

A green chevron graphic pointing to the right, located on the left side of the page.

# Tamworth Regional Council **Sustainability Strategy** 2017-2021

Tamworth Regional Council  
acknowledges the Kamilaroi  
People, the traditional  
owners and custodians of  
the lands in our region and  
we pay respect to the Elders  
both past and present.



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### About this Plan

This Strategy was developed in response to Keychange 2017-2021, Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and provides an integrated and coordinated approach to advancing sustainability in our Region.

### Acknowledgements

Tamworth Regional Council acknowledges the support of the Office of Environment & Heritage via the Sustainability Advantage Program.

Council also acknowledges the contribution of specialist consultants 100% Renewables in guiding us through the formation of this Strategy.

## Message from the Mayor

Welcome to Tamworth Regional Council's Sustainability Strategy 2017-21 which provides an integrated and coordinated approach to advancing sustainability in our Region.

Council recognises that we must protect and enhance our natural and built environments if we want a healthy, connected and sustainable future. Our Region is fortunate to have a diverse range of natural assets including rich agricultural soil, local waterways and significant native animal species. As the major centre for a catchment area of some 200,000 people, Tamworth is one of most progressive and innovative regions in NSW. We are also in the enviable position of being able to enjoy generous open space and a rural landscape with access to the services and facilities provided by a modern city, but we cannot take our way of life for granted.

Tamworth is experiencing rapid population growth which is good for our local economy but also poses challenges that have significant environmental impact. The ongoing demand for housing, increased resource use and waste production puts enormous pressure on our environment.

Council is committed to making environmental sustainability a priority. We must protect our diverse urban and rural assets, manage the urban-rural interface and use our resources more efficiently to reduce our everyday impact on the environment.

This Strategy reinforces the vision and aspirations we have as an organisation, and delivers on our Community Strategic Plan commitments to pursue environmental sustainability in our Region. It identifies four priority areas of action including energy, water, waste and carbon emissions, each presented with clear aims and tools of measurement.

You have my commitment that progress towards achieving individual targets will be regularly reviewed by Council and reported on as part of our normal corporate reporting arrangements.



Cr Col Murray  
Mayor, Tamworth Region



## Background

Tamworth Regional Council's Sustainability Strategy was developed in response to Keychange 2017-2021, Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP), and provides an integrated and coordinated approach to advancing sustainability in our Region. During the consultation phase of the Community Strategic Plan, the community identified sustainability as a key area of interest and concern for residents, and they told us they wanted to achieve the following outcomes:

- Council should be a leader in renewable energy and sustainable practices;
- develop and implement a Regional Sustainability Strategy;
- more sustainable planning, and
- a sustainable energy future phasing out fossil fuels.

The Community Strategic Plan also identifies the following sustainability challenges for the future:

- how can we reduce the impacts of human activity on the environment to protect it for future generations;
- how do we deliver and report upon a sustainability plan that meets the expectations of the community;
- how do we reduce local energy consumption and increase the use of renewable resources;
- how do we better manage demand of limited water resources, and
- how do we reduce waste generation and increase reuse and recycling?

Photo: Sustainable Garden in Peel Street with Mayor, Col Murray, Cr Helen Tickle and Ian Lobban with TAFE students.



## Our Region's Vision

“

Our Vision: A region of opportunity  
and prosperity, a place to call home

”

This vision is reflected in the five core themes of the CSP: a spirit of community; a prosperous region; an accessible region; a region for the future and a region of progressive leadership. The 'region for the future' theme is about sustainability - acting and living now in a way that does not risk the needs of the future. In developing and delivering this Plan, we are demonstrating progressive leadership and good planning.

### OUR VISION

### KEY THEMES

### STRATEGY



#### A SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY

Active healthy  
communities

Promote our Region's  
heritage, character and  
culture

Safe places to live, work,  
play and visit

## About Council's Sustainability Unit

Sustainability, in the way the term relates to towns, regions and communities, is about ensuring the way that we live today doesn't reduce the quality of life of future generations or degrade the quality of the environment they will live in.

In 2015, Tamworth Regional Council established a dedicated Sustainability Unit to provide specialised advice on sustainable water, waste and energy practices. The Unit consists of four staff that are committed to strengthening Council's corporate sustainability performance; growing community awareness and facilitating sustainable development for the Region.

The Sustainability Unit strives to preserve community assets through sustainable consumption of finite and variable resources. Our mission is to create awareness through the implementation of community education programs and through innovative sustainability projects. One of our guiding principles is that our actions and decisions need to deliver the best outcomes possible for the community.

## Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The SDGs build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, eight targets identified in the United Nations Millenium Declaration adopted in September 2000, while including new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice, among other priorities.

The SDGs were agreed and adopted by the United Nations in September 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Each of the 17 Goals are underpinned by targets.

Tamworth Regional Council has identified which of the SDGs and targets are most relevant to our Sustainability Strategy and how we can contribute positively.

## A region of opportunity and prosperity, a place to call home



### A PROSPEROUS REGION

A strong and diverse economic base

Promote "Destination Tamworth" as a great place to visit a great place to live

Quality, affordable lifelong education and learning opportunities

Make Tamworth as the next major freight distribution centre in Regional NSW



### AN ACCESSIBLE REGION

Safe and efficient transport network

Improve choice, availability and quality of transport options for our Region

Functional communications and technology for the Region



### A REGION FOR THE FUTURE

Sound asset and land planning to facilitate future community needs

Promote sustainable living to protect and support our environment, heritage and resources.



### A REGION OF PROGRESSIVE LEADERSHIP

Community feel well informed, heard, valued and involved in the future of the Region

Our Region is well led and managed

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## Planning and reporting framework

Keychange 2017-2027 is part of an Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework which strengthen Council's strategic focus and ensures accountability and responsiveness to our community. Every four years Council develops a Delivery Plan that sets the targets for the Council term in line with the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan. An Annual Operational Plan then details the actions that will be undertaken each financial year to ensure that progress is made towards the four-year Delivery Plan and wider Community Strategic Plan.

As a result, the goals and actions within the Sustainability Strategy will be embedded within the Delivery and Operational Plans, and progress shared through quarterly Corporate Performance Management reporting, and the annual reviews of these Plans.

The Tamworth Regional Council Sustainability Strategy is integral to ensuring that there is a holistic approach to the activities within the Delivery Plan, and will assist in prioritising the delivery of strategic and operational projects. The Sustainability Strategy will feed into other Council plans including but not limited to:

- Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy;
- 2015 Drought Management Plan; and
- 2016 Demand Management Plan.

## PLANS & STRATEGIES



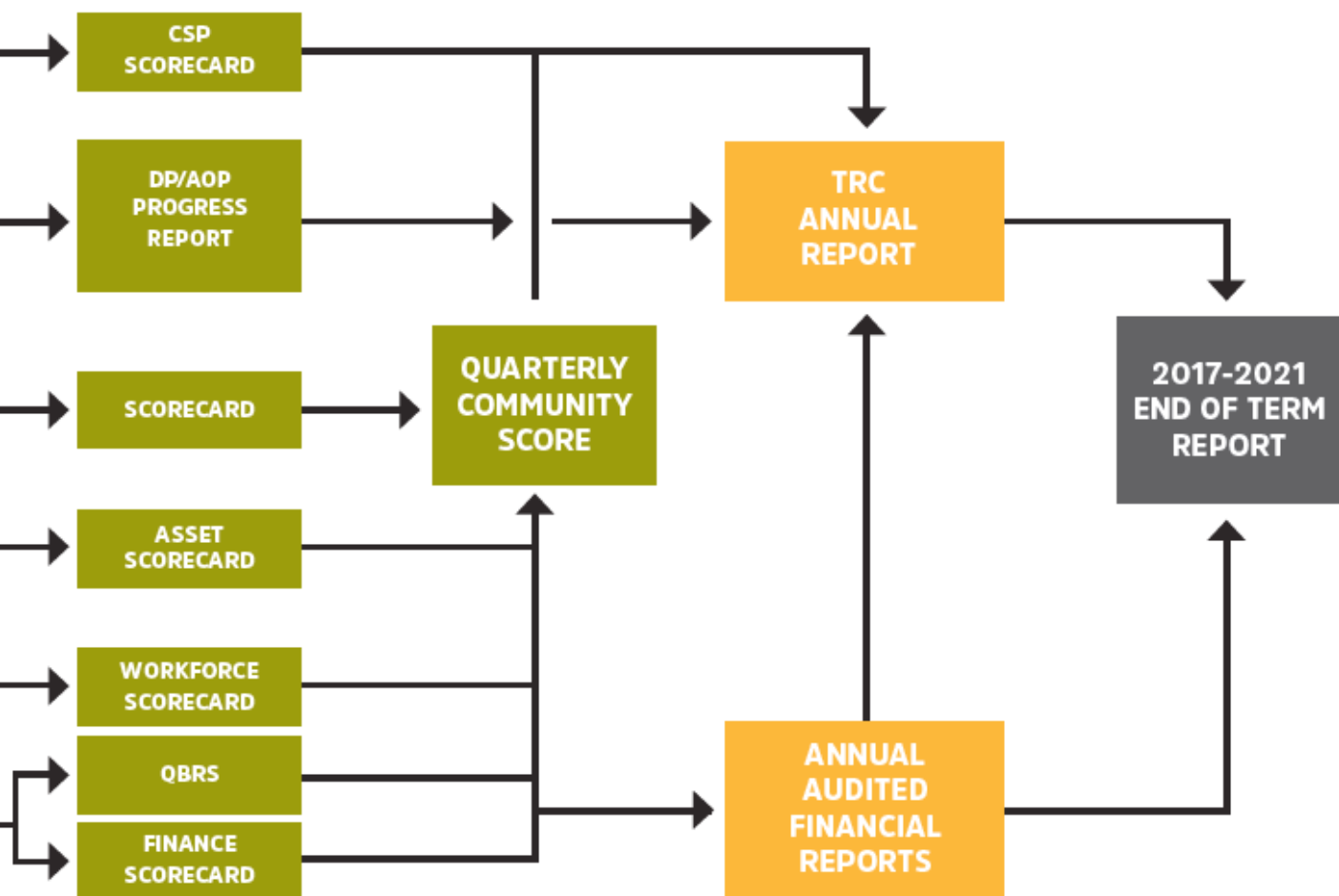
## PLAN



## QUARTERLY REPORTS

## ANNUAL REPORTS

## TERM REPORT



## MEASURE

## COMPARE

## REFLECT



## Themes

The Sustainability Strategy has four key themes: energy, waste, water and carbon emissions. For each theme, goals and actions have been identified. The actions will be developed into projects and will help create a more sustainable Tamworth Region.

## Energy

Energy use sourced from fossil fuels is the primary contributor to climate change. The most significant action that Tamworth Regional Council can take is to implement energy efficiency projects to reduce energy consumption and to utilise renewable energy sources. A guiding principle for investing in sustainable energy use and production is financial responsibility, meaning that the business case has to be sound to be pursued.

### Focus areas of this strategy:

1. increase energy efficiency for Council buildings;
2. increase energy efficiency for water and sewer assets;
3. increase energy efficiency for street and public lighting;
4. increase uptake of renewable energy for Council operations;
5. internal Council energy management;
6. transport energy, and
7. increase sustainability in the community.

### Measures of success include:

- Council implements energy efficiency projects;
- Council implements renewable energy projects;
- Council operates an energy management system, and
- Council engages the community in terms of energy use and renewable energy.

### Related Sustainable Development Goals:



Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

The SDG targets that Council identified to be most relevant for our Sustainability Strategy and energy action plan are:

- 7.2: By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.
- 7.3: By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.



## Waste

Tamworth Regional Council manages waste and recycling on behalf of residents and businesses in the Local Government Area. Service functions include collection, treatment, and the recycling or disposal of waste materials. Council strives to provide high-quality services to the community whilst protecting the environment from potential impacts that may arise from Council waste and recycling operations. The recovery of materials for recycling and the efficient management of assets and operating costs is also our priority.

### Focus areas of this strategy:

1. avoid and reduce waste generation;
2. increase recycling and divert more waste from landfill;
3. increase community recycling and improve problem waste capture;
4. reduce littering;
5. reduce illegal waste dumping;
6. sustainable, integrated waste management, and
7. internal Council waste management initiatives.

### Measures of success:

- Council engages the community in terms of waste avoidance;
- residents and businesses recycle more;
- organic waste is diverted from landfill;
- less litter in the Region;
- less illegal dumping, and an
- efficient and informed waste management system

### Related Sustainable Development Goals:



Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.



Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.



Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

The SDG targets that Council identified to be most relevant for our Sustainability Strategy and waste action plan are:

- 3.9: By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.
- 11.6: By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to municipal and other waste management.
- 12.2: By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.
- 12.5: By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse.



## Water

Sustainable water management not only has a high priority in the Tamworth Region, it is a focus at a state, national and global level. We are facing serious challenges globally, especially in terms of quality and quantity, with issues such as increasing human population and urbanisation, the demands of agriculture and industry for water, and the issue of climate change. Council's Water Strategy is cognizant of these issues and is linked to a range of relevant planning initiatives from the national to regional level.

### Focus areas of this strategy:

1. increase water efficiency for Council assets;
2. internal Council water management;
3. increase water awareness and understanding in the community for greater water efficiency, and
4. identify alternative water supplies.

### Measures of success:

- Council implements water efficiency projects;
- Council operates a water management system;
- Council engages the community in terms of water use, and
- less use of treated water

### Related Sustainable Development Goals:



Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

The SDG targets that Council identified to be most relevant for our Sustainability Strategy and water action plan are:

- 6.3: By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.
- 6.4: By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.



## Carbon emissions

Council recognises that its operations have an impact on climate change through the emission of greenhouse gases. Council will set up a carbon management system and will regularly monitor and review its carbon emissions.

### Focus areas of this strategy:

1. internal Council carbon emissions management.

### Measures of success:

- Council reports its carbon baseline, and
- Council continually tracks its carbon performance.

### Related SDG Goals:



Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, modern energy for all.



Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

The SDG targets that Council identified to be most relevant for our Sustainability Strategy and carbon emissions action plan are:

- 7.2: By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.
- 7.3: By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.
- 11.6: By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to municipal and other waste management.



## Glossary of terms and acronyms

2015 Drought Management Plan	outlines Council's strategy for managing periods of limited water supply, preparing for future periods of limited water supply, and achieving all potential water sustainability consumption outcomes.
2016 Demand Management Plan	outlines Council's current and future water demand across the region and how various water supplies meet this demand.
Behind the meter	a renewable energy generation system that produces energy intended for consumption on site
Bin Trim	auditing tool developed by the NSW Environment Protection Authority to help small and medium sized businesses identify actions they can take to reduce waste.
Carbon baseline	the amount of carbon emitted prior to any carbon reduction activities, providing a point against which changes in the amount of carbon produced can be measured.
Carbon emissions	the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. A greenhouse gas is an atmospheric gas that absorbs and emits infrared or heat radiation, giving rise to the greenhouse effect.
Community Recycling Centre (CRC)	facility located at Forest Road Waste Management Facility where problem wastes such as paint, fluorescent tubes, batteries and gas bottles can be dropped off free of charge.
Container Deposit Scheme	NSW Environment Protection Authority litter reduction initiative where a 10c refund can be claimed for eligible containers.
Energy management system	a internal management system to monitor, control and optimise an organisation's energy consumption
Energy Saving Certificates	an Energy Savings Certificate, or ESC, represents one notional Megawatt hour of energy. Accredited Certificate Providers can implement energy saving projects and create ESCs representing the energy savings from the project. These certificates can be traded and sold to Scheme Participants who have an obligation to meet energy savings targets each year through the surrender of certificates or the paying of a penalty.
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
Fossil fuels	a hydrocarbon deposit such as petroleum, coal or natural gas derived from the accumulated remains of ancient plants and animals that can be used as fuel.
GIS	geographical information system information
Green Star Recognition Program	a program of the Green Building Council of Australia that assesses the sustainable design, construction and operation of buildings, fitouts and communities.
LGNSW	Local Government New South Wales
L-RIP	Litter-Regional Implementation Plan
Millennium Development Goals	in September 2000, world leaders adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration committing to 8 targets known as the Millennium Development Goals.
MRF	material recovery facility or recycling facility.
NIRW	Northern Inland Regional Waste
Off River Storage	a water storage area where water is transferred from a river for use at a latter more optimal time.
PPA's	Power Purchase Agreements applicable to renewable energy generation where a contract exists for a power user to purchase the electricity output from a generator at an agreed unit cost for an agreed duration of time.
Recoverable Resource Market	market for waste products that can be recovered from the general waste stream to produce recycled materials.

## Glossary of terms and acronyms

RENEW	Regional Networks for Effective Waste Management
Renewable energy	energy generated from a source that is not depleted when used including solar, wind, hydro and geothermal energy.
Residential Water Rebate Scheme	financial assistance offered to householders to install water saving products in and around their home.
Reuse	the reuse of materials without further processing, reducing the need for the production of new materials and minimising waste generation.
SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; 17 goals adopted on 25 September 2015 with the aim to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all.
Transport energy	energy sources that power various means of transport, generally to run internal combustion engines
TRC	Tamworth Regional Council
Untreated water	water that has not been subject to treatment at one of Council's Water Treatment facilities
Integrated Waste Management & Resource Recovery Strategy	Outlines Council's ambitions for sustainable waste management incorporating increased resource recovery or recycling
Wastewater	any non-potable water that has already been used in the home, in a business, or as part of an industrial or commercial process.
Westdale WWTP	Westdale Waste Water Treatment Plant treats and reuses all waste water in the Tamworth area.



Prepared by 100% Renewables on behalf of the Sustainability Advantage Program, offered via the **NSW Office of Environment & Heritage.**

