# NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY

Annual Operational Plan 2024 – 2025

Adopted by Council on: / /2024 Resolution: Draft/24

### COVER

New headquarters for the New England Weeds Authority at AirSide Business Park, 21 Waller Avenue, Armidale Airport



# INTRODUCTION

# **Completion of New Offices, Depot and Wash-down Bay for NEWA**

During early 2021, the Council of the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA) resolved to acquire land in the AirSide Business Park, located at Armidale Airport, on which to construct a new purpose-built facility. Adjacent to the airport and the New England Highway, the site is ideally positioned to the airport and well connected to major roadways. Importantly, the new facility allows both offices and the depot to be co-located on a single site; greatly improving efficiency with reduced cost and time lost in travel.



With design of the facility completed and a development application approved, construction of the new headquarters was commenced in early 2023 and completed in February 2024.

Location of NEWA facility at Airport

This financial year (2024-2025) will see NEWA able to take advantage the new facilities and capabilities made available at the new site. These include an environmentally compliant wash-down bay, that releases no waste products outside of a closed system, and a herbarium that contains a broad range of noxious weeds for use at exhibitions, talks and training sessions. The new facility has been constructed with security in mind, with secure steel perimeter fencing, CCTV, Access Control to manage entry to the facility and secure parking and storage. Importantly, all of NEWA's vehicles and spray equipment are now able to be stored under cover in the depot. Provision has been made for the use of current and future technology including ICT systems, video conferencing and training facilities to name a few.



NEWA's newly completed facility showing secure fencing, access control, CCTV and the depot in the rear.

# **Moving forward**

During the current year and into 2025, NEWA will be focussed upon *reaping the returns* of the financial and human capital invested over the past 2 years and during 2023-2024 in particular. This has seen investment in new business systems, moving to a new financial system (XERO), a major capital investment in the construction of a new facility, providing offices, a depot and a wash-down-bay; located on a single, secure site.

New digital spray system technology now enables the logging and plotting of NEWA's spray activities, *without* the need for human involvement; significantly reducing the time and associated cost that was previously incurred with the filling-out spray sheets, weather information, time on-site and chemical mix and chemical volume used. All this data is recorded real-time and is available on-line to NEWA's Team Leaders and to Officers within our constituent councils - to view on-line and in real-time. While the recording of Biosecurity inspections has been electronically for some time, this capability has now been extended to NEWA's spray operations, providing greater transparency.

NEWA has also become part of the Weeds County Network (WCCN), an informal group of several Weeds County Councils that meet to share knowledge and experience in a best practice environment, learning from members' shared knowledge. This covers areas of governance, HR, risk, WHS, funding programs (WAP), biosecurity and weed control practices. One such area has been the development by UMCC over the past 18 months of a risk-based *inspection and compliance system*. Such a system allows a measured and consistent approach to the risk rating, recording and compliance required to meet the requirements of the Biosecurity Act. It also enables NEWA's Biosecurity Officers to better focus on higher risk property holders with an increased level of visitation; in order to improve efficiency and compliance. NEWA will be implementing this system from July 2014.

NEWA's staff have continued to be strengthened with the addition of members appropriately qualified and experienced to carry out the biosecurity and weed spray operations, together with a strengthened administration and project management capability.

## A continued focus on Safety

NEWA's spray and biosecurity staff have received training in Traffic Control planning and use; a significant risk to operators when undertaking roadside spraying. Standard TCPs have been prepared for most spray situations to be encountered, and vehicle signage has been upgraded to meet the highest standards.

Operator safety was enhanced with the decision to move to the use of UTVs (side-by-sides), for both spray and inspection operations. Both Kubota side-by-sides are fitted with Kwik Spray units. The two remaining quad bikes have now also been removed from service to complete the move to enhanced safety.



These activities, and many more, are helping NEWA to make significant strides to position the Weeds Authority for growth into the next decade, while focussing on efficiency and safety.

# **INTEGRATED PLANNING & REPORTING**

The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework includes this year's *Operational Plan for 2024-2025*. This document forms part of a suite of IP&R documents, as depicted in the diagram below, and this Plan should be read in conjunction with other IP&R documents. The Operational Plan includes the Annual Budget for 2024-2025 and the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP), Cash Flow and Capital Expenditure forecast.



- Business Activity Strategic Plan	2017 - 2027
- Long Term Financial Plan	2024 - 2033
- 4-year Delivery Program	2022 - 2026
- Annual Operational Plan	2024 - 2025
- Asset Management Strategy	2023 - 2033
- Workforce Plan	2023 - 2033

# **IP&R Elements**



The *Operational Plan* outlines the major activities that will be undertaken across the full range of Council's operations during the 2024-2025 financial year. These activities directly address the objectives and strategies outlined in the Delivery Program of the current Council, as identified in the Business Activity Strategic Plan (BASP).

The *Operational Plan* deals with the actions and tasks where the County Council has a role to play and identifies what is planned during the 2024-2025 financial year. The Plan also highlights how we will measure progress and identifies responsibility for completing the activities.

The annual financial information forming part of this plan (Annual Budget & LTFP), outline the Annual Estimates, Revenue Policy, Fees and Charges and other financial information. This financial information relates equally to both the Delivery Program, the *Operational Plan* and Long-Term Financial Plan.

# THE OPERATIONAL PLAN

One of the important requirements of both the Delivery Program and the *Operational Plan* is to identify who will be responsible within the county council for completing the various activities and projects that have been identified. This gives a clear picture of expectations, accountabilities, and timeframes for their delivery.

### Integration of the plans

It is important to note that the *Operational Plan* is part of a larger system – the Business Activity Strategic Plan (BASP) sets the agenda for the County Council into the future, the Resourcing Strategy identifies matters that are within the council's realm of activity and capability, and the Delivery Program and *Operational Plan* spell out the council's plan of action for achieving these matters during the current financial year.

The strategies identified in the Business Activity Strategic Plan have been reflected within the Delivery Program and the actions identified in the four-year Delivery Program, are managed through the actions set out within the *Operational Plan*.

The following diagram shows how the various levels of the planning framework connect.



The *Operational Plan* has been developed to highlight the activities to be undertaken during the 2024-2025 financial year.

The *Operational Plan* is broken into delivery sections, where the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA) works as a team from the Councillors, to the General Manager, and through to senior staff and all members of the County Council. NEWA is outcome-focused and closely monitors performance targets, to ensure our work improves the communities we live in (KPIs).

The *Operational Plan* forms the link to both Council's Delivery Program and the Business Activity Strategic Plan for reporting of our actions, achievements, and financial results. The *Operational Plan* is also linked to the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) with respect to the 2024-2025 financial year's budget.

NEWA's General Manager, provides Council with quarterly reports (QBR, WAP), to advice of outcomes being achieved as identified in the (four year) Delivery Plan. This process allows the Council and the community to understand service outcomes and to consider the budget process when compared to the actions and activities set out in this *Operational Plan*.

# ANNUAL BUDGET & CAPITAL WORKS 2024-2025

Within the IP&R framework, Council prepares a ten year, rolling Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP). From this plan, a single year financial plan (Budget) is prepared to identify the County Council's day-to-day operational needs and also to determine capital needs and maintenance works across the service areas of Council to achieve these needs – see annual budget P&L, Cash Flow and Capital Budget (below).

Having just completed the construction of a new office and depot facility (the largest capital works undertaken by NEWA in its history, capital works will be minimal and restricted to asset replacement while at the same time reaping the benefits of NEWA's new and upgraded facilities.



The 2024-2025 financial plan identified the following Capital Works which will be undertaken during the current financial year:

- Minor capital works to newly completed office and depot facility sealing of trafficway outside of the depot building.
- Installation of an electric chain hoist for the removal and reinstallation of spray units from vehicles.
- Replacement of utility vehicles as appropriate due to age milage

Capital expenditure during the coming financial year covers the purchase of plant (vehicles) and equipment (spray units) totalling approximately \$260,000.

# Private, Project & Grant Funded (Spray) Works

Included in the budget are various allocations toward weed control works to be undertaken for member Councils, along roads and community/park areas, including guidepost spraying, treatment of ovals, parks and gardens and riparian areas.

Projects may include weed spraying and eradication for a diversity of customers, from universities to solar farms and are provided on a quote, do and charge basis.

Council also considers the use of *grant funding* to help develop new projects and to assist in the *cost-effective delivery* of projects and maintenance across all areas of operation. Major grants are sought to targeted environmental and agricultural weeds and regeneration projects.

# **Organisational Structure**



# **OPERATIONAL PLAN - LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS AND COMPLIANCE**

	Identify projects, programs or activities that Council will undertake within the financial year towards addressing actions identified within the Delivery Program	The actions in this document include actions planned for the 2024-2025 financial year
	Allocate responsibilities for each project, program or activity and KPI's to determine effectiveness	The actions in this document include responsibilities, measurements and timeframes.
Operational Plan Requirements	Included within the Statement of Revenue Policy	The actions in this document include responsibilities, measurements, and timeframes.
	Include provisions relating to the content of Council's annual statement of Revenue Policy:	The actions in this document include responsibilities and measurements
	<ul> <li>Estimated income and expenditure</li> <li>Proposed fees and charges</li> <li>Council's proposed pricing methodology</li> <li>Proposed borrowings</li> </ul>	

### **Operational Plan Actions**

In this plan, the Operational Plan actions are addressed under the following categories:

- 1. Civic Leadership / Governance / Administration / Finance / Risk (coloured Teal)
- 2. Weed Management and Control (coloured Green)
- 3. Economic Affairs (coloured Pink)
- 4. NSW Weeds Action Program 2020-2025 (coloured Red)

### Principal Activity - Civic Leadership/Governance / Administration / Finance / Risk Management

### Civic Leadership/Governance

To provide effective, relevant civic leadership and local governance, through community consultation, availability of information to the public and to Council, public access to Councillors and liaison with member Councils and relevant government agencies.

### Administration

To implement financial and administrative systems, policies and procedures to allow the management of all Council activities, in a manner that ensures the economic sustainability of the Council while protecting Council and community assets.

### Finance

To provide the framework for Council to undertake its activities in a financially responsible and economically sustainable manner that protects Council and community assets.

### **Risk Management**

To minimise Council's exposure to risk and to provide a safe working environment for staff, contractors and for county landholders.

Strate	egies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
1.1.1	A quality customer service focus by all NEWA staff	To provide quality customer service by all Council employees.	ALL	Customer satisfaction	Community feedback monitored: a) Customer complaints b) Customer feedback via website, newsletter and social media c) KPI's achieved
1.1.2	Promote timely and quality dissemination of information to the community	Regular community updates by various media including Council's website, social media and newsletters.	GM	Report on actions taken	Council to be proactive in reporting to community through <i>Chairs' news items</i> and preparation of other noteworthy stories.
1.1.3	Convey community issues to the State Government	Lobby on behalf of the community	GM	Number of communiques reported to council and forwarded on.	Issue media releases to the community on meetings held and/or actions taken.
1.1.4	Identify policies and guidelines to support NEWA activities.	Ensure Council Policies and Procedures are up to date and relevant.	GM	Undertake a regular review of policies and procedures to ensure they remain relevant and comply with legislation change.	<ol> <li>Report all Policies to Council within 6 months of a general election, and/or</li> <li>Report policies that need adoption to Council annually.</li> </ol>

# **Objective 1.1: Civic Leadership/Governance Continued**

Strateg	jies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
1.1.5	Co-ordinate and support community groups to promote NEWA activities within the local community	Assess requests received for support for community events Support community events	GM	Donation/support provided with council approval	Develop guideline on events to attend and information distribution eg. Shows, Morning Teas, schools, ag- shows, field days etc.
		through attendance and displays by key staff.	GM	Community feedback and number in attendance	Assist event organiser
			GM	Number of committees formed for special events	Involve Council in community events

Strateg	jies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
1.2.1	Timely and accurate reporting for efficient management and accountability	As appropriate for a County Council, review Council Committee membership and Administrative support on an annual basis	GM	Report to Council	Review by November 2023
		To promote timely and quality dissemination of information to the community, as well as internally throughout the Council organisation	ALL	Review annually	<ul> <li>Website</li> <li>e-mail system</li> <li>Column in Local or regional newspaper</li> <li>Rate notices (via Member Councils')</li> <li>Newsletter</li> </ul>

# **Objective 1.2: Administration Continued**

Strateg	jies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
1.2.1 Cont.	Timely and accurate reporting for efficient management and accountability	To review business papers to improve information provided to elected members and the public.	GM	Council determination	Review October 2024
		To ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements for financial reporting and public accountability by the due dates.	GM	Reporting on time to auditors, Ministers and the public.	All statutory reporting undertaken by due dates. Reporting of Assets complying with audit rules.
		To provide for revenue and expenses in a fair and competent manner with due regard for Council's financial position and public accountability.	GM	Council's financial reporting analysis	Regular reporting to Council on finance and asset areas as per LGA

Objectiv	Objective 1.2: Administration Continued				
Strategi	ies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
1.2.2	Effective staff training and development processes in place	Review staff training and development	ALL	Adopt a Training Plan that is <i>affordable</i> .	Develop a long-term skill- based training plan and work with local training organisations.
		To implement systems for performance management and staff review.	ALL	Undertake annual staff performance appraisals.	Undertake staff performance appraisals from March of each year.
				Review Salary System in accordance with the NSW Local Govt. Award.	Report Award changes to staff.

Objectiv	Objective 1.3: Finance					
Strategie	25	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions	
1.3.1	Ensure all finances are audited as required by the Local Government Act and Regulations	Undertake Annual External Audit as per the NSW Auditor Generals requirements		Provide all advice required to complete the audit process	Make all attempts to have an unqualified audit. Provide Council with advice as to Audit qualifications and methods to correct any such qualifications.	
1.3.2	Identify Grant Funding opportunities.	Ensure level of Grant Funding is maintained	Project Management Officer GM ALL	The PMO and the General Manager will ensure grant applications and returns are completed in a timely manner	Report quarterly as to grants obtained and finalized to Council.	

Strateg	jies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
1.4.1	Identify Risks within the Council operations	Undertake process steps to reduce organisational risk	WH&S Committee All	Undertake an assessment of all Policies and procedures to reduce risks, to identify risks in the workplace and to reduce community risk	Reviewed policies to be presented to Council for adoption by March 2023 in accordance with the LGA. The GM is to show leadership in risk reduction including WH&S risks. Council reports shall include Risk category to alert Councillors to the level of risk or action required. The GM shall ensure that risk previously experienced in the workplace are eliminated or mitigated, that staff training i provided, and that Council's policies are adhered too.

Object	Objective 1.4: Risk Management Continued				
Strate	jies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
1.4.2	Observe Work Health and Safety Requirements	Maintain the health of both staff and public who may come into contact with herbicides during the invasive weed spraying program.	All	Comply with guidelines of Council, industry standards and specific guidelines on the label of each herbicide being used. Spraying operations to cease when there is a danger of the public becoming contaminated with herbicides by spray or volatile drift onto neighbouring properties or contamination of produce likely to be consumed by the public, such as blackberry fruit. No reports of health effects from the public or staff related to this activity.	Maintain annual medical surveillance. Staff medical surveillance shows no adverse effects of chemical usage.

Strateg	ies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
1.4.3	Undertake Strategic Planning to identify and develop the organisation	<ol> <li>General Manger to review Council's Business Activity Strategic Plan and associated Delivery Plan.</li> <li>General Manager to review Operational Plan annually.</li> <li>The General Manager shall prepare an Annual Report for submission to Council and the Office of Local Govt.</li> </ol>	GM	<ol> <li>A revised Delivery Plan shall be presented within two months of a general election of Councillors.</li> <li>A revised Operational Plan and annual budget and the long term financial plan/budget shall be presented to Council no later than March annually.</li> <li>Annual Report to be submitted prior to November annually.</li> </ol>	Following the holding of a Workshop on the Delivery Plan, reports are presented to Council for consideration and adoption prior to the legislative dates.
1.4.4	Provide advice to Member Councils and the Community to highlight NEWA achievements.	Provide ongoing information to Constituent Councils and the NSW Department of Primary Industries	GM	The GM to provide feedback and reports on operations to each Member Council. Provide an annual Grant Return report to Council and in turn the Member Councils in summary form.	<ol> <li>Councillors to report to their respective Councils after each meeting, distribute fact sheets and annual reports.</li> <li>Maintain effective level of accurate cost/benefit feedback to Councils and the NSW DPI.</li> </ol>

### 2 Principal Activity - Environment - Scheduled Priority Weed Management and Control

### Scheduled Priority Weed Management and Control

To act in a regulatory and advisory role to stakeholders and landholders to improve the agricultural and natural environment through a reduction in scheduled priority and invasive weeds species as identified in the Northern Tablelands Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2023 – 2028.

<b>Objective 2.1:</b> Scheduled Priority	Weed Management & Control

Strateg	jies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
2.1.1	Management of Priority weed plants	Support Invasive Plant control programs on private lands	GM	Report to Council	Report quarterly to Council on control measures undertaken, and report the number of property inspections undertaken
		Support Invasive Plant control programs on private lands	SMT	Support Grant applications by the public for weed control projects. Provide advice on control methods and assist in developing control programs	Report the number of landholder programs assisted
2.1.2	Maintain involvement and support of Local Land Services (LLS)	Liaise continually with LLS on natural resource management issues	SMT	Number of meetings and issues raised.	Meet with LLS General Manager / CEO a minimum of 4 times a year

Strategies		Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Det	tailed Actions
2.1.3	Develop Community and Landholder Education Programs	Develop public awareness of Invasive Plants and promote good weed management practices using integrated weed management strategies and develop Weed Management Plans for Weeds of regional importance through regional coordination committees.	GM / SMT	<ol> <li>Conduct field days, seminars and weed walks, speak at various farmer or community group meetings</li> <li>Use various mediums such as email, newsprint, radio, television (video) and fact sheets to distribute information on best practice on Invasive Plant control</li> <li>Develop landholder contact database to provide seasonal information on best practice for weed control activities.</li> <li>Promote appropriate vegetation management using integrated weed control and management techniques</li> <li>Provide information to public on access to information sources such as Council, regional and State Government websites.</li> </ol>	2. 3. 4.	extension events by June annually Produce or be involved in 12 media articles by June annually. Regularly post Social Media updates to Facebook and to Instagram

Strate	gies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
2.1.4	Interact with Authorities and other groups that participate in weed control or biosecurity activities.	Participate in regional advisory groups, campaigns and surveys being conducted by stakeholders with weed control Interests	All	<ol> <li>Consult with neighbouring non- member Councils and their Senior Staff.</li> <li>Attend meetings which directly or indirectly affect Council's invasive plant control program.</li> <li>Complete surveys or reports which support the endeavours of other bodies interested in weed control.</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>Co-ordinate activities with neighbouring non-member Councils through membership of Regional Weeds Management Committees.</li> <li>Participate in meetings of stakeholders.</li> <li>Report to Council any actions required of NEWA.</li> <li>Participate in WCCN meetings and events</li> </ol>

### 3 Principal Activity - Economic Affairs - Private Works and Other Business Undertakings

### Private Works

To provide a contract spraying and inspectorial service to generate revenue and to assist landholders and government agencies to control scheduled priority and invasive weeds.

### Other Business Undertakings

To promote the interests of County Council stakeholders through active interaction and participation with other authorities (such as Northern Tablelands and Northwest Regional Weed Committees, Local Government NSW and NSW Department of Primary Industries) through advocacy and political pursuits.

Objec	Objective 3.1: Private Works						
Strate	gies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions		
3.1.1	Provide a Private Works service to landowners	Provide a contract spraying service	SMT	Provide commercial quotes in accordance with the ACCC rules for Local Government Private works	Report quarterly to Council the total of all private works undertaken and project assessment.		
		Provide a Fee for Inspection service for solicitors and real estate agents	SMT	Provide an inspection service at a cost recovery fee (Fees and Charges)	Show in the quarterly budget reviews all inspections undertaken.		

Objec	Objective 3.2: Other Business Undertakings							
Strate	gies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions			
3.2.1	Undertake an internal review of potential for other works, grants or activities.	Identify fee for service, grant opportunities or income generating activities	All	Assess market for additional services to landowners, agents, or other stakeholders.	Report services to be provided to Council and hourly costs for inclusion in Fees and Charges.			
			All	Review and develop grant opportunities across the New England Region	Report grants applied for to Council each quarter			
			All	Assess opportunities to work with non-member Councils to control weeds, undertake inspections etc.	Report to Council discussions being held and shared opportunities.			
			All	Review opportunities to work with LLS on a fee for service basis whilst performing NEWA inspection roles.	Report to Council discussions being held and shared opportunities.			

### 4. Principal Activity- NSW Weeds Action Program – Northern Tablelands Regional Weed Committee (NTRWC)

To provide regional coordination services on behalf of the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services for the implementation of the NSW Weeds Action Program 2020-2025 for the member Councils of NEWA as part of the Northern Tablelands Regional Weed Committee (NTRWC) region.

### **Objective 4.1: NSW Weeds Action Program**

Strategies		Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions		
4.1.1	Management of noxious plants		GM	Report to Council	Report quarterly to Council control measures undertaken and compliance with the Approved Regional Weed Action Plan.		
4.1.2	Maintain involvement and support of Local Land Services (LLS)	Liaise continually with LLS on natural resource management issues	SMT	Number of meetings and issues raised.	Meet with LLS when required		
4.1.3	Implement the objectives of the NSW Weeds Action Plan	Provide staff and resources to meet the deliverables under the Weeds Action Plan.	All	Review annually the objectives and targets listed under the Action Plan Undertake meetings with NSW DPI staff to review and look for grant or action funding	Report each 6 months to Council, areas of compliance and noncompliance with targeted actions. Provide advice to Council as to the number of meetings held with NSW DPI and details of outcomes.		

Object	Objective 4.1: NSW Weeds Action Program Continued						
Strate	gies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions		
4.1.3 Cont.	Implement the objectives of the NSW Weeds Action Plan	Prevent the establishment of new Invasive Plants on public lands under the control of constituent Councils.	SMT / Biosecurity Officers	Staff instigate and conduct coordinated treatment programs on high risk sites and pathways when conducting other principal activities staff monitor for infestations of new invasive plants.	Conduct high risk site inspections and monitor and treat new infestations. Undertake the inspection of High- Risk Pathways.		
		Fully and continuously suppress and destroy all regionally prioritised <i>eradicate</i> category Invasive.	SMT Biosecurity Officers	Using the latest weed control techniques and practices, treat with herbicides and other suitable. integrated weed management systems	No increase in infestations All reported <i>eradicate</i> category invasive plants infestations to be treated each year		
		Prevent the spread and reduce the numbers and distribution of Invasive Plants.	TLB Biosecurity Officers	Using the latest weed control techniques and practices treat plants with herbicides and other suitable integrated weed management systems.	Contain and reduce known infestations of regional prioritised Invasive Plants on an annual seasonal basis. All reported invasive plants infestations to be treated each year subject to funding		

Strategies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
4.1.3 Cont.	Eradicate targeted Invasive Plants species from designated areas	TLB Biosecurity Officers	Coordinate the eradication of targeted Invasive Plants species from areas where <i>eradication</i> of Invasive Plant species is considered achievable Specify, financially assist approved projects in accordance with Council's Policies	Council supports at least 4 programs annually.
	Reduce the risk from Invasive Plants which are poisonous to humans and animals on public lands	SMT / Bio- Security Officers	Prioritise treatment of poisonous Invasive Plants on public land.	Reduce the extent of infestations of Invasive Plants which are considered a risk to human and animal health. No reports of Humans or animals affected by contact with invasive plants on public land.

Strategies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
4.1.3 Cont.	Prevent the establishment of new invasive weed species on private and public lands	Bio Security Officers	Systematically inspect various new areas bounded by specific landmarks, such as creek or road systems, each year. Report Invasive Plants found, degree of infestation, location and area infested and input of all data to the database system. Report action being carried out by land occupier and further action required by land occupier to Council.	<ol> <li>Conduct Private property inspections annually as per WAP.</li> <li>Inspect a minimum area of Private Property as set out in the WAP by June annually.</li> <li>Inspect at least 5,750 Ha of high-risk pathways by June annually.</li> <li>Integrate UAV Inspections into annual program as per the WAP annually.</li> <li>Conduct a minimum of 200 peri urban Inspections annually</li> <li>Undertake a minimum of 200 Tropical Soda Apple inspections annually.</li> </ol>

Strategies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department Bio Security Officers	Measures Inspect all nurseries and other outlets involve in the sale of plants quarterly.	Detailed Actions Inspections carried out on all nurseries and other outlets involve in the sale of plants quarterly.
4.1.3 Cont.	Prevent the sale and Transport of invasive plants and prohibited cacti.			
	Re-inspect all properties systematically who are, or should be undertaking Invasive Plant control programs	Bio Security Officers	Systematically inspect identified properties with known infestations of Invasive Plants. Inspection reports to Council containing recommendations for actions required by land manager or Council within a reasonable time of the last inspection.	10% reduction in area of known infestations of Invasive Plants on private lands by June annually.
	Advise, co-ordinate and implement invasive plant control programs	Bio Security Officers	Provide advice to land managers on a one-to-one basis. This advice will be provided during inspections, field days, over the phone, by letter or by Fact sheet.	Inspection reports indicate a containment, reduction and eradication of Invasive Plants on the property.

Strate	gies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Officer/ Department	Measures	Detailed Actions
4.2.1	Use and record Risk Assessment using the Risk Assessment Tool (RAT), for EVERY property inspected,	Risk Assessment and Compliance system used to quantify and implement inspection planning and required compliance actions	Team Leader and Bio Security Officers	All property inspections record a Risk Assessment rating for inclusion in related reports.	All property inspections reflect a Risk Assessment which is follower up with repeat inspections where required.
	Attend meetings and events organised by the WCCN		GM	Meeting reports to Council containing recommendations for actions to be implemented by NEWA	Number of meetings attended

# **FEES AND CHARGES**

### i. Private Works

Where the owner/occupier of private land, a public authority or member council requests the County Council to treat scheduled priority and invasive weeds on their behalf, the following rates shall apply for 2024-2025:

FUNCTION OR SERVICE	FEE	GST INC	GST STATUS
Labour - spraying	\$70.00/ hr	\$77.00 / hr	Taxable
Labour – supervisor / professional	\$99.00 / hr	\$108.90 / hr	Taxable
Plant (vehicle) with spray equipment	\$65.00 / hr	\$71.50 / hr	Taxable
Large Plant with spray equipment	\$95.00 / hr	\$104.50 / hr	Taxable
Chemicals and other consumables	As quoted	As quoted	Taxable
Administrative charge based on time (hr)	\$75.00 / hr	\$82.50/ hr	Taxable
Undertaking a 'drone' inspection (including mapping and equipment).	\$250 / hr	\$275.00	Taxable
Minimum Charge	\$250.00	\$275.00	Taxable

\* In cases of hardship, especially relating to pensioners on small lots, the Authority may upon written application, waive/reduce the charge.

### ii. Project Works

The quoting and undertaking of contracted project works.

FUNCTION OR SERVICE	FEE	GST INC	GST STATUS
Undertaking defined and contracted project works	As quoted	As quoted	Taxable

# iii. Other fees and charges levied by NEWA in accordance with the Biosecurity Act - 2015

The following fees and charges shall apply:

FUNCTION OR SERVICE	FEE	GST INC	GST STATUS
Entry onto private land to carry out treatment work for 'Fail to Comply' with individual biosecurity direction (under Sections 128 & 133 of the Biosecurity Act 2015), if undertaken by Council (plus cost of chemical).	\$250.00/hr (Minimum charge)	\$275.00	Taxable
Entry onto private land to carry out treatment work for 'Fail to Comply' with individual biosecurity direction (under Sections 128 & 133 of the Biosecurity Act 2015), if undertaken by a contractor engaged by NEWA (per contractor charge plus cost of chemical).	Contractor charge plue cost of chemical (if no in contractor's cost) pl contractors charge for administration and su	Taxable	
Subsequent inspection of private property as part of Council's regulatory function, after the service of an individual biosecurity direction or Biosecurity Undertaking (under Sections 128 & 133 and 147 of the Biosecurity Act 2015).	\$180 / hr	\$198.00	Taxable
Preparation and accepting a biosecurity undertaking by a person (under the provisions of Sections 142 & 146 of the Biosecurity Act 2015).	\$250.00	\$275.00	Taxable

# **Councillor Fees and Allowances**

Councillor Fees and Allowances are set by NEWA's Council in accordance with the parameters outlined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal for non-water County Councils. The following table shows Councillor and Chair Fees and Allowances as included in the 2024-2025 Annual Budget.

POSITION	NUMBER	FEE/ ALLOWANCE	AMOUNT ex-GST	TOTAL
		Chair's Fee supplement	6,494.16	
Chair	1	Councillor's Fee	6,300.00	
		Travel & Accommodation	495.00	
		Superannuation	1,535.30	
				14,824.46
		Councillors' Fees	6,300.00	31,500.00
Councillor	5	Travel Allowance	245.00	1,225.00
Councillor	5	Superannuation	696	3,480.00
			7,241.00	36,205.00
			TOTAL	\$51,029.46

# NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY

# **ANNUAL BUDGET 2024-25**

# **Consideration of Inflation**

After many years of relative economic stability, energy costs, retail pricing, rents and the cost of living in general, are driving inflation to a level that is unstainable and is forcing the RBA to raise interest rates (13 times) in an effort to put downward pressure on inflation. For this reason, some consideration has been applied to what inflation might look like over the period of the LTFP.

The table and chart below set out the inflation outlook that has been used in this year's Annual Budget and LTFP.

Year	2022/23 Benchmark	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33 Notation
Cost Drivers:											
Salaries & Wages	4.25%	4.25%	3.50%	3.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50% easing in line with RBA long term inflation forecasts
Materials (Chemicals)	4.75%	4.75%	4.50%	4.00%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	easing in line with RBA long term inflation
Other Consumables	7.00%	7.00%	5.00%	4.00%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00% easing in line with RBA long term inflation forecasts
Energy Costs	8.00%	8.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00% anticipating continued upward pressure as generators adjust to climate-lead change
Consulting Services	7.00%	7.00%	4.50%	4.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00% easing in line with RBA long term inflation forecasts
Average Annual Inflation Forecast	6.90%	5.50%	5.00%	4.50%	4.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Loan Interest (source: T-Corp )	5% (fixed)	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00% Fixed for 20 year term unless renegotiated

### RBA Indicative Inflation Expectations (Source: RBA Statement on Monetary Policy - February 2023)



### NEWA - Long Term Inflation Forecast (Source: RBA Statement on Monetary Policy - February 2023)

### NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY 10 YEAR OPERATING PLAN 2024 - 2033

	1 March 2024 QBR	2 2024_25 Budget	3 2025_26 F'cast	4 2026_27 F'cast	5 2027_28 F'cast	6 2028_29 F'cast	7 2029_30 F'cast	8 2030_31 F'cast	9 2031_32 F'cast	10 2032_33 F'cast
IN CO ME	-									
Government Grants - (ind. WAP)										
Grant - WAP	430,000	406,111	424,386	441,362	454,602	468,240	482,288	496,756	511,659	527,009
Grant - Gondwana Grasses	70,000	72,004	75,244	78,254	80,602	83,020	85,511	88,076	90,718	93,440
Transport for NSW		110,775	115,760	120,390	124,002	127,722	131,554	135,501	139,566	143,753
Grant - LLS W/Cactus, TSA		253,589	256,000	258,240	259,989	261,789	263,642	265,552	267,518	269,543
KSC - TSA Project		52,500	54,863	57,057	58,769	60,532	62,348	64,218	66,145	68,129
Other - unspecified	210,847	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
	710,847	1,094,979	1,126,253	1,155,303	1,177,964	1,201,303	1,225,343	1,250,103	1,275,606	1,301,874
Member Council Contributions		_								
Armidale Regional Council	253,355	280,695	293,326	305,059	314,211	323,637	333,346	343,347	353,647	364,256
Glen Innes Severn Council	114,740	127,121	132,841	138,155	142,300	146,569	150,966	155,495	160,159	164,964
Uralla Shire Council	95,834	106,176	110,953	115,392	118,853	122,419	126,091	129,874	133,770	137,784
Walcha Council	95,834	106,176	110,953	115,392	118,853	122,419	126,091	129,874	133,770	137,784
	559,763	620,168	648,073	673,998	694,217	715,044	736,494	758,590	781,346	804,788
Project Works										
DPI, LLS, Crown Lands, Land Care	150,000	210,000	219,450	228,228	235,075	242,127	249,391	256,873	264,579	272,516
	150,000	210,000	219,450	228,228	235,075	242,127	249,391	256,873	264,579	272,516
Private Works										
Member Councils, LLS, Crown Lands	150,000	157,500	164,588	171,171	176,306	181,595	187,043	192,654	198,434	204,387
Private Landholders	50,000	52,500	54,863	57,057	58,769	60,532	62,348	64,218	66,145	68,129
	200,000	210,000	219,451	228,228	235,075	242,127	249,391	256,872	264,579	272,516
Interest Income										
Interest - Fixed Term Deposits	11,000	25,000	25,000	28,000	24,000	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000
	11,000	25,000	25,000	28,000	24,000	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000
Other Income										
Gain/ <loss> on sale of Assets</loss>	52,000	34,000	22,000	22,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Workers Comp. Reimbursement	10,500									
Insurance Rebate	6,500	5,539	5,788	6,020	6,200	6,386	6,578	6,775	6,978	7,188
	69,000	39,539	27,788	28,020	31,200	31,386	31,578	31,775	31,978	32,188
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	1,700,610	2,199,686	2,266,016	2,341,777	2,397,531	2,458,987	2,519,197	2,581,213	2,645,089	2,710,882

### NEWENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY 10 YEAR OPERATING PLAN 2024 - 2033

	1 March 2024 - QBR	2 2024_25 Budget	3 2025_26 F'cast	4 2026_27 Fcast	5 2027_28 F'cast	6 2028_29 F'cast	7 2029_30 Fcast	8 2030_31 F'cast	9 2031_32 F'cast	10 2032_33 F cast
COST OF SALES										
Operational Staff Wages & On-costs	805,500	858,592	884,350	906,459	929,121	952,349	976,157	1,000,581	1,025,575	1,051,215
Staff Travel & Accommodation	18,500	8,925	9,327	9,700	9,991	10,290	10,599	10,917	11,245	11,582
Contractor Costs	250,000	315,000	330,750	345,634	359,459	370,243	381,350	392,791	404,574	416,712
Chemical Us age (ex-inventory)	56,721	38,000	39,710	41,298	42,537	43,813	45,128	46,482	47,878	49,312
Fuel, Oil & Vehicle Maintenace	88,000	89,500	93,975	98,204	102,132	105,198	108,352	111,602	114,950	118,399
	1,218,721	1,310,017	1,358,112	1,401,295	1,443,240	1,481,891	1,521,586	1,562,353	1,604,221	1,647,220
GROSSMARGIN	481,889	889,668	907,905	940,482	954,291	977,095	997,611	1,018,860	1,040,869	1,063,663
OTHER EXPENDITURE										
Member Fees & Allowances										
Chair - Allowances, Fees, Travel	15,997	13,873	14,497	15,077	15,529	15,995	16,475	16,969	17,478	18,003
Member - Allowances, Fees Travel x4	29,995	34,569	36,124	37,569	38,697	39,857	41,053	42,285	43,553	44,860
Member - Superannuation	5,037	5,329	5,568	5,791	5,965	6,144	6,328	6,518	6,713	6,915
	51,029	53,770	56,190	58,438	60,191	61,996	63,856	65,772	67,745	69,777
Staff Training & Conferences										
Training - DPI, LLS & Work Tickets	5,000	5,250	5,488	5,708	5,877	6,053	6,235	6,422	6,614	6,813
First Aid Training	1,500	1,050	1,097	1,141	1,175	1,211	1,247	1,284	1,323	1,363
WHS Training & WHS Committee	1,000	525	549	571	588	605	623	642	661	681
Biannual NSW Weeds Conference	-	8,640	-	9,390	-	9,962	-	10,589	-	11,213
	7,500	15,485	7,132	16,807	7,640	17,831	8,105	18,917	8,599	20,070
Depreciation										
Office & Depot Depreciation	5,000	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500	22,500
Office Equipment & IC T	16,000	18,375	19,202	19,970	20,589	21,188	21,822	22,477	23,151	23,846
Spray Units	9,000	9,975	10,424	10,841	11,166	11,501	11,846	12,201	12,567	12,944
Motor Vehicles	75,000	71,925	75,162	78,168	80,513	82,928	85,416	87,978	90,617	93,336
UTVs , Argo & Trailers	12,500	11,550	12,070	12,553	12,930	13,318	13,718	14,130	14,554	14,991
	117,500	134,325	139,358	144,032	147,678	151,433	155,302	159,286	163,389	167,617
Borrowing Costs - 21 Waller Avenue										
Principal		62,625	64,725	66,825	68,925	71,025	73,125	75,225	77,325	79,675
Interest	6,500	40,684	38,904	37,715	35,910	33,868	31,574	29,012	28,168	23,019
	6,500	103,289	103,629	104,540	104,835	104,893	104,699	104,237	103,491	102,694

### NEWENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY 10 YEAR OPERATING PLAN 2024 - 2033

	1 March 2024 - QBR	2 2024_25 Budget	3 2025_26 F'cast	4 2026_27 Fcast	5 2027_28 F'cast	6 2028_29 F'cast	7 2029_30 Fcast	8 2030_31 F'cast	9 2031_32 F'cast	10 2032_33 F cast
Other Operating Expenses										
Administrative Salaries and Oncosts	153,238	168,796	173,860	178,207	182,662	187,228	191,909	196,707	201,624	206,665
Advertising - General	13,000	5,250	5,488	5,708	5,877	6,053	6,235	6,422	6,614	6,813
ARC Rates - 21 Waller Ave	1,651	1,734	1,812	1,884	1,941	1,999	2,059	2,121	2,185	2,251
Audit - Financial & ARIC	27,000	15,750	16,459	17,117	17,631	18,160	18,704	19,265	19,843	20,439
Bank Fees & Charges	1,000	525	549	571	588	605	623	642	661	681
Consultants - Finance - CFO	90,000	47,250	49,378	51,351	52,892	54,479	56,113	57,796	59,530	61,316
Other Consulting Services	5,000	5,250	5,488	5,708	5,877	6,053	6,235	6,422	6,614	6,813
Governance & LGNSW membership	2,000	2,100	2,195	2,282	2,351	2,421	2,494	2,589	2,646	2,725
ICT SLA & Telecomms	48,000	48,300	50,474	52,492	54,087	55,689	57,360	59,081	60,853	62,679
Insurance	62,665	46,200	48,279	50,210	51,716	53,268	54,868	56,512	58,207	59,954
Legal Costs	5,000	5,250	5,488	5,708	5,877	6,053	6,235	6,422	6,614	6,813
Mapping (Chartis)	11,000	6,300	6,584	6,847	7,052	7,264	7,482	7,706	7,937	8,175
Media - Social, Newsletter, Website	0	8,400	8,778	9,129	9,403	9,685	9,978	10,275	10,583	10,901
Office Maintenance & Repairs	7,600	1,050	1,097	1,141	1,175	1,211	1,247	1,284	1,323	1,363
Postage	1,000	1,050	1,097	1,141	1,175	1,211	1,247	1,284	1,323	1,363
Printing and Stationery	5,000	5,250	5,488	5,708	5,877	6,053	6,235	6,422	6,614	6,813
Publications & Subscriptions	5,000	5,250	5,486	5,708	5,877	6,053	6,235	6,422	6,614	6,813
Rent - Rusden Street	14,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Staff PPE	10,868	11,411	11,924	12,401	12,773	13,157	13,551	13,958	14,377	14,808
Utilities	29,000	18,000	19,080	20,225	21,438	22,725	24,088	25,533	27,065	28,689
	490,022	403,116	418,994	433,527	446,249	459,367	472,893	486,843	501,231	516,073
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	1,891,272	2,019,983	2,083,415	2,158,639	2,209,833	2,277,411	2,326,442	2,397,408	2,448,676	2,523,450
OPERATING SURPLUS/ <deficit></deficit>	<190,662>	179,703	182,601	183,138	187,698	181,575	192,756	183,805	196,413	187,432

### NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY 10 YEAR CASH FLOW 2024 - 2033

	1 March 2024 QBR	2 2024_25 Budget	3 2025_26 F'cast	4 2026_27 F'cast	5 2027_28 Fcast	6 2028_29 F'cast	7 2029_30 F'cast	8 2030_31 Fcast	9 2031_32 Fcast	10 2032_33 F'cast
Source & Application of Cash Funds										
Opening Cash Balance	1,536,000	487,934	451,713	521,222	638,742	777,268	906,227	1,048,034	1,176,675	1,319,828
Loan Drawdowns	700,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Income per profit and Loss	1,700,610	2,199,686	2,266,016	2,341,777	2,397,531	2,458,987	2,519,197	2,581,213	2,645,089	2,710,882
Expenses per P&L (excl. Depn. & Interest)	<1,787,272>	<1,844,994>	<1,905,153>	<1,976,892>	<2,026,245>	<2,092,110>	<2,139,566>	<2,209,110>	<2,259,121>	<2,332,814>
Capital expenditure Building	<211,000>	<125,000>	<73,000>	<48,000>	<35,000>	<35,000>	<35,000>	<35,000>	<35,000>	<35,000>
Building Construction (Office & Depot)	<1,781,000>	<75,000>	<25,000>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loan Repayments	0	<62,625>	<64,725>	<66,825>	<68,925>	<71,025>	<73,125>	<75,225>	<77,325>	<79,675>
Closing Cash Balance	487,934	451,713	521,222	638,742	777,268	906,227	1,046,034	1,176,675	1,319,828	1,453,526
Loan Account										
Loan Opening Balance	0.00	639,475	576,850	512,516	445,691	376,766	305,741	232,616	157,391	80,068
Loan Drawdown	700,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interest (10 years)	6,500	40,664	38,904	37,715	35,910	33,868	31,574	29,012	26,166	23,019
Loan Repayments	0	62,625	64,725	66,825	68,925	71,025	73,125	75,225	77,325	79,675
Closing cash balance	0	<62,625>	<84,725>	<66,825>	<68,925>	<71,025>	<73,125>	<75,225>	<77,325>	<79,675>
	639,475	576,850	512,516	445,691	376,766	305,741	232,616	157,391	80,066	0.00

### NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY 10 YEAR CAPITAL BUDGET

	1 March 2024 QBR	2 2024_25 Budget	3 2025_26 F'cast	4 2026_27 F'cast	5 2027_28 F'cast	6 2028_29 F'cast	7 2029_30 F'cast	8 2030_31 F'cast	9 2031_32 F'cast	10 2032_33 F'cast
CAPITAL BUDGET										
Capital Income										
Transfer from Plant Reserve	125,000	73,000	48,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Income from Loans	700000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	825,000	73,000	48,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Capital Expenditure										
Acquisition of Plant & Equipment	211,000	125,000	73,000	48,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Acquisition of Office Equipment	14,000	12,000	0	5,000	0	5,000	0	5,000	0	5,000
Building Construction - Office & Depot	1,761,000	75,000	25,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to Plant Reserve	52,000	34,000	22,000	22,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Principal repayment of Building Loan	60,525	62,625	64,725	66,825	68,925	71,025	73,125	75,225	77,325	79,675
	2,098,525	308,625	184,725	141,825	128,925	136,025	133,125	140,225	137,325	144,675
NET CAPITAL MOVEMENT	<1,273,525>	<235,625>	<136,725>	<106,825>	<93,925>	<101,025>	<98,125>	<105,225>	<102,325>	<109,675>