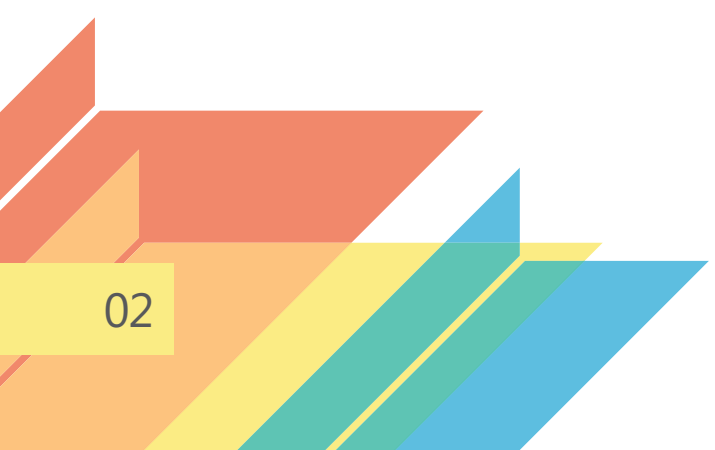




# Cessnock 2023 Community Strategic Plan

OUR PEOPLE OUR PLACE OUR FUTURE





Many residents have already played a key part in getting us to this point. The process started with a community survey of 500 residents in July 2009. This was followed in 2010 by a public debate, a series of sixteen workshops, a targeted survey, an online forum, telephone hotline and written submissions. Primary school children participated through a school art project with more than 50 drawings received.

During 2013 Council has confirmed, via a further community survey and a series of workshops, that this plan still reflects the aspirations of the community; and refined it to better describe the future that we all want.

The Cessnock 2023 community strategic plan outlines what you have told us you would like to see by the year 2023. Key responsibilities are also outlined in the plan – whether involving the Federal Government, the State Government, Cessnock City Council or the community itself.

This document is presented in five sections – being the desired outcomes that were identified during the community engagement process:

- A connected, safe and creative Community: Developing

safe and connected neighbourhoods that support healthy and fulfilling lifestyles for all ages

- A sustainable and prosperous Economy: Achieving long term economic security through a mix of diverse business and employment options
- A sustainable and healthy Environment: Promoting a sustainable balance between development and preserving our natural environment
- Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities: Increasing the range and accessibility of the services we need along with investment in improved infrastructure
- Civic Leadership and effective governance: Ensuring that we have strong leadership and good governance and that we foster community participation in decision-making

Together residents, visitors, property owners, business owners, community organisations and government are committed to the strategic directions and desired outcomes in the Cessnock 2023 community strategic plan. And we will work together to create the thriving, attractive and welcoming community that we aspire to.

Clr Bob Pynsent, Mayor	
Clr Cordelia Burcham	Clr Ian Olsen
Clr Morgan Campbell	Clr Catherine Parsons
Clr Rod Doherty	Clr James Ryan
Clr Bryce Gibson	Clr Graham Smith
Clr James Hawkins	Clr Allan Stapleford
Clr Jeff Maybury	Clr Suellen Wrightson

## Foreword

We, the councillors of Cessnock City Council, are proud to present Cessnock 2023, Cessnock City's community strategic plan for the prosperity and sustainability of the City over the next 10 years. To succeed, it needs your involvement and input.

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## Community Profile

The Cessnock township developed from 1850, as a service centre at the junction of the Great North Road leading to Morpeth, Maitland and the state's North West.

Cessnock is a city of rural, town and village areas.

The Cessnock Local Government Area (Cessnock City) covers approximately 1,950 square kilometres within the Hunter Valley of New South Wales, approximately 150 kilometres north of Sydney and 40 kilometres west of Newcastle. The estimated population at 30 June 2011 was 52,493. It is home to the Darkinjung Aboriginal people.

Whilst mining was the principal industrial base and source of employment in the Cessnock area for the first half of last century, changes to the mining industry, including automation and the introduction of sophisticated

computerised equipment, led to the closure of the vast majority of mines in the area.

The decline of mining has been paralleled by growth in the wine industry. The Hunter Valley wine-growing area in the Cessnock LGA is Australia's oldest wine region and one of the most famous, with around 4,500 acres under vine. The vineyards of Pokolbin, Mount View and Allandale, with their rich volcanic soils managed by entrepreneurial vignerons, are also the focus of a thriving tourism industry.

As well as vineyards and wineries there are fine restaurants, motels, cabins, guest houses and galleries. Wine-related tourism has also created opportunities for other attractions, such as the historic Marthaville Arts and Crafts Centre, Wollombi Village, the Richmond

Main Mining Museum and the Richmond Vale Railway. Other primary industries in Cessnock City include beef and poultry.

Growth in light and secondary industry have also been a feature of the City's recent economic development, with the processing of explosive equipment and mining support services now a significant source of employment in the area.

Support infrastructure across the City now includes two hospitals, two TAFE campuses, community health services, a range of childcare and aged care options as well as numerous other community support services. Each of the City's towns and villages (which are linked by large expanses of natural vegetation) provide high quality sporting facilities and parks.



# Developing our community plan

## AT A GLANCE

Local Councils in NSW are required by legislation to work with their communities to develop a long term plan for the social, environmental and economic health, sustainability and prosperity of their areas. The plan must also identify the civic leadership actions that will bring the plan to life over a minimum 10 year period.

Extensive input from the Cessnock community over the last three years and, in particular, during the first half of 2010 has informed the development of the Cessnock 2023 Community Plan.

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

As a result of legislation enacted in October 2009, all NSW local councils are required by the Local Government Act to develop a long term community strategic plan. This must be done in consultation with the community.

The plan must:

- Have a long term focus, with a minimum of 10 years;
  - Address the key issues of social, environmental and economic sustainability as well as civic leadership;
  - Be delivered as a partnership between council, state agencies, community groups and individual community members;
  - Consider the State Plan and any relevant state or regional plans and strategies;
  - Have regard for an adopted community engagement strategy, showing how the council will communicate with and consult its community to develop a draft plan;
  - Provide for a resourcing strategy that reflects how Cessnock City Council will manage community assets and structure its workforce plan and long-term financial strategy to meet the aspects of the plan for which it has responsibility;
- Provide direction for a Council four-year Delivery Program and annual Operational Plans which outline how Council will contribute to the implementation of the long term plan;
  - Give consideration to the expected levels of service expressed by the community;
  - Include a community vision statement, strategic objectives and strategies for achieving the objectives;
  - Identify assessment methods for determining whether the objectives are being achieved;
  - Outline how progress in implementing the plan will be measured and monitored;
  - Provide for the council to progressively report to the community on progress, and achievements, and have regard for social justice and sustainability guiding principles.

Following an extensive community engagement program to develop the original community strategic plan, Cessnock 2020, in 2010, Council confirmed that the vision and objectives were still reflecting the community's highest priorities in line with a Community Engagement Strategy endorsed by the Council on 6 February 2013.

Four community workshops were held at which all members of the community could attend.

Location	Date	No. of attendees
Cessnock	19 February	6
Branxton	21 February	3
Kurri Kurri	21 February	5
Wollombi	26 February	15

In addition direct consultation was also held in conjunction with other activities also being undertaken by Council including:

Activity	Date	No. of attendees
Economic Development Workshops	11-15 February	108
Litter Grant Workshops	February 2013	6
Energy Saving Workshops	February 2013	58
Noxious Weeds Cessnock Show	22-23 February	50
Animal Microchipping	2 March	129

Council also promoted the review of the community strategic plan at its Administration Centre, libraries, swimming pools, the Performing Arts Centre and on its website.

Two staff workshops were also held with Cessnock City Council's employees to confirm their vision for Cessnock and better understand their views about the issues and challenges facing the area over the next 10 years.

Staff Group	Date	No. of attendees
Managers	6 February	14
All staff	19 February	14

In addition to the specific community engagement activities undertaken during 2013 towards the development of Cessnock 2023, Council was able to draw on a number of community consultations undertaken in recent years which were focused on the future of the Cessnock area. These included:

- Cessnock CBD Masterplan
- Vineyard Vision

*Community Research Survey* – A Community Research Survey was undertaken in July 2012 by Micromex Research. This survey involved telephone interviews with a representative sample of 400 residents across the Cessnock LGA.

These residents were asked to rate their agreement with 34 specific statements about attributes of the Cessnock community.

## Consulting with our community

## OUR VISION

*Cessnock will be a cohesive and welcoming community living in an attractive and sustainable rural environment with a diversity of business and employment opportunities supported by accessible infrastructure and services which effectively meet community needs.*

*In summary, the vision is:*

**Cessnock -  
thriving, attractive  
and welcoming.**

## COMMUNITY VISION

During workshops held in 2010 participants were asked to visualise Cessnock and its surrounding area in ten years time and imagine the place they would like it to be. The relevance of this vision was confirmed during the community engagement process in 2013.

## THE CHALLENGES

*Identifying and meeting the challenges*

The workshops and the community surveys identified a number of significant and important issues confronting the City. Our challenge is to actively and seriously address the issues identified during the workshops so that the future of our City can be assured.

The Plan has been developed based on the issues, challenges, opportunities and priorities identified by the community within the key themes of:

- Our Community
- Our Economy
- Our Environment
- Our Service
- Our Leadership

Some of the issues and challenges are of immediate concern and require action in the short to medium term, while many relate to significant and complex issues that will require longer term planning and resolution. Regardless, they must be resolved to ensure the long term wellbeing and prosperity of the City.

As a result strategic directions outlined in the Cessnock 2023 Community Strategic Plan need to be considered in the context that some initiatives will take up to 10 years or more to reach fruition.

Despite this, we should not be afraid of developing strategic initiatives in a staged approach that will have long term payback.





# A CONNECTED, SAFE & CREATIVE COMMUNITY

## COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME

This desired outcome relates to community wellbeing, connectedness and safety. During the initial community engagement program participants expressed the desire for a healthy, active, engaged and cohesive community that maintained its unique local identity and friendliness into the future.

### *How we are progressing:*

In July 2012 research was undertaken to assess the community's perceptions of progress towards this desired outcome:

### *How well does this statement:*

A connected, safe and creative community describe the Cessnock local government area?

### 3.05 – Moderate agreement

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree

18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Male	Female	Overall
2.95	3.02	3.09	3.12	3.05	3.06	3.05

### *Confirmation of desired outcomes and objectives and objectives*

In 2013 the community confirmed that this desired outcome and objectives were still relevant.

## OBJECTIVE 1.1:

### Promoting Social Connections

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Our community is aware of and has access to community services.
- We are connected to others in our neighbourhood and across the Local Government Area.
- Our community has opportunities to celebrate together.
- Our communities are linked by walking and bike tracks.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community
- Community groups
- Business groups
- Tourism groups
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government
- Federal Government

## OBJECTIVE 1.2:

### Strengthening community culture

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Our residents show pride in our local government area.
- Our community organisations have opportunities to work together to develop and deliver services.
- Our facilities are utilised by community groups.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community
- Community groups
- Business groups
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government
- Federal Government

## OBJECTIVE 1.3:

### Promoting safe communities

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Residents and visitors feel safe in the Cessnock Local Government area.
- The CBD areas are safe at night.
- Our roads are safe for motorists and pedestrians.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community
- Community groups
- Business groups
- Tourism groups
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (NSW Police, RMS)
- Federal Government

## OBJECTIVE 1.4:

### Fostering an articulate and creative community

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- We have thriving cultural precincts throughout the local government area that celebrate our heritage and culture.
- We have a diverse program of cultural and heritage activities.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community
- Community groups
- Business groups
- Non-government organisations
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (NSW Police, RMS)



MEASURES	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	TARGET
Community Wellbeing	<p>This measure is from a random survey of residents where they are asked to rate their agreement with the statement "The area offers a good quality of life" on a scale of 1-5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.</p> <p>Current Rating = 3.76 (compared with 3.77 in August 2009)</p>	3.76 2012	Improve
Socio-Economic Index	<p>The Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) measures the relative level of socio-economic disadvantage based on a range of Census characteristics including income, educational attainment, unemployment and occupations.</p> <p>A score higher than 1,000 means a lower level of disadvantage and a score lower than 1,000 means a higher level of disadvantage.</p> <p>In 2006 Cessnock local government area had an Index of 938.7.</p>	936.4 2011	Improve
Malicious Damage to Property	<p>This measure is the number of incidents (and ranking out of 140 local government areas) of malicious property damage to property in the Cessnock Local Government Area from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.</p> <p>In 2011 there were 802 incidents and Cessnock LGA had the 42nd highest number of incidents (compared with 800 incidents in 2010 and 916 incidents in 2009).</p>	802 (RANKING 42) 2011	Maintain

QUALITATIVE MEASURES	2012	TARGET
These measures are from a random survey of residents where they are asked to rate their agreement with these statements on a scale of 1-5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.		
There is strong community spirit in the Cessnock Area	3.39	Improve
Facilities and services for children are adequate	2.85	Improve
Facilities and services for youth are adequate	2.27	Improve
Facilities and services for the aged are adequate	2.93	Improve
Arts, entertainment and culture are well-catered for	3.39	Improve
It is a safe place to live	3.12	Improve

#### RELEVANT STATE & REGIONAL PLANS

- State Plan
- Hunter Regional Action Plan – NSW Govt 2013
  - Improve community safety
  - Local action to prevent crime
- Lower Hunter Regional Strategy

# A sustainable & prosperous community

## COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME

This desired outcome identifies the need to attract a diverse range of businesses, industries and services together with improved access to education, training and employment opportunities to ensure we have a sustainable and prosperous economy in Cessnock in 2023.

*How we are progressing:*

In July 2012 research was undertaken to assess the community's perceptions of progress towards this desired outcome:

*How well does this statement:*

A prosperous and sustainable economy describe the Cessnock Local Government area?

### 3.12 – Moderate agreement

1	2	3	4	5		
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree		
18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Male	Female	Overall
3.25	3.11	3.08	3.06	3.13	3.10	3.12

*Confirmation of desired outcomes and objectives and objectives*

In 2013 the community confirmed that this desired outcome and objectives were still relevant.

OBJECTIVE 2.1:

## Diversifying local business options

### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Our local government area is attractive and supportive of business.
- We have a diversity of business and industries across the local government area.
- Our planning controls provide for adequate industrial and commercial lands.

### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community groups
- Business groups
- Tourism groups
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (e.g. Trade & Investment)
- Federal Government

## OBJECTIVE 2.2:

### Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- We have learning opportunities for people of all ages.
- We have employment opportunities in the local government area.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community groups
- Business groups
- Tourism groups
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (e.g. Dept of Education & Training)
- Federal Government

## OBJECTIVE 2.3:

### Increasing tourism opportunities & visitation in the area

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- We have a range of diverse visitor experience across the entire local government area.
- Our local government area is attractive to visitors.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Business groups
- Tourism groups
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government



MEASURES	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	TARGET
Unemployment Rate	<p>This is the measure of residents actively seeking employment but unable to find work.</p> <p>It is published quarterly by the Dept of Education, Employment &amp; Workplace Relations.</p> <p>In December 2012 the unemployment rate for Cessnock LGA was 6.6% (compared with 5.1% for NSW and 5.2% for Australia).</p>	6.6% Dec 2012	NSW + 1.3%
Tourist Visitation and Expenditure	<p>This measure is the total number of visitors (overnight and day trips) and their total expenditure in the LGA from Destination NSW and Tourism Research Australia's National Visitor Survey and International Visitor Survey.</p> <p>For the period Sept 2008-Sept 2011 there were 755,000 visitors with a total spend of \$157m (compared to 73,759,000 visitors to NSW with a total spend of \$23,592m).</p>	755,000 visitors \$157m Spend 2008-11	Maintain

QUALITATIVE MEASURES	2012	TARGET
These measures are from a random survey of residents where they are asked to rate their agreement with these statements on a scale of 1-5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.		
Industry and business development is working well	2.79	Improve
There are enough employment opportunities	2.40	Improve
Education and training opportunities are good	3.02	Improve
Tourism is promoted well	3.93	Maintain
The vineyards play an important role in the local economy.	4.49	Maintain
Conferences and events are important for the area.	4.25	Maintain

#### RELEVANT STATE & REGIONAL PLANS

- State Plan
- Hunter Regional Action Plan – NSW Govt 2013
  - Investment in economic diversity
  - Support economic diversity
  - Support small business
  - Grow the visitor economy in the Hunter
  - Skill development in the Hunter
- Lower Hunter Regional Strategy
- Destination NSW - Visitor Economy Taskforce

# A Sustainable & Healthy Environment

## COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME

This desired outcome focuses on the conservation and preservation of the natural environment whilst balancing the impact of development to ensure sustainable and healthy community.

*How we are progressing:*

In July 2012 research was undertaken to assess the community's perceptions of progress towards this desired outcome:

*How well does this statement:*

A healthy and sustainable environment *describe the Cessnock local government area?*

### 3.41 – Moderate agreement

1	2	3	4	5		
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree		
18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Male	Female	Overall
3.30	3.50	3.40	3.41	3.43	3.38	3.41

*Confirmation of desired outcomes and objectives and objectives*

In 2013 the community confirmed that this desired outcome and objectives were still relevant.

## OBJECTIVE 3.1:

# Protecting & enhancing the natural environment & the rural character of the area

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Our area's rural character and heritage is protected.
- Our community is aware of the value of natural resources and biodiversity.
- Our environmental amenity is protected and enhanced.
- Our waterways and catchments are maintained and enhanced.

## RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community
- Community groups
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (e.g. Dept of Planning)

## OBJECTIVE 3.2:

### Better utilisation of existing open space

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Our open spaces are distributed where people live.
- We have green corridors connecting our open space areas.
- We have high quality, centralised multi-purpose sporting and recreation facilities.
- Our open spaces have suitable amenities and plenty of shade.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community
- Community groups
- Sporting organisations
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (e.g. Dept of Planning)

## OBJECTIVE 3.3:

### Better waste management and recycling

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- We divert more of our waste for recycling or re-processing.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community
- Industry
- Community groups
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (e.g. Office of Environment & Heritage)





MEASURES	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	TARGET
Open Space & Green Corridors	This measure is the number of lots zoned residential (R2, R3, R5 and RU5) within 500m of open space and green corridors (zoned RE1, RE2 and E1).	15,844 lots	Maintain
	This measure identifies the number and proportion of residents with access to open space for passive and active recreation purposes.	79.2%	Maintain
	This measure is sourced from Council's geographic information system.		
Waste & Recycling	<p>This is a measure of the number of tonnes recycled via the kerbside recycling service.</p> <p>The kerbside recycling service was provided to 18,881 properties in 2011-12.</p> <p>This measure is sourced from Hunter Resource Recovery.</p>	4,447t 2011-12	>4,500 T P.A.

QUALITATIVE MEASURES	2012	TARGET
These measures are from a random survey of residents where they are asked to rate their agreement with these statements on a scale of 1-5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.		
The area has an attractive appearance	3.23	Improve
The natural environment is well managed	3.06	Improve
Environmental issues are handled well	2.89	Improve
The bushland that supports a diversity of native plants and animals is valuable	4.19	Maintain
The area's heritage is well conserved	3.62	Maintain
Development overall is well planned and well managed	2.71	Improve
Residential development is well managed	2.76	Improve
There are enough good quality open spaces	3.21	Improve
There is a wide range of recreation and leisure opportunities	3.10	Improve
Waste collection and disposal are well managed	3.61	Maintain

#### RELEVANT STATE & REGIONAL PLANS

- State Plan
- Hunter Regional Action Plan – NSW Govt 2013
  - Effectively plan for land use
- Lower Hunter Regional Strategy

# Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities

## COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME

This desired outcome identifies the local, state and federal infrastructure, services and facilities needed to serve the current and future community of Cessnock while ensuring there is adequate access to these facilities and services.

*How we are progressing:*

In July 2012 research was undertaken to assess the community's perceptions of progress towards this desired outcome:

*How well does this statement:*

Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities describe the Cessnock local government area?

### 3.02 – Moderate agreement

1	2	3	4	5		
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree		
18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Male	Female	Overall
3.21	3.07	2.81	3.01	2.92	3.11	3.02

*Confirmation of desired outcomes and objectives and objectives*

In 2013 the community confirmed that this desired outcome and objectives were still relevant.

## OBJECTIVE 4.1:

# Better transport links

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- We have access to a range of public and community transport within the local government area.
- We have access to a range of public and community transport beyond the local government area.
- We have a new passenger train service in Cessnock.

## RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community groups
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Private transport operators
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (e.g. Transport NSW)
- Federal Government

## OBJECTIVE 4.2:

### Improving the road network

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- We have a high quality road network.
- We have managed the traffic impact of the Hunter Expressway on local communities.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (e.g. RMS)
- Federal Government

## OBJECTIVE 4.3:

### Improving access to health services locally

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- We have better availability of and access to hospitals and health services in the local government area.
- We have better availability of and access to general practitioners and dental services in the local government area.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Not-for-profit organisations
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (e.g. Dept of Health)
- Federal Government



MEASURES	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	TARGET
Public Transport Usage	This measure is the annual distance and percentage of trips made by public transport (trains and bus) by residents of the local government area. This data is sourced from the Household Travel Survey.	93,000km 5% 2010-11	Improve
Pavement Network Condition	The Pavement Condition Index (PCI) is a measure of urban road quality – it reflects the quality of the pavement structure (not the surface condition/ driveability). It excludes unsealed roads. Pavement condition indexes are classified from less than 1 (failed) to greater than 8.5 (excellent) As at 30 June 2012 the average PCI for the urban road network was 7.96 (compared with 7.49 at 30 June 2011).	7.96 (very good) 2012	Improve
Ratio of GPs per 100,000 population	This measure is the number of general practitioners (GPs) per 100,000 population in the Cessnock Local Government Area. In 2011 the ratio was 1:1,575 (compared to 1:1,400 for Australia).	1:1,575 2011	Improve
Hospital Emergency On Time Treatments	This measure is the percentage of emergency and urgent patients treated on time (i.e. within 10 minutes and 30 minutes respectively) at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Hospitals. In 2011-12 the national average for emergency patients treated on time (within 10 minutes) was 80% and for urgent patients treated on time (within 30 minutes) was 66%. This data is sourced from the National Health Performance Authority.	86% & 79% Cessnock  93% & 84% Kurri Kurri 2011-12	Maintain  Maintain

QUALITATIVE MEASURES	2012	TARGET
These measures are from a random survey of residents where they are asked to rate their agreement with these statements on a scale of 1-5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.		
There is enough public transport	2.59	Improve
The road network is effective and in good repair	1.45	Improve
Health facilities are sufficient	2.64	Improve

#### RELEVANT STATE & REGIONAL PLANS

- State Plan
- Hunter Regional Action Plan – NSW Govt 2013
  - Improve transport connectivity
  - Improve freight movement
  - Deliver road infrastructure upgrades
  - Invest in rail infrastructure
  - Invest in local road infrastructure
  - Enhance health infrastructure
  - Target health services for local communities
- Lower Hunter Regional Strategy



## Civic leadership and effective governance

### COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME

This desired outcome focuses on the need for strong civic leadership and effective governance with an engaged community actively participating in decision making processes affecting their future.

*How we are progressing:*

In July 2012 research was undertaken to assess the community's perceptions of progress towards this desired outcome:

*How well does this statement:*

Civic leadership and effective governance describe the Cessnock local government area?

#### 2.35 – Low agreement

1	2	3	4	5		
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree		
18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Male	Female	Overall
2.61	2.31	2.29	2.25	2.16	2.53	2.35

*Confirmation of desired outcomes and objectives and objectives*

In 2013 the community confirmed that this desired outcome and objectives were still relevant.

Community research in July 2012 showed only a low level of agreement that this desired outcome was being achieved; so during the next integrated planning and reporting cycle there will be a renewed focus on leading by example and strengthening governance frameworks.

### OBJECTIVE 5.1:

## Fostering and supporting community leadership

### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- We have well-trained and qualified leaders in our community and in our workforce.
- Our young people have aspirations to become leaders.

### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community
- Businesses
- Training organisations
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Cessnock City Council
- NSW Government (e.g. Dept of Education & Training)
- Federal Government

## OBJECTIVE 5.2:

### Encouraging more community participation in decision making

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- We are informed about our community.
- We are involved in decisions affecting our community.
- We have improved relationships between different levels of government.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Community
- Community groups
- Cessnock City Council
- Other local governments
- NSW Government
- Federal Government

## OBJECTIVE 5.3:

### Making Council more responsive to the community

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Our Council is responsive to the community.
- Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent.

#### RESPONSIBILITY & CONTRIBUTIONS

The following individuals and organisations can contribute to achieving these strategic directions:

- Cessnock City Council





MEASURES	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	TARGET
Participation	<p>This measure is the number of people per 1,000 population volunteering for an organisation or group.</p> <p>In the Australian Bureau of Statistic's 2011 Census, there was a total of 5,015 or 125 people per 1,000 population volunteering for an organisation or group in the Cessnock Local Government Area (compared with 167 people per 1,000 in NSW and 178 in Australia).</p>	125 2011	Improve
Education	<p>This measure is the percentage of the population with a post-school qualification (degree, diploma or vocational).</p> <p>This measure is obtained from the ABS Census and in 2011 the comparative NSW figure was 45.9%.</p>	36.7% 2011	Improve
Engagement	<p>This measure is the attendance of community representatives on Council committees at meetings of those committees.</p> <p>It is calculated by dividing the number of members attending meetings by the number of members eligible to attend those meetings.</p>	N/A	>75%
Governance	<p>This is the number of complaints received by the Division of Local Government regarding Cessnock City Council and the percentage of the total complaints across all councils received by the Division.</p> <p>In 2010-11 the Division of Local Government received 29 complaints about Cessnock City Council (2.57% of total complaints).</p>	25 2011-12  2.13% of total 2011-12	Reduce

QUALITATIVE MEASURES	2012	TARGET
These measures are from a random survey of residents where they are asked to rate their agreement with these statements on a scale of 1-5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.		
People volunteer and get involved in their community	3.29	Improve
The opportunity exists for me to be involved in making decisions about my community	3.04	Improve
Laws and regulations are enforced consistently and fairly	2.96	Improve
There is good cooperation between all levels of government in the area	2.50	Improve
There is a clear plan and direction for the future	2.41	Improve

#### RELEVANT STATE & REGIONAL PLANS

- Destination 2036 – NSW Govt

## Monitoring our progress

### AT A GLANCE

The Cessnock 2023 community strategic plan belongs to all Cessnock residents and land owners and relies on all of us to achieve the outcomes we seek in the future. At the same time Cessnock City Council can play a major role in progressing the strategic directions outlined in this document.

Council, along with the community, will also have an important role to play in advocating for the State and Federal governments to achieve the desired outcomes and objectives for which they have responsibility such as education, public transport, health services and policing.

In order to play its part in implementing the Cessnock 2023 community strategic plan; Council will undertake the following planning and reporting activities:

*Development of a four-year Delivery Program* – the 2013-17 Delivery Program details all of the principal activities to be undertaken by Council to meet its statutory obligations and deliver on the objectives and strategic directions outlined in the Cessnock 2023 community strategic plan.

*One-year Operational Plan* – this effectively is the Council's annual budget and identifies the specific strategic projects and services that will be funded each year.

*Regular Council Review* – the General Manager will report to the Council at least every six months to outline progress that has been achieved in implementing its Delivery Program.

*Annual Progress Review* – the Council will prepare an Annual Report summarising its operations and initiatives during the year.

*Community Research* – the Council will undertake independent community research every two years to gauge the community's perceptions of progress against the community strategic plan.

*End of Term Report* – at the final meeting prior to the local government elections, the outgoing Council will be presented with a report detailing the progress that it has made towards implementing the community strategic plan.

### CONCLUSION

Cessnock City Council has adopted the Cessnock 2023 community strategic plan on behalf of the community and is looking forward to working in partnership to make our community's vision a reality.

Feedback and suggestions on the Cessnock 2023 community strategic plan are always welcome and should be directed to:

The General Manager  
Cessnock City Council  
PO Box 152

Cessnock NSW 2325

Or

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

Or

Telephone: 4993 4100.



## Appendix I - Glossary

*Community Strategic Plan* – The community's vision for the future of the local government area. This document has a ten-year timeframe. The original plan (Cessnock 2020) was adopted in October 2010. The current plan (Cessnock 2023) was adopted in June 2013.

Comprises:

- *1 x Community Vision* – an overarching statement of what the community desires for the local government area
- *5 x Desired Outcomes* – the community had articulated the results that it would like to see for the local government area grouped into five major themes (of community, economy, environment, infrastructure and governance)
- *16 x Objectives* – the community has identified the 3-4 ambitions under each of the desired outcomes.
- *42 x Strategic Directions* – the community has articulated the course in which it wishes to head in order to achieve its desired outcomes. The strategic directions start with the word

“Our” or “We” to demonstrate their inclusiveness – i.e. we are all a part of this.

- *Community Strategic Plan Measures* – These measures relate to the local government area (and not the organisation). For example: Index of Socio-Economic Advantage, Education levels, etc.

This section will include a description of the measure, some context/background, the base line (i.e. what the measure is now) and the direction that is being targeted (i.e. where we want the measure to be in 10 years' time). These measures will be used to assess progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan.

*Delivery Program* – The Delivery Program is Cessnock City Council's contribution to the achievement of the Community Strategic Plan. Note that Council is one of many who will contribute towards the community's vision (others include: individuals, community groups, businesses, industry groups, not-for-profit groups, State & Federal government

and government agencies, etc.).

The Delivery Program has a four year timeframe – in line with the term of the elected Council. (A council is elected in September and must adopt a 4-year Delivery Program by the following June).

Comprises:

- *Deliverables* – These describe the programs, projects and services that Council will provide (during the term of the elected Council). The Deliverables start with a verb (e.g. “Commence”, “Complete”, “Provide”, etc.) and progress against Deliverables is reported quarterly to Council.

Deliverables are linked to the 16 Community Strategic Plan objectives or are other statutory requirements that may not be included in the Community Strategic Plan.

## Appendix 2

2009 Workshop comments about the Cessnock local government area of the future.

### *Services*

- More equitable distribution of services across the local government area
- More affordable housing estates
- Cluster 'like' services together
- Lessen the segregation and distance between shops so that less travel is required
- Ensure services provision grows as the population of the community grows

### *Transport*

- Better public transport in Cessnock and improve accessibility in and out of the area (via air, roads and fast rail)
- More accessible community transport opportunities
- Integrated public transport timetables
- Increased number and better cycleway networks through Cessnock
- A planned maintenance schedule for quality road improvements in the area
- Remove heavy vehicle traffic out of the CBD

### *Health care*

- Long term security and expansion of local health services

- A local hospital with a maternity ward
- Adequate provision of child care services
- Better facilities for kids with disabilities
- Improved access to health services for all people but in particular aged care
- Support services for elderly including adequate provision of retirement villages
- After hours General Practitioner services in all local communities

### *Community and lifestyle*

- Provide more affordable cultural activities/facilities available for all age groups
- Improve safety through greater police presence and monitoring of CCTV
- Develop a more diverse shopping mix
- More and improved community celebrations including multicultural events and Australia Day
- Build and improve community image
- More participation of community leaders in programs such as this
- Need a larger population to support services
- Maintain local identity and improve sense of community pride
- Better early intervention services

- Raise awareness about the community activities and facilities available
- Use existing spaces and facilities more effectively
- Reduce community apathy
- Better community integration and cohesion between Cessnock and other areas
- Active and vibrant arts community
- Engage and celebrate the local Aboriginal community's heritage
- Acquire green space for the future – open recreational community space including parks, gardens, cycle paths, active and passive spaces and community pools
- Encourage engagement of youth
- Maintain current village lifestyle
- Great North Road heritage listing
- Remove the gaol – major community issue

### *Communication and community participation*

- Better technological forms of communication
- Council website should be a forum for the community to provide comments
- Council appropriately notify ratepayers about community events and consultation activities / meetings
- Greater feedback to community from Council

### *Natural environment*

- Education about environmental care including through awareness raising activities such as posters
- Rehabilitation of mining sites
- Monitoring of pollution levels by industry and big businesses
- Create community gardens
- Invest in alternative energy sources
- Encourage environmental sustainability
- Improve regularity of rubbish and recycling collections
- Maintain a quality scenic landscape
- Regulation to protect rural environments
- Improve drainage and prevent pollution of waterways by installing grates over drains
- More playgrounds, parks, trees and shade
- Better fire hazard reduction planning across all levels of government and agencies

### *Built environment*

- Maintain and create more recreational areas and public gardens/parks
- Retain villages by ensuring rates go back into local infrastructure
- Improve kerb and guttering
- Improve visual aesthetics of the whole area including tree replacement, upgrades

of main streets, place power underground

- Extend footpaths and complete gaps in the footpath network
- Find the right balance of development
- More public toilets/access to toilets through better signage
- Improve street lighting
- Maintain community facilities better – including technology
- Review State Government planning decisions

### *Economy*

- Create local diverse jobs opportunities across the LGA
- Section 94 contributions to be spent locally
- Strong service industry
- Vibrant profitable wine related tourism industry
- Need to develop strategy to take opportunity from F3 extension
- Understanding Cessnock's point of difference
- Encourage mid-week activity for tourists
- Better destination marketing – strategic branding
- More council funding for tourism
- Retraining for older workers
- Mentoring programs
- Consider impacts of reduction in coal mining employment

- Tourism to be expanded to include history/heritage of the LGA
- Equal distribution of funding across the LGA
- Rates to be spent in local areas

### *Education*

- Develop a hospitality training college
- Provide greater access and range of education and training service providers

### *Leadership*

- Respect and recognition of different areas in the LGA
- Get rid of party politics and have a less bureaucratic Council
- More input by the Vineyards District Advisory Committee
- More effective DA approval system - quicken development process
- Improve coordination between surrounding councils
- Improve responsiveness of the planning department within Council
- Educate public on election processes and the system for voting
- Improve accountability of Council
- Better Councillor representation and support for smaller areas
- Develop Local/Village community strategic plans