

Warren Shire Highlights

Image credit: Steven Christian

MARCH 2024

Warren Shire's Ordinary Council Meeting was held on Thursday 28 March 2024. Highlights from this meeting included:

LOCAL ROADS CONGRESS

Warren Shire Council has resolved that, along with Council's General Manager and Divisional Manager Engineering Services, Councillors McCloskey and Whiteley will attend the 2024 Local Roads Congress on Monday 3 June 2024.

Held annually by IPWEA NSW's Roads and Transport Directorate in collaboration with Local Government NSW, the Congress aims to address policy issues and optimise roads and transport outcomes.

DESTINATION MACQUARIE MARSHES

To progress the development of a detailed Destination Macquarie Marshes Strategy and Action Plan, new Destination Macquarie Marshes Taskforce workshops commenced on 27 March 2024.

The workshops are facilitated by the Economic Development and Visitation Manager, with the aim of creating an updated Draft Action Plan for review and adoption, prior to inviting new membership to the Destination Macquarie Marshes Taskforce.

The Action Plan is anticipated to be completed in 2024.

Council is collaborating with key stakeholders to increase access to the Macquarie Marshes by commercial providers and free-independent travellers (FITs), while working toward providing a diverse offering to the access and experience that the Macquarie Marshes can offer a variety of markets.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Warren Shire Council is currently awaiting notification on the following grant applications submitted to the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund Program 2023/24:

- \$825,000 to enable a Racecourse irrigation upgrade, to enhance sustainability by delivering water efficiency and optimise value and community enjoyment.

This upgrade will also enhance Council's ability to work towards environmentally sustainable practices and eliminate manual handling issues for staff during watering activities.

- \$96,636 to enable a compliant, accessible concourse within the Showground / Racecourse complex, as currently the GBS Falkiner Lounge and Grandstand area does not have adequate disability access.

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- \$361,364 to improve perimeter fencing around the Showground / Racecourse Complex encompassing the Racecourse, Showground, Equestrian Arena, Pony Club and Country Horse Jump facilities. This would provide superior protection against potential kangaroo intrusion, thereby improving safety at the facility.

In addition, grant applications have been submitted for:

- \$60,000 for the 2024 Warren Street Christmas Party, under Transport for NSW's Open Streets Grant Program. The event would feature activities for the whole family, including a visit from Santa Claus, kids' rides and holiday market stalls showcasing unique gifts from local artisans.
- \$42,500 for the 'Warren's Women of the Future' event, under Women NSW's Investing in Women Funding Program. This one-day event would bring together and motivate the young women of Warren, and would also feature an inspirational keynote address by a prominent high achiever.

ON THE ROADS

During March 2024, work has been ongoing on the Oxley Highway under the Road Maintenance Council Contracts (RMCC). Crews have completed all the scoped heavy patching work on the Nevertire side, and are now progressing well from Collie towards Warren.

Repairs are ongoing for damage caused by the March 2021 flooding event, with crews currently working on Notts Lane.

Council's pothole patching crew has also been working across several roads, including the Oxley Highway, Marthaguy Road, Carinda Road and Collie-Trangie Road. In addition, flood restoration and maintenance work has recently been completed on Retreat Road, Hatton Lane, Gibson Way and Billybingbone Road.

Slashing has been completed on the Oxley Highway, Collie-Trangie Road, Wambianna Road and Industrial Access Road.

Future planned work includes the continuation of heavy patching on the Oxley Highway, rehabilitation of Nevertire-Bogan Road, and maintenance grading.

CAPITAL WORKS IN PROGRESS

Major works are progressing on the [Carter Oval Youth Sports Precinct](#), [Warren Showground / Racecourse Upgrade](#) and [Warren Airport Upgrade](#), with all works scheduled for completion in the first half of 2024.

Current project and other works updates include:

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- **\$7.1M Warren levee rehabilitation** is underway, with the tender for floodgates closing on 4 April 2024.
- As part of the **Warren Airport upgrade**, framework and roof for the new terminal building went up in March 2024. It is anticipated that the terminal building and other related works will be completed by May 2024.
- Work is continuing on the Modular Amenities Building at the **Carter Oval Youth Sporting Precinct**. The facility is expected to be completed by late June, early July 2024. Work on the long jump pit and cricket pitch is progressing, with these works expected to be completed by the end of this month.
- Preparation work is currently underway for the **bitumen resealing of the Warren Walkways/Cycleways**.
- The **oval lighting at Victoria Park** has now been upgraded. Under this project, the old metal halide lights were removed and replaced with state-of-the-art, dark sky compliant LED fittings, which offer improved reliability, longevity and energy efficiency.

COMMITTEE NEWS

- The **Water and Sewerage Committee** has recommended that, subject to funding approval by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), Council should proceed with the development of the Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) strategic planning document, as per the NSW Public Works proposal.

They also recommend that up to \$60,000 be provided as Council's contribution to the development of the document.

In order to further efforts to ensure future drought preparedness, the Committee resolved that Council would monitor drought conditions, review water restrictions imposed by neighbouring Councils on the Macquarie River, and impose water restrictions as required.

As part of the Safe and Secure Funding Program, the Committee also resolved that the 2024/2025 estimates would consider a 90% funded, at least 2.5ML standpipe bore water reservoir at Bore Flat, at an estimated cost of \$3 million.

The Committee noted that a feasibility and options report will be required, and that any loan requirements for Council contributions would also need to be determined.

Lastly, Councillor Noel Kinsey was nominated and accepted the role of the Committee's Chairperson.

- The **Airport Operations Committee** confirmed that the Draft Aerodrome Manual will be implemented on a trial basis, with a review to be carried out at the next meeting of the Committee.

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- The **Internal Audit and Risk Management Committee** discussed Council's four-year Strategic Audit Plan from 2024-2025.

During April 2024, the Senior Management Team will finalise the four-year plan, with a more detailed 12-month audit to also occur.

- The **Roads Committee** received updates on flood damage works and RMCC Contractor performance.
- The **Plant Committee** discussed proposed capital purchases for 2024/2025. Subject to a budget of \$867,823.07 being approved by Council for 2024/2025, the Committee recommended that the proposed capital purchases for Light Vehicle Replacement and Heavy Vehicle Replacement be approved, for the commencement of a Plant Replacement Program from 1 July 2024. The Committee also recommended that a used 2019 Mack Superliner 6x4 Prime Mover Truck be purchased by Council.
- **The MANEX Committee** heard an update on the progress of Council's Customer Service Charter. Set to be developed over the next few months, the Charter will help Council to ensure an appropriate customer service culture is implemented throughout the organisation.

The Committee also received an update on the current status of the flood and storm damage claims that have been submitted, and associated works that have been undertaken.

In addition, the Committee discussed strategies to engage with 30 to 40-year-old residents, with some possible solutions including the use of online meetings and intentionally scheduling activities at times that would suit young families.

Council's General Manager submitted an initial Grants Register, which will now be updated and reported monthly to MANEX by the Divisional Manager Finance and Administration and the Treasurer.

The Economic Development and Visitation Manager advised that the Department of Education Pilot Program between Council and the Warren Central School is going well.

The Economic Development and Visitation Manager and the Manager Health and Development Services will be attending the Warren Central School on Thursday 28 March 2024, and at this stage, it's expected that as many as 40 participants may be involved.

A one-day Leadership Day will also be held on Monday 8 April 2024, with the Economic Development and Visitation Manager commenting on the positive working relationship Council has achieved with the Warren Central School.

- The **Warren Support Services Interagency Meeting** noted that Marathon Health has been awarded a two-year contract to continue to deliver the Commonwealth Psychosocial Support (CPS) Program, until 30 June 2025.

The Warren Youth Foundation reported they are currently working in conjunction with the Office of Sport and Basketball NSW to run a six-week basketball program in Warren Shire.

A banner image showing a sunset over a field with rows of crops. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm orange and yellow glow. The sky is blue with some clouds. A blue rectangular box is overlaid on the top part of the image, containing the text 'Warren Shire Highlights' in white.

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In addition, preparations for NAIDOC Week 2024, the April school holidays, and Youth Week 2024 are well underway, with local young people set to be presented with lots of wonderful opportunities and activities.

-ENDS-

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