

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORTS
PRESENTED TO THE BLAYNEY SHIRE COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 12 MARCH 2012



01) **CONSIDERATION OF A POPULARLY ELECTED MAYOR**
(General Manager)

RECOMMENDED:

1. For Council's Determination

REPORT

At the February Ordinary Meeting of Council, it was resolved:

1202/004 RESOLVED:

1. That this item be carried over until the next Ordinary Meeting of Council. (Kingham/Ewin)
Councillor Braddon requested that his name be recorded against this resolution.

Accordingly, this report is again presented for Council's consideration.

Council at its December meeting resolved;

1112/002 RESOLVED

1. *That the General Manager prepare a report for Council in regards to the process of the public electing a Popularly Elected Mayor. (Ferguson/Radburn)*

A review has been undertaken to provide advice as to the issues that arise around the election of a popularly elected mayor. Advice has been widely sort from local government in New South Wales to ensure that Council and the community can consider the steps to be taken and the outcomes of this action.

Council under the local Government Act has the ability to request a referendum under Section 228 of the Local Government Act that states:

- 228 How is it decided that the mayor be elected by the electors?
- (1) It may be decided at a constitutional referendum that the mayor be elected by the electors.
 - (2) A decision that the mayor be elected by the electors takes effect in relation to the next ordinary election after the decision is made.

As per Council's resolution a list of issues has been identified.

CHANGE THE METHOD OF ELECTING THE MAYOR

The mayor of an area is elected to office by the councillors from among their number or by the electors if there is a decision in force which provides for the election of the mayor by the electors. (s.227)

It may be decided at a constitutional referendum that the mayor be elected by the electors. Such a decision takes effect in relation to the next ordinary election after the decision is made. (s.228)

A mayor elected by the electors holds the office of mayor for four years, subject to the provisions of the Act. (s.230)

If it is decided that the Mayor is to be elected by the electors, the electorate will comprise all electors for the area, even if the area is divided into wards. (s.282)

A person may be a candidate for election as mayor and a candidate for election as a councillor at the same time. If a person is elected as mayor and the person is also a candidate for election as a councillor, the votes cast for the person as a councillor are not to be counted for that person but are to be distributed as prescribed by the regulations. (s.283)

Following interaction with a number of Council’s across the state that have in recent years held a referendum in relation to this matter, the following information is provided as a guide to previous referendum questions as approved by Kempsey, Eurobodalla and Wentworth Shires:

Do you favour changing the way the Mayor is elected from an annual election by the Councillors to election by all electors every four (4) years?

That the yes and no case be as printed below:

FOR	AGAINST
<i>The position of Mayor should be determined by electors and not be elected representatives</i>	<i>The elected council should determine the leader of the council.</i>
<i>Popular election of the Mayor would give stability to the office for a period of four years</i>	<i>Councillors need to be satisfied of their capacity to work in co-operation with the Mayor</i>
<i>The Mayor would have an opportunity to influence planning and policy setting in the longer term.</i>	<i>Councillors should retain the option of assessing the performance of the Mayor on an annual basis.</i>
<i>The Mayor would have more direct accountability to the electorate.</i>	<i>Other Councillors should have an opportunity to lead the Council during its elected term.</i>
<i>The prospect of internal politics each year at the time of the election of the Mayor would be avoided.</i>	<i>A popularly elected mayor may not have the support of a majority of councillors.</i>
<i>Popular election would give a stronger community focus to the office of Mayor.</i>	<i>Neither electors nor the council would be able to change an unsatisfactory tenure before the next election.</i>
<i>The possibility of a Mayor being elected “out of the hat” is avoided.</i>	<i>The views and actions of the Mayor may be at variance with the council.</i>
<i>The Mayor would be able to set and adhere to an agenda of change and reform.</i>	<i>The longer term commitment creates the potential for greater cost through circumstances causing an extraordinary vacancy.</i>
<i>Popular election would represent a greater level of involvement and participation by residents.</i>	<i>The positions of Prime Minister and Premier are not elected by popular vote.</i>

The Process

A request was made to the NSW Electoral Commission in December to identify the cost of running a referendum in conjunction with the 2012 local government election. The officer advised that generally Council can expect that the cost of the referendum would be in the order of 15 to 20% of the election cost however this was subject to the extent of advertising required and the provision of information to voters to make a decision.

The cost of the 2008 election as advised to Council in November was \$36,200 and an estimate of the 2012 election will be approximately \$41,000 based on CPI costs. A referendum would cost in the range of \$6,100 to \$8,200, based on the general advice received from the Electoral Commission. Council will also be required to undertake advertising of the referendum and may undertake community forums to introduce the topic to its community this cost will be borne by Council.

As part of the referendum preparation, Council is required to approve and submit a question for the referendum to the Electoral Commission for review and for the commission to determine the weighting of the question. The Commission will need to receive Councils advice as to the referendum going ahead by early April 2012 and receive the resolved question by June 2012. This allows the commission to prepare all required notices.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Council will be required to make provision in its 2012/2013 budget for the full costs associated with the holding of a referendum.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Council will not elect a Mayor annually. Compliance will be in accordance with the Local Government Act.

Attachments

Nil

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS
PRESENTED TO THE BLAYNEY SHIRE COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 12 MARCH 2012



02) ADOPTION OF COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN
(Director Corporate Services)

RECOMMENDED:

1. That Council adopt the Draft Blayney Community Strategic Plan '*Blayney Shire 2025: All the pieces together*'.

REPORT

It is a requirement of the *Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Act 2009* that the community strategic plan is developed with the community and that the community is involved in every stage of its development. The Act also requires that the various components be publicly advertised for 28 days.

Council at its meeting held 14 November 2011 considered a report on the Adoption of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and resolved the following:

1. *That Council adopt the draft Blayney Community Strategic Plan and exhibit it for public comment for a period of 28 days. (Ferguson/Reeks)*

The process for developing this draft plan has been quite extensive and following exhibition during November/December no comment from the public was received.

Following a review by staff there have been a number of minor amendments throughout the document to get it to a finalised format. The changes are not material and do not change the intent of the community from the consultation workshops undertaken.

The final Blayney Shire Community Strategic Plan, '*Blayney Shire 2025: All the pieces together*' is now ready for adoption prior to being submitted to the Division of Local Government by 30 March 2012.

What next for the Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework process?

Staff have now developed the first draft Asset, Workforce and Financial Plans (the Resourcing Plans). These plans integrate with the Delivery and Operational Plans which are also under development. The timelines for this are outlined in the following table.

Senior staff and managers have attended a 2 day "lock-up" on 16 / 17 February to progress those plans to finalisation. These will then also have to go to Council for consideration and endorsement prior to going on public display which should be for the April meeting of Council. These plans are due to be presented to the Division of Local Government by June 30 2012.

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Project has been managed as a WBC Alliance project. There have been some very positive sharing of expertise and ideas within the staff of the Alliance which has greatly assisted in meeting

the timelines. There have also been saving achieved in different areas such as the engagement of the consultants to facilitate the project.

Timelines for Integrated Planning And Reporting

Time line	Community Strategic Plan	Resourcing Plans	Delivery plan	Time line
	Community forums, shaping group, staff, IPR Project Managers	HR, Assets, Finance Managers, IPR Project Managers	Directors Engineering, Finance and their teams, GM's	
July/Aug	Community engagement Unedited outputs report			July/Aug
August	Shaping the plan	Planning to Plan workshop – HR, Assets and Finance plans		August
Oct	Draft Community strategic plan (check back with community and shaping groups and consult with stakeholders and social justice groups)	Resourcing plans to be completed by mid December		Oct
Nov	Final draft CSP To council for adoption	CSP and resourcing plans inform development of delivery plans		Nov
Dec	Public exhibition		Initial work on delivery plan	Dec
Jan	Final graphic design			Jan
Feb	Final draft to council for adoption		IPR Lockdown Delivery plans completed	Feb
Mar	Submitted to DLG		Draft delivery plan adopted by Council	April
			Pubic Consultation	April / May
			Adjustment and final plan adopted by Council	June
			Resourcing and Delivery Plans submitted to DLG	June

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Council has approved a budget for this process in the 2011-2016 Management Plan. Associated costs (excluding staffing) will be borne against this item.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The community strategic plan in conjunction with the delivery program and resourcing strategy and adopted Council positions will guide the review of policies in 2012/13 to ensure alignment with those directions and positions.

Attachments

1 Blayney Community Strategic Plan 30 Pages

03) REQUEST TO WAIVE CHARGES - BLAYNEY SHIRE CAN ASSIST

(Director Corporate Services)

RECOMMENDED:

1. That Council approve the request from Blayney Shire Can Assist to waive charges associated with the hire of Blayney Showground on 31 March 2012 in the amount of \$170.00.
2. That it be exhibited for public comment for 28 days in accordance with section 610E of the Local Government Act.

REPORT

Council is in receipt of a request from Blayney Shire Can Assist seeking Council to waive charges associated with hire of Blayney Showground on 31 March 2012. A Bush Dance is proposed to be held on this date.

Can Assist is a not for profit organisation that provides confidential financial assistance for cancer patients in the Blayney Shire.

The applicable charge for Pavilion hire for schools and not for profit organisations in the 2011 – 2016 Management Plan is \$170.00.

Council has in the past supported such requests.

Division 3 (section 610E(2)) of the Local Government Act 1993 requires Council to adopt a resolution on its determination following public exhibition as it would a proposed fee under section 610F(2) or (3). A copy of section 610E is shown below:

610E Council may waive or reduce fees

(1) A council may waive payment of, or reduce, a fee (whether expressed as an actual or a maximum amount) in a particular case if the council is satisfied that the case falls within a category of hardship or any other category in respect of which the council has determined payment should be so waived or reduced.

(2) However, a council must not determine a category of cases under this section until it has given public notice of the proposed category in the same way as it is required to give public notice of the amount of a proposed fee under section 610F (2) or (3).

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Council will forego the income that would be generated by this activity.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil effect.

Attachments

1 Blayney Shire Can Assist Letter 1 Page

04) REPORT OF COUNCIL INVESTMENTS AS AT 29 FEBRUARY 2012
 (Manager Financial Services)

RECOMMENDED:

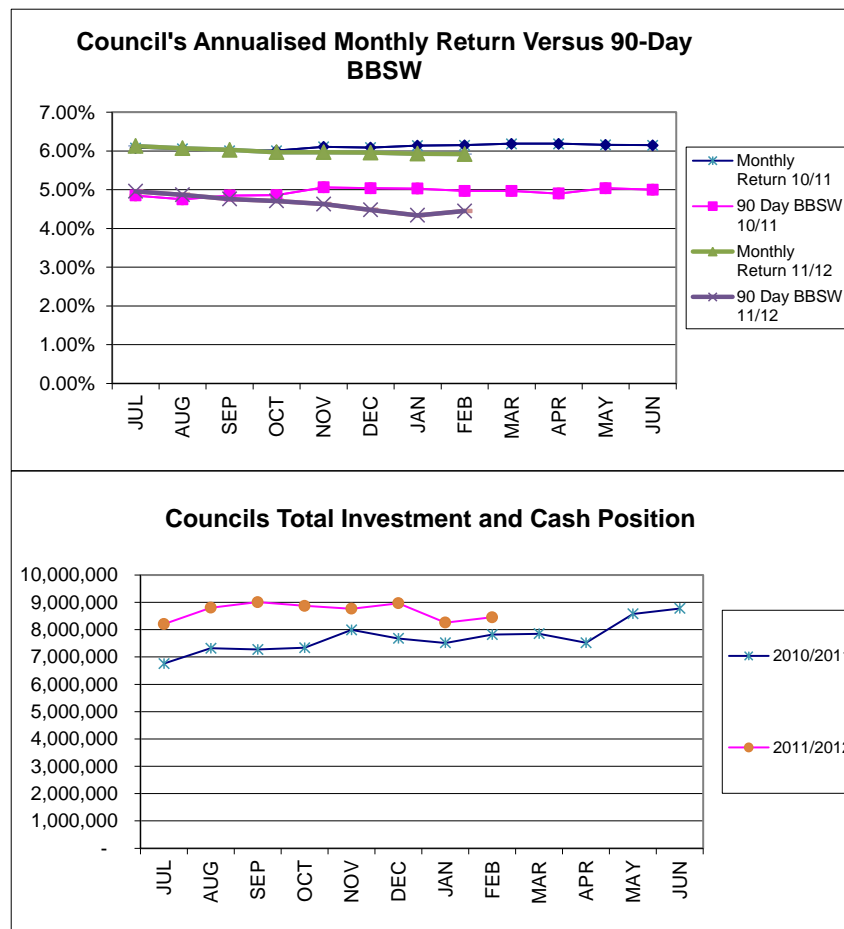
1. That the Report indicating Council’s Investment position as at 29 February 2012 be received and noted.
2. That the Certification of the Responsible Accounting Officer be noted and the Report be adopted.

REPORT

This report provides details of Council’s Investment Portfolio as at 29 February 2012.

Council’s total investment and cash position as at 29 February 2012 is \$8,452,473. Investments earned interest of \$36,060 for the month of February 2012.

Council’s monthly net return annualised for February of 5.92% outperformed the 90 day Bank Bill Swap Rate of 4.45%.



REGISTER OF INVESTMENTS AND CASH AS AT 29 FEBRUARY 2012

Institution	Maturity	Amount \$	Monthly Net Return Annualised
<u>Term Deposits</u>			
Bank of Cyprus Australia	29/05/2012	500,000.00	5.90%
BankWest	10/04/2012	500,000.00	6.00%
Bankstown City Credit Union	6/03/2012	500,000.00	5.75%
Westpac Bank	13/03/2012	500,000.00	6.00%
ME Bank	10/04/2012	500,000.00	5.95%
ING	31/07/2012	500,000.00	5.96%
Bank of Queensland	6/03/2012	500,000.00	5.95%
Credit Union Australia	24/04/2012	500,000.00	5.76%
Community CPS	1/05/2012	500,000.00	5.85%
Bank of Queensland	10/04/2012	500,000.00	5.75%
Peoples Choice Credit Union	17/04/2012	500,000.00	5.82%
AMP	7/08/2012	500,000.00	6.00%
Suncorp Metway	29/05/2012	500,000.00	5.77%
Total		6,500,000.00	5.88%
<u>Collateralised Debt Obligation (CDO's)</u>			
ANZ Custodian (Kakadu, BBSW + 140 points)	20/03/2014	500,000.00	6.11%
ANZ Custodian (Flinders, BBSW + 150 points)	20/03/2012	500,000.00	6.21%
Total		1,000,000.00	6.16%
Total Investments		7,500,000.00	5.92%
Benchmark: BBSW 90 Day Index			4.45%
Commonwealth Bank - At Call Account		201.25	
Commonwealth Bank Balance		952,271.61	
TOTAL INVESTMENTS & CASH		8,452,472.86	

Summary of Investment movements - FEBRUARY		
Financial Institution	Invst/(Recall) Amount \$	Commentary
<u>Term Deposits</u>		
ING	500,000.00	Term Deposit invested 01/02/2012
Suncorp Metway	(507,853.01)	Term Deposit matured 01/02/2012
AMP	500,000.00	Term Deposit invested 07/02/2012
Suncorp Metway	(507,758.90)	Term Deposit matured 21/02/2012
Suncorp Metway	500,000.00	Term Deposit invested 21/02/2012
Bank of Cyprus Australia	(507,354.79)	Term Deposit matured 28/02/2012
Bank of Cyprus Australia	500,000.00	Term Deposit invested 28/02/2012

Collateralised Debt Obligations (CDO's)

As per Council's Auditor recommendations the disclosure of the impact of market conditions on the value of the Collateralised Debt Obligations held is provided. It is estimated by ANZ Custodian Services that the market value of Flinders and Kakadu are \$477,144 and \$62,329 respectively as at 31 December 2011. It is anticipated that as the investments draw near to maturity the market values will increase. Council is also involved in ongoing legal action to minimise any losses.

Council's monthly net return annualised for September on the CDO's is 6.16% outperforming the 90 day Bank Bill Swap Rate of 4.45%.

CERTIFICATION – RESPONSIBLE ACCOUNTING OFFICER

I, Chris Hodge, certify that the investments listed in this report have been made in accordance with Section 625 of the Local Government Act 1993, the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 and Council Policy.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

A good investment strategy optimises Council's return on investments.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil effect.

Attachments

Nil

05) CHANGE TO OFFICE OPERATING HOURS
(Director Corporate Services)

RECOMMENDED:

1. That Council approve the change of office hours to 9.00 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday.

REPORT

Council's hours of operation at its Customer Service counters span from 9.00am to 5.00pm. Walk-in enquiries within these timeframes are currently handled until finalisation, sometimes resulting in staff and customers remaining until after 5.00pm.

As part of the staff engagement process during preparation of the Workforce Management Plan it was identified that the closure of the office at 4.30pm would lead to better security for staff and would help minimise the risk of unnecessary staff overtime.

Statistics were collated for the months of December 2011 to February 2012 showing activity between the hours of 4.30pm to 5.00pm and are shown below:

Month	Cashier	Corporate Services (Other)	Engineering	Environmental Services
December 2011	6	-	-	1
January 2012	1	2	-	1
February 2012	9	-	-	-

Of particular merit will be the ability for the Cashier to sign off at 4.30pm, balance takings for the day and finalise daily tasks by the scheduled close of business time of 5.00pm.

The arrangement also eliminates the risk of Customer Service staff working alone and assists with Council's inherent obligations under Workplace Health & Safety Legislation.

It is anticipated that there will be a minimal impact to customer service as under the amended arrangements phone calls would still be received; appointments would still be coordinated by mutual agreement after 4.30pm and meetings of Council and committees would also be accommodated without disruption.

This arrangement is consistent with practices of a number of Councils, Government Departments and private sector organisations such as banks.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There will be costs associated with promotion of the amended business hours and signage. This will be minimal and can be borne within existing budget allocations.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil effect.

Attachments

Nil

06) **MILLTHORPE RAILWAY STATION PUBLIC AMENITIES**
(Director Corporate Services)

RECOMMENDED:

1. That the report on the discontinuation of services to the public amenities facility at Millthorpe Railway Station be received and noted.

REPORT

Council currently maintains the public amenities facility at the Millthorpe Railway Station as public toilets and has done so since 2008 when it was operated by Council as a function centre following its closure.

Council has always acted as a “custodian” pending a Lessee being found for the Millthorpe Railway Station and was not intended to be an ongoing arrangement. At the October 2007 meeting Council resolved:

Minute no. 07/245:

“That the General Manager be delegated with the authority to rescind the existing lease agreement should a request be forthcoming from ARTC after due consideration and assessment has been given to the nature of the commercial operation.” (Williams / Coleman)

Council had also advised Millthorpe Village Committee on 19 February 2009, in response to an enquiry, that:

“It is Council’s intention, that upon the creation of a lease between ARTC and other parties for the Millthorpe Railway Station, Blayney Shire Council would allow the maintenance and cleaning of the toilets to revert to that lease holder.”

The Millthorpe Railway Station (including the public toilets) is currently leased from the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) by Edgcombe Wines who run a Cellar Door as a commercial operation.

Council currently has no interest or commercial arrangement with the property owner or the lessee of the facility. Council was working towards a sub-lease arrangement as part of a resolution to this matter however a number of associated risks have been highlighted that has prompted this review.

Council currently expends approximately \$11,000 per annum in insurance and service costs with Millthorpe Railway Station public amenities. Other costs Council could be responsible for are building maintenance, upgrade, vandalism repair and lease preparation / legal fees (for both parties).

Risks inherent with continuation of this arrangement are:

- ICAC probe into why a commercial enterprise is funded by public (ratepayer) funding when Council has no interest in the facility.

- Other businesses in the Shire approaching Council to maintain their facilities for public use.
- Council seen to be using public monies to assist a commercial enterprise operating for private gain.
- Vandalism and building repairs to the amenities building. (Council has in the past 2 years undertaken major repairs following vandalism)

It is a condition of the Liquor License terms for the Lessee to provide public amenities at the Millthorpe Railway Station. There are also a number of businesses within the Millthorpe village that provide such facilities. Public amenities are also available at Redmond Oval within the Millthorpe village.

The Millthorpe Village Committee has expressed its concern at the facility no longer being available as public amenities however it is in Council's interests to discontinue this arrangement to protect itself from the potential risks identified earlier. Accordingly it is intended to cease this practice forthwith following promotion of the change.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Council will incur costs associated with signage removal and promotion of its closure.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil effect.

Attachments

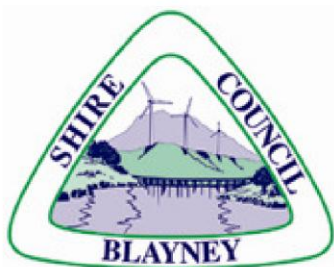
Nil



Blayney 2025

All the pieces together

The strategic plan of the Blayney Shire community



Prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Amendment Act 2009 and adopted by Blayney Shire Council on (date)

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Message from the Mayor and Councillors

Blayney Shire Council

Blayney 2025 represents the vision, aspirations and priorities of our community and signifies a change in the way planning by Council and the Community is developed and implemented.

From the outset of the planning process we asked our community to '**Add their piece**' and help create the picture of what they want Blayney to be like in the future. The participation and contribution was positive and productive and the end community strategic plan, **Blayney 2025: All the pieces together**, provides the blueprint for our future.

The purpose of the community strategic plan is to:

- Describe the preferred future;
- Describe the values to guide future choice and how we will work together as a community;
- Outline the strategic outcomes to achieve the preferred future;
- Provide a long-term focus for decision making and resource allocation – finances, workforce and asset management;
- Provide a basis for measuring our progress;
- Provide opportunities for community participation in decision making;
- Address social, economic, environmental and civic leadership issues.

We all have a responsibility and role to play in achieving Blayney 2025. Council is only one player. We cannot and should not do everything. We will do the things we have to do but there are many other groups and organisations who will be able to work on the strategic outcomes of the plan and our future.

We now look forward to working with you on **Blayney 2025: All the pieces together**.

Thank you

Council would like to offer sincere thanks to all the people who contributed to the development of this community strategic plan and community engagement framework. Participants who engaged in workshops and meetings were representative of all the groups that influence what happens in Blayney Shire – Council, Government and our Neighbours, Agriculture, Mining, Business, Education, Training and Learning, Arts and Culture, Health and Wellbeing, Transport and Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation and Emergency Services. Throughout the development of other plans we also engaged with many individuals, groups and organisations. The combined processes have given us a deep understanding of what is important to our community and has both informed and guided the development of Blayney 2025: All the pieces together.

Contact details:

Blayney 2025: All the pieces together

In the first instance please contact:
Blayney Shire Council General Manager
on telephone (02) 6368 2104 or
email: council@blayney.nsw.gov.au

The development of the documents of the Integrated Planning and Reporting has been a joint project of the WBC Alliance. All three councils and Central Tablelands Water have undertaken the same engagement and development processes. It is the intent of the Alliance that a combined strategic plan be developed that will identify future joint projects and resource sharing initiatives.



Our present situation

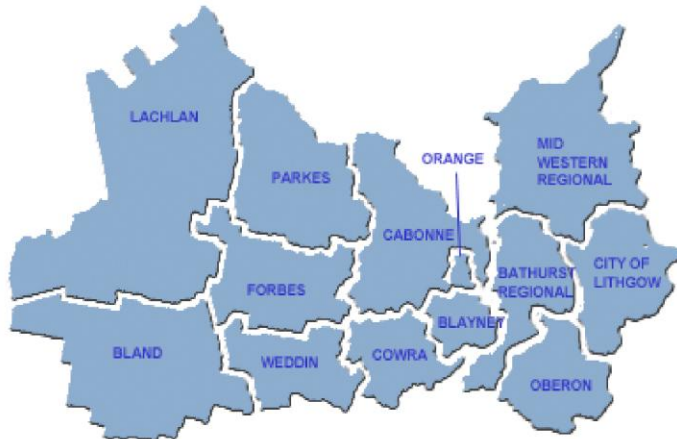
Blayney – At a glance

Blayney Shire has an area of 1,524.7 square kilometres and is located in the Central Tablelands of New South Wales, approximately three hours by road from the centre of Sydney. The principal town in the Shire is Blayney, situated some 37km southwest of Bathurst and approximately 244km by road from Sydney. It is the centre of a district, which stretches east to Bathurst, southwest to Cowra and north to Orange. Blayney Shire is comprised of a number of villages including Millthorpe; Carcoar; Mandurama; Lyndhurst; Neville; Newbridge; Hobbys Yards and Barry. The Shire sits at an altitude of 850 metres above sea level

Map of Blayney Shire boundaries

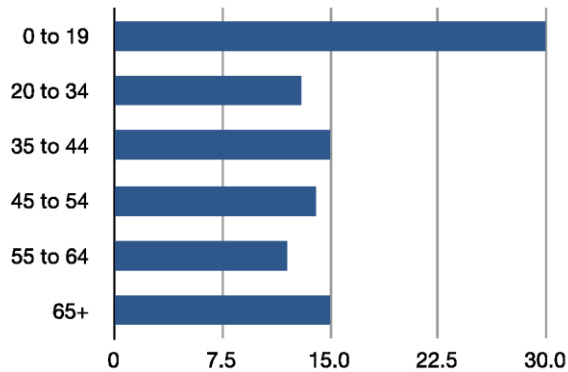


Location of Blayney Shire in the NSW Central West



At the 2006 census the Shire had a population of 6,593 persons equally distributed between men and women. As the table shows the Shire has a relatively young population and even distribution across the age groups. The median age was 39 years compared to 37 for Australia. Of all occupied properties at the time of the 2006 census 72% were family households compared to 67% for Australia.

Percentage of Blayney population by age groups



Transport

Council owns and maintains 751 kilometres of road throughout the Shire. Transport is a key issue and the Shire is serviced by the Mid-Western Highway that links Bathurst (35km) in the east with Marsden to the west, and services the larger regional centre of Cowra (69km) south of Blayney. Blayney is also linked to Orange via a road to the north-west. Other roads provide connections to Canberra via Goulbourn and Forbes via Canowindra. In addition to road linkages there is also rail. The Main Western Railway traverses the Shire providing a daily commuter service between Dubbo and Sydney stopping at Blayney. At Blayney there is also a link to the main southern line at Demondrille via Cowra.

Economy

Key industries: Blayney Shire is predominately rural in nature, supporting primary industries such as dairying, beef, lamb, wool, viticulture, orchards, potatoes, canola and other grains. Mining is also a key industry and the area supports other industrial activities such as manufacturing, transportation and food processing.

At the time of the 2006 census the median household income was \$862 per week compared with \$1,027 for Australia.

Employment spread per industry sector

Agriculture, forestry & fishing	<i>Total</i> 451
Mining	161
Manufacturing	280
Electricity, gas, water & waste services	38
Construction	188
Wholesale trade	90
Retail trade	231
Accommodation & food services	143

Transport, postal & warehousing	138
Information media & telecommunications	24
Financial & insurance services	34
Rental, hiring & real estate services	29
Professional, scientific & technical services	106
Administrative & support services	49
Public administration & safety	184
Education & training	210
Health care & social assistance	304
Arts & recreation services	34
Other services	114

Education

In the Shire there are 8 Primary Schools: 7 public and 1 Catholic and one high School.

Key strengths and challenges

Blayney is an agricultural shire with strong mining heritage. Our town, villages and settlements are spread throughout a beautiful landscape of undulating hills and tablelands. Here the Blayney Shire communities enjoy a pace of living that is relaxing, genuine and in tune with the changes of a temperate climate with four distinct seasons.

The spirit of community is strong. A history of supporting one another when times get tough continues today. The Shire has quality schools, and facilities support participation in sports, recreation and healthy lifestyles.

Although people in the Shire have good access to medical facilities at neighbouring centres there is a need for a doctor to operate the existing emergency centre. If these facilities are not used there is a risk they will be lost. Law enforcement is also not as readily available as it could be in emergencies. These issues bring about unease in the community.

There are many opportunities for economic growth in building on agriculture, transport, tourism, industry and mining activities. Mining however can be a double-edged sword. It benefits the local economy, but causes pressures in housing, employment and tourism. Shift patterns also affect participation in sport and community life.

Our settlements are spread out and need to be connected. Contemporary information and communication technologies offer an opportunity to improve connections between each other and the rest of the world.

Retailing needs to complement larger neighbouring centres and also focus on differentiation. Many of our heritage and other buildings along with our town and villages would benefit from beautification and improved physical access.

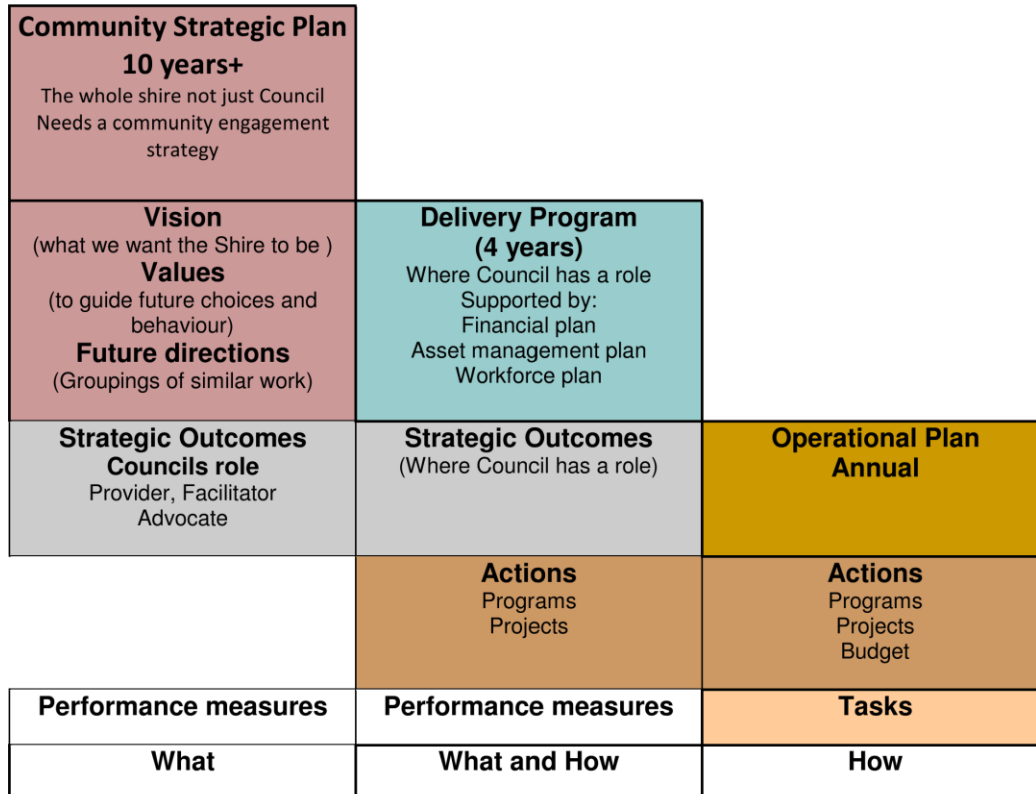
Like many rural areas we need to provide the opportunities and facilities for our younger and older community members to live in the Shire and fully engage in community life.

The Community Strategic Plan structure

Integrated planning and reporting

The following diagram shows the relationship between the Community Strategic Plan (CSP), Council's Delivery Program and Council's Annual Operational Plan.

The delivery program deals with the work Council can do to achieve the CSP. The Strategic Outcomes in the CSP where Council has a role come across into the Delivery Program. It needs to be stated that Council alone cannot deliver all the strategic outcomes in the CSP. Many will require cooperation across the various sectors of the Blayney shire community.



How the Community Strategic Plan is organised

Blayney 2025: *All the pieces together* has the following components:

- A vision of the preferred future for the Shire;
- A values statement to guide future choices and how we will work together as a community;
- Six future directions and associated strategic outcomes to follow to achieve the preferred future. The future directions and strategic outcomes are written in the present tense. They describe the ideal outcomes that the community want to see happen.
- The role council will play in achieving each of the strategic outcomes;
- Those groups or organisations that could collaborate around the strategic outcomes;
- Performance measures to help us now if our efforts are making a difference

Council's roles

The Community Strategic Plan is for the whole shire and Council cannot deliver all the strategic outcomes. Council will only be able to contribute where there is a role. Broadly speaking Council has four roles:

- Provider: Council does the work e.g. road maintenance or undertakes regulatory responsibilities. e.g. the local planning scheme
- Facilitator: Council will help out or work with others to get things done.
- Advocate: Council will speak up for and support a community initiative or issue.

Where council does not have a role the various sections of the Blayney community will need to work together and collaborate.

Our Community - definition

Throughout the Blayney 2025: *All the pieces together* the terms 'our' and 'community' are used. Whilst the primary concern will always be the residents of the Shire, we acknowledge that 'our community' includes all those who live here, own property here, do business here and visit Blayney Shire.

Blayney 2025: All the pieces together

The Community Strategic Plan

Our preferred future

(What we want Blayney Shire to be in 2025)

Our Shire of welcoming communities

The many communities of the Shire's town, villages and settlements are supportive and welcoming to those who live here and also those who visit.

Beautiful and productive landscapes

The landscape in which we live is both beautiful and productive.

Rural and mining heritage

Our heritage of rural living amidst agricultural and mining production has taught us much about the nature of these activities and how they can exist in harmony.

Showing the world how agriculture, mining and industry can work together for the greatest good

We are eager to share these lessons and learnings with other communities around the world.

A place to live your dreams

In Blayney Shire there is both space and time to make and live your dreams!

Values

These are the values that will guide our future choices and the way we work together as a community.

With a generosity of spirit we will:

Be inclusive and united

Act honestly and respect each other

Have a "can do" attitude

Think outside the square and

Back ourselves

Future Directions

1. **Grow the wealth of the Shire**
2. **A centre for sports and culture**
3. **Preserve and enhance our heritage and rural landscapes**
4. **Develop and maintain Shire infrastructure**
5. **Develop strong and connected communities**
6. **Leadership**

Grow the wealth of the Shire

Future Direction 1: Grow the wealth of the Shire			
<p>Employment is needed to keep people in and attract people to the Shire. There are opportunities for growth in niche agriculture, mining and tourism. Retailing needs greater levels of local support to remain viable and grow. There is also a need for the water, energy and transport sectors to be sustainable and provide a platform for future growth.</p> <p>Growth, however, needs to respect the environment and rural landscapes. Mining brings economic benefits but also pressures on accommodation, wages and shift work constraints on community living. There is the potential for the community and mining industry to work together for mutual benefit. The world needs to know about the benefits of living and working in Blayney Shire through the development of a well recognised brand and communication activities.</p>			
Strategic outcome		Council Role	Who should collaborate
CSP 1.1	A viable agricultural sector with niche opportunities and products coupled with lifestyle.	Provider (planning and promotion) Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities • Industry bodies • State and Australian Governments • Educational institutions
CSP 1.2	A thriving mining industry that supports and works well with the community.	Provider Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mining industry • Industry bodies • Community • Educational institutions • State and Australian Governments

Future Direction 1: Grow the wealth of the Shire			
CSP 1.3	A well established, connected and prosperous tourism industry.	Provider Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local tourism businesses • State and Australian Governments • Other LGA's • Industry bodies • Community groups • Business sector • Mine
CSP 1.4	Internationally recognised brand for Blayney Shire.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and Australian Governments • Other LGA's • Industry bodies, • Community groups • Business sector, • Mine
CSP 1.5	Sustainable water, energy and transport sectors to support future growth.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and Australian Governments • Central Tablelands Water • Industry bodies
CSP 1.6	A vibrant local retail and business sector.	Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shire Businesses • Community • State and Australian Governments
Performance indicators: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GDP for the Shire 2. Visitation numbers and spend 3. People employed in mining 4. Reduction in vacant shops 5. Brand development and recognition 6. Transport utilisation 7. Water storage statistics 8. New start up businesses 			

A centre for sports and culture

Future Direction 2: A centre for sports and culture			
<p>Participation in sports and cultural activities and events has and will continue to bring the community together. A coordinated program of events also has the potential to attract visitors and help to grow and sustain local businesses.</p> <p>Events can be subject to funding pressures, red tape, regulation and rising insurance costs. A cooperative community approach to events can help overcome these issues. The aim is for Blayney Shire to become known as a centre where sports, arts and entertainment are central to an enviable lifestyle and great visitor experience.</p>			
Strategic outcome		Council Role	Who should collaborate
CSP 2.1	Cultural and sporting events are coordinated and resourced.	Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event organisers • Sponsors • Newcrest Mining Operations • Schools • Sport and recreation • Village Associations
CSP 2.2	Strong participation in sporting events and competitions.	Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools • State and Australian Governments • Business sector • Sponsors • Families • Village Associations
CSP 2.3	Blayney Shire - a centre for arts, performance and entertainment.	Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcrest Mining Operations • Sponsors • State Government • Schools • Village Associations
<p>Performance indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of community and cultural events 2. Attendance levels at events 3. Cost of insurance 4. Levels of sponsorship 5. Number of sporting teams and participants 			

Preserve and enhance our heritage and rural landscapes

Future Direction 3: Preserve and enhance our heritage and rural landscapes			
<p>Although the rural landscapes are beautiful, the environmental facts are that less than 10% of native vegetation remains in the Shire and there are issues with erosion and salinity. Action must be taken to encourage sustainable land use practices particularly if population increases. The biodiversity of our water ways is also important and there are rich and productive soil types that need to be mapped and protected.</p> <p>Our heritage stories need to be interpreted and made accessible. We have a built heritage that gives character to our villages. This can be enhanced and supported through sympathetic urban design and landscaping.</p>			
Strategic outcome		Council Role	Who should collaborate
CSP 3.1	Retention of native vegetation with linking corridors.	Provider Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Groups • Village Associations • State and Australian Governments • Private enterprise • Mine • Farmers • Schools • Catchment Management Authorities
CSP 3.2	Biodiversity of waterways.	Facilitate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catchment Management Authorities • Water users • Land holders • Land Care • State and Australian Governments
CSP 3.3	Heritage sites in the natural and built environment are identified and understood.	Provider Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community groups • State Government • Historical Society
CSP 3.4	Sustainable land use practices across the Shire.	Provider (planning LEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community
<p>Performance indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased signage and information about heritage 2. Increased percentage of native vegetation 3. Decreased erosion 4. Carbon offsets 5. Willow removal 6. Protection of soil types 7. River water quality 			

Develop and maintain Shire infrastructure

Future Direction 4: Develop and maintain Shire infrastructure			
<p>Social and physical infrastructure is the skeleton that supports a community. Transport, rail and roads connect the Shire to the region and help people and goods move in to, out of and around.</p> <p>Information and communication technologies are the new highways to the world and it is important that there is coverage across the Shire so everyone can be connected.</p> <p>Water and sewer infrastructure are essential for public health and economic growth through property development.</p> <p>Social infrastructure includes schools, government and emergency services, medical facilities, aged care and housing. This infrastructure needs to be funded, maintained and developed to ensure it meets the needs of the community.</p>			
Strategic outcome		Council Role	Who should collaborate
CSP 4.1	Adequate provision of transport, roads, rail, information and communication technologies and community social assets.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State and Australian Governments Industry Community members
CSP 4.2	Every village has access to water and sewerage services.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State and Australian Governments Central Tablelands Water Village Associations
CSP 4.3	Improved access to community and public transport between villages and centres.	Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Government Transport operators Industry
CSP 4.4	Integrated medical and aged care facilities across the Shire	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State and Australian Governments Facility operators
CSP 4.5	Preservation and continued development of rail infrastructure.	Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State and Australian Governments Industry
CSP 4.6	Sustainable waste management	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State and Australian Governments Facility operators
<p>Performance indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transport patronage 2. Properties connected to water and sewer 3. Aged care accommodation waiting lists and occupancy rates 4. Number of rail movements and tonnages carried 5. Community survey results 6. Infrastructure service levels 			

Develop strong and connected communities

Future Direction 5: Develop strong and connected communities			
<p>The geographic spread and distances between our town, villages and settlements can cause a lack of cohesion on occasions. There is a need to integrate, improve communication and linkages between our communities so that they can share, support and learn from one another. This will also help build their capacity to be self reliant. Both transport and modern technology can help with this.</p> <p>Strong communities are healthy and fit communities and this is especially important as the population ages. Access to medical facilities when needed is important particularly in emergencies. Balanced communities retain both younger and older members and this helps maintain viable population levels. Both age groups need the facilities and opportunities to participate and contribute to community life.</p>			
Strategic outcome		Council Role	Who should collaborate
CSP 5.1	A diverse and sustainable population in our communities and villages.	Provider (land use planning) Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Associations • Progress Associations • State and Australian Governments • Industry • Landowners • Developers
CSP 5.2	Fit and healthy community members.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools • Local produce providers • Sport and recreation groups • Community groups • Australian Government
CSP 5.3	Full and equitable access and strong usage of Information and communication technologies across the Shire.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and Australian Governments • NBN Co • Telco's
CSP 5.4	Capable, self sufficient communities engaged in decision making about issues that affect them.	Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Schools • Community groups • Service clubs • Village Associations • Progress Associations
<p>Performance indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Population 2. Technology coverage 3. Health statistics 4. Community calendar of events 5. Community survey results 			

Leadership

Future Direction 6: Leadership			
<p>To achieve our preferred future we will all need to work together. Working together will be easily achieved if we have strong relationships and networks. Present relationships and networks will benefit from a planned approach to community engagement and involvement in decisions and activities that are important to people.</p> <p>Building the capacity of existing and emerging community leaders throughout the Shire will strengthen networks, build trust and result in more successful outcomes.</p> <p>Elected representatives need to work as a team and the Council organization needs to be well run and resourced to do the work it has to do to help achieve the preferred future. Governance needs to be open with every interaction an opportunity to build trust, confidence and credibility.</p>			
Strategic outcome		Council Role	Who should collaborate
CSP 6.1	Good governance across our communities	Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Local Government • Community groups and committees • State and Australian Governments
CSP 6.2	Meaningful communication between the Shires communities and Council.	Provider Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Local Government • Community groups and committees • Australian and NSW Governments
CSP 6.3	A well-run Council organisation.	Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Local Government • State and Australian Governments • ALGA • LGSA
CSP 6.4	A safe community	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency services • Roads & Maritime Services • State and Australian Governments • Australian Local Government Association • Local Government & Shires Associations of NSW
<p>Performance indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Engagement activities 2.Community satisfaction 3.Resource sharing projects 4.Communication processes 			

The principles of social justice and sustainability

The principles that underpin the **Blayney 2025: *All the pieces together*** are social justice and sustainability. All future directions and strategic outcomes seek to achieve sustainability and aspire for equity, access, participation and equal rights particularly for the disadvantaged and vulnerable within our community.

Social Justice

Equity:	Decisions should reflect equality in the prioritising and allocation of resources.
Access:	All people should have access to services, resources and opportunities to maintain and improve their quality of life.
Participation:	Everyone should have the 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.

Sustainability

Sustainability describes the integration of environmental, social, economic and governance goals, processes and performances. However, these elements are not always in harmony.

Blayney Shire has many competing elements and a balance is required to ensure that the environment, agriculture, natural resources and economic development is considered at a local, state and national level; and that the Shire area remains attractive to residents and visitors.

Quadruple bottom line

The quadruple bottom line approach ensures that the Community strategic Plan is balanced. The CSP needs to adequately address social, environmental, economic and civic leadership considerations. The following table shows the relationship of the strategic outcomes in each future direction to the quadruple bottom line framework. Some strategic outcomes address more than one area of the quadruple bottom line framework. The plan has 21 social linkages, 9 environmental, 12 economic and 4 civic leadership.

Future direction	Strategic Outcome	Social	Environment	Economic	Civic leadership
Grow the wealth of the Shire	A viable agricultural sector with niche opportunities and products couples with Lifestyle	Employment	Sustainable farming practices	Key component of the economy now and in future	
	A thriving mining industry that supports and works well with the community	Employment and community support	Sustainable mining practices	Key contributor to the local economy	
	A well established, connected and prosperous tourism industry	Employment		Potential source of revenues	
	Internationally recognised brand for Blayney Shire				
	Sustainable water energy and transport sectors to support future growth				
	A vibrant local retail and business sector	Local employment			
A centre for sports and culture	Cultural and sporting events are coordinated and resourced				
	Strong participation in sporting events and competitions				
	Blayney Shire a centre for arts, performance and entertainment			Will assist tourism	
Preserve and enhance our heritage and rural landscapes	Retention of native vegetation with linking corridors				
	Biodiversity of waterways				
	Heritage sites in the natural and built environment are identified and understood	Gives character to villages		Will assist tourism	
	Sustainable land use practices across the shire				

Future direction	Strategic Outcome	Social	Environment	Economic	Civic leadership
Develop and maintain Shire infrastructure	Adequate provision of transport, roads, rail, information and communication technologies and community social assets				
	Every village has access to water and sewerage services	Community health			
	Improved access to community and public transport between villages and centres				
	Integrated medical and aged care facilities across the Shire				
	Preservation and continued development of rail infrastructure	Public transport			
	Sustainable waste management	Community health			
Develop strong and connected communities	A diverse and sustainable population in our communities and villages				
	Fit and healthy community members				
	Full and equitable access and string usage of information and communication technologies across the Shire				
	Capable self sufficient communities engaged in decision making about issues that affect them				
Leadership	Good governance across our communities				
	Meaningful communication between Shire communities and Council				
	A well run Council organisation				
		21	9	12	4

Links to NSW state plan

NSW 2021 is the ten-year strategic plan to make New South Wales number one in the nation. It is based around five strategies. The table below shows the linkages between the future directions and strategic outcomes of the Blayney Community Strategic plan for Blayney Shire and the NSW 2021 strategies. There are many areas where the State and Blayney plan share directions.

NSW 2021 Strategies	Blayney CSP future directions and strategic outcomes
<p>Rebuild the economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve performance of the NSW economy • Rebuild State finances • Drive economic growth in regional NSW • Competiveness of doing business in NSW • Downward pressure on the cost of living • Strengthen NSW skill base 	<p>Grow the wealth of the Shire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A viable agricultural sector with niche opportunities and products couples with Lifestyle • A thriving mining industry that supports and works well with the community • A well established, connected and prosperous tourism industry • Internationally recognised brand for Blayney Shire • Sustainable water energy and transport sectors to support future growth • A vibrant local retail and business sector
<p>Return quality services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport • Health • Family and community services • Education • Police and justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate provision of transport, roads, rail, information and communication technologies and community social assets • Improved access to community and public transport between villages and centres • Integrated medical and aged care facilities across the Shire • Preservation and continued development of rail infrastructure • Fit and healthy community members
<p>Renovate infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in critical infrastructure • Build liveable centres • Secure potable water supplies 	<p>Develop and maintain Shire infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every village has access to water and sewerage services • Full and equitable access and string usage of information and communication technologies across the Shire • Sustainable waste management
<p>Strengthen our local environment and communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect local environment • Opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments • Easier for people to be involved in their communities • Increase opportunities for seniors • Opportunity and partnership with the Aboriginal People • Cultural creative sporting and recreation opportunities • Prepared for major emergencies and natural disasters 	<p>A centre for sports and culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural and sporting events are coordinated and resourced • Strong participation in sporting events and competitions • Blayney Shire a centre for arts, performance and entertainment <p>Preserve and enhance our heritage and rural landscapes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention of native vegetation with linking corridors • Biodiversity of waterways • Heritage sites in the natural and built environment are identified and understood • Sustainable land use practices across the shire <p>Develop strong and connected communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A diverse and sustainable population in our communities and villages • Capable self sufficient communities engaged in decision making about issues that affect them

NSW 2021 Strategies	Blayney CSP future directions and strategic outcomes
<p>Restore accountability to Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence and integrity in the planning system • Trust in State and Local governments as service providers • Government transparency and access to government information • Involve the community in decision making 	<p>Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good governance across our communities • Meaningful communication between Shire communities and Council • A well run Council organisation

Community Engagement

The engagement process to develop the plan

The process for engaging the community in the development of the Community Strategic Plan began with identifying the 'whole system' of Blayney Shire; the complex network of groups, organisations and networks that influence or are influenced by what happens in the Shire.

The following groups were identified:

- Council, government and neighbours
- Agriculture
- Mining
- Business
- Education, training and learning
- Arts and culture
- Health and Well being
- Transport and Infrastructure
- Sports and Recreation
- Emergency Services

Representatives from each of these groups were invited to participate in a major, day long planning workshop to reflect on the areas past, explore the present situation – internal strengths and weaknesses, external opportunities and threats; and design the preferred future.

On 25th July, 2011, 74 passionate community members, representative of the Shire's whole system and demographic profile, worked together to create the framework of what became Blayney 2025: *All the pieces together*. Using this approach all perspectives from all communities of interest and demographic profiles were heard.

Almost a month later on 22nd August 2011 a smaller representative group of community members, Councillors and Council management came together again for a day to "shape" the Community Strategic Plan using the unedited outputs of the planning workshop, other relevant plans – national, state and local – and an understanding of the present situation.

The draft plan was then distributed for comment to all those who had participated in the process. Minor modifications were made before it was presented to the November 2011 Council meeting and put on public display during December 2011. Again, minor modifications were made before being formally adopted by the Blayney Shire Council on behalf of the entire Blayney Shire Community on (date)

Engagement with the community will be ongoing throughout the life of the Plan.

Engagement process overview

Step	Activity	Output/Outcome
1. Planning to Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning workshop involving Councillors and Council Management 	<p>Identification of Blayney Shire's whole system groups</p> <p>Identification of relevant groups within</p> <p>Development of key message to engage the community in the process</p> <p>Communication plan</p>
2. Communication and Recruitment	<p>Communication and recruitment activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct mail – letter of invite to participate + registration form Advertising – monthly newspaper advertisement Publicity – articles and segments in press and on radio, included in community newsletters Council website Presentations to raise awareness at village and community group meetings 	<p>Participants in planning process</p> <p>Comments on what is important to the community</p>
3. Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future planning workshop – day long workshop involving representatives from each of the 'whole system' groups working together. Council staff workshops x 3 Meetings Individual contributions 	<p>Blayney Shire's present situation</p> <p>Preferred future</p> <p>Guiding values</p> <p>Differentiation</p>
4. Shaping the Community Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning workshop with Councillors, Council management and community representatives working with :- unedited outputs of planning workshop, present situation information, other plans – LEP, Tourism Plan, Social Plan and relevant State and Federal plans and policies 	<p>Draft Community Strategic Plan</p> <p>Vision</p> <p>Values</p> <p>Future directions</p> <p>Strategic outcomes</p> <p>Council's role in achieving each of the strategic outcomes</p> <p>Others to collaborate</p> <p>Performance measures</p>

5. Public exhibition and comment period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulated to workshop participants and all who engaged with the process • Circulated to Council staff • Advertised • Placed on website • Made available to Village Associations and community groups 	Comments on the draft plan Modifications to draft plan
6. Adoption of the Community Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council meeting of (date) 	Blayney 2025: <i>All the pieces together</i> – the Community Strategic Plan

Our ongoing community engagement framework

Language and meaning

Community Engagement

- Community Engagement is a term that covers all the ways a Council and its' Community come together to improve decision-making, build relationships and partnerships, raising awareness and complementing representative democracy. It is a way of working side-by-side and building support for the shared goal of making the community a better place to live. Community engagement is an outcome.

Consultation

- The process of developing understanding of the issues and boundaries around a particular topic or issue before decisions are made. We consult with one another when the boundaries around a decision are not understood.

Communication

- The exchange of information. We communicate when the boundaries around a decision are understood.

Capacity building

- The development of knowledge, skills and attitudes to achieve a purpose.

Communities of interest

- All those who influence or are influenced by a particular proposed project, programme, issue or action

The benefits of community engagement

It is central to participatory democracy

Communities rightfully expect to have input into matters that affect them and seek involvement and engagement beyond the election of their political representatives. Community engagement complements the official electoral process and is a key method of participatory democracy.

Decision making is improved

Better decisions are made when information and all points of view are heard and understood. Where feasible and desirable, Council's decisions need to match the needs and aspirations of the community.

It builds trust

Trust and understanding are likely to grow in an environment where engagement and involvement is taken seriously and is well done.

It builds networks

When we work together we build relationships and have the opportunity to form purposeful networks and partnerships. In this environment collaboration, occurs more easily.

It helps build resilience and stronger communities

Trusting, confident and involved communities tend to be stronger and able to respond to change and circumstances 'together', combining expertise, experience and resources.

The risks associated with community engagement

The costs of poor engagement processes and tools

Communities recognise poor engagement processes and tools. Poorly managed community engagement will lead to scepticism and loss of trust. You need to use the right process in the right way.

Managing expectations

Engagement does not give decision-making powers to non-elected representatives. Sometimes engagement can raise unrealistic expectations of both Council and Community. Again, this is usually a product of poor practices.

Balancing the act

More is not necessarily better. The most appropriate form of engagement needs to be understood and well undertaken.

Budget and project management

Community engagement is 'part of' not an 'add on' to any project or programme.

The cost of not collaborating or sharing resources

Working on things that matter to the community without engagement can lead to conflict and costly rework.

Guiding principles for community engagement

The design and development of engagement activities in Blayney Shire will be guided by the following principles. We will strive to make all engagement – communication, consultation, involvement, collaboration and partnerships

- Inclusive and accessible
- Productive and enterprising
- Approachable and welcoming
- Consistent so we know where we stand
- Engaging, exciting and inspiring

The characteristics of successful community engagement in our Shire

These 'characteristics of success' will guide and inform how we design, implement and provide feedback on the outputs and outcomes of our community engagement activities.

The purpose of the engagement and how the input of the engagement will be used is clearly stated:

The purpose of the engagement is to be stated clearly from the outset. Checking the understanding of the purpose should also be undertaken at the beginning of any interaction so there is no confusion or unrealistic expectations. Similarly how the engagement input will be used should also be stated from the outset.

Activities are timely, held at the right time and given enough time.

Input is sought before decisions are made. Engagement activities are held so they do not clash with other events or activities; at a convenient time for those participating and enough time is given to discussion, comment capture and agreeing outcomes and actions.

Include all groups and organisations that have an interest in the engagement topic or issue

This will include demographic groupings, different cultural backgrounds, social economic-groups and geographic representation.

Create safe space and a positive atmosphere

Engagement should be seen as part of community life where people come together to discuss issues, opportunities and challenges. The atmosphere needs to be positive and welcoming, not combative. It should be a space where all alternatives can be explored in safety. Respect for one another and actively listening to understand the different points of view will help create 'safe space'. Just as community views and priorities are heard, so too are Council's views and priorities. It is a two-way activity.

Information is accessible

Information is written in plain English so it is easily understood. The implications of the information are also explained.

Existing networks are used

Communities are made up of different networks. Geographically based networks and communities of interested need to be understood and motivated to support engagement activities. Using this approach you are building and working from what already exists.

The capacity and capabilities of community leaders is developed and strengthened

The capacity of community leaders within these networks is developed and strengthened. Each community engagement activity is an opportunity to learn more about our community and the things that affect the Shire. Engagement knowledge, skills and attitudes can be built both within Council and also with community leaders.

It is not a 'one size fits all'

Different processes and mediums are used to engage different groups in the community.

The levels of engagement

There are four levels of engagement and each level comes with the promise of what Council will do.

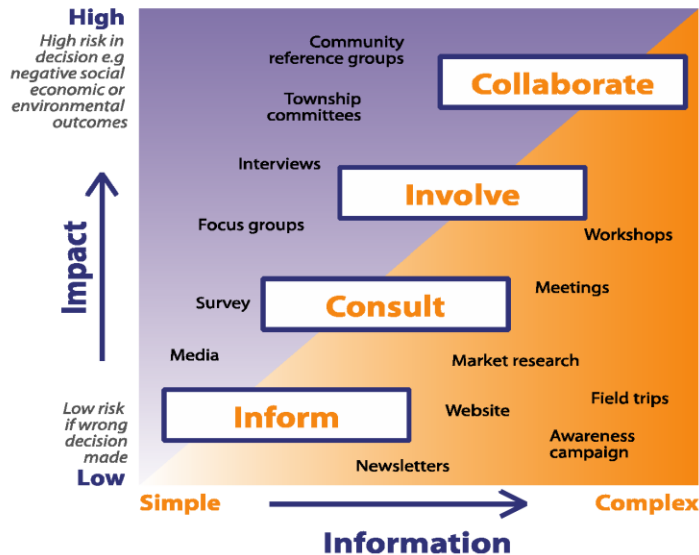
LEVELS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
Level	Our promise
Inform	We will make sure you have the information you need and that the implications of the information are explained.
Consult	We will work with you to understand the issues and boundaries associated with a particular decision before the decision is made
Involve	We will explore options and priorities together so we all know what is the preferred
Collaborate	We will work together and share the responsibility

What level to use

The level of engagement is directly related to the complexity of the information needed and the degree of impact a project, programme or action could have on the community. The higher the impact, the more complex the information, the greater the potential risk within the decision and therefore the more engagement is needed.

The following Impact/Complexity Matrix links the likely impact and complexity of information with the types of community engagement that might be considered.

Impact/Complexity Diagram



Steps in planning community engagement and questions to ask

When undertaking community engagement, Council will follow six steps and ask a series of associated questions:

Establish the level of impact and complexity of the project, programme or action

Council will ask:

- What is the likely impact of the project, programme, issue or action on the community? High? Low? Or somewhere In-between?
- Is it localised or does it involve the broader community?
- Is the issue or project straightforward and easy to understand or is it and the implications, complex?
- Where does it sit on the Risk/Complexity matrix?

Identify all those communities of interest who have an interest around the issue**Council will ask:**

- Who has an interest in this project, program, issue or action?
- List all the individuals, groups and organisations.
- Make sure those who engage are 'representative' of all these relevant communities of interest

Plan the engagement process and gather or develop relevant information and resources**Council will ask:**

- What is the purpose of the engagement?
- What processes will we use?
- What information do people need to engage well?
- If there is an engagement event, what are the logistics of the event we have to organise e.g. venue, catering, materials, technology

Engage the relevant and identified communities of interest**Council will ask:**

- Have we given people enough notice?
- Does it clash with another event or priority in the community?
- Have we considered the convenience of participants?
- Am I fully prepared for the engagement?
- How we made it clear what the purpose of the engagement is?
- Does everyone know how their input will be used?

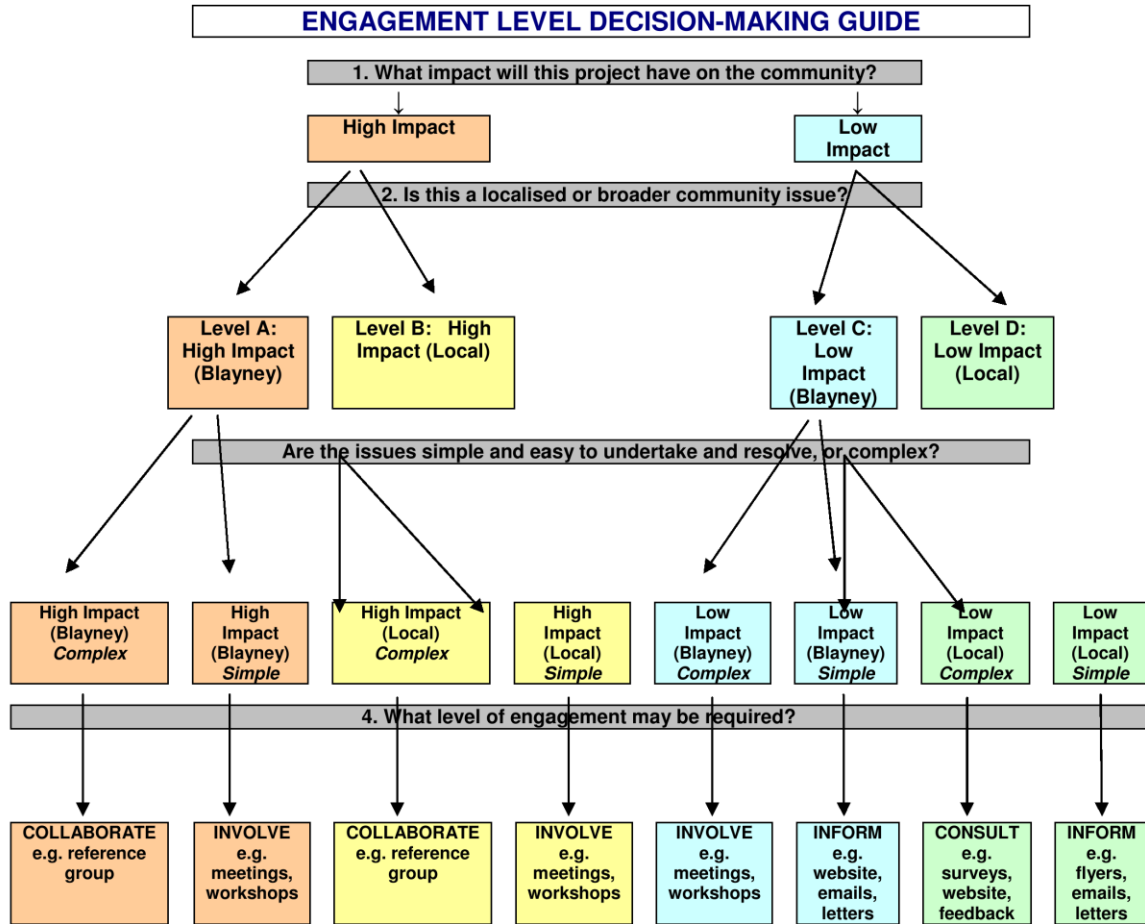
Feedback results of engagement and decision making if relevant**Council will ask:**

- Have we let participants know and got agreement over how their input will be used?
- Have we let people know the outcome of their input?

Evaluate the process**Council will ask:**

- What would we do differently next time to improve the process?

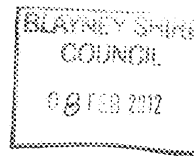
The engagement decision making tree



This Is A Reprint Of A Scanned Image



7 February 2012



Mr Glenn Wilcox
General Manager
Blayney Shire Council
PO Box 62
BLAYNEY NSW 2799

Dear Glenn

Can Assist Blayney Branch is a not for profit organization that provides confidential financial assistance for cancer patients and their families in the Blayney Shire.

We are holding a Bush Dance at Blayney Showground on 31 March 2012 which we hope will be our major fundraiser for the year. We would like to request that Council consider assisting our efforts by reducing the hire fees associated with this event.

We are also hoping the event raises the profile of our group so we are able to assist more members of our community.

Yours sincerely
Blayney Shire Can Assist

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeanette".

Jeanette Turner
Secretary

"Providing assistance and care to country cancer patients and their families"

Country Patients Assistance Society of NSW

ABN 78 050 412 715

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