

# *state of our shire report*

---

2021 -2024

NOTED BY COUNCIL 155/24 23 October 2024





# State of our Shire Report

The State of our Shire Report 2021-2024 (formerly the End of Term Report) is part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, it is the final document in this term of Council and will be included with the Annual Report 2023/24.

This document shows our progress in implementing the 10-year Community Strategic Plan via our 4 year Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

You can view these documents on Council's website [www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au](http://www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au)

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Mayoral Message &amp; Councillors</b> | <b>03</b> |
| <b>Major Achievements 2021-2024</b>      | <b>04</b> |
| <b>Community</b>                         | <b>06</b> |
| <b>Economy</b>                           | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Environment</b>                       | <b>16</b> |
| <b>Transport</b>                         | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Leadership</b>                        | <b>22</b> |

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

*"Tenterfield Shire Council would like to acknowledge the Ngarabal people, the traditional custodians of this land, and also pay our respect to the Jukembal, Bundjalung, Kamilaroi, Githabul and Wahlubul people of our Shire, and extend our respect to all people."*



## Mayor's Message

Council is in a stronger financial position than at the start of this term two and a half years ago when Councillors were informed that an 86% rate rise was required. This was a huge shock even though we were the 18th lowest rated shire in the state. The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal approved a Special Rate Variation (SRV) increase of 43% for the 2023/2024 financial year, and while that was a blow to the community Councillors have deferred applying for a further SRV for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years. Although council's financial situation remains challenging and Council has had to make some hard decisions, it has also been fortunate to have some funding increases that have reduced the immediate impact on ratepayers, and we have been able to reverse or alter some of those, continue to improve infrastructure and provide community services. We have a new General Manager and leadership team with a significantly reduced but dedicated staff.

Council has been frustrated by slow government assessment and approvals of disaster claims from 2021 onwards, however with the tripartite agreement with the State and Federal governments for disaster funding in May 2024 disaster funding will be provided upfront in stages, dramatically improving council's cash flow, and assessments have been expedited.

Other highlights include: the full bitumen sealing of the Mt Lindesay Road; bitumen sealing of additional roads; bridge replacements; significant road works at Drake to enable disaster evacuation; completion of the new Tenterfield Water Treatment Plant; Urbenville Water Augmentation program; village bore program for Liston, Legume, Drake and Torrington; award winning Tenterfield Youth Activation Precinct including skate park, pump track and basketball court; opening of the Tenterfield Memorial Hall after refurbishment; heritage building restorations in Tenterfield and Urbenville; reopening the School of Arts Museum; contracting tourism promotion to the Tenterfield Chamber of Tourism, Industry and Business; lease of the Tenterfield airport to Friends of Tenterfield Aerodrome; assuming management of the Mt Mackenzie Lookout; removal of bushfire risk roadside vegetation; and establishment of a Council Facebook page.

I express my thanks and gratitude to the Councillor team, the staff and the community.



**Mayor Bronwyn Petrie**

## Tenterfield Shire Councillors 2021-2024



Councillors left to right - John Macnish (Deputy Mayor), Peter Petty, Tim Bonner, Tom Peters, Peter Murphy, Kim Rhodes, Greg Sauer, Geoff Nye, Giana Saccon (resigned)



Tenterfield National Monument  
Recovery Project  
Youth Precinct Bike pump track and  
skatepark  
Upgrading of disability access to  
amenities blocks across the shire  
Shire wide signage project  
Mingoola Heritage Trail  
Sporting & Playground facilities  
across the shire



## major achievements 2021-2024



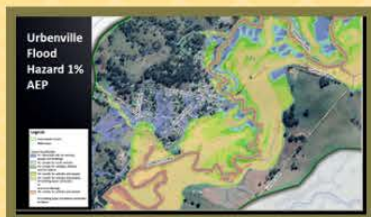
Winner of NSW government  
"Most Innovative Youth Week  
Program"  
Library Refurbishment  
Music Events  
Food Events  
Cultural & Theatre Events  
Sports Events  
Public Art  
Seniors Week



Council has sealed and conducted pavement rehabilitation at various locations along the Mt Lindesay Hwy. With a full pavement reconstruction of 12 km between Legume and Woodenbong. Sealed sections of over 14 local roads. Replaced 5 timber bridges with concrete. Replaced footpaths in Tenterfield and Urbenville.

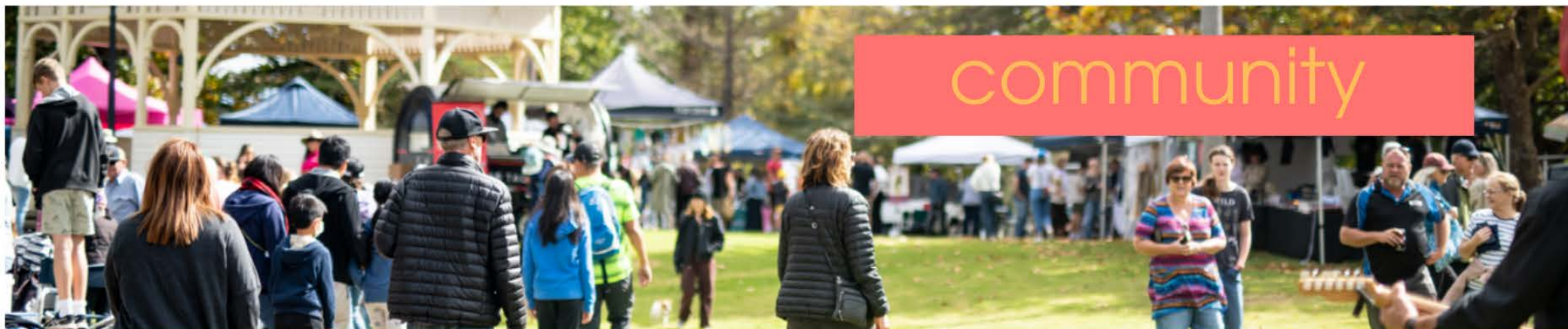


## major achievements 2021-2024



- New Water Treatment Plant for Tenterfield
- Replacement of major water main Tenterfield
- Posi-shell unit deployed to Boonoo Boonoo landfill
- Megamuncher worm farms - Torrington waste station
- Urbenville, Mulli Mulli and Woodenbong Flood Study
- New weather stations deployed and online





People told us they wanted Tenterfield Shire to be a vibrant, inclusive and safe community where diverse backgrounds and cultures are respected and celebrated.

People want the community to be supported by accessible and equitably distributed facilities and recreational opportunities for people of all ages.

**Provide opportunities for residents to enjoy access to arts, festivals, sporting activities, recreation, community and cultural activities.**

Council secured grant funding from Reconnecting Regional NSW, **Community Events Program Grant** to support a range of community events across the Tenterfield Shire, which included the **Tenterfield CBD, Drake, Urbenville, Mingoola** and **Legume**. The events that were held included:

- Music Events - **Beat the Bush concerts**, the **Bavarian Multicultural Music Festival and Markets**, **Summer under the Stars** - Bruxner Park.
- Food Events - **Eat Street Tenterfield** and the **Tenterfield Farmers & Makers Market**.
- Cultural and Theatre Events - **'The Night Sky Tour'** with an Indigenous astronomer as part of **NAIDOC week celebrations**, **Oracles of the Bush** (poetry and music), **School of Arts Theatre Program** and **Carnival of the Animals Village Tour**.
- Sports Events - **Gravel n Granite Mountain Bike ride**.
- Inspirational Events - **Tenterfield Wedding Expo** and **Live, Inspire, Lead** long lunch with keynote speaker, Sam Bloom, aiming to inspire the community to action.
- **Christmas Fairs** in Tenterfield, Sunnyside and Urbenville.
- **Australia Day Events** in Urbenville and Sunnyside, the **Tenterfield Volunteer Expo** and the **Sunnyside Sip and Shop Markets**, **Drake Community Markets**, **Back to Legume Picnic Day and Dance** and **Mingoola Bonfire Night**.
- Council supported **Senior's week** activities which included the **Art of Ageing** - photographic display, luncheon and entertainment at the Bowling Club and **Mystery Bus Tour**.
- Contribution to **Arts North West** provides arts and cultural development activities, grants and networking opportunities across the region for local artists and organisations.
- **Public Art** was installed throughout Tentrfield Parks, starting at the Youth Precinct and finishing at Millbrook Park.





People told us they wanted Tenterfield Shire to be a vibrant, inclusive and safe community where diverse backgrounds and cultures are respected and celebrated.

People want the community to be supported by accessible and equitably distributed facilities and recreational opportunities for people of all ages.

**Provide opportunities for residents to enjoy access to arts, festivals, sporting activities, recreation, community and cultural activities.**

In **2021/2022**, the **Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts** welcomed **6,531** visitors which constituted attendances for the Museum, live performances, bus tours and live events. Events that were held included; Cinema - screenings (most popular was 'Top Gun Maverick' and 'The Drovers Wife', Theatre (most popular were live performances of the 'Melbourne Comedy Festival' and the production of 'Mother and Son'). Funding was also secured for a series of special school holiday screenings in association with National Youth Week celebrations. The School of Arts (Cinema/Museum/Theatre) closed on 30 July 2023. It was later reopened on 4 February 2024 under a Section 355 Committee.

In **2022/2023** the following **community events** were held:

- **Tenterfield Autumn Festival.**
- **Youth week** - included an **outdoor cinema event** at Bad Manners cafe.
- **Free bike day** in partnership with the Saddlers Mountain Bike Club and Angry Bull Trails. The events were funded through the NSW Government Youth Week grants program.
- Establishment of **'Tenterfield Park Run'** with the Office of Sport & Recreation committing funding to support the initiative.
- **Youth after school music program** 'Get it Together' commenced in 2023 for the duration of 2 school terms. Funded by the NSW Government, Regional NSW Children and Youth People funding.





# community

People told us they wanted Tenterfield Shire to be a vibrant, inclusive and safe community where diverse backgrounds and cultures are respected and celebrated.

People want the community to be supported by accessible and equitably distributed facilities and recreational opportunities for people of all ages.

**Provide safe and accessible public spaces and places that are well maintained, clean and fun.**

- **Mingoola Hall** Improvements to include installation of a disabled ramp and upgrades to include 2 ambulant toilets and 1 unisex disabled toilet and parent room.
- Construction of 2 village toilets at **Liston** and **Jennings**, gateway signage and village concept plans for all villages. **Urbenville** received an upgrade to Triangle park, **Drake** installation of safe crossing area, picnic/BBQ area within the playground, **Liston** received installation of a covered BBQ area.
- **Tenterfield Town Centre** revitalization - Phase 2 completed with paving to the footpath between High and Molesworth Streets, installation of planter boxes and street trees, and interpretative panels.
- Shade canopy installation - **Rotary Park**
- **Sunnyside Hall** Improvements included construction of an outdoor covered area overlooking the tennis courts, bathroom fit out and installation of baby change facilities and upgrade of the subfloor by replacing stump footings
- Upgrades to **Drake Hall** included external painting, floors sanded and polished, new roof, gutters and downpipes, upgrades to existing solar system.
- Extension to the **Urbenville** footpath from main street to the Urbenville Hospital.
- Repairs to the **Liston RFS Shed** and **Urbenville SES Shed**.
- **Memorial Hall** internal acoustic and insulation treatments with new fire system installed, fans and lighting. Sanding, recoating and installation of line marking for multi-function timber flooring of the recently refurbished complex.
- **Liston Community Hall** toilets and games room extension, including 5000 gallon tank.
- **Urbenville** beautification and **Pioneer Cottage** works include new footpath paving on the western side of Urban Street. Pioneer Cottage works included replacement of guttering, downpipes, veranda timbers, foundation works.
- **Bolivia Hall** upgrades included an addition to the History Museum, a unisex disability toilet and upgrade to standard disabled.
- **Tenterfield Library Refurbishment** - extensive refurbishment of Library space.





People told us they wanted Tenterfield Shire to be a vibrant, inclusive and safe community where diverse backgrounds and cultures are respected and celebrated.

People want the community to be supported by accessible and equitably distributed facilities and recreational opportunities for people of all ages.

**Provide safe and accessible public spaces and places that are well maintained, clean and fun.**

In **2021/2022** visitation at the **Tenterfield Public Library totaled 11,580**. An increase in digital user activities were identified with statistics showing that 8,316 searches of the Tenterfield Star newspaper archive were sourced. Digitized Mayoral photographs were included in the **Tenterfield Sesquicentenary Commemorative Book**, managed by the Tenterfield Public Library which was completed and published in 2022.

In **2022/2023** the Tenterfield Public Library established a **self-service library resource hub** at **Urbenville** Community Hall. The Urbenville library resource hub is volunteer managed by the Urbenville Progress Association, operating 3 hours per week on Wednesday mornings. Visitation at the **Tenterfield Public Library totaled 14,601** during this period. The Library closed from 3 June 2023 to 14 August 2023 to undergo its refurbishment project. Funded by State Library NSW, the funding provided updated visitor user experiences including new meeting and **study areas, activity spaces** and **circulation desk**. The Library project managed implementation activities for the refurbishment which included development of the space design plans, sourcing/selection of approved contractors and suppliers, selection and procurement of furnishings, equipment and flooring, collection management and safe removal and storage of the full collection of materials in preparation for works to commence. The new look library was inspired by the rich colours of Autumn in Tenterfield.

Library staff secured a State Library NSW grant to present **25 Tech Savvy Workshops** available free to the community in the library. The range of programs included introductory level workshops in using smart devices to more advanced workshops in email and cyber safety. The Tenterfield Public Library continues to support the community through ongoing weekly children's **Storytime** programs delivered by **'Make it' Tenterfield**.





People told us they wanted Tenterfield Shire to be a vibrant, inclusive and safe community where diverse backgrounds and cultures are respected and celebrated.

People want the community to be supported by accessible and equitably distributed facilities and recreational opportunities for people of all ages.

**Provide safe and accessible public spaces and places that are well maintained, clean and fun.**

In **2023/2024** The Tenterfield Public Library held the following events in Youth Week - National Youth Week Celebrations included:

**Story Quest** - a self directed activity to discover **digital stories** created by young people during 'storyteller workshops" which were held in the Tenterfield Library. The activity was a short walking trail adventure to find decorated rocks with QR codes attached. When you find the rocks, use a smart device to scan the QR codes to discover our young storyteller's tales.

Crafty Party - **Arts and Craft** sessions for all ages. **Skateboard clinics** - Skate legends Isaac Roxburgh and Tony Chavez Jr from Truck Stop Sk8 offered a series of 4 x1 hour skate clinics to help hone tips and tricks like a pro. **Visual Storytelling Workshops, Stop Motion Workshop, Decorate your Winter Table Workshop,** and **Hardcover Book Binding Workshop.**

Council's NSW Youth Week program was awarded 'Finalist' in the NSW Youth Week 2024 'Best Small Council with Most Outstanding Youth Week Program' and 'Most Innovative Youth Week Program' by the NSW Government, winning the overall trophy for '**Most Innovative Youth Week Program**'.

Tenterfield Public Library played host to a special hands-on interactive **STEM** exhibition from **Questacon, Canberra's National Science and Technology Institute**. The exhibition of the 'Fascinating Science' travelling pop-up exhibition covered everyday scientific principles and problem-solving puzzles.

Visitation at the **Tenterfield Public Library totaled 15,659** during this period.

*Tenterfield Shire Council - state of our shire report 2024*





People told us they wanted Tenterfield Shire to be a vibrant, inclusive and safe community where diverse backgrounds and cultures are respected and celebrated.

People want the community to be supported by accessible and equitably distributed facilities and recreational opportunities for people of all ages.

#### **Provide a choice of sporting facilities that cater for the diverse needs of the community.**

- This term saw the completion of the **Tenterfield Youth Precinct** which included bike pump tracks, skills track and a contemporary concrete skatepark with bowl and full-sized outdoor Basketball Court. Tenterfield Shire Council was the recipient of the **Excellence in Crown Land Management 2023** for this outstanding project.
- **Jennings playground**, exercise area, BBQ area, sealed parking area and free camping area.
- **Drake playground** with picnic and BBQ area.
- **Urbenville playground** and Liston received installation of a covered BBQ area.
- **Tenterfield War Memorial Baths** sourced a new defibrillator, pool painting and renewal. Increased attendances from 16,150 to 18,399.
- **Tenterfield Archery Shelter** Area received the construction of a covered BBQ Area with deck table and chairs.
- **Tenterfield Memorial Hall Sporting Complex** - construction of 2 sets of change rooms, strengthening of floor, installation of retractable seating which seats 400 people, addition of modular stage, and upgrades to the stormwater of the building.
- **Shirley Park Amenity Refurbishment** included upgraded canteen and change rooms, installation of 2 Cricket Nets and lighting.
- Installation of covered exercise area at **Hockey Fields**, 13 station all access gym with shade cover.
- **Tenterfield Rugby Park** had new fencing erected.
- Revitalization of **Tenterfield netball courts**, replaced with tiled courts.





# community

People told us they wanted Tenterfield Shire to be a vibrant, inclusive and safe community where diverse backgrounds and cultures are respected and celebrated.

People want the community to be supported by accessible and equitably distributed facilities and recreational opportunities for people of all ages.

## **Promote and recognise the work of volunteers in the community.**

The Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts was supported by an active group of 14 volunteers participating in the **School of Arts Volunteer Program**. In recognition and acknowledgement of the value and commitment of the volunteer program, Council undertook two volunteer morning tea events and a Christmas party gathering held for volunteers.

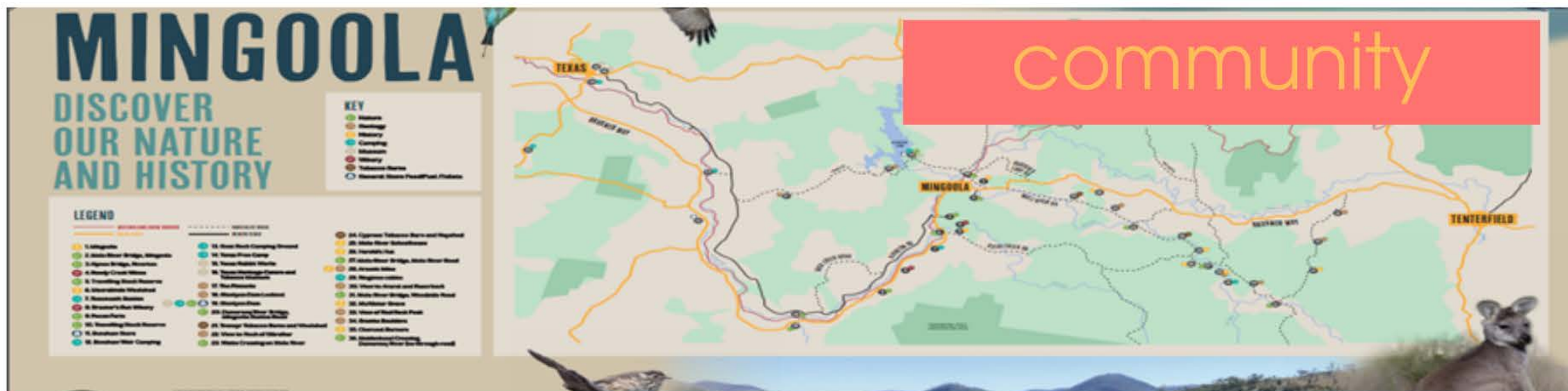
The Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts staff provided ongoing support to the **Volunteer Program** for front of house operations. An extensive review of volunteer on-boarding was conducted which saw the development of the new volunteer on-boarding procedure, volunteer position description and volunteer's handbook. This was to ensure compliance requirements across multiple areas of legislation, including workplace health and safety, and the operational requirements of the School of Arts.

The Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts staff nominated School of Arts Cinema volunteer, Mr Nick Byrt for the **NSW Volunteer of the Year award** in recognition for his deep commitment to providing projectionist services for the venue and community. Mr Byrt and staff attended the Awards ceremony in Armidale to celebrate his achievements.

## **Continue to support and partner with the local Aboriginal communities for improved and inclusive outcomes.**

In collaboration with the Aboriginal Advisory Committee and Moombeelene Land Council, Tenterfield Shire Council's **'Acknowledgement of Country'** was updated to reflect all aboriginal local groups in the local government area. Acknowledgement is on the opening page of this document.





People told us they wanted Tenterfield Shire to be a vibrant, inclusive and safe community where diverse backgrounds and cultures are respected and celebrated.

People want the community to be supported by accessible and equitably distributed facilities and recreational opportunities for people of all ages.

**The individual unique qualities and strong sense of local identity of Tenterfield Shires towns, villages and community groups is respected, recognised.**

- **Shire Signage Project** - Village identity signage installed at Amosfield, Deepwater, Dumaresq, Jennings, Legume, Tabulam, Urbenville and Woodenbong.
- **Restoration to the Willsons Downfall Restoration Project** - Historical research, installation of interpretive signs, clearing and grave identification and surveying of the area.
- **Northern Border Walk project** - create, design and installed a series of signs to enhance the walking/riding experience for the hikers/riders along the Northern Border Walking Track.
- **Tenterfield National Monument Recovery Project** - Funded through Council's drought recovery grant, works continued with verandah reconstructions and facade restorations at the Premier Bootmaker, 242 Rouse St, the National Buildings, 271-281 Rouse Street and the former bakery and commercial group, 148-150 High Street.
- **Mingoola Heritage Trail** - Council was successful in gaining a grant to develop a Heritage Trail for Mingoola. The working group of Julia Hapham, Janet White and Deborah Wray collaborated to carry out site visits, research, gather information from local community members and develop ideas for the trail over a two year period. The trail material took the form of four detailed fold out brochures with different routes and places of interest visible from public roads. These were produced in hard copy and electronic form for download on Councils website and two large interpretive sign boards installed near the Mingoola RFS. The major themes of the brochures were **Aboriginal Heritage**, **Our History** (pioneer and early settlement history), **Our Agricultural, Industrial Heritage**, and **Our Natural Heritage** (geology, flora and fauna).





During our community engagement people told us they wanted development of Tenterfield Shire's economic base into a robust and growing economy that supports employment and business opportunities.

**Develop and facilitate a diversified and growing economy that is a balance of all economic contributors.**

Acknowledging its financial difficulties, Council has been positioning itself to work with and support **community initiatives** that are focused on the nurturing and augmenting of economic development projects, for example, the **Angry Bull Trails** developments. In the same vein, Council has partnered with the local **Tenterfield Chamber of Commerce** to provide exciting destination marketing and initiatives to further grow our visitor economy.

Towards the end of the term, Council has adopted a **renewed focus** on updating and refining its infrastructure **asset management plans**. This action will, over time, translate into Council being in a financial position to adequately maintain and renew its road infrastructure network to facilitate transport of produce and products, including first and last mile considerations.

## economy



**Manage Council's Livestock Saleyards in a commercial manner.**

Council supported the **Livestock Saleyards** with major works including the completion of a lighting upgrade, the installation of a double height loading ramp and the hard stand surfaces fronting the new ramp.

Cattle throughput numbers are slowly increasing income for this facility to hopefully operate on a financial breakeven basis or better into the future.





During our community engagement people told us they wanted development of Tenterfield Shire's economic base into a robust and growing economy that supports employment and business opportunities.

**Improve heavy vehicle access across the shire and improve links to regional transport infrastructure to facilitate and support regional development opportunities.**

Council has **sealed** a section of Mt Lindesay Road and conducted **pavement rehabilitation** at various locations along Mt Lindesay Road, predominately between Legume and Woodenbong including **full pavement reconstruction** of 12 km of this road.

Council has also **replaced various timber bridges** with concrete structures at the following locations: Boonoo Boonoo Bridge (Mt Lindesay Road), Leeches Gully Bridge, Paddy's Flat Road South, Paddy's Flat Road North, Unnamed Creek and Graham's Creek Road Bridge.

Council has **replaced major timber components** on various bridges, including a new timber superstructure on Cheviot Hills Road, replacement of concrete abutments and construction of timber super structures at Boorook Road Bridge, Mole River Road (Tableland CK) and various others.

The work completed on the Mt Lindesay Road and bridge replacement has improved freight access and access to the **regional transport** infrastructure. These works in turn have linkages to the proposed **Heavy Vehicle Bypass** of Tenterfield.

Council responsible for

**402 km** sealed rural roads  
**235.3 km** sealed regional roads  
**74 km** sealed Tenterfield & Village Streets  
**963.5 km** unsealed rural roads  
**152** Bridges  
**4,570** culverts and pipes

economy







# environment

During our community engagement people told us that they wanted our natural environment to be protected, enhanced and promoted for future generations. Importantly people want Council to provide secure, sustainable and environmentally sound infrastructure and services that underpin Councils service delivery.

**Town and village planning supports and enhances local place making principles to deliver sustainable land use management practices for our natural environment.**

- **Shire Signage** installed at Amosfield, Deepwater, Dumaresq, Jennings, Legume, Tabulam, Urbenville and Woodenbong.
- Improvements to Drake Resource Centre included construction of an **emergency response shed** and improvements to gardens and signage.
- Restoration to the **Willsons Downfall Restoration Project** - Historical research, installation of interpretive signs, clearing and grave identification, and surveying of the area.

**We are prepared, resourced and educated as a community to deal with natural disasters such as bushfires, storm and flood events.**

- **Drought Management Plan** reviewed and updated annually.
- Replacement of the **flood warning gauging system** completed and live online.
- Urbenville, Mulli Mulli and Woodenbong **Flood Study** provided by the DPI Grant Funds completed.
- **New weather stations** deployed and online.
- **Bore and storage tank** completed at Liston and Legume under the Tenterfield Sustainable and Disaster Resilient Communities program.
- **Bore** completed at Shirley Park Tenterfield.





During our community engagement people told us that they wanted our natural environment to be protected, enhanced and promoted for future generations. Importantly people want Council to provide secure, sustainable and environmentally sound infrastructure and services that underpin Councils service delivery.

**We are prepared, resourced and educated as a community to deal with natural disasters such as bushfires, storm and flood events.**

- **Local Emergency Management Committee** meetings were well attended over the term.
- **Mingoola Rural Fire Service Shed** project completed.
- Community Recovery Officer engaged October 2021 and worked with the community and relevant stakeholders with COVID and **Bushfire recovery initiatives** and support.
- **Local Emergency Management Plan** was reviewed and implemented in 2024.
- **Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC)** meetings attended.
- Local Emergency Management Committee was invited to attend Southern Downs Regional Council's (QLD) Local Emergency Management Committee, providing a cross border network and collaboration on cross border emergencies.
- **NSW Reconstruction Authority** meeting held with Council staff to work on **Pre-event Recovery Plan**, which supports the Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN) by identifying specific roles and responsibilities within recovery and is a sub-plan of the EMPLAN.
- Various **bushfire events** occurred in 2023 within the Tenterfield Local Government Area. A section 44 emergency was declared. Council provided initial response action to assist combat agencies, with Council Local Emergency Management Officer attending the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in Glenn Innes. Council worked closely with the community, various combat agencies and the NSW Reconstruction Authority to provide needed support and advice regarding recovery.
- Community Recovery Program was terminated in March 2024.





# environment

During our community engagement people told us that they wanted our natural environment to be protected, enhanced and promoted for future generations.

Importantly people want Council to provide secure, sustainable and environmentally sound infrastructure and services that underpin Councils service delivery.

**Our community is educated, encouraged and supported to implement sustainable strategies for the management and protection of our natural resources.**

Weeds pose a serious threat to human and animal health, to primary production and our natural environment. They reduce farm productivity, displace native species, harbour pest animals and contribute to ongoing land degradation.

On going monitoring, surveillance and control of State and Regional priority weed species within the Tenterfield LGA has seen the containment and in some cases, the reduction of some of these weeds. **Black knapweed** was found in Tenterfield in 2019 and due to the ongoing treatments and surveillance of roadsides and private property in the area, a large reduction in plant numbers has been seen. Constant surveillance and control work on **Tropical Soda Apple** has been carried out yearly.

**Education and awareness programs** have been undertaken in high-risk areas and assistance has been provided to affected landholders through grant funding and some assistance with control work.

**Gorse** has been contained to a small section of roadside on the Mt Lindesay Highway and Boonoo Boonoo Falls Road, regular inspections on control work are carried out. Yearly inspections for Water Hyacinth on the Dumaresq River have found no evidence of re-emergence of the weed to date.

The roadsides within the Tenterfield LGA have improved with the yearly control work that has been undertaken each year for asset protection, targeting weeds such as **Blackberry, Lantana** and **Giant Parramatta Grass** to name a few.



# environment



During our community engagement people told us that they wanted our natural environment to be protected, enhanced and promoted for future generations.

Importantly people want Council to provide secure, sustainable and environmentally sound infrastructure and services that underpin Councils service delivery.

## **Deliver a total water cycle management approach including water conservation and complying with relevant acts and legislation.**

- **New Tenterfield Water Treatment Plant** completed.
- NSW Dam Safety regulation with compulsory **risk assessment** for the dam under NSW Dam Safety requirements completed. Inspection of Dam completed 2022.
- **Replacement of the major water main** for the new filtration plant in Tenterfield's East Street Reservoir.
- Clive Street Tenterfield, **water main replacement** completed.
- Apex Park **bore** dispenser completed.
- Mag-flow meter installed at East Street reservoir as part of the **leakage reduction pilot program**.
- Stage one of Cowper Street Tenterfield water main replacement is completed with stage two preparations pending.
- The new **Tenterfield Water Treatment Plant** has been put through its paces undertaking two rounds of proof of performance testing.

## **Deliver an affordable waste management solution for the community to best manage waste and recycling opportunities.**

- **Recycling stations** installed at Liston, Drake and Torrington
- **Torrington waste transfer station** completed from conversion of unmanned landfill operation.
- Repair of fire damage to **Boonoo Boonoo Cells 1 and 2 completed**. Fencing of the damaged cells completed. New fluted compactor wheels delivered
- Alternative cover landfill (Posi-shell) spray unit completed and deployed to **Boonoo Boonoo landfill**. Boonoo Boonoo site offices completed. Installation of weighbridge, gates and remote security camera system completed and new leachate pond has commenced construction.
- Roll out of **Mega muncher**, Food Organics Green Organics (FOGO) - **worm farms** for Torrington.
- All **statutory waste reporting** completed.
- Due to Tenterfield Shire having an ageing population, **hydraulic bin lifters** have been deployed to waste transfer stations.





# environment

During our community engagement people told us that they wanted our natural environment to be protected, enhanced and promoted for future generations. Importantly people want Council to provide secure, sustainable and environmentally sound infrastructure and services that underpin Councils service delivery.

## **Deliver affordable and effective wastewater management solutions for the community.**

- All **statutory reporting** completed.
- **Manhole refurbishment, replacement and relining** is a program requirement under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) licensing. Assessment and completion has taken place in Tenterfield, with repairs completed for 37 of the highest risk assets. 25 manholes were relined completing all asset grade 4 and 5 repairs.
- **Network mapping** to ensure the accuracy of current geographical information services (GIS) is complete. The GIS survey was conducted alongside the **manhole asset inspections**.
- Tenterfield **sewer smoke testing** program commenced in 2022 with 17 issues being identified.
- To ensure best performance of the Tenterfield Sewerage Treatment Plant, contractors were engaged to clean the pump stations and de-sludge the Sewerage Treatment Plant sludge lagoons and finishing ponds. Pump station cleaning is complete.
- Pump station 2 at Urbenville, failure of duty and standby pumps installation complete.
- **Integrated Water Catchment Management** (Part 2), asset inspections completed 2024.





# transport

Our transport network is important to the Tenterfield Shire community, at our community engagement sessions the community told us that they wanted Tenterfield Shire to have an effective transport network that is safe, efficient and affordable.

**Deliver a well-designed, safe road network, including carparking, footpaths and cycleways, that is suitable for all users now and take into consideration future network demand.**

Council has sealed sections of **Mt Lindesay Road** - 5.5km section past Harrigan's Lane, 4.1km section south of Maryland Bridge and conducted pavement rehabilitation at various locations along Mt Lindesay Road, predominately between **Legume** and **Woodenbong** including **full pavement reconstruction** of 12km.

Council has **sealed local roads**, including sections on Black Swamp Road, Washpool Creek Road, Leeches Gully Road, Robinsons Lane, Paddy's Flat Road North, Homestead Road, Haddocks Road, Timbarra Sreet and Undercliffe Road.

Council has **replaced various timber bridges** with concrete structures at the following locations: Boonoo Boonoo Bridge (Mt Lindesay Road), Leeches Gully Bridge, Paddy's Flat Road South, Paddy's Flat Road North, Unnamed Creek and Graham's Creek Road Bridge.

Council has replaced major timber components on various bridges, including a **new timber superstructure** on Cheviot Hills Road. Replacement of concrete abutments and construction of timber super structures at Boorook Road Bridge, Mole River Road (Tableland Creek) and various others.

Council has replaced **footpath** on Miles Sreet between Scott Sreet and Rouse Sreet, **Tenterfield**, and Beaury Sreet, **Urbenville**.

**Deliver an adequate storm water and drainage infrastructure is provided, maintained and renewed.**

Council has **replaced pipes and gully inlets** in Riley Sreet, Landers Sreet and Miles Street. **Earth drainage** works are ongoing in Tenterfield and surrounding villages.



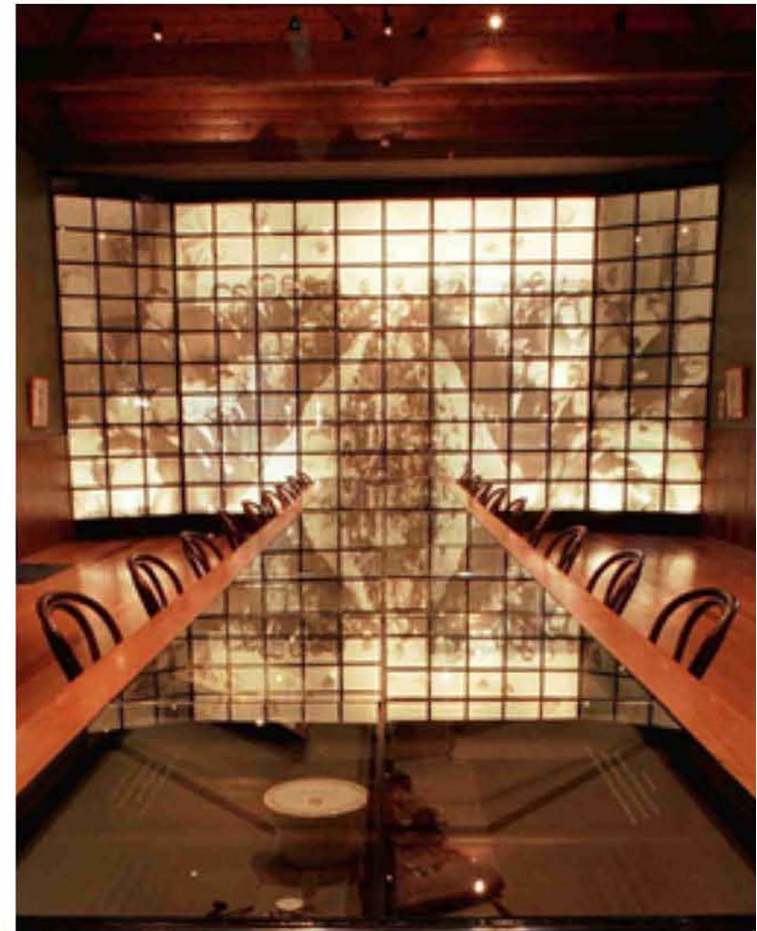
Our community told us that they wanted Council to be a transparent, financially sustainable and high performing organisation, delivering valued services to the community. People told us they wanted the resources and advocacy of Council aligned to support the delivery of the community vision outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

**Ensure the performance of Council as an organisation complies with all statutory guidelines, supported by effective corporate management, sound integrated planning and open, transparent and informed decision making.**

Council adopted the revised **Risk Framework** for risk management and improvement in local government during this term. This included adoption of legislated requirements for the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, as well as Council's **Internal Audit** requirements. Council undertook a **strategic assurance mapping** program, with the outcome identifying service areas where internal audits will be undertaken in the next term of Council, from September 2024 to June 2027. Council also adopted a range of statutory changes in policies. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Public Interest Disclosure Policy, based on the NSW Ombudsman's Office model policy, and Statement of Business Ethics, to include elements reflecting NSW and Commonwealth Modern Slavery legislation brought into effect during the term.

Tenterfield use the **Integrated Planning & Reporting (IPR)** framework to guide their planning and reporting activities. Beginning with **Community Engagement** which started in early 2022, we developed our **Community Strategic Plan, Resourcing Strategy**, which included 3 inter-related elements: Long-Term Financial Plan, Workforce Management Plan and Asset Management Plan, **Delivery Program** and yearly **Operational Plans**. Tenterfield Shire Council's decision making processes throughout the term have been linked back to IPR to support and deliver the communities needs and aspirations. All statutory reporting completed annually and as required.

Council has participated in the **Records Management Assessment Program** conducted by NSW State Records during this term of Council. The program reports back to State Records on Council's compliance with legislation and regulations around the handling, recording and storage of all official records managed and held by Council. Council has also progressed its **Digitisation Program**, with the bulk of records having been scanned. Categorisation of scanned documents is continuing, in line with the NSW Business Classification Scheme.



# leadership





Our community told us that they wanted Council to be a transparent, financially sustainable and high performing organisation, delivering valued services to the community. People told us they wanted the resources and advocacy of Council aligned to support the delivery of the community vision outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

# leadership

**Ensure the performance of Council as an organisation complies with all statutory guidelines, supported by effective corporate management, sound integrated planning and open, transparent and informed decision making.**

## **Workforce Development & Safety**

### **2021/2022**

- Consultation, communication and participation processes in line with legislative requirements relating to worker health and wellbeing. Training conducted in Mental Health First Aid for Managers and Mental Health Awareness for all staff.
- All staff were provided access to Council's Employee assistance Program (EAP). This program was ongoing throughout the term. Employee health checks provided.
- Staff were provided with recognition, incentive and succession planning programs.
- 2021 Workforce Development and Safety continued to assess evolving work practices and procedures in line with the changing COVID environment and NSW health mandates. COVID-19 vaccinations for staff were organised for those eligible. The management of the COVID-19 risk is conducted within council's existing risk management framework and the legislative requirements under the WHS Act and Regulation.
- Training and development funding was sourced to secure free training e.g First Aid.
- Through the supporting apprentices and trainees' retention wage subsidy program, 11 staff members enrolled in Certificate IV in Civil Construction and another in Certificate III in Civil Construction. This was finalised in December 2023.
- Strategic workforce planning occurred and a review of the organisation's structure occurred with a focus on casuals, trainees, contractors and outstanding recruitments.
- Challenges were faced aligning technical skill shortages with skill supply.
- Moratorium on positions was implemented. All vacancies were reviewed by the Chief Executive and recruitment was put on hold unless extenuating circumstances arose due to financial sustainability.
- **2021 Full-time equivalent (FTE) - 112**

### **2022/2023**

- Organisational review of Council's enterprise risks and classifications occurred leading to improved reporting and risk maturity.
- Financial, operational and wellbeing concerns continued to be discussed with staff following the workplace environment of restricted resourcing and the effects on staff morale, output, health and wellbeing service level expectations. An increase to EAP services was obtained to include an outreach program each week.



Our community told us that they wanted Council to be a transparent, financially sustainable and high performing organisation, delivering valued services to the community. People told us they wanted the resources and advocacy of Council aligned to support the delivery of the community vision outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

# leadership

**Ensure the performance of Council as an organisation complies with all statutory guidelines, supported by effective corporate management, sound integrated planning and open, transparent and informed decision making.**

## **Workforce Development & Safety**

### **2022/2023 - Continued**

- Skin checks were organised and provided to all staff that wished to participate in this initiative, meeting legislative requirements.
- Skill enhancement and career development training curtailed due to financial environment.
- Increase in staff turnover occurred. Recruitment moratorium continued. Some technical roles were being recruited approved by the Chief Executive.
- Implementation of Workforce Management Strategies were impeded by financial constraints.
- The repositioning of staff resourcing occurred to ensure, where possible the retention of valuable staff assets.
- **2022 Full-time equivalent (FTE) - 106**

### **2023/2024**

- Senior staff resignations of Chief Corporate Officer, Chief Executive Officer, and Director of Infrastructure within a short period of time saw a further change in staff morale.
- Interim General Manager commenced October 2023 finalising his appointment in March 2024. During his tenure, the Director of Infrastructure and General Manager positions were recruited.
- **2023 Full-time equivalent (FTE) - 103**
- Recruitment of critical technical skilled positions advertised as approved by the General Manager. Challenges of economic and market climate facing local rural Council's impeding acquisition of quality talent.
- Position description reviews undertaken to provide clarity around roles and associated service delivery accountabilities and to assist in realigning business strategies with delivery and operational plans.
- Audiometric testing conducted 2024 following changes in the Workplace Health & safety legislation. Flu Vaccination program provided to staff.
- Statecover and Statewide Mutual reports undertaken and submitted.
- Extensive work was undertaken on Council's workforce review, Organisational Structure and payroll budget due to financial implications.
- **2024 Full-time equivalent (FTE) - 82**



Our community told us that they wanted Council to be a transparent, financially sustainable and high performing organisation, delivering valued services to the community. People told us they wanted the resources and advocacy of Council aligned to support the delivery of the community vision outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

#### **Deliver continuous improvements in Council's business, processes and systems.**

Council's customers have **adapted to technology** over the term, with significant increases in telephone and email communication to service areas. The average number of telephone calls to customer service each month during the term was 500, with individual months often exceeding 650 calls alone to customer service.

There was a corresponding increase in email traffic to Council's email box, with commensurate increases in the use of **online applications** for Council services. The use of technology has partly assisted the ability of a greatly reduced customer service workforce to handle and process customer and stakeholder enquiries and requests.

#### **Management of Council's assets will be long term and focused on meeting the needs of the community now, and into the future.**

Council continues to develop **asset management plans** and maintain current **condition ratings** of assets by inspections of roads and bridges with **data** that will allow Council to have benchmarks for condition rating comparisons into the future.

**Plant replacement and plant management** is Council's focus by applying funding as available to fund plant replacement.

**Asset sustainability** is a focus of Council into the future.

Council operates in a financially responsible manner when doing **Commercial Works** by utilising Council's adopted Fees and Charges rates to do works. Council officers monitor that Council profits from these works.





Our community told us that they wanted Council to be a transparent, financially sustainable and high performing organisation, delivering valued services to the community. People told us they wanted the resources and advocacy of Council aligned to support the delivery of the community vision outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

**Work with key stakeholders and the community to lobby for adequate health services in our region.**

The **Mayor** and **Deputy Mayor** through their **stakeholder engagement** with Regional, State and Federal bodies have advocated for the ongoing improvement of health services within our region. An example of this is the identification of Ambulance vehicles not being suitable to access all areas within the Local Government Area, hence the local State Member of Parliament supporting of Council's view that at least one **all terrain Ambulance** be provided.

**Services to our community are provided in an equitable, safe, professional, friendly and timely manner consistent with our corporate values.**

Council is in a **transitional period** where resources, both human and financial, have been severely restricted to accomodate the Council's financial reality - impacting on its ability to provide services to best practice levels and standards.

With reduced staffing numbers and access to financial resources, Council is pursuing innovative avenues to provide core services to the community in accordance with its **'ICARE' values of Integrity, Community Focus, Accountability, Respect and Excellence.**

**Lobby and support government and local service providers to enhance communications infrastructure across the Tenterfield Shire.**

Council has advocated on the behalf of Tenterfield Shire for **enhanced communications** infrastructure, stakeholder **nbn** has developed a Regional Upgrade Program which will benefit the Tenterfield Local Government Area. Many residents in Tenterfield serviced by the nbn network via a **Fibre to the Curb** (FTTC) can now upgrade to **Fibre to the Premises** (FTTP). nbn has also started work on upgrading the nbn **Fixed Wireless** network in the Shire to help those customers access faster speeds and once complete will also allow some customers within the nbn Sky Muster footprint to access the nbn Fixed Wireless network.





Our community told us that they wanted Council to be a transparent, financially sustainable and high performing organisation, delivering valued services to the community. People told us they wanted the resources and advocacy of Council aligned to support the delivery of the community vision outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

**Ensure Council operates in an effective and financially sustainable manner to deliver affordable services.**

The former Council was elected in December 2021 and inducted in mid - January 2022 and initially conducted community consultation process as part of the Community Strategic Plan in late January 2022, to understand community needs and expectation of Council. Following this a second round of community consultation was held in April 2022 across the Shire with attendance at these events higher than at previous consultations due to the inclusion of the Special Rate variation scenario in the Long-Term Financial Plan to address community expectations.

Council on 25 May 2022 adopted its ten-year long term financial plan as part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (Resolution 98/22). The plan forecasts a 'Net Operating Result before Grants and Contributions provided for Capital purposes' deficit range between \$3.5 million and \$5.7 million in the general fund for the next ten years without a special rate variation.

Two scenarios were presented as part of the consultation process and form part of the Long-Term Financial plan and the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework documents on public exhibition.

**Scenario (a)** - A Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 43% in FY 2023/2024 and a 43% Special Rate Variation in Financial Year 2024/2025, resulting in a compound (accumulative) impact of 104.49%.

**Scenario (b)** - A Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 28% in FY 2023/2024, 28% Special Rate Variation in Financial Year 2024/2025 and a Special Rate Variation of 28% in Financial Year 2025/2026, resulting in a compound (accumulative) impact of 109.715%.

Community consultations and information sessions were held between April 2022 to September 2022 where Council requested community feedback and provided face to face meetings with executive staff to go through concerns and/or comments regarding the Special Rate Variation.





Our community told us that they wanted Council to be a transparent, financially sustainable and high performing organisation, delivering valued services to the community. People told us they wanted the resources and advocacy of Council aligned to support the delivery of the community vision outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

# leadership

**Ensure Council operates in an effective and financially sustainable manner to deliver affordable services.**  
**Continued.**

On 26 October 2022 Council resolved (237/22) to request the Chief Executive Officer to notify the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of its intent to apply under section 508A of the Local Government Act 1993 for a Special Rate Variation of 43% (including the rate peg) in 2023/2024 and 43% (including the rate peg) in 2024/2025 to be a permanent increase retained within the rate base, for the purpose of maintaining current service levels, maintenance and renewal of assets and enhancing financial sustainability.

On 12 December 2022 Council had formally applied for a Special Rate Variation of 43% (including rate peg) in 2023/2024 and 43% (including rate peg) in 2024/2025.

## **IPART's decision on the Special Rate Variation**

Council's application to IPART was not approved in full. Based on the assessment of Council's application against the OLG Guidelines and consideration of stakeholder submission Council was approved a one year permanent Special Variation of 43%.

The one year SRV of 43% approved was consistent with the first year of the Council's proposed 2 year SRV of 104.49%. This resulted in Council raising an additional \$1.87 million in rates revenue (above the actual rate peg of 4.2%) in 2023/2024.

Council continued to improve its finances during the past two years of the Council term.

**Investments** - In 2022 Council had total investment balance of \$6 million. By the end of term, Council investment balances was \$13 million as at June 2024. Council continues to invest surplus funds in financial markets, in accordance with Council Investment Policy guidelines.

**Loans** - Since 2022, council borrowed \$2.604 million on 31 March 2022 and another loan of \$3.1 million on 29 March 2023 to keep itself financially viable and have sufficient funds to conduct capital works. Post IPART determination to increase rate revenue by \$1.87 million effective 2023/2024 Financial Year and a reduction on Employee costs by approximately \$1.5 million, Council did not borrow any new funds.

As of 30 June 2024, Council had Principal Loan balance of \$20.128 million compared to \$21.078 million in 2023.



Our community told us that they wanted Council to be a transparent, financially sustainable and high performing organisation, delivering valued services to the community. People told us they wanted the resources and advocacy of Council aligned to support the delivery of the community vision outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

# leadership

**Ensure Council operates in an effective and financially sustainable manner to deliver affordable services. Continued.**

**Corporate Market Loan** - In January 2022, Council approved the establishment of a Corporate Markets Loan with the National Australia Bank, with a drawdown facility limit of \$5.0 million to assist in working capital. As of 30 June 2024, Council did not use any amount from this facility. Considering councils improving financial situation, on July 2024 Council resolved to extend the facility for another 12 months but with a revised drawdown facility of \$2.67 million.

The strong financial management since 2022 has resulted in Council having a positive unrestricted cash since then and as part of the fiscal repair strategy key steps have been taken to maintain financial management.

**Information Technology and Advancements** - During the past two years Tenterfield Shire Council Finance and IT team has taken a proactive approach in reducing IT operating costs and risk, while advancing the technologies in use to ensure efficiency and productivity.

Primary areas of improvement focus around, Information Technology, telecommunications and digital Geographic Information Systems (GIS). IT Systems will see a better than 40% (approx. \$1.5 million over the next 5 years) operating cost reduction after the implementation projects have been completed, with a move to the cloud environment and current SaaS ERP solutions to drive advanced reporting for accurate operational and economic decision making. In this age of cyber security risk, these new solutions provide the highest level of security to protect Tenterfield Shire Council customer's data and privacy.

GIS systems have previously been outsourced to consulting companies at a high cost, Tenterfield Shire council is implementing solutions to bring most of this work in-house. Accurate and integrated GIS systems are a core functional requirement to drive much of the graphical information and historical records required for long term planning of asset management, prioritising maintenance works and financial management to ensure the ongoing improvement of Tenterfield Shire's infrastructure assets.



Tenterfield Shire Council  
247 Rouse Street  
(PO Box 214)  
Tenterfield NSW 2372

Phone: 02 6736 6000

Email: [council@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@tenterfield.nsw.gov.au)

Website: [www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au](http://www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au)

