



DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

OPERATIONAL PLAN

2019 - 2020

CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITIES
FOSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH
LEADING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP
INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT, PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS
ROBUST GOVERNANCE AND EFFICIENT SERVICE DELIVERY



Douglas Shire Council would like to show its appreciation by acknowledging local indigenous artists Lenice Schonenberger, Loretta Pierce (Lenoy) and Ronald Bamboo for providing the cover artwork entitled "**Daintree Ferry**"

Ongoing and Recurring Operational Responsibilities

In addition to the specific initiatives identified for the 2019/2020 financial year, the ongoing work of each department/branch of Council forms part of Council's 'business as usual' operations. A summary of the ongoing responsibilities is listed below:

MANAGEMENT TEAM

- **Good Governance** – Facilitating the decision making and leadership of Council through provision of advice and information.
- **Strategic Planning** – Planning for a successful future for the Shire.
- **Community Sustainability** – Identifying and acting on opportunities to strengthen the economic, environmental and social base for the Shire.
- **Financial Sustainability** – Planning for and supporting the development of a financially sustainable Council.
- **Organisational Performance and Culture** – Managing the resources of Council effectively and efficiently to ensure sustainable performance, a high level of service delivery and a positive culture.
- **Engagement and Advocacy** – Creating and supporting productive and strategic relationships with the communities of Douglas, local and regional stakeholders and other levels of government.

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Promoting and enhancing Council's corporate image through the implementation of high quality communications, marketing and media liaison.
- Actively collaborating with the business community and organisations to support and develop economic development opportunities in the Shire and regionally.
- Actively participating in the development of opportunities for all sectors of the community including but not limited to the arts, culture and sports.
- Developing and implementing community resilience programs throughout the Shire.
- Actively collaborating with community groups, organisations and various levels of government to develop and implement programs and activities that encourage capacity building and inclusiveness.
- Developing, implementing and promoting Council's grants program.
- Providing grant information and support for community groups and grant applicants for Council projects.
- Ongoing coordinating of Council events, supporting Council funded events and provision of advice for other event organisers.
- Coordinating, planning and delivering library services to residents and visitors of the Shire.
- Complying with Queensland Public Libraries standards and guidelines.
- Providing a welcoming creative Library space in Mossman and Port Douglas that delivers programs and activities to support and enhance reader development, lifelong learning and participation for all.
- Providing a property services function which optimises utilisation of Council facilities and ensures a strategic approach to property management.
- Managing Council's human resources functions including employee relations, compliance, compensation and benefits, training and development, recruitment, and all other employee related matters.
- Ensuring Payroll is processed in a timely manner and is compliant with all relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
- Supporting Council's Workplace Health and Safety system ensuring the provision of a safe working environment for all employees.

ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

- Ensuring land use assessment and environmental planning functions are carried out in accordance with statutory requirements, including processing of Development Applications and Operational Works Applications within legislated timeframes.
- Administering compliance with relevant State legislation, Council Local Laws and the Douglas Shire Planning Scheme.
- Managing Local Law, Environmental Health and other delegated licensing, permitting and registration functions.
- Undertaking strategic land use planning functions in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Managing recycling and waste collection and disposal contracts and Council's Resource Management facilities in a safe, sustainable and environmentally sensitive manner.
- Providing strategic direction and outcomes for delivering environmental sustainability in the Shire.
- Developing and implementing a disaster management policy and programs to achieve the objectives of the *Disaster Management Act 2003*, in particular the promotion of safer, and more secure and resilient communities.

WATER AND WASTEWATER

- Managing the Water and Wastewater income and expenditure within approved budget and in accordance with Council strategies and plans.
- Meeting wastewater compliance within statutory requirements and licence conditions.
- Supplying drinking water and recycled water that meets customer quality requirements and agreed service standards in accordance with the approved Drinking Water Quality Management Plan.
- Managing and developing Trade Waste and Pumping Applications in the Shire.
- Managing Council contracts and where required, negotiating new contracts relating to Water and Wastewater.
- Maintaining Council's Water and Wastewater assets to ensure maximum lifespan and output capacity in the lifecycle of those assets.
- Monitoring systems, procedures and the workplace environment to ensure equipment, plant and machinery is safe to operate and work processes comply with workplace health and safety legislation and standards.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

- Undertaking project management of major capital construction activities for Council.
- Undertaking project management of disaster rehabilitation construction activities for Council.
- Providing advice on design, procurement, approvals and construction functions to internal and external stakeholders.
- Delivering projects in an efficient, environmentally sustainable, quality assured and timely manner.

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

- Continuing the development and implementation of infrastructure planning to enhance and preserve the natural and built environment.
- Coordinating the development and implementation of the Landscape Management Plan.
- Planning and construction of a network of bicycle trails, traffic separation and management arrangements.
- Asset assessment and valuation to prioritise road reseals, road rehabilitation, building facility upgrades, stormwater network improvements, parks and playgrounds.
- Coordinating Pest Management Activities across Council controlled, State Government and private land.
- Coordinating disaster recovery activities in accordance with disaster management procedures.
- Fleet Management services including maintenance and asset renewal.

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

- Coordinating the annual audit of Council's financial systems and financial statements and achieving an unmodified audit result.
- Complying with all relevant legislation, policies and procedures including statutory reporting requirements.
- Facilitating the Rates & Water Billing functions and managing Debtor balances within acceptable limits.
- Processing Accounts Payable within the allocated timeframes and trading terms.
- Supporting the Information Technology function with set up of new systems and ongoing support for Council operations.
- Delivering a quality frontline service ensuring a high standard of customer service that meets the needs of Council and its communities.
- Provision of Integrated Services for Corporate Services and Operations.
- Managing Council's records management system ensuring processes and systems are in place to capture all Council records and maintain legislative compliance.

GOVERNANCE

- Developing and maintaining an effective risk management system and culture to mitigate risks to Council.
- Ensuring Governance systems, functions and reporting frameworks are developed and implemented to meet organisational requirements.
- Providing a quality complaints management process for Council which ensures not only legislative compliance but improved service quality to the community.
- Delivering an effective and efficient insurance function ensuring adequate coverage of Council's assets and provision of a quality insurance claims function.
- Managing Council's records management system ensuring processes and systems are in place to capture all Council records and maintain legislative compliance.

Operational Plan

2019 - 2020

Not yet commenced

In progress

Off-track, plan in place

Off-track, no plan in place

Cancelled/no longer applicable

Completed



	Initiative	Success Measure	Description	Status	Updates
Theme 1: Celebrating Our Community					
Goal 1: We will celebrate the diversity of our community and ensure that all infrastructure, programs, and services are underpinned with inclusiveness and accessibility.					
1	Implement the Community Facilities Revitalisation program.	Completion of upgrades.	This project will include improvements to the Port Douglas Community Hall, the Mossman Shire Hall, the Sugar Wharf and the Thornton Beach Café.	In progress	
2	Continue to implement the Indigenous Signage program.	Number of signs installed.	Bi-lingual road signage comprising 'Welcome To Country' signs and 'Town Entry Signs' for Main Roads, and 'Place Marker' signs and 'Story Place' signs for council roads and areas, in Eastern Kuku Yalanji and Yirrganydji languages.	In progress	
Goal 2: We will deliver programs and services that protect and enhance the liveability of our beautiful Shire.					
1	Develop open spaces principles and guidelines.	Clear design palette and objectives, consistency of open space design.	To ensure that the investment in the Open Spaces program is maximised, Council requires a set of design principles and an open space palette that is consistent with the inherent natural beauty of the Shire and is appropriate for the region.	Not yet commenced	
2	Implement the Open Spaces Renewal and Revitalisation plan.	Program implemented, community satisfaction	The Corporate Plan survey indicated that open spaces and beautification are high priorities in the Shire. This project will be complimented by a significant increase in expenditure to improve streetscapes, parks and gardens.	In progress	
3	Develop and implement "Butt it Bin it" program.	Per cent reduction in cigarette butts in the Shire.	This program will aim to improve the amenity of the Shire by providing more cigarette butt bins. It will include education at licenced venues in hot spot areas.	Not yet commenced	
Goal 3: We will develop programs that promote health, well-being and safety in the community.					
1	Continue to seek existing and alternative funding including philanthropic opportunities to design and construct a domestic and family violence refuge facility in the region.	Progress in seeking funding.	This initiative is a continuation of the previous year's Operational Plan. Council is acting as a facilitator of the outcome. Council will lobby State and Federal government on the importance of building the facility. Council will also seek philanthropic opportunities to fund.	Not yet commenced	
2	Develop a Sports and Recreation strategy.	Completion of the strategy.	Sports and recreation is growing in the Shire. An active lifestyle is important for health and well-being. The Shire does not currently have a strategy and as Council invests more in this area, a strategy is required.	Not yet commenced	

	Initiative	Success Measure	Description	Status	Updates
Theme 1: Celebrating Our Community					
Goal 3: We will develop programs that promote health, well-being and safety in the community.					
3	Investigate and map appropriate bike friendly paths and programs to encourage bicycle participation across the Shire .	Paths are utilised by bicycles and bike friendly infrastructure is installed in parks and along paths.	Interactive maps of the Shire's bicycle paths, bike repair stations installed in well utilised bike paths and programs implemented in the community and schools to encourage uptake of bicycle pathways in the Shire.	Not yet commenced	
Goal 4: We will promote arts and cultural programs and events that bring vibrancy to the community and compliment the tourist experience.					
1	Develop an annual sponsor prospectus for Council supported events and programs.	# of sponsors signed up and \$ value	Events are an important part of the tourism offer in the Shire. This initiative seeks to attract sponsors of events to the region to help offset costs.	In progress	

	Initiative	Success Measure	Description	Status	Updates
Theme 2: Fostering Sustainable Economic Growth					
Goal 1: We will build appropriate infrastructure and deliver services that connect and support businesses.					
1	Partner with State government to deliver Phase 1 of the Wangetti Trail.	Implementation of the trail.	The Corporate Plan includes both Phase 1 and 2 over the five year period. This year will see a focus on delivering phase 1 of the Trail project.	In progress	
2	Award Daintree Ferry contract and begin planning infrastructure improvement works. Initiate short term improvements.	Quality of solution provided by successful tenderer.	The current Daintree Ferry contract expires in 2021. Council seeks peak queuing solutions, improved ticketing, loading, customer service, availability and amenity.	In progress	
Goal 2: We will work with partners to promote the Shire as the World's leading sustainable tropical destination and encourage business investment.					
1	Undertake actions in the Eco-Destination Accreditation program.	80 of the 100 actions completed.	This is an important part of the Shire's brand to be the leading sustainable tropical destination.	In progress	
2	Develop a short term accommodation policy and strategy.	Implementation of the policy.	Douglas Shire is a leading tourist destination. Tourism accounts for nearly 80% of the region's economy. With the advent of AirBnB and other apps that allow tourists to book accommodation in what has traditionally been residential neighbourhoods, Council has seen an increase in noise complaints. Council needs to develop a strategy that balances short term accommodation with residential amenity.	Not yet commenced	
Goal 3: We will develop strategies that seek to diversify the Shire's economic base.					
1	Review and revise the Economic Strategy.	Actions agreed and implementation commenced.	A diverse economic base adds to overall economic stability. The current Economic Strategy requires updating and revision. This action will see a revised strategy that details actions in relation to diversifying the economy	Not yet commenced	

	Initiative	Success Measure	Description	Status	Updates
Theme 3: Leading Environmental Stewardship					
Goal 1: We will protect our sensitive environment and plan for the impact of climate change.					
1	Undertake actions in the Resilient Coast Strategic Plan.	Completion of action.	Implement 1 of the 35 actions outlined in the Resilient Coast Strategic Plan 2019-2029. This action relates to enhancing the resilient and adaptive capacity of the coastline by implementing a community stewardship photograph monitoring program in appropriate areas.	Not yet commenced	
2	Develop a Sustainable Events policy.	Policy updated and implemented.	To enhance the reputation of the Shire as the leading sustainable destination, Council seeks to implement an events policy consistent with this objective.	Completed	
3	Develop a Plastic Free Douglas strategy.	Completion of the strategy and reduction in plastic waste.	The impact of plastic on our environment, in particular our waterways, is significant. This initiative will support the Shire's desire to be at the forefront of environmental protection.	Not yet commenced	
4	Develop alternatives to glyphosate products.	Implementation of environmentally sensitive solutions for managing open spaces.	Council avoids the use of glyphosate products in particularly sensitive areas of the Shire and has begun to utilise steam weeder; however, this action seeks the complete removal of such products.	In progress	
Goal 2: We will implement programs that reduce and offset our environmental footprint.					
1	Implement Healthy Reefs partnership with Qantas and TPDD.	# of businesses that sign up.	Council has approved expenditure to move council operations towards full carbon neutrality. This action will involve the implementation of the Council decision as well as consideration of the National Carbon Offset Standard.	In progress	
2	Undertake 2019/20 actions in the Corporate Sustainability Strategy 2017-20	Actions completed.	This is the final year of this strategy.	Not yet commenced	
3	Begin development of a new Corporate Sustainability Strategy for 2021 - 2025.	Completion of the plan.	As the current plan is coming to its end, a new strategy will need to be developed.	Not yet commenced	
4	Conduct a solar energy feasibility study for the Port Douglas Waste Water Treatment Plant.	Completion of the study.	As part of the Council's plan to reduce its carbon footprint, alternative energy sources are being sought.	Not yet commenced	

	Initiative	Success Measure	Description	Status	Updates
Theme 3: Leading Environmental Stewardship					
Goal 2: We will implement programs that reduce and offset our environmental footprint.					
5	Update Council's Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan to align with the new State Strategy.	Completion of the strategy.	The State Government's Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy is being reviewed to ensure updates to Council's Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan aligns with the State's Strategy.	Not yet commenced	
6	Implement a Cape Tribulation transfer station.	Completion of the initiative.	Residents and businesses currently must take their waste to the Cow Bay transfer station. A more local facility is required. Land will have to be sought and facilities developed.	Not yet commenced	
Goal 3: We will continue to build water infrastructure so that the Douglas Shire may enjoy water security and water quality.					
1	Continue upgrades to sewer network.	Projects successfully implemented.	This is on-going important work to ensure Council is capturing water waste.	Not yet commenced	
2	Implement smart meters for water trial.	Trial conducted and learnings assessed.	Smart meters will help Council obtain better data on water usage. The trial will assist Council in determining whether the technology is appropriate for the objective.	Not yet commenced	
3	Complete improvements to the Daintree water intake.	Works completed.	This action is part of Council's longer term strategy to build resilience and sustainability into the Shire's water supply.	Not yet commenced	
Goal 4: We will partner with the community to educate and monitor.					
1	Continue Council's waste and recycling education program.	Community understanding.	This program is aimed at improving knowledge about waste and recycling.	In progress	
Goal 5: We will recognise the contribution that Traditional Owners make to the protection of the environment.					
1	Work with Jabalbina to complete transfer of title for the Blue Pools to Traditional Owners.	Transfer completed.	This project is currently underway.	In progress	

	Initiative	Success Measure	Description	Status	Updates
Theme 4: Inclusive Engagement, Planning and Partnerships					
Goal 1: We will implement transparent decision making through inclusive community engagement and communication.					
1	Develop a five year communications strategy.	Strategy completed.	This plan will focus on how Council can improve communications across the organisation and through digital channels. It includes the My Douglas initiative that will improve Council's website.	In progress	
Goal 2: We will develop forward looking strategies for the future of our communities and we will ensure balanced and appropriate planning decisions.					
1	Develop a "blueprint" Master Plan for Port Douglas.	Clear vision articulated and understood by community.	Currently there are a number of projects underway or proposed. Some of these projects are master plans. Council requires a holistic plan for Port Douglas that will set a vision, deliver consistency, and set out time lines.	In progress	
2	Develop a Mossman 2025 Master Plan and Strategy.	Plan completed.	With the transition of the Mossman Mill, Mossman will see significant changes. Council must plan for these changes. This initiative will be a holistic plan for the township considering alternative scenarios.	Not yet commenced	
3	Develop a 30 year Daintree Community Plan.	Active engagement from the community and plan completed.	The Daintree community has asked for a comprehensive plan for the area. Council will facilitate the 30 year vision and plan that will go beyond the jurisdiction of Council and involve multiple stakeholders including all layers of government.	Not yet commenced	
Goal 3: We will recognise the critical role that our partners play in planning and delivering vital programs and services.					
1	Council will work with all of its partners to implement the actions in this Operational Plan.				

	Initiative	Success Measure	Description	Status	Updates
Theme 5: Robust Governance and Efficient Service Delivery					
Goal 1: We will conduct Council business in an open and transparent manner with strong oversight and open reporting.					
1	Develop a Project Decision Framework and an Administration Instruction.	Framework agreed. Improved decision making with better information and process.		Not yet commenced	
2	Establish an Audit Committee.	Audit Committee regularly meeting.	The Queensland Audit Office recommends that all Councils have an Audit Committee. It directly contributes to good corporate governance. The Council will develop terms of reference and recruit for the Committee. Meetings will then commence.	Not yet commenced	
3	Introduce new grant themes in 2019/20.	More opportunities for the public to receive funding.	Grants are an important source of funding for community organisations. This initiative will update the current Grants Policy, develop improved administrative guidelines and consider the implementation of a micro grants round in the Community Grants program.	Not yet commenced	
Goal 2: We will put the customer at the centre of our service delivery and process improvement as we deliver efficient and appropriate services based on community expectations.					
1	Begin development of Customer Experience Strategy.	Strategy completed leading to improved community satisfaction.	Council seeks to move towards a customer centric service ethos.	Not yet commenced	
2	Develop a Human Resources strategy and implement actions.	Completion of strategy and implementation of actions. Engaged staff.	This strategy will look at workforce planning, organisational culture and human resource strategy and policies.	Not yet commenced	
3	Implement continuous improvement program.	Program implemented and high volume processes identified with initial improvements in place.	Effective and efficient customer service and administration requires regular improvement. This program will see elements of Lean Thinking introduced.	Not yet commenced	
4	Commence Future IT environment project.	Improved IT performance.	Appropriate and reliable IT is essential to effective and efficient service. This program will see Council update its infrastructure.	In progress	
Goal 3: We will make sound financial decisions by ensuring robust strategic planning, financial management and reporting.					
1	Prepare Asset Management plans for all Council assets.	Robust plans in place.	Council is the custodian of over \$350 million in community assets. Ensuring that these assets are managed over their lifetime is essential. This project will develop plans for Council assets.	Not yet commenced	
2	Develop and implement new Certified Agreement for Council	Agreement signed.	Council's current agreement has expired. Negotiations are underway.	In progress	
3	Develop a Rates Hardship policy.	Clear policy resolved.	Council offers financial assistance to rate payers, but Council requires a clear and accessible policy to help guide decisions.	In progress	
4	Develop a Water Leaks policy.	Adoption of a policy.	Water leaks create significant angst with customers. A clear policy is required.	Not yet commenced	

	Initiative	Success Measure	Description	Status	Updates
Theme 5: Robust Governance and Efficient Service Delivery					
Goal 4: We will work with our communities to ensure they are informed, empowered and supported so that they are resilient to the impacts of disaster events. Through our leadership and capabilities we will plan, prepare, respond and recover from events so as to minimise the impact on people, property, the environment, and our economic stability.					
1	Install new infrastructure throughout Shire to allow for increased intelligence on rainfall and transport.	Improved data for disaster management.	Douglas Shire has experienced several emergencies where good data has made a significant difference to preparedness and responsiveness. This program seeks to implement more data capture tools.	Not yet commenced	