



**CENTRAL NSW**  
JOINT ORGANISATION

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025



## Acknowledgements

Central NSW Joint Organisation wishes to acknowledge the contribution of regional peak agencies, CNSWJO Councillors, Board Members and staff in providing feedback and direction throughout the development of this Strategic Plan with special mention to the Sub Committee of Mayors that had oversight of the review process.

Front page photo credit: Geagle Productions - Weddin Mountains Region





Photo credit: Domino Houlbrook Cove

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## Purpose

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Central NSW Joint Organisation provides strong cohesive leadership that aligns all tiers of government to deliver our region's community derived strategic priorities.

## Vision

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Prosperous communities, dynamic local government, a collaborative and strong region – when one Council succeeds, we all succeed.

## Principles

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The following principles guide the Central NSW Joint Organisation:

- Exercising leadership
- Mutual respect
- Demonstrating integrity
- Thoughtful contribution
- Acting in the public interest
- Intergenerational equity
- Timely and appropriate responsiveness
- Willingness and commitment
- Accountability and transparency
- Sharing and positive intent
- Adding value

## Functions of Joint Organisations

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The Local Government Act 1993 identifies the three principal functions of Joint Organisations as follows:

### Section 400R PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS OF JOINT ORGANISATIONS

1. A joint organisation has the following principal functions:
  - a. to establish strategic regional priorities for the joint organisation area and to establish strategies and plans for delivering those strategic regional priorities
  - b. to provide regional leadership for the joint organisation area and to be an advocate for strategic regional priorities
  - c. to identify and take up opportunities for inter-governmental co-operation on matters relating to the joint organisation area.
2. In establishing strategic regional priorities for the joint organisation area, a joint organisation is to consider any relevant strategic priorities or plans of member councils and the State government.
3. A strategic regional priority, or a plan or strategy for delivering a strategic regional priority, established by a joint organisation does not limit the operation of or otherwise affect any regional plan or strategy given effect to under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (including any regional plan made under Part 3B of that Act).



# Members

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The Central NSW Joint Organisation (JO) was established by proclamation on 11 May 2018. Membership was identified in the proclamation as:

- Bathurst Regional Council
- Blayney Shire Council
- Cabonne Council
- Cowra Shire Council
- Forbes Shire Council
- Lachlan Shire Council
- Oberon Council
- Orange City Council
- Parkes Shire Council
- Weddin Shire Council

## Associate Members:

- Central Tablelands Water
- Regional Development Australia – Central West
- Regional NSW
- Upper Macquarie County Council



Photo credit: Orange360



# Stakeholders

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## Key stakeholders are:

- Member Councils
- Associate Members
- Adjoining JOs and Councils
- Other tiers of government

## Key stakeholders in the other tiers of government include:

- Agencies including regulators within the NSW and Federal governments that manage local government, planning, heritage, energy, health, education, regional economic development and tourism, water, infrastructure and transport.
- Local members of parliament across the region.

## Regional and other peak body stakeholders include:

- NSW and National Farmers
- Business NSW
- Arts OutWest
- Destination Network Central West
- Charles Sturt University

## Key Local Government industry include:

- Local Government NSW
- Country Mayors
- Australian Local Government Association
- Other JOs



Photo credit: Cowra Tourism Corporation



# Review of the Strategic Plan

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This review of the Strategic Plan was

- informed by an End of Term Report November 2021
- led by a Subcommittee of Mayors:
  - Cr Kevin Beatty (Chair, Mayor Cabonne)
  - Cr Mark Kellam (Deputy Chair, Mayor Oberon)
  - Cr John Medcalf (Mayor Lachlan)
  - Cr Scott Ferguson (Mayor Blayney)
  - Cr Bill West (Mayor Cowra)
  - Cr Phyllis Miller (Mayor Forbes)
- informed by three key background papers
  1. A scan of various State, Federal and international strategies and plans relevant this region
  2. A review of the Community Strategic Plans of member Councils
  3. A review of the Local Strategic Planning Statements of the member Councils
- refined by consideration of risks in a risk management plan
- shaped by a workshop with the Board
- informed by Councillors from across the region at a conference in August 2022





## Implementing the Strategic Plan

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The Action Plan included in the Strategic Plan has been designed so that the Board of the Central NSW JO can receive quarterly updates that identify how the timeframes and budget for each item is being delivered. Variances to the Board's approved action plan will be commented upon in these reports. Risks are also considered quarterly as are emergent opportunities.

The key performance indicators are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely.

The Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities has been incorporated into the Strategic Plan. It serves as “strategy on a page” summary of the priorities and the key activities to be undertaken by the JO.



Photo credit: Forbes Art Society

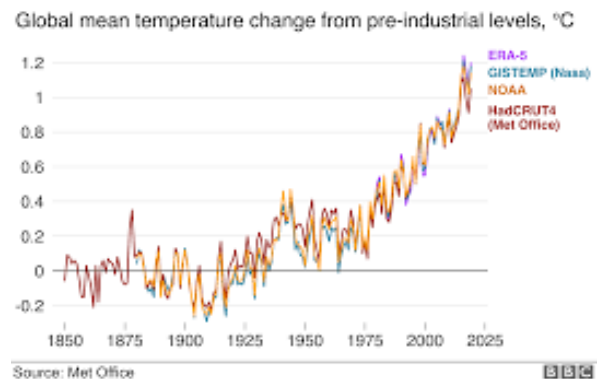


## Profile of the Region

Central NSW has a varied landscape from the escarpment of the Blue Mountains to the east out to the western plains. Geographically, it is proximal to the west of Sydney and also to the south to Canberra. Significant transport corridors in the region are east-west to Sydney, southeast to Canberra and north-south along the Newell and Inland Rail alignment between Melbourne and Brisbane.

The region includes the Macquarie and Lachlan rivers where the Lachlan is regulated and the upper Macquarie which includes the communities of Oberon, Bathurst, Orange and Molong, is unregulated. The significant water storage in the region is the Wyangala Dam where raising its dam wall to assure better water security and flood mitigation is being progressed. Other State managed water storages are Lake Cargelligo, Oberon and Carcoar. Councils also have dams for urban water purposes. The Macquarie and Lachlan Regional Water Strategies are due for completion in 2022.

### Temperature rise since 1850



Many communities in Central NSW have the impacts from the recent drought writ large in their thinking. While the summer of 2021/2022 to date is showing cooler temperatures the broader outlook shows continued temperature rise.

The effect of this temperature rise in this region will see more impactful droughts (longer and hotter) interspersed with more severe storm events. The change in climate will have a wide variety of impacts. A useful resource for more advice in this regard is Impacts of climate change ([nsw.gov.au](https://nsw.gov.au))

Recognising the need to rapidly transition to a renewable energy future, communities across Central NSW are seeing rapid growth of infrastructure associated with emissions reduction including pumped hydro, wind and solar farms. Member Councils are providing feedback that this rapid change is challenging and not being well socialised.



Photo credit: Oberon Council

Central NSW is in Wiradjuri Country. Natural, aboriginal, and western cultural heritage is significant in this region. Central NSW has a pattern of settlement of:

- 2 larger regional cities of Bathurst and Orange,
- large regional towns over 5000 people such as Cowra, Forbes and Parkes,
- a network of smaller towns over 1000 people including Oberon, Blayney, Canowindra, Molong, Millthorpe, Condobolin, Lake Cargelligo and Grenfell; and
- a significant number of villages under 1000 people including Yeoval, Eugowra, Carcoar, Trundle, Tottenham, Mandurama, Lyndhurst, Newbridge, Hobbys Yards, Sofala, Hill End, Neville, Spring Hill, Forest Reefs, Barry, Cumnock, Nashdale, Cudal, Borenore, Baldry, Spring Terrace, Mullion Creek, Wattle Flat, Peel, O'Connell, Rockley, Perthville, Tarana, Sunny Corner, Trunkey Creek, Yetholme, Lucknow, Albert, Peak Hill, Bogan Gate, Tullamore, Gooloogong, Wattomondara, Woodstock, Cargo, Burruga, Black Springs and Yerranderie.



Demographically the region has an older population than average in Australia and is predominantly white Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

Please find following SEIFA mapping where the regions is in the bottom third in the nation at 26% with the metrics being between 924 in Lachlan and 1010 in Cabonne.



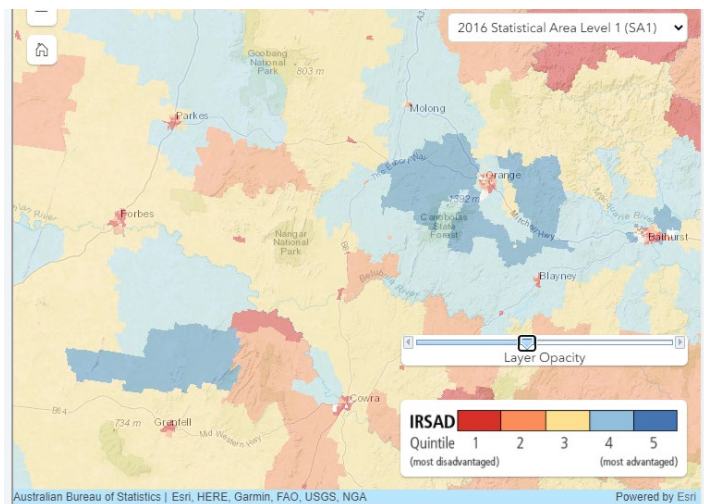
Photo credit: Parkes Shire Council



The outlook for agriculture in region is positive with the following being a snapshot:

- Commodity prices are high
- Supply chain issues are exacerbated by Covid
- Stock numbers still recovering
- Workforce shortages (shearers, harvest workers)
- Impacts of excess rain for some but not as bad as in 2016

As the coal belt does not fall into the CNSWJO footprint, mining in this region is for gold, copper, high-grade nickel, cobalt and lithium. The outlook for all of these metals is good.



Exploration continues in region and work continues to develop mines at Macphillamy's in the east of the region and for other metals in Lachlan and Parkes to the west. The primary challenge for these industries is workforce.

Central NSW is a well-connected and innovative region with growing opportunities across a range of sectors including ag-tech, resources, logistics and health. It's location and the Special Activation Precinct in Parkes leveraging Main Western railway line to Adelaide and Sydney, road transport to Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. There is also an established agri-finance hub in Orange. The region has a small but steadily growing number of manufacturing businesses.

The region has a range of successful agribusinesses from multinationals to niche producers of artisanal food. The region's climate enables production of diverse food and beverage products. It is home to global manufacturing companies such as Nestle Purina, Mars Petcare and Simplot and 18% of Regional NSW agribusiness and food manufacturing workers.<sup>1</sup>



Photo credit: Orange360

<sup>1</sup> Central West and Orana | Invest Regional NSW

The visitor economy is an important and growing industry sector where every LGA's Regional Economic Development Strategy references its importance. Councils collectively spend \$20m per annum on events, visitor services and visitor experiences such as galleries museums and parks. For more detail please go to <https://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/content/uploads/Refresh-of-Visitor-Economy-Strategy.pdf>

Skills shortages are being reported across the region in every industry. This is both short term as a result of the immediate impacts of workforce having Covid and structural impacts for example the growth of the regional population and the government spending so much money on infrastructure to stimulate the economy.

This will be exacerbated by the 64,000 jobs just as a result of construction in the broader Central West and Orana region in the next 5 years.

Covid-19 has had significant impacts for the Australian community for from early 2020 to mid 2022 leaving a significant legacy where every industry, including Local Government, impacted. Long Covid has yet to be understood to any extent and given the high risks to the vulnerable it will be some time, if ever, before "living with Covid" is the same as "living before Covid."

Health more broadly in Central NSW has been identified by the outgoing Board as being an issue. Communities in Central NSW have lower life expectancies and poorer health outcomes than their metropolitan cousins. This is impacted by health workforce shortages.

Despite past talk of a tsunami of doctors and various attempts to resolve the situation, figures from the Rural Doctors Network show that doctor shortages alone are increasing as part of a broader health workforce challenge. This is being exacerbated by Treasury's Common Planning Assumptions informing both service delivery and the size of new hospitals.

Unfortunately, the region is at the mercy of population projections and common data assumptions of the NSW Government. This shows very little growth in the region and is at odds with other data sets developed by the State for the region, for example:

- workforce and population projections developed by TfNSW in planning for construction on the Great Western Highway (30,000 jobs over ten years)
- workforce estimates as a result of the Parkes Activation Precinct – up to 3000 jobs by 2041<sup>2</sup>
- workforce estimates as a result of the construction anticipated for the Central West and Orana region for the next 5 years – 64,000 jobs<sup>3</sup>

**Apprentices and trainees in training (thousands)**

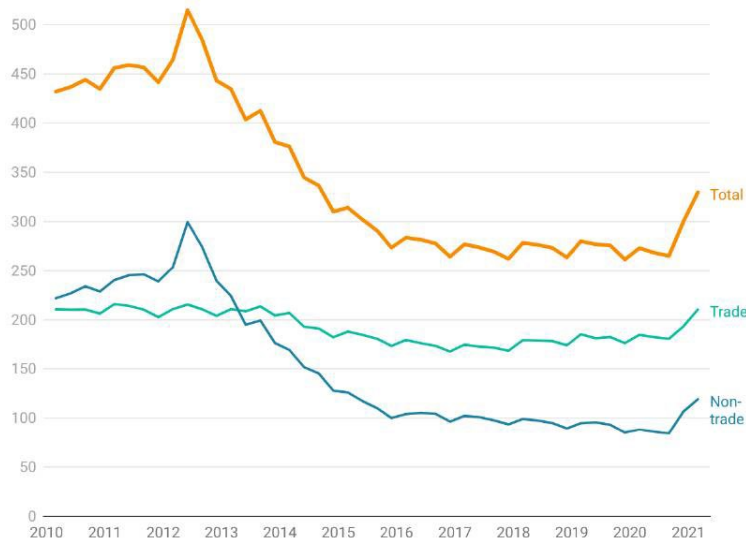


Chart: AAP FactCheck • Source: NCVER • Created with Datawrapper

<sup>2</sup> PowerPoint Presentation (shared-drupal-s3fs.s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com)

<sup>3</sup> WRI Region Shapers Report commissioned by the Department of Planning 2021 – please request



Covid-era migration patterns are underscored by an increasing preference for regional areas: capital-city dwellers are moving to the regions in greater numbers, while regional people are electing to stay in place in greater numbers. This has seen the former group increase its share of total quarterly movement – from around 5 per cent in the years just prior to Covid to slightly more than 6 per cent of total quarterly movement in more recent quarters. The latter group of movers – regional people moving to capital cities – has shrunk in its share of total movement. From generally staying above 4 per cent in the years prior to Covid, to reaching as little as 3.6 per cent back in the September 2020 quarter.<sup>4</sup>

The Regional Australia Institute advises that communities that enjoy the highest levels of growth are those within a 3-hour travel time from a capital city. Migration from the cities is being constrained by the housing shortage in region. Housing prices continue to climb and the cost of housing is increasing as input costs such as timber and steel rise. Workforce shortages are exacerbating the situation. A Housing Taskforce has been set up by the State and has identified longer term solutions which may or may not be implemented.

The tertiary education sector has been significantly impacted by Covid where post school training and education is fragmented.

The fragmented nature of post school education including vocational training and employment services is difficult for Councils, community and businesses to try and navigate. In terms of education, the region has:

- University presence primarily from Charles Sturt and Sydney universities where Sydney University is mostly about health services where Charles Sturt provides a broader offering. There is a Country University Centre in Parkes.
- A fragmented vocational education sector including TAFE and various Registered Training Organisations accessing an equally challenging funding framework. It is unsurprising to see a downward trend in apprenticeships though this has improved during Covid.
- A network of public and private schools at both primary and high school. Further information will be provided once CSP data has been analysed.
- Preschools and childcare where the region is reporting significant concerns for childcare shortages.



<sup>4</sup> M395\_RAI-CBA-Regional-Movers-Index-September-21\_v04.pdf (regionalaustralia.org.au)



The significant changes in technology that are either here or coming shortly that will impact the aspirations of the region are:

- The rise of the use of software enabling collaboration over distance on projects.
- Online vulnerability and cybersecurity risks have been identified by police in region as significant.
- It is anticipated that the 74% of the Central West and Orana region's households that have internet access will grow.
- Parkes is the first official Special Activation Precinct in NSW, taking advantage of location, business development opportunities and employment growth offered by the east-west rail line and the Inland Rail project, placing Parkes at the crossroads of Australia. The precinct is set to become Australia's largest intermodal site and will create new jobs in the freight and logistics industry and optimise opportunities in the circular economy and agricultural industries. Regional suppliers will be brought closer to their customers, allowing local products to be delivered across Australia and around the world.
- The circular economy will provide opportunity for the region and include significant technological innovation. Limiting factors for the circular economy include the cost of transportation which may be resolved by renewable energy and EVs.
- While no CNSWJO Councils are included in the footprint, the Central West and Orana region has been announced as the first Renewable Energy Zone as part of the 2019 NSW Electricity Strategy. It will play a vital role in delivering affordable energy to help replace the state's existing power stations as they retire over the coming decades. Construction of the Renewable Energy Zone is expected to commence in 2022. The broader State Government policy position on reducing emissions by 50% by 2030 is being driven by growing renewable energy production. This will both drive opportunities in RE and thinking on "what's next" in emissions reduction.
- Electric Vehicles will see substantial growth over the next 5 years.

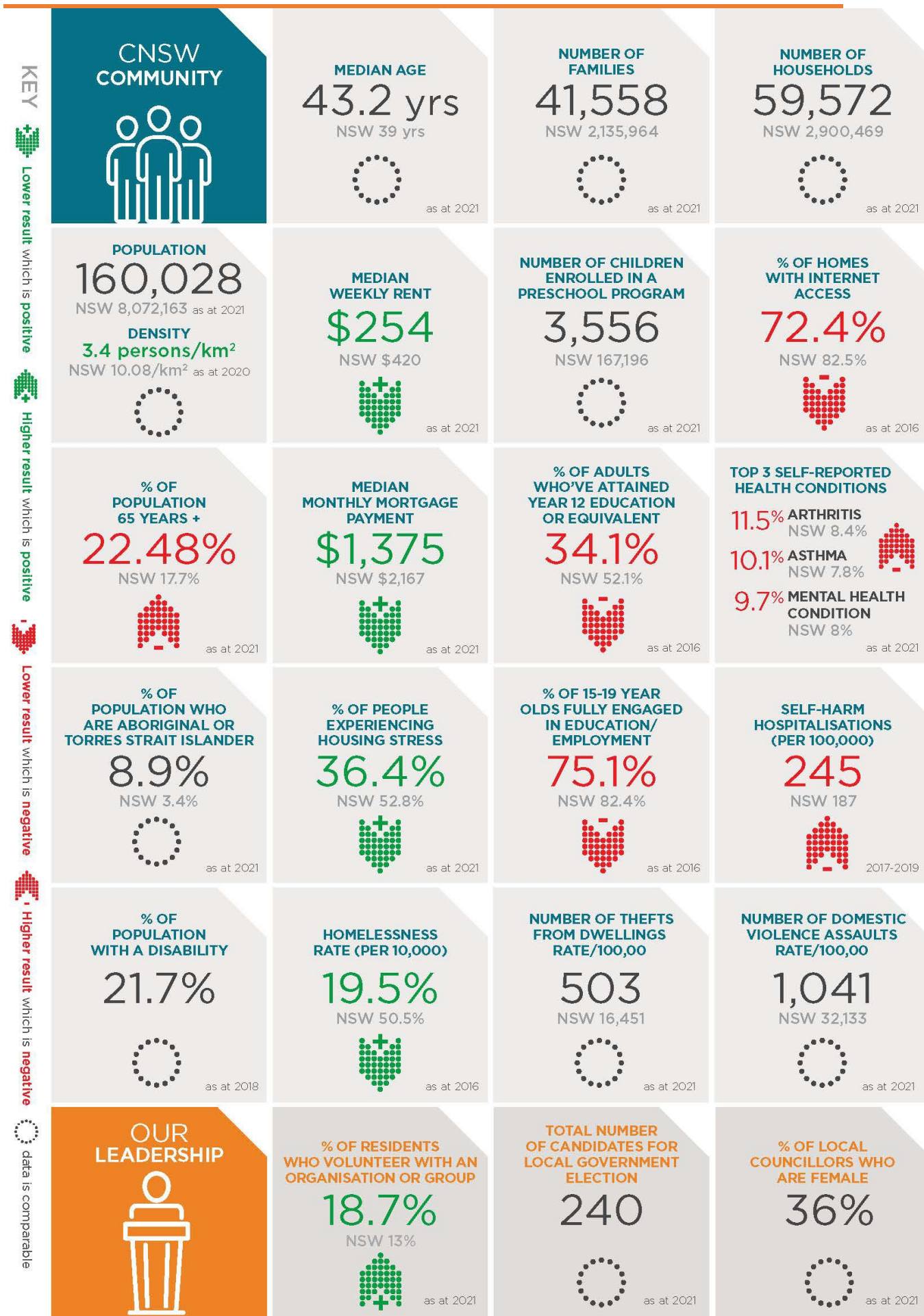
In short, the region has seen significant change over the past 5 years and anticipates this term of Local Government will be one of continuing challenges.



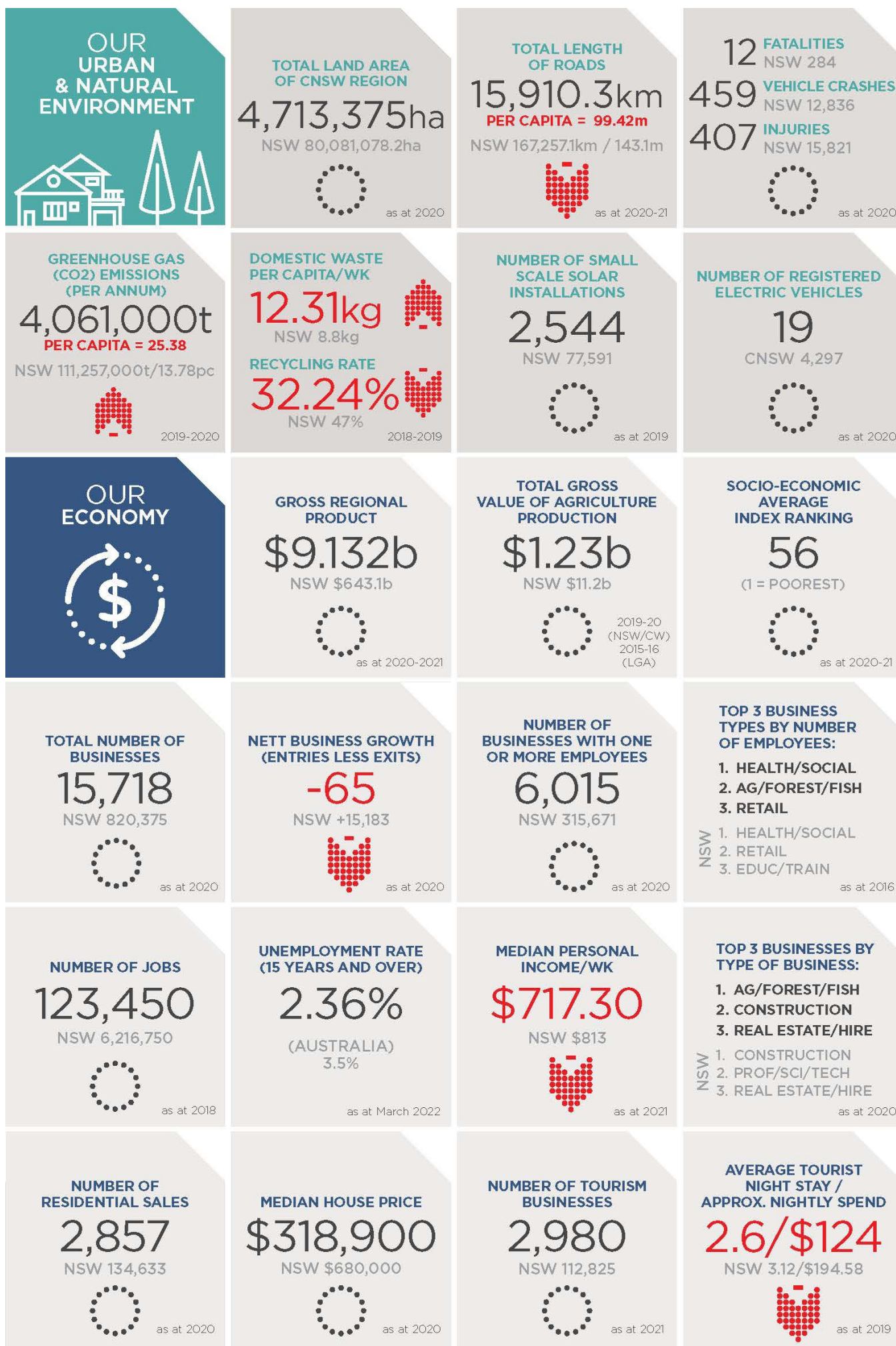
Photo credit: Orange360



# Regional Statistical Snapshot











CENTRAL NSW  
JOINT ORGANISATION

## Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities

Our Vision for the  
Central NSW  
region

Prosperous communities, dynamic local government, a collaborative and strong region –  
when one Council succeeds, we all succeed.

Principal functions  
- how we will  
deliver our  
priorities

Strategic planning and priority setting  
Intergovernmental collaboration  
Leadership and advocacy

Who we are

Member councils: Bathurst Regional Council, Blayney Shire Council, Cabonne Council,  
Cowra Shire Council, Forbes Shire Council, Lachlan Shire Council, Oberon Council,  
Orange City Council, Parkes Shire Council, and Weddin Shire Council.

Associate members: Central Tablelands Water, Upper Macquarie County Council,  
Regional Development Australia – Central West, Regional NSW

Strategic alignment

Our priorities align with the following:

- [Community Strategic Plans](#) and [Local Strategic Planning Statements](#) of member councils
- NSW Government 20 Year Regional Economic Vision and Regional Economic Development Strategies
- Regional Plan: NSW Government Central West and Orana Regional Plan
- Central West and Orana Regional Transport Plan
- The Regional Water Strategies for the Lachlan and Macquarie
- The Central West Destination Management Plan
- The Central West Food and Fibre Strategy

For more detail on strategic alignment please go to [www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/reports-policies/](https://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/reports-policies/)



# Our key strategic initiatives

## Priority One: Leveraging our successful collaboration

- 1.1 Driving efficiencies and effectiveness saving Councils money
- 1.2 Building capacity across our Councils
- 1.3 Working well with other peak agencies

## Priority Two: Regional prosperity through better infrastructure and services

- 2.1 Initiatives to grow population and increase the visitor economy in the context of locational preference factors
- 2.2 Regional industry and population growth planning
- 2.3 Advocacy and initiatives on skills and housing shortages
- 2.4 Leveraging the region's endowments and opportunities:
  - a. Critical minerals and mining
  - b. Circular economy and net zero
  - c. Activation precincts including Parkes SAP
  - d. Inland Rail
  - e. Pattern of settlement; liveability, proximity to capital cities and ports
  - f. Agriculture

## Priority Three: Advocate for better infrastructure and services in health and ageing

## Priority Four: Telecommunications

## Priority Five: Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation

- 5.1 Transport connectivity planning
- 5.2 Infrastructure prioritisation including the CNSWJO Matrix
- 5.3 Natural disaster road funding

## Priority Six: Regional Water Security and Productive Water

- 6.1 Regional Water network planning and best practice skills development
- 6.2 Productive Water

## Priority Seven: Transition to a sustainable, secure, and affordable energy future

- 7.1 Energy Efficiency and Emissions Reduction
- 7.2 Circular Economy
- 7.3 Environment
- 7.4 Understanding our energy (fuel and electricity) security, capacity and scalability.

## Key Stakeholders

### Key regional partners:

NSW and National Farmers, Business NSW, Arts OutWest, Destination Network Central West, and Charles Sturt University

### Key stakeholders in the other tiers of government we seek to collaborate with in our delivery:

Agencies and regulators within the NSW and Federal governments that manage local government, planning, environment, heritage, energy, health, education, regional economic development and tourism, water, infrastructure, and transport. Local members of parliament across the region.

### Key Local Government industry stakeholders:

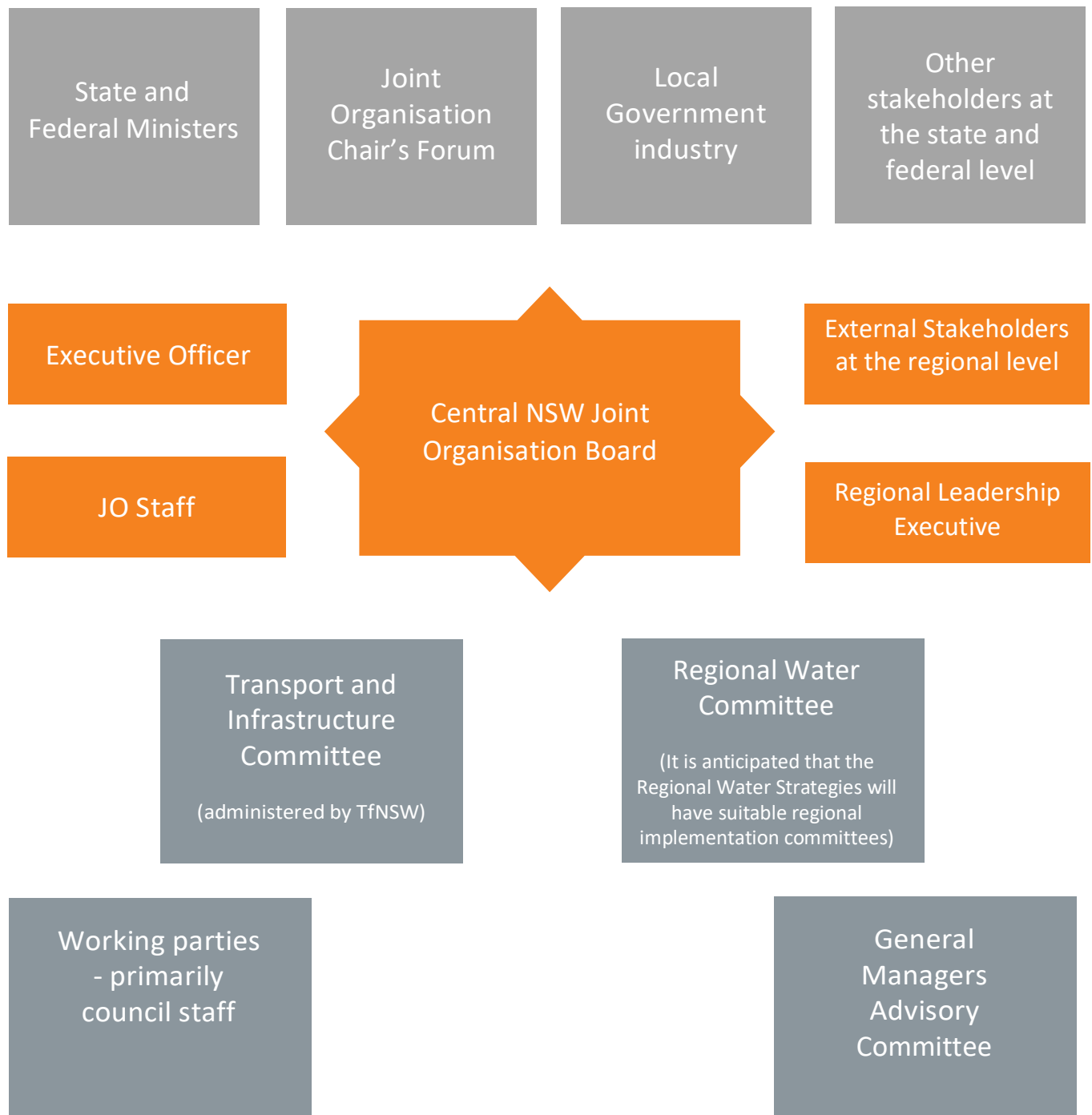
Our member councils, Local Government NSW, Country Mayors, Australian Local Government Association, and other JOs.

Photo credit: Geagle Productions - Weddin Mountains Region

# Organisational Structure

Note the existing Transport and Infrastructure Committee and the proposed Water Security Committee and Regional Leadership Executive Sub-committee will have terms of reference created to define their roles.

Central NSW JO Board Membership of these committees will be a combination of Central NSW JO members and agency/external experts.





# What we know about our region's priorities from our Local Strategic Planning Statements

Whilst each Council's LSPS Statement has been prepared and designed to address the individual Councils planning priorities and vision, there are four clear themes that each Council's LSPSs planning priorities can be divided into:

- Community and Leadership
- Infrastructure
- Protection of the Natural and Built environment and
- The Economy.

Under each of these main themes there are also some clear sub themes/ planning priorities. The sub themes do not relate to all of member Councils, but most planning priorities fit under the sub themes. It should be noted that some of the Councils' planning priorities could fit across multiple themes. For simplicity and for the purpose of this report they have only been placed under one heading.

## Community, Liveability and Leadership

- Housing
- Land Use Planning
- Education and Health care
- Recreational and Cultural Facilities
- Support for Villages, small communities and rural residents

## Infrastructure

- Transport
- Water Security
- Utility Planning

## Protection of the Natural and Built environment

- Mitigation and Resilience to Climate Change
- Protect Heritage and Culture
- Protect and Manage the Natural and Built Environment
- Manage Land Use conflict

## The Economy

- Development of Town Centres
- Supporting existing and emerging industry
- Agriculture
- Mining
- Tourism

Photo credit: Bathurst Regional Council



## What we know about our region's priorities from our Community Strategic Plans

Community Strategic Plans (CSPs) should reflect the views, wants and needs of the community. In many cases these priorities are outside the traditional jurisdiction of local government. This is where the importance of the advocacy by local government comes to the forefront. CSPs are used to discuss community issues with government representative and officials and are required to be referenced in most grant applications.

The level of sophistication, complexity and detail in the plans across the region varied. What is obvious from the CSPs is that community and social infrastructure such as health and education is a priority for regional communities. The liveability of communities was also a focus of most plans.

A strong economy was recognised as being important for communities as it was acknowledged that a strong economy contributes to social wellbeing. Good governance, engagement, leadership, management of Council assets and development of partnerships was also highlighted in many of the CSPs.

It is widely acknowledged that the landscape is vastly different from where we were five years ago – Central NSW has battled droughts, fires, plagues, climate change and a pandemic. The CSPs have started to reflect these challenges. It does need to be knowledge that as these are community documents the agenda is not set by Council but the local community and therefore may only be focused on very local issues.

Whilst each Council's CSP has been prepared and designed to address the individual Councils community priorities and vision however, there are five clear themes that each Council's CSP can be divided into:

- The Economy
- The Community
- The Environment
- Leadership
- Infrastructure and Assets





Under each of these main directions/ themes there are also some clear strategies that are reflected across the majority of Councils. The strategies do not relate to all of the Councils. It should be noted that some of the Councils' strategies could fit across multiple themes. For simplicity and for the purpose of this report they have only been placed under one heading.

#### The Economy

- Support Local Business
- Attract Investment
- Embrace technology/ smart solutions
- Attract and develop a skilled work force
- Support Tourism

#### Leadership

- Open, accountable and engaged
- Sustainability
- Innovation
- Partnerships

#### Infrastructure and Assets

- Transport Road/ Rail
- Active Transport
- Water and Sewer

#### The Community

- Health
- Education
- Liveability
- Inclusion
- History/ arts

#### The Environment

- Climate change
- Waste Management/ Recycling/ renewables
- Preserve the natural environment
- Land use planning
- Water conservation

Photo credit: @timbean\_photography



# What we know about our region from our scan of strategies and plans relevant to Central NSW

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Based on the environmental scan of the State, Federal and private sector strategic plans the following challenges and opportunities have been identified.

## Challenges

### Climate Change

Leading to extreme weather emergency events such as storms, droughts, floods, fires. Flow on impact on agriculture, water security, asset management, insurance costs and social dislocation

### Population projections

Due to inaccurate population projections, there is a lack of planning for social infrastructure such as housing, education and healthcare .

### Inflation

Currently we are seeing the cost of living rising higher than wages. This is reflected in transport costs, consumer goods – including fruit and vegetables which have been impacted by climate change and rising input costs.

### Transport Linkages

Between regional centres and cities and smaller communities as well as access into capital cities. The growing freight task and access into ports as well as the rising cost of freight will be a challenge into the future.

### Telecommunications

Access, speed and costs for both mobile and internet services. Additionally, IOT networks for agriculture.

### New technology and Innovation

There seems to be a lack of appropriate Government policy to support new technology and industry. New technology has been hindered by things such as procurement guidelines for Government and the fact that Government Departments such as EPA are often looking for “proven” technology which is difficult when it is a new technology.

### Community & Stakeholder Engagement

Transition to new technologies and a net zero economy will need careful, respectful and considerate community engagement especially as different industries and communities will be impacted disproportionately. Consultation also needs to be included in the development of strategic plans.

### Funding

Funding needs to be identified to deliver the objectives of many of the Strategic plans. Local Governments are taking on the responsibility of delivering many of the objective but they are doing it from a capped rate base making their financial sustainability more precarious.

### Water Security

Water security is linked to climate change but also population growth. As more and more people moving to regional area and establish of new industries, we will need secure water supplies to ensure economic and social growth. There is a lack of focus on Water Security in most strategies.



## Skills, housing, education & health

Currently there is very low unemployment in the Central West. Coupled with the pandemic suspending immigration there is a lack of skills in regional NSW. This is further impacted with the lack of housing options to entice skilled labour to regional areas. With the cost of housing going up the Central west is also suffering from an affordable housing crisis. The Central West is also suffering from a skills shortage in the healthcare sector especially outside of Bathurst and Orange and educational outcomes are still in some case substantially subpar metropolitan areas.

## Geopolitical Environment

There is no doubt that the geopolitical landscape looks vastly different to it did five years ago. Traditional trading partners such as China have introduced tariffs against Australia. The current war in the Ukraine and the sanctions against Russia are pushing up commodity prices such as grain and oil. Many Countries have also put net zero targets in place for their trading partners, which they will need to achieve to continue exporting. The pandemic has also highlighted fragility within our supply chains.

## Opportunities

### Net Zero

Reduce the impact of Climate change. Ensure international trade is maintained.

Creation of new jobs and industries. There are also opportunities for local governments to develop their own net zero policies.

### Renewable Energy

Green power generated in regional areas will entice new industry to locate to regional areas and ticks many of the ESG requirements that industry is looking for. It will also help the transition from traditional coal fired power stations and create new jobs and skills.

### Circular Economy

The concept of the circular economy enables regions to think differently about products and waste. From designing waste out, to repurposing products to recycling and resource recovery there are many opportunities that the circular economy will present to Central NSW.

### Agriculture

With better water security, new technologies and the opportunity to develop additional income streams through net zero initiatives such as carbon trading and soil sequestration – the future of agriculture in Central NSW is positive.

### Better water management and security

We have to look differently at the way we manage our natural assets such as water and how we use technology monitor their use. We need to look at international best practice such as in the Netherlands who almost two decades ago, set themselves an ambitious target of ‘twice as much food, half the resources.

Better water security supports not only agriculture but population growth and industry development.

### Liveability

More and more people are choosing to live where they want to work. This is a huge opportunity for regional areas to attract skills and investment into regional areas.

### Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives

Financial institutions globally are increasingly looking at ESG credentials as part of their investment strategies. Consumers are increasing making purchasing decision based on EGS credentials.

### Mining and Critical Minerals

Central NSW has the opportunity to play a large role in the developing critical minerals market.

It is located along the Macquarie Arch and significant exploration is already happening with the area.

# Action Plan

## Priority One:

### Leveraging our successful collaboration

#### 1.1 Driving efficiencies and effectiveness saving Councils money

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Determine the regional procurement activities of the JO	Executive Officer	January 2023	Board approved 5-year procurement plan.
b)	Implement the outcomes from the Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement Program	Executive Officer	January 2023 and Ongoing	GMAC and Board implements Best Practice in Procurement

#### 1.2 Building capacity across our Councils

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	<p>The region supports the operational teams and short-term projects by collaborations of Council staff that provide an opportunity for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• information sharing</li><li>• networking</li><li>• capacity building</li><li>• procurement</li><li>• formal and informal training</li><li>• good governance</li><li>• cost savings and other value to Councils</li></ul>	Executive Officer	Ongoing - as the relationship between the JO and State matures, operational teams are receiving support from State agencies	<p>Reports to Board demonstrate value from these collaborations</p> <p>#, \$ and quality of State agency engagement</p>

All teams and projects work to Terms of Reference adopted by the Board. There are typically 10-15 collaborations of member Councils supported by CNSWJO resource.



### 1.3 Working well with other peak organisations

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Engage with LGNSW Country Mayors and ALGA on priorities for local government	Executive Officer	January 2023 Ongoing	Board adopts Advocacy Plan. Board receives regular reports on activities in the Advocacy Plan
b)	Progress actions in the MoU with RDA;	Executive Officer	January 2023 ongoing	MoU and associated progress reports reviewed annually
c)	Foster collaboration with a focus on the region's opportunities and endowments between CSU, Arts Out West, RDA Central West, Essential Energy, Business NSW and the RLE	Executive Officer	January 2023 Ongoing	Board reports provide advice on emerging opportunities from collaboration



Photo : Central NSW JO Board Meeting

## Priority Two:

# Regional Prosperity through better infrastructure and services

### 2.1 Initiatives to grow the visitor economy in the context of locational preference factors

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Review CNSW Tourism service provided by JO with consideration of future services in light of the offerings from Destination Network Central West while continuing with destination marketing.	Tourism Group	January 2024	Tourism Group review report recommendations adopted by the Board.  ROI on destination marketing.

### 2.2 Regional industry and population growth planning

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Review and progress the implementation of the Central West and Orana Regional Plan	Planners Group	From January 2023	Planners Group reports to GMAC/Board
b)	Continue advocacy regarding Treasury Common Planning Assumptions including the population projections for this region.	Board	Ongoing	Quarterly reports to the Board
c)	Identification and reporting on regional planning matters.	Planners Group	As issues arise	Quarterly reports to the Board
d)	Community Strategic Planning Project with the Regional Leadership Executive and advocacy for better engagement between Councils and State agencies on CSP.	Executive Office and RLE with support from Council team	From June 2023	Quarterly reports to the Board

### 2.3 Advocacy and initiatives on skills and housing shortages

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Develop and implement advocacy plan in support of skills shortages	Board	From February 2023	Board adopts Advocacy Plan. Board receives regular reports on activities in the Advocacy Plan



b)	Supporting Councils with skills shortages with a focus on the Health and Building staff	Executive Officer Leveraging Council working party and pilot REROC project	Ongoing	Quarterly reports to the Board
c)	Provides regional representation to the Local Jobs Taskforce and the Parkes Special Activation Precinct Skills Subcommittee of the Regional Leadership Executive.	Executive Officer	Ongoing	Quarterly reports to the Board
d)	Undertake through funding from NSW Housing Taskforce a spare capacity in housing project in the region.	Executive Officer	June 2024	Quarterly reports to the Board

#### 2.4 Leveraging the region's endowments and opportunities

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	<b>Critical minerals and mining</b> This priority will be negotiated with the Department of Regional NSW and the Regional Leadership Executive in the context of the Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) to seek cross agency support for programming in region. Policy will be developed and reviewed to inform advocacy plans.	Executive Officer	Ongoing	Report Quarterly to the Board
b)	<b>Circular economy and net zero.</b>  Resource collaboration with peak agencies in this regard in line with Board direction from the CNSWJO Emissions Reduction Plan.  Leverage the Parkes SAP and potential other projects in region.  Support collaborations with DPE on Net Zero.	Executive Officer	January 2023 & Ongoing	Report Quarterly to the Board
c)	Support the development of existing and potential activation precincts including Parkes SAP	Executive Officer	Ongoing	Report Quarterly to the Board

d)	<b>Inland Rail.</b> Progress advice from Inland Rail Productivity enhance Program with a view to entering the next Gateway	Executive Officer	March 2023	Reports to Board
e)	<b>Pattern of settlement; liveability, proximity to capital cities and ports</b> Seek to work through the RLE where childcare has been identified as of particular concern	Executive Officer RLE and Board	September 2023	Reports to Board
f)	<b>Agriculture</b> Produce a productive water strategy for Board consideration including considering the “Dutch Model”	Executive Officer CWUA Program Manager	From January 2023 and ongoing	Board receives report on the sustainability issues impacting on the Agriculture sector. Productive Water report delivered to the Board’s satisfaction.

## Priority Three:

### Advocate for better infrastructure and services in health and ageing

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Provide advocacy support and programming at the direction of the Board where advocacy for better infrastructure and services in health and ageing will be reworked to align with the 44 recommendations as listed in the Health Outcomes and Access to Services report.	Board	February 2023	Board adopts Advocacy Plan. Board receives regular reports on activities in the Advocacy Plan
b)	Seek to work with Charles Sturt University on a policy paper on enabling growing our own health workforce	Executive Officer		Advocacy advice adopted by the Board
c)	As part of its commitment to growing our own health workforce, CNSWJO provides \$15Kpa for three medical students a year.	Board	For review in 2023	Presentations by students



## Priority Four:

### Telecommunications

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Advocacy and opportunities for improved outcomes for Telecommunications: delivered in collaboration with RDACW	Board	Annual review of advocacy plans and policy in November/February. Annual review of the MoU with RDACW	Board adopts Advocacy Plan. Board receives regular reports on activities in the Advocacy Plan

## Priority Five:

### Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation

5.1 Transport connectivity planning				
No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Review and implement transport advocacy plan	Board	February 2023 and then annually	Report to the Board
b)	Monitor and actively engage in the TfNSW Central West and Orana Regional Transport Plan and other strategic opportunities	Board	February 2023 and then annually	Review of TOR Annually Number of regional priorities recognised in the TfNSW Central West and Orana Regional Transport Plan.
c)	Provide regional transport planning analysis with a focus on freight	Transport and Infrastructure Working Party	Feb 2020	Report to the Transport and Infrastructure Committee.
d)	Identify opportunities for regional program funding and report on emergent transport issues	Transport and Infrastructure Working Party	Ongoing	Reports to the Board
e)	Implement the Reviewed Roads and Transport Technical Committee Plan	Transport and Infrastructure Working Party	January 2023	Roads and Transport Technical Committee Plan adopted by the Board. Reports from the Transport and Infrastructure Committee.

## 5.2 Infrastructure prioritisation including using the CNSWJO Matrix

Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a) Using a multi criteria analysis prioritisation matrix Informed by the State and Federal funding framework. Outputs from the Matrix are used to support member grant applications. Members keep the inputs current typically through workshops of the transport and water teams. CNSWJO staff develop outputs and letters of support on an as needs basis.	Executive Officer  CNSWJO Roads and Transport Group  CWUA	Ongoing	Report to the Board

## 5.3 Natural disaster road funding

Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
A report will be provided to the February 2023 Board meeting outlining the program.	Executive Officer  CNSWJO Roads and Transport Group	Ongoing	Report to the Board

## Priority Six:

## Regional Water Security and Productive Water

### 6.1 Regional Water network planning and best practice skills development

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Advocacy plan	Board	Ongoing	Advocacy Plan approved #submissions Board reports monitor alignment with policy position
b)	Regional Water Strategies in the Lachlan and Macquarie - implementation	Implementation Committee as developed by the State	Ongoing	Board reports
c)	Resource the Regional Water Loss Management Centre of Excellence for Central NSW codesigned with the NSW Government	Executive Officer/CWUA DPE Water	Phase 1: June 2023	Board reports include value to members and the State



d)	Resource Stage 2 implementation of the new Regulatory and Assurance Framework for LWUs including a potential pilot of regional work on the integration of strategic water planning with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. This to align with the Regional Asset Management Working Party is also being resourced to support members in the management of assets.	Executive Officer/CWUA	December 2024	Board reports on Council progress with water strategy into IP andR
e)	Balance of program identified in the CWUA Strategy supporting leading practice, measured and benchmarked in the delivery of quality secure water and sewer services	Executive Officer	Ongoing	Strategy approved by the Board. #Staff Trained #Contracts \$ Saved \$ Grant funding # Submissions

## 6.2 Productive Water

Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a) Advocacy plan to support the value of town water and alternative approaches to water use, for example the Dutch Model	Board	February 2023	Board approved advocacy plan
b) Resource the development of a productive water strategy leveraging the huge amount of strategic reform underway in water management at both the State and Federal level.	Executive Officer	“Plan for the Plan” January 2023  Productive Water Strategy finalised January 2024	Reports to the Board

## Priority Seven:

# Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future

### 7.1 Energy Efficiency and Emissions Reduction

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Review advocacy plan for an orderly transition to a secure renewable energy future with an emphasis on Social License issues	Board	February 2023	Advocacy Plan adopted by the Board
b)	Collaborate with State agencies in delivering programming in reducing member Council emissions  Resource collaboration with peak agencies in this regard in line with Board direction from the CNSWJO Emissions Reduction Plan.	Executive Officer	Ongoing	Board reports include value of collaboration to Councils and the State
c)	Support Council collaboration under the 5 pillars of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Streetlighting</li><li>• Electric Vehicles</li><li>• Renewable energy production and storage, including Distributed Energy Resources (DER)</li><li>• Energy efficiency and demand management</li><li>• The nexus between water and energy</li></ul>	Executive Officer	Ongoing	Board reports include value to Councils
d)	Leverage the contractual relationship with electricity retailers to enable emissions reduction	Executive Officer	Ongoing	Board reports include value to Councils

### 7.2 Circular Economy

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Support regional collaboration on circular economy as directed by the Board from the CNSWJO Emissions Reduction Plan	Executive Officer	Ongoing	Report to Board implementing the CNSWJO Emissions Reduction Plan



### 7.3 Environment

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Review policy approach to the anticipated rapid transition to a renewable energy future on the Social Licensing issues and raise awareness for renewable energy infrastructure	Executive Officer	June 2023	Report to Board
b)	Develop policy with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biodiversity</li> <li>Urban environments during climate change including tree canopy</li> <li>Waste and landfill emissions.</li> </ul>	Executive Officer	June 2023	Report to Board
c)	Provide advocacy support to members in regard to weed management issues	Executive Officer	June 2023	Report to Board

### 7.4 Understanding our energy (fuel and electricity) security, capacity and scalability

No.	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Key performance indicators
a)	Undertake strategy and scoping for Board review	Executive Officer	December 2023	Report to Board

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