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ACCOUNTING

Strategic Outcome:	Good government
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Responsible Officer:	Director Corporate Services
Document Control:	Replaces and revokes the Accounting Policy adopted 19 June 2019
Delivery Program Link:	2.1.3.1 *Coordinate Council investments, financial management, financial operations and processing.*

1. POLICY STATEMENT

To comprehensively collate accounting policies, significant judgments, estimates and assumptions in regard to the financial records and position of the Council.

All such relevant accounting policies and practices must comply with relevant accounting standards, and be in line with requirements of the Office of Local Government Code of Accounting practice.

2. PURPOSE

To ensure adequate practices are put in place to direct the accounting and inform treatment of revenue, expenditure, assets, liabilities, equity and to guide the preparation & presentation of Annual Financial Statements. These policies are included in full with each set of statements.

To specify and outline the specific treatment Council has adopted in its financial reporting and treatment of relevant accounting issues, in particular where:

- The accounting standards offer more than one option in the treatment of a particular issue
- Where the Office of Local Government Code of Accounting Practice has alternative treatments or seeks Council to make a choice or elect a particular method
- Council practices require further explanation or clarification

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Council activities, in particular the preparation and presentation of the financial statements.

4. DEFINITIONS

AASB	Australian Accounting Standards Board
OLG	NSW Office of Local Government
The Code	The Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting as issued annually by OLG.

5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 General basis of preparation of financial statements

Councils general purpose financial statements are prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Australian Accounting Interpretations, the *Local Government Act 1993* and Regulations, and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

Council will review the impact of all new Australian Accounting Standards and any new accounting policies it adopts.

Financial statements are prepared under historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and certain classes of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

5.2 Significant accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the Council's accounting policies.

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that may have a financial impact on the Council and that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

5.2.1 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Council makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results.

The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year include

a) estimated fair values of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment
b) estimated tip remediation provisions
c) employee benefit provisions

5.2.2 Impairment of receivables

Council has made a significant judgement about the impairment of a number of its receivables.

Council monitors its receivables closely and currently considered all of them recoverable (except as outlined in the Receivables Note), with debt collection processes ongoing where necessary.

Where necessary Council will undertake debt collection processes, including action to sell properties for recovery of rates in arrears. Where sale proceeds are expected to not entirely cover the associated cost of legal and sale proceedings any shortfall is accordingly impaired.

5.2.3 Goods and Services Tax

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of associated GST, unless the GST incurred is not recoverable from the taxation authority. In this case it is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the Statement of Financial Position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities that are recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority are presented as operating cash flows

5.3 Income

5.3.1 Rates and charges

Levying and making of rates and charges are further detailed in the Revenue Policy.

Rates and annual charges are recognised as revenue when the Council obtains control over the assets comprising these receipts.

Pensioner rebates relate to reductions in rates and certain annual charges for eligible pensioners' place of residence in the local government council area that are not subsidised by the NSW Government.

Pensioner rate subsidies are received from the NSW Government to provide a contribution towards the pensioner rebates.

Control over assets acquired from rates and annual charges is obtained at the commencement of the rating year as it is an enforceable debt linked to the rateable property or, where earlier, upon receipt of the rates.

5.3.2 User charges and fees

User charges and fees are recognised as revenue when the service has been provided

5.3.3 Interest and investment income

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest rate at the date that interest is earned.

Dividends are recognised as income in profit or loss unless the dividend clearly represents a recovery of part of the cost of the investment

5.3.4 Other revenue

Council recognises revenue when the amount of revenue can be reliably measured, it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the Council and specific criteria have been met for each of the Council's activities as described below. Council bases its estimates on historical results, taking into consideration the type of customer, the type of transaction and the specifics of each arrangement.

Rental income is accounted for on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Miscellaneous sales are recognised when physical possession has transferred to the customer which is deemed to be the point of transfer of risks and rewards.

Other income is recorded when the payment is due, the value of the payment is notified, or the payment is received, whichever occurs first.

5.3.5 Grants and contributions

Control over grants and contributions is normally obtained upon their receipt (or acquittal) and is valued at the fair value of the granted or contributed asset at the date of transfer.

Where grants or contributions recognised as revenues during the financial year were obtained on condition that they be expended in a particular manner, or used over a particular period, and those conditions were un-discharged at reporting date, the unused grant or contribution is disclosed above.

Council has obligations to provide facilities from contribution revenues levied on developers under the provisions of sections 7.4, 7.11 and 7.12 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

While Council generally incorporates these amounts as part of a Development Consents Order, such developer contributions are only recognised as income upon receipt by Council, due to the possibility that individual development consents may not be acted upon by the applicant and, accordingly, would not be payable to Council.

Developer contributions may only be expended for the purposes for which the contributions were required, but the Council may apply contributions according to the priorities established in work schedules

A liability is recognised in respect of revenue that is reciprocal in nature to the extent that the requisite service has not been provided at reporting date

5.4 Expenses

5.4.1 Employee benefits and on-costs

Employee benefit expenses are recorded when the service has been provided by the employee.

All employees of the Council are entitled to benefits on retirement, disability or death. Council contributes to various defined benefit plans and defined contribution plans on behalf of its employees.

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense as they become payable. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that a cash refund or a reduction in the future payments is available.

Council participates in a Defined Benefit Plan under the Local Government Superannuation Scheme, however, when sufficient information to account for the plan as a defined benefit is not available and therefore Council accounts for its obligations to defined benefit plans on the same basis as its obligations to defined contribution plans, i.e. as an expense when it becomes payable – refer to Contingencies and other assets/liabilities not recognised note for more information.

5.4.2 Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs incurred for the construction of any qualifying asset are capitalised during the period of time that is required to complete and prepare the asset for its intended use or sale. Other borrowing costs are expensed.

5.4.3 Depreciation, amortisation and impairment

Information regarding Depreciation, amortisation and impairment is also contained in the Asset Accounting Policy.

Depreciation and amortisation are calculated using the straight line method to allocate their cost, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives.

Intangible assets that have an indefinite useful life or are not yet available for use are not subject to amortisation and are tested annually for impairment, or more frequently if events or changes in circumstances indicate that they might be impaired. Other assets are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use.

For the purposes of assessing impairment, assets are grouped at the lowest levels for which there are separately identifiable cash inflows that are largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets (cash-generating units). Non-financial assets that suffered an impairment are reviewed for possible reversal of the impairment at each reporting date.

Impairment losses for revalued assets are firstly offset against the amount in the revaluation surplus for the class of asset, with only the excess to be recognised in the Income Statement

5.4.4 Other expenses

Other expenses are recorded on an accruals basis as the Council receives the goods or services.

5.5 Disposal of assets

The Disposal of assets is covered in the Disposal Policy.

The gain or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has irrevocably passed to the buyer and the asset is derecognised.

5.6 Investments

5.6.1 Classification

Council classifies its financial assets in the following categories: loans and receivables; held-to-maturity investments. The classification depends on the purpose for which the investments were acquired.

Management determines the classification of its investments at initial recognition and, in the case of assets classified as held-to-maturity, re-evaluates this designation at each reporting date

5.6.2 Held-to-maturity

Held-to-maturity investments are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments and fixed maturities that Council's management has the positive intention and ability to hold to maturity. Assets in this category are measured at amortised cost

5.6.3 Recognition and derecognition

Regular purchases and sales of financial assets are recognised on trade-date: the date on which Council commits to purchase or sell the asset. Investments are initially recognised at fair value plus transaction costs for all financial assets not carried at fair value through profit or loss.

Financial assets carried at fair value through profit or loss are initially recognised at fair value and transaction costs are expensed in the income statement. Investments are derecognised when the rights to receive cash flows from the financial assets have expired or have been transferred and Council has transferred substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership

5.7 Receivables

5.7.1 Recognition and measurement

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market. They are included in current assets, except for those with maturities greater than 12 months after the reporting date which are classified as non-current assets.

Receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. Receivables are generally due for settlement within 30 days. Cash flows relating to short-term receivables are not discounted if the effect of discounting is immaterial.

5.7.2 Impairment

For loans and receivables the amount of the loss is measured as the difference between the asset's carrying amount and the present value of estimated future cash flows (excluding future credit losses that have not been incurred) discounted at the financial asset's original effective interest rate. The carrying amount of the asset is reduced and the amount of the loss is recognised in profit or loss. Collectability of receivables is reviewed on an on-going basis. Debts that are known to be uncollectible are written off by reducing the carrying amount directly.

An allowance account (provision for impairment of receivables) is used when there is objective evidence that Council will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables. Significant financial difficulties of the debtor, probability that the debtor will enter bankruptcy or financial reorganisation, and default or delinquency in payments (more than 120 days overdue) are considered indicators that the receivable is impaired.

When a receivable for which an impairment allowance had been recognised becomes uncollectable in a subsequent period it is written off against the allowance account. Subsequent recoveries of amounts previously written off are credited against other expenses in the Income statement.

5.8 Inventory and other assets

5.8.1 Raw inventory and stores

Raw materials and stores are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Costs are assigned to individual items of inventory on basis of weighted average costs. Costs of purchased inventory are determined after deducting rebates and discounts.

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price in the ordinary course of business less the estimated costs of completion and the estimated costs necessary to make the sale

5.8.2 Inventory held for distribution

Inventory held for distribution is held at cost, adjusted where applicable for any loss of service potential.

5.8.3 Land held for resale/capitalisation of borrowing costs

Land held for resale is stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost is assigned by specific identification and includes the cost of acquisition, and development and borrowing costs during development. When development is completed borrowing costs and other holding charges are expensed as incurred. Borrowing costs included in the cost of land held for resale are those costs that would have been avoided if the expenditure on the acquisition and development of the land had not been made. Borrowing costs incurred while active development is interrupted for extended periods are recognised as expenses.

Where Council develops land for resale it considers that it is trading in the land, and treats it as inventory accordingly

5.9 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

Accounting for assets is covered under the Asset Accounting Policy.

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment are held at fair value. Independent valuations are performed at least every five years, however the carrying amount of assets is assessed at each reporting date to confirm that it is not materially different from current fair value.

Water and sewerage network assets are indexed at each reporting period in accordance with the Rates Reference Manual issued by Crown Lands and Water (CLAW).

Increases in the carrying amounts arising on revaluation are credited to the asset revaluation reserve. To the extent that the increase reverses a decrease previously recognising profit or loss relating to that asset class, the increase is first recognised as profit or loss. Decreases that reverse previous increases of assets in the same class are first charged against revaluation reserves directly in equity to the extent of the remaining reserve attributable to the class; all other decreases are charged to the Income Statement.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to Council and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the income statement during the financial period in which they are incurred.

Land is not depreciated.

Depreciation on other assets is calculated using the straight line method to allocate their cost, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives in line with the Asset Accounting Policy.

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date. Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with carrying amount. These are included in the Income statement

5.9.1 Land under roads

Land under roads is land under roadways and road reserves including land under footpaths, nature strips and median strips.

Council has elected not to recognise land under roads acquired before 1 July 2008 in accordance with AASB 1051 Land Under Roads. Land under roads acquired after 1 July 2008 is recognised in accordance with AASB 116 Property, Plant and Equipment.

5.9.2 Crown reserves

Crown Reserves under Council's care and control are recognised as assets of the Council. While ownership of the reserves remains with the Crown, Council retains operational control of the reserves and is responsible for their maintenance and use in accordance with the specific purposes to which the reserves are dedicated.

Improvements on Crown Reserves are also recorded as assets, while maintenance costs incurred by Council and revenues relating to the reserves are recognised within Council's Income Statement

5.9.3 Rural Fire Service assets

Under section 119 of the *Rural Fire Services Act 1997*, "all firefighting equipment purchased or constructed wholly or from money to the credit of the Fund is to be vested in the council of the area for or on behalf of which the firefighting equipment has been purchased or constructed".

Until such time as discussions on this matter have concluded and the legislation changed, Council will not recognise Rural Fire Service plant and equipment assets. Land and buildings are recognised.

5.10 Payables and borrowings

5.10.1 Payables

Reported amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Council prior to the end of financial year that are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

5.10.2 Borrowings

Borrowings are initially recognised at fair value, net of transaction costs incurred. Borrowings are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Any difference between the proceeds (net of transaction costs) and the redemption amount is recognised in the income statement over the period of the borrowings using the effective interest method.

Fees paid on the establishment of loan facilities are recognised as transaction costs of the loan to the extent that it is probable that some or all of the facility will be drawn down. In this case, the fee is deferred until the draw down occurs. To the extent there is no evidence that it is probable that some or all of the facility will be drawn down, the fee is capitalised as a prepayment for liquidity services and amortised over the period of the facility to which it relates.

Borrowings are removed from the Statement of Financial Position when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expired. The difference between the carrying amount of a financial liability that has been extinguished or transferred to another party and the consideration paid, including any non-cash assets transferred or liabilities assumed, is recognised in other income or finance cost. Borrowings are classified as current liabilities unless Council has an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting date.

5.11 Provisions

Provisions are recognised when Council has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events, it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation, and the amount has been reliably estimated.

Where there are a number of similar obligations, the likelihood that an outflow will be required in settlement is determined by considering the class of obligations as a whole. A provision is recognised even if the likelihood of an outflow with respect to any one item included in the same class of obligations may be small.

Provisions are measured at the present value of management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation at the reporting date. The discount rate used to determine the present value reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the liability. The increase in the provision due to the passage of time is recognised as interest expense.

5.11.1 Employee benefits - short term

Liabilities for wages and salaries, including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and accumulating sick leave expected to be wholly settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service are recognised in respect of employees' services up to the end of the reporting period and are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

The liability for annual leave and accumulating sick leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. All other short-term employee benefit obligations are presented as payables.

5.11.2 Employee benefits - long term

The liability for long service leave and annual leave that is not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service is recognised in the provision for employee benefits and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the end of the reporting period using the projected unit credit method.

Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures, and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the end of the reporting period on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

The obligations are presented as current liabilities in the Statement of Financial Position if the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting date, regardless of when the actual settlement is expected to occur

5.11.3 Tips and quarries - restoration

Close down and restoration costs include the dismantling and demolition of infrastructure and the removal of residual materials and remediation of disturbed areas.

Estimated close down and restoration costs are provided for in the accounting period when the obligation arising from the related disturbance occurs, whether this occurs during the development or during the operation phase, based on the net present value of estimated future costs. Provisions for close down and restoration costs do not include any additional obligations which are expected to arise from future disturbance. The costs are estimated on the basis of a closure plan.

The cost estimates are calculated annually during the life of the operation to reflect known developments, e.g. updated cost estimates and revisions to the estimated lives of operations, and are subject to formal review at regular intervals

5.11.4 Tips and quarries - rehabilitation

Where rehabilitation is conducted systematically over the life of the operation, rather than at the time of closure, provision is made for the estimated outstanding continuous rehabilitation work at each reporting date and the cost is charged to the Income Statement.

Provision is made for the estimated present value of the costs of environmental clean-up obligations outstanding at the reporting date. These costs are charged to the Income Statement. Movements in the environmental clean-up provisions are presented as an operating cost, except for the unwinding of the discount which is shown as a borrowing cost.

Remediation procedures generally commence soon after the time the damage, remediation process and estimated remediation costs become known, but may continue for many years depending on the nature of the disturbance and the remediation techniques.

As noted above, the ultimate cost of environmental remediation is uncertain and cost estimates can vary in response to many factors including changes to the relevant legal requirements, the emergence of new restoration techniques or experience at other locations. The expected timing of expenditure can also change, for example in response to changes in quarry reserves or production rates. As a result there could be significant adjustments to the provision for close down and restoration and environmental clean-up, which would affect future financial results.

Other movements in the provisions for close down and restoration costs, including those resulting from new disturbance, updated cost estimates, changes to the estimated lives of operations and revisions to discount rates are capitalised within property, plant and equipment. These costs are then depreciated over the lives of the assets to which they relate.

Close down and restoration costs are a normal consequence of tip and quarry operations, and the majority of close down and restoration expenditure is incurred at the end of the life of the operations. Although the ultimate cost to be incurred is uncertain, Council estimates the respective costs based on feasibility and engineering studies using current restoration standards and techniques.

5.12 Key management personnel

Council has adopted a Key Management Personnel (KMP) policy.

Key management personnel (KMP) of the Council are those persons having the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the council, directly or indirectly.

Council has determined that transactions at arm's length between KMP and Council as part of Council delivering a public service objective (e.g. access to library or Council swimming pool by KMP) will not be disclosed.

6. RELATED LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

6.1 Legislation

- Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 (NSW)
- OLG Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting circulars

6.2 Australian Accounting Standards

- AASB 5 Non-current Assets Held for Sale and Discontinued Operations
- AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement
- AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements
- AASB 108 Accounting Policies, Change in Accounting Estimates and Errors
- AASB 116 Property, Plant and Equipment
- AASB 16 Leases
- AASB 123 Borrowing Costs
- AASB 136 Impairment of Assets
- AASB 137 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets
- AASB 138 Intangible Assets

- AASB 140 Investment Property
- AASB 1041 Revaluation of Non-Current Assets
- AASB 1031 Materiality
- AASB 1051 Land Under Roads
- AASB 1049 Whole of Government and General Government Sector Reporting
- SAC4 Statement of Accounting Concepts – Controlled Assets

6.3 Industry guidelines

- IPWEA's Australian Infrastructure Financial Management Guidelines
- CPA Guide to Valuation and Depreciation for Public and Not-for-profit sectors under AASB Accounting Standards
- NSW Treasury TPP 14-01 Accounting Policy: Valuation of Physical Non-Current Assets at Fair Value

6.4 Industry guidelines

- All Other Integrated Planning and Reporting documentation
- Asset Accounting Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Asset Management Strategy 2019 - 2027
- Berrigan Shire Council Asset Management Plans
- Capital Works on Community Facilities Policy
- Childrens' Young People and Families Strategy 2015 - 2019
- Community Strategic Plan 2027
- Contributory Footpath and Kerb and Gutter Schemes
- Corporate Credit Cards
- Council operated enterprises
- Delivery Program 2017 - 2021
- Disposal Policy
- Economic Development Strategy 2017-2021
- Financial Strategy 2016
- Fraud Control Policy
- Fuel Card Policy
- Information and Communications Technology Strategy 2019-2024
- Investment Policy
- Legislative Compliance Policy
- Library Services Strategic Plan 2014
- Long-term Financial Management Plan 2019 - 2029
- Operational Plan 2019 - 2020

- Payment of Expenses and the provision of facilities for Mayors and Councillors
- Privacy Management Plan 2013
- Private use of council vehicles – fuel charge policy
- Private use of Council vehicles policy
- Procurement and Disposal Policy
- Reimbursement of relocation expenses policy
- Related party disclosure policy
- Revenue policy
- Risk Management Policy & Framework
- Risk Management Strategic Plan 2013 - 2016
- Salary Policy
- Sports Tourism Strategy 2012
- Tender Policy
- Tourism Strategy 2014 - 2018
- User Fees and Charges policy
- Volunteer Strategy 2012 - 2016
- Water and Sewer supply policy
- Water trading policy
- Workforce Plan 2017 – 2021