

A large crowd of people, including children and adults, are gathered in a park-like setting at dusk. Tall, slender pine trees dominate the background. In the foreground, a person in a colorful, illuminated costume is visible. The scene is festive and community-oriented.

KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL **ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23**



KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
your council, your community



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Acknowledgement of country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands of Kiama Municipality, 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.

In May 2022 Kiama Council affirmed and endorsed the Uluru Statement from the Heart and committed to enacting its principles. We have made a commitment to consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as to how best to incorporate the Uluru Statement from the Heart into Council's strategic plans going forward.

Vision Mission Values

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 and share goals.



EXCELLENCE

We aspire to be the best - in everything we do

Message from the Mayor

There's an ancient curse that says "may you live in interesting times". Well, the 2022-23 financial year has certainly been interesting. Thankfully, we don't feel cursed, but ready to embrace the new opportunities that 'interesting' brings.

Coming off the back of COVID and with a freshly elected Council starting in January 2022, the past year has brought many challenges.

We unearthed financial issues that, while they may have felt new to some, had been percolating for years under the surface. Many of these issues relate to our aged care business, Blue Haven.

Kiama Council began exploring options for Blue Haven in May 2022, right before the beginning of this Annual Reporting period. In late June 2022, Council released a 222-page document tabling historical Council reports relating to the design, construction and funding of Blue Haven Bonaira between May 2003 and December 2017.

Council decided in October 2022 to sell Blue Haven Bonaira and then re-confirmed this decision unanimously at an extraordinary meeting on 28 February 2023.

In the midst of all this, we were issued with a Performance Improvement Order (PIO) by the NSW State Minister for Local Government, Wendy Tuckerman, in November 2022.

Minister Tuckerman's letter said: "In deciding to issue a PIO, I have had particular regard to Council's use of restricted funds for purposes other than the restricted purpose, evidence suggesting Council may not be able to pay its debts as they fall due, and the deterioration of Council's financial position."

The PIO and Minister Tuckerman's letter confirmed what we had been saying about the state of our finances and needing to get back in the black.

However, it also put stress on the whole operation of Council. I know myself and the Councillors felt the huge pressure of knowing our every move was being closely monitored by the Minister.

Probably the most intense meeting of Council I have experienced in all my years as a Kiama Councillor was our Extraordinary Meeting on 28 February 2023. The meeting was held at The Pavilion and around 120 community members attended in the public gallery.

The meeting re-confirmed our decision to divest Blue Haven Bonaira, but not Blue Haven Terralong. We also made some important decisions to help re-establish Council's path to financial sustainability.

Prior to embarking on the sale process for Blue Haven Bonaira, we needed to reclassify the land on which it sits, from community to operational land. This process also took several months of intense discussions, both within the Council and among the community. The decision to reclassify the land was confirmed in June. We announced the beginning of the Blue Haven sale process by expression of interest (EOI) in August 2023.



It has not been an easy year but it has been a necessary one. Sometimes you need to delve into the past to create the future.

I should also take this opportunity in our Annual Report to commend all our staff who have supported Council and worked so hard to sift through our financial issues, particularly those on the frontlines in our finance department.

I'm pleased to say that 30 June 2023 marked the end date of our PIO. The four reports required by the PIO were all submitted on time, our temporary adviser's tenure has concluded and we have had some positive response from the new Minister for Local Government, Ron Hoenig.

We are not entirely out of the woods and we're still waiting to hear if the PIO has officially been lifted. But I think we can all look back with pride at the enormous amount of progress we have made and be pleased with what our hard work and tough decisions have achieved this year.

None of these decisions have been made lightly. Although it had been a long time coming and was something we've been talking about for more than 12 months, the Blue Haven EOI announcement was still a big moment for all of us at Kiama Council.

I want to reassure everyone that no one's home will be lost. In fact, this process means that all Blue Haven's residents and their homes, as well as the aged care services provided by Blue Haven, will remain in our community while also allowing Council to operate sustainably and equitably, well into the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N Reilly'.

Cr Neil Reilly,
Mayor of Kiama Municipal Council

Councillor Warren Steel



Councillor Karen Renkema-Lang



Councillor Kathy Rice



Councillor Stuart Larkins



Councillor Neil Reilly



Councillor Imogen Draisma



Councillor Jodi Keast



Councillor Mark Croxford



Councillor Matt Brown



Our Mayor and Councillors

Kiama Municipal Council is led by our Elected Council, comprised of nine Councillors who are elected every four years through the Local Government elections.

The Council is responsible for electing a Mayor and Deputy Mayor every two years.

Our Elected Council plays an important role in representing the community, and ensuring that the community's aspirations for our Local Government Area (LGA) are addressed through our Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Our Elected Council achieves this by providing civic leadership for the community, ensuring the financial sustainability of Council, developing and endorsing Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) documents, and reviewing Council's performance in an ongoing manner.

Our current Councillors were elected in December 2021. The next Local Government elections will be held in September 2024.

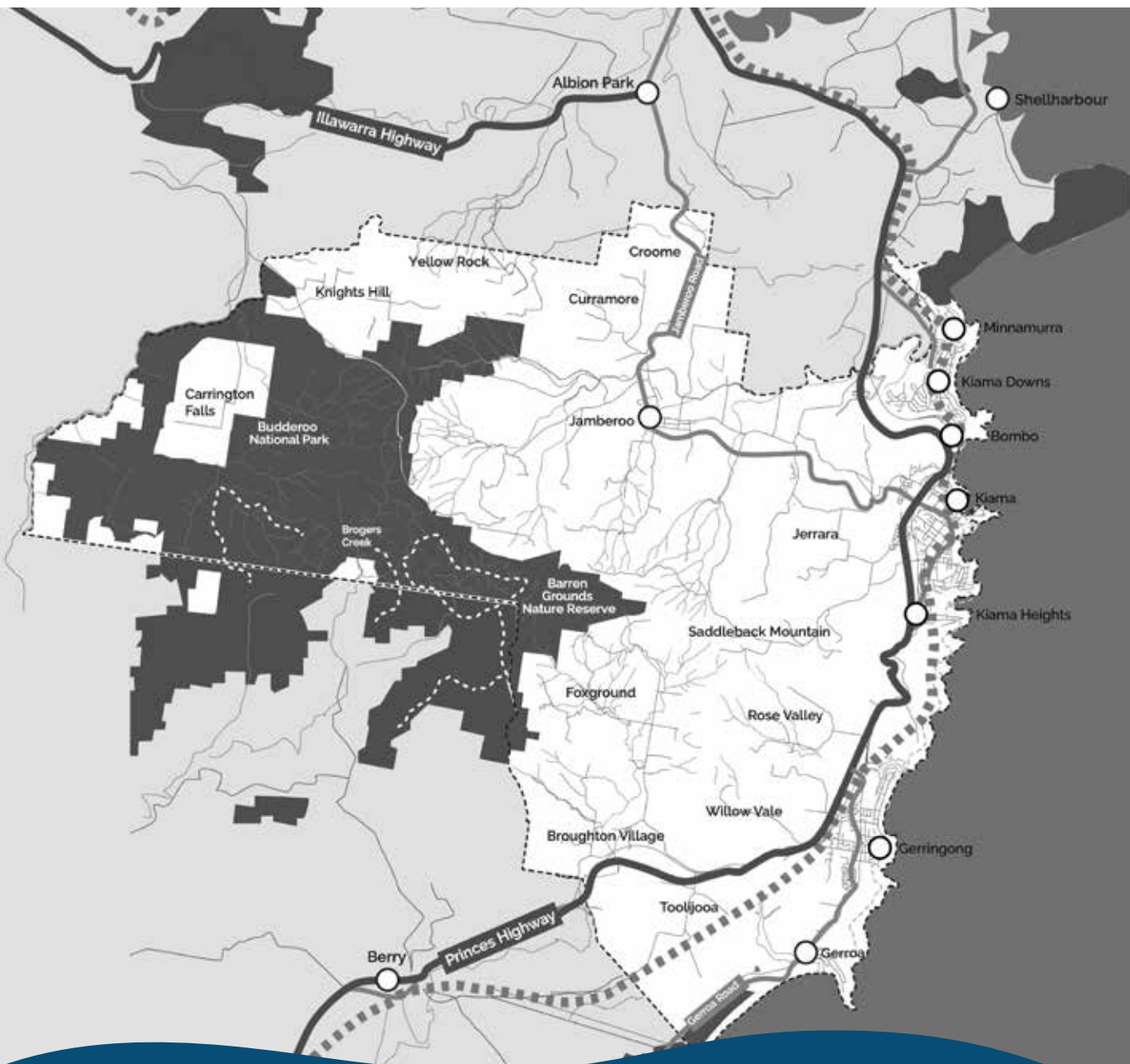


Our Municipality

The Municipality of Kiama is located on the south coast of New South Wales in the Illawarra region. Kiama is close to the major regional centres of Wollongong and Nowra and is 120km south of Sydney.

Our landscapes include beaches, rainforests, escarpments, mountains and rural areas. The Local Government Area (LGA) is made up of six main towns, each with its own individual character.

The Kiama area has a strong sense of community and locals take pride in their LGA. Kiama Council works hard to create and maintain a municipality with a healthy, vibrant, beautiful environment and harmonious, connected and resilient community.





You can read more about the profile of our community and our economic profile via the REMPLAN links on our website:
www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Business/Statistics-and-reports



Council established:

1859



22,964

estimated current
population



Area:

258km²

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



2012-2022
population growth
rate:

0.9%

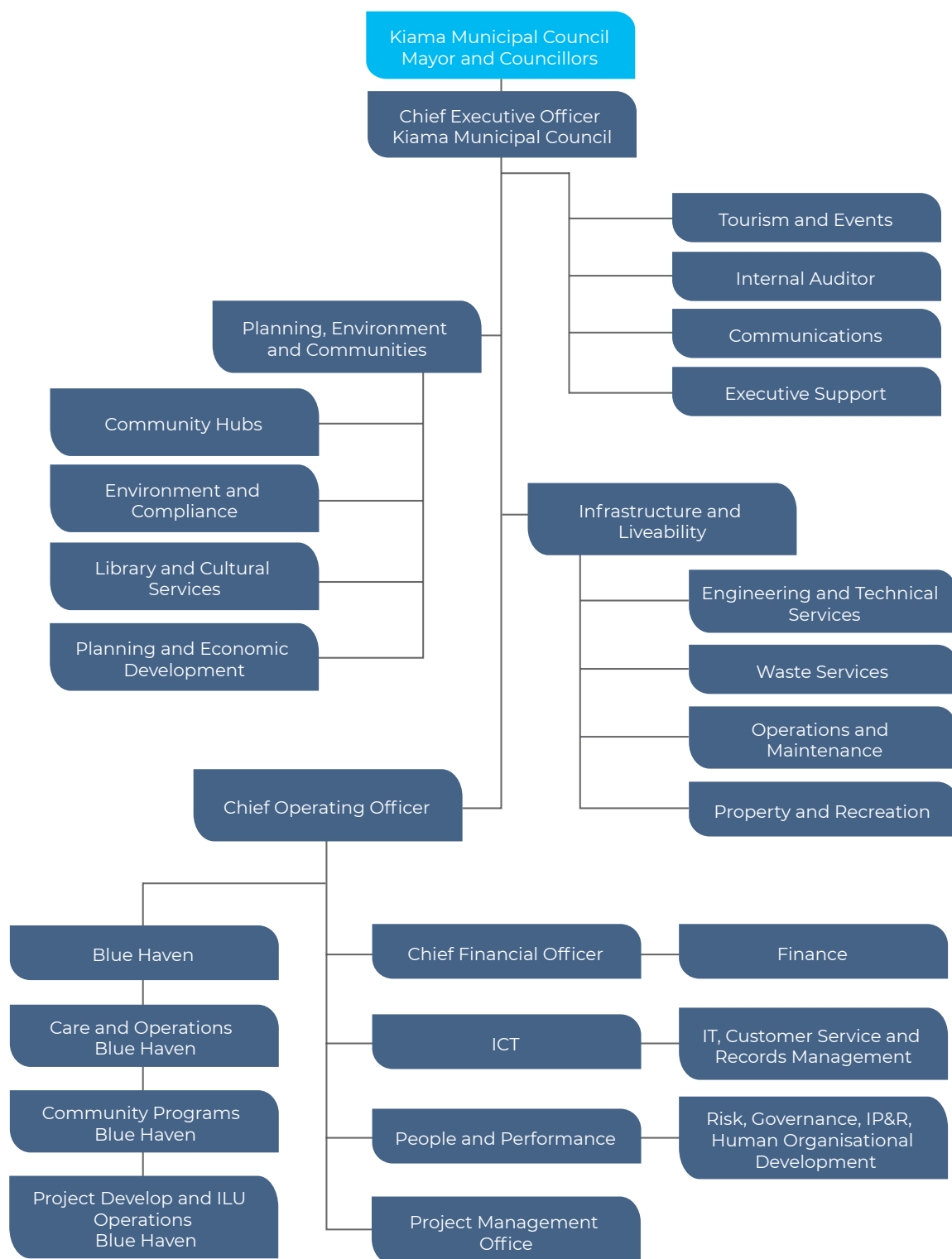
(est population
increase of 1,960
since 2012)



6

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

Our organisation





Chief Executive Officer Jane Stroud

Message from the CEO

The year 2022-23 for Kiama Council has been one where we have faced considerable challenges but also a time where we have achieved much.

As an organisation, we have continued to work through the significant financial issues identified in the “State of the Organisation” report in early 2022. Building on this report, we created a Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) in May 2022 to identify key issues that needed addressing in the areas of

- Financial sustainability
- Organisational capability, culture and performance
- Risk and governance

The Strategic Improvement Plan proved an invaluable resource when we were issued with a Performance Improvement Order by the State Government in November 2022 (see page 31).

To demonstrate what had been achieved and update our core focus areas, we created a Strategic Improvement Plan 2 in April this year, which is well underway as this report shows.

Aside from these key issues and documents, the normal, day-to-day business of Council does not stop. As you will read in this report, 2022-23 saw an enormous amount of services provided to our community by our teams including Waste Services, Libraries, Destination Kiama, Blue Haven, Customer Services, Strategic Planning, Kiama Leisure Centre, Parks & Gardens, Kiama Coast Holiday Parks and The Pavilion Kiama.

We have also undertaken a multi-million dollar program of Capital Works including the completion of the mammoth job of getting Jamberoo Mountain Road repaired and re-opened.

As well as this, we have conducted communications, consultations, events and activities to inform, entertain and delight our Kiama community and beyond.

Internally, we have embarked on and are making excellent progress on our organisation restructure. This is about ensuring we have the right positions in place, and the right people in those positions to modernise our workforce and create a Kiama Municipal Council that's fit for purpose both today and one that looks to future challenges with enthusiasm and innovation.

I commend this annual report to you and look forward to achieving more of what we've begun in 2022-23 as we move forward.



Jane Stroud
Chief Executive Officer



Facilities and Assets

152

public
buildings

33

amenities

308kms

of roads

64

carparks

61kms

drainage

35

bus shelters

83kms

footpaths and
cycleways

55

bridges/major
culverts

137

parks and
open spaces

Facilities and Assets

31

playgrounds

6

pools

6

boat ramps

4

cemeteries

134-bed

residential aged
care facility

257

independent
living units

Destination Kiama, Photographer: Shot Studio

Snapshot of achievements (Kiama mid-year review)

Key actions from the Strategic Improvement Plans, Performance Improvement Order and other reports

- ✓ Obtained accreditation for our Blue Haven aged care facility operations
- ✓ Closed off audited financial statements for 2020-21. Audit of 2021-22 financial statements underway
- ✓ Plan to address outstanding actions from Blue Haven accreditation report accepted by Aged Care Commission
- ✓ Repaid \$30m of our debt to TCorp for the Blue Haven Bonaira development and have negotiated a 2-year extension for the remaining \$15m
- ✓ Sold property holdings in Akuna Street, which has gone some way to restore reserves and working capital
- ✓ Resolved to modernise municipal operations, review business units and services, and advance enterprise technology platforms
- ✓ Decided to divest our Blue Haven Bonaira property and aged care, and community transport operations (subject to the reclassification of the land)
- ✓ Completed 18 recommendations from the Forsyths forensic accounting assessment - April 2022 (at April 2023)
- ✓ Developing plans for liquidity, property, and cashflow improvements
- ✓ Completed three out of four recommendations for Forsyths Developer Contribution reserves review - April 2022 (at April 2023)
- ✓ Explored scenarios for the Blue Haven Terralong site and resolved to seek a dilapidation/asset report (and cost) along with options for Havilah Place and the Kiama Community Garden
- ✓ Completed 18 recommendations from the Hopwood Governance report
- ✓ First Strategic Improvement Plan closed off (75 actions completed) and 12 outstanding actions moved to Strategic Improvement Plan 2



Events, projects and customer service

72 events held on Council reserves this financial year (including major events, charitable, not for profit, community, school based and sporting events)

15 Capital Works projects completed (upgrades, refurbs, roads, crossings). Almost \$10m spent on Capital Works for FY22-23

4 Strategic projects commenced

29 plans, project policies or proposals put on public exhibition

2 major coastal mangement plans progressed (Crown Lands Plan of Management, Coastal Management Plan)

17 Major events including returning favourites such as Kiama NYE Sky Show, Kiama I Do, Kiama Rugby Sevens, Kiama Jazz & Blues Festival, and Gerringong SurfLife Festival

New events including the Sun Up Festival, Gerringong Kite Festival, Surfing NSW - Her Wave Teams Classic, Volleyball NSW, Wind and Waves Festival, Wine Down Carols.

100,000+ inbound emails per month (staff send 25,500 emails per month)

7,500 subscribers to our e-newsletters

2,000 phone calls per month to main Council number

90% of calls are answered within 60 seconds

450 customers per month visit our Customer Service desk

250 live views per Ordinary Council Meeting (plus 250 views of each recording)



Councillor and executive highlights FY 2022-23

15 Councillor workshops/briefings held

8 Councillor training sessions

6 Civic events (Citizenship/Mayoral Receptions)

30 Community Events (Australia Day/Anzac Day/Mayor opening community events)

70+ Ministerial meetings/engagement with heads of Government Departments

8 meetings of the Finance Advisory Committee (FAC)

5 meetings of the Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee (ARIC)

4 ISJO Board meetings and monthly ISJO GM meetings (Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation)

458 Council Reports

460 Council Resolutions

Weekly

meetings with NSW Audit Office, TCorp and State Government appointed adviser

Recruitment



175 started a new role of which
144 were new employees at Kiama Council

(July 2022 - June 2023), this includes internal appointed employees.

Council continues to focus on decreasing our vacancy rates to fill gaps in our workforce



156
positions

advertised externally
(July 2022 - June 2023)



Our organisational challenges and priorities

Council identified a range of issues, challenges and priorities relating to its financial sustainability and resourcing in the State of the Organisation Report February 2022.

The initial Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) followed in April 2022, outlining a mix of actions to address the issues and mitigate those challenges. Alerted by concerns raised by the Audit Office (AO), the NSW Office of Local Government (OLG) monitored Council's progress, choosing to encapsulate key actions from the SIP into a Performance Improvement Order (PIO) in November 2022.

The Strategic Improvement Plan version 2 (SIP2) takes any incomplete actions from SIP1, actions identified in the PIO and any additional identified key actions to provide an overview of our core strategic challenges and priorities for 2022-23 and beyond.

Overall Objective:

To deliver a strategic program of works that improves the financial sustainability of the organisation and addresses governance, administrative and organisational matters raised in the OLG issued Performance Improvement Order.

Critical Strategic Aims of the Strategic Improvement Plan:

1. To provide a blueprint for guiding the organisational transformation that is required over the next few years to improve financial sustainability, organisational performance, and maturity.
2. To demonstrate to the NSW State Government and Office of Local Government that the legislative requirements and ratios for sustainability can be met.
3. To position the organisation to refinance and repay the TCorp debt.
4. To proactively continue to implement the required improvements noted in the performance orders issued 8 November 2022.
5. To improve the capability, administrative and cultural performance of the organisation, with the ability to measure performance on annual basis.
6. To restore community confidence and trust in the business systems and processes of the municipality.
7. Position Council to be sustainable into the future, delivering the services and facilities required to support its community.

Approach:

The broad approach includes the following:

1. Divest property
 - Continue to work as resolved in 15 December 2022 report towards divestments (Akuna, Irvine, Marsden, Riverside holdings) and 28 February 2023 recommendations



Jamberoo Palms

2. Focus on fundamentals
 - divest aged care, home care and community transport operations
 - reassess Council's role, returns and capacity in non-municipal functions (aged care, business units)
3. Restore liquidity
 - reduce debt and liabilities
 - restore reserves and working capital
 - address structural deficit
4. Reset budget
 - priority spend on assets (servicing, maintenance, renewal); and manage asset revaluations and depreciation
 - focus on public benefit and regulatory obligation services
 - reassess Council's role and build fee recoveries for shared or private beneficiary services
 - pursue grants with low risk (capital contribution), or downstream impact (future depreciation or reduction in operating grant)
 - invest in organisation transition (business analysis, digital transaction, skill resilience)
5. Review settings
 - services, assets, business, attributions
 - rating, pricing, property
 - performance, risk
 - organisation design (incl staff establishment following divestment Blue Haven operations)
6. Resilient Organisation
 - build growth and climate resilience into design and renewal of assets
 - build change and resilience in organisation skills, culture and technology
 - build systems of business intelligence for planning, risk, projects and reporting
 - collaborate with agencies to improve population and infrastructure growth and emergency mapping

Plans and strategies guiding Council's actions

All Councils in NSW are required to operate within the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework. The IP&R framework guides how each Council develops, documents and reports on their strategic plans for their Local Government Area. The IP&R framework reflects relevant legislative requirements under the Local Government Act 1993. The IP&R framework requires each Council to develop and implement a suite of planning documents in response to the Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

The CSP captures and reflects the community's vision and aspirations for Kiama Municipality. This is the 10-year plan that forms a basis for Council to respond to with its planning and delivery.

The Delivery Program is the 4-year plan that outlines the specific activities that a Council will undertake during its elected term to address the strategies and outcomes outlined in the CSP.

The Operational Plan then sets out the specific actions that will be undertaken on a yearly basis to achieve the Delivery Program, along with the detailed annual budget.

The Resourcing Strategy shows how Council will leverage its available resources to implement the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. The Resourcing Strategy covers:

- Long Term Financial Plan
- Workforce Management Strategy
- Strategic Asset Management Strategy

Progress Reporting: Progress is reported through quarterly budget statements, 6-month progress reports, annual reports, and the 4-year State of Our Municipality Report.

Underpinning it all are the Principles of Social Justice

All plans have been developed giving consideration to the four key areas of Community, Environment, Economy and Civic Leadership and are based on the Social Justice Principles¹ 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 which 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.



Our commitment

To achieve our community vision, as set out in our Community Strategic Plan and summarised as:

Working together for a healthy, sustainable and caring community, we commit to:

- Treating the parts of the vision as a whole, recognising that they all connect.
- In choosing priority actions, ensuring the rationale is clear.
- Showing leadership and demonstrating to communities and stakeholders that the future of the Kiama Local Government Area (LGA) will not be left to chance
- Linking the vision with the reality of its implementation, recognising that each decision, no matter how small, affects the collective future of the community.
- Being a strong advocate for our region, inspiring others to come on board with the vision.
- Being accountable to the people of the Kiama LGA.
- Actively listening to, and engaging with, our communities and our stakeholders to develop and implement the vision.
- Making financially sustainable decisions even when they are difficult or unpopular.
- Approaching the vision with a spirit of partnership, actively seeking to work toward vision outcomes in collaboration with other Councils, our regional partners such as the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO), as well as the NSW Government, the Australian Government and other stakeholders.
- Using the vision to develop Council's strategic planning, and following it through.
- Acting with integrity and transparency.
- Acting on lessons from success and failures, learning from mistakes and finding a better way, rather than shelving and forgetting them.
- Ensuring that the vision continues to reflect community values, needs and aspirations.
- Working with elected members and staff to ensure understanding of the vision, so that it remains central to Council thinking beyond election and planning cycles.



About this report

Each year, we produce an annual report for our community on our achievements and opportunities.

The current elected Council is halfway through its term, after coming to office in January 2021, and with the next Local Government Elections scheduled for September 2024.

We developed our new Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2022-2032 following extensive consultation with our communities and it was adopted in June 2022. Therefore, this is Kiama Council's first Annual Report under the CSP 2022-32. At the same time, we also adopted our Operation Plan and Delivery Program 2022-26.

You can view and download copies of these plans via our website at www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/Community-Plans

This report follows the structure of our CSP 2022-32, which has five pillars outlining our key objectives and delivery strategies, which underpin our reporting. The report details Kiama Council's actions in the financial year 2022-23 as set out in our Operational Plan 2022-23 and Delivery Program 2022-26.

The five pillars of our CSP are that we:

- Belong and contribute
- Thrive in a sustainable environment
- Create a strong and diverse economy
- Are part of a connected and liveable community
- Expect accountable and transparent leadership; a financially sustainable Council.

We are required to prepare the report within five months of the end of each financial year (deadline: 30 November) in line with section 428 of the Local Government Act of 1993 and clause 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

This report is prepared in accordance with the Local Government Regulation and the Integrated Planning & Reporting Guidelines.

This year, Council is publishing a summary of Financial Statements as an interim measure, while we await the finalisation of our audited financial statements. This delay has been authorised by the Office of Local Government, and an extension of time for reporting has been granted. Audited Financial Statements will be published in accordance with the Act when the audit has been completed.

This includes disclosure of how development contributions and development levies have been used or expended under each contributions plan.

Our results and our objectives

Our results

Our annual report outlines achievements in implementing the main actions in Kiama Council's Operational Plan 2023-24 and Delivery Program 2022-26 for the 2022-23 financial year. It looks at some of our major achievements over this time.

Our objectives

Priorities and strategies identified under our Community Strategic Plan's five pillars link directly to the actions and activities in our Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Five pillars for the future

Our Community Strategic Plan 2022-32 identified five pillars. The pillars relate to each of the major aspects and lives of our community.

Our Community Strategic Plan represents a community vision for our treasured region, based on extensive consultation both recently and drawing upon Council's experience and knowledge gathered from more than 160 years of interaction and engagement with the people of our Municipality. The purpose of setting out this vision is to provide a guide for the work of many stakeholders in the region, and particularly the work we do here at Kiama Municipal Council.

The five pillars from our Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032 are that we:



Belong and contribute



Thrive in a sustainable environment



Create a strong and diverse economy



Are part of a connected and liveable community



Expect accountable and transparent leadership; a financially sustainable Council

Meet our Executive Leadership Team



Jane Stroud
Chief Executive Officer

The Office of the CEO's responsibilities include:

- Tourism and Events (Destination Kiama)
- Communications
- Internal Auditor
- The Pavilion
- Executive Support Services.



Joe Gaudiosi
Chief Operating Officer

Key responsibilities:

- Blue Haven
- Finance
- ICT, Customer Service and Information Management
- Governance
- People & Performance
- Project management.



Jessica Rippon
Director Planning, Environment & Communities

Key responsibilities:

- Strategic Planning and Economic Development
- Development Assessments
- Community Hubs (Libraries, Leisure Centre, Youth Services)
- Environmental Health Services
- Compliance.



Michael Malone
Director Infrastructure & Liveability

Key responsibilities:

- Capital Works
- Asset Management
- Public open spaces and recreation
- Holiday Parks
- Waste Services
- Roads, reserves, parks & playgrounds
- Lifeguards.



Olena Tulubinska
Chief Financial Officer

Key responsibilities:

- Finance
- Payroll.



Aerial shot of Kiama Harbour

Consolidated operating results 2022-23

Consolidated Operating Results (\$)			
Income from continuing operations	2022-23 Actuals	Budget	Variance
Rates and annual charges	27,215	27,156	59
User charges and fees	24,570	24,323	247
Other revenue	7,254	7,251	3
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	20,198	16,228	3,970
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	5,560	6,374	(814)
Interest and investment income	1,781	1,471	310
Other income	2,097	2,351	(254)
Net gain/(loss) from the disposal of assets	8,086	16,637	(8,551)
Total income from continuing operations	96,761	101,790	(5,029)
Employee benefits and on-costs	36,432	36,541	(109)
Materials and services	33,387	32,842	545
Borrowing costs	2,295	1,601	694
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment for non financial assets	11,186	11,186	(0)
Other expenses	3,092	3,263	(171)
Total expenses from continuing operations	86,392	85,433	(959)
Operating result from continuing operations	10,369	16,357	(5,988)
note brackets indicate negative figure			

Financial data is subject to change as Council's 2022-23 financial statements are yet to be finalised.

Council issued with Performance Improvement Order

In November 2022 Kiama Council received a letter from the Minister for Local Government confirming the issuance of a Performance Improvement Order (PIO) and the appointment of a temporary adviser, Mr Peter Tegart.

The letter from the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Wendy Tuckerman, acknowledged the work Council has done to date to address our financial situation, including the sale of our Akuna Street landholdings and the resolution to sell Blue Haven Bonaira, noting however that these actions are not enough to address the fundamental areas of concern.

Minister Tuckerman's letter said: "In deciding to issue a PIO, I have had particular regard to Council's use of restricted funds for purposes other than the restricted purpose, evidence suggesting Council may not be able to pay its debts as they fall due, and the deterioration of Council's financial position."

Council CEO Jane Stroud said, "I respect the Minister's decision. Local Government is an instrument of the State, and our focus must relentlessly be on only core local government services and remaining financial sustainable." "Hundreds of staff and our residents and ratepayers depend on our ability to pay our bills, week in, week out. I've worked tirelessly to unearth and address these issues since starting in the role, and that effort won't stop."

"We must improve the business, address the items in the performance improvement order and retain our local government for the people of the Kiama local government authority". Council tabled the full letter in our Ordinary Meeting on Tuesday 15 November and placed the PIO on our website, as requested by the Minister.

The PIO required Council to work closely with, and utilise the skills of Mr Tegart in his role of Temporary Advisor. It also issued a schedule of actions, including 4 compliance reports to be provided to the minister by the following dates:

- 15 December 2022
- 15 February 2023
- 29 April 2023
- 30 June 2023


Kiama Council compiled and submitted all its compliance reports on schedule throughout 2022-23. The new Minister for Local Government, The Hon Ron Hoenig, has since confirmed that Mr Tegart's role as Temporary Advisor had finished on 30 June.

As at September 2023, Kiama Council is currently waiting for a further response and update on the status of our Performance Improvement Order. We will report on this in our Annual Report 2023-24.



PILLAR 1 |

We belong and contribute



1 person
households
10%

Employed
youth
26%

Population
aged 60+
35.6%

Population:
22,964

Worked at
home
28%

Renting
17%

Government
workers
21%

Residents identify as
Aboriginal and/or Torres
Strait Islander
522

Australian
Citizens
92%

Pillar 1: We belong and contribute

OUTCOME 1: We want a strong sense of community and belonging, where social and cultural life can flourish; and our families, friends and visitors feel welcome and included

Kiama Council created its Build Invest Sustain Integrate (BISI) cultural planning document 2017-2020 more than five years ago. In 2022-2023, our action to draft an Arts and Culture Strategy incorporating a review of BISI and update to the priorities and actions within is progressing. The review of the BISI Cultural Planning document 2017-20 is underway, with additional actions proposed for the next year of reporting. This will be able to be further advanced due to the recruitment of a new Cultural Development Officer position, which was located within the Libraries and Culture team through the restructure process. Recruitment for this position has been finalised and the position filled in October 2023.

During the reporting period a new organisation called the South Coast Arts was established with the support of Kiama Council and other surrounding Councils. This organisation meets regularly and comprises of industry experts and representatives from each Council. The Deputy Mayor and Director Planning, Environment and Communities are board members. Council has continued to support the arts including hosting a number of exhibitions and displays in The Old Fire Station, Gerringong Library and the Council Chambers.

Council provides a unique opportunity for artists to display their works both within the Old Fire Station Exhibition Space in Kiama and the

Gerringong Library Exhibition Space. Council has also been actively encouraging the display of art within Council Chambers. A number of programs and opportunities were provided throughout the reporting period, including programs for young people such as Open Mic afternoons at our SENTRAL Youth Service and other creative programs. Council continues to support community initiatives including markets and collaborations which enable sharing and sales of works. Council has also actively supported the arts and artist both through financial contribution and in-kind contribution to the South Coast Arts (RADO).

A review of Council's grants programs has been undertaken, including an audit of grants required through the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC). Implementation of a new grants program has also occurred which includes the new Signature Community Events Program (kicking off in 2023-24).

The Illawarra Interagency hosts events and delivers programs that provide opportunities to build capacity, network and partnerships within the region. These include grant writing workshop, yarning circles and cultural competency training. In 2022-23 the Illawarra Interagency provided via its website, 110 posts to its 414 blog subscribers, promoting their Illawarra based activities, events, projects and services, which attracted over 7,000

views by more than 4,000 visitors. During the year, the Interagency offered the region's 535 email subscribers, opportunities in capacity building, networking and professional development, with a calendar of themed topics that included; 2021 Census Data tools, Yarning Circle, Community Sector Peak Bodies, Community Capacity Building, Community Grants Training and an Annual Networking Event.

Council's project to partner and collaborate with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District to deliver holistic health outcomes within our communities has now been completed. Discussions have been held with the Local Health District and focus will now change to ongoing collaboration on strategic planning outcomes and other projects which relate to active transport and design of spaces. Ongoing meetings are also being held to continue to seek input from the Health District into Council's decision-making process. Council has also been liaising with other health providers and industry on a range of projects for example, the low cost and free meals directory and the Shellharbour Hospital. Council also undertakes a range of other

partnerships including work that occurs through SENTRAL such as programs and activities with health and wellbeing outcomes for young people including camping, sexual health education, art and music workshops. Council's Leisure Centre also continues to provide health and fitness programs to the community.

Work has been occurring through the Lifehacks program to seek input and feedback about young people's needs and wants within the LGA. This project was presented to the wider community in July 2023. Work has also occurred during the reporting period to reestablish relationships and partnerships with community groups and with the Kiama High School.

New programs have been offered through the youth centre and have included partnerships with outdoor education providers, emergency services, careers services and other providers. A review of our SENTRAL Youth Service drop-in has also been undertaken to understand utilisation and options for this program. Focus has also been on the recruitment and restructure of the Community



26 May, Sorry Day

Team with the establishment of a new Community Hubs Manager Position.

SENTRAL Youth Services was successful in securing grants for a number of programs and initiatives throughout the year. Focus was on creating strong partnerships and facilitating activities and support services (rather than service provision by Council). Work also focused on re-establishing relationships with key partners and service providers as well as local schools and community groups.

SENTRAL Youth Services had started a monthly youth gig for young people to showcase their talents and musical ability. By running these events we had young people volunteer and develop skills based around sound setup and live sound production. SENTRAL worked with Wollongong youth services to develop a pathway so young people can access and participate in Illawarra gigs and activities through performances. These gigs have been running monthly since December 2022

Council has developed a draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-2026 inclusive of a whole of Council action plan. Council has held consultations with staff and community and is currently reviewing the feedback to finalise the DIAP for implementation.

The action to 'engage with our diverse community through the Disability Access and Movement Committee' has been completed. During the reporting period Council resolved to review its committee structure and dissolved former Committees of Council. A new committee structure has been established and this work will occur in the next reporting period.

Council provides venues and resources to support

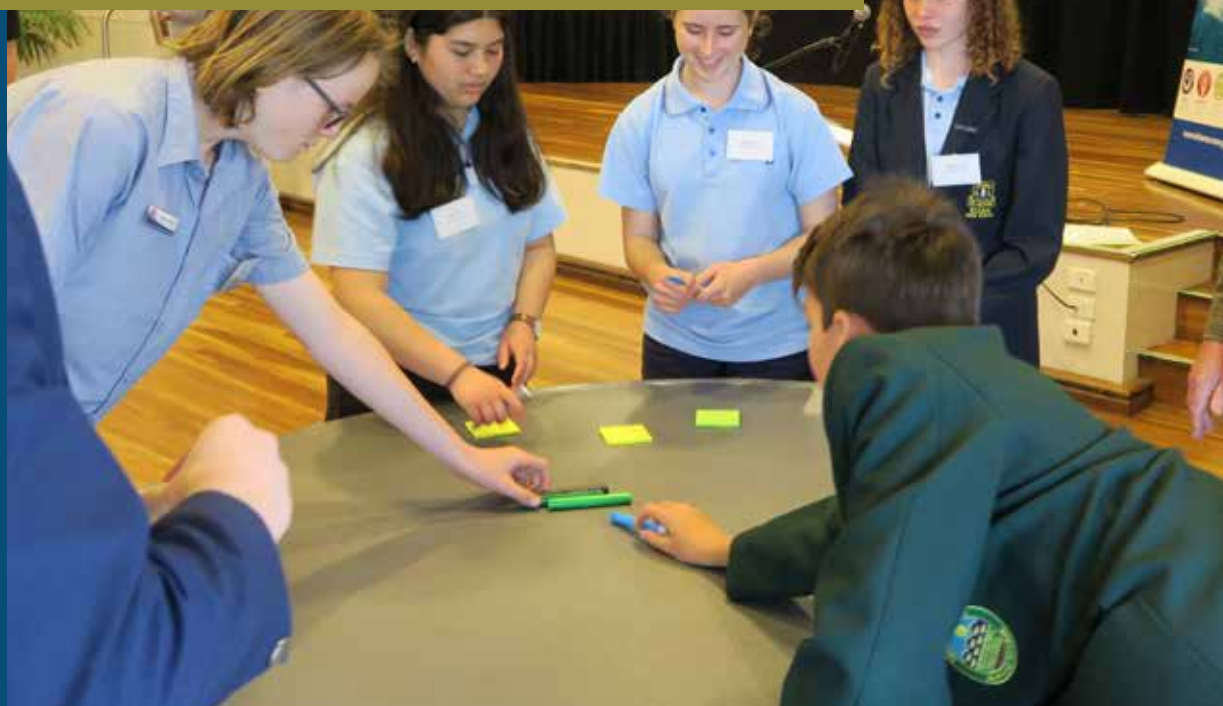
community and cultural groups to connect and participate in skill development activities including. The facilities were utilised by community groups and volunteers such as weekly art and craft, fitness and health, and information sessions.

Council's community facilities were activated during national and local significant days such as during Seniors Week, Youth Week, Sorry Day, NAIDOC and at community market days.

SENTRAL delivers for our youth

SENTRAL Youth Services delivered a diverse program of activities for young people during 2022-23, including the following highlights:

- Held Drop-In sessions twice a week, a safe and learning space for young people to engage with youth workers and each other.
- Delivered art, culture, health, mental health and education talks and workshops at weekly Drop-In sessions.
- Established Good Vibes and SENTRAL Sounds, a skills development and performance opportunity to showcase local talents.
- Partnered and worked with local schools on community, cultural and sporting programs including League Tag, Wear It Purple Day and The Panel.
- Partnered with PCYC to deliver Fit for Life Program.
- Delivered school holidays and Youth Week programs, including securing a grant for a youth camp.
- Partnered with Beyond Empathy to deliver weekly podcasting, photography and videography workshops.
- In total, over 1,650 young people were engaged and participated in programs and activities.



Kiama Libraries

A number of meetings with the South Coast Cooperative have been held in order to facilitate feedback on the library collection development and selection.

Standing Order profiles have been completed for Adult Fiction, Youth and Junior series titles. A regular program of collection maintenance is ongoing to ensure currency, usage, diversity, and subject area gaps are identified.

We are currently investigating the use of Collection Profiles to support the collection to remain relevant to local community need.

The South Coast Cooperative Collection Development policy was reviewed in 2022.

During this reporting period:

- Library membership increased by 969 members
- 5,127 new items purchased
- 7,166 items responsibly discarded
- 52% of the collection is less than 5 years old
- 14,587 information searches via our online databases
- 14,925 internet hours accessed by 11,627 in-library users
- 6,568 hours of Wi-Fi accessed by 11,820 users
- 58,074 visitors to Library website

After reviewing the Information Services Librarian position due to retirement, the Local Studies Librarian position has been filled and a new focus on the Vertical File collection has taken place. A project has been developed to digitise this collection for inclusion on the library Digital



Access Management. This system can be accessed by the community from the library website and provides access to additional local history material which was previously only available onsite.

Partnerships with the local historical societies have provided opportunities for us to share our collection and programs with the wider community.

130 Early Childhood programs have been provided with 2,998 attending during the last 12 months. All Early Children programs have resumed after the pandemic restriction to include fortnightly session of Baby Story Time and Toddler Tales at Kiama Library and weekly pre-school Story Time sessions. Toddler Tales session commenced at Gerringong Library March 2023 on a fortnightly basis with 7 sessions held and 111 attending. Also see our Facility report: Libraries on page 56.



Review and update library strategy

The State Library NSW, consultants and public library networks have been approached to provide advice on best practice for implementing a service review. Staff have been informed of the library service review and the development of a strategy and a review framework has been developed.

OUTCOME 2: We love where we live; we have the services and facilities we need, and the natural beauty of our surroundings enhances our active and healthy lifestyle

Council's Sports Project Officer is continuing to progress the creation of Council's Open Space and Recreation Strategy. Extensive consultation via face-to-face meetings, community sessions and online surveys have been conducted with sporting clubs and the community. Unforeseen additional tasks have contributed to the delay in finalising the strategy. It is anticipated that the Strategy will be reported to Council before the end of the 2023 calendar year.

Council has participated in Local Emergency Management Meetings with representation by LEMO (Risk Management Coordinator), Liaison Officer (Manager Depot Operations) and Chair (Director Infrastructure & Liveability).

Meetings have included Illawarra Emergency Response Plan review and updates in accordance with State Emergency Response Management (SERM).

Jamberoo Pool and Kiama Leisure Centre

Jamberoo Pool operated from December 2022 to March 2023. Recruitment took place in October/ November, where 5 current employees and one new employee were engaged to work at the pool. The season ran smoothly with only five unscheduled closures due to inclement weather and staff shortages/ unavailability. All risks and

faults were managed in accordance with current procedures and statutory requirements.

Jamberoo Pool had more than 8,300 visits during the season, with the highest number of visits recorded in the last week of January 2023.

Plant maintenance was carried out as per weekly work schedules, and one sand filter was replaced this season.



Jamberoo Pool

At Kiama Leisure Centre, scheduled pool and plant maintenance was completed weekly and monthly in accordance with centre procedures.

All pool testing results were recorded to comply with NSW Health requirements, and met the statutory levels associated with public swimming pools.

All risks and faults were actioned and repairs were conducted in a timely manner to ensure the safety of the public. All incident reports were completed and actioned, and sent to Council's risk management team for review. Incidents were assessed to provide us with potential options to improve our facility.

Leisure Centre services were successfully provided to both casual users and members throughout the reporting period. Fitness classes averaged between 13-16 participants, with adjustments made to the timetable to include new types of classes in line with industry trends. Aqua classes continue to remain popular, averaging 24 participants per class.

Swim school, squads and gymnastics classes were fully utilised with an average of 90% capacity. The number of classes on offer has been less due to a shortage of available qualified staff for these programs. The Centre used new initiatives such as social media promotions and posters and course providers offering courses at our Centre to attract new potential staff for these programs.

Total members averaged 1380, with around 2500 Fitness Passport entries per month. The centre's maintenance, pool testing and cleaning schedules have been completed on time to ensure we provide a safe and clean facility. All Leisure Centre run programs such as learn to swim and swim programs; group fitness and aqua classes; personal training; gym and circuit classes; child minding, and kiosk follow centre procedures including identifying and managing risks associated with these programs. All incident reports and actions were completed and sent to Council's risk management team. Procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure we provide safe programs at all times.

The Leisure Centre hall is utilised by casual users, clubs and centre run programs. Setting up and packing away of equipment is completed by centre staff to ensure all equipment is assessed for faults and setup following the correct procedures and manual handling techniques. The hall is cleaned, checked and maintained by our centre cleaner and staff, and weekly maintenance schedules are completed.



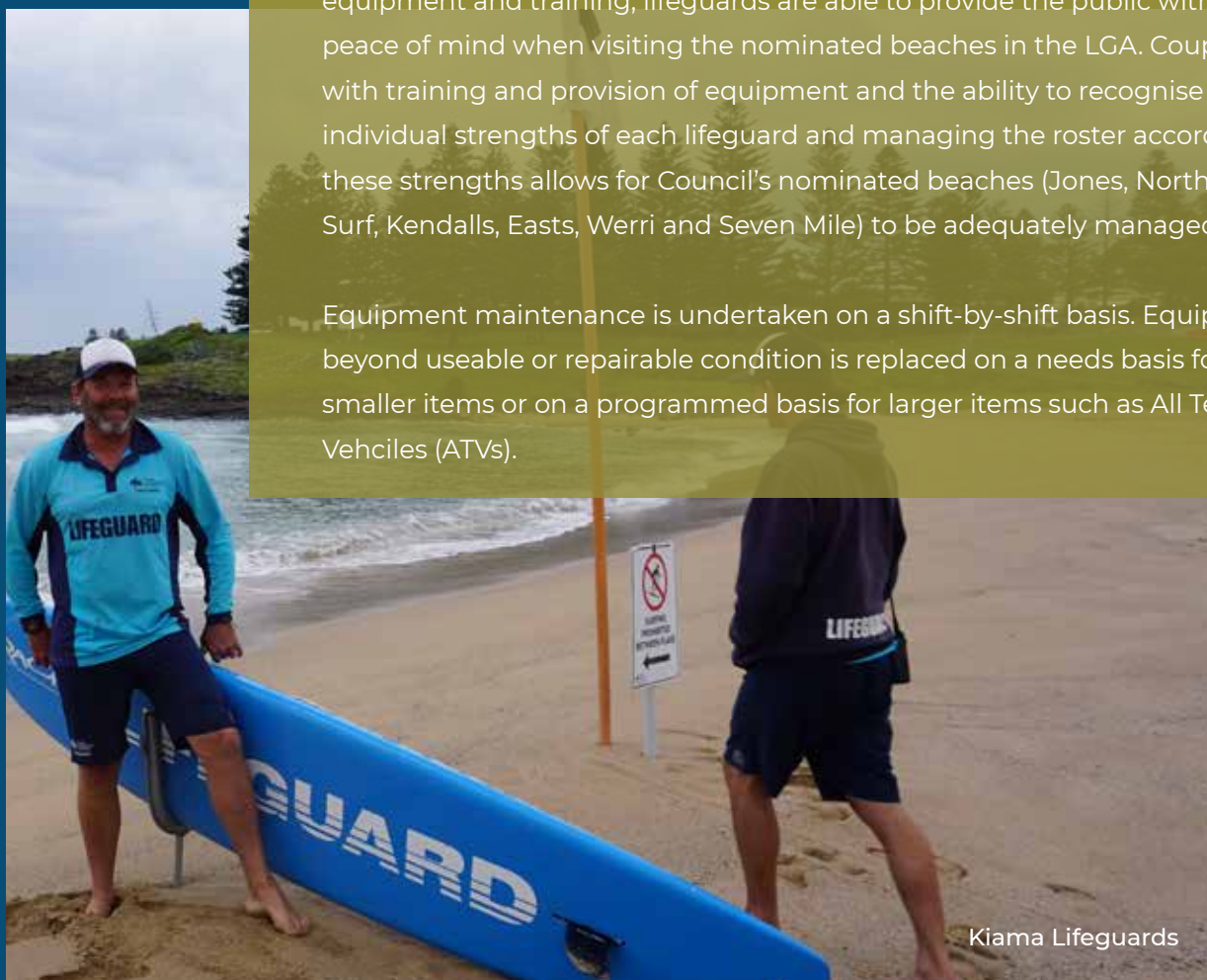
Lifeguard beach patrols

The patrol program for 2022-23 was developed in accordance with the Lifeguard Services Strategy and implemented through the high and low seasons supported by a successful recruitment and induction program for seasonal lifeguards in 2022.

There were extended patrols at four of the Kiama beaches where there is no surf lifesaving club patrol presence (North Bombo, Kendalls, Easts, Seven Mile). Weekend patrols at the four non-surf club beaches continued through February for late summer surf safety for our community and visitors.

Throughout the summer season, lifeguards implement the Lifeguard Strategy through vigilance and service; continuing to monitor the changing conditions presented to them on an hourly basis. This enables them to make lifesaving decisions on the spur of the moment, enabling them to undertake rescues at any moment. By providing quality and appropriate lifesaving equipment and training, lifeguards are able to provide the public with peace of mind when visiting the nominated beaches in the LGA. Coupled with training and provision of equipment and the ability to recognise the individual strengths of each lifeguard and managing the roster according to these strengths allows for Council's nominated beaches (Jones, North Bombo, Surf, Kendalls, Easts, Werri and Seven Mile) to be adequately managed.

Equipment maintenance is undertaken on a shift-by-shift basis. Equipment beyond useable or repairable condition is replaced on a needs basis for smaller items or on a programmed basis for larger items such as All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs).



Kiama Lifeguards

Companion animals

Council facilitates companion animals education and management of companion animals legislation register and community education. Education occurs during active patrols and when compliance staff interact with the community. Council's website is kept up to date with information relating to companion animals and our off leash areas. 10 dogs were collected and 4 were released back to their owner and 4 were rehomed, 2 dangerous dogs were euthanised. No cats were impounded, and no cats were euthanised. 205 pro-active patrols for companion animal compliance were undertaken. See also page 196 for more data on Companion Animals.

42

Companion animal complaints



9

infringements were issued with a value of **\$5,470**



18

dog attack complaints



41

other infringements were issued (face value of \$11,595 for breach of Companion Animals Act.)



205

Proactive patrols for companion animal matters



In 2022-23, Council committed to reimagine our compliance service, ensuring customer service is at the heart of what we do. We maintain compliance through maintenance of registers, scheduled inspections and action to rectify breaches. Resourcing the key manager role (post retirement) in our Environment and Compliance Team was a priority for this period.

Manage and implement requirements of the swimming pool act and regulations

A role in this area was advertised four times and not filled in the reporting period, creating a key resourcing gap. Recruitment is underway for this position and is expected to be filled in September 2023. See page 191 for more information on swimming pool inspections carried out in this reporting period.

Food safety and public health

Our “I’m Alert” online food safety training provider hosted 447 participants with 391 visitors and 48 registrations. The Environmental Health Officers will be facilitating food safety workshops for school canteens in partnership with NSW Health and surrounding councils to promote safe food handling in schools across the Illawarra. The team works hard to provide tailored and contextually relevant educational material to customers and applicants to promote and endorse positive food safety outcomes across the community as well as meet customer needs. Recruitment process to fill vacancies is underway. There were 105 food shop inspections and 6 reinspections of food shops undertaken during this period.

Swimming pool microbiological sampling of Council operated pools were conducted monthly from April this year.

- Ongoing updating and maintenance of the Public Swimming pool (water quality), warm water systems and cooling tower, skin penetration, public water supply registers.
- Providing customers with information regarding fit-out requirements to open a new skin penetration or beauty business.
- Ensuring customers and applicants are aware of the required approval documents to begin trading.
- 5 skin penetration inspections conducted this period.
- No breaches reported in this period.
- 8 public health inspections conducted during this year.

Manage the public health and safety legislation – on-site sewerage legislative compliance

Recruitment process to fill key vacancies is underway but has impacted Council’s ability to complete this action in full. There is a total of 944 on-site sewerage management systems within the Local Government Area. There are 116 high risk systems and 72 of these were inspected this year. There are 828 low risk systems and 158 were inspected during this year. 223 were found to be compliant, with only 7 failing to meet the required standard.



OUTCOME 3: Our heritage matters; we want to learn, preserve and share both the Aboriginal history of this area, and the history since settlement

Planning for NAIDOC Week Awards commenced early 2023, in preparation for the July Ceremonial Dinner. Themed 'For Our Elders', Kiama Municipal Council hosted the 2023 Local Government Regional NAIDOC Awards at The Pavilion Kiama on Saturday 29 July 2023 in partnership with Shellharbour City Council, Wollongong City Council and Shoalhaven City Council. Comprised of Aboriginal cultural activities, performances and the Award ceremony, the event was attended by over 200 members of the Aboriginal community, Elders, dignitaries, the wider community, community services and government agencies. Council marked the national commemorative events for NAIDOC and Sorry Day as follows:

Sorry Day - Council held a flag raising ceremony at the Pavilion. Over 300 community members attended, including local primary and high school students and Aboriginal community members and Councillors. The flag raising ceremony was held at the Council Chambers. Due to wet weather, the rest of the program included a welcome to country, smoking ceremony and performances were held at the Pavilion.

Council hosted an exhibition of Aboriginal artefacts at Kiama library.

Council held a traditional breadmaking workshop and Boomerang Painting workshops with children and young people at the Youth Centre (SENTRAL), with around 20 participants.



Council's Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer held Aboriginal cultural talks at Gerringong Primary school where over 50 students participated. The book titled 'Sorry Sorry' was also read out to the students; a book written about the Stolen Generation.

Council adopted the Uluru Statement From The Heart in 2022 and has been working with the First Nations community to support, acknowledge and celebrate our Aboriginal community. Council has engaged with the Aboriginal community through community and cultural programs to consult and engage on matters of significant to the community, including to mark Sorry Day and NAIDOC Week. For Australia Day 2023, Council engaged Aboriginal Dancers and hosted a Yarning Circle at Joyce Wheatley Community Centre.

Council's Aboriginal Liaison Officer continues to engage with First Nations peoples locally and regionally, as well as relevant specialists, to identify Aboriginal Cultural sites to ensure they are correctly identified and protected.

Heritage Reviews

The Kiama Heritage Review has been completed and a Planning Proposal has been exhibited to legislate the changes into our LEP. A Heritage Review of Jamberoo has also been completed and publicly exhibited. The findings of the review as well as the comments from the public will be used to inform a Planning Proposal to legislate any appropriate changes into our LEP.

Updates to the Heritage Studies for Jamberoo and Kiama have occurred this year. A Scope of works has also been developed for the Gerringong Heritage Study review. Ongoing work is occurring in order to incorporate the findings of all of the updated Heritage Studies into planning documents to ensure controls and legislation continues to be contemporary.



Australia Day 2023



News story: Kiama tops small town list

In March 2023 Mayor Neil Reilly welcomed the news Kiama had topped the list of best small towns in NSW according to a study conducted by The Australian newspaper.

The Australian looked at 752 small towns across Australia and ranked the best ones in each state, with Kiama ranked number one in NSW.

“I’d say this is exciting, and no surprise to anyone who has spent any time here, it’s just further confirmation of what our residents and regular visitors have known for a long time,” Cr Reilly said.

“I’ve said before: I have the privilege to be the Mayor of the best bit of the best nation, the municipality of Kiama.”

“I’m just surprised it’s taken this long for others to find this out.”

The Australian considered criteria such as prosperity, skills, diversity and wellness in the 752 towns.

The top towns were:

- Kiama, New South Wales
- Tamborine Mountain, Queensland
- Mount Barker, South Australia
- Dunsborough, Western Australia
- Bright, Victoria
- Legana, Tasmania

The results were based on data from the 2021 Census of towns people living in urban centres ranging between 1,000 and 50,000 residents.

Do you want to know more about the profile of our community; how we live, work, study? Do you have questions about what is changing, and what is staying the same?

Kiama Council has an easy to use, online tool that makes the demographic information from our local government area available.

The information about our community comes from Census data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). It is then compiled into local level information about how we live, what has changed over time and how it compares to other areas.

You can find information and statistics on:

- Population demographics by age, gender, family type
- Religion, citizenship, ancestry and languages spoken
- Statistics on education, migration, and wellbeing
- Education, employment, economic profiles and more

Individuals and organisations can use this data for a range of purposes.

For example, would your organisation or community group benefit from some data that tells a funding body about the community; such as age, diversity, education level, ways of working, or how many volunteers we have?

There are two key areas on Council's website:

The Community Profile covers information including our community characteristics including population, age, education and working patterns, how we live and where we come from.

The Economic Profile covers a wide range of information relating to the economy, local jobs and local business insights, the workforce profile, and industry structure.

Data is being updated as the Census information is released and can provide our community, as well as Council, with significant insight into how we live and work.

kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/News/Free-demographic-data-via-Kiama-Council-website



Kiama Street Soiree

Facility report: celebrating our volunteers

Kiama Council celebrated our fantastic volunteers during Volunteer Week (15-21 May). We also promoting volunteering opportunities in our community with a Volunteer Expo at Kiama Farmers Market on Wednesday 24 May. According to Volunteering Australia, 56.7 per cent of Australians volunteer either formally or informally. However, with volunteering on the decline in general, 83 per cent of volunteer organisations say they're keen for more people to put their hand up for this vital and rewarding work.

Our Volunteer Expo had representatives from 30 local volunteer organisations, providing a smorgasbord of options for our community-minded residents.

Deputy Mayor Imogen Draisma, who hatched the idea of the Expo, said she was excited by the response from so many organisations.

"The sheer number and range of groups taking part is just one more example of the civic spirit for which our municipality is renowned," Cr Draisma said.

"It also demonstrates the many and varied ways you can volunteer your time for a worthy cause." The Volunteer Expo had representatives from well-known service groups such as Rotary, Lions, Red Cross, St Vincent de Paul and the Country Womens Association.

Also on hand were environmental organisations such as Landcare and WIRES as well as emergency and first aid services such the Rural Fire Service and St John Ambulance. Local organisations looking to recruit volunteers at the Expo included Blue Haven Community, Kiama Visitors Centre, Kiama Show Society, the Gerringong and District Historical Society.



Volunteer Week 2023

Council volunteers

Kiama Council offers a range of volunteer opportunities including at Blue Haven, our Family History Centre and Libraries, and at our Visitor Information Centre.

“No one has made it through life without someone else’s help. Volunteering matters profoundly. It builds communities and creates a better society for everyone,” says Imogen Draisma, Kiama’s deputy mayor.

Community members do volunteer work for Kiama Council in three main areas, here’s some more info and quotes from volunteers on why they love what they do.

Kiama Libraries

Our two libraries and Family History Centre (FHC) have 25 volunteers who do 20 hours of work per week (collectively) in a number of different roles.

This year the library hosted morning teas during Volunteer Week to say thank-you.

“I love coming to the library to volunteer and select books for Home Library customers. I enjoy working with the library staff, and it’s always so peaceful and quiet, a real escape, a beautiful place for people of all ages.”

– **Bea (Library volunteer)**

“I enjoy helping people research their ancestry, the happy and sad discoveries that lie hidden in their pasts. Also, discovering family details which can be hidden within the legal documents of their land titles.”

– **Don (FHC volunteer)**

“I really enjoy volunteering at the Kiama Family History Centre because I’ve gained greater research skills and have a sense of purpose in helping others connect with their genealogy.”

– **Jann (FHC volunteer)**

“I enjoy using my skills to help the Family History Centre improve its resources”

– **Mark (FHC volunteer)**

“I enjoy volunteering at Kiama Family history Centre because of the great resources and friendly helpful staff and other volunteers.”

– **David (FHC volunteer)**

“I volunteer at Kiama Library delivering books to Kiama residents who are unable to access the library themselves. It’s a simple job but it gives me great pleasure supporting those who love to read and learn. The library staff are always warm and welcoming, and I feel like a valued part of the library community.”

– **Christine (Library volunteer)**

"It is always frustrating when you lose something but exceptionally satisfying when the elusive item is found.

Being a volunteer in the Kiama Family History Centre gives you that satisfaction. Not always is the lost relative found; but when the records start to tell a story and the people and places come together to give us the answer and to help our client/visitor fill in the blanks it is deeply rewarding.

We see strangers seeking information from the Centre and we utilise all the knowledge of the volunteers to endeavour to find the answers. We have laughter and sometimes tears.

Working with other volunteers you become part of the group, vast and different life experiences provide a social environment that just makes you feel good.

What more can we ask for."

- Russ (FHC volunteer)

INTERESTED? FILL OUT A FORM TODAY



Visitor Information Centre

Our Visitor Information Centre (VIC) has around seven volunteers who each work four hours per fortnight, providing around 16 hours a week of assistance to the centre.

One of our VIC volunteers says: "I love Kiama and I enjoy helping people. Volunteering at the Visitor Information Centre is the perfect fit. The staff are great, and you always feel valued for your contribution."

Interested? Pop into the Visitor Information Centre at Blowhole Point to fill out an application form.

Blue Haven

Blue Haven has around 80 volunteers who assist with many community-based activities. This includes driving or helping on community buses and/or cars, which transport clients to medical appointments, shopping trips, group outings and events. Volunteers also assist our clients to maintain community links, supporting community engagement and social connectivity which is integral to health and well-being.

Volunteers assist clients to attend day programs and activities including: musical reminiscence, pet companionship, arts, crafts, indoor bowls, bocce (a favourite), bingo, guest speakers, concerts and exhibitions.

Visits from local schools and pre-schools also provide the opportunity for intergenerational activities. Volunteers help make all of this (and more) possible.

Fred is one of our volunteer Blue Haven bus drivers, and also does volunteer work for Kiama Community Radio. We asked Fred his work driving the Blue Haven bus: "I've done about 140 of these trips over the 3.5 years I've been volunteering and find it interesting and rewarding."

Why did you volunteer?

"I had just retired myself and thought that it might get me out of my comfort zone and also give something back to the community. It certainly has been a great experience and is one I'd recommend to anyone."

What do you enjoy about volunteering?

"Meeting a range of interesting people, while helping people and giving something back to the community. I enjoy talking to each of the clients about their family and life story and most people are very happy to have a yarn about anything that's on their mind."

We'd love to hear more...

"As I also volunteer for Kiama Community Radio, I obtained approval to interview any willing client about their interesting lives. These can be found on the KCR website under 'Tales from the Blue Haven Bus!'"

INTERESTED? FIND OUT MORE:



News story: Council unveils \$4.24m road repair program

In December 2022 Kiama Council unveiled a \$4.24 million construction program to repair Jamberoo Mountain and other local roads damaged by storms and landslides.

Council thanked both the NSW and Federal Government for their funding support for this project through the NSW Disaster Assistance initiative.

Jamberoo Mountain Road, Wallaby Hill Road, Foxground Road, Cliff Drive and Gipps Street were all damaged during storms and flooding in March and July 2022.

The extensive work required to reopen Jamberoo Mountain Road and Wallaby Hill Road includes complex repairs at six different locations.

The repairs involve the construction of concrete piles that are anchored into rock to support the road or soil nails to stabilise slopes before the road can be then reconstructed.

The work at Foxground Road, Cliff Drive and Gipps Street requires the construction of a gabion basket retaining wall to support the road, then reconstruction of the road.

Council contracted Civic and Civic Group, RIX Group and GT Civil to carry out the work. Awarding the work to the three different firms is intended to complete the work as quickly as possible and be cost-effective.

Given the complexity of the project, Council has included contingency funding into construction program, to cater for any variations. Work at sites such as Foxground Road, Cliff Road and Gipps Street, due to the smaller scale of the damage or relative simplicity of the construction work, will commence early in the new year.

Jamberoo Mountain and Wallaby Hill Road, with extensive damage and complex solutions, first need significant preparatory work for the custom-designed concrete piles and soil nails before they are installed.



Jamberoo Mountain road damage



Foxground Road

The designs and works program were developed using an experienced, qualified geotechnical engineering consultancy recommended by the NSW and Australian Governments.

They were also rigorously reviewed by Kiama Council and Transport for NSW engineers. Feedback from community members on progress, risks and the designs has also been considered.



The work was fully funded by the Natural Disaster Recovery Assistance initiative. Transport for NSW is administering this State and Federal funding.

Council created a website hub page where community members and stakeholders could track the progress of the Roads Repair Construction Program 2022-23.

We also provided regular updates (approx. 12 updates over a 12 month period) via our website, email, social media and local news coverage.



Jamberoo Mountain Road re-opens

In June 2023, we announced the re-opening of the newly repaired Jamberoo Mountain Road would occur in the first week of the next school term in mid July.

Council had expected to be able to reopen the road by the end of June.

However, delays experienced by our contractors meant we had to revise this timeline.

The work included complex repairs which involved manufacturing, drilling and filling piles to stabilise the road in various sections.

Sections of hill above the road were repaired. Hundreds of soil nails were installed to support the damaged terrain, before placing geofabric and supporting mesh over these sections as further reinforcement.

Once the work was complete, Council's contractors undertook road resurfacing, line repainting and cleaning and tidying up. Council hosted a barbeque in Jamberoo to celebrate the road reopening and to thank locals and visitors for their patience during what was a difficult year with the road being closed.

Facility report: Libraries

Once again our libraries continue to be safe and welcoming places for our community to gather, learn and create. Newborn infants are welcomed to our community by receiving a library bag and brochures as well as a board book distributed by the Early Childhood nurse on their first visit. 60 of our Home Library members receive a fortnightly visit with a personalised selection of over 11,000 items library materials. Library programs are certainly not confined to our physical buildings!

212 community programs have been held across our libraries during the last year with over 7,660 people attending. Our programs range from author talks, Book Club groups, writing workshops and exhibitions. 127 Early Literacy programs were provided and enjoyed by more than 2900 attendees. Our very popular School Holidays activities featured a range of programs including family Lego nights, robotic workshops and 3D printing activities that were enjoyed 812 children.

The Makers and Creators programs attracts an audience of non-traditional library users who enjoyed creative journalling, making clay ornaments, using Canva and creating mandalas. One of our most recent innovative programs has been the Death Café. This program is run in partnership with Illawarra-Shoalhaven Compassionate Community and provides a welcoming safe, relaxed space where participants enjoy open, light and relaxed conversation on death, dying and end of life. People can share a story if they wish, or just listen and observe.

The library has produced a second series of the podcast Good Librations. Over the 12 episodes library staff discuss all things book, reading and libraries and have achieved an amazing 500 downloads to date.





Receiving over 28,700 visitors, 21,154 loans issued, hosting 58 events and 11 exhibitions the local community has truly embraced the new Gerringong Library and Museum (GLaM) facility. The Gerringong community now enjoy weekly preschool Story Time sessions and fortnightly Toddler Tales sessions which reflect the needs for the local area.

Other highlights include the Diagon Alley Twilight Youth Maker Market based around the Wizarding theme at Gerringong Library. Expressions of interest for stallholders aged 12-25 were called for with eight applications received and seven attending on the day. All market stallholders were tasked with creating or selling products that were magically themed and asked to decorate their stalls to fit the theme.

Events included a Fortune Teller, Youth performers, a photobooth, a magical drinks stall (Gillyweed, Firewhiskey, Butterbeer, Elderflower Wine) and a series of games and puzzles that

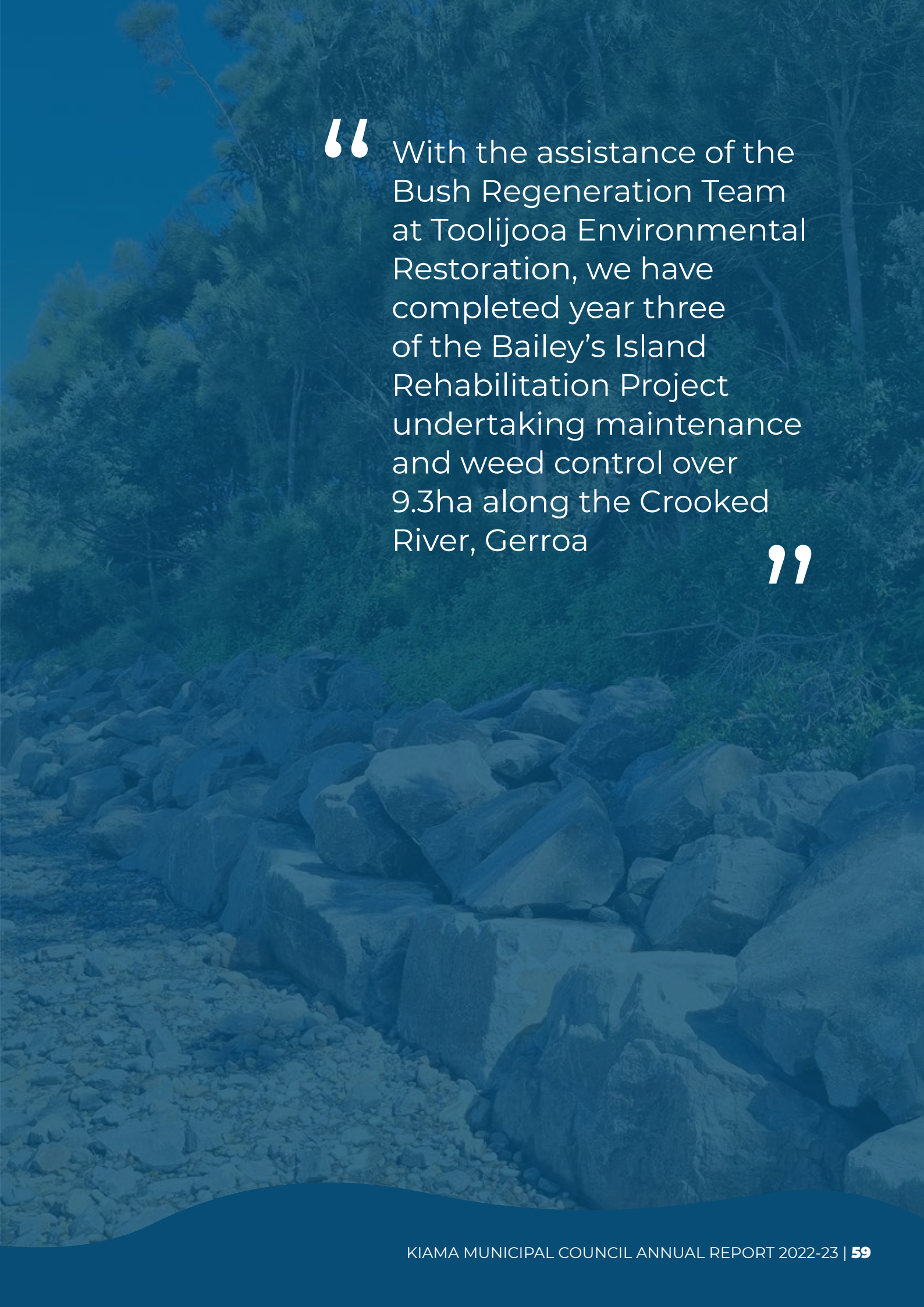
participants could complete to go in the draw to win one of three themed prizes. Staff were delighted by the huge turnout which was estimated to have attracted well over 500 people – mostly families with parents and children and young adults.

700 people attend the GLaM 1st Birthday celebrations on Saturday 3 December 2022. With a full day of scheduled activities hundreds of people stayed for several hours to enjoy circus performers, a magician, musicians, author, competitions, an exhibition, craft and party boxes, face painting and balloon animals, photos and food.

In recognition of our innovative and unique programs, several library staff have been invited to present at professional development seminars hosted by the State Library NSW. Staff shared their expertise in adapting popular activities such as gaming, podcasting into engaging library programs.

A tall, dark signpost for the Kiama Coast Walk stands in a grassy field. The sign is blue and white, with an upward arrow and text indicating the direction to the beach and the walk's length. The background shows a coastal landscape with cliffs and the ocean under a blue sky.

PILLAR 2 | We thrive in a sustainable environment



“ With the assistance of the Bush Regeneration Team at Toolijooa Environmental Restoration, we have completed year three of the Bailey’s Island Rehabilitation Project undertaking maintenance and weed control over 9.3ha along the Crooked River, Gerroa

”

Pillar 2: We thrive in a sustainable environment

OUTCOME 1: We protect our people, our place, our flora and fauna through our planning and our actions

The Minnamurra Rock Wall Assessment Concept Design Report was completed by Advisian, and endorsed by Council in Oct 2022, following community consultation on the draft report. Recommendations were provided in a report to Council in the October 2022 Ordinary Meeting, recommending that the high priority site within area C be the first and highest priority for allocation of Council resource and grant funding. Council resolved in the October 2022 Ordinary Meeting to seek grant opportunities to allow for funding to be obtained for the bank stabilisation and stormwater infrastructure works at the High Priority site in Area C (adjacent to River Street), as well as to undertake investigation of opportunities for grant funding (including the 2023-24 round of NSW Coast and Estuary Grants Program) for the development of further concept options and final detailed engineering design for works at the High Priority site in Area B (North Street Reserve).

The Crooked River Coastal Zone Management Plan and staged delivery program has been delayed due to the lack of availability of suitably qualified consultants responding to a request for quotes to undertake the work on behalf of Council.

A review of the Local Environmental Plan has commenced regarding Agricultural Lands Mapping which are also affected by the current Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy. Collaboration with Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation, our neighbouring Councils and the relevant State Agencies continues in relation to this project.

Planning Proposals have been processed in accordance with the Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy.

A review of the Local Environmental Plan has commenced regarding Vegetation Mapping and Agricultural Lands Mapping. A Planning Proposal is anticipated as being necessary to amend the LEP to include the updated mapping.

All reported breaches of tree management legislation and policies have been reviewed and responded to within required timeframes.

All tree management applications have been assessed and determined within required timeframes.

The Grants Officer actively sought funding opportunities for natural area restoration at priority sites on Council land.

With assistance of the Bush Regeneration Team at Toolijooa Environmental Restoration, we have completed year three of the Bailey's Island Rehabilitation Project undertaking maintenance and weed control over 9.3ha along the Crooked River, Gerroa. See page 75 for more on the Bailey's Island Project.

The work has controlled major invasive weed species including asparagus fern, Norfolk Island hibiscus and lantana. Removal of these weeds will allow the remnant vegetation communities to naturally regenerate.



Local Landcare groups were supported with materials, plants and technical advice for all requests throughout the year.

Council was unsuccessful in its application for funding under the Department of Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund to develop a feasibility study and business case to outline a strategy for the extension of the Kiama Coast Walk.

A funding allocation has been provided in the 2023-24 budget to enable broad preparatory investigations to be undertaken to inform a future business case business should grant funding become available.

National Tree Day was completed successfully on 8 August 2022 and again on 31 July 2023, and involved Council collaborating with Kiama High students, Landcare groups, and Minnamurra Lions Club, to educate in planting local native tree species, to help regenerate our natural environment.



National tree day

After a two year hiatus due to COVID, national tree day activities with Kiama High School resumed on Monday 8 August 2022. Council prepared 3 planting sites for the kids at Spring Creek, Bombo Headland and Seven Mile Beach.

Bombo Headland and Seven Mile Beach were run in conjunction with the local Landcare group volunteers, with representatives of the groups assisting with the site preparation and planting on the day. Minnamurra Lions Club BBQ committee generously provided the BBQ and volunteers to cook a well-earned sausage sandwich for the children at Kendalls Beach, which was much appreciated by both Council and the High School.

OUTCOME 2: Our natural environment of spectacular beaches, rainforests and rolling hills define our place

During this reporting period, the Kiama Coastal Management Program (CMP) Stage 3 Report was completed and will be made publicly available. This document will inform the final Stage 4 Coastal Management Program that is being prepared which will undergo further stakeholder engagement and community consultation before being placed on public exhibition, estimated to occur in November 2023. Following the public exhibition, the CMP will be finalised and submitted to the Minister for certification which is now expected to be in late April 2024 following community, Council and stakeholder endorsement.

Our environmental services staff take care of our coast and waterways, biodiversity, and pollution and include environmental reporting. Our team develops regular environmental reports including State of the Environment, Waste Depot Surface, Gerroa and Minnamurra Waste Depot sampling reports. The NSW Government State of the Beaches Report showed a positive result for all of our five monitored beaches with all achieving a “good” categorisation in this reporting period.

Council is continuing to work on our growth management strategy and planning framework, to update and contemporise our planning controls. Our vegetation study was completed and further work undertaken on bushfire mapping and controls. Our Development Control Plan (DCP) chapters for the Town Centre were finalised and the Local Environment Plan (LEP) for the Town Centre and our Kiama Heritage LEP were exhibited and are nearing finalisation.

Ongoing updates to controls are continuing through our review of the Kiama LEP and consideration of opportunities for enhancements to our scenic protection controls. Ongoing retention of character and refinement of our planning layers is occurring.

A focus on recruiting planning, development assessment and management roles during the reporting period did impact on Council's capacity in strategic planning.



OUTCOME 3: We use our natural resources in efficient and sustainable ways; managing, improving or enhancing through protection, restoration and maintenance

Following the recruitment of a new Manager Waste Services, completion of operational priorities was delayed in part. The Waste Strategy will be completed in 2023-24 and will align with the NSW EPA Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041.

A Waste Audit was undertaken to establish baseline data to assist with future waste education programs. The final report for the waste audit conducted in June 2022 was received in July 2022.

Read more in our Waste Services report on page 114.

Urban householders are continuing to maintain a high uptake of sorting their waste correctly



99.35%

of food organics and garden organics (FOGO) bin contents were compliant FOGO material



94.38%

of recycling bin contents were compliant comingled recycling



3,000
bags of compost
given away to
urban households

3x

Home
Composting
workshops



43

Workshop attendees

Existing and new waste services, projects, programs and events are publicised on the Council website to ensure that the information is updated on a regular basis. Feedback from residents is noted where improvements are required and in June a program was started to convert the various Waste Application Forms to one online form. The online form is planned to go live in the second quarter of the 2023-24 reporting period.

Council received a \$10,000 SCRAP Together Grant aimed at raising awareness of our existing FOGO waste service and to celebrate 10 years since its inception. We had involvement in the Regional Circular Economy Investigation workshop as managed by ISJO. 4



Second Hand Saturday returned in September after a three year hiatus due to COVID. More than 100 cars registered for the event. Worn Up Program (a collaboration with R3) for the recycling of old school uniforms is up and running, with approximately 300kg collected to date.

All approved programs funded through the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Better Waste Recycling Fund 2022-2023 were delivered and finalised. The fit out of Household Bulky Waste (HBW) shed was completed and is fully operational. Trailers purchased and delivered for the two all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) to be used to transport bins and equipment for events. Post and rail fencing made from recycled soft plastics purchased to replace the old timber fencing surrounding Kiama Showground. Installation expected by end 2023. Waste videos created for social media purposes to support various waste events - Fabric Swap Event, Clothing Swap Event, Home Composting Workshop and Second Hand Saturday.

In keeping with the Regional Community Recycling Centre (CRC) Communications Strategy, face to face community satisfaction surveys were conducted with users in June 2023.

To further promote the use of the CRC, information flyers were distributed to household letterboxes in August 2022 and February 2023 to coincide with our bi-annual Household Bulky Waste Drop Off Events. Council's website is regularly monitored to ensure information relating to the CRC is correct and information is included in the Waste and Recycling Guides which support the annual urban and rural Waste Collection Calendars.

The Waste Depot was available to host the EPA-run Household Chemical Cleanout Event in 2022-23, however EPA did not progress with the event during this reporting period.

WASTE DROP OFF EVENTS



2

Waste Drop Off events held in 2022-23



1,200

bookings at each event

SEPTEMBER 2022 WASTE DROP OFF

HBW Shed
erected for September 2022 event



223 tonnes
collected

135 tonnes

recycled, reused or repurposed, resulting in a

60.54%

resources recovery rate



MARCH 2023 WASTE DROP OFF

Due to time constraints, no tonnages were recorded for the March 2023 event. The online booking system via the Council website has shown:

78%
of bookings are done directly by residents



28%

of bookings are processed by Customer Service/ Waste Service staff

Throughout the review period Council's cleaning services have remained consistent in their approach to cleaning public facilities. The easing of COVID related restrictions also resulted in an increase in tourism and general public facility usage during the review period that at times, made resourcing difficult to manage.

Throughout the annual report period, Kiama Council collected 2,900 tonnes of domestic waste to landfill (red lid) from its residents, 2,500 tonnes of recycling (yellow lid) and 4,830 tonnes of Food Organics & Garden Organics (green lid).

The Minnamurra Depot continues to provide a publicly accessible facility for the receipt of green waste, steel and other recyclable materials.

Over the 12 month review period, the Minnamurra Depot received:



1,110 tonnes
of green waste



441 tonnes
of steel



319 tonnes
approx. of household
waste received
in Community
Recycling centre

Environment Protection Licence (EPL)

Throughout the annual review period, Council delivered on its reporting requirements to ensure compliance with the Minnamurra EPL and the Gerroa EPL.

Waste depot rehabilitation is an ongoing program of works that was 100% completed during this review period.

It involved maintenance of landfill capping which includes lawn mowing, vegetation removal and addition then compaction of capping material.

Also involved is the ongoing maintenance of infrastructure, including calibration of the weighbridge, painting of road lines and maintenance of electrical infrastructure and fire extinguishers.

Compliance Officers conduct regular patrols of known illegal dumping sites and have certain

locations monitored by covert cameras to assist with investigation of common dump points. 93 illegal dumping incidences were investigated during this year and the face value of fines issued this year amounted to \$1,256.

The Implement Regional Litter Grant as managed by Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation was not applied for by ISJO. It is no longer relevant.



OUTCOME 4: We work together to understand and respond to the need for growth and change

The Bushfire Prone Land 2022 update was provided by Biosis. Biosis amended the draft map utilizing contemporary data and recommended that the draft Bush Fire Prone Land Map be forwarded to the New South Wales Rural Fire Service's Head Quarters for approval and certification.

Multiple funding applications have been prepared and submitted to support the review and update of the Spring Creek Floodplain Study and Risk Management Plan. This is the priority area to be studied to enable access infrastructure upgrades to open up future developable lands.

Design consultant appointed to prepare detailed designs for all identified priority actions from the Gerringong and Jamberoo Flood investigations. Designed projects will be implemented progressively based on the outcome of separate funding applications made under various disaster recovery and infrastructure betterment funding programs.

The preparation of a Community Emissions Strategy was placed on hold until the position of Environmental Sustainability Officer was filled in July 2023. Now that the position has been filled, preparations can re-start. However, as part of exhibiting the draft State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) Design and Place the NSW Government proposed to increase the targets for energy use and thermal performance within the NSW BASIX program. Additionally, new requirements for embodied carbon emissions will also be introduced to the NSW BASIX program.

As part of the Corporate Emissions Reduction Strategy including renewable energy and net zero targets, Council assessed a suitable renewable energy provider through a Request for Tender process. A Renewable Energy Power Purchase Agreement was implemented in conjunction with neighbouring Councils to supply electricity for large-scale Council sites and street lighting. For full story see page 93.

Submission of site host Expression of Interest to host electric vehicle fast charging infrastructure to the NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy Program was unsuccessful. Feasibility study for electric vehicle fast charging at 28 Councils around NSW including Kiama conducted by Charge works, to be released to Council soon. This information will support us in developing our Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure on Public Land Policy. Solar PV systems installed on the Leisure Centre, Library and Administration buildings continue to be monitored. Council is working with Endeavour Energy to bulk upgrade the remaining LED streetlights in the Kiama LGA. Council's revolving Energy Fund continues to operate.

It is envisaged that a Planning Proposal will be prepared for a Gateway Determination to amend the LEP and Chapter 3 of the DCP to include the recommendations of the adopted Community Emissions Strategy in the coming year, 2023-24.



Facility report: Destination Kiama



1.3M

Visitors (90% up YoY) who spent
\$279M



8,000

Approx, international
overnight visitors

- International visitor nights: approx. 35,300
- International overnight visitors estimated spend: \$3.9m
- Average estimated spend for International overnight visitors to Kiama: \$487 per visit



359K

Overnight visitors
(23% up YoY)

- Total nights: 985,000 (14% up YoY) *12% higher than the pre-pandemic year end March 2019
- Average length of stay: 2.7 nights
- Domestic overnight visitors estimated spend: \$186m
- Average spend for domestic overnight visitors to Kiama: \$517 per visit



937K

Domestic day visitors
(140% up YoY)

Domestic day visitors estimated spend: \$89m
Average spend for domestic day visitors to Kiama:
\$89 per visit

Top 5 activities

Eat out/dine at restaurant and/or café	58%
Go to the beach	56%
Visit friends & relatives	30%
Bushwalking/rainforest walks	24%
Sightseeing/looking around	24%

Events

Council's investment in tourism related events continued with the Destination Event Funding Program supporting 11 events this year to the value of over \$60,000.

This included annual events such as SurfLife Music Festival in Gerringong, The Kiama Coastal Classic, Kiama Sevens, Kiama I Do, and Red Hot Summer Tour, whilst also supporting, for the first time, events such as the Beach Volleyball Australian Youth Championships, Wind and Waves Festival, and Cloudbreak Wealth's Small Caps Conference.

This financial and in-kind support is in addition to the concierge style support our Event Coordinator provides to assist event organisers through requirements related to development applications, licence application and bookings.

This year, Destination Kiama were busier than ever administering Council's own events via a successful grant from the NSW Government's Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program to the value of \$239,651.

This calendar of approved activities included Council-run events, as follows:

- Gerringong Kite Festival
- New Year's Eve Sky Show
- Sun Up Surf and Skate Festival at Kiama Downs; and
- Kiama Street Festival in conjunction with Kiama Jazz and Blues Festival.

We also financially supported the following independently run events:

- Kiama Beach TAG
- Kiama Christmas Carols
- Kiama Jazz and Blues Festival
- Gerringong Street Parade; and
- Australia Day events.

The funding will continue to support

- Taste of the Dharawal
- Eat Like a Local; and
- Jamberoo Street Festival.

IGNITE – Kiama Winter Festival was fully wrapped up by July 2022 and the New Year's Eve 2022 Sky Show in Kiama made it back on the calendar after a two year hiatus due to COVID.





Kiama New Year's Eve 2022 photos by Peter Izzard



Visitor servicing

The Destination Kiama visitor services volunteer program continues to engage a group of six committed committee members.

The walls of the Visitor Information Centre also facilitate a gallery whereby local artists display their work.

DK partnership program

The Destination Kiama (DK) partnership program remained strong with 215 partners in 2022-23.

These partners enjoy a range of benefits including representation at the Visitor Information Centre, on our destination website **kiama.com.au**, involvement in marketing programs and various other networking events and industry involvement opportunities.

We were proud to run four seasonal Tourism After Hours Events at partnering businesses, with an average of 70 Destination Kiama partners attending to receive updates and engage with Destination Kiama staff as well as network with other local industry professionals.

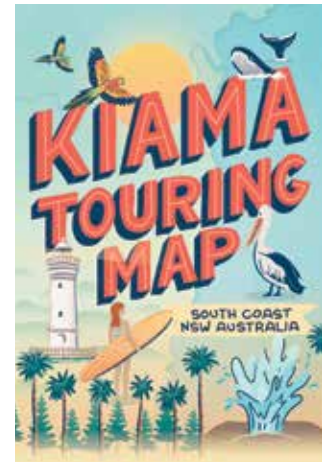
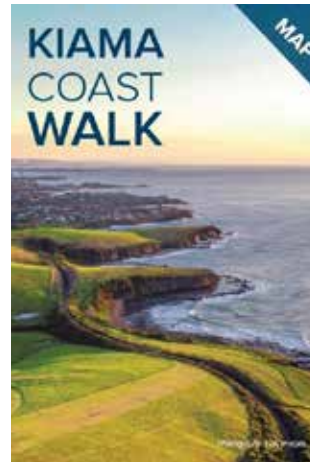
Destination marketing

The annual 2023 Kiama Visitor Guide was produced in December 2022, showcasing our area in print form and providing the backbone of information on our region and featuring our local tourism attractions and services.

Along with this, a Kiama Touring Map was created, providing an illustrated souvenir style touring map, identifying local attractions, and touring routes. Destination Kiama also delivered new iterations of the Kiama Accommodation Guide and Kiama Dining Guide. A focus on sustainability, accessibility and trends relating to nature based travel, and health and wellness, were incorporated into these publications.

Collaborating with Destination NSW, and our regional neighbours, we launched a 'Feel New' marketing campaign that introduced and encouraged visitors to consider the South Coast, as an exciting winter destination. We featured attractions and businesses that aligned with the program brief, and through this process were able to maintain a suite of images and content to use again.

We continued our marketing program, encouraging visitor dispersal throughout our region and out of peak season. This included partnerships with Australian Traveller, Caravan and Camping, Australian Country, and local media such as The Fold.



19,000

New users on the website during 2022-23

1:21 minutes

Session duration

kiama.com.au



7,300

Facebook Followers

@kiamansw



850+

EDM The Buzz Readership



16,300

Instagram Followers

@kiamansw

Team highlight

In 2022-23 the Destination Kiama team attended an Aboriginal Cultural Experience in May 2023. The staff and volunteers at the Visitor Information Centre can now pass on the local knowledge gained to visitors to the area.





News story: environmental wins for Crooked River

This World Environment Day (5 June 2023), Kiama Council celebrated our success in a local ecological rehabilitation project.

With assistance of the Bush Regeneration Team at Toolijooa Environmental Restoration, we have completed year three of the Bailey's Island Rehabilitation Project undertaking maintenance and weed control over 9.3ha along the Crooked River, Gerroa.

The area has Aboriginal significance and is a rare example of multiple endangered ecological communities – from dune systems through to riverine / floodplain communities – in a very small area that includes swamp oak forest, coastal saltmarsh, littoral rainforest and Bangalay sand forests.

Work has been done in the forests to control major invasive weed issues, including asparagus fern, Norfolk island hibiscus and lantana. These weeds have been inhibiting the ability of the vegetation communities to naturally regenerate.

Improvement in the resilience of these vegetation communities and reduction of invasive weed seed source by the project will benefit adjoining areas of vegetation in the Seven Mile Beach Reserve, as well as reducing the likelihood of weeds affecting adjoining rural properties.

Kiama Council would like to thank all our local Landcare Groups for their continued environmental protection and bush regeneration work.

Technical and financial assistance for the Bailey's Island Rehabilitation Project has been provided by the NSW Government's Coastal Management Program.



Facility report: Kiama Coast Holiday Parks

Kiama Council's five Holiday Parks have had a successful year with a combined income of \$11.16 million, a \$2.02 million increase from last year's figures.

Following the adoption of the Improvement program of compliance works in May 2022, licence applications were submitted, detailing a schedule of works to be delivered over a 2-3 year period. These works have been a major focus for much of the year and Council has appointed a Senior Project Manager to deliver these works. Safety improvements, such as installation of additional fire hose reels and fire hydrants, have been completed.

Council's Holiday Parks team have continued to work on brand recognition, social media presence and improvements to the Kiama Coast Holiday Parks website. Social media continues to play a major role in the marketing strategy. Kiama

Coast Holiday Parks have featured in industry and tourism publications, participated in promotional expos and sponsored several local events.

As pet friendly holidays become increasingly popular, pet friendly accommodation options have expanded to meet the demands of this market.

In support of the core marketing activities, a major focus has been enhancing the guest experience at our Kiama Coast Holiday Parks. Throughout the year our Holiday Park management teams delivered a range of activities to enhance guest experience, from pool side entertainment, kids activities, movie nights, band nights, sausage sizzles and organised viewings of sporting events. Also see page 86 for Holiday Parks information.

5 Kiama Coast Holiday Parks

- Kiama Harbour Cabins
- Surf Beach Holiday Park
- Kendalls Beach Holiday Park
- Werri Beach Holiday Park
- Seven Mile Beach Holiday Park.



72.7%

Average occupancy
in cabins



59.8%


Average occupancy
for caravan and
camping sites



168K

Tourist visitor nights
across the 5 Kiama
Coast Holiday Parks



A photograph of four children standing on a grassy field under a clear blue sky. The child on the far left is a girl with glasses, holding a small ice cream cone. Next to her is a boy in a white t-shirt and a cap, holding a large, colorful kite that features a palm tree and a sunset. To his right is a girl in a floral dress and a bucket hat, also holding a kite. On the far right is a boy in a blue t-shirt and a cap, holding a small ice cream cone. Several other kites are visible in the sky in the background.

PILLAR 3 | We create a strong and diverse economy



“ We worked with Destination Sydney Surrounds South and the Sparrowly Group to explore opportunities in the Kiama tourism industry, with a particular focus on agritourism ”

Pillar 3: We create a strong and diverse economy

OUTCOME 1: A strong economy, vibrant local businesses and local economic growth

We have continued to partner closely with ISJO on matters of local and regional economic development. Using ISJO's network, we have built connections with key NSW government agencies, such as Workforce Australia, Regional Industry Employment Program and Dairy NSW. In 2022-23 ISJO secured funding to develop a regional economic development strategy. The bulk of this work will be done in 2023-24, however we did assist with a preliminary survey of economic development priorities, which identified the following major drivers of regional economic development: decarbonisation, defence and the circular economy.

We worked with Destination Sydney Surrounds South and the Sparrowly Group to explore opportunities in the Kiama tourism industry, with a particular focus on agritourism. We partnered with

Business Connect and the Service NSW business concierges to support local business. We have built connections with Workforce Australia, the NSW Regional Industry Employment Program, and NSW Department of Education to identify training and employment opportunities in our region.

We have developed a connection with Dairy NSW to help support our local dairy farmers. We have developed a network of connections in the Defence industry, including the Office of Defence Industry Support, to capitalise on significant investment expected in the defence industry in the Illawarra-Shoalhaven region. We have also developed connections in the Energy industry, including the Department of Climate Change Energy Environment & Water, to capitalise on significant investment expected in the Illawarra renewable energy zone.





Recruitment for Economic Development Coordinator and Manager Planning Economic Development roles was challenging and contributed to delays in creating our Economic Development Strategy. Work has now commenced, however is in the early draft stage. Work undertaken so far includes collecting data from various sources (Remplan, Spendmapp, ABS and ABR Explorer), collecting survey responses from local business owners regarding economic development in the region, and reviewing complementary policies (e.g. Kiama Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018) to situate this strategy within a policy framework.

All Planning Proposals are being assessed in accordance with Council's Economic Development Strategy and the Illawarra -Shoalhaven Regional Plan.

Economic Development Priority Strategies that are relevant to Council have been included in our Operational Plan (OP) 2023-24.

Council's Planning Instruments continue to facilitate the recommendations of the previous Economic Development Strategy. It is envisaged that updating Council's Planning Instruments facilitate the recommendations of the new adopted Economic Development Strategy will occur in the coming year 2023-24.

We partnered with Illawarra ITEC to offer a fully funded leadership training program to Council staff.

OUTCOME 2: An economy that embraces the opportunities of tourism while ensuring that we don't lose our community feel; our tourism development and the visitor economy is well managed



Our Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings are staged bi-monthly with minutes presented to Kiama Council meetings for endorsement.

The TAC's purpose is to:

- Act in an advisory capacity to Council on matters relating to the development and implementation of strategies, as outlined in Pillar 3 of the Kiama Community Strategic Plan
- Act as the primary conduit of information between the community and Council on tourism matters.

This reporting period, the committee have provided valuable industry/local knowledge to help inform Council decisions tourism matters, determined new initiatives that support the Tourism and Events Strategic Plan, and raised awareness of the value of tourism and the visitor economy. The committee also reviewed applications and provided recommendations to

deliver the Destination Event Funding Program. Destination Kiama, through its partnership program, destination website **kiama.com.au**, social media accounts and printed collateral, provides for visitors' linkages between each of the area's attractions and businesses.

During this reporting period, the 2023 Kiama Visitor Guide was developed, 45,000 copies distributed, and a revised Dining Guide and Accommodation Guide was finalised. To supplement these updated publications, a contemporary illustrated "Kiama Touring Map" was conceptualised and printed in a handy fold up pocket guide.

Some of the best examples of linkages between tourism products and touring experiences this year has been via our online blog, that we supplement and promote via social media posts. Collaborating with the surrounding Council areas we worked with Destination NSW in a major

marketing campaign, highlighting the South Coast as the destination of choice outside of the peak period, the marketing focused on the key words “Feel New”.

The Events Action Plan from 2020 is still relevant, however has not been updated due to competing organisational priorities and existing workloads in this reporting period. The Reconnecting Regional NSW Grant we received resulted in an extremely busy year of planning and delivering events for the community, and in effect, allowed many of the objectives within the Action Plan to be delivered.

The Destination Event Funding Program continued to be administered and supported 14 events within the year.

We did as much as we could this reporting period to map and develop cultural site experiences. A blog was written and distributed with an accompanying digital and interactive map, via Alpaca, that assisted visitors in discovering little known artistic and cultural galleries and activities to participate in.

The Tourism and Events Strategic Plan 2022-26 was endorsed by Council and an internal action plan developed. This plan prioritises strong leadership, partnerships and communication, with a clear vision and advocacy of sustainable tourism growth and development. We continue to be agile in order to respond to funding opportunities to progress the Tourism Opportunities Plan’s identified growth or improvement areas. The Manager, Tourism and Events has participated in working group meetings, concentrating efforts towards Kiama Harbour revitalisation, agritourism and beach/foreshore improvement.

With full time and part time Event Coordinators now in the Tourism and Events department we are able to more than adequately service the needs of event organisers and assist them with navigating permissibility’s and responsibilities to stage an event in Kiama.

In addition, the online Preliminary Events Application Form is still used to assist with determining the needs of event organisers so we can match with the appropriate advice to progress their event concept and provide ongoing assistance from within Council for an overall concierge approach.

Destination Kiama ran a number of events, funded via a Regional NSW grant fund. This included the Gerringong Kite Festival, three Christmas Carol events, Light up Kiama, Gerringong Street Parade, the New Year’s Eve Sky Show, SunUp Surf and Skate Festival, as well as supported Australia Day and Kiama Beach Tag. In addition to this, the Destination Event Funding Program financially supported Kiama Folk Festival, Kiama Jazz and Blues Festival, Wind and Waves, Beach Volleyball, Jamberoo Veteran’s Golf, Kiama Sevens, Surflife Music Festival in Gerringong, Kiama I Do, and Kiama Coastal Classic.

Destination Kiama hosted two networking functions for operators and supported DSSS Symposium and the Kiama Community College’s upskilling program. We communicate broader industry news, celebrate wins, highlight opportunities and collaboration opportunities via our e-newsletter, The Buzz, with over 800 subscribers.

sunUp Festival



The Tourism Opportunity Plan continues to be the Tourism and Events Department's underpinning document. Falling under this plan is the 2022-2026 Tourism and Events Strategic Plan and associated internal action plan. Both of these more recent documents reference changes in visitor trends and the changes made within regional and state policies and directions to ensure alignment.

Destination Kiama continues to focus energy and projects that encourage positive community engagement and spread the positive impacts of the tourism industry across the LGA.

Winter Fest



Partnerships were made with publishers of luxury publications such as Australian Traveller and Home Beautiful that fit our Destination Kiama Target Market profile. A series of blogs were written to support these campaigns, the titles being Get Creative on the Kiama Coast, Autumn Adventures in Kiama, NSW South Coast Getaway, Winter Adventures in Kiama. The purpose of these marketing campaigns is to encourage visitors to experience more and extend their stay.

Winter Fest



Level one Visitor Information Centre accreditation has been achieved and continued for the Kiama Visitor Information Centre (VIC).

A review and update to the VIC Business Plan has been completed and the reviews and ratings for the VIC remain positive, sitting at 4.5 stars.

The Kiama Visitor Information Centre has been a ticket outlet for the following events: Red Hot

Summer Tour, Kiama Red Cross Fun Run, as well as concerts staged by Daniel Rohn.

A volunteer program at the Kiama Visitor Information Centre has nine active volunteers that donate between five and 20 hours per month. We continue to run familiarisation tours with our staff and volunteers, invite them to industry networking events, as well as Destination Kiama run local events and celebratory functions with the team. The work of our volunteers is regularly acknowledged, however this is also carried out formally on an annual basis.

Extension of our volunteer program to encourage new participation and volunteer delivery opportunities to assist in visitors servicing will be a priority, and the team recently participated in Council's volunteer exhibition.



Kiama Coast Holiday Parks

Council's five Kiama Coast Holiday Parks provide diverse holiday accommodation opportunities in Kiama that support the local economy through encouraging increased visitation and overnight stays.

Projects completed during this period include:

- Rectification works to six decks at Kiama Harbour Cabins
- Installation of a herb garden and compost system at Surf Beach Holiday Park
- One cabin kitchen replacement, upgrade and extension of camp kitchen at Kendalls on the Beach Holiday Park
- Replacement of pool filtration system, renovation of two bathrooms at Werri Beach Holiday Park
- Demolition and rebuild of reception, refurbishment of residence bathroom and repairs to camp kitchen at Seven Mile Beach Holiday Park
- Installation of fire hydrants across all parks

Maintaining and improving the accommodation offerings and facilities is a vital part of maintaining and increasing visitation, and has been delivered within budget allocations.



Council continued to implement the compliance upgrade program to improve facilities and compliance. A significant investment has been undertaken in 2022-2023 with works to continue in 2023-24.

Engagement with Holiday Van owners at Werri Beach and Seven Mile Beach Holiday Parks to address compliance issues is ongoing. A consultant has been engaged to assist with this communication.

Upgrades to existing fire safety infrastructure is complete. Concept and design work for roads and pathways across all Kiama coast Holiday Parks is underway.

Licence applications submitted in September and October 2022 are under review. Once approved, national accreditation can be sought for each of the Holiday Parks.

Council has continued to promote Kiama Coast Holiday Parks to increase visitation to the area, to develop brand awareness and increase the income generated by its Holiday Parks.

The ongoing marketing efforts have contributed to the combined income of \$11.16m, exceeding the forecast figure by \$1.28m. Promotional activities and review of the marketing plan will continue in 2023-24. Also see page 76 for Holiday Parks information.





The Pavilion Kiama

Kiama's Council-owned and operated entertainment venue The Pavilion Kiama continues to deliver commercial, community and internal events all year round, with viable events that maintain a financially sustainable business, that delivers a profit for Council, with excellent customer service.

The Pavilion bookings are managed to maximise the commercial opportunities of the venue, balanced with community needs. Our objective is to ensure the Pavilion is at maximum capacity all year round for maximum exposure and bookings to deliver an additional economic income stream for Council and support other local businesses who supply goods and services and deliver events.

Maintenance

The Pavilion's ongoing and annual maintenance schedule ensures that the physical infrastructure is well maintained, well presented and meets the high standards of physical appearance and cleanliness required of a wedding and conference venue. Maintenance was completed, on budget and tracking well for the financial year.

Facility report: The Pavilion

Kiama Council's event venue The Pavilion had a successful 2022-23.

Over the past year we have maintained our strong wedding presence on the South Coast and Illawarra while also dealing with multiple date changes for many weddings due to restrictions in 2022 and multiple limitations during COVID. The Pavilion hosted 26 weddings attracting more than 5,000 people to the Kiama area and through the Pavilion doors.

Events hosted included the Kiama I Do! Wedding show, which in its fourth year was again a great success for the collaboration of The Pavilion Kiama, The Sebel Kiama, The Mercure Gerringong, Crooked River Winery and Jamberoo Lodge Resort. We also participated in the South Coast Wedding Trail once again in August.

This year, The Pavilion established a new online presence via Instagram and Facebook to promote the Pavilion to local business community members. This included the development of a modern sketch of The Pavilion building and its scenic surrounds.

This presence is also used for the promotion of corporate events such as music festivals and community events benefiting local sporting groups, service clubs and community groups that hold events throughout the year at The Pavilion Kiama. Our online presence has grown significantly over the past year.

Website updates

This year we updated The Pavilion website with the following:

- New 360 degree online virtual tour
- Events and What's on Page
- Updated images
- Updated client enquiry forms
- Addition of new video reels for conferencing, formals and weddings
- Newly created wedding brochure
- Revised wedding menus.

We also created a new Community page on the Pavilion website under the "About" section. This was developed to show how we are connecting to and supporting our local community, including general businesses and not for profit organisations and sporting groups.

This includes Youth groups and services, Kiama Rotary, Kiama Lions, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (R3) and other Environmental initiatives such as the Kiama Municipal Council Clothing and Fabric Swaps.

We also source products and services from local businesses including Gumaraa, Willowvale Candles, Kiama Shores, the Nova, Known Designs and Soul Clay Studio.



Marketing highlights

- The Fold Illawarra
- The Kiama Focus
- The Buzz
- Kimunico
- KMC Website
- Pavilion Venue Signage
- Website refresh including embedding conference and wedding videos
- Aberdeen House Yearly Australian Public Health Yearbook, distributed nationally to all Health-related businesses and hospitals.
- Thankyou gifts for clients, signature candle and new recycled tote bags from Kiama Boomerang Bags
- Wave FM ads and Total Interactive marketing
- TV ads placed at Illawarra Family Medical Centre and Shell Cove Family Health.

Annual events

The following community events attracted more than 20,000 visitors to The Pavilion precinct this year:

- The Kiama Jazz & Blues Festival
- Kiama Folk Festival
- Kiama Rugby 7s
- KISS Arts Festival including Kiama Kabaret
- Kiama Show Society
- Kiama Show Ball and Trivia evening
- The Music Makers Creative Arts Performance Evening
- Various Dance concerts, recitals, and competitions
- Various events held by local service clubs of the Kiama local area
- Supporting the local sporting association presentation and awards ceremonies
- William Campbell Annual fundraising ball
- Westpac Tour De Cure annual rider's dinner.

Corporate events

- Annual Pavilion Christmas Market 2021, 2022 and 2023 local business community Pavilion created event
- Conferences from large and small including training, team building, business meetings and multi day business events adding to the local economy
- International conferences
- Concerts, Music Festivals, Recitals, Comedy Nights, Choir performances providing the local community with a venue to hold all weather events, as well as provide ample room for social distancing including Red Hot Summer Tour
- Increased school formal bookings from three (3) to nine (9) in one year to local Illawarra schools
- Held the National Rose Show for the first time in three (3) years attended by National Patron, Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley, wife of then Governor General David Hurley.
- School graduations for local Kiama primary and high school students
- Kiama Business Chamber events including supporting the Kiama Focus Magazine
- Brendan Cato exclusive Mother's Day luncheon
- Participation in Revel in May for various events partnering with Destination Kiama.

News story: net zero gains in 2022-23

Kiama Council announced two major achievements towards its Net Zero strategy in October and November 2022.

In October Kiama Council and Endeavour Energy marked a major milestone in Council's journey to net-zero by finalising our installation of LED street lights.

Endeavour Energy completed our LED upgrade of 951 street lights across the municipality, reducing Council's electricity bill, maintenance costs and carbon emissions.

Mayor Neil Reilly joined Endeavour Energy's General Manager Business Services Andrew Pittman to watch the Endeavour Energy crew in action.

"Thanks to the great work of Endeavour Energy, we are taking an exciting, important and big step forward for Kiama Council, our residents and ratepayers, in realising a sustainable future for our community," Cr Reilly said.

"Upgrading our non-LED street lights is a major part of our Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan which we adopted last July, and it's amazing that we'll soon be able to put a big green tick next to it."

Kiama Council's Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan (2021 – 2031) commits Kiama Council to having our operations and facilities reaching 'net zero' within ten years.

As well as the upgrade to LED street lights, the Plan includes initiatives such as securing a long term supply of renewable power and exploring the option of photovoltaic and battery storage for the Leisure Centre, The Pavilion and Community Recycling Centre.

Andrew Pittman said Endeavour Energy's street light program was delivering both environmental and financial benefits not only for Kiama Council and its community, but communities across our region.

"Due to the lower emissions and higher operational efficiency of LED lighting, both the electricity savings and reduction in carbon emissions will be significant," Mr Pittman said. "Replacing these 951 lights will lead to a CO₂ reduction of 277,660 kg per annum, the equivalent of taking close to 130 cars off the road."

The upgrade of major street lights, which represents about 45% all street lights, follows an earlier upgrade of lighting in suburban streets. Converting to a full LED network is expected to save 410,119 kWh of electricity each year, which equates to 332 tonnes of CO₂.

The saving to Council's electricity bill is estimated at \$48,000 a year.

See also photo and information on pages 68-69.



Flow Power Deal announcement

Renewable electricity deal

In November 2022, Kiama, Shoalhaven and Shellharbour Councils announced they had teamed up to secure a renewable electricity agreement with innovative energy retailer, Flow Power.

Under the agreement the Councils will be able to purchase renewable electricity from wind and solar farms in regional NSW to cover the operation of their large facilities including pools, administration buildings, street lighting and treatment plants from 1 January 2023.

The arrangements will see renewable energy added to the grid on behalf of the Councils, offsetting their energy use.

This deal anchors the development of at least two renewable energy projects on unused Council land, delivering jobs and supporting local industry, while creating clean energy generators in these important regional centres.

Councils would also be able to get more value from their assets such as their water treatment facilities and controllable energy usage to

manage costs, improve local grid stability and encourage more renewables to connect by diverting more energy use to times of high renewable generation.

The renewable energy will initially be purchased from the Sapphire Wind Farm near Glenn Innes in northern NSW, and the Bomen and Cootamundra Solar Farms in the Riverina for the next 8 years. The Bomen Solar Farm will be used as a renewable energy bridge until the local renewable projects are completed and supplying energy to the grid.

Mayor Neil Reilly said, "This is an important step forward for Kiama Council, our residents and ratepayers, in realising a sustainable future for our community".

"This power deal is major part of our Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan, which commits Council to reaching 'net zero' by 2031", Cr Reilly said.



PILLAR 4 | **We are part of a connected and liveable community**

A photograph of construction workers in high-visibility vests and boots working on a paved path. They are using tools like a shovel and a long straightedge. The area is cordoned off with red and white striped tape and orange traffic cones. The image has a semi-transparent blue overlay.

“ All programmed work has been completed to improve accessibility of recreational facilities including wheelchair access to seating, shaded areas, outdoor exercise and play equipment ”

Pillar 4: We are part of a connected and liveable community

OUTCOME 1: A strong economy, vibrant local businesses and local economic growth

Work is ongoing on the development of the Local Housing Strategy with consideration to be made to the findings and recommendations of the City Plan yet to be released by the Six Cities Commission in the coming year 2023-24.

In the financial year 2023-23, 100% of Planning Proposals have been prepared and assessed in consistency with existing legislative requirements.

Ongoing changes continue to be made to Kiama Council's planning instruments to best facilitate the provision of suitable housing in the Local Government Area.

Quarterly reports have been provided to Council on the number of dwellings approved and completed to monitor housing and land supply to ensure demand is being met. Work with the Greater Cities Commission and the Department of Planning is continuing on research and strategy projects.

Further work on our Rural Landuse Strategy to foster and promote viable agricultural enterprises and practices will commence following the completion of the Housing Strategy.

The preparation of the Kiama Rural Lands Strategy has not commenced. This will occur following the completion of the Kiama Housing

Strategy and the release of the relevant City Plan from the Greater Cities Commission which is anticipated to occur in the first quarter of the coming year 2023-24.

Numerous submissions have been made to the NSW Department of Planning regarding required changes to Standard Instrument LEP and other relevant environmental planning instruments.

A Development Assessment Policy is being drafted to be placed on public exhibition. Submissions will be assessed, and the Policy put to Council for adoption in the first quarter of coming year 2023-24.

Once the policy is adopted, Council will undertake an assessment of Development Applications in accordance with the Policy.

Work is continuing to occur on the integration of the planning portal with the current DA tracker. All decisions are transparent.

All Development Assessment templates and practices are continually monitored to ensure consistency with Policy and best practice requirements. Further work is occurring on the standard conditions of consent and enhancements to current processes and systems.

DA timeframes are currently delayed due to staff resourcing. External support has been provided and Council officers are being supported to reduce overall timeframes.

Council officers continue to undertake building inspections as the Principal Certifying Authority. Council continues to process complying development, occupation and construction certificates within legislative timeframes. Ongoing compliance work is occurring on Caravan Parks within the Local Government Area. Meetings have been held with park owners and a compliance register and plan developed to support improvements.

Council has continued to make timely decisions and submissions regarding proponent-led planning proposals.

Council has continued to make Local Environmental Plans, which have been delegated to Council, in the timeframes specified in a Gateway Determination.

Council is endeavouring to determine development applications, for which Council is the consent authority, as soon as practicable. However, further work is required to improve the DA determination timeframes. During the next reporting period the threshold for delegations are proposed to be increased to allow for more efficient processing.

PLANNING/COMPLIANCE

Spatial data relevant to Planning has been regularly reviewed and updated as required to meet legislation and user needs.

All Planning Certificates were processed and issued within a timely manner. A total of 859 certificates were processed for the year with an average number of processing days of 2.4 days. Relevant legislation is reviewed each week on the legislation website to ensure requirements are met and up to date. Certificates are reviewed against the relevant register data for every application to ensure accurate and current information is included in certificates.

All certificates as to Notices and Orders were processed and issued within a timely manner. A total of 71 certificates were processed for the year with an average processing timeframe of just under 2 days.

Website enhancements have been implemented to ensure Council's website provides current and best practice advice on the development approval process. Further changes will be made as a result of the Development Assessment Policy which has been drafted and public exhibited.



World Town Planning Day 2022



New Gainsborough toilets

PUBLIC WORKS / CAPITAL WORKS / IMPROVEMENT WORKS AND ACCESSIBILITY, COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

Council's two additional public toilets at Chapman Oval, Kiama and Bomboo Hill Reserve, Kiama Downs were added to the National Public Toilets Register.

All programmed work has been completed to improve accessibility of recreational facilities including wheelchair access to seating, shaded areas, outdoor exercise and play equipment. This includes a new footpath linking the accessible amenities at James Oates Reserve, new accessible amenities built at Chapman Reserves and the installation of accessible outdoor furniture in our parks.

All scheduled works in the approved recreation and open space programs have been completed within budget. The weather adversely impacted the program early in the period due to prolonged rain and weather issues. Additional resources were applied when weather conditions allowed and programmed works were completed.

All programmed building maintenance on community buildings have been delivered within budget. The type of maintenance included white good replacement and lighting upgrade at Gerringong Town Hall and door and window maintenance at Jamberoo Youth Cottage. Graffiti removal continues as needed. All requests for maintenance have been actioned within agreed timeframes.



Gainsborough pipes

Stormwater/maintenance

In terms of stormwater asset maintenance and capital programs, quarterly cleaning and inspections of all gross pollutant traps have been completed. Customer requests have been actioned with the agreed timeframes.

All programmed maintenance of Council's plants and equipment has been completed on time and on budget. The approved plant replacement program has been completed and all equipment ordered. Due to global supply chain issues we are still waiting for delivery of several machines.

We have completed two stocktakes during the reporting period. Store stock levels continue to be closely monitored in an effort to balance operational needs.



Cemeteries

Council's four cemeteries (3 operating, 1 closed) were maintained and operated successfully.

Delays in grounds maintenance were experienced due to wet weather and localised flooding early in the program; however, additional resources were applied as the weather issues declined and vegetation growth slowed as winter arrived.

All requests for interment were processed in a reasonable timeframe. Records of burials and placement of ashes regularly updated in Council's records system.



Gerringong cemetery



OUTCOME 2: We are well connected within our local community, and to our region

All Customer Requests for footpath maintenance have been actioned within agreed timeframes. New footpath has been installed in Minnamurra linking the bike skills track to existing path. Pedestrian safety upgrades have also been completed at Kiama High School, Gerringong Public School and Minnamurra Public School.

All customer action requests to manage footpath and cycleway infrastructure and assets have been actioned within agreed timeframes.

Applications were made for all funding opportunities in 2022-23 for external grant funding for cycleways identified in annual budget schedules. Council is pursuing successful applications through the revised Capital Program which continue to be actioned including the Jamberoo Valley Cycleway.

Driveways are inspected promptly, with the target timeframe adjusted to 3 days to support Asset Inspector scheduling.

Local Government Road Safety Program 2022-23 has been successfully applied for as outlined in the Southern Region partnering team program working with Kiama Council to deliver Road Safety outcomes for the community.

Projects delivered include:

- The National Road Safety Week
- Older Road User workshop
- Helping Learner Drivers Become Safer Drivers workshop for parents & supervisors.

Local Road Safety projects and programmed works were delivered as per schedule or nearing completion. These include road safety education programs and learner logbook runs.

Approved traffic facility upgrades were implemented in accordance with Council's adopted capital budget. Several projects were significantly impacted by weather and storm events directly or indirectly due to delays on preceding projects or access restrictions due to works by State Government agencies.

Works partially completed in 2022-23:

- A new raised pedestrian crossing on Saddleback Mountain Road at the Kiama High School.



Road safety event

Works now programmed to be completed in 2023-24:

- Line marking for the new raised pedestrian crossing on Saddleback Mountain Road at the Kiama High School
- Minnamurra Public School Kiss & Drop Zone
- Crooked River Road Gateway Project (speed zone threshold indicator)
- Bong Bong Street pedestrian crossing at Railway Parade
- Gerringong Public School pedestrian refuge.

The Transport for NSW supported Safety Action Plan 2022-23 was developed and completed as per the Local Government Road Safety Guidelines and enabled grant applications in the priority areas.

Having faced significant resourcing issues due to the effects of natural disasters impacting on critical assets such as Jamberoo Mountain Road as well as other priority actions under the Performance Improvement Order (PIO) and Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP), progress on the Traffic and parking study for Kiama Town Centre project was delayed.

The independent peer review of the draft Traffic & Parking Study identified several opportunities for improving the Study and proposed actions. Some of the proposed actions are influenced by significant private development that was not understood at the time of the original study in 2018.

A staged review of sections of the Study data and planning assumptions is being programmed for 2023-24.



Kiama High School crossing

Parking patrols

159
active parking
patrols
conducted



298
fines issued

\$56,495
in face value
of fines



During this period 159 active parking patrols were conducted. The number of fines issued during this period was 298, this provided a face value of fines equating to \$56,495.00.

In addition to this a new fine issuing system (PinForce) was implemented to automate vehicle plate searches and to provide a seamless integration with Revenue NSW which allows the customer to view an image of the non-compliant vehicle online via the Revenue NSW website. 220 illegally parked vehicle complaints received this year, 17 Abandoned vehicle complaints investigated, 7 abandoned vehicles removed, fines valued at \$2,970.00 issued for abandoned vehicles.

Capital Works

Capital Works renewal projects are identified through condition and inspection information and scheduled based on available funding allocations from a mix of rates, grants and reserve sources. This data, along with existing commitments, was used to draft the proposed capital budget for 2022-23 and the works program to be funded by the budget.

The Capital Works Program was significantly impacted by overarching financial issues requiring the reduction of revenue funding available for works. The affected projects will be re-phased into later years of the Delivery Program as budget capacity allows.

Capital works upgrade/new projects are identified through service reviews, strategic plans or grant funding opportunities and scheduled based on approved funding allocations, generally only from grants and service-specific reserve sources (such as Holiday Parks). Rates-funded capital works were postponed for this year due to financial constraints.

Grant opportunities are assessed and applied for through Council's Grants Officer.

Council appointed a new Infrastructure Engineer and Assets Officer during the reporting period - work has now commenced on a review and update of Council's asset register.

During the reporting period a consultant has been engaged to prepare the detailed designs for all flood mitigation measures identified in the adopted flood investigation report. These designs

were used for grant funding applications to enable delivery of flood mitigation works. Funding approvals still pending at time of reporting.

The tender process for the significant Hindmarsh Park Upgrade, was unsuccessful as all tenders significantly exceed available budget.

Council has resolved to proceed with redesigning the proposed park upgrade as required to deliver an outcome within the available funding outlined in the report and enable a contract to be entered into. The Hindmarsh Park Upgrade is now programmed for the 2023-24 period.

The Jamberoo Valley shared path is now programmed for the 2023-24 period. Other grant funded projects continue to be delivered with all available resources.



OUTCOME 3: Our built environment is safe and inclusive; our infrastructure is well planned and well managed

Cycleways and footpaths

Two significant cycleway projects in the Jamberoo Valley and Omega Flat Shared paths projects were continued; however, they have been impacted by resourcing issues. Engineering staff were required to manage significant additional projects as result of the natural disaster early in 2022, which did impact cycleways and footpaths.

OUTCOME 4: Innovation and new technologies and resources that improve environmental and social outcomes are embraced

We have begun work with Kiama Community College towards a career development training day with students at Kiama High School. This day will take place in November 2023.

The UOW social enterprise program commenced in August 2023. We plan to work with UOW in 2023-24 to encourage local Kiama residents to utilise the program.

Council continues to partner and collaborate with UOW to explore opportunities to support innovation and entrepreneurship; local education; leadership programs; research activities; environmental sustainability.

To find out more about Council's community education programs in the areas of Cultural Development, Youth Services, health and wellbeing, art and music, see information on pages 34-37.

For Council's food safety education program, see page 44.

For more information on Council's work to promote learning, preservation and respect for our history and heritage, including the Aboriginal history of the area, see pages 46-47.

Council participates in environmental outreach programs, working with Landcare groups and local schools, see pages 60-63.

For information on Council's innovation in digital services and communications, see pages 129-133.



Facility report: Kiama Leisure Centre

The Kiama Leisure Centre is open 95 hours every week, 360 days of the year. The Leisure Centre operates a successful swim school and squad program with around 1,300 students altogether.

We currently run 14 aqua classes every week and a dry fitness program offering 38 fitness classes every week plus 11 gym class/circuit training offerings. The gym and fitness classes remain popular with both Leisure Centre members, casual users and fitness passport holders. Other services offered include personal training services, gymnastics, school holiday sport and recreation programs as well as child-minding services by qualified creche staff.

Jamberoo Pool operated from December 2022 to March 2023. Recruitment took place in October/November, where 5 current employees and one new employee were engaged to work at the pool. The season ran smoothly with only five unscheduled closures due to inclement weather and staff shortages/ unavailability. All risks and faults were managed in accordance with current procedures and statutory requirements.

Jamberoo pool had more than 8,300 visits during the season, with the highest number of visits recorded in the last week of January 2023.

Plant maintenance was carried out as per weekly work schedules, and one sand filter was replaced this season.

Kiama Leisure Centre's online portal continues to provide online services to our members, pass holders, casual users, swim school, squads and gymnastic parents.

Swim school, squads and gymnastic parents have the ability to access a range of services via a user-friendly dashboard. These services include, booking and changing classes, updating account details, and paying outstanding fees, and viewing their child/children's progress through each level of the program.

Leisure Centre members and pass holders can renew their memberships, and book into our Group fitness and Aqua classes, and sauna and spa facilities up to 25 hours prior to the class start time.



The Leisure Centre provided the aquatic facilities for our local Public and Catholic schools and Shellharbour Anglican College, to participate in learn to swim classes run by the Department of Education and Leisure Centre staff. These programs were much needed, as the two years prior, no learn to swim classes were offered due to COVID restrictions. These important programs ran in terms three and four 2022, and provided the students with stroke correction, swimming and water safety skills which are important life skills living so close to the sea.

The Leisure Centre sports hall was also booked by many sporting groups and clubs, including Illawarra Little Kickers, Kiama Junior Basketball, South Coast Leisure Basketball, Kiama Volleyball, Shoalhaven Basketball, Illawarra Academy Netball trials and training, Kiama Netball Association, and many other local sporting clubs for competitions and training.



Leisure Centre survey 2022

Kiama Leisure Centre conducted a customer survey in late 2022, releasing the results in November. The survey targeted Leisure Centre users to understand demand for services now and in the future and help plan how to meet that demand.

A Council spokesperson said: “It’s been five years since we last asked our Leisure Centre customers specifically about their experience and especially about individual services we offer.”

“We had a fantastic response from more than 700 of our customers, which is more than double what we received in 2017.”

Council said the results of this year’s survey would be invaluable in helping set the direction for the Centre in coming years.

“A clear message we got from this survey was the need to review our customer service, both at the counter and online, as well as how we keep our customers in-the-loop about things such as changing class times.”

“As a result we’ll be developing an operational plan for the Centre, and reviewing how we communicate with our customers.”

Other opportunities identified from the survey include:

- Improving online bookings, payments and programs to overcome wait times, congestion and delay
- Regularly review programs to provide contemporary fitness program offerings and timetables
- Dedicated management of the aquatic programs area
- Gym enhancement including a five-year space refresh and equipment renewal plan, functional floor layout and additional hours of access.

Findings from the survey helped the Leisure Centre design and launch a new spring-summer fitness program.

The new program offers a mix of classes, including favourites such as Body Pump and Pilates as well as new offerings including Reboot, Shape Up and Move It.

“The time changes and a range of new class types will allow us to include a larger portion of our community: workers, retirees, parents and their children.”

“This shows we’re serious about listening to our customers and continually trying to deliver the programs and services they want.”

In 2023-24 Council will conduct a service review of the Leisure Centre and continue to work through the opportunities identified in the survey.





News story: Kiama Sky Show returns this NYE

This year our NYE Sky Show returned to light up Kiama Harbour on New Year's Eve after a two-year absence.

Destination Kiama Chair Matt Brown said the NYE Sky Show had been sorely missed during its COVID-enforced hiatus.

"Around 15,000 people enjoyed the sights and sounds of our rebooted Sky Show in 2022, making it one of the largest NYE fireworks displays in NSW," Cr Brown said.

"Importantly, it is a family-friendly and easy-to-access alternative to the spectacular but heavily-crowded Sydney fireworks."

Cr Brown said the return of the NYE Sky Show was welcomed by local businesses, from restaurants and cafes to food and drink vendors.

"Kiama and District Business Chamber have been strong supporters of the NYE Skyshow in previous years and we once again enjoyed working alongside them to create an epic event."

The event was further enhanced with an Eat Street experience with food and drink stalls established alongside Kiama Harbour.

"The idea was to stimulate your taste buds with a variety of cuisine as well as your eyes and ears with fireworks and music," said Cr Brown

"We do this event so well in Kiama and now it's back, we're not stopping! So thanks to our community and visitors for once again celebrating New Year's Eve in style in arguably the prettiest setting on the South Coast."

The event was centred around the 9pm fireworks, with ancillary events, including roving and fixed live entertainment and DJs, aimed to build an electric atmosphere. Some attendees made a full day of it and others decided to come later just in time for the fireworks.

To provide light entertainment for those that gathered early, from 4pm the WAVE FM 'Wave Riders' hosted lawn games and giveaways, and Eat Street opened. 4pm also saw the opening of the Kiama Family Carnival on Old School Flat (not associated with the NYE Sky Show, but a crucial entertainment piece run independently).

At 6pm the live DJ commenced in the event precinct. Roving performances wove their way through the crowd with a range of circus based and illumination effects as the evening went on. The event footprint extends to Hindmarsh Park where in 2022 the Orry Kelly stage hosted a Flamenco and Fire Show and provided a quieter and more relaxed atmosphere.

The Kiama New Year's Eve Sky Show 2022 was proudly promoted as a free event, where attendees were invited to bring their family, friends and picnic blankets down to Black Beach Reserve for the ultimate viewing experience.

This year the event was funded by the NSW Government's Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program to the amount of \$53,000 excluding GST.

The consumer experience was solidified with an emphasis on safety and waste management. Kiama Council also provided an accessible drop-off and pick-up zone, as well as an accessible viewing area at the event.



New youth workshop format a hit

In September 2022 we launched our new-format Youth Engagement Workshop at The Pavilion.

Kiama Council welcomed local high school and primary students to discuss two big issues particularly important to young people: local housing and recreational facilities.

Both issues pose significant intergenerational challenges, and the Councillors found out first-hand how local young people want our community (through Council) to tackle them. Councillors split up and joined different teams to 'workshop' these problems and solutions.

The new format for the annual youth engagement meeting proved a big hit, with lots of discussion, debate and ideas. In attendance were students from Kiama High, Gerringong Public, Kiama Public, Minnamurra Public, Jamberoo Public and Ss Peter & Paul Primary schools.

The results have been put to very good use, helping develop our Local Housing Strategy and Open Spaces and Recreation Strategy.

Kiama Council thanks the schools for participating, our SENTRAL Youth Services team who hosted the workshop and our Community and Cultural Development Officer who facilitated it.





Facility report: Waste Services

2022-23 was a difficult year for Waste Services, however, services continued to be delivered regardless.

Our Manager Waste Services, Tony Hardy passed away on 2 February 2023 after five decades of work with Kiama Municipal Council.

Council's cleaning services continued to deliver a high standard of work. This period saw three new/upgraded public toilets including James Oates Reserve, Chapman Oval and Bombo Hill Reserve, increasing the workload for the existing team in which staffing levels fluctuated. Regardless of the adversity, public toilets, offices, libraries, halls, and sporting facilities continued to be cleaned regularly. Increased tourism and local large and small scale events also resulted in increased use of the public facilities which put a strain on resources at times. A commendable effort from Council's cleaning team.

Council's External Plant Hire business unit continued to perform well generating revenue for Council and providing a high level of service

to the customer. Approximately \$1.4 million dollars in revenue was generated over the 2022-23 period with the customer base remaining solid or increasing over that time.

Public Place waste collection, an absolute necessity in service provision, struggled at times, particularly school holiday periods coinciding with local events. The overwhelming success of tourism in the area meant that at times, public place bins were overflowing, even if it was only for a 24-hour period. An estimated 24,000 bin lifts were undertaken in the 2022-23 period covering both public place recycling and garbage.

Domestic waste collection continued throughout the year. The 140L and 240L bins required constant repairs and replacements as the plastic started to become brittle. Bin lids cracked, wheels fell off and the main bin bodies also started to break up. These repairs and replacements were all made by Waste Services team members. A total of 2,900 tonnes of waste was sent to landfill, a reduction of 150 tonnes on the previous year. 4,830 tonnes


of FOGO (Food organics and garden organics) were processed into soil conditioner in the 2022-23 period, a small reduction of 220 tonnes on the previous period. Finally, 2,500 tonnes of domestic recycling were collected, again a slight reduction on the previous period.

Commercial Garbage and Recycling services continued in the reporting period. A total of 13,788 recycling bin lifts were completed in the reporting period, including both commercial customers and Council properties such as the Libraries, Community Halls, Holiday Parks and Depots. The commercial garbage truck lifted 21,097 bins during the 2022-23 period, again including commercial customers and Council properties. During the same period Council took ownership of a new commercial garbage truck (pictured) generating less carbon emissions, constructed with a lower driving cabin and a larger hopper capacity, overall reducing environmental impacts, improving working conditions, and maximising efficiency.

Minnamurra Community Recycling Facility and Waste Depot continued to operate all functions, receiving 1,100 tonnes of green waste generated from local gardening contractors, households in and around the LGA and 27% was generated by Council's outdoor crews cleaning up after the many storms during the period. The Community Recycling Facility saw the introduction of a dedicated staff member funded through an EPA grant. This resulted in lower rates of contamination in the receptacles and better customer service through the 2022-23 period.

Council's new, lower-emissions garbage truck



A photograph of a woman with blonde hair and glasses speaking into a microphone. Her hand is raised in the foreground, partially obscuring the view. The image is overlaid with a green tint.

PILLAR 5 |

We expect accountable
and transparent
leadership; a Council
that is financially
sustainable

“ During this reporting period, Kiama Council was focused on asset divestment as part of our wider strategy towards financial sustainability ”



Pillar 5: We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a Council that is financially sustainable

OUTCOME 1: Public funds and assets are managed strategically, transparently and efficiently

Reporting

The Long-Term Financial Plan was adopted by Council in June 2023. It will be reviewed and updated for any material changes on a quarterly basis as a part of the regular quarterly budget review process.

The 2020-21 Financial Statements were prepared and are in the process of being audited with the target for the audit opinion to be issued by 30 September 2023. Preparation of the 2022-23 Financial Statements will commence in October with the final audit planned for April 2024. In addition, Council continually improves quality and timeliness of financial reporting through the Quarterly Budget Review process and monthly financial reporting.

The Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee (ARIC) has been very active during the year in reviewing and monitoring Council's financial and risk management strategies, governance, internal audit activity, and external accountability responsibilities. This has included the provision of feedback and review of Council's financial statements. ARIC has provided key advice and assistance during the year with respect to:

- Financial statements for 2021 and 2022 and related auditor concerns

- NSW Audit Office financial sustainability concerns
- NSW Office of Local Government Performance Improvement Order (PIO).

Read the ARIC Annual Report from page 164.

In August 2021, the Office of Local Government issued draft Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Councils in NSW to guide the operations of ARICs and to require Councils to have a risk management framework and internal audit function. These guidelines have now been approved in draft (pending amendments to the Local Government Regulation) with full compliance required by 1 July 2024.

A gap analysis was provided to ARIC, detailing the key requirements of the Guidelines, noting areas of compliance, and identifying areas that need to be addressed. The Committee has been proactive in its early adoption of certain aspects of the Guidelines, including the requirement to remove the voting rights of Councillors on the Committee. Changes were adopted by Council and terms of reference updated.

Regular progress reporting remains a key focus and will continue to be provided to ARIC to ensure compliance by the 1 July 2024 deadline. Good progress is being made on audit implementation.

The Strategic Internal Audit Plan is being delivered on schedule. Internal audits completed during the year included payroll & leave management, and procurement. Internal audit reports are provided to ARIC and include audit findings and recommendations, and a timeframe for implementation. The Committee regularly monitors the implementation of internal audit recommendations and receives a progress report on the implementation status at each Committee meeting.

A Contracts Management Framework was developed and implemented by Council. Improved

centralised procurement staffing and processes are planned for 2024. A Project management framework was to commence in the last quarter of the year. The framework is yet to be developed and has been delayed due to the recruitment challenge of an appropriate manager. Consideration of an independent consultant program implementation is being reviewed.

Implementation of the budget module in OneCouncil (TechOne) is now complete. Standard reports were developed to streamline the quarterly budget review process. Operational and Capital Dashboards were developed to improve monitoring of the budgets by budget owners. All managers were trained to use the new dashboards.

Fees and charges

As part of the 2023-24 annual budget preparation, fees and charges were increased in line with CPI. Fees and charges will be further refined as a result of upcoming service reviews.

In addition, fees and charges for home care packages and Independent Living Unit (ILU) fees were reviewed by management.

The Financial Sustainability Strategy was adopted by Council in February 2023 and the subsequent Long Term Financial Plan was adopted in June 2023, capturing the need for operating efficiency improvements of 10% commencing in 2025.

Council manages investments in accordance with the Local Government Act, Ministerial order and Council's Investment Policy. This is reported to Council on a monthly basis.

Council is now up to date with invoicing. Annual rates notices were also sent on time. Council's debt collection process is functioning efficiently. Overdue debtors are reviewed on a monthly basis and appropriate actions are taken to recover outstanding balances.

Council's Developer Contribution Framework continues to be reviewed. Recruitment to this role is difficult due to a shortage of planners across the industry.

External funding and grants

Council applied resources to applications to increase programs beyond internal capacity. From January to July 2023 our Grants Officer has been instrumental in securing 10 grants to the value of \$5.7 million and we are awaiting outcome notification on a further 11 applications that represent a cumulative total value of \$11.8million. Successes include:

Funding secured	Grant
\$2,150,000	Natural Disaster Funding Emergency Works & Immediate Reconstruction Works Claims
\$1,010,000	Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 5
\$994,000	Sport Infrastructure Recovery Fund - Gerry Emery Reserve Athol Noble Oval Sport Facility Upgrade
\$691,000	Sport Infrastructure Recovery Fund - Gainsborough Oval Sport Facility Upgrade
\$489,000	Regional & Local Road Repair Program
\$352,000	Female Friendly Community Sport Facilities & Lighting Upgrades Program - Jamberoo Sporting Precinct & Connective Pathways Lighting Upgrade
\$7,000	Autumn Holiday Break
\$7,000	Winter Holiday Break
\$3,700	Youth Week
\$3,000	NAIDOC Week

Corporate governance framework

A number of actions within our internal audit program were completed in 2022-23 and further actions will be addressed in the coming year 2023-24, as recruitment in this area progresses.

Asset management

Existing asset data and asset management plans were used to develop the asset renewal program for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 capital programs.

Due to significant resource demands managing large scale damage from natural disasters through the year as well as the necessary focus on achieving financial sustainability under the Strategic Improvement Plan and the adoption of a revised Long Term Financial Plan in June; review of the Asset Management Policy and Plan will be now undertaken through the 2023-24 reporting period.

Asset valuations for building and recreation assets were completed in early 2022 and incorporated into prior year financial reporting this year. The planned valuations for Footpaths & Shared paths in 2022-23 was delayed due to the necessary reallocation of staff to priority financial reporting tasks under the Strategic Improvement Plan as well as significant additional infrastructure works in response to the 2022 natural disasters.

As a result of the prior year financial reporting requirements and subsequent audit outcomes, a revised asset valuation and condition assessment program was developed. The scope of works to undertake the assessment process was expanded to include footpaths and shared use paths and remaining transport assets, such as roads, bridges and roadside furniture.

The procurement process for this larger scope of works has started and will be completed by September 2023 with the overall program to be completed in 2023-24.

A valuation for the Blue Haven Terralong Street site was obtained; however, following Council's resolution to retain the site and prepare a sub-division for Havilah and the Community Gardens, this portion of the project will be continued in 2023-24.

A number of actions within the internal audit have been completed and other items being proposed to be actioned in the coming year 2023-24.

COMMERCIAL WASTE & HIRE SERVICES

Council has resolved to correctly classify the business of Commercial Waste & Hire Services. Our customers remain happy and satisfied with service levels and service delivery.

Service reviews

The Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) 2 includes an action on service reviews, which has been continued from SIP1. The scope of the proposed reviews into waste services, holiday parks, the Leisure Centre and The Pavilion was endorsed by Council in February 2023. The Finance Advisory Committee have also discussed the reviews and suggested that the service review of our waste services is elevated. Progress of the service reviews has been delayed pending budget allocation in FY2024. The findings of these reviews will help inform more detailed conversations about service levels and potential areas for efficiencies.



Land management

There are 136 land use agreements (leases and licences) in place on Council community, operational and Council-managed Crown Land that are being managed in accordance with the relevant legislation.

The Crown Lands Plan of Management has been under development and a draft plan was endorsed for submission to the Minister for approval to publicly exhibit. The draft plan was approved for public exhibition and this was undertaken between 9 March and 20 April 2023. During the public exhibition process, 24 submissions were received both in support and requesting minor changes/suggestions to be made to the plan of management. Following a review of the submissions and

further consultation with the Department of Planning & Environment - Crown Lands, a proposed final draft Plan of Management was developed. The final draft Plan of Management will now be reported to Council early in 2023-24 recommending endorsement for submission to the Ministerial for approval.





Council landholdings

Council adopted an initial asset divestment plan in December 2022 in accordance with the Strategic Improvement Plan - the processes required for putting the lands to market have commenced with the most significant site, Akuna Street (south), being the subject of an Expression of Interest process in June.

The tender process for the Akuna Street (south) site was undertaken early in the 2023-24 year. Other sites are in the preparation for sale phase including proposed closures of roads to enable sale and will be delivered over the term of the Delivery Program.

This activity remains a key focus area and other sites are in the preparation-for-sale phase including proposed closures of roads to enable sale. The review of Council's land holdings and preparation processes required to deliver an initial divestment program in support of the Strategic Improvement Plan to achieve long term financial sustainability was completed.

Preparatory and statutory processes to enable divestment of portions of public roads not required for the operation of the Kiama road network commenced, including a portion of Marsden Street (off South Kiama Drive); corner of Manning Street and Farmer Street, and Noorinan Street, Kiama; and, Gray Street, Gerringong.

The processes required to achieve divestment are statutory in nature and not all phases are in Council's control. Accordingly, sales are expected to be delivered over the period 2023-24 to 2025-26. The sale by Expressions of Interest and then selective tender of Council's Akuna Street (south) holdings was started with the Expression of Interest closing in June. The tender process of sale will be completed in 2023-24.

Blue Haven - Council resolution 22/1040C

SALE OF BLUE HAVEN

A business case was presented to Council on 28 February 2023. Council resolved unanimously to note and reaffirm the prior October decision to divest of all aged care and retirement village assets on the Bonaira site.

A Project Control Group was implemented to manage the sale process with probity lawyers and an industrial specialist appointed.

Land reclassification of the site was endorsed at the Council meeting on 20 June 2023. An Expression of Interest (EOI) tender process is progressing with the EOI launched 18 August 2023.

A Community Engagement Plan was developed to guide the delivery of regular communication updates to ensure residents and staff were informed of progress regarding the sale of Blue Haven Bonaira. Communications were provided via face-to-face meetings chaired by the CEO and the Mayor as well as the engagement of a communications consultant who conducted 'Bonaira Banter' sessions where residents and families were able to ask questions and raise concerns. The regular Blue Haven newsletter/magazine was also distributed to residents and families.

OPERATIONAL PLAN

The Blue Haven Operational Plan for 2023 was developed in April 2023 and also addressed a requirement of the Performance Improvement Order on Council. The various components of Blue Haven - Residential Aged Care, Community Services & In-Home (Aged) Care, Retirement Villages & Independent Living are covered. The Plan was presented to the Blue Haven Advisory

Committee in April 2023. The Plan aligns with the broader Kiama Council Operational Plan.

ACCREDITATION

The Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission conducted an assessment visit at Blue Haven Residential Aged Care Facility in September 2022. The Assessment concluded that despite some areas for improvement, Accreditation was granted to April 2025. ACQSC confirmed satisfaction in April 2023 of Blue Haven's Action Plan response to issues noted in the Accreditation assessment. A follow up assessment visit in July 2023 to review the Action Plan confirmed the April 2025 Accreditation status, and reduced unmet.

Blue Haven Federal Home Care program is due for Accreditation assessment and preparatory work has commenced in terms of self-assessment reviews and gap analysis. Improvements made to Retirement Village processes regarding asset management plans and financial reporting with further refinement required.

DECOMMISSION STRATEGY FOR AGED CARE FACILITY AT HAVILAH PLACE

This project is commenced but not yet completed.

The former Residential Aged Care Facility is currently contained within the same lot as the Independent Living Unit stages and the interdependencies of the existing buildings needs to be investigated to confirm the pathway for decommissioning the un-used building. These works will continue in 2023-24

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The asset management plan system for Blue Haven Bonaira was completed for Retirement Village compliance and budget planning for asset renewal and maintenance. From 2027 the forecast indicates that capital investment for the replacement of assets will increase as shorter life components reach the end of design life.

Asset planning for Retirement Village compliance in the Terralong facilities was significantly constrained by access restrictions. Asset inventory and conditions were estimated based on floor plans and areas that were available for inspection to develop an initial asset plan. A detailed assessment is programmed for 2023-24 to confirm asset conditions and useful lives. This is expected to confirm that significant investment in both maintenance and asset renewal is required, as would be expected, especially for the older stages of the facilities.

GOVERNANCE

The Blue Haven Advisory Committee was instated in April 2023 with 3 independent members joining the committee.

The Aged Care Prudential Standards Policy was initially endorsed by Council at the 20 September 2022 Ordinary Meeting following a 28-day public exhibition. The policy was also subject to review by Federal Department of Health & Ageing following some clarification of financial management matters. Recently, the Liquidity Management Standard and resident loan coverage amount within the Aged Care Prudential Standards Policy was reviewed and updated for year end 2023 by Council at the 18 July 2023 Ordinary meeting.



Blue Haven Bonaira



OUTCOME 2: Governance is transparent and builds trust

Council's Code of Meeting Practice was reviewed and updated in November 2022. Administrative changes to the Code of Meeting Practice were subsequently endorsed at the July Council meeting. During the year Council conducted 11 Council meetings and 5 extraordinary meetings in accordance with the COMP.

We trialled a Councillor Briefing Session from February 2022 which enabled members of the community and external bodies to make deputations to the Council. However following feedback from Councillors and staff a decision was made at the August 2022 Council meeting to not adopt the policy and discontinue the sessions.

Councillors attend a monthly workshop on the first Tuesday of each month to include presentations on: budget matters, liquidity plans, Cash flow, the Long Term Financial Plan, Councillor Committees, Performance Improvement Order, Strategic Improvement Plan 2, capital works projects, events and the Salary System Review.

During the year, 42 members of the public addressed Councillors at the Public Access Forum.

Following the suspension of most of the Council Committees in March 2022 a draft Committee Policy and Framework plus associated terms of reference were submitted to the September 2022 Council meeting and endorsed for public exhibition. The Committee Policy and Framework was placed on public exhibition for 28 days and the final document endorsed at the April 2023 meeting, effectively establishing two new committees - Sustainable Communities and Infrastructure & Liveability.

It is noted that during this time the following committees operated: Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, Kiama Local Traffic Committee, Tourism Advisory Committee, Performance Review Committee, Finance Advisory Committee and the Blue Haven Advisory Committee.

The Central Precinct and the South Precinct continue to hold monthly meetings and an executive summary of these meetings are submitted to Council regularly.

As part of Council's review of its Community Engagement Policy (CEP) during this period, an updated policy was developed, that integrated the Community Participation Plan (CPP). This work was done as part of the IP&R (Integrated Planning and Reporting) suite of documents. The draft updated CEP (including CPP) was put on public exhibition and received several submissions. Changes are being worked through to the draft policy to finalise it, after which it will go up to Council for endorsement. There has been a lack of human resources in the area of Community Engagement, which is forecasted has been addressed in the organisational restructure with the creation of a Manager Communications & Engagement and Community Engagement Officer role, which is due to be filled in 2023-24.

Where possible, the team have facilitated and implemented engagement activities and promoted community participation in line with IP&R requirements. With the anticipated appointment of a Community Engagement Officer in 2023-24, a lot more progress should occur in this sphere.

Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R)

The 2021-2022 Annual Report was submitted to Council in November 2022 and is available on the Council website. The first six monthly reporting on the Operational Plan was submitted to Council in February 2023.

Integrated Planning and Reporting documents for 2023-2024 (apart from the Community Engagement Plan) were endorsed at an Extraordinary Council meeting held on 29 June 2023 following community consultation.

PROGRAM OF SERVICE REVIEW

The information gathered from Community Strategic Plan (CSP) workshops, Youth meeting, 2021 library survey and precinct presentations informed the work underway to develop a wider community survey of service levels, which will form part of a comprehensive service review.

A draft process for service reviews was endorsed at the February 2023 Extraordinary Meeting. Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) identified priorities for service reviews being Waste, Leisure Centre, Holiday Parks and The Pavilion.

The scope of work has been discussed with the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) and the Leisure Centre will commence as the first operational area to be reviewed.

Digital services

Council provides an excellent online service via our main Council website and other departmental sites (eg: Kiama Library, The Pavilion, Holiday Parks). Online payment provision for rates and invoices. Online bookings, RSVPs and submission forms are provided via the website for community events such as our Household Bulky Waste event, consultations and more. There is continued work to digitise our public-facing and internal forms, including feedback and report-a-problem, to provide users with a seamless digital service.

The focus continues on archiving improvements and addressing records management issues.

In 2022-2023, our site had 134,000 users (131k new), excluding staff. Average engagement time on our website was 1.11minutes. Users accessed our site via mobile phone (66.3%), desktop (30.6%) and tablet (3.1%).

Top pages on www.kiama.nsw.gov.au

- 1 Home
- 2 Leisure Centre
- 3 Jobs at Council
- 4 Kiama Leisure Centre online portal
- 5 Search
- 6 Find my bin collection dates
- 7 Kiama Leisure Centre pool and aquatics
- 8 Agendas and minutes (Council meetings)
- 9 Waste and recycling
- 10 Kiama Leisure Centre gym and group fitness





Communications

The Website Content Strategy was adopted and endorsed by our Executive Leadership Team in November 2021. The system of distributed content authors across the business means that when staff turnover it can leave large gaps in knowledge and ownership, resulting in outdated content in some key areas.

The Communications Team continues to work to train and support content authors and to facilitate content checking and updates as required. Some of the website areas identified in the Website Content Strategy for discrete rollouts or major updates - such as the Leisure Centre and Holiday Parks - will be a priority in for upcoming work and service reviews.

Council style guide improvements are underway to address common questions and mistakes. A particular focus for 2023-24 will be signage. The Communications Strategy is being developed. The strategy will draw on Council's Community Engagement Strategy (currently being reviewed / updated), Council's Social Media Policy (endorsed April 2022), Council's Media Policy (currently being developed), Council's Customer Service Charter (being developed). The Communications Strategy will be delivered in 2023-24.

Our updated Social Media Strategy was endorsed and adopted by Council in April 2022. Since then we have worked to implement the strategy, appointing Social Media Administrators within the Communications Team and documenting and dealing with breaches of the policy, as per the policy. All Councillors have declared their social media accounts and administration roles, as per the policy.

The frequency of Kimunico (Council's e-newsletter) was adjusted to monthly from February 2023 in order to focus more resources on our website updates and social media posts. We currently have 8k Facebook followers and 2.5k Instagram followers. Meltwater media monitoring service sends weekly email digests to our Communications and Executive (ELT) teams and we regularly communicate community sentiment and share screenshots/links to relevant posts on social media internally.

Regular news, media releases, updates and events via our website and social media channels. Continues with an average 2-5 press releases per week. A fortnightly Mayor's column and Council news page in The Bugle local newspaper. A TV screen near the Admin Centre's customer service desk highlights community events, rates deadlines etc. The quarterly rates notice contains a DL leaflet with relevant Council information (eg: rates info, holiday tips, Lifeguard schedule).

Council responds to and respond to all media enquiries in a timely way. This usually takes the form of providing statements, answering questions, clarifying information and/or setting up interviews with key Council spokespeople (eg: the Mayor, CEO, directors) and/or Council staff who are subject matter experts. Coverage includes local news organisations such as The Bugle, Illawarra Mercury, ABC and WIN TV. We publish regular paid content in The Bugle, as well as contributing to local stories. Our Destination Kiama team also liaises with numerous national travel & tourism media organisations to provide and promote stories about local attractions, businesses and beyond.

Council reviewed its Community Engagement Policy (CEP) during this period and drafted an updated policy as part of the IP&R (Integrated Planning and Reporting) suite of documents. The draft updated CEP was put on public exhibition and received several submissions. An updated draft is being finalised.

Records management

The Records and Information Management Policy provides guidelines and direction for the management of records in accordance with all relevant legislation, standards and policies.

The Records Management Assessment Tool (RMAT) was submitted to the State Records Authority NSW, which is the statutory body for records management. The assessment focuses on the management of records, information and data and identifies how these practices align with requirements in the State Records Act 1998. NSW Audit Office completed the audit of 2021 Financial Statements noting deficiencies with information and reconciliations to support opening balances and flow on effect to some closing balances. Improvement of financial reporting information is a key initiative reported separately under financial management.

Governance

Councillors have the opportunity to undertake training and professional courses each year. Training and information sessions, presentations and workshops have included:

- strategic risk
- executive certificate for elected members
- code of meeting practice
- local government NSW mentoring program
- understanding local government finances for Councillors
- social media workshop
- liquidity plan and cashflow
- operating plans and budget
- ICAC training
- dealing with dysfunction in the elected body
- audit, risk and improvement
- cyber security for Councillors.

Committees of Council operating this period included Audit, Risk and Improvement, Blue Haven Advisory Committee and Finance Advisory Committee. Reports are available to the public via the business papers to Council. Committees operate within the Code of Meeting Practice requirements. Annual declarations for written returns of interest were submitted by designated persons within committees and reported to Office of Local Government in accordance with compliance and reporting requirements.

Reports of Public Interest Disclosure (PID), complaints and investigations have been managed in accordance with statutory requirements. In accordance with Office of Local Government compliance and reporting annual requirements, reports to Ombudsman, Council and the Office were respectively submitted.

Over 50 requests under GIPA - Government Information Public Access - were received this year. Majority formal requests and related to Development Applications. All requests for information have been managed in accordance with legislative requirements. 3 decisions being reviewed by National Civil & Administrative Tribunal. Report sent to Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC) October 2022 period.

New staff are advised at induction of their requirement to declare conflicts of interest, secondary employment and gifts and benefits. Declarations are assessed at multiple levels to identify suitable mitigation and/or approval and the employee is notified of outcome and associated obligations.

All complaints that have been received have been managed in accordance with applicable policy and/or legislation, referred to alternate authority for management if indicated and reported to relevant agency as required by the Office of Local Government or Aged Care Act requirements for various Blue Haven Aged Care matters.

Information technology

An Information Management & Technology (IM&T) Strategy is in place and provides guidance on the direction for technology, people, processes and information. An overview and update has commenced with completion expected by December 2023. The Strategy provides clear direction and deliverables to improve the maturity of our processes and aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of ICT to support service delivery.

The Cyber Security Strategy and Policy have been reviewed to ensure that maturity against relevant standards is continuously improved. IM&T work in collaboration with Cyber Security NSW to leverage specialised knowledge and advice.



OUTCOME 3: Council has the right structures, technology, processes and procedures to support their role in delivering for the public

People and performance

The HR workforce plan ensures compliance with employment-related legislation and reporting. The team works to this plan while managing employee lifecycle.

WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Workforce Management Plan for 2022 - 2026 was developed as part of the integrated planning and reporting requirements. The strategy was reviewed in May 2023 and adjustments recommended in line with legislation updates.

Operational Risk reviews are occurring biannually. Risk and Work Health & Safety (WHS) incident data is recorded and monitored. Contractor management processes are compliant with requirements. Whole of Council, consolidated or centralised electronic incident management systems and processes are to be reviewed in 2024.

Significant hazards and incidents have been investigated and corrective actions applied. Manual handling incidents predominate in the range of incidents occurring during 2022-2023. One of the main goals in incident investigation is to eliminate the cause of the injury where possible and in doing so prevent a recurrence in the future. Notifications of hazards, [where no actual injury occurred] by staff are an important injury prevention mechanism and greatly assist in Council's WHS goals.

First aid training refreshers were completed in 2023 year for first aid officers. Council also supports other staff who wish to be trained in first aid.

Key facility evacuation exercises completed. Responsibilities for the maintenance of emergency diagrams and firefighting equipment was allocated to facility managers. Emergency warden training was also completed. Emergency information covering principle identified risks and actions was distributed to staff.

All insurance policies were renewed in the reporting period. Claims managed in accordance with relevant legislation and procedures.

Interactions with SafeWork remain positive. Council has had several visits from SafeWork relating to their routine programs of inspection. Their feedback was positive with no directions for improvement issued.

All workplace injuries are managed compliantly in accordance with the legislation and Council's return to work program.



Technology

A broad review of Council's enterprise management platform OneCouncil (TechnologyOne) implementation was undertaken with priority given to Finance modules. Significant data cleansing was performed to improve accuracy of expenses and revenue allocation including closing off old accounts and cost centres, as well as refining integration between Civica and TechOne.

Civica version upgrade actioned as an interim measure to ensure ongoing platform support given the critical operational need. A reduced Tech One annual fee was also negotiated.

A Capital Dashboard was developed in TechOne for management to monitor project actuals vs. budget with "live" data. The Long Term Financial Plan and Budget was developed using the TechOne budgeting module to ensure a single source audit trail for future reference.

An internal Project Control Group (PCG) was established to better manage ongoing program implementation and the management of both TechOne and Civica. This work will continue for the next 2-3 years given the significance and extent of implementation and the required internal resourcing to support.



Andy from Council's IT Team on World Bicycle Day

News story: your council, your community page

In 2022-23, Kiama Council continued to produce our monthly “Your Council, Your Community” advertorial page in The Bugle newspaper.

This page showcases the great work undertaken by our staff and services. We often feature lesser-known and under-appreciated areas and shine a light on all the wonderful things our workforce delivers for our community.

Common themes are staff saying how much they enjoy interacting with the community and their fellow staff. Then there's the fact that, as a smaller Council, there's more variety in many of our job roles. And, of course, everyone appreciates the natural beauty of our surroundings.

Below are some highlights from some of our favourite interviews in 2022-23:



Meet the gardeners: Jason and Ben

As spring kicks in, Kiama's floral displays delight locals and visitors alike.

We spoke to two of Kiama Council's gardeners, Jason and Ben, about how they keep Kiama in bloom.

What does your typical day involve?

We work 6.15am to 3.30pm and our days are spent planting, watering, looking after the soil (adding mulch or compost) and tending the various garden beds around town.

How do you get the annuals looking so good each year?

Jason: There's several steps – first we pull out the previous plantings, turn the soil over and add mushroom compost for two to three weeks. Then we plant the next annuals. Once the flowers are in, we water every two or three days, depending on the weather.

What do you enjoy about your job?

Jason: I started at Kiama Council 2017 after finishing high school and my Cert 3. I like the early starts and being outside on a nice day.

Ben: I've been here two years. Kiama is such a nice place to work, the people are nice too. It's a great community and we always get good feedback on the gardens.

What are some of the challenges?

Both: Although it's out of our control – it's challenging when there's difficult weather and a lot of rain. In term of the plants, dealing with diseases and pests on the annuals is a challenge.

Any tips for home gardeners?

It's important to have a good understanding of your soil and surroundings. Some plants only work in certain areas and with certain types of soil. For example, some plants don't like salt, some won't tolerate frost. It's also really important to look after your soil with mulch, compost and the right nutrients. Finally – prune and deadhead at the right time to ensure your plants look their best.

Our customer service team

Our hard-working customer service team, who are available 8.30-4.30pm on the front desk, phones and email to answer questions, log requests, deal with complaints, take payments and more.

We spoke to Natalie, our Customer Service Coordinator about what their work involves, what it takes to work in customer service and the challenges they face.

What does your job involve?

I coordinate and support the customer service team to deliver an excellent customer experience for our customers via phone, web and front counter.

Tell us your stats?

My team and I handle more than 2,100 calls per month and many other interactions with customers via email and face to face.

What skills do the customer service team need?

Exceptional customer service and administration skills and experience, high level organisational skills, and the ability to negotiate and deal effectively with customers in varied situations.

Is the customer always right?

The customer is always right in raising any concerns they have – their concerns are always important as it is of importance to them, and the Customer Service team will do their very best to provide a prompt, accurate response.



How can we help?

This month, we're celebrating our hard-working customer service team, who are available at the front desk, on the phones and via email to answer questions, log requests, deal with complaints, take payments and more. We spoke to Natalie, who has been our Customer Service Coordinator for 18 months.

What does your job involve?

I coordinate and support Council's Customer Service team to deliver an excellent customer experience for our customers via phone, web and front counter.

Tell us your stats?

My team and I handle more than 2,100 calls per month and many other interactions with customers via email and face to face.

What skills do the Customer Service team have?

Exceptional customer service and administration skills and experience, high level organisational skills, and the ability to negotiate and deal effectively with customers in varied situations.

Any challenges?

Weather and the impact it can have on events and infrastructure in the local area, and the flow-on effect this has on Customer Service and the wider Council and community.

Best bits of the job?

Working within a passionate, knowledgeable team, who strive to provide extraordinary, efficient customer service to the Kiama community. We also love it when customers bring their puppies in to reception when registering them. In fact, we insist on it!

Is the customer always right?

The customer is always right in raising any concerns they have – their concerns are always important as it is of importance to them, and the Customer Service team will do their very best to provide a prompt, accurate response.

To contact our Customer Service Team, call (02) 4232 0444, email council@kiama.nsw.gov.au or www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Customer-Service/. Submit feedback via www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/submit-feedback.

Reboot your fitness at Kiama Leisure Centre

Is your fitness ready for a reboot? Kiama Leisure Centre (KLC) has launched its new spring-summer timetable to bring the heat to your workouts.

Our new timetable provides a mix of classes that include favourites – such as Body Pump, Pilates, Yoga and Zumba – and new offerings including KLC Reboot, Shape Up and KLC Move.

The timetable has been carefully constructed based on feedback from our Leisure Centre survey conducted in May, and aims to deliver more of what our customers have asked for.

The Leisure Centre's expert trainers are pumped for the spring-summer fitness season and look forward to motivating you with our dynamic and energetic new timetable. www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/klc-reboot



Glenn and Museum (GLAM) has

Meet our new Youthie crew

SENTRAL has a new coordinator and 3 new casual youth workers on board who are excited about supporting our young people.

This month, we welcomed our new Youth Services Coordinator, Steven McIlann. He joins recent arrivals Toni, Kayla and Jordan, who will be facilitating our Drop-In program as well as working on current and upcoming projects like Create to Connect, SENTRAL Studio and NextGen work skills.

The team is looking forward to using their talents and knowledge to continue to provide a safe, inclusive and high-quality program for our young people.

SENTRAL



News story: your council, your community page

Waste services: keeping things tidy

Kiama Council's waste crew has completed another busy summer-holiday season of work. We caught up with Darren, who has worked at Kiama Council for 26 years and leads the Waste Services team.

What does your team do?

My team has many roles. We drive Kiama's waste trucks and conduct waste services such as keeping all parks, headlands and reserves clean of litter.

We also clean all public toilets – Kiama has around 30 toilet blocks, which stretch up our coastline all the way from Gerroa to Minnamurra and out towards Jamberoo.

In addition, we keep the streets tidy with blowers, and collect all the debris such as leaves and rubbish with our street sweepers. And we pick up any illegal dumping.

We clean the facilities owned by Council, including our offices, libraries, The Pavilion, Kiama Leisure Centre and community halls.

Plus we work with our events coordinators and tourism team to provide waste services to major events such as the NYE fireworks, Kiama's Winter Festival and many other wonderful events throughout the year.

Give us some stats?

This season (summer 2022-23) we used a record amount of materials such as around six pallets of toilet paper and probably 30 boxes of hand soap. We placed an extra 85 bins throughout our parks and main streets over the summer period.

What's the best thing about your job?

I like the early start, which is 4am, and the 1pm finish. I love working outside with such a wonderful view of the harbour, headlands and seeing the sunrise every morning.



Waste services team



Image: Lauren (centre) and the tourism team outside Kiama's Visitor Information Centre

Kiama's Visitor Information Centre

We interviewed Kiama Council's Visitor Services Coordinator, Lauren, on the tourism services Kiama Council provides.

What does your typical day involve?

Generally lots of liaising with our Destination Kiama partners. Ensuring their businesses are well represented and promoted to a high standard through our Kiama.com.au website, the Kiama Area Visitor Guide and at the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) located at Blowhole Point. We also make sure the Centre is adequately stocked with souvenirs and info from as many local businesses as we can.

What do visitors ask for info about?

People always ask about the blowhole(s). Also topping the list are the Kiama Coast Walk and our local markets.

People love a recommendation on where to eat, take photos and of course options on where to stay once they realise how beautiful the area is. No two days are the same up at the VIC, and we always enjoy a curly question where we are required to pool our local knowledge.

What do you love about working for Kiama Council?

Look where I get to work every day! Who wouldn't want to walk into an office surrounded by Kiama's beautiful coastline?

I work with an amazing team who are friendly, professional, and fun. And we get to meet people from all around and talk about what Kiama has to offer. What isn't to love.

Facility report: Works Depot and Parks & Gardens

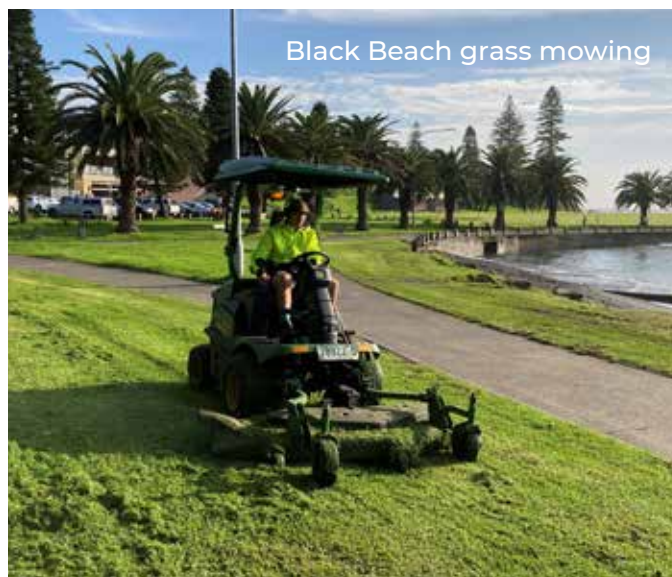
The 2022-23 year started with above average rain fall and storm events that impacted our ability to complete many scheduled maintenance task including mowing of our parks, headlands, reserves, sports fields and cemeteries. Once the weather improved our parks crews were able to get back on top of the program.

In addition to our usual maintenance program additional amenities have been provided in our parks including a new accessible toilet at Chapman Reserve and new accessible toilets and change facilities at Bombo Hill Reserve.

Our construction crews have built a new footpath linking the Minnamurra Bike Skills Track in Ritchie Place with the existing path in Charles Ave and between Ironbark Crescent to Henry Parkes Drive in Kiama Downs.

Our road renewal program completed the resealing of the following:

- Johnson Street – Kiama Downs
- Hyam Place – Jamberoo
- Margaret Street – Gerringong
- Pacific Ave – Gerringong
- Michael Crescent – Kiama Downs
- Meehan Drive – Kiama Downs
- Thornett Way – Kiama Downs.





Minnamurra bike skills track footpath

We were also successful in securing additional grant funding to complete the following road renewals:

- Barney Street – Kiama
- Terralong Street - Kiama
- Morrow Street – Gerringong
- Coal Street – Gerringong.

Our works crews started to deliver grant funded improvements around our schools in an effort to provide safety improvements for the students.

These projects included:

- Kiama High School – Raised pedestrian crossing.
- Minnamurra Public School – Kiss & Drop Zone.
- Gerringong Public School – Belinda Street Pedestrian Refuge.

Council's maintenance team continued to deliver both scheduled and unscheduled maintenance on Council's many community buildings and facilities. This work has varied from graffiti removal, window and door fixings to painting and kitchen upgrades.

Pot holes have remained a focus of our maintenance teams due to the wet weather and resulting damage to our road network. We have continued to respond to community requests and completed works as quickly as possible.



Terralong road resurfacing



Lifeguard Challenge 2023

Lifeguard Challenge returns

The Illawarra and Shoalhaven's Lifeguard Challenge returned this February at Surf Beach, Kiama. The last Lifeguard Challenge was in 2014.

The Lifeguard Challenge saw teams of lifeguards from Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven Councils go head-to-head in a friendly competition on and off the water.

Ten teams competed in a series of challenges including run, swim tag, water paddle and rescue. Each team of six lifeguards must have at least one female and one member aged over 27 years.

Kiama Council's Senior Beach Lifeguard Blair Day, who was responsible for reviving the event, said it was an opportunity for our local professional lifeguards to celebrate the end of another busy summer holidays.

"Between all four Councils we have around 160 lifeguards keeping an eye out for hundreds of thousands of beach goers up and down our coast over the holidays," Mr Day said.

"It's an important job, and one we love doing, but we often are so busy we forget to stop and give ourselves a little pat-on-the back."

Mr Day, who splits his time as lifeguard between Kiama and Shellharbour, says the Lifeguard Challenge was originally inspired by a similar event shown on the TV series Bondi Rescue.

"To be honest, I reckon the lifeguard talent we've got here on the South Coast is as good, if not better, than what they have on Sydney's beaches."

To spice up the local challenge, a new trophy was presented to the winning team.

The event was a success with lifeguard teams from Shellharbour securing a one-two win and a Kiama team claiming third spot.

Lifeguard Season Report

The Kiama Council Lifeguard Season Report 2022-23 showed an increase in rescues even though we had less beach-goers during the patrol season. Council had a total of 31 casual lifeguards operating 405 patrol days from September 2022 to April 2023, across our 7 patrolled beaches.

Our 3 surf lifesaving clubs at Kiama Downs, Kiama, and Gerringong provided 216 volunteer patrol days at their respective beaches.

See page 42 for more on Lifeguards.



Divestments

During this reporting period, Kiama Council was focused on asset divestment as part of a wider strategy towards financial sustainability.

At the February 2023 Extraordinary Meeting, Council endorsed a property divestment plan, a liquidity management and cash flow plan. We also spent much of the 2022-23 financial year working through aspects of divestment of Blue Haven Bonaira.

At this meeting, Councillors also made a decision on distribution of the proceeds from selling Council's valuable landholding in Akuna Street, Kiama.

This sale marked the highest-value return made by Council in its history.

The site totalled almost 7,000sq m over 4 lots and sold for \$28 million to Level 33 Property Group. The sale contract was signed in September 2022 and settled in December.

The property sold after a competitive and open tender process to select the buyer.

"I'm very pleased to announce the sale of our Akuna Street landholdings to Level 33 Property Developers," said Cr Reilly.

"Akuna Street has proven to be an excellent investment by Kiama Council. We purchased the property in separate lots many years ago and have taken the time and care to get the sale right.

“ Akuna Street has proven to be an excellent investment by Kiama Council ”

I'd like to thank my fellow Councillors for their patience and diligence throughout the process."

Cr Reilly confirmed the sale is the single biggest commercial transaction in the history of Kiama Council and said it will provide a much-needed injection to our finances.

"It's a breath of fresh air to have this happen right before Christmas 2022."

However, Cr Reilly continued, "While the sale of Akuna Street does provide some relief for our cashflow in the short term, there are still important, longer-term financial sustainability issues that we need to focus on."

In terms of plans for the site, it is now up to Level 33 Property, said the Mayor.

Once plans are completed, Level 33 Property Developers will need to go through the usual development application processes.

"It's an iconic location in the heart of Kiama, the development of which we welcome. I know Level 33 Property has some great plans for the site, which we all look forward to seeing in more detail," Mayor Reilly said.





Blue Haven Annual Report



“ Blue Haven’s commitment to fostering open and transparent communication with our community and prioritising the wellbeing of our residents and service users is our main focus ”

Message from our COO, Joe Gaudiosi

I'd like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to our residents, dedicated staff and valued clients for your continuing support. The past year has been a busy time at Blue Haven and your patience during this transitional period is very much appreciated.

As we navigate the evolving landscape of aged care, we remain committed to enhancing the quality of care for our residents and clients. Our mission is the care, comfort and wellbeing of senior members of our wider community. We do this by providing independent choice, wonderful facilities and the means to enjoy life to its maximum potential.

The business case review by Paul Sadler Consultancy, considering the issue of sell/ partner/ retain Blue Haven, was presented to Council on 31 January 2023 and then formally reported to Council on 28 February 2023. Council determined to continue with its decision to divest all Bonaira services, assets, and the site, but to retain Terralong, while seeking an Asset Condition/ Dilapidation Report of the buildings at Terralong given some of them date back to 1980. In June, Kiama Council voted to reclassify the land at Blue Haven Bonaira from community to operational land.

The divestment of Blue Haven Bonaira is listed as a key action in Council's adopted Strategic Improvement Plan and other plans and forecasts, provided to the NSW Office of Local Government and the Audit Office.



Blue Haven's commitment to fostering open and transparent communication with our community and prioritising the well-being of our residents and service users is our main focus. We understand the concern that the sale decision has and is having on residents, clients, families and our staff.

With this in mind, we held numerous face-to-face discussions where residents' concerns and questions about the Bonaira sale have been noted, considered and answered. We have also created an FAQ page dedicated to the sale of Bonaira and regularly update this with the latest queries.

Kiama Council is committed to continuing Blue Haven's high standards of aged care as we move through the divestment process for Blue Haven Bonaira. The Residential Aged Care Facility underwent the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Accreditation Assessment in October 2022 and achieved Accreditation to 2025.

During the year, the aged care reform, and staffing shortages across the industry and COVID-19 have been challenging.

Despite all this, a number of improvements and initiatives have been made and the rest of the Annual Report shows that some fun and good times were also had.

I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated Blue Haven staff and volunteers for their invaluable hard work and unwavering commitment to the safety and wellbeing of our residents and clients. We look forward to embracing the challenges ahead and continuously enhancing our services to improve the lives of our residents.

Residential aged care facility

The 2022-23 financial year has presented Blue Haven with some challenges from sporadic COVID-19 outbreaks, workforce turnover and the Council's decision to divest Blue Haven Bonaira from its portfolio.

Blue Haven Bonaira has seen the resignation and appointment of a new Residential Manager and the appointment of the Interim Chief Operating Officer, Blue Haven to Chief Operating Officer for the wider Council. Furthermore, the team was strengthened in September 2022 with the appointment of a Nurse Educator and a Quality and Compliance Coordinator who has since taken on a broader operations role to support the COO.

Blue Haven has achieved re-accreditation until 2025 and while there are still some areas for development, the team remain committed to delivering high quality care and services to our residents.

Blue Haven has supported its residents and staff through the challenges of mask wearing during the COVID-19 situation and the difficulties

associated with isolation. The team are proud of their achievements in maintaining the safety and wellbeing of their residents, with outbreaks being short in duration and with minimal impacts felt throughout the home. The team are grateful for the continued support from our residents' families and friends in achieving these outcomes.

Blue Haven continues to evolve and adapt to the requirements of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) and the implementation of the Aged Care Reforms as a result of the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aged Care.

Blue Haven is proud of and grateful for the place it holds within the Kiama community, the links it shares with local schools, colleges and businesses, the dedication of its staff and the support it receives from our families and friends, and Blue Haven strives to maintain these relationships well into the future.

Independent Living Units

Annual meetings

Blue Haven holds annual management meetings with residents of both villages, in addition to quarterly resident forums. The annual management meeting offers a platform to engage with residents, share updates on various issues and allow residents an opportunity to provide feedback and request improvements.

Reporting

As an approved provider of residential aged care, Blue Haven and Kiama Municipal Council continue to comply with their prudential responsibilities as required by the relevant legislation, standards and principles.

Occupancy

Resident occupancy levels remain strong within both villages.

- Terralong 98% (average)
- Bonaira 96% (average)

Activities

Both villages enjoy a range of resident led activities.

Terralong village hosts over 20 regular weekly activities for residents' enjoyment.

Bonaira village hosts 10 regular events each week and continues to add to this list.

Maintenance

There were various maintenance items completed this year as part of the capital maintenance and repair program for both Terralong and Bonaira Village, including:

- Lifts
- Painted surfaces
- Hot water systems
- Air conditioning units
- Doors and windows
- Plant and equipment
- Roofs and gutters
- Fire systems
- Hydraulic systems
- Electrical and lighting
- High pressure path cleaning
- Roof anchor inspections
- Inaccessible window cleaning requiring aerial work platforms.



Blue Haven's residential aged care facility has received accreditation to April 2025

Blue Haven's Residential Aged Care Facility in October 2022 announced it had received Accreditation to April 2025 from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission following an accreditation assessment.

Kiama Council Chief Operating Officer Joe Gaudiosi said "We are pleased to achieve accreditation given the difficulties and challenges faced by both our service and the industry generally. The challenges including the workforce shortages, new aged care reforms and dealing with COVID-19 cannot be overstated."

The accreditation assessment is based on the 8 Aged Care Quality Standards.

The assessment visit occurred in September 2022 and involved 3 assessors onsite for 3 days reviewing systems and processes and meeting with residents and families.

"Once again, I'd like to thank all our Blue Haven staff and residents and families who assisted with the accreditation audit, and the assessors for their time."

"It's a great result that confirms our good reputation for quality care and high standards as well as being an accurate reflection of our hardworking and dedicated staff and wonderful residents," Mr Gaudiosi said.

Communications update: Blue Haven's commitment to open, consistent communication

Ensuring Blue Haven residents are fully updated on the progress of the sale of Blue Haven Bonaira is our priority. Our commitment to open and consistent communication is demonstrated as follows:

- Distributing 5 Bonaira Bulletins
- Offering 5 Bonaira Banter sessions
- Holding 8 face-to-face discussions where residents' concerns and questions have been noted, considered and answered
- Posting Bonaira Bulletins to residents without access to the internet
- Ensuring all issues of the Bonaira Bulletin are available in print format at Blue Haven Bonaira Reception
- Regular news updates to the Blue Haven and Kiama Council website on aspects of the sale
- Quarterly Blue Haven Newsletter distributed to all Blue Haven Bonaira and Terralong residents, as well as copies at Blue Haven reception, at Kiama Libraries and via Council's customer service desk
- Blue Haven's social media platforms are also updated with the latest news regarding the Blue Haven Bonaira sale.

The latest updates based on the facts related to the Blue Haven Bonaira sale can be found on the Kiama Council website - Frequently Asked Questions page:
www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/bluehavenfaqs

Community

Blue Haven Community Transport (CT)

CT currently provides transport to 538 clients for health and medical appointments, shopping, library visits, community groups, social connections, and special events. In addition to expanding our community transport clients, we have also increased our social support outings this year.

The philosophy of CT is centred around maintaining clients' independence, while providing them with the means to remain active in the community and living in their own homes. We pride ourselves on empowering our clients and providing them the opportunities to take charge of their everyday lives.

We encourage all Kiama LGA residents who are over 65, or over 50 if they are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, to register with My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 to access our transport service.

Also, if you are under 65, and experience transport disadvantage, are socially or geographically isolated or financially disadvantaged please call the Blue Haven Transport Office on (02) 4203 4904 and ask to speak to the Transport Facilitator who will conduct an over-the-phone assessment of your needs and eligibility.



Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

The CHSP provides a range of entry level services which include personal care, domestic assistance, home maintenance and social support. Blue Haven's CHSP program has delivered 11,786 hours of services to 602 clients over the past 12 months.

Home Care Packages (HCP)

There are 4 levels of our HCP ranging from basic care needs (level 1) through to high care needs (level 4). Services provided under a package include Personal Care, Medication Support, Nursing Care, Meal Support, Domestic/Laundry, Gardening/Lawns, Respite, Transport, Social Support and Outings. Blue Haven's HCP program currently has 104 packages (clients):

Level 1: 8

Level 2: 37

Level 3: 34

Level 4: 25

We have experienced a high turnover of HCPs recently due to a number of clients either passing away or accessing higher level care, but the uptake has been slow due to the extended wait periods for allocation of package funding, particularly for Levels 3 and 4 packages.

Workforce shortages have also impacted on our ability to provide services. We have implemented an ongoing recruitment process for Support Workers and Domestic Cleaners and have also backfilled vacancies in our Rostering Team.

Aged Care Rights: All people receiving Australian Government funded residential care, home care or other aged care services in the community have rights. The Charter of Aged Care Rights includes 14 specific rights that individuals can expect when receiving aged care services. Some of these rights include choice, respect, information, dignity & respect and complaints, just to name a few.

In January 2023, Blue Haven Community staff members underwent training provided by the Aged Care Rights Service. They also participated in supplementary training focused on the Aged Care Code of Conduct. During this training, the Senior Rights Service Representative emphasised the essential principal that every individual possesses the right to reside in an environment devoid of abuse, neglect and exploitation. The training sessions generated valuable discussion points that revolved around these crucial subjects.

Quality Review: Management and staff are working through the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Plan for Blue Haven Community in preparation for our pending Quality Review.

The Commission are currently giving Aged Care Community Programs 5-14 days' notice of an onsite audit and although we have not formally been notified, Blue Haven Community was last audited in December 2018 so, we are expecting an audit at any time.

Blue Haven home care client focus group

In June, Blue Haven Community Services organised a client focus group to gather feedback from homecare clients about their experiences with Blue Haven. The clients expressed satisfaction with the development of their Care Plans and other services they received. Some questions were raised regarding the sale of Blue Haven Bonaira and concerns about the separation of Blue Haven from Council. However, the overall outcome of the focus group was constructive and optimistic. We sincerely appreciate the participation of all attendees, as their valuable feedback will help us enhance our service provision.



Blue Haven trainee Taleah

Training

PACOP training

Our nurses and care staff attended the Palliative Aged Care Outcomes Program (PACOP) workshop at Blue Haven.

We learned how to support our residents and their families through optimal palliative and end of life care.

PACOP is dedicated to significantly improving the outcomes of all Australians in aged care homes with a particular focus on those who are approaching the end of their life.

To find out more about the PACOP, visit:
www.uow.edu.au/ahsri/pacop/



PACOP training

Taking care to the next level

Blue Haven trainee Taleah (pictured left) people in the community to be able to have a sense of independence and social connection.

Taleah witnessed it first-hand in her own life, supporting her younger brother with a disability that enabled him to live his life to the fullest. This set her on a path of wanting to help others in similar situations.

Taleah entered the aged care workforce, using her compassion and skills to assist other community members to live as independently and safely as possible in their own homes. Taleah joined Blue Haven Community Care as a Support Worker and says she's found a career that she is passionate about.

When Blue Haven asked its staff if there was anyone who wanted to improve their skills by completing a Certificate IV in Ageing Support, Taleah put her hand up.

"It's very convenient being able to do the course through my workplace," she says.

Blue Haven Community Care is working in collaboration with UOW College to upskill its staff with a custom-designed course that will meet the needs of its residents, clients and staff.

Taleah says with UOW College delivering the content of the course at the workplace, she is still able to continue to work while putting new skills into practice without delay".

"This was always something I wanted to do, but financially it was out of reach," she said.

"As soon as I heard there was an opportunity to take the course, and it was fully funded, I enrolled."

"I'm 27 now and haven't done any study since I completed my Certificate III in Aged Care 10 years ago. Although homework was a bit daunting at first, the support we receive means I'm on top of it all."

"We have three trainers who are all fabulous and provide us with great resources."

Taleah said the new skills she is learning are already helping in her role as a Support Worker and she believes it will enable her to give clients the best possible outcomes.

"What I love about this job is witnessing my clients achieving outcomes and goals," she says.

"My job entails going to clients' homes and helping them do everyday tasks such as showering, transport, shopping or just social appointments, and those little things can help them stay independent and maintain their movement".

Blue Haven celebrates our community centenarians with a '100 Club' party

Blue Haven threw a big party for our Kiama centenarians on 30 September 2022 to mark International Day of Older Persons.

We noticed that our wonderful municipality seemed to have a plethora of folks in their 100th decade – longevity it seems, is just one of the many benefits one can enjoy from living in the Kiama Municipality.

Held at Blue Haven Bonaira, our community came together to celebrate with afternoon tea and live music. The event received coverage in local newspapers and on WIN TV.



Blue Haven in the news: oldest residents celebrated – The Bugle

What better way to mark the International Day of Older Persons than getting our oldest locals together for one big celebration.

About 40 centenarians, and people within a decade of the milestone, came to the party organised by Council with friends and family members.

They were entertained by live music, enjoyed an afternoon tea including a cake donated by Parfait Patisserie, and received hand-made cards from the children at Create Imagine Learn Childcare Centre in Kiama Downs.

The Bugle took the opportunity to chat with people about their lives and times as they sat around the table and enjoyed the event, which was attended by the Mayor, Councillors, Council staff and the local MPs, Fiona Phillips and Gareth Ward.

Bev Sherwood, who recently celebrated her birthday, was eating cake she cut when she exclaimed, "I'm 102 and I'm having a good time!" She misses her husband, who she explains as a 'wonderful man', and often remembers the time she rejected his first offer to dance and how they used to laugh at the memory together.

101 year old Alvin Manning and his wife Valerie visited Blue Haven for the celebration. They recalled that while Alvin would spend his time volunteering with Bankstown Rural Fire Service, Valerie was busy doing all kinds of dancing, including ballroom and Scottish country dancing.

Valerie now enjoys looking nice with her pink hair and reminisces on the 'fabulous time' when she was first married to a light keeper and would live in various lighthouses along the NSW coast.

A local for over 40 years, Iris Champion, who will celebrate her 95th birthday next week, once enjoyed knitting, sewing and tapestry. "You name it, I've done it," she insists. She now does crocheting and says she misses her well-working knees and eyes.

Blue Haven resident, Thelma Allman, admitted she came in by accident while on a walk. It seems Thelma hasn't gotten any less active as she grew older with her usual walk down to the beach and back. "I had to ride my bike about 8 kilometres to a little country school every day. I am sure that is why I have strong legs, I don't have a stick or anything," she says.

(Reference, the Bugle Kiama, 30 September 2022)



Blue Haven Community client Val Brunker (right) being interviewed by Jessica Roemischer

Gardening through the ages

Kiama Community Garden hosted an intergenerational in October 2022 where Blue Haven Community Services clients got their hands dirty gardening alongside children from Kiama Family OOSH and members of the community garden group.

Blue Haven's Seaside Group partnered with kids from Kiama Family OOSH for a morning's work and fun in the popular community garden located at Havilah Place, Kiama. There was a rock painting activity, followed by guided foraging for salad leaves and veggies in the Garden.

The produce made the perfect pairing for a sausage sizzle lunch, with snags kindly donated by The Butcher's Nook, Kiama.

Local bakery Flour Water Salt also donated cookies, which the happy gardeners enjoyed after lunch.

"Our Seaside Group is very active and love to get in the garden," said Blue Haven Manager of Community Services Marianna Parish. "It was lovely to see them interacting with the younger generation and everyone working and laughing together."

Members of the Kiama Community Garden (KCG) were also on hand to provide help and guidance. "We were delighted and proud to host and be part of this first (of many, hopefully) intergenerational gatherings at the KCG," said Joe Carter from the Kiama Community Garden.

"Our garden is a wonderful green space of growth and sharing. It is open to people from our community with all sorts of interests, skills and challenges. Hosting this event fits in so well with our ethics of Earth Care, People Care and Fair Share."

Garden members who attended the event said: "Today was a delightful experience. It was wonderful being with the elderly attendees and their youthful counterparts as they got to know each other, worked at a craft activity together and then explored the garden together. By lunchtime, the genuine engagement between all participants was visible and there was abundant positive energy around. It was a really valuable exercise in community building." – Kathy

"It was a great success despite the weather and fun was had by all." – Gabriella

"It was a joy to see the way that the children and the older Blue Haven Care guests related so spontaneously and joyfully." – Peter

"It was a really lovely morning, the positive vibe was obvious. Such a great chance to meet and get to know our elderly citizens who have so much to share. I really enjoyed seeing one particular young girl click with the lady she was paired with, it was sweet." – Ali

New partnerships have been forged and the groups are already planning their next time together in the community garden.



Volunteering

Celebrating our volunteers

This May, Kiama Council celebrated our fantastic volunteers during Volunteer Week (15-21 May). We also promoted volunteering opportunities in our community with a Volunteer Expo at Kiama Farmers Market on 24 May.

According to Volunteering Australia, 56.7 per cent of Australians volunteer either formally or informally. However, with volunteering on the decline in general, 83 per cent of volunteer organisations say they're keen for more people to put their hand up for this vital and rewarding work.

Kiama Council offers a range of volunteer opportunities including at Blue Haven, our Family History Centre and Libraries, and at our Visitor Information Centre.

"No one has made it through life without someone else's help. Volunteering matters profoundly. It builds communities and creates a better society for everyone," said Imogen Draisma, Kiama's Deputy Mayor.



St Patrick's Day at Blue Haven



Fred Hollis, Blue Haven volunteer

Newsletter



In this issue:

Residents of
from 10



Volunteer Mahin and resident George

National Volunteer Week – afternoon tea at Bonaira

Our Blue Haven volunteers gathered for an afternoon tea to say ‘thank you’ for the fabulous work they do in the community and for our wonderful clients.

Stories were shared over a cuppa and cake after each volunteer received their certificate of gratitude from our Mayor Neil Reilly.

It was a great opportunity for volunteers to meet and mingle with others of similar outlook and chat about the importance of volunteering and what it means to them.

Volunteers Karon and Mahin with Blue Haven seaside member Shirley



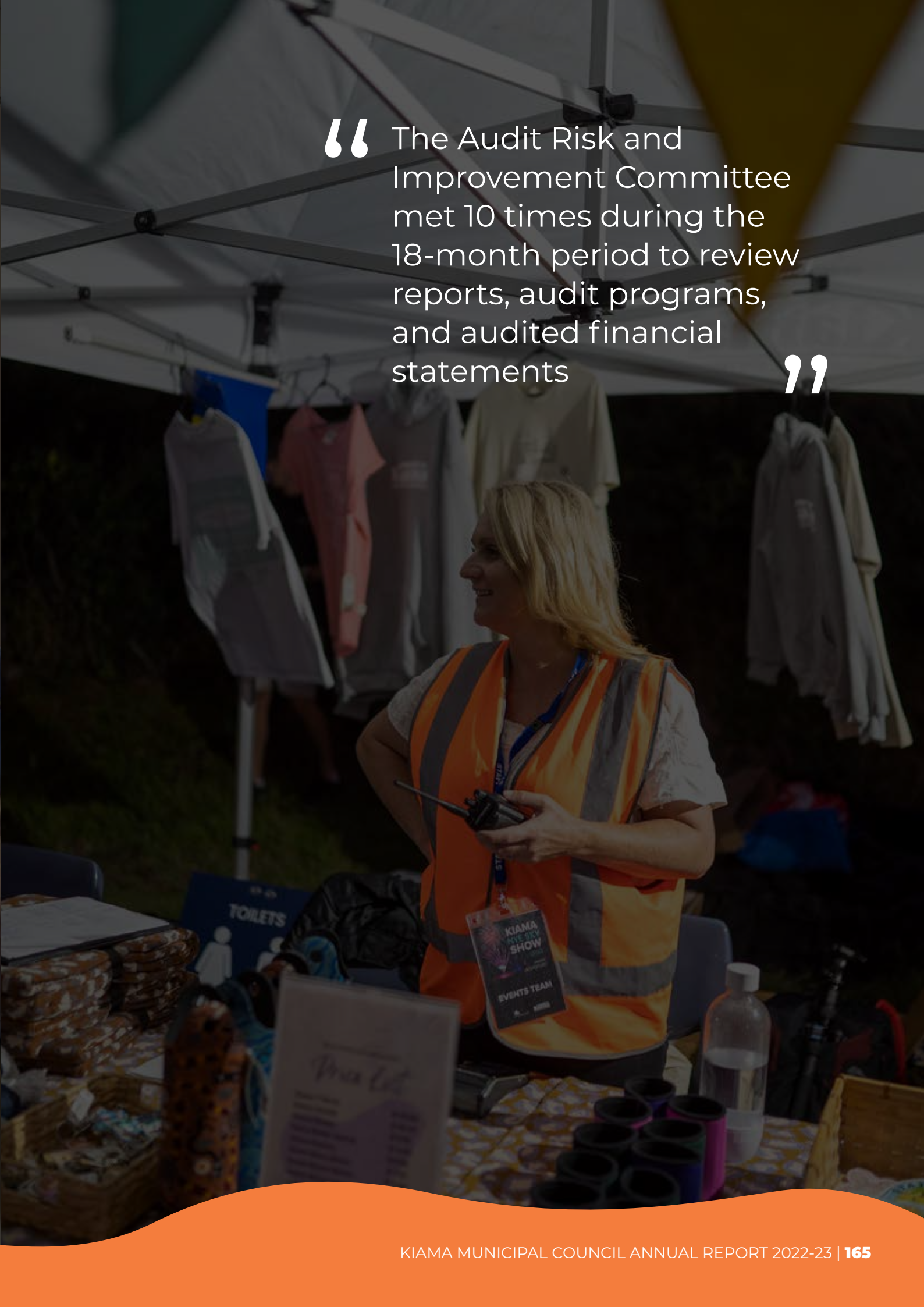
Volunteer Karon and resident Valerie





Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Annual Report

“ The Audit Risk and Improvement Committee met 10 times during the 18-month period to review reports, audit programs, and audited financial statements ”



Introduction

This annual report has been prepared to inform Council of the activities of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) for the 18-month period ending 30 June 2023.

The purpose of the ARIC is to provide independent assistance to Council by monitoring, reviewing, and providing advice about Council's governance processes, compliance, risk management and control frameworks, external accountability obligations, and overall performance.

The ARIC works under Terms of Reference which align with the draft Office of Local Government Guidelines.

The Terms of Reference require the Chair to provide an annual report to Council with the details of the reviews conducted. Who considers the scope and approach of these activities have fulfilled the Committee's responsibilities.

The Committee appreciates the full cooperation of the Chief Executive Officer and her staff to ensure it can fully meet its mandate. I'd like to extend my thanks to all members and management representatives for their contribution during the year.

David Pendleton
Kiama Council ARIC Chair



Council's Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee - ARIC

Membership

The Committee comprises of three appointed independent external members and three Councillors, nominated by Council. The Councillors do not vote in decisions of this committee.

Independent members

David Pendleton (Independent Chair)

– appointed as Chair on 12 April 2022, member since 28 September 2021

David is a finance professional with over 30 years' experience in senior executive roles in media, audit, superannuation, and infrastructure. Most recently he was Chief Operating Officer and CFO at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation where he was responsible for all financial, operational, and technical functions of the Corporation. He is currently a non-executive director Independent Member and Chair on a number of audit and risk committees in NSW and Victoria. David was formerly a director of MediaHub Australia, the National DAB Licence Company, and Symphony Australia. David has a Bachelor of Business from UTS. He is also a graduate and a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD), a Fellow of the Certified Practising Accountants (FCPA) and a Senior Fellow of the Financial Services Institute of Australia. David was admitted to the NSW Government pre-qualified panel for Member of Audit and Risk Committee through the NSW Department of Finance.

Rhonda Wheatley (Independent Member)

– appointed 28 September 2021

Rhonda's finance career commenced in manufacturing and progressed across major public sector organisations including the Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW, Sydney Catchment Authority, the Library Council of NSW (incorporating the Mitchell Library and the Library Trust), the Sydney Opera House Trust, the Public Service Commission of NSW, the NSW Department of Education. Rhonda was the CEO of the Administration of Norfolk Island. She was awarded NSW Public Sector CPA of the Year in 2003 for her significant contribution towards improving governance and the financial management of public sector organisations within NSW.

Jim Mitchell (Independent Member)

– appointed 1 February 2022

Jim is an experienced leader and administrator within the NSW Government arena. He has a wealth of experience in successfully interfacing with chief executives and board members in his professional career as an auditor, evaluator, and board/committee member. Jim has broad experience within the NSW Audit Office where he spent most of his career at executive-level management. In his audit and management roles, Jim was extensively involved in the review and evaluation of agency financial operations, risk, effectiveness, and efficiency.

Councillor members

Mayor Councillor Neil Reilly

– appointed 24 February 2022

Councillor Reilly has represented the Kiama Municipality as a Councillor since 2008, including a year as deputy mayor. His qualifications are in marketing, international relations, and local government. Councillor Reilly's career has been in the field of advertising and marketing, and he has also served with the Australian Defence Force.

Councillor Karen Renkema-Lang

– appointed 24 February 2022

Councillor Lang has an extensive background in IT and communications serving in the Royal Australian Navy and then working for the Australian Federal Government. Her qualifications include a Bachelor of Information Technology and a Masters of Science (earth and environmental science).

Councillor Jodi Keast

– appointed 24 February 2022

Councillor Keast is a Certified Practising Accountant with a Masters degree in Business Administration and significant experience as an executive manager in governance, financial, strategic, risk, and business continuity management. She has board director experience with Grand Pacific Health, a non-profit organisation that delivers mental health services, preventative health, and Aboriginal health services.

Other non-voting members

The Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Internal Auditor, Director of Planning, Environment and Communities, Director of Infrastructure and Liveability, and People & Performance Manager attend the ARIC meetings as non-voting members.

Invitations are also extended to the Audit Office of NSW.



David Pendleton, Mayor Reilly
and Jim Mitchell

Year in review

Number of meetings

The Audit Risk and Improvement Committee met 10 times during the 18-month period to review reports, audit programs, and audited financial statements.

Meetings dates were:

- 8 February 2022
- 12 April 2022
- 6 May 2022 (extraordinary meeting)
- 14 June 2022
- 24 June 2022 (financial statements 2021 meeting)
- 9 August 2022
- 11 October 2022
- 15 December 2022
- 25 February 2023
- 4 April 2023.

Participation

January 2022 - June 2023 ARIC participation		ARIC meetings	
Member	Role	Eligible	Attended
David Pendleton	Independent Member (Chair)	10	10
Rhonda Wheatley	Independent Member	10	10
Jim Mitchell	Independent Member	10	10
Cr Neil Reilly	Councilor Representative (non-voting)	9	9
Cr Karen Renkema-Lang	Councilor Representative (non-voting)	9	8
Cr Jodi Keast	Councilor Representative (non-voting)	9	8

Additional briefings

In addition to the scheduled ARIC meetings, members of the Committee also attended various briefings and workshops including:

Strategic Risk workshop (Chair only) – 6 July 2022
Meeting with CFO, CEO and KPMG – 3 August 2022
Meeting with the NSW Audit Office – 8 August 2022
Meeting with the NSW Audit Office and CEO (Chair only) - 11 August 2022
CEO briefing (all members) – 6 September and 9 September 2022
Blue Haven Business Case workshop (Chair Only) – 31 January 2023
Meeting with Temporary Financial Advisor (Chair only) – 31 January 2023

Disclosure of interests

Disclosures are recorded at the start of each meeting and annually for all ARIC members.

Internal audit

The internal audit function is performed in-house. The Internal Auditor attends each ARIC meeting and provides internal audit reports for completed audits, a status reports on the implementation of internal audit findings, and an update on progress against the annual work plan.

The Strategic Internal Audit Plan is a three year plan that incorporates the Annual Work Plan. It is updated annually to reflect the risk profile of Council. Internal audits were performed in accordance with the Internal Audit Plan, in the following areas in the 18 months to June 2023:

- Developer Contributions (February 2022)
- Tendering and Contract Management (June 2022)
- Payroll and Leave Management (December 2022)
- Procurement (June 2023).

The implementation of management actions arising from internal audits is a critical element of an effective internal control framework. Progress is tracked and reported to each meeting of ARIC.

Snapshot of implementation of recommendations

Number of recommendations arising from internal audits: 126

Number of recommendations completed: 84

Number of recommendations in progress: 37

Number of recommendations delayed: 5

Audit of Financial Statements

The external audit of the Financial Statements for the year ended 2021 was conducted by the Audit Office of NSW (The 2022 audit is nearing completion). The 2020-21 Financial Statements were adopted at the 16 May 2023 Council meeting.

The 2020-21 audited Financial Statements have been the focus and attention of Council, ARIC, The Audit Office of NSW and The Office of Local Government NSW. The reliability of financial records and questions about Council's financial sustainability were the issues of main concern.

The Audit Office of NSW Director of Financial Audit, Lisa Berwick, made a presentation to ARIC at its meeting on 4 April 2023. received a presentation from Lisa Berwick on the 2020-21 Financial Statements. This presentation focused on the Independent Auditor's Report on the General Purpose Financial Statements; Special Purpose Financial Statements and the Report on the Conduct of the Audit.

ARIC has played a vital governance role in overseeing the preparation and finalisation of the audited 2020-21 financial statements.



Mayor Reilly, David Pendleton and Jim Mitchell from ARIC visit Blue Haven

Audit of Financial Statements

In addition to the feedback and review of Council's financial statements, ARIC considered a range of other issues during the year:

- The State of the Organisation Report
- Council's Long Term Financial Plan 2022-32
- Council's Strategic Improvement Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan
- Monthly financial reports, statements of investments, cash flow forecasts, and going concern assumptions.
- Budgetary and financial updates
- Liquidity plan and T-Corp loan repayment plan
- Council's Performance Improvement Order, and response to the letter from the Minister of Local Government
- Forsyth's Forensic Audit Report
- Progress, findings and implementation plans associated with internal audits.
- Risk Management including operational and strategic matters such as implementation of Council's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework.
- Council's progress towards implementation of ARIC resolutions and audit recommendations.
- Updates relating to the draft OLG Guidelines for internal audit and risk management.
- Technology One implementation updates
- The Cyber Risk Audit Report report by Civic Risk Mutual
- Critical Success Solutions report titled "Aged Care Quality and Safety Standards: External Audit report for Blue Haven Residential Aged Care Facility"

- Blue Haven Accreditation Assessment
- KPMG's presentation about the separation of the Blue Haven ledger from Council's ledger
- A presentation on the business case for the proposed divestment of Blue Haven.

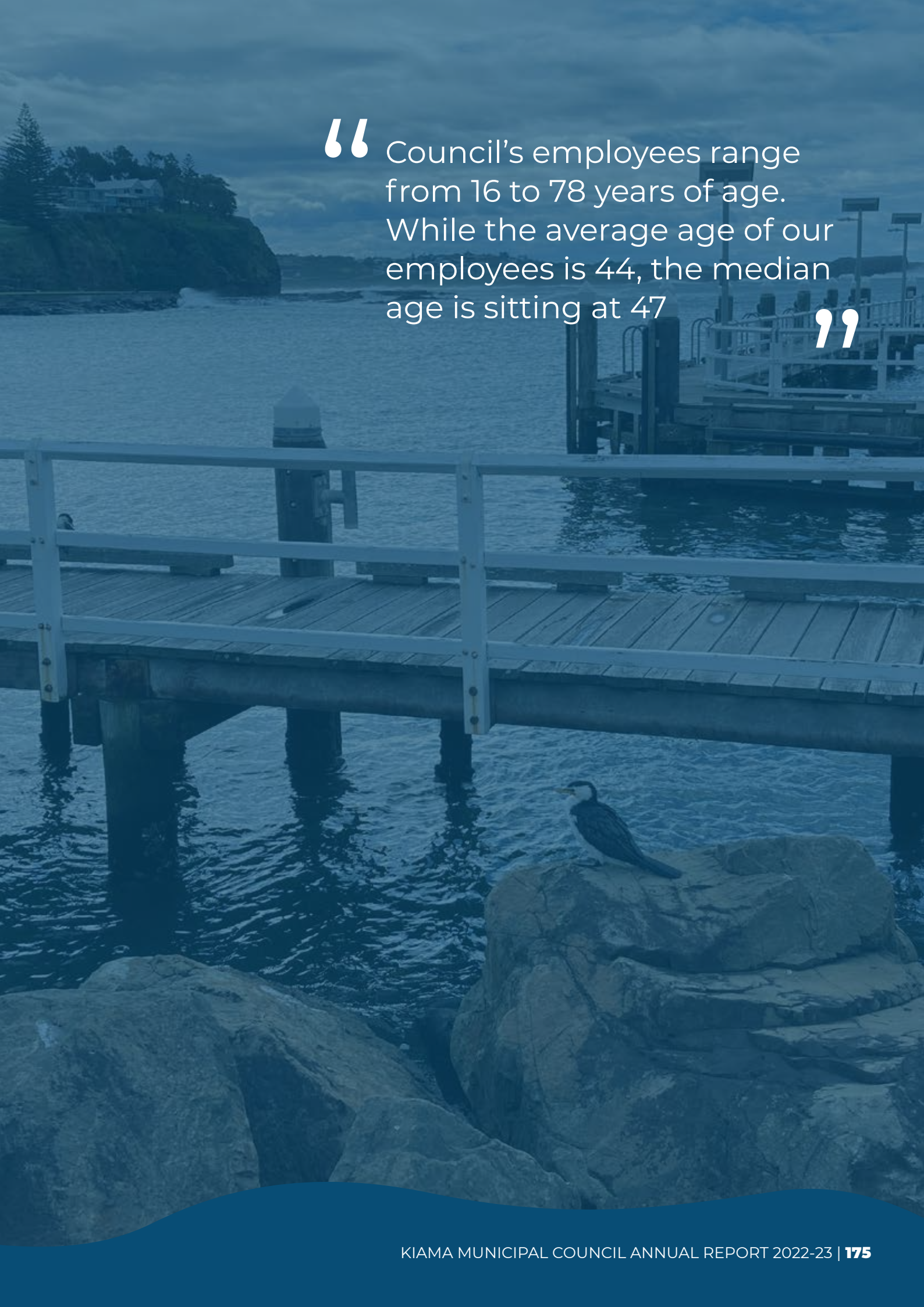
ARIC continued to support the Council and its leadership team as it navigated through an exceptionally difficult year. In response to the financial sustainability concerns and the issuance of the performance improvement order, ARIC reviewed its meeting agendas to include an increased focus on financial management, risk management, and the effectiveness of internal audit and implementation of recommendations.

Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee Report Card

Committee Charter	Compliance
Committee meetings	A quorum was met at every meeting.
Composition	The Committee comprises 3 independent members, 3 non-voting Councillors.
Broad range of skills and experience	The Committee is experienced and diverse with strong local government and relevant commercial experience.
Functional separation	The Committee has no executive power and is advisory in its capacity.
Probity	Members declared conflicts of interest if they arose.
Risk management	A Risk Management Report is provided at each meeting, which includes updates on the status of the ERM framework. Council's strategic risk register was presented for feedback.
Control framework	<p>The Committee reviewed internal controls, policies, and procedures through internal audit reports and high-level briefings.</p> <p>The Committee also reviewed Council's controls in the context of presentations made by the Audit Office of NSW and Forsyths Forensic Audit.</p>
Legislative compliance	<p>Legislative updates are provided by the CEO through her report.</p> <p>A Gap Analysis was used against Draft Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit issued by the OLG NSW.</p>
Fraud, corruption, and control	The Committee considered Forsyths Forensic Review and internal audit recommendations.
Internal audit	<p>The Committee reviewed and approved the Strategic Internal Audit 3 Year Plan.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed internal audit reports and monitored progress with implementation of audit recommendations.</p>
External audit	<p>The Committee met several times to review Council's 2021 Financial Statements and discuss issues with the Audit Office of NSW.</p> <p>The Audit Office of NSW was invited to attend all meetings of ARIC.</p> <p>ARIC reviewed and monitored the implementation of recommendations in the Management Letter.</p>
External accountability	The Committee provides input and feedback on the Council's Financial Statements and control issues identified by the external auditor.
Financial management	Council's Committee received and reviewed the monthly financial reports, statements of investments, cashflow forecasts, liquidity plan, and long-term financial plan.



Other required information



“ Council’s employees range from 16 to 78 years of age. While the average age of our employees is 44, the median age is sitting at 47 ”

Attendance at Council Meetings and Activities

Council held 18 meetings including 5 Extraordinary Meetings and 1 Youth Engagement Workshop in the 2022-23 financial year. The September 2022 Ordinary Meeting was adjourned over two sessions but is counted here as one meeting.

	Ordinary Council Meetings	Extraordinary Council Meetings	Youth Engagement Workshop
Cr Matt Brown	11	5	1
Cr Mark Croxford	12	5	1
Cr Imogen Draisma	12	5	-
Cr Jodi Keast	12	5	1
Cr Stuart Larkins	12	5	1
Cr Neil Reilly	12	4	1
Cr Karen Renkema-Lang	12	5	1
Cr Kathy Rice	12	5	1
Cr Warren Steel	12	4	-

Councillor workshops, conferences and briefings

	KPMG briefing	Councillor briefing: RFS, Flood mitigation, Org structure	Councillor Finance	Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) - National General Assembly	LGNSW Annual Conference	SWITCH Annual Conference
Cr Matt Brown	1	1	1		1	
Cr Mark Croxford	1	1	1			
Cr Imogen Draisma	1		1	1	1	
Cr Jodi Keast	1		1			
Cr Stuart Larkins	1	1				
Cr Neil Reilly	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cr Karen Renkema-Lang	1	1	1	1		
Cr Kathy Rice	1	1	1	1		
Cr Warren Steel	1	1	1			
Total	9	7	8	4	3	1

	LGNSW Rural & Regional Summit	Proposed salary structure change/ strategic risk register review	LGNSW Workforce & Legal Team award briefing	National Forum on Coastal Hazards	Councillor workshops
Cr Matt Brown					6
Cr Mark Croxford					6
Cr Imogen Draisma	1		1		6
Cr Jodi Keast					5.5
Cr Stuart Larkins		1	1		5
Cr Neil Reilly				1	7
Cr Karen Renkema-Lang				1	7
Cr Kathy Rice					7
Cr Warren Steel					7
Total	1	1	2	2	

Professional development

	Executive Certificate for Elected Members (LGNSW/UTS)	Understanding LG Finances for Councillors	ARIC course	LGNSW - Mentoring program	ICAC Fraud & Corruption prevention	ICAC training for Councillors	Dealing with Dysfunction in the Elected body	Speed Reading	Cyber Security for Councillors
Cr Matt Brown						1	1		
Cr Mark Croxford				1		1	1		
Cr Imogen Draisma		1							
Cr Jodi Keast				1		1			1
Cr Stuart Larkins	1	1	1		1	1	1		
Cr Neil Reilly				1		1	1		
Cr Karen Renkema-Lang		1		1	1	1	1		
Cr Kathy Rice						1	1	1	
Cr Warren Steel						1			
Total	1	3	1	4	2	8	6	1	1

Councillor fees/senior staff payments

Mayor and Councillor fees and expenses		
	2023 (\$)	2022 (\$)
Mayoral Fee	46,038	40,550
Mayoral Car Expenses	-	570
Councillors Fees	189,941	156,738
Councillor Expenses	23,413	26,999
Cost of Dedicated Office Equipment		
Cost of Telephone Calls incl mobile phones etc	7,023	6,176
Cost of Conferences/seminars & training	22,336	36,863
Mayor and Councillor interstate visits	2,724	249
Mayor and Councillor overseas visits	-	-
	291,475	268,145

Council's Chief Executive Officer and Senior Staff Payments				
Position	Salary (\$)	Bonus or Other	Employer contributions (\$)	Total FBT (\$)
Chief Executive Officer	311,472	-	16,869	9,292
Senior Staff Combined*	992,575	-	50,676	31,136

Senior Staff include

- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Operating Officer
- Director Infrastructure & Liveability (formerly Director Engineering & Works)
- Director Planning, Environment & Communities (formerly Director Environmental Services).

* Senior staff payments includes redundancy payments to senior staff members whose contract ended in 2022-23.

List of current delegates to other bodies - 2022-23

Committee	Meetings	Nature of Appointment	Delegates
CivicRisk Mutual	Quarterly	Council	1 Councillor CEO
Cleary Bros Community Consultative Committee	As required	Council	2 Councillors
Friends of Kiama Library	Monthly	Council	1 Councillor 1 Alternate
Healthy Cities Illawarra, Management Committee and International Healthy Cities Alliance (including Australian Chapter)	Bi-monthly	As Mayor	Mayor 1 Alternate
Illawarra Academy of Sports	Bi-monthly	As Mayor	Mayor / Delegate 1 Alternate
Illawarra Bush Fire Management Committee	Quarterly	Council Delegate Staff	1 Councillor Director Infrastructure and Liveability
Illawarra District Weeds Authority Committee	Quarterly	Council	1 Councillor 1 Alternate being the Landscape Officer
Illawarra Regional Airport Management Advisory Committee	As required	As Mayor	Mayor
Illawarra Rural Fire District Service Agreement Committee	Quarterly	Council Delegate Staff	1 Councillor Director Infrastructure and Liveability
Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation	Bi-monthly	Council Delegate	Mayor 1 Councillor 1 Alternate CEO
Kiama and District Sports Association	Bi-monthly	Council	1 Councillor Director Infrastructure and Liveability
Kiama Liquor Accord	As required	Council Delegate Staff	2 Councillors Road Safety Officer
NSW Public Library South East Zone Committee	Quarterly	Council Delegate Staff	1 Councillor Director Environmental Services Manager Library Services
South Coast Co-operative Library Service	Annually	Council	1 Councillor
Southern Regional Planning Panel	As required	Council Delegates	Mayor 1 Councillor 1 Alternate

Amount of rates and charges written off during the year

\$20,416.36 of rates and charges were written off during the 2022-23 financial year.

Pension rebates of \$421,960 were granted for the financial year.

Rates	Ad Valorum	Base Amount	Total	Count
Residential Rate	\$8,634,182	\$8,551,356	\$17,185,538	9,961
Farmland	\$536,051	\$205,101	\$741,153	236
Business Commercial	\$1,502,836	\$ -	\$1,502,836	582
Business	\$40,369		\$40,369	58
Rural Residential	\$346,542	\$118,062	\$464,605	138
Total	\$11,059,980	\$8,874,520	\$19,934,500	10,975

Stormwater management services provided (levied)

Council undertook a number of additional stormwater maintenance activities at locations across Kiama and continued our design projects, partially funded by the State and Federal Governments, for floodplain management works at Jamberoo and Gerringong. See p99 for more info on stormwater maintenance in 2022-23.

Coastal protection management services (levied)

There were no coastal protection management levies applied.

Private works on private land

No private works on private land were carried out during the 2022-23 financial year.

Special Rate Variation (SRV) works

There were no special rate variations applied in the 2022-23 reporting period.

Kiama Council was given a temporary Additional Special Variation (ASV) for 2022-23. The ASV increased income by 0.9% above the rate peg to 2.5% for 2022-23.

Council's 2022-23 temporary ASV raised \$174,451. This amount was counted as part of general revenue.

Money granted

Total amounts contributed or otherwise granted to financially assist others.

Donations and Sponsorships	
Shine Girl - Kiama High School	\$250
Kiama Garden Club	\$250
Jamberoo RLFC	\$250
Hope Concert Against Human Trafficking	\$250
Kiama Parkinson Support Group	\$250
Kiama Game Fishing Club "Big Fish"	\$300
Seaside and Valley Veterans Golf Tournament	\$600
Gerringong & District Historic Society 'Remarkable' exhibition	\$850
Jamberoo Red Cross - Australia Day	\$1,000
Kiama Downs SLSC - Australia Day	\$1,000
Kiama Rotary - Australia Day	\$1,000
Gerringong Lions Club - Australia Day	\$1,000
Go Fund Me London International Youth Science Forum Kiama High School students	\$1,000
Gerringong Public School - Music Program	\$1,000
Kiama Public School - Music Program	\$1,000
Ss Peter & Paul School - Music Program	\$1,000
Jamberoo Public School - Music Program	\$1,000
Minnamurra Public School - Music Program	\$1,000
Kiama High School - Music Program	\$1,000
Gerringong Lions Club - Motor Fest / Car Show	\$1,260
Kiama Fun Run	\$2,000
Kiama Art Society	\$2,150
Folk by the Sea	\$3,000
Jamberoo Car Show and Family Day	\$3,000
Volleyball NSW Youth Championship	\$4,000
Kiama I Do	\$4,500
Red Hot Summer Concert	\$5,000
Wind and Waves Festival	\$5,000
Kiama Coastal Classic	\$5,000
Clearly Music and Arts Festival	\$5,000
Kiama Rugby Sevens	\$7,500
Changing Tides Music Festival	\$8,000
Gerringong SurfLife Music Festival	\$8,000
Surfing NSW - Her Wave Teams Classic	\$12,250
Kiama Show Society	\$16,400
Kiama Jazz & Blues Festival	\$22,000

Section 7.11 and 7.12 Contributions

Funds received during 2022-2023

Plan type	Amount exc interest	Interest	Including interest
7.11 Cont. Plan No. 1 - Tree Planting	13,760	312	14,073
7.11 Cont. Plan No. 2 - Northern Region	24,728	561	25,289
7.11 Cont. Plan No. 3 - Southern Region	1,551	35	1,586
7.11 Cont. Plan No. 7 - Cedar Ridge/Silver	547	12	559
7.11 Contribution Plan No. 1 - LGA Wide	267,985	6,085	274,069
7.12 Contribution Plan	639,423	14,518	653,941
Plan No. 5 - Carparking Gerringong	31,220	709	31,929
Total	\$979,213	\$22,233	\$1,001,446

Works undertaken	Expenditure
No Expenditure was undertaken in 2022	0



Kiama New Years Eve 2022

Annual reporting of labour statistics - relevant date of 23 November 2022

Regulation 217(1)(d) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 contains a new requirement for councils and county councils to include in their annual reports information about labour statistics on a date which will be determined annually by the OLG (the “relevant date”), including separate statements on the total number of the following:

- the number of persons directly employed by the council:
 - on a permanent full-time basis
 - on a permanent part-time basis
 - on a casual basis, and
 - under a fixed-term contract
- the number of persons employed by the council who are “Senior Staff” for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1993
- the number of persons engaged by the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person’s employer, that is wholly or principally for the labour of the person, and the number of persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person’s employer, as an apprentice or trainee.

The OLG has determined that the ‘relevant date’ for the 2022-23 financial year is Wednesday, 23 November 2022.

The number of persons directly employed by Council on 23 November 2022

Permanent full-time: 220

Permanent part-time: 141

Casual: 99

Fixed-term: 35

Senior staff: 4

Contract: 14

Contracts over \$150,000 2022-23

Contractor	Goods/Services	Estimated amount payable under the contract (including GST)
Affective Services Australia; Allworx Plumbing Co; Brenacon; Camray Air; Colour creation Painting & Decorating; Dynamac; Easter Electrical; Garry Wynn Plumbing; GL Jurd Electrical Contractors; Halroc; IJED Electrical & Data; Innovate Energy; Kiama Electrical Services; P&D Envirotech; Parrish Group; Perspective Carpentry & Construction; Pro-Asset Painting Maintenance; Relyon Constructions; Rogers Construction Group; SOS Hot Water & Plumbing Services; Spackman & Kentwell Roofing	Panel of suppliers to provide trade services	\$4,000,000
T & M Dowling P/L	Fire hydrant compliance at Holiday Parks	\$660,000
Dwyers Isuzu	Supply & delivery of one tipper truck	\$224,956
Austek Constructions P/L	Supply & install playground to Old School Park, Gerringong	\$165,000
Illawarra Hino	Supply & delivery of one water truck	\$329,433
Rosmech Sales & Services P/L	Supply & delivery of one road sweeper	\$419,827
QuantSec P/L	Managed network services	\$762,082
NSW Electoral Commission	Administration of the 2024 ordinary Local Government Election	\$240,594
Roadworx	Supply and lay asphaltic concrete	\$500,000

Contractor	Goods/Services	Estimated amount payable under the contract (including GST)
WesTrac P/L	Supply 1 track loader	\$165,750
Land HQ	Supply 3 out-front mowers	\$159,433
Landmark Engineering & Design (Modus Australia) P/L	Bombo Hill Amenities	\$206,176.30
Batmac Constructions P/L	James Oates Reserve & Gainsborough Oval amenities refurbishment	\$307,025
Cool Blue Air Conditioning P/L	Kiama Council administration building air-conditioning	\$699,119.30
BG&E P/L	Gerringong & Jamberoo flood infrastructure	\$326,195.91
Allstate Asbestos & Demolition P/L	Hindmarsh Park residence demolition	\$178,310
GT Civil P/L	Landslide repairs – various sites Kiama	\$273,795.50
Civil & Civic Group	Landslide repairs – Jamberoo	\$1,712,751.07
Wagbuild Management Beaus Building Consultancy Jerez Enterprises	Project management support	\$750,000

External bodies, companies and partnerships

We did not hold any interests in any corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies during the 2022-23 financial year. We held no controlling interest in any company in the 2022-23 financial year. We participated in partnerships/joint ventures with the following corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies.

Name of partnership/joint venture	Type	Partner(s)
South Coast Library Service	Library co-operation, sharing books and other resources	Shoalhaven City Council
Rural Fire Service	Coordinated rural fire management response for Illawarra Councils	Shellharbour and Wollongong Councils
Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO)	Association to combine Council resources and staff skills for regional strategy, political advocacy, joint initiatives and to maximise efficiencies	Shellharbour, Shoalhaven and Wollongong Councils
Illawarra District Weeds Authority	Regional approach to tackle invasive weeds	Shellharbour and Wollongong Councils
Dementia Friendly Kiama Project (ended in 2022 but continues as the Dementia Inclusive Kiama Project)	Resource, knowledge and skill sharing to make Kiama a dementia friendly town	University of Wollongong, Dementia Australia, Gerringong Rotary Club
Surfing NSW	Partnership agreement for the Kiama area to host local, state and national surfing events	Surfing NSW
Regional Arts	Promote and assist arts within the region	Shellharbour, Wingecarribee and Wollongong Councils
South Coast Tourism Promotion	South Coast 'Feel new' campaign	Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven LGA's partnering with Destination NSW to promote the South Coast as a winter holiday destination
Customer surcharge package 14 – Kiama Project	Improve the Kiama and Jamberoo sewerage scheme	Sydney Water
Cities Power Partnership	Exchange information on best practice towards a target for Net Zero emissions	Councils across Australia
Feral Animals Control Program	Regional project to control feral animals locally and regionally	South Eastern Local Land Services
Kiama & District Stronger Community	Collaborate on youth & family focused events & activities	Kiama & District Stronger Community
Australian Coastal Councils Association	National body formed to represent the interests of coastal councils	Other coastal councils

Name of partnership/joint venture	Type	Partner(s)
Illawarra Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention Collaborative	Working collectively to identify and implement strategies and activities that reduce suicide	Coordinaire (auspice organisation), Health, Education, Police, NSW Ambulance Service, mental health services, Aboriginal organisations, TAFE, University of Wollongong, Life Span, Illawarra Women's Health Centre, Kiama Community College, Lifeline, Stand By and most importantly people with lived experience of suicide
Illawarra Interagency	Collaborate to support Landcare groups operating on Council land and, where possible, partner to undertake natural resource management activities	Landcare groups
WEAVE Artist Directory	Online directory of visual, literary and performing artists within the Kiama, Shellharbour, Wingecarribee – Southern Highlands and Wollongong regions of NSW	Kiama, Wollongong, Shellharbour, & Wingecarribee Councils. Note: from 2023, WEAVE is run by the South Coast Arts
Local Government Cultural Arts Network	Local government officers working in cultural arts, networking, information sharing and regional project management	Kiama, Wollongong, Shellharbour, & Wingecarribee Councils
CivicRisk Mutual Limited (CRML)	Council is a member of CRML, which is a local government- controlled company limited by guarantee. CRML provides discretionary mutual cover to its members for liability, property, motor and other risks	Other councils in NSW
Kiama & District Business Chamber	Supporting local businesses within the Kiama LGA	Various business owners and community members from throughout the Kiama LGA and surrounds
Illawarra-Shoalhaven Defence Network	Enhancing capabilities of local businesses operating or looking to operate in the defence sector	Various business owners and community members from throughout the Illawarra-Shoalhaven region, the Department of Regional NSW, Shoalhaven business chamber and Shoalhaven City Council
Illawarra First / Business Illawarra	Supporting businesses within the Illawarra region	Various business owners and community members from throughout the Illawarra region

National Competition Policy

We have adopted the principle of competitive neutrality to business activities as part of the National Competition Policy which is applied throughout Australia at all levels of government.

The framework for its application is set out in the June 1996 NSW Government Policy Statement on the Application of National Competition Policy to Local Government. The Pricing and Costing for Council Business – A Guide to Competitive Neutrality issued by the Office of Local Government in July 1997 has also been adopted.

These guidelines outline the process for identifying and allocating costs to activities and provide a standard of disclosure requirements. These disclosures are reflected in our pricing and/or financial reporting systems and include taxation equivalents, council subsidies, return on investments (rate of return) and dividends paid.

We did not receive any Competitive Neutrality Complaints during the 2022-23 financial year.

Carers Recognition

Council is not considered to be a 'human service agency' under the Carers Recognition Act 2010 (CR Act) and is therefore not required to report on compliance with the CR Act for this reporting period.



Declared business activity

In accordance with The Pricing and Costing for Council Business – A Guide to Competitive Neutrality we declared that the following are to be considered as business activities:

Category 1 – where gross operating turnover is over \$2 million

1. Kiama Coast Holiday Parks
2. Blue Haven

Category 2 – where gross operating turnover is less than \$2 million

1. Commercial Waste & Hire Services
2. The Pavilion

Statement of ordinary expenses

Statement of Ordinary Expenses incurred, ordinary revenue raised and assets held by Category 1 Business units – Year ended 30 June 2023. The figures in the statement below are subject to completion of the audited financial statements.

Business Unit	Revenue		Expenses		Operating Results		Total Assets Held (current & non-current)
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Actual
Kiama Coast Holiday Parks	10,631	11,205	6,704	6,109	3,927	5,096	33,802
Blue Haven	23,516	24,329	24,445	26,000	- 929	- 1,671	211,207
Total	34,147	35,534	31,149	32,109	2,998	3,425	245,009

*Financial data is subject to change as Council's 2022-23 financial statements are yet to be finalised.

Obligations Under the Modern Slavery Act 2018

Kiama Council was not notified of any issues of concern with the operations of Council by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during the year. Council has amended its standard suppliers terms and conditions to explain what modern slavery is and to specify expectations relating to its prevention.

In the 2022-23 financial year Council undertook a modern slavery risk assessment of suppliers to Council. This project was run in conjunction with Kiama, Shoalhaven and Shellharbour Councils and will assist Council in assigning risk ratings by industry category to each of our suppliers.

Council has begun to embed reference to modern slavery in tender and contract documentation. Council has purchased the Local Government Procurement Modern Slavery Toolkit to help guide actions going forward.

Swimming pool inspections

Private swimming pool inspections

Seventy-six (76) private swimming pools were inspected this year in compliance with the requirements of the Swimming Pools Act 1992 and Swimming Pools Regulation 2018. Seventeen (17) of the 76 inspections were conducted by Council of which:

- none were of tourist and visitor accommodation
- 1 was of premises with more than 2 dwellings
- 10 resulted in issuance a certificate of compliance under s22D of the SP Act
- 7 resulted in issuance a certificate of non-compliance under cl 21 SP Reg.

Swimming pool barrier compliance inspections under the Swimming Pools Act 1992 and Swimming Pools Regulation 2018

Inspections for the 2022-23 financial year were unfortunately down due to challenges with recruitment for the Swimming Pool Compliance role, which has delayed progress. Pools continue to be certified and inspected through direct requests to Council as part of contracts of sale or Occupation Certificates. An action plan has been developed to review Councils' swimming pool compliance program.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

No planning agreements were in force during the 2022-23 financial year.

Workforce management plan including Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The Council's employees range from 16 to 78 years of age. While the average age of our employees is 44 years, the median age is sitting at 47. With many of our longer term employees approaching retirement, Council has the challenge of catering to many varied and specific needs while balancing maintenance of corporate knowledge.

Council introduced a Flexible Work Arrangement policy during the year that allows flexible work practices for all employees regardless of the position they hold at Council. This policy enables options for our employees that are fair and equitable. We also strive for a workforce that reflects the demographics of our region. Over the year Council has:

- Continued to consider all employee-initiated requests for flexible work arrangements to support employees with care and family responsibilities, and plans to transition to retirement. All requests were considered balancing the merits of the individual request, operational requirements, established precedents and protocols. Approved arrangements have included part-time work, flexible hours, work from home, use of accrued time and nine-day fortnight arrangements
- Continued our long-standing commitment to free confidential and professional counselling services for our employees, volunteers, and their families
- Continued to improve on the revitalisation of our corporate induction sessions for new staff
- Reviewed a range of employment related policies including Council's Leave Provision policy, Internal Grievance policy and the Flexible Work Arrangements policy
- Tabled matters of potential concern to our joint Consultative Committee for discussion as a formal mechanism for employee input and feedback
- Continued to resolve employee grievances, union concerns and industrial disputes in accordance with relevant legislative frameworks
- Assisted employees returning to work from both work-related and non-work-related illness or injury with the support of qualified rehabilitation providers
- Continued to assess ongoing fitness for work, balancing Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) with risk and safety considerations
- Implemented capability assessments for employees who use equipment that may potentially create an increased risk of injury
- Continued to purchase specialised equipment to ensure we made reasonable adjustments for employees with special needs which include reasonable adjustments for interviewing if required
- Observed key health and wellbeing promotions
- Organised and ran events to raise awareness and recognise RUOK? Day and International Women's Day.

Policies and practices that promote fairness and equity

Council has a range of employment related policies that recognise and support life's complexity, helping employees to balance their outside-life and work commitments. These include areas such as:

- Nine Day Fortnight/ Accrued Time / Rostered Days off
- Leave provisions including Long Service Leave at half, single or double pay
- Flexible Work Arrangements including part-time employment
- Hybrid Work
- Leave Without Pay
- Paid and Unpaid Parental Leave
- Purchased Additional Leave
- Learning and development support
- Study assistance.

The policies support our employees at all stages of the employment lifecycle and are important part of our employment value proposition.

Our employment-related policies are developed and reviewed collaboratively, with our joint Consultative Committee ensuring employees have a structured, formalised opportunity to contribute to shaping the practices and culture of the organisation in which they choose to work.





Companion Animals

Kiama Municipal Council is responsible for enforcing the provisions of the Companion Animals Act 1998 which provides for effective and responsible care and management of companion animals.

As part of its responsibilities, Council is required to report a detailed statement of activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with Companion Animals legislation. Council lodged all pound data returns with the Office of Local Government within the required timeframes.

Pound data lodged with the Office of Local Government

Kiama Municipal Council continues to respond to stray dogs that may escape their properties and end up being seized by Council or members of the community. The continued growth in online platforms and social media remains a key factor in reuniting lost pets with their owners.

Council has completed the "Survey of Council seizure of Cats and Dogs 2022/2023". In the 2022-23 financial year a total of 10 dogs were impounded. A total of 4 were reunited with their owners and a total of 4 were rehomed, 2 dangerous dogs were euthanised. No cats were impounded.

Dog attacks

Council continues to support members of the public that may be involved in unprovoked dog attacks. Unfortunately a small percentage of dogs become involved in dog attacks against other

animals or people. Dog attack investigations may result in dogs being declared menacing or dangerous, and strict control requirements are imposed to protect the community from these animals. During this reporting period 18 dog attack incidents were reported.

With proper training and care, most dog attacks can be prevented. Responsible pet ownership is required to ensure that people and other animals do not fall victim to dangerous dogs.



Financial information on companion animal funds

In 2022-23 \$13,818 was spent on implementing the companion animal management functions. Funds were spent on companion animal administration, enforcement management of Council's pound and other companion animal management issues performed by our Ranger Services.

In 2022-23 Council received income of \$62,813 from the following sources:

- Registration and impounding income \$37,897
- Penalty Infringement Notice (PIN) income paid \$24,916 (note: fines are not always paid in full in the same financial year this explains the difference between PINs issued and income received)

Companion animal PINs FY 2022-2023

There were 50 Penalty Infringement Notices (PINs) issued totalling \$17,065 of potential income when fines are fully paid.

Jamberoo dog park

Kiama Council supports the creation of a dedicated dog off-leash area in Jamberoo, however the project was not funded in Council's 2022-23 budget, nor is it funded in our 2023-24 budget.

Council is in the process of scoping the project. This process will involve identifying and applying for grant funding before the project can commence, as well as further consultation. Council Officers have done some preliminary work to identify potential sites in the Municipality that may be suitable for a fenced dog park, however more assessments and community consultation would need to occur if and when the project gets funding.

A Council spokesperson confirmed: "If and when funding is secured, the project will require additional consultation, both internally with appropriate staff, and externally with the community, before it can proceed."

"We recognise the community's enthusiasm for this project and we're pleased to note the progress in preliminary discussions with community groups and scoping of potential sites to date."

Council is currently researching appropriate grants and will update the community when we have further information. See page 43 of this report for more information on Council's services and outcomes around Companion Animals.

Cat and dog de-sexing

Council requires all dogs and cats leaving its pound to be de-sexed. The NSW Government introduced legislative requirements from 1 July 2020 that require owners of cats not desexed by four months of age obtain an Annual Permit, which you can get from Kiama Council. This legislative requirement was introduced to reduce the number of cats abandoned or impounded and the euthanasia rates, and to help address concerns about feral, stray and roaming cats and their effect on wildlife.

Strategies to rehome unclaimed animals

Council encourages local residents to adopt animals that are suitable for rehoming. Four dogs and no cats had to be rehomed this year.

www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/News/Registryour-pet

Dog off-leash areas

Council offers its residents and visitors nine coastal locations for the off-leash exercise and recreation of dogs (under effective control by their owners) and one river on-leash swimming area.

Our dog off-leash areas are located in:

- Gerroa
- Gerringong
- Kiama
- Bombo
- Kiama Downs
- Minnamurra
- Werri Beach.

Six are headland areas, three are beach areas and one is an on-leash swimming area in the Minnamurra River.

Governance

Legal proceedings

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – Section 217 Clause 1(a3)

Expenses incurred by Kiama Municipal Council during 2022-23 for legal proceedings taken by or against Council are summarised in the table below

Jurisdiction	Details	Status		Cost
Land and Environment Court	Universal Property Group Pty Ltd, Barton Drive, Kiama	Finalised	Orders made by way of conciliated agreement. Approved subject to conditions.	\$13,162
Land and Environment Court	Anthony Elwaw, Crooked River Road, Gerroa	Finalised	Orders made by determination of DA by Grant of Consent	\$85,588
Land and Environment Court	John Grant Grantie's Village, Broughton Village	Finalised	Orders made regarding unauthorised works. Contempt proceedings being prepared.	\$8,788
Federal Court of Australia (Human Rights Action - unlawful discrimination)	John Joseph Giles	Ongoing	Ongoing	\$37,000
NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal	NCAT - Joseph v KMC	Ongoing	Ongoing	\$153,640
Land and Environment Court	Vortex Developments et al v KMC - Class 1 Appeal - DA 10.2021.156.1 96 Rose Valley Road, Rose Valley (Abattoir)	Ongoing	Matter is ongoing. Hearing dates to be determined, awaiting applicants experts	\$48,000
NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal	NCAT - Champion v KMC	Finalised	Orders made. Full and final settlement.	\$39,609
Federal Court of Australia	KMC v Graham Wery 2 Caliope Street, Kiama	Finalised	Appeal dismissed and DA refused. Costs awarded to Council.	\$2,247
Land and Environment Court	Kez Developments v KMC Class 1 Appeal DA10.2022.12.1 59 Belinda Street, Gerringong	Ongoing	Ongoing	\$39,644
Land and Environment Court	Class 4 Judicial Review DA 10.2021.344.1 - 92 Jerrara Road, Jerrara	Ongoing	Ongoing	\$12,777

Jurisdiction	Details	Status		Cost
Land and Environment Court	McCarthy v KMC - Class 1 Appeal Secondary dwelling at 290 Rose Valley Road, Rose Valley	Ongoing	Ongoing	\$9,190
NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal	NCAT - USU v KMC Refusal of GIPA application - Forsyth's Report	Finalised	Proceedings dismissed. Executive summary report released.	\$16,755
Land and Environment Court	Fabemu (No 2) P/L v KMC - Class 4 Judicial Review DA 10.2015.77.1 - residential dwelling 242 Fern Street, Gerringong	Finalised	Orders made and complete.	\$15,921
Federal Court of Australia	Nicolas Daoud & Co Pty Limited	Ongoing	Ongoing	\$1,233,347

Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994

The Public Interest Disclosures Act, 1994 (PID Act) requires that Council report annually on its obligations under the Act. This report is made in accordance with Sections 31 and 6E of the PID Act, and Clause 4 of the associated regulations.

The PID Act encourages and facilitates the disclosure, by public officials, of:

- Corrupt conduct
- Maladministration
- Serious and substantial waste of public money
- A breach of the Government Information (Public Access) Act, 2009
- A breach of pecuniary interest obligations under the Local Government Act, 1993.

The PID Act sets out a comprehensive framework for protecting public officials who disclose wrongdoing and provides clear pathways for those wanting to make disclosures. Council's internal reporting policy contains the procedures relating to the lodgement, receipt, assessment and handling of public interest disclosures.

Council's internal reporting policy and other information about the PID Act has been made available to staff through Council's intranet and staff induction sessions.

In the reporting period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 Council received 3 Public Interest Disclosures.



GIPA Annual Report 2022-23

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) ACT 2009

The Government Information (Public Access) Act (GIPA Act) requires us to be proactive with the release of information it holds. It creates an environment where members of the public can freely access most of this information. The Act requires councils to make information readily available to members of the public, unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure. To ensure compliance with the GIPA Act, we reviewed the procedures and methods we use to manage information and privacy and personal information.

GIPA Annual Report 2022-23

Our GIPA Annual Report outlines our obligations for the financial year. It is a requirement of the GIPA Act and must be submitted to the Minister for Local Government and the NSW Information Commissioner within four months of the end of each financial year. The following information is required to be included:

Clause 8A: Details of the review carried out by the agency under section 7 (3) of the Act during the reporting year and the details of any information made publicly available by the agency as a result of the review

Review carried out by the agency	Information made publicly available by the agency
Yes	Yes

As required under Section 7 of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act), Council reviews the information that can be proactively released through these channels. We review formal and informal access applications to identify if additional information can be made readily available on Council's website as a proactive release.

Clause 8B: The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year (including withdrawn applications but not including invalid applications)

Total number of applications received
39

Clause 8C: The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year that the agency refused either wholly or partly, because the application was for the disclosure of information referred to in Schedule 1 to the Act (information for which there is conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure)

Number of Applications Refused	Wholly	Partly	Total
	0	1	1
% of Total	0%	100%	

GIPA Annual Report 2022-23

Schedule 2 Statistical information about access applications to be included in annual report

Table A: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome*

	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/ Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Media	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Private sector business	0	13	0	1	0	1	0	1	16	36%
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	7%
Members of the public (other)	0	17	5	0	0	2	0	1	25	56%
Total	0	32	6	1	0	4	0	2	45	
% of Total	0%	71%	13%	2%	0%	9%	0%	4%		

* More than one decision can be made in respect of a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision. This also applies to Table B.

GIPA Annual Report 2022-23

Table B: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome*

	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/ Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Personal information applications*	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		2%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	0	31	6	1	0	4	0	2	44	98%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	
Total	0	32	6	1	0	4	0	2	45	
% of Total	0%	71%	13%	2%	0%	9%	0%	4%		

* A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in clause 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant (the applicant being an individual).

GIPA Annual Report 2022-23

Table C: Invalid applications

Reason for invalidity	No of applications	% of Total
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	6	100%
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0	0%
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0	0%
Total number of invalid applications received	6	100%
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	6	100%

Table D: Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure: matters listed in Schedule 1 of Act

	No of applications	% of Total
Overriding secrecy laws	0	0%
Cabinet information	0	0%
Executive Council information	0	0%
Contempt	0	0%
Legal professional privilege	1	50%
Excluded information	1	50%
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0%
Transport safety	0	0%
Adoption	0	0%
Care and protection of children	0	0%
Ministerial code of conduct	0	0%
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0	0%
Privilege generally - Sch 1(5A)	0	0%
Information provided to High Risk Offenders Assessment Committee	0	0%
Total	2	

*More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application). This also applies in relation to Table E

GIPA Annual Report 2022-23

Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure: matters listed in table to section 14 of Act

	No of times consideration used	% of Total
Responsible and effective government	5	12%
Law enforcement and security	0	0%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	33	77%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	3	7%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	2	5%
Secrecy provisions	0	0%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0%
Total	43	

Table F: Timeliness

	No of applications	% of Total
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	34	100%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	0	0%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0%
Total	34	

Table G: Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)

	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total	% of Total
Internal review	0	1	1	13%
Review by Information Commissioner*	4	1	5	63%
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0	0%
Review by NCAT	2	0	2	25%
Total	6	2	8	
% of Total	75%	25%		

*The Information Commissioner does not have the authority to vary decisions, but can make recommendations to the original decision-maker. The data in this case indicates that a recommendation to vary or uphold the original decision has been made by the Information Commissioner.

Table H: Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)

	No of applications for review	% of Total
Applications by access applicants	1	88%
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	7	13%
Total	8	

Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies.

	No of applications for review	% of Total
Agency-Initiated Transfers	0	0%
Applicant-Initiated Transfers	0	0%
Total	0	



Date approved/adopted	21 November 2023
Resolution No	23/319OC
Department	CEO's office
Responsible Officer	Manager People & Performance

Australia Day 2023, Photo: Nerida McMurray

HOW TO CONTACT COUNCIL

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In Person

Our Administration Building located at
11 Manning Street Kiama
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(excluding public holidays)



KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
your council, your community

RESPECT • INNOVATION • INTEGRITY • TEAMWORK • EXCELLENCE