



# COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2017–2036





Our vision for the Cowra Shire community for the years ahead...

## OUR VISION

In 2036 we will be...

*“A leading, innovative and creative community, proud of our place in history and offering opportunity with the best of country living.”*

## OUR VALUES

In all our dealings we will...

- Show and grow leadership
- Be positive and work together
- Value each other and what we have
- Create opportunities for our next generations.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

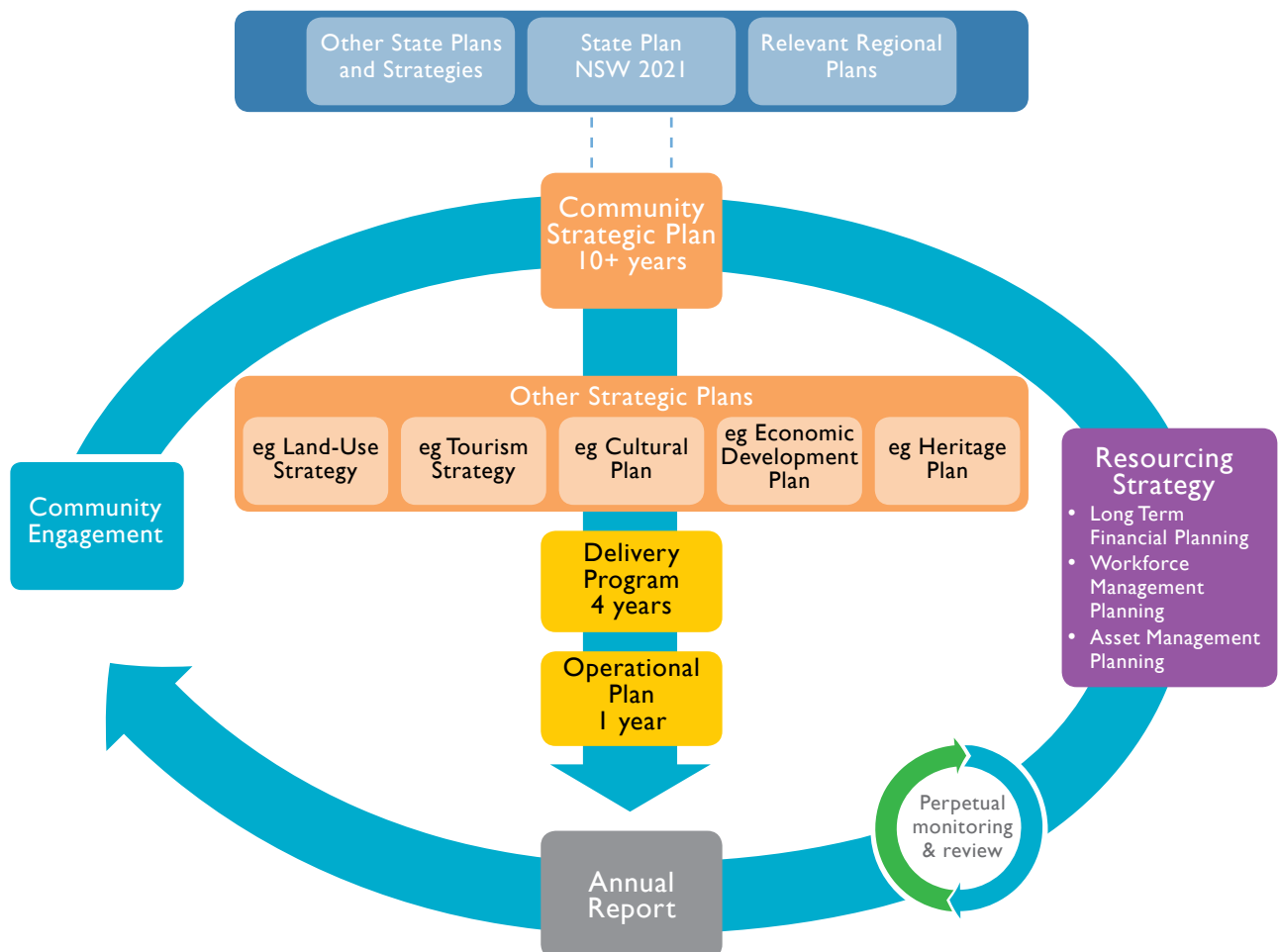
- Health and Well-being
- Education Training and Research
- Lifestyle
- Governance
- Business and Industry
- Transport and Infrastructure
- Natural Resource Management

# INTEGRATED PLANNING

The Integrated Planning and Reporting framework recognises that most communities share similar aspirations: a safe, healthy and pleasant place to live, a sustainable environment, opportunities for social interaction, opportunities for employment and reliable infrastructure. The difference lies in how each community responds to these needs. It also recognises that council plans and policies should not exist in isolation and that they in fact are connected.

This framework allows NSW councils to draw their various plans together, understand how they interact and get the maximum leverage from their efforts by planning holistically for the future.

All councils in NSW work within the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework (shown below).



# THE INTEGRATED PLANS

## THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The **Community Strategic Plan** represents the highest level of strategic planning undertaken by a local council. All other plans developed by the council as part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework must reflect and support the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan.

The Community Strategic Plan essentially addresses four key questions for the community:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be in 2036?
- How will we get there?
- How will we know when we have arrived?

## THE DELIVERY PROGRAM

The **Delivery Program** details the principal activities Council will undertake to achieve the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan. The Delivery Program covers a four-year period commencing on 1 July following each ordinary election.

## THE OPERATIONAL PLAN

The **Operational Plan** is a sub-set of the Delivery Program – not a separate entity. The Delivery Program spells out the strategies and the Operational Plan spells out the individual actions that will be undertaken in a financial year to achieve those strategies. The Operational Plan must include the council's detailed annual budget and include the Statement of Council's Revenue Policy which includes the proposed rates, fees and charges.

A council must have a long term Resourcing Strategy for the provision of resources required to implement the strategies established by the Community Strategic Plan that the council is responsible for. The strategy must include provision for long term financial planning, workforce management planning and asset management planning.

The Resourcing strategy includes:

- The **Long-Term Financial Plan**, which is used to inform decision making during the finalisation of the Community Strategic plan and the

development of the Delivery Program. The plan must be for a minimum of 10 years.

- The **Workforce Management Plan**, developed to address the human resourcing requirements of Council's Delivery Program.
- The **Asset Management Plan/s**, designed to encompass all the assets under a council's control. The Asset Management Plan/s must contain long term projections of asset maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement costs.



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Cowra Shire Community Strategic Plan has been prepared with reference to existing plans, strategies and sources of information that are relevant to the ratepayers and residents of Cowra Shire. These sources of information include;

## **THE COUNCIL CHARTER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 – SECTION 8C (AS AT 6 JANUARY 2017)**

The following principles for strategic planning apply to the development of the integrated planning and reporting framework by councils:

- a. Councils should identify and prioritise key local community needs and aspirations and consider regional priorities.
- b. Councils should identify strategic goals to meet those needs and aspirations.
- c. Councils should develop activities, and prioritise actions, to work towards the strategic goals.
- d. Councils should ensure that the strategic goals and activities to work towards them may be achieved within council resources.
- e. Councils should regularly review and evaluate progress towards achieving strategic goals.
- f. Councils should maintain an integrated approach to planning, delivering, monitoring and reporting on strategic goals.
- g. Councils should collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals.
- h. Councils should manage risks to the local community or area or to the council effectively and proactively.
- i. Councils should make appropriate evidence-based adaptations to meet changing needs and circumstances.

## **NSW GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES**

Council recognises that the NSW Government is working to grow the economy, deliver infrastructure, protect the vulnerable and improve health, education and public services across NSW.

Council recognises the value and objectives of the relevant regional draft plans that are available when preparing this Community Strategic Plan.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE AND SOCIAL COMMUNITY PLANNING

The NSW Government's social justice strategy is based on the following interrelated principles:

- Equity – there should be fairness in decision making, and prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances
- Access – all people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life
- Participation – everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives
- Rights – equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

Cowra Shire Council must ensure that the Community Strategic Plan reflects these four social justice principles, and that social considerations are adequately addressed in the planning process.





## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Strategic Objectives for each of the Future Directions are set out in detail in the following tables.

Also described are the roles of Cowra Shire Council as well as community organisations and groups that need to be involved to achieve the objectives of the plan.

As far as roles are concerned Council can be ...

- A provider where the strategic objective falls within its area of responsibility
- A facilitator where help can be given to others
- An advocate by speaking up on behalf of the community.



# HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

To enjoy our unique country lifestyle and be fit and healthy, we need a range of facilities, services and programs that cater for the needs of all age groups. We also need to take steps to prevent conditions that could lead to loss of health and well-being. This will involve health, social and family care service professionals, together with volunteers.

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	COUNCIL'S ROLE	STAKEHOLDERS
H1	Provide for future aged care accommodation needs and support services.	Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Council</li> <li>Health providers</li> <li>Aged care service providers – Bilyara, Weroona</li> <li>Government departments/agencies</li> <li>Western NSW Local Health District</li> </ul>
H2	Provide facilities and programs for health and well-being needs including disability, mental health and family support services.	Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Council</li> <li>Health providers</li> <li>Relevant government departments/ community service providers</li> <li>Headspace</li> <li>Cowra Special Needs Service</li> </ul>
H3	Investigate ways to attract and retain health professionals.	Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Council</li> <li>Health providers</li> <li>Central West Division of General Practice</li> <li>Central NSW Councils (Centroc)</li> </ul>
H4	Support and encourage voluntary community services.	Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Council</li> <li>Health providers</li> <li>Neighbourhood Centre</li> <li>Cowra Special Needs Service</li> </ul>
H5	Develop and provide programs to meet the needs of Cowra's young people.	Facilitator Advocate Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Council</li> <li>PCYC</li> <li>Cowra Local Aboriginal Land Council</li> </ul>

## ASSESSING PROGRESS

- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has actively advocated for health services and facilities that meet the needs of residents
- ▶ Council through community surveys will monitor community satisfaction with:
  - Availability of and access to health care professionals
  - Availability of and access to medical services and facilities
  - Availability of and access to aged care beds
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has worked with other stakeholders to develop and provide programs for young people in the shire.

## EDUCATION TRAINING AND RESEARCH

We must work to make Cowra a centre of excellence for education, training and research. Education, training and research are key components for Cowra's present and future development. They provide a sound basis for the economic improvement of individuals and businesses. They help build the capacity of the community to get things done. We are challenged to create an environment where the concept of 'life-long learning' is encouraged and supported.

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	COUNCIL'S ROLE	STAKEHOLDERS
E1	▶ <b>Make Cowra a Learning Community.</b>	Advocate Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools</li> <li>• TAFE</li> <li>• Federal/state Departments of Education</li> <li>• Other educators/training providers including private sector</li> <li>• Relevant community stakeholders including P&amp;C groups and student advisory councils</li> </ul>
E2	▶ <b>Maintain and develop learning infrastructure and programs to respond to education and training needs.</b>	Advocate Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools</li> <li>• TAFE</li> <li>• Federal/state Departments of Education</li> <li>• Relevant community stakeholders</li> </ul>
E3	▶ <b>Build a mutually supportive education sector.</b>	Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools</li> <li>• TAFE</li> <li>• Relevant community stakeholders</li> </ul>
E4	▶ <b>Strengthen the role and use of local education and training providers.</b>	Advocate Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools</li> <li>• TAFE</li> <li>• Federal/state Departments of Education</li> <li>• Relevant community stakeholders</li> </ul>

### ASSESSING PROGRESS

- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has actively advocated for improved access to tertiary education for residents of the shire
- ▶ Council will monitor community satisfaction with the range of TAFE courses available in Cowra to local and regional students
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has advocated for an enhancement of the Cowra TAFE facility to provide a broader number of courses to the region
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has actively advocated for the continued operation and growth of the Cowra Agricultural Research Station.

## LIFESTYLE

Cowra has a distinctive country lifestyle. Access to and enjoyment of our sporting, recreational, cultural and heritage facilities together with our natural environment is key to a sense of community and well-being. The range and quality of these many assets together with our history, heritage and indigenous culture, provide an opportunity to fully develop Cowra's potential as a unique place to live and work.

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	COUNCIL'S ROLE	STAKEHOLDERS
L1	Build strong linkages with our indigenous community.	Advocate Provider Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cowra Local Aboriginal Land Council</li> <li>Police</li> <li>Cowra Community Information and Neighbourhood Centre</li> </ul>
L2	Find ways to tell Cowra's story.	Advocate Facilitator Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cowra Tourism</li> <li>Cowra Historical Society</li> <li>Family History Group and interested public members</li> <li>Arts Out West</li> <li>Consultant marketing and promotion groups</li> </ul>
L3	Continue to develop our leisure and cultural facilities, infrastructure and natural environment.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cowra sporting, recreational and cultural groups</li> </ul>
L4	Build participation in community life.	Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community groups and TAFE to design training courses</li> </ul>
L5	Continue to develop our unique country lifestyle.	Provider Advocate Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public submissions</li> <li>Consultants</li> </ul>
L6	Recognise and grow the talent in our community.	Advocate Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TAFE</li> <li>Service clubs</li> <li>Recreation, cultural and sporting clubs</li> </ul>

## ASSESSING PROGRESS

- ▶ Council through community surveys will monitor community satisfaction with:
  - Availability of an access to sporting, cultural and recreational facilities
  - Recognition of Cowra's indigenous culture
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has provided programs that:
  - Encourage community participation in sporting activities
  - Encourage community participation in cultural activities
  - Encourage participation of Cowra's indigenous community in broader community activities.

## GOVERNANCE

Understanding the roles and responsibilities of key organisations within our community is the key to working together. Communication between Council, other levels of government and the community is fundamental for effective consultation. Leadership is needed from Council and from other organisations, groups and individuals within Cowra. Planning is a shared responsibility and purposeful partnerships are the way forward.

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	COUNCIL'S ROLE	STAKEHOLDERS
G1	Implement an effective community engagement strategy.	Provider Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local and regional media outlets</li> <li>Businesses</li> <li>Community groups and individuals</li> </ul>
G2	Provide a planning framework that responds to changing community needs.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Office of Local Government</li> <li>Cowra community</li> </ul>
G3	Strengthen partnerships with government and other agencies.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Government departments that operate and interact with Cowra community</li> </ul>
G4	Maximise funding opportunities.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interested potential funding recipients and grant funding providers</li> </ul>
G5	Develop leadership skills across the community.	Provider Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training groups</li> <li>Service clubs</li> <li>Sporting and cultural organisations</li> </ul>

## ASSESSING PROGRESS

- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has undertaken appropriate strategic land-use and infrastructure planning to meet future community needs
- ▶ Council through community surveys will monitor community satisfaction with:
  - Access to information on Council activities, services, decisions and priorities
  - Engagement mechanisms utilised by Council
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has sought to maximise funding opportunities in the provision of services and facilities for the community
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has provided opportunities to develop leadership within the local community.

## BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Cowra needs a strong and vital economy to provide opportunity and build its desirable country lifestyle. We will promote Cowra to the rest of the world as an area of agricultural excellence and opportunity for a variety of businesses. We need to respond to the needs of new and existing businesses, encourage innovation and high standards and develop ways to help businesses prosper. We must plan, develop and implement the facilities and infrastructure needed for business to locate and expand in Cowra.

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	COUNCIL'S ROLE	STAKEHOLDERS
B1	Plan for business and industry growth and change.	Facilitator Advocate Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cowra Business Chamber</li> <li>• Cowra Tourism</li> <li>• Business groups</li> <li>• Federal/state government agencies</li> </ul>
B2	Tell the world about the opportunities and benefits of Cowra.	Facilitator Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cowra Business Chamber</li> <li>• Cowra Tourism</li> <li>• International links and connections</li> <li>• Federal/state government agencies</li> </ul>
B3	Add value and support to our existing businesses and industries.	Advocate Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cowra Business Chamber</li> <li>• Cowra Tourism</li> </ul>
B4	Link and connect Cowra to the world.	Advocate Facilitator Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cowra Business Chamber</li> <li>• Cowra Tourism</li> <li>• International links and connections</li> </ul>
B5	Grow Cowra as a centre for excellence in agriculture, research and innovation.	Advocate Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural network</li> <li>• Cowra Business Chamber</li> <li>• Cowra Tourism</li> </ul>
B6	Identify and develop profitable and sustainable tourism products for Cowra.	Advocate Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cowra Tourism</li> <li>• Relevant tourism operators</li> <li>• International links and connections</li> </ul>

### ASSESSING PROGRESS

- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has undertaken a concerted effort to support and grow existing businesses
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has sought to attract investment in the Shire
- ▶ Council will monitor relevant statistical indicators published by State and Commonwealth Government.

## TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Transport and infrastructure issues are critical for the future development of and access to Cowra. We need to improve and develop our public infrastructure and associated services in a sustainable way. Service delivery is challenged by new demands and a changing world. The diverse demands of public health, community safety, access for all, population change and the reality of climate change will require a range of innovative solutions for the future.

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	COUNCIL'S ROLE	STAKEHOLDERS
T1	Develop an integrated transport system that addresses local and regional needs in relation to road, rail and air.	Facilitator Advocate Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal/ state government agencies</li> <li>Central NSW Councils (Centroc)</li> <li>Transport groups</li> </ul>
T2	Provide water, sewerage, storm water, innovative energy and communication services to meet community needs.	Provider Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal/ state government agencies</li> <li>Central NSW Councils (Centroc)</li> </ul>
T3	Secure Cowra's water supply.	Provider Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal/ state government agencies</li> <li>Central NSW Councils (Centroc)</li> </ul>

### ASSESSING PROGRESS

- ▶ Council will maintain its road transport, stormwater, building, water and sewer assets in accordance with adopted Asset Management Plans
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has advocated for continued improvements to the State Highway network to cater for anticipated increases in heavy vehicle freight traffic
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has advocated for the re-opening of rail services in the region
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has advocated for continued access to air transport services
- ▶ Council will monitor the roll-out and community satisfaction with access to the NBN
- ▶ Council will advocate for the continued improvements to the mobile phone coverage within the Shire.

# NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Cowra looks forward to enjoying both a country lifestyle and economic growth, but not at any cost. Our natural resource base is the foundation of Cowra today and tomorrow. Caring for our natural resources means managing all the elements of land, water and air, now and for the future. It will require expertise and commitment. In undertaking this task, Cowra will endeavour to become a centre of natural resource management excellence.

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	COUNCIL'S ROLE	STAKEHOLDERS
N1	▶ <b>Make Cowra a centre of environmental excellence.</b>	Advocate Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal/state government agencies</li> <li>• Relevant industry groups</li> <li>• NRM Committee</li> </ul>
N2	▶ <b>Build partnerships with people who work with and care for the land to secure a healthy environment.</b>	Advocate Facilitator Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal/state government agencies</li> <li>• Relevant industry groups</li> <li>• NRM Committee</li> </ul>
N3	▶ <b>Promote practices to encourage Cowra to be an environmentally responsible community.</b>	Advocate Facilitator Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal/state government agencies</li> <li>• Relevant industry groups</li> <li>• NRM Committee</li> </ul>

## ASSESSING PROGRESS

- ▶ Council will monitor recycling statistics and provide education in an endeavour to improve recycling habits within the community
- ▶ Council should be able to demonstrate it has worked with other Government agencies eg Local Land Services to deliver programs that manage the environment in a sustainable manner
- ▶ Council will report on the environment through the State of the Environment Report.