



**2022-26
MacDonnell
Regional Council
Strategic Plan**



INCORPORATING THE

**2025-26
Regional Plan**

Contents



Cover: A small sample of Council's total staff of 418. Council's most important asset is its people – it is the staff of MacDonnell Regional Council that turn Council's Vision, Mission and Values into reality.

The 2022-26 Strategic Plan of MacDonnell Regional Council incorporates the 2025-26 Regional Plan and is produced in accordance with the Northern Territory of Australia Local Government Act 2019. MacDonnell Regional Council works with its funding partners in an endeavour to achieve shared goals, provide real employment and improve life opportunities for constituents.

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Message from our President

Welcome to the 2025–2026 Regional Plan.

This plan serves as MRC's roadmap for strategic growth and development - guiding how we will continue to support and strengthen our communities across all sectors. It outlines not only where we're headed, but how we plan to get there – together.

As President, I want to take a moment to sincerely thank the many individuals - both within our organisation and across our communities - whose efforts often go unseen but are absolutely vital. These dedicated people form the foundation of our progress, quietly driving initiatives and ensuring our communities thrive. Their commitment and perseverance continue to shape the identity and future of the MacDonnell Region.

One group especially close to my heart is our youth. They are not only our future but also a reflection of the choices we make today. It is essential that we create environments where young people feel supported, heard, and empowered. I urge my fellow Councillors to ensure the voices and needs of our youth are thoughtfully considered in this year's Regional Plan. Investing in them is an investment in the long-term prosperity and resilience of our communities.

I also encourage all Councillors and Local Authority members to pay close attention to the quieter voices among us—those who may feel overlooked or unheard. Their experiences and perspectives are invaluable, often offering thoughtful insights that can inspire meaningful change.

The progress we've seen over the past year is a credit to the coordinated efforts of people across every part of our organisation - from the teams who maintain our infrastructure to those delivering essential services on the ground. It's this collective dedication that allows our communities to flourish.

As we look to the future, our shared mission remains clear: to strengthen each of our 13 communities through unity, collaboration, and mutual support.

I'm deeply grateful for the guidance and energy of my fellow Councillors, whose contributions help shape the direction and focus of this Regional Plan.

To build thriving, connected communities, we must uphold the principles of openness, accountability, respect, inclusivity, and innovation. True progress happens when Council and community work hand-in-hand.

A heartfelt thank you goes to all our teams across Council Services, Community Services, and our internal corporate departments. Your ongoing dedication is both valued and appreciated.

We are also fortunate to have strong leadership in our CEO, Belinda Urquhart, whose steady guidance has been especially impactful during times of challenge. Her leadership continues to set a clear, values-driven direction for our organisation.

Looking ahead, I'm excited to work closely with community members, Council staff, and stakeholders to deliver the best outcomes possible through this Regional Plan. Together, we can continue building a future where every community feels supported, heard, and proud of what we achieve.



Roxanne Kenny
President, MacDonnell Regional Council



Message from our Chief Executive Officer

I'm proud to share the strategic direction, planning, and goals we've set for the 2025–2026 financial year. At MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC), our commitment remains steadfast: to improve the liveability of the communities we serve and to continue building momentum toward meaningful progress.

Each Regional Plan represents more than just a document - it's a shared vision. Through clearly defined goals and objectives, we aim to deliver on our mission for the 13 communities we service, always guided by collaboration, accountability, and purpose.

Reflecting on the past year, we've made great strides - thanks to careful planning, strong engagement, and the dedication of our team. Looking ahead, there's a great deal to be excited about. Major projects are already underway, such as the completion of sporting lights in Kintore and Titjikala, the construction of new football change rooms in Hermannsburg and Papunya, community laundries and public amenities at Kintore, Areyonga and Docker River, along with various infrastructure improvements across our communities. These achievements are only possible because of the dedication and flexibility of our growing MRC workforce.

To everyone contributing to our efforts - thank you. I especially want to recognise the leadership of community members who continue to set powerful examples, helping us all move forward together. Our collective success depends on this spirit of unity. When we come together, we build stronger, more resilient communities - proud of our achievements and ready for the future.

This Regional Plan aligns closely with our Strategic Plan, providing a clear framework of key performance indicators and strategies for the year ahead. With ongoing community input, we remain focused on ensuring our infrastructure evolves in step with local needs.

I encourage all of us to think creatively about ways we can contribute to long-term community development. Every idea matters, and every voice counts. As CEO, I see my role as one of advocacy - ensuring the voices of our residents are heard at every level of local government. Employment remains a top priority, and we continue to support initiatives that create meaningful job opportunities and lasting outcomes.

Local Authority members are the backbone of our local decision-making process. Their leadership and insight are essential to shaping how MRC delivers services on the ground and ensures the best possible outcomes for each community. These meetings are not only an important avenue for discussion - they are vital to our growth and direction.

As we face challenges together, our shared values - respect, listening, unity, and commitment - guide us. I look forward to continued conversations with elected members, staff, community stakeholders, and residents across our region. Together, we can ensure this Regional Plan delivers on its promise to improve liveability across Central Australia.

On behalf of myself and the entire MRC team, thank you for your continued trust and partnership.



Belinda Urquhart
Chief Executive Officer, MacDonnell Regional Council



The December Council Meeting - trialling new technology at Alice Springs Town Council

Our Council



Our Governance

Our Council, Culture and History

MacDonnell Regional Council covers 268,329km² of arid, desert environment at the heart of the Australian continent. The landscape of the region includes picturesque waterholes, iconic flora and fauna, striking red desert sands and rough-hewn mountain ranges.

Our region is uniquely beautiful, with a powerful cultural and spiritual significance that can only truly be felt when living on or travelling across the land.

Our Communities

Council takes its name from the ancient and spectacular MacDonnell Ranges, and covers 13 major remote communities, as well as many outstations and enterprises in the pastoral, tourism and mining industries.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimate a resident population of 6,583 based on the 2021 Census. The towns of Alice Springs and Yulara are excluded from the MRC boundaries.

At council, we recognise and respect the fact that Aboriginal Australians are the oldest-known continuous culture on the planet and have had their own forms of governance for tens of thousands of years.

We have been able to develop strong governance principles and practices by using effective two-way communication and engagement with the Aboriginal representatives on Council.

Our discussions often move easily between the Aboriginal languages spoken in the MacDonnell region (mainly Arrernte, Pitjantjatjara, Pintubi and Luritja) and English. Councillors also explore vastly different perspectives and expectations when weighing up the impacts of their decisions.

Council remains committed to providing quality assistance for all of our residents, operating from Council Services Centres in all 13 communities. The coordination of all services and the administration of governance, finance, funding arrangements, program management and human resources is undertaken centrally from our Alice Springs office.



Entrance to the Titjikala community

The Council

MacDonnell Regional Council was established in 2008, with 12 elected members in four wards. Councillors are elected for four years, with the most recent election held in August 2021.

Following these elections, newly-elected councillors joined with re-elected councillors to vote for their principal members. In this election Roxanne Kenny was re-appointed as President of MacDonnell Regional Council and Dalton McDonald was appointed as Deputy President.

Throughout each annual cycle, MRC holds an Ordinary Council Meeting every two months, and Special Council Meetings as required. Meetings are held in Alice Springs, on one of Council's 13 communities, or at a local business within the region

All Council meetings are open to the public unless confidential business is being considered. MRC encourages attendance from residents of our communities and members of the public.

Committees of Council

- Finance and Risk Committee
- Audit Committee
- Local Authorities (see following)

Dates, times, agendas and minutes for all Council and committee meetings, including Local Authority meetings, are available on the MacDonnell Regional Council website:

www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/council-meetings

Local Authorities

Local Authorities are established under the *Local Government Act 2019* and have the following functions:

- To have as their primary objective the support of local decision making.
- To involve local communities more closely in issues related to local government.
- To ensure local communities have an opportunity to express their opinions on questions affecting local government.
- To allow local communities a voice in the formulation of policies for the locality, as well as policies for the area and the region.
- To take the views of local communities back to council and act as advocates on their behalf.
- To develop a Local Authority Plan for their community and contribute to the Regional Plan.

Local Authorities may also from time to time represent their community on other matters, with governments and other organisations able to approach them for advice and consultation on a range of issues.

As vacancies arise, potential members nominate themselves for a Local Authority and Council approves the nominations at a Council Meeting. A Chair is chosen from the members of each Local Authority. Each Local Authority meeting is attended by its Ward Councillors and the President, when available, as well as by senior MacDonnell Regional Council staff.

Local Authority Projects

PROJECT NUMBER	COMMUNITY	BUDGET
Amoonguna		
2103	Water Trailer for Sorry Camp	\$35,000.00
2104	Stealth Lighting for each of the Shade Structures at the Sorry Camp	\$14,378.41
2106	Fence for the footy oval	\$7,000.00
Areyonga (Utju)		
2111	Water Bubbler near bus stop	\$10,000.00
2114	Install 1 x GFS 200 Solar Light between MRC office and Tjuwampa	\$3,500.00
2118	Playground Upgrades.	\$26,811.32
2119	Solar Light at Entrance	\$4,000.00
2260	Waste Trailer	\$18,000.00
2261	Community Healthy Event	\$19,502.65
Docker River (Kaltukatjara)		
2122	New park location and structures, shade shelter, BBQ, seating & fencing	\$58,041.82
2129	Solar light at entry into Docker River	\$35,478.95
2570	Mobile Water Trailer	\$24,981.20

PROJECT NUMBER	COMMUNITY	BUDGET
Finke (Aputula)		
2132	Stealth Solar Lights	\$16,000.00
2133	Wash Down Bay	\$10,000.00
Haasts Bluff (Ikuntji)		
2145	Community Healthy Event	\$35,410.33
2386	Garden Shed with Tools for the cemetery	\$3,879.87
2392	Trees around the Park	\$4,000.00
Hermannsburg (Ntaria)		
2151	Repair Lights at the Oval	\$5,000.00
2152	Change Room Site	\$73,060.78
2153	Scoreboard	\$26,065.00
2154	Water Bottle Refill Stations	\$25,000.00
2155	Two Bin Trailers	\$35,000.00
2157	Industrial Fans for Basketball Court	\$15,000.00

Local Authority Projects CONT.

PROJECT NUMBER	COMMUNITY	BUDGET
Imanpa		
2161	Purchase of a Water Trailer	\$28,379.75
Kintore (Walungurru)		
2172	Kintore Community Hub Plan	\$204,414.99
Mount Liebig (Watiyawanu)		
2184	Plaque for the Rec Hall	\$1,000.00
2186	Solar lights for the Cemetery	\$20,000.00
2187	Music equipment for Church	\$11,071.77
2188	Sporting equipment for the Youth Board	\$1,000.00
Papunya (Warumpi)		
2192	Mature established trees	\$3,000.00
2195	Healthy Community event	\$45,000.00
2198	Trailer Bin	\$18,000.00
2505	Yarning Circle	\$22,000.00
2508	Sunday School	\$105,134.07
Santa Teresa (Ltyentye Apurte)		
2205	2 x Bin Trailers	\$35,000.00
2206	Shade and Seating at Cemetery	\$39,142.30

PROJECT NUMBER	COMMUNITY	BUDGET
Titjikala		
2214	Park Rejuvenation	\$10,000.00
2215	Bin Trailer	\$18,000.00
2400	Solar lights at Entrance	\$6,500.00
Wallace Rockhole		
2223	Upgrade to Gordon Ida Park - inc irrigation, plants and trees.	\$24,380.57
2226	Movie Equipment and Supplies	\$1,000.00
2227	Sporting Equipment	\$500.00
2228	Easter Celebrations for Youth	\$300.00



Our Councillors



Councillor
Andrew Davis
Amoonguna



Councillor
Lisa Sharman
Titjikala



Councillor
Patrick Allen
Finke (Aputula)

Rodinga Ward

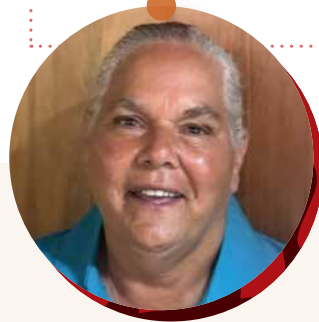
Rodinga Ward, takes its name from the Rodinga railway station siding that stood beside the old Ghan railway line, and includes the communities of Amoonguna, Santa Teresa, Titjikala and Finke. Its elected Councillors are Andrew Davis from Amoonguna, Lisa Sharman from Titjikala and Patrick Allen from Finke. Languages predominantly spoken in the ward include Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara, Central and Eastern Arrernte.

Ljirapinta Ward

Ljirapinta Ward represents residents in and around the communities of Hermannsburg and Wallace Rockhole where Western Arrernte is the predominant language. Its elected Councillors are Roxanne Kenny, Maryanne Malbunka and Mark Inkamala from Hermannsburg. Roxanne is the Council President.



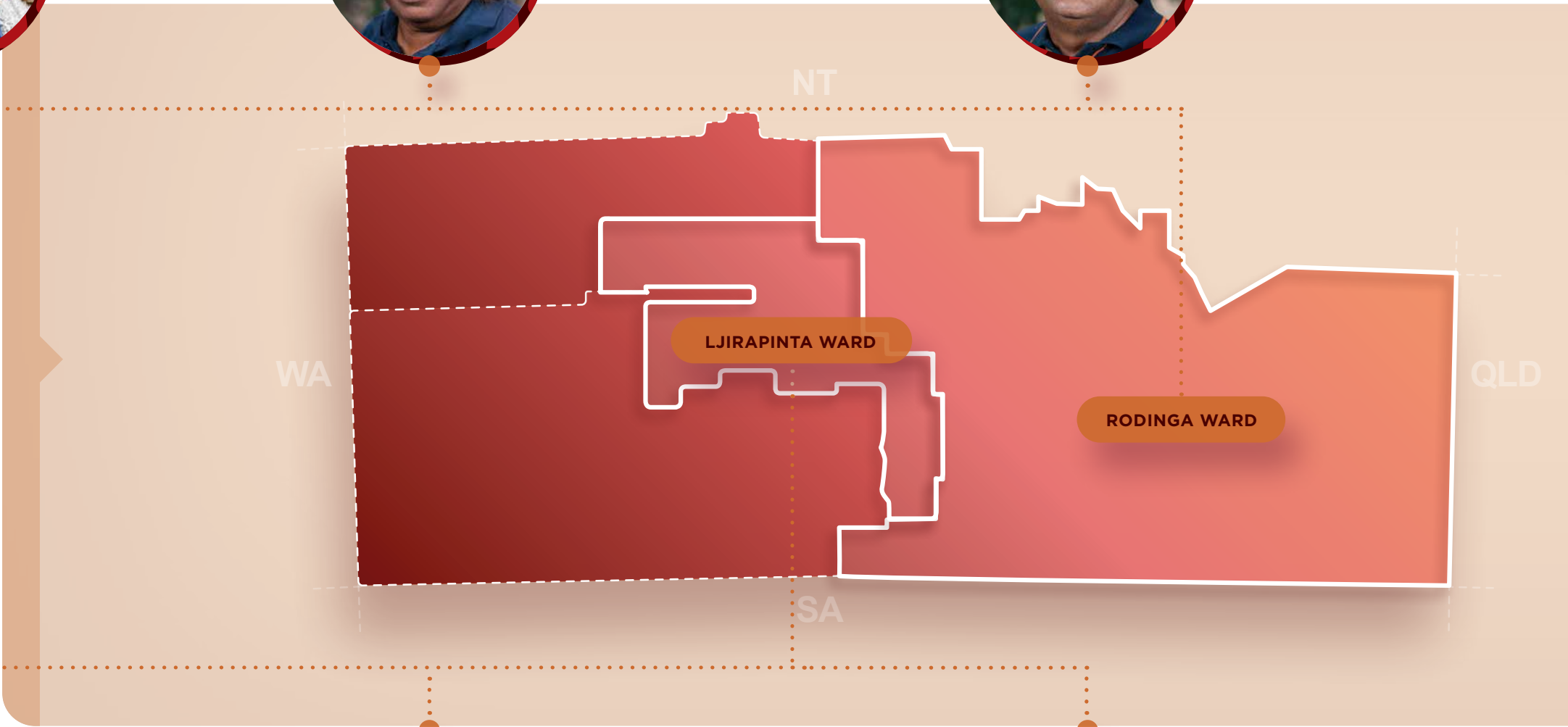
President
Roxanne Kenny
Hermannsburg (Ntaria)



Councillor
Maryanne Malbunka
Hermannsburg (Ntaria)



Councillor
Mark Inkamala
Hermannsburg (Ntaria)



Our Councillors



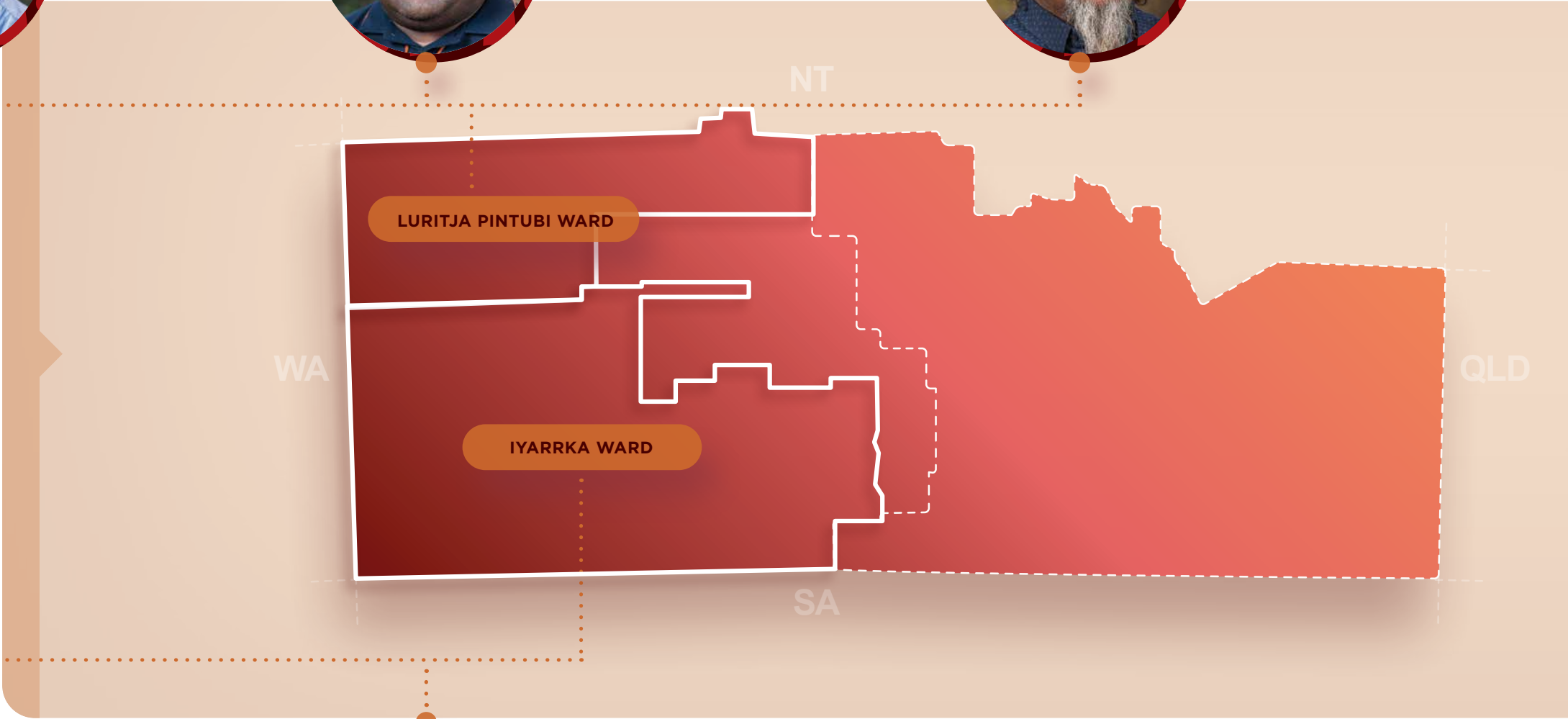
Deputy President
Dalton McDonald
Papunya (Warumpi)



Councillor
Jason Minor
Mt Liebig (Watiyawanu)



Councillor
Tommy Conway
Kintore (Walungurru)



Councillor
Abraham Poulson
Areyonga (Utju)



Councillor
Marlene Abbott
Docker River (Kaltukatjara)

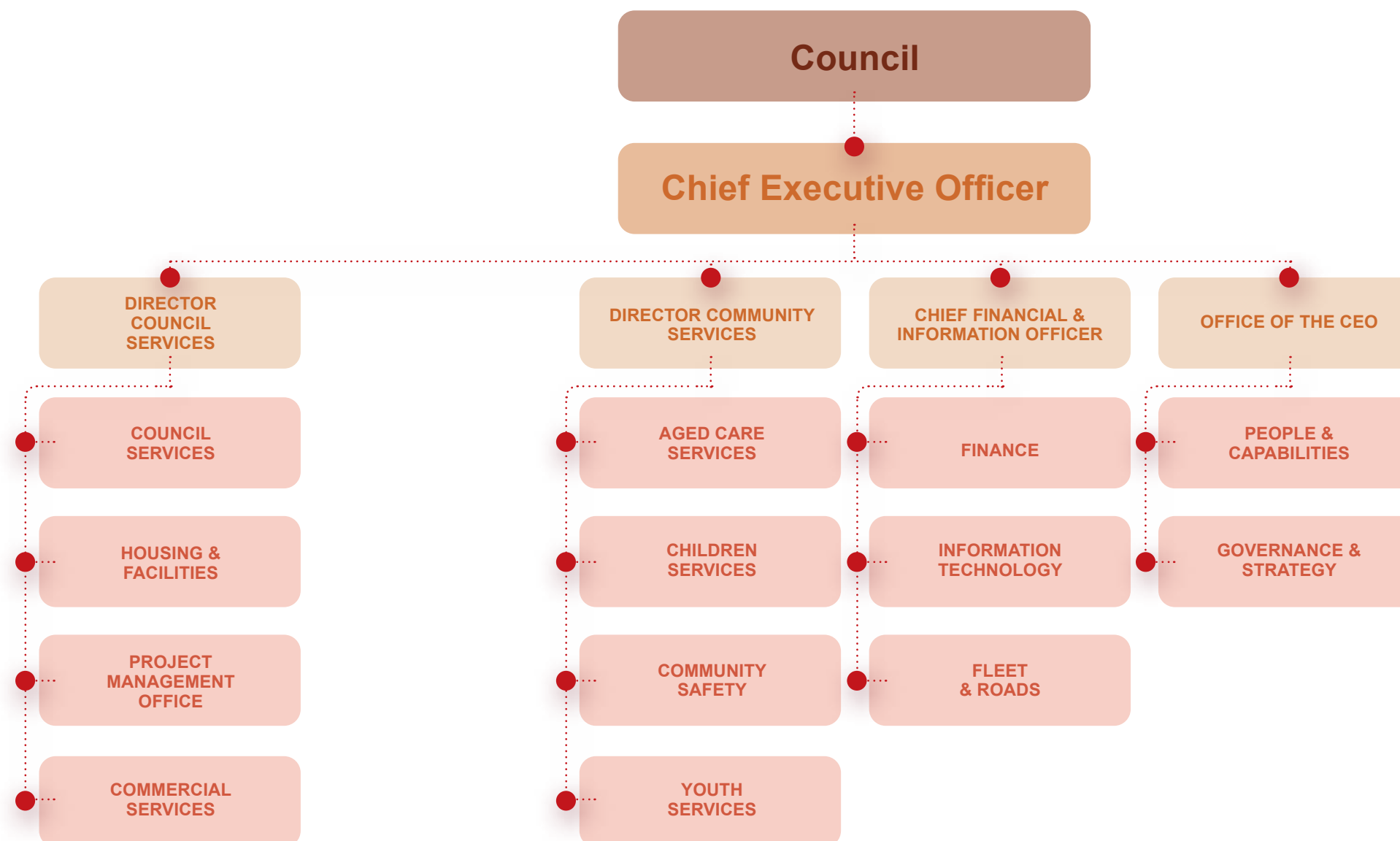
Luritja Pintubi Ward

As suggested by its name, this Ward predominantly represents Luritja and Pintubi speakers living in the communities of Kintore, Mount Liebig, Papunya and Haasts Bluff. Elected Councillors for Luritja Pintubi Ward are Tommy Conway from Kintore, Jason Minor from Mount Liebig and Dalton McDonald from Papunya. Dalton is the Council Deputy President .

Iyarrka Ward

Iyarrka Ward covers an area where Pitjantjatjara is predominantly spoken. Consequently it takes in Docker River and Imanpa communities and hooks around neighbouring wards to also include Areyonga. Its elected Councillors, Marlene Abbott and Abraham Poulson, are from Docker River and Areyonga respectively.

Our Organisation Structure



Our Workforce

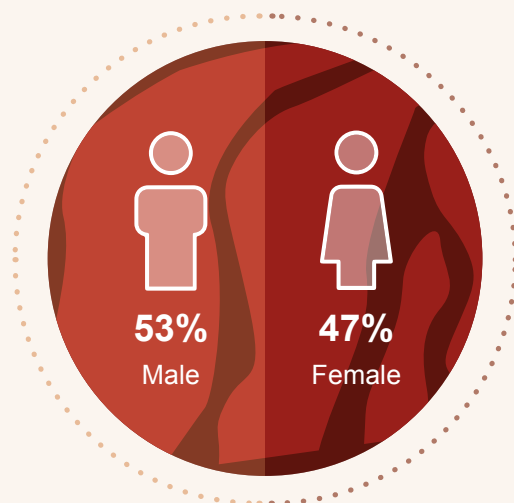
Total employees: 418

% Indigenous

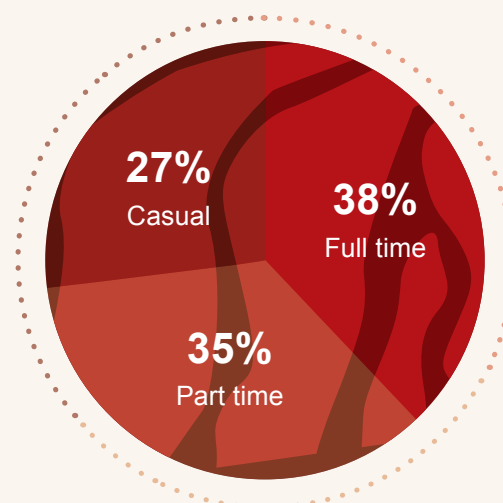
Community based: **95%**

Head office Alice Springs: **5%**

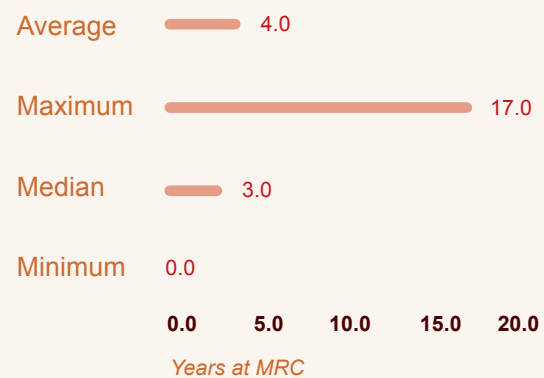
Gender Balance



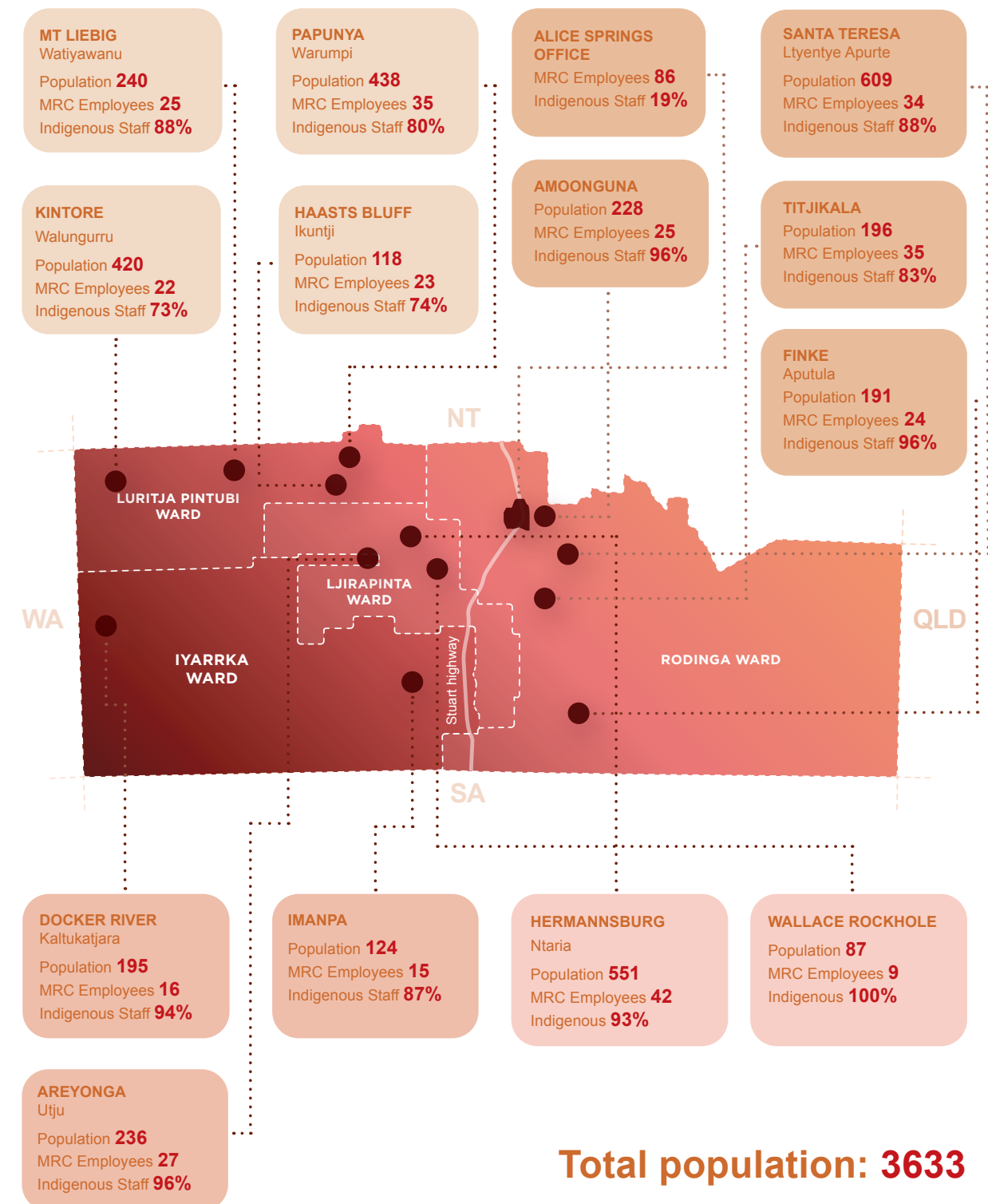
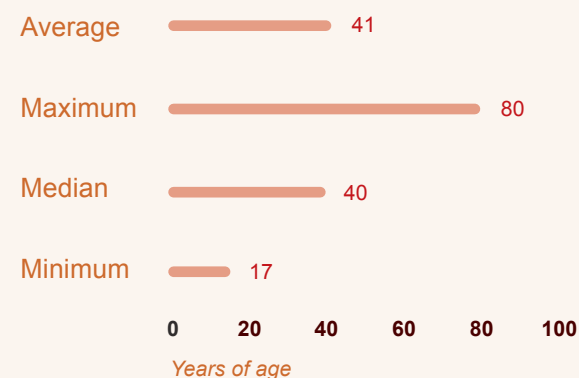
Division of Labour



MRC Experience Statistics



Min/Max Age Statistics



Total population: 3633

Population figures shown are from ABS 2021 Census

Haasts Bluff – one of Council's 13 communities. Strategic Planning is critical to the success of these communities and the realisation of Council's Vision.

Our Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan denotes the vision, mission and values of the fourth MacDonnell Regional Council for the life of this Council being 2022-2026. It describes the goals and objectives as standard indicators of MRC's performance. This is the last Strategic Plan in the life of this Council.

Our Vision

Many voices,
one dream,
building a quality
desert lifestyle

Our Mission

To improve the lives of
Council residents
by delivering valued and
relevant services

Our Values

Open

We will build strong relationships and seek feedback and input on our work

Accountable

Our work must be transparent and accountable to MacDonnell Regional Council residents

Respectful

We will respect and support our diverse cultures and heritage

Inclusive

We will value and incorporate local knowledge, experience and perspectives into the work we do

Innovative

We will seek new ideas and ways to achieve our outcomes and improve our services

This Strategic Plan comes from the people of our region and is for the future of the people of our region.

Our Goals & Objectives

1

Developing communities

MRC'S infrastructure meets community needs

Create employment opportunities

Increase Aboriginal employment opportunities

Support local Aboriginal enterprise

2

Healthy communities

Support active and healthy lifestyles

Improve environmental health outcomes

Support community and cultural events

3

Empowered communities

Young people are empowered to be engaged representatives

Local Authority and Council members are trained and empowered in their roles to lead into the future

Local Authority and Council members, constituents and stakeholders are engaged and informed

4

A supportive organisation

Support new employees

Support the development and advancement of our staff

Improve efficiencies through our use of technology

Support staff safety and wellbeing

Staff are empowered to inform MRC decision-making

Critical to Council's success is the delivery of Core Council Services such as Waste Management.

Our Regional Plan

The Regional Plan of 2025-2026 addresses the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan and defines the specific strategies, associated key performance indicators and targets for the next operational year.

Goal 1

Developing Communities

MRC'S infrastructure meets community needs	>
Create employment opportunities	>
Increase Aboriginal employment opportunities	>
Support local Aboriginal enterprise	>

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR - AND MEASURE	TARGET	TARGET DATE
1.1 MRC's infrastructure meets community needs	Develop MRC Community Infrastructure Plans to guide infrastructure investment and development.	"Develop and adopt 10 year MRC Strategic Asset Management Plans for each community."	Develop comprehensive plans that includes roads, housing and facilities.	June 2027
	Secure long term land tenure for lots used in the delivery of MRC services.	"Community based lots that utilised by MRC to deliver services are leased under Section 19 leases."	All leasing applications are current and relevant to each MRC facility.	June 2026
	Improve internal road networks to support community development.	Develop a long-term advocacy plan and approach for increased funding opportunities.	Advocate for MRC to tender for new funding opportunities.	June 2027
	Implement Local Authority funding efficiencies.	Within set timeframes.	All projects completed within the LA Funding Guidelines.	June 2026
	Improve energy efficiency.	Implement energy efficient solutions in each Council facility.	Upgrade of facilities in three (3) communities annually.	June 2029
1.2 Create employment opportunities	Develop local employment pathways through Council.	Increase Aboriginal employment in leadership roles through the implementation of a Special Measures policy for all community based roles.	All community based positions are advertised under the Special Measures policy.	June 2028
1.3 Increase Aboriginal employment opportunities	Promote Aboriginal employment within MRC.	Community-based positions are filled by Aboriginal staff.	90%	June 2028
		Commercial Contracts undertaken by MRC use Aboriginal employment.	50%	June 2027
		Local Aboriginal labour achieved through delivery of MRC's tendered contracts.	10%	June 2028
1.4 Develop career pathways for Youth and emerging leaders	Implement training and mentorship programs for young people.	Establish at least two (2) career pathway programs.	50% participation and uptake by Youth.	June 2029

Goal 2

Healthy Communities

Support active and healthy lifestyles



Improve environmental health outcomes



Improve access to cultural and recreational activities



OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR - AND MEASURE	TARGET	TARGET DATE
2.1 Support active and healthy lifestyles	Collaborate with community stakeholders to promote health initiatives.	Implement MRC led Healthy Communities events to encourage healthy hygiene, eating and sustainability.	Thirteen (13) MRC Communities over five years.	June 2029
	Promote healthy eating through MRC's services, meetings, functions and events.	All MRC services, meetings, functions and events provide healthy and nutritious food.	Development and Implementation of an MRC Healthy and Nutritious Food policy.	June 2026
2.2 Improve environmental health outcomes	Promote sustainable communities through waste management awareness and education.	MRC to participate in the NT Tidy Towns program each year.	Participation by all MRC communities.	June 2026
	Improve the health of animals living in communities.	Using information gained from census to implement animal health programs targeting identified health issues.	Two visits per community per year.	June 2027
		Source funding to increase regularity of animal health visits on MRC communities.	An additional two visits per community per year.	June 2027
		Implement animal health education and management through schools in the MRC region.	Deliver to each community once per year.	June 2027
	Recycling at MRC's waste management facilities.	Expand waste recycling programs in all communities.	70% of community participation.	June 2028
2.3 Improve access to cultural and recreational activities	Provide in-kind support for community and cultural initiatives.	Support community and cultural initiatives by providing in-kind support.	One significant event in each ward in each calendar year to the value of \$50,000.	June 2027
	Expand youth engagement in youth programs and sport and rec programs.	Establish safe community spaces for program delivery.	Increase in program attendance across all communities.	June 2028
		Improving and consistently delivering engaging youth programs.	80% of youth on community engaging in school holiday and youth programs.	June 2027

Goal 3

Empowered Communities

Young people are empowered to be engaged representatives >

Local Authority and Council members are trained and empowered in their roles to lead into the future >

Local Authority and Council members, constituents and stakeholders are engaged and informed >

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR - AND MEASURE	TARGET	TARGET DATE
3.1 Young people are empowered to be engaged representatives	Provide support for youth leadership across the MRC region.	Manage Youth Boards in thirteen (13) communities.	Youth Boards meet twice (2) per community per year.	June 2026
		Implement governance training plan including formal meeting procedures, agendas and minutes.	Provide one module at each Youth Board meeting.	June 2026
	Council engages with Youth Boards.	One representative from each Youth Board to attend the June OCM.	Representative attends June OCM.	June 2026
		One whole of Council Youth Board meeting to take place immediately prior to the October OCM with a representative from each Youth Board.	October Youth Board, whole of Council meeting.	June 2026
		Local Authorities approve funding for Youth Boards for appropriate wish list items.	\$1,000 is provided to each Youth Board in each community per year.	June 2026
3.2 Local Authority and Council members are trained and empowered in their roles to lead into the future	Mandatory governance training is undertaken by all Elected Members.	Each Elected Member completes the NTG's governance training within 12 months of being elected.	Within 12 months of elections and by-elections.	June 2026
	Governance training is delivered to all appointed members of Local Authorities.	Governance training program delivered to all LAs each year.	Training delivered on all thirteen communities.	June 2026
3.3 Local Authority and Council members, constituents and stakeholders are engaged and informed	Increase Local Authority meeting participation.	Increase attendance at Local Authority meetings.	85% attendance and participation at each community.	June 2026
	Increase community input to inform Council and Local Authority decision-making.	Undertake annual Community Satisfaction Survey, and consultation on Regional and Strategic Plans.	Annually.	June 2026

4 Goal

Supportive Organisation

Build a skilled and motivated workforce



Support the development and advancement of our staff



Improve efficiencies through our use of technology



Support staff safety and wellbeing



Staff are empowered to inform MRC decision-making



OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR - AND MEASURE	TARGET	TARGET DATE
4.1 Build a skilled and motivated workforce	Improve staff retention and satisfaction.	Maintain a high workforce retention rate.	85% annual staff retention.	June 2026
4.2 Support the development and advancement of our staff	Expand training and professional development opportunities.	Increase staff training and development participation.	80% of training agreed in staff APRs are commenced.	June 2027
		Continue development of online learning management system to keep existing staff up to date with policy, procedures and changes to MRCs operations and to assist in ongoing staff development.	60% of staff using the online LMS effectively.	December 2028
		MRC to focus on Aboriginal employment in the Alice Springs office.	Minimum 20% of Alice Springs staff are Aboriginal.	June 2026
		Provide staff with tools and training to improve service delivery and efficiency.	Deliver two (2) staff development training sessions per calendar year.	June 2026
		Recognise and reward staff contribution to achieving Council objectives.	Annual staff awards.	June 2026
4.3 Improve efficiencies through our use of technology	Increase digital transformation for efficient service delivery.	Develop and adopt a comprehensive IT strategy including a review of enterprise architecture, business applications and platforms.	Three communities upgraded and reviewed as per the IT strategy each calendar year.	June 2028
4.4 Support staff safety and wellbeing	Develop best practice Work Health and Safety strategy.	Maintain best practice Work Health and Safety Strategy.	Monitor and review WHS Management systems.	June 2026
	Standardise staff housing security to ensure wellbeing.	Implement minimum safety standards for staff housing.	Standards rolled out to all staff housing over three years	June 2028
4.5 Staff are empowered to inform MRC decision-making	Empower staff to contribute to MRC's success.	Encourage a culture of collaboration and innovation.	Adopt a revised and endorsed Change management framework that focuses on improving culture.	June 2026

The Regional Plan

Council Services

The Goals and Objectives are achieved through the delivery of Core Local Government Services. These services directly address such matters as infrastructure, employment opportunities and environmental health outcomes and so much more.

They are also achieved through the delivery of Community Services and Commercial Services. Council determines to deliver these programmes and services because they support the safety and wellbeing of community members and they contribute to the economic functionality of Council's communities. They are directly aligned with creating and increasing employment opportunities, they support active and healthy lifestyles and community events and they live the mission of Council "to improve the lives of Council residents by delivering valued and relevant services".

None of this could be achieved without the provision of Support and Administration Services. These critical services not only enable to delivery of Core, Community and Commercial Services but, in their own right, make a special contribution to the attainment of Council's goals relating to Empowered Communities and a Supportive Organisation.

What follows represents the operational or action plans Council intends to implement to ensure it meets its goals.

Introduction

At MacDonnell Regional Council, we are committed to building a quality desert lifestyle for our residents across 13 communities. Our Council Services, comprising several sections, is pivotal in achieving this vision. With funding from various sources, we employ nearly 175 dedicated individuals to ensure the well-being and safety of our communities.

Council Services

Our Council Services Directorate comprises several sections, each contributing to the Council's mission of delivering valued and relevant services. From Administration to Civil Works, Essential Services to Airstrip Maintenance, our teams work collaboratively to keep our communities healthy, clean, and safe. We are particularly proud to note that nearly 95% of our staff are Indigenous, reflecting our deep commitment to local engagement and empowerment.

Service Level Guidelines

To maintain high service delivery standards, we have established precise service levels linked to multi-year implementation plans and our Strategic Plan. These guidelines are accompanied by robust staff management and training strategies, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with community needs. The standards and service level guidelines are briefly summarised over the following pages.

Service level guidelines and sustainability practices

At MacDonnell Regional Council, we are deeply committed to meeting our communities' immediate needs and contributing to global sustainability goals. As part of this commitment, we have aligned our service level guidelines and waste management practices with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs).

Integration of UNSDGs

Our service level guidelines are not just about enhancing service delivery, but also about contributing to broader sustainability objectives outlined in the UNSDGs. This integration of global goals into our strategic planning ensures that our actions are in line with the wider vision for a more sustainable and equitable world.

Contributing to global goals

By incorporating the UNSDGs into our operations, we are actively contributing to achieving global targets related to clean water and sanitation, sustainable cities and communities, climate action, and more. This holistic approach underscores our commitment to creating lasting positive impacts beyond our immediate communities.

Community engagement and empowerment

Moreover, we don't just stop at aligning with the UNSDGs. We actively engage with our communities, raising awareness about these global goals and encouraging local participation in achieving them. Through education, capacity building, and community-led initiatives, we empower residents to become active agents of change in their sustainable development journey.

Continued commitment

We remain dedicated to advancing sustainability principles in all operations as we move forward. By embracing the UNSDGs as a guiding framework, we strive to build resilient, inclusive, and sustainable communities for generations. More detailed information about MRC standards and service levels can be found on our website at: www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/about-council/standards.

Core Council Services

Animal management

Our Animal Management Guidelines focus on improving the health and control of companion animals while respecting cultural sensitivities. We aim to reduce animal numbers sustainably through regular veterinarian visits, medical sterilisation, and educational programs without resorting to mass culling. These guidelines provide a four (4) level implementation plan for Animal Management in communities to reach a service level standard within the various timeframes, taking into account the Council's Goal of Healthy Communities and in accordance with relevant legislation.

Cemetery management

With responsibility for 12 cemeteries, our Council adheres to Cemetery Guidelines to uphold respectful standards in burial grounds. These guidelines prioritise actions to ensure dignified cemetery maintenance by relevant legislation. This outlines the service level standards we aim to achieve within the various timeframes, considering the Council's Goal of Developing Communities.



Preparatory works for the new Titjikala cemetery.

Core Council Services CONT.

Internal roads maintenance and traffic management

The MacDonnell Regional Council has developed Internal Roads Management Guidelines to improve the safety of internal roads and road signage in its communities. The success of any Internal Roads Management plan is based on five (5) factors:

Repair damage to existing roads

1. Complete an audit of existing traffic management road furniture (signs, speed bumps, etc.)
2. Develop a traffic management asset plan for each community in consultation with their Local Authority
3. Implement that traffic management asset plan and install the approved road furniture
4. Maintain repairs to roads, road verges, storm/flood damaged areas and replace any damaged road furniture. Principally, Internal Roads Management refers to improving the overall safety of roads within our communities.



The Coordinators of MRC get together for training, November 2024.

Parks and open spaces

The MacDonnell Regional Council Parks and Open Spaces Guidelines outline a phased plan to enhance recreational areas across our communities. By adhering to these standards, we create vibrant and healthy outdoor spaces for residents to enjoy, taking into account the Council's Goals of Developing Communities and Healthy Communities and in accordance with the NT Local Government Act and Australian Standards.

Sports grounds

The MacDonnell Regional Council has developed Sports Grounds Guidelines. Through These Guidelines, we aim to provide safe and accessible sports facilities for community use. By implementing these standards, we promote physical activity and community engagement. This outlines the service level standards that we will aim to achieve within the various timeframes, taking into account the Council's Goal of Healthy Communities and also in accordance with the NT Local Government Act.

Street lighting

The MacDonnell Regional Council street lighting standards ensure consistent illumination across our regions, enhancing safety and security for residents. By maintaining operational street lights and adhering to budgetary constraints, we prioritise community well-being and maintain street lights in the region based on the following five standards:

1. Total number of MRC street lights
2. Audit of all street lights within the first week of each month
3. Restore community street light levels that drop below 70% within 30 days
4. Average year to date level of operational street lights in each community at 75%+
5. Deliver services on budget

Waste management

The MacDonnell Regional Council has developed its Remote Waste Management Facility Operating Manual and has continued to refine it. Aligned with the Waste Management and Pollution Control Act, our Waste Management Guidelines focus on environmental sustainability and public health. We mitigate environmental risks through strategic waste management plans and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. These guidelines now form the basis for developing an ongoing waste management plan that provides baseline standards we aim to achieve. Five top-priority actions have been identified for all communities in the MacDonnell Region. These actions are primarily based on the outcomes of Public Health and Environmental Risk Assessments and are to be achieved in every community. Refer to the Waste Management Guidelines for more information and the Work Method Statements for detailed instructions. Our waste management practices prioritise environmental sustainability and resource efficiency in line with the UNSDGs. Through initiatives such as waste reduction, recycling programs, and community education, we strive to minimise our environmental footprint and promote responsible consumption and production.

Weed control and fire hazard reduction

The MacDonnell Regional Council has developed Weed Control & Fire Hazard Reduction Guidelines to improve the safety of its communities. At the same time, a Council goal is Healthy Communities – where we work to improve environmental health outcomes. The success of any Weed Control & Fire Hazard Reduction plan is based on six (6) factors – Slashing, mowing, chemical spraying, clearing, manual control and pruning (tree lopping). This set of guidelines can also be applied to any other contracts the Council provides for other agencies (i.e. PowerWater, at its Powerhouse & Sewerage ponds and the NT Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics for its airstrips).

These guidelines provide an implementation plan for Weed Control and fire Hazard Reduction in communities to reach a service level standard within the various timeframes, taking into account the Council's Goal of Healthy Communities and in accordance with relevant legislation, including the Weeds Management Act.

Infrastructure/Asset Management Services

Council Infrastructure Services are responsible for repairs, maintenance, upgrades and capital works for all MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC) buildings and facilities as well as tenancy services for staff housing.

Our buildings include Service Delivery Centres, Home Care and Childcare Centres, depots, recreation halls, staff and outstation housing as well as swimming pools and other sporting facilities.

These services also include the management and delivery of grant funded projects on behalf of the Northern Territory Government and Federal Government.

In support of the delivery of these projects MRC's Fleet Management undertakes fleet planning and procurement and provides a mobile mechanical workshop to ensure MRC's assets are continually serviced, maintained and operational at all times.



New Finke shade structure.

Project management office

Established in 2024, the MacDonnell Regional Council Project Management Office (PMO) oversees the delivery of major projects across MRC communities. Its key objectives include:

- Planning Tranche 2 projects.
- Streamlining Local Authority project processes.
- Completing outstanding major projects.

To enhance efficiency, the PMO has introduced simplified policies and procedures for tendering, quote requests and project tracking. These improvements ensure projects are delivered on time and within budget while maximising funding opportunities for meaningful community development.

Current/ongoing PMO Projects include:

- PCIP0004 – Mt Liebig Multi-Sports Complex
- PCIP0005 – Remote Shade Shelters
- PCIP0006 – Hermannsburg Footy Change Rooms
- PCIP0016 – Papunya Footy Change Rooms
- Tranche 1 – Footy Lights for Kintore and Titjikala
- IIOC – Remote Shade Shelters

Through these initiatives the PMO is committed to enhancing community infrastructure and quality of life across the region. The activities of the PMO make a substantial contribution to the goals of MRC, in particular ensuring that MRC's infrastructure meets community needs (Goal 1, Objective 1.1).

Housing and facilities management

The Housing and Facilities team oversees the repairs, maintenance, upgrades, and capital works for all MacDonnell Regional Council buildings and facilities, as well as providing tenancy services for staff housing. Our portfolio includes Service Delivery Centres, Home Care and Childcare Centres, depots, recreation halls, staff and outstation housing, swimming pools, and various sporting facilities.

Capital works projects are designed with a strong focus on staff safety, particularly through improved security and connectivity. The team also manages commercial and grant-funded projects on behalf of both the Northern Territory and Federal Government departments. All works are tendered with specific criteria to support Aboriginal employment opportunities.

Alignment of the Housing and Facilities Department with MacDonnell Regional Council Goals

The Housing and Facilities Department actively supports the strategic direction of MacDonnell Regional Council (MRC) through the following key objectives:

1.1 MRC's infrastructure meets community needs

The department is responsible for the ongoing repairs, maintenance, upgrades, and capital works across all MRC buildings and facilities.

1.3 Increase Aboriginal employment opportunities

The department ensures that works are tendered with defined criteria that promote and support Aboriginal employment. This approach helps support local employment and encourages community involvement in Council projects.



Upgrade of the Docker River meeting room.

4.3 Improve efficiencies through our use of technology

Committed to improving operational efficiency, the department has invested in enhanced connectivity solutions. This includes the rollout of Starlink satellite internet in communities without reliable 4G access, such as Haasts Bluff and Areyonga. By the end of the year, five communities will benefit from this technology, supporting faster communication and more efficient service delivery with the remaining communities having installations in the next two years.

4.4 Support staff safety and wellbeing

Staff safety and wellbeing remain a priority in all capital works planning. Improved connectivity through Starlink has enabled the installation of remotely monitored security cameras at staff housing. In addition, ongoing upgrades to doors, windows, and fencing continue to enhance physical security measures across Council properties.

Fleet management

The Fleet Services team operates from the Alice Springs based workshop where Council vehicles are maintained and major works on larger fleet items are undertaken.

The team includes a coordinator, fleet officer and four mobile mechanics who travel to communities every week to maintain MacDonnell Regional Council's large fleet of more than 330 items including vehicles, trucks, garbage compactors, buses, tractors, trailers, skid steers, backhoes and large earthmoving plant.

The team uses a web-based application called Fleetio to assist with the task of managing the fleet. This is a collaborative tool which has been used by MRC for 12 years. The data collected in that time has been invaluable for understanding usage patterns and costs for forward planning and record keeping.



Areyonga - winner Territory Tidy Town 2016. Despite its small size this is a proud and vital community.

Community Services

Delivering High-Quality Community Services

The Community Services Directorate is important to MacDonnell Regional Council's commitment to building a quality desert lifestyle. These services are integral to community well-being, ensuring residents across our 13 communities access essential programs that improve lives, promote safety, and strengthen cultural identity.

With a network of 9 Youth and Recreation facilities, 8 Aged and Home Care Centres, 9 Childcare Centres, and 12 Night Patrol offices, we provide high-quality, culturally responsive services that respect and support the unique needs of young people, families, and elders in our communities.

Our focus is on delivering excellence, not just meeting but exceeding the standards set by funding bodies. This commitment ensures that our services evolve to meet our communities' growing needs and expectations, instilling confidence in our stakeholders.

At the core of our approach is empowering local Indigenous employment – over 80% of our Community Services employees come from MacDonnell Regional Council communities. By prioritising local knowledge and Leadership, we are building a skilled and resilient workforce that delivers services by the community for the community.

The heart of our service delivery lies within our 13 remote communities, where dedicated teams work every day to support local families, young people, and elders. However, ensuring these teams have the resources, training, and operational backing they need in these remote and often challenging environments requires strong regional coordination.

The Alice Springs Regional Office plays a key role in supporting frontline staff and ensuring that every program – whether in youth services, aged care, childcare, or community safety – has the funding, workforce, infrastructure, and governance required to operate effectively. This office does not direct services but instead

works in partnership with our community teams to provide the resources, guidance, and advocacy they need.

The Alice Springs office acts as a hub for essential support services, ensuring that our community teams can focus on delivering high-quality, culturally responsive programs. Key functions include:

- **Community Services Leadership & Operations** – Providing guidance and oversight while ensuring community voices shape decision-making.
- **Finance & Grant Management** – Securing and managing funding so services can continue to grow and improve.
- **Human Resources & Workforce Development** – Supporting local recruitment, staff training, and leadership pathways for Aboriginal employees.
- **Asset & Infrastructure Support** – Maintaining vehicles, buildings, and essential equipment to keep services running smoothly.
- **Youth & Community Safety Coordination** – Assisting frontline teams with program planning, reporting, and engagement with funding bodies.

This regional support ensures that on-the-ground teams in communities have what they need to deliver vital services effectively.

A Workforce Built by and for the Community

MacDonnell Regional Council is deeply committed to a community-led approach, ensuring that services are delivered by local people, for local people. Across all Community Services programs, we employ:

- Over 200 staff, with more than 80% being local Aboriginal employees.
- A workforce spread across Youth, Aged Care, Childcare, and Community Safety services.

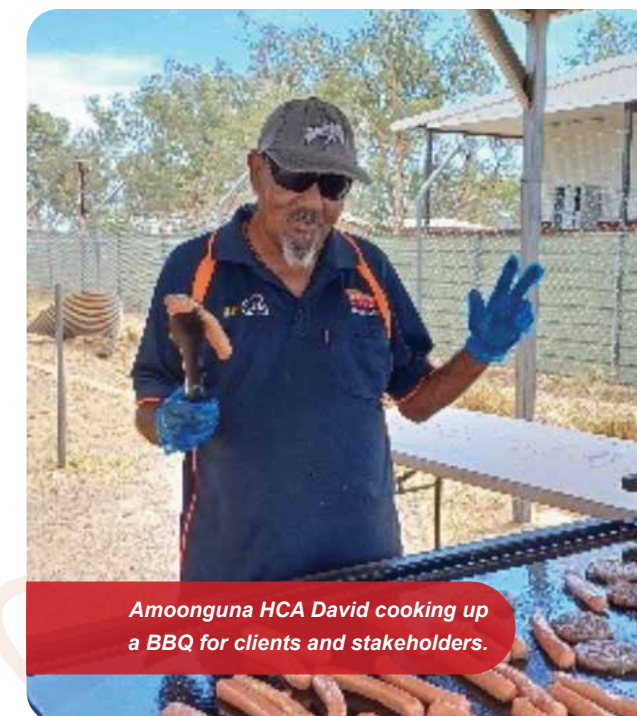
- Dedicated support teams who work alongside community-based staff to ensure smooth program delivery.

Investing in a Strong Future

Recruiting and retaining skilled staff remains a priority for delivering high-quality services in remote communities. MacDonnell Regional Council is implementing strategic workforce initiatives, including:

- Expanding professional development opportunities to help local staff progress into leadership roles.
- Cultural programs to strengthen new staff knowledge of local traditions, languages, and ways of working.
- Improving staff housing and infrastructure to better support teams living in remote areas.
- Building partnerships with training organisations, universities, and government agencies to provide accredited learning opportunities.

By investing in our people and strengthening community-led service delivery, MacDonnell Regional Council remains committed to empowering communities, supporting local employment, and ensuring sustainable, high-quality services across the region.



Aged and disability services

Empowering Elders, Strengthening Communities

Our Aged and Disability Services ensure that elders and people with disabilities can live safely and with dignity in their own communities for as long as possible. Focusing on personalised, high-quality care, we deliver essential services across eight remote communities guided by the Aged Care Quality Standards.

We provide a holistic and culturally responsive approach that includes:

- Nutritious meal provision
- Personal care and domestic support
- Transportation and shopping assistance
- Social engagement and community connection
- Allied Health coordination and package management

Additionally, we lead the School Nutrition Program, ensuring children receive healthy meals that support school attendance and long-term well-being.

Over 75% of our aged care workforce are local Aboriginal employees, ensuring care is delivered by people who understand the culture, Language, and traditions of the clients they serve.

Our commitment is to meet and exceed industry standards, ensuring our elders receive the best possible care. At the same time, we continue to advocate for greater investment in aged care services in remote communities.

Community Services CONT.

Children's services

Laying Strong Foundations for the Future

Our Early Learning Program provides a safe, nurturing, and educational environment for over 120 children across nine remote communities. Guided by the National Quality Standards and the Early Years Learning Framework, we integrate Aboriginal child-rearing practices and ways of learning to support a strong cultural identity from an early age.

We deliver high-quality early childhood education with a focus on the following:

- School readiness and lifelong learning
- Healthy eating and nutrition programs
- Language and cultural preservation
- Protective behaviours and safety awareness
- Physical activity and motor skill development
- Integrated services with health professionals

With 75% of our workforce made up of local Aboriginal staff, we are investing in community-led solutions to address the critical shortage of early childhood educators. Our innovative recruitment and training strategies ensure that children learn from educators who share their Language, culture, and community values.

Children's Services operates up to five days a week, adapting to each community's unique needs. Through extensive stakeholder consultation and a commitment to continuous improvement, we ensure that our services meet and exceed community expectations, providing exceptional early learning experiences that empower children to thrive.



Childcare Worker Serionne painting with Eliyannah

Community safety

Supporting Safe and Strong Communities

Community Safety, commonly known as Night Patrol, is more than just a safety service. It is a community-driven initiative that ensures young people and vulnerable residents have access to safe spaces, Support, and culturally appropriate guidance.

Operating across 12 MRC communities, our teams are made up entirely of local Aboriginal employees, ensuring that solutions are built from within the community.

Our work focuses on:

- Transporting young people to and from safe spaces, youth programs, and home
- Supporting vulnerable residents, including taking them to clinics or police when necessary
- Monitoring and de-escalating anti-social behaviour
- Providing a safe space for community members to talk and share concerns
- Promoting community-led solutions to safety and well-being

Community Safety operates up to 5-6 nights per week, responding flexibly to each community's needs. Our focus is on prevention, early intervention, and working collaboratively with community leaders to strengthen safety and resilience.

By empowering local staff and ensuring they are respected as mentors rather than security guards, we continue to drive positive change and safer outcomes for everyone.



Areyonga Night Patrol team in vehicle ready for patrol

Youth services

Creating Opportunities, Inspiring Futures

Youth services are more than recreation; they provide young people opportunities to grow, lead, and thrive. With programs targeting education, Leadership, culture, sport, and employment pathways, we are empowering the next generation across our communities.

Each year, we engage with over 1,600 young people, offering:

- Sport and recreation programs that promote health, teamwork, and personal development
- Leadership and cultural programs that connect young people to their identity and heritage
- Support for education, training, and employment pathways

Over 80% of our 80+ youth workers are local Aboriginal employees, ensuring that programs are culturally relevant, and community led.

We operate five days a week, including 12 weeks of school holiday programs, ensuring young people have safe, engaging spaces year-round.

We also champion youth voices through local Youth Boards, giving young people a say in shaping their own programs and ensuring their concerns are heard.

By creating meaningful opportunities and investing in our youth, we are building stronger, more vibrant communities for the future.

Digital and library services

Digital and Library Services delivers literacy and digital literacy programs across the Council region, with the support of Libraries and Archives NT. The program navigates the unique challenges of delivering services in remote communities while successfully connecting individuals with vital educational and digital resources, often forging new pathways to overcome obstacles and achieve results.

Community Services CONT.

Community services directorate alignment with MRC goals

The Community Services Directorate is dedicated to supporting our strategic goals across key areas, ensuring that our services and programs directly contribute to achieving these objectives:

- **1.1 MRC's infrastructure meets community needs:** We strive to ensure that our infrastructure, including Youth and Recreation facilities, Aged Care Centres, and Childcare Centres, is well-maintained and meets the evolving needs of our communities.
- **1.2 Create employment opportunities & 1.3 Increase Aboriginal employment opportunities:** Over 80% of our staff come from local Aboriginal communities, creating employment opportunities and actively contributing to MRC's goal of increasing Aboriginal employment in our workforce.
- **1.4 Develop career pathways for Youth and emerging leaders:** Through professional development programs and leadership training, we actively support the career growth of young Aboriginal employees, ensuring they have pathways to leadership roles within the community.
- **2.1 Support active and healthy lifestyles & 2.2 Improve environmental health outcomes:** Our programs promote physical activity and well-being, such as through sport and recreation programs and community health initiatives, supporting MRC's goal of fostering healthier lifestyles and improving environmental health.
- **2.3 Improve access to cultural and recreational activities:** By delivering culturally responsive programs, including Youth and Community Safety services, we enhance access to meaningful recreational and cultural activities, contributing to the overall well-being of our communities.
- **3.1 Young people are empowered to be engaged representatives:** We engage over 1,600 young people annually, providing them with opportunities to develop leadership skills and become active representatives in shaping their futures, aligning with MRC's goal of empowering young people to lead.
- **3.3 Local Authority and Council members, constituents, and stakeholders are engaged:** We maintain strong communication with Local Authorities and stakeholders, ensuring their input informs the direction and success of our community programs.
- **4.1 Build a skilled and motivated workforce:** We invest heavily in workforce development, with over 200 staff, many of whom are trained locally, to ensure a skilled and motivated team that aligns with MRC's workforce development goals.
- **4.2 Support staff development and advancement:** Through ongoing training and leadership pathways, we ensure that our staff have the resources to grow in their roles and take on new responsibilities within our programs.
- **4.3 Improve efficiencies through technology:** We are continually looking at ways to improve our operations through technology, such as adopting digital systems for program management and reporting, in line with MRC's goal to improve efficiency.
- **4.4 Support staff safety and wellbeing:** Our commitment to staff wellbeing includes a range of initiatives, including access to professional development and support programs, ensuring that our team is both safe and supported in the workplace.
- **4.5 Empower staff to inform decision-making:** We encourage staff participation in decision-making processes, ensuring that those delivering the services have a voice in shaping the direction and improvement of programs.

By aligning our work with these specific MRC goals, the Community Services Directorate ensures that our efforts directly contribute to MRC's broader mission of improving lives, building resilience, and empowering local communities.

Commercial Services

As stated previously Council delivers Commercial programmes and services because they support the safety and wellbeing of community members and they contribute to the economic functionality of Council's communities.

Airstrips

Council is contracted to provide maintenance services for 9 airstrips in our region.

Australia post

Mail services are provided weekly to MRC communities and are usually delivered by air. Where airstrips are not available, the Council organises mail collection from Alice Springs.

Centrelink

Council is contracted by Services Australia to deliver remote Centrelink Agent services on behalf of the Commonwealth.

Indigenous essential services

The Council delivers essential services across all 13 Council communities under contract to the Power and Water Corporation (PowerWater). Council employs Essential Service Officers (ESOs), with a strong focus on training and developing local Indigenous employees in the role.

Outstations

Council is contracted and funded by the NT Government to deliver services to some occupied outstations or homelands. Services include municipal and essential services, housing maintenance services, and special purpose infrastructure projects.

Support and Administration Services

Professional support is provided to ensure the successful delivery of Council's services across the region through the provision of administrative, information and communications technology, human resources, finance and governance services.

Financial management

The Finance Department ensures that Council income, payments and financial reporting is done in a timely and accountable manner. The Finance department manages all payments and receipts across the 14 offices of Council, as well as the acquittal of all grant money received.

The work of this department encompasses the following activities:

- Budget development and review
- Rates administration
- Financial planning and reporting – including regular reporting to Council and the annual audited Financial Statements

- Internal controls and accounting procedures
- Financial asset management – including acquisitions and disposals and stock control
- Internal charges
- Custody and control of financial records
- Receipting, banking of money and financial investments
- Payment of salaries and wages
- Fraud detection and prevention
- Accounts payable and receivable

Governance and strategy

A small team delivers governance, policy, customer service, communications and engagement services for the entire MRC organisation. The governance team ensures the Council's compliance through legislative, statutory, policy and delivery obligations. The team specifically provides support to the Council and the 13 Local Authorities as well as stewardship to the development of MRC and operational policies, procedures and supporting documents.

The team provides the Council's communications, internally for the workforce and externally for stakeholders through selected media channels. The team facilitates Council's strategic planning and reporting processes and produces its most critical documents: the Regional Plan and Annual Report.

The work of this department encompasses the following activities:

- Communications
- Community Engagement
- Council and Local Authorities
- Customer Service
- Governance
- Policy Development and Review
- Records Management
- Risk Management
- Youth Boards



Areyonga Youth Board

Information and communications technology (ICT)

The information Communications Technology and Records department is supported by two staff members: the Manager and ICT Officer. The department supports 14 Locations and up to 220 users with access to the MRC Systems and Infrastructure.

This support includes but is not limited to:

- Maintaining all ICT Equipment serviceability especially with supply shortages across the globe.
- Managing and maintaining network connectivity – reporting all faults to service providers for repair to ensure continuity of services and operations.
- Providing feedback to service providers on major and minor outages for resolutions.
- Monitoring all ICT Expenses to ensure correct accountability of services are maintained.
- Cancelling and creating services as necessary to ensure standards are met.



MT LIEBIG LA MEETINGS – The introduction of new technology enables meetings to go ahead when participants can't be in community

Support and Administration Services CONT.

People & capabilities (P&C)

The People & Capabilities (P&C) Department reports to the Office of the CEO. This department contains the work divisions of:

1. Human Resources
2. Cultural Advisory
3. Learning & Development
4. Work, Health, & Safety

These divisions of the P&C team work together to manage employee end-to-end career cycles which include recruitment, records administration, performance management, learning & development, employee relations, industrial relations, administrative processing, and overall employee wellbeing.

In support of Goal #4.2, the P&C team continues to find the best training programs that will address sensitive and important topics. In early Q12025,

a new LMS platform will be rolled out to support staff in accomplishing required and professional development training throughout their employment. The LMS platform will keep staff informed of policy, procedures, and compliance tracking requirements. Our ongoing efforts to identify and provide opportunities for staff development aim to equip individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to become effective mentors, further fostering a supportive and informed workplace culture.

Additionally, P&C is committed to employing and empowering our indigenous staff, aimed to exceed 20% Aboriginal in the Alice Springs Office by June 2026.

Supporting Goal #4.4 the P&C team actively reviews, revises, and improves WHS processes and procedures across council. This effort is ongoing and continuously evolves for the better of staff well-being. We acknowledge our people are our greatest asset, and P&C is committed to evolve with operational needs to keep our employees safe.



Staff enjoying the thrill of 4WD training.



The 2024 Northern Territory Tidy Town Awards saw Haasts Bluff crowned the Territory's Sustainable Community Tidiest Town

Council Services

Summary of Council Services with direct linkage to Regional Plan

SERVICES	LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN	RESPONSIBLE SECTION	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
Core Services	1.1, 1.2, 1.3 2.1, 2.2, 2.3	Council Services	Provides essential municipal services including waste management, road maintenance, parks and open spaces, and animal management. This service is dedicated to supporting healthy, sustainable communities through effective infrastructure and environmental management.
Project Management	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Project Management Office	Oversees the planning, execution, and delivery of projects to ensure they align with the strategic goals of Council. This service focuses on infrastructure development and fostering Aboriginal employment opportunities and local enterprise.
Housing and Facilities	1.1, 4.1, 4.4	Property and Tenancy	Manages staff housing, visiting accommodation, and council facilities across communities. This service ensures adequate housing stock and facility maintenance to support staff and community needs, as well as maintaining compliance with safety standards.
Fleet Management	1.1	Transport Fleet and Infrastructure	Acquisition, maintenance and disposal of Council's motor vehicle fleet, plant and equipment. Management of Council's workshop and mobile mechanics.
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program (NATSIFACP)	2.1	Aged and Disability Services	Aged & Disability Services delivers the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program (NATSIFACP funded by The Department of Health and Aged, along with the Department of Education and NIAA: • Meals • Domestic Assistance (Laundry Service) • Personal Care • Transportation • Social Support Individualised/Group

SERVICES	LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN	RESPONSIBLE SECTION	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)	2.1	Aged and Disability Services	Aged & Disability Services delivers the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) Domestic Assistance (Laundry Service), including: • Personal Car • Transportation • Social Support Individualised/Group
NDIS Brokerage	2.1	Aged and Disability Services	Aged & Disability Services delivers the NDIS Brokerage, including: • Domestic Assistance (Laundry Service) • Personal Care • Transportation • Social Support Individualised/Group
Aged & disability services Administration & Management	4.2	Aged and Disability Services	Aged & Disability Services Management and Administration team work to meet Compliance and legislative requirements in: • Client Enrolments & Documentation • Compliance & Reporting • Payments & Finance • Internal Macdonnell Regional Council Reporting • Support Training and Professional development for staff
School Nutrition Program (SNP)	2.1	Aged and Disability Services	School Nutrition Program (SNP) including: • Supply and deliver breakfast and lunch to school children as per nutritional guidelines

Council Services CONT.

Summary of Council Services with direct linkage to Regional Plan

SERVICES	LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN	RESPONSIBLE SECTION	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
Children's Services 0-18mths	2.1	Children Services	Children's Services deliver the following programs for 0-18mths children funded in entirety by the Department of Education: • Early Learning Program. • Healthy eating & nutrition program. • Language and Cultural program. • Protective Behaviours. • Physical activity (gross motor) program. • Infrastructure provision to encourage an integrated service model for streamlined access to NT Health nurses, occupational therapists, dieticians, and hearing professionals. • School Readiness and Transition program.
Children's Services 18mths-3yrs	2.1	Children Services	Children's Services deliver the following programs for 18mths-3yrs children funded in entirety by the Department of Education: • Early Learning Program. • Healthy eating & nutrition program. • Language and Cultural program. • Protective Behaviours. • Physical activity (gross motor) program. • Infrastructure provision to encourage an integrated service model for streamlined access to NT Health nurses, occupational therapists, dieticians, and hearing professionals. • School Readiness and Transition program.



Eliannah, one of Council's budding artists

SERVICES	LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN	RESPONSIBLE SECTION	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
Children's Services 3-6yrs	2.1	Children Services	Children's Services deliver the following programs for 3-6yrs children funded in entirety by the Department of Education: • Early Learning Program. • Healthy eating & nutrition program. • Language and Cultural program. • Protective Behaviours. • Physical activity (gross motor) program. • Infrastructure provision to encourage an integrated service model for streamlined access to NT Health nurses, occupational therapists, dieticians, and hearing professionals. • School Readiness and Transition program.
Children's Services Administration & Management	4.2	Children Services	Children's Services Management and Administration team work to meet compliance and legislative requirements in: • Children's enrolments & documentation • Compliance reporting • Billing & finance • Child Care Subsidy claims • Internal MacDonnell Regional Council reporting • Support Training and professional development for staff

Council Services CONT.

Summary of Council Services with direct linkage to Regional Plan

SERVICES	LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN	RESPONSIBLE SECTION	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
Administration & Management	1.2, 1.3	Community Safety	Community Safety Administration and Management delivers the following programs funded by National Indigenous Australians Agency: - Working closely with the local Community Development Employment Programme (CDEP) providers in remote communities with advertising and recruitment. - Working with MRC departments and external agencies to provide accredited training opportunities for remote staff. - Manager has been working with Charles Darwin University (CDU) in developing the Certificate III in Community Safety which will be delivered to all staff. - All positions in the twelve (12) remote communities are held by local Aboriginal staff. - Staff have the opportunity to fill in for the Senior and Team Leader role to develop their skills, and to create an opportunity for progression.

SERVICES	LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN	RESPONSIBLE SECTION	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
Patrol Services	2.1, 2.3	Community Safety	Community Safety Patrol Services deliver the following programs funded by National Indigenous Australians Agency: - Support to the organisers and the community of the Northern Territory Healthy Community project. - Supporting local Community Sports Carnivals by providing additional Community Safety patrols. - Working alongside MacYouth to help with getting children and young people safely home after the MacYouth program ends. - Increasing the number of community patrols to assist in providing culturally appropriate service during Community Sports Carnivals - Liaising with Community Safety Staff in community, community members, Police, MRC Departments, and Community based stakeholders during preparation of Sporting and Cultural events. - Work with Stakeholders such as Art Centre's, MacYouth Programs in delivering support in providing culturally appropriate Youth Programs to youth and artists in community.



White cockatoos, Imanpa

Council Services CONT.

Summary of Council Services with direct linkage to Regional Plan

SERVICES	LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN	RESPONSIBLE SECTION	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
Administration & Management	4.1, 4.2, 4.3	Community Safety	Community Safety Administration & Management inducts New MacSafe Coordinator's not from a local Aboriginal community to the local community by the local Team Leader and their staff - Community Safety Coordinators provide an induction in community to the local staff; - The Coordinators provide ongoing support and training to the teams - Training and professional development for staff - Internal MacDonnell Regional Council reporting - Reporting to funding bodies - Development and ongoing use of the MacSafe Reporting App
Outside of School Hours Learning Program and Youth Development Program	2.1, 3.1	Youth Services	Provide engaging and relevant services to young people between the ages of 5-25 with an aim to increase participation, engagement and school attendance
Education and Engagement	2.1, 3.1	Youth Services	Employ 2 Youth Engagement Officers to provide preventative approaches to health and prevent volatile substance use in young people living in community.
Commercial Services	1.2, 1.3	Council Services	Manages key commercial contracts, including Indigenous Essential Services, Australia Post, Centrelink, and airstrip maintenance. This service aims to create employment opportunities, particularly for Aboriginal people, while ensuring the smooth delivery of essential services.
Support for Council and Local Authorities	3.2, 3.3	Governance and Strategy	Coordination of the engagement of Council and Local Authorities and their members through training and the conduct of efficient meetings which include current and accurate reporting.

SERVICES	LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN	RESPONSIBLE SECTION	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
Support Local Authority projects and discretionary funding	1.1	Governance and Strategy	Coordination and monitoring of LA projects & discretionary funding. Provision of project updates to the relevant departments, including liaison with Finance.
Manage Youth Boards	1.4, 3.1	Governance and Strategy	Implementation of youth leadership support and community engagement activities and strategies to support the youth within MRC through effective Youth Boards.
Connectivity	4.3	Information Services	Ensures reliable and secure network infrastructure for communication and access to services.
User Support	4.3	Information Services	Provides technical assistance to staff for troubleshooting, system access, and training.
Hardware and Equipment	4.3	Information Services	Manages and maintains IT hardware like computers, docks, and mobile devices.
Software /Upgrades	4.3	Information Services	Handles the installation, updates, and maintenance of software applications used by the council.
Data Management and Security	4.3	Information Services	Ensures the proper storage, backup, and protection of sensitive government data, maintaining compliance with privacy regulations.
Learning and Development	4.2, 4.3	Human Resources	Providing all employees of council with appropriate learning, training, and development opportunities.
Employee Development	4.2	Human Resources	Providing all employees with appropriate on-the-job support and development opportunities.

Council Services CONT.

Summary of Council Services with direct linkage to Regional Plan

SERVICES	LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN	RESPONSIBLE SECTION	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
<i>Succession Planning</i>	4.1	Human Resources	Ensuring each role has key successor(s) in place as people move throughout or from MRC.
<i>Recruitment</i>	4.1	Human Resources	Process of attracting the right people through engaging adverts and proper induction procedures.
<i>Retention</i>	4.1	Human Resources	Process of obtaining the right people through employee engagement and support measures.
<i>Employee Relations</i>	4.4, 4.5	Human Resources	EBA negotiation and implementation; Industrial dispute (singular or collective) management and resolution; Joint Consultative Committee operation; Legislation and Awards compliance; cultural awareness.
<i>Support new employees</i>	4.1, 4.4, 4.5	Safety	Inductions for new employees emphasise that Work Health and Safety is Council's main priority.
<i>Learning and Development</i>	4.2, 4.3, 4.4	Safety	Introduce the new Learning Management System platform to improve training delivery and staff development. Hold monthly WHS training sessions for Senior Leadership Team and Managers.
<i>Support Staff Safety and Wellbeing</i>	4.4	Safety	Ensure Council's compliance with Work Health and Safety legislation and codes of practice.
<i>Staff are empowered to inform MRC decision making</i>	4.5	Safety	Staff are trained in hazard identification and reporting. Supervisors are encouraged to include recommendations on incident and accident reports.

Summary of Council Services which underpin MRC's Vision, Mission and Values

SERVICES	RESPONSIBLE SECTION	SERVICE DESCRIPTION
Payroll	Financial Services	Calculating wages, managing tax withholdings, filling taxes and super.
Accounts payable	Financial Services	Managing funds that council owes its vendors.
Accounts Receivables and Rates	Financial Services	Managing and collecting the funds owed to council from its customers and rate payers
Grants and Acquittals	Financial Services	Providing accurate reporting on funded projects.
Financial Accounting & Reporting	Financial Services	Monitoring and reviewing all ledgers, books adjustments, reconciling, month-end process and year end process, preparing data for auditors, and provide accurate financial reports on Council's financial position.
Budget & Management accounting	Financial Services	Ensuring financial stability and effective resource allocation.
Manage HQ	Governance and Strategy	Provide a high level of customer service to MRC customers and clients through a friendly and efficient receptionist service.
Management of the MRC brand, Media and Communications	Governance and Strategy	Development and implementation of all content to ensure effective and consistent communication across all media.
Policy development and review	Governance and Strategy	Develop, monitor and review all policies, procedures, guidelines, registers and other supporting documents for MRC.
Strategic planning and reporting	Governance and Strategy	Development, monitoring and coordination of all planning and reporting documents and obligations.
Risk Management	Governance and Strategy	Provide strategic and innovative approaches to MRC's risk management framework, policies and procedures that drive risk-adverse decision-making.
Records Management	Governance and Strategy	Manage and maintain the application of MRC's records management protocols, legislated registers and destruction of records.

List of council and other Services

Council Services

Core Services

- Animal Management
- Cemetery Management
- Internal roads maintenance and traffic management
- Parks and open spaces
- Sports grounds
- Street Lighting
- Waste management
- Weed control and fire hazard reduction

Infrastructure/Asset Management Services

- Project Management Office
- Housing and Facilities Management
- Fleet Management
- Swimming Pools

Support and Administration Services

- Financial Management
- Governance and Strategy
- Information and Communications Technology
- People and Capabilities
- Workplace Health and Safety

Non-Council Services

Community Services

Aged and Disability Services

- Aged Care Services
- School Nutrition Program

Children's Services

- Early Learning Program

Community Safety

- Community Safety Program

Digital and Library Services

- Library Program
- Digital Literacy Program

Youth Services

- Youth Services & Outside School Hours
- Learning Program
- Remote Sports Program
- Meeting the Youth Gap

Commercial Services

- Airstrip Maintenance
- Centrelink Agency
- Essential Services Maintenance
- Postal Services
- Outstation Services

Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Community

Community members can provide feedback directly to MacDonnell Regional Council staff, Local Authority members and Ward Councillors.

All Local Authority and Council meetings are open to the public. Community members are encouraged to attend these meetings to observe their deliberations and decisions.

Local Authorities

Local Authorities exist in each of MRC's 13 communities. The members of Local Authorities work with their communities to find solutions to local issues. They are involved in planning, give feedback on service delivery and identify priority community projects.

Local Authorities are a key component of Council's Goal #3 – Empowered Communities.

Council

MRC reports quarterly to Council on Regional Plan progress against the KPIs, budget performance as well as issues and strategies identified by Council. Councillors monitor and guide Council's spending and progress to ensure that identified objectives are achieved. All directorates report to Council at each Ordinary Council Meeting.

Executive leadership team

Directors and Executive Managers are responsible for monitoring, reporting and implementing their Operational Plans to ensure KPIs are achieved. Much of Council's funding is sourced by agreements or commercial contracts from external agencies that impose detailed performance targets and reporting regimes to monitor outcomes.

Staff

Council staff contribute to their team's Regional Plan KPIs through their directorate's Operational Plans.

NT Government and General Public

Many Council documents, including agendas, policies, financial reports and plans are available on the Council website. Council has a principle of transparency wherever possible to ensure our stakeholders, community members and the public are aware of Council operations and key measures. The Council's Regional Plan is presented to the Agency responsible for Local Government each year, ensuring compliance with our governing legislation and contributing to a robust governance framework.

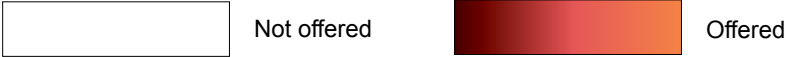
Community Consultation

The Regional Plan has received input from varied sources, including Council's staff, Local Authority members and Councillors.

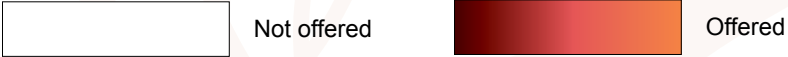
Our Services

Services offered by MacDonnell Regional Council by Community

	AMOONGUNA	AREYONGA	DOCKER RIVER	FINKE	HAASTS BLUFF	HERMANNSBURG
Council Infrastructure						
Municipal Services						
Libraries						
Outstations						
Swimming Pools						
Airstrip Maintenance						
Australia Post						
Centrelink						
Power Maintenance						
Water Maintenance						
Sewerage Maintenance						
Early Learning Centres						
Youth Services						
Community Safety						
Aged and Disability Services						
School Nutrition						
Sport and Recreation						



	IMANPA	KINTORE	MOUNT LIEBIG	PAPUNYA	SANTA TERESA	TITJIKALA	WALLACE ROCKHOLE
Council Infrastructure							
Municipal Services							
Libraries							
Outstations							
Swimming Pools							
Airstrip Maintenance							
Australia Post							
Centrelink							
Power Maintenance							
Water Maintenance							
Sewerage Maintenance							
Early Learning Centres							
Youth Services							
Community Safety							
Aged and Disability Services							
School Nutrition							
Sport and Recreation							



*The beautiful
landscapes
of our region
- grass tree
country near
Docker River.*

Our **Financial Plan**

MacDonnell Regional Council proposes to adopt its budget for the 2025-26 financial year consistent with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2019* (the Act).

The following information is provided in accordance with the requirements of Part 10.4 Long-term Financial Plan, section 200, and Part 10.5 Annual Budgets, section 201(2) and *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021* as applicable. The format of the Tables presented are in accordance with recommendations provided by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development.

Each legislative requirement is addressed below.

Our Long-term Financial Plan

A long-term financial plan must contain:

s200(3)(a) a statement of the major initiatives the council proposes to undertake during the period to which the plan relates.

The Budget which has been developed for 2025-2026 feeds into the long-term financial planning of Council. This planning is restricted by a series of unknowns in regards to a range of commercial and community services related programs and contracts.

Commercial and agency contracts represent a significant revenue stream for the Council in management and administration fees. The programs also assist in subsidising other core service activities such as human resources, administration and infrastructure services.

The sustainability of the Council is dependent upon stable, long term grant funding arrangements with the Australian Government and the Northern Territory Government. Changes in these arrangements and in existing commercial and agency contracts have the potential to disrupt the Council's capacity to deliver core services to the communities.

Key assumptions of the long-term financial plan:

- All current core services will continue to be provided by the Council. Grant-funded (community) services have been considered only where experience shows that the funding is recurrent since the Council hasn't been advised, at the time of preparing the long-term financial plan, of what funding will be available for the next 4 financial years. Estimates are based on original arrangements provided to Council.

- There will be no significant adverse change in government policies impacting upon the operation of the Council.
- Overall CPI increases are assumed to average 3.6% per year depending on the relevant program.
- The repairs, maintenance, management and development of infrastructure is intended to continue at the same level as detailed in the current year budget with increases in line with inflation.

The new initiatives budgeted for in 2025-2026 are detailed in Table 4. "Budget Initiatives".

s200(3)(b) the projected statement of income and expenditure for each financial year of the period to which the plan relates.

Table 1. "Annual Budget 2025-2026 and Long-Term Financial Plan" contains the required information as specified in the Act.

Budget discussion

The budget for a particular financial year must:

s201(2)(a) outline:

(i) the council's objectives for the relevant financial year.

The objectives for the 2025-2026 financial year are to deliver Council services and programs as outlined in the Regional Plan 2025-2026. The primary focus of the Council is to deliver Core Services such as providing an administration centre in each community and undertaking roads and parks maintenance and waste management, etc.

Regulation 8(1)(b) of the General Regulations states that Council's Budget and Long Term Financial Plan must include a list of budget assumptions. The assumptions used in drafting the Budget for 2025-2026 are shown at Table 3. "Budget Assumptions". The Long Term Financial Plan Assumptions are detailed above.

(ii) the measures the council proposes to take, during the financial year, towards achieving those objectives.

At page 67 of the Regional Plan Council's Performance Monitoring and Reporting mechanisms are detailed. The Community, Local Authorities, Council, etc, all hold MRC accountable in achieving its Objectives. More specifically each Objective included in the Goals established by Council is assigned to a specific organisational Director. It is the responsibility of each Director to report to Council on a quarterly basis on progress against each Key Performance Indicator and to provide an update against the target and timeline set.

In relation to budget objectives MRC's performance is strictly monitored and reported to Council at each meeting. Variances outside of acceptable limits are quantified and qualified in the report.

(iii) the indicators the council intends to use as a means of assessing its efficiency in achieving its objectives.

The Regional Plan lists the indicators/measures that the Council intends to use to assess the quality and/or effectiveness of the planned outputs/actions.

s201(2)(b) contain the projected statement of income and expenditure for the financial year (differentiating between operating and capital expenditure).

Table 1. "Annual Budget 2025-2026 and Long-Term Financial Plan" and Table 2. "Capital Expenditure and Funding Budget" contain the required information as specified in the Act.

s201(2)(c) list the council's fees for services and the estimates of revenue for each of those fees.

The detailed Schedule of Fees and Charges 2025-2026 is included at Appendix 2.

s201(2)(d) state the amount to be allocated to the development and maintenance of each class of infrastructure for the financial year.

The Budget 2025-2026 includes the following expenditure in relation to Council's infrastructure:

CATEGORY	OPERATING EXPENDITURE	CAPITAL EXPENDITURE
Infrastructure - inc the upgrades listed below:	\$1,032,835	\$2,197,704
Maintenance of Council controlled Assets	\$96,240	-
Amoonguna	\$54,700	\$118,100
Areyonga	\$90,301	\$120,849
Docker River	\$65,500	\$182,843
Finke	\$41,099	\$76,579
Haasts Bluff	\$106,000	\$89,490
Hermannsburg	\$74,500	\$349,987
Imanpa	\$53,500	\$72,089
Kintore	\$86,500	\$345,784
Mount Liebig	\$57,200	\$74,507
Papunya	\$127,481	\$305,570
Santa Teresa	\$72,370	\$264,393
Titjikala	\$91,444	\$125,345
Wallace Rockhole	\$16,000	\$72,168

s201(2)(e) state the amount the council proposes to raise by way of rates, and set out the rates structure, for the financial year.

The full Declaration of Rates and Charges for MacDonnell Regional Council 2025-2026 under Part 11 of the *Local Government Act 2019* is included at Appendix 1 to this report. The précis of rates and charges to be levied is as follows:

Rates Chart

RATE OR CHARGE	APPLICATION	RATE OR AMOUNT	TOTAL TO BE RAISED
Rate	Residential	Flat rate of \$1,254.00 per allotment	\$1,608,964
Rate	Commercial	Flat rate of \$1,485.00 per allotment	
Rate	Conditional rating (pastoral)	0.000789 cents per dollar / min. charge \$970.61	
Rate	Conditional rating (mining)	0.008960 cents per dollar / min. charge \$2,297.21	
Rate	All other allotments	Flat rate of \$1,435.00 per allotment	
Rate	Special - Animal Management	Flat rate of \$232.00 per Residential allotment	\$1,148,875
Charge	Garbage - Residential	\$1,006.00pa	
Charge	Garbage - Commercial, industrial or community use purposes	\$2,012.00pa	
TOTAL			\$2,757,839

s201(2)(f) include an assessment of the social and economic effects of its rating policies.

MacDonnell Regional Council’s rates and charges are set each year with regard to a number of factors including increases in the cost of providing services, proposed capital works and increases in service levels or other Council initiatives. The Council also considers statistical indicators such as the Consumer Price Index and the increase in cost of wages experienced by MacDonnell Regional Council under its enterprise agreement.

The Council consciously aims to keep the increase in rates to a minimum in order to lessen any impact on ratepayers, while generating enough income to provide adequate levels of service and achieve its objectives.

The rates as a revenue source at MacDonnell Regional Council represent just 3.65% of revenue so are a minor part of its revenue. The Minister for Local Government approves rates for Pastoral Leases and Mining Leases and at the minimum level these will increase in line with the Minister’s approval.

The remaining rates raised by Council have been increased by 3.5%, which reflects the need to cover reduced income in other areas and the recent high level of increase in CPI in order to help maintain the current level of services within the Council. The Council currently has a low level of reserves, which are available for a limited amount of future capital and project expenditure.

As such, the Council’s assessment of the social and economic effects of the Council’s rating policy is that the increases in rates are not of sufficient magnitude to have any significant effect on the ratepayers concerned.

s201(2)(g) state the allowances for members of the council for the financial year and the amount budgeted to cover payment of those allowances.

The following rates of allowances for Councillors are applicable from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026:

Councillor Allowances

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEMBER	
Councillors' Allowance	\$21,230.00
Professional Development Allowance	\$5,000.00
Maximum Extra Meeting Allowance (Paid at the per day rates approved within Council's policy)	\$10,000.00
Maximum Vehicle Allowance	\$10,000.00
Total Claimable	\$46,230.00
DEPUTY PRINCIPAL MEMBER	
Deputy Principal Member's Allowance	\$37,320.00
Professional Development Allowance	\$5,000.00
Maximum Extra Meeting Allowance (Paid at the per day rates approved within Council's policy)	\$10,000.00
Maximum Vehicle Allowance	\$10,000.00
Total Claimable	\$62,320.00
PRINCIPAL MEMBER	
Principal Member's Allowance	\$106,600.00
Professional Development Allowance	\$5,000.00
Total Claimable	\$111,600.00
LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBER PER MEETING	
Local Authority Chairperson will be paid at the following rates:	
Up to 2 hours	\$300
Between 2 and 4 hours	\$450
More than 4 hours	\$600
Ordinary Local Authority Members will be paid at the following rates:	
Up to 2 hours	\$200
Between 2 and 4 hour	\$300
More than 4 hours	\$400

The MacDonnell Regional Council’s 2025-2026 budget includes \$720,020 in respect of all allowances paid to Elected Members. Elected Members’ Allowances are paid in accordance with Council Policy and in line with the Northern Territory of Australia Remuneration Tribunal report on Determination no.1 of 2025 – Allowances for members of local councils.

s201(2)(h) separately provide for a budget for each local authority established by the council.

Table 5. “Budget for Each Local Authority Area 2025-2026” and Table 6. “Capital Expenditure and Funding Budget by Local Authority Area” contain the required information as specified in the Act.



The challenging weather conditions in our region

TABLE 1: Annual Budget 2025-26 and Long-Term Financial Plan

	2025-26 BUDGET \$	2026-27 BUDGET \$	2027-28 BUDGET \$	2028-29 BUDGET \$
OPERATING INCOME				
Rates	1,608,964	1,784,240	1,873,450	1,967,120
Charges	1,148,875	1,256,360	1,319,180	1,385,140
Fees and Charges	413,095	433,750	455,440	478,210
Operating Grants and Subsidies	34,973,481	36,022,690	37,103,370	38,216,470
Interest/Investment Income	401,100	413,130	425,520	438,290
Commercial & Other Income	5,828,884	6,003,750	6,063,790	6,124,430
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	44,380,738	45,913,920	47,240,750	48,609,660
OPERATING EXPENSES				
Employee Expenses	26,676,813	27,477,120	28,301,430	29,150,470
Materials and Contracts	15,280,980	15,440,190	15,594,590	15,750,540
Elected Member Allowances	357,120	360,690	364,300	367,940
Elected Member Expenses	365,280	368,930	372,620	376,350
Council Committee & LA Allowances	134,650	136,000	137,360	138,730
Council Committee & LA Expenses	70,802	71,510	72,230	72,950
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	9,205,374	9,205,374	9,205,374	9,205,374
Interest Expenses	3,500	3,540	3,580	3,620
Other Expenses	5,295,473	1,088,460	1,099,340	1,110,330
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	57,396,330	54,151,814	55,150,824	56,176,304
BUDGETED OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(13,015,591)	(8,237,894)	(7,910,074)	(7,566,644)
Remove NON-CASH ITEMS				
Add Back: Non-Cash Expenses - Depreciation	9,205,374	9,205,374	9,205,374	9,205,374
TOTAL NON-CASH ITEMS	9,205,374	9,205,374	9,205,374	9,205,374
Less ADDITIONAL OUTFLOWS				
Capital Expenditure	(908,000)	(917,080)	(926,250)	(935,510)
TOTAL ADDITIONAL OUTFLOWS	(908,000)	(917,080)	(926,250)	(935,510)
Add ADDITIONAL INFLOWS				
Capital Grants Income	500,428	0	0	0
Prior Year Carry Forward Tied Funding	3,927,790	0	0	0
Transfers from Reserves	290,000	0	0	0
TOTAL ADDITIONAL INFLOWS	4,718,218	0	0	0
NET BUDGETED OPERATING POSITION	0	50,400	369,050	703,220

TABLE 2. Capital Expenditure and Funding Budget

	2025-26 BUDGET \$	2026-27 BUDGET \$	2027-28 BUDGET \$	2028-29 BUDGET \$
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE				
Buildings & Facilities	290,000	292,900	295,830	298,790
Infrastructure (including roads, footpaths, park furniture)	0	0	0	0
Furniture and Fittings	18,000	18,180	18,360	18,540
Plant & Equipment	100,000	101,000	102,010	103,030
Vehicles	500,000	505,000	510,050	515,150
TOTAL EXPENDITURE FUNDING	908,000	917,080	926,250	935,510
Total capital expenditure funded by:				
Operating Income (amount allocated to fund capital items)	117,572	917,080	926,250	935,510
Gain from the sale of assets/other	500,428	0	0	0
Transfers from Reserve	290,000	0	0	0
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUNDING	908,000	917,080	926,250	935,510

TABLE 3: Planned Major Capital Works Budget

	MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECT*	TOTAL PRIOR YEAR(S) ACTUALS \$	2025-26 BUDGET \$	2026-27 BUDGET \$	2027-28 BUDGET \$
CLASS OF ASSETS					
Plant & Equipment	Replacement Plant	953,998	750,000	757,500	765,080
Vehicles	Upgrade of fleet	942,246	830,000	838,300	846,680
TOTAL		1,896,244	1,580,000	1,595,800	1,611,760

	MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECT*	2028-29 BUDGET \$	TOTAL MAJOR CAPITAL WORKS BUDGET \$	EXPECTED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE
CLASS OF ASSETS				
Plant & Equipment	Replacement Plant	953,998	3,226,578	Ongoing
Vehicles	Upgrade of fleet	942,246	3,457,226	Ongoing
TOTAL		1,896,244	6,683,804	

Table 4. Budget Assumptions

The key assumptions made when setting the annual budget and long-term financial plan, included in the Regional Plan are:

- a. In order to be sustainable Council relies on a range of commercial and agency contract revenue streams to supplement core services income. These programs help share the cost of the centralised management and administrative services of Council, such as human resources, financial and infrastructure services, and allows core service staff in our communities to provide support to these programs at a reasonable cost.

It is assumed that in the long term, grant funding arrangements with the Australian Government and Northern Territory Government and other commercial contracts will continue at a similar level to past experience, providing Council continued ability to benefit from shared resources.
- b. There is no significant change expected in current services provided by the Council.
- c. Administration fees charged by Council will continue at the current generally accepted level of 15%. Funds resulting from the Northern Territory Government's promise of grants to Local Authorities have been included as it is believed that these are to be available again in 2025-26.
- d. Council has increased residential and commercial rates by 3.5%, waste charges by 3.5% and other fees and charges by 3.6%. This reflects the need to cover reduced income in other areas, the previous level of rates and charges in comparison to those existing across the NT and the recent high level of increase in CPI. Wages have been increased in line with the 3% increase within council's Enterprise Agreement (EA) which is currently being negotiated and the eligibility of staff to receive an increment within the wage structure. Council policy is to not capitalise roads, therefore road expenditure is reflected in full in the operational expenditure within the budget.
- e. An estimate of CPI and wage increases has been used to forecast the budgeted income and expenditure for the long-term plan.

Table 5. Budget Initiatives

The annual budget for 2025-26 has been reviewed and consequential changes to the Council's long-term plan have been incorporated. There are a series of unknowns, in respect of ongoing funding of services provided under agency arrangements, which have led to various assumptions being made and these are discussed below.

This budget is predicated on a "business-as-usual" model. No new initiatives are anticipated at this time but will be considered as and when they arise.



Belinda Urquhart, CEO, welcomes Maryanne Malbunka as a newly-appointed Councillor at the December 2024 Council meeting.

Table 6. Budget for Each Local Authority Area

	REGIONAL OFFICE \$	AMOONGUNA \$	AREYONGA \$	DOCKER RIVER \$	FINKE \$	HAASTS BLUFF \$	HERMANNSBURG \$
OPERATING INCOME							
Rates	1,608,964	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charges	1,148,875	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fees and Charges	0	3,000	19,000	57,865	30,200	8,150	19,500
Operating Grants and Subsidies	24,738,123	33,500	409,929	427,691	368,644	318,212	1,039,888
Interest/Investment Income	401,100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial & Other Income	1,626,147	182,382	404,039	319,932	373,038	303,402	393,142
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	29,529,548	218,882	832,968	805,488	771,882	629,764	1,452,530
OPERATING EXPENSES							
Employee Expenses	8,917,565	1,188,902	1,442,522	1,276,881	1,332,502	1,396,339	2,204,372
Materials and Contracts	1,566,686	349,016	502,976	455,785	315,193	472,066	1,411,442
Elected Member Allowances	357,120	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elected Member Expenses	365,280	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Committee & LA Allowances	70,800	4,800	4,600	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800
Council Committee & LA Expenses	0	5,200	7,802	5,200	5,200	5,200	5,200
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	9,205,374	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interest Expenses	3,500	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Expenses	3,051,365	108,911	208,892	132,002	140,170	164,372	273,612
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	23,544,029	1,656,829	2,166,791	1,874,669	1,797,864	2,042,776	3,899,426
BUDGETED OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	5,985,520	(1,437,947)	(1,333,823)	(1,069,181)	(1,025,982)	(1,413,012)	(2,446,896)

IMANPA \$	KINTORE \$	MOUNT LIEBIG \$	PAPUNYA \$	SANTA TERESA \$	TITJIKALA \$	WALLACE ROCKHOLE \$	TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET \$
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,622,036
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,142,142
7,450	59,950	44,410	132,375	12,700	15,520	2,975	413,095
24,000	917,625	743,307	4,495,053	461,553	979,556	16,400	34,973,481
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	401,100
297,693	368,873	293,758	398,739	359,182	342,829	165,727	5,828,884
329,143	1,346,448	1,081,475	5,026,167	833,435	1,337,905	185,102	44,380,738
833,081	1,245,100	1,166,193	1,842,915	1,479,101	1,753,931	597,410	26,676,813
265,805	1,562,365	1,013,637	5,045,988	635,145	1,587,357	97,518	15,287,319
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	357,120
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	365,280
4,800	4,800	6,450	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	134,650
5,200	5,200	6,000	5,200	5,000	5,200	5,200	70,802
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,205,374
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,500
86,526	164,912	137,472	340,515	249,007	201,196	36,520	5,295,473
1,195,412	2,982,378	2,329,753	7,239,418	2,373,053	3,552,484	741,448	57,396,330
(866,269)	(1,635,930)	(1,248,277)	(2,213,251)	(1,539,618)	(2,214,579)	(556,346)	(13,015,591)

Table 7. Capital Expenditure Budget for Each Local Authority Area

	REGIONAL OFFICE \$	AMOONGUNA \$	AREYONGA \$	DOCKER RIVER \$	FINKE \$	HAASTS BLUFF \$	HERMANNSBURG \$
Buildings & Facilities	290,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Infrastructure (including roads, footpaths, park furniture)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Furniture and Fittings	18,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plant & Equipment	100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vehicles	500,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE FUNDING	908,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total capital expenditure funded by:							
Operating Income (amount allocated to fund capital items)	618,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Grants Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfers from Reserve	290,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUNDING	908,000	0	0	0	0	0	0

IMANPA \$	KINTORE \$	MOUNT LIEBIG \$	PAPUNYA \$	SANTA TERESA \$	TITJIKALA \$	WALLACE ROCKHOLE \$	TOTAL \$
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	290,000
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18,000
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100,000
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500,000
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	908,000
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	117,572
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500,428
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	290,000
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	908,000



Imanpa Civil Workers removing cars

Appendix 1

Rate Assessment Record Certification

I certify to the Council that, to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, the rates assessment record is a comprehensive record of all rateable land within the area.

Belinda Urquhart

Chief Executive Officer, MacDonnell Regional Council

Wednesday 28 May 2025

Rates and Charges Declaration for 2025-26

Rates

MacDonnell Regional Council (the Council) makes the following declaration of rates pursuant to Chapter 11 of the *Local Government Act 2019* (the Act).

1. Pursuant to Section 226 of the Act, the Council declares rates consisting of a combination of fixed charges and valuation based charges including a minimum charge. For valuation based rates, pursuant to Section 227 of the Act, the Council adopts the Unimproved Capital Value (UCV) method as the basis of the assessed value of allotments within the council area.
2. The Council intends to raise, for general purposes by way of rates, the amount of \$1,401,709 which will be raised by application of:
 - (a) Differential rates with differential minimum amounts being payable in application of each of those differential rates; or
 - (b) A fixed charge ("flat rate")

3. The council hereby declares the following rates:
 - (a) With respect to every allotment of rateable land within the council area that is used for residential purposes, a flat rate of \$1,254.00 for each allotment.
 - (b) With respect to every allotment of rateable land within the council area that is used for commercial or business purposes, a flat rate of \$1,485.00 for each allotment.
 - (c) With respect to every allotment of conditionally rateable land within the council area:
 - (i) A rate of 0.000789 multiplied by the assessed value of land held under a Pastoral Lease, with the minimum amount being payable in the application of the differential rate being \$970.61;
 - (ii) A rate of 0.008960 multiplied by the assessed value of land occupied under a Mining Tenement with the minimum amount being payable in the application of the differential rate being \$2,297.21.
 - (d) With respect to every allotment of rateable land within the council area not otherwise described elsewhere in this declaration, a flat rate of \$1,485.00 for each allotment.

4. Special Rates

Pursuant to Section 238 of the Act, the Council declares the Special rate "Animal Management" to assist with implementation/cost recovery of animal management within Council's regional areas. The Council intends to raise \$207,255 by way of this Special rate. This rate will be levied on all "Residential" allotments by application of a fixed charge of \$232.00 per allotment.

Charges

5. Pursuant to Section 239 of the Act, the Council declares the following charges in respect of the garbage collection services it provides for the benefit of all land within the following designated communities within the council area (except such land as Council from time to time determines to be exempt or excluded from the provision of such services or for which the Council has determined it is impractical to provide such services).
6. Council intends to raise \$1,148,875 by these charges.
7. Garbage collection services are provided weekly in the designated communities within the council area of Amoonguna, Areyonga, Docker River, Finke, Haasts Bluff, Hermannsburg, Imanpa, Kintore, Mount Liebig, Papunya, Santa Teresa, Titjikala and Wallace Rockhole.
8. For the purpose of paragraphs 8:
 - "residential dwelling" means a dwelling house, flat or other substantially self-contained residential unit or building on residential land and includes a unit within the meaning of Unit Titles Act.
 - "residential land" means land used or capable of being used for residential purposes (but does not include land on which there is no residential dwelling).
9. The following charges are declared:
 - (a) A charge of \$1,006.00 per annum per residential dwelling in respect of the garbage collection service provided to, or which Council is willing and able to provide to, each residential dwelling within Amoonguna, Areyonga, Docker River, Finke, Haasts Bluff, Hermannsburg, Imanpa, Kintore, Mount Liebig, Papunya, Santa Teresa, Titjikala and Wallace Rockhole Communities.
 - (b) Other than a residential dwelling to which paragraph 8 (a) applies, a charge of \$2,012.00 per annum for each allotment used for commercial, industrial or community use purposes in respect of the garbage collection service provided to, or which Council is willing and able to provide to, each such allotment within Amoonguna, Areyonga, Docker River, Finke, Haasts Bluff, Hermannsburg, Imanpa, Kintore, Mount Liebig, Papunya, Santa Teresa, Titjikala and Wallace Rockhole Communities.

Payment of Rates and Charges

10. Pursuant to section 244 of the Act, Council determines that rates and charges for the year 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 inclusive, shall be due and payable in two approximately equal instalments on the following dates namely:
 - First instalment Friday 3rd October 2025
 - Second instalment Friday 6th March 2026
11. Payment of all or any remaining instalments may be made on or before the due date of the next instalments.
 - (a) Details of due dates and specified amounts will be listed on the relevant rates notice under section 242 of the Act ("the Rates Notice").
 - (b) Variations to those options for payment will be administered according to the conditions outlined on the front and reverse of the Rate Notice.
 - (c) A ratepayer who fails to abide by such conditions may either be sued for recovery of the principal amount of the rates and charges and late payment penalties; or a charge may be registered over the property or lease prior to potential sale of the property. Costs reasonably incurred by Council in recovering or attempting to recover the rates and charges will be recoverable from the ratepayer.

Relevant Interest Rate

12. The Council fixes relevant interest rate for the late payment of rates and charges in line with Section 245 of the Act at the rate of 18% per annum which is to be calculated on a daily basis.

Belinda Urquhart

Chief Executive Officer, MacDonnell Regional Council

For further details please contact MacDonnell Regional Council, Chief Financial and Information Officer on T: 8958 9600.

Appendix 2

Fees and Charges Schedule

The following Fees and Charges are set out in accordance with Section 289 as at 1 July 2025. Council reserves the right to vary them from time to time and current rates can be found at:

www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au/about-council/rates-fees-charges.aspx

Labour Hire (subject to availability)

Penalties apply for work outside of normal span of work hours.

	UNIT	FEE (GST INC)
Essential Services Operator	per Hour	\$202.00
Other Skilled Staff	per Hour	POA*

* price on application

Short Term Accommodation

A purchase order must be received and the booking confirmed prior to arrival on community. All accommodation arrangements to be completed with the Council Services Coordinator in the specific community prior to arrival at that location. All accommodation is un-serviced and based on availability

	UNIT	FEE (GST INC)
All communities except Amoonguna	per Person/ per Night*	\$150.00

*terms greater than 14 days are dependent on availability and fee is subject to change

Administration

SERVICE	UNIT	FEE (GST INC)
A4 Photocopying	per Page	\$5.00
A3 Photocopying	per Page	\$8.00
A4 Faxing	per Page	\$7.00
A4 Scanning and Emailing Documents	per Page	\$7.00
Regional Plan	per Copy	\$24.00
Annual Report	per Copy	\$37.00
Rates Search	Per request	\$34.00
Freedom of Information (FOI) application relating to personal information		No Fee
Freedom of Information (FOI) application relating to non-personal information		\$37.00
Freedom of Information (FOI) application relating to personal and non-personal information		\$37.00

Meeting Room and Office Use

SERVICE	UNIT	FEE (GST INC)
Meeting rooms in Council Offices	per Full Day	\$286.00
Use of office space	per Day	\$98.00

Plant Hire

	UNIT	FEE (GST INC)
Vehicle Hire 4WD day rate (with driver less km rate)	per Hour	\$132.00
Vehicle Hire 4WD km rate	per Km	\$3.00
Backhoe (with operator)	per Hour	\$264.00
Excavator (with operator)	per Hour	\$327.00
Forklift (with operator)	per Hour	\$264.00
Front End Loader (with operator)	per Hour	\$264.00
Front End Loader - Large (with operator)	per Hour	\$327.00
Grader (with operator)	per Hour	\$327.00
Skid Steer (with operator and attachments)	per Hour	\$264.00
Tractor (with operator and attachments)	per Hour	\$264.00
Truck - Articulated (with operator)	per Hour	\$327.00
Truck - HR (with operator)	per Hour	\$327.00
Truck - MR (with operator)	per Hour	\$264.00

Equipment Hire

	UNIT	FEE (GST INC)
Brush Cutter (with operator and fuel)	per Hour	\$312.00
Cement Mixer	per Hour	\$301.00
Chainsaw (with operator and fuel)	per Hour	\$312.00
Generator	per Hour	\$301.00
Lawnmower (with operator)	per Hour	\$312.00



Kintore Community safety members Rex Eddie and Sharon Napparulla.

Waste Management Fees

MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE (NON- COMMERCIAL)	UNIT	FEE (GST INC)
Clean Fill	m³	No Charge
General Waste	m³	No Charge
Green Waste	m³	No Charge

BINS	UNIT	FEE (GST INC)
Replacement 240 litre Wheelie Bin	Each	\$139.00
Service fee to supply and fit parts	per Hour	\$77.00
Skip Bin Hire	per 4m³	\$359.00
Skip Bin Hire	per 5m³	\$392.00
Skip Bin Hire	per 6m³	\$424.00
Skip Bin Hire	per 8m³	\$467.00

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL	UNIT	FEE (GST INC)
Unsorted Waste will be charged at m³ rate	m³	\$666.00
Animal Carcasses	Each	\$47.00
Animal Carcasses (feral - camels, donkeys, etc.)	Each	\$264.00
Batteries	Each	\$6.00
Car Bodies	Each	\$345.00
Concrete/Rubble	m³	\$230.00
General Waste	m³	\$63.00
Green Waste	m³	\$63.00
Metal Uncontaminated	m³	\$63.00
Mixed Fill (soil, rock, rubbish)	m³	\$63.00
Solar Hot Water Systems	Each	\$79.00
Timber (untreated)	m³	\$63.00
Timber (treated) includes pallets	m³	\$63.00
Tyre - Vehicle	Each	\$26.00
Tyre - Light Truck 16"	Each	\$44.00
Tyre - Truck Heavy Vehicle	Each	\$81.00
Tyre - Tractor/ Industrial Vehicle	Each	\$225.00
White Goods	Each	\$26.00

BURIAL	UNIT	FEE (GST INC)
Burial – Grave digging (within community only)	Per plot	\$700.00
Burial – Grave digging (outside of community)	Per plot	As per applicable rates

MRC Council offices
contact information

Alice Springs OFFICE

2 / 1 Bagot Street, The Gap
Local call: 1300 360 959
Phone: 08 8958 9600
Mail: PO Box 5267, Alice Springs NT

Council Services Centres

Amoonguna

Phone: 08 8959 7402
Mail: PO Box 996 Alice Springs NT 0871
Email: amoonguna@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Areyonga (Utju)

Phone: 08 8956 7877
Mail:CMB 219 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: areyonga@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Docker River (Kaltukatjara)

Phone: 08 8954 4102
Mail: CMB 49 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: dockerriver@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Finke (Aputula)

Phone: 08 8956 0966
Mail: CMB 184 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: finke@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Haasts Bluff (Ikuntji)

Phone: 08 8956 8533
Mail: CMB 211 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: haastsbluff@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Hermannsburg (Ntaria)

Phone: 08 8954 4702
Mail: CMB 185 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: hermannsburg@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Imanpa

Phone: 08 8956 7454
Mail: CMB 119 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: imanpa@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Kintore (Walungurru)

Phone: 08 8956 8566
Mail: CMB 13 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: kintore@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Mount Liebig (Watiyawanu)

Phone: 08 8956 8588
Mail: CMB 97 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: mountliebig@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Papunya (Warumpi)

Phone: 08 8993 7703
Mail: CMB 225 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: papunya@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Santa Teresa (Ltyentye Apurte)

Phone: 08 8957 3802
Mail: CMB 190 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: santateresa@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Titjikala

Phone: 08 8956 0844
Mail: CMB 149 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: titjikala@macdonnell.nt.gov.au

Wallace Rockhole

Phone: 08 8954 4802
Mail: CMB 168 via Alice Springs NT 0872
Email: wallacerockhole@macdonnell.nt.gov.au



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www.macdonnell.nt.gov.au

*Essential Services Officers play a key role in the
delivery of services to Council's communities*