



Six monthly report

JANUARY TO JUNE 2020



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au | 02 4988 0255

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Contents

General Manager's message	2
COVID-19 & Restart.....	2
Major projects.....	3
Staff lending a hand	4
Funding received.....	4
Financial sustainability	4
People, awards, scholarships.....	4
Our Port Stephens.....	6
Our Council	7
Principal activities.....	9
Key priorities	9
Delivery Program objectives update.....	18
Scorecard.....	38
1. Service Delivery	40
2. Community Satisfaction	45
3. Employee Engagement.....	45
4. Governance.....	46
5. Risk Management	47
6. Financial sustainability	48
7. Infrastructure backlog.....	49

The 6 monthly report January to June 2020 has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 404(5) of the *Local Government Act 1993*:

"The general manager must ensure that regular progress reports are provided to the council reporting as to its progress with respect to the principal activities detailed in its delivery program. Progress reports must be provided at least every 6 months."

General Manager's message



Wayne Wallis, General Manager

What an eventful 6 months it has been. From bushfires and drought to a global pandemic — it can't be denied that we are in the midst of challenging times. But as always Port Stephens Council has the community's back and will support them where they need it most.

While the year we've come from and the times ahead are unprecedented, what we can predict is that change is a constant and that there will always be challenges that we face as a community. The role of Council during these periods of rapid and widespread change remains the same — to provide the services our community needs in the best possible way.

This report provides not only our achievements and challenges for the past 6 months but alternate ways that we've been providing services and supporting the community.

COVID-19 and Restart

Extension of Council term

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Minister for Local Government has postponed ordinary local government elections until 4 September 2021, thereby extending the current Council term.

COVID Safe Plans

Across the organisation, Council has prepared COVID Safe Plans in accordance with Public Health Orders, for its buildings to ensure that we are keeping both the community and staff safe. From our Community Halls to Administration Building, Libraries to Holiday Parks we've included measures such as contactless check-in, online guest declarations, hygiene and safe distance signage along with increasing cleaning protocols.

Funding made available

In March 2020, Council allocated \$500,000 for COVID-19 affected tourism and business in Port Stephens, allowing Council to be agile and respond with support as these industries need it. Through targeted marketing campaigns, events and industry development programs Council has been working with Destination Port Stephens and the industry to maintain a critical mass of tourism services and facilities across the visitor economy. Ensuring that when the virus is contained and normality resumes, the visitor economy has the capacity to rebuild and maintain its position as one of the leading regional tourism destinations in NSW.

Restart Port Stephens

In April 2020 Council urged the State and Federal governments to provide local government assistance to support essential Council services as well as giving assistance to businesses and residents during the pandemic. Council committed to amongst other things: making hardship support more accessible (more information on page 33), reviewing the grants program to support our community's response to COVID-19 (further update in December 2020) and preparing a Community Response and Recovery Plan (the foundation of which comes from COVID-19 questions in the 2020 Community Satisfaction Survey).

Other Government support

Federal and State government have also pledged funding to assist Council, our community and economy to remain resilient through:

- Local Government Economic Stimulus Package
- Federal/State Government Investment in Infrastructure and Road Safety Projects

Services delivered another way

In times when we haven't been able to deliver traditional face to face programs and services, Council has been agile, adapting and delivering these in a number of different ways, including, call and collect services at the Library, online Interagency and Committee meetings, online community engagement, Public Notices online and Council meetings via video conferencing just to name a few.

Major projects

Completion of a number of key projects and plans such as:

- Drafting of the Local Strategic Planning Statement and Local Housing Strategy
- Stage 1 Tomaree Road, Shoal Bay
- 2 sections of footpath at Gan Gan Road, Anna Bay
- Vardon Road, Fern Bay
- Seaham Road, Nelsons Plains
- Roundabout at Lemon Tree Passage Road/Nelson Bay Road Salt Ash for Transport NSW
- Exhibition and endorsement of Council's 2020-2021 Integrated Planning and Reporting documents (Delivery Program, Operational Plan, Long Term Financial Plan, Workforce Plan, Strategic Asset Management Plan and Fees and Charges)
- Key Priorities from page 9.

Nelson Bay Road/Lemon Tree Passage Roundabout



Staff lending a hand

Our staff have gone above and beyond their normal duties with:

- Bushfires — our Environmental Health team in February nominating to assist bushfire affected Councils through the Local Government Bushfire Recovery Support Group. Whilst COVID-19 delayed these plans in March this assistance is now being rescheduled and will see 3 Officers spending 6 weeks to assist a South Coast Council with inspections of food shops and wastewater systems.
- COVID 19 — staff have not only been flexible and agile in their work programs but have moved around the organisation to help others in need of a helping hand. With the temporary closure of areas such as libraries and holiday parks, staff put up their hand to assist their colleagues who were inundated in Finance, Capital works and Customer Service.

Funding received

- \$3.25m in Federal funding for 5 notorious black spot safety upgrades (Medowie, Duns Creek, Salt Ash, Salamander Bay and Anna Bay)
- NSW Stronger Country Communities Fund:
 - \$700,000 for youth community facilities at Tomaree Sports Complex and Port Stephens Police Citizens Youth Club
 - \$200,000 for an upgrade of Nelson Bay Rugby Club, Bill Strong Oval
 - \$150,000 for new playground and park furniture at Spencer Park, Soldiers Point

Financial sustainability

As a result of COVID-19 and the forced closures of a number of Council facilities it is anticipated that the underlying financial result will move from a surplus to a deficit. Careful management of cash flow projections has ensured that Council has remained able to meet financial obligations but a short term deficit has been unavoidable.

People, awards, scholarships

Community

We value the outstanding contributions made every day within the Port Stephens community, with the Port Stephens Annual Awards providing Council with an opportunity to formally recognise the amazing efforts of groups and individuals from around our region. On Australia Day 2020 the following 2019 Port Stephens Annual Award winners were awarded:

- Citizen of the Year — Alicia Cameron
- Young Citizen of the Year — Tasmyn Fellows
- Freeman of the Year — Lorraine Nicol

Port Stephens Medals:

- Kenyon Windeyer
- Donald 'Steve' Jones
- Mambo Wanda Wetlands, Reserves and Landcare Committee
- Sportsperson of the Year — Dion Cooper
- Cultural Endeavour — Rhys Fabris
- Environmental Award — Nigel Waters

\$36,000 was also awarded to 18 talented and inspiring students as part of the 2020 Port Stephens Mayoral Academic Scholarships, thanks to the financial support of local businesses. The Port Stephens Mayoral Academic Scholarship program is an annual partnership between Port Stephens Council and local businesses to support the next generation of local business and industry leaders as they embark on their tertiary study.



Staff

Despite the challenges faced over the past 6 months, we have performed well across our operations, achieving the following awards:

- Winner — NSW Local Government Excellence Awards – Community Development & Services — Expansion & Rebranding of Children's Services
- Finalist — NSW Local Government Excellence Awards – Community Partnership & Collaboration – Anna Bay 7 Day Make Over
- Finalist — NSW Local Government Excellence Awards – Innovative Leadership & Management – Whole People. Whole Council – An Unconventional Leadership Journey
- Finalist — iTnew Benchmarks Awards 2020

It has been a tough time for everyone these past 6 months, although I am heartened by all levels of government working together with the community to forge through this. We are a resilient community who have been through trying times before but with each other's support, commitment and working to keep one another safe, we will do it side by side again.

Wayne

Wayne Wallis

Our Port Stephens

Located on the east coast of Australia about 2 hours north of Sydney, Port Stephens is known for its stunning natural beauty, unique wildlife and strong community spirit. These characteristics make it an ideal recreation, tourist and retirement destination as well as a great place to live, work and play.

The Worimi people are the traditional owners of the Port Stephens local government area (LGA). We value the unique status of Aboriginal people as the owners and custodians of these lands and waters.

Port Stephens was named after Sir Philip Stephens, First Secretary of the Admiralty in the late 1700s and later a Lord Commissioner of the British Admiralty Between 1795 and 1806.

Snapshot	
Region:	Hunter
Area:	858.5 square kilometers
Population:	73,481 people (2019 Estimated Residential Population)
Population projection:	88,920 by 2040
Median age:	45
Population density (persons/ha):	0.81
Major centers:	Raymond Terrace, Medowie, Nelson Bay
Employment (estimated):	27,346
Unemployment:	5%
Number of active businesses:	4,955
Gross Regional Product:	\$5.334 billion
Main employing industries:	Public Administration and Safety (15%), Manufacturing (12%), Construction (11%)



Source: Remplan 3 August 2020. For more statistical information, visit the Port Stephens Economic Profile at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/work/economic-development/economic-data-and-advice

Our Council



Community's vision

A great lifestyle in a treasured environment.



Council's vision

Engaged and resilient people in strong healthy relationships, working collaboratively, enhancing community well-being.



Council's purpose

To deliver services valued by our Community in the best possible way.



Values

Respect

Creating a unique, open and trusting environment in which each individual is valued and heard

Integrity

Being honest and inspiring trust by being consistent, matching behaviours to words and taking responsibility for our actions.

Teamwork

Working together as one Council, supporting each other to achieve better results for everyone

Excellence

Improving the way we work, to meet the challenges of the future

Safety

Providing a safety focused workplace culture to ensure the wellbeing of staff, their families and the community

Elected Council
17 September 2017 to current



Mayor
Ryan Palmer

East Ward



Councillor
John Nell

Central Ward



Councillor
Steve Tucker

West Ward



Councillor
Ken Jordan



Councillor
Glen Dunkley



Councillor
Chris Doohan



Councillor
Paul Le Mottee



Councillor
Jaimie Abbott



Councillor
Sarah Smith



Councillor
Giacomo Amott

Principal activities

Key priorities

The following key priorities were nominated for investigation and progression over the Delivery Program period 2018-2021. Over the past 6 months, we have investigated funding sources to resource these initiatives and infrastructure projects, with progress achieved as outlined below.

Accessible Port Stephens

Council has completed a number of actions under the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) and continued to provide ongoing support and services to ensure and promote inclusivity.

Over the period we have:

- Commenced a Public Domain Plan for Raymond Terrace, including areas for accessible parking and projects to improve accessibility and mobility in and around the town centre and riverside.
- Completed the Port Stephens Local Strategic Planning Statement, a long term vision for land use that includes actions related to accessibility such as:
 - Promoting accessible tourism and visitor amenities in Port Stephens.
 - Preparing a Community Wellbeing Plan to incorporate actions for accessibility and inclusivity.
- Constructed a new recreation area at Robinson Reserve, Anna Bay. Including accessible public amenities, and accessible basket swing play component.
- Constructed a new multipurpose sports amenities building at Lionel Morton Oval, Karuah. Including accessible public amenities and accessible car parking spaces at grade with the facility.
- Constructed a new pathway link through Boomerang Park, Raymond Terrace. Designed to meet accessible pathway grades and provide suitable rest areas for users.



Lionel Morton Oval:

Before



After

Airport DAREZ drainage environmental approval

Council is seeking to re-establish a direct discharge point from Dawson's Drain to Fullerton Cove in order to support future development in the Williamstown area.

The proposed drainage works involve assessment by three tiers of government and a wide range of permits and approvals, including Commonwealth approvals related to the protected wetlands at Fullerton Cove.

On 28 May 2020 Deputy Premier John Barilaro announced the establishment of the fifth Special Activation Precinct in NSW will be established in Williamstown. The Precinct covers up to 10,000 hectares of land in and around Newcastle Airport and RAAF Base Williamstown.

Council invested significant resources over 20 years into supporting the development of a Defence and Airport Related Employment Zone — which included the Williamstown Aerospace Centre. Council conducted extensive Strategic Planning work in 2014 to 2015 and worked closely with the Department of Premier and Cabinet to determine the site's potential. The declaration of the SAP realises the alignment of the planning and investment necessary to realise Port Stephens Council's long term vision for the Williamstown area.

The \$5 million pledge for developing the Williamstown Special Activation Precinct, which is expected to take up to 2 years, comes from the \$4.2 billion Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund creating jobs, attracting business, investment, and fuelling economic growth in regional NSW.

The benefits to the Port Stephens Community were amplified during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the investment into the region ensuring future prosperity and security for local communities.



Picture: Deputy Premier The Hon. John Barilaro and Deputy Mayor Chris Doohan

Birubi Information Centre

Planning is currently underway for the construction of the Birubi Information Centre, which is expected to start in 2021.

Council in partnership with the Worimi Conservation Lands, Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council and NSW National Parks, has initiated the development of a business plan to guide the short term and long term operations of this new tourism development.

Coastal Management Program

The Coastal Management Plan will set the long term strategy for the coordinated management of land within the coastal zone for the next 10 years.

- Stage 1 — scoping study (issues, threats/ hazards and risk identification) is complete
- Stage 2 — detailed studies of vulnerabilities and opportunities currently being undertaken
- Stage 3 — response, management identification and evaluation due 2020-2021
- Stage 4 — prepare, exhibit, finalise, certify and adopt a coastal management program: mid 2021
- Stage 5 — implement, monitor, evaluate and report: end 2021. Council will commence physical works in Stage 5 subject to securing supporting funding.

Over the period Council has been partnering with neighbouring Councils, relevant state agencies and stakeholders to develop a Coastal Management Program. In July 2019 Stage 1 of the CMP was completed, with Stage 2 now commenced. Detailed technical studies will be completed by coastal experts throughout 2020, prior to engagement with the community.

Cycleways, footpaths and beautification

A number of shared paths were constructed and opened for use towards the end of the financial year. These included the construction of two missing links at Anna Bay being the missing section between Anna Bay and Boat Harbour, and from Anna Bay out to Nelson Bay Road. Additionally a shared path along Waropara Road Medowie commenced with the remaining path to be constructed later in the 2020-2021 financial year.

Planning is underway for a number of shared paths including a proposed shared path adjacent to Medowie Road, Medowie, alongside Nelson Bay Road through Fern Bay, Lemon Tree Passage Road missing link from Mallabula to Lemon Tree Passage and the Shoal Bay foreshore. These paths are funded through Council's PSC2020 initiative.

The entrance to Shoal Bay received a safety upgrade with the extension of the 40km/hr pedestrian safety zone and upgrades to the pedestrian crossing adjacent to the Shoal Bay Holiday Park. These were funded through Transport for NSW's High Pedestrian Activity Area Funding scheme.



Shoal Bay safety upgrades

Events

From January to March 2020, a number of events were held across the LGA including the Beach Water Polo Fours, Garmin Billfish Shootout NSWGFA Interclub State Championships, Australia Day and the Peter Wilson Memorial Touch Football Championships. These events had an estimated economic impact of more than \$2 million across the Port Stephens economy.

From late March 2020, events across Port Stephens were postponed or cancelled in line with NSW Health regulations in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Council has worked with many of these event organisers to reschedule events for later in the year or postpone to 2021.

Funding investigations

In 2018 to 2019, as part of the Operational Plan, Council endorsed investigation of other funding options for a range of major projects.

Council continue to seek a broader range of State and Federal Government grants. This can be challenging as grant program priorities do not often match those of local projects. Council will continue to optimise our investment returns.

Gateway, location and town signage

Stage 1 of the gateway signage program was completed prior to June 2019 with no activity undertaken in this 6-month period. Future stages of the signage program will look at each suburb as funding becomes available.

In June Council completed the year-long Aboriginal Place signage project that saw the Communications Section work collaboratively with the Worimi LALC and a local Aboriginal artist. The project incorporated Aboriginal dreamtime stories relating to place, video, audio and artwork into new signage at a number of locations within the Birubi and Soldiers Point Aboriginal Place.



Key road projects

Council has a plan to deliver a number of key capital works projects. Over the past 6 months, the following has been achieved on these key projects

- Church Street, Nelson Bay — Council has previously reconstructed the road pavement along part of Church Street to improve the ride quality and pavement strength, as well as minor drainage improvements and pedestrian accessibility. The remaining section extending to the Government Road roundabout will be completed in 2020-2021 financial year.
- Fairlands Road, Medowie — no activity was planned for the past 6 months. Project initiation and design will commence in 2020-2021 while construction is scheduled for 2021-2022 financial year. Additional funding has been gained through the NSW State Government fixing local road funding.
- Fingal Bay Link Road (estimated at \$188 million) — the State Government has committed to funding this project, with Roads and Maritime Services leading the planning and delivery of the project.
- Tanilba Road, Mallabula — Council will be reconstructing Tanilba Road from Bay Street to The Parkway Ave North including pavement widening, kerb and gutter construction, and drainage upgrades. Project initiation and design has been deferred to commence in 2020-2021 while construction is scheduled for the 2021-2022 financial year.
- Tomaree Road, Shoal Bay — Council has completed Stage 1 of the full reconstruction of Tomaree Road between Marine Drive and Verona Road, including pavement widening, kerb and gutter and footpath construction, and drainage upgrades. Construction of the remaining works (Stage 2) will be completed in the 2020-2021 financial year.
- Warren Street, Seaham — No activity was planned for the past 6 months. Project initiation and design has commenced for construction to be scheduled for the 2021-2022 financial year.

Tomaree Road, Shoal Bay



Before

After

Koala Sanctuary

The Port Stephens Koala Sanctuary is a partnership between Port Stephens Council, the NSW State Government and Port Stephens Koalas. The Koala Sanctuary build has now reached practical completion and is expected to be operational at the end of September 2020.

The \$9M facility incorporates:

- Koala Centre — the visitor admissions and guest reception facilities
- Sanctuary Story Walk – a 250m meandering pathway offering visitors an immersive educational experience of the koala habitat
- Koala Hospital — a fully accredited Small Animal Hospital, breeding and research facility
- Newcastle Airport SKYwalk — a 225m elevated viewing platform offering a unique treetop perspective into the koala’s natural habitat
- Fat Possum Café — offering a range of grab and go eats, coffee and souvenirs
- Deluxe 4-star accommodation — guests will be able to wake up with the koalas by staying onsite in 4-star glamping tents



Medowie Sport and Community Centre

Construction of a new multi-purpose community centre at Medowie reached practical completion in December 2019. The process to engage an operator has been delayed due to the impacts of COVID-19; however Council is currently undertaking an expression of interest process in an effort to secure a fit for purpose operator for the facility. The centre will provide:

- club facilities at Medowie Sporting Precinct
- multiple community groups access to use the facility under a sublease agreement with the Medowie Sport and Community Club
- for use as an emergency evacuation centre
- a restaurant, bar, event space, sporting facilities and meeting places.



Off-leash dog parks

Council resolved to modify the mapping of the dog exercise area in Boomerang Park, Raymond Terrace. Project planning is underway for a fenced off-leash dog exercise area to be constructed in 2021.

Council is also investigating the mapping of the dog exercise area in the Anna Bay, Fisherman's Bay and Boat Harbour areas with recommendations to be made to Council in 2021.

Placemaking

Creating people friendly, vibrant spaces across Port Stephens has been identified as a key priority requiring investment from both Council and the community. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, opportunities for placemaking were limited however, significant strategic work has occurred during this period to develop programs that both improve the vibrancy of our town centres whilst also supporting the recovery of our community from the impacts of the shutdowns.

New funding programs for events, evening economy activity, place activation and place making and will be released in the new financial year.

Port Stephens Council depot development

A substantial part of Council's work is providing the construction and maintenance of community infrastructure, roads, parks and gardens. The staff and equipment including specialised machinery, require safe locations to store and maintain a substantial specialised fleet. This also includes servicing NSW Rural Fire Service vehicles.

The way that Councils use depots is very different from how they were used when the depots were first built.

The depot location and design was re-assessed following changes to the post SRV funding models.

Councillors have been briefed with options and have provided a preliminary recommendation to rejuvenate the existing Raymond Terrace site and rationalise the existing Administration Building fitout. This will allow for the depot administration, Capital Works and Children Services sections to be all housed at 1 location as well as meet the needs for Council to supply services to the community. A project delivery program is under development.

Strategic Planning Statement and Local Housing Strategy

Council is completing a range of long-term strategies to provide an integrated approach to housing through the review of the Port Stephens Planning Strategy 2011 (PSPS). A Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and Local Housing Strategy (LHS) have been prepared to replace the PSPS as part of the review.

Under the Hunter Regional Plan 2016 and Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2018, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment committed to preparing guidelines to assist councils in preparing local housing strategies to implement the Regional Plan.

The LSPS and LHS was exhibited during the period and adopted by Council on 14 July 2020.

Williamstown Management area

Department of Defence has prepared a project plan to manage ongoing PFAS contamination remediation.

Council's General Manager has previously participated on the Williamstown Community Reference Group however the State Government abolished the group in October 2019 with individual agencies to liaise directly with the community as required.

In February 2020 the Williamstown community class action against the Department of Defence for PFAS contamination was settled.

Council is continuing to monitor the implementation of the Department of Defence PFAS contamination remediation program.

Delivery Program objectives update

As with all businesses that have been facing challenges during the pandemic we are committed to delivering our services in the best possible ways, while remaining flexible and agile if and when any challenges are thrown our way. Our progress made below in the 6 months to June 2020 reflects this approach.

As new information on COVID-19 became available, we adapted by revising and re-baselining our work programs, diverting some resources and planned projects to respond to the circumstances. COVID-19 has impacted our Operational Plan and normal operations in a myriad of ways, from physical distancing requirements on site to not being able to procure certain supplies and impacting our financial position.

We have worked hard to continue to deliver services and projects for our community whilst doing our bit to keep safe and try to prevent the spread of COVID-19.





Focus Area One | Our Community

Port Stephens is a thriving and strong community respecting diversity and heritage

C1 Community diversity

100% on track*
Operation Plan actions



We have continued to:

- provide facilities and services for children
- provide support for young people to build their confidence and contribution to the community
- encourage Port Stephens to be inclusive and access friendly
- support needs of an ageing population
- support volunteers to deliver appropriate community services.

Key outcomes include:

- Winning an award for rebranding of Children Services to Thrive Kids. Supporting families through various types of quality childcare, with 25,690 childcare places filled for OOSH, 3,356 Family Day Care Spaces and 62 Family Day Care Educators registered.
- Delivering the final stages of the youth Pathways and Possibilities funding and promoting advocacy principles of connectivity during these challenging times.
- Completing a range of infrastructure to be inclusive and accessible, refer Key Priorities page 9.
- Undertaking numerous projects to plan for the needs of an ageing population including the Local Housing Strategy, Smart City Blueprint and Smart parking in Nelson Bay, refer Key Priorities page 17.
- Facilitating a program of events as part of seniors week in Port Stephens.
- Transitioning from the use of 355c committees as a method of on-ground volunteering in our parks, reserves and cemeteries which has included dissolving 14 park and reserve committees, 2 cemetery committees and splitting of some hall/park committees. Positive comments received in this transition from groups already operating the new model have been reduced administration, relaxed avenues for meetings and decision making.



* Revised current work programs/plans impacted by COVID-19 are 100% on track

Key challenges include:

- COVID-19 — seriously impacting Children Services, with: increased vigilance in hygiene and health monitoring, downturn in utilisation in April due to closure of schools and families home isolating and sustainability challenges due to the federal government making childcare free. Impacts face-to-face programs for youth.
- The Local Housing Strategy — has been prepared using preferences survey data across the community. The results reflected the diversity of Port Stephens with an opportunity for small lot and medium density housing while maintaining a strong preference for single detached homes. The Local Housing Strategy has sought to balance these diverse preferences and allowing for a range of housing types that suit residents in Port Stephens.

C2 Recognised traditions and lifestyles

We have continued to:

- recognise and support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- support and promote local cultural activities
- recognise and support the heritage of Port Stephens
- provide public libraries as vibrant community spaces.

Our key outcomes include:

- Developing a revised Gumba Gu Roadmap and engaging artist support for the Aboriginal Signage Project — refer Key Priorities page 13.
- Successful event management of Birubi Point Aboriginal Place over summer leading to less traffic congestion and thereby controlling impacts on Aboriginal cultural values of place.
- Finalising the draft Cultural Strategy and Events Strategy allowing Council to strategically support diverse cultural activities and better plan for cultural programs.
- Acquitting Heritage Grants funding and commencing preparations for the next round of the Local Heritage Projects Grant.
- Providing library services in a different way when libraries were closed due to COVID-19 restrictions, with a 'Call and Collect' service as well as home delivery for elderly homebound members.



Much to the delight of many customers, our library doors were opened to the public in early June 2020 under thorough COVID Safe Plans. Both Raymond Terrace and Tomaree libraries have been averaging between 80-150 visitors per day and signing up 109 new library members in their first month of reopening.

Key challenges include:

- COVID -19 impacting face-to-face programs and meetings with the Aboriginal community Strategic Arts and Heritage Advisory committees.
- Cost control of event management of Birubi Point Aboriginal place and finding the right mix of information on parking restrictions is critical for the long-term management of traffic at Birubi.
- Resolving software glitches within the library system.

C3 Community partnerships

We have continued to:

- assist community service providers to effectively deliver services in the region
- support local community events that highlight and foster the creative and diverse nature of our community
- provide recreational and leisure services
- support financially creative and active communities.

Our key outcomes include:

- Adapting our program to convene and support online interagency meetings (40-60 participants fortnightly), sharing vital service information and logistical support for new initiatives.
- Receiving a Senior Inclusion grant from the Department of Communities and Justice.
- Hosting the Australia Day event at Raymond Terrace and supporting other Australia Day events at Nelson Bay, Karuah and Tanilba Bay.
- Over \$42,000 in financial assistance approved through Mayoral and Ward funds to many local community groups and organisations. Supporting events such as Men's Health Information Road Tour, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders Olympics and local groups such as St Vincent De Paul, schools and playgroups. As COVID restrictions slowly eased community groups looked forward to once again being able to gather, support and provide assistance through this financial support.



- Managing Council's Leisure and Recreational contracts including Aquatic Centre management Surf Lifeguards, leases and licences on community land to ensure contract compliance and manage community expectations. Tilligerry Pool and Lakeside pools reopened in June 2020, with Surf Lifesaving approved to reinstate flags allowing people to enter the water and resume beach patrols through the offseason until the start of the official season on 26 September.



Key challenges include:

- COVID – 19 limiting local events, gatherings and disrupting some Council businesses which remained closed due to Public health orders.
- Ongoing negotiations for Targeted Early Intervention funding.



Focus Area Two | Our Place

Port Stephens is a liveable place supporting local economic growth

P1 Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investment

100% on track*
Operation Plan actions



We have continued to:

- support sustainable business development in Port Stephens, and
- support and deliver services that attract sustainable visitation to Port Stephens.

Our key outcomes include:

- Implementing a number of measures to support the local community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Tourism and Business Fund was established, supported by an implementation plan outlining the phased approach for project implementation at various stages of the crisis with a focus on business support, event attraction and destination marketing.
- Establishing a Small Business Support Service in March, with communications aimed at helping businesses to access information and professional support and services. Council staff delivered this via a hotline and regularly updated web page.
- Council assisting businesses as they reopened with managing hygiene in the workplace and negotiating training from State Training Services. In June we assisted businesses with managing social distancing, by delivering COVID Business Support tools to businesses across the LGA, including floor stickers to encourage social distance and hygiene.
- Conducting monthly occupancy audits in the Nelson Bay and Raymond Terrace town centres to better understand the immediate impacts of COVID-19 on business, with temporary business closures at:
 - Raymond Terrace: 30% (30 March), 12% 31 May
 - Nelson Bay: 40%(30 March), 8% 31 May
- Bootcamp sessions for Port Stephens Visitor Economy Start House being reformatted to online delivery due to COVID restrictions. The aim of the program being to create new experiences and services for our visitors, as travel options open.

Bring your business
idea to **light**



- Whilst COVID-19 presented many challenges for business and the wider community and suspended place management activities, it also allowed the opportunity for a greater focus on strategic projects aimed at streamlining the events application process, refer Key Priorities page 12.
- Delivering major construction works at the Koala Sanctuary, refer Key Priorities page 15.
- Re- allocating Visitor Information Centre staff to assist other areas of Council when the Visitor Information was closed during the COVID-19 shutdown.
- Sponsoring events, Refer Key Priorities page 12.
- Signing a new 3 year funding agreement with Destination Port Stephens (DPS) which seeks growth in the visitor economy and launching of the new DPS brand and marketing campaign.



Destination Port Stephens Chairman Andrew Macdonald, Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney Stuart Ayres, Chief Executive Destination NSW Steve Cox and Port Stephens Mayor Ryan Palmer at the official launch in Sydney

Key challenges include:

- COVID-19 having an unprecedented impact on the economy, business and tourism in Port Stephens. Cancellation/postponement of major events from March to June 2020 having an estimated economic impact of nearly \$1.8m on the local economy.
- Public events being cancelled or postponed due to NSW Public Health orders.

P2 Infrastructure and facilities

We have continued to:

- plan civil and community infrastructure to support the community
- build Council's civil and community infrastructure to support the community
- maintain Council's civil and community infrastructure to support the community
- deliver road infrastructure services on behalf of Roads and Maritime Services.

Our key outcomes include:

- Being 12 months ahead of schedule for In-Vehicle Management System (IVMS) installations for all road-going vehicles.
- Progressing the Smart Parking Infrastructure for Nelson Bay town centre.



- Major inspections of all road bridge assets.
- Managing Council's participation in the LED Street lighting replacement program.
- Completing a Dam Break Assessment for the Bagnalls Beach Road detention basin.
- Processing flood certificates, flooding and drainage advice and development engineering advice for Development Applications.
- Completing drainage improvement works at Shoal and Nelson Bay.
- Delivering Council's 2019 -2020 Road Safety Projects funded by Transport for NSW.
- IPWEA NSW awarding a high commendation for "Motorcycling In The Hunter" project, with the publication set to double in size and content in 2020-2021.
- Monthly convening the Local Traffic Committee.
- Being successful in a number of grant applications and delivering key projects over 2019-2020, including Birubi Point Aboriginal Place, Robinson Reserve Recreation Precinct Upgrade, new multipurpose sports amenities at Lionel Morten Oval, Karuah, multisport court at Fern Bay Reserve, disabled amenities upgrades at King Park Sports Complex in Raymond Terrace and the Bagnall's Beach East playground upgrade in Nelson Bay.

- Preparing and submitting a Project Proposal report for the Clarence Town Road Federal and State grant which is valued at \$9.5M over 3 years.
- In conjunction with the normal surveying works program, completing a major surveying task related to selected Asset Protection Zones across the LGA.
- Completing the largest ever capital works program delivered by Council in a single financial year (refer Scorecard, Service Delivery from page 40) which couldn't have been achieved it wasn't for the support and reallocation of resources from across the organisation during COVID-19. While COVID-19 cashflow required late deferral of a number of Council funded recreation and structures projects, excluding these, Capital Work Project Management delivered 96% (105 of 110 projects) of the program with the remaining 4% already deferred pre COVID-19.
- Maintaining 7 operational and historic Cemeteries across Council's owned and managed land at Raymond Terrace, Pioneer Hill, Karuah, Anna Bay, Carumbah Gardens Nelson Bay, Birubi Point, and Seaham Cemetery.
- Repairing nearly 10,000 potholes and 15,163 m2 of heavy patching, with over 1900 tonnes of asphalt used in maintenance patching over the period.



- Completing drainage inspections: 1314 roadside and drainage defects registered year to date and 1630 accomplished. Over 10,000 defects being logged in the bi-annual inspection. All high risk/priority defects will be repaired in 2020-2021
- 511 planned services and 958 unscheduled repairs undertaken throughout the year by our depot workshop, with a 10% increase in service and repairs due to the increased capital works program.

Key challenges include:

- Due to COVID-19, larger scale projects not being delivered within forecast project timeframes, road safety projects impacted, 'Operation PAIL could not proceed due to it being suspended by Police and Free Cuppa did not reach its full potential due to travel restrictions.
- Resourcing increased capital works program as a result of PSC2020 projects and reallocating resources and project scheduling due to COVID-19 impacts.

- COVID-19 created a number of challenges including disruption of community sport was unprecedented and Council's role as a leader and an advocate was important in assisting the sporting community in a return to normality. The closure of a number of public facilities and the gradual reopening created a testing time for the LGA.
- A backlog of 338 defect repairs (mainly kerb and gutter repairs, pipe drain and tree works).
- The Raymond Terrace Landfill Site Capping project has suffered extended delays due to the lack of suitable locally sourced fill material.

P3 Thriving and safe place to live

We have continued to:

- provide land use plan, tools and advice that sustainably support the community
- enhance public safety, health and liveability through use of Council's regulatory controls and services
- support the amenity and identity of Port Stephens
- support emergency services and protect Council assets from bushfires and extreme weather events.

Our key outcomes include:

- Exhibiting and preparing the final Port Stephens Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and Local Housing Strategy (LHS) as outlined under Key Priorities page 17.
- A total of 450 development applications were determined, with over \$98M worth of development approved over the period and DA process net median days at 26 days.
- Reviewing a number of processes and procedures including streamlining the Development Application process and improve assessment timeframes.
- A net median Construction Certificate processing time of under 4 days was achieved over the last 6 months and 54 Construction Certificates were approved. We have continued to refine our approach to certification with positive responses being received from the industry and the number of Construction Certificates lodged with Council increasing by 150% in the last quarter.
- Inspections included:
 - Food shops -144 primary inspections and 24 re-inspections for the period, with 83% satisfactory at the primary inspection. 19 warning letters, 6 improvement notices and 6 penalty notices were issued.
 - Onsite Sewage Management Systems – 227 inspections with a 98% satisfaction result.
 - Skin penetration premises – 42 inspections conducted mainly in June due to COVID-19 with compliance at 90%.
- Investigating incidents of unauthorised development and land use and continued working to reduce outstanding complaints. 188 CRMs were finalised with approximately 80 outstanding.
- Increasing focus on companion animal management due to an increase in dog attacks. 98 attacks were investigated, up from 63 in the previous 6-months and more than double the 45 reported for the same period in 2019.

- Commencing in January a Companion Animals Registration Project to identify un-registered Cats and Dogs within our LGA. The initial phase resulted in registrations up 100% compared to the same time last year, with 856 un-registered animals identified, 700 owners contacted and over \$14,000 in outstanding registration fees received.
- Realising savings of approximately \$450,000 in clean-up costs through the removal of 1540 cubic metres of waste in the bulky waste compliance (kerbside collection) program.
- Success with a grant application for \$60K being awarded through NSW EPA for Waste Less Recycle More.
- Preparing a public domain plan for Raymond Terrace with over 700 people from the community engaged as part of the process.
- Ensuring the RFS and SES buildings are functional and have been maintained within agreed levels.



- Completing construction of the new RFS building at Karuah.
- APZs and fire trails have continued to be maintained at Council agreed levels of service throughout the period.
- Work with LEOCON and NSW Health continues regarding restrictions in place regarding COVID-19. The pandemic has seen the Port Stephens emergency management arrangements enacted and tested.

Key challenges include:

- The complexity of the LSPS and LHS documents required significant internal and external engagement.
- COVID-19 pandemic providing uncertainty in the construction and development industry, and shifting priorities for the Food shop inspection program and Ranger Teams.
- Resourcing illegal dumping investigations continues to remain a challenge and is being reviewed to ensure regulatory responsibilities are maintained.
- Planned hazard reduction burns have been postponed due to rain throughout the period and will be rescheduled once weather clears.



Focus Area Three | Our Environment

Port Stephens' environment is clean, green, protected and enhanced

E1 Ecosystem Function

100% on track*
Operation Plan actions



We have continued to:

- protect and enhance the local natural environment
- re-educate the community about the natural environment.

Our key achievements include:

- Completing the Sustainability Strategy preparatory work (including a diagnostic session with staff and audit of Council facilities), with a consultant appointed to develop an initial action plan and future roadmap.
- Working on Flora and Fauna Survey and Management Report templates and guidelines continued with all documents currently being reviewed internally.
- Processing:
 - 71 DA referrals for Environmental Impact Assessments
 - 102 tree applications received determined
 - 61 other referrals received assessed
- Inspecting 338 site for biosecurity compliance of priority weeds – 19 compliance/enforcement actions undertaken for breaches. 244 sites were treated to control priority weeds.
- Undertaking nature conservation programs in collaboration with 457 volunteers to restore, regenerate and rehabilitate natural assets and areas of biodiversity, landscape, cultural, and environmental value. With 38 hectares across 167 sites regenerated and 1087 trees planted.
- Council's Natural Resources team leader being elected to represent Local Government on the Hunter Regional Pest Animal Committee, where work will continue on authorisation of Local Government staff for pest animal work under the Biosecurity Act
- All 73 council owned and managed areas considered to house significant Natural Assets being assessed using Council's Bushland Assessment Tool (BAT).
- 4 public events to educate the community on the environment were held and 260 stakeholders received Invasive Species face to face engagement.

Key challenges include:

- COVID-19 restrictions limiting the ability to hold group activities.
- COVID-19 restrictions reduced the ability of volunteers and contractors to complete works as usual.

E2 Environmental Sustainability

We have continued to:

- reduce the community's environmental footprint.

Our key achievements include:

- Coordinating waste collection services with the following completed over the period:
 - 13,485 tonnes of waste via the red bin collected and composted
 - 2,833 tonnes of recycling via the yellow bin collected and recycled
 - 811 tonnes of green waste collected via drop off days and mulched
 - 4,842 tonnes of mixed wastes received at the Salamander Bay Waste Transfer Station
 - 57% of waste delivered to Newline Road Waste Facility was composted
 - 90% of recycling was diverted
- Planning for a trial small wind generation system.

Key challenges include:

- Landfill diversion of the waste collected by council from the kerbside was again down, this is due to the Mixed Waste Organics Output (MWOO compost) that is produced having to be landfilled as an alternative use is yet to be identified. Council is working with our contractor on alternate uses for MWOO and is also about to develop a long term waste strategy. These actions will enable Council in the future to again achieve high levels of landfill diversion from the waste collected at the kerbside.



E3 Environmental Resilience

We have continued to:

- encourage community resilience to coastal hazards
- encourage community resilience to detrimental impacts from the environment
- encourage community resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Our key achievements include:

- Completing sand replenishment projects at Nelson Bay Marina and Shoal Bay West with minimal disruption to the community
- Commencing Stage 2 of the Coastal Management Program – refer Key Priorities page 11
- Quarterly water and gas monitoring of decommissioned waste landfill sites as per the schedule
- Council continuing to monitor the implementation of the project management action plan from Department of Defence to achieve PFAS contamination remediation – refer Key Priorities page 17
- Developing a Climate Change Policy which has gone on public exhibition
- Facilitating a review of the Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan.



Key challenges include:

- COVID -19 restrictions created some challenges to resourcing, however the Coastal Management Program remains on track
- Environmental conditions continue to have an impact on coastal erosion with the main constraints being prioritisation and funding
- Effective engagement with the community about coastal management processes when the topic and processes in themselves are quite complex
- Capping and rehabilitation of the former waste landfill at Newline Road Raymond Terrace has commenced and was expected to be completed at the end of 2019, however due to difficulty sourcing approved clay capping required in terms of EPA guidelines, the expected completion date is the end of August 2020.



Focus Area Four | Our Council

Fort Stephens Council leads, manages and delivers valued community services in a responsible way

L1 Governance

100% on track*
Operation Plan actions



We continue to:

- develop and encourage the capabilities and aspirations of a contemporary workforce
- provide strong civic leadership and government relations
- provide a strong ethical governance structure
- provide strong supportive business systems for Council's operations
- reduce risk across Council.

Our key achievements include:

- Improvements from the Human Resources program of work towards learning and development, enhancements to the Human Resource Information System, review of the salary system and supporting COVID-19 activities.
- Council adopting a new Workforce Plan in June which sets out our plan for human resource requirements.
- Delivering support to Council and the executive on time and within budget.
- Hosting citizenship ceremonies on Australia Day at both Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay, with 28 conferees from 10 nationalities taking the pledge at Raymond Terrace and 28 conferees from 6 nationalities taking the pledge at Nelson Bay.



- As a joint owner of the airport, recognising commencement of construction of Stage 1 of the Astra Aerolab project development, with BAE Systems signing an MOU to be an anchor tenant in the Astra Aerolab precinct.
- Significant work has been undertaken by the Hunter Joint Organisation towards the establishment of the proposed Hunter 2050 Foundation. The objective of the Foundation is to drive diversification of new economic opportunities across the Hunter region.
- Providing governance and legal services across the organisation, managing legal matters in court and meeting ongoing legislative compliance.

- Conducting the 2020 Governance Health Check over 4 key areas including Ethics, Risk Management, Information Management and Reporting. Refer to the Governance scorecard on page 46.
- The 2019-2020 Internal Audit program was endorsed by the Audit Committee, with 7 internal audits conducted throughout the year.
- Council meeting its obligations under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act. Council received over 30 formal applications and in excess of 300 informal requests for access to information.
- Conducting the 2020 annual Community Satisfaction Survey in May/June. The survey link was distributed to nearly 14,000 emails, targeting residents across the Local Government Area. Refer Scorecard Community Satisfaction page 45.
- Meeting our Integrating Planning and Reporting requirements by:
 - providing a 6 Monthly Report (to Dec 2019) to Council - showing we were on track with our 7 Key metrics.
 - publicly exhibiting and Council endorsing for our budget, resourcing and works plans via our Integrated Planning and Reporting documents for 2020-2021 (including the Delivery Program 2018-2021 incorporating the Operational Plan 2020-2021; Long Term Financial Plan 2020-2030, Strategic Asset Management Plan 2020-2030, Workforce Plan 2018-2021 and Fees and Charges 2020-2021). Refer Service Delivery Scorecard page 40.



- Continuing to make improvements to the processes for our services by improving the customer and employee experience, improving the focus on process improvement and variation reduction to find further efficiency and savings for the organisation.
- Continuing the Corporate Improvement and Business Systems program of work (which is focused on continuously improving the effective use of data, information and knowledge across the organisation). Whilst some of the projects have been deferred due to COVID-19, the ICT team has responded quickly and effectively during this time to enable staff to work from home.
- Having a significant risk focus on health and safety, adjusting to a dynamic and rapidly evolving environment to prioritise staff and community health whilst enabling progress towards economic and community resilience and continuing to manage the Integrated Risk Management program of work. Refer to the Risk Management Scorecard from page 47.

Key challenges include:

- Additional citizenship ceremonies scheduled to be held in March and April were cancelled due to COVID-19, however in consultation with the Department of Home Affairs and in accordance with Public Health Orders half of our waiting list of approved participants are being proposed for a new ceremony date in July.
- COVID-19 has had a severe impact on airport operations with the Board putting into place various strategies to mitigate adverse impacts, however it is anticipated that the financial result will be severely impacted in the short-medium term. As a consequence no dividend payment to shareholders is forecast for 2020. The NAPL solvency position and cash reserves are strong.
- The Community Satisfaction Survey was longer in length this year to cover off on a number of key areas and indicators including COVID-19, with the report style and future format to be reviewed as part of continuous improvement.
- Due to COVID-19, the Integrated Planning and Reporting documents for 2020-2021, required further rework than is normally required to reflect budget and operational impacts.

L2 Financial Management

We continue to:

- maintain strong financial sustainability
- maximise non-rate revenue and investment to support Council services.

Our key achievements include:

- Completing the 2020 - 2021 Fees and Charges Schedule, Long Term Financial Plan, 2 Budget Reviews, 2 Quarterly Grants Reports and Financial hardship measures (as a result of COVID-19) investigated and implemented within a short timeframe.
- Maintaining Council's financial sustainability following the March quarter results and net cash flow challenges posed by COVID-19 with a lot of number crunching and re-prioritisation of spending without any reduction in our staffing and only minor delays in projects. Refer Financial Sustainability Scorecard page 48.

- Completing upgrade works to 437 Hunter Street Newcastle and carrying out insurance works to Terrace Shopping Village and Best and Less buildings following damage from storms.
- Issuing 33 commercial leases and licences.
- Working towards the acquisition of numerous parcels of land at Swan Bay and Newline Road to facilitate road widening works, as well as negotiating various Crown Land licences at Little Beach, Corlette and surrounds to facilitate sand extraction activities.
- Completing: the land register audit, the subdivision and sale of landlocked land to adjoining owners at Salamander Bay, sale/lease of all lots in Stage 1 of Salamander Central, negotiations with multiple landowners at Boat Harbour for an easement acquisition and civil works at 795 Medowie Road Medowie with one property settled.
- Riding the ups and downs over the period with an increase in Holiday Park occupancies for January and increase in revenue for February comparative to the previous year, however with COVID-19 and Public Health Order the Holiday Parks closed in late March. The Holiday Park staff made the best of the situation working on overdue improvement projects including painting, pressure cleaning, gardening, road marking, deck repairs, repairing sites and spring cleaning updating the reservation system, implementing a new arrival survey, updating assets registers, reviewing and improving the parks rules, terms and conditions, setting up a new payment plan, refining our online chat robot “Newbie” and improving holiday van processes.

On 1 June the Holiday parks reopened and launched our new Reconnect Now campaign to welcome guests back to the Holiday Parks once the travel restrictions were eased.



Key challenges include:

- Managing the budgets and maintaining financial sustainability during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Requests for rent relief from many business due to COVID -19.
- COVID-19 causing the closure of Beachside Holiday Parks from 26 March through to 1 June 2020.

L3 Communication and Engagement

We continue to:

- promote a customer first organisation
- provide information in a range of accessible formats
- strengthen Council's reputation
- provide a voice for the community.

Our key achievements include:

- Transformations in Customer Relations with a Leadership team approved within the team placing the team in a good position to have staff leadership during COVID-19. The Customer Relations team have worked 25% over their normal workload to assist the community and answer queries on social distancing, travel, restrictions and facilities and services updates. 8,167 customer requests were received in the period.
- Creating a dedicated COVID-19 landing web page and sub-pages to make information easy to find and access by the community webpage during the pandemic. This provides a vital single source of information, with these pages having been viewed 29,527 times. With a clear and concise pinned post on Facebook and other publicity referring back to this webpage. All of our Communications, Emergency Management and Customer Relations teams working as one during the pandemic to keep our community updated.
- Streamlining content on our website to improve the user experience and speed up loading times, with over 500 pages removed and 7 years of news content archived. Revamping Library, Community Directory, Councillor Development program, Grants, Rates, Weeds, Port Stephens Profile, Tenders and Contractors, Art Space and creating a dedicated Public Exhibition page for the user.
- PSLIVE event — an excellent whole of Council initiative that exceeded expectations with regard to engagement. Setting the benchmark for a new style of engagement with our community. Continued growth in audience and engagement across all social platforms during this period reflects well on our new approach to prioritising our owned media channels, with our biggest growth on LinkedIn at 17.6% - a clear indicator that we've got a growing audience for our employer brand.
- Graphic Design continuing to be a much sought after service with a large number of internal and external signs, newspaper notices, flyer and social notices sought in a very short turnaround time along with support for Mambo Westlands signage, Aboriginal Place signage and LSPS and LHS documents.
- Actively servicing 48 communications and engagement projects and completing 42 projects during the period, which include Raymond Terrace Public Domain Plan, Boomerang Park Do park options, Cabbage Tree Road, Shoal Bay footpath, LSPS/LHS and PSLive.



Artist Nick Stuart and his mural on Raymond Terrace Library

Key challenges include:

- The Customer Relations team also took a hit in regards to aggressive and abusive customers as the plans and restrictions put in place by Council to adhere to the Public Health Notice were not popular or well received by the community.
- Management of COVID-19 peak traffic on the website was a challenge with traffic through the website to locate information about COVID 19 Public Health Orders not expected. The management of changes to legislated public notices advertising generated some negative sentiment. The change was managed through greater use of Council's owned digital media, which in turn generated a conversation with the broader community about how Council communicates with community.
- Reduction in face-to-face engagement activities due to COVID-19, risked exclusion of some members of the community from accessing information and participating in projects.

Scorecard

7 key result measures underpin everything we do at Port Stephens Council:

Seven Result Measures		Status
	<p>1. Service Delivery Target > 95% Integrated Plans delivered on time</p> <p>Achievement: 100% Operational Plan Actions* (as at 30 June 2020)</p>	
	<p>2. Community Satisfaction Target > 80% Community Satisfaction</p> <p>Achievement : 80% %(Source: 2020 Community Satisfaction Survey)</p>	
	<p>3. Employee Engagement Target > 70% Employee Engagement</p> <p>Achievement: 74% (Source: AON Hewitt, 2019)</p>	
	<p>4. Governance Target > 95% Governance Health Check</p> <p>Achievement: 98.24% (as at June 2020)</p>	
	<p>5. Risk Management Target > 80% Risk Management Maturity</p> <p>Achievement: 86% (As at August 2019)</p>	
	<p>6. Financial sustainability Target: underlying financial surplus</p> <p>Achievement: Anticipated deficit for the 2019-2020 financial year. Results to be provided in Annual Report 2019-2020</p>	
	<p>7. Infrastructure Backlog Target: Infrastructure backlog reduced</p> <p>Achievement: Results to be provided in Annual Report 2019-2020</p>	

Legend:



On track (target achieved or on track to be achieved)



Monitor (<5% off the target)



Off track (>5% off the target)

* Revised current work programs/plans impacted by COVID-19 are 100% on track

We successfully balance these key metrics by:

- ensuring that we're delivering on what we say we're going to do
- ensuring our community is satisfied with the level of service
- ensuring our assets are maintained in an acceptable standard
- being financially sustainable
- having the right practices and governance in place
- having an appropriate risk maturity and
- having engaged employees



1. Service Delivery

The following progress has been made on the actions in the 2019-2020 Operational Plan, which contribute to delivering the Delivery Program objectives:

- 100% (90 actions) on track*

The following tables are a summary of individual road, community and recreation projects that were completed and are in progress as at 30 June 2020. It is not an exhaustive list of all Capital Works projects carried out during this period.

Roads and Drainage projects completed	Expenditure 1 January to 30 June 2020
Shoal Bay Holiday Park access — exit onto Government Rd	\$62,849
Tomaree Road Shoal Bay — Stage 1	\$524,313
Abundance Road	\$307,210
Shoal Bay pedestrian crossing	\$105,791
Vardon Rd, Fern Bay	\$393,331
CPTIGS - Fingal Bay and Mt Hall Rd, Shoal Bay (install shelters & plinths) * 1 bus stop in West Ward	\$14,311
Seaham Road, Nelsons Plains	\$291,385
Greenwattle Creek Rd, Butterwick	\$400,000
Foreshore Drive, Salamander Bay (part PS2020 funded)	\$615,782
Stage 1 East Donald Street (PS2020) ¹	\$902,490

¹ A correction to the Operational Plan 2020-2021 is to be made regarding completion of Stage 1 of East Donald Street Carpark. The Car Park works are complete as outlined above, however the Amenities are due to be commenced in October 2020

* Revised current work programs/plans impacted by COVID-19 are 100% on track

Stage 1 Waropara Road, Medowie — shared pathway (PS2020)	\$136,714
Gan Gan Rd (from Nelson Bay Rd to dune access), Anna Bay (PS2020)	\$481,419
Gan Gan Rd (from 269 Gan Gan Rd to 304 Gan Gan Rd), Anna Bay (PS2020)	\$22,830
RMS - Nelson Bay Rd / Lemon Tree Passage Rd	\$410,757
TOTAL	\$4,669,182

Lemon Tree Passage Road, Tanilba Bay



Before



After

Vardon Road, Fern Bay



Before

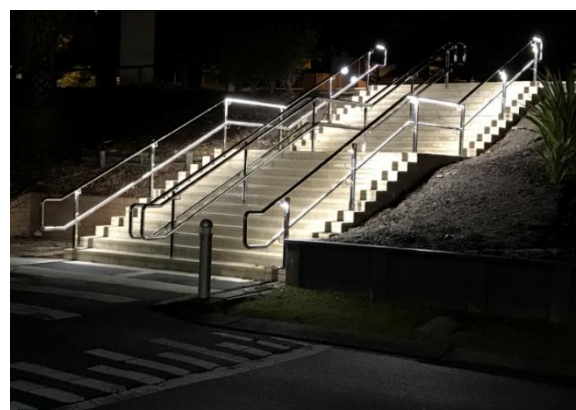


After

Roads & Drainage projects in construction	Expenditure 1 January to 30 June 2020
Raymond Terrace Landfill Site Capping	\$230,207
Port Stephens Drive	\$254,687
Italia Road - SEG 110	\$165,011
Lemon Tree Passage Road, Salt Ash	\$275,476
RMS – Cabbage Tree Rd	\$350,000
TOTAL	\$1,275,381

Roads & Drainage projects in planning	Expenditure 1 January to 30 June 2020
Newline Rd, Raymond Terrace (Design Only)	\$22,886
Masonite Rd, Tomago	\$17,843
Tanilba Bay Paths (PS2020)	\$21,339
Mallabula to Lemon Tree Passage, Lemon Tree Passage Rd - Shared Pathway (PS2020)	\$18,496
Bus Interchange at Seaham (PS2020)	\$9,237
Fern Bay Shared Pathway (PS2020)	\$10,423
William St, Raymond Terrace - Town Centre Improvements (PS2020)	\$84,569
Shoal Bay Foreshore, Shoal Bay - Shared Pathway (PS2020)	\$27,840
Swan Bay Rd, Swan Bay (PS2020)	\$97,361
TOTAL	\$309,994

Community & Recreational and Structures projects completed	Expenditure 1 January to 30 June 2020
Shoal Bay Holiday Park Amenities	\$21,725
Port Stephens Netball Club Disabled Amenities	\$7,832
RFS Karuah	\$812,914
Lionel Morten Oval Amenities	\$1,037,910
Apex Park, Nelson Bay	\$2,990
Nelson Bay Croquet Club	\$43,662
Pirrarea Gardens, Nelson Bay	\$55,867
Shoal Bay West Sand Replenishment	\$57,628
Vi Barnett Athletics Club Disabled Amenities	\$73,960
Fitzgerald Bridge Amenities	\$194,271
Tilligerry Tennis	\$5,076
Fern Bay Sports Court	\$156,181
Nelson Bay Marina	\$143,688
Fingal Bay Oval - Footpath Upgrades - Replace Access Paths	\$17,989
TOTAL	\$2,631,693



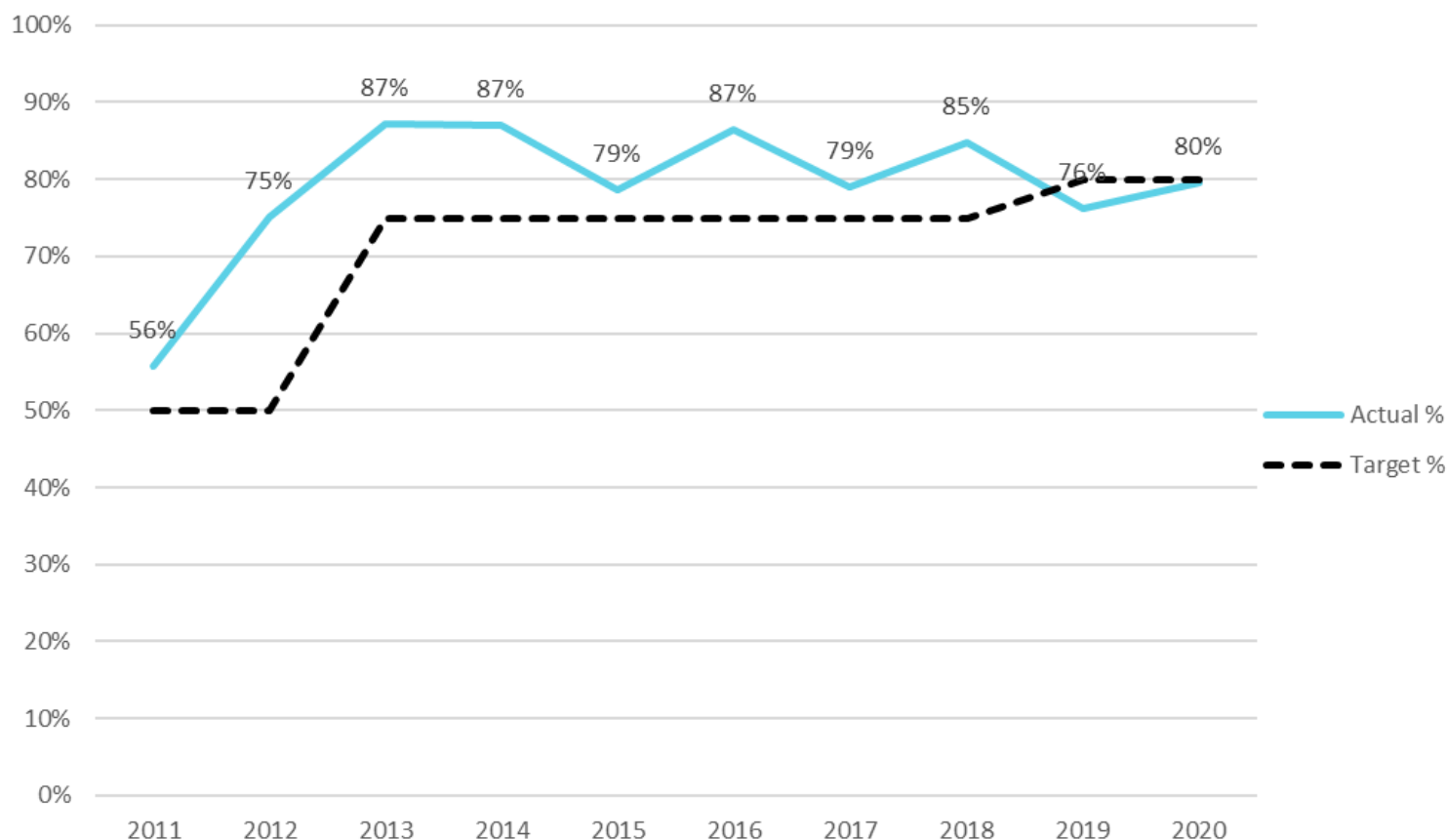
Community & Recreational and Structures projects in construction	Expenditure 1 January to 30 June 2020
Salt Ash Hall Outside Toilet	\$40,497
Koala Sanctuary	\$1,891,975
Robinson Reserve, Anna Bay	\$1,601,981
TOTAL	\$3,534,453

Community & Recreational and Structures projects in planning	Expenditure 1 January to 30 June 2020
Little Beach, Nelson Bay - Amenities Replacement (PS2020)	\$20,818
Longworth Park, Karuah - Amenities Replacement (PS2020)	\$4,050
Mallabula Sports Complex	\$50,861
Boat Harbour Amenities	\$8,674
Raymond Terrace Depot	\$62,144
Birubi Information Centre	\$183,076
TOTAL	\$329,623

2. Community Satisfaction

Our annual Community Satisfaction Survey was carried out in May/June 2020 yielding an overall satisfaction score of 80% from the community. This is 4 percentage points up from our 2019 score and meets our annual target of 80%.

A report with more detailed information will be provided to Council and be made available on Council's website at the end of August 2020.



3. Employee Engagement

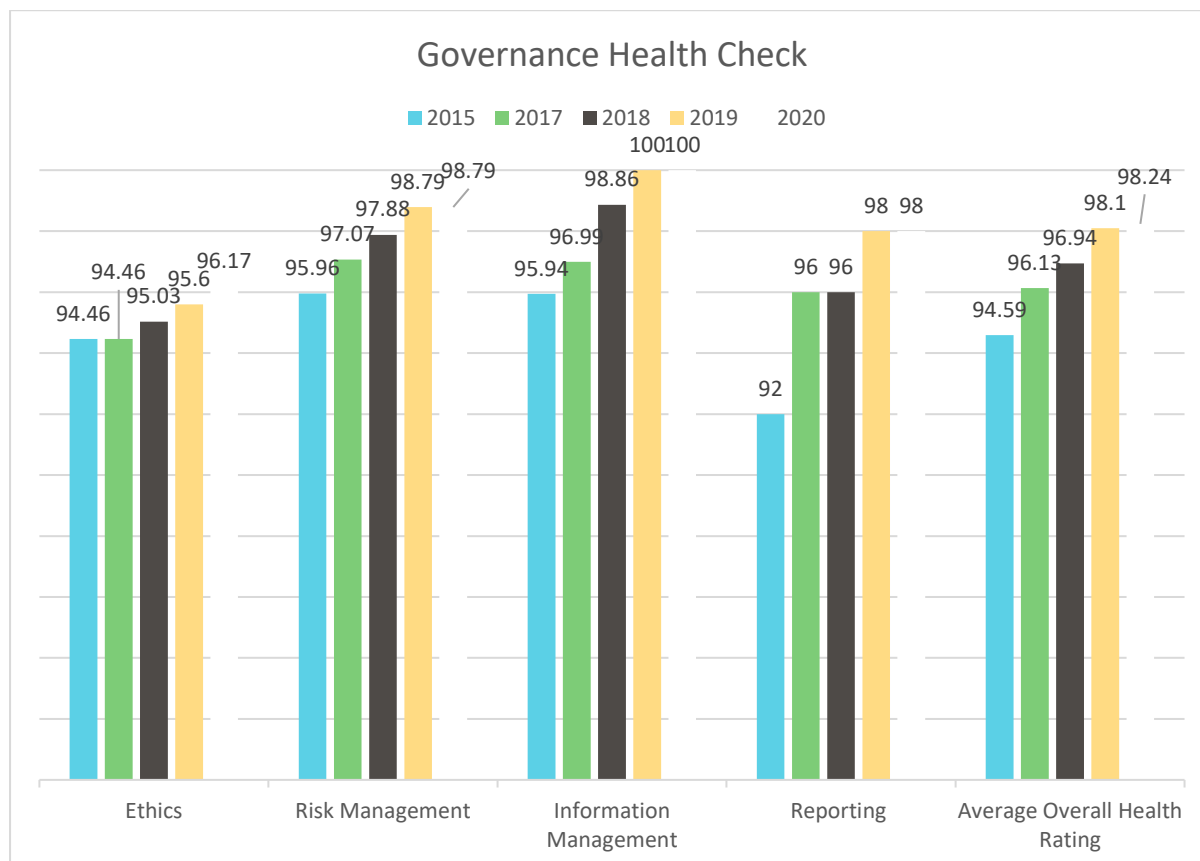
The Employee Engagement Survey was conducted in September 2019 with a 74% engagement score. This was our highest ever result.

For the first time we exceeded our ambitious target of 70% which places Council in the top quartile of organisations in Australia and New Zealand. We continue to score significantly above the average local government score of 54%. There have been improvements in all key areas which we focussed on during the year. A robust plan will be implemented with key stakeholders on how to improve over the next 6-12 months and beyond with short- and long-term milestones.

4. Governance

Our Governance Health Check was last conducted in June 2020 and is reviewed on an annual basis. The overall rating in 2020 increased to 98.24% due to further improvements in the area of managing working with children policy and procedures. The rating exceeded Council's target of 95%.

The Governance Health Check is a tool to measure our governance and how well we perform. It covers four areas: ethics, risk management, information management and reporting. The graph below demonstrates our progress in achieving our Governance Health Check scores from 2015 to 2020.



5. Risk Management

The enterprise Risk Management Framework (RMF) continues to support Council to deliver its strategic and operational goals. The RMF has been an important component of Council's proactive and coordinated response to the challenges COVID-19 has presented to our organisation and community over the last six months.

This period has required significant risk focus on health and safety, adjusting to a dynamic and rapidly evolving environment to prioritise staff and community health whilst enabling progress towards economic and community resilience. The Enterprise Risk Management team carried this forward in addition to the risk support and guidance for ongoing delivery of core Council operations and services.

Environmental Management System

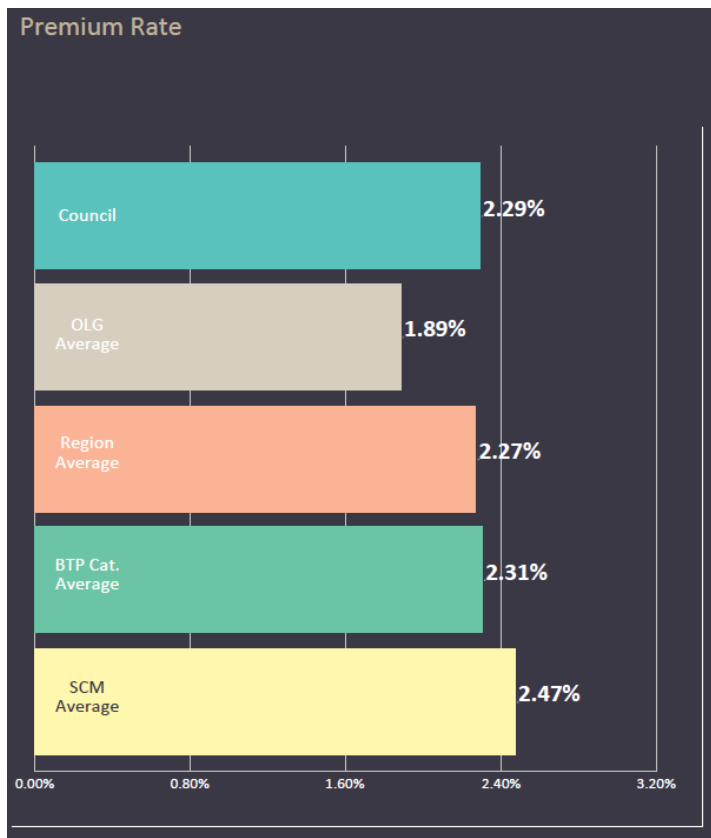
The Local Government NSW Council Roadside Reserves Environmental Grant was completed in June 2020. This \$50,000 grant supported the delivery of the following outputs:

- Environmental Management System deployment for roadside operational maintenance, including Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)
- Roadside vegetation assessment using the Rapid Assessment Methodology (RAM)
- Roadside Environmental Marker Program
- Integrating Natural Assets into Council's Asset Management System

Council has been progressing its risk awareness and response to climate change. With the support of Statewide Mutual and JLT Consulting, an internal workshop was held to identify and analyse specific climate threats based on current climate projections. This involved scenario and impact analysis of climate change on different functional areas of Council, including long-term planning and resourcing. This exercise remains in progress and will help to inform Council's ongoing approach to adapting to the challenges of climate change.

Work Health and Safety

Over the last 6 months Council has experienced a reduction in the number of workers compensation claims (compared to the same period last year). However, the nature of some injuries have resulted in more complexity of claims. This is reflected in Council's workers compensation premium rate, which, whilst below the StateCover Mutual Scheme average, acknowledges improvement opportunities.



Council continues to review and refine practices with a strong emphasis on injury prevention. Focus areas include mental health, sprains and strains, hazard identification and identification of high-risk tasks.

During the last 6 months, Council has undertaken the following key health and safety outputs (including Actions to prevent or respond to potential risk):

- 50 Ergonomic assessments (90 Actions),
- 8 Workplace Inspections (42 Actions),
- 72 Safety Compliance Audits,
- 983 Safety observations (99 Actions), and
- 180 Influenza vaccinations for staff.

Council's ongoing and continued efforts in workplace health and safety prompted a rebate in this period of \$117,344 from its Workers Compensation Insurer, StateCover Mutual Ltd.

6. Financial sustainability

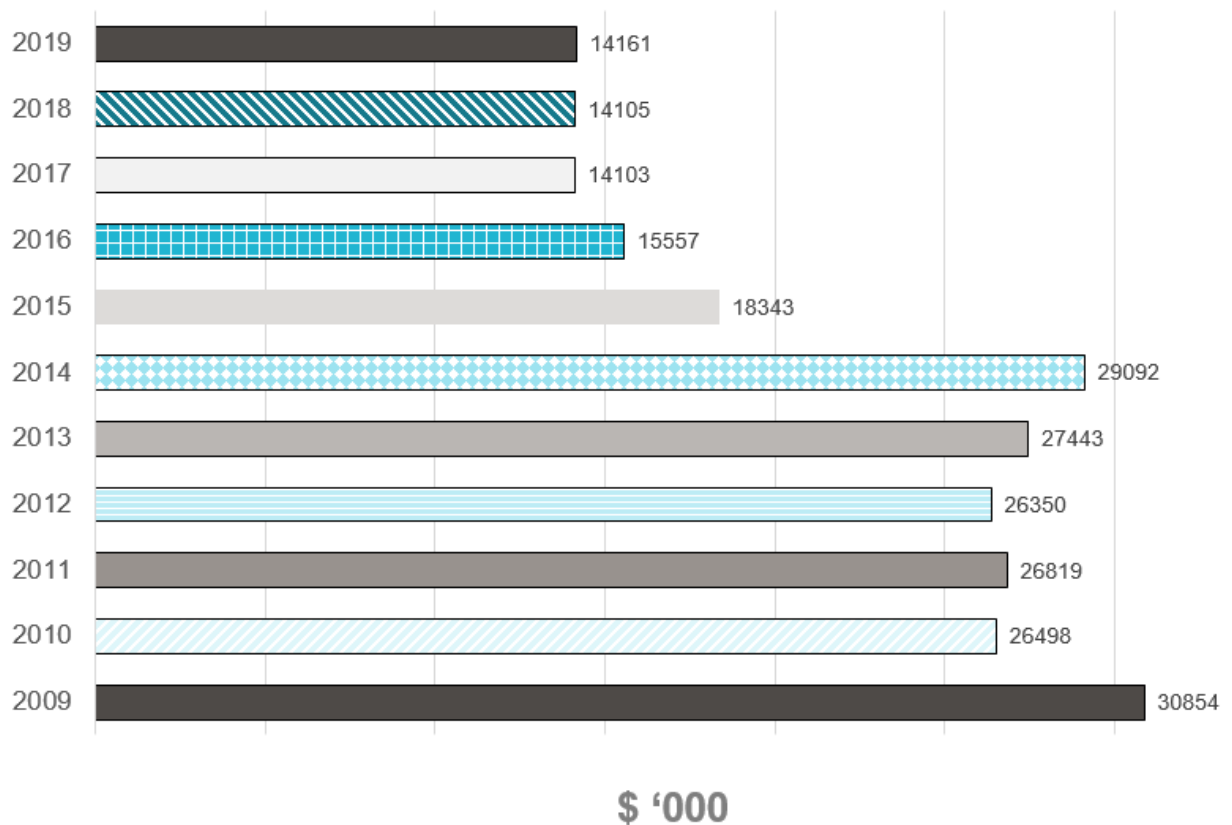
As a result of COVID-19 and the forced closures of a number of Council facilities it is anticipated that the underlying financial result will move from a surplus to a deficit. Careful management of cash flow projections has ensured that Council has remained able to meet financial obligations but a short term deficit has been unavoidable.

Due to the timing of preparation of end of year financials, the underlying financial result is not available at the time of compiling this report, with the results to be published as part of Council's 2019-2020 Annual Report to the community.

7. Infrastructure backlog

The infrastructure backlog is a new measure introduced in the 2019-2020 financial year.

The target is to reduce the backlog, which occurred significantly from 2014 to 2015, remaining relatively stable for the past 3 years. Due to the timing of preparation of end of year financials, the infrastructure backlog result is not available at the time of compiling this report, with the results to be published as part of Council's 2019-2020 Annual Report to the community.





PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au | 02 4988 0255
PORTSTEPHENS.NSW.GOV.AU    