

# Newcastle City Council **Annual Report** **2014/15**





Newcastle City Council acknowledges that we are meeting on the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, and that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession.

Council reiterates its commitment to address disadvantages and attain justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community.

**Front Cover Image:**  
Newcastle ANZAC Memorial Walk

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Newcastle City Council

**Authorisation**  
Interim CEO



Image: School holiday activities at Newcastle Art Gallery



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# PART 1

## OUR COUNCIL



Image: Newcastle ANZAC Memorial Walk



# A MESSAGE FROM THE LORD MAYOR



Council is an integral part of the fabric of the local community - making decisions that reflect the diversity of our people and planning strategically for future growth and economic stability. Our shared vision for Newcastle 2030 guides the many projects, activities and services we provide throughout the local government area, leading us to become a smart, liveable and sustainable city - a place where people want to live, work, play and raise families.

We are at a critical point in our city's history and the decisions we make today will shape Newcastle and affect our future. Improved transport networks, revitalisation of the city centre and further growth in the diverse local economy will be key drivers in sustaining our future. Council's commitment to support the city renewal project Renew Newcastle with \$30,000 annually for three years is just one example of how we are working towards supporting the emerging creative industries.

An important part of a sound local economy is a financially healthy and sustainable Council. This Council is committed to bringing the city back to financial stability through our long-term financial plan while protecting local services and community amenity such as pools, parks, libraries and cultural facilities both in the city and suburbs. In addition, we are planning for greater community change through documents like the Wallsend Master Plan, the Foreshore Plan of Management and the Local Planning Strategy.

We also want to capitalise on our city's unique history, wonderful cultural facilities and burgeoning café culture, which are major attractions to both locals and visitors. Council is fully committed to retaining Newcastle's heritage character, continuing to support and improve the Art Gallery and Museum and helping people learn more about our history. This year we introduced five new self-guided walking tours that allow people to explore Newcastle's past and present as the Artists' City, Convict and Industry, Newcastle at War, the Shoreline and Newcastle Architecture.

Over the past year we have made tremendous progress on our four priority projects that I have championed for many years. We have completed major links in the Bathers Way project, our shared coastal pathway linking Newcastle's seven coastal precincts, and revitalisation of infrastructure at our beaches; we have opened a new Wildlife Arena and amenities block at Blackbutt Reserve; in city revitalisation our building façade improvement scheme is upgrading the frontages of 80 city businesses and our place activation initiative that has delivered

popular projects such as Hit The Bricks; and we are in planning stages for our comprehensive cycleway network around the city.

The community came through a traumatic event together this year in the form of the April super storm. So severe was the damage that Newcastle was declared a natural disaster zone, and we are still working to repair the significant amount of damaged infrastructure, which included the loss of 10,000 trees.

After the storm, more than 50,000 people attended the ANZAC dawn service at Nobbys to pay their respects to those who fought for our country. Thousands more joined services across the city. My sincere thanks go to the Council staff, the community, RSL sub-branches and local businesses who worked so hard to deliver such moving events, just days after our region had been so devastated by the super storm.

Last summer Newcastle continued to impress internationally by staging the Asian Cup, the biggest football tournament Australia has ever hosted, and the largest sporting event to come to our city. Broadcast to approximately 800 million people worldwide, the January 2015 tournament was the most watched Asian Cup ever.

Newcastle is clearly experiencing growth and change, which always come with challenges and sometimes difficult decisions. Council is committed to a consultative leadership approach so that we face these challenges together and we make decisions with full understanding and consideration of community perspectives.

**Councillor Nuatali Nelmes**  
**Lord Mayor of Newcastle**

# A MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



The 2014/15 financial year was one of significant positive growth for Newcastle, with much of this change initiated through Newcastle City Council projects and activities.

We made significant strides toward achieving our vision of a smart, liveable and sustainable city, starting with continued improvement in Council's financial performance.

The financial health and sustainability of Council is critical to the continued economic growth of our city and the provision of essential services to the community. Continued adherence to strict budget principles has resulted in the audited 2014/15 financial

statements reporting a net operating surplus of \$12.5 million.

This surplus represents a positive variance of \$17.2million against the operating budget deficit of \$4.7 million and an increase of \$8.6 million over last year's operating surplus of \$3.9 million. A significant factor contributing to this variance was a shortfall in spending on asset maintenance and renewal compared to the capital expenditure budget.

The completion of the planned asset maintenance and spending on planned works was impacted by the significant storm in April and Council's response to it, which required both short and longer term maintenance projects to be put on hold whilst Council crews addressed critical safety issues in the community caused by damaged trees, roads and footpaths. However, the level of capital works completed in 2014/15 was still 28% greater in value than that completed in 2013/14.

A major boost this year in helping us move closer to achieving long term financial sustainability in the future came in the support from Council and the community for a rate increase above the rate peg set by IPART. The increase, approved by IPART to commence from 2015/16, will allow us to further close the financial sustainability gap.

In addition, this special rate variation will put Council in a position to fund

revitalisation and improve current service levels into the future, although we will continue to face financial challenges and we must be ever-vigilant in our expenditures.

However, we will be able to accelerate the completion of our priority projects as well as make steady reductions to our infrastructure backlog. This means our facilities, roads, footpaths, sportsgrounds, parks and playgrounds will all be in better condition. We will be able to contain increases to user fees and charges and we will be able to invest in new infrastructure as our population increases.

We have made significant progress on, and completion of, a range of projects including the restoration of Newcastle City Hall clock tower, the refurbishment of Merewether Ocean Baths, Merewether to Bar Beach section along Bathers Way, the construction of the wildlife arena, new amenities block and shade shelters at Blackbutt Reserve, and new cycleways.

Thank you to our Council staff for their ongoing commitment and support in the delivery of services, projects and initiatives to our local community and in particular their emergency response and recovery efforts during and after the April storm.

**Frank Cordingley**  
**CEO (Interim)**





Image: Council staff clearing up Civic Park after the April storm in time for ANZAC Day.



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NEWCASTLE  
CITY COUNCIL  
EMPLOYS MORE  
THAN 900  
STAFF AND IS  
RESPONSIBLE  
FOR PROVIDING  
SERVICES AND  
FACILITIES TO  
MORE THAN  
155,000 PEOPLE

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# WHO WE ARE

**The Newcastle City Council is comprised of two distinct parts: the elected Council and the administration.**

## Elected Council

Twelve councillors and the Lord Mayor make up the elected body of Newcastle City Council. The Newcastle local government area is divided into four wards, with each ward represented by three councillors who are elected for a four year term.

Under the *Local Government Act 1993*, councillors have a responsibility to:

- participate in the determination of the budget
- play a key role in the creation and review of Council policies, objectives and criteria relating to the regulatory functions, and
- review Council's performance and the delivery of services, management plans and revenue policies.

A councillor represents residents and ratepayers, provides leadership and guidance to the community, and facilitates communication between the community and Council. Council meets every third and fourth Tuesday of the month from February to November.

## The Administration

The administration is organised into three groups, each with a range of responsibilities.

The General Manager leads the administrative arm of Newcastle City Council and is responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the business and ensuring that the decisions of Council are implemented.

The General Manager reports to the full elected Council.



# ADMINISTRATION



## CEO (Interim)

Frank Cordingley

## Council and Legal Services

Frank Giordano



## Director Planning and Regulatory

Peter Chrystal

### Development and Building

Murray Blackburn-Smith

### Strategic Planning

Jill Gaynor

### Regulatory Services

Andrew Baxter

### Cultural Facilities

Liz Burcham

### Libraries

Suzie Gately



## Director Corporate Services

Glen Cousins

### Finance

Andrew Glauser

### Information Technology

Greg Brent

### Human Resources

Graeme Holland

### Commercial Property

Paul Nelson

### Customer Service

Rod Bales



## Director Infrastructure

Greg Essex (Acting)

### Infrastructure Planning

Ken Liddell

### Civil Works

Greg Essex

### Projects and Contracts

Greg Sainsbury

### Facilities and Recreation

Phil Moore

### Waste Management

Darren North



# ELECTED COUNCIL 2012-2016



**Cr Nuatali Nemes**  
Lord Mayor (Labor)  
20 November 2014 - Current

## Ward 1

Bar Beach, Carrington, Cooks Hill, Islington, Maryville, Mayfield, Mayfield East, Mayfield West, Newcastle, Newcastle East, Newcastle West, Stockton, The Hill, The Junction (part), Tighes Hill, Warabrook, Wickham

## Ward 2

Adamstown, Adamstown Heights, Broadmeadow, Hamilton, Hamilton East, Hamilton South, Hamilton North, Merewether, Merewether Heights, The Junction (part)

## Ward 3

Georgetown, Jesmond, Kotara, Lambton, New Lambton, New Lambton Heights, North Lambton, Waratah, Waratah West

## Ward 4

Beresfield, Birmingham Gardens, Black Hill, Callaghan, Elmore Vale, Fletcher, Hexham, Lenaghan, Maryland, Minmi, Rankin Park, Sandgate, Shortland, Tarro, Wallsend







**Cr Michael Osborne** (Greens)

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**Cr Stephanie Posniak** (Labor)

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**Cr Lisa Tierney** (Liberal)

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**Cr Tim Crakanthorp** (Labor)

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**Cr Brad Luke** (Liberal)

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**Cr Therese Doyle** (Greens)

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**Cr David Compton** (Liberal)

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**Cr Jason Dunn** (Labor)

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**Cr Allan Robinson** (Independent)

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# IP&R OVERVIEW

On 1 October 2009, the NSW Government adopted new integrated planning and reporting legislation for local councils. The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework in response to this legislation is demonstrated in the diagram below.

## Annual Report

We are required under s428 (Act) of the *Local Government Act* to report on the achievements in implementing the Delivery Program and the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives in the Community Strategic Plan at which those activities are directed.





# NEWCASTLE

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NEWCASTLE IS AUSTRALIA'S SEVENTH LARGEST CITY. OVER THE PAST DECADE THE POPULATION OF THE NEWCASTLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA HAS SURGED WITH SIGNIFICANT GROWTH IN ITS WESTERN CORRIDOR.

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The city offers a remarkable and diverse natural environment—from coastal headlands and beaches to wetlands, mangrove forests, steep ridges and rainforest gullies. This diversity presents significant challenges for Council in terms of maintaining this environment and the broad range of workforce skills required to do so.





# OUR PEOPLE

WE HAVE COPEd WITH EARTHQUAKES, STORMS AND THE CLOSURE OF MAJOR INDUSTRIES AND WE CONTINUE TO GROW AND CHANGE.





Novocastrians are a proud community who have been shaped by their heritage.

For thousands of years, the area we now know as Newcastle was nurtured and protected by local traditional custodians, including the Worimi and Awabakal peoples, who lived around the mouth of the Hunter River. They called this place Muloobinba and the river, the Coquun.

From the traditional custodians to European settlement, our culture is shaped collectively by our history as a penal settlement and the birthplace of the Australian coal industry. Ships, convicts and coal—these early and difficult beginnings have made us what we are today: a loyal, welcoming and diverse community.





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## NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL MANAGES 14 KMS OF SPECTACULAR COASTLINE, OVER 100,000 STREET TREES AND MORE THAN 400 PARKS, RESERVES AND WETLANDS

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# WHAT WE DO

We are responsible for providing a wide range of community facilities and services. They include:

- town planning
- construction and maintenance of local roads, streets and bridges
- preservation of historic places
- food and public health services
- waste management and recycling
- supervision of building and development control
- strategy and enforcement for parking
- maintenance of parks, sporting fields, pools and beach facilities
- provision and servicing of libraries, community centres, theatres and art galleries
- pet registration and control
- tourism and economic development
- child care and youth services and
- enforcement of a range of legislation.

We currently manage a diverse asset portfolio of hundreds of assets valued in excess of \$1.6 billion. They include:

- Newcastle and Merewether Ocean Baths
- Newcastle City Hall
- Civic Theatre Newcastle
- Newcastle Art Gallery
- Newcastle Museum
- Fort Scratchley.

We are responsible for the construction and maintenance of around 3,500 kilometres of roads, footpaths, drainage, and kerbs and guttering. Many natural assets are our responsibility too, including 14 kilometres of spectacular coastline, over 100,000 street trees and more than 400 parks, reserves and wetlands.

We work with local communities and business owners to improve the places we live, by supporting our business improvement associations, place making initiatives, murals in public places and other beautification projects. We are changing the look of the city centre through the façade improvement scheme, which encourages local building owners to undertake maintenance to improve the look of the whole area.

We encourage involvement in decision making and planning for our future through Newcastle Voice, our community reference panel, which has more than 2,400 members. We also support Newcastle Youth Council who represent Newcastle's young people aged 15-25 years.

### April 2015 Storm

Newcastle City Council staff worked tirelessly to help the Newcastle community to recover from the April super storms. Our staff worked around the clock unblocking drains, clearing roads and making the city safe.

# APRIL 20-22 // 2015 STORM

**135 km**  
winds  
wind gusts at Nobbys

**47%**  
above  
average  
rainfall

**10,000**  
trees lost in Newcastle

On the Hunter Storms...  
“This is the biggest  
response operation  
in the history  
of the Service”  
(NSW SES, 27 April, 2015)

## OUR RESPONSE

### WHAT WE ACHIEVED IN THE FIRST 5 WEEKS



**Cleared**  
fallen trees  
from **roads**  
and houses  
Work to unstable  
trees and branches



**Cleared**  
parks of **debris**  
in time for  
**ANZAC Day**  
services



**8000**  
more calls  
than April last year



**FREE** tipping  
for **5 weeks**  
**9500**  
tonnes  
of waste



**2500**  
kerbside  
collections  
of waste, including  
**green waste**



**Recycled**  
**7000**  
tonnes  
of green waste

## STORM RECOVERY PLAN

### THE ROAD AHEAD



**6 MONTHS**  
remove stumps



**1 YEAR**  
repair pathways  
damaged by falling trees



**+1 YEAR**  
ongoing tree replacement  
and infrastructure work -  
roads, footpaths, drainage



### CITY OF NEWCASTLE OUT OF POCKET COSTS

Replacing fallen trees

**\$1 MILLION**

Damage bill:

**\$1 MILLION**

buildings and other infrastructure

Damage bill:

**\$1 MILLION**

pathways, footpaths & roads from fallen trees

Free tipping bill:

**\$500,000**

in handling and processing costs

### THE CITY OF NEWCASTLE'S RECOVERY EFFORT WILL IN PART BE ASSISTED BY:

- Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery funding which is a joint Commonwealth/State assistance program
- claims on insurance for damage to buildings and some other infrastructure items



# OUR VISION

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IN 2030 NEWCASTLE WILL BE A SMART, LIVEABLE AND SUSTAINABLE CITY. WE WILL CELEBRATE OUR UNIQUE CITY AND PROTECT OUR NATURAL ASSETS.

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# COMMUNITY VISION

In order to ensure Council is working towards delivering a better Newcastle in line with the vision of the community, a community strategic plan was developed as a guide to inform policies and actions throughout our city for 20 years. This plan is known as [Newcastle 2030](#).

- *In 2030 Newcastle will be a Smart, Liveable and Sustainable city.*
- *We will celebrate our unique city and protect our natural assets.*
- *We will build resilience in the face of future challenges and encourage innovation and creativity.*
- *As an inclusive community, we will embrace new residents and foster a culture of care.*
- *We will be a leading lifestyle city with vibrant public places, connected transport networks and a distinctive built environment.*
- *And as we make our way toward 2030, we will achieve all this within a framework of open and collaborative leadership.*

From this vision the community identified seven strategic directions and 23 objectives to help deliver a better Newcastle. These are:

## A connected city

## A protected and enhanced environment

## Vibrant and activated public places

## A caring and inclusive community

## A liveable and distinctive built environment

## A smart and innovative city

## Open and collaborative leadership

Implementing and delivering these strategic directions requires a partnership between government (federal, state and local) and our community. The *Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan* identifies these key responsibilities and partnerships.

In 2012/2013 a review was undertaken of the Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan to ensure it continued to represent the vision of the community and included the release of the State of the City Report in August 2012.

The review provided an update of the challenges and opportunities facing Newcastle, and involved a broad range of community engagement activities where feedback was sought on our shared objectives and ideas for the future. More than 1,100 community members participated in this review program.

The following table represents Council's role in the delivery of the Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan:

COUNCIL IS  
WORKING  
TOWARDS  
DELIVERING  
A BETTER  
NEWCASTLE IN  
LINE WITH THE  
VISION OF THE  
COMMUNITY

Responsibility	Connected City	Protected and Enhanced Environment	Vibrant and Activated Public Places	Caring and Inclusive Community	Liveable and Distinctive Built Environment	Smart and Innovative City	Open and Collaborative Leadership
Advocate	●	●		●	●		●
Collaborator	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Lead Agency			●		●		●



Image: ANZAC Day march past Civic Park



# PART 2

## OUR PERFORMANCE



Image: Wildlife arena, Blackbutt Reserve

# OPERATIONAL PLAN ACTIONS

PROGRESS ON THE ACTIONS AND TARGETS FOR THE 2014/15 OPERATIONAL PLAN AND THE FOUR YEAR DELIVERY PROGRAM TRACKED WELL WITH A TOTAL OF 44 OUT 110 COMPLETED AND 64 ARE ON TRACK AND CONTINUING IN 2015.

In delivering to the Community Strategic Plan, Council commits to its responsibility for key areas of the plan and continues to advocate on behalf of the Newcastle community in areas not directly resourced by Council.

Our four year Delivery Program and one year Operational Plan identifies the actions and programs we are undertaking to help achieve the shared vision for Newcastle. Key actions and projects progress are listed below.

Continuing actions are a result of:

- activities that span the four years of our Delivery Program
- changes in priorities of deliverables
- realisation of cost savings through deferring to the following year
- ongoing Strategy
- development of supporting models and plans to ensure best value

## Performance Summary

Below is a summary of our performance, with full details contained under each of the Community Strategic Plan themes:

	★	✓	!	>
<b>A connected city</b>	10	7		
<b>A protected and enhanced environment</b>	4	10		
<b>Vibrant and activated public places</b>	10	15	1	
<b>A caring and inclusive community</b>	7	9		1
<b>A liveable and distinctive built environment</b>	5	8		
<b>A smart and innovative city</b>	3	7		
<b>Open and collaborative leadership</b>	5	8		

★ Completed ✓ On track ! Not on track > Deferred



# CONNECTED CITY

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OUR TRANSPORT NETWORKS AND SERVICES WILL BE WELL CONNECTED AND CONVENIENT. WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT WILL BE VIABLE OPTION FOR THE MAJORITY OF OUR TRIPS.

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## 1. Cycleways

Cyclists are enjoying the smooth ride along the renewed Jesmond Park cycleway. More than two kilometres of cycleway was resurfaced linking Lambton and Jesmond and the John Hunter Hospital. Approximately 800 metres of the city's east-west cycleway has also been renewed and an extension of the St James cycleway created through Alder Park, which allows New Lambton, New Lambton Heights and Adamstown Heights residents to connect with the Newcastle regional cycling network.

## 2. Road resurfacing

More than \$2.3 million was spent resurfacing roads across the city including Enterprise and Kinta Drive, Beresfield, Everett and Young Streets, Carrington, Honeysuckle Drive and Merewether Street, Newcastle, Sunhill Drive, Merewether, Orchardtown Road, New Lambton, Pitt Street and Wharf Crescent, Stockton, Railway Street, Wickham and Stockrington Road, Black Hill.

## 3. Shortland Esplanade infrastructure project

The Shortland Esplanade infrastructure project is underway with road and parking improvements from Nobbys to Newcastle Beach and the revitalisation of community facilities in the Newcastle Beach and Ocean Baths. The works include construction of the Bathers Way shared pathway, road and drainage infrastructure, parking, embankment stabilisation, viewing platforms, picnic areas and landscaping.

## 4. Park safe, stay safe

The park safe, stay safe school program was launched in February 2015 and was designed to improve road safety around primary schools in Newcastle local government area in partnership with principals, parents, students and the broader community. The project safety messaging, delivered by Newcastle City Council parking officers was designed to provide children with safe access to school. This collaborative engagement strategy with parents and teachers was seen to be an area where considerable improvements could be made using education as the basis for change rather than relying on enforcement alone.

## 5. Footpath construction in King Street

Work to improve pedestrian and road user safety while maintaining on street parking continued in King Street, Newcastle. This work connected to previously completed works in King Street from Darby Street to The Tower Cinemas and from 141 King Street to Perkins Street. The first phase of the footpath rehabilitation work between Crown and Brown Streets is complete; crews have now left the site to ensure no disruptions are caused over the busy holiday period. They will return in early 2016.

Actions/Project	Responsibility	June 2015
Develop and Implement the transport stops and shelters program	Infrastructure Planning	★
Develop and Implement the roundabout program	Infrastructure Planning	★
Develop and implement the Roads to Recovery Program	Infrastructure Planning	★
Implement Car Park maintenance and renewal	Projects and Contracts	✓
Investigate Inner City bike lanes	Infrastructure Planning	★
Develop and implement the Road Resurfacing Program, City Wide Roads Signs and Line replacement and City Wide Roads rejuvenation Program	Civil Works	✓
Implement Newcastle City Council Cycling action plan through the Cycle ways program	Infrastructure Planning	★
Implement the Footpath rehabilitation Program	Infrastructure Planning	★
Implement the city wide bus shelter replacement program	Infrastructure Planning	★
Implementation of the Hunter Street Revitalisation Project	Projects and Contracts	✓
Participate and provide input through the project working group to the Newcastle Light Rail Project	Strategic Planning	✓
Manage Council's off street multi level car park to meet the parking demands and a commercially competitive environment	Regulatory Services	✓
Enforce the parking provisions of the NSW Road Rules to achieve traffic and pedestrian safety and turnover of parking spaces	Regulatory Services	✓
Implement the recommendations of Councils adopted revised parking strategy	Regulatory Services	✓
Undertake the approved program of local traffic studies, including development of plan, community consultation, reporting to Newcastle City Traffic Committee (NCTC) and Council.	Infrastructure Planning	★
Liaise with Roads and Maritime Services on new developments with the State Road Network	Infrastructure Planning	★
Improve Rideability of road network	Infrastructure Planning	★

 Completed 
  On track 
  Not on track 
  Deferred





# PROTECTED AND ENHANCED ENVIRONMENT

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IN 2030 OUR UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT  
WILL BE UNDERSTOOD, MAINTAINED  
AND PROTECTED.

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## 1. Stormwater outlets

We stabilised a number of stormwater outlets across the city. Most notable for the year was an outlet along Callan Avenue, Maryland where stormwater discharges directly into Hexham Swamp, an internationally significant wetland under the Ramsar Convention. This collaborative project between Council, Hunter Local Land Services, National Parks and Wildlife Service and Soil Conservation Service included rockwork and native revegetation to stabilise the outlet, slow the flow of stormwater, reduce erosion, provide habitat and improve water quality entering the wetland.

## 2. Stockton foreshore

The fourth stage of repairs to the river foreshore along Stockton Ballast Ground was delivered. Work included stabilising 306 metres of shoreline with rock, building a 61 metre long rock benches for coastal saltmarsh (an endangered ecological community) to grow, landscaping along the top of the bank and infill planting to the existing landscaped areas, to the edge of the cycleway. Cyclists, joggers and walkers are also enjoying stopping at a series of educational signs (50% grant funded by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage) along the Stockton Cycleway, and learning about the important environmental values of the river shoreline.

## 3. Creek Naming

The NSW Geographic Names Board officially named seven creeks in Newcastle as part of a Council initiated community engagement project. The participatory project invited local community members to nominate and vote on new urban creek names. Our staff took Newcastle residents and school students on walks and talks to learn more about their local history, natural environment and local waterways before receiving nearly 200 nominations. The community were invited to celebrate one of the new creek names by participating in a creek naming ceremony. This celebration was jointly coordinated by Heaton Public School, Council, Wetland Care Australia and Hunter Local Land Services and was part of broader on-ground creek rehabilitation work.

## 4. Award for Excellence in Infrastructure

We received the Stormwater Industry Association New South Wales Award for Excellence in Infrastructure. The Award recognised us and our service provider, Soil Conservation Service Hunter, for urban waterway rehabilitation works within Ironbark Creek catchment. Soil Conservation Service went onto win an international Environmental Excellence Award for innovation, Education and Contribution to the Erosion and Sediment Control Industry for the same project.

## 5. Stormwater quality improvement devices

We manage over 250 stormwater quality improvement devices. Most are located within the city's drainage system. A number of 'vegetated' devices have been incorporated in the revitalisation of our coastal zone at John Parade and Watkin Streets, Memorial Drive, Robinson Reserve and Dixon Park. A three-monthly inspection and maintenance program removes litter, sediment and other pollutants from these devices - to help reduce the pollution flowing from the city into our waterways and onto our beaches.

Actions/Project	Responsibility	June 2015
Flood Road Signage In consultation with the SES and RMS, background study to identify priority locations for the installation of passive and active road signage, considerate of the existing signage network and potential ongoing maintenance and installation demands. Signs installed Depend on background study, the status and extent of the existing flood signage network that may need replacing or amending, and cost	Infrastructure Planning	✓
Morgan - Selwyn Street Floodway Study Merewether - Evaluate management options, feasibility, effectiveness and cost of voluntary acquiring whole or part thereof of affected properties, and/or structural works, to reduce the flooding risk.	Infrastructure Planning	✓
Resource Recovery Facility Expansion & Enhancement	Waste Management	✓
Drainage rehabilitation - Replacement of deteriorated stormwater infrastructure	Civil Works	✓
Community Education at environment rehabilitation worksites - Build stronger working relationships between residents and Council through increased community awareness of the role and value of environmental assets through understanding and participating in Council's asset management on ground activities.	Waste Management	✓
Proactively monitor and regulate activities to minimise environmental impact, including implementing Council's Business Pollution Prevention Program (BPPP) and Erosion & Sediment Control Program	Regulatory Services	✓
Manage contaminated land information and seek appropriate remediation through the development application process.	Regulatory Services	✓
Proactively monitor and regulate on site sewage management systems to minimise the risk of water pollution and public health impacts.	Regulatory Services	★
Work with the community to achieve measurable environment improvement in waste reduction through the development, delivery, evaluation and refinement of waste programs, learning modules and internal educations.	Waste Management	✓
Implement the tree inspection program in line with the city wide maintenance policy	Civil works	✓
Develop a waste education strategy with a focus on promoting waste avoidance and behavioural change, to encourage increased participation in residential waste reduction, resource recovery and recycling initiatives, as well as working to reduce household contamination rates.	Waste Management	✓
Promote and manage community based groups in provisions of environmental projects to help restore natural areas in accordance with relevant plans of Management	Facilities and Recreation	✓
Plan and implement community planting days	Facilities and Recreation	★
Identify and deliver projects to achieve energy and water savings as part of the 10 year financial plan and the <i>Newcastle 2020 Carbon and Water Management Plan</i>	Projects and Contracts	✓

 Completed 
  On track 
  Not on track 
  Deferred





# VIBRANT AND ACTIVATED PUBLIC PLACES

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## PROMOTING PEOPLE'S HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND WELLBEING.

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### 1. **Restoration of Newcastle City Hall and clock tower**

Restoration work is continuing on one of Newcastle's most prestigious and recognisable buildings. This conservation work includes sandstone replacement and repair, waterproofing and lead flashing replacement, restoration of metal windows, copper roof restoration, replacement electrical and lighting, and refurbishment of the clock mechanisms. Replacement sandstone for City Hall conservation work must be a very high quality oxidizing (self-colouring) Sydney basin 'Yellowblock' sandstone sourced from an excavation site in George Street, Sydney. The severe storms in April delayed completion of the current stage which is now expected to be completed by December 2015.

### 2. **Blackbutt Reserve wildlife arena**

A new wildlife arena and amenities block opened at Blackbutt Reserve. The wildlife arena is designed to be an interactive outdoor classroom with tiered seating, state of the art audio visual technology and lockers for students and tourist groups to store bags while exploring the reserve. The new amenities block includes a family bathroom and parent's room along with male, female and disabled toilets, allowing Blackbutt to cater for a large range of users.

### 4. **Night OWLS competition**

The Night OWLS (Original Welcoming Lighting Solutions) competition in August sought submissions from young people aged 15 to 29, to design creative lighting installations in selected areas of the city centre. Their innovative and creative solutions were shared in an exhibition and funding is being sought to install the top two submissions.

### 5. **Coastal revitalisation**

The Merewether Beach precinct public domain improvements were recognised in the 2014 NSW Planning Institute of Australia Awards for Planning Excellence. Part of Council's overall coastal revitalisation project, the upgrades included wider pathways, plaza areas, seating, lighting and landscaping, creating a community hub and gathering space.

Image: City Hall clock tower restoration  
in progress

Actions/Project	Responsibility	June 2015
City Hall Tower façade restoration	Projects and Contracts	✓
Design, develop and present public and education programs for the Newcastle Art Gallery annually for general and specialised audiences represented in the Newcastle LGA that link to both the exhibition program and collection and are not only educational but enjoyable and relevant	Cultural Facilities	✓
Maintain and support the high quality development and ongoing management of the Gallery's permanent collection including its access by audience from general to academic through publications, resources, exhibitions, research and programs	Cultural Facilities	✓
Revitalise and restore our public art and monuments	Projects and Contracts	✓
Prepare and adopt the community Facilities strategy	Facilities and Recreation	✓
Deliver a community Safety Program	Strategic Planning	✓
Support local community initiatives through place making grants	Strategic Planning	✓
Provide safe public places by delivering the Business Lighting project	Strategic Planning	✓
Implement recommendations outlined within the Parkland and Recreational Strategy across the City	Facilities and Recreation	✓
Implement programs for the building and maintenance of shade structures, seating and playgrounds and associated parks infrastructure	Facilities and Recreation	★
Promote appropriate environmental and recreational community use of Blackbutt Reserve facilities	Facilities and Recreation	✓
Reviewing the future role of local parks less than 0.2 hectares in size.	Facilities and Recreation	✓
Investigate opportunities to improve the financial sustainability of swimming pools	Facilities and Recreation	★
Develop parkland and recreation facility service levels to align with facility roles and provide operational efficiencies.	Facilities and Recreation	!
Planning of a district sport and recreation complex to serve the long term needs of the growing Western Corridor	Facilities and Recreation	✓
Strengthening partnerships and opportunities for Newcastle sporting associations to participate in the planning, decision making and prioritisation of sport and recreation projects	Facilities and Recreation	✓
Review and update the Crime Prevention Plan	Strategic Planning	✓
Review and update the Alcohol Safe Management Strategy Newcastle	Strategic Planning	✓
Implement the recommendation from the Coastal Plan of Management	Infrastructure Planning	✓
Facilitate night time economy initiatives	Strategic Planning	★
Partner and facilitate the Newcastle Writers Festival	Libraries	★
Facilitate and support broad participation in community arts based programs	Libraries	★
Implement Exhibition Program Including a range of community partnerships. This year we partnered with YWCA to present the She exhibition which had 5000 visitor and 5 support organisations.	Libraries	★
Implement various programs for libraries; children's book week, author program, senior week, Harmony day, story time and the Wacky wombat program	Libraries	★
Work with the community to remember WWI centenary. Includes a book project working with schools and the community	Libraries	★
Facilitate a place making approach to all projects	Strategic Planning	★



A photograph showing two council staff members in high-visibility green shirts and hats working in the rain. One staff member is using a long-handled tool to clear debris, while the other stands nearby. The background is a blurred view of a park or street during a heavy rainstorm.

# CARING AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

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DIVERSITY IS EMBRACED,  
EVERYONE IS VALUED AND HAS THE  
OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE AND  
BELONG.

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**1. April 2015 storm recovery**

During the April 2015 storm, Council crews conducted urgent road repairs and tree work in areas where there was imminent threat to community safety, in some cases leaving their own damaged homes to do so. Crews then went to work on Civic Park, removing numerous fallen trees in just two days in order to ensure ANZAC Day commemorations were not disrupted.

**2. Welcoming city for refugees**

In March 2015, Council endorsed a statement in favour of a culturally and religiously diverse city and pledged to provide a welcoming city for refugees. The statement affirms Council's commitment to *"maintain our city as a culturally diverse, inclusive community, united by a commitment to democratic principles and fairness"* as well as *"the right of all our residents to enjoy equal rights and be treated with equal respect."*

**3. International Children's Games team**

Council sponsored Newcastle's team in the International Children's Games. The team of 18 outstanding athletes aged 12 to 15 competed against young people from more than 30 countries in the first ICG games to be held in the Southern Hemisphere. Team Newcastle participated in four sports.

**4. Acknowledgement of Aboriginal Custodians and Welcome to Country**

We launched the publication 'Guidelines for Acknowledgement of Aboriginal Custodians and Welcome to Country' in cooperation with Council's Guraki Aboriginal Advisory Committee. It offers guidelines for when an Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners or a Welcome to Country ceremony is advised. By making these guidelines publicly available, we hope to encourage the practice of paying respect to local Aboriginal cultural traditions and history.

**5. CityServe projects**

The CityServe project completed about 70 projects in three local government areas - Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Shellharbour. In Newcastle 993 CityServe volunteers completed 45 projects contributing 5958 volunteer hours upgrading facilities at our parks and sporting facilities.

Actions/Project	Responsibility	June 2015
Implementation of the Merewether Baths Restoration	Projects and Contracts	★
Implementation of Henderson Park Community Hall Renewal	Facilities and Recreation	➤
Prepare and deliver Youth Week and Seniors Week	Strategic Planning	★
Prepare and deliver an Aboriginal Youth Arts projects consistent with the Grant	Strategic Planning	★
Implement actions from the Cultural Development Program	Strategic Planning	✓
Facilitate Guraki and Youth Advisory Committees	Strategic Planning	✓
Deliver on the Community Development Projects, which address needs of target groups, specific issues and place based initiatives	Strategic Planning	✓
Complete a review of child care centres and early childhood centres and the complete the priority actions	Strategic Planning	★
Promote awareness of the requirements of the <i>Companion Animals Act</i> with respect to the ownership of companion animals	Regulatory Services	✓
Participate in Hunter Region Health Education Committee (HRHEC)	Regulatory Services	✓
Actively encourage use of open space through junior ranger programs at Blackbutt, community planting days and volunteer groups.	Facilities and Recreation	★
Collect and preserve materials relating to the history of Newcastle	Libraries	★
Acquire new works by artists for exhibitions and the Newcastle Art Gallery collection	Cultural Facilities	✓
Promote positive ageing activities for seniors and inclusive activities for people with a disability	Strategic Planning	✓
Position and promote City Hall as an accessible and multi – use venue with diverse hiring potential for local, regional and national clients	Cultural Facilities	✓
Developing and managing a diverse program of exhibitions annually that showcase local national and international artists practice	Cultural Facilities	✓
Provide a library service with appropriate materials to assist residents with life long learning needs	Libraries	★

★ Completed 
 ✓ On track 
 ! Not on track 
 ➤ Deferred





# LIVEABLE AND DISTINCTIVE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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AN ATTRACTIVE CITY THAT IS BUILT  
AROUND PEOPLE AND REFLECTS  
OUR SENSE OF IDENTITY.

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## 1. Fletcher Community Centre awarded

Fletcher Community Centre won the GHD Small Scale Commercial Development Award. Now open for use by the local community, the centre "demonstrates sustainable building practices with community, environmental and social benefits." The Merewether Beach public domain improvements won the award for CityGreen Landscape and Public Art. The jury noted that *"returning priority to the pedestrian and providing a place to enjoy Australia's national surfing reserves are two intended design objectives that are immediately clear when arriving at the site"*.

## 2. Local planning focus of new strategy

The Local Planning Strategy was developed after more than 18 months of community engagement activities. The strategy is a comprehensive land use strategy to guide the future growth and development of the city of Newcastle. The strategy implements the land use directions from the Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan and reflects the outcomes of the Council's other strategies as they relate to land use. The Local Planning Strategy replaces the Newcastle Urban Strategy as the principal land use strategy for Newcastle.

## 3. Heritage conservation areas

We engaged with local community members in heritage conservation areas (HCAs) to better understand what residents/property owners value about their HCAs and to understand how we can enhance these values within the context of development assessment. The findings from the community engagement activities informed the review of the Heritage Conservation Areas Development Control Plan.

## 4. Making great places

We supported a range of activities, events and initiatives to improve public spaces via the Make Your Place community grant program. One great activity was the Paws to Pavement 2.3k fundraising walk at the Stockton Foreshore which include local non-profit community groups, a BBQ and 'doggie market' with products and services on show specifically for dogs.

## 5. Energy Hunter project

The Energy Hunter project has helped Newcastle businesses become more energy efficient, working with a network of 350 small businesses to reduce their electricity consumption and bills. Since 2012, businesses participating in Energy Hunter have collectively reduced their annual electricity consumption by over 4 million kilowatt hours, saving over 4,200 tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions and over \$1.1 million in the businesses' electricity bills.

Actions/Project	Responsibility	June 2015
Prepare and implement various buildings fire assessment	Facilities and Recreation	✓
Assess hazardous materials in various building across the City	Infrastructure Planning	★
Provide supervision, coordination and technical instruction to private developers in the construction of new residential subdivisions and commercial precincts in accordance with approved development criteria	Infrastructure Planning	★
Deliver Hunter Street Mall short term Improvements	Civil Works	★
Monitor and amend Local Environment Plan 2012 (LEP) and Development Control Plan 2012 (DCP) as required	Strategic Planning	✓
Implement the strategies from the Heritage places strategic plan	Strategic Planning	✓
Prepare project plan and review boundaries and controls applying to heritage conservation areas.	Strategic Planning	✓
Delivery of business sector energy and resource management projects in accordance with the Newcastle 2020 Carbon and Water Management Action Plan	Projects and Contracts	✓
Implement place making policy	Strategic Planning	✓
Review controls in both the Local Environment Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP), including stakeholders consultation and establishment of an Industry liaison group for single dwellings Development Controls Plan	Strategic Planning	★
Transition LEP and DCP into the new planning legislation	Strategic Planning	✓
Review contributions applicable for mines subsidence grouting work	Strategic Planning	✓
Prepare and implement a community safety strategy	Strategic Planning	✓

 Completed 
  On track 
  Not on track 
  Deferred





# SMART AND INNOVATIVE CITY

## A LEADER IN SMART INNOVATIONS WITH A HEALTHY, DIVERSE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY.

### 1. Savings through installation of solar panels

Council installed 222 kilowatts of solar PV capacity at our Works Depot, City Library and Newcastle Art Gallery. The installation of solar PV is reducing our exposure to electricity prices, while helping to meet our goal of having 30% of our electricity generated from low-carbon sources by 2020.

### 2. AFC Asian Cup

Newcastle successfully hosted AFC Asian Cup fixtures in January, delivering a global audience to our city and showcasing our ability to host events on an international scale. The stunning semi-final at Hunter Stadium delivered a sell-out crowd and a Socceroos win, with the Asian Football Confederation saying that Newcastle was the friendliest, most engaged and best organised host city.

### 3. Guinness World Record

In February, Newcastle set a new Guinness World Record for the longest line of surfboards when community members lined up 608 surfboards, measuring 1,123.28m, at Nobbys Beach, smashing the previous record of 398 boards set at Port Noarlunga Beach in Adelaide in December 2013.

### 4. ANZAC centenary

Newcastle commemorated 100 years of ANZAC with an extensive program of events including the traditional dawn service at Nobbys Beach, the march from Hunter Street to Civic Park and the united commemoration service at Civic Park. There was special significance this year with the opening of the Newcastle Memorial Walk and the lighting of the ANZAC memorial flame at Camp Shortland.

Actions/Project	Responsibility	June 2015
Identify opportunities to partner with other groups to deliver activation and development projects. Eg, Hit the Bricks	Strategic Planning	✓
Transition LEP and DCP into the new Planning legislation	Strategic Planning	✓
Develop a Visitor Economy Masterplan for the CBD	Strategic Planning	★
Promote the location for a Convention and Exhibition Centre	Strategic Planning	✓
Develop and promote iconic lookouts and walking trails to create linkages between precincts with "experience" nodes within walking distance.	Strategic Planning	✓
Build industry capacity to engage in the distribution system, in particular to become "export ready" – for international and cruise visitors.	Strategic Planning	✓
Invest in 'market ready' programs to educate business for new markets, interstate and Asia/China	Strategic Planning	✓
"All Together Perfect" project (Newcastle, Port Stephens, Hunter Valley), conference bidding, destination promotion, Conference and exhibition centre project.	Strategic Planning	✓
Deliver regular events - Anzac Day 2015 Centenary; Carols by Candlelight, Christmas in the City; Australia Day National Maritime Festival; New Years Eve – review of events, delivery, outsourcing, budgets, growth opportunities.	Strategic Planning	★
AFC Asian Cup 2015: Deliver contractual obligations and develop citywide approach to event delivery for Newcastle. Support marketing and volunteer program, deliver Fanzone and identify legacy opportunities.	Strategic Planning	★

 Completed 
  On track 
  Not on track 
  Deferred





# OPEN AND COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

## A STRONG DEMOCRACY WITH AN ACTIVELY ENGAGED COMMUNITY AND EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS.

### 1. Newcastle Voice

Our community engagement panel Newcastle Voice had 2,432 active members at the end of June 2015. This figure is approximately 1.65% of the Newcastle local government area population (148,535 ABS 2011) and above the baseline of 1.25% for statistical significance.

### 2. Engagement projects

Our engagement team undertook 13 community engagement projects in 2014/2015 including 22 face to face community sessions attended by more than 300 community members.

### 3. Surveys

We received survey responses from 1,487 members of the broad community and 4,525 from our Newcastle Voice community on topics ranging from the special rate variation to future use of the Newcastle and Merewether Ocean Baths pavilions, Newcastle After Dark and the Local Planning Strategy.

### 4. Aboriginal Employment Strategy initiatives

We fulfilled a range of initiatives outlined our 2013-2017 Aboriginal Employment Strategy including implementing a career development program for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander employees, cultural awareness training facilitated at local Aboriginal cultural facilities, individual career development coaching held for Aboriginal employees and we also held NAIDOC week celebrations.

Image: Newcastle Voice attending one of the local community events

Actions/Project	Responsibility	June 2015
The Enterprise Resource Planning Project will implement a solution for Council's core enterprise business areas of: Customers, Property, Assets, Finance, Human Resources, Governance and Document Management	Information Technology	✓
Consolidate internet and intranet onto one common platform	Information Technology	★
Plan and conduct a network penetration of Council's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure & Develop and implement an integrated ICT security framework consistent with industry standard practices	Information Technology	✓
Transition LEP and DCP into the new Planning legislation	Strategic Planning	✓
Monitor implementation of the Community Strategic Plan 2030	Strategic Planning	✓
Ensure the management of Council's budget allocations and funding alternatives are compliant with Council policy and relevant legislation to ensure the long term financial sustainability of the organisation	Finance	★
Implement the initiatives from the Workforce Management Plan including, the Aboriginal Employment Strategy and The Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan	Human Resources	✓
Establish a Leadership Development Framework that incorporates Cultural Change (People & Safety) and Performance Management to deliver a consistent leadership approach across Council	Human Resources	✓
Identify redundant assets for disposal and for the proceeds to be placed in the land and property reserves to assist with reducing the infrastructure backlog	Commercial Property	✓
Undertake a media engagement strategy to maximize positive exposure opportunities and effectively manage any potential issues	Customer Service	★
Develop and implement a recruitment and retention strategy for Newcastle Voice	Customer Service	★
Coordinate engagement with identified industry groups such as Newcastle Tourism Industry Group, University of Newcastle (UoN), APC, UDIA, HBC, RDA Hunter, Hunter Net, Newcastle Port.	Strategic Planning	✓
Promote the Williamstown Aerospace Centre (WAC) in conjunction with PSC, NAL, and other stakeholders in defence industry	Strategic Planning	★

 Completed 
  On track 
  Not on track 
  Deferred



# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

THE YEAR 2014/15 HAS SEEN THE SIGNIFICANT EFFICIENCY MEASURES TAKEN IN PAST YEARS IMBEDDED INTO COUNCIL OPERATIONS.

The priority has been ensuring, through prudent financial management, that operating costs are contained and revenue opportunities maximised, in order to achieve financial sustainability.

A sound financial position provides the resources necessary for Council to meet its strategic objectives and reduce the asset maintenance and renewal backlog.

The information provided has been sourced from the audited financial statements.



Image: Opening the new Wildlife Arena at Blackbutt Reserve







## Financial Performance Measures

# ENSURING COUNCIL REACHED A POSITION OF FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY HAS REMAINED A PRIORITY OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS.

The audited financial results for 30 June 2015 continue the recent trend of improvement with Council achieving an operating surplus for the second consecutive year.

This consistency in operating performance has been achieved for the first time in the last decade of audited results. The 2014/15 operating surplus of \$12.518 million continues the trend of improvement commenced in 2013/14.

Over the last two years Council has prudently managed its long term financial sustainability by:

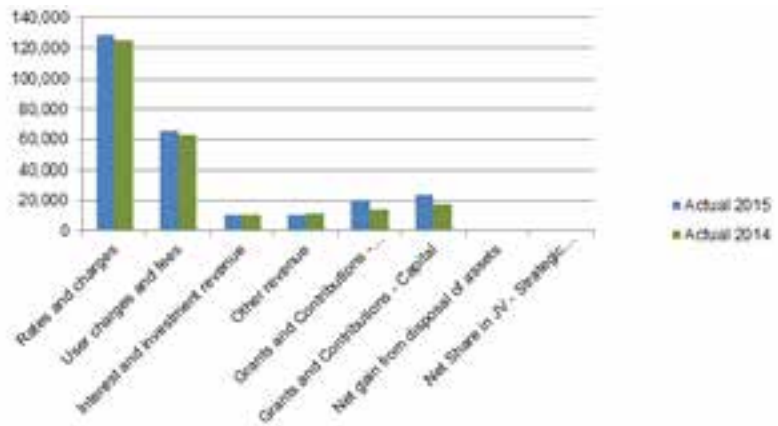
- Undertaking a significant program of initiatives to reduce operating expenses
- Increasing revenues
- Implementing a disciplined and measured capital works program
- Extensively reviewing the Long Term Financial Plan to reflect Fit for the Future goals

## Financial Performance Measures

Measurement Indicators	2014	2015	Target OLG	Result	Trend
Operating Performance Ratio	-0.50%	5.81%	>0%	✓	✓
Own Source Operating Revenue Ratio	86.54%	82.94%	>60%	✓	✓
Unrestricted current ratio	3.22:1	3.83:1	1.5:1	✓	✓
Debt Services Ratio	4.13	8.31	>2	✓	✓
Rates and Annual Charges outstanding	4.61	4.31%	<5%	✓	✓
Cash Expenses Cover Ratio	8.70	9.59	3 months	✓	✓

## 2014/15 total income \$'000s

	Actual 2015	Actual 2014
Rates and charges	128,031	124,781
User charges and fees	65,822	61,542
Interest and investment revenue	10,259	10,117
Other revenue	10,666	12,846
Grants and Contributions - Operating	20,101	14,305
Grants and Contributions - Capital	24,058	18,000
Net gain from disposal of assets		235
Net Share in JV - Strategic Services	121	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>259,058</b>	<b>241,877</b>



## 2014/15 total operating expenses \$'000s

	Actual 2015	Actual 2014
Employee Benefits	87,308	87,229
Borrowing costs	4,254	4,450
Materials and contracts	46,411	41,575
Depreciation and Amortisation	41,125	40,755
Impairment	11	1,898
Other Expenses	42,011	44,047
Net losses from Assets	1,362	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>222,482</b>	<b>219,954</b>

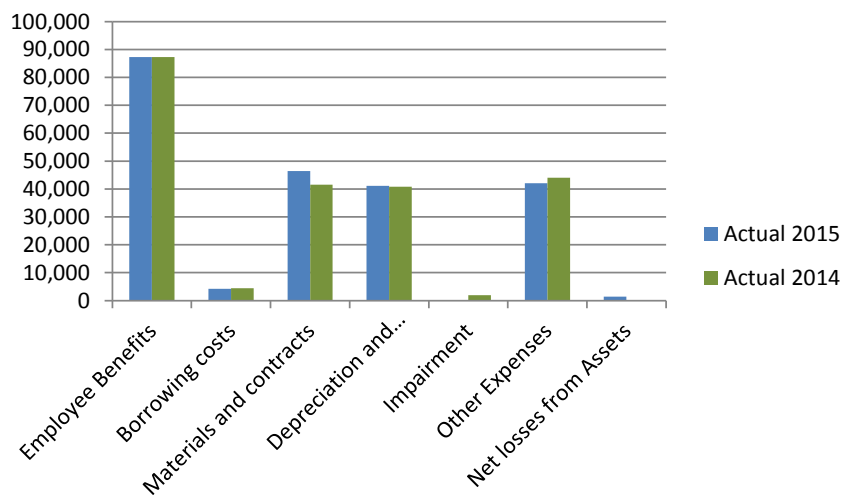






Image: Blackbutt Reserve's resident Koala

## Operating results \$'000

Operating result	
2008-09	2,682
2009-10	13,651
2010-11	(260)
2011-12	(2,300)
2012-13	(3,684)
2013/14	21,923
2014/15	36,576

## Operating result before capital contributions \$'000

Operating result before capital contributions	
2008-09	(24,231)
2009-10	(311)
2010-11	(21,526)
2011-12	(13,317)
2012-13	(13,405)
2013/14	3,923
2014/15	12,518

## Capital expenditure \$'000

Capital expenditure	
2008-09	39,844
2009-10	31,472
2010-11	50,357
2011-12	57,530
2012-13	46,164
2013/14	42,506
2014/15	48,884

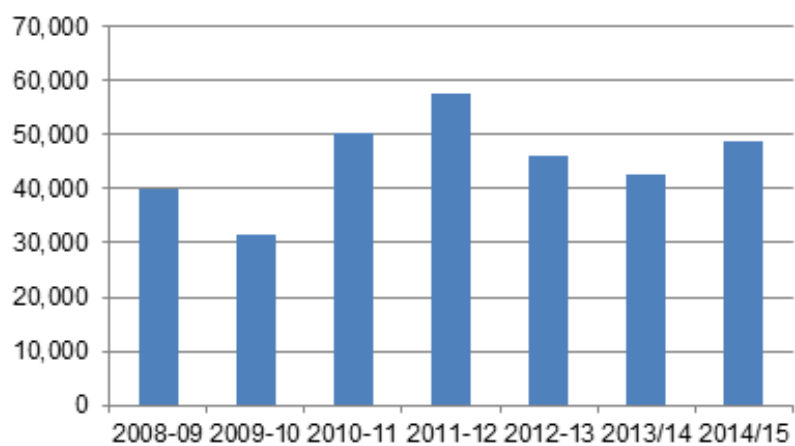
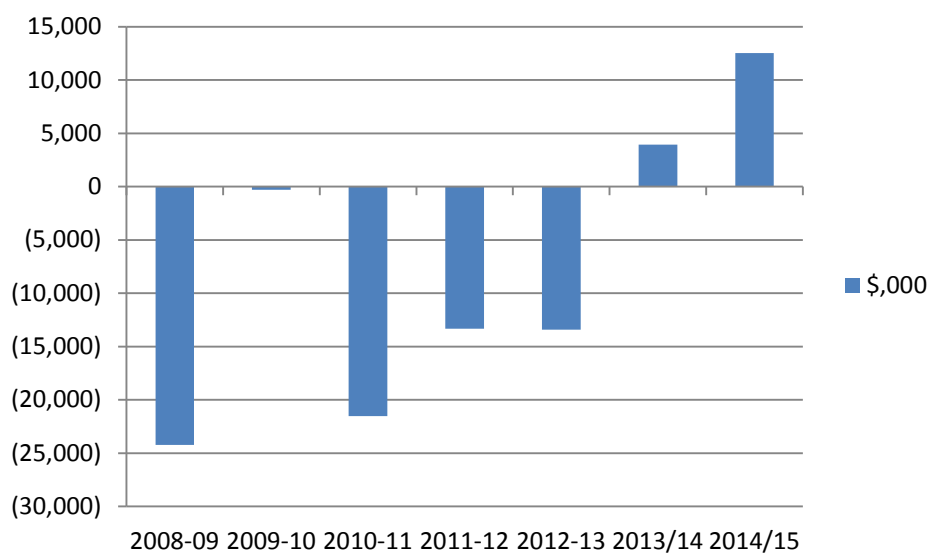
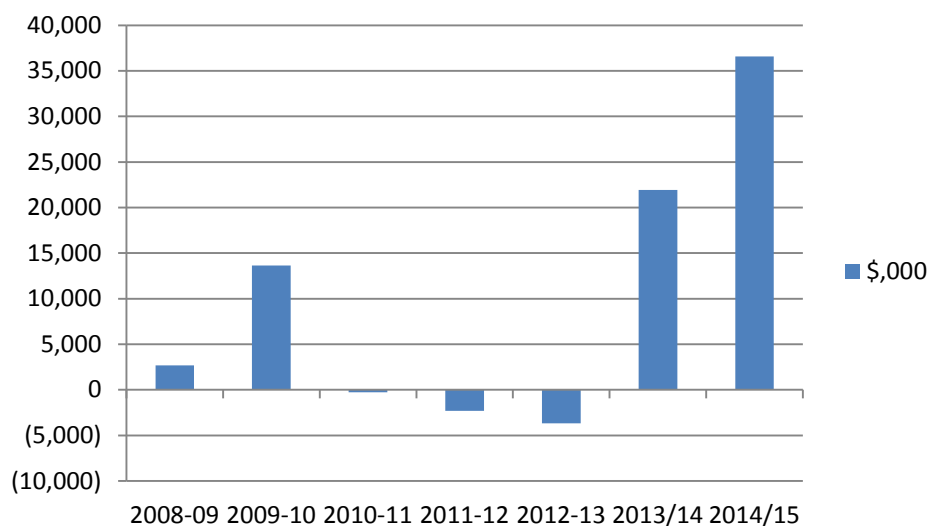






Image: Blackbutt Reserve's Junior Ranger Day during the School Holiday's



# SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) has approved two special rate variations (SRV) in recent years. The 2012 special rate variation was approved specifically to fund Council's 'special projects' program and the special rate variation was approved to help secure the long term financial sustainability of Council.

## 2012 Special rate variation

In 2012, IPART approved a section 508(2) SRV of 5% above the rate cap for one year. The variation occurred in the 2012/13 financial year increasing the base rate charge. The terms of the IPART approval restrict the variation to funding works of a capital nature for the specific projects, outlined below.

The Delivery Program adopted by Council also includes budget principles specific to project delivery and these are: *'that no project commences until funding for the full cost of the project is secured or has certainty' 'special projects be prioritised in accordance with community ranking from the Micromex Research 2011 Report and timing for delivery matched to cash flow.'*

### Special Projects

These priorities are set according to the support as follows:

1. Revitalising Hunter Street
2. Revitalising our coast
3. Upgrading Blackbutt Reserve
4. Providing new cycleways
5. Improving our swimming pools
6. Modernising our libraries
7. Expanding parking meters (Note: Council resolved not to expand the parking meter network.)
8. Off-street parking stations (Note: Council sold two of three parking stations.)
9. Expanding our Art Gallery

### First four priority projects

Currently we are focused on delivering the first four priority projects and these are:

1. Hunter Street Revitalisation
2. Coastal Revitalisation
3. Blackbutt Reserve
4. Cycleways

The SRV was introduced in July 2012 and in this time has raised \$14,193,026. This revenue is placed in a restricted reserve to fund the projects outlined in the SRV application only.

During the 2014/15 financial year \$10,075,000 was spent on identified projects with the majority of funding being used for coastal revitalisation.

In total \$18,247,655 has been spent on the four priority

projects since the introduction of the SRV. In the current 2015/16 financial year we are budgeting to spend a further \$11 million on the four priority projects.

Progress comments for these projects can be seen on page 42, Corporate performance measures.

## 2015 Special Rate Variation

### Road to Recovery

The 'Road to Recovery' initiatives commenced in 2012/13 and focused on reversing Council's operating deficit and constraining its capital expenditure to ensure long term financial sustainability. The initial focus was on improving revenues and reducing expenditure via a significant organisational restructure.

Council communicated directly with 1,726 members of the Newcastle community during the Road to Recovery engagement activities and overall, the community were supportive of our SRV.

IPART undertook an independent assessment of the Council's SRV application which was approved in May 2015. IPART noted in their determination that Council was able to demonstrate a clear need for the additional revenue, that it had appropriately engaged the community about the proposed rate increases and that it has taken and is taking steps to improve productivity and contain costs.

IPART approved the application in full (8% per annum over five years), increasing Council's revenue by 46.9% over the five years to 2019/2020 (an annual increase of between \$8.5million and \$11.7million over the five years).

The revenue additional provided by the SRV is critical to ensure Council achieves financial sustainability. It will also allow Council to accelerate the completion of our priority projects as well as make substantial reductions to our infrastructure backlog.

This means our facilities, roads, footpaths, sportsgrounds, parks and playgrounds will be in better condition. We will be able to contain increases to user fees and charges and we will be able to invest in new community infrastructure as our population increases. Council will also be able to fund some modest improvements in service levels in future years.

Priority	Special Project	2014/15 Actual Spend \$'000
1	Hunter Street Revitalisation	292
2	Coastal Revitalisation	7,250
3	Blackbutt Reserve	1,819
4	Cycleways	714
Total		10,075



# MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

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NEWCASTLE COUNCIL HAS COMMITTED TO THE DELIVERY OF AN AFFORDABLE AND ACHIEVABLE LEVEL OF SERVICES ACROSS ALL PROGRAM AREAS.

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Actions have been developed and form the basis of the business units' work plans which all contribute to the achievement of the Delivery Program.









## Executive

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### LORD MAYOR/COUNCIL

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### GENERAL MANAGER

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### COUNCIL AND LEGAL SERVICES

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#### Achievements

Process mapping sessions delivered to subject matter experts and business analysts working on the OneCouncil project to promote consistency in documentation development.

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Core processes relating to modules of OneCouncil reviewed in line with the deployment schedule.

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Business Improvement team has partnered with all business units across the organisation to facilitate delivery of the OneCouncil project

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Coordinate Council meeting processes including forward agenda, corporate diary, coordination of business papers, webcasting, chamber management and production of minutes

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Provided customer focused, quality advice, representation and services in governance, Internal legal, council services, access to information, internal audit and business improvement

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#### Performance

24 key performance indicators (KPIs) were set in Council's 2014/15 Operational Plan to measure the success and performance of each business unit, delivering results as follows

**27** ✓ On track

**3** ! Not on track

**0** > Deferred

96% of Executive's KPIs are on track. A KPI for the completion of scheduled compliance activities has been deleted, No schedule of compliance activities has or will be developed. This KPI will be deleted for future years.

## Corporate Services

### FINANCE

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### HUMAN RESOURCES

### COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

#### Performance

49 Key performance indicators were set in Council's 2014/15 Operational Plan to measure the success and performance of each business unit, delivering results as follows:

**44** ✓ On track

**5** ! Not on track

**0** > Deferred

90% of Corporate Services KPIs are on track, KPIs that were not on track included the revised timeframes for non-critical ERP projects, ten year asset sales will be revised down to \$40 million and the customer contact KPI to be reassessed once the implementation of the Customer Contract Centre is completed in early 2016.

#### Achievements

Enterprise Resourcing Planning IT upgrade project releases to date - finance, supply chain, payroll, HR self-services, fortnightly pay, HR training, grievances and performance development and works and assets management

Gained IPART approval for a Special Rate Variation of 8% per annum over five years 2015/16 to 2019/20 increasing Council's revenue to ensure financial sustainability

Surplus asset sales of \$13.7 million achieved with funds applied to the reduction of Council's asset maintenance and renewal backlog. Sales including Civic Centre Site, 252 Parry Street Newcastle and 182-188 Hunter Street Newcastle (former school of Arts)

Council's Investment Portfolio continues to provide a favourable return compared to prevailing market rates

The previous historical trend of increasing operational deficits has been reversed with an operating surplus before capital grants for 2014/15 of \$12.5 million

An extensive review on the Long Term Financial Plan was conducted to reflect the NSW state government Fit for the Future goals

A Council improvement plan has been developed and submitted to IPART in accordance with the requirements of the NSW state Government Fit for the Future program

34,654 registered inward correspondences (including email and hard copy) have been processed during the full year at an average of 2,887.83 per month

Results of a recent customer satisfaction survey indicate 65% are satisfied with current service

Human Resources progressed the leadership development capabilities framework

Community Consultation - Road to Recovery. Key activities included, print advertising campaign, 72,000 information brochures, quarterly council news mail out to 54,000 rate payers, media releases, opinion pieces, online advertising, social media, e-newsletter, feedback forms, drop in sessions, independent telephone survey and a Council survey open to both the Voice members and the broader community. 1752 members of the community provided feedback during this process

A rewards and recognitions program was introduced to facilitate a culture of cooperation, respect and wellbeing

Nine face to face engagement strategies conducted and 12 surveys deployed



## Planning and Regulatory

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## DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING

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## STRATEGIC PLANNING

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## REGULATORY SERVICES

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## CULTURAL FACILITIES

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## LIBRARIES

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### Achievements

Facilitated a See Change Forum on cycling

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Newcastle Smart City Initiative launched, in partnership with Newcastle Now and Cisco

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Participated in design workshops for light rail transport for NSW

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2015 Asian cup games completed in Newcastle

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Record attendances at Anzac Day commemorations

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40 essential repairs/ preventative maintenance projects by private owners to heritage listed buildings and properties in heritage conservation areas. \$1,471,168 spent, representing an important investment in the city's heritage

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Completed tender for Day Markets in Civic Park won by The Olive Tree Market

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Completed Wheeler Place Activation Project Plan

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Night OWLS Project delivered - Night OWLS was a competition for young people aged 15 to 29, to design creative lighting installations in selected areas of Newcastle city centre. This project was an initiative of Newcastle City Council and Newcastle Youth Council

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Completed and procured new artistic Globe Lighting for Civic Park

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Completed a draft Public Art Policy

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Implemented pedestrian under awning Lighting Improvement in city centre

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Two place making grant rounds delivered

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Youth Week and Seniors Week delivered

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Show Reel' project with Octopod and can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTKUVf\\_oTA&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTKUVf_oTA&feature=youtu.be). It highlights how people with disability are accessing creative opportunities

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Community Sector Development Project Delivered in accordance with FACS funding specification, including the facilitation of Newcastle Interagency and community partnership projects

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Participated in City Centre Advisory Groups (Newcastle NOW)

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Local Planning Strategy advertised for comment with 8 workshops held generating 360 comments and 71 written submissions received

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A major strategic review of Newcastle Heritage Conservation Areas undertaken

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Archaeological Management Strategy prepared and exhibited. The strategy will give guidance to the

management of archaeology in the city centre and clarifies Council's role with respect to archaeological heritage

The Heritage Technical Manual in the Newcastle DCP revised and updated in September 2014. Extensive new design guidelines introduced to protect and enhance heritage areas. Industry groups consulted, supportive of new guidelines

A heritage amendment to the Newcastle LEP prepared, currently awaiting gazettal. This amendment improves the accuracy of the LEP heritage schedule, removes redundancies, and clarifies requirements for property owners

21 new Façade Improvement Scheme grants provided this year out of 49 over 18 months leveraging over \$600,000 in city façade improvements

Facilitated for Council and provided funding for Hit the Bricks street art festival

Short term Mall Improvements including removal of old bollards, removal of excess infrastructure, new tree surrounds and trimming, new bollards and redundant signage removal

Completed the City Centre Public Domain Technical Manual

Newcastle Smart City Initiative launched, in partnership with Newcastle Now and Cisco

Smart Arts capacity building program delivered in partnership with Octapod and Newcastle Business Centre

Provided funding and support to Renew Newcastle

Sponsorship grants to 6 local initiatives

Sponsorship grants for 9 events that brought more than \$3 million into the local economy

The Library facilitated and supported a broad participation in community arts based programs, including Homeless Connect, Refugee Week with Ethnic Communities Council, Ability Links, Newcastle High Students in partnership with Jobquest in conducting eLearning training for customers and technology training at Wallsend Library, Law Week with Legal Aid and NSW Fair Trading, Hunter Writers Centre writing workshops. Film and discussion night for NAIDOC week. International Day of People with Disability, Children's Week and Wallsend Winter Fair

The Library hosted the Newcastle Writers Festival Kids Program with 2,277 attending

This year the library partnered with ACON and Family Planning NSW to present the Outing Disability photography exhibition which had 5,205 visitors and 5 support organisations

The library worked with the community to remember WWI, including, children's exhibition featuring original Australian artwork, from children's picture books, exploring stories of WWI, incorporating stories and workshops for schools and a special opening on Anzac Day; Three Soldiers Exhibition

features photographs from the Newcastle Region Library's photographic collection. The photographs featured Newcastle citizens who went to WWI

174,948 people visited Newcastle Museum

17 exhibitions were presented at Newcastle Museum including major attractions such as *Permian Monsters* and *The Making of Midnight Oil*; Newcastle stories such as *Earthquake Then and Now* and *Our Pubs*; and Community exhibitions such as *50 years of Newcastle University* and *Night Owls Youth Council competition*

Newcastle Art Gallery held a total of 252 public events attended by 17,826 people in addition to 609 guided tours attended by 5,114 people

30 new works were acquired for the Newcastle Art Gallery Collection. 21% of works exhibited in the Gallery were drawn from the collection. A further 13 works were loaned to other Galleries for exhibition display and a total of 320,134 people viewed these works. This is in addition to the *Wolfhagen* exhibition; developed and toured by Newcastle Art Gallery, featuring 7 works from the Collection and a further 42,000 viewed this exhibition in this fiscal

### Performance

31 key performance indicators were set in Council's 2014/15 Operational Plan to measure the success and performance of each business unit, delivering results as follows:

**27** ✓ On track

**1** ! Not on track

**2** > Deferred

90% of Planning and Regulatory's KPIs are on track, KPIs that were not on track included Council's major venue catering tender is behind due to building works at Council's major venue sites, the annual fire safety statement to be resolved with the appointment of a new role in 2015/16. The food premises inspection percentage will be reviewed with a more instructive KPI for next year.



## Infrastructure

### INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

### CIVIL WORKS

### PROJECTS AND CONTRACTS

### FACILITIES AND RECREATION

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

#### Achievements

##### Coastal Revitalisation achievements

Merewether Ocean Baths rehabilitation complete – Baths reopened in December 2014

Completion of Dixon Park stage 1 (John Pde to Kilgour Ave) valued at \$3.2 million

Completion of Robinson Reserve car park and viewing platform valued at \$170,000

Grant funding of \$5.6M for Nobbys to Newcastle project successfully awarded in March for 14/15 – 15/16

Nobbys to Newcastle Stage 1 at 90% complete – expected late July stage valued at \$5.5 million

Commencement of construction on Nobbys to Newcastle stages 2&3 in July valued at \$4.5 million

Memorial Walk opened to the public in April and sees over 1,600 users per hour at peak times

Strzelecki car park and ancillary works for Memorial Walk complete valued at \$400,000

Merewether Beach was a Finalist in the PIA national awards for Plan to Place in May

Dixon Park Stage 2 Construction works at 80% complete in June – anticipated completion in September

##### Council secured the following grants

\$990,000 for Cottage Creek Bridge – \$1.98 million project under Aust Govt. Bridges Renewal Programme

\$550,000 for North Stockton Boat Ramp - \$850,000 project under Transport NSW. NSW Boating Now Program

\$16,750 revegetation, viewing platform and signage  
Stockton sandspit - \$33,500 projects under through OEH

\$50,000 Whole of Government Estuary Hydrodynamic Model - \$100,000 project through OEH

\$7,000 Educational signage for Newcastle rock platforms and river shoreline - \$14,000 project through OEH

\$69,000 Flood grants through OEH

Flash Flood Warning System up and running for Wallsend – 12 month Trial.

16 key cycleway projects and various line-marking and signage works completed. Cycleways construction included but not limited to:

- Alder Park New Lambton;
- Wilkinson Ave Birmingham Gardens;
- Park Ave Kotara;
- Griffiths Road Hamilton;
- Scenic Drive Merewether;
- Market Street Broadmeadow

## Park Improvements

The implementation of over 40 City Serve projects across the city

The completion of pathways in National Park

Completion of amenities buildings at Islington Park, No 4 Sportsground, Mayfield Park and Wallarah Reserve for the Newcastle Football association

Storm damage remedial works by Parks operations and Building services

Merewether Surfing Reserve Plinth installed

Development of a new baseball facility in Plattsburg Park

Sub soil drainage installation in Nesbitt Park Kotara, and Lugar Park,

Tarro Reserve - ground renovation works

New playgrounds at Federal, Tumpoala, Woodward, Minmi, Cedrella Creek Reserve and Kilpanie Parks

## Blackbutt Improvements

Carnley Ave outdoor area completed

Carnley Ave amenities building completed

Carnely Ave BBQ facilities and Picnic Shelters

Black Duck Pond Water quality enhancements

## Environmental Projects

Energy Hunter business program completed

Utilities metering and monitoring system commissioned

Council was a Green Globe winner in Climate Change Leadership for the Energy Hunter Program, and was Highly Commended for this project in the Local Govt Excellence in the Environment awards

Solar panels generating 130KW of power were installed on the Main Library and Art Gallery buildings

## Waste Management

Improved Summerhill Waste Management centre surplus with current surplus at \$6.1 million

Ongoing community education at environment rehabilitation worksites to ensure waste management and the impacts of waste are understood by the community

Detailed designs have commenced for a 3 year program to invest into resource recovery and construct a regional facility capable of diverting waste from landfill. Target completion date July 2017

Water safety education programs delivered to over 13,000 primary school children across the Newcastle local government area.

2030 waste strategy currently under development and draft expected to be issued to community consultation early 2016.

Fletcher Community centre won the GHD small scale commercial development award

The Merewether beach public domain improvements won the award for City greening landscape and public art.

## Performance

56 key performance indicators were set in Council's 2014/15 Operational Plan to measure the success and performance of each business unit, delivering results as follows:

**52** ✓ On track

**4** ! Not on track

**0** > Deferred

93% of Infrastructure's KPIs are on track, KPIs that were not on track related to waste. New staff appointed and software to be introduced in 2016 to improve the data collection and monitoring of the KPIs.



## Measuring our meters

Every year we complete numerous road construction and natural & stormwater projects as well as undertaking a range of maintenance projects for these areas. We completed the following works for 2014/15:

Natural & Stormwater	
Length of Creek (metres)	530
Length of Coastline/Foreshore/Coast Cliff (metres)	1686
Number of headwalls renewed	11
Length of saltmarsh establishment (metres)	175
Number of signs(temporary)	28
Area of revegetation (square metres)	66,839
Number of plants in revegetation sites	108,068
Interpretative signs	11
Stormwater Pipe Relined (metres)	904
New street and park trees planted	644
Tree maintenance	5680
Water quality monitoring (number of sites)	57

Local Roads - Renewal	
Resurfacing (km)	11.9
Resurfacing (m <sup>2</sup> )	102,000
Surface resealing (km)	5.7
Surface resealing (m <sup>2</sup> )	56,000
Surface rejuvenation (km)	29
Surface rejuvenation (m <sup>2</sup> )	269,000
Surface crack sealing application (km)	133
Kerb and gutter replacement (km)	1.7
Laneway reconstruction (km)	0.4
Road reconstruction (km)	0.8
Footpath replacement (km)	1.3
Local Roads - Maintenance	
Concrete footpath replacement (km)	2.5
Kerb and gutter replacement (km)	0.6
Defective road restoration and resurfacing (m <sup>2</sup> )	13318
Defective asphalt footpath restoration and resurfacing (m <sup>2</sup> )	1695
Concrete grinds to eliminate trip hazards	4492
Paver replacement (m <sup>2</sup> )	607

## Corporate performance measures

The below table identifies the key performance areas which allow the Council and the Community to monitor the success of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Newcastle City Council will report six monthly and annually against its corporate objectives using the following key performance indicators:

Objective
1. Deliver on the key civic projects determined as the priorities for the community
KPI
Key civic projects are delivered in accordance with the budget and timeframes identified in the 2013/2017 Delivery Plan
Measure
Six monthly and annual performance on outcomes of project implementation

### Revitalising Hunter Street

The Façade Improvement Scheme for the city centre is well underway having 21 grants provided this year out of 49 over 18 months, leveraging over \$600,000 in city façade improvements.

A city centre count of pedestrians and cyclists was conducted and implementation of a pedestrian under awning Lighting Improvement was provided in the city centre.

Several community partnership projects were completed including the Christmas in the City project, Hit the Bricks artworks, Newcastle 2020 art competition and Little Birdwood Park improvements.

### Upgrading Blackbutt Reserve

The construction of the new amenities building and the Wildlife Arena is complete and has been in operation since May 2015.

Council has commenced construction of stage2 upgrade at Carnley Avenue Recreation Area which includes the following items:

- Demolition of old amenities building, old paths, park furniture and playground (Kept for re-use)
- Construction on new all abilities compliant reinforced concrete access paths
- Construction of 4 new picnic shelters
- Construction of a new BBQ shelter with 8 hot plates
- Construction of a new grassed picnic mound
- Construction of a new viewing deck over the edge of Black Duck pond
- Rehabilitation of the southern edge of Black Duck Pond
- Installation of water quality improvement device into Black Duck Pond

The final component of the stage 2 works is the viewing deck over Black Duck Pond, this is expected to be completed in early September 2015.

The design for a new car park at Carnley Avenue has been completed and is ready for construction when funding becomes available.

The next major facility to be implemented is an adventure playground at Richley Reserve.

### Providing new cycleways

A number of cycleways and shared paths have been designed and constructed in the second half of 2014/15 including:

#### Alder Park, New Lambton

Construction of a 270m concrete off-road shared pathway from Bridges Rd to St James Rd was completed. The pathway provides faster and safer connectivity between Bridges Road and St James Road and provides improved connectivity to the existing R6 shared pathway north of St James Road

#### St James Rd, New Lambton

Construction of a 310m off road shared pathway From Mackie Avenue to Errington Avenue; refuge crossing at St James Rd and linking to Alder Park shared pathway was completed. The project provides a safe connection for cyclists traveling through New Lambton connecting the 2014/15 Alder Park cycleway with cycleway links along Glebe road constructed in previous years.

#### University Drive Shared Pathway

Construction of a 760m of concrete off-road shared pathway connecting the existing Wallsend cycleway off Tillie Street from the stormwater channel, through to Blue Gum Road was completed. The pathway provides connectivity between the existing R5 shared pathway to the west and the University of Newcastle, enabling cyclists utilising this route to avoid the need to ride on Wilkinson Avenue to travel to and from the university.

#### Sanctuary Estate Cycleway

Construction of a 380m of concrete off-road shared pathway connecting Sanctuary Estate with Maryland. Councils construction component is complete. The cycleway provides a safe off road connection between Maryland and Fletcher across Wentworth Creek as part of the Sanctuary Estate residential development construction.

#### Market St Waratah

Construction of a 30m concrete off-road cycleway link allowing cyclists a faster and safer connection between the R1, and R4/R5 on either side of the rail line, and enabling cyclists utilising this route to avoid the need to ride and cross Lambton Road.

#### Griffith Road, Broadmeadow.

Construction of a 270m concrete off-road shared pathway allowing safe cycling connection from Jackson Street & Hunter stadium to Chattham Street completing a small section of the Inner City Bike Lanes link.



## National Park, Newcastle West.

Construction of a 180 metre concrete off-road shared pathway through National Park from Union St to the stormwater channel bridge.

### Investigation and design projects

Design of Park Avenue Kotara 50% complete - 580 metres of off-road concrete shared pathway from Northcote Drive to Kulliaaba. The project will facilitate the safe passage along this section of Park Avenue where current on road cycle provision is minimal. It links Kotara commercial shopping area and regional cycling routes R4 (Lake Macquarie to Tighes Hill) and R1 (NSW coastline cycleway).

Design of Brickworks Park, Wallsend 100% complete - The pathway provides connectivity of Elmore Vale to the R5 shared pathway route which in turn connects to the city. It will enable cyclists utilising this route to avoid the need to ride on busy streets like Douglas Street and Newcastle Road.

Richmond Vale Rail Trail feasibility analysis - The feasibility investigation of a 32km recreational shared pathway rail trail on the disused Richmond Vale Railway Line and corridor between Hexham and Pelaw Main. The pathway provides connectivity for the townships of Kurri Kurri, Stockrington, Buchanan, Pelaw Main and Richmond Vale to the Newcastle cycle network and vice versa. It will enable cyclists and pedestrians to travel safely along this route avoiding the need to ride on road.

Inner City Bike Lanes options investigation. A major deterrent to increased take-up of cycling is the perceived lack of safety. This project investigations multiple options for future off-road physically separated cycleway connections from Hunter Stadium to Newcastle Beach, and from Merewether Baths to Newcastle Harbour.

## Newcastle City Hall refurbishment

Newcastle City Hall is one of our City's most important buildings and the conservation of the sandstone façade is an important part of its ongoing preservation.

- Conservation work to the magnificent clock tower is currently underway.
- Council took the opportunity to replace additional sandstone to the southern face of the tower as well as removing steel pins that tie the stone to the structure.
- This decision was taken in order to reduce Council's maintenance requirements for City Hall into the future.
- The additional work along with some delay due to the April storm has extended the duration of the current stage until December 2015.
- Council has also now released a tender for a further stage of conservation work to the southern and eastern facades of City Hall.
- This work is scheduled to commence at the end of 2015 and continue for at least 18 months.

## Merewether Baths redevelopment

Merewether Baths is a unique part of Newcastle's coastline and the completion of the redevelopment project will ensure the Baths will remain an active public recreational and social space for many years to come. Merewether Baths closed in

February 2014 for an overhaul and the project was completed in November 2014.

The work included upgrading the pumping pipework system, demolition and reconstruction of the surrounding promenades, bleacher seating along the western side of the children's pool and the western promenade levels adjusted to provide a smooth transition around the baths and new ramps into the pools this will provide equitable access to the baths.

Objective
2. Engage with the Newcastle community on projects that have a high level of impact on the community
KPI
Consultation undertaken for all projects which have a high level of impact on the community
Measure
Evidence that consultation has taken place is reported in the annual report

In August 2014, Council endorsed a Community Engagement Strategy seeking feedback from the community on three different rating options for five years commencing in 2015/16. The results were used to support a successful application to IPART for a special rate variation.

The Community Engagement Strategy was implemented in October 2014, and included an information campaign as well as a range of engagement activities in line with International Association for Public Participation best practice.

Key activities to inform the community included an extensive print advertising campaign, an information brochure hand delivered to all households (72,000 copies), a dedicated section in the quarterly Council News mail out to 54,000 ratepayers and well as information on Council's website.

Media releases, opinion pieces, online advertising, social media and e-newsletters were also used to maximise community awareness.

Community drop-in sessions were held at all nine branch libraries between 9 October and 25 October 2014. These sessions were held both during the day and in the evening and each ran for either 2.5 or 3 hours. These were attended by 67 community members in total.

Micromex Research was contracted to conduct an independent random telephone survey of 400 residents in the Newcastle Local Government Area to measure satisfaction and importance of Council services, awareness about the SRV project and the level of support for the three different options.

In addition to the independent telephone survey, Council's Engagement Team also conducted a survey which was open to both Newcastle Voice members and the broader community. In total 899 community members took part in the survey including 688 Newcastle Voice members and 211 members of the broader community.

In addition, 274 feedback forms (tear-offs from information brochures which were delivered) were received and a further 59 online feedback forms were also received.

Through these engagement activities, Council received feedback from 1,752 members of the community regarding the Road to Recovery. This represents 1.48% of Newcastle's adult population.

The results of the community engagement activities were reported to council in November 2014 and they resolved to proceed with a special rate variation application to IPART.

This was our most detailed engagement activity for the July to June period however, a range of other engagement activities were also completed including:

#### Survey development/deployment

- Newcastle/Merewether Ocean Baths
- Beresfield Day Care
- Cycleways Strategy
- Community Survey
- Hamilton South 'Garden Suburb' Heritage Conservation Area survey development
- Internet
- Newcastle by Night
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Major Venues hire survey
- Local planning strategy
- Water sensitive city
- Young Street road reconstruction

#### Face to face engagement

- Design Newcastle facilitation(NSW Government Light Rail).
- Wallsend Winter Carnivale (recruitment and awareness)
- Beresfield pool family fun day
- Bikefest and Ride2Work day
- Mang-guwan
- High Tide youth event
- Orientation Week
- Hamilton Food Festival
- Hunter Multicultural Expo 2015

Objective
3. Maintain a net funding budget surplus to ensure financial sustainability
KPI
Improve financial sustainability of Council
Measure
Net budget operating surplus ratio 2.7%

Financial sustainability of Council operations requires that there is sufficient operational revenue to cover operational

expenses in the long run. Council's operating result before capital contributions show an operating surplus of \$12.5 million; this represents a significant improvement from prior years.

This surplus represents a positive variance of \$15.3 million against the revised operating budget deficit of \$2.8 million; a significant factor contributing to this variance was an increase in fees and charges. This increase in income can be attributed to improved performance across a range of areas including increased revenue from work performed under contract on behalf of Roads and Maritime Services together with modest increases in revenue derived from, Stockton Caravan Park, Civic Theatre and Newcastle Airport.

IPART also approved a five year special rate variation allowing Council to increase rate by up to 8%pa (including the rate peg) commencing in the 2015/16 financial year, to ensure council continues on the path of financial sustainability.

Objective
4. Maintain a strong cash and liquidity position to ensure financial sustainability
KPI
Implement the budget principles endorsed by Council 18 April 2014
Measure
Achievement of budget principles

Council currently has a strong cash and liquidity position which is essential to ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council into the future; this is demonstrated with the following ratios

Unrestricted current ratio 3.83:1 (Benchmark is greater than 1.5:1)

This ratio is an indicator of Council's liquidity and has remained relatively stable in recent years, and reflects the impact of the requirement of Accounting Standards to classify investments as current or non-current, depending on the maturity date.

The unrestricted current ratio has been calculated for the purposes of assessing the capability of Council to meet its short term obligations (current liabilities) using current assets. The ratio indicates an improvement on last year due to an increase in cash levels from positive cash flows from operating activities including capital grants and contributions.

Rates and annual charges outstanding ratio 4.31% (Benchmark is <5%) This ratio assesses the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts. The rates and annual charges outstanding ratio of 4.31% has fallen from 4.61% in 2013/14.

This represents a decrease of 0.3%. This is an improvement on the result due to a more proactive approach with Council's mercantile agent.

Cash expense cover ratio 9.59 months (benchmark is greater than three months).



This liquidity ratio indicates the number of months a Council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow.

Objective
5. Provide better and more efficient services to customers through the implementation of improved systems and processes by 2017
KPI
Improve responsiveness and quality of customer experiences
Measure
Improve customer satisfaction scores in the Customer Service Survey by 2% 2014 , 5% 2015, 7% 2016, 10% 2017

The customer experience survey will commence in the 2015/16 financial year. The survey was deployed in July 2015. This will provide base line data on current customer experience. This data will be used to help determine priorities and performance benchmarks for the Customer Contact Centre, which is due to be fully implemented in early 2016.

The survey will be repeated in July 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 so we are able to determine the impact the implementation of the Customer Contact Centre has had on improving the customer experience and identify areas where more training/information may be required.

Objective
6. Renew and maintain assets within a sustainable range
KPI
Annual renewal ratio
Measure
Minimum of 10% variance in the maintenance renewal budget.

The special schedule 7 of the 2014/15 Financial Statements has the infrastructure backlog sitting at \$94 million (\$90.4 million 2013/14 and \$97.7 million 2012/13). While a number of the key ratios that measure our performance on addressing the infrastructure maintenance and renewal backlog have improved the actual value of the infrastructure backlog has increased slightly during the current year.

This was partly due to the challenges experienced in increasing the operational capacity required to complete the required maintenance and renewal projects and also due to the impact of the April storm event. Increased funding has been allocated to this work in the 2015/16 budget to ensure that the backlog is reduced to sustainable levels.

There was a slight reduction in the backlog of buildings and structures which was due to some asset sales and the work completed on City Hall. City Hall still remains the largest contributor to the Building and Structure backlog.

Other asset classes all reflect a worsening asset position. Specifically these are:

- roads has increased by \$6.3 million from \$17.1 million to \$23.4 million
- drainage works has increased from \$17.3 million to \$24.5 million
- Swimming pools and other open space/ Rec Assets will require capital works of \$0.98 million to bring them to a satisfactory condition. This asset class has been included to provide a more complete view of the asset maintenance and renewal backlog.

Reductions over the years have been largely achieved by selling assets in poor condition in the building asset class whilst the asset maintenance and renewal backlog has grown in all other classes of assets. This is not financially sustainable and is clearly a major challenge for Council. Increased funding and effort have been allocated to address this issue over coming years as detailed in the Long Term Financial Plan.

The special rate variation recently approved by IPART and commencing in the 2015/16 financial year will generate the additional funding required to undertake the maintenance and capital works necessary to address the backlog.

Objective
7. Identify opportunities for asset rationalisation to fund the infrastructure backlog
KPI
Infrastructure backlog: infrastructure backlog (\$m) less internally available infrastructure funding (\$m) = unfunded infrastructure backlog (\$m)
Measure
Target backlog is 2% of value of infrastructure (\$)

The 10 year target for asset sales (2013/14 to 2022/23) has been revised down from \$47 million (December 2014) to \$37.8 million. This is due to the combined impact of the elected Council removing some properties from the sale list and the reappraisal of the potential sale proceeds for the remaining properties.

These funds will be restricted for the purpose of infrastructure renewal (ie reducing the backlog).

Land and Buildings	Status of Sale	Actual Settlement Amount
29 & 31 Laman Street, Cooks Hill	Settled	\$819,523
Civic Centre Site, Newcastle	Settled	\$4,907,463
Civic Hotel Gaming Machine Entitlements	Settled	\$78,333
124 Cardiff Road, Elmore Vale	Settled	\$344,000
327 Maryland Drive Maryland	Exchanged	\$537,515
252 Parry Street Newcastle West	Settled	\$4,483,172
475 Sandgate Road, Shortland	Settled	\$176,800
141 Minmi Road Wallsend	Settled	470,000
182-188 Hunter Street Newcastle (former School of Arts)	Settled	\$1,971,487
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$13,788,292</b>

Objective
8. Ensure a strong organisation that has the skills and talent to support the delivery of services that meet community needs
KPI
Critical skills known and succession plans in place to ensure continuity of service delivery to community
Measure
Succession plans in place for all critical positions by 2015

The leadership capability framework is currently being finalised. The next step in the process will be informed by the outcome of the employee engagement survey conducted in August 2015.



# CAPITAL WORKS PERFORMANCE

★ Completed   ✓ On track   ! Not on track   ➤ Deferred   ■ Not Started



Image: Uncovering an old rail track during works at Nobbys Beach







Project Name	\$ spent	Status	Project Name	\$ spent	Status
Civic Theatre Lighting Upgrade - CEEP	53,669	✓	Lambton Road New Lambton - Stormwater Rehabilitation	46,574	★
Employee Information Screens	0	➤	Lambton Swim Centre - Shade Shelter	1,739	■
E-Waste Collections Events	24,054	★	Lambton Swim Centre Grandstand - replace roof.	35,350	★
Lambton Park Stage 2 pathways	1,800	★	Lawson Ave Beresfield - road rehabilitation	0	➤
Library Resources	798,002	★	Living Streets Campaign	12,548	★
Low Carbon Energy Systems for Council Sites	118,765	✓	Llewellyn St Merewether-Design Drainage Rehabilitation	2,157	✓
Office Refurbishment - Parking Meters	7,348	★	Lloyd St Merewether Reserve Design / Works	5,647	✓
Park Avenue Kotara Kuranda and Bender - pedestrian refuge	2,569	★	Love Food Hate Waste	26	!
Parking Study	78,400	✓	Lovett Gallery & Local Studies Paint & Carpet Tiles.	17,435	✓
Residential Bin Audits	59,357	✓	Low Lying Suburb Study	0	!
S94 - Fletcher Sanctuary Community Centre	35,868	✓	Lugar Park - sub-surface drainage	0	✓
S94 General Centre Upgrade	8,254	★	Maitland Rd Hexham - tide gate replacement	71,807	★
3x3 Scenic Drive Merewether-Lloyd St Pedestrian Refuge	89,551	!	MapInfo Professional Upgrade	142	➤
Adamstown Community Hub-Concept design.	0	■	Market St and Graham Rd Lambton	26,023	★
Adamstown Library -Toilet Block Demolition.	1,303	✓	Marshall St North Reserve - weed removal	29,440	✓
Addison St Beresfield - rehabilitation of existing GPT	231,762	★	Master Works Program Development	6,462	★
Admin Build Office Exp - Implementation Project Management	0	■	Matching grant funding	14,444	★
Aerial Photography resupply 2014	1,423	★	Mattress Muster	67,549	★
Alcohol Management Strategy	31,650	■	Maud St Waratah - cycleway design	56,799	✓
Alder Park Lambton - St James Road to Bridges Road	179,229	✓	Mayfield Community Centre Hub	0	■
Alister St Shortland - drainage design	19,091	✓	Mayfield Pool - sand filter rehabilitation.	42,187	★
Archer Crescent Maryland - drainage rehab design	36	✓	Melville and Gosford Roads - footpath rehabilitation	10,553	★
Aries Way Reserve - creek rehabilitation	14,917	★	Memorial Drive - Strzelecki Car Park Design	430,571	★
Art Gallery - cultural asset preservation.	3,311	★	Memorial Drive - Trig Station	7,020	✓
Art Gallery - Presentation Improvements to Courtyard	213,087	★	Merewether Baths - Restoration	1,749,200	★
Art Gallery Building Management system Upgrade	29,700	★	Merewether St Merewether	31,785	★
Art Gallery- Window replacement.	7,545	■	Minmi Community Hall - Concept planning to renew.	223	■
Art Gallery Works of Art	106,818	★	Minmi Rd - trenchless technology drainage rehabilitation	121,051	★

Project Name	\$ spent	Status	Project Name	\$ spent	Status
Assess antivirus options	4,996	★	Minmi Rd Maryland - Construct Shared Pathway	57,834	★
Assess Web filtering options	5,572	★	Minmi Rd Shared Path - Bunnings Roundabout	172,247	✓
Asset Revaluation 2015 - AMS & DMS Modifications	41,225	★	Minmi Reserve Minmi - replace playground.	7,249	✓
Astra St - replace sewer discharge	10,018	✓	Morgan - Selwyn Street Floodway Study Merewether	24,000	!
Astra St Channel repairs - stage 1	446	>	Morgan St Merewether - road rehabilitation	75,014	★
Astra St Former Landfill Site - monitoring and reporting.	30,753	✓	MR326 - St James Rd to Sketchley Pde	1,445,680	★
Ayrshire St Sandgate - sediment control	6,415	✓	MR326 Bridges Road New Lambton	2,954	★
Bailey St Adamstown - design and install drainage	57,729	✓	Multi Function Device (MFD) replacement 2015	55,645	!
Bar Beach Ave-New Drainage Construction	264,469	✓	Multi Unit Dwelling Recycling Program	29,290	✓
Bar Beach Avenue The Junction	564,898	★	Museum Erecting Shop Sawtooth Roof.	61,203	!
Bather Way - Nobbys to Newcastle sea wall repair	19,192	★	National Park - renew cricket screens	161,872	★
BCCC - Planning/Consult for Playground Equipment	4,500	!	National Park - upgrade amenities building	0	■
BCCC - Security System Upgrade	6,961	★	National Park Athletic Track - upgrade/demolish toilets.	250,732	★
Beaumont St Hamilton South - resurfacing Dumaresq to Jenner	0	>	National Park from Union to bridge - pathway and seating	252,481	★
Beaumont St Training Rooms - It setup	5,050	★	National Park No 4 Sportsground - renew sporting amenities.	394,604	★
Beresfield Community Hub - Concept planning.	0	■	Natural Connection - Newcastle's Healthy Catchments Program	20,488	✓
Bibby St Hamilton - footpath rehabilitation	1,378	■	Nesbitt Park, Kotara South. sub soil drainage	84,108	★
Bibby St Hamilton - footpath rehabilitation design	35,472	✓	New Lambton Library Circulation Desk renewal	0	■
Blackbutt Reserve - bushland regeneration	27,136	★	Newcastle Baths Canoe Pool Sluice Gate	48,612	★
Blackbutt Reserve - replace boardwalk timber boards	34,356	★	Newcastle East - 40 kph High Pedestrian Activity Area	7,997	>
Blackbutt Reserve - SRV	1,819,098	!	Newcastle Wetland Reserve - Foreshore Revegetation	40,000	★
Blackbutt Reserve Parking machine EMV compliance	18,175	★	No1 sports Ground sewer pumping system upgrade	0	★
Blackley Oval renew amenities.	439,745	★	No1 Sportsground - upgrade scoreboard.	0	>
Blue Wren Creek Elizabeth Cook Dr - revegetation	7,489	★	Nobbys Roundabout Resurfacing	66,000	★
Boardbooks Software - Council Business Papers to Councillors	235	✓	Nobbys Surf Club Footway Renewal	62,000	★
Brown St The Hill - footpath rehabilitation	698	>	Nobbys Surf Club Storage Culvert Repair	111,000	■
Burwood St Merewether - resurfacing	33,447	★	Northcott Drive Kotara Pedestrian Refuge, Fencing and Line M	283,013	★



Project Name	\$ spent	Status	Project Name	\$ spent	Status
Bush Fire Prone Land Mapping (BFPLM)	5,638	!	Ocean and Livingstone St - Road Rehabilitation	0	>
Bushland Natural Asset Mgt Sys-development	40,637	★	Ocean St Merewether Outlet - Design & Insallation	171,913	✓
CAC Air condition Duct Cleaning	9,280	★	On Street Parking - EMV Compliance Upgrade	815,832	✓
CAC - HVAC plant and control upgrade - Stage 1	0		OneCouncil Solution Update	2,694,973	★
CAC - HVAC plant and control upgrade - Stage 3 - CEEP	31,846	★	Organics Infrastructure	14,790	✓
CAC - inspect facade and clean windows.	52,976	★	Organisational review - systems alignment	3,650	★
CAC - lighting upgrade - CEEP	21,631	★	Park and Street Tree - Life extension program	34,955	★
CAC - rehabilitate building wiring.	30,133	★	Park Ave Kotara - road rehabilitation	76,690	★
CAC - replace ground level ceiling tiles	72,366	★	Park Ave Kotara Dibbs and Northcott - shared pathway	9,919	✓
CAC level 3 office refurbishment	39,613	★	Park Avenue Kotara - Seaview St to Howell St	0	✓
Call Centre Fitout	466,374	★	Parker St Carrington - drainage rehabilitation Stage 2	5,089	✓
Cambridge Drive Reserve - weed removal and bush regeneration	14,721	★	Parking Compliance - 2 Way Radio Upgrade	60,017	★
Cardiff Road New Lambton Heights - upgrade refuge	87,227	★	Passmore Grandstand - Repair Exterior	108,970	★
Cathedral Park Pathways	11,376	★	Patrick St Merewether - road rehabilitation	888	
Cathedral Park Retaining Wall - Repairs	36,589	✓	Patrick Street at Watkins Street Design	6,343	★
Cathedral Park The Hill - footpath rehabilitation	16,434	✓	PC replacement 2015	234,113	★
Cedrella Cr Reserve Warabrook - replace playground.	54,683	★	Pilot of Wireless Access Points CAC4 and Depot	58,606	★
Church St Mayfield - resurfacing	62,087	★	Pitt St Stockton - resurfacing	36,729	★
Cisco Security MARS System Replacement	142	✓	Platt St Waratah - shared pathway	1,905	★
City Centre Traffic Modelling	603	★	Plattsburg Park - District Baseball Facility	67,727	★
City Hall - elevator lift shaft safety repairs.	15,861	★	Project Management and Administration - CEEP	8,788	★
City Hall - HVAC plant and control upgrade - CEEP	163		Property and Planning Spatial Information Maintenance	62,540	★
City Hall - provide pigeon control baiting system.	2,666	★	Public Art - maintenance	4,657	★
City Hall - rehabilitate amenities.	33,620	★	Q-Flow Upgrade	11,697	★
City Hall- Tower facade restoration	1,851,328	!	Queen St Cooks Hill - footpath rehabilitation design	238	
City Waste and Recycling Program	44,052	✓	Queen's Wharf Condition Assessment & Maritime Capacity	23,830	✓
City Wide - Roadside fencing rehabilitation	9,658	★	Queens Wharf Tower - wash down 6 Monthly.	0	★

Project Name	\$ spent	Status	Project Name	\$ spent	Status
City Wide - survey of road infrastructure	39,647	✓	Regional Roads Parking Lane - resurfacing	95,863	★
City Wide Transport Strategy	541	★	Repaint Master Gunners Cottage.	35,294	★
Citywide - Community Urban Forest Program	23,942	✓	Replace Fort Scratchley Tunnel Chair Lift	700	■
Citywide - design of road infrastructure	78,776	✓	Resource Recovery Facility	51,014	!
Citywide - renew property boundary fencing.	862	>	Resource Recovery Facility Expansion & Enhancement	75,668	✓
Citywide - survey of retaining walls tunnels and bridges	61,324	★	Review Network IP Addressing Scheme	10,219	★
Citywide - tree audit for all attributes - Stage 2 Area 2	60,710	✓	Review of 3D datasets	142	>
Citywide - trenchless technology drainage rehabilitation	402,036	★	Richmond Vale Rail Trail Feasibility Assessment	59,800	★
Citywide - upgrade electrical control systems.	19,705	★	RMS- The Junction40kph High Pedestrian Area	191,458	★
Citywide Bus Seats - rehabilitation and replacement.	238	★	Road Resurfacing - crack sealing	232,116	★
Citywide Bus Seats - repainting	6,587	★	Road Resurfacing - heavy patching.	263,344	★
Citywide Bus Shelters - repainting	19,799	★	Road Resurfacing - kerb and gutter replacement.	604,867	★
Citywide Bus Shelters - replacement	533	★	Road Resurfacing - maintenance of work.	27,595	★
Citywide Guard Rail - rehabilitation	146,247	✓	Road Resurfacing - pavement and road roughness testing	9,703	★
Citywide Ordinance Fence - rehabilitation.	148,033	★	Road Resurfacing - pavement Investigations	132,124	★
Citywide Ordinance Fencing - repainting.	15,992	★	Road Resurfacing - pavement patching	71,762	★
Citywide Ordinance Sign - rehabilitation.	1,211	★	Road Resurfacing - programmed patching	316,196	★
Citywide Road Signs and Lines - replacement.	130,076	★	Road Resurfacing - rejuvenation	507,322	★
Citywide Roadside Furniture - repainting.	10,950	★	Road Resurfacing - resealing	362,314	★
Citywide Roadside Furniture - seat replacement	34,456	★	Road Resurfacing - site preparation	49,137	★
Citywide Street Sign - rehabilitation.	54,528	★	Road Resurfacing - sub soil drainage	306,382	★
Citywide Tree - inspection and monitoring	19,754	✓	Road Resurfacing - tipping fees TAR	111,548	★
Civic Park Fountain - repair art patina	4,545	★	Road Resurfacing - traffic control	1,143	★
Civic Park Improvements Project	373	!	Russell Rd New Lambton	275,581	✓
Civic Theatre - paint external timber fixtures.	0	>	Sanctuary to Balarang St Maryland Shared Pathway	487,331	✓
Civic Theatre - repaint dressing room corridors	18,544	★	Sanctuary/Federal Park - floodlighting	79,267	!
Civic Theatre - repaint office area	33,322	★	SAPTRP - Street Tree Planting	1,015,609	★
Civic Theatre - Replace Bar 2 old benchtop	0	✓	Scenic Drive Merewether Heights - West of Sun Hill Drive	30,119	■



Project Name	\$ spent	Status	Project Name	\$ spent	Status
Civic Theatre - Replace old and damaged carpet.	11,881	✓	Scenic Drive/City Road Merewether Heights - Shared Pathway	171,763	✓
Civic Theatre - Reupholster Lounge Chairs and Sofa	3,139	!	School Recycling Program 12	13,604	★
Civic Theatre - reupholster seating	65,530	★	Security Access System Upgrade	999	✓
Civic Theatre - upgrade light globes	18,065	★	Selwyn St Mayfield East - Design	3,464	!
Civic Theatre - upgrade pigeon control	1,795	★	Shared Path Glebe Rd & St James Rd New Lambton	77,133	✓
Civic Theatre Green Room - paint room and corridors	20,573	★	Shepherds Hill Reservoir Footpath Rehabilitation	0	★
Civic Theatre Lighting Upgrade - CEEP	0	■	Shortland Esplanade Newcastle East - Environmental Works	200,000	★
Coastal cliff stabilisation - Construct	29,533	★	Shortland Esp Newcastle East - road formation stabilisation	96,361	✓
Coastal cliff stabilisation - Design	506	✓	Shortland Esp Newcastle East - road investigation	12,003	★
Coastal Educational Signage	13,491	★	Shortland Esp Newcastle East - road rehabilitation	800,000	★
Coastal Revitalisation - Dixon Park Stage 1	2,057,292	★	Shortland Golf range Sewer pumping system	30,252	✓
Coastal Revitalisation - Dixon Park to Bar Beach Stage 2	1,474,810	✓	Smart Energy Metering	1,941	!
Coastal Revitalisation - King Edward Park	40,091	>	Spatial data maintenance process migration	17,132	✓
Coastal Revitalisation - Nobbys to Newcastle - Stage 1	3,284,076	!	Stage 1 - Tarro Sportsground	1,068	✓
Coastal Revitalisation - Nobbys to Newcastle - Stage 2	54,705	✓	Standardisation of POS Systems	65	✓
Coastal Revitalisation - Nobbys to Newcastle - Stage 3	130,371	✓	Standardisation of SQL Server versions	465	✓
Coastal Revitalisation - Planning & Communications	1,749,898	★	Stockton - seawall repairs - Stage 3 of 4	17,104	✓
Coastal Revitalisation - Robinson Reserve Viewing Platform	153,586	★	Stockton Beach Holiday Park - Stage 2	999,494	★
Coastline - dune preservation and restoration	55,729	✓	Stockton Beach Holiday Park Improvements - Stage 3	83,406	✓
Commercial and Rented Properties - maintenance management	6,493	★	Stockton Cemetery - Roads	21,027	★
Community Education at environment rehabilitation worksites	92,943	✓	Stockton Cemetery - vegetation management	8,703	★
Community Energy Efficiency Program - administration	300	■	Stockton Cemetery Lawn Beam x 1	0	>
Cooks Hill - Council St drainage rehabilitation	86,682	✓	Stockton Foreshore Pitt St Reserve - rehabilitate	16,642	★
Cooks Hill drainage rehabilitation - Bruce St GPT	25,332	!	Stockton Library - carpet tiles.	17,448	★
Cooks Hill Surf Club partial roof replacement	0	■	Stockton North/South pontoon - inspection/certification.	3,440	★
Corporate Website Infrastructure Replacement	300	★	Stockton Sand Spit - implement Master Plan	33,572	★
Council Chambers AV Implementation	3,885	>	Stockton seawall repairs-Stage 4/4 design & construct	263,350	★

Project Name	\$ spent	Status	Project Name	\$ spent	Status
Council Operations Resource Recovery Program	37,597	★	Strezlecki Lookout - Car park rehabilitation	0	★
Council Reserves - maintainance of drainage sites	119,537	★	Summerhill Administration building - repaint interior.	7,495	★
Creek Revegetation - post rehab construction	30,462	★	Summerhill Waste Management Centre - lighting upgrade - CEEP	7,861	★
Creeks and Waterways - inspect erosion and sediment control	85,822	★	Summerhill Waste Management Centre - road rehabilitation	55,254	✓
Croudace Rd - Creek riparian rehabilitation Chinese gardens	20,632	✓	Sunderland St Mayfield Roe to Valencia St - drainage design	4,245	!
Cultural Centre Level 3 Carpet Renewal	13,139	✓	Sunset Bl, Nth Lambton drainage rehabilitation	29,571	★
Curzon Rd New Lambton - drainage rehabilitation design	473,737	★	Survey - Total Station (replace a 5 year old station with ne	47,105	★
Cycleways Investigation Program - Annually	163,063	■	SWMC - New IT Server RM (building and A/C component)	5,041	■
Cycleways Program Communications Plan	1,273	>	SWMC - Waste Management Software Upgrade	10,541	✓
Cycling Strategy Implementation-Inner City Bike Lanes Invest	13,920	★	SWMC - Wheelwash Upgrade (Mobile Unit)	261	■
Dangerfield Drive bush regeneration	19,429	★	SWMC Detail Design and Construction of Landfill Cell 09	324,278	✓
Darby St Cooks Hill - footpath rehabilitation design	248	✓	SWMC- Major Resource Recovery Facility (C&I Dirty MRF)	24,170	✓
Darby St Cooks Hill- Tooke St Drainage Rehab	0	>	SWMC Whole of Life Plan	1,060	✓
Darby Street Cooks Hill - at Tooke Street	149,091	!	Teralba Rd Adamstown - road rehabilitation Stage 3	558,448	★
Date Street Car Park - Designation to Free Public Car Park	7,742	!	The Hill Tennis Club Sewer renewal	61,950	★
Decommission Impala system	11,774	★	Transport Shelters Program	56,835	✓
Decommission Sims system	22,234	✓	Transport Stop Upgrade	128,756	!
Denney St Broadmeadow - road rehabilitation	249,850	★	Tudor St (Parry to Gordon) - drainage construction	86,925	★
Development of DR Strategy	2,085	!	Tudor St Hamilton - road rehabilitation Stage 1	726,588	✓
Dixon Park Beach car park - resurfacing	0	>	Tudor St Hamilton East - median replacement stage 1	1,290	✓
Dixon Park cycleway	150,350	★	Tumpoaba Reserve Maryland - replace playground.	53,455	★
Dixon Park Stage 2 - road rehabilitation 2014/2015	140,000	★	Turton Rd Waratah Griffiths to Unnamed Lane - shared pathway	2,045	★
DMS - Drainage Data Analysis and Cleanse	67,258	★	Tuxford Park - upgrade floodlighting.	193,669	★
EA Negotiations	0	■	University Dr & Wilkinson Ave Birmingham Gardens-cycleway	653,666	★
ECM Minor update	7,917	★	University Dr Waratah West - catchment rehabilitation	1,543	!
Elizabeth Cook Drv Rankin Park - road rehabilitation	1,532	■	Upgrade wayfinding (directional) and instructional signs	4,298	★
Email Archiving Solution	4,408	✓	Various Bridges - programmed bridge maintenance	473	★

Project Name	\$ spent	Status	Project Name	\$ spent	Status
Email Backend Upgrade	142	NC	Various Buildings - fire assessment	63,795	★
Employee Kiosk	0	➤	Various Buildings - Fixed Fire Equipment	120,512	★
Engineering advice - general	197,057	★	Various Buildings - inspect and certify roof anchor systems	6,260	★
Engineering Survey Stormwater Investigation	152,924	★	Various Buildings - maintain flash flood detection equipment	9,770	★
Environmental Project Delivery Support	96,061	★	Various Buildings - maintain portable fire equipment	130,923	★
Federal Park, Wallsend. Playground, shade, seating and pathw	87,347	★	Various Buildings - monitor fire alarms	22,001	★
Fellowes and Lockyer Streets Merewether - road rehabilitation	484	★	Various Buildings - renew air conditioning systems.	197,427	★
Fishing Tables	11,160	!	Various Buildings - replace locks.	731	★
Flash Flood Warning System	10,870	!	Various Buildings - upgrade safety switches.	98,649	★
Fleet Replacement Program	3,749,739	★	Various Council Buildings - assess hazardous materials.	2,025	NC
Fletcher St Adamstown - resurfacing	49,511	★	Various Council Buildings - treat termites using baiting	22,304	★
Flood Asset Register	2,850	✓	Various Creeks - rehabilitation	85,309	★
Flood Road Signage	0	▬	Various cycleways - linemarking and signage program	121,537	★
Floodlights Field 3 Waratah Park	0	▬	Various Environment Assets - investigation	28,676	★
Fortnightly Pay Implementation	34,161	★	Various Footpaths - accessibility program	16,888	★
Fred Ash - refurbish liftcar for disabled access.	8,571	★	Various Footpaths - footpath repairs	357,163	★
Fred Ash - repair façade	45,127	✓	Various Footpaths - minor footpath renewal	12,633	★
Fred Ash Building - replace AC plant building modifications	55,878	✓	Various Footpaths - redundant crossing removal program	0	▬
Frederick St Merewether - drainage design	9,525	!	Various Headwall Rehabilitation	232,979	★
Fullerton Street Stockton - pedestrian refuge and lighting	175	★	Various Monuments - repair and preserve	56,427	★
George McGregor Reserve - bushland regeneration	7,431	✓	Various Park seating replacement	13,614	★
Glebe Rd & Park Ave Adamstown TCS	15,446	!	Various Parks - inspect and replace timber poles.	62,965	★
Glebe Road at Smith Street	175,525	!	Various Parks - inspect steel floodlighting poles.	41,619	★
Griffith Rd Hamilton North - Pathway - Design	17,499	★	Various Parks - renovate sports grounds	59,815	★
Griffith Rd Hamilton North - Pathway construction	123,311	✓	Various Parks - replace BBQs	20,490	★
Gross Street Reserve Tighes Hill - open channel construct	55,666	✓	Various Parks - replace floodlighting	37,397	★
Hargrave and Robertson St Carrington - drainage rehab	0	★	Various Parks - replace water systems	80,419	★



Project Name	\$ spent	Status	Project Name	\$ spent	Status
Harriet Street Waratah at High Street	205,498	★	Various Parks - restore cricket wickets	20,029	★
Hawkins Oval - Perimeter fence replacement	60,661	★	Various Parks - upgrade canteens	82,623	★
Hawkins Oval - upgrade floodlighting.	151,838	★	Various Parks - upgrade public access power	43,224	✓
Hope St Wallsend - catchment rehabilitation	61,643	✓	Various Parks - upgrade public toilets	73,314	★
Household Problem Waste	0	!	Various Public Toilets - repaint	4,143	★
Hunter Estuary Model - design	49,940	★	Various Reserves - bushland regeneration	63,587	★
Hunter River Foreshore Stockton - revegetation	61,682	✓	Various Road - Resurfacing AC	2,581,972	★
Hunter St Revitalisation	288,855	✓	Various roads - laneway repairs	186,844	★
HW326 Bridges Road - Segment 379, 380 - DESIGN for Rehabilitation	4,334	✓	Various Roofwater Drainage Systems -repair and clean gutters	183,883	★
ICT Network Penetration Testing - Stage 2	27,026	★	Various Sites - coastal revegetation	86,809	★
ICT Strategic Plan update	227	!	Various Sites - wetland rehabilitation	1,073	>
Illoura St Wallsend - shared pathway resurfacing	133,563	★	Various Stormwater Drainage - construct access	12,400	★
Implementation of Standard Operating Environment including update	218,161	★	Various Stormwater Drainage - replace grates	105,975	★
Implementation/deployment of MDM Software	1,082	✓	Various Swim Centres - maintain painted surfaces.	22,183	★
Information Serv-Smart Phone	0	>	Various Swim Centres - maintain plant	88,489	★
Inspection and Monitoring - Natural Assets	40,088	★	Various Swim Centres - masonry repairs	18,615	★
Internet GIS Implementation	16,932	✓	Various Swim Centres - shade sail replacement	572	★
Internet/Intranet consolidation	148,788	★	VMware Upgrade	260	>
Investigation and Development of construction projects	42,841	★	Wallsend Brickworks Park - Victory Pde to Iranda Grove	73,979	✓
Ironbark Ck Const Work Smith Rd Elmore Vale	354,551	★	Wallsend Floodplain Risk Management Plan - implementation 2	185,051	!
Ironbark Ck Diane St - rehabilitation	22,812	★	Wallsend Lawn Cemetery Lawn Beam x 2	0	>
Ironbark Ck Reserve Site 1 and 2 - revegetation works	91,923	✓	Wallsend library - renew floor coating	0	✓
Ironbark Creek Site 3 - creek rehab construct Elmore Vale	614,810	!	Wallsend Park - footpath rehabilitation design	0	★
Islington Park, Islington. Construction of new amenities building	135,183	✓	War Memorial Cultural Centre - cultural asset preservation	9,290	★
Islington Shade Sail	5,380	★	War Memorial Cultural Centre Double Glazing - CEEP	0	✓
Jersey Road Sandgate - Wetland Rehabilitation	37,885	✓	Warabrook Blv Warabrook- resurfacing roundabout	0	★
Jesmond Park - bushland regeneration	26,725	★	Waratah Grandstand - replace roof.	29,773	✓

Project Name	\$ spent	Status	Project Name	\$ spent	Status
Jesmond Park - Seating, Shade, Pathways & Playground	39,540	★	Waratah Park Outer Ground - provide floodlighting	146,961	✓
Kilpanie Rd Reserve Lambton - replace playground.	65,640	★	Waratah Park Outer Ground - upgrade canteen and storeroom	168,649	★
King Edward Park and The Obelisk - Themeda restoration	9,441	✓	Waste Collection Calendar	59,557	★
King St Car Park- Mechanical & Electrical Renewal	0	■	Water Sensitive City Implementation	15,406	✓
King St Newcastle - 40k High Pedestrian - Black Spot	14,978	★	Web Based Monitoring and Reporting System	222,015	✓
King St Newcastle - footpath rehabilitation	93,517	✓	WebProxy replacement (ISA alternative)	1,946	✓
King Street Car Park - Structural assessment.	4,412	✓	Western Corridor District Sport & Recreation Facility	3,748	✓
Kotara Park - drainage rehabilitation	23,304	✓	Wharf Cr Stockton - resurfacing	42,482	★
Kotara Park Community Hall Re lining of external	0	■	Wharf Rd at Watt St - pedestrian threshold and crossing	4,196	★
Laman St Cooks Hill - footpath resurfacing	3,024	★	Wharf Rd Newcastle - replace tide gates	20,975	✓
Lambton and Griffith Rd Retaining Wall	96,301	★	WHS Incident Mgt & WC Claims Mgt System Implementation	20,046	✓
Lambton Park, Lambton - New Floodlights	34,045	!	William St Jesmond - drainage design and construction	73,347	✓
Lambton Pool Diving board replacement	10,175	★	William St Merewether - drainage construction	134,776	★
Lambton Pool Renew Solar Pool Heating.	63,636	★	Works Depot - modify fuel pump	2,586	■
Lambton Rd Laneway - drainage rehabilitation	121,217	✓	Young Rd New Lambton	105,837	★
Lambton Road - laneway rehabilitation	4,425	>	Young St Carrington - rehabilitation design	7,174	!

★ Completed  
 ✓ On track  
 ! Not on track  
 > Deferred  
 ■ Not Started



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# LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

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ACHIEVING FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY REMAINS THE KEY OBJECTIVE OF NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL. SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARDS ACHIEVING THIS OBJECTIVE.

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**Over a two year period Council has significantly improved its Operating Position and strengthened its cash and investments to ensure future liabilities and commitments can be met.**

There is still work to be done. While a number of the key ratios that measure our performance in addressing the infrastructure maintenance and renewal backlog have improved, the actual value of the infrastructure backlog has increased slightly during the current year. This is clearly a challenge for Council and further improvement is required for Council to reach a sustainable position.

Council needs to also increase the expenditure on maintaining its assets to ensure community assets remain in a satisfactory condition. It will be essential that Council continues enforcing strong financial discipline to ensure the turnaround of Council's finances is not put at risk. This has been an ongoing process and many initiatives have been undertaken to position the organisation to achieve financial sustainability in the long term.

The Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) is a key document in the IP&R Framework mandated as a requirement for all NSW councils. Prior projections undertaken in early versions of the LTFP highlighted the precarious financial position of the Council and the need for drastic and immediate remedial action. This resulted in the implementation of a number of initiatives to improve the financial sustainability of the organisation, which are outlined below.

The LTFP is continually updated to reflect the current financial performance of Council as well as any significant changes to assumptions made regarding the Council's operating environment. The version of the LTFP, adopted by Council in February 2015 reflected the significant progress made by Council to that point as well as assessing the impact of the 8% pa rate increase (SRV) which was subsequently approved by IPART.












The LTFP was again revised to reflect the impact of the Council Improvement program submitted to IPART on 30 June 2015 in response to the NSW State Government Fit for the Future program. The current LTFP confirms that Council has made significant progress in turning around its financial position and with continued diligent and prudent financial management will achieve a financially sustainable position by 2020 (two years earlier with the new Fit for the Future initiatives.)

**Council's Initiatives (Action Plan to achieve sustainability)**

Council has completed the majority of the initiatives listed below. However after further assessment it was determined that a number of the originally proposed initiatives would not deliver the financial benefits anticipated and accordingly they will not be pursued.

Notwithstanding this in aggregate the initiatives which have been completed have exceeded the intended financial objectives. The most substantial financial benefit was achieved through the organisational restructure which was undertaken in 2013/14.

As noted Council has also identified a number of additional revenue enhancement and efficiency initiatives as part of Council's Fit for the Future submission. These initiatives will result in further improvement in Council's financial sustainability.

Initiative	Status	Comment
<b>Operating cost reductions</b>		
<b>Organisational restructure</b>		Staffing was reduced by over 90 equivalent full time staff (EFT) to 920 EFT resulting in a permanent cost reduction of over \$10 million per annum. Employee costs would be considerably high if the restructure had not proceeded.
<b>Post ERP Savings</b>		These savings are \$0.5 million in financial year 2014/15. They will need to be achieved through efficiency gains following the implementation of the new enterprise system in 2015. The total value over the 10 years is \$2 million.
<b>Energy Savings</b>		By setting a target each year for energy savings, including changing practices and implementing simple technology, a forecast annual \$0.1 million savings will occur by 2014. The total savings for the 10 year period is \$6.4 million.
<b>Asset Rationalisation and Backlog reduction</b>		
<b>Achieve maintenance savings and raise capital from asset disposal</b>		Based on an asset disposal program there will be maintenance and operational savings. In addition there will be capital raised through asset sales. This capital should be put into a concerted effort to remove the asset backlog over the next five years. The total raised for the 10 year period is \$5.3 million.
<b>Revenue Enhancement</b>		
<b>City Hall</b>		The City Hall budget will need to break even by 2015. This will be achieved through higher levels of bookings, better utilisation of rooms, including leasing some rooms to commercial tenants. The total additional income raised over 10 years will be \$5 million.
<b>Civic Theatre</b>		An operational assessment indicates there are very limited opportunities to significantly increase revenue at City Hall. This initiative have been replaced with Fit for the Future Improvement Initiatives.
<b>NAL (Newcastle Airport Limited) Dividends</b>		Civic Theatre will provide an additional \$0.25 million of revenue by 2015. This will result in \$2.2 million increase over the 10 year period.
<b>Fort Scratchley, Museum and Art Gallery</b>		In November 2012, Port Stephens Council and Newcastle City Council agreed to change Newcastle Airport Limited's structure from a company limited by guarantee to a company limited by shares. Newcastle Airport Pty Limited (NAPL) now operates under the new structure. The Airport dividend this year was \$1,096,505; being \$559,217.55 for NAPC1 (25.5%) and \$537,287.45 for NAPC2 (24.5%).
<b>Summerhill Waste Management Centre (SWMC)</b>		Opportunities will need to be identified to increase revenue by \$0.25 million by 2015. This will achieve \$2.5 million over the 10 years.
<b>Business Improvement Associations (BIAs)</b>		An improved position of \$0.5 million per annum will be required by 2015. This will raise an additional \$5.1 million in 10 years.
<b>Original SRV Proposal</b>		
<b>Special Rate Variation (SRV)</b>		BIAs are rate funded. This service should be full cost recovery. This will cost recover \$0.5 million over 10 years (ie \$50,000 per annum).
		In May 2015 IPART approved Council's SRV application in full (8% per annum over five years), increasing Council's revenue by 46.9% over the five years to 2019/2020.

## Fit for the Future

The NSW State Government's Fit for the Future program required all councils to complete an assessment of their operations and their financial position to determine if they met the Government's "Fit for the Future" criteria. All councils were then required to submit a Council Merger Proposal (template 1) or a Council Improvement Proposal (template 2) to IPART by 30 June 2015 (a third option was only available to rural councils).

Newcastle City Council elected to submit a Council Improvement Proposal (template 2). This proposal included all of the initiatives that Council had already embarked upon as part of its Road to Recovery strategy together with some additional initiatives aimed at further improving the financial performance of the organisation and accelerating its progress towards achieving financial sustainability while delivering the quality services required by the Community into the future.

As a result Council has supplemented the existing initiatives outlined in the LTFP endorsed by Council in February 2015 with the additional Fit for the Future Improvement initiatives. These initiatives will make a material contribution to accelerating Council's journey to financial sustainability. . The Fit for the Future proposal has targeted a broad range of initiatives which will incrementally increase operating revenue, reduce expenses and improve efficiencies across the organisation.

Prior to the announcement of the Fit for the Future program, Council had already made significant progress in addressing Council's financial challenges and had a clear plan to achieve long term financial sustainability with the initiatives included in the Road to Recovery program. The path of financial reform which Council had commenced in 2013 was completely aligned with the objectives of the Fit for the Future program.

## Road to Recovery

Council has successfully implemented a number of initiatives which have delivered significant financial improvements in the short term, but it remains focused on the long term and ensuring that Council maintains the financial discipline necessary to deliver services in line with the community needs and expectations in a sustainable manner into the future. Council has made considerable progress on this path (the Road to Recovery)

Our progress on the Road to Recovery can be divided into three distinct phases:

### 1. Enhance revenue and reduce expenditure

The initiative that has generated the greatest benefit was the organisational restructure. The impacts of the implementation of these initiatives were an immediate, significant and sustainable improvement in our operating position.

### 2. Special rate variation

IPART approved a special rate variation of 8% per annum over five years, increasing Council's revenue by 46.9% over the five years commencing in 2015/16. This will provide the increased levels of revenue which are essential to fund existing services to the community at the service levels expected, as well as progress towards achieving a sustainable operating position and generating sufficient surplus funds to reduce the infrastructure maintenance and renewal backlog.

### 3. Addressing infrastructure maintenance and renewal backlog

Infrastructure backlog has been reducing over recent years from \$117 million (2011/12) to \$94 million (2014/15), this has been largely due to selling assets of poor condition. However ongoing asset sales are not a sustainable means of reducing the backlog.

A number of the key ratios that measure our performance in addressing the infrastructure maintenance and renewal backlog have improved, however the actual value of the infrastructure backlog has increased slightly during the 2014/15 year.

As noted above the IPART approved rate increases will fund significant reductions in the backlog in 2015/16 and beyond.

### Funding the budget in the future

The allocation of surplus funds to asset renewal in order to address the backlog means that the net funding position is not forecast to move into surplus until 2019/20. The Fit for the Future initiatives have assisted in bring this forecast forward by two years.





Image: Newcastle Voice recruiting member's at a local community event

# WORK FORCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

NEWCASTLE IS AUSTRALIA'S SEVENTH LARGEST CITY, MANAGING AN ASSET PORTFOLIO OF \$1.6 BILLION, AN OPERATIONAL BUDGET OF MORE THAN \$225 MILLION AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE OF \$55 MILLION. OUR 920 STRONG TEAM MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY AND TO THE ORGANISATION THROUGH VARIOUS SERVICES AND INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN.

## Our values

The mission and vision for Newcastle City Council were both reviewed in 2012 by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). Council's mission is designed to provide us with direction and purpose and it serves to remind us why we are here.

In addition, the organisational values of Council were reviewed in 2011. Over 400 employees contributed by telling us what was important to them. As a result of this employee feedback the values of Cooperation, Respect, Excellence and Wellbeing (CREW) were identified. These values are those most important to our people and form the heart of the way we work together.



### Mission

Proud to deliver services valued by our community.

### Vision

Respected for what we do and what we achieve.

### Cooperation

We work together as an organisation helping and supporting each other.

### Respect

We respect diverse views and opinions and act with integrity.

### Values

### Excellence

We strive for quality and improvement in everything we do.

### Wellbeing

We develop a safe and supportive environment.

## Our people

The operational efficiencies achieved from the 2013 organisational restructure have been retained and in consultation with the unions we have now commenced renegotiating the Enterprise Agreement using an Interest-based bargaining (IBB) approach in which both Council and the unions collaborate to find "win-win" solutions.

This strategy focuses on developing a mutually beneficial agreement based on the common interests of all parties.

### Gender profile

When comparing Newcastle City Council to the aggregate results for NSW local government, Newcastle City Council has 38% female employees whilst women make up 46% of the local government workforce in NSW.

This is similar to the 45% of women that make up the broader NSW workforce (source: ABS Labour force 6202.0). This is a 1% increase in female representation in the workforce since June 2013.

### Age profiles of current workforce

Overall, half of the local government workforce is aged between 35 and 54 with little difference between metropolitan, regional and rural councils. Metropolitan councils do have a higher proportion of younger workers aged 15–34 years (about one-third) compared with regional and rural councils (about one-quarter).

For Newcastle City Council:

1. 28% of current workforce is aged 50 years or older and will likely exit over the next 15 years through retirement
2. 20% of the staff that are aged 50 years or older are in hard to fill roles
3. 14% of the workforce will move into the aged 50 years or older bracket over the next 5 years
4. the potential leadership pool from the 34–44 years age bracket is experiencing greater turnover than any other age group

## Key Strategies

### Attracting and retaining talent

**Objective:** Attract and retain people with the right skills, knowledge and behaviours to ensure delivery of Council's strategic plans and operational programs between 2013 and 2017.

**Achievements:** The recruitment of the Senior Management team was completed.

- Organisational restructures were undertaken in the Libraries and Cultural Facilities Business Units.

### Investing in the capabilities of our people

**Objective:** Identify and develop the required capabilities of our people to ensure they can contribute at a high level of performance during the term of this plan (2013–17).

**Achievements:** The Leadership Development Capability Framework has progressed and work will continue into 2015/16

### Facilitating a culture of cooperation, respect and wellbeing

**Objective:** Identify and implement initiatives to build a workplace culture that ensures that all employees work in accordance with Council's values at all times.

**Achievements:** A Reward and Recognition Program was introduced.

### Planning for our future workforce needs

**Objective:** Develop and implement workforce planning processes that identify future workforce requirements and put strategies in place to address these needs.

**Achievements:** The Business Unit Managers are supported by HR as they evaluate their workforce needs in accordance with the requirements of the long term financial plan.

## Council's structure in 2014/15

Directorate	EFT at July 2013	% EFT	Current EFT 2015	Service Units
Executive Management	24.8	2.3%	20.8	General Manager, Lord Mayor, Council and Legal Services
Corporate Services	161.9	15.5%	142.1	Finance, Information Technology, Commercial Property, Human Resources, Customer Services
Planning and Regulatory	241.53	23.1%	213.06	Development and Building, Regulatory Services, Libraries, Strategic Planning, Cultural Facilities
Infrastructure	588.87	59.1%	543.67	Civil Works, Infrastructure Planning, Projects and Contracts, Facilities and Recreation, Waste Management
<b>Total EFT</b>	<b>1017.1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>919.63</b>	



# STRATEGIC ASSET PLANS

COUNCIL HAS \$1.6 BILLION OF INFRASTRUCTURE, PROPERTY, PLANT EQUIPMENT AND INVESTMENT PROPERTY ON ITS BALANCE SHEET OF THIS \$94 MILLION IS IN BACKLOG.

## Our Assets

Council currently manages an asset portfolio of \$1.6 billion, delivering services across eight core asset classes:

### Core Assets

- Buildings and structures
- Natural assets
- Parks and recreation
- Stormwater
- Transport

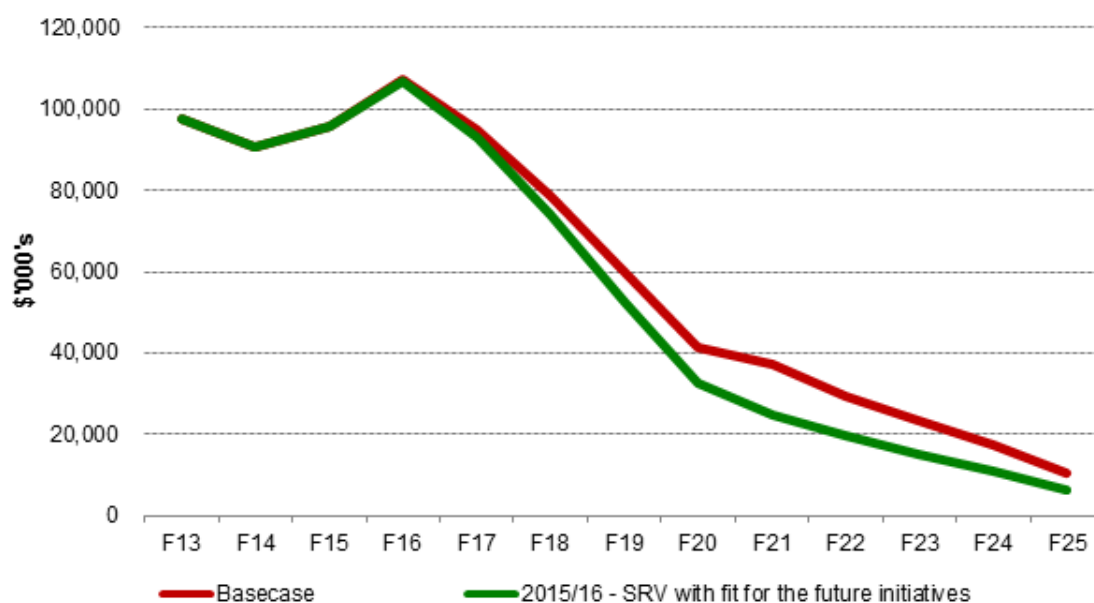
### Facilities

- Art Gallery collection
- Library collection
- Museum collection

## Infrastructure backlog

Council has successfully implemented a number of initiatives which have delivered significant financial improvements in the short term, but is focused on the long term and on ensuring that Council maintains the financial discipline necessary to deliver services in line with community needs and expectations in a sustainable manner into the future.

Figure 2: Infrastructure Backlog



Council has made considerable progress in this path and the current backlog is \$94 million which is a reduction from \$117 million in 2011/12. This is however a \$3.6 million increase on last year's position. A slight increase is predicted in 2016 due to a revaluation of Council's assets.

The additional revenue provided by the IPART approved SRV will provide the funding necessary to increase Council's commitment to reducing the infrastructure backlog in the future years.

## Customer satisfaction

The community's satisfaction levels regarding asset conditions have generally been met. As can be seen from the Community Survey snapshot (2014) asset intensive services are ranked around the middle of the list of satisfaction ratings.

The snapshot includes the following services:

- Roads are in good conditions: 49% are satisfied or very satisfied (mean score of 3.2)
- Swimming pools: 45% are satisfied or very satisfied (mean score 3.1)
- Footpaths are in good condition: 44% are satisfied or very satisfied (mean score 3.1)
- Providing cycleway: 31% are satisfied or very satisfied (mean score 2.9)

Key Strategies	Strategy	Status	Comment
1	Annual review of the Asset Management Policy (Appendix 5)	✓	Completed and adopted by Council August 2012. Annual review completed by Infrastructure Planning August 2015. No changes required
3	Implementing, monitoring and reporting to the Executive Leadership Team on the development of asset management at Newcastle City Council will be the responsibility of the Asset Management Steering Group (AMSG), once established	✓	Ongoing
3	Continue to develop and update AMPs for the major asset groups in accordance with the improvement plans identified in these documents	✓	Current AMPs will be reviewed/developed as Service based AMPs. Ongoing
4	Identify infrastructure expenditure by both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expenditure category ie the asset group it is associated with eg road pavement</li> <li>• expenditure type – operating, maintenance, capital renewal, capital upgrade or capital expansion</li> </ul>	✓	Complete. Infrastructure expenditure identified IAW this strategy in current budget
5	Consider the ongoing ownership costs of new capital works proposals in budget deliberations. This is achieved by identifying the renewal and capital upgrade/expansion components of all capital works projects, and providing for the ongoing operational and maintenance requirements.	✓	Ongoing. Specific task identified for inclusion in future project approval process
6	Annual review of asset risk management plans for all major asset classes. These will be included in a maturity assessment and risks reviewed by an audit committee and accepted by Council	✓	Ongoing
7	Continue to review the completeness and accuracy of the data for all major infrastructure classes.	✓	Ongoing. Major asset class being individually reviewed as One Council project progresses
8	Use a knowledge management strategy to ensure that appropriate and optimal decision support information is available to clearly communicate the cumulative consequences of decisions	✓	System being introduced as part of One Council to enable this strategy by June 2016
9	Continue development of the corporate asset register meeting both technical and financial reporting requirements	✓	Ongoing through the One Council project
10	Develop and adopt an Asset Accounting and Capitalisation Policy that assists in meeting the intention of Fair Value Reporting (AASB116) in accordance with the Australian Infrastructure Financial Management Guidelines (AIFMG)	✓	Ongoing
11	Continue development and enhancement of a funding model which addresses the need for sustainable renewal of infrastructure and which identifies all asset life cycle costs	✓	Funding model in place. Ongoing refinement occurring
12	Ongoing development and integration of the LTFP for all Council functions to consider both the future anticipated income projections, and the future expenditure requirements to sustain services. Council's LTFP will consider the expenditures identified in the AMPs, providing input into the Operational Plan budget	✓	Ongoing. The introduction of Service based Asset Management Plans in 2016 will greatly assist this strategy
13	Continue to develop and improve the information on the relationship between the asset service levels and cost, so that future community consultation will be well informed of the options and financial implications	✓	Ongoing. The introduction of Service based Asset Management Plans in 2016 will greatly assist this strategy
14	Undertake a detailed assessment of the resources required to implement this Strategy so that a program of improvement and milestones can be implemented and monitored through the LTFP and WMP	✓	Resource identified to develop improvement program and recruitment in process







Image: Dixon Park to Bar Beach



# PART 3

# STATUTORY REPORTING



Image: Merewether Ocean Baths

# STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

## Amounts contributed or otherwise granted

### Regulation CL 217(1)a5

During the 2014/15 financial year Council provided funding to external bodies as per section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* under the following programs:

#### Events Sponsorship Program

Council funds a range of events under the banner of the Events Sponsorship Program. In 2014/15, nine events were sponsored to the value of \$154,071 and generated a return of over \$3 million in the local community.

The events included cultural, sport and community events such as the Newcastle Writers Festival, Bikefest, DiG Festival, Surfest, NutriGrain Iron Man, Australian Bowl Riding Championships, the NBN Sparke Helmore Triathlon, Newcastle Herald Carols and the Australian Lions Club National Conference.

#### Economic Development Program

Under this program, Council contributed \$90,250 to six projects

- Renew Newcastle Creative Business Incubator - Renew Newcastle Limited
- 2015 Real Film Festival - Screen Hunter
- Newcastle – Open for Business - Hunter Business Centre
- Newcastle Innovation and Clean Tech Hub - Australian Energy Consultants
- TINA: Destination Newcastle - Octapod

Funding was also provided to the China Festival in conjunction with the University of Newcastle. The total value of the projects are estimated at \$400,000.

#### Recreation Facilities Program

In 2014/15 under this program Council contributed \$50,000 towards 11 projects for minor infrastructure works on Council's Sporting Facilities. Typical projects included drainage improvements, fencing, floodlighting upgrades, ground surface improvements, cricket wicket upgrades and softball fencing. The total contribution for project works on Council Sporting facilities were \$146,000.

#### Make Your Place Grants

In 2014/15, 21 projects were funded including 10 community events, nine creative/cultural projects and two greening projects. These projects directly involved 2,498 people. Council's grant contribution totalled \$39,200 (excluding Council officer's time) with \$118,470 added by the community.

#### Façade Improvement Program

Council funds are granted for works on building facades (the

exterior of the building that is visible from the public realm) and was guided by the Façade Improvement Scheme Policy.

The Façade Improvement grant scheme has now improved 49 facades for the city centre, leveraging over \$600,000 in works for only \$104,000 Council investment. Newcastle Now is a partner in the grant program.

#### Youth Week

Council funds events for National Youth Week each year. In 2014/15, nine events were sponsored to the value of \$6000, \$3000 funded by Council and \$3000 by State Government. These events included a Pop Up Film Night, Nicpic, Meth Makes Me Youth Forum, What's On Your Mind, Party In The Park, Enjoying My Life, Lets Go, Hamo South Youth Week, Urban Arts Cultural Workshop and Hunter Seekers.

## Coastal protection services

### Regulation CL 217(1)(e1)

In the 2014/15 financial year Council did not impose a levy for coastal protection works.

## Companion animals management

### Regulation CL 217(1)(f)

Council uses a range of education and regulatory tools to administer its responsibilities in accordance with the *Companion Animals Act 1998*.

Education activities carried out by the Ranger team included the distribution of brochures, high visibility engagement operations, signage installations and attendance at community and school events.

Council promotes the benefits of desexing animals and maintains a relationship with the RSPCA and Hunter Animal Watch to facilitate low-cost desexing for persons in financial difficulty. The Newcastle Dog Rescue Association recently received \$20,000 in funding primarily for the purpose of desexing dogs for owners in financial hardship. Council refers owners meeting this requirement and their dogs are desexed free of charge. Council has also provided microchips and implantation to assist in reducing the overall cost of desexing and registering an animal.

Regulatory activities included the investigation and management of straying, nuisance, attacking, dangerous, restricted dogs. Council investigated and reported 262 dog attacks to the Division of Local Government during the 2014/15 financial year.

Council's pound is operated by the RSPCA. Running costs were \$336,670 with expenditure exceeding income received from the companion animal related revenue from registration fees which totalled \$65,906 and impound fees which totalled \$29,493.

Unclaimed animals in Newcastle are transferred to the RSPCA where homes, if possible, are found for them. Animals are only euthanased when their health or behaviour makes it unsuitable for them to be re-homed. The RSPCA updates the pound data collection return every month and lodges it with the Division of Local Government on an annual basis.

Council has 17 off leash areas. The locations are detailed at [www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au) search for off leash.



## Controlling interest Statement

### Regulation CL 217(1)(a5)

Council held no controlling interests in companies during the 2014/15 financial year.

## Private work and financial assistance (Regulation CL 217:1:a4)

During the financial year 2014/15 no works were undertaken on private land and no works were subsidised.

## Contractors/works awarded

### Regulation CL 217(1)(a2)

During the 2014/15 financial year Council awarded contracts/work to the total value of \$41 302 651 as detailed in the following table.

### Contractors/works awarded

Contractor Name	Description of Goods, Works or Service	Contract sum or estimate*
Husky Demolition Pty Ltd	Demolition of former TPI House	\$181,830.00
RTC Commercial Pty Ltd	Construction of No. 4 Sportsground Amenities & Islington Park Amenities	\$854,920.00
NSW Soil Conservation Services	Construct & Install Baffle Box Addison Street Beresfield	\$194,100.00
Labour Cooperative Ltd	Outdoor Labour Hire	\$3,000,000.00*
Michilis Pty Ltd	Bathers Way - Construction of Dixon Park to Bar Beach	\$1,578,154.60
Daracon Contractors Pty Ltd	Bathers Way - Construction of Nobbys to Zaara Street	\$2,894,500.00
Staples	Supply of Stationery & Ancillary Items	\$400,000.00*
BCK Pty Ltd	Supply of Magazines & Periodicals to council libraries (2 + 1 years)	\$395,400.00
Insituform Pacific Pty Ltd	City Wide Trenchless Storm Water Drainage Remediation	\$393,378.62
Design Sabar Pty Ltd	Mall Car Park Access Equipment Upgrade	\$200,278.00
6 x suppliers accepted	Supply of Library Books & Library Materials (up to 3 years)	\$2,000,000.00*
Fuji Xerox Finance Ltd	Lease of High Speed Copier / Production Press	\$314,700.00
Planet Footprint Pty Ltd	Web Based Utilities Metering, Monitoring & Reporting System	\$217,105.00
NTT Data Figtree Systems Pty Ltd	WHS Management & Claims Management Software	\$411,204.00
Volvo Commercial Vehicles	Supply of 4 x New Waste Collection Vehicles	\$1,485,524.40
SMEC Australia Pty Ltd	Detailed Design of Summerhill Waste Management Centre Cell 9	\$199,350.44
NSW Electoral Commission	Conduct Lord Mayor By Election 2014	\$409,847.00
Knightguard Protection Services Pty Ltd	Cash in Transit Services (up to 5 years)	\$1,370,585.00
NSW Soil Conservation Service	Ironbark Creek Stage 3 Restoration Construction Works	\$367,127.58
Gleeson Civil Engineering Pty Ltd	Bathers Way - Construction of Shortland Esplanade Newcastle Beach	\$3,131,239.64
F & D deVitis	Blackley Oval Amenities Construction	\$342,420.00
FE Technologies Pty Ltd	Library RFID System Stage 2 Implementation	\$165,178.20
Kentan Machinery Pty Ltd	Supply of 4 x New Tractors	\$161,948.00
NSW Electoral Commission	Conduct Ward 3 By Election 2015	\$178,784.00

Contractor Name	Description of Goods, Works or Service	Contract sum or estimate*
<b>Onstage Presentations Pty Ltd</b>	Audio Visual & Web Casting Equipment Replacement for Council Chambers	\$152,419.30
<b>3 x contractors accepted</b>	Traffic Control Services (2 years)	\$200,000.00*
<b>3 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Supply of Soils	\$174,000.00*
<b>4 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Supply of Turf	\$144,000.00*
<b>SITA Australia Pty Ltd</b>	Biennial Supply of Coarse Mulch	\$280,000.00*
<b>2 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Storm Water Pipe CCTV Inspection, Cleaning & Reporting Services	\$168,000.00*
<b>8 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Supply of Sands & Rock Dust	\$150,000.00*
<b>3 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Concrete Pathway Construction Services	\$150,000.00*
<b>Rocla Pipeline Products</b>	Biennial Supply of Precast Concrete Products	\$170,000.00*
<b>2 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Road Line Marking & Road Line Marking Removal Services	\$150,000.00*
<b>6 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Supply of Road Base & Sub Base Materials	\$2,000,000.00*
<b>6 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Supply of Asphaltic Concrete Road Overlay Services	\$1,000,000.00*
<b>2 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Supply of Road Bituminous Spray Seal Services	\$740,000.00*
<b>3 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Road Pavement Rejuvenation Services	\$900,000.00*
<b>5 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Road Pavement Repairs Services	\$6,000,000.00*
<b>3 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Road Pavement Crack Sealing Services	\$380,000.00*
<b>3 x contractors accepted</b>	Biennial Road Safety Barrier (Guardrail) Services	\$750,000.00*
<b>Kingston Building (Australia) Pty Ltd</b>	Newcastle Museum Erecting Shed Post Development Works	\$941,509.00
<b>ERM Power Ltd</b>	Supply Electricity to Small Sites	\$1,000,000.00*
<b>Water Art Australia Pty Ltd</b>	Specialist Plumbing Services (2 years)	\$500,000.00*
<b>4 x contractors accepted</b>	In House Civil Design Services (2 years)	\$500,000.00*
<b>3 x contractors accepted</b>	In House CAD Services - Civil Designs (2 years)	\$200,000.00*
<b>Big Boys Newcastle Pty Ltd</b>	Roof Gutter Cleaning & Maintenance Services (2 years)	\$350,000.00*
<b>NSW Roads &amp; Maritime Services</b>	Installation of Traffic Signals at Smith & Lingard Streets Merewether	\$265,311.87
<b>O'Connor Marsden &amp; Associates Pty Ltd</b>	Provision of Internal Audit Services (3 years)	\$375,000.00*
<b>NSW Soil Conservation Services</b>	Stockton Seawall Repairs	\$248,016.00
<b>Westrac Pty Ltd</b>	Supply of 2 x New Skid Steer Loaders	\$242,071.74
<b>Gilbert &amp; Roach</b>	Supply of 3 x New 4.5T Cab Chassis with Tipping Bodies	\$236,140.00
<b>Gilbert &amp; Roach</b>	Supply of 3 x New 7.5T Cab Chassis with Tipping Bodies	\$331,335.00
<b>Lane 4 Pty Ltd</b>	Operation of 4 x Council Inland Swim Centres (5 years)	\$929,500.00
<b>NSW Electoral Commission</b>	Conduct 2016 Council Elections	\$827,774.00

\* means the amount is an estimate with some estimates based on historical expenditure. All amounts are stated as GST inclusive

## Mayoral and Councillor expenses

### Regulation CL 217(1)(a1)

The following expenses are the combined total for the Lord Mayor and 12 Councillors. The reporting of these expenses is in line with the above regulation.

Financial Year 2013/14	\$
Members Fees	391,833
Official Business	543.63
Overseas Visits (for Official Business)	21,297.45
Professional Development	20,083.56
Annual Conference	1,109.09
Communication Expenses	22,218.96
Operating Expenses	2,687.00
Incidental Costs	12.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>459,784.98</b>

## Details and purpose of overseas visits by Councillors, Council staff or other persons representing Council

### Regulation CL 217(1)(a)

#### Lord Mayor Overseas Visits

Acting Lord Mayor, Councillor Brad Luke travelled to Palo Alto and Chicago in the United States of America in October 2014 (as detailed below). Councillor Brad Luke paid for his own international airfares and conference registration. Council contributed to accommodation expenses.

Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes travelled to the United States of America on 18 June 2015 for participation in the United States Studies Centre Future Cities Program 2015, arriving back in Sydney on 7 July 2015 (as detailed below).

#### Councillor Overseas Visits

During the 2014/15 financial year no Councillor undertook an overseas visit as part of their Council duties.

#### Council Officer Overseas Visits

General Manager, Deputy Lord Mayor Councillor Brad Luke (at his own expense) and the Community Safety Facility Officer travelled to Palo Alto and Chicago in the United States of America in October 2014.

The purpose of the trip was to:

- Support and showcase the development of Newcastle City Council as a Smart City;
- Apply for membership of the Smart City global steering committee to reinforce presence of Newcastle as an emerging Smart City;
- Send a delegation comprised of the General Manager,

Deputy Lord Mayor Councillor Brad Luke and the Community Safety Facility Officer to the city of Palo Alto California and the Cisco Internet of Things World Forum in Chicago; and

- Explore opportunities to establish ongoing mutually beneficial relationships with the City of Palo Alto, technology entrepreneurs and investors and corporate entities that will support the development of a Smart City platform in Newcastle City Council.

Peter Chrystal - Director of Planning and Regulatory and the Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes travelled to the United States of America during June/July 2015.

The purpose of the trip was to:

- Participate in the United States Studies Centre Future Cities Program 2015
- The program focused on city centre revitalisation and building sustainable, liveable and resilient communities.
- The primary goal of the Future Cities Program is to promote sustainable urban development by supporting elected leaders, together with local government staff and community leaders, with an evidence based approach to strategic urban planning.
- The Future Cities Program aims to provide on-going knowledge sharing and capacity building between Australian and American partners.
- Also in attendance from Newcastle was Michael Cassell, UrbanGrowth NSW's Newcastle Project Director

## EEO Management Plan implementation

### Regulation CL 217(1)(a9)

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) focuses on recognising and valuing diversity within the workplace. This means having workplace policies, practices and behaviours that are fair and do not disadvantage people who belong to particular groups.

Council provides a large number of services to a diverse community and aims to promote an environment free from harassment, bullying, victimisation and discrimination. We have an EEO Management Plan with strategies that assist members of EEO groups to overcome past and present disadvantage.

#### Key Achievements were:

- Activities within the Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2013-2017 continue to be implemented.
- Individual and group development programs ran for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander employees.
- Aboriginal Scholarship program implemented in partnership with the University of Newcastle.
- 2015-2017 Reconciliation Action Plan launched.
- Continuing work on data verification to ensure compliance with the *Local Government Act*, Section 345 (c) states that 'collection and recording of appropriate information' is required to assist in the development of the EEO Management Plan.
- Employee Assistance Program implemented.



## External bodies, companies or partnerships

### Regulation CL 217(1)(a8)

#### Hunter Integrated Resources

Hunter Integrated Resources, a public company limited by guarantee and not having share capital. Council has an interest in this company that was incorporated on 7 December 2000 and is not currently carrying any active business. It was originally incorporated to undertake a Hunter Region waste project joint venture between Newcastle City Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Maitland City Council and Cessnock City Council.

#### Hunter Councils

Hunter Councils Limited is a public company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The purpose of the company is to provide local government resource sharing arrangements. Hunter Councils brings together 11 Councils to promote cooperation and collaboration to benefit local communities.

This has achieved strong communication between councils, sharing professional expertise and inter-council collaboration. The General Managers' Advisory Committee, made up of all the Hunter Councils' general managers, meets monthly to progress issues of regional importance.

#### Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd

Council was previously in a joint venture with Port Stephens Council to operate the Newcastle Airport.

Following the corporate restructure that occurred on 9 October 2013, the four partners of the Newcastle Airport Partnership are now Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 1 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 1) and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 2 (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 2), both owned by Newcastle City Council, and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 3 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 3) and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 4 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 4), both owned by Port Stephens Council.

Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd operates the Newcastle Airport as agent for the Newcastle Airport Partnership. Under this structure, Newcastle Council and Port Stephens Council hold the rights to their share of the assets and their share of the obligations in the partnership.

As defined in AASB 131 – Interests in Joint Ventures, joint control is the contractually agreed sharing of control over an economic activity and exists only when the strategic, financial and operating decisions relating to the activity require the unanimous consent of the parties sharing the control.

Before the restructure each Council had joint control through their 50% share of Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd. After the corporate restructure that occurred on 9 October 2013, this ownership structure ultimately remains the same and Council now owns new holding companies Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 1 (NAPC1) and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 2 (NAPC2).

Council has elected to continue to apply the proportionate consolidation method allowed in AASB 131.

Therefore there is no change in the accounting for Newcastle or Port Stephens' share of the joint operation by each Council as the impact of recognising the direct interests in the assets, liabilities, revenue and expenses of the joint operation is effectively the same as recognising their share under the proportionate consolidation method currently in place.

#### NSW Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme (Statewide)

The NSW Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme started in 1993 as a joint venture with 96 members forming a 'self insurance mutual' covering public liability and professional indemnity insurance.

Membership has expanded to include councils, the Local Government Association, the Local Government Shires Association, a rural Water Board and a Noxious Weed Eradication Board.

Over 18 years, Statewide has delivered many benefits including stable premiums, reduced premium outcomes for Council as well as cost containment and spread of risk.

## Functions delegated by Council

### Regulation CL 217(1)(a6)

To better engage the community and reflect local community views and needs, Newcastle City Council delegates

a range of its functions to volunteer committees and other organisations.

Changes have included the move for Mainstreets from s355 committees to incorporated associations independent of Council.

#### Parks Committees

Parks committees manage local parks and reserves on behalf of the community including:

- Beresfield/Tarro Park
- Centennial Park
- Elmore Vale Reserve
- Federal Park
- Heaton-Birmingham Gardens Park
- Kotara Park
- Myambah Crescent Oval
- New Lambton Oval
- Stevenson Park
- Stockton Park
- Tuxford Park

#### Community Facility Committees

Community facility committees manage local community facilities on behalf of the community. Council supports Community Facility Committees for:

- Beresfield Child Care Centre
- Carrington Community Centre
- Hamilton South Community Centre
- Henderson Park Hall
- New Lambton Community Centre

# Legal Proceedings

## Regulation CL 217(1)(a3)

### Expenses incurred

During 2014/15 the total of legal expenses in relation to legal proceedings incurred by Newcastle City Council was \$41,592.

Of this, the monies expended undertaking litigation and the amounts received in settlement of costs claims were:

- Amount expended undertaking litigation: \$41,592
- Amount received in settlements of costs claims: \$70,000

### Local Court

#### Prosecutions and appeals

Legal proceedings in the Local Court include prosecutions by Council, usually concerning failure to obtain or comply with orders or development approvals issued by Council. Areas of prosecution range from unauthorised works to failure to comply with animal control orders or clean-up notices. Defendants may appeal any decisions made by the Local Court in relation to prosecutions.

#### Appeals

There were three appeals lodged with the Local Court in relation to dangerous dog declarations issued by Council. Of these:

- One matter was withdrawn.
- One matter was dismissed and an agreed control order was imposed.
- One matter is yet to be finalised.

There was one annulment application lodged in relation to a decision made by the Local Court in 2014/15 which was dismissed.

#### Court elected penalty notices

Legal proceedings in the Local Court also include enforcement of penalty notices. Court elected parking penalty notices are dealt with by the police prosecutors (except in special circumstances where Council may deal with a matter directly, for example, if the defendant is a Police Officer). For all other court elected penalty notices, Council's Legal Services Unit will review and determine whether the matter should proceed in the Local Court or whether the penalty notice be withdrawn.

In 2014/15, Council was involved in seven cases where the recipient of a penalty notice had court elected. Of these:

- In three matters the offences were proven with convictions recorded and fines imposed.
- In two matters the offences were proven with no convictions recorded and no fines imposed.
- One matter was dismissed under s10A(1) of the *Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999*.
- One matter was withdrawn.

## Land and Environment Court

### Class 1 appeals

Class 1 appeals in the Land and Environment Court are related to environmental planning and protection appeals. This includes appeals on the merits only against refusals, or deemed refusals, of development consents or conditions of development consents.

In 2014/15, seven class 1 appeals were lodged in the Land and Environment Court against Council. Of these, two appeals were successful (one on the basis of an amended application). Two appeals were settled; one at a section 34 conciliation conference and one by a section 34 agreement between parties. The proceedings for the remaining three appeals continue and are yet to be finalised.

### Class 4 appeals

Class 4 applications in the Land and Environment Court relate to environmental planning protection and development contract civil enforcement. This includes breaches of planning law or breaches of conditions of development consent, and also proceedings which question the legal validity of consents or refusals of consent issued by Council.

One class 4 application which was lodged in the Land and Environment Court against Council in 2011/12, and the judgement was handed down in 2014/15. The appeal was upheld, with costs awarded to the applicant. A subsequent costs order is yet to be finalised.

One class 4 application which was lodged in the Land and Environment Court against Council in 2014/15 and is yet to be finalised.

In addition, one class 4 application was lodged in the Land and Environment Court by Council in 2012/13 and subsequent orders were made in 2012/13. These orders have not been adhered to and so contempt proceedings were initiated by Council in 2014/15 - these proceedings are yet to be finalised.

## Public Interest Disclosures

### (Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 Regulation 2011)

Council has an adopted Public Interest Disclosure Policy (Policy) in accordance with the requirements of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* (PID Act). The Policy provides a mechanism for Council Officials to make disclosures about serious wrongdoing.

### Public interest disclosures: Statistical information

During 2014/15, the following disclosures were made under the Policy:

Number of public officials who made Public Interest Disclosures	0
Number of Public Interest Disclosures received	0
Of Public Interest Disclosures received, number primarily about:	
- Corrupt conduct	N/A
- Maladministration	N/A
- Serious and substantial waste	N/A
- Government information contravention	N/A
Number of Public Interest Disclosures finalised	1

## Public interest disclosures: details on how Council met its obligations in 2014/15

Council adopted its current Policy in October 2013. The Policy:

- Incorporates the relevant provisions of the *PID Act* and the NSW Ombudsman's Model Internal Reporting Policy – Public Interest Disclosures (2013 version).
- Appoints a coordinator under the framework who is responsible for assisting the General Manager to manage disclosures.
- Appoints 13 Council Officers from diverse work areas and locations across the organisation who may receive disclosures from staff.
- Council's General Manager has taken action to ensure staff are aware of the Public Interest Disclosure Policy by:
- Arranging for representatives from the NSW Ombudsman to attend and provide training to Managers and Public Interest Disclosure Officers.
- Making Council's Policy available to all staff via a link on Council's intranet. The intranet site also contains a factsheet, frequently asked questions document and a link to the NSW Ombudsman website.
- Making hard copies of Council's Policy are available in a number of easily accessible places at Council's works depot, including through Council's nurse.
- Erecting posters provided by the NSW Ombudsman Office at numerous worksites which set out:
  - where Council's Policy can be located; and
  - contact details for Council's Disclosures Coordinator.
- Incorporating information about the Public Interest Disclosure Policy to new staff as part of its induction program.
- Supporting the roll-out of an e-learning training module which incorporates information and assessment on Council's Public Interest Disclosure Policy.
- Supporting a Performance Management framework includes a section providing for discussion about Public Interest Disclosures.

## Stormwater levies and charges

### Regulation CL 217(1)(e)

Council levied a Stormwater Management Service Charge (SWMSC) of \$25 per residential property, \$12.50 for residential strata lots, \$25/350m<sup>2</sup> for business properties capped at a maximum charge of \$1000. Business strata units were subject to a minimum of \$12.50 per strata lot for additional works and services. The total received SWSC funds was \$1,973,794.

The projected expenditure on Stormwater Management Service Charge (SWMSC) drainage works and services over the 2014/15 financial year identified in the Management Plan was \$1.99 million. The budget adopted as at December 2014 Quarterly review was \$3.21 million. The actual expenditure of these works and services incurred over the financial year was \$3.21 million of stormwater management service charge funds.

The expanded actual expenditure was the adoption of proposals to deliver projects that were scoped and designed during the year, as part of the regular quarterly review process, including eg Minmi Road Detention Basin, Fletcher pipe replacement using trenchless technology.

Larger scale stormwater drainage pit and pipe rehabilitation works were deferred to allow for priority reactive works.

A large number of designs were to be started in 2014/15 and then implemented (final design and construction) in 2015/16 Operational Plan. Catchment investigations and modelling works were delivered for priority catchments such as Cooks Hill.

### The 2014/15 SWMSC program consisted of 26 projects delivering:

- 6 WSUD devices including a sediment baffle box and wet sump;
- 3 street tree rain gardens devices and a gross pollutant net trap;
- 10,340 metres of pipe rehabilitated;
- 454 metres of open channel renewed;
- Rehabilitation of 106 street pit entries;
- 14 headwalls and associated inlets/outlets;
- As well as education, maintenance and compliance outcomes.

### Major achievements in the year included:

- Completion of residential stormwater renewal works within New Lambton Heights that delivered excellent outcomes controlling stormwater within steep, difficult terrain. The project was delivered on time and on budget;
- Developing a Hexham Swamp stormwater discharge treatment demonstration site at Callan Avenue Maryland, in conjunction with Hunter LLS and NPWS to address the ongoing degradation of this RAMSAR listed wetlands from uncontrolled discharges from development sites;
- The highly successful Gutter Talk community street meetings with residents across Cooks Hill, that discussed catchment characteristics and how local action can assist in changing the quality and in some cases quantity of stormwater within neighbourhoods
- Safety fencing to ensure traffic and pedestrian safety when moving near/around new stormwater assets;
- Delivery of approximately 225 erosion and sediment control and Business Pollution Prevention interventions across a range of targeted business operations (eg industrial areas, mechanics, smash repairers and development sites), with excellent rates of response to inspection outcomes;
- Successful outcomes from drainage renewal works in New Lambton at Lambton laneway and Russell Road intersections with Bridges Road where connecting street drainage to the Hunter Water Styx Creek Channel saw improvement to previous street inundation issues;
- The Shortland Esplanade drainage works associated with the Bather Way development has renewed failing drainage asset and brought stormwater quality improvement through the installation of raingarden to treat road runoff before discharges to the ocean and rock platform; and
- The delivery of nearly one kilometre of stormwater pipe renewal without the need for trench construction, bringing quality asset renewal without the cost and disruption of traditional pipe renewal methods.



## 2014/15 Stormwater Management Service Charge (SWMSC) projects

Projects 2014-15	Outcome
<b>Citywide - trenchless technology drainage rehabilitation</b>	0.91 kilometres of pipeline was renewed using Trenchless technology across the LGA
<b>Creeks and Waterways - inspect erosion and sediment control</b>	Proactive and re-active erosion & sediment control inspections delivered across the LGA
<b>Community Education at environment rehabilitation worksites</b>	Over 70 sites were incorporated within the 2014/15 community engagement and participation program for Major Environment Asset Renewal work. The program included works sites such as Boatmans Ck and Addison St Beresfield WSUD delivery, Cooks Hill Gutter Talk sessions & Water Quality monitoring site delivery
<b>Curzon Road New Lambton - drainage rehabilitation design</b>	Design completed on a very challenging site
<b>Water Sensitive City Implementation</b>	Council continues in its role as participant in the CRC for Water Sensitive City. This has offered free capacity building workshops and courses for staff (equivalent approximately 315 hours) that has delivered expanded staff skills and knowledge base and improved current work outputs.
<b>Tudor Street (Parry to Gordon) - drainage construction</b>	The drainage renewal works within the road rehabilitation project included 215 metres of various sized pipe and 13 pit renewals. Three new Norfolk Island Pine trees were also installed within the median, due to use of Escholtz median kerbs
<b>Church Street Drainage design and build</b>	Construction complete
<b>Wye Street Lambton - drainage replacement</b>	Cancelled - asset works transferred to private ownership
<b>Council Reserves - maintenance of drainage sites</b>	Council's range of Water Sensitive Urban Design treatment devices is inspected and maintenance works distributed to relevant Council work teams on a monthly basis. This ensures that stormwater quality improvements and environmental benefits from such devices is maximised. Annual Gross pollutants, organic debris and sediment removal is documented for each device
<b>University Drive Waratah West - catchment rehabilitation</b>	Completion and review of Boatman Creek Survey (2.3 km) to determine blockages. Project Charter for cleaning and CCTV of 70 metres of stormwater culver including construction of several cofferdam structures to facilitate cleaning and CCTV and spoil disposal process completed. Project also includes review of Warabrook Railway Station footbridge.
<b>Various Headwall rehabilitation -</b>	The Headwall Project successfully delivered a range of headwall and outlet renewal works that reduced erosion and habitat destruction at seven sites across the LGA
<b>Lambton Road Laneway - drainage rehabilitation</b>	The Project involved the rehabilitation of deteriorated drainage infrastructure and new pipeline installation in order to increase the capacity of the stormwater network. The Project involved the installation of approximately 144 metres of stormwater pipeline including the construction of nine new pits

Projects 2014-15	Outcome
<b>Shortland Esplanade Newcastle East - drainage rehabilitation</b>	This major project incorporated renewal of 38 pit and 86 metres of pipe drainage and inclusion on three WSUD elements to treat stormwater before direct discharge to the ocean.
<b>Russell Road New Lambton - drainage rehabilitation &amp; upgrade</b>	The Project involved the rehabilitation of deteriorated drainage infrastructure and new pipeline installation in order to increase the capacity of the stormwater network. The Project involved installation of approximately 90 metres of stormwater pipeline including the construction of 4 new pits.
<b>Cooks Hill drainage rehabilitation - Bruce Street install GPT</b>	Feasibility and concept design approved and detailed construction plans completed ready for 2016 works
<b>Wharf Road Newcastle - replace tide gates</b>	Stormwater model completed for the harbour outlets off Wharf Road as well as Throsby Basin Carrington. No tide gates were required at the harbour outlet locations. Two new gates and a range of maintenance is required along the Carrington peninsula.
<b>Maitland Rd Hexham - tide gate replacement</b>	Installation of safety barriers along approximately 50 metres of SH10 roadside to protect traffic from exposed vertical drop (approximately 1 metre) to the tide gate and outlet structures if a vehicle left road carriageway.
<b>Parker Street Carrington - drainage rehabilitation Stage 2</b>	Concept design completed for the restoration of stormwater channel through the Parker St mangrove stand to reinstate drainage connectivity from Tighes Hill and industrial development of Carrington to Throsby Basin.
<b>Hope Street Wallsend - catchment rehabilitation</b>	Catchment and drainage rehabilitation completed
<b>Sunderland Street Mayfield Roe to Valencia Street - drainage design</b>	Site investigation completed. Design to be completed 2015/16.
<b>Ocean Street Merewether - drainage rehabilitation</b>	Works were reported in 2013/14 year
<b>Hunter Estuary Model - design</b>	Model completed with Council contribution and five other agency partners to allow effective investigation and review of any future Newcastle Port and lower Hunter estuary development proposals
<b>Addison Street Beresfield - rehabilitation of existing GPT</b>	Construction complete
<b>William Street Merewether - drainage construction</b>	Works will be delivered over two years. In 2013/14 60 metres of pipe and six pits were installed
<b>Bar Beach Avenue drainage rehabilitation</b>	This project has provided fit for purpose stormwater drainage assets for the full length of Bar Beach Avenue from Kilgour Avenue to the HWC channel discharge. Works will be continuing during 2015-16.
<b>Flood Asset Register</b>	The flood asset register has been deferred to 2015/16 delivery. Investigation of a detention basin was completed in 2013/14
<b>Engineering Survey Stormwater Investigation</b>	Engineering survey was completed for 12 sites to inform stormwater drainage renewal works included in 2015/16 forward program

## Total Remuneration for General Manager and Senior Officers

### Regulation CL 217(1)(b) and (c)

During the 2014/15 financial year Council's senior officers were comprised of:

General Manager	
Council & Legal Services Manager	
Planning & Regulatory Director	
Development & Building Manager	
Strategic Planning Manager	
Regulatory Services Manager	
Cultural Facilities Manager	
Libraries Manager	
Manager Waste	
Corporate Services Director	
Finance Manager	
Human Resource Manager	
Commercial Property Manager	
Customer Service Manager	
Infrastructure Director	
Infrastructure Planning Manager	
Civil Works Manager	
Projects & Contracts Manager	
Facilities & Recreation Manager	

All figures stated are in line with relevant legislation that requires the following components to be reported:

(i) the total of the values of the salary components of their packages.

(ii) total amount of any bonus payments, performance payments or other payments made to the general manager that do not form part of the salary component of the general manager.

(iii) total amount payable by Council by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the general manager may be a contributor.

(iv) total value of any non-cash benefits for which the general manager may elect under the package.

(v) total amount payable by Council by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits.

General Manager	\$382,000
Senior officers x 18	\$3,423,976
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,805,976</b>

## NAT V3 Work Health & Safety

### Element 3.3.6

The past 12 months have seen a number of key initiatives rolled out across Council, aimed at promoting a safe workplace and developing Work Health and Safety (WHS) best practice.

Council focused on delivering on the initiatives from the 2014-17 WHS Management Plan which promotes WHS based initiatives aligned to 10 key objectives:

1. To reduce injury rate;
2. To be compliant with new noise management requirements;
3. To streamline current risk management processes;
4. To implement a procurement process which appropriately addresses WHS risk;
5. To have all staff trained in the WHS Management System;
6. To improve safety leadership across all levels of supervisors;
7. To deliver WHS training;
8. To retain our Workers Compensation Self-Insurance Licence;
9. To increase safety leadership presence and
10. To investigate our current safety culture and make improvement.

To enhance the Newcastle City Council WHS Management System, the following WHS Management System Documents underwent major or minor review for compliance to the *WHS Act*, WHS Regulation 2011, Codes of Practice and/or Australian Standards or via through WHS System and WHS Compliance Audits.

- 2 Policy
- 5 System Procedures
- 11 Operating Procedures
- 66 Forms
- 2 Injury Management Plans
- 2 Registers
- 12 Training Plans

Opportunities identified to enhance the WHS System were monitored through the mySafety Incident and Hazard Corrective Action System and as a result the WHS System has now been reviewed with further progress made on improving Council's legislative compliance.

Overall, Council's WHS performance in the 2014/15 Financial Year recorded the following:

- Zero Improvement Notices or Council Proven WorkCover Incident Investigations
- The Lost Time Injury Rate (LTIR) of 3.91 in 2014/15 compared to 4.42 in 2013/14
- The Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR) of 17.62 in 2014/15 compared to 20.29 in 2013/14
- Lost Time Injuries decreased from 43 in 2013/14 to 36 in 2014/15
- Total Injuries increased from 215 in 2013/14 to 197 in 2014/15
- 100% of investigations of Lost Time and Medical Treatment Injuries



Positive Performance Indicators Results	%	Status
Corrective Actions (01/04/09 to current)	87.34%	✓
Incidents entered <3 Days (month)	96.04%	✓
Workplace inspections (Month)	87.51%	✓
Workplace Inspections entered into Dataworks/ECM (Month)	93.73%	✓
Systems or Compliance Audits (month)	100%	✓
Training Attendance (Month)	94.22%	✓
Group Overall Performance	93.55%	✓

## Total rates and charges written off

### Regulation CL 132(5)

The total rates and charges written off was \$1,345,159

## GIPA annual report

Obligations under the *GIPA Act*

### 1. Review of proactive release program – Clause 7(a)

Under section 7 of the *GIPA Act*, agencies must review their programs for the release of government information to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. This review must be undertaken at least once every 12 months.

Council undertook the following initiatives as part of the review of its proactive release program for the reporting period:

- Reviewing the information published on Council's website to ensure that the information is up to date, informative and relevant.
- Monitoring matters of public interest to review whether Council can proactively release information about the matter.

As a result of this review, Council released the following information proactively:

### Community service announcements about:

- changes to waste collection services
- parking meter operations
- Wallsend library closure for refurbishment
- BHP exhibit closure at Newcastle Museum
- Emergency messaging during April storms including road closures, hazards, response times

### Project updates including:

- Geotech investigations at South Newcastle Beach
- Bathurst Way progress reports
- City Hall clock tower refurbishment
- Upgrades to Blackbutt Reserve including a new wildlife arena
- Tudor Street road rehabilitation
- King Street footpath rehabilitation
- Ironbark Creek rehabilitation
- North Stockton boat ramp improvements
- Traffic changes to Glebe Road, Merewether

### 2. Number of access applications received – Clause 7(b)

During the reporting period, Council received a total of 41 formal access applications (including withdrawn applications but not invalid applications).

### 3. Number of refused applications for Schedule 1 information – Clause 7(c)

During the reporting period, Council refused a total of five access applications either wholly or in part because the information requested was information referred to in Schedule one to the *GIPA Act*. Of those applications, two were refused in full, and three were refused in part.

### 4. Statistical information about access applications – Clause 7(d) and Schedule 2

See table A.

**Table A: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome\***

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with application	Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn
Media	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private sector business	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	1
Members of the public (application by legal representative)	0	3	0	1	2	0	0	1
Members of the public (other)	6	4	2	0	2	0	0	5

\*More than one decision can be made in respect of a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision. This also applies to Table B.

**Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome**

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with application	Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn
Personal information applications*	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	7	6	3	1	3	1	0	11
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	2	4	0	0	1	0	0	0

\*A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in clause 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant (the applicant being an individual).

PLEASE NOTE: The total number of decisions in Table B should be the same as Table A.

**Table C: Invalid applications**

Reason for invalidity	Number of applications
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	9
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0
Total number of invalid applications received	9
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	8

**Table D: Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure: matters listed in Schedule 1 of the Act**

Number of times consideration used*	
Overriding secrecy laws	0
Cabinet information	0
Executive Council information	0
Contempt	0
Legal professional privilege	5
Excluded information	0
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0
Transport safety	0
Adoption	0
Care and protection of children	0
Ministerial code of conduct	0
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0

\*More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and, if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application). This also applies in relation to Table E.

**Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure:**

Number of occasions when application not successful	
Responsible and effective government	1
Law enforcement and security	0
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	8
Business interests of agencies and other persons	5
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0
Secrecy provisions	0
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0
Transport safety	0
Adoption	0
Care and protection of children	0
Ministerial code of conduct	0
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0

**Table F: Timeliness**

Number of applications	
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	19
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	6
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>

**Table G: Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)**

	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total
Internal review	0	0	0
Review by Information Commissioner*	0	1	1
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0
Review by ADT	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

\*The Information Commissioner does not have the authority to vary decisions, but can make recommendation to the original decision-maker. The data in this case indicates that a recommendation to vary or uphold the original decision has been made.

**Table H: Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)**

Number of applications for review	
Applications by access applicants	1
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	0
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0
Total number of invalid applications received	9
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	8

**Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies under Division 2 of Part 4 of the Act (by type of transfer)**

Number of applications transferred	
Agency - initiated transfers	0
Applicant - initiated transfers	0



