

LIVERPOOL PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL



***A.R. BLUETT MEMORIAL AWARD
SUBMISSION – 2006/07***

APPLICATION FORM

1. Council Details

<i>Council Name:</i>	<i>Liverpool Plains Shire</i>
<i>Association Membership Category:</i>	<i>Shires Association</i>
<i>Council Address:</i>	<i>60 Station St, Quirindi NSW 2343.</i>
<i>Contact Person:</i>	<i>Robert Hunt</i>
<i>Email:</i>	<i>robert.hunt@lpsc.nsw.gov.au</i>
<i>Website:</i>	<i>www.lpsc.nsw.gov.au</i> and <i>visitquirindi.com.au</i>
<i>Telephone:</i>	<i>02 6746 2844</i>
<i>Fax:</i>	<i>02 6746 3255</i>
<i>Mayor:</i>	<i>Councillor Ian Lobsey</i>
<i>General Manager:</i>	<i>Robert Hunt</i>

2. Brief Statistics for 2006-07 (as at 1/7/07)

<i>Total Population – Council Area as per ABS Estimates</i>	<i>7,541</i>
<i>Population Urban</i>	<i>5,264</i>
<i>Population - Rural</i>	<i>2,276</i>
<i>Council Area (sq km)</i>	<i>5,002</i>
<i>Number of FTE Staff</i>	<i>129</i>
<i>Date of most recent organisational structural review (sec 333LG Act)</i>	<i>28th March 2007</i>

3. List of Projects and Initiatives Completed at 30th June

<i>Nature of Project or Initiative</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>	<i>Total Cost \$000</i>	<i>% Council Funds</i>
<i>Gravel re-sheeting SR 114 Williewarina</i>	<i>July 2006</i>	<i>303</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>S.R. 10 Re-construct Morduval Lane</i>	<i>July 2006</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>S.R. 3 Reconstruction</i>	<i>May 2007</i>	<i>251</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>Construction of culverts and causeways rural roads</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>129</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Seal and widen sections of Callaghan's Lane</i>	<i>Nov 2006</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>M.R. 130 Reconstruct Currabubula Hill</i>	<i>Nov 2006</i>	<i>335</i>	<i>8.6%</i>
<i>M.R. 126 Reconstruct White rock section</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>433</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>M.R. 126 Reconstruct Uppertons section</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>273</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>M.R. 130 Barnbrook Road intersection reconstruction</i>	<i>Dec 2006</i>	<i>157</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>M.R. 7710 Reconstruct 3.93 k to 4.93 k west of Ste highway 29</i>	<i>Dec 2006</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>M.R. 106 Reconstruct Black gully section</i>	<i>Dec 2006</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>M.R. 106 Wiles Gully reconstruction</i>	<i>March 2007</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>Up-grade Gurton Street Bridge structure</i>	<i>Nov 2006</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Upgrade Henry Street Railway crossing</i>	<i>Sept 2006</i>	<i>113</i>	<i>11%</i>
<i>Gravel Roby Avenue Quirindi</i>	<i>Dec 2006</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Kerb & Gutter Coronation Avenue from Punyarra Street to Werris Creek Pool</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Reconstruct Eilerslie Street Premer</i>	<i>April 2007</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Construct new urban road Maitland Street at Currabubula</i>	<i>Nov 2006</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Construction of new concrete footpath Nowland Street to Hill Street Quirindi</i>	<i>Sept 2006</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Construct new footpath Hawker Street Quirindi Nowland Street to Snape Street</i>	<i>Nov 2006</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>New footpath construction Dewhurst Street Quirindi</i>	<i>Feb 2007</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>New footpath construction Allnutt Street to Henry Street Quirindi</i>	<i>Dec 2006</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>New footpath construction Dewhurst Street to TAFE (Quirindi)</i>	<i>Jan 2007</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Henry Street Quirindi new Kerb & Gutter construction</i>	<i>May 2007</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Water mains rehabilitation Ogle Avenue Quirindi</i>	<i>May 2007</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Water meter replacements Quirindi</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Water main replacement Fitzroy Street Quirindi</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>100%</i>

3. Continued - List of Projects & Initiatives Completed at 30th June

<i>Nature of Project or Initiative</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>	<i>Total Cost \$000</i>	<i>% Council Funds</i>
<i>Willow Tree Water Supply improvements</i>	<i>Nov 2006</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Extension of water main at Spring Ridge</i>	<i>April 2007</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Maria Street Wallabadah installation of 100mm water main</i>	<i>May 2007</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Investigation of Wallabadah groundwater aquifer</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>50%</i>
<i>Investigation of Willow tree groundwater aquifer</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>50%</i>
<i>Construction of a horse wash bay at the Quirindi Showground</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Installation of a chemical storage shed at the Quirindi Works depot</i>	<i>August 2006</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>New plant purchases</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>357</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Plant replacements</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>218</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Purchase of budget reporting software</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Werris Creek Railway Museum construction of an audio visual display</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>3%</i>
<i>Surgery and Housing contract with Doctor</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Installation of sewer tertiary pond aerator equipment</i>	<i>May 2007</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Purchase of land for Eastside Childcare Centre</i>	<i>May 2007</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Final stage of two way radio upgrade</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Purchase of Doctors surgery George Street Quirindi</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Construction of radio tower base (joint project)</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Installation of irrigation equipment at David Taylor Park Werris Creek</i>	<i>April 2007</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>SES facilities upgrade and construction of new shed</i>	<i>June 2007</i>	<i>141</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Upgrade of air conditioning in the Administration Centre Station Street Quirindi</i>	<i>Nov 2006</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Installation of disabled steps at both Quirindi & Werris Creek swimming pools</i>	<i>Nov 2006</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Installation of waste oil recycling units at waste depots</i>	<i>August 2006</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>Upgrade of Rural Fire Service Headquarters at Willow Tree</i>	<i>Jan 2007</i>	<i>332</i>	<i>13.3%</i>

4. List of Projects & Initiatives in Progress at 30th June

<i>Nature of Project or Initiative</i>	<i>% Completed 30/06/07</i>	<i>Total Cost \$000</i>	<i>% Council Funds</i>
<i>S.R. 3 Rehabilitation east of Pump Station Creek bridge</i>	<i>38%</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>S.R. 1 Reconstruction of Weemalah section</i>	<i>46%</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>S.R. 3 Rehabilitate and widen Warrah Creek floodplain</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>M.R. 7710 reconstruction of section 3.93 k to 4.93 k west of S.H. 29.</i>	<i>66%</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>NIL</i>
<i>Construction of water mains Pryor Street Quirindi</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Design of Coepolly Dam No 2 upgrade</i>	<i>65%</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Willow Tree Water Supply reticulation improvements</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>New watering system and facilities upgrade Henry Street No 1 oval Quirindi</i>	<i>38%</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>50%</i>
<i>New play equipment for Premer Park, Premer</i>	<i>59%</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Construction of shade sails at Rose-Lee park Quirindi</i>	<i>33%</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Construction of a new library at Werris Creek</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>50%</i>
<i>Construction of new office and staff amenities at the Quirindi Works depot</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Pryor Street Quirindi mains replacement</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>100%</i>

5. Principal Projects & Initiatives

Capital Works & Infrastructure Services (including utility services)

Council, in trying to address its infrastructure backlog, undertook its largest ever spending program on roads, bridges and footpaths during the year at a cost of over \$3m which is more than double the previous year's expenditure. Major upgrades took place on regional roads (\$1.5m), particularly on the Nundle to Quirindi timber haulage route in preparation for the Quirindi Timber Processing Mill opening in late 2007, the Quirindi to Currabubula road and the Werris Creek to Carroona road which now completes a sealed road for tourists and caravaners travelling from west of Coonabarabran to Werris Creek and the northeast.

Strong lobbying of Federal politicians by Council resulted in the announcement in late June 2007 of a Regional Roads to Recovery grant of \$4.1m to Tamworth Regional Council and Liverpool Plains Shire Council (\$2.1m) to upgrade the Nundle to Quirindi log haulage route. This grant was obtained outside the initial two Federal government announcements for successful projects under this program.

For the first time Council implemented a supplementary gravel resheeting program on major unsealed Shire roads with \$303,000 allocated to Williewarina Road during the year. A culvert program valued at \$130,000 was also implemented to address various trouble spots on unsealed roads which required graders to travel long distances just to repair a small section of road damaged by water flowing across it. Both of these programs have been popular with rural residents.

Sealed Shire roads also attracted funding from Council for upgrades as did footpath construction and kerb and gutter construction in the urban centres of Quirindi, Werris Creek and Willow Tree.

Unfortunately the drought impacted on two of Council's village water supplies necessitating the search for supplementary groundwater. The cost of this search for water has so far cost over \$82,000 and while success has been found at Wallabadah a number of potential sites at Willow Tree have been unsuccessful and Council continues to seek an alternative water supply. Drought proofing Council's towns and villages has become a priority of Council following the negative impacts that this drought has had on the community.

Council commenced its design for the upgrade of Coepolly Dam to withstand a 1 in 10,000 year flood event. Cost of the design was \$26,000 during the year. Demand and Drought Management Plans were developed during the year for both water supplies and this enabled the sale of surplus town water to irrigators who had their water licence entitlements cut back by up to 95%.

Cultural & Heritage

*At the beginning of 2007 a new **Audio Visual room** was launched in the Rail Journeys Museum at the multi award winning Australian Railway Monument and Museum at Werris Creek. This was a project jointly funded by the Department of Transport and Regional Services and Liverpool Plains Shire Council and cost some \$58,000. It entails a large plinth containing a plasma television screen surrounded by movable rail memorabilia.*

The audio visual display is a DVD running for approximately six minutes giving real accounts from former Werris Creek Railway employees. It also includes original footage from the days of steam through to modern day diesel and electric.

The museum has also been fortunate in having a large multi level model railway donated to it while many items of heritage significance were gifted by the NSW State Rail Heritage Office during their clean out of the Everleigh Rail Sheds in Sydney.

The Museum is playing a huge role in the revitalisation of the community of Werris Creek and is currently averaging 1100 visitors per month. The volunteers are averaging 32 man hours per day saving Council significantly in wages.

*The **First Fleet Memorial Gardens** at Wallabadah continues to attract more visitors. Improvements to the facility during the year included the construction of a new fountain, the brick amenities block was sandbagged and painted and a new pergola was constructed for weather protection. A locked donations box was also erected and this has so far taken over \$2,400 towards upkeep of the memorial.*

*It was the **150th Anniversary** of the town of Quirindi and \$15,000 was allocated for celebrations which included a street parade, various activities and a concert for the community.*

*Council visited its **Sister City Blacktown** during its annual Festival and set up a stall promoting the Liverpool Plains to entice skilled workers to relocate. This was seen as being much cheaper and more effective than attending Country Week in Sydney where we would be competing with all the other country councils. Council had some 80,000 persons all to themselves and took many enquiries.*

*The **Quirindi Rural Heritage Village** made application for a Federal Government Grant to construct a new exhibition pavilion and asked if Council would contribute \$45,000 if they were successful. Council agreed and the grant was subsequently successful. This new tourist attraction for the district will now benefit from Council's participation in the grant application process.*

*Council was successful in gaining a \$200,000 grant for the construction of a new **library at Werris Creek**. Land had previously been acquired in the main street and earth works have commenced following detailed plans being approved by the NSW State Library.*

Economic & Social Development

*The town of Werris Creek, which had recently been recognised as one of the 30 most disadvantaged towns in NSW based on a number of social and economic factors, proved that it was on the improve when Council sold all 13 lots of its Stage 1 **Punyarra Residential Subdivision** within months of their release. Council has allowed for the construction of Stage 2 in the 2007/08 Budget with funds coming from the sale proceeds of Stage 1.*

*Council sold its remaining lots in the Quirindi **Industrial Estate** as well as two lots in a nearby estate that it had purchased in the previous year all at a good profit. The exploration of coal by BHP has led to an increase in speculative investment in the town, however the last two industrial lots were sold to McDermott Drilling and to Country Energy which is building a large service centre due to the increased demand in the area.*

*Council staff have been kept busy with subdivision applications from private developers for **residential subdivisions**. One 48 lot subdivision has been completed with all land sold as house/land packages to outside investors prior to subdivision works being completed. Another 60 lot subdivision has been approved for a Sydney developer. Several smaller subdivisions were also approved during the year indicating that the area is now seen as being attractive for investment opportunities.*

*The latest Census statistics reveal a **9% increase** in population over the previous census result which is quite an achievement when compared to most other rural councils on the western side of the Range. It confirms that Council's economic development initiatives are working.*

*Council was instrumental in setting up the **Kamilaroi Highway Steering Committee** which is made up of the six councils through which the Highway passes (Willow Tree to Bourke). The steering committee made application for funding from the Federal Government's Department of Tourism industry & Resources to improve amenities and signage along the Highway. Council was advised of its success in being granted \$245,000 and these funds were administered by Gunnedah Shire Council during the year.*

*In an effort to give the smaller villages within the proposed future Shire some autonomy over expenditure, Council established **Village Development Committees** at Premer, Blackville, Spring Ridge, Wallabadah, Willow Tree, Caroon/Walhallow and Currabubula. An amount of \$10,000 annually is made available to each village committee for minor works and facilities to be determined by the respective committees.*

*Council's **Community Initiative Fund** provided financial assistance of over \$26,000 across four different categories - sport, education and environment, art and culture and community organisations, to various groups and individuals to assist with the holding of community events, sporting events, travel assistance, etc.*

Built & Natural Environment

*Council is proceeding with a shire wide comprehensive **Local Environmental Plan (LEP)** which will replace the Parry, Murrurundi and Quirindi LEP's which existed prior to amalgamation. A shire-wide community consultation program has been completed on a Study and a Growth Management Strategy prepared. Council has adopted the Study and Strategy which will be released for public comment in August 2007.*

*Council received funding of \$50,000 from DNR and the Federal Government to prepare a **Flood Study and Floodplain Management Plan for Quirindi Township**. This work was completed during the year.*

Upon amalgamation Council successfully lobbied to have the Liverpool Ranges Rural Fire Service Headquarters located at Willow Tree. The Headquarters provides accommodation and a Bushfire Emergency Management Operations Centre for the Shires of Upper Hunter, Gunnedah and Liverpool Plains. The Minister, Nathan Rees officially opened the Headquarters on 3rd July 2007.

*During the period four new **Rural Fire Service Brigade Stations** were constructed at Warrah Creek, Currabubula, Blackville and Carroona.*

*For many years the **Quirindi State Emergency Service** operated from a shed at the rear of the council chambers. The closure of the Quirindi Saleyards provided an opportunity to refurbish the kiosk building as an Emergency Centre and to construct a new shed to house plant and equipment. The Centre was also opened by the Minister Nathan Rees.*

*The **Quirindi Volunteer Rescue Association** has now expanded and moved into the former SES shed to improve their storage and operations centre.*

*As part of a resource sharing arrangement with Gunnedah Shire Council, a **Parking Officer** was contracted to police parking in the CBD which has become congested due to new development. This arrangement has been extended in 2007/08 to include Narrabri Shire Council.*

Environmental Initiatives

*Council in conjunction with its Sister City Blacktown successfully applied for \$2m in funding under the **Urban Sustainability Program** for a carbon trading initiative. The project will see native trees planted in both council areas to capture and sequester carbon. The project will also help improve biodiversity and the health of riverbanks. The project will allow both councils to trade carbon certificates adding to the income stream for both councils. This Council could not have received the funding without the assistance of Blacktown as the Program is for urban areas with greater than 10,000 in population.*

Liverpool plains Shire Council, Gunnedah Shire Council and Narrabri Shire Council have successfully obtained grant funding to undertake a regional resource strategy to identify resource development impacts, especially from coal mining. Known as Namoi 2030 the \$208k project has been expanded to include Tamworth Regional Council and the Namoi Catchment Management Authority.

Recreation, Health & Community Services

*The recently refurbished Police Boys Club, now known as the **Quirindi Recreation Centre**, continues to attract more patrons including patients rehabilitating after medical operations. Council's partnership with the Local Area Health Service resulted in a Highly Commended award in the Kelloggs/Heart Foundation Awards.*

*Council was successful with a **Sport & Recreation Grant** of over \$100,000 to upgrade its No 1 Cricket oval with shade sails, wicket covers, fencing, building extension and automatic underground watering system. New play equipment has been constructed at Premer Park and shade sails ordered for the playground at Rose Lee Park.*

Council has been heavily involved in doctor recruitment following the retirement and relocation of three doctors during the year. Council has been successful in finding replacements and purchased one surgery along with furniture and equipment at a cost of \$234,000.

With regard to the future recruitment of doctors Council has been looking at the construction of a medical centre specifically for the new generation of doctors who want an easy entry and a graceful exit strategy. Working with the local Area Health Service and the North West Slopes Division of General Practice a Health One medical centre has now been approved for Quirindi. This was successful largely due to Council negotiating a substantial financial contribution from BHP towards construction costs.

The Eastside Child Care Centre was constructed by Council to provide facilities for employees of the sawmill which is still under construction. The Centre is now full without the sawmill engaging its workforce and Council has prepared for a further expansion of the Centre by purchasing land adjacent to the current Centre. It is proposed to add to the facility to take advantage of economies of scale with one large centre rather than two separate centres. Profit from the child care centre of around \$70,000 p.a. has been allocated to resealing roads to help address the infrastructure backlog.

Corporate & Strategic Planning Services

*During the year Council developed a Council wide **Performance Management System** involving an annual bonus to all staff. Five Council wide targets covering all Departments have been selected and include a reduction in Sick Leave, completion of the Management Plan targets, a reduction in the history component of our Workers Compensation Premium, Innovations which saves money and/or increases productivity and the achievement of satisfactory results in 25 different services within the annual Community Survey to all households.*

There are two targets which result in cash savings to Council if achieved – reduction in workers compensation premium and innovation. One or both of these targets are required to fund the bonus system along with an annual base amount of \$30,000 to be set aside in the budget. The other three targets will result in productivity savings and achievement of our management plan objectives.

*The **Tr@cer Electronic Data Management System** has revolutionised the way Council deals with its correspondence and customers. Tr@cer was developed in-house as an alternative to purchasing an off the shelf document management program.*

The program was developed on the premise of achieving workplace efficiency gains, improved customer service and cost savings for Council, however the “clean green” benefits must also be recognized and these include reduced carbon emissions through a reduction in paper and copier consumables.

Tr@cer is a simple user friendly program that automates the former manual recording, storage and retrieval process of all documents. Program functions include tasking, escalation, linking, delegation, exporting, customer action requests, SMS messaging, and correspondence reply. Data is stored on a sequel data base using windows technology.

Cost of developing the program was in the order of \$20,000 however this is offset with a one off capital saving of \$42,000 and ongoing annual savings in paper, copy consumables, support and training of \$16,000 pa. The software program has won the IT category at the 2007 National Local Government Awards.

Production of Councils monthly Committee and meeting business papers were once an onerous, time consuming and resource demanding task requiring a number of staff to complete the photo copying, collation processes with out of hours delivery to Councillors.

*Councils IT staff took up the challenge and developed an in-house solution, the **Tr@cer Meeting Management software**.*

Hard copy reports are first collated then scanned into an Acrobat PDF file which is stored at an in-house FTP site. End users can download the business papers to a local directory and these can be retrieved or archived back into the working folder. Councillors can now download business papers in a matter of minutes.

Corporate & Strategic Planning Services cont'd

The electronic business paper has proven to be another success story for Council with an overwhelming acceptance of the program by all users. The program has produced re-current cost savings of \$4,000 p.a., efficiency gains of \$6,000 p.a. and a one off capital saving in the order of \$10,000

*Council's financial software was not considered user friendly by non-finance staff, particularly for reporting purposes. The lack of end user information prompted Council to purchase the well known budget and reporting software package "**Power Budget**".*

The "Power Budget" program seamlessly integrates with the existing financial software using an alternate key reporting format for the various reporting layouts. Power Budget has empowered Engineering and Environmental staff with the ability to interrogate and monitor respective expenditure programs and projects to ensure expenditures remain on target and within budget.

The management reporting software has made a substantial contribution to Council's financial performance in 2006/2007 with improved staff management of expenditure programs. The program, installation and training cost \$29,000.

*In line with Department of Local Government thinking Council introduced a **Ten Year Management Plan** for the first time. Although not legislated for at this time it was introduced to ensure staff began planning for the longer term future and commenced putting in processes and procedures prior to any legislation. In conjunction with this a new position of Asset and Infrastructure Engineer was created to commence the development of a ten year **Asset Management Plan** for Council.*

*During the year Council adopted a ten year **Strategic Regional Water Plan** designed to link Werris Creek's water supply (Coepolly Dam) to Quirindi and the underground water of Quirindi to Werris Creek. This allows both town to access each others water supply should either one become contaminated. The strategy also raises the height of the dam wall to increase holding capacity to cater for the expected increase in population due to the proposed Carooona Coal Mine. The total project is expected to cost \$18m and Council has during the year been successful in gaining over \$3m in grants to commence the project in 2007/08.*

*A number of new **Policies** were introduced during the year including Corporate Property (dealing with purchase and sale of land and buildings and the creation of a property investment fund), Records Management, Records Management Policy & Procedures for Councillors, Burial of Bodies on Private land, Availability of Building Plans, Replacement of Stolen Kerbside Bins, Occupation of Caravans, Keeping of Animals In Urban Areas, Rural Dwellings Water Supply, Liquid Trade Waste, Investigation and Enforcement of Unlawful Activity, Aboriginal Archeological Survey Requirements, Road Crossings, Fraud, Investments, Local Road Network, Contractor Requirements for Working on Council Roads, Local Road Hierarchy, Road Maintenance Boundary, Upgrading of Unformed Roads, Local Approvals, Public Notification of Development Applications and 63 different OH&S policies.*

Corporate & Strategic Planning Services cont'd

Staff were also busy revising the Code of Meeting Practice, Code of Conduct and Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities policies. The unexpected resignation of a councillor placed greater strain on staff who had to deal with a by election.

*Council consulted with the community through a mail out survey to every household in the Shire seeking feedback on Council's performance in the delivery of local government services. The **Community Survey** resulted in Council receiving a 90% satisfactory or better rating overall and maintained or improved its rating in other specific areas.*

*Another new form of community consultation introduced is the **Quarterly Newsletter** which is a glossy 4 page brochure providing current information to residents. This is delivered to every household in the Shire.*

6. Awards & Citations

Council received the following Awards for works, services and initiatives completed or achieved during 2006/07:

- *Highly Commended Award in the Kelloggs/ Heart Foundation Awards for the activities at the Quirindi Recreation Centre.*
- *Category winner in the 2007 NSW Tidy Towns Cultural Heritage Award – Werris Creek Railway Museum*
- *Council and Blacktown City Council won the New Affiliation Award at the 2006 Australian Sister Cities Annual Conference*
- *Category winner in the 2006 National Local Government Awards – Community Business Partnerships Category – for work done in collaboration with the Werris Creek community on the development of the Australian Railway Monument and Museum*
- *Category Winner in the 2007 National Local Government Awards – Information Technology Category for Tr@ceR Records Management System*
- *Finalist in the NSW Inland Tourism Awards – for the Australian Railway Monument & Museum*

7. Supplementary Information

Please find attached the following extracts from Council's General Purpose Financial Report for the year ended 30th June 2006.

- 1. Statement of Financial Performance*
- 2. Statement of Financial Position*
- 3. Statement of Changes in Equity*
- 4. Statement of Cash Flows*
- 5. Note 6(a) – Cash Assets and Investment Securities*
- 6. Note 6(b) – Details of Movements and Utilisation of Restricted Cash Assets and Investments*
- 7. Note 13 – Statement of Performance Measurement*
- 8. Special Purpose Financial Statement – Statement of Financial Performance by Business Activities*

Web Page Link to March Quarterly Review:

www.lpsc.nsw.gov.au/files/1960/File/Council-Meeting-May-2007-part-0002.pdf

8. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During 2006/07 Council implemented a wide range of strategies designed to achieve higher levels of growth, improved quality of life and new opportunities for sustainable social and economic development. These strategies involved extensive consultation with the community, the creation of partnerships with other private and government organisations and the construction of infrastructure.

Although it was an extremely successful year for the Council, completing a number of major infrastructure projects, there were many obstacles outside of Council's control that had to be overcome. These included the loss of key engineering and finance staff for extended periods, a flood disaster in late June, the departure of three of the five General Practitioners in Quirindi, an unexpected Council by election, community opposition to the proposed BHP Caroon Coal Mine, the village of Wallabadah running out of water and an unprecedented amount of development activity placing pressure on the remaining staff.

Over the last 12 months four of Council's engineers have left to take up new jobs at Tamworth. While two have been replaced no suitable applications have been received for the others. The Manager Finance, who after three years of training, resigned at the end of May to leave us without anyone to complete the Annual Statements of Account. Smaller Councils are finding it increasingly difficult to compete with the larger Councils that can afford to pay greater salaries to attract skilled staff who are in short supply. The remaining staff who have coped with the increased workload are to be congratulated.

With the loss of four doctors in the last two years it has become part of Council's charter to recruit and retain doctors due to the inability or desire of any other government to become involved. This has put great strain on staff and council resources to secure doctors and acquire surgeries for their use. Rental houses at Council's expense needed to be found for their accommodation and this is very difficult with the current shortage of housing stock available. Fortunately Council has been successful in the recruitment process securing three new doctors.

The impact of the drought hit home when the Wallabadah groundwater supply dried up and made the news internationally. New sources of water have been located and a new \$18m water strategy adopted to ensure the future supply of water for residents in the main towns of the Shire should another similar drought be experienced.

Perhaps the greatest achievements during the year include the construction of the Liverpool Ranges RFS Headquarters at Willow Tree, the new State Emergency Services Headquarters at Quirindi, the residential development that is occurring as a result of Council's economic development initiatives, the undertaking of the largest road construction program ever undertaken by Council, the gravel resheeting and culvert programs, the development and implementation of new software for records management, budgeting and business papers, the recruitment of doctors, the securing of over \$5m in new grants for carbon forests, new water infrastructure and road upgrades on the sawmill route and strategic long term planning.