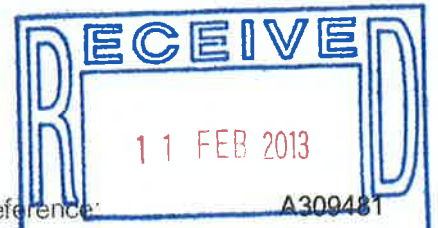




**Premier & Cabinet**  
Division of Local Government

5 O'Keefe Avenue NOWRA NSW 2541  
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Our Reference: A309481  
Your Reference:  
Contact: Kathryn Ridley  
Phone: 02 9289 4082

Mr Gary Woodman  
General Manager  
Cobar Shire Council  
PO Box 223  
COBAR NSW 2835

*Garry*

Dear Mr Woodman

I am writing regarding the Council's commencement under the Integrated Planning and Reporting legislation as a Group 3 council.

As you know, the Council's suite of planning documents was reviewed as part of a peer review program facilitated by the Division as part of its commitment to ensuring the effective implementation of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework. The review was undertaken from the point of view of a community member, and sought to identify how the intent of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework has been applied in the Council's plans.

I would like to acknowledge the Council's significant effort in transitioning to the framework. The Division recognises that Integrated Planning and Reporting is an iterative process, and that there may have been challenges that the Council needed to overcome in implementing the framework. The Council's effort in this regard is reflected in the planning process undertaken and in the plans themselves.

Attached is a summary of the findings from the Division's review. I trust that the Council will find this feedback useful, and will use this information to inform future reviews of these planning documents. If particular legislative requirements are outstanding, please ensure that the Council addresses these in the current revision of plans due for adoption by 30 June 2013.

If you have any further questions relating to the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework, please contact the Division on telephone 02 4428 4220 or by email to [ipr@dlg.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ipr@dlg.nsw.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

*Ross Woodward* 31/1/13

**Ross Woodward**  
Chief Executive, Local Government  
A Division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet

Cobar Shire Council	
FILE No. <i>LS-22</i>	FOLIO No. <i>75747</i>
REFERRED TO:	<i>GM &amp; M</i>
Info	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action
	Reply
	Report

# **Summary of the review of Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting documentation**

## **Cobar Shire Council**

The following is a summary of the peer review of the Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting suite of documents. The review found that the Council largely meets the legislative requirements of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework.

### **Community Strategic Plan**

- The Community Strategic Plan contains a good overview of the community engagement process that shaped the development of the Plan
- The Plan is well laid out and clearly identifies community outcomes and the strategies to address them
- While consideration was given to the State Plan and other Regional Plans, this would have been strengthened by more directly relating the State Plan objectives with Strategies identified in the Community Strategic Plan
- The Council's and other community partners' role in delivering against the Plan's objectives is clear
- Assessment methods for determining whether or not the objectives of the Plan have been met should be included
- A clear vision for the community is not evident in the Plan.

### **Community Engagement Strategy**

- The Council has a published Community Engagement Strategy
- The Strategy does not outline how community engagement will be undertaken for Integrated Planning and Reporting. Rather, it is a high-level document that defines community engagement and the principles to be considered
- It is not clear which of the 'Identified Audiences' were actually engaged during the development of the Community Strategic Plan
- It is not clear what information was provided to the community to inform the development of the Community Strategic Plan.

### **Resourcing Strategy – overall comments**

- The use of an overarching Resourcing Strategy document is useful in explaining the link between each of the plans.

### ***Workforce Management Planning***

- The Workforce Management Plan provides a good overview of the external and internal pressures on the Council's workforce
- The SWOT analysis is comprehensive and clearly identifies focus areas for the Council

- The Action Plan needs to include timeframes to make clear when over the four-year period of the Plan specific actions will be undertaken
- It is not clear how the Workforce Management Plan enables the achievement of the Delivery Program.

#### ***Asset Management Planning***

- The Council has an Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Plans
- The Asset Management Strategy is a very technical document and would be difficult for many non-technical people to understand
- The timeframe for the Asset Management Strategy is not apparent. Strategies within this document should be assigned timeframes across its (minimum) ten-year span
- The Strategy is very generic, and doesn't clearly articulate Cobar Shire's specific asset portfolio
- Actions identified in the Asset Management Strategy and individual plans are not reflected in the Delivery Program
- Asset Management Plans were not available for review.

#### ***Long-Term Financial Plan***

- The Long-Term Financial Plan is a concise document which is easy to read, informative and well set out
- The Plan contains excellent explanatory information around each of the scenarios
- Methods for monitoring the ongoing financial performance of the Council should be included in the Plan.

#### **Delivery Program**

- The Delivery Program flows clearly from the Community Strategic Plan
- The Delivery Program is well laid out and easy to follow
- Strategies, Outcomes and Activities are all clearly identified
- The Performance Measures would be strengthened with the inclusion of baseline and target information
- The Delivery Program should indicate in which year/s each of the activities will be delivered
- The Activities should be numbered to be consistent the Operational Plan.

#### **Operational Plan**

- The Operational Plan clearly builds on the Delivery Program
- Performance Measures would be strengthened by the inclusion of baseline and target information.

#### **Overall integration of plans**

- The integration between the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan is clear
- Links from these documents to the Resourcing Strategy are not evident.

**Summary of strengths**

- The documents are written in a community-friendly way, and avoid the use of jargon (with the exception of the asset planning documents)
- The consistent use of colour, numbering and layout in the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan increases the plans' readability and integration
- Information provided about the community consultation process gives the impression that it was wide spread and comprehensive, and that the views of the community are represented in the plans
- An overarching Resourcing Strategy explaining the role and purpose of its components is useful.

**Summary of areas for further development**

- The Community Engagement Strategy should be revised for future revisions of the Community Strategic Plan, and identify specific groups and strategies for engagement
- The Asset Management Strategy needs to be strengthened to more specifically relate to Cobar Shire Council
- Timeframes need to be assigned to the actions of the Workforce Management Plan
- Performance measures need to be strengthened across all of the documents.