



ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

ENCLOSURES

Wednesday 20 November 2024

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Annual Report
2023-24

KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
your council. your community

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Acknowledgement of country

Kiama Municipal Council acknowledges the Wodi Wodi people on Dharawal country as the traditional custodians of the land on which our Municipality is located. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We are committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to our community.

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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

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Message from the Mayor

During this financial year, we planned the foundations of financial stability. This underpinning enabled our organisation to successfully navigate a challenging financial, political, and structural year.

My message in this Annual Report reflects on Council's blend of resilience and strategic foresight. I would also like to offer my personal gratitude to our staff, Councillors, and community for their support and understanding during these trying times.

This financial year, we planned and enacted decisive strategies to strengthen our financial position and invest in our community's opportunities. This will provide a solid basis for future Councils to capitalise on new prospects that drive better service and long-term growth.

Our strategy was based on transparency being key in maintaining trust. We have always provided our community and our stakeholders with a candid assessment of our situation, including the impact on financial performance and operations. We understand the gravity of these issues and are committed to addressing them head-on, publicly outlining our strategic measures to address these challenges. This has included cost-cutting initiatives, divestment, and improved governance.

It was well known that the imposition of a Performance Improvement Order (PIO) may well have led to administration had we not shown our willingness and ability to comply.

We methodically worked our way through our first PIO and we are doing the same with the second, varied PIO. This is being done openly and reported regularly to the satisfaction of the Office of Local Government, the Audit Office of NSW and the Minister for Local Government.



Neil Reilly, Mayor of Kiama

The most critical action taken this financial year was the divestment of the Blue Haven Bonaira aged care business. This process began in early 2022 and has involved several steps, the first of which was the reclassification of land. While the sale of the land was certainly contingent on reclassification, it was also legislatively necessary for the operational aged-care activities to continue on that land. The land reclassification was completed by mid-2023, followed by an open Tender Process. The Council went out to tender in October 2023. Although initial tenders were declined, negotiations continued with a preferred tenderer, culminating in a significant milestone reached in May 2024, where the Council endorsed the terms of the sale to Hall & Prior Aged Care.

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Message from the Mayor
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The \$95 million sale price will certainly lift a lot of the financial burden borne by the Council. It also provides surety to those residents at Blue Haven. Although this burden was not of the current Council's making, it was our work to rectify it. Council has navigated through this storm by focusing on our obligation to our community and the incredible dedication of our Councillors and staff. We emerged stronger by focusing on our core values and strategic priorities.

This year, we also endorsed our new Community Engagement Strategy. Kiama won the State 'Top Tourism Town' in 2024, we hosted the 2024 Local Government Awards, and undertook service reviews of key business units with results and recommendations being reviewed to allow for the development and implementation of plans for better outcomes and improvement.

I do not want anyone to think that everything we did as an elected Council was perfect, because it was not. Our decisions were not always unanimous and we often had to act on timely rather than perfectly complete information. The opposing voices were strong and loud. However, in our democratic way, the majority's vote prevailed, showing that the pursuit of perfection comes with a cost we cannot afford. As a Council, we determined that it is better to administer first aid now and save the patient. Others in future Councils will have the luxury of time to debate the cause and search for the best cure.

Lastly, I am, we all are, indebted to the people of the Council and the people of our community who have remained calm, decisive and pleasant throughout our struggles. We have all strived to create an environment where Kiama Municipal Council embodies a harmonious blend of community engagement, transparent governance, and sustainable development. We prioritise the voices of our diverse residents through regular consultations and inclusive forums, ensuring decisions reflect the community's needs and aspirations. We seek to create an efficiently managed Council that embraces the means to streamline services, enhance public amenities, and maintain pristine public spaces.

As this is my farewell to our community, as your Mayor, I wish Kiama Municipal Council a continued dedication to cultural enrichment, economic vitality, and social equity. I sought to provide the basis of a Council that fosters a vibrant, resilient, and thriving community for all.

Thank you all.



Neil Reilly
 Mayor of Kiama

"Our strategy was based on transparency. We have always provided our community and stakeholders with a candid assessment of our situation, including the impact on financial performance and operations."

Neil Reilly

Our Mayor and Councillors

"We all have strived to create an environment where Kiama Municipal Council embodies a harmonious blend of community engagement, and transparent governance, and sustainable development."



Mayor
Councillor Neil Reilly



Deputy Mayor
Councillor Imogen Draisma



Councillor Matt Brown



Councillor Mark Croxford



Councillor Jodi Keast



Councillor Stuart Larkins



Councillor Karen Renkema-Lang



Councillor Kathy Rice



Councillor Warren Steel

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Our Mayor and Councillors (continued)

Kiama Municipal Council is led by our Elected Council, comprised of nine Councillors.

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 (DPOP).

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

NSW's Local Government elections were held in September 2024, with Kiama Council's newly elected body sworn into office in October 2024. The Councillors shown on these pages were in office for the entire period this Annual Report covers - from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.



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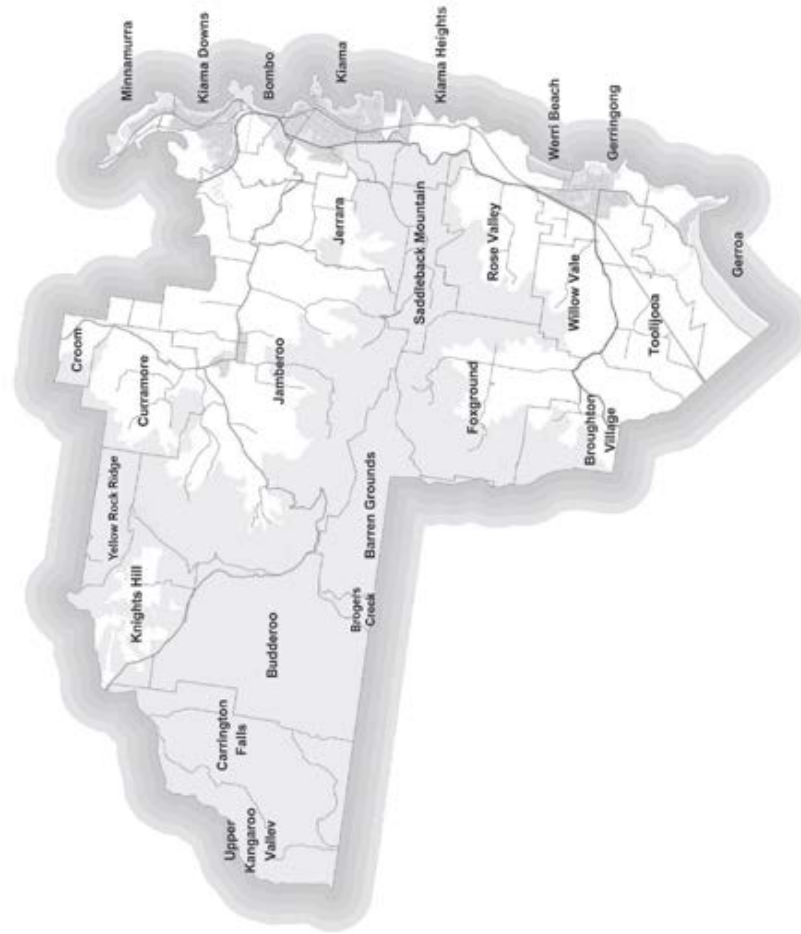
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Our municipality

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 an accessible 120km south of Sydney.

Our landscapes are diverse and 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. These are: Minnamurra, Kiama Downs, Jamberoo, Budderoo, Barren Grounds and Gerroa.

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 a harmonious, connected and resilient community.



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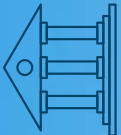
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Our municipality (continued)




1859
Council established




23,002
Estimated current population




258km²
Area



0.8%
2014-2024 population growth rate
(est population increase of 4,740
in the last 10 years)



6
Major towns and villages
(Minnamurra, Kiama Downs, Kiama,
Jamberoo, Gerringong & Gerroa)



Further information
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

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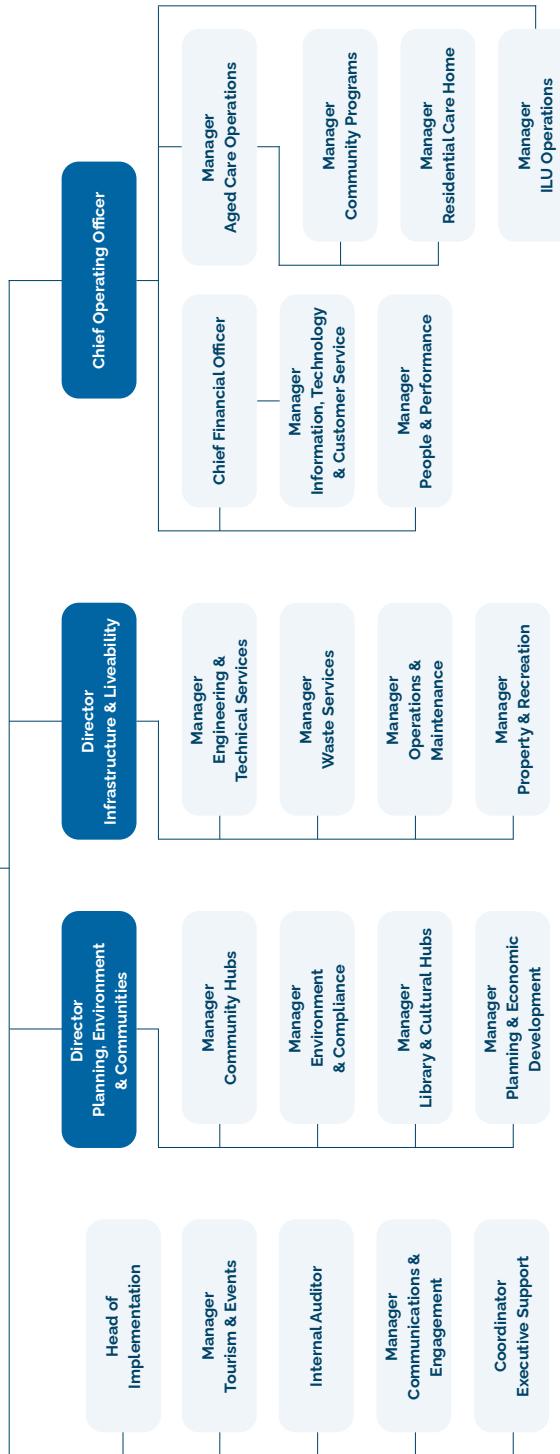
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Our organisation

Kiama Municipal Council

Chief Executive Officer
Kiama Municipal Council



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Message from the CEO

As I look back on another busy year at Kiama Council, I am both impressed and relieved to reflect on the many achievements of my staff and our organisation in 2023-24.

I am impressed because of the sheer volume of work undertaken – for example, completing not one but three sets of financial statements in a 12-month period, commencing seven service reviews and completing almost half the priority actions in our Strategic Improvement Plan.

I am relieved because we are finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel in relation to some complex and intricate pieces of work.

The year has also seen many other noteworthy achievements by Council, beginning with the very welcome re-opening of Jamberoo Mountain Road after a closure of almost 12 months of intensive capital works and ending with Kiama being awarded 'Top Tourism Town' in NSW for 2024.

We hosted numerous successful events including the regional NAIDOC Awards, a range of music, arts and cultural festivals, family events and our iconic New Years Eve Sky Show to name just a few.

Community Engagement was another focus. We got an excellent response from asking our community to help shape our rebooted Community Engagement Strategy. You'll see this engagement work continue

with regular community pop-ups as we move into 2025 and beyond.

In respect to finance and governance, 2023-24 saw Kiama Council complete the State Government-issued Performance Improvement Order (PIO) and the issuing of a varied PIO which we continue to operate under.

Our Records Team has seen an uplift in archiving and improving our record keeping practices. This is an often-overlooked area of local government that is vitally important to ensure Council functions efficiently and meets our legislative requirements.

It also bears repeating that much has been achieved in getting our finances back on track. While there is still much to do, we've managed to realise an improvement in the order of 35% in our bottom line.

The divestment process of Blue Haven Bonaira is another area that took a lot of time and effort this year and where much progress has been made. After an extensive EOI process, we announced the buyer as Hall & Prior Aged Care, with settlement scheduled for February 2025.

We are a small Council but we achieve many good things. I think it's important to take the time to stop and acknowledge that. Therefore I encourage you to read this Annual Report carefully and appreciate everything contained within.



Jane Stroud
Chief Executive Officer

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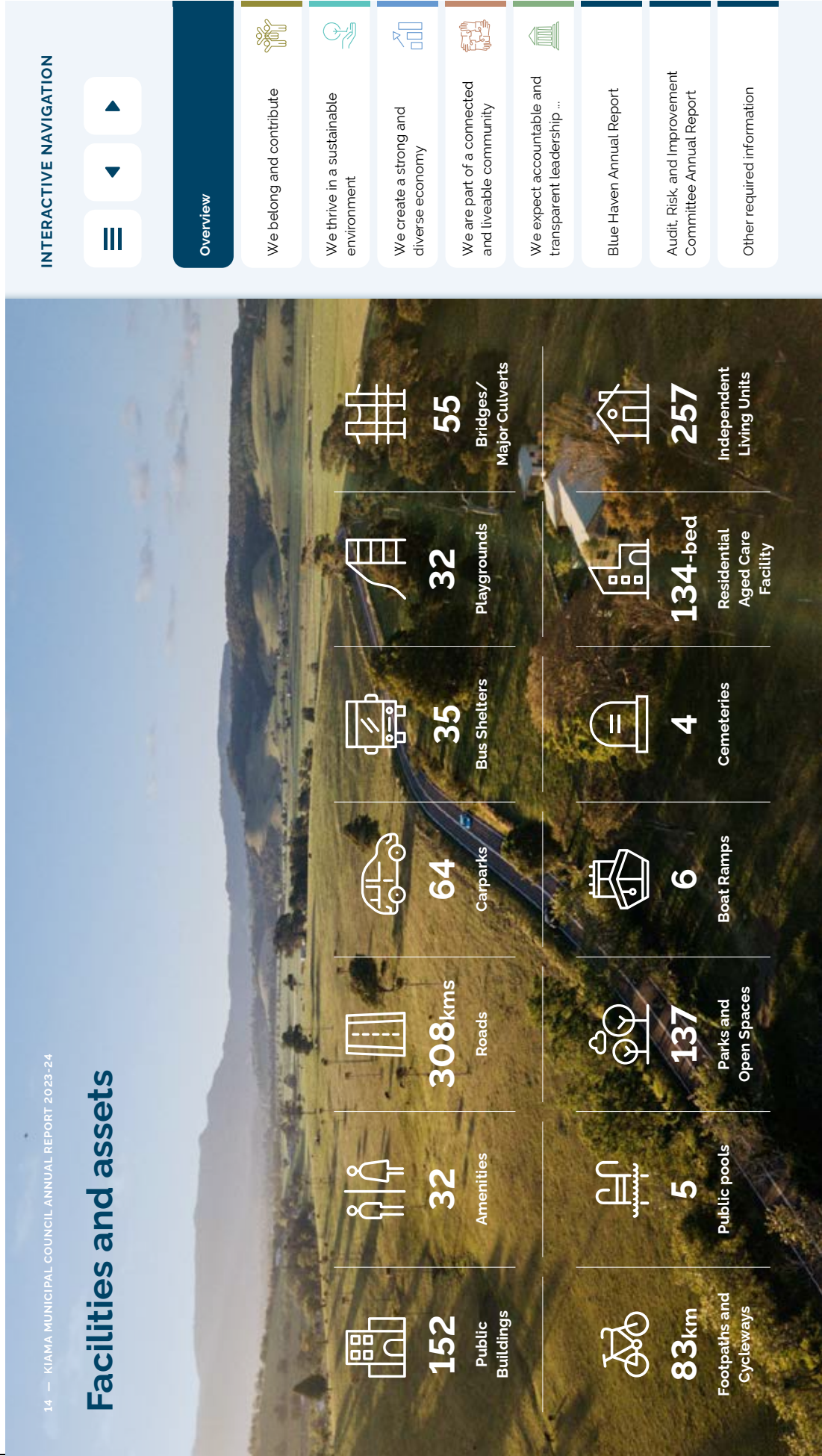
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A snapshot of Council activity

In May 2024 Council voted to proceed with the sale of **Blue Haven Bonaira** to Hall & Prior Aged Care. Contracts for the sale were executed on July 17 and settlement will occur in early February 2025.

Council published its **State of Our Economy Report** in April, providing economic context and commentary for strategic and policy decisions regarding economic development. Work has also commenced towards drafting the Employment Lands Strategy which will feed into the overarching Economic Development Strategy.

Our **Long-Term Financial Plan** was adopted by the Council on June 27, 2024.

We lifted **864,000 bins** in the year and received 1310 tonnes of green waste. We also received 390 tonnes of scrap steel of which we exported 380 tonnes for recycling.

The introduction of **monthly and quarterly financial reporting** adhered to financial reporting standards. The preparation of annual financial statements is now in accordance with statutory timeframes.

The **Akuna Street car park sale** settled in November 2023 for \$5.5 million and the **22b Irvine Street site sale** was settled the last quarter of the financial year for a total sale price of \$1,225 million. These transactions were a significant contribution to achieving Council's 2023-24 budget and continuing our journey towards financial sustainability and a balanced budget in 2026-27.

Council's new **Community Engagement Strategy** has been adopted by Council.

Our Visitor Information Centre assisted **58,944 visitors** in the 2023-24 year, up from 46,200 the year before.

Our **Environmental Health Officers** investigated 177 pollution complaints (noise, waterways, air, sewer discharge and other) and issued 4 clean-up notices.

Strategic Finance & Governance Improvement Plan was approved by Council in June 2024, documenting Council's plan for addressing the NSW Government-issued varied Performance Improvement Order.

Just over **300 Development Applications** were determined in the 2023-34 financial year.

Council endorsed **19 new policies** including:

- Complaints Handling Policy
- Unsolicited Proposals Policy
- Public Art Policy (and accompanying procedure)
- Art Collection Policy (and accompanying acquisition and deaccession procedure)
- Grants and Donations Policy
- Media Policy
- Committees Framework Policy
- Development Assessment Policy
- Asset Management Policy

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A snapshot of Council activity (continued)

827 planning certificates were issued, with an average processing time of 2.5 days. 92.6% of certificates were issued in 3 business days, exceeding performance targets.

Lawn beams expanded at Kiama Cemetery to allow for 254 additional interment locations.

434 active parking patrols conducted.

Investigated **199 complaints** about illegally parked vehicles, with 4 abandoned vehicles removed and 5 fines issued.

55 Capital Works projects or annual programs were completed (infrastructure upgrades, refurbishments and renewals including roads, buildings and drainage assets) and a further 38 projects or programs continued for completion in 2024-25. Almost **\$15.6 million spent on Capital Works** for 2023-24 financial year.

Publicly exhibited **21 plans, projects, policies or proposals** (excluding leases and licences) to gain valuable community feedback.

After four years in development the **Kiama Coastline Coastal Management Program** was adopted by Council in May 2024 and was certified by the Minister for Environment in October 2024.

6 major events delivered including returning favourites such as annual New Year's Eve Skyshow, Kiama Winter Festival, Red Hot Summer Tour and KISS Arts and the new Changing Tides Festival and Clearly Music and Arts Festival.

An average **74,500 inbound emails** received per month with an average 24,650 outbound emails sent each month.

1,065 subscribers to our monthly Kimunico e-newsletter.

Answered an average **1,539 phone calls per month** to our main Council number.

96% of calls answered within 1 minute.

Engaged with an average of **427 customers** per month in person, helping with their enquiries at our Customer Service desk.

On average there were **182 live views per Ordinary Council Meeting** (plus 172 monthly views of archived recordings from the 2023-24 council meetings)

Engaging with our **91,005 followers/subscribers** across our social media platforms.

Councillor and executive highlights 2023-2024 financial year

9	Councillor workshops held
6	Councillor training sessions
3	Civic events (Citizenship/ Mayoral Receptions)
43	Community Events (Australia Day/ ANZAC Day/ Mayor opening community events)
5	Meetings of the Finance Advisory Committee (FAC)
6	Meetings of the Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee (ARIC)
5	Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO) board meetings and monthly General Manager meetings
24	Ministerial meetings/engagement with heads of government departments
377	Council Reports
342	Council Resolutions



Recruitment

202 people started a new role of which...

144 were new employees at Kiama Council (July 2023 – June 2024) this includes internal appointed employees.

Council continues to focus on finding the right people with the right skills for our workforce, while ensuring that due diligence is undertaken to understand the current and future needs of Council before recruitment commences.

147 positions advertised externally

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Our organisational priorities

Updated PIO

In May 2024 Council received the finalised variation to its Performance Improvement Order (PIO) from the NSW Minister for Local Government, the Hon Ron Hoenig MP.

The varied PIO requires Council to take a number of actions over the next three years to improve its operating performance.

These include:

- Implementing a new Strategic Finance and Governance Improvement Plan, to include a three-year financial strategy.
- Reviewing the timing of service reviews and revenue opportunities to assist moving the surplus budgets.
- Continue to investigate and pursue opportunities from property holdings and investments.

At the time of receiving the varied PIO, CEO Jane Stroud said "This is a reasonable and well-thought-out intervention by the NSW Government. We simply need to fix our structural deficit and live within our means".

"The PIO gives a strong mandate to making difficult decisions and binds this Council and the next incoming Council after elections."

"Our latest budget and long-term financial plan are both based on the parameters of the PIO, including delivering a balanced budget."

"The next step is to provide a finalised Strategic Finance and Government Improvement Plan to Councilors for endorsement at their meeting in June."

Council is required to provide bi-monthly progress reports on the latest PIO to Councilors and the NSW Government.

Budget and financial management

Council will record an operating deficit of \$5.4 million in 2024-25 (excluding capital grants and assets sales).

This is forecast to improve to an operating deficit of \$2.7 million in 2025-26 before returning an operating surplus of \$700,000 in 2026-27.

CEO Jane Stroud said returning an operating surplus by 2026-27, without relying on asset sales or capital grants, was required by the NSW Government.

"This represents the culmination of what has been an incredibly difficult budget to put together for our organisation," Ms Stroud said.

"But what we have now is a good start towards delivering a surplus budget in two years, as required by our Performance Improvement Order."

"To start the work of getting this Council back in form is no mean feat."

"When you consider our budget deficit in 2019-20 was \$8.1 million, we've managed to realise an improvement in the order of 35% in our bottom line."

Mayor Neil Reilly thanked Ms Stroud and Council staff for their efforts to deliver the budget and other financial and planning documents required by 1 July 2024.

"I want to acknowledge the staff who have come together and identified savings and efficiencies," Cr Reilly said.

"This is a serious budget, reflecting serious consideration, evaluation and extensive consultation."

"While a tough budget, it's one I am proud to present."

The 2024-25 budget is the last to be considered and endorsed by the current Council before the local government elections in September 2024.



Our organisational priorities (continued)

'Living within our means' and the Strategic Finance and Governance Improvement Plan

"Kiama Council is no longer in a position where efficiencies and savings are the answer. Where we go next will require political decisions from our Incoming Councillors" said Jane Stroud, CEO of Kiama Council.

The most important of these will be deciding our core business as a council, following the review of our essential and non-essential services, which is already underway.

The divestment decision of Blue Haven Bonaira was a monumental one for this Council, and the size and complexity of the undertaking cannot be ignored.

"However, the sale of assets alone is not the answer. We will need to focus on what we have to deliver for our community versus what is nice to do," said Ms Stroud.

In short, as Council works towards a surplus budget in 2026-27 that does not rely on asset sales year on year, we will need to start living within our means.

Ms Stroud said the newly endorsed Strategic Finance and Governance Improvement Plan (Improvement Plan) was critical to the work to be done over the next three years.

The Improvement Plan sets out what financial sustainability looks like for Kiama Council, and eight 'levers' for achieving it by 2026-27:

- 1 Sustainable cash reserves & responsible borrowing
- 2 Optimised revenue opportunities
- 3 Well planned assets
- 4 Reviewed and efficient service landscape
- 5 Investment in transformation
- 6 Robust financial management
- 7 Prioritising advocacy and partnerships
- 8 Ensure good governance

The Improvement Plan requires monthly financial reporting and the Plan itself will be reviewed and updated every six months.

Further information

www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/Council-Plans/Strategic-Finance-Governance-Improvement-Plan

Service Reviews

Service Reviews are a normal and legislated part of Local Government operations. To this end Kiama Council has a rolling program of service reviews that are undertaken to ensure that the way we are operating is both sustainable, in keeping with best practice and the needs of our community now and into the future.

In the 2023-24 financial year we completed service reviews of Kiama Library Services and Kiama Leisure Centre.

Additionally Service Reviews of the following areas commenced and will continue in 2024-25:

- The Pavilion
- Tourism and Event Services
- Kiama Waste Services
- Kiama Coast Holiday Parks
- Open Space and Recreation Services



Plans and strategies guiding Council's actions

All Council's 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 their strategic plans for their Local Government Area. The IP&R framework reflects the relevant legislative requirements under the Local Government Act 1993. It also 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 ten-year plan forms the basis for Council to respond to with its planning and delivery. The Delivery Program is a 4-year plan that outlines the specific activities that Council will carry out during its elected term to address the strategies and outcomes outlined in the CSP. The Operational Plan (a yearly roadmap) then sets out the specific actions that will be undertaken in an annual period to achieve the Delivery Program, along with a detailed annual budget.

Alongside this key suite of plans sits a Resourcing Strategy that shows how Council will leverage available resources to implement the Delivery Program and Operational Plan (DPOP). The Resourcing Strategy is comprised of:

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

Progress Reporting: IP&R progress is reported through quarterly budget statements, half-yearly progress reports, annual reports and the 4-year State of Our Municipality Report which is provided at the second meeting of an incoming newly elected Council.

Underpinning all of this are Principles of Social Justice.

All plans are developed giving consideration to the four key areas of Community, Environment, Economy and Civic Leadership and are based on the Social Justice Principles of:

Equity – There should be fairness in decision-making, prioritising and allocation of resources particularly for those in need. Everyone should have fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community.

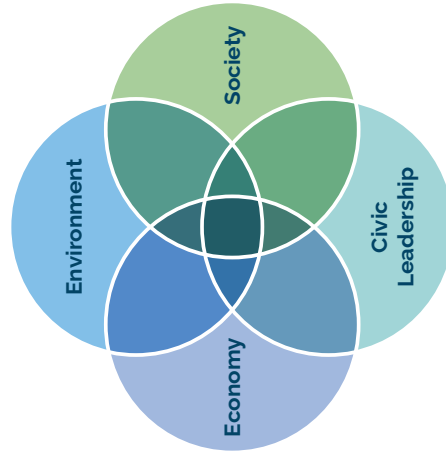
The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances.

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

Participation – Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions that effect 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.

Social Justice Principles



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About this report

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





The Councillors who served in office during the period of this Annual Report were elected in December 2021 and sworn in on 11 January 2022. The most recent Local Government Elections were held in September 2024.

We developed our current Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2022-2032 after extensive consultation with our communities and it was adopted by Council in June 2022. This is the second Annual Report under the CSP 2022-2032 and relates to the Delivery Program 2022-2026 and most recent 2023-2024 Operational Plan.

You can view and download copies of these individual plans on the Kiama Municipal Council website at www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/Community-Plans

This report follows the structure of our CSP, which has five pillars, under which sit our key objectives and delivery strategies, which underpin our reporting. The report covers the actions of Kiama Council in the 2023-24 Financial Year as set out in our 2023-2024 Operational Plan and Delivery Program 2022-2026.

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 the financial year 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 (IP&R) Guidelines.



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Meet our Executive Leadership Team 2023-24



Jane Stroud
Chief Executive Officer

The Office of the CEO's responsibilities include:

- Tourism and Events (Destination Kiama)
- Communications and Community Engagement
- Implementation



Joe Gaudiosi
Chief Operating Officer

Key responsibilities:

- Blue Haven
- CFO and Finance
- People and Performance
- Information Management
- Customer Service



Jessica Rippon
Director Planning, Environment & Communities

Key responsibilities:

- Strategic Planning and Economic Development
- Development Assessments
- Community Hubs (Community Halls, Leisure Centre, Youth Services)
- Cultural Hubs (Libraries, Galleries)
- 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 and Playgrounds
- Lifeguards

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Attend ELT and Council meetings/ briefings



Olena Tulubinska
Chief Financial Officer



Ed Paterson
Head of Implementation

Consolidated operating results 2023-24

Consolidated Operating Results (\$)

	Actual 2023-24	Budget 2023-24	Variance 2023-24
\$'000			
Income from continuing operations			
Rates and annual charges	27,686	27,920	(234)
User charges and fees	23,373	22,929	444
Other revenues	7,006	6,257	749
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	19,577	15,826	3,751
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	13,809	11,445	2,364
Interest and investment income	2,357	2,387	(30)
Other income	286	1,493	(1,207)
Net gain from the disposal of assets	-	31,218	(31,218)
Total income from continuing operations	94,094	119,475	(23,381)
Expenses from continuing operations			
Employee benefits and on-costs	40,403	37,110	(3,293)
Materials and services	41,031	35,432	(5,899)
Borrowing costs	942	387	(555)
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	11,185	14,608	3,423
Other expenses	10,013	2,272	(7,741)
Net loss from the disposal of assets	3,334	-	3,334
Total expenses from continuing operations	106,908	89,599	(17,399)
Operating results from continuing operations	(12,814)	29,966	(42,780)
Net operating results for the year attributable to Council	(12,814)	29,966	(42,780)
Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	(26,623)	18,521	(45,144)



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Pillar 1

We belong and contribute



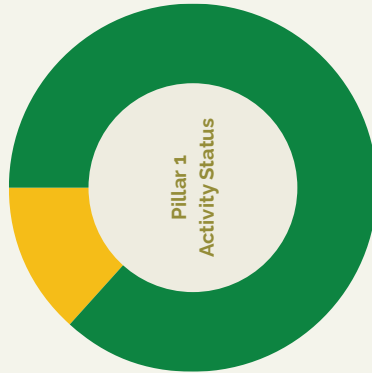
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Delivery Program and Operational Plan Activity Progress



● Complete/near complete

● Significant progress

Small Community Events – open all year round
Allocates up to \$500 to community groups for activities that provide social, cultural and sustainable outcomes for our community.

Examples include: Christmas carols, sporting competitions, photographic exhibitions and healthy lifestyle programs.

Signature Community Events – two rounds annually

Allocations for up to \$7,000 to community groups for activities that provide significant social, cultural and sustainable benefits for our community.

Examples include: the Kiama Jazz and Blues Festival and Kazador: Mini Spiegeltent Season.

Destination Events – two rounds annually

Allocations for up to \$20,000 to support major or destination events that provide sustainable tourism growth.

Examples include: Folk by the Sea, Red Hot Summer Tour, Jamberoo Car Show and Family Day, Kiama Coastal Classic, Kiama Rugby Sevens, Changing Tides Music Festival and Gerringong SurfLife Music Festival.

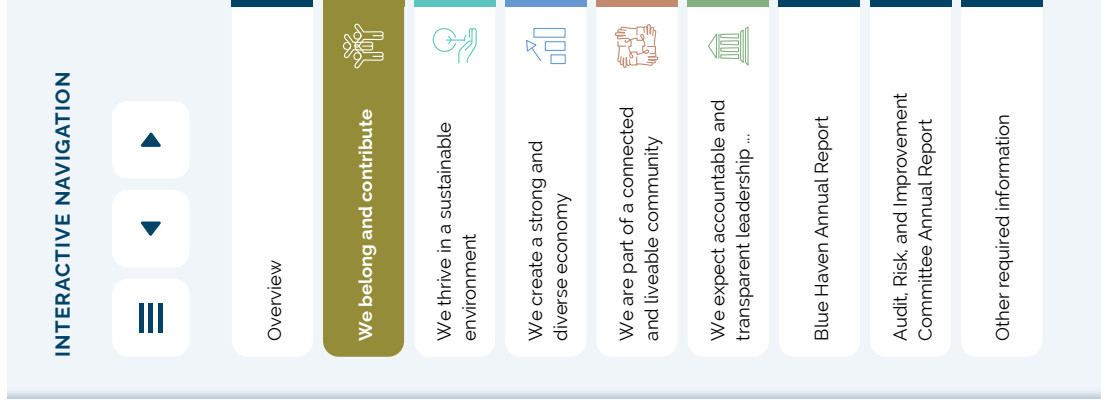
Updated Grants and Donations Program launched
In the 2023-24 Financial Year we administered a total of \$198,721 in grants and sponsorships to support social, cultural, sports and leisure activities, events and festivals in the Kiama local government area.

This year also saw us unveil an updated Grants and Donations Program that will invest more that \$200,000 annually in local events, activities and initiatives.

The Program is designed to invest our ratepayers' money effectively, efficiently and equitably to further the economic, environmental, social and cultural wellbeing of our community.

This year we have designed and implemented a new Grants and Donations Policy and Guidelines for Applicants to help those considering making an application, as well as tips for preparing their submission.

The Grants and Donations Program allocates this funding across the following streams:



Pillar 1: We belong and contribute
(continued)

Cultural Grants – two rounds annually

Allocations for up to \$2,500 to artists, community organisations or arts-based businesses for activities that provide social, cultural and sustainable outcomes for our community.

Examples include: art exhibitions, festivals, book launches and album releases.

Health and Sustainability Grants – two rounds annually

Allocations for up to \$2,000 to not-for profit community organisations or school groups for activities that provide health and environmental sustainability outcomes for local communities.

Examples include the Kiama Community Garden, Landcare Illawarra and Kiama Public School P&C Association.



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Another busy season on our beautiful beaches

Our lifeguards put in 375 patrol days, keeping an eye on more than 275,000 people who visited our local beaches between September 2023 and April 2024.

Seven Mile Beach remains the favourite destination for those taking a dip, followed by Surf Beach, with Jones Beach the quietest.

While there was an increase in beachgoers compared to the previous season, the number of rescues (104) was lower, and there were no fatalities. This continues the success of our lifeguards' proactive approach to safeguarding beach visitors through preventative actions.

Preventive actions are when lifeguards engage with a swimmer to ensure they're aware of potential dangers. The success of the patrol season is also due to the strong partnership between our Council lifeguards and volunteer surf lifesavers. Our three surf clubs once again provided crucial support, patrolling their local beaches (Jones Beach, Surf Beach and Werri Beach) on weekends and public holidays.

Our lifeguards were also able to deliver their surf education program at our local primary schools in the lead up to the patrol season. This provides our young local beach-goers with lessons on sun safety to surf survival techniques, as well as information about the inherent dangers when visiting our beaches.



Finally, an important improvement this season was equipping our lifeguards with iPads on their patrols. The iPads allowed our lifeguards to connect to a dedicated online portal to complete their daily beach, first aid and incident reports. This has been a significant improvement on the paper-based logbooks used for many years.

The online portal also provides access to real-time weather alerts, training and support resources.

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Jamberoo pool popularity rises with the temperatures

Responding to community demand, Jamberoo's pool season was opened to the public two weeks early for the 2023-24 season.

Running for a full three months between 22 November 2023 and 22 March 2024, this season saw 8,860 visitors enjoy the pool during this period, or an average of 72 visitors per day.



Illawarra Interagency continues support of community partners

Co-convening of the Illawarra Interagency in partnership with Shellharbour City Council continued to support community organisations, agencies, associations, clubs, groups, and charities. This year saw 425 members who had activities, events, projects and services promoted to 5,167 viewers via the website and blog posts. A total of 6,178 members and subscribers engaged and benefited from the collective.

SENTRAL get top marks from young people and their parents

Kiama SENTRAL Youth Services implemented a new program including a revised Youth Week program, of offerings, with total participation of 1,027 for the year. This figure comprised: Youth Centre 331, Holiday Programs 227 and SENTRAL Sounds 469 attendees.

This year's Kiama Council Youth Week activities were voted a resounding success! Parents and carers gave our SENTRAL staff a 100 per cent rating for creating a safe and welcoming space for their child, with all of them also saying they'd happily have their child attend future SENTRAL programs.

For our SENTRAL members, the best reviews however were from the young people themselves, again providing a 100 per cent rating for Council's Youth Week programs.

New Disability Inclusion Action Plan

In December 2023 Kiama Council marked International Day of People with Disability (3 December) by releasing our new Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2023 - 2027.

Council also released the accompanying Implementation Plan, which has actions for Council to undertake during the first year of the Plan.

Director Planning, Environment and Communities, Jessica Rippon, said developing and implementing the DIAP was an important part of Council's commitment to improving the liveability of Kiama for those with diverse backgrounds and abilities.

"Our Kiama Community Strategic Plan requires Council to provide spaces, services and initiatives that foster a proud, inclusive, and connected community for all," Ms Rippon said.

"The DIAP is an important tool for Council, working with our community, to make that happen."

Ms Rippon thanked the many people involved in reviewing and updating the DIAP, including residents, visitors, local organisations and Council staff.

The Implementation Plan has 32 actions across 13 priority areas.

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"These actions will be embedded into the Delivery Program and Operational Plan as part of the budget process for 2024-25," Ms Rippon said.

The actions have been split into three categories:

1. Actions that can be implemented with existing staff resources such as consultation and engagement, advocacy and representation.
2. Actions that can be programmed and budgeted within the maintenance/capital works program such as accessibility compliance upgrades at facilities.
3. Actions eligible for funding support from the NSW government such as accessible paths to beaches and accessibility ramps/lifts at pools.



"I'm pleased to be able to say that the majority of commitments under the Implementation Plan are achievable through existing Council works and staff resources."

The DIAP aligns with the Principles of Social Justice, the Kiama Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032, and is informed by the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008) and the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021-2025.

Proudly partnering with our First Nations Community

Over the past year Council has proudly partnered with our First Nations community to celebrate and commemorate the achievements and contributions of our Aboriginal community.

Our Australia Day celebrations were enhanced by a traditional Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony by Auntie Lila Stewart and Richard Scott-Moore as well as a hugely popular performance from the Djaadjawan Dancers.

Kiama Council was also honoured to be the host for the 2023 Local Government Regional NAIDOC Awards, allowing us to work with Community to celebrate the contribution and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities in Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and the Shoalhaven.



In 2024, as in previous years, Kiama Council marked national Sorry Day in May. The event was attended by community members, Councillors and Council staff and local school children. It included a flag raising outside of the Council Chambers followed by a formal ceremony at The Pavilion with a smoking ceremony, a civic address and formal apology, and story telling by local elders.

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Kiama Heritage Review adoption

Council lodged the Kiama Heritage Review Proposal with the NSW Government in September 2023. The Proposal sought to amend the Kiama Local Environment Plan to:

- Establish a Smiths Farm Heritage Conservation Area between Shoalhaven Street and Collins/Belvedere Streets from Akuna Street through to Seaview Street.
- Establish a Kiama Town Centre Heritage Conservation Area taking in sections of Manning Street, Terralong Street and Collins Street.
- Add a range of properties as heritage items, including the Blowhole Tennis Courts and Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church.

Council conducted extensive community consultation to develop the proposal, with the draft proposal placed on public exhibition earlier in 2023.

Pleasingly, 2024 saw the proposal adopted and placed in the NSW Government Gazette, creating two new Heritage Conservation Areas in Kiama Town Centre as well as a number of additional heritage items into the Local Environmental Plan.

Developing Kiamas Cultural Plan

Kiama Council is committed to cultivating creativity across our region. We believe that investing in the cultural arts yields significant returns for our community – economically, socially, and by enhancing health and wellbeing.

As we continue to develop our Cultural Plan 2025-29, we are engaging with community to share their insights, their dreams and their experiences to help us craft a plan that reflects their creative aspirations and provides something for everyone in our community.



Food safety

Council's Environmental Health Officers have put in an outstanding effort to complete all required food shop inspections during the 2023-24 financial year. This is a significant achievement as this has not been achieved since pre-pandemic times due to closures caused by COVID and staff shortages.

In addition to this, our Environmental Health Officers have spent an extensive amount of time offering education and advice to food shops, temporary food stalls and mobile food vendors to ensure that any person selling food in the Municipality is compliant under the relevant legislative requirements.

We have also continued to facilitate access to training through our website including our free online "I'm Alert – Food Safety Training course" to keep food handling practices up-to-date and links to the new "Food Standard 3.2.2A – Food Safety Management Tools" and the Food Authority "Food Handlers Basics training".

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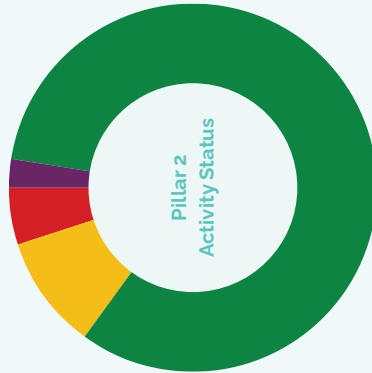
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Pillar 2: We thrive in a sustainable environment

Delivery Program and Operational Plan Activity Progress



Community battery for Kiama Downs

Endeavour Energy with Kiama Council launched its second community battery on the NSW South Coast on 24 May 2024, encouraging 100 residents to register and save on their household electricity costs.

The Kiama Community battery is the third and largest community battery on the Endeavour Energy network, offering 445 kWh of storage capacity, and will enable the residents of Kiama Downs to store and share solar, while supporting all customers by keeping a downward pressure on electricity prices.

It features the artwork of Wulbunga Woman, Jodie Stewart which captures the striking geography of the Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven regions.

The Community battery is part of a program of more than 50 batteries currently being rolled out as Endeavour Energy continues to connect more renewables to the grid. The Mayor of Kiama, Neil Reilly welcomed the battery.

"We're excited to see our local community battery – the largest in the Endeavour Energy network so far – in operation."

"Our community expects their Council to strive for zero emissions, as per our Emissions Reduction Strategy, and facilitating a community battery is in line with our goals and targets," said Mayor Reilly.



Blue Angle Creek measures completed

In May 2024, works to stabilise the bank and control erosion at Blue Angle Creek were completed.

Natural bank erosion was being exacerbated by informal bank access for recreation activities, uncontrolled storm-water discharge and a lack of riparian vegetation. This active bank erosion was in turn affecting estuary health through increased downstream sedimentation contributing to localised decline in water quality.

The erosion was also threatening the accommodation infrastructure at Council's popular Seven Mile Beach Holiday Park, as well as recreational use of the estuary.

Council undertook creek bank stabilisation and erosion control measures in two locations.

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The canoe launch area has been formalised, with the associated stormwater infrastructure repaired. Natural reed and mangrove growth is also being encouraged and supplemented by plantings. The NSW Government through its Coastal and Estuary Management Program have provided financial and technical support for this project.

National Tree Day 2023

National Tree Day 2023 saw Kiama Council partner with our local Landcare groups and Kiama High School Year 7 students to plant approximately 700 trees across three sites which were selected and prepared by our Environmental Sustainability staff. These plants will help regenerate the Seven Mile Beach, Bombo Headland and Spring Creek areas and provide habitat for local wildlife.



Draft DCP Chapter 12.11 South Kiama Urban Release Area

This year in addition to an amendment to the Development Control Plan (DCP) to incorporate the agritourism guidelines developed by the Department of Planning being finalised, we prepared the Draft DCP for the Kiama South Urban Release Area for exhibition.

The South Kiama site includes 40ha of rural land west of the Princes Highway between Saddleback Mountain Road to south of Weir Street South Kiama. The site was rezoned by the NSW Government in 2022 to allow for approximately 450 dwellings.

The Draft DCP Chapter 12.11 is a proposed amendment to the Kiama DCP that provides the overarching planning objectives and development controls for the South Kiama Urban Release Area. Exhibition of the new Draft DCP Chapter 12.11 closed mid-July 2024.

Growth and Housing Strategy

Council's Growth and Housing Strategy has been developed after significant community consultation and planning during FY 2023-24, and was on public exhibition between August and September 2024 for community comment and conversation.

The Strategy clearly articulates where, how and why growth will occur within our Municipality and how to carefully and appropriately manage this growth.

Director Planning, Environment and Communities Jessica Rippon said that this pivotal piece of work for Kiama Council, the NSW Government and our community would be integral in shaping the future of our Municipality.

"Developing this Strategy is the key priority for my planning team this year, and this starts with an intelligent and robust conversation with our residents, businesses, community and sporting groups about growth," Ms Rippon said.

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Pillar 2: We thrive in a sustainable environment (continued)

Kiama Council's Strategic Planning Team started with an analysis of our area's demographic background, as well as future trends and demands.

An Urban Economist also prepared a housing supply feasibility analysis.

Ms Rippon said the Growth and Housing Strategy, which had its origins in affordable housing solutions, was an idea whose time had come.

"Anyone reading or watching the news knows our nation is facing a housing crisis."

"The Australian and NSW Government have begun housing reforms with ambitious targets. Kiama Council, and our community, will be required to play a part."

"We need to lead this process, rather than having development forced upon us."

Ms Rippon said the Growth and Housing Strategy would set out a clear plan to support the delivery of housing in our municipality and our region over the next 20 years.

It will identify if new housing opportunities are required, and if so, where, and how these opportunities can be supplied.

It will also promote efficient use of land and infrastructure by seeking to align housing growth with supporting infrastructure and social services, such as schools, health facilities, water, sewerage and public transport.

"We need to be proactive in providing a strategy that is as much about creating new communities and good planning outcomes."

"This means using place-based planning to provide great areas in which to live, including walkable neighbourhoods that support active and healthy lifestyles, as well as creating and renewing public spaces."

Waste Services

In the last year, the waste collection team lifted approximately 864,000 bins across all three waste streams – Landfill, Recycling, Food and Organics (FOGO). FOGO bins generated the highest tonnages, which is in line with expectations. Council continues to support efficient collection and processing of FOGO waste as quality compost, launching the "Kiama – you're a good sort" campaign with recent upgrades to our website to communicate changes to what can and cannot go into FOGO bins from 1 August 2024.



Waste Services also ran educational workshops and events aimed at reducing waste to landfill. These events included the Household Bulky Waste events held in September and March.

Additionally, five home composting workshops were run, the fabric swap event, the clothes swapping party, facilitation of Kiama High School's careers day, Second-hand Saturday and the Household Chemical Cleanout.

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Bushfire mapping

As part of our Kiama Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), the community strongly identified the need to conserve areas of environmental significance. This is captured by Theme 4 of the LSPS: Mitigate and adapt to climate change and protect our environment.

There are 3 Planning Priorities within Theme 4.

One of these is to plan for and adapt to the impacts of natural hazards and the changing climate.

To do this, one of the actions identified was to complete a municipal-wide vegetation study to ensure our biodiversity corridor and bushfire mapping is accurate.

Following an open tender process, Council appointed Blossis Pty. Ltd. to carry out this vegetation study. The associated Bush Fire Prone Land map was prepared by BlackAsh Bushfire Consulting.

This year Council have accepted and reviewed the vegetation study and the contemporary Bushfire Mapping was published in accordance with NSW Rural Fire Service's requirements.

Successful grant applications to allow floodplain study for Jamberoo and Spring Creek in 2024-25

Council has to date completed a number of flood related studies meeting the NSW Government's Floodplain Risk Management requirements. Each study focuses on a particular catchment area in the municipality.

They define the behaviour of flooding in the catchment including:

- flood levels
- velocities
- hydraulic categories
- provisional hazard categories

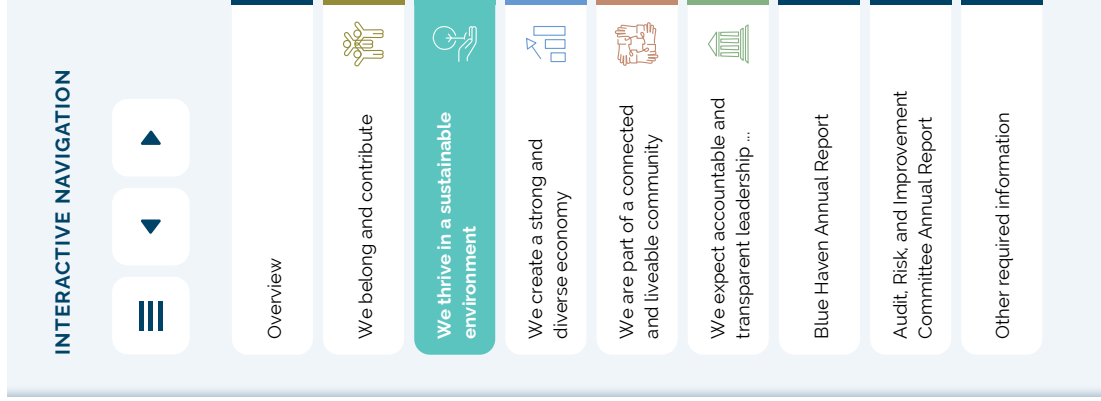
The studies also identify flood-prone land in the event of storm events.


To date the following have been conducted:

- Gerringong-Jamberoo Flood Study
- Ooaree Creek/Werri Lagoon Catchment Flood Study
- Spring Creek Catchment Flood Study
- Surf Beach catchment Floodplain Risk Management study and plan
- Surf Beach catchment mapping series
- Werri Beach Holiday Park – Flood Mitigation Investigation

To allow us to be proactive in this area, Council has been successful in a grant funding application made to undertake a Floodplain Risk Management Strategy & Plans for Jamberoo and the Spring Creek (Kiama) catchments.

These projects are programmed to commence in the 2024-25 period.





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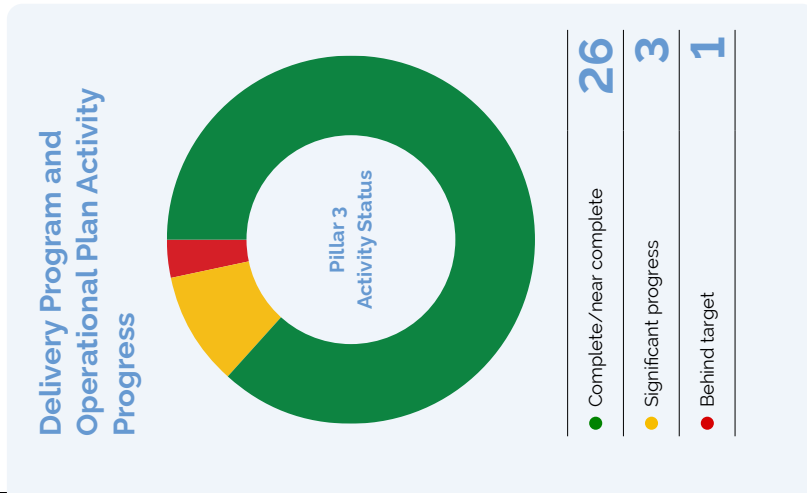
Pillar 3

We create a strong and diverse economy

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Pillar 3: We create a strong and diverse economy



Events

This year we once again saw Council supporting successful annual events such as Kiama Sevens rugby, Kiama Folk Festival and SurfLife and as well as providing support for new events such as DISTILLED, Changing Tides Festival and Clearly Music Festival. This financial and in-kind support is in addition to the concierge style support our Event Lead provides to assist event organisers through requirements related to development applications, licence application and bookings.

In total the Destination Event Funding Program enabled Council to support 23 local events across three grant rounds in 2023-24, with grants totalling \$122,600.

The Tourism and Events team planned and implemented a very successful 2023 Kiama Winter Festival whereby an ice rink was set up on Black Beach for a week, local providers were supported with the Eat Like a Local event and the team brought together exciting new activations for Council's annual New Year's Eve Skyshow in 2023.



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Kiama wins Top Tourism Town

Our beautiful home was recognised this year, winning the State 'Top Tourism Town' for 2024 after a great submission and campaign by Destination Kiama and our Tourism and Events Team.

The annual 2024 Kiama Visitor Guide was produced in December 2023, 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, the Tourism and Events team launched the 'Get Creative on the Kiama Coast' campaign and the 'Coast In, Chill Out' winter campaign, both focusing on visitor dispersal throughout our region and travel out of peak season.

Our major campaigns for the 2023-24 year have seen pleasing results with annual tourism figures (as at March 2024) up \$52 million to \$330 million.



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Free barista training program

This year CENTRAL partnered with Kiama Community College to offer young people living in Kiama free Barista Training, as a way not only to learn how to make a great coffee but also as a foot in the door to Kiama's vibrant café industry. Young people completing the course received a certificate of completion to add to their resume.

CENTRAL staff also liaised with the local business community to create a pipeline from training to employment.

Working with our future workforce

Council's Economic Development staff successfully delivered the Careers at Council program, which saw 80 students from Kiama High School experience work in different functional areas within council with students gaining a better idea of the wide range of work done by Council staff.

Students were presented with a range of scenarios faced by staff every day, from food safety inspections, identifying biohazards and avoiding garbage bin disasters to planning a community festival and housing subdivisions.

2023-24 also saw staff facilitating discussions between NSW Department of Education's head teacher careers and Council's Human Resources team to update our work experience program.

State of Our Economy

This year Council has finalised and published its State of Our Economy Report, providing the necessary economic context and commentary for strategic and policy decisions regarding economic development.

Council has also commenced the preparation of the Employment Lands Strategy. This Strategy will be used in conjunction with the recently drafted and exhibited Growth and Housing Strategy to strategically guide future development in the municipality and feed into the overarching Economic Development Strategy.

Further information

www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Business/Statistics-and-reports/Economic-strategy



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Pillar 4

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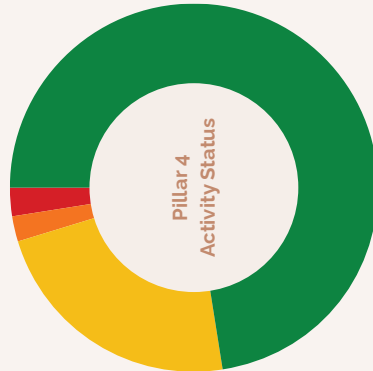
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Delivery Program and Operational Plan Activity Progress



Agritourism Chapter added to Development Control Plan

During the year, an Agritourism Development Control Plan (DCP) chapter was finalised and adopted by Council and is now included as Chapter 13 in the DCP. This addition contains general provisions that apply to development for roadside stalls, farm experience premises, farm gate premises and farm stay accommodation.

Cycleway upgrades

In September 2021, the NSW State Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Paul Toole announced a \$3.3 million investment under the Active Transport Fund built on the NSW Government's Future Transport 2056 vision to double the number of commuting walkers and cyclists across the region.

The funds were allocated for the completion of the 7-kilometre Jamberoo Valley Cycleway, linking Jamberoo with the rest of the Kiama cycleway network. Money was also assigned for the Omega Shared Path in Gerringong, to extend between Omega Flat and Fern Street.

In September 2023, Council resolved to decline any tenders and cancel the proposed works on the Omega Shared Path in Gerringong as the project could not be delivered within budget. The grant with Transport for NSW was rescinded for the unexpended portion of the funding.



In October 2023, footpaths linking Mimmamura Bike Skills Track to local roads were completed.

Council is currently working with a design consultant on the Jamberoo Valley Cycleway extension on the detail design phase.

Development Assessment Policy

In response to feedback and legislative requirements, Council has been developing and implementing a Planning Reform Program Local Government Area. An action of this Planning Reform Program is to prepare and adopt a Development Assessment Policy.

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The objectives of the policy are to:

- Establish an efficient and effective assessment framework to ensure Council retains its planning functions.
- Set clear standards and expectations for information required to lodge Development Applications.
- Set clear expectations for when and how Council will request additional information from applicants.
- Set clear standards and expectations for how and when Council will communicate with applicants and/or owners of Development Applications.
- Set a clear relationship between other policies of Council, including the Kiama Community Participation Plan 2019.
- Outline how Council will manage conflicts of interests when assessing Development Applications.
- Establish a delegation hierarchy to enable efficient determinations of Development Applications.

This year the Draft Development Assessment Policy was reported to Council and placed on public exhibition. It is envisaged that this will be reported back to Council for adoption early in the next financial year.

In addition, requests for Additional Information, Assessment Reports, Notices of Determination and Stamped Plans are now publicly available on Council's DA Tracker. This year work also continued on the transition to the Department of Planning Notice of Determination Template and Conditions as required by legislation.

Road Safety Action Plan funding secured

Council's annual Road Safety Action Plan was approved for funding by Transport NSW in the first quarter of the 2023-24 financial year.

This funding has enabled Council to complete construction of the Crooked River Road urban gateway treatment project as well as a number of road safety activities including:

Learner Log Book Run – this activity provides learner drivers and their supervisors the opportunity to participate in a planned drive that includes a range of driving experiences such as a random breath test (RBT) in a non-threatening environment, a speed check and a driver reviver to address how to deal with fatigue.

Graduated Licensing Scheme Parent Workshops – these workshops support and help prepare parents and supervising drivers for their role in helping make learner drivers safer drivers. The course covers topics including: How to plan road driving sessions; How to use the Learner Driver Log Book and The importance of giving the learner constructive feedback.



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Hindmarsh Park upgrade

Through joint funding from NSW Government grants Kiama Council was able to invest \$4.5 million to upgrade Hindmarsh Park, including new landscaping and playground.

- The project was done in three stages, to minimise disruption for locals and visitors using the park.
- The Collins Street footpath upgrade.
- The Orry Kelly Stage access improvements/new shade structure.
- The installation of the new play equipment, pathways and gardens.

Construction of the new play space within Hindmarsh Park was completed in September 2024. The park's official opening was held in October.

Despite the setbacks of wet weather, contractors Growth Civil Landscapes stayed on schedule. The most prominent of the new features are the towers supporting the main slide, rope climbs, bridges and inclusive play elements. Also noticeable are the new set of swings with the shade canopy. Less obvious are the springers, trampoline and carousel, which are also in place.

If you're walking along Terralong St you'll also notice the new street furniture, i.e. picnic tables and chairs, are all in place. On the Shoathaven St side, the bike lockers and bike repair station are in place next to the bus stop.

The park upgrade has delivered significant improvements to accessibility, seating and shade facilities in Kiama. Council thanks local members of parliament and councillors for their continued support for this upgrade along with the NSW Government's Public Spaces Legacy, Stronger Country Communities and Active Transport Programs for their significant support for this important community project.



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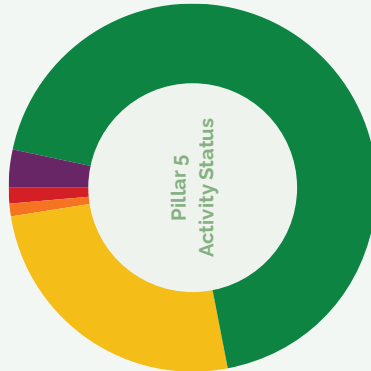
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Delivery Program and Operational Plan Activity Progress



Community Engagement Strategy launched

Kiama Council was excited to announce the adoption of its Community Engagement Strategy 2024-28 in June 2024.

Developed in consultation with the community and Council staff, this strategy provides a structured framework for engaging residents on crucial issues, projects, and policies impacting our community, focusing on transparency and inclusivity.

Kiama Mayor Neil Reilly said: "Our revised and updated Community Engagement Strategy draws on insights gathered from engagement activities conducted in early 2024. This included community pop-ups across the Municipality, meetings with various committees and stakeholder groups, an online survey, and public exhibition of the Draft Strategy."

"Council staff engaged with more than 3,000 locals and stakeholders to understand their preferences for engaging with Council, as well as setting out how Council will engage with the community."

Key action areas of the Strategy include:

- building staff capacity.
- meeting community where they are.
- clear and transparent communication.
- collaborating with youth and other under-represented groups.

- closing the loop through timely follow-ups.
- letting people know how their input has affected decision making and Council outcomes.

"We are committed to empowering residents to have a say in decisions that affect them," said Claire Doble, Manager of Communications and Engagement.

"By focusing on these areas, Council aims to strengthen how it engages with the community, cultivate trust and ensure decisions reflect the diversity of voices of our community."

Mayor Reilly said: "By adopting this strategy, Council has reaffirmed its dedication to reaching a vibrant diversity of voices. We are committed to listening, learning, and working together for better and more sustainable outcomes for our community."



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Council meets reporting requirements in 2023-24

Each year Council has a number of reporting requirements that it must undertake and reporting timelines it must adhere to. In 2023-24 Council has undertaken the following in regards to our reporting.

- The implementation of monthly and quarterly financial reporting, which adheres to financial reporting standards.
- The preparation of annual financial statements conducted in accordance with statutory timeframes.
- The 2023-24 Annual Reporting was completed in October 2023.
- Half yearly reporting on Delivery Program completed in April and September.
- The 2024-25 Delivery Program and Operational Plan was reviewed and endorsed by council in June 2024.

TechOne budget software improves efficiency

This year saw a new budgeting software module in Council's enterprise management platform TechOne rolled out and launched across Council. Finance staff ran comprehensive training sessions for all impacted staff. The result is that both internal and external monthly and quarterly financial reports can be delivered on time and with confidence.

Records and Information Management

The Records & Information Management (RIM) Team have improved procedures for managing Council's legacy paper records. This includes assessing retention periods, authorising destruction and digitisation of records.

Over 20 metres of paper records that were digitised or due for destruction, have been assessed and destroyed using accountable processes that accord with the NSW State Records Act

Additionally the team have overseen the training of 76 staff members over the past year in using Council's Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS). The RIM Team is reviewing the content of this training to improve its delivery and have incorporated new content to help staff understand the importance of record keeping at Council.

The RIM Team collaborated successfully with Infrastructure and Liveability team members to deliver an improved record keeping system for engineering projects. The teams ensured that the project records could be easily captured, identified and linked to funding sources.

Changes to the NSW State Records Act took effect over the period 31 December 2022 - 1 January 2024. One of the major changes involved a reduction in the open access period from 30 to 20 years. Access



Directions for Council records have been reviewed to address this change. Council also improved its score in the annual self-assessment of records and information management maturity levels, required by State Records NSW.

Property divestments

In addition to the divestment of Blue Haven Bonaira, previously covered in this report, two additional properties were also identified as surplus to Council's needs.

After a successful marketing campaign, a property in Irvine Street, Kiama was sold at auction for over the reserve price resulting in a successful outcome for Council.

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Council also ran a positive marketing campaign prior to the auction of a property in South Kiama Drive, Kiama, which resulted in a successful outcome for Council when the property sold after auction at a set price.

A review of the Council Land Register was also completed and a number of minor inconsistencies in land descriptions and land attributes have been identified for correction in early 2024-25.

The initial assessment of the landholdings has been completed and has informed the divestment program for the 2024-25 Operational Plan. Finalising the remainder of the review was delayed by project issues on a number of divestment projects in the final quarter and is being finalised in early 2024-25.

Asset Management Policy

2023-24 saw the completion of road asset valuation and conditions assessments. The completion of this body of work has informed the development of the Capital Works program for 2024-25 and will also support the drafting of a longer term works program. Preparation also commenced for the engagement of a consultant for the condition assessment and valuation of stormwater assets which will be the focus of works to be undertaken in 2024-25.

Implementation Team

Kiama Council's Implementation Team was formed in May 2024 to ensure that Council has staff with time, resources and skills that will be dedicated to managing and undertaking much of the work we are tasked with around the Performance Improvement Order (PIO). The Implementation Team priorities going forward are:

- Preparing and monitoring the implementation of the 'Strategic Finance and Governance Strategy'.
- Coordinating the balanced budget.
- Coordinating and tracking of service reviews to ensure organisational consistency.
- Delivery of Service Review and Business plan training for staff.
- Coordinating and tracking of business plans for all departments, including the preparation of KPIs for teams for inclusion in future Delivery Programs and Operational Plans.
- Preparation of business cases and masterplans for key catalysts sites, including the Administration Centre, Works and Waste Depots, Havilah Place etc.
- Coordinating the implementation of the recommendations of the Hopwood Report Stage 2.
- Consolidating all legal work, including NCAT, Code of Conduct requests and the preparation and curation of a Kiama Council legal library.
- Working with the PIO Oversight Committee.

Service Reviews

The Service Review of the **Kiama Leisure Centre** was completed in February 2024. This review has been reported to Council and to other Committees of Council for noting and endorsement. The Service Review report recommended development of a strategy, long term asset renewal and maintenance program, review of service and program offerings, management model and operational structure. These recommendations will guide and inform Council decisions and directions over the next few years to ensure services are efficient, effective and sustainable. An implementation plan has been developed and a draft strategy is also in place to enable the recommendations of the review to be actioned.



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In April 2024 the Service Review of **Kiama Library** was reported to Council for noting and endorsement. The review was conducted by an independent consultant engaged by the State Library, at no cost to Kiama Council. The review found that:

- Council is meeting industry benchmarks for library services.
- 2022-23 data shows that 50.97% of the community are library members.
- This is an increase of 8% on the prior year, which is a very strong result compared to other NSW public libraries.
- Circulation per capita of 5.16 indicates members are active borrowers.
- While programs run at the libraries are popular, there are about 50% of the community who are not members/do not use the library so it may be helpful to engage with these people to find out which programs/collections/services may bring them into the libraries.
- There remain risks around asset planning and maintenance for library facilities and the need to develop a strategy to ensure adequate planning occurs for future years.

Council resolved at their April meeting to:

1. Note the generally positive findings of the State Library Assessment Visit and service review of the Kiama and Gerringong Library.
2. Develop a Library Strategy which supports and encourages increased membership and usage of the facilities.
3. Continue to explore revenue opportunities, including the hiring of spaces and mixed uses within the library facilities.

The draft **Waste Services and Operations** Service Review report was received and is currently the subject of internal review to verify the data inputs (historical data and financial reporting from prior to the implementation of some TechOne financial reporting modules) and interpretations to confirm the draft recommendations. This review is programmed for completion in early 2024-25.

Following a period of data gathering an initial **Holiday Parks** Service Review was undertaken. Following the adoption of a revised framework for undertaking the service reviews the initial results will be used to undertake a large scope of assessment in early 2024-25.



A Service Review of **The Pavilion** has commenced with an expected completion time of late June 2024. A variation to the initial scope was requested and will be completed and reported on in quarter two 2024-25.

The **Open Spaces and Recreation** Service Review has been undertaken this year. The review report is being drafted and will be presented to management and Council in the first half of the 2024-25 financial year.

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Message from our COO

The past year at Blue Haven has been one of significant transition, and I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our residents, staff, and the community for your unwavering support during this time.

A major highlight was Blue Haven Bonaira Aged Care Home's outstanding performance in the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACOSC) audit in January. Our facility met all 42 criteria of the 8 Accreditation Standards, reflecting our ongoing commitment to excellence in aged care. This achievement underscores the hard work and dedication of our entire team, who have continuously strived to improve and maintain the highest standards of care. The Bonaira Home Care team are preparing for their upcoming accreditation visit.

This year also brought a strategic decision regarding Blue Haven Bonaira's future. Kiama Municipal Council has entered a contract with Hall & Prior Aged Care for the sale of Blue Haven Bonaira, with settlement set in early 2025. This follows a long process that has been difficult and concerning for residents, clients and staff. Hall & Prior are a large leading aged care provider and the sale ensures that our staff and residents will continue to receive the highest standard of support, care and services. Hall & Prior's experienced team is well placed to deal with the ever increasing aged care reform agenda, and the complex regulatory environment. The sale also assists Council's longer term governance and financial sustainability. The

Community Transport service will also transition to a new provider but this process has not yet concluded.

As we prepare for this transition, I want to acknowledge the incredible contributions of our staff. We are constantly reminded of their dedication by residents who recently shared their gratitude during Aged Care Employee Day. Residents praised our team's helpfulness, professionalism, and the personalised approach.

Bonaira Independent Living Unit (ILU) and aged care home residents have also endured significant building rectification works and I thank them for their patience and understanding with the disruptions and concerns this has caused.

Terralong and Bonaira ILUs have also experienced changes in management with the extended leave and then retirement of the longstanding Manager. This too has been difficult for all residents and I thank the resident committees in particular at both villages for their assistance and understanding.

Our thanks extend to everyone at Blue Haven – our nurses, care staff and support workers, cooks, dietitians, caterers, cleaners, administration staff, maintenance teams, and our 100+ volunteers. Your passion and commitment make a difference every day.

As we move forward, we remain committed to transparent communication with all stakeholders. We will continue to provide updates as we approach the settlement date for Bonaira and beyond, ensuring a smooth transition for everyone involved.



Thank you for your support of Kiama Council and Blue Haven. Together, and with the introduction of Hall & Prior, we will ensure that the community continues to receive quality aged care and retirement village services.

Joe Gaudiosi
Chief Operating Officer, Kiama Municipal Council
Blue Haven Advisory Committee member (non-voting)

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Residential Aged Care Facility

Blue Haven's Residential Aged Care home has continued to prioritise the quality of care and overall experience for our residents throughout 2023-2024. Our commitment to ensuring compliance with aged care standards has been unwavering. In January 2024, we successfully overturned the final seven standards, making the home fully compliant with the aged care standards. Our next accreditation is scheduled for April 2025, marking the start of our three-year accreditation cycle under the new guidelines, which will officially commence on July 1, 2025.

This year, we have made significant strides in enhancing our residents' nutrition and hydration experience. Our dietician has conducted comprehensive assessments, leading to improvements in the quality and variety of our meals. In collaboration with our residents, we are excited to unveil a new menu in July 2024, designed to elevate the dining experience. Staff have been actively trained on the new standards, with a particular focus on person-centred care in the dining room environment.

The home has welcomed 48 new residents and bid farewell to 27, bringing us close to full capacity once again. During the past six months, we have concentrated on ensuring new residents feel safe, supported, and connected to both the community within Blue Haven and beyond. As part of this effort, we are establishing a Quality Care Advisory Body to further enhance our services.

Our Clinical Governance Team has taken an active role in mentoring and supporting our team, resulting in improvements across key clinical indicators. In line with government care minute requirements, we have also increased our registered staff numbers and transitioned to a more stable roster, with 85% of our staff now being permanent. This allows us to deliver consistent, high-quality care while deepening relationships between staff and residents, ensuring a more personalised and familiar caregiving environment.

The Lifestyle Team has been particularly focused on enriching our residents' daily lives. They have introduced a specialised program for our Memory Support units, launched in September, and have expanded one-on-one activities for those who prefer more intimate, personalised engagements. Our dedicated team of 17 volunteers has been instrumental in providing companionship and organising activities, from group events to one-on-one sessions. Their involvement has had a profoundly positive impact on our residents.

We take great pride in fostering connections between our residents and the wider community. Residents from our Terralong Village and Bonaira Independent Living Units (ILUs) regularly visit, and many have taken up volunteering roles, helping new residents maintain existing friendships while fostering new ones.



A highlight of the year was our Spring Ball, an event that transported residents back to a time of elegant music and dance. The preparation of attire, the transformation of Matternson Hall, and the vibrant atmosphere, complete with live entertainment, brought joy to all in attendance. The feedback from residents, staff, families, and the local community has reaffirmed the importance of such events in creating cherished memories for our residents.

In the coming months, we will continue to build on these successes, ensuring our residents receive the highest level of care and continue to feel a strong sense of belonging and connection.

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Independent Living Units (ILUs)

Annual meetings

Blue Haven continues to hold annual management meetings with residents of both Terralong and Bonaira villages, supplemented by quarterly resident forums. These meetings provide a vital platform for residents to engage with management, discuss important issues, and offer feedback and suggestions for improvements. This October, we will expand the format to include more interactive sessions, allowing for greater resident participation, with a morning tea with residents to touch base about any questions or concerns residents have.

Management changes

This year has seen changes to management with the extended leave and then retirement of the longstanding Manager. Caretaker departures have also occurred across both Villages. This has caused difficulties and we thank both Villages for their patience during these times. We have also introduced a greater presence from Council's Infrastructure Team to assist not only as an interim measure but also to provide assistance and guidance with asset management and facilities maintenance longer term. We have very recently been able to employ a new Manager and look forward to their contribution.

Occupancy

Occupancy levels have remained robust throughout the year, reflecting the ongoing demand for quality independent living options at Blue Haven:

- **Terralong:** 90% (average).
- **Bonaira:** 88% (average).

These strong occupancy rates demonstrate the appeal of our villages and the effectiveness of our efforts to maintain high standards of living and care.

Activities

Both Terralong and Bonaira villages continue to thrive with a diverse range of resident-led activities that foster community engagement and well-being.

- **Terralong Village:** hosts more than 25 regular weekly activities, including exercise classes, craft groups, and social clubs, ensuring there is something for everyone.
- **Bonaira Village:** expanded its activities schedule to 15 regular events each week, featuring new programs such as gardening workshops, technology tutorials, and cultural outings, which have been warmly received by residents.



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Maintenance

This year saw the completion of several essential maintenance projects across both villages as part of our comprehensive capital maintenance and repair program. The focus remained on ensuring a safe, comfortable, and modern living environment for all residents. Key maintenance activities included:

- **Lifts:** regular servicing to enhance safety and reliability.
- **Painted surfaces:** resident units are freshly painted to maintain a clean, inviting environment.
- **Hot water systems and air conditioning units:** upgraded to more energy-efficient models, reducing operational costs and environmental impact.
- **Doors and windows:** inspections and repairs to enhance security and insulation.
- **Plant and equipment:** routine maintenance to ensure optimal performance.
- **Roofs and gutters:** currently undergoing inspections and repairs to prevent leaks and damage.
- **Fire systems and hydraulic systems:** comprehensive checks and upgrades to meet safety standards. Stage 5 has had back-to-base fire panels installed (Stages 1-4 to follow).

- **Fire evacuation diagrams:** have been updated throughout Terralong Village, and fire evacuation exercises are held annually. All on-site staff are fire warden trained.
 - **Electrical and lighting:** installation of energy-efficient LED lighting throughout common areas and units.
 - **High-pressure path cleaning and roof anchor inspections:** carried out to maintain safety and aesthetic standards.
 - **Inaccessible window cleaning:** performed using specialised aerial work platforms to ensure all areas are properly maintained.
 - **New signage:** has been installed for emergency services and improvement plan.
 - **Vital care emergency pendant system:** each resident has a Vital Care Pendant system installed within their unit, for quicker emergency responses.
 - **Inclinators:** the inclinators near the stairs has undergone significant repair work and is back operational to enhance safety and support mobility to Terralong Street.
- These maintenance efforts are part of our ongoing commitment to providing a high standard of living for all residents and ensuring that Blue Haven's independent living units remain a desirable and supportive environment.

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Celebrating our amazing aged care workers

We know our staff are amazing, but it's always good to remind ourselves (and everyone else) about the great work done by aged care workers at Blue Haven and everywhere else.

Thankfully, we don't need to remind our residents such as Yvonne.

We were absolutely humbled and very moved by Yvonne's very kind words at our celebration of Aged Care Employee Day in August.

Among the tributes paid by Yvonne was citing the helpfulness and professionalism of the Blue Haven team members.

"They are excellent if you need help, if you're not feeling well. They get right on it."

"They provide so many opportunities to enjoy yourself, from information sessions, physical activity and social occasions such as our sing-alongs."

"They really go beyond their work roles to make sure this place is your home, they very quickly become like friends to you."

This is all music to the ears of our hard-working staff, who leave no stone unturned to make our residents happy and healthy.



Photo: Yvonne (seated centre) celebrating Aged Care Workers Day with our staff – topped off by cupcakes of course

We also want to take this opportunity to heartily agree with Yvonne.

A hallmark of Blue Haven over its 40+ years has been the great care and attention our staff bring to their work every day.

Our thanks to the nurses, cooks, dietitians, caterers, cleaners, administration staff, maintenance and other workers who are not only professional but also passionate about their work.

This includes our fabulous army of volunteers who help out in our day-to-day operations.

We have more than 100 people who donate their time as a Blue Haven volunteer, helping with reading, massage, pet therapy, craft, painting and regular barbecues.

They also drive our residents to appointments, take them shopping or manage group outings.

We are proud to celebrate all our amazing aged care workers.

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Enhancing resident care through Blue Haven's call bell system

Blue Haven has introduced an advanced call bell system at our Bonaira Residential Aged Care Facility. It's as simple as a button press for our residents to notify our dedicated staff whenever they need assistance.

This means our residents have a direct line to request immediate help, ensuring a swift response in critical situations, thus bolstering resident safety.

We understand that some residents might find traditional call bell systems challenging to use or occasionally forget to request assistance. To address this, we have also implemented bed and chair sensors in designated resident rooms, offering an automated alert system that ensures immediate staff intervention when assistance is required.

Efficient response with staff pagers

Our dedicated staff members are equipped with pagers to ensure they remain responsive to residents' needs. Whether a resident requires assistance or is simply moving around, our staff receive real-time notifications, enabling a swift and efficient response to any request. This proactive approach minimises the need for residents to initiate the call bell.

Personalised care and engagement

At Blue Haven, we place great emphasis on personalised care. Our staff take the time to understand each resident's unique routines and preferences, allowing us to deliver tailored support. We encourage residents to communicate their preferred wake-up times and daily requirements, enabling us to create a customised daily experience that maximises engagement and comfort.

Continuous improvement and data-driven care

We rigorously audit our call bell system to ensure it aligns with residents' needs and aids in determining optimal staffing levels. Furthermore, call bell data supports roster planning, refines residents' care plans, and assists in any incidents within our aged care home.

Accessible assistance throughout our facility

Call bells are strategically placed throughout our facility, including bathrooms, lounge areas, and resident rooms.

For added convenience, residents have the option to wear a pendant around their necks, providing peace of mind and immediate assistance access, regardless of their location within our home.

At Blue Haven, resident's safety, comfort, and satisfaction are our top priorities. Our advanced call bell system is a testament to our unwavering dedication to our resident's well-being.



External defibrillators installed

A highlight for the year was working with the Bonaira Residents Committee to have 16 automated external defibrillators installed.

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Blue Haven Bonaira RACF gets full marks in ACQSC audit

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) conducted an unannounced two-day site audit at Blue Haven Bonaira Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) in January 2024.

The audit results indicated substantial progress, with Blue Haven now meeting all 42 out of 42 Criteria of the 8 Accreditation Standards, showcasing a significant improvement from the previous assessment in [September 2022](#) and subsequent [audit in August 2023](#).



The ACQSC reported that the facility had successfully addressed previous concerns and unmet standards, affirming Blue Haven's commitment to excellence in aged care provision.

Joe Gaudiosi, Chief Operating Officer of Kiama Council said: "This unannounced visit underscores the robust compliance and regulatory framework of the ACQSC. We view external feedback as a valuable opportunity to enhance our services and ensure the highest level of care and safety for our residents."

Mr Gaudiosi further added, "Despite undergoing a period of management changes, the action plans and improvement initiatives have yielded positive outcomes, demonstrating our commitment to continuous improvement."

Blue Haven remains transparent and committed to open communication with residents, families, and the broader community.

This outcome does not impact on Blue Haven's accreditation, which was granted to April 2025 after the visit in September 2022.

Background

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Accreditation Assessment evaluates facilities based on 8 Quality Standards, encompassing a total of 42 criteria. Blue Haven underwent a rigorous assessment in September 2022 and subsequent audit in August 2023 to ensure compliance with the highest standards of care and safety for its residents. With the latest audit, Blue Haven proudly announces meeting all 42 Accreditation Standards, reflecting its unwavering commitment to excellence in aged care provision.



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Blue Haven Community: empowering independence and support

Blue Haven Community Transport

Blue Haven Community Transport is a vital service that ensures our residents and community members maintain their independence and stay connected with the broader Kiama community. The 2023-24 year has seen an expansion in our transport services, reflecting our commitment to supporting the mobility and well-being of those we serve. We currently provide transport to **540 clients** for health and medical appointments, shopping, library visits, community group connections, and special events.

- **Accessible transportation:** our community transport service provides reliable and accessible transportation for residents and clients, ensuring they can attend medical appointments, social activities, and essential errands. This service is particularly valuable for those who do not have access to private or public transportation.
- **Increased demand:** we have expanded our transport routes and schedules to accommodate the growing needs of our community, due to lack of other services in the area i.e. taxis. This expansion has allowed us to serve more residents and clients, ensuring that everyone can stay active and engaged.
- **Volunteer drivers:** our team of volunteer drivers, who are the backbone of this service, has grown

this year. Their dedication and commitment ensures that our clients reach their destinations safely and comfortably, making a significant impact on their quality of life.

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

The Commonwealth Home Support Program at Blue Haven plays a crucial role in helping older Australians live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. This program offers a range of services designed to support day-to-day living and enhance the overall quality of life for our clients. Blue Haven's CHSP program has delivered 144,450 hours of service to 276 clients over the past 12 months.

- **Personalised support:** through the CHSP, we provide tailored services that meet the unique needs of each client. These services include assistance with household chores, personal care, and social support, all delivered by our trained and compassionate staff.
- **Community connection:** our CHSP also focuses on keeping clients socially connected. We offer a variety of group activities and outings that encourage social interaction, helping to reduce isolation and loneliness among our clients.
- **Flexibility and accessibility:** understanding that each client has different needs, we offer flexible service options that can be adjusted as their needs change. This adaptability ensures that our clients always receive the right level of support.



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Home Care Packages (HCP)

Additional to CHSP, Home Care Packages at Blue Haven are designed to provide more comprehensive support to individuals with higher care needs. Our packages offer a range of services that allow clients to remain in their homes while receiving the care they require. Blue Haven's HCP program currently has 91 packages (clients).

Level 1: 9 | Level 2: 39 | Level 3: 22 | Level 4: 21

Blue Haven's Home Care Packages have experienced a high turnover of packages due to client's increasing needs and transferring to higher level care.

- **Comprehensive care planning:** each Home Care Package is developed in close consultation with the client and their family, ensuring that the care plan is personalised and aligned with their specific needs and preferences. This collaborative approach empowers clients to make informed decisions about their care.
- **Wide range of services:** our Home Care Packages cover a broad spectrum of services, from nursing care and medication management to home modifications and social support. These services are provided by our skilled and dedicated staff, who are committed to delivering high-quality care.
- **Ongoing monitoring and support:** we regularly review and adjust care plans to ensure they continue to meet the evolving needs of our clients. This ongoing support helps clients maintain their independence while ensuring their health and well-being are prioritised.

Quality review

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission reviews Home Care Providers through the Quality Review Process to ensure compliance against the Aged Care Quality Standards. This is usually done every three years and we are preparing for an upcoming review.

As part of our preparation, we undertook an independent Pre-Accreditation Audit by Arete Advisory & Consultancy Services in March 2024 to assess how we were performing against the Aged Care Quality Standards. From this audit we have developed a Continuous Quality Improvement Plan and staff are currently working with management to address any gaps and improvements to ensure compliance.

Staff training and development

At Blue Haven, we recognise that the quality of care we provide is directly linked to the skills and knowledge of our staff. Therefore, we have made significant investments in training and development programs to ensure our team is equipped to deliver the highest standards of care across all our services.

- **Comprehensive training programs:** all staff members, including those involved in Community Transport, CHSP, and Home Care Packages, undergo rigorous training programs. These programs cover essential topics such as dementia care, infection control, and communication skills, ensuring that our staff can meet the diverse needs of our clients.



- **Ongoing professional development:** we are committed to continuous learning and development. Our staff have access to regular workshops, seminars, and online learning modules that keep them updated on the latest best practices in aged care and community support.
- **Mentorship and support:** new staff members are paired with experienced mentors who provide guidance and support as they navigate their roles. This mentorship program helps to ensure that all staff feel confident and competent in their duties, leading to better outcomes for our clients.

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Volunteer appreciation morning tea: celebrating our community heroes

As part of the 2023-24 year in review, we are thrilled to highlight the success of our recent Volunteer Appreciation Morning Tea, held in celebration of National Volunteer Week (N.V.W). This special event was our way of honouring the extraordinary contributions of our dedicated volunteers who give so much of their time, energy, and passion to support our community.

The morning was filled with joy and camaraderie as our volunteers gathered for a delightful tea, enjoying heartfelt speeches, delicious treats, and plenty of laughter. It was a wonderful opportunity to share stories, celebrate achievements, and recognise the unique impact that each volunteer makes in our community. Their efforts are the true heartbeat of our organisation, and this event served as a small token of our gratitude for their unwavering support and hard work.

We extend our deepest thanks to everyone who attended the morning tea and to all those who continue to support our mission throughout the year. Your generosity and commitment are inspiring, and together, we can continue to make a positive impact.

Thank you to our community heroes!



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Community connection and volunteer contributions

The Seaside Group: a pillar of support

The Seaside Group continues to be an integral part of the Blue Haven community, providing invaluable support to our residents and enriching their lives through a variety of programs and activities. Established by a dedicated group of local volunteers, the Seaside Group has grown into a robust network that plays a key role in fostering a sense of belonging and community at Blue Haven.

Activities and programs

The Seaside Group has been instrumental in organising a wide range of activities that cater to the diverse interests and needs of our residents. These activities not only provide entertainment and engagement but also contribute to the overall well-being of our residents.

- **Active games:** one of the most popular initiatives, active games, has allowed residents to explore their sportsmanship while socialising with others. These games are led by skilled volunteers who provide guidance and encouragement, resulting in fun, laughter and a little friendly rivalry.
- **Musical events:** music plays a vital role in the lives of many of our residents. The Seaside Group has organised numerous musical events, including sing-alongs, concerts, and performances by local

musicians. These events have been particularly popular, offering joy and nostalgia to our residents.

- **Special celebrations:** The Seaside Group has been pivotal in planning and executing special celebrations throughout the year. From holiday parties to birthday celebrations. These events have created memorable moments for our residents, complete with decorations, entertainment, and themed activities.

Volunteer engagement and impact

Volunteers are the heart of Blue Haven, and their contributions have had a profound impact on the Blue Haven community. In 2023-24, we have seen an increase in volunteer participation, reflecting the growing commitment of the Kiama community to support our residents.

- **Volunteer hours:** this year, volunteers contributed over **7,586 hours of service**, a testament to their dedication and passion for making a difference in the lives of our residents. These volunteers come from all walks of life, bringing a diverse range of skills and experiences that enrich our programs.
- **Volunteer training and development:** to ensure that our volunteers are well-equipped to meet the needs of our residents, we introduced a comprehensive training program. This program covers essential topics such as dementia care, communication skills, and safety protocols, ensuring that volunteers are confident and capable in their roles.



Recognition and appreciation

Recognising the hard work and dedication of our volunteers is a priority at Blue Haven. This year, we introduced several new initiatives to celebrate and appreciate our volunteers:

- **Volunteer appreciation events:** we hosted several events throughout the year to honour our volunteers, including an annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. These events provided an opportunity for us to express our gratitude and celebrate the achievements of our volunteers.

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- **Awards and recognition:** to further acknowledge the outstanding contributions of our volunteers, we celebrate National Volunteer Week (NVW). NVW recognises individuals who have gone above and beyond in their service to Blue Haven, highlighting their commitment and impact.

Expanding volunteer opportunities

As we look to the future, we are committed to expanding our volunteer programs and increasing community involvement. The Seaside Group will continue to play a central role in these efforts, with plans to introduce new volunteer-led initiatives that cater to the evolving needs of our residents.

- **New volunteer programs:** we are exploring opportunities to expand our volunteer offerings, including the introduction of a mentoring program where experienced volunteers can support new recruits. Additionally, we plan to launch more intergenerational activities, connecting volunteers of all ages with our residents.
- **Community outreach:** The Seaside Group will also focus on increasing outreach efforts to attract more volunteers from the Kiama community. By raising awareness of the rewarding opportunities available at Blue Haven, we hope to continue growing our volunteer base and enhancing the lives of our residents.



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Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Annual Report

Introduction

This annual report has been prepared to inform Council of the activities of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) for the 12-months ending 30 June 2024.

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 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. It is considered that the scope and approach of these activities have fulfilled the ARIC's responsibilities. The committee comprises a strong mix of skills from independent members and Council representatives who all challenge and management as necessary and contribute to the discussion of committee business during meetings. Our meetings are well structured, and held at regular intervals, and action items are tracked and reported back at each meeting.



The ARIC 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

Audit Risk and Improvement Committee
www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/Council-meetings/Council-Committees/Audit-Risk-and-Improvement-Committee

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Council's Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee

Membership

The Committee comprises three appointed independent external members and one non-voting Councillor member nominated by Council.

Independent members

David Pendleton (Independent Chair)

– appointed as Chair on 12 April 2022 (member since 28 September 2021)

David is a finance professional with more than 30 years of experience in senior executive roles in the media, audit, superannuation, and infrastructure sectors. 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, an independent member, and chair of several 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 (AICD), a Fellow of the Certified Practising Accountants (FCPA) and a Senior Fellow of the Financial Services Institute of Australia.

Rhonda Wheatley (Independent Member)

– appointed 28 September 2021

Rhonda's finance career commenced in manufacturing and progressed across major public sector organisations such as 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 and 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 toward improving governance and the financial management of public sector organisations within NSW. Rhonda is currently the CEO of Fairhaven Services.

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 in executive-level management, including the position of Deputy Auditor-General and Board member of the Western Sydney Parklands Trust. In his audit and management roles, Jim was extensively involved in the review

and evaluation of agency financial operations, risk, effectiveness and efficiency.

Councillor member

Councillor Jodi Keast

– elected 24 February 2022, term extended on 19 September 2023 to September 2024 by resolution of Council

Cr 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, 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 Risk Management Coordinator attend the ARIC meetings as non-voting members.

Invitations are also extended to the Audit Office of NSW.

Councillors are welcome to attend as non-voting observers.





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Year in review

Number of meetings

The Audit Risk and Improvement Committee met seven times during the 12 months to review reports, audit programs, and audited financial statements. Meeting dates were:

- 11 July 2023
- 8 August 2023 (financial statements 2022 meeting)
- 7 September 2023 (financial statements 2022 meeting)
- 10 October 2023
- 12 December 2023
- 27 February 2024
- 2 April 2024 (financial statements 2023 meeting)

Participation

July 2023 – June 2024 ARIC participation

Member	Role	ARIC meetings	
		Eligible	Attended
David Pendleton	Independent Member (Chair)	7	7
Rhonda Wheatley	Independent Member	7	7
Jim Mitchell	Independent Member	7	7
Cr Jodi Keast	Councillor Representative (non-voting)	7	7
Cr Neil Reilly*	Councillor Representative (non-voting)	7	3
Cr Karen Renkema-Lang*	Councillor Representative (non-voting)	7	3

* Term ended 19 September 2023

Internal Audit

The internal audit function is performed in-house, with the assistance of an external provider where necessary. The internal auditor attends each ARIC meeting and provides internal audit reports for completed audits, a status report on the implementation of internal audit findings, and an update on progress against the annual work plan. The strategic internal audit plan is a 4-year plan incorporating 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, and in the 12 months to June 2023 included:

- Payroll and Leave Management (September 2023)
- Procurement (September 2023)
- Council papers (February 2024)
- Fraud & Corruption (February 2024)
- Delegations (June 2024)

The implementation of management actions arising from internal audits is a critical element of an effective internal control framework and is tracked and reported at each ARIC meeting.

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) – 10 July 2023
- Kiama Council site visit (all members) – 11 July 2023
- Meeting with the NSW audit office (all members) – 8 August 2023
- CEO briefing (all members) – 12 December 2023

Disclosure of Interests

Disclosures are recorded at the start of each meeting and annually for all ARIC members.



Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Annual Report (continued)

Snapshot of implementation of recommendations

Number of recommendations arising from internal audits: **130**

Number of recommendations completed: **102**

Number of recommendations in progress: **16**

Number of recommendations delayed: **12**

Audit of Financial Statements

The external audit of the financial statements for the years ended 2022 and 2023 were conducted by the Audit Office of NSW. The 2021-22 financial statements were completed in September 2023 and the 2022-23 financial statements were completed in April 2024.

The NSW Audit Office has issued a qualified audit opinion for the 2022-23 financial statements, indicating considerable advancements from the disclaimer of opinion issued on the 2021-22 financial statements concerning verification of accounting records and improved compliance.

The conclusion of the 2022-23 audit signifies that Kiama Council is now up to date and current with the audited financial statement cycle. The 30 June 2024 audit is underway and Council will submit the 2023-24 financial statements to the Office of Local Government by the usual annual timeline of 31 October 2024.

Three years of financial statements prepared in partnership with the NSW Audit Office in twelve months is a major achievement.

ARIC has played a vital governance role in overseeing the preparation and finalisation of the audited 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial statements and will continue to provide advice to management as they work through the remaining issues concerning the audit qualification.

Other matters considered by ARIC

In addition to the feedback and review of Council's financial statements, ARIC considered a range of other issues during the year:

- Council's Long-Term Financial Plan 2024-2033.
- Council's Strategic Improvement Plans, Delivery Program, and Operational Plan.
- Monthly financial reports, statements of investments, cash flow forecasts, and going concern assumptions.
- Quarterly budget reviews.
- Council's Performance Improvement Order (PIO), variation to the PIO and the John Rayner Report.
- Progress, findings and implementation plans associated with internal audits.
- Risk management including operational and strategic matters such as the implementation of Council's Enterprise Risk Management framework, fraud and corruption strategies and child safety standards.

- Council's progress towards implementation of ARIC resolutions and audit recommendations.
- Council's progress in implementing the OLG Guidelines for internal audit and risk management.
- Technology One implementation updates.
- Cyber security progress against the Essential Eight.
- Compliance and legal updates.
- Civic Risk Mutual's presentation on flooding risks for Council.
- Blue Haven divestment updates.
- Blue Haven accreditation assessment.
- Service review updates.

ARIC continued to support the Council and its leadership team as it navigated through a difficult year. In response to the financial sustainability concerns and the issuance of the variation to the Performance Improvement Order (PIO), 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 and Improvement Committee Annual Report (continued)

Outlook for 2024-25

The strategic internal audit plan takes into consideration Council's strategic risks and issues currently faced by Council. Council, in conjunction with the ARIC, will continue to review the internal audit plan.

Management and the ARIC members are committed to remaining up to date with developments in the local government sector as well as challenging current processes in audit, risk, finance and governance to ensure the Council continues to develop best practices in its business models whilst maintaining robust internal controls.



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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, 1 non-voting Councillor
Broad range of skills and experience	The Committee is experienced and diverse with strong local government and commercial experience.
Functional separation	The Committee has no executive powers and is advisory in its capacity.
Probity	Members declared conflicts of interest if they arose.
Risk management	Risk management key activities are reported at each meeting, including updates on the status of Council's Enterprise Risk Management framework and Council's strategic risk register and treatment plans.
Control framework	The committee effectively reviewed the controls, policies and procedures through the audit reports and high-level briefings.
Legislative compliance	Legislative updates are provided through the CEO report. A gap analysis was used to ensure compliance with the Office of Local Government (OLG) Guidelines for risk management and internal audit issued by the OLG NSW.
Fraud and corruption	The Committee monitored the implementation of the fraud and corruption internal audit action plan and prevention strategies.

Committee Charter	Compliance
Internal audit	The Committee reviewed and approved the Strategic Internal Audit Plan. The Committee reviewed internal audit reports and monitored progress of the implementation of a audit recommendations. The Committee met several times to review and discuss Council's 2022 and 2023 financial statements and discuss issues with the Audit Office of NSW.
External audit	The Audit Office of NSW was invited to attend all ARIC meetings. The Committee reviewed and monitored the implementation of recommendations in the Management Letter.
External accountability	The Committee acts as a forum for communication between the Council, senior management, internal audit, external auditors and the NSW Audit Office.
Financial management	The Committee received and reviewed the monthly financial reports, treasury reports, cash flow forecasts, liquidity plans and the long-term financial plan.
Governance	The Committee reviewed the implementation of Council's Strategic Finance and Governance Improvement Plan.

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Attendance at Council Meetings and activities

Council held 13 meetings including 2 Extraordinary Meetings and 10 Engagement Workshops in the financial year 2023-24.

	Ordinary Council Meetings	Extraordinary Council Meetings
Cr Matt Brown	11	2
Cr Mark Croxford	9	1
Cr Imogen Draisma	11	1
Cr Jodi Keast	11	2
Cr Stuart Larkins	11	2
Cr Neil Reilly	8	2
Cr Karen Renkema-Lang	11	2
Cr Kathy Rice	11	2
Cr Warren Steel	11	2



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Councillor induction, training and ongoing professional development

The Mayor and Councillors were made aware of professional development opportunities available to them and were involved in selecting appropriate opportunities to be undertaken towards their professional development

This recommendation is based on benchmarking

Mayor or councillors who completed any induction training course, induction refresher course or supplementary induction course during the year	Cls Reilly, Draisma, Croxford, Steel, Renkema-Lang, Keast, Rice, Larkins, Brown.
Mayor or Councillors who participated in any ongoing professional development opportunity during the year	Cls Reilly, Draisma, Croxford, Steel, Renkema-Lang, Keast, Rice, Larkins, Brown.
The number of seminars, circulars and other activities delivered as part of the ongoing professional development program during the year.	Circulars – 21 Workshops/ Briefings etc - 29

Councillor fees/senior staff payments

Mayor and Councillor Fees and Expenses	2024 (\$)	2023 (\$)
Mayoral Fee	47,419	46,038
Mayoral Car Expenses	-	-
Councillor Fees	195,640	189,941
Councillor Expenses	26,591	23,413
Cost of Dedicated Office Equipment		
Cost of Telephone Calls incl mobile phones etc.	7,234	7023
Cost of Conferences/seminars & training	19,781	19,612
Mayor and Councillor interstate visits	2,211	2,724
Mayor and Councillor overseas visits	-	-
	298,876	288,751

Senior staff remuneration

In accordance with the Local Government Regulation 2021, the report must include a statement of the total remuneration package of the CEO.

- As at 30 June 2024, The Chief Executive Officer was paid a total remuneration of:

Salary	Bonus or Other Contributions	Employer Contributions	Total FBT
\$344,414	-	\$27,399	\$9,849

In accordance with the Local Government Regulation 2021 the report must include a statement of the total remuneration packages of all senior staff members (other than the CEO), expressed as the total.

Senior Staff of Council include the Chief Operating Officer, Director of Infrastructure & Liveability and the Director Planning, Environment & Communities.

- As at 30 June 2024, these Senior staff were paid a total remuneration of:

Salary	Bonus or Other Contributions	Employer Contributions	Total FBT
\$725,647	-	\$76,254	\$11,015

These costs include salary, superannuation paid by way of employer contributions and salary sacrifice, non-cash benefits and fringe benefits tax payable by council for non-cash benefits.

Senior Staff include

- Chief Operating Officer
- Director Infrastructure & Liveability
- Director Planning, Environment & Communities

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List of current delegates to other bodies – 2023-24

Committee	Meetings	Nature of Appointment	Delegates
CivicRisk Mutual	Quarterly	Council	1 Councillor
Cleary Bros Community Consultative Committee	As required	Council	1 Councillor
Friends of Kiama Library	Monthly	Council	1 Councillor, 1 Alternate
Illawarra Academy of Sport	Bi-monthly	Delegate	1 Councillor
Illawarra Bush Fire Management Committee	Quarterly	Council Delegate, Staff	1 Councillor, Director Infrastructure & Liveability
Illawarra District Weeds Authority	Quarterly	Council	1 Councillor
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 & 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
Kiama Liquor Accord	As required	Council Delegate, Staff	2 Councillors, Road Safety Officer
NSW Public Library South East Zone Committee	Quarterly	Council Delegate, Staff	Mayor, Director Planning, Environment and Communities, 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

Amounts of rates and charges written off during the year

\$1,807,81 of rates and charges were written off during the 2023-24 financial year. Pension rebates of \$418,475.00 were granted for the financial year.

2023-24 Annual Rates

Rates	Ad Valorem	Base Amounts	Total	Count
Residential Rate	\$8,981,309	\$8,901,278	\$17,882,587	9,926
Farmland	\$556,779	\$211,645	\$768,424	236
Business Commercial	\$1,527,789		\$1,527,789	557
Business	\$41,324		\$41,324	54
Rural Residential	\$363,763	\$123,758	\$487,511	138
Total	\$11,470,954	\$9,236,681	\$20,707,635	10,928

Other required information
(continued)

Stormwater management services provided (levied)

Council continued with a number of design projects for stormwater, including progressing floodplain management works for Gerringong and Jamberoo (partially State and Federal Government funded). Additional stormwater activities have included preliminary investigations of reported problem areas for inclusion of budget in future years for design and construction works. Council also proactively manages the stormwater network through scheduled maintenance of pits and pipes in the network. A programmed inspection of a representative number of stormwater assets was also undertaken by staff and contractors to ensure ongoing management and renewal of pipes and pits is well planned.

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 2023-24 financial year.

Special Rate Variation (SRV) works

There were no special rate variations applied in the 2023-24 reporting period.

There was no expenditure of SRV obtained revenue in the 2023-24 reporting period.



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Money granted

Total amounts contributed or otherwise granted to financially assist others.

Donations, Sponsorships and Signature Events	Amount of Assistance
Red Cross – Fun Run	\$1,000
Gerringong Lions Club – Motorfest/ Car Show	\$920
Jamberoo Football Club – Jamberoo 7s	\$1,000
Gerringong Bowlo – Carols pre-approved under delegated authority	\$500
Gerringong Anglican Church – Carols pre-approved under delegated authority	\$500
Jamberoo Youth Hall Association – Celebration of Youth and Heritage	\$750
Gerringong Community Garden – expansion	\$250
Kiama-Shellharbour Camera Club – Photographic Exhibition	\$550
Kiama Leagues Club – Carols	\$2,000
Kiama Jamberoo Uniting Church – Carols pre-approved under delegated authority	\$500
Life Together Seminar – Dealing with Disappointment	\$350
CWA Evening Branch – ANZAC Day biscuits	\$500
Jamberoo Croquet Club – Autumn Carnival	\$250
Kiama Community Radio – Vintage Vibrations: 'Melody Through the Ages'	\$1,430
Kiama Community Garden – Song-growing intergenerational initiative	\$410
Jamberoo Preschool AT – Culture Visit	\$1,200
Life Together – Intentional Living	\$350
Kiama High School – 70th Birthday Celebration	\$500
Kiama Rotary – Walk Against Domestic Violence	\$1,140
Kiama Rotary – 2024 Christmas in July Trivia Night	\$900

Donations, Sponsorships and Signature Events	Amount of Assistance
Kiama Rotary – Festival of Choirs	\$1,500
Becky Guggisberg, President and Festival Director – Kiama Jazz and Blues Festival	\$1,000
Seven Marks – NEWLIGHT, and Emerging Artists Initiative by SEVENMARKS Gallery	\$3,000
Laughter House Entertainment – The Kazador Kiama's mini Spiegeleint season	\$20,000
Man Walk	\$10,000
Kiama Show – Kiama Show Trivia Night	\$1,100 in kind venue (Pavilion)
Kiama Show – Kiama Show Trivia Night	\$1,300 in kind, venue
Kiama Show	\$2,816 in kind, waste services
Kiama Show – waiving fees for road safety application permit	\$105
Kiama Art Society – 2024 Art Exhibition	\$2,300
Gerringong Lions Club – Australia Day	\$1,000
Kiama Downs Surf Club – Australia Day	\$1,000
Kiama Rotary – Australia Day	\$1,000
Jamberoo Red Cross – Australia Day	\$1,000
Donations, Sponsorships and Signature Events Total	\$79,121

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Destination Events Funding	Amount of Funding
The Australian Bodysurfing Classic	\$4,860
Kiama Folk by the Sea 2023	\$6,000
KiamaSala	\$10,000
Evening with the Artists	\$2,000
Volleyball NSW State Tour	\$3,000
Seaside and Valley Veterans Golf Tournament 2023	\$600
Kiama Music & Arts present Terry Christmas featuring The Terrys & friends	\$4,000
Red Hot Summer Concert	\$7,500
Kiama Rugby Sevens	\$10,000
Kiama Beach Tag 2024	\$11,500
SurfLife Music Festival Gerringong	\$10,000
Melvo Baptiste	\$2,000
Winter Wine Festival	\$5,220
Kiama Coastal Classic	\$4,000
Books by the Sea	\$4,500
KISS Arts Festival	\$8,000
DISTILLED	\$5,220
Jamberoo Music Festival	\$7,200
Jamberoo Car Show and Family Day	\$5,000
Clearly Music Local Artists 2024 Campaign	\$6,000
Seaside and Valley Veterans Golf Tournament 2024	\$600
Kiama Folk by the Sea Festival 2024	\$5,400
Destination Events Funding Total	\$122,600



Other required information
(continued)

Section 7.11 and 7.12 Contributions

Funds received during 2023-24

Contributions Plan	Opening Balance (\$)	Contributions Received (\$)	Interest (\$)	Expenditure (\$)	Adjustments (transfers) (\$)	Closing Balance (\$)
Section 7.11 Plan – No 1	7,390,000	1,491,396	164,071	0	-9,045,467	0
Section 7.11 Plan – No 2	140,000	133,417	4,066	0	-277,482	0
Section 7.11 Plan – No 3	63,000	21,000	1,666	0	-85,666	0
Section 7.12 Plan	3,242,000	828,414	465,753	327,653	9,408,616	13,617,130
Total	10,835,000	2,474,227	635,556	327,653	0	13,617,130

* This information is from the draft and unaudited financial statements and is subject to change.

Funds expended during 2023-24

Contributions Plan	Project ID	Project description	The kind of public amenity or service	Monetary amount expended from contributions development	Value of land dedication	Value of material public benefit provided	Contributions expended to date	Amounts expended temporarily borrowed	Project status	% of cost funded by contributions
\$7.12 Plan	200986	James Oates Reserve Amenities Upgrade	Open Space and Recreation	\$89,335	\$0	\$0	\$89,335	\$0	Completed	45%
\$7.12 Plan	200988	Chapman Oval Amenities Upgrade	Open Space and Recreation	\$9,156	\$0	\$0	\$9,156	\$0	Completed	8%
\$7.12 Plan	201185	Gerringong Surf Club	Open Space and Recreation	\$170,000	\$0	\$0	\$170,000	\$0	Under way	N/A

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Annual reporting of labour statistics – relevant date of 14 February 2024

Regulation 217(1)(d) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 contains a new requirement for councils and country 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 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 numbers 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 2023-24 financial year is Wednesday 14 February 2024.

The number of persons directly employed by Kiama Council and Blue Haven on 14 February 2024

Permanent full-time	247
Permanent part-time	140
Casual	113
Fixed term	29
Senior Staff	4
Contract	16



Other required information
(continued)

Contracts over \$150,000 2023-24

Supplier Name	Description	Amount (Inclusive)
CivicRisk Mutual Limited	Civic Risk Mutual policies 2023/24 - Public Liability/Professional Liability, ISR/property, Motor Vehicle, Management Liability, Crime, Cyber	\$1,526,811.00
Southern Truck Centre Wollongong Pty Ltd	New Volvo FE 6x4 with Bucher gen 6, Roadwork rego, Roadwork rego	\$1,153,505.70
StateCover Mutual Limited	Workers Compensation insurance cover	\$1,116,181.76
Hall & Wilcox	Legal fees - Council v Daoud	\$773,687.75
GT Civil Pty Ltd	Landside Repairs - various sites Kiama	\$327,115.00
Civica Pty Ltd	Annual SaaS Fee Authority Altitude, including licensing, upgrade implementation & training	\$517,963.60
Audit Office of New South Wales	Audit fees	\$740,300.00
Dwyers Truck Centre	New FVD165-260 auto crew cab + flocon, Roadwork rego	\$350,006.28
Quant Sec Pty Ltd	KMC: Network Services Management, Blue Haven: Network Services Management - annual fee	\$254,027.40
Alistate Asbestos & Demolition Pty Ltd	Demolition of hindmarsh park residence	\$169,400.00
Agriquip by LandHQ	New Johndeere 1570 4WD Outfront Mower	\$159,433.44
WesTrac Equipment Pty Ltd	New Caterpillar 305CR Mini Excavator	\$157,300.00
WesTrac Equipment Pty Ltd	New Caterpillar 239D3-TL	\$156,750.00
Systems Thinking Consultancy	Consulting support, Consulting support, Consulting support, Consulting support	\$162,665.00
Roadworx Group	Road resealing Fern St, Gerringong	\$222,352.37
Roadworx Group	Road resealing Bland St, Kiama	\$191,701.00
Roadworx Group	Road resurfacing, Minnamurra Depot	\$165,570.90
Civica	SAAS fee - enterprise software	\$423,694.26
Data #3	3 year microsoft licensing	\$282,772.86
Australis Asset Advisory Group	Inspection and valuation of council stormwater drainage & utility assets	\$240,185.00

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External bodies, companies and partnerships

We did not hold any interests in any corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies during the 2023-24 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)	Name of partnership/ joint venture	Type	Partner(s)
South Coast Library Service	Library co-operation, sharing books and other resources	Shoalhaven City Council	South Coast Tourism Promotion	South Coast 'Feel New' campaign	Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven
Rural Fire Service	Bushfire Management Committee. Coordinated rural fire preparedness, management response and asset protection for Illawarra Councils	Shellharbour and Wollongong Councils and other agency stakeholders	Customer surcharge package 14 – Kiama Project	Improve Kiama and Jamberoo sewerage scheme	Destination NSW to promote the South Coast as a winter holiday destination
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	Cities Power Partnership	Exchange information on best practice towards a target for Net Zero emissions	Sydney Water
Illawarra District Weeds Authority	Regional approach to tackle invasive weeds and act responsibly and in compliance with biosecurity	Shellharbour and Wollongong Councils	Feral Animal Control Program	Regional project to control feral animals locally and regionally	Councils across Australia
Surfing NSW	Partnership agreement for the Kiama area to host local, state and national surfing events	Surfing NSW	Australian Coastal Councils Association	National body formed to represent the interests of coastal councils	Southern Eastern Local Land Services
Regional Arts	Promote and assist arts within the region	Shellharbour, Wingecarribee and Wollongong Councils			Other coastal councils



Other required information (continued)

Name of partnership/ joint venture	Type	Partner(s)
Landcare Illawarra	Collaborate to support Landcare groups operating on Council land and, where possible, partner to undertake natural resource management activities and offer technical and material support	Landcare groups in the Kiama LGA
WEAVE Artist Directory	Online directory of visual, literary and performing artists within the Kiama, Shellharbour, Wingecarribee and Wollongong regions of NSW	Run by South Coast Arts Centre, Kiama, Wollongong, Shellharbour and Wingecarribee Councils
Local Government Cultural Arts Network	Local Government officers working in cultural arts, networking, information sharing and regional project management	Kiama, Wollongong, Shellharbour and 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

Name of partnership/ joint venture	Type	Partner(s)
Kiama and District Business Chamber	Supporting local businesses within the Kiama LGA	Various business owners and community members from throughout the Kiama LGA and surrounds
Illawarra First/Business Illawarra	Supporting businesses within the Illawarra region	Various business owners and community members from throughout the Illawarra region
ISJO Net Zero Accelerate	Regional net zero networking group	Kiama, Wollongong, Shellharbour and Shoalhaven Councils and University of Wollongong
NSW Food Regulation Partnership	Sale of regulated safe food across NSW	Food Authority and Local Councils

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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 issues 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 2023-24 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 more than \$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 2024.

Business Unit (\$'000)	Revenue		Expenses		Operating Results		Total Assets Held (current & non-current)	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Kiama Coast Holiday Parks	11,046	11,004	8,493	8,204	2,553	2,800	40,301	40,301
Blue Haven	24,606	26,172	26,650	38,494	(2,044)	(12,322)	186,887	186,887
Total	35,652	37,176	35,143	46,698	509	(9,522)	227,188	227,188



Other required information
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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 2023-24 financial year. Council's standard supplier's terms and conditions have been updated to explain what modern slavery is and to specify expectations relating to its prevention. Council has updated our Statement of Business Ethics to reflect its position against modern slavery.

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 assists Council in assigning risk ratings by industry category to each of our suppliers.

Council embeds reference modern slavery in tender and contract documentation. Council has purchased the Local Government Procurement Modern Slavery Toolkit to help guide actions going forward.

Child Safe Organisation

Kiama Council acknowledges the significant and lasting impact that abuse can have on children and young people.

In the 2023-24 financial year, Kiama Council worked through a program of implementing the Child Safe Standards in our journey to become a Child Safe Organisation.

Over the last 12 months we have:

- Endorsed a Child Safe Policy, and Behavioural Standards that apply to all employees, councillors, contractors and volunteers.
- Reviewed recruitment, induction and reporting processes and provided training and awareness across council
- Child Safe signage in community changerooms.
- Our child-facing facilities feature Child Safe messaging and information about where to get help.
- Developed Child Safe-specific reporting processes, updated our Complaints Handling Procedure and Statement of Business Ethics.
- Updated Council's Event toolkit with Child Safe requirements.

Swimming pool inspections

Private swimming pool inspections

Fifty-six (56) private swimming pools were inspected by Kiama Council during this reporting period in accordance with the Swimming Pools Act 1992. Sec 22D. Thirty-five (35) private swimming pool inspection reports were received from Private Certifiers, due to being non-compliant for Kiama Council to follow-up 22E (Sale of a Home OR Tenancy Agreement) of which:

- 1 was tourist and visitor accommodation.
- none were of premises with more than 2 dwellings.

- 37 resulted in issuance of a certificate of compliance under S22D of the SP Act.
- 16 resulted in issuance of a certificate of non-compliance under cl 21 SP Reg resulting in reinspections.

Swimming pool barrier compliance inspections under the Swimming Pools Act 1992 and Swimming Pools Regulation 2018

Private swimming pools continue to be certified and inspected through direct requests to Council as part of contracts of sale, tenancy agreements or occupation certificates. An action plan has been developed, where Kiama Council has activated a Swimming Pool Compliance Program, where Pool and Safety Education will be covered by our multi-disciplinary Compliance Officers.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

No planning agreements were in force during the 2023-24 financial year.

Further information

www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/Council-Policies/Statement-of-Business-Ethics



Other required information
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Workforce management plan including Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

Kiama Council's employees range in age from 16 – 79 years, with an average age of 45. With many of our longer term employees getting closer to retirement, we have the challenge of working with staff to meet a range of varied and specific needs while still maintaining corporate knowledge.

Last year we introduced a flexible work policy for Council staff, enabling options for all staff regardless of their position that are fair and equitable. Over the year we have also:

- Undertaken recruitment and selection practises with consideration of diversity, equity and inclusion principles.
- Continued to ensure employees, volunteers and their families had access to free, confidential and professional counselling services.
- Worked to balance Equal Employment Opportunities, and Workplace Health and Safety obligations while assessing reasonable modifications to support our employees.
- Organised and delivered events to raise awareness and recognise R U OK? Day, Harmony Week, International Women's Day, International Men's Day.
- Introduced Psychosocial risk tools and training for staff.

Policies and practices that promote fairness and equity

Council has a range of employment-related policies that recognise and support life's complexity, helping our workforce 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 their employment lifecycle and are an 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 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.

In the 2023-24 financial year a total of 15 dogs were impounded. A total of 11 were reunited with their owners and a total of 3 were rehomed. 1 dangerous dog was euthanised. In 2023-24, 3 cats were impounded. A total of 2 were reunited with their owners and a total of 1 was euthanised.

Other required information (continued)

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 9 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.

Information on companion animal funds

In 2023-24 \$10,637 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 Compliance Officer (Ranger) services.

In 2023-24, Council received income of \$23,287 from the following sources:

- Registration and impounding income **\$15,952.**
- Penalty Infringement Notice (PIN) income paid **\$7,335**



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Companion animal PINs Financial Year 2023-24

There were 23 Penalty Infringement Notices (PINs) issued totalling \$7,335 of potential income when fines are fully paid.

Dog Friendly Spaces Strategy

Council is developing a Dog Friendly Spaces Strategy to provide guidance for the development, improvement, and management of dog-friendly areas within the Kiama Local Government Area (LGA).

This Strategy outlines specific objectives:

- To find a balance between the needs of dog owners and those of the wider community, ensuring parks are accessible and safe for everyone.
- To ensure compliance with legislative requirements.
- To identify any gaps in dog-friendly spaces provision and ensure fair distribution across the LGA.
- To plan for dog-friendly areas in consideration of expected population growth and trends in dog ownership.

The Strategy includes various actions to be carried out over the next decade. These actions are categorised into short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals, aligning with the timelines of the Council's Operational Plan, Delivery Program, and Community Strategic Plan.

Jamberoo dog park

Community consultation was conducted for the Dog Friendly Spaces Strategy from 23 February – 22 March 2024. Public exhibition was conducted between 22 June and 21 July 2024. The consultation identified the desire for a fenced off leash dog area. Council has received a grant from the Premiers Office to help fund the fenced dog off leash area at Jamberoo.

Cat and dog desexing

The Office of Local Government has introduced legislative changes to the Companion Animals legislation from 1 July 2024. Registration for dogs and cats will be required to be paid at 12 weeks of age or upon an animal's first transfer. An additional fee payment will be necessary in cases where an owner does not desex their dog by 6 months of age or an annual permit is required for a cat not desexed by the relevant age of 4 months.

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. Three dogs and no cats had to be rehomed this year.

Further information

www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Services/Animals

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
- Werri Beach
- Kiama
- Easts Beach
- Little Blowhole
- Bombo
- Kiama Downs
- Minnamurra

Six are headland areas, three are beach areas and one is an on-leash river swimming area.

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Governance

Legal Proceedings

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – Section 217 Clause 1(a3)

The following table is a summary of the expenses incurred by Kiama Municipal Council (KMC) during the 2023-24 Financial Year in relation to legal proceedings, as well as the current status and details (where the matter is concluded).

Jurisdiction	Matter	Status	Details	Costs (as at 30/06/24)
Land & Environment Court	DA House v KMC Class 1	Ongoing	Listed for conciliation conference 03/10/2024	\$6,042
Land & Environment Court	Refusal of DA10.2022.175.1 31 & 37 Cooinda Place, Kiama	Ongoing		
Land & Environment Court	Michael Joseph v KMC & Spencers Class 4	Ongoing	Appeal discontinued. Council awarded costs – awaiting judgement	\$72,661
Land & Environment Court	Refusal of DA10.2023.98.1 110 North Kiama Drive, Kiama	Ongoing		
Land & Environment Court	J & R Spencer v KMC Class 1	Ongoing	Listed for conciliation conference and hearing on 12 & 13/08/2024	\$35,871
Land & Environment Court	Refusal of DA10.2023.98.1 110 North Kiama Drive, Kiama Downs	Ongoing	Motion for joinder by Michael Joseph was dismissed.	
Land & Environment Court	Enzo Developments (McElhone) v KMC Class 1	Ongoing	Listed for conciliation conference on 13/09/2024.	-
Land & Environment Court	Deemed refusal of DA10.2021.344.1 92 Jerrara Road, Jerrara	Ongoing		
Land & Environment Court	Enzo Developments (McElhone) v KMC Class 4	Ongoing	Orders made by the Court on 05/07/2024. Awaiting outcome of the Class 1 appeal.	\$23,714
Land & Environment Court	Deemed refusal of DA10.2021.344.1 92 Jerrara Road, Jerrara	Ongoing		

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Jurisdiction	Matter	Status	Details	Costs (as at 30/06/24)
Land & Environment Court	Forte Kiama Heights Development v KMC Class 1 Refusal of DAO.2022.1131 4 Elanora Road, Kiama	Ongoing	Agreement reached. S34 agreement has been filed with the Court.	\$12,916
Land & Environment Court	Grant v KMC Class 4 Grantie's Village 219 Donovan Road, Broughton Village	Ongoing	Awaiting judgment.	\$161,464
Land & Environment Court	Cole & Hennessy v KMC Class 1 Refusal of DA10.2022.152.1 50 Riverleigh Avenue, Gerroa	Ongoing	Listed for conciliation conference 15 & 16/07/2024.	\$12,836
Land & Environment Court	Harwood v KMC Class 1 Deemed refusal of DA10.2023.134.1 110-114 Terralong Street, Kiama	Ongoing	Continuing at conciliation.	\$42,748
Land & Environment Court	EPLANNING v KMC Class 1 Deemed refusal of DA 10.2023.176.1 261 Jamberoo Mountain Road, Jamberoo	Ongoing	Parties unable to reach agreement at conciliation. Amended DA lodged with Court. Matter listed for hearing 11 & 12/11/2024.	\$10,999
Land & Environment Court	Grant v KMC Class 4 Civil enforcement (Contempt) Grantie's Village 219 Donovan Road, Broughton Village	Finalised	Finalised. Orders entered by consent. Mr Grant found to be in contempt.	\$20,733
Land & Environment Court	Vortex Developments et al v KMC Class 1 DA10.2021.156.1 96 Rose Valley Road, Rose Valley (Abattoir)	Finalised	Awaiting judgement and advice re costs orders.	\$167,458

Other required information
(continued)

Jurisdiction	Matter	Status	Details	Costs (as at 30/06/24)
Land & Environment Court	Fountaindale v KMC Class 1 Refusal of DA 10.2021.261 15 Golden Valley Road, Jamberoo	Finalised	Following conciliation conference, applicant's appeal upheld. DA approved subject to amended plans. Applicant to pay Council's costs thrown away (\$17,500)	\$94,830
Land & Environment Court	McCarthy v KMC Class 1 Refusal of DA 10.2021.1531 290 Rose Valley Road, Rose Valley	Finalised	Following conciliation conference, applicant's appeal upheld. Agreement reached and DA approved subject to amendments.	\$24,228
Land & Environment Court	D & L Sharp v KMC Class 1 Refusal of DA10.2022.431 44 Halls Road, Jerrara	Finalised	Appeal upheld and Development Application granted subject to conditions of consent.	\$70,715
Land & Environment Court	Kez Developments v KMC Class 1 Refusal of DA10.2022.121 59 Belinda Street, Gerringong	Finalised	Appeal upheld. Development Application granted subject to conditions of consent. Applicant ordered Council's costs "thrown away" in the amount of \$8,500.	\$48,431
Land & Environment Court	Fabemu (No 2) P/L v KMC Class 4 Judicial Review DA10.2015.771 242 Fern Street, Gerringong	Finalised	Amended summons dismissed. Application for declaration that Development Consent 10.2015.771 dated 25 October 2016 has commenced is refused.	\$300
Federal Court of Australia	Federal Court Proceedings Nicholas Daoud (NDCO) v KMC (Unreasonable delays to DA)	Ongoing	Matter set down for Mediation 04/07/2024. If the matter does not settle, it will proceed to trial.	\$3,547,719
Federal Court of Australia	John Giles v KMC Alleged unlawful discrimination	Ongoing	Agreement on settlement terms reached and a Deed of Settlement prepared.	\$47,176
Supreme Court of NSW	Karen Renkema-Lang v KMC Judicial Review - Supreme Court Revocation of Censure of Councillor	Finalised	The proceedings were discontinued, by consent.	\$159,746

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Jurisdiction	Matter	Status	Details	Costs (as at 30/06/24)
Supreme Court of NSW	Advice regarding defects at Blue Haven	Ongoing	Holding proceedings have been filed to preserve limitation periods against the Builder. Blue Haven has been sold however Council has accepted a deduction from the purchase price equivalent to the cost of rectification of the defects.	\$46,852
Supreme Court of NSW	KMC v Josef Fischer Extension of Caveat Swamp Road Cycleway, 11 Thornett Way, Kiama Downs	Ongoing	Easement in process of being registered. Once registered, the caveat can be withdrawn and proceedings discontinued as per the deed.	\$55,508
Local Court	Morgan Lewis v KMC Contested fine – Failure to comply with terms of DA	Ongoing	Matter listed for mention on 05/08/2024	\$18,908
NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)	United Services Union (USU) v KMC Fillmore's, Manning Street, Kiama	Finalised	Agreement reached during mediation. Application withdrawn by applicant.	\$8,787
NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)	Joseph – GIPA Reviews x3	Finalised	Council's decisions affirmed.	\$49,241
NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)	Joseph – NCAT appeal (summons decision)	Finalised	Appeal dismissed.	\$36,330
NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)	Joseph – Internal appeal (substantive decision)	Finalised	Appeal dismissed.	\$40,222
NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)	Moore – GIPA Review	Finalised	Agreement reached. Application to be withdrawn.	\$5,804

Other required information (continued)

Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022

On 1 October 2023 new public interest disclosure (PID) legislation came into effect in NSW. The Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 (PID Act 2022) completely replaces the previous Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994.

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.

The PID Act 2022 does not contain an equivalent provision to section 31 of the PID Act 1994 requiring that Council report annually on its obligations under the Act however, for the purposes of transparency, in the reporting period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, Council received 3 Public Interest Disclosures.



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GIPA Annual Report 2023-24

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 2023-24

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	No
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.	0	0

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 application received
18

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	0	0	0
% of Total	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

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Other required information (continued)

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 information is held	Application Withdrawal	Total	% of Total
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Private Sector Business	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	27.78%
Not for Profit Organisations or Community Groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Members of the public (be legal representative)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	5.56%
Members of the Public (other)	0	7	1	0	0	4	0	0	12	66.67%
Total	0	11	1	0	0	5	0	1	18	
% of Total	0.00%	61.11%	5.56%	0.00%	0.00%	27.78%	0.00%	5.56%		

* 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.

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 information is held	Application Withdrawal	Total	% of Total
Personal Information Applications*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Access applications (other than personal information)	0	11	1	0	0	5	0	1	18	100.00%
Access applications that are partly personal information and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Total	0	11	1	0	0	5	0	1	18	
% of Total	0.00%	61.11%	5.56%	0.00%	0.00%	27.78%	0.00%	5.56%		

* 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).



Other required information
(continued)

Table C: Invalid applications

Reason for Invalidity	No of Applications	% of Total
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	8	100.00%
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0	0.00%
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0	0.00%
Total number of invalid applications received	8	100.00%
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	7	87.50%

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	0.00%
Cabinet Information	0	0.00%
Executive Council Information	0	0.00%
Contempt	0	0.00%
Legal professional privilege	0	0.00%
Excluded information	0	0.00%
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0.00%
Transport safety	0	0.00%
Adoption	0	0.00%
Care and protection of children	0	0.00%
Ministerial code of conduct	0	0.00%
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0	0.00%
Privilege generally – Sch 1(5A)	0	0.00%
Information provided to High Risk Offenders Assessment Committee	0	0.00%
Total	0	

* 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

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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	2	12.50%
Law enforcement and security	0	0.00%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	12	75.00%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	2	12.50%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0	0.00%
Secrecy provisions	0	0.00%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0.00%
Total	16	

Table F: Timeliness

	No of Applications	% of Total
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	11	91.67%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	1	8.33%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0.00%
Total	12	

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	1	1	2	28.57%
Review by Information Commissioner*	1	0	1	14.29%
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0	0.00%
Review by NCAT	1	3	4	57.14%
Total	3	4	7	
% of Total	42.86%	57.14%		

* 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.

Other required information
(continued)

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	6	85.71%
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	1	14.29%
Total	7	

Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies.

	No of Applications for review	% of Total
Agency-Initiated Transfers	0	0.00%
Applicant-Initiated Transfers	0	0.00%
Total	0	



How to contact council

Post
 Chief Executive Officer
 Kiama Municipal Council
 Po Box 75
 Kiama NSW 2533

Telephone
 +61 (02) 4232 0444

Online
 Email: council@kiama.nsw.gov.au
 Website: www.kiama.nsw.gov.au

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



KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
 your council. your community

Respect

Innovation

Integrity

Teamwork

Excellence

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State of our Municipality 2021-24

KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
your council. your community

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3 — KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL STATE OF OUR MUNICIPALITY REPORT 2021-24

Acknowledgement of Country

Kiama Municipal Council acknowledges the Wodi Wodi people on Dharawal country as the traditional custodians of the land on which our Municipality is located. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We are committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to our community.

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We belong and contribute




We thrive in a sustainable environment



We create a strong and diverse economy



We are part of a connected and liveable community



We expect accountable and transparent leadership ...

CEO message – looking ahead

Mayor's introduction

I am pleased to present this end of term State of our Municipality 2021-2024 report to the Kiama community. While this was a shorter term of council than usual due to the global pandemic, it has certainly not been an uneventful one.



Neil Reilly, Mayor of Kiama

Council elections were held in December 2021, with the newly elected Councillors inducted in January 2022. Less than a month later, the CEO presented Councillors with her 'State of the Organisation' report, which noted core challenges for the organisation in respect to financial sustainability, organisational capability, culture and performance, and risk and governance. This report set the tone for the Council term.

My fellow Councillors and I were in for a challenging ride, as information came to light about issues affecting the organisation. These challenges, many of them years, and in some cases decades in the making, were diligently worked through during the 2021-24 term of Council and I commend my fellow Councillors, Council staff and our community for working alongside us as we tackled the issues and made difficult but crucial decisions.

In the meantime, we faced other challenges too. The tail end of the COVID pandemic has had ongoing affects on businesses, governments and society. Weather events including flooding and heavy rains affected our area. Of particular note, one of our main arterial roads, Jamberoo Mountain Road, was closed for a period of 12 months. Road repairs are an ongoing challenge in a regional area such as ours.

On a lighter note, we also celebrated with some fantastic events. Our NYE Skyshow returned post-COVID bigger and better than ever, the Jamberoo Jam, Kiama Street Soiree and annual Winter Festival

have all proved popular with locals and visitors, as have the fantastic reader, author and book-themed events put on by our Libraries.

Meanwhile our premier events venue The Pavilion and our Holiday Parks continue to thrive and attract visitors to the area. Our Leisure Centre has provided water safety and swim lessons to thousands of local children year on year. The municipality's parks and gardens provide a range of play and recreation opportunities, and were regularly praised for our stunning floral displays.

It comes as no surprise that, given all of the above, Kiama won the NSW Top Tourism Town of the year in 2024. The award recognises much hard work from many sectors and Kiama Council was justifiably honoured by this accolade.

As I complete my term as Mayor and my 17 years as a Kiama Councillor this year, I can only be proud and impressed by all that we've achieved. While we have not been perfect, a wise mantra of leadership is to "leave things better than you found them" and I can honestly say that this term of Council has done that.



Neil Reilly
Mayor of Kiama 2021-2024

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

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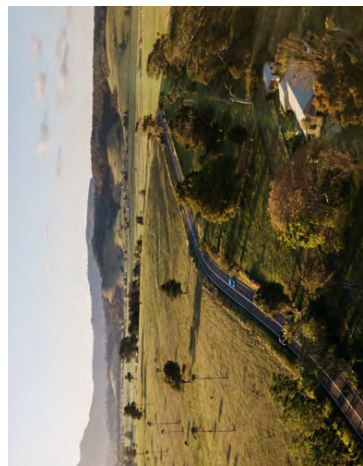
CEO message - looking ahead

About this report


The State of our Municipality report covers the term of the previous Council (December 2021 to August 2024) and objectively tracks councils progress against our Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

This report provides information that sets the scene for the new Council, including achievements to date. It also serves to highlight future work to be undertaken.

This report is designed to assist the new Council to undertake a review of the CSP, which is an essential component of Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) cycle.



Our CSP 2022-2032 is divided into five pillars, stating that:

-  We belong and contribute
-  We thrive in a sustainable environment
-  We create a strong and diverse economy
-  We are part of a connected and liveable community
-  We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a financially sustainable Council

The report shows the community's progress towards (or away from) its stated goals and aspirations as identified in the CSP.

The report reiterates the key outcomes Council identified under each pillar, and provides a snapshot of some of Council's main achievements, projects undertaken and progress made by different departments and areas of Council. These snapshots demonstrate the breadth and depth of work undertaken by Council in this shorter term (2 years, 9 months, versus a usual 4-year term).

The report provides valuable status information on key community objectives and the utility of the strategies which were identified to address them.

Council is currently operating under a NSW-Government imposed Performance Improvement Order (PIO), and Council has identified eight (8) strategic levers to help get to where we need to be and guide Councils direction over the following two to three years to achieve financial sustainability. Read more about this on page 13 under the foundations of financial stability.

The State of our Municipality report is presented to the second meeting of a newly elected council for noting. The quotes throughout this report were supplied by the Councillors who served as Kiamas elected representatives during this term of 2021-24.

"Moving forward, it is important that the new and future councils focus on core financial sustainability and complete the State Government's performance improvement order on council. I would also advise all new Councillors; you are elected to make decisions based on what you believe is the best interest of the community, so trust in your own judgement. Please be kind, persevere and be brave."

Cr Stuart Larkins

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Our councillors

Councillors in alphabetical order of surname



Councillor Matt Brown

I was raised in Kiama and I am a former Captain of Kiama High School.

I have been a corporate lawyer, business operator and employer, and a local Member of Parliament.

I have a proven record of success in negotiating, lobbying and securing grants and infrastructure for the local community.

I also have extensive experience in public administration.

I will continue to ensure that Kiama Council is 'Fit for the Future' to avoid any possibility of future amalgamation.

I am committed to improving the lifestyle of all residents, and the improvement of our Leisure Centre, recreation facilities and retirement villages.



Councillor Mark Croxford

I am a semi-retired corporate and public affairs consultant from Kiama Downs.

I am a volunteer within Kiama's LGA, including with our Combined Community Advocacy Group, North Precinct and Kiama High School P&C.

I am a 20-year navy veteran with operational service in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as a former senior ministerial adviser in the Howard government.

I'm also an advocate on mental health matters, particularly for veterans. I am married to Cath and a father of four.

It is no secret I am a member of the Liberal Party of Australia, however I strongly oppose the involvement of political parties in local government.



Councillor Imogen Draisma (Deputy Mayor)

I have lived in the Kiama area since a young age, attending Kiama and Minnamurra public schools.

I completed my school education at Wollongong High School of the Performing Arts and am currently completing a double degree, Bachelor of Arts/ Bachelor of Laws at the University of Wollongong.

During my university studies, I have been a student activist with a particular interest in student safety on campus, directing my attention to ensure that the pandemic-impacted university provides the services and supports that the student community needs.

I have worked for members of the NSW and Australian parliaments.

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Our councillors (continued)



Councillor Jodi Keast

I am 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.

I bring my board director experience with Grand Pacific Health, a non-profit organisation that delivers mental health services (e.g. Headspace), preventative health and Aboriginal health services, to my role as a councillor.

I am connected to the community through my work at the Kiama Community College, membership of local sporting clubs, volunteer work, as well as my family's strong involvement in local sporting, cultural, health and volunteer activities.



Councillor Stuart Larkins

I have grown up and lived in the Kiama area my entire life.

I have a long family heritage connected to Kiama and the South Coast of NSW.

I went to Minnamurra Primary School and Kiama High School.

I have completed a double degree in Law and Arts (Politics/Indigenous Studies) at the University of Wollongong and I also have a graduate diploma in legal practice from the Australian National University.

I have been involved in a number of our local volunteer groups.

What drives me is a passion to help people and I will always advocate for those that need it most.



Councillor Neil Reilly (Mayor)

I have represented the Kiama community as a councillor since 2008, including a year as deputy mayor.

My career has been in the field of advertising and marketing. I also served with the Australian Defence Force.

Although retired, I consider being a councillor my job. I am married to Wendy and we have three adult children.

My role in the community is an exceptional opportunity. I work in the best place on earth with its best people.

Council should be seeking outcomes that give us shared benefits and impose shared responsibilities.

There are joys, challenges and critical thinking. I love it.

Our councillors (continued)



Councillor Karen Renkema-Lang

I am committed to protecting the most precious assets in our municipality now and for future generations; the distinctive qualities and inclusive and friendly culture of our towns and villages; our farmlands, waterways, and beaches; and our flora, fauna, and wildlife corridors.

I have demonstrated this commitment by volunteering on Council committees, Kiama Central Precinct, and Kiama Community Radio.

I have an extensive background in IT and communications serving in the Royal Australian Navy and then working for the Australian Government.

My qualifications include a Bachelor of Information Technology and a Masters of Science (earth and environmental science).



Councillor Kathy Rice

I am motivated by a passion for community engagement in governance and have been an active and engaged Councillor since 2012.

I have worked in the community for most of my life and developed a rich experience of how participation can change lives.

I have striven to represent those views that arise most commonly in community consultations and submissions.

I respect the community's role in shaping local development controls that when followed, stabilise the uncertainty of planning outcomes and contribute towards environmental sustainability.

I want to help Kiama develop in ways that we most value whilst protecting those features that we most love.



Councillor Warren Steel

Since selling papers on the trams of Kingsford in the 50's I have had a long career developing businesses with a flair for the creative.

I have worked as an electrician, in sports, printing and real estate. I've also managed several businesses including a timber yard, brickworks, and a regional bank.

I was CEO of the Wollongong Chamber of Commerce for 10 years, championing the small business community and advocating for representation in local government.

I received a Lions Club award for 55 years of membership and services to the community, and an Outstanding Service Award from the Office of Local Government.

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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 an accessible 120km south of Sydney.

Our landscapes are diverse and 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 a harmonious, connected and resilient community.

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The Integrated Planning and Reporting framework

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

In 2022, Council adopted its 2022-2032 Community Strategic Plan, which forms the first layer of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework. It identifies our community's vision and objectives for a 10-year period and identifies strategies to work towards achieving these long term objectives. The CSP addresses social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues in an integrated manner.

Also in 2022, the newly elected Council established our Delivery Program 2022-2026 which focused on the specific actions to work towards achieving the objectives of the longer term CSP. Supporting the DP each year, Council established the annual OP to detail the activities and services that will be carried out during the following year.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Planning framework

3 months

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

6 months

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

12 months

Annual Report
Every 12 months we will focus on our progress in implementing the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, as these plans are wholly Council's responsibility.

4 years

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

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The foundations of financial stability

During the 2023-24 financial year, we planned the foundations of financial stability. This underpinning enabled our organisation to successfully navigate a challenging financial, political, and structural year. We also completed not one, but three sets of financial statements in a 12-month period.

While Council will record an operating deficit of \$5.4 million in 2024-25 (excluding capital grants and assets sales), we are now forecast to improve to an operating deficit of \$2.7 million in 2025-26 before returning an operating surplus of \$700,000 in 2026-27.

When you consider our budget deficit in 2019-20 was \$8.1 million, we've managed to realise an improvement in the order of 35% in our bottom line.

"Kiama Council is no longer in a position where efficiencies and savings are the answer. Where we go next will require political decisions from our incoming Councillors" said Jane Stroud Chief Executive Officer of Kiama Council.

"The most important of these will be deciding our core business as a council, following the review of our essential and non-essential services, which is already underway."

"However, the sale of assets alone is not the answer. We will need to focus on what we have to deliver for our community versus what is nice to do."

With this in mind we have developed the newly endorsed Strategic Finance and Governance Improvement Plan (Improvement Plan), which is critical to the work we need to do over the next three years as we work towards a surplus budget in 2026-27 that does not rely on asset sales year on year.

The Improvement Plan sets out what financial sustainability looks like for Kiama Council, and eight 'levers' for achieving it by 2026-27:

- 1 Sustainable cash reserves & responsible borrowing
- 2 Optimised revenue opportunities
- 3 Well planned assets
- 4 Reviewed and efficient service landscape
- 5 Investment in transformation
- 6 Robust financial management
- 7 Prioritising advocacy and partnerships
- 8 Ensure good governance



CSP outcomes – how did we do?

Each Pillar lists Pillar Outcomes, which are the goals Council and the community together have identified that we want to achieve. The CSP lists **Strategies**, which are how we will achieve the outcomes, **Partners**, the people, organisations and other stakeholders who will help us achieve the outcomes and **Community Indicators**, which include measurements for the outcomes.

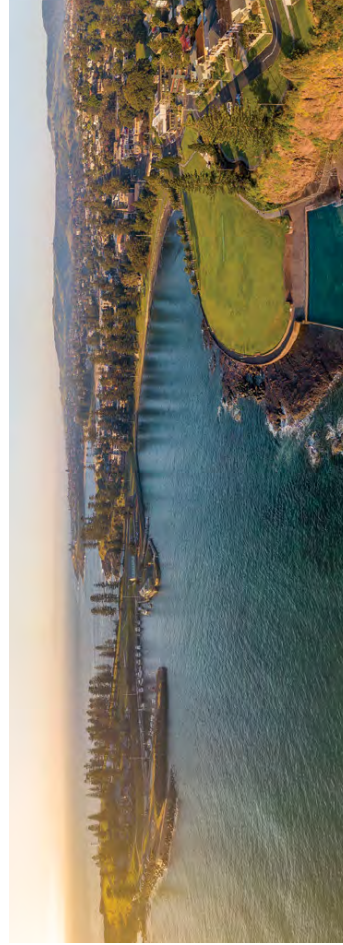
Below, we have tabled each Pillar Outcome with a short summary of how each has been achieved and/or if there is still work to carry over into the upcoming term of Council.

Each section also includes a few briefs on Council projects, business areas, achievements and strategic goals that relate to that Pillar (although much of Council's work is relevant across several and sometimes all five pillars). Altogether this provides a comprehensive overview of Council's achievements during this term, and offers a good basis for the incoming council to set priorities for their term (in line with the parameters of Kiama Council's NSW Government-issued Performance Improvement Order).

This information in this report, alongside other key documents such as our Strategic Finance and Government Improvement Plan, will assist our incoming Council to revise the CSP and set desired outcomes for the next ten years.

"Our council has come through what I have called an 'existential problem'. That is, a problem that left unanswered by positive action would mean that our council, which was established over 165 years ago, would cease to exist. The actions outlined in the State of our Municipality Report collectively represent a comprehensive effort by Kiama Council to address its difficulties and work towards a more sustainable future."

Mayor Neil Reilly



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Pillar 1
We belong and contribute



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Pillar 1: We belong and contribute

Pillar 1 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved	Pillar 1 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved
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.	<p>We have maintained our Socio-Economic Index for Areas SEIFA score of 1,061 (previously 1,056) in quintile 5, percentile 90 (2023 results).</p> <p>Kiama Council has not completed a community satisfaction survey since 2020 but plans to undertake one in early 2025.</p> <p>No new data available for volunteer numbers.</p> <p>Our events continue to be attended by a 70:30 ratio of locals: visitors.</p> <p>Our Libraries continue to produce annual reports.</p> <p>Council continues to support a range of diverse events and activities targeted at different demographics. These continue to be delivered for both general and specific purposes.</p> <p>Council has developed in collaboration with our young people, a range of new and existing partnerships and activities, as evidenced by our work at SENTRAL youth services, and our work in the careers and community engagement space with local preschools, primary and high schools.</p>	<p>● Yes</p>	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.	<p>Council continues to provide facilities that enable the community to participate in social, cultural, recreational and sports activities. Our SEIFA score has been maintained (see left).</p> <p>Kiama scores 96.6 in the Australian Urban Observatory Liveability index for key workers map.aao.org.au.</p> <p>In terms of looking after each other in times of disaster, Council has spent time, effort and resources in disaster recovery work during this term, including qualifying for declared natural disaster funding from State and Federal governments for road repair, beach and debris clean ups and green waste collection.</p> <p>Council produced a community poster to raise awareness of domestic and gender-based violence which was displayed in Council premises and made available to local businesses.</p> <p>Council has worked in conjunction with local area health services to provide locations for mobile health vans to set up, the annual 'Health Moves' program and seniors health activities.</p>	<p>● Yes</p>

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Pillar 1: We belong and contribute
(continued)

Pillar 1 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved
Our heritage matters; we want to learn, preserve and share both the Aboriginal history of this area, and the history since settlement.	<p>Work has commenced on Council's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which is being developed in close consultation with our local Aboriginal community. The RAP can incorporate the development of a Cultural sites index.</p> <p>Council has incorporated Aboriginal cultural elements into its civic events, as well as hosting an annual Sorry Day ceremony and the Local Government Regional NAIDOC awards for the Illawarra.</p> <p>Council has updated its Heritage Review program in this term, with more work scheduled. Number of applications/outcomes is not something that is available as a separate index. The Heritage Items Register is already included in LEP and State Heritage Register.</p> <p>Council provides regular advice and guidance on heritage buildings and local areas of cultural significance.</p> <p>Councils Libraries provide Family History Centres that allow people to explore local heritage (mostly post-Colonial information available).</p>	<p>● Yes</p>

"As a reflection on this term of council, it has been without a doubt, a challenge. I believe as part of my achievements for the Kiama Municipality, I have advocated for and ensured that we have developed; a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan, a Dog Friendly Spaces Strategy with key progress towards our first ever fenced dog park and establishing new heritage conservation areas for the Kiama town centre. I am proud to have served on the local traffic committee since 2022 and assisted with future plans and strategies for parking and traffic management across our local area."

Cr Stuart Larkins



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Community Hubs

Council has a network of six community halls, distributed across the municipality, which comprise of older style and single purpose facilities.

An assessment of Council halls, including their current asset condition and utilisation status were undertaken which identified a number of gaps and opportunities for improvement. Key areas for consideration were found to be: the underutilisation, maintenance status and the absence of a long-term vision for the assets. A number of recommendations and options have been put into place to increase activation, renewal, management and operations.

A marketing strategy was implemented to promote the facilities and community halls are included in Council's new online booking system as of June 2024. A two-year activation plan will be developed in 24-25 financial year.

Council's new Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) includes actions to improve accessibility and increase utilisation of community facilities.

Kiama Lifeguard Service

During the past four years there have been no recorded drownings in the flagged areas in the LGA, which goes to show having paid lifeguard services is of immense value for our community.

Council's Supervising Lifeguard helped with the introduction of Emergency Response Beacons (ERBs) for unpatrolled black spot areas in the LGA, to alert lifeguards to people in distress.

In the two years of the ERBs being in place, more 15 people have been rescued as a result of their use.

Council has also formed an unofficial exchange program with the RNLI Lifeguard service, where local lifeguards get to travel abroad and develop their skills on busy Cornish beaches and we in turn host lifeguards from Cornwall to work on our wonderful beaches.

We have fostered very good relationships with the local Surf Lifesaving Clubs through SAR training exercises, support in patrols and beach safety talks with the nippers. This hopefully encourages the young kids to progress from nippers through to paid professional lifeguards who will eventually patrol the beaches within the LGA.

Moving forward: if budget or grant funding allows, the new council might consider increasing the lifeguard service Council provides by incorporating patrols into the shoulder season, providing an additional service at Bombo Beach and improving the facilities provided to Council lifeguards at Werri and Bombo beaches.



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Blue Haven

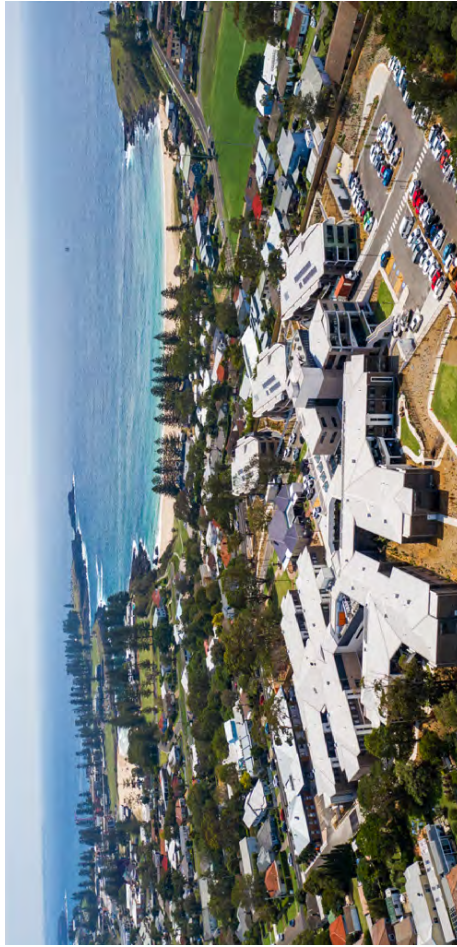
Arguably the most momentous action of this council term has been Council's decision and ongoing work to divest itself of its large aged care business, Blue Haven Bonaira.

Kiama Council has been providing aged care services in the Municipality for more than 40 years. Blue Haven currently consists of a 134-bed residential aged care facility, 250 Independent Living Units over two sites (Bonaira and Terralong), staff and associated services (eg: Commonwealth Home Care Packages) and Community Transport.

With the reforms and increased governance in the aged care sector making it increasingly untenable for Councils to run aged care, Kiama Council is the largest remaining local government provider of aged care services in Australia.

The decision for Council to divest Blue Haven Bonaira was not taken lightly. Councillors and the community have faced ongoing challenges in this process. Council has demonstrated its commitment to open and consistent communication each step of the way with regular meetings held, individual sessions offered, and frequent website and email updates circulated to Blue Haven residents, families and loved ones, staff and the wider community.

Council has also continued to produce its quarterly, 30-page print edition of the Blue Haven Newsletter, which contains divestment updates alongside general



good news stories and information on the wonderful care and activities held at Blue Haven.

The original motion to sell Blue Haven in April 2022 was rescinded, and an updated motion that was passed in October (re-confirmed in February 2023), was subject to the reclassification of the land. The reclassification process took several months and was completed in June 2023, allowing Council to go out to tender for the sale.

The EOI and tender process was held in accordance with Local Government Legislation and, as such, took many months. In February 2024, Council resolved to

decline all tenders for Blue Haven and negotiate with the preferred tenderer.

In May 2024, Council announced the buyer for Blue Haven was Hilt & Prior Aged Care and contracts were signed in June 2024, with settlement due to occur in February 2025.

Until the settlement and transfer is finalised, Council remains committed to Blue Haven, and the care and wellbeing of our residents and staff is paramount.

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Library Services

The opening of the newly renovated Gerringong Library and Museum (GLaM) facility was held on 1 December 2021. The public opening was attended by more than 500 people who enjoyed the smoking ceremony by Gumaraa and participated in a variety of activities and programs showcasing what would be on offer to the community ongoing.

Our libraries host and support a number of reader, writer and author events and activities including:

- National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) – an annual challenge to writers to write 50,000 words of a novel in thirty days – over November. We have supported this program in 2022 and 2023 by providing access to some amazing published author including: Clayton Zane Comber, Kate Forsyth, Jonica Newby, Meredith Jaffe, A.L. Tait, Jeff Apter, Kell Woods and Tori Haschaka.

- Embracing the Bridgeton phenomenon Gerringong Library was transformed into an elegant tea room with tables adorned with flowers and decorations which set the stage for an unforgettable experience hosting sixty distinguished ladies and gentlemen for a spectacular event. The enchanting melodies of harpist Yasmine Russell greeted guests on their arrival and a delectable High Tea was provided by a local community group as a fund raising activity.

- Early literacy programs for children have increased to include a fortnightly Baby Storytime and Toddler Tales sessions at Gerringong Library, which reflect the current programs being offered at Kiama Library. School holiday programs continue to be popular and allow children to explore new interests, develop confidence and actively engage in social interaction with others.

- Escape Room activities have been a popular Summer school holiday activity with family groups participating in puzzling their way through cyphers, riddles and physical challenges to break the curse and save the world.

- The Library's Makers and Creators program provides opportunities for community members and students to gather and learn how to create and build together. For ages 15 to 115 this intergenerational activity instils a love of lifelong learning alongside other community members. Recent activities have included block printed tea towels, watercolour felt flowers, brooches and Canva basics. This program has the added benefit of engaging with community members that are not regular attendees at other library programs.

"I think it is very important that even in a cash strapped Council with a primary focus on improving itself, that our residential communities are not forgotten and there will be some tangible outcomes that directly benefit them throughout the 2024-28 Council term ahead."

Cr Kathy Rice





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Pillar 2

We thrive in a sustainable environment



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Pillar 2: We thrive in a sustainable environment

Pillar 2 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved	Pillar 2 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved
We protect our people, our place, our flora and fauna through our planning and our actions.	<p>Council works with local, regional and NSW and Federal Government stakeholders to comply with the Coastal Management Act.</p> <p>Coastal Management Program finalised and endorsed by the Minister.</p> <p>Minnamurra River and Crooked River Coastal Zone Management Programs are being implemented.</p>	<p>Achieved ●</p> <p>In progress ●</p>	Our natural environment of spectacular beaches, rainforests and rolling hills define our place.	<p>Council conducts regular care and maintenance of our outdoor spaces. We work with local Landcare groups to deliver events such as National Tree Day in conjunction with Kiama High School.</p> <p>Council holds regular free composting workshops and provides funding and support to community gardening groups in the LGA.</p> <p>A highlight was the intergenerational gardening event, organised at Kiama Community Garden with garden volunteers, Blue Haven residents and carers, and local preschool children.</p>	<p>Achieved ●</p> <p>Yes</p>

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Pillar 2: We thrive in a sustainable environment
(continued)

Pillar 2 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved	Pillar 2 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved
We use our natural resources in efficient and sustainable ways: managing, improving or enhancing through protection, restoration and maintenance.	Regular patrols are undertaken to monitor for illegal dumping. Additionally 104 illegal dumping complaints were received and investigated in the 2023-24 financial year. Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy has been drafted and will go on public exhibition in late 2024. Regular waste audits are conducted and Kiama scores well, see stats on page 24. Regular waste events include: Household Bulky Waste, Second Hand Saturday, Household Chemical Clean out, Fabric Swap and Clothes Swap events. We have maintained our compliance with EPA standards.	● Yes	We work together to understand and respond to the need for growth and change.	Our Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan (Net Zero Strategy) continues to be worked through with LED street light upgrades implemented in partnership with Endeavour Energy and the gradual shift of the Council fleet to electric vehicles (where possible). We have also partnered with Endeavour Energy to introduce the LGAs first Community Battery. We have completed and published Bushfire Mapping in accordance with NSW Rural Fire Service requirements. Flood studies have been conducted, with funding being sought to implement recommendations. Growth & Housing Strategy has been drafted (see pillar 4) Crisis management procedures and policies are being developed.	● In progress

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Reducing our footprint

Kiama Council has continued to work on reducing both our carbon footprint and to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill by encouraging residents to reduce, reuse and recycle.

Our regular waste events remain very popular. These include Household Bulky Waste, which is held twice a year in March and September, and allows Kiama residents to book in and drop off bulky waste to our Community Recycling Facility for free. The event also hosts an 'Up for Grabs' shed where pre-loved goods such as furniture, surfboards and other sporting equipment, books, toys and household goods can be given another lease on life by being claimed by someone new.

Council also hosts Second Hand Saturday, a large car-boot sale open to Kiama residents as stallholders and anyone to come along to browse and buy. There's also a fabric swap event, regular free composting workshops, the Household Chemical Clean Out, and various other waste education events and campaigns.



864,000 bins lifted 2023-24 FY



1310 tonnes of green waste received



390 tonnes of scrap metal received



Our Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan 2021-2031 (Net Zero Strategy) continues to be worked through. During this term of Council, steps towards reducing our carbon emissions to net zero included the following:

- All municipal street lights switched to LED, in conjunction with Endeavour Energy
- Photovoltaic panels on the roof of our Leisure Centre and Blue Haven Bonaira
- Installation of the Kiama Downs Community Battery, led by Endeavour Energy

- Being an active part of the Cities Power Partnership, Australia's largest government climate network that represents close to 11 million Australians.
- The Mayor's car is now a fully electric vehicle (EV).
- Kiama Council joined forces with our neighbouring Shoalhaven and Shellharbour councils to secure a renewable electricity agreement with innovative energy retailer, Flow Power.

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Open Spaces & Recreation

Our Open Space and Recreation team have undertaken a service review in this Council term and will look to report and implement any actions and outcomes moving forward.

Other achievements in this area include:

- Old School Park Gerringong playground upgrade
 – Council replaced the aging play equipment at Old School Park in Gerringong with new equipment including swings. Completed May 2023 cost \$165,000.
- Headland Drive Gerroa playground upgrade – after aboriginal heritage issues at Emery Park Gerroa delayed that project. The new equipment greatly improved the play opportunities at that location. A new playground will be built at Emery Park when heritage issues are resolved.
- Public Tree Management Policy – The Tree Planting Policy and tree and Vegetation Vandalism Policy were combined to form the new Public Tree Management Policy. This policy went through several revisions after community consultation and focus group scrutiny, and was adopted in April 2022. This document improves the way council manages trees on public land.

Looking forward to the next Council term, our Open Space and Recreation teams will finalise Councils Open Space and Recreation Strategy. This strategy will guide and assist Council and the community in understanding current and near-term demand for recreational facilities and what types of recreational facilities and open space is required into the future for the Kiama Municipality.

Council is also looking toward finalisation of the Masterplans for South Warri Reserve and Kiama Sport Complex and Leisure Centre. These masterplans will provide Council with a guide to future proposed development for these sites

"There is plenty of work ahead for the new Council, the long-awaited Traffic and Parking Study and the Rural Land Use Strategy both await finalisation and there are still many actions towards protecting agriculture and agricultural lands to progress. I am looking forward to hearing more of Council's progress towards Zero Carbon by 2031 and watching as Urban Greening outcomes become visible."

Cr Kathy Rice





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Pillar 3

We create a strong and diverse economy

INTERACTIVE NAVIGATION

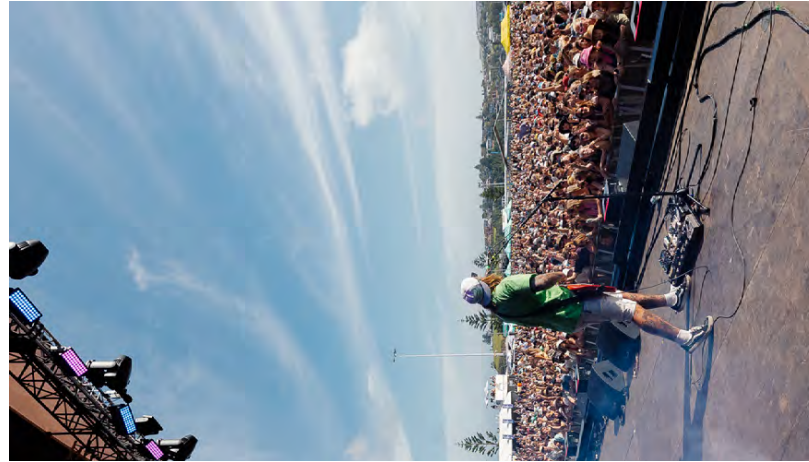
- Overview
- We belong and contribute
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- CEO message - looking ahead



Pillar 3: We create a strong and diverse economy

Pillar 3 Outcomes

Measures	Achieved
<p>A strong economy, vibrant local businesses and local economic growth.</p> <p>Council appointed an Economic Development Officer during this term, who worked closely with the Kiama & District Business Chamber and Destination Kiama to strengthen ties with and promote economic opportunities to local businesses. Council supported and promoted events such as the Local Business Awards, the Illawarra Business Awards and Small Business Month.</p> <p>Destination Kiama continued its successful partnership program, incorporating hundreds of local businesses and suppliers.</p> <p>Since the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) was published, our local economy has grown from \$1.668 billion (2020 stats) to \$2.3 billion in 2024 (REMPAN).</p> <p>The number of local jobs has risen from 5,260 to 6,794 (REMPAN 2024).</p> <p>Kiama Councils Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 will be updated in the upcoming Council term.</p> <p>Number of local businesses have risen to 2,119 (ABS).</p> <p>Kiama's draft Growth & Housing Strategy (see info under Pillar 4) is being developed and will identify employment lands and needs in the area.</p> <p>We have worked towards an LGA-wide economic development strategy by undertaking the State of our Economy assessment and are working towards completion of Employment Lands Strategy. These will feed into the updated Economic Development Strategy and Growth and Housing Strategy.</p>	<p>● Yes</p>



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CEO message – looking ahead

Pillar 3: We create a strong and diverse economy
(continued)



Pillar 3 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved
<p>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.</p>	<p>Council's tourism and events unit, Destination Kiama, has continued to work successfully with local and regional businesses, event organisers and suppliers in its partnerships program.</p> <p>Destination Kiama has been successful in securing grants for a mix of community and visitor events.</p> <p>Council's Tourism and Events Advisory Committee (TEAC) meets bi-monthly and advises Kiama Council on tourism policy and strategy, including the development and implementation of the Kiama Tourism and Events Strategic Plan (2022-26) and its Action Plan, as well as the Kiama Major Events Impact Report (2024), while addressing tourism-related community impacts, supporting sustainable visitor growth, identifying investment opportunities, guiding marketing efforts, and raising awareness of the visitor economy's benefits.</p> <p>Visitor number remain consistent at 1.1m for the year ending March 2024 (this is down on March 2023 figures but in line with figures when the CSP was developed). However total visitor nights is at a record 1.9 million resulting in an increased spend, and an increased average stay of 3.4 nights (all time 12-month record).</p> <p>The Kiama Major Events Impact Review and Recommendations Report was initiated due to an increase in large-scale event applications and their cumulative effect. It supports hosting up to six major events annually based on feedback from focus groups, resident and attendee surveys. While major events don't closely align with the Tourism and Events Strategic Plan's goal of positioning Kiama as a destination for boutique events, they are effective in addressing seasonality challenges, boosting visitor spending, and supporting local businesses.</p>	<p>● Yes</p>

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CEO message – looking ahead





Pillar 3: We create a strong and diverse economy
(continued)

Kiama Coast Holiday Parks

Kiama Council runs five Kiama Coast Holiday Parks across our LGA: Kiama Harbour Cabins, Surf Beach Holiday Park, Kendall's Beach Holiday Park, Warri Beach Holiday Park and Seven Mile Beach Holiday Park.

Our Holiday Parks have welcomed a large number of visitors during this period, following the dip in bookings caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the period from December 2021 to August 2024 (this Council term), Kiama Coast Holiday Parks recorded the following figures:

-  **\$30.8 million** combined income
-  **799,720** tourist nights
-  An average of **198,000** visitor nights for long term casual Holiday vans
-  **67%** Average cabin occupancy
-  **60.25** Average site occupancy

In May 2022 Council commenced a \$3.8 million program of works to undertake compliance and improvement works across all five of its Holiday Parks over several years. This work is ongoing.

Looking forward: the Holiday Parks will continue and complete its compliance program over the five Holiday Parks. We will also review and renew management contracts for the five Holiday Parks, as per the cycle of regular reviews.

Regular wins include attending industry consumer events such as the Sydney Caravanning and Camping Show, the Canberra Caravan and Camping Expo, and the Sydney Dog Show. The latter introduced our Holiday Parks to a whole new cohort of clientele, resulting in a large increase to our mailing list and anticipated bookings.



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Pillar 3: We create a strong and diverse economy (continued)






Tourism & Events

Kiama Councils tourism and events division, Destination Kiama has gone from strength to strength. This Council term began towards the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and as such saw a significant resurgence in visitor numbers to our area.

Kiama Municipality has always been a popular holiday destination, within easy reach of Sydney, Wollongong and Canberra. We boast an excellent variety of events, activities and local attractions. This resulted in Kiama being awarded NSW's Top Tourist Town 2024 earlier in the year. A well-deserved accolade which is also testament to the hard work and dedication of our Destination Kiama team, Tourism and Economic Advisory Board and Kiama Council.

Meanwhile, our premier events venue, The Pavilion, also continues to thrive with a very full calendar of events including large one-off music festivals regulars such as the 'Kiama I Do' wedding trail and community events such as the Christmas Market and Kiama Show as well as a host of conferences, meetings, weddings, community meetings, concerts and other events.

In the 12 months from March 2023 to March 2024, our local tourism industry saw:

-  **\$330 million** injected into the Kiama economy
-  **77,000** international visitors
-  **522,000** day visitors
-  **524,000** overnight visitors
-  **3.4 nights** was the average length of stay

Source - Tourism Research Australia

The Pavilion

- Total of 362 events held in 2023-24.
- Client surveys show an overall venue, catering and customer service rating of 9/10 for events held in the 2023-24 year.
- Increase in Formals from 3 in 2020 to 10 booked for 2024.
- Collaboration with local accommodation houses and council run holiday parks to offers guests attending events at the Pavilion a discount when holding their event at the Pavilion.
- Partner with local wedding vendors for Kiama I Do Wedding Expo to attract clients to local area for destination weddings.

"Destination Kiama has matured and is delivering on all measures as set out in the Tourism Opportunities Plan. We now have an excellent "calendar of events" year-round and support from the community at large for our events. This has led to us being awarded the Top Tourist Town in NSW for 2024!"

Cr Matt Brown



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Pillar 4

We are part of a connected and liveable community



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

Pillar 4 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved	Pillar 4 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved
We love where we live; our housing reflects our values.	<p>Council has developed its draft Growth & Housing strategy by seeking community and stakeholder feedback. The strategy sets out a roadmap for reasonable and sustainable growth and housing across the LGA and wider region.</p> <p>Council continues to work with the NSW Government and Department of Planning on housing. We attend Land and Environment Court to resolve issues when required. Council works with the Illawarra Housing Trust on affordable housing.</p> <p>The Scenic Management Study has been deferred and will be further explored following the adoption of the Growth and Housing Strategy. Visual impact and scenic analysis is currently a requirement of any development in our rural and environmental landscape.</p>	<p>● In progress</p>	We are well connected within our local community, and to our region.	<p>Council provides advice and approvals in line with NSW Government legislation and our planning instruments and guidelines.</p> <p>Progress has been made on regional cycleways, shared pathways and roads to maximise access to key destinations and facilities, although there is still more to achieve in this area, particularly around the Jamberoo cycleway extension.</p> <p>New signage was installed along the Kiama Coast Walk, which provides visitor information and increases both wayfinding and safety (eg. signs featuring emergency contact information and locations are now located every 2km along the Loves Bay to Warri Beach section of the Kiama Coast Walk).</p>	<p>● Yes</p>

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CEO message – looking ahead

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

Pillar 4 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved
Our built environment is safe and inclusive; our infrastructure is well planned and well managed.	<p>Asset Management Plans are in place or are being developed for all Council owned and managed assets and infrastructure.</p> <p>Cycling Maps were updated in prior to the World Cycling Championships in 2022.</p> <p>All new infrastructure works undertaken by Council are compliant with AS1428. Any upgrade works to existing infrastructure are made AS1428 compliant wherever it is viable to do so.</p> <p>We launched the Kiama Rides guide in April 2024 which outlines nine diverse rides catering to riders with a range of skills and experience.</p>	<p>● Yes</p>
We embrace innovation and new technologies and resources that improve environmental and social outcomes.	<p>We have maintained the number of local education providers in the region and continue to partner with our local providers where there is opportunity including the Kiama High School Careers Day.</p> <p>Working closely with our tenant Jamberoo Preschool to provide a solution to regular flooding of their Council-owned facility.</p> <p>Councillors and Council staff regularly attend regional forums, networks and conference events and return to share knowledge (via Council report, internal briefings, etc.).</p>	<p>● In progress</p>



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CEO message – looking ahead

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

Leading growth for good

Kiama Council is embarking on an inclusive and dynamic journey and encouraging every member of the community to actively participate in this pivotal conversation that will shape the trajectory of Kiama's future.

The growth conversation delves into the intricacies of our evolving landscape.

Recognising the national housing shortage, and local government's role in managing growth, we aim to collaboratively identify suitable sites for growth, explore practical solutions, and define essential infrastructure which are fundamental for responsible growth.

Strategic planning for growth, housing and development is always a key topic for Local Government and the communities they serve.

In this council term, much progress was made towards a Growth and Housing Strategy, alongside other important planning documents being progressed. Some of these include:

- Heritage reviews
- Coastal Management Plan
- Crown Lands Plan of Management
- Development Application assessment policy

"The last term of Council saw several longer-term projects come to fruition. I am pleased that following its beginnings in 2019-2020 the Kiama Growth and Housing Strategy was recently finalised. I am hopeful that through it, the expressed needs of our community will guide the developments to be constructed in Kiama."

Cr Kathy Rice



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

Infrastructure & Liveability

It has been a busy term for Council's Infrastructure and Liveability team, which includes Road Safety, Engineering, Technical Services, Property Services, Tree Management, Parks and Outdoor Spaces, Cemeteries, Holiday Parks and Lifeguard Services. Highlights include:

Road safety

- Road safety officer supported by Transport for NSW
- Annual participation in National Road Safety Week
- Education for top road safety initiatives
 - Driving while distracted
 - Speed
 - Drugs and alcohol
- Helping Learner Drivers Become Safer Driver workshops and Learner Logbook Runs, including a night time run
- Coffee with a Cop
- Investigation of road safety matters within the Kiama LGA, including traffic and parking
- New Kiama High School pedestrian crossing
- New Bong Bong Street pedestrian crossing near railway station
- School safety improvements for pedestrians around various schools (signs and lines).

Natural disaster recovery

- March 2022 event
 - Landslips and trees down on multiple roads resulting in road closures.
 - Short term flooding in Gerringong, Jamberoo and Kiama.
 - Recovery works funded through Federal and State Government only completed in 2024 due to extent of damage to road infrastructure and landslips in difficult locations.
 - Further rain caused a major landslip on Jamberoo Mountain Road in July 2022, resulting in the closure of the road for an extensive period of time, reopening in mid July 2023.

Jamberoo Mountain Road

Video and regular updates [kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/News/Your-council-your-community/Engineering-a-new-Jamberoo-Mountain-Road](https://www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/News/Your-council-your-community/Engineering-a-new-Jamberoo-Mountain-Road).

Link to video: [kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/News/Jamberoo-Road-reopens](https://www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/Council/News/Jamberoo-Road-reopens).

- 2024 events in May and June
 - Landslips and trees down on multiple roads resulting in road closures, many on the same roads impacted in the 2022 weather event.
 - Recovery works are ongoing, with two landslip outstanding and planned for late 2024-25.



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CEO message – looking ahead

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

Flood reports

- Gerringong and Jamberoo flood management study completed in 2022.
- Currently undertaking Risk Management plans for Jamberoo and Spring Creek, including concept designs for future improvements.

Ongoing projects

Hindmarsh Park

After an extensive community engagement and design process, the build contract for the enhancement of Hindmarsh Park was awarded in November 2023 to Growth Civil Landscapes. This project was completed in September 2024 with the grand opening held on 21 October 2024. Several NSW Government Agencies provided funding for the project resulting in the installation of a variety of attractive features, such as a water play area, rock climbing facilities, towers, rope climbs, bridges, inclusive play elements, slides, swing sets, shade canopies, bicycle lockers and repair station and a barbeque area. The upgrade also included new and improved pathways and a revamp of the Orry Kelly Stage.

Jamberoo sports field lighting upgrade

Upgrade existing lighting to LED and addition of some new poles to extend ability to use the sports fields. Project due for completion late 2024.



Jamberoo dog park

Scheduled to begin work late 2024-early 2025.

"For the 2024-25 financial year, the council has planned a \$13.9 million capital works program, primarily funded by grants and reserves, to ensure continued investment in community infrastructure."

Mayor Neil Reilly

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CEO message – looking ahead

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

Property management

Highlights from our property management team include:

- Divestment of Akuna Street (South)
- Divestment of Irvine Street, Kiama
- Divestment of Lot 100 South Kiama Drive, Kiama
- Development and endorsement of Council Managed Crown Land Plan of Management
- Delivery of Community Battery project - Kiama Downs

Looking ahead, our property team will be working towards the following:

- Development of a Property Strategy
- Divestment of identified lands
- Development of a Rental Rebate Policy



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Pillar 5

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

Pillar 5 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved
Public funds and assets are managed strategically, transparently and efficiently.	<p>Council has made huge progress with its financial reporting, completing three sets of financial statements in 2024 to get up to date.</p> <p>This term of Council has focused on financial sustainability and transparency, with an unprecedented amount of financial information reported regularly to Councillors and the community via Council's business papers.</p> <p>Our Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) and Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) meet regularly and provide advice and guidance.</p> <p>This high-level of reporting and detail has been well established and will continue through the next Council term, as best practice, and also to meet the requirements of the NSW Government issued Performance Improvement Order.</p>	<p>● Yes</p>



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CEO message – looking ahead

Pillar 5: We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a financially sustainable Council
(continued)

Pillar 5 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved	Pillar 5 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved
Governance is transparent and builds trust.	Key documents including the Strategic Improvement Plans, Performance & Governance Improvement Plan have been developed to guide Councils operations and meaningfully measure how the actions and strategies of the CSP and other documents impact on the delivery of Councils work, as well as ensuring Council meets the requirements of the NSW Government imposed Performance Improvement Order (PIO). Council provides our community, stakeholders and local media with a steady and regular stream of information, updates, press releases, business papers, and other communications. This has helped to forge and in some cases also repair relationships and build trust in the community. Council has substantially revised and updated its Community Engagement Strategy and is developing a practical framework to undertake and measure community engagement.	● Yes			
				Council updated its Social Media Policy, endorsed its first Media Policy and drafted a Customer Service Charter. This suite of documents help ensure good communications, engagement and customer service. A community satisfaction survey will be undertaken in early 2025. The number of Code of Conduct complaints increased, but Council will work to provide Councillor induction and workshops to reduce this number in the incoming Council. The Hopwood Review of Governance Arrangements was received by Council in early 2022 and contained 35 recommendations, all of which have been actioned. Councils Committees Framework Policy was endorsed in this term and Council committees have been maintained.	● Yes

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CEO message – looking ahead

Pillar 5: We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a financially sustainable Council
(continued)



Pillar 5 Outcomes	Measures	Achieved
Council has the right structures, technology, processes and procedures to support their role in delivering for the public.	<p>Council has worked hard to restructure the organisation to align functions, appoint permanent staff where people were acting or there were gaps and to 'rightsized' our teams and departments.</p> <p>A total of 41 polices have been reviewed and endorsed by Council during their term in office.</p> <p>While the updated IT Strategy is still under development, we have made big progress implementing Councils enterprise management platform, TechnologyOne and updating some of our legacy platforms. Our website continues to get good traffic and will see the addition of a community engagement platform and Councillor Portal in late 2024.</p>	<p>● In progress</p>

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CEO message – looking ahead

Pillar 5: We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a financially sustainable Council
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Performance Improvement Order and Strategic Plans

This Council term began with a CEO report on the "State of the Organisation" in February 2022 that identified three crucial areas for urgent attention:

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

Council followed this up by drafting a Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP), which was adopted by Council in May 2022. The SIP had four focus areas: finance and costs, assets, communications, and staff.

Kiama Mayor Neil Reilly said: "A Strategic Improvement Plan allows us to immediately focus on what needs to be addressed to stabilise and improve our situation."

In April 2022 Council received a forensic report prepared by accountancy firm Forsyths that covered an assessment of Kiama Council's historical financial data and transactions regarding:

- Cash management
- Blue Haven Bonaira development
- Developer contribution reserves

On 8 November 2022, Kiama Council was issued with a Performance Improvement Order (PIO) by the Hon. Wendy Tuckerman MP, Minister for Local Government. Council completed this first Performance Improvement Order in June 2023.

In April 2023, Council adopted its updated Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP2), which captured actions from the PIO.

Council was issued with a [varied Performance Improvement Order](#) in May 2024.

In July 2024 Council endorsed a Strategic Finance & Governance Improvement Plan, which was prepared both as a requirement of the varied PIO and also to reiterate Councils primary obligation is to be financially sustainable and make effective use of the public funds entrusted to us and ensure the responsible management and planning of community assets, so that future ratepayers are not burdened unnecessarily.

The varied PIO requires Council to become financially sustainable by the 2026-2027 financial year.



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Pillar 5: We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a financially sustainable Council
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In our Strategic Finance & Governance Improvement Plan, Council has identified eight (8) strategic levers to help get to where we need to be and guide Council's direction over the following two to three years to achieve financial sustainability. These levers are:

- 1 Sustainable cash reserves & responsible borrowing
- 2 Optimised revenue opportunities
- 3 Well planned assets
- 4 Reviewed and efficient service landscape
- 5 Investment in transformation
- 6 Robust financial management
- 7 Prioritising advocacy and partnerships
- 8 Ensure good governance

Council staff will provide bi-monthly status reports on the actions of the Strategic Finance & Governance Improvement Plan to both the elected body and the NSW Office of Local Government. Copies of these status reports will also be published on Council's website.



"Kiama Council has implemented a series of financial and governance reforms, driven by our own Strategic Improvement Plan and echoed by Performance Improvement Orders issued by the NSW Minister for Local Government."

Mayor Neil Reilly

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Pillar 5: We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a financially sustainable Council
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Service reviews

In February 2023, Council resolved to undertake service reviews of four key areas:

- Kiama Leisure Centre
- Holiday Parks
- Waste Services
- The Pavilion

In addition, Council is conducting service reviews in some of its other departments. This will be a rolling program of reviews, as per legislative and IP&R requirements.

Service reviews are a very normal, and indeed legislated, part of Local Government operations. However, Kiama Council hasn't done service reviews for many years, which is not ideal but the situation is now being rectified.

Service reviews give us a chance to consider what services we are delivering, innovation opportunities and required changes that might be needed.

Going forward into the new Council term, our Implementation Team will be coordinating Kiama Council's service reviews, conducting community engagement as needed and reporting results to Council and our community.



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We belong and contribute

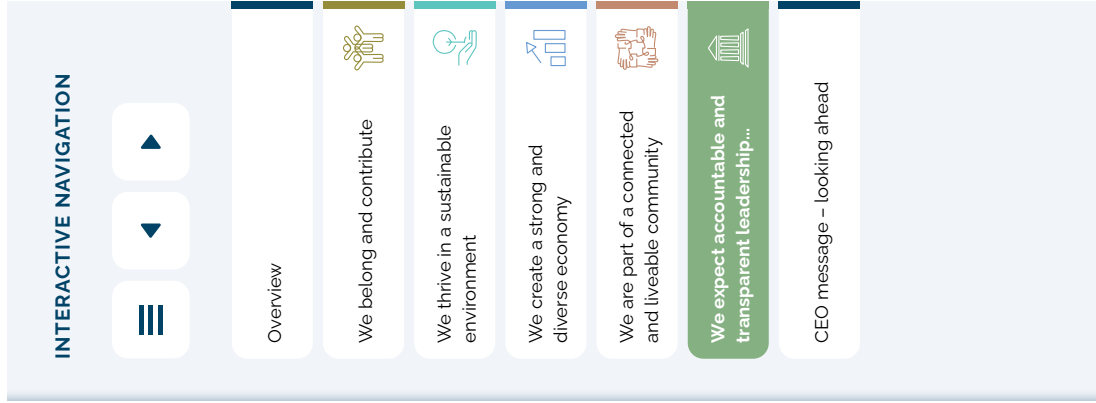
We thrive in a sustainable environment

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CEO message – looking ahead



Pillar 5: We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a financially sustainable Council
(continued)

People and Performance
Council made excellent progress working through organisation structure changes to improve synergy, collaboration and efficiency of output and services to the community.

- This involved
- Roles and appointments made as a result of re-purposing existing positions and centralising work functions, rather than creating brand new roles
 - Where possible, appointing permanent or part-time staff where we were previously relying on contractors
 - Our reliance on contractors and consultants has been greatly reduced
 - We continue the process to 'rightsized' the organisation and our departments

During the period of the pandemic and associated restrictions and lockdowns, Council's People and Performance team led organisational compliance, service continuity during impact period. The team assessed and implemented the resulting positive wellbeing, technological and flexible approaches into our current working conditions.

As an organisation, Council has worked closely with our Councillors, chairs of Audit, Risk & Improvement, Financial Advisory and Blue Haven Advisory Committees and our executive to define, treat and evaluate the strategic risks that impact Councils objectives.

This period has also seen Council review its Employee Value Proposition – The EVP Project – in particular looking at what Council offers in the market and how to market the organisation to potential candidates. In doing so, Council updated its recruitment advertising and increased our flexible working options and promoted study assistance. This also resulted in development of a Senior Staff Attraction & Retention Policy.

- Other internal successes include:
- Implementation of the payroll TechOne software including the roll out of electronic timesheets, significant efficiency gains and more compliant record retention.
 - The Rural Management Challenge is a professional development opportunity Council staff that is specially designed for councils in rural and regional areas of NSW. Kiama's Rural and Regional Management Challenge Team won the prestigious event in both 2021 and 2022, announced at the NSW Local Government Excellence Awards each year.

Improvements to Council's Delegations review and issue process have been substantially implemented and are now hosted on a repository platform that integrates onto Council's website.

- Engaged governance expert Tood Hopwood to review Kiama Councils governance policies, processes, resources and personnel. The Hopwood report made 35 recommendations, all of which have since been or are being implemented, including all

seven of the recommendations listed for immediate action.

- Councilor induction and professional development program developed and delivered.
- Creation of key plans and policies including but not limited to: Crisis Communications Plan, Psychosocial Risk Policy, Child Safe Standards across Council, Complaints Handling Policy, Flexible Work Policy
- Updating emergency management processes in Blue Haven ILUs.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion focus with recruitment and selection practices.
- Leadership and development programs for Executive and Management Leadership teams.
- Commenced review of critical risk and safety culture.
- Recognition of significant days including R U OK? day, Harmony week, International Womens Day, International Mens Day and Local Government Week Awards.



Pillar 5: We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a financially sustainable Council
(continued)

Rebooting community engagement

Recognising the importance of good communications and community engagement, Council invested in these key areas during this term.

This saw Council develop and update key strategies and policies such as our Social Media Policy, Media Policy, Customer Service Charter and Community Engagement Strategy.

In 2024 we welcomed onboarded our first-ever Community Engagement Officer, taking on board consistent feedback from the Community and our Councillors that Kiama Council recognise the importance of enhancing our work in this crucial area.

One of the Community Engagement Officer's first and more vital tasks was to revise and reboot our outdated Community Engagement Strategy, which we kicked off with a unique co-design process to draft the strategy and followed up with a comprehensive series of community engagements, workshops and information gathering.

The updated Community Engagement Strategy was endorsed in June 2024 and provides a practical framework for delivering meaningful and measurable community engagement and amplifying a diversity of voices in our community and stakeholders.

During this term, Council also had success with its Your Council, Your Community monthly advertorial page in a local newspaper, which highlighted various Council departments and promoted our events and projects.

In 2024, we moved to video, launching a regular, post-Council meeting Mayoral video and a new program of 'Your Council, Your Community' videos, with the first featuring staff from Kiama Leisure Centre.

"Another achievement that responded to community wishes was the development of the Customer Service Charter, which should soon be operative for those contacting Council."

Cr Kathy Rice



INTERACTIVE NAVIGATION

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Overview

We belong and contribute

We thrive in a sustainable environment

We create a strong and diverse economy

We are part of a connected and liveable community

We expect accountable and transparent leadership...

CEO message – looking ahead

CEO message – looking ahead

As we conclude the 2021-24 term of Kiama Council, my team and I are future-focused on the road ahead.

As this State of our Municipality report shows, this term of Council has provided its share of challenges. I'm proud of how both the organisation and governing body rose to those challenges and made progress.

I'd like to give particular praise to our finance team, who have worked diligently to get our financial statements back on track and into real-time data, with reliable monthly reporting. This could not have been achieved without ongoing assistance from the Audit Office of NSW, which has been greatly appreciated.

As we welcome our new and returning Councilors for this next term, I'm looking forward to engaging with our elected body, and our community, to envision what they want Kiama Council to become over the next decade. With the divestment of Blue Haven Bonaira and a refocusing on municipal services, we already know that our Council operations will look very different in that respect.

We're also hyper aware of retaining and maintaining the things our community and our elected representatives value so highly: our pristine environment, focused on sustainability, the sense of togetherness and a strong and diverse economy.

We also know that our community expects accountable and transparent leadership and a

Council that is financially sustainable, and I remain steadfastly committed to this goal. It's no secret that all these things have been pillars of our Community Strategic Plan for the past term. While the wording may change when we create our next CSP, as we move into the 2024-28 term of Council, the sentiment and goal posts will stay the same. We must spend within our means, manage the business efficiently and strive to improve the culture and safety practices of the organisation.

In looking ahead, a draft 'Roadmap to Recovery' report has been prepared and will be workshopped with Councilors so that a clearer vision, set milestones and decision points are evident, understood and shared. The draft roadmap lists achievements and advocacy projects, as well as outlining key policy positions and goals for the next two years while we strive to meet and have lifted the NSW Government Performance Improvement Order.

I'm feeling optimistic about the road ahead and working with a cohesive elected body and the staff of the organisation.

Thanks,



Jane Stroud
Chief Executive Officer



Jane Stroud

INTERACTIVE NAVIGATION

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CEO message – looking ahead

How to contact council

Post
 Chief Executive Officer
 Kiama Municipal Council
 Po Box 75
 Kiama NSW 2533

Telephone
 +61 (02) 4232 0444

Online
 Email: council@kiama.nsw.gov.au
 Website: www.kiama.nsw.gov.au

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



KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
 your council. your community

Respect

Innovation

Integrity

Teamwork

Excellence

INTERACTIVE NAVIGATION







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CEO message - looking ahead