

# **Annual Report**

**2008 / 2009**

## **Council's Vision**

A prosperous and harmonious community, which enjoys a clean and healthy lifestyle with access to all services considered necessary in a modern society.

## **Council's Mission**

Through its undertakings, maintain and improve the services to ratepayers by the efficient and effective management of assets and the environment in response to community needs.

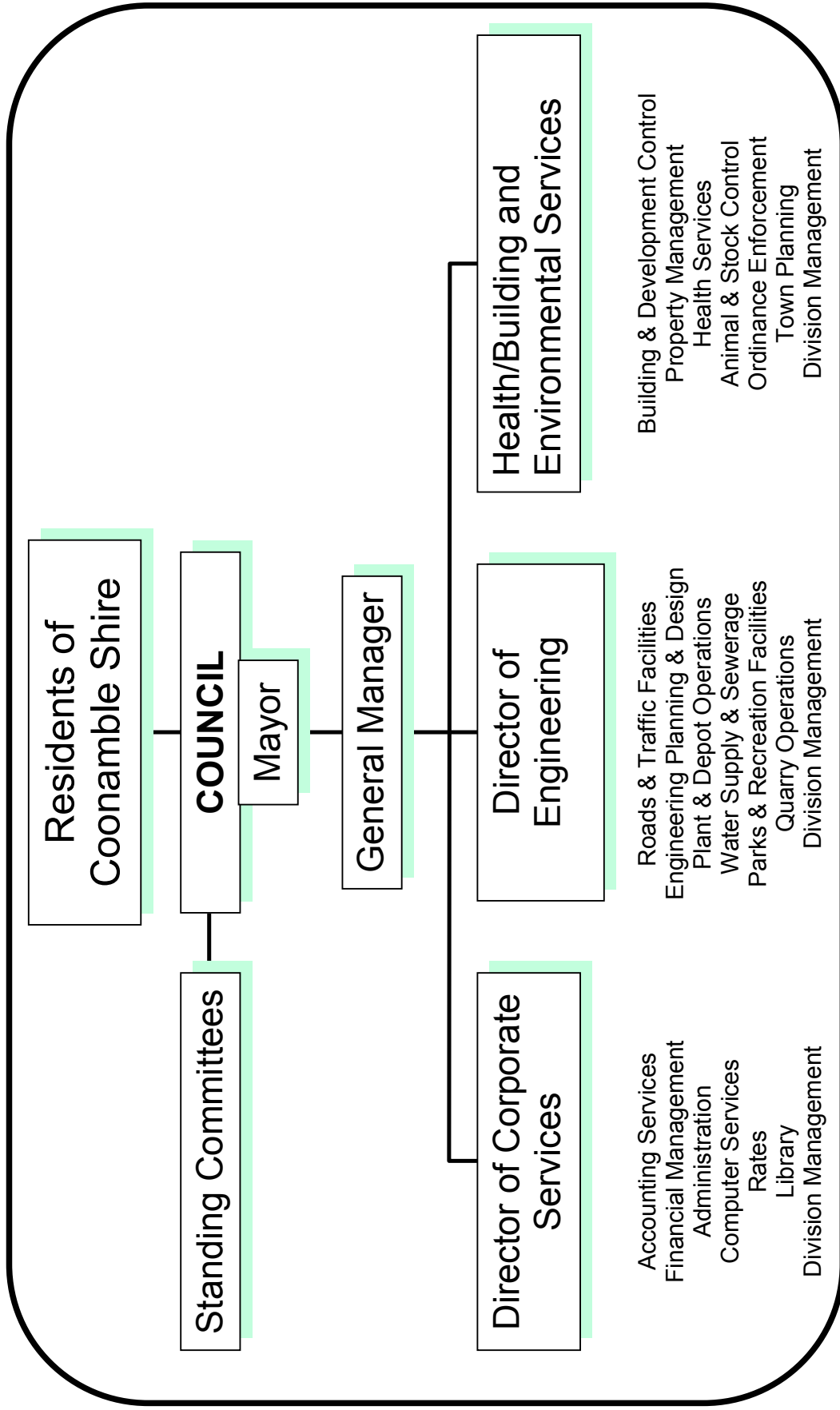
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# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



## COUNCIL OFFICES & FACILITIES

Council Chambers	80 Castlereagh Street, Coonamble Open 8.30 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. Monday – Friday Cashier: 9.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. daily Phone 6827 1900 Fax 6822 1626 After Hours Phone: 1300 618 500 Email: <a href="mailto:council@coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au">council@coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au">www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au</a>
Library	Castlereagh Street, Coonamble Phone 6827 1925 Fax 6822 1057
Visitors Information Centre	Cypress Motel 147 Castlereagh Street, Coonamble Phone 6822 4532
Roads & Traffic Authority Agency	Coonamble Rural Transaction Centre 26 Castlereagh Street, Coonamble Phone 6822 1487
Riverside Caravan Park	Castlereagh Highway, Coonamble Phone 6822 1926

## **COUNCILLORS**

**Mayor:** Councillor T.Horan  
**Deputy Mayor:** Councillor D Schieb  
Cr Barbara O'Brien Cr Jack Canham Cr Tom Cullen  
Cr Allan Karanouh Cr. Michael Webb

## **COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Ordinary meetings of Council are held on the second Wednesday of the month, excluding January, commencing at 9.00 a.m. Members of the public are invited to attend. A Public Question Time has been set aside from 9.30 a.m. - 10.00 a.m. for interested persons to address Council.

Council's September meeting is held in the village of Quambone and the meeting for March is held at Gulargambone.

Correspondence to be considered by Council must be lodged at least one week before the meeting.

## **COUNCIL DELEGATES**

Castlereagh Macquarie (Weeds) County Council: Crs Schieb and Webb  
(Alternate: Councillor Cullen)

North Western Co-operative Library Service: Councillor O'Brien  
Librarian Bev Davidson

Barwon Darling Alliance: Mayor and General Manager  
(Alternate: Councillor Schieb)

Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC): Mayor and General Manager

Outback Arts: Councillor O'Brien  
(Alternate: Tourism Development  
Officer)

## **SENIOR & EXECUTIVE STAFF**

General Manager: Mr. John Griffiths  
Director of Engineering Services: Mr. Don Gamage  
Director of Corporate Services: Mr. Rick Warren

## **THE YEAR IN REVIEW**

I am pleased to be again reporting to you following the September 2008 Local Government Elections and the subsequent Mayoral Election. It is a honour to be the Mayor of this wonderful Shire and I, along with the new Council, am looking forward to a rewarding and exciting four years.

### **Budget 2010**

The budget for the upcoming year is extremely tight due to the severe drop in interest rates and the superannuation additional levy imposed on Council. Where in previous years there has been the capacity to undertake significant infrastructure improvements, the coming year will see the elimination of continuation of these vital works. Despite the slashing of expenses, Council has been able to maintain its workforce which will ensure the economic integrity of the community. The global crisis has reached Coonamble Shire but due to the sound financial position, we should be able to sustain the downturn.

The proposed capital works for the coming year include:

- Depot improvements – including wash bay that will ensure compliance with environmental provisions.
- Flood mitigation works in the form of levee repairs.
- Expansion of Council's Buckley Drive industrial estate.
- Continuation of the water and sewerage mains replacements in all urban areas.
- Development of the water treatment plant to remove excess iron from the water.
- Rewiring of the Gulargambone War Memorial and Mechanics Institute Hall.

Council has been able to balance its budget within the rate-pegging limit set by the Minister for Local Government, however the proposal to force Council into an Alliance for water and sewerage functions has resulted in higher increases.

### **Community Involvement**

Council is very pleased with the high level of both infrastructure and community projects achieved over the last year and will again continue in 2010. These include:

- Finalisation of timber bridge replacement program – Council has now replaced all timber bridges and is proud of this achievement.
- Coonamble Showground Pavilion was replaced and became operational in time for the Annual Show and the Vibe Alive event.
- Skate Park became operational and is warmly received by the youth of Coonamble and the envy of youth in many other centres.
- Restoration of flood damage caused to Council's road network by the December 2007 floods has been completed.
- The staged development of Macdonald and Smith Parks was progressed and Council continues to receive positive feedback.
- Ongoing support provided to Vibe Alive, Moorambilla Festival, NSW Women's Gathering, Rodeo & Campdraft, Marthaguy Picnic Races,

Waste2Art Exhibition, International Women's Day, Heritage Open Day, etc.

- Council's efforts in the area of expanding existing businesses, seeking new business proponents and generally supporting the business community are proving essential in the progressing of economic development within the Shire.

### **Sister City Relationship – Coonamble & Campbelltown**

The ongoing sister city relationship with Campbelltown City Council continues to expand with positive results flowing from staff exchanges, professional data interaction, training cooperation being added to the reciprocal visits by senior management and councillors and the financial support of events by both Councils.

### **Air Services**

The loss of commercial flights to Coonamble is proving inconvenient for the community, businesses and medical services. Whilst the Coonamble leg of the service was sparingly utilised, Council continues to seek a replacement provider, but may have its work cut out without the return of the Federal Government subsidy which was deleted by the Rudd Government.

### **Staffing**

The loss of Council's Director of Engineering was a massive blow to the continuity of service levels and project development. Council is very fortunate to have gained the services of Mr Don Gamage who returns to Coonamble after developing his professional expertise across Australia. Mr Matthew Cock has now attained full status as a health and building surveyor and assumes the role of Manager – Environmental Services with Council. Matt is to be congratulated on undertaking hundreds of hours' study to achieve a significant milestone.

### **Federal Government Funding**

My attendance in Canberra in November 2008 was underscored by Council being granted \$100,000. Allocation was made to the Quambone Hall, Gulargambone Park fencing, shade covering at Macdonald Park, seating for the river walk and kiosk and storeroom at the netball courts in Smith Park. In June 2009 a further \$30,000 was granted under the same program. Council has been unsuccessful with its applications for funding under the Strategic Component of the grant program which is determined on an Australia-wide competitive basis.

### **Wandering Dogs**

Numerous dog attacks have occurred over the past twelve months in both Coonamble and Gulargambone which necessitate mandatory reporting to the Department of Local Government. Increased patrols and a firmer attitude to the dog regulations have been necessary to reduce the number of dogs wandering unattended in public places without the level of success Council hoped to achieve. Identification of changes to procedures will continue to be sought to find a positive solution.

### **Land Use Planning**

The ongoing development of a Land Use Strategy reached its conclusion in June 2009 with the draft strategy being the subject of many submissions from the community. Once those submissions have been addressed, Council will move to the development of a new Local Environmental Plan for the Shire.

### **Conclusion**

The new Council is starting to settle in to its role and the community should see some positive outcomes from the hard work carried out by its representatives as they become conversant with the significant restrictions placed on Council operations. Hopefully the world-wide negative impacts will start to mitigate in the near future and we can return to being able to achieve the improvements of which the community is worthy.

**TIM HORAN**

Mayor

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## 1. INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

- **Industrial Estate Expansion —**  
Identified and liaised with 5 potential businesses interested in being located in the new industrial estate subdivision. Submitted application for funding to state government to assist with essential infrastructure.
- **Demand Farming –**  
*Mustard: —*  
A successful initial crop of ‘Mickey Mustard’ was harvested in 2008, and 2,500 hectares was planted in 2009 season.  
*Other Value-Adding Opportunities: —*  
A short list of other opportunities has been identified for further exploration.
- **Respond to inquiries and support new industry proponents —**  
*Sheep Feedlot —*  
This potential industry had been waiting for the release of water allocations from the GAB savings of the Cap and Pipe Scheme.  
*Bush Tucker/Horticulture: —*  
Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Corp completed a feasibility study for the project. In Sept 08 Council agreed in principle to sell a portion of The Meglo for the intensive covered horticulture enterprise subject to a successful business plan being completed.  
*Abattoir —*  
Inquiries are still being received regarding the sale of the Abattoir, information supplied as requested.  
*Pulse Packing Plant —*  
Assisted a local proponent in examining the viability of setting up a pulse packing plant in/near Coonamble along the railway line. Access to suitable land has proven difficult plus the necessity to build a spur line to overcome rail access restrictions.
- *Retail development —*  
Provided information and assistance to a series of retail proposals including a main street supermarket and an agricultural supply company.

## 2. NEW RESIDENTS —

- *Skills Attraction Strategy –*  
commenced planning with four neighbouring Councils, funding application submitted, our contribution secured.
- *Info kit for prospective residents –*  
Responded to inquiries via [www.coonamble.org](http://www.coonamble.org) - 12 distributed
- *Welcome Pack for New Residents –*  
Liaised with businesses to compile a ‘showbag’ of information and merchandise to distribute to approx 70 new residents.
- *Aerodrome Landuse –*  
Responded to a series of inquiries for small rural blocks on the land surrounding the Coonamble Aerodrome.

### 3. BUSINESS PROMOTION

- *Business Awards* –  
Manage local awards process. Businesses were nominated by their customers with the judging at the local level on a popular vote 231 nominations received for 34 businesses. Held presentation night/dinner at the Cypress Motel with 100 people attending.
- *Online Business Directory* –  
Ongoing maintenance of local business listings on [www.coonamble.org/localinfo](http://www.coonamble.org/localinfo). Data was completely updated in May 09.
- *Keep Coonamble Kicking* —  
During the Look Local campaign of 08, a commitment was made to extra promotional material starting with T-shirts for participating businesses. Highway signage was also erected during 09.

### 4. BUSINESS SUPPORT

- *Business Workshops* –  
Two workshops organised. Don Keady 22 participants; Making Dollars and Sense from Events cancelled due to lack of numbers. Follow up 1 on 1 sessions with Norman Stoker in August after his June 08 workshop with businesses.
- *Business Bulletin* –  
Five bulletins compiled and distributed to around 300 businesses across the Shire.
- *Business Assistance Fund* –  
Two businesses received financial assistance in the 12 months.
- *Referrals to other agencies* —  
6 referrals given to other organisations for business start-ups and referrals.

### 5. MANAGE COUNCIL'S HERITAGE SERVICES

- *Local heritage Fund* –  
A new Heritage Advisor Ray Christison was appointed in October 08. Two properties received assistance for painting/repairs.
- *CBD Heritage Fund* –  
Two buildings were painted/repared in 08/09– former Johnny Burns shops and AJF Brien & Sons. (Total 7 buildings over 2 year project) Final report submitted with the unexpended funds returned to the Heritage Office.
- *Museum* —  
Joint application with Gilgandra Shire for a shared Museum Advisor sent to Museums and Galleries. Shar Jones appointed.
- *Railway Station*  
Funding sought from DSRD for a Strategic Business Plan. Completed by Stafford Group. Various funding applications sent for restoration and repairs.

## **6. BUSINESS & TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE**

- *Nickname Hall of Fame* –  
Three portraits and stories approved.
- *Showground Redevelopment* –  
Application forwarded to Federal Jobs Fund for undercover arena
- *Coonamble Saleyards* -  
Undertook some marketing to promote increased usage by producers and buyers.

## **7. BUILD COMMUNITY CAPACITY**

- *Employment Circle* —  
Attended monthly meetings and assisted with projects.
- *Employment & Training Expo*  
Assisted Vibe Alive with expo
- *Gulargambone Roundtable* –  
Instigated combined meetings of Gulargambone businesses and community-owned enterprises to commence initiatives to encourage business and employment. Roundtables held July, December 08 and June 09.

## **8. REPORTS/REVIEWS/FUNDING APPLICATIONS/ADVOCACY and LOBBYING**

- NSW Grain Freight Review – 2 submissions.
- Productivity Commission Review into Drought Assistance
- EOI Local Infrastructure Support Fund for Industrial Estate Assistance.
- Liaised with Media prior to protest rally regarding Amalgamation of Coonamble HSM with Gular & Gilgandra
- Assisted various community groups with funding applications for Country Halls Program
- Three applications to Federal Jobs Fund 1<sup>st</sup> round – Indoor Events & Education Centre, Railway Station Restoration, Warrena Weir & Wetlands Project.
- Museums & Galleries - Application for Museum Advisor
- Application to TQAL funding for Bore Baths study.
- Four applications submitted to NSW Community Building Partnerships Program (Coonamble Men's Shed Toilets; Gular Hall roof repairs; Quambone Hall supper room upgrade; relocation of Coonamble Soccer Fields)

## **TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

This year Coonamble Shire combined with Gilgandra, Narrabri and Warrumbungle Shires to jointly promote the region with a marketing campaign into QLD which included production of 50,000 DL fliers, TV advertising and a direct mail campaign into Toowoomba and the Gold Coast. As a member of Central NSW Tourism the Shire was promoted at a number of trade show across Australia this financial year including the Sydney and Hunter travel shows. Council continued support for the Great Inland Way touring route from Sydney to Cairns as a member of the Great Inland Way promotions group.

In conjunction with Coonamble Arts Alive Council sent a small exhibition of Coonamble Art to Campbelltown City Council in November for the third year and this was exhibited as part of the annual Festival of Fishers Ghost Art Award. Council sponsored a category in that exhibition and in return Campbelltown City Council sponsored the annual Rodeo in June 2009 and sent a delegation to the event. During the reporting period a partnership agreement was signed with Campbelltown City Council

Coonamble had a finalist in the Inland NSW Tourism Awards with two eight two eight from Gulargambone. Two eight two eight won the award for specialised tourism services with the Gulargambone Caravan park awarded a Judges commendation. Council completed the submissions and successfully received AVIC accreditation for the Gulargambone and Coonamble Visitor Information centres in early 2009.

Council provided assistance for the Moorambilla Festival held from 19-21 September 2008. This was the third time the event had been held in Coonamble and Council support included provision of funding for marketing and for an event coordinator. Coonamble was also the host town for the 2008 NSW Women's Gathering which saw 300 women attend from across the state. Council provided assistance with the erection of a temporary tent city through underwriting the provision of amenities. Council support for other events in the Shire focussed on promotion and marketing. Council developed and maintained web sites for the four race clubs in the area. Council also hosted the web site for the Coonamble Rodeo & Campdraft and in 2008 successfully applied for funding from Tourism NSW through the Regional Flagship Events Program. This enabled development of a new web site, banners and additional advertising for the 2009 Rodeo. In May 2009 Coonamble hosted the VIBE ALIVE festival for the second year in a row, the only town in NSW to do so.

Council launched the new brochure for Coonamble in February 2009 and distributed these to over 30 visitors centres across the state. A new promotional flier was also produced for the council owned Coonamble Caravan park along with new entry and directional signage within the park.

## COONAMBLE SHIRE LIBRARY

Coonamble Shire Council operates as part of the North Western Library Service, comprising the Shires of Bogan, Coonamble, Gilgandra and Warren.

There are three outlets within the Shire – Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone. Library staff comprise a full-time librarian, part-time library assistant at Coonamble and Quambone and casual staff where required. Gulargambone library is staffed by the Two Eight Two Eight Committee.

### **Library Report – Coonamble**

To introduce the library to the wider community staff continued with the very popular home deliveries, visiting approximately 17 housebound people on a fortnightly basis. The radio station is visited weekly for a ten minute reminder of the events or new stock at the library.

In conjunction with the North Western Library Service a stock take was conducted in May and most fiction books are now less than 10 years old unless they are a classic or part of a series. This resulted in a major clean up of library shelves - the older books are being sold off to the community. To enable the stock take to take place in an orderly manner it was necessary to close the library for two days. One of these days was the Coonamble Show holiday so library services were not disrupted too much. This allowed the stock take to be completed in two days instead of three and made it much safer for staff and patrons, as there were boxes of books stacked about the library.

Book exchanges were completed with the Gulargambone and Quambone libraries. These sites were also included in the stock take and weeding of old or irrelevant items.

Two students from Coonamble High School participated in work experience at the library, giving them an insight to library work.

Staff received training for the computer upgrade which took place in May as well as training delivered in Dubbo by the State Library for readers services.

The reprinting of “The Vision Splendid” by Joan McKenzie on the history of Coonamble has begun - hopefully it will be available before Christmas 2009.

Council was represented by the Librarian at the Zone and Annual Meetings of the Public Libraries of NSW – Country. Most recently this was at Parkes to celebrate 20 years of the organization and to plan strategies for the next 20 years. A gathering of librarians from all States of Australia was also attended after six places were offered to rural and remote librarians. It was titled the “Next Chapter” and highlighted the expectations of the ‘baby boomers’ when they reach retirement age and how libraries are to prepare for this. It was suggested that 24% of these retirees will be in rural and remote areas and will mostly be serviced by libraries of only one or two staff.

The library has participated in Constable Care promotional colouring books for younger readers as well as hosting photographs of the Waste2Art exhibits.

Council allows the library to be used to display items in the 'Quilt Show' which was held during the June long weekend. This display has proved most successful in introducing members of the wider community who are not library users to Council's wonderful facility.

### **Library Report – Gulargambone**

During the past year membership of the library has increased by 7% while borrowings have increased by over 20%. Reasons for increased use of the library by the Gulargambone community include:

- Training and development of volunteer staff to ensure that they are competent and confident about their role in the library and are able to provide friendly and informed support to library users.
- Organising a more user friendly library by:
  - Labeling sections with signs such as “biography”, “craft”, “non-fiction” so that library users can find the areas of interest within the library without difficulty;
  - Placing new titles in a “new arrivals’ section so that they are easily identified and accessible; and
  - Monitoring borrowing patterns and developing displays promoting sought after titles, authors and genres.
- Promoting titles relevant to events such as ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and Christmas.
- Including regular book reviews on the ‘two eight two eight’ web site.
- Locally produced reference books for visitors wishing to research family history or events.
- Providing community members with a welcoming place to drop in and catch up with the local newspapers and magazines.
- Story time for the local preschool at the library
- Children’s holiday craft mornings
- Children’s annual holiday reading challenge.

The following figures show usage of the various library outlets during the year:

○ Coonamble	Issues 22,208 items	New members 21
○ Gulargambone	Issues 1,664 items	New members 8
○ Quambone	Issues 156 items	

Total library membership is 1,417 persons.

## STATUTORY DISCLOSURES

The following matters are required to be reported by Council under Section 428(2) of the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 and are listed with the corresponding clause number. Figures given are for 2008/2009:

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993

**Section 428(2) (a)** – Council’s Audited Financial Reports  
See **APPENDIX A**

**Section 428(2) (b)** - Performance of Principal Activities to 30 June 2009.  
See **APPENDIX B**

**Section 428(2) (c)** - Report on the State of the Environment  
This report is available on Council’s website: [www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au](http://www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au)

**Section 428(2) (d)** - Condition of Public Works  
Special Schedule 7 of Council’s Audited Financial Reports for the year ended 30 June 2009 provides the condition of public works under the control of Council.

**Section 428(2) (e)** - Summary of Legal Proceedings  
Council costs in regard to legal proceedings for 2008/2009 amounted to \$2,050.00.

### **Section 428(2) (f)** - Payments to Councillors

**Fees:** Fees for Councillors of the Coonamble Shire have been determined by Council within the limits approved by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal as:

Councillor	\$ 7,272/annum
Mayor	\$11,940/annum (additional)

The total expenditure during the year was:

Councillors’ Fees	\$56,070
Mayoral Fees	\$12,420
Delegates Exes	\$10,567
Travel/Sustenance	\$ 6,399
Insurance	\$ 1,680
Training	\$ 3,274
	<u>\$90,410</u>

A review of Council’s payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to the Mayor and Councillors Policy was adopted on 11 November 2009. A copy of this Policy is provided at **APPENDIX C**.

**Section 428(2) (g) - Senior Staff**

Council's only designated "Senior Staff" position is that of the General Manager. Payments for the year included:

Salary	\$122,965	
Superannuation	\$ 8,190	
Vehicle R/C	\$ 3,000	
FBT	\$ 4,553	
Housing	\$ 6,240	\$144,948

**Section 428(2) (h) - Contracts Awarded by Council**

Council awarded the following contracts in excess of \$150,000 during the 2008/2009 financial year:

Contract	Contractor	Value (\$) (ex. GST)
Heavy Plant	Tracserv	315,000
Heavy Plant	Westrac	625,800
Aerodrome	Roadbusters	188,000
Showground Pavilion	Luke Crawford Constructions	535,100
Quarry Development	Southern Explosives Supp.P/L	270,000

**Section 428(2) (i) Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Activities**

There are 23 Rural Fire Brigades in the Shire under the control of the NSW Rural Fire Service.

The township of Coonamble is covered by the Headquarters Brigade and there are village brigades in Quambone and Gulargambone.

Due to severe drought conditions experienced throughout the Shire in 2008/2009 there was no need for planned hazard reduction activities to take place.

**Section 428(2) (j) Programs and Multicultural Services**

Coonamble Shire has a relatively low population of ethnic residents and there is no known population which does not speak English. Consequently there was no demand throughout the year for additional services from people with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Brochures in various languages containing information on such matters as social security, etc. are available for members of the public but are rarely, if ever, used.

**Section 428(2) (k) Subsidised Private Works**

Council did not undertake any subsidised private works during the year.

**Section 428(2) (l) Donations and Contributions under Section 356**

A total of \$46,727.70 was donated or contributed by Council during the year.

**Section 428(2) (m) - Human Resource Activities**

Council places importance on the training and development of staff - training programs for all departments were implemented throughout the year for both indoor and outdoor staff.

The safety of employees, contractors and sub-contractors, as well as members of the public, is considered of the utmost importance to Council. All new staff undertake a general induction and an occupational health and safety induction.

Continuing development and refinement of position descriptions is undertaken consistently with Council's workplace requirements and to permit employee progress within salary ranges. Training courses attended by Council staff are listed below.

Council conducts annual staff appraisals, from these skill gaps are identified. Individual training plans are developed and aggregated into Council's overall training program for the year.

Training expenses for the year, including wages, were \$81,401.91.

<b>Name of Training Course</b>	<b>No of Staff attending</b>
Aerated Wastewater treatment	2
Chemical Application	7
Consultative Committee	6
Fire Extinguisher	15
Fluoride operator	3
Extractive Industries Cert III, IV	4
Induction – workplace	6
Interview Panel	3
OHS Consultation	3
Plant – jet patcher	1
Plant – forklift	2
Pool – RLS	1
Road train & truck driver training	1
Rangers	2
RTA training	1
Supervision	21
Water Industries Cert III	2

**Section 428(2) (n) - Equal Employment Opportunity**

Council adopted a revised EEO Policy on 10 October, 2007 to enable EEO matters to be addressed. The purpose of Council's policy is to eliminate discrimination in employment and to promote opportunities for identified under-represented groups.

**Section 428(2) (o) - Delegations to External Bodies**

Council has delegated the following functions to the organisations listed below:

- (i) **Castlereagh-Macquarie County Council** undertakes noxious weed control across the Shire
- (ii) **Streets Ahead Committee** promotes events and fosters economic activity in Coonamble township

- (iii) **Coonamble Vacation Care** co-ordinates vacation care activities for children.

**Section 428(2) (p)** Companies in which Council held a Controlling Interest  
Council held no controlling interest in any Company.

**Section 428(2) (q)** Partnerships, Cooperatives, Joint Ventures to which Council was a party:  
Coonamble Shire Council is a member of the *North Western Library Service*, a cooperative providing library services to the Shires of Bogan, Coonamble, Gilgandra and Warren. The quality of service is significantly enhanced by participation in the Joint Library Service.

Council is a member of the *Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC)* looking at various resource sharing activities. OROC during the year investigated joint purchasing arrangements and has now joined Hunter Councils Joint Purchasing Group to effect savings on specific tendered materials and services.

Council is a member of the *Barwon Darling Alliance* – an association of Western NSW Councils formed to promote economic activity in the area – particularly focusing on socioeconomic zones and traineeships.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL) REGULATION 2005**

### **Clause 132** Rates and Charges Written Off:

Rates and charges totalling \$119,301.86 were written off during the 2008/2009 financial year.

Pensioner Rebates	\$107,071.52
Write off Interest under Hardship Policy	\$ 586.60 (Min.6777/18.1)
Owner relinquished to Council	\$ 11,643.74 (Min. 1930/5)

Council received a Government subsidy of 55% of Pensioner Write-offs during the year. The 2008/2009 subsidy amounted to \$58,889.34.

### **Clause 217(1) (a)** Overseas Visits

No overseas trips were undertaken by Council representatives during the 2008/2009 year.

### **Clause 217(1) (a)** - Councillor Expenses

- (i) There is no dedicated office equipment made available to the Mayor or any individual councillor. Council does provide office facilities and access to Council communications equipment that may be used by councillors in carrying out their civic functions.
- (ii) No facilities were provided to Councillors of either a mobile telephone or land lines installed at Councillor homes.
- (iii) During the year councillors attended several conferences and workshops, these included:

- Shires Association Conference
- “C” Division Conference and meetings
- Barwon Darling Alliance meetings
- Roads Conference
- Saleyards Conference

Costs incurred in attending these meetings were \$4,419.69.

Being a rural Council some councillors are entitled to travelling expenses to attend meetings. During the 2008/2009 year travel and sustenance expenses amounted to \$6,399.00.

- (iv) One Councillor attended dedicated courses providing for skill development in relation to council activities – Financial Management.
- (v) No interstate visit was undertaken by Councillors during the 2008/2009 year.
- (vi) No overseas trips were undertaken by Council representatives during the 2008/2009 year.
- (vii) There was no expense paid to any person who accompanied any councillor in the performance of their civic function.
- (viii) No expenses were paid to any person to allow any councillor to perform their civic function.

**Clause 217(1) (b) – Senior Staff**

Complete information relating to the General Manager, the only senior staff member employed by Council is contained in this report in the Local Government Act 1993, Section 428(2) (g) disclosures.

**Clause 217(1) (c) – Children’s Services and Programs**

Council assists an external organisation in the provision of youth services at Coonamble and Gulargambone.

The library conducts activities to promote reading among children on a regular basis.

Council maintains and provides playground equipment at parks and ovals throughout the Shire.

Council auspices Vacation Care activities for school aged children and provides assistance if required to pre school and day care services.

**Clause 217(1) (d) - Access & Equity Services**

(i) Council has developed and adopted a Community and Social Plan. This document profiles the Shire. Council participates with indigenous groups in both Coonamble and Gulargambone, in the conduct of a Reference Group to administer a Community Facilitator under the Murdi Paaki Partnership Program. That Reference Group administers a community facilitator funded by the Premier's Department and includes implementation of Council's Community and Social Plan and its Crime Prevention Plan, together with the Community Action Plan of the Community Working Parties for both towns.

(ii), (iv), (vi) and (viii) – Category 1 Business Activities

Council does not operate any Category 1 Business Activity.

(iii) Category 2 Business Activities

Council recognises the following as Category 2 business activities:

- Coonamble Shire Council Combined Water Supply
- Coonamble Shire Council Combined Sewer Services
- Magometon Quarry

Financial reports relating to these activities are contained within the Special Purpose Financial Statements of Council's Audited Financial Statements. (APPENDIX A)

(v) Principles of Competitive Neutrality

The Department of Local Government's guidelines "Pricing and Costing for Council Business: A guide to competitive neutrality" outlines the process for identifying and allocating costs to activities and provide disclosure standards. These disclosures are reflected in council's financial reports and include taxation equivalents, council subsidies, rate of return on investments in the business and dividends paid.

(vii) & (ix) Competitive Neutrality Complaints

Council has a Complaint Handling Policy that relates to any issue of the operation of Council. The policy is available and was advertised through the adoption phase of the policy. The policy is advertised as available for inspection at Council's place of business.

It is not Council policy to undertake activity that is in direct competition with private enterprise within the Council Local Government Area or to subsidise any competitive operation.

Council has received no complaints in respect of competitive neutrality during the 2008/2009 year.

**Clause 217(1) (e) Stormwater Management Services**

Council did not levy any charge for stormwater management services during 2008/2009.

**Clause 217(1) (f) Companion Animals Act and Regulation**

- (i) Council has lodged pound data with the Department of Local Government as required throughout the year.
- (ii) Council has not lodged any data with the Department of Local Government relating to dog attacks during the year.
- (iii) Over the 2008/2009 year Council has incurred \$79,761 in companion animal management activities.
- (iv) Each year Council carries out an education program and participates in a subsidised desexing program, which is advertised in the local media.

Council rangers are accredited volunteer educators and carry out "SPOT" education where required.

- (v) Council endeavours to rehouse animals where possible as an alternative to destroying the animal. The incidence of rehousing is dependent upon suitable animals being available and the demand at the time.
- (vi) Council has adopted a companion animal management plan. Off leash areas are contained within the plan. Council currently has one designated off leash area at Macdonald Park in Aberford Street, Coonamble.
- (vii) Council received \$7,955 from registration and sundry fees for companion animals during the 2008/2009 year. Expenses incurred were \$79,761.

Council's net cost relating to the management of companion animals was \$71,806.

**Clause 217(2) State of the Environment Report**

Please refer to Council's website: [www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au](http://www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au)

**Clause 217(3) Competitive Neutrality Pricing Requirements**

Information relating to this is contained within Council's Audited Special Purpose Financial Reports.

(Refer APPENDIX A)

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1989**

**Section 14(1) (a) & (b)** Statement of Affairs and Summary of Affairs  
Council publishes each six months a summary of the statement of affairs and identifies the officer “Public Officer” to whom enquiries should be directed if seeking information regarding these affairs.

Council received no requests under the Freedom of Information Act 1989 during the 2008/2009 year.

## **PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION ACT 1998**

### **Part 5** Review of Conduct

Council staff are governed by the principles of this Act and guidance notes developed by Council relating to issues of privacy.

No review was conducted or considered necessary under Part 5 of the Act during the 2008/2009 year.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979**

**Section 939(5)** Planning Agreements.  
Council has not entered into any planning agreements.

## **APPENDIX A**

# **AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORTS**

## **APPENDIX B**

# **PERFORMANCE OF PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES**

## **APPENDIX C**

# **POLICY FOR PAYMENT OF EXPENSES & PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR MAYOR & COUNCILLORS**