

Mayor's Message

The last five years have been a period of progress for the Ballina Shire and there have been many achievements and milestones during the term of the elected Council.

Whilst the Council continued to provide and maintain essential infrastructure and services during this term, we also delivered on a number of high quality projects designed to provide long-term benefits to our community.

With the Covid-19 pandemic throwing up global challenges, I am very proud of our community abiding by the State and Federal Governments regulations to help contain the virus in our shire. During this time of change, Ballina Shire Council has followed the Covid-19 guidelines and continued to deliver projects as planned.

These projects and programs reflect the immediate and future needs and desires of our residents, and importantly, are balanced with the goals of responsible and sustainable fiscal management.

With growth it is essential that we are also investing in infrastructure to ensure that our facilities meet the needs of current and future populations. We have been working closely with the State and Federal Governments to seek their support and funding to continue our momentum in the delivery of new and upgraded infrastructure.

Over the period many projects were completed or underway:

- oOfficial opening of the new \$8 million Wollongbar Sportfields, which now includes AFL field/cricket oval, rugby union grounds, tennis and netball courts, lighting and clubhouse amenities
- continued growth at the Ballina Byron Gateway Airport with over 530,000 passengers per annum taking advantage of the approximately 60 direct flights each week to Sydney, Newcastle and Melbourne
- substantial improvements to the Shaws Bay area as part of our commitment to the environment
- implementation of our Healthy Waterways
 Program to improve the overall health of our major waterbodies
- redevelopment of the Alstonville and Ballina swimming pools to ensure that we have contemporary facilities for the next 40 years
- continued our compliance with the NSW Government's Fit for the Future program with Council obtaining approval for a permanent special rate variation for 2018/19 and 2019/20
- confirmed funding for the completion of the Coastal Shared Path and Coastal Walk projects

- that will ensure there is pedestrian and cycling connectivity between Ballina and Lennox Head
- we built the new Ballina Indoor Sports Centre and opened this in 2019.

But it's not all about tangible projects, our work also focuses on building community capacity and engagement:

- during the height of the Covid-19 restrictions, we supported our business community, commercial tenants and ratepayers during this difficult financial period by providing a financial support package
- we have taken up opportunities, particularly in the visitor economy, to support local business by providing direct air services to Canberra and now Dubbo
- established the Business Connect program to link local businesses to residents in self-isolation
- launched a new website and delivered more online services for the community to access more user friendly content
- implemented Recycle Right waste education campaign
- provided \$100,000 in donations to community and sporting groups
- endorsed and commenced the Lennox Head Village Vision concept plans
- commenced design and construction for the River Street Duplication project
- obtained planning approval and commenced construction of the Wollongbar District Park.

Yet we have much to look back on and so much more to look forward to. I encourage you to read our end of term report as it provides a snapshot of our community and what we can achieve by working together.

Ballina Shire Council has progressed many significant community projects during the 2016 to 2021 term, and the elected Council is to be commended for its collegial and constructive approach to local government as it worked proactively to balance social, economic and environmental issues in our communities. Ballina Shire Council is a vibrant, modern, innovative and efficient organisation and the progress and achievements over the last four years will reap benefits for the community for many years to come

Drevagh

Cr David Wright
Mayor Ballina Shire Council

Ballina Shire Councillors 2016 - 2021



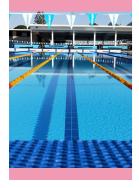


Left to right:

Councillors David Wright (Mayor), Sharon Cadwallader, Ben Smith, Keith Williams, Nathan Willis, Stephen McCarthy, Eoin Johnston, Jeff Johnson, Sharon Parry and Phil Meehan.

We built new \$15million community swimming pools in Ballina and

Alstonville, included 50m and 25m enclosable heated pools, access ramps, kids splash areas and new amenities for Ballina. New amenities delivered for Alstonville in 2019/20.



A random survey of 500 residents reveals 93% are 'somewhat satisfied' with Council's performance, our overall rating of 3.96 out of 5 is higher than the NSW average.



Beach and Sharpes Beach to improve access to our coastal environment.

We also launched the **Bundjalung Cultural Ways** Interpretive Signage project in East Ballina.

We constructed a shared path

between Angels



We issued 96 grants to eligible residents through the Wollongbar Landbuyer subsidy scheme.



new \$8million Wollongbar Council continues Sportsfields, which to comply with the includes tennis and NSW Government's netball courts, rugby Fit for the Future and AFL fields as program and well as clubhouse received a temporary amenities. special rate variation



We completed

We finalised and implemented our Floodplain Risk Management Plan.



We implemented actions as part of the Ballina **Major Regional Centre Strategy** 2035, including the construction of the coastal shared path, preparation of an economic development strategy and planning an



We established a local asbestos policy to guide Council in dealing with matters related to asbestos.



Council constructed

Airport Boulevard

Completed improvements to Shaws Bay precinct and Lake **Ainsworth** as part of the Coastal Zone Management Plan actions.



MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS 201

approval for 2018/19



We installed a multi-court facility at Porter Park in West Ballina and installed new playground equipment at Rubiton, Fawcett and Bulwinkel Parks.



We launched **Ignite Studios** @ the Northern Rivers Community Gallery as a shared workspace for arts and arts learning.



Council commenced construction of **Wollongbar District** Park and Pop **Denison Park** playgrounds.



We continue to install recycled water connections, now in use at 2,277 properties.



Enhanced purchasing **processes** reducing paper and improving auditing.



Council launched a new shared paths and cycleway touring map including education on dog-friendly areas in our Shire.



We commenced live streaming of Council meetings.



Introduced Community Recycling Centres to recycle common household items such as batteries and ink cartridges.



Constructed the new Ballina Indoor **Sports Centre** featuring two international standard indoor courts as well as meeting rooms.



Launched the Love it or Lose it water education campaign and won a LGNSW Excellence in Communications award.



Council introduced online planning applications via the **NSW Planning** Portal.



People told us they want to feel connected to a community which is respectful, inclusive and tolerant of all ages and cultures. We want to feel safe and supported. We want to live in an area that is relaxed, where we know our neighbours, where people are happy and friendly and where the needs of all residents, from the young to the old, and those with disabilities are treated equally and fairly.

"We feel safe..."

Actively promoted crime prevention and safety strategies by:

- Delivering three mobility safety workshops.
- Delivering three educational 'Safety on the Road Over 65' workshops.
- Delivering road safety and community awareness programs (including RRISK, shared path community education, road safety around schools, mobility scooter, community radio road safety initiatives and older road user workshops).
- Completing the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan field audit and the prioritisation and final review of projects is underway.
 Anticipated completion is in the next quarter.
- Completion of Bike Plan and production of Shared Path touring
 man
- Undertook quarterly audit of unregistered dogs and cats and increased patrols at known hot-spots of dog-owner non-compliance with regulations.

Ensured adequate plans are in place for natural disasters and environmental changes by:

- Facilitating the Local Emergency Management Committee for Ballina.
- Establishing the Business Connect Program to support those in the community who were self-isolating during COVID.

Monitored the built environment and services delivered to the community to ensure relevant standards are being met by:

 Implementing a Compliance Program including an audit of major developments in the shire, identified development consents and all development consents in the Russelton Estate. Main breaches being unauthorised second and third dwellings on rural land, and investigating tourism and function centre complaints in rural areas.

"We feel connected to the community..."

Encouraged community interaction and volunteering by:

- Inviting all Council volunteers including Community Spaces, Gallery and Tourism Ambassadors to attend an acknowledgment morning tea for Volunteers Week. Presented volunteers with a certificate of appreciation for their service.
- Installing **Cultural Ways Aboriginal signage** along the Coastal Recreational Path at East Ballina.

Assisted disadvantaged groups by:

- The Access Reference Group provided input into the redevelopment of the Ballina Byron Gateway Airport.
- Completion of the **Disability Inclusion Action Plan** (DIAP) with the following projects/programs implemented:
- Construction of the first fully Accredited Changing Place toilet facility in NSW.
- Alteration of the design templates for the construction of footpaths to improve accessibility.
- Construction of an extensive network of accessible shared pathways and ongoing condition audits of the pathway network
- Employment of the regional works crew.
- Alteration of the design specification for **public amenities** such as picnic tables, drinking fountains and garbage bins.
- Accessible pool entry ramps and change facilities incorporated in redeveloped public swimming pools in Ballina and Alstonville.
- Network of accessible unisex toilets with MLAK keys free of charge to eligible residents.

Created events and activities that promote interaction and education, as well as a sense of place by:

- Holding an Open Day at the Animal Shelter to build awareness of the rehoming services provided.
- The Northern Rivers Community Gallery developed new audiences with the introduction of BOLD Sparks creative workshops for people living in Aged Care Facilities, and 1000 Words Arts and Literacy Program for school groups.
- Developing a new pet ownership education pack and holding two microchipping days at the Animal Shelter. Included in this was a \$50 voucher to assist in the desexing of cats and dogs which was supported by all local commercial veterinary clinics in the Shire.
- Installed public art on new roundabouts on Ross Lane, Cherry Street and Moon Street.
- Provided Festival and Events Program funding (\$580,000) over five years, some of the major beneficiaries being:
 Ballina Country Music Festival, Love Lennox Festival,
 Skullcandy Oz Grom Fest, Ballina Fine Wine and Food Festival,
 Quota Club of Alstonville Craft and Garden Fair, Alstonville
 News Year's Eve Family Event, Riverside Carols.
- Provided donations to community and sporting groups, with major beneficiaries being:
 Ballina Jet Boat Rescue, Lennox Head, Riverside and Alstonville Carols, Ballina Shire Concert Band, Ballina Hockey

Ballina Jet Boat Rescue, Lennox Head, Riverside and Alstonville Carols, Ballina Shire Concert Band, Ballina Hockey Club Men's Masters, Lennox Head Christmas Carols Event, Ballina Shire Concert Band, Ballina Hockey Club, Christmas on the Plateau Event, Crawford House Museum, Cabbage Tree Island Rugby League Football Club, Land Care Groups.

"There are services and facilities that suit our needs..."

Provided equitable access to a range of community services and facilities by:

- Designing and constructing the Ballina Indoor Sports Centre.
- Opening the upgraded Alstonville Aquatic Centre and Ballina War Memorial Swimming Pools.
- Commencing the expansion of the Skennars Head Sports Field.
- Completing upgrade works to the Lennox Head Cultural Centre.
- Opened the Marine Rescue Tower.

Provided young people with a range of leisure and personal development activities by:

- Completing the \$15 million Alstonville Aquatic Centre and Ballina Memorial **Pool** redevelopment.
- Opening the \$8 million **Wollongbar Sportfields,** including netball courts, tennis courts, rugby union fields and clubhouse amenities.
- Launching **Ignite Studios** @ the Northern Rivers Community Gallery as a shared work space for arts and arts learning.
- Installing a multi-court facility at Porter Park, West Ballina and replacement of Fawcett Park playground, Ballina and Rubiton and Bullwinkel Parks.
- · Launching new cycleway touring map.
- Completing the Skennars Head Sports Fields Expansion.
- Adopting the Ballina Sports and Recreation Facilities Plan.
- Opening the Ballina Indoor Sports Centre and holding the Get Active Expo.

Provided strategies for older residents to feel part of our community by:

- Completing the **Pixel the Past** (digital media) heritage project, inclusive of exhibition at the Northern Rivers Community Gallery.
- Encouraging active aging through volunteer programs at the Northern Rivers Community Gallery, tourism ambassadors at the airport and support of local landcare groups.

During our community engagement people told us they want a vibrant and diverse local economy that provides a range of jobs and opportunities for people of all ages. Importantly, we want to ensure there are job opportunities for our young people so they do not have to leave the area to find work. We want to attract innovative and progressive businesses that will ensure our villages and towns continue to thrive and prosper.

"We attract new business and visitors..."

Promoted our area as an attractive place to invest and visit by:

- Implementing Destination Management Plan for Ballina Shire.
- Implementing Regional Visitor Strategy.
- · Progressing the Coastal Shared Path.
- Installing five pontoons around the shire under the Regional Boating Strategy.
- · Developing unique experiences marketing activities.
- Welcoming over **one million visitors** to our shire.
- · Awarding a tender for the Shelly Beach Café site.
- Establishing a digital visitor services hub in the new BP Highway Service
- Endorsing the Lennox Head Village Vision concept plans for public
- Completing the Coastal Shared Path network connecting Ballina to Lennox
- Constructing the Coastal Recreational Walk from Sharpes Beach, Skennars Head to Lennox Point, Lennox Head.

Minimised costs and regulatory requirements for doing business by:

- Introducing online applications and online certificates via the Community Portal.
- Simplified access to documents and expanded volume of digitised records such as sewer diagrams.

Provided infrastructure that supports business and delivers economic benefits by:

- Ballina Town Centre enhancement projects with Moon/River Street and Cherry/Tamar Street roundabouts.
- Key business centre enhancements with Wardell Boardwalk and pontoon.
- Adoption of Ballina Marina Master Plan to attract investment in the West Ballina waterfront precinct.
- Finalising rezoning of Southern Cross Expansion Project and implementing expansion of existing estate.

"Improve liveability in the Ballina Shire..."

Facilitated and provided economic land and infrastructure to support business growth by:

- Increasing availability of industrial land in the Russelton Estate and Southern Cross Industral Estate, Ballina.
- Improvements of Wigmore Arcade encouraging retail trade in the Ballina town centre.
- Completing the Ballina Byron Gateway Airport (BBGA) terminal upgrade.
- Completing the River Street upgrade (Moon Street to Grant Street).
- Commencing delivery of the River Street Duplication Project (Stage 1) Burns Point Ferry Road to Barlows

Facilitated and provided affordable infrastructure, both business and residential by:

- Providing the final 44 grants for Ballina Heights Estate and Wollongbar bringing the Building Better Regional Cities Program to completion (a total of 216 grants were provided throughout the program).
- · Introducing waiver of section 7.11 contributions for secondary dwellings.
- · Releasing land at Council's Wollongbar residential land
- Completing the Hutley Drive/Byron Bay Road roundabout and access road.

Encouraged technologies and transport options that support work at home or close to home business activities by:

 Upgrading and construction of new footpaths to implement the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan.

20,199

511,800

\$15.2mi

1,472

PROSPEROUS

ECONOMY

\$59.2mi

"My business can grow and diversify..."

Developed plans that encouraged business growth and diversification by:

- Implementing Airport upgrades with the terminal expansion project.
- Progressing rezoning of land at the Southern Cross Industrial Estate and the construction of Airport Boulevard.

Promoted and facilitated a range of business activities by:

• Maximising opportunities and benefits to be gained from Council dredging and quarrying activities (development of business case to expand quarry).

Established planning regulations that encourage opportunities for diversification by:

- Enhancing opportunities for business interaction with Council with development of the **Economic** Development Strategy.
- Building infrastructure such as Wollongbar Sports Fields, Skennars Head Sports Fields and Ballina Heights Sports Fields to support growth areas in Lennox Head, Wollongbar, and Ballina Heights.



The health and preservation of our natural environment was a strong recurring theme from our community engagement. We want to continue to find a balance between development and the environment to ensure we preserve what people love so much about living here. We want to restore and repair our waterways and areas that have been degraded to maintain aquatic and birdlife. We understand the importance of peace, serenity and harmony with nature. We want our built environment to meet our needs but not at the expense of our natural environment or the people who live and work here.

"We understand the environment..."

Considered past and predicted changes to the environment when planning by:

- Implementing Floodplain Management Plans, investigating isolated rural properties, and a detailed investigation of Ballina Island and West Ballina.
- Implementing our Environmental Action Plan, with implementation of Healthy Waterways program and installation of 134kw solar panels at the community pools.
- Developing Coastal Zone Management Plan to monitor, manage, and protect our coastline.
- Finalising Floodplain Risk Management
 Plan with amendments to the DCP.
- Implementing Council's Climate Action Strategy and Environmental Action Plan.

Promoted initiatives that improve our natural environment by:

- Launching the 'Love It or Lose It' animations to educate how to keep the Richmond River catchment waterways clean. Won the LGNSW Excellence in Communication Award.
- Developing Coastal Zone Management
 Plan for Lake Ainsworth Management.
- Implementing Stormwater Management
 Plan with works at Chickiba wetlands,
 Northlakes, Alstonville Creek.
- Upgrading the Chickiba wetlands weir with monitoring and rehabilitation continuing.
- Installing new flood gates on Burns Point Ferry Road.
- Implementing the Koala Management Strategy, working with Office of Environment and Heritage to trial Koala Management Roadside Toolbox Talks.
- Convening a community information session for floodplain management.
- Improving the health and recreational value of Shaws Bay through CZMP improvement works including control bank erosion and siltation, dredging, improvements to Compton Drive Foreshore with improved parking, access ramp, shower facilities, seating and stormwater treatment.

"We use our resources wisely..."

Implemented total water cycle management practices by:

- Implementing Urban Water
 Management Strategy with supply of recycled water from Lennox Head
 Treatment Plant to Ballina residents.
- Supplying recycled water to dual reticulated properties with 2,277 of properties currently using recycled water.

Reduced, reused and recycled our resources by:

- Introducing Community Recycling Centres to recycle common household items such as batteries and ink cartridges.
- Conducting **Water Loss Reduction** program in Alstonville to detect leaks.
- Innovative technologies to generate efficiencies such as Skype for Business, Pulse performance and project management system, internal helpdesks to prioritise and deliver internal requests.

Pursued innovative technologies by:

- Upgrading the SCADA (the computer system that monitors and controls processes at the Wastewater Treatment Plants) resulting in improved aeration rates and consistent and efficient data collection.
- Implementing Touchpoint technology to monitor phone call data and allocate resourcing according to customer needs.
- Implementing the corporate reporting module to monitor service delivery indicators in the Delivery Program/ Operational Plan.
- Launching an electronic rates marketing campaign to reduce council's use of paper (with over 3,000 people registered for e-rates)
- Investigating and mapping unaccounted water loss for the shire.

"Built environment blends with natural and cultural environment..."

Developed and implemented plans that balance the built environment with the natural environment by:

- Providing for residential urban and semirural expansion with adoption of DCP for Skennars Head.
- Developing Major Regional Centre Strategy for Ballina and progress planning or delivery of Pop Denison Park, Coastal Recreational Path and Indoor Sports Centre.
- Implementing Wardell Strategic Plan with construction of new boardwalk, pontoon, shelters and toilet facilities.
- Developing the Alstonville Strategic Plan 2017 – 2037 to guide decision making in the village.
- Reviewing Local Growth Management Strategy.
- Adopting Killen Falls and Tosha Falls
 Management Plans to guide the long term
 planning of these popular but sensitive
 sites.
- Preparing the Wollongbar Planning and Environmental Study and Strategic Plan.

- Consulting the community on the Ocean Breeze Reserve Community Garden.
- Continuing with implementation of the Ballina Major Regional Centre Strategy.
- Improving the recreational spaces at Lake Ainsworth.

Minimised negative impacts on the natural environment by:

- Implementing a Local Asbestos Policy.
- Monitoring on-site sewage management (OSSM) systems to ensure 3,000 systems across the shire are compliant.
- Implementing the Koala Management Strategy including maping of koala habitat and feed trees in the road reserves managed by Council and mapping of potential Crown road reserves as koala movement corridors.

Matched infrastructure with development by:

- Developing a Section 94 Open Spaces and Community Facilities contributions plan.
- Updating the **Roads Contributions Plan** to include the Hutley Drive north extension.

During our community engagement people told us they want to have confidence and trust in their elected representatives and want a genuine partnership with Council where their voices are heard and their opinions respected. Our community wants resources to be used efficiently and responsibly. People want Council to act locally but to also work effectively and collaboratively with other levels of government, private sector organisations and community groups to drive economic and social prosperity.

"Our Council works with the community ..."

Faciltated and developed strong relationships and partnerships with the community by:

- Continuing four-yearly reviews of all council policies to ensure they are contemporary and reflect best practice and legislation.
- Ensuring land classifications reflect community standards and intended land use. Public land holdings are reviewed every six-months.
- Adopting the Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027.

Involved our community in the planning and decision making processes of Council by:

- Increasing community involvement in council activities through wider and targeted engagement methods.
- Commencing live streaming of Council meetings to maintain accessibility.
- Delivering community information sessions on the **Delivery Program** in Alstonville, Ballina, Lennox Head and Wardell
- Online Council meetings, public meetings and ward committee meetings held in response to COVID-19 lockdown.
- Holding information sessions and community consultation for the River Street duplication project.
- Holding weekend design workshop with wide range of stakeholders for the Lennox Village Vision project.

Actively advocated community issues to other levels of government such as:

 Approaching NSW and Australian Governments on issues that affect our shire including funding and support of new indoor sports centre, Ballina Coast High School, south-facing ramps at Cumbalum, road projects and essential funding, affordable housing projects, short term rental accommodation crisis.

"Council's finances and assets are well managed..."

Proactively pursued revenue opportunities, cost savings and / or efficiencies by:

- Using plant, equipment and stock effectively and efficiently with barcode scanners for stores stocktake, and web based interface of approved suppliers/contractors.
- Enhancing financial sustainability through compliance with Fit for the Future Program.
- Achieving operating surplus and an asset renewal ratio of 100%. Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) forecasts shows that Council is Fit for the Future.
- Generating operating surplus on our water and wastewater operations.

Using modern operating systems by:

- Implementing innovative electronic onboarding for new employees with eLearning and training modules.
- Improving customer service with integration of core platforms (financial, records and mapping) with the online community portal.
- Implementing Skype for Business to 200 end-users providing call analytics and reporting.
- Completing drone training to collect and analyse asset data, vegetation management, modelling, planning, and promotions and marketing.
- Continuing to develop centralised electronic registers to reduce 'silo' data sets held in spreadsheets.
- Enhancing online purchase requisitions
 'Procure 2 Pay' to reduce paper and improve efficiencies and auditing.

Providing effective risk and safety practices by:

- Completing Statewide Insurance Audit to ensure compliance.
- Aligning risk management practices with insurer and legislative requirements to improve our safety record and insurance premiums.

"We are all valued citizens..."

Providing prompt, knowledgeable, friendly and helpful advice by:

- conducting a community survey every two years to measure Council service delivery and improve trust and confidence with Council.
- Initiating a community satisfaction survey and received an overall rating of 3.46 out of 5.0.
- Delivering a new Council website to provide prompt and efficient information to the community.

Delivering responsive and efficient services by:

- Introducing BIS reporting.
- Increasing efficiencies for road maintenance (hand patching) asphalt for pothole repair.
- Improving efficiencies for road maintenance for gravel roads, reactive maintenance required due to to wet weather can impact the delivery of capital works programs.
- Expanding workforce skills with the review of the Resourcing Strategy and focus on developing skills in information technology and leadership.

Encouraging a motivated and adaptive workforce by:

- Focussing on developing workforce skills in information technology (digital literacy) and leadership (great managers) with the review of the Resourcing Strategy.
- Improving remote and mobile digital services with installation of high capacity internet connection and portable tablet PC rollout.





The End of the Report is the final document in the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework for 2016 - 2021.

This document shows our progress in implementing the 10-year Community Strategic Plan (Our Community: Our Future) via the four-year and annual reviews of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

You can view all these documents on Council's website ballina.nsw.gov.au