

Council Improvement Proposal

(Existing structure)



Office of
Local Government



Getting started . . .

Before you commence this template, please check the following:

- You have chosen the correct template – only councils that have sufficient scale and capacity and who do not intend to merge or become a Rural Council should complete this template (Template 2)
- You have obtained a copy of the guidance material for Template 2 and instructions for completing each question
- You have completed the self-assessment of your current performance, using the tool provided
- You have completed any supporting material and prepared attachments for your Proposal as PDF documents. Please limit the number of attachments and ensure they are directly relevant to your proposal. Specific references to the relevant page and/or paragraph in the attachments should also be included.
- Your Proposal has been endorsed by a resolution of your Council.

Council name:

Blayney Shire Council

Date of Council resolution endorsing this submission:

Monday 15 June 2015

1.1 Executive Summary

Provide a summary (up to 500 words) of the key points of your Proposal including current performance, the issues facing your council and your planned improvement strategies and outcomes.

Blayney Shire Council (Council) resolved, in the interests of ratepayers, to continue to be an independent Council in the Central West Joint Organisation (JO) in accordance with the recommendation from the Independent Local Government Review Panel (ILGRP) Report (2013).

This Improvement Proposal demonstrates that Council will achieve all seven Sustainability, Infrastructure and Service, Management and Efficiency financial performance benchmarks within the five year Action Plan. An analysis of the 2013/14 audited financial statements identified that Council meets four out of the seven financial performance benchmarks. Council has validated that, in 2014/15, we will meet five and in the 2015/16 Operational Plan will progress to achieving six.

The improved financial performance is a reflection of Council's proactive Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 6% for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 years and an increase in mining land valuations. Population alone is not a measure of scale in a council that has a large revenue base from mining. In other words, our revenue base is comparable to a council with say 15,000 population who are predominately residential/rural ratepayers. Our scale and capacity is evidenced by experience in driving efficiencies through collaboration with neighbouring LGAs and the WBC Alliance, which has delivered in excess of \$5.7million in savings over the past 12 years. Council is a focused provider of core local government services and in comparison to many rural and regional centres does not have ongoing 'cost-shifting' concerns.

The headline issues facing Council are:

- proximity to major regional cities, the geographic centre of the shire being almost equidistant from Orange, Bathurst and Cowra;
- building on Council's track record of collaboration with our adjoining LGAs in the new local government environment;
- expanding our capacity to partner with government agencies and the private sector to deliver major infrastructure projects;
- capitalising on the value and attractiveness of the unique historical villages in the Shire;
- reliance on mining rate revenue, mostly from a single ratepayer;
- fostering diversity amongst our seven elected Councillor positions; and
- achieving satisfactory and sustainable improvement in our infrastructure management benchmarks.

Having regard to the financial incentives offered, Council undertook an analysis of the merger options, particularly with respect to Orange City and Cabonne Councils, focusing on the financial, social aspects and communities of interest issues. The results of this review and feedback from the community consultation and stakeholder engagement strategy, demonstrated there is no significant financial benefit, and potentially adverse outcomes, to the residents of Blayney Shire if a merger were implemented.

In preparing Council's Improvement Plan the following goal and four key strategies were adopted:

The Goal is to ensure that Blayney Shire Council is Sustainable and Efficient.

The **Key Strategies** are:

1. Efficient and Cost Effective Service Delivery
2. Workforce and Councillor Capability and Capacity
3. Integrated Planning and Community Engagement
4. Regional Collaboration and Shared Services

A range of actions have been identified in each of the key strategy areas. Council expects for the foreseeable future to be able to continue to provide its communities with the services they require at an affordable cost. This is consistent with the ILGRP (2013) assessment that Blayney could remain sustainable as a separate Council for several decades.

Blayney Shire Council has a financially secure and independent future; its size belies its strategic capacity.

Scale and Capacity

Does your council have the scale and capacity broadly consistent with the recommendations of the Independent Local Government Review Panel?

(ie, the Panel did not recommend your council needed to merge or become a Rural Council).

Yes

If No, please indicate why you are not proceeding with a voluntary merger or creation of a Rural Council as recommended by the Independent Panel and demonstrate how your council has scale and capacity (up to 500 words).

Refer to attached '**Evidence of Scale and Capacity**'

2. Your council's current position

2.1 About your local government area

Explain the key characteristics of your local government area, your community's goals and priorities and the challenges you face in the future (up to 500 words).

You should reference your Community Strategic Plan and any relevant demographic data for this section.

Blayney Shire is located in the Central Tablelands region and encompasses an area of 1,525 square kilometres. The shire's main township of Blayney is the centre of a productive agricultural district, strategically located between the regional centres of Bathurst, Cowra and Orange. Blayney Shire is renowned for its Villages which have retained a significant proportion of late 19th century architectural heritage buildings and include historic Millthorpe, Carcoar, Mandurama, Lyndhurst, Neville, Newbridge, Hobbys Yards and Barry. The shire enjoys positive population growth, currently 7,400 with NSW Department of Planning estimate of 7,800 by 2031. There is an even distribution across the age groups and in 2006 the median age was 40 years (ABS, 2011).

Blayney has ready access by road to Bathurst (35km), Cowra (69km) and Orange (34km). The town of Blayney is an important central freight and transport hub to these major regional centres radiating to Canberra, Sydney and western NSW districts with road and rail linkages connecting the shire to Canberra, Sydney, Western and Southern NSW.

A regional audit and prioritisation of water, transport and now health infrastructure assets undertaken by the Centroc JO identified the Blayney to Demondrille rail line, along with the Bells Line expressway as significant transport priorities of national importance. Whilst the main western railway traverses the shire providing a daily commuter and freight service between Blayney and Sydney, the main southern line to Demondrille via Cowra if re-opened would provide significant transport options for coal, gold and agricultural produce direct to Port Kembla. This remains an important regional infrastructure focus for the region and Council.

Blayney Shire is predominately rural in nature, supporting primary industries such as dairy, 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, warehousing and food processing (ABS, 2011).

The region boasts a strong mining heritage with the town, villages and localities spread throughout a beautiful landscape of undulating hills and tablelands. The spirit of community is strong and a history of supporting one another when times get tough continues today. The shire has quality schools and sporting facilities which support participation in sports, recreation and healthy lifestyles. Well serviced medical centres and a multipurpose health service provide 24 hour emergency care within easy reach of Bathurst, Orange or Sydney for specialist care services.

There are many opportunities for economic growth by building on agriculture, transport, tourism, industry and mining activities. Council manages community assets valued at \$185m (2014).

Although our settlements are spread out, contemporary information and communication technologies offer an opportunity to improve connections between each of them 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 residents to live in the shire and fully engage in sharing of cultural activities and community life.

The large employment sectors are;

- mining 18.3%
- agriculture, forestry and fishing 14.6%; and
- manufacturing 12.6%,

closely followed by;

- workers engaged in construction 7.1%
- education and training 6.8%; and
- health services 5.7% and retail trade 5.4%.

This is appropriate given that we are home to the Cadia Gold and Copper Mine, Nestle Purina Pet Food Factory, in the middle of a productive rural area and close to transport and major regional centres. This aligns to the output contribution to the shire with;

- mining worth \$593m
- food manufacturing worth \$204m
- agriculture worth \$75m and
- construction worth \$74m.

With sound transport linkages, opportunities exist to travel to work each day throughout the central west. At least 39% of the workforce (946 people), travel into the Blayney LGA each day for employment. Similarly 52% of workers (1,560 people) live in Blayney LGA and travel to Orange, Bathurst or Cabonne LGAs each day for work. We see this as an opportunity to be the alternative to city living providing a rural and residential lifestyle adding value to the sense of community and family interests, which is demonstrated by the demand for small lot residential and village properties in the shire.

2.2 Key challenges and opportunities

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust and diverse rate base, mining rate income being a source of funds for capital and asset renewal • Healthy cash position and low overheads • Efficiencies via regional collaboration with WBC Alliance and Central West Pilot JO (Centroc) • Work practices and culture of multi-skilled, flexible workforce • Proximity to Bathurst and Orange • Councillor body – strategic, number, participation, free of party politics • Service provider of IT and HR management support to Central Tablelands Water • Highly engaged and interested community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mining rate accounts for 48% rating income • Reporting to community on achievements • No female or ATSI Councillor representation • Competency skills attainment based salary progression not linked to performance • No clearly documented levels of service with the community
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Council's assets and community expectations • Engaging community to determine service levels • Borrowing capacity and low interest rates on loans • New partnerships and regional collaboration, Pilot JO • Review CSP, Resourcing Strategy and new Delivery Plan and Operational Plan • Councillor induction and training September 2016 • Enhance community engagement through social media for community feedback • Improve efficiencies through business improvement program • Boundary adjustments • Employment generating industrial and manufacturing development with capacity to accommodate residential demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost shifting and reduction of FAGS • Mergers destabilising staff and future recruitment • Loss of local representation if Council merged • Legislative changes outside Council control • Local media grabs contributing to small Council perception • Proposed re-zoning Industrial Land Orange Airport

2.3 Performance against the Fit for the Future benchmarks

Sustainability

Measure/ benchmark	2013 / 2014 performance	Achieves FFTF benchmark?	Forecast 2016 / 2017 performance	Achieves FFTF benchmark?
Operating Performance Ratio (Greater than or equal to break-even average over 3 years)	-0.142	No	0.0367	Yes
Own Source Revenue Ratio (Greater than 60% average over 3 years)	63.62%	Yes	68.63%	Yes
Building and Infrastructure Asset Renewal Ratio (Greater than 100% average over 3 years)	103.31%	Yes	109.83%	Yes

If the Fit for the Future benchmarks are not being achieved, please indicate why.

Operating Performance Ratio

The historical figures for Council have not been achieved through various factors. Council's operating income was affected by the timing of the Financial Assistance Grants in 2013/14 skewing the results when compared to previous years. Also a review of depreciation is planned and is expected to reduce depreciation, providing a positive impact on the Operating Performance Ratio. Council also acknowledged the restriction of rate pegging and the increasing costs above this limit. Action was taken in 2012/13, starting the conversation with the community in regards to a special rate variation which was approved for 2014/15 and 2015/16. Council's Operating Performance Ratio is now above the benchmark and also forecast positively in the LTFFP over the next 10 years.

2.3 Performance against the Fit for the Future benchmarks

Infrastructure and service management

Measure/ benchmark	2013 /2014 performance	Achieves FFTF benchmark?	Forecast 2016 / 2017 performance	Achieves FFTF benchmark?
Infrastructure Backlog Ratio (Less than 2%)	7.72%	No	5.27	No
Asset Maintenance Ratio (Greater than 100% average over 3 years)	95.6%	No	112.69%	Yes
Debt Service Ratio (Greater than 0% and less than or equal to 20% average over 3 years)	1.24%	Yes	2.88%	Yes

If the Fit for the Future benchmarks are not being achieved, please indicate why.

The **Infrastructure Backlog Ratio** is improving into the future with 2019/20 meeting and exceeding the 2% benchmark as Council progresses with its comprehensive asset management strategies. Improved data and Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) confirm Council's ability to renew infrastructure assets currently and into the future. With a comprehensive review of service levels with the community to take place in 2015/16, Council believes the backlog will reduce more rapidly than currently forecast.

Asset Maintenance Ratio

In recent years Council has not been able to resource all maintenance and capital works, resulting in maintenance and capital renewals expenditure figure below that identified in Asset Management Plans. During the mining construction period Council was competing for resources but unable to match the packages offered by the mines. The large mine within the LGA has now finished major capital upgrades allowing Council to increase resources and is confident that the required maintenance levels will be met from 2015/16 onwards.

2.3 Performance against the Fit for the Future benchmarks

Efficiency

Measure/ benchmark	2013 /2014 performance	Achieves FFTF benchmark?	Forecast 2016 / 2017 performance	Achieves FFTF benchmark?
Real Operating Expenditure per capita A decrease in Real Operating Expenditure per capita over time	Increasing	No	Decreasing	Yes

If the Fit for the Future benchmarks are not being achieved, please indicate why.

Real Operating Expenditure

In the 2009, 2010 and 2011 financial years Council experienced a major increase in the Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment due to revaluations resulting in an increase in depreciation of \$1.5m. In 2012 Council undertook a one off major project for NSW Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) resulting in an increase of operating expenditure of approximately \$1.5m. Also regular asset revaluations resulted in an increase in depreciation of \$400K. The above have been the major factors in affecting this measurement.

2.4 Water utility performance

NB: This section should only be completed by councils who have direct responsibility for water supply and sewerage management

Does your council currently achieve the requirements of the NSW Government Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage Framework?

Yes

If NO, please explain the factors that influence your performance against the Framework.

Blayney Shire Council manages all sewerage services for the shire and so the following data relates only to this service.

Central Tablelands Water County Council (CTW) is an independent and regionally strategic local water supply authority constituted under NSW Local Government Legislation.

Blayney Shire Council is a constituent member of CTW which currently has approximately 5,700 water connections and provides potable water to around 11,000 consumers in 14 towns and villages. CTW meets all requirements of the NSW Government Best Practice Management of Water Supply Framework and is a full member of CENTROCC and the Central West Pilot JO.

How much is your council's current (2013/14) water and sewerage infrastructure backlog?

\$1.508m

2.4 Water utility performance

Identify any significant capital works (>\$1m) proposed for your council's water and sewer operations during the 2016-17 to 2019-20 period and any known grants or external funding to support these works.

Capital works

Proposed works	Timeframe	Cost	Grants or external funding
Lining Replacement of Sewer Mains	Rolling replacement program that commenced in 2013/14 to be completed by 2019/20	\$1m	Savings achieved through CENTROC Water Utilities Alliance Joint tender for relining of sewer mains through CEEP 2 Federal Funding

2.4 Water utility performance

Does your council currently manage its water and sewerage operations on at least a break-even basis?

Yes

If No, please explain the factors that influence your performance.

Not Applicable

2.4 Water utility performance

Identify some of your council's strategies to improve the performance of its water and sewer operations in the 2016-17 to 2019-20 period.

Improvement strategies

Strategy	Timeframe	Anticipated outcome
Sewer Load Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise hydraulic loads due to infiltration, inflow and illegal connections and manage any industrial and commercial pollutant loads Implement Inflow/Infiltration program Implement Liquid Trade Waste Policy 	June 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspection regime of mains for Inflows/ Infiltration completed Sewer relining/replacement program completed Sewer manhole rehabilitation program completed Liquid Trade Waste register reported to NOW Liquid Trade Waste awareness campaign undertaken Ongoing Liquid Trade Waste Inspections
Operations and Maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate and maintain assets to provide agreed levels of service at minimum life cycle costs 	August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation and adoption of Operations and Maintenance Plans Sewerage Asset Management Plans reviewed and completed within the Best Practice guidelines Business Continuity Plan completed Sewer reticulation model finalised Review of operational procedures for quality assurance and WHS risk management Undertake mains cleaning/ root cutting/ foaming program Review and update system schematics and maintain engineering records

3. How will your council become/remain Fit for the Future?

3.1 Sustainability

Summarise your council's key strategies to improve performance against the Sustainability benchmarks in the 2016-20 period, including the outcomes you expect to achieve.

1. Undertake a complete review of Council's assets and depreciation
2. Rewrite and update of Council's Resourcing Strategy including Asset Management Plan 2016/17 – 2025/26, Long Term Financial Plan 2016/17 – 2025/26 and Workforce Management Strategy 2016/17 – 2019/20
3. Undertake a full service level review and benchmarking program to ensure efficiency and effective delivery of services
4. Enhance regional collaboration with a new sub-regional Strategic Alliance

Explain the key assumptions that underpin your strategies and expected outcomes.

For example the key assumptions that drive financial performance including the use of SRVs, growth in rates, wage increases, Financial Assistance or other operating grants, depreciation, and other essential or major expense or revenue items.

Council was successful in attaining a SRV for 2014/15 for two years, with a permanent general rate increase of 5.11% in 2015/16 used to focus on the Asset and Infrastructure Renewals programs. An existing SRV is forecast to finish in 2015/16 as opposed to the original date of 2017/18 which results in a reduction in Council's operating surplus of approximately \$550k over those two years.

A review of Domestic Waste Management resulted in an increase of the annual waste charge in anticipation of increased contract costs expected in the 2015/16 year. A service review will again be undertaken to determine the true cost of the service delivery and to determine if it is adequately funded.

Council has factored in the reduction of income (\$300k) as a result of the freezing of Financial Assistance Grants indexation up to 2017/18. Council has taken into account an increase to salaries and employee on-cost of 3.5% including salary step increases. A review of budgeted maintenance works within the Asset Management Plan framework resulted in a reduction of maintenance spending (\$195k in 2015/16) and using the excess to increase capital renewal funding. This has had a positive impact on Council's Operating Performance and also Asset Renewal ratios.

3.1 Sustainability

Outline your strategies and outcomes in the table below.

3.1 Sustainability

Objective	Strategies	Key milestones	Outcome	Impact on other measures
1.1 Obtain a thorough and realistic understanding of the cost and efficiency of council's services	1.1.a Develop Service Review Program to be undertaken over 15/16	Program developed by Sept 2015	Unit cost of service is calculated	Improve Infrastructure Backlog Ratio and Operating Performance Ratio
	1.1.b Complete pricing model for costing of internal construction staff to assist contestability	Reviews commence from September 2015	Identify those services or resources that could be provided on a shared basis with other partners	
	1.1.c Undertake a benchmarking program with other councils to measure the efficiency of the services currently provided	Benchmark against similar councils and region the operational effectiveness of Council services and operations Local Government Operational and Management Effectiveness Survey	Council can demonstrate efficient and cost effective service delivery comparable with other providers of similar services	

	1.1.d Implement full cost recovery for Council's discretionary services	<p>Review of fees and charges for services Council currently provides</p> <p>Complete a fully attributed costing of all services</p>	<p>User pays and cost effective services delivered</p> <p>Reduction in loss making activities</p> <p>Cost of service is transparent and validated</p>	
	1.1.e Include new pricing in Revenue Policy for 2016/17	Cost structure discussed with community and Council and adopted	Services provided on cost recovery basis	
1.3 Improve efficiency of service delivery	1.3.a Implement a Business Improvement Program linking internal audit, service reviews, risk management	Complete Promoting Better Practice Review and measure improvements (Dec 2015)	Improve workplace efficiencies to increase productivity by 5%	Improve Operating Performance Ratio
	1.3.b Undertake a benchmarking program with other councils to measure the efficiency of the services currently provided	Utilise alliance practitioners to work cooperatively with staff to identify ways to improve efficiencies and work practices	Service levels and efficiency rank meet or exceed industry/regional benchmarks	
	1.3.c Staff training, benchmarking, professional development and audits/assessments	Training and project based learning is completed by March 2016	Continuous improvement is driven internally by staff capable of implementing business improvement	

3.1 Obtain a thorough and realistic understanding of Council's depreciable assets	<p>3.1.a Undertake a comprehensive review of all assets</p> <p>3.1.b Support lobbying to review the basis of depreciation of LG assets</p> <p>3.1.c Results of road revaluation process are incorporated into assets and financial plans</p>	<p>Complete implementation of asset management software by December 2015</p> <p>Adjust agreed assets classification and hierarchy</p> <p>Council endorsed and adopted resourcing strategy by 30 June 2016 including asset management plan, workforce management plan and long term financial plan</p>	<p>Asset rationalisation</p> <p>Improve reliability of depreciation expense</p> <p>Attain a TCorp Infrastructure Management Assessment Rating of Strong</p> <p>Achieve TCorp Financial Sustainability Rating of Moderate with an Outlook of Positive</p>	Improve Infrastructure Backlog Ratio
2.1 Improve the capability and efficiency of staff	<p>2.1.a Develop contemporary recruitment and retention strategies</p> <p>2.1.b Review Workforce Management Strategy (WMS)</p>	<p>Strategies are developed and implemented by Dec 2015.</p> <p>Trainee Works Operators appointed in 2016</p> <p>Cadet Engineer appointed in 2016</p>	<p>Council is recognised as a Local Government Employer of Choice</p> <p>New WMS completed which integrates more fully with the Delivery and Operational Plans</p>	Improve Real Operating Expenditure per capita
2.3 Build and strengthen leadership skills	2.3.a Improve internal capability in project and financial management - particularly Managers and Supervisors	Training program developed and funded for 15/16 and ongoing	Staff undertaking post graduate qualifications and people management training incorporated into Learning and Development plans	

	2.3.b Implement leadership and team building training for Managers and Supervisors		High quality managerial leadership	
3.3 Develop more robust own-source revenue base	3.3.a Undertake a review of the rating structure 3.3.b Identify future options to mitigate reliance on mining rates revenue 3.3.c Develop rating options	Review is completed and new structure implemented for 16/17 financial year	Implement new rating structure Reduce the reliance of mining rate revenue on operational and core Council activities Quarantine mining rate income for infrastructure renewal only	Improve Own Source Revenue
3.4 Minimise unforeseen liabilities	3.4.a Implement Risk Management Strategies Train and develop staff skills	Risk Management Action Plan approved and adopted by Council	Achieve Industry Benchmarks for Risk Management Practices	Improve Operating Performance Ratio
3.5 Broaden the rates base	3.5.a Complete an assessment of areas of interest including community consultation 3.5.b Develop recommendations for adjustments in concert with neighbouring Councils	Review of local government area boundaries is completed by Dec 2016	Boundary adjustments approved by NSW Government	Improve Own Source Revenue

3.6 Maximise non-rates own-source income	<p>3.6.a Develop private works program and targets</p> <p>3.6.b Complete a critical analysis of full cost recovery for each business unit (activity) of Council (in conjunction with Service reviews Action 1.1.a)</p>	<p>Adopt pricing structure for private works which are in demand at profitable rates</p> <p>Identify workforce capacity to meet requirements of both internal and private works</p>	<p>Generate additional profitable and sustainable revenue from private works</p>	<p>Improve Own Source Revenue and Operating Performance Ratio</p> <p>Potential to adversely affect Real Operating Expenditure per capita</p>
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3.2 Infrastructure and Service Management

Summarise your council's key strategies to improve performance against the Infrastructure and service management benchmarks in the 2016-20 period, including the outcomes you expect to achieve.

1. Take advantage of Council's borrowing capacity to spread capital renewal expenditure providing intergenerational equity
2. Review and rewrite of Council's Workforce Management Strategy
3. Engage with each village and town to review and develop Council's Community Strategic Plan 2016/2036
4. Utilise the current elected representative Councillor cohort to attract and mentor new Councillors

Explain the key assumptions that underpin your strategies and expected outcomes.

A review of budgeted maintenance works within the Asset Management Plan framework resulted in a reduction of maintenance spending (\$195k) in 2015/16 compared to previous years and with the excess applied to capital renewal project funding. In recent years Council has not been able to resource all maintenance and capital renewal works, resulting in a maintenance and capital renewal figure below that identified in Asset Management Plan. Council is increasing resources in this area and is confident that the required maintenance levels will be met from 2015/16 onwards.

Condition assessments and yearly asset revaluations will improve data for Asset Management Plans. As asset management systems and data continue to be refined, the accuracy, reliability and quality of the backlog information will improve. Council believes that this will show our backlog position to be better than currently reported.

Council's future outlook is strong therefore the need to borrow is small. Given this, Council is in a flexible position to undertake projects when needs arise and has a strong capacity to seek loan borrowings for these projects in line with intergenerational equity principles. Having a robust Asset Management Plan has allowed Council to plan ahead as was shown in the combination of using loans through the LIRS scheme in 2014 and cash reserves held by Council.

3.2 Infrastructure and Service Management

Outline your strategies and outcomes in the table below.

3.2 Infrastructure and service management

Objective	Strategies	Key milestones	Outcome	Impact on other measures
1.6 Ensure Council's operations are planned, managed and cohesive	1.6.a Complete an audit of fleet management functions including fleet utilisation and identify savings in fleet management or rationalisation	Audit completed by March 2016 Recommendations for improvement adopted by April 2016	Savings identified and redirected Improved fleet management practices and systems in place	Improve Own Source Operating Revenue
	1.6.b Review processes involved in administering and managing RMS work contracts	Review completed early 2016 Process and system improvements implemented	Maintain or improve Council's RMS Performance Rating - increase in work from RMS	
2.2 Provide a workplace environment where employees have the opportunity to advance their career	2.2.a Implement new policies and processes for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Succession Planning - Acting and Higher Duties Policy and training program - "Preparing for Retirement Program Policy" 	Mentor program introduced Transition to retirement program introduced	Enhanced ability to employ a wider range of skilled staff Knowledge, creativity and innovation improved	Improve Real Operating Expenditure per capita

	2.2.b Review the competency based salary system and investigate Performance management frameworks	Review is completed in consultation with consultative committee by April 2016	Market competitive salaries Enhanced ability to attract staff Higher levels of performance and morale	Improve Operating Performance Ratio
2.5 Improve the Asset Management capability of elected members and staff	2.5.a Targeted capacity building programs including: - Community service level negotiations - Risk management and infrastructure vulnerability assessments - Identification critical infrastructure	Training provided by Dec 2015	Stronger assets management capability Decision making is based on sound asset plans	Improve Infrastructure Backlog Ratio
2.6 Give the community confidence in the leadership of its Council by enhancing knowledge and skills of Council management and elected officials particularly in respect of importance financial and asset management	2.6.a Foster and encourage Councillor training, information sessions and professional development opportunities 2.6.b Actively promote Councillor positions to woman and ATSI community members	More representative Council group elected in 2016	New Councillor training implemented post 2016 elections Participation and involvement at LGNSW and regional Alliance meetings	

<p>3.7 Maximise funds available for asset renewals and replacements</p>	<p>3.7.a Identify local priority projects and move to shovel ready status</p> <p>3.7.b Work with Central West JO to ensure Council projects have appropriate regional priority</p> <p>3.7.c Adopt intergenerational equity approach for fast tracking of major capital works programs</p>	<p>Set targets for grant funding and take a more focussed and strategic approach to grant applications</p> <p>Realise opportunities for subsidised borrowings (as a FFTF council)</p>	<p>Local projects completed by Council with grant funding</p> <p>Bridge renewal and replacement program brought forward</p>	<p>Increase Debt Service Ratio</p> <p>Reduce Own Source Operating Revenue</p> <p>Improve Infrastructure Backlog Ratio and Building and Infrastructure Ratio</p>
<p>3.8 Empower communities to be engaged and strategic, enhancing their local capacity for decision making</p>	<p>3.8.a Engage with each Village and Town in reviewing Council's Community Strategic Plan 2016/2036</p> <p>3.8.b Provide opportunities for community to engage on future and place making</p>	<p>Individual Village Community Plans are completed for Carcoar, Millthorpe, Lyndhurst, Mandurama, Blayney, Newbridge and Neville</p> <p>Corporate Partners are engaged in Financial Assistance Program</p>	<p>Community participation and local involvement in developing individual Community Plans</p> <p>Council endorsed and adopted CSP 2016/2036 by 30 June 2016</p> <p>Village Enhancement Programs in place and Financial Assistance Program provides funding for community projects</p>	

3.3 Efficiency

Summarise your council's key strategies to improve performance against the Efficiency measures in the 2016-20 period, including the outcomes you expect to achieve.

1. Improve efficiencies in delivery of services, reducing costs by shared services and improvements in technology
2. Build on WBC Alliance experience to formalise an enhanced new sub-regional Strategic Alliance
3. Grow the population and employment opportunities of the shire by supporting residential land strategy
4. Maximise the access to industrial and manufacturing land which is available

Explain the key assumptions that underpin your strategies and expected outcomes.

The projected local government cost index of 2.5% was used as well as 3.5% forecast increase of employee benefits and on-costs, taking into consideration performance increases by staff.

New South Wales State and Local Government Area Population Projection (NSW Department Planning): 2014 final forecasts were used with a projected population growth to 2031 around 8%.

Council has not forecast any one-off private works that could affect this ratio negatively as these are difficult to predict.

Council regularly re-values assets and a small increase to depreciation is forecast each year however a review of depreciation methods could reduce the depreciation expense affecting this measurement positively.

3.3 Efficiency

Outline your strategies and outcomes in the table below.

3.3 Efficiency

Objective	Strategies	Key milestones	Outcome	Impact on other measures
1.2 Service levels are known and agreed with community	1.2.a Once cost of service is identified consult with community to agree on service levels	Complete community consultation in relation to service levels	Fully documented statement of service levels for all assets and services	
1.3 Improve efficiency of service delivery	1.3.a Implement a Business Improvement Program linking internal audit, service reviews, risk management 1.3.b Undertake a benchmarking program with other councils to measure the efficiency of the services currently provided 1.3.c Staff training, benchmarking, professional development and audits/assessments	Complete Promoting Better Practice Review and measure improvements Utilise alliance practitioners to work with staff to identify ways to improve efficiencies and work practices Training and project based learning is completed by March 2016	Improve workplace efficiencies to increase productivity by 5% Service levels and efficiency rank meet or exceed industry/regional benchmarks Continuous improvement is driven internally by staff capable of implementing business improvement	

1.4 Improve procurement and contract management performance	<p>1.4.a Implement ArcBlue Procurement Roadmap and spend analysis</p> <p>1.4.b Roll out a “Think Local Buy Local” campaign to local and regional contractors</p>	Programs have been implemented by June 2016	<p>Achievement of 5% cost savings in purchasing and contracts through Best Buy and smart procurement</p> <p>Increased number of local contractors on preferred supplier panels</p>	
1.5 Improve efficiency through technology	<p>1.5.a Provide innovative and leading technology interface including: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased use of mobile devices - Online DA Tracking system operational and utilised - Electronic Housing Codes - Electronic timesheets and payslips <p>1.5.b Implement a unified communications solution</p> <p>1.5.c Improve electronic customer interface introducing more online options for customers</p>	<p>Enhanced use of technology particularly in the area of remote access for staff and on-line customer access</p> <p>NBN implementation to provide further technological improvements</p> <p>New internal system in place by June 2016</p> <p>System capability defined</p> <p>Engage with WBC partners on same system to develop joint solutions</p> <p>E-timesheets developed with WBC partners</p>	<p>Increased efficiencies in processing of data and more accurate and timely data available</p> <p>Reduction in overall telecommunications costs and ability to streamline our internal and external communications with the latest technology</p> <p>Enhanced customer experience</p> <p>Ability to redirect internal resources</p> <p>Savings in processing time</p>	
2.4 Enhance Council's capacity to deal with change and manage projects/contracts	<p>2.4.a Change Management Training</p> <p>2.4.b Project Management Training</p>	Programs delivered during the 15/16 training plan period	Enhanced capability of staff to respond to change and take on new projects or functions	

4.1 Reduce costs through shared services	<p>4.1.a Develop an enhanced Strategic Alliance</p> <p>4.1.b Pursue resource sharing and collaborative partnerships with neighbouring Councils</p>	<p>Review experience and expertise of the WBC Alliance</p> <p>Rebuild with new partners and purpose</p> <p>Identify opportunities for Blayney and neighbouring Councils to share resources</p>	<p>Blayney Shire and neighbouring Councils formalise an enhanced sub-regional Strategic Alliance</p> <p>Identify operational functions that can be delivered via resource sharing or fee for service basis within JO and within Alliance</p>	
4.3 Grow the population of the Shire	4.3.a Develop strategies for the Shire to leverage off the growth of Orange and Bathurst as a residential satellite area	Increased rate of population growth	Operating expenditure spread over a larger ratepayer base	

3.4 Improvement Action Plan

Summarise the key improvement actions that will be achieved in the first year of your plan.

Action plan

Actions	Milestones
1.1 Develop Service Review Program to be undertaken over 15/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program developed by Sept 2015 • Reviews commence from September 2105
1.1 Undertake a benchmarking program with other councils to measure the efficiency of the services currently provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark against similar councils and region the operational effectiveness of Council services and operations • Participate in Local Government Operational and Management Effectiveness Survey
1.1 Implement full cost recovery for Council's discretionary services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of fees and charges for services Council currently provides • Complete a fully attributed costing of all services
1.1 Include new pricing in Revenue Policy for 2016/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost structure discussed with community and Council and adopted
1.2. Cost of service is identified consult with community to agree on service levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete community consultation in relation to service levels by June 2016
1.3. Implement a Business Improvement Program linking internal audit, service reviews, risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Promoting Better Practice Review and measure improvements (Dec 2015)
1.3 Staff training, benchmarking, professional development and audits/assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and project based learning is completed by March 2016

1.4 Implement ArcBlue Procurement Roadmap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs have been implemented by June 2016
1.5 Improve electronic customer interface introducing more online options for customers including online payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System capability defined • Engage with WBC partners on same system to develop joint solutions • E-timesheets developed with WBC partners
1.6 Complete an audit of fleet management functions including fleet utilisation and identify savings in fleet management or rationalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit completed by March 2016 • Recommendations for improvement adopted by April 2016 • Roll out of new fleet management system and processes from May 2016
1.6 Review processes involved in administrating and managing RMS work contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review completed early 2016 • Process and system improvements implemented
2.1 Develop contemporary recruitment and retention strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies are developed and implemented by Dec 2015.
2.1 Review Workforce Management Strategy (WMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainee Works Operators appointed in 2016 • Cadet Engineer appointed in 2016
2.2 Review the competency based salary system and investigate Performance management frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review is completed in consultation with consultative committee by April 2016
2.3 Improve internal capability in project and financial management - particularly Managers and Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training program developed and funded for 15/16 and ongoing
2.6 Foster and encourage Councillor training, information sessions and professional development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More representative Council group elected in 2016
3.1 Undertake a comprehensive review of all assets and results of road revaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete implementation of asset management software by December 2015 • Adjust agreed assets classification and hierarchy

process are incorporated into assets and financial plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council endorsed and adopted resourcing strategy by 30 June 2016 including asset management plan, workforce management plan and long term financial plan
3.2 Review the General Ledger to provide better level of financial data to improve financial planning and budget allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review is completed in preparation for 2016/17 budget cycle
3.3 Undertake a review of the rating structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review is completed and new structure implemented for 2016/17 financial year
3.8 Engage with each Village and Town in reviewing Council's Community Strategic Plan 2016/2036	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Village Community Plans are completed for Carcoar, Millthorpe, Lyndhurst, Mandurama, Blayney, Newbridge and Neville • Corporate Partners are engaged in Financial Assistance Program
4.1 Develop an enhanced Strategic Alliance and pursue resource sharing and collaborative partnerships with neighbouring Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review experience and expertise of the WBC Alliance • Rebuild with new partners and purpose • Identify opportunities for Blayney and neighbouring Councils to share resources
4.2 Maintain effective partnerships with current strategic alliances and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Joint Organisation for Central West is constituted from June 2016

Refer attached '**Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Review 2015/16 – 2024/25**' and '**Detailed Action Plan**'

Outline the process that underpinned the development of your Action Plan.

Blayney Shire Council has successfully managed the development and completion of the FFTF submission utilising the resources, professional skills and experience of its staff to undertake this project in-house. From the outset in February 2014, when the ILGRP Report was published and subsequent announcement of the NSW Government FFTF reform program, Councillors were engaged and have committed much time and energy into the process via Council meetings and FFTF workshop sessions.

In September and October 2014 Blayney Shire Council, Mayor and then Acting General Manager met separately with the Mayor and General Manager of Bathurst Regional Council and Orange City Council. Similarly Blayney Shire Council representatives attended various meetings including the OLG facilitated Pilot JO sessions in November and December 2014 to discuss the FFTF program and the region's options at the WBC Alliance and Centroc Board level. In February 2015 a meeting was hosted by Oberon Council and included Blayney, Bathurst and Lithgow Councils to discuss each Council's FFTF preferred options.

The Mayor and General Manager attended the OLG Rural Council information meeting in Dubbo in December 2014. Initially separate staff and Councillor workshops were held in December 2014 and January 2015. This was followed by joint staff and Councillor sessions to review the financial benchmarks, merger options and assess the key challenges and opportunities in March and April 2015.

The Central West Pilot JO included Central Tablelands Water (CTW), whose chairman is a Councillor from Blayney Shire Council, so providing additional insight into the regional strategic response. CTW senior staff were included in the staff workshops to maximise collaboration between our WBC Alliance partner and Council.

Council and the community were briefed via regular monthly reports and Councillors were included in all FFTF workshops and the community engagement strategy.

Staff and WBC Executive attended LGNSW FFTF bootcamps, OLG FFTF information sessions and most recently the IPART consultation in Dubbo held in May 2015 in regards to the process and methodology for FFTF assessment.

The establishment of Central West (Centroc) as a Pilot JO means Blayney Shire Council has been involved at every opportunity to ensure that this is a successful trial.

Of note is the research and work undertaken by a Blayney Shire Councillor who has prepared a discussion paper drafting the legislative framework for the JOs moving forward. This contribution by one of our Councillors at the regional level is viewed as very positive for the region and local government overall.

Upon appointment of a new General Manager in November 2014, the senior executive team (MANEX) appointed a small multi-disciplinary project team of staff with expertise and interests in strategic planning, asset management and finance. From February 2015, this project group met fortnightly and the tasks of each section of the Improvement Proposal submission allocated to the department where that particular expertise sits. In February 2015, Council appointed a Chief Financial Officer, who added another level of expertise to this FFTF working group.

Orange City Council formally invited Blayney and Cabonne Councils to participate in a Merger Business Case study in February 2015. Following analysis of the options available, Council made the very important decision in March 2015 to focus entirely on submitting an Improvement Proposal resolving that staff prepare a stand-alone position being Template 2.

FFTF strategy workshops held again in May 2015, involving Councillors, Senior Staff, Supervisors and key staff provided input into the development of the 4 Year Action Plan. The whole process was undertaken in partnership with the WBC Alliance with Executive Manager undertaking much of the collation of Council's evidence and supporting documents which have been attached to this Improvement Proposal.

Finance and asset management staff, whilst dealing with the completion of the 2015-16 Operational Plan and normal QBRS schedules, have undertaken a review and updated the LTFP. This has provided the necessary data for the financial benchmarks moving forward. Key to this submission are the assumptions for the 2016/17 – 2019/20 period and the Action Plan strategies, milestones and projected outcomes. All of these were presented to Council for feedback and final approval both at workshops and at formal Council meetings in May and most recently in June 2015, when the final resolution to submit Template 2 Improvement Proposal was unanimously endorsed.

Blayney Shire hosted an Office of Local Government and LGNSW Improvement Proposal Peer Review day on 3 June 2015. This meant staff involved in preparing their FFTF Improvement Proposals representing 15 Councils from the Central West and Orana region were able to exchange ideas, share resources and experiences. This event is an example of how Blayney Shire Council has the capacity and leadership to work collaboratively and is prepared to help improve Local Government in the region.

As a further independent check NSW TCorp (TCorp) was engaged to undertake a review of the revised LTFF in preparation for the FFTF submission. In updating the analysis completed for the previous reports; being April 2013 and November 2013 for the SRV which was approved by IPART in 2014, TCorp's work included;

- Assessing of the performance of Council based on its last 5 years financial results including (2013/14)
- Reviewing the revised LTFF (2015/25) and key assumptions and methodology
- Analysing the extent to which the forecast operating performance will support the long term sustainability of Council; and
- Updating the assessment of the FSR and Outlook for Council

Based on this independent review of both the historic financial information and the 10 year financial forecast within Council's LTFF TCorp consider Council to be in a satisfactory, and improving financial position. TCorp believes Council's current financial Sustainability position is Moderate, with an Outlook of Positive. At this rating, Council is currently achieving a level of performance broadly consistent with the TCorp benchmarks.

Furthermore TCorp state '*The LTFF indicates that, if achieved, Council's position is expected to improve over the next 3 years which is based on the following points:*

- *Council has demonstrated a willingness to seek approvals for SRV's to assist in addressing its need for additional revenue to meet infrastructure costs.*
- *Council's financial position has been improving, particularly when the timing differences associated with the FAG payments are taken into account.*
- *Council is forecasting operating surpluses, sound levels of liquidity and own source revenue is at sound levels to support the operations.'* (TCorp, 2015)

TCorp have raised the point that should the forecast increase in population occurs, Council will need to adjust its planning in future to take any impacts of that into account. This will be addressed in the future Delivery Plans and reviewing of LTFF into the future.

The community and staff engagement strategy has been ongoing, with the FFTF story on the agenda in weekly General Manager Updates and Mayoral Comments via the website, quarterly community newsletters, Blayney Chronicle, Mayoral Radio interviews, staff meetings and staff communications. In addition the General Manager and Mayor made the most of any opportunities made available to speak at various community organisations and Council Committees about the FFTF program and Council's position.

The Community Engagement Strategy was approved at the April 2015 meeting. A Council FFTF roadshow to Blayney and the villages was organised from the end of May and early June 2015, where the General Manager and Mayor, with Councillors presented the Draft Improvement Proposal and merger options for discussion. Eight individual community meetings were held, hosted by each Village Association in Millthorpe, Barry, Newbridge, Carcoar, Neville, Mandurama, Lyndhurst and Blayney. These meetings were well attended with over 120 community members participating in this process.

A survey sought community input about the options for Blayney Shire Council. 'Have your Say' was distributed online, at community meetings and promoted online and in media channels, opening on Monday 19 May 2015 and closing Friday 12 June 2015.

193 surveys were collected online and via paper forms, representing 5% of the number of ratepayers in the shire. Key themes indicated by respondents about what they value in the Blayney Shire include:

1. Country Lifestyle – 39.01%
2. Good services/ facilities/ staff at Council – 24.73%
3. Community spirit – 21.43%
4. Farming Country/ landscape – 12.64%
5. Friendships/ Family – 8.79%

The Stand Alone preferred option accounted for 86% of respondents. A merger with Orange and/or Cabonne accounted for 9% of respondents. Preferred governance options numbered from 1 to 4 are summarised as follows;

Option	1st Preference	2nd Preference	3rd Preference	4th Preference
Stand Alone	167	9	3	2
Merge with Orange and/or Cabonne	18	34	18	10
Merge with Bathurst and/or Oberon	2	32	34	10
Other	6	19	7	21
TOTAL	193	94	62	43

Refer attached '**Blayney Shire Council Financial Assessment and Sustainability Report**' (NSW Treasury Corporation, 2015).

3.5 Other actions considered

In preparing your Improvement Action Plan, you may have considered other strategies/actions but decided not to adopt them. Please identify what these strategies/actions were and explain why you chose not to pursue them.

Council has undertaken a rigorous process to consider the options available to secure the future sustainability of the shire.

This has included:

- a comprehensive series of workshops with Councillors and staff in December 2014, January, February, March and April 2015;
- completion of a merger assessment review to identify the similar and different services provided, and the cultural and community of interest fit;
- a robust analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of a merger with Orange/Cabonne and Bathurst/Oberon;
- identification of the organisation's key challenges and opportunities;
- review of the scale and capacity of the current and future Council operations;
- a comprehensive testing of financial performance benchmarks against our assumptions; and
- identification of future strategies to strengthen the long term sustainability of Council.

Whilst a formal invitation was made by Orange City Council to undertake a Merger Business Case Study, given the body of evidence produced from this work noted above, Council resolved to focus its resources preparing a submission as a Council in the Central West JO, in accordance with the recommendation from the ILGRP (2013).

We now know from the Orange and Cabonne Merger Business Case Study (May 2015) that the outcome did not demonstrate a significant benefit. In fact the independent study proved that both Orange and Cabonne have the scale and capacity to achieve the FFTF financial performance benchmarks as stand-alone entities. In summary the merger of a very urban and a very rural council with opposing purposes, priorities and service levels was inconclusive and the risks identified in the merger analysis far outweighed the estimated savings. With significant community angst demonstrated against any merger, both Orange and Cabonne Councils have resolved to stand alone as individual Councils in the Central West JO.

Additionally a key element in this decision was the commitment to shared services delivery with like-minded councils. Blayney, through the WBC Strategic Alliance, has been a long-time advocate of the benefits of shared services. In 2013/14 the WBC Alliance committed significant resources and engaged KPMG to develop a methodology and structure for the delivery of shared services across a range of 20 functions with estimated benefits of over \$1.1m in efficiency savings whilst maintaining the local democratic representation and presence that the community demands. Council is of the opinion that the opportunities for sharing of resources and services, is a viable and more attractive future option for Blayney than a wholesale merger with a large urban centre.

The desired objective for a council merger should be to achieve both economies of scale and economies of scope. In preparing the stand-alone position, Blayney Shire Council has critically assessed and tested both positive and negative impacts, including what economies of scale and scope could be accomplished by a merger with either Orange City or Bathurst Regional Councils. Blayney Shire Council can demonstrate that by working collaboratively with the Wellington, Blayney and Cabonne (WBC) Alliance (or indeed an enhanced sub regional Strategic Alliance of neighbouring councils) provides efficient and a diverse range of services. This partnership and resource sharing is extended to the current arrangements for Central West Libraries, CENTROC and the new Central West JO, Netwaste, Blayney Cabonne Family Day Care, Local Land Services and Local Government Procurement

The partnership with community groups and the village associations adds value and delivers local improvement projects to community infrastructure which is vital for the continued growth of our community. The creation of individual Village Community Plans, an initiative facilitated by Council and the individual local village association which is already underway. The launch of the 'Your Carcoar' Village Community Plan strategy was held in mid June 2015. These individual and locally based vision and project setting forums will provide valuable input into the Blayney Shire Community Strategic Plan 2016-2036. This process is an important capacity building project that will support place management approaches to community engagement, practices and ownership. Building on this volunteer enthusiasm and community value add is recognised as an important feature of Council's Action Plan.

Refer attached '**An Analysis of the Merger Options**'

4. How will your plan improve performance?

4.1 Expected improvement in performance

Measure/ benchmark	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Achieves FFTF benchmark?
Operating Performance Ratio (Greater than or equal to break-even average over 3 years)	-0.091	-0.053	0.037	0.033	0.029	0.035	Yes
Own Source Revenue Ratio (Greater than 60% average over 3 years)	65.02%	66.11%	68.63%	70.10%	72.16%	73.12%	Yes
Building and Infrastructure Asset Renewal Ratio (Greater than 100% average over 3 years)	98.9%	114.9%	109.8%	123.5%	122.5%	125.9%	Yes
Infrastructure Backlog Ratio (Less than 2%)	5.04%	5.49%	5.27%	3.84%	2.56%	1.68%	Yes
Asset Maintenance Ratio (Greater than 100% average over 3 years)	85.79%	107.14%	112.69%	112.69%	112.69%	112.69%	Yes
Debt Service Ratio (Greater than 0% and less than or equal to 20% average over 3 years)	1.68%	2.37%	2.88%	2.26%	1.65%	1.61%	Yes
Real Operating Expenditure per capita A decrease in Real Operating Expenditure per capita over time	decreasing	decreasing	decreasing	decreasing	decreasing	decreasing	Yes

4.1 Expected improvement in performance

If, after implementing your plan, your council may still not achieve all of the Fit for the Future benchmarks, please explain the likely reasons why.

Not Applicable

5. Putting your plan into action

How will your council implement your Improvement Action Plan?

The Improvement Plan will remain the responsibility of the General Manager supported by MANEX which includes Council's 3 Directors. Actions and tasks will be allocated to the General Manager, Directors, Chief Financial Officer and/or various Managers depending on their specialist skill area and responsibility. This cooperative approach and sharing of resources is important for our continued staff professional development. The community and staff FFTF engagement strategy will be ongoing. Information about Blayney's FFTF status and Action Plan and the NSW Government reform of local government will continue to be communicated widely via General Manager Updates and Mayoral Comments on Council's website, facebook, twitter, community newsletters, local newspaper (The Blayney Chronicle) and regional media, community and staff meetings and staff communiqués.

A number of Actions will result in the production and publication of certain plans, strategies or reports which will be reported to Council and made available to the community within the next 18 months. These include;

- Village and Town Community Plans (Carcoar, Millthorpe, Lyndhurst, Newbridge, Neville, Mandurama, Barry, Blayney);
- Blayney Shire Community Strategic Plan 2016/2036;
- Delivery Plan 2016/17-2019/20 and Operational Plan 2016/17;
- Asset Management Plan 2016/17 – 2025/26;
- Long Term Financial Plan 2016/17 – 2025/26;
- Workforce Management Strategy 2016/17 – 2019/20; and
- NSW TCorp Infrastructure Management Assessment and Financial Sustainability Rating and Outlook Reports.

Formally, Council will provide a detailed report on its progress to becoming FFTF to the community and NSW Government annually via the Annual Report. In addition, the Action Items will be included in the new Delivery Plan 2016/17 that will be adopted by Council in June 2016 and further endorsed by the newly elected Council post September 2016. The six monthly reporting cycle from July 2016 and final Council report of the Delivery Plan in 2020 as per the IP&R guidelines will further ensure that the organisation provides the feedback to ratepayers and the public on the achievements and report progress against the key strategies and action items. Financial benchmarks will be reported quarterly as part of the Quarterly Budget Review Statements (QBRS) in November, February and May each year and annually via the publication of Council's audited Financial Statements. The Auditor General would reassess performance periodically as part of the Audit Office of NSW's new auditing role in the sector.