



AGENDA

Ordinary Meeting of Council

11 February 2020

**ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
TO BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MORUYA**

ON TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2020

COMMENCING AT 11.00AM

AGENDA

(Proceedings of this meeting will be recorded as per Eurobodalla Shire Council's Code of Meeting Practice)

- 1. WELCOME**
 - 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**
 - 3. APOLOGIES**
Nil
 - 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
2.1 Ordinary Meeting held on 10 December 2019
 - 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OF MATTERS ON THE AGENDA**
(Declarations also to be made prior to discussions on each item)
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 - 7. PETITIONS**
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**DR CATHERINE DALE
GENERAL MANAGER**

MR20/001 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

File Ref: S012-T00025

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

THAT

1. Acknowledge the tragedy of the three fatalities that occurred as a result of the fires in Eurobodalla and all fatalities around the country that were a result of this bushfire disaster.
2. Council thank and acknowledge all those members of our community and emergency teams who have worked so hard to keep our community safe and have looked after their welfare.
3. Council express its sincere gratitude to the generosity of spirit that has been shown to Eurobodalla Shire Council in the provision of donated goods, services, facilities and resources.

REPORT

Community

Every person in Eurobodalla is feeling the impact of the bushfire disaster that we are continuing to experience. The bushfires have destroyed nearly 500 homes in Eurobodalla and more than 900 outbuildings and facilities, with many, many more damaged.

Our people are hurting at the moment. People are experiencing the emotional trauma and devastation that comes with bushfire disasters. This is a difficult process and we encourage people to seek the help they need.

It has been fantastic to see the outpouring of support from within our community. There have been neighbours helping each other to protect their homes, strangers stepping up to assist those in need, locals volunteering at evacuation centres and people offering accommodation, clothing and a meal to those who have lost everything or need shelter.

With the threat of bushfire still not over, we encourage the community to remain vigilant with their bushfire survival plans. We understand that we have been experiencing emergency warnings and trying conditions for weeks, however we do not want anyone to become complacent.

We are in the process of moving into the recovery phase in the areas that have already been impacted by fire. This is a process that is likely to take years and I am confident that our community will come together during this time and continue supporting each other.

I would like to thank the community for their understanding, patience and resilience during this difficult time. Our sense of community is stronger than it has ever been before. Together we will get through this and will rebuild and recover stronger than ever.

Emergency services and other agencies

Emergency services have worked tirelessly to keep our community safe over the past two months. The NSW Rural Fire Service and their volunteers, as the lead agency, along with NSW Fire and Rescue, National Parks and Forestry NSW have worked hard to protect our community

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from bushfires. These agencies have put in long hours to fight, contain and control the fires to minimise the impact on life and property.

These agencies have been closely supported by NSW Police, Essential Energy, NSW SES, NSW Ambulance, NSW Disaster Welfare, NSW Local Health District, Transport for NSW, NSW Department of Primary Industries Agriculture and Animal Services and NSW Local Lands Services assisted by volunteers, local contractors, visiting firefighters and Council staff.

The coordinated response from emergency services and additional agencies have been nothing short of outstanding. People have been in our Emergency Operations Centre and out on the ground helping people during their time of need. We are extremely grateful for the knowledge, expertise, compassion and empathy that has been shown toward our community from these agencies. We thank everyone involved in the response for their continued efforts.

Thank you also to the local clubs, organisations and community groups who assisted our community during the bushfire emergency. These organisations banded together to provide additional support and shelter for people in need.

Business and industry

Eurobodalla's business community has been hit hard by the bushfires. Every industry has felt the effects of the fires in some way. Tourism is our biggest income and the fires have affected our peak period. The bushfires have caused closures of the Princes and Kings Highways for weeks on end which are our major access routes for tourists. The school holiday period over December and January is usually the busiest time of the year for our local businesses. For many, they are reliant on the income over this period to support them for the duration of the year.

The loss of income for businesses has had impact on staff, especially those employed on a casual basis. With little income, businesses are unable to keep staff employed and this has a detrimental effect on the wider economy.

We know our local businesses are struggling. Council's Tourism and Business Development Teams have been liaising with our local businesses and Business Chambers to find out what is most needed now. We have advocated to the State and Federal Governments to support local businesses and industry.

Support from others

We have been inundated with support from people all over the country. We are overwhelmed by the generosity and compassion of people from around Australia donating items and money for our fire affected residents. Many of these donations have already been distributed to people in need and we are extremely grateful to all of those who have donated.

The Federal and NSW Governments and have been extremely supportive of Eurobodalla. We have had various Ministers from both levels of government visit Eurobodalla over the past four weeks to show their support for our community and listen to our stories and concerns. The NSW Governor, Margaret Beazley visited in early January and met with front line staff and people throughout the community. Thank you to our local Members, Andrew Constance and Fiona Phillips, for your support during the bushfire emergency. We appreciate the support you have given to us.

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Council has set up the Eurobodalla Disaster Relief Fund to encourage people to donate money, rather than goods, to Eurobodalla. Money is what people need most. This will be solely used to assist those affected by the fires.

We have received support from several Councils across NSW offering staff and support where required. We have also been contacted by various organisations that offer programs and support for staff, recovery and clean up. These offers have been very much appreciated.

Council staff

Council staff have gone above and beyond over the past six weeks in response to the bushfire emergency. Just like the rest of the community, our staff and their families have lived through the emergency and have had to prepare and defend their homes, too. Sadly, some of our staff have been directly impacted by the fire and have lost homes and outbuildings.

Many staff members gave up their scheduled December/January annual leave to ensure essential services continued to be provided to the people of our shire. We had staff members manually turning on water and sewer pumps to ensure the community had access to fresh drinking water and flushing toilets. Staff are still refueling generators around the clock to ensure we have water to fight the fires. Staff were manning roadblocks and undertaking traffic control to ensure the safety of the public. There were staff clearing roads from fallen trees and debris to allow the community to travel safely around Eurobodalla. Our Mechanics team also worked around the clock to keep emergency vehicles on the road. Council Rangers and other staff also physically delivered paper copies of communication around the Shire, where accessible, when every form of communication was not operating.

During the time of crisis our staff have been innovative, professional and have not been afraid to step up when required. Staff volunteered to help in areas outside of their usual work responsibilities and excelled when tasks were given to them. We had staff coming up with innovative and creative ways to get the job done in difficult circumstances with no power and no communications.

A special thank you must go to our LEMO's Warren Sharpe, Rob Burke and Carlyle Ginger who have been based at the Eurobodalla Emergency Operations Centre since before Christmas. These staff have worked tirelessly to provide executive support and coordinate various aspects of the emergency response. The Emergency Operations Centre have been supported by administration staff who have been rostered on around the clock to provide any required support.

Council's Communications Team stepped up and took on the role of communicating key messages from the RFS and other agencies to the media on behalf of the Emergency Operations Centre. This has been very well received by the community and we thank them for their hard work and long hours. Thank you also to our Information Technology team, who ensured that staff still had access to phone lines, emails and internet at the Emergency Operations Centre for the duration of the fires.

To all our Council staff that have been involved in the emergency response and who volunteered at the evacuation centres, we thank you. Many staff worked with members of our community to assist the over 9,000 people who stayed at our three centres helping to cook,

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clean and provide support to people who were anxious and displaced. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed by our community and we appreciate the work that you do.

MR20/002 NON-COMPULSORY SCHOOL BREAK

File Ref: S012-T00025

Attachments: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Throughout December 2019 and January 2020, Eurobodalla was severely impacted by bushfires. This has resulted in many families having their school holiday plans and activities interrupted or cancelled.

This is a period of time that is meant to be a break for school children, a chance to have fun and enjoy themselves. Unfortunately, the fires have had a very negative impact on children in affected areas and many did not have the chance to relax or spend some time with their friends and family.

I would like to propose a week, either at the end of term one or beginning of term two, which is a non-compulsory holiday. This week would coincide with the April school holidays and could create a three-week holiday.

To assist working parents, I propose that schools open and commit to having a week of fun activities rather than schoolwork. These activities could include excursions, games or sports. This would enable a choice for parents, and students would not be disadvantaged should they take the extra week off school. I would like to encourage the community to be a part of this week, such as local artists, sports clubs and retired teachers visiting the schools to assist with activities.

I would also like to encourage corporations and big business outside of impacted areas to offer an extra week paid leave and encourage their staff to visit the regions affected by bushfires.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Write to the NSW Department of Education requesting consideration of a non-compulsory extra week's holiday in April 2020 to coincide with the Easter break.
2. Write to the NSW Department of Education requesting for students attending school, a week of fun activities be programed instead of the usual school curriculum.
3. Write to the Australian Business Council to encourage corporations and big businesses outside of impacted areas to offer an extra week paid leave and encourage their staff to visit the regions affected by bushfires.

MR20/003 USE OF MAYORAL EXECUTIVE INSTRUMENT

File Ref: S012-T00025

Attachments: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with Council resolution 19/207, Council recessed during January 2020. During the months of December 2019 and January 2020, Eurobodalla suffered devastating bushfires that destroyed 493 homes, 78 facilities, 839 outbuildings, resulting in lengthy losses of power and communications, road closures, evacuation of over 9,000 people and the ongoing real threat of dangerous fires. During this period, four issues that were of an operational nature required a decision.

In the exercise of the power conferred by section 226 (d) of the Local Government Act 1993, I, Councillor, Liz Innes, as Mayor of Eurobodalla Shire Council, have on behalf of the Council, utilized the powers vested in my role as Mayor under the Local Government Act 1993.

As we commenced the recovery process, the following actions were considered a necessity as it was essential that a timely decision was made.

1. Seek deferral with Transport for NSW for the Fixing Country Roads Grant for the Garlandtown bridge widening project.

Reason: Council has lost 19 bridges as well as damage to many rural and regional roads that require urgent rebuilding, taking resources and management from the Garlandtown Bridge reconstruction. The decision to defer this grant is due to the fact that the tender price would expire prior to the commencement of works.

2. Approve the creation of the Eurobodalla Disaster Relief Fund (EDRF), and the rules covering its governance, aims and objections (as set out in the EDRF document).

Reason: Necessary to create an account and development of terms of reference for donated funds from organisations and individuals to assist the local community affected by this disaster. If this fund had not been established, our community would have lost donations that were being offered during this period.

3. Engage council's curb side waste collection contractor, SUEZ to undertake weekly green waste collections from Monday 27 January 2020 to Friday 21 February 2020 noting that these additional services will cost Council approximately \$60,000 plus approximately \$15,000 in tipping fees.

Reason: Assist the community in reducing its green waste, noting that the service would be an additional cost to Council, not the community.

4. From Saturday 25 January, until further notice, accept domestic quantities of burnt garden waste (excluding trees) and general fire affected waste e.g. outdoor furniture, garden implements, dog kennels, clothes lines and children's play equipment at council's Surf Beach and Brou Waste Management Facilities at no cost to the customer. (Domestic quantity is 1 standard 6 X 4 trailer or equivalent ute load). It is noted that the ultimate cost of this is not able to be calculated at this point and that all reasonable efforts will be taken to recover the costs from the NSW Government however, this cannot be guaranteed, in which case the cost will be incurred by Council.

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Reason: Assist the community in the recovery process and providing free tipping fees for affected residents.

I consider the circumstances to involve a case of 'necessity' pursuant to section 226 (d) of the Local Government Act and I am satisfied of the necessity to proceed with the action.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council note the use of the policy-making functions under Section 226(d) of the Local Government Act by the Mayor between Council meetings.

**NOM20/001 INVESTIGATION INTO THE EXPENDITURE BUDGET FOR THE 2019-2020
FINANCIAL YEAR**

S011-T00003, S012-T00025, S012-T00026

Responsible Officer: Lindsay Brown - Councillor

Attachments: Nil

Councillor Lindsay Brown has given notice that at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 11 February 2020, he will move the following motion.

MOTION

THAT Council

1. Investigate which items of expenditure budgeted for 2019/2020 financial year can be brought forward and a briefing be provided to Councillors for their consideration.
2. Revisit opportunities to bring forward expenditure in the 2020/2021 Financial Year once that budget has been approved.

BACKGROUND

The entire Eurobodalla has been devastated by bushfires that occurred in the region in December 2019 and January 2020. The bushfire threat continues to grip the area. Both residents and businesses have been severely impacted by this devastating event with lives and properties lost.

All Councillors recognise Eurobodalla Shire Council are a major employer and purchaser of products in the shire.

Councillors are also aware that Eurobodalla Shire Council's resources will be stretched in regards to any unbudgeted expense. With that responsibility and understanding it is my request that council consider bringing forward any budgeted expense scheduled that can stimulate the local economy.

Such expenses could be printers, furniture, lawn mowers, whipper snippers, sundry equipment, and higher value equipment such motor vehicles, utes, trucks etc - anything that can be purchased locally now.

The business community is currently bleeding and needs a vote of confidence from Council immediately. This action would provide a strong message to the broader community of Council's commitment to recovery.

The need is to ensure our local businesses get some immediate stimulation.

**GMR20/002 EUROBODALLA BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND
RECOVERY - OVERVIEW AND UPDATE**

**S012-T00025;
S008-T00025**

Responsible Officer: Dr Catherine Dale - General Manager

Attachments: Nil

Outcome: Protected and Valued Natural Environment

Focus Area: 3.1 Respond to our changing environment and build resilience to natural hazards

Delivery Program Link: 3.1.3 Collaborate with agencies and emergency services to support coordinated emergency management

Operational Plan Link: 3.1.3.3 Support emergency services agencies in planning and responding to natural and man made disasters

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Eurobodalla community has been significantly impacted by the bushfires since the Currowan Fire started on 26 November 2019. Since then further extreme conditions on Tuesday 31 December, Saturday 4 January, Friday 10 January, Thursday 23 January, Friday 31 January and Saturday 1 February 2020 saw heavy fire impact or heat conditions in our towns and villages, as well as rural areas.

Eurobodalla is still in the Emergency response phase and Council has also commenced the Recovery phase. This report provides a high level summary of the fire disaster and some of the activities and strategies that have been implemented to assist in the coordination to rebuild, restore and rehabilitate the social, built, economic and natural environment for the Eurobodalla community.

The fires were managed by the Incident Management Team, which is led by the Rural Fire Service and supported by NSW Forestry and National Park and Wildlife Service (NPWS) coordinating the firefighting response. The Incident Management Team is supported by a multi-agency team through the Eurobodalla Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). The EOC comprises of representatives from NSW Police, Eurobodalla Shire Council, Essential Energy, NSW SES, NSW Ambulance, NSW Disaster Welfare, NSW Local Health District, Transport for NSW, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Agriculture and Animal Services and NSW Local Lands Services. Council is a key member of the EOC providing support to the Incident Management Team.

The impact of the fires on the Eurobodalla community has been massive and unfortunately there is potential for further impacts this fire season. This report will focus on the key elements of the Emergency Response and Recovery phases. Further reports are recommended in order to review in more detail some of the critical issues that have been raised and to provide Council with updates on the Recovery process.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Acknowledge the social, physical, environmental and economic impact the bushfires have had on our community including businesses.

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2. Acknowledge the tireless work of the:
 - (a) Incident Management Team (NSW Rural Fire Service, Forestry and NPWS) assisted by volunteers, local contractors, visiting firefighters and Council staff.
 - (b) Emergency Operations Centre (NSW Police, Eurobodalla Shire Council, Essential Energy, NSW SES, NSW Ambulance, NSW Disaster Welfare, NSW Local Health District, Transport for NSW, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Agriculture and Animal Services and NSW Local Lands Services.
 - (c) People who worked or volunteers at the three evacuation centres, which assisted over 9,000 people during this period and the Clubs, Health and Aged care facilities and local households who also provided welcome assistance to people who were evacuated.
3. Note the actions and advocacy taken to date during the Emergency Response and Recovery phases.
4. Receive a supplementary report on the further support and ongoing advocacy that Council can implement for our community and businesses.
5. Continue its advocacy for an Integrated Emergency Services Precinct with a purpose build Emergency Operations Centre, further financial support for businesses, additional resources for our community and processes to assist people to regain control over their lives.
6. Accept the Commonwealth funding of \$1 million made available under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Category C (severe impact event funding) in response to the recent bushfires.
7. Receive a further report identifying a priority list of projects and programs for consideration in allocating this \$1 million in funding assistance.

BACKGROUND

The Currowan Fire started on 26 November 2019 burning through Shoalhaven and into Eurobodalla. The Incident Management Team (IMT) for this fire was based from Shoalhaven support by the Far South Coast RFS and Shoalhaven and Eurobodalla Emergency Operations Centres (EOC). At the same time, the Black Range Fire near Braidwood was impacting our neighbours with direct liaison between the Queanbeyan Palerang IMT and EOC.

This fire progressed further west crossing the Kings Highway above Government Bend and on 30 December 2019 was renamed the Clyde Mountain Fire. The Badja Fire started on 27 December 2019 along with the Coondella Trail Fire and Big Belimbla Creek fires on 30 December 2019 joining as one.

A Section 44 Declaration under the Rural Fires Act 1997 was declared on 27 November 2019 and a Natural Disaster Declaration on 6 December 2019 for the Currowan Fire for Shoalhaven and Eurobodalla (down to the Deua River) LGAs. A new Section 44 was declared effective on 30 December 2019 for the whole of Eurobodalla.

The Currowan Fire resulted in the loss of homes in early December 2019 north of Nelligen and in the lower Shoalhaven. These fires included significant impacts to arterial road access via both the Princes and Kings Highways, with consequent adverse impacts to the Eurobodalla

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economy and supply chains. The fire burnt along the Kings Highway for an extended period resulting in closure of the Kings Highway and limiting access to allow works for re-opening for an extended period. The Kings and Princes Highway are now open in the Eurobodalla area.

Subsequently all fires within Eurobodalla progressed rapidly eastward on the morning of 31 December 2019, with widespread damage experienced in the areas of Belowra, Nerrigundah, Tuross River Valley, Nelligen hinterland, Nelligen township, Runnyford/Buckenbowra areas, Mogo, Bimbimbe, Batemans Bay and coastal suburbs from Broulee to Batemans Bay. Fires on 4 and 10 January 2020 progressed with damage to Merricumbene, Mogendoura Valley and upper Deua River. 23 January 2020 saw significant damage to rural properties west of Moruya and into as far as the Moruya industrial area on Yarragee Road. Severe fire days were also predicted for Friday 31 January and Saturday 1 February 2020, however these were tempered by the strategic firefighting implemented and more favourable winds with an easterly influence.

The Currowan, Clyde Mountain and Badja fires have burnt over 397,789 hectares of land and caused significant impact to Eurobodalla. Within Eurobodalla more than 271,000 hectares of our 343,000 hectares or 79% of our Shire has been directly fire impacted.

Impacts from these extraordinary fires within Eurobodalla include:

- the sad and tragic loss of three lives, one each at Belowra, Nerrigundah and Bodalla rural areas
- large numbers of stock and native fauna
- loss of more than two thousand buildings (outlined in more detail below)
- substantial damage to public infrastructure (roads, bridges, water, sewer, waste, public buildings and facilities, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure)
- significant impacts on business and tourism due to the disruption to the peak visitor period
- extended closures of the primary transport and access routes into and out of Eurobodalla with both the Kings Highway and Princes Highway impacted
- significant adverse health impacts, particularly the mental health of our community
- more than 96,000 hectares or 90.5% of our State forests burnt
- more than 127,000 hectares or 90.6% of our National Parks burnt

As at 31 January 2020, Building Impact Assessment has found the following confirmed property losses:

- 493 homes destroyed
- 78 facilities destroyed
- 839 outbuildings destroyed
- 280 houses damaged
- 28 facilities damaged

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- 291 outbuildings damaged

Building impact assessments are still continuing and the above figure will rise.

There is a huge number of fire affected hazardous trees along fire affected roads as well as on public and private land that have been identified and removal has commenced. This also led to the closure of State forests and National Parks and the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden.

The fire continues to burn as at 31 January 2020 with response continuing by the RFS Incident Management Team supported by the Eurobodalla Emergency Operations Centre. Additional damage is likely to occur.

The impact in the short and long term will be very significant and addressing the issues of mental health and wellbeing are vitally important.

The fires have had a significant and sustained impact on our community and this report cannot express the depth, extent or range of experiences that have occurred throughout this time. The devastation, fear and concerns, those families who have lost loved ones, those who have lost properties, prepared their houses, evacuated, business impacts and the tourists required to leave as well as the acts of kindness, generosity and comradery; all have created unique and individual impacts and experiences.

CONSIDERATIONS

Emergency Management Arrangements

The primary combat agency for fire emergencies is the NSW Rural Fire Service who lead the Incident Management Team reporting through to the RFS Commissioner. The Section 44 declaration under the Rural Fires Act 1989 allows the RFS Commissioner to co-opt resources as required including from Forestry NSW, NPWS, NSWFR, Council and contractors to assist in fighting the fire with NSW Government funding.

For emergency events of this scale, the combat agency is supported by the Eurobodalla Emergency Operations Centre headed up by the Local Emergency Operations Controller (LEOCON) and supported by the Eurobodalla Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO). The Eurobodalla EOC reports through to the Regional Emergency Operations Centre and then to the State Emergency Operations Centre. Local Emergency Operation Centres across LGAs work collaboratively across the region as required.

Council supports the Emergency Operations Centre by providing the Local Emergency Management Officer(s), supports staff as well as liaison for the management of infrastructure as a Local Government service provider. Council also makes available existing infrastructure to act as evacuation centres.

When required, evacuation centres are opened and operated by the NSW Government through the arrangements with the relevant welfare agencies and supporting charities. Where practicable, evacuated people are provided with suitable alternate accommodation, either being directed to family and friends, or if required, to temporary accommodation.

The scale of the fire impacts across NSW (and other parts of Australia), resulted in approximately 60 evacuation centres being in operation simultaneously across NSW, up to five times the typical maximum number in any one emergency situation.

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Despite this, the three evacuation centres within Eurobodalla registered more than nine thousand people at the peak of the evacuations, with Council, including a number of Councillors, needing to supplement trained welfare agencies with our own resources to assist, due to lack of access into or out of Eurobodalla. This was during a period where the Shire experienced the loss of power, television and telecommunications. This circumstance was best described by the Moruya Evacuation Centre manager who highlighted to occupants at a briefing that this was a 'life boat' situation.

The resilience and self-reliance of our community during this period was remarkable and our community can be proud of how they pulled together to get through this challenging period.

It should be also acknowledged that many of our clubs, health and aged services fulfilled a vital role in assisting people who were evacuated in many cases offering additional facilities for people to rest and recuperate. Many generous families and friends also housed people during this period.

Although there were considerable challenges during the peak of this event, people were kept safe and taken out of the direct line of these devastating fires. As a result, no lives were lost in the fires in the peri-urban and urban areas of our Shire.

The emergency services agencies will review the outcomes of the operation of the evacuation centres as part of the normal post event processes. Council will participate in this review with input directed into the review process via the Local Emergency Management Officer. Recommended improvements including those needed to make the evacuation centres and community infrastructure more resilient and effective will become the basis of applications for funding to the Office of Emergency Management.

Council's Role

Council has taken a leadership and partnership role throughout this disaster, actively working with community, all levels of government, contractors and relevant agencies to provide support where needed, restore services quickly and assist whenever possible.

Emergency Response Phase

Some of the activities undertaken by Council included:

- Direct liaison with the local Member for Bega Andrew Constance MP and key Government agencies working closely with and through Mayor Liz Innes
- Working on the frontline undertaking containment works for the RFS working closely with Forestry NSW and contractors
- Ongoing support within the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) including Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO), administration roles, Liaison Officer roles in the areas of infrastructure, mapping, environmental services, information technology, transport, water and sewer, rangers and communications staff
- Speaking at public meetings and providing communications via radio (Mayor and LEMO) and through Emergency Operations Centre communications to supplement those provided by the RFS as the primary combat agency

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- Provision of electrical modifications to the main office, emergency operations centres and evacuation centres, and provision of generators during power outages (with the assistance of Essential Energy)
- Setting up, staffing and ongoing monitoring of all local road closures throughout the response phase
- Undertaking road closures on the Kings Highway and Princes Highway in collaboration with Transport for NSW
- Provision of one-off arrangements to support removal of green waste from South Durras from all coloured bins in front of the approaching fire
- Undertaking removal of hazardous fire affected trees along a substantial length of the Kings Highway (working closely with Forestry NSW, local contractors and Transport for NSW) as well providing inspections and intelligence to Transport for NSW on the status and work required to be undertaken to restore highway access
- Provision of joint communications with the local Member for Bega and RFS on the closures of the Kings Highway and major local roads
- Undertaking advance vegetation works in front of the fire to mitigate the impacts of fire on our highways and Council roads so as to better protect emergency response personnel, improve evacuation routes for our community, allow faster restoration of primary transport routes and mitigate the impacts of fire on our critical infrastructure.
- Re-arranging materials stockpiles to mitigate fire impacts, including on our bridge timber stockpile
- Working with the RFS, Police and Transport for NSW to facilitate the mass evacuation of tens of thousands of visitors from Eurobodalla for their safety and to allow our multi-agency response team to better care for our local residents, including leading communications in close collaboration with the RFS
- Organising in excess of 200 welfare checks on vulnerable community members
- Assessing alternate north-south transport routes between Moruya – Batemans Bay to re-establish a primary arterial access routes post the New Years Eve fire and clearing George Bass Drive to re-open a north-south transport route into and out of our Shire
- Re-wiring of key and provision of generators to service stations in each major town to allow public access to fuel
- Collaborating with fuel suppliers, Police and Transport for NSW to facilitate emergency fuel deliveries into the Eurobodalla and Bega Valley Shires through fire affected ground to support firefighting efforts (vehicles and air support), and to supply fuel to the community and visitors
- Prioritising and undertaking inspections of hundreds of kilometres of local roads to re-establish access, remove fallen vegetation and then make safe, working collaboratively with Forestry NSW, Transport for NSW and contractors (emergency works are on-going)

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- Inspecting bridges in fire affected ground, re-establishing side tracks around destroyed or damaged bridges and undertaking temporary repairs to damaged timber bridges where practicable to re-establish access
- Provision of access to and refuelling of generators to support hospitals, firefighting activities, telecommunications, evacuation centres and water and sewerage infrastructure (with more than 120,000 litres of diesel used during this period)
- Operation of our water and sewer system without power and telecommunications to secure critical water supply for firefighting and drinking water
- Integrating activities and working closely with Essential Energy to re-establish power to primary towns and facilities where safe and arranging direct delivery of generators to fire affected farmers
- Removing high priority fire affected hazardous trees within urban areas likely to fall on residents or remaining dwellings
- Working with Local Land Services (LLS) to re-establish access to priority areas to allow assessment of, and where necessary euthanising of life stock and animals impacted by fire
- Working with LLS and others to facilitate access to allow delivery of emergency fodder
- Provision of facilities and support, and working closely with the ADF to arrange provision of drinking water to remote areas, fencing and access clean-up, delivery of power pole posts and re-opening of key access routes (public roads and access to farms, telecommunications towers)
- Managing fire affected infrastructure including Council's own waste facilities and Eurobodalla Botanic Garden
- Providing additional waste collection services for green waste across Eurobodalla
- Supporting the lead agency, NSW Department of Communities and Justice, in its role in setting up and operating evacuation centres, in many situations taking a key role when agency staff were unable to travel to the centres or lacked the necessary local knowledge or contacts to fulfil vital activities and tasks
- Assistance in the management of donated goods
- Physically circulating paper copies of communication notices around the Shire when accessible.

Council Recovery Role

Council, under the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989, has a key lead role in the recovery stage for the community. Council has many responsibilities and will maintain support for the community in the long term.

Participation in Regional Recovery Committees and sub-committees

The NSW Government appointed Dick Adams as the Recovery Coordinator for Southern NSW. In regard to the Recovery Committee structure, the Regional Committee reports through to the

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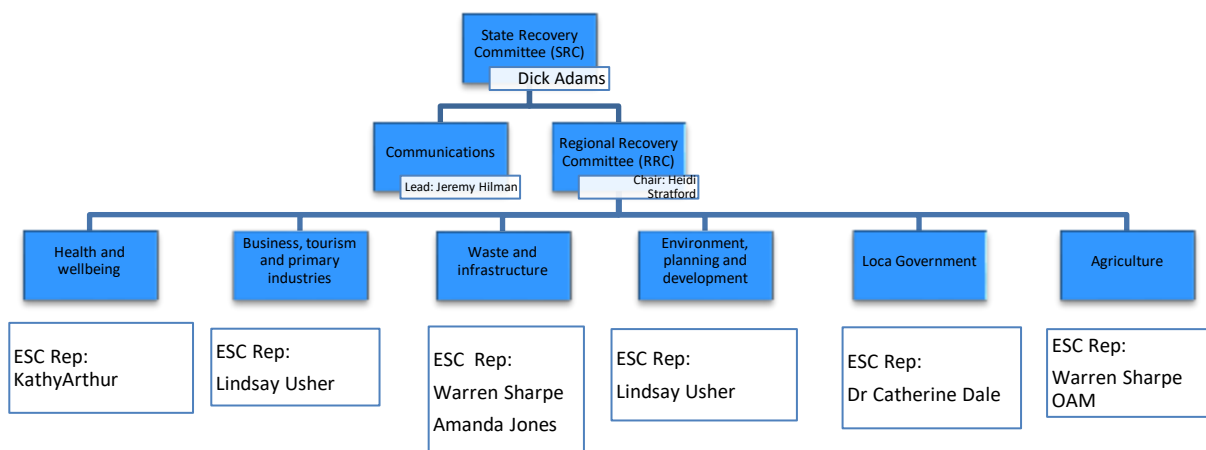
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State Recovery Committee. The Regional Recovery Committee has a number of sub-committees of which Council staff are members.

The Regional Recovery Committee operates across eight local government areas covering:

- Bega Valley
- Eurobodalla
- Shoalhaven
- Snowy Monaro
- Snowy Valleys
- Queanbeyan Palerang
- Wingecarribee
- Greater Hume

The Regional Recovery Committee is Chaired by Heidi Stratford. Eurobodalla Shire Council General Manager, Dr Catherine Dale is a member on the Regional Committee and the sub-committees are as follows.



Eurobodalla Recovery Committee

Council has established a Local Recovery Committee consisting of key agencies including NSW Police, NSW Rural Fires Services, Office of Emergency Management, Family and Community Services, Local Land Services, NSW Health, NSW Public Health, NSW Public Works, Coordinare, Australian Defence Force and the NSW Member for Bega’s representative. The committee will meet on a weekly basis and Council will continue to work with agencies to ensure that the recovery process is effective.

The objectives of the committee include:

1. Assess damage and needs

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2. Reconstruct and restore physical infrastructure
3. Ensure support for emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing
4. Adapt to a changed natural environment
5. Build community resilience and capability.

Eurobodalla Recovery Centre and other activities

Council staff in collaboration with OEM arranged the opening and resourcing of the Disaster Recover Centre in Batemans Bay. Additional resources have been engaged to directly support the recovery process at the Centre providing registrations and administrative support. Staff are also provided as liaison officers at these centres for on ground community support. These additional positions are funded via the Office of Emergency Management and are being sourced locally. Council has also provided significant IT support at the Disaster Recovery Centre.

The service opened on 15 January 2020 and currently operates 7 days per week, 9am -5pm weekdays and 10am to 4pm weekends. As of 3 February 2020 the Recovery Centre has registered over 1800 households.

The centre provides a comprehensive range of services to assist our community during this challenging time. There are a number of government and non-government agencies, with approximately 20 service providers available to assist affected community members.

Additionally, key actions implemented by Council during the early recovery phase to support the community include:

- Assistance to RFS and PWA to undertake Building Impact Assessments
- Coordination of three outreach information and social support events, in Mogo (23 January), Malua Bay (23 January) and Bodalla (29 January). A fourth event, scheduled for Narooma (30 January) was postponed due to increased fire activity. It will be rescheduled in the coming days.
- Tasking of Australian Defence Force personnel to set up and manage a distribution point for donated goods at Mackay Park in Batemans Bay.
- Tasking of Australian Defence Force personnel to assist Eurobodalla's farmers in clearing downed trees in the heavily impacted areas of Belowra, Cadgee, Nerrigundah, Eurobodalla and Deua Valley, along with liaison with Blaze Aid to assist in Eurobodalla.
- Support for the set up and operation of a Headspace Centre in Batemans Bay, with interim management by Coordinare (Public Health Network (PHN), South Eastern NSW).
- Worked with the Bushfire Housing Assistance Response Team (NSW Dept. of Communities and Justice) and non-government agencies and charities to identify housing opportunities and solutions, with the aim of addressing identified housing needs and gaps as a result of the bushfires.
- Set up of recovery webpages on Council's website to provide a 24/7 source of truth for residents seeking recovery support – www.esc.nsw.gov.au/recovery

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- Working with media and using Council's communication platforms to provide information and interview opportunities to ensure the community is aware of recovery support
- Received and disseminated, including to lead organisations and charities where appropriate, 400+ offers of assistance, including accommodation, trade skills, donations (food, clothing, financial support) grants and sponsorship opportunities.
- Sent letters to all non-resident property owners seeking any assistance they can provide by renting holiday homes to residents who have lost their houses.
- Facilitated a HIA meeting with over 150 builders and impacted residents to discuss bushfire clean up, planning controls and rebuilding.
- Advocacy for essential needs, including attendance at regional recovery meetings and meetings with Australian and NSW Government Ministers, relevant NSW authorities and companies, and appointed recovery personnel about immediate and future community needs to aid the recovery process.

In addition to the above actions Council has been investigating and advocating for opportunities in relation to employment, skills development, social and community events, programs and activities that can be implemented to assist community wellbeing outcomes and the reestablishment of social connection and confidence. These activities will roll out in the coming months to support health and wellbeing across the shire.

A 'councils helping councils' resource sharing initiative called the Local Government Bushfire Recovery Support Group has also been established by Office of Local Government, City of Sydney, Sydney Resilience Office and Local Government NSW to enable unaffected councils to offer assistance, resource sharing and temporary deployment of relief staff to councils in need. Council has secured a number of Development Assessment Planners from Inner West Council through this initiative.

Planning and Development

Council has been advocating to the NSW Government for changes to the planning system to facilitate the recovery process and to make it easier for our community to re build. Decisions have previously been made to allow development in areas impacted by the fires. The focus needs to be on facilitating redevelopment and where appropriate improving health and safety through actions such as complying with current bush fire management standards.

To this end Council has advocated that the Biodiversity Conservation Act should be switched off for development replacing fire impacted development and where it is proposed to introduce an asset protection zone up to a level agreed in consultation with Rural Fire Service eg clearing up to a BAL29 is exempt.

Council has also advocated for amendments to the State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) and Local Government Regulations to facilitate:

- Demolition
- Replacing fire damaged or destroyed dwellings, commercial, industrial, sheds.

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- Temporary Accommodation/Caravans
- Temporary Storage/Shipping Containers
- Exemption for approvals under s138 of the Roads Act and s68 of the Local Government Act for works ancillary to replacement development

Council is pleased that these suggestions are being well received by the NSW Government with changes already made to the SEPP to facilitate demolition and temporary storage, along with changes drafted to the Local Government Regulations to address temporary accommodation and use of caravans. Further changes to address other issues raised are also being discussed.

Council Environmental Health, Planning and Building staff have also been assisting Rural Fire Service and Public Works Authority to undertake Building Impact Assessments.

In addition, Council has provided staff at the recovery centre to provide environmental health and planning advice to community members impacted by the fire while also providing these services from the Council administration building in Moruya.

Waste issues

Council's Surf Beach Waste Management Facility was significantly impacted by fire causing it to be closed to the public until it was able to be made safe and operational. The liner for the new cell at the site was significantly damaged by the fire. This cell cannot be used until repairs are undertaken. This work has been commissioned and is expected to take 2-3 months to complete. The facility has reopened to the public providing all normal services.

The Moruya Transfer station was also directly impacted by the fire. The facility as of the 4 February 2020 was closed to the public while works were being undertaken to make the site safe and operational. Efforts are still being taken to extinguish mulch piles on the site.

Whilst the Brou Waste Facility Management Facility has not been directly impacted it has been closed on occasions due to fire in the immediate area.

The Council is currently working with the NSW Government on a strategy to dispose of the demolition waste generated from fire impacted properties. All efforts are being made to minimize the impact and cost to the community now and into the future as a result of the strategy developed.

Council is currently not taking demolition waste generated by the fire at any of its facilities. Council is accepting domestic ute and trailer loads of fire impacted household waste and burnt green waste.

Infrastructure asset damage and consequences

Council's road and bridge network has been extensively damaged during this fire event. On the roads accessed, 19 timber bridges are damaged or destroyed. Damage to the road network includes guideposts, guardrails, signposts and road surfaces.

The Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens incurred extensive fire damage although the new buildings were saved. The Batemans Bay SES shed was destroyed and Batemans Bay depot incurred only minor damage.

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There was also extensive damage to water and sewer infrastructure including the new low-pressure sewerage system at Rosedale, Tuross River bores, sewer pump stations and other infrastructure.

Council has been advocating to the NSW government via the local member The Hon. Andrew Constance MP and Deputy Premier, The Hon. John Barilaro MP to permit Council to use its own day labour staff for emergency clean up and rebuilding works where practical, fully funded under the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements. In addition, Council is advocating to have Government fund the replacement of critical timber bridges with more fire and flood resilient concrete structures. Council is awaiting a formal response from the Government in this regard.

Under the current arrangements, Councils must fund the first \$29,000 of these works.

Wellbeing and Mental Health

The health and wellbeing of the community has been significantly impacted, directly and indirectly, by the bushfires. Council is working with a range of government and non-government agencies to identify issues and potential solutions, as well as support specialist services to start operating, with the aim of achieving a successful long-term recovery for our community. The NSW LHD should be commended for their swift action in sending mental health professionals to the shire to supplement their existing service.

Impact on Business and Tourism

The tourism industry and business more broadly have been adversely impacted by fires. These impacts are both direct as a result of fire damage to property and associated infrastructure and indirect as a result of impacts including road closures, broader fire impacts such as smoke, and safety concerns resulting in evacuations.

Council has been speaking with Business Chambers and industry representatives to understand the impacts on business and their needs. This information has been invaluable in assisting council to advocate for support of business. Whilst a number of support packages and marketing campaigns have been announced by the NSW and Australian Governments, there is a general view among the business community that these programs are not meeting the immediate needs of business. This concern continues to be raised further funding opportunities from NSW Government was announced on Tuesday 4 February 2020. The adequacy of this support will need to continue to be monitored and feedback provided in an attempt to ensure that Eurobodalla business community is adequately supported.

Tourism and business newsletters have been produced and widely circulated to complement the Eurobodalla bushfire community updates. These newsletters have provided current information on local activities and available support.

With the current changing bushfire conditions Council's tourism marketing has focused on weekly showcases (fire conditions pending) of the actual status of Eurobodalla. These have been posted through social media channels. The focus of the messaging has been on authenticity, transparency and gratitude, through providing factual and reliable information. Council is also planning activities to promote the destination and key events to encourage visitation over the Easter school holidays and during the winter.

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Environmental impacts

There has been significant impacts on flora and fauna due to the bushfires. Wildlife management is being overseen by the Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment with support from Council, WIRES and local veterinarians.

Water quality, sediment and erosion control are significant management challenges for the catchments, town water supplies, oyster and tourism industries and recreational usage of waterways.

Council advocated for funding and support to manage environmental issues. Support to date has included:

- South East Local Land Services \$50 000 for immediate works on the Clyde River
- Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment announced a \$5million grant program for immediate work and council will be preparing an application seeking funds for on ground works.

Additionally, Council has and will continue to advocate for a regional approach to prioritise works across south east NSW to minimise negative environmental impacts and for this work to be funded.

Whilst advocacy in this space has focused on environmental values council has also advocated on the significant economical cost associated with adverse environmental impacts, and in particular the impact on the oyster industry and tourism.

Whilst there is state agency support and potentially some funds this initial response will require ongoing support and funding from the NSW and Australian governments for which council will continue to advocate.

Legal

Section 44 of the Rural Fires Act 1997 requires the NSW RFS Commissioner to take charge of all bush fire-fighting operations and bush fire prevention measures anywhere in NSW if, in the Commissioner's opinion, certain conditions are met. A Section 44 was declared on 27 November 2019 and a Natural Disaster Declaration on 6 December 2019. A new S44 was declared effective on 30 December 2019.

Financial

The fire events affecting Eurobodalla have section 44 declarations under the Rural Fires Act 1997 and as such the cost of any works undertaken to assist in firefighting and immediate access issues are covered by the NSW Government under the Section 44 payment.

Councils have 21 days after the Section 44 declaration is revoked to undertake emergency cleanup work funded under this declaration. In Eurobodalla, the section 44 remains in place. Once this declaration is revoked, Council will determine if it will need to apply for an extension past the 21 day period to continue to provide emergency clean up works.

It should be noted that the section 44 declaration only covers what is classified as essential infrastructure. This mainly applies to roads and bridges, but not community infrastructure such as community halls, childcare centres, gardens, waste management facilities or water and

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sewer infrastructure. These facilities are covered under Council's insurance policy as is related reductions in revenue, in some circumstances.

Available funding for NSW and Australian Government

Currently there are various grants being announced by the Australian and NSW Governments and this support is very welcomed. New funding and support funding opportunities for community members and businesses are still being announced as new needs arise and are responded to.

The Australian Government has provided an initial and immediate support payment of \$1million to local councils that have been affected by the recent bushfires under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Category C (severe impact event funding). A condition of the grant is that Council provides a schedule of works by 15 April 2020. Council has received this payment with the funds currently restricted for allocation by Council. Once the overall landscape of grant funding and support arrangements is clearer, Council can then consider in what areas this money would be best allocated in a strategic and coordinated manner to maximise community benefit. A further report will be provided for consideration.

The impact on the social, environmental and social fabric of our community is recognised. It is also recognised that there has been a financial impact on many members of our community. Council through the Mayor has been advocating for NSW Government support to assist communities to alleviate some of the financial burdens through rates, charges and fees.

Consequently, it was wonderful to hear the announcement on 4 February 2020, from the Minister of Local Government that the NSW Government would cover the cost of rates for six months for nominated affected persons. Further details are not yet available.

Council has had a Rates and Debtors Hardship Policy in place for many years. It is understood that OLG are preparing guidelines that may assist Councils to provide greater flexibility regarding such policies. Once these guidelines are available it may be appropriate to have some consistency between fire impacted councils.

Council has started a Eurobodalla Disaster Recovery Fund which is the subject of report M18/002 Use of Mayoral Executive Powers. These funds will also be an important contribution to assisting our community recovery. Currently there just over \$101,000 in the fund so far. Further details will be provided to Council once the Disaster Recovery Committee has met.

As other needs arise further grants and offsets maybe come available from the NSW and Australian Governments. Consequently, a further review will be undertaken to fully understand where additional community and business support can be best focused.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

One of Council's roles during the emergency response was to provide communications and public relations support to the Eurobodalla Emergency Operations Centre. This commenced on New Year's Eve and will continue as required.

Communications consisted of regular updates provided by email to media, local community associations, evacuation centres, and posted on Council's Facebook page and website (website from second week in January).

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The updates consist of official advice from the Rural Fire Service about fire activity and weather predictions, and advice from other emergency services and police for residents about returning home after relocating, evacuation centres, roads and traffic, power, water, waste, support for livestock.

This information was the basis for local and regional media to keep the community updated and was broadcast on radio and published in print and online. Local and national media interviews were arranged when agency, government and Council representatives were available.

Eurobodalla's local media outlets deserve acknowledgement. Maintaining professional and empathetic emergency coverage over an extended period requires commitment and passion for community – Council congratulates the region's journalists and broadcasters on their efforts.

Power, internet and television outages meant many residents were isolated from information. Attempts were made by the EOC to overcome this by providing twice daily briefings at each evacuation centre, and Council staff delivered hard copies of the updates to communities where access was possible.

A factsheet to help the community better prepare for what RFS call a campaign fire – fires that extend over a long period - was created and distributed on behalf of the Eurobodalla Emergency Operations Centre by Council. It was widely used by local media and neighbouring councils to provide information and strategies to the community in the lead up to recent bad fire days.

To coincide with the opening of the Eurobodalla Recovery Centre on 15 January, Council created Recovery webpages – www.esc.nsw.gov.au/recovery - that collect the range of recovery information in one convenient place for the community. Topics include clean up information, financial assistance, animals and livestock, looking after your mental health, and information about the recovery centre. Resources are updated daily.

CONCLUSION

This report has outlined a number of key issues related to the Eurobodalla Response and Recovery phases. It has provided a summary of the devastating fires that have significantly impacted our community including the damage they have caused and Council's role and actions. This is the first of many reports that will be presented to ensure that Council is kept informed of our progress as our community rebuilds.

GMR20/001 2020 CONFERENCES

**S004-T00019,
S012-T00025**

Responsible Officer: Dr Catherine Dale - General Manager

Attachments: Nil

Outcome: Innovative and Proactive Leadership

Focus Area: 9.1 Provide strong leadership and work in partnership to strategically plan for the future and progress towards the community vision

Delivery Program Link: 9.1.2 Implement effective governance

Operational Plan Link: 9.1.2.4 Provide professional development opportunities for Councillors

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has a commitment to continuing professional development for Councillors. Attendance at sector conferences provides the individual Councillor with new skills and knowledge on particular issues to ensure that they can perform their duties and represent residents to the best of their ability. It also provides Councillors with the opportunity to network and advocate with councillors from other local government areas.

Due to the 2020 Local Government elections caretaker period, conferences scheduled up to 1 August have been included in this report.

To ensure each Councillor is given the opportunity to participate in the conferences that are of interest to them, this report has been prepared outlining a number of conferences known to be available to Councillors until August 2020. The conferences included are:

1. LGNSW Tourism Conference on 16-18 March 2020.
2. Australia Local Government Women's Association NSW Conference on 26-28 March 2020.
3. Floodplain Management Australia National Conference on 19-22 May 2020.
4. NSW Local Roads Congress on 1 June 2020.
5. National General Assembly (NGA) on 14-17 June 2020.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. Council determine which Councillors will attend each of the following Conferences being held in 2019:
 - a. LGNSW Tourism Conference on 16-18 March 2020.
 - b. Australia Local Government Women's Association NSW Conference on 26-28 March 2020.
 - c. Floodplain Management Australia National Conference on 19-22 May 2020.
 - d. NSW Local Roads Congress on 1 June 2020.

GMR20/001 2020 CONFERENCES

**S004-T00019,
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- e. National General Assembly (NGA) on 14-17 June 2020.
2. Council representatives be reimbursed out of pocket expenses in accordance with the Councillors' Expenses and Facilities Policy.

BACKGROUND

This schedule of conferences provides the opportunity for Councillors to plan their professional development and keep within the allocated budget.

Due to the 2020 Local Government elections caretaker period, conferences scheduled up to 1 August have been included in this report.

Below is the detailed information of conferences available for Councillors to attend in 2020 in order of when they occur throughout the year.

The **LGNSW Tourism Conference** is being held on 16-18 March 2020 in Jindabyne, NSW. The conference gives Councillors and Council staff the opportunity to meet, listen to experts and peers, and find out how other councils are engaging and managing their tourism industry. The registration cost is \$1,584 or \$4,592 for a group of three or more delegates. More information and a copy of the Conference program is available at: <https://www.lgnsw.org.au/events-training/lgnsw-tourism-conference>

The **Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) NSW Conference** is being held on 26-28 March 2020 in Shellharbour City, NSW. The conference is an opportunity to come together and engage in learning and networking that will assist in personal and professional development. The conference and registration brochures will be available closer to the date and will be available at: <https://www.algwa.org.au/events/index.php?s=algwa-nsw-conference-2020>

The **Floodplain Management Australia National Conference** is being held on 19 – 22 May 2020 in Toowoomba, QLD. The theme of the conference is "A Flood Resilient Australia: transforming vision into action".

The registration cost is \$1050 if paid by 20 March 2020. More information can be found on the conference website: <https://floodplainconference.com/>

The **NSW Local Roads Congress** is being held on 1 June 2020 at NSW Parliament House in Sydney. The NSW Local Roads Congress provides an annual forum for local community representatives managing our road and freight networks to discuss better outcomes for the safe and efficient movement of passengers and freight across the extensive network of local and regional roads in NSW. Registration for Councillors attending this conference is free with a paying delegate. The Director Infrastructure Services will be attending the Congress as the paying delegate. The conference and registration brochures will be available closer to the date on the congress website: <https://www.ipweansw.org/local-roads-congress>

The **National General Assembly (NGA)** is being held on 14-17 June 2020 at the National Convention Centre in Canberra. This event provides an opportunity for Local Government to engage directly with the Federal Government, to develop national policy and to influence the future direction of our councils and our communities. The registration cost is \$989 if paid by 8

GMR20/001 2020 CONFERENCES

**S004-T00019,
S012-T00025**

May 2020. Council is a non-voting delegate of LGNSW. More information and a copy of the Conference program is available at: <https://conferenceco.eventsair.com/nga2020/registration>

CONSIDERATIONS

Policy

Council's Councillor's Expenses and Facilities Policy provides that attendance of Councillors at each conference will normally be limited to two. The principle of having one councillor attend will be considered as 'best practice' for attending seminars and conferences. This may be varied from time to time by resolution of Council.

Councillors attending training, seminars and conferences are to provide a report to Council on the outcome and issues. Councillors must provide a written delegate's report to Council following each conference attended, to be eligible to attend any further conference.

Section 232 (1) (g) of the Local Government Act 1993, states '*to make all reasonable efforts to acquire and maintain the skills necessary to perform the role of a Councillor*'.

Financial

Under *Councillor's Expenses and Facilities* Policy, Councillors (excluding the Mayor) are entitled to an annual amount of \$3,500 (indexed to the CPI) per financial year for their professional development.

Council will reimburse or pay registration fees, accommodation, meals, parking, telephone and travel expenses associated with attendance at the conference plus any other reasonable and directly related out of pocket expenses.

Accommodation is restricted to a maximum NRMA 4 ½ star rating and where possible at the conference venue to avoid other costs and inconvenience.

CONCLUSION

It is considered appropriate that Councillors attend conferences throughout the year to enable them to be both knowledgeable and up-to-date on particular issues to ensure that they can perform the duties and represent the residents to the best of their ability.

CCS20/001 INVESTMENTS MADE AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2019

**S011-T00006,
S012-T00025**

Responsible Officer: Anthony O'Reilly - Director Corporate and Commercial Services

Attachments: Nil

Outcome: Innovative and Proactive Leadership

Focus Area: 9.2 Ensure financial sustainability and support the organisation in achieving efficient ongoing operations

Delivery Program Link: 9.2.4 Responsibly manage Council's finances and maintain Fit for the Future status

Operational Plan Link: 9.2.4.3 Provide financial management and reporting

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to:

- certify that Council's investments in financial instruments have been made in accordance with legal and policy requirements
- provide information and details of investments
- raise other matters relevant to investing.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the certification that the investments as at 30 November 2019, made in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council's Investment Policy and the provision of Clause 1 (Reg. 212) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*, be received.

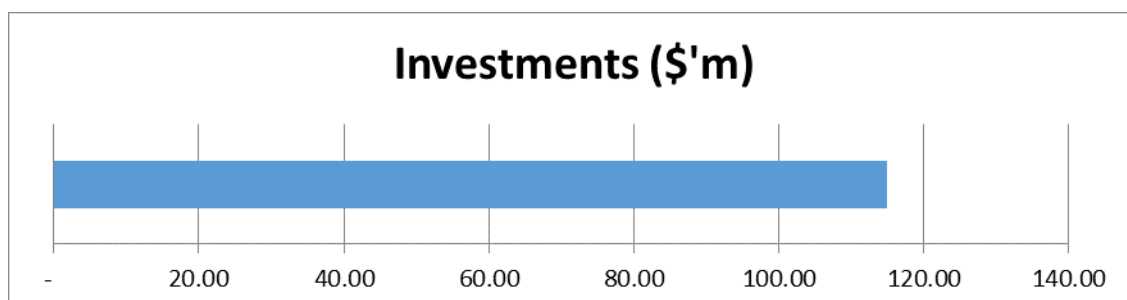
CONSIDERATIONS

Policy

The portfolio is compliant with Council's Investment Policy adopted by Council on 31 July 2018 (Minute 18/182).

Financial

Council investing overall



CCS20/001 INVESTMENTS MADE AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2019

**S011-T00006,
S012-T00025**

Council has 100% (\$115.00m) invested in Bank Deposits. The Bank Deposits are held in banks rated A or greater, or covered by the AAA rated Government Guarantee, except for \$33.25m invested in banks rated below A, and in the 'some limited risk' category of the policy.

The decrease in the investment portfolio was because there were some funds held back to cover loan repayments in December.

The 'some limited risk' category is now restricted to BBB+ rating institutions which allows up to 30% of all investments. Currently there is 28.91% invested in BBB+. Investment in Government Guaranteed Deposits is \$1.75m and represents 1.52% of the portfolio.

There was a downgrade to the AMP Bank from A to BBB+ rating by Standard and Poors rating agency and because the BBB+ (Some Limited Risk) section is limited in the investment policy to Bendigo Bank and Bank of Queensland this means that the AMP Bank will be removed from the portfolio when the current investments mature and this will rebalance the portfolio.

There are \$49m (42.61%) of funds invested in claimed fossil fuel free institutions.

The weighted average return for all investments for the month is 1.82%, which is above the Council policy benchmark of Bank Bill Swap rate (BBSW) + 0.25% (1.16%).

Collateralised Debt Obligation (CDO)

Funded legal action against one agency is continuing.

Summary investment information

The following table summarises investment categories and balances at month end.

CATEGORY	(\$)
At Call Deposit	5,000,000
Term Deposits	108,250,000
Term Deposits Government Guaranteed	1,750,000
	115,000,000
<i>Weighted average interest %:</i>	1.82%
<i>Average 90 day BBSW + 0.25%</i>	1.16%

Policy and liquidity risk

The Investment Policy is divided into two risk categories of credit risk (risk of ultimately not being able to redeem funds) and liquidity risk (risk of loss due to the need to redeem funds earlier than the investment term). Our investments comply with the risk policy as shown in the following table.

CCS20/001 INVESTMENTS MADE AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2019

S011-T00006,
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Policy risk	Low liquidity risk %	Total % of investments	Policy risk % (max holdings)
Remote risk	1.52	1.52	100.00
Near risk free	69.57	69.57	100.00
Some limited risk (BBB+)	28.91	28.91	30.00
Grand total	100.00	100.00	

The unrestricted current ratio is the amount of unrestricted current assets compared to each dollar of current liability. The Office of Local Government suggests a minimum 1.5:1, and the audited unrestricted current ratio as at 30 June 2019 is 1.96:1. Council therefore has approximately \$1.96 of current assets for each \$1 of current liabilities.

CONCLUSION

Pursuant to provision of Clause 1 (Reg. 212) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*, I hereby certify that these investments have been made in accordance with *the Local Government Act 1993* and related Regulations.

CCS20/002 INVESTMENTS MADE AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

**S011-T00006,
S012-T00025**

Responsible Officer: Anthony O'Reilly - Director Corporate and Commercial Services
Attachments: Nil
Outcome: Innovative and Proactive Leadership
Focus Area: 9.2 Ensure financial sustainability and support the organisation in achieving efficient ongoing operations
Delivery Program Link: 9.2.4 Responsibly manage Council's finances and maintain Fit for the Future status
Operational Plan Link: 9.2.4.3 Provide financial management and reporting

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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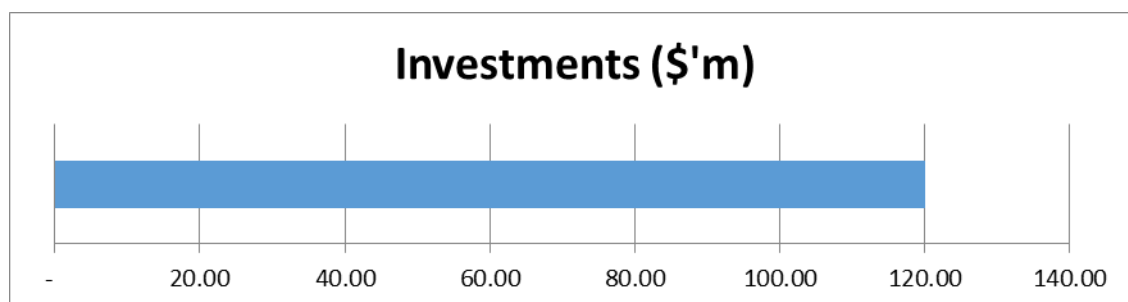
CONSIDERATIONS

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Financial

Council investing overall



CCS20/002 INVESTMENTS MADE AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

**S011-T00006,
S012-T00025**

Council has 100% (\$120.00m) invested in Bank Deposits. The Bank Deposits are held in banks rated A or greater, or covered by the AAA rated Government Guarantee, except for \$31.50m invested in banks rated below A, and in the 'some limited risk' category of the policy.

The increase in the investment portfolio was because there were some funds held back in November and were not required.

The 'some limited risk' category is now restricted to BBB+ rating institutions which allows up to 30% of all investments. Currently there is 26.25% invested in BBB+. Investment in Government Guaranteed Deposits is \$1.50m and represents 1.25% of the portfolio.

There was a downgrade to the AMP Bank from A to BBB+ rating by Standard and Poors rating agency and because the BBB+ (Some Limited Risk) section is limited in the investment policy to Bendigo Bank and Bank of Queensland this means that the AMP Bank was removed from the portfolio and the portfolio has been rebalanced to comply with the investment policy.

There are \$49m (40.83%) of funds invested in claimed fossil fuel free institutions.

The weighted average return for all investments for the month is 1.62%, which is above the Council policy benchmark of Bank Bill Swap rate (BBSW) + 0.25% (1.15%).

Collateralised Debt Obligation (CDO)

Council received settlement on the 12th December 2019 from the funded case against Fitch rating agency. The amount received was \$317,070.89 in full settlement of this claim. This settlement should finalise the legal proceedings in respect of CDO's, however there may be a small dividend when Lehman Brothers Australia is finally liquidated.

Summary investment information

The following table summarises investment categories and balances at month end.

CATEGORY	(\$)
At Call Deposit	5,000,000
Term Deposits	113,500,000
Term Deposits Government Guaranteed	1,500,000
	120,000,000
<i>Weighted average interest %:</i>	1.62%
<i>Average 90 day BBSW + 0.25%</i>	1.15%

CCS20/002 INVESTMENTS MADE AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

**S011-T00006,
S012-T00025**

Policy and liquidity risk

The Investment Policy is divided into two risk categories of credit risk (risk of ultimately not being able to redeem funds) and liquidity risk (risk of loss due to the need to redeem funds earlier than the investment term). Our investments comply with the risk policy as shown in the following table.

Policy risk	Low liquidity risk %	Total % of investments	Policy risk % (max holdings)
Remote risk	1.25	1.25	100.00
Near risk free	72.50	72.50	100.00
Some limited risk (BBB+)	26.25	26.25	30.00
Grand total	100.00	100.00	

The unrestricted current ratio is the amount of unrestricted current assets compared to each dollar of current liability. The Office of Local Government suggests a minimum 1.5:1, and the audited unrestricted current ratio as at 30 June 2019 is 1.96:1. Council therefore has approximately \$1.96 of current assets for each \$1 of current liabilities.

CONCLUSION

Pursuant to provision of Clause 1 (Reg. 212) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*, I hereby certify that these investments have been made in accordance with *the Local Government Act 1993* and related Regulations.

15. DEALING WITH MATTERS IN CLOSED SESSION

In accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993, Council can exclude members of the public from the meeting and go into Closed Session to consider confidential matters, if those matters involve:

- (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals; or
- (b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer; or
- (c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business; or
- (d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed;
 - (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or
 - (iii) reveal a trade secret,
- (e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law; or
- (f) matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property; or
- (g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege or information concerning the nature and location of a place; or
- (h) an item of Aboriginal significance on community land.

and Council considers that discussion of the material in open session would be contrary to the public interest.

In accordance with Section 10A(4) of the Local Government Act 1993 the Chairperson will invite members of the public to make verbal representations to the Council on whether the meeting should be closed to consider confidential matters.

EUROBODALLA SHIRE COUNCIL

ETHICAL DECISION MAKING AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A GUIDING CHECKLIST FOR COUNCILLORS, OFFICERS AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEES

ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

- Is the decision or conduct legal?
- Is it consistent with Government policy, Council's objectives and Code of Conduct?
- What will the outcome be for you, your colleagues, the Council, anyone else?
- Does it raise a conflict of interest?
- Do you stand to gain personally at public expense?
- Can the decision be justified in terms of public interest?
- Would it withstand public scrutiny?

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest is a clash between private interest and public duty. There are two types of conflict: Pecuniary – regulated by the *Local Government Act* and Department of Local Government; and Non-Pecuniary – regulated by Codes of Conduct and policy, ICAC, Ombudsman, Department of Local Government (advice only).

THE TEST FOR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Is it likely I could be influenced by personal interest in carrying out my public duty?
- Would a fair and reasonable person believe I could be so influenced?
- Conflict of interest is closely tied to the layperson's definition of "corruption" – using public office for private gain.
- Important to consider public perceptions of whether you have a conflict of interest.

IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS

1st Do I have private interests affected by a matter I am officially involved in?

2nd Is my official role one of influence or perceived influence over the matter?

3rd Do my private interests conflict with my official role?

Whilst seeking advice is generally useful, the ultimate decision rests with the person concerned.

AGENCY ADVICE

Officers of the following agencies are available during office hours to discuss the obligations placed on Councillors, Officers and Community Committee members by various pieces of legislation, regulation and Codes.

CONTACT	PHONE	EMAIL	WEBSITE
Eurobodalla Shire Council Public Officer	4474-1000	council@eurocoast.nsw.gov.au	www.esc.nsw.gov.au
ICAC	8281 5999	icac@icac.nsw.gov.au	www.icac.nsw.gov.au
Local Government Department	4428 4100	dlg@dlg.nsw.gov.au	www.dlg.nsw.gov.au
NSW Ombudsman	8286 1000 Toll Free 1800 451 524	nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au	www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

Reports to Committee are presented generally by 'exception' - that is, only those items that do not comply with legislation or policy, or are the subject of objection, are discussed in a report.

Reports address areas of business risk to assist decision making. Those areas include legal, policy, environment, asset, economic, strategic and financial.

Reports may also include key planning or assessment phrases such as:

Setback Council's planning controls establish preferred standards of setback (eg 7.5m front; 1m side and rear);

Envelope taking into account the slope of a lot, defines the width and height of a building with preferred standard of 8.5m high;

Footprint the percentage of a lot taken up by a building on a site plan.

Acronym	Meaning	Description
ACR	Australian Capital Region	The political and strategic grouping of the ACT government and 17 adjacent councils.
AEP	Annual Exceedance Probability	For floods expressed as a % eg 1% = 1:100 year event. The NSW Flood Guidelines nominate types of development and controls.
AHD	Australian Height Datum	Floor levels for buildings set to remain at or above flood level (expressed as 'freeboard').
APZ	Asset Protection Zone	Area to be cleared and maintained around habitable buildings in bushfire prone areas.
AS	Australian Standard	Standards set by national body as minimum construction, service, system, planning or design requirements.

Acronym	Meaning	Description
BCA	Building Code of Australia	Prescribes minimum standards or performance base for building construction.
CAMP	Companion Animal Management Plan	Required by state law, plan nominating management of dogs and cats and areas for access for the exercise of dogs (eg beaches and reserves).
CC	Construction Certificate	Floor plans approved by council or private certifier in compliance with development conditions and BCA.
COPW	Condition of Public Works Report	Required by state law to define the condition of infrastructure assets, the cost to upgrade to defined standards, the current costs of maintenance and desired levels of maintenance.
CP	Cultural Plan	A cultural plan enables identification of cultural assets, identity and needs as well as providing a framework to develop cultural initiatives to increase opportunities for residents.
CSR	Complaint and Service Request	Requests received from public by phone, letter, email or Councillor to attend to certain works (eg pothole) or complain of certain service or offence (eg dogs barking).
DA	Development Application	Required by state law to assess suitability and impacts of a proposed development.
DAP	Disability Action Plan	Council plan outlining proposed works and services to upgrade facilities to progressively meet Disability Discrimination Act.
DCP	Development Control Plan	Local planning policy defining the characteristics sought in residential, commercial land.
DECCW	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (formerly EPA, NPWS, DEC)	State agencies (former Environment Protection and National Parks), DNR managing state lands and natural resources and regulating council activity or advising on development applications.
DWE	Department of Water and Energy	State agency managing funding and approvals for town and country water and sewer services and State energy requirements.
DoP	Department of Planning	State agency managing state lands and regulating council activity or advising on development applications or strategic planning.
DLG	Department of Local Government	State agency responsible for regulating local government.
DoL	Department of Lands	State agency managing state lands and advising on development applications or crown land management.
DoC	Department of Commerce	State agency (formerly Public Works) managing state public water, sewer and buildings infrastructure and advising/supervising on council infrastructure construction.

Acronym	Meaning	Description
DoH	Department of Health	State agency responsible for oversight of health care (community and hospital) programs. Also responsible for public warning of reportable health risks.
DOTAR	Department of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development and Local Government	Federal agency incorporating infrastructure, transport system, and assisting regions and local government.
EBP	Eurobodalla Bike Plan	Strategic Plan identifying priorities and localities for cycleways in the Shire.
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	Required for designated and state developments researching and recommending solutions to social, economic and environmental impacts.
EMP	Estuary Management Plan	Community based plan, following scientific research of hydrology and hydraulics, recommending actions to preserve or enhance social, economic and environmental attributes of estuary
EMS	Environmental Management System	Plans prepared by council (such as waste management and strategic planning) around AS14000.
EOI	Expressions of Interest	Often called in advance of selecting tenders to ascertain capacity and cost of private sector performing tasks or projects on behalf of council.
EP&A	Environment Planning & Assessment Act	State law defining types of development on private and public lands, the assessment criteria and consent authorities.
ESC	Eurobodalla Shire Council	
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development	Global initiative recommending balance of social, economic and environmental values in accord with 7 ESD principles.
ESS	Eurobodalla Settlement Strategy	Council strategy prepared with assistance of government to identify best uses and re-uses of urban lands, the appropriate siting of private and public investment (eg institutions, employment areas or high density residential) based on current and planned infrastructure and land capacity.
ET	Equivalent Tenement	Basis of calculation of demand or impact of a single dwelling on water and sewer system.
FAG	Financial Assistance Grant	Federal general purpose grant direct to local government based on population and other 'disability' factors.

Acronym	Meaning	Description
FSR	Floor Space Ratio	A measure of bulk and scale, it is a calculation of the extent a building floor area takes up of an allotment.
GIS	Geographic Information System	Computer generated spatial mapping of land and attributes such as infrastructure, slope, zoning.
IPART	Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal	State body that reviews statutory or government business regulatory frameworks and pricing levels.
IPWEA	Institute Public Works Engineers Australia	Professional association.
IWCMS	Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy (or Plan)	Council plan identifying risk and social, economic and environmental benefit of proposed augmentation to water, sewer and stormwater systems.
IWMS	Integrated Waste Management (Minimisation) Strategy	Council plan identifying risk and social, economic and environmental benefit of proposed augmentation of waste (solids, effluent, contaminated, liquid trade waste).
LEP	Local Environment Plan	The statutory planning instrument defining the zones and objectives of urban and rural areas.
LGAct	Local Government Act	State law defining the role of Mayor, Councillors, staff, financing, approvals etc.
LGMA	Local Government Managers Australia	Professional association.
LGNSW	Local Government NSW	Representative advisory and advocacy group for councils in NSW.
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding	Agreement in principle between parties (eg council and agency) to achieve defined outcomes.
NPWS	National Parks & Wildlife Service	Now merged into DECCW.
NRM	Natural Resource Management	
NVC	Native Vegetation Act 2003	State law defining means of protection of threatened legislation and approval processes to clear land.
OC	Occupation Certificate	Issued by council or private certifier that building is safe to occupy and in compliance with development conditions and BCA.
OSMS	On site sewage management system	Includes septic tanks, aerated systems, biocycles etc.
PCA	Principal Certifying Authority	The person or organisation appointed by applicant to inspect and certify structures.

Acronym	Meaning	Description
PIA	Planning Institute of Australia	Professional association.
POEO	Protection of the Environment Operations Act	State law outlining standards for emissions and discharges and penalties for pollution.
PoM	Plan of Management (usually for community land)	Council plan nominating type of uses for community land and range of facilities progressively to be provided on land.
PPP	Public Private Partnerships	
PTS	Public Transport Strategy	Council strategy to initiate mechanisms to promote and facilitate public transport (bus, taxi, community transport, cycles) in design of subdivisions, developments and council works.
REF	Review of Environmental Factors	Council examination of risk and social, economic and environmental benefit of proposed works, assessed against state planning, environment and safety laws.
REP	Regional Environment Planning Policy	Outlines compulsory state planning objectives to be observed in development assessment and strategic planning.
RFS	Rural Fire Service	State agency responsible for providing equipment and training for volunteer firefighter brigades, and the assessment and approval of developments in bushfire prone lands.
RLF	Regional Leaders Forum	The group of mayors and general managers representing the councils in the ACR.
RMS	Roads & Maritime Service	State agency responsible for funding, construction and maintenance of state roads, the approval of council works on arterial roads and development applications.
S64	S64 Contributions Plan	Developer contributions plan to enable, with council and state funds, the augmentation of water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure.
S94 S94A	S94 Contributions Plan S94A Contributions Plan Levy Plan	Developer contributions to enable construction of public infrastructure and facilities such as roads, reserves, carparks, amenities etc.
SCG	Southern Councils Group	Political and strategic grouping of councils along the NSW south coast from Wollongong to the border, lobbying government for assistance (eg highways) and resourcing sharing initiatives.
SCRS	South Coast Regional Strategy	Regional Strategy prepared by DoP for ESC, BVSC and part SCC to guide new LEPs.

Acronym	Meaning	Description
SEA	Strategic Environment Assessment	Spatial assessment of environmental constraints of land considered in design and assessment of subdivision and infrastructure. Scientific research behind assessment of capacity of land and waterways in rural residential and urban expansion lands to sustain human settlement.
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy	Outlines compulsory state planning objectives.
SNSWLHD	Southern NSW Local Health Districts	State board commissioned with oversight of health care in Highlands, Monaro and Far South Coast.
SoER	State of the Environment Report	Required by state law, the comprehensive assessment (every four years) of the condition and the pressures on the social, economic and environmental features of the Shire and appropriate responses to address or preserve those issues.
SP	Social Plan	Required by state law, the comprehensive assessment (every four years) of the condition and the pressures on the social framework of the community, their services and facilities and economic interactions.
.....SP	Structure Plan	Plan promoting landuses and siting of infrastructure and facilities in towns (eg, BBSP – Batemans Bay Structure Plan).
SRCMA	Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority	State agency commissioned with assessment and monitoring of health and qualities of catchments from Wollongong to the border, and determine directions and priorities for public and private investment or assistance with grants.
STP	Sewer Treatment Plant	Primary, secondary and part tertiary treatment of sewage collected from sewers before discharge into EPA approved water ways or irrigation onto land.
TAMS	Total Asset Management System	Computer aided system recording condition and maintenance profiles of infrastructure and building assets.
TBL	Triple Bottom Line	Commercial term coined to encourage business to consider and disclose social and environmental risk, benefit and costs in the conduct of business to guide investors as to the long term sustainability and ethics of a business. Taken up by Council to record the basis of prioritisation, the review of condition, the monitor of progress and the financial disclosure of preventative or maintenance investment in council based social and environmental activities.
ToR	Terms of Reference	
TSC	Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995	State law governing the protection of nominated species and relevant assessment and development controls.

Acronym	Meaning	Description
WCF	Water Cycle Fund	Combination of water, sewer and stormwater activities and their financing arrangements.
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design	Principle behind the IWCMS and council development codes requiring new developments to reduce demand and waste on water resources through contemporary subdivision and building design.