



**KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**  
your council, your community



**STATE OF OUR MUNICIPALITY 2016-21**





The *State of our Municipality Report* is a function of Council's Annual Reporting obligations under the Local Government Act. All councils are required to prepare Annual Reports and for these reports to be submitted to the Office of Local Government by November of each year.

Under Integrated Planning and Reporting legislation, Council is required to produce a report on progress made during the Council term, in implementing the Community Strategic Plan.

In the year of a Local Government election, the State of our Municipality Report is submitted to the last meeting of the current Council. The report is also noted by the incoming Council at their second meeting.





<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>COMMUNITY VISION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>COUNCIL MISSION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>COUNCIL VALUES</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>OUR COUNCILLORS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>OUR MUNICIPALITY</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>THE INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAYS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>OUR COMMUNITY REPORT</b>	<b>17</b>
A healthy, safe and inclusive community .....	18
Well planned and managed spaces, places and environment .....	22
A diverse, thriving economy .....	28
Responsible civic leadership that is transparent, innovative and accessible .....	32
<b>MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: LOOKING FORWARD</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>HOW TO CONTACT COUNCIL</b>	<b>40</b>



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands, the Dharawal people. We pay our respects to all Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge their deep and ongoing connection and cultural responsibilities to this land. We are committed to honouring Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to our community.



This mural was created at SENTRAL Youth Services with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community parents and children during a workshop that was coordinated by our Aboriginal Liaison Officer. *"When the wattle starts to flower we know that the whales are beginning to migrate".*

## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

**Council's State of our Municipality Report for 2016–2021 provides us with an important opportunity to reflect and report on the achievements and challenges faced during this Council's term and demonstrates that we, together with our community and responsive and professional staff, have achieved great things and placed the organisation in a great position to move forward under the new Council.**

The term has been one of unprecedented challenges that we have faced together and overcome during this period; from bushfires, major storms and flood events to the significant health, social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am proud to have observed the response of your Councillors, the Council staff and of our community being one of resilience, dedication and compassion. Your Council has continued to provide the services our community rely on, in one way or another during these trying times.

Looking back, some particular highlights of note from my perspective include the successful delivery of significant capital works programs year after year including some major projects. The most significant was opening Blue Haven Bonaira in 2019, our \$106 million state-of-the-art aged care complex on the site of the Old Kiama Hospital. This was one of the largest projects delivered by any Council in New South Wales.

Other projects for which the Councillors and I have been particularly proud of delivering during our term include major upgrades to the Jamberoo sporting facilities, our extensive program of upgrading community amenities and toilet blocks throughout the Municipality using the Special Rate Variation income, delivery of the already popular Minamurra Bike Skills Track and gradual progression of the Jamberoo Cycleway project.

We are also very pleased to see the completion of the new Gerringong Library and Museum (GLaM) right at the end of our term.

My fellow Councillors and I are very proud of our efforts to support the environment through initiatives such as the photovoltaic energy system at Kiama Library, the Leisure Centre and the new GLaM. As you may know, Kiama is part of the Cities Power Partnership of councils leading the charge



on sustainable power and committing to a zero emissions target by 2031. Having this system in place and working is very satisfying.

We have also delivered coastal management programs and had a continued strong focus on reduction of waste from our community through strong FOGO, recycling and household bulky goods programs. I want to especially acknowledge and thank the community for your efforts and interest in this regard.

Regionally and strategically, we continued to contribute and influence policy at a level beyond our relative size, through active partnership with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO) and in contributing to regional plans, strategies and policies. I have also been very proud to represent Kiama on the Country Mayors Association, playing a critical role in influencing government policy for regional councils like Kiama.

We have continued also to plan for and manage sustainable development of our towns and villages, developing the Kiama Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and Kiama Town Centre Study and assessing the ever-increasing activity in residential and investment housing in our area. Over the term of Council, it is staggering to think that the value of development applications determined (1,841) has been over \$1 billion.

In terms of community services, health and sustainability, we were able to deliver the Kiama Health Plan, commenced the Aboriginal Cultural

Sites project, continued to support expansion of youth services through SENTRAL and major events like the Youth Festival. We also provided countless local community groups and not for profits with advice and small grants to provide critical on-the-ground support programs.

Throughout our term we have seen every one of our Blue Haven residents continue to receive the very best of care, with the Aged Care regulator regularly giving staff a perfect or near-perfect report card during reaccreditations.

Of particular note is the way in which our fabulous and caring Blue Haven staff helped clients navigate the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), shifting from their old Community Care Support Program to various NDIS packages. We are one of an increasingly few local councils who manage aged care facilities and I am proud to say we're leading our private industry peers in many aspects of our services.

Finally, I would like to express how proud I am of my fellow Councillors and how we have worked together as part of a proactive collaborative team for the betterment of our community. Your Councillors have taken very active roles in not just representing

our residents' views and requests but have chaired or participated in numerous committees, reference groups and working parties that have guided Council priorities, programs and decisions.

These have included groups for Traffic Management, Walking Tracks and Cycleways, Accessibility, Heritage, Health and Sustainability, Economic Development, Tourism, Community Safety, Finance, Planning and Youth Services.

I am immensely proud of the achievements of Council during our last term and I commend the State of our Municipality report to you as a demonstration of the progress we have made towards ensuring Kiama is the healthy, sustainable, and caring community we strive to maintain.



**Cr. Mark Honey**  
**Mayor Kiama Council**



## COMMUNITY VISION

Working together for a healthy, sustainable, and caring community.

## COUNCIL MISSION

Kiama Council will work to create a municipality that has a healthy, vibrant lifestyle, beautiful environment and harmonious, connected and resilient community.

## COUNCIL VALUES



### RESPECT

We treat others as we expect to be treated  
- in a fair and professional manner.



### INNOVATION

We champion change in order to provide superior services to our community.



### INTEGRITY

We are open, honest and ethical in our behaviours  
- at all times.



### TEAMWORK

We are one team - working together with trust and commitment to achieve shared goals.



### EXCELLENCE

We aspire to be the best  
- in everything we do.



## OUR COUNCILLORS







*I was proud to be part of several important wins for our community – standing up for local democracy during the anti-amalgamation fight, creating the Heritage Conservation Precincts, and pushing for amendments to the State's Regional Plans to protect our natural landscapes. Along the way I have championed a long list of improvements to the liveability of our area, including key footpaths, new playgrounds and shade structures, the Gerringong Library and Museum and the Minnamurra Bike Skills Track. It has been an honour and privilege to represent you over the past nine years.*

**Andrew Sloan, Deputy Mayor**



*It has been an honour to serve my community as a Councillor over the past five years and work with three General Managers and a whole lot of very dedicated staff wanting to deliver the best for the communities we serve. I would especially like to thank the team at Destination Kiama. Initially this was led by Karen Ronning and now by Sally Bursell. To start a committee up from scratch was daunting but exciting. Thank you to all the committee members who assisted along the way as well as Destination Kiama members, volunteers and supporters. It has also been terrific to see the community come together to recognise the challenges we have in regards to Mental Health along with our general health. Our area is the best in our country and I have enjoyed working with my colleagues and our staff to make our contribution to keep it that way.*

**Councillor Matt Brown**



*This term has been extended by a global pandemic, so has our council. Council have formed a stronger working relationship with the community, shown leadership and responsible management, all the time maintaining the functions that a great Council undertakes for a great community. This gives us all a feeling of pride and oneness among staff, the community and Councillors.*

**Councillor Neil Reilly**



*Despite significant change over the last five years, Staff and Councillors are moving steadily in planning for the future. Whilst Deputy Mayor, I had the privilege of being closer to the community, hearing from them and sharing their events. I have worked beside committed residents on numerous Council committees, and I feel grateful that these experiences have guided me in representing the community interest. There are major community consultations coming up in the next year or so and I urge all residents to get involved, so that we can make the Kiama Municipality the very best it can be.*

**Councillor Kathy Rice**





*In my 24 years as a Councillor, my main focus has been to simplify the development application process. We need to ensure that a system where residents can communicate their concerns with Council is developed as this continues to be an area of concern among the Kiama community. It continues to be frustrating that there seems to be an inordinate amount of time between when we agree on an idea or course of action and when there is anything actually commenced.*

**Councillor Warren Steel**



*Great to finish this year on a strong note with completion of infrastructure projects that have brought so much appreciation and usage from our rate payers. I speak of the outstanding success of Bike Skills facility at Minnamurra quarry, not only providing a use for the quarry but one that involves children and families that will also have health benefits. The completion of Kiama Downs Surf Club car park is much appreciated by our community in what can be described as a community hub. Progress with Kiama District Sports Association, that has seen Kiama Power AFL get their Club House and amenities facility to also accommodate females and disabled. I am also pleased to welcome our new CEO Jane Stroud and impressed by her leadership for the future.*

**Councillor Mark Way**



*This term on Council has been an absolute pleasure due to the strong working relationships of Council staff, community groups, strong and effective volunteers and everyone in the Kiama LGA. I have especially enjoyed being involved with the Youth Advisory Committee; we are in good hands with tomorrow's leaders showing so much passion concerning their community.*

**Councillor Mark Westhoff**



*It has been a privilege to serve as a Councillor in this extended term of Council which has been one of challenge and renewal. I would personally like to thank the hard work of our professional outdoor staff which has constantly excelled in maintaining and keeping our LGA safe, secure and beautiful for locals and tourists alike. I also commend the positive inputs from all our community groups who have only the best in mind for all in Kiama. Finally, I would like to thank the Mayor for his leadership and our senior leadership team for their advice and assistance. I commend this State of our Municipality Report.*

**Councillor Don Watson**



## OUR MUNICIPALITY

**Longitude 150° east, Latitude -34° 40 south**

The Municipality of Kiama is located on the south coast of New South Wales between Shellharbour, Shoalhaven and Wingecarribee Local Government Areas. Kiama is close to the major city centres of Wollongong and Nowra and is just 90 minutes to Sydney.

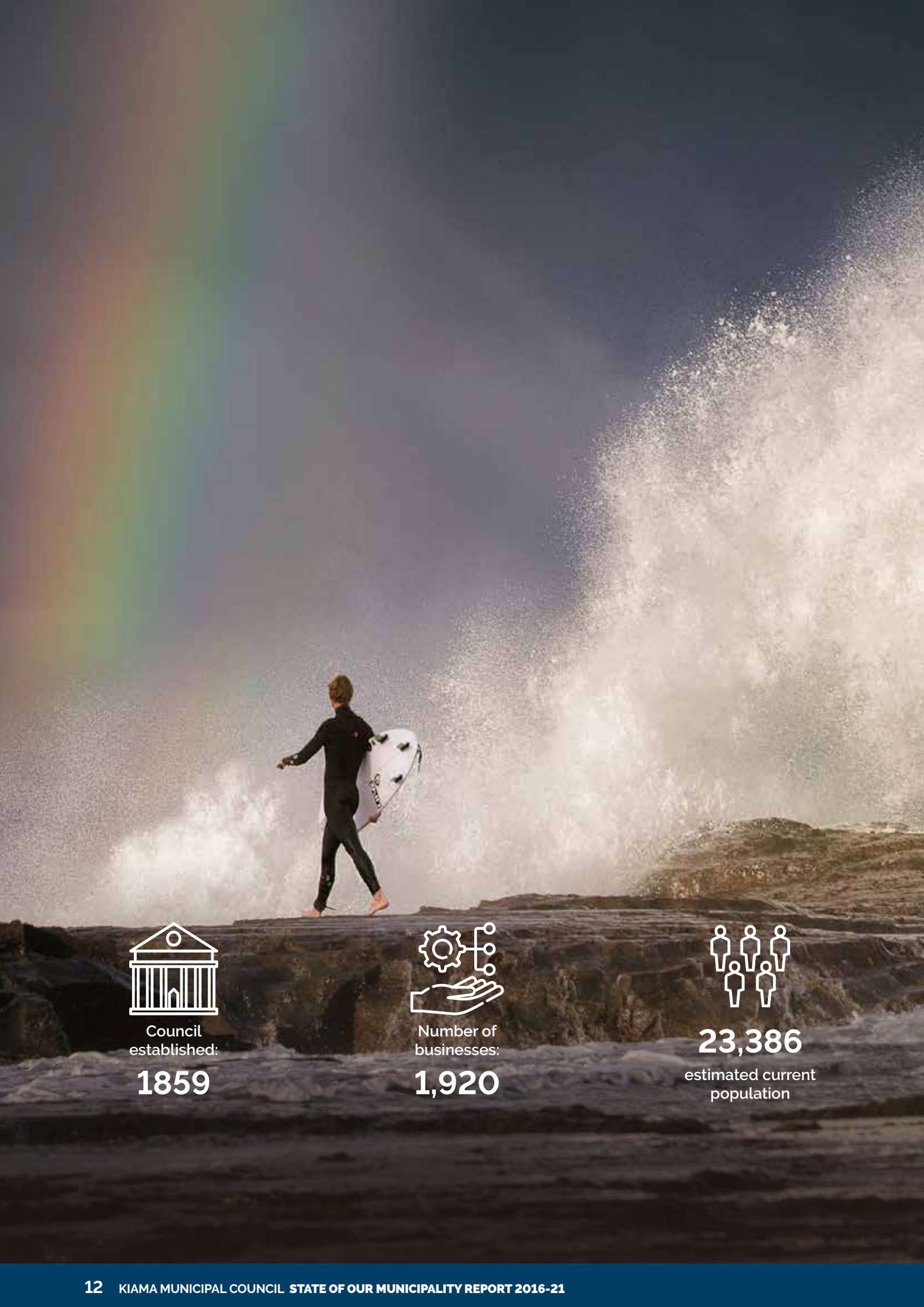
Our area takes in beaches, rainforests, mountains, escarpment, and rural landscapes. Our main towns are Kiama, Gerringong, Gerroa, Jamberoo, Kiama Downs and Minnamurra and each has a distinct character.

The Municipality is a popular tourist destination and provides many artistic, sporting, social and business opportunities for you to become involved in the community.

The word 'Kiama' is believed to be derived from the Aboriginal word 'Kiarama-a'. Some sources say it means 'where the sea makes a noise' and that this refers to Kiama Blowhole.







Council  
established:

**1859**



Number of  
businesses:

**1,920**



**23,386**

estimated current  
population



Annual  
population  
growth rate:

**1.3%**  
(compared to  
1% for the  
Illawarra)



Area:

**259km<sup>2</sup>**

Boundaries:  
City of  
Shellharbour,  
City of  
Shoalhaven  
& Shire of  
Wingecarribee



**6**

Major towns  
and villages:  
Minnamurra,  
Kiama Downs,  
Kiama, Jamberoo,  
Gerringong  
& Gerroa



# THE INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

**Councils throughout NSW are required to prepare Integrated Plans which include the 10-year Community Strategic Plan (CSP); the four-year Delivery Program (DP) and the annual Operational Plan (OP).**

In 2017, Council adopted its *2017-2027 Community Strategic Plan*, which forms the first layer of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework. It identifies our community's vision and objectives for a 10-year period and identifies strategies to work towards achieving these long term objectives. The CSP addresses social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues in an integrated manner.

Accompanying the CSP is a 10-year resourcing strategy designed to inform the development of the CSP to ensure that we have adequate resources (financial, human and infrastructure) to realise the long term objectives.

Planning framework

## QUARTERLY OPERATIONAL PLAN REVIEW

Every three months we will report on the progress made on the activities identified in the annual Operational Plan (Outputs).

## BIANNUAL DELIVERY PROGRAM REVIEW

Every six months we will report on the progress made in implementing the actions identified in the Delivery Program (Outcomes).

## ANNUAL REPORT

Every twelve months we will focus on our progress in implementing the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, as these plans are wholly Council's responsibility.

## STATE OF OUR MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Every four years the outgoing Council reports on the achievements in implementing the Community Strategic Plan over their previous term in office. This report was formerly known as the End of Term Report. The 2016-21 report covers five years as local government elections were postponed due to COVID).

The Resourcing Strategy contains three key components: The *Long-term Financial Plan*, the *Asset Management Strategy* and the *Workforce Management Plan* (a four-year plan).

Also in 2017, the newly elected Council established our *Delivery Program 2017-2021* which focusses on the specific actions they chose to work towards achieving the objectives of the longer term CSP. Supporting the DP each year, Council established the annual OP to detail the activities and services that will be carried out during the following year.

During this term, Council chose to combine the DP and the OP into one document to guide us towards meeting our community's needs and demands for services, facilities and infrastructure.

Combining these two plans allowed us to show a clear link between how the long-term objectives and strategies of our CSP are translated into activities and specific actions.

The OP also contains Council's detailed annual budget and Revenue Policy, including proposed rates, fees and charges. The diagram left shows how the various levels of the planning framework connect.

All our plans have been developed with consideration to the four key areas of Community, Environment, Economy and Civic Leadership and are based on the social justice principles of:

**Equity:** There should be fairness in decision-making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interest of people in vulnerable circumstances.

**Access:** All people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

**Participation:** Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions that affect their lives.

**Rights:** Equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

This State of our Municipality report outlines our performance in meeting the CSP strategies for the 2016-21 period. It reports on our achievements and challenges across the four CSP objectives of:



**A healthy, safe and inclusive community**



**Well planned and managed spaces, places and environment**



**A diverse, thriving economy**



**Responsible civic leadership that is transparent, innovative and accessible**

The State of our Municipality can be considered as a report card of the Council and looks at some of our major achievements and significant challenges over this time.





## WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAYS

**Community satisfaction is a key indicator of any local government agency's performance.**

Kiama Council had periodically engaged local government specialists IRIS Research to conduct Community Satisfaction Surveys to gauge our performance in the eyes of our customers, the residents of the Municipality.

Results from four (4) surveys conducted between 2016 and 2020 have been used to guide Council in shaping and refining priorities within the CSP, DP and Resourcing Strategy.

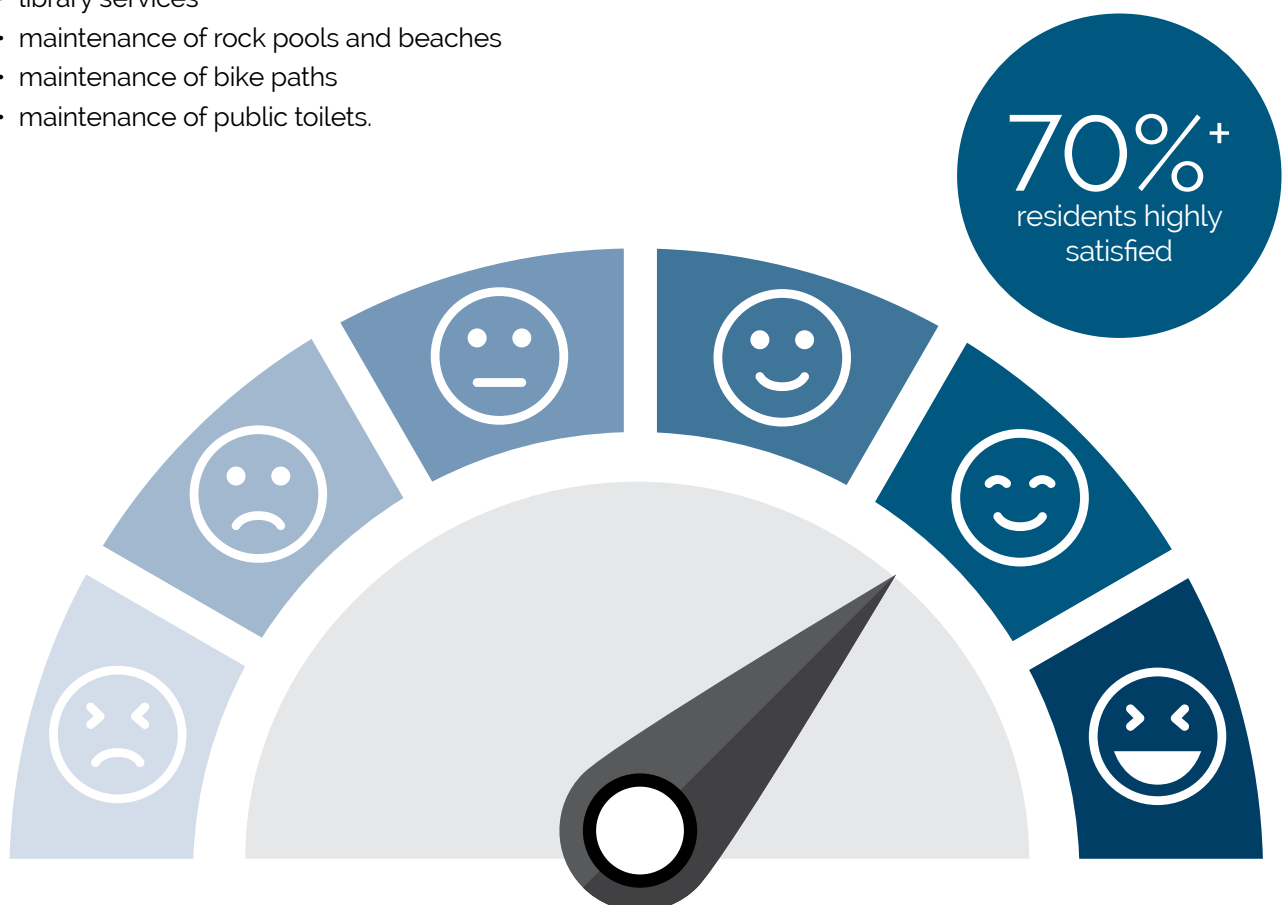
Throughout the Council term, survey results consistently showed that residents have a high level of satisfaction with our overall performance (>70 per cent) and only a small proportion of residents were dissatisfied with Council's performance. Our overall rating has consistently been one of the highest scores across all councils surveyed in NSW. In fact, the 2020 results showed Kiama was the best performing council from comparable councils for the following core services:

- maintenance of local roads
- maintenance of stormwater drainage
- clean-up of street litter and dumped rubbish
- services for older people
- library services
- maintenance of rock pools and beaches
- maintenance of bike paths
- maintenance of public toilets.

While satisfaction levels with Council services and facilities remained relatively high during the term, the results highlighted the following priority areas for continued focus and improvement:

- services and facilities for youth and children
- engagement with the community, particularly regarding Council decisions
- additional car parking in town centres
- concerns about over-development
- additional shopping and supermarket facilities in Kiama
- maintenance of stormwater drainage
- clean-up of street litter and dumped rubbish
- maintenance of public toilets.

These and future survey results allow us to track works and services against community satisfaction levels over time. Development of future Integrated Plans will work to address the priority areas for improvement. Importantly, these surveys will be used to help establish service levels to enable us to focus where attention is most sought and to allocate resources to ensure we are meeting the needs and expectations of the community.





# OUR COMMUNITY REPORT

The following pages provide highlights and outcomes of this Council's term in relation to each of the CSP pillars and objectives, followed by details of key actions and projects delivered during the term.







## A healthy, safe and inclusive community

### Objectives

- 1.1 Developing and implementing services and programs that promote social cohesion, healthy and active lifestyles for residents of all ages, abilities and interests
- 1.2 Planning for and assisting specific needs groups
- 1.3 We live in a safe community

### Term Highlights

Council successfully delivered on our **Health and Sustainability Grants Program**. Of the 19 applications received 14 projects have been funded since 2016, and four of the eight applications for the Community Garden Grants Program were funded.

We have had continuing success of the **Get Active Outdoors Program** which supports older residents to learn how to best use outdoor gym equipment for exercise routines, and to connect with others to support each other to maintain routines.

**Your Community Cares About You** postcard project at the beginning of the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020 was delivered successfully with every household in our Local Government Area (LGA) receiving a postcard encouraging them to connect with their neighbours, offer support and/or request support, or to call Council to organise any support needed.

Council provided **leadership and coordination** in the response to the suicide cluster the LGA experienced in 18 months covering 2020-21.

Our **lifeguard service** has grown over the last two years to adequately respond to increased use of our beaches, driven largely by the continuing growth in holiday and general visitation to the LGA.

We continue to provide one of the most proactive and professional lifeguard services in the region. Our lifeguards continue to provide important school surf awareness programs before each patrol season gets underway, although the widespread restrictions resulting from COVID-19 suspended this important community program in 2020.

The **Kiama Leisure Centre Swim School** has experienced major increases in enrolments. We have seen **improvements to the Leisure Centre** including an upgrade of the auditorium, new spin room, extension to the gymnasium area, upgrades to the family change room, spa replacement and solar photovoltaic system installed.

**Jamberoo Pool** has also seen upgrades including a new access chair.

Our \$106 million **Blue Haven Bonaira Aged Care and Retirement Living facility** is the embodiment of Council's commitment to providing high quality facilities and care so that our residents can remain in their community as they age. Completed in 2019, it was the single largest construction project by a local council in Australia in recent years.



State Member for Kiama, Gareth Ward, enjoys the seating while inspecting Blue Haven Bonaira

Blue Haven Bonaira boasts 59 independent living units in four buildings, and a state-of-the-art 134-bed residential-care home with two dedicated dementia wings. There is also a community hall, meeting rooms, wellness centre, chapel, hairdresser, beauty spa as well as extensive gardens.

Bonaira complements our existing independent living complexes on Terralong and Thomson Streets, with residents from the original aged care hostel now at home at Bonaira.

Bonaira is also the headquarters for Blue Haven

Illawarra Community Services, which support more than 60 aged people and people living with a disability who still live in their own homes.

The Australian and NSW governments have contributed funding to the project.

The **Dementia-friendly Kiama Project** has met with much success since it began in 2014, increasing community awareness and understanding of dementia.

A key factor in this success has been placing people living with dementia in the driver's seat. This includes community information and awareness sessions developed and delivered by people with dementia.

The project is now internationally recognised with the Dementia Alliance International citing it as the gold standard for empowering people with dementia to lead community work of this nature.

Participants have extended the reach of the program, using online meetings imposed by COVID-19 to network with overseas organisations such as Alzheimer's Singapore.

They are also working with the Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra to connect with people living with dementia from diverse linguistic, religious or cultural backgrounds.



The work of the Dementia Friendly Kiama project continues to benefit people within and beyond our Municipality, and is now a regular stop for riders in the Bondi to Berry – Ride to Remember, which raises funds for dementia research.



Dementia Alliance visit stakeholder workshop.

Council's **SENTRAL Youth Services** continues to provide innovative and award-winning support programs to our young people, giving them the knowledge and skills to make positive life and health choices.

These include a Heart Foundation Local Government Award for the Intergen Munchout program which provided younger and older people the knowledge and skills to manage their fitness and nutrition while connecting the generations.

SENTRAL also received a CaddyShack Outstanding Achievement – Encouragement Award for the young women's program and work done with female students from Kiama High School.

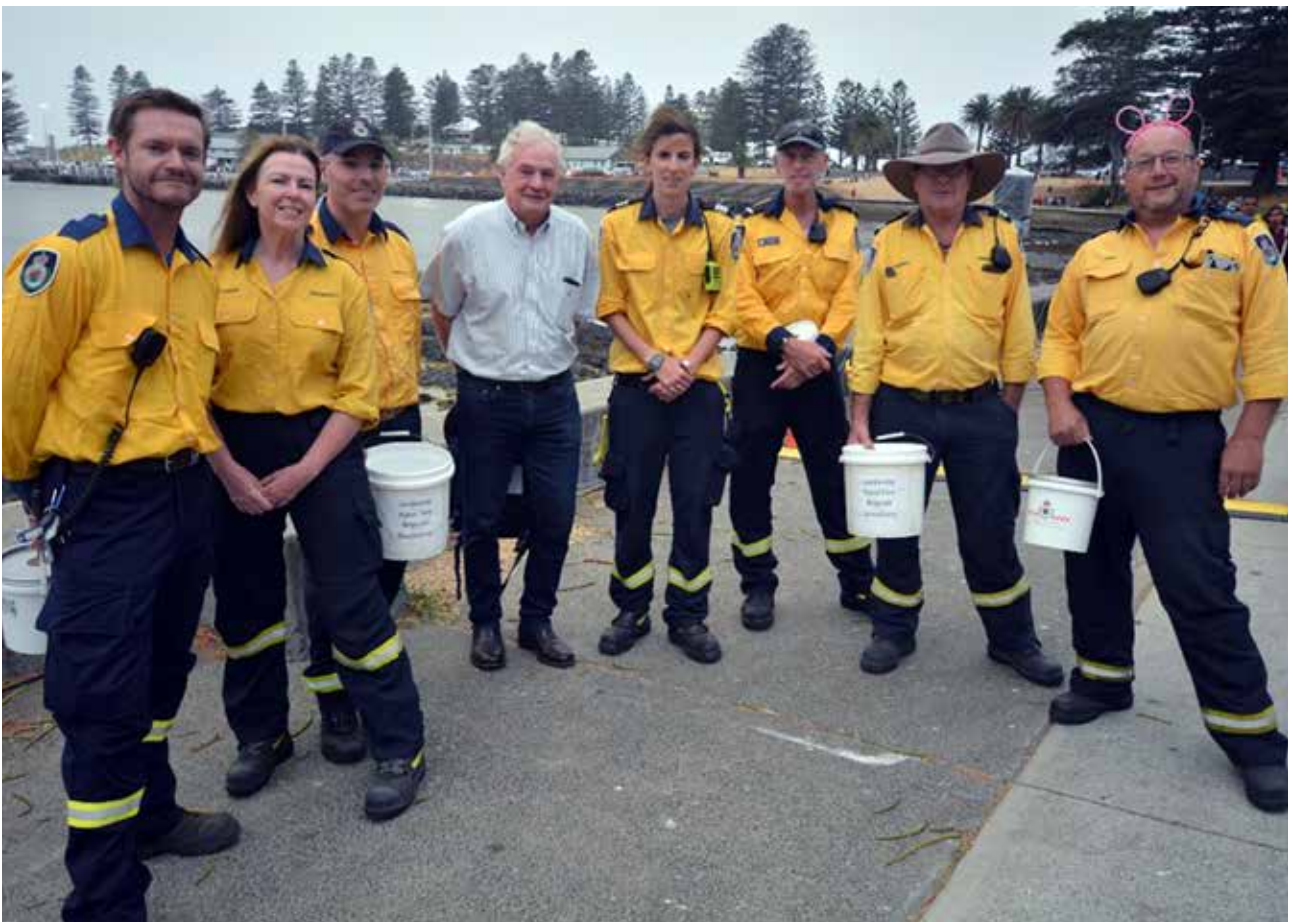
The team was quick to respond to COVID-19 restrictions in 2020, shifting many of its services and programs online, including SENTRAL Fitness, to allow the team to remain connected to their clients.

SENTRAL was recognised in 2021 with a We Do Magic Award for coordinating suicide and grief support activities in response to the crisis that emerged among local young people in 2020. It was also nominated for NSW Youth Service of the Year 2021.





The award-winning work of SENTRAL attracted the attention of Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove, shown at SENTRAL during his Kiama visit.



Council used the traditional New Year's Eve fireworks in 2019 to help raise funds for the Rural Fire Service.

The \$4.5 million **Gerringong Library and Museum (GLaM)**, was completed in late 2021 and provides a new library service to the southern part of our municipality. It also showcases the area's cultural heritage and serves as a social and recreation hub for the local community.

The project has involved restoring the historic Gerringong School of Arts building, built in 1883, while adding a new wing housing a state-of-the-art library.

As well as the library wing and museum, the building features a shared foyer and display area, meeting rooms and amenities. This includes a design with flexible spaces and moveable walls to allow different configurations as needed.

The Australian Federal and NSW governments contributed funding to the project.



The summer bushfire crisis of 2019-20 presented Council and our community one of our biggest challenges since the tornado of 2013.

As a member of the Illawarra Local Emergency Management Committee, Council was fully aware of the threat catastrophic fire conditions posed to the safety of our community and staff, as well as to critical Council services, by the forested hills of the Illawarra Escarpment to our west.

Our Critical Response Team established a detailed plan that set safety thresholds for our staff working in the field or remote locations, as well as the needs of our community and visitors.

This included providing regular updates to staff and the community throughout the crisis.

Council also supported Shoalhaven City Council, which suffered significant destruction, with key staff, equipment and services such as waste services and parks and gardens crews to help with clearing up waste and debris.

Kiama Council's COVID-19 response to the state-wide lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 is outlined on page 35.





## Well planned and managed spaces, places and environment

### Objectives

- 2.1 Maintain the separation and distinct nature of local towns, villages and agricultural land
- 2.2 Our community and natural environments are adaptive, resilient and sustainable and informed of predicted climate change impacts
- 2.3 The principles of ecologically sustainable development and compliance underpin town planning and local development
- 2.4 Effectively manage our waste and resources
- 2.5 Effectively manage our transport, drainage and other infrastructure and assets

### Term Highlights

Kiama was one of the first NSW councils to complete its **Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)**, our peak planning document setting out our community's vision for land use in our area over the next 20 years.

The finalisation of the LSPS in 2020, ended an 18-month community-led development program, involving the general community as well as our Councillors and planning staff, economic and tourism operators and local primary and high school students.

Workshops were held across the municipality to help residents participate. Council also used its Community Satisfaction Survey as well as a further survey of people living in our region but outside the Kiama LGA.

The community provided important feedback on the draft version of the LSPS, which was restructured to add priorities and our community's vision with the resulting priorities and actions.

The **Kiama Town Centre Study** was conducted to ensure the beauty and heritage of the town are highlighted and considered in future development.

Council provided workshops for our community, local businesses and our planning committee to consider challenges and opportunities in developing the town centre.

We also used the Social Pinpoint online platform to gather comments, as well as a drop-in session at the Kiama Farmers Market.

The study found the community wanted future planning decisions to respect Kiama's heritage and amenity and the development of a traffic and car parking plan to manage tourist congestion on weekends and holidays.

A character statement for the town centre was developed as part of the study, as well as 47 actions.



Local school students were recognised for their work with Council to provide our community's vision of what we want our Municipality to look like in 20 years.



The Kiama Town Centre Study considered the future for Terralong Street, including diverting traffic flow to allow the stretch south east of the railway bridge to become a pedestrian zone.

Kiama Council has taken a **leadership role in responding to climate change**, focussing on renewable energy solutions and waste reduction to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

A founding member of the **Climate Council's Cities Power Partnership (CPP)** program, we have established a Revolving Energy Fund delivering photovoltaic systems for Kiama Library, Blue Haven Bonaira and Kiama Leisure Centre, as well as a progressive upgrade of street lighting to energy-efficient LEDs.

Our waste management team has become a model for other councils, reducing landfill while providing financial benefits to our community. They have developed a Short Term Rental Accommodation weekly waste service, established the Kiama Boomerang Bags (plastic bag reduction) initiative and a Clothes Swapping Party - 74 per cent of all items dropped off were claimed with the remaining 26 per cent donated to Lifeline South Coast.

Through their initiatives our community has achieved a 40 per cent reduction in waste to landfill, with 75 per cent recycled or reused, also saving ratepayers \$400,000 annually in disposal costs.

Our award-winning **OK Organics Kiama** service has diverted 4,598 tonnes of organic material from landfill, a carbon emissions reduction of 1,150 tonnes.

Our award-winning Household Bulky Waste Drop-off service has provided residents with a free, safe and effective way to dispose of items such as mattresses and furniture. It averages a minimum 60 per cent resource recovery rate at half the cost to ratepayers of kerbside collections.

Similarly, since being established in 2016, our Community Recycling Centre at Minnamurra receives more than 266 tonnes of batteries, light globes, electrical goods, packaging, gas bottles and paint each year.

In August 2021, Council launched its **Net Zero Emissions Plan** for its operations, matched by a similar community plan.

Our facilities' photovoltaic systems and our LED street lighting are big contributors to our net zero strategy. In October 2021, Council resolved to upgrade all 951 remaining non-LED lights in the



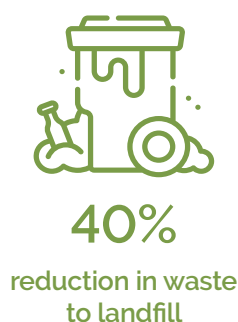
Our Drop-off events have diverted an extraordinary volume and array of household items from landfill.

municipality. We are well on our way to the target of being carbon neutral by 2031. See page 24 for more of Kiama's Net Zero plans.

We are also developing a **Coastal Management Plan** to assist with future management of our coastline and meeting climate change challenges.

Kiama Council is a member of the **Illawarra District Weeds Authority**. The Authority manages council's obligations for weeds control and reporting to comply with the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015. A recent innovation is the trial of drone technology to accurately target weeds like Bitou bush in inaccessible places such as cliff faces.

Council also supports local **Landcare** groups and undertakes tree planting for National Tree Day, where possible coordinating with active local Landcare groups. Over the past 5 years, we have planted trees across the LGA at national tree day events, notably in the Spring Creek Wetlands near Bombo Cemetery, Bombo Headland / Boneyard Landcare sites, Hyams Creek in Jamberoo, Hillside Landcare site at the Leisure Centre playing fields, Seven Mile Beach Reserve Landcare sites, Gainsborough wetlands and Jerrara Dam.





### Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan (2021-2031)

Kiama Council has set itself the target of being carbon neutral by 2031. At the August 2021 Council meeting, we adopted a Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan (2021-2031), which includes our operations and facilities reaching **'Net Zero' within ten years**.

The Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan (Corp ERP) includes reasons for emissions reductions, an effective carbon accounting approach and the pathways to achieving these reductions.

The Corp ERP also includes the aim of having more than half Council's electricity coming from renewable sources by 2025.

In pursuit of environmental sustainability, Kiama Council has achieved a number of energy efficiency 'wins' in recent years, including:

- Photovoltaic systems at our Leisure Centre, Library and Blue Haven Bonaira
- Street lighting upgrades to LED in partnership with Endeavour Energy
- LED lighting upgrades at Council's Administration Centre
- Water management and data logging programs
- Waste education programs
- Power optimisation and power factor correction of our buildings
- Energy audit of Kiama Leisure Centre.

As part of our Corp ERP, Kiama was one of the first LGAs in Australia to sign up to the Better Futures Declaration. By doing this, Kiama is leading by example and showing its support for Australia's international commitment to transition to net zero emissions before 2050.

Mayor Mark Honey said: *"This ties in very well with what Kiama Council is doing in addressing climate change, trying to reduce our net emissions to zero. I think that being involved with the Cities Power Partnership has been a great benefit to the community."*

Better Futures Australia is a network of partners who are amplifying climate work and bringing together public and private sector leaders to scale success stories and demonstrate Australia's readiness for an ambitious national response to climate change. The declaration pushes for a national response to reach net zero emissions by 2050 or sooner.



Kiama Leisure Centre - 99.6kW Photovoltaic system.

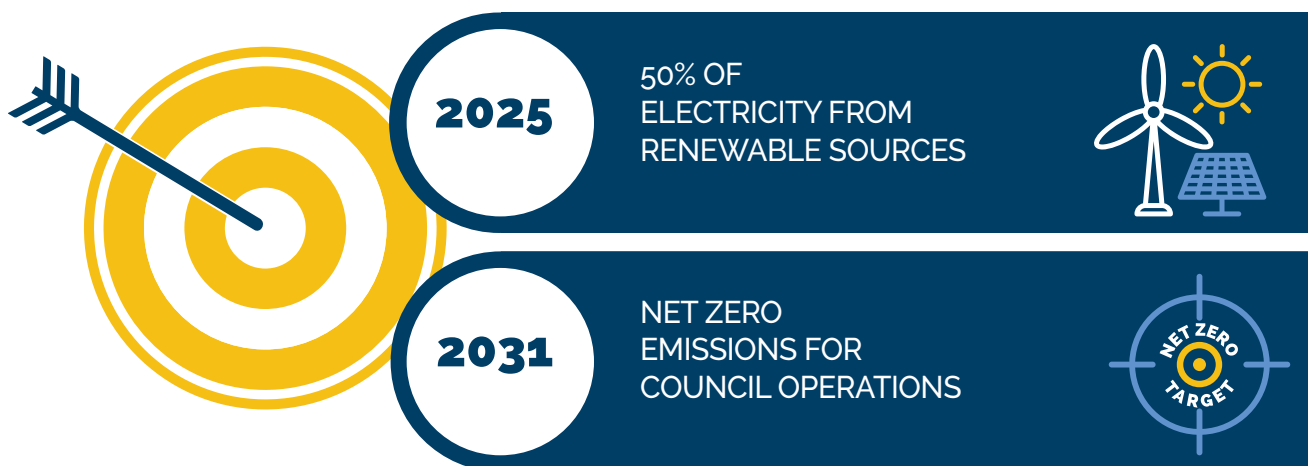


Kiama Council's Mayor, Clr. Mark Honey, speaks at the Cities Power Partnership Summit 2018, hosted by Kiama Council.



Kiama Leisure Centre - 99.6kW Photovoltaic system.

Council's emissions reduction target.





The \$1.44 million Jamberoo Sports Precinct upgrade has provided this popular recreation hub with its biggest renewal since the 1970s.

This major project has provided our community with a modern sporting centre catering to a range of sports.

The upgrades to the Jamberoo Sporting Complex include:

Kevin Walsh Oval refurbishment of the old amenities block to provide new accessible change rooms and public toilets (including an adult change table), and a new canteen. The ground has also received new spectator stands, safety fencing and improved drainage.

Keith Irvine Oval has been provided a dedicated amenities block as well as sports field lighting for night training and matches, and an upgraded access road.

Council also used the opportunity to improve drainage at the adjacent Jamberoo Croquet Club.

The Jamberoo Youth Hall has been renovated and drainage improvements made, to better support community events and activities.

Our thanks to the NSW Government, which joined Council in funding the work.



Council's commitment to our community in seeking a **Special Rate Variation (SRV)** was that the funds were required to ensure the maintenance of infrastructure.

Since the SRV was introduced, we have completed a number of significant capital works programs as a result.

This includes our 'great toilet clean-up', refurbishing, upgrading or completely rebuilding more than a dozen amenities throughout our municipality.

This included, where possible, adding accessible facilities.

Funds from the SRV also helped Council upgrade popular community halls such as the **Jamberoo Youth Hall** and **Gerroa Neighbourhood Centre**.



Our construction team with Director Engineering and Works Mike Dowd and Councillor Mark Westhoff outside the new amenities at Emery Reserve.



The new amenities at South Werri Beach still feature its iconic mural



Cutting the ribbon for the new canteen at Jamberoo Youth Hall

It also provided upgrades of several playgrounds across the Municipality, such as Bonaira Street and Gainsborough Chase Reserve, as well as Croft Place and Jubilee Park in Gerringong, James Muir Miller Reserve at Werri Beach, Reid Park in Jamberoo and Hillview Circuit in Kiama.



In addition to the many SRV projects, Council invested significantly each year using rates revenue and State and Federal Government funding in the renewal, replacement and **upgrade of our roads, car parks, footpaths and cycling facilities**. Over this term of Council, we renewed or upgraded -

- 186 local roads across the Municipality
- 30 footpaths and cycleways
- 10 car parks

In June 2020, following a major storm event that caused localised flooding across the municipality, a retaining wall on Jamberoo Mountain Road collapsed, making the road impassable. Working closely with the State Government and expert consultants and contractors, Council was able to rebuild the wall and have the road open to traffic within six months in time for the Christmas school holidays.



Jamberoo Mountain Road landslip

Council has a strong focus on providing **facilities for cyclists**, both young and mature. A couple of great projects completed during the term are the section of the Jamberoo shared path along Swamp Road to Browns Lane and the brand new Minnamurra Bike Skills Track at the old quarry. These projects, supported by generous State Government grants, provide fantastic facilities for exercise and recreation and for our youth, families and visitors.



UPGRADES  
TO:



**186**  
local roads



**30**  
footpaths & cycleways



**10**  
carparks





## A diverse, thriving economy

### Objectives

- 3.1 Promote and encourage business development and economic prosperity in the local area
- 3.2 Council's procurement strategies recognise and support the local economy
- 3.3 Promote and support tourism in the local area

### Term Highlights

The **Economic Development Committee** continued its operations identifying a number of priorities such as:

- Kiama Harbour revitalisation
- Jerrara Dam options
- Tourism accommodation
- Kiama Town Centre Study - economic demand assessment
- Appropriate supply of employment lands

Due to the impact of COVID-19, workshops pivoted to digital platforms including for the **Kiama Small Business Forum** and **Next Gen Business Programs**. The business e-newsletter was sent out regularly and included the promotion of Government grant opportunities. The Economic Development Manager assisted with the facilitation of these opportunities with interested businesses.

Council through the Economic Development Manager is an active participant in regional Economic development initiatives such as **Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plans, Destination Management Plans, Regional Employment taskforce, Youth Employment Taskforce, Illawarra Business Awards and the Economic Gardening Program**.

Council's Economic Development Manager also has a close liaison with the **NSW Office of Small Business** and the **Easy to do Business Program**, as well as being involved with the facilitation of the establishment of the **Gerringong Business Network**.

The **Pavilion Kiama** successfully held a number of conferences and events including **NSW Tourism Conference, Leisure Conference and Coastal Conferences, Native Plants Conference, Institute of Interesting Ideas series**. These conferences and events are major economic drivers for our area.

Council is a major player in the **tourism market** operating our **Kiama Coast Holiday Parks**, the **Kiama Visitor Information Centre** and establishing **Destination Kiama** to support other local operators.

The **Kiama Coast Holiday Parks** experienced a massive increase in business post COVID-19 in 2020 and finalised major upgrades (to the tune of a \$5.6 million dollar investment) to the Surf Beach Holiday Park. The Holiday Parks also successfully developed a rebranding campaign as well as a new marketing plan. These will help ensure their long-term commercial sustainability and guide future operations and improvements.



In a normal year tourism contributes more than \$187 million to the local visitor economy annually. This generates an estimated 1,500 direct and indirect jobs. We welcome an estimated 983,000 visitors annually and more than 60,000 of these visitors utilise the **Kiama Visitor Information Centre**. Destination Kiama has successful partnerships with Tourism Australia and Destination NSW delivering important promotional campaigns for our region.

Destination Kiama saw an increase in visitors and increased traffic to our digital channels:

## DESTINATION KIAMA kiama.com.au



**64.5%**  
increase in  
website traffic  
since 2018



**255.9%**  
increase in Instagram  
total reach  
in the past year

**71%**  
increase in followers  
in the past year

**161%**  
since 2018



**45%**  
increase in  
Facebook followers  
since 2018

**Destination Kiama** completed the development, implementation and execution of a:

- Tourism and Events Strategic Plan
- Tourism Opportunities Plan
- Industry Partnership Program with more than 215 active members
- Events Strategy and Action Plan
- Tourism Marketing Plan

The Destination Kiama team developed an industry resource hub providing grant funding, templates and guidelines. It continues to run a strong and well engaged industry partnership program offering a number of industry development workshops and networking opportunities.

Council's Tourism Advisory Committee was established to advise Council on the development of policy and strategy relating to tourism in the Kiama Local Government Area (LGA).

Destination Kiama has succeeded in attracting major events to our area to drive the tourism economy.

These include the **World Bodyboarding Championships, World Junior Surf League, L'Etape Ride by Tour de France, and SkateFest**.

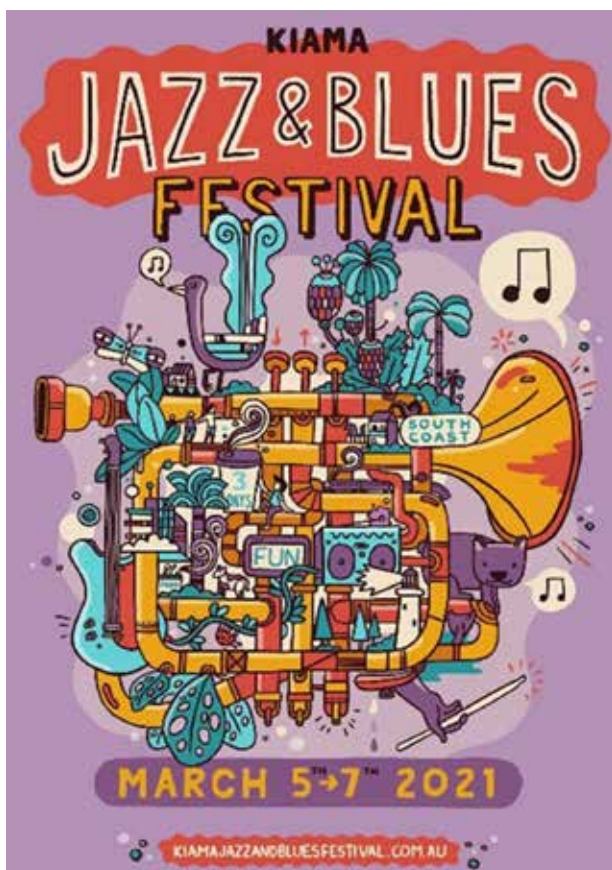






The Destination Kiama team coordinates our popular New Year's Eve celebrations and supports other significant local events such as the **Kiama Jazz and Blues Festival**, **KISS Arts Festival** and **Folk by the Sea**.

Kiama Council also partners with other organisations to deliver amazing events including the Readers Festival, NSW surfing and body board competitions, car shows, sporting events and fun runs.



### Other highlights

- Jamberoo Pool was upgraded with a new pool deck, ramps and accessible amenities.
- New playgrounds were installed at Bonaira Oval and Gainsborough Reserve, and the Jamberoo cycleway way has been extended to Browns Lane.
- An adult lift and change facility was installed at Kiama Harbour, allowing those with disability to better enjoy the rock pools, and other attractions in the area.
- A whale watching platform and picnic tables/shelters were installed at Minnamurra Headland and Jones Beach respectively, in partnership with Minnamurra Lions Club. Council staff worked with Kiama Rotary to construct a new lookout platform at Saddleback Mountain and are currently working with the Kiama Lions to establish a respite house for carers and their families.



## Supporting local business

The Kiama business community have demonstrated their resilience with results post COVID being exceptionally pleasing.

For the year ending April 2021, spending in the Kiama LGA over a two-year period increased by a total 27.5 per cent. This change can be attributed to the inability of residents and visitors to travel interstate and internationally resulting in a much higher spend by both residents (13 per cent) and visitors (41 per cent).

During the pandemic Council has been proactive in offering online education in financial resilience including educating on how to access the myriad government grants on offer and how to prepare financially for temporary business closures.

We also offered weekly webinars on digital literacy with particular focus on online sales platforms and how to maximise your business presence using social media platforms. These webinars were well attended with more than 600 businesses logging onto these sessions.

Electronic newsletters and distribution of the monthly BUZZ tourism e-newsletter, was again

a vital source of information for businesses and provided much information to business on how to pivot and how to maximise business opportunities post COVID.

Council continued the successful Kiama Small Business Forum program of events as it has done since 2005. The topics covered vary with a continued focus on social media and assisting businesses to utilise online platforms.

We have been proactive in October's Small Business month offering business roundtable events that were well attended. We also held a number of "Welcome to Kiama" events for new businesses to help them find local service providers and to introduce them to the local business community.

Council has also partnered with Shellharbour City Council and continues to offer the Economic Gardening Program seeing some excellent results for local businesses.

Council uses local suppliers where possible for minor and civil works, tree management trade services and other contracting.







## **Objectives**

- 4.1 Council is financially sustainable
- 4.2 Council embraces good governance and better practice strategies
- 4.3 Council and the community working together

## **Term Highlights**

Council has demonstrated Civic Leadership during the past five years in numerous ways. We have implemented plans and procedures that set a benchmark for using technology, streamlining services and mobilising our workforce.

During this period, Kiama adopted and embedded its organisation values of respect, integrity, innovation, teamwork and excellence.

### **We established committees, policies, plans and programs including:**

- The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC), to provide Council with independent oversight and monitoring of Council's audit processes, including the internal control activities
- The ICT (Information Communication and Technology) Strategic Plan was reviewed to ensure that technology is used effectively to deliver Council services
- The Injury Management Protocol and Return to Work Program, which has seen us continually achieve below base tariff premium resulting in significant savings for the organisation
- Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy for Councillors and Protocol and Procedure for employees developed and implemented
- Community Participation Plan

### **Technology and processes**

- Introduction of Promapp to the organisation provided staff with a software tool to map processes, encourage company-wide collaboration, increase accountability, and improve processes
- LEAN process improvement methodology undertaken by teams on areas such as tree management, event management, Blue Haven admissions process, resulting in major efficiency advances
- Implemented e-recruitment system Scout to assist with candidate management and the talent acquisition processes

- Council has several major projects underway including; implementation of TechOne, network upgrades for Council sites, the infrastructure and provision of IT services for Blue Haven Bonaira and the Enterprise Software Project
- Introduced successful HR programs: Reward and Recognition and Lunch and Learn, and developed and implemented our first Employee Engagement Survey

### **Community engagement**

- Engagement with the community has continued through weekly e-Kimunico and inclusion of Kimunico with rates notices
- Established various websites, social media channels and e-newsletters across our various channels
- Celebrated our community's achievements through presentation of annual Australia Day and community achievement awards together with additions to our Sports and Arts Honour Rolls
- Regular coverage in The Bugle newspaper and app (advertising and editorial). The Bugle is Kiama's local fortnightly paper, with a circulation of 10,500. The Bugle app has 10,600 digital readers.

### **Wider networks**

- CCTV camera networks in Kiama and Gerringong have continued to be used by NSW Police in their investigations into crimes
- Key meetings with Sydney Trains, Boral and relevant State Departments regarding the rehabilitation and future of Bombo Quarry
- Supported internal R U OK? functions, Casual for a Cause, mindful meditation sessions and "Question. Persuade. Refer. Suicide Prevention Training" for all staff
- Provided a COVID-19 Financial Relief Package to ratepayers and the community in 2020
- Showed leadership during COVID-19 lockdowns by modelling behaviour and sharing State and Federal Government and Health Department messaging to our community and beyond.



Mayor Mark Honey encouraging people to 'buy local'.

### Long Term Financial Plan and Financial Sustainability Plan

Council has instigated a Long Term Financial Plan over the past five years, in a response to the amalgamation threat of 2015-16, when the NSW Government deemed Kiama Council financially unfit and proposed a merger with Shoalhaven City Council.

The development of the 10-year Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) was led by Councillors and senior managers, with the involvement and support of staff and our community.

Following the establishment of the LTFP, the NSW Government provided a 'Fit for the Future' assessment in 2017.

This process was designed to measure Council's ability to deliver quality services and infrastructure to its community.

This not only secured Kiama Council's long term future for our community but helped attract financing for critical projects such as Blue Haven Bonaira.

Council continues to focus on remaining 'Fit for the Future Ratios' and our LTFP, especially our Performance Ratios.

The Operating Performance ratio compares our day to day operating revenues against the day to day expenses. The benchmark for this ratio is greater or equal to 0 per cent.

This has improved significantly since 2014, when it was -6.0 per cent, with Council recording an Operating Performance ratio of +4.43 per cent in 2016-17, when it was assessed as Fit for the Future.

Understandably, COVID-19 has had an impact on this progress, with our estimate for 2020-21 being -9.4 per cent.

Nonetheless, Council remains committed to our LTFP, with the improvement in our position since the impact of COVID set to continue.

To ensure this, we have also adopted key strategies

focussed on our income generating assets, fees and charges, depreciation expenditure and borrowing costs.

The benchmark for this ratio is a minimum of 60 per cent. The increase in income from the new Blue Haven Bonaira Council continues to be well above benchmark and we will continue to explore revenue producing initiatives outside of the main income source of rates and annual charges. This will ensure this ratio remains well above the benchmark of 60 per cent.

A restricted assets policy has been adopted during the 2020-21 year to look at what reserves Council put in place, with an eye on future sustainability and an ability for Council to provide intergenerational working capital to continue its high quality service delivery to our community.



Gareth Ward MP with Mayor Mark Honey officially opening Blue Haven Bonaira

### Financial Sustainability Plan

In August 2021, Council has announced a Financial Sustainability Plan (FSP) to refine and deliver its Long Term Financial Plan.

Kiama Council, along with many other councils across the country in the past 18 months, has had a challenging time financially. The economic impacts of environmental disasters and COVID-19 have affected Council's budget, with a reported operational loss of \$7.956 million in 2020 and an estimated loss of \$6.621 million in 2021.

The operational loss for the 2022 budget is \$2.748 million, with early foundations being laid to continue the trend of bringing Council's budget back into surplus.

The FSP includes projects and strategies to be progressively implemented and actioned from 2021-22 over a three-year financial period.

Key strategic projects that will drive financial sustainability for Council over the coming years and form the backbone of Council's Long Term Financial Plan include the following:

- greater community engagement



- review of current land holdings
- review of current procurement practices and policy
- asset management plan to develop levels of service targets for the community
- review of Council's fees and charges
- sustainable resourcing allowing Council to obtain its strategic directions
- focus on future grant opportunities
- a review of Council's future borrowing costs.

*"Our Financial Sustainability Plan and Long Term Financial Plan show we are actively working to address the operational deficit and ensure a wise use of funds in all areas of Council," said CEO Jane Stroud.*

Kiama Mayor Mark Honey said: *"Our organisation is committed to deliver for our community and to work together to ensure that we have a bright future. I know that the Kiama community will support us through this process as we work with you on financial sustainability."*

Our **Rural Management Challenge** teams have proven a source of pride, and a skills and experience development opportunity for our future leaders.

We have entered teams in the Rural Management Challenge over the past five years. This is an excellent opportunity to challenge our thinking, develop networks, and expand the knowledge of our staff in relation to local government, management skills and teamwork.

In 2019, Kiama won the regional round, awarded the best score of any of the 28 teams competing in six regions across NSW and finishing a narrow second in the State Finals to Tamworth.

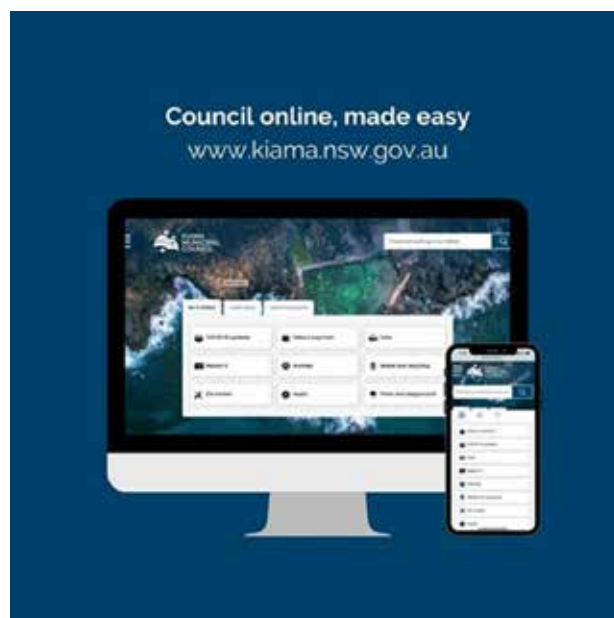


In 2021 we went one better, winning the Rural and Regional Management Challenge, seeing off teams across NSW, including our neighbours Shellharbour and Wollongong, to take out top spot in our state.

Apart from bragging rights, this program helps our

future leaders develop a greater understanding of their council, their community and local government that they can apply when they return to work.

The development and launch of our new **Council website** [www.kiama.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kiama.nsw.gov.au) in June 2020 was another major achievement in improving the ability of our community to find information about our services and facilities.



The new site, which uses the Open Cities platform increasingly favoured by Australian councils, is the result of two years' work.

This project began with extensive user research as to the shortcomings of our existing website and opportunities for our new system.

This involved significant collaboration with Council staff across all departments, as well as community members that reflected the demographic profile of our municipality.

This information was used to assist the tendering process by which Open Cities was selected.

Our inter-departmental team worked for two years to bring the site online, on time and on budget.

The release of the website was actually brought forward to assist with our COVID-19 strategy of helping our customers use more of our services from the safety of their home.

Our other digital publications include:

- Kimunico – our weekly e-newsletter roundup of Council news and press releases
- KCAN – monthly arts and culture e-newsletter
- Bookishh and Stacks – Kiama Library e-newsletters
- The Buzz – Destination Kiama's industry e-newsletter
- Food Safety
- Kiama Leisure Centre e-newsletter
- Blue Haven website and e-newsletter
- SENTRAL website
- The Pavilion blog
- 17 social media feeds covering all our key brands

### COVID-19 Response

Council is proud of the leadership it was able to provide addressing the early challenges of COVID-19 during the initial lockdown in 2020 and in the second state-wide lockdown in 2021. During both COVID lockdowns, we continued delivering services to our community and within our own operations.

Kiama joined other member councils of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO) in discussing a coordinated response for our region.

This guided our daily and weekly COVID-19 Response Team sessions, where strategic decisions turned into tactical actions, to enable the safe operation of critical Council services and updating our community as to what was happening from day-to-day.

Our outdoor staff worked tirelessly to ensure essential services such as waste collection and toilet cleaning continued even during lockdown, showing real commitment.

Our parks and maintenance continued upgrading public amenities.

Our rangers continued to respond to call outs.



Behind the scenes there was a remarkable effort to rehouse 90 per cent of our office-based staff safely. In 2020 we split into self-managing units in remote sites, to ensure we could still operate if an infection occurred in one location. In 2021, we acted early to send all staff to work from home who could reasonably do so.

Staff at our closed facilities rapidly shifted their services online where possible, to continue to support our community.

While we closed the doors to our administration centre, our Customer Service team remained as busy as ever taking more than 100 calls a day.



Our Library ramped up its impressive eLibrary and click & collect services, SENTRAL Youth Services provided phone and online counselling, while providing YouTube classes for SENTRAL Fitness.

Similarly, our Leisure Centre instructors uploaded a comprehensive range of gym classes to stay connected with their loyal clients while in lockdown.

Our hard-hit business community was provided critical support with very popular and free business webinars to assist a shift to online commerce.

Destination Kiama established a quickly growing Facebook community (Kiama@Home), to let locals know which of their local outlets were open, closed, changed or now providing home delivery or an online shop.

Our Environmental Health Officers managed the complicated but important work of helping our 200 plus food premises get to grips with COVID-19 orders and requirements.



A special point of pride for Kiama Council, as one of the few local councils with an extensive aged care operation, was the way Blue Haven responded to the COVID pandemic.

Blue Haven quickly developed a COVID-Safe Action Plan with new protocols and procedures so that home care staff could safely continue to service their clients. This included changes to provide each client a dedicated support worker to reduce risk of infections.

While our residential aged care home was closed, we set up virtual visits for families with tablets allowing everyone to enjoy seeing and talking to each other.



We endeavoured to mark important occasions such as Easter, Anzac Day and Mother's Day to ensure our residents could still enjoy life in the 'new normal'.

When vaccinations became mandatory for Aged Care staff, we ensured all our staff were vaccinated by providing on-site clinics. Our Blue Haven residents were also vaccinated quickly and efficiently, achieving full vaccination status for all residents who wanted it by August 2021.

Council has been able to retain all its permanent and part-time staff throughout COVID-19. As our area's largest employer this is a considerable economic plus for our staff and community.

Lastly, despite all the challenges, we were also able to provide a financial assistance package to help ratepayers, residents and businesses affected by COVID in 2020.

This commitment included accepting delayed payments from our residents for rates, while at the same time accelerating the payment of our invoices from local business.



Kiama Leisure Centre staff busy with maintenance during the 2020 COVID lockdown updating the mural near the kids pool.



In May 2021, Blue Haven welcomed Bushman, a therapy horse, for the first time.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: LOOKING FORWARD



**The State of our Municipality Report is always a good opportunity to pause and reflect on the milestones and achievements of the outgoing Council. I acknowledge the efforts and work done by the previous Council, particularly in times of uncertainty and global changes caused by extreme weather events of bushfires and floods, changing climates and pandemics.**

Our people are our greatest asset. And during tough times, our staff's resilience and hard work has been nothing short of inspiring.

In reflecting on the five years previous it must be acknowledged that significant change at the leadership level of the organisation has also occurred, with the retirement and departure of two general managers and my own arrival as well as significant turnover of senior staff.

I acknowledge the hard work done by many senior staff and officers who may have acted up in higher roles or taken on additional responsibilities. Their care, attention and willingness to step up is appreciated.

Our Council is part of the very fabric of the community and you can read in this document the range of services, commitment to delivery and the many projects and works that our staff have delivered to the residents.

To all the community groups and committees who have worked with us over the past term I also offer you my sincere thanks. Your generosity in thoughts,

time and energy is greatly valued and has helped improve and add value to much of our work.

The end of one term also heralds the beginning of a new term. Front of mind for our future outlook on the journey of sustainability are the following key issues that we must work together to solve:

### **Financial sustainability**

I am committed to improving our financial outlook and moving forward with a robust financial strategy and reporting. This is crucial to our success and long-term goals. Like every household our budget is finite, and we must live within our means, tailoring services, and focusing on essentials, and seeking savings where possible.

Expenditure will need to be clear, accountable and well reported. The difficult decisions associated with addressing rising operating costs, which are not matched by income, will need to be made.

Continued delivery of capital works and services will require Council to create and get value from its partnerships and communication with the community.

Acceptable and agreed levels of service will need to be determined for our assets and services, with the community's involvement in setting these levels critical to the effective use of scarce resources.

### **Organising our workforce**

Our structure and culture in the workplace need support, clarity and improvement. As the largest employer in the region, we need to ensure that our greatest asset - our people - are supported, clear on their roles and responsibilities, and focused on delivering essential customer services.

A new salary model and improved performance review systems are in the process of being established. Working with our consultative committee, unions and workforce we need to realign ourselves and help reposition the organisation's workforce.

### **Working in partnership**

Our relationship within the region and with the community needs continual effort and clear vision. Our input into regional planning, boards, and the joint organisation of Council needs to add value to



the positioning of Kiama. Our engagement with our residents, groups and people through community engagement, committees and open and transparent government is crucial. The development of the new Community Strategic Plan will provide an important vision for us to use to align our work to.

Our new Blue Haven Board, Finance Advisory Committee and remodelled ARIC (Audit Risk and Improvement Committee) will also add value and provide expert advice to the new Council.

### **Asset management and services**

Improving our asset planning will continue to be a key focus. Council is now the custodian of built assets worth more than \$650 million. Our continued investment in renewal and maintenance of our assets will ensure our they continue to be managed sustainably for current and future generations.

### **Economic prosperity**

The future outlook for our region is closely tied to the availability of a skilled and adaptable workforce and an improved diversified economic base.

Encouraging investment and attraction around supporting our different industries will be important to ensure a resilient economy with a range of local employment options. The creation of innovative and bespoke new business investments and job opportunities will help add depth to our economy. While Council has limited control, it can influence catalytic infrastructure and assist in supporting local businesses.

Building on our past success and with much work to do looking ahead, it is an exciting time for Kiama LGA.



**Jane Stroud**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

<b>Date approved/adopted</b>	16 November 2021
<b>Resolution No</b>	21/256OC
<b>Date effective</b>	16 November 2021
<b>Date last reviewed</b>	20 December 2021
<b>Department</b>	Governance, Communications, CEO



## How to contact Council

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### Office hours

Our Administration Building located at  
11 Manning Street Kiama  
is open 8.45am to 4.15pm Monday to Friday  
(excluding public holidays)



**KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**  
your council. your community

RESPECT • INNOVATION • INTEGRITY • TEAMWORK • EXCELLENCE