LAKE MAC LIBRARIES, KAWUMALYIKILBA

Strategic Action Plan 2024-2028

DRAFT

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Charlestown Library's colourful reading area

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We remember and respect the Ancestors who cared for and nurtured this Country.
Dhumaan ngayin ngarrakalu kirraanan barayidin.

It is in their footsteps that we travel these lands and waters.
Ngarrakalumba yuludaka bibayilin barayida baaduka.

Lake Macquarie City Council acknowledges the Awabakal people and Elders past, present and future.
Lake Macquarie City Council dhumaan Awabakala ngarrakal yalawaa, yalawan, yalawanan.

"A library is not a luxury but one of the necessities of life"

- Alice Hoffman

STRATEGY STRUCTURE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of the plan is informed by Council's vision for the city, Community Strategic Plan 2022-32, Delivery Program 2022-2026 and the Arts, Heritage and Cultural Plan 2017-2027.

The plan identifies:

The purpose and value of libraries in the community; community feedback regarding library service delivery; emerging trends, challenges, innovations; and service and infrastructure priorities and frameworks to achieve Lake Mac Libraries, kawumalyikilba's vision.

This strategy is structured to align with:

INTERNAL
- Council's Arts, Heritage and Cultural Plan 2017-2027
- Lake Mac Libraries brand and Ultimate Library Employee profile
- Lake Mac Libraries Values
- Lake Mac Libraries Customer Charter
- Lake Mac Smart City, Smart Council
- Lake Mac 2050
- Lake Macquarie Youth Strategy 2020-2023
- Ageing Population Strategy 2022-2026
- Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2027
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025

EXTERNAL
- Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)
- Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations 2015
- Indigenous Spaces in Library Spaces Toolkit (State Library NSW)
- NSW Library Act 1939
- Library Council of NSW
- Public Library Funding Strategy
- Library Development Framework
- Library Standards and Guidelines
- Digital Inclusion Strategy
- Cultural Inclusion Framework

Dual naming of Lake Mac Libraries, kawumalyikilba

Aboriginal people of the Awabakal nation have lived in the Lake Macquarie area for more than 8000 years. The name Awabakal is derived from the Lake, meaning people of the calm surface.

In 2021, in partnership with Miromaa Aboriginal Language and Technology centre, Council introduced cultural names for all of our libraries to recognise the City's indigenous heritage.

As part of this, our libraries are known as Lake Mac Libraries, kawumalyikilba.

The word kawumalyikilba means "gathering place" in Awabakal.

Cultural names of our libraries

BELMONT LIBRARY, NGARRABANGBA
ngarrabangba means "Change Place" in Awabakal and refers to the first Aboriginal mission in Australia.

CARDIFF LIBRARY, KURAM
kuram means "Winding creek" in Awabakal and refers to the traditional name of the Cardiff area.

CHARLESTOWN LIBRARY, WALYAMAYI
walyamayi means "Top Camp" in Awabakal and refers to the higher elevation of the Charlestown area.

MORISSET LIBRARY, BAWARRAMALANG
bawarramalang means "Duckhole Creek" in Awabakal and refers to the traditional name of the Morisset area.

SPEERS POINT LIBRARY, MILYABA
milyaba means "Fun place" in Awabakal and refers to the traditional name of the Speers Point area.

SUGAR VALLEY LIBRARY MUSEUM, KIRANTAKAMYARI
kirantakamyari means "North Creek" in Awabakal and refers to the traditional name of the Cameron Park area.

SWANSEA LIBRARY, KARIYAWANGBA
kariyawangba means "southwards" in Awabakal and refers to Swansea as the southernmost point of Lake Macquarie.

TORONTO LIBRARY, TIRRABIYANGBA
tirrabiyangba means "father's tooth place" in Awabakal and refers to the traditional name of the Toronto area.

WANGI LIBRARY CREATIVE HUB, WANJI WANJI
wanji wanji refers to the traditional name of the Wangi Wangi area in Awabakal.

WINDALE HUB, BILYABAYI
bilyabayi means "valley" in Awabakal and refers to the low-lying area of Windale.

Sugar Valley Library Museum, kirantakamyari

BACKGROUND

In 2019, Lake Macquarie released its first five-year strategic business plan to deliver an updated and aspirational list of additional infrastructure, services, initiatives, and activities for the Lake Mac Libraries, kawumalyikilba service. Informed by the 10-year Arts, Heritage and Cultural Plan 2017-2027 for the city and following the previous Lake Mac Libraries 2011 delivery plan, this new iteration outlines the strategic priorities for the next five years for Lake Mac Libraries.

The plan was achieved by developing and applying a revised governance and management structure to deliver many actions across multiple disciplines and requirements. The plan provided 137 deliverable actions across 10 strategic goals distributed by the converged Arts Culture and Tourism Department (ACT).

Achievements and positive outcomes since 2019 are many, with some significant items of note.

THESE INCLUDE:

- Awabakal dual naming of the entire service 'kawumalyikilba'

- The region's first library museum, Sugar Valley Library Museum, kirantakamyari at Cameron Park

- First self-access library and creative hub at Wangi Wangi

- Refurbishment of multiple library branches

- Design and construction of Windale Hub, bilyabayi

- Update of all technology in branches, online catalogue and smartphone app

- Initiated self-access from 7am-7pm, seven days across five branches with the other six in the next two years

- Initiated zero landfill actions for sustainable library practice

- Transitioned underperforming mobile library to new volunteer delivery program

- Added social media channels and streamlined digital content.

Beyond the physical, since the plan's inception, Lake Mac Libraries have provided a significantly larger number of programmed events and activities across the city than ever before, supporting the plan's literacy and lifelong learning aspects. Along with continued advances in effective collection management, multiuse and maker spaces, and online engagement, Lake Mac Libraries have refined and delivered the expected high-level of service.

These successes were not without their challenges. The key challenges the plan initially acknowledged and sought to combat, such as decreasing attendance and loans, changes in perceived value and relevance, and increased expenditure were compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. This pandemic's influence on operations, visitor experience, customer habits, and service adaptation cannot be understated. The Lake Mac Libraries service and ACT Department met the varied challenges with innovative and constructive solutions, safely putting the service and patrons first. Despite the team's efforts, forced closures and the influence on public movement further impacted traditional visitation, program participation and loan targets.

The development of this updated plan for the next four years seeks to provide an update on actions and, importantly, establish additional initiatives that build on the completed achievements, adapt to the new challenges and impacts on the industry, and continue to sustainably diversify the service to appeal further to members and non-members alike.

Children enjoying the book nook at Sugar Valley Library Museum, kirantakamyari

OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of Lake Mac Libraries, kawumalyikilba is to provide:

- Free access to information, knowledge, and ideas
- Support for formal and informal learning, especially literacy, throughout all stages of life
- A space for people to meet, share and be inspired
- Programs, events, and collections that are recreational and enjoyable
- Housing, protection and promotion of community heritage
- Access to technology to address the digital divide.

This purpose is closely aligned with the values of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). In addition, Lake Mac Libraries operate in accordance with the NSW Library Act 1939 to support provision for the establishment, maintenance and management of libraries, library services and information services.
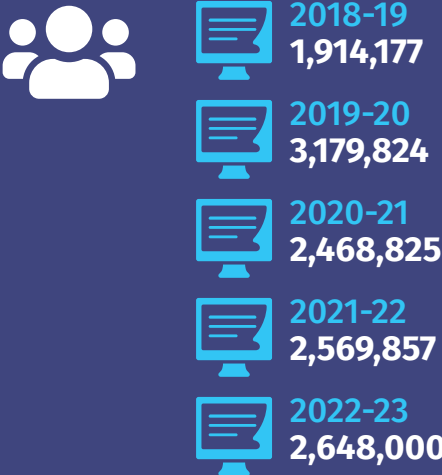
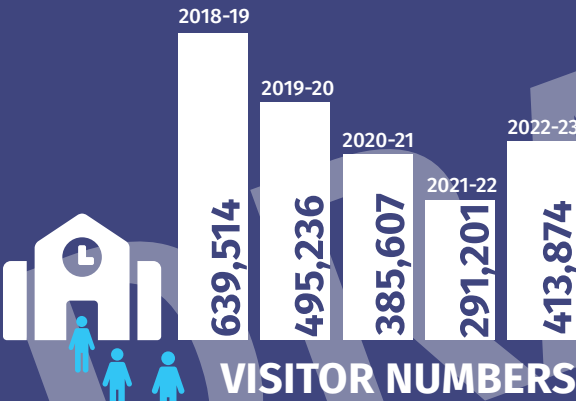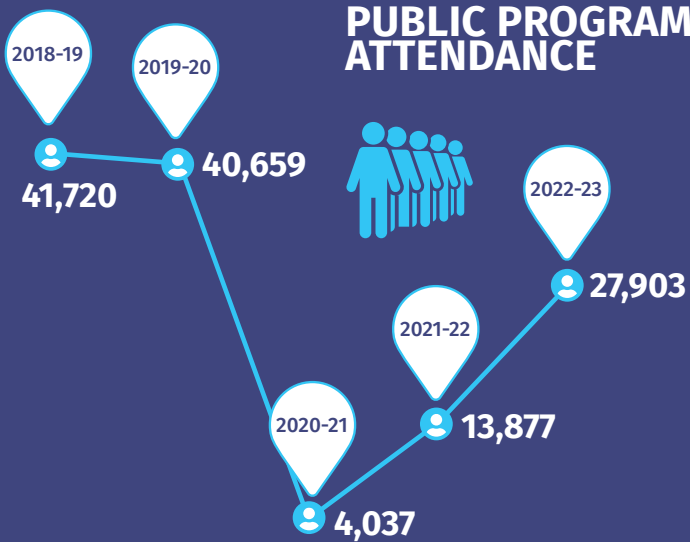A staff member assists a borrower at Charlestown Library, walyamayi

LAKE MAC LIBRARIES, SERVICE SNAPSHOT

A borrower using self-checkout at Speers Point Library, milyaba
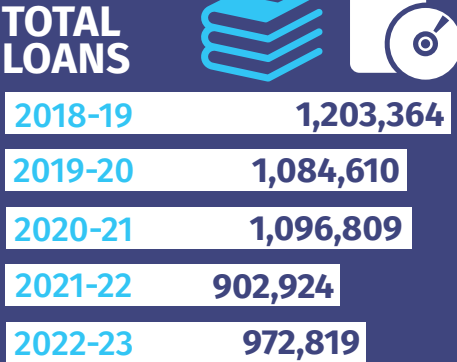
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TOTAL ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

- 2018-19 **1,914,177**
- 2019-20 **3,179,824**
- 2020-21 **2,468,825**
- 2021-22 **2,569,857**
- 2022-23 **2,648,000**

PUBLIC PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

- 2018-19 **41,720**
- 2019-20 **40,659**
- 2020-21 **4,037**
- 2021-22 **13,877**
- 2022-23 **27,903**

VISITOR NUMBERS

- 2018-19 **639,514**
- 2019-20 **495,236**
- 2020-21 **385,607**
- 2021-22 **291,201**
- 2022-23 **413,874**

LIBRARY MEMBERSHIPS

LAKE MAC LIBRARIES kawumalyikilba

- 2018-19 **77,550**
- 2019-20 **62,947**
- 2020-21 **49,454**
- 2021-22 **47,071**
- 2022-23 **48,484**

DUAL-NAMING OF ALL VENUES

All libraries recognised with an English and Awakabal name equivalent)

TOTAL LOANS

- 2018-19 **1,203,364**
- 2019-20 **1,084,610**
- 2020-21 **1,096,809**
- 2021-22 **902,924**
- 2022-23 **972,819**

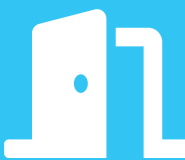## WI-FI ACCESS

Access growing year-on-year with over **122,000** active clients

SELF-CHECKOUT USAGE

Average of **80%** use of self-service kiosks

SELF-ACCESS FACILITIES

Extended self-service access across **4** libraries

LIBRARY COLLECTION

370,000+ collection items

2019-2024 REVIEW

" **The public library is where place and possibility meet** "

- Stuart Dybek

A borrower utilising self-access at Speers Point Library, milyaba

The inaugural plan had 137 actions across 10 strategic goals and achieved almost 70 per cent of these actions despite over two years of severe interruption in service delivery due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Details of the actions and achievements are outlined in the available appendices.

The past four years included the city's first internationally recognised Fab Lab maker space and the new Textile Lab in the Toronto Library. There has also been strong and consistent growth in programmed events and activities, such as History Illuminated, Write Here Festival, Dobell Festival, and POP BAM. General programming delivery and attendance also increased. Lake Make Libraries connected with the community through engaging initiatives such as library public art mascots and the inclusion of the 'Launchpad' emerging art exhibitions.

Innovative services and technology were introduced, such as the library's smartphone app, members' portal 'Monitor,' and user-friendly website. Thanks to these technological additions and updates library members now have greater access to the collection, membership details, ticketing, databases, and printing from home.

The library team worked hard to deliver operational efficiencies and improved processes. The streamlining and flexibility embedded in the workforce planning supported Lake Mac Libraries through the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted the innovative and resilient nature of the team when faced with closure. At the time of writing we are seeing an upturn in visitation to our libraries although at a lower 'new normal' level, as compared to other services within the NSW Public Libraries network. We must continue to be innovative and flexible to maintain relevance in a society that has undertaken swift cultural and technological change.

COVID IMPACT PERIODS

2019-2020 - 10-week closure period

2020-2021 - Restrictions in place but no closures

2021-2022 - Nine-week closure period.

Over the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lake Mac Libraries were closed for a total of 19 weeks.

This was the shortest period of closure for any public library in NSW.

LAKE MAC LIBRARIES, CURRENT SITUATION

> " A library is a miracle. A place where you can learn just about anything, for free. A place where your mind can come alive "
>
> - Ray Bradbury

Sugar Valley Library Museum's, kirantakamyari dedicated children's area

Our typical library user is over 55, visits monthly between 9am and 11am and primarily browses and collects reserved physical items.

What does the typical library user look like in 2024?

- Borrows novels (over 40 per cent of all loans) and is frustrated with wait times for popular titles and the older materials
- Wants longer opening hours, particularly on weekends and evenings
- Wants improved physical accessibility as well as quiet study spaces, programs for the elderly and materials in multiple formats
- Wants comfortable furniture, designated quiet areas and improved aesthetics.

What's different from four years ago?

- Uptake in self-checkout up from 40 per cent in 2019 to 85 per cent in 2023
- Overall online reach in marketing has increased
- City NBN connection complete
- Proliferation of consumer technology and information, education and entertainment platforms.

What hasn't changed?

- Decline in visitation
- Decline in computer use from our libraries since January 2018
- Members visiting libraries before 1pm
- On average, the busiest days are Saturday and the first day opening after a day of closure. The quietest days are Thursday and Friday.

Emerging trends

- New services such as toy libraries, seed libraries, after-hours returns, meeting spaces, workshops, and author talks
- Convenience of technology with expansion of the new library app, online collections and self-access
- Libraries as a space for social interaction and community events, and services that cater to this need
- Programs, events, and activities for children and toddlers.

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Lake Mac Libraries website

" The only thing that you absolutely have to know, is the location of the library"

- Albert Einstein

Lake Mac Libraries is supported through the converged structure of the ACT Department. This ever-evolving organic structure, established in 2019, is made up of teams that work across the visual arts, performance, heritage, literacy, events, tourism and marketing sectors rather than in the traditional hierarchy model.
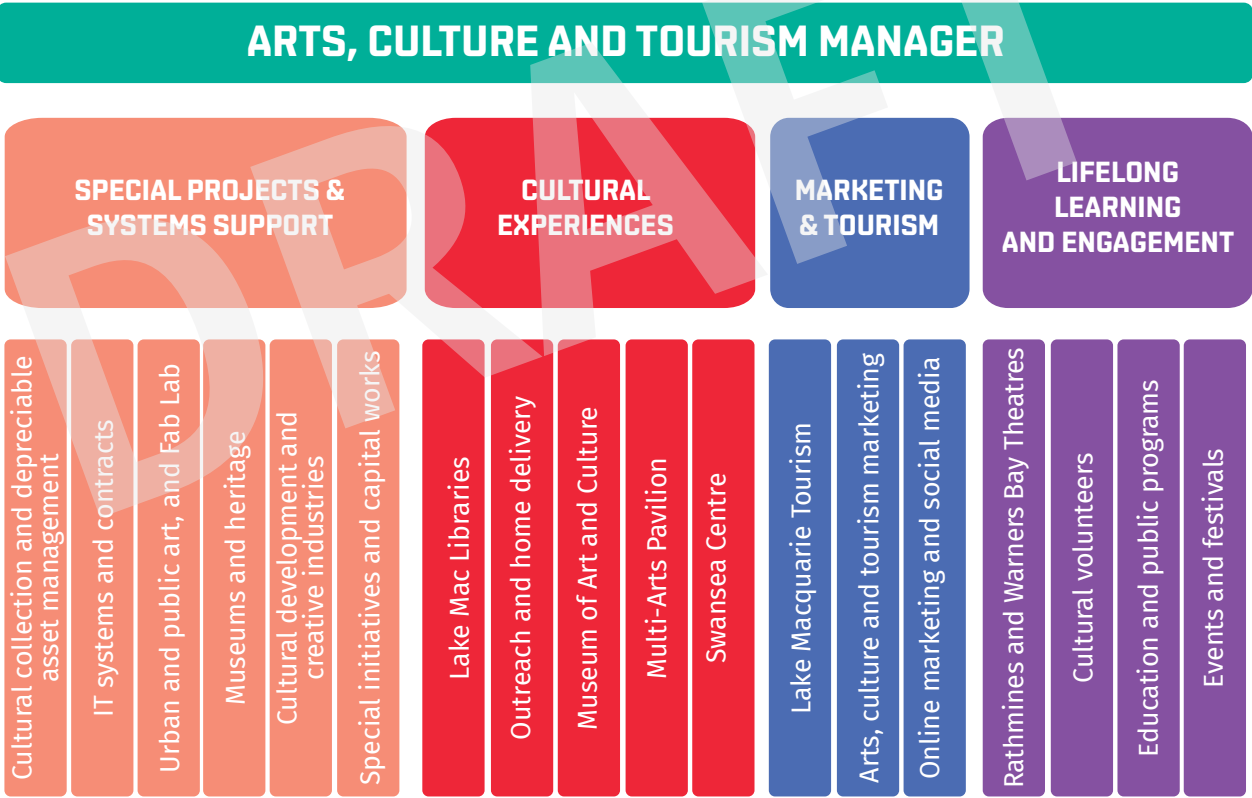
ACT management manages the relationship with the wider organisation and Council, external networks and strategic direction.

The Special Projects and Systems Support Team comprises of assets and compliance, cultural collections and information technology (IT) processes, and assists with development and major capital works that raise the standard of our facilities.

The Cultural Experiences Team enable all the facilities to deliver literacy, visual arts, and community hire services at the highest level.

The Marketing and Tourism Team are all things branding, marketing, research and promotion, achieving a consolidated online, brand, voice, language and profile for the department.

The Lifelong Learning and and Engagement Team exists to raise the profile and position of how we engage with our audiences, members and visitors, and how we provide meaningful engagement opportunities that add value to what we do.

ARTS, CULTURE AND TOURISM MANAGER

SPECIAL PROJECTS & SYSTEMS SUPPORT	CULTURAL EXPERIENCES	MARKETING & TOURISM	LIFELONG LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT
Cultural collection and depreciable asset management; IT systems and contracts; Urban and public art, and Fab Lab; Museums and heritage; Cultural development and creative industries; Special initiatives and capital works	Lake Mac Libraries; Outreach and home delivery; Museum of Art and Culture; Multi-Arts Pavilion; Swansea Centre	Lake Macquarie Tourism; Arts, culture and tourism marketing; Online marketing and social media	Rathmines and Warners Bay Theatres; Cultural volunteers; Education and public programs; Events and festivals

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

Children participating in a Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths (STEAM) workshop at Toronto Library, tirrabiyangba

Digital inclusion

Libraries are increasingly focusing on bridging the digital divide by offering access to technology, digital skills training and online resources to ensure everyone can participate in the digital world. Lake Mac Libraries continue to evolve and grow our digital offering through industry leading platforms and collections. Lake Mac Libraries educates through digital mentoring in-branch and through our outreach team. Lake Mac Libraries acknowledges this opportunity is fast moving and requires continuous review and update.

Community engagement

Libraries are evolving into community hubs, offering a range of services beyond traditional book lending, such as workshops, events and partnerships with local organisations to address community needs. Our buildings and services continue to undertake significant change through newly constructed community hubs and multiuse spaces, and renewal or revitalisation of older spaces through modular furniture, supporting the night-time economy through the installation of lighting treatment, dedicated spaces for leisure and learning, and visual merchandising methods to increase appeal and wayfinding.

Virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR)

Libraries are exploring the use of VR/AR technologies to enhance learning experiences, from virtual tours to immersive educational programs. This features in the increased programming opportunities at Lake Mac Libraries, found at our Fab Lab and in the development of our updated outreach program. This technology is now far more accessible and will be applied to many programming opportunities across the city's Lake Mac Libraries and ACT initiatives.

Data literacy programs

With the growing importance of data in society, libraries are developing programs to help people understand and use data effectively, from basic data literacy to more advanced data analysis skills. An enterprise-level focus informing staff 'cyber hygiene' awareness and support and in-branch digital mentoring to at-home volunteer-led digital mentoring. Lake Mac Libraries are increasing our focus on awareness, understanding and application of artificial intelligence systems and their benefits and risks to remain a confident stakeholder in this new paradigm.

Environmental sustainability

Libraries are adopting environmentally sustainable practices, such as green building design, energy-efficient technologies and programs that promote environmental awareness and action. With a committed intent of zero landfill by 2028, Lake Mac Libraries understand the importance of our contribution towards environmental sustainability. While libraries are the original circular economy model, we know we can go further.

Cultural preservation

Libraries are playing a key role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage, from digitising historical documents to curating exhibitions and events that celebrate local culture. Lake Mac Libraries intend to be a guardian and promoter of cultural heritage. We aim to provide access to diverse knowledge, safeguard local knowledge and curate exhibitions and events celebrating local culture. Lake Mac Libraries strive to foster a sense of pride, understanding, and unity among individuals and communities by engaging our community through education, research support, and promoting cultural diversity.

Health and wellness

Libraries are expanding their focus to consider health and wellness initiatives, offering resources and programs that promote physical and mental wellbeing, such as classes, workshops, and access to health information. Through our ever-increasing accessibility, curated and growing multilingual collections and consideration around repurposed physical spaces such as community gardens and indoor treatments, Lake Mac Libraries are growing our relevancy as wellbeing hubs for the community.

REMAINING AND GROWING CHALLENGES

A participant soldering a circuit board at the Lake Mac Libraries Fab Lab

Declining attendance and loans

Declining attendance and loans present a significant challenge for public libraries, impacting their sustainability and relevance. Changing leisure habits, digital alternatives, and competing entertainment options contribute to this trend.

Over the past decade library membership at both national and state level has trended down, with membership in 2021-2022 at the national level being 16.5 per cent lower than in 2011-2012. Lake Mac Libraries has also followed a similar trend. Physical loans at the national level from 2014-2015 to 2018-2019 decreased by 14.6 per cent, with a further 24.6 per cent decline during the COVID-19 pandemic.

At Lake Mac Libraries, physical loans fell by 44.7 per cent from 2012-2013 to 2021-2022. Online loans had a significant increase from 2017 to 2021. However, online loans have since dropped and levelled into a more static trend despite an increase in e-resource collections.

Despite these examples, Lake Mac Libraries and the industry are starting to see a moderate increase in our participation and visitation. However, the new normal is apparent. To maintain relevancy and continue to provide value to members and the city, we must consider ways to change to suit.

To address this challenge, libraries must implement innovative strategies to attract and retain patrons, adapt to evolving community needs and preferences, as well as effectively advocate for the continued value and importance of public libraries in Australian society.

Value and relevance

Lake Mac Libraries research and data have illustrated that in some ways public libraries must constantly evolve to meet the diverse needs of their communities, adapt to technological changes, and demonstrate their relevance in an increasingly digital age. Failure to do so risks losing patrons and support, impacting funding and sustainability.

Our core patronage is aged over 55 with a learned love for their service however the younger demographic is more familiar and inclined to use readily accessible digital and mobile education and recreation options as standard. Through the growing diversity of physical and digital offerings, accessibility and an approach to continuous improvement, Lake Mac Libraries will ensure the public library has something for everyone.

Digitalisation and technology

The increasing digitalisation of information and the rise of e-books and digital resources have raised questions about the role of physical libraries and the need for investment in digital infrastructure. Debates are also raging about how libraries can best adapt to these changes while continuing to effectively serve their communities.

Since 2020, Lake Mac Libraries observed a decrease in public computer usage of over 70 per cent as people's personal ownership of technology increased.

Role in education and literacy

Public libraries have always played a crucial role in promoting literacy and lifelong learning, but there are debates about how their role in education should evolve. This includes discussions about the integration of libraries into formal education systems and their potential to support diverse learning needs.

As the number of people who read for pleasure decreases and the nation's literacy rates also decline, enabling and supporting literacy continues to be a key focus for Lake Mac Libraries. Alignment with Council's operating plan continues through innovative programming and alternative outreach methods to contribute to the city's education and literacy need.

Access and equity

Ensuring equitable access to library services for all community members is an ongoing challenge.

We acknowledge that some of our branches have physical accessibility issues for our ageing population. Opening hours and collection reviews that are attractive to new and emerging communities are needed to improve participation.

In addition, prioritising readable online content, increasing e-resources and expanding multi-language content as well as including quiet spaces, accessible furniture and equipment will improve inclusion and access.

Sustainability and environmental impact

As concerns about environmental sustainability grow, libraries can reduce their environmental impact and promote sustainable practices. This includes building design, energy efficiency, and the use of resources such as paper and ink.

The age of our facilities makes it difficult to operate sustainability, and some of our processes have not changed in over 30 years. Lake Mac Libraries have taken a stand with the aim of zero landfill by 2028, which will present innate challenges but aligns with Council wide initiatives.

Entertainer Timberlina participating in a children's storytime

CONSULTATION AND RESEARCH REFERENCED IN THIS PLAN

A staff member assists a borrower at Charlestown Library, walyamayi

Community Engagement:

Throughout 2023, Council workshopped library trends, challenges and opportunities with councillors and the community and received feedback from almost 1600 individuals including library patrons and non-members, school and community groups, local history, and meeting room users, on how they use and value the service. Closely aligned Council departments such as Community Partnerships and ACT also undertook workshops. The information provided an updated understanding of library patron demographics and engagement, visitation patterns, opening hours, increased accessibility opportunities and preferred services and activities.

Independent research

Library trends noticeably change and, in part, are influenced by the impact on library participation due to apparent shifts in societal habits and additional influence from the impacts of a global pandemic. Consequently, Council collaborated with independent consultants to better understand our status, the detail that informs this and the areas we must be proactive. Research was undertaken on state and national library sector trends as well as Lake Mac Libraries' comparative status. Data analysis and reporting included the metrics and comparisons of:

- Membership
- Visitation
- Catchment areas and population
- Demographics, lifecycle, and user type
- Loans and types of services used
- Operating hours

Some examples of key findings are found in the accompanying infographic in this document.

2024-2028 ACTIONS

" Libraries are only good if people use them, like books only exist when someone reads them"

- Nicolas Meyer

School students engaging with circuits during a library workshop

Focusing on practical improvements and community needs, Lake Mac Libraries has developed a group of new or revised strategic actions to better serve the community. These actions aim to enhance community engagement, leverage technology for improved access, and refine our operations for efficiency. Grounded in a commitment to providing valuable services and resources, these efforts aim to ensure that Lake Mac Libraries remain a relevant and essential institution in the lives of our community members.

Glossary of responsible council roles:

ACT - Arts, Culture and Tourism Department within the Service Delivery Cluster

BITS - Business and Information Technology Systems Department within Council

COMMUNITY HISTORY - Social History Team

COORDINATOR - Cultural Experiences Coordinator

COPA - Community Partnerships Department

CULTURAL PROJECTS CURATOR - Coordinates public art and community art projects

EXECUTIVE/COUNCIL - Lake Macquarie City Council Executive and Council elect

EXHIBITION LEAD - Museum and Exhibition operations

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY OFFICER - Member of the Special Projects and Systems Support Team

LEADERSHIP TEAM - ACT Senior Leadership Team

LIBRARIES LEADERS - Cultural Experience Regional and Branch Leaders

LIFELONG LEARNING - Team of ACT

MANAGER - Manager Arts, Culture and Tourism

MARKETING - Team of ACT

OUTREACH - Outreach and Volunteer Lead

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND SYSTEMS SUPPORT - Team of ACT

Definitions of focus areas:

CAPITAL: Construction or purchase of assets that provide contemporary library programming and resources.

COMMUNITY: Engage and serve the local population through tailored programs, outreach and partnerships, fostering a sense of belonging and inclusivity.

INNOVATION/CREATIVITY: Foster a culture of continuous improvement and creativity within the library, leveraging emerging trends and technologies to enhance services and user experiences.

MANAGEMENT: Implement effective structures, leadership, and resource allocation to ensure efficient day-to-day operations and strategic alignment with overarching goals. Includes staff training and continued improvement.

REVENUE: Projects and Programs that raise revenue

STRATEGIC: Establish strong future-focused goals aligned with Council's vision. Including sector leadership, change management and agile thinking

SUSTAINABILITY: Develop and maintain practices that ensure Lake Mac Libraries' long-term viability, including financial stability, environmentally conscious initiatives, and strong community relationships

TECHNOLOGY: Integrate and optimise digital tools, platforms and resources to streamline operations, improve accessibility and meet the evolving information needs of the community.

Glossary of resources:

OPERATIONAL: Included from within existing budget

GRANTS: Funding from external sources

LIBRARY PRIORITY FUNDING: State Library New South Wales Public Library Priority Funding

A SENSE OF PLACE AND BELONGING

STRATEGIC GOAL 1:
CELEBRATE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURE

Lake Macquarie is traditional Awabakal land, where the culture of all people is recognised, acknowledged, and respected.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Community					
Continue to promote and celebrate First Nations literature, culture and programming within the libraries	1	Welcome and share: New book posters to be displayed in branches aligned with engaging programming	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Collections Development Lead • Libraries Leaders • Marketing
	2	Present Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in all branches	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Libraries Leaders • Marketing
Innovation					
Increase online presence and access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge	3	Lake Mac Libraries website to feature a tab with an information portal/directory	Year Two	Operational /grant	• Libraries Leaders • Lifelong Learning • Marketing
Capital					
Expand First Nations collection	4	Inclusion of Māori and other Pacific populations and development of contemporary reparative cataloging	Year Three	Operational	• Collections Development Lead
	5	Incorporation of a dedicated Aboriginal study collection within the Windale Hub	Year One on opening	Operational	• Windale Hub Leader • Collections Development lead
Community					
Welcome and share: include Indigenous songs/rhymes/ language at Storytime,	6	Deliver a minimum of 10 children's programs, with four delivered by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander storyteller	Year One and annual KPI	Operational	• Libraries Leaders • Aboriginal Community • Lifelong Learning • Marketing
Innovation/creativity					
Develop an Awabakal children's book for Lake Macquarie	7	Commission a children's book illustrator and story book in Awabakal language	A biannual program starting Year One	Grant funding confirmed	• Lifelong Learning • External Artists and Writers
Incorporate Awabakal artists as part of the Lake Mac Libraries exhibition program	8	KPI: Minimum of two per year across libraries Launchpad	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Lifelong Learning • External Artists and Writers
Community					
Build on dual naming existing facilities and continue to promote and raise awareness of Awabakal naming	9	Develop resources and programs that further promote the dual naming of library facilities KPI: Minimum of four per year	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Libraries Leaders
Innovation/creativity					
	10	Investigate and develop uniform or wearable items for staff, promoting Awabakal language	Year Two	Operational	• Libraries Leaders
Community					
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership to Lake Mac Libraries	11	Increase membership through; community incentive programs, school inclusion and mentorship and giveaways	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Coordinator • Marketing

A SENSE OF PLACE AND BELONGING

Promote and facilitate quality and diverse public art initiatives, place-making and excellence in aesthetic design of our built and landscape architecture.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Innovation					
Activate facilities that support a night-time economy through programming	12	Undertake evening programs and events across all branches and measure effectiveness.	Year One at Windale Hub and Sugar Valley Library Museum Year Two Toronto and Charlestown	Operational, grants	• Libraries Leaders
Technology					
Activate facilities that support an evening and night-time economy through self-access	13	Expand on Wangi Wangi, Cardiff and Speers Point self-access service: • Sugar Valley Library Museum and Toronto Library • Charlestown and Windale Libraries • Swansea and Belmont • All libraries with extended self-access (24 hours trialed)	Current Year One Year One and Two Year Two Year three and Four	Library Priority Funding	• Special Projects and Systems Support
Management					
	14	Prepare feasibility and implement where suitable 'summer hours' compared to 'winter hours'	2025 Review visitation linked with programming 2025 Undertake trial	Operational	• Coordinator
Innovation/creativity					
Activate facilities that support an evening and night-time economy through creative treatments	15	Night-time illumination activation program for libraries	2025 and 2027 Two branches each phase	Operational, grants	• Libraries Leaders • Cultural Project Curator • Lifelong Learning
Management					
Develop and implement library visual merchandising plan	16	Update library service points and entryways with contemporary treatment, including merchandising	Year One with an annual review for effectiveness	Operational	• Marketing • Leadership Team
Community					
Open a 'pop-up' library site	17	Select locations around the city and in shopping precincts promoting library services	Year Two Minimum two locations per year	Operational	• Libraries Leaders • Outreach
Revenue					
Implement the 'Creative Kiosk' program	18	Incorporate book sales at night events, markets, and locations around the city	Year One Minimum eight locations per year	Operational	• Outreach
Sustainability					
Define the suitability of community gardens at library sites	19	Undertake feasibility for Charlestown, Wangi Wangi, and Speers Point	Year Two	Operational, grants	• Outreach • Libraries Leaders • COPA • Sustainable Neighborhood
Capital					
Define landscaping and external branch presentation schedule to ensure maximum attractiveness	20	Conduct audit and delivery of priority tasks to achieve economical, aesthetic treatments	Year Two and ongoing	Operational	• Special Projects and Systems Support • Coordinator
Management					
Refresh Lake Mac Libraries brand on signage, website and online	21	Include refreshed collateral, imagery and style	Year Two	Operational	• Marketing

A SENSE OF PLACE AND BELONGING

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: CHAMPION LOCAL HERITAGE AND HISTORY

Lake Macquarie values the tangible and intangible heritage of the city's built and natural environments, and the city's social history and artefacts.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Community					
Increase community participation, awareness and value of heritage and history	22	Redevelop website with additional functionality, contemporary information, video and links to social platforms	Year One with ongoing updates	Operational, grants	• Special Projects and Systems Support • Community History
Management					
	23	Scan all local history physical collections for online access and archive family history collection	Two-year initiative starting Year One	Operational	• Special Projects and Systems Support • Community History • Volunteers
Capital					
	24	Integrate kEMU and SPYDUS collection management systems with education and school links	Year Two and Year Three		• Community History • Marketing • Libraries Leaders
Technology					
	25	Continue to undertake oral histories with local specialists and promote local history discussions on social media	Year One with minimum three per year	Operational	• Community History
Innovation					
Improve accessibility to local history resources	26	Implement ticketed family history sessions to consolidate and simplify local access	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Community History
Community					
Work with Aboriginal Land Councils to develop connections with libraries and cultural heritage	27	Decentralise elements of local history collection and build on existing capacity within library branches to actively display and promote heritage elements pertinent to their catchments	Ongoing	Operational	• Community History • Marketing
	28	Investigate connection with Aboriginal Reference Group in collaboration with museums and galleries. Update Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collection at Toronto in collaboration with Aboriginal Community Development Officer	Ongoing	Operational	• Community History • Marketing • Aboriginal community
Revenue					
Continue to expand the flagship History Illuminated Festival	29	Lead the History Illuminated annual program	Year One Annual Program	Operational	• Community History • Marketing • Lifelong Learning
Community					
Develop a series of local history public programs, book launches and workshops	30	At least six events a year	Year One and an annual program	Operational	• Community History • Marketing
Innovation/creativity					
Curate exhibitions that celebrate local history, collections and stories	31	Minimum of two exhibitions a year across Rathmines Heritage Centre, SEEN@Swansea and Launchpad exhibition spaces	Year one and ongoing	Operational	• Community History • Marketing
	32	Assist with the development and promotion of Heritage Trails, walks and experiences	As required	Operational	• Tourism • Marketing • Cultural Projects Curator
Management					
	33	Undertake service review to inform future of community and local history resourcing and demand	Year Three	Operational	• Coordinator • Special Projects and Systems Support • Community History

A SENSE OF PLACE AND BELONGING

Support and provide a sense of belonging, yet encourage our suburbs and economic centres to develop their own cultural identity by encouraging new initiatives and activities that make the places in which our residents live, work, and play a central facet of Lake Macquarie's cultural life.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Community					
Develop meaningful community-focused projects and celebrations	34	For example: Friendship Day, Waste as Art arts workshops, school exhibitions, NAIDOC week, creative writing, ZINE and comic workshops	Year One and ongoing Host a minimum of 20 programs in Lake Mac Libraries a year	Operational	• Lifelong Learning • COPA • Marketing • Cultural Projects Curator
	35	Focus on a rolling program of quality initiatives targeting culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community People with a Disability, Isolated community, LGBTIQA+ and older community members	Year One and ongoing Host a minimum of 20 programs in Lake Mac Libraries a year	Operational	• Lifelong Learning • COPA • Marketing
	36	Audit cultural venues against contemporary physical accessibility standards	Year One and ongoing	Operational, grants	• Lifelong Learning • COPA
Innovation/Creativity					
Provide Storytime and other traditional library programs that support quality community program delivery and participation	37	Minimum of 60 children's programs a year	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Lifelong Learning • Libraries Leaders
Revenue					
Make and mend initiative: Develop locations, schedule and programs around local upcycling and repair workshops	38	Make and mend spaces established at Toronto and Belmont Libraries Textile Lab	Year One – Fab Lab	Grants, operational	• Lifelong Learning • Marketing • Community stakeholders • Sustainability
	39	Develop in-house programs, guest presenters and process for regular and ad-hoc users	Year Two - Ongoing		
	40	Launch "Library of Things" at Charlestown, Belmont and Toronto Libraries	Year Two		
	41	Pop-up Repair Cafes at a minimum of three locations a year	Year Four and ongoing		
Investigate liquor licensing-related service aspect to diversify appeal and experience outside traditional operating hours	42	Develop feasibility and seek grant funding to trial after-hours entertainment and licensing options and deliver seasonal events	Year One – Charlestown Library Year Two – Toronto Library Year Three – Sugar Valley Year Four – Swansea Centre Future – Morisset Hub	Break-even partnership	• Coordinator • Leadership Team • External Partner
Management					
Continue to research and refine opening hours and branch operations based on viability, sustainability, and accessibility	43	Continue a phased approach to opening hours changes to best meet community and operational demands	Year One and ongoing as an annual review	Operational	• Manager • Coordinator
Innovation					
	44	Continue to develop and deliver self-access across Lake Mac Libraries branches to support sustainable broad accessibility for the community	All branches with self-access by 2026	Library Priority Funding	• Coordinator • Special Projects and Systems Support

A CREATIVE LIFE

STRATEGIC GOAL 4:
CELEBRATE CONNECTEDNESS

Support and provide a sense of belonging, yet encourage our suburbs and economic centres to develop their own cultural identity by encouraging new initiatives and activities that make the places in which our residents live, work, and play a central facet of Lake Macquarie's cultural life.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Management					
	45	Continue review and update to non-viable opening hours for the city's libraries in a phased approach	Annual	Operational	• Coordinator • Libraries Leaders
Capital					
Include AR/VR and Gaming resources into library spaces	46	Implement e-gaming availability with appropriate furniture and supporting loan collection	Year One – Sugar Valley Library Museum Year Two – Swansea Year Three – Toronto Year Four - Belmont		• Special Projects and Systems Support
Innovation/creativity Revenue/technology					
Increase Fab Lab impact and awareness	47	Continue building on Fab Lab capabilities and sustainable membership programming	Review program 2026	Operational, grants	• Special Projects and Systems Support • Fab Lab Lead
	48	Deliver Fab Lab academy initiative as nationally recognised program	Year One and ongoing	Operational, grants	• Fab Lab Lead
	49	Undertake annual call-out for students	Year One and ongoing	Operational, grants	• Fab Lab Lead
	50	Commission a range of Fab Lab programs and workshops that expand design and technology awareness and skill across the city	Year One and ongoing	Operational, grants	• Fab Lab Lead
	51	Develop a range of items for merchandise opportunities	Year One and Two	Operational, grants	• Fab Lab Lead
Management					
Incentivise new library members and visitation through marketing initiatives, driven by increased marketing and newsletter readership	52	Develop regular prize draw based on visitation, loan status, membership status and ambassadorship	Increase membership by 10 per cent a year from 2025 onwards	Operational	• Marketing
	53	Expand on developed video content and create YouTube content.	Year Two		
	54	Investigate non-traditional methods of library promotion and marketing such as influencers, billboards, guerrilla marketing etc	Year One to Year Three		

A CREATIVE LIFE

Value creativity, working together with creative process and outcomes that bring together history, culture, knowledge, and expertise that supports innovation, enquiry, and creative education.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Innovation/creativity					
Develop innovative connections with the education sector and institutions	55	Define and establish partnerships with primary, secondary, and tertiary educational institutions for program delivery and sector development Develop a minimum of 15 curriculum-based projects and programs	Year One	Operational and Grants	• Lifelong Learning • All branches to participate in Tech Hub program
	56	Implement an education strategy that targets and measures increased participation of students Increase annual student participation by three per cent annually	Year One and ongoing	Operational, Grants	• Lifelong Learning
Continue to develop quality and dynamic maker space infrastructure as pop-up and permanent (e.g., Fab Lab, SEEN@Swansea, Launchpad, Wangi Wangi Art Studio, Sugar Valley Library Museum)	57	Invest in new spaces, eg: Textile Lab at Toronto, hot desks at Belmont and Speers Point , cafes in libraries, and planning for Morisset Hub	Year One and ongoing	Operational, Grants	• Leadership Team • Lifelong Learning • Libraries Leaders
Revenue					
Write Here Festival	58	Continue with the annual program with five per cent growth annually	Annual festival Minimum 25 workshops	Revenue program	• Lifelong Learning
History Illuminated Festival	59	Incorporate history writing and heritage research as part of the festival program	Annual festival Minimum 4,000 attendees	Revenue program	• Lifelong Learning
POP Bam	60	Host contemporary youth-focused Pop Culture festival	Annual festival	Revenue program	• Lifelong Learning
GLAM and library professional sector	61	Include contemporary library practices as part of the GLAM program	Annual festival	Revenue program	• Lifelong Learning
Management					
Strategically develop new target markets and businesses for arts, cultural and heritage programming	62	Define target markets	Ongoing	Operational	• Leadership Team
Technology					
	63	Undertake a technology audit of Lake Mac Libraries' service	Year One	Operational	• Special Projects and Systems Support • Libraries Leaders
Innovation/creativity					
Investigate cultural hub projects, incubators and pop-up exhibitions within Lake Mac Libraries and community facilities	64	Host artist in residency program	Ongoing - One a year	Operational	• Lifelong Learning
	65	Run EOI for writers, poets and illustrators to be involved	Ongoing - One a year	Operational	• Lifelong Learning
	66	Pilot self-directed creative play activities such "Art Cart" at branches with Launchpad spaces	Ongoing - four per year	Operational	• Outreach
Revenue					
A rolling program of exhibitions by local artists, artist groups, schools and associations	67	Host a minimum of 24 emerging artists within libraries as part of the Launchpad program	Continue with the exhibition program at Charlestown, Toronto, Belmont, Windale and Swansea	Revenue program	• Exhibition Lead

A CREATIVE LIFE

Council plays a pivotal role as a leading partner with our community to achieve our city's vision of being a vibrant, contemporary, and cosmopolitan City by continuously improving how we enable creativity and cultural activities to be presented and supported.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Capital					
Deliver new planned facilities	68	Construct and open Windale Hub	Year One	Capital	• Executive/Council • Libraries Leaders
	69	Continue to work with the Internal PCG on the development of the new Morisset Community Centre	Year One – Feasibility Year Four – Drawing and design	Capital, grants	• Executive/Council
Investigate service alternatives across single use branches	70	Investigate alternative service at Speers Point Library	Year Two	Operational	• Executive/Council
Innovation					
Implement new outreach and home delivery services and outreach options	71	Implement new kiosks across the service that will be included in Council and community events	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Outreach
Capital					
	72	Implement volunteer home delivery, digital mentor and revised outreach program	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Outreach
	73	Pilot 'My Little Library' program for preschools	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Outreach
Innovation					
Increase membership	74	Launch membership/user referral program to encourage members to introduce friends and family to the library	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Marketing • Lifelong Learning • Cultural experiences
Strategic					
Review low-performing libraries for reuse, multi-use, or closure	75	Review and present options and recommendations for consultation with Council and the community, including: 1. Identify negative trends 2. Alternatives for members 3. Delivery and access models 4. Relocation 5. Attendance and loans 6. Changes in demographics and use 7. Usage times and access	Year One – Aligned with the opening of Windale. Year Three – Aligned with the renewal of Cardiff lease. Year Three – In line with the expansion of self-access hours across all services	Operational	• Leadership Team • Executive/Council

A CREATIVE LIFE

Council plays a pivotal role as a leading partner with our community to achieve our city's vision of being a vibrant, contemporary, and cosmopolitan City by continuously improving how we enable creativity and cultural activities to be presented and supported.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Management					
Continuously improve library staffing and rostering in line with changing use and demand	76	Review staffing profiles in line with existing data and use and sector changes to develop future directions and workforce plans	Ongoing	Operational	• Coordinator
	77	Succession planning and staff development pathways in contemporary library systems and collection management	Ongoing	Operational	• Coordinator
Undertake tech audit and develop plan for new and future purchases	78	Undertake and complete audit	Year One	Operational, grant	• Special Projects and Systems Support
	79	Identify new tech purchases and phase out dated technology	Year One and ongoing	Operational, +grant	• Special Projects and Systems Support
Implement and deliver best practice digital skills for maker space technologies	80	Consult community and industry partners to determine digital skills and maker space technologies required at each branch	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Special Projects and Systems Support • Lifelong Learning • Outreach
	81	Plan and target technology introduction and use workshops and programs for community and staff with specialist trainers	Year One and ongoing		• Special Projects and Systems Support • Lifelong Learning • Outreach • External Contractor • BITS
	82	Develop a program of workshops promoting digital creativity	Year Two and ongoing as an annual program	Operational	• Digital Technology • Lifelong Learning • Libraries Leaders • Fab Lab Lead
Strategic					
Achieve national cultural professional standards in governance, operational responsibility and integrity	83	Continuously review service delivery for excellence, efficiency, cost management, sustainability, programming and resource use	Year One and ongoing Complete monthly, quarterly and annual reporting against KPIs and industry benchmarking	Operational	• Libraries Leaders
Management					
Implement best practice leadership and innovation in the sector	84	Analyse trends and member surveys to align programming to needs	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Manager • Libraries Leaders • Marketing
	85	Meet budget and revenue expectations and KPIs	Year One and ongoing		• Leadership Team

A CREATIVE LIFE

STRATEGIC GOAL 6:
CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE COUNCIL'S CULTURAL FACILITIES, PROGRAMS AND TEAMS

Council plays a pivotal role as a leading partner with our community to achieve our city's vision of being a vibrant, contemporary, and cosmopolitan City by continuously improving how we enable creativity and cultural activities to be presented and supported.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Management					
Actively seek sustainable funding partners and sources for project and program delivery	86	Actively seek appropriate funding sources	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Leadership Team
	87	Establish relationships with spokespeople to publicly advocate for the library network's purpose, value and relevancy	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Marketing • Lifelong Learning
	88	Investigate library brand initiatives to meet the needs of a range of user personas, attract new members and further improve and demonstrate relevancy and open opportunities to use partner communication channels	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Marketing • Lifelong Learning
Empower staff to undertake tasks to achieve strategic goals with a global vision	89	Establish an annual library professional development training program	Year Two and then as an established program	Operational	• Leadership Team
Revenue					
Be a sector-leading service	90	Deliver GLAM symposium libraries related content for the team and sector	Year One and annually	Operational	• Leadership Team
Strategic					
Review and develop new four-year Strategic Plan for libraries	91	Conduct skills audit and workforce and succession planning for the next 10 years	Year Two	Operational	• Coordinator
	92	Build upon midterm review with planning to develop new 2028-2032 Library Strategic Plan	Year Three	Operational	• Leadership Team
Management					
Reward and celebrate excellence in customer services	93	Create a Lake Mac Libraries, kawumalyikilba reward and recognition program for library staff who demonstrate innovation, user engagement and 'living the brand'	Year One and annually	Operational	• Coordinator • Libraries Leaders
Sustainability					
Lake Mac Libraries work towards zero landfill by 2028	94	Review processes and practices to achieve zero waste by 2028. Examples include assessing and actioning removal of soft plastics from collection stock Remove general waste bins from facilities Use only recyclable materials in programs	Year One and ongoing	Operational, grants	• Leadership Team • External contractors
	95	Launch Windale Library as a zero-landfill focused facility	Year One and ongoing	Operational, grants	• Windale Hub Leader • Libraries Leaders
Sustainability					
Enhance reference services to ensure community members are aware of and can access online library and Council services	96	Investigate and increase range of services available online. (such as Haynes, Carters antiques)	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Collection Development Lead • Special Projects and Systems Support • Marketing
	97	Increase staff knowledge of online services			
	98	Investigate marketing collateral for branches			
	99	Review physical reference collections for online equivalents and implement.			

A CITY OF CULTURE AND INNOVATION

STRATEGIC GOAL 7:
FOSTER OPEN COMMUNICATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND LEADERSHIP

Open and honest communication with the creative community, facilitate and champion partnerships that strive for the City's arts, heritage and cultural vision, and act and facilitate strong leadership within the sector.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Innovation/Creativity					
Support and nurture an environment that encourages creativity and innovation	100	Support emerging writers and authors in the city through appropriate policy, industry support and event opportunity	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Lifelong Learning
Community					
	101	Implement innovative volunteer and professional models of management for existing Council cultural assets	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Outreach
Strategic					
Build strong industry networks	102	Investigate a network relationship with Hunter and Central Coast Libraries (reciprocal borrowing)	Year Two and ongoing	Operational	• Leadership Team
	103	Collaborate with regional partners in re-establishing a zone group to strengthen advocacy and communication with state and federal bodies	Year Two and ongoing	Operational	• Leadership Team
Community					
Regular and valuable communication with our members	104	Continuously improve library smartphone app, e-newsletters, and social media connectivity, ensuring the highest level of cyber security.	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Systems Support • Marketing

A CITY OF CULTURE AND INNOVATION

STRATEGIC GOAL 8:
VALUE AND SUPPORT OUR CREATIVE INDUSTRY AND CULTURAL ECONOMY

Lake Macquarie values and supports individual creativity, skill, and talent, which has the potential for employment and the development of a sustainable creative economy.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Management					
Proactively seek and implement opportunities to engage the creative community within all our activities	105	Seek grant funding to ensure programming and events reflect creative industries in libraries' programming strategy	Year One and ongoing	Operational, grants	• Lifelong Learning • Artists
Innovation/Creativity					
	106	Develop, in conjunction with performing arts groups, a One Act Play Festival	Ongoing	Operational, grants	• Lifelong Learning • Playwrights
Revenue					
Build strong industry networks	107	Provide and promote work hub spaces that service small businesses and entrepreneurs	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Leadership Team
Technology					
	108	Develop and promote Make and Mend Spaces and Fab Lab, as an incubator for textiles-based entrepreneurs	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Special Projects • Lifelong Learning • Marketing
Revenue					
	109	Develop strategies to encourage the purchase of local art in exhibitions	Year One and ongoing	NA	• Cultural Experiences • Lifelong Learning • Marketing
Community					
Engage creatives, authors, and writers in programming	110	Expressions of interest for flagship library programming	Year Two and ongoing	Operational	• Cultural Experiences • Lifelong Learning
Revenue					
Establish a revised bookshop commercial element	111	Develop a consistent visible, accessible and appealing library book sale layout	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Marketing
Sustainability					
	112	Deliver and grow consistent and regular book sales opportunities across all branches	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Marketing
Management					
Expand and manage meeting room use	113	Monitor and consult with users to maximise revenue and extend use to community groups	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Cultural Experiences • Marketing

A CITY OF CULTURE AND INNOVATION

STRATEGIC GOAL 9:
COMMUNICATE OUR CULTURE: BE LOCAL, AIM GLOBAL

Celebrate and promote creativity, innovation and uniqueness through engaging and active events, festivals, programs and exhibitions for community and visitors.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Innovation/Creativity					
Libraries as tourist support/ destinations	114	Train all Cultural Experience Officers (CEOs) as Tourism Ambassadors	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Marketing • Libraries Leaders
Market libraries globally	115	Provide and promote work hub spaces that service small businesses and entrepreneurs, as well as develop cafes and other businesses within our spaces.	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Leadership Team
Revenue					
	116	Support online membership outside Lake Macquarie LGA through marketing plan initiatives	Ongoing	Operational	• Marketing
Management					
Actively participate in national and industry changes and discussions	117	Deliver annual GLAM symposium dedicated to industry collaboration and innovation	Annual	Operational	• Lifelong Learning • Libraries Leaders • Marketing
	118	Advocate and drive reinvigoration of regional partnerships and connection with state and national bodies	Ongoing	Operational	• Libraries Leaders

A CITY OF LITERACY AND LEARNING

Facilitate and champion activities and partnerships that support community members to participate fully in the labour market, education and training, and social and civic life.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Community					
Investigate and develop an online, interactive literature-themed map of Lake Macquarie	119	Conceptualise and crowd-source literary references and sites of significance to Lake Macquarie	Year One	Grants	• Lifelong Learning • Marketing
Innovation/Creativity					
	120	Develop programs to embrace the concept of 'Storytime is for Everyone' – scope programs and seek training for Reading Aloud activities	Year Two	Grants	• Lifelong Learning • Libraries Leaders
Technology					
	121	Provide opportunities for skills development in creative arts and literacy using emerging technology to suit	Year One and ongoing	Grants	• Lifelong Learning • External Contractors • Artists
Innovation/Creativity					
	122	Develop 'Lake Mac Imaginarium' concept to support funding for delivery	Year Two	Grants	• Libraries Leaders • Lifelong Learning • Marketing • External Contractors • Artists
Strategic					
Support and promote a strong focus on early language and literature development	123	Review, design and deliver effective early literacy sessions for babies, toddlers and preschool children and their families	Year One and ongoing	Library Priority Funding	• Libraries Leaders • Lifelong Learning • COPA
Innovation/Creativity					
	124	Develop and deliver programming operational model to increase early literacy activities in libraries and increase availability of these activities KPI – increase traditional programming availability by 20 per cent	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Libraries Leaders • Lifelong Learning
Strategic					
Develop targeted preschool library collection development	125	Launch "My Little Library Program" with a focus on suburbs and preschools with highest need	Year One	Operational	• Collection Development Lead • Outreach

A CITY OF LITERACY AND LEARNING

Facilitate and champion activities and partnerships that support community members to participate fully in the labour market, education and training, and social and civic life.

STRATEGY	ACTION #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	TEAMS/LEAD
Community					
Develop activities to support and celebrate local, national, and international reading initiatives	126	Actively promote Reading Challenges to school-aged children	Annually	Operational	• Libraries Leaders • Lifelong Learning
	127	Celebrate Children's Book Week as a premier event and an event to link in with Premier's Reading Challenge (Mayor/Executive presenting awards at libraries)	Annually	Operational	• Libraries Leaders • Lifelong Learning • Marketing
	128	Deliver coordinated recognition of Indigenous Literacy Day, The Reading Hour, Adult Learners Week, World Book Day, National Literacy and Numeracy week, etc.	Ongoing	Operational	• Libraries Leaders • Lifelong Learning • Marketing
Develop Family Literacy Framework and brand	129	'Sing Say Share' incorporated into existing branch early literacy programs and marketing	Ongoing	Operational, grants	• Libraries Leaders • Marketing
Innovation/Creativity					
Strengthen readers advisory activities and awareness to grow collection	130	Expand activities such as genre-themed bookmarks, 'Ask a librarian' online open forms, and external reader's advisory platforms	Ongoing	Operational	• Libraries Leaders • Marketing
Community					
	131	Develop engagement activities to encourage reading and borrowing, and community identity. In particular, priority members including people with a disability, culturally and linguistically diverse and those in isolation.	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Lifelong Learning • Marketing • Library Leaders
Innovation/Creativity					
	132	Develop and launch Lake Mac Reads - Reading Challenge a 12-month reading challenge/book bingo	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Library Leaders • Marketing • Collection Development Lead
Technology					
	133	Package 'Bibliotherapy' service expanding on 'Shelf Help' online form	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Collection Development Lead • Marketing
Community					
	134	Develop and deliver 'Lake Mac Reads' as a brand emphasising wellbeing and encouraging the development of a reading community	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Marketing
Technology					
	135	Update technology to ensure industry-leading accessibility standards for people of all abilities.	Year One and ongoing	Operational, grants	• Special Projects and Systems Support
	136	Integrate into facility signage and layout delivery	Year One and ongoing	Operational	• Marketing

INFRASTRUCTURE 2024-2028

Lake Mac Libraries are in a unique position as a major library service providing library facilities that continue to be individual, unique and extremely well-connected.

The challenge is how to capitalise or consolidate these strengths and maintain public libraries as a sustainable community experience. This table provides the current context, influences and potential change and timelines that will be assessed throughout the life of this plan and beyond.

An aerial view of the construction of the new Windale Hub

LOCATION	SERVICE AND USE - CURRENT	EXPECTED CHANGE DRIVERS – OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS	PROPOSED INFRASTRUC-TURE CHANGES	RESOURCING AND PHASE
Belmont, ngarrabangba	• Mid-size service activity • Traditional standalone library with meeting room and public parking • Community limited growth	Ageing population	• Internal site changes • Furniture upgrades • Self-access • Storage option increased	• Year One – define scope and implement self-access • Year Two – construction with funding through the Library Priority Grant
Cardiff, kuram	• Small to mid-size service activity with reducing attendance/loans • Leased • Traditional standalone library with public parking and self-access	Competition and library location density Community limited growth	• Review sustainability on lease end 2026	• Monitor service and use • Review options on lease end
Charlestown, walyamayi	• Large service activity • Consistent high attendance • Traditional standalone library with meeting room and public parking • Community standard growth	Higher-density city living Economic growth drives reuse of site	• Implement self-access • Internal and external treatment • Upgraded service space and storage	• Year One – implement self-access • Year Two – further scope future use of site and service in Charlestown • No capital funding allocation planned
Morisset, bawarramalang	• Small to mid-size service activity • Highest use per square metre within the service. • Traditional standalone library • Community growth high	High growth catchment	• Implement self-access Year Three	• Continue to collaborate with the wider Council to define feasibility, funding, design, and community engagement
Speers Point, milyaba	• Small to mid-size service activity • Mid-size facility • Traditional standalone library with public parking and self-access • Library administrative operational hub • moderate community growth	Proximity to Council administration Community demographic changes	• Increase self-access options • Replace archive as an online resource • Scope feasibility for relocation and back of house service changes	• Year One – implement extended self-access hours • Year Two – review back of house teams and resource location needs • Year Three – identify options for integration with Council administration or repurpose back of house

LOCATION	SERVICE AND USE - CURRENT	EXPECTED CHANGE DRIVERS – OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS	PROPOSED INFRASTRUC-TURE CHANGES	RESOURCING AND PHASE
Sugar Valley Library Museum, kirantakamyari	• Mid-size service activity • Multi use space with professional museum	Continuing community growth high	• Minor technology updates • Museum exhibition space refreshes	• No infrastructure changes are proposed over the next six years
Swansea, kariyawangba	• Mid-size service activity • Declining use and loans • Multiuse space with public parking	Slow community growth Need for alternative spaces for meetings and programs	• Increased room hire options • Library layout revision	• Continue to collaborate with the wider Council to define feasibility, funding, design and community engagement
Toronto, tirrabiyangba	• Mid-size service activity • Declining attendance and visitation	Growth in business use Growth in community meeting spaces	• Additional spaces for activity • Increased tech infrastructure supporting after hours use • Visual merchandising furniture opportunities	• Year One – implement self-access • implement textile lab • Year Three – extend self-access
Wangi Library Creative Hub, wanji wanji	• Small service activity • Small facility	Changing community Opportunity to expand into creative commercial activity	• Implement 24/7 self-access	• Year Two - Implement 24/7 self-access • No infrastructure changes are proposed over the next five years
Windale Hub, bilyabayi	• Historically small service activity • New multi-use facility • Moderate to high community growth	Broadening social and demographic change Urban density	• Minor technology updates • Implement self-access	• No infrastructure changes are proposed over the next five years

OUR LIBRARIES

BELMONT LIBRARY, NGARRABANGBA
19 Ernest Street, Belmont

CARDIFF LIBRARY, KURAM
Corner Main and Macquarie Roads, Cardiff

CHARLESTOWN LIBRARY, WALYAMAYI
Corner Smith and Ridley Streets, Charlestown

MORISSET LIBRARY, BAWARRAMALANG
39 Yambo Street, Morisset

SPEERS POINT LIBRARY, MILYABA
139 Main Road, Speers Point

SUGAR VALLEY LIBRARY MUSEUM, KIRANTAKAMYARI
156 Portland Drive, Cameron Park

SWANSEA LIBRARY, KARIYAWANGBA
228 Pacific Highway, Swansea

TORONTO LIBRARY, TIRRABIYANGBA
Corner Brighton Avenue and Pemell Street, Toronto

WANGI LIBRARY CREATIVE HUB, WANJI WANJI
295 Watkins Road, Wangi Wangi

WINDALE HUB, BILYABAYI
Lake Street, Windale

DRAFT