



Castlereagh Macquarie County Council

**Delivery Programme
2017/2018 - 2020/2021**

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Prepared in accordance with the provisions contained in the Local Government Act 19

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1. Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

The following definitions and abbreviations are used in the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council Delivery Plan:

BASP: Castlereagh Macquarie County Council Business Activity Strategic Plan

BIS: Bio-Security Act, 2015

Constituent Councils: means Coonamble Shire Council, Gilgandra Shire Council, Walgett Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council, and Warren Shire Councils collectively. These local government areas constitute the area of operation for the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council.

Council: Castlereagh Macquarie County Council

Councillors: Members of the CMCC governing body

County Council: Castlereagh Macquarie County Council

EEO: Equal Employment Opportunity

LGA 1993: NSW Local Government Act 1993

Noxious Plants: Plants which are declared noxious by Bio-Security Act, 2015 (formerly NSW Noxious Weed Act 1993) for the area of operation of the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council.

NSW DPI: NSW Department of Primary Industries

NWA 1993: NSW Noxious Weed Act 1993

CMCC: Castlereagh Macquarie County Council

NW LLS : North West Local Land Services

CW LLS : Central West Local Land Services

2. County Council Contact Details

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3. Legislative Requirements of the Delivery Plan

In accordance with Section 404, Local Government Act 1993, Council is required to develop a Delivery Plan which:

- a) Details the principal activities that Council will undertake to achieve the objectives established in the Business Activity Strategic Plan (BASP), which are within the resources available to Council as outlined in Resourcing Strategy contained in Council's BASP.
- b) Includes a method of assessment to determine the effectiveness of each principal activity in achieving the objectives at which the activity is directed.
- c) Is reviewed, at least every six (6) months, via principal activity progress reports from the General Manager to Council.

Council is also required to prepare a new Delivery Plan after each ordinary election of Councillors to cover the principal activities of Council for the four (4) year period commencing on the 1 July following the election.

4. Vision Statement

To prevent, contain or reduce the invasion of Noxious Plants within the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council area.

5. Mission Statement

To provide effective integrated weed management systems utilizing the latest technology to all Constituent Councils fairly and equitably in accordance with the Bio-Security Act, 2015 (formerly the Noxious Weeds Act, 1993).

5. PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES OF COUNCIL

Principal activities to achieve main business activity priorities

Note: This section needs to be amended to reflect requirements of new Biosecurity Act and Regulations

1. Strategic objective – Building Relationships

Build strong relationships with other natural resource managers having responsibilities in or adjacent to, the County Council’s area of operations through a program to improve liaison between natural resource managers.

Strategy

Foster a spirit of cooperation with other natural resource managers.

Activities

- Attend seminars, workshops, etc., conducted by other natural resource managers where appropriate.
- Encourage natural resource managers to participate in Council activities, such as public meetings and workshops.
- Share information with other natural resource managers.
- Host an annual meeting between natural resource managers to foster good relations and to provide a convenient forum for the exchange of information and the facilitation of cooperation.
- Encourage and establish personal contact between Council staff and staff of other natural resource managers.
- Establish and keep up to date a data base of contacts staff and others in other natural resource managers.
- Encourage Council staff to establish contact with appropriate staff in other natural resource managers.
- So far as possible, maintain contact between Council staff and the appropriate local staff of other natural resource managers and make such contacts the first point of contact between the Council and the other natural resource manager.
- Promote joint works for noxious weed control by natural resource managers.
- Investigate how the Council might undertake noxious weed control work jointly with other natural resource managers.
- Encourage other natural resource managers to consider undertaking noxious weed control and work jointly with other natural resource managers.
- Where appropriate, endeavour to have natural resource managers, particularly private occupiers, enter into joint arrangements for noxious weed control work.
- Investigate what incentives the Council might offer to private occupiers to enter joint arrangements for noxious weed control work.

2. Strategic Objective – Noxious Weeds Control

Ensure the effectiveness of the Council’s role in improving the natural environment through a reduction in noxious weeds.

Strategy

Ensure that the Council is aware of any presence of noxious weeds in its Area of Operations.

Activities

- Conduct a regular and systematic program of property visits to private landholders.
- Ensure that any infestations of noxious weeds found on property visits are mapped and properly recorded.
- Ensure that weed infestations on roads are mapped and properly recorded.
- In conjunction with public authorities, conduct a regular and systematic program of property visits to land of public authorities.
- Ensure that weed infestations on land of public authorities are mapped and properly recorded.
- Respond promptly to complaints about the presence of noxious weeds.
- Provide assistance and support to private occupiers in controlling noxious weeds on their land.
- Conduct a regular program of property visits to enhance the Council’s knowledge of weed control work carried out on private land.
- Ensure that private landholders are provided with accurate and timely advice on their weed control obligations.
- Provide encouragement to private landholders and public authorities to prepare Property Weed Management Plans for their land and assist in the preparation of the Plans.
- Ensure the availability of weed control advisory material and advice to private landholders and public authorities.
- Provide assistance to occupiers in applying for grant funds for weed control work.
- Actively pursue the control of noxious weeds on vacant Crown land.
- Regularly inspect vacant Crown land to ensure weed control obligations are being met.
- Facilitate application for necessary funds to finance weed control work by the Council on vacant Crown land.
- Provide information to the responsible Department on the state of noxious weed control on vacant Crown land.
- Promptly respond to complaints regarding noxious weeds on vacant Crown land.
- Actively pursue the control of noxious weeds on land of Forests NSW.
- Inspect areas proposed to be clear felled in coming financial year.
- Advise Forests NSW of proposed clear fell areas that are potential weed risks.
- Follow up to ensure control work is carried out on potential weed risks
- Inspect areas surrounding standing forests and “land bank” areas.
- Advise Forests NSW of areas that pose a risk of weeds spreading to adjoining land.
- Conduct aerial spraying programs for noxious weeds.
- Organize programs for the aerial spraying of noxious weeds throughout the year as seasonal conditions permit and demand requires.
- Publicise aerial spraying in local media, and as occasion’s permits, to ensure maximum landholder participation.
- Organize aerial spraying (involving all Weeds Officers) throughout the Council’s Area of Operations in accordance with established programs.

3. Strategic objective – Noxious Weeds Controls - Roadsides

Improve the effectiveness of the control of noxious weeds on roads by promoting changes in management techniques and cooperative action.

Strategy

Ensure that all occupiers are aware of their obligations to control noxious weeds on roads.

Activities

- Include in the Council's advisory and extension material an explanation of the circumstances in which occupiers are required to control noxious weeds on roads.
- Weeds officers to explain to occupiers, where necessary, their obligations to control weeds on roads.
- Where appropriate, bring to the public's notice via press releases and by other appropriate means the obligations on occupiers to control noxious weeds on roads.
- Where occupiers are failing to control weeds on roads, as required by the Act, bring the requirements to their attention in writing.
- Identify the extent of noxious weed infestations on roads and whether the responsibility for control is the Council's or the adjoining occupier's.
- Institute a program of inspections to identify all noxious weed infestations on roads in the Council's area of operations.
- Identify whether or not the responsibility for control of the noxious weeds on roads is the Council's or the adjoining occupier's.
- Ensure that all noxious weed infestations on roads are properly recorded.
- Control identified noxious weed infestations on roads.
- Prepare a program of work for the control by the Council of noxious weeds on roads where the responsibility for control is the Council's.
- Give priority in the program of work to isolated infestations and to infestations where the level of infestation on adjoining and adjacent land is low or where occupiers of such land have an approved Property Weed Management Plan for the control of the weed.
- Include in the Council's annual estimates adequate provision to fund the program of work for the control of noxious weeds on roads.
- Undertake each year so much of the prepared program of work as has been funded in the estimates.
- The program of work for the control of noxious weeds on roads will be undertaken either by the Council staff or by contractors, whichever is the most economical.
- Where the adjoining occupier is liable for the control of noxious weeds on a road and the work is not being undertaken, encourage the occupier to comply with the obligations and where this is unsuccessful use the regulatory powers, in accordance with this Strategy, to enforce compliance.
- Pursue alternatives for the control of noxious weeds on roads.
- Investigate the legal issues involved in having adjoining occupiers undertake work on roads for the control of noxious weeds, where the Council is liable for the control under **update** Section 14, and what incentives might be used to encourage such work. If legally feasible, and economically viable, institute a program to encourage adjoining occupiers to undertake work.
- Investigate means to achieve the revegetation of roadsides with indigenous species.
- Encourage road authorities to revegetate roadsides with indigenous species and to institute work practices which minimise disturbance of roadsides by road construction and maintenance work.

- Lobby road authorities for the provision of funding for the control of noxious weeds on roads.
- Investigate the use of constituent council Weed Officers for the control of noxious weeds on roads where they are undertaking weed control on the road for other purposes (road maintenance or environmental weed control).

4. Strategic objective – Noxious Weeds Controls Funding

Secure funding, where possible, to assist occupiers in their management of noxious weeds by encouraging policy change by NSW State Government and other funding authorities.

Strategy

Provide assistance and support to occupiers in securing funding for noxious weed control.

Activities

- Endeavour to ensure that the Council is aware of all sources of funding for noxious weed control.
- Disseminate information to occupiers of on the availability of grant funding to assist with noxious weed control.
- Encourage occupiers to apply for grants to assist with noxious weed control wherever possible and appropriate.
- Provide assistance to occupiers in applying for grant funds for weed control work.
- Lobby politicians and others to increase awareness of the necessity of providing public support for weed control work on private land.
- Publicise where ever possible the necessity for the broad Community to assist with noxious weed control on private land where there is a public good in doing so.
- Write to State and Federal politician’s regularly drawing attention to the necessity for increased funding for noxious weed control and for a broadening of the eligibility criteria.
- Encourage Constituent Councils to increase support for the Council because of the public goods that flow from noxious weed control.

5. Strategic objective- Communication Policies

Improve communications between the Council and its community through increased use of electronic and other media.

Strategy

Improve the Council’s profile in the community.

Activities

- Keep under review the appropriateness of the council’s corporate logo.
- Ensure that the corporate logo appears on all Council publications, advertisements, uniforms, letterhead, Council office, etc.
- Keep under review the appropriateness of the council’s letterhead and other forms.
- Ensure that the Council’s name and logo are prominently displayed on all Council vehicles.
- Investigate the registration of a business name under which the Council may conduct its business.
- Hold Council’s Ordinary meetings at least once each year in the area of each of the constituent councils.

- Investigate the feasibility and benefit of holding Council's Ordinary meetings at least once each year in the area of each of the constituent councils.
- If feasible and beneficial, hold at least one Ordinary Council meeting each year in the area of Warrumbungle, Coonamble, Gilgandra, Walgett and Warren Shires.
- Any ordinary Council meeting should be held on a day, at a time, and at a venue that will encourage attendance and participation.
- Inform members of the Council's community of the Council's activities and seek input into the Council's operations.
- At least once each year, hold a public meeting in the area of each of the constituent councils to inform the Council community of the Council's activities and to seek input into the Council's operations.
- Ensure that each of the public meetings is advertised widely and that members of the Council community are invited, and encouraged, to attend.
- Consider sending personal invitations to attend the meetings to appropriate members of the Council's community (e.g. Mayors, Councillors and appropriate staff of constituent Council's, Representatives of public land managers etc.).
- Ensure that each of the public meetings is held on a day, at a time, and at a venue that will encourage attendance and participation.
- Consider having the meetings facilitated by an independent, skilled person.
- Provide refreshments at the meeting.
- Ensure that at each of the meetings the agenda is relevant to the audience.
- Ensure that a proper record of the meeting is kept, particularly of any comments or suggestions from the attendees.
- Where possible, provide feedback on action taken in response to comments, suggestions, criticisms etc.
- Inform members of the Council's community of new initiatives by the Council and of changes in Council's policies, etc.
- As required, hold a public meeting or other public forum to explain new initiatives by the Council or changes in the Council's policies, Weeds Strategy, etc.
- Such public meeting or public forum is to be arranged, as far as appropriate, in accordance with previous activity inform members of the Council's community of the Council's activities and seek input into the Council's operations
- Encourage members of the Council's community to make comments, suggestions, criticisms, etc., on the Council's activities and to otherwise have input into the Council's operations.
- Establish a community participation database.
- Ensure that the establishment of the database receives wide publicity.
- Provide a form for use by members of the Council community who wish to use it to make comments, suggestions, criticisms, etc. Use of the form not to be compulsory.
- Ensure that all public participation comments, suggestions, criticisms, etc. and all other input from the community on the Council's operations are recorded.
- At regular and frequent intervals, report to the Council on additions to the database since the last report and how the Council might modify its activities, or otherwise react to, input received.

6. Strategic objective – Community Consultation

Improve the accountability of the Council to its community by providing more open access to information and public participation.

Strategy

Encourage members of the Council's community to take an interest in the Council's affairs.

Activities

- Ensure that, through improved communications between the Council and its community, members of the Council's community are aware of the Council and its role.
- Inform members of the Council's community of their rights to be kept informed of the Council's activities via newspaper advertisements and other Council publications.
- Have staff who are in regular contact with members of the Council's community personally invite members to attend Council meetings at which items in which they may have an interest are to be considered.
- Ensure that members of the Council's community are aware of the dates, times and places of Council meetings.
- Publish notice of Council's Ordinary Meetings in accordance with **update** Clause 232 of the Regulation on a six monthly basis.
- Each six months, the Council is to give notice of the next six meetings by an **update** single advertisement placed in each of local newspapers, that is, in the North West Magazine, Warren Weekly and Coonabarabran Times.
- Notice of any change to the Ordinary Meeting schedule during the six monthly periods covered by the advertisement will be given by separate notice.
- Each notice to contain advice of the entitlement of members of the public to attend the meeting and an invitation for them to do so.
- Ensure that members of the Council's community receive meaningful information on the Council's operations.
- Early in each financial year, prepare a leaflet containing succinct and meaningful information, in plain English, on the Council's operations for the past year and its planned operations and budget for the current year.
- Publicise the availability of the leaflet and have staff hand a copy to any member of the Council's community with whom they come in contact.
- Investigate having the leaflet mailed out to members of the Council's community, either with the rate notices of constituent councils or otherwise.
- Establish a proper complaints handling procedure.
- Establish a complaints database.
- Provide a form for use by members of the Council community who wish to make a complaint. Use of the form is not to be compulsory.
- Ensure that all complaints are recorded in the database.
- The General Manager to investigate all complaints and to make a determination on an appropriate response.
- At regular and frequent intervals, report to the Council on complaints received and on the response.

7. Strategic objective- Administration

Develop an efficient and effective Council administration for the management of noxious weeds through improved training, procedures and use of technology.

Strategy

Engage and retain sufficient skilled staff to provide administrative services to the Council.

- Constantly monitor the workload of all staff.
- As necessary, engage additional staff, or provide other support, to meet the fluctuating workload of the Council.
- Ensure that the administrative workload on Weeds Officers is not such as to interfere with their education, advisory and regulatory functions.
- Ensure that all staff receive continuing training as required.
- Investigate the provision of additional clerical and accounting assistance as finances permit.
- Investigate the employment of a Community Liaison Officer to assist **update**
- Weeds Officers in their education and advisory function.
- Provide up to date computer and other technological facilities.
- Provide adequate computer facilities for the use of Weeds Officers.
- Provide adequate computer facilities to run an appropriate Geographical Information System (GIS).
- Continue and enhance the present practice of entering into arrangements with constituent councils, or others, for obtaining GIS data.
- Continue and enhance the present practice of entering into arrangements with constituent councils for the appropriate support of all information technology systems.
- Expedite the installation, testing and expansion of the Weed Map Pro® electronic weed tracking and mapping system or similar to facilitate management and reporting of weed infestations.
- Provide an efficient records management system.
- Improve the Council's records management system.
- Investigate alternative records management systems to identify the most suitable for the Council's needs.
- Investigate possible arrangements with constituent councils for the provision of expert records management advice and support.
- Improve the Council's record storage.
- Provide administrative support for the Council's education and advisory functions to enhance communication by the Council with its community.

Activities

- Provide effective cataloguing and storage of educational and advisory material.
- Provide appropriate hardware and software to establish and maintain a community participation database (see Business Activity Priority number 3). **update**
- Provide appropriate hardware and software to establish and maintain a complaints database (see Business Activity Priority number 2). **update**
- Continually **update** and enhance the Council's website (www.noxiousweeds.org.au) **update**

8. Strategic objective- Funding Arrangements

Secure the Council's financial position by promoting stronger funding arrangements with funding bodies and seeking alternative sources of funds.

Strategy

Secure alternative sources of funding for the Council's ordinary operations.

Activities

- Lobby politicians to have the funds from which grants are made under **update**
- Section 33 of the Act increased.
- Lobby politicians to have the funds provided by Parliament for noxious weed control, specifically funds provided to the Department of Primary Industries, diverted from the bureaucracy so that a specified percentage of available funds must be spend on "on ground" work for noxious weed control.
- Investigate the availability of grant funds from other sources to assist the Council in its ordinary operations.
- Secure alternative sources of funding for particular Council functions.
- Lobby public authorities for funding of weed control work on roads.
- Continue to seek grants from Local Land Services for specified noxious weed control projects.
- Investigate alternative sources of grant funds for identifiable council weed control projects, such as serrated tussock control.
- Investigate alternative sources of grant funds to support Council's administrative and management functions.
- Maximise income from fees, charges and income producing operations.
- Charge appropriate fees and charges for Council services where this is legally possible and will not prejudice noxious weed control.
- Investigate opportunities for the Council to enhance income from its operations.
- Ensure that all operations carried out on a contract or agreed basis on behalf of others, including the control of weeds on private property by arrangement with the landholder, are properly costed and the cost fully recovered.
- Eliminate unnecessary expenditure.
- Ensure that the Council does not undertake weed control work for which the Council does not have a statutory obligation unless the work is properly costed and charged at its true cost.
- Ensure that work done by the Council for public authorities, including work on vacant Crown land, is properly costed and charged at its true cost.
- Ensure that where the Council supervises weed control work funded by other natural resource managers, or others, the cost of supervision is properly costed and brought to account.

9. Strategic objective- Lobbying

Increase public awareness of the impact of noxious weeds on the community and the cost to the community of noxious weeds through contact with community leaders and public awareness campaigns.

Strategy

Increase politician's awareness of weeds.

Activities

- Write to politicians at every opportunity drawing attention to the importance of weeds and their impact on the community.
- Encourage interested groups in the community to lobby politicians about weeds issues and provide background material for their use in doing so.
- Invite politicians to Council meetings and to any other Council activities such as field days, community meetings etc.
- Foster an interest in weeds in the local and rural press and news media.
- Generate an interest in weeds by means of press releases in relation to any relevant noxious weed matter, such a scientific advances, research, new control initiatives, Council activities, and such like.
- Invite media representatives to any newsworthy noxious weeds events.
- Provide photo opportunities for media representatives of Council noxious weed control activities.
- Encourage the reporting of "good news" stories such as successful noxious weed control programs, either by Council or others.
- Always make Council staff available for interview or comment on noxious weed control matters.
- Investigate the placing of annual advertisements in the local press reminding occupiers of their noxious weed control obligations. Encourage accompanying editorial comment or stories on noxious weeds.
- Publicise weed matters within the Council's community.
- Ensure that the importance of weeds is emphasised in all Council publications.
- Continue and enhance the practice of having constituent councils include with rate notices a suitable information brochure about noxious weeds and the work of the Council.
- Ensure that wide publicity is given to any Council community activities (see business activity priority number 2). **Update**
- Continue and enhance the practice of having constituent councils include with **update** section 149 and 603 certificates a suitable information brochure about noxious weeds and the work of the Council and advising of the desirability of having a pre-purchase inspection about the noxious weed status of land and information on obtaining a Section 64 certificate.
- Investigate financial feasibility of preparing suitable information brochures about identification of noxious weeds, control obligations, and the work of the Council.
- Investigate financial feasibility of mailing an information brochure to all rural property occupiers on a regular basis.

10. Strategic objective- Technology

Enhance the educational and advisory role of the Council through the provision of a range of written and electronic material and staff promotion of this role.

Strategy

Ensure that the Council fulfils its educational and advisory role.

Activities

- Ensure that Weeds Officers are aware of the importance of the educational and advisory role.
- Keep the training of Weeds Officer up to date so that they are better able to fulfil the educational and advisory role.
- Have an appropriate range of educational material about noxious weeds available through the Council and ensure that it is kept up to date.
- Continually **update** and enhance the Council' website (www.noxiousweeds.org.au).
- Provide assistance to occupiers in completing Property Weed Management Plans **update** and applying for the Council's approval to such plans.
- Investigate the employment of a Community Liaison Officer to assist in the educational and advisory function. **update**
- Council staff to attend at local agricultural shows and provide facilities for distributing educational and advisory material and provide advice on noxious weed matters (perhaps jointly with Department of Primary Industries).
- Investigate having constituent councils provide educational and advisory material to applicants for Sections 149 and 603 certificates (see Business Activity Priority number 1). **update**
- Encourage an awareness by purchasers of the desirability of obtaining pre-purchase noxious weed status reports.
- Target solicitors and conveyancers and educate them on noxious weed problems and how they might best protect their clients.

11. Strategic objective – Regulatory Powers

Improve the effectiveness of the Council's regulatory role by the strategic use of the regulatory powers and appropriate publicity.

Strategy

To use the Council's regulatory powers, where necessary, to enforce the requirements of the Act with regard to noxious weed control.

Activities

- Institute a program of inspections to identify private occupiers who have not complied with their obligations under **update** Sections 12, 15, 17 or 17A of the Act.
- Institute a program of inspections to ensure compliance by private occupiers with programs of work set out in approved Property Weed Management Plans. **update**
- The General Manager will, in accordance with this Plan and other Council policies, authorise the issue of a penalty notice, or the prosecution of an occupier or owner, at the General Manager's discretion and after consultation with the Senior Weeds Officer, where it appears that an offence against the Act or the regulations has been committed.
- The General Manager will authorise the issue of a penalty notice, or the prosecution of an occupier or owner, only where the General Manager is satisfied that such action –

- 1.is necessary to enforce compliance by the offender with the Act and all other methods to encourage compliance have been unsuccessful, or,
 - (b) Will serve as an example to others and will encourage the control of noxious weeds and further the implementation of this Strategy.
- Only in exception circumstances, to be determined by the General Manager in accordance with Council's policies, will the General Manager authorise the issue of a penalty notice, or the prosecution of an occupier, for an offence under **update** Sections 12, 17 or 17A. Instead, where all other efforts to encourage compliance with the requirements of the Act have been unsuccessful, an **update** Section 18 weed control notice will be given.
 - The General Manager will authorise the issue of a penalty notice in preference to prosecution action.
 - The General Manager will authorise prosecution action only after consultation with the Senior Weeds Officer and where the General Manager is satisfied that a penalty notice is unlikely to secure compliance by the offender with the Act and believes that prosecution will encourage the control of noxious weeds and further the implementation of this Strategy.
 - Where an **update** Section 18 notice has not been complied with and all efforts to encourage compliance have been unsuccessful the General Manager after consultation with the Senior Weeds Officer will either authorise issue of a penalty notice or prosecution action.
 - Action under **update** Section 20 will be taken at the General Manager's discretion where control of the noxious weed the subject of the notice is imperative for the protection of adjoining or adjacent landholders or for other pressing reason.
 - Publicise the Council's intention to use its regulatory powers to enforce the requirements of the Act with regard to noxious weed control.
 - Include in the Council's advisory and extension material an explanation of the Council's regulatory powers.
 - Include in the Council's advisory and extension material and explanation of the circumstances in which the Council will use its regulatory powers to enforce the requirements of the Act.
 - Weeds Officers to explain, both orally and in writing, to occupiers, and where appropriate, owners, who are failing to meet the requirements of the Act, the regulatory consequences that may follow their continued failure to comply with the requirements of the Act.
 - Emphasise in press releases and on all appropriate public occasions that the Council will use its regulatory powers to enforce the requirements of the Act where there is continued failure by occupiers and owners to comply with the Act.
 - Ensure that the powers of inspection are used strictly in accordance with the Act and the Council's priorities.
 - The General Manager shall ensure that Weeds Officers who have been appointed as inspectors under Section 41 **update** of the Act shall receive instruction on the powers and duties of an inspector under the Act.
 - Before entering premises the Council will make every reasonable endeavour to contact the occupier to discuss its intention to enter and will endeavour to secure the occupier's consent to the entry.
 - A permanent record of the circumstances and details of all oral consents by occupiers to enter premises will be kept.
 - The Council will give oral notice of its intention to enter premises except where the circumstances indicate that written notice should be given.
 - A permanent record of the circumstances and details of all oral notice given will be kept.
 - Use the power under Section 21 **update** to recommend to the Minister that the Minister serve a weed control notice on a public authority.

- Monitor the control of noxious weeds by public authorities on land that they occupy, as required by **update** Section 13, within the Council's area of operations.
- Endeavour to secure the cooperation of public authorities in controlling noxious weeds on land that they occupy.
- Where a public authority has failed to comply with **update** Section 13, and the Council has been unsuccessful in securing its cooperation in controlling noxious weeds on land that it occupies, recommend to the Minister that a weed control notice be given by the Minister to the public authority.
- Ensure that the regulatory powers are used fairly and impartially and in accordance with this strategy.
- All staff are to be made aware of the provisions of this plan relating to the use of regulatory powers.
- The General Manager to thoroughly investigate all complaints concerning the use of the regulatory powers.
- Institute a program of random reviews of selected instances of regulatory action to ensure that the powers have been used fairly and impartially and in accordance with this strategy.
- Institute a program of random reviews of instances where a failure of occupiers or owners to comply with the Act has not resulted in regulatory action to ensure that the matters were managed in accordance with this strategy.
- Report to the Council the result of any reviews conducted.

5.1 Other Information Relating to Principal Activities of Council

1. CAPITAL WORKS PROJECTS TO BE CARRIED OUT

Council has not planned any Capital Works Programs for 2017/2018 other than plant replacement and to provide alternate depot facilities at Coonamble.

2. SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

PRIVATE WORKS

Private works will be carried out for private individuals or Government Departments on requests on a sundry debtor basis provided the carrying out of such work will not interfere with Council's primary responsibility of noxious weed control in accordance with the Bio-Security Act, 2015 (formerly the Noxious Weeds Act, 1993).

SALE OF HERBICIDES

Herbicides used for noxious weed control will not be made available to the public to purchase.

ADVICE

Fact sheets and brochures on noxious weed identification and control procedures will be forwarded to enquirers on request.

3. ASSET REPLACEMENT PROGRAMS TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY COUNCIL

Council will seek quotations for replacement plant and equipment from suppliers within and outside the County area. Suppliers within the County area will be given preference. Petrol driven motor vehicles will be replaced at 40,000 kilometers or two (2) years, whichever comes first and diesel vehicles will be replaced at 80,000 kilometers or two (2) years, within Council's budget.

4. SALES AND PURCHASES OF ASSETS TO BE CONDUCTED BY COUNCIL

The General Manager is authorised to sell and purchase items of equipment.

5. HUMAN RESOURCES ACTIVITIES

Staff is to have training to meet the minimum requirements of the industry standards in noxious weed identification, use of herbicides, health and safety and understanding integrated management techniques. All Weeds staff are to successfully complete the Local Government Industry Training Committee (LGITC) Weed Control Course or its equivalent.

By reducing staffing levels to a senior weeds officer and five weeds officers/spray operators in 2014, Council rationalized staff numbers to reflect sound and sustainable management practices having regard to available finances including any variations to available grant income from Department of Primary Industries. Council may in future rely on casual/contract operators where demand requires this approach.

6. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY IMPLEMENTATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan is a separate document and is available on request.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Council complies with legislative requirements that relate to the environment and the use of herbicides to control noxious weeds. Such legislation includes the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, Clean Water Act, etc.

6. Weed Categories

(This section needs revision following introduction of the new Biosecurity Legislation - insert table from Weed Wise app here).

The content provided here is for information purposes only and is taken from the Noxious Weeds (Weed Control) Order 2014 published in the NSW Government Gazette, detailing weeds declared noxious in New South Wales, Australia, under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993. The Order lists the weed names, the control class and the control requirements for each species declared in a Local Control Authority area.

7. Financial Estimates 2017-2018

1. CONSTITUENT COUNCIL CONTRIBUTIONS

Each Constituent Council will contribute an equal amount annually determined by Council. The contribution will be increased annually by the allowable general rate increase set by the Minister for Local Government and Co-operatives or as otherwise provided for.

2. FEES

Council provides professional and specialist information in furnishing applicants with “Noxious Weeds Certificates” under Section 64 of the **update** Noxious Weeds Act, 1993.

3. CHARGES – SALE OF MERCHANDISE

Items sold to land holders for the destruction or control of weeds on private land are charged on the basis of costs plus 15%.

4. PRIVATE WORKS

All private work will be charged on the basis of plant hire plus labour and on costs.

5. BORROWINGS

There are no proposed borrowings in accordance with Section 622 of the Local Government Act, 1993. Council has, however, arranged advances of \$50,000 from each of the five constituent Councils repayable over three years in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

6. PRIVATE WORKS FOR CONSTITUENT COUNCIL

All private work carried out for Constituent Councils will be charged at actual costs plus overheads and 15% administration.

For further financial information please refer to Council's 2017/2018 Budget and Long Term (ten year) Financial Plan.

8. Policy and Plan Review Schedule

8.1 Policies

Policy	Date Adopted	Next Review Date	Legislative Requirements
Model Code of Conduct	8 May 2013	June 2017	Within Twelve (12) months of the election of Council
Inspection Policy and Procedures		October 2017	Within Twelve (12) months of the election of Council
Roadside Control		October 2017	Within Twelve (12) months of the election of Council
WH&S		October 2017	Within Twelve (12) months of the election of Council
Drugs & Alcohol		October 2017	Within Twelve (12) months of the election of Council
Code of Meeting Practice	October 2016	October 2017	Within Twelve (12) months of the election of Council
Workplace Rehabilitation		June 2017	Within Twelve (12) months of the election of Council
Payment of Expenses and the Provision of Facilities for Councillors Policy	October 2016	August 2017	Annually
Asset Management Policy	June 2016	April 2017	Reviewed as part of the BASP review
Class 4 Noxious Plant Control Policy		April 2017	Within Twelve (12) months of the election of Council
Community Engagement and Information Strategy	8 May 2013	June 2017	Within Twelve (12) months of the election of Council

8.2 Plans and Reports

Plan	Date Adopted	Review Dates	Review Schedule
Operational Plan	June 2016	August 2016, October 2016, February 2017, April 2017	Quarterly Review
Long Term Financial Plan	June 2016	April 2017	Annually
Business Activity Strategy Plan	June 2016	April 2017	Within Twelve (12) months of the election of Council - Every 4 years
Workforce Management Strategy	June 2016	April 2017	Every 4 years
Asset Management Strategy	June 2016	April 2017	Every 4 years
Annual Report	December 2016	December 2017	Annually
Delivery Programme	June 2016	April 2017	Annually
Equal Employment Opportunity Implementation Management Plan	June 2016	April 2017	Annually with the adoption of Delivery Plan
Pesticide Use Notification Plan	June 2016	April 2017	Annually with the adoption of Delivery Plan
Publication Guide	June 2016	April 2017	Annually
Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan	June 2016	April 2017	

9. Pesticide Use Notification Plan

9.1 Activities to Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas

9.1.1 Use Integrated Management Techniques to Reduce Reliance on Herbicides

The control options of noxious weeds along roadsides are limited when compared with neighbouring land occupiers. The options include mechanical, chemical, cultural and biological.

An integrated approach will totally and completely eliminate a noxious weed infestation. However, at times only a partial control and containment of an infestation is feasible. Reliance only on the control options rarely eradicates weeds. Each control option has several advantages and disadvantages and these are often governed by outside influences such as seasonal conditions.

Mechanical techniques may include slashing, ploughing and grading. Chemical techniques use herbicides by various application techniques. Cultural control, which may use strategic grazing on properties, is limited to growing more desirable and competitive vegetation along roadsides. Biological control can be achieved by using either classical or innovative techniques suited to the specific vector. For biological control to be successful, a host population needs to be maintained so that the vector does not die out.

Noxious weed control activities around environmentally sensitive areas will be reduced or stopped until the risk is at its lowest. An integrated approach using alternative methods may be necessary.

9.1.2 Use of Selective Herbicides

When assessing noxious weed control programs, various suitable herbicides and additives are selected from a range of herbicides to give the following options:

- a) Reduce the risk of off target damage due to spray and/or volatile drift.
- b) Reduce the risk of off target damage due to leaching or sideways wash of soil herbicide residues.
- c) Treat greatest number of noxious weed species in one pass with one spray tank mix to reduce the impact of herbicides on the environment.
- d) Use additives which increase the efficiency of the herbicide, reduce rain fastness time, reduce volatility of herbicide and increase droplet size to reduce spray drift.
- e) Where it has found that birds use various shrubby noxious weeds such as African Boxthorn as nesting habitat, landholders are encouraged to plant desirable native shrubs alongside the weeds after they have been controlled.

9.2 Notification of Pesticide Use on Roadsides and Aquatic Areas

In accordance with the **update** Pesticides Regulation 1995, Council has developed a Pesticide Use Notification Plan. This plan is available to the public at Constituent Council's Offices and on the Council's website: www.noxiousweeds.org.au.

The Pesticide Use Notification Plan requires Council to include in its Management Plan reference of Council's intention to use pesticides on urban and rural roadsides, verges and reserves

Council uses pesticides to meet its obligations in relation to the control of Noxious Plants declared under the **update** Noxious Weeds Act 1993. Council's staff will carry out treatment programs on

these plants throughout the year on urban and rural roads. The location, timing of application, target species and pesticides used in these programs are all governed by prevailing seasonal conditions.

Council will be conducting three applications of herbicides to infestations of Alligator weed found in the locality. These treatments are scheduled to occur in October 2017, February 2018 and May 2018.

When Council staff apply a pesticide to urban and rural road shoulders, verges and reserves at the request of a Constituent Council, the notification of the pesticides use will be in accordance with the Constituent Council's notification plan.

10. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Implementation Management Plan

The objects and provisions relating to Council's EEO Management Plan are outlined in the following sections of the Part 4, LGA 1993;

344 Objects

- a) to eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination in employment on the grounds of race, sex, marital status and physical impairment in Councils; and
- b) to promote equal employment opportunity for women, members of racial minorities and physically handicapped persons in Councils.

345 Preparation and Implementation Management Plan

1. A Council must prepare and implement an EEO management plan in order to achieve the objects of this Part.
2. The plan is to include provisions relating to:
 - a) The devising of policies and programs by which the objects of this Part are to be achieved; and
 - b) the communication of those policies and programs to persons within the staff of the Council; and
 - c) the collection and recording of appropriate information; and
 - d) the review of personnel practices within the Council (including recruitment techniques, promotion and transfer policies and patterns, and conditions of service) with a view to the identification of any discriminatory practices; and
 - e) the setting of goals and targets, where these may reasonably be determined, against which the success of the plan in achieving the objects of this Part may be assessed; and
 - f) the means, other than those referred to in paragraph (e), of evaluating the policies and programs referred to in paragraph (a); and
 - g) the revision and amendment of the plan; and
 - h) the appointment of persons within the Council to implement the provisions referred to in paragraphs (a) (g)
3. An equal employment opportunity management plan may include provisions, other than those referred to in subsection (2), that are not inconsistent with the objects of this Part.

11. Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan

OBJECTIVE: Compliance with objectives of Local Government Act 1993:

a) to eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination in employment on the grounds of race, sex, marital status and physical impairment in Council; and

b) to promote equal employment opportunity for women, members of racial minorities and physically handicapped persons in Council.

STRATEGIES:

1. Develop and implement EEO Policy statement.
2. Allocate responsibility for EEO program management.
3. Discuss Policy and proposed strategies with Council and Union representatives.
4. Communicate policy to staff by distribution.
5. Review and/or development of employment policies and practices with the aim of integrated EEO/merit principles including:
 - recruitment techniques
 - selection criteria
 - promotions and transfers
 - training and development
 - conditions of employment
6. Develop grievance procedure.
7. Determine appropriate performance indicators and set goals and targets against program objectives.
8. Establish monitoring and evaluation procedures for the management plan.
9. Review of management plan periodically.
10. Annual reporting on progress publicly.

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE:

During 2017/2018 it is proposed to undertake the following implementation program.

1. Review all existing Council policies to ensure compliance with EEO principles.
2. Further develop EEO policy.
3. Ensure people involved with EEO policy development and management have adequate training.

POLICY:

Castlereagh Macquarie County Council is committed to its human resource management practices being conducted in a manner that ensure fair and equal treatment for employees and potential employees.

To ensure that for any position, training opportunity or other benefit, the best available person is selected, the merit principle will apply in assessing each person's skills and abilities against the needs of the job and disregarding unlawful personal characteristics which are irrelevant to the job.

Equal opportunity is an integral part of sound business practice which will enhance productivity and result in better services to the community.

Consistent with the requirements of the Local Government Act, 1993, the broad objectives/purpose of the policy are:

- a) to eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination in employment on the grounds of race, sex, marital status and physical impairment; and
- b) to promote equal employment opportunity for women, members of racial minorities and physically handicapped persons.

PROCEDURES

1. All staff will contribute toward the development, implementation and maintenance of an equal opportunity management plan which will include the provisions specified in the Act to achieve its broad objectives.

2. The following key principles will apply:

Non-discriminatory Environment: Every person employed by Council is entitled to work in an environment which is free of discrimination by Council and its employees, where discrimination means denying a person fair and equal treatment in employment on grounds other than those based on the requirements of the job.

Merit as the basis for Recruitment, Development and Promotion: Those with the abilities, skills, qualifications and experience which are required for a particular job will have an equal opportunity of being considered for the position. The person selected will be the person who best meets the requirements for the particular position. Selection criteria should be made explicit and may include the opportunity for career development and potential for further promotion beyond that position. There will be equal opportunity of access to appropriate training and development opportunities.

Access to Information: All employees will have access to information about conditions and benefits pertaining to their employment.

Access to Entitlements: All employees will have equal access to the benefits and entitlements pertaining to the positions held.

Affirmative Action: Positive and constructive measures will be taken to identify and eliminate barriers which may exclude certain groups from the equal opportunity to be considered on their merits.

Workplace Harassment: Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against harassers where complaints have been substantiated.

Resolution of Grievance: Employees shall have access to effective process for the resolution of grievances concerning discrimination and/or harassment.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Equal Employment Opportunity Policy applies to all staff, as all staff are obliged to follow non-discriminatory practices in the workplace, as it is Council being the responsible employer, which is legally accountable for discrimination on employment matters.

The General Manager will ensure that:

- Council's EEO Management Plan is implemented and maintained within Council;
- All staff comply with Council's EEO Policy and with relevant legislation and that the organisation of Council is subject to public scrutiny by way of external reporting.

All staff:

- Are responsible for upholding the EEO principles outlined in Council's Policy;
- Have the right to seek advice through the appropriate grievance mechanisms concerning discrimination and/or harassment.