

Business Paper

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

**ALBY SCHULTZ MEETING CENTRE,
COOTAMUNDRA**

6:00PM, TUESDAY 28TH APRIL, 2020

Administration Centres: 1300 459 689

The Mayor & Councillors
Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
PO Box 420
Cootamundra NSW 2590

NOTICE OF MEETING

An Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held in the Alby Schultz meeting Centre, Cootamundra on:

Tuesday, 28th April, 2020 at 6:00PM

The agenda for the meeting is enclosed.

Phillip McMurray
General Manager

AGENDA

Order of Business

1	Acknowledgement of Country	5
2	Open Forum	5
3	Apologies	5
4	Disclosures of Interest	5
5	Confirmation of Minutes	6
5.1	Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Tuesday 31 March 2020	6
6	Mayoral Minutes	23
6.1	Mayoral Minute - Councillor Engagement	23
7	Reports from Committees	25
8	General Manager's Report.....	25
8.1	Business	26
8.1.1	New Regulations in Response to COVID-19	26
8.1.2	Financial Sustainability Review by Dr Joseph Drew	36
8.1.3	Cootamundra Community Arts Cultural Centre - Report from Chairperson April 2020.....	77
8.1.4	Community Donations Policy	80
8.1.5	Updated Council Meeting Action Report	89
8.1.6	Minutes of the Cootamundra Tourism Action Group s355 Committee Meeting held 5 March 2020.....	107
8.1.7	Information Bulletin	108
8.2	Finance	121
8.2.1	Borrowing for Cootamundra Water Mains Replacement.....	121
8.2.2	Investment Report - March 2020	122
8.2.3	Monthly Finance Report.....	125
8.2.4	March 2020 Major Projects Progress Report.....	129
8.3	Community and Culture	136
8.4	Development, Building and Compliance	137
8.4.1	Development Applications Approved for the Month of March, 2020.....	137
8.4.2	On Site Sewerage Management System (OSSMS) Policy.....	139
8.4.3	Adoption of Rural Lands Strategy	149

8.5	Regulatory Services	199
8.6	Assets	200
	8.6.1 Plant Income Management.....	200
8.7	Civil Works	203
	8.7.1 Tender for Winning and Crushing of Gravel	203
	8.7.2 Civil Works & Technical Services Report - April 2020	205
8.8	Technical Services	207
8.9	Facilities.....	207
8.10	Waste, Parks and Recreation	207
9	Motion of which Notice has been Given.....	208
9.1	Notice of Motion - That the Waste Strategy Plan be Adopted and Made Available for Public Review and Comment.	208
9.2	Notice of Motion - That Council write to the Honorable Shelley Hancock, Minister for Local Government, and Ms Steph Cooke, Member for Cootamundra, advising them that Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council have undertaken the Rate Harmonisation, legislated by the State Government, and that the letter include the table of rate changes, the formula applied to ascertain the harmonisation figures and a comment on the adverse impact that the rate increases are likely to have on many members of its community.....	209
10	Questions with Notice	210
11	Confidential Items	210

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri people, the Traditional Custodians of the Land at which the meeting is held and pays its respects to Elders, both past and present, of the Wiradjuri Nation and extends that respect to other Aboriginal people who are present.

ADJOURN MEETING FOR OPEN FORUM**2 OPEN FORUM****RESUME OPEN MEETING****3 APOLOGIES****4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5.1 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 31 MARCH 2020

REPORTING OFFICER	Marianne McInerney, Personal Assistant to the General Manager
AUTHORISING OFFICER	Phillip McMurray, General Manager
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no Financial implications associated with this report.
LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS	There are no Legislative implications associated with this report.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	There are no Policy implications associated with this report.
ATTACHMENTS	1. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Tuesday 31 March 2020

RECOMMENDATION

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Tuesday 31 March 2020 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.



**COOTAMUNDRA-
GUNDAGAI REGIONAL
COUNCIL**

ABN: 46 211 642 339
PO Box 420, Cootamundra NSW 2590
Email: mail@cgrc.nsw.gov.au
www.cgrc.nsw.gov.au

Minutes

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, GUNDAGAI

6:00PM, TUESDAY 31ST MARCH, 2020

Administration Centres: 1300 459 689

**MINUTES OF COOTAMUNDRA-GUNDAGAI REGIONAL COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, GUNDAGAI
ON TUESDAY, 31 MARCH 2020 AT 6:00PM**

PRESENT: Cr Abb McAlister (Mayor), Cr Dennis Palmer (Deputy Mayor), Cr Leigh Bowden, Cr David Graham, Cr Gil Kelly, Cr Penny Nicholson, Cr Doug Phillips, Cr Charlie Sheahan, Cr Craig Stewart

IN ATTENDANCE: Phil McMurray (Acting General Manager), Ganesh Ganeshamoorthy (Manager Assets), Susan Gheller (Manager of Business), Sharon Langman (Manager Development, Building and Compliance), Andrew Brock (Manager Facilities), Tim Swan (Manager Finance), Matt Stubbs (Manager Technical Services), Wayne Bennett (Manager Waste, Parks & Recreation Services)

Note:

Pursuant to s747A of the Local Government Act, 1993 Cr Dennis Palmer (Deputy Mayor) and Cr's Bowden, Kelly, Phillips, Sheahan and Stewart attended the meeting remotely using an audio-visual link.

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chairperson acknowledged the Wiradjuri people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land at which the meeting was held and paid his respects to Elders, both past and present, of the Wiradjuri Nation and extended that respect to other Aboriginal people who were present.

2 OPEN FORUM

Note: Due to COVID-19 the Meeting was closed to the public and there was no Open Forum. The Meeting was livestreamed. No written submissions relating to items on the agenda or any other matter were received by Council for presentation at the meeting.

3 APOLOGIES

Nil

4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Nil

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5.1 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2020**RESOLUTION 077/2020**

Moved: Cr David Graham

Seconded: Cr Charlie Sheahan

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Tuesday 25 February 2020 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

CARRIED

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**RESOLUTION 078/2020**

Moved: Cr David Graham

Seconded: Cr Penny Nicholson

That Council suspend standing orders to bring forward consideration of item 8.2.2 presentation of Audited Financial statements.

CARRIED

8.2.2 PRESENTATION OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note: Mr Brad Bohun of Crowe delivered a presentation to Council on the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 30th June, 2019.

RESOLUTION 079/2020

Moved: Cr David Graham

Seconded: Cr Penny Nicholson

Item 8.2.2 Presentation of Audited Financial Statements be moved forward to allow Mr Brad Bohun of Crowe to deliver a presentation to Council on the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June, 2019.

CARRIED

5.2 MINUTES OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 12 MARCH 2020**RESOLUTION 080/2020**

Moved: Cr Doug Phillips

Seconded: Cr David Graham

That:

- 1. The Minutes of the Internal Audit Committee Meeting held on Thursday 12 March 2020 and 12 March 2020, attached under separate cover, be received and noted;**
- 2. The External Audit Report, on the operation of s355 Committees, attached under separate cover, and foreshadowed administrative actions be also noted.**

CARRIED

6 MAYORAL MINUTES**6.1 MAYORAL MINUTE - COUNCILLOR ENGAGEMENT FOR MARCH, 2020**

Note: the following amendments were made at the meeting:

21st -22nd February, 2020

Cr Sheahan did not attend the Australian Local Government Women's Association forum in Griffith.

5th March, 2020

Cr Nicholson attended the Cootamundra Tourism Action Group s355 Committee Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Meeting.

12th March, 2020

Cr Nicholson attended Jubilee Park for the official opening of the new adventure playground funded through the Stronger Country Communities Fund R1, with Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke, MP.

RESOLUTION 081/2020

Moved: Cr Dennis Palmer

Seconded: Cr Craig Stewart

The Mayoral Minute and additional information provided at the meeting be received and noted.

CARRIED

7 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Nil

8 GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

8.1 BUSINESS**8.1.1 INFORMATION BULLETIN****RESOLUTION 082/2020**

Moved: Cr Gil Kelly

Seconded: Cr Dennis Palmer

The Information Bulletin, and correspondence, attached under separate cover, be received and noted.

CARRIED

8.1.2 COUNCIL MEETING ACTION REPORT**RESOLUTION 083/2020**

Moved: Cr Leigh Bowden

Seconded: Cr Craig Stewart

The updated Council Meeting Action Report, attached, be received and noted.

CARRIED

8.1.3 MINUTES OF COOTAMUNDRA HERITAGE COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD 3 FEBRUARY, 2020 AND 2 MARCH, 2020**RESOLUTION 084/2020**

Moved: Cr David Graham

Seconded: Cr Doug Phillips

The Minutes of the Cootamundra Heritage Centre Management s.355 Committee meetings held on 3rd February and 2nd March, 2020, attached under separate cover, be received and noted.

CARRIED

8.1.4 COOTAMUNDRA SHOWGROUND USERS GROUP S355 COMMITTEE MINUTES 18 MARCH, 2020**RESOLUTION 085/2020**

Moved: Cr David Graham

Seconded: Cr Penny Nicholson

- 1. The Minutes of the Cootamundra Showground Users s355 Committee held 18th March, 2020, attached under separate cover, be received and noted.**
- 2. The tree referred to in item 1.8 General Business of the Minutes be removed by Council officers if possible.**

3. The request for a donation to cover the cost of ground hire for the 2020/21 financial year submitted by Riding for the Disabled be deferred to the Ordinary Meeting to be held 28th April, 2020 and considered in conjunction with the community donation program.

CARRIED

8.1.5 MINUTES OF THE STOCKINBINGAL MEMORIAL HALL S355 COMMITTEE 27TH FEBRUARY, 2020

RESOLUTION 086/2020

Moved: Cr David Graham

Seconded: Cr Dennis Palmer

The Minutes of the Stockinbingal Memorial Hall s355 Committee meeting held 27th February, 2020, attached under separate cover, be received and noted.

CARRIED

MINUTES OF THE COOTAMUNDRA TOURISM ACTION GROUP S355 COMMITTEE (LATE ITEM)

Note: The Minutes from the Cootamundra Tourism Action Group s355 Committee Annual General Meeting and Committee Meeting were accepted by the Chairperson as a Late Report.

RESOLUTION 087/2020

Moved: Cr David Graham

Seconded: Cr Charlie Sheahan

Council note the Cootamundra Tourism Actions Group's preference for Brand Concept three (3) (separate logos). However, if this concept is also adopted by council, that further tweaks to the logo design and a different by-line be implemented to better reflects the key offerings and community pride in Cootamundra the Cootamundra Tourism Actin Group s355 Committee believe have been missed from the current draft strategy document.

CARRIED

8.1.6 MINUTES OF THE GUNDAGAI TOURISM ACTION S.355 COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 24 FEBRUARY 2020

RESOLUTION 088/2020

Moved: Cr Penny Nicholson

Seconded: Cr David Graham

1. **The Minutes from the Gundagai Tourism Action s355 Committee meeting held 24th February, 2020, attached under separate cover, be received and noted.**
2. **Council adopt the brand concept three (3): Gundagai, “Gundagai Unleash your Freedom” and refrain from adopting a regional logo.**
3. **Council look at options for funding for the purchase and installation of a speaker system for Sheridan Street that plays the local radio station and be utilised for events.**

CARRIED

8.1.7 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARTS CENTRE COOTAMUNDRA S.355 COMMITTEE, HELD 19 MARCH, 2020

RESOLUTION 089/2020

Moved: Cr Leigh Bowden

Seconded: Cr David Graham

1. **The Minutes of The Arts Centre Cootamundra held 19th March, 2020, attached under separate cover, be received and noted.**
2. **Recommendations included in the Minutes be considered by Council’s Manager Facilities.**

CARRIED

8.1.8 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARTS CENTRE COOTAMUNDRA S.355 COMMITTEE, HELD 20 FEBRUARY, 2020**RESOLUTION 090/2020**

Moved: Cr Doug Phillips

Seconded: Cr Craig Stewart

The Minutes of the Meeting of The Arts Centre Cootamundra s.355 Committee, held 20th February, 2020, attached under separate cover, be received and noted.

CARRIED

8.1.9 REPORT TO COUNCIL FROM COOTAMUNDRA CREATIVE ARTS INCORPORATED - MARCH 2020**RESOLUTION 091/2020**

Moved: Cr Doug Phillips

Seconded: Cr Leigh Bowden

The report from Cootamundra Creative Arts Inc., attached under separate cover, be received and noted.

CARRIED

8.1.10 FURTHER REVIEW OF S355 COMMITTEE OPERATIONS**RESOLUTION 092/2020**

Moved: Cr Charlie Sheahan

Seconded: Cr Craig Stewart

- 1. Council hold a workshop to consider its approach to ongoing community participation and administrative burdens on the operational independence of community groups;**
- 2. Council assess the effectiveness of the s355 Committee structure in best achieving the required balance between governance, administrative requirements and expectations of the community in respect of desired delivery and service outcomes.**

CARRIED

8.1.11 COUNCILLOR WORKSHOP REPORT

It was moved by Cr's Palmer (Deputy Mayor) and Kelly:

1. The report on the Councillor Workshop held 24th March, 2020 be received.
2. Council redraft the draft tender document to include the management of the weighbridge to the successful tenderer.
3. Council endorse the proposed changes to the onsite sewer charge.
4. Council approve the allocation of \$10,000 for work to be commenced to implement the commercial trade waste charges in Cootamundra.
5. Council endorse the proposed changes to Council Community Donations Policy.
6. Council endorse the Financial Sustainability Review video of Dr Drew be shared with Council staff and the community.

On being put to the vote Motion was LOST.

RESOLUTION 093/2020

Moved: Cr Doug Phillips

Seconded: Cr Penny Nicholson

1. **The report on the Councillor Workshop held 24th March, 2020 be received.**
2. **Council endorse the amended Material Recycling Facility to go to Tender as tabled at the meeting.**
3. **Council endorse the proposed changes to the onsite sewer charge.**
4. **Council approve the allocation of \$10,000 for work to be commenced to implement the commercial trade waste charges in Cootamundra.**
5. **Council endorse the proposed changes to Council Community Donations Policy.**
6. **Council endorse the Financial Sustainability Review video of Dr Drew be shared with Council staff and the community.**

CARRIED

8.1.12 FINAL REPORT FOR BOUNDARIES COMMISSION**RESOLUTION 094/2020**

Moved: Cr Penny Nicholson

Seconded: Cr David Graham

1. Council receive the Final Report for Boundaries Commission report, Dr Drew's Cover over Letter for the Boundaries Commission Report and the Local Government Boundaries Commission Notice for Submissions, attached under separate cover.
2. The Mayor and General Manager be authorised to distribute Dr Drew's cover letter for Boundaries Commissions Report and the Final Report for Boundaries Commission, attached, with Council's submission to the Boundaries Commission, Minister for Local Government, Premier, Deputy Premier and Member for Cootamundra.
3. The Final Report for Boundaries Commission report be displayed on Council's Website and a copy made available at the Customer Service Centres.
4. A copy be made available to any interested party.

CARRIED

8.1.13 RIVERINA JOINT ORGANISATION BOARD MEETING REPORT**RESOLUTION 095/2020**

Moved: Cr Craig Stewart

Seconded: Cr Charlie Sheahan

The report on the Riverina Joint Organisation Board Meeting held 27th February, 2020 be received and noted.

CARRIED

8.2 FINANCE**8.2.1 INVESTMENT REPORT - FEBRUARY 2020****RESOLUTION 096/2020**

Moved: Cr Doug Phillips

Seconded: Cr David Graham

The Investment Report as at 29th February, 2020, attached under separate cover, be received and noted.

CARRIED

8.2.2 PRESENTATION OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note: The presentation of the Audited Financial Statements was considered earlier in the meeting following item 5.1 minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council Held Tuesday , 25th February, 2020.

RESOLUTION 097/2020

Moved: Cr Penny Nicholson

Seconded: Cr Leigh Bowden

The General Purpose Financial Statements, Special Purpose Financial Statements and Special Schedules for the year ended 30 June, 2019 be adopted.

CARRIED

8.2.3 MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2020**RESOLUTION 098/2020**

Moved: Cr Penny Nicholson

Seconded: Cr Craig Stewart

- 1. The Monthly Finance Report for February, 2020, attached under separate cover, be received and noted.**
- 2. The Manager Assets prepare a report on Plant costings for the consideration of Council at the Ordinary Meeting scheduled to be held on 28th April, 2020.**

CARRIED

8.2.4 GRADER FINANCE**RESOLUTION 099/2020**

Moved: Cr Leigh Bowden

Seconded: Cr Penny Nicholson

Authority be granted to the General Manager to execute the loan application with Commonwealth Bank of Australia as detailed in the report.

CARRIED

8.3 COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Nil

8.4 DEVELOPMENT, BUILDING AND COMPLIANCE**8.4.1 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS APPROVED FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY, 2020****RESOLUTION 100/2020**

Moved: Cr David Graham

Seconded: Cr Penny Nicholson

The information on Development Applications approved in February, 2020 be noted.

VOTING RECORD	
FOR RESOLUTION	AGAINST RESOLUTION
Cr Abb McAlister (Mayor) Cr Dennis Palmer Cr Leigh Bowden Cr David Graham Cr Gil Kelly Cr Penny Nicholson Cr Doug Phillips Cr Charlie Sheahan Cr Craig Stewart	Nil
ABSENT	DECLARED INTEREST
Nil	Nil

CARRIED

8.4.2 LISTING UNDER SCHEDULE 8 CLEAN AIR REGULATION - CONTROL OF BURNING**RESOLUTION 101/2020**

Moved: Cr Charlie Sheahan

Seconded: Cr Doug Phillips

Council not adopt the Listing Under Schedule 8 Clean Air Regulation as detailed in the report.

VOTING RECORD	
FOR RESOLUTION	AGAINST RESOLUTION
Cr Abb McAlister (Mayor) Cr Dennis Palmer Cr Leigh Bowden Cr David Graham Cr Gil Kelly Cr Penny Nicholson Cr Doug Phillips Cr Charlie Sheahan Cr Craig Stewart	Nil
ABSENT	DECLARED INTEREST
Nil	Nil

CARRIED**8.5 REGULATORY SERVICES**

Nil

8.6 ASSETS

8.6.1 COOTAMUNDRA WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

RESOLUTION 102/2020

Moved: Cr Gil Kelly

Seconded: Cr Leigh Bowden

The report on the Cootamundra Water Main Replacement Program and Water Main Progress Map, attached to the report, be received and noted.

CARRIED

8.6.2 STOCKINBINGAL SEWERAGE SCHEME

RESOLUTION 103/2020

Moved: Cr Dennis Palmer

Seconded: Cr Penny Nicholson

- 1. The report on the Stockinbingal Sewerage Scheme and the Stockinbingal Sewerage Scheme Concept Design Report, attached under separate cover, be received and noted.**
- 2. Council engage NSW Public Works Authority to prepare a business case for the proposed Stockinbingal Sewerage Scheme.**
- 3. An application be made under the Safe and Secure Water Program for funding towards a detailed design.**

CARRIED

8.6.3 FLOOD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

RESOLUTION 104/2020

Moved: Cr Leigh Bowden

Seconded: Cr Charlie Sheahan

- 1. Council approve that the Cootamundra Flood Risk Management Plan, attached under separate cover, be included in an application to be prepared and submitted to the NSW Government Floodplain Management Program 2020-21.**
- 2. If the application, referred to in 1 above, is successful, Council approved a \$20,000 co-contribution for the project through Council's Water Fund.**

CARRIED

8.7 CIVIL WORKS**8.7.1 NANGUS WATER SUPPLY****RESOLUTION 105/2020**

Moved: Cr Penny Nicholson

Seconded: Cr Dennis Palmer

- 1. The report on the Nangus Water Supply and the Nangus Water Supply Feasibility Study, attached under separate cover, report be received and noted.**
- 2. Copies of the Nangus Water Supply Feasibility Study are to be placed on Council's website and copies made available to interested community members.**
- 3. Council endorse progressing the next Business Case stage of the Nangus Water Supply project and that Council request the Office of Local Government approve any remaining funds from the project budget be restricted within Council's Water Fund, in consideration so that this invaluable piece of work can progress through to completion.**
- 4. Cardno be appointed to undertake the Business Cases for Options 2 and 7 as a shared venture with Goldenfields Water County Council provided a satisfactory quote is received.**

CARRIED

8.7.2 CIVIL WORKS AND TECHNICAL SERVICES REPORT - MARCH 2020**RESOLUTION 106/2020**

Moved: Cr Craig Stewart

Seconded: Cr Doug Phillips

The Civil Works and Technical Services Report for the month of March, 2020 be received.

CARRIED

8.8 TECHNICAL SERVICES

Nil

8.9 FACILITIES

Nil

8.10 WASTE, PARKS AND RECREATION

Nil

9 MOTION OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil

10 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

11 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil

The Meeting closed at 8:04 PM.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 28 April, 2020.

.....
CHAIRPERSON

.....
GENERAL MANAGER

6 MAYORAL MINUTES

6.1 MAYORAL MINUTE - COUNCILLOR ENGAGEMENT

DOCUMENT NUMBER	325185
AUTHORISING OFFICER	Phillip McMurray, General Manager
REPORTING OFFICER	Marianne McInerney, Personal Assistant to the General Manager
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

To keep Councillors and the community aware of my engagements on behalf of Council I intend to provide regular updates through my Mayoral Minutes. These Minutes will also include copies of relevant correspondence received by me, if any.

RECOMMENDATION

The information in the Mayoral Minute be received and noted.

30th March, 2020

Cr Sheahan attended an Adina Care Board meeting.

I attended a Riverina Eastern Region Organisation of Councils (REROC) biodiversity seminar via Zoom.

31st March, 2020

Cr Palmer (Deputy Mayor), Crs Bowden, Graham, Kelly, Nicholson, Phillips, Sheahan, Stewart and I attended a Councillor Workshop with Phillip McMurray (General Manager) and senior Council staff via Microsoft Team.

1st April, 2020

Cr Nicholson, Phillip McMurray (General Manager) and I had a meeting with Mark Tilley (John Holland Rail) in relation to the rail viaduct in Gundagai.

3rd April, 2020

I attended a REROC Executive meeting via Zoom.

4th April, 2020

Cr Bowden attended an Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) informal discussion, via Zoom, on the way forward with COVID-19.

7th April, 2020

Cr Palmer (Deputy Mayor) and Cr's Bowden, Graham, Nicholson, Sheahan and I attended a Workshop with Phillip McMurray (General Manager) and senior Council staff via Microsoft Team.

8th April, 2020

I attended a Riverina Joint Organisation working party meeting via Zoom.

9th April, 2020

I attended a Gundagai Rail Viaduct Stakeholders meeting.

14th April, 2020

Cr Palmer (Deputy Mayor) and Cr's Bowden, Graham, Kelly, Nicholson, Sheahan, and I attended a Workshop with Phillip McMurray (General Manager) and senior Council staff via Microsoft Team.

17th April, 2020

I attended a REROC Executive meeting via Zoom.

Cr Bowden attended an Easter Riverina Arts Advisory Committee meeting via Zoom.

18th April, 2020

Cr Bowden attended and ALGWA Executive meeting via Zoom.

21st April, 2020

Cr Palmer (Deputy Mayor) Cr's Bowden, Graham, Kelly, Nicholson, Sheahan and I attended a Workshop with Phillip McMurray (General Manager) and senior Council staff via Microsoft Team.

22nd April, 2020

C Bowden attended the Riverina Regional Library Advisory Committee meeting via Zoom.

23rd April, 2020

I attended a REROC and Riverina Joint Organisation meeting via Zoom.

7 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Nil

8 GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

8.1 BUSINESS

8.1.1 NEW REGULATIONS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

DOCUMENT NUMBER	325866
REPORTING OFFICER	Greg Briscoe-Hough, Relief Governance Officer
AUTHORISING OFFICER	Phillip McMurray, General Manager
RELEVANCE TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN	<p>4. Good governance: an actively engaged community and strong leadership team</p> <p>4.3 Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council is a premier local government Council</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no Financial implications associated with this report.
LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS	There are no Legislative implications associated with this report.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	There are no Policy implications associated with this report.
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Modification of Statutory Requirements in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic ↓ 2. Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy ↓

RECOMMENDATION

1. Council determine whether to adhere to the regular statutory timetable for the Operational Plan and rating process or delay these for the permitted 30 day extension period.
2. The relaxation of statutory provisions in relation to advertising and access to various public documents be noted.
3. Council consider the impact of the new regulations outlined in the report on existing policies more fully once normal circumstances resume.
4. Consideration of the waiving of any non-rate related Fees and Charges under a new COVID-19 category be referred to Council for determination.
5. Facilitate, where Council determines, relief measures to local ratepayers and businesses.

Introduction

Councillors will be aware that, in addition to postponing the next Council election, the State Government amended the Local Government Act, 1993 (the Act) so that regulations may be made under section 747B of the Act to modify the application of sections of the Act for the purposes of “responding to the public health caused by the COVID-19 pandemic” and that any such provisions automatically expire after 6 months, or earlier if decided by the Parliament.

Discussion

Pursuant to Section 747B of the Act a number of regulations have been made to temporarily modify the application of the Act to:

- Extend some statutory deadlines for plans and setting of rates (generally by a month as listed in Table A) noting, however, a Council can still direct that an Operational Plan be adopted by the 1st July, 2020 due date and ensure rates are levied and served by 1st August, 2020;
- Address basic administrative procedures relating to public notices and public access to documents remotely rather than in person (e.g. Council meeting papers, Code of Meeting Practice, Plans of Management, Local policies, Audited accounts, and flood and fire risk manuals);
- Facilitate, where Council determines, relief measures to local ratepayers and businesses, again generally by a month in relation to rates due dates.

The potential for Council to **immediately** waive or offer other fee relief beyond normal 'hardship' provisions under a new COVID-19 category is also provided for without the normal statutory notification requirements.

Of a more significant and longer term impact, with the temporary closure of some local newspapers and to assist councils to reduce their costs, the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 has also been amended to **permanently** remove requirements for newspaper advertising for a number of areas, including:

- Integrated Planning documents including Delivery Program, Operational Plan (including Budget and Fees and Charges)
- Council Meeting Notices
- Notifications in relation to certain filming projects
- Consultation concerning categorisation of land as an area of cultural significance
- Open and selective tendering processes
- Poll and referendum notices by Election Managers

Council will instead be required to publish notices on their websites and in such other manner that they consider necessary "to bring it to the notice of the local community or other interested persons." Clearly, these amendments do not represent a prohibition to use local papers should the Council feel that was necessary.

It should also be noted that the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 has been amended to remove the requirements on councils to notify planning processes, applications and determinations in local newspapers. It is now sufficient for these matters to be advertised on Council's website or the NSW Government's Planning Portal.

Table A: Permissible deadlines established under s747B

Section of LG Act	Prior deadline	New deadline
Adoption of Operational Plan – s405(1)	By 1 July 2020	By 1 August 2020
Making of a rate or charge – s533	By 1 August 2020	By 1 September 2020
Date by which quarterly rates are payable – s562(3)(a)	31 August 2020	30 September 2020
Quarterly review statements (QBRs) – Cl 203(1) of Regulation	The third quarter 2019-20 QBRs (currently May 2020)	Third quarter QBRs - June 2020. All future QBRs remain due as per Regulation.
Submission of audited Financial Reports – s416(1)	31 October 2020	30 November 2020
Preparation and publish of Annual Reports – s428(1)	30 November 2020	31 December 2020



Office of
Local Government

Circular to Councils

Circular Details	20-12/ 17 April 2020 / A696830
Previous Circular	20-06 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Development Updates
Who should read this	General Managers / Finance, Governance and Integrated Planning and Reporting staff
Contact	Council Performance Team / 02 4428 4100 / olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Action required	Council to Implement

Modification of statutory requirements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

What's new or changing

- Regulations have been made under section 747B of the *Local Government Act 1993* to temporarily modify the application of the Act in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The regulations made under section 747B modify the Act as follows:
- Councils have been provided with a one-month extension:
 - to adopt their 2020-21 Operational Plan (including Revenue Policy, Statement of Fees and Charges and annual budget) before 31 July 2020;
 - to submit audited financial reports by 30 November 2020; and
 - for the preparation and publishing of annual reports by 31 December 2020.
- Councils have the option to delay issuing rates notices to ratepayers until 1 September 2020, and the collection of the first quarter rates instalment until 30 September 2020.
- Councils may immediately waive or reduce fees under a new "COVID-19" category.
- The requirement for councils to make certain documents available for physical inspection at their offices has been modified to allow access to the documents to be provided remotely.
- In addition to these temporary measures, in response to the closure of some local newspapers and to assist councils to reduce their costs, the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (the Regulation) has been amended to remove requirements for newspaper advertising. This amendment is not temporary and will continue to apply after the COVID-19 pandemic passes.

What this will mean for your council

- The COVID-19 pandemic has caused an exceptional set of circumstances with unprecedented impacts. The NSW Government is committed to supporting local councils and their communities during this period of uncertainty.
- To provide NSW councils with flexibility to adjust to the rapidly shifting circumstances and to allow them to provide appropriate financial support to their local communities, a number of statutory deadlines for 2019-20 and 2020-21 have been modified. These are set out in the table below:

Section of LG Act	Prior deadline	New deadline
Submission of audited Financial Reports – 416(1)	31 October 2020	30 November 2020
Preparation and publish of Annual Reports – 428(1)	30 November 2020	31 December 2020

Office of Local Government
5 O'Keefe Avenue NOWRA NSW 2541
Locked Bag 3015 NOWRA NSW 2541
T 02 4428 4100 F 02 4428 4199 TTY 02 4428 4209
E olg@olg.nsw.gov.au W www.olg.nsw.gov.au ABN 20 770 707 468

Section of LG Act	Prior deadline	New deadline
Adoption of Operational Plan - 405(1)	By 1 July 2020	By 1 August 2020
Making of a rate or charge - 533	By 1 August 2020	By 1 September 2020
Date by which quarterly rates are payable - 562(3)(a)	31 August 2020	30 September 2020
Quarterly review statements (QBRs) - CI 203(1) of Regulation	The third quarter 2019-20 QBRs (currently due May 2020)	Third quarter QBRs - June 2020 . All future QBRs remain due as per Regulation.

- In exercising discretion to extend the making of a rate or charge under section 533 or the collection of rates under 562(3)(a) of the Act, each Council must consider both the financial circumstances of local ratepayers and the potential impact such actions would have on the general cashflow of Council.
- The Government recognises that there may be circumstances where adopting such extensions may not be appropriate or desirable for councils.
- Councils do not need to resolve to extend the date to adopt its Operational Plan, issue rates notices or collect the first rates instalment. A council may, however, choose to direct its General Manager to submit an Operational Plan for adoption prior to 1 July 2020 and to ensure that its rates and charges notices are served by 1 August 2020 (as is normally the case under legislation).
- Councils should also note that there are no changes to the provisions in the following table at this time. However, the Government is continuing to monitor the broader strategic and operating environment for local councils.

Section	Ongoing requirement
405(2)	Councils Operational Plan must include a statement of a council's revenue policy
405(3)	Council must give public notice of draft Operational Plan for not less than 28 days
405(6)	Council must post a copy of its Operational Plan on website within 28 days after the plan is adopted

Extension of the ability of councils to waive or reduce fees

- The application of section 610E of the Act has been broadened to allow councils to waive or reduce fees under a newly established "COVID-19" category, which has been added to the Regulation.
- This means that councils can immediately apply the waiver or reduction without establishing a new category or going through the normal public notice requirements of section 610E(2) for adding new categories.
- Councils may choose to apply such a waiver or reduction, for example, in cases where a business has seen significantly reduced income as a result of COVID-19. The application of any such waiver or reduction of fees is voluntary and is decision for each council based on local circumstances.
- Councils do not need to resolve to waive or reduce fees under the "COVID-19" category if the existing powers delegated to the General Manager include the power to determine a new category in which a council may waive or reduce fees.

Modification of requirements for councils to make certain documents available for inspection

- Under the regulations, the requirements under the Act for councils to make documents physically available for inspection will be satisfied if:

Office of Local Government
 5 O'Keefe Avenue NOWRA NSW 2541
 Locked Bag 3015 NOWRA NSW 2541
 T 02 4428 4100 F 02 4428 4199 TTY 02 4428 4209
 E olg@olg.nsw.gov.au W www.olg.nsw.gov.au ABN 20 770 707 468

- in the case of a document that is “open access information” for the purposes of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (the GIPA Act), the information contained in the document is published on the council's website and is made available on request in an electronic form or in such other manner determined by the council.
- in the case of a document that is not “open access information” for the purposes of the GIPA Act, the information contained in the document is made available on request in an electronic form or in such other manner determined by the council.

Removal of newspaper advertising requirements under the Regulation

- To alleviate the red tape burden on councils and to reduce their costs, amendments have also been made to the Regulation to remove remaining requirements for notices to be published in newspapers.
- Councils are now instead required to publish notices on their websites and in such other manner that they consider necessary to bring it to the notice of the local community or other interested persons.

Key points

- Regulations may be made under section 747B to modify the application of the Act for the purposes of responding to the public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Regulations may only be made under section 747B if:
 - Parliament is not currently sitting and is not likely to sit within 2 weeks after the day the regulations are made, and
 - the arrangements made by the provisions of the regulations are in accordance with advice issued by the Minister for Health and Medical Research or the Chief Health Officer, and
 - the regulations are reasonable to protect the health, safety and welfare of persons.
- Regulations made under section 747B automatically expire after 6 months or earlier if decided by the Parliament.

Where to go for further information

- For further information please contact the Council Performance Team on 02 4428 4100 or by email at olg@olg.nsw.gov.au.



Tim Hurst
Deputy Secretary
Local Government, Planning and Policy

Office of Local Government
5 O'Keefe Avenue NOWRA NSW 2541
Locked Bag 3015 NOWRA NSW 2541
T 02 4428 4100 F 02 4428 4199 TTY 02 4428 4209
E olg@olg.nsw.gov.au W www.olg.nsw.gov.au ABN 20 770 707 468



ABN: 46 211 642 339
 PO Box 420, Cootamundra NSW 2590
 Email: mail@cgrc.nsw.gov.au
 www.cgrc.nsw.gov.au

Rates and Charges Financial Hardship Policy

Approved by	Council resolution
Responsible Officer	Rates Officer
Council Service Unit	Finance
Next Review Date	December 2021

Version Control

Ref	Date	Description	Council Resolution
0.1	12 December 2017	Presented to Council	07/12/2017

Purpose

To provide financial assistance to ratepayers who are experiencing genuine financial hardship with the payment of Council's rates and charges.

To provide a decision making framework for the appropriate assessment of financial hardship applications.

Scope

This policy applies to eligible ratepayers within the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Local Government area who are experiencing genuine financial difficulties in paying their rates and charges.

Legislative Framework

Local Government Act 1993

Review Period

This document is to be reviewed every four years.

Policy Statement

Council recognises there are cases of genuine financial hardship requiring respect and compassion in special circumstances. This policy establishes guidelines for assessment of a hardship application applying the principles of fairness, integrity, confidentiality and compliance with statutory requirements. It applies to all applications for alternative payment arrangements or writing off rates, fees, annual charges and interest accrued on such debts.

The General Manager has the delegated authority to assess applications due to hardship and payment arrangement plans from any customer after receiving a written request and in cases of genuine hardship each

1 of 4

case is to be referred to Council for consideration in accordance with Councils adopted policy.

To establish guidelines for the General Manager and staff when dealing with ratepayers, suffering genuine financial hardship, with the payment of their rates and charges.

To fulfill the statutory requirements of the Local Government Act, 1993 with respect to the ability to grant provision and give special consideration to ratepayers subject to financial hardship.

Determination of Eligibility

The criterion for financial hardship involves an inability of the ratepayer to pay their rates, rather than an unwillingness to do so. Hardship may result from any of, but is not limited to, the following:

- Loss of employment by ratepayer or family member.
- Family breakdown.
- Ongoing or long term illness of the ratepayer or family member.
- Death in the family.
- Loss of income due to natural disasters or drought.
- High rate levy increase due to revaluation.

To request consideration for a concession under the hardship policy, the ratepayer must submit in writing a signed and dated application stating the nature of the hardship and the estimated period over which the hardship will be experienced.

- Evidence confirming the ratepayer's hardship status must accompany the application in one of the following forms:
- Evidence in writing from a third party such as the ratepayer's bank manager or accountant;
- Copy of recent bank statements for all accounts.
- Evidence in writing from a recognised financial counsellor;
- Statutory declaration from a person familiar with the ratepayer's circumstances who is qualified to provide Council with a clear, unbiased assessment of the ratepayer's hardship status, such as a carer, power of attorney or a medical practitioner.

Council may request additional information to confirm the ratepayer's hardship status if deemed necessary and may also request the ratepayer attend an interview to assist Council in the understanding of the issues causing hardship.

Hardship Concession Provisions

Once the ratepayer has submitted the application, the Revenue Officer will make an assessment based on the merit of the individual case against the eligibility conditions within this policy, and will make a recommendation to Council regarding the actions they may take in relation to the particular hardship case. Available options are:

Defer outstanding amounts for a set period of time

Periodic Payment Arrangements

- Section 564 of the Local Government Act provides that Council may enter into a formal agreement with

a ratepayer eligible for alternative periodical payments for due and payable rates and charges. A periodic payment agreement will be offered in accordance with Council's Debt Recovery Policy. Interest will apply unless specifically stated otherwise on outstanding balances but allow ratepayers the required time to make payments without any legal action being undertaken by Council to recover rates and charges.

Charge interest rate of 0% on overdue amounts for a set period of time

Writing off accrued interest and costs

- Accrued interest on rates or charges payable by a person may be written off under Section 567 of the Local Government Act 1993, if:
- The person was unable to pay the rates or charges when they became due for reasons beyond the person's control,
- The person is unable to pay accrued interest for reasons beyond the person's control, or
- Payment of the accrued interest would cause the person hardship.

Extend pensioner concession to avoid hardship

- Section 577 of the Local Government Act, 1993 enables Council to make an order deeming certain persons who are jointly liable with an eligible pensioner(s) or solely liable, but who are not themselves eligible, to be eligible pensioners for the purpose of a mandatory reduction in rates and charges to avoid hardship.

Pensioner Abandonments

- Section 582 of the Local Government Act, 1993 enables Council to waive or reduce rates, charges and accrued interest due by any person prescribed by the regulations who is in receipt of a pension, benefit or allowance under the Social Security Act 1991. Thus, council may, in its absolute discretion, further reduce on a voluntary basis (with no subsidy from the state government) rates and charges otherwise payable by an eligible pensioner. Council may also agree to allow the remainder of pensioners' rates, after concessions have been deducted, to accrue against the future estate or sale of the land in appropriate cases.

General Revaluation of the Local Government Area

- Section 601 of the Local Government Act, 1993 provides that where any ratepayer who suffers substantial hardship as the consequence of the making and levying of a rate following a new valuation, may apply to Council for rate relief.
- Council will not consider hardship applications under this provision, as valuations are independently determined by the NSW Valuer General. Council will encourage ratepayers to make an appropriate application under the appeal provision of the NSW Valuation of Land Act 1916.

Any combination of the above.

Assessment Process

Each case will be considered individually and on its merits and will take into account, but will not be limited to:

The property for which the hardship application applies must be the principal place of residency of the applicant/s if categorised as "Residential" for rating purposes.

- The property for which the hardship application applies must be categorised as "Residential" or

“Farmland” for rating purposes.

- The applicant must be the owner or part owner of the property and be liable for the payment of rates on the property.
- The ratepayer’s financial circumstances, including income and expenses from all sources.
- The amount of rates levied compared to the average rates levied of the rate category or sub-category.
- Repayment history, including any previous defaults or arrangements.

Council will consider hardship applications in closed meetings and personal information will remain confidential. The ratepayer will be informed of Council’s decision in writing and if not satisfied with the outcome can request the Council to reconsider its decision.

If the ratepayer continues to experience hardship after the concession period approved by Council has expired, then a new application must be made by the ratepayer. In such circumstances evidence provided with the initial application may be used to confirm the ratepayer’s hardship status, however Council may request additional information to confirm the ratepayer’s current hardship status if deemed necessary.

Hardship Concession Termination

The concessions granted may be withdrawn for any of the following reasons:

- The ratepayer no longer owns the land.
- The ratepayer advises Council that the hardship no longer applies.
- The ratepayer defaults on a payment arrangement if a payment arrangement has been entered into,
- Council receives information that proves the hardship no longer exists.

Where property ownership changes on any assessment with a rate deferral agreement in place, all rates and charges must be fully paid at the point of this change. Hardship concessions are not transferable.

8.1.2 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY REVIEW BY DR JOSEPH DREW

DOCUMENT NUMBER	325865
REPORTING OFFICER	Phillip McMurray, General Manager
AUTHORISING OFFICER	Phillip McMurray, General Manager
RELEVANCE TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN	4. Good governance: an actively engaged community and strong leadership team 4.1 Decision-making is based on collaborative, transparent and accountable leadership
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no Financial implications associated with this report.
LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS	There are no Legislative implications associated with this report.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	There are no Policy implications associated with this report.
ATTACHMENTS	1. Dr Joseph Drew - Cover Letter ↓ 2. Cootamundra-Gundagai Financial Sustainability Review by Dr Joseph Drew.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. The report on the Financial Sustainability of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council by Dr Joseph Drew, attached to the report, be adopted by Council as a reference document.**
- 2. Council consider the recommendations made by Dr Drew contained within the report.**
- 3. Council make representations to The Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Shelley Hancock to finance the service of Dr Joseph Drew provided by University of Technology Sydney.**

Introduction

Dr Joseph Drew was engaged, through the University of Technology Sydney, to undertake a review of the current financial position of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council and to provide a report on its future financial sustainability. The Financial Sustainability of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council report by Dr Joseph Drew, attached to the report, details the changes required to assure the financial sustainability of Council for the next three to five years.

Discussion

The Financial Sustainability of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council report provides a comprehensive overview of Council current financial status including liabilities and offers proposed solutions.

Council needs to consider the recommendations included in the attached report and resolve those recommendations accordingly

Hon Shelley Hancock

Thursday 9th April, 2020

Dear Minister,

I understand that Council will soon be providing you with a copy of the financial sustainability report that I prepared for them.

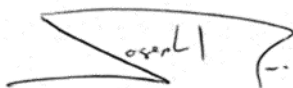
As you will see, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council faces some serious challenges to its financial sustainability. Notably, some of these problems can be traced back to decisions made during the Administration period, and others to the decisions of former Councillors prior to amalgamation.

I am pleased to say that Council has accepted my recommendations in various other reports and taken prudent measures to ensure that it remains a going concern over the next difficult five years or so. Moreover, Council has conducted the most extensive community education campaign that I have ever seen in this country and have explained the situation and the measures that must be implemented to mitigate matters (please see, for example, the thirteen videos at <https://www.cgrc.nsw.gov.au/boundaries-commission-inquiry/>). Indeed, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors have really stepped up to the mark and shown extraordinarily strong leadership during this budget emergency.

Towards the end of the report I detail seven important ways that you could help this community to overcome the financial challenges that it now faces. I would be grateful if you would take the time to read the report and the measures that I propose. I have no doubt that the community would be most appreciative of any support you could provide them with during this difficult time.

Should you have any questions regarding the material in the report then I would be most happy to answer same. I only want the best for this community, as I know you do also. Please do not hesitate to contact me on 0416 489 475 or Joseph.Drew@uts.edu.au if you feel that I can help further in any way.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joseph Drew', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Professor Joseph Drew

Cootamundra-Gundagai Financial Sustainability Review

This report paints a bleak picture of a rural council that has struggled to adapt in the wake of an unpopular forced amalgamation. Mistakes were made early on in its amalgamation administration period, and it is only recently that the elected representatives and new General Manager have come on to the scene and sought appropriate independent expert assistance. I don't think it would be reasonable to blame any of the existing leadership team for the problems that we are now faced with.

Drastic changes will be required to assure the financial sustainability of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council for the next three to five years. These changes will cause pain and hardship. However, they must be implemented shortly in a decisive manner.

In the next part of this report I provide an overview of Cootamundra-Gundagai's financial sustainability position, measured against a group of fourteen peers. Thereafter, I list a number of measures that the Minister might take to help improve circumstances. I conclude the report with some comments regarding the urgency of the situation and the importance of recommended measures being undertaken quickly and comprehensively.

Financial Sustainability of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council

To gauge the current financial sustainability situation of Council, I constructed over 40 different measures of performance from audited financial statement data, long term financial plans, Australian Bureau of Statistics data, and NSW Local Government Grant Commission data. In most cases I have presented the results in a box and whisker plot for the last three years. This illustrates both Cootamundra-Gundagai's performance against itself over time as well as performance against similar peer councils (selected from the same OLG category by Council). Figure 1 illustrates how to read a boxplot and Table 1 lists the peer group used for comparison (Cootamundra-Gundagai is classified by the Office of Local Government as a Group 11 local government).

Figure 1. Interpreting Box and Whisker Plots

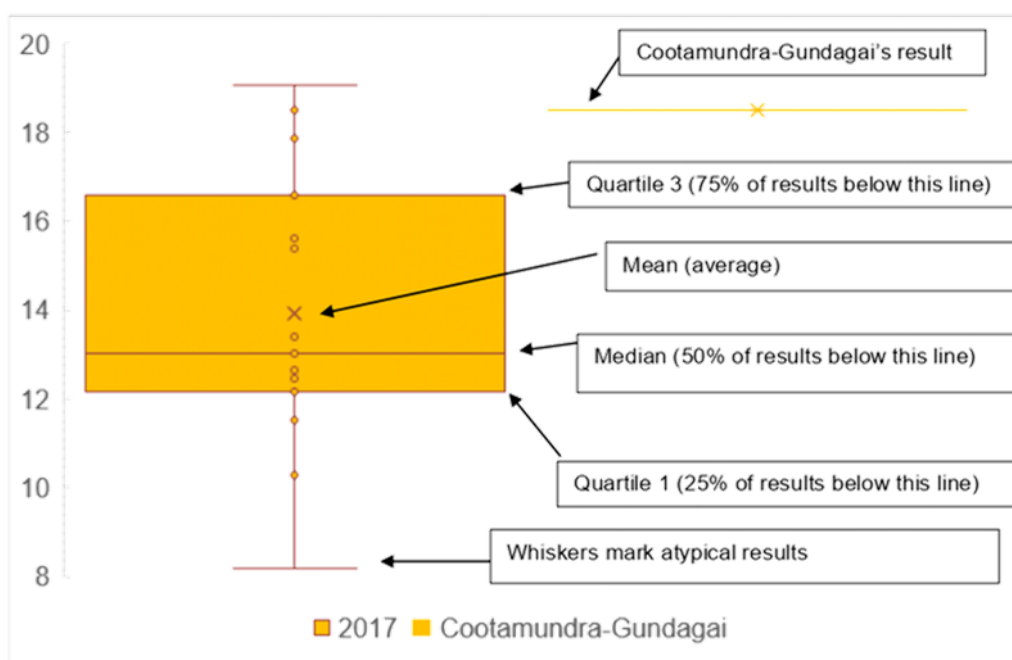
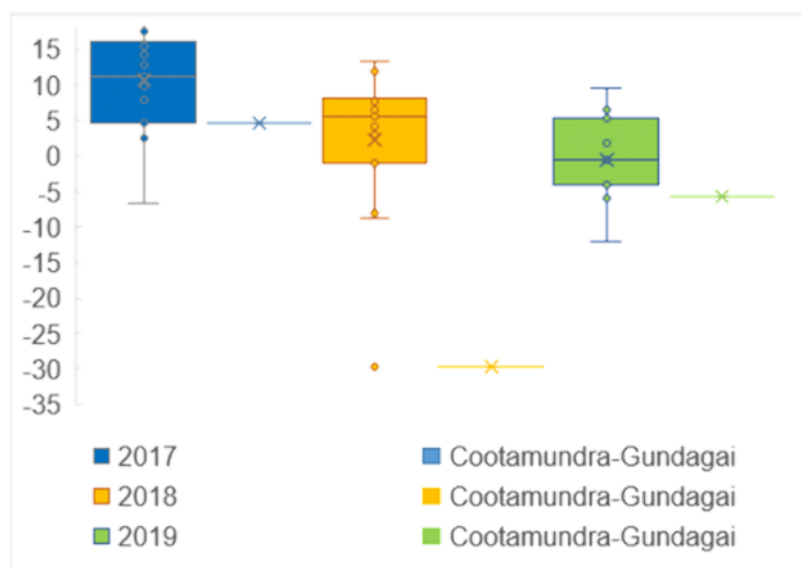


Table 1 Peers Used in Comparisons

OLG 11 Councils	OLG 11 Councils	OLG 11 Councils	OLG 10 Councils
Cabonne	Cowra	Greater Hume	Bland
Hilltops	Leeton	Murray River	Junee
Narrabri	Parkes	Snowy Valleys	Temora
Upper Hunter	Yass Valley		

The first ratio that I present is the operating performance ratio which played such a key role in amalgamation debates. As can be seen in Figure 2 the performance of Cootamundra-Gundagai is far below that of its peer group, and remains stubbornly below the bottom quartile of results. Typically, operating results may fluctuate a little between years which is why many performance monitoring regimes set benchmarks for average performance over 3 years. However, constant performance in the bottom quartile illustrates clearly that current revenues are not sufficient to service current expenditures. For the standard financial years since amalgamation Council has been recording large operating deficits (excluding capital grants), that are not financially sustainable in the medium term, and even less so long term. The situation is serious and strong action needs to be taken to get the revenue base up and the expenditure base down over the next 12 months.

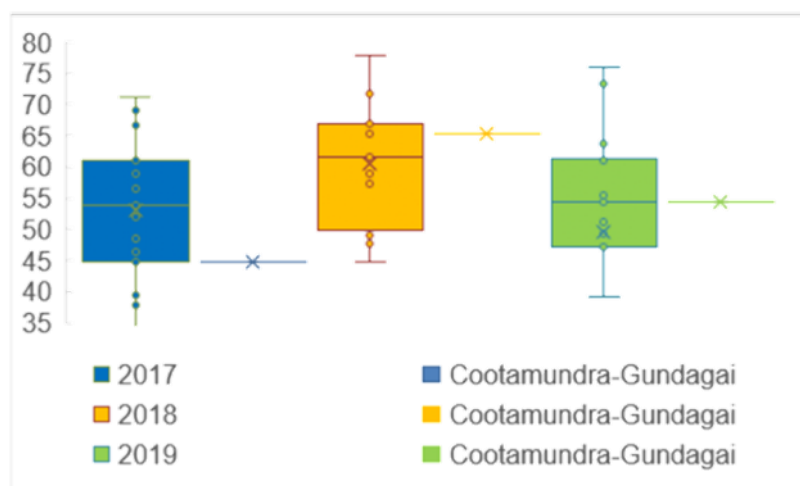
Figure 2. Operating Performance Ratio

The own source ratio also featured in the amalgamation debates. Council was well below the benchmark of 60% for two of the three most recent years. However, the importance of this ratio has been well-and-truly overstated in the past by people who are apparently unacquainted with the fiscal federalism literature. Rural local

governments will generally tend to have low rates of own source revenue owing to the fact that their road networks are invariably far longer than urban peers, and that living standards tend to be much lower in rural areas. The Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act (1995) has horizontal fiscal equalisation (HFE) as a core objective. HFE means that all councils ought to have similar capacity to provide core services through reasonable efforts. A HFE inspired grants system will thus result in large transfers to rural councils and economically disadvantaged areas. Thus Cootamundra-Gundagai's performance in this area simply suggests that the FAG system of grants is working more or less as the legislators wished it to work – it would be silly to somehow suggest that Council performance is poor, simply because it is receiving the help from the federal government that it is legislatively entitled to.

Some Councils have unfortunately decided to go into various business arrangements as a way to meet the benchmark for this ratio. This is a very dangerous practice – government should govern, not distort local economies by entering into business ventures. Moreover, when governments engage in business activities it exposes residents to risk (which is the whole reason why business receives above market returns on investments) and unless residents have agreed to this risk it is hard to justify these activities in a moral sense. Given the precarious nature of Council's financial sustainability, this is not a good time to be taking on new risks. It should also be borne in mind that government is notoriously bad at running businesses – generally, the wage structure for government is much higher, and the regulatory and social burdens also greater. In addition, running a business diverts council attention away from its' core responsibilities, and in a council such as Cootamundra-Gundagai which is struggling to deal with a number of matters that should have been resolved four years ago, it does not seem wise to me to do anything that might distract staff attention further.

Figure 3. Own Source Ratio

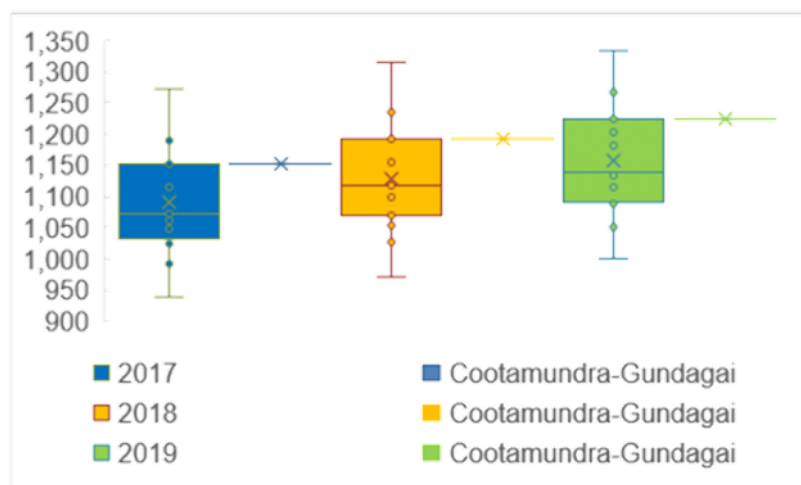


In Figure 4 I plot the road grants received by Cootamundra-Gundagai against those received by its peers. As I have written elsewhere, I am not thoroughly convinced that Cootamundra-Gundagai has been receiving its full entitlement during the four-

year post-amalgamation protection period. However, it is clear from the relatively high levels of road component FAGs that Council has received far higher road grants than its peers. It would be thus reasonable to suspect that when the protection period expires, that road grants might be reduced to more typical levels. Moreover, we should be mindful that the federal government is currently heading towards a very large deficit (due to its' coronavirus response) and previous experience suggests that future federal budget repair may well include a FAGs freeze. In addition, the NSW Local Government Grants Commission has advised me that they are phasing in a new formula that has unknowable implications for local governments (because they won't release full details).

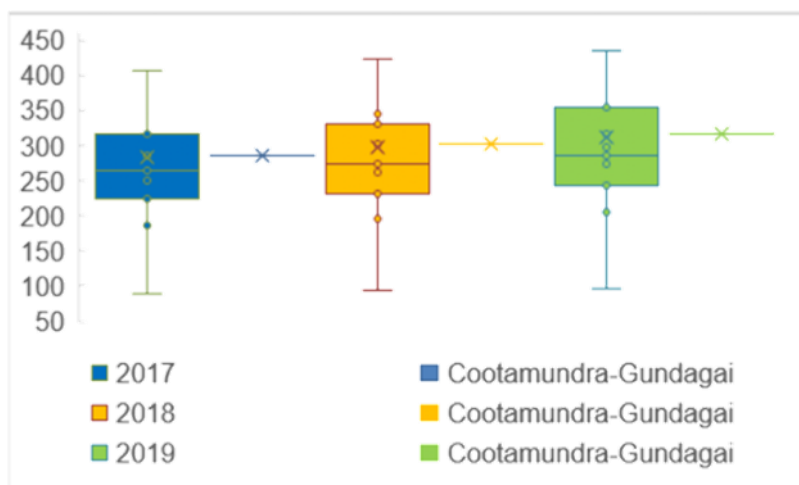
For all these reasons we might reasonably expect recurring grant revenues in the future to decrease. *This is problematic because the current LTFP – which is alarming – works off the assumption that grant income will continue to grow.*

Figure 4. Road Grant per Kilometre



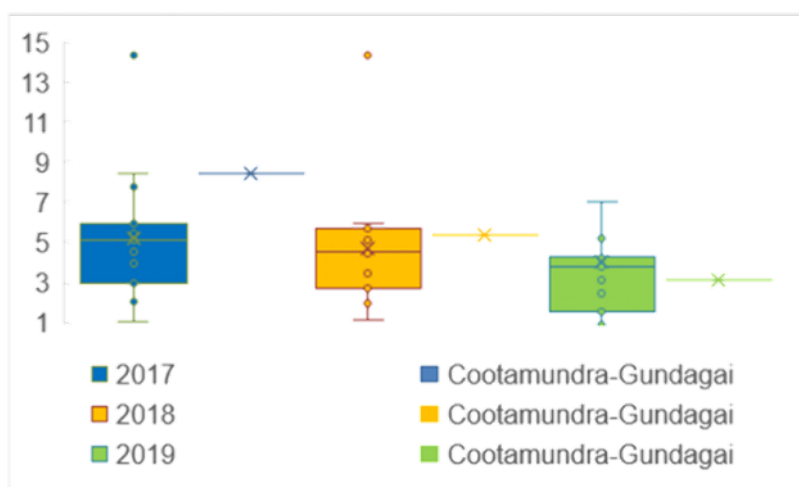
Similarly, Council currently receives slightly higher levels of the general component of FAGs (see Figure 5). I suspect that when the protection period expires that these levels might decrease slightly. As I noted earlier, the NSW LGGC is running with a new model next year, and this could have big implications for revenue for many councils, including Cootamundra-Gundagai (there is thus good cause for LGNSW to conduct a study into these implications for their members). The financial sustainability at Cootamundra-Gundagai is at a concerning state – if grants do in fact reduce further then Council will likely experience even more pronounced stress.

Figure 5. General Component of Financial Assistance Grant per Person



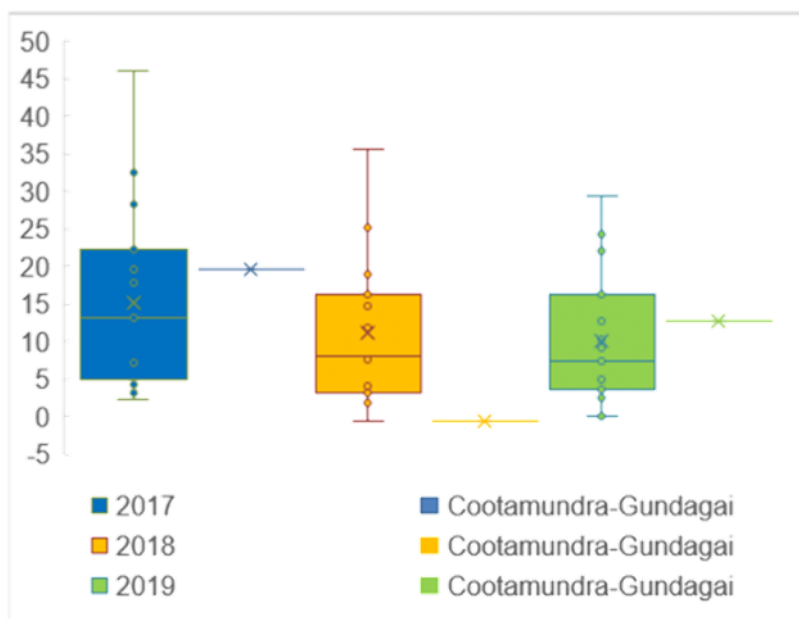
The effect of chronic operating deficits (excluding capital grants) will be a reduction in liquidity. Figure 6 clearly demonstrates waning liquidity. Cootamundra-Gundagai is still above the benchmark (1.5) for 2018-19. However, it is clear that if the recent trends continue that Council will fall short of the benchmark next year. This underlines the urgency of budget repair work.

Figure 6. Unrestricted Current Ratio

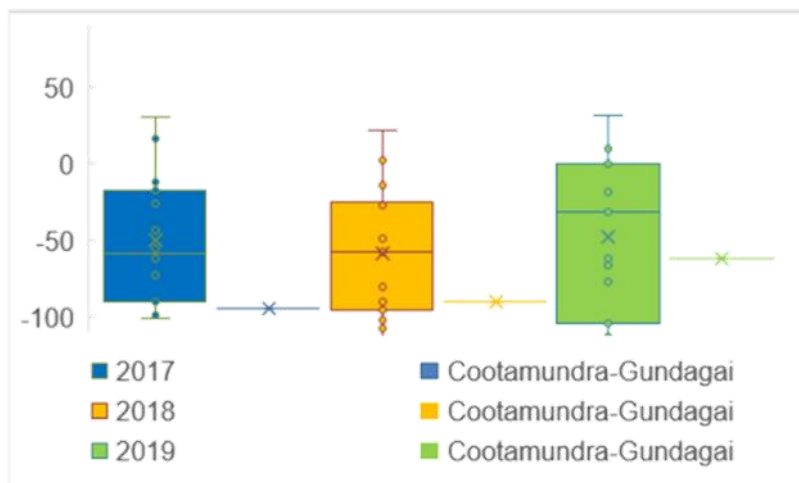


The debt service ratio is also eroded by chronic operating deficits. I understand that Cootamundra-Gundagai was recently discouraged from pursuing finance with TCorp. Given the results illustrated in Figure 7, I am not surprised. Council has an annual shortfall in operating revenue and is thus not currently in a position to service a medium-term borrowing facility. I would urge caution regarding the plans to take out further debt.

Figure 7. Debt Service Ratio

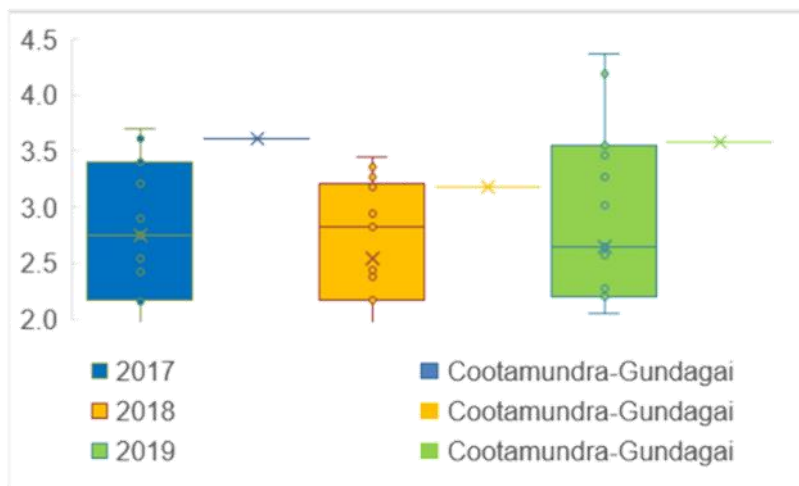


The nett financial liability ratio is not used in NSW (it is used in Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia). It is a much more inclusive picture of a council's position because it takes account of non-current assets and liabilities. Generally, a local government will have a negative result for this ratio (the lower the better) as non-current assets usually make up a large proportion of a council's balance sheet. Figure 8 demonstrates that when non-current assets are included then the position of the council looks good, relative to the peer group. However, the position of Council has been eroding since amalgamation as evidenced by the fact that the Cootamundra-Gundagai's result has been moving steadily north over the last three years. What this means is that Cootamundra-Gundagai's relative position owes much to restricted reserves, strong flows of capital grants, and the relatively good state each council was in prior to amalgamation. Since amalgamation, things have clearly deteriorated.

Figure 8. Nett Financial Liabilities

There has been some concern expressed to me that some of the *prima facie* parlous state of finances may owe something to the way that figures have been presented in financial statements (which it should be remembered have been audited). The largest area of discretion to skew impressions of performance lies in the depreciation accruals and there is a relatively large literature demonstrating that local government finance executives are sometimes active in manipulating this data (see Drew, 2018; Drew and Grant, 2017). Figure 9 shows the depreciation rate employed in Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council relative to its peer group. The rate is relatively high (at Quartile 3, wherein only 25% of results exceed this point). However, there are a couple of points that one must be mindful of when considering these numbers. First, depreciation rates across the state are extraordinarily low and chaotic (Drew, 2018) – so higher depreciation rates might simply mean that Council is recording asset consumption appropriately (as I suspect). Failure to depreciate appropriately is, in fact, a long-term financial sustainability risk, because inevitably values have to be adjusted or plant and equipment is disposed of at a loss. Second, a lot of the metrics we have been looking at don't have depreciation as an input at all. Therefore, whilst a 'fast' depreciation schedule might affect the income statement operating result, it is not affecting most of the metrics contained in this report that generally paint an unflattering picture of Council's financial sustainability.

Figure 9. Depreciation Rate



Operating deficits (excluding capital grants) can either be caused by insufficient revenue or excessive expenditures (or, most probably, both). Previously I have provided Council with rate comparison data that I re-produce below:

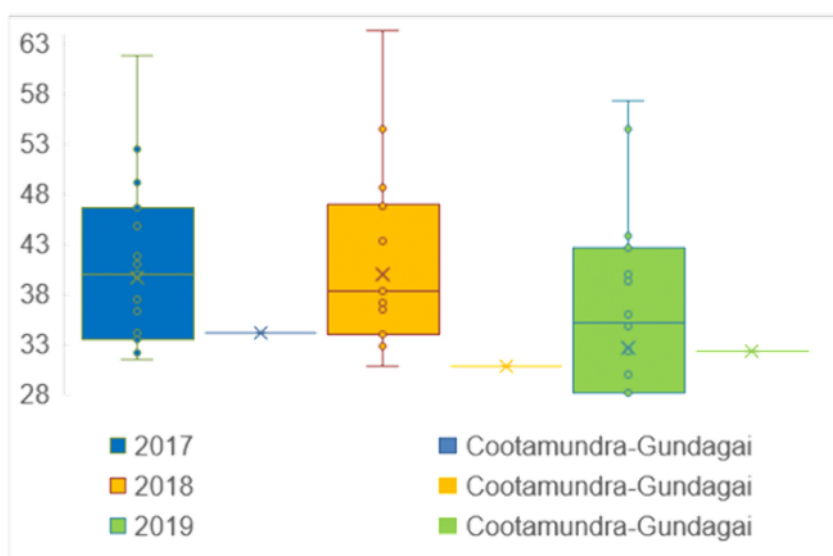
Table 2. Comparative Data on Average Rates.

Category	Proposed	OLG11 Average	OLG 10 Average (former Cootamundra Group)	OLG 9 Average (former Gundagai Group)
Residential	\$699.70	\$806	\$668	\$414
Farmland	\$3,017.74	\$3,309	\$2,864	\$3,128
Business	\$1,639.39	\$2,118	\$1,540	\$842

Relative to other OLG 11 councils, there would seem to be scope to lift rates by at least 10 to 15 percent.

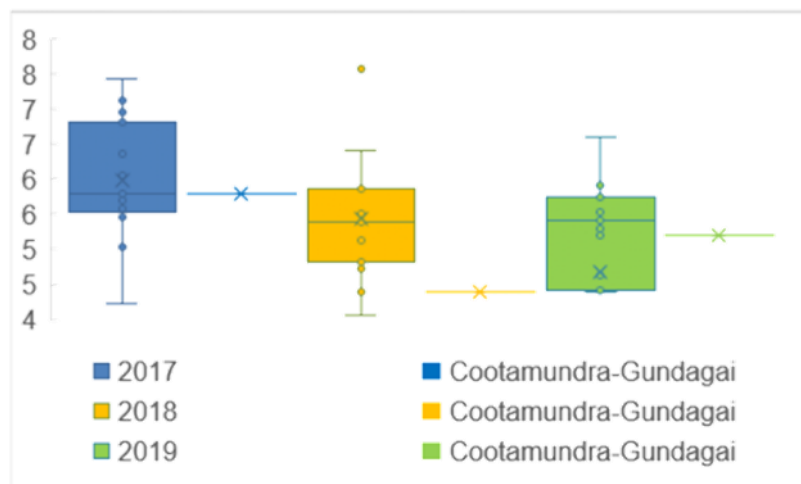
In Figure 10 I plot the nexus ratio for Cootamundra-Gundagai and its peer councils. This ratio effectively measures the amount of operational expenditure that is funded through fees and charges. As can be seen, Cootamundra-Gundagai has a particularly low nexus ratio compared to similar councils. This means that Council is funding a lot more of its operational expenditure from the common tax pool, than does its peer group. As I have written elsewhere, cross-subsidising non-public goods and services from the common tax pool (that is, not charging sufficient fees to cover costs and overheads) is both inequitable and unsustainable. There is clearly a case for increasing Council fee and charges revenue (which is also insufficient for Council's current expenditure profile), to take some of the pressure off the tax pool. As I have noted before, correct trade waste charging, on-site sewer administration charges, and correct business stormwater charges are obvious avenues to increase the nexus ratio. However, it also seems there is a case to adjust other charges to better capture full costs, including overheads. From both ethical and capacity to pay perspectives it is much preferable to get discretionary fee charging correct than to subsidise non-public goods and services through increases to non-discretionary local government taxation.

Figure 10. Nexus (adjusted for extraordinary RMS)



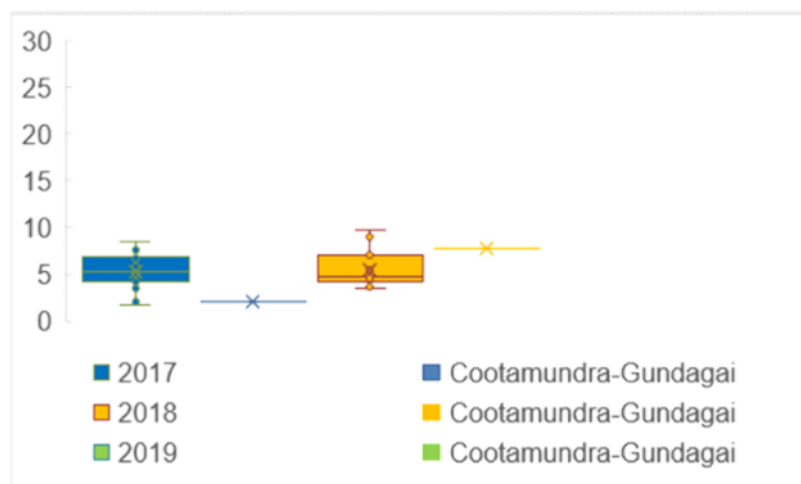
In Figure 11 I plot rates, fees and charges revenue per assessment against time and the peer group (I adjusted the 2019 charges for RMS down to reflect the extraordinary situation this last financial year). As will be noted this ratio is jumping around a fair bit which suggests Council has a higher than normal reliance on charges revenue from non-standard sources (such as RMS, but maybe also discretionary services). Mostly, Cootamundra-Gundagai's result is lower than its typical peer which provides further evidence for my contention that increases to rates and charges must be part of the budget repair plan.

Figure 11. Rates, Fees and Charges per Assessment (adjusted for extraordinary RMS)



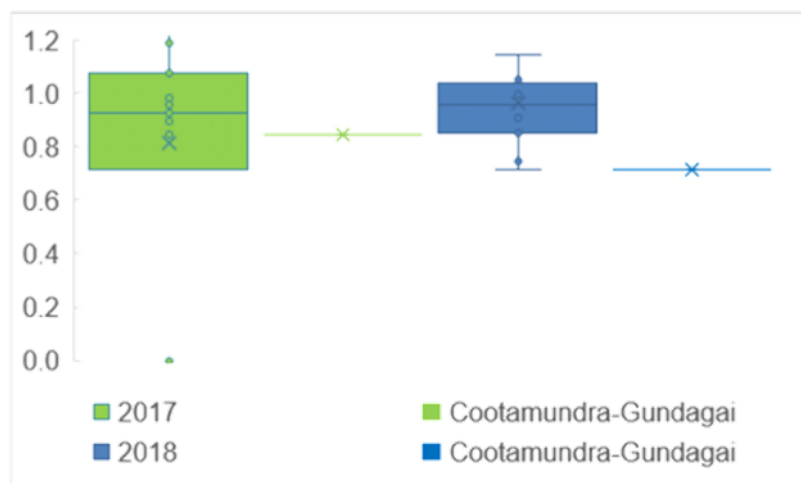
The other critical part of budget repair will be to reduce the expenditure profile of Council. In Figures 12-15 I examine the broad components of spending to try to help Council to identify where it should prioritise cost-cutting exercises. Figure 12 plots operational expenditure on roads on a per kilometre basis (this data is not available for 2019). Expenditure for this item jumps about a fair bit, but averaging the two years' data together suggests to me that Council is pretty typical of its peer group in this area.

Figure 12. Road Operational Expenditure per Kilometre (2019 data unavailable)



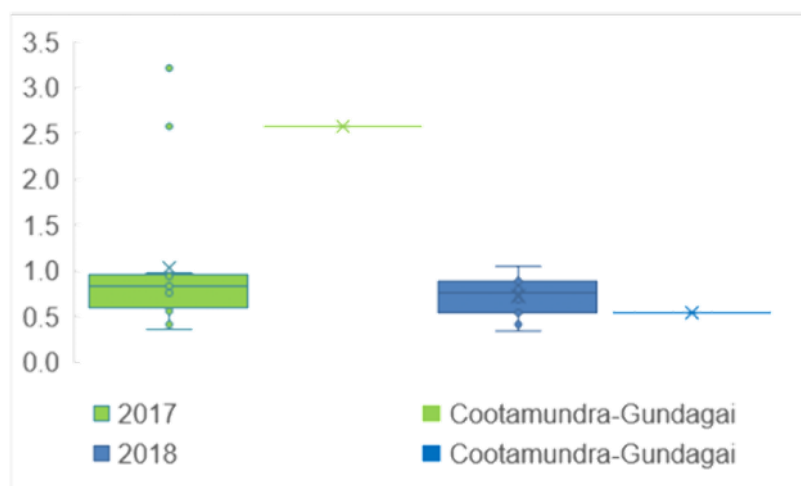
Similarly, there are no obvious problems for operational expenditure in the area of water provision.

Figure 13. Water Operational Expenditure per Assessment



Sewer operational expenditure has been skewed a little (I suspect from capex), however the 2018 result suggests to me that this is not an area of concern either.

Figure 14. Sewer Operational Expenditure per Connection



The problem is clearly with the residual activities of Council as illustrated in Figure 15. Otherwise stated Cootamundra-Gundagai is doing an acceptable job on roads, water and sewer, but costs seem excessive relative to peers in the remainder of functions. For both standard financial years since amalgamation Council has been hovering around Quartile 3 (top 25% of results) for residual operational expenditure when expressed in per assessment terms. This is clearly a problem given that, as we saw earlier, rates revenue on an average per assessment basis is well below peers.

Figure 15. Non-Road, Non-Water and Non-Sewer Operational Expenditure per Assessment

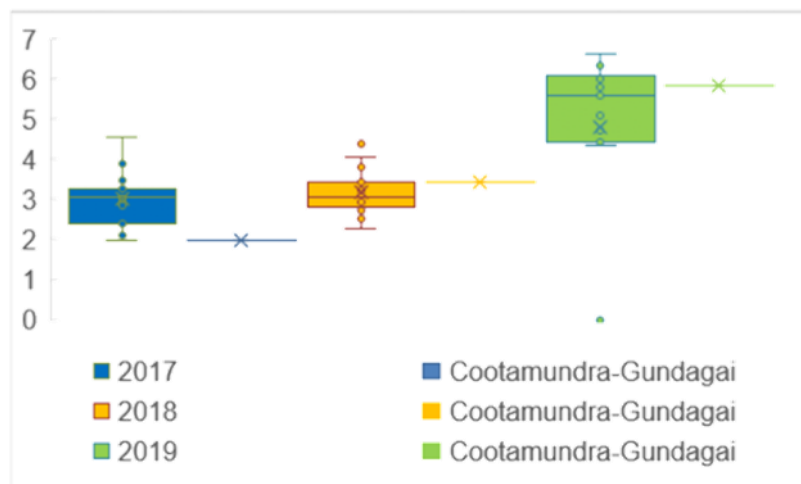


Figure 16 plots deviation from budgeted expenditure for the two standard financial years since amalgamation and casts further light on the problems with spending at Cootamundra-Gundagai. Relative to its peer group, Cootamundra-Gundagai has incredibly high unexpected blowouts in expenditure. Elsewhere I have shown that poor budget accuracy is closely linked to poor relative technical efficiency (McQuestin, Noguchi, and Drew, 2020). It is therefore imperative that unbudgeted spending be abruptly curtailed. Part of the problems in this area can be unexpected grants, unplanned RMS work, and natural disaster responses. However, I note that many of the peer group have been subject to similar disturbances (including the Stronger Community grants arising from amalgamation). I suspect that unplanned requests for help with community projects may be one source of this budgeting error. Elsewhere I have proposed a much stricter approach to the provision of community grants and subsidies. To make expenditure more predictable, community groups and the like need to be advised that there will only be a single round of grants (around March or April), and that grants applications will have to adequately address the following matters before they can be considered:

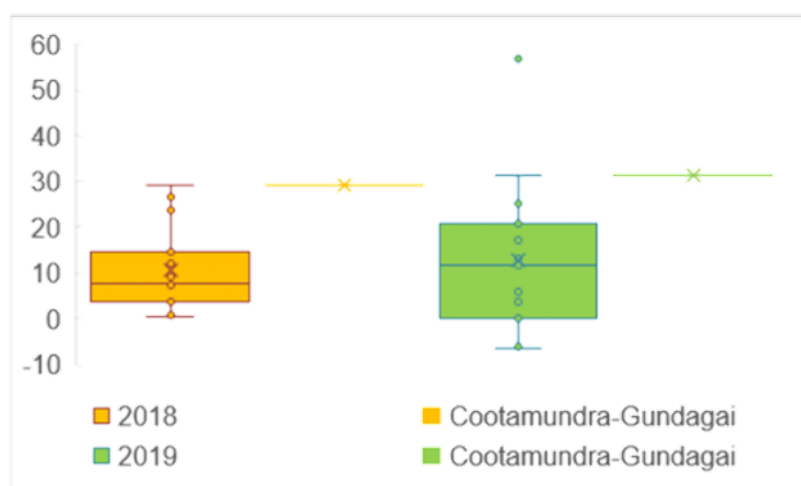
1. The persons or association who are deemed to have *bona fide* need of the grant or subsidy
2. The moral justification for the grant or subsidy – why should the wider body of taxpayers support this activity or association?
3. The benefit to and participation of the wider community in the activities for which a grant is sought.
4. The measurable outcomes against which the success of the grant or subsidy will be assessed
5. Specific details of the association's plans to reduce its dependence on Council for grants or subsidies in the future
6. The date for review of the grant or subsidy

7. An acknowledgement that future grants will be contingent on meeting or exceeding agreed outcomes

Given the troubling state of the Council's finances it can no longer be considered appropriate to hand out grants annually without associations accepting their reciprocal responsibility to also help themselves. Moreover, it is simply unfair for taxpayers to pay ongoing subsidies to support the activities of groups that have little benefit to the wider community, or which have no plan to make themselves self-sufficient. It is not a nice thought to have to reduce community grants substantially, but if finances deteriorate much further the reality is that grants will cease entirely. I believe it is much better to get community groups to start planning now for lower levels of dependency in the future, and also encourage them to consider how they return value to the wider body of taxpayers who have been supporting them.

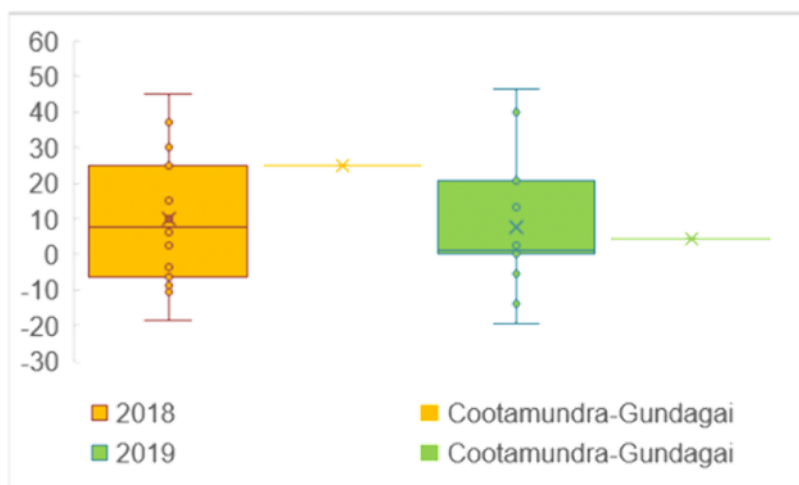
Another part of the problem is that senior management – for at least 4 years – has not been made responsible for their Department's budget blowouts. Quarterly budget meetings must be implemented (at a minimum) wherein senior management will be asked to explain deviations from budget and show how they will make future savings to mitigate matters. The Council Finance Committee could potentially have a role in ensuring accountability, within the constraints of the Act (1993). I intend to talk with senior staff on this matter shortly.

Figure 16. Deviation from Budgeted Expenditure (2017 unavailable)



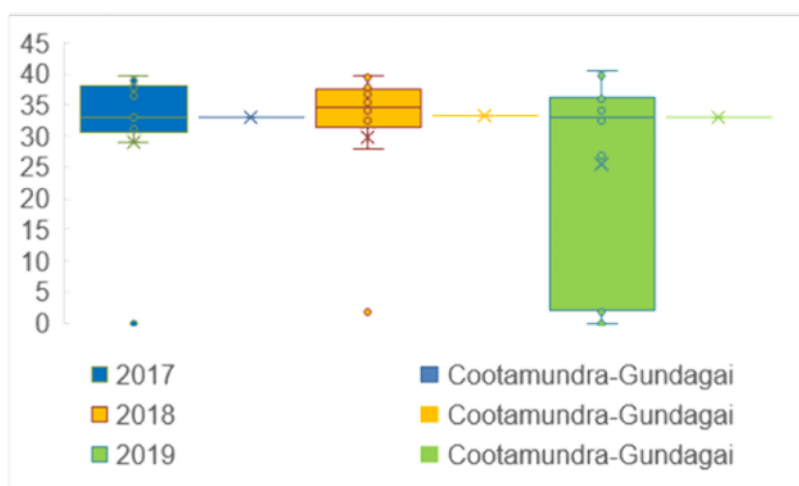
It also appears that Council has had difficulty predicting revenue. However, a positive result in this side of the ledger does not have the same deleterious effects as it represents unexpected flows of revenue.

Figure 17. Deviation from Budgeted Revenue (2017 unavailable)



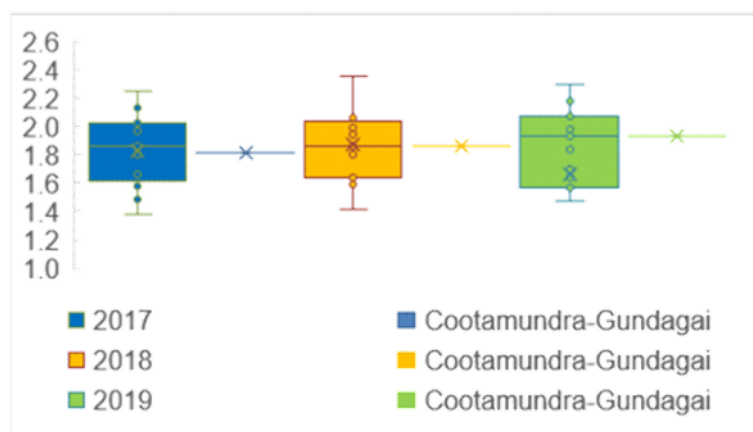
The proportion of expenditure on staff for Cootamundra-Gundagai is pretty typical of the local government peer group. This suggests that there are only limited opportunities available to reduce staff expenditure as part of the budget repair effort. However, matters are sufficiently serious that each vacant position must now be carefully considered *before* a decision is made to fill it. In particular, the presumption should be that outdoor staff won't be immediately replaced when they resign or retire. Savings in this area will offset some of the pain of fee and tax increases. I am well aware that this will result in reduced outdoor service levels, but can see little alternative. Indoor positions will also need to be considered carefully, but few indoor jobs can go long undone, and it is clear to me that Council has been missing out on revenue over the last four years simply because we haven't had sufficient office staff in the right places to get essential work done. Therefore, we will have to be careful not to make matters worse by leaving key indoor staff positions unfilled.

Figure 18. Proportion of Expenditure on Staff



When we look at the level of staff expenditure on a per assessment basis, this picture of Cootamundra-Gundagai as typical seems to be confirmed. One must be mindful of Figure 11 when interpreting this present graph – staff expenditure may be typical, but rates, fees and charges are below typical and the compounding effect of this disparity over four years explains much of the Council's present difficulties. Merely being typical, with respect to staff expenditure will not repair the budget or save rate payers from significant increase to fees and taxes. Therefore, Cootamundra-Gundagai Council would be well-advised to look at ways to reduce employee costs – along the lines I stated above – even further and hopefully improve relative performance to Quartile 1, or below.

Figure 19. Staff Expenditure per Assessment



Given my comments above, the relatively poor operating cash flow for Council will not come as a surprise. The 2017 result was affected by the additional six weeks that was included for amalgamated councils and isn't a reliable comparison. For the two standard financial years since amalgamation it is clear that Council has some of the poorest results of the peer group. The situation cannot be allowed to continue for long before there are serious ramifications. The solution will probably be to both reduce operating expenditure *and* increase operating revenue substantially.

Figure 20. Operating Cash Flows (deflated by revenue)

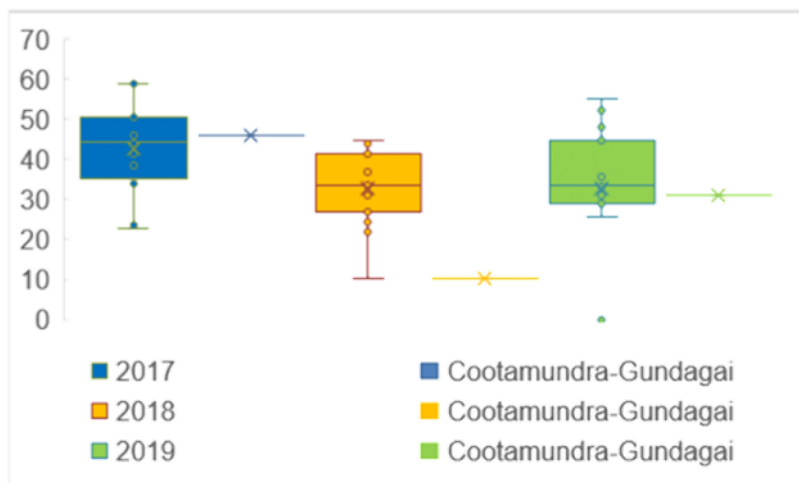
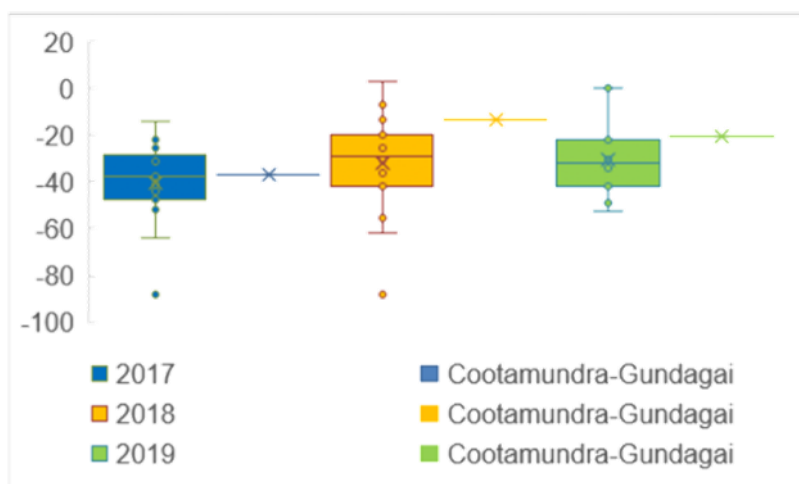


Figure 21 illustrates the relative position of Council with respect to investment cash flows. Cootamundra-Gundagai Council has been delivering extensive infrastructure projects which have so far been mainly funded through grants and running down of reserves. Thus, in a relative sense Council performance doesn't look particularly bad. However, the LTFP and various conversations I have had of late suggests to me that reserves have been depleted (or are about to be) and this is very concerning. Fees will have to go up significantly for water and sewer (less so for waste) to re-build reserves back to a safe level.

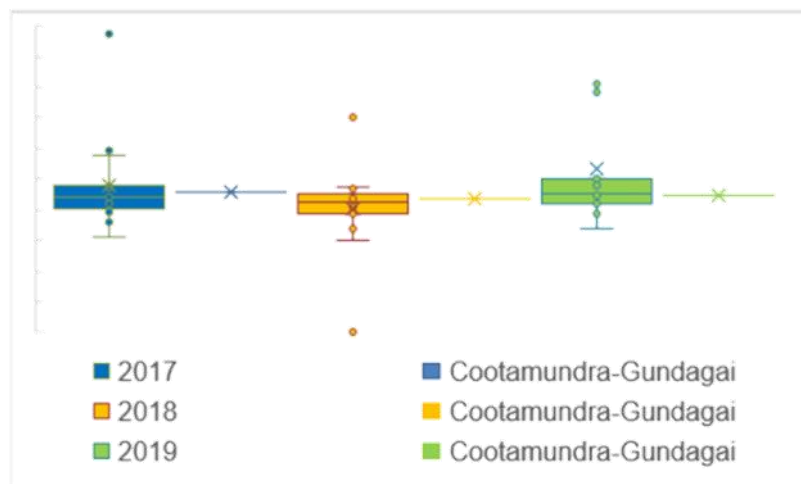
Figure 21. Investing Cash Flows (deflated by revenue)



Cash flows for investment activities suggest to me that Council's repayments and borrowings are typical for the peer group. However, we need to be mindful of the

impact of the proposed new borrowings, as well as the fact that revenue is clearly insufficient for the current expenditure profile.

Figure 22. Finance Cash Flows (deflated by revenue)



The next three charts examine various measures of infrastructure condition and backlog. Caution needs to be exercised when considering these charts because many of the inputs to the ratios rely on subjective judgements. Since the Fit for the Future programme many Councils have adopted an optimistic approach to recording their asset conditions, because these ratios were used in 2016 to justify forced amalgamations. Also, as at the time of writing Cootamundra-Gundagai did not have infrastructure metrics prepared for the 2019 financial year.

Figure 23 charts Council's relative position on the renewals ratio which measures funds spent on renewals relative to depreciation expenditure (see the Table in the appendix for ratio definitions). As I noted earlier, Council does have a relatively high depreciation rate which will tend to lower its relative performance on this ratio, all other things held constant. Notwithstanding this relatively high depreciation rate Cootamundra-Gundagai recorded a typical result with respect to its peer group in 2018. I imagine this will also be the case in 2019 given the significant work being undertaken on water assets.

Figure 23. Buildings and Infrastructure Renewal Ratio (2019 data unavailable)

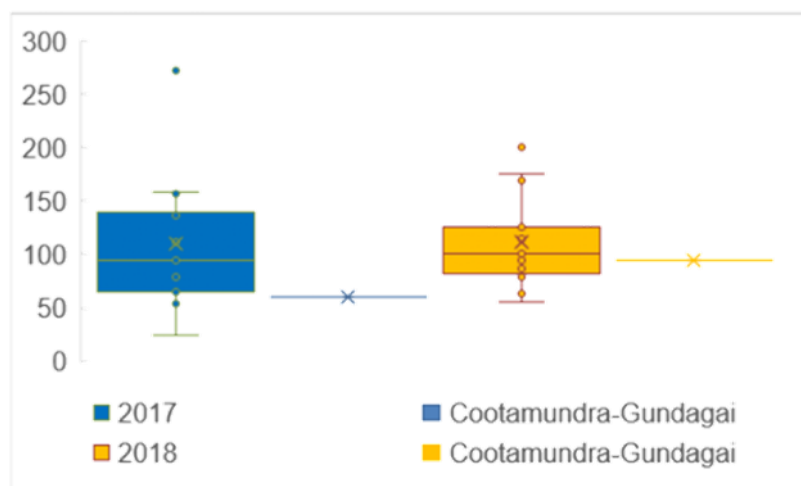
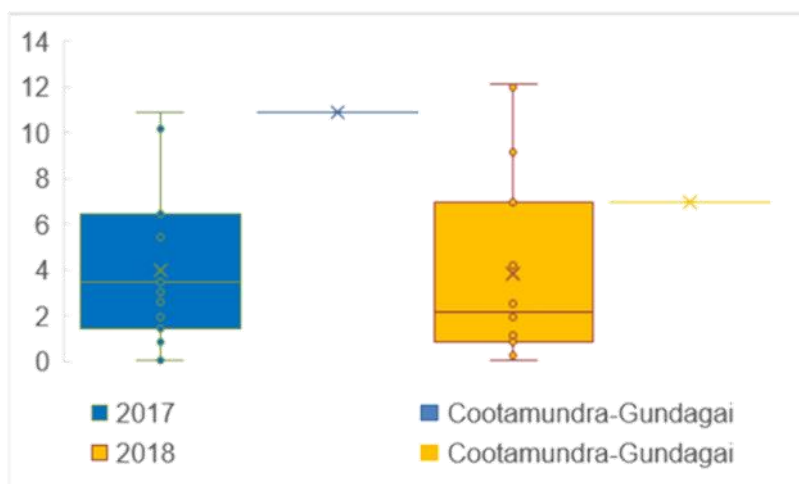


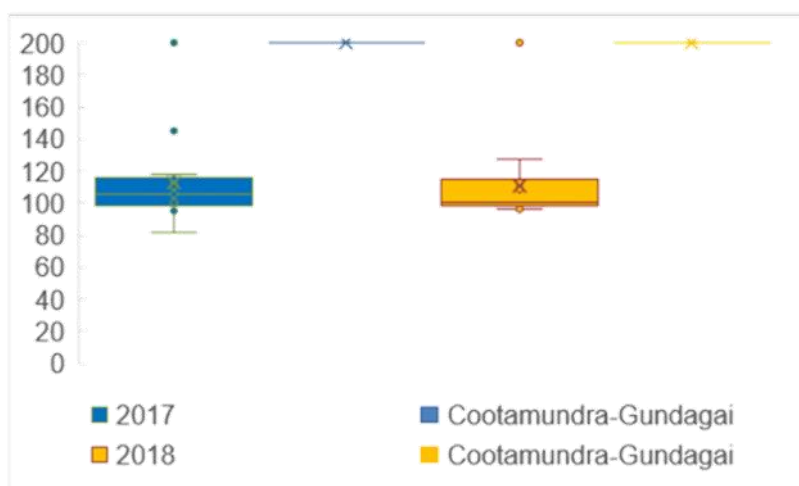
Figure 24 charts the backlog ratio which measures funds that are required to be spent on assets in order to bring them to a satisfactory standard as a proportion of total assets. The chart suggests that Council has a very high backlog relative to its peer group. This, of course, is why Cootamundra-Gundagai has been spending (or is planning to spend) considerable funds on water and sewer assets (and to a lesser extent waste). Unfortunately, this means that reserves will soon be at concerning low levels for water and sewer and fees therefore will need to go up substantially to ensure Council has sufficient funds to cover contingencies.

Figure 24. Infrastructure Backlog Ratio (2019 unavailable)



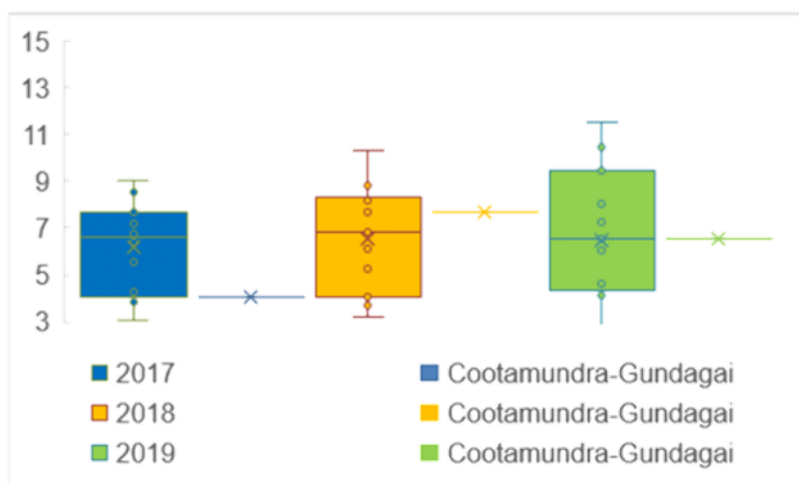
For the previous two years Council has claimed that it has no required maintenance to conduct on its assets (I set it at 200, just so Council would appear in the graph – if I left it at infinity CGRC wouldn't have been marked in at all). This is clearly not correct and should be redressed in future financial statements.

Figure 25. Asset Maintenance Ratio (2019 unavailable)



The final financial ratio that I examined is the rates and annual charges outstanding ratio. This ratio fluctuates a little from year to year, but I think it is fair to say the Cootamundra-Gundagai's performance here is pretty typical of the peer group. This is an important point to consider because I cannot see any other alternative to significantly higher fees and taxes for the next five years or more. The ratio suggests that residents have 'typical' capacity to pay what must be paid and this suggests to me that budget repair – although unfortunately painful – will be possible. Careful attention should be paid to this ratio for the next few years to monitor the capacity of ratepayers to meet the higher demands that will have to be placed on them.

Figure 26. Rates and Annual Charges Outstanding



Long Term Financial Plan Analysis

The Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) makes for sobering reading. Of particular concern are projections of negative balances in unrestricted general funds commencing 2021/22. At this time Council would likely be placed into financial administration. Moreover, the sewer and water reserves are about to be emptied and there simply will be no money to deal with unexpected problems or budget blowouts on the sewer and water works.

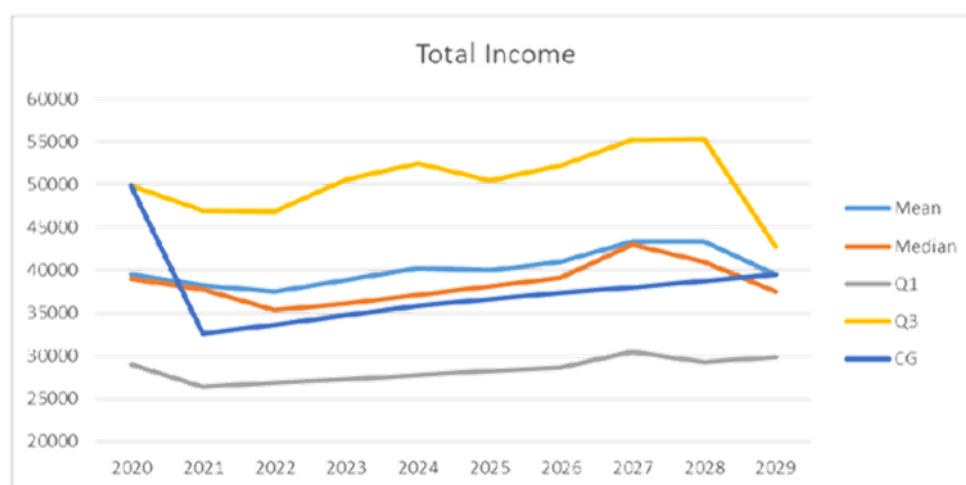
I am not quite sure why this didn't ring very loud alarm bells some time ago. I am also not sure that I can rely completely on the numbers in front of me – most LTFPs aren't very reliable, and I have no cause to think that this one would be any different (in fact I suspect it is even less reliable than usual). However, we must deal with the numbers before us – the state government, and community will hold us rightly accountable if we fail to react swiftly and decisively on what is currently before us. At present Council is planning to fail some time in 2021/22 and this is simply not acceptable. The community deserves far better. Maybe the long-term situation is not as grim as it seems on paper – but I would much prefer to be accused of over-reacting than to be complicit in the devastation of this community. Moreover, as the federal government has recently graphically demonstrated for us, it is simply not good enough to sail so close to the wind for so long – because if something unexpected does come up (covid 19 in their case), then you will simply fall in a heap.

When examining these figures, we should be mindful that LTFPs are always based on assumptions. Some of the assumptions in the LTFP that underlie the figures that I chart below are extremely optimistic. For instance, it is assumed that RMS work will continue apace. It is also assumed that FAG grants will continue at current levels – and this is clearly a heroic assumption (first because you are now out of the protection period, second because a new FAG model is being introduced in NSW, and third because the parlous state of federal finances means that a FAG freeze is a strong possibility). Similarly, it has been assumed that R2R funding will continue at current rates (which is also unlikely given the federal budget position). In addition, it is also implicitly assumed that Council managers will stick to their budgets – and this

has clearly not happened since amalgamation. Moreover, there is already an assumption built in of 8.5% p.a. SRVs commencing 2021/22 – which clearly won't be sufficient if we are still expecting to end up with negative \$1 million by the end of 2021/22.

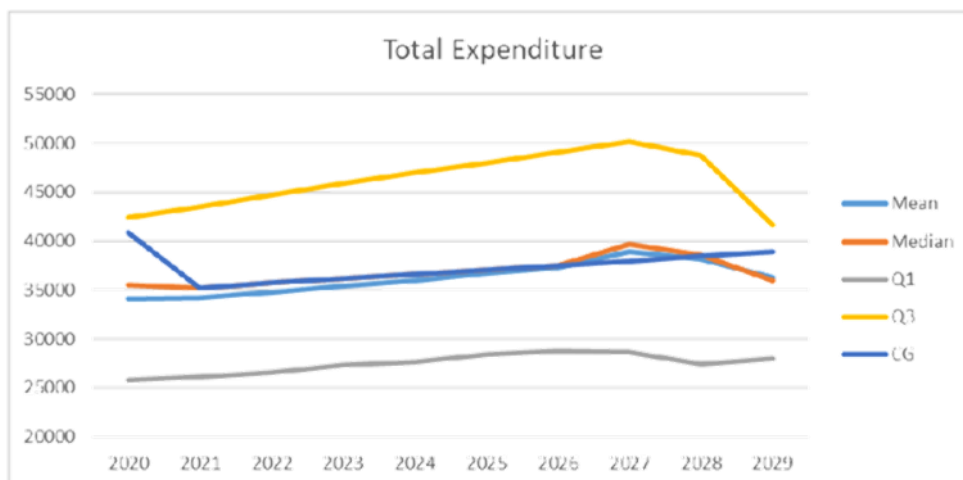
The following four charts tell us most of what we need to know about the problems facing Council. Figure A looks at Total Income compared to the peer group. As will be quickly noted Cootamundra-Gundagai has total income below the typical level of the peer group (measured by either the mean (average) or median (half-way mark when results are placed in ascending order)). Notably this is inclusive of large flows of capital grants this year, and the planned SRVs that I discussed from 2020/21. Clearly Council is not receiving sufficient revenue for a local government of its size.

Figure A. Total Income Compared to Peer Group



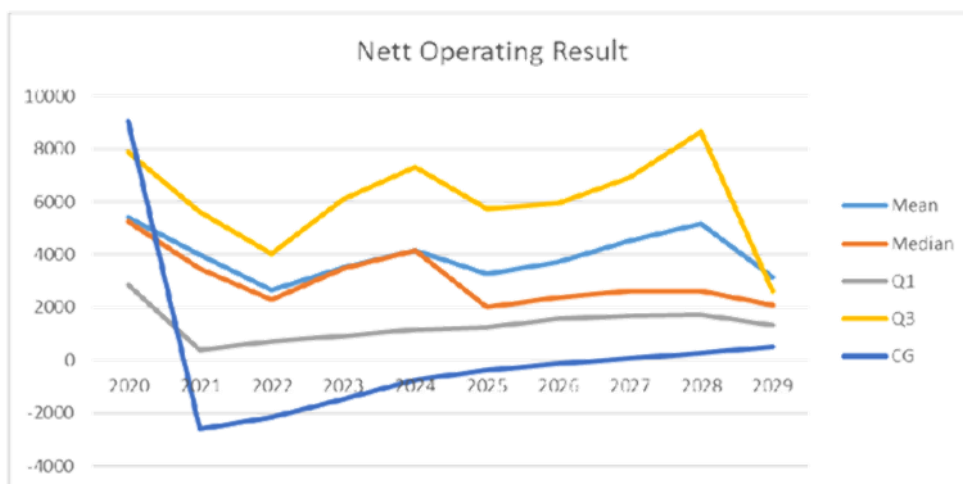
The problem of insufficient revenue is thrown into stark relief by the total expenditure data which shows that Council is slightly higher than typical in this respect. Otherwise stated, Council has lower revenue than typical, but higher expenditure than typical. It is thus hardly surprising that after four years of this unbalanced revenue/expenditure profile that Council has reach its current budget crisis.

Figure B. Total Expenditure Compared to Peer Group



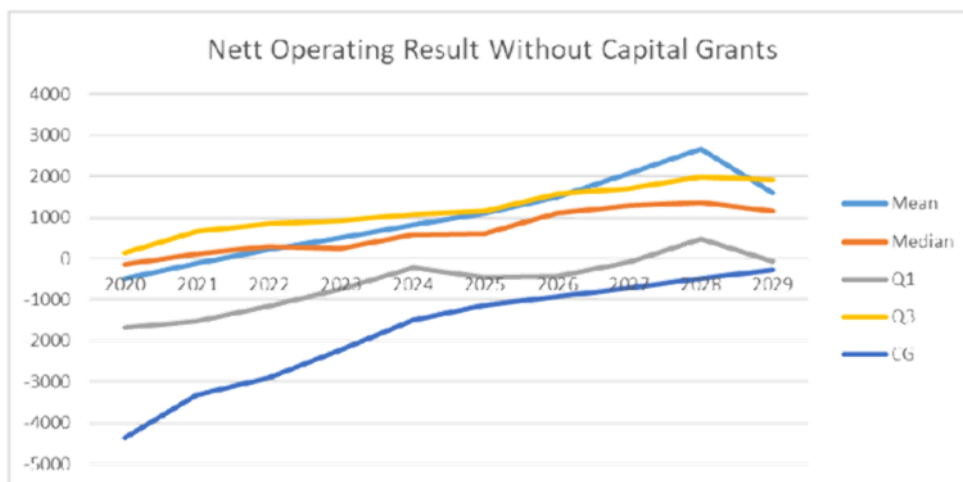
It is also not surprising that the projected nett operating result for Council is the worst in the peer group (which includes Hilltops; see Figure C below). This is clearly not sustainable.

Figure C. Nett Operating Result (Including Capital Grants)



In Figure D the picture becomes even grimmer, when we exclude capital grants.

Figure D. Nett Operating Result Without Capital Grants



At present the plan seems to be for Council to fail sometime during the 2021/22 financial year. This cannot be allowed to happen and anyone who doesn't understand the gravity of this situation needs to look at the scholarly paper I wrote regarding the financial administration of Central Darling Shire (Drew and Campbell, 2015).

So, what does need to happen? We need to reduce our costs and increase our revenue. We also need to ensure that our senior staff and ratepayers are made aware of the measures we must take and the budget emergency we face. Blame for this situation goes way back to the amalgamation, and even before then. Early Administrators saddled Council with expenditure and structures which still weigh Council down. The costs for amalgamation were larger than expected. The politically motivated four year rate cap meant that we couldn't put in a SRV much earlier, which would have minimised the pain (due to compounding effects) and might have been expected to have made it easier for ratepayers to manage the transition to higher fees and charges. However, other matters can't be laid at the feet of amalgamation – for instance, the water infrastructure backlog at Cootamundra didn't happen overnight, nor did the sewer works at Gundagai suddenly become unfit for purpose. Another example is the Elouera situation, this should have been sorted out five years ago. Moreover, fees could have been harmonised years ago. Each one of us bears some responsibility for the current crisis – so there is nothing to gain by finger pointing. We are all responsible, and we all need to act decisively now.

Shortly Council will receive a report on new waste fees, changes to the waste strategy, and a plan to put Elouera's work out to competitive tender. I also make recommendations for changes to stormwater, on-site septic fees, water charges, sewer access charges, trade waste fees, other non-regulated fees, and a new strategy for providing community grant funds. Council needs to consider these matters quickly and make appropriate resolutions as soon as practical.

Council also needs to commit itself to strict austerity for a period of at least five years – there cannot be any new discretionary programs or discretionary expenditure. Staff need to focus on dealing with the situation at hand, and the community needs to have its fiscal illusions dispelled as a matter of some urgency.

Later I will provide details of significant changes to water and sewer charges that need to be resolved, preferably by the end of the month, so that they can go out on public display and be charged next financial year. We also need to ensure that all scheduled charges are in fact being charged – I have found far too many instances of cases where a charge is scheduled but charge notices don't appear to have been issued to residents.

Senior staff need to be made aware of the situation and informed regarding new procedures for budget accountability. We also need to get senior management fully engaged in finding tangible savings that can be imputed into the 2020/21 budgets. We need to shave *at least* 1.7% from the projected 2020/21 operational expenditure budget and these savings need to be identified and reported on by mid-April. It is not sufficient to hope for a new source of revenue from a proposed Council business – we need tangible savings that each senior manager will be made accountable to deliver.

Unfortunately, we are locked out of a SRV for this financial year, which will only increase the pain that must be inflicted next financial year. I have gone back through the last four years' IPART SRV determinations and the largest one I found was:

Dungog Shire*508A: 15.00%, 15.00%, 10.00%, 10.00%, 10.00%

Cumulative rise =76.02%

Cumulative rise above rate peg = 62.66%

SV purpose: Fund operations such as infrastructure maintenance and renewal, reduce infrastructure backlog, maintain existing enhance financial sustainability (IPART, 2019).

Unfortunately, this would *not* be sufficient to keep Council's unrestricted general fund in the black, given current LTFP projections.

The minimum that would keep us in the black (assuming the 1.7% saving on expenditure that I outlined earlier) according to the current LTFP is:

2021/22: 17.5%

2022/23: 17.5%

2023/24: 10%

2024/25 onwards: back to rate cap

These are permanent increases to local government taxes that would have to be borne by the community.

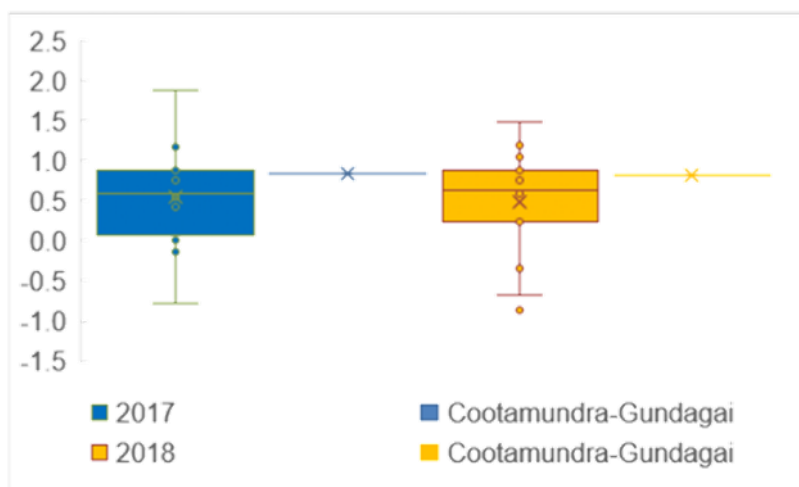
As I stated earlier the situation at Council is extraordinarily fluid (due to poor budget control, optimistic assumptions, and perhaps poor data quality), so things may well change by the end of the year. However, what won't change is that a large SRV is absolutely necessary and Council should resolve shortly to commit to indicating to IPART that it will be lodging a SRV application when the next round opens.

Demographic Ratios

The following suite of metrics are important because they provide us with a detailed picture of the operating environment that Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council faces.

Notably Council has relatively high growth in number of assessments, which will act in the medium and long-term to mitigate some of the financial sustainability concerns.

Figure i. Growth in Number of Assessments



As the next two charts illustrate growth in residential assessment is pretty typical, compared to the peer group, but very promising for business. This is particularly helpful given that growth in business not only directly increases revenue for non-residential services, but might also be expected to bolster local employment and hence improve resident capacity to pay.

Figure ii. Growth in Residential Assessments

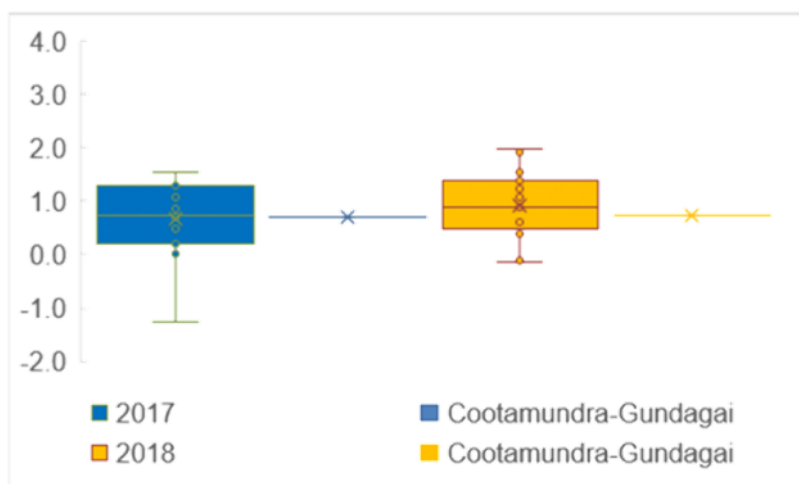
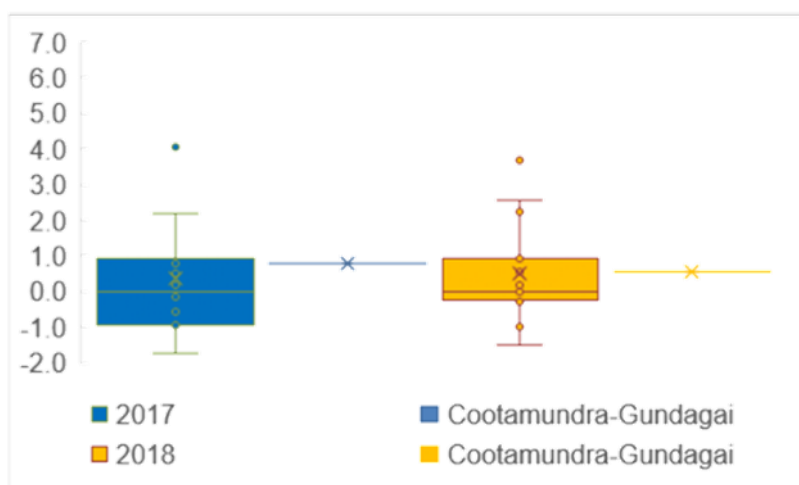
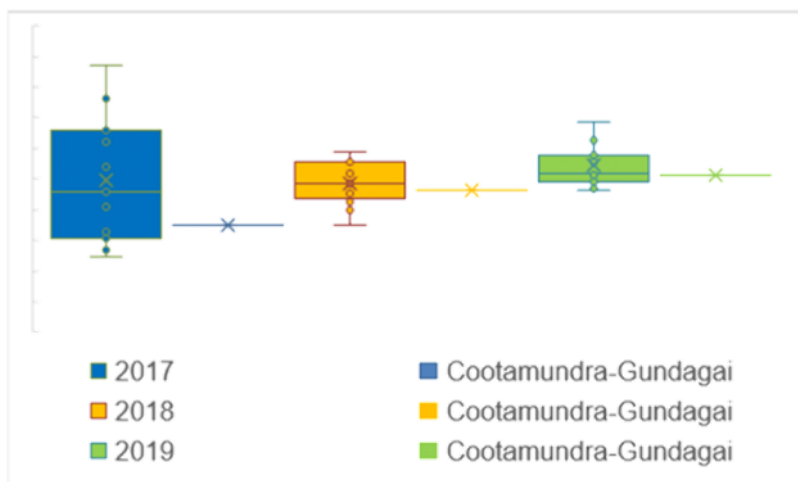


Figure iii. Growth in Business Assessments



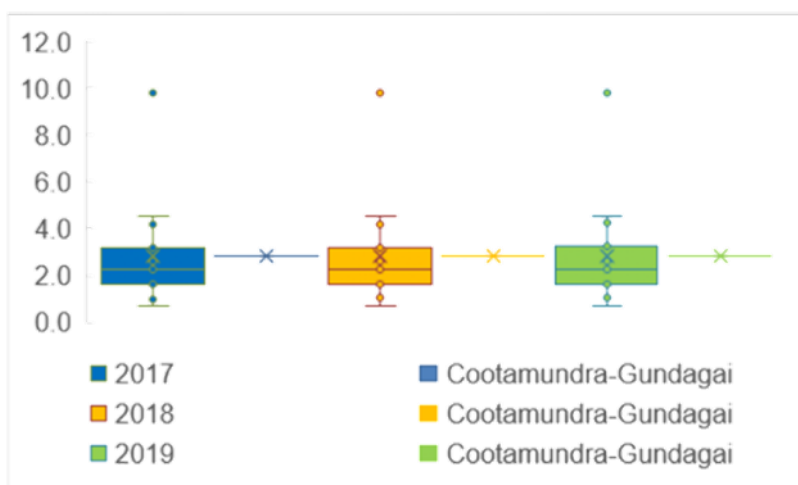
The uneven distribution in assessment growth is reflected in population growth data in Figure iv. However, it should be noted that growth in number of assessments is a much better metric to judge future revenue potential by because the data is far more accurate (inter-censal estimates in population growth may have errors up to 15.2% - see Drew and Dollery, 2014) and far more relevant to revenue considerations (because it is the unit by which waste, water and sewer access charges are levied).

Figure iv. Population Growth



Population density provides us with a proxy measure by which to understand Council costs for servicing properties. As the distance between properties increases the cost of providing local government services also increases, all other things held constant (which is a good reason for why Council should preference infill development over greenfield sites). Figure v illustrates that population densities at Cootamundra-Gundagai are higher than typical for the peer group – which suggests that relatively higher costs incurred per assessment (see Figure 15) should be able to be addressed through careful expenditure control.

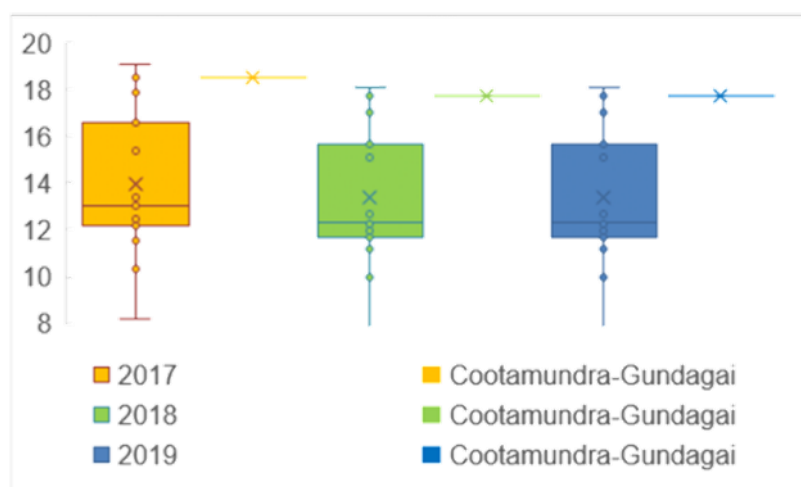
Figure v. Population Density



One area that Council is disadvantaged in relates to its relatively high proportion of pensioners. This has significant implications for revenue owing to pensioner discounts and the like. Ultimately the high number of discounts which Council is required by legislation to provide means that the remaining body of taxpayers and fee-payers will need to have even greater imposts placed on them than would be expected to occur at peer councils. Welfare is not a function assigned to local

government in the tax assignment literature for a very good reason and it is regrettable that successive state governments have forced councils to effectively do so. However, it would be unrealistic to expect that pensioner discounts might be discontinued, so it is an additional burden Cootamundra-Gundagai is likely to be forced to bear indefinitely.

Figure vi. Aged Pension



Other welfare statistics (disability pension, Newstart, and single parent pension) provide us with a further glimpse into the challenging socio-demographic environment in which Council operates.

Figure vii. Disability Pension

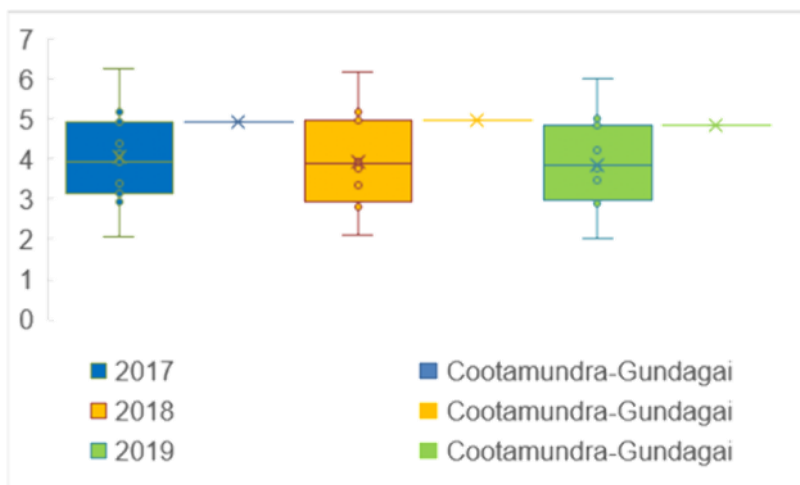


Figure viii. Newstart

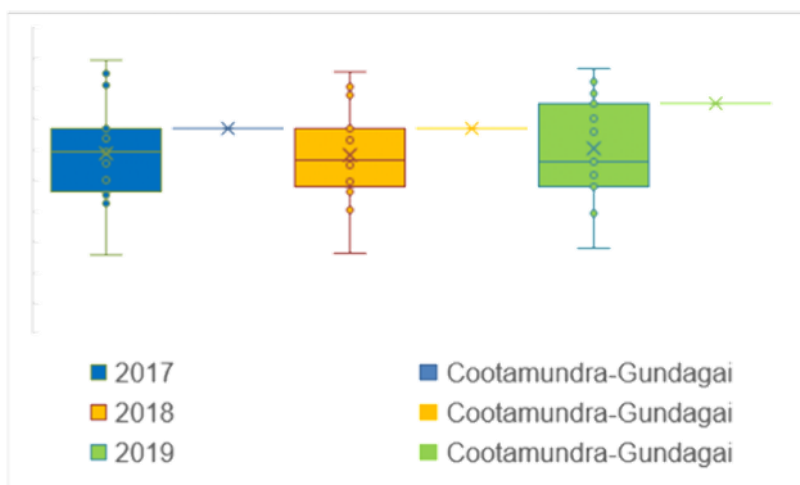
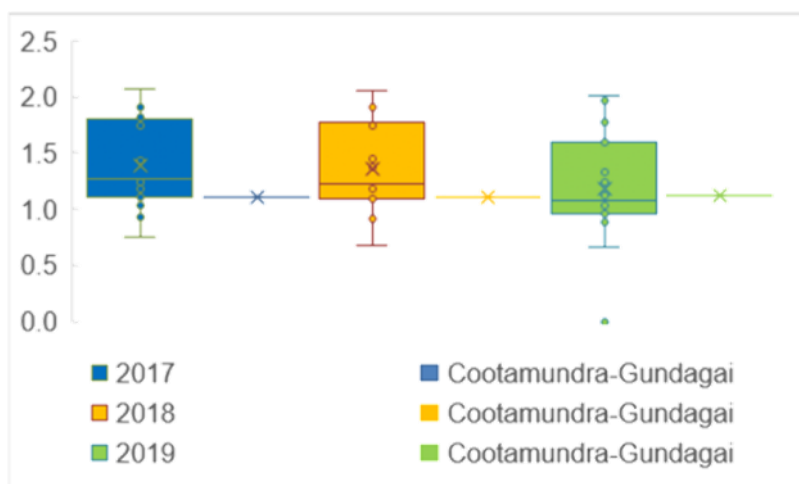
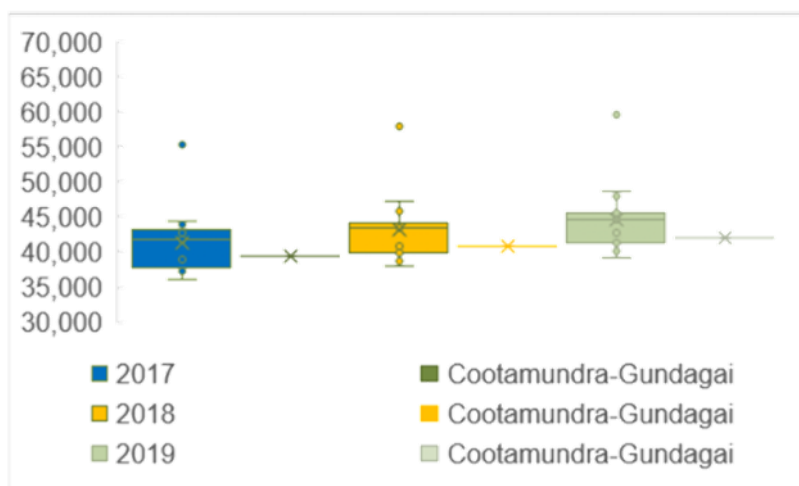


Figure ix. Single Parent Pension



This picture, of a challenging operating environment, is confirmed by the relatively low median income of Cootamundra-Gundagai residents illustrated in Figure x. This means that Council will need to be very mindful of capacity to pay as it seeks to undertake budget repair. In an ideal situation inter-governmental grants would 'compensate' Council for its challenging socio-demographics, however it has long been demonstrated that the Financial Assistance Grants are not allocated in a manner consistent with the horizontal fiscal equalisation goals set out in the enabling legislation (see Grant and Drew, 2017).

Figure x. Median Income



Future Shocks

As we have seen, Cootamundra-Gundagai operates in a very challenging socio-demographic environment. However, these challenges are likely to pale into insignificance compared to the challenges presented by the federal government's coronavirus response.

Large swathes of the economy have been shut down, by edict, in the last few weeks. This will mean that some businesses have reduced or zero revenue for the next 6 months or so, and that some residents have found themselves abruptly put out of work as a result of government policy. We are told to expect unemployment rates of up to 15 percent, and a recession is guaranteed (defined as two quarters of negative GDP growth). However, with an uncharacteristically low currency, high reliance on imports, dismal consumer and business confidence, and highly unpredictable government it would seem optimistic to me to think that a lengthy period of stagflation is not on the cards. Our well-known housing bubble, and our former equities bubble, combined with world-leading household indebtedness, means that things will almost certainly get much worse before they get better.

Ideally local government would want to enter into a period of economic uncertainty with strong balance sheets and thus be in a position to stimulate the local economy. However, Cootamundra-Gundagai, as a result of some poor decision-making, particularly around the time of the amalgamation, finds itself in exactly the opposite situation.

This is regrettable for the whole community, but I emphasise again that this is not a problem caused by the current team of Councillors or the current executive managers.

Unfortunately, I hold grave concerns for the financial sustainability of Council which means that I cannot, in good conscience, recommend that Council puts off budget repair any longer. In a separate report I have detailed changes to fees and charges which will need to be implemented from 1 July 2020 to assure financial sustainability going forward. In addition, I have asked senior management to identify savings in the order of 1.7 percent which will need to be made throughout the coming financial year. Finally, a SRV is an absolute necessity commencing 1 July 2021.

The timing for all of these measures could hardly be worse. I have therefore recently¹ recommended to Council that they offer additional hardship provisions for business and residents affected by the government response to corona virus. The time to bring about budget repair will be extended in proportion to the number of people forced to avail themselves of these hardship provisions.

Moreover, Council needs to be mindful of even greater challenges with which they will be faced over the next few years. The federal and state governments have both

¹ This report was written during the implementation of the federal government's unpredictable response to coronavirus and I have therefore had to adjust my messaging to Council on a regular basis.

seriously damaged their budget positions as a result of their response choices and will have to execute their own significant budget repairs in the next year or two. Going by what has occurred in the past, local governments can probably expect a freeze to financial assistance grants, a freeze or discontinuation of Roads to Recovery grants, and more attempts at cost-shifting. Members of higher tiers of government need to be mindful to ensure that their own budget repair efforts don't put the financial sustainability of rural and remote local governments – which have limited additional revenue capacity – in particular, into financial jeopardy. It would thus be prudent for higher tiers of government to ensure that any imposts that must be passed onto local government falls disproportionately on metropolitan local governments (which have a higher capacity to cope with economic shock).

In addition to reduced levels of intergovernmental grants and higher levels of cost-shifting, local government can unfortunately look forward to a high probability of multiple superannuation calls. The share market in Australia (which is where the majority of superannuation funds are invested) has fallen around 30 percent from its 2020 highs. In addition, the federal government has invited many taxpayers to make large withdrawals from their superannuation funds as part of its fiscal support for individuals made unemployed through government policy. This will drive markets down even further. Thus, a superannuation call is very likely.

In sum, Council can expect that its operating environment will grow ever more challenging over an extended period of time which will further hamper its efforts to become financially sustainable. In this sort of environment it will be critical to ensure that those who can absorb higher taxes and charges do so (in order that others can be effectively subsidised) and that every dollar of expenditure is treated as a precious and very finite resource.

NSW State Government Assistance

The state government was clearly part of the problem that got us to this situation and therefore needs to be part of the solution. I honestly believe that the state government is trying to help, but I also firmly believe that the help has been misdirected and in many instances is exacerbating the problems.

The Minister should be aware that Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council is not the only struggling rural council. There are two other councils that have approached me that are in similarly desperate need of help. Indeed, at least in the case of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council the Councillors are all now aware of how grave their situation is – this cannot be said for many rural councils.

My recommendation to the Minister is to support the Council in its efforts to remain financially viable by considering the following:

1. **Fund a financial mentor for Council.** The NSW government could fund a financial advisor for Council to get them through the next critical 9 months or so – the fee harmonisation and increases, SRV, and budget repair. Without independent help from someone that understands the situation and has the trust of the community, the future of Council looks rather bleak. I cannot see any reason to appoint an Administrator just now, and doing so would simply get the community off-side further and make budget repair nigh on impossible. Most of these Councillors – the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in particular – understand the situation perfectly and are prepared to do what is required. We need the leadership of these trusted community members to remedy the situation and this kind of leadership simply won't be forthcoming in an administration scenario.
2. **The SRV for 2021/22 needs to be approved.** My reading of the Act (1993) suggests to me that the Minister can streamline this process significantly and thus liberate valuable Council time and money which is better spent on addressing the imposing problems before it. This report is far more comprehensive than reports normally prepared for IPART to meet the 'demonstrated need criteria'. Council has already started community awareness and will pursue this further. This document (and the forthcoming document on changes to fees and charges) demonstrates that sustainable finance strategies will soon be in place. Moreover, the 'history of productivity improvements' is currently being dealt with, although fundamentally confounded by the poor outcomes from amalgamation (and the poor choices made during Administration). The increases proposed – whilst significant – are in no way disproportionate to the circumstances faced by Council. I therefore recommend that the Minister directs IPART to consider that Council has met all of the criteria for a SRV in 2021/22.
3. **The Minister should recommend and fund a de-amalgamation.** As I have shown elsewhere the business case stacks up (notably this would not be the case for most recently amalgamated local governments). The community is almost united in its desire for a de-amalgamation (which is about the only

thing that they are united on). The problems at Cootamundra-Gundagai are simply too large and complex for any one team of senior managers or Councillors to deal with – this is not a failing of particular individuals, but merely a statement of the complexity of the extant situation. De-amalgamation would break these problems down into much more manageable pieces, and there is no doubt in my mind that both communities would be much more prepared to make the sacrifices that will have to be made as de-amalgamated entities. The state government would also certainly be lauded for taking responsible and appropriate action to fix a problem which occurred under the watch of a former Premier, and former Minister of Local Government.

4. **The Minister needs to stop funding non-essential infrastructure.** I have no doubt that the Minister genuinely believes that these Stronger Community funded projects are helping Council – but they are not. It is diverting organisational attention (which is clearly already stretched too far), it is adding to maintenance and depreciation cost bases, and it is entrenching fiscal illusion in the community (which will make it harder to convince the community that they need to pay higher fees and taxes). What this, and most struggling rural communities desperately need is essential infrastructure (roads, water and sewer), not toys. Council has agreed to increase the water and sewer charges significantly next financial year and this will go towards raising an additional \$460,000 (depending on volumes actually supplied) and \$530,000 respectively. Unfortunately this will not be enough to carry out essential work – let alone rebuild the depleted reserves – given that the backlog as stated in the most recent audited financial statements is \$12.16 million for water and \$10.378 million for sewer. I would therefore recommend to the Minister that she considers providing a grant to make up the difference between what can be raised from the community over the next five years and what is required to complete essential work.
5. **Additional non-tied ongoing operational grants.** I am very concerned about the lack of detail on the new Local Government Grants Commission grant allocation model. It would be helpful for planning a budget repair strategy if the Minister could provide us with reliable information on the likely outcomes for Cootamundra-Gundagai arising from the new FAG allocation methods. Moreover, the Minister might do well to investigate how this model will affect all rural councils, because many of them are clearly in trouble.
6. **Consider putting in place measures to ensure liquidity if there is an uptick in uncollected rates, fees and charges as a result of covid-19.** Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council simply cannot afford any additional disruptions to its cash flow. There are a number of other councils that are also probably at risk. I urge the Minister to get work done on identifying these 'at risk' councils as well as design a suite of measures to mitigate cash flow problems that will almost certainly occur during the next 12 months. I am happy to discuss what is required with the Minister at a time of her choosing.
7. **Consider doubling the library grant to ensure that Cootamundra-Gundagai is not disadvantaged as a result of the amalgamation.** Following amalgamation the effective grant per library was halved and this

has understandably caused great consternation in the wider community. As the Minister will be aware libraries are a significant area of expenditure for local governments. In order to ensure that Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council has sufficient funds going forward we have recently taken measures to reduce the opening hours and wage bill for the two libraries. This will unfortunately result in a decline to service levels for residents. Without additional funding for Cootamundra-Gundagai's two libraries next year I fear it will be necessary to reduce opening hours even further.

Appendices

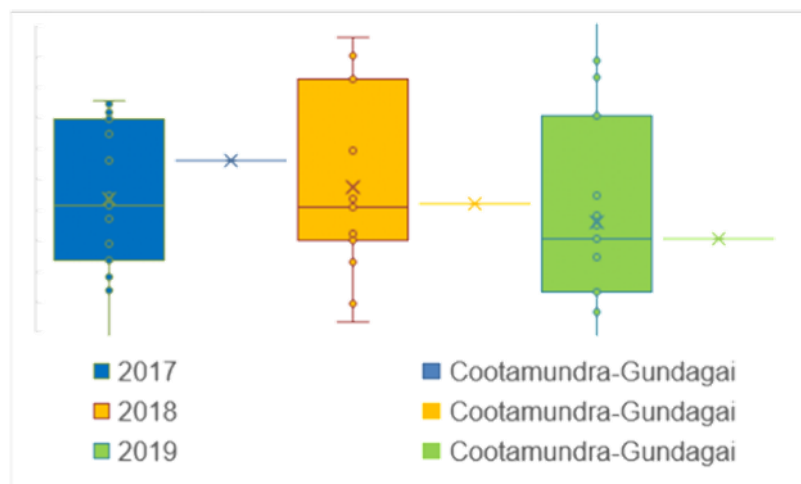
Definitions, Benchmarks, and Weightings of TCorp Financial Sustainability Ratios

Variable	Weighting	Benchmark	Definition
Operating ratio	17.5%	>4%	(Operating revenue ^a – operating expenses)/operating revenue ^a
Own-source Revenue ratio	17.5%	>60%	Rates, utilities, and charges/total operating revenue ^b
Unrestricted Current ratio	10.0%	>1.50×	Current assets less restrictions/current liabilities less specific purpose liabilities
Interest Cover ratio	2.5%	>4.00×	EBITDA/interest expense
Infrastructure Backlog ratio	10.0%	<0.02×	Estimated cost to bring assets to a satisfactory condition/total infrastructure assets
Debt Service Cover ratio	7.5%	>2.00×	EBITDA/(principal repayments + borrowing costs)
Capital Expenditure ratio	10.0%	>1.10×	Annual capital expenditure/annual depreciation
Cash Expense ratio	10.0%	>3.0 months	(Current cash and equivalents/(total expenses – depreciation – interest costs)) × 12
Buildings and Infrastructure Renewal ratio	7.5%	>1.00×	Asset renewals/depreciation of building and infrastructure assets
Asset Maintenance ratio	7.5%	>1.00×	Actual asset maintenance/required asset maintenance

^aRevenue excludes capital grants and contributions. ^bRevenue includes capital grants and contributions.

The cash expense cover ratio was not reported in the main body of this report as it provides a misleading picture of Council's true cash position. Most of Council's cash is in restricted funds and the general fund is in a rather parlous state. The cash expense ratio doesn't make distinctions between restricted funds and general funds, and thus suggests that Council's position is pretty typical of the peer group. It is, unfortunately, anything but typical. Drastic action must be taken as soon as possible to build up General Fund balances – this will include postponing projects, reducing staff expenditure, increasing fees and increasing rates.

Cash Expense Ratio



References

- Drew, J. (2017). Playing for Keeps: Local Government Distortion of Depreciation Accruals in Response to High Stakes Public Policy-Making. *Public Money & Management*, 38(1): 57-64.
- Drew, J. and Campbell, N. (2016). Autopsy of Municipal Failure: The Case of Central Darling Shire. *Australasian Journal of Regional Science*, 22(1): 81-104.
- Drew, J. and B. Dollery. (2014). Keeping It In-House – Households as an Alternative Proxy for Local Government Output. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 73(2): 235-246.
- Drew, J. and Grant, B. (2017). Means, Motive and Opportunity: Distortion of Public Policy Making Performance Management Data. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 75(1): 237-250.
- Drew, J. & Grant, B. (2017). Multiple Agents, Blame Games and Public Policy-Making: The Case of Local Government Reform in New South Wales. *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 52(1), 37-52.
- Grant, B. and Drew, J. (2017). *Local Government in Australia: History, Theory and Public Policy*. Springer Palgrave, Singapore.
- Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART (2019). *NSW Councils' Special Variation and Minimum Rate Applications for 2019-20*. IPART: Sydney.

8.1.3 COOTAMUNDRA COMMUNITY ARTS CULTURAL CENTRE - REPORT FROM CHAIRPERSON APRIL 2020

DOCUMENT NUMBER	325863
REPORTING OFFICER	Greg Briscoe-Hough, Relief Governance Officer
AUTHORISING OFFICER	Phillip McMurray, General Manager
RELEVANCE TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN	4. Good governance: an actively engaged community and strong leadership team 4.2 Active participation and engagement in local decision-making
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no Financial implications associated with this report.
LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS	There are no Legislative implications associated with this report.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	There are no Policy implications associated with this report.
ATTACHMENTS	1. CCACC Chairperson Report to Council April, 2020 ↓

RECOMMENDATION

The Cootamundra Community Arts Cultural Centre – Report From Chairperson April 2020 report, attached to the report, be received and noted.

Introduction

Council has received Isabel Scott, Cootamundra Community Arts Cultural Centre Chairperson's Report for April, 2020

Discussion

The report discusses the current status of the Centre in the Covid-19 environment.



CACC MEETING - APRIL 2020

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Hello CGRC Council and Councillors, CCACC Committee and All TACC Volunteers, Staff and Patrons.

There is to be no meeting this month but I would like to assure you The Arts Centre is still functioning at a very basic level with Gwen, Lucy and Eric our staff carrying out their duties behind closed doors.

Gwen is following up on completing Policies and Procedures for the Centre to function in a safe and productive manner after our AGM and changes in how we proceed. She is also looking at what has to be carried out with regards to cleaning the Centre, sorting and archiving documents, answering any enquiries by phone or email and just making sure the Centre is ready for re-opening when allowed.

We thank Gwen for her positive and diligent work under these strict isolation requirements.

Eric is regularly cleaning getting into the nooks and crannies while he has the time and none of us around to muck his hard work up. Thank you, Eric.

Lucy Main is our positive, forward thinking Communications Officer who is keeping TACC face out there in front of the community. Thank you, Lucy for posting the Easter notice and Lyn Angus for her really lovely drawing to accompany the information.

With the closure of the Centre due to Social Distancing and isolation conditions the Communications Officer, Lucy Main, and the Chair of the s355 Committee, Isabel Scott, have been looking at just how we keep TACC relevant in the Community. TACC is working on an event programs and projects to bring our patrons and workshop participants back, keeping arts and cultural on the community radar.

Research shows it is important to remember : [Arts improve individual well-being](#). 69 % of the population believe the arts "lift me up beyond everyday experiences," 73 % feel the arts give them "pure pleasure to experience and participate in," and 81 % say the arts are a "positive experience in a troubled world."

TACC Social "**Dis-danc-sing**" **Performing Arts Project** aims at items and works that will result in performance while we are encouraging all our patrons, participants and volunteers to let TACC know what they are doing during this time at home. This will result in a recorded history of locally based home and community activity during this period corona virus isolation conditions.

TACC has been working on a positive program of initiatives for Community participation during isolation. Touching base with performance and visual artists' projects and programs TACC has developed some great ideas to keep the community of all ages engaged with the Centre.

Check out your TACC mail chimp, face book and website for upcoming posts. There is a segment on "Friendly Faces of the Arts Centre" where community members answer a questionnaire around their activities

This is the basic plan the Communications Officer has put forward:

REGULAR MAILCHIMP and FACEBOOK will include:

- Images from one (or some) of our artists, volunteers, etc of their at home creativity
- Friendly faces of TACC photo and blurb (eg Annabel, Gwen, Isabel, Julie, Lindsey, Lyn Cameron, etc) It would be lovely to see something from Susan who is sadly leaving us.
- A 'did you know?' or 'flash back' about TACC - eg: what went into creating the theatre

- **Simple creative inspiration** – if anyone else comes up with ideas this can be emailed through on mail chimp, and TACC social media sites etc. There are a lot of kids' craft ideas out there already, but not so much for adults. TACC has developed the following **DIS-DANCE-SING Challenges below**.
- TACC **WEBSITE** will be updated with "the Friendly Faces of TACC info" and the "Did you know? / flashback" info.
- Challenges and inspiration to be added to events page (with a long end date so it stays for a long time).

The PERFORMING ARTS " DIS-DANCE-SING" CHALLENGES

These challenges are around Creative Writing, Wearable Arts and Movement, Film and Sound.

All these challenges will be distributed by a series of separate flyers with more detail and promoted as something for people who want more of a challenge. As part of this flyer something along these lines will be included: *"When the doors of TACC re-open we will explore various options for a public performance"*. This way people who are keen to present in public will hopefully be inspired, for example under Creative Writing the CCACC Committee wants participants to write a monologue or create a Pecha Kucha Presentation recording their experiences to be presented live.

- We want participants to document /record their progress and send their inspired activity through to us. We will then let community know what is happening hoping more participants will engage with the program.
- The CCACC Committee especially would like this to be a record of the time spent social distancing and isolation documenting how c-virus impacted on individuals, family, friendships and business in our immediate community.

The TACC Volunteer Treasurer continues to work behind the scenes overseeing the acquittal of the Fulcrum Grant, looking after the staff and wages and keeping TACC financials up to date.

PROJECT & WORKS:

Andrew Brock, CGRC Infrastructure Manager, has been through with a consultant to evaluate compliance upgrades. We thank Andrew for his continued work on our behalf to get this Centre up to current compliance standards.

- John Silvestro, has been back in contact re the Lights and Audio in the Theatre but nothing has been decided. He will deal directly with Andrew.
- Not sure where the Stronger Community Grant for the Rehearsal and On line Learning Space is up to.
- There has been no reply, as yet, to CCACC recommendations put to the March Council Meeting.
- There has been no information about the Men's Shed vacating that shed which mean storage issues are still a big problem.
- TACC has given the Youth Officer the names of mentors who may be interested in supporting a Youth Council. If any Arts Centre supporters know anyone who may fit in to these guidelines please encourage them to apply.
- Lyn Cameron has decided not to take the large gas Kiln.
- Julie Cowell and the Movie Committee have put TACC movie schedule on hold until the Centre reopens. This involved many lengthy negotiations.
- The BOARD has organized continuing work for Office Manager, Gwen Norman, around policy, procedures and risk assessment documentation for the future smooth administration of the Centre

I would like to wish Judy and Paul Braybrooks congratulations and a very happy retirement. Paul has been our Chairman and TACC thank him for his service and considerable generosity in his support of this facility.

Finally, Susan Gheller: A huge thank you for your contribution to Council as a CGRC Staff member. More importantly thank you for your contribution to the administration of TACC.

Best Regards, Isabel Scott - CCACC Chairperson.

Please everyone keep in touch." We are all in this together"

8.1.4 COMMUNITY DONATIONS POLICY

DOCUMENT NUMBER	326078
REPORTING OFFICER	Greg Briscoe-Hough, Relief Governance Officer
AUTHORISING OFFICER	Phillip McMurray, General Manager
RELEVANCE TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN	1. A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued 1.1 Our Community is inclusive and connected
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	There are Financial implications associated with this report.
LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS	There are Legislative implications associated with this report.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	There are Policy implications associated with this report.
ATTACHMENTS	1. Draft Community Donations Policy ↓ 2. Draft Community Donations Policy Procedure ↓

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. The proposed Community Donations Policy, attached to the report, be adopted.**
- 2. The appropriate provision for the budgeting and funding of the Community Donations program be included in the Operational Plan.**
- 3. The General Manager be delegated to develop, implement and review as required, the associated Community Donations Policy Procedures, attached to the report, consistent with the attached draft in 1 above.**

Introduction

Cootamundra- Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC), and the former Cootamundra and Gundagai Shire Councils, have traditionally supported local sporting clubs, community groups and individuals through the provision of financial, and in kind, support. It is imperative that CGRC continues to provide that support to its communities now and into the future.

The purpose of this Policy is to enable Council to support the local initiatives put forward by the organisations that promote these values. In doing so, the Policy aims to:

1. Make provision in Council's budget to provide financial assistance to selected organisations which meet the criteria set out in this Policy and associated procedures.
2. Provide an annual open and transparent decision-making process for requests for donations from Council. And,
3. Ensure an accessible and equitable process for those seeking donations from Council.

Discussion

Councillors will be familiar with community requests coming before Council on an *ad hoc* basis throughout any one year. To meet regulatory requirements in relation to wider community consideration of these various requests, the Act, and Office of Local Government guidelines, provides a mechanism to do this holistically by considering any and all requests annually and with consistent application and assessment procedures.

Section 356 of the Local Government Act, 1993 (the Act) prescribes the requirements when councils provide financial assistance to others (including charitable, community and sporting organisations and private individuals). Financial assistance must be for the purposes of exercising the council's functions under the Act.

(See also Office of Local Government Circular 06-32 – Provision of financial assistance under Section 356)

Section 377 (1A) of the Act states that the power can be delegated and this permission is mirrored in Section 356(3) which, in similar terms, removes the need for 28 days public notice of a proposal to pass a resolution to grant financial assistance prior to doing so where:

- The assistance is part of a specific program which has been included in the council's management plan (the purpose of this policy).
- The program's budget does not exceed 5% of the council's income from ordinary rates for the year. And,
- The program is uniformly available to all or a significant group of persons within the area.

This approach will enable Council to compare and contrast the various requests and align them with programs and initiatives already identified in Council's plans and strategies as part of the annual Operational Plan and Delivery Program review.



Draft Community Donations Policy

Policy Approval and Distribution

Approved by	Council resolution
Responsible Officer	Manager Community and Culture
Section/Service Unit	Community and Culture
Next Review Date	December after next Ordinary Council election

Version Control

Ref	Date	Description	Resolution Number
0.1	24-04-2020	Presented to Council for Adoption	

Purpose

Cootamundra- Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC), and the former Cootamundra and Gundagai Shire Councils, have traditionally supported local sporting clubs, community groups and individuals through the provision of financial, and in kind, support. It is imperative that CGRC continues to provide that support to its communities now and into the future.

The purpose of this Policy is to enable Council to support the local initiatives put forward by the organisations that promote these values. In doing so, the Policy aims to:

1. Make provision in Council's budget to provide financial assistance to selected organisations which meet the criteria set out in this Policy and associated procedures.
2. Provide an annual open and transparent decision-making process for requests for donations from Council, and;
3. Ensure an accessible and equitable process for those seeking donations from Council.

Scope

All community Members belonging to, and/or delivering services/activities to the CGRC Local Government Area and which:

- assist to provide a service that falls within Council's area of responsibility, or;
- benefits or assists a target group or activity identified in one of Council's adopted plans.

Objectives

To better regulate donations, sponsorships and in kind support of not for profit, community groups, and individuals activities by providing procedures adequately addressing application criteria for appropriate assessment and approval.

Definitions

In this Policy, *donation* includes 'financial assistance' in providing funds, 'in-kind assistance' by way of assisting with staff, plant or supplies, or general sponsorship and the waiving of fees and charges.

Legislative Framework

Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 prescribes the requirements when councils provide financial assistance to others (including charitable, community and sporting organisations and private individuals). Financial assistance must be for the purposes of exercising the council's functions under the Act.

(See also Office of Local Government Circular 06-32 – Provision of financial assistance under Section 356)

Section 377 (1A) of the Local Government Act states that the power can be delegated and this permission is mirrored in Section 356(3) which, in similar terms, removes the need for 28 days public notice of a proposal to pass a resolution to grant financial assistance prior to doing so where:

- The assistance is part of a specific program which has been included in the council's management plan (the purpose of this policy).
- The program's budget does not exceed 5% of the council's income from ordinary rates for the year and;
- The program is uniformly available to all or a significant group of persons within the area.

Related CGRC Policies, Procedures and Forms

Community Donations Policy Procedure
Application Form in above procedure

Review Period

This document is to be reviewed 3 months after each ordinary Council election to ensure that it remains relevant and meets legislative requirements.

Policy Statement

Nothing in this Policy restricts Council from making recurrent donations, subject to Council receiving an annual application from the applicant organisation. Funding in any one year will neither preclude nor guarantee funding in any other year.

Council will only provide financial assistance to individuals in exceptional circumstances and only then if the application for assistance is made by an incorporated organisation.

This Policy does not apply to any requests for assistance from s355 Committees of Council, or requests associated with events or economic development initiatives or for capital works and major building repairs.

Council may consider applications for donations for the payment of general rates from organisations that meet a general not-for-profit basis as well as meeting the criteria in the associated procedures document.

Council will not approve financial assistance for initiatives or events that generate financial profits for commercial companies and/or individuals.



ABN: 46 211 642 339
 PO Box 420, Cootamundra NSW 2590
 Email: mail@cgrc.nsw.gov.au
 www.cgrc.nsw.gov.au

Draft Community Donations Policy Procedure

Procedure Approval and Distribution

Approved by	General Manager
Responsible Officer	Manager Community and Culture
Council Service Unit	Community and Culture
Next Review Date	December after next Ordinary Council election

Version Control

Ref	Date	Description
0.1	XX-XX-2020	Presented to the General Manager for approval

Procedure

Each year in April/May, a budget will be presented to Council to fund Community Donations.

Applications will be invited from known community groups and advertised on Council's website and newspaper columns/media releases.

The application outlines the following required criteria to be met:

- The person/s or association have bona fide need of the donation,
- The justification for the donation – (why should the community support this activity or association?),
- The benefit to and participation of the wider community in the activities for which the donation is sought,
- The measurable outcomes against which the success of the donation will be assessed,
- Specific details of the association's plans to reduce its dependence on Council for donations in the future,
- The date for review of the donation (for multi-year donations), and;
- An acknowledgement that future donations (if any) will be contingent on meeting or exceeding agreed outcomes.

Applications received by the advertised deadline will be assessed according to the attached guidelines by:

- The General Manager or their representative;
- The Manager Community and Culture or their representative;
- The Manager Business or their representative;

and a report tabled for Council's consideration.

Applicants will be notified after the Council meeting that considers the tabled report.

DATE CREATED:	23 April, 2020
RELATED POLICIES:	Community Donations Policy
RELATED PROCEDURES & FORMS:	Community Donations Policy Procedure – Application Form

Documentation

Public Notice / Call for applications

Application form/s and any applicable guidelines based on this document and criteria sent/downloaded

Lodged Applications

Assessment documentation and Council report.

Letters of Notification to applicants

Records

All of the above for required statutory period.

Not for profit, community groups, and individuals will be required to submit the Application for Donation Form to CGRC before the annual cut-off date to be considered in the next years funding round.



Community Donations Policy

Application for Donation Form

For not for profit organisations, community groups, and individuals applying for a donation.

Applicant Information	
Name of Organisation:	
Organisation Address:	
Organisation website:	
Name of Applicant:	
Applicant Address:	
Phone Contact	
Email address	

Organisation Information	
Is the Organisation a not for profit charity, Association or community service organisation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
ABN or ATO No: <i>If you do not have one, attach a copy of the Organisation's adopted Constitution.</i>	
Is the organisation a Government entity with an existing partnership with Council?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Where do the Organisation's activities occur?	
Are the majority of members residents of the Cootamundra-Gundagai local government area? Please attach evidence of membership if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do members pay to join the organisation and / or attend an activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please list the costs associated:	

Description of Request	
Please describe the activity/event and the justification for Council support. (attach additional information if necessary)	
Date(s) and Time(s) of activity/event NB: If requesting a donation for the hire of a Council facility, a booking must be made PRIOR to submitting this application.	
Where will the activity/event be held?	
How many Cootamundra-Gundagai residents will participate in the event/activity?	
How will this activity/event benefit the Cootamundra-Gundagai community?	
How will the requested donation be spent?	

Financial Request	
Funding will be provided subject to Council Resolution, availability and in accordance with the criteria outlined in the application.	
Please ensure you have reviewed this application and included any attachments prior to its submission for the consideration of Council.	
Amount Requested:	\$
Have you received funding from, or have you sought funding from any other source for this request?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please provide details:	

Payment Information	
Please provide Banking Details to assist prompt payment should your Application be successful.	
Bank / Financial Institution	
Account Name	
BSB:	Account No:

Confirmation and Acknowledgement of Information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I have attached Proof of Organisational Status. ○ I have attached all requested information and relevant additional information to support my application. ○ I certify that the information provided is true and correct. ○ I acknowledge that in the event that this request for donation is successful, consideration of future requests will be contingent on meeting or exceeding agreed outcomes. ○ The organisation can demonstrate that the funds/in kind support was spent or used wisely to achieve the objective of the request. ○ The request will be available for public knowledge via CGRC website. ○ If successful this application will be the only request for Council support in the current financial year. ○ The organisation has provided and considered a detailed plan on our own financial situation and cannot rely on Council for funds for the success of the application. ○ Should the application be successful CGRC will be acknowledged in any advertising, marketing and promotion of an event as a supporter/sponsor. ○ The organisation can be contacted by CGRC officer, requesting details arising from Council's support. 	
Name of Applicant (<i>Print</i>)	
Position in Organisation (if applicable)	
Signature:	Date:

8.1.5 UPDATED COUNCIL MEETING ACTION REPORT

DOCUMENT NUMBER	325476
REPORTING OFFICER	Marianne McInerney, Personal Assistant to the General Manager
AUTHORISING OFFICER	Phillip McMurray, General Manager
RELEVANCE TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN	4. Good governance: an actively engaged community and strong leadership team 4.2 Active participation and engagement in local decision-making
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no Financial implications associated with this report.
LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS	There are no Legislative implications associated with this report.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	There are no Policy implications associated with this report.
ATTACHMENTS	1. Updated Council Meeting Action Report ↓

RECOMMENDATION

The Updated Council Meeting Action Report be received and noted.

COUNCIL MEETING ACTION REPORT

MEETING / ITEM	ACTION	OFFICER	STATUS
05.07.2017 18.06.2019 19.09.2019	Amend Gundagai LEP 2011 to correct mapping discrepancies	Manager Development, Building and Compliance	Ongoing. Amendment No 4 is currently being reviewed following feedback from the Department of Planning prior to a Gateway determination. Gateway determination issued, currently on exhibition for 28 days. To be reported back to October 2019 Council meeting. Partly complete – schedule 1 amendment gazetted
30 October 2018			
Council, with further consultation, consider the representations made by Mr Peter Beath on behalf of the members of the Cootamundra Aboriginal Working Party, in his letter dated 24 October 2018. 8.1.4 Resolution 215/2018	“It is recommended the CGRC take a proactive approach engaging with the existing community groups and organisations to look at the formation of a formal Aboriginal Advisory/Consultative Committee under section 355 of the local Government Act 1993”		
8.1.5 Resolution 216/2018	2. In time, and subject to available funding, CGRC, in conjunction with the local Aboriginal communities, the Brungle-Tumut LALC and the Young LALC, undertake the mapping of the sites of cultural significance to Aboriginal people in this LGA. 3. CGRC, in consultation and negotiation with Aboriginal communities in the region, form an	Manager Development	

	<p>Aboriginal Advisory Committee to liaise with Council about matters of importance and concern to local Aboriginal people.</p> <p>4. The Consultative Committee consider the implementation of an Indigenous Employment Strategy</p>	<p>Manager Culture and Community</p>	
	<p>CGRC put in place Cultural (Aboriginal) Competency/Cross Cultural training to Council Staff and Councillors.</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>Manager Culture and Community</p>	
<p>28.11.2017 – 7.3.2.1</p> <p>22.08.2018</p> <p>17.09.2018</p> <p>26.09.2018</p> <p>17/01/2019</p> <p>4.02.2019</p>	<p>Waste Collection Services</p> <p>Waste Collection Services cont.</p>	<p>Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation</p>	<p>Council adopted for Stage 3 to commence with a schedule of works and timelines currently being prepared for staff's consideration.</p> <p>Once the schedule and estimates have been approved works will commence with council to be informed accordingly of the adopted schedule of works and timelines.</p> <p>18/6/19 update- First draft of the financial plan has been completed and review sent back to consultant for consideration. Next stage is the development of</p>

11.02.2020			<p>the Business Plan. For full details of the scope of works, timelines etc. refer to the Waste, Parks & Recreation Managers' report to the June, 2019 Council meeting.</p> <p>23/10/19 update - Draft financial plan delivered to council in September with the final plan scheduled to go to the November Council meeting.</p> <p>November 2019 - Report to November 2019 for Councils consideration</p> <p>February 2020 – report adopted in principal, report to Feb meeting seeking council approval to place the report out to the community for 3 months seeking comment.</p> <p>March – Reviewed report going to council this month.</p>
<p>31.01.2018 – 7.1.1.3</p> <p>19.06.2019</p> <p>07.2019</p> <p>12.02.2020</p>	Continue with land transfer of Inland Aircraft Fuel Depot	GM/ Manager Facilities	<p>Remediation works to be completed by Caltex prior to finalising transfer of title.</p> <p>Transfer progressing. Following up remediation work.</p> <p>Site meetings undertaken with consultants. Funding options being investigated.</p> <p>Additional funding required for site development</p>
<p>31.01.2018 – 7.1.1.4</p> <p>18.06.2019</p>	Prepare detailed design and cost estimates for Turners Lane industrial subdivision. Include budget allocation in 2018/2019 budget.	<p>GM</p> <p>Bill</p>	<p>22/03/2018 To be outsourced. An amount of \$500K has been included in budget estimates.</p> <p>Proposals being sought.</p> <p>Awarded to MJM – Designs expected Dec 18.</p> <p>Draft final civil design plans have been submitted by consultants and returned to consultants requiring</p>

			<p>some minor amendments for finalisation. Receipt of the final designs is anticipate early July, 2019.</p> <p>Works to commence in 2019/20.</p> <p>July 2019 update - Final civil design plans received. Awaiting final electrical design (anticipated mid-August). Awaiting result of funding application prior to commencement of construction.</p>
17.01.2019	Investigations to be undertaken to determine feasibility of providing a safe and accessible pedestrian pathway to link Cootamundra town centre and the cemetery on Yass Rd.	Manager Civil Works/ Road Safety Officer	<p>Long term project.</p> <p>Include in new PAMP CYCLEWAYS Plan</p> <p>Safety audit of rail overpass completed.</p>
31.07.18 – 9.2	<p>Council, in collaboration with the Muttama Creek Regeneration Group, investigate the feasibility of creating a walking track alongside sections of Muttama Creek.</p> <p><i>Council, in collaboration with the Muttama Creek Regeneration Group, investigate the feasibility of creating a walking track alongside sections of Muttama Creek. continued</i></p>	Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation	<p>Application prepared and submitted for grant funding for footpath/walking track.</p> <p>17/01/2019 update - Still awaiting response on submission. Actively seeking alternative funding options or grants as they become available.</p> <p>21/03/2019 update - Arrangements are current being arranged to meet onsite with the group to discuss future plans. Once this has been determined a report will need to be presented to council for determination and approval.</p> <p>18/06/2019 update -Any plans will need to consider the Muttama Flood Study and seek recreational opportunities.</p>

11.02.2020			<p>July 2019 update - A meeting between the group and the Waste, Parks & Recreations Manager is yet to be arranged. It is the intention to arrange a meeting for September 2019.</p> <p>November 2019 - This is still yet to happen with the current work load and this rated as a low priority action will be implemented ASAP.</p> <p>In the meantime Council is working with the Group with the existing works as and when required</p> <p>no change to date.</p> <p>March – no change</p>
Ordinary Meeting - 26 March 2019			
Item 8.1.7	Showground users group	Manager Facilities	<p>A masterplan for the Showground be prepared with staff and the Committee including the provision of a caretakers cottage.</p> <p>18/06/2019 update - Drone work complete. Being presented to users group Wednesday 19-6-2019.</p> <p>July 2019 update - Awaiting feedback from user groups.</p> <p>12.02.2020 Feb 2020-No further progress. User groups still working on requests.</p>
Item 8.4.1	NSW Public Works Advisory be invited to prepare a proposal for a concept design incorporating an optional PV arrangement to offset power costs and with the provision for future chlorine treatment should Council wish to supply treated effluent for irrigation purposes within the village.	GM/Manager Assets	<p>23/05/2019 update - Discussions with Public Works are continuing.</p>

ORDINARY MEETING - 28 MAY, 2019			
Question 8.1.10 Council Meeting Action Report	Follow up progress detailed design for Turners Lane and include in action report.	Bill	See 31.01.2018 – 7.1.1.4 on page 2
	Bridge Safety Audit Report	Manager Civil Works/ Manager Technical Services	Prepare report for June/July business paper. Ongoing. Seeking funding opportunities for bridge assessment.
8.7.2 Council Mini Bus (165/2019)	The Council Hiace mini bus be retained for a period of six months and a report on the bus's usage income and costs against the bus be prepared and submitted to the November, 2019 Ordinary Meeting.	GM	Gundagai Neighbourhood Centre manage bus Group induction for users to drive bus Provide requirements e.g. current licence, log books, user spreadsheet, booking form, data spreadsheet to collate use hours, kilometers, use contract and guidelines/limitations (if any) etc.
9.1 Notice of Motion (172/2019) 07.2019	Council investigate the feasibility of extending the Cootamundra indoor pool weekend operating hours. Further, Council undertake a review of the facility's processes and expenditure and incorporate options regarding the use of staff or contractors in the management of both the pool and stadium facilities.	GM/ Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation	No time frame was provided for a report to be submitted to Council. An independent report to be prepared at the conclusion of the trial period and with a report to be submitted for the Council consideration. The extended winter season operating hours have been implemented as per Council resolution, with the outcomes to be reported back to Council at the end of the winter pool season. A report to Council will be presented in August, 2019 indicating the cost associated with the undertaking of an independent review of the aquatic centre and stadium operations.

			<p>23/10/19 update - Associated reports will be submitted to council regarding both the trail extended hours and aquatic centre feasibility study.</p> <p><u>November 2019</u> – Report to the November council meeting.</p> <p>March – Pool and Sports Stadium now closed.</p>
ORDINARY MEETING - 25 June, 2019			
	Aside request from Cr Sheahan	GM	Provide Road Safety Audits to EA to GM & Mayor to upload to Councillor Drive.
	Access and Inclusion Committee	Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation	<p>Lift and change table in the Cootamundra pool facility.</p> <p>Adult change facility.</p> <p>23/10/19 update - MWP & R is still to follow up on this issues.</p> <p>November 2019 – waiting on Manager Facilities to come back to work to give financial details on this project.</p> <p>March – No further action as no funds available</p>
		Manager Development, Building and Compliance	<p>Disability access audit of business' with awareness programme delivered by Council staff to business owners/managers</p> <p>Starting with Council premises first.</p>

ORDINARY MEETING - 30 July, 2019			
8.1.2 Cootamundra Tourism Action Group s.355 Committee Meeting Minutes and Membership	The Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation meet with Friends of Pioneer Park to discuss improvements proposed in the Friends of Pioneer Park Management Plan, attached to the report, and report back to Council.	Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation	<p>This is pending the results of a grant submission made as part of the Stronger Community Grants R3 in October.</p> <p>November 2019 – no change, result on grant application is expected early 2020.</p> <p>March – Grant application unsuccessful no further action to be taken at this stage. The Friends group to be notified.</p>
ORDINARY MEETING - 28 AUGUST, 2019			
Item 8.1.9 Gundagai TAC Minute Recommendations	Council seeks funding for a Tuckerbox plinth for tourists to pose their dogs on for a photo as a permanent fixture at the Dog on the Tuckerbox Site.	Manager Community & Culture	<p>Seeking funding opportunities. Update to be provided at a later date.</p> <p>November 2019 – It is intended to use the proceeds of the donations received.</p> <p>Still awaiting quotation to be able to apply for funding 11.02.2020</p>
8.5.1 Pigeon Strategy Report	<p>Council prepare a fact sheet to distribute to residents and local businesses providing information on pigeon control.</p> <p>Council undertake pigeon proofing on Council assets where roosting pigeons congregate.</p> <p>Council liaise with business owners to facilitate efforts to eradicate pigeons from the CBD area and seek Expressions of Interest from pest exterminators with the intention of providing a report to Council once the information has been collated.</p>	Manager Regulatory Services	<p>12.02.2020 Manager Regulatory Services has written to the Cootamundra Development Corporation and, in turn, they have written to the local businesses regarding contributing towards a pigeon control program. A meeting to be held with interested local businesses will be arranged at the end of February.</p>

	The report and resolution be distributed to CBD businesses.		
8.10.1 Cootamundra Aquatic Centre Access	3. The cost for the installation of permanent barricades be investigated with the consideration to disabled access.	Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation	This has been completed on a temporary trial basis. <u>November 2019</u> – no change. March – Pool now closed no further action at this stage.
8.10.2 Cootamundra Aquatic Centre Independent Review	3. A further report be prepared containing any Expressions of Interest received and be submitted to Council for consideration.	Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation	Report going to Council in October 2019. <u>November 2019</u> – completed, consultants are to be engaged and works undertaken as per Council resolution, March – First draft completed will go to council workshop in April
ORDINARY MEETING - 24 September, 2019			
9.1 Notice of Motion - The Lighting Scheduled for Replacement at Fisher Park be donated to the Cootamundra Rodeo Association	The lighting scheduled for replacement at Fisher Park be donated to the Cootamundra Rodeo Association.	Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation	<u>November 2019</u> - Lights and towers will be removed and stored until collected by the Rodeo Club. All electrical works completed, tower footings completed delivery of towers and lights scheduled for November. Tower erecting and commissioning is scheduled for November early December. Project is on time, budget and quality.

			March – Lights not considered by council and Rodeo to be suitable
9.2 Notice of Motion - Cootamundra-Gundagai Local Area Traffic Committee Develop Draft Guidelines for Roadside Trailer Advertising	Council request Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Local Traffic Committee develop a draft policy guidelines paper to regulate the use of advertising trailers across the local government area. Once the draft policy guidelines to regulate the use of advertising trailers has been completed a report will be prepared and submitted for the consideration of Council. The policy guidelines should commit to: a) Present a degree of fairness, reflecting Council's ongoing support for the promotion of local businesses, b) Regulate appropriate sites to protect public access and safety, c) The proposal of a fee to cover the cost of administration of the regulation of the policy guidelines, and d) Ensure the proposed fee reflect fair commercial advertising costs.	Manager Civil Works	Initial report went to November, 2019 Traffic committee to consider suitable sites
ORDINARY MEETING - 29th October, 2019			
ITEM	ACTION	STAFF	Status
8.1.1 Local Government Elections 2020	Council invite a representative from the Australian Electoral Commission to address Council and explain the costs included in the quote received for the local Government elections 2020.	GM/EA to GM & Mayor	Waiting on response from AEC to indicate their availability to attend a Councillor Workshop Elections deferred due to COVID-19

8.1.8 Gundagai Tourism Action s.355 Committee Meeting Minutes	From Minutes – council wait for outcome of SCCF 3 funding before spending \$300K	Manager Community & Culture	
8.1.9 Muttama Creek Regeneration Group s.355 Committee Meeting Minutes	Arrange meeting between s355 Committee and Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation	Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation	November 2019 – as detailed in items 31.07.18 – 9.2 March – no further action at this stage.
8.1.10 Information Bulletin Attachment 5 – Government response to IPART’s review of local government election costs	Write to the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Shelley Hancock, MP	GM/EA to GM & Mayor	
8.3.1 Friends of Old Gundagai Gaol Committee Meeting AGM Minutes	Restricted funds audit report to Council	Manager Community & Culture	Manager Community & Culture and Manager Finance to discuss to determine what is required.
ITEM	ACTION	STAFF	STATUS
9.3 Notice of Motion - Save our Recycling Campaign	4. Council write to the local State Member(s) Ms (Steph) Stephanie Anne Cooke MP, Hon Michael McCormack MP, Minister for	EA to GM &	

	<p>Energy and Environment the Hon Manager Technical Serviceshew Kean MP, Local Government Minister the Hon Shelley Hancock MP, NSW Treasurer the Hon Dominic Perrottet MP, Premier the Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP, Opposition Leader Jodi McKay MP, Shadow Minister for Environment and Heritage Kate Washington MP, and Shadow Minister for Local Government Greg Warren MP to confirm their support for recycling and outline the urgent need to educate, innovate and invest in local waste and recycling services via the Waste Levy.</p> <p>5. Council formally write to its own Youth Council advising its members of its support for the Save Our Recycling campaign and asking them to consider endorsing and sharing it with their own networks across the CGRC local government area.</p> <p>6. Council advise LGNSW President Linda Scott of the passage of this Motion.</p>	May or	
9.4 Council develop a local services preference policy detailing that, where opportunity exists, service providers, based within town boundaries are given preference should they be available, they are able to meet essential criteria and specifications and their quote or tender amount is comparative with	Council develop a Local Services Preference Policy detailing that, where opportunity exists, service providers, based within town boundaries are given preference should they be available, they are able to meet essential criteria and specifications and their quote or tender amount is comparative with other submissions received by Council.	Procurement Officer	March The Procurement Policy has been updated with reference to buying local and further information will be contained in the Procurement Procedure document to go to the April Council Meeting.

other submissions received by Council.			
ITEM	ACTION	STAFF	STATUS
ORDINARY MEETING 26TH NOVEMBER, 2019			
8.3.4 EVERYONE CAN PLAY APPLICATION - LINDLEY PARK SOUTH GUNDAGAI RESOLUTION 429/2019 Moved: Cr David Graham Seconded: Cr Charlie Sheahan	Council endorse a matched application for funding for Lindley Park South Gundagai to the Everyone Can Play Grants.	Manager Finance/ Manager Community & Culture	If grant application successful set aside funding in budget. Determine how to fund. Works in kind from what department. Discuss with relevant Managers.
8.7.2 COUNCIL MINI HIACE BUS COMMUNITY USAGE REVIEW RESOLUTION 437/2019 Moved: Cr Penny Nicholson Seconded: Cr Leigh Bowden	2. Council undertake consultation with representatives of Mirabooka to develop a fee proposal, to be included in the report, to be prepared and submitted to the Ordinary Meeting to be held Tuesday, 26th May, 2020 for the consideration of Council for inclusion in the 20/21 Fees and Charges. 3. A further report with more accurate hire details be prepared and submitted to the Ordinary Meeting to be held Tuesday, 26th May, 2020 for the consideration of Council.	Manager Civil Works/ GM	12.02.2020 Trial continuing. Report to be prepared for the consideration of Council at the Ordinary Meeting to be held 28th April, 2020
ORDINARY MEETING 10TH DECEMBER, 2019			
ITEM	ACTION	STAFF	STATUS
8.7.2 Fixing Local Roads Funding Program. RES 471/2019	Council commit to a 25% contribution to all projects submitted under the program.	Manager Finance/ Manager Civil Works/ Manager Technical Services	Reported at December 2019 meeting with nominated projects and 25% council contribution.
9.1 Notice of Motion - Council Undertake Another Volunteer	That a group volunteer induction day be advertised in January, 2020 so members of local community groups be	Manager Civil	Madlin to arrange induction process

Induction For Drivers of the Council Community Hiace Mini Bus in February, 2020 RES 479/2019	eligible to drive the Community Hiace Mini bus so as to optimise its use.	Works/ Madlin	Deferred due to COVID-19
9.4 Notice of Motion - The Cost of an Irrigation System for the Off Leash Dog Park in Hurley Street be Included in the 2020/21 Budget. RES 482/2019	That an amount of up to \$30,000 be considered within the 2020/21 Budget for an irrigation system to be installed at the Off Leash Dog Park in Hurley Street, Cootamundra.	Manager Regulatory Services	Update required March To be completed by Regulatory Services
11.2 Proposed Compulsory Acquisition Land Affecting Lots 35, 71 and 88 DP751415 and Lot 2 DP1100263 Reno Road, Gundagai RES 485/2019	1. Council make application to acquire land affecting lots 35, 71 & 88 DP 751451 and lot 2 DP1100263 under the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act, 1991. 2. The General Manager be authorised to sign any relevant documentation in relation to the proposed acquisition referred to in 1 above. 3. Authority be granted to affix the common seal of Council to the necessary documents.	GM	Confidential Report. Confidential update required.
11.4 Proposed Acquisition by Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council for Bangus Quarry Remediation Project - Late Report RES 487/2019	1. Council approve the acquisition of Crown land Lot 7300 DP1149008 and Lot 7004 DP1028797 for the Bangus Quarry Remediation Project. 2. The General Manager be authorised to sign any relevant documentation in relation to the proposed acquisition referred to in 1 above. 3. Authority be granted to affix the common seal of Council to the necessary documents. 4. Upon acquisition by Council the land be classified as operational.	GM	Confidential Report. Confidential update required.
ORDINARY MEETING 28TH JANUARY, 2020			
ITEM	ACTION	STAFF	STATUS

8.1.7 Tender - Town Entry Signs, Cootamundra and Gundagai RES 012/2020	That the Tenderer, Gundagai Constructions be advised of the resolution of Council.	Manager Business	Update required by Procurement Officer
8.1.8 The Response to the New Risk Management and Internal Audit Framework for Local Councils in New South Wales RES 013/2020	Council make representations to Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke MP and the Office of Local Government in relation to the unfairness of the fees required to be paid by Council for the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.	Manager Business	CGRC contributed to representations provided by REROC to the Office of Local Government. Letter to Steph Cooke MP outstanding.
8.1.13 s.355 Committee Update RES 018/2020	Council dissolve the Cootamundra Concert Band s.355 Committee, for reasons detailed in the report.	Manager Business	Correspondence be sent to the Cootamundra concert Band informing them of the resolution of council Correspondence has been sent to the Cootamundra concert Band informing them of the resolution of council Complete
8.1.15 Cootamundra Tourism Action Group Section 355 Committee Minutes of meeting held 15 January 2020 RES 020/2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That appropriate grant funding be acquired to develop a specific agri-tourism and regional tourism tours strategy for the Gundagai and Cootamundra region which develops rural, agriculture, food tourism and experiential tourism opportunities through the collaboration between Council, Local businesses and producers. 2. That Council seek an appropriate funding arrangement to ensure the position of Economic Development and Tourism Officer in Cootamundra, continues beyond the current one year tem which ends in November, 2020. 	Manager Culture and Community	No update available to date

8.1.16 Gundagai Tourism Action Section 355 Committee RES 021/2020	Council seek permission from Transport for New South Wales to locate a variable message sign on the northern side of Gundagai, with the intention of encouraging south bound motorists to Stop, Revive, Survive in Gundagai.	Manager Culture and Community	Anthony Carroll taking to February, 2020 traffic committee
0.1 Finance			
8.2.1 December 2019 Quarterly Budget Review Statement RES 025/2020	A report on the funding of Cootamundra Water Mains Replacement Program be prepared and submitted to the Ordinary Meeting to be held 25 th February, 2020.	Manager Finance	A report on the funding of Cootamundra Water Mains Replacement Program be prepared and submitted to the Ordinary Meeting to be held 25 th February, 2020.
Ordinary Meeting February, 2020	Action	Manager	Update
Jan 2020 resolution 034/2020	The Motion to Review the 2019/20 budget with relation to staff and Councillor development with the view to allocate funds in the 2020/21 Budget was deferred until the Ordinary Meeting to be held 25 th February, 2020 to source benchmark funding information to then be provided for the information of council at the Request of Cr Graham and with the approval of Cr Nicholson	Manager Finance	
8.3.1 Recreational Needs study public consultation (066/2020)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Draft Cootamundra-Gundagai Recreational Needs Study (attached under separate cover) be placed on public exhibition for a period of twenty eight days inviting submissions from the community. 2. A further report on the Cootamundra-Gundagai Recreational Needs Study including submissions, if any, be prepared and submitted for the consideration of Council. 	Manager Culture and Community	
8.3.2 Drought communities program (067/2020)	Applications be prepared and submitted through the Drought Communities Program for the Gundagai Main Street Development Stage Two (2) and Parker Street Cootamundra Upgrade.	Manager Culture and Community	

Ordinary Meeting March, 2020	Action	Manager	Update
8.1.4 Cootamundra Showground Users Group s355 Committee Minutes 18 th march, 2020	Tree dropping limbs on to private property bordering the ground be removed.	Manager Waste, Parks and Recreation	
8.1.6 Minutes of the Gundagai Tourism Action s355 Committee Meeting February 2020	Council look at options for funding a speaker system to be purchased and installed in Sheridan Street that has the capacity to play a local radio station and can be utilised for events	T and ED Officer	
8.2.2 Presentation of Audited Financial Statements	Send letter of thanks to Mr Brad Bohun		Complete
8.2.4 Grader Finance	Loan to be arranged to finance purchase of the grader	Manager Finance	complete
8.6.2 Stockinbingal Sewerage Scheme	1. Engage Public Works to prepare business case 2. An application be made under the sage and secure water program for funding towards a detailed design.	B Moore	

8.1.6 MINUTES OF THE COOTAMUNDRA TOURISM ACTION GROUP S355 COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 5 MARCH 2020

DOCUMENT NUMBER	325867
REPORTING OFFICER	Greg Briscoe-Hough, Relief Governance Officer
AUTHORISING OFFICER	Phillip McMurray, General Manager
RELEVANCE TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN	4. Good governance: an actively engaged community and strong leadership team 4.2 Active participation and engagement in local decision-making
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no Financial implications associated with this report.
LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS	There are no Legislative implications associated with this report.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	There are no Policy implications associated with this report.
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Minutes of the Cootamundra Tourism Action Group s355 Committee held 5th March, 2020, and partially considered by Council at the Council Meeting of 31st March, 2020, be received and noted.
2. Council confirm Committee Membership of Dotti Le Sage and Hans Bruitzman on the Cootamundra Tourism Action Group s355 Committee.

Introduction

The Minutes of both the Annual General Meeting and Ordinary meeting of the Cootamundra Tourism Action Group s355 Committee, both held 5th March, 2020, were omitted from the last Council meeting agenda. One item of business from the Ordinary meeting was discussed and resolved.

Discussion

The purpose of this report is to note the other items, note the impact of COVID-19 on funding recommendations, and confirm the Membership of two new Committee members.

8.1.7 INFORMATION BULLETIN

DOCUMENT NUMBER	325889
REPORTING OFFICER	Marianne McInerney, Personal Assistant to the General Manager
AUTHORISING OFFICER	Phillip McMurray, General Manager
RELEVANCE TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN	<p>4. Good governance: an actively engaged community and strong leadership team</p> <p>4.3 Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council is a premier local government Council</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no Financial implications associated with this report.
LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS	There are no Legislative implications associated with this report.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	There are no Policy implications associated with this report.
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managing Fraud and Corruption Risks During the COVID-19 ↓ 2. Stories in Time of COVID-19 ↓

RECOMMENDATION

The Information Bulletin and correspondence, attached to the report, be received and noted.

Introduction

Council receives circulars and correspondence from a variety of sources. The attached circulars and correspondence are provided for the information of Council and the community.