many voices, one dream, building a quality desert lifestyle

SHIRE PLAN

2010 - 2014

MacDonnell Shire

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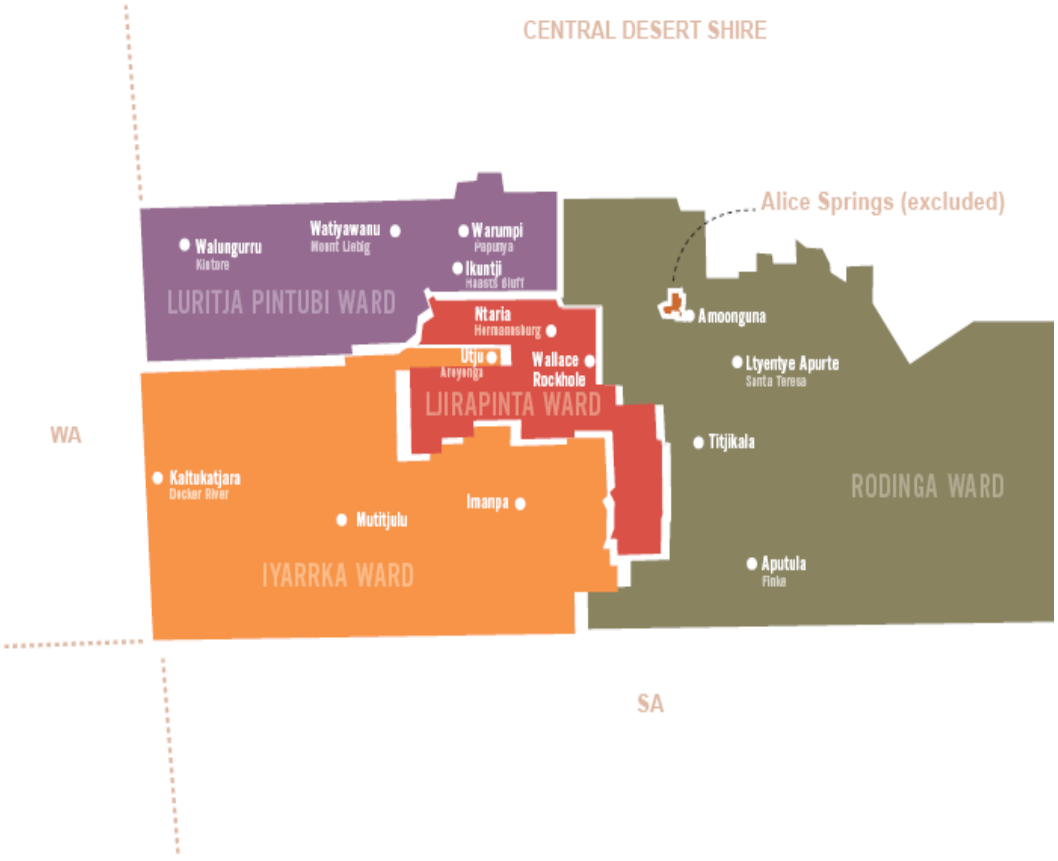
OUR SHIRE

Situated in an arid desert environment at the centre of the Australian continent, MacDonnell Shire features many iconic, panoramic landscapes which are easily accessed from Alice Springs. The picturesque swimming holes, magnificent flora and fauna, captivating mountain ranges with changing hues and red desert sands are reasons why the MacDonnell Shire is uniquely beautiful and has a deep and powerful strength that can only be felt when travelling across the land.



MacDonnell Shire Council officially commenced operations on 1st July 2008. Formed as a result of the Northern Territory Government's Local Government Reforms, MacDonnell Shire covers the southern portion of the Northern Territory and has a land mass of 268,887km^2.

Located within the Shire are 13 major remote communities, many outstations as well as numerous established and emerging enterprises in the pastoral, tourism and mining industries.

The towns of Alice Springs and Yulara are excluded from the Shire. The total estimated population of MacDonnell Shire is 6,600 (based on the 2006 Census Data and Northern Territory Government formula to calculate population figures).

As part of the reform process the residents of 13 major remote communities located within the MacDonnell Shire are provided with a range of local government and other services by the Council. These communities include:

- Amoonguna
- Utju / Areyonga
- Kaltukatjara / Docker River
- Aputula / Finke
- Ikuntji / Haasts Bluff
- Ntaria / Hermannsburg
- Walungurru / Kintore
- Imanpa
- Warumpi / Papunya
- Titjikala
- Wallace Rockhole
- Watiyawanu / Mt Liebig
- Santa Teresa / Ltyentye Apurte

OUR HISTORY

Prior to the Northern Territory Government's Local Government Reform process, there were some 63 community government councils and associations dispersed throughout the Northern Territory delivering core local government services. These incorporated local government bodies were dissolved on June 30, 2008 under the Local Government Act 2008. Despite best efforts and commitment by many, the local government bodies were small, dispersed and often struggled to deliver adequate services to a standard that major cities, towns and regional centres received elsewhere in Australia, resulting in the 'bush' being left behind.

Competing for funding to deliver basic core and agency services in remote communities, with dispersed and often fluctuating populations in discrete communities, was difficult for smaller local government councils. The Northern Territory Government recognised this and passed new legislation (Local Government Act 2008) to set up the new Shires resulting in eight new Shire Councils established by the Minister for Local Government.

In October 2008, the first elections of the new Shires were held throughout the Northern Territory under the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations. Each Shire had to elect 12 Councillors for their respective Shire Councils and in the MacDonnell Shire the 12 elected Councillors are all Indigenous.

Through the reform process MacDonnell Shire Council is committed to creating a strong future for all of its residents. The administration of governance, finance, funding arrangements, program management and human resources is undertaken centrally at Council Headquarters. The Northern Territory Government has provided the Shire Councils with sophisticated business systems and communications technology which, over time, will significantly improve

operating efficiency. Consultation and negotiation with Federal and Territory Government funding bodies has enabled the Shire to negotiate funding arrangements to align with the new Shire model. The Shire Headquarters has a highly skilled workforce and the experienced Executive Team, Coordinators, Managers and Officers work effectively to ensure that communities receive efficient local government services. Shire employees in remote Service Delivery Centres are better supported by larger staff networks and through having access to vocational training to enhance their skills.

To date the MacDonnell Shire Council has successfully attracted funding from the Australian and Territory Governments, and is a stronger political voice to advocate on behalf of its residents. As a third tier of Government, MacDonnell Shire Council will continue to talk directly to all levels of Government on a range of policies and funding issues relative to local government core and non core services bringing the Northern Territory in line with other States and Territories.

OUR CULTURE

MacDonnell Shire area is unique, expansive, multilingual and culturally diverse. MacDonnell Shire Council places respect for cultural diversity at the heart of its operations, and Council is committed to bringing Indigenous governance and Western governance systems together in a meaningful and respectful way.

The 13 major communities in MacDonnell Shire have populations made up primarily of Indigenous Australians. Outside of these communities there are numerous pastoral, mining and tourism businesses that are owned and operated primarily by non-Indigenous Australians.

There are four main Indigenous language groups spoken in the MacDonnell Shire which include Luritja, Pintubi, Pitjantjatjarra and Arrente. For some residents, Warlpiri is also spoken, and English is almost always a second or third language.

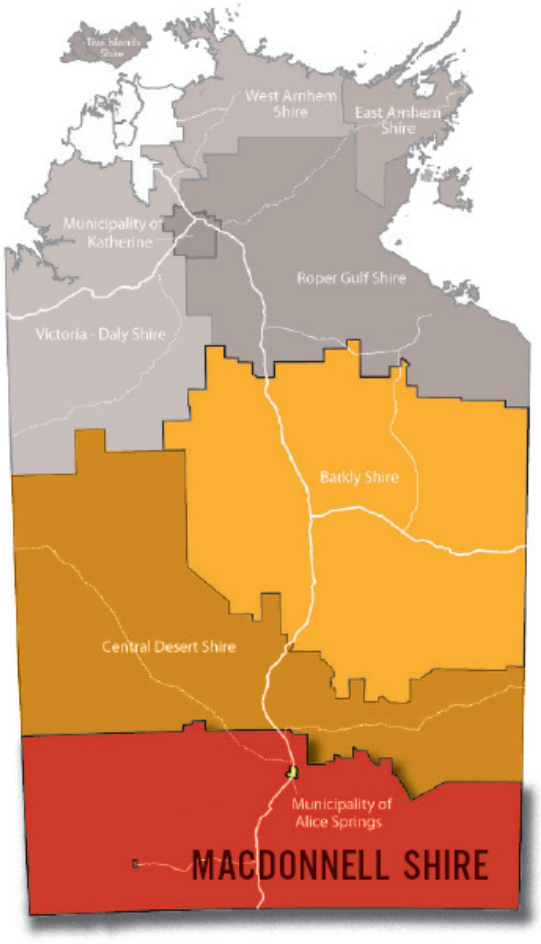
Indigenous people have had their own culturally based governance systems for tens of thousands of years – with their own leaders, laws, traditions, rules, structures and traditional land ownership (Di Smith 2008, CDO Workshop).

The western governance system is a relatively new form of governance for Indigenous people in Central Australia. After the granting of Northern Territory self-government in 1978, remote Aboriginal communities in Central Australia underwent major changes to begin governing their communities in a traditional Australian Local Government context. There were major issues related to governance and service delivery as a result of these changes, and the key principles of western governance often competed with the key principles of Indigenous governance.

Having a Shire Council that currently (July 2010) has full Indigenous representation, elected by residents of the Shire, provides an opportunity for the MacDonnell Shire Council to bring Indigenous and non Indigenous cultures together by building social relationships and cohesion in a way that has never been achieved before. Through effective two-way communication and good governance principles and practices, MacDonnell Shire Council aims to achieve a respectful Shire that celebrates its unique cross-cultural diversity.

OUR REGION

MacDonnell Shire forms part of the Central Australian region, and is part of the Local Government Regional Management Plan for central Australia released in August 2008.



The Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services developed the first Regional Management Plan for Central Australia, and works with Shires, Municipal Councils and government and non-government agencies to improve the plan so that it might lead to better responses to regional opportunities and challenges.

MacDonnell Shire Council joins Alice Springs Town Council, Central Desert Shire Council and Barkly Shire Council as the four Local Government bodies incorporated into this plan.

The formation of the Shires now offers a potential opportunity for improved regional planning, and for the three Central Australian Shires to partner with Alice Springs Town Council wherever there is opportunity for them to cooperate to gain mutual benefits.

Cooperation will also enable the Councils to have a stronger regional political voice in lobbying both Australian and Territory Governments to represent the needs of the Central Australian region.

Through improved regional management and joint approaches the four Central Australian Councils will be able to move towards improved services and long term opportunities for all Central Australians.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

SID ANDERSON

To be part of the first MacDonnell Shire Council means that all people in the Shire have been part of an historical change for Local Government in the Northern Territory – Shire residents, Shire Councillors and Shire staff.

This change has been a time of confusion for a lot of Shire residents, but for all Councillors it has also been a time of rapid learning from the day we were announced as the first elected members of the MacDonnell Shire.

Remote indigenous towns in Central Australia are no strangers to change, but these changes have often not brought positive long term benefits for our people.

As Councillors we have a lot of combined governance experience through being members of former Community Government Councils, Central Land Council or other similar boards and bodies, but the Shire system of governance was something new for us all to understand.

As a Council we are slowly beginning to see the opportunities the Shire system brings for positive long term change and development for all people.

We are able to see this because we are now learning how to work together to make decisions in the best interests of all Shire residents – not just people in our own communities or people in our families.

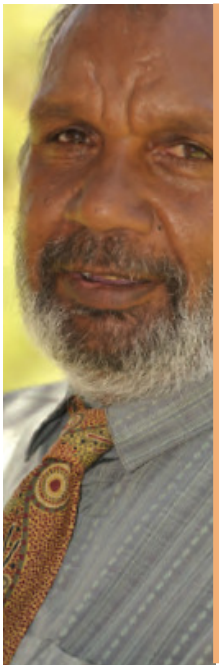
Through making strong decisions we will ensure that no town or resident is left behind – that we have a strong united voice so that everyone has access to improved service delivery, long term developments and opportunities.

The 13 Local Boards in the Shire give Council access to a local voice when making our decisions. Our Local Boards also give local people an opportunity to communicate their problems and feedback to Council, and to be part of the long term planning process for their towns. The MacDonnell Shire Council's Local Boards will form a key part of the success of our Shire in the years to come.

So as we move together into the future, we as Councillors are committed to meeting challenges and continuing to work together to shape a sustainable future for all residents in our Shire.

SID ANDERSON
MacDonnell Shire President

INTRODUCING YOUR COUNCILLORS



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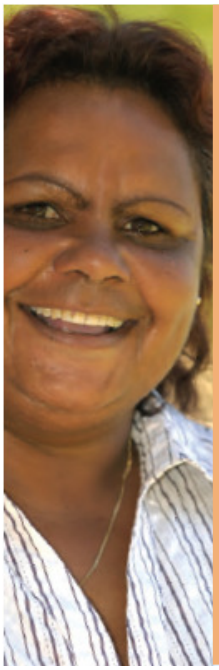

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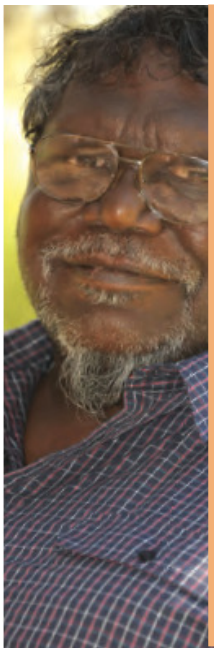

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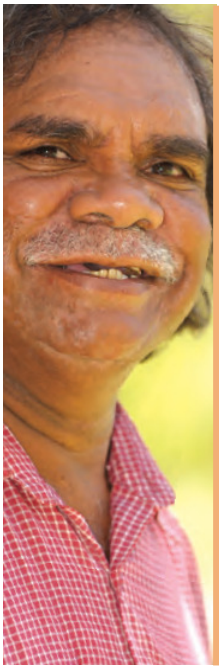

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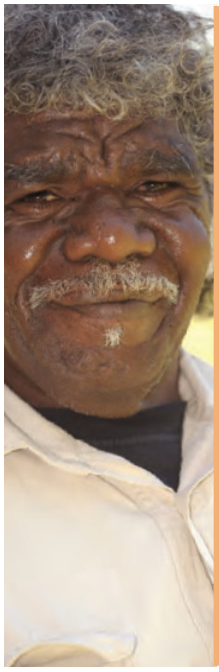

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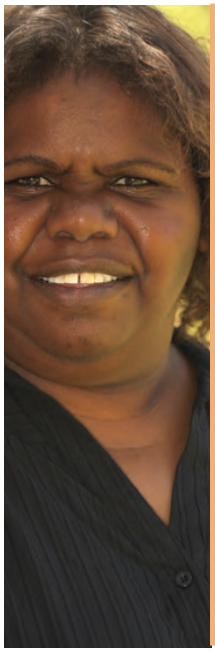

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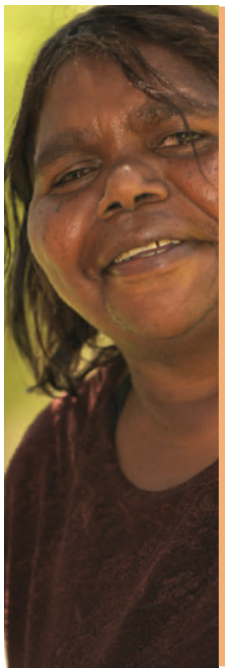

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FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

GRAHAM TAYLOR

Our Shire Council is a progressive organisation, focussed on a shared vision of lifestyle improvement and supported by a set of broad objectives and specific strategies.

We are here to add value to our Shire community, improve the outcomes of a diverse range of programs and services and operate in a sustainable and caring manner.

Our success in achieving our vision requires a clear statement of direction and alignment between objectives and available resources. This Shire Plan provides a framework to inform our decision-making in relation to setting priorities and making the best allocation of finite resources.

The Shire Plan therefore sets our direction for the future. This Plan is a refinement of the past two plans and seeks to ensure regulatory compliance and establish a clear set of benchmarks by which to measure achievements.

We operate in a highly dynamic environment and, although just two years old, the Shire Council is embracing its broad obligations and developing a culture of strong commitment to the Shire community.

We are progressively growing while we respectfully provide services for those that once lived here, those currently living here and those yet to be born.

Graham Taylor
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

INTRODUCING THE EXECUTIVE TEAM

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vacant

Director Service Delivery

OUR PLANNING PROCESS

Our planning process is designed to meet the following key objectives:

1. Reflect the wishes and aspirations of Shire residents for local government service delivery.
2. Fulfil our obligations under relevant legislation, policies, directives, contracts and funding arrangements.
3. Practicality within available resources.

The planning process is initiated by discussion and consultation and is not confined to an annual process but is embedded within our organisational culture.

The Shire receives community input to the planning process in a number of ways including, but not limited to:

1. Resolutions of the Council
2. Local Board meetings and the resulting action lists
3. Individual and group representations to individual councillors and to the Council as a whole.
4. Representations from other stakeholders and interested parties.

The Shire Receives government input to the planning process through:

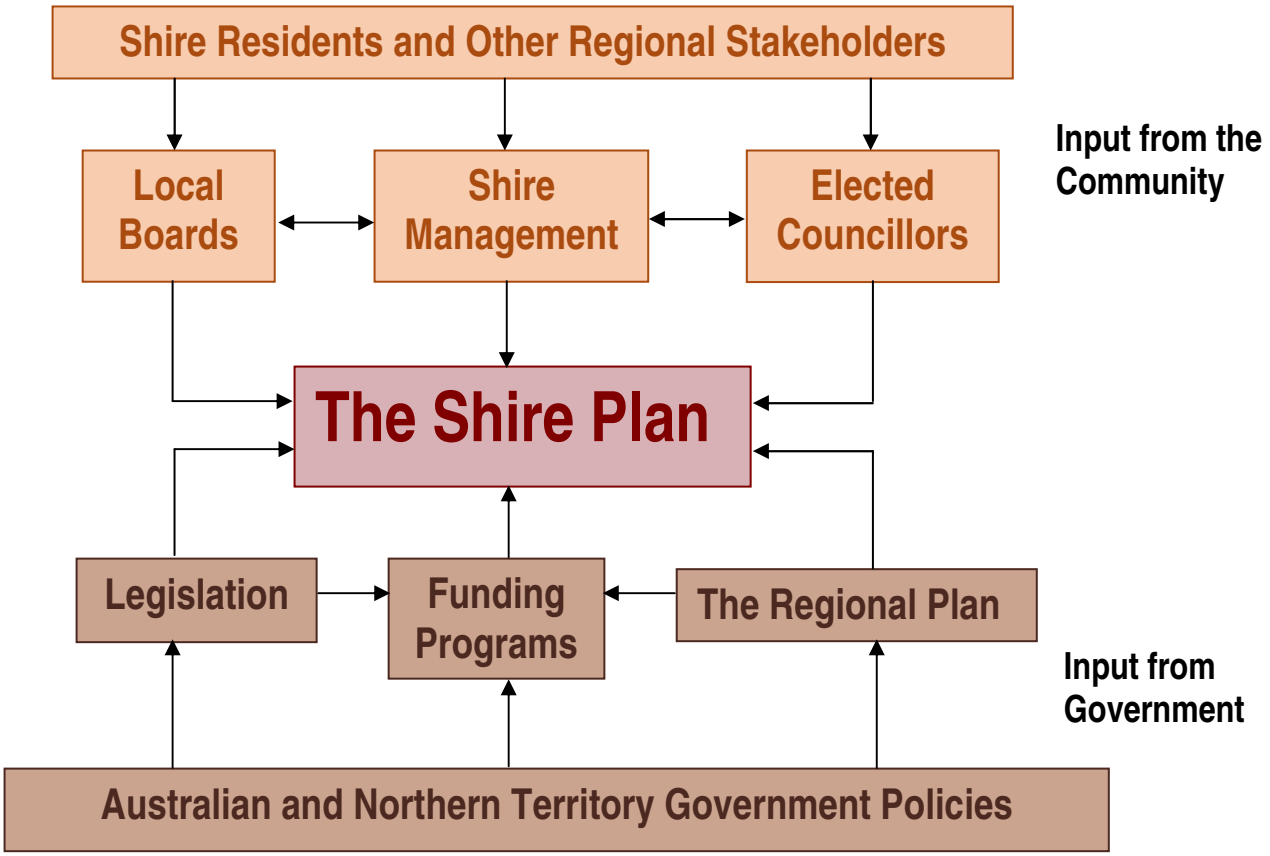
1. Regulation
2. Dialogue concerning programs and funding needs
3. Interaction with government officials in Canberra, Darwin, Alice Springs and within the communities in the Shire.
4. Participation in local government organisations, forums and technical work groups.

Starting in the 2010/11 financial year, the Shire will work with Councillors, Local Boards and other stakeholders to generate Place Plans for each serviced community. These Place Plans, which will inform the next review of our Shire Plan, will define local actions, projects and priorities to reflect the unique circumstances of each community within a broader Shire-wide planning framework.

Through planning that begins at community level, the Shire is able to make a meaningful contribution to other plans including:

- Local Government Regional Management Plan – Central Australian Region
- Specialist Plans dealing with individual areas
- Northern Territory 2030

Our planning process can be represented by the following diagram:



Our **Shire Plan,** which is set out in the following pages**,** comprises the following elements which are linked as follows:

- **Our Vision** – this defines our mission and core values
- Assessment of Significant **Opportunities & Challenges** – This is a review of context within which we carry out our mission and includes the social, economic, geographic, financial and political environments in which the Shire operates.
- **Strategic Goals** of our Vision – these are the things that we aspire to achieve within our operating environment.
- **Objectives** of Each Strategic Goal
- **Strategies and Actions for Service Delivery** to meet out Objectives

OUR VISION

Ngkitja Ntjarra, Tnangkarra Nyinta;
Wangka Tjuta, Tjukurpa Kutju

"***Many voices, one dream, building a quality desert lifestyle***"

OUR MISSION

To improve the lives of Shire residents by delivering excellent local government services in remote communities.

OUR VALUES

Our values define the manner in which we will work to carry out our mission. We will be:

Open • We will listen to one another, share ideas and welcome input from all stakeholders.

Respectful • We will respect and support our diverse cultures and heritage.

Accountable • Our governance and management processes must be transparent and accountable to the residents in whose interests we will work.

Inclusive • We will value and incorporate local knowledge, experience and perspectives into the work that we do.

Innovative • We will constantly strive to improve the services we deliver and the outcomes we achieve.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES FOR SERVICE DELIVERY

While the creation of the Shires by the Northern Territory Government has given rise to a number of opportunities for improved local government service delivery, this is not without significant threats and uncertainties for the longer term future and sustainability of the current model.

The key opportunities and threats in relation to the Shire's capacity to deliver its mandated services during the current planning cycle are:

OPPORTUNITIES

The creation of the Shires by the Northern Territory Government and other policy changes impacting upon the residents of the Shire have created a number of opportunities for local government service delivery in the bush, including:

- A coordinated approach to funding and program management for remote communities.
- The simplification of funding arrangements for remote desert communities by means of aggregation into Shire based funding rather than fragmented community-based funding.
- The introduction of multi-year block funding as is the norm for local government in other parts of Australia.
- Greater efficiency in the use and management of capital equipment.
- Employment opportunities for community members at above-award rates of pay and conditions.
- Strategic alliances with training organisations to provide valuable vocational skills to indigenous employees.
- The professionalization of management and administration.
- An enhanced capacity to speak with a strong, united voice in the political arena.
- The introduction of sophisticated business management systems and processes to support efficiency gains and service quality.
- Improved purchasing power and other economies of scale.

THREATS

The social, economic and political environment I which the Council operates gives rise to a number of threats, including:

- The sustainability of the Shire is dependent upon stable, long term grant funding arrangements with the Australian Government and the Northern Territory Government. Changes in these arrangements and the policies which drive them have the potential to disrupt the Shire's capacity to deliver core services and agency services to the

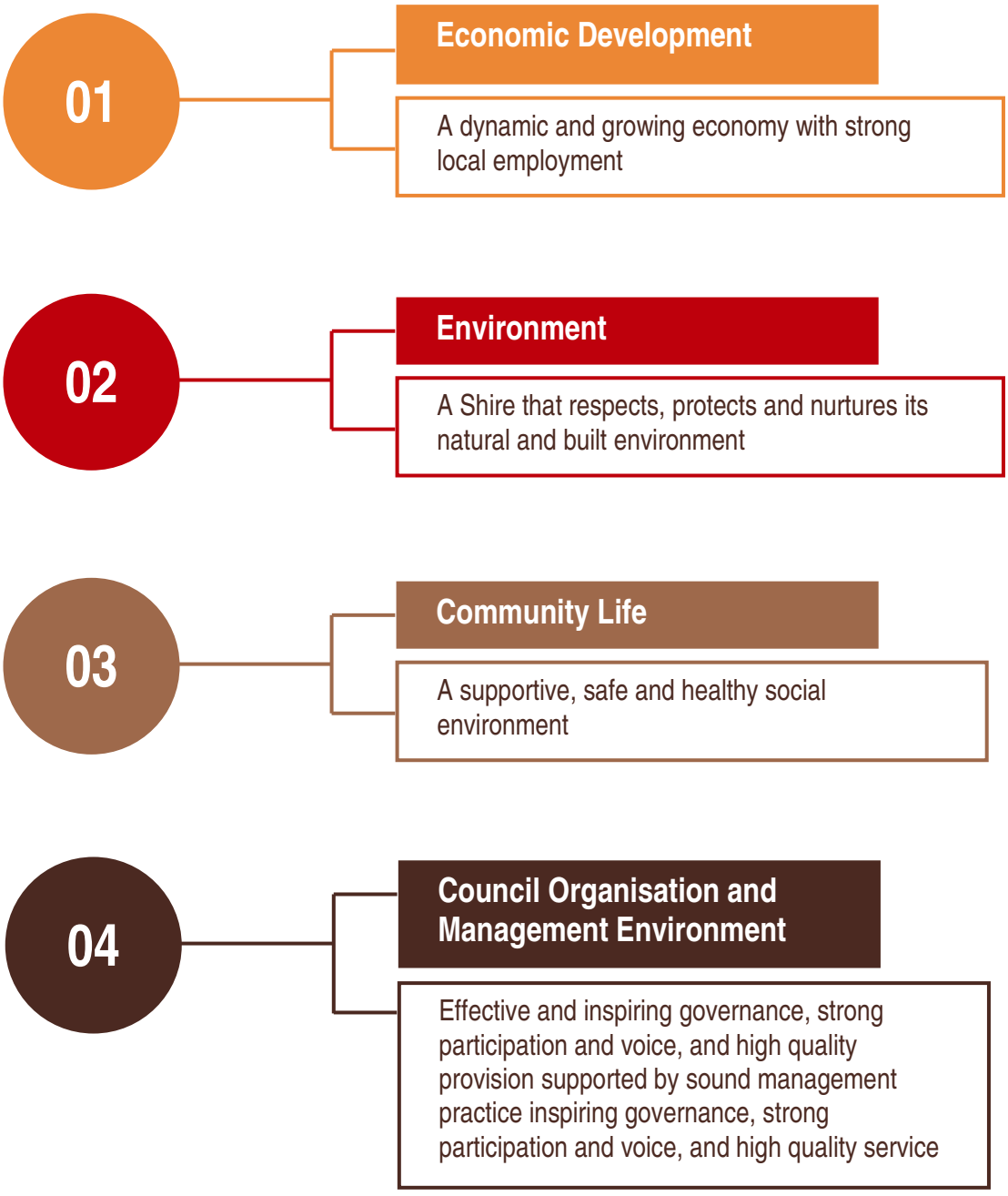
communities. It is noted that during the current planning cycle there will be at least two Federal elections and one Northern Territory election.

- The Shire Council provides services in communities situated on Aboriginal freehold land held by land trusts. In relation to the NTER the Federal Government obtained five year leases over the communities. Under the terms of an Administrative Authority granted to the Shire by FaHCSIA in 2008, the Shire Council occupies and uses a number of buildings and facilities in the communities. This gives rise to significant risks:
    - Availability risk – there is no certainty that these assets will continue to be available for occupancy and use by the Shire Council after the termination of the five year leases.
    - Economic risk - there is no certainty that funding will be available to pay for commercial rents and other outgoings that may become payable for the assets after the termination of the five year leases
- The Shire has a very low level of untied funding. This seriously constrains the ability of Elected Councillors and management to set priorities and initiate action. This limits the capacity for the Council to make a material difference to the lives of residents and places the Shire at a material disadvantage compared with local government in other parts of Australia.
- The Shire has a very low rates base. At the present time, revenues from rates, fees and charges from the Shire's 268,000 square kilometres of land cover barely 2% of the Shire's budgeted expenditure on core services and support services. Most of the land in the Shire is exempt Land Trusts or conditionally rateable pastoral leases.
- The Shire continues to experience difficulty in filling all vacant positions in the communities and at head office. The Shire's capacity to consistently deliver high quality services depends upon the recruitment and retention of capable, motivated staff at all levels. A key success factor for staff recruitment and retention is the availability and quality of staff housing.
- The size of the Shire and the distances between communities poses a significant challenge in the delivery of local government services. The unsealed roads to many of the communities are prone to damage and disruption in adverse weather conditions.

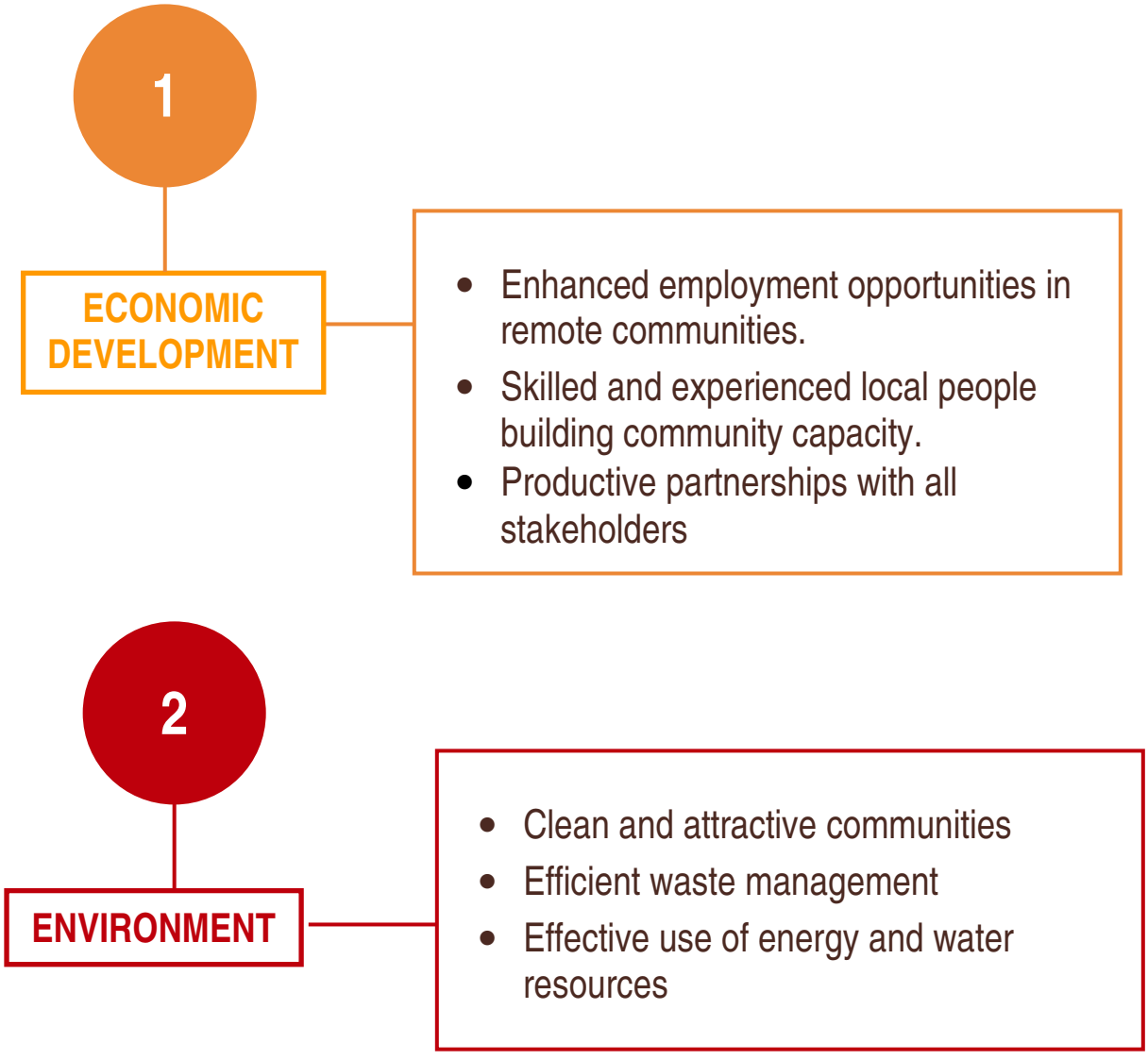
OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

Our strategic goals support our statutory obligations and the requirements of the Regional Plan. These goals will be pursued during the life of this plan and are reviewed annually to ensure continuing clarity and relevance.

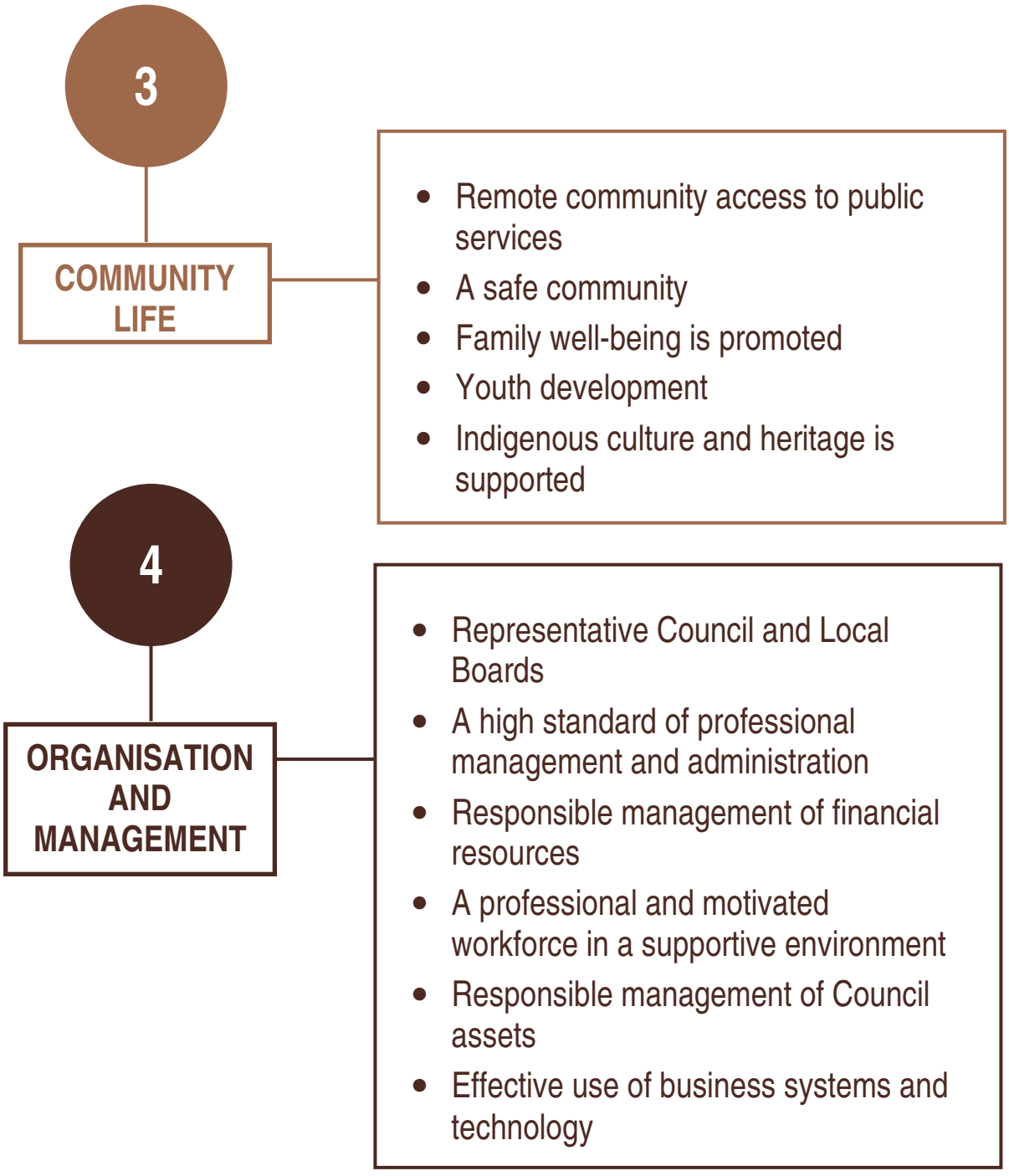
The Council's strategic goals are:



OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES (Cont.)



SHIRE SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN:

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

During the timeframe to which this Shire Plan relates and, subject to annual review, the Shire Council will undertake the following strategies and actions to deliver local government services in alignment with its stated mission, objectives, goals and statutory obligations. As stated in our assessment of significant threats, it should be noted that the Shire Council's capacity for delivering the strategies and actions set out below is dependent on funding from the Commonwealth and Territory governments. Much of what needs to be done, especially in the areas of economic development and environmental management, will require special-purpose funding over and above the base funding received by the Shire Council.

In delivering local government services under this Shire Plan, the Shire Council is organised into the following functional service groups:

- **Core Services** – functions and services mandated by the Regional Plan
- **Commercial Services** – specialist non-mandatory services delivered under the terms of a commercial arrangement with a government or non-government organisation or on behalf of the community where no commercial operator exists.
- **Agency Services** – specialist non-mandatory services delivered on behalf of agencies of the Commonwealth Government and Northern Territory Government.
- **Corporate Services** – functions necessary to fulfil the Shire Council's governance, administrative, managerial and support requirements.

Further details of the specific functions and services falling within each of these categories are set out in Appendix 3.

PART 1 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1.1 - Enhanced employment opportunities in remote communities.

Strategy 1.1.1 – Develop and implement a traineeship program for appropriate positions

Actions

1.1.1.1 – Determine the types of traineeship programs available and the funding arrangements for them

1.1.1.2 – Determine the terms and conditions applicable to employers and trainees

1.1.1.3 – Identify opportunities for traineeships across the organisation and prioritise

1.1.1.4 – Notify employees of traineeship opportunities

1.1.1.5 - Select trainees and design learning programs

1.1.1.6 - Evaluate the outcomes of traineeships and link to further skills acquisition and vocational education programs (see 1.1.2 below)

Responsibility: Manager, HR and Coordinator, Indigenous Training and Development

Strategy 1.1.2 – Lobby the Commonwealth and Territory Governments for long term funding to facilitate real skills acquisition and vocational empowerment

Actions

1.1.2.1 – Undertake a skills requirements study across all Shire Council functions

1.1.2.2. – Identify and prioritise skills shortages

1.1.2.3 – Develop strategic relationships with vocational training providers in the region

1.1.2.4 – Define available training programs for community members

1.1.2.5 – Develop a long term training plan to meet skills shortages from within our communities.

1.1.2.5 – Submit costed proposals to government agencies for consideration and funding.

Responsibility: Manager, HR and Coordinator, Indigenous Training and Development with input from all members of the management team

1.2 - Skilled and experienced local people building community capacity.

Strategy 1.2.1 – Develop a long term roadmap for transferring community-based local government management jobs to trained and experienced community members.

Actions

1.2.1.1 – Give priority to suitably qualified local people in fulfilling vacancies in the communities

1.2.1.2 – Provide job readiness development opportunities and job skill development opportunities

1.2.1.3 – Identify local people with an interest in being trained for a specific position

1.2.1.4 – Prepare an appropriate training program

1.2.1.4 – Undertake training as per 1.1.2 above

Responsibility: Manager, HR and Coordinator, Indigenous Training and Development

1.3 - Productive partnerships with all stakeholders

Strategy 1.3.1 – Actively participate in forums and networking groups to promote the economic interests of Shire residents

Actions

1.3.1.1 - Participate in LGANT working groups and support LGANT in lobbying government for resources and other forms of support.

1.3.1.2 – Participate in the Economic Development Committees within the region and advance the economic interests and aspirations of our communities

1.3.1.3. – Work closely with other Shires and municipal councils to share experiences and collaborate on economic development opportunities

Responsibility: CEO and Directors

Strategy 1.3.2 – Engage with the non-government commercial operators in the region

Actions

1.3.2.1 – Support the development of commercial activities in the Shire, especially those offering employment opportunities for community members

1.3.2.2 - Communicate with ratepayers including pastoralists and miners regarding the activities of the Shire Council and its role in the delivery of government services in the region.

1.3.2.3 – Actively seek ways in which the Shire Council can provide appropriate services to commercial operators in the Shire.

1.2.3.4 – Actively seek other ways in which the Shire Council can be supportive to commercial operators in contributing to economic development

Responsibility: CEO and Directors

PART 2 – ENVIRONMENT

2.1 - Clean and attractive communities

Strategy 2.1.1 – Increase vegetation for shade and improved visual amenity

Actions

2.1.1.1 – Plant native trees and shrubs in locations agreed with residents

2.1.1.2 – Install irrigation systems to maintain vegetation in an arid climate

2.1.1.3 – Train community-based employees to maintain vegetation

2.1.1.4 – Where possible, use recycled waste water for irrigation of grassed areas, trees and shrubs (see below at 2.2)

Responsibility: Director of Technical Services

Strategy 2.1.2 – Reduce dust pollution in the communities

Actions

2.1.2.1 – Maintain community roads, gutters and curbing in good condition

2.1.2.2 – Install traffic suppression devices to reduce speed

2.1.2.3 – Use vegetation as a wind break where practical (see 2.1.1 above)

2.1.2.4 – Resurface selected highly frequented locations with appropriate materials

Responsibility: Director of Technical Services

2.2 - Efficient waste management

Strategy 2.2.1 – Ensure that sufficient waste disposal capacity is provided to each community

Actions

2.2.1.1 – Assess the current waste disposal needs of each community

2.2.1.2. – Evaluate the current land fill capacity of each community

2.2.1.3 – Prepare a waste disposal plan which charts the growing waste disposal needs of each community

2.2.1.4 – Provide additional landfill capacity as required

2.2.1.5 – Evaluate alternative methods of waste disposal such as incineration.

Responsibility: Director of Technical Services

Strategy 2.2.2 – Seek ways to reduce waste

Actions

2.2.2.1 – Annually arrange for major items of waste, such as wrecked cars, to be removed from the communities or otherwise safely disposed of

2.2.2.2 – Embrace and support government initiatives for waste reduction such as drink container return and recycling.

2.2.2.3 – Educate young people about responsible waste disposal and the dangers of waste such as broken glass

2.2.2.4 – Provide rubbish bins in public areas and empty them regularly

2.2.2.5 - Provide wheelie bins to all residences and other occupied buildings

2.2.2.6 - Operate a scheduled wheelie bin emptying service

2.2.2.7 - Operate litter patrols as required

Responsibility: Director of Technical Services

2.3 - Effective use of energy and water resources

Strategy 2.3.1 – Work collaboratively with other organisations to reduce the Shire's consumption of fossil fuels and increase the adoption of renewable technologies

Actions

2.3.1.1 – Monitor government policy and funding initiatives for solar energy including grants, subsidies and feed-in/offset incentives

2.3.1.2 – Develop relationships with relevant organisations such as PowerWater, CSIRO, Desert Knowledge and academic institutions

2.3.1.4 – Determine the viability of a pilot project to significantly shift a community from fossil fuel dependency to renewables

2.3.1.5 – In collaboration with other interested parties, seek funding for a pilot project in a remote community

2.3.1.6 – Undertake a pilot project and evaluate results

Responsibility: Director of Technical Services and Director of Corporate Services

Strategy 2.3.2 – Work collaboratively with other organisations to exploit opportunities for waste water recycling and usage

Actions

2.3.2.1 – Monitor government policy and funding initiatives for waste water recycling including grants, subsidies and feed-in/offset incentives

2.3.2.2 – Develop relationships with relevant organisations such as PowerWater, CSIRO, Desert Knowledge and academic institutions

2.3.2.3 – Evaluate the results of the first pilot program undertaken in 2009/10 and make recommendations

2.3.2.4 - Undertake further waste water recycling projects in remote communities

Responsibility: Director of Technical Services

PART 3 – COMMUNITY LIFE

3.1 – Supporting remote community access to public services

Strategy 3.1.1 – Work collaboratively with other government agencies to deliver services in our communities

Actions

3.1.1.1 – Deliver contract Centrelink services in designated communities

3.1.1.2 – Maintain close working relationships with all other agencies at the community level

3.1.1.3 – Actively seek opportunities for service improvement in conjunction with other agencies.

3.1.1.4 – During the NTER develop a productive working relationship with the GBM in each community.

3.1.1.5 – Provide library service at Santa Teresa.

Responsibility: Executive management, Area Managers and SSM's.

3.2 – Supporting safe communities

Strategy 3.2.1 – Maintain a safe environment

Actions

3.2.1.1 - Maintain street lighting in good operating condition and in suitable locations

3.2.1.2 - Work collaboratively with other agencies in identifying and disposing of toxic and hazardous waste

3.2.1.3 - Work collaboratively with other agencies in operating emergency services

3.2.1.4 - Operate a companion animal management program including regular veterinary services

3.2.1.5 - Remove dangerous waste (e.g. broken glass) from parks and open spaces

3.2.1.6 - Maintain sewerage and septic tank systems to minimise health risks

Responsibility: Director of Technical Services

Strategy 3.2.2 – Improve Personal Security and protect property

Actions

3.2.2.1 - Operate night patrol service in designated communities

3.2.2.2 – Provide training and employment opportunities for night patrol officers

3.2.2.3 – Work closely with the police service to improve security in the communities

3.2.2.4 – Take reasonable steps to safeguard the Shire Councils property

3.2.2.5 – Take out appropriate insurance cover for all property operated and/or owned by the Shire Council

3.2.2.6 – Develop community safety plans in partnership with other stakeholders.

3.2.2.7 – Assist communities in developing and implementing strategies for the prevention of anti-social and destructive behaviours.

Responsibility: Director of Service Delivery, Manager, Agency Services and Director of Corporate Services

3.3 – Promoting Family well-being

Strategy 3.3.1 - Deliver Agency Services to children and their families

Actions

3.3.1.1 – Provide training and employment opportunities for community members in the provision of local child care services

3.3.1.2 - Deliver after school care programs for children

3.3.1.3 - Deliver long day care programs for young children

3.3.1.4 - Deliver nutritional programs for young children

3.3.1.5 - Deliver crèche programs for infants

Responsibility: Director of Service Delivery and Manager, Agency Services

Strategy 3.3.2 – Deliver Agency Services to the elderly and the disabled

Actions

3.3.2.1 - Provide training and employment opportunities for community members in the provision of local aged care services

3.3.2.2 – Deliver the community aged care packages (CACP) at designated locations

3.3.2.3 – Deliver the home and community care programs (HACC) at selected locations

3.3.2.4 – Maintain and upgrade aged care buildings and facilities

3.3.2.5 – Deliver flexible aged care programs at designated locations

Responsibility: Director of Service Delivery and Manager, Agency Services

3.4 – Developing our Young People

Strategy 3.4.1 – Deliver Agency Services for Child Safety and Substance Abuse Diversion Programs

Actions

3.4.1.1 – Provide training and employment opportunities for community members in the provision of youth development programs

3.4.1.2 – Deliver Youth in Communities programs

3.4.1.3 - Deliver Active Remote Communities programs

3.4.1.4 - Deliver After School Care programs

3.4.1.5 - Deliver Vacation Care programs

3.4.1.6 – Deliver Volatile Substance Abuse Diversion programs

3.4.1.7 – Provide consistent diversionary activities in designated communities.

3.4.1.8 – Work in partnership with other stakeholders to assist young people to access training and employment opportunities

Responsibility: Director of Service Delivery and Manager, Agency Services

Strategy 3.4.2 – Encourage active participation in sports and exercise

Actions

3.4.2.1 - Sponsor local sports teams

3.4.2.2 – Recondition, maintain and improve community sports ovals

3.4.2.3 – Construct and maintain safe playgrounds for children

3.4.2.4 – Work in partnership with other stakeholders to develop sustainable sporting programs.

Responsibility: Manager, Agency Services and Director of Technical Services

3.5 – Supporting Diverse Culture and Heritage

Strategy 3.5.1 – Operate with cultural sensitivity in the delivery of local government services

Actions

3.5.1.1 - Require all non-indigenous employees to undergo cultural awareness training during their first year of employment

3.5.1.2 - Engage in appropriate consultation with local boards and traditional owners in relation to proposed works

3.5.1.3 - Ensure full compliance with the law regarding activities undertaken on aboriginal freehold land

3.5.1.4 - Obtain necessary permission for access to land outside community boundaries

3.5.1.5 - Whenever practical, use local languages in any written public communications with communities

3.5.1.6 – Provide a flexible workplace which supports the cultural leave requirements of indigenous employees

3.5.1.7 – Support culturally appropriate broadcasting at designated communities.

Responsibility: Director of Shire Service Delivery, Director of Corporate Services, manager, Agency Services

PART 4 – COUNCIL ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 - Representative Council and Local Boards

Strategy 4.1.1 – Provide structured governance training to Councillors and Local Board members

Actions

4.1.1.1 - Define training needs

4.1.1.2 - Design culturally appropriate training programs with external training specialist

4.1.1.3 - Deliver modular, structured, progressive training to Councillors

4.1.1.4 - Deliver modular, structured, progressive training to Local Board members

4.1.1.5 - Define other valuable and relevant training needs for Councillors and Local Board Members.

Responsibility: Director of Corporate Services and Manager, HR

Strategy 4.1.2 – Work collaboratively with other stakeholders to review governance and electoral arrangements for the Shire

Actions

4.1.2.1 - During the term of each elected Council undertake a formal review of the governance and electoral arrangements for the Shire Council.

4.1.2.2 - Report findings and recommendations to the Minister and the Electoral Commission

4.1.2.3 - Implement any changes authorised by the Minister

4.1.2.4 - Communicate any changes to Shire residents in conjunction with the Electoral Commission

Responsibility: Director of Corporate Services

Strategy 4.1.3 - Produce and disseminate culturally appropriate communications media to inform and educate residents about the role and functions of the Shire and how to access representation

Actions

4.1.3.1 - Support other government agencies in the distribution of communications media to Shire residents. This includes providing access to Council notice boards and links on the web site.

4.1.3.2 - Produce an information DVD which defines the role of the Shire Council, its context with the overall delivery of government services and how residents can access elected members and have their voices heard.

4.1.3.3 - Ensure that important announcements about the Shire are published in a newspaper, posted on Council notice boards and on the web site.

4.1.3.4 – Whenever practical, ensure that communications are in the relevant languages as well as English

Responsibility: Director of Corporate Services

4.2 - A high standard of professional management and administration

Strategy 4.2.1 – Uphold operating policies and governance practices in compliance with regulations and consistent with best practice

Actions

4.2.1.1 - Document and disseminate all Council Policies and Management Operating Procedures

4.2.1.2 - Provide training to staff in the above

4.2.1.3 - Provide Code of Conduct training to staff

4.2.1.4 - Provide conflict of interest training to staff

4.2.1.5 - Provide whistleblower training to staff

4.2.1.6 - Periodically review the completeness, accuracy and clarity of all Council Policies and management Operating Procedures

4.2.1.7 - Obtain Council or Executive approval, as required, for any changes and inform all staff accordingly

Responsibility: CEO and all Directors

Strategy 4.2.2 – Provide structured training programs to all management staff

Actions

4.2.2.1 - Undertake individual training needs analyses annually

4.2.2.2 - Agree and document training priorities

4.2.2.3 - Collaborate with LGANT and other Shires on shared training to reduce costs

4.2.2.4 - Identify suitable training providers and arrange training programs

Responsibility: Manager, HR

4.3 - Responsible management of financial resources

Strategy 4.3.1 - Implement formal and inclusive financial planning processes

Actions

4.3.1.1 - Identify and document community needs and wants based on inputs from community sources, staff and the Councillors

4.3.1.2 - Determine priorities to be carried out within available funding

4.3.1.3 - Define unfunded projects and initiatives requiring lobbying for funds or deferral

4.3.1.4 - Configure and install the Technology 1 Enterprise Budgeting System

4.3.1.5 - Provide training to the management team in the use of the system.

4.3.1.6 - Commence using the system for the 2011/12 planning cycle, commencing in March 2011.

Responsibility: Director of Corporate Services

Strategy 4.3.2 – Use appropriate technology to produce regular, relevant, timely financial reports and analysis

Actions

4.3.2.1 - Operate the Technology 1 suite of business systems for all accounting, payroll and reporting requirements.

4.3.2.2 - Operate a grants database to record, track and schedule our compliance with the terms and conditions of grants. This system is to be integrated with the Technology 1 financial system

4.3.2.3 - Develop report formats to meet the diverse needs of internal and external stakeholders, including special formats for certain grants

4.3.2.4 - Implement monthly, quarterly and annual reporting schedules for all internal and external stakeholders

Responsibility: Director of Corporate Services

Strategy 4.3.3 - Enforce appropriate internal controls supported by documented delegations, procedures and user training

Actions

4.3.3.1 - Develop and document detailed accounting policies, procedures and operating instructions to supplement the technology 1 user manuals.

4.3.3.2 - Develop and document policies and procedures relating to purchasing and procurement

4.3.3.3 - Train non-accounting staff in the proper use of financial system components relevant to the conduct of their work

4.3.3.4 - Place comprehensive restrictions on access to the financial system though the use of user profiles, role definitions, passwords and system locks

4.3.3.5 - Minimise the use of cash by Council employees

4.3.3.6 - Enforce the regulatory requirements relating to procurement and tendering

4.3.3.7 - Restrict access to and use of Council assets such as plant, equipment and vehicles

4.3.3.8 - Ensure that bank accounts and other key asset and liability accounts are reconciled regularly

4.3.3.9 - Ensure that any material breaches of policies and procedures are followed up by appropriate remedial and, where appropriate, disciplinary action

Responsibility: Director of Corporate Services

4.4 - A professional and motivated workforce in a supportive environment

Strategy 4.4.1 - Develop and implement policies, practices and processes to promote a supportive workplace culture

Actions

4.4.1.1 – Develop and implement competitive recruitment and retention policies and procedures.

4.4.1.2 – Develop and implement employee performance reward and recognition policies and programs.

4.4.1.3 – Introduce a mentoring and "buddy" system for new employees.

4.4.1.4 – Develop a succession planning process

Responsibility: All Directors and Manager of HR

Strategy 4.4.2 - Using appropriate forums, media and technologies, communicate regularly with all employees

Actions

4.4.2.1 - Hold regular meetings with staff to provide updates on current forthcoming events and issues and to obtain feedback from employees

4.4.2.2 - Produce a periodical newsletter to share news, stories and important information

4.4.2.3 - Develop an intranet

Responsibility: CEO and Director of Corporate Services

4.5 - Responsible Management of Council assets

Strategy 4.5.1 - Develop a detailed profile of the operating costs of all Shire owned and/or operated buildings and facilities

Actions

4.5.1.1 - Subject to clarification concerning long term occupation and funding, refurbish Council buildings in line with contemporary operating needs and standards

4.5.1.2 - Implement a scheduled maintenance program for all Shire owned and/or operated buildings and facilities.

4.5.1.3 - Monitor operating costs to identify any sub-standard properties and, subject to funding constraints, take remedial action

Responsibility: Director of Technical Services

Strategy 4.5.2 - Implement a comprehensive fleet management program

Actions

4.5.2.1 - Evaluate the fleet management model recommended by the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia.

4.5.2.2 - Configure the Technology 1 Fleet management system

4.5.2.3 - Upload all asset data into the system and perform tests and training

4.5.2.4 - Produce regular reports of Asset operating cost profiles and take corrective action as required

4.5.2.5 - Review future fleet requirements to meet service levels with available financial resources

4.5.2.6 - Make adjustments to the composition of the fleet as required

Responsibility: Director of Technical Services

OTHER INFORMATION

1. The Most Recent Assessment of Constitutional Arrangements

Pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Act and the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations, Council has commenced a review of constitutional (electoral) arrangements.

The Draft Terms of Reference are as follows:
To conduct an assessment of the effectiveness of constitutional arrangements for electoral representation of the council area (electoral review) in accordance with the requirements of Section 23(1)(c) and 23(2) of the Local Government Act and Regulations 63 of the Local Government Electoral Regulations to determine whether the arrangements presently in force provide the most effective representation possible.

MacDonnell Shire Council will employ an experienced consultant to assist it in carrying out the assessment. The following tasks will be undertaken within the assessment:

- Consultation with the NT Electoral Commission as required by Regulation 63(4);
- Preparation of a Discussion Paper on the issues being assessed – as prescribed in Regulation 63 with relevant background information, elector data, demographic trends, comparisons (elector numbers and elector ratios) with other council and ward structure options;
- Public consultation on the Discussion Paper and the calling for public submissions;
- Review of public submissions;
- Identification of options;
- Public consultation on the options and the calling for public submissions;
- Review of public submissions;
- Preparation of Final Report and recommendations to Council;
- Preparation of formal ward descriptions in consultation with the NT Electoral Commission and liaison with NT Electoral Commission to facilitate finalization of the review.

The final report is to be forwarded to the NTEC by 31 January 2011 and Council must formally adopt the final report and submit it to the Minister by the end of March 2011.

2. The Most Recent Assessment of Possible Changes to the Regulatory & Administrative Framework

The Shire Council periodically reviews its regulatory and administrative framework to ensure:

- Ongoing compliance with applicable laws
- Practicality
- Cultural appropriateness.

Changes in the management structure of the organisation are being implemented in 2010/11 to improve the effectiveness of administration and service delivery.

3. The Most Recent Assessment of Possibilities for Improving Service Delivery through Co-operation with Other Organisations

The Shire Council has identified training and development as a strategically important issue for improving service delivery. Accordingly, relevant training organisations and institutions are being researched with a view to entering into one or more strategic alliances. The nature of such a relationship will be dependent upon the magnitude and sustainability of suitable funding from government.

many voices, one dream, building a quality desert lifestyle

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