

2023/24 Annual Report

yass valley council

the country the people

Contents

Contents	3
<i>Mayoral and CEO Message</i>	4
<i>Corporate & Community Directorate</i>	5
<i>Planning & Environment Directorate</i>	9
<i>Infrastructure & Assets Directorate</i>	10
1. Council’s Achievements in Implementing the Delivery Program.....	12
2. Rates and Charges Written Off	13
3. Overseas visits by Councillors, Council Staff, or other representatives	13
4. Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors	13
5. Council Induction and/or Professional Development	13
6. Projects for which utilise contributions or levies	13
7. Contracts Awarded Above \$150,000	15
8. Amounts Incurred in Relation to Legal Proceedings	16
9. Summary of Resolutions made under section 67 concerning work carried out on private land ..	17
10. Grants and Donations under Section 356	17
11. Statement of all external bodies that exercised functions delegated by Council.	17
12. Statement of all Corporations, Partnerships, Trusts, Joint Ventures, Syndicates or other Bodies in which Council held a controlling Interest.....	17
13. Statement of all Corporations, Partnerships, Trusts, Joint Ventures, Syndicates or other Bodies in which Council participated.	18
14. Activities to Implement Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Plan	18
15. Statement of total number of persons who performed paid work on Wednesday 14 February 2024.....	19
16. Total Remuneration Package of the Chief Executive Officer	19
17. Total Remuneration Package of all Senior Staff	19
18. Stormwater Management Services.....	19
19. Coastal Protection Services.....	20
20. Environmental upgrade agreements, in accordance with s406	20
21. Special Rate Variation (SRV).....	20
22. Report on Capital Works Projects	20
23. Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2018.....	20
24. Details Inspection of private Swimming Pools - Swimming Pools Act & Regulation	21
25. Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and Regulation	21
26. Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979.....	23
27. Public Interest Disclosures	24
28. Compliance with the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010	24
29. Disability Inclusion Act 2014	24
30. Recovery and Threat Abatement Plans - Fisheries Management ACT 1994	24
<i>Attachment A: 2023/24 Annual Financial Statements</i>	25
<i>Attachment B: Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)</i>	26

Mayoral and CEO

Message

It is with great pleasure that we present Yass Valley Council's 2023/24 Annual Report. This report offers a valuable opportunity to reflect on and share our accomplishments over the past year with our community.

Through this report, we highlight the progress made across various projects, events, and initiatives that have enhanced the lives of our local residents and strengthened our region.

We consider the most impactful improvements to be:

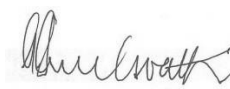
- In July 2023, we celebrated the opening of the newly revitalised Riverbank Park, a project made possible by \$2 million in funding from the NSW Government through the Public Spaces Legacy Program. To qualify for this funding, Yass Valley Council committed to accelerating its median assessment timeframe for development applications by 20%, ensuring streamlined growth for our region. As the Yass community continues to expand, it is vital that our public spaces evolve as well, providing essential areas for recreation, relaxation, and community connection. The new Riverbank Park is a testament to that commitment.
- The replacements of Jeir Creek and Back Creek Road bridges were major infrastructure achievements, jointly funded by Round 6 of the Bridges Renewal Program and Yass Valley Council. Both were upgraded from single-lane, low-level crossings to dual-lane concrete bridges, significantly improving safety and providing much needed accessibility during flood events for residents and travellers in these areas and beyond. These projects were completed at a cost of \$2 million for Jeir Creek Bridge and \$3.2 million for Back Creek Road Bridge.
- The extension of Victoria Park Skate Park was made possible through \$500,000 in funding from the Stronger Country Communities Fund. This project introduced new skate ramps, designed to enhance the safety of the park by catering to a range of ages and skill levels. In addition to the ramps, Yass Valley Council implemented further improvements, including shaded seating areas, water facilities, and minor upgrades to the car park to boost accessibility, ensuring the skate park is a welcoming and inclusive space for all.

- The Crago Mill Precinct redevelopment is now underway, marking an exciting new chapter for Yass Valley. This significant project will include a modern administration building, a state-of-the-art library, and a vibrant community/commercial hub, all designed to meet the growing need of our region. Additionally, the historic Crago Mill will be restored and transformed into a café, blending heritage with community life. The first stage of this redevelopment is expected to be completed by August 2025, offering enhanced public facilities and spaces for residents to enjoy.

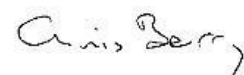
Looking ahead, the community can be confident that Yass Valley Council is working to ensure it is financially sustainable into the future. Council remains committed to ongoing improvement, ensuring the delivery of high-quality services that provide value of money to our residents.

We would like to express our gratitude to our councilors and staff for their dedication over the past year in upholding the values of Yass Valley Council. We also extend our appreciation to the many volunteers who generously contribute their time and efforts to support the community, helping to make Yass Valley an exceptional place to live.

We commend this Annual Report to you.



Allan McGrath
Mayor



Chris Berry
Chief Executive Officer



Corporate & Community Directorate

It has been a busy year for staff involved in the Corporate and Community directorate. The directorate includes the areas of Finance, Governance & Risk, Information & Communication Technology, Human Resources, Media & Communication, Customer Services, Community & Economic Development, and the Library.

Staff from this and other directorates have also been working on the Parkwood development implications for the Yass Valley Council. Work is being progressed on two options: border move to ACT (with water in exchange) or no border move and special rate variation for those residents. The special rate variation will ensure that the remainder of the Yass Valley residents are not affected by increased rates and charges for the Parkwood development.

Finance

The external audit and 2023/24FY Annual Financial Statements will be presented to Council in October 2024. Enormous amount of time and effort by staff, with the support of finance contractors, have been dedicated to ensuring that we adhered to the regulated timeline.

Council's forecast Net operating result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes for 2023/24FY was a deficit of **\$12,557K**. Council ended the year at the 30 June 2024 with a deficit of **\$5,127K** (refer **Attachment A**).

Council's Executive Management and Leadership teams came together to discuss and work through how Council can be sustainable. Staff are ranking services that a local council must undertake, the ones that are important, nice to have and possible reduction, as well as monitoring projects and budgets on a monthly basis to ensure that council is able to meet community expectations while ensuring a balanced budget. At the time of writing this report, work has commenced on the 2025/26FY budget with the aim of forecasting a balanced budget and ongoing financial viability.

Information Communication Technology

Some of the achievements for ICT during 2023/24 included:

- Replacement of end-of-life ICT server infrastructure: future proofing these assets for another 5-7 years
- Enforcement of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for all our users: to further protect our systems and the data we are entrusted to protect by our community.
- Improvement of our disaster recovery resilience with additional layers of security for backups and measures of reducing the risk for ransomware attacks.
- Testing conducted by independent organisation to assess cyber security posture and provide recommendations.
- Progression of Cyber Security implementations to improve the council's cyber security posture.

Community & Economic Development Department

Community Events

The Yass Valley has experienced a vibrant year of community engagement and events, bringing together residents of all ages to celebrate, learn, and connect has been the central focus of the community services staff. Below is a summary of the major events that took place across the region.

The much-anticipated opening of Riverbank Park was a highlight for the community. The day was filled with exciting activities, including a duck race organised by Yass Rotary Club, supported by the Yass Valley Youth Council, and performances from street walkers and bubble makers that entertained attendees. The event marked a significant enhancement to the recreational offerings along the river.

Our Winter school holiday program offered a variety of enriching activities. Highlights included lawn bowls and a memorable morning tea where local youths spent time with elderly residents at Thomas Eccles Gardens. These activities fostered intergenerational connections and brought the community closer.

August saw the celebration of Local Government Week. We handed out egg and bacon roll to residents heading to Canberra, a small gesture of appreciation for those traveling for work. Our Parks & Gardens team planted a new vegetable garden at Bowning Primary School, which was a big hit with students and teachers alike. Meanwhile, our rangers visited Sutton Primary School alongside our resident dog, teaching the importance of microchipping pets. Our environment team also gave a presentation on lunchbox safety, helping ensure healthy and sustainable habits for the children.

In September, we honoured NAIDOC Week with a Scar Tree Acknowledgement, recognising and preserving Indigenous culture and heritage in our region. This acknowledgement was an important moment for the Yass Valley community, bringing focus to the region's rich cultural history.

The Seniors Spring Program this year showcased the incredible work of the Men's Sheds around the valley, highlighting their craftsmanship and community contributions. Seniors also enjoyed a bus trip to the Tulip Gardens, offering a scenic and relaxing day out during the bloom season.

Our Spring School Holiday Program was packed with fun activities, attracting participants of all ages. Popular events included horse riding, a native plan workshop, and a bus trip to Questacon, offering a mix of outdoor and educational experiences for the regions' youth.

December marked the much-anticipated opening of the new skate park, offering a dedicated space for skaters and riders. The event brought in crowds of all ages and showcased the Yass Valley Council's commitment to providing recreational infrastructure for youth in the community.

This year's Christmas Parade was a festive triumph, with over 70 market holders and 80 participants contributing to a lively celebration. The parade brought the community together, and Santa's visit was the perfect highlight, adding a magical touch to the evening.

The Australia Day celebration was a success, with the theme of Keeping Cool by the Pool. The event featured live performances from a band and DJ at the Yass Memorial Pool, providing a fun and festive atmosphere while residents enjoyed the summer heat.

During January, we ran our Summer School Holiday Program, which spanned over three weeks and included 20 activities. This diverse program offered children opportunities to engage in everything from spray painting workshops, fishing competitions in Wee Jasper, and archery round the region to Tennis, and outdoor movie, and much more.

March saw a special focus on our seniors with Seniors Week, during which 14 activities were organised. Highlights included tennis, an interactive poetry session in Binalong, and a Yass Heritage walk, offering a chance for seniors to engage in both physical activity and cultural enrichment.

In April, our school holiday program continued to grow in popularity, with over 10 activities on offer. Kids participated in fun and exciting events such as golf, horse riding, and a high-tech VR escape room experience, ensuring these was something for everyone to enjoy.

In June, we held a Youth Forum at Yass High School. The event gave students the opportunity to voice their opinions, engage with local government, and discuss the issues that matter to them, fostering a sense of civic involvement and empowerment among our young residents.

The year was full of successful events that have strengthened community bonds and provided enriching experiences for Yass Valley residents and could not have been offered to the community without staff applying and winning, State grant funding. From intergenerational gatherings to youth-focused recreational opportunities, our council continues to deliver diverse, inclusive, and engaging programs for all. We look forward to building on this success in the coming year with even more exciting initiatives.

Economic Development

Council engaged and supported various economic development activities for the region. Partnering with the Yass Valley Business Chamber, we were able to win the NSW Government grant to host 10 events across the Yass Valley region for small business month in October of 2023, which saw over 180 attendees, networking & upskilling our local small businesses.

November 2023 celebrated the 1-year anniversary of the 'Shop Local' Yass Valley Gift Card program that has grown to have 50 local Yass Valley Businesses partnering with the program. The focus for the program remains on the circular economy for the region, with over 1,000 gift cards loaded and available to be spent locally. This project was very successful with over. \$34,000 worth of cards purchased in the last 12 months. This program continues to provide a boost to local small businesses, assisted by regional marketing, promotions, and building community driven support.

Council worked with the following organisations: Yass Valley Business Chamber, Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) Economic Development managers, Destination Southern NSW, Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT, Regional NSW, Southern Tablelands Steering Committee, Visit Canberra, interagency services, Yass High School, Service NSW and Workforce Australia.

Staff also supported destination workshops; attended and supported all Yass Valley Business Chamber breakfast meetings; operated the Yass Valley Information Centre 363 days of the year; supported the Hume & Hovell strategic planning & development; Regional Connectivity forums; Region Drought Resilience stakeholder reference groups, development of 4 seasonal marketing campaigns, 67 advertising partnerships in the 2024/2025 - 52 page Yass Valley Destination Guide, nomination into the Canberra Region Top Tourism Town Awards which Gundaroo won, and then received 3rd in the Australian Top Tiny Tourism Town awards, as well as event support and regional marketing.

Yass Library

Yass Valley Library (YVL) had an exciting 2023/24 providing a broad range of services and activities for the community. We continue to offer a broad and up to date collection of material in both physical and digital formats. We held several events for the seniors' festival and programs for the school holidays.

While staff developed a new program, Tots wriggle and Rhyme, aimed at under 3s to help to develop a lifelong love of books and reading, we continued to offer favourites like Storytime, for preschoolers, and Lego club. This year, at Lego Club, the kids were encouraged to create something to enter the Lego category at the Yass Show and we came home with some winners!

We continue to work with Southern Tablelands Art exhibiting local artist's work in the Gallery Box and a waste to art school holiday program in anticipation for the Wollondilly Waste to Art Prize 2024.

YVL continued to host community and charity groups like "wrapped with love" knitting group and book clubs while introducing the Red Cross "Trauma Teddy" knitting group and Yass Gardening club.

We also hosted several authors through the year:

- Rhian Williams read her children's book "*Emergency! Emergency!*" to local children who were then treated to a visit to the library by a Yass Fire and rescue truck and its crew.

- Andrew Skeoch Spoke about his book *“Deep listening to nature”* and what he has learnt from tuning into the sounds of creatures around us.
- Cathryn Hein spoke about her writing process and how she develops her stories in introduced us to her latest book *“The Grazier’s son”*.
- We also had Ruth & Don Pollock who turned their hand to writing after having to close their business due to the COVID shutdown. Don spoke about his book *“Suggy’s men”* and Ruth about her novel *“Clouds and Sunshine”*.



Planning & Environment Directorate

A total of 611 applications determined were:

Determined 2023/24FY - Application type	
Application Type	Total
Building Information Certificate	26
Complying Development Certificate	15
Construction Certificate	46
Development Application	260
Development Consent Modification	95
Occupation Certificate	51
S68 Plumbing	51
S68 Solid Fire Heater	17
Subdivision Certificates	31
Pool Compliance	19

- Completion of working dog microchipping programs with SELX, the NSW Farmers Association and a local rural supplier with a total of 40 dogs microchipped.
- Completion of 322 inspections of properties high risk pathways for new and emerging priority weeds.
- Completion of spraying program of priority weeds on Crown Lands.
- Provision of heritage advisory program jointly funded by Heritage NSW and Council.
- Approved six grants under the Local Heritage Grants Program totaling \$19 000. This program is jointly funded by Council and Heritage NSW.
- Adoption in April 2024 of the Yass Valley Open Space Strategy.
- Completion of food premises inspections
- Completion of 50 on-site sewage management systems
- Completion of 11 skin penetration premises inspections.
- Completion of 11 caravan park inspections
- Completion of 9 public swimming pool inspections
- Completion of a new fenced off leash dog park in the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, Murrumbateman
- Reconstruction of the O'Connor Park, Yass (Yass River) boat ramp
- Completion of the Victoria Park Skate Park extension
- Selection of a site, community consultation and preparation of concept designs for the new category 1 all abilities playground in Murrumbateman
- Completion of the Open Space Strategy
- Completion of the Riverbank Park Adventure Playground.
- Completion of the five bay storage shed at the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, Murrumbateman
- Completion of the horse yards at the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, Murrumbateman
- Completion of the Binalong and Bowring Masterplans

Infrastructure & Assets Directorate

Commencement of Construction of the Crago Mill Precinct

Progress made to 6 July 2024 for the Yass Valley Council (YVC) Civic Precinct Project (the project), to develop the requirements of the YVC for long-term office accommodation for staff along with the provision of community services such as the Customer Service Centre, YVC Chambers, YVC Administration Building, Library, refurbishment of the Crago Mill, and provision of commercial/start-up spaces.

- Onsite construction activities have commence following the attainment of Construction Certificate No. 1 on 2 July 2024.
- The Contractor has proceeded with demolition, hazardous material removal, bulk excavation on the areas associated with the new administration building and library.
- Asphalt was stripped off the carpark and driveway and the garage was fully demolished.
- Design development is progressing with a 90% architectural design submission issued by Contractor on 1 July 2024 for stakeholder review and approval.
- Design development of the services documentation has also reached 80% and is currently with stakeholder for review.
- Construction Certificate no.2 (CC2) has been submitted on the portal however is awaiting design certification by DPC. (Has been issued as of September 2024)
- A S4.55 DA modification for changes from pre-contract value management activities have been submitted to YVC for approval as of 7 June 2024. Approval of the S4.55 is expected in late September 2024 due to public exhibition period.
- Site remediation works are ongoing with multiple locations of contamination found on site.
- Change management activities have continued with the development of FAQs and a forecast activities schedule to assist YVC and change champions in their consultation with the larger staffing cohort.

Replacing the roof on Memorial Hall

Phase 1 of the Memorial Hall roof replacement is 90% completed. Earlier issues with the contractor have been resolved and completion of Phase 1 is expected in Earlier November 2024.

Gravel resheeting program

The following unsealed roads, as part of the LRCI Grant fund, have been gravel resheeted: Bobbara Rd, Glengarry Rd (part), Tangmangaroo Rd (part), Gums Lane (part), Dicks Creek Rd (part), Tallagandra Lane (part) and Glenroy Rd.

Total amount of roads resheeted with gravel equates to 114,450 m² / 19.92 kms.

Bitumen Resealing Program

The following bitumen roads, as part of the FLRPRR, RTR and FLR(2) Grant funds, have been resealed: Murrumbateman Rd (part), Nanima Rd (part), Mountain Creek Rd (part) and Woolgarlo Rd (part). Total amount of roads resealed equates to 131,298 m² / 19.31 kms.

Heavy Patching Program

The following bitumen roads, as part of the RERRF and BLOCK Grant funds, have been heavy patched in certain areas to increase the overall life of the road pavement: Murrumbateman Rd, Dog Trap Rd, Cooks Hill Rd, Sutton Rd, Gundaroo Rd, Shingle Hill Way, Hillview Dr and Wee Jasper Rod. The total area of heavy patching equates to 61,455 m2.

Other programs

- Completion of the replacement of the low level crossing on Nanima Road Nanima with a concrete bridge
- Completion of Stage 1 of sealing Back Creek Road Gundaroo
- Completion of Sage 1 of the Yass Valley Flood Warning System
- Upgraded two bus shelters and construct one new shelter
- Successful received grants for:
 - Bowning Activity Circuit - \$1.3M
 - Detail Design Yass Rail Trail - \$700k
 - Safety Improvements Murrumbateman Road - \$826k
- Rehabilitation of Seg 35 of Sutton Road including upgrade of Murrumbateman Road intersection
- Completion of the replacement of the low level crossing on Back Creek Road Gundaroo with a concrete bridge (refer below photo).



- Provision of sewer and stormwater services to orphaned blocks that relied on on-site sewage management system in Grand Junction Road.
- Completion of detailed business case for the upgrade of Yass Water Treatment Plant that secured the remaining funding of \$6.6M from Housing Infrastructure Fund for construction. Approved business case also made it possible to seek additional funding from NSW Government Ad-hoc election funding, National Water Grid Funding and NSW Health Fluoridation Grant.
- Annual cleaning of cleaning of major water reservoirs (9 No.), sewer mains (4.3 km), and relining of sewer mains (90m)
- Commenced migration of SCADA System consisting of repeater station and main servers.
- Upgrade of chlorination system at Binalong Reservoir.

1. Council's Achievements in Implementing the Delivery Program

Councils' achievements during 2023/24 include, but are not limited to:

- Completion of working dog microchipping programs with SELX, the NSW Farmers Association and a local rural supplier with a total of 40 dogs microchipped.
- Completion of 322 inspections of properties high risk pathways for new and emerging priority weeds.
- Completion of spraying program of priority weeds on Crown Lands.
- Provision of heritage advisory program jointly funded by Heritage NSW and Council.
- Approved six grants under the Local Heritage Grants Program totaling \$19 000. This program is jointly funded by Council and Heritage NSW.
- Adoption in April 2024 of the Yass Valley Open Space Strategy.
- Completion of food premises inspections
- Completion of 50 on-site sewage management systems
- Completion of 11 skin penetration premises inspections.
- Completion of 11 caravan park inspections
- Completion of 9 public swimming pool inspections
- Completion of a new fenced off leash dog park in the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, Murrumbateman
- Reconstruction of the O'Connor Park, Yass (Yass River) boat ramp
- Completion of the Victoria Park Skate Park extension
- Selection of a site, community consultation and preparation of concept designs for the new category 1 all abilities playground in Murrumbateman
- Completion of the Open Space Strategy
- Completion of the Riverbank Park Adventure Playground.
- Completion of the five bay storage shed at the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, Murrumbateman
- Completion of the horse yards at the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, Murrumbateman
- Completion of the Binalong and Bowning Masterplans
- Successful Yass Valley Community Christmas event in December 2023.
- Ability to run 10 successful events as part of Small Business Month in October 2023.
- Council supported the Hume & Hovell strategic planning & development; Regional Connectivity forums; Region Drought Resilience stakeholder reference groups, nomination into the Canberra Region Top Tourism Town Awards which Gundaroo won, and then received 3rd in the Australian Top Tiny Tourism Town awards.
- We honoured NAIDOC Week 2023 with a Scar Tree Acknowledgement, recognising and preserving Indigenous culture and heritage in our region.
- Provided exceptional activities for youth and seniors through School Holiday and Senior Programs.

2. Rates and Charges Written Off

Pensioner Concessions Granted	\$120,622.26
Postponed Rates	\$7,304.06
Rates and Charges (including interest)	\$47,958.40

3. Overseas visits by Councillors, Council Staff, or other representatives

Nil

4. Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors

A total of \$185,276 was attributed to the provision of Councillors facilities and payment of expenses, including conferences, travel costs, accommodation, meals and reimbursement of travel for use of Councillor private vehicles on Council business.

There were no interstate visits undertaken by Councillors, other than regional meetings in the ACT, which is included above.

Mayoral and Councillor Fees and related expenses

Mayoral Allowance	\$33,590
Councillor Fees	\$159,120
Councillor Expenses	\$28,215

Other Expenses

Mayoral Car (travel expenses)	\$4,334
Conference/meeting attendance	0

Total Elected Members expenditure	\$225,259
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5. Council Induction and/or Professional Development

There was no professional development in the 2023/24FY.

The Councillors undertook induction when the term commenced in 2021.

6. Projects for which utilise contributions or levies

Project ID number: 4920002

Project title: Murrumbateman Recreation Grounds Dog Park

Total project cost: \$100,000

Public amenity or public service to which project relates: Recreational activities

Monetary contributions/levies used or expended on the project: \$100,000

Percentage of the cost of project funded by contributions/levies: 100%

Project compete: Under construction

Project ID number: 5019024

Project title: O'Connor Park Yass (Yass River) – Boat ramp re-construction

Total project cost: \$95,000

Public amenity or public service to which project relates: Sport and recreational activities

Monetary contributions/levies used or expended on the project: \$50,000

Percentage of the cost of project funded by contributions/levies: 47%

Project complete: May 2024

Project ID number: 4920016

Project title: Victoria Park Skate Park Extension

Total project cost: \$500,000

Public amenity or public service to which project relates: Sport and recreational activities

Monetary contributions/levies used or expended on the project: \$112,008

Percentage of the cost of project funded by contributions/levies: 0%

Project completed: Park completed and opened December 2023. Carpark line marking completed July 2024.

Project ID number: 4920019

Project title: Victoria Park Field Lighting Upgrade

Total project cost: \$451,248

Public amenity or public service to which project relates: Sport and recreational activities

Monetary contributions/levies used or expended on the project: \$115,312

Percentage of the cost of project funded by contributions/levies: 25.5%

Project completed: August 2024

Project ID number: 4920006

Project title: Murrumbateman Recreation Ground Amenities

Total project cost: \$2,100,000

Public amenity or public service to which project relates: Sport and recreational activities

Monetary contributions/levies used or expended on the project: \$700,000

Percentage of the cost of project funded by contributions/levies: 33%

Project completed: Completion anticipated by end September 2024

Project ID number: 5010016

Project title: Replacement of Low Level Crossing on Nanima Road over Jeir Creek

Total project cost: \$2,051,670

Public amenity or public service to which project relates: Road Infrastructure upgrade

Monetary contributions/levies used or expended on the project: \$410,334

Percentage of the cost of project funded by contributions/levies: 20%

Project completed: March 2024

Project ID number:

Project title: Road Rehabilitation and sealing Back Creek Road Stage 1

Total project cost: \$3,425,000

Public amenity or public service to which project relates: Road Infrastructure upgrade

Monetary contributions/levies used or expended on the project: \$428,125

Percentage of the cost of project funded by contributions/levies: 12.5%

Project completed: May 2024

Project ID number: 5010015

Project title: Replacement of Low Level Crossing on Back Creek Road over Back Creek

Total project cost: \$3,562,605

Public amenity or public service to which project relates: Road Infrastructure upgrade

Monetary contributions/levies used or expended on the project: \$712,521

Percentage of the cost of project funded by contributions/levies: 20%

Project completed: June 2024

7. Contracts Awarded Above \$150,000

Refer to Contracts Register on Council's Website

<https://www.yassvalley.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/our-services/corporate-and-community/contracts-register-june-2024.pdf>

8. Amounts Incurred in Relation to Legal Proceedings

Ref	Property Address	Jurisdiction	Summary	Status	Costs
DA230052	25-27 Laidlaw Street, Yass	Land and Environment Court	Appeal against deemed refusal for self storage facility	Parties entered into s34 Agreement. DA refused.	\$37 674
DA165253C	36 Rose Street, Murrumbateman	Land and Environment Council	Appeal against refusal of development consent to the modification application for a different type of fence	Parties entered into s34 Agreement. Modification approved.	\$19 802
-	5 Ambleside Avenue, Murrumbateman	Land and Environment Court	Two appeals against Development Control Orders being: 1 Stop Use Order and Restore Works 2 Stop Use Order and Demolish Works Order	Parties entered into s34 Agreement to modify both orders	\$21 608
DA230523	5 Ambleside Avenue, Murrumbateman	Land and Environment Court	Appeal against deemed refusal of DA230523 for use of an existing shed as a dwelling house and works required to convert that shed to a dwelling	Not finalised	\$6 685
-	34 Birril Close, Springrange	NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal	Direction Notice pursuant to s28 of the Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act 2021	Council's decision on 15 September 2023 to issue a Direction Notice to the applicant pursuant to s28 of the Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act 2021 was affirmed. An appeal to this decision was made and subsequently withdrawn by the Appellant.	\$49 127
-	365 Bushs Lane, Murrumbateman	Local Court	Appeal against decision of Council – Companion Animals Act	Directions hearing held. Matter not finalised.	\$12 213
	n/a	NCAT	GIPA	Finalised	\$41,391.41
	n/a	NCAT	GIPA	Finalised	\$1,384.02
	n/a	IRC	Personnel Matter	Finalised	\$4,204.75
	n/a	IRC	Personnel Matter	Finalised	\$7,102.71

9. Summary of Resolutions made under section 67 concerning work carried out on private land

Council has not undertaken any work on Private Land during 2023/24FY.

10. Grants and Donations under Section 356

Community Group/Organisation	Approved
<i>Yass Netball Association</i>	<i>5,000</i>
<i>Yass Landcare Group Inc.</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Yass Senior Citizens</i>	<i>1,300</i>
<i>Gundaroo Park</i>	<i>9,000</i>
<i>Bowling Hall Assoc.</i>	<i>4,111</i>
<i>Yass Valley Triathlon Club</i>	<i>2,000</i>
<i>Combined Churches Yass Community Christmas Carols</i>	<i>5,000</i>
<i>Yass FM</i>	<i>1,140</i>
<i>Yass Valley Concert Band</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Yass Picnic Race Club Committee</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Yass Swimming Club</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Springfield Brigade NSW RFS</i>	<i>2,025</i>
<i>The Kids for Kids Project (Ride for Babies)</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Yass Music Club</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Yass Region Rodeo Assoc.</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Irish & Celtic Music Festival Inc. Committee</i>	<i>10,000</i>
<i>Buena Vibra: Alive in the Street</i>	<i>15,000</i>
<i>Yass High School</i>	<i>3,000</i>
<i>Binalong Rescue Squad (VRA)</i>	<i>1,450</i>
<i>Berinba School</i>	<i>2,000</i>
<i>Murrumbateman Primary School</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Gundaroo Expo</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Gundaroo Soldiers Hall Committee</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Binalong Mechanics Institute</i>	<i>999</i>
<i>Section 356 Total</i>	<i>\$87,025</i>
<i>Mayor Discretionary Fund</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>
<i>Grant Total</i>	<i>\$89,025</i>

11. Statement of all external bodies that exercised functions delegated by Council.

No external bodies exercised any delegated functions of Council during the reporting period.

12. Statement of all Corporations, Partnerships, Trusts, Joint Ventures, Syndicates or other Bodies in which Council held a controlling Interest.

Council held no controlling interest in any such entity during the reporting period.

13. Statement of all Corporations, Partnerships, Trusts, Joint Ventures, Syndicates or other Bodies in which Council participated.

- Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO)
- ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group
- Southern Tablelands Arts (STARTS) Inc
- South West Regional Waste Management Committee
- South East Australia Transport Strategy Inc (SEATS)
- Country Mayors Association
- Local Government NSW Statewide Mutual (Insurance)
- South East Weight of Loads Group

14. Activities to Implement Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Plan

Council's *EEO Management Plan 2019/2023* was adopted in June 2019. An EEO action plan was developed to ensure the objectives of the EEO management plan are achieved. The following activities were undertaken in 2022/2023:

- Objective 1 All staff understand EEO principles, their responsibilities and rights with EEO**
- The *EEO Management Plan* is accessible to all staff.
 - Upon commencement, new employees are assigned an online learning module via the HR System. The module consists of the EEO Management Plan document for review, an acknowledgement of the EEO Management Plan, an online course focused on Discrimination and EEO, including an assessment activity.
- Objective 2 Ensure Council HR policies and procedures comply with EEO principles**
- HR policies and procedures conform with EEO principles, with no complaints received in 2023/2024 regarding EEO practices.
 - Recruitment activities comply with EEO principles, with no complaints received in 2023/2024 regarding recruitment practices.
 - Selection panels comprised of a least one representative of the same gender as candidates being interviewed where possible.
 - Position descriptions were reviewed prior to recruitment of a position to ensure EEO compliance.
 - Applications for flexible working arrangements were considered and reviewed, taking into account individual circumstances and contexts, in conjunction with operational/business requirements.
- Objective 3 EEO Management Plan was successfully implemented, evaluated, and periodically reviewed.**
- New employees were asked to complete EEO questions on commencement (voluntary).
 - EEO data has been collected on a voluntary basis for submission in Annual Report (details below).

Objective 4 EEO TARGET GROUPS: Council’s workforce diversity is reflective and representative of the broader community.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff were advised of their entitlement under the Local Government (State) Award 2023 to take 1 day of leave to participate in NAIDOC day celebrations.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply for vacant positions, as stated on Council’s website in information on how to apply.
- The number of women in management position has been reviewed.

The below table shows the number of employees including casuals in each EEO target group by salary levels as at 30 June 2023:

Salary range	No. employees	Male	Female	NESB*	ATSI*	PWD*
\$40,000 - \$49,999	7	4	3	0	0	0
\$50,000 - \$59,999	18	16	2	1	1	1
\$60,000 - \$69,999	26	14	12	0	2	0
\$70,000 - \$79,999	25	17	8	3	2	0
\$80,000 - \$89,999	14	11	3	2	0	0
\$90,000 - \$99,999	10	7	3	2	0	0
>\$100,000	27	17	10	1	0	0
TOTAL	127	86	41	9	5	1

*NESB – Non-English-Speaking Background; ATSI - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; PWD - People with a Disability

15. Statement of total number of persons who performed paid work on Wednesday 14 February 2024

Persons employed by the council on a permanent full-time, permanent part-time or casual basis or under a fixed-term contract	139
Persons employed by the council as senior staff members	4
Persons engaged by the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person’s employer, wholly or principally for the labour of the person	5
Persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person’s employer, as an apprentice or trainee	Nil

16. Total Remuneration Package of the Chief Executive Officer

The value of the General Manager's TRP as of 30 June 2024 was \$245,999.96.

17. Total Remuneration Package of all Senior Staff

The value of the TRP for all senior staff as of 30 June 2024 was \$569,641. The value is expressed as the combined total TRP of the senior staff members.

18. Stormwater Management Services

Nil stormwater projects identified.

19. Coastal Protection Services

Not applicable

20. Environmental upgrade agreements, in accordance with s406

No environmental upgrade agreements have been entered into by Council that require compliance with section 406.

21. Special Rate Variation (SRV)

No special rate variation for 2023/24FY

22. Report on Capital Works Projects

Below is the list of capital works projects undertaken during the 2023/24FY.

- Completion of a new fenced off leash dog park in the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, Murrumbateman
- Reconstruction of the O'Connor Park, Yass (Yass River) boat ramp
- Completion of the Victoria Park Skate Park extension
- Completion of the Riverbank Park Adventure Playground.
- Completion of the five bay storage shed at the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, Murrumbateman
- Completion of the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, Murrumbateman
- Replacement of low Level crossing Back Creek Road over Back Creek
- Replacement of low level crossing Nanima road over Jeir Creek
- Rehabilitation and seal of Back Creek Road Stage 1
- Rehabilitation of Sutton Road Segment 35 and intersection with Murrumbateman Road
- Bus shelter replacement Murrumbateman
- Browne Street Yass Stormwater Augmentation
- Replacement of culverts Woolgarlo Road.

23. Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2018

Council carried out companion animal community education programs using local media, community notice boards, Facebook and the Council website. Council has also conducted school visits to educate students on dog safety and owner responsibilities.

Educational letters and fact sheets were sent to individual owners and areas with a high number of reported animal incidents. A microchipping program in conjunction with SELEX (stock sales facility), the NSW Farmers Association and local rural suppliers was also held over two events with a total of 40 working dogs microchipped. By increasing the number of working dogs that are chipped it means more dogs get reunited with their owners and less animals end up in our animal shelter.

Through the year, there were:

- 33 incidents involving dog attacks. These were predominately on stock and animals.
- 9 Orders were issued for Dangerous, Menacing and Nuisance dogs.
- 33 Infringement Notices were issued – totaling \$20,895.
- 72 Advisory and education letters forwarded to owners of companion animals.
- 91 dogs were impounded, 74 of those were returned to owners and 19 were rehomed through the public and rescue organisations.

Council runs a 'Yass Valley Animal Shelter' Facebook page which has proved to be a huge advantage for the rehoming of dogs and locating animal owners. Council have been taking shelter dogs out in the community with the dogs wearing fluorescent 'available for adoption vests', to increase adoptions. One of the dogs even visited the residents at the local retirement village. The rehome and return to owners rate for suitable dogs in 2023/24 was 100%.

Council provides unfenced off leash areas within the Local Government Area at:

- Lower Walker Park, Yass
- Below Joe O'Connor Park at the riverbank, Yass
- Bowning Recreation Ground, Bowning
- Binalong Recreation Ground, Binalong
- Nirta Drive Common, Murrumbateman
- Murrumbateman Recreation Area, Murrumbateman.

A fenced off leash park is provided in Yass on Laidlaw Street below the Yass Pool and a new fenced off-leash park was opened at the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground, Murrumbateman.

New signage has been erected at some of our community sporting fields regarding dog control, the remainder are to be updated in the near future.

Works have been undertaken at the Yass Valley Animal Shelter with the external boundary fence being replaced and a new animal holding yard added. Old unused dog cages have been modified to make six new cat cages.

Council received \$19 415 in companion animal registration fees and \$20 895 in companion animal infringements during 2023/24. This income assists in offsetting Council's costs associated with companion animal management.

Daily activities are undertaken by Council to promote compliance with the Companion Animals Act 1998 including patrols of parks and public areas across the local government area. Council have been conducting on the spot registration checks and educating the public on new registration requirements that will be in force from 1 July 2024.

24. Details Inspection of private Swimming Pools - Swimming Pools Act & Regulation

Swimming Pool Inspections	No. Inspections	No. Certificates of Compliance	No. Certificates of Non-Compliance
Tourist and Visitor Accommodation	0	0	0
Premises which there are more than 2 dwellings	0	0	0
Inspections that resulted in issuance a Certificate of Compliance under s.22D SP Act	14	14	0
Inspections that resulted in issuance a certificate of non-compliance under cl.21 SP Regulation	8	0	8

25. Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and Regulation

The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act) replaced the Freedom of Information Act 1989 on 1 July 2010. The GIPA Act provides four ways for government information to be released:

1. Open access information

Yass Valley Council publishes certain categories of information on our website as a matter of course; this is known as Open Access Information. Open Access Information includes details of contracts, policies and many other categories of information.

2. Proactive release

Yass Valley Council releases as much other information as possible to the public free of charge and publishes as much as possible on our website.

3. Informal access request

Members of the public may contact Council and ask for information. This is known as an informal access request.

4. Formal access application for release of information

If information cannot be accessed through any of the above ways, members of the public may submit a formal access application.

This report provides an account of the work of Yass Valley Council for the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017. During this time Council's aim was to meet the requirements of the GIPA Act with regard to Open Access Information and to establish simple processes for dealing with the informal and formal access applications.

During the reporting period the following categories of information have been published on Yass Valley Council's website:

- Policies
- Delegations
- Contracts
- Political donations
- Environmental Planning Instruments

During the reporting period the following documents relevant to the GIPA Act have been published on Yass Valley Council's website:

- Access to Information Policy
- How can I gain access to Council Information, Documents or Records?
- Delegations to Staff
- Informal Access Request Form
- Formal Access Application Form
- Publication Guide
- Disclosure Log
- Contracts Register

Council's focus for 2017-2018 is to continue to review the information held by Yass Valley Council and to work with internal stakeholders to encourage proactive publication of information and to develop procedures and guidance material.

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.

Reviews carried out by the agency	Information made publicly available by the agency
Yes	Yes

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	9
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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%	11%	11%

Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure: matters listed in Schedule 1 of Act

	Number of times consideration used*
Overriding secrecy laws	0
Cabinet information	0
Executive Council information	0
Contempt	0
Legal professional privilege	0
Excluded information	1
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0
Transport safety	0
Adoption	0
Care and protection of children	0
Ministerial code of conduct	0
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0
Privilege generally - Sch 1(5A)	0
Information provided to high risk offenders assessment committee	0

26. Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979

Following planning agreements in accordance with the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*:

Agreement Date	Planning Agreement Parties	Development Description
24 May 2017	Council and Yass Vine Church	Development of the Yass Vine Church
21 December 2016	Council and Abode Hotel (Motel), The Apartment Hotel Murrumbateman Pty Ltd	50 unit hotel, rainwater tank and associated infrastructure
28 June 2017	Council and CRK Holdings Pty Ltd	5 lot subdivision with associated water, sewer and stormwater facilities
21 December 2016	Council and Yass Industrial Park Pty Ltd	18 lot subdivision over two stages consisting of 16 industrial lots, 1 residual lot, installation of a sewer pump station, roads and associated infrastructure

28 June 2017	Council and Rossi Yass Pty Ltd	Residential subdivision
28 June 2018	Council and Bango Wind farm Pty Ltd and DWF Nominees Pty Ltd	Bango Wind Farm
16 December 2020	Council and Rye Park Renewable Energy Ptd Ltd	Rye Park Wind Farm
24 June 2022	Council and Next Level 18 Pty Ltd	101 lot subdivision, pathways and landscaping
19 May 2022	Council and Timothy Hill	2 lot subdivision
24 November 2022	Council and CVC Projects	58 lot subdivision including an open space lot and a future development lot. Widening and upgrading of Grand Junction Road and Burrai Place. Construction of new road and associated infrastructure.
13 February 2024	Council and Winjarra Pty Ltd	Quarry rehabilitation including importation of up to 38,150 cubic metres of material (VENM/ENM)

27. Public Interest Disclosures

Section 6CA *Public Interest Disclosures Act* 1994 requires Council to provide the NSW Ombudsman with information about Council's obligations in relation to public interest disclosures every six months. The following information was provided to the Ombudsman during 2022/23.

- Nil

28. Compliance with the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010

As no staff identified themselves as carers in accordance with the Act, no follow up consultation was required. Council was not required to adopt new policies or make any amendments to existing policies.

29. Disability Inclusion Act 2014

Refer Attachment B

30. Recovery and Threat Abatement Plans - Fisheries Management ACT 1994

Not applicable

Attachment A: 2023/24 Annual Financial Statements

Attachment B: Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)

