

Our people, our place

focus on our future



Cessnock City Council's

Delivery Program & Operational Plan



Our Community - Current Position

Cessnock has a population of 51,720 people (2010) which is projected to grow by 40,000 people by 2031 (Lower Hunter Regional Strategy). The population of Cessnock is ageing, which raises some concerns about the health services and infrastructure available for the elderly.

The cultural diversity in Cessnock is quite limited with only 6.4% of the population born overseas. In addition, the majority of the population speaks English only (93.8%). The next most commonly spoken language is German which is spoken by 0.2% of the population of Cessnock.

Cessnock has two TAFE colleges, one in Cessnock and one in Kurri Kurri, 23 public schools, five catholic schools and one independent school.

The level of education in Cessnock is lower compared to the broader Hunter Statistical Division with:

- A smaller percentage of people with Bachelor or Higher degrees (5.5% compared to 10.6%);
- A greater percentage of people with no qualifications (54.1% compared to 49.2%);
- A larger percentage of people who left school at Year 10 or equivalent (37.4% compared to 34.4%); and
- A smaller percentage of people who left school at Year 12 or equivalent (20.9% compared to 30.7%).

There is also a relatively high illiteracy rate compared to the state average.

The community is represented by a small proportion of high income earners (13.1% of the population) and a relatively large proportion of residents whose income is low (50.0% of the population).

There are two hospitals and two community health centres located in Cessnock and in Kurri Kurri. There has been a downsizing of health services in the area which has resulted in the need for some people to travel to Newcastle for specialist services.

A number of community services that are contributing to the social wellbeing of Cessnock have been identified as:

- Coalfields NeighbourCare provides flexible transport options for people who are frail, aged, those with disabilities and the carers of either requiring support to attend appointments.
- Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) provides a range of supervised social, recreational and educational activities, offering opportunities that foster personal growth for young people aged 12-20 years.
- Tidy Town Committees which are community driven bodies to enhance pride in our communities.





The community's vision for our community

During the community engagement process leading to the development of the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan the community identified the following issues to be incorporated into the long term plan for Cessnock's community of the future.

- Provide more affordable cultural activities/facilities available for all age groups
- Improve safety through greater police presence and monitoring of CCTV
- Develop a more diverse shopping mix
- More and improved community celebrations including multicultural events and Australia Day
- Build and improve community image
- More participation of community leaders in community building programs
- Need a larger population to support services
- Maintain local identity and improve sense of community pride
- Better early intervention services
- Raise awareness about the community activities and facilities available
- Use existing spaces and facilities more effectively
- Reduce community apathy
- Better community integration and cohesion between Cessnock and other areas
- Active and vibrant arts community
- Engage and celebrate our local Aboriginal community and heritage
- Acquire green space for the future – open recreational community space including parks, gardens, cycle paths, active and passive spaces and community pools
- Encourage engagement of youth
- Maintain current village lifestyle
- Great North Road heritage listing
- The jail is a major community issue

Outcome Measures

In 2009 Cessnock City Council commissioned a random community survey of 500 residents. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement on a scale of 1 to 5 with a number of statements with regards to the attributes of the Cessnock community.

Following is a summary of the key findings in the area of community.

The statements that were attributed a moderately high level of agreement included:

- The area offers a good quality of life - 3.8
- If there was a problem in my community, people would band together to solve it - 3.6

The statements that were attributed a moderate level of agreement included:

- There is a strong community spirit in the Cessnock area - 3.5
- It is a safe place to live - 3.2
- Arts, entertainment and culture are well catered for - 3.2
- Facilities and services for the aged are adequate - 3.0

The statements that were attributed moderately low levels of agreement included:

- Facilities and services for children are adequate - 2.9
- There is a wide range of recreation and leisure opportunities - 2.9
- Facilities and services for youth are adequate - 2.5

Council will continue to undertake community surveys on a regular basis. These perceptual statements will again be rated in these surveys. Council will be able to analyse the trends in the responses from the community over time to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategies in the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan.



What the community has said

During the Community and Stakeholder workshops, the following challenges were identified as needing to be addressed in the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan. They include:

- Community safety as a common theme – especially of young drivers and where pedestrians and cars share a carriageway, night-time safety in CBD areas, community safety in regards to bushfires
- Improved quality and access to facilities for youth and elderly persons
- Increased support services for young families
- Providing more night-time entertainment
- Improving community cohesion
- Employing a community development officer across all areas
- Linking communities via walking and bike tracks and community transport
- Improving the image of Cessnock
- Addressing community apathy
- Preserving the history and heritage of the area
- Gradual growth of new residential developments in appropriate locations
- Public housing developments should be integrated into the community not developed in designated areas
- Better utilisation of community facilities such as community halls
- Creating a multi-cultural program to celebrate diversity in the community
- Developing a consolidated events calendar listing community and business events
- Better communication and promotion of community events / programs
- Simplifying application processes to hold community fairs, concerts and gatherings
- Support for Cessnock Art Gallery





Cessnock 2020 - Desired Outcome for Our Community

This Key Direction relates to community wellbeing, connectedness and safety. During the community engagement program participants expressed the desire for a healthy, active, engaged and cohesive community that maintained its unique local identity and friendliness into the future.

Promoting social connections

- Improve access to community services across the Local Government Area
- Improve communication, awareness and understanding between all age groups in the community
- Develop an integrated range of events across the Local Government Area including festivals, cultural and sporting activities
- Establish safe physical links joining villages
- Identify strategies to establish strong and supportive partnerships with the Aboriginal community

Strengthening community culture

- Improve the image of Cessnock
- Develop opportunities among community organisations for joint ventures and partnerships
- Greater utilisation of existing community facilities for community activities servicing all age groups
- Invest in new and upgraded early childhood and aged care facilities and services
- Improve services and facilities for young people to encourage them to experience the positive aspects of community life

Promoting safe communities

- Develop and implement the Cessnock Crime Prevention Plan
- Participate in community safety forums
- Improve the safety of Cessnock Central Business District

Fostering an articulate and creative community

- Recognise and promote the heritage and cultural life of the Local Government Area
- Re-invigorate the Cessnock Central Business District including an arts precinct
- Provide leadership in the development and provision of community cultural programs



Objective 1.1 – Promoting social connections

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
1.1.1	Improve access to community services across the Local Government Area	- Promote and update the Community Services Directory and actively encourage new and existing services to be listed in the directory.	December 2011	Community Planning Co-ordinator
1.1.2	Improve communication, awareness and understanding between all age groups in the community	- Appoint a permanent Community Planning Officer to undertake community engagement on social issues.	December 2011	Community Planning Co-ordinator
1.1.3	Develop an integrated range of events across the Local Government Area including festivals, cultural and sporting activities	- Facilitate delivery of priority community based events and festivals identified in the Social and Cultural Plan	June 2013	Community and Cultural Engagement Manager
1.1.4	Establish safe physical links joining villages	- Undertake a City Wide Cycleway and Footpath Study	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
1.1.5	Identify strategies to establish strong and supportive partnerships with the Aboriginal community	- Undertake an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study	December 2011	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
1.1.1.1	Promote and update the Community Services Directory and actively encourage new and existing services to be listed in the directory.	- Complete update of existing Community Services Directory	December 2011	Community Planning Co-ordinator
		- Use networks to identify new service providers for inclusion in Directory	December 2011	Community Planning Co-ordinator
1.1.2.1	Appoint a permanent Community Planning Officer	- Complete appointment process	December 2011	Community Planning Co-ordinator
1.1.3.1	Facilitate delivery of priority community based events and festivals identified in the Social and Cultural Plan	- Hold inaugural River of Black Gold Festival	August 2011	Community and Cultural Engagement Manager
		- Continue to conduct NAIDOC Week, Seniors Week, Youth Week and other Community events	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator
1.1.4.1	Undertake a City Wide Cycleway and Footpath Study	- Complete study	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
1.1.5.1	Undertake an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study	- Complete study	December 2011	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager



Objective 1.2 – Strengthening community culture

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
I.2.1	Improve the image of Cessnock	- Contribute to the planning, co-ordination and promotion of projects that aim to engage the community in the participation of community life.	June 2013	Community Planning Co-ordinator/Economic Development Manager/ Recreation Services Manager/ Environmental and Waste Services Manager
I.2.2	Develop opportunities among community organisations for joint ventures and partnerships	- Seek, encourage and actively support joint partnerships that allow for the development and implementation of services that have been identified by the community as an area of need.	June 2013	Community Planning Co-ordinator / Environmental and Waste Services Manager
I.2.3	Greater utilisation of existing community facilities for community activities servicing all age groups	- Upgrade Millfield Community Hall and playground facilities	June 2012	Recreation Services Manager
I.2.4	Invest in new and upgraded early childhood and aged care facilities and services	- Produce a discussion paper which analyses the future community need for child care services - Produce a discussion paper to understand the future community need for aged care services	June 2012 June 2013	Community Planning Co-ordinator Community Planning Co-ordinator
I.2.5	Improve services and facilities for young people to encourage them to experience the positive aspects of community life	- No significant new actions planned for 2011-13		



Objective 1.2 – Strengthening community culture

Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
1.2.1.1	Contribute to the planning, co-ordination and promotion of projects that aim to engage the community in the participation of community life.	- Ongoing support for Landcare groups, Tidy Towns Committees, Clean-up Australia Day, Adopt-a-Road, s355 Committees, Mainstreet Programs, Screen Hunter/ Central Coast, Chambers of Commerce	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator/Economic Development Manager/ Recreation Services Manager/ Environmental and Waste Services Manager
1.2.2.1	Seek, encourage and actively support joint partnerships that allow for the development and implementation of services that have been identified by the community as an area of need.	- Participate in Cessnock Healthy Lifestyles Network, Cessnock Anti-Violence Network, Environment Committee, Tidy Towns Committees	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator / Environmental and Waste Services Manager
1.2.3.1	Upgrade Millfield Community Hall and playground facilities	- Hall upgrade complete - Playground facilities to be completed	July 2011 December 2011	Recreation Services Manager Recreation Services Manager
1.2.4.1	Produce a discussion paper which analyses the future community need for child care services	- Update data on community needs - Prepare discussion paper	March 2012 June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator Community Planning Co-ordinator
1.2.4.2	Produce a discussion paper to understand the future community need for aged care services	- No actions planned in 2011/2012		



Objective 1.3 – Promoting safe communities

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
1.3.1	Develop and implement the Cessnock Crime Prevention Plan	- Develop a media and community promotional campaign highlighting the need to report malicious property crime	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator
		- Provide youth with crime prevention education	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator
		- Review the effectiveness of the Crime Prevention Plan 2009-2012	June 2013	Community Planning Co-ordinator
1.3.2	Participate in community safety forums	- Review and update the Community Road Safety Strategy	June 2012	Design Delivery Manager
		- Continue representation on the Cessnock Liquor Accord, Community Safety Precinct Committee and the Cessnock Anti Violence Network	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator
1.3.3	Improve the safety of Cessnock Central Business District	- No new actions planned for 2011-13		
Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
1.3.1.1	Develop a media and community promotional campaign highlighting the need to report malicious property crime	- Implement phase 3 of promotional campaign	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator
1.3.1.2	Provide youth with crime prevention education	- Continue education program with police	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator
		- Work in partnership with Department of Juvenile Justice to deliver a pilot program providing youth offenders with a community service opportunity	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator/CYCOS Co-ordinator
1.3.1.3	Review the effectiveness of the Crime Prevention Plan 2009-2012	- Integrate Crime Prevention by Design principles in the soon to be developed "Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for Development Applications"	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator
1.3.2.1	Review and update the Community Road Safety Strategy	- Consult with RTA, Police and neighbouring Councils to review strategy	June 2012	Design Delivery Manager
1.3.2.2	Continue representation on the Cessnock Liquor Accord, Community Safety Precinct Committee and the Cessnock Anti Violence Network	- Attend regular meetings of these Networks	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator



Objective 1.4 – Fostering an articulate and creative community

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
1.4.1	Recognise and promote the heritage and cultural life of the Local Government Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the Library Strategic Plan - Implement the priority strategies in the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre Strategic Plan 	June 2013 June 2013	Community and Cultural Engagement Manager Integrated Planning Manager
1.4.2	Re-invigorate the Cessnock Central Business District including an arts precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the Cessnock Mainstreet Committee to develop a program of events that will activate the town centre - Prepare detailed plans for the Cessnock Central Business District including a structure plan, development control plan and development contributions plan 	December 2012 June 2013	Economic Development Manager Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
1.4.3	Provide leadership in the development and provision of community cultural programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement priority cultural strategies in the Social and Cultural Plan 	June 2013	Community and Cultural Engagement Manager
Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
1.4.1.1	Complete the Library Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commence development of the Library Strategic Plan 	June 2012	Community and Cultural Engagement Manager
1.4.1.2	Implement the priority strategies in the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subject to finalisation of CPAC Business Plan by June 2011 	June 2012	Integrated Planning Manager
1.4.2.1	Work with the Cessnock Mainstreet Committee to develop a program of events that will activate the town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-ordinate events workshop - Commence implementation of events 	December 2011 June 2012	Economic Development Manager Economic Development Manager
1.4.2.2	Prepare detailed plans for the Cessnock Central Business District including a structure plan, development control plan and development contributions plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review development contributions plan - Review development control plan 	December 2011 December 2011	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
1.4.3.2	Implement priority cultural strategies in the Social and Cultural Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No significant actions planned in 2011/2012 		



Our Economy - Current Position

Vineyards, tourism, retail and manufacturing are the key contributors to Cessnock's robust economy. In 2008, there were 2.7 million visitors to the area and they spent \$220 million on local services such as accommodation, restaurants and at the cellar door. Golfers contributed \$1.3 million and weddings generated \$1.4 million.

The current population of the Cessnock Local Government Area is approximately 52,000 and this figure is likely to increase significantly with the projected population growth of 40,000 people by 2031 (Lower Hunter Regional Strategy). The main areas of employment are currently in manufacturing followed by retail trade, health care and social assistance, accommodation and hospitality services and mining.

Cessnock City Council has identified the need to attract new industries to the area to ensure the sustainability of the local economy and is currently working in partnership with Regional Development Australia, NSW Department of State and Regional Development, AusIndustry and the Department of Premier and Cabinet to facilitate employment opportunities. A Light Metals Taskforce has been established with a charter to attract industry using raw materials at Kurri Kurri and Weston. There has also been the establishment of economic development branding including Cessnock Pick of the Bunch for Business and Investment to attract business relocation and labour force migration.

The City Wide Settlement Strategy 2010 identifies sites considered suitable for employment lands in the short term (0-5 years). Longer term opportunities for employment lands are identified in the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy.

A number of initiatives to help support further economic development in the Cessnock area have previously been identified as:

- construction of the Queensland/Hunter gas pipeline;
- completion of the Hunter Expressway to provide greater access to the area;
- partnership with Hunter Regional Business Enterprise Centre to provide support for small and indigenous businesses;
- creating a Memorandum of Understanding with schools and TAFE to support literacy and skills training;
- TAFE Hospitality Training Academy at Kurri Kurri TAFE;
- Tourism S94 Contribution Plan to assist in funding for vineyard infrastructure requirements; and
- upgrading of roads, telecommunications and power supply.





The community's vision for our economy

During the community engagement process leading to the development of the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan the community identified the following issues to be incorporated into the long term plan for Cessnock's economy of the future.

- Create local diverse job opportunities across the LGA
- Section 94 contributions to be spent locally
- Strong service industry
- Vibrant profitable wine related tourism industry
- Need to develop strategy to take opportunity from F3 extension
- Understanding Cessnock's point of difference
- Encourage mid-week activity for tourists
- Better destination marketing – strategic branding
- More council funding for tourism
- Retraining for older workers
- Mentoring programs
- Consider impacts of reduction in coal mining employment
- Tourism to be expanded to include history/heritage of the LGA
- Equal distribution of funding across the LGA
- Rates to be spent in local areas
- Develop a hospitality training college
- Provide greater access and range of education and training service providers

Outcome Measures

In 2009 Cessnock City Council commissioned a random community survey of 500 residents. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement on a scale of 1 to 5 with a number of statements with regards to the attributes of the Cessnock economy.

Following is a summary of the key findings in the area of economy.

The statements that were attributed a high level of agreement included:

- The vineyards play an important role in the local economy - 4.3
- Conferences and events are important for the area - 4.2
- Tourism is promoted well - 4.0

The statements that were attributed a moderate level of agreement included:

- Education and training opportunities are good - 3.4
- Shopping in the Cessnock Council area is well catered for - 3.4
- High quality and environmentally friendly industries are encouraged - 3.3
- Quality housing is both available and affordable - 3.1
- Industry and business development is working well - 3.1

The statements that were attributed moderately low levels of agreement included:

- There are enough employment opportunities - 2.5

Council will continue to undertake community surveys on a regular basis. These perceptual statements will again be rated in these surveys. Council will be able to analyse the trends in the responses from the community over time to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategies in the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan.



What the community has said

During the Community and Stakeholder workshops, the following challenges were identified as needing to be addressed in the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan. They include:

- Taking advantage and capitalising on the opportunity to reinvent Cessnock with the opening of the Hunter Expressway
- Creating a sustainable economy - environmentally viable and economically viable
- Creating incentives to attract businesses into the LGA
- Encouraging more green businesses
- Encouraging business / industry / organisations to work more cooperatively
- Developing a register of local businesses to encourage use of local service providers
- Cooperation between Wine Country operators and Cessnock CBD businesses
- Ensuring strategies are not Cessnock-centric
- Consolidating the business zone
- Better marketing of the region
- Diversifying industry in the area and promoting all of them equally
- Developing a reason to visit Cessnock - cultural, heritage, commercial, environmental activities and providing information about these attractions
- Reducing 'red tape' and streamlining DA processes to improve efficiency
- Providing reliable transport options that support education and employment facilities
- Providing greater variety of education opportunities
- Ensuring an adequately trained workforce
- Reducing the percentage of people on welfare
- Developing employment opportunities for youth
- Need to develop strategies to attract mentors in the community
- Providing more affordable housing
- Rates and charges should be spent on services in the local community from which they were raised





Cessnock 2020 - Desired Outcome for Our Economy

This Key Direction identifies the need to attract a diverse range of businesses, industries and services together with improved access to education, training and employment opportunities to ensure we have a sustainable and prosperous economy in Cessnock in 2020.

Diversifying local business options

Promote the whole of the Local Government Area and market the area comprehensively to attract new businesses and residents
 Increase the availability of industrial and commercial land and utilise the infrastructure that already exists in the Hunter Economic Zone
 Improve transport linkages across the Local Government Area to ensure there is transport to jobs and events
 Develop a freight hub and transport interchange at the Bloomfield / Donaldson site

Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities

Expand learning opportunities for all ages
 Develop more locally run education programs that could be used in local industries
 Provide incentives for young people to continue their education
 Establish a mentoring program for youth utilising skills in the community

Increasing tourism opportunities and visitation in the area

Identify and increase the diversity of the tourism experience and market existing historical, cultural, natural and indigenous heritage
 Market Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Wollombi as specific tourist destinations in their own right as part of the broader Wine Country area
 Develop specific tourism strategies for towns, villages and niche markets
 Create an inclusive tourism and event website for the entire Local Government Area



Objective 2.1 – Diversifying local business options

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.1.1	Promote the whole of the Local Government Area and market the area comprehensively to attract new businesses and residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update business marketing material for the Cessnock Local Government Area - Prepare a New Resident's Guide 	February 2012 March 2012	Economic Development Manager Communications Co-ordinator
2.1.2	Increase the availability of industrial and commercial land and utilise the infrastructure that already exists in the Hunter Economic Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop an inventory of industrial and commercial land and floor space - Review zoning for Hunter Economic Zone 	December 2012 June 2013	Economic Development Manager Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
2.1.3	Improve transport linkages across the Local Government Area to ensure there is transport to jobs and events	No action at this stage		NSW GOVERNMENT
2.1.4	Develop a freight hub and transport interchange at the Bloomfield/Donaldson site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide specialist advice in the evaluation, planning and timing for a freight hub on the redundant Bloomfield/Donaldson mining leases - Include the transport interchange in the City Wide Transportation Study 	June 2013 June 2013	Economic Development Manager/Strategic Land Use Planning Manager Strategic Asset Planning Manager
Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.1.1.1	Update business marketing material for the Cessnock Local Government Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update Pick of the Bunch material - Update tourism monitor information 	September 2011 February 2012	Economic Development Manager Economic Development Manager
2.1.1.2	Prepare a New Resident's Guide	- Complete New Resident's Guide	March 2012	Communications Co-ordinator
2.1.2.1	Develop an inventory of industrial and commercial land and floor space	- No action planned in 2011/2012		
2.1.2.2	Review zoning for Hunter Economic Zone	- Develop a planning proposal to investigate a suitable land use zone and development guidelines	June 2012	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
2.1.3.1	No action at this stage			
2.1.4.1	Provide specialist advice in the evaluation, planning and timing for a freight hub on the redundant Bloomfield/Donaldson mining leases	- Participate in Department of Premier and Cabinet's Economic Development Forums and provide feedback as required	June 2012	Economic Development Manager/Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
2.1.4.2	Include the transport interchange in the City Wide Transportation Study	- Will be undertaken as part of 4.1.1.3 preparation of gap analysis and strategic capacity studies	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager



Objective 2.2 – Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.2.1	Expand learning opportunities for all ages	No action at this stage		NSW GOVERNMENT
2.2.2	Develop more locally run education programs that could be used in local industries	No action at this stage		NSW GOVERNMENT
2.2.3	Provide incentives for young people to continue their education	- Promote Mayoral academic challenge to assist young people to develop their skills	June 2012	Mayor's Office
2.2.4	Establish a mentoring program for youth utilising skills in the community	- Co-ordinate a project with the business community to establish a program for youth mentoring towards enhancing their employability	June 2013	Economic Development Manager
Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.2.1.1	No action at this stage			
2.2.2.1	No action at this stage			
2.2.3.1	Promote Mayoral academic challenge to assist young people to develop their skills	- Continue to promote Mayoral academic challenge annually	June 2012	Mayor's Office
2.2.4.1	Co-ordinate a project with the business community to establish a program for youth mentoring towards enhancing their employability	- Continue to support Hospitality Open Days	September 2011	Economic Development Manager



Objective 2.3 – Increasing tourism opportunities and visitation in the area

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.3.1	Identify and increase the diversity of the tourism experience and market existing historical, cultural, natural and indigenous heritage	- Work with Tourism Hunter Advisory Group and Hunter Valley Wine Country Tourism to identify and promote opportunities for diversifying the tourism experience	December 2012	Economic Development Manager
2.3.2	Market Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Wollombi as specific tourist destinations in their own right as part of the broader Wine Country area	No action at this stage		HUNTER VALLEY WINE COUNTRY TOURISM
2.3.3	Develop specific tourism strategies for towns, villages and niche markets	- Assist Chambers of Commerce to develop localised tourism strategies for their villages and niche markets	December 2013	Economic Development Manager
2.3.4	Create an inclusive tourism and event website for the entire Local Government Area	- Develop an inclusive cultural events, heritage and tourism calendar	December 2011	Economic Development Manager
		- Establish a centralised one-stop website for community events and information	June 2012	Communications Co-ordinator
Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.3.1.1	Work with Tourism Hunter Advisory Group and Hunter Valley Wine Country Tourism to identify and promote opportunities for diversifying the tourism experience	- Ongoing participation with the Tourism Hunter Local Advisory Group and Hunter Valley Wine Country Tourism	June 2012	Economic Development Manager
2.3.2.1	No action at this stage			
2.3.3.1	Assist Chambers of Commerce to develop localised tourism strategies for their villages and niche markets	- Work with Cessnock and Wollombi Chambers of Commerce for ongoing development of CBD Marketing Plans	June 2012	Economic Development Manager
		- Support ongoing development of Kurri Kurri 2020 Plan	June 2012	Economic Development Manager
2.3.4.1	Develop an inclusive cultural events, heritage and tourism calendar	- Develop tourism website in partnership with Sustainable Cessnock	December 2011	Economic Development Manager
2.3.4.2	Establish a centralised one-stop website for community events and information	- Collect initial community information	December 2011	Communications Co-ordinator/Technology Systems Manager
		- Establish website structure	March 2012	Technology Systems Manager
		- Go live with website	June 2012	Technology Systems Manager



Our Environment - Current Position

Cessnock's environment is highly valued by the community not only for its natural beauty but also for its important role in many of the local industries including mining, agriculture and wine production.

Cessnock has some of the largest remaining remnants of lowland forests and woodlands and, near Kurri Kurri, 29 species of Eucalypt have been recorded. There are few other places in NSW which would have comparable biodiversity per hectare.

Cessnock is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna species with records of 424 bird species in the Lower Hunter.

Cessnock also provides an important cross over point between coastal species and more inland species.

One of the key challenges that has already been identified is maintaining a balance between the demand for the expansion of urban, rural and rural residential development, industry, agriculture and the preservation of the natural environment.

A number of initiatives to manage, protect and improve the local environment are already being implemented throughout the LGA including:

- Landcare, Land for Wildlife Programs, Waste as Art and Clean up Australia.
- Numerous waste reduction and recycling programs are being undertaken including Hunter Resource Recovery which has seen 4171 tonnes of recyclable materials diverted from landfill in Cessnock between July 2009 and June 2010. Quarterly waste collection of computers, televisions and mobile phones, has also been introduced.
- Water and energy rebate schemes for efficient water and energy appliances.
- Biodiversity in Cessnock benefits from the support of community groups including Tidy Towns, Landcare Groups and Friends of Tumblebee.





The community's vision for our environment

During the community engagement process leading to the development of the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan the community identified the following issues to be incorporated into the long term plan for Cessnock's environment of the future.

Natural Environment

- Education about environmental care including through awareness raising activities such as posters
- Rehabilitation of mining sites
- Monitoring of pollution levels by industry and big businesses
- Create community gardens
- Invest in alternative energy sources
- Encourage environmental sustainability
- Improve regularity of rubbish and recycling collections
- Maintain a quality scenic landscape
- Regulation to protect rural environments
- Improve drainage and prevent pollution of waterways by installing grates over drains
- More playgrounds, parks, trees and shade
- Better fire hazard reduction planning across all levels of government and agencies

Built environment

- Maintain and create more recreational areas and public gardens / parks
- Retain villages by ensuring rates go back into local infrastructure
- Improve kerb and guttering
- Improve visual aesthetics of the whole area including tree replacement, upgrades of main streets, place power underground
- Extend footpaths and complete gaps in the footpath network
- Find the right balance of development
- More public toilets/access to toilets through better signage
- Improve street lighting
- Maintain community facilities better – including technology
- Review State Government planning decisions

Outcome Measures

In 2009 Cessnock City Council commissioned a random community survey of 500 residents. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement on a scale of 1 to 5 with a number of statements with regards to the attributes of the Cessnock environment.

Following is a summary of the key findings in the area of environment.

The statements that were attributed a high level of agreement included:

- There is enough bushland to support a diversity of native plants and animals - 3.9

The statements that were attributed a moderately high level of agreement included:

- The quality of the air is clean and clear - 3.7
- Waste collection and disposal are well managed - 3.7
- The area's heritage is well conserved- 3.6

The statements that were attributed moderate levels of agreement included:

- The natural environment is well managed - 3.5
- There are enough good quality open spaces - 3.5
- The area has an attractive appearance - 3.4
- Environmental issues are handled well - 3.1

The statements that were attributed moderately low levels of agreement included:

- Creeks and waterways are well looked after - 2.8

Council will continue to undertake community surveys on a regular basis. These perceptual statements will again be rated in these surveys. Council will be able to analyse the trends in the responses from the community over time to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategies in the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan.



What the community has said

During the Community and Stakeholder workshops, the following challenges were identified as needing to be addressed in the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan. They include:

- Finding a balance between development and the environment through appropriate planning controls
- Protecting the rural character of the area and containing industrial areas
- Maintaining the heritage feel of the area
- At a minimum retaining current green space but planning for an increase in green space with new development
- Better utilising the open green space we already have and being more strategic about selecting locations for playgrounds etc.
- Upgrading parks and recreational areas with more shade
- Improving the visual aesthetics of the entrance to and from the freeway
- Improving and extending footpath networks throughout the area
- Regular household recycling service including green waste and general household waste to all rate payers
- Expanding environmental education programs about waste, biodiversity and environmental protection for primary aged children and the whole community
- Addressing drainage issues
- Developing a reticulated sewage system and monitoring of sewerage treatment polluting Congewai Creek
- Rehabilitating old mining sites





Cessnock 2020 - Desired Outcome for Our Environment

This Key Direction focuses on the conservation and preservation of the natural environment whilst balancing the impact of development to ensure a sustainable and healthy community.

Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the rural character and village atmosphere of the area

- Ensure the Local Environmental Plan and other planning protocols protect rural areas and reflect the community's values on "rural character" and the heritage feel of the area
- Expand community and student education about the value of natural resources and biodiversity
- Protect environmental corridors from being degraded and fragmented
- Promote environmental tourism
- Protect and enhance the waterways and catchments

Better utilisation of existing open space

- Ensure the distribution of open space recreation settings matches community demand
- Consolidate existing open space areas to establish green corridors
- Develop and enhance high quality multi purpose sporting and recreation facilities
- Provide more shade and better amenities in parks and open spaces
- Establish a major community park in the Cessnock Central Business District

Better waste management and recycling

- Implement the adopted waste management strategy for the Cessnock Local Government Area
- Review opportunities to provide expanded waste resource services and facilities
- Increase education and surveillance to reduce illegal dumping in rural areas



Objective 3.1 – Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the rural character and village atmosphere of the area

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
3.1.1	Ensure the Local Environmental Plan and other planning protocols protect rural areas and reflect the community's values on "rural character" and the heritage feel of the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake an Agricultural Lands Study - Complete Vineyards Visioning Plan - Review the heritage, flooding and urban housing chapters of the Development Control Plan - Commence the review of the City Wide Settlement Strategy to identify future development areas, settlement patterns and conservation outcomes 	June 2012 December 2011 December 2011 June 2013	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager Strategic Land Use Planning Manager Strategic Land Use Planning Manager Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
3.1.2	Expand community and student education about the value of natural resources and biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement comprehensive sustainability reporting to the community - Develop a program to educate the community about weed management - Develop a range of sustainability programs and undertake community engagement activities in relation to these programs 	June 2012 June 2012 June 2013	Environment and Waste Services Manager Recreation Services Manager Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.1.3	Protect environmental corridors from being degraded and fragmented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare a comprehensive Biodiversity Strategy in conjunction with relevant agencies 	June 2013	Executive Manager Natural Environment Planning
3.1.4	Promote environmental tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with Tourism Hunter and Hunter Valley Wine Country Tourism to develop and promote environmental tourism projects 	June 2013	Economic Development Manager
3.1.5	Protect and enhance the waterways and catchments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete Flood Studies and Flood Risk Management Plans for two major local government area catchments 	June 2013	Strategic Asset Planning Manager



Objective 3.1 – Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the rural character and village atmosphere of the area

Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
3.1.1.1	Undertake an Agricultural Lands Study	- Consultant to undertake study	June 2012	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
3.1.1.2	Complete Vineyards Visioning Plan	- Finalise plan after community consultation	December 2011	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
3.1.1.3	Review the heritage, flooding and urban housing chapters of the Development Control Plan	- Will be included as part of Development Control Plan review	December 2011	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
3.1.1.4	Commence the review of the City Wide Settlement Strategy to identify future development areas, settlement patterns and conservation outcomes	- No actions planned for 2011-12		Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
3.1.2.1	Implement comprehensive sustainability reporting to the community	- Prepare annual State of the Environment report	November 2011	Environment and Waste Services Manager
		- Review proposed legislative changes and amend reporting accordingly	June 2012	Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.1.2.2	Develop a program to educate the community about weed management	- Attend Tocal Field Day and hold two (2) information sessions at local markets	June 2012	Recreation Services Manager
3.1.2.3	Develop a range of sustainability programs and undertake community engagement activities in relation to these programs	- Review Council's environment and sustainability program, where possible to align with other agencies.	June 2012	Environment and Waste Services Manager
		- Promote DECCW & CMA programs and facilitate their uptake via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental communication strategy - Schools program - Land for Wildlife and the like 	June 2012	Environment and Waste Services Manager
		- DECCW & CMA programs and information be reviewed via Council's Environment Committee	December 2011	Environment and Waste Services Manager



Objective 3.1 – Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the rural character and village atmosphere of the area

Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
3.1.3.1	Prepare a comprehensive Biodiversity Strategy in conjunction with relevant agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop project plan and commence preparation of Biodiversity Strategy - Environment Committee provide input into Strategy development 	June 2012 June 2012	Executive Manager Natural Environment Planning Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.1.4.1	Work with Tourism Hunter and Hunter Valley Wine Country Tourism to develop and promote environmental tourism projects	- Facilitate participation of local tourism operators with Hunter Councils' Regional Sustainability Policy	June 2012	Economic Development Manager
3.1.5.1	Complete Flood Studies and Flood Risk Management Plans for two major local government area catchments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subject to external funding continue the Black Creek Flood Risk Management Plan - Subject to external funding commence the Wallis/Swamp/Fishery Creek Flood Risk Management Plan 	June 2012 June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager Strategic Asset Planning Manager



Objective 3.2 – Better utilisation of existing open space

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
3.2.1	Ensure the distribution of open space recreation settings matches community demand	- Include the outcomes of the Recreation and Open Space Plan as an amendment to the new Local Environmental Plan	December 2011	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
3.2.2	Consolidate existing open space areas to establish green corridors	- Formalise the Green Corridor identified in the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy by investigating an environmentally significant land overlay to the maps in the Local Environmental Plan	June 2012	Executive Manager Natural Environment Planning
3.2.3	Develop and enhance high quality multi purpose sporting and recreation facilities	- Redevelop Greta Central Oval by undertaking works identified in the masterplan and funded in the budget	June 2013	Recreation Services Manager
		- Redevelop Kurri Kurri Central Oval by undertaking works identified in the masterplan and funded in the budget	June 2013	Recreation Services Manager
3.2.4	Provide more shade and better amenities in parks and open spaces	- Upgrade facilities at Carmichael Park Bellbird	June 2013	Recreation Services Manager
3.2.5	Establish a major community park in the Cessnock Central Business District	- Develop a masterplan for Civic Park providing links to Turner Park	December 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager/ Recreation Services Manager



Objective 3.2 – Better utilisation of existing open space

Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
3.2.1.1	Include the outcomes of the Recreation and Open Space Plan as an amendment to the new Local Environmental Plan	- Include as an amendment to new comprehensive LEP	December 2011	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
3.2.2.1	Formalise the Green Corridor identified in the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy by investigating an environmentally significant land overlay to the maps in the Local Environmental Plan	- To be included in development of the Biodiversity Strategy	June 2012	Executive Manager Natural Environment Planning
3.2.3.2	Redevelop Greta Central Oval by undertaking works identified in the masterplan and funded in the budget	- Complete staged masterplan implementation	June 2012	Recreation Services Manager
3.2.3.3	Redevelop Kurri Kurri Central Oval by undertaking works identified in the masterplan and funded in the budget	- No actions planned for 2011-12		Recreation Services Manager
3.2.4.1	Upgrade facilities at Carmichael Park Bellbird	- Upgrade playground	December 2011	Recreation Services Manager
3.2.5.1	Develop a masterplan for Civic Park providing links to Turner Park	- Engage consultants to develop a draft masterplan in consultation with the community	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager/ Recreation Services Manager



Objective 3.3 – Better waste management and recycling

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
3.3.1	Implement the adopted waste management strategy for the Cessnock Local Government Area	- Construct Transfer Facility	June 2012	Environment and Waste Services Manager
		- Implement priority actions in the Waste Strategy and prioritised projects from the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water – Waste & Sustainability Improvement Program	June 2013	Environment and Waste Services Manager
		- Review Waste Strategy	June 2013	Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.3.2	Review opportunities to provide expanded waste resource services and facilities	- Conduct an audit of types and volumes of waste collected	December 2011	Environment and Waste Services Manager
		- Review technological developments to process materials to achieve the highest landfill diversion	June 2013	Environment and Waste Services Manager
		- Complete Stage 1 extension to existing landfill site including construction of landfill cells ready to accept waste	June 2013	Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.3.3	Increase education and surveillance to reduce illegal dumping across the LGA	- Participate in regional programs for education and surveillance of illegal waste dumping	June 2013	Environment and Waste Services Manager



Objective 3.3 – Better waste management and recycling

Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
3.3.1.1	Construct Transfer Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare detailed design and consultant brief - Commence construction 	December 2011 June 2012	Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.3.1.2	Implement priority actions in the Waste Strategy and prioritised projects from the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water – Waste & Sustainability Improvement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement cost effective energy and water savings actions suggested in energy and water audits - Undertake water and energy savings audits of additional top 10 sites - Complete Fleetwise Program - Stage I - Trial sustainability checklists in major contract procurement procedures 	June 2012 June 2012 June 2012 June 2012	Environment and Waste Services Manager Environment and Waste Services Manager Environment and Waste Services Manager Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.3.1.3	Review Waste Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake complete review of waste service and recycling including bin size, collection frequency, separation etc - Investigate the feasibility of outcomes - Implement Organis Waste Plan including community organic waste program and green waste drop off feasibility study 	September 2011 March 2012 June 2012	Sustainability Coordinator Environment and Waste Services Manager Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.3.2.1	Conduct an audit of types and volumes of waste collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake waste and recycling bin content assessment in line with 2010 WaSIP program 	August 2011	Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.3.2.2	Review technological and developments in regional procurement strategies to reduce waste to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participate in regional focus groups to monitor regional procurement strategies and green waste processing facilities - Keep up-to-date with legislative developments surrounding minimisation, processing and markets 	June 2012 June 2012	Environment and Waste Services Manager Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.3.2.3	Complete Stage I extension to existing landfill site including construction of landfill cells ready to accept waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare detail design and construction plans - Commence construction 	December 2011 June 2012	Environment and Waste Services Manager
3.3.3.1	Participate in regional programs for education and surveillance of illegal waste dumping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake prioritised actions identified in the Regional Illegal Dumping and Littering Programs - Implement Illegal Dumping and Litter Plan 	June 2012 June 2012	Sustainability Coordinator Sustainability Coordinator



Our Services - Current Position

Infrastructure includes such things as recreation and cultural facilities, roads, transport, emergency services, education facilities and health care facilities. Infrastructure in Cessnock is provided by Cessnock City Council and by State and Federal Governments.

Council is responsible for 1000 kilometres of roads within the LGA, of which 670 kilometres are sealed. The NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) provides part funding for the maintenance of the state and regional road network of 100 kilometres in Cessnock. Many of the rural and urban roads are not coping well with increased usage due to tourism, business and urban expansion that has taken place in the past 10-20 years.

There is heavy reliance on motor vehicles in Cessnock and studies suggest that only 4% of people travelling to Cessnock's CBD use public transport. There are currently 10 public bus routes and 34 school bus routes throughout Cessnock. City Rail train services which link Newcastle to Scone pass through Greta and Branxton and a bus service also links Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Morisset railway station. Council's allocated budget for transport covers minor works but is insufficient for major improvements. Cessnock also has an Aerodrome which is used primarily for tourism, aircraft training schools and has an aircraft maintenance facility.

There are 52 parks located throughout the LGA and 41 of these parks contain playgrounds. There will be increased pressure for recreation and open spaces particularly with the projected population growth. Ageing playground equipment and gaps in shared cycleways/pathways have already been identified as areas that need attention. Sporting facilities in Cessnock are ageing and are also in need of maintenance. The majority of amenity buildings adjacent to sports grounds are over 40 years old and have had minimal upgrades. There are three Council pools in the LGA in Kurri Kurri, Branxton and Cessnock.

Cessnock also has a number of cultural facilities and attractions including the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre, Marthaville which is an historic homestead that is now used as an arts and cultural centre and Cessnock's Regional Art Gallery. Events are also held in the historic Wollombi Village and in more recent times concerts and events in the vineyards have become very popular.

The State Infrastructure Strategy 2008-2018 has provided an allocation of funding for a new gymnasium for Kurri Kurri High School, Kurri Zone Substation Augmentation and Cessnock Feeder and a Cessnock Ambulance Station.





The community's vision for our infrastructure services and facilities

During the community engagement process leading to the development of the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan the community identified the following issues to be incorporated into the long term plan for Cessnock's services of the future.

Services

- More equitable distribution of services across the local government area
- More affordable housing estates
- Cluster 'like' services together
- Lessen the segregation and distance between shops so that less travel is required
- Ensure services provision grows as the population of the community grows

Transport

- Better public transport in Cessnock and improve accessibility in and out of the area (via air, roads and fast rail)
- More accessible community transport opportunities
- Integrated public transport timetables
- Increased number and better cycleway networks through Cessnock
- A planned maintenance schedule for quality road improvements in the area
- Remove heavy vehicle traffic out of the CBD

Health care

- Long term security and expansion of local health services
- A local hospital with a maternity ward
- Adequate provision of child care services
- Better facilities for kids with disabilities
- Improved access to health services for all people but in particular aged care
- Support services for elderly including adequate provision of retirement villages
- After hours General Practitioner services in all local communities

Outcome Measures

In 2009 Cessnock City Council commissioned a random community survey of 500 residents. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement on a scale of 1 to 5 with a number of statements with regards to the adequacy of services provided within the Cessnock area.

Following is a summary of the key findings in the area of services.

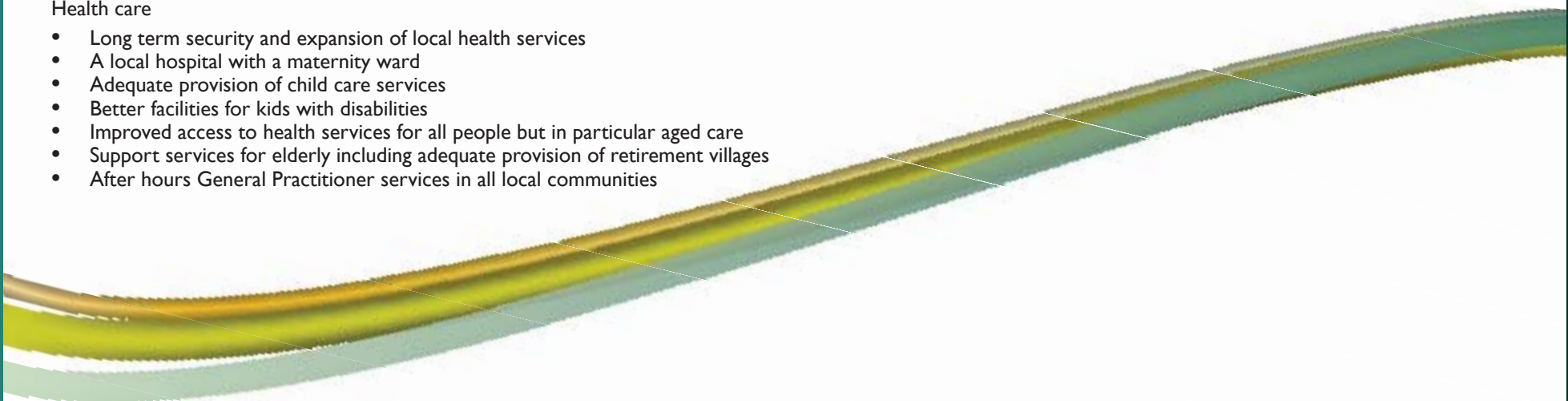
The statements that were attributed a moderately low level of agreement included:

- There is enough public transport - 2.6
- Health facilities are sufficient - 2.6

The statements that were attributed very low levels of agreement included:

- The road network is effective and in good repair - 1.8

Council will continue to undertake community surveys on a regular basis. These perceptual statements will again be rated in these surveys. Council will be able to analyse the trends in the responses from the community over time to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategies in the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan.





What the community has said

During the Community and Stakeholder workshops, the following challenges were identified as needing to be addressed in the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan. They include:

- Improved access to public transport with more transport routes with greater frequency including community transport services
- Maintaining and improving road networks
- Developing bicycle path networks
- Provision of more health services particularly aged care services
- Integrating medical facilities that are accessible to families and visiting specialists
- Encouraging local doctor's facility in villages across the LGA e.g. work from a community hall one day a week
- More rehabilitation services for injury recovery and drug and alcohol abuse
- Clustering 'like' services together e.g. health services, homeware shopping, general shopping, entertainment and restaurants
- Developing a partnership between a local hospital and the University of Newcastle
- Accessibility of a diverse range of tertiary education opportunities
- Increasing funding to educational facilities
- Telecommunications improvements





Cessnock 2020 - Desired Outcome for Our Services

This Key Direction identifies the critical local, state and federal infrastructure, services and facilities needed to serve the current and future community of Cessnock while ensuring there is adequate access to these facilities and services.

Better transport links

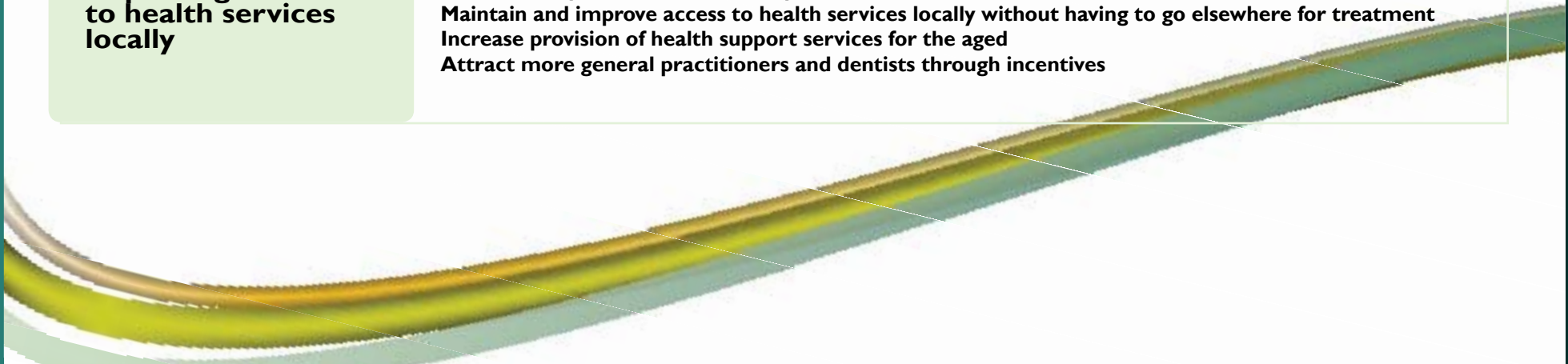
Develop a Hunter Regional Transport Strategy which encompasses Cessnock's needs
Increase public awareness of current public transport and community transport services
Improve public and community transport opportunities between towns and key community hubs in and outside the LGA
Work with the State and Federal Governments to seek increased transport funding for Cessnock
Investigate the potential to re-instate train services to Cessnock and have buses linked out from that terminal

Improving the road network

Establish and implement best practice asset management strategies for Council's roads, bridges and drainage infrastructure
Determine and manage the impacts of the Hunter Expressway on Council's road network and associated infrastructure
Work with the State and Federal Governments for increased road funding for Cessnock
Investigate a contribution plan or a visitor levy to fund road improvements in the vineyards area

Improving access to health services locally

Advocate to protect the area's hospitals and associated health services
Maintain and improve access to health services locally without having to go elsewhere for treatment
Increase provision of health support services for the aged
Attract more general practitioners and dentists through incentives





Objective 4.1 – Better transport links

Delivery Program	Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
4.1.1	Develop a Hunter Regional Transport Strategy which encompasses Cessnock's needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a long term strategic plan for Cessnock Aerodrome - Provide input into the development of the Lower Hunter Transport Strategy by Transport NSW - Undertake priority strategic infrastructure planning activities, including 'gap analysis' (to identify gaps in the existing infrastructure) and capacity studies (to identify upgrade of existing infrastructure and planned expansion of new infrastructure from future development). 	June 2012 June 2012 June 2013	Integrated Planning Manager Strategic Asset Planning Manager Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.1.2	Increase public awareness of current public transport and community transport services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribute the Lower Hunter Transport Guide and newsletters to the community 	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.1.3	Improve public and community transport opportunities between towns and key community hubs in and outside the Local Government Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct workshops with public and community transport operators during development of the City Wide Transportation Study 	June 2013	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.1.4	Work with the state and federal governments to seek increased transport funding for Cessnock <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobby state and federal governments through local members of parliament and Hunter transport groups 	June 2012	General Manager/ Mayor
4.1.5	Investigate the potential to re-instate train services to Cessnock and have buses linked out from that terminal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate rail options during the development of the City Wide Transportation Study 	June 2013	Strategic Asset Planning Manager



Objective 4.1 – Better transport links

Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
4.1.1.1	Develop a long term strategic plan for Cessnock Aerodrome	- Develop Cessnock Aerodrome Strategic Plan including public consultation and review by Airport Consultative Committee	June 2012	Integrated Planning Manager
4.1.1.2	Provide input into the development of the Lower Hunter Transport Strategy by Transport NSW	- Participate directly by invitation and indirectly through membership with the 'Lower Hunter Transport Group'	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.1.1.3	Undertake priority strategic infrastructure planning activities, including 'gap analysis' (to identify gaps in the existing infrastructure) and capacity studies (to identify upgrade of existing infrastructure and planned expansion of new infrastructure from future development).	- Undertake public consultation in the preparation of gap analysis and strategic capacity studies in relation to road pavement, traffic management, car parking, pedestrian accessibility, public transport, trunk stormwater drainage and floodplain management.	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.1.2.1	Distribute the Lower Hunter Transport Guide and newsletters to the community	- Ongoing participation through membership with the 'Lower Hunter Transport Group'	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.1.3.1	Conduct workshops with public and community transport operators during development of the City Wide Transportation Study	- Will be undertaken as part of 4.1.1.3 preparation of gap analysis and strategic capacity studies	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.1.4.1	Lobby state and federal governments through local members of parliament and Hunter transport groups	- Continue to lobby for more funding for Council's transport infrastructure	June 2012	General Manager/ Mayor
4.1.5.1	Investigate rail options during the development of the City Wide Transportation Study	- Will be undertaken as part of 4.1.1.3 preparation of gap analysis and strategic capacity studies	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager



Objective 4.2 – Improving the road network

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
4.2.1	Establish and implement best practice asset management strategies for Council's roads, bridges and drainage infrastructure	- Review infrastructure delivery programs in accordance with long term asset management plans	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.2.2	Determine and manage the impacts of the Hunter Expressway on Council's road network and associated infrastructure	- Establish Council's infrastructure upgrade and expansion requirements to support the Hunter Expressway	June 2013	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.2.3	Work with the state and federal governments for increased road funding for Cessnock	- Lobby state and federal governments through local members of parliament and Hunter transport groups	June 2012	General Manager/Mayor
4.2.4	Investigate a contribution plan or a visitor levy to fund road improvements in the vineyards area	- Review road improvements required in the Vineyards district	December 2011	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
		- Review the City Wide Section 94 Contributions Plan	December 2011	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager
Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
4.2.1.1	Review infrastructure delivery programs in accordance with long term asset management plans	- Delivery programs to be developed in accordance with adopted Asset Management Plans	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.2.2.1	Establish Council's infrastructure upgrade and expansion requirements to support the Hunter Expressway	- Ongoing participation in 'Hunter Expressway Council Liaison Group' involving councils and RTA. Roads requiring upgrade will be identified and prioritised.	June 2012	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.2.3.1	Lobby state and federal governments through local members of parliament and Hunter transport groups	- Continue to lobby for increased road funding in particular commitments made during 2011 State Election	June 2012	General Manager/Mayor
4.2.4.1	Review road improvements required in the Vineyards district	- Priorities to be identified using Council's pavement management system in accordance with adopted asset management plans	December 2011	Strategic Asset Planning Manager
4.2.4.2	Review the City Wide Section 94 Contributions Plan	- Consultant employed to review City Wide Development Contributions Plan	December 2011	Strategic Land Use Planning Manager



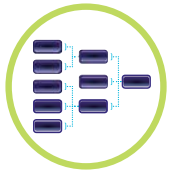
Objective 4.3 – Improving access to health services locally

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
4.3.1	Advocate to protect the area's hospitals and associated health services	- Lobby state and federal governments through local members of parliament and Hunter New England Health Service to ensure that current service levels are maintained and upgraded as required.	June 2013	General Manager/Mayor
4.3.2	Maintain and improve access to health services locally without having to go elsewhere for treatment	- Assist and support local services with information that enables the submission of grant applications that aim for improved and increased health services and infrastructure.	June 2013	Community Planning Co-ordinator/ Community Grants Officer
4.3.3	Increase provision of health support services for the aged	- Understand the future community needs for aged care services, including health needs and document in a discussion paper.	June 2013	Community Planning Co-ordinator
4.3.4	Attract more general practitioners and dentists through incentives	- Lobby federal government for a change in the Australian Standards Geographical Remoteness Areas for the townships of Kurri Kurri, Abermain and Weston from a major city classification to inner regional.	June 2012	Group Leader Strategy and Sustainability



Objective 4.3 – Improving access to health services locally

Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
4.3.1.1	Lobby state and federal governments through local members of parliament and Hunter New England Health Service to ensure that current service levels are maintained and upgraded as required.	- Continue to lobby for maintenance and upgrade of health services as required	June 2012	General Manager/Mayor
4.3.2.1	Assist and support local services with information that enables the submission of grant applications that aim for improved and increased health services and infrastructure.	- Facilitate CDSE Scheme Applications - Assist and support local services on request	August 2011 June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator/ Community Grants Officer
4.3.3.1	Understand the future community needs for aged care services, including health needs and document in a discussion paper.	- Understand the impact of new funding and service delivery arrangements between state and federal government	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator
4.3.4.1	Lobby federal government for a change in the Australian Standards Geographical Remoteness Areas for the townships of Kurri Kurri, Abermain and Weston from a major city classification to inner regional.	- Continue to lobby for change	June 2012	Group Leader Strategy & Sustainability



Our Leadership - Current Position

Leadership and governance refers to the role of Council and the community of Cessnock in the future planning and direction for the area to ensure the City continues to be a place where people want to live, work and visit.

Encouraging community engagement and participation in the future of Cessnock is important in ensuring the ideas and concerns of the community are understood and addressed. On an ongoing basis, one of the significant challenges facing Cessnock, and many other communities, is how to involve the wider community in the decision-making process.

To ensure leadership and governance is truly representative, our leadership mechanisms need to have a way of hearing from people from all parts of the community: youth, seniors, business people, industry, community organizations, environment and cultural groups etc.

Another significant challenge is making sure people who live in outlying rural areas have equal access to participate in consultation activities. Good community leadership requires representation by a broad spectrum of community members.

Governance refers to the way the city's affairs are managed and to the regulatory services undertaken by Council, such as educating the community and managing unlawful activities such as illegal rubbish dumping, illegal parking and ensuring compliance with environmental and public health matters.





The community's vision for our leadership

During the community engagement process leading to the development of the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan the community identified the following issues to be incorporated into the long term plan for Cessnock's leadership of the future.

- Respect and recognition of different areas in the LGA
- Get rid of party politics and have a less bureaucratic Council
- More input by the Vineyards District Advisory Committee
- More effective DA approval system - quicken development process
- Improve coordination between surrounding councils
- Improve responsiveness of the planning department within Council
- Educate public on election processes and the system for voting
- Improve accountability of Council
- Better Councillor representation and support for smaller areas
- Develop Local/Village community strategic plans

Outcome Measures

In 2009 Cessnock City Council commissioned a random community survey of 500 residents. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement on a scale of 1 to 5 with a number of statements with regards to planning and leadership within the Cessnock area.

Following is a summary of the key findings in the area of leadership.

The statements that were attributed a moderately high level of agreement included:

- Internet access and availability is adequate - 3.6

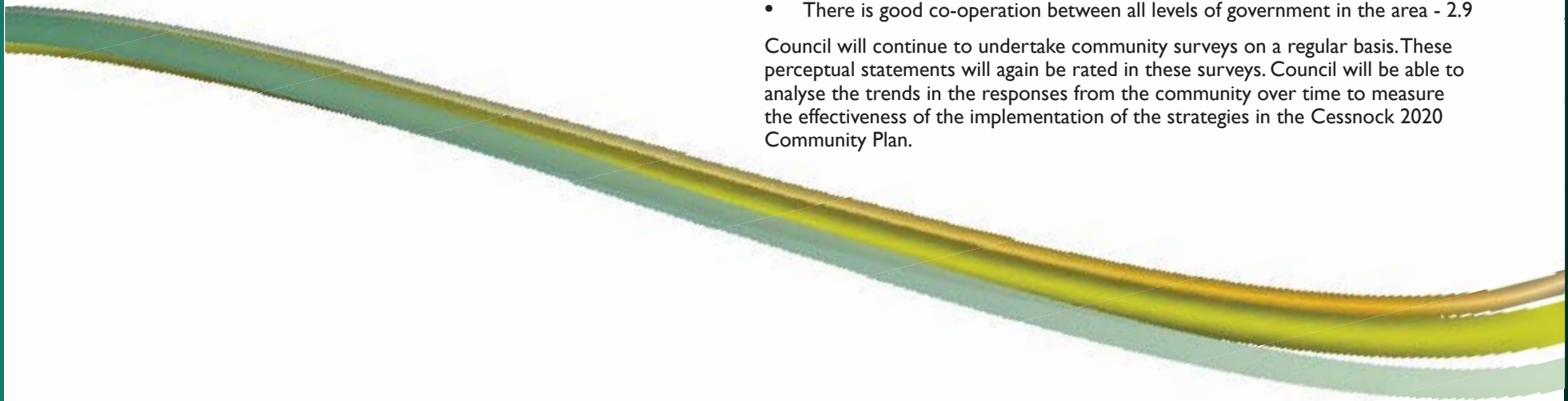
The statements that were attributed a moderate level of agreement included:

- The opportunity exists for me to be involved in making decisions about my community - 3.3
- Development overall is well planned and well managed - 3.1
- Laws and regulations are enforced consistently and fairly - 3.1
- Residential development is well managed - 3.1
- There is a clear plan and direction for the future - 3.0

The statements that were attributed moderately low levels of agreement included:

- There is good co-operation between all levels of government in the area - 2.9

Council will continue to undertake community surveys on a regular basis. These perceptual statements will again be rated in these surveys. Council will be able to analyse the trends in the responses from the community over time to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategies in the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan.





What the community has said

During the Community and Stakeholder workshops, the following challenges were identified as needing to be addressed in the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan. They include:

- Encouraging greater community engagement in decision making processes
- Improving communication between Council and the community by providing more feedback on community issues
- Ensuring the community voice is heard
- Greater attendance by Councillors at community meetings
- Ward Councillors should establish a community consultation mechanism such as a Village Council
- Developing trust in Council and service providers
- Improving relationships and developing stronger partnerships between different levels of government - e.g. State Forests, RFS, NPWS - to reduce fire hazards
- Improving management efficiency of Council by reducing costs and improving relationships between Council officers and the public
- Attracting and retaining well trained and qualified community leaders in business, industry and at Council
- Building aspirations of young people to become leaders through interaction with current leaders
- Ensuring succession planning is in place
- Removing party politics in Council
- Need for a community education program regarding party politics
- Leadership should include consideration of the history of the area





Cessnock 2020 - Desired Outcome for Our Leadership

This Key Direction focuses on the need for strong civic leadership and effective governance with an engaged community actively participating in decision making processes affecting their future.

Fostering and supporting community leadership

- Promote volunteering and mentoring to develop partnerships and community leadership
- Establish scholarships and mentoring programs to foster young leadership
- Establish education campaigns to involve community members in local organisations
- Increase recognition of the work of community leaders

Encouraging more community participation in decision making

- Councillors to be regularly available for community members to raise issues of concern
- Develop and implement strategies to encourage and empower the community to participate in consultation activities
- Council to have a greater presence in outlying communities within the area

Making Council more responsive to the community

- Implement a best practice customer service strategy within Council
- Provide follow up on decision making to keep community engaged and informed
- Improve the efficiency and transparency of Council processes
- Increase the availability of information on Council's website



Objective 5.1 – Fostering and supporting community leadership

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.1.1	Promote volunteering and mentoring to develop partnerships and community leadership	- Contribute to the planning, co-ordination and promotion of community projects that foster participation in volunteering, mentoring and leadership.	June 2013	General Manager
5.1.2	Establish scholarships and mentoring programs to foster young leadership	- Develop scholarships for academic, professional and trade excellence	June 2013	Economic Development Manager
5.1.3	Establish education campaigns to involve community members in local organisations	- Contribute to the planning and co-ordination of projects that aim to inform community members of the range of organisations that exist within the area.	June 2013	Community Planning Co-ordinator / Recreation Services Manager
5.1.4	Increase recognition of the work of community leaders	- Establish a data base of leaders of community organisations who can be ambassadors for community engagement activities	June 2013	Communications Co-ordinator
Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.1.1.1	Contribute to the planning, co-ordination and promotion of community projects that foster participation in volunteering, mentoring and leadership.	- No actions planned in 2011/2012		
5.1.2.1	Develop scholarships for academic, professional and trade excellence	- Continue to award scholarships and encourage applications for the program	June 2012	Economic Development Manager/ Mayor's Office
5.1.3.1	Contribute to the planning and co-ordination of projects that aim to inform community members of the range of organisations that exist within the area.	- Ensure Community Services Directory is up to date - Work in consultation with service providers to identify means of promoting their services to the community	December 2011 June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator / Recreation Services Manager
5.1.4.1	Establish a data base of leaders of community organisations who can be ambassadors for community engagement activities	- No actions planned for 2011-12		



Objective 5.2 – Encouraging more community participation in decision making

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.2.1	Councillors to be regularly available for community members to raise issues of concern	- Establish mechanisms to increase community access to Councillors	June 2013	General Manager/Mayor
5.2.2	Develop and implement strategies to encourage and empower the community to participate in consultation activities	- Prepare an updated Communications Strategy	December 2011	Communications Co-ordinator
		- Investigate adoption of web 2.0 (e.g. blogs, wikis)	June 2012	Technology Systems Manager
		- Undertake a broad based Community Survey of perceptions about Cessnock as a place to live	June 2012	Integrated Planning Manager
5.2.3	Council to have a greater presence in outlying communities within the area	- Investigate re-establishment of ward meetings	December 2011	General Manager/Mayor
Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.2.1.1	Establish mechanisms to increase community access to Councillors	- Hold workshop with Councillors on this issue	December 2011	General Manager/Mayor
5.2.2.1	Prepare an updated Communications Strategy	- Review existing Strategy	September 2011	Communications Co-ordinator
		- Finalise updated Strategy	December 2011	Communications Co-ordinator
5.2.2.2	Investigate adoption of web 2.0 (e.g. blogs, wikis)	- Examine resourcing impacts/develop business case for Web 2.0	March 2012	Technology Systems Manager
		- If adopted develop policies and procedures	June 2012	Technology Systems Manager
5.2.2.3	Undertake a broad based Community Survey of perceptions about Cessnock as a place to live	- Employ consultants to undertake community survey	June 2012	Integrated Planning Manager
5.2.3.1	Investigate re-establishment of ward meetings	- Consult with Councillors about best methods of communicating with outlying areas	December 2011	General Manager/Mayor



Objective 5.3 – Making Council more responsive to the community

Delivery Program		Actions for 2011/13	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.3.1	Implement a best practice customer service strategy within Council	- Review the interim Customer Service Strategy	June 2013	Community and Cultural Engagement Manager
5.3.2	Provide follow up on decision making to keep the community engaged and informed	- Review the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan including extensive community consultation	June 2013	Integrated Planning Manager
5.3.3	Improve the efficiency and transparency of Council processes	- Implement a new remuneration system	June 2012	Human Resources Manager
		- Implement an OH&S system which is legislatively compliant	June 2012	Business Improvement Manager
		- Develop a Preferred Suppliers/Contractors Panel for goods and services regularly contracted by Council	December 2011	Depot Services Manager
		- Replace Council's Enterprise Content Management System	December 2012	Administration Services Manager
		- Replace Council's Customer Request Management System	December 2012	Administration Services Manager
		- Review Council's electronic Fire Safety Register program	June 2013	Health and Building Manager
		- Develop guidelines for social impact assessments of key development applications	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator
5.3.4	Increase the availability of information on Council's website	- Provide an e-service for booking building inspections	December 2012	Business Support Manager



Objective 5.3 – Making Council more responsive to the community

Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.3.1.1	Review the interim Customer Service Strategy	- Review the interim Customer Service Strategy	June 2012	Community and Cultural Engagement Manager
5.3.2.1	Review the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan including extensive community consultation	- Develop performance measures for Cessnock 2020 Community Plan - Undertake Community Survey	December 2011 June 2012	Integrated Planning Manager Integrated Planning Manager
5.3.3.1	Implement a new remuneration system	- Select preferred supplier - Implement system	December 2011 June 2012	Human Resources Manager Human Resources Manager
5.3.3.2	Implement an OH&S system which is legislatively compliant	- Design, build and implement system	June 2012	Business Improvement Manager
5.3.3.3	Develop a Preferred Suppliers/ Contractors Panel for goods and services regularly contracted by Council	- Review range of existing goods and services delivered by preferred suppliers contracts and expand as necessary	December 2011	Depot Services Manager
5.3.3.4	Replace Council's Enterprise Content Management System	- Install system and do pilot user acceptance testing	June 2012	Administration Services Manager
5.3.3.5	Replace Council's Customer Request Management System	- Install system and do pilot user acceptance testing	June 2012	Administration Services Manager



Objective 5.3 – Making Council more responsive to the community

Operational Plan		Actions for 2011/12	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.3.3.6	Review Council's electronic Fire Safety Register program	- Review reporting data and associated procedures	June 2012	Health and Building Manager
5.3.3.7	Develop guidelines for social impact assessment of key development applications	- Audit standards of social impact assessment on past development applications	December 2011	Community Planning Co-ordinator
		- Consult with staff during development of guidelines	June 2012	Community Planning Co-ordinator
5.3.4.2	Provide an e-service for booking building inspections	- Install system and do pilot user acceptance testing	June 2012	Business Support Manager

