



Corowa Shire

...the choice

Corowa Shire Council Social and Community Plan

2006-2011

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Abbreviations

SCCPO	Social, Community and Cultural Planning Officer
PAMP	Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan
CCSC	Corowa Community Safety Committee
GSAHS	Greater Southern Area Health Service
GP	General Practitioner
HACC	Home and Community Care
NSW	New South Wales
TAFE	Technical and Further Education

Executive Summary

Council has compiled the Social and Community Plan to comply with the provisions of the Local Government Act.

The information in the Plan was gathered from existing documentation from external sources as well as Council's own information. Council has utilised information from consultations and research for specific projects in developing the Plan. In addition specific consultations for the Social and Community Plan were held with key sectors of the community.

It must be stressed that this Plan is the first to be developed by Council under the revised guidelines of the NSW Government for local government social and community service planning. Some issues included in the Plan have been identified for Council previously and Council's last plan addressed some local government responsibilities for the provision of services. Through this Plan Council recognises that it has a social and community responsibility to provide services to the target groups identified in the Plan and will endeavour to do so within budgetary constraints.

In the process of compiling the Plan a number of new issues have been identified many of which are outside the direct responsibility of Council. In addition further research is required in respect of some issues.

Therefore, whilst the Plan covers the period to 2008, there are many short- term tasks that need to be achieved before longer-term actions and strategies can be adopted with confidence. Therefore, it will be necessary to update the Plan annually in conjunction with a Management Plan process.

Review and Update 2006

The current Social, Community and Cultural Planning Officer (SCCPO) conducted a review of the Plan during July-November 2006.

The Plan was reviewed in recognition of the role of SCCPO possessing the required knowledge and experience of the Plan and the Corowa Shire Community to generate the subsequent amendments through community and network consultation.

Recommendations were made to the Social and Community Plan Committee as well as relevant groups and community services for the amendment of the Plan.

Social and Physical Infrastructure Actions 2006-2008

The Plan identifies the following actions for providing **social and physical infrastructure** upon which other Action for particular target groups can built or integrated:

Action 1

That Council will produce an action strategy to commence partnership with other councils, government and non-government departments to promote and establish programs for the benefits of Corowa Shire residents. Council will negotiate protocols for working arrangements with other agencies as well as adopting an advocacy role for Corowa Shire residents.

Action 2

That Council continue to utilise the Corowa Community Safety Committee to address safety issues across all target groups and the broader community issues such as lightning, appropriate signage, road safety as well as access and equity issues.

Action 3

That the SCCPO continue to identify and address transport issues across all target groups and the broader community through contact with the Regional Passenger Transport Working Group (as convened by the Ministry of Transport) and any developed initiatives.

Action 4

That the SCCPO undertake relevant service mapping as required establishing the availability and extent of local services such as transport, allied health, family and children's services, drought services and aged care services.

Action 5

That Council continue to acknowledge the integrated nature of the roles of the SCCPO, the Economic Development Manager and the Corowa Visitor Information Centre Manager. In addition Council continues to recognise that the Social and Community Plan is associated with other Council and external management and policy plans.

Action 6

That Council continue to progress and support the redevelopment of 'Karinya House' to accommodate the relevant social and community services. In addition it is recommended to Council for future consideration that the role of SCCPO be relocated to the redeveloped site to enhance the process of social and community service planning.

Action 7

That Council monitor and lobby progress of appropriate Government regional plans for Corowa Shire in relation to all target groups.

Action 8

That Council continue to improve communication with residents and groups in Corowa Shire by a more diverse use of the 'Corowa Snippets' in the Free Press and the Yarrowonga Chronicle, the Howlong Grapevine, Council newsletters and coordination meetings with groups and agencies.

That Council continue to provide, distribute and update the Shire Information Pack including listings of social and community services in the Shire

That Council update regularly on the website information on health, education, community and social services.

Action 9

That Council consider the development and implementation of a formal community grants/funding program to distribute allocated funds to community groups, organisations and services.

Target Group Actions

Part A Children 0-11 years

i) Family Day Care Facilities

Actions

That Council monitor the demand for Family Day Care Services within the Shire and further investigate the opportunities for funding such services according to demand.

That Council assist Family Day Care Services to expand according to demand and monitor the limitations placed on development by current staffing arrangements.

That Council assist Family Day Care through promotion and other help necessary to recruit carers and promote the service.

ii) After School Care and Vacation Care

Actions

That Council encourage appropriate organisations to provide after school care within the Corowa shire.

That Council support regular school holiday programs in Corowa, Howlong and Mulwala, ensuring access for residents in other rural locations in the Shire.

That Council continue to liaise with Schools, industry, community groups and agencies to assess the demand for after school care and/or vacation care

iii) Pre Schools

Actions

That Council continue to make representations to the NSW State Government for a review of the funding formula for pre schools.

That Council assist Pre Schools within the Shire with small maintenance works and materials as requested to assist service provision.

That Council continue to support Pre schools with relevant funding applications to the various funding bodies/groups.

iv) Families First Programs

Action

That the SCCPO continue to support Families First programs being implemented in the Shire such as the Early Intervention program – Friends For Families by attendance at regional Families First Network meetings.

That the SCCPO investigate the viability of implementing other Families First Programs within the Shire where available.

v) Children's Health

Action

That Council monitor and liaise with appropriate government departments as part of the information and data collection for overall planning and implementation of health programs in the Shire.

That Council monitor the adequacy of children health services and advocate to regional health services and the Greater Southern Area Health Services for improvements whenever possible.

That Council support the dissemination of Children's Health information through Council's noticeboards and Snippets.

vi) Child Protection

Action

That Council continue to support Child Protection initiatives within the Shire and assist in raising awareness throughout the Shire of Child Protection and Child Sexual Assault issues.

That the SCCPO keep informed of Child Protection issues and support the local Children's Services in accessing relevant Child Protection training.

vii) Road Safety Issues

Action

That Council continue to monitor the road safety of urban areas particularly surrounding Children's Services to ensure safe access to community facilities.

That where road safety issues are identified the Corowa Community Safety Committee will hear and action any priorities.

viii) School Enrolments

Action

That Council monitor industry and housing developments and Shire growth and liaise with Schools to be prepared should Council need to make representations to Department of Education for improved capital facilities.

ix) Environment and Target Group

Action

That Council plan and implement environmental and community safe programs involving school children in projects.

That Council support Landcare initiatives and projects within schools and link Children's Services and Landcare for project opportunities where appropriate.

x) Toy Libraries

Action

That Council continue to support the Corowa Toy Library Service by encouraging cooperation with Family Day Care and assisting with promotion and recruitment of volunteers.

Action

That Council recognise the establishment of the Howlong Toy Library through support and promotion of the service.

Part B Young People 12-18 years

i) Vandalism and Safety

Action

That Council encourage a regular and proactive education program to prevent vandalism in conjunction with local schools and local police and investigate other means of prevention including the publication of vandalism incidents to the residents.

That Council plan and implement town improvement programs, such as improved lighting in the Ball Park area, paved area on all sides of public toilet block at Safeway car park, provision of toilet facilities, such as hand wiping or drying.

That Council work with the Attorney General's Department to implement community safety programs into urban areas and assist community groups to attract working with youth programs that utilise the arts and other activities to provide preventative vandalism projects.

That Council utilise the print, television and radio media to communicate to residents Council's involvement in prevention programs through improvement and upgrade to community facilities, improved lighting, school programs and other community projects in conjunction with health and welfare departments, the police and the schools.

ii) Communication

Action

That opportunity is taken to integrate young people with other sectors of the community in specific forums and projects to foster communication and understanding.

That Council continue to liaise with Corowa High School and young people's groups to inform and consult on relevant issues.

That Council take a coordinating role in providing information to youth about events for young people in the region.

That Council utilise media opportunities available to comment and promote achievements of young people in all sports and cultural activities.

iii) School Holiday Programs

Action

That Council assist appropriate organisations to facilitate school holiday programs for young people including activities planned by the SCCPO.

iv) Social Youth Space Facilities

Action

That Council continue to support the young people's space of the 'Shack' and continue to seek further opportunities to utilise the space.

That the SCCPO continue to encourage other community groups and services to utilise the 'Shack' for the purposes of meetings and activities.

That Council encourage and support community agencies and groups to seek and explore the development of initiatives that will meet the social needs of young people and youth within the Corowa Shire.

That Council encourage other venues and groups to provide youth friendly spaces and programs.

v) *Transport to Activities*

Action

That the SCCPO assist in arranging the provision of transport for young people for specific functions and events.

That the SCCPO regularly attend Regional Passenger Transport Working Group meetings (as convened by the Ministry of Transport) to lobby for local issues and to remain informed of regional passenger transport issues particular to young people.

vi) *Technical and Higher Education Facilities*

Action

Council continue to encourage Corowa College of Adult Education to expand its operations in Corowa Shire.

Council assist other Technical and Higher Education providers to service Corowa Shire residents.

That Council continue to liaise with TAFE to encourage the use of TAFE facilities for other community activities and groups.

vii) *Social & Community Services*

Action

That the Council continue to encourage and support relevant organisations to network as a means for increased co-ordination of services for young people and other target groups to assist social and community service planning.

That the SCCPO Chair and Minute the Corowa-Rutherglen Interagency Meetings as held bi-monthly, with the agenda being set by the meeting group. The meetings provide a forum and network for local and regional Social and Community services.

viii) Corowa High School

Action

That Council continue to liaise with and action the opportunity of a large high school population to assist with projects or programs targeting community preventative education programs.

That Council assist where possible to support the School Counsellor to source and obtain funding for professional development and /or increase of service.

ix) Youth Employment

Action

That Council continue to press educational and employment opportunities for Corowa Shire.

That the SCCPO support and assist the Economic Development Manager in developing any strategies or programs in relation to Youth Employment.

x) Youth Worker

Action

That Council investigate the viability of and any funding opportunities for the position of Youth Worker to act in conjunction with the SCCPO.

The position of Youth Worker would develop and implement programs, projects and strategies specific to young people, whilst providing a valuable advocate and Local Government contact for young people.

xi) Youth Suicide

Action

That the SCCPO continue to remain informed of local adolescent Mental Health issues and provide support for the induction of mental health programs and interventions as may be provided by local health and community services.

That the SCCPO participate in regional forums that promote youth suicide prevention.

xii) Young People and Community Activities

That Council communicate to the Shire its support for the development of a diversity of activities for young people including the support of young people's community activity areas throughout the Shire such as the Corowa Skate Park and the Howlong BMX track.

That specific youth events and activities are planned with recognition of the diversity of interests among young people for sport, arts, leisure and hobbies.

That Council in consultation with young people provide a program of events for the annual celebration of Youth Week.

Part C Women

i) Women's Health

Action

That Council lobby appropriate authorities to ensure the provision of specialist care services.

That Council support GSAHS to improve the provision of services in Corowa Shire and the region.

That Council lobby the appropriate authorities for the increased provision of family support services and support for new mothers.

That the SCCPO investigate the suitability of commencing a 'Young Mum's' program in Howlong.

ii) Domestic Violence

Action

That Council support GSAHS and other departmental community preventative programs that target sources of aggression and domestic violence.

That the SCCPO attend the Corowa Rutherglen Domestic Violence Committee meetings and provide support where possible to the Committee's projects.

Also that the SCCPO regularly attend the Regional Domestic Violence Committee Meetings to keep informed of Domestic Violence issues and relevant programs.

That Council continue to lobby appropriate departments and services to provide supported accommodation for the needs of residents in crisis. It is inappropriate for people in extreme crisis following abuse to be expected to relocate considerable distances away from other families and support.

iii) Lighting of Public Places

Action

That Council continue to monitor the adequacy of street lighting in public places and make improvements as identified by the Corowa Community Safety Committee.

That Council continue to support the improvement of lighting public areas and streets within the Shire in conjunction with the appropriate authorities such as Country Energy.

Part D Older People (55 years and over)

i) Community Option packages

Action

That Council monitor the situation and lobby the appropriate authorities to increase the provision in Corowa Shire as needed.

ii) Respite Care

That Council gain detailed information on available regional respite services and ensure that Council and the relevant agencies are providing this information to residents.

That Council monitor the need for Respite Care facilities.

That Council continue to lobby appropriate authorities to address respite issues within the region.

iii) Transport

Action

That Council monitor the adequacy of transport for older people in the Shire through contact with the relevant transport and community service groups.

That the SCCPO undertake service mapping to identify all transport services available to Corowa Shire residents, and publish to the community the criteria and costs of available transport.

That Council continue to support community transport to improve the flexibility and promotion of community transport within Corowa Shire.

That Council lobby, when and where appropriate, to ensure adequacy of transport to older people is maintained in the Shire.

iv) Allied Health Services

That Council lobby appropriate authorities when necessary and continue to support Corowa Health Services to provide the appropriate level of allied health services (such as physiotherapy) to older residents within the Shire residents.

That Council monitor developments in contact with Corowa Health Services and advocate for services to match the growth of the target group within the Shire.

v) Pedestrian and wheelchair access

That Council continue to maintain and endorse actions of the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) 2006 ensuring access and equity for older pedestrians and wheelchair users.

vi) Palliative and Hospice Care

Action

That Council monitor the need for additional Hospice and Palliative Care facilities by working closely with Corowa Health Services, Palliative Care Planning Officer and other relevant groups to lobby appropriate government departments for increased services.

vii) Retirement Units

Action

That Council continue to support the development of private retirement facilities throughout the Shire.

viii) Library Services

Action

That Council continue to monitor and assess extending opening hours of the libraries as well as access to library resources.

That Council investigate increasing available library print resources, including reference material.

That Council include the use of the library resources in context of wider cultural planning for art gallery space, group meetings, workshops and community access for all age groups.

That Council continue to support mobile library services throughout the Shire ensuring access for rural residents.

x) Community and Older People

Action

That Council will support agencies and groups in the community such as University of the 3rd Age (U3A) to improve the participation of older people in the work force, education, leisure and volunteering.

xi) Traffic Facilities

Action

That Council continue to monitor pedestrian and traffic facilities ensuring access and equity and resolve issues through the CCSC as required.

Part E People with Disabilities

i) Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP)

Action

That Council continue to maintain, monitor and endorse actions and priorities to ensure access and equity for people with disabilities as determined by the PAMP.

ii) Pedestrian and Wheelchair Access

a) Access to public buildings

Action

That Council undertake an audit of Public Facilities and prioritise a program for disabled access for Council facilities and make representations to relevant property owners for access improvement.

That Council investigate and assist users of Heritage buildings to overcome impediments to wheelchair access.

b) Streets and Footpaths

Action

That new kerb and gutter infrastructure throughout the Shire continues to be constructed to ensure access and equity.

That, in conjunction with a Council's risk management program, a priority program be put in place to improve kerb and gutter and footpath infrastructure.

In conjunction with Council's risk management program and PAMP actions short - term repairs be undertaken for problem areas throughout the Shire.

That an audit be undertaken to ensure a logical flow of pedestrian and wheelchair traffic in all urban areas throughout the Shire.

iii) Transport

Action

That the SCCPO continue to work with disability transport service providers to support service expansion, monitor demand and lobby appropriate authorities to increase services when applicable.

iv) Respite Care

Action

That Council advocate with the appropriate government departments to provide more respite care relevant to people with disabilities and those caring for them.

That Council monitor through relationships with Corowa Health Services, Corowa Shire and Rutherglen District Health, Social, and Community Support Committee and other service providers the level of respite care services available to Corowa Shire residents and promote these services to the community.

That Council continue to encourage and support the establishment of Disability outreach services within the Shire.

That Council provide information about Council and local services that is accessible to people with a wide range of disabilities.

That Council promote positive attitudes to people with disabilities through information and education provided to Council staff, and Shire residents and potential users of Council services.

Part F Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

i) Recognition of Heritage

Action

That Council continue to recognise the contribution of Indigenous Heritage throughout the Shire and seek opportunities to celebrate local Indigenous Heritage and Culture.

ii) Communication

Action

That Council maintain communication with the Indigenous community within the Shire through appropriate means to foster sharing and development.

iii) Respect for Culture

Action

That Council encourage the Indigenous Community to maintain its culture in various forms as appropriate to Indigenous Culture.

That Council continue to seek opportunities to raise awareness of and be inclusive of Indigenous culture through appropriate programs and projects.

iv) Community Participation

Action

That Council support the participation of the Indigenous Community wherever possible through community, sporting and cultural activities throughout the Shire.

Part G People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

i) *Growth*

Action

That Council monitor the growth of the CALD community throughout the Shire and take action to assist individuals and families with information on and a connection to multicultural support services.

ii) *Support*

That Council support agencies identifying social needs of people from CALD backgrounds and assist groups to develop appropriate service provision.

That Council support a range of cultural, arts and sports activities to develop throughout the Shire in which people from differing backgrounds can participate.

Part H Rural and Isolated People

i) Road Network

Action

That Council pursue to adopt and implement a Road Classification System recognising the importance of the rural road network to the target group.

ii) Maintenance of Rural Social Infrastructure

Action

That Council continue to maintain and improve rural social infrastructure throughout the Shire and support other rural social networks under the guidance of appropriate authorities.

That Council monitor the transport issues for rural residents and access to urban services and facilities.

iii) Council Communication

Action

That Council maintain communication with the community through traditional forms such as the media and continue to establish improvements where possible.

v) Family Day Care and Vacation Care

Action

That Council monitor the access to and development of family day care and vacation care programs to Corowa Shire's small villages and other rurally isolated families.

vi) Health and Welfare

Action

That Council monitor and lobby relevant government departments to press for improved rural access to services throughout the Shire, Albury and regional service centres.

That Council continue to work with rural communities and small towns to enhance community and social well being among the residents.

That Council support initiatives developed by external agencies such as the Regional Social Development Group (RSDG) that assists in maintaining health and well-being to the Shire's rural and isolated residents.

vii) Landcare

Action

That Council continue to work with rural communities and small towns through Landcare groups and initiatives to enhance community and social well-being among the residents.

viii) Drought Support

Action

That Council investigate developing drought support opportunities and consider implementing and/or supporting a drought planning task force involving the appropriate authorities and professional guidance.

Part I Other Issues

i) Cross Border Issues

Action

That Council continue to make representations to the appropriate authorities with a view to resolving specific issues.

That Council join the efforts of Regional Council organisations to resolve many cross border issues

ii) Public Housing

Action

That Council continue to monitor the demand for public housing through contact with appropriate departments and service providers and lobby for increased public housing provision where appropriate throughout the Shire.

iii) Emergency Accommodation

Action

That Council support, investigate and promote the availability of refuge/crisis accommodation in an emergency situation available in the local area.

That Council continue to encourage the NSW Department of Community Services to undertake a Needs Analysis of the provision of emergency accommodation the regional area.

iv) Emergency Services

Action

That Council continue to add street numbers to street signs throughout the Shire's towns and villages where poor visibility of numbers occurs.

That Council support emergency services and management of emergencies throughout the Shire and assist services where possible.

v) Buildings

Actions

That Council, in conjunction with relevant community groups, promote and plan the diverse use and development of public buildings for community and social use.

That Council explore current and potential use by single and a combination of community groups, and investigate opportunities with government owned buildings, ie TAFE.

That Council establish a steering committee to seek Heritage and Arts Council funding for the purpose of renovating, changing or maintaining existing buildings.

vi) Use of Community Facilities

Action

That Council encourage the development of programs and service use of Council facilities such as:

- Corowa Memorial Hall
- Oddfellows Hall
- Railway Station
- Library and
- Resource Centre

vii) Howlong Community Resource Centre

That Council take a strategic approach to ensure that the development and future use of the building appropriately meets the needs of the Howlong Community.

viii) Arts & Culture

That Council continue to support community art and cultural groups such as the Curlew Arts Council and investigate opportunities for projects involving these groups.

CHAPTER 1

Outline of Aims of the Social and Community Plan

The 1996 NSW Social Justice Directions Statement “Fair Go, Fair Share, Fair Say” committed the State Government and the Department of Local Government to promoting a more inclusive community by ensuring that government services are responsive to community need and diversity.

The Local Government (General) Amendment (Community and Social Plans) Regulation 1999 has been introduced to help meet this commitment and assist councils to:

- ◆ Promote fairness in the distribution of resources, particularly for those most in need
- ◆ Recognise and promote people’s rights and improve the accountability of decision makers
- ◆ Ensure that people have fairer access to the economic resources and services essential to meeting their basic needs and improving their quality of life
- ◆ Give people better opportunities for genuine participation and consultation about decisions affecting their lives.

The regulation aims to recognise and build on the many existing Council efforts to promote the wellbeing of their community and effectively meet needs through social planning.

It requires all Councils to:

- ◆ Develop a social/community plan or its equivalent by June 1999 (*Corowa Shire Council adopted their first Social and Community Plan in 1999 –2003 then requisitioned the 2003-2008 Plan followed by the current review 2006*)
- ◆ Include in their management plan and annual report a statement about the access and equity activities planned or undertaken by Council.

The Social Justice Directions Statement was updated in February 2000 *as Supporting People and Strengthening Communities*. This demonstrated the government's efforts working in partnership with the community - to build a fairer, more inclusive society.

In December 2002 the guidelines were updated after a review of the social/community plans prepared by councils under the 1998 guidelines and five ways were identified in which those guidelines could be modified to improve their clarity, intent, flexibility and responsiveness.

The updated version of the 1998 Social and Community Planning and Reporting Guidelines includes the following five changes:

1. Use of clearer and more straightforward format for the guidelines.
2. Encourage councils to be creative and innovative, provided there is compliance with the legislation and the guidelines.
3. Integrate access and equity activities in a “whole of council” approach to a council’s operations.
4. Integrate Government and Non-Government organisations activities with council’s access and equity activities.
5. Clarify the system for reporting on access and equity activities.

The Importance of Social/Community Planning for Councils

Local Government is increasingly the key interface between people and government. Councils are no longer solely concerned with roads, rubbish and rates. Social/community planning is a vital corporate tool to help councils increase their accountability, guide the future of their communities, and develop effective planning partnerships with other government and non-government agencies.

A social/community plan describes the local community, summarises the key issues facing this community, formulates recommended strategies which Council and/or other agencies could implement to address identified needs, and informs Council's strategic planning process across a range of functions. It usually incorporates a community profile and a set of recommended strategies.

Preparing a social/community plan will help councils to:

- ◆ Develop an understanding of the needs of their communities including those more disadvantaged members
- ◆ Identify appropriate strategies to respond to those needs
- ◆ Identify the services, facilities and processes needed to address the community's needs
- ◆ Identify which services Council should have a role in funding or providing
- ◆ Advocate for those services that need to be provided by other government agencies, the private sector or community organisations
- ◆ Monitor changes in community needs and the extent to which existing services and models meet these needs
- ◆ Provide improved facilities, services and regulatory activities that are more sensitive and appropriately targeted
- ◆ Achieve a more coherent service system by working cooperatively with other government agencies, the private sector and community groups on service planning
- ◆ Address quality of life issues to benefit the whole community.

CHAPTER 2

Outline of the Process Used to Develop the Plan

Introduction

In response to the requirement for Councils to develop a Social and Community Plan, Corowa Shire Council determined in the formulation of its 2000/2005 Management Plan to comply with the requirement during the year. Council was able to adapt a number of tools and processes to assist in the formulation of the plan. Some of these tools and processes were already in train so that the formulation of the community and Social Plan could be integrated without unnecessary duplication.

Processes and Tools

(a) Community consultation for the Corowa Shire Council Social Community Plan 1999-2003

In 1999 a 3rd Year Bachelor of Social Work student, La Trobe University, undertook a community consultation and survey on behalf of Council. This consultation and survey covered the NSW Government seven-target categories. Local agencies and people in the target categories responded.

Council has implemented some of the Actions and identified issues 1999-2003. Other Actions have been brought forward and given priority in this Plan.

(b) Mulwala Community Health Consultation

During the time of consultation for this Plan, the former Greater Murray Area Health Service conducted a community forum to assess the community health needs of Mulwala. They issued a report containing issues raised by the community and recommended Actions. Those pertaining to the responsibility of Council form part of the Social and Community Plan, while other issues that remain a health service responsibility will be monitored and negotiated by Council on behalf of the Mulwala community.

(c) Corowa Rutherglen Health Support Group (now Corowa Shire & Rutherglen District Health, Social and Community Support Committee 2006)

Council is a member and services the Corowa Rutherglen Health Support Group to monitor the level and quality of border health services to the residents of Corowa and Rutherglen Shires. Issues that have been identified by this committee are included in the plan. The Committee forms an important role in Council's relationship with other councils, government and non-government departments and local health and community services.

(d) Cultural Plan Development

The consultations and surveys for this Plan and consultations and forums discussed above (2000-2003) included issues and comments on cultural development in the Shire. These forums and surveys were used to provide input for the development of the Social and Community Plan, therefore, addressing culture has been an integral part of the present process and included in the Social and Community Plan. It was deemed unnecessary to separate culture into another plan (2003).

(e) Management Plan

Council's existing Management Plan already contains headings and references in the area of social and community services. The Management Plan mainly refers to the status quo and existence of services within the responsibility of Council. The Social and Community Plan targets and plans for actions and working with other agencies have been developed as a result of the direct consultation with various agencies, groups and individuals. The plans and actions can be integrated into the Management Plan and used as the access and equity check on Council's plans and operations.

(f) Existing Documentation Internal and External Sources

There are numerous documents providing information on the Social and Community Service Plan for Corowa Shire. These are listed in Appendices and have been used as reference. In addition Council has been provided with specific information from various agencies relating to their services as a result of direct investigation. Government and non-government departments have been consulted. Government agency strategic plans are appended to assist Council with social and community service planning.

(g) Other Consultations (2003)

A number of consultations were held with members or organisations responsible for specific target groups to assess the particular needs of the target groups as well as the general community. Completed surveys were received from groups and individuals. These groups or organisations are as follows:

Family Day Care	Community Health	Residential care
Primary School	Greater Murray Area Health Service	TAFE
High School	Department of Ageing and Disability	Corowa Home Care
Pre School	Medical Centre	Pharmacy
Library	Community College	Arts Council
Health Council	Meals on Wheels	Inter-agency group
Drug Action Team	Safety Committee	Hospital staff
Churches	St. Vincent de Paul	Tourist Association
Clubs	Community groups	Theatre group
NSW Premier's Dept.	Chamber of Commerce	HACC (Regional)
Regional Women's Forum		

Surveys were sent to all organisations, agencies and groups listed by Corowa Shire Council. The returned surveys were included in the analysis of the consultations

(h) Review 2006

The SCCPO conducted a review of the Plan to allow for amendments and inclusions. Many Actions have been achieved since the adoption of the Plan in 2003 and great progress has been made in establishing a connection between Council and the community as well as local health and community services.

Whilst progress has been made the process of Community Development continues to evolve through the monitoring and reviewing of the Plan.

Community Consultation was held with relevant community groups and networks as well as 'whole community' media exposure through local media throughout the Shire requesting feedback for the review. Consideration was taken to include the addition of the Howlong Community in the review of the Plan due to the boundary adjustment in 2004/05.

Request for feedback and consultation was invited from these groups:

Community Groups/Organisations:

Anglican Women Corowa	Corowa Apex
Corowa CWA	Corowa District Historical Society
Corowa Friends of the Library	Corowa Legacy
Corowa Lions Club	Corowa RSL Women's Auxiliary
Corowa Rotary Club	Corowa Senior Citizen's
Corowa Toy Library	Southern Cross Karinya
Ladies Probus Corowa	Men's Probus Corowa
Karinya House Ladies Auxiliary	Mulwala Senior Citizens
Mulwala Rotary Club	Red Cross Corowa
Corowa police	Mulwala Police
Howlong Police	Ambulance Station Corowa
Howlong Community Health	Corowa Community Health
Howlong Medical Centre	Corowa Medical Centre
Oolong Aged Care Howlong	Mulwala RSL Retirement Village
Corowa Preschool	Howlong Preschool
Mulwala Preschool	Corowa Family Day Care
ABC Childcare Corowa	Howlong Playhouse
Corowa Home Care Service	Corowa Community Transport
Lutheran Aged Care Corowa	Corowa Public School
Corowa South Public School	St Mary's Primary School
Corowa High School	Corowa High School Student Council
Howlong Public School	Mulwala Public School
Balldale Public School	Lowesdale Public School
Savernake Public School	Sureway Employment Corowa
Centrelink Corowa	Riverina Community College
TAFE NSW Riverina Inst Corowa	University of the Third Age (U3A) Corowa
PM Mielgel Chemmart Corowa	AE Wilmott & Sons Amcal Pharmacy Corowa
	AE Wilmott & Sons Amcal Pharmacy Howlong
Corowa Visitor Information Centre	Corowa Library
Corowa Federation Museum	Mulwala Historical Society & Pioneer Museum
Curlew Arts Council	Landcare Corowa
Howlong Legacy	

Committees/Networks:

Social, Community & Cultural Plan Committee
Corowa Shire & Rutherglen District Health, Social & Community Support Group
Howlong Representative Committee
Howlong Community Forum
Mulwala Progress Association
Corowa/Rutherglen Interagency Network
Corowa Tourism Networks
Corowa Health Services Networks
Corowa Youth Action Committee
Corowa Community Safety Committee

Media

Corowa Free Press
Yarrowonga Chronicle
Corowa/Mulwala Snippets
Howlong Grapevine
Press Release

CHAPTER 3

Community Profile and Demographics

Corowa. Mulwala. Howlong. Savernake. Rennie. Balldale. Coreen. Daysdale.

Buraja-Lowesdale.

The Corowa Shire is a prospering rural community situated on Australia's greatest River the Majestic Murray in New South Wales, closely border Victoria and centrally located between the rural cities of Albury, Wodonga, Wangaratta, Wagga Wagga and Shepparton. The area population is 10,700 with Corowa at 5,300, Mulwala at 1,800, Howlong at 2,300 people plus many smaller villages throughout the Shire's rural area.

Boasting a Mediterranean climate, Corowa Shire has a vibrant atmosphere and is ideally located for business, families and retirees to experience exceptional lifestyle and opportunities.

Residents enjoy quality health, education and community facilities. Regional towns are renowned for their cooperative spirit and local hospitality; the communities of Corowa Shire certainly fit his bill.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Corowa has a fully serviced medical centre, District Hospital, dental surgery and a new aged care facility. Corowa Community Health provides ancillary health services throughout the Shire such as HACC Services, Early Childhood Nurse, Drug and Alcohol Worker, Generalist Counsellor, Friendly Visiting Service, Aged Care Coordinator, Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, Social Workers, Child and Adolescent Worker, Mental Health Workers, Dietician, Diabetic Educator, Gentle Exercise programs, Palliative Care Volunteer Coordinator, Women's Health, Psycho-geriatric Nurse. Howlong Community Health also provides access to ancillary medical and health services.

Corowa Shire has access to many private (located in Corowa, Howlong and Mulwala), Government and outreach health and community services including (but not limited to) podiatry, physiotherapy, dentistry, massage therapy, chiropractor, hearing services, optometrist, naturopathy and alternative health as well as Friends for Families Volunteer service, Friends of Woodstock disability service, Kallianna Community Transport, Disability Advocacy & Information Service, Department of Veterans Affairs and Regional Social Development Group services.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Corowa Shire has a choice of schools located throughout the Shire's major towns and villages from pre-schools and primary schools through to Corowa High School. The Riverina Institute of TAFE and Riverina Community College are also located within Corowa. Both La Trobe and Charles Sturt Universities have facilities in nearby Albury/Wodonga.

The Corowa Family Day Care, Hume Billabong Family Day Care and Moira Shire Family Day Care schemes service the Corowa Shire area as well as friendly childcare centres located in Corowa and Howlong. Playgroups have been established in Corowa, Howlong and Balldale. Toy libraries are located in Corowa and Howlong and offer toys on loan for two-week periods.

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Whilst agriculture, forestry and fishery is a traditional major employer of the Shire accounting for about 16% (REMPAN, La Trobe University, 2006) of all jobs other major employers of the area are quickly taking over such as manufacturing which employs 21% (REMPAN) of the population. Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants 13%, Retail 12%, Health and Community Services 6%, Education 4% and Culture and Recreation make up the remainder of employers (REMPAN).

COROWA, a NSW Federation Town is serviced by specialty and variety stores, two supermarkets and many older style pubs. Centrally located in the Shire, Corowa is the main service centre of the Shire, ideal for day trips and locally based activities with excellent transport links to all east Australian cities.

HOWLONG has a rapidly growing town centre with new stores and businesses, including a supermarket, chemist, post office, bakery, two pubs, a motel, Registered Club, 18 Hole Golf Course and 2 bowling greens. Development is booming in Howlong with new homes being built alongside historical buildings. Reasonably priced industrial and residential land is available only a short distance from Albury-Wodonga and the Hume Highway.

Set on the edge of the unique Lake Mulwala, *MULWALA*, is a growing town situated opposite thriving Yarrowonga in Victoria. Melbourne Street commercial strip includes a butchery, bakery, post office, takeaway, Chinese, Thai and Italian restaurants, a new supermarket, newsagency and petrol station, industrial and leisure businesses, 3 registered clubs plus a 45 hole golf course, the largest public course in the southern hemisphere. Mulwala is a town on the verge of a development boom with new housing and industrial estates, housing refurbishment, new businesses and increasing numbers of tourists coming to town.

HISTORY

Corowa is commonly referred to as the Birthplace of Federation due to its significant role in bringing about the Federation of the Australian Colonies. During the 1893 Corowa Conference organised by the Local Border Federation League, a motion put forward by Bendigo's Dr John Quick was unanimously carried. This motion had the effect of changing both the pace and direction of the Federation Movement in Australia. Visit Corowa's Federation Museum for more details on this historical event.

RECREATION

The Shire is a sporting mecca catering for sports such as football, netball, golf (three courses), bowls, tennis, hockey, cricket, gliding and skydiving, wakeboarding, water skiing, sailing, fishing, rowing and swimming. Other activities include bird watching and nature walks.

For further information please visit www.corowa.nsw.gov.au

CHAPTER 4

Commentary

Corowa Shire is experiencing industry, tourism and newcomer expansion. The expectations of newcomers for services and facilities reflect the growth in infrastructure provision of other local government areas and personal residential experience. The diversity and growth of cultural activities in the Shire, particularly urban areas is moving ahead of current service provision and traditional activities. The key change in community expectations is for pro-active planning, rather than reactive planning. The community consultation in 2003 identified many people understood the leadership required to move with the changes of a modern society. This included the identification of needs beyond the individual groups i.e. coordination, support, promotion, information and a confidence building in the community that leadership exists to meet new challenges and diversity facing the Shire.

Most groups and agencies pursue specific needs for which they have formed. In some instances the lack of liaison and coordination leads to duplicate committee work in areas or interests that display close relation. Motivated sections of the community and individuals realise the potential for groups to be strengthened by increased coordination and cooperation.

During the 2003 participant consultations recommendation was made that the Shire Council adopts an ad hoc approach to servicing and supporting groups in the community. Many groups articulated that the onus is on them to request help, and the criteria for responses from the Shire Council remain unclear. Members of organisations who enjoy a positive relationship with Council also reinforced these comments.

Many developments and funded projects fall within the responsibility of State and Federal departments, or other external authorities authorities. There is a key first step to meeting the aspirations of the diversity of people and groups in the Shire. This step involves Council adopting a pro-active action plan to assist groups and committees to cooperate, lobby and submit to the appropriate funding bodies.

It is considered that all community submissions and requests should receive equity and access consideration as well as informed assessment by the appropriate Council staff members and/or external professionals/groups.

Housing

2003

The housing activity and lack of rental accommodation may be cyclical and chiefly attributed to industrial, tourist and retirement movements. These movements happen according to the activities of the areas mentioned and not necessarily relating to planning or decisions made by Council. Retirement flows of population to Corowa Shire appear to arise from two sources – Shire residents moving to the larger towns and older holidaymakers who have visited the area.

Other sources boosting the housing market include population movements from Albury-Wodonga area as people relocate to cheaper housing and older people on the outskirts of the Shire urban areas moving closer to existing facilities. The housing activity is one part

of changes occurring in the Shire population and contributing to the expectations for improved Council direction and community facilities.

2006

The housing industry is presently thriving in Corowa, Mulwala and Howlong with strong demand and reasonable prices for residential land and houses for rent or purchase. Public Housing is available within the major towns, tenants are generally long-term and waiting lists are not significant.

Council closely monitors housing developments and trends within the Shire.

Industry

2003

The relatively large industries within the area means employment, however this does not remove the problem of low-income status for many families. Matters outside the control of the Shire Council exacerbate the low economic status, such as medical bulk billing issues and travelling costs to access services located outside the Shire. Employees relocate to Corowa Shire to work in local industries. These employees bring expectations of schooling and community facilities and services referred to elsewhere in the report.

The ability for people to obtain employment in the local industries has made it difficult for essential services, such as Family Day Care to attract staff. This situation also impacts on the ability of community groups to attract volunteers. Therefore, the proposal to implement coordination and liaison among the various groups, business and services is an essential first step for Council to take some direction. Council needs to be on top of the presenting problems for groups, services, business and tourism. The next step involves using the information and the coordination to strengthen the potential and promotion of services in the Shire, therefore, making them attractive to people to want to seek employment with those services.

2006

Whilst agriculture, forestry and fishery is a traditional major employer of the Shire accounting for about 16% (REMPLAN, La Trobe University, 2006) of all jobs other major employers of the area are quickly taking over such as manufacturing which employs 21% (REMPLAN) of the population. Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants 13%, Retail 12%, Health and Community Services 6%, Education 4% and Culture and Recreation make up the remainder of employers (REMPLAN).

The Corowa Shire is home to a wide array of small to medium sized enterprises ranging from tourism and hospitality to manufacturing and agriculture. The major industries include a piggery feedlot and abattoir, agriculture machinery sales and services, food processors, munitions factory, many freight transport companies and thriving tourism, retail and trade businesses.

Tourism, accommodation and the registered club industry are major employers in the area. Tourism is a fast growing part of the region's economic expansion.

Transport and agricultural industries are also extensive throughout the Shire area. The region raises sheep, cattle and pig meat for export and large domestic contracts. The local transport industry has an excellent reputation and carts product throughout Australia.

Community Development

2003

The Community Development Worker position will be a critical step in performing this work for Council. The skills of the person in this position will assist Council to implement the coordinating role and strengthen the positive aspects of existing employment and community organisations. The residents become informed on the diversity of employment or volunteer options. Also, the positive direction creates more information and support for funding and services in the Shire.

As mentioned in the report there is scope to liaise and implement programs in conjunction with neighbouring Councils.

As part of the improvement to Council communication the Corowa Shire Profile needs to upgrade to a detailed analysis of physical, demographic, health and social status of the local government area. Such profiles can be outsourced to information service consultants or other Councils/authorities with the information technology.

2005 – current and ongoing

Action taken to employ a Community Development Worker under the title of Social, Community & Cultural Planning Officer (SCCPO). The role chiefly involves implementing, monitoring and reviewing the Plan as well as community activities and maintaining relevant networks.

Action was also taken to update the Community Profile (as shown in Chapter 3) further action needs to continue for a more detailed analysis of the Community Profile.

Target Groups and Key Community Issues

Part A

Target Group – Children 0-11 years

Current Services

There is a good mix of services available for children in the Corowa Shire from a number of organisations and agencies. Corowa Shire is directly involved in service provision as outlined in the Management Plan. These services can be broadly summarised as follows:

- Primary Schools
- Pre Schools
- Family Day Care
- Childcare Services
- Recreation Facilities
- Library Service

Consultations with the community and investigation identified the following issues in 2003:

- i) Day Care Facilities
- ii) After School Care
- iii) Pre Schools - service user access to additional information
- additional operational funding
- iv) School Holiday Programs
- v) Improvement of Corowa Swimming Pool
- vi) Children's Health

i) Day Care Facilities

Investigation reveals that there are difficulties in attracting staff and child carers due to the opportunities available for shift work in the local industries. Pre school and Family Day Care staff are stretched to capacity and require assistance to take advantage of funding available from the NSW Department of Community Services to expand services to the high needs areas in the population, and, in particular assistance to the rural small towns. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest a lot of private care is unregistered. Government funding is available for 0-12 in home care, but current staff ratios prevent developing the service. Family day care needs identified in Balldale, Coreen, Oaklands, Buraja and Rand. The Family Day Care Service experiences difficulties in obtaining carers. Family Day Care have been liaising with the Corowa Toy Library with the aim of resource sharing.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Council's advertising column in the Corowa Free Press was made available to the Family Day Care service. Council staff assisted Family Day Care with management of funds.

Council auspice of Family Day Care, licence went through Council. Council Management have assisted with handling parent complaints.

Action

That Council monitor the demand for Day Care Services within the Shire and further investigate the opportunities for funding such services according to demand.

That Council assist Day Care Services to expand according to demand and monitor the limitations placed on development by current staffing arrangements.

That Council implement assistance to Family Day Care to expand the service by accessing the 0-12 years government funding available for care.

That Council assist Family Day Care through promotion and other help necessary to recruit carers and promote the service.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Council in conjunction with Corowa Family Day Care continues to monitor the demand for Family Day Care across the Shire.

Due to recent funding cuts Corowa Family Day Care has had increase fees slightly in an attempt to cover costs.

Council continues to assist Corowa Family Day Care through promotion and administration support.

ii) After School Care

There are after school care services in Corowa Shire. However, there is some difficulty with transport and servicing demand in small rural towns. Consultation with the services in Corowa reveals a need of people in shift work and others involved in evening studies for after school care.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Family Day Care staff has identified the need.

Action

That Council encourage appropriate organisations to provide after school care in Corowa Shire.

That Council liaise with Schools, industry, community groups and agencies to assess the demand for after school care.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Council continues to monitor the demand for before and after school care through relationships with the Shire's schools, preschools and childcare facilities.

The SCCPO investigated opportunities for funding and will continue to examine opportunities for the development of before and after school programs.

iii) Pre Schools

The Pre Schools are non-profit making organisations under pressure from capped funding. The services require assistance with maintenance of premises and grounds.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Council assisted the Corowa Pre School to access loan funds to build a fence according to regulations.

Action

Council make representations to the NSW State Government for a review of the funding formula for pre schools.

That Council assist Pre Schools in the Shire with small maintenance works and materials to assist service provision, ie noticeboards with accessible information to families on other children's services in the Shire.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Council continues to lobby the appropriate agencies for a review of preschool funding and advocate for preschools in the Shire.

The SCCPO conducted regular Pre-School Working Group meetings during 2006 involving the three preschool from the Corowa, Howlong and Mulwala to investigate opportunities for funding and lobbying.

Council permitted each of the Shire's preschools an equal funding amount in Council's current budget.

iv) Holiday Programs

Holiday programs have been identified as an urgent need by children services.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Identification of need by the services.

Action

That Council support regular school holiday programs in Corowa and Mulwala to provide access for residents in other rural locations in the Shire.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

The SCCPO has examined the viability of developing vacation care programs within the three major towns and determined that this is not currently viable.

The SCCPO will continue to monitor the demand for vacation care programs and recommends that issue remain highlighted for investigation.

Action

That the SCCPO conduct service mapping on holiday and vacation care programs available throughout the Shire and make the information available to children's and family services throughout the Shire.

v) Access to Corowa Pool

The Corowa Swimming Pool leaks badly and requires maintenance/replacement to bring the facility up to modern standards ensuring safety of patrons and an upgrade as part of the environmental scaping for the area. This facility is an essential recreational facility provided by Council for the target group.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

The swimming pool upgrade identified and planned.

Action

That Council monitor the adequacy of the Corowa Swimming Pool hours.

That the implementation of maintenance/replacement and upgrade commence for the swimming pool, rendering the pool compliant with modern standards and improvement to the grounds.

That the upgrade and scaping of the swimming pool grounds are included in the long term planning for scaping and river frontage usage.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

The redevelopment of a community pool is under consideration by Council and several community consultations have been held to discuss options.

vi) Children's Health

Children's health is addressed by a number of agencies and schools in the Corowa Shire. Waiting lists and access to special services in Albury or other regional towns has been identified as an access issue for Corowa children.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change.

Tourist Association submission for an adventure playground.

Action

That Council monitor and liaise with appropriate government departments as part of the information and data collection for overall planning and implementation of health programs in the Shire.

That Council monitor the adequacy of children health services and advocate to regional health services and the Greater Murray Health Services for improvements whenever possible.

That Council implement a strategy to encourage young families to the Corowa Shire communities by improvement of urban areas and children health, social and recreational facilities.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

On going liaison with the appropriate agencies and Corowa Health Services to monitor demand for and access to Children's Health services within the Shire.

The development of a Family and Children's Services information card to be distributed throughout the Shire.

vii) Improved Traffic Facilities

Action

That Council continue to monitor the road safety of urban areas to ensure safe access to community facilities.

Actions taken 2005/2006

Action is on going.

viii) School Enrolments

Action

That Council monitor industry and housing developments and Shire growth and liaise with Schools to be prepared should Council need to make representations to Department of Education for improved capital facilities.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

The SCCPO continues to liaise with local schools and the NSW Department of Education to monitor enrolments.

ix) Environment and Target Group

Action

That Council plan and implement environmental and community safe programs involving school children in projects.

Action Taken 2005/2006

Council continues to work with and support Landcare initiatives and Landcare projects with local schools.

xj) Toy Library

Action

That Council continue to support the Toy Library Service by encouraging cooperation with Family Day Care and assisting with promotion and recruitment of volunteers.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Council has assisted Corowa Family Day Care to cooperate with the Corowa Toy Library volunteers for the use of toy library equipment.

Action

That the SCCPO investigate using the Corowa and Howlong Toy Libraries equipment on a revolving roster to establish a toy basket for Council's office foyer to be accessed by children and their parents whilst visiting the Shire offices.

Part B

TARGET GROUP – YOUNG PEOPLE 12-18 YEARS

Current Services

There are services available for youth in the Corowa Shire. . Extensive sporting activities exist.

Corowa Shire is directly involved in some service provision that is outlined in the Management Plan.

- High School
- Recreational Facilities
- Technical and higher education facilities
- Social Services
- Cultural Exchanges through Sister City , Yokowa Japan.
- The Shack (2005)

Consultation with the community and investigation during 2003 identified the following issues:

- i) Vandalism
- ii) Communication
- iii) School Holiday Programs
- iv) Social Youth Space Facilities
- v) Transport to Activities
- vi) Technical and higher education facilities
- vii) Social Services – Lack of Co-ordination
- viii) Youth employment
- ix) Youth Worker
- x) Non-traditional recreation activities

i) Vandalism

Corowa Shire Council and many individuals and groups participating in the process of the Social and Community Service Plan expressed concern about the increasing vandalism, particularly in urban areas. Corowa Shire Council as the custodian of public property has had many examples of senseless vandalism.

Young people, individual adults, agency representatives and business people have expressed concerns that the vandalism is a response to the lack of youth focus in the Shire on a broad scale. This includes insufficient community activities to support the diversity of youth interests, insufficient youth friendly approaches and strategies in organisations and lack of support to groups work with or for young people. A number of quarters expressed concern of the influence on young people from traditional football clubs and their strong association with alcohol. Many young people confirmed the limitations of the Corowa Shire activities and support for young people. Youth from rural locations identified transport as an issue in preventing after school activities or returning to urban locations for night events.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Council has introduced a reward system to groups and clubs to stop vandalism.

Action

That Council encourage a regular and proactive education program to prevent vandalism in conjunction with local schools and local police and investigate other means of prevention including the publication of vandalism incidents to the residents.

That Council plan and implement town improvement programs, such as improved lighting in the Ball Park area, paved area on all sides of public toilet block at Safeway car park, provision of toilet facilities, such as hand wiping or drying.

That Council work with the Attorney General's Department to implement community safety programs into urban areas and assist community groups to attract working with youth programs that utilise the arts and other activities to provide preventative vandalism projects.

That Council utilise the print, television and radio media to communicate to residents Council's involvement in prevention programs through improvement and upgrade to community facilities, improved lighting, school programs and other community projects in conjunction with health and welfare departments, the police and the schools.

That Council encourage Shire schools to participate in a program to "adopt a public facility", i.e. park, building etc. that the school children help to maintain and improve.

Actions continue during 2005/2006

ii) Communication

There seems to be a general lack of integration of youth with many groups and organisation pursuing individual goals and interests. The Theatre group managed an excellent young players group that folded due to lack of volunteers and other assistance. The integration of youth with other sectors of the community in specific forums and projects could be a productive strategy.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Council formed the Youth Council that has provided one avenue to address the issues arising from communications.

Youth have been regularly attending Youth Council meetings. However, priority to school work can place pressures on young people. Also, it has been observed that Youth Councils usually attract the most motivated young people and those who are inclined to leadership and achievement.

Action

That opportunity is taken to integrate youth with other sectors of the community in specific forums and projects to foster communication and understanding.

That the successful appointment of a community development worker include a strong focus on working with youth by implementing programs identified above and the development of existing facilities and services, ie the library and diversity of activities and encouraging communities to do the same in urban and rural locations.

That a program for youth in conjunction with Australia Day be arranged which could attract youth participation and attendance.

That specific youth events and activities be planned with recognition of the diversity of interests among youth for both contact and passive sport, arts, leisure and hobbies.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Corowa High School continues to provide counselling services and leadership programs.

The Youth Council was disbanded due to lack of interest in 2006, however a smaller group of interested young people continues to meet regularly for informal meetings to plan activities and events as well as volunteering opportunities with local services.

Communication with young people continues to be inconsistent due to a lack of resources.

iii) School Holiday Programs

Investigation disclosed this issue to be a major concern among adults and youth. Vacation care and holiday programs were identified as a significant need.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change.

Action

That Council assist appropriate organisations to facilitate school holiday programs for youth.

iv) Social Youth Space Facilities

Consultation with a number of agencies indicated a desire for such a centre to be established.

Community agencies and groups be encouraged to explore the options available in Corowa to meet the social needs of this target group and other strategies to facilitate youth development.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Fortnightly discos organised by the Corowa Blue Light Disco Inc.

Corowa Golf Club indoor recreation facility maintained and refurbished.

Action Taken during 2000/2001

The status quo remains.

Actions Taken 2004/2005

The Youth Council refurbished and developed the 'Shack' a youth friendly space where young people can hold activities.

Action

That the Council encourage and support community agencies and groups to seek and explore the development of initiatives that will meet the social needs of young people and youth within the Corowa Shire.

That Council encourage other venues and groups to provide youth friendly programs.

That Council take a coordinating role in providing information to youth about events for young people in the region.

y) *Transport to Activities*

Transport was listed as an issue among youth participants as well as in the community consultations with agencies and individuals in 2003. Limited public transport is available for the general public in Corowa Shire. Most youth rely on parents or friends for transport to various functions and activities. Difficulty is experienced in the transport of youth between towns to other centres as well as those from the more remote areas of the Shire.

It is not practical to arrange regular services. However, there would be a case to arrange transport for special functions and events.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Transport has been arranged by individuals and groups on an ad hoc basis.

Action

That Council's Community Development Worker (when appointed) assist in arranging the provision of transport for youth for specific functions and events.

That in the short term Council use public notices and representation to Clubs and other community organisations to address the transport access issue of youth through whatever community and family means is available.

Actions taken 2005/2006

The SCCPO has established an effective relationship with Corowa Community Transport for the hire and use of their bus (thanks to volunteer drivers) as an affordable option for young people to travel to youth events in the region. Regular trips are taken to Tocumwal to attend the Blue Light Disco.

vi) *Technical and Higher Education Facilities*

There are university campuses at Albury, Wodonga and Wagga.

As with most rural communities there is a drift of youth population to the major centres to access specialist higher education opportunities.

TAFE courses in Corowa were identified as traditional. Representatives of TAFE, business and the community expressed concern for new TAFE courses in Corowa with a higher level of vocational education for the Shire. The consultation identified many activities in the non-tradition vocational sector that could be explored for further education courses. These areas included, arts, crafts, library, government agency staff, family day care, shops, tourism, and may others.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Council provides community information about further education sources in the Shire.

Action

Council continue to encourage Corowa College of Adult Education to expand its operations in Corowa Shire.

Council assist other Technical and Higher Education providers to service Corowa Shire residents.

Council meet with TAFE, Chamber of Commerce industry leaders to explore the provision of different vocational programs.

Council meet with TAFE to assess the potential use of TAFE facilities for other activities in relation to Council's strategic plan to be developed on the use and/or upgrade of buildings for the range of community services and activities.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

No change actions continue

vii) Social Services Co-ordination

The consultations revealed a lack of co-ordination of services.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Communication and co-ordination between welfare service providers and maintaining the lines of communication between service providers will always be an ongoing task and remains too large a task for the Youth Council.

Inter-agency meetings deal with youth issues along with other target groups.

Action

That the Council encourage relevant organisations to network as a means for better co-ordination of services for youth and other target groups for social and community service planning.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Service co-ordination issues continue to be addressed through Interagency meetings. Service co-ordination has developed and remains of a high standard.

viii) Corowa High School

Actions

That Council action the opportunity of a large high school population to assist with projects or programs targeting community preventative education programs.

That Council recognises the limited counselling resources in the Shire and as a short to medium term strategy will support School counsellors to source and obtain funding for upgrade counselling seminar and professional development.

viii) Youth Employment

Youth Employment is an issue throughout Australia and Corowa Shire is no exception. However, the local manufacturing and rural and tourist industry make Corowa Shire better placed than other rural Shires.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

The High School provides a high level of state education for equipping youth for future education and employment.

Council and the Chamber of Commerce advocate for improved TAFE courses.

Council and Chamber of Commerce take opportunities to attract industry and tourism to the area.

TAFE introduced on-line connect study for students across NSW based at Corowa TAFE.

Action

That Council continue to press educational and employment opportunities for Corowa Shire.

That Council promote the current opportunities fro education throughout the Shire.

ix) Youth Worker

2003

Many organisations and individuals identified the need for a youth worker. This exemplified the considerable concern that youth in the Shire need support and servicing. The Community Health youth work needs strengthening. An overwhelming support for the establishment of a Community Development Worker at Council is the first step to work towards achieving increased levels of service and work with the young people in the Shire.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Council worked with the District Health Committee and forwarded the submission for a Community Development Worker.

Action

That Council re-submit the application for a Community Development Worker with more substantial documentation and assistance from the District Health Committee.

That the Community Health Worker be established at Council to provide the coordinating and developmental work for Council.

That the youth work be included in the brief of the Community Development Worker.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Whilst the introduction of the SCCPO role goes some way to addressing the need for a Youth Worker in the Shire, the capacity and resources of the role place limitations on the amount and type of Youth Work that can be actioned.

Action

That the SCCPO investigate opportunities for funding to establish the role of a Youth Worker for the Shire.

Opportunities may arise by developing the role in-conjunction with other external agencies.

x) Youth Suicide

Action

That Council participate in regional forums that promote youth suicide prevention.

That the SCCPO continue to examine Youth Suicide issues and remain informed of Suicide prevention programs and campaigns.

That Council support external agencies delivering adolescent mental health programs and services throughout the Shire.

That Council continue to support mental health and well being programs delivered by the High School as they see necessary.

xi) Non-traditional activities

Many participants identified the need for improved facilities and recognition of the diversity of interests and activities in community participation and recreation. During the consultation it was observed that considerable diversity exists in Corowa Shire and residents engage in a wide range of interests outside of the traditional Club and contact sport scene. Therefore greater numbers of people are identifying the need for support and development of these other interests. Some of these include walking and cycling as well as educational programs.

Some suggested that the some facilities are not "user friendly" to youth or people wanting activities outside some limited options. This raises equity and access issues that inevitably arise when there is a lack of coordination on behalf of residents and groups and organisation pursue individual aims regardless of the changing face of a community. Industry brings relocation of workers and a diversity of population. Tourists, and residents

visiting other areas, expand interests and demand. It is the same with youth of these families.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Council provision of skate park.

Tourist Association submission for improved signage, cycling and walking paths.

Action

That Council communicate to the Shire its support for the development of a diversity of activities for young people.

That Council utilise media opportunities available to comment and promote achievements of young people in all sports and cultural activities.

That Council assess the feasibility and consequent funding to upgrade netball courts to support access to sponsorship and attracting statewide championships to the Shire.

That Council continue to encourage Charitable and Community Organisations to extend youth community activities such as the skate park and BMX bike facilities.

That Council establish a long-term plan for an indoor sports facility accessible to all the target groups. In the short term Council will examine the use of current Club facilities, the diversity of sports required and access issues.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

The SCCPO has coordinated a number of Youth Activities throughout 2005/2006 including non-traditional activities such as the ARTSTART Project.

Action

Actions as above are ongoing.

Part C

Target Group – Women.

Current Services

There is a range of services available to Corowa Shire residents, but few that are specifically for women. Current provision is not identified in the Management Plan as needs were not identified previously. In the community consultations there were very many issues raised for the target group.

i) Women's Health Issues

Women have access to local private medical and allied health services as well as public services from Corowa Hospital and Greater Murray Health. The availability of mammogram checks was raised as a specific issue. A mobile service is not available to Corowa Shire as the Albury service is deemed to service the Shire.

Update 2005/2006

Greater Southern Area Health Service (formerly Greater Murray) made available in February 2006 a mobile mammogram service at the Corowa Hospital with plans to return again in 2007/2008.

Further investigation needs to be carried out to determine the current services available, the service gaps and further action by Council.

During the consultation in 2003 the following issues were identified:

- i) Emergency Accommodation for women and children in crisis
- ii) Supported accommodation and transitional housing for women escaping domestic violence
- iii) Carers with children with disabilities have no day care
- iv) Mothers and babies support
- v) Family support services
- vi) Court Support
- vii) Return to school programs
- viii) Networking
- ix) Single parent isolation

ii) Supported accommodation

The needs identified in the 2003 consultation suggest a number of issues have been hidden from the public arena. There was strong support for emergency and refuge accommodation to be located within the Shire.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change to status quo.

Action

That Council lobby appropriate departments and service to provide supported accommodation for the needs of residents in crisis. It is inappropriate for people in extreme crisis following abuse to be expected to relocate considerable distances away from other families and support.

That Council support improved local services to women in domestic violence.

That Council support GMAHS and other departmental community preventative programs that target sources of aggression and domestic violence.

That Council lobby GMAHS for the increased provision of family support services and support for new mothers.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Recommendations were made to the NSW Department of Housing for a needs analysis of emergency and supported accommodation to be conducted across the Shire. Reply from the Department indicated that the area was being monitored for growth, however it was unnecessary to conduct any further investigations as yet.

iii) Carers and children with disabilities

The lack of provision for children and others with disabilities has emerged as a major concern during the consultations.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change to status quo.

Action

That Council lobby appropriate authorities to ensure the provision of specialist care services.

iv) Mothers and babies

A number of health agency staff identified the need for a mother and baby unit at Corowa Hospital. Examples of mothers requiring support and relying on other regional hospital indicated additional stress at a time when some mothers already suffered post natal depression. Other mothers suffering from the loss of babies need more support and more efficient referral services to the major metropolitan centres.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change to status quo.

Action

That Council lobby GMAHS to improve the provision in Corowa Shire and the region.

That Council lobby and investigate the options for the disused maternity unit in Corowa Hospital.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Corowa Community Health introduced a trial period of 1 day per month outreach access to the Parent & Baby Unit staff from Albury. The trial was not utilised and therefore deemed unsuccessful.

Action

That the SCCPO investigate opportunities to establish a 'Young Mum's' group in Howlong.

v) Family Support Services

Women and their families have been identified as requiring support services to remove and prevent isolation. More support services within health and community programs would alleviate this problem.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Court support program funded for Corowa and to be auspiced by Community Health.

Action

That Family First and other support programs be negotiated for implementation by appropriate government departments.

Action taken 2005/2006

There is currently no Court support formally provided to Corowa Shire area however support can be arranged on an as needs basis through Corowa Community Health.

vi) Single mothers

Professional agency staff identified both networking and return to school programs as needed for single mothers. Networking for all women and continuing education rates as important. Single mothers encounter particular difficulty with isolation from information and ready access to some programs.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change to the status quo.

Action

That Council lobby appropriate authorities to provide funding and programs to ensure access for the target group.

That Council lobby appropriate authorities to ensure the provision of health services for women as required.

vii) Lighting of Public Places

This issue relates to safety of females at night in public places. Generally highly trafficked public places are well lit and are considered adequate. However, Council should monitor problem areas and provide additional lighting on a needs basis.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Normal developments.

Action

That Council continue to monitor the adequacy of street lighting in public places and make improvements as identified by the Corowa Community Safety Committee.

Part D

TARGET GROUP – OLDER PEOPLE (55 YEARS AND OVER)

Current Services

There is a good mix of services available for older people in Corowa Shire from a number of organisations and services. There are 200 HACC clients in the area (2003). Services available for older people can be broadly summarised as follows:

- Recreational facilities
- Hospitals
- Nursing home
- Hostel care
- Community aged care packages
- HACC services
- Meals on Wheels
- Community Transport
- Senior Citizens Centre
- Recreational Clubs

Consultation with the community and investigation in 2003 revealed the following issues:

- i) Community Option packages
- ii) Respite Care
- iii) Transport
- iv) Allied Health Services
- v) Pedestrian and wheelchair access (see disabled target group)
- vi) Other Issues

i) Community Option packages

The consultation identified it is difficult to access aged care packages in Corowa Shire. Home and Community Care provide to the service target group. Funding restrictions allow little scope for expansion to a growth population area.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change to the status quo.

Action

That Council monitor the situation and lobby the appropriate authorities to increase the provision in Corowa Shire.

Actions continue 2005/2006

ii) Respite Care

There are limited facilities available in Corowa Shire with residents accessing services in other regional locations. The consultation identified little is known about the Regional Respite Care Centre Service based in Wagga where assistance for local people can be obtained through HACC. Dementia care arose as an issue with implications for access to both community respite and residential care.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change to status quo.

Action

That Council monitor the need for additional Respite Care facilities.

That Council acquire detailed information on all regional services and ensure this information is being provided to residents by Council and other relevant agencies.

Actions continue 2005/2006

iii) Transport

A community bus service to transport aged and disabled persons to other places for health and medical appointments and other needs exists

In Corowa a private bus service operates between Corowa and Albury. Taxi Services are available. Some groups provide transport to individuals attending activities, ie Theatre group assist older people to attend performances. Home Care transport clients to appointments and shopping, but this has been identified as a costly service, therefore limiting the availability of the service. Residents rely considerably on owning transport, families and friends.

The current transport service to the HACC is outsourced from Albury (Kalianna) and done on a voluntary basis. It is identified as limited in availability and accessibility. Consideration to people confined to wheelchairs is needed. Within the Shire, there seems an increasing demand from the Mulwala area.

The issues raised in community consultations in this area relate to the following:

1. Information on transport services
2. Weekend services
3. Resolution of Border Anomaly for taxi transport subsidy scheme

Action Taken during 1999/2000

1. *Information on transport services.*

The consultation identified much confusion among service providers and the public on exactly what transport services existed. The input from one agency suggests that community transport may not reach maximum patronage. Others identified systems problems with management of the community bus access in Corowa Shire.

2. Additional Weekend Services

Residents and services identified the lack of weekend transport meant access issues for older people.

3. Cross Border Anomaly – Taxi Transport Scheme

The consultation was advised that travel across the border is problematic between Mulwala and Yarrowonga because half price discounts are State-based and when people travel across the border they pay full price.

3a Additional Cross Border Issues

Older people in wheelchairs encounter a range of access problems. Residents with Gopher wheelchairs in Mulwala wanting to access services in Yarrowonga can only travel on the road because the footpaths are too narrow.

Action Taken during 2000/2003

No change to status quo

Action

That Council in conjunction with the Corowa Rutherglen Health Support Group identify the transport services available to Corowa Shire residents, private and community, and publish to all community groups the criteria and cost of the available transport.

That Council liaise with GMAHS transport program manager to access community transport funding for Corowa Shire.

That Council survey and document all transport available to the older people and others with disabilities (except individual and family cars). This information to be made public to residents and the information to be available at all relevant agencies servicing the target groups.

That Council monitor the adequacy of transport for the target group.

That Council lobby, when and where appropriate, to ensure adequacy of transport the target groups is maintained in the Shire.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

The SCCPO has been attending regular meeting with the regional Transport Working Group to raise issues regarding Passenger Transport in the Shire.

Through discussions held at the TWG meetings Corowa-Wahgunyah Taxis and Corowa Community Transport have made arrangements to service older people on the weekends and after normal Community Transport hours using their issued vouchers.

iv) Allied Health Services

The target group and other target groups identified access problems to subsidised podiatry, speech pathology and occupational therapy services. Residents encounter long waiting lists and regional shortages of staff. Residents travel to regional centres for appointments. This problem is identified in this target group and across all target groups. The presence of the Aged Care Assessment Team in the Shire has resulted in speedy assessments. The Corowa Hospital and other aged care services assist older people to access regional services. Allied health services and hospital staff assist with post patient integration into community life.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Council supports Senior Citizens' Week.
Generally no change to status quo.

Action

That Council lobby GMAHS to provide the appropriate level of allied health services to the Shire residents.

That Council monitor the developments and advocate for service to match the growth of the target groups in the Shire.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Council continues to support Corowa Health Services and Howlong Community Health to assist older people in the Shire.

v) Pedestrian and wheelchair access

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Council has developed the PAMP and continues to implement the identified actions.

vi) Other Issues

Establishment of Hostel

Action

That Council continue to assist Southern Cross Homes in the establishment of the Aged Hostel facility in Corowa.

Action Completed 2004 – no longer necessary.

Palliative and Hospice Care

Action

That Council monitor the need for additional Hospice and Palliative Care facilities, and assist identified needs by local health services to lobby appropriate government departments for increased services.

Actions Taken 2006

Regional Social Development Group has employed a Palliative Care Planning Officer to research and monitor Palliative Care demands and issues within the region.

Retirement Units

Action

That Council continue to support the development of private retirement unit facilities in the Shire.

Library Services

Actions

That Council assess extending opening hours of the libraries, particularly during the lunch hours.

That Council investigate the viability of increasing library print resources, including reference material.

That Council include the development of libraries in context of wider cultural planning for art gallery space, cultural group meetings, workshops and community access for all age groups.

Community and Older People

Action

That Council will support agencies and groups in the community to improve the participation of older people in the work force, education, leisure and volunteering.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

The role of the SCCPO has encourages the education of older people by supporting the development and promotion of University of the Third Age (U3A) within the Shire.

Improved Traffic Facilities

Action

That Council plan and implement in the medium term a pedestrian crossing in Sanger Street near the main shopping and services location. This is an identified access issue for all pedestrians, but particularly for the elderly and people with disabilities.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Council's development of the PAMP addresses pedestrian traffic facility issues.

Part E

TARGET GROUP – PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Current Services

There are services available for people with disabilities from a number of organisations and services that can be summarised as follows. The Community College offers a living skills program (2003). Children requiring respite travel to Deniliquin or Wagga. Respite is also available in Albury and Wangaratta (Victoria). The Royal Far West Children's Health Scheme for children with acute and chronic illnesses provides a service to country NSW. The issues for allied health services mentioned in Section D also apply to the disability target group

- Community Health Services
- Allied Health Services
- Hospital Services
- Medical Services
- Social Welfare Services
- Recreational facilities
- Local Support Groups
- See Older Persons Services

Consultation with the community and investigation in 2003 revealed the following issues:

- (i) Pedestrian and wheelchair access
- (ii) Transport (see Older Persons Part D)
- (iii) Respite and Residential Care
- (iv) Community Options

i) Pedestrian and Wheelchair Access

In community consultations safety of older and disabled persons in terms of pedestrian and wheelchair access was a major issue. This issue can be broken down into the following areas:

1) Access to public buildings

The Building Code of Australia contains standards for all new public buildings to ensure the provision of access. A number of heritage buildings exist in Corowa that require special permission for alterations or alternative access works. In the consultation people identified a problem with access to Heritage buildings, entrance to the Hospital (no automatic doors), Council Shire Office doors difficult to exit for wheelchairs and elderly on foot because the doors open inwards.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Access has been provided when alterations to existing buildings occur. Some heritage buildings received alternative access.

Action

That Council undertake an audit of Public Facilities and prioritise a program for disabled access for Council facilities and make representations to relevant property owners for access improvement.

That Council investigate and assist users of Heritage building to overcome impediments to wheelchair access.

2) Streets and Footpaths

Council and developers have constructed kerb and gutter and footpath infrastructure in urban areas over the years. The major problems identified in community consultations include the difficulty those utilising wheelchairs and motorised wheelchairs have in negotiating the lip of kerb laybacks, access in and around Corowa and Mulwala, and between Mulwala and Yarrowonga (identified in Section D).

Action Taken during 2000/2003

Ongoing management of streets and footpaths.

Action

That all new kerb and gutter infrastructure in Corowa Shire be constructed to ensure there is no lip to the kerb.

That in conjunction with Council's risk management program a priority program be put in place to improve kerb and gutter and footpath infrastructure.

In conjunction with council's risk management program short term repairs be undertaken for problem areas.

That an audit be undertaken to ensure a logical flow of pedestrian and wheelchair traffic in urban areas.

Actions taken in 2005/2006

Actions as identified by the PAMP.

ii) Transport

See Part D Older Persons

iii) Respite and Residential Care

The community consultations indicated that there is a lack of respite care facilities in the area to provide relief for carers. Further investigation is required to ascertain current services and of solutions to fill any gaps. Younger people with disabilities use aged care nursing home facilities. Existing health services are frustrated in attempts to find alternatives. In the long term appropriate residential care needs to be provided for people with disabilities across the generations. Community Option packages for people with disabilities to live independently are required in the Shire.

There is a demand for peer support and social support. Most service provision of this type is outsourced from Albury Family Link, running "Pathways to independence". Some kind of recreation and leisure service as well as community access support service is needed.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

To access respite in a hostel or nursing home the client must have had a geriatric assessment by an Aged Care Assessment Officer.

Department of Ageing and Disability, GMAHS and HACC assessments of needs and plans for the region.

That Council lobby appropriate government departments and agencies to provide services addressing the identified needs.

Action

That Council advocate with the appropriate government departments to provide more respite care relevant to people with disabilities and those caring for them.

That Council monitor the level of respite care services available to Corowa Shire residents and promote these services to the community.

That Council provide information about Council and local services that is accessible to people with a wide range of disabilities.

That Council promote positive attitudes to people with disabilities through the information and education provided to Council staff, and users and potential users of Council services.

That Council include a long-term plan to lobby the Department of Ageing and Disability to provide community options packages in Corowa Shire.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

No change – Actions Continue

Part F

TARGET GROUP – ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE

Current Services

Services are available on a regional basis from Albury and Wagga Wagga.

There is a wide range of services directly available to the Indigenous community from various organisations and services. In addition all general services available to Corowa Shire residents are accessible to the Shire's Indigenous community.

Consultation with the community and investigation in 2003 revealed the following issues:

- (i) Communication
- (ii) Respect for Culture
- (iii) Sport and Community Participation

(i) Communication

Existing services and community provide contact and assistance. The High School engages a proactive communication program to ensure sensitivity to culture and integration across ethnicity.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change to status quo.

Action

That Council maintain communication with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through appropriate means to foster cooperation and development.

ii) Respect for Culture

In the process of major developments there are requirements to protect significant Aboriginal sites under relevant planning legislation.

Action

That Council encourage the Aboriginal community to maintain its culture in various forms as opportunities arise.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Council celebrated NAIDOC week during 2005 and 2006 to raise awareness of the recognition of the Shire's Aboriginal Heritage.

Actions continue to evolve and are ongoing

iii) Sport and Community Participation

The culture and demands within the Corowa Shire are changing with newcomers and the expectations of existing residents as they become aware of developments in other Shire. It is important to equally recognise the diversity to include indigenous culture.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people able to participate in available sport and facilities.

Action

That Council recognise and support indigenous culture wherever possible through community activities.

Actions continue 2005/2006

Part G

TARGET GROUP – PEOPLE FROM CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

Participation in the 2003 consultation suggested the invisibility of people with culturally diverse backgrounds. Service providers were aware of culturally appropriate services, but did not identify particular issues, as the target group does not generally access services. A national interpreter service is available. In the consultations people suggested the development of multicultural groups to meet specific needs, language groups could involve students learning a second language meeting with people from different ethnic backgrounds.

Current Services

Residents of Corowa Shire have equal access, regardless of birthplace, nationality or language to all services available. People from the target group can access regional Multicultural services in Albury and Wagga.

Action Taken during 2000/2003

There has been no dramatic change in this target group.

Action

That Council monitor the growth in the target group and take action to assist individuals on a needs basis.

That Council support agencies identifying social needs of people from different ethnic backgrounds.

That Council support a range of cultural, arts and sports activities to develop in Shire in which people from different backgrounds can participate.

That Council will support initiatives for programs to enable frail older people from different ethnic backgrounds to meet socially.

Actions continue 2005/2006 with greater access to and knowledge of Albury and Wodonga multicultural services and groups due to investigations and networks accessed by the SCCPO.

Part H

TARGET GROUP – RURAL AND ISOLATED PEOPLE

Current Services

This target group has access to all general services available to the wider community. However, due to their rural location there are certain barriers to service access.

The main issues raised in community consultations in 2003 are as follows:

- (i) Road Network
- (ii) Maintenance of rural social infrastructure
- (iii) Communication
- (iv) Telecommunications
- (v) Health and Welfare

(i) Road Network

The maintenance of the road network is of utmost importance to the rural population for transport to major centres as well as transport associated with rural business.

Road maintenance and construction is conducted by Corowa Shire Council as and when required. However, Council's road expenditure is limited by income received.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Not change to status quo.

Action

That Council pursue, adopt and implement a Road Classification System recognising the importance of the rural road network to the target group.

Actions continue 2005/2006

(ii) Maintenance of Rural Social Infrastructure

In the 2003 community consultations the importance of rural social infrastructure was recognised as a crucial element to maintain. The specific infrastructure that Council is involved with included community halls, sporting facilities, and bush fire brigades. It is recognised that there are other rural networks such as Landcare groups, church groups, farmers groups, etc.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

Council continues to support services provided to rural communities such as community halls, sporting facilities, Landcare and bush fire brigades.

Action

That Council continue to maintain and improve rural social infrastructure and support other rural social networks where possible.

That Council monitor the transport issues for rural residents and access to urban services and facilities.

Actions continue 2005/2006

The development and maintenance of rural infrastructure continues to play a part in assisting rural and isolated communities.

iii) Communication

Council issues specific information to every householder on various matters including Australia Day celebrations and Senior Citizens Day on a needs basis.

Local media are utilised for specific press releases issued by Council on various matters.

Council has established a website to provide direct access to all Council decisions and provide information about the range of services and events in the Shire.

Action

That Council maintain communication with its community through traditional forms and improve where possible.

That Council provide information to all groups in the Shire about funding sources and funding rounds available.

iv) Telecommunications

Corowa Shire shares the problem of many rural areas regarding poor mobile phone coverage and the necessity for upgrading telecommunications for rural areas.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change to status quo.

Action

That Council pursue Telstra and other means regarding telecommunication infrastructure and access to the Shire with a view to upgrading to cater for the needs of modern society.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

Issues no longer significant and telecommunications continue to improve in rural areas.

v) Family Day Care

Action

That Council monitor the access to and development of family day care programs to Corowa Shire small towns and other rurally isolated families.

vi) Health and Welfare

During consultations in 2003 residents identified the access to health and welfare services within and external to Corowa Shire as an important issue. Small towns needing family day care require carers and transport issues to be addressed. High school students articulated access needs to after school activities in the Shire major urban areas being inhibited due to the lack of transport. Isolation is classified as a community health issue. Rural people unable to access urban facilities, either through information or by means of transport raises an equity issue based on the nature of residence.

Action

That Council continue to press GMAHS and other appropriate government and non-government departments for improved services that benefit rural people.

That Council assists Family Day Care staff resources to take up new government funded programs that service rural areas.

That Council monitor and lobby other government departments to press for improved access to services within the Shire, Albury and other regional service centres.

That Council continue to work with rural communities and small towns to enhance community and social well being among the residents.

Actions taken 2005/2006

The SCCPO maintains effective communication with local health and community service providers monitoring the health and well being needs of rural communities and addressing issues of access as they arise through appropriate avenues.

Drought support and planning has been identified as an issue for rural communities and is addressed in *Part H* of the target group Actions.

vii) Landcare

Action

That Council continue to work with rural communities and small towns through Landcare groups to enhance community and social well-being among the residents.

Part I

OTHER ISSUES

In the community consultations in 2003 five other main issues were revealed which affect the general population. Before discussing the five main issues there were many items worth noting that people participating in the consultation rose as community issues. Not all are specifically mentioned in the target group sections. The listing is a chronological order of noting the items during the consultation.

Improvement to existing services and groups and awareness of them in the community
Loneliness, especially for newcomers
Distance from Albury and size of Corowa prevents service development
Hard to attract conferences to Corowa because of the distance from the Albury airport
Transport costs and time accessing services in Albury
Community Transport volunteers very good
No transport to towns like Balldale or Lowesdale
Need cheap community transport for kids
Guides/Scouts need to hire a bus for large numbers to go anywhere
Hard for charitable organisation, even harder for youth of the town, no after hours services
Sometimes services not coordinated or may be duplicated
High cost of doctors' indemnity cover
Hard to get appointments with doctors of choice in an emergency
TAFE has a long tradition in Corowa
Corowa needs a distinctive attraction to mark its difference in the region
Corowa Shire needs leadership to bring about many programs and cultural developments
Corowa could be a Learning City and make links with other places while helping the Shire to develop a diversity of interests through informal and formal education for all ages
The community needs to be listened to
Council could develop the river frontage for tourism and the community
Walking tracks, cycle paths and better roads for South Corowa
Use of Corowa Golf Club facilities
No front entrance access to Community College
Support for environmental projects in schools
Council involves groups and organisation for notice of events in calendars
Communication needs improving in the Shire
"One stop shop" for essential services
Street improvements
Volunteers need more recognition
Vandalism needs community and infrastructure approach
Library should stay open all week Library could run cultural days and art gallery, coffee shop, etc.
Volunteers burn out, more volunteers needed
Community groups need information from Council on funding available

In addition **Community Consultation in 2006** revealed these issues as significant:

The plan needs to include Howlong
Need for and indoor sports complex
Men are not included in the target groups
Adult disabled people with carers need respite urgently
More support for older people and people with disabilities is required at a community level
More staff and space would be necessary to increase opening hours of the Corowa library and to increase print resources.

i) Cross Border Issues

Due to the location of the Shire and its proximity to Victoria there are many cross border anomalies that affect a range of areas including health, education, transport, law and order and others.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change to status quo.

Action

That Council make representations to the appropriate authorities with a view to resolving specific issues.

That Council join the efforts of Regional Councils organisations to resolve many cross border issues.

Actions continue 2005/2006

ii) Public Housing

Investigation has revealed that there cyclical private housing rental shortages.

Action Taken during 1999/2003

No change to status quo.

Action

That Council make representations for the provision of public housing in Corowa Shire.

That Council integrate social and community planning with the Council Management Plan by planning for residential development. This arises from relocation of workers to local industry; retirement housing for existing residents and holiday-makers to the region; and the growth in regional housing movements of people seeking cheaper housing outside the Albury-Wodonga boundaries.

Actions taken 2005/2006

The SCCPO has corresponded with Housing NSW as well as local public housing services to examine the provision of public housing in the Shire. Communication and monitoring continues.

iii) Emergency Accommodation

This issue is also discussed in Section C 'Women'

Action

That Council support and promote the availability of refuge accommodation in an emergency situation available in the local area.

That Council encourage the NSW Department of Community Services to undertake a Needs Analysis for the area.

Actions continue 2005/2006 including monitoring of the issue.

iv) Emergency services access

Residents requiring ambulance and other services raised this issue in 2003 consultations. Some people have needed to walk into the street in night attire to indicate to the ambulance driver their location.

Action

That Council add street numbers to street signs where poor visibility of numbers occurs, priority identification for Honour Avenue.

Actions Taken in 2005/2006

Actions continue across the Shire to provide visible house numbers to residence's guttering/driveway where applicable. The SCCPO advises that it is often required that people walk into the street to direct ambulance or emergency service vehicles regardless of the visibility of street numbers.

v) Buildings

There are a number of buildings and halls within the Shire. Many groups and organisations identified the need for improved or appropriate building space. Some groups identified that some meeting spaces lack furniture that is costly for individual groups to hire. The Theatre group (the Corowa Players) is a successful arts and cultural feature for Corowa. This group meets, rehearses and performs at inadequate premises. A number large number of local artists and crafters need a gallery space for their work. The thriving and growing activity in the arts requires support for facilities for workshops, visiting artists and seminars that could be one of the Shire attractions. None of the present meeting places is adequate. Although creative planning and development could provide for these important cultural developments. (comments made 2003)

Action

That Council, in conjunction with relevant community groups, plan the diverse use and development of public buildings for community and social use.

That Council explore current and potential use by single and a combination of community groups, and investigate opportunities with government owned buildings, ie TAFE.

That Council establish a steering committee to see Heritage and Arts Council funding for the purpose of renovating, changing or maintaining existing buildings.

Actions continue 2005/2006

vi) Arts and Culture

Recommendation

That Council encourage developments of programs and services in facilities such as:

Corowa Memorial Hall;
Oddfellows Hall;
Flour Mill;
Railway Station;
Library; and
Resource Centre.

Actions taken 2005/2006

Council continues to encourage groups to utilise the facilities.

No further Actions recommended – Actions are ongoing.

vii) Newcomers

Recommendation

That Council continue to support the newcomers kit compiled by Corowa Tourism and made available in a range of community organisations and implement a newcomers visitor/welcome program. Further that Council encourage access to information available on the Council Website.

Actions Taken 2005/2006

The SCCPO, Business Development Manager and Visitors Information Centre Manager developed a New Residents Shire Information Kit that has evolved into a Shire Information kit. The Kit continues to be maintained and updated by Council for distribution from various agencies throughout the Shire.

No further Action required – Action completed.

Appendix 'A'

SHIRE PROFILE

Geography and Industry

The Corowa Shire Council, represents an area of 2 228 square km, and a population of approximately 10700 forms part of the Murray Region of New South Wales, a region that stretches from the western edge of the Great Divide to the border between New South Wales and South Australia. The Shire Council area occupies a superb setting as the Murray River, which forms its southern border, provides an ideal residential and recreational environment, together with drinking and irrigation water.

Mixed farming enterprises dominate the agricultural sector in the Shire Council area and farms occupy the majority of rural land. There are over 250 operating agricultural establishments in the Shire Council area on farm units that range in size from around 100 hectares to over 1000 hectares. Major products of the Shire Council area include wheat, barley, maize, canola, wool and livestock (sheep, cattle, and pigs).

Whilst agriculture, forestry and fishery is a traditional major employer of the Shire accounting for about 16% (REMPPLAN, La Trobe University, 2006) of all jobs other major employers of the area are quickly taking over such as manufacturing which employs 21% (REMPPLAN) of the population. Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants 13%, Retail 12%, Health and Community Services 6%, Education 4% and Culture and Recreation make up the remainder of employers (REMPPLAN).

COROWA, a NSW Federation Town is serviced by specialty and variety stores, two supermarkets and many older style pubs. Centrally located in the Shire, Corowa is the main service centre of the Shire, ideal for day trips and locally based activities with excellent transport links to all east Australian cities.

HOWLONG has a rapidly growing town centre with new stores and businesses, including a supermarket, chemist, post office, bakery, two pubs, a motel, Registered Club, 18 Hole Golf Course and 2 bowling greens. Development is booming in Howlong with new homes being built alongside historical buildings. Reasonably priced industrial and residential land is available only a short distance from Albury-Wodonga and the Hume Highway.

Set on the edge of the unique Lake Mulwala, **MULWALA**, is a growing town situated opposite thriving Yarrawonga in Victoria. Melbourne Street commercial strip includes a butchery, bakery, post office, takeaway, Chinese, Thai and Italian restaurants, a new supermarket, newsagency and petrol station, industrial and leisure businesses, 3 registered clubs plus a 45 hole golf course, the largest public course in the southern hemisphere. Mulwala is a town on the verge of a development boom with new housing and industrial estates, housing refurbishment, new businesses and increasing numbers of tourists coming to town.

Existing Health and Community Services

Corowa has a fully serviced medical centre, a hospital, dental surgery and a new aged care facility. Corowa Community Health provides ancillary health services throughout the Shire such as HACC Services, Early Childhood Nurse, Drug and Alcohol Worker, Generalist Counsellor, Friendly Visiting Service, Aged Care Coordinator, Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, Social Workers, Child and Adolescent Worker, Mental Health Workers, Dietician, Diabetic Educator, Gentle Exercise programs, Palliative Care Volunteer Coordinator, Women's Health, Psycho-geriatric Nurse. Howlong Community Health also provides access to ancillary medical and health services.

Corowa Shire has access to many private (located in Corowa and Howlong), Government and outreach health and community services including (but not limited to) podiatry, physiotherapy, dentistry, massage therapy, chiropractor, hearing services, optometrist, naturopathy and alternative health as well as Friends for Families volunteer service, Friends of Woodstock disability service, Kallianna Community Transport, Disability Advocacy & Information Service, Department of Veterans Affairs and Regional Social Development Group services.

Transport

Transportation to and from the Shire Council area is primarily by road as the rail service to Corowa ceased in 1987. A network of major roads provides adequate links to N.S.W. and Victoria, particularly Melbourne which is only 3 hours drive and from where the majority of goods and services are obtained. The closeness of Melbourne and the ideal links into Victoria affords ready access to the area for tourists.

Corowa has an excellent aerodrome with two fully sealed runways one of which is provided with facilities for night landing. The airport adequately caters for aircraft up to Fokker 28 size and weight.

Regular passenger bus services operate between Corowa and the two major regional centres of Albury and Wangaratta.

Recreation and Tourism

The excellent recreational and sporting facilities are available throughout the Shire, The Shire is a sporting mecca catering for sports such as football, netball, golf (three courses), bowls, tennis, hockey, cricket, gliding and skydiving, wakeboarding, water skiing, sailing, fishing, rowing and swimming. Other activities include bird watching and nature walks.

During peak holiday periods the population of Mulwala increases to over 5,600 persons, whilst Corowa's population increases significantly also. To accommodate the tourist population there are many successful hotels, motels and caravan parks with river frontage as well as bed and breakfasts

For further information on the Corowa Shire please refer to www.corowa.nsw.gov.au

Appendix 'B'

Key Issues confronting Corowa Shire Council in the future are:

- Upgrading the existing Mulwala Sewerage Treatment Works to cater for not only existing loads, which currently exceed existing capacity but to cater for future growth over the next 20 years or to abandon the existing works and construct new facilities. The existing works were constructed in the late 1930's to cater for the needs of the Mulwala Explosives Factory (now A.D.I.) and handed over to Council in 1970 when Mulwala was seweraged. Council is investigating the available options to update the treatment of sewerage in Mulwala including a cross border resource sharing option with North East Water involving the establishment of one facility for Yarrowonga and Mulwala.
- Appropriate drainage strategies need to be developed and implemented particularly in Mulwala where the major constraints relate to the flatness of the terrain and the lack of clearly defined drainage lines. In Corowa the concerns of drainage that need to be addressed relate to outfall provisions for the drainage lines to the north west and southwest and for South Corowa.
- In view of the economic importance of the Shire Council area's rural activities it is imperative that Council resist the fragmentation of rural lands. Council is periodically subjected to pressure to approve the subdivision of prime agricultural land for rural residential purposes.
- In line with increasing awareness over environmental matters, Council will need; to ensure that development is carried out in a manner which mitigates environmental impact; to address all forms of pollution; and, to ensure that the Murray River and its environs are not further degraded.
- To ensure the continued economic growth of the Shire Council area there is a need to encourage the growth of new industry and tourist related developments. There is also the need to promote Council's industrial land and the area as a tourist resort and promote our Federation heritage.
- The life expectancy of the Corowa Swimming Pool, now some 40 years old and in a deteriorated condition, should now be assessed in order for Council to plan for a major upgrading of the facility now that new amenity facilities have been developed on the site.
- The continuing operations and the urgent need to address the environmental issues at the A.D.I. factory in Mulwala is very important to the Shire and Mulwala and Yarrowonga communities.
- With the increase of the retirement population taking up residence in the Shire particularly in the lakeside town of Mulwala and increasingly, the growing town of Howlong there is a need for strategic planning of social, community and health service infrastructure to support the specific needs of these populations.

Appendix 'C'

Documentation and References

- Demographic Profile of Corowa Shire (Corowa Shire Council), 2003
- Demographic Profile of Corowa Local Government Area (Corowa Shire Social/Community Plan 1999-2000)
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- 1998 Social/Community Planning and Reporting Guideline and Manual (Department of Local Government)
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- 1998 Social Determinants of Health, The Solid Facts, Healthy Cities for All, Wilkinson, R & Marmot, M., World Health Organisation
- 1999 Murray Shire Community Social Plan
- 1999 Planning Information, Department of Community Services
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- 1999 Wagga Wagga City Council Social Plan
- 2000 Social and Community Planning and Reporting Guidelines NSW Department of Local Government
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- 2000 -2003 Greater Murray Area Health Services Area Health Plans:
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- 2001 Women in Australia, Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women
- 2002 Women's Health Outcomes Framework, NSW Health Department
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- 2002-2005 Corowa Shire Management Plan
- 2002 –2003 Draft Action Plan Yarrawonga Mulwala
- 2002-2003 NSW Rural Health Plan, NSW Health Department
- 2002-2003 Directory, Corowa, Wahgunyah and Rutherglen
- 2003 Corowa Shire Council Community Calendar
- 2005/2006 Shire Kit, Corowa Shire Council
- 2006 REMPLAN, La Trobe University
- 2006 Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) Corowa, Howlong and Mulwala
Corowa Shire Council, Community Development Initiatives Pty Ltd

Documentation in organisations
Corowa Health Service Planning Consultations
Corowa Information Centre literature
Corowa Free Press
Councils Newsletters