

## Key Elements of Strategic Capacity

### More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending

- Council has applied to IPART for a modest special rating variation of 7.21% for the 2015/2016 financial year, 7.46% for the 2016/2017 financial year and 7.15% for the 2017/2018 financial year.
- Introduction of Section 94A Plan which has expanded Council's ability to raise important funds for the provision of communities services and facilities. The introduction of a Section 94A Plan works best for rural councils, particularly where there is disproportionate growth.
- Solid growth in the south west area of the Shire provides the opportunity for rates growth over time. Rates growth is currently 0.5% above rate pegging.
- Proven ability to be a regional contractor to the NSW Roads and Maritime Services for the Road Maintenance Council Contract.
- Maintenance of adequate Reserves and/or loan borrowing capacity.
- Introduction of programmed Service and Efficiency Reviews.

### Scope to undertake new functions and major projects

#### **New functions**

Since 2004 Greater Hume Shire Council's has concentrated on reviewing, streamlining and rationalisation of service delivery however immediately following the amalgamation a number of strategic tasks were completed including:

- ✓ Transitioning staff into and out of the new organisation (Greater Hume) whilst also transitioning selected staff to Albury and Corowa Councils.
- ✓ Integration of the policies of the three former shires into effective policies for the expanded Council area
- ✓ Consolidation of 3 Local Environment Plans to 1.
- ✓ Consolidation of salary systems and entitlements.
- ✓ Streamlining the rating structure from 16 rating categories to 6.
- ✓ Distribution of the assets and liabilities of the former Hume Shire Council to Greater, Albury and Corowa Councils in accordance with an agreed formula.
- ✓ Rationalisation of offices and depots.
- ✓ Implementation of an electronic document management system.
- ✓ Implementation of a common Information Technology platform.

The ability to address a range of issues, whilst simultaneously delivering a large number of major projects demonstrates Council's adaptability and resilience.

#### **Major projects**

By the end of the 2015 calendar year in just eleven short years Council will have completed almost \$43m of capital projects over and above recurrent operational and capital expenditure. This expenditure has included the following major projects:-

- ✓ Replacement of a bridge across the Billabong Creek - \$4m – ***Funded through Roads and Maritimes Services as part of the Hume Highway duplication works.***
- ✓ Widening and reconstruction of Coppabella Road (a log haulage road) - \$3.5m - ***Funding from Local and State Government and 5 industry partners***
- ✓ Completion of 6m of a regional road - \$1.5m – ***Roads and Maritimes Services Road Toll Response Program***

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- ✓ 10 bed extension of the Jindera Residential Aged Care Hostel - \$1.5m – ***Funded by The Australian Government's Department of Health and Ageing***
- ✓ As part of the Hume Highway Bypass project and on behalf of the NSW Roads and Maritime Services the realignment of Wagga Road and Albury Streets - \$1.1m – ***Funded by Roads and Maritime Services – Part of the Hume Highway Bypass of Holbrook***
- ✓ Holbrook Streetscape upgrade - \$2m (80%complete) – ***Funded by Roads and Maritime Services as a mitigation measure of the Hume Highway Bypass of Holbrook.***
- ✓ RMCC maintenance and ordered works totalling \$17m over the last nine years rising to \$3.6m in 2012/2013 and \$2.9m in 2013/2014 financial years – ***Funded by Roads and Maritime Services***
- ✓ Responded appropriately and compassionately to the December 2009 Bushfire Natural Disaster that ravaged over 6,000 ha of the Shire developing and partly funding a farm re-fencing program – ***Funded by the Australian and New South Wales Government's Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Programs***
- ✓ Expenditure of natural disaster funding following the 2010 and 2012 floods - \$9.2m - ***Funded by the Australian and New South Wales Government's Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Programs***

In addition the following projects are also about to commence:-

- ✓ Reconstruction of Young Street, Holbrook - \$1.635m - ***\$1.1 m funded by Roads and Maritime Services as compensation for road damage during the construction of the Hume Highway Bypass of Holbrook.***
- ✓ Reconstruction of 10.5km of Alma Park Road – \$1.5m – ***Funded through a loan borrowing with an interest rate subsidy provided under the State Government's Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme.***
- ✓ Reconstruction of 2.4km of Jingellic Road - \$3.5m – ***Funded by the Australian Government's Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program (\$1.75m) and the State Government's Fixing Country Roads Program (0.75m) with balance by Council.***

### Ability to employ a wide range of skilled staff

Council has been able to recruit and retain high calibre and appropriately qualified staff across all functional areas, this is demonstrated as follows:

- ✓ General Manager – 25 years local government experience, 14 years as General Manager, 9 Years as General Manager of Greater Hume Shire Council.
- ✓ Director Corporate and Community Services – 33 years local government experience, 9 years as department head at Greater Hume Shire Council.
- ✓ Director Engineering – 26 years local government experience, 7 years as department head at Greater Hume Shire Council.
- ✓ Director Environment and Planning – 20 years local government experience, 11 years as department head, 5 years as department head at Greater Hume Shire Council.
- Internally assessed an \$8.5 million Organic Composting facility at Gerogery which was recommended for refusal by Council's Assessing Officer and refused by the Southern

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- Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP). On appeal to the Land and Environment Court the Assessing Officer's Report and the JRPP's refusal was upheld by the court.
- Implementation, monitoring and review of Council's Workforce Plan
  - First Council in NSW to participate in the highly successful Work Inspiration Program:- a three step process to highlight the local government employment opportunities to Year 10 Students.
  - Currently providing education assistance to 6 staff.  
Detailed below are courses being undertaken by those staff:
    - ✓ Cert IV in Work Health & Safety with the National Safety Council of Australia – course fee funded via a successful scholarship application with StateCover – GHSC sponsoring with access to time and resources.
    - ✓ Masters of Social Work (Child and Adolescent Welfare)
    - ✓ Diploma of Management
    - ✓ Bachelor of Business (Accounting)
    - ✓ Bachelor of Business (Tourism)
    - ✓ Certificate IV in Recordkeeping.
  - Nestled between the major regional cities of Wagga Wagga and Albury/Wodonga provides Council with a strong recruitment capacity.
  - Council has implemented an Apprenticeship/Traineeship Program recently employing three trainees and one apprentice in the following fields:- 2 in Civil Construction, Library and Youth Services and Diesel Mechanic.
  - Geographic location exposures Council to a wide range of high quality consultants in a variety of fields including town planning, engineering and community capacity building etc. to supplement existing staff if required.

### Knowledge, creativity and innovation

- Greater Hume Children's Services winner NSW Coordination Unit of the Year at the 2013 Family Day Care Australia (FDCA) Awards in Excellence and achieved a rating of "Exceeding the National Quality Standard" under the NQS with the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.
- As demonstrated by being the lead council Greater Hume is seen as the knowledge holder on a regional basis for a number of core local government services: noxious weeds, ranger services, youth, road safety, community health and wellbeing as demonstrated by being the lead council in service provision.
- Greater Hume Shire Council applied for and was successful in obtaining ethics approval and funding of ~~\$18,000~~ to carry out a research project to evaluate the innovative models of respite services provided to people with dementia and carers in the Albury, Corowa and Greater Hume Shires, it was titled "An evaluation of what respite options work best for people with dementia and their carers living in rural NSW". Funding was from The Dementia Collaborative Research Centre at the UNSW, and was the only rural project to be funded. The project was one of 80 papers from 500 submitted to be invited to be presented at the 12<sup>th</sup> National Rural Health Conference. The work was also published in the Journal of Dementia Care and the Senate Affairs Committee paper has since taken up the Communique recommendation from the National Rural Health Conference. GHSC implemented the research findings into its own programs improving the quality of services provided to clients and carers living in rural and regional areas.
- An early adopter of NSW Planning's Electronic Housing Code.

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- In conjunction with NSW Planning implementing On-line DA tracking.
- Introduction of a Waste Management Strategy saving Council \$250k per year.
- Adoption of a Community Health and Well Being Profile including the development of a Community Health and Wellbeing Plan and the establishment of a Health and Well Being Alliance bringing together service providers, stakeholders for a coordinated and collaborative approach to health, aged care and disability planning and support in the region. **Refer ANNEXURE 2a** at <http://www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=mHnPjzBhRCY%3d&tabid=637>
- In conjunction with Statewide Mutual development of a Risk and Work Health and Safety Management System that can be used as a template statewide. **Refer ANNEXURE 2b** at <http://www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=20Xv-q8bMVM%3d&tabid=637>
- Co-funded with StateCover a Health and Well Being strategy – 'Building Healthy and capable teams'.
- Auspicing Council of the Riverina Noxious Weeds program which was the winner of the 2014 LGNSW Excellence in Environment Awards in the Weeds Management category. Council manages this \$1.4 million program on behalf of 33 local government authorities, Local Land Services and Regional Weed Advisory Committees.
- High quality on-site sewerage management program including pre purchase inspections.
- Community Grants program to build community capacity to match other external funding and in kind contributions. Since 2008/2009 Council has distributed \$357,138 which has leverage further funding of \$2.2 million
- Co-location of council services with other institutions and activities (e.g.: 2 Customer Services Centres co-located with financial institutions, 2 Customer Services Centres co-located with Rural Transaction Centres and other Council services – libraries to improve service delivery).
- The Holbrook Community Resource Centre and Culcairn and Henty Library spaces being used as a central meeting points for other rural based operations, - providing state of the art technology facilities to residents and other users.
- Partnered with Riverina TAFE to install video conferencing facilities in the Holbrook and Henty to provide educational opportunities for residents via remote access.
- Undertake the role of residential and industrial land developer in the absence of private enterprise.
- Buy local initiative across the Shire.

### Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development

- Proven ability to develop a resourceful Council from the previously poorly managed amalgamation process in 2004.
- Ability to plan for and adapt to significant changes to the funding for aged and community services changing from a provider to facilitator of services.
- Following the withdrawal from providing aged and community services two Council staff members were invited to apply and accepted to the Board of Management of Intereach a prominent 'Not for Profit' provider of aged and disability services in the region.
- Development of a comprehensive Community Health and Well Being Plan and Alliance.
- Ability to attract significant external funding and being able to complete funded works along with Council's recurrent works program.

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- Development of a suite of Land Use Planning strategies and documents (including floodplain management) of the consolidated Greater Hume Shire area.
- Early completion of the Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan.

### Effective regional collaboration

- Greater Hume Shire Council (through its predecessors) has been an active and committed member of REROC and RAMROC for over 20 years (refer Building Strategic Capacity document included as [ANNEXURE 3](#)).
- A pivotal role in the winding up of Upper Murray Regional Library and assisting in facilitating the membership of Corowa, Urana and Tumbarumba Councils in the Riverina Regional Library.
- Active member of the Riverina Regional Library and host Council for the southern mobile library.
- General Manager is currently a member of the REROC Executive and Convenor of the Workforce Development Group.
- Director Environment and Planning on the Riverina JO Planning Working Group
- Council was also a major instigator of the REROC group of Councils hosting the Executive Certificate for Elected Members Course held earlier this year. Five Greater Hume Shire Councillors attended the program.
- Lead Council along with Lockhart and Corowa Councils in a tender for the supply of bitumen sealing works.
- Lead Council in resource sharing initiatives with Lockhart and Urana Shire Council to provide Road Safety and Youth Services. Greater Hume Shire Council also provides ranger services under contract to Urana Shire Council.
- Director Engineering and Greater Hume Shire Council are the project leaders in the development of the RAMROC Regional Transport Plan.
- Lead Council in the Hume Region of the Rural Fire Service.
- Auspicing Council of the Riverina Noxious Weeds program which was the winner of the 2014 LGNSW Excellence in Environment Awards in the Weeds Management category.
- Participant in a joint cross border waste contract involving Albury City, Corowa Shire Council, Wodonga Council and Indigo Shire Council.
- Provider of Children's Services (Family Day Care, In Home Care) in neighbouring Councils and cross border.
- Active member of the Softwoods Working Group that has resulted in over \$6 into Greater Hume Shire and funding announcements of \$116.65m regionally from Federal, State Governments and Private Enterprise.
- Active member of Murray Arts a cross border collaboration of Albury City, Corowa Shire Council, Wodonga Council, Towong Shire Council and Indigo Shire Council
- Councillor representation on the Board of Apprentices Trainees Employment Limited.
- Active member of the Alliance of Councils and Shires of the Upper Murray Working Party (ACSUM) including Albury City, Corowa Shire Council, Wodonga Council, Towong Shire Council and Indigo Shire Council
- Council's Senior Weeds Officer chairs the Eastern Riverina Noxious Weeds Advisory Council and Council is the lead agency NSW Weeds Action program for Eastern and Western Riverina Noxious Weeds Advisory Group.
- Active member of the Murray Darling Association – Region 1.
- Constituent Council of Riverina Water County Council.



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- Foundation member of Border Trust, a local philanthropic organisation covering the local government areas of: Victoria – Alpine, Indigo, Towong and Wodonga NSW – Albury, Corowa, Greater Hume, Tumbarumba
- Council Director Engineering is the Chair Local Emergency Management Committee.
- Active participant in the Regional Leaders Network convened by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.
- Foundation member of the C Change Bureau a collective of Councils in the Riverina to promote country living opportunities.
- Member of the NSW Business Chamber
- Active member of the Murray Regional Tourism Board including a partnership with Destination NSW and Tourism Vic to implement a Digital Platform for the Murray region.
- In partnership with Museums & Galleries NSW and Albury City Council to engage a regional museum advisor to provide workshops and individual advice to our 11 museums.
- Member of the newly formed RAMROC Records Network Group.

### Credibility for more effective advocacy

- Council membership of REROC and RAMROC has provided a very effective advocacy mechanism and Council is of the view that the Riverina Joint Organisation will further enhance effective advocacy for Council and the region.
- Active member of the Alliance of Councils and Shires of the Upper Murray Working Party (ACSUM) including Albury City, Corowa Shire Council, Wodonga Council, Towong Shire Council and Indigo Shire Council has provided a very effective advocacy mechanism and was pivotal in the development of the cross border Albury/Wodonga Health organisation.
- Council has been able to achieve meetings with Members of Parliament when important issues arise. In the past twelve months Greater Hume Shire Council has met with the Premier, Minister for Roads and Freight and the Minister for Local Government.
- Regular and productive meetings with local Federal and State members of Parliament.

### Capable partner for state and federal agencies

- NSW Roads and Maritime Services and a regional contractor for the Road Maintenance Council Contract in both the Greater Hume and Lockhart local government areas.
- Establishment of Government Access Centres that provide a range of State Government Services along with Centrelink agencies.
- Office of Environment and Heritage in the development of Floodplain Studies and Risk Management Plans.
- Office of Water with a range of projects including Integrated Water Cycle Management, Reuse Water Schemes.
- Ministry of Police and Emergency Services responding to 5 Natural disaster events in the last 6 years.
- NSW Trade and Investment to deliver a significant collaborative forestry road project involving State, local government and private enterprise.
- Recent announcement of funding for the \$3.5m Jingellic Road reconstruction and widening, a collaboration of Federal, State and Local Government.
- Outstanding relationship developed with the Murrumbidgee Local Health District and local Health Services

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- Maintain a close working relationship with Local Land Services to facilitate effective service delivery of both organisations (e.g.: feral animal control).
- Council was a highly respected service provider for Aged Disability and Home Care and Department of Social Services until funding changes resulted in it being uneconomic for Council to continue in that role.
- Strong working relationship with all emergency services organisations.
- NSW Heritage Office through the implementation and management of the Local Heritage Program.
- Reserve Trustee Manager for 62 Crown Reserves

### Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change

- Intimate knowledge of the landscape, residents and resources to assist with the emergency management of events. This has enabled a rapid response to 5 Natural disaster events in the last 6 years including re-establishment programs.
- Resilient financial management that ensured the integrity of Council's portfolio during the Global Financial Crisis.
- Maintenance of a high level of unrestricted working capital that provides the capacity to respond to unexpected change.
- Developing a range of strategies to ensure the prosperity of Holbrook and Woomargama following the construction of Hume Highway bypasses of those towns. These have included development of town business plans, streetscapes, billboards etc.
- Responded swiftly to the unexpected announcement in May 2014 to freezing Federal Government Financial Assistance Grant funding (a reduction over 4 years of \$1,058,000) by amending the 2014/2015 Budget at the June 2014 Council meeting to ensure budget integrity was maintained.
- Responded to structural changes to aged and disability care funding by undertaking a strategic review of all services being provided. The strategic review ultimately led to Council exiting as a provider of aged and disability care services and working collaboratively with State and Federal governments to transition services to the Not for profit sector

### High quality political and managerial leadership

- Capacity to deliver on Council's Community Plan despite 5 natural disaster events since December 2009.
- 5 Councillors have undertaken the Executive Certificate for Elected Members. Remaining Councillors aiming to also complete.
- A Councillor elected to the LGNSW Board
- Well-functioning elected body and senior management team with no Code of Conduct complaints in the past two terms of Council.
- Council has strong links with the community through precinct Committees in most towns and villages along with 45 Community Committees that assist Council in managing a range of public facilities including: sportsgrounds, public halls, cemeteries, swimming pools etc. This harnesses community skills and leadership.

Details of Council's Committee structure is detailed in [ANNEXURE 2c at http://www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=atndLsUoIjY%3d&tabid=637](http://www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=atndLsUoIjY%3d&tabid=637)

- Strong relationships with local Federal and State Members of Parliament.