council's Annual Health Program included:

- **Mental Health Programs** – Managing Mental Health for Leaders had a total of 15 Employees attend. REACH for mental health had a total of 41 employees attend
- **Skin checks** – predominantly aimed at Council's outdoor staff, skin checks are performed by a registered nurse (melanographer) with experience and specific training in skin cancer screening. This year skin checks were offered to all Council staff. A total of 83 employees received screening
- **Hearing tests** – Annual testing of employees engaged in noise related work and environments is conducted by a qualified audiometric specialist. A total of 7 employees participated
- **Flu vaccinations** – the annual vaccination protects staff against diseases caused by the highly variable influenza virus. The vaccinations are given on-site and offered to all of Council's employees. A total of 89 workers received the vaccination
- **Japanese Encephalitis Vaccine** – made available to all Council employees by Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) Vaccinations were held at Council chambers.



Staff Wellbeing Session



## Corporate Governance

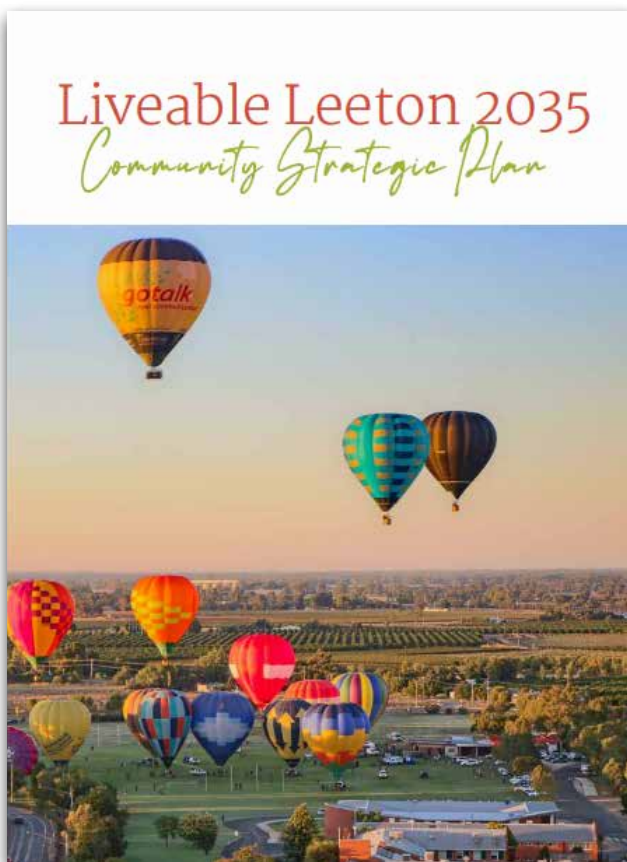
Good governance stems from accountability, close and accurate monitoring of performance and a framework that facilitates the achievement of strategic goals.

Leeton Shire Council is committed to ensuring that:

- its policies and practices reflect good governance
- the manner in which the Council conducts its daily operations complies with the broad principles contained in the *Local Government Act 1993*.

## Our Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan outlines the strategic directions set by and for the Leeton community. Council reports on the activities it undertakes in support of the Community Strategic Plan on a quarterly basis (Delivery Program reporting). It tracks progress towards achieving the overall outcomes of the Community Strategic Plan in a State of the Shire report which will be issued early in the new Council's term.



## Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice

Council's Code of Conduct applies to Councillors, the General Manager, the Senior Management Team and all other employees of Leeton Shire Council. All are expected to act in accordance with the Code and to do everything possible to influence those with whom they are working to ensure that they also maintain similar standards of integrity and ethical behaviour.

No formal Code of Conduct complaints were made during the 2023/24 financial year.

Council's Code of Meeting Practice applies to all meetings of Council and Committees of Council of which all members are Councillors.

Both Codes were updated and adopted in 2022 and can be viewed on Council's website at [www.leeton.nsw.gov.au](http://www.leeton.nsw.gov.au).

## Child Safe Organisation

Council is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. That commitment led Council to advance the process of becoming a Child Safe Organisation by implementing the Child Safe Policy adopted in June 2020.

In 2023/24, Council continued the process of entrenching Child Safe practices across the organisation by embedding Child Safety in all relevant policies, procurement processes, contracts and project management.

## Procurement Activities

Each year Council spends millions of dollars on purchases (materials and services). To ensure our procurement activities are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* and associated regulations, and in accordance with the principles of good governance during 2023/24, Council bolstered its procurement practices by:

- Creation and implementation of Procurement Guidelines Quick Reference
- New Supplier Contract Management Policy
- Using the VendorPanel and Tenderlink platforms to procure goods and services
- Ensuring Council's pool of potential local suppliers is maximised by encouraging and supporting those suppliers to register with VendorPanel

## Risk Management

The Local Government Act 1993 requires all councils to appropriately manage its risks. The NSW Government's Internal Audit Guidelines encourage all councils in NSW to have a structured enterprise risk management (ERM) framework in place to identify any known and emerging risks they face and the controls needed to manage these risks. Office of Local Government guidelines include a risk management section which outlines the need for Council's risk management framework to be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure it is relevant, effective, and complies with the current risk management standard. Internal controls are the actions taken by a council to manage both the positive and negative impact of risk on its community.

Council has an integrated risk management framework which includes ERM considerations in place and is continuing the risk management maturity journey. Risk management activities undertaken included:

- Actively participating in and contributing to risk management for Council's Project Management activities
- Completing the StateCover Mutual Limited self-assessment audit with regard to WHS. Which included the need to complete priority corrective actions identified
- Completing the Statewide Continuous Improvement Pathway audit which covered risk management compliance for building assets, playgrounds and business continuity
- Undertaking a hazardous manual task program to reduce manual tasking injuries which make up 43% of Council lost time injuries due to sprains and strains
- Strategic risks reviewed annually and operational risks reviewed quarterly through the ARIC committee
- Ongoing training in, reference to and exposure to the Pulse Enterprise Risk Management module to improve visibility of organisational risk, completion of mitigation actions and risk management support for projects
- Reviewing Council's policies relating to integrated risk and WHS
- Maintaining Health and Wellbeing Program initiatives, including psychological and physical health
- Conducting site inspections and observations
- Statewide Mutual insurance renewals.



Working from Heights Training



## Audit Management

### The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

Leeton Shire Council's Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) was established in 2018.

It is charged with providing assurance, oversight and advice to Council and the General Manager in relation to the governance, risk and internal control functions of Council. Their charter covers risk management, control, governance and external accountability responsibilities.

The ARIC promotes good corporate governance by the provision of independent objective assurance and assistance to the Council on:

- Governance and Legislative compliance
- Cybersecurity
- Risk management
- Fraud control
- Financial and Payroll management
- Implementation of Council plans and strategies
- Internal Audit Function
- Collection of performance measurement data by the Council
- Integrated Planning and Reporting
- Any other matters prescribed by regulations..

The ARIC membership is currently comprised of:

- Two Councillors – one voting (Cr. Tracey Morris) and one non-voting (Cr. Matthew Holt)
- Three Independent external members (all Voting Members), one of whom is the independent chair. They are Graham Bradley (Chair), Emerson Doig and Bill Robertson

Meetings are also attended by members of the Senior Management Team and staff who are subject matter experts, as required, including the Manager Finance. Staff attendees are not eligible to vote.

The ARIC met five times in 2023/24. Under its guidance, Leeton Shire Council:

- Reviewed the 2023/24 external Annual Engagement Plan
- Reviewed its draft 2023/24 annual financial statements
- Reviewed the 2023/24 external audit management letters
- Reviewed its draft 2023/24 budget
- Reviewed the Integrated Planning and Reporting documents
- Oversaw the implementation of its 2023/24 internal audit program
- Developed the 2023/24 internal audit program



Councillor Morris, GM Jackie Kruger, Sarah Graham and Avtar Singh, with ARIC Committee Chair, Graham Bradley and retiring ARIC member Bill Robertson



## Internal Audit Outcomes

In 2023/24, Council:

- Presented reports to ARIC on audit of Council's Cybersecurity functions and guidelines. Most of the actions have been completed or have been addressed and are ongoing.
- Continued to implement the Records Management Process Action Plan and provided a status update to ARIC.
- Continued to implement the Procurement and Contract Management Process Action Plan and provided a status update to ARIC.

## External Financial Audits

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires each council to have their annual financial reports externally audited by the NSW Auditor-General so that the community and councillors have access to an independent opinion on its validity. The NSW Audit Office conducts these audits on behalf of the NSW Auditor-General.

Since 2017, the NSW Auditor-General has also reported to the NSW Parliament each year on Local Government sector-wide matters arising from the examination of financial statements of councils and any other issues that the Auditor-General has identified.

The external auditors primarily provide an assurance that Council's financial statements reflect the financial position of Council at the conclusion of the financial year. The work conducted by the external auditors to enable them to provide this assurance includes:

- Testing a sample of Council's internal controls
- Observation of processes or procedures being performed
- Enquiries of individuals within Council
- Examining financial and accounting records, other documents and tangible assets
- Obtaining written confirmations of certain items.

## Public Interest Disclosures

The Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 (PID Act) applies to all NSW public sector agencies. The PID Act provides a framework for public officials (Councillors, staff, suppliers and contractors) to report serious wrongdoing within Council, and to be protected when they do so.

The PID Act removes barriers that prevent people who work in the public sector from speaking up about serious problems by:

- encouraging and facilitating the disclosure of information by public officials about suspected wrongdoing in the public sector
- making sure public interest disclosers are supported and protected from negative consequences
- making sure disclosures by public officials are properly investigated and dealt with.

As of 1 October 2023, the new Public Interest Disclosure (PID) Legislation came into effect and Councils were required to provide training on the PID framework to all staff, Councillors, volunteers, contractors, and subcontractors. The PID Framework provides multiple pathways for public officials (you) to report serious wrongdoing. We also need to inform all staff who have supervisory responsibilities of their mandatory obligations under this framework. Five training sessions were offered to staff across the entire organisation.

Further information on our annual reporting obligations to Parliament are in the Statutory Information section of this report on page 89.

## Public Access to Government Information

In compliance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) Leeton Shire Council provides access to the information it holds in the following ways:

- Mandatory release via Council's website (open access)
- Authorised proactive release via Council's website
- Informal release via an informal access application
- Formal release via a formal access application.

A number of open access documents are available. These include Council plans and policies, Council's Code of Conduct, an Access to Information Policy and Guide, a Register of Government Contracts, the Integrated Planning and Reporting document suite and the Agendas and Minutes of Council meetings.

Where information is released to an applicant under a formal access application and Council considers that it will be of interest to other members of the public, Council may provide details of the information in its disclosure log on Council's website for inspection by the public.

Council is required to produce an Annual Report under section 125 of the GIPA Act. A summary of the information provided in this report has been included in the Statutory Information section of this report on page 99.

Our Organisation cont.

## Conflicts of Interest and Pecuniary Interest

Councillors and senior staff are required to declare any conflict of interest in any matter, and the nature of that interest, before a matter is discussed in a Council or Committee meeting.

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*, all Councillors and senior staff are required to complete returns of Interest forms on election/appointment, and annually thereafter.

Completed Returns of Interest forms for the past two years can be viewed on Council's website. Returns for the years prior to this date are contained in the Pecuniary Interest Register, which is available for viewing at Leeton Shire Council's main office.

## Community Engagement

Leeton Shire Council is committed to engaging with residents, businesses, stakeholders and Council officers as it develops strategies, and plans services and facilities.

Involvement in the development of strategies and in planning the delivery of services has a number of benefits for the community, stakeholders and Council because it:

- ensures that priorities are appropriate for current and future needs
- provides valuable information and increases understanding
- adds value to projects and the outcomes they seek to achieve.

Community consultation is an ongoing commitment. Our activities and achievements are promoted to the community through our website, media releases, Facebook, LinkedIn and the weekly half-page 'Leeton Shire Council Noticeboard' published in *The Irrigator*.

Extensive consultation also takes place in relation to Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan, annual budget and Council policies.

Residents are invited to attend, ask questions and make submissions to Council meetings. They are also invited to participate in forums on various issues.

Our Councillors and senior management hold positions on many associations, urban infrastructure groups, regional committees and other groups.

For more information on Council's 2023/24 Community Engagement Program, please see pages 83.

Leeton Shire Council is committed to engaging with residents, businesses, stakeholders and Council officers as it develops strategies, and plans services and facilities.

# Our Performance by Functional Area

Details of the key actions Council has undertaken during the 2023/24 financial year to progress the goals set by the Leeton Shire community are outlined in the following pages.

The information is organised according to the functional areas as set out in the Delivery Program 2022-2025

## Functional Area 1.

### **Community Services and Community Development**

## Functional Area 2.

### **Museum, Arts and Cultural Services**

## Functional Area 3.

### **Parks, Streetscapes and Sporting Facilities**

## Functional Area 4.

### **Economic Development**

## Functional Area 5.

### **Planning, Building and Public Health**

## Functional Area 6.

### **Roads and Drainage**

## Functional Area 7.

### **Water and Sewerage Services**

## Functional Area 8.

### **Environment Sustainability and Emergency Services**

## Functional Area 9.

### **Governance and Administration**





*Elijah Ingram and William Ingram - Gossamer Park Mural Painting*

# Functional Area 1: Community Services and Community Development

CSP Links: Cc1, Cc2, Cc3, Cc4, L3, L4, Ec1, Ec3, Ec4, Ec5, Ec6, Sc1, Sc3

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 1.1 Operate a library in Leeton
- 1.2 Operate Children's Services
- 1.3 Provide CCTV and free Wi-Fi services in the CBD of Leeton and in all major Council facilities
- 1.4 Promote and supporting volunteering, both in Council and in the community
- 1.5 Offer advice, active support and grants to community groups
- 1.6 Support a range of local community events
- 1.7 Promote community inclusion and wellbeing
- 1.8 Support and promote multiculturalism and social cohesion
- 1.9 Provide halls for communities to meet
- 1.10 Foster youth leadership and engagement through the Leeton Youth Council
- 1.11 Facilitate town improvement planning in Whitton, Yanco and Wattle Hill
- 1.12 Provide social and temporary housing
- 1.13 Advocate for improved health services and appropriate policing capability and capacity

## In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Completed the Library's Technology and Community Hub Enhancement Project made possible with grant funding of \$76,374 from the State Library of NSW. The project enabled significant improvements and the acquisition of state-of-the-art technology and furniture
- Hosted 26 registered students through the Country Universities Centre (CUC) – Leeton Campus, which is located at the Leeton Shire Major Dooley Library. These students accessed the facility on more than 207 occasions
- Hosted a variety of activities and programs – including Baby Rhyme Time, Lego, Dungeons and Dragons, Brain Games and StoryTime – at the Leeton Shire Major Dooley Library. More than 20,371 visits were made to the library and 4,853 people participated in events, activities and programs throughout the year
- Loaned 18,328 books and other items to more than 3,004 library members
- Leeton Shire Library was one of seventy eight libraries to receive a National Backyard Cricket Grant. The library received \$1,200 to upgrade and extend their musical instruments
- Coordinated the Community Compass program at the Library to provide support to people who have English as their second language
- Offered quality, age-appropriate early childhood education for up to 79 children per day through the Leeton Early Learning Centre (LELC), with an average scheduled occupancy of 95%, 136 children enrolled to attend and a waiting list of 207 children
- Completed the expansion of the Leeton Early Learning Centre which will enable the service to operate with an additional 20 places. The expansion involved the construction of an additional classroom





Australia Day Pool Party

- Through the Leeton Out of School Care (LOOSC) Program, provided a total of 40 weeks of After School Care (ASC) and 10 weeks of Vacation Care (VAC) for primary school aged children. The average scheduled attendance was 64% for ASC and 56% for VAC, which shows an increase since the impacts of COVID-19
- Provided free public WIFI to 903 community members. This initiative remains a crucial part of our commitment to enhancing connectivity and accessibility for residents, businesses, and visitors
- Utilised the much-appreciated services of 193 volunteers. Our volunteers contribute to activities undertaken by the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery, Leeton Major Dooley Library (Home Library Service), the Visitors Information Centre and the Golf Course. Additional volunteers serve on our Section 355, Action Groups and Advisory Committees
- Awarded 15 Community Strengthening Grants to a total value of \$22,497, four Quick Response Grants to a total value of \$6,269 and 17 Youth Development Grants to a total value of \$4,250
- Donated \$1,025 to the four high schools, seven primary schools and TAFE for end of year prizes
- Managed the Leeton Multipurpose Centre, leasing office space to seven tenants and hiring out rooms on a casual basis on 265 occasions
- Hosted a successful Light Up Leeton event on Sunday 3 December 2023. The event was well supported by the community with approximately 3500 people in attendance at Mountford Park. There were 26 groups/acts involved in the concert and 16 community stallholders selling food, drinks and festive wares
- Hosted a successful Australia Day celebration on 26 January 2024. The program of activities included an official ceremony – which incorporated a Smoking Ceremony, Welcome to Country, performance by Parkview Cultural Dance Group and an artefact display. The Ceremony was followed by a bush tucker lunch provided by Sandhills Artefacts. Following official proceedings, a Pool Party was held at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre with approximately 500 attendees
- As part of NSW Seniors Festival 2024, Leeton Shire Library hosted two free information sessions which involved local service providers including Tierney Dowd and Patrick Dawson Law Firm, Leeton Community Health, Service NSW, Open Mobility Aids and Leeton Physiotherapy
- Continued to work closely with the police to provide timely access to CCTV footage, contributing to community safety and crime prevention efforts



Functional Area 1: Community Services and Community Development cont.



Gossamer Park Family Fun Day



Susie Rowe from the Leeton Shire Library at Gossamer Park Family Fun Day



## Functional Area 1: Community Services and Community Development cont.

- Updated the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-2025
- Submitted the annual DIAP Implementation Report to the Disability Council NSW
- JBS Australia Fiesta La Leeton was held on Saturday 19 May 2024 with approximately 2,500 people in attendance. The event included performances by Western Sydney musicians Nadya & the Gypsy Firecrackers, the Fijian River of Life band, and members of the Cook Island (Pukapukan), Filipino and Solomon Islander communities. A total of 19 stallholders served cuisines from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Fiji, Italy, China, Afghanistan and Indigenous Australia
- Hosted four citizenship ceremonies, one on Australian Citizenship Day (17 September 2023), one on Australia Day (26 January 2024), one on Harmony Day (21 March 2024) and one on 18 June 2024 to mark Refugee Week. Leeton Shire welcomed a total of 28 new citizens at these ceremonies (23 adults and 5 children). The new citizens originated from various countries including Afghanistan, China, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, Zimbabwe and South Africa
- Supported the Yanco Town Improvement Committee in coordinating the Yanco Twilight Markets on Saturday 25 November 2023 which was attended by approximately 1,000 people with 28 stallholders
- Participated in the Welcoming Cities Program – an initiative that supports local councils to consider, commit to, communicate, plan for, build and sustain a welcoming community
- Monitored the provision of accommodation at the Leeton and District Eventide Homes with the aim of providing self-care units to eligible pensioners. At 30 June 2024, all 14 Eventide Homes units were occupied
- Provided accommodation and support to one University of Wollongong student doctor undertaking a ten-month placement in Leeton. This year is the thirteenth year Leeton Shire has supported the Wollongong University of Medicine Student Doctor Program
- Supported the inaugural Leeton Pride Festival through traffic management, event coordination and marketing
- Promoted initiatives including Volunteer Day, International Day of Person with Disability, LocaliseYou event, Leeton Carers morning tea, Legal Aid free advice sessions
- Sponsored three students (both medical students) as part of the NSW Rural Doctors Network's Bush Bursary Country Women's Association (NSW) Scholarship Program
- Supported Western Sydney University, the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP), and Multicultural NSW to deliver a Positive Peace Workshop in February 2024 for young people aged 18-25.



Children from the Leeton Early Learning Centre

Functional Area 1: Community Services and Community Development cont.



Leeton Show Society - Recipients of a Community Development Grant



Youth Week - Writing Seminar



Members of the Youth Council



Youth Week - Paint and Pizza



Leeton Rainbow Pride Collective - Recipients of a Community Development Grant

The unique event aimed to empower the youth in Leeton Shire by fostering conditions for social harmony, economic development, and mutual understanding

- Coordinated a Youth Week program for children and youth aged 8+ that included a yoga workshop, basketball shootout, zumba workshop and paint & pizza event, all hosted at the Leeton Indoor Stadium

- Held five Youth Council meetings with representation from all three local High Schools. The Committee is an advisory group of Council, providing valuable feedback on a range of projects, local challenges and plans
- Commenced development of a Leeton Shire Reconciliation Plan
- Supported Multicultural NSW in implementing its Regional Resettlement Pilot Program, NSW Growing Regions of Welcome (NSW GROW). NSW Grow has the dual aims of supporting regional communities and employers, and connecting the migrants and refugees in Western Sydney with employment and lifestyle opportunities in regional NSW. The program provided support to a family of four to move to Leeton
- Participated in quarterly Multicultural Interagency Network meetings. The Multicultural Interagency Network is a network of services, agencies and organisations which provide support and action for local culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities
- Continued to offer the Leeton Living website in partnership with the Leeton Business Chamber and Leeton Connect
- Continued to auspice staff (grant funded) for Leeton Connect, Jumpstart and Leeton Multicultural Support Group Inc.





*Fiesta La Leeton*

## Functional Area 2: Museum, Arts and Cultural Services

CSP Links: Cc1, Cc2, Cc3, Cc4, L1, L3

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 2.1 Operate the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery
- 2.2 Support the Whitton and Yanco Museums and Committees
- 2.3 Maintain strong working relationships with Western Riverina Arts and Leeton Family and Local History Society
- 2.4 Deliver a Program of Public Art
- 2.5 Operate the Roxy Theatre

### In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Attracted 3,476 visitors to a total of eleven exhibitions at the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery (LMAG) including:
  - Water by Design – the Leeton Water Story
  - Yanco Public School
  - Penny Paniz Acquisitive Exhibition
  - Adoring Art Deco
  - Homages to the Sun
  - Miniature Marvels
  - Curious Minds
  - It was a Riot
  - A Common Thread
  - The Curious Explorers
  - Evoking Art Deco
- Hosted a number of events and workshops at the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery including:
  - Australian Art Deco Festival VIP night
  - Vintage Viewing at the Little Roxy
  - Dressing Deco
  - Tutankhamun Roadshow
  - David Scheel Concert
- Continued the development of 'By Virtue of Water, the Leeton Wiradjuri Story' the permanent First Nations-led exhibition for display on LMAG's second floor. In its second year, this project is supported by the NSW Government with funding through Create NSW. This funding will inject another \$100,000 into the multi-year project currently in its development phase
- Supported the 11th Annual Penny Paniz Memorial Art Competition by providing financial sponsorship of \$1,200, venue for the exhibition, exhibition support materials, and staff support over the Easter Holiday long weekend. The final count for entries was 156 entries from 60 artists, with artists either from Leeton Shire or current financial members of the Leeton Art Society. The competition, themed 'Dust and Rain,' attracted 156 entries from 60 artists, all of whom were either residents of Leeton Shire or active members of the Leeton Art Society



*Homages to the Sun Exhibition at the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery*

- Collaborated with Western Riverina Arts (WRA) on various initiatives aimed at local artists' professional development, workshops, event coordination, and grant programs. For the Leeton Local Government Area, a total of \$362,250 in arts and cultural grants were applied for, partnered with, and supported through WRA's office, resulting in \$192,000 of grant funding reinvested into the local economy
- Provided the Leeton Family and Local History Society with a space to operate from for \$1pa to successfully deliver heritage information, collection services and exhibitions
- Completed test mapping which was viewed by the community for the Leeton Water Tower large-scale public art project
- Coordinated the Leeton Shire Photography Competition – providing an opportunity for local community to showcase their talent and creativity. Entries close early July 2024
- Continued collaboration with Western Riverina Arts, Mill Mill and Illuminart to advance the Leeton Water Tower public digital art project. Proudly funded by the NSW Government through two grants: Stronger Country Communities (\$49,000) and Create NSW (\$30,000). The project forms part of the CBD Enhancement Project – Phase 3 and installation of the projection system has been completed, with test mapping by Illuminart showcased to the community in June 2024. The content design for the projection is now in its final stages of development
- The Henry Lawson Cottage hosted one open day and over 14 local events as part of the Australian Art Deco Festival in July 2023. Six performances were held over the 3 days, with 116 people attending in total
- Launched an exciting additional, new NIDA Connect course in Digital Storytelling, coming to Leeton in August 2023. Facilitated by Leeton's budding Roxy Institute of Performing Arts (RIPA) in partnership with the prestigious National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), the NIDA Connect Digital Storytelling course will provide 15–18-year-old students with an introduction to the principles of visual storytelling through a digital lens



Functional Area 2: Museum, Arts and Cultural Services cont.

- Continued the redevelopment of the Roxy Community Theatre. The redevelopment, when complete, will result in a Roxy that complies with building, accessibility and theatre industry standards. The redeveloped Roxy Theatre will also possess improved dressing rooms, a larger stage, a new heating and cooling system, a second auditorium and an improved foyer/lounge/servery. Extensive works were completed with the overall build phase 1 and 2 being 95% complete. Council is excited to see the completion of this major project in the coming financial year
- Offered virtual tours of the Roxy providing an exclusive peek behind the curtain of the ongoing redevelopment at the historic theatre. As a cherished heritage-listed site, the Roxy holds a special place in the hearts of Leeton Shire residents
- Continued works on the Leeton Museum and Gallery (LMAG) Access Infrastructure project (\$197,244 of that a NSW Creative Capital grant). Heritage, structural, and architectural assessments have been completed, along with the submission of a development application (29/2024) in May 2024 for the installation of a lift to the second floor of LMAG. This project will deliver equitable access to the future exhibition spaces of the First Nations-led exhibition – The Leeton Wiradjuri Story



Roxy Redevelopment



Right: *The Curious Explorers Book Launch at the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery*

Below right: *The Acacia Quartet, renowned as one of Australia's most esteemed string ensembles, graced the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery*

Below left: *Test mapping for Leeton Water Tower Project*







*Community attending the official opening of the waterslides at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre*

## Functional Area 3: Parks, Streetscapes and Sporting Facilities

CSP Links: En3, Sc2, Cc1

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 3.1 Provide attractive town entrances, streetscapes and town centres
- 3.2 Provide quality parks, ovals, sporting fields and public toilets
- 3.3 Provide safe, accessible, interesting and fun playgrounds and exercise spaces across the Shire
- 3.4 Provide safe, accessible and fun sports and outdoor entertainment facilities
- 3.5 Provide safe, accessible and fun swimming pools in Leeton and Whitton
- 3.6 Provide cemeteries and burial support services in Leeton and Whitton

### In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Had a successful pool season with 32,414 entries at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre and 2,733 at the Whitton Pool
- Completed the installation of the water toys and waterslides at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre and held an opening on 21 October 2023
- Partnered with The Totem Collective and community groups to host the 21st Annual Riggz Cup Riverina Skate Championships at the Leeton Skate Park. The event was held as part of Youth Week and included free learn to skate and mentoring sessions
- Commenced works on developing a row of 160 new burial plots at the Leeton Cemetery which will last approximately 2-3 years. To date, 80 plinths were completed
- Ongoing maintenance of both Leeton and Whitton cemeteries continued
- Approved the request from the Leeton Greenies Rugby League Football Club (LGRLFC) to name the existing unnamed stand at Leeton No 1 Oval the 'Bill Arnold Stand'
- Maintained the Leeton Town Ovals Complex. This includes No. 1 Oval (home of the Leeton Greenies Rugby League Football Club, Leeton United Football Club and the Leeton Phantoms Rugby Union Club), the Yanco Sports Ground and the Mark Taylor Oval – the main cricketing facility in Leeton Shire
- Awarded the Yanco Wamoon Rugby League Football Club Ladies Auxillary \$1,499 through Council's Community Strengthening Grant Program for the purchase of an automatic coffee machine for the canteen
- Completed over sowing works of No. 1 and 2 Ovals in preparation for the football season



Functional Area 3: Parks, Streetscapes and Sporting Facilities cont.



*Leeton Pool*

- Continued to manage and operate the Leeton Golf Course with the help of 40 active volunteers. A total of 18,564 rounds of golf were played. Golf Club membership numbers remained strong at 271 members
- Hosted various events at the Golf Course including:
  - Riverina Ladies Championship.
  - MS Charity Golf Day
  - Veterans Week of Golf
  - Twilight Golf Competition
  - MS Charity Golf Day
  - Veterans Week of Golf
  - Twilight Golf Competition
  - Sunrice Pro-Am
  - IronPlan charity golf day
  - Riverina Pennant Championships
  - Ladies Open Tournament
- Maintained and operated the Leeton Indoor Stadium. Participant numbers were 19,025 across a range of activities including pickleball, basketball, netball, croquet, futsal, volleyball and gymnastics
- Launched 'Gamechanger', an innovative new program aimed at fostering sports participation and enhancing wellbeing among students across seven schools in the Shire. The initiative, which commenced on 8 May 2024, will benefit over 180 children from diverse backgrounds by providing free access to sports and wellbeing activities



*Leeton No 1 Oval Rehabilitation Works*

- Hosted four events at the stadium to celebrate Youth Week; Yoga, Basketball shootout, Zumba and Paint & Pizza
- Granted consent for the development of a new Clubhouse at the Leeton Golf Course; a project that is being funded and managed by the Golf Course Benevolent Trust & Golf Club, with financial support from the NSW Regional Sports Facility Fund – Infrastructure (\$425K) and a private benefactor. Council will contribute to the construction of carparking facilities
- Installed shade sails at Whitton Memorial Park
- Completed the off leash dog park at McCaughey Park in Yanco

Functional Area 3: Parks, Streetscapes and Sporting Facilities cont.



Leeton Cemetery



Yanco Dog Park



Whitton Park Shade Sails



Pickleball at the Leeton Indoor Stadium



Gamechanger Program

- Continued works on the Chelmsford Town Square project with a completion date early in the next financial year. The project is currently under budget
- Provided support to over 29 non-council sporting events
- Planted 83 new street trees throughout the Shire

- Completed the construction of the fully accessible toilet facilities at Gossamer Park
- Completed the installation of toilet facilities at Wamoon park.





*Art Deco Festival in Mountford Park*



## Functional Area 4: Economic Development

CSP Links: Ec1, Ec2, Ec3, Ec7, L2, L3, L5, Cc2, Cc3

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 4.1 Implement local and regional economic development strategies
- 4.2 Develop land at Vance Industrial Estate and WR Connect Freight Intermodal
- 4.3 Develop land for housing at Brobenah Road, Leeton (former caravan park) and in Whitton
- 4.4 Continue to enhance the CBD of Leeton
- 4.5 Continue to invest in the Narrandera – Leeton Airport Shared Service
- 4.6 Grow jobs in Leeton by supporting local businesses and attracting new businesses
- 4.7 Develop new business units for Council-owned quarry and Gogeldrie Weir Riverside Park
- 4.8 Support local economy
- 4.9 Promote and market Leeton as a visitor destination
- 4.10 Host major destinational events

### In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Actively participated in the Western Riverina 'Grow Our Own' initiative, a network coordinated by Regional Development Australia (RDA) Riverina to encourage people to build a career locally, and encourage local business to invest in local people through employment, training, mentoring and motivation. As part of this initiative, staff attended the Riverina Careers Day held at Leeton High School
- Commenced construction on Vance Estate Stage 3 in June 2024 with an expected completion date of February 2025. This project has been made possible through Government investment of \$2,230,000
- In collaboration with the Leeton Business Chamber, GROW (Growing Regions of Welcome) Riverina and Workforce Australia, hosted the Leeton Recruitment Summit. The event was designed to support local businesses in their recruitment efforts and to enhance workforce development in the region. The summit was held on 7 May 2024
- Commenced the process of matching 30 skilled workers with available jobs as part of the Bhutan-Australia Skill and Labour Exchange program. The program is part of a broader initiative to address skill shortages and provide employment opportunities for Bhutanese workers in Australia
- Provided \$1,800 in sponsorship towards the Leeton Business Chamber Awards
- Partnered with the Leeton Business Chamber to host the Leeton NSW Small Business Month Seminar at the Hydro Hotel. The event focussed on online branding
- Commenced the implementation of Ambition 2030, Councils Economic Development Strategy, with 70% of actions being completed for the financial year

## Functional Area 4: Economic Development cont.

- Contracted a consultant to complete a business case for Brobenah Road Housing Development with options to be presented to Council in August 2024 for recommendation
- Planned, programmed, promoted the Australian Art Deco Festival 2023. The event had approximately 3,606 participants across 40 events with 57.4% coming from locations beyond the Leeton Shire area. The festival had an estimated economic return to the Shire of \$594,000
- Operated the Leeton Visitors Information Centre (VIC). The VIC, which is housed in one of the first buildings built in Leeton and staffed by Council officers and volunteers, provides visitors with detailed information regarding attractions and events, stocks a diverse range of local produce and artwork, and offers a 'Tastes of Leeton' presentation. There were 2,618 visitors to the centre
- Supported the Sunrice Festival Committee in coordinating the biannual SunRice Festival. The festival was very successful with over 10,000 participants across its five key events including the Parade which involved 70 floats, Festival on Mountford, Cruisers Show and Shine, Leetons Longest Lunch and Balloon Glow which involved 14 balloons and 30 stallholders. The festival was made possible with \$80,000 sponsorship from local businesses. \$54,694 was fundraised by the Sunrice Ambassador entrants which is divided between their chosen charity, committee and combined with other entrants to form the Ambassador Grant Fund
- Continued to promote the Art Deco Way Touring Route through Facebook (1,011 page likes) and Instagram (241 followers)
- Collaborated with the entire workforce of JBS Foods Riverina (approximately 450 staff) and Welcoming Australia for a morning tea to celebrate workforce diversity, and to demonstrate the value of workforce attraction and retention, which are key pillars for businesses in rural/regional Australia
- Provided \$5,967 in-kind and event coordination support towards the Leeton Outback Band Spectacular. There were approximately 1,250 people in attendance at the Mountford Park event and 140 people at the Massed Band Performance
- Commenced the redevelopment of the Murrumbidgee Trails guide in collaboration with Lockhart Shire, Narrandera Shire, and Murrumbidgee Shire Councils
- Operated Gogeldrie Weir Holiday Park with caretakers employed to operate the park. The Park welcomed 3,518 day visitors and 2,219 campers. This is a 20% increase on total visitation compared to the previous financial year



Outback Band Spectacular Event at Mountford Park



Gogeldrie Weir



Functional Area 4: Economic Development cont.



Leeton SunRice Festival Parade



Art Deco Festival Roller Disco



MEDLOG Visit to discuss their move to WRConnect

- In partnership with Narrandera Shire Council, operated the Narrandera-Leeton Airport. This year, a total of 7,394 passengers utilised the Regional Express Airlines (REX) daily airline service. This is a 23% decrease compared to the previous financial year which is a result a reduction on flights due to a pilot shortage
- Represented Leeton Shire Council on the Visit Riverina stand at the Canberra Caravan and Camping Lifestyle Show
- In partnership with Griffith City Council, worked with Currajong Planning to finalise the Masterplan for WR Connect. Council continued to work with AgConnex to ensure the project is moving forward

- Detail design for the rail siding at WR Connect was completed by Transport for NSW with the project expected to be completed in the next financial year
- Attended the International Rural Welcoming Exchange, bringing rural/regional Councils together alongside rural/regional Councils from the United States. Council presented on Leeton's upcoming Bhutan program and demonstrated its unique contribution to addressing skill shortages, and advancing positive settlement outcomes.





*Mosquito Trapping.*

## Functional Area 5: Planning, Building and Public Health

CSP Links: Cc1, Cc2, Cc3, Cc4, Ec3, L3, L4

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 5.1 Undertake and implement strategic land use planning
- 5.2 Provide helpful, friendly and timely planning and building assessment services for development applications
- 5.3 Collect developer contributions and review developer contribution plans
- 5.4 Provide built heritage services including access to a heritage advisor and heritage grant funding for private heritage listed properties
- 5.5 Prepare and issue development engineering guidelines
- 5.6 Provide regulatory/ranger services
- 5.7 Provide public health services

### In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Received 171 Development Applications and approved 141 with a total value of \$19.47M
- Approved 25 Development Applications for dwellings/residential development
- Placed the draft Housing Strategy on exhibition. The strategy aims to address current challenges facing the Shire and NSW in terms of affordable housing and to plan for the next 20 years
- Successfully made an application for \$220K through NSW Regional Strategic Planning Grants to develop an Integrated Land Use, Transport and Infrastructure plan. Currajong Pty Ltd was appointed as the successful consultancy and the project commenced in April 2024
- Held 27 pre-lodgement meetings with applicants and developers
- Issued:
  - 342 s10.7(2) Planning Certificates (a 18% increase compared to the previous year)
  - 59 s10.7(5) Planning Certificates (a 29% decrease compared to the previous year)
  - 67 Construction Certificates (a 3% increase compared to the previous year)
  - 3 Subdivision Certificate (compared to 4 in the previous year)
  - 51 Occupation Certificates (a 7% decrease compared to the previous year)
  - 2 Complying Development Certificates (compared to nil in the previous year)
- Commenced the construction of the new animal pound facility. The new facility will feature modern amenities, including spacious enclosures for up to 6 cats and 10 dogs, climate control systems, and an animal exercise yard. There will also be an attached carport for easier loading and unloading of the animals



- Responded to 21 reports of dog attacks (on animals and/or humans) in the Leeton Shire, issuing warnings, infringement notices/fines, dangerous dog declarations and/or menacing dog orders as required
- Impounded 166 dogs throughout the year. Of this number, 92 were returned to their owners and 61 were transferred to rehoming organisations. This represents a 95% return to owner/rehoming rate
- Held two free microchipping days with a total of 91 animals microchipped. An additional 77 animals were microchipped as paid microchipping activities
- Carried out the annual Mosquito Trapping and Sentinel Chicken Surveillance Programs aimed at early detection of mosquito-borne viruses such as Ross River Fever
- Undertook a public awareness campaign around mosquitos which included installing signage in parks and public spaces, providing free repellent to events and schools, applied laticide to all drains near schools and preschools
- In response to Japanese encephalitis being detected Hosted a visit from Dr Cameron Webb who provides advice on how to best manage mosquitoes and their health threats

*Repainting of external façade to shop as part of the Local Heritage Grants program*

- Promoted community awareness of the importance of disability parking spaces and the restrictions surrounding their use via Council's Facebook page, and followed up by conducting 38 patrols and issuing 14 infringement notices for misuse of disability parking spaces by people without a permit



*Rangers hosting a free microchipping day*



Functional Area 5: Planning, Building and Public Health cont.



Weed Information Session

- Conducted 92 food safety inspections of food premises, 9 inspections of skin penetration premises and 19 inspections of swimming pools

- Made available a free online food safety course, "I'm Alert", an interactive online tool to help food shop owners fulfill their obligation to train food handlers in Food Safety. The webpage was visited 3,744 times
- Implemented the Scores on Doors Program. A NSW hygiene and food safety scoring program that displays the results of regular inspections of food premises
- Issued Food Safety Calendars and NSW Health Food Safety Awareness Information Packs to all food premises in the Shire
- Continued the implementation of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The LSPS provides the strategy for the community's economic, social and environmental land use needs over the next 20 years. Eighteen of the 26 short term actions identified in the LSPS are completed with six underway, two not recommended to commence
- Coordinated the annual Local Heritage Grants program in partnership with the Heritage Advisor and approved six applications to the value of \$18,000



Leeton Pound



Road Conditions Assessment Vehicle



## Functional Area 6: Roads and Drainage

CSP Links: Ec3, En3, En4, L3, L5, L6, Sc1

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 6.1 Provide a network of safe (lit if urban) sealed roads
- 6.2 Provide a network of safe gravel roads
- 6.3 Provide bridges, culverts, kerb and guttering, bus stops, street furniture and carparking
- 6.4 Undertake active transport planning and provide a network of footpaths and cycleways
- 6.5 Provide road safety programs
- 6.6 Undertake "ordered works" from TfNSW
- 6.7 Provide safe, efficient drainage systems to cope with normal rainfall

### In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Completed the renewal of the footpath along Madonna Place. These repairs also allowed us to remove a step along the boundary that was of some concern to users of this facility and general public
- Completed maintenance works on kerb and guttering on Mallee Street and Wade Avenue
- Completed 13km of new line marking and remarking along Corbie Hill Road, Stoney Pt Road, MR539, Vance Road, Canal Street and Wade Avenue
- Renewed a culvert as part of the Stony Point Rehabilitation Project
- Completed minor works along Belah Street to reduce water inundation into Home Improvement Centre
- Completed stormwater works on Coolamon Steet and Grigg Road
- Completed scheduled pipe cleaning and condition assessments, with a focus on Petersham Road area
- Inspected all bus shelters in the Shire as part of the annual inspection program. A new bus shelter was installed in Whitton. The upgrade was funded under the Country Passenger Terminal Infrastructure Grants Scheme (CPTIGS)
- Adopted a new Active Transport Plan to replace the existing Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP). The Active Transport Plan will guide the development of practical transport solutions that support the active transport needs of pedestrians and cyclists, including older people and pedestrians with mobility and vision impairments
- With the support of funding from Transport for NSW (TfNSW), organised a variety of road safety activities including a Free Child Restraint Checking Day, Mobility Scooter/Older Driver Workshop, Learner Driver Workshops and a Caravan Weighing Days



Functional Area 6: Roads and Drainage cont.



Rotary Youth Driver Awareness event



Camera Trailer on Irrigation Way



Road Safety Older Driver Workshop

- Completed the remarking of carparking spaces on Dooley Lane and Kurrajong Avenue
- Installed public seating in the vicinity of the Leeton Hospital
- Supported the coordination of the Rotary Youth Driver Awareness Day being held in February 2024 with over 355 students attending
- Coordinated five Leeton Local Traffic Committee meetings which assist in promoting road safety through design and regulation
- Rehabilitated 6.1km of the sealed road network. Rehabilitation works were carried out on:
  - Bourke Road
  - Oxley Road
  - Brisbane Street
  - Stoney Point Road
  - Euroley Road
  - Boundary Road
  - Naradhun Street
  - Railway Avenue
  - Wade Avenue (North)
  - Murrami Road
  - Melbergen Street
  - Mahogany Road

Functional Area 6: Roads and Drainage cont.



Brobenah Road Resealing

- Carried out the annual resealing program by resealing 16.6km of sealed road. The sections of resealing works were carried out on:
  - Brunell Street
  - Jarrah Street
  - Stephenson Street
  - Wandoo Street
  - Maple Street
  - Murrami Road (South)
  - Church Street
  - Ashton Lane
  - Commission Lane
  - Reservoir Lane
  - Belah Street
  - Contour Road
  - Calorfield Road
  - Kirkup Road
  - Brobenah Road
  - Boree Street
- Resheeted 9.7km of the gravel road network. Resheeting was carried out on Marston Road, Bridge Road, Brown Road, Litchfield Road, Harwood Road
- Attended and presented on road safety at three workshops/meetings including the Auside Mini Caravan Rally, Stepping on Workshop, and the Leeton Senior Citizens Committee Meeting
- Adopted the Leeton Active Transport Plan and submitted the Road Safety Plan to Transport for NSW per the 2023/24 funding guidelines
- Under the Road Maintenance Council Contract (RMCC) for Transport for NSW, completed heavy patching works on MR80 covering 15 patches over 2200m<sup>2</sup> (value of \$180K)
- As part of the roads condition assessment, completed a survey of 410km of sealed roads utilising advanced video imaging technology. The assessment is conducted every 4-5 years and provides a detailed report of cracking, pavement and surface defects, stripping and flushing.



From the top: New bus shelter in Whitton  
Completed maintenance works on Wade Avenue  
Madonna Place footpath renewal  
Rehabilitation Works on Euroley Road





Wamoon Sewerage Scheme Opening Ceremony



## Functional Area 7: Water and Sewer Services

CSP Links: En3

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 7.1 Provide potable water services to the urban residents of Leeton Shire
- 7.2 Provide sewer services to the urban residents of Leeton Shire
- 7.3 Provide regulatory trade waste services to local business and industry
- 7.4 Develop strategic plans to support security of service and growth of the Shire

### In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Supplied potable water of high quality, with minimal taste and odour issues and minimal disruption to service, to the towns and villages in Leeton Shire.  
This year:
  - Leeton Water Treatment plant supplied 2083ML of water (10.44% increase on the previous year)
  - Murrami Water Treatment plant supplied 21.5ML of water (65% increase on the previous year)
  - Whitton Water Treatment plant supplied 72ML of water (30.53% increase on the previous year)
- Installed a chemical storage shed at the Leeton Water Treatment Plant
- Replaced two sedimentation tank launders at the Leeton Water Treatment Plant due to corrosion. This forms part of an annual replacement program (over four years) with four more launders to be completed in the next two years
- Completed a valve audit and required repairs at the Leeton Water Treatment Plant
- Completed the designs for the upgrade of the reservoir access ladders at the Leeton Water Treatment Plant
- Completed automation and plant upgrades at both Murrami and Whitton treatment plants
- Upgraded pump stations which included the installation of generator changeover switches
- Completed telemetry upgrades to sewer pump station no. 27 (Leeton Masonic Lodge)
- Completed water main replacement and installation in Gogeldrie Street in Whitton to assist with flow, demand on the supply and future expansion
- Completed the overhaul of the Leeton Sewer Treatment Plant Aerator No. 1, this included the reinstallation of the motor and gearbox

## Functional Area 7: Water and Sewer Services cont.

- Complete manhole renewals on Railyway Avenue which included robotic grinding and UV relining to defective sewer main
- Completed the Wamoon Sewerage Project in full, on time and under budget. 63 households and the public school in the village of Wamoon now have access to modern wastewater services for the first time after being connected to the Leeton Sewage Treatment Plant. The project involved the installation of over eight kilometres of pipe work as well as additional pipe work within the properties and the fitting of 61 pressure sewer units across the village
- Undertook 67 Liquid Trade Waste inspections – 91% of discharging businesses have approvals and Council is continuing to work with non-compliant businesses to become compliant
- Continued the development of an Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) Plan with the assistance of Public Works. This is a 30 year strategic plan for water and sewer services to meet future residential and industrial growth
- Operated sewage treatment and effluent discharge plants and reticulation services at Leeton, Yanco and Whitton.



*Silas Darby, Jackie Kruger and Chris Dole reviewing the electrical upgrades at the Leeton Sewage Treatment Plant*



*Electrical Upgrades at the Leeton Sewage Treatment Plant*



*Launder replacement at the Leeton Water Treatment Plant*



Functional Area 7: Water and Sewer Services cont.



Overhead Water Filtration Plant





Fivebough Wetlands

## Functional Area 8: Environmental Sustainability and Emergency Services

CSP Links: En1, En2, En4, L6

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 8.1 Deliver recycling and solid waste management services
- 8.2 Enhance Leeton Shire's climate resilience
- 8.3 Improve Leeton Shire's emergency preparedness
- 8.4 Deliver noxious weeds management via the NSW government endorsed Weeds Action Plan and advocate for an increase in funding for noxious weeds
- 8.5 Advocate for water security for primary production and biodiversity health and general tidiness at Fivebough Wetlands and Murrumbidgee National Park

### In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Provided waste management services to the Shire. A total of 17,019.89 tonnes of waste entered the Leeton Landfill and Recycling Centre (a 2.5% decrease from 2022/23). Council's kerbside collection service (red bins) accounted for 2877.52 tonnes
- Successfully diverted 41.36% of waste from landfill, which is consistent with the previous year (41.41%)
- Maintained full compliance at the Leeton Landfill with environmental regulations and made substantial progress in completing the new landfill cell awareness of the importance of waste and responsible waste management practices
- Council's kerbside collection service (yellow bins) accounted for 280.22 tonnes of recyclable materials
- Actively communicated with residents who contaminate their kerbside recycling bins. A letter has been sent to these residents, providing detailed information on what items are suitable for the recycling bin. The letter aims to create awareness among residents about the recycling process and offers alternative solutions for disposing of problematic waste
- Reopening of the Leeton Tip Shop by Reviva, a not for profit social enterprise which works on under its innovative waste to wages model, diverting waste from landfill to create employment and training opportunities
- Implemented a diverse range of educational activities aimed at promoting recycling within the community. These initiatives encompassed workshops, presentations, school outreach programs, public awareness campaigns, and collaborations with local businesses
- Actively promoted two chemical 'Drum Muster' initiatives with a total of 5,166 drums being collected



- Completed the review of the Water, Wastewater, Transport, Drainage and Buildings Asset Management Plans
- Completed a full and detailed review of the Local Emergency Management Plan. This included a review of Leeton's designated evacuation centers, potential transport blockage during flood or fire and contact information for the various locations identified within the plan
- In response to the new NSW Government's Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041, which introduced a mandate for councils to provide Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collections to all NSW households on the serviceable bin route, commenced the rollout of the new three bin system. This included significant community education focused on direct engagement with residents. Council's 'Green Team' engaged with over 500 community members at local events. The service starts on 1 July 2024.
- Generated approximately 399,089kWh of solar power through solar arrays, enough power to supply 142.5 households for a year. The generated solar equates to an estimated 377 tonnes reduction in carbon footprint
- In partnership with Griffith City Council, Murrumbidgee Council and Narrandera Shire Council, sought community input into the Regional Drought Resilience Plan via community workshops. The joint project is funded by the



Reviva Leeton Reuse Shop

Australian Government through the Future Drought Fund (\$560K) and aims to proactively explore opportunities to mitigate and alleviate the impacts of drought across the MIA

- Continued the implementation of the Energy Masterplan that guides Council in the delivery of energy efficiency projects. This included the completion of the solar inverter replacement at the Council Administration building which also included the addition of a remote monitoring system and electrical upgrade re-wire and PFC installation at the Leeton Sewer Treatment Plant (completed on time and under budget)
- Maintained compliance as per Council's obligations to the Weed Action Program. This included the completion of a total of 131 inspections



Functional Area 8: Environmental Sustainability and Emergency Services cont.



Sarah Lavilles at Leeton Plaza as part of the Halve Waste Program



- Secured \$55,000 in weeds grant funding from Riverina Local Lands Services
- Conducted a free Public Weeds Information Session at the Leeton Shire Library
- Slashed a total of 334.9 hectares of roadside vegetation and an additional 155.4 hectares of spraying
- In concert with RAMJO, Council agreed to accept a proposal from the Hunter Joint Organisation (HJO) to tender for the purchase of power for Council's 'large market reduce electricity costs across the RAMJO group and other participating JOs, benefitting each participating council
- Participated in the Biodiversity offset scheme support webinars hosted by the Department of Planning and Environment which were intended to support accredited assessors and local government who may be involved in the upcoming NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme
- Continued to work with Crown Lands and the Fivebough Committee on the management of the RAMSAR-listed Fivebough Wetlands.

Luke Tedesco presenting and at the Yanco Sewer Treatment Plant Solar Installation



*Leeton's Multicultural Advisor, Ken Dachi with his Excellency General the Honourable David John Hurley AC DSC*



## Functional Area 9: Governance and Administration

CSP Links: L1, L2, L3, L4, L5

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitment:

- 9.1 Provide enhanced customer service
- 9.2 Undertake authentic and timely community engagement where community input genuinely shapes Council decisions
- 9.3 Provide respected and effective representation, leadership and advocacy
- 9.4 Nurture strong partnerships with Murray Darling Association, RAMJO, MI Ltd, NSW Government, Commonwealth
- 9.5 Foster a valued and committed workforce that is suitably rewarded and goes home safe each day
- 9.6 Deploy reliable and efficient corporate and project governance including audit, risk and improvement
- 9.7 Deploy reliable and efficient corporate management – financial, asset, property, records, information technology, buildings and plant/fleet
- 9.8 Undertake service reviews (depreciation; staffing levels; water and sewer; open space and recreation) and benchmarking
- 9.9 Attract grant funding for capital works and operations

### In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Completed the review of five Asset Management Plans including Water, Wastewater, Transport, Drainage and Buildings
- Provided the following traineeships:
  - 3 x Cert III Early Childhood Education & Care (Leeton Early Learning Centre)
  - 2 x SBAT Cert III Early Childhood Education & Care (Leeton Early Learning Centre)
  - 1 x SBAT Cert II Horticulture (Open Space & Recreation team)
  - 1 x Cert III Water Industry Operations (Water and Waste Water team)
  - 1 x Cert III in Events (Events & Visitor Information Centre team)
  - 2 x Cert IV in Business (Customer Service team)
  - 1 x Cert IV Library & Information Services (Leeton Shire Library)
- Offered work experience and work placements to 15 school students across the organisation, including the Early Learning Centre, Library, Museum and Art Gallery and Visitor Information Centre
- Continued to participate in RAMJO, which brings together councils from across the region and provides an important forum for escalating local and regional issues for broader consideration. This year, RAMJO's strategic regional priorities included:
  - water security
  - energy security and affordability
  - transport connectivity
  - digital connectivity
  - better health services
  - industry, workforce and jobs
  - waste management
- Continued its engagement with the NSW Government, the Federal Government and industry agencies to seek funding for major projects and





Water Rally – No More Buybacks

- to address challenges such as healthcare, water, housing, and workforce. Meetings took place with:
  - The Hon. Ryan Park MP Minister for Regional Health
  - Mrs Helen Dalton, MP – Member for Murray
  - The Hon. Rose Jackson, NSW Water Minister
  - Ministry of Health
  - The Hon. Sussan Ley MP
  - Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Member for Farrer
  - Senator Deborah O'Neill
  - The Hon. Tanya Plibersek, Minister for the Environment and Water
  - Senator Perin Davey, Shadow Minister for Water
- Submitted three motions on issues of high importance to the Leeton Shire community to the 2024 ALGA National General Assembly (all of which were adopted). The motions were:
  1. Greater Assistance with managing energy expenditure and funding to deliver projects in local communities;
  2. Increased Support for Housing Initiatives in rural Australia;
  3. Optimising the PALM Scheme
- Submitted three motions on issues of high importance to the Leeton Shire community to the 2023/24 LGNSW Conference. The motions were:
  - Improving Cyber Security in Regional and Rural NSW
  - Addressing the Housing Shortage
  - Increased Funding for Weed Management
  - Attended the LGNSW Conference, where all motions submitted by Leeton Shire were adopted
- Coordinated and supported six Section 355 Committees, 15 Advisory Committees/Working Groups, two action groups and ARIC. Council also participated in two shared Service Committees and seven External Committees
- Participated in the Country Mayors Association (CMA) which included:
  - quarterly meetings in Sydney and AGM
  - NSW Rural and Regional Health Forum in Wagga
  - virtual meeting with NSW Water Minister The Hon. Rose Jackson
  - Participated in quarterly meetings with the Local Police and Narrandera Shire Council
- Undertook health advocacy including:
  - Meeting with Alice Dunne & Brendon Cutmore from Health NSW re Collaborative Care Discussion
  - Meeting with Southern Cross Care addressing GP shortages in Leeton and impacts on aged care services
- Actively participated in the Murray Darling Association – Region 9 by attending meetings, the National Annual Conference in Murray Bridge and the Regional Community Forum
- Continued to advocate for sensible water policy that supports the needs of the region. In 2023/24 Advocacy efforts included participating in the Leeton Water Rally and submitting a motion via MDA Region 9 to strongly advocate against Minister Plibersek's Water Amendment Bill 2023, most especially water buybacks and the removal of socio-economic neutrality testing

Functional Area 9: Governance and Administration cont.



RAMJO met with Hon. Ryan Park MP, Minister for Regional Health, Luke Sloane, Deputy Secretary for Regional Health, and Member for Murray, Helen Dalton

- Participated in a webinar with Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water on Framework for Restoring Our Rivers Bill implementation – via MDA Region 9 to RAMJO
- Continued to liaise with Murrumbidgee Irrigation Ltd (MI) on areas such as road closures, channel and road crossing upgrades, traffic control, the Mayor and General Manager attended MI's Annual General Meeting
- Issued 128 media releases, posted 829 social media posts (up from 693 in 2023/24), undertook 10 'Have Your Say Surveys' and grew the number Council's registered 'Have Your Say' users to 826 (up from 803 in 2021/22)
- Sought community feedback on a number of Council initiatives through the 'Have Your Say' community engagement hub, social media channels and the local newspaper, *The Irrigator*.
  - DRAFT Related Party Disclosure Policy – Submissions
  - DRAFT Parks, Playgrounds and Recreational Facilities Maintenance Management Policy – Submissions
  - DRAFT Leeton Housing Strategy 2024 – Submissions
  - DRAFT 2024/25 Annual Operational Plan, Budget and Revenue Policy (including Fees & Charges) – Submissions
  - DRAFT Asset Management Plans – Building & Stormwater – Submissions
  - DRAFT Asset Management Plans – Submissions
  - DRAFT Kerbside Collection Policy – Submissions



RAMJO met with NSW Water Minister Hon. Rose Jackson, in Sydney

- Endorsed a 2-Year Rate Rebalancing Program to Improve Fairness. The new adopted ordinary rate structure will see the rate peg redistributed from Farmland onto Business for two years (only). Council will introduce two new rating sub-categories 'Business Industrial – Leeton' and 'Business Industrial – Whitton'. Residential ratepayers will see no change to the proportion of rates paid overall (beyond the annual rate peg)
- Successfully applied for 17 grants to the value of \$784,264 (excludes road funding)
- Purchased a CCTV Trailer to be used for three primary functions: mobile CCTV, people counting (e.g., at events like Chill & Grill), and traffic counting.





Participants in the Leeton Skate Championships



# Our Performance by Status of Actions at 30 June 2023

This year staff across the organisation undertook 184 Operational Plan actions which aim to support the achievement of the Delivery Program. Each of the actions were allocated a status:




- Purple icon**      **Completed** – the project has been completed
- Green icon**      **On Track** – the activity or project is progressing as expected
- Amber icon**      **Needs Attention** – the activity or project needs additional input or focus to get back on track
- Red icon**      **Critical Concerns** – there are major issues associated with this activity or project
- Black icon**      **Not Due to Commence**

The status of activities and projects at 30 June 2023 is shown in the following table:







| Status of activity/project    | Purple icon | Green icon | Amber icon | Red icon | Black icon | Total No. of Actions |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|----------|------------|----------------------|
| Number of activities/projects | 43          | 129        | 9          | 1        | 2          | 184                  |

A total of 172 of the 184 actions/activities Council committed to undertaking are either **On Track**  or have been **Completed** .




One action was considered to be of **Critical Concern** . However, 9 actions were assigned the status of **Needs Attention**  and two were **Not Due to Commence** . The table below provides details on each of these actions and corrective actions being taken to address specific issues.

| Operational Plan Activity   | Status  | Reason for Status   | Corrective Actions  |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>1.13.1</b> Advocate for accessible, quality and timely health services including mental health; drug and alcohol rehabilitation services, ambulance services and hospital services |  | Whilst a large amount of advocacy was undertaken, an Integrated Health Services Strategy for Leeton Shire is yet to be completed. | Leeton Shire has been selected to do 'Collaborative Care' planning and the Rural Doctors Network (RDN) has been funded to coordinate the program in 2024/25.            |
| <b>2.4.4</b> Explore public art opportunities on 'Cannery Corner' Wamoon Ave  |  | SunRice has seen management changes and the project's priority has slowed.  | To be revisited in 2024/25.   |
| <b>4.3.2</b> Council to consider housing development opportunities on Council-owned land commencing with Brobenah Road (current dog park) and in Whitton (Conapaira Street)           |  | Council has not yet secured a development partner. Conversations have commenced with Landcom and continue with Argyle Housing.    | Council is working with a consultant to complete a business case for Brobenah Road Housing development with options to be presented to the council in February 2024/25. |

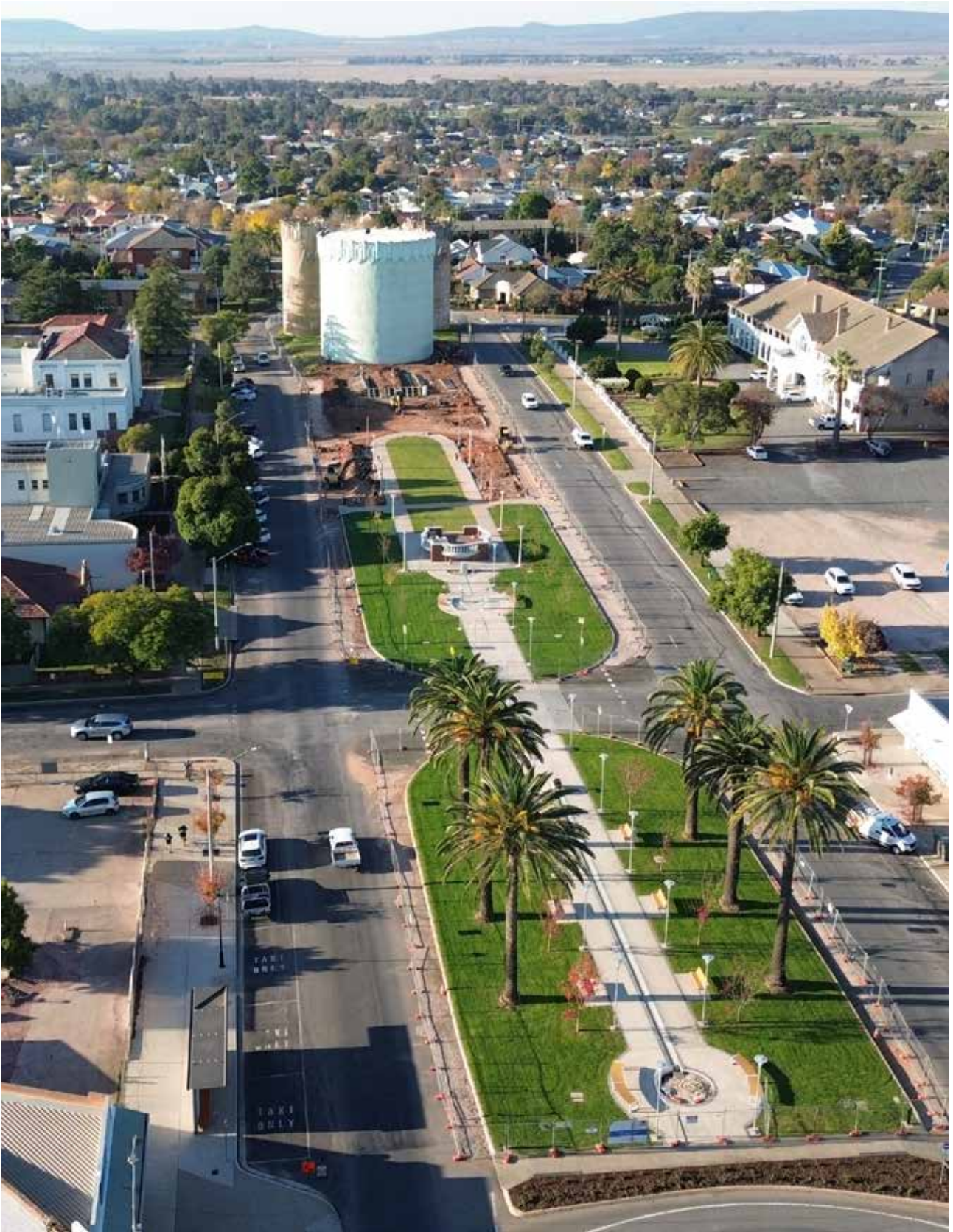
Our Performance by Status of Actions cont.

| Operational Plan Activity  | Status  | Reason for Status  | Corrective Actions   |
|--|---|--|--|
| <b>4.4.1</b> Develop – Chelmsford Place Town Square  |    | While the project is progressing well, it was identified as being behind schedule by six weeks.  | A new completion date of 19 July 2024 has been set.  |
| <b>4.4.2</b> Continue CBD Façade Painting in Leeton  |    | Project was not prioritised in 2023/24 for reasons of workload.  | Owner contributions in Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the project have been placed in a reserve fund to be utilised in a future financial year.                  |
| <b>6.1.4</b> Heavy patching of sections of roads   |    | This status was used due to some sections of the roads not being completed as per the program:<br>– Bella Vista Drive<br>– Carrington Drive<br>– Stony Point Road. | Identified roads have been rolled over into the next financial year.   |
| <b>9.4.3</b> Undertake strategic engagement with Murrumbidgee Irrigation Ltd (MI Ltd)  |  | Difficulty securing meeting dates.   | Engagement with MI Ltd will recommence in 2024. Priorities are piping of channels and MOU.   |
| <b>9.6.8</b> Deliver Council's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) program, fostering continual improvement                                     |  | Review is currently 80% complete and the aim was to be 100% complete by the end of the financial year.   | Review will be 100% complete by the end of the first quarter in 2024/25.   |
| <b>9.7.13</b> Prepare and implement Plans of Management (PoM) for Crown Lands properties, and user agreements for sports ovals on Crown Land |  | Due to staff movements and workload pressures, the PoM's have not been completed.  | PoM work plan has been created to assist with managing the requirements for progressing PoM's in 2024/25. This includes the possible use of contractors. |

Our Performance by Status of Actions cont.

| Operational Plan Activity   | Status   | Reason for Status   | Corrective Actions   |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p><b>9.7.1</b> Implement the Long-Term Financial Plan – in consultation with ratepayers – to support Council's ongoing financial sustainability, including a Special Rate Variation (SRV) and/ or reductions in service levels</p> |   | <p>Council's general fund remains under strain and its financial position is unsustainable over the medium to long term. Council proposed an SRV in 2022. Following public consultation Council voted not to proceed.</p> | <p>New Council to consider options for achieving financial sustainability.</p>                   |
| <p><b>3.4.2</b> Maintain a Sporting Walk of Fame</p>  |   | <p>Committee determined there would be no event for 2024 as there were insufficient nominees to be included.</p>  | <p>Committee will go into recess for the next term of Council.</p>                               |
| <p><b>6.1.1</b> Shoulder widening</p>   |  | <p>No projects approved for shoulder widening this financial year.</p>  | <p>Potential projects will be presented as part of the planning for the next financial year.</p> |





Leeton

# Statutory Information

The following section provides transparency, accountability and addresses statutory requirements under Chapter 13, Parts 2 and 4 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Part 9, Division 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* and any other legislation which requires information to be included in this report.

## Councillor Professional Development

To comply with clause 217(a1)(iia) and clause 186 of *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*, Council provides the following report on the provision of induction training and professional development programs for the Mayor and Councillors.

During 2023/24, all 9 Councillors participated in ongoing professional development. Councillors took the opportunity to participate in over 20 different training, seminars, circulars and other professional development programs, including:

| Councillor                   | Training   |
|------------------------------|--|
| Mayor Cr Tony Reneker        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023)</li> <li>Cultivating Connection with your Community – Locale Learning (August 2023)</li> <li>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)</li> <li>Local Government NSW Annual Conference (November 2023)</li> <li>National General Assembly of Local Government (ALGA) (June 2024)</li> </ul> |
| Deputy Mayor Cr Michael Kidd | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023)</li> <li>Cultivating Connection with your Community – Locale Learning (August 2023)</li> <li>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Spea Up Team (September 2023)</li> <li>Local Government NSW Annual Conference (November 2023)</li> <li>National General Assembly of Local Government (ALGA) (June 2024)</li> </ul>  |
| Cr George Weston             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023)</li> <li>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)</li> </ul>   |
| Cr Tony Ciccia               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023)</li> <li>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)</li> </ul>   |
| Cr Matthew Holt              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023)</li> <li>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)</li> </ul>   |
| Cr Tracey Morris             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023)</li> <li>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)</li> </ul>   |
| Cr Krystal Maytom            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training (1 Hour) – Halve Waste (August 2023)</li> <li>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)</li> </ul>  |

## Statutory Information cont.

| Councillor      | Training   |
|-----------------|--|
| Cr Paul Smith   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting Things Done On Council – Institute of Local Governance (July 2023)</li> <li>• Reviewing Council Financial Accounts – Institute of Local Governance (July 2023)</li> <li>• Demographics for Councillors – Institute of Local Governance (July 2023)</li> <li>• FOGO “3 Bin Service” Training – Halve Waste (August 2023)</li> <li>• Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)</li> <li>• Cyber Security Training (October 2023)</li> </ul> |
| Cr Sandra Nardi | Did not attend any training or undertake professional development which was organised and or provided by Council within 2023/24  |

Councillors were also invited to participate in eleven Councillor Workshops, none of which related to business papers. Details of the attendances are listed below.

| Councillor                   | Occasions of Attendance |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mayor Cr Tony Reneker        | X 11                    |
| Deputy Mayor Cr Michael Kidd | X 9                     |
| Cr George Weston             | X 11                    |
| Cr Tony Ciccia               | X 10                    |
| Cr Matthew Holt              | X 10                    |
| Cr Tracey Morris             | X 8                     |
| Cr Krystal Maytom            | X 9                     |
| Cr Paul Smith                | X 9                     |
| Cr Sandra Nardi              | X 5                     |

### Overseas visits

#### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a)

No overseas visits were undertaken by Leeton Shire Councillors as representatives of Council during 2023/24.

It is noted that General Manager, Jackie Kruger attended the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) Conference 2-5 June 2024. She represented the Australian Federation of LG Professionals and all expenses were covered by LG Professionals NSW.

### Payment of Councillor Fees and Expenses, and Provision of Facilities to Councillors

#### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a1) (i), (ii), (iia), (iv), (vi), (vii), (viii)

Leeton Shire Council has a Councillors' Expenses and Facilities Policy that governs the expenses paid and facilities provided to the Mayor and other Councillors in their civic duties. Annual fees were paid to all Councillors as required by the Local Government Act 1993 and in line with the determination of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The total fees paid to all Councillors for 2023/24 was \$104,272.

Annual fees were paid to all Councillors as required by the *Local Government Act 1993* and in line with the determination of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The total fees paid to all Councillors for 2023/24 was \$111,629.



Statutory Information cont.

| Councillor Fees, Expenses and Facilities  | Amount              |
|---|---------------------|
| Councillor fees   | \$104,272.00        |
| Mayoral allowance, excluding Councillor fee   | \$25,549.15         |
| Motor vehicle – Mayor (business use) – Current Mayor does not utilise a Mayoral vehicle | -                   |
| Councillor travel and accommodation   | \$9,176.34          |
| Council meeting and sundry expenses (includes external meetings/receptions)             | \$7,153.67          |
| Councillor training and skills development  | \$4,520.00          |
| Superannuation – Councillors  | \$4,463.25          |
| Telecommunications  | \$3,251.78          |
| Seminars and conferences  | \$7,385.37          |
| Memberships (Includes subscriptions and publications)                                   | -                   |
| Material and consumable purchases   | \$240.01            |
| Printing and stationery   | \$3,131.37          |
| Florist expenses  | \$1,208.13          |
| Catering  | \$786.82            |
| Carer expenses  | -                   |
| Interstate visits   | -                   |
| Overseas visits   | -                   |
| Office equipment  | -                   |
| Spouse/partner expenses   | -                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>\$171,137.89</b> |

### Environmental Upgrade Agreements

#### Local Government Act 1993 – s 54P(1)

No environmental upgrade agreements have been entered into by Leeton Shire Council during this reporting period.

### Special Rate Variations

#### Special Rate Variation Guidelines – 7.1

There was no special rate variation, and therefore Council only applied the increase of 3.7% in line with the rate peg.

### Rates and Charges Written Off

#### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 132

Rates and charges (interest not included) written off in the 2023/24 period included:

| Item                               | Amount           |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Total Pensioner Concession         | \$312,521        |
| <b>Less:</b> Subsidy Reimbursement | (\$170,975)      |
| Amount Written off by Council      | Nil              |
| Postponed Rates and Charges        | \$2,222.87       |
| Sale of land for rates             | Nil              |
| Rates debts abandoned              | Nil              |
| Special Rate Rebates               | \$16,457         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       | <b>\$160,226</b> |

Statutory Information cont.

## Contracts Awarded

### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a2)(i), (ii)

Details of contracts awarded by Leeton Shire Council in 2023/24 for amounts greater than \$150,000 are provided in the following table.

| Contractor Name  | Contract Description  | Value   | Date                            | Tender Type                       |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Malcolm Goode Plumbing<br>FOGO Contract  | Plumbing Remediation Works – Gogeldrie Weir Transpiration Field   | \$184,500   | 15 May 2024 to 26 June 2024     | Open Market Request for Quotation |
| Boots Civil Pty Ltd  | Construction of Landfill Trench   | \$428,535.32  | 1 December 2023 to 1 April 2024 | Open Market Tender                |
| Excell Gray Bruni Pty Ltd  | Construction Contract Vance Industrial Estate Project   | \$7,157,972.36  | 4 June 2024 to 21 March 2025    | Open Market Tender                |
| Downer EDI   | Extension of Works Spray Sealing Contract   | Estimated \$900,000   | June 2024 to June 2025          | Open Market Tender                |
| Currajong  | Planning services for infrastructure master plan  | \$220,000   | 5 April 2024 to 1 May 2025      | Request for Quotation             |
| Boots Civil Pty Ltd  | Chelmsford Town Square Project  | \$1,987,863.25  | 10 October 2023 to 31 May 2024  | Open Market Tender                |
| Armstrongs Plant Hire<br>Matt Sheldrick<br>Prolop<br>Boots Civil<br>HB Constructions<br>Stabilfix<br>Coates<br>Conplant<br>FM Rural<br>Brooks<br>MIA Crane Service<br>Parter Excavations<br>Rollers Australia<br>The Stabilising | Pricing commitment by potential suppliers for the provision of wet and dry earthmoving and plant hire options | \$1,500,000<br><br>Estimated total value for a two-year period for all wet and dry plant hire | July 2023 to June 2025          | Open Market Tender                |
| Boots Civil Pty Ltd  | New landfill trench construction  | \$428,535.32  | September 2023 to August 2024   | Open Tender                       |
| I2R Electrical   | Electrical upgrade – Leeton STP   | \$420,000   | 28 November 2023 to 30 May 2024 | Selective Tender                  |

Statutory Information cont.

## Legal Proceedings

### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a3)

In 2023/24, there were no legal proceedings for debt recovery of rates and water charges. Council was involved in legal proceedings as follows:

| Type of Proceedings  | Cost       | Amount/Activity                      | Status      | Result                |
|--|------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Public liability claim against Council – 1 claim, personal injury/public liability | \$3,475.70 | Defence costs – Mills Oakley Lawyers | In progress | Unknown at this stage |

## Works Carried out on Private Land

### Local Government Act 1993 – 67, 67(2)(b), 67(3)

### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a4)

During the 2022/23 year, Leeton Shire Council made no resolutions under Section 67 of the *Local Government Act 1993* to carry out or subsidise work on private land.

## External Bodies that exercise functions delegated by Council

### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a6)

As per legislation, delegations fell to the following external bodies:

| Name of External Body    | Delegated Function   |
|--------------------------|--|
| Rural Fire Service       | Oversee the delivery of a Rural Fire Service within the local government area and discharge Council's obligations under the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> and <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> |
| State Emergency Services | Oversee the delivery of the State Emergency Service within Leeton Shire and discharge Council's obligations under the <i>State Emergency Service Act 1989</i>                                |

## Companies controlled by Council

### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a7)

Leeton Shire Council did not hold a controlling interest in any corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies.

### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a8)

The table below describes Leeton Shire Council's participation in corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates and other bodies..

| Name of Organisation                             | Function   |
|--|--|
| Country Mayors Association                       | The Association represents rural and regional member councils in NSW. It is a forum to discuss shared issues and make representations to other levels of government.   |
| Leeton Local Emergency Management Committee      | This Committee is responsible for an all-agencies comprehensive approach to emergency planning in the Leeton Shire local government area. The membership of this Committee is made up of Emergency Services and other agencies with functional responsibilities. |
| Leeton–Narrandera Aerodrome Management Committee | This Committee is responsible for policy formulation and setting of guidelines for management matters at the Leeton–Narrandera Airport.<br>Leeton Local Traffic  |



Statutory Information cont.

| Name of Organisation  | Function   |
|---|--|
| Committee<br>This Committee exists                          | primarily as a technical review committee which advises Council on some traffic-related matters. The Committee is made up of representatives from Council, NSW Police and Roads and Maritime Services.   |
| Local Government New South Wales<br>Local Government NSW is | the peak industry association that represents the interests of NSW general and special purpose councils. In being a member, Council is also represented at the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).   |
| MIA Zone Liaison Committee (Rural Fire Service)             | This Committee advises the State Bushfire Coordination Committee on bushfire prevention in the Leeton Shire LGA; promotes the coordination of policies, practices and strategies relating to bushfire management; and prepares a Bushfire Management Area Plan and oversees its implementation.  |
| Murray Darling Association Region 9                         | This group represents local government and community views on the major natural resource management issues of the Murray Darling Basin. It seeks to influence the policies of governments as they relate to conservation and sustainable development within the Basin.   |
| Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation                      | The Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) is a voluntary regional organisation of 11 councils in the Riverina and Murray Region established under the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> , which takes a regional approach to addressing issues shared by local councils.   |
| Riverina Regional Library                                   | The Riverina Regional Library (RRL) is the largest regional library service in NSW. It provides library services to approximately 96,000 constituents of 11 local government areas, those being the shires of Berrigan, Bland, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Federation, Greater Hume, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Snowy Valleys and Temora. The service consists of 21 stationary library branches and a mobile library spread over an area of 46,324 sq km. |
| Western Riverina Arts                                       | Western Riverina Arts (WRA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works in partnership with our member councils: Narrandera Shire Council, Leeton Shire Council, Griffith City Council and Murrumbidgee Shire Council to support, develop and promote the Arts in the Western Riverina.  |

### Equal Employment Opportunities Management Plan

#### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a9)

Leeton Shire Council, through its policies and programs, aims to provide an environment where employees and others in the workplace are treated fairly and with respect, and are free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and bullying.

Council has endeavoured to translate intent into action in the following ways:

- Continuing to promote Council's employment opportunities to workplace diversity in our recruitment practices by targeting partners who can source quality candidates from diverse backgrounds
- Partnering with community organisations to provide development and engagement opportunities for First Nations peoples
- Enhanced support mechanisms for (particularly vulnerable) staff through the Employee Assistance Program, and assistance from the People and Culture team
- Continuing staff engagement through the Consultative and Safety Committees, including the planning and preparation of Wellbeing and Resilience Programs.

Statutory Information cont.

### Remuneration – General Manager

#### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(b)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v)

As at 30 June 2023, Leeton Shire Council's General Manager's remuneration package consisted of:

| Component   | Value               |
|---|---------------------|
| Salary  | \$265,357.53        |
| Bonus or performance payments                               | Nil                 |
| Employer's contribution to superannuation                   | \$29,189.29         |
| Non-cash benefits – Private use of motor vehicle (notional) | \$10,000            |
| FBT on non-cash benefits                                    | Nil                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>\$304,546.82</b> |

\*General Manager also pays \$126.73 per week for private use of the car from her salary

### Remuneration – Senior Staff

#### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(c)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v)

As at 30 June 2023, no other Leeton Shire Council staff fit the *Local Government Act 1993* definition of 'senior staff'.

### Statement of total number of persons who performed paid work on Wednesday 14 February 2024

#### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(d)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv)

| Categories of Staff  | Number of staff |
|--|-----------------|
| Persons employed by the council on a permanent full-time, permanent part-time or casual basis or under a fixed-term contract                         | 160             |
| Full-time Equivalent Persons (FTE)   | 140.42          |
| Persons employed by the council as senior staff members  | 1               |
| Persons engaged by the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, wholly or principally for the labour of the person | 3               |
| Persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, as an apprentice or trainee                       | 0               |

### Stormwater Management Services

#### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(e)

During 2023/24, Leeton Shire Council levied a Stormwater Management Service Charge (SMSC) on eligible residential properties and eligible properties in the business rating category. A total of \$91,618 was raised through these charges.

These funds were spent on a continued review and condition assessment of our current Stormwater network through physical inspections, and upgrade to Lansdowne Estate Pumpstation.

### Coastal Protection Services

#### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(e1)

The requirement to report on coastal protection services does not apply to Leeton Shire.

Statutory Information cont.

## **Companion Animals Activities**

### **Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(f)**

#### **Companion Animals Act 1998**

#### **Companion Animal Regulation 2018**

Monies received from the Companion Animals Fund were expended on the provision of Companion Animal Management and Control services (details below). A total of \$340,500 was spent on Companion Animal Management and related activities.

Council's pound data collection returns and dog attack data for the 2023/24 financial year were lodged with the Office of Local Government (OLG) on 22 July 2024.

### **Community education programs carried out and strategies the council has in place to promote and assist the desexing of dogs and cats**

Council's programs and strategies to promote and assist the registration, microchipping and desexing of dogs and cats included:

- Conducting community education programs by way of media releases, social media posts, participation in interviews with the media, reports to Council, Councillor briefing sessions, distribution of educational material and extension services provided to pet owners in person by Council's Rangers during daily operations
- Offering an ongoing subsidised microchipping program which allows members of the public to have their companion animals microchipped at a substantially reduced rate (\$35 for one animal or \$28 for more than one animal). This year, 168 animals were microchipped, down from 214 in the previous financial year
- Hosting free microchipping days (two were hosted in 2023/24 with 91 animals microchipped)
- Deferring the registration of cats and dogs for owners who wish to have their pets de-sexed until after the animals are de-sexed so the owners can benefit from the lower de-sexed animal registration rate.

### **Strategies in place for complying with the requirement under s 64 of the CA Act**

In order to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed impounded animals, Council:

- has entered into rehoming agreements with 'Hounds on the Rebound' and 'Pets Haven'
- microchips any animal going to a rescue organisation at no cost
- does not charge for animals adopted from the Pound by members of the public (apart from registration fees) and provides free microchipping
- has a dedicated Facebook Page for the Pound
- includes on its website pictures of impounded dogs and cats, regularly updated, in order that the owners may claim the dogs or that they may be rehomed.

In 2023/24, Council returned 89 of the 186 dogs impounded to their owners and transferred 91 to rehoming organisations. This represents a 97% return to owner/rehoming rate of impounded dogs, up from 95% in 2021/22.

### **Off-Leash Areas**

Council provides an off-leash area at the former caravan park site on Brobenah Road, Leeton and at McCaughey Park, Yanco.



## Capital Works Projects

### Office of Local Government Capital Expenditure Guidelines

Council undertook major capital works with a value of \$20,234,715. These projects included:

| Project                       | Amount              |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Land and Buildings            | \$5,755,183         |
| Parks and Recreation Assets   | \$4,672,360         |
| Plant and Equipment Purchases | \$1,859,691         |
| Roads Bridges and Footpaths   | \$4,894,722         |
| Sewer Infrastructure          | \$1,999,013         |
| Waste Infrastructure          | \$399,320           |
| Water Supply System           | \$654,426           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                  | <b>\$20,234,715</b> |

## Compliance with the Carers (Recognition) Act

### Carers Recognition Act 2010 – s 8(2)

Leeton Shire benefits from Home and Community Care Services delivered through Temora Shire Council's Pinnacle program. Leeton Shire also benefits from Community Transport Services delivered through Narrandera Shire Council. Leeton Shire Council does not, itself, provide services directed at carers and/or people being cared for by carers.

Since January 2015, Council has had an agreement with Argyle Community Housing to manage the Council owned Eventide Yanco 14-unit affordable housing complex. Council provides an annual budget for capital works which has included but not limited works within each of the units such as the replacement of all kitchen, full internal repaints, bathroom renovations, carpet replacement and the installation of a new shared user gazebo common area.

In 2023/24 Council met its obligations under the Carers (Recognition) Act through a range of initiatives and programs. This included supporting workplace flexibility for employees with carer responsibilities.

## Implementation of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan

### Disability Inclusion Act 2014 – s 13(1)

Leeton Shire Council continued to progress the scheduled actions of its *Disability Inclusion Action Plan* (DIAP). Actions undertaken in 2023/24 included:

- Consulting with people with disabilities and their carers, disability service providers and members of the community in the development of a new DIAP
- Successful application for funding for an Adult Changing Facility in Sycamore St (\$114,962.50)
- Lodging the required information relating to implementation of the DIAP with the Minister for Disability Services
- Offering a free Home Library Service delivery to residents who are housebound, live in assisted living, are carers or who live with disability
- Installation of disability access to the bus shelter on Benermbah Street, Whitton, funded through the Country passenger Terminal Infrastructure Grant Scheme
- Coordination of 'Stepping On', an education and exercise based program
- Repairing footpath defects identified via Council's inspection program and/or in response to notifications by members of the community

## Statutory Information cont.

- Review and implementation of a new layout of Leeton Shire Library that allows for improved wheelchair access
- Advancing planning for a lift at LMAG
- Advancing installation of x2 lifts and hearing augmentation as part of the Roxy Community Theatre redevelopment
- As part of the Chelmsford Place Square redevelopment, considerations were made for disability access on footpaths to ensure inclusivity for all members of the community
- Leeton Indoor stadium coordinated/hosted pickleball for Kurrajong, Gralee School and MyPlan Connect
- Launch of LeetonLiving website which details a list disability service providers
- Implemented the Hidden Disability program which aims to help support and raise awareness of hidden disabilities that may not be obvious

### Planning Agreements in Force

#### *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 – s 7.5(5)*

Leeton Shire Council did not enter into any planning agreements during 2023/24

### Recovery and Threat Abatement Plans

#### *Fisheries Management Act 1994 – s 220ZT(2)*

Leeton Shire Council is not identified as having responsibility under any Recovery and Threat Abatement Plan.

### Inspections of Private Swimming Pools

#### *Swimming Pools Act 1992 – s 22F (2)*

#### *Swimming Pools Regulation 2018 – cl 23*

Leeton Shire Council implemented its swimming pools inspection program as per the following table.

| Project  | No. of inspections |
|--|--------------------|
| Tourist and visitor accommodation  | 0                  |
| Premises with more than two dwellings  | 0                  |
| Inspections at single dwelling premises that resulted in a Certificate of Compliance being issued under s 22D of the <i>Swimming Pools Act 1992</i>              | 16                 |
| Inspections at single dwelling premises that resulted in a Certificate of Non-Compliance being issued under cl 21 of the <i>Swimming Pools Regulation 2018</i> ) | 3                  |
| Number of swimming pools inspected   | 19                 |
| Number of reinspections conducted  | 3                  |
| <b>Total number of pool inspections conducted</b>  | <b>22</b>          |

### Section 7.11 Fixed Levies and Section 64 Contributions

#### *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

#### *Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 cl 218A(1)*

During 2023/24, Leeton Shire Council collected \$159,545.09 towards its Section 7.12 Fixed Levy Plan. The balance at 30 June 2024 was \$1,146,686.38. No funds were expended in this financial year.

Under Section 64 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council may also levy some development for the construction of works related to water supply and sewerage and facilities. In 2023/24, \$260,719.80 was collected and \$260,719.80 spent as detailed below. The balance in the restriction at 30 June 2024 was \$31,325.48.

Statutory Information cont.

| Detailed Project Description  | \$ value of contributions or levies used or expended on project | Percentage of project cost funded by contributions of levies | Percentage of project completion |
|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Whitton Water Filtration (WFT) Plant Access Ramp & Pit Platform/ Pump Monorail, Leeton Water Filtration Plant Chemical Storage Shed and Sedimentation Tank Launder Replacement and Telemetry Upgrades | \$130,580.64  | 45%  | 45%                              |
| Leeton Raw Water Plant Variable Speed Drive (VSD) and Switchboard Upgrade   | \$2,827.20  | 3%   | 28%                              |
| Pump Stations Electrical upgrade at the Sewer Treatment Plant   | \$127,311.96  | 24%  | 78%                              |

### On-site Sewage Management

#### Local Government Act 1993 – s 68

#### Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

During 2023.24, Leeton Shire Council levied an on-site sewage management fee for 1,697 properties which consists of 795 rural and 902 urban. A total of \$25,391 was raised through the charges and is used by Council to offset the cost of an education and inspection program.

19 on-site sewage management inspections were conducted in 2023/24.

### Government Information Public Access Activity

#### Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, s 125(1) (GIPA Act)/

#### Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018, cl 8, Schedule 2

Under section 7 of the GIPA Act, agencies must review their programs for the release of government information at least once every 12 months to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. During the reporting period we reviewed this program by examining the information currently provided on Council's website, in public areas at Council offices, in local newspapers and provided in response to requests from the public. Council's website continues to be a primary source for providing information to the public and provides timely and detailed reporting on current matters relating to Council. The most common requests for information received by Council continue to relate to development or building records, with increasing interest in developments by private certifiers, with additional information now included on Council's website.

Number of access applications received – Clause 7(b) of the GIPA Act. During the reporting period, Council received a total of one (1) subpoenaed and six (6) formal access applications (including withdrawn applications but not invalid applications). In addition, Council processed seven (7) 'Access to Information Requests' (informal GIPA applications) during the reporting period. Number of refused applications for Schedule 1 information – Clause 7(c) of the GIPA Act: was zero (0).



Statutory Information cont.

## Public Interest Disclosures

**Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 – s 31**

**Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011 – cl 4**

Under Clause 4(1) of the Public Disclosures Regulation, Council must include the following information in its Annual Report:

| Public Interest Disclosures (PIDs) in 2023/24 | Number |
|---|--------|
| Number of public officials who made PIDs      | 2      |
| Number of PIDs received                       | 2      |
| Number of PIDs finalised                      | 2      |

## Procurement Procedures – Anti Slavery

**Local Government Act 1993 - s 428(4)(c) and (d)**

No concerns were raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during the year concerning the operations of Council.

Council is working towards taking reasonable steps to ensure that:

- Modern Slavery is not occurring in the operations and supply chains of Council and any entity that it owns or controls
- it does not use or procure any goods, plant, equipment or other materials and work or services that are the product of Modern Slavery, and
- it develops and implements appropriate procedures including appropriate prevention plans and other policies in order to demonstrate that it has exercised due diligence to prevent Modern Slavery in Council's operations and supply chains, and to identify and respond to an actual or suspected case of Modern Slavery.

If Council becomes aware of any actual or suspected occurrence of Modern Slavery in its operations or supply chains (or in those of any entity that it owns or controls), Council commits to taking reasonable steps to respond to and address the occurrence in accordance with the relevant code of practice/conduct or other guidance issued by the Anti-slavery Commissioner.





**LEETON**  
SHIRE COUNCIL

**Leeton Shire Council**

ABN 59 217 957 665

23-25 Chelmsford Place, Leeton NSW 2705

**[www.leeton.nsw.gov.au](http://www.leeton.nsw.gov.au)**

**E:** [council@leeton.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@leeton.nsw.gov.au)

**P:** (02) 6953 0911 **F:** (02) 6953 0977