



RECONNECTING  
*with our community*





## About this report

This year's Annual Report represents the 2020/21 financial year and the activities, achievements and challenges of our Council and community.

This is our major accountability tool in Council's governance framework and provides non-financial and financial information to enable the community to assess the performance of Council in achieving its goals and objectives.

The report is structured on the key strategic goals of the Corporate Plan 'Our Plan, Our Future' and Council's values – Our Customers, Our People, Our Reputation.

The *Local Government Act 2009* and Regulations advise Councils on what is required in the Annual Report each financial year. We welcome feedback from our community and key stakeholders on this report and on our performance throughout the year.

To provide feedback please contact Council on (07) 4620 8888 or email [council@balonne.qld.gov.au](mailto:council@balonne.qld.gov.au)

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work, live and play, and pay our respect to their cultures, their ancestors and to the elders, past, present and future.





# Table of Contents

<b>02</b>	<b>Welcome from our Mayor</b>	
<b>03</b>	<b>Welcome from our Chief Executive Officer</b>	
<b>04</b>	<b>Our Plan, Our Future</b>	
<b>05</b>	<b>Our Shire</b>	
<b>06</b>	<b>Our Purpose</b>	
<b>07</b>	<b>Our Elected Members</b>	
	Advocating on behalf of our Communities .....	10
<b>11</b>	<b>Our People</b>	
	Our Senior Leadership Group .....	12
	Corporate Structure .....	14
	Our team.....	15
	Our volunteers.....	19
<b>20</b>	<b>Our Customers</b>	
<b>21</b>	<b>Our Reputation</b>	
<b>23</b>	<b>Our Performance</b>	
	Community.....	25
	Economy.....	37
	Environment.....	49
	Infrastructure & Planning .....	61
	Governance.....	73
<b>84</b>	<b>Statutory Information</b>	
<b>89</b>	<b>Community Financial Report</b>	
<b>99</b>	<b>Balonne Shire Council</b>	
	<b>General Purpose Financial Statements</b>	

# A WELCOME MESSAGE



## *from our Mayor*

The theme for this Annual Report is reconnecting with our community. Our theme was chosen to represent coming out of lock down in 2019/20 and being able to celebrate events and visit our smaller townships. It also represents the near completion of our digital connectivity projects and the work is continuing to lobby and seek funding for Stage 2 Bollon and Stage 5 Mungindi-Thallon and Mungindi-Hebel links.

The beginning of 2021 felt like ground hog day with a March flood event and COVID-19 threatening to lock us down again. Our Local Disaster Management Group has been at stand up for 96 days out of 365 during 2020/21 – and is continuing into 2021/22. Council is still delivering the \$53m in disaster recovery works caused by the February 2020 event that will be completed by 30 June 2022. Our Emergency Dashboard is now live and linked to our website and we encourage our community to 'Opt In' to receive emails and SMS texts of weather, traffic and emergency alerts.

In this Annual Report we are starting to see the completion of a number of significant milestone projects such as the Dirranbandi Beautification scheme, Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing projects and Digital connectivity projects Stages 1, 3 and 4. We are also entering into 2021/22 with the new Library Hub under construction.

The Business Mentoring program has now come to an end with 21 mentees (19 agriculture and horticulture producer, 2 small/medium enterprises) completed.

Council adopted a Rating Strategy on 17 June 2021 that provides the principles for levying rates and charges and seeks to ensure a fair and consistent approach along with flexibility to take into account the changes in our local economy across the different industries.

All properties were valued by the Department of Natural Resources during 2020/21 financial year and applied to rates from 1 July 2021. A significant increase was experienced across a majority of rate categories. Council adopted a 10% limitation to ensure that no ratepayer was significantly impacted.

Council's response to COVID-19 continues to be swift providing important information and assistance to our community on how to stay safe, how to remain open for business and how to seek help and advice. We take this opportunity to thank the Australian Defence Force and Queensland Police Service who have maintained border closures. We have also been lobbying

to be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses relating to border closures, that at the time of writing this report represented approximately \$250,000 (since March 2020). Thank you also to our staff on the ground, checking and locking gates under the direction of the State Government. Together we are working to keep our communities and Queensland safe.

Council has also established itself as a key stakeholder across the South-West with the dissolution of the South-West Local Government Association and the incorporation of the South-West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils. Council has also worked closely with the Western Alliance of Councils with some remote 'zoom' meetings and gathering in Richmond in May 2021 for the annual assembly.

On behalf of Council we undertook a trip to Canberra, which is an opportunity to raise issues that affect us locally, to lobby for funding and to negotiate issues that impact shire residents. This was the first deputation of this term and a productive few days that has already seen dividends in our community.

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As we reconnect with our communities, within the restrictions that are ever changing, we thank everyone for the role they have played in ensuring South-West Queensland has remained Coronavirus free.

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Finally, and certainly not least thank you to my fellow Councillors, our executive management team and all our staff who have continued to work above and beyond, to complete funded projects and who pride themselves in delivering great outcomes for our Shire.

**Cr Samantha O'Toole**  
Mayor





## *from our Chief Executive Officer*

**2020/21 continued from where we left off in financial year 2019/2020 with COVID-19 dominating the landscape and the need for rolling out flood recovery works in a timely manner to meet community expectations.**

Anticipating the economic impacts of COVID-19 has seen both tiers of Government providing economic stimulus measures to keep communities viable until some sense of normality could return. Federally we have seen a range of measures from but not limited to JobKeeper and JobSeeker, Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Programme (LRCIP) and increased expenditure on roads through the National Heavy Vehicle Programme (NHVP) and the Roads of Strategic Importance or ROSI as it is more commonly known.

Not to be outdone we have seen the State Government increasing their own expenditure on economic stimulus programs such as Works for Queensland (W4Q), Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS) and a range of others. This 'pump priming' is a real coup for councils such as Balonne with a heavy dependence on grant revenue and limited ability to raise own source revenue.

On average Balonne Shire Council (BSC) derives approximately 30% of its annual revenue from own source revenue which includes rates. Literally that means 70% of our annual income is totally reliant on external funding sources over which we have absolutely no direct control. Grant revenue by its very nature is often highly reactive to circumstances or events happening in the broader community and traditionally has very tight timelines in terms of on ground delivery.

This places enormous pressure on not only council's human and material resources but also those of the business community as we struggle to deliver often complex projects in literally months when normally they could take years.

Councils' ability to recruit, hire, train and have new employees reach acceptable productivity levels is unrealistic and not fair to either party. Additionally, because it is grant funding, once the project has been completed there is the real possibility we have no other grant projects to swing the employees across to which potentially creates a very awkward situation.

At Balonne Shire Council we rely very heavily on our local contractors to step up and fill the void however, with all the stimulus activity currently occurring throughout the economy, our contractors and especially tradies are under the pump just as much as we are. Add to this the increasing cost of building materials, we are seeing an all-round perfect storm of issues negatively impacting on our ability to deliver projects in a timely manner, on budget and to an acceptable standard.

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**This year your council team has performed to an extremely high level often under difficult circumstances and delivered a wide range of community projects to enhance the liveability of our shire.**

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We and I'm sure you are justifiably proud of our council team, the community in which we live and serve and how we have come through COVID-19 largely unscathed.

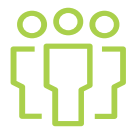
**Matthew Magin**  
*Chief Executive Officer*



# OUR PLAN, OUR FUTURE

## *sets the strategic direction for council*

Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2023, Our Plan, Our Future, sets the strategic direction for a five-year period. The plan is based around five strategic goals:



### 1. COMMUNITY

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### 2. ECONOMY

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### 3. ENVIRONMENT

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### 4. INFRASTRUCTURE & PLANNING

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### 5. GOVERNANCE

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In 2021/22 the Council will review the Corporate Plan to set the strategic direction over the coming five years. This will include community and staff consultation. The Council can be proud of the progress it has made on its 2018-2023 Corporate Plan with many of its signature projects now coming to fruition.





**\$300M**  
GROSS  
REGIONAL  
PRODUCT

**4,377**  
POPULATION

**40 years**  
MEDIAN AGE

**2,357**  
LOCAL  
JOBS

**853**  
LOCAL  
BUSINESSES

**2,317**  
EMPLOYED  
RESIDENTS

**4.8%**  
UNEMPLOYMENT  
RATE

**Agriculture  
Forestry  
Fishing**  
LARGEST  
INDUSTRIES

**\$240M /  
84.6%**  
AGRICULTURAL  
EXPORT OUT  
OF BALONNE

**15.9%**  
ABORIGINAL  
AND/OR  
TORRES STRAIT  
ISLANDER  
PEOPLE

# Our Shire

The Balonne Shire shares its border with New South Wales and is known as the gateway to the west – located about 500km inland from the Queensland Capital Brisbane and 200km from Moree. As a border Shire, Council has been instrumental in assisting the State and Federal Governments on Queensland border restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Shire covers an area of 31,152km<sup>2</sup> (the size of Belgium) with 3,019km of roads and a gross regional product of \$300m. The Shire exports over \$240m each year from its key economic driver, the Agricultural industry – food and fibre.

Council is delivering on its vision for connected, innovated communities providing opportunity for economic growth delivering a range of strategic projects – Dirranbandi Beautification scheme, Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing projects, Digital connectivity in partnership with Field Solutions Group, and business mentoring programs to support our local businesses.

A high percentage of our population are volunteers with **30.7%** compared with the State average of **18.8%**

SOURCE: 2016 Census data



# Our Purpose

Council has played a key role in reconnecting with our communities following the 2020 lock down and COVID restrictions. The safety and wellbeing of our communities and staff has been a key focus since the pandemic along with helping businesses and the agricultural sector to operate with flexibility and agility. We have 4,377 residents who call one of our seven communities home – St George, Thallon, Dirranbandi, Bollon, Nindigully, Mungindi and Hebel. We strive to be a welcoming Shire representing the diverse interests of all who live, work and visit. We welcome over 34,000 holiday makers that pass through our Shire and more than 13,000 to our Visitor Information Centre. The Shire employs an estimated 500 transient contractors and workers across a range of sectors, especially the agricultural industry.

Council provides our community with essential services including water, sewerage and waste services as well as safe transport routes. Council supplies water using both bore and river water supplies. We have a significant road network to maintain 3,019km with a mix of sealed and unsealed roads and an active number of stock routes. We are so much more than the traditional roads, rates and rubbish services. Our team provides facilities and activities that benefit all our communities – from parks and playgrounds for people of all ages, to the sporting grounds, showgrounds and community halls that keep our residents and visitors active and entertained. We have also achieved funding to improve digital connectivity, construct wild dog exclusion fencing and develop a Country University Centre.

Disaster management has increased with Council responding to the ongoing border closures due to COVID-19 and a flood event in March 2021. Council co-ordinates the Local Disaster Management Group working with Queensland Health, Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire & Emergency Services and other key agencies. The LDMG reports to the District and State Disaster Management Groups to provide valuable community updates and inform of any key impacts on our communities where assistance may be required. Our new Emergency Dashboard keeps our residents informed of the ever changing COVID and disaster event alerts.

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Council plays a significant role in advocating on behalf of our constituents and making submissions on legislative changes.

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Economic Development continues to be an important initiative of Council that has seen an increased focus on supporting our local businesses to navigate the global pandemic and a business mentoring program to explore new innovative ways to conduct business and stay connected.







## Our Elected Members

Our elected members represent the interests of the Shire as a whole for present and future generations. While listed as representing the different communities across the Shire – this is simply a way of sharing the workload and a point of contact for our residents. Other initiatives Council has introduced include a range of committees, advisory and project groups to oversee the diverse range of projects underway.



**CR RICHARD LOMMAN,  
DEPUTY MAYOR**

*First elected as a Councillor in 2020 and appointed Deputy Mayor by Council on 14 April 2020.*

Cr Lomman represents the townships of Thallon and Nindigully. Cr Lomman is Deputy Chair of the Local Disaster Management Group, Community Advisory Committee and Information Communication & Technology Standing Committee. He is a member of the Business Taskforce which includes Business Mentoring Advisory Group and Bettering Balonne. Most recently mentoring the new Youth Council to engage and consult with our young people.



**CR SCOTT SCRIVEN**

*First elected as a Councillor in 2016, this is the second term for Cr Scriven.*

Cr Scriven represents the townships of Thallon and Nindigully. He Chairs the Assets Standing Committee and is a member of the Biosecurity Advisory Committee. Cr Scriven is also a member of the external Wild Dog Barrier Fence Advisory Group.



**CR ROD AVERY**

*First elected as a Councillor in 2012-2016 and then re-elected as a Councillor in 2020, this is the second term for Cr Avery.*

Cr Avery represents the townships of Dirranbandi and Mungindi. He is Chair of the Biosecurity Advisory Committee and a member of the Library Working Group, Assets Standing Committee and the South-West Regional Waste Group.



**CR SAMANTHA O'TOOLE, MAYOR**

*First elected as a Councillor in 2016, Cr O'Toole was elected Mayor in 2020.*

The Mayor is the ex-officio of all portfolios and committees. The Mayor is Chair of the Local Disaster Management Group, member of the Audit & Risk Committee and Library Project Working Group. The Mayor chairs a number of external committees and regional organisations such as the South-West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils, Darling Downs & South-West Queensland Council of Mayors and the Border Regions of Councils. She is also a member of the Queensland Great Artesian Basin Advisory Committee and Murray-Darling Association.





**CR IAN TODD**

*First elected to Council in 2016, this is the second term for Cr Todd.*

Cr Todd represents the townships of Dirranbandi and Hebel. He is Chair of the Plant Standing Committee and a member of the Audit & Risk Committee, Information Communication & Technology Standing Committee and Assets Standing Committee.



**CR ROBYN FUHRMEISTER**

*First elected to Council in 1996, 2021 marks 25 years of service for Cr Fuhrmeister as a Balonne Shire Councillor.*

Cr Fuhrmeister represents the townships of Mungindi and Bollon. She is Chair of the Rowden Park Users Group, Regional Arts Development Fund Reference Panel and Tourism Operators meeting. She is a member of the Work Camp Advisory Committee, Library Working Group and represents the South-West on the Policy Executive of the Local Government Association of Queensland.



**CR BILL WINKS**

*First elected to Council in 2020, and in his first term as Councillor.*

Cr Winks represents the townships of Bollon and Hebel. He is Chair of the Work Camp Advisory Committee, Dirranbandi Showgrounds User Group, Bollon Showgrounds User Group and St George Showgrounds User Group. He is a member of the Community Advisory Committee, Regional Arts Development Fund Reference Panel and Tourism Operators meeting.



# Advocating *on behalf of our Communities*

As the level of government closest to the community, Council has a longstanding tradition of lobbying State and Federal governments on behalf of the Balonne Shire. By working with our community we can combine our voices to 'speak out' on a range of Advocacy issues that impact on our communities, businesses and different industry sectors.

The Mayor has had over 40 meetings with the Premier of Queensland, State and Federal Ministers and Members of Parliament on a range of issues from the Thallon-Noondoo Road, a large defence project, to on-farm quarantine, disaster management, health and education.

Cross border stakeholder engagement increased with cross border funding initiatives at Mungindi for digital connectivity and foreshore improvements. The LDMG worked with New South Wales State Departments for Health and Education, together with NSW State Emergency Services and Moree Plains Regional Council during the March 2021 flood event and in response to COVID border restrictions, vaccinations and testing.

The Mayor and Chief Executive Officer visited Canberra and Brisbane to meet with Ministers and Government Officials on a wide range of topics, particularly grant funding opportunities which we rely very heavily upon for job security and financial sustainability. From the perspective of purely general rates which are levied against all our landholders, they represent approximately 30% of our revenue

base which means Council has to be both innovative and frugal in how it raises and expends its funds each and every year. With 70% coming from external sources, particularly grants, Council actually has very little control over its financial position.

Our focus this year has been on ramping up our State and Federal government advocacy work in order to continue our successful record of attracting grants especially under the Building Better Regions program (which last year funded our new Library Hub) and the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Programme (Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing, Business Mentoring and Dirran Dip to name just a few).

Council has been working closely with a company involved in the defence industries sector and we have been very active in advocating for enhanced local infrastructure to support a significant investment in our shire which could potentially create up to 50 full time jobs. If we are successful in attracting this investment we would hopefully see some announcements in 2021/22.

Council has also been actively engaging with State Government Departments with regards to valuation of properties, education in the Balonne Shire, access to child care and day care in Dirranbandi and health and aged care services. Council supported local businesses, in particular our agricultural sector, to navigate border closures and seasonal worker shortages due to COVID.







## Our People

Our People are at the centre of everything we do. Our employees, volunteers and contractors continue to deliver a high standard of services and initiatives across the Shire.

## Our Senior Leadership Group



**MATTHEW MAGIN**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Matthew was appointed Chief Executive Officer in November 2016. He has an extensive background in stakeholder engagement, government relations, economic development and the retail industry. He was CEO of the Burdekin Shire prior to joining Balonne. Matthew continues to be a Director with Local Government Managers Australia Queensland, a member of the Councils of Western Queensland and represents Council on a wide range of regional and community committees and groups. Matthew's biggest challenge in 2020/21 has continued to be his role as Local Disaster Co-ordinator and looking to promote the Shire as a thriving economic hub. Community functions have now been restructured and fall back under the Directorate of Community & Environmental Services.



**MICHELLE CLARKE**  
**DIRECTOR FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES**

Finance & Corporate Services provides enabling services to Council from payroll, information technology through to financial management. Michelle has been with Council since October 2016 and was officially appointed as Director Finance & Corporate Services in February 2017. Michelle holds a Bachelor of Law and Administration, Graduate Certificate in Business (Professional Accounting) and has a Graduate Diploma in Applied Risk Management and Corporate Governance. Michelle is a Qualified Justice of the Peace, Fellow with Local Government Managers Australia and Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia. The biggest challenge in 2020/21 has been embedding the significant organisation change of a new financial management system and accounting, reporting and acquitting the significant increase in grant funding and flood recovery works.





**DIGBY WHYTE**  
**DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT & REGULATORY SERVICES**

Digby joined our team in September 2018 and has experience in the broad field of parks and recreation at city, regional, State and International levels in New Zealand, the USA, Australia and France. The Department of Environment & Regulatory Services has once again been restructured to include communities and was renamed Community & Environmental Services in 2021. The Department's biggest challenges in 2020/21 have been implementing the Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing and fast internet projects across the Shire, introducing a new Biodiversity Strategy and a Waste Strategy, and assisting businesses respond to changing COVID requirements.



**ANDREW BOARDMAN**  
**DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

Andrew joined Council in September 2018 and was appointed Director Infrastructure Services in March 2019. He holds a Bachelor of Engineering – majoring in Civil Construction and Structural Engineering. The biggest challenge for the Department has been managing the disaster recovery works and working towards Transport & Main Roads accreditation to provide revenue opportunities into the future.

# Corporate Structure

In November 2019 the corporate structure was changed to acknowledge the massive workload created by the roll out of the Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing (WDEF) projects. As these projects are completed Council has moved Communities functions to the previous structure – Community & Environmental Services. This Directorate also comprises Rural Services, Environmental Health, Building Services and Planning. The Rural Services component is quite diverse and encapsulates bio-diversity plan, stock routes, animal control, land management and much more.

The Office of the Chief Executive Officer (OCEO) has retained the tourism functions, economic development, media and communications. Executive Support for the Mayor and CEO is also provided through the OCEO.

Council will continue to be agile and flexible and operate as one team to work closely with all our key stakeholders and relevant agencies to ensure Balonne Shire is at the forefront of agricultural growth, diversification and sustainability through modern and environmentally responsible management of our land and finite resources.

## BALONNE SHIRE MAYOR & COUNCILLORS

### Chief Executive Officer







## Our team

2020/21 has seen some changes in our team and some real challenges to deliver business as usual on top of over \$30m in grant funded projects, up to \$53m in disaster recovery works, not to mention COVID restrictions and border closures. It is the dedication of each and every one of our team members that ensures we deliver services to our community, while being resilient and agile, adapting to the changing work environment and ever changing COVID-19 restrictions.

Stay safe, stay strong, stay apart –  
we will get through this together

Council values teamwork and interdependence; we value each other and seek to benefit from diverse people and perspectives. Our employees are our most valuable asset, and they are a major factor in contributing to a positive

public image. Council's mission is to invest in people, ignite ideas, meet our challenges and grow prosperity. We are committed to developing our staff well-being, encouraging personal and professional growth. We aim to create a safe and healthy work environment built on mutual trust, respect and integrity. Council thanks every one of our employees who were part of the 2020/21 team for their work and contribution to our Shire.

### WITH SPECIAL THANKS

The following employees (with over 5 years of service) were farewelled during 2020/21 and we wish them all the very best in their future endeavours.

Richard Backhouse, *39 years of service*

John Hurst, *21 years of service*

James Lindores, *12 years of service*

Robert Steadman, *5 years of service*

Peter Smith, *26 years of service*

OUR TEAM		FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES	INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES	COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	OFFICE OF THE CEO
M	Full time	3	45	5	1
	PT/ Casual	0	0	0	0
F	Full time	16	3	6	5
	PT/ Casual	1	4	10	1
TOTAL	Full time	19	48	11	6
	PT/ Casual	1	4	10	1
OVERALL		20	52	21	7



## *A loving farewell*

We lost a valued and loved member of our team in November 2020, Marea Lochel. Marea worked in Community Development, Wellbeing, Libraries and more. She was integral in the planning of the new library innovation hub. Marea Lochel will be honoured in the gardens of The Hub – library and Country University Centre – that will be opened in 2021/22.



## LONG SERVICE

Council acknowledged its long serving employees at a Christmas Function in December 2020.

### BRONZE MEDALLIONS

Employee	Years of Service	Anniversary Date
Kevin Wayne Cordrey	20	27/04/2020
Dianne Michelle Francisco	20	27/03/2020
John Ivan Bradley	15	05/09/2020
Kelly-Ann Fontaine	15	11/04/2020
Beth Michelle Johnston	15	25/07/2020
Patricia Anne Kennedy	15	24/01/2020
Michael Shane Regan	15	14/02/2020
Matthew John Smith	15	26/09/2020

### SILVER MEDALLIONS

Rodney Darren Beckman	25	15/11/2020
Malcolm Phillip Ross	25	27/12/2020

### GOLD MEDALLIONS

Grantley Noel Kingston	45	27/01/2020
Deborah Ann Green	40	08/12/2020





### OUR EXPECTED BEHAVIOURS

65 staff attended Code of Conduct training in May 2021 delivered by Local Government Managers Australia. The training highlighted the need to ensure employees are aware of, and adhere to, the expected standards of workplace behaviour and performance. The expectations contained within the Code of Conduct are based upon the ethical principles outlined in the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994, specifically:

- integrity and impartiality
- promoting the public good
- commitment to the system of government
- accountability and transparency

17 managers and supervisors received performance management training delivered by Local Government Managers Australia to develop their skills in managing others.

### DEVELOPING OUR PEOPLE

Council has improved the management and recording of training with a comprehensive training register, qualifications and licence record and centralisation of training plans.

We actively encourage our employees to undertake study to enhance their knowledge and skills. As part of the training guidelines, Council contributes to the financial cost of approved courses. Council has five staff registered with the Country University Centre who are at various stages of a range of studies from a degree in accounting to apprentice mechanic. More information on training completed and developing our people is in the Governance section on page 73.

### EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

We are committed to the implementation of, and adherence to, equal employment opportunity principles in all facets of our operations. We treat our employees and employment applicants fairly when making decisions on selection and promotions. These decisions are made on factors such as skills, qualifications, abilities and aptitude. Council works with an external provider to ensure independence and merit selection in our recruitment practices for senior roles. Council adopted a Human Rights Policy that applies to its workforce and customers. A draft Workforce Plan is currently out for consultation with all staff and will further prepare Council for the future needs of its workforce.

**OUR TRAINEESHIPS**

Council currently has one trainee in Information Technology and one apprentice mechanic.

**OUR STAFF BREAKFASTS**

In 2020/21 Council held three staff breakfasts and had to change and adapt with COVID-19 restrictions. Staff Breakfasts are a great opportunity for our entire workforce together with elected members to improve communication, share information and promote staff initiatives. Our Senior Leadership Group and elected members cook the breakfast or we have catering. Our staff received updates on the Budget, Workplace Health and Safety; Enterprise Bargaining and Workforce Planning in 2020/21.

Our weekly Monday morning water cooler chat provides a great opportunity for more staff to join in with the use of Microsoft Teams. We also have a weekly wrap staff newsletter that celebrates the achievements of the week past and what's coming up in the week/s ahead.

**KEEPING OUR PEOPLE SAFE AT WORK**

Council recognises the importance of developing and maintaining healthy and safe working conditions in all workplaces and the importance of keeping the work health and safety practices in these workplaces under constant review. The safety of our employees, contractors, volunteers, work-experience students, visitors and members of the public is our priority. Council engaged the services of an external provider to review and assist in improving our overall work health and safety management system. Council successfully achieved an audit result of 72.5% and is continuing to fully implement the improvements and recommendations of that audit.

Risk assessments became part of everyday use by our staff for travel during COVID-19 restrictions. Incoming contractors and visitors were also required to complete COVID-19 declarations. More on workplace health and safety initiatives can be found in the Governance section on page 81.

**LOOKING AFTER OUR PEOPLE**

All staff and their immediate family have access to an Employee Assistance Program that provides counselling and confidential support in partnership with Assure Programs. Apart from this formal assistance our staff have shown support for each other by donating leave through our Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, fundraising activities and donations to relevant charities. In 2021/22 Council will develop a Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy to further support our staff.







*Recognise. Reconnect. Reimagine.*

**FUND DRIVE FOR CHARITY**

*Balonne Shire Council*

National Volunteer Week is Australia's largest annual celebration of volunteers. From Monday 17th to Sunday 23rd May 2021, NVW will celebrate the significant contribution of Australia's almost six million volunteers. Each year these volunteers dedicate over 600 million hours to help others.

## Our volunteers

Our Visitor Information Centre (VIC) currently has nine registered volunteers. The Visitor Information Centre relies on volunteers to cover weekends and staff leave. The centre is very grateful to all our valuable volunteers who dedicate so much of their time. Their duties range from pricing of merchandise, customer service and the daily running of the Visitor Information Centre on weekends. The centre is always looking for additional volunteers and runs regular recruitment campaigns throughout the year.

We have a number of volunteers that help out at our library to return books to their shelves.

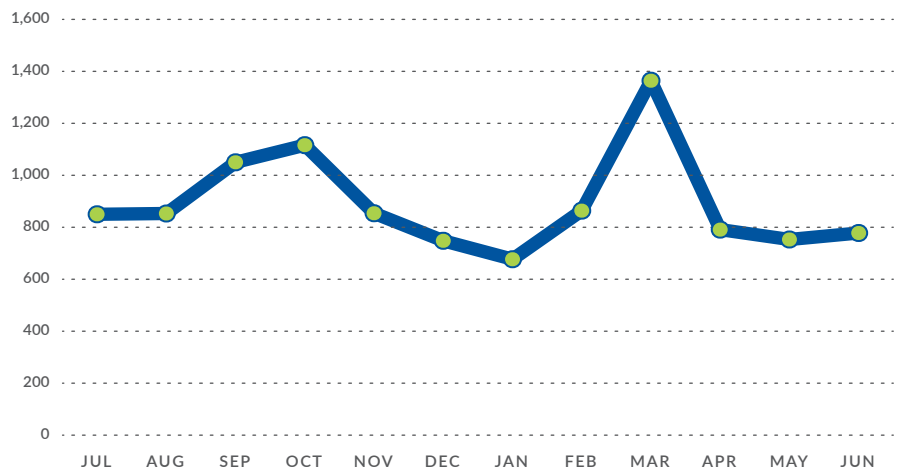
We thank all of our volunteers who help provide these important services to our visitors and residents.

# Our Customers

Our Finance & Corporate Services team greet customers at our main Administration Centre or answer your incoming phone calls. From there we re-direct you to other areas within Council or register your service request for action.

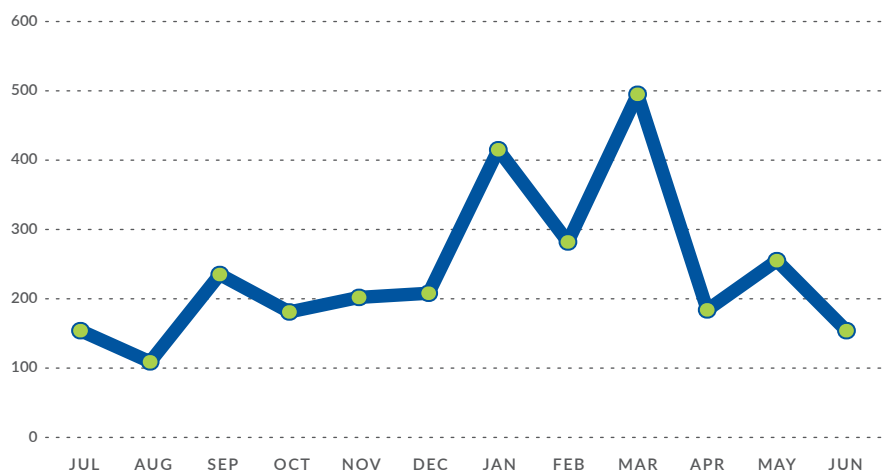
In 2020/21 Council recorded 2873 service requests, 75 complaints on service requests lodged, 25 compliments and registered 10698 incoming calls. Council also provides an after-hours service. The following graph shows a spike in phone calls during the March 2021 flood event which also coincided with rates being levied.

NUMBER OF CALLS



Council continues to promote **Snap Send Solve** as a way visitors and residents can report issues such as road conditions or stray animals. These are registered along with all other service requests. The number of service requests per month ranges from 100-200 however we saw it peak between 400 and 500 between January and March. (see below graph)

NUMBER OF SERVICE REQUESTS: 2020-21



Council's target is to resolve service requests within ten days, where possible.

Council reports that an average completion rate of 79% was reached in 2020/21 and acknowledges it is below our target of 85%. Council is continuing to work on ways to improve its processes to record and resolve Service requests in a timely manner. Where Council cannot complete a service request within the timeframe customers are to be kept informed of the progress of their request and/or reasons why their request cannot be resolved (eg. budget constraints). If dissatisfied with the action around a service request we register this as a complaint.

You can register your request through snap send solve, phone, in person, on line or emailing [servicerequest@balonne.qld.gov.au](mailto:servicerequest@balonne.qld.gov.au) If you feel our service has been above expectations we encourage you to let us know by recording your compliments.





# Our Reputation

## ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION COMPLAINTS

Council had no external review complaints with the Queensland Ombudsman in 2020/21. Council referred one matter to the Crime & Corruption Commission (CCC) resulting in disciplinary action of two employees. The number of administrative complaints increased from eight to nine received in 2021/21.

NO. OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS	9
NO. OF COMPLAINTS RESOLVED	10 (including 1 from 2019/20)
NO. OF COMPLAINTS OUTSTANDING	0

## RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI)

Under *Queensland's Right to Information Act 2009* and *Information Privacy Act 2009*, members of the community are able to apply for access to documents held by Council (subject to statutory exemptions). The *Information Privacy Act 2009* also allows members of the community to apply for and request amendments to documents concerning their personal affairs, where it is believed the information is incomplete, out-of-date, inaccurate or misleading.

In 2020/21 Council received and processed nil Right to Information applications and no information privacy breach complaints in 2020/21.

Council received 1 Information Privacy application.

## AUDIT & RISK MANAGEMENT

Our Audit & Risk Committee operates in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009*, the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (the Regulation). The committee met three times during 2020/21 financial year and two flying minutes. The Audit & Risk Committee reports directly to Council and is composed of four voting members.

### The Committee members are;

- Independent Chair, James Hetherington (appointed 2017)
- Independent Member: Craig Dreher (appointed 2019)
- Mayor Samantha O'Toole, Cr Ian Todd

The Chief Executive Officer and all Directors, the Manager Finance Services and Council's Internal Auditor together with representatives of Queensland Audit Office attend Audit & Risk Committee meetings as standing invitees. Council's External Auditor attends to provide an overview of the External Audit. Council's Internal Auditors Arabon Audit & Assurance Pty Ltd attend to report on the internal audit function of Council.

## INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION

During 2020/21 there was one site visit undertaken by Arabon Audit & Assurance Pty Ltd and one remote visit (due to COVID-19).

### In progress:

- Fleet management (April 2019 - 50% of recommendations completed)
- Capital works and budgeting (November 2019 - 10% of recommendations completed)
- Grants management (April 2020 - 5% of recommendations completed)
- Service Requests and Complaints Management (October 2020 - 25% recommendations completed)

Management reports on the progress of implementing the recommendations that arise from internal audit that create an opportunity for continuous improvement. All of the above initiatives and programs demonstrate openness, transparency and account. More information can be found in the Governance section of the report on page 73.

Council takes this opportunity to acknowledge Mr Bob Fleming B.Com. CA. PMIIA. CIA, Director, Accounting and Auditing Solutions Pty Ltd, and part of the Arabon Assurance team who sadly passed away in June 2021, a true professional.

Six grant acquittals were completed and audited by Arabon Assurance in 2020/21.

## PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING PERFORMANCE

The Operational Plan 2020/21 forms the basis of our quarterly performance reporting. These reports include progress on the implementation of our Corporate and Operational plans and financial reporting of budget performance. The Corporate Plan 2018-2023 and Operational Plan 2020/21 are available on our website. The primary tool for external accountability is the annual report. This document is prepared annually to show the community and interested stakeholders how successful Council has been in achieving the strategic goals and objectives outlined in the corporate plan. The report contains detailed financial and non-financial information about Council's activities and performance. See Our Performance Section from page 23.





# Our Performance

Our performance is measured against what we said we would do in our four-year *Corporate Plan 2018-2023* and one-year *Operational Plan 2020/21*.

This includes the delivery of projects, programs, tasks the performance measures as well as progress towards four year term achievements. Our Annual Report is presented in the five key program areas:

COMMUNITY 

ECONOMY 

ENVIRONMENT 

INFRASTRUCTURE & PLANNING 

GOVERNANCE 







# COMMUNITY

Pursuit of active and healthy lifestyles where cultures, traditions and the arts are celebrated, including the provision of safe and welcoming spaces to connect, engage and learn.

## 17 ACTIONS

were included in the Operational Plan for **Community**

## 13 ACTIONS ACHIEVED 90%

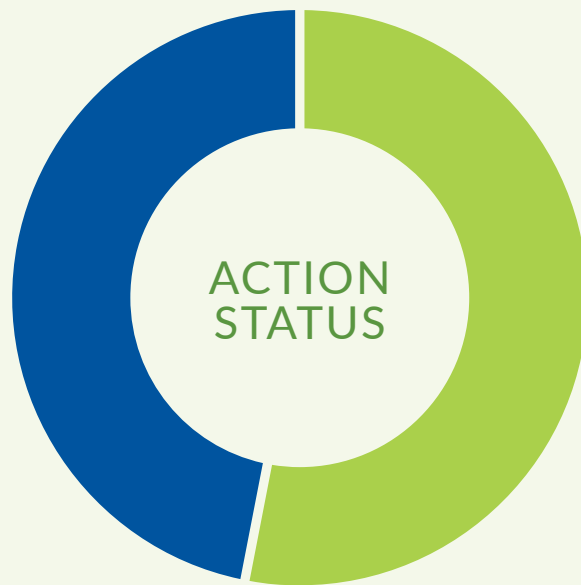
on target and/or complete

## 2 ACTIONS ACHIEVED BETWEEN 70%–90%

of action target

## 1 ACTION ACHIEVED LESS THAN 70%

of action target



53.33% (8) **ON TRACK**

46.67% (7) **MONITOR**

0% (0) **NEEDS WORK**

0% (0) **NO TARGET**



## Community Spaces to Connect, Engage & Learn

### LIBRARY HUB

Following extensive community consultation and concept planning with Complete Urban for the 650m<sup>2</sup> library, park and upgrade of the Cultural Centre annex, Council secured \$5m of Murray-Darling Economic Development Program funding with the Federal Government with a co-contribution from Council of \$1m.

#### Features of the Library Hub include:

- Country Universities Centre
- Business and Learning Hub
- Contemporary Library spaces (for workshops, programs, increased resources and digital education)
- Maker's Space (innovation, creativity and robotics) with 3D Print hub for prototypes and new product development (ag-tech inclusive)
- Virtual learning, training and connection
- Conference and workshop facilities (fully equipped with modern technology)
- Hot desks and virtual office hire
- Training and workshops via virtual connection
- Quiet study and work areas
- Teen and Junior feature areas
- Dedicated area for the celebration of local history and cultural representation
- Revitalised Victoria Street Precinct
- Connecting green space
- Redeveloped Forecourt
- Refurbished and repurposed Cultural Centre Annex and Façade meeting rooms, art gallery and entry.

#### To progress this significant project Council:

- Established a Project Management team
- Appointed Complete Urban as the project superintendent
- Engaged Fulton Trotter as the Architects
- Engaged Burke Industries to undertake demolition that was completed in May
- Appointed St Hilliers to construct The Hub, with commencement in June

The new Library Hub will support Council libraries in the townships of Bollon, Hebel, Thallon and Dirranbandi.

The project has not been without its challenges with soft ground delaying the foundations, requiring a heavier slab and significant reinforced foundations. Tenders were let for providers for furniture, landscape and civil works and fibre connection.

Council established a temporary Library in Henry Street while demolition and construction works got underway. Services to the St George community were interrupted for a week only and the temporary location proved to be suitable and welcoming to library patrons. A new Library Co-ordinator will be appointed in early 2021/22 with a planned opening of the new facility in January 2022.



### LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

School holiday programs were run at each library featuring robotics, drones and programming in line with Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programs run across the state.

Over the year Libraries registered 161 new patrons giving a total of 1,708 Library members in the Balonne Shire borrowing 18,420 items over the year.

Story time has continued to engage littlies across the Shire with events increasing – held weekly in St George and monthly in Bollon and Dirranbandi. 581 children attended St George Library Story times over the year and activities were added like dressing up as your favourite book character.

### COUNTRY UNIVERSITY CENTRE (CUC)

Council was successful in achieving grant funding from 2020 and 2023 and established the CUC Balonne Ltd on 27 January 2021. At the end of the 2020/21 financial year the CUC Balonne had 11 students registered (and at the time of preparing this Annual Report there were 30 students registered).

The Centre has been temporarily established in the Disaster Training Rooms at the rear of the Balonne Shire Council Administration Centre in St George while the new library 'The Hub' is being constructed. In Dirranbandi the CUC has worked with the Rural Transaction Centre to occupy shared space.

The CUC Balonne Ltd was established as a beneficial enterprise of the Balonne Shire – a charitable not for profit organisation. In its initial opening months, it held Mental Health First Aid Training with the Queensland Royal Flying Doctor Service, issued four Get Inspired Student Packs which included laptops donated by NBN Enterprise Ltd and has reached over 5,000 people via social media.

The CUC Balonne Centre Manager, Alix Greenhill, is working closely with Council to build the new library that will be known as The Hub – and will be the CUC Balonne home base, with overflow into our training rooms at the rear of 112-118 Victoria Street, St George.

State of the art technology was installed into the training and meetings rooms that allow students to access fast internet speeds, attend virtual lectures and complete exams in quiet, secure spaces. Sponsorships, donations and grant funding will assist the CUC Balonne to extend beyond its initial three years.

#### New and upcoming programs include:

- Partnering with training providers to bring 15+ short courses to the region in the second half of the calendar year. Courses range from Ag, business, hospitality and more.
- Scheduled Student Meet & Greet events to focus on building the student community and networks.
- Partnership with Goondir's Big Buddy program giving students the opportunity to participate in the Health and Fitness Academy.



Visit [cucbalonne.edu.au](http://cucbalonne.edu.au) to find out more



# Health & Active Lifestyles

## USER GROUPS

Council has established a range of User Groups to meet with sporting groups across the Shire to consult and help to prioritise budgets for maintenance and/or development. We also work with these groups to assist with grant funding initiatives. Representatives from our Communities and Infrastructure Services teams attend the meetings together with elected representatives to stay engaged with local sports clubs. The groups established include:

- Bollon Showgrounds User Group
- Dirranbandi Multi Sports User Group
- Dirranbandi Showgrounds User Group
- Dirranbandi Swimming Pool Advisory Committee
- Rowden Park User Group
- St George Showgrounds User Group

Council has also supported a range of sporting events including Battle on the Balonne, Camp Drafts and 399 Car Rally.

## TACKLING REGIONAL ADVERSITY THROUGH INTEGRATED CARE (TRAIC)

Council has been able to fund and support a number of initiatives thanks to TRAIC funding from Queensland Health. Although suspended due to COVID-19 in April 2020, the funding was reinstated in October 2020. Our communities were consulted to develop an updated Project Plan, adopted by Council in May 2021.

Projects completed in 2020/21 included construction of Blue Chairs for Hebel and Dirranbandi aimed at raising awareness of mental health and depression and Drone Workshops at Hebel and Nindigully. Funding also assisted the St George and Dirranbandi Queensland Country Women's Association's highly successful Cubbie Cotton Community Day held in April 2021.

## LOCALISED MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

In June 2021 Council successfully secured an additional \$75,000 in grant funding from Queensland Health to support Localised Mental Health Initiatives. This funding will be used to support mental health and wellbeing related initiatives in 2022 including the South-West Youth Summit, mental health information wallet cards, mental health first aid training, health choices partnerships and an Arts Festival.







## Vibrant Creative Arts, Music, Local History & Culture

### REGIONAL ARTS DEVELOPMENT FUND

Eight applicants received funding for arts and cultural activities through Council's Regional Arts Development Fund in the two rounds of the financial year. A total of \$18,660 was provided by Council.

PROJECT NAME	APPLICANT	AMOUNT
Funny Mummies	St George Farmhouse	\$3,500
Camerata Live	St Patrick's Catholic School P&F Association	\$660
Thallon Sculpture Trail	Thallon Progress Association	\$3,500
Are You Lonesome Tonight	Opera Queensland	\$3,500
Mosaics for Beginners	QCWA St George Branch	\$1,400
St George Region Aboriginal Arts Workshop	Surat Aboriginal Corporation	\$3,000
Ballet Workshops – Regional Tour	Queensland Ballet	\$1,650
Brushstrokes with Lyn	St George Arts Groups	\$1,450

## MULTICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Thanks to Celebrating Multicultural Queensland Regional Partnership funding, we have continued to work towards becoming a more welcoming, inclusive and diverse Shire.

A 'Welcome Party' held in February 2021 was well attended despite torrential rain changing it from a barefoot bowls afternoon to a highly entertaining Trivia Night instead. Fittingly, a multicultural team of 'Balonne Battlers' were the winners on the night.

This year, the libraries have been instrumental in 'Celebrating Our Cultures' and created fantastic displays on Australian, South East Asian, South African, Filipino and Indigenous culture.

The Welcoming and Attraction Strategy and Welcoming Booklet will be adopted by Council in late 2021. These two key documents will assist with Council's efforts to attract new residents.

Partnerships with key stakeholders such as Catholic Care, Goondir Health Services, St George Aboriginal Housing Company, Multicultural Affairs, Welcoming Cities and Welcoming Clubs, amongst others continue to positively evolve. These relationships have been essential to Council's efforts to improve diversity and inclusion within the Balonne Shire and make it a more welcoming place for all residents.

## AUSTRALIA DAY 2021

On Tuesday 26 January 2021 the National Australia Day Council sponsored a COVID-safe Australia Day event. An estimate of 180 people attended Australia Day 2021 in Dirranbandi and the day started with a community breakfast served by the Dirranbandi Progress Association, followed by the Australia Day 2021 awards ceremony where the winners were announced. During the event, there was live entertainment with our very own local band 'Fe Fi Fo Fum'. Finally, the community was invited to attend their preferred local pub with a complimentary drink.

### Australia Day 2021 Award winners

*Citizen of the Year*; Liz Hill

*Young Citizen of the Year*; Katie Parker

*Community Event of the Year*; Dragon Country Sandgreen Cup

*Community Service Award*; Pam Crothers

*Sports Achievement*; Kym Webster

*Junior Sports Achievement*; Oliver Lockwood

*Sports Administrator Achievement*; Peta Hart

*Junior Cultural Achievement*; Marshal Sanford

## ANZAC DAY 2021

Council supported the Anzac Day celebrations in 2021 providing \$1,400 to the St George RSL for Traffic Management. Councillors attended ceremonies across the Shire in St George, Dirranbandi, Bollon and Thallon. Our Australian Defence Force representatives who had served protecting our borders at Hebel and Mungindi came back on Anzac Day to be part of this special day of remembrance.





## Strong Community Organisations

Council provided 26 community groups with financial assistance to the value of \$52,177 from the Community Grants and Assistance program to support community events. These included sporting groups, community organisations and school activities. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 many events had to be postponed.

A total of \$1,370.60 was made to sponsor one community organisation seeking to develop and implement traffic management plans for community event road closures. Council provided information to community groups about upcoming events, grant and workshop information via email on a monthly basis. Council has also supported community groups through the COVID-19 restrictions and how to prepare and plan a COVID-safe event.



### WORK CAMP

WORK Camp was recalled or locked down in their camps several times due to COVID in 2020/21 however they still provided exemplary service to the community.

NUMBER OF ORGANISATIONS WHO REQUESTED WORK CAMP ASSISTANCE	41
NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED	61
NUMBER OF ONGOING OR COMPLETED PROJECTS	54

In addition to ongoing mowing and maintenance, WORK Camp assisted with the set up and pack down of events like Thallon's Grazing at the Waterhole, the St George Show and Dirranbandi's Paul Kelly Concert. They have constructed donation boxes for Thallon Progress Association, a blue chair for Dirranbandi and Hebel to raise awareness of depression and mental illness and constructed numerous jumps for the St George Pony Club's outstanding cross-country course.

Community organisations and Council acknowledge that without the assistance of WORK Camp many projects, large and small would not be possible. Their absence at times throughout this year has made the community even more appreciative of their presence and key role they play in our Shire.



## Community Wellbeing

Council's Community Advisory Committee met twice and from these meetings the Balonne Youth Council has now been established with nominations called for Youth Members in May 2021.

A Youth Interagency Network was established to bring Councillors and Council staff together with service providers and education leaders to enable better co-ordination and communication for youth programs. The group met monthly to discuss various programs and issues that affect Balonne Shire's young people. One of the initiatives to come out of this forum is Council's assistance to coordinate School Holiday planning. Working with key stakeholders, Council produced streamlined school holiday programs to help families stay in the loop about what activities are on offer and ensure service providers can work collaboratively and share resources to provide the best possible school holiday offerings.

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Council continued to work in partnership with a range of agencies to deliver the community wellbeing program across the Shire.

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Extensive work was completed to review and develop Community Recovery Plans.





# Disaster Management

## SOUTH-WEST REGIONAL PROJECT

Balonne Shire has been managing funding on behalf of five South-West Queensland Regional Councils that secured an officer to update all five Councils' Disaster Management (DM), Policies, Plans and Procedures. This project commenced with a great start in July 2019 however stalled due to major flooding in the Balonne Shire in February 2020, and a change-over of staff, then COVID-19. The project is back on track with all five Councils' DM Policies, Plans and Procedures updated. The project is due to be finalised and acquitted in June 2022.

## LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP

The Balonne Shire Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) is a core group of agencies that co-ordinate a response to disaster events and assist the community to recover following an event. The Local Disaster Management Plan includes four response activation phases from Alert – Lean Forward – Stand Up to Stand Down. This is then followed by recovery. Our LDMG has remained at Stand Up Status for 96 days out of 365 in 2020/21 with over 87 days at Lean Forward and 182 days at Alert Status in response to the February 2020 flood event and Mungindi 2021 flood event. Council assisted with border closures from April 2020 to September 2020 and was again assisting into July 2021, at Hebel and Mungindi, in response to COVID-19.

Council has actively sought reimbursement for financial assistance with the cost of border closures not currently covered under disaster funding arrangements. Council estimates it has cost in excess of \$250,000 since the beginning of the pandemic to assist the State and Federal Governments to protect our communities and the State of Queensland on the border. Council has assisted local businesses and farmers to stay in business with ongoing messaging and support to develop COVID-safe plans, advocating and working with Queensland's Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for harvests to go ahead and supporting applications for seasonal workers to assist with crops.

### In May 2021 Council and the LDMG adopted its updated:

- Balonne Shire Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan 2021
- Local Disaster Management Plan
- Pandemic Plan; and
- Disaster Recovery Plans (and continuing to work with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority to build resilience)

The Mayor, CEO, two Directors and Manager Community Services completed a master class in Disaster Management. Online training was completed by LDMG Members, and Guardian refresher training was completed with relevant staff. Guardian is Council's disaster management software system.

FEB 2020	JUL 2020	AUG 2020	OCT 2020	FEB 2021	APR 2021	JUN 2021	JUL 2021
STAND UP		ALERT		STAND UP	LEAN FORWARD		STAND UP



**FLOOD EVENT – FEBRUARY-MARCH 2021**

The flood event at Mungindi required a cross border approach with the Balonne Shire LDMG working with NSW SES, Moree Plains Regional Council and other NSW Stakeholders to co-ordinate a response. LDMG remained in Stand-Up Status for 46 days.

**EMERGENCY DASHBOARD**

All information is now co-ordinated through Council's Emergency Dashboard. The Dashboard includes live feeds from Bureau of Meterology, Queensland Traffic and Road Conditions, Ergon Energy and news feeds from the Balonne Shire during disaster events. Residents can now Opt-In to receive alerts via SMS and/or Email to remain informed and take action as required.



For more information or to Opt-In for Alerts visit [emergency.balonne.qld.gov.au](http://emergency.balonne.qld.gov.au)

**2020-21 PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	ANNUAL TARGET	ACTUAL
Upgrades to community spaces and facilities	90% of budget completed	90%
Number of grants awarded to community and sporting groups	1	3
Support for arts, music and cultural programs and events	12	20
Number of learning and engagement programs and attendance rates	10% increase	25% increase



*Into the Future*

- Council will open the library hub in early 2022 offering a range of new and improved library services and the Country University Centre.
- TRAIAC funding initiatives will continue to support our local community groups and welcome people to our Shire.
- Welcoming Communities Strategy and Booklet will be adopted in early 2021/22.
- An Arts and Culture Strategy will be developed.
- Council has provided input into the Queensland Reconstruction Authority's Regional Resilience Strategy that will be finalised in 2021/22.
- Council will roll out the final year of the three-year CMQ Regional Partnership Pilot Program funded by the Department of Children, Youth, Justice and Multicultural Affairs and aimed at supporting our efforts to make the Balonne Shire a more inclusive and welcoming place.













# ECONOMY

Strong economic growth where SMEs (Small to Medium Enterprises) and agriculture-related businesses thrive, with a focus on improved connectivity, skilling, diversification and innovation.

## 26 ACTIONS

were included in the Operational Plan for **Economy**

## 26 ACTIONS ACHIEVED 90%

on target and/or complete

## 0 ACTIONS ACHIEVED BETWEEN 70%–90%

of action target

## 0 ACTIONS ACHIEVED LESS THAN 70%

of action target



100% (26)	ON TRACK
0% (0)	MONITOR
0% (0)	NEEDS WORK
0% (0)	NO TARGET



## *Economic Development*

Economic Development in 2020-21 had the cloud of COVID-19. As the pandemic continued to wreak financial havoc on the country, Balonne Shire's economy managed to cope well and diversify. The flood of February 2020 and timely rains were the catalysts to enable cotton and cereal crop growers to enjoy record yields after enduring years of drought. Strong livestock prices and the roll out of more than \$25 million of exclusion fencing projects has encouraged graziers to re-invest in the area. Council provided assistance to several proposed investments including feedlots and other value-chain opportunities for the Shire. Our horticultural sector was heavily impacted in the year notably by the lack of available workers, low prices and changing directives and restrictions.

The delivery of more than \$70 million of pre-COVID and disaster/drought recovery infrastructure provided a significant economic kickstart not only for the short-term but for the long-term economic benefit. The hospitality and tourism sectors realised record visitations by various groups as restrictions in the region eased and businesses in the Balonne Shire diversified their operations with more than ten moving to sell online.

To diversify the economy, Council has been active in identifying emerging industry sectors that enhance the strengths of the region including Agricultural Technology and Biotechnology, and new sectors including, but not limited to, defence and space.

### **INITIATIVES TO BUILD THE FOOD AND FIBRE LEADERS PROFILE**

Agriculture and horticulture are the main sectors of the Shire's economy, accounting for more than \$296 million (51% of the Shire's economic output) and 41% of all jobs. Council has supported farmers seeking to diversify their operations through business mentoring (19 growers/producers/graziers and two local mentors/business advisors). This project was funded by the Australian Government under the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program. The initiative has encouraged:

- investment and re-investment/expansion into further value-add opportunities
- facilitating \$25 million in exclusion fencing projects and future investment opportunities from these projects
- attracting more than \$6 million in digital connectivity projects to improve on-farm efficiency and opportunities for shire residents
- ensuring the new library and innovation has a strong agricultural and AgTech presence linking with regional innovation hubs and supporting and implementing innovation amongst our agricultural and horticultural industries.

Council continues to support and deliver tailored events and workshops on relevant topics such as agricultural advisory, decision making, farm management and agritourism, grant programs, and advocacy and lobbying with key stakeholders to State and Federal Governments on growers' and producers' issues and needs such as border restrictions and seasonal workers.





### **BUSINESS INCUBATION & SUPPORT**

Council worked in partnership with St George & District Chamber of Commerce and Progress Associations to support initiatives for businesses including COVID-19 support such as: programs, communications (Queensland Health directives) and support for businesses and agribusinesses, business advisory and mentoring support, JobKeeper and JobSeeker programs. Grant writing workshops/assistance and funding initiatives and eligibility (Queensland Adaption grant went to 19 businesses of more than \$171,000 in funding).

Further support to small business included the delivery of the Dirranbandi Business Improvement Program (21 projects), the CCIQ ecoBiz energy, water and waste efficiency program (20 businesses), Business Mentoring program (53 businesses – 34 SME and tourism businesses), delivering 21 webinars and workshops (many recorded) focusing on business training and support and project funding (\$174,000).

We delivered infrastructure projects with strong commitment to supporting local business procurement (>\$29 million in local expenditure and >51% of Council's total expenditure) and supporting businesses registering on procurement platforms, supporting the Buy Balonne Gift Card and buy local campaign surpassing \$100,000 in funds loaded onto cards. Two events were held to support Queensland Small Business Month (May) with promotion of job vacancies/opportunities (online), and regional and government opportunities.

Council engaged with partners to help businesses expand and diversify their operations with ten businesses (as part of the mentoring program) now selling online and several producers identifying and implementing new technologies and strategies to retain more of the value-add supply chain in the Shire.

### **SKILLING TRAINING & INNOVATION**

Council is committed to growing our labour force by assisting its Government partners to help deliver skilling and workforce development programs for current and future labour requirements. Development of a local online jobs' platform (local business), virtual regional job fairs and direct engagement with employment agencies to raise awareness of employment opportunities in the Shire. The Country Universities Centre Balonne (St George and Dirranbandi) will also offer further education opportunities to our residents and businesses.

### **INVESTMENT ATTRACTION & PARTNERSHIP**

Council continued to promote the Shire as a prime destination for both attracting inward investment and encouraging local reinvestment. There were 26 business enquiries during the year with 14 external and 12 local enquiries predominately from agriculture (5), tourism (5), emerging industries (4) and property (3). There were three projects announced valued at \$1.675 million creating/retaining nine jobs. Other major investments in the Shire included \$1.4 million in digital infrastructure (St George to Bollon)

announced under the Federal Regional Connectivity Program and Council's exclusion fencing programs (\$25 million).

Council is working with key stakeholders to assist in planning, securing funding and developing hard (road, digital, inland rail) and social infrastructure (eg. education, childcare, housing, transport) along with tourism and recreation infrastructure (eg. Dirranbandi Thermal Baths) – all of these initiatives enhance the liveability and lifestyle for our residents and visitors.

### **VALUE-ADD AND DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGIES**

To diversify the economy, Council has been actively promoting in new emerging industry sectors and value and supply chain opportunities in agriculture and horticulture that will generate further long-term economic benefit and career pathway opportunities for the Shire and its residents. In partnership with the South-West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (SWQROC) we produced a new Regional and Shire Investment Prospectus (print and digital) and marketing through various channels and partners to promote business and investment opportunities.



**For more on investing in our region visit [swqroc.com.au/invest](http://swqroc.com.au/invest)**



## 2020 – 2021 Highlights

- Announcement and delivery of more than \$70 million in infrastructure projects (on-going)
- Funding and administration of more than \$25 million in exclusion fencing in partnership with farmers and an exclusion fencing survey
- Digital Connectivity – construction of towers to deliver fast internet from St George to Hebel and \$2.3 million partnered funding for St George to Bollon
- Progression of the St George Library and Innovation Hub – completion date early 2022
- Progression of the Dirranbandi Thermal Baths project – completion date April 2022
- Successful grants (29 projects) securing \$13,647,356 in funding
- Economic Development Action Group sessions
- 53 businesses (19 agriculture, 19 SMEs and 15 tourism) shire-wide participating in two rounds of business mentoring
- 45 business mentoring projects awarded \$83,000 in funding with \$91,000 in co-matching contribution of which nearly \$80,000 (46%) was spent locally in Balonne Shire
- Business mentoring – four feasibility studies (\$136,000 in funding and co-matching) awarded for projects that have the potential to create up to 18 jobs
- 21 business webinars and workshops conducted including entrepreneurship, financial management and marketing
- Dirranbandi Business Improvement Program (21 projects – façade and energy efficiency) with tourism, economic and energy saving benefits to be realised
- Delivery of CCIQ's ecoBiz program to more than 20 businesses shire-wide
- Buy Balonne Gift Card has 92 participating businesses and surpassed \$100,000 in funds
- 19 businesses receiving more than \$171,000 in Queensland Government Adaption Grants
- Opening of the Country Universities Centres Balonne in St George and Dirranbandi
- 26 new business enquiries and 3 investments announced – \$1.675 million creating/retaining 9 jobs
- Inland rail projects (3) progressing to Gate 2
- New renewable and alternative strategy and opportunities for Balonne Shire
- New shire and regional investment attraction prospectuses





### CROSS-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Cross-regional partnerships are instrumental in providing both financial and in-kind assistance to help deliver economic projects at both the Federal and State level. We work with a range of government departments and agencies and continue to strengthen our regional partnerships with local governments, private and public organisations including South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (SWQROC), Border Region of Councils (BROC), Darling Downs South-West Queensland Council of Mayors (DDSWQCOM), Western Queensland Alliance of Councils (WQAC) and Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise (TSBE). Regional projects include housing, digital connectivity, energy (including renewable and alternative), transport, inland rail opportunities, health, education and workforce development, waste management, regional innovation, investment attraction, carbon farming, business support and tourism development.

### TOURISM PARTNERSHIPS

The Balonne Shire Tourism Team works in partnership with Local, Regional and State tourism groups, bodies and associations to ensure the Visitor Information Centre and the St George Region are positively promoted and so that staff stay informed of best practice. Continuing to build positively upon and grow these relationships is a high priority in the Strategy covered by both Priority 3.2, Highway Links and Priority 4.3 Industry Networking.

After much deliberation the Shire's RTO representation was changed from Southern Queensland Country Tourism (SQCT) to Outback Queensland Tourism Association (OQTA). This change aligned with the findings of the Strategy and supported

the consumer research undertaken for the development of the St George Region Brand which found that most people identify the Balonne Shire as being located in the Outback.

At a State level, we have participated and worked with Tourism & Events Queensland (TEQ) on their *Good to Go* campaign to help drive visitation following the COVID-19 lockdown, while on a Regional level we collaborated with OQTA on their Drive campaign and participated in the Outback Muster and Queensland Caravan & Camping Supershow both in Brisbane and South-West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (SWQROC) on the Be Our Guest campaign. We also continued our collaborations with our Highway Linkage groups – Adventure Way (AW), The Great Inland Way (GIW) and Drive Inland (DI).

More locally, we ran quarterly meetings with the Balonne Shire Tourism Network. The aim of these meetings is to support operators and keep them up-to-date with industry events and activities while providing a platform for our operators to collaborate and improve cross promotion in the region. The collaboration from this group proved imperative to the success of the Welcome to Our Place campaign.

### TOURISM GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

COVID-19 put a dampener on visitor numbers for the start of the financial year, giving the Council's Tourism team the perfect opportunity to focus on achieving some of the key priorities outlined in the *Tourism & Events Strategy 2025* (the Strategy), which was adopted by Council in February 2021 and was formally launched in October 2021.

# Destination Brand & Profile

One of the key priorities identified by the Strategy was the need to create a Destination Brand and Profile for the Shire (Priority 3.1 Brand Development). As a second stage of the overall Tourism & Events project, Krista Hauritz, a proven tourism and marketing strategist, was contracted to research and develop a destination brand and profile for the Shire.

The St George Region Brand was developed to create a cohesive, fluid and on-brand approach to tourism, events and marketing in the Shire. With the overarching vision for the Shire to be known as an essential overnight stay destination, the main aim was to encourage visitors to explore the region to increase length-of-stay and generate greater overnight visitor expenditure.

## WHY ST GEORGE REGION?

Consumer research undertaken by the consultants identified that most visitors to the Shire did not recognise the Shire's name, Balonne Shire. With St George the most recognisable town name in the Shire and having the highest search engine optimisation results it became the obvious choice. Hence St George and Surrounds was simplified to St George Region.

## OUR BRAND STORY

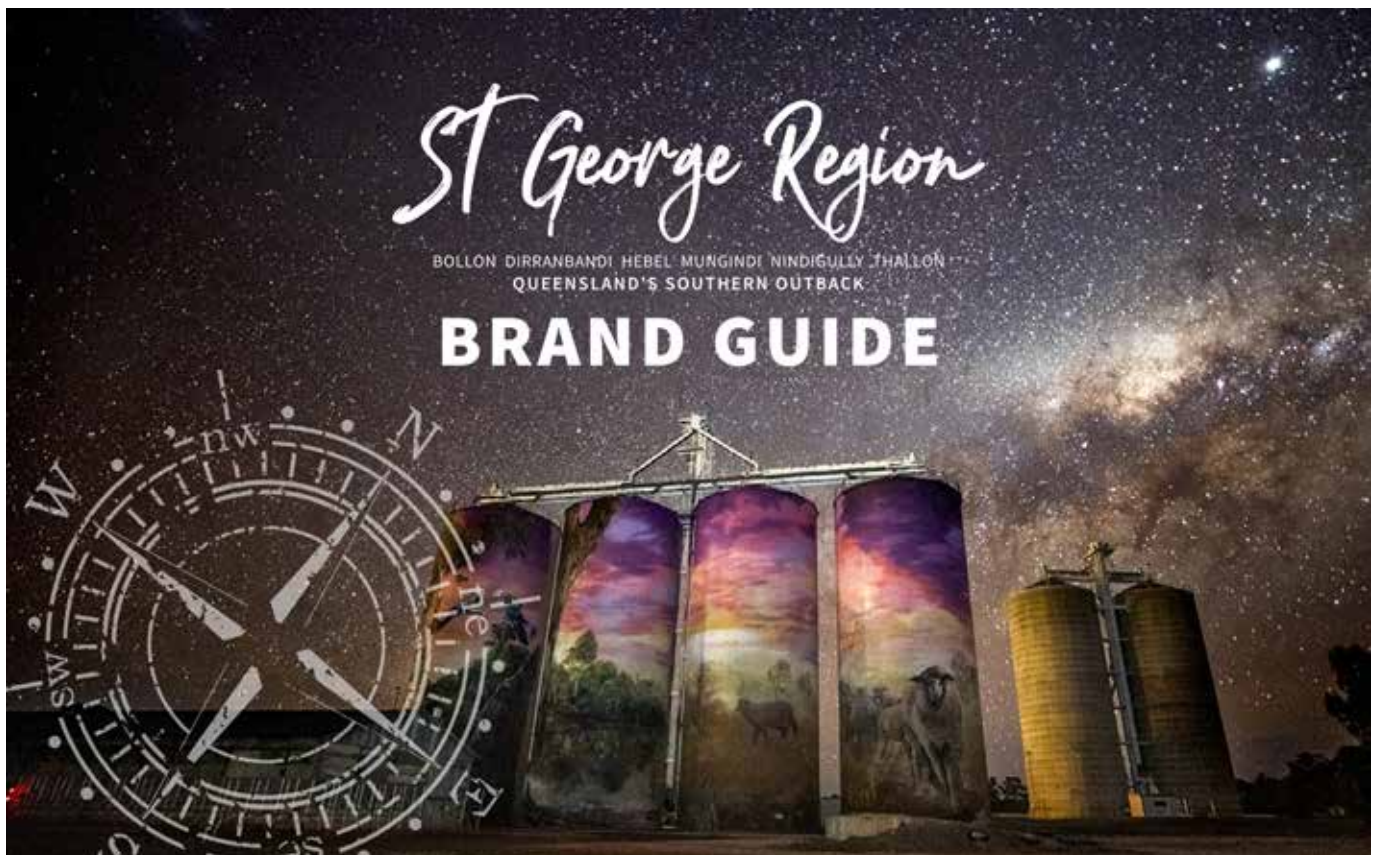
At St George Region's core is the desire to welcome people to 'our place'. To share our relaxed, rural lifestyle, where country meets outback. We offer visitors a welcome reprieve, like a country oasis. Our region is not one to observe, but one to immerse yourself in, taking your time to breathe in fresh country air and explore vast landscapes and the freedom of our wide-open spaces.

## BRANDING TOOLKIT & STYLE GUIDE

To ensure the amplification of the region, a digital *St George Region Branding Toolkit and Style Guide* was created and made accessible to both Balonne-based tourism operators and the wider tourism and events industry, including tourism partners such as OQTA, Tourism & Events Queensland (TEQ) and Tourism Australia (TA) fulfilling Priority 3.3 (Branding Toolkit) and 3.5 (Digital Distribution) of the Strategy.

To help reinforce the consistent messaging, the Branding Toolkit included templates, logos and maps. Recognising the St George Region is home to seven individual, vibrant towns, the Toolkit also provided local applications with each town given its own logo. In addition, professional images and digital footage reflecting our Shire's key competitive advantages, including rivers, fishing, Australian wildlife, indigenous culture, rural lifestyle and heritage were taken by well-known photographers Sean Scott and Leeroy Todd. The photos were made available as part of the Toolkit completing Priority 3.4 of The Strategy (Content Creation).

Officially launched in October 2020, the new St George Region branding was successfully rolled out across all of the Shire's tourism marketing and promotions.





# Marketing & Promotions

## WELCOME MATE; WELCOME TO OUR PLACE

Our Tourism team had to ensure our marketing strategies for the Shire were able to adapt to the peaks and troughs throughout the year, especially with the disruptions caused by COVID. While the original strategy was for the amplification of the successful Welcome Mate campaign, which was launched in early March 2020, to international accolades, COVID-19 brought an end to tourism as we knew it.

With the onset of lockdown, border closures and travel restrictions, COVID took away our feeling of belonging, of being connected to each other and to our surrounds. We had lost our sense of place. The Tourism team realised there was a need to create a space for 'Our Place' – a place where the Balonne community could share their stories and love of the region with each other – and so our welcome to visitors was consequently downscaled to focus on those closer to home.

Welcome Mate therefore expanded to 'Welcome Mate; Welcome to Our Place' with the following objectives:

- Inspire, connect and unite the Balonne Shire community
- Re-establish community identity and connection to place
- Launch staged, targeted marketing – local, regional (Visiting Friends & Family/Outback), Intrastate, Long Haul/Domestic
- Build awareness and recognition of St George Region.

Being in a rural location where communities need to travel significant distances to get to another community, local residents were urged to embrace 'Our Place'. To get out and explore the spaces and places they loved and missed during lockdown. To help inspire them a special Welcome to Our Place Facebook Group was created where locals could share photographs of their favourite places within the Balonne Shire.

Then building upon the ethos of friendship, loyalty and collaboration set by the original Welcome Mate campaign, Welcome to Our Place (WTOP) employed people power to help rebuild the Shire's tourism industry. A new promotional video trailer was created to set the scene with seven locals enlisted to share seven stories, over seven weeks, from our seven towns and showcase what it was they loved about our unique river town region.

Soon restrictions eased and overnight stays were permitted. Local businesses and the community were encouraged to use the new Welcome to Our Place Digital Toolkit with logos, email signature and website tile, to spread the word that the Balonne Shire was ready to welcome visitors back. Locals were further encouraged to extend an invitation to family and friends to come and visit our Shire by sending a free Welcome to Our Place postcard.

Then as a follow up to our viral 'St George Matesong' video earlier in the year – a parody of Kylie Minogue's song promoting Australian tourism which was a hit with the

songstress who tweeted her love for the video – an invitation was extended to Kylie Minogue to visit the Shire. With COVID keeping Kylie in the United Kingdom, the Team, undeterred, took a cardboard cut-out of Kylie for a spin around the Shire to give her a taste of what the region had to offer once she could finally accept our invitation, creating a great buzz on social media.

By taking the country hospitality we were already known for and using it on a broader scale, we not only reawakened community pride but also ensured that Our Place was a welcoming space for all kinds of visitors. The campaign was so successful it inspired several regions including Goondiwindi, Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast to run similar promotions. It was then embraced by the Balonne Shire Community Team who gave it an economic development spin by inviting potential and new residents to Make Our Place Your Place.

With travel back on the agenda, at least domestically for 2021, the campaign has since transformed into a re-energised Welcome Back Mate launched in April 2021. Moving forward both will underpin the development of a new Welcome Program outlined in Priority 4.4 of the Strategy.

## ST GEORGE REGION TRAVELLERS' GUIDE & WEBSITE

April 2021 marked the start of the new tourism season and the rollout of the new Branding with the release of the new Travellers' Guide and the change of name from St George and Surrounds to St George Region. This release tied in with the launch of a brand-new StGeorgeRegion.com.au dedicated tourism website that was specifically targeted at the travelling public.

Previously, tourism had occupied a space within Council's corporate website which does not come up when St George is Googled. This independent platform has allowed us to further promote the information centre, tourism providers and businesses in the St George Region in a more targeted way.

With some catchy slogans introduced, such as 'come and explore life beyond the city, let's explore, explore our towns and what would you like to explore?', the site gives a thorough insight into our region, using visually appealing photos and videos of our wide-open spaces and oasis like environment.

The move away from the council platform has subsequently improved searchability for the researching traveller as the Balonne Shire was only known to the region to which it belongs. It also gave travellers the ability to download the guide electronically as well as other useful guides such as Balonne Shire Fishing Map and Birds of Balonne Map.



Visit [stgeorgeregion.com.au/explore/st-george](https://stgeorgeregion.com.au/explore/st-george)

**TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**

Throughout COVID we have continued to work and keep in touch with our tourism providers to gauge what assistance we could provide. While many projects were put on hold, some new tour products were developed out of the new obligations for people to be able to isolate or to travel in small family groups and preferably outdoors. The most notable of these were the creation of three Self-Drive Itineraries – a suite of resources developed as a map of things people can do and see in their own time, at their own pace:

- Outback Oasis Explored (3 days)
- Adventure Way Loop (4 days)
- Produce, Parks & Pubs Explored (5 days)

These tours are not only COVID friendly, they are also ideal for the new market of the 30 to 50-year-old traveller who is now looking for an adventure holiday in the Outback. This age group and the number of non ‘grey nomads’ who are investing in a caravan has grown extensively since lockdown in Queensland has lifted. The inability to travel overseas has given us a whole new marketplace to target.

This age group also travel with children and are taking longer leave from work, so these new product options are very family orientated and are more than a weekend getaway. The trails and self-drive tours allow us to also ensure the businesses in our smaller communities were able to interact with the tourism sector and share in the tourism dollar. There is more appetite now for making St George Region the destination rather than just the way to get from here to there. This has allowed us to increase overnight stays, further increasing business recovery and resilience in our region.





# Training & Development

## SOCIAL MEDIA MENTORING PROGRAM

During the COVID closure the Tourism team participated in a six-month Business Mentoring Program around social media with Tourism Tribe. By completing extra education around the social media stratosphere, the Tourism team now have the skills required to implement an engaging, visible and informative social media presence.

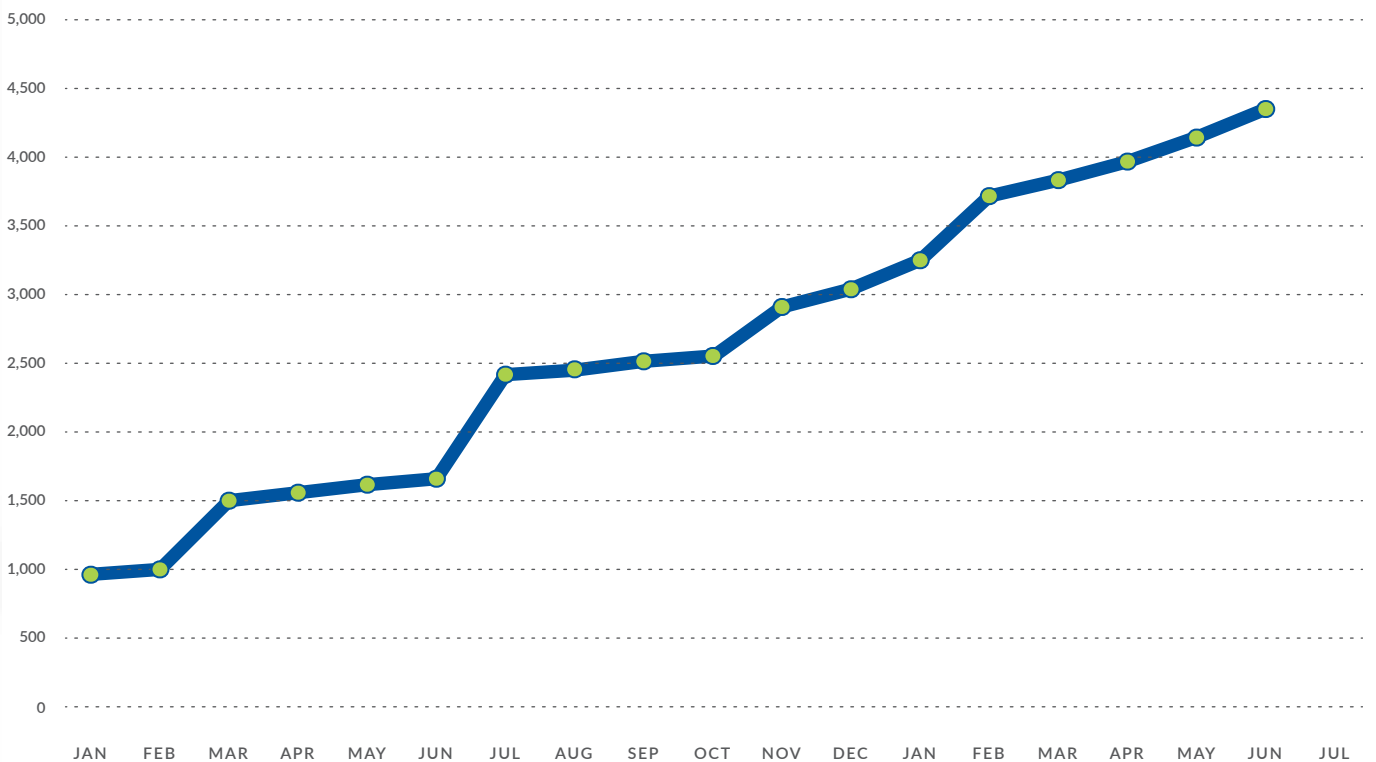
During this time, @StGeorgeRegion Instagram page was launched and is steadily growing in followers. Encouraging visitors to use the hashtag #explorestgeorge has already gained 250+ images shared from visitors and locals promoting and enjoying our region. Most notably, we have been able to capitalise on the established Facebook profile, built with the Welcome Mate campaign to dramatically increase its following. At the beginning of January 2020 we had 968 Likes and by the end of July 2021 it had skyrocketed to 4,312 Likes.

## EVENT ORGANISER MASTERCLASS WEBINAR SERIES

Our priority, with so many events cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic, was to pivot to ensure quality events and attractions could continue across the region when safe to do so. The Team's focus thus shifted to educating our tireless event organisers, many of whom are volunteers, aligning with Priority 4.1 of the Strategy – create a Tourism + Event Training Program. A free Events Masterclass webinar series was run in early 2021 to give local event organisers of Balonne Shire some extra inspiration and a helping hand to revive their events for 2021.

Hosted by Linda Tillman of rEVENTS Academy, these masterclasses tap into her 15 years of experience in regional, rural and remote tourism events. The six-part webinar series covered a wide variety of topics from business plans and marketing, to risk management and running events in a COVID-safe environment. The classes have been kept as a resource and made available online through the Balonne Shire Council website.

ST GEORGE REGION FACEBOOK LIKES (JANUARY 2020 - JULY 2021)





## AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Our Tourism team is committed to delivering the highest possible standard of customer service and tourism products and actively sought recognition to further raise the profile of the Balonne Shire. Achievements. Our team achieved the following:

- 2020 Silver Winner of Best Council Free Stay Award for the Nindigully Visitor and Tourist Area at the Grey Nomad Awards
- 2021 Finalist Top Tourism Town Awards for Best Small Town for St George
- 2021 Winner Local Government Association of Queensland Award for Excellence in Communication for the Best Social Media Campaign for the St George Matesong.

*The last Awards being back in 2008 when they took out the Tourism & Hospitality Award in the now defunct St George & District Chamber of Commerce Balonne Business Excellence Awards.*

Capping this all off, the Tourism team led the push for a number of the Shire's exceptional business leaders to be nominated in the 2021 Greater Downs Women in Business Awards. With 2021 marking the first time the awards were extended to include our Shire, it was both an astounding achievement and great surprise that we then took out a suite of honours including the top gong. The awards received included:

*Agribusiness Award and Greater Downs Woman in Business of the Year; Sally Rigney, Owner Myall Plains  
Community Dedication Award; Liz Hill, Owner Connect South-West QLD  
Mary Wagner Honour; Samantha O'Toole, Mayor Balonne Shire Council  
Rising Star Award (Highly Commended); Nikki Pulfer, Owner Dirranbandi Caravan Park  
Business Adaption and Ingenuity Award (Highly Commended); Kim Wildman, Manager Tourism Balonne Shire Council*

## 2020-21 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	ANNUAL TARGET	ACTUAL
Increased access to TAFE, tertiary and other professional development programs	10%	10%
Number of new established businesses	2	3
Number of businesses value-adding and diversifying	10	15
Increased visitor numbers	5%	61%
Advocacy efforts and investment attraction to improve transportation & infrastructure services	2	4



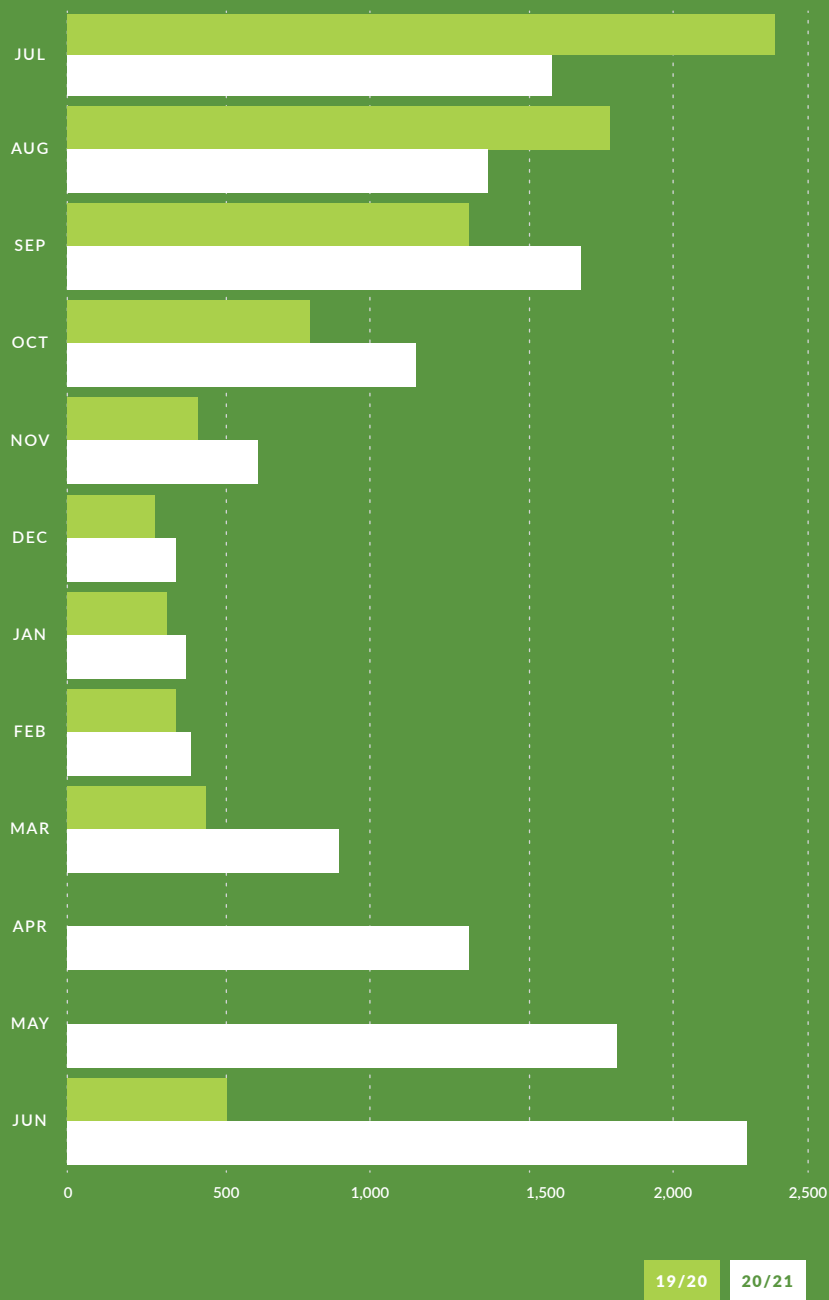
# Into the Future

## TOURISM OUTLOOK

Following on from COVID-19 the tourism sector bounced back well with strong visitor numbers especially through the high season – Easter to October. People travelled for longer in the shoulder seasons and we welcomed travellers right through the summer period especially when the weather was milder. June/July school holidays as always was our busiest with all programs and tours in place and running at full capacity most days. The year thus ended on a high with visitor numbers surpassing previous years.

As a comparison for the 19/20 financial year the Balonne Shire Visitor Information Centre recorded a total of 8,436 visitors through its doors versus 13,594 visitors during the 20/21 financial year as highlighted by the graph. That's a jump of more than 60%. While this is a fantastic result, we need to bear in mind that the Visitor Information Centre was closed for two whole months during the 19/20 period due to COVID. Also, while the Balonne Shire and the Outback region of Queensland have been enjoying record breaking visitation due to the restrictions on international travel, this domestic travel bubble will burst once international borders reopen to the Australian travel market. In the meantime, until the vaccinations are fully rolled out lockdowns and border closures will continue to impact tourist numbers for the Shire both positively and negatively.

BALONNE SHIRE VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE  
VISITOR NUMBERS











# ENVIRONMENT

To enhance, protect and sustain the environment, ensuring a triple bottom line approach of balancing social and economic needs with environmental goals.

## 18 ACTIONS

were included in the Operational Plan for **Environment**

## 15 ACTIONS ACHIEVED 90%

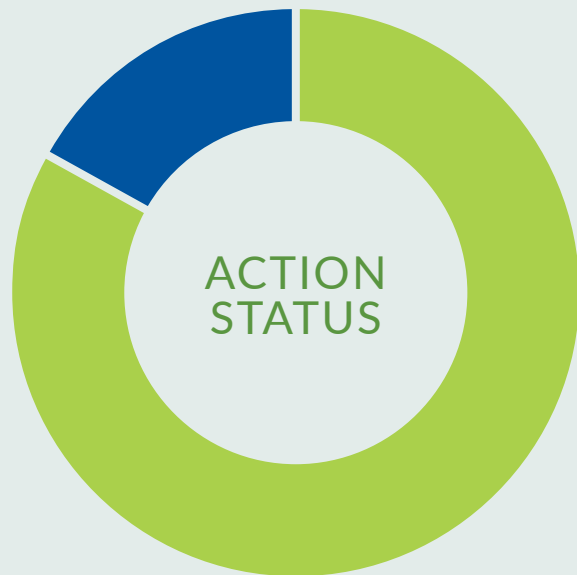
on target and/or complete

## 3 ACTIONS ACHIEVED BETWEEN 70%–90%

of action target

## 0 ACTIONS ACHIEVED LESS THAN 70%

of action target



83.33% (15) **ON TRACK**

16.67% (3) **MONITOR**

0% (0) **NEEDS WORK**

0% (0) **NO TARGET**

# Best Practice Waste Management & Recycling

## SOLID WASTE PLAN

All Balonne Shire Council Waste facilities continue to operate within the conditions of Council's Environmental licence. Council developed a Solid Waste Plan during the year which addresses best management practices for Council landfills. This plan outlines the need for a Master Plan for all landfill sites over the next ten years – until 2031. It identifies the capital works and infrastructure required to maintain compliance levels articulated in the Environmental Approvals and improve overall waste operations.

## GREEN WASTE

Council continues to look for opportunities for the disposal and reuse of green waste. Currently green waste is burnt at the St George Landfill under Council's ERA 61 licence. Green waste at all other landfills is currently stockpiled and allowed to decompose over time.

## WASTE COLLECTION

Council continues to service its community with a two-bin system of general and recycled waste. Meetings with JJ Richards are held regularly to discuss initiatives in the waste industry.

Residents of the community who require assistance with their waste collection due to sickness or physical ability are asked to contact Council for assistance.

## CONTAINER RECYCLING

Council runs the Drum Muster program in the Shire with quarterly collections. 9,188 chemical containers were recycled.

Council promotes the Containers for Change program operated by the St George Lions Club. The CRS Depot is located in Arthur Street, St George.

## ILLEGAL TYRE DUMPING

During 2020-2021, Council partnered with Maranoa Shire Council and the Department of Environment & Science to remove 300 tonnes of illegal dumped tyres from the Shire. By partnering with Tyre Stewardship Australia and local industry, Council was able to educate its community on the benefits of recycling end-of-life tyres. Council also implemented a disposal process for local industry which allows for the recycling of end-of-life tyres.

A number of illegal dumping incidents were reported to Council in relation to Commissioner's Point Road. These incidents were deemed as hot-spot incidents and were reported to the Department of Environment & Science and actioned by Council. Grant funding from the Department of Environment & Science allowed for these clean ups to be actioned.

## ANNUAL SHIRE CLEAN UP

The Annual Shire Clean Up was held in March 2021. The response from our communities was overwhelming. Council offered its residents in St George, Dirranbandi, Thallon and Bollon the opportunity to place hardstand waste on the footpath for disposal. A large number of disused vehicles were collected and disposed of during the program.

This Annual Shire Clean-up project is carried out in conjunction with the Clean Up Australia campaign.





# Effective Water Planning

In agreement with the South-West Regional Organisation of Councils (SWROC) the South-West Water Group was established across the SWQROC member Councils. This Group collaborates and works together on common water and sewerage issues across the Shires. The advantage for member Councils is looking for regional commitments and opportunities and make efficiencies in resourcing our water and sewerage services, wherever possible.

## WATER SECURITY FOR THE SHIRE

Water supply is an essential service provided to our communities. We do everything we can to ensure that we deliver a safe, reliable water service. We secure water through a range of sources across the Shire:

- **Bollon:** Untreated artesian bore supply.
- **Dirranbandi:** Treated water mixed with untreated artesian bore supply.
- **Hebel:** Untreated artesian bore supply.
- **Mungindi:** Moree Plains Shire Council treats water from the town weir on the Bokhara River in Mungindi, NSW and meters it before it crosses the border to Balonne Shire ratepayers in Mungindi Qld.
- **St George Bore:** Untreated artesian bore supply.
- **St George River:** An untreated supply from the town weir on the Balonne River is used for gardens, toilets and fire fighting. Water is purchased from SunWater, who determines Council's allocation according to supply availability.
- **Thallon:** Untreated artesian bore supply.

Council currently has access to 3,000ML of river water annually in Jack Taylor Weir under a Term Allocation Contract with SunWater. A term allocation fee is charged in addition to an allocation fee and a usage fee. Council changed the structure of its river water access charges for the urban township of St George in preparation for charge for excess river water in 2022/23. The new river water access charge did not increase the current charges for water in St George however does provide clarity for landholders to see the proportion of charges for river and bore water connections.

## WATER RESTRICTIONS

The recent summer and winter rains within the catchment of the Balonne River provided the communities within the Balonne Shire a very secure outlook. Storages within the river system are up to 100% at different times during the year, which is reassuring for the next twelve months. Council still encouraged our communities to be vigilant in their water usage with Level One (winter) water restrictions in place for St George in May 2021. Council continues to work in collaboration with SunWater and Mallawa Irrigation to maintain an adequate river water supply for St George. Council entered into a historic agreement with Mallawa Irrigation Limited for the procurement of allocation water, for the 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years for the purposes of securing water for the St George town water supply from the Balonne River system.

## WATER QUALITY TESTING

Council continues to provide a number of different tests depending on the environment to ensure that the quality of water is safe for its intended use. Council undertook rainwater testing for all Food businesses as well as rainwater testing for private use.

## WATER QUALITY

Council continues to provide a number of different tests depending on the environment to ensure that the quality of water is safe for its intended use. Council also provides sound and effective advice to owners of rainwater tanks to help them eliminate the E.coli bacteria from their water supply. Tests are carried out on the river systems within the Shire. In March 2021 following flooding on the Barwon River at Mungindi the Moree Plains Regional Council issued an alert for residents to boil all water due to the conditions on the river causing problems with the water treatments.

## ASSET UPGRADE

To ensure security of supply, Council is looking towards the future and will develop a feasibility study and business case ahead of any application to the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (DRDMW) to supply and install a second artesian bore to the township of St George.

Balonne Shire Council undertook water main construction works which were completed from the intersection of McDonnell Avenue and Church Street, through to the end of Isles Street. These works ensure that the water supply is maintained to upgrade ageing water mains.

# Biosecurity, Pest Management & Stock Route Planning

## BIOSECURITY AND PEST MANAGEMENT

Council's Biosecurity Plan 2019-2024 provides strategic direction for the management of invasive plants and animals in the Shire. The goal of the Plan is to engage all stakeholders, and work together in implementing ongoing, coordinated and effective management of all priority invasive species within the local government area. A Biosecurity Advisory Committee was established to advise on the implementation and review of the Plan. The Committee is complemented by the Wild Dog Advisory Committee focussed on feral animal control, and in particular Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing (WDEF) and expenditure of Council's feral animal special rate on scalps, trappers and baiting.

## FERAL ANIMAL LEVY

Council levies a special rate on all rateable assessments in Rating Categories 100, 79, 80, 81 and all properties greater than or equal to 1,000 Hectares in Categories 200 and 300 to assist in feral animal management. The Rural Services Section coordinated Council's Wild Dog Scalp and Bounty Policy and received 379 wild dog scalps in 2020/21. The number of scalps increased substantially from 2019/20.

Two wild dog baiting campaigns were completed in October 2020 and May 2021. Council currently has three licensed operators to conduct these bi-annual campaigns with the assistance of QMDCL rangers.

BAITING CAMPAIGN MONTH	NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING PROPERTIES	KILOGRAMS OF FRESH MEAT BAIT
October 2020	65 properties	2,560kg
May 2021	57 properties	2,520kg

In between the campaigns Council provided 1,080 baits for 22 properties to conduct 'pulse baiting'.

- 300kg of fresh meat baits
- 700 pre-manufactured fox baits
- 360 pre-manufactured wild dog baits
- 1,650kg of baited pig grain

Council was able to achieve a range of projects for the benefit of pest management and stock route planning or to increase wild dog exclusion fencing in the Shire.

## WILD DOG EXCLUSION FENCING (WDEF) PROJECTS

Over the last two years Council administered \$9.48 million in funds for four wild dog exclusion fence programs with a \$8.1 million co-contribution from landholders. This has resulted in 1,520km of fencing constructed or underway to protect 590,000 hectares on 73 properties. Hall Chadwick's Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Report June 2021, based on a survey of landholders, indicated a resulting 74 new agricultural jobs and increased annual agricultural income of \$22,973,000 per year. To date about 60% of the Shire is fenced from public and privately funded WDEF.

## WDEF SPECIAL RATE SCHEME

Council's WDEF Special Rate Scheme continued into 2020/21 utilising \$8 million in Council borrowings from the Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC). Round 1's 23 properties continued construction of 397.5km in fencing projects totalling \$3.175 million (excluding capitalised interest). By 30 June 2021 three properties had reached practical completion.

For Round 2, 15 properties were approved in June 2020 for construction of 223.45km in fencing projects with a final draw down of QTC funding of \$1.511 million (excluding capitalised interest). From 30 June 2021 no further drawn downs can be made. Council utilised \$4.686m of the loan facility (excluding capitalised interest).

Landholders have 20 years to repay Council via the special rate scheme with fixed interest of less than 2 percent.

## WDEF MURRAY-DARLING BASIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Council administered this Federal \$5 million grant similarly to the special rate process, with 45 approved properties with 814.5km of fencing continuing. By 30 June 2021 seven properties had reached practical completion.

## WDEF COMMUNITIES COMBATting PEST AND WEED IMPACTS DURING DROUGHT (CCWI)

This \$800,000 grant funded 11 properties and 197.2km of fencing protecting 62,994 hectares. All 11 properties were completed.



## REGIONAL ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION PROGRAMME (REDP) WDEF

This \$733,000 grant funded cluster fencing for 16 properties in three clusters.

- The Woolerina/Yendon Cluster, which in partnership with Maranoa Regional Council through the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative (Round 2), jointly constructed 64km of pest animal fencing, comprising:
  - » 17.85km of pest animal exclusion fencing through the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative (Round 2) in the Maranoa Regional Council local government area; and
  - » 46.5km of pest animal exclusion fencing through the Regional Economic Diversification Programme in the Balonne Shire Council local government area.
- The East Thomby Cluster, with 10 properties totalling 78km of WDEF.
- The Homestead/Wingi-Jimmi Cluster, with two properties totalling 53.5km of WDEF.

All properties in the three clusters were completed.

## COMMUNITIES COMBATTING PESTS AND WEEDS DURING DROUGHT (CCWI) PEST WEEDS IN THE MOONIE AND MARANOA RIVER CATCHMENT

Council completed work under this \$200,000 grant involving invasive weed mapping and control in the Moonie River catchment. This included:

- Purchase of five (5) commercial grade spraying equipment for managing pest weeds in and around targeted catchments.
- Completion of pest weed and animal survey within the targeted catchments, resulting in a 69% landholder completion rate.
- Completion of an aerial survey (helicopter) within the targeted catchments, with observed pest weeds recorded via GPS.
- Engagement of Ninox Robotics to determine whether drones could be used to survey for pest weed infestations. Success depended upon infestation size and condition variables.

## QUEENSLAND ARBOVIRUS SENTINEL SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

This Surveillance program continues annually from January to June each year. The program continues in partnership with Queensland Health.

Fourteen sites across Queensland ensures mechanisms for monitoring arboviruses keep Queenslanders safe from exposure. The monitoring of human cases is only one possible trigger for public health action and the additional surveillance systems are used in concert to signal the risk of human disease, often before the appearance of human cases.

Mosquito vector surveillance includes mosquito trapping for speciation and enumeration of mosquitoes to monitor population sizes and relative composition. Virus isolation from mosquitoes can also be undertaken.

## GRAVID AEDES TRAP (GAT) MOSQUITO SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

The Balonne Shire Council together with the Darling Downs Public Health Unit (DDPHU) implemented a surveillance program annually which assists Public Health Units to determine the presence of *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes in communities. The Gravid Aedes Trap (GAT) is a revolutionary design in mosquito traps that uses transparent panels to confuse and trap mosquitoes.

It is this program that allows surveillance of mosquitoes for diseases such as dengue, chikungunya and Zika.



## STOCK ROUTE MANAGEMENT

Council manages State-owned stock route under the *BSC Stock Route Management Plan 2021-2026*. The Rural Services Section provided a range of policy development, partnerships and grant programs during 2020/21 including:

- Updating the *BSC Stock Route Management Plan 2021-2026*.
- Completion of stock route network inspections, water facility inspections, stock route patrols and stock route compliance in accordance with Council's Stock Route Compliance Priority Policy and Compliance Procedure.
- In partnership with QMDCL Indigenous Rangers, completed pest weed inspections and control on Council-managed roads and stock routes.
- Completion of preliminary trials utilising fire and Indigenous knowledge to manage Council reserves.

No agistment permits or droving permits were issued this financial year on the stock route network.

### **In addition, the four DNR capital works projects within the stock route network were completed:**

- Construction of a new night yard and asset protection yard at the Bullawarrie water facility.
- Construction of a new concrete trough and foundation at the Vincent's Valley water facility.
- Construction of a new asset protection yard, including raised bunded area to combat the effects of erosion at the Mundalee water facility.
- Construction of a new night yard and asset protection yard at the Glencoe water facility.

## DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Council reviewed its domestic animal pound procedures to provide a more effective, efficient and safe service. The pound building was improved and painted with a mural by local Indigenous artists and a secure undercover drive-in unloading area was added.

1,141 dogs were registered for the 2020/2021 financial year.

Regular patrols were completed across all townships within the Shire for wandering dogs and other Local Law offences. As a result, 180 animals, 139 dogs and 41 cats, were impounded. Of those, 41 were reclaimed by their owners and 83 were re-homed. The remaining 16 were euthanised on vet advice or because they were deemed unsuitable for re-homing.

Council continues to receive reports about welfare issues across the Shire. After initial investigations, several of those were forwarded to DAF for follow-up. Patrols were increased in St George for wandering dogs including during early mornings and late afternoons.





# Investment & Adoption of Sustainable & Renewable Solutions

In October 2020 Council supported a feasibility study into Alternative Energy Initiative that was presented to Council in April 2021. As a result Council adopted the following 'Environmental Sustainability Strategic Statement' to provide Council staff with clear guidance when making decisions moving forward.

**Environmental Sustainability Strategic Statement:** *All Council decisions should consider Environmental sustainability as part of the decision making process and give preference to the more Environmental sustainable options, where cost effective.*

## DIRRANBANDI ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

This project funded a Dirranbandi Business Improvement Scheme (the Scheme) in the Dirranbandi township to support local businesses and promote tourism by improving commercial premises. This project was funded by the Australian Government under the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program with a total amount of \$426,000 + GST available under the Scheme.

21 projects in total were supported under the scheme which consisted of 12 businesses under Stream 1 (external façade and internal improvements), and 9 businesses supported under Stream 2 (energy efficiency improvements).

The Stream 2 Energy Efficiency project had two key goals:

1. support local businesses to achieve cost-savings through energy efficiency projects; and
2. to stimulate increased business profitability and sustainability for businesses in Dirranbandi.

The project enabled 5 businesses to install solar panels. Enviro Projects were engaged and commenced works in January 2021. Other energy efficiency projects included upgrades to air-flow efficiency air conditioners, cold room upgrade and new energy efficient lighting, oven and refrigerator.







## *Strong Partnerships with Stakeholder Groups & Government*

Council has played a major role in establishing the South-West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (SWQROC) and is secretariat and treasurer for the organisation. This saw the South-West Queensland Local Government Association wind up. The SWQROC employs an executive officer and provides a platform for the six member Council's to advocate for the region. The member Councils include Balonne, Maranoa, Bulloo, Paroo, Murweh and Quilpie Shires comprising approximately 320,000km<sup>2</sup> and representing 24,000 people. The first initiative was the 2020 State Election Candidate Scorecard – writing to the major parties contesting the Queensland State election seeking a response on the

priorities that aim to help communities across South-West Queensland grow and prosper.

The SWQROC also joined forces with the Western Queensland Alliance of Councils (WQAC), representing over 22 Councils across the north west, central west and south west of Queensland. The WQAC represents the views of rural and remote councils.



Visit the WQAC at [wqac.com.au](http://wqac.com.au)



# Advocacy for Triple Bottom Line Approach

Council continues to strive for Social, Economic and Environmental outcomes for the Council and across the Shire. The Triple Bottom Line is a sustainability framework recognising that while it is important to measure economic outcomes, it is equally as important to measure social and environmental elements when accounting for the true cost of something. To this end the Balonne Shire throughout this report has demonstrated its commitment to tourism, economic development, community wellbeing, energy efficiency, biosecurity, water and waste.

## DIRRANBANDI BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

A great example of the Triple Bottom Line approach is evident in the project funded by the Australian Government under the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program. Stream 1 invited applicants to improve their external façade and other internal improvements with two key goals:

1. support local businesses through stimulating trade and increasing patronage; and
2. provide overall social and economic benefits to Dirranbandi including increasing tourism and civic pride.

12 businesses were successful in Stream 1 with a range of works completed from external painting, new signage, minor repairs, new windows and internal updates such as new shelving and counters.

Overall, 21 projects in total were supported under the scheme which consisted of 12 businesses under Stream 1 (external façade and internal improvements), and 9 businesses supported under Stream 2 (energy efficiency improvements).

This project will improve business sustainability in the township of Dirranbandi and has given the town a real lift.



## Community Education Programs

Council continues to provide information to the community on environmental programs and public health across its social media, website and newsletter platforms.

A number of education programs were carried out during the year including animal awareness programs for our indigenous community.

Planet Ark's Tree Day is held in July each year. All schools in the Balonne Shire received a voucher for \$100 to help plant trees, shrubs or other plants suitable for their school gardens. This is a positive initiative which helps our environment and allows our school children to connect with nature.

### FOOD LICENCES

Balonne Shire Council issued 52 Food Licences together with four of these businesses having outdoor dining permits for their establishments. There were 10 temporary food permits during the year.

The Balonne Shire Council ensured that all licensing fees associated with Food Business were exempt in 2020/21 to help our local businesses during the pandemic.

Due to the Queensland Health guidelines, Council was required to issue a number of temporary food permits. This allowed our community groups who carried out catering such as BBQs at their events to continue.

All food business licence operators operated within the Queensland Health Guidelines for COVID-19. With 'QR' codes becoming a way of life the 'Check in Qld' scan has been posted on every entry point to these food business stores. This allows for fast contact tracing should our Shire experience a COVID-19 alert.

The buy local campaign continues to be successful with all the local businesses. This Balonne gift card allows for goods to be purchased locally which greatly assisted our businesses during this pandemic.

### COVID-19

Another year in a pandemic and Council continues to engage with its residents, community groups and businesses by keeping them informed with all Queensland Health guidelines, updates and alerts.

Council also assisted a large number of community residents who were planning personal celebrations such as weddings, engagements, milestone parties and farewells to loved ones.

Our community groups embraced the Queensland Health guideline changes with creative planning and COVID-safe events continuing throughout the year. Thanks to the many volunteers who stepped up to ensure our community continued to social distance, sanitise and register, thus keeping our community safer.

Council has also been working with Queensland Health and the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries to look at on-farm quarantine to assist our Agricultural and Horticultural industries bring in farm workers for harvest.

The Emergency Dashboard was launched in March 2021 to promote important information relevant to the pandemic and other disaster arrangements.





# Wastewater & Sewerage Services that Protect Public Health & Environment

## ASSET UPGRADE

The Dirranbandi rising sewerage main replacement program was funded under the Works for Queensland 2019-21 Round 3 funding from the Queensland State Government. Council sought to engage a suitable supplier however the project was delayed and will now be completed in 2021/22. The total cost of the project is \$530,000.

## WASTEWATER & SEWERAGE TESTING

The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission has contracted the University of Queensland and the University of South Australia to deliver the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program across Australia.

Council has committed another three years to the program.

Along with testing for illicit drugs and substances, COVID-19 tracing is also monitored in the waste water. This allows Queensland Health to monitor COVID-19 across the state and prepare alerts when deemed necessary.

## 2020-21 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	ANNUAL TARGET	ACTUAL
Evidence of collaborative approaches including partnerships and engagement	0	3
Number of strategic communication responses to advocate for balanced environmental laws and reform	5	2
Reduction in wild dog numbers	5% increase	25% reduction
Percentage of cluster fencing erected in the Shire	70% of Shire fenced	75%
Water consumption targets met for households and industry	100% compliance	Consumption notices were issued to all users of river water to reduce usage
Waste management consumption targets met for households and industry	5% decrease	Not currently measured
Forums, attendance at meetings and other community engagement programs	5% decrease	Council's attendance at community engagement programs in 2020/21 fell due to COVID restrictions however Council did conduct extensive consultation and provision of information to help businesses and community organisations to navigate COVID requirements
Implementation of the Stock Route Management and Biosecurity Plans	100% adopted	100%

## Into the Future

1. Council will continue to seek grant opportunities for waste management or best practice recycling opportunities.
2. Council continues to work with State Development seeking regional LGA opportunities in waste management.
3. Continued implementation of Council's Stock Route Compliance Priority Policy and Compliance Procedure.
4. Continued implementation of *Council's Biosecurity Plan 2019-2024* with the Biosecurity Advisory Committee and Wild Dog Advisory Committee.
5. Continued implementation of *Council's Stock Route Management Plan 2020-2025*.
6. Continued implementation of the Diversification of Weed Management through Cultural Burning project, which builds on initial trials with QMDCL to utilise cultural cool burning techniques to manage pest weeds and improve stock route condition.
7. Completion of Special Rate Scheme Round 1 and continuation of the Round 2 Special Rate Scheme – Wild dog fencing projects.
8. Completion of the Australian Government Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program – Dirranbandi and St George wild dog exclusion fencing projects.
9. Completion of the Annual animal inspection program within the Balonne Shire Council LGA.







# INFRASTRUCTURE & PLANNING

Effective town planning and infrastructure design to support the Shire's needs with a focus on visionary planning to suit changing needs into the future.

## 22 ACTIONS

were included in the Operational Plan for **Infrastructure & Planning**

## 11 ACTIONS ACHIEVED 90%

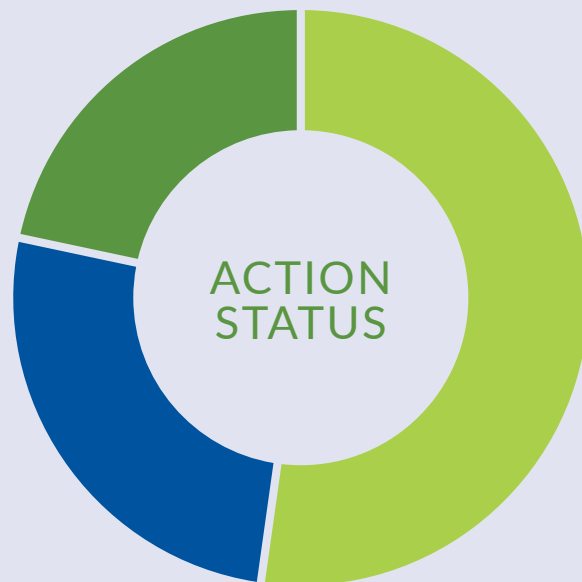
on target and/or complete

## 6 ACTIONS ACHIEVED BETWEEN 70%–90%

of action target

## 5 ACTIONS ACHIEVED LESS THAN 70%

of action target



50% (11)

ON TRACK

27.27% (6)

MONITOR

22.73% (5)

NEEDS WORK

0% (0)

NO TARGET

# Digital Connectivity for Business & Industry Growth & Social Connectedness

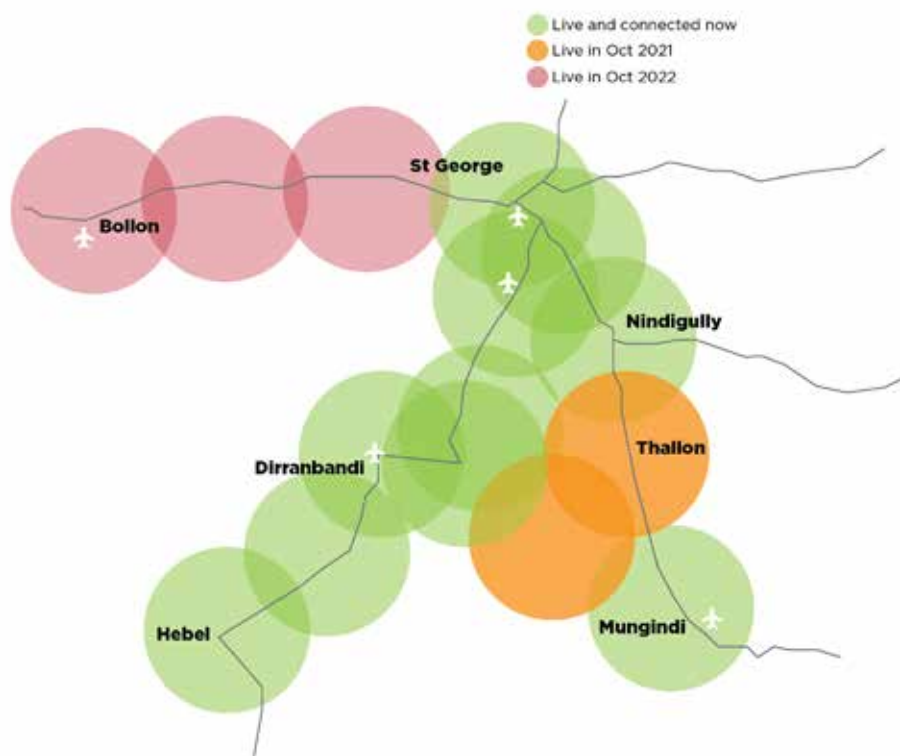
## DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY PROJECT | FIXED WIRELESS FOR THE BUSH

The Balonne Shire Council Digital Connectivity Project is a strategic and staged approach rolling out fast broadband internet via fixed wireless, with symmetrical speeds throughout the Balonne region. These are expected to connect both towns and landholders within the approximate 20 kilometre range of the telco towers.

Stage 1 of the program was funded with \$1m from the Queensland Government's *Building Our Regions Program* with Stages 3 and 4 funded with \$1m from the Australian Government under the Murray–Darling Basin Economic Development Program. Council's Telco Partner, Field Solutions Group, funded an additional \$1 million. This provided coverage to St George, Dirranbandi and Hebel by 30 June, with Thallon and Nindigully due in November 2021, and involved seven new 45 metre towers and equipment fitted to three existing structures. These three stages covered approximately 33 percent of the Shire area.

Stage 5 funding was approved by the NSW Cross-Border Commissioner to connect their fixed wireless network from Mungindi to Thallon, allowing both Moree Plains Shire and Balonne Shire to connect to NBN sources in both Brisbane and Sydney. This project is expected to be completed in 2022.

Council submitted two separate grants to the Australian Government for Stage 2 Bollon. However, it was Field Solutions Group that achieved a \$1.3 million Regional Connectivity grant, to be matched by \$1 million from the telco to install four new towers providing both broadband internet and 5G mobile connectivity to Bollon in 2023. This will add an additional 22 percent coverage of the Shire's area.





# Safe, Efficient, Connected Transport Networks

Balonne Shire Council has four grader crews operating throughout the Shire. These crews are responsible for all construction and maintenance works carried out on the Balonne local road network. The crews also support the Department of Transport and Main Roads for maintenance works on the State road network. Council also assisted the Queensland Police Service and Australian Defence Force with border closures by erecting barriers and locking gates.

## MAINTENANCE

This year Council implemented a monthly road update to inform residents of Council's maintenance grading program and priorities. The update has now been incorporated into the *Balonne Bulletin* and is also available on Council's website. The weather event of February 2020 had temporarily delayed standard maintenance programs. In March 2021 a second severe weather event also caused delays in the Mungindi area.



Council website: [balonne.qld.gov.au](http://balonne.qld.gov.au)

## SEVERE WEATHER EVENT FEBRUARY 2020

Following the February 2020 severe weather event Council conducted a comprehensive submission and lodged this with the State Government's Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA). The event was activated as a recognised event on 9 March 2020. By June 2020 Council had approval for flood recovery works through the QRA. As at 30 June 2021 Council has completed the flood damage restoration works on:

- Whyenbah Road
- Cubbie Road
- Lower Plains Road
- Thomby Road

## Flood damage restoration works are continuing on:

- Middle Road
- Mourilyan Road
- Rutherglen Road
- Unity Road
- Crescent Vale Road
- Powrunna Road
- Wagoo Road
- Commissioners Point Road
- Thurragi Road
- Johnson Road
- Gunnindaddy Road
- Narine Road

The Flood Damage Restoration Works will continue into the 2021/22 financial year with a completion date of 30 June 2022.



## **SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND SEVERE WEATHER MARCH 2021**

In March 2021 a second severe weather event impacted the region which once again resulted in flood damage to Council's local road assets. The second event was also lodged with the State Government's Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) and activated as a recognised event on 1 April 2021. Council undertook most of the works as Emergent Works and has since finalised its submission to the QRA in relation to flood damaged roads and as at 30 June 2021 was awaiting approval to undertake flood damage restoration works.

## **TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (TIDS)**

The Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS) is a jointly funded initiative between State and Local Governments. It is administered through the Road Alliance and the South-West Regional Roads Technical Group.

The funding is specifically for Local Roads of Regional Significance (LRRS) and is funded 50/50 by State and Local Governments.

### **The following projects received funding under TIDS in 2020/21:**

- **Bollon:** Dirranbandi Road Bitumen Reseal
- **Hebel:** Goodooga Road Bitumen Seal Upgrade (Co-contributed by the Heavy Vehicle Safety Productivity Programme)
- Kooroon Road Gravel Reseal
- **Mitchell:** Bollon Road Bitumen Resheet and Reseal

## **ROADS TO RECOVERY (R2R)**

Roads to Recovery (R2R) is a Federal Government funded multi-year program. This program was renewed by the Federal Government in 2020/21 and a funding amount of \$6.8 million was committed to Council for the period 2019/20 to 2023/24; \$1.7m of which was allocated in the 2020/21 financial year.

### **The following projects received funding under R2R in 2020/21:**

- Ballangarry Road Bitumen Seal Upgrade (Carnarvon Highway intersection to Ballangarry Bridge)
- Commissioners Point Road Culvert Replacement
- Commissioners Point Road Bitumen Reseal
- Thungaby Road Bitumen Reseal
- Wagoo Road Bitumen Reseal
- Thuraggi Road Gravel Resheeting
- Whytes Road Bitumen Reseal
- Albert Street Bitumen Reseal
- Alfred Street Bitumen Reseal
- Arthur Street Bitumen Reseal
- Barlee Street Bitumen Reseal
- Scott Street Bitumen Reseal
- Wilson Avenue Bitumen Reseal
- Cashelvale Road Culvert Installation
- Dingadee Road Gravel Resheet

## **STATE ROADS**

Council partners with the Department of Transport & Main Roads (TMR) to deliver contract maintenance and upgrade works on State controlled roads. Council has a Road Maintenance Performance Contract (RMPC) crew that services the State Road Maintenance Contract with the support of Council's construction crew to deliver maintenance and construction services.

## **ROAD MAINTENANCE PERFORMANCE CONTRACT**

Council delivered its largest Road Maintenance Performance Contract (RMPC) to date in 2020/21 maintaining the State Road network on behalf of the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR).

Council's road team successfully completed the contract with a 100% spend of the RMPC funds allocated.

Council's RMPC has increased from less than \$1 million in 2011/12 to \$3.2 million in 2020/21. A further increase to \$5 million has been announced for the 2021/22 financial year. This increase in funding is testament to Council continuing to meet TMR expectations of 100% spend whilst ensuring value for money and a high-quality service.





### **BOLLON WESTERN LEVEE**

Council was awarded the Minor Infrastructure Contract – Sole Invitee to deliver the construction of the Bollon Western Levee for the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR). The project consisted of earthworks preparation, embankment construction and bitumen works. These works were delivered to a high standard and well within contractual timeframes.

### **OLD BULLAMON BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, THALLON**

Council was awarded the Sole Invitee Contract to partner with RoadTek to deliver the construction of the Bullamon Bridge approaches on the Noondoo-Thallon Road at Thallon. The scope of works was the civil delivery of the approaches and support works for RoadTek for the construction of a new two-lane bridge over the Moonie River. The project was the final stage of the \$14 million program aimed at improving the Noondoo-Thallon Road and intersections of the Castlereagh and Carnarvon Highways. The end result is improved access to Noondoo and Thallon since the closure of the Thallon-Dirranbandi rail line in 2010.

### **NOOND00-THALLON ROAD REHABILITATION**

Council was awarded the Sole Invitee Contract to deliver rehabilitation works on the Noondoo – Thallon Road for TMR. These works were delivered to a high standard and well within the contractual timeframes.

### **AERODROMES**

Council is the operator of two registered Aerodromes at Dirranbandi and St George and an Aircraft Landing Area at Bollon and Hebel. Annual technical inspections were completed at St George and Dirranbandi, as required.

St George Aerodrome has a State Government regulated regular public transport service which is operated by Rex Airlines twice a week, and each aerodrome has a maintenance program.

### **ST GEORGE GENERAL AVIATION PROJECT**

Council received \$1 million in funding through Building our Regions fund with the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. The project will deliver a range of allotments of various sizes for private enterprise to construct hangars for aircraft storage. Site clearance initially took place in December 2019. A number of variations for delivery of the project were approved by the Department with delays in the tender process. Council's tender for the project received two conforming responses, however, both were significantly above the available budget. Council has decided to undertake the works and commenced the earthworks component of this project on 26 July 2021. The Land development and a public auction of the sites for lease will be completed in the 2021/22 financial year.



# Community Infrastructure for Existing & Future Needs

## ST GEORGE

Initial master planning of St George has been undertaken including scoping work for the upgrade to the Beardmore Dam Recreational Area and additional street scape within the Central Business District (CBD). A range of works commenced in 2019/2020 and continued during the 2020/2021 financial year. Grant funding from a range of sources has allowed continual upgrade and improvements to the river foreshore and festive/Christmas lighting. The river foreshore footpath extension stage 1 has included a new pedestrian foot bridge and will continue into the 2021/22 financial year to complete the next stage of footpath extension up behind the showgrounds, ending at the St George Hospital.

Council installed a new shade structure over the playground equipment in Jack Hammond Park, St George. The new solid shade structure was erected, replacing the failing shade cover and now provides improved shade for those using the playground equipment.

Irrigation works in Arthur Street were completed for 40 trees, lining the street and improving the amenity of the area.

## DIRRANBANDI

Council's Dirranbandi Thermal Bath project funded through the Federal Government's Murray-Darling Basin Regional Economic Development fund has progressed with the design agreed to by Council and extensive consultation completed with the Dirranbandi community. At the time of writing the Annual Report Council had called for tenders for the construction of the proposed Dirranbandi Thermal Bath.

Council completed the new children's playground area adjacent to the old Railway Station in Railway Street, Dirranbandi. This project included the construction of the new playground area, installation of new playground equipment, including the provision of soft fall and synthetic grass covering. A shade structure and safety fence was added to ensure the safety of children using the park.

The Dirranbandi Rail and River Precinct Masterplan is an ongoing project to be completed over nine stages. Stage 1 was funded by the Federal Murray-Darling Regional Economic Diversification Program (REDP) and comprised of the construction of gardens and a footpath as well as the installation of street furniture.

Stage 2, funded under the State Government's Works for Queensland (W4Q) COVID program, incorporated the construction of a public toilet block, playground, seating and picnic tables. Arbours were funded under the Drought Communities Program (DCP). Council will be submitting funding applications to continue with Stages 3 – 9.





**HEBEL**

Council installed a solar irrigation system at the Hebel Cemetery as part of an overall beautification project for Hebel. Water supply was extended through to the landfill areas.

A tree planting program was conducted around the Hebel Landfill Area, where in excess of 100 trees were placed around the perimeter of the landfill. This initiative was funded under the Works for Queensland (W4Q) COVID program.

The community was consulted in the lead up construction of the Hebel-Goodooga Road Bitumen Seal Upgrade that was funded by the TIDS and Heavy Vehicle Safety Productivity Programme. Discussions are continuing as to whether the Hebel-Goodooga Road should be re-aligned to improve safety at the primary school. This road opens up a major transport route from New South Wales.

Hebel has also been a hive of activity with the border closures with the Australian Defence Force and Queensland Police taking up a significant number of months (24/7) at their vehicle check point.

**THALLON**

The Drought Communities Program (DCP) provided funding for upgrade works to Thallon's Pine Street Park which received a new shade structure over the playground area, along with a new fence around the park area. The fencing was proposed following the severe drought and in the summer of 2019/20 large numbers of kangaroos congregating in the park and in many cases dying due to their poor condition.

Solar lights have also been installed along the footpath. The Thallon community had a festive Christmas event and Council has once again allocated further funding in its annual budget for more Christmas trees and lighting (across the Shire).

The Thallon Tennis Courts have also received an upgrade with a new dual sport court incorporating tennis, basketball and netball.





#### **NINDIGULLY**

Council continues to maintain the free camping area. This camping area at Nindigully was recognised in the 2020 Grey Nomad Awards. The transfer station also received new hardstand area utilising the State Government Works for Queensland (W4Q) COVID funding program.

#### **MUNGINDI**

Funding for the continuation of works to the Mungindi River Park has been successful under the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program (LGGSP) NSW Cross Border Funding and the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program (MDB EDP) Round 2. This funding has allowed for the erection of a shade structure over the playground area as well as a fence to improve the safety of users. The flood event in March 2021 has hampered efforts to complete these works with the recreation area under water for several months.



#### **BOLLON**

The past year has seen the completion of several projects for Bollon, including the installation of automatic irrigation systems at both the Civic Centre through the State Government Works for Queensland (W4Q) COVID funding program. Walter Austin Park was also irrigated utilising funding through the Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal's Tackling Tough Times Together funding.

Community consultation and site inspections took place as Council prepares for the construction of a new skate park at the Walter Austin Park. The design has now been agreed and construction will take place in 2021/22. The skate park is the result of the Bollon Primary School students presenting their idea to Council and while it has taken some time to be realised it demonstrates how our residents – no matter how big or small – can make a difference in their community – you just have to ask!





## *Protection and Enhancement of Water Supply*

The provision of a safe, secure and reliable water supply is critical to ensure that the wellbeing and needs of the community are met and is vital to meet the needs of the residents, ratepayers and visitors to each township within the Balonne Shire, no matter how large or small they are.

The enhancement of the community water supply is ongoing and involves the Council continually carrying out capital works either by Council funding or through State and Federal Grants. In 2020/2021 Council replaced mains within the St George township.

Council is continually improving the town water supply either by watermain replacement and/or upgrade of the reticulation network. Council will seek funding in 2021/22 with a view to preparing an overall plan and business case for additional water supply production bores to ensure security of supply to Balonne Shire communities.

### **WATER RESTRICTIONS**

Summer and winter rains within the catchment of the Balonne River provided communities within the Balonne Shire a secure outlook with storages within the river systems providing water security in 2020/21 with community and irrigation users being vigilant in their water usage.

### **ASSET UPGRADE**

Council has been consulting with the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (DRDMW) with a view to applying for an additional quote of water and the supply and installation, if required, of a second artesian bore.

# Sustainable Development & Planning

## BUILDING

In 2020/21 there were 35 building approvals issued in the Balonne Shire to the value of just over \$10 million. These approvals consisted of a variety of structures including new residential sheds and dwellings. There were seven new communication towers associated with Council's digital connectivity project, and the new Library Hub which contributed to the value of approvals being much higher than 2019-20 which was a total of \$2.64 million for 35 approvals.

## PLANNING

Planning applications significantly increased for 2020-21. Seventeen development applications were approved compared to seven in 2019-20. Approvals granted by Council in 2020-21 were:

- 'Health Care Services' and 'Caretakers Accommodation' (dental clinic)
- 'Telecommunications Facility' (7 telco towers)
- 'Community Use'
- 'Medium Impact Industry' (container refund depot and storage facility)
- 'Low Impact Industry' (livestock feed supplement storage facility)
- 'Reconfigure of a lot'

## 2020-21 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	ANNUAL TARGET	ACTUAL
Percentage of improved digital connectivity	5% increase	Approx 33% coverage of Balonne Shire
Communication and engagement with telcos and other providers	100%	100%
Percentage of infrastructure projects completed within budget and on time	90%	100% completed within budget 80% completed on time
Application of Smart Regions principles in new builds and infrastructure planning decisions	100%	Not currently measured however Council adopted a sustainability statement
Adoption of consistent infrastructure planning principles for all projects	100%	Not currently measured
Percentage of business and community members access to adequate communications	10% increase	Towers serving St George, Dirranbandi, Hebel and Mungindi

## Into the Future

- The South-West Regional Organisation of Councils (SWROC) will complete a digital strategy across the region and a housing strategy;
- Council will continue to complete flood recovery works to be finalised by 30 June 2022;
- The Library Hub development will be opened in 2021/22;
- The St George Aviation hangar development will be put to public auction in 2021/22;
- Bollon will have improved digital connectivity with a Regional Communications grant awarded to Field Solutions Group.













# GOVERNANCE

To develop an effective governance framework that drives enhanced organisational performance through project management, financial sustainability, performance management and community engagement.

## 33 ACTIONS

were included in the Operational Plan for **Governance**

## 26 ACTIONS ACHIEVED 90%

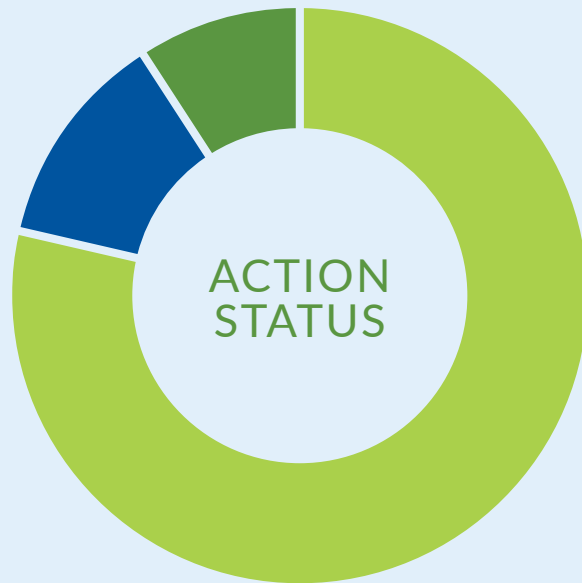
on target and/or complete

## 4 ACTIONS ACHIEVED BETWEEN 70%–90%

of action target

## 3 ACTIONS ACHIEVED LESS THAN 70%

of action target



78.79% (26)	ON TRACK
12.12% (4)	MONITOR
9.09% (3)	NEEDS WORK
0% (0)	NO TARGET



## Active Community & Stakeholder Engagement

### MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

Council will continue to actively engage with our community and stakeholders, with even more exciting plans and projects outlined for the next year.

In the past 12 months, our media and communications team have compiled some great new resources and expanded our social media presence. We are keeping our community informed online and in print, and in the 2021-22 financial year will re-introduce video reports as well.

Council has established a regular newsletter, the *Balonne Bulletin*. The first copy was distributed on 11 June 2021. The *Balonne Bulletin* is mailed to each postal address in the Balonne Shire, and is also available online via the Council's website. With the closure of the print editions of many regional newspapers in Queensland (and elsewhere in Australia), our region is not well-served by local newspapers (though the establishment of a weekly publication by the South-West Newspaper Co. is very welcome). The *Balonne Bulletin* is intended to help fill the gap in provision of a local newspaper coverage and reporting on our region. It allows Council to provide direct information to the Balonne community about our plans and activities and also to promote and celebrate local events and achievements.

During the 2020-21 financial year, Council has utilised regional radio stations to help get news and views out to our Shire residents. Council has supported Bourke-based radio station 2WEB, which is received by communities in the

southern parts of our Shire. Council has also supported Radio 4SG, 88FM, based in St George. Since 3 August 2020, Mayor Samantha O'Toole has presented a weekly segment, "Mayor on the Air", on 4SG, providing news and views from the Council to listeners in the St George area.

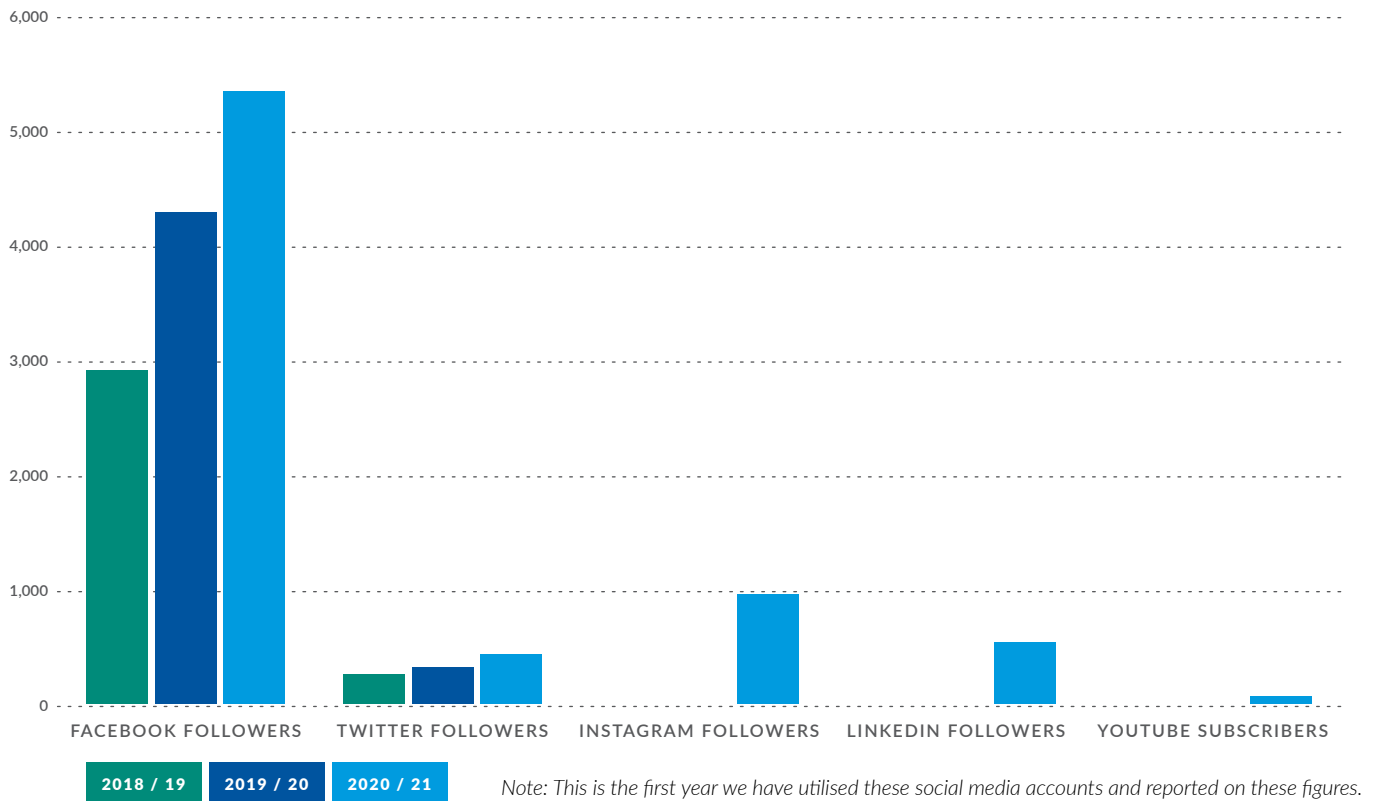
The media and communications team have also written and distributed numerous media releases during the past year. These have been published in regional newspapers (such as the *South West Newspaper* and the *Toowoomba Chronicle*) and reported on regional radio news bulletins. These media releases have also led to extended interviews on local radio stations, particularly ABC Radio Southern Queensland, based in Toowoomba. Frequent interviews on ABC Southern Queensland have allowed news from the Balonne Shire to be heard widely across Southern Queensland.

Television news coverage of the Balonne Shire is patchy, in fact infrequent. Council has achieved a number of television interviews with travelling Brisbane-based news crews and with Toowoomba-based television stations, however distance has proved a barrier to more frequent coverage.

It is partly in response to this that Council decided during the 2020-21 year to commence filming and airing news-report videos for use via our Facebook page, website and YouTube channel. The videos will also be provided to Brisbane and Toowoomba (and other television stations) for possible use in news stories. The video shot by our media and communications team will be television broadcast quality



## INCREASE IN SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE



so that it will be suitable for wider use by the ABC and commercial television stations. This removes the need for television news crews to always travel west to the Balonne to gather footage of events in the Shire and is expected to lead to improved coverage.

Council also uses a range of tools to inform our community. One of the primary ways of communicating with our Balonne residents – in real time – is via Facebook. It has offered a platform for our community to engage with Council quickly and easily. In 2021-21 Council's Facebook page had an average reach of 2,207 users per day.

At the end of the 2020-21 financial year, Council's total Facebook following was 5,276 users. Metrics on 'reach' during this financial year have also been captured for the first time, to set a benchmark for performance reporting and in turn drive social media strategy for years to come.

Council also has a presence on Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. While these accounts are smaller by comparison – partly due to the different demographics of users on these platforms – there is room for growth in their follower count, reach and engagement rate by creating targeted content fit for these specific platforms.

Council will continue to engage with our communities and key stakeholders for input into matters of strategic direction, improvement of community facilities, services and levels of service.

In 2020-21, Council commenced a revamp of the website with dual goals of user-friendliness and an updated corporate image. Existing content on the website is being refreshed, and additional content is being created to fill informational gaps. Council is working with the Local Government Association of Queensland on this project: their digital team is rebuilding the website with new look pages and a more user-friendly structure and adding online fillable forms for common tasks.

The new website format will be launched in 2021-22. It will provide a new standard of digital information for residents and other stakeholders, and an up-to-date point of reference for Council staff.

More information can be found on the Balonne Shire Council website, another primary source of direct contact with our residents.

**Council website:** [balonne.qld.gov.au](http://balonne.qld.gov.au)

Council is committed to continuing its communication with Balonne communities via a range of mediums. Residents are welcome to provide feedback on how they feel this communication could be further improved in the coming year.

**INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

We produce a weekly staff newsletter 'the Weekly Wrap' that is circulated to all Councillors and staff. It is an important means of keeping Council's own staff informed and up to date on what is happening across different areas of the Council and in different locations in the Shire.

**EMERGENCY DASHBOARD**

The newest feature of our website is the Emergency Dashboard. The dashboard provides real-time emergency and disaster management news and information in one convenient application. You can 'opt in' for SMS or email notifications on weather, emergency or traffic alerts. Live feed provides the latest information from QHealth, Qld Traffic, Bureau of Meteorology, SES, Council and more. Further details are provided on page 34 under Disaster Management.

**COMMUNITY CATCH UP DAYS**

There was limited opportunity for large gatherings during the financial year due to COVID restrictions. On 4-6 August 2020, our Councillors had their first opportunity to travel to each township and hold a Meet the Councillor event. Councillors have each been nominated at least one township to ensure that all community groups and residents have access to their elected members. Councillors collectively attended over 300 community meetings, site inspections and road runs over the financial year.







## Effective Strategic Planning & Partnerships

### REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Council was instrumental in the establishment of the South-West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils [SWQROC]. The six member Councils of Balonne, Maranoa, Murweh, Paroo, Bulloo and Quilpie that formed the South-West Queensland Local Government Association was dissolved in June 2021 and the new entity SWQROC was formed with the same Council member base.

The new entity employs an Executive Officer to help coordinate activities and advocate on behalf of the region. The SWQROC is closely aligned with the Western Queensland Alliance of Councils [WQAC] and consists of the three regional groups – North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (NWQROC), Remote Area Planning & Development Board (RAPAD) and SWQROC – providing a united voice for everyone in Western Queensland. The WQAC is a collaboration of the three regional organisations of councils in Western Queensland and covers 60 percent of the State of Queensland, representing 22 local government areas. More information can be found at Western Queensland Alliance of Councils ([wqac.com.au](http://wqac.com.au)). Three key areas of priority for the SWQROC and WQAC include roads, connectivity and housing.

### COUNTRY UNIVERSITY CENTRE – BALONNE

Council was successful in achieving grant funding from the Federal Government's Department of Education, Skills and Employment and Murray-Darling Basin Regional Economic Development Program to establish the CUC Balonne Ltd.

At the end of the 2020/21 financial year, the CUC Balonne had 15 students registered and at the time of preparing this Annual Report, there were 36 students registered. CUC has 2 campuses – one located in St George and another mini hub located in Dirranbandi. The CUC Balonne was established as a beneficial enterprise of the Balonne Shire Council as a charitable not for profit organisation. In its initial opening months, it held Mental Health First Aid Training with the Queensland Royal Flying Doctor Service, issued 11 Get Inspired Student Packs to new students, and reached over 5000 people via social media.

The CUC Balonne Ltd Centre Manager, Alix Greenhill, is working closely with Council as we build the new library that will be known as The Hub – and the new home of the CUC Balonne Ltd. The CUC was opened in the disaster training rooms at the rear of 112-118 Victoria Street, St George as we await the opening of the new library. State of the art technology was installed into the training and meetings rooms that allow students to access fast internet speeds, attend virtual lectures and complete exams in quiet secure spaces. Even after the new Hub opens these training rooms will continue to provide a venue for face to face training and as an overflow for students (especially around exam time).

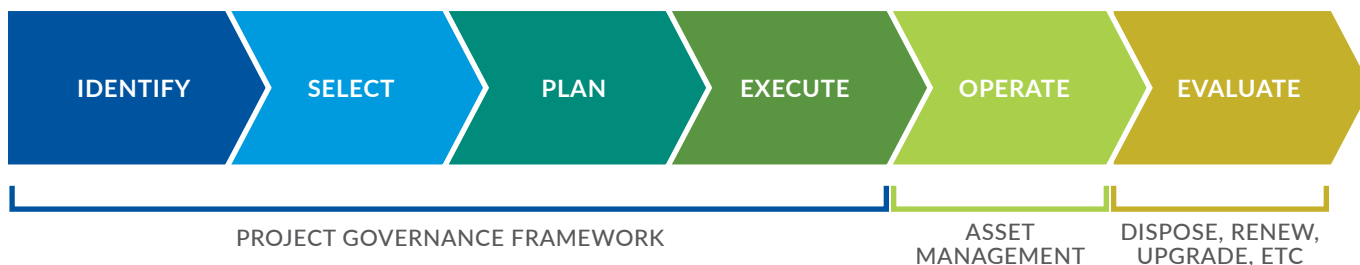
Sponsorships, donations and grant funding will assist the CUC Balonne Ltd to extend beyond its initial three years of funding. We take this opportunity to thank the Country University Centre Ltd and Mr Duncan Taylor for their support to our Centre Manager to get the centre operational. The CUC Balonne Ltd Board has a mix of skills from government, health and education fields.

#### CUC Board Members:

*Chair*; Matthew Magin, Chief Executive Officer, Balonne Shire Council  
*Non Executive Directors*; Alex Benn, Kym Weatherall, Frank Deshon, Andrea Killen, Councillor Samantha O'Toole and Duncan Taylor  
*Centre Manager*; Alix Greenhill

# Excellence in Service Delivery & Project Management

FIGURE 1: PROJECT LIFESTYLE



## PROJECT GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Council has established a project register as part of its continuous improvement in project management and delivery. Three staff participated in project management training in 2020/21. Projects are managed through the following project lifestyle with decision points at each new phase.

## ASSET MANAGEMENT

Council established an Assets Standing Committee, Plant Standing Committee and Parks & Gardens Standing Committee to improve the management of its diverse assets and facilities.

Council adopted a Non-Current Asset Policy that was considered by the Audit & Risk Committee and adopted by Council in March 2021. The policy and guidelines relate to the following functions:

- Acquiring, constructing or developing a non-current asset;
- Accounting for costs incurred in maintaining a non-current asset;
- Renewing, replacing or enhancing the service potential of a non-current asset;
- Revaluing non-current assets;
- Disposal of non-current assets;
- Accounting for the depreciation or amortisation of non-current assets;
- Establishing the useful life and residual value of non-current assets;
- Testing non-current assets for impairment.

Position papers were completed and submitted to Council's external auditors on the following topics:

### Impairment

A flood event occurred within the Shire in late March/early April 2021, causing some minor damage to Council's transport assets. In addition, a more significant flood event occurred during the previous 2019-20 financial year (February 2020), where sections of Balonne Shire Council's road network suffered damage. Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) approved restoration works are still in progress as of 30 June 2021.

Based on the analysis in the position paper the Audit & Risk Committee and Council accepted that no impairment should be applied to the financial asset values recorded in Council's financial asset register for the 2020-21 financial year due to the immateriality of values for all non-current asset classes.

### Interim Valuation review

An interim valuation review of Council's fixed assets was conducted and presented to the Audit & Risk Committee and Council. The report found no material changes to input factors and therefore Council resolved to make no changes to asset values other than for completed Capital Works for the 2020/21 financial year.

### Landfill remediation

The Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) issued the following Australian Accounting Standard - AASB 137 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets.

The Queensland Audit Office (QAO) requires Council to recognise a provision for remediation of its landfills on Council's balance sheet. This position paper was prepared based on an assessment of Council's six (6) current landfill sites by an external consultant.

### Revenue Recognition and new Accounting Standards

Council's Audit & Risk Committee considered the impact of new accounting standard AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors – identifying a 'potential' service concession arrangement relating to the St George Swimming Pool facility in the future that may fall within the scope of AASB 1059. At such time Council would recognise the relevant asset and liability on its balance sheet.

Council continues to work with the external auditors on the recognition of revenue and at each budget amendment relating to grant funding completes a checklist against the Accounting Standards AASB 1058 and AASB 15.



# High Levels of Accountability & Compliance

Council reviewed the Chief Executive Officer's delegated authority in January 2021, as required under the Local Government Act. The delegations register and authorised officer authorisations allow Council employees to operate within the risk appetite and tolerance set by Council and service our community.

**Related Party Disclosures (ASB1124)** requires the disclosure of relevant additional information in the Council's Annual Financial Statements for 2020/21 financial year. Council used the Governance Institute of Australia's best practice guide for consideration of related party transactions to determine if reporting was required. All key management personnel are required to complete an annual report (in addition to the requirements under the Local Government Act for a register of interests). This promotes openness and transparency in the way we operate.

## COUNCILLORS

Our Councillors have participated in a wide variety of training and professional development opportunities during 2020/21 including:

- **Elected Member Update:** Local Government Association Queensland
- **Conflict of Interest Training:** Department of Local Government
- **Integrity Training:** Department of Local Government and Integrity Commissioner
- **Understanding Financial Statements and Driving Performance:** Dr John Sing
- **Financial Sustainability:** Tony Brett
- **Local Government Association Queensland Annual Conference**
- **Financial Management and Asset Management:** Local Government Association Queensland
- **Social Media for Councillors (2):** Local Government Association Queensland

## COUNCILLOR CONDUCT REGISTER SECTION 150DY LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2009

There have been no Councillor complaints this financial year. There is still one matter pending with the Office of the Independent Assessor on a complaint that was raised in 2018/19 and originally deemed as no further action required. As of 30 June 2021, this matter was still unresolved despite final documentation submitted for consideration in April 2021.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Council implemented the Queensland Government rolling reform agenda that came into effect on 12 October 2020. Councillors and Management attended training and the Code of Meeting Practice, Councillor Code of Conduct and other relevant policies were updated within the required timeframes. Council also made a submission with the Local Government Association of Queensland calling for some changes under the new provisions that are difficult to implement retrospectively.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

Council won a Local Government Mutual Services Risk Excellence Award for the South-West Queensland Region. The Award is in recognition of Council's Enterprise Risk Management Improvement Program, which has seen Council undertake the following:

- Completed the QAO risk maturity assessment identifying areas for improvement.
- Comprehensive analysis of Council's strategic risks.
- Updated its enterprise risk management framework into a Risk Management System and compliance with Australian Standard ISO 31000:2018 Risk management – Guidelines.
- Conducted operational risk assessment workshops with its manager/supervisor group.
- Renaming their Audit Committee to include Risk – Audit & Risk Committee.
- Risk Management Report is now a standing Agenda Item on Council's quarterly reporting to their Audit & Risk Committee, and to Council and Management.
- The migration of Council's operational risks into their Risk Management System (CAMMs Integrated reporting system) to link with Council's Operational Plan.
- Council has undertaken a comprehensive review of their fraud and risk framework.

The Awards program is provided from Council's ongoing Membership with the LGMS mutual self-insurance Scheme. Council will be presented with a trophy at the Local Government Association of Queensland conference and is eligible to attend the National Local Government Risk Management Conference to be held in August 2022. Council will also receive \$20,000 in funding to assist in the future development of its risk management maturity.

# Financial Management for Long-Term Sustainability

## PROCUREMENT

Council is currently in the process of implementing and upgrading Vendor Panel to the NextGen Hub. With the Next Gen rollout all staff will be given refresh training in Council's procurement system and purchasing policies and procedures. Next Gen is raising the bar in sourcing and governance, creating opportunities for buyers in procurement, to deliver:

- Increased spend and process transparency.
- Visibility of risk.
- Increased avenues to deliver value for money.
- Removing inconsistent and complex procurement processes which impact how suppliers engage.
- Supporting local and regional economic development.
- Everything in one place making it easy for buyers and suppliers.
- Better value with smarter sourcing providing faster, more secure and cost-effective procurement capabilities.

Council also utilises Local Buy and the Queensland whole-of-government standing offer arrangements to achieve value for money.

In the past 12-month period Council utilised Vendor Panel for a total of 225 requests, 154 of these requests were for internal lists of preferred suppliers, 53 against external Local Buy lists and 18 Public Tenders. Council has a series of preferred supplier arrangements in place to improve efficiency and compliance including:

- Legal Services
- Wet & Dry Plant Hire
- Specialised Consultancy Services
- Supply & Deliver Road Building Materials
- Supply of Fencing Construction Contractors
- Supply of Fencing Materials
- Trade Services
- Traffic Management Services
- Cleaning Services

Council undertook several major procurement projects in 2020/21 including:

- Dirranbandi Improvement Scheme
- Design and Construction of Balonne Slash Pad
- Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing Schemes
- St George Library Hub Project
- Flood Reconstruction Works

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

2020/21 represents the first full year of utilising the new financial management system Synergy Soft and Definitiv. There have been continued challenges to fully embed the system and training across all areas of Council due to resourcing, changes in staff and border closures. Additional training was completed in October 2020 and May 2021 with IT Vision.

84 out of a total of 98 Council employees are now completing online timesheets reducing the volumes of manual handwritten timesheets.

The ICT Standing Committee met twice through the financial year to consider the budget and resourcing requirements for our Information Technology. The Committee revised its Terms of Reference, adopted a Cyber Incident Response Policy and Plan and monitored the implementation of the Digital Connectivity projects across the Shire.

Council has an arrangement in place with Field Solutions Group to provide 24 hour IT Managed Services with the cost shared between Council and the CUC Balonne Ltd. Council also conducted an audit of its IT requirements with Field Solutions Group and is currently migrating to a cloud environment to improve mobility of the workforce.

Video conferencing systems have been installed in the Boardroom and Country University Centre meeting rooms. This has enhanced the ability to conduct virtual meetings with relevant stakeholders and has been particularly useful for the frequent Local Disaster Management meetings with participants from New South Wales, Brisbane and across the Shire.

The new Emergency Dashboard was implemented and is now live.





# Safe & Healthy Workplace Environment

A **Health and Safety Committee** meets every three months. This committee includes management and Health and Safety representatives. All the Safety representatives have recently renewed their qualifications. Other Council officers and specialists are called in as required.

We have mandatory **Safety Training** that is undertaken by internal and external professionally qualified trainers. This training has been conducted in areas such as first aid, CPR, pool lifeguard activities, traffic management, ACDC and plant tickets. Supervisors and Managers are also in the process of undertaking a **Verification of Current Competency** with their staff to ensure their competencies are up to date with current plant.

Workplace **incidents and injuries** statistics for the last six financial years are shown in the table below. Strains/Sprains continue to dominate here with a clear majority of injuries reported. A high percentage of the reported incidents are the consequence of Slip/Trip and Fall injuries.

All WHS training including **staff inductions** continues to highlight our safety initiatives with most employees

undertaking some type of work health and safety training or induction during the year.

Council has continued to implement its Drug and Alcohol Policy conducting **random drug and alcohol tests** with a number of external and internal providers testing our employees this financial year. Contractors have also been tested at work sites. No disciplinary action was required with all staff returning a negative result.

**Hazard inspections** are helping identify items which require immediate rectification as well as for our maintenance programs. Job site inspections have indicated that, in most areas, we are compliant with requirements.

**Toolbox Talks** and **Take 5** are continuing as a simple and effective way to increase safety awareness across the workforce by getting workers involved in taking five minutes to think about the job ahead and the potential workplace hazards. These weekly messages allow supervisors and staff to consider a range of safety measures relevant to the workplace from electrical safety to manual office safety, pressure safety, trenching and excavating, and safety data sheets.

INJURY	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Strain/sprain	1	3	2	7	13	10
Foreign body	0	6	0	2	1	0
Bruise	0	3	1	1		1
Cuts/laceration	1	2	2	0	1	2
Burns/scalds	0	1	0	0	0	1
Skin irritation	0	1	0	0	1	1
Weld flash	1	0	0	0	0	0
Puncture	0	0	0	1	0	2
Poisoning	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plant damage						4



# Engaged Employees in Meaningful, Productive Work

Employees receive a **performance appraisal** on a twelve-monthly cycle. The purpose of the appraisal is to provide feedback on work completed, plan the year ahead and identify any training or skills gaps to be addressed.

Three **staff breakfasts** were held in 2020/21. Weekly water cooler chats have now gone live over Microsoft Teams to include as many staff as possible. Weekly staff newsletters are produced and all departments have regular smaller team meetings to enhance communications across the Shire.

## DEVELOPING OUR PEOPLE

Council has improved the management and recording of training with a comprehensive training register, qualifications and licence record and centralisation of training plans. The following training was provided to relevant staff in 2020/21:

- Safety Representative Training Course
- Lifeguard Update
- First Aid Certificate
- CPR
- Licence to Perform High Risk Work – Forklift
- Use Firearms to Humanely Destroy Animals
- Apply Poison baits for vertebrate pest control in Rural and Environmental Landscapes
- Chemcert – Control Weeds
- Fall Trees Manually
- Maintain Chainsaws
- Trim and Cut Felled Trees
- Certificate IV in Tourism
- Perform a Rescue from a Live LV panel
- Statement of Attainment – Conduct Backhoe and Loader Operations
- Fire Warden and Fire Extinguisher Training
- Certificate III in Aviation (Remote Pilot)
- Transport and Store Chemicals
- Safe Application of Chemicals
- Prepare and apply chemicals to control pest, weeds and diseases
- Completing 1080 Risk and Awareness Training
- Prepare to Work Safely in the Construction Industry
- Working in Proximity to Traffic – Awareness part 1 and 2
- Know your Natives – At Risk Wildlife and Habitat Monitoring Workshop
- Applying Effective Wildlife Hazard Management Practices
- Level 1 Bridge Inspection E – Workshop
- Mental Health First Aid
- Certificate of Attendance – Road Safety Audit – Workshop
- Bridge Inspection Workshop L1 & 2
- Certificate of Attendance – ArcGIS Online – View Only
- Certificate of Attendance – ArcGIS Online – Field Data Capture
- Certificate III in Library Services
- Diploma of Project Management
- Certificate of Completion – Executive Management in Queensland Local Government Programme
- Certificate in Engagement methods
- Queensland Human Rights
- Traffic Implementation program
- Aeronautical Radio Operator Certificate
- Animal Welfare
- CPD Certificate – Tax Ed Government – Non-profit Tax Training and Support
- Bridge Inspection Level 1
- Diploma of Local Government Administration
- Diploma of Human Resource Management
- Certificate IV – Record Keeping
- Diploma of Procurement and Contracting
- Certificate IV – Civil Construction
- Post Grad – Risk Management and Corporate Governance
- Professional Certificate in AM Planning
- High Consequence Decision Making Masterclass
- Caterpillar Multi Models Graders
- Road Safety Audit
- Fauna Spotters Course
- Certificate III in Playground Inspections
- Noise Course
- Business and Corporate Planning
- LMS Refresher Training
- Grant Finder Platform Training

We actively encourage our employees to undertake study to enhance their knowledge and skills. As part of the training guidelines, Council contributes to the financial cost of approved courses. Council has seven staff registered with the Country University Centre who are at various stages of a range of studies from a degree in accounting to apprentice mechanic.



# Effective Investment Program & Innovative Finance Approaches

Council reviews its Investment Policy each financial year as part of its budget. Council has investments through the Queensland Treasury Corporation [QTC] and several smaller short-term investments with Westpac Banking Corporation.

Council obtained an independent report on Financial Sustainability in late 2020 and has attended several financial management training and professional development opportunities provided by the Local Government Association Queensland, Department of Local Government and Local Governance Finance Professionals (Qld).

Council was the lead in working with the South West Regional Roads and Transport Group to improve Asset Management across the region with funding through the Queensland Government Local Government Grants & Subsidies Program. Council moved to ArcGIS and as part of the project achieved an asset management hub space.

Council has continued to improve its accounting treatment of assets in consultation with the Queensland Audit Office and external auditors. A position paper and Non-Current Asset Policy and guidelines were adopted by the Audit & Risk Committee in 2020/21 as we continue to work with our contracted Asset Accountant.

The Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing [WDEF] Special Rate Scheme is an innovative approach to promote economic development across the Shire. 20 property assessments were included in Round 1 with Council borrowing \$3.715m\* from Queensland Treasury Corporation resulting in 397.513km of fencing. Council approved a further 15 property assessments in Round 2 with a draw-down of an additional \$1.511m\* and 237.3km of fencing. (\*figures are excluding capitalised interest).

## 2020-21 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	ANNUAL TARGET	ACTUAL
Evidence of reduced duplication of services	5% increase in efficiency	service delivery reviews underway
Number of government/industry joint initiatives	2	2
Compliance with statutory and corporate compliance	100%	100%
Improved financial sustainability ratios	Refer to page 89 community finance report	
Employee satisfaction	10% increase	To be assessed in October 2021



## Into the Future

In 2021/22 Council proposes to:

- Continuously improve Work Health & Safety processes and will consider a new WHS IT system.
- Revise and update the Corporate Plan for the next five years.

- Introduce mobile tablets across the workforce to improve mobility, access and promote efficiency.
- Finalise the installation of IT into The Hub.
- Roll out a new and improved CCTV network across the Shire.

# Statutory Information

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR OUR COUNCILLORS

Councillors have participated in professional development sessions and regional meetings to stay across the diverse range of responsibilities including:

- PEAK social media training
- Elected Member Update with Local Government Association
- Conflict of Interest/Integrity Refresher Session hosted by Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning

Councillors and Senior Management have attended a range of meetings virtually or in person during 2020/21:

- South West Queensland Local Government Association
- South West Regional Economic Development (SWRED)
- South West Regional Transport & Roads Group
- Darling Downs & South West Queensland Council of Mayors
- Wild Dog Barrier Fence Advisory Group
- Southwest Regional Waste Group
- Regional Tourism Organisation/ Association
- Regional Arts Development Fund Reference Panel
- Adventure Way
- Great Inland Way
- Tourism Operators Meeting
- Queensland Great Artesian Basin Advisory Committee

- Murray-Darling Association
- Border Region of Councils
- LGAQ Disaster Management Conference Brisbane – MM and DW attended
- Land Forces Conference
- SWQROC Deputations including face to face meeting held in St George
- WQAC Richmond conference
- DSSQW meeting – hosted by BSC included tour, golf club dinner
- Various ministerial visits: Minister Dutton, Minister Littleproud
- Various MDA meetings and events: Mayor only
- CUC Balonne Meetings and Open Day – Mayor and Matthew Magin only. Matthew is chair of meeting.
- Darling Downs & SWQ Council of Mayors Meeting (MM and SOT attended)
- LGAQ EMU – Elected Members Update

Councillors have worked with our Senior Leadership Group in workshops and committee meetings to formulate policy and strategic direction across a wide range of issues including:

- Rates and levies reviews
- Budget workshops
- Project planning for grant funding opportunities
- Asset management

Council held 94 workshops in 2020/21.





## COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

COUNCILLOR NAME	DATES	COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING	SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
Cr Samantha O'Toole (Mayor)	1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020	11	3
Cr Richard Lomman (Deputy Mayor)	10 April 2020 to 30 June 2020	3	2
Cr Scott Scriven	1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020	12	3
Cr Ian Todd	1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020	12	3
Cr Robyn Fuhrmeister	1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020	12	3
Cr William Winks	10 April 2020 to 30 June 2020	3	2
Cr Rod Avery	10 April 2020 to 30 June 2020	3	2

Council held the following number of Standing Committee meetings in 2020/21:

- Asset Committee (2)
- Parks & Gardens Committee (1)
- Plant Committee (2)
- Audit and Risk Committee (4)
- Information, Communications and Technology Committee (3)

## COUNCILLOR CONDUCT (S150) AND COUNCILLOR COMPLAINTS REGISTER/ANY DECISIONS OF QIA

No councillor complaints were received in 2020/21. One matter outstanding from 2018/19 is still pending resolution through the Councillor Conduct Tribunal.

## COUNCILLOR REMUNERATION INCLUDING FACILITIES

OVERALL TOTALS					
COUNCILLOR NAME	BASE ALLOWANCE	MEETING FEES	PRIVATE VEHICLE	OTHER EXPENDITURE	TOTAL GROSS
<b>OVERALL TOTALS</b>	<b>\$351,023.40</b>	<b>\$90,183.60</b>	<b>\$16,743.84</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$457,950.84</b>
Cr Samantha O'Toole (Mayor)	\$108,222.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$108,222.00
Cr Richard Lomman (Deputy Mayor)	\$62,435.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$62,435.00
Cr Rod Avery	\$36,073.28	\$18,036.72	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$54,110.00
Cr Robyn Fuhrmeister	\$36,073.28	\$18,036.72	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$54,110.00
Cr Scott Scriven	\$36,073.28	\$18,036.72	\$110.16	\$0.00	\$54,220.16
Cr Ian Todd	\$36,073.28	\$18,036.72	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$54,110.00
Cr William Winks	\$36,073.28	\$18,036.72	\$16,633.68	\$0.00	\$70,743.68

## SENIOR MANAGEMENT REMUNERATION

Remuneration package including salary, superannuation, rental assistance and vehicle for the Senior Leadership Group (SLG) totalled \$805,929 in 2020/21.

REMUNERATION PACKAGE RANGE	NUMBER OF CONTRACT POSITIONS
\$0.00 – \$100,000	2
\$100,001 – \$200,000	6
\$200,001 – \$300,000	1

Council has four senior executives and three managers on contract and two remote contract positions.

## ADVISORY GROUPS AND COMMITTEES:

Councillor adopted the following Standing Committees, Advisory Committees and User Groups to consult with both internal and external stakeholders:

### Standing Committees:

- Audit & Risk Committee (Statutory)
- Information Communications & Technology (ICT) Standing Committee
- Assets Standing Committee
- Plant Standing Committee
- Parks & Gardens Standing Committee

### Advisory Committees:

- Biosecurity Advisory Committee
- Wild Dog Advisory Committee
- Community Advisory Committee
- Work Camp Advisory Committee
- Dirranbandi Swimming Pool Advisory Committee
- Economic Development Advisory Committee

### Working and User Groups:

- Innovation Library Hub Working Group
- Dirranbandi Multi Sports User Group
- RV Strategy Working Group
- Rowden Park Users Group
- Business Taskforce including Business Mentoring Advisory Group and Bettering Balonne
- Dirranbandi Showgrounds User Group
- Bollon Showgrounds User Group
- St George Showgrounds User Group

### Disaster Management:

- Local Disaster Management Group
- Local Disaster Community Recovery Committee

### Regional Groups/Organisations:

- South West Economic Development Group
- South West Regional Roads & Transport Group
- South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
- South West Regional Waste Group
- Wild Dog Barrier Fence Committee (Qld State)
- Outback Queensland Tourism Association
- Murray-Darling Association
- Border Region of Councils

## REGISTERS/POLICIES S190 LGR MUST INCLUDE ANY INVITATIONS TO CHANGE TENDERS / CONCESSIONS FOR RATES/ CHARGES

### Registers held by Council

In accordance with section 190(1) (f) of the Local Government Regulation, 2012, the following lists the registers and other publications that are kept under the control of the Chief Executive Officer.

These are open to inspection, with or without restriction, in some cases charges may apply for copies or extracts if these are allowable.

- Land Record
- Fees and Charges
- Road Register
- Local Law Policies
- Planning Scheme
- Council Meeting Minutes
- Council Delegation to Chief Executive Officer
- Delegations by Chief Executive Officer to employees
- Policy Register
- Corporate Plan
- Annual Operational Plan
- Budget
- Lease register
- Archive Register

*Council maintains a current and up-to-date policy register, which indicates when policies require to be reviewed.*

### Policies adopted or reviewed by Council in 2020/21 were:

- Revenue Policy
- Investment Policy
- Debt Policy
- External Grant Application and Management Policy
- Wild Dog Exclusion Fence Vegetation Clearance Policy
- Light Vehicle Fleet Policy
- Councillor Complaints Investigation Policy
- BSC Climate Resilience Policy Statement
- Stock Route Compliance Priority Policy and Compliance Procedure
- Amendment to Temporary Transfer of CAP Policy

- Town Commons Agistment Policy
- Facility Booking Policy
- Tourism Events Grant Policy
- Facility Booking Policy
- Body Worn and Vehicle Mounted Camera Policy

### The following Management Directives were adopted by the Senior Leadership Group:

- Return to Work Management Directive
- Reasonable Adjustment Management Directive
- Fact Sheet – Reasonable Directions

## LAND AND RESERVES

Council is responsible for the following land under infrastructure:

- 3,019km of roads (a further 639.58km of Main Roads are within the Shire); and
- 14,040.66 hectares of reserve land that are reserves under the *Land Act*



## SPECIAL RATES AND CHARGES – LEVIES

### Thallon Town Rural Fire Brigade

For 2020/21 year, a special charge was levied on those rateable properties contained within the benefited area of Thallon. This was for the purpose of raising revenue to fund the operation of the Thallon Town Rural Fire Brigade. During the year \$7,564.80 was levied.

### Domestic Animal Special Charge

For the 2020/21 year a special charge was levied on those rateable properties Category 1 – 3 within the Balonne Shire Council boundary. This levy is for the purpose of raising revenue to assist funding Council's Domestic Animal Management services or activities in the Shire. During the year \$29,757.00 was levied.

### Feral Animal Special Charge

For the 2020/21 year a special charge was levied on those rateable properties in the Rating Categories 79,80,81 and category 100 and all properties  $\geq$  1,000 Hectares in Category 200 and Category 300 within the Balonne Shire Council boundary. This levy is for the purpose of raising revenue to fund the continued operation of Feral Animal Management services or activities in the Shire. During the year \$164,025.28 was levied.

### Environmental Special Charge

For the 2020/21 year a special charge was levied on those rateable properties contained in the benefited area surrounding the townships of St George, Dirranbandi, Bollon, Thallon, Hebel, Mungindi and Nindigully. This was for the purpose of raising revenue to fund the continued operation of the landfills in St George, Dirranbandi, Bollon, Hebel, Thallon and Nindigully. During the year \$10,250 was levied.

### Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing Special Rate Scheme

For the 2020/21 year a special rate was levied on those approved rateable properties that participated in Round 1 and Round 2 of the Special Rate Scheme for the specific purpose to construct exclusion fencing on the benefited properties.

The special rate scheme is underpinned with a loan from Queensland Treasury Corporation with a total of \$4.5m drawn down from the loan facility. Rates for the scheme will start to be levied in 2022/23.

## LEVIED \$ FIGURES 2019/20

SPECIAL RATES	LEVY (2020/21)
Thallon Town Rural Fire Brigade	\$7,564.80
Domestic Animal Levy	\$29,757.00
Feral Animal Levy	\$164,025.28
Environmental Levy	\$10,300.00

## REBATES AND CONCESSIONS

### Pensioner Rebate Remissions

Council provides a remission of rates for properties owned or occupied by pensioners, equal to a maximum of \$170.00 per annum to owners of qualifying premises. The subsidy was in addition to the subsidy offered by the State Government. This includes a concession for pensioners for their waste services.

### Payment of Rates by Instalments

The Council will accept applications for payment of rates by instalments from property owners who can demonstrate a genuine financial hardship. The Council has determined that each such application is to be assessed on its merits. All instalment plans must have the effect of liquidating the debt within six months unless Council by resolution determines otherwise.

No premium is charged for the payment of rates by instalments under such arrangements, however interest continues to be charged on overdue rates which are subject to an instalment payment plan. The applicant must comply strictly with the terms of the instalment plan agreed to. Default will result in Council requiring immediate full payment of future instalments.

### Concessions for Rates and Charges and other remission requests

Concessions for rates and charges and other remission requests, or rate deferral requests are assessed on a case by case basis in accordance with Section 190 (1)(g) of the *Local Government Regulations 2012*. Balonne Shire Council grants concessions of 50% of utility charges to eligible religious, charitable and other organisations. Total concessions granted for 2020/21 was \$19,395.68.

### Discount for prompt Payment of Rates and Charges

Council allows a discount for prompt payments of rates/charges as a means of ensuring a timely flow of cash to fund its operations. Council set by resolution at its Budget Meeting a discount of 10% with the date by which the rate must be paid at least 30 days after the issue of the rates notice. Council provides the discount for each rate moiety.

### The discount applies to the prompt payment of:

- General rates
- Urban Water Charges including Excess Water and Consumption Charges
- Rural Residential Water Charges

### Excess Water Charges include:

- Sewerage Charges
- Cleansing Charges
- Thallon Town Rural Fire Brigade Special Charges

## INVITATIONS TO CHANGE TENDERS

There were no invitations to change tender specifications over 2020/21.

### Grants to community organisations

- Free or concessional use of Council facilities – \$7,420

## REGIONAL ARTS DEVELOPMENT FUND 2020/21 PROJECTS

### Regional Arts Development Fund

Ten applicants received funding for arts and cultural activities through Council's Regional Arts Development Fund in the 2 rounds of the financial year. A total of \$27,328.10 was provided by Council. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic many events and workshops were unable to go ahead as planned.

EVENT	ORGANISER
Funny Mummies	St George Farmhouse
Camerata Live	St Patrick's Catholic School P&F Association
Thallon Sculpture Trail	Thallon Progress Association
Are You Lonesome Tonight	Opera Queensland
Mosaics for Beginners	QCWA St George Branch
Plasma Laser Cut Art Trail	Dirranbandi Progress Association
St George Region Aboriginal Arts Workshop	Surat Aboriginal Corporation
Ballet Workshops - Regional Tour	Queensland Ballet
Brushstrokes with Lyn	St George Arts Groups
A night in Tuscany	Opera Eagles Nest (postponed)





# COMMUNITY FINANCIAL REPORT

The Community Financial Report is a simplified version of Council's financial performance and position for the 2020/21 financial year. The aim of the report is to assist readers in evaluating Council's financial performance and position without the need to interpret the financial information contained in the Annual Financial Statements.

Council's financial statements are audited by the Queensland Audit Office in partnership with Prosperity Audit Services.

The key statements that are summarised in the Community Financial Report are:

- Statement of Comprehensive Income
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Financial Position
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Financial Sustainability Ratios

Executive summary of key financial highlights:

- Cash holdings of \$37,479,585 generating \$464,352 in interest revenue
- Council debt increased as a result of borrowing for the WDEF Special Rate Loan Scheme (Round 2)



## 5-YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY

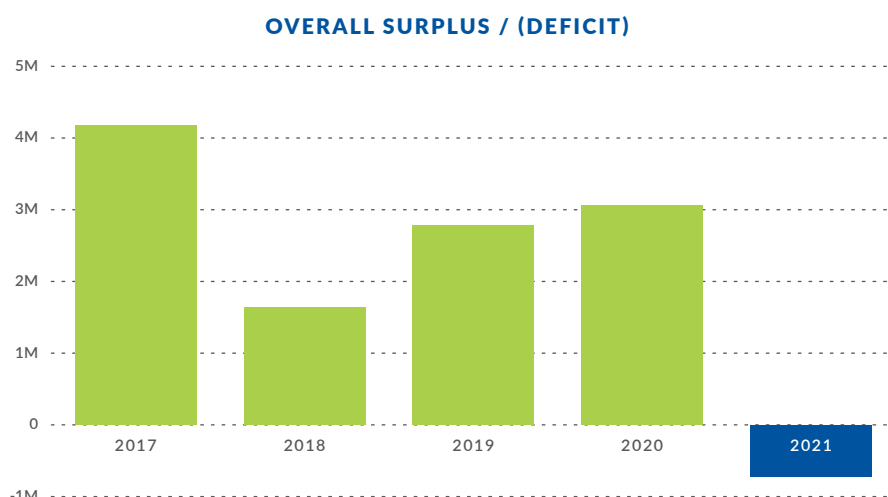
FINANCIAL FAST FACTS	2016/17 \$'000	2017/18 \$'000	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
Capital Expenditure	\$6,537	\$7,013	\$8,946	\$8,724	\$9,977
Net Result – Surplus (Deficit)	\$4,183	\$1,645	\$2,779	\$3,062	(\$723)
Increase/(Decrease) in Net Assets	\$6,367	\$3,551	\$45,628	\$1,535	(\$723)
Revenue	\$27,966	\$25,648	\$27,636	\$32,998	\$52,086
Percentage of Revenue from Rates & Charges	38%	38%	38%	32%	19.5%
Expenses	\$23,783	\$24,003	\$24,857	\$29,936	\$52,809
Cash Holdings	\$21,616	\$25,595	\$31,225	\$40,239	\$37,479
Restricted Cash	\$6,976	\$8,163	\$15,396	\$19,215	\$10,110
Borrowings	\$3,180	\$2,932	\$2,659	\$5,572	\$6,851
WIP	\$689	\$2,415	\$4,759	\$8,114	\$11,427

## Statement of Comprehensive Income

The Statement of Comprehensive Income measures how Council performed in relation to revenue and expenses for the year. Council's operating result for 2020/21 was a deficit of \$723 thousand which is the difference between revenue and expenses.

In comparison Council's operating surplus has reduced from \$3.062 million in 2019/20 to a deficit of \$723 thousand due largely to a reduction in capital grant funding.

The Statement of Comprehensive Income shows both cash transactions and non-cash transactions. For example, all rates issued are recorded as revenue when levied irrespective of them actually being paid. The amount not paid would show in the Statement of Financial Position as an amount owed to Council. In accounting terms this is referred to as accrual accounting principles.



## 5-Year Financial Summary of Revenue & Expenses

REVENUE	2016/17 \$'000	2017/18 \$'000	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
Rates, Levies and Charges (Net of Discounts)	\$9,472	\$9,789	\$10,470	\$10,478	\$10,159
Federal Assistance Grant	\$7,576	\$5,438	\$5,805	\$5,854	\$5,807
Other Grants, Subsidies & Contributions	\$5,348	\$5,802	\$7,048	\$8,892	\$27,183
Sales Revenue	\$4,145	\$3,144	\$2,803	\$6,582	\$7,757
Interest and Investment Revenue	\$425	\$584	\$683	\$389	\$464
Other Income	\$357	\$389	\$315	\$295	\$188
Fees and Charges	\$269	\$276	\$273	\$292	\$236
Rental Income	\$238	\$226	\$239	\$209	\$292
Capital Income	\$136	\$0	\$0	\$7	\$0
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$27,966</b>	<b>\$25,648</b>	<b>\$27,636</b>	<b>\$32,998</b>	<b>\$52,086</b>
EXPENSES	2016/17 \$'000	2017/18 \$'000	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
Employee Costs	\$6,113	\$6,126	\$6,285	\$6,927	\$8,272
Material Services & Other Expenses	\$9,438	\$9,181	\$10,763	\$15,112	\$36,245
Depreciation	\$8,012	\$8,190	\$7,324	\$7,699	\$7,673
Borrowing Costs	\$220	\$212	\$184	\$198	\$226
Capital Expenses	\$0	\$294	\$1	\$0	\$393
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$23,783</b>	<b>\$24,003</b>	<b>\$24,857</b>	<b>\$29,936</b>	<b>\$52,809</b>





# Operating Revenue

Council's total revenue for the financial year was \$52.086 million.

## NET RATES, LEVIES & CHARGES – \$10.159 MILLION

- General rates/Community Levy totalled \$6.562 million
- Special Rates from Domestic Animal, Feral Animal and Thallon Fire Levies \$199 thousand
- Water charges of \$1.923 million for access and \$311 thousand for water consumption and sundry water charges
- Urban waste water charges of \$1.080 million
- Waste service charges of \$1.126 million
- Total rates discounts and write-offs of \$1.002 million and Pensioner remissions of \$356 thousand.

## FEES & CHARGES – \$236,097

This includes (but is not limited to):

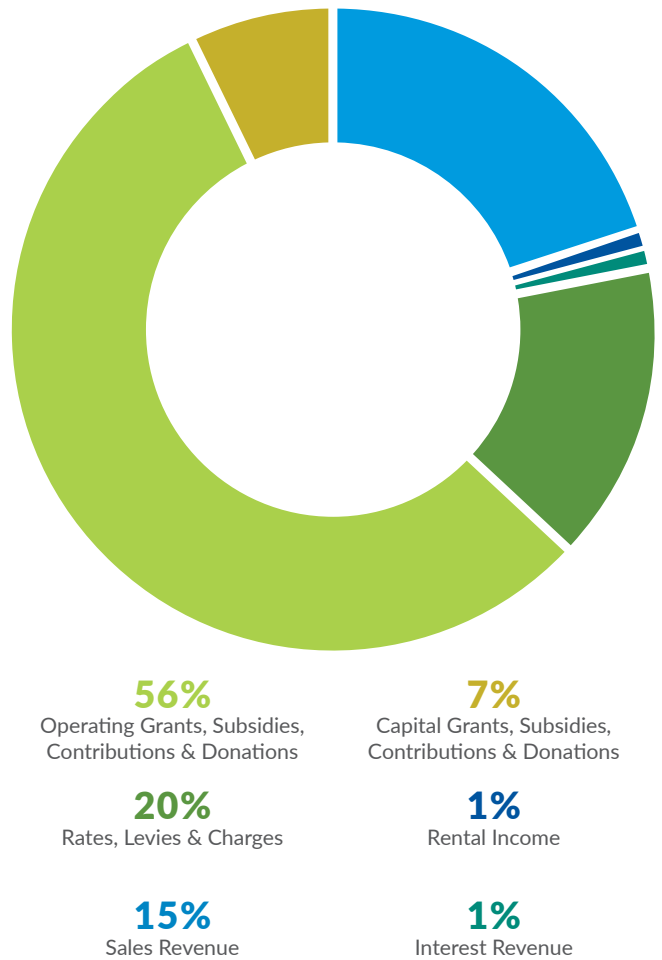
- Planning and building \$77,296
- Cemetery charges \$64,575
- Hire charges \$50,255
- Waste management fees \$18,901

## OPERATING GRANTS, SUBSIDIES, CONTRIBUTIONS & DONATIONS – \$29.403 MILLION

Operating grant funding varies from year to year depending on the number of successful grant applications received. The annual Federal Financial Assistance Grant contributed \$5.807 million to the overall operational Grant funding which included a 'bring forward' payment of the 2021/22 allocation of \$3.013 million. Council also recognised \$15.142 million of funding for QRA Flood Damage submissions.

## CAPITAL GRANTS, SUBSIDIES, CONTRIBUTIONS & DONATIONS – \$3.587 MILLION

Capital revenue varies from year to year depending on the level of grant funding sourced. In 2020/21 Council received funds for Works for Queensland projects, Roads to Recovery projects, the Library Hub project, an Aerodrome Project and other various State and Commonwealth government subsidies and grants.





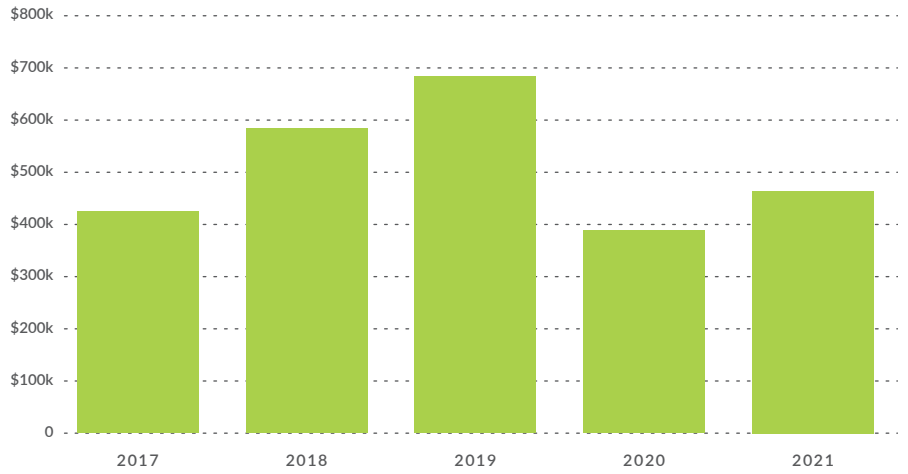
**INTEREST & INVESTMENT REVENUE**

- \$464,352

Council's cash investments were held by Westpac Banking Corporation and Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) and returned interest revenue of \$312,180.

Council charged interest of 8.53% on outstanding rates, levies and charges balances which generated \$44,809. Interest of \$107,363 was accrued as part of WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme.

**INTEREST & INVESTMENT REVENUE**

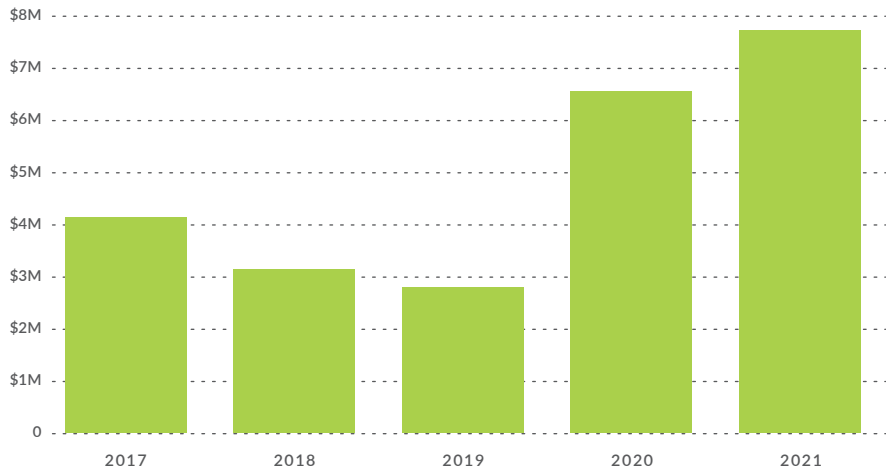


**SALES REVENUE - \$7.757 MILLION**

Sales revenue contributed to \$7.757 million of Council's income in 2020/21 up from \$6.582 million in 2019/20.

The significant increase in sales revenue is due to an increase in State Transport and Main Roads funding.

**SALES REVENUE**



# Operating Expenses

Council's total expenses for 2020/21 were \$52.416 million up from \$29.936 million in 2019/20. The significant increase was a result of the spending on QRA Flood Damage works.

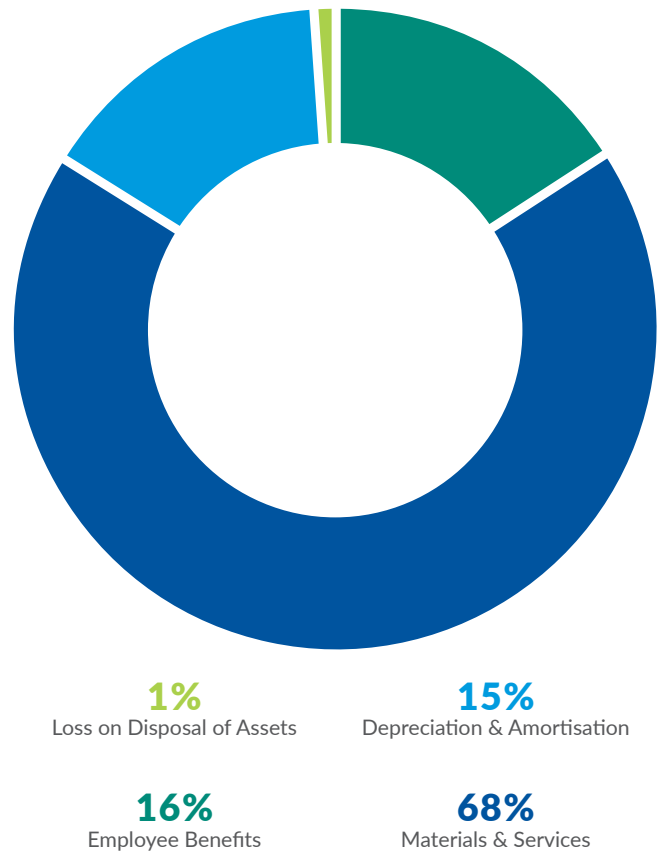
Operating expenses consist of materials and services, employee benefits, depreciation, finance costs and loss on disposal of assets. A breakdown of Council's 2020/21 operating expenses is shown opposite.

Council provides a wide range of services to the community. This work is performed by Council staff and in some instances contractors. Wherever possible, local suppliers and local contractors are used, so the money flows back into the local economy.

The three major cost categories are employee costs, materials and services and depreciation.

Materials and services of \$36.245 million accounted for 69% of all operating expenses. The costs for materials and services incorporates our payments to suppliers for the delivery of services and projects to the community such as roads, parks, water, sewerage, waste, footpaths, libraries, pools, community halls, planning and building services and compliance and includes payments for purchases like bitumen materials, gravel, electricity, fuel and other operational costs.

Employee costs of \$8.272 million included employee salaries and wages, superannuation, leave entitlements and Councillor remuneration.





## 5 Year Financial Depreciation by Asset Class

REVENUE	2016/17 \$'000	2017/18 \$'000	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
Buildings	\$869	\$897	\$741	\$1,433	\$1,179
Plant & Equipment	\$949	\$765	\$729	\$733	\$675
Furniture & Fittings	\$35	\$36	\$28	\$30	\$0
Water Supply Network	\$382	\$571	\$592	\$450	\$465
Other Infrastructure Assets	\$525	\$527	\$113	\$0	\$0
Transport Infrastructure	\$4,864	\$5,022	\$5,156	\$4,733	\$5,032
Urban Waste Water Network	\$369	\$362	\$253	\$304	\$304
Intangible Assets	\$19	\$10	\$12	\$16	\$18
<b>TOTAL DEPRECIATION</b>	<b>\$7,594</b>	<b>\$8,190</b>	<b>\$7,624</b>	<b>\$7,699</b>	<b>\$7,655</b>

## Statement of Cash Flows

Cash and cash equivalents was \$37.479 million as at 30 June 2021. This cash balance is sufficient to cover Council's restricted assets/reserves for future asset replacement of \$10.110 million.

The Statement of Cash Flows is similar to your personal bank statement. If you summarised your bank statements for the year it would be your cash flow statement.

Council's cash flow statement reports on cash movements and shows:

1. How much money we started the year with;
2. Where the incoming money came from;
3. Where the money was spent; and
4. How much money we had left at the end of the year.

The Statement of Cash Flows quantifies the inflows and outflows of cash throughout the organisation during the financial year.

Cash flows for the period are separated into operating, investing and financing activities.

- Operating activities – includes all areas such as rates, user charges, grants, employee costs, material and services, interest and administration – \$1.962 million
- Investing activities – includes money Council receives and spends when we buy or sell property, plant and equipment – (\$6.001 million)
- Financing activities – incorporates cash received if Council takes out new loans or cash paid to repay loans – \$1.278 million.

CASH FLOW	2016/17 \$'000	2017/18 \$'000	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000
Opening cash balance	\$17,168	\$21,616	\$25,595	\$31,225	\$40,239
Net cashflow from operating activities	\$6,308	\$6,227	\$7,543	\$9,634	\$1,962
Net cashflow from investing activities	(\$1,619)	(\$2,000)	(\$1,640)	(\$3,533)	(\$6,001)
Net cashflow from financing activities	(\$241)	(\$248)	(\$273)	\$2,913	\$1,278
<b>CLOSING CASH BALANCE</b>	<b>\$21,616</b>	<b>\$25,595</b>	<b>\$31,225</b>	<b>\$40,239</b>	<b>\$37,479</b>

# Statement of Changes in Equity

## ASSET REVALUATION SURPLUS – \$242.155 MILLION

This amount represents an accumulation of the net increase in value of Council's non-current assets having regard to asset condition, useful life and time value of money.

## RETAINED SURPLUS – \$88.510 MILLION

This amount represents Council's estimated net wealth at the end of the year.

KEY LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INDICATORS		2020 ACTUAL RESULT	BENCHMARK	WITHIN LIMITS
RATIO	DESCRIPTION			
Operating Surplus Ratio	This is the indicator of the extent to which revenue raised covers operational expenses only or is available for capital funding.	-8.1%	Between 0-10%	No
Asset Sustainability Ratio	This ratio helps to show whether Council is replacing assets as their service potential is used up.	70.8%	Greater than 90%	No
Net Financial Liability Ratio	This ratio explains the level of debt Council has compared to its operating revenues.	-51.6%	Less than 60%	Yes

## Financial Sustainability Ratios

### OPERATING SURPLUS RATIO

The Operating Surplus Ratio indicates the extent to which operational revenues raised cover operating expenses.

Calculated as: Net operating result / Total operating revenue (excluding capital items).

The *Financial Management Sustainability Guideline 2013* has set the target between 0% and 10%. Council's performance continues to be negatively impacted in part due to loss of sales revenue and maintaining service levels to customers at previous levels. The ratio for 2020/21 is -8.1% which is an improvement on the 2019/20 result which was -9.3%.

### ASSET SUSTAINABILITY RATIO

The Asset Sustainability Ratio indicates the extent to which assets are being replaced as they reach the end of their useful lives.

The *Financial Management Sustainability Guidelines 2013* has set the target at greater than 90%. Achieving this target would indicate that Council is renewing and replacing its assets at a greater rate than they are wearing out.

The ratio was 70.8 % in 2020/21, which has improved on the 2019/20 result of 64.2% but is significantly below the set target.

Calculated as: Capital Expenditure on replacement of assets (renewals) / Depreciation Expense.

### NET FINANCIAL LIABILITIES RATIO

The Net Financial Liabilities Ratio indicates the extent to which operating revenue (including grants and subsidies) can cover net financial liabilities (usually loans and leases).

Calculated as: (Total liabilities – current assets) / Total operating revenue.

The *Financial Management Sustainability Guideline 2013* has set the target as not greater than 60%.

Councils that have net financial liabilities that are greater than 60% of operating revenue have a limited capacity to increase loan borrowings and may experience stress in servicing current debt.

Council has a -51.6% performance ratio, which means that Council has the ability to increase its loan borrowing.

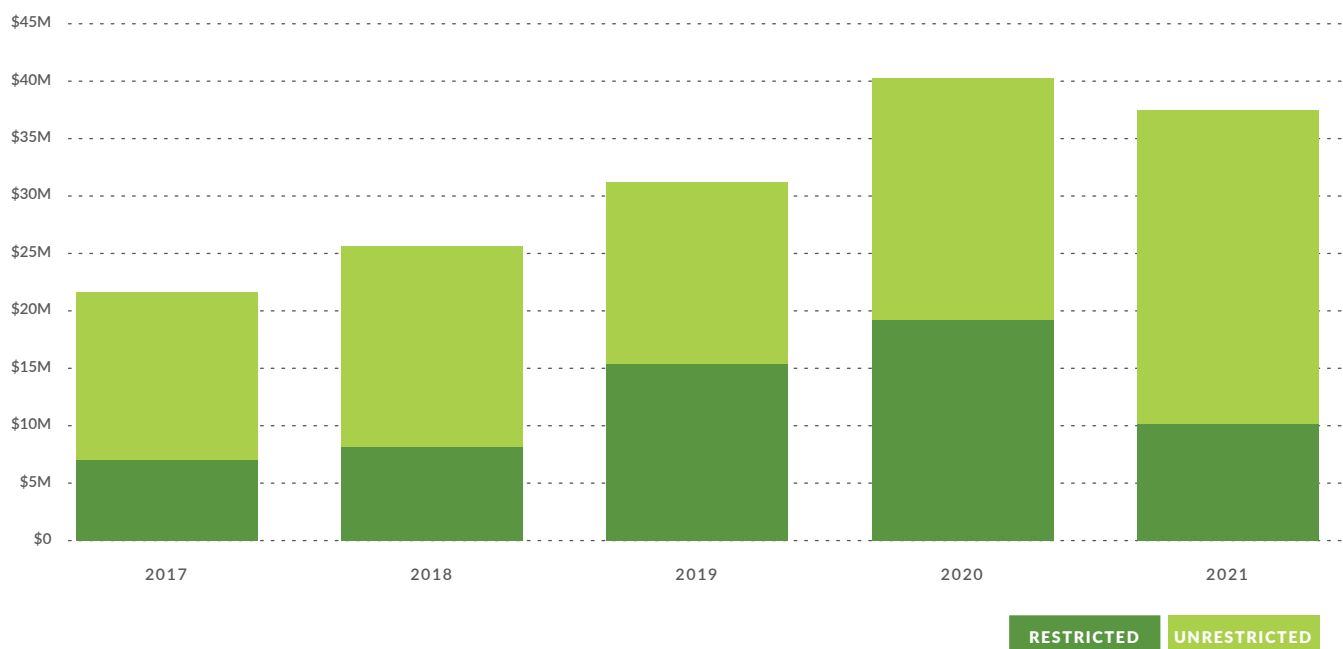


# Statement of Financial Position

## CURRENT ASSETS – \$44.794 MILLION

The major component of current assets was cash and investments totalling \$37.479 million at 30 June 2021. Of these funds, \$10.110 million is restricted (grants, subsidies, developer contributions and specific Council reserves).

### CASH BALANCE AT YEAR END



## NON-CURRENT ASSETS – \$305.646 MILLION

A receivable for the WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme of \$592 million was recognised in 2020/21 representing the loan value of practically completed properties and capitalised interest on loans.

The non-current asset also includes the value of Council's infrastructure assets, buildings and facilities, plant and equipment and capital works in progress at 30 June 2021 as show in the table.

ASSET GROUP	\$'000
Land	\$3,016
Buildings	\$40,867
Plant & Equipment	\$5,805
Furniture & Fittings	\$0
Water Supply Network	\$20,898
Intangible Assets	\$298
Transport Infrastructure	\$209,789
Urban Waste Water Network	\$12,954
Capital Work in Progress	\$11,427
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$305,054</b>

## LIABILITIES

Council owes \$6.851 million in loans.

Local Governments, in general, have a very high level of assets under their control but are limited in revenue raising opportunities. This means that the majority of Councils in Queensland have to rely on borrowing or substantial grants to fund major capital works, while using their general revenue (rates, fees and charges) to provide services and maintain community assets. Council borrowed \$1.564 million in 2020/21 to facilitate the Round 2 of the WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme which will be recovered through rates over 20 years.

Details of all loans outstanding as at 30 June 2021 are as follows:

LOAN OUTSTANDING AS AT 30 JUNE 2021	
DESCRIPTION OF PURPOSE	AMOUNT
Bridgeworks A/c	\$50
Administration Building	\$1,405
Water	\$602
WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme (Round 1)	\$3,268
WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme (Round 2)	\$1,525
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,850</b>









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# GENERAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

# BALONNE SHIRE COUNCIL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

<b>101</b>	<b>Statement of Comprehensive Income</b>	
<b>102</b>	<b>Statement of Financial Position</b>	
<b>103</b>	<b>Statement of Changes in Equity</b>	
<b>104</b>	<b>Statement of Cash Flows</b>	
<b>105</b>	<b>Notes to the Financial Statements</b>	
1	Information About These Financial Statements.....	105
2	Analysis of Results by Function.....	106
3	Revenue.....	108
4	Grants, Subsidies and Contributions.....	109
5	Employee Benefits .....	110
6	Materials and Services.....	111
7	Cash and Cash Equivalents .....	111
8	Trade and Other Receivables .....	112
9	Property, Plant and Equipment.....	113
10	Contract Balances .....	119
11	Trade and Other Payables .....	119
12	Borrowings.....	119
13	Provisions .....	120
14	Revaluation Surplus.....	121
15	Contractual Commitments .....	121
16	Contingent Liabilities .....	122
17	Superannuation.....	122
18	Reconciliation of Net Result for the Year to Net Cash Flows from Operation Activities .....	123
19	Reconciliation of Liabilities Arising from Finance Activities .....	123
20	Changes in Accounting Policy.....	123
21	Events After the Reporting Period.....	123
22	Related Parties .....	124
23	Financial Instruments and Financial Risk Management .....	124
<b>126</b>	<b>Management Certificate</b>	
<b>127</b>	<b>Independent Auditor's Report (General Purpose Financial Statements)</b>	
<b>131</b>	<b>Current Year Financial Sustainability Statement</b>	
<b>132</b>	<b>Certificate of Accuracy – for the Current Year Financial Sustainability Statement</b>	
<b>133</b>	<b>Independent Auditor's Report (Current Year Financial Sustainability Statement)</b>	
<b>137</b>	<b>Unaudited Long Term Financial Sustainability Statement</b>	
<b>138</b>	<b>Certificate of Accuracy – for the Long Term Financial Sustainability Statement</b>	



**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Statement of Comprehensive Income**  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$000	2020 \$000
<b>Income</b>			
<b>Revenue</b>			
<b>Recurrent Revenue</b>			
Rates, Levies and Charges	3(a)	10,159	10,478
Fees and Charges	3(b)	236	292
Sales Revenue	3(c)	7,757	6,582
Grants, Subsidies, Contributions and Donations	4(a)	29,403	9,145
<b>Total Recurrent Revenue</b>		<u>47,555</u>	<u>26,497</u>
Rental Income		292	209
Interest Received		464	389
Other Income		188	295
		<u>48,499</u>	<u>27,390</u>
<b>Capital Revenue</b>			
Grants, Subsidies, Contributions and Donations	4(b)	3,587	5,601
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<u>52,086</u>	<u>32,991</u>
Capital Income		-	7
<b>Total Income</b>		<u>52,086</u>	<u>32,998</u>
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Recurrent Expenses</b>			
Employee Benefits	5	8,272	6,927
Materials and Services	6	36,245	15,112
Finance Costs		226	198
Depreciation and Amortisation			
Property, Plant and Equipment	9	7,655	7,683
Intangible Assets		18	16
		<u>52,416</u>	<u>29,936</u>
<b>Capital Expenses</b>			
		393	-
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<u>52,809</u>	<u>29,936</u>
<b>NET RESULT</b>		<u>(723)</u>	<u>3,062</u>
<i>Net Operating Surplus / (Deficit)</i>		(3,917)	(2,546)
<b>Other Comprehensive Income</b>			
<b>Items Not be Reclassified to Net Result</b>			
Increase / (Decrease) in Revaluation Surplus	9	-	-
<b>Total Other Comprehensive Income for the Year</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total Comprehensive Income for the Year</b>		<u>(723)</u>	<u>3,062</u>

*The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and Significant Accounting Policies.*

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
as at 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$000	2020 \$000
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	7	37,479	40,239
Trade and Other Receivables	8	4,651	1,163
Inventories		190	265
Contract Assets	10(a)	2,331	579
Other Assets		143	36
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>44,794</b>	<b>42,282</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Property, Plant and Equipment	9	304,756	302,994
Intangible Assets		298	35
Receivables (WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme)		592	-
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>305,646</b>	<b>303,029</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>350,440</b>	<b>345,311</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Payables	11	4,443	1,609
Contract Liabilities	10(b)	6,166	4,144
Borrowings	12	141	253
Provisions	13	1,568	1,819
Other Liabilities		146	1
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>12,464</b>	<b>7,826</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>			
Borrowings	12	6,710	5,319
Provisions	13	601	776
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>		<b>7,311</b>	<b>6,095</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>19,775</b>	<b>13,921</b>
<b>Net Community Assets</b>		<b>330,665</b>	<b>331,388</b>
<b>Community Equity</b>			
Revaluation Surplus		242,155	242,155
Retained Surplus		88,510	89,233
<b>Total Community Equity</b>		<b>330,665</b>	<b>331,388</b>

*The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and Significant Accounting Policies.*



**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Statement of Changes in Equity**  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

Note	Revaluation Surplus \$000	Retained Surplus \$000	TOTAL \$000
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2020</b>	242,155	89,233	331,388
Net Result	-	(723)	(723)
Other Equity Adjustments for the Year	-	-	-
Increase / (Decrease) in Revaluation Surplus	-	-	-
<b>Total Comprehensive Income for the Year</b>	-	(723)	(723)
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2021</b>	<b>242,155</b>	<b>88,510</b>	<b>330,665</b>
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2019</b>	242,155	87,698	329,853
Other Adjustments	-	(5)	(5)
Adjustment on Initial Application of AASBs 15 / 1058	-	(1,522)	(1,522)
Restated Balance at 1 July 2019	242,155	86,171	328,326
Net Result	-	3,062	3,062
Increase / (Decrease) in Revaluation Surplus	-	-	-
<b>Total Comprehensive Income for the Year</b>	-	3,062	3,062
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2020</b>	<b>242,155</b>	<b>89,233</b>	<b>331,388</b>

*The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies.*

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Statement of Cash Flows**  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$000	2020 \$000
<b>Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>			
Receipts from Customers		14,039	17,743
Payments to Suppliers and Employees		(41,918)	(20,969)
		<u>(27,879)</u>	<u>(3,226)</u>
Interest Received		464	389
Rental Income		292	209
Operating Grants and Contributions		29,124	11,585
Other Receipts		188	875
Borrowing Costs		(226)	(198)
<b>Net Cash Inflow (Outflow) from Operating Activities</b>	18	<u>1,962</u>	<u>9,634</u>
<b>Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>			
Payments for Property, Plant and Equipment		(10,025)	(8,724)
Payments for Intangible Assets		(281)	(20)
Proceeds from Sale of Property, Plant and Equipment		167	7
Capital Grants, Subsidies, Contributions and Donations		4,138	5,204
<b>Net Cash Inflow (Outflow) from Investing Activities</b>		<u>(6,001)</u>	<u>(3,533)</u>
<b>Cash Flows from Financing Activities</b>			
Proceeds from Borrowings		1,564	3,175
Repayment of Borrowings		(286)	(262)
<b>Net Cash Inflow (Outflow) from Financing Activities</b>		<u>1,278</u>	<u>2,913</u>
<b>Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents Held</b>		<u>(2,760)</u>	<u>9,014</u>
<b>Cash and Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the Financial Year</b>		40,239	31,225
<b>Cash and Cash Equivalents at End of the Financial Year</b>	7	<u>37,479</u>	<u>40,239</u>

*The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies.*



**Balonne Shire Council  
Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**1 Information About These Financial Statements**

**1.A Basis of Preparation**

Balonne Shire Council is constituted under the Queensland *Local Government Act 2009* and is domiciled in Australia.

These general purpose financial statements are for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. They are prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*. These financial statements comply with all Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). Council is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes and complies with the Australian Accounting Standards as applicable to not-for-profit entities.

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the revaluation of certain classes of property, plant and equipment.

**1.B New and Revised Accounting Standards Adopted During the Year**

Council adopted all Standards which became mandatorily effective for annual reporting periods beginning on 1 July 2020, none of the standards had a material impact on reported position, performance and cash flows.

**1.C Standards Issued by the AASB Not Yet Effective**

The AASB has issued Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations which are not effective at 30 June 2021, these standards have not been adopted by Council and will be included in the financial statements on their effective date. Where the standard is expected to have a material impact for council then further information has been provided in this note.

**1.D Estimates and Judgements**

Councils make a number of judgements, estimates and assumptions in preparing these financial statements. These are based on the best information available to Council at the time, however due to the passage of time, these assumptions may change and therefore the recorded balances may not reflect the final outcomes. The significant judgements, estimates and assumptions relate to the following items and specific information is provided in the relevant note:

- Revenue Recognition - Note 3
- Valuation and Depreciation of Property, Plant and Equipment - Note 9
- Provisions - Note 13
- Contingent Liabilities - Note 16

**1.E Rounding and Comparatives**

The financial statements have been rounded to the nearest \$1,000. Comparative information is generally restated for reclassifications, errors and changes in accounting policies unless permitted otherwise by transition rules in a new Accounting Standard.

**1.F Trust Funds Held for Outside Parties**

Funds held in the trust account on behalf of outside parties include those funds from the sale of land for arrears in rates, deposits for lodged to guarantee performance and unclaimed monies (e.g. wages) paid into the trust account by the Council. Council performs only a custodial role in respect of these monies and because the monies cannot be used for Council purposes, they are not considered revenue nor brought to account in the financial statements.

**1.G Volunteer Services**

Council engages volunteers to assist with the operation of its Visitor Information Centres but does not recognise volunteer services in the Statement of Comprehensive Income due to immateriality.

**1.H Taxation**

Council is exempt from income tax, however is subject to Fringe Benefits Tax, Goods and Services Tax ("GST") and payroll tax on certain activities. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is shown as an asset or liability respectively.

**1.I Impacts of Covid-19 Pandemic**

Council undertook the following key actions during the current year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Council extended the period to pay rates from 30 days to 60 days;
- General rates did not increase in the 20/21 financial year; and
- Annual food licence fees have been waived in 20/21.

The impacts of these measures are not material to the 20/21 financial statement of Council.

**Balonne Shire Council  
Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**2. Analysis of Results by Function**

**2(a) Components of Council Functions**

The activities relating to the Council's components reported on in Note 2(b) are as follows :

**CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

The objective of corporate governance is to provide effective organisational leadership through strategic planning, accountability and ethical standards of practice. This function includes activities and services relating to risk management, strategic and operational planning and also includes the Mayor, Councillors and Chief Executive Officer.

**CORPORATE SERVICES**

The goal of corporate services is to enhance the capability and performance of Balonne Shire Council and ensure resources are directed to achieve organisational objectives. This function includes activities and services related to social and corporate performance, human resources and information services.

**PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

The objectives of this function is to implement appropriate planning and building construction controls to ensure and encourage the balance between quality development of the shire and the protection of the environment. As well as to implement policies and operational programs that will contribute to the environmental health and wellbeing of the community. This function includes activities and services related to planning, development and environmental health services.

**RURAL SERVICES**

The goal of this function is to provide effective and efficient management of stock routes, animal and weed pests. The major activities and services included in this function is pest management.

**INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

This functions objective is the provision of quality services and infrastructure for the current and future community that is planned, provided and managed on sound environmental and asset management principles. Activities and services included in this function relate to infrastructure that meets our community's needs including roads, water and sewerage.

**COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE**

The goal of the community lifestyle function is to encourage and promote a sense of community and belonging, community pride, engagement, wellbeing and grow social capital. Parks and gardens related activities and services is the major contributor to this function.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The objective of economic development is to foster a vibrant economic environment which promotes a strong and sustainable regional economy. This function includes activities and services related to tourism and economic development.

**COMMERCIAL SERVICES**

The goal of commercial services is to undertake commercial works within the scope of Council's expertise in an efficient and cost effective manner. This function includes activities and services relating to private works (RMPC, DMR, etc).

**Balonne Shire Council  
Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

2(b) Analysis of Results by Function  
Income and expenses defined between recurring and capital are attributed to the following functions:

Functions	Year Ended 30 June 2021						Total Income	Gross Programme Expenses		Total Expenses	Net Result Recurrent Operations	Net Result	Assets
	Recurrent			Capital				Recurrent	Capital				
	Grants	Other		Grants	Other								
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000							
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	(11)	80	-	-	-	69	(1,670)	-	(1,670)	(1,601)	\$'000	-	
CORPORATE SERVICES	3,006	7,023	1,504	-	-	11,533	(3,690)	-	(3,690)	6,339	7,843	45,411	
PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	158	198	171	-	-	528	(1,118)	-	(1,118)	(761)	(590)	0	
RURAL SERVICES	5,649	(192)	-	-	-	5,457	(6,109)	-	(6,109)	(652)	(652)	4,381	
INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES	19,388	6,124	2,082	-	-	27,594	(31,438)	(121)	(31,559)	(5,926)	(3,965)	259,033	
COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE	678	(261)	(103)	-	-	314	(3,645)	(272)	(3,917)	(3,228)	(3,604)	41,587	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	535	127	(68)	-	-	594	(1,133)	-	(1,133)	(471)	(538)	28	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES	-	5,998	-	-	-	5,998	(3,613)	-	(3,613)	2,385	2,385	-	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29,403</b>	<b>19,096</b>	<b>3,587</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>52,086</b>	<b>(52,416)</b>	<b>(393)</b>	<b>(52,809)</b>	<b>(3,917)</b>	<b>(723)</b>	<b>350,440</b>	

Functions	Year Ended 30 June 2020						Total Income	Gross Programme Expenses		Total Expenses	Net Result Recurrent Operations	Net Result	Assets
	Recurrent			Capital				Recurrent	Capital				
	Grants	Other		Grants	Other								
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000							
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	93	-	-	-	-	93	(993)	-	(993)	(900)	(900)	-	
CORPORATE SERVICES	4,587	6,915	7	-	-	11,510	(2,552)	-	(2,552)	8,951	8,958	37,775	
PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	98	167	-	-	-	265	(807)	-	(807)	(542)	(542)	3,764	
RURAL SERVICES	2,156	238	93	-	-	2,487	(1,851)	-	(1,851)	543	636	483	
INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES	863	4,222	4,611	-	-	9,696	(13,360)	-	(13,360)	(9,275)	(3,664)	284,505	
COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE	1,245	120	618	-	-	1,983	(4,322)	-	(4,322)	(2,957)	(2,339)	18,715	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	103	30	279	-	-	412	(761)	-	(761)	(628)	(349)	69	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES	-	6,552	-	-	-	6,552	(5,290)	-	(5,290)	1,262	1,262	-	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,145</b>	<b>18,245</b>	<b>5,601</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32,998</b>	<b>(29,936)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(29,936)</b>	<b>(2,546)</b>	<b>3,062</b>	<b>345,311</b>	



**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**3 Revenue**

Revenue where the contract is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations falls within AASB 15, if not AASB 1058 applies.

	Note	2021 Financial Year	
		AASB 15 \$'000	AASB 1058 \$'000
<b>Revenue Recognised at a Point in Time</b>			
Rates, Levies and Charges (Excluding those Related to Services)	3(a)	-	10,159
Fees and Charges (Excluding Infringements)	3(b)	270	-
Infringements	3(b)	-	(34)
Sales of Goods and Services	3(c)	7,757	-
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions *	4	15,722	13,681
Rental Income		292	-
Interest Received		464	-
Other Income		188	-
		<u>24,693</u>	<u>23,806</u>
<b>Revenue Recognised Over Time</b>			
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions		-	-
Revenue Relating to Grants for Assets Controlled by Council	4	-	3,587
		<u>-</u>	<u>3,587</u>
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<u>24,693</u>	<u>27,392</u>

\* Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contribution amount includes \$15.715 million in revenue received as a result of the 2020 Flood event.

	Note	2020 Financial Year	
		AASB 15 \$'000	AASB 1058 \$'000
<b>Revenue Recognised at a Point in Time</b>			
Rates, Levies and Charges (Excluding those Related to Services)	3(a)	-	10,478
Fees and Charges (Excluding Infringements)	3(b)	258	-
Infringements	3(b)	-	34
Sales of Goods and Services	3(c)	6,582	-
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions	4	-	10,099
Rental Income		209	-
Interest Received		389	-
Other Income		302	-
		<u>7,740</u>	<u>20,611</u>
<b>Revenue Recognised Over Time</b>			
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions		4,144	-
Revenue Relating to Grants for Assets Controlled by Council	4	-	503
		<u>4,144</u>	<u>503</u>
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<u>11,884</u>	<u>21,114</u>
		<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
		<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>

**(a) Rates, Levies and Charges (Excluding Those Related to Services)**

Rates and annual charges are recognised as revenue when Council obtains control over the assets comprising these receipts which is the beginning of the rating period to which they relate. Prepaid rates are recognised as a financial liability until the beginning of the rating period.

General Rates	6,562	6,946
Special Rates	199	201
Water	1,923	1,922
Water Consumption, Rental and Sundries	311	87
Urban Waste Water	1,080	1,165
Waste Charges	1,126	1,126
Total Rates and Utility Charge Revenue	<u>11,201</u>	<u>11,447</u>
Less: Discounts	(1,003)	(932)
Less: Pensioner Remissions	(36)	(37)
Less: Rates Write-Offs	(3)	-
	<u>10,159</u>	<u>10,478</u>

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**(b) Fees and Charges**

Revenue arising from fees and charges is recognised when or as the performance obligation is completed and the customer receives the benefit of the goods / services being provided.

The performance obligation relates to the specific services which are provided to the customers and generally the payment terms are within 30 days of the provision of the service or in some cases, the customer is required to pay on arrival, for example caravan parks. There is no material obligation for Council in relation to refunds or returns.

Licences granted by Council are all either short-term or low value and all revenue from licences is recognised at the time that the licence is granted rather than the term of the licence.

Revenue from infringements is recognised on issue of infringement notice after applying the expected credit loss model relating to impairment of receivables for initial recognition of statutory receivables.

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Building and Developmental Fees	77	48
Infringements	(34)	34
Licences and Registrations	1	49
Swimming Pool Fees	20	36
Cemetery Fees	64	51
Council Facilities Hire	76	36
Water Connection Fees	6	6
Search and Other Council Document Fees	22	21
Other Fees and Charges	4	11
	<u>236</u>	<u>292</u>

**(c) Sales Revenue**

Sale of goods revenue is recognised when the customer has taken delivery of the goods. Revenue from services is recognised when the service is rendered.

Revenue from contracts and recoverable works generally comprises a recoupment of material costs together with an hourly charge for use of equipment and employees. This revenue and the associated costs are recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the contract activity based on costs incurred at the reporting date. Where consideration is received for the service in advance it is included in other liabilities and is recognised as revenue in the period when the service is performed. There are no contracts in progress at the year end. The contract work carried out is not subject to retentions.

**Rendering of Services**

Contract and Recoverable Works	7,704	6,552
	<u>7,704</u>	<u>6,552</u>

**Sale of Goods**

Visitor Information Centre	53	30
	<u>53</u>	<u>30</u>
	<u>7,757</u>	<u>6,582</u>

**4 Grants, Subsidies and Contributions**

*Grant Income Under AASB 15*

Where grant income arises from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations then the revenue is recognised when control of each performance obligation is satisfied. The performance obligations are varied based on the agreements. Payment terms vary depending on the terms of the grant, cash is received upfront for some grants and on the achievement of certain payment milestones for others.

Each performance obligation is considered to ensure that the revenue recognition reflects the transfer of control and within grant agreements there may be some performance obligations where control transfers at a point in time and others which have continuous transfer of control over the life of the contract.

Where control is transferred over time, generally the input methods being either costs or time incurred are deemed to be the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefit.

*Grant Income Under AASB 1058*

Assets arising from grants in the scope of AASB 1058 are recognised at the asset's fair value when the asset is received. Council considers whether there are any related liability or equity items associated with the asset which are recognised in accordance with the relevant accounting standard.

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**4 Grants, Subsidies and Contributions (continued)**

Once the assets and liabilities have been recognised then income is recognised for any remaining asset value at the time that the asset is received.

Capital grants received to enable Council to acquire or construct an item of property, plant and equipment to identified specifications which will be under Council's control, and which is enforceable, are recognised as revenue as and when the obligation to construct or purchase is completed. For construction projects, this is generally as the construction progresses in accordance with costs incurred since this is deemed to be the most appropriate measure of the completeness of the construction project as there is no profit margin.

Where assets are donated or purchased for significantly below fair value, revenue is recognised when the asset is acquired and controlled by Council.

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
<b>(a) Operating</b>		
General Purpose Grants	4,876	5,397
State Government Subsidies and Grants	4,456	3,200
Commonwealth Government Subsidies and Grants	4,218	99
Contributions	138	43
2020 Flood Event *	15,715	406
	<u>29,403</u>	<u>9,145</u>

\* A significant flood event occurred in the Shire in February 2020, Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) has approved \$58 million in submissions for restoration works in relation to the event, which revenue will be received over multiple financial years.

**(b) Capital**

Capital Revenue includes grants and subsidies received which are tied to specific projects for the replacement or upgrade of existing non-current assets and / or investment in new assets.

State Government Subsidies and Grants	1,573	2,106
Commonwealth Government Subsidies and Grants	2,014	3,495
	<u>3,587</u>	<u>5,601</u>

**5 Employee Benefits**

Total Staff Wages and Salaries	5,434	4,285
Councillors' Remuneration	439	437
Annual, Sick and Long Service Leave Entitlements	1,126	991
Termination Benefits	-	-
Superannuation	17 720	684
Training Costs	193	314
Workers' Compensation Insurance	71	104
	<u>7,983</u>	<u>6,815</u>
Other Employee Related Expenses	289	112
	<u>8,272</u>	<u>6,927</u>
Less: Capitalised Employee Expenses	-	-
	<u>8,272</u>	<u>6,927</u>

Councillor remuneration represents salary, and other allowances paid in respect of carrying out their duties.

Total Council Employees at Reporting Date:	#	#
Elected Members	7	7
Administration Staff	48	41
Depot and Outdoors Staff	46	47
Total Full-Time Equivalent Employees	<u>101</u>	<u>95</u>



**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

	2021	2020
Note	\$'000	\$'000
<b>6 Materials and Services</b>		
Council implemented a new enterprise business system at the end of the 2020 financial year which has resulted in a change to how some lines within the materials and services note for the financial year 2021 are reported.		
Advertising and Marketing	47	55
Administration Supplies and Consumables	231	65
Aerodrome Maintenance	114	188
Audit Fees and Services *	62	54
Cleansing Services	568	1,249
Communications and IT	1,463	619
Community Donations / Assistance	-	43
Contractors / Consultants	7,111	257
Councillors' Expenses (incl. Mayor) - Other	51	50
Insurance	552	227
Land Protection Fund Precept	108	118
Legal Fees	179	41
Power	471	49
Repairs and Maintenance	4,223	4,680
Subscriptions and Registrations	274	82
Swimming Pools (Council Owned)	-	351
Urban Waste Water	124	271
Urban Water Services	846	954
2020 Flood Event	13,577	415
Other Materials and Services	6,244	5,344
	<u>36,245</u>	<u>15,112</u>

\* Total audit fees quoted by the Queensland Audit Office relating to the 2020/21 financial statements are \$43,600 (2020: \$38,300)

**7 Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents in the Statement of Cash Flows include cash on hand, all cash and cheques receipted but not banked at the year end, deposits held at call with financial institutions, other short-term, highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value and bank overdraft.

Cash at Bank and On-Hand	5,570	9,454
Term Deposits	10,000	10,000
Deposits at Call	4,612	4,573
QTC Cash Fund	17,297	16,212
	<u>37,479</u>	<u>40,239</u>

**Restricted Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Council's cash and cash equivalents are subject to a number of internal and external restrictions that limit amounts available for discretionary or future use. These include:

Externally imposed expenditure restrictions at the reporting date relate to the following cash assets:

Unspent Government Grants and Subsidies	6,166	4,144
WDEF Special Rate Loan Scheme	443	1,943
Total External Restrictions	<u>6,609</u>	<u>6,087</u>

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
		<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Internally imposed allocations at the reporting date:			
Future Capital Works		618	618
Future Asset Replacement		9,474	9,448
Future Recurrent Expenditure		18	3,062
<b>Total Internal Restrictions</b>		<b>10,110</b>	<b>13,128</b>

Cash, cash deposits and term deposits are held with the National Australia Bank (A+), Commonwealth Bank of Australia (AA-), Westpac Banking Corporation (AA-) and Queensland Treasury Corporation (AA) in normal term deposits, deposits at call and business cheque accounts.

**8 Trade and Other Receivables**

<b>Current</b>			
Rateable Revenue and Utility Charges		769	407
Trade Debtors *		3,888	762
Less: Loss Allowance			
Rateable Revenue and Utility Charges		(5)	(5)
Trade Debtors		(1)	(1)
		<b>4,651</b>	<b>1,163</b>
<b>Non-Current</b>			
Receivables (WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme)		592	-

Receivables, loans and advances are amounts owed to council at year end. They are recognised at the amount due at the time of sale or service delivery or advance. Settlement of receivables is required within 30 days after the invoice is issued.

A Non-Current Receivable exists for the WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme and represents the value of completed projects at 30 June 2021, and payable by landholders under a specific scheme approved by Council. Repayments will be made by way of a special levy over a 20-year period, with Council recovering interest on the outstanding balance at an proportionate interest rate the same as the rate at time of loan drawdown.

Debts are regularly assessed for collectability and allowance is made, where appropriate, for impairment. Impairment of Council's receivables is not material. All known bad debts were written-off at 30 June. If an amount is recovered in a subsequent period it is recognised as revenue.

Because Council is empowered under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2009* to sell an owner's property to recover outstanding rate debts, Council does not impair any rate receivables.

\* Balance as at 30 June 2021 includes \$3.024 million in outstanding invoices relating to Contract Work claims.

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**  
**9 Property, Plant and Equipment**

30-Jun-21

Basis of Measurement

**Asset Values**

Opening Gross Value as at 1 July 2020

Work in Progress Transfers

Work in Progress Additions

Disposals

Revaluation Adjustment to Revaluation Surplus

Transfers Between Classes

**Closing Gross Value as at 30 June 2021**

**Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment**

Opening Balance as at 1 July 2020

Depreciation Expense Provided in Period

Depreciation on Disposals

Revaluation Adjustment to Revaluation Surplus

Transfers Between Classes

**Accumulated Depreciation as at 30 June 2021**

**Total Written Down Value as at 30 June 2021**

Range of Estimated Useful Life in Years

Additions Comprise:

Renewals

Other Additions

Total Additions

Land	Buildings		Plant and Equipment		Furniture and Fittings		Water Supply Network		Transport Infrastructure		Urban Waste Water Network		Work in Progress		TOTAL
	Fair Value \$'000	Cost \$'000	Fair Value \$'000	Cost \$'000	Cost \$'000	Cost \$'000	Fair Value \$'000	Cost \$'000	Fair Value \$'000	Cost \$'000	Fair Value \$'000	Cost \$'000	Fair Value \$'000	Cost \$'000	
2,950	66,928	12,106	306	306	30,561	279,883	22,266	8,115	423,115	-	-	-	-	-	-
66	1,138	1,594	-	-	735	3,132	-	9,977	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	(674)	(453)	-	-	(95)	(372)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,594)
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	306	(306)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>3,016</b>	<b>67,392</b>	<b>13,553</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>31,201</b>	<b>282,643</b>	<b>22,266</b>	<b>11,427</b>	<b>431,498</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-

-	25,748	7,242	146	146	9,913	68,064	9,008	-	120,121	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	1,179	675	-	-	465	5,032	304	-	7,655	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	(402)	(315)	-	-	(75)	(242)	-	-	(1,034)	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	146	(146)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	<b>26,525</b>	<b>7,748</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>10,303</b>	<b>72,854</b>	<b>9,312</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>126,742</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>3,016</b>	<b>40,867</b>	<b>5,805</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20,898</b>	<b>209,789</b>	<b>12,954</b>	<b>11,427</b>	<b>304,756</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-

Land: Not Depreciated.	15 - 75	3 - 50	5 - 60	10 - 100	10 - 300	10 - 100	N / A
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
-	184	1,526	-	521	4,236	3	6,470
66	1,659	18	-	102	133	-	3,507
66	1,843	1,544	-	623	4,369	3	9,977



**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

30-Jun-20

Basis of Measurement  
**Asset Values**  
 Opening Gross Value as at 1 July 2019  
 Work in Progress Transfers  
 Work in Progress Additions  
 Disposals  
**Closing Gross Value as at 30 June 2020**

Land	Buildings	Plant and Equipment	Furniture and Fittings	Water Supply Network	Transport Infrastructure	Urban Waste Water Network	Work in Progress	TOTAL
\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2,950	64,392	12,181	411	30,351	278,172	22,266	4,759	415,482
-	2,938	177	80	210	1,998	-	(5,403)	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,759	8,759
-	(402)	(252)	(185)	-	(287)	-	-	(1,126)
<b>2,950</b>	<b>66,928</b>	<b>12,106</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>30,561</b>	<b>279,883</b>	<b>22,266</b>	<b>8,115</b>	<b>423,115</b>

**Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment**  
 Opening Balance as at 1 July 2019  
 Depreciation Expense Provided in Period  
 Depreciation on Disposals  
**Accumulated Depreciation as at 30 June 2020**  
**Total Written Down Value as at 30 June 2020**  
 Range of Estimated Useful Life in Years

-	24,618	6,744	230	9,463	63,379	8,704	-	113,138
-	1,433	733	30	450	4,733	304	-	7,683
-	(303)	(235)	(114)	-	(48)	-	-	(700)
-	25,748	7,242	146	9,913	68,064	9,008	-	120,121
<b>2,950</b>	<b>41,180</b>	<b>4,864</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>20,648</b>	<b>211,819</b>	<b>13,258</b>	<b>8,115</b>	<b>302,994</b>
Land: Not Depreciated.	15 - 75	3 - 50	5 - 60	10 - 100	10 - 300	10 - 100	N / A	-

Additions Comprise:  
 Renewals  
 Other Additions  
**Total Additions**

\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
-	348	498	-	1,064	2,800	9	224	4,943
-	1,267	177	-	-	102	-	2,270	3,816
-	1,615	675	-	1,064	2,902	9	2,494	8,759

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**9 Property, Plant and Equipment (continued)**

**(a) Recognition**

Items of plant and equipment with a total value less than \$5,000 and infrastructure and building assets with a total value of less than \$10,000 are treated as an expense in the year of acquisition. All other items of property, plant and equipment are capitalised where their cost exceeds the respective recognition threshold.

**Land Under Roads**

Land under roads and reserve land under the Land Act 1994 or Land Title Act 1994 is controlled by Queensland State Government and not recognised in the Council financial statements

**(b) Measurement**

Property, plant and equipment assets are initially recorded at cost. Subsequently, each class of property, plant and equipment is stated at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment loss.

Cost is determined as the fair value of consideration plus costs incidental to the acquisition. Direct labour, materials and an appropriate portion of overheads incurred in the acquisition or construction of assets are also included as capital costs.

Property, plant and equipment received in the form of contributions, for significantly less than fair value or as offsets to infrastructure charges are recognised as assets and revenue at fair value.

**(c) Depreciation**

Assets are depreciated from the date of acquisition or, in respect of internally constructed assets, from the time an asset is completed and commissioned ready for use, at which time they are reclassified from work in progress to the appropriate asset class.

Land, work in progress, and road formations are not depreciated. Depreciation, where applicable, is calculated on a straight-line basis such that the cost of the asset less its residual value is recognised progressively over its estimated useful life to Council. Management believe that the straight-line basis appropriately reflects the pattern of consumption of all Council assets.

The useful life of leasehold improvements is the shorter of the useful life of the asset or the remaining life of the lease.

Where assets have separately identifiable components, these components have separately assigned useful lives.

Depreciation methods, estimated useful lives and residual values are reviewed at the end of each reporting period and adjusted where necessary to reflect any changes in the pattern of consumption, physical wear and tear, technical or commercial obsolescence, or management intentions.

**Key Judgements and Estimates**

Management reviews its estimate of the useful lives of depreciable assets at each reporting date, based on the expected utility of the assets. Uncertainties in these estimates relate to technical obsolescence that may change the utility of certain software and IT equipment.

**(d) Impairment**

Property, plant and equipment is assessed for indicators of impairment annually. If an indicator of possible impairment exists, the Council determines the asset's recoverable amount. Any amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount is recorded as an impairment loss.

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**  
9 **Property, Plant and Equipment (continued)**

**(e) Valuation**

**Key Judgements and Estimates**

Some of the Council's assets and liabilities are measured at fair value for financial reporting purposes. In estimating the fair value of an asset or a liability, the Council uses market-observable data to the extent it is available and other inputs as necessary.

**(l) Valuation Processes**

Council considers the carrying amount of its property, plant and equipment on an annual basis compared to fair value and makes adjustment where these are materially different. Every 3 - 5 years council performs a full comprehensive revaluation by engaging an external professionally qualified valuer.

In the intervening years, Council uses internal financial and engineering expertise to review appropriate industry cost indices for the region and undertake an assessment of movements in input costs and assumptions associated with all infrastructure assets, land and buildings. Together these are used to form the basis of determining whether a material movement has occurred for the infrastructure asset classes.

For 2020-21 the analysis has indicated that, on average, the variance between an indexed asset value and the asset value reported from the last comprehensive valuation is not material and the indices used by Council are sound. Further details in relation to valuers, the methods of valuation and the key assumptions used in valuing each different asset class are disclosed below.

Revaluation increases are recognised in the asset revaluation surplus unless they are reversing a previous decrease which was taken through the income statement, in that case the increase is taken to the income statement to the extent of the previous decrease.

Revaluation decreases are recognised in the asset revaluation surplus, where there is sufficient amount available in the asset revaluation surplus relating to that asset class. Where there isn't sufficient amount available in the surplus, the decrease is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income. Where the class of asset has previously decreased in value and this reduction was recognised as an expense, an increase in the value of the class is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income.

On revaluation, accumulated depreciation is restated proportionately with the change in the carrying amount of the asset and any change in the estimate of remaining useful life.

Fair values are classified into three levels as follows:

**Level 1:** fair value based on quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities

**Level 2:** fair value based on inputs that are directly or indirectly observable, such as prices for similar assets, for the asset or liability

**Level 3:** fair value based on unobservable inputs for the asset and liability

There were no transfers between levels during the year.



**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**9 Property, Plant and Equipment (continued)**

**(ii) Valuation techniques used to derive fair values**

The fair valuation techniques adopted by Council are as follows:

<b>Asset class and fair value hierarchy</b>	<b>Valuation approach</b>	<b>Last comprehensive valuation date</b>	<b>Valuer engaged</b>	<b>Key assumptions and estimates (related data sources)</b>	<b>Interim Index applied</b>	<b>Other Interim revaluation adjustment</b>
Land (Level 2)	Market Value	30-Jun-19	AssetVal	Level 2 valuation inputs were used to value land in freehold title as well as land for special purpose, which is restricted in use under current zoning rules. Recent market sales transactions for comparable land sites in close proximity are adjusted for differences in key attributes such as property size. The most significant inputs to this approach are prices per square metre.	2.60% movement - deemed immaterial	Nil
Buildings and Other Structures (Level 2)	Market Value	30-Jun-19	AssetVal	Where there is a market for Council building assets, fair value is derived from recent market sales transactions of comparable properties after adjusting for differences in key attributes such as property size (level 2).	3.16% movement - deemed immaterial	Nil
Buildings and Other Structures (Level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30-Jun-19	AssetVal	Where Council buildings are of a specialist nature and there is no active market for the assets, fair value has been determined on the basis of replacement with a new asset having similar service potential including allowances for preliminaries and professional fees. The gross current values have been derived from reference to market data for recent projects and costing guides issued by the Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors, Rawlinson's (Australian Construction Handbook). Over 95% of assets were visually inspected by the Valuer, and an assessment of remaining useful life was made taking into consideration the visual condition as well as the age of the asset and any economic and/or functional obsolescence.	3.16% movement - deemed immaterial	Nil

**Balonne Shire Council  
Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

<b>Asset class and fair value hierarchy</b>	<b>Valuation approach</b>	<b>Last comprehensive valuation date</b>	<b>Valuer engaged</b>	<b>Key assumptions and estimates (related data sources)</b>	<b>Interim Index applied</b>	
Transport Infrastructure (Level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30-Jun-19	AssetVal	<p>Fair Value reflected the cost of replacing the existing economic benefits based on an efficient set of modern equivalent assets to achieve the required level of service output with the Council's planning horizon.</p> <p>Road infrastructure is categorised into urban and rural roads and then further sub categorised into sealed and unsealed roads.</p> <p>All road segments are componentised into formation, pavement and seal (where applicable).</p> <p>Valuation was calculated by reference to asset linear and other specifications, estimated labour and material inputs, service costs, and overhead allocations.</p> <p>A sample of the roads (approximately 10%) were visually inspected by the Valuer. No testing or measurement of defects or condition was undertaken. An assessment of remaining useful life was made by the Valuer taking into consideration the visual condition, construction date, evidence of recent repairs or capital works and the surrounding environmental factors.</p>	0.43% movement - deemed immaterial	Nil
Water Supply Network (Level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30-Jun-19	AssetVal	<p>Water Supply assets were componentised to a level to ensure a reliable measure of cost and service capacity and deterioration of estimated remaining life. Valuation was calculated by reference to asset linear and other specifications, estimated plant, labour and material inputs and overhead allocations. An assessment of remaining useful life was made by the Valuer taking into consideration the construction date, evidence of recent repairs or capital works and the surrounding environmental factors.</p>	3.89% movement - deemed immaterial	Nil
Urban Waste Water Network (Level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30-Jun-19	AssetVal	<p>Urban Waste Water assets were componentised to a level to ensure a reliable measure of cost and service capacity and deterioration of estimated remaining life. Valuation was calculated by reference to asset linear and other specifications, estimated plant, labour and material inputs and overhead allocations. An assessment of remaining useful life was made by the Valuer taking into consideration the construction date, evidence of recent repairs or capital works and the surrounding environmental factors.</p> <p>For wastewater gravity mains the assumption that the pipes will be relined was adopted.</p>	3.89% movement - deemed immaterial	Nil

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**10 Contract Balances**

Where the amounts billed to customers are based on the achievement of various milestones established in the contract, the amounts recognised as revenue in a given period do not necessarily coincide with the amounts billed to or certified by the customer.

When a performance obligation is satisfied by transferring a promised good or service to the customer before the customer pays consideration or before payment is due, Council presents the work in progress as a contract asset, unless the rights to that amount of consideration are unconditional, in which case Council recognises a receivable. When an amount of consideration is received from a customer / fund provider prior to Council transferring a good or service to the customer, Council presents the funds which exceed revenue recognised as a contract liability.

	<u>2021</u> <u>\$'000</u>	<u>2020</u> <u>\$'000</u>
<b>(a) Contract Assets</b>		
Contract Assets	2,331	579
	<u>2,331</u>	<u>579</u>
Contracts with customers	1,578	170
Contracts to construct Council's own assets	753	409
<b>(b) Contract Liabilities</b>		
Funds received upfront to construct Council controlled assets.	1,398	503
Deposits received in advance of services provided	4,768	3,641
	<u>6,166</u>	<u>4,144</u>
Revenue recognised that was included in the contract liability balance at the beginning of the year.		
Funds to construct council controlled assets	488	-
Deposits received in advance of services provided	665	1,522
<b>Total revenue included in the contract liability</b>	<u>1,153</u>	<u>1,522</u>

**11 Trade and Other Payables**

**Current**

Creditors and Accruals *	4,440	1,608
Security Bonds, Deposits and Retentions	3	1
	<u>4,443</u>	<u>1,609</u>

Creditors are recognised when goods or services are received, at the amount owed and are generally settled on 30 day terms.

\* Balance as at 30 June 2021 includes unpaid invoices for flood damage works relating to grant funding of \$2.413 million.

**12 Borrowings**

Borrowings are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. Thereafter, they are measured at amortised cost. Principal and interest repayments are made quarterly/semi annually/annually in arrears.

All borrowings are in Australian dollar denominated amounts and interest is expensed as it accrues. No interest has been capitalised during the current or comparative reporting period. Expected final repayment dates vary from 15 June 2022 to 15 March 2041. There have been no defaults or breaches of the loan agreement during the period.

Council adopts an annual debt policy that sets out council's planned borrowings for the next nine years. Council's current policy is to only borrow for capital projects and for a term no longer than the expected life of the asset. Council also aims to comply with the Queensland Treasury Corporation's borrowing guidelines and ensure that sustainability indicators remain within acceptable levels at all times.



**Balonne Shire Council  
Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**12 Borrowings (continued)**

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
<b>Current</b>			
Loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation		141	253
		<u>141</u>	<u>253</u>
<b>Non-Current</b>			
Loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation		6,710	5,319
		<u>6,710</u>	<u>5,319</u>
<b>Loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation</b>			
Opening Balance at Beginning of Financial Year		5,572	2,659
Loans Raised		1,564	3,175
Principal Repayments		(286)	(262)
Book Value at End of Financial Year		<u>6,850</u>	<u>5,572</u>

The QTC loan market value at the reporting date was \$7,127,491. This represents the value of the debt if Council repaid it at that date. As it is the intention of Council to hold the debt for its term, no provision is required to be made in these accounts.

No assets have been pledged as security by Council for any liabilities, however all loans are guaranteed by the Queensland Government. There have been no defaults or breaches of the loan agreement during the 2021 or 2020 financial years.

The following table sets out the Council's liquidity risk of borrowings in a format as it might be provided to management. The amounts disclosed in the maturity analysis represent the contractual undiscounted cash flows at balance date:

Book Value	0 to 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	Over 5 years	Total Contractual Cash Flows	Carrying Amount
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>2021</b>					
Loans - QTC	329	1,661	6,615	8,605	6,850
<b>2020</b>					
Loans - QTC	426	1,347	5,335	7,108	5,572

The outflows in the above table are not expected to occur significantly earlier or for significantly different amounts than indicated in the table. Expected final repayment dates vary from 15 June 2022 to 15 March 2041.

Balonne Shire Council is exposed to interest rate risk through its borrowings from the Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC). Council has access to a mix of variable and fixed rate funding options through QTC so that interest rate risk exposure can be minimised.

**13 Provisions**

**Long Service Leave**

The provision for long service leave represents the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date. The liability is calculated using current pay rates and projected future increases in those rates and includes related employee on-costs. The estimates are adjusted for the probability of the employee remaining in the Council's employment or other associated employment which would result in the Council being required to meet the liability. Adjustments are then made to allow for the proportion of the benefit earned to date, and the result is discounted to present value. The interest rates attaching to Commonwealth Government guaranteed securities at the reporting date are used to discount the estimated future cash outflows to their present value.

Where employees have met the prerequisite length of service and council does not have an unconditional right to defer this liability beyond 12 months long service leave is classified as a current liability. Otherwise it is classified as non-current.

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**13 Provisions (continued)**

**Refuse Dump Restoration**

A provision is made for the cost of restoring refuse dumps and quarries where it is probable the Council will have an obligation to rehabilitate when the use of the facilities is complete.

The provision for refuse restoration is calculated as the present value of anticipated future costs associated with the closure of the dump sites, decontamination and monitoring of historical residues and leaching on these sites. The calculation of this provision requires assumptions such as application of environmental legislation, site closure dates, available technologies and engineering cost estimates. These uncertainties may result in future actual expenditure differing from amounts currently provided. Because of the long-term nature of the liability, most significant uncertainty in estimating the provision is the costs that will be incurred. The provision recognised for dump sites is reviewed at least annually and updated based on the facts and circumstances available at the time. Management estimates that the final sites will close in 2120 and that the restoration will occur progressively over the subsequent four years.

As refuse dumps are on State reserves which the Council does not control, the provision for restoration is treated as an expense in the year the provision is first recognised. Changes in the provision are treated as an expense or income.

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
<b>Current</b>		
Long Service Leave	761	898
Annual Leave	804	863
Other Employee Entitlements	3	58
	<u>1,568</u>	<u>1,819</u>
<b>Non-Current</b>		
Long Service Leave	70	132
Refuse Restoration	531	644
	<u>601</u>	<u>776</u>
Details of movements in provisions:		
<b>Refuse Restoration</b>		
Balance at Beginning of Financial Year	644	459
Increase / (Decrease) in Provision due to Unwinding of Discount	3	182
Increase / (Decrease) in Provision due to Change in the Discount Rate	(116)	3
Balance at End of Financial Year	<u>531</u>	<u>644</u>

**Refuse Restoration**

Balonne Shire Council currently operates six (6) active landfill sites.

This is the present value of the estimated cost of restoring the refuse disposal sites to a useable state at the end of their useful lives. The projected cost is \$1,583,327 and this cost is expected to be incurred between 2028 and 2140 after closing the sites between 2028 and 2140 and allowing a period for settlement.

**14 Revaluation Surplus**

The asset revaluation surplus comprises revaluation movements on property, plant and equipment. Increases and decreases on revaluation are offset within a class of assets.

**15 Contractual Commitments**

Contractual commitments at end of financial year but not recognised in the financial statements are as follows:

Waste Collection Contract (per year) - Expires 30/06/2025	526	526
Landfill Maintenance Contract - Expires 01/06/2022	258	517

**Balonne Shire Council  
Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**16 Contingent Liabilities**

Details and estimates of maximum amounts of contingent liabilities are as follows:

**Local Government Mutual**

Council is a member of the local government mutual liability self-insurance pool, LGM Queensland. In the event of the pool being wound up or it is unable to meet its debts as they fall due, the trust deed and rules provide that any accumulated deficit will be met by the individual pool members in the same proportion as their contribution is to the total pool contributions in respect to any year that a deficit arises.

As at 30 June 2020 the financial statements reported an accumulated surplus and it is not anticipated any liability will arise.

**Local Government Workcare**

Council is a member of the Queensland local government workers' compensation self-insurance scheme, Local Government Workcare. Under this scheme Council has provided an indemnity towards a bank guarantee to cover bad debts which may remain should the self insurance licence be cancelled and there was insufficient funds available to cover outstanding liabilities. Only the Queensland Government's workers' compensation authority may call on any part of the guarantee should the above arise.

**17 Superannuation**

Council contributes to the LGIAsuper Regional Defined Benefits Fund (the scheme), at the rate of 12% for each permanent employee who is a defined benefit member. This rate is set in accordance with the LGIAsuper trust deed and may be varied on the advice of an actuary. The Regional Defined Benefits Fund is a complying superannuation scheme for the purpose of the Commonwealth Superannuation Industry (Supervision) legislation and is also governed by the *Local Government Act 2009*.

The scheme is a pooled defined benefit plan and it is not in accordance with the deed to allocate obligations, plan assets and costs at the Council level.

Any amount by which the scheme is over or under funded may affect future contribution rate obligations, but has not been recognised as an asset or liability of the Council.

Technically Council can be liable to the scheme for a portion of another local governments' obligations should that local government be unable to meet them. However the risk of this occurring is extremely low and in accordance with the LGIAsuper trust deed changes to council's obligations will only be made on the advice of an actuary.

The last completed actuarial assessment of the scheme was undertaken as at 1 July 2018. The actuary indicated that "At the valuation date of 1 July 2018, the net assets of the scheme exceeded the vested benefits and the scheme was in a satisfactory financial position as at the valuation date." The measure of vested benefits represents the value of benefit entitlements should all participating employees voluntary exit the scheme. Council is not aware of anything that has happened since that time that indicates the assets of the scheme are insufficient to meet the vested benefits, as at reporting date.

No changes have been made to prescribed employer contributions which remain at 12% of employee assets and there are no known requirements to change the rate of contributions.

The next triennial actuarial review is not due until 1 July 2021.

The most significant risks that may result in LGIAsuper increasing the contribution rate, on the advice of the actuary, are:

Investment risk - risk that the scheme's investment returns will be lower than assumed and additional contributions are needed to fund the shortfall.

Salary growth risk - risk that wages or salaries will rise more rapidly than assumed, increasing vested benefits to be funded.

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Superannuation contributions made to the Regional Defined Benefits Fund		44	65
Other superannuation contributions for employees		676	619
Total superannuation contributions paid by Council	5	720	684



**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**18 Reconciliation of Net Result for the Year to Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities**

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Net Result		(723)	3,062
Non-Cash Items:			
Depreciation and Amortisation		7,673	7,699
		<u>7,673</u>	<u>7,699</u>
Investing and Development Activities:			
Loss on Disposal of Assets		393	(7)
Capital Grants and Contributions		(3,587)	(5,601)
		<u>(3,194)</u>	<u>(5,608)</u>
Changes in Operating Assets and Liabilities:			
(Increase) / Decrease in Receivables		(4,080)	585
(Increase) / Decrease in Inventory		75	(76)
(Increase) / Decrease in Contract Assets		(1,408)	(579)
(Increase) / Decrease in Other Assets		(107)	20
Increase / (Decrease) in Payables		2,834	775
Increase / (Decrease) in Contract Liabilities		1,173	3,405
Increase / (Decrease) in Employee Leave Entitlements		(313)	(20)
Increase / (Decrease) in Other Provisions		(113)	185
Increase / (Decrease) in Other Liabilities		145	186
		<u>(1,794)</u>	<u>4,481</u>
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities		<u>1,962</u>	<u>9,634</u>

**19 Reconciliation of Liabilities Arising from Finance Activities**

	Note	As at 30 June 2020	Cash Flows	As at 30 June 2021
Loans	12	5,572	1,278	6,850
		<u>5,572</u>	<u>1,278</u>	<u>6,850</u>
	Note	As at 30 June 2019	Cash Flows	As at 30 June 2020
Loans	12	2,659	2,913	5,572
		<u>2,659</u>	<u>2,913</u>	<u>5,572</u>

**20 Changes in Accounting Policy**

There were no changes in accounting policy in the 2020/21 financial year.

**21 Events After the Reporting Period**

There are no material adjusting events after the balance date.

**Balonne Shire Council  
Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**22 Related Parties**

**(a) Transactions with Key Management Personnel (KMP)**

KMP include the Mayor, Councillors, council's Chief Executive Officer and Directors. The compensation paid to key management personnel for 20/21 comprises:

Details of Transaction	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000
Short-Term Employee Benefits	1,320	1,214
Post-Employment Benefits	83	83
Long-Term Benefits	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,403</b>	<b>1,297</b>

\* Detailed remuneration disclosures are provided in the Annual Report

**(b) Transactions with Other Related Parties**

Other related parties include the close family members of KMP and any entities controlled or jointly controlled by KMP or their close family members. Close family members include a spouse, child and dependent of a KMP or their spouse.

No transactions between council and other related parties are applicable based on the criteria.

**(c) Loans and Guarantees to / from Related Parties**

Council does not make loans or receive loans from related parties. No guarantees have been provided.

**(d) Transactions with Related Parties that have not been Disclosed**

Most of the entities and people that are related parties of Council live and operate within Balonne Shire. Therefore, on a regular basis ordinary citizen transactions occur between Council and its related parties. Some examples include:

- Payment of rates
- Normal use of Council's sport and recreational facilities
- Dog registration
- Normal fees and charges
- Normal creditor and debtor transactions

Council has not included these types of transactions in its disclosure, where they are made on the same terms and conditions available to the general public.

**23 Financial Instruments and Financial Risk Management**

**(a) Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities**

Council has exposure to three types of risk from financial instruments; interest rate risk, credit risk, and liquidity risk.

**Risk Management Framework**

Council is responsible for the establishment and oversight of the risk management framework, together with developing and monitoring risk management policies. Council's risk management policies are established to identify and analyse the risks faced, to set appropriate limits and controls, and to monitor these risks and adherence against limits. Council aims to manage volatility to minimise potential adverse effects of financial performance.

Council's audit and risk committee oversees how management monitors compliance with risk management policies and procedures, and reviews the adequacy of the risk management framework. The committee is assisted in its oversight role by internal audit. Internal audit undertakes both regular and adhoc reviews of risk management controls and procedures, the result of which are reported to the audit and risk committee.

**Credit Risk**

Credit risk is the risk of financial loss if a counterparty to a financial instrument fails to meet its contractual obligations. These obligations arise principally from the council's investments and receivables. Exposure to credit risk is managed through regular analysis of credit counterparty ability to meet payment obligations.

Investments in financial instruments are required to be made with Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) or financial institutions in Australia, in line with the requirements of the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982. No collateral is held as security relating to the financial assets held by Balonne Shire Council.

The carrying amount of financial assets at the end of the reporting period represent the maximum exposure to credit risk.

**Balonne Shire Council**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**23 Financial Instruments and Financial Risk Management**

**Liquidity Risk**

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Council will encounter difficulty in meeting the obligations associated with its financial liabilities that are settled by delivering cash or another financial asset. Council's approach to managing liquidity is to ensure, as far as possible, that it will have sufficient liquidity to meet its liabilities when they are due, under both normal and stressed conditions, without incurring unacceptable losses or risking damage to Council's reputation.

*Exposure to liquidity risk*

Council is exposed to liquidity risk through its normal course of business and through its borrowings with QTC and other financial institutions. Council manages its exposure to liquidity risk by maintaining sufficient cash deposits and undrawn facilities, both short and long term, to cater for unexpected volatility in cash flows.

**Market Risk**

Market risk is the risk that changes in market indices, such as interest rates, will affect the Council's income or the value of its holdings of financial instruments.

*Interest rate risk*

Council is exposed to interest rate risk through investments and borrowings with QTC and other financial institutions. Council has access to a mix of variable and fixed rate funding options through QTC so that interest rate risk exposure can be minimised.

*Sensitivity*

Sensitivity to interest rate movements is shown for variable financial assets and liabilities based on the carrying amount at reporting date. Movements in interest rates are unlikely to have a significant effect on Council's equity or net result as they only impact interest on investments.



**Balonne Shire Council  
Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**Management Certificate  
For the year ended 30 June 2021**

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared pursuant to sections 176 and 177 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (the Regulation) and other prescribed requirements.

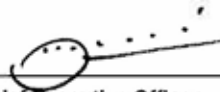
In accordance with section 212(5) of the Regulation we certify that:

- (i) the prescribed requirements of the *Local Government Act 2009* and *Local Government Regulation 2012* for the establishment and keeping of accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and
- (ii) the general purpose financial statements, as set out on pages 3 to 27, present a true and fair view, in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, of the Council's transactions for the financial year and financial position at the end of the year.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor  
Cr S C O'Toole

Date: 15/10/21



\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer  
Mr J M Magin

Date: 15/10/21

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the councillors of Balonne Shire Council

### Report on the audit of the financial report

#### Opinion

I have audited the financial report of Balonne Shire Council.

In my opinion, the financial report:

- a) gives a true and fair view of the council's financial position as at 30 June 2021, and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended
- b) complies with the *Local Government Act 2009*, the Local Government Regulation 2012 and Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial report comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the certificate given by the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

#### Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report* section of my report.

I am independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code and the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

#### Other information

Other information comprises financial and non-financial information (other than the audited financial report) in an entity's annual report.

At the date of this auditor's report, the available other information in Balonne Shire Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2021 was the current year financial sustainability statement and long-term financial sustainability statement.

The councillors are responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. However, as required by the Local Government Regulation 2012, I have expressed a separate opinion on the current year financial sustainability statement.

In connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report and my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Responsibilities of the councillors for the financial report**

The councillors are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009*, the *Local Government Regulation 2012* and Australian Accounting Standards, and for such internal control as the councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The councillors are also responsible for assessing the council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is intended to abolish the council or to otherwise cease operations of the council.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report**

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the council.



- Conclude on the appropriateness of the council's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the council's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. I base my conclusions on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the council to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the council regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

#### **Report on other legal and regulatory requirements**

In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, for the year ended 30 June 2021:

- a) I received all the information and explanations I required.
- b) I consider that, the prescribed requirements in relation to the establishment and keeping of accounts were complied with in all material respects.

#### **Prescribed requirements scope**

The prescribed requirements for the establishment and keeping of accounts are contained in the *Local Government Act 2009*, any other Act and the Local Government Regulation 2012. The applicable requirements include those for keeping financial records that correctly record and explain the council's transactions and account balances to enable the preparation of a true and fair financial report.



Michael Claydon  
as delegate of the Auditor-General

20 October 2021

Queensland Audit Office  
Brisbane

# BALONNE SHIRE COUNCIL

**Current Year Financial Sustainability Statement**

**Certificate of Accuracy - for the Current Year Financial Sustainability Statement**

**Independent Auditor's Report (Current Year Financial Sustainability Statement)**

**Balonne Shire Council  
Current-Year Financial Sustainability Statement  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**Measures of Financial Sustainability**

Council's performance at 30 June 2021 against key financial ratios and targets:

	How the measure is calculated	Actual	Target
Operating Surplus Ratio	<i>Net result (excluding capital items) divided by total operating revenue (excluding capital items)</i>	-8.1%	Between 0% and 15%
Asset Sustainability Ratio	<i>Capital expenditure on replacement of assets (renewals) divided by depreciation expense.</i>	70.8%	greater than 90%
Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	<i>Total liabilities less current assets divided by total operating revenue (excluding capital items)</i>	-51.6%	not greater than 60%

**Note 1 - Basis of Preparation**

The current year financial sustainability statement is a special purpose statement prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* and the *Financial Management (Sustainability) Guideline 2013*. The amounts used to calculate the three reported measures are prepared on an accrual basis and are drawn from the Council's audited general purpose financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2021.



**Balonne Shire Council  
Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

**Certificate of Accuracy  
For the year ended 30 June 2021**

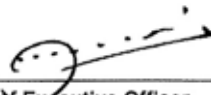
This current-year financial sustainability statement has been prepared pursuant to Section 178 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (the regulation)

In accordance with Section 212(5) of the Regulation we certify that this current-year financial sustainability statement has been accurately calculated.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor  
Cr S C O'Toole

Date: 15/10/21



\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer  
Mr J M Magin

Date: 15/10/21

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the councillors of Balonne Shire Council

### Report on the current-year financial sustainability statement

#### Opinion

I have audited the accompanying current-year financial sustainability statement of Balonne Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2021, comprising the statement, explanatory notes, and the certificate of accuracy given by the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer.

In accordance with s.212 of the Local Government Regulation 2012, in my opinion, in all material respects, the current-year financial sustainability statement of Balonne Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2021 has been accurately calculated.

#### Basis of opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the current-year financial sustainability statement* section of my report.

I am independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the statement in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code and the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

#### Emphasis of matter – basis of accounting

I draw attention to Note 1 which describes the basis of accounting. The current-year financial sustainability statement has been prepared in accordance with the Financial Management (Sustainability) Guideline 2013 for the purpose of fulfilling the council's reporting responsibilities under the Local Government Regulation 2012. As a result, the statement may not be suitable for another purpose. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

#### Other Information

Other information comprises financial and non-financial information (other than the audited financial report) in an entity's annual report.

At the date of this auditor's report, the available other information in Balonne Shire Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2021 was the general purpose financial statements and long-term financial sustainability statement.

The councillors are responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the current-year financial sustainability statement does not cover the other information and accordingly I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

However, as required by the Local Government Regulation 2012, I have expressed a separate opinion on the general purpose financial report.

In connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report and my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Responsibilities of the councillors for the current-year financial sustainability statement**

The councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the current-year financial sustainability statement in accordance with the Local Government Regulation 2012. The councillors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the statement that is accurately calculated and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the current-year financial sustainability statement**

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the current-year financial sustainability statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this statement.

My responsibility does not extend to forming an opinion on the appropriateness or relevance of the reported ratios, nor on the council's future sustainability.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the council.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the statement, including the disclosures, and whether the statement represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.



I communicate with the council regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

*M. Claydon*

Michael Claydon  
as delegate of the Auditor-General

20 October 2021

Queensland Audit Office  
Brisbane

# BALONNE SHIRE COUNCIL

**Long Term Financial Sustainability Statement – Unaudited**

**Certificate of Accuracy – for the Long Term Financial Sustainability Statement**

Balonne Shire Council  
 Unaudited Long-Term Financial Sustainability Statement  
 Prepared as at 30 June 2020

Measures of Financial Sustainability	Measure	Target	Actuals at 30 June 2021	Projected for the years ended										
				30 June 22	30 June 23	30 June 24	30 June 25	30 June 26	30 June 27	30 June 28	30 June 29	30 June 30	30 June 31	
Operating Surplus Ratio	Net result divided by total operating revenue	Between 0% and 15%	-8.1%	-40.70%	-13.44%	-17.93%	-14.56%	-21.44%	-21.65%	-19.47%	-22.79%	-20.55%	-20.67%	
Asset Sustainability Ratio	Capital expenditure on the replacement of assets (renewals) divided by depreciation expense.	greater than 90%	70.8%	70.00%	71.67%	65.92%	71.68%	68.30%	74.99%	79.68%	68.29%	75.51%	69.44%	
Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	Total liabilities less current assets divided by total operating revenue	not greater than 60%	-51.6%	-43.63%	-56.47%	-57.88%	-49.29%	-56.36%	-57.72%	-52.04%	-49.14%	-44.96%	-41.53%	

**Balonne Shire Council's Financial Management Strategy**

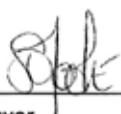
Council measures revenue and expenditure trends over time as a guide to future requirements and to make decisions about the efficient allocation of resources to ensure the most effective provision of services. Council ensures that its financial management strategy is prudent and that its long-term financial forecast shows a sound financial position whilst also being able to meet the community's current and future needs.



**Certificate of Accuracy**  
**For the long-term financial sustainability statement prepared as at 30 June 2021**

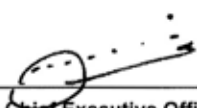
This long-term financial sustainability statement has been prepared pursuant to Section 178 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 (the regulation)

In accordance with Section 212(5) of the Regulation we certify that this long-term financial sustainability statement has been accurately calculated.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor  
Cr S C O'Toole

Date: 15 / 10 / 21



\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer  
Mr J M Magin

Date: 15 / 10 / 21



