

Productivity improvements

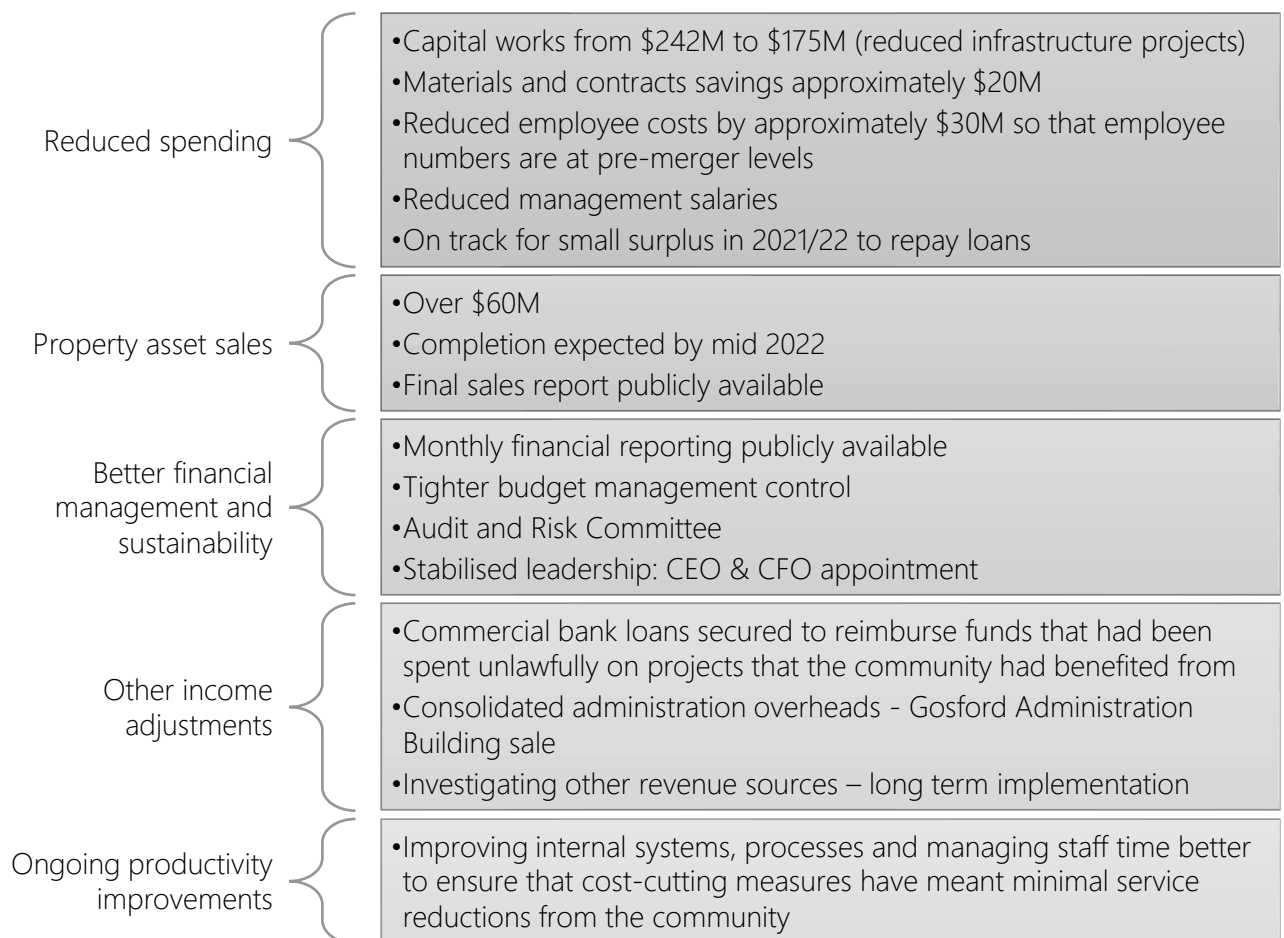
Fact Sheet



Getting our house in order

Council has taken decisive actions in a short space of time since uncovering its financial problems in November 2020. We have implemented measures to manage costs including significant staff reductions, restrictions of spending and reducing capital works programs (such as infrastructure and IT systems); selling property assets and obtained emergency bank loans to reimburse the restricted funds that had been spent unlawfully on projects that the community had benefited from. We have done everything we can behind the scenes to reduce costs without largely impacting on the services we deliver for the community.

Diagram 1. Council actions to fix the financial problem



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These cost management measures made up 70% of what we needed to do to satisfy the external lenders that we were getting Council finances back on track. The other 30% came from the temporary 13% (plus 2% rate peg) rate increase approved by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in May 2021. This temporary increase is for three years only. The external loans are the backbone of our recovery and we are required to repay these within 10 years. To do this and continue to be able to deliver services at the current level, Council is proposing to apply to maintain the current rates for an additional seven years, or ten years in total.

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Productivity improvements have also been made through better management of staff time; purposeful equipment to help staff do their job efficiently; and our technological progression coming to fruition with our staff benefiting from using upgraded technology systems and transitioning manual processes into digital ones. This means we have stopped some clunky and inefficient processes. These productivity improvements have ensured the necessary cost-cutting measures have meant minimal service reductions for the community. Some of these productivity gains will continue to have an ongoing positive impact on improved service delivery and the community will see the benefits year on year.

In a nutshell, we continually strive to be more productive, so we can use those 'saved hours of staff time' to deliver an improved service level for our community.

Diagram 2. Balancing costs reduction with productivity improvements.

Productivity improvements continually rebalances any cost cutting measures to ensure minimal service level impacts.



Cost cutting measures risk reducing service levels.

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Snapshot of productivity improvements

<p>Consolidating services to make it easier for our customers and staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One customer call centre reduced from two, providing one single phone number and point of contact• One rates management system, policy and procedures, following two rating systems being brought together• One main administration office building location reducing administrative overheads, with the future sale of Gosford administration building• One contract to manage three Animal Care Facilities instead of three different contracts• One pay cycle for staff, replacing five pay cycles and duplicated processes• One Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan progressing, meaning already simpler development application administration processes and systems (2022 completion)• One provider for waste collection service, instead of two contracts continues to provide ongoing benefits• One provider for the transport and processing of garden organics and sewage biosolids, instead of five contracts continues to provide ongoing benefits• Capital works internal committee for one way of managing capital program and budget• Single road pavement inspection process to improve road pavement hazard identification• One Asset Management System removed multiple databases and reduced IT software license fees• Better maintenance work order system to save time scheduling maintenance activities and record cost per activity• Reduced number of fleet vehicles from 1021 to 641 since 2018• One program for beach safety service reduced from two, providing single contract with Surf Lifesaving CC and consistent service for all 15 surf clubs across the coast• Annual cost savings since Council resumed management of three former YMCA leisure facilities in 2017• One library back of house operations location, instead of four locations• Region wide Bike Plan and Pedestrian Access & Mobility Plan in place to inform and prioritise pathway linkages, instead of reviewing individual sections at different times
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Central Coast Civil Works Specification to standardise consistent delivery and maintenance of roads, drainage and pathways to reduce asset lifecycle costs, and ensure assets reach their required useful life • One rolling ten-year road and drainage capital works program instead of multiple programs of work • One single road and drainage asset register instead of multiple systems
<p>Technological progression benefitting our customers and staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing multiple, similar software systems to single systems • Utilising fit-for-purpose technology to improve services • Rationalising back-office functions by removing duplicated internal processes and manual work-around tasks • Improving data quality, reporting and analysis of activities • Saving staff time to be reallocated to other functions. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Library App to access library resources from mobile devices, reducing staff transactions - Asset Maintenance Management System to better utilise staff time for inspections and produce defects reports - Field technology instead of paper-based assessments for low risk works and - Key stroke generator software automatically loads fees and charges instead of manual input - Single system for field staff to check if a sports field is being used each day to reduce lost time by turning up to facilities that are being used - Partially automated preparation of Flood Certificates - Utilised industry leading technology to complete full network road and pathway audit with information being used to better plan future maintenance work programs - GPS data helping drive Plant and Fleet efficiencies and optimise monthly fuel tax credit (FTC) claims - Scheduling software for light vehicle drivers to easier book maintenance - Desktop booking software and electronic key cabinets facilitated new centralised car-share scheme, giving staff easy access to pooled vehicles for use on a short-term casual basis
<p>Purposeful equipment so staff time is managed well</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robot line marking machine for sports field marking, saving staff time • Higher efficiency mowing equipment with higher speeds and wider cutting decks to reduce the time per scheduled mowing service • All weather air condition mowers means less staff down time due to weather conditions e.g. dust, heat, rain

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New sports fields, parks and playgrounds turfed with low slow growing couch turf minimising ongoing maintenance time • Improved out of season preparation works for open space areas e.g. mulching around tree bases to maximise mowing by high efficient ride on mowers and reduce manual whipper snipping and push mowing time • Remote operation of floodlighting and irrigation for some sporting facilities saving staff call out times • New turf management chemical to better maintain sports field turf helping to reduce frequency of maintenance • Accelerated upskilling in new collaborative technology, means the uptake has been highly optimised and benefits stay in place post-pandemic • Conference and instant messaging software upgraded and continues to have positive collaborative benefits beyond enabling staff to work from home • Maintenance management system (REFLECT) for proactively scheduling inspections and capturing asset defects • Plans underway to establish permanent program of reuse/repurpose/recycle materials in construction of road and drainage capital works (minimise use of virgin material) • LED streetlight replacement program creating ongoing energy cost savings and benefit of smart controls (supported by NSW Government) • Default public litter hutch removed individually custom manufacturing of hutch types resulting in bulk purchase benefits
<p>“BetterWays” program for staff ideas benefitting our community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy way for staff improvement ideas to be collected, investigated and put into place
<p>More improvements scheduled over the next three years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One theatres management model being investigated for efficiencies, instead of three council theatres managed differently • One public tree service system with consistent procedures and timeframes instead of two current systems • One outdoor dining application and management process to replace two processes • Consolidating a number of aspects of road, drainage and pavement design and overall management to create efficiencies in staff time • Ten-year strategy to transition to electric light vehicles underway to stay abreast of industry trends and to reduce Council's total fleet fuel consumption rates

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One cemeteries management system combining a number of different processes |
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This information is current as at 8 November 2021.

Related resources

For more information visit

- [Your Voice Our Coast](#)

Ask us a question

Please contact us at:

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