

1. Election of chairperson and deputy chairperson properties

Councillor Robert Mustow has been returned to the role of chairperson and Councillor Sharon Cadwallader as deputy chairperson.

Congratulations to both and they will hold office until the ordinary local government elections, expected to occur in September 2024.

2. Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee – Appointment of Councillor member

Congratulations to Councillor Big Rob being appointed as the non-voting councillor member on the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee for a two year term or until a casual vacancy occurs, whichever is the earlier.

3. International Women’s Day Event

Rous is hosting an event for International Women’s Day on 12 March 2024 at Invercauld House with the guest speaker being Rabia Saddique. Council approved Councillor Sarah Ndiaye to be Master of Ceremonies with the event running from 9am to 12 noon.

6. Quarterly Budget Review Statement for quarter ending 31 December 2023

The Quarterly Budget Review Statement (QBRs) is made up of a minimum of six key statements:

(QBRs1) Statement by the Responsible Accounting Officer on Council’s financial position

(QBRs2) Budget Review Income and Expenses Statement

(QBRs3) Budget Review Capital Budget

(QBRs4) Budget Review Cash and Investments Position

(QBRs5) Budget Review Contracts and Other Expenses

(QBRs6) Budget Review Key Performance Indicators

Revenue has increased by \$2.0M, operating expenditure has decreased by \$0.7M, capital expenditure has decreased by \$0.4M and loan drawdowns have decreased by \$15.0M, resulting in an overall change of \$11.5M to be transferred from reserves.

A complete review of proposed capital works is to be undertaken as part of the annual budget process.

The overall internal reserves policy position is still forecast to be met, along with the New South Wales Treasury Corporation loan covenant requirement to hold reserves that equal 6 months of the next financial year’s operating expenditure less depreciation.

7. Retail Bad Debt Write-off

Council approved the write-off of a bad debt valued at \$5,759.01 associated with a retail water billing customer. Discussion around bad debt write-offs and how to deal with them is ongoing. To give councilors an understanding of Rous' position with bad debts and the Debt Management and Financial Hardship' policy, a workshop will be conducted at a date to be determined.

8. Information Reports

1. Sustainable Water Partner Pilot Program

The Sustainable Water Partner Program (Pilot) implemented in 2023 built on the success of work undertaken previously which targeted businesses using more than 5 megalitres of water per annum.

The objective is to assist non-residential customers to improve water efficiency and reduce water/sewer bills. This consists of three parts: water efficiency plans, water efficiency projects and recognition.

The Pilot program deliverables are: -

- Lead initial engagement with targeted businesses.
- Conduct onsite water assessment of businesses.
- Produce a water efficiency plan for each business including water efficiency project of works.

The Water Conservancy was awarded the contract to deliver the services for the program, including the installation of smart meters to provide data usage.

The results achieved water savings for the businesses in the program and Rous is continuing to encourage other businesses to adopt the measures identified in their reports.

Rous will continue to promote the program to high water users and specific priority industry sectors, including a subset of each target business type across the region.

2. Retail Water Customer Account Assistance – Information report

In the six-month period July to December 2023, two applications were received for financial assistance, in accordance with section 356(1) Local Government Act 1993 (LG Act) and council's "Retail Water Customer Assistance' policy.

The 2023/24 financial year budget allocation for applications made in accordance with the 'Retail Water Customer Account Assistance' policy is \$25,000.00. The total value of financial assistance granted by the General Manager under delegated authority for this period equated to \$8,923.25.

3. Investments – as of 31 January 2024

- The RBA cash rate is 4.35%
- Total funds invested is \$35,778,872.
- Weighted Average Return is 4.70%
- Interest earned is \$149,275.
- The cheque account balance is \$668,942.
- Weel account balance is \$18,838.
- Investments with institutions that do not support the fossil fuel industry is \$6,500,000 (18.17% of current holdings)

4. Water production and consumption –

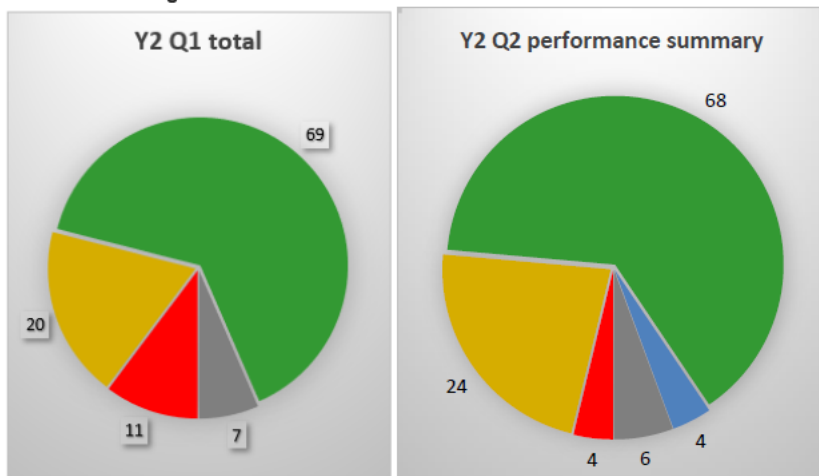
The table below is the January 2024 bulk water sales to the constituent councils in kilolitres compared to the corresponding January sales for 2023 and 2022.

Council	Jan 2022 (kL)	Jan 2023 (kL)	Jan 2024 (kL)	% of Total Sales
Ballina Shire Council	308,887	342,324	309,700	36.11%
Byron Shire Council	214,550	248,277	247,009	28.8%
Lismore City Council	243,023	242,167	243,506	28.39%
Richmond Valley Council	51,616	62,565	57,420	6.7%
TOTAL MONTHLY CONSUMPTION BY CONSTITUENT COUNCILS	818,076	895,333	857,635	

5. Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework – Delivery program / Operational plan progress update

A report on performance for the period 1 October to 31 December 2023. A report on performance for the twelve-month period ending 30 June 2024 is due to be furnished to Council's August 2024 meeting.

Performance at a glance



The reduction in the total number of actions from 107 to 106 for Q2 is the result of merging two actions.

Refer to the attachment for comments on **Amber**, **Red**, and Grey items.

Blue: COMPLETE.
Green: ACCEPTABLE. On track according to schedule or not yet due to have started.
Amber: MONITOR. In progress but behind schedule.
Red: REVIEW. Corrective action required.
Grey: NO LONGER REQ.

Council's business paper and draft meeting minutes can be found via the following link:
<https://rous.nsw.gov.au/business-papers-and-meeting-minutes>