

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-23



A YEAR OF COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS



ABOUT THIS REPORT

This year's annual report represents the 2022-23 financial year and the activities, challenges and major achievements completed within our council and community.

This is one of the primary accountability tools in council's governance framework. It provides non-financial and financial information which the community and our stakeholders can use to assess council's performance against its goals and objectives. The *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012* advise councils on what is required in their annual reports each financial year.

The 2022-23 year marks the final full term for councillors serving from 2020 to 2024, with local government elections scheduled for 16 March 2024.

The report is structured around the key strategic goals of 'Our Plan, Our Future: Balonne Shire Council Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027' and council's values:

- **Our customers** - the centre of everything we do, we aim to get things done with speed, conviction and agility
- **Our people** - we value teamwork and interdependence, we value each other and seek benefit from diverse people and perspectives

- **Our reputation** - our most valuable asset, we act honestly and consistently in our behaviours, actions and decisions.

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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Balonne Shire Council acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present.

The six main Indigenous Peoples in the shire are:

- Bigambul People
- Gamilaraay People
- Gunggari People
- Kooma People
- Mandandanji People
- Yuwaalaraay/Euahlayi People



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WELCOME FROM OUR MAYOR

On behalf of Balonne Shire Council, I am pleased to present the 2022-23 Annual Report. In this final year of the 2020-24 council term, I am immensely proud of the broad range and depth of our achievements. Despite challenges and disruptions, our team has worked in partnership with our communities and key stakeholders to advance and complete a number of ambitious projects.

Our Shire was disaster declared for six separate events between 2020 and 2022. As a result, a big focus for our team in the last financial year has been delivering and completing \$14.5M of flood recovery works for these events. Our Infrastructure team also partnered with the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) to deliver contract maintenance and upgrade works on state-controlled roads. During the 2022-23 financial year, our team successfully completed over \$5M in contracted work to TMR, providing a safer road network for our shire.

We have delivered numerous initiatives that improve the safety and resilience of our community. By implementing innovative technologies like flood water mapping and a network of flood monitoring cameras, we are now better equipped to mitigate the impact of natural disasters and safeguard the wellbeing of our residents.

To drive economic development, we have launched a range of initiatives to support businesses in our shire. We have worked with local businesses to improve their infrastructure, diversify and expand, which will contribute to the economic growth and long-term prosperity of our region.

We know that tourism plays a vital role in our local economy and our Tourism team continued to deliver with clever, award-winning campaigns that boosted our economy.

There have been challenges. We were not immune to the global challenges of increasing prices for materials, transport costs and supply chain delays and our Local Disaster Management Group were active for 71 days of the financial year with flood events. Our team prevailed through these challenges, continued to achieve key milestones and win numerous awards.

We should have optimism and confidence about the future. In June this year we handed down our largest budget in recent years, with a total



revenue of \$108.67M, expenditure of \$90.17M and a net operating surplus of \$1.372M. We also brought the budget back in to surplus and have forecast ongoing surpluses for the next ten years.

I am proud of these achievements which are a testament to the effective planning, hard work, advocacy and commitment of my fellow councillors, Chief Executive Officer Matthew Magin and the Balonne Shire Council team.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our residents, communities, elected members, staff, volunteers and contractors. Your support, dedication and hard work have been vital in helping us tackle challenges head on and achieve our goals.

Councillor Samantha O'Toole
Mayor

“We should have optimism and confidence about the future. In June this year we handed down our largest budget in recent years...”

In the realm of beautification, we have completed and continue to work on a range of projects that create inviting spaces for our residents, attract visitors and stimulate local businesses. Projects have included the revitalisation of the Dirranbandi Rail and River Precinct, the Mungindi River Park, the Thallon Campground, the St George foreshore and CBD, as well as some beautiful new public art.



MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

This year's annual report theme is community partnerships and connectedness. I believe our team's commitment to the Balonne Shire Council motto of 'For the People' has been particularly evident in the last financial year by what we have achieved, working in partnership with our community. Community partnerships have been delivering successful outcomes across a broad range of projects, in every area of our organisation.

Council owns over 2,000kms of the road network in our shire. Our road network is always under pressure from climatic extremes (flood and drought), lack of human and financial resources, scarce availability of materials, geographical challenges and declining population. Despite our best efforts, it remains a constant challenge to maintain every road in peak operational condition.

This financial year we engaged local contractors for a large proportion of \$14.5M of flood recovery works on our local road network. Through our partnerships with local contractors and key stakeholders, we have been able to make great inroads in delivering safer roads for our community.

The state-controlled network running through our shire includes the Balonne, Barwon, Carnarvon, Castlereagh and Moonie Highways and covers a distance of 636kms. These highways play a critical role in maintaining connectedness for our region, state and nation. Council have maintained TMR accreditation and have successfully tendered to undertake major reconstruction and emergent works for TMR. This partnership allows council to play a critical role in improving road safety for our community.

Through our partnership with TMR, we were also able to identify sections of road for betterment and improve their long-term resilience. This included a section of the Castlereagh Highway, extending from Policeman's Lagoon in Dirranbandi to the south end of town, heading towards Hebel. Council identified areas requiring attention and secured \$10M for betterment works to be completed by TMR by 2025.

Our reliance on digital connectivity continues to increase and is a critical component of business, industry, education, health, leisure and recreation in our community. Council's continued commitment to improving digital connectivity in our shire included supporting Field Solutions Group (FSG) to lodge an application under the federal government's Regional Connectivity Program (RCP) to construct telecommunication towers. Tower construction is now well under way, with 4 towers installed between St George and Bollon, providing data and mobile phone connectivity.

Council have continued to partner with key community groups across our shire, including business and industry groups, progress associations and health and education groups. We have also formally engaged and consulted with the community across a range of issues and projects.

We have maintained close working partnerships with our two largest external stakeholders, the state and federal governments, who provided 58% of council's revenue in the last financial year. We rely on funding provided through these strong and positive partnerships to remain financially viable.

Partnerships, relationships and strategic alliances are vital to the



“Community partnerships have been delivering successful outcomes across a broad range of projects, in every area of our organisation.”

long-term viability of our shire. For this reason, we will continue to put in the necessary time, effort and energy to maintain our existing partnerships and develop new partnerships, where there is direct benefit to our shire.

Matthew Magin
Chief Executive Officer



OUR PLAN, OUR FUTURE

The Corporate Plan sets the strategic direction for 2022-27 across five foundation areas, community, economy, environment, infrastructure and planning and governance.

The following community priority areas have been developed in consultation with focus groups across the shire and are listed in no order of priority. Council's role may vary from advocating, monitoring or playing a direct role in strategies to improve these key priority areas:

- Retention and attraction of people, new businesses and industries
- Increasing base level services and needs
- Community liveability and wellbeing
- Indigenous engagement
- Digital connectivity.



KEY FOUNDATION AREAS

The 2022 – 2027 Corporate Plan is based on five (5) Foundations:



COMMUNITY



ECONOMY



ENVIRONMENT



INFRASTRUCTURE
& PLANNING



GOVERNANCE



AWARDS

Balonne Shire Council (BSC) were the proud recipients of several prestigious awards in the 2022-23 financial year, including:

- **The Butch Lenton Memorial Bush Council Innovation Award**, council donated the \$10,000 award to the Country Universities Centre (CUC) Balonne
- **Local Government Association of Queensland's (LGAQ) 'Queensland it's Time to Shine' award** for the 'St George Region: You'll Be Hooked' tourism campaign
- **The 2022 Best Grey Nomad Trail Category** for the Mungindi Sculpture Trail, a collaboration between BSC, the McMillan family, the Mungindi Progress Association, and the Moree Plains Shire Council (MPSC)
- **New South Wales Local Government Awards, Borderless Communities Finalist** with MPSC
- **OpenMinds 2022 QLD Mental Health Awards** – Winner of the Workplace Award (1-200 Staff)
- State finalist in the **Shaping Communities category of the Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA) Queensland Awards for Excellence**.
- The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia, **Queensland's Excellence Award for Projects \$5m to \$10m** for 'The Hub' at St George for improving educational opportunities for regional students.

Councillor Robyn Fuhrmeister, Balonne Shire's Deputy Mayor, was recognised in The King's Birthday 2023 Honours List, receiving a Medal in the General Division (OAM) for her outstanding service to local government and to the community of St George.

Councillor Fuhrmeister was also awarded a long service award at the LGAQ 2023 Annual Conference, for more than 25 years service.



CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS

Projects that have been completed in the past financial year, achieving the vision of the 2022-27 Corporate Plan include:

St George CBD Beautification Project

Project works in Victoria Street and the Hub area have been completed with kerb replacement and installation of footpath and road crossings. Landscaping and supporting irrigation works for the centre median, adjacent to the footpath and greenspace at the Hub area, were also undertaken. These works tie into the completed works around the Hub and further enhance the space.

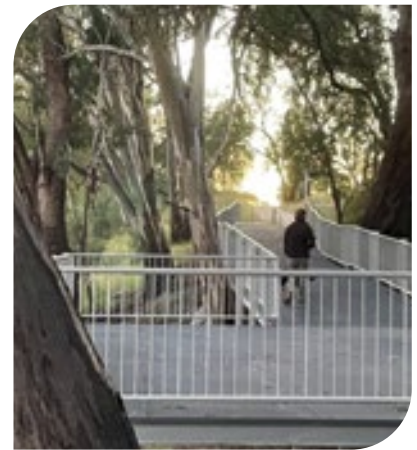
St George River Foreshore Boardwalk

This multi-year project was completed this year with the installation of footpath and viewing platform between the boat ramp and the showgrounds. This final section completes the walk, linking the riverfront from the bridge to the hospital and making the entire riverfront more attractive and accessible to tourists and locals alike.

Mungindi River Park Upgrades

After many delays due to recurrent flooding, the upgrade works at the Mungindi River Parks were completed with installation of paths, bins,

landscaping and bollards to delineate the area. These installations support the existing playground, toilet block and earthen boat ramp, making the park an ideal location for families to experience river activities.



Mungindi Sculpture Trail

After almost 3 years of hard work hampered by shutdowns due to COVID 19 and continual flooding, Mungindi's long-awaited Sculpture Trail officially opened in September 2022. Featuring 10 raw and rustic sculptures by award-winning local artist Tony 'Nicko' McMillan, who tragically died at 54 years of age in 2016, the 2.5km trail delivers a new perspective on art and nature. Working in collaboration with Nicko's family, who generously donated the sculptures to the Mungindi community, the Mungindi Progress Association and the MPSC, BSC utilised funding from the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program (MDBEDP) to pay tribute to Nicko and display the sculptures for everyone's enjoyment.



OUR SHIRE

The Balonne Shire is located in Queensland, approximately 500km inland from Brisbane, resting on the New South Wales border. The Balonne Shire is bounded by the Maranoa Regional Council area in the north, the Western Downs Regional Council area and the Goondiwindi Regional Council area in the east, and the Paroo Shire in the west.

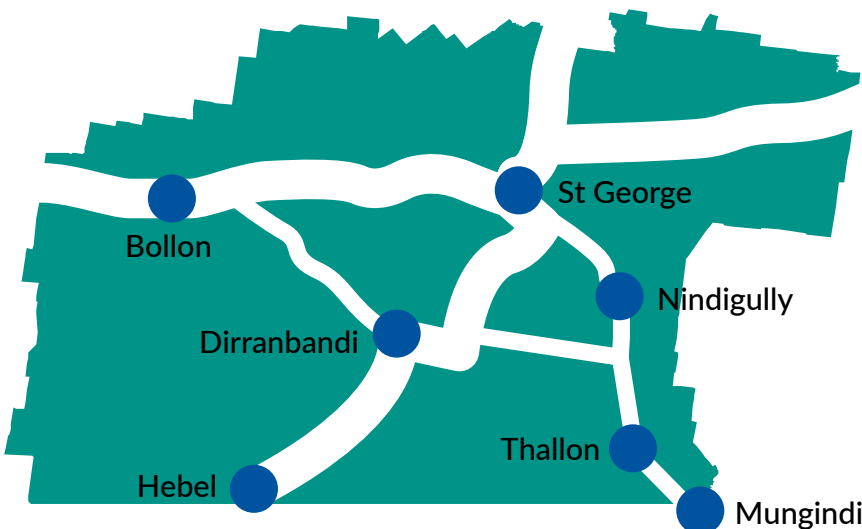
The Shire covers an area of 31,152km² and has a resident population of 4,362 persons (2022) with a population density of 0.14 persons/km².

The local government area comprises seven communities, St George, Thallon, Dirranbandi, Bollon, Nindigully, Mungindi and Hebel. St George is the hub of the shire and is centrally located at the intersection of six highways, ensuring strong transport links and a constant flow of goods and visitors into the region. St George also has an airport which is serviced with regular Rex Airlines flights.

Traditionally, the shire's economy has been built around the agriculture sector, led by cotton, grain, sheep and cattle production. We are currently experiencing exciting growth in the tourism industry, as well as the horticulture sector (including large broccoli, carrot, garlic and grape enterprises). Businesses within the shire engage an estimated 700 transient contractors and workers across a range of sectors, particularly the agricultural industry.

The Visitor Information Centre (VIC) recorded a total of 16,168 visitors in 2022-23, an impressive 33.5% increase on visitor numbers from 2021-22 (12,110 visitors).

The Balonne Shire boasts a unique and relaxed lifestyle, strong community values and diverse natural landscapes. All towns in the shire are uniquely situated on waterways, which provide water for our nationally significant agricultural industries and create an abundance of recreation activities for residents and visitors to enjoy, including boating, fishing, swimming, walking and camping.



STATISTICS

\$794m

Gross Regional Product

4362

Population

2331

Local jobs

2272

Employed residents

900

Local businesses

Largest industry **Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing**

\$299m

/ 78.1% Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing exports out of Balonne

\$794m

in 2022-23 Gross Value Product – 6th amongst Queensland Councils in agricultural production and output.

3.5%

Unemployment rate

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2022)



OUR PURPOSE

Our team has worked tirelessly to collectively deliver essential services to our communities, in addition to providing numerous facilities and activities that improve the liveability and sustainability of our shire. We are proud of our team's collective achievements and commitment to serving current and future residents and visitors.

Essential Services

We provide essential services, road maintenance and upgrades, water and sewerage infrastructure, recreation and community facilities and a range of community services.

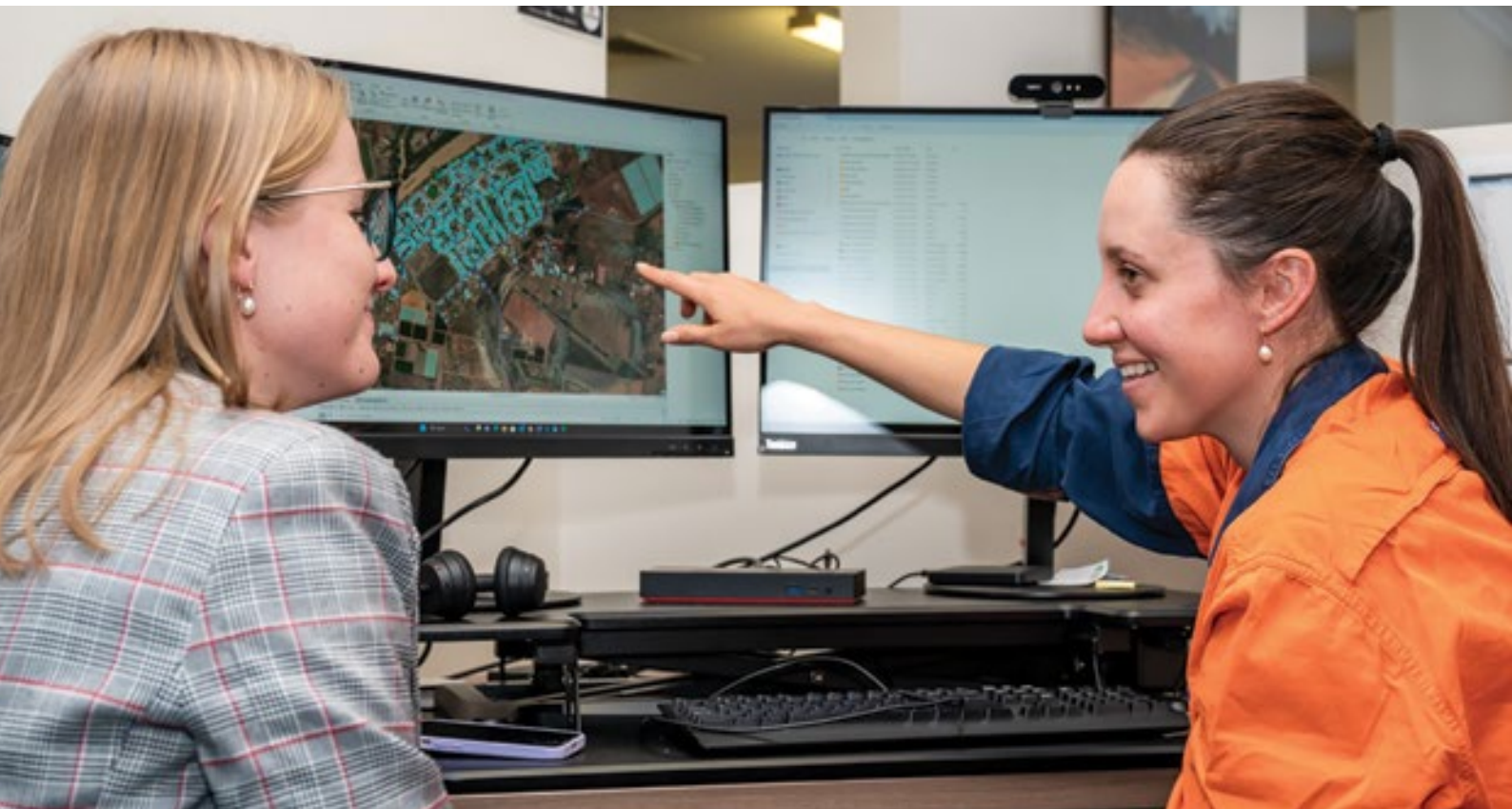
The shire has a network of 3019km sealed and unsealed roads which are managed and maintained by council.



Council manages the bore and river water supplies to all 7 towns in the shire. Council provides its water supply in accordance with its Drinking Water Quality Management Plan.

We deliver domestic kerbside waste collection services, maintain 5 landfill sites and one transfer station site.

Our team deliver environmental health, local laws and compliance services, such as food inspections, and animal control. We take a proactive approach to managing stock routes, biosecurity and feral animal management.





Council provide and maintain a range of facilities for residents and visitors of all ages, including parks and playgrounds, sporting grounds and facilities, showgrounds and community halls.

Supporting economic, social and environmental wellbeing

Council's Tourism team have delivered a range of successful tourism initiatives, events, programs, tours and trails. They have also successfully managed council's Tourism and Events Grant program.

Our Community team coordinate and deliver a range of popular community events and programs. They assist community groups through the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) and council's Community Grants program. They have achieved remarkable success in further

developing our youth and youth engagement partnerships.

Council's support of education opportunities in the shire has been highly effective. CUC Balonne is supporting more than 140 students with tertiary studies, far above the initial targets and expectations. In 2022-23, we secured funding to ensure this important initiative is financed for an additional 4-year period. CUC Balonne also joined 15 other centres and 19 university partners to form the Eastern Australia Regional University Centre Partnership.

A review of education in the shire will continue to build on improving wellbeing and opportunities for students from childcare through to higher education.

We are constantly striving to develop stronger Indigenous relationships with recognition of native title, Indigenous

Land Use Agreements (ILUA), cultural burning and consultation on a broad range of topics.

Economic development continues to be an important initiative for council to help individuals and businesses explore new and innovative ways to conduct business in our shire.

Council's role in improving digital connectivity across the Shire supports business, students and individuals to stay connected.

Advocacy and Regional Partnerships

Council plays an important advocacy role on behalf of our communities. We are actively involved in a number of regional advocacy groups. More information about council's advocacy work in 2022-23 can be found on page 16.



OUR ELECTED MEMBERS



Our elected members represent the interests of the shire as a whole and share responsibility for participating in various user groups, progress associations and committees.

Council meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month with a number of standing and advisory committees reporting to council.

Councillors participate in briefing workshops and project groups to monitor progress of the diverse range of projects and initiatives managed by council.

During 2022-23 two councillors resigned and two new councillors commenced. Councillor Ian Todd resigned on 15 September 2023, he was replaced by Councillor

Alex Benn who was elected unopposed. Councillor and Deputy Mayor Richard Lomman resigned 1st April 2023. Council appointed Councillor Adam Osborne in accordance with the provisions in the *Local Government Act 2009*.

Councillor Fuhrmeister was also elected as Deputy Mayor in April 2023.



Mayor Samantha O'Toole

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

The Mayor is the ex-officio of all committees and the chair of all council meetings. Other duties include Chair of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) and member of the Audit and Risk Committee. Mayor O'Toole chairs several external committees and regional organisations such as the South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (SWQROC) and the Darling Downs and South West Queensland Council of Mayors. She is also a member of the Queensland Great Artesian Basin Advisory Committee and the Murray-Darling Association. She is a Director on the Board of the Local Government Mutual Service.





Cr Robyn Fuhrmeister OAM, Deputy Mayor

First elected as a councillor in 1992, 2022 marked 26 years of service as a Balonne Shire councillor for Cr Fuhrmeister. She was appointed as Deputy Mayor on 27 April 2023, following the resignation of Cr Lomman.

Cr Fuhrmeister represents the townships of Mungindi and Bollon. She is Chair of the Rowden Park Users Group, the RADF Reference Panel and the Tourism Operators meeting. She is Deputy Chair of the LDMG and a member of the Dirranbandi Multi Sports Group, the Dirranbandi Swimming Pool Advisory Committee and the Work Camp Advisory Committee. Councillor Fuhrmeister also represents Southwest Queensland on the Policy Executive of the LGAQ.



Cr Scott Scriven

First elected as a councillor in 2016, and then re-elected as a councillor in 2020, this is the second term for Cr Scriven.

Cr Scriven represents the townships of Thallon and Nindigully. He is the Chair of the Assets Standing Committee and a member of the Biosecurity Advisory Committee (BAC). He is Chair of the Assets Committee and the Airport Working Group, who are currently finalising the development of the airport hangars and a new industrial subdivision. Cr Scriven is also a member of the external Wild Dog Barrier Fence Advisory Group and the St George Showgrounds User Group.



Cr Rod Avery

First elected as a councillor to serve from 2012 to 2016, Councillor Avery was 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 the Chair of the BAC and Chair of the Workforce Development Group. He is a member of the Plant Standing Committee, Local Housing Action Plan (LHAP) Advisory Group, the Assets Standing Committee, the Airport Working Group and the South West Regional Waste Group.



Cr Bill Winks

First elected as a councillor in 2020, Councillor Winks is in his first term as a councillor.

Cr Winks represents the townships of Bollon and Hebel. He is Chair of the Work Camp Advisory Committee, the Dirranbandi Showgrounds User Group, the Bollon Showgrounds User Group, the Hebel Showgrounds User Group and the St George Showgrounds User Group. He is a member of the Community Advisory Committee, the Assets Committee, the RADF Reference Panel and the Youth Advisory Committee (Youth Council).





Cr Alex Benn

Elected unopposed and sworn in as a councillor on 10 November 2022.

Cr Benn represents the townships of Thallon and Nindigully. He is the Chair of the Multicultural Committee, the Youth Advisory Committee (Youth Council), the Economic Development Advisory Committee, as well as the Information Communications and Technology Standing Committee. He is a member of the Business Mentoring Group, the Learning Opportunities Advisory Committee, the Workforce Development Group, the Airport and Industrial Land Development Working Group, the Local Water Security Advisory Group, the Plant Standing Committee and the Tourism Operators meeting.



Cr Adam Osborne

Elected by nomination and sworn in as a councillor on 27 April 2023.

Cr Osborne represents the township of Dirranbandi and is the Chair of the Community Safety Group. He is a member of the Indigenous Advisory Committee, the Bollon Showgrounds User Group, the Dirranbandi Showgrounds User Group, the Hebel Showgrounds User Group, the Multicultural Committee, the Work Camp Advisory Group, the Learning Opportunities Advisory Committee, the Information Communications Technology Standing Committee, the LHAP Advisory Group and the BAC.



We take this opportunity to thank our outgoing councillors during 2022-23.

Cr Ian Todd

First elected as a councillor in 2016, Councillor Todd was then re-elected in 2020, this was the second term for Cr Todd. He resigned as councillor on 15 September 2022.

He represented the townships of Dirranbandi and Hebel. He was chair of the Plant Standing Committee and a member of the Audit and Risk Committee, the Information Communication and Technology Standing Committee, the Assets Standing Committee and the Airport Working Group.



Cr Richard Lomman

First elected as a councillor in 2020 and appointed Deputy Mayor by Council on 14 April 2022, he resigned on 1 April 2023.

Cr Lomman represented the townships of Thallon and Nindigully. He was deputy chair of the LDMG, the Community Advisory Committee and the Information Communications and Technology Standing Committee. He was a strong advocate for our youth, leading the establishment of the Balonne Shire Youth Council. He was a member of the Airport Working Group and the Business Taskforce (Business Mentoring Advisory Group and Bettering Balonne).





ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Council plays an important advocacy role on behalf of our communities and is actively involved in a number of regional advocacy groups.

The benefit of taking a collaborative regional approach is that we are able to present a unified approach and a stronger voice when we present common issues and proposed solutions to state and federal governments. We speak out on a range of issues that impact our collective residents, businesses and different industry sectors.

In 2022-23, BSC met with 38 ministers and senators to discuss a broad range of issues including housing, flood relief, water buy backs and biosecurity.

We are actively involved in a number of regional advocacy groups, including;

- Western Queensland Alliance of Councils (WQAC)
- Southwest Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (SWQROC)
- Border Regional Organisation of Councils (BROC)

- Darling Downs and South West Queensland Council of Mayors
- Murray Darling Association (MDA) and related community groups
- Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise (TSBE)
- Outback Queensland Tourism Association

Mayor O'Toole is the Chair of the SWQROC and has attended a number of deputations to state and federal ministers in that capacity.



The mayor chaired more than 11 LDMG meetings, attended one Western Downs Regional Council LDMG meeting for bush fires and one Local Disaster Recovery meeting.

Council coordinated and hosted a Planning for Cross Border Disaster Management Exercise in July 2023, bringing together neighbouring councils as well as relevant Queensland and New South Wales government agencies, aiming to

improve disaster management across state borders.

The mayor attended 12 key Murray-Darling meetings in 2022-23, including various board, community committee and subcommittee meetings.

The report from the review of learning opportunities in our shire, funded by council, generated a number of meetings with Education Queensland and a range of other stakeholders,

aiming to improve learning opportunities for all ages across our shire. Council continues to work with the communities of Mungindi and Dirranbandi to tackle a lack of early childhood education and kindergarten options for those communities.

Council continues to play an active role in advocating for improved health and aged care services and regularly meets with the South West Hospital Health Service.



OUR PEOPLE



Our Senior Leadership Group

The Senior Leadership Group is comprised of the CEO and 3 directors who each oversee core functions of the organisation. The CEO and directors share responsibility for attending community meetings across each of our communities.

BALONNE SHIRE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

<p>FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Service Administration Procurement Financial Management Risk Management Grant Management Records Management Information Technology Human Resources 	<p>INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads & Transport Water & Sewerage Parks & Gardens Aerodromes Maintenance Operations Asset Management Facilities & Community Infrastructure Work Health & Safety Plant & Fleet Management 	<p>COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biosecurity & Rural Services Compliance Environmental Health Multicultural Services Planning & Development Building Services Community Development Library Services 	<p>OFFICE OF THE CEO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Support Media & Communications Tourism & Visitor Information Services Economic Development
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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 represent council at a wide range of regional and community meetings. Matthew represents council at the Mungindi Progress Association meetings.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN 2022-23

Continuing to provide our standard services, in addition to protecting, advising, and updating our community via the LDMG, which was active for 71 days in 2022-23, responding to 2 flood events. LDMGs are enshrined in legislation under the Disaster Management Act. They are a partnership between the Queensland Government and council. Council has responsibility for managing disaster events from a local perspective, with support and assistance from relevant state agencies. We act as a conduit for information flowing up to the District Disaster Management Group and ultimately to the State Disaster Coordination Centre.



Michelle Clarke, Director Finance and Corporate Services

Michelle joined council in October 2016 and was officially appointed as Director Finance and Corporate Services in February 2017. Michelle holds a Bachelor of Law and Administration, a Graduate Certificate in Business (Professional Accounting) and a Graduate Diploma in Applied Risk Management and Corporate Governance. Michelle is a Fellow of Local Government Managers Australia and the Governance Institute of Australia. She is also a Justice of the Peace. Michelle represents council at the Dirranbandi Progress Association meetings.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN 2022-23

Increased turnover across the organisation has reduced productivity, with incoming employees requiring additional time for induction, training, learning and upskilling. High turnover put additional pressure on the Finance team, with external audit, internal audit, budget and end of financial year coinciding in the final months of 2022-23. Despite these challenges, the budget was still delivered on time.



Digby Whyte, Director Community and Environmental Services

Digby joined our team in September 2018 and oversees town planning, waste management, environmental health, biosecurity, stock route management, natural and cultural heritage, local laws, community and cultural programs, libraries and digital connectivity. Digby was previously the Chief Executive of World Urban Parks/ International Federation of Park and Recreation Administration, following a parks and recreation career with local, state and national agencies. He holds a director's degree in recreation and park administration (Indiana), a master's degree in public policy (Massey), and a company director's diploma (AICD). He is a Fellow of the New Zealand Recreation Association and Chair of the World Parks Academy. Digby represents council at Bollon and Hebel community association meetings.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES IN 2022-23

Reviewing the planning scheme, meeting environmental and funding expectations for waste, creating the Indigenous Advisory Committee and an environmental services unit, completing federally funded wild dog exclusion fence programs, expanding community and library programs and events.





Chris Whitaker, Director Infrastructure Services

Commencing in February 2023, Chris was engaged as Director Infrastructure Services, to lead the infrastructure team and oversee the broad range of infrastructure projects council is currently delivering. Chris brings a wealth of local government experience, with over 16 years' experience leading regional council infrastructure teams, most recently with Southern Downs Regional Council and Banana Shire Council. Chris holds a Bachelor of Civil Engineering and has highly developed expertise delivering road maintenance and construction projects. Chris represents council at the Thallon Progress Association meetings and attends Showground User Groups meetings.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES IN 2022-23

Inclement weather caused extensive delays to projects and flood damage significantly increased workload. This was compounded by substantial procurement delays, stemming from ongoing COVID-19 pandemic impacts. The Infrastructure team was unable to avoid the nationwide issue of staff shortages, with attraction and retention of staff providing ongoing challenges.

FAREWELL

We farewelled our previous Director Infrastructure Services, Andrew Boardman, in December 2022. Andrew joined Council in September 2018 and was promoted to Director in March 2019. We wish Andrew and his family our best wishes and take this opportunity to thank him for his service to the Balonne Shire.



OUR TEAM



Council's mission is to invest in people, ignite ideas, meet our challenges, and grow prosperity. At Balonne we value:

- Each other
- Diverse teams and perspectives
- A safe and healthy work environment
- Mutual trust, respect, and integrity.

Our Workforce Plan is in the second year of its implementation. The plan is about building an engaged, skilled and evolving workforce to meet our community's future needs. We recognise that our employees are our most valuable asset, and they are a major factor in contributing to a positive public image. We therefore develop our staff by encouraging personal and professional growth.

This is also the second year of implementing our Mental Health Strategy to improve staff wellbeing. Our Mental Health Implementation Team is comprised of employees



from different departments across the organisation, with Michelle Clarke acting as sponsor from the Senior Leadership Group.

Current team:

- Ron Petterson (Chair)
- Kyra Passman
- Dylan Sherriff
- Alan Greenhalgh
- Gail Liversidge (Secretary)

Previous team members were Annabelle Albeck, Aiden Keane (resigned) and Carolyn Harrison (resigned).

Council provides abundant opportunities to work on a diverse range of projects.

We value teamwork and often establish multi-disciplinary teams to oversee and support each other when delivering a major project.



We take this opportunity to thank all our employees, contractors and elected members for their work, contribution and commitment to our shire in 2022-23.

The following employees, with over 5 years' service, were farewelled during 2022-23. We wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

EMPLOYEE:	YEARS OF SERVICE
Shane Bunyan	20
Patricia Kennedy	14
Tayla Willis	10
Christopher Dixon	9
Ronald Cooke	9
Aidan Keane	8
Sabina Ryan	8



LONG SERVICE

Council acknowledged its long service employees at a Christmas function in December 2022.

	YEARS OF SERVICE:	EMPLOYEE:	ANNIVERSARY DATE:
Bronze Medallion	20 years	Shane Bunyan	20/03/2022
Gold Medallion	35 years	Wayne Ross	02/12/2022

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

DEPARTMENT	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL		
	Full Time	PT/ Casual	Full Time	PT/ Casual	Full Time	PT/ Casual	Total
Community and Environmental Services	6	1	9	10	15	11	26
Finance and Corporate Services	3	0	14	5	17	5	22
Infrastructure Services	47	0	5	1	52	1	53
Office of the CEO	2	0	4	4	6	4	10
Total	58	1	32	20	90	21	111




Our expected behaviours

To ensure employees are aware of, and adhere to, the expected standards or workplace behaviour and performance, council's Code of Conduct is promoted through council's General Induction Program and Toolbox Talks. Code of Conduct training was completed across the organisation in May 2023.

The expectations contained within the Code of Conduct are based upon the ethical principles outlined in the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, specifically:

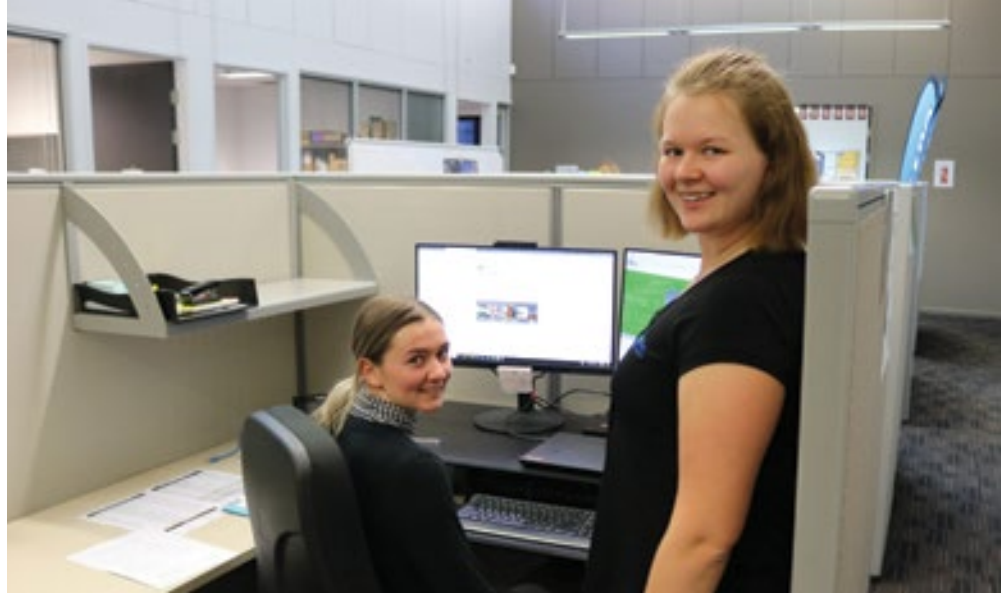
- Integrity and impartiality
- Promoting the public good
- Commitment to the system of government
- Accountability and transparency.

 <https://www.balonne.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/1493/code-of-conduct-for-employees>

Developing our people

Council has improved the management and recording of training with a comprehensive training register, as well as a qualifications and licence record. Learning and development plans are now centralised.

We actively encourage our employees to undertake study and enhance their



knowledge and skills. As part of the training guidelines, council contributes to the financial cost of approved courses. Council has 3 staff registered with CUC Balonne, who are at various stages of a range of studies.

More information on training completed and developing our people is in the Governance section on page 82.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Council is 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 promotion. 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's Human Rights Policy applies to its workforce and customers. The Workforce Plan promotes diversity in the workforce.

Our Traineeships

As part of our commitment to developing employees, Council has several current trainees:

- One (1) Civil Construction trainee (Adam Parkes)
- Two (2) Business Administration trainees (Chloe Vidler and Crystal Smith)
- One (1) Certificate II in Horticulture trainee (Billy Turnbull)
- One (1) school-based trainee, completing a Certificate III in Business (Emalie Hams)
- One (1) Apprentice Mechanic (Max Hillier)





All staff meetings

Council held 2 staff breakfasts in 2022-23. Our staff breakfasts are a great opportunity for our entire workforce to get together with elected members. It improves communication, information sharing and provides a forum to promote staff initiatives. Our councillors and senior leadership group cook and serve breakfast. Some highlights from this year's breakfasts included:

- Guest speaker Mr Brett Peachey, who spoke to us about mental health
- A presentation from Dr Lisa Patterson-Kane (Changing Ways Psychology), who runs one of our Employee Assistant Programs
- Update presentations on our Mental Health Strategy
- Staff were challenged to a strength test and offered free access to the My Healthy Life program, provided by Southern Queensland Rural Health.

We start every week with our Monday morning water cooler chat. This provides an opportunity for all staff to get an update of the week that was and what is coming up in the weeks ahead. The sessions are recorded, and the recordings are available to all staff.

A weekly wrap staff newsletter is circulated to all staff. This is an effective platform to share announcements, provide updates on key projects and celebrate achievements.

Keeping our people safe at work

The safety of our employees, contractors, volunteers and members of the public is our priority. Council recognises the importance of developing and maintaining healthy and safe working conditions in all workplaces, and the importance of keeping the work health safety practices in these workplaces under constant review.

Council engaged the services of an external provider, Fedderson's Group,

to assist in maintaining our Integrated Management System (IMS) for ISO standards in quality (9001), environmental (14001) and safety (45001). An ISO surveillance audit of the IMS was completed in February 2023, ensuring council maintained its third-party accreditation for TMR contract work. The National Audit Tool (NAT) for self-insurance was completed in March 2023, council was conformant across all 5 elements and achieved a 73.8% result.

More on workplace health and safety initiatives can be found in the Governance section on page 80.

Looking after our people

Council offers 3 Employee Assistance Programs (Assure Programs, Changing Ways Psychology and Mates in Construction). All staff and their immediate family members can access any of these free and confidential programs which provide professional and accredited counselling and support services.



We now have 19 trained volunteer employees who are able to identify colleagues in need of support and connect them to the Employee Assistance Programs available.

May is Domestic and Family Violence Awareness Month. Councillors remembered victims of domestic violence at a special ceremony on 18 May 2023. Council acknowledges that domestic and family violence has no boundary lines and affects all ages, genders and races. Council stands united and strong to show that the prevention of domestic and family violence is everyone's responsibility.

Celebrating our volunteers

We take this opportunity to thank our volunteers who give up their time to support our VIC and libraries.

Our VIC currently has 5 registered volunteers who provide valuable assistance during peak tourist season and when staff are on leave. Their duties range from customer service to pricing merchandise and other general duties, ensuring daily operations are effective and efficient. Our library volunteers help return books to shelves and other library activities.

Council is incredibly grateful to all our valuable volunteers, who dedicate so much of their time.

The VIC and our libraries are always looking for additional volunteers and run regular recruitment campaigns throughout the year. If you are interested in sharing your knowledge of the shire with visitors, or assisting at one of our libraries, please contact us on (07) 4620 8888.

Once again, we thank all our volunteers who help provide invaluable services to our visitors and residents.



OUR PERFORMANCE

The Operational Plan 2022-23 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. Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2027 is available on Council's website.

 <https://www.balonne.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/1459/corporate-plan-2022-2027>

The primary tool for external accountability is the annual report. This document is prepared annually and contains detailed financial and non-financial information about council's activities and performance. Members of the community and interested stakeholders can use this document to assess how successful council has been in achieving the strategic goals and objectives outlined in the corporate and operational plans.

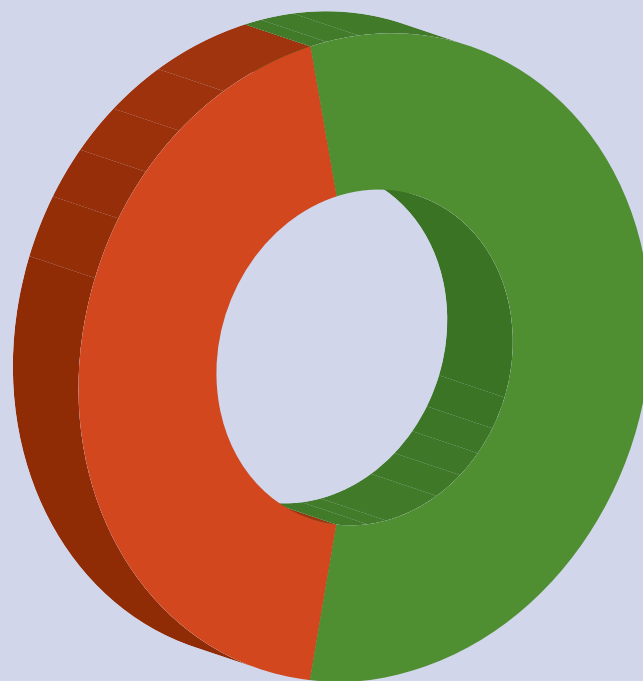





COMMUNITY



Welcoming, safe and thriving communities where cultural diversity, traditions and the arts are celebrated, and quality education is accessible.

19 actions were included in the operational plan for Community



-  = 9 Actions achieved target 90% on target and /or complete
-  = 0 actions achieved between 70% - 90% of action target
-  = 7 actions achieved less than 70% action target





1.1 ACTIVE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Bollon cemetery

In 2022 the Wilson family donated a remembrance wall for the Bollon Cemetery, to the Bollon community. The Bollon community requested further consultation regarding the placement of the remembrance wall. Council held and attended several community meetings relating to this matter and invited written submissions as part of the consultation process. Council received 28 written submissions regarding this issue, all feedback received was considered before a final decision was made about where the remembrance wall would be located.

Council resolved to erect the remembrance wall at the rear of the Bollon Cemetery, where there is space to later add a columbarium, gardens and pathways. Council will also develop a policy to ensure there is consistent criteria for

inclusion and uniformity in the plaque sizes and materials used on the remembrance wall. Council acknowledged the feedback from the community and thanked all who provided their input.

Learning Opportunities

Council has been working with the Dirranbandi and Mungindi communities providing support to develop a childcare and/or kindergarten model to meet their needs.

Council resolved at its meeting in September 2022 to adopt the Balonne Shire Council Learning Opportunities Report and work with key stakeholders within the community, Education Queensland, and other agencies to implement the report's recommendations.

Council will consult with key stakeholders to identify the funding

required to implement the report and agree on how that will be secured. Council clarified its role is to support and advocate for the implementation of the recommendations and that any future budget considerations would be referred to council for decision.

Thallon Campground Beautification – Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCIP) Phase 3 and Queensland Fishing Infrastructure Program (QFIP)

A masterplan for the Thallon Campgrounds was developed several years ago. Recently, council successfully obtained funding through QFIP and LRCIP Phase 3 to implement the masterplan and beautify the area.



The upgrades included landscaping and irrigation, installation of a communal camp kitchen, 3 picnic shelters, footpath upgrades and the installation of additional mushroom powerheads with protection bollards. The majority of the masterplan has been implemented through this project. Some additional irrigation and landscaping will be completed in a future stage.

Hebel, Thallon and Rowden Park master planning

Following the completion of St George and Bollon town master planning, council engaged Suttor & Associates and Complete Urban to undertake extensive community and stakeholder consultation for Hebel, Thallon and Rowden Park, in St George.

This consultation process will provide a clear understanding of the community needs, now and into the future and will be used as the basis to produce master plans and style guides for both Hebel and Thallon. These master plans and style guides will inform council's direction for future projects, community requests and beautification plans.

Master planning for Rowden Park commenced early in 2021 with the establishment of a project team and early design. Focus sessions were undertaken to engage with user groups and the project team seeking an understanding of their current needs and future aspirations. Preliminary site plans have been developed by Complete Urban and the project team, which support community engagement as this project progresses to the next phase.

Cross border relationships

Our unique community of Mungindi straddles the Barwon River, with either side of the river marking the border between Queensland and New

South Wales. As a result, Mungindi has services on both sides of the border and receives local government services from both BSC and MPSC.

In September 2022, Mayor Samantha O'Toole of the Balonne Shire and Moree Plains Shire Mayor Mark Johnson came together to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the betterment of the Mungindi community.

The key goals of this MoU are to avoid duplication, waste and inconsistencies in service. improved project delivery, and to increase social and economic outcomes. The MoU will allow both councils to share services and provide effective disaster management planning, coordination and response. It will also allow both councils to work in partnership on joint projects that will improve outcomes for both shires.





1.2 COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AND SPACES TO CONNECT, ENGAGE AND LEARN

Council's development of the Hub in St George has resulted in a remarkable facility for the community. The award-winning complex has multiple meeting spaces, including the Cultural Hall and open garden space, the St George Library and CUC Balonne.

Since its inauguration in early 2022, it has become a bustling centre of activity. Throughout the year, the Hub has hosted a variety of events, meetings, and activities for council and external stakeholders, including the Balonne Shire Youth Council, Queensland Health, Regional Arts Services Network, and the Office of the Premier and Cabinet. The Hub is a valuable asset to the community, providing endless opportunities for those who utilise it.

In 2022-23, the Hub hosted several council community events, including a Wind in the Willows production, the 2022 Mayoral Ball, Get Ready Day, the 2022 St George Christmas Carnival, Queensland Day, a Careers Expo, a Youth Summit, citizenship ceremonies, CORES mental health

training, first aid training, Great Aussie Bites, and several book launches. These events brought the community together and provided engaging experiences whilst displaying the diversity and vibrancy of the local area.



Library activities in 2022-23

Our libraries have gone from strength to strength in 2022-23, with 384 new membership applications and over 14,000 items borrowed by members.

Record numbers participated in holiday activities offered at the Bollon, Dirranbandi, Hebel, Thallon and St George Libraries. Craft activities proved most popular and friendly rivalry has been generated with the introduction of holiday challenges including making kites and rock creatures. St George staff have visited branch libraries to provide support with First 5 Forever and technology programs.

School groups, kindergarten and daycare groups continued to visit our libraries, participating in First 5 Forever activities and special days such as National Pyjama Day, National Tree Day, yoga classes, online author presentations and Book Week celebrations.

During the year, St George Library hosted several unique events including:

- A book launch for Clare Fletcher's first novel, Five Bush Weddings
- Clancy Sinnamon's Outback Film Club filming workshop for young people
- A visit from It's Rocket Science, in conjunction with the Small Schools Swim and STEM Camp



- A book launch for Joy Lee's book, A History of Boolba: Featuring 57 Years of QCWA.

Partnerships have continued within and across our libraries as we continue to provide meeting spaces for health and wellbeing professionals and community and business groups.

Throughout the year, library staff have had the opportunity to participate in online training offered by the State Library, including courses covering new First 5 Forever First Nations Resources, Young People and Essentials of Engagement.



1.3 ACTIVE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES, INCLUDING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Throughout the 2022-23 year, council has made significant strides in promoting mental health and wellbeing within the Balonne Shire community. Council recognised the need for tailored programs that catered to the diverse needs of the community, including initiatives like the Fly High Billie program for state primary school children and The Resilience Project for both primary and high school students.

Additionally, council has implemented the CORES program, a network of specially trained volunteers who can offer support to individuals in need.

As one of the largest employers in the area, council has also taken steps to prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of its staff through the implementation of an internal Mental Health Strategy and training via the MATES program.

These efforts aim to foster a better understanding of mental health issues and provide staff with the necessary tools and strategies to collectively address mental health concerns. Council's commitment to promoting mental health and wellbeing throughout the community is evidenced by these initiatives and their ongoing efforts to ensure that everyone has access to the support they need.

How Work Camp helps our community

Council partners with Queensland Corrective Services to operate the Work Camp sites in Dirranbandi and St George. The programs run on a fortnightly rotation of low-risk inmates who provide valuable one-off and ongoing services to non-profit community groups. Services offered

can vary depending on the scope of abilities for inmates but typically involve grounds maintenance, labour, painting, repair work, setting up and packing down events. Many inmates are given the opportunity to build their skillsets which enables them to prepare for life after serving their sentences.

As many of our non-profit community groups struggle to find willing volunteers, the assistance provided through this program helps keep our non-profit community groups alive.

In 2023, Work Camp Dirranbandi provided much needed support to the Dirranbandi council depot employees, assisting with clean up after a bad storm, clearing fallen trees and debris from yards, footpaths and public roads.

IN 2022-23 WORK CAMP HELPED THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:

DIRRANBANDI	ST GEORGE	
Balonne Catholic Parish – Dirranbandi church	QCWA St George	St George Men's Shed
Dirranbandi Independent Living Units	Nindigully Sports Committee	St George Presbyterian Church
Dirranbandi Arts Council	St George Bowls Club	St George Rotary Club
QCWA Thallon / Daymar	Bollon Anglican Church	St George RSL Club
Thallon Community Services	Bollon QCWA	St George SES
Dirranbandi P-10 State School	Care Balonne Assoc Inc	St George Tennis Club
Thallon Progress Association	NCC Early Learning St George	Warrawee Aged Care
Dirranbandi RTC	St George Catholic Church	Girl Guides Hut
Dirranbandi RSL	St George Clay Target Club	Balonne Catholic Parish – Bollon church
Balonne Shire Council (e.g., paint water tank at Noondoo Truck Stop)	St George Fruit & Veg Growers	St George Fire Station
Thallon State School	St George Golf Club	St George Jockey Club
	St George Heritage Centre	



1.4 SAFE AND WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

CCTV network expanded across the Shire

LRCIP funding enabled council to expand its CCTV network, in partnership with FSG, across the shire. Council has since entered a MoU with the Queensland Police who will have access to footage which may be used as evidence in criminal matters. Council also adopted a CCTV policy in September 2022.

Bollon	5 cameras
Dirranbandi	12 cameras
St George	41 cameras
Thallon	5 cameras

Balonne Shire Youth Council

The inaugural Youth Council meeting was held in November 2021, since then they have continued to meet monthly in the Makerspace at the Hub, in St George. Youth Council representatives have already demonstrated that they are a driving force for positive change. They have been ambitious and driven in setting their goals for the future, laying the foundations to be the next generation of leaders in our community.

Initially the Youth Council was guided by Deputy Mayor Richard Lomman, until his resignation in April 2023. Councillor Alex Benn has now taken this role on and is assisted by Councillor Bill Winks.

In 2022-23, Youth Council members have played an active role in several council projects, including:

- St George Basketball Court – choice in concrete colours
- St George Skatepark – choice of mural design
- Computer build project – members built four gaming-capable computers

that will benefit the whole community and be accessible in the library

- Ongoing talks around improvements to Jack Hammond Park and Cutler Park to improve connectedness for families and community
- First aid and CPR training.

Youth Council representatives have also assisted with several key events, including the 2022 Mayoral Ball, Care Balonne's Child Safety Week Colour Run, Festival of Small Halls in Bollon, the St George Christmas Carnival and the 2023 Queensland Day celebrations.





The highlight of the past year has been Youth Council's successful motion to council, ensuring a CCTV camera is installed at the St George Skatepark in 2023-24 to increase safety and deter vandals.

Youth Summit

CUC Balonne partnered with BSC to organise the second Inspire & Lead Youth Summit in March 2023. This summit was designed to motivate the youth of the southwest region to reach their career goals and explore the numerous options available to them beyond their current perceptions, particularly in remote areas.

Students were exposed to speakers and information that would typically require travel to Toowoomba or

Brisbane, with an emphasis on inspiring them to get more involved in their community and become future leaders.

The event was attended by 71 students, along with teachers and support staff from St George State High School, Mungindi Central School and Dirranbandi P-10 State School.

Sessions for the day included:

- Career Futures: presented by University of Southern Queensland's (USQ) Outreach Career Development Practitioner, Karen Browning. Presentation and discussion about what careers will look like now and into the future.
- J-MILLA: a 24-year-old member of the Mak Mak Marranungu people. Music and storytelling got him through the challenging early years

of his life, and it was this part of his culture that he clung to when he noticed the power of narrative and its influence on those around him. J MILLA told his story, including a break-down of his high impact song My People with a live performance.

- Monitoring Cattle Movement – Smart Tags: data management to improve management of livestock.
- What is being Culturally Capable - Inspire & Lead: designed to develop understanding of how to conduct oneself in a culturally respectful and appropriate manner.
- Inspired by Chocolates – Where Tourism, Hospitality and Events Can Lead You: former chef-turned university researcher inspiring through passion that can lead people to embark on employment in tourism, hospitality and events.

Celebrating Australia Day 2023

It was a beautiful day to celebrate the diversity of people residing on our great land, whilst also respecting the traditions and culture of the First Nations people. Balonne Shire Council's 2023 Australia Day celebrations were held in Bollon (Kooma country). Council congratulates all recipients and nominees for the 2023 Australia Day Awards.



**BALONNE SHIRE AUSTRALIA DAY
2023 AWARD WINNERS**

Citizen of the Year

Richard Marsh

Young Citizen of the Year

Julia Killen

Volunteer of the Year

Victoria Nancarrow

Cultural Award

National Breast Cancer Foundation

Cultural Award

St George State School

Community Group of the Year

QCWA St George

Senior Sports Award

Nate Davis

Junior Sports Award

Sienna Beardmore



Sports Administrator Achievement
April McLaren

Our 2023 Ambassadors were Dr Dimity Dornan AO and Peter Dornan AM, they were guest speakers and presented the Australia

Day awards to recipients in our region. Dr Dimity Dornan AO is the founder of the Hear & Say Foundation, and Chair of Bionics Queensland, and her husband Peter Dornan AM is the Director of Peter Dornan Physiotherapy.



**Celebrating our
Newest Australians**

Council held Citizenship Ceremonies in April and August in 2023 to officially welcome 3 new Australian Citizens. Council is proud to officially acknowledge and welcome new Australians who reside in our shire and agrees with the democratic belief that all Australians are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect, regardless of their race, country of origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, heritage, culture, politics, wealth or religion.

Australian values are based on freedom, respect, fairness and equality of opportunity which are central to our community remaining a secure, prosperous and peaceful place to live.

Citizenship ceremonies for 2022-2023:

- April 2023
- Gail Robinson
- August 2023
- Trevor Rayner and Aron Froese



1.5 VIBRANT CREATIVE ARTS, LOCAL HISTORY CELEBRATION



Artistic and cultural project funding

Council manage a number of funding programs that support arts and cultural projects to enhance community connectedness, improve skill sets and provide educational opportunities. The programs are funded by council and the state government and include the Community Grants program, the Multicultural Development Fund and RADF. Funded projects in 2022-23 included:

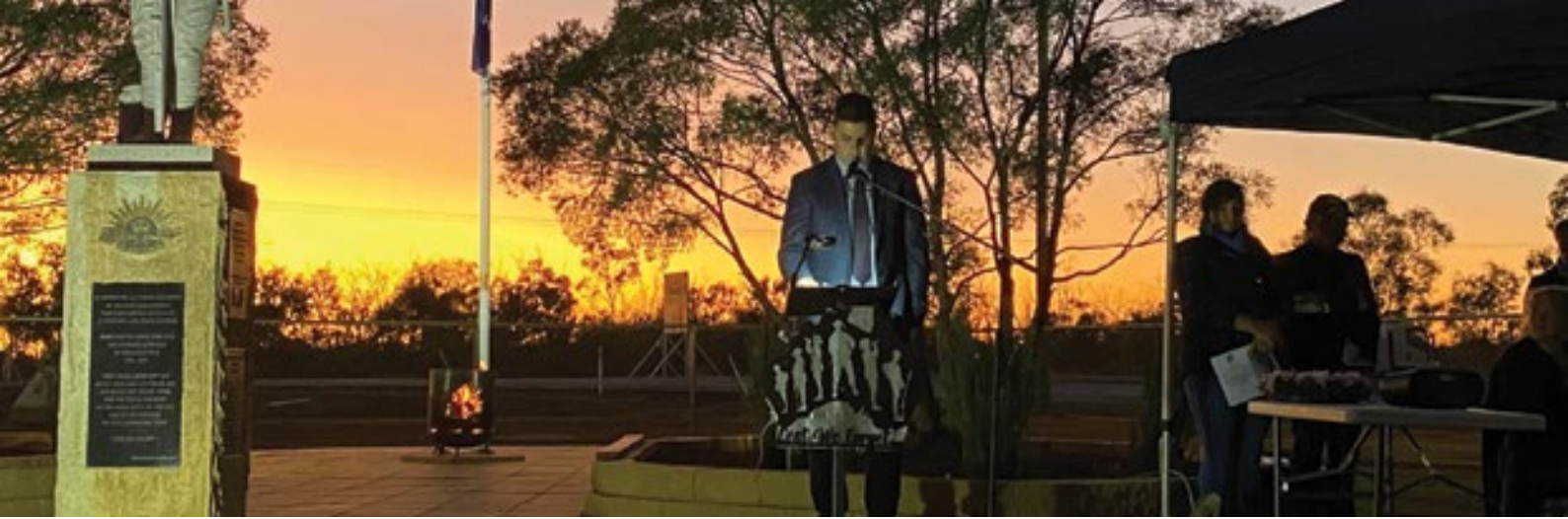
- Children's Charity Sewing project (Community Grant)
- Flavours of the Balonne (Multicultural)
- Outback Film Club (RADF)

Regional Arts Development Fund

A total of 8 RADF applications, totalling \$21,028 in funding, were received and approved by council in 2022-23.

Project Name	Applicant	\$ Amount Approved by Council
Round 1		
Filmmaking Workshop	Outback Film Club	\$2,500
Round 2		
A Good Catch	Cluster Arts	\$2,500
Round 3		
Kids Exploring Photography	Aliven Photography	\$2,500
Christmas Wreath Workshop	Nindigully Sports Committee	\$2,000
I Will Always Love You	Opera Eagles Nest (Howard Edmunds)	\$2,500
Outback Oils	St George Art Group	\$2,213
Lamp Making Workshops x 2	QCWA Thallon Daymar	\$1,855
Children's Charity Sewing project	Country Artisan's Corner	\$2,480
TOTAL		\$21,028





Commemorating our Service Men and Women

On Anzac Day each year council joins our communities to remember all Australians who have served and died in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations. It is an opportunity for our communities to come together, reflect, remember and appreciate the sacrifices of those who have served, or are serving, our country.

The mayor and councillors attended moving and memorable ANZAC Day services in Bollon, Dirranbandi, St George and Thallon. Council's Community Grant funded \$2,189 towards traffic management for 2022-23 ANZAC Day events in the shire.

Throughout the year, services for Vietnam Veterans Day and Remembrance Day services are organised and hosted by the St George RSL sub-branch. Elected representatives and some council staff attend these services to remember the sacrifice of all Australians who have died in conflicts, particularly the high number of men and women from our region.



Community Grants: sponsorship and donations program

During the 2022-23 financial year, Council approved \$41,939 in community grant funds for 21 community group events and activities, in addition to two traffic management grant applications to assist with road closures for events. Following is a complete list of applicants, projects and funding.



Project Name	Applicant	\$ Amount approved by Council
School bench seats (2) - materials for repair	Thallon State School P & C	\$500
Bronze Sponsor - Awards Dinner	St George Cotton Growers Assoc	\$500
Boolba Christmas Tree event 2022	Boolba Tennis Club	\$500
Wildfire Youth event	Kings Community Care	\$500
St George Blue Light Disco	Qld Blue Light Disco Assoc	\$250
QCWA Bollon Christmas Tree event	QCWA Bollon	\$2,200
Melbourne Cup Luncheon fundraiser	Dirranbandi Hospital Auxiliary	\$500
Children's Charity Sewing program	Country Artisan's Corner	\$2,500
St George Show - fee waiver for grounds hire	St George Showground Society	\$1,500
Super 6 Carnival and Turf Pitch	St George Cricket Assoc	\$3,000
St George Reading Dragon project	Country Artisan's Corner	\$2,500
Battle on the Balonne - Traffic Management grant	Tri St George	\$3,000
ANZAC Day - Traffic Management grant	RSL St George Sub-branch	\$2,189
Playground Equipment	Mungindi Playgroup	\$1,500



Project Name	Applicant	\$ Amount approved by Council
"Cocktails & Comedy" fundraiser	St Patrick's Primary P&F Committee	\$3,000
In-kind support - Council's water truck for the Dirranbandi Show Campdraft	Dirranbandi P&A Assoc	\$2,800
St George NAIDOC Week celebrations	St George Aboriginal Housing Co Ltd	\$3,000
Old School Fair	Thallon State School P&C	\$3,000
Zone 5 Representative U10 and U12 Teams Carnival	Balonne Barwon Jnr Rugby League	\$3,000
Bollon Polocrosse 2023 Carnival	Bollon Polocrosse Assoc	\$3,000
Mungindi Show 2023	Mungindi Show Society	\$3,000
TOTAL		\$41,939



1.6 CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Celebrating Multicultural Initiatives

The Multicultural Development team grew in 2022-23, increasing the team's capacity to deliver and support additional multicultural initiatives for residents and visitors to the shire.

One notable event was Flavours of Balonne, where community members could enjoy cuisine from diverse cultures in the Balonne Shire. Local businesses took the opportunity to highlight the food and rich cultural heritage of numerous community members.

In February, the Multicultural Development team collaborated with the Economic Development team to organise a familiarisation trip. Members of Toowoomba's South Sudanese and Congolese communities visited the Balonne Shire to explore the various opportunities available for those who might be interested in relocating to the region. The initiative proved to be a resounding success, with one of the visitors receiving a job offer in St. George. Plans are currently underway for additional familiarisation trips in the future.

In April 2023, council organised a barefoot lawn bowls Welcoming Party to bring new and established residents together in a casual and friendly setting. New residents met with established locals and representatives from various community groups and organisations.

The Multicultural Development team attended events hosted by the Communities team, manning tables and handing out welcome packs.



Great Australian Bites

Great Australian Bites was held in January 2023 at the Hub in St George and was well supported by the community with more than 220 people in attendance. Attendees enjoyed food stalls from local cafes and community groups, an exhibition of local craft and Indigenous art. A chef hosted a cooking demonstration, using locally grown salt bush lamb and produce. Live music was provided by local band, Fe Fi Fo Fum, with local music students joining the band for a recital. A hearing-impaired student played the clarinet for our Australia Day Ambassadors.




1.7 DISASTER MANAGEMENT, RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE

The Balonne Shire LDMG was active for 71 days out of 365 in 2022-23 (with a total of 201 days in 2022) due to flood events in the Balonne, Moonie and Border River systems. In response, council provided alerts through its Emergency Dashboard

and held 12 LDMG meetings from September to October in 2022.

In 2022-23 council's Emergency Dashboard had 240 subscribers, over 400 new users and user engagement in excess of 32,000.

Flood recovery works from the 2020 and 2021 flood events have now been completed, with remaining works due to be completed by June 2024.

 <https://emergency.balonne.qld.gov.au/>

Nov 2021 - Dec 2021	Dec 2021 - Jan 2022	Feb 2022 - Mar 2022	Mar 2022 - May 2022	May 2022	May - Jun 2022
Lean Forward - Flood Event 1/12/2021 - 8/12/2021	Stand Up - Flood Event 8/12/2021 - 7/01/2022	Stand Up - Flood event 28/2/2022 - 17/3/2022	Lean Forward - Flood event 17/3/2022 - 5/5/2022	Lean Forward - Rainfall - Flood Event 12/5/2022 - 19/5/2022	Stand Up - Rainfall - Flood Event 19/5/2022 - 10/6/2022
Aug - Nov 2022					
Alert - 7 days 1/8/2022 - 7/8/2022					
Alert - 13 days and Lean Forward 4 days - 9/9/2022 - 25/9/2022					
Alert - 11 days - Lean Forward 5 days - Stand up 31 days - 7/10/2022 - 23/11/2022					



Community resilience and recovery in Balonne

During the year, council created the Community Resilience and Recovery Officer position, funded by the state government as part of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement (DRFA). The Community Resilience and Recovery Officer works with the Local Recovery Coordinator and the Local Recovery Group to ensure wider community engagement around resilience and recovery before, during and post-disaster.

The Community Resilience and Recovery Officer role aims to establish a local presence to engage with affected communities and identify their needs and aspirations. This includes facilitating community development opportunities, planning days, supporting and nurturing community resilience and recovery projects. The program supports community-led initiatives and facilitates collaboration and

partnerships across groups to enable medium and long-term recovery and resilience planning.

During 2022-23, the Community Resilience and Recovery Officer coordinated or attended several community events including Get Ready Day 2022, the school-based Resilience Project, Queensland Day 2023 and the Flyhighbillie B-Kinder Day 2022.

Into the future

The Communities team is excited to continue building upon the progress made in the past year. We will focus on maximising use of our community's libraries and open spaces to further engage residents through events and activities. We have several key events planned for the upcoming year, such as the Mayoral Ball, Day Out in Dirran and Festival of Small Halls, among others.

Council's Resilience and Recovery area is committed to providing programs that enhance the mental health and well-being of our community, as well as implementing strategies for disaster preparedness and recovery.

The Balonne Shire Youth Council continue to grow and develop as a strong voice for our youth. They will

be offering movie and disco nights for families and young people in the community.

Our Multicultural Development team is dedicated to enhancing our multicultural community and welcoming vision. We have planned strategies and are developing a multicultural steering committee. We are also excited to welcome the St George Chinese Community Memorial Committee (SCCMC) to rededicate the Amoy Shepherds memorial at the St George cemetery.

Council's Community Grants and the RADF program will continue to support the community, with staff available to assist with applications. Council will also complete several special grant-funded projects,

including new murals around St George and enhancing our current community murals. We will also be mapping and recording our local military history through the 'Saluting their Service' grant.

Our libraries will continue to offer programs such as the First 5 Forever program, and we will collaborate with local schools to provide more engaging events and activities.

We will continue to offer engaging events and activities that support and develop our welcoming, safe, and thriving communities, where cultural diversity, traditions and the arts are celebrated and quality education is accessible.

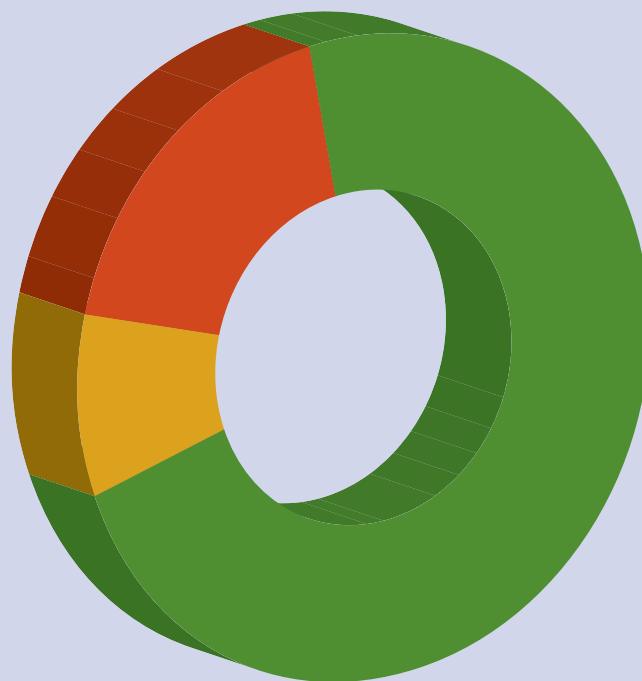





ECONOMY



Building sustainable enterprises and strong economic growth through investment and reinvestment and support for all businesses to thrive.

28 actions were included in the operational plan for Economy.



-  = 16 Actions achieved target 90% on target and /or complete
-  = 2 actions achieved between 70% - 90% of action target
-  = 4 actions achieved less than 70% action target





2.1 DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY FOR BUSINESS GROWTH AND CONNECTEDNESS

Balonne Shire Council is committed to working with key stakeholders on the support, development and enhancement of digital connectivity services shire-wide and supported telco applications through RCP.

Council has been active in engaging with NBN and telecommunications operators to roll out broadband and fixed wireless services, leading to community benefits including:

- Improved health and medication support
- Agribusinesses improving operational efficiency through agricultural technology
- Small businesses capitalising on e-commerce economic opportunities
- Improving career pathways and opportunities for current and future residents

- Attracting new residents to the region and supporting new business start-ups
- Instilling business confidence and reinvestment
- Attracting trades and business services and potential inward investment to the shire.

Council approved Development Applications for 4 towers from St George to Bollon, under the RCP grant. One tower received development approval to replace an existing tower at a cotton gin in St George.

MPSC was the lead proponent, in coordination with BSC, for cross-border towers connecting New South Wales and Queensland.

Council adopted the 2023-27 Economic Development Strategy which included the development of

the 2023-27 Digital Connectivity Strategy. In addition to investment in digital infrastructure, council is committed to investigating how the shire could benefit from future applications of improved digital connectivity, including:

- E-commerce development
- Agtech
- Telehealth, education and training
- Emergency services
- Projects involving extended reality (XR), including virtual, augmented and mixed reality
- Potential impacts of artificial intelligence.

Council will continue to identify key digital connectivity projects, eliminate black spots and advocate for further public and private digital connectivity investment.



2.2 SUPPORT FOR THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY AND AGRIBUSINESS SECTORS

Agriculture is the key industry for Balonne, accounting for 33% of the total workforce, generating more than 60% of the shire's economic output and \$450M gross regional product.

The new 2023-27 Balonne Shire Economic Development Strategy identifies livestock, cotton and grain and horticulture as 3 of the shire's five pillar industries. Agriculture also plays a major role in the shire's other 2 pillar industries, tourism and events and emerging industries.

Council continues to support the economic development and growth of agriculture in our shire and remains committed to assisting the industry to identify gaps and opportunities where Council can work with key stakeholders and partners to achieve outcomes.

Business Mentoring

The most recent round of council's mentoring program had a total of 21 mentees participate, 13 agriculture, 3 horticulture, 3 agritourism and 2 agriculture and horticulture supply chain businesses. Total local spend for this round of mentoring was \$89,000.

As part of the mentoring program, council facilitated 5 workshops and field events covering topics including attracting and retaining staff, farm expansion fundamentals, agritourism packaging and partnerships, business record keeping, the fundamentals of goat and ruminant livestock nutrition and cybersecurity.

Over \$31,000 in funding was allocated to 16 projects to help diversify the participants' businesses which helped create up to 7 full-time equivalent positions. Further program funding was allocated to a group of 6 local

producers (with over 40 observers) for small livestock development and agricultural technology education and training, including virtual and augmented reality.

Council continues to monitor the impact of the business mentoring program on previous rounds. A total of 74 businesses have participated in the business mentoring and advisory programs over 3 years, collectively benefitting from nearly 2000 mentoring hours, \$115,000 in project funding, \$68,000 in feasibility studies and over \$238,000 in direct local expenditure in the Balonne Shire.

Exclusion Fencing

Council continued to assist and support landholders in completing

Special Rate Scheme and MDBEDP exclusion fencing projects. A total of 97 properties were approved funding under these programs, with 51 properties (52%) completed. A total of 1190.46 km (75%) of 1582.58 km of fencing has been completed. The main objectives of the exclusion fencing projects are:

- Reduced predation by wild dogs and pigs for livestock enterprises resulting in less stock losses, improved weaning rates, reduced livestock stress
- Better control over total grazing pressure on pastures enabling better pasture planning, improved environmental outcomes with better ground cover and improved habitat for small fauna





- Reduced crop losses due to better control of native and feral animals
- Investment in new capital projects and plant and equipment on properties due to improved control of farm businesses
- Increased employment in the region with more small livestock and viable businesses.

It is anticipated that fencing projects within the Balonne Shire and throughout the broader Southwest region will increase commercial (particularly value-added investment) and employment opportunities.

Council is monitoring the impacts and outcomes of exclusion fencing assessed by Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Reporting, with the first MERI report delivered in July 2021. It was estimated that the cost-benefit ratio to landholders was 3:1 and that exclusion fencing projects had generated an additional 68 full-time equivalent jobs and \$23M in agricultural income per annum. As part of its commitment to funding bodies and stakeholders, council will be conducting a second MERI report in 2023-24.

Other agricultural sector projects supported by council in 2022-23 included:

- Opportunities in developing microgrid, renewable and alternative energy

- Workforce development including regional and overseas migration programs
- Digital connectivity and partnerships to deliver improved connectivity on farm and communities
- Category C recovery efforts resulting from 2021-22 flood events including assisting with farm impact surveys and supporting applications for either grant or loan assistance
- Working with partners, landholders, producers and graziers on farm resilience plans
- Regional partnerships in advancing agricultural technology and deploying technologies on farms

- Supporting webinars, forums and field events for landholders, producers and graziers
- Advocating on behalf of industry on key issues affecting the industry, including infrastructure
- Working with local producers and graziers on local on-farm expansion and/or diversification
- Promoting and attracting investment for the region (3 major projects in the shire and 3 projects from proponents outside the shire)
- Land valuations
- Engaging with key stakeholders on building export capability and supply chain development in the region.



2.3 ATTRACT AND FACILITATE INVESTMENT AND LOCAL RE-INVESTMENT

A key component for economic growth in the shire is attracting new investment and encouraging re-investment by capitalising and building on its strengths. Identifying, supporting and attracting new and emerging industries will help to diversify the local economy and reduce the shire's reliance on agriculture sectors.

The new 2023-27 Balonne Shire Economic Development Strategy identifies 5 key pillar industries, with a plan to attract inward investment and encourage business re-investment, expansion and diversification.

We work to actively promote investment in the shire through our strategic partners, at targeted trade and investment events, by attending and hosting events relevant to the Balonne region, in ministerial visits and housing forums.

In 2022-23 council also facilitated 71

meetings with potential investors and investment enablers, including Trade and Investment Queensland, Austrade and site selection professionals.

Council had direct input and contributed to 4 new developments in the region, which created 13 new full-time equivalent positions. Council assisted 28 inward investment and 15 local expansion enquiries throughout the year. Additional projects announced or progressing in the year included the proposed expansion of the St George Hospital, St George State High School and Goondir, as well as on-farm expansion projects including farm diversification and feedlot developments.

Revisions to the planning scheme have been made to stimulate and attract further investment in the form of development incentives.

Council is currently working with proponents of 4 major opportunities

that have strong potential to generate jobs for the shire, across various sectors. Three of these projects are in the agriculture sector (value-add), the other project is in emerging industries. To support this growth, council is also working with housing stakeholders (LHAP), developing the local workforce and key industrial and residential land, for both commercial and new housing development.

Major infrastructure projects funded through various government agencies are being delivered for flood recovery and to further attract and enable investment and employment opportunities from these projects. Working with key partners, current and proposed infrastructure projects include roads, digital connectivity improvement, St George aerodrome expansion, education and training facilities, housing, public facilities, childcare and aged care, sport and recreational facilities and medical and emergency services and facilities.



2.4 BUSINESS SUPPORT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Council has a strong commitment to supporting and growing the capability of its local businesses through:

- Identifying business opportunities and challenges to growth, such as e-commerce, digital connectivity, workforce development
- Facilitating programs to assist small business
- Encouraging more local businesses to prosper by participating in local and regional procurement opportunities.

Building on past success, council delivered a third round of the business mentoring and advisory program, this time targeting and supporting agribusinesses, agritourism and agricultural supply chain businesses. Twenty-one businesses participated, benefitting from over 570 hours of tailored mentoring and advisory

services covering financial and business planning, marketing including e-commerce, social media, succession planning and diversification. A further 16 capital projects were funded under the program to assist businesses with expansion. Six tailored workshops were facilitated in the program, covering finance, marketing, cybersecurity and attracting and retaining employees. Capital projects received \$31,000 in funding, bringing the total local program expenditure to \$89,000.

The Balonne Business Improvement Program continued to be delivered with a total of 53 projects across 2 streams, visual improvement (32) and energy efficiency (21). All projects were collectively valued at approximately \$1.3M, including program funding and proponents' co-contributions. At least 2 projects are being delivered in each of the shire's communities, with the program

driven by the success of the previous Dirranbandi Business Improvement program. The current projects include:

- External façade improvements, including new paint, signage, awnings and louvres
- Internal improvements, including flooring, carpeting, reception and display areas
- Energy efficiency projects, including solar systems (11 systems at 167kwh), cool and cold rooms, lighting and refrigeration.

As of 30 June 2023, 37 of the 53 projects had been completed. The combined value of these projects was \$970,000, more than \$378,000 (41%) was spent with local Balonne Shire contractors.

Council was recognised as a state finalist in the Shaping Communities



category of the Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA) Queensland Awards for Excellence for these two programs. Funding for the business mentoring and business improvement project was through the MDBEDP.

Council signified its strong commitment to supporting our local businesses by signing the Queensland Government's Small Business Friendly Charter. The Charter sets out guidelines and objectives to support small businesses in the Balonne Shire through business growth, diversification and procurement to increase local expenditure in the shire. It also supports local business in building competitiveness, capability and capacity with major projects and primary contractors. Council hosted procurement events for local businesses to assist with developing profiles on procurement platforms and raising awareness of local and regional opportunities.

Council continued to support the St George and District Chamber of Commerce's Buy Balonne Gift Card with program marketing and back-office support and reporting. A total of 85 Balonne based businesses and organisations are participating in the gift card program. In the year, a total of \$62,200 in funds were loaded, with \$61,300 in funds redeemed. The gift card program has been running for 3 years and has surpassed \$250,000 in funds loaded during that time.

Balonne has not been immune to the nationwide labour shortage, which has driven Balonne businesses to call for assistance with workforce development. The need for workforce development support was further substantiated by its inclusion in the 2023-27 Balonne Shire Economic Development Strategy and as sub-strategy within the document.

Through the state government's Growing Workforce Participation Fund, council was successful in



securing one year of funding to support a Workforce Development Officer to assist in addressing these workforce challenges. The implementation of the workforce development role has enabled a full-time designated officer to focus on training, upskilling and improving connections between local businesses and unemployed locals. Some of the key highlights of the program include:

- The Balonne Career and Jobs Expo, attended by 189 students and 29 exhibitors
- Attracting and Retaining Staff workshops
- Working with Catholic Care Services and the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce to coordinate a successful familiarisation trip. Members of Toowoomba's South Sudanese and Congolese communities visited the Balonne Shire to explore the numerous opportunities available for those who might be interested in relocating to the region.





2.5 GROW TOURISM

Tourism and Events Strategy implementation

CAMPSITE SIGNAGE

In the previous financial year, council successfully developed RV friendly towns throughout the shire, with Bollon, Dirranbandi and Mungindi joining Thallon in attaining RV friendly status, a key action from the Tourism and Events Strategy.

In 2022-23 council continued its efforts to further develop infrastructure at the shire's free campsites and increase the camping and caravanning market sector for Balonne (Priority 1.4). This included the upgrade of the Thallon and Mungindi campsites, along with the creation and installation of vibrant welcome signs for each of the 6 campsites. The new signs also incorporated a QR Code to encourage travellers to make a donation, contributing to maintaining these sites.

EVENT SUPPORT

Council's Tourism Events Grant program was reviewed and expanded in 2022-23 to support reinvigorating existing shire events, another key action from the Tourism and Events

Strategy (Priority 2.2). More focus was given to helping existing events reach their potential and elevate the event experience with professional staging, programming and marketing. Events that received funding in the 2022-23 financial year included Grazing at the Watering Hole, the McIntyre 900, Easter in the Vines, the St George Show and the Dragon Country Sandgreen Cup.

Council also supported 2 major state-wide events, Queensland Music Festival's Oasis Afternoon in April 2023 and Golf Australia's Outback

Queensland Masters in June 2023. Oasis Afternoon attracted 320 people, more than 50% of attendees came from outside the Shire. The event was promoted locally via the Balonne Bulletin newsletter, posters and flyers distributed to businesses and accommodation providers in St George, through a press release, on ABC Southern Radio and on council and St George Region websites and social media channels. The Outback Queensland Masters attracted approximately 300 people from as far away as Western Australia.



Marketing and coverage of the event was enormously successful, with the event media team achieving a total media reach of more than 30 million on TV, radio and online news, equating to \$278,959 in Advertising Value Equivalency.

PARTNERSHIPS AND PACKAGING

In our busy modern world, there is a growing market requirement for seamless travel, allowing visitors to easily book complete travel experiences. As part of council's ongoing commitment to upskilling and building the capacity of the region's tourism operators, council contracted Anita Clark Tourism to deliver a two-part Partnership and Packaging program (Priority 4.2).

The program encouraged local accommodation providers and tour operators to package their experiences and make them available online. This improves the visitor experience by streamlining purchasing and travel experiences, it also encourages visitors to stay longer.

Product development

FISHING TRAIL

Recreational fishing is one of Australia's most popular leisure activities. According to the Australian Department of Agriculture, 3.4 million people participate in recreational



fishing per year. New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland are the largest markets in this sector.

Drawing on our region's renown as the inland fishing capital of Queensland, council developed and created a fishing guide and itinerary detailing the best spots for visitors to pursue the 'catch of the day'. With all our towns located on a waterway, the St George Region is notorious for freshwater fishing and for catching legendary sized Murray Cod, Yellowbelly and Blue Claw Yabby. In addition to revealing fishing hot spots, the guide also details boat ramp locations, local competitions, fishing regulations and other handy tips.

MUNGINDI SCULPTURE TRAIL

After almost 3 years of hard work, hampered by COVID-19 and continual

flooding, Mungindi's long-awaited Sculpture Trail officially opened in September 2022. Featuring 10 raw and rustic sculptures by award-winning local artist Tony 'Nicko' McMillan, who tragically died at 54 years of age in 2016, the 2.5km trail delivers a new perspective on art and nature.

Working in collaboration with Nicko's family, who generously donated the sculptures to the Mungindi community, the Mungindi Progress Association and the MPSC, BSC utilised funding from the MDBEDP to pay tribute to Nicko and display the sculptures for everyone's enjoyment.

The Mungindi Sculpture Trail is a wonderful example of collaboration between BSC, MPSC and the Mungindi Progress Association.

Marketing and promotions

ST GEORGE REGION: YOU'LL BE HOOKED

The shire's clever new 'St George Region: You'll be Hooked' tourism marketing campaign is aimed at reeling in visitors and was launched in May 2023 at Riversands Winery in St George. The event was attended by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and CEO and a number of local tourism operators. Special guests flying in from Brisbane for the launch





included Alison Smith (CEO of LGAQ), Racheal Klitscher (Stakeholder and Engagement Director at Tourism & Events Queensland, TEQ) and Susan Maynard (OQTA).

The I Got Hooked on St George Region Scavenger Hunt was then officially launched a week later, on National Scavenger Hunt Day.

The launch also marked the start of a digital marketing package from IMATE, the industry media agency for tourism and events in Queensland. The package was won as part of LGAQ's 'Queensland it's Time to Shine' marketing competition and includes advertising campaigns for Meta (Facebook and Instagram), Outbrain, Google and Australian Traveller, which promote our shire.

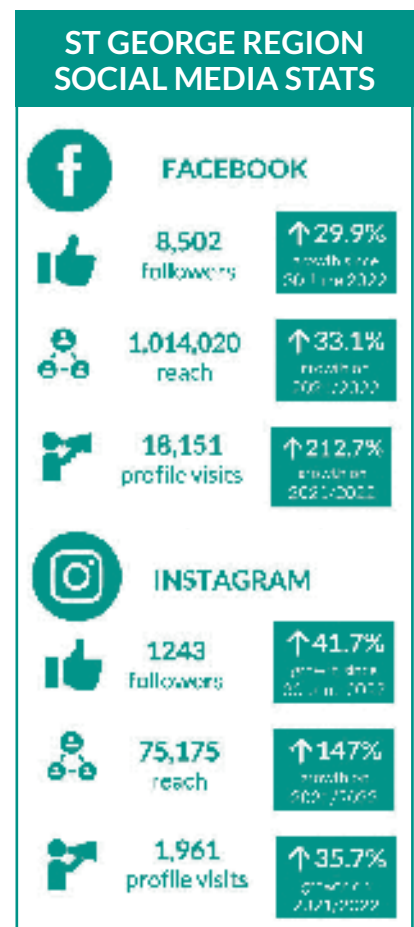
During the first month of the competition period more than 130 people had already participated in the hunt, 94 were travellers from outside of the shire and 60 of those travellers had changed their travel plans to come to the Balonne Shire, or stayed longer, to complete the challenge.

The promotion proved an enormous success for travellers and the shire. Travellers, and locals, got to immerse themselves in our region's natural wonders and uncover hidden gems, while having a fantastic time with family and friends. The shire benefitted from the economic boost that new intrastate and interstate tourism brought to the region.

Destination profile

SOCIAL MEDIA

Audience growth and engagement continues to improve on our social media platforms, most notably on the St George Region Instagram page, which has grown by 41.7% since 30 June 2022. The St George Region Facebook page also grew by 29.9%. Growth on both platforms has been largely driven by the St George Region: You'll be Hooked tourism campaign and promotions.



WEBSITE

Launched in April 2021, the St George Region website has quickly become the go-to destination for travel information on the shire. In 2021-22 the website recorded a total of 79,920 views and 24,461 users, this rose to 144,686 views and 26,759 users in 2022-23, marking an increase of 81% in views and 9.3% in users.



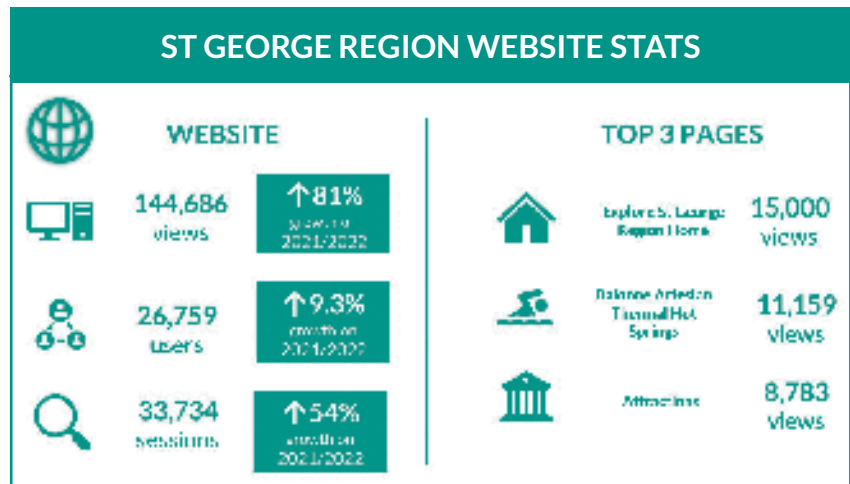
The two most clicked pages on the website were the Explore St George Region Homepage and Balonne Artesian Thermal Hot Springs, remaining unchanged from the previous year. The Attractions page replaced the Camping and Caravan Parks page as the third most clicked page in 2022-23.

Awards and recognition

QUEENSLAND: IT'S TIME TO SHINE



The Tourism team continued its winning streak taking out the LGAQ's "Queensland It's Time to Shine" Tourism Marketing Competition for their catchy "St George Region: You'll be Hooked" tourism campaign idea, beating dozens of entries from councils across the state. Run in partnership with TEQ, the main prize of the competition was a \$10,000 marketing package from TEQ's industry media agency, IMATE, to help ensure the campaign's success. The campaign not only reflected the region's renown as the inland fishing capital but drew on other hooks, including classic Aussie pubs, little trekked national parks and a fun collectable keyring encouraging travellers to explore each of the region's 7 towns.



GREY NOMAD AWARDS

In early 2023 BSC, MPSC and the town of Mungindi were celebrating when our region's newest attraction was named winner of the national 2022 Grey Nomad Awards for the Best Grey Nomad Trail. Founded in 2018, the Grey Nomad Awards shine a light on regional and remote Australia, providing opportunities for communities and tourism operators across the country to gain recognition.

The judges said "This trail has all the elements of both a star attraction and a touching memorial. Through the remarkable sculptures, 'Nicko' brought to life the animals and flora that make outback Queensland and NSW so extraordinary. So, it is fitting that a trail of his works now acts as a memorial of sorts, and everyone

involved should be commended for taking the initiative to turn these wondrous works into an extraordinary visitor experience."

Cross regional partnerships

The Balonne Shire Tourism team works in partnership with local, regional, state and national tourism groups, bodies and associations to ensure the VIC and the St George Region are positively promoted and so that staff are up to date with current best practice. Continuing to positively grow these relationships is a high priority in the strategy, covered by both Priority 3.2 Highway Links and Priority 4.3 Industry Networking.

At a local level, the Tourism team ran quarterly meetings with the





Balonne Shire Tourism Network. The aim of these meetings is to support operators and update them on industry events and activities, while providing a platform for our operators to collaborate and improve cross promotion in the region.

At a regional level, the Southwest chapter of OQTA met in St George in December 2022 for their annual in-person meeting. Representatives from OQTA, SWQROC, Maranoa and Paroo Shire Councils were treated to a Cotton and Wine Tour, St George Town Tour and a sunset cruise of the Balonne River.

The Tourism team continued with our collaboration with SWQROC to attend the Moreton Bay Expo in February 2023, as part of the South West: Be Our Guest stand, along with representatives from Quilpie, Murweh, Paroo and Bulloo Shires. Members of SWQROC also worked together to bring social media influencers Travel Tales Blog to the Southwest in April. The Manager Tourism attended OQTA's two-day Digital Acceleration Round Up ahead of the Outback Muster and Tradeshow in Brisbane in March 2023.

At a state level, VIC staff attended the 2022 Queensland Information Centres Associations Conference in Noosa in October. Key topics covered at the three-day conference included Green Travel and Sustainability, Brisbane 2032 Olympics and Paralympics, Accessible Tourism, Indigenous Tourism and Customer Service in our New World.

In November 2022, the Manager Tourism participated in a TEQ round table discussion with members of the Southwest region of OQTA. This meeting was also attended by the Assistant Minister for Tourism Industry Development, Mike Healy, and Leanne Coddington, CEO of TEQ.

At a national level, the Manager Tourism attended the Australian Regional Tourism Conference in Ballarat, with representatives from TEQ, OQTA, and SWQROC in October 2022. The 3.5-day program included a one-day Agritourism Conference. Common themes across the sessions were community, sustainability, compliance, capability building and collaboration.

Following the COVID-19 Queensland tourism bubble of 2019-21, prospects

looked up for tourism. However, fresh outbreaks of COVID-19 in Southeast Queensland and in Sydney in the latter half of 2021, followed by successive rain events, flooding and road closures in early 2022 meant that numbers dipped by 10.9% for the 2021-2022 financial year.

Once roads reopened, tourism numbers for the last half of 2022 began to rise steadily and while 2023 began slowly, come tourist season in April, visitor numbers increased dramatically. There was a clear increase in visitor numbers in June which was driven by consecutive major events and the launch of the successful "I Got Hooked on the St George Region" marketing campaign.

As a comparison, the VIC recorded a total of 13,594 visitors in 2020-21, 12,110 visitors in 2021-22 and 16,168 visitors in 2022-23, an impressive 33.5% increase on visitor numbers from 2021-22. While tourism numbers have increased, rises in interest rates and the cost of living, combined with a greater desire for overseas travel post COVID-19 may lead to a downward trend in 2023-24.



2.6 STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS, PLANNING AND ADVOCACY

Building and maintaining strategic partnerships, advocating to all levels of government and to key stakeholders is critical to ensure council can identify, understand and support our shire's current needs, liveability, future growth and project opportunities.

Council values its relationships with local groups including the St George and District Chamber of Commerce, Progress Associations in Mungindi, Thallon, Dirranbandi and Hebel, as well as the Bollon Community Group. Through regular engagement at meetings and forums, council obtains valuable community feedback to assess, determine and scope key activities and projects and seek funding to deliver these projects across the shire's communities.

Council has also been proactive in attending targeted industry events to promote opportunities in the Balonne region and identify and implement best practices learned from these events.

Regionally, council has been partnering with bordering council associations and key regional organisations and associations. These groups include:

- Border Regional Organisation of Councils (BROC)
- Darling Downs and South West Queensland Council of Mayors
- Murray-Darling Basin Authority
- Outback Queensland Tourism Association
- South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (SWQROC)
- Toowoomba Surat Basin Enterprise (TSBE)
- Western Queensland Alliance of Councils (WQAC)



Some of the key projects council is working on with regional partners include:

- Inland rail opportunities via the Southwest rail line to Goondiwindi, with Goondiwindi Regional Council
- Digital connectivity to eliminate black spots
- Designated area migration agreements to assist in attracting migrant workers to the region
- Housing initiatives, including the completion and adoption of the Balonne Shire LHAP in conjunction with the WQAC
- Childcare and education needs, including building on opportunities from the CUC Balonne and university partners and supporting education across the regions
- Working with SWQROC to promote the Southwest Queensland region, to attract investment, business services, professionals and trades
- Opportunities arising from the 2032 Olympic Games and legacy
- Environmental projects such as waste and recycling projects
- Cross-border issues

- Major infrastructure projects
- Tourism marketing promoting regional events and opportunities
- Building on regional opportunities in entrepreneurship, agricultural and business innovation, supply chain/procurement, export development and workforce development.

Council advocates to, and partners with, federal and state governments. We value our partnerships with key industry groups, including AgForce, Meat and Livestock Australia, Cotton Australia, Hort Innovation, Queensland Farmers Federation, Ag Tech and Logistics Hub, Advance Queensland, Business Chamber Queensland and the Office of the Small Business Commissioner. Working in partnership with these groups assists council to support the shire's agribusiness sector and businesses, in various capacities.

Partnerships in 2022-23 helped council secure a total of \$522,600 in grant funding for economic development and tourism projects, including:

- Business Mentoring program - \$305,800 (Queensland Government - DRFA)



- Workforce Development Officer – \$158,800 (Queensland Government - Growing Workforce Participation Fund)
- Pub Choir – \$36,000 (Queensland Government – Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) Flexible Funding Grant)
- Tourism Business Mentoring – \$20,000 (Queensland Government – DRFA)
- Queensland Small Business Month – \$2,000 (Queensland Government – Regional Networker Grant Program).

Into the future

With the adoption of the 2023-27 Balonne Shire Economic Development Strategy, including the digital connectivity and workforce development strategies, council will focus economic development resources on the actions and industry specific plans detailed in the strategy. Council will engage with targeted investment groups and our community to identify and deliver projects, with grant funded assistance, that benefit the communities of the Balonne Shire.

Supporting its small business community, council will deliver 2 business mentoring and advisory programs in 2023-24, for up to 40 businesses, to help diversify and build resilience in local businesses and industries. The Balonne Shire Business Improvement Scheme, with 53 local energy efficiency and visual projects, will conclude in November. These projects are shire-wide and will improve the liveability and appeal of our communities, as well as economic outcomes for our businesses and communities.

Council will continue to work with local agriculture sectors, across various projects, in the next financial year. In partnership with landholders, council will complete its current exclusion fencing programs and will work with landholders on monitoring the success of the fencing projects through a 2023-24 MERI report.

Other areas Council will support the agricultural sector include;

- Improvements to on-farm digital connectivity
- Workforce development, including temporary and permanent workers and career pathways
- Energy and water initiatives
- Supply chain opportunities
- Advocacy on key issues facing the agriculture industry
- Agricultural education and immersion programs
- Agricultural technology and innovation
- Business mentoring and advisory
- Farm diversification
- Further development and opportunities in the small livestock sector
- Value-add opportunities in the grain and cotton sectors
- Energy needs including renewable and alternative energy

- Decarbonisation
- Supporting the sector with infrastructure requirements.

Other key economic development areas council will continue to build and deliver with partners include:

- Housing initiatives and projects
- Workforce development projects to help address employment challenges and pathways for our current and future residents
- Education pathways and childcare development
- Improvements and enhancements in digital connectivity within our communities
- Renewable and alternative energy projects, including decarbonisation
- Developing key industrial land and areas for commercial development
- Delivering on actions set out in the 2023-27 Balonne Shire Economic Development Strategy.

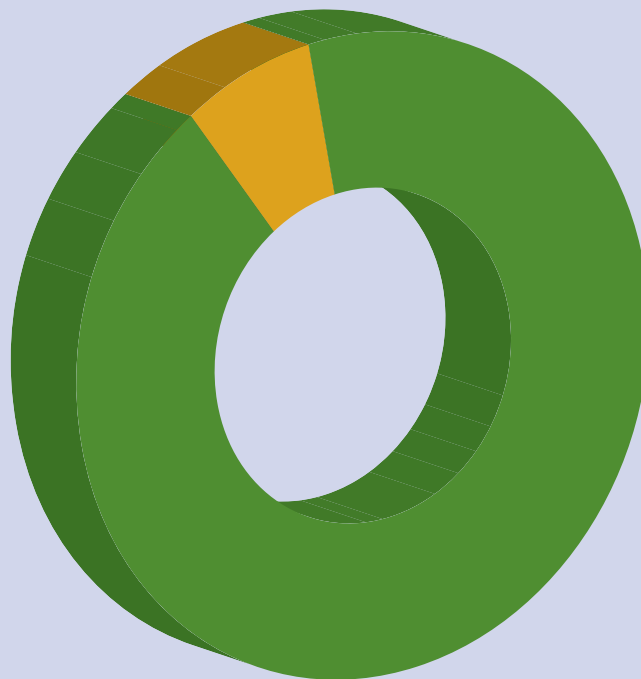





ENVIRONMENT



Enhance, protect and sustain the environment within a framework of balancing social, cultural, economic and environmental needs.

14 actions were included in the operational plan for Environment.



-  = 13 Actions achieved target 90% on target and /or complete
-  = 1 actions achieved between 70% - 90% of action target
-  = 0 actions achieved less than 70% action target



3.1 BEST PRACTICE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

Illegal dumping project

Over the past 2 years council has been working with the Department of Environmental Science to improve community awareness on illegal dumping. Council has been fortunate to secure grant funding from the department, funding a full-time officer to monitor illegal dumping and educate the community about responsible waste disposal.

Illegal dumping pollutes our environment and significantly diminishes the use, enjoyment and value of our public places. This makes our communities and natural areas look dirty and uncared for, unpleasant to be in, and less likely to be used by the public. Common illegally dumped items include:

- Household rubbish and garden waste
- Household goods (such as whitegoods, TVs, mattresses and furniture)
- Building waste (construction and demolition materials)
- Tyres, chemical drums and paint tins
- Asbestos.



Illegal dumping costs Queensland communities millions of dollars each year in waste management and clean-up expenses. Illegal dumping of items containing chemicals or asbestos can directly cause harm or injury to humans and wildlife and major pollution.

Waste management

During 2021-22 council invested in producing a Solid Waste Plan to help identify problem waste, methods to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and to meet Queensland Government waste targets. The Solid Waste Plan is currently being implemented by council and forms part of the new contract management of the St George landfill through state government targets.

Council has been working with the Darling Downs and other Southwest Queensland councils to implement a Waste Plan to help mitigate rising waste costs.

Green waste continues to be problematic for council. As a result, council has budgeted funds to ensure

green waste chipping is carried out during the upcoming year.

Fires at landfill sites are another concern for council. Several illegal fires in landfill trenches have occurred in Hebel, Dirranbandi and Thallon over the last 12 months. This is a reportable offence to the Department of Environmental Services.

Landfill sites

Our landfills are engineered and regulated pits in the ground which are divided into cells. Each cell is designed to maximise compaction and eliminate potential environmental impacts. Cells are filled with waste that cannot be recycled including:

- Putrescible waste from municipal collections
- Commercial and industrial waste
- Construction and demolition materials.

Council has been working diligently to improve the landfill sites across the shire. New trenches have been installed at Hebel and Dirranbandi, along with new front fencing at the



Dirranbandi landfill site. A review of the Dirranbandi landfill site has been undertaken. To increase the life of the site, the site will be surveyed and a masterplan will be produced in 2023-24.

A survey of waste from residential general waste (red top) bins was conducted, allowing council to review its strategies and implement improved waste disposal alternatives for the community. An education flyer has also been produced and will be distributed in 2023-24.

The Department of Environment and Science have reviewed council's Environmental Authority and have determined that burning green waste at the St George landfill is no longer permitted. Green waste at all sites is currently being stockpiled in separate areas and chipping will commence in 2023-24.

Cooking oil disposal at landfill sites has previously been problematic, however council has lobbied on behalf of the community to secure a new disposal contractor who is assisting businesses to dispose used cooking oil responsibly.

Concrete crushing has commenced at the St George landfill to reduce the stockpile at the site. This product will be utilised within the site for internal road networks and help prepare the JJ Richards transfer station base in 2023-24.

Annual shire clean up – kerbside collection

The annual kerbside collection service helps residents dispose of large household items. This year, council improved its kerbside collection process for the removal and disposal of waste. General waste was collected in March 2023 and green waste was collected in May 2023. This improved service meant that waste

2023 Hard Rubbish Kerbside Collection Guide

COLLECTION TOWNS

- Bollon
- Dirranbandi
- St George
- Thallon

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- keep piles tidy, footpaths and roadways clear
- do not leave sharp or dangerous objects on the footpath
- items must be less than 30kg and 1.5m length
- ineligible items will not be collected

All hard rubbish must be kerbside by 6AM Monday 27 March 2023

2023 Green Waste Kerbside Collection

COLLECTION TOWNS

- Bollon
- Dirranbandi
- St George
- Thallon

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- keep piles tidy, footpaths and roadways clear
- do not leave sharp or dangerous objects on the footpath
- items must be less than 30kg, 1.5m length and 10cm diameter
- ineligible items will not be collected

All green waste must be kerbside by 6AM Monday 29 May 2023

was separated by the homeowner and allowed council's contractor to easily remove and dispose of waste with less risk to the local road network.

DrumMUSTER

The drumMUSTER service benefits drum users, industry, the wider community and the environment by providing a reliable, cost effective and sustainable option for recycling empty eligible AgVet chemical containers.

Council continued to provide a quarterly DrumMUSTER service for all landholders, with a total of 3,317 containers collected in 2022-23, an increase of 332 containers from 2021-22.

In 2022-23 7,173 containers were collected by Astron Plastics Pty Ltd from our Springwell Road DrumMUSTER site for recycling into re-usable products, such as wheelie bins, road signs, fence posts and bollards.



3.2 BIOSECURITY, PEST MANAGEMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Mosquito management

Each year, significant numbers of Queenslanders are infected with mosquito borne diseases, such as Ross River and Barmah Forest virus. Queensland has the highest incidence of Ross River Virus in Australia. A further complication from a human health perspective is an absence of vaccines to prevent these diseases.

The Mosquito and Vector Control Program protects public health by controlling mosquitoes and other vectors that spread disease. Balonne Shire Council conducted several mosquito surveillance programs throughout the year.

Council continues to monitor Japanese Encephalitis Virus (JEV) in partnership with Queensland Health, we also work closely with our cross-border counterparts to ensure vector spraying can be administered in border towns, such as Mungindi, during disaster responses.

Biosecurity Plan

The Balonne Shire Biosecurity Plan continues to deliver strong strategic direction for the management of pest plants and animals in the Balonne local government area. Pest plants and animals can have an enormous impact on our economy so priority must be given to prevent the introduction and dispersal of these pests in our region.

A Biosecurity Column was introduced in the monthly Balonne Bulletin and a flyer was mailed out to landholders in August 2022, providing an Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness update for Foot and Mouth Disease, African Swine Fever and Lumpy Skin Disease.

The BAC met in December 2022 and May 2023. Since March 2023, the BAC incorporated the former Wild Dog Advisory Committee (WDAC) to provide guidance and advice to landholders and other stakeholders on a coordinated approach to:

- Control wild dogs and other priority vertebrate pests
- Increase landholder participation and stakeholder awareness
- Improve data collection
- Prioritise potential high density pest areas.

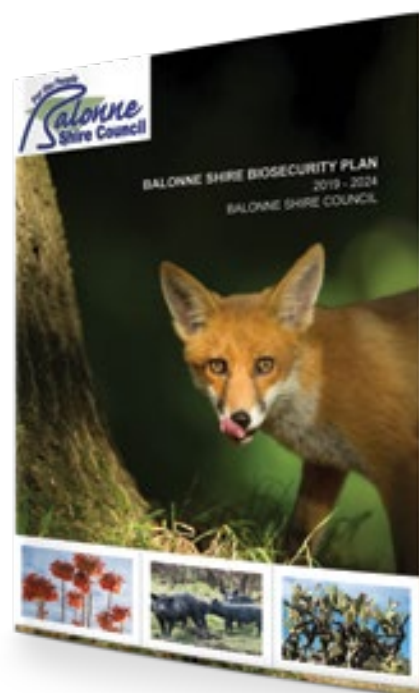
Feral animal levy

Council's feral animal levy continues to provide funds to assist in feral animal management, including coordinated baiting campaigns and the wild dog scalp bounty program.

Baiting

Two wild dog baiting campaigns were completed in November 2022 and May 2023. Council currently has only one licensed operator to conduct these bi-annual campaigns, with the assistance of the Queensland Murray-Darling Catchments Ltd. (QMDCL) rangers.

In between campaigns, council provided 1080 baits for 20 properties to conduct pulse baiting activities, including:



- 4,360kg wild dog meat baits
- 280kg pig meat baits
- 3,570kg pig grain baits
- 200 pre-manufactured fox baits
- 840 pre-manufactured wild dog baits.

Council has now acquired all the necessary equipment to conduct baiting activities under the new legislation (*Medicines & Poisons Act 2019*), including drying racks, a stainless-steel injection table, bag hoppers and injection guns.

Scalps

Council received 180 wild dog scalps in 2022-23, 70 of these were brought in from our registered trappers. This number is an increase from 2021-22 by 64 scalps, but significantly lower than the 379 scalps received in 2020-21. This could be attributed to the 2021-22 bounty reduction, from \$100 to \$50, and could also be an indication of the effectiveness of the wild dog exclusion program.

BAITING CAMPAIGN MONTH	NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING PROPERTIES	KILOGRAMS OF FRESH MEAT BAIT
November 2022	34 properties	1,280kg
May 2023	58 properties	2,600kg





3.3 STOCK ROUTE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Weed management

Environmental Services officers have been conducting spraying programs throughout the year targeting pest weed species along stock routes, roadsides and road corridors. Officers have been targeting high priority pest weed species including Arican Boxthorn, Mother of Millions, Common Pest Pear and Tree Pear. Council officers can now also electronically map pest weed infestations throughout the shire.

With the assistance of TMR funding and the QMDCL rangers, council has made significant inroads into the control and spread of these pest weed species.

Coral Cactus

Council Environmental officers have been working in partnership with Biosecurity Queensland and landholders in the southwest region of our shire to combat and control the

spread of coral cactus (*Cylindropuntia fulgida*). Officers have made several visits to affected properties, one of which has had a biocontrol released for a period of up to 6 years.

Outstanding results have been achieved with an alternative method to herbicide spraying. In January 2023, officers released a biocontrol pinto coral cactus in several locations on one property. A follow up visit in April 2023 confirmed the biocontrol release had been successful. Additional follow up visits have been planned for mid to late 2023.

It is imperative that landholders take responsibility for effective land management and are vigilant in monitoring and controlling weeds and noxious plants.

Stock route grazing and travelling permits

Three Stock Route Grazing Agistment Permits (for 684 head) and 4 Stock

Route Travel Permits (for 3,834 head) were issued for the shire's stock route network in 2022-23.

Element 6 firebreak grading was completed and a policy was developed and adopted, temporarily allowing landholders to agist road boundaries, with the agistment fee waived, to reduce grass fuel loads.

Capital works projects

Four Department of Natural Resources capital works projects within the stock route network were completed:

- Construction of a new night yard at the Wodonga water facility
- Construction of a new asset foundation and an asset protection yard at the Bindle water facility
- Desilting of the Boombah 2 water facility
- Desilting of the Boombah 4 water facility.



Wild dog exclusion fencing

In 2019 BSC successfully secured a \$5M grant under the MDBEDP Round 1 to implement and construct Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing, in partnership with rural property landholders within defined river catchment areas surrounding Dirranbandi and St George. Funding received under Round 1 was quickly secured by interested landholders wishing to protect their properties and stock with Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing.

Since construction commenced, 23 of the 45 properties have reached practical completion, with 644.49km of the 810.80km approved fencing projects completed (79% project completion).

In 2021 BSC was successful in obtaining an additional \$1.5M under MDBEDP Round 3 for the implementation and construction of Wild Dog exclusion Fencing under a short project timeline.

The Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing Project under Round 3 was developed to directly improve problematic wild dog areas across the shire and were not confined to a defined river catchment, as in Round 1. Strategically, the funding was utilised to close gaps in Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing across the shire and increase economic impacts, through the revival of the sheep and wool industry with associated facility, staff, plant and equipment expansion, with flow on benefits to the supporting agricultural industry and rural economy. This included employment opportunities, as well as improved attraction and retention of residents and skilled workers.



Since construction commenced, 5 of the 14 properties have reached practical completion with 62.64km of the 180.76km approved fencing projects completed (35% Project completion).

The Special Rate Scheme Round 1 project commenced in July 2019. At the end of 2022-23, 13 of 23 properties reached practical

completion, with 334.79km of the 393.50km approved fencing completed (85% project completion).

The Special Rate Scheme Round 2 project commenced shortly after. At the end of 2022-23, 10 of 15 properties reached practical completion, with 148.54km of the 197.52km approved fencing completed (75% project completion).



3.4 ADOPTION OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AND RENEWAL SOLUTIONS TO ADAPT AND RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Flood resilient design

Queensland is the most disaster impacted state in Australia, with flooding being the most frequent disaster event. We cannot stop floods from occurring, but we can take steps to reduce their impact. Flood resilient design is one of the many ways council has been improving flood resilience in our shire. Flood mapping has been incorporated into council's Planning Scheme, providing clear guidance on flood resilient design principles and construction details.

Cultural burn

Council continued their work on a multiyear program to pilot the effectiveness of Indigenous-informed cool burning as a method to control

invasive weeds and promote plant and landscape health, on stock routes and reserves. This 3 year program has secured \$746,000 in funding from the Department of Agriculture Water and Environment's Advancing Pest Animals and Weeds Control Solutions grant.

Council has partnered with Firestix land management, USQ, QMDCL rangers and representatives from Balonne's Indigenous corporations to collectively research and implement cultural burning trials.

The project has completed preparation work at 4 sites with varying ecology, Thallon Reserve, Munya Lakes, Galonga Reserve and Comale Lagoon/Dirranbandi Town Common, with first burns completed at 2 sites during 2022. Due to the dryness of the land, council requested

and received a 12 month project extension, the project will now be completed in June 2024.

The project provides a platform for reintroduction and education of cool burning, and using fire as a land management tool. USQ has been engaged to collect data and research cool burning effectiveness, while Balonne's Indigenous peoples have shared knowledge and developed skills to work on country.

In addition to controlling high water content invasive weeds, such as Mother-of-Millions, Willow Cactus, Prickly Pear and Common Tree Pear, cool burning holds promise as a cost-effective tool in rejuvenating country with native species and grasses, such as Mitchell and Kangaroo grass, on reserves and landholdings alike.





3.5 STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS AND ADVOCACY

Council continues to build relationships and networks with elected representatives and relevant departments for both federal and state governments.

We continue to build strong partnerships with neighbouring councils in the Darling Downs and Southwest regions to improve the management of waste streams. Currently council is undertaking a commitment to improving regional partnership for better recycling across the region.

Council has embraced the opportunity to work with MPSC to ensure the Mungindi community continues to be serviced by both local governments during disaster events, particularly for effective vector control and continued waste management services.

Council resolved to take the following motions to the LGAQ annual conference in 2022:

- That the LGAQ call on the state government to create the position of Queensland Cross Border Commissioner to provide an enhanced mechanism for Queensland councils and communities to address cross border issues associated with Queensland's three state and territory borders.
- That the LGAQ call on the newly elected federal government to act on recommendations in the 2020 Royal Commissions into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, specifically:
 - Recommendation 22.1 Evaluation of financial assistance measures
 - Consider reviewing eligibility criteria to ensure all communities

that have been severely impacted by disaster events are included in financial assistance measures

- Consider reviewing betterment provisions to ensure DRFA can be best utilised to make damaged infrastructure more resilient through the rebuilding process.

The motions were supported by the annual conference and the LGAQ continues to advocate on behalf of local government with state and federal governments.

Indigenous Partnerships

Council has commenced engagement with Traditional Owners and has set up an Indigenous Advisory Group to ensure council and Traditional Owners have a platform for open and respectful communication.



Meetings have included determining key issues and discussing education and water issues. Council worked on an ILUA with the Gamilaraay people as part of their Native Title claim process. Council has existing ILUAs with the Bigambul People and Gunggari People.

Food Safety

Food safety regulations apply to each stage of food and beverage production. Currently there are 54 food licence holders within the Balonne Shire. Current licence holders are a combination of shop front businesses, hotels and motels, caterers and mobile food vendors. Council works with food businesses to ensure that they are providing safe food to their customers.

Local Laws

During the year council reviewed its Local Laws and revised its Local Law 2 (Animal Management) 2018, effective 1 July 2023. Under this revised local law, several changes and exemptions were made:

- Allotments under 10,000m² (2.47 acres) are only permitted to have 2 registered dogs
- Allotments over 10,000m² (2.47

acres) are permitted to have up to 4 registered dogs, 2 must be desexed

- Dog owners with a current extra dog permit will be permitted to keep their dog, however dogs cannot be replaced after 1 July 2023
- A permit will be required for keeping a rooster in the urban area of the St George township
- A permit will be required for keeping more than 2 beehives in the urban footprint of St George, Thallon, Mungindi, Dirranbandi, Hebel and Bollon.

Council also adopted a new Local Law for the Installation of Advertising Devices. This local law came into effect in December 2022.

It is important to remember that local laws carry penalties which are legally binding. Council can enforce local laws with verbal warnings, compliance and stop-work notices, on-the-spot fines, penalty infringement notices, court action and confiscation of property.

Compliance – animal control

Over the last 12 months council officers have implemented the new local laws and have undertaken an education program with the

community on the planned changes. An Authorised Inspection Program resulted in increased numbers of dogs being registered with council.

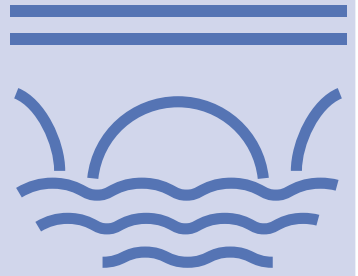
Council has also been working with an external rescue company to rehome impounded dogs outside the shire. In some instances, there is an unfortunate requirement to euthanise dogs who cannot be safely returned to their owners or be rehomed.

Into the future

In 2023-24, the Environmental Services team will focus on:

- Diversifying weed management practices through cultural burning
- Waste management and the transition to a circular economy
- Implementation of the new BSC Local Laws
- Improvement and monitoring of council's stock route network
- Education and implementation of the council's Biosecurity Plan
- Increased safety awareness and monitoring of Food Act changes for food businesses
- Surveillance and monitoring of vector borne diseases.








INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING

Effective infrastructure planning and design, construction, and ongoing management to support the shire's needs with a focus on well-planned projects to suit changing needs into the future.

42 actions were included in the operational plan for Infrastructure and Planning.



-  = 22 Actions achieved 90% on target and /or complete
-  = 6 actions achieved between 70% - 90% of action target
-  = 10 actions achieved less than 70% action target





4.1 SAFE AND CONNECTED TRANSPORT NETWORKS

Flood recovery works across the shire

Balonne Shire Council was subject to multiple severe weather events from 2020, through to 2022, with the shire being disaster declared for six separate events throughout this period. Consequently, the 2022-23 financial year saw the delivery and completion of the remaining flood damage restoration works from the first three flood events of 2020-21 and the beginning of the restoration works for the remaining 3 events.

Since the activation of the first disaster event within our shire, several other flood events activated various programs under funding arrangements, including the DRFA. Jointly funded by commonwealth and state government funding, DRFA provides financial assistance to help communities recover from eligible disasters. The DRFA administers relief funding through several governing bodies including Counter Disaster Operation (CDO) and Restoration of Essential Public Assets (REPA).

The following events granted council eligibility to receive relief funding:

- 2020 DRFA February Event – REPA
- 2021 DRFA March Event – CDO and REPA
- 2021 DRFA November Event – CDO and REPA
- 2022 DRFA February Event – CDO and REPA
- 2022 DRFA May Event – CDO and REPA
- 2022 DRFA October Event – CDO and REPA.

As of 30 June 2023, council completed flood damage restoration works on the following roads:

Minnum Rd Culvert Crossing	Cubbie Roadbed level crossing	Middle Road
Crescent Vale Road	Unity Road	Rutherglen Road
Mourilyan Road	Honeymah Lane	Powrunna Road
Secret Plains Road	Mundalee Rad	Cardiff Road
Mitchell-Bollon Road	Nulky Road	Mourilyan Road
Wagoo Road	Commissioners Point Road	Thuraggie Road
Johnston Road	Narline Road	Openbah Road
Hoolavale Road		



Flood restoration works are continuing on the following roads:

Thomby Road	Teelba Road	Dalkeith Road
Hollymount Road	East Goondulla Road	North Bindle Road
Ingaby Road	Wonolga Road	Wagoo Road
Thungaby Road	Stubby Lane	Knights Road
Munro Road	Bolins Road	Bimble Road
Yilgangandi Road	Narkoola Road	Sunset Valley Road
Jhelum Plains Road	Runnymede Road	Fernlee Road
Cashel Vale Road	Corack Road	Woolerina Road
North Kulki Road	Kulki Road	Link Road
Loughnan Downs Road	Mulga Downs Road	Byra Road
Tambingey Road	Old Woolerbilla Road	Davirton Road
Woolerbilla Road	Ballandool Road	Lower Plains Road
Kilcummin Road	Euraba Road	Minum Road
Booligar Road	Koomalah Road	Habnarey Road
Narine Road	Dunkerry Road	Ballangarry Road
Littleton Road	Chelmer Road	Warrie Road
Beltana Road	Thompsons Road	Kooroon Road
Satur Road	Trackers Crossing Road	Ula Ula Road
Ramalis Road	Eumerella South Road	Pine Park Road
Noondoo-Mungindi Road	Dingadee Road	Gunnindaddy Road
Cambo Road		

The QRA approved Betterment Funding for the following projects:

- Betterment funded section of Whyenbah Rd, along with flood damage restoration works
- Betterment funded sections of Jakelwar-Goodooga Rd North, along with flood damage restoration works.

Local Roads of Regional Significance (LRRS)

The Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS) is a jointly funded (50/50) initiative between state and local governments.

It is administered through the Road Alliance and the Southwest Regional Roads Technical Group. The funding is specifically for LRRS. The following projects received funding under TIDS in 2022-23:

- Bollon-Dirranbandi Rd – Bitumen resealing
- Noondoo-Mungindi Rd – Gravel resheeting works
- Whyenbah Road – Detailed design (unsealed section)
- Noondoo-Thallon Road – Resealing
- Jackelwar-Goodooga Road North – Pavement repair and drainage.

Roads to Recovery

Roads to Recovery (R2R) is a federal government funded multi-year program. This program was renewed by the federal government in 2022-23 and a funding amount of \$6.8M was committed to council for the period 2019-20 to 2023-24. The following projects received funding under R2R in 2022-23:

- Cashel Vale Road – Medium formation grading with resheeting
- Honeymah Lane – Build up road with gravel through low lying areas
- Jackelwar-Goodooga Road - Build up road with gravel through low lying areas





- Bowhay Road – Reseal
– Local Roads
- Johnston Road – Reseal
– Local Roads
- Boronia Avenue – Reseal
– Local Roads
- Carnation Avenue – Reseal
– Local Roads
- Howe Street – Reseal
– Local Roads
- McGahan Street – Reseal
– Local Roads
- Myall Avenue – Reseal
– Local Roads
- Wattle Drive – Local Roads.

Working in partnership on state roads

Council partners with TMR to deliver contract maintenance and upgrade works on state controlled roads. Council has a Road Maintenance Performance Contract (RMPC) that services the state road network.

Our RMPC crew support council's construction crew to deliver maintenance and construction services. During the 2022-23 financial year, the RMPC team established a new grader crew to assist with the delivery of works. Works include gravel re-sheeting, pavement repairs and flood emergent works, where

required. Council's RMPC contract has continued to increase over the last financial year from \$3.2M in 2020-21 to over \$5M in 2022-23. Council's road team successfully completed the contract with 100% spend of the RMPC funds allocated. Council's RMPC team has also been able to accommodate additional works outside their allocation to further assist TMR and the shire in providing a safer road network.

The continued funding and additional emergent works are testament to council's capability to meet TMR expectations of 100% spend whilst ensuring value for money and a high-quality service.

Contracted works – Noondoo-Thallon intersection

Council was awarded the Minor Infrastructure Contract – Sole Invitee to deliver the construction of the Noondoo-Thallon intersection for TMR. The project consisted of earthworks, embankment, drainage structures, stabilisation, sealing and asphalt. These works were completed with great results achieved by the council construction crew, helping to improve the TMR network and support the Thallon community.

Contracted Works - Heavy Vehicle Truck Pad – 36A Balonne Highway

Council was awarded the Minor Infrastructure Contract – Sole Invitee to deliver construction of the Balonne Highway – Heavy Vehicle Truck for TMR. The \$2M project consists of earthworks, embankment, drainage structures, stabilisation, sealing and asphalt and is funded by the federal and state governments. The completion of this project provides 10 parking bays for type-2 multi-combination vehicles, which has become a welcome addition to the heavy vehicle transport industry and the St George township.

Contracted Works – Pavement Rehabilitation – 36A Balonne Highway

Council was awarded the Minor Infrastructure Contract – Sole Invitee to deliver rehabilitation on sections of pavement along the Balonne Highway between St George and Bollon. The project consisted of earthworks, drainage structures, stabilization and sealing of the almost 5km section. The completion of this project has now helped to provide a safer driving network for the public, between the 2 townships.



4.2 ROBUST ASSET MANAGEMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE

Maintaining our facilities

Providing effective and efficient management of assets is a key obligation for council. Balonne Shire Council faces unique challenges delivering services in a rural setting due to costs, availability of contractors and resources, as well as the impact of inclement weather. Council maintains approximately 215 buildings and structures across 7 townships. Maintenance activities are undertaken to ensure efficient operation and serviceability of assets. This ensures that the assets retain their service potential over the course of their life.

Maintenance includes reactive and proactive work activities. Reactive maintenance is unplanned repair work carried out in response to a service request and proactive maintenance is work that is carried out regularly or identified through routine inspections.

Council has received 160 service requests specifically related to buildings, and many more through consultation with our User Groups and Progress Associations.

In 2022-23 Council engaged a contractor to complete maintenance and repair works across council's staff housing in accordance with its adopted Housing Strategy.



Aerodromes servicing our shire

Council is the operator of 2 registered aerodromes at Dirranbandi and St George and Aircraft Landing Areas at Bollon and Hebel. Annual technical inspections were completed at St George and Dirranbandi, as required. St George Aerodrome has a state government regulated public transport service, operated by Rex Airlines twice a week. All aerodromes have a maintenance program administered by council. The aerodromes and airstrips service

the Royal Flying Doctor Service, businesses and private users.

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority undertook an audit of the aerodromes in April 2023. Four safety findings were identified at the Saint George aerodrome and 5 at Dirranbandi. These safety findings were rectified within the required 4-week period. A number of safety observations were also identified and corrective action plans have been prepared and are being completed.



Developing St George Aerodrome

Council received \$1M in funding through the Building our Regions fund with the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. The project consisted of airside works including, creation of 9 hanger allotments, apron, fencing, taxiway, drainage works and partial construction of supporting road infrastructure. This portion of the development was completed this financial year.

In addition council received funding through the federal government's LRCIP to undertake development of the landslide area at the airport. This project includes construction of infrastructure such as roads, stormwater, power and sewer. This project is in design with construction works due to commence next financial year.

Across the shire

TREE PLANTING

Council's tree planting project has taken place again in 2022-23, with over 350 trees planted. This has been achieved through federal government LRCIP funding and allowed council to not only plant trees, but to provide them with water supply through our low-density irrigation network and electronic timing devices.

We have also successfully started growing tube stock, through the newly built Work Camp nursery project. The nursery affords us the opportunity to deliver more tree planting projects to the community. In addition, we can transition plants onto bore and raw water at the nursery before they are planted in our towns that do not have access to river water, increasing their likelihood of survival. Council would like to thank Work Camp for their assistance in maintaining and running the nursery, in conjunction with the Parks and Gardens department.



ST GEORGE RIVER FORESHORE BEAUTIFICATION - MDBEDP

Grant funding from a range of sources has allowed continued upgrades and improvements to the river foreshore in St George. \$1M from the federal government's MDBEDP has allowed further extension of the river foreshore concrete footpaths, solar lighting and CCTV from the footbridge at the end of Church Street, through to the hospital. The project has also included the construction of a duckpond under the footbridge at the canoe ramp and irrigation beyond (towards the showgrounds).

This development has connected

the showgrounds, hospital and high school to our beautiful Balonne River, providing a safe and scenic foreshore route for our residents and visitors to walk, relax and enjoy. It has also provided a new route for our local Park Run. Feedback for the project has been overwhelmingly positive.

DIRRANBANDI RAIL AND RIVER PRECINCT STAGE 2 - MDBEDP

The Dirranbandi Rail and River Precinct project saw the development of the access road on the western side, with a small carpark behind the bakery, exposed aggregate footpath connecting amenities, railway buildings and shelters, BBQ



installation, upgrades to the Goods Shed and the development of a sealed long vehicle carpark. The project saw many delays and is about 80% complete with the project due to be completed in September 2023.

ROWDEN PARK BASKETBALL COURT – LRCIP 3

Council was successful in receiving funds through LRCIP Round 3 to fund the construction of a full basketball court at Rowden Park, as the sport becomes increasingly popular within the shire. The Balonne Shire Youth Council were engaged to select the colours for the concrete treatment to form the base of the basketball court. Works commenced toward the end of the 2022-23 financial year and will be completed by September 2023.



HEBEL SHOWGROUNDS SHED/ CANTEEN - LRCIP ROUND 2

Hebel is a small community with aging infrastructure, particularly the showgrounds, which hosts most community events. Council was successful in obtaining funding through LRCIP Round 2, allowing us to construct a new facility at the showgrounds which, once fitted out, will include a canteen and bar area, as well as a secretary's office.

The facility is situated in a central location with a viewing platform overlooking the arena. The project was well received by the community and there are already plans to host many community events in the facility. The official opening is yet to occur. With constant flooding causing Hebel to be isolated, planning a ministerial opening is proving to be more challenging than usual.

MUNGINDI FORESHORE UPGRADES

Stage 2 and 3 of the Mungindi River Park project were finally completed in 2022-23, after delays due to flooding, with the recreation area under water on and off for months. This project included installation of a

new playground with a fixed shelter, upgrades to the toilets, new seat shelters, accessible path with handrails and bollards and a vehicle access road that is yet to be completed.

BOLLON WALTER AUSTIN PARK AMENITIES UPGRADE

Bollon is situated on the Wallum Creek, a beautiful, natural and free campsite for travellers. This very popular campsite is often full of

campers. During peak tourist season, the town thrives off the business the travellers bring to the town. To increase visitor numbers and length of stays, council identified the need for an amenity upgrade to make travellers stays on the Wallum Creek a little more comfortable. The project was completed providing the town with a new amenity comprising of ambulant and wheelchair accessible toilets and showers along with a connecting footpath along the Wallum Creek.



CBD BEAUTIFICATION – LRCIP 3 AND MDBEDP

Council undertook the next phase of the staged renewal and beautification throughout Victoria Street and the St George Central Business District, continuing from works previously completed on Grey Street. During the beautification project, end of life AC watermain were replaced while the pavement was being removed to ensure the underground assets do not require upgrades following the completion of the extensive streetscape upgrades.

The project included kerb and footpath replacement on the southern side of Victoria Street (from Grey to Henry Streets), with further development of the Hub greenspace, installation of buildouts and cross over points, as well as irrigation installation and landscaping. Further funds into the 2023-24 financial year will allow street furniture, arbours and the Victoria Street naming wall to be completed.



4.3 EFFECTIVE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT AND SEWERAGE SERVICES

Back Up Generators – QRA

With regular power outages and flooding events, council was eligible for funding to install backup generators at the main disaster centres for St George, Thallon and Hebel. The generators will enable these facilities to run essential equipment and create an evacuation centre during a disaster. Each facility required upgrades to the main switchboard as well as installing change over switches to enable the main power sources of the building to be easily switched to the backup generator. The project was completed at the end of the financial year.

Effective waste-water management and sewerage services

The Water and Sewerage department had a heavy focus on the maintenance and productivity of the St George Treatment Plant in 2022-23. The site has been cleared of all overgrown vegetation to ensure council's evaporation dams can operate at optimum ability. Settling pond one has been shut off, with future plans to de-sludge and complete urgent maintenance already in place. The digester and clarifier have been emptied and cleaned to ensure that these crucial assets can continue to operate for years to come. A screw screen, to collect rags and debris from the inflow waste line, has also been purchased with commissioning to take place shortly.

Effluent testing and groundwater monitoring wells have been put in place at the St George Treatment Plant, to ensure continued conditions in our environmental authority are met.



Condition assessments of our sewer pump stations have been completed and subsequent maintenance works have been booked with an external contractor. The 3 Dirranbandi sewer pump stations are scheduled to receive a full renovation in 2023.

National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program

Balonne Shire Council undertakes quarterly wastewater drug sampling at the St George Sewerage Treatment Plant. This program is supported by the University of Queensland (Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences), the University of South Australia and the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission.

The National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program is an Australian Government funded initiative that continues to evolve. Wastewater analysis assists in understanding drug use within populations, providing a measure of one important aspect of national health – the demand for a range of drugs. Illicit drugs and licit drugs with abuse potential are inherently harmful. Reliable drug consumption data is a key indicator of the level of harm experienced by the community. This is because the level of community harm is directly related to the quantity of substances that are consumed. Understanding drug consumption at a population level supports effective allocation of resources to priority areas and assists to inform appropriate demand, supply and harm reduction strategies.



Balonne Shire Council has been part of this program since its inception and values this partnership which helps improve the safety of communities.

Protection and enhancement of water supply

Council has taken considerable measures to improve its data collecting and monitoring of water supplies throughout the shire. The Safe Work Method Statement data program has been implemented and utilised by all town officers to record potable and non-potable water data, as well as water sample results. This program provides council with valuable data to forward plan and meet the needs of the community.

Balonne Shire Council's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition strategy has also been developed to ensure remote monitoring of essential water supply sites meets current standards. This will provide officers with the ability to be better prepared to respond to supply issues and complaints.

Upgrades to the potable and non-potable mains have been completed in Victoria Street, St George. This upgrade was completed in conjunction with the CBD beautification works, to provide water services, on both sides of the road, to businesses in the area.

Drinking water monitoring

Under the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*, all townships must be supplied with drinking water of a quality that complies with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines. These standards include health related guideline values and aesthetic guideline values.

Water quality that complies with the health-related guideline values ensures that there is no risk to the health of a consumer. For some



parameters, an aesthetic guideline value is also nominated, these are associated with the acceptability of water to the consumer and can include appearance, taste and odour.

Council undertakes extensive monitoring of the drinking water to confirm it is safe to drink across all sections of the network. Every quarter all drinking water samples are sent to a National Association of Testing Authorities registered lab in Brisbane for full screening.

Mungindi water security

Another successful project through the New South Wales Cross Border program is the Mungindi Water Security project. The project includes investigation, design and construction of an artesian bore to supply the Mungindi Queensland community. Currently the township of Mungindi draws its water supply from the Moree Plains Shire Reservoir. This project will ensure quality water supply and adequate water pressure to both sides of the border.

Given that the region is frequently subject to water restrictions, this project also intends to improve water security and supply on both sides of the border. Council have executed a contract with the successful tenderer and are currently waiting

Development Application approval, with drilling due to commence next financial year.

Balonne Water Security and Cooling Plans – Building our Regions Round 6

Balonne Shire Council have engaged with consultants to undertake extensive capacity testing on all bores around the shire to understand future water security and the condition of all bores. The key objectives of the project were as follows:

1. Develop a potable water supply hydraulic model for the townships of St George, Dirranbandi, Bollon, Thallon, Hebel and Mungindi.
2. Develop a non-potable water supply hydraulic model for the St George township.
3. Undertake a detailed hydraulic modelling analysis of the potable and non-potable water supply networks, for both the existing and ultimate planning horizons.
4. Where system performance deficiencies were identified from the hydraulic modelling, determine infrastructure and/or operational solutions to achieve the minimum design standards stipulated in the Department of Energy and Water



Supply's Planning Guidelines for Water Supply and Sewerage (2014), and the South-East Queensland Water Supply and Sewerage Design and Construction Code (2020).

5. Issue a Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland certified hydraulic assessment report and concept design layout plans.
6. Identify potential water security and cooling solutions for consideration.

Sustainable Planning and Development

Council received 13 planning development applications and 46 building applications, to the value of \$4,116,403 in 2022-23.

Council completed a formal review of the 2019 Balonne Shire Council Planning Scheme. Although functioning well, a substantial review of the planning scheme was undertaken by councillors at several workshops to further strengthen commercial and community outcomes.

A final draft of the revised Planning Scheme was approved by council and the state review was received. As at June 2023, council were waiting formal state approval to commence

public consultation with all townships in the shire. The scheme is scheduled for completion by December 2023.

Council also developed and implemented a customer service framework for planning and building services. A Planning Customer Service Charter was developed and approved by council, providing integrated and responsive service standards and policies that encourage development and efficient processing. A Development Incentives Policy (waiving development application fees when meeting economic development outcomes) was also approved by council.

Associated communications including an easy-to-read road map for planning processes, website fact sheets and an online development application tracker were also developed. Interactive planning software will require grant funding. A trial of interactive flood map software is scheduled for 2023-24.

Council received a grant to update flood maps associated with the 2019 Balonne Shire Council Planning Scheme. This will better capture town levies and update flood maps to assist with siting development. Balonne

Shire's towns data was gathered by LiDAR from the air. Work to model the data and develop flood maps is scheduled for 2023-24.

Into the future

- \$4.4M upgrade of Whyenbah Road, co-funded by federal and state governments and BSC
- \$2.4M upgrade of Jakelwar-Goodooga Road, co-funded by federal and state governments and BSC
- Airport and Innovation Zone – ongoing multimillion dollar project
- Mungindi Water Security – Council will construct a 1.2km deep Great Artesian bore to provide an independent water supply source during emergency times
- Staff Housing - Council will build additional dwellings to attract and retain council staff and relieve pressure on the local housing market
- St George Sewerage Treatment Plant – Council will install a new automatic cleansing screen to significantly reduce the pollution load on the plant, leading to improved effluent quality.






GOVERNANCE



Deliver an effective corporate governance framework that drives enhanced organisational performance through best practice project management, financial management and risk mitigation.

35 actions were included in the operational plan for Governance



-  = 24 Actions achieved target 90% on target and /or complete
-  = 2 actions achieved between 70% - 90% of action target
-  = 7 actions achieved less than 70% action target





5.1 EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE DELIVERY TO CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES

Council has experienced a significant increase in workload following COVID-19 and 5 flood events since 2020. As a result, we commenced a service delivery review to consider the organisation's functions, capacity and roles required to meet current and future demands. From this a Workforce Plan was implemented to lead the development of our workforce, commencing our first service level review with the Community and Environmental Services team.

Service Delivery Review – Community and Environmental Services

This review of service levels was undertaken by a Councillor Working Group. Actions from the review included:

- Amalgamation of the Rural Services and Environmental Health teams, to form Environmental Services
- A peer review and report on animal management was conducted by officers from

Western Downs and Goondiwindi Regional Councils

- Waste management moved towards being placed on a whole of life levy and user fee basis
- Legislated and discretionary services were identified, with officer time allocated
- Fee and grant-based services were identified
- The BAC and WDAC were integrated
- The Community Safety Committee was replaced by the Community Advisory Committee
- The Youth Advisory and Indigenous Advisory Committees were developed
- Strategies were required for libraries and arts for council grant allocation.

Customer Service

Our Finance and Corporate Services team greet customers at our main administration office, answer incoming phone calls and receive emails, service requests are then forwarded

to relevant departments for follow up and resolution.

Library staff in our St George, Thallon, Bollon, Dirranbandi and Hebel libraries, together with the Visitor Information Team in St George and at the Dirranbandi Rural Transaction Centre, are also responsible for front line customer service.

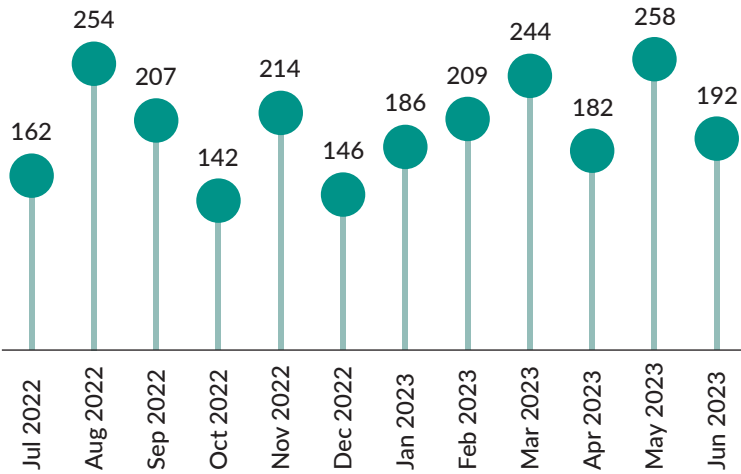
In 2022-23 Council recorded 2,396 service requests, one complaint for a lodged service request and 30 compliments. Council utilises Peak Services for its after-hours telephone service.

Council continues to promote Snap Send Solve as an efficient method for residents and visitors to report issues including road conditions and wandering animals. Council received 223 Snap Send Solve notifications in 2022-23 which were registered with all other service requests.

The number of service requests per month ranges from 140 to 260. Seasonal fluctuations are experienced from August to September (coinciding



NUMBER OF SERVICE REQUESTS BY MONTH



with dog registration notices and rates) and from February to March (coinciding with rates).

Whenever possible, council should resolve service requests within 10 days. In 2022-23, council resolved 90% of service requests within 10 days, which is above our target of 85%. Where council cannot complete a service request within this timeframe, customers must be kept informed of

the progress of their request, or advised why their request cannot be resolved (for example, budget constraints). If customers are dissatisfied with council's response to a service request, this is registered as a complaint.

Service requests can be registered with Snap Send Solve, by phone or email, or online. Further information and contact details can be found on our website. If you feel our

service exceeds expectations, we encourage you to let us know by recording your compliments.

<https://www.balonne.qld.gov.au/contact-us>

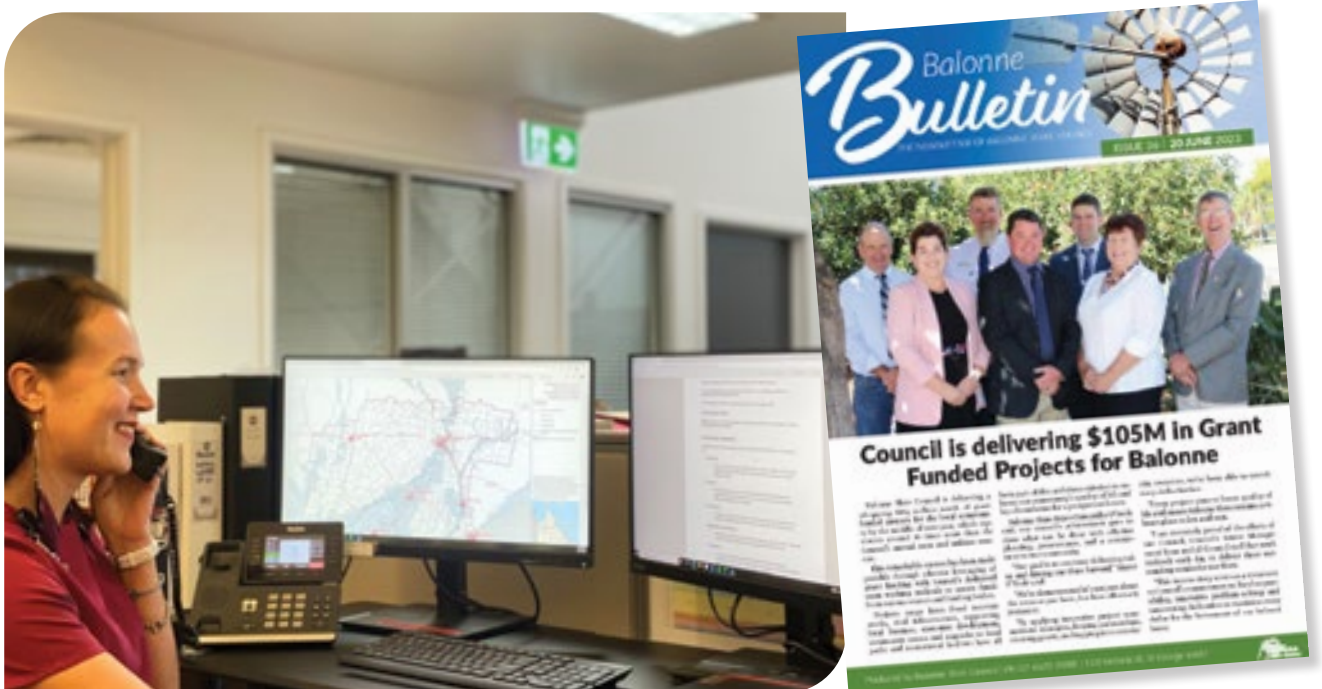
Community engagement

Councillors, members of our senior leadership group and relevant teams attend regular community, progress association, user and advisory group meetings to ensure our communities are well represented in the decision-making process.

Council produce and distribute regular editions of our community newsletter, the Balonne Bulletin, providing important updates on council and community activities, events and issues. In 2022-23 13 editions were distributed by post and electronically to all townships in the shire.

Council's Parks and Gardens Standing Committee and Asset Standing Committee monitor and consider new and current projects across the Shire.

A community satisfaction survey was planned for 2022-23, this has been deferred to 2024.



5.2 HEALTHY, SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE

Balonne Shire Council has continued to make improvements to its IMS through reviews, inspections, internal and external audits. The IMS is a single integrated management system to meet the requirements of council's statutory, environmental, product quality, community objectives and best practices. These include the NAT, TMR prequalification criteria and International Standards (ISO) including ISO:45001:2018 Safety Management Systems (which incorporates ISO:14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems and ISO:9001:2015 Quality Management Systems).

In September, Alan Greenhalgh was appointed to the role of IMS Coordinator to maintain, improve and administer council's IMS.

ISO Certification

An internal audit, conducted by Feddersen Consultants, highlighted areas requiring attention, which were resolved prior to an external audit in May 2023. This was a surveillance audit to ensure council is maintaining the IMS. At the conclusion of the audit, council received 2 opportunities for improvement and 4 observations, an excellent result for our team.

A repeat surveillance audit will be conducted next year to assess the IMS system again. Finally, in the third year, a deeper recertification audit is conducted for the entire system.

Council's next objective is to extend ISO Certification to the whole of council, allowing for a more cohesive structure across all council departments.



Transport and Main Roads (TMR)

In 2022 the TMR prequalification application was approved by TMR and received a R2 rating, allowing council to bid for tenders in this range.

The IMS was reviewed and updated to better address TMR prequalification requirements of Health and Safety, Quality and Environment, to have closer alignment to TMR and BSC requirements.

The IMS Coordinator and the Roads team worked in partnership to develop new project specific management plans, including project safety, traffic, air quality, noise, erosion and sediment plans. Supporting documentation including procedures, forms, registers and checklists were also developed, based on the new plans. This system was used on the current Rehabilitation of Pavement - Balonne Highway project. The system was audited by TMR prior to commencing, and during the NAT and ISO audits, passing all audits without any issues. This secured Council's TMR prequalification status for a further 12 months.

Hazard inspections

During October all council facilities were inspected for hazards and the risk register was updated. The risk assessment results from each facility determined the frequency of hazard inspections. A hazard inspection frequency regime was then developed to ensure hazard inspections are conducted across the shire each year. Hazard inspections are a valuable tool for ensuring compliance against legislative and council requirements. Generally, council remains compliant across all facilities.

National Audit Tool

Following a safety management system audit against the NAT requirements conducted in June 2021, significant improvement was noted, with a score of 73.8% being achieved. As a result of this audit, some non-conformances and opportunities for improvements required implementation. This is a normal process of continuous improvement and the system maturing. Another internal audit was conducted in January 2023 with all findings implemented prior to our external NAT audit in April 2023. Once again,



council was able to comfortably exceed the NAT target of >70%.

Training

During the 2022-23 financial year 22 new training courses were made available and completed by staff members. New staff are provided with all training courses previously allocated.

All employees were given access to the Learning Management System (LMS) with the final allocation of tablets to Infrastructure Services field personnel. Supervisors and managers are advised if employees have incomplete training modules and are responsible for encouraging completion of all allocated training. This has had a significant impact on completion of outstanding training modules.

The WHS Committee, Human Resources and the IMS Coordinator will work in partnership to ensure training requirements are identified and implemented as necessary.

Incident and injury statistics 2022-23

The incident spreadsheet is updated monthly and reported to management. It is pleasing to see incidents being reported and recorded with more regularity, this improves council's ability to track incidents and prevent recurrence. During the 2022-23 financial year, the following incidents were recorded:

Total Number of Incidents (22/23 FY)

33 incidents recorded (down from 37 in the previous year)

Number of Incidents Remaining Open as of 30 June 2023

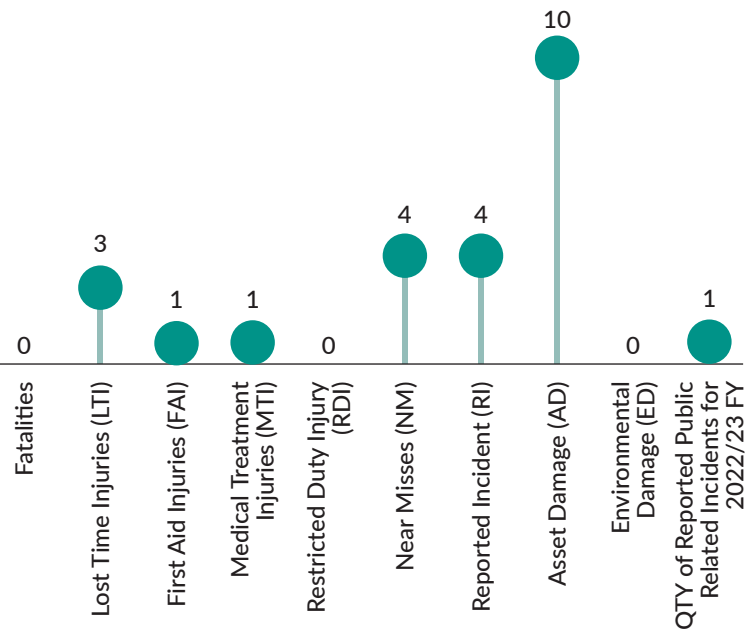
One (1) investigation still active and four (4) waiting review of actions (controls working) before closing out

Number of Incidents Closed

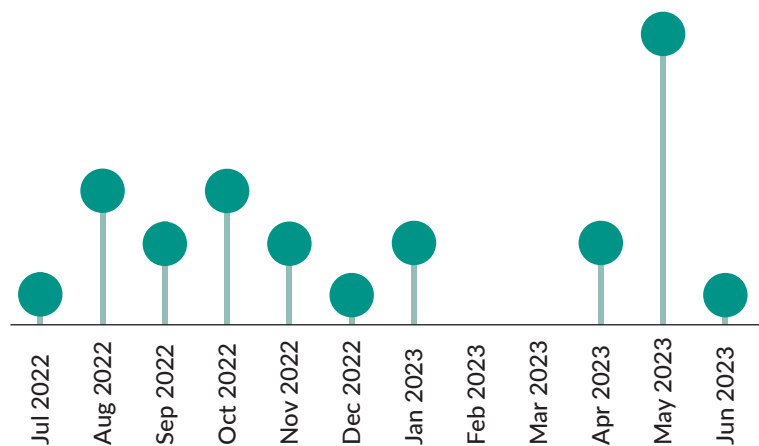
32 incidents closed (97%)



QUANTITY OF INCIDENTS PER TYPE



QUANTITY OF INCIDENTS PER MONTH





5.3 LEADERSHIP, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Workforce plan

The progress of council's workforce plan is overseen by the Mental Health Team and Director Finance and Corporate Services. Key progress milestones include:

- Human Resource Management Framework drafted and scheduled for adoption early in 2023-24
- Relevant HR management directives and procedures have been revised
- A recruitment and selection flow chart has been developed to guide management
- The induction process has been improved.

Learning and development plans were prepared for corporate training across council, with Code of Conduct training completed in May 2023. Individual training plans are reviewed with performance appraisals. Council's register for tickets and qualifications is reviewed regularly for renewals and expiry.

Professional Development

The Local Government Manager's Australia mentor program saw 2 of our managers mentored by other council

executives. Council's Director Finance and Corporate Services mentored a Governance Officer from a large coastal council. One council employee participated in the Local Government Manager's Australia Ignite Program. Ignite is a leadership development programme designed to provide new or aspiring managers, supervisors or team leaders with the necessary skills to manage and lead themselves and their team.

Two managers attended the Executive Management Program in Queensland Local Government which provides

local government professionals with a comprehensive understanding of the role of senior executives in Queensland local government. The programme has been written by experienced CEOs and senior managers from Queensland local government and goes beyond the legislation to explore the real challenges and experiences you might expect to face in a CEO or senior leadership role.

A range of professional development opportunities attended throughout the year by relevant staff include:

Risk Management Forums (on line)	LGMA Villages (on line)
Local Government Managers Australia annual conference	LGAQ annual conference
Finance Officers Networks	Local Government Finance Professionals conference
Tropical Financial Workshop	Local Government Cyber Security Round Table
Darling Downs and South West Queensland Council of Mayors	Darling Downs South West Queensland CEO Forum
Border of Regional Organisation of Councils	Queensland Disaster Management conference
CEO forums	



The following training was provided to relevant staff in 2022-23:

Aerodrome Reporting Officer and Works Safety Officer Training	Aerodrome Reporting Officer Refresher	Aeronautical Radio Operator Certificate
Arc Blue Hub & Analytics Training (procurement software)	Asphalt Construction and Failure Review	Authorised Officer Training
Certificate II in Civil Construction	Certificate III in Business Administration	Code of Conduct
Conduct Civil Construction Grader Operations	CORES (Community Response to Eliminating Suicide)	Course in Swimming Pool Safety Inspections
CPR and First Aid	Cyber Security Fundamentals	Dangerous Dog Training
Developing Investment Worthy Projects in Business and Community	Diploma of Civil Construction Management	Diploma of Local Government (Corporate Services)
Drug and Alcohol Training	Fire Warden / Chief Fire Warden Training	Future Libraries Symposium (State Library QLD)
Future of Whistleblowing & Complaints Management - Webinar	Grant Writing Webinar	Guardian IMS Advanced Training
Guardian IMS Basic Training	Implement Traffic Management Plans	Investigation Fundamentals
IPWEA - Temporary Traffic Management Practice Workshop	IPWEA Managing Unsealed Roads	IPWEA QLD Urban Drainage Manual Workshop
IPWEA QNT SWQ Branch Conference	IPWEA Spray Seal Construction and Failure Review	IPWEA Sprayed Bitumen
LGMA Executive Management Program	LGMA Leadership Management	LGMA Mentoring Programme
LGW Workplace Health and Safety Conference	Licence to Perform High Risk Work - Forklift Truck	Local Government Risk Management Focus Group
Local Government Worker Training	MagiQ Training	Managing Aggressive People
MATES Connector Training	MATES General Awareness Training	OQRA Conference Muster & Awards
Outback QLD Tourism Hero	PID Act Awareness and Managing Organisational Risk Training	PID Support Training
ProMaster Credit Card Software	Public Interest Disclosures - Assessment and Management Training	QGATE Positive Interactions
QLD Ombudsman Support Training	QTC Asset Management	QTC Business Cases in Practice
Rapid Focus Training - InfoCouncil	Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator Course	Service Planning Training Program Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
Situational Awareness	Somerset Storyfest Investigations	SWIMS Reporting Training
SWIMS Training	Synergy Soft Training	Vendor Panel Training
Water Supply/Drinking Water Regulation Workshop	WHS Due Diligence Training for Supervisors and Managers	WHS Representative Training
Women in Local Government Conference		



Staff turnover

Staff turnover remains a challenge, with 38 staff leaving the organisation in 2022-23, out of a workforce of 111 (including part-time and casual staff). This figure includes resignations (33), dismissals (3), retirements (1) and temporary contract conclusions (1). Turnover reduces productivity and requires training and upskilling of incoming employees.

Council also struggles to attract appropriately qualified and skilled

employees with a number of positions having to be re-advertised several times throughout the year. The 'great resignation' is a global trend, with people choosing to move for a range of reasons. Council is working hard to sell the region and local government opportunities to compete with the open market.

Internal promotions and movements were higher than in previous years, with 19 staff taking advantage of our diverse organisation for career changes and promotions.

Council offer a range of benefits including 5 weeks annual leave, 15 days sick leave, salary packaging, 13.5% superannuation and, for some positions, housing and private use of vehicles. Council does offer some flexible working arrangements that meet operational requirements. Council did not have a significant number of staff working from home following the pandemic, however we have had an increase in requests for flexible work arrangements.

TOTAL ROLES RECRUITED	90
Positions advertised internally	17
Positions advertised externally	68
Transitions to permanent appointments	2
Contract/Labour Hire	3

RESULTS OF RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY (INCLUDING MULTIPLE APPOINTMENTS FOR SOME POSITIONS)	
External appointments	36
Internal appointments (incl. current employees applying through external advertising)	37
Labour Hire appointments	4
Positions not filled or progressed	7
Ongoing into 2023/2024	13



5.4 TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES TO ACHIEVE EFFICIENCY THROUGH CONNECTIVITY AND MOBILITY

Council recognised in its Workforce Plan and Corporate Plan that technology is a valuable tool to improve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Our entire outdoor workforce was issued with mobile tablets to improve their connectivity with corporate information, complete online timesheets and learning and development modules.

Our CCTV network has been enhanced with new software (NX Witness) which can also be accessed by the Queensland Police Service. Servers were updated to allow for additional storage and an ongoing program to monitor network issues is in place.

The Wallam and Mungallala Rooms in our Cultural Centre, in St George, received an upgrade of audio-visual technology. These rooms are now

suitable for large scale meetings, with the capacity to host participants in-person and virtually. Council worked in partnership with Visual Focus from Toowoomba to instal additional speakers, a large TV screen and a camera.

Work has commenced on digitising council's cemeteries, utilising our GIS system to map plots and graves across the shire.

Council has worked in partnership with FSG over the past 5 years to improve digital connectivity across the shire. FSG also provide managed information technology services to council and were invaluable with staff movements and an inability to attract qualified and experience IT professionals. FSG provided support for a period of 6 months and council now has two qualified and experienced IT

professionals to help with our digital transformation and service delivery. The IT Service Desk has been busier than previous years with the high change over in staff and additional support for outdoor workers coming online.

Tickets opened: 3629

Tickets closed: 3554

Average tickets closed per week: 68

As of 30/06/2023 there were 73 open tickets

Council's network performance has been more stable in the past 12 months with a range of strategies implemented to improve back-ups, cyber security and asset replacement. Council is also continuing towards a cloud migration strategy to improve the administration of its workstations.

5.5 HIGH LEVELS OF TRANSPARENCY AND COMPLIANCE

Administration Action Complaints

Council received and resolved 4 administrative action complaints in 2022-23, an increase from one in 2021-22. All 4 complaints were resolved within 30 business days

or less. Areas of concern included rates, procurement and a cemetery. Council had one external review of a complaint, with the Queensland Ombudsman dismissing the matter.

Council had no referrals to the Crime & Corruption Commission (CCC) in the 2022-23 period.

	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Number of administration complaints	9	1	4
Number of complaints resolved	10 (including 1 from 2019/20)	2 (including 1 from 2020/2021)	4
Number of complaints outstanding	0	0	0



Right to Information

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 2022-23 council received and processed one Right to Information application and nil Information Privacy applications. There were nil complaints for breach of Information Privacy provisions.

The Right to Information and Information Privacy legislation is currently under review in Queensland.

Audit and Risk Committee

Our Audit and Risk Committee operates in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009*, and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*. The committee met 5 times during the 2022-23 financial year. The Audit and Risk Committee reports directly to council and has 4 voting members. The committee members are:

- Independent Chair - James Hetherington (successfully re-appointed 1 January 2022)
- Independent Member - Walter Brosnan (appointed 15 September 2022)
- Mayor Samantha O'Toole
- Cr Ian Todd (resigned 15 September 2022)
- Cr Robyn Fuhrmeister and Cr Avery replaced former Cr Todd on the committee.

The Chief Executive Officer and all directors, the Manager Finance Services and council's Internal Auditor, together with representatives from the Queensland Audit Office attend Audit and Risk Committee meetings as standing invitees. Council's External Auditor attends to provide an overview of the External Audit. Council's Internal Auditor attends to provide an update on implementation of the Internal Audit Plan and any outstanding internal audit recommendations. Council's external auditors, UHY Haines Norton, were appointed in January 2022 by the Queensland Audit Office.

Internal Audit Function

Council appointed Crowes – Findex Auditors to undertake the internal

audit function for Council. Two internal audits were completed in 2022-23:

- Asset Management - 3 findings and 2 process improvement opportunities
- Business Continuity - 1 finding and 1 process improvement opportunity

A contractor management internal audit is currently underway.

There are several recommendations that remain outstanding from prior year audits as follows:

2019-2020:

- Fleet management - 85% of recommendations completed and Plant Standing Committee established
- Capital works and budgeting - 70% of recommendations completed and Asset Standing Committee established
- Grants management - 70% of recommendations completed.

2020-2021:

- Service requests and complaints management - 85% of recommendations completed.

5.6 CREATE AND PROTECT VALUE THROUGH RISK MANAGEMENT

The Director Finance and Corporate Services attended the Local Government Risk Management conference in August 2022, as part of the Local Government Mutual Services Risk Excellence Award received in 2021-22.

Council's strategic risks were reviewed in April 2023 and operational risks are under review. Psychosocial risk assessments are planned for 2023-24.

Council's enterprise risk management framework was reviewed in January 2023 following consultation with

the Audit and Risk Committee. The framework includes a revised risk appetite statement and tolerances.

Risk management training was completed online through LMS.

A quarterly report is provided to the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Balonne Management Group has improved its performance reporting on capital and operational projects as detailed in 5.7, below. The reports include risks and issues identified which may impact projects or programs

across council. Potential opportunities are also identified with a view to improving efficiencies, communication and procurement planning. In summary the following risks were common across all program areas:

- High turnover of staff
- Temporary project managers continue to assist in progressing council's larger capital projects
- Supplier prices continue to be higher than originally estimated
- Contractor availability continues to delay some projects.



5.7 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FOR LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY

The Queensland Government introduced a Sustainability Framework for Queensland local governments that will come into effect 1 July 2023. Implementation of the framework will provide councils and the state government greater insight into the challenges and support required for local government. The framework includes new financial ratios that will be incorporated into the 2023-24 financial statements.

Council introduced an improved performance report for its capital and operational projects to improve openness and transparency on the progress of council projects. The Balonne Management Group, made up of council's middle management, reported on 8 program areas from across council. All programs are aligned with the outcomes of the Corporate Plan. The programs are:

- Corporate Governance
- Community Services
- Corporate Finance
- Disaster Management
- Economic Development
- Environmental Services
- Infrastructure Services
- Fleet and Plant

The reports are summarised in a dashboard based on the financial status of the projects.

Council's target to deliver on 90% of its capital projects was under spent by 45%, with a carry forward of projects to be completed over multiple years, including the Victoria Street CBD upgrade in St George, building council housing and the Rail and River Precinct in Dirranbandi. Many of these projects will be finalised early in 2023-24. 61% of operational projects were completed in 2022-23. Three-year

budgeting and forecasting will be introduced in 2023-24 to improve reporting on larger projects over multiple years.

The long-term financial plan was submitted to Queensland Treasury Corporation within the required timeframe, a borrowing application to renovate and increase the size of the council's works depot was also submitted. Council achieved a moderate credit rating with a neutral outlook and were approved for borrowings up to \$3M. In early 2023 Council resolved to defer the application to the 2023-24 financial year for consideration of the newly elected council, before June 2024.

Council reviewed its budget in December 2022 and April 2023 due to a high volume of flood recovery projects approved during the financial year.

Council introduced a range of improvements to increase cyber security of council's financial transactions including ProMaster for online credit card reporting and Eftsure to check supplier details against council's financial system.

Into the future

- Objective Leader training will be offered to all managers and select supervisors to improve their leadership and management of employees. This program will run over 12 months and will provide individual coaching and support, together with 4 to 5 modules and group sessions
- Council will continue to improve mobility for all employees with the provision of mobile tablets and improved means of communication and reporting

- The CCTV strategy will be revised and re-named as the CCTV and flood infrastructure network master plan to continuously improve our network across the shire and attract further funding
- A digital strategy will be developed in consultation with staff, aiming to transition from traditional, manual and isolated operations to a more integrated, automated, and digitally advanced model of public service delivery. Council is facing a rapidly adapting digital market, and the strategy emphasises enhancing citizen interactions with the council, equipping employees with advanced collaboration tools and processes, centralising and securing data using modern technologies and persistently refining services based on analytics and community insights
- Focus will continue on implementing the recommendations of the Mental Health Strategy and Workforce Plan
- An Employee Engagement Survey will be rolled out in 2023-24
- Psychosocial risk assessments are planned for early 2023-24.





STATUTORY INFORMATION

Councillor training, professional development and engagement

Councillors participated in a number of training and professional development opportunities including:

- LGAQ Annual Conference
- WQAC Annual Conference
- Bush Council's Conference
- Darling Downs South West Queensland Council of Mayors
- Australian Local Government Association Conference
- MDA National Conference
- Asset management and financial sustainability (all Councillors in house)
- So you want to be a councillor? (Cr Alex Benn and Cr Adam Osborne)
- Councillor inductions (Cr Alex Benn and Cr Adam Osborne).





Councillor attendance at Council and committee meetings

COUNCILLOR NAME	COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING	SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
Cr Samantha O'Toole (Mayor)	12	6
Cr Richard Lomman (Deputy Mayor)	9	2
Cr Robyn Fuhrmeister	12	6
Cr Scott Scriven	12	6
Cr William Winks	12	6
Cr Rod Avery	12	3
Cr Alex Benn	8	4
Cr Adam Osborne	2	2
Cr Ian Todd	3	1

Council held 87 workshops and the following Standing Committee meetings in 2022-23:

- Asset Committee (4)
- Parks and Gardens Committee (3)
- Plant Committee (4)
- Audit and Risk Committee (5)
- Information Communications and Technology Committee (2).

Councillor Conduct (s150) and Councillor Complaints Register/any decisions of QIA:

No councillor complaints were received in 2022-23.

Councillor Remuneration

OVERALL TOTALS					
COUNCILLOR NAME	BASE ALLOWANCE	MEETING FEES	PRIVATE VEHICLE	OTHER EXPENDITURE	TOTAL GROSS
Cr Samantha O'Toole (Mayor)	110,386.00				110,386.00
Cr Robyn Fuhrmeister (Deputy Mayor) elected 27 April	41,583.19	15,121.10		227.41	56,931.70
Cr Rod Avery (Councillor)	36,794.67	18,397.33	756.00		55,948.00
Cr Scott Scriven (Councillor)	36,794.67	18,397.33			55,192.00
Cr William Winks (Councillor)	36,794.67	18,397.33	16,340.40		71,532.40
Cr Alex Benn (Councillor) Elected****	23,488.10	11,744.05	748.80		35,980.95
Cr Adam Osborne (Councillor) Elected****	6,552.48	3,276.24			9,828.72
Cr Ian Todd (Councillor) resigned 15 September 2022	7,862.97	3,832.78			11,695.75
Cr Richard Lomman (Deputy Mayor) resigned 1 April 2023	47,981.10				47,981.10
Total	348,237.85	89,166.16	17,845.20	227.41	455,476.62



Senior Management Remuneration

Remuneration package including salary, superannuation, rental assistance and vehicle for the senior leadership group totalled \$1,015,675 in 2022-23.

REMUNERATION PACKAGE RANGE	NUMBER OF CONTRACT POSITIONS
\$0.00 - \$100,000	0
\$100,001 - \$200,000	5
\$200,001 - \$300,000	2
\$300,001 - \$400,000	1

Council has 4 senior executives and 2 managers on contract and 2 remote contract positions.

Advisory Groups and Committees

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

STANDING COMMITTEES

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Information Communications and Technology (ICT) Standing Committee
- Assets Standing Committee
- Plant Standing Committee
- Parks and Gardens 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 (LDMG)
- 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 Regional of Councils

Registers / Policies s190 Local Government Regulations must include any invitations to change tender/ concession for rates charges.

In accordance with section 190(1) (f) of the Local Government Regulations 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.

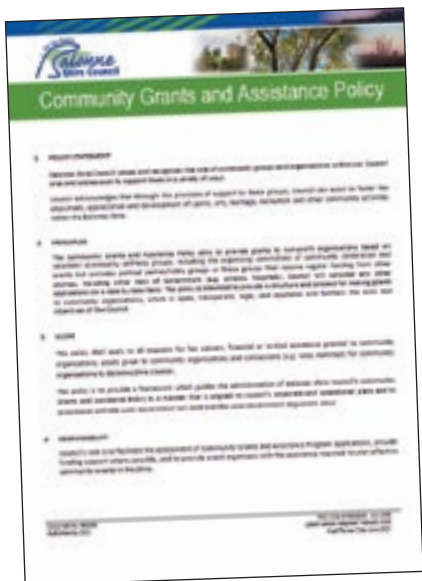
- Land Record
- Fees and Charges
- Road Register
- Local Law Policies
- Planning Scheme
- Council Meeting Minutes
- Council Delegation to Chief Executive Officer to employees
- Policy Register
- Corporate Plan
- Annual Operational Plan
- Budget
- Lease Register
- Archive Register

Council maintains a current policy register which indicates when policies require review.

POLICIES ADOPTED OR REVIEWED BY COUNCIL IN 2022-23 WERE:

- CCTV Policy
- Debt Policy 2022-23
- St George Water Supply Policy
- Investigation Policy (Statutory) Councillor Inappropriate Conduct





- Enterprise Risk Management Framework and Policy
- Facility Booking Policy
- Emerging Leaders Bursary Policy
- Corporate Credit Card Policy 2022-23
- Compliance and Enforcement Policy
- Development Incentives Policy
- Unreasonable Customer Conduct Policy
- Revenue Policy 2023-24
- Investment Policy 2023-24
- Debt Policy 2023-24
- Procurement Policy 2023-24
- Community Grants and Assistance Policy
- Development Incentives Policy

Special Rates and Charges

SPECIAL RATES AND CHARGES – LEVIES

Thallon Town Rural Fire Brigade

For 2022-23 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 operational costs of the Thallon Town Rural Fire Brigade. During the 2022-23 year \$7,564.80 was levied.

Urban Animal Management Special Charge

For the 2022-23 year a special charge was levied on those rateable properties in the Rating Categories 4A – 4B within the BSC boundary. This levy is for the purpose of raising revenue to assist funding council's Urban Animal Management services or activities in the shire. During the 2022-23 year \$29,641.50 was levied.

Feral Animal Special Charge

For the 2022-23 year a special charge was levied on those rateable properties in the Rating Categories 79,80,81 and category 100 and all properties > or = 1000 Hectares in Cat 200 and Cat 300 within the BSC area. 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 2022-23 year \$125,441.09 was levied.

Environmental Special Charge

For the 2022-23 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 2022-23 year \$11,795.56 was levied.

Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing Special Rate Scheme

For the 2022-23 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.

SPECIAL RATES	LEVY (2022-23)
Thallon Town Rural Fire Brigade	\$7,564.80
Domestic Animal Levy	\$29,641.50
Feral Animal Levy	\$125,441.09
Environmental Levy	\$11,795.56
Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing Special Rate Scheme	\$79,808.19

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.

The state government also provides a rebate for eligible pensioners per annum to owners living at that specific primary property address. The total amount of the Pensioner Rebate offered by the state government and claimed for during the 2022-23 year totals \$42,562.08.

PAYMENT OF RATES BY INSTALMENTS

Council will accept applications for payment of rates by instalments from property owners who can demonstrate a genuine financial hardship. Council has determined that each application will be assessed on its merits. All instalment plans must have the effect of liquidating the debt within 6 to 12 months.

No interest is charged for the payment of rates by instalments under such arrangements, however interest continues to be charged on



overdue rates which are not subject to an approved payment plan. The applicant must comply strictly with the terms of the instalment plan agreed to waive the interest. Three default payment plans will result in council requiring immediate full payment of future instalments and could result in recovery action.

COMMUNITY RATES SUPPORT PROGRAM CONCESSIONS

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% off utility charges to eligible religious, charitable, and other organisations and 25% off utility charges for eligible sporting organisations. Total concessions granted for 2022-23 was \$19,828.24.

DISCOUNT FOR PROMPT PAYMENT OF RATES AND CHARGES

Council allows a discount for prompt payments of rates and 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
- Rural Residential Water Charges
- Waste Water Charges
- Cleansing Charges
- Thallon Town Rural Fire Levy

Excess Water Charges

ST GEORGE RIVER WATER

Council applies excess water charges annually for bore water and river water in St George. A separate excess water charge will apply to water supply for untreated bore water, untreated river/creek water, treated water and blended treated/untreated bore water.





COMMUNITY FINANCIAL REPORT



COMMUNITY FINANCIAL REPORT

The Community Financial Report is a simplified version of council's financial performance and position for the 2022-23 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 UHY Haines Norton.

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 \$46.94M generating \$1.38M in interest revenue
- Council debt decreased as a result of repayment of the principal component of administration and water loans.

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 2022-23 is a surplus of \$7.36M which is the difference between revenue and expenses.

In comparison council's operating surplus has decreased from a surplus of \$7.82M in 2021-22. This can be attributed to a slight decrease in grant funding.

The surplus over the past two financial years can also be attributed to the Federal Assistance Grants increasing in value and being paid in advance (see table on page 95).

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 whether they have been paid. The amount not paid is shown in the Statement of Financial Position as an amount owed to council. In accounting terms this is referred to as accrual accounting principles.

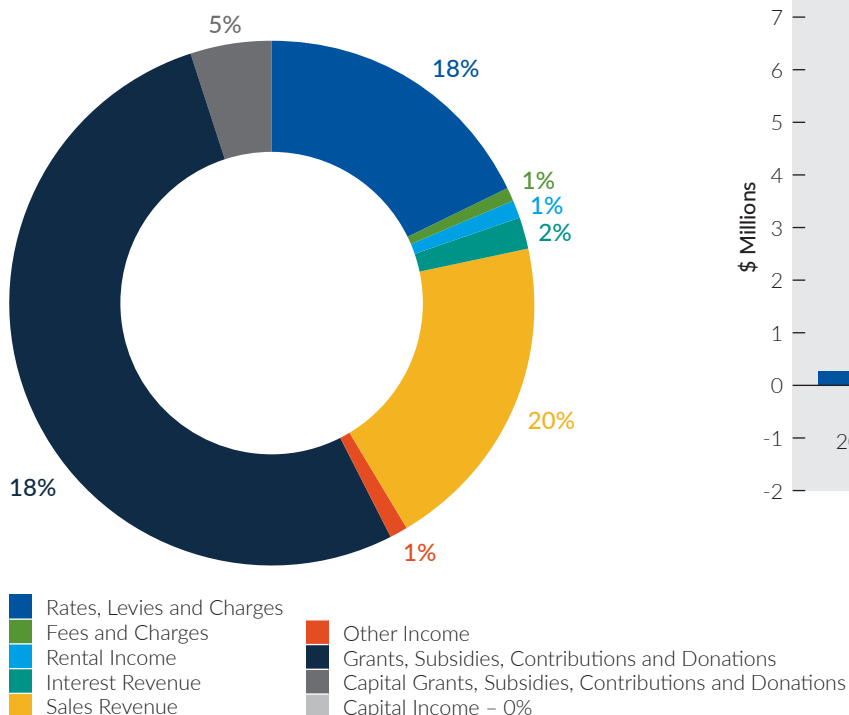
5-Year Financial Summary

FINANCIAL FAST FACTS	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000	2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000
Capital Expenditure	\$8,946	\$8,724	\$9,977	\$14,229	\$13,888
Net Result - Surplus / (Deficit)	\$2,779	\$3,062	(\$723)	\$7,819	\$7,358
Increase / (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$45,628	\$1,535	(\$723)	\$28,257	\$33,768
Revenue	\$27,636	\$32,998	\$52,086	\$85,884	\$61,145
Percentage of Revenue from Rates and Charges	38%	32%	19.5%	12%	18%
Expenses	\$24,857	\$29,936	\$52,809	\$78,065	\$53,786
Cash Holdings	\$31,225	\$40,239	\$37,479	\$31,184	\$46,947
Restricted Cash	\$15,396	\$19,215	\$16,720	\$13,147	\$22,754
Borrowings	\$2,659	\$5,572	\$6,851	\$6,718	\$6,588
WIP	\$4,759	\$8,114	\$11,427	\$7,786	\$5,071

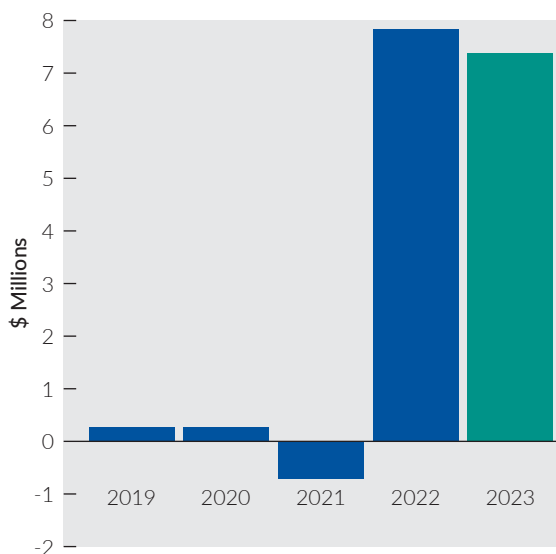


Operating revenue

Council's total revenue for the financial year was \$61.15M.



Overall Surplus / (Deficit)



5-Year Financial Summery Of Revenue & Expenses

Revenue	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000	2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000
Rates, Levies and Charges (Net of Discounts)	\$10,470	\$10,478	\$10,159	\$10,278	\$10,901
Federal Assistance Grant	\$5,805	\$5,854	\$5,807	\$8,187	\$10,028
Other Grants, Subsidies & Contributions	\$7,048	\$8,892	\$27,183	\$58,930	\$25,366
Sales Revenue	\$2,803	\$6,582	\$7,757	\$7,537	\$12,181
Interest and Investment Revenue	\$683	\$389	\$464	\$251	\$1,380
Other Income	\$315	\$295	\$188	\$225	\$403
Fees and Charges	\$273	\$292	\$236	\$225	\$378
Rental Income	\$239	\$209	\$292	\$251	\$367
Capital Income	\$0	\$7	\$0	\$0	\$141
Total Revenue	\$27,636	\$32,998	\$52,086	\$85,884	\$61,145

Expenses	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000	2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000
Employee Costs	\$6,285	\$6,927	\$8,272	\$9,166	\$10,333
Material, Services and Other Expenses	\$10,763	\$15,112	\$36,245	\$53,334	\$34,564
Depreciation	\$7,624	\$7,699	\$7,673	\$7,956	\$8,644
Borrowing Costs	\$184	\$198	\$226	\$175	\$208
Capital Expenses	\$1	\$0	\$393	\$7,434	\$37
Total Expenses	\$24,857	\$29,936	\$52,809	\$78,065	\$53,786



NET RATES, LEVIES AND CHARGES - \$10.9M

- General rates / community levy totaled \$7.23M
- Special rates from Domestic Animal, Feral Animal and Thallon Fire Levies \$159,000
- Water charges of \$2.08M for access and \$60,000 for water consumption and sundry water charges.
- Urban wastewater charges of \$1.17M.
- Waste service charges of \$1.31M.
- Total rates discounts and write-offs of \$1.06M and pensioner remissions of \$36,000.

FEES AND CHARGES - \$378,000

This includes (but is not limited to):

- Planning and building: \$55,369
- Infringements: \$73,552
- Cemetery charges: \$62,581
- Hire charges: \$46,274
- Search and other council documents: \$31,300.

OPERATING GRANTS, SUBSIDIES, CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS - \$32.23M

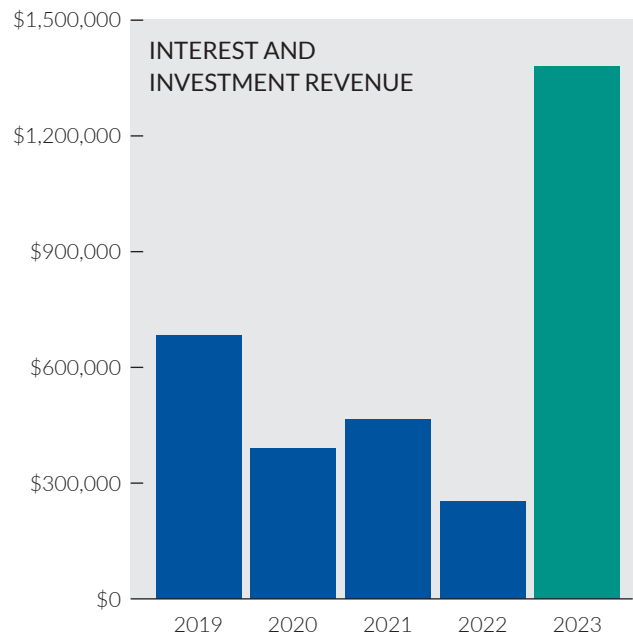
Operating grant funding varies from year to year depending on the number of successful grant applications received. The annual Federal Financial Assistance Grant contributed \$10.03M to the overall operational grant funding, which included a 'bring forward' payment of the 2022-23 allocation of \$7.7M. Council also recognised \$16.43M of funding for Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) Flood Recovery submissions.

CAPITAL GRANTS, SUBSIDIES, CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS - \$3.16M

Capital revenue varies from year to year depending on the level of grant funding sourced. In 2022-23, council received funds for Works for Queensland projects, Roads to Recovery projects, Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing funded by both the Murray Darling Basin Economic Development Program and Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing Round 2, an aerodrome project, in addition to other state and commonwealth government subsidies and grants.

INTEREST AND INVESTMENT REVENUE - \$1.38M

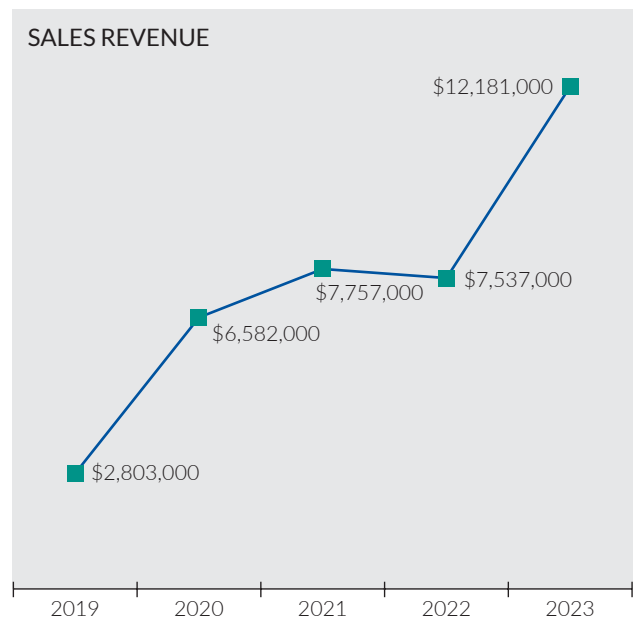
Council's cash investments were held by Westpac Banking Corporation and Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) and returned interest revenue of \$1.22M. Council charged interest of 8.17% on outstanding rates, levies and charges balances which generated \$54,000. Interest of \$104,000 was accrued as part of WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme.



SALES REVENUE - \$12.18M

Sales revenue contributed to \$12.18M of council's income in 2022-23 increasing from \$7.54M in 2021-22.

The increase in sales revenue is due to an increase in Queensland TMR funding.

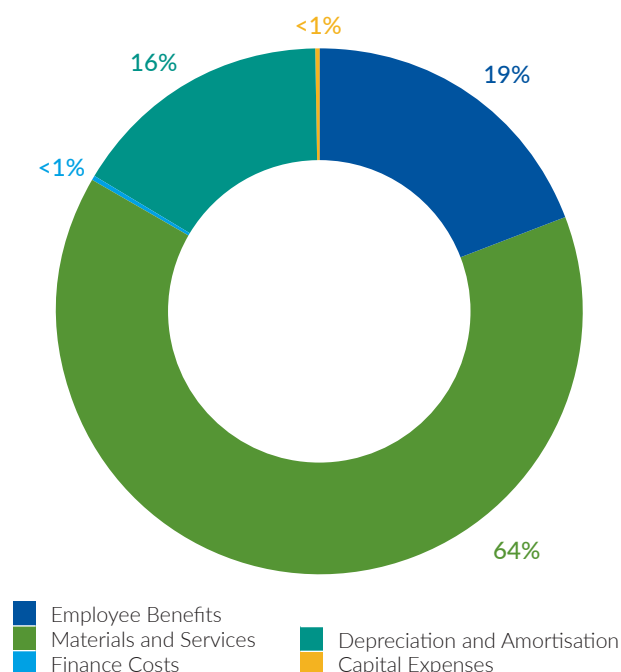


OPERATING EXPENSES - \$53.79M

Council's total expenses for 2022-23 was \$53.79M down from \$78.07M in 2021-22. The significant decrease is a result of the spending on QRA Flood Restoration costs, decreasing from \$35.49M in 2021-22 to \$14.48M in 2022-23.



Operating expenses consist of materials and services, employee benefits, depreciation, finance costs and loss on disposal of assets. A breakdown of council's 2022-23 operating expenses is shown below:



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

Materials and services of \$34.56M accounted for 64% of all operating expenses. The cost for materials and services incorporates our payments to suppliers for the delivery of services and projects to the community, including roads, parks, water, sewerage, waste, footpaths, libraries, pools, community halls, compliance, planning and building services. It includes payments for purchases including bitumen, gravel, electricity, fuel and other operational costs.

Employee costs of \$10.33M includes employee salaries and wages, superannuation, leave entitlements and councillor remuneration.

5-Year Financial Depreciation By Asset Class

Asset Class	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000	2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000
Building & Other Structures	\$741	\$1,433	\$1,179	\$1,231	\$1,342
Plant & Equipment	\$729	\$733	\$675	\$675	\$753
Furniture and Fittings	\$28	\$30	\$0	\$0	\$0
Water Supply Network	\$592	\$450	\$465	\$477	\$523
Other Infrastructure Assets	\$113	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transport Infrastructure	\$5,156	\$4,733	\$5,032	\$5,266	\$5,685
Urban Waste Water Network	\$253	\$304	\$304	\$307	\$341
Intangible Assets	\$12	\$16	\$18	\$0	\$0
Total Depreciation	\$7,624	\$7,699	\$7,673	\$7,956	\$8,644



STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

Cash and cash equivalents are \$46.95M as at 30 June 2023. This cash balance is sufficient to cover council's restricted assets/reserves for future asset replacement of \$9.76M.

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:

- How much money we started the year with
- Where the incoming money came from
- Where the money was spent
- 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 - \$24.35M.
- Investing activities – includes money council receives and spends when we buy or sell property, plant and equipment – \$8.46M.
- Financing activities – incorporates cash received if council takes out new loans, or cash paid to repay loans – \$130,000.

5-Year Cash Flow

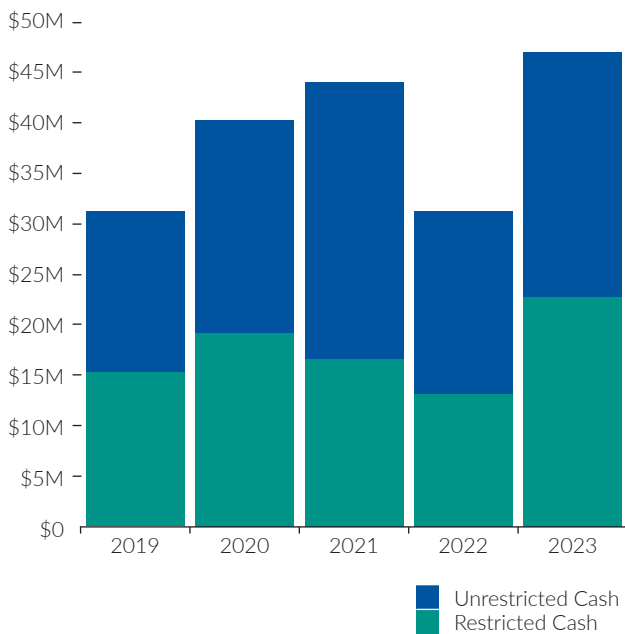
Cash Flow	2018/19 \$'000	2019/20 \$'000	2020/21 \$'000	2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000
Opening Cash Balance	\$25,595	\$31,225	\$40,239	\$37,479	\$31,184
Net Cashflow from Operating Activities	\$7,543	\$9,634	\$1,963	(\$1,623)	\$24,350
Net Cashflow from Investing Activities	(\$1,640)	(\$3,533)	(\$6,001)	(\$4,539)	(\$8,458)
Net Cashflow form Financing Activities	(\$273)	\$2,913	\$1,278	(\$133)	(\$130)
Closing Cash Balance	\$31,225	\$40,239	\$37,479	\$31,184	\$46,947



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

CURRENT ASSETS - \$53.79M

The major component of current assets was cash and investments totalling \$46.95M at 30 June 2023. Of these funds \$9.76M is restricted (grants, subsidies, developer contributions and specific council reserves).



NON-CURRENT ASSETS - \$366.58M

A receivable for the WDEF Special Rate Loan Scheme of \$2.81M was recognised in 2022-23, 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 2023, as shown in the table.

Asset Group	\$'000
Land	\$2,995
Buildings and Other Structures	\$52,335
Plant and Equipment	\$9,312
Water Supply Network	\$25,450
Transport Infrastructure	\$255,135
Urban Waste Water Network	\$13,471
Capital Work in Progress	\$5,071
Total	\$363,769

LIABILITIES

Council owes \$6.59M 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 most councils in Queensland must 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.

Details of all loans outstanding as at 30 June 2023 are as follows:

Loans Outstanding as at 30 June 2023

Description of Purpose	\$'000
Administration Building	\$1,203
Water	\$516
WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme (Round 1)	\$492
WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme (Round 2)	\$495
WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme (Round 3)	\$2,309
WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme (Round 4)	\$1,277
WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme (Round 5)	\$296
Total	\$6,588



STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

ASSET REVALUATION SURPLUS - \$289M

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, as well as value for money.

RETAINED SURPLUS - \$103.69M

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

KEY LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INDICATORS		2023 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.	7.10%	Between 0 - 10%	Yes
Asset Sustainability Ratio	This ratio helps to show whether Council is replacing assets as their service potential is used up.	74.50%	Greater than 90%	No
Net Financial Liability Ratio	This ratio explains the level of debt Council has compared to its operating revenues.	-45.20%	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 is assisted by an increase in sales revenue. The ratio for 2022-23 is 7.1% which is an improvement on the 2021-22 result which was -5.3%.

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.

Calculated as: capital expenditure on replacement of assets (renewals) / depreciation expense.

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 74.5 % in 2022-23, which has improved from the 2021-22 result of 53.8%, but is still below the set target of 90.0%.

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 per cent of operating revenue have a limited capacity to increase loan borrowings and may experience stress in servicing current debt.

Council has a -45.2% performance ratio, which means that council has ability to increase its loan borrowings.



BALONNE SHIRE COUNCIL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

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Balonne Shire Council
Statement of Comprehensive Income
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$000	2022 \$000
Income			
Revenue			
Recurrent Revenue			
Rates, Levies and Charges	3(a)	10,901	10,278
Fees and Charges	3(b)	378	225
Sales Revenue	3(c)	12,181	7,537
Grants, Subsidies, Contributions and Donations	4(a)	32,230	48,296
Total Recurrent Revenue		55,690	66,336
Rental Income		367	251
Interest Received		1,380	251
Other Income		403	225
		57,840	67,063
Capital Revenue			
Grants, Subsidies, Contributions and Donations	4(b)	3,163	18,821
Total Revenue		61,004	85,884
Capital Income		141	-
Total Income		61,145	85,884
Expenses			
Recurrent Expenses			
Employee Benefits	5	10,333	9,166
Materials and Services	6	34,564	53,334
Finance Costs		208	175
Depreciation			
Property, Plant and Equipment	9	8,644	7,956
		53,749	70,631
Capital Expenses			
		37	7,434
Total Expenses		53,786	78,065
NET RESULT		7,358	7,819
<i>Net Operating Surplus / (Deficit)</i>		4,091	(3,568)
Other Comprehensive Income			
Items that will not be Reclassified to Net Result			
Increase / (Decrease) in Revaluation Surplus	9	26,409	20,438
Total Other Comprehensive Income for the Year		26,409	20,438
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year		33,768	28,257

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 2023

	Note	2023 \$000	2022 \$000
Current Assets			
Cash and Equivalents	7	46,947	31,184
Trade and Other Receivables	8	4,289	1,811
Receivables (WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme)	8	97	-
Inventories		345	214
Contract Assets	10(a)	1,984	6,648
Other Assets		131	298
Total Current Assets		53,793	40,155
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	9	363,769	335,530
Receivables (WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme)	8	2,809	1,717
Total Non-Current Assets		366,578	337,247
Total Assets		420,371	377,402
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	11	3,121	3,747
Contract Liabilities	10(b)	12,621	2,976
Borrowings	12	161	154
Provisions	13	1,556	1,648
Other Liabilities		711	29
Total Current Liabilities		18,170	8,554
Non-Current Liabilities			
Borrowings	12	6,427	6,564
Provisions	13	3,080	3,355
Total Non-Current Liabilities		9,507	9,919
Total Liabilities		27,677	18,473
Net Community Assets		392,694	358,927
Community Equity			
Revaluation Surplus		289,002	262,593
Retained Surplus		103,692	96,334
Total Community Equity		392,694	358,927

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



Balonne Shire Council
Statement of Cash Flows
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$000	2022 \$000
Cash Flows from Operating Activities			
Receipts from Customers		22,139	20,653
Payments to Suppliers and Employees		(44,967)	(62,828)
		<u>(22,828)</u>	<u>(42,175)</u>
Interest Received		1,380	251
Rental Income		367	251
Operating Grants and Contributions		45,237	39,999
Other Receipts		402	225
Borrowing Costs		(208)	(175)
Net Cash (Outflow) Inflow from Operating Activities	18	<u>24,350</u>	<u>(1,623)</u>
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Payments for Property, Plant and Equipment		(13,888)	(14,229)
Proceeds from Sale of Property, Plant and Equipment		248	278
Capital Grants, Subsidies, Contributions and Donations		5,183	9,412
Net Cash Outflow from Investing Activities		<u>(8,458)</u>	<u>(4,539)</u>
Cash Flows from Financing Activities			
Proceeds from Borrowings		-	56
Repayment of Borrowings	12	(130)	(189)
Net Cash (Outflow) Inflow from Financing Activities		<u>(130)</u>	<u>(133)</u>
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents Held		<u>15,763</u>	<u>(6,295)</u>
Cash and Equivalents at the Beginning of the Financial Year		31,184	37,479
Cash and Equivalents at End of the Financial Year	7	<u><u>46,947</u></u>	<u><u>31,184</u></u>

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



Balonne Shire Council
Statement of Changes in Equity
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Revaluation Surplus \$000	Retained Surplus \$000	TOTAL \$000
Balance as at 1 July 2022	262,593	96,334	358,927
Opening Balance Adjustment	-	(1)	(1)
Restated Balance at 1 July 2022	262,593	96,333	358,926
Net Result	-	7,358	7,358
Increase / (Decrease) in Revaluation Surplus	26,409	-	26,409
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year	26,409	7,358	33,768
Balance as at 30 June 2023	289,002	103,692	392,694
Balance as at 1 July 2021	242,155	88,510	330,665
Opening Balance Adjustment	-	4	4
Restated Balance at 1 July 2021	242,155	88,514	330,669
Net Result	-	7,819	7,819
Increase / (Decrease) in Revaluation Surplus	20,438	-	20,438
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year	20,438	7,819	28,258
Balance as at 30 June 2022	262,593	96,334	358,927

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 2023

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 2022 to 30 June 2023. They are prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 2009 and the Local Government Regulation 2012. Council is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes and these financial statements complies with the Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations 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

Balonne Shire Council adopted all Standards which became mandatorily effective for annual reporting periods beginning on 1 July 2022. There are no new standards that had a material impact on reported position, performance and cash flows.

1.C Standards Issued by the AASB Not Yet Effective

Balonne Shire Council has considered all standards issued not yet effective and determined that none of them will have a material impact on the future reported financial position and performance.

1.D Estimates and Judgements

Council makes 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 or, where that amount is \$500 or less, to zero, unless otherwise stated. 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 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.



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, by implementing 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

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 function's 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 (Road Maintenance Performance Contracts, Department of Main Roads, etc).



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

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

Year Ended 30 June 2023	Functions	Gross Programme Income						Total Income	Gross Programme Expenses		Net Result Recurrent Operations	Net Result	Assets
		Recurrent			Capital				Recurrent	Capital			
		Grants	Other	Grants	Grants	Other	Capital						
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000		\$'000	\$'000			
	CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	775	130	359	-	1,263	(2,490)	-	(1,227)	-			
	CORPORATE SERVICES	10,056	6,495	-	-	18,553	(4,244)	-	14,308	51,929			
	PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	261	173	(106)	29	356	(844)	-	(409)	-			
	RURAL SERVICES	(447)	225	650	-	429	(1,550)	-	(1,121)	4,814			
	INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES	20,993	4,692	1,728	112	27,525	(30,556)	(7)	(4,870)	306,951			
	COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE	346	(152)	488	-	682	(4,188)	(29)	(3,994)	56,657			
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	243	60	47	-	350	(1,120)	-	(817)	20			
	COMMERCIAL SERVICES	-	11,886	-	-	11,886	(8,756)	-	3,229	-			
	TOTAL	32,230	25,610	3,163	141	61,144	(53,748)	(37)	4,091	420,371			

Year Ended 30 June 2022	Functions	Gross Programme Income						Total Income	Gross Programme Expenses		Net Result Recurrent Operations	Net Result	Assets
		Recurrent			Capital				Recurrent	Capital			
		Grants	Other	Grants	Grants	Other	Capital						
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000		\$'000	\$'000			
	CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	491	2	(132)	-	361	(1,287)	-	(795)	-			
	CORPORATE SERVICES	6,439	6,849	-	-	13,288	(4,943)	(143)	8,445	41,591			
	PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	212	140	183	-	536	(1,849)	-	(1,496)	2			
	RURAL SERVICES	945	140	-	-	1,085	(3,143)	-	(2,058)	4,763			
	INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES	39,469	4,297	12,832	-	56,697	(50,154)	(7,155)	(6,389)	277,975			
	COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE	517	(134)	5,817	-	6,200	(3,419)	(136)	(3,036)	53,023			
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	223	39	21	-	284	(908)	-	(646)	27			
	COMMERCIAL SERVICES	-	7,433	-	-	7,434	(5,028)	-	2,404	-			
	TOTAL	48,296	18,765	18,821	-	85,884	(70,631)	(7,434)	(3,568)	377,401			



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

3 Revenue

(a) Rates, Levies and Charges

Rates, levies and charges are recognised as revenue at 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.

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
General Rates	7,228	6,889
Special Rates	159	151
Water	2,078	1,966
Water Consumption, Rental and Sundries	60	69
Urban Waste Water	1,165	1,104
Waste Charges	1,308	1,150
Total Rates and Utility Charge Revenue	11,999	11,328
less: Discounts	(1,056)	(1,005)
less: Pensioner Remissions	(36)	(36)
less: Rates Write-Offs	(7)	(10)
	10,901	10,278

(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.

Building and Developmental Fees	55	31
Infringements	74	11
Cemetery Fees	63	62
Council Facilities Hire	46	46
Search and Other Council Document Fees	31	33
Other Fees and Charges	109	42
	378	225

(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	12,121	7,500
	12,121	7,500

Sale of Goods

Visitor Information Centre	61	38
	61	38
	12,181	7,537



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

4 Grants, Subsidies and Contributions

Grant Income Under AASB 15 - Revenue from Contracts with Customers

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 - Income of Not-for-Profit Entities

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.

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

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.

Donations and Contributions

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

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
(a) Operating		
General Purpose Grants	13,910	6,684
State Government Subsidies and Grants	1,272	2,796
Commonwealth Government Subsidies and Grants	617	2,994
Contributions	30	329
Flood Restoration Reimbursements *	16,401	35,493
	<u>32,230</u>	<u>48,296</u>

* Significant flood events occurred in the Shire in 2020, 2021 and 2022. The Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) has approved \$129.4 million funding in submissions for restoration works in relation to the events. This revenue will be received progressively over multiple financial years as the works are completed.

(b) Capital Revenue

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	170	1,515
Commonwealth Government Subsidies and Grants	2,993	7,107
Contributed Assets	-	10,199
	<u>3,163</u>	<u>18,821</u>
Total Operating and Capital Revenue	<u>35,393</u>	<u>67,117</u>

(c) Analysis and Timing of Recognition

	2023 Financial Year		
	AASB 15 \$'000	AASB 1058 \$'000	Total \$'000
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions - Operating (Point in Time)	-	14,844	14,844
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions - Operating (Over Time)	16,401	985	17,386
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions - Capital (Point in Time)	-	-	-
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions - Capital (Over Time)	-	3,163	3,163
	<u>16,401</u>	<u>18,992</u>	<u>35,393</u>



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

4 Grants, Subsidies and Contributions (continued)

	2022 Financial Year		
	AASB 15 \$'000	AASB 1058 \$'000	Total \$'000
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions - Operating (Point in Time)	-	12,803	12,803
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions - Operating (Over Time)	35,493	-	35,493
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions - Capital (Point in Time)	-	10,199	10,199
Grants, Subsidies, Donations and Contributions - Capital (Over Time)	-	8,622	8,622
	<u>35,493</u>	<u>31,624</u>	<u>67,117</u>
		2023	2022
	Note	\$'000	\$'000

5 Employee Benefits

Employee benefit expenses are recorded when the service has been provided by the employee.

Total Staff Wages and Salaries		6,584	5,976
Councillors' Remuneration		458	441
Annual, Sick and Long Service Leave Entitlements		1,503	1,478
Superannuation	17	892	756
Training Costs		251	194
Workers' Compensation Insurance		23	86
		<u>9,711</u>	<u>8,931</u>
Other Employee Related Expenses		622	235
		<u>10,333</u>	<u>9,166</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	53	56
Depot and Outdoors Staff	46	49
Total Full-Time Equivalent Employees	<u>106</u>	<u>112</u>
	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000

6 Materials and Services

Expenses are recorded on an accruals basis as Council receives the goods or services.

Advertising and Marketing		124	71
Administration Supplies and Consumables		380	278
Audit Fees and Services *		112	78
Cleansing Services		273	836
Communications and IT		627	1,048
Contractors / Consultants		5,064	3,842
Insurance		782	495
Land Protection Fund Precept		319	296
Power		469	471
Repairs and Maintenance		8,547	6,753
Subscriptions and Registrations		386	193
Urban Water and Waste Water Services		965	772
Flood Restoration Contractors		14,475	35,493
Other Materials and Services		2,031	2,708
		<u>34,564</u>	<u>53,334</u>

* Total audit fees exclusive of travel expenses are \$61,000 (2022: \$54,500) as quoted by the Queensland Audit Office relating to the 2022/23 general purpose financial statements.



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

7 Cash and Equivalents

Cash and equivalents in the Statement of Cash Flows include cash on hand, all cash and cheques received 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.

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Cash at Bank and On-Hand	22,152	19,278
Deposits at Call	17,830	4,624
QTC Cash Fund	6,964	7,282
	<u>46,947</u>	<u>31,184</u>

Restricted Cash and Equivalents

Council's cash and 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	12,621	2,976
Rates Paid in Advance	375	-
Total External Restrictions	<u>12,996</u>	<u>2,976</u>

Internally imposed allocations at the reporting date:

Future Capital Works	621	618
Future Asset Replacement	9,119	9,535
Future Recurrent Expenditure	18	18
Total Internal Restrictions	<u>9,758</u>	<u>10,171</u>

Cash, cash deposits and term deposits are held with the National Australia Bank (A+), Commonwealth Bank of Australia (A+), 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

Current

Rateable Revenue and Utility Charges	860	785
Trade Debtors *	3,437	1,032
less: Loss Allowance		
Rateable Revenue and Utility Charges	(5)	(5)
Trade Debtors	(3)	(1)
	<u>4,289</u>	<u>1,811</u>

Current

Receivables (WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme)	<u>97</u>	<u>-</u>
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Non-Current

Receivables (WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme)	<u>2,809</u>	<u>1,717</u>
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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 2023, 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 ranging between 1.907% and 2.564% depending on the QTC interest 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 generally impair any rate receivables.

Balonne Shire Council's impairment of receivables is considered not material.

* Balance as at 30 June 2023 includes \$2,647,011 in outstanding invoices relating to Contract Work claims (2022: \$834,142).



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

9 Property, Plant and Equipment

30 June 2023

Basis of Measurement
Asset Values
Opening Gross Value as at 1 July 2022
Work in Progress Transfers to PPE
Work in Progress Additions
Disposals
Prior Year WIP Expensed and Adjustments
Revaluation Adjustment to Revaluation Surplus
Transfers Between PPE Classes
Transfers to WDEF Contract Assets
Transfers to Assets Held for Sale
Closing Gross Value as at 30 June 2023
Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment
Opening Balance as at 1 July 2022
Depreciation Expense Provided in Period
Depreciation on Disposals
Revaluation Adjustment to Revaluation Surplus
Accumulated Depreciation as at 30 June 2023
Total Written Down Value as at 30 June 2023

Land	Buildings and Other Structures	Plant and Equipment	Water Supply Network	Transport Infrastructure	Urban Waste Water Network	Work in Progress	TOTAL
3,077	76,867	13,962	34,965	313,641	24,844	7,786	475,143
4	3,333	3,200	35	6,847	-	(13,419)	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	13,887	13,887
-	(108)	(654)	-	-	-	-	(763)
-	-	-	-	-	-	(117)	(117)
-	-	-	6,451	34,806	(1,571)	-	39,686
-	(1,547)	946	1	601	-	-	0
-	-	-	-	-	-	(3,065)	(3,065)
(86)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(86)
2,995	78,545	17,453	41,451	355,895	23,273	5,071	524,684

-	24,947	7,928	11,592	84,573	10,573	-	139,612
-	1,342	753	523	5,685	341	-	8,644
-	(79)	(540)	-	-	-	-	(619)
-	-	-	3,887	10,502	(1,112)	-	13,277
-	26,210	8,141	16,001	100,760	9,802	-	160,915
2,995	52,335	9,312	25,450	255,135	13,471	5,071	363,769

Land: Not Depreciated.	10 - 100	4 - 50	15 - 100	10 - 120	15 - 105	N / A
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Range of Estimated Useful Life in Years	10 - 100	4 - 50	15 - 100	10 - 120	15 - 105	N / A
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Range of Estimated Useful Life in Years

Additions Comprise:
Renewals
Other Additions
Total Additions

\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
-	1,590	3,054	477	3,755	57	8,933
-	887	290	32	3,718	27	4,954
-	2,478	3,343	510	7,472	84	13,887



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

30 June 2022

Basis of Measurement

Asset Values

Opening Gross Value as at 1 July 2021	3,016
Work in Progress Transfers to PPE	232
Work in Progress Transfers to WDEF Receivables	-
Work in Progress Additions	-
Contributed Asset Additions	-
Disposals	(555)
Revaluation Adjustment to Revaluation Surplus	2,941
Transfers Between Classes	(312)
Transfers from Intangibles	-
Closing Gross Value as at 30 June 2022	3,077

Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment

Opening Balance as at 1 July 2021	26,525
Depreciation Expense Provided in Period	1,231
Contributed Assets Accumulated Depreciation	-
Depreciation on Disposals	(276)
Revaluation Adjustment to Revaluation Surplus	(2,507)
Transfers Between PPE Classes	(26)
Transfers from Intangibles	-
Accumulated Depreciation as at 30 June 2022	24,947

Total Written Down Value as at 30 June 2022

	3,077
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Range of Estimated Useful Life in Years

	15 - 120	2 - 72	15 - 100	10 - 120	15 - 105	N / A
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Additions Comprise:

Renewals	331
Other Additions	8,383
Total Additions	8,714

Land	Buildings and Other Structures	Plant and Equipment	Water Supply Network	Transport Infrastructure	Urban Waste Water Network	Work in Progress	TOTAL
\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
3,016	67,392	13,553	31,201	282,643	22,266	11,427	431,488
232	7,401	1,218	899	6,503	541	(16,794)	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,076)	(1,076)
-	-	-	-	-	-	14,229	14,229
-	-	-	-	13,576	-	-	13,576
-	(555)	(1,032)	(393)	(5,202)	(278)	-	(7,460)
(171)	2,941	-	3,258	15,956	2,315	-	24,289
-	(312)	147	-	165	-	-	-
-	-	76	-	-	-	-	76
3,077	75,867	13,962	34,965	313,641	24,844	7,786	475,143

-	26,525	7,748	10,303	72,854	9,312	-	126,742
-	1,231	675	477	5,266	307	-	7,966
-	-	-	-	3,377	-	-	3,377
-	(276)	(576)	(268)	(1,231)	(31)	-	(2,382)
-	(2,507)	-	1,080	4,303	985	-	3,861
-	(26)	22	-	4	-	-	-
-	-	59	-	-	-	-	59
-	24,947	7,928	11,592	84,573	10,573	-	139,613
3,077	61,920	6,033	23,373	229,068	14,272	7,786	335,530
Land: Not Depreciated.	15 - 120	2 - 72	15 - 100	10 - 120	15 - 105	N / A	-

\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
-	331	359	(8)	3,016	581	4,279
236	8,383	180	-	792	-	9,660
236	8,714	539	(8)	3,808	581	14,229



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

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 or physical obsolescence that may change the utility of infrastructure assets.

(d) Impairment

Property, plant and equipment is assessed for indicators of impairment annually. If an indicator of possible impairment exists, 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.

(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.

(f) 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. Water Supply and Urban Waste Water Networks were subject to a full comprehensive revaluation in 2022/23.



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

9 Property, Plant and Equipment (continued)

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.

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

(ii) Valuation techniques used to derive fair values

The fair valuation techniques adopted by Council are as follows:

Asset Class and Fair Value Hierarchy	Valuation Approach	Last Valuation Date	Valuer Engaged	Key Assumptions and Estimates (related data sources)	Interim Index Applied	Other Interim Revaluation Adjustment
Land (Levels 2 and 3)	Market Value	30-Jun-22	JLL	The current Balonne Shire Council's Planning Scheme (adopted 19 December 2018) was considered in determining the highest and best use of the land. The valuations were undertaken having regard to available sales evidence in the locality in which the land assets were located. Where local sales were not available evidence was sourced from other localities considered to be of relevance. The type of sales found was determined in consideration with a number of factors such as the zoning of the subject land, neighbouring land uses and physical characteristics.	Below materiality threshold	Nil
Buildings and Other Structures (Level 2)	Market Value	30-Jun-22	JLL	Where there is a market for Council building assets, fair value has been derived from sales evidence across the relevant local market of comparable properties after adjusting for considerations such as location, development potential, aspect, size, physical characteristics and date of sale.	Below materiality threshold	Nil



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Asset Class and Fair Value Hierarchy	Valuation Approach	Last Valuation Date	Valuer Engaged	Key Assumptions and Estimates (related data sources)	Interim Index Applied	Other Interim Revaluation Adjustment
Buildings and Other Structures (Level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30-Jun-22	JLL	Where Council buildings are of a specialised 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 Council projects and costing guides such as Rawlinsons and Cordells which provide indicative unit rates for a variety of building and infrastructure assets as well as material, plant and labour. Allowances for physical depreciation and obsolescence were made based on on-site condition assessments in discussion with appropriate Council's Asset Management and Property Services staff.	Below materiality threshold	Nil
Transport Infrastructure (Level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30-Jun-19	AssetVal	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. Road infrastructure is categorised into urban and rural roads and then further sub categorised into sealed and unsealed roads. All road segments are componentised into formation, pavement and seal (where applicable). Valuation was calculated by reference to asset linear and other specifications, estimated labour and material inputs, service costs, and overhead allocations. 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.	10.84%	Nil
Water Supply Network (Level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30-Jun-23	JLL	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.	N/A	Nil
Urban Waste Water Network (Level 3)	Current Replacement Cost	30-Jun-23	JLL	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. For wastewater gravity mains the assumption that the pipes will be relined was adopted.	N/A	Nil



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

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.

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
(a) Contract Assets		
Contract Assets	1,984	6,648
	<u>1,984</u>	<u>6,648</u>
Contracts with customers	1,942	6,415
Contracts to construct Council's own assets	41	233
	<u>1,984</u>	<u>6,648</u>
(b) Contract Liabilities		
Funds Received Upfront to Construct Council Controlled Assets.	1,909	1,668
Deposits Received in Advance of Services Provided	10,712	1,308
	<u>12,621</u>	<u>2,976</u>
Revenue recognised that was included in the contract liability balance at the beginning of the year.		
Funds to construct Council controlled assets	809	891
Deposits received in advance of services provided	847	4,768
Total revenue included in the contract liability	<u>1,656</u>	<u>5,659</u>

Satisfaction of contract liabilities

The contract liabilities in relation to capital grants relate to funding received prior to the work being performed since revenue is recognised as Council constructs the assets. Council expects to recognise the contract liability as income in the next 2 years.

(c) Significant changes in contract balances

During 2022/23 Council completed 13 funded projects. In addition Council's flood damage changed from an a contract asset of \$4.244m to a contract liability of \$8.776m through out the year work being undertaken on various QRA approved submissions that will be completed over a number of financial years.

11 Trade and Other Payables

Current

Creditors and Accruals *	3,108	3,740
Security Bonds and Deposits	13	7
	<u>3,121</u>	<u>3,747</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 2023 includes unpaid invoices for flood damage works relating to grant funding of \$28,892 (2022: \$1,112m)

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 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 period. Expected final repayment dates vary from 15 June 2032 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 ten 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 Queensland Treasury Corporation's borrowing guidelines and ensure that sustainability indicators remain within acceptable levels at all times.

Current

Loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation	161	154
	<u>161</u>	<u>154</u>

Non-Current

Loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation	6,427	6,564
	<u>6,427</u>	<u>6,564</u>



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
12 Borrowings (continued)		
Loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation		
Opening Balance at Beginning of Financial Year	6,718	6,850
Loans Raised	-	56
Principal Repayments	(130)	(185)
Book Value at End of Financial Year	<u>6,588</u>	<u>6,718</u>

The QTC loan market value at the reporting date was \$5,547,647 of which \$3,800,968 relates to the WDEF Special Rates Loan Scheme. 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 2022 and 2023 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
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2023					
Loans - QTC	335	2,237	5,387	7,959	6,588
2022					
Loans - QTC	317	1,958	6,001	8,276	6,718

Balonne Shire Council is exposed to interest rate risk through its borrowings from the 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.

Refuse Dump Restoration and Quarry Rehabilitation

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 St George, as the longest lasting of the current landfills, will close in 2086 and that the restoration will occur progressively over the subsequent four years.

As refuse dumps are on State reserves which 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.



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
13 Provisions (continued)		
Current		
Long Service Leave	760	758
Annual Leave	748	817
Other Employee Entitlements	48	62
	<u>1,556</u>	<u>1,648</u>
Non-Current		
Long Service Leave	211	190
Refuse Restoration	2,869	3,165
	<u>3,080</u>	<u>3,355</u>
Details of movements in provisions:		
Refuse Restoration		
Balance at Beginning of Financial Year	3,165	531
Increase / (Decrease) in Provision due to Unwinding of Discount	119	23
Increase / (Decrease) in Provision due to Change in the Discount Rate	(162)	(3,421)
Increase / (Decrease) in Provision due to Change in Inflation	(442)	3,504
Increase / (Decrease) in Provision due to Change in Timing of Cost	-	201
Increase / (Decrease) in Provision due to Change in the Projected Cost	189	2,327
Balance at End of Financial Year	<u>2,869</u>	<u>3,165</u>

Refuse Restoration

Balonne Shire Council currently operates five (5) active landfill sites.

This represents 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 \$2,869,222 and this cost is expected to be incurred between 2026 and 2087 after closing the sites between 2026 and 2086 and allowing a period for settlement. The judgement made to the rehabilitation provision is currently at 2.5% , aligned with the long term RBA target inflation rate. If this rate were adjusted to 3%, the impact would be \$965,955

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	1,263	394
Landfill Maintenance Contract - Expires 01/06/2024	303	123
Swimming Pool Contract - Expires 30/06/2026	400	311
Plant and Equipment Purchases	2,143	1,627
Other Capital Projects	227	-
	<u>4,336</u>	<u>2,455</u>

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 2022 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. Council's maximum exposure to the bank guarantee is \$192,542.



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

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 managed by the LGIAsuper trustee for LGIAsuper trading as Brighter Super.

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 2021. The actuary indicated that "At the valuation date of 1 July 2021, 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 voluntarily 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 remuneration and there are no known requirements to change the rate of contributions.

The next triennial actuarial review is not due until 1 July 2024.

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	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Superannuation contributions made to the Regional Defined Benefits Fund		41	37
Other superannuation contributions for employees		851	719
Total superannuation contributions paid by Council	5	892	756
18 Reconciliation of Net Result from Comprehensive Income for the Year to Net Cash Inflow (Outflow) from Operating Activities			
Net Result		7,358	7,819
Non-Cash Items:			
Depreciation		8,644	7,956
Investing and Development Activities:			
(Profit) / Loss on Disposal of Assets		(104)	4,800
Adjustments for Intangibles due to new Accounting Standards		-	281
Work in Progress Transfers to Held for Sale & Expenses		202	-
Work in Progress Transfers to WDEF Receivables		-	1,076
Capital Grants and Contributions		(3,163)	(18,821)
		(3,065)	(12,665)
Changes in Operating Assets and Liabilities:			
(Increase) / Decrease in Receivables		(3,656)	1,715
(Increase) / Decrease in Inventory		(131)	(24)
(Increase) / Decrease in Contract Assets		5,951	(4,836)
(Increase) / Decrease in Other Assets		166	(155)
Increase / (Decrease) in Payables		(626)	(697)
Increase / (Decrease) in Contract Liabilities		9,405	(3,460)
Increase / (Decrease) in Employee Leave Entitlements		(71)	200
Increase / (Decrease) in Other Provisions		(296)	2,634
Increase / (Decrease) in Other Liabilities		670	(117)
		11,413	(4,740)
Net Cash Inflow / (Outflow) from Operating Activities		24,350	(1,623)



Balonne Shire Council

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

19 Reconciliation of Liabilities Arising from Finance Activities

	Note	As at 30 June 2022	Cash Flows	As at 30 June 2023
Loans	12	6,718	(130)	6,588
		As at 30 June 2021	Cash Flows	As at 30 June 2022
Loans	12	6,850	(133)	6,718

20 Events After the Reporting Period

There are no material adjusting events after the balance date.

21 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 2022/23 comprises:

Details of Transaction	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Short-Term Employee Benefits	1,391	1,295
Post-Employment Benefits	80	87
Total	1,471	1,382

* 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.



Balonne Shire Council
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

22 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.

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. 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 calculated 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.

Measurement of Fair Value

The valuation technique used in measuring financial liabilities is discounted cash flows. This valuation model considers the present value of expected payments, discounted using a risk-adjusted discount rate (where appropriate).



Balonne Shire Council
Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Management Certificate
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

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 2 to 24, present a true and fair view, in accordance with all relevant 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: 25/10/2023



Chief Executive Officer
Mr J M Magin
Date: 25/10/2023



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 2023, 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 2023, 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 material accounting policy 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 2023 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 formed 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 material accounting policy information 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 2023:

- 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*, 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.

Jacques Coetzee

26 October 2023

Jacques Coetzee
as delegate of the Auditor-General

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane



**Balonne Shire Council
Current-Year Financial Sustainability Statement
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023**

Measures of Financial Sustainability

Council's performance at 30 June 2023 against key financial ratios and targets:

	How the measure is calculated	Actual	Target
Operating Surplus Ratio	Net result (excluding capital items) divided by total operating revenue (excluding capital items)	7.1%	Between 0% and 10%
Asset Sustainability Ratio	Capital expenditure on replacement of assets (renewals) divided by depreciation expense.	74.5%	greater than 50%
Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	Total liabilities less current assets divided by total operating revenue (excluding capital items)	-45.2%	not greater than 50%

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 Council's audited general purpose financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2023.



**Balonne Shire Council
Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023**

**Certificate of Accuracy
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023**

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: 25, 10, 2023



Chief Executive Officer
Mr J M Magin
Date: 25, 10, 2023



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 2023, 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 2023 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 2023 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 formed 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 councillor's 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 material accounting policy information 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.

Jacques Coetzee

26 October 2023

Jacques Coetzee
as delegate of the Auditor-General

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane



Balonne Shire Council
 Unaudited Long-Term Financial Sustainability Statement
 Prepared as at 30 June 2023

Measures of Financial Sustainability	Measure	Target	Projected for the years ended									
			Actuals at 30 June 2023	30 June 24	30 June 25	30 June 26	30 June 27	30 June 28	30 June 29	30 June 30	30 June 31	30 June 32
Operating Surplus Ratio	Net result divided by total operating revenue	Between 0% and 10%	7.1%	1.50%	0.56%	1.26%	0.76%	1.33%	2.00%	1.49%	2.20%	2.80%
Asset Sustainability Ratio	Capital expenditure on the replacement of assets (renewals) divided by depreciation expense.	greater than 90%	74.5%	101.47%	99.28%	97.37%	99.14%	101.64%	98.44%	97.50%	100.16%	97.65%
Net Financial Liabilities Ratio	Total liabilities less current assets divided by total operating revenue	not greater than 60%	-45.2%	-11.72%	-25.21%	-33.63%	-38.99%	-43.94%	-49.07%	-54.02%	-59.66%	-65.22%

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 2023

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: 25 / 10 / 23



Chief Executive Officer
Mr J M Magin
Date: 25 / 10 / 23



GLOSSARY

TERM	DEFINITION
BAC	Biosecurity Advisory Committee
BROC	Border Region of Councils
BSC	Balonne Shire Council
CDO	Counter Disaster Operation
CUC Balonne	Country Universities Centre Balonne
DRFA	Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements
FSG	Field Solutions Group
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreements
IMS	Integrated Management System
LDMG	Local Disaster Management Group
LGAQ	Local Government Association of Queensland
LHAP	Local Housing Action Plan
LMS	Learning Management System
LRCIP	Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program
LRRS	Local Road of Regional Significance
MDA	Murray Darling Association
MDBEDP	Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program
MERI Reporting	Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Reporting
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPSC	Moree Plains Shire Council
NAT	National Audit Tool
QFIP	Queensland Fishing Infrastructure Program
QMDCL	Queensland Murray-Darling Catchments Ltd.
QRA	Queensland Reconstruction Authority
R2R	Roads 2 Recovery
RADF	Regional Arts Development Fund
RCP	Regional Connectivity Program
REPA	Restoration of Essential Public Assets
RMPC	Road Maintenance Performance Contract
SWQROC	South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
TEQ	Tourism & Events Queensland
TIDS	Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme
TMR	Department of Transport and Main Roads
USQ	University of Southern Queensland
VIC	Visitor Information Centre
WDAC	Wild Dog Advisory Committee
WQAC	Western Queensland Alliance of Councils





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