

# Council News

Autumn 2021 edition

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# Message from the Mayor

## Council's financial circumstances and solutions

This is my second letter to residents. On this occasion I provide information concerning the Council's financial position and suggest potential solutions to address financial pressures.



In late July 2020 the Interim Administrator adopted a General Fund budget

which envisaged a deficit of \$2.3 million on operations for the financial year 2020-21. As at 31 December 2020 that had improved and a surplus of a little over \$2 million was then projected for the current fiscal year.

This improvement was largely achieved by significant cost cutting of expenditure votes, fortunately without appreciable impact on current service levels. A large contributing factor to the improvement was the recognition of \$694,000 in grant funding relating to the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program (Phase 2) and an

improved forecast for landfill revenue. We applaud our staff for being able to achieve this turnaround.

Council's temporary Special Rate Variation expires on 30 June 2021. In May, the Council will learn from IPART the result of its General Fund Special Rate Variation (SRV), which sought to maintain the existing level of rates (apart from the permissible rate peg increase). If the application is not successful, Council will have to better adjust its 2021-22 budget downwards by almost \$1.5 million – a most difficult task.

Council's financial performance is measured against a total of six financial and four infrastructure ratios. Recognising that they are 'point in time' statistics, on each of these measures over the past three financial years Council has achieved steady improvement. With the exception of two financial and two infrastructure assets performance indicators, Council is now within the designated acceptable benchmarks.

Continuous further improvements are necessary. However, there needs to be

a continual focus on Council's financial position and underlying cash reserves. It will be necessary to take a long - term view on decisions relating to service levels and prioritisation of funding of projects

Furthermore, greater attention to scoping and accurate estimating of project costs will be vital.

In recent years Council has been the fortunate recipient of extensive State and Federal grants for a wide range of projects. We recognise and express our thanks to our parliamentary representatives for their ongoing support of our community.

Over the next few years, Council needs to steadily build its financial sustainability. Several budget briefing sessions have been conducted in recent weeks and your Councillors and senior staff are working closely together to determine an operational plan and budget for the next financial year. This will provide continuous improvement of Council's financial position.

Cr. Ian Tiley  
Mayor

## Local Government elections happening this September

Residents of the Armidale region are being reminded to save the date for the 2021 Local Government elections.

On Saturday 4 September 2021, the community will be required to vote for eleven new Councillors to represent the region over a three year term. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will then be elected by Council.

Armidale Regional Council's General Manager James Roncon is reminding everyone of the importance of taking part in the elections.

"Voting in the Local Government elections is compulsory for everyone living in the Armidale LGA," said Mr Roncon.

"This is an opportunity for everyone to take action and have their say on important issues facing our community."

This year's election will be held in conjunction with an important constitutional referendum to determine whether the number of Councillors should be reduced.

"Council will be asking for every voter's say in whether there should be a reduction in the number of Councillors from eleven to nine in the future," said Mr Roncon.

"The result of this won't take effect until 2024."

Mr Roncon is also reminding those who are

passionate about making positive change in our community to consider nominating as a Councillor.

"These elections are an opportunity to revitalise our region, and we are seeking a diverse range of dedicated and passionate residents to take action and represent our wonderful community," said Mr Roncon.

Visit [www.elections.nsw.gov.au](http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au) for information on what is involved and how to nominate.

### Key dates:

#### Nominations for candidates:

- Opens 6 July 2021, closing 12pm 4 August 2021

#### Postal voting:

- Applications open 27 July 2021, closing 5pm 30 August 2021

#### Pre - poll voting:

- Begins 23 August 2021, closing 3 September 2021.

For more key dates and helpful resources, visit Council's website or the NSW Electoral commission site.

[www.elections.nsw.gov.au](http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au)



# New Drought Management Plan

Armidale Regional Council has adopted a new Drought Management Plan to secure the region's town water supply in the event of future droughts.

The new plan harmonises the previously separate Armidale and Guyra Drought Management Plans and outlines strategies to minimise the impact of drought on town water users.

After seeking community input last year, Council has identified key short and long term actions that can be taken to preserve town water supply.

Strategies include new guidelines for when water restrictions are triggered and identifying when certain actions need to be taken.

There are also a number of long term strategies, including increasing the capacity of Malpas Dam, utilising potential groundwater, and renewing the Puddledock transfer main under the NSW Government's Safe and Secure Funding program.

Armidale Regional Council General Manager James Roncon said the plan is a way to ensure the community is informed about

issues associated with drought management.

"By having a roadmap established, we hope to avoid a year like 2019 where nil inflows into Armidale and Guyra's dam storages meant emergency restrictions had to be introduced," said Mr Roncon.

"The new trigger system will eliminate any uncertainty when it comes to implementing restrictions and deciding when the right time is to relax or tighten rules around water use," said Mr Roncon.

The plan is available on Council's website at [armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au](http://armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au).

## Water restriction triggers

| ACTIVITY                                    | Permanent                      | LEVEL 1                        | LEVEL 2                       | LEVEL 3                            | LEVEL 4                                  | LEVEL 5  |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Residential restrictions                    | 200 Litres                     | 80%<br>180 Litres              | 70%<br>170 Litres             | 60%<br>160 Litres                  | 55%<br>155 Litres                        | 50% - 145 Litres<br>Countdown to day zero triggers |
| <b>General Watering Lawns &amp; Gardens</b> |                                |                                |                               |                                    |  |  |
| Buckets                                     | Permitted                      | Permitted                      | Permitted                     | 2 hours only                       | Recycled water only                      | Recycled water only                                |
| Hand held hoses (with trigger nozzle)       | Permitted                      | Not during the heat of the day | 2 hours only                  | 2 hours only on Sunday & Wednesday | Not permitted                            | Not permitted                                      |
| Water efficient drip irrigation             | Permitted                      | Not during the heat of the day | 2 hours only                  | Not permitted                      | Not permitted                            | Not permitted                                      |
| Sprinklers & fixed hoses                    | Not during the heat of the day | 2 hours only                   | Not permitted                 | Not permitted                      | Not permitted                            | Not permitted                                      |
| Watering of new turf for up to 6 weeks      | Not during the heat of the day | Not during the heat of the day | 2 hours only                  | 2 hours only on Sunday & Wednesday | Not permitted                            | Not permitted                                      |
| <b>Vehicle Washing</b>                      |                                |                                |                               |                                    |  |  |
| Buckets                                     | Permitted                      | Permitted                      | Permitted                     | Not during the heat of the day     | Windscreen & licence plate cleaning only | Windscreen & licence plate cleaning only           |
| Hand held hoses                             | Permitted                      | Not during the heat of the day | 2 hours only                  | Not permitted                      | Not permitted                            | Not permitted                                      |
| <b>Washing Down Hard Surfaces</b>           |                                |                                |                               |                                    |  |  |
| High pressure cleaner                       | Permitted                      | Permitted                      | Permitted                     | Not permitted                      | Not permitted                            | Not permitted                                      |
| Hand held hoses                             |                                | Not permitted                  | Not permitted                 | Not permitted                      | Not permitted                            | Not permitted                                      |
| <b>Private Swimming Pools</b>               |                                |                                |                               |                                    |  |  |
| Filling                                     | Permitted                      | Permit required to fill > SKL  | Permit required to fill > SKL | Not permitted                      | Not permitted                            | Not permitted                                      |
| Topping up                                  | Permitted                      | Permitted                      | Permitted                     | Buckets only                       | Not permitted                            | Not permitted                                      |
| <b>Evaporative Coolers</b>                  |                                |                                |                               |                                    |  |  |
| Use of water for cooling                    | Permitted                      | Permitted                      | Permitted                     | Permitted                          | Permitted                                | Not permitted                                      |
| <b>Water Cartage</b>                        |                                |                                |                               |                                    |  |  |
| Treated water for stock & domestic          | Permitted                      | Permitted                      | Permitted                     | Internal domestic use only         | Internal domestic use only               | Internal domestic use only                         |

**Notes**  
 Restrictions apply to the use of Armidale and Guyra town water.  
 Greywater and rainwater can be used at any time, provided that rainwater tanks are not topped up from town supplies.  
 A Water Management Plan may be approved to allow the use of fixed sprinklers outside the nominated hours during Permanent and Level 1 restriction periods.  
 Any reference to 2 hours of restricted watering means between the hours of 6pm and 8pm OR 6am and 8am (not both) during daylight saving and 5pm and 7pm OR 5am and 7am (not both) at all other times.  
 Not during the heat of the day means not between 9am and 5pm during daylight saving and 10am and 3pm at other times.  
 Periods of water restrictions Level 1 to Level 5 will be policed by Council Officers. The maximum penalty under the Local Government Act for a breach of restrictions is \$2,200 for corporations and \$220 for individuals.  
 Level 5 Trigger 1 - 365 days to zero 120L, Level 5 Trigger 2 - 250 days to zero 100L, Level 5 Trigger 3 - 60 days to zero 80L.



## Region moves into permanent water conservation following rainfall in March

The Armidale region has moved out of water restrictions and into permanent water conservation after experiencing significant rainfall resulting in full and overflowing dams in March.

Permanent conservation is a widely used term around Australia when water restrictions are not active. Residents will still be encouraged to practice sensible water conservation and work towards an average per person daily usage of 200 litres per day.

Sprinklers and fixed hoses are not allowed to be used during the heat of the day.



# Dumaresq Dam wall strengthening underway

Works to strengthen the Dumaresq Dam wall are now underway, with contractors moving on - site in March.

Once complete, the project will rectify identified safety issues with the wall, after Dam Safety NSW found it was not meeting current safety standards and posed a risk of failure during an extreme flooding event, which would affect people downstream.

In 2014 Council conducted extensive consultation with the community that overwhelmingly supported the dam

remaining at its current height to maintain the popular recreation area.

The strengthening of the dam wall involves the installation of post tensioned anchor bars both from the crest of the dam and through the toe down into the underlying rock.

In June and July the embankment to the west of the dam wall will be raised and strengthened and the wall to the east will be extended.

During this time work on improvements to the outlet pipework at the base of the dam

will also take place.

To facilitate construction, the dam will need to be drained by about two metres. This will only be during construction and access to the water via the boat ramp could be limited.

The recreation area is also set to receive an upgrade during the second half of the year.

The NSW Government has funded fifty percent of the \$8.1 million project through the DPIE's Safe and Secure Water program. Council is contributing the remainder for the project.



## Library receives generous donation

The Armidale Regional Council War Memorial Library has received two generous donations from the Friends of the Armidale War Memorial Library.

Thanks to the group's outstanding fundraising efforts, the library is now home to \$8000 worth of new shelving to be used for displaying the library's latest arrivals.

The group regularly fundraises for the

facility, and in addition to the new shelving, \$10,000 was donated to purchase more large-print and talking books.

To come and see the new shelving and books for yourself, drop into the Armidale Regional War Memorial Library on Rusden Street. The library is open Monday to Friday, 9.30am – 5.30pm, and 10am – 1pm on Saturdays.



## Updated waste services guide

Armidale Regional Council has entered a new era of Waste Services with an updated guide distributed to all households.

The guide includes detailed information about what can be recycled, what is considered organic waste, and what has to be put in the red-lid bin. There is also some information about how often waste is collected and information on our facilities.

The easy to read brochure can be stuck on the fridge as a quick reference guide whenever you are in doubt about our waste services.

The new guide has a focus on recycling and the City to Soil program to ensure as much waste is diverted out of landfill as possible.

The hard copy guide is printed on 100% recycled paper and was distributed via post to all residents.

# The Big Chill Beer and BBQ Festival

The inaugural Big Chill Beer and Barbeque Festival will be the perfect place to chill with a craft beer and a hearty barbeque meal, and will be held on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 May at Armidale's Civic Park.

The over 18's festival will host a range of breweries and butchers from all over the state, along with barbeque cook - offs and some exciting musical acts.

The new annual event is set to cement Armidale as a tourist hotspot and will put the region's iconic cooler months and unique Autumn leaves on display.

Cr. Tiley said after the tough year everyone has had, the festival will be the perfect way for people from near and far to come and chill out with a frosty beer and a hearty meal.

Highlights of the event include the Steak Cook - Off Association competition and the Australasian Barbeque Alliance competition where members of the community can take part or be a judge.

The event will be ticketed to comply with COVID-19 restrictions.

For more information on how to get involved, or to purchase tickets, visit the Big Chill Festival website at [bigchill.com.au](http://bigchill.com.au).

We hope to see you there!



## New murals brighten up the Armidale Mall



The Armidale Mall and its laneways have received a splash of colour, with new murals now scattered around the CBD.

Local artist James O'Hanlon has brightened up the Mall Arcade and its entrance on Moore Street through his bird-inspired artworks.

Taking inspiration from the diverse birdlife that calls the Armidale region home, some of the featured feathered friends include the regent honeyeater, the king parrot, and the superb fairy wren.

Mr O'Hanlon's designs build upon the avian theme already present in the area through existing murals, and complement the nearby buildings' art-deco style.

In addition to Mr O'Hanlon's murals is another located in the laneway next to the Tattersall's Hotel. Painted on the BooBooks wall, well-renowned artists CRISP and Sillypear, otherwise known as Christian Peterson and Charlie Nivison, have collaborated to create a mural that pays homage to the extreme seasons of the New England.

The Mall and Laneways Beautification Project was made possible by an \$80,000 Shared Spaces grant from the NSW Government, and is a partnership between Council and Renew Armidale.



# Service centre secures premier position at business park

The sky's the limit for Armidale Airside Business Park as stage one takes off with anchor tenant, Outlook Property Services, to establish a prominent service centre with fuel and food outlets.

New occupant, Outlook Property Services, has secured a premier position at the entrance to the precinct on the New England Highway, to construct a modern service centre experience for travellers, connecting through to convenience food outlets and rest areas.

Armidale Regional Council Mayor Ian Tiley said the sale of the service centre is a major step in building economic momentum for the Armidale region.

"The service centre is expected

to introduce more than 40 full-time employment opportunities to Armidale when fully operational, and will complement other potential investments at the precinct," he said.

The centre is expected to include 24 hour service, branded food outlets with drive-thru, rest and fatigue facilities, an internal food court, outdoor food areas and caravan and trailer parking facilities.

Sale of the land to Outlook Property Services is one of the first of 24 lots to be released on the market under stage one development.

Visit [www.investarmidale.com.au](http://www.investarmidale.com.au) for more information on investment opportunities.



# Start using City to Soil today!

Are you using the City to Soil program to dispose of your organic waste?

Putting organic waste into landfill creates a high amount of methane which is a major contributor to climate change, so through our well - renowned City to Soil program, we are taking small steps to divert waste from landfill and reduce our carbon footprint.

Things that can go into your green lid bin include fruit and vegetable scraps, meat, bones, soiled cardboard and pizza boxes, garden waste and more.

For more information, see your new Waste Services Guide or visit our website at [armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au](http://armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au).



# Zero30 project underway

A vision for a carbon neutral future will be a reality thanks to a new partnership between UNE and Council.

Working together as Project Zero30, we will be one of the first LGAs in Australia to take on the ambitious target of carbon neutrality.

By 2030, some of the significant goals of the project include having 25 percent of the Armidale LGA's buildings carbon certified, bringing winter air quality levels below the Department of Health's guidelines, and planting 1 million trees to offset carbon usage.

# ACA Masters Tour

The Australian Cricketers' Association Masters Tour came to Armidale in February, and saw a number of the country's best past and present players come to town.

The event included the Sporties Night meet and greet, a casual golf morning, as well as school coaching clinics where budding players were given valuable tips from the greats.

The highlight of the tour was the T20 match, where a representative team from the Armidale District Cricket Association played against the Masters.

The tour was the first major event the city has seen since the COVID-19 pandemic, and provided the region's up and coming cricketers with a rare opportunity that is usually only available to those living in metropolitan areas.

Through the event, Council raised \$585 for the local Cricket Association.

For pictures of the event, visit Council's social media platforms.

# Monckton Aquatic Centre to receive new heat pumps during season closure

With the region's pools now closed for the colder months, work will begin on upgrading the ageing heat pumps at the Monckton Aquatic Centre.

When complete, the new pumps will allow temperatures to be up to three degrees warmer than without heat pumps, and will maintain pool temperatures at 26 degrees.

This will improve the experience of pool goers when using the facility during the cooler months in Spring and Autumn.

Work will be complete in time for the pool to reopen in the second half of the year.

The project was made possible by a \$350,000 grant from the Australian Government through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Fund.



## Storytime sessions return to Armidale and Guyra libraries



The region's young bookworms can once again participate in the Armidale Regional Library storytime sessions held in the Guyra and Armidale each week.

The popular reading sessions were put on hold in March last year due to COVID-19 restrictions, but are now back and better than ever.

Each session runs for up to an hour and includes fun reading activities for young children.

For more information, visit the Libraries page on Council's website.

Please note, sessions run during school terms only.

**Guyra - 11am every Monday**  
**Armidale - 10:30am every Tuesday**

## Hay donated to flood victims

Armidale Regional Council will donate 40 bales of hay to neighbouring regions affected by devastating floods to help the farming communities suffering the loss and damage of silage and winter stocks.

A motion was put forward by Councillor Galletly to provide the goodwill gesture to flood affected communities on the mid-north coast after a transport company approached him with a willingness to donate haulage of the hay. The motion was unanimously supported at the March Ordinary Council Meeting.

## New England Volunteer Awards

The New England Volunteer Awards will be held on Tuesday 18 May and will be the perfect way to acknowledge the selfless members of our community who work tirelessly to help others.

The awards ceremony is being run by the Armidale Volunteer Referral Service (AVRS), the Uniting Church and the Alwyn Jones Community Service Award Committee.

Cr. Tiley said the awards are an opportunity to recognise the wonderful work our local volunteers do.

National Volunteer Week runs from 17 – 23 May 2021.

For information on the awards visit the volunteers page on our website at [armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au](http://armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au).

## Council announces the Armidale Spring Games

The inaugural Armidale Spring Games was announced by Council in April and will cement itself as an annual celebration of sport.

The event will be held over the October long weekend on 1 – 4 October 2021. The three sporting codes involved will be hockey, cricket and football, and will take place at several venues across the city.

More than 50 teams from inter and intra - state are expected to take part in the event. The hockey competition will target under 15's boys and girls teams,

football will target over 35's men and open women's teams, while cricket will be targeting teams in the over 50's category. All competitions will compete for the title of Armidale Spring Games Champions.

The event will present an opportunity to showcase the region from both a sporting and tourism angle and will deliver a significant boost to the local economy.

Visit [armidalespringgames.com.au](http://armidalespringgames.com.au) for more information on the exciting event.

Updates will be posted on Council's social media channels.

## Council meetings

The general public is welcome to attend any Armidale Regional Council meeting:

- Wednesday 28 April, 4pm in Guyra
- Wednesday 26 May, 4pm in Armidale
- Wednesday 23 June, 4pm in Armidale

Seating is limited during COVID-19 restrictions. Register by emailing [executiveoffice@armidale.nsw.gov.au](mailto:executiveoffice@armidale.nsw.gov.au)

## Have you seen the new signage on our garbage trucks?



### Live Streaming

Council meetings are now streamed live on our youtube channel or via our website!

## Participate at a Council meeting

Public access is available for members of our community to voice their opinion on an issue at Council.

Public access will only be granted for items listed on the agenda.

Each address will be limited to a maximum of two speakers for and two speakers against the agenda item.

The address is to be no longer than five minutes.

### How to apply

Requests must be submitted by 12pm on the day prior to the meeting.

A form is available on our website under 'Participate at a Council Meeting'.

## Sign up to our E-news today!

Do you want to keep up to date with everything that's happening at Council and in the region?

Why not sign up to our fortnightly E-news? Sent straight to your inbox,

you'll never miss out on hearing the latest Council news.

Sign up via Councils website at [www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au](http://www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au) (scroll to the bottom of the page).



## Contact Us

**Call: 1300 136 833**

Email: [council@armidale.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@armidale.nsw.gov.au)

Visit a Customer Service Centre at:

135 Rusden St, Armidale or  
158 Bradley St, Guyra

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