

# Agenda

## Ordinary Meeting

**Wednesday, 25 February 2026**

**Time: 9:00 am**  
**Location: Council Chambers**  
**82 Brisbane Street**  
**BEAUDESERT QLD 4285**

**Scenic Rim Regional Council  
Ordinary Meeting  
Wednesday, 25 February 2026  
Agenda**

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**1 Opening of Meeting****2 Attendance and requests for leave of absence****3 Apologies****4 Prayers****5 Public Question Time**

In accordance with Council Procedure - Meetings and Other Forums Administration and Participation, the Chief Executive Officer will read out the public questions and then the answer to each question.

**5.1 Questions from Mr Gary Lindsay**

The Chief Executive Officer received an email from Mr Lindsay dated 21 January 2026, as follows:

*"Question1: Will the CEO confirm that he will make public the full findings of the Peer Review into MCU 23/131, the Development Application for 8 poultry sheds housing 320,000 birds, proposed for Moorang Lane?"*

*Question 2: Will the Council note and acknowledge that the Bremer River crossing, proposed as access for this development and initially approved by council, has been cut on multiple occasions already during heavy rain this season."*

**5.2 Questions from Mr Nigel Waistell re Gallery Walk Car Park**

The Chief Executive Officer received an email from Mr Waistell dated 5 February 2026, as follows:

*"I submit the attached question for Public Question Time for the meeting to be held on Wed 25 Feb 26."*

The following questions were included in an attachment to Mr Waistell's email:

*"Ref: Gallery Walk Car Park:*

- 1. How much did the land cost?*
- 2. Who paid for the land: State, Council or both?*
- 3. How much was paid by each identity?*
- 4. How much is the building of the car park going to cost under current budget projections?*
- 5. Who is paying: State, Council or both?*
- 6. What is the cost to each identity?*

7. *The Officer's report for the Special Meeting on 4 Feb stated that contractors will deliver the remaining scope, including roadworks, lighting and amenities. Please can you expand on what is covered by roadworks, lighting and amenities? And do amenities include the toilets?"*

The Chief Executive Officer received an additional email from Mr Waistell dated 14 February 2026, as follows:

*"A question for the meeting on Wed 25 Feb 26.*

*The Mayor has announced an independent investigation into Gallery Walk Car Park.*

*Questions are:*

1. *What is the proposed expenditure for this investigation?*
2. *What is the proposed timeline for the report to be delivered to Council?*
3. *What is the proposed timeline for delivering the results of the investigation to the public?*
4. *Why is it necessary to have an independent investigation?"*

## **6 Declarations of Prescribed or Declarable Conflict of Interest by Members**

## **7 Announcements / Mayoral Minutes**

## **8 Reception of Deputations by Appointment / Presentation of Petitions**

## **9 Confirmation of Minutes**

Ordinary Meeting - 28 January 2026

Special Meeting - 4 February 2026

**10 Business Arising from Previous Minutes****10.1 Correction to Dates for Ordinary Meetings to be held in June and July 2026**

**Executive Officer:** Director Corporate and Community Services

**Item Author:** Governance Officer

**Attachments:** Nil

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**Councillor Portfolio / Representation**

Not applicable.

**Local Government Area Division**

This report relates to the whole Scenic Rim region.

**Executive Summary**

This report relates to the requirement for correction of two dates listed for Ordinary Meetings to be held in June and July 2026.

**Recommendation**

That Council note the correction to the following dates for Ordinary Meetings to be held in June and July 2026, as referred to in Item 11.1 of the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 24 September 2025:

- Wednesday, ~~22~~ 24 June 2026; and
- Wednesday, ~~23~~ 22 July 2026.

**Previous Council Considerations / Resolutions**

At the Ordinary Meeting held on 24 September 2025 (Item 11.1), Council resolved to:

1. Adopt the following dates for Ordinary Meetings to be held in 2026, with the meetings to commence at 9.00am:
  - Wednesday, 28 January 2026;
  - Wednesday, 25 February 2026;
  - Wednesday, 25 March 2026;
  - Wednesday, 29 April 2026;
  - Wednesday, 27 May 2026;
  - Wednesday, 22 June 2026;
  - Wednesday, 23 July 2026;
  - Wednesday, 26 August 2026;

- Wednesday, 23 September 2026;
  - Wednesday, 28 October 2026;
  - Wednesday, 25 November 2026;
  - Wednesday, 9 December 2026; and
2. Acknowledge that Ordinary Meetings scheduled in 2026, will be held in the Council Chambers, 82 Brisbane Street, Beaudesert.

**Report / Background**

To ensure compliance with relevant legislation and the continuity of Council's decision-making responsibilities, it is necessary for Council to resolve the scheduling of Ordinary Meetings.

At the Ordinary Meeting held on 24 September 2025 (Item 11.1), Council resolved to adopt the proposed dates for Ordinary Meetings held in 2026. It was acknowledged that the 2026 Ordinary Meetings were to be held on Wednesdays, with meetings commencing at 9am, and the dates adopted ensure timely decision-making and effective corporate planning, and were proposed in consideration of the dates of known events.

Two typographical errors have been identified in the dates proposed for June and July 2026 Ordinary Meetings, being 22 June 2026 and 23 July 2026, both of which are not Wednesdays. The report seeks Council's acknowledgement of the typographical errors to ensure that the dates advertised on Council's website and in local newspapers are correct, in compliance with the relevant subsections of s.254B of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* set out below.

**Budget / Financial Implications**

Not applicable.

**Strategic Implications**

*Operational Plan*

Theme: 3. Open and Responsive Government

Key Area of Focus: To be a high-quality customer-focused organisation that provides high-quality customer-focused services

*Legal / Statutory Implications*

*Local Government Regulation 2012:*

- Section 254B of the Regulation provides:
  - "(1) A local government must, at least once in each year, publish a notice of the days and times when -
    - (a) its ordinary meetings will be held; and
    - (b) the ordinary meetings of its standing committees will be held.
  - (2) The notice mentioned in subsection (1) must be published on the local government's website, and in other ways the local government considers appropriate. ..."
- Section 257of the Regulation provides that a local government must meet at least once in each month unless it would be impractical or unnecessary to do so.

**Risks**

Strategic Risks

The following Level 1 and Level 2 (strategic) risks are relevant to the matters considered in this report:

SR46 Inadequate or lack of Governance (including procurement) Framework (systems, policies, procedures, delegations and controls) in place to ensure compliance by Council's Councillors and Officers with all relevant State and Federal legislation and regulations.

Risk Summary

<b>Category</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Governance, Risk & Compliance  Non-compliance with statutory requirement of publication of Council meeting dates.	Council is required, in accordance with ss.254B and 257 of the Regulation, to publish a notice of the days and times when its Ordinary Meetings will be held, and must meet at least once in each month.
Reputation, Community & Civic Leadership  Lack of effective communication with the community and stakeholders. Failure to adequately consider issues of concern and strategic planning that effect communities within the region.	Council has a responsibility to deliver effective, appropriate and timely communication to the community and relevant stakeholders.

**Human Rights Implications**

No human rights have been impacted by any actions recommended in this report.

**Consultation**

Coordinator Governance

**Conclusion**

Council is requested to note the correction of the dates adopted for Ordinary Meetings to be held in June and July 2026.

**Options**Option 1

That Council note the correction to the following dates for Ordinary Meetings to be held in 2026, as referred to in Item 11.1 of the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 24 September 2025:

- Wednesday, ~~22~~ 24 June 2026; and
- Wednesday, ~~23~~ 22 July 2026.

Option 2

That Council resolve to change the dates of the Ordinary Meetings to be held in June and July 2026.

## 11 Consideration of Business of Meeting

### Executive

#### 11.1 Independent Investigation into Gallery Walk Upgrade Project

**Executive Officer:** Director Planning, Development and Environment /  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

**Item Author:** Internal Auditor

#### **Attachments:**

1. Draft Terms of Reference - Project Investigation - Gallery Walk Upgrade Project [↓](#)

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### Councillor Portfolio / Representation

Not applicable.

### Local Government Area Division

This report relates to Division 1.

### Executive Summary

The Gallery Walk Upgrade Project was initially approved with a \$4.2 million budget scheduled to commence in early 2025 and be complete by February 2026. In April 2025, the budget was revised to \$4.4 million. In January 2026, Council was requested to increase the total budget to \$6 million and extend the delivery timeframe to June 2026. These changes were accepted by Council at a Special Meeting held on 4 February 2026, following lengthy discussion of the project status and the contributing factors to the variations.

The Mayor has called for an independent investigation into the project and this report presents a draft Terms of Reference for the consideration of Council.

### Recommendation

That:

1. Council direct the Chief Executive Officer to engage a suitably qualified independent auditor to conduct an investigation into the Gallery Walk Upgrade Project that would report directly to the Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with Section 3.1 of the Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference; and
2. Council endorse an increase of \$50,000 to the budget of the Internal Audit Section to fund this activity, which will be incorporated into Council's budget at the next budget review.

## Previous Council Considerations / Resolutions

At the Special Meeting held on 4 February 2026 Council resolved that *"Council endorse the one-off reallocation of \$1.6 million to accommodate a total budget amount of \$6 million for the delivery of the Gallery Walk Stage 1 Off-Street Carparking project, funded from general revenue through the Quarter Two Budget Review 2025 - 2026, with monthly reporting to Council on project progress"*.

## Report / Background

The Gallery Walk Upgrade Project aims to alleviate traffic congestion and enhance pedestrian safety, providing off-street parking and improved accessibility within the Tamborine Mountain Gallery Walk Precinct. Stage One will focus on the construction of the off-street parking to the east of Long Road and pedestrian safety. The current stage 1 project is jointly funded by a \$2.1 million grant through the Queensland Government's South East Queensland Community Stimulus Program.

The Gallery Walk Upgrade Project was initially approved with a \$4.2 million budget scheduled to commence in early 2025 and be complete by February 2026. In April 2025 the budget was revised to \$4.4 million.

The project has raised in January 2026 that the latest forecast is for an increase in total cost of \$1.6 million raising the total to \$6 million. The timeframe will also be extended by approximately three months with a new completion date in June 2026. These changes were accepted by Council at a Special Meeting held on 4 February 2026. The project has stated:

*"As with many civil infrastructure projects, delivery delays can arise from factors such as adverse weather, resourcing challenges, and prevailing market conditions. These issues commonly affect site access, material availability, and construction scheduling, requiring adjustments to timelines and budgets to maintain quality and compliance outcomes."*

*"For this project, the primary unforeseen drivers of delay include changes to Council resources, an increase in earthwork scope beyond initial estimates for the carpark and associated work, minor scope changes to service relocations and electrical conduiting works, prolonged wet weather, and reduced contractor availability in a market influenced by major regional infrastructure projects in South East Queensland."*

The revised budget and completion date were accepted by Council at a Special Meeting held on 4 February 2026, following lengthy discussion of the project status and the contributors to the variations.

Council has established the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), which is enabled by and operates within, the terms of the Audit and Risk Committee Policy and the Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference. In section 3.1 under the heading Authority, it is stated that, *"The Committee has authority to conduct or request investigations into matters within its scope of responsibility"*.

To help ensure the independence of this activity, it will be structured to report directly to the ARC. The ARC Chair has been consulted on the approach and on the draft Terms of Reference and will have ongoing oversight (with the detailed aspects facilitated by Council's Internal Auditor). After review by the ARC, a final report will be provided to the Chief Executive Officer and Council.

A comprehensive investigation report of the findings and recommendations from the investigation will be presented to an Ordinary Meeting to ensure effective transparency and accountability. This will contain as much detail as possible, as determined by the independent consultant, with consideration to protecting personal information of individuals, ensuring due process and natural justice and meeting obligations to keep commercially sensitive information confidential.

The draft Terms of Reference is attached for the information of Councillors. A final decision on the Terms of Reference will be made by the ARC Chair after consideration of feedback from the Councillors.

**Budget / Financial Implications**

It is estimated that the costs to engage a suitably experienced firm or individual, including costs to produce a report that would be publicly available, may total up to \$50,000.

There would also be an indirect cost arising from the need for the Internal Auditor to spend time facilitating and supporting the review.

**Strategic Implications**

*Corporate Plan 2025-2030*

Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030 outlines the organisation's Vision, Mission, and Values. Council's Values are Service, Resilience, Respect, Commitment.

Strategic Goal: Not applicable

Guiding Principle: Operational Efficiency

*Legal / Statutory Implications*

There are no sections within the *Local Government Act 2009* or the *Local Government Regulation 2012* which directly require an investigation or would impact the conduct of such an investigation. The investigation would need to consider compliance with legislative requirements such as those governing procurement and financial reporting. Council would be required to obtain three written quotes.

**Risks**

Strategic Risks

The following Level 1 and Level 2 (strategic) risks are relevant to the matters considered in this report:

CR25 Delivering Projects and Strategic Plans - It is inherently challenging to deliver successful projects ranging from large capital projects, strategic programs, internal enhancement projects, or smaller operational projects. Unsuccessful projects can result in delayed outcomes, cost increases, or reduced scope of deliverables.

Risk Summary

Category	Explanation
Governance, Risk & Compliance  There is a risk of repeated issues in project delivery.	As the strategic risk recognises, it is inherently challenging to undertake project activities. There are risks that are common to similar projects and risks more specific to the circumstances of individual projects. An investigation can help ensure Council staff have a good understanding of project risks and are managing these effectively.
Reputation, Community & Civic Leadership  If Council does not demonstrate effective project management including meaningful lessons learned activities public confidence in Council is likely to be diminished.	Council needs to ensure that it is following an effective and appropriate project management framework to reduce the risks of project failures and ensure we are meeting public expectations for project delivery. An investigation can assess the suitability of current and planned project management approaches, including effective processes for project closure and lessons learned activities.

## Human Rights Implications

Fair hearing

Although this human right is not completely applicable to these circumstances, it is appropriate to recognise that the investigation will be conducted in a manner that meets the principles of 'natural justice' and a 'fair hearing'. If it becomes applicable, the requirements of Council's Human Resources policies will be followed.

## Consultation

Executive Team  
Audit and Risk Committee Chair

## Conclusion

The increase in costs and delays to completion of the Gallery Walk Upgrade Project has led to calls for an investigation to determine the cause and ensure that lessons are learnt to avoid such outcomes in the future. This report outlines an approach to that investigation for the consideration of Council.

## Options

### Option 1

That:

1. Council direct the Chief Executive Officer to engage a suitably qualified independent auditor to conduct an investigation of the Gallery Walk Upgrade Project that would report directly to the Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with Section 3.1 of the Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference; and
2. Council consider an increase of \$50,000 to the budget of the Internal Audit Section to fund this activity, which will be incorporated into Council's budget at the next budget review.

### Option 2

Council's Internal Auditor would lead the investigation with the assistance of an independent consultant. In this approach the cost would be reduced, with a degree of impact on the depth of the analysis, independence of the activity and possibly on the quality of the outcomes. Council's Internal Auditor has experience in the review of large projects including multiple IT Projects at Brisbane City Council. Results of the review would still be reported publicly at an Ordinary Meeting.

A recommendation to support this option would be:

That:

1. Council direct the Chief Executive Officer to have the Internal Audit Section, supported by a suitably qualified independent auditor, conduct an investigation of the Gallery Walk Upgrade Project that would report directly to the Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with Section 3.1 of the Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference; and
2. Council consider an increase of \$20,000 to the budget of the Internal Audit Section to fund this activity, which will be incorporated into Council's budget at the next budget review.

Option 3

Council's Internal Auditor would conduct the investigation. In this approach there would be no direct cost, with only an indirect cost due to redirecting the efforts of the internal resource. The Internal Auditor would still work under the direction of the Audit and Risk Committee to a greater degree than for other review activities that would ensure an adequate level of independence. Results of the review would still be reported publicly at an Ordinary Meeting.

A recommendation to support this option would be:

That Council direct the Chief Executive Officer to have the Internal Audit Section conduct an investigation of the Gallery Walk Upgrade Project that would report directly to the Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with Section 3.1 of the Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference.

Option 4

Council does not support an independent investigation, however, Council directs that an internal process be completed, including the Internal Auditor, that would assess and document the issues that have arisen, the lessons learned from the project and confirm the forecasts for completion of the project. This would be led by staff from the Infrastructure Service Directorate not involved in the project and would follow the project closure methodology in the new Project Management Framework including completing a report using the "Significant Project Closure Report" template.

A recommendation to support this option would be:

That Council direct the Chief Executive Officer to conduct an internal review led by staff from the Infrastructure Services Directorate, consulting with Council's Internal Auditor, that would be guided by the project closure methodology in the Project Management Framework.



SCENIC RIM REGIONAL COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

**PROJECT INVESTIGATION-  
GALLERY WALK UPGRADE  
PROJECT**



## Background

The Gallery Walk Upgrade Project aims to alleviate traffic congestion and enhance pedestrian safety, providing off-street parking and improved accessibility within the Tamborine Mountain Gallery Walk Precinct. Stage One will focus on the construction of the off-street parking to the east of Long Road and pedestrian safety. Once funded, Stage Two will involve additional off-street parking construction, along with improvement works on Long Road.

The project has been developed over a number of years. Initial public consultation occurred in 2021 with a final concept design completed in 2022. Council then started seeking grant funding opportunities to help in funding the project. In 2024 an application was submitted to the State Government which was confirmed as being successful in November 2024.

The current stage one of the project is jointly funded by a \$2.1 million grant through the Queensland Government's South East Queensland Community Stimulus Program. The grant agreement has a number of requirements including matched funding by Council, recognition of the State Government funding, regular progress reporting and consultation on public communication related to the project.

In February 2025 construction works commenced, with an expected completion date of February 2026 (weather and construction conditions permitting). The original \$4.2 million project budget was adjusted to \$4.4 million in the budget review in April 2025.

The project has raised in January 2026 that the latest forecast is for an increase in total cost of \$1.6 million raising the total to \$6 million. The timeframe will also be extended by approximately three months with a new completion date in June 2026. These changes were accepted by Council in a Special Ordinary Meeting on 4 February 2026. The project has stated,

"As with many civil infrastructure projects, delivery delays can arise from factors such as adverse weather, resourcing challenges, and prevailing market conditions. These issues commonly affect site access, material availability, and construction scheduling, requiring adjustments to timelines and budgets to maintain quality and compliance outcomes.

For this project, the primary unforeseen drivers of delay include changes to Council resources, an increase in earthwork scope beyond initial estimates for the carpark and associated work, minor scope changes to service relocations and electrical conduiting works, prolonged wet weather, and reduced contractor availability in a market influenced by major regional infrastructure projects in South East Queensland."

Concerns have been raised regarding the overall governance of the project and the circumstances surrounding the changes to the forecast cost and timeline. Councillors have requested that the Audit and Risk Committee have direct oversight of an independent review to examine what has occurred in the Gallery Walk Upgrade Project. This is consistent with the statement on the Audit and Risk Committee's authority within section 3.1 of the Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference.

The request was for an investigation that would identify what has occurred within the project, why and how this has happened to ensure that such project changes/cost over runs do not happen for this project and others in the future.

## Objective

To provide an independent assessment of the Gallery Walk Upgrade project's current status, events that contributed to the project variations, project governance and project forecasts to ensure it can be completed effectively and that lessons are captured for future capital works.

## Scope

This investigation will consider the following aspects of the Gallery Walk Upgrade Project:

- **Baseline Comparison:** Review the original scope and budget against the current \$6 million forecast to identify the specific drivers of the \$1.6 million variation.
- **Governance & Approvals:** Examine the decision-making trail regarding the scope changes. Were variations approved within delegated authority and reported to Councillors and the Mayor?
- **Project Management Methodology (PMM) Compliance:** Evaluate the specific PMM expected for a project of this scale (e.g., PRINCE2, PMBOK, or Council's internal framework).
  - Determine if the project team adhered to the mandatory stages, documentation, and reporting requirements of that methodology.
  - Identify if the deviations from the budget and scope were a result of methodology failure or a failure to follow the methodology.
- **Risk Management:** Evaluate the project's risk register and why the current cost overruns were not flagged as high-probability risks earlier.
- **Funder Alignment:** Ensure the proposed scope changes remain compliant with the requirements of external funding bodies and that other grant obligations are being met.
- **Procurement Review:** Verify that all variations and additional works have been procured in accordance with Council policy.
- **Stakeholder Communication and Timing:** Evaluate the effectiveness of the "Notification of Works" process.
  - Assess whether the decision to delay works (to avoid the Christmas peak) was made with sufficient lead time to mitigate cost escalation or if it exacerbated the financial pressure.

## Investigation Outcomes

The investigation aims to identify the "root cause" of issues (e.g., unforeseen site conditions vs. design changes).

The report produced will document specific recommendations to address the findings of the review.

The investigation report will be provided directly to the Audit and Risk Committee. A final detailed report will subsequently be issued to the CEO and Council.

A comprehensive investigation report of the findings and recommendations will be presented to an Ordinary Meeting of Council to ensure effective transparency and accountability.

## Audit Resources

Council's Internal Auditor will facilitate the conduct of the review. A suitable independent external resource will be engaged following a procurement process.

It is estimated that the review will have a direct cost of up to \$50,000. The Internal Auditor anticipates 15 working days effort for themselves (indirect cost) to establish appropriate arrangements, assist with conduct of the review and the reporting processes.

The aim is to have a draft report available by the end of April 2026.

## 11.2 Operational Plan 2025-2026 Quarter Two Report

**Executive Officer:** Chief Executive Officer

**Item Author:** Executive Manager People and Performance

**Attachments:**

1. Quarter Two Operational Plan Report 2025-2026 (under separate cover) [⇒](#)
  2. Quarter Two Service Delivery Report 2025-2026 (under separate cover) [⇒](#)
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### Councillor Portfolio / Representation

Not applicable.

### Local Government Area Division

This report relates to the whole Scenic Rim region.

### Executive Summary

Council adopted the Operational Plan 2025-2026 at the Ordinary Meeting held on 9 July 2025.

Attachment 1 to this report is a draft progress report against the Operational Plan and is provided for Quarter Two of 2025-2026 covering the period from 1 October 2025 to 31 December 2025.

Attachment 2 to this report is a draft report on Council's service delivery performance, which also covers Quarter Two and which provides information about various Council's services. Minor changes to headings and structure have been made to reflect the new organisational structure.

### Recommendation

That:

1. Council approve the Quarter Two 2025-2026 Operational Plan Progress Report; and
2. Council approve the Quarter Two 2025-2026 Service Delivery Report.

### Previous Council Considerations / Resolutions

At the Ordinary Meeting held on 9 July 2025, Council adopted the Operational Plan 2025-2026.

### Report / Background

The Quarter Two 2025-2026 Operational Plan Progress Report has been prepared to provide a summary of the progress made towards the achievement of the Operational Plan 2025-2026, as required by section 175 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

The Operational Plan is divided into sections, to align to the Corporate Plan 2025-2030.

There are 51 activities in the Operational Plan 2025-2026. As at 31 December 2025, the end of Quarter Two, four activities had been completed, 28 were considered to be On Track, 16 are being closely monitored and three are marked as requiring attention. The report provides comments about each activity and, where an activity is not completed or on track, the reason for lack of progress and what action is being undertaken.

The Service Delivery report provides data and comments about Council's activities during Quarter Two.

**Budget / Financial Implications**

The activities detailed within the 2025-2026 Operational Plan are factored into Council's annual budget.

**Strategic Implications**

*Corporate Plan 2025-2030*

Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030 outlines the organisation's Vision, Mission and Values. Council's Values are Service, Resilience, Respect, Commitment.

Strategic Goal: Not applicable

Guiding Principle: Operational Efficiency

*Legal / Statutory Implications*

The Chief Executive Officer is required to provide a quarterly report on the Operational Plan to the local government meeting under section 174(3) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

**Risks**

Strategic Risks

The following Level 1 and Level 2 (strategic) risks are relevant to the matters considered in this report:

CR8 Ineffective Organisation Governance - Council is a complex organisation delivering a wide range of services via different processes, using different resources and systems. Council's organisational governance, including corporate planning, controls, internal compliance, monitoring and reporting, may not be adequate to ensure quality outcomes and avoid potentially poor consequences.

Risk Summary

Category	Explanation
Governance, Risk & Compliance  Failure to progress the Operational Plan Quarterly Report to Council results in non-compliance with statutory obligations or resolutions of Council.	Council's endorsement of the quarterly reports as recommended will mitigate risk of non-compliance with statutory reporting obligations and/or failure to deliver on a resolution of Council.

Category	Explanation
Reputation, Community & Civic Leadership  Failure to deliver on corporate objectives as outlined in the quarterly reports results in negative perception from community and other stakeholders.	Regular monitoring and review of operational performance against targets ensures that issues are and risks are escalated and managed appropriately. Council's adoption of the quarterly progress report, which includes commentary regarding delivery parameters, will ensure that transparency for the community can be maintained.

**Human Rights Implications**

No human rights have been impacted by any actions recommended in this report.

**Consultation**

All Directors and relevant Managers and Coordinators have contributed to the development of the quarterly progress reports.

**Conclusion**

The draft Quarter Two 2025-2026 Progress Report demonstrates the progress made towards the implementation of the deliverables contained within the Operational Plan 2025-2026 for the period 1 October 2025 to 31 December 2025 and also provides an update about service delivery during Quarter Two.

**Options**

Option 1

That:

1. Council approve the Quarter Two 2025-2026 Operational Plan Progress Report; and
2. Council approve the Quarter Two 2025-2026 Service Delivery Report.

Option 2

That:

1. Council not approve the Quarter Two 2025-2026 Operational Plan Progress Report; and
2. Council not approve the Quarter Two 2025-2026 Service Delivery Report.

## Planning, Development and Environment

### 11.3 Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Strategy 2020-2025 - Final Report

**Executive Officer:** Director Planning, Development and Environment /  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

**Item Author:** Economic Development Officer /  
Acting Principal Specialist Regional Prosperity

**Attachments:**

1. Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Strategy 2020-2025 (under separate cover) [⇒](#)
  2. Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Strategy 2020-2026 Action status report [↓](#)
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### Councillor Portfolio / Representation

Economic Development - Cr Marshall Chalk

### Local Government Area Division

This report relates to the whole Scenic Rim region.

### Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the key initiatives undertaken and the outcomes achieved through the implementation of the Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Strategy 2020-2025 (the Strategy) (refer Attachment 1).

Adopted on 3 February 2020, the Strategy aligned with Council's Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Operational Plan. The Strategy supported five key development pillars and identified a range of opportunities for the region which were achieved through implantation of an action plan.

The Strategy's strategic framework was designed to support the creation of valuable local employment for local residents. It was constructed based on research, analysis and engagement with stakeholders and built upon the levers of influence and role of local government and other government agencies in facilitating economic development.

The Strategy provided an effective catalyst and focus through which impactful initiatives have been delivered in the region, which resulted in sustainable economic growth and job creation.

**Recommendation**

That:

1. Council note the completion of the Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Strategy 2020-2025 and acknowledge the initiatives undertaken and outcomes delivered to the benefit of the Scenic Rim region; and
2. Council acknowledge the commencement of the Scenic Rim Economic Development Strategy 2026-2030.

**Previous Council Considerations / Resolutions**

At the Ordinary Meeting held on 3 February 2020 (Item 11.1), Council adopted the Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Strategy 2020-2025.

At the Ordinary Meeting held on 27 August 2025 (Item 11.5), Council adopted the Scenic Rim Economic Development Strategy 2026-2030.

**Report / Background**

Adopted in February 2020, this Strategy set a clear direction and roadmap for the Scenic Rim's economic growth and sustainability through to the end of 2025. The Strategy provides the framework and details the strategies that will support the ultimate goal of creating valuable jobs for local people.

This Strategy was an extension of the Corporate Plan and Community Plan of Scenic Rim Regional Council and represented Council's plan to deliver a Sustainable and Prosperous Economy. The Strategy built on existing initiatives and links to other elements of the Corporate Plan and Community Plan and informed Council's Annual Operational Plans.

The Strategy's framework was designed to support the creation of valuable local employment for local residents. It was constructed based on research, analysis and engagement with stakeholders and built upon the levers of influence and role of local government in economic development.

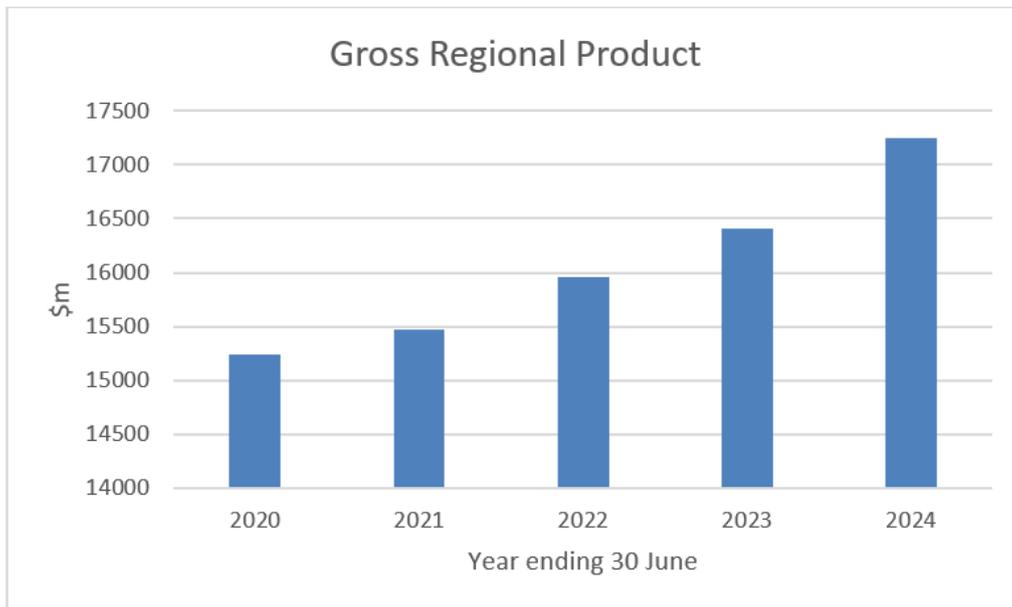
The five pillars of activity provided clear direction regarding how the Scenic Rim region will support the creation of valuable employment for local residents:

1. Business and industry development
2. Marketing and promotion
3. Investment facilitation
4. Education and workforce development
5. Advocacy for infrastructure

Within each pillar, there were specific initiatives that provided clear direction regarding activities to support economic growth and prosperity throughout the region. Overall, the pillars and initiatives provided a sound basis for detailed tasks and actions, which formed an annual action plan to be delivered.

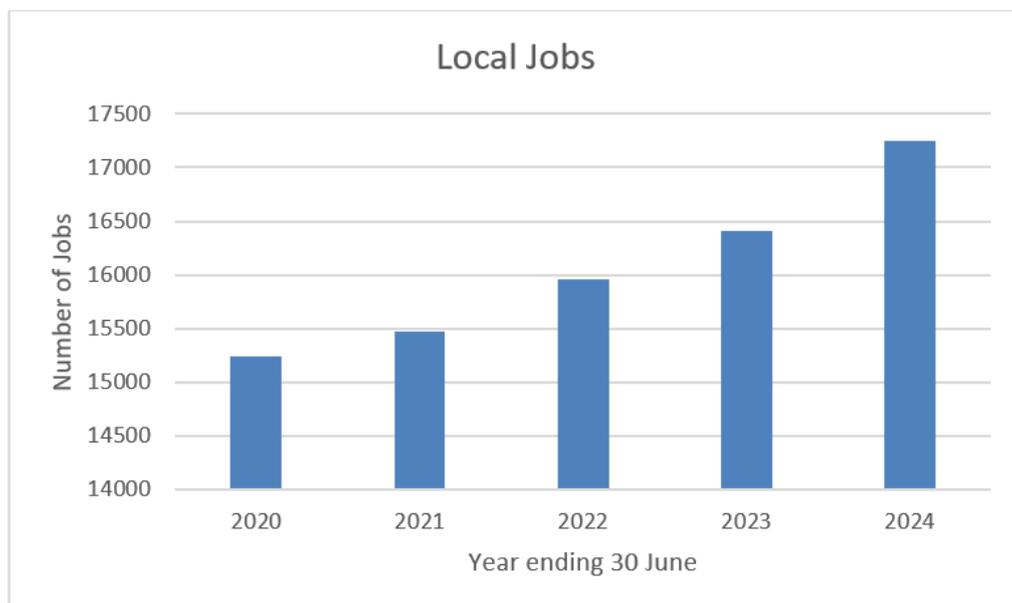
The Strategy was monitored and tracked against the action plan and the economic outcomes (progress towards achieving the identified goal of creating valuable jobs for residents).

The value of the Scenic Rim economy, grew from \$1.9 billion as at 30 June 2020 to \$2.5 billion year ending 30 June 2024. This equates to a 30.72% increase, which is double that of the growth of the Queensland (14.7% increase over the same period). The Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry contributed significantly to this growth (\$170m), and accounted for 15% of the value of the region's economy in 2023-2024, double that of the contribution in 2019-2020.



The number of local jobs increased by 2,010 over the period from 30 June 2020 to 30 June 2024, with the three main industries contributing to this growth being:

- Construction (+496 local workers)
- Health Care and Social Assistance (+488 local workers)
- Education and Training (+371 local workers)



Of the 48 actions contained within the Strategy (refer Attachment 2):

- 44 have been fully delivered;
- one has been partly delivered and in progress; and
- three have not been delivered.

Overall, this is considered a very good result, especially given the external impacts such as COVID-19, drought and natural disasters. The region's economy is on a growth trajectory, which will be guided by the Scenic Rim Economic Development Strategy 2026-2030.

**Budget / Financial Implications**

Costs associated with delivery of the Strategy were contained within the operational budget of the Regional Prosperity team. Additional funding was also achieved via various State and Federal Government funding programs.

**Strategic Implications**

*Corporate Plan 2025-2030*

Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030 outlines the organisation's Vision, Mission and Values. Council's Values are Service, Resilience, Respect, Commitment.

Strategic Goal: Economic Development

Guiding Principle: Strategic Local Partnerships

*Legal / Statutory Implications*

Not applicable.

**Risks**

Strategic Risks

The following Level 1 and Level 2 (strategic) risks are relevant to the matters considered in this report:

SR53 Economic Development - Economic growth and employment opportunities are created through promoting and developing the region's competitive strengths. Council has a key role in supporting and enabling that growth.

Risk Summary

Category	Explanation
Financial/Economic  The strategy is the roadmap for growing the region's economic, which improves prosperity and job opportunities for locals. Not setting or reaching achievable growth targets for our economy and regional prosperity	Council has already adopted the Scenic Rim Economic Development Strategy 2026-2030 to guide the region's economic growth over the next five years. Ensuring all initiatives highlighted in the strategy are delivered and optimised.

**Human Rights Implications**

No human rights have been impacted by any actions recommended in this report.

## Consultation

Councillors and Executives were presented to and consulted at several stages during the development of the Strategy. A number of stakeholder engagement sessions were held with industry, government agencies and representative groups. Additionally, the Strategy was available for public consultation.

## Conclusion

Adopted on 3 February 2020, the Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Strategy 2020-2025 aligned with Council's Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Operational Plan. The Strategy supported five key development pillars and identified a range of opportunities for the region which were achieved through implantation of an action plan.

The Strategy's strategic framework was designed to support the creation of valuable local employment for local residents. It was constructed based on research, analysis and engagement with stakeholders and built upon the levers of influence and role of local government and other government agencies in facilitating economic development.

The Strategy provided an effective catalyst and focus through which impactful initiatives have been delivered in the region, which resulted in sustainable economic growth and job creation.

In August 2025, the Scenic Rim Economic Development Strategy 2026-2030 was adopted, setting a clear direction for the region's growth, sustainability and prosperity through to 2030. This Strategy outlines 32 targeted actions to drive sustainable growth, support local businesses, attract investment and enhance the region's liveability and visitor appeal.

## Options

### Option 1

That:

1. Council note the completion of the Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Strategy 2020-2025 and acknowledge the initiatives undertaken and outcomes delivered to the benefit of the Scenic Rim region; and
2. Council acknowledge the commencement of the Scenic Rim Economic Development Strategy 2026-2030.

### Option 2

That:

1. Council does not note the completion of the Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Strategy 2020-2025 and acknowledge the initiatives undertaken and outcomes delivered to the benefit of the Scenic Rim region; and
2. Council does not acknowledge the commencement of the Scenic Rim Economic Development Strategy 2026-2030.

ACTION	COMMENT	DELIVERED
<b><u>Business and Industry Development</u></b>		
<i>1.1 Directly engage with local business owners</i>		
1.1.1 Development and implementation of local business visitation schedule	Officers engaged directly with businesses via enquiries, attendance at chamber of commerce meetings, Destination Scenic Rim networking events and programs facilitated by Council.	
1.1.2 Assist local businesses directly to address challenges and opportunities and/or link to partner agency	Distribution of electronic direct mail to database to inform business and industry of programs and funding opportunities. Provided connections to relevant government agencies and groups to assist businesses. Council delivered three Economic Stimulus Packages in response to COVID during the 2020-2021 period.	
<i>1.2 Support local businesses</i>		
1.2.1 Maximise local buying by Council, for Council	As per operational plan reporting. Approximately 25-30% of Council materials and services expenses purchased from local suppliers.	
1.2.2 Implement QRA Grant Proposal to assist in recovery efforts of local businesses and the region	The 2019 Queensland Bushfire Community Recovery Package was acquitted in October 2022 for the Scenic Rim Tourism Recovery Fund program.	
1.2.3 Actively utilise research and analysis tools to provide up-to-date economic information to both internal and external stakeholders	SRRC is subscribed to the informed decisions online platform ( <a href="https://economy.id.com.au/scenic-rim">https://economy.id.com.au/scenic-rim</a> ).	
1.2.4 Develop and implement tourism research and data collection	SRRC receives quarterly data from Tourism Research Australia.	

1.2.5 Linking local businesses with Queensland and/or Australian Government Programs	SRRC subscribed to Grant Guru platform <a href="https://grantguru.com/au/scenicrim">https://grantguru.com/au/scenicrim</a> . Following natural disasters, impacted businesses, tourism operators and primary producers were connected with available support programs.	
1.2.6 Continue Vibrant and Active Towns Program to maximise placemaking and development of each town including linkage to the Arts sector	The VATV initiative aims to create an integrated region of outstanding towns and destinations focused on local culture and community life while supporting a sustainable and prosperous economy. Further information <a href="https://www.scenicrim.qld.gov.au/Council-Services/Infrastructure/Vibrant-and-Active-Towns-and-Villages">https://www.scenicrim.qld.gov.au/Council-Services/Infrastructure/Vibrant-and-Active-Towns-and-Villages</a>	
1.2.7 Strengthen support of local industry bodies (particularly Chambers of Commerce) and work with them to deliver programs to their members	SRRC supported Chambers of Commerce and Destination Scenic Rim in the delivery of programs as part of Queensland Small Business Week/Month. Council joined the Small Business Friendly Program by signing the Small Business Friendly Council Charter in 2021.	
1.2.8 Establish a Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Leadership Alliance	Not completed Formation of the group and terms of reference endorsed at 23 November Ordinary meeting. Following an EOI process in 2022 for members, this project did not progress .	
1.2.9 Actively support, grow and develop a single Local Tourism Organisation for Scenic Rim	Destination Scenic Rim Incorporated (DSR) is a membership-based organisation with over 150 members. DSR is the voice of the region's tourism industry and plays an important advisory role to Council by acting as a reference group for the region's local tourism operators. DSR was endorsed by Council in June 2021.	
1.2.10 Conduct a range of workshops or seminars to support local business development and capacity development	Queensland Small Business Month was highly successful and received significant engagement from local businesses and Chambers of Commerce.	

Business Breakfasts were also well attended by business, industry and State Government.  
 Agribusiness and Agritourism Industry Development Program delivered in 2020-2021.  
 Scenic Rim Supply Chain Capability Program delivered 2021-2022.

1.2.11 2020 Scenic Rim Business Excellence Awards

Business Excellence Awards were held in 2021 and 2023 and provided a valuable opportunity for local businesses to shine in the spotlight and for the wider community to recognise the dedication and determination of local business operators. 2025 program currently being delivered.



1.2.12 Assist with the growth of existing businesses into new markets and working collaboratively within the region (retention and expansion)

Partnership with Scenic Rim Farm Box (initiative and support during COVID), connection with Trade and Investment Queensland to showcase products and assist with export, Aus Industry Entrepreneurial Program.



1.2.13 Develop a Smart Regions Strategy to support local economic development, liveability and attract investment in the region

On 21 June 2022, Council adopted the *Scenic Rim Smart Region Strategy 2022-2032*. The strategy was developed following consultation with local residents and business operators to create a shared vision for the region's use of new technologies and data and to allow local businesses and communities to embrace and adapt to changing global digital trends



Marketing and Promotion

*2.1 Promoting and Investment Opportunities across the region*

2.1.1 Develop the suite of investment attraction marketing materials

Fact Sheets and Prospectus documents created and available on Invest Scenic Rim website



		( <a href="https://www.investscenicrim.com.au/">https://www.investscenicrim.com.au/</a> ) .	
2.1.2	Develop an online investment attraction portal	Invest Scenic Rim website developed and content updated <a href="https://www.investscenicrim.com.au/">https://www.investscenicrim.com.au/</a>	
2.1.3	Conduct a targeted marketing campaign to raise awareness and recruit investment in the region	Collateral developed and distributed at various trade delegations and provided to Trade and Investment Queensland and State Development.	
2.1.4	Promote the Beaudesert Enterprise Precinct as a precinct for new and expanding businesses	Beaudesert Enterprise Precinct officially opened in November 2023, with Ray White Special Projects engaged for marketing and sales ( <a href="https://www.beaudesertenterpriseprecinct.com.au/">https://www.beaudesertenterpriseprecinct.com.au/</a> ) .	
2.1.5	Promote Bromelton SDA as an ideal precinct for large-scale industry	Fact Sheets and Prospectus document created and details available on Invest Scenic Rim website ( <a href="https://www.investscenicrim.com.au/">https://www.investscenicrim.com.au/</a> ). In partnership with State Government Agencies, a number of site visits and meetings with potential investors have been held.	
<b>2.2 Marketing the region as a desirable tourism destination</b>			
2.2.1	Continue to build on the region's unique identity	SRRC success at Queensland Tourism Awards in 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.	
2.2.2	Continue to develop a suite of marketing materials to promote the Scenic Rim as the premier destination in South East Queensland	Marketing materials and content developed, most significantly the "Richest Place on Earth" campaign a further development of the Visit Scenic Rim Bran, including website rebuild/refresh..	
2.2.3	Continue to develop and implement a focused tourism and lifestyle marketing campaign to promote the Scenic Rim	Destination marketing activities on going through Visit Scenic Rim.	
2.2.4	Develop and implement an Event Attraction Strategy	Not commenced Planned for 2025/26 as a new initiative	
2.2.5	Strengthen Scenic Rim's nature-based offering and promotion by developing iconic experiences associated with the region's natural beauty	Nature-based offering a key feature in destination marketing initiatives. SRRC connected operators and supported developments with state government agencies and industry groups.	

2.2.6 Development and implementation of an Adventure and Nature Based Tourism Strategy for the region		On 18 April 2023, Council adopted the Scenic Rim Nature-based Tourism Strategy 2023-2032.	
2.2.7 Attain Ecotourism accreditation for Scenic Rim		Announced in January 2025, Scenic Rim gained ECO Destination Certification with Ecotourism Australia.	
2.2.8 Continue to conduct and develop events to attract visitors to the region		Expanding Eat Local Week to Eat Local Month in 2023 and supporting various events through the Regional Events Sponsorship program (e.g. Kalbar Sunflower Festival, Clydesdales Spectacular, Scenic Rim Farming Expo). Additionally, SRRC supported The Long Sunset.	
2.2.9 Actively capitalise on the international education sector from visiting friends and relatives, targeting Brisbane and the Gold Coast markets	Not commenced	Impact due to COVID	
2.2.10 Review and update the Scenic Rim Tourism Strategy		On 24 January 2023, Council acknowledged that in lieu of producing a new broad-based tourism strategy, key tourism actions are contained within the Scenic Rim Regional Prosperity Strategy 2020-2025, with a focus on developing relevant sub-strategies, such as Scenic Rim Agri-tourism and Agribusiness 10-Year Roadmap 2-22-2032, and the Scenic Rim Nature-based Tourism Strategy adopted in 2023.	
2.2.11 Review and reshape visitor services in the region		Review of Visitor Information Centres undertaken in 2021	
<b>2.3 Attendance at a variety of events</b>			
2.3.1 Attend and promote the region at a range of consumer and trade events		SRRC and Destination Scenic Rim attended various regionally significant events both within and outside of region to promote the Scenic Rim. Operators also represented the region at various industry events (e.g. Australian Tourism Exchange, Taste of Queensland).	

<u>Investment Facilitation</u>			
<i>3.1 Proactively facilitate investment in the region</i>			
3.1.1	Document investment facilitation process for development approvals that deliver employment outcomes	The Investment and Attraction Policy and Procedure endorsed by Council in December 2023.	
3.1.2	Undertake research to target specific industries and potential investors	Council engaged Lucid Economics to undertake the Scenic Rim Investment Attraction project, completed in 2023, which identified competitive advantages of the region and investment attraction opportunities. Fact Sheets and Prospectus document created and details available on Invest Scenic Rim website ( <a href="https://www.investscenicrim.com.au/">https://www.investscenicrim.com.au/</a> ). In partnership with State Government Agencies, a number of site visits and meetings with potential investors have been held.	
3.1.3	Proactively engage with potential investors regarding opportunities to invest in the region	Collateral developed and distributed at various trade delegations and provided to Trade and Investment Queensland and State Development.	
3.1.4	Create a new investment incentive policy and program (and market program widely)	Council endorsed the Investment Attraction Incentives Program Policy and Corporate Procedure on 20 December 2023. The Program itself will be delivered by Lucid Economics.	
<i>3.2 Efficient planning processes</i>			
3.2.1	Provide case management for proponents and conduct concept and pre-lodgement meetings for strategic developments	Economic Development Officers attend concept and pre lodgement meetings. Officers act as the 'case manager' for business and industry proponents seeking to develop their existing or new operation in the Scenic Rim, providing advice and assistance with navigating Council business units and processes.	
<u>Education and Workforce Development</u>			
<i>4.1 Ensure alignment across skills, jobs and local residents</i>			

4.1.1	Meet with local businesses to discuss their workforce development needs	In 2019, Council received funding from the Department of employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) for the Regional Skills Investment Strategy (RSIS) Project for a two year period ending June 2021, which included the employment of a Coordinator charged specifically with coordinating the project and helping local businesses to find, train and upskill the workers they need to prosper and grow.	
4.1.2	Identify suitable training programs and government assistance programs to support training needs	RSIS Project worked collaboratively with local industry and community stakeholders to develop specialised solutions to address local workforce issues related to skilling and training.	
4.1.3	Link local businesses to various State Government workforce development programs	This action was a key action and deliverable of the RSIS initiative. The RSIS Coordinator was charged specifically with helping local businesses to find, train and upskill the workers they need to prosper and grow.	
4.1.4	Development of a Regional Skills Investment Strategy Reference Group	The Reference Group comprised of representatives from three levels of Government, industry leaders from the Health and Allied services, Tourism and Hospitality and Agricultural sectors.	
4.1.5	Encourage the development of new education infrastructure in the Scenic Rim	Over the period of this strategy, Council had submitted grant applications for a study hub/university centre which were unsuccessful. This has also been identified as an action within the Scenic Rim Economic Development Strategy 2026-2030. This was also included in the 2025 Advocacy Statement.	
4.1.6	Continue to implement the Regional Skills and Investment Strategy	The RSIS Project works collaboratively with local industry and community stakeholders to develop specialised solutions to address local workforce issues related to skilling and training within three focus industries, which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture and agri-business;</li> </ul>	

- Health and allied services; and
- Tourism and hospitality.

At the Ordinary Meeting in August 2021, Council acknowledged the activities, initiatives and outcomes delivered as part of the Regional Skills Investment Strategy project since it was established in 2019 and concluded in June 2021.

Advocacy for Infrastructure

*5.1 Advocate for greater infrastructure investment from the Queensland and Australian Governments*

5.1.1 Develop advocacy documents to support funding requests from Government for infrastructure

In February 2025 025 Council released an Advocacy Statements which focuses on transport, connectivity, reasonable access for community amenity, and ongoing financial sustainability for service and infrastructure support.



Advocacy Initiatives can be delivered in many ways and Council will identify the most appropriate forms of advocacy to achieve its desired outcomes.

5.1.2 Meet with key political figures and senior staff to discuss required infrastructure

Advocacy, both directly and through the Council of Mayors South East Queensland, helps Council to secure funding from other levels of government, broadening our revenue base beyond rates and charges, and to influence Queensland and Australian Government policy to support the Scenic Rim community. Working collectively with 11 other southeast Queensland councils gives us a stronger voice to communicate our needs.



Council Officers, Executives and elected officers have met with key Government Agencies, Ministers and Director Generals to advocate for infrastructure needs of

<p>5.1.3 Continue to submit funding grants to government for infrastructure developments for Council (e.g. Beaudesert Enterprise Precinct and VATV) or in support of local developments (e.g. Scenic Rim Agricultural Industry Precinct)</p>	<p>the region. Council has submitted funding applications over this period for key infrastructure projects, as well as supported industry in applying and securing funding for development.</p>	
<p>5.1.4 Continue to proactively engage the government agencies to develop strategic enabling infrastructure such as the Bromelton SDA, Inland Rail) including connection to Port of Brisbane and key freight transport road networks</p>	<p>Over the period, Council has facilitated quarterly Strategic Coordination Group meetings to discuss key strategic enabling projects for the region.</p>	
<p>5.1.5 Continue to lobby for critical infrastructure through the SEQ City Deal</p>	<p>In progress Led by the Queensland Government, in partnership with Scenic Rim Regional Council and the Australian Government. This project involves developing a Business Case to determine what infrastructure planning, sequencing, prioritisation and capital investment is required to activate the 15,610ha State Development Area.</p>	

## Infrastructure Services

### 11.4 Integrated Transport Plan

**Executive Officer:** Director Infrastructure Services

**Item Author:** Coordinator Asset Management /  
Acting Manager Transport and Assets

**Attachments:**

1. Integrated Transport Plan (under separate cover) [⇨](#)
  2. Active Transport Plan (under separate cover) [⇨](#)
  3. Active Transport Plan Appendix A: Walking Network Plan (under separate cover) [⇨](#)
  4. Active Transport Plan Appendix B: Walking Trails Scoping Study (under separate cover) [⇨](#)
  5. Active Transport Plan Appendix C: Bethania to Beaudesert Rail Trail (under separate cover) [⇨](#)
  6. Active Transport Plan Appendix D: Cycle Network Map (under separate cover) [⇨](#)
  7. Road Network Plan (under separate cover) [⇨](#)
  8. Beaudesert Principal Cycle Network Plan Development (under separate cover) [⇨](#)
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## Councillor Portfolio / Representation

Transportation and Infrastructure - Cr Duncan McInnes

## Local Government Area Division

This report relates to the whole Scenic Rim region.

## Executive Summary

Council has developed an Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) aimed at enhancing the efficiency, safety, and sustainability of transportation networks in the Scenic Rim. This is the first time a comprehensive study encompassing all transport network needs has been undertaken. The ITP will serve as a strategic decision-making tool for Council and provide a long-term vision for improving transportation in the local government area. Additionally, it will equip Council with a solid technical foundation for engaging with other levels of government regarding the local government area's role within the region and the imperative to enhance transport outcomes.

## Recommendation

1. That Council adopt the Integrated Transport Plan inclusive of the Active Transport Plan, Walking Network Plan and the Road Network Plan, to guide strategic decision-making and funding for integrated transport planning for the Scenic Rim region.

## Previous Council Considerations / Resolutions

Not applicable.

## Report / Background

Council is undertaking a Local Government Infrastructure Plan amendment. A key deliverable to assist with identifying the future transport infrastructure needs for the region is the development of an ITP. Bitzios Consulting was the successful supplier to assist Council in developing the ITP. An ITP is utilised by governments to define their policies, goals and designs for how they intend to successfully move people and goods now and in the future. The ITP will serve as a strategic decision making tool for Council and provide a long-term vision for improving transportation in the local government area.

The ITP will include a collection of studies under the 'umbrella' of an ITP, including transport modelling, road network planning, active transport planning and community engagement. Work has been undertaken and a draft plan has been developed. These outputs formed the basis of the final part of the community engagement.

The Integrated Transport Plan presented for adoption includes:

- The Active Transport Plan comprising of the Walking network Plans, Cycle Network Maps and the Principal Cycle Network Assessment; and
- The Road Network Plan.

The ITP utilises the forecast population, employment and tourism growth in the Scenic Rim and its potential impacts to the transport network. A review of the local road network operations was undertaken, including assessment of the walking and cycling networks around the 10 key towns and villages using Department of Transport and Main Road's (TMR) frameworks. An integral part of the project is engaging with the community to identify the unique characteristics of the Scenic Rim, reinforce findings from the technical assessments and assist in prioritising works based on what is most important to each community. The ITP will determine the road safety, built standard and capacity upgrades required, including high level cost estimates and prioritisation, to address existing issues in the network and manage forecasted growth.

### *Transport Modelling and Road Network Plan*

As part of the ITP, Council requires the development of a comprehensive Road Network Plan that encompasses both passenger and freight transportation for the region. Transport modelling techniques will be utilised to assist with the determination of safety and amenity upgrades across the network.

The primary objective is to create an efficient and cost-effective road network that seamlessly caters to the needs of commuters and freight transport. The Road Network Plan is designed to optimize the road infrastructure, address existing challenges, and adhere to sustainability considerations and lifecycle cost analysis.

### *Active Transport Plan*

Council currently manages an extensive network of footpaths, cycle tracks, and trails, however, challenges exist in terms of asset width, missing links, and necessary upgrades. An integrated plan will provide the framework to address these issues, potentially expanding these networks to accommodate a variety of active transport modes, ensuring they are accessible, comfortable, and safe.

### *The Walking Networks Plan*

The Walking Networks Plan will guide practical, effective and economical investment in footpaths based on TMR's walking network framework. Once endorsed the Walking Networks Plan will unlock potential grant funding within the framework of TMR's active transport funding strategy.

**Budget / Financial Implications**

The ITP will serve as a strategic decision making tool for Council and provide a long-term vision for improving transportation in the local government area. The ITP will be implemented within the available budget into the future.

**Strategic Implications**

*Corporate Plan 2025-2030*

Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030 outlines the organisation's Vision, Mission and Values. Council's Values are Service, Resilience, Respect, Commitment.

Strategic Goal: Integrated Transport

Guiding Principle: Operational Efficiency

*Legal / Statutory Implications*

Not applicable.

**Risks**

Strategic Risks

The following Level 1 and Level 2 (strategic) risks are relevant to the matters considered in this report:

CR3 Assets and Infrastructure - Council owns and maintains a significant network of assets and infrastructure. Deficiencies in funding, planning or unpredicted deterioration may lead to not meeting expected service levels.

SR52 Resource Planning - Adopting strategic plans that are not appropriately scoped or resourced may result in missed opportunities, re-work, failure to deliver objectives and loss of confidence by the community.

SR54 Ineffective Advocacy and Partnerships - Achievement of many of Council's strategic goals and priorities relies on partnerships, collaboration and external funding. If this is not successful, it could negatively impact the delivery of Council's major strategic objectives.

Risk Summary

<b>Category</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Infrastructure, Assets & Service Delivery  Adverse impact due to poor planning.	Low Risk – the plan objectives being generated out of the drafting of the plan will have been reviewed internally by Council and will be confirmed through the public consultation process. The approved plan will support annual plan budgeting application into the future.
Reputation, Community & Civic Leadership  Adverse impacts due to poor stakeholder engagement	Low Risk – Community engagement process is diverse, including targeted consultation with key stakeholders, to support the development of the Integrated Transport plan through the engagement phase.

**Human Rights Implications**

No human rights have been impacted by any actions recommended in this report.

**Consultation**

The ITP is being developed in consultation with key functional areas of Council. The business units consulted at this stage of the process include:

- Capital Works and Asset Management;
- Resources and Sustainability;
- Maintenance and Operations;
- Finance;
- Strategic Planning;
- Community Development;
- Customer Care and Engagement;
- Communications and Marketing; and
- Community

**Conclusion**

Council has drafted an ITP, this plan will deliver a framework for the future transportation needs within the Scenic Rim. Extensive engagement has occurred with Council stakeholders and the wider community to ensure the current and future needs of the Scenic Rim are met within the ITP.

**Options**Option 1

That Council adopt the Integrated Transport Plan inclusive of the Active Transport Plan, Walking Network Plan and the Road Network Plan, to guide strategic decision-making and funding for integrated transport planning for the Scenic Rim region.

Option 2

That Council does not adopt the Integrated Transport Plan and supporting documents, to guide strategic decision-making, funding and effort to achieve the vision of practical and effective Integrated Transport planning for the Scenic Rim region.

**11.5 Tropical Cyclone Alfred Disaster Debrief and Recovery Report**

**Executive Officer:** Director Infrastructure Services

**Item Author:** Coordinator Community Development

**Attachments:**

1. Tropical Cyclone Alfred Disaster Management and Recovery Review After-Action Report prepared by Capire [↓](#)

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**Councillor Portfolio / Representation**

Local Disaster Management Group - Cr Stephen Moriarty

**Local Government Area Division**

This report relates to the whole Scenic Rim region.

**Executive Summary**

In March 2025, South East Queensland, including the Scenic Rim region, experienced the effects of Tropical Cyclone Alfred. Although the cyclone did not directly impact the region, it brought heavy rainfall and strong winds, resulting in widespread disruption across local communities.

Rainfall totals exceed 200 mm in some areas, with Binna Burra recording 248 mm and Tamborine Mountain over 220 mm during peak periods. Strong wind gusts caused trees and powerlines to fall, leading to power outages for over 4,800 properties across Tamborine Mountain, Beechmont, Canungra, and surrounding areas. Roads were blocked by debris, and damage to local infrastructure disrupted services and access in affected communities. Recovery operations commenced immediately following the event, coordinated across multiple agencies.

Following this disaster event, Scenic Rim Regional Council engaged Capire Consulting Group (CCG) to facilitate a series of disaster debriefs with local disaster groups, Councillors, Council's Executive Team, and the wider community.

**Recommendation**

That Council accept and endorse the Tropical Cyclone Alfred Disaster Management and Recovery Review After-Action Report.

**Previous Council Considerations / Resolutions**

Not applicable.

**Report / Background**

Capire Consulting Group were engaged to deliver a minimum of seven post-event debrief sessions, along with reports and recovery documentation. The sessions were conducted through a combination of face-to-face and online meetings. Recordings, PowerPoint presentations, agendas, and other documents were created by CCG to support delivery of, and capture information from, the debrief sessions.

These sessions were held in June, July and August 2025 and included meetings with the Scenic Rim Local Disaster Management Group, the Local Disaster Coordination Centre Incident Management Team, the Scenic Rim Local Recovery and Resilience Group, and Councillors.

In addition, a Recovery Workshop was facilitated to identify the short-, medium- and long-term recovery objectives following Tropical Cyclone Alfred. This workshop produced the draft Event-Specific Local Recovery Action Plan, which supports Council's internal recovery objectives. Three community consultation meetings were also held in Tamborine, Canungra, and Boonah.

The purpose for these sessions was to engage with the community using multiple methods to:

- Capture genuine voices, concerns and perception;
- Capture long-term disaster impacts of previous disasters;
- Capture baseline community perceptions;
- Discover true community's understanding of the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements;
- Provide opportunity to discuss Council's role in disaster management;
- Capture community preparedness and resilience; and
- Capture long term community recovery needs.

Council's approach to disaster management organisational learning and lessons aligns with the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience Handbook 8: Lessons Management. This approach uses the Observations, Insights, Lessons Identified, and Lessons Learned model to ensure organisational improvements strengthen effective practices, while addressing the areas requiring improvement.

CCG captured their observations from the debrief sessions and workshops using the People, Process, Organisation, Support, Technology and Training framework. The resulting Tropical Cyclone Alfred Disaster Management and Recovery Review After-Action Report After-Action Report is designed to guide continuous improvement by identifying lessons and implementing changes to systems. This ensure both reinforcement of effective practices and the enhancement of areas needing attention, ultimately providing a stronger disaster and recovery response for communities within the Scenic Rim region.

**Budget / Financial Implications**

An allocation was provided within Council's 2025-2026 budget for delivery of this project.

Engagement with CCG was under a tender arrangement VP456219 Consultant Service - Debrief and Recovery Management project, with a contract value of \$53,481.50.

Additional administrative and coordination support has also been provided by Council officers, including Council's Disaster Management Coordinator and Business Support officers.

**Strategic Implications**

*Corporate Plan 2025-2030*

Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030 outlines the organisation's Vision, Mission and Values. Council's Values are Service, Resilience, Respect, Commitment.

Strategic Goal: Connected Communities

Guiding Principle: Operational Efficiency

*Legal / Statutory Implications*

- *Disaster Management Act 2003*
- *Disaster Management Regulation 2014*
- Scenic Rim Local Disaster Management Plan
- Scenic Rim Local Disaster Management Group Terms of Reference and Guide

**Risks**

Strategic Risks

The following Level 1 and Level 2 (strategic) risks are relevant to the matters considered in this report:

CR5 Disaster Management - Disaster events can have a significant impact on the region and on Council operations. In addition, there is a risk that Council's disaster management arrangements may be inadequate to meet our obligations under the *Disaster Management Act 2013* and community expectations, resulting in impacts on community and Council operations.

Risk Summary

<b>Category</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
WH&S & Public Safety  Inadequate information captured and inappropriate opportunity to debrief, fail to meet external stakeholders and community needs.	Council captures and officially records with adequate information about the disaster event.
WH&S & Public Safety  Inadequate disaster arrangements implemented following the disaster event.	Recovery arrangements are implemented in accordance with the disaster management and recovery framework.

**Human Rights Implications**

Right to life

This right relates to things the government can do to protect life, such as having laws about, violence, health and safety, road rules and making sure people follow them.

**Consultation**

Significant consultation has occurred in capturing feedback and information and developing the Tropical Cyclone Alfred Disaster Management and Recovery Review After-Action Report and the Local Recovery Action Plan. This has been facilitated by CCG through several debrief sessions and workshops.

**Conclusion**

In accordance with local disaster management and recovery arrangements, the post-event debriefs and After-Action Plan Report were delivered in line with the Queensland Disaster Management guidelines.

This has been a significant debrief project; the largest delivered by Council's Disaster Management team compared to previous years. According to the Scenic Rim Local Disaster Management Plan and the Risk Management Report developed in 2022, east coast lows are expected to occur more often, presenting risk to the region, however planning should be based on a risk of a Category 2 cyclone.

Experiencing a Tropical Cyclone in South East Queensland is abnormal and was not expected.

Council and the Scenic Rim Local Disaster Management Group overall responded in a manner best suited to the available resources and capability at the time, to such an unexpected natural hazard event. By conducting a thorough review with disaster groups and the community, findings and recommendations will only improve Council's disaster response, resources and capability.

**Options**Option 1

That Council accept and endorse the Tropical Cyclone Alfred Disaster Management and Recovery Review After-Action Report.

Option 2

That Council do not accept or endorse the Tropical Cyclone Alfred Disaster Management and Recovery Review After-Action Report and it is held over to a future meeting to allow for further review of the documents.

# Tropical Cyclone Alfred Disaster Management and Recovery Review

After-Action Report

Scenic Rim Regional Council

November 2025

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# Giving every person a voice.

Capire Consulting Group  
The Commons  
Wurundjeri Country  
Level 4, 54 Wellington Street  
Collingwood VIC 3066

Hub Anzac Square  
Yuggera Country  
Level 6, 200 Adelaide Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

(03) 9285 9000  
info@capire.com.au  
capire.com.au

Capire acknowledges and deeply respects the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.



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**Consultation**

Unless otherwise stated, all feedback documented by Capire Consulting Group and any person(s) acting on our behalf is written and/or recorded during our program/consultation activities.

Capire staff and associates take great care while transcribing participant feedback but unfortunately cannot guarantee the accuracy of all notes. We are however confident that we capture the full range of ideas, concerns and views expressed during our consultation activities.

Unless otherwise noted, the views expressed in our work represent those of the participants and not necessarily those of our consultants or our clients.

VERSION	AUTHOR	AUTHORISED	DATE
2.0	Michelle Setianto, Erin Searle	Mel Hagedorn	15/08/2025
3.0	Merryn Appleby, Erin Searle	Denise Francisco	27/11/2025
4.0	Erin Searle	Mel Hagedorn	28/11/2025

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## Executive Summary

Tropical Cyclone Alfred and associated severe weather event, 1-12 March (TC Alfred) brought heavy rainfall, damaging winds and widespread disruption to communities across Scenic Rim. In the months that followed, Scenic Rim Regional Council initiated a comprehensive after-action Disaster Response and Recovery Review to assess how the region's disaster management system operated across preparedness, response, and early recovery. This report presents the findings from that review and outlines clear, system-wide recommendations to strengthen future resilience.

### Overview and approach

This After-Action Report examines how Scenic Rim's disaster management system functioned before, during, and after Tropical Cyclone Alfred. It brings together reflections from agencies, Council teams, and community members to understand what worked well, what challenges emerged, and where improvement is needed to strengthen preparedness, response, and recovery for future events.

The review drew on engagement with the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG), Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC), Local Recovery and Resilience Group (LRRG), Councillors, Council leadership and staff, community organisations, external partners, and residents. Engagement activities included stakeholder workshops, community conversations, interviews, and an online survey. These activities were designed to surface operational insights, technical expertise, and lived experience across all three phases of the event. The approach aligns with national and state disaster management best practice.

### Engagement themes

Key themes captured a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and priorities, spanning operational, organisational, and community considerations.

- **Communication and Messaging** – clarity, timeliness, and system reliability.
- **Governance and Coordination** – role clarity, activation protocols, and decision-making.
- **Preparedness and Resilience** – readiness, training, contingency planning, and adaptive capacity.
- **Community Engagement** – incorporation of local knowledge and two-way communication.
- **Disaster Planning and Response** – activation of plans, staff capability, and operational coordination.
- **Infrastructure and Isolation** – impacts of road closures, power, fuel and communication outages.
- **Health and Wellbeing** – access to services, mental health support, and volunteer capacity.
- **Equity and Inclusion** – the experiences of vulnerable or isolated groups.
- **Economic Recovery** – business preparedness and targeted local support.
- **Evacuation and Shelter** – suitability of facilities and public understanding of evacuation guidance.

Together, these themes show the complexity of responding to an event that created physical isolation, information constraints, and uneven community impacts.

### Insights and learnings

Overarching thematic analysis highlighted unique insights and learnings that Council can use to guide future priorities and decide where to focus its disaster management and recovery resources, effort, and support.

- **Leadership, role clarity and accountability are inconsistent across the system** - Stronger, more visible leadership and clearer governance structures are required.
- **Communities want to be equipped-not only informed** - Local capability, resources and training are essential for effective self-reliance.
- **Communication and coordination remain the most significant pressure points** - Reliable, multi-channel communication systems and clear authority over public messaging are essential.
- **There is a shared understanding of what needs to improve** - Agencies, staff, and communities are aligned on key gaps and opportunities, creating momentum for collaborative reform.
- **Existing strengths are present but not embedded** - Good practice must be formalised through training, planning, and succession processes.

- **Resources and infrastructure do not always match local needs** -Local facilities, equipment and logistics require targeted investment based on lived experience and risk profiles.

### Recommendations

The following six overarching recommendations have been identified for all disaster management stakeholders. Tailored actions for key stakeholder groups are also outlined in this report.

1. Embed role clarity and strengthen support for key operational and leadership roles
2. Develop and implement an integrated disaster communications plan
3. Invest in community-led preparedness and resilience building
4. Strengthen interoperability and shared learning across response and recovery
5. Align funding and resources with local needs, capability, and lived experience
6. Make continuous improvement a core part of business-as-usual preparedness

TC Alfred highlighted both the strengths and vulnerabilities within the Scenic Rim's disaster management system. While agencies and communities worked with significant commitment and adaptability, the event underscored the need for clearer structures, stronger communication systems, and more locally tailored preparedness.

By implementing the recommendations outlined in this report, Scenic Rim Regional Council and its partners can enhance their collective readiness, improve coordination with communities and agencies, and build a more resilient, better-prepared region for future events.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

TC Alfred impacted the Scenic Rim region in early March 2025, bringing heavy rainfall, strong winds, and widespread disruption across local communities. The system originated in the Gulf of Carpentaria and tracked southeast before weakening, with impacts felt across parts of Queensland.

In the Scenic Rim, rainfall totals exceeded 200 mm in some areas, with Binna Burra recording 248 mm and Tamborine Mountain over 220 mm during peak periods. Wind gusts brought down trees and powerlines, resulting in power outages for over 4,800 properties across Tamborine Mountain, Beechmont, Canungra, and surrounding areas. Roads were blocked by debris, and damage to infrastructure disrupted services and access in affected communities. Recovery operations commenced immediately following the event, which was coordinated across multiple agencies.

## 1.2. About this report

This review involved structured engagement with a broad range of stakeholders, including the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG), Local Recovery and Resilience Group (LRRG), Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC), Councillors, the Council CEO and selected staff, as well as community organisations and residents. The purpose was to surface insights, capture lessons, and identify clear learnings and recommendations for improvement.

This After-Action Report draws on feedback collected through the entire debriefing process and outlines the overarching recommendations arising from it. It also includes suggested actions for the key stakeholders. For more information on stakeholders' response to TC Alfred see **Appendix A**.

## 2. Engagement approach

### 2.1. Purpose

The Scenic Rim Disaster Response and Recovery Review recognises the increasing need for robust evaluation of disaster processes, particularly as the region faces more frequent and severe weather events. This project was initiated to consolidate learnings from TC Alfred, strengthen disaster response, resilience, and support continuous improvement in recovery planning and operations.

As part of the debrief process, stakeholders were asked to reflect on their experiences across three phases-before, during, and after the event.

### 2.2. Objectives

The objectives of the debrief process were to:

- Consolidate observations, insights, and recovery lessons from TC Alfred across key agencies, Council teams, and communities.
- Strengthen disaster recovery capability by embedding lessons into practical planning tools and guidance documents.
- Facilitate structured engagement with diverse stakeholder groups to surface lived experience, technical expertise, and operational feedback.
- Support a coordinated and trauma-aware recovery process by providing inclusive, safe spaces for stakeholders to share and reflect.
- Present evidence-based recommendations and draft plans to key stakeholder groups for validation and endorsement.

### 2.3. Limitations

While the review process was carefully designed to ensure quality, safety and diversity, some limitations should be acknowledged:

- Incomplete representation – key personnel were not involved in the debrief sessions and were requested to provide their input via the Stakeholder and Community Survey. The input received has been included in the debrief findings in this report.
- Community participation and timing – Attendance by community members at the debrief sessions was lower than anticipated. This review was conducted 3-4 months post event, which may have contributed to lower levels of community participation.
- Limited to one event – this review is specific to TC Alfred and may not be representative of broader disaster management practices.
- This report has been prepared by Capire, a community and stakeholder engagement consultancy. Capire's role was to facilitate a process to capture observations and insights from stakeholders; as such, the findings reflect lived and professional experience of stakeholders and community rather than expert disaster management advice or technical recommendations.

### 2.4. Methodology

#### 2.4.1. Overview of the debrief format

The debrief involved a multifaceted community and stakeholder engagement approach, including four structured stakeholder workshops, three community conversations, one stakeholder interview and an online survey. Each group listed in Table 1 below, was provided an opportunity to participate in one or more face to face debrief conversations. Any stakeholders and community members who could not attend these events, were encouraged to provide their feedback via the Community and Stakeholder survey, which was open for five weeks during the debrief process.

Table 1 Stakeholder groups and debrief format

ACTIVITIES	STAKEHOLDER GROUP	DATE AND TIME	LOCATION
<b>Stakeholder workshops</b> Structured two-hour workshop involving facilitated group discussions and shared reflection activities.	Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG)	Monday 16 June 2025, 1.00pm – 3.00pm	Council Chambers and Teams
	Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC)	Wednesday 18 June 2025, 9.30am – 11:30am	Council Chambers and Teams
	Local Resilience and Recovery Group (LRRG)	Monday 7 July 2025, 10.00am – 12.00pm	Council Training Room and Teams
	Councillors	Thursday 24 July 2025, 2.00pm – 4.00pm	Council Chambers and via mobile
<b>Community workshops</b> Structured two-hour workshop involving facilitated group discussions and shared reflection activities.  To support community members during the session, representatives from the Disaster Recovery Team (Metro South) and the Addiction and Mental Health Service were organised by Council to be present at Tamborine and Canungra.	Tamborine community debrief session	Friday 18 July 2025, 5.30pm – 7:30pm	Tam Mount Pres Church
	Boonah community debrief session	Sunday 20 July 2025, 11.00am – 1.00pm	Fassifern Community Centre
	Canungra community debrief session	Sunday 20 July 2025, 3.00pm – 5.00pm	Canungra School of Arts Hall
<b>Conversation</b> An additional conversation was held with Council’s CEO and a small number of key staff. This one-hour conversation followed a flexible interview format to discuss strengths, challenges and opportunities.	CEO and key Council staff	Wednesday 30 July 2025, 8.30am – 9:30am	Online via Microsoft Teams

2.4.2. Data collection

Data was collected using multiple engagement tools and activities across community and stakeholder sessions to ensure inclusivity and depth. Activities and tools included:

- Mentimeter – live, anonymous reflections and prioritisation
- butcher’s paper – small group discussions and key learnings and actions
- shared timeline mapping – plotting key observable moments before, during, and after the event (data collected via Menti)
- group discussion and verbal reflections – facilitated dialogue and invitations to share with the full group.

2.4.3. Framing principles

The review and facilitation process was designed to be:

- strengths-based – recognising successes and resilience
- trauma-informed – sensitive to the emotional and psychological impact of disaster events
- no-blame language – focusing on systems, not individuals
- neutral and collaborative – ensuring a safe space for open reflection and shared learning.

## 2.5. Analysis framework

This report aligns with best practice guidance outlined in the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) Community Recovery Handbook and supports the continuous improvement principles embedded in the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA). In particular, the review reflects AIDR's emphasis on post-event analysis as a critical component of resilience building and reinforces the Prepare-Prevent-Respond-Recover model that underpins Queensland's disaster management governance.

The review also adopts AIDR's OILL process – Observations, Insights, Lessons and Learnings – to ensure that debrief findings are not only recorded but actively translated into meaningful actions. This structured reflection process supports a cycle of continuous improvement across all phases of disaster management.

### 2.5.1. Use of PPOSTT framework

To support analysis, all qualitative data captured from stakeholder groups was coded using the PPOSTT framework, which categorises insights across six system dimensions: People, Process, Organisation, Support, Technology, and Training. This framework aligns with AIDR's principles and enables a structured, repeatable approach to identifying opportunities for system improvement.

### 3. Key observations and insights

Stakeholders across Council, emergency services, and the community were invited to share their reflections as part of the structured debrief process. They were asked to document observable moments across the before, during, and after phases of the event. These reflections offer valuable insights into what worked well, what could be improved, and what lessons should inform future preparedness and response. These stakeholder insights provide critical context to support continuous improvement.

The key events, formal disaster response and observations were recorded and grouped by phase, with themes and key takeaways summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Stakeholder observations: Before, During, and After the Event

	KEY EVENTS	STAKEHOLDER RESPONSE	OBSERVATIONS
<b>BEFORE</b> 21 FEB- 6 MAR 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TC Alfred was officially named on 23 February and reached Category 4 intensity by 27 February.</li> <li>The Bureau of Meteorology issued early forecasts and warnings from late February, with alerts relevant to the Scenic Rim region escalating from 2 March.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC) was activated to Lean Forward on 3 March and escalated to Stand Up on 4 March.</li> <li>Contractors, various items and machinery were prepared and staged at key locations, including Vonda Youngman, Harrisville, and Canungra.</li> <li>LDCC staff rostering commenced, and daily briefings were implemented across operational teams.</li> <li>The Disaster Dashboard and Council’s social media platforms provided key public updates.</li> <li>Human and Social support teams and volunteers were placed on standby.</li> </ul>	<p>Stakeholders generally agreed that the extended lead time ahead of the event supported effective mobilisation. Early warnings from the Bureau of Meteorology, the timely activation of the LDCC, and pre-positioning of staff and resources were seen as key enablers of readiness.</p> <p>However, several reflections pointed to gaps in internal communication and a lack of clarity around roles. While planning activities were in place, some questioned whether the available time was used as effectively as it could have been. Concerns were also raised about communication contingencies in the event of power loss.</p> <p>Other observations noted that health and emergency sub-groups were helpful but required more formalised coordination. Early communication via social media and internal channels was seen as generally effective.</p>
<b>DURING</b> 7-8 MARCH 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TC Alfred made landfall in the early hours of 8 March, crossing Moreton Island and weakening shortly after reaching the mainland.</li> <li>Power and internet outages commenced on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A place of refuge was activated at Vonda Youngman. Two community-led spaces were opened at Beechmont and Tambourine Mountain Presbyterian Church.</li> <li>The LDCC maintained continuous operations, and Guardian IMS was utilised for task management.</li> </ul>	<p>Stakeholders described the event as fast-moving and operationally intensive. Power and internet outages that began Friday night disrupted coordination and public messaging. While inter-agency relationships were viewed as a strength, multiple comments cited confusion around roles between LDCC, Records, and other departments.</p> <p>Activation of Vonda Youngman place of refuge drew mixed feedback. Some stakeholders questioned the suitability of sites and the timing of</p>

	KEY EVENTS	STAKEHOLDER RESPONSE	OBSERVATIONS
	<p>the evening of 7 March and affected a significant portion of the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roads, waste management, and access to food became immediate community concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency coordination and community support response escalated rapidly.</li> </ul>	<p>decisions. There were also concerns about the adequacy of information provided to residents during the event and disruptions caused by inconsistent messaging.</p>
<p><b>AFTER</b> 8 MARCH ONWARDS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recovery operations began swiftly following landfall, with agencies transitioning to recovery within 24 hours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community recovery hubs were activated at Beechmont, Tamborine Mountain, and Tam Mount Pres Church.</li> <li>Green waste removal was coordinated by Council and contractor Forge.</li> <li>Guardian IMS continued to be used for tracking recovery tasks and resource deployment.</li> <li>The Local Recovery and Resilience Group (LLRG) and Human and Social teams supported community needs.</li> <li>Economic assistance, including Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme (PHAS) grants, was made available to eligible residents and businesses.</li> <li>Early after-action reviews were initiated to capture lessons and improvements.</li> </ul>	<p>Transition to recovery was generally viewed as well-executed, with Council’s coordination of waste removal and community hub support noted as effective. Community Recovery hubs and community-led spaces provided valuable support and were appreciated by many. Council’s coordination of waste removal and the engagement of Forge to support recovery operations were seen as effective steps.</p> <p>Despite these strengths, visibility and accessibility of some recovery hubs remained a challenge. Stakeholders noted inconsistent access to services such as water, showers, and trades. Several comments flagged confusion about responsibilities between Council, recovery agencies, and volunteers.</p> <p>Mental health and fatigue were raised frequently in relation to both staff and the broader community. Some noted the need for earlier lessons to be applied and shared and called for clearer handover processes during the transition from response to recovery.</p>

**BEFORE – 21 FEB- 6 MAR 2025**

*“Had time to prepare, was it used effectively?”*

*“Role clarity and comms breakdowns internally.”*

*“ABC Radio, not confident community knew the band or that info was relevant.”*

*“Comms with public an issue, especially once power goes off. Need one or two sources*

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## 4. Thematic insights

### 4.1. Key themes

Key themes were identified through feedback from all stakeholder groups and the broader community during the debrief process. These themes capture a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and priorities, spanning operational, organisational, and community considerations. Together, they provide a consolidated view of the common issues, strengths, and opportunities for improvement across the disaster management system.

Figure 1 shows that Communication and Messaging emerged as the largest theme, accounting for 27% of all feedback, followed by Governance and Coordination (20%), Preparedness and Resilience (18%), and Community Engagement (16%). Smaller proportions related to Disaster Planning and Response (6%), Infrastructure and Isolation (4%), Health and Wellbeing (4%), Economic Recovery (3%), Evacuation and Shelter (2%), and Equity and Inclusion (1%).

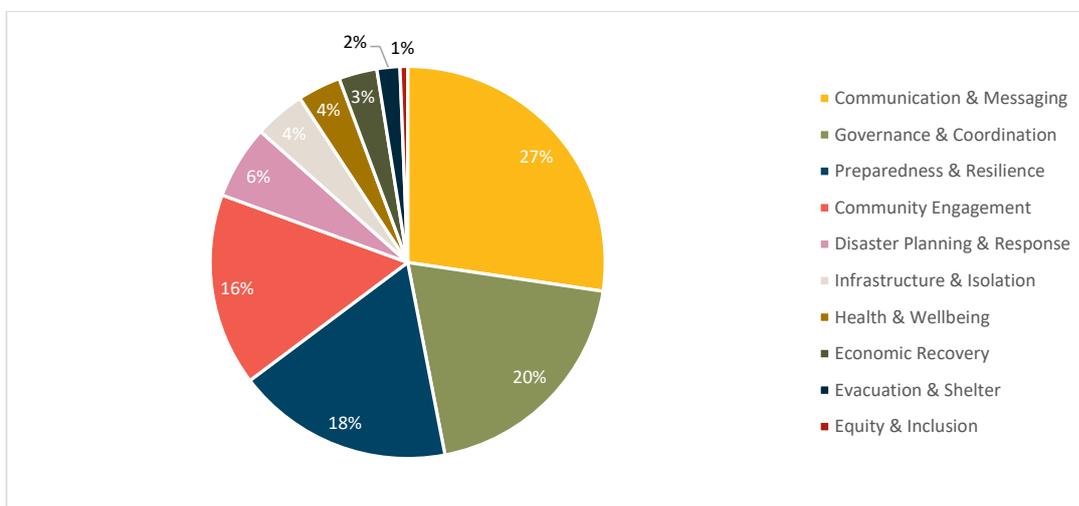


Figure 1. Summary of Stakeholder-Identified Themes

A summary of each theme is provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of key themes identified through the debrief process

KEY THEME	SUMMARY
<b>Communication and Messaging</b>	Feedback related to how information was communicated to the public and between agencies before, during, and after the event. Key points included the clarity, accuracy, and timeliness of messaging, as well as the importance of backup systems when power or internet access was disrupted.
<b>Governance and Coordination</b>	Reflected feedback on roles, responsibilities, leadership structures, and coordination mechanisms. Comments addressed clarity in decision-making, activation protocols, and the effectiveness of internal and inter-agency coordination.
<b>Preparedness and Resilience</b>	Captured views on how well individuals, communities, and systems were prepared and able to respond and adapt. Feedback referenced local knowledge, contingency planning, training, and longer-term adaptive capacity.

KEY THEME	SUMMARY
<b>Community Engagement</b>	Related to how Council and agencies engaged with communities, including the incorporation of local knowledge, relationship-building, and two-way communication before and after the event.
<b>Disaster Planning and Response</b>	Covered how emergency plans were activated and operationalised during the event. This included site readiness, staff roles, logistics, and the effectiveness of response coordination in real time.
<b>Infrastructure and Isolation</b>	Focused on issues related to physical access, critical infrastructure, and isolation. Comments noted the impact of power, fuel, and communication outages, and highlighted the importance of local coordination and support networks.
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	Included feedback on access to health services, mental health support, volunteer capacity, and service coordination. Emphasis was placed on continuity of care and cross-agency collaboration.
<b>Equity and Inclusion</b>	Captured perspectives on fair access to services, especially for vulnerable or isolated groups. Themes included the need for timely local support, faster deployment of resources, and the value of community connections.
<b>Economic Recovery</b>	Addressed local business resilience and economic recovery. Comments highlighted the importance of local procurement, preparedness education, and support tailored to small and family-owned businesses.
<b>Evacuation and Shelter</b>	Focused on the availability, clarity, and communication of safe places. Feedback covered the suitability of facilities, activation protocols, and public understanding of evacuation terminology.

## 4.2. Overarching PPOSTT insights

Following the completion of all stakeholders debrief sessions, lessons and ideas for action were coded using the PPOSTT fundamentals, this includes People, Process, Organisation, Support, Technology and Training. This approach led to additional insights emerging from across all stakeholders debrief data.

As demonstrated in Figure 2 below, most comments were related to Process (29%), followed by People (21%) and Organisation (18%). Less prevalent were references to Support (15%), Training (10%), and Technology (7%).

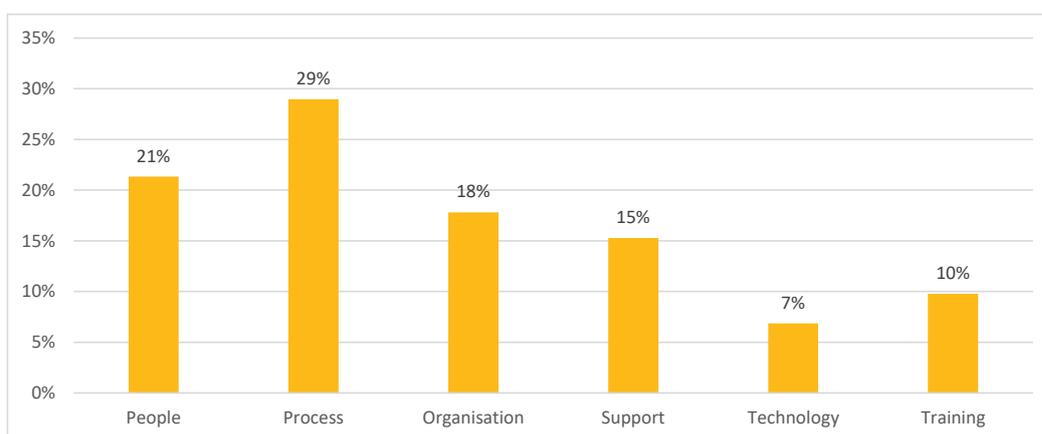


Figure 2 - Lessons and Actions PPOSTT Coding

### 4.2.1. People

This category captured 109 (21%) comments referring to individuals, roles, leadership, or human dynamics. Feedback under this category highlighted the importance of role suitability, staff wellbeing, and local knowledge in effective disaster response

and recovery. Stakeholders noted that the right people in the right roles significantly influenced coordination outcomes. Comments pointed to the value of lived experience, local relationships, and neighbour-to-neighbour support. Suggestions included strengthening staff induction, improving fatigue management, and formalising the role of Customer Service and Liaison Officers during activation. There was a call for clearer role boundaries, transparent communication, and better preparation for working with vulnerable populations. Mental health support and resilience-building for both staff and community were also seen as essential.

**Examples:**

*"If you don't get the right people, you don't get the outcome you need."*

*"People are beginning to understand the risks ('starting to get it')."*

*"Build trust and transparency through patient, open, and honest interactions between Council and the community."*

*"Some individuals have been placed in roles that are not suited to their personalities or capabilities; a review is needed to assess whether they are fit to handle high-stress responsibilities."*

*"During Alfred, people had time to prepare, which made a difference."*

#### 4.2.2. Process

A total of 148 (29%) comments related to how tasks, decisions, and coordination were carried out. Process-related reflections were the most common across stakeholder feedback, highlighting the importance of role clarity, coordination, and consistent communication. A key theme was the need for more clearly defined structures and responsibilities across Council, LDCC, and LDMG. Participants noted gaps in role handovers, uncertainty around who was responsible for specific decisions (e.g. opening places of refuge), and the need to embed responsibilities into position descriptions and standard operating procedures.

Communication protocols, especially during power outages, were frequently raised. Suggestions included developing pre-approved messaging, improving coordination with Councillors, and ensuring alignment across platforms such as Guardian IMS, social media, and radio. Several stakeholders called for improvements in planning for different types of events, investment in continuity processes, and proactive engagement with community volunteers.

Fatigue management, training, and succession planning were also noted as priority areas, with observations that these gaps impacted real-time response and decision-making. Participants emphasised the value of early planning and coordination but cautioned that without ongoing review and capability-building, momentum could be lost.

**Examples:**

*"Regardless of preparedness, we must decide now how communication will occur during the next event."*

*"Council and disaster management currently have a general Comms Plan, but it needs to be more integrated."*

*"Succession planning has not taken place, and there is a notable lack of proper handovers."*

*"Some individuals have been placed in roles that are not suited to their personalities or capabilities; a review is needed to assess whether they are fit to handle high-stress responsibilities."*

#### 4.2.3. Organisation

In total, 91 (18%) comments reflected on coordination, governance, and structure. Organisation focused insights emphasised the need for clearer governance, role delineation, and communication structures across response and recovery functions. Comments highlighted the importance of aligning responsibilities between Council, LDCC, LDMG, and partner agencies, noting that current role definitions can be unclear or fragmented across functions (e.g., Comms, IMS, PIO, Disaster Board).

Stakeholders observed that role clarity and coordination were essential for effective decision-making, especially in relation to the activation of places of refuge, public messaging, and volunteer management. Several suggestions were made to improve operational effectiveness, including embedding responsibilities into position descriptions, developing quick-reference materials, and formalising induction and training processes.

The feedback also reinforced the value of a consistent leadership presence in the LDCC, supported by structured check-ins, clearer escalation pathways, and improved information flow. Broader inter-agency collaboration was seen as effective during this event, although participants stressed the need for continued joint planning, shared capability assessments, and long-term integration of resilience building efforts.

**Examples:**

*"Council is in a state of flux while waiting for the new Local Disaster Coordinator to start."*

*"Roles and responsibilities for public communication are unclear and scattered across functions (PIO, Comms, IMS, social media, Disaster Board)."*

*"Service delivery expectations are high, with examples like sandbag delivery being seen as "above and beyond."*

*"Council must align community volunteers' enthusiasm with formal responsibilities and protocols."*

*"Review and map the capability of Council, including key support functions such as Records and Broadcast, and align these with operational processes."*

*"Staff require better awareness of available communication tools and how to use them effectively."*

*"Gold Coast had 3 or 4 reps from each agency, which worked well."*

**4.2.4. Support**

A total of 78 (15%) comments highlighted the availability (or lack) of resources and support systems. Support-related feedback focused on ensuring resources, infrastructure, and services are fit-for-purpose, accessible, and responsive to community needs. Participants highlighted the need to better prepare and equip local halls as frontline facilities, with appropriate amenities such as showers and generators. The availability and visibility of emergency packs and mental health services also emerged as key issues, with concerns around distribution, accessibility, and awareness.

Support for vulnerable populations—such as rough sleepers, business owners, isolated communities, and domestic violence survivors—was raised across multiple engagements. Some expressed concern about inconsistent or delayed delivery of services and identified a need for greater clarity around Council's role, particularly in information provision and coordination of local resources.

Participants also emphasised the importance of promoting community resilience, routine check-ins for staff, and investing in early intervention and Psychological First Aid. Calls were also made to strengthen support across local agriculture, improve signage and communication for tourists, and secure additional funding to meet emerging needs.

**Examples:**

*"At least 3 halls across the region should be fully fitted out (showers, generators)."*

*"Power outages severely limited communication and access to essential services (e.g. cash registers), leading to compounding stress."*

*"Communities rely too much on being directed and there is a need to build self-sufficiency."*

*"Post-COVID expectations for business support are not being met, revealing resilience gaps."*

*"Establish a baseline understanding of community resilience: Assess how well community members are prepared and consider the community's historic and compounding recovery needs."*

*"Provide tailored mental health support for business owners affected by multiple disaster events."*

**4.2.5. Technology**

A total of 35 (7%) comments focused on the critical role of communication systems, digital infrastructure, and contingency planning in disaster response. Internet and mobile network failures were widely reported, with 180 mobile towers knocked out across Gold Coast (parts of Scenic Rim relies on Gold Coast towers), affecting everything from streaming and live updates to basic coordination. These outages led to stress and confusion among community members, particularly in isolated areas with no radio coverage.

Participants emphasised the importance of incorporating power outage contingencies and investing in alternative communication methods such as radio, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), and satellite phones. Radio was consistently viewed as a reliable fallback, though issues with access and signal strength were also noted.

There were also suggestions to improve the clarity and functionality of digital dashboards and to ensure pre-prepared messaging is consistently developed and available in advance. Training on platforms such as Guardian IMS helped improve staff confidence, but broader awareness of communication tools and protocols was seen as necessary.

**Examples:**

*“Internet–180 mobile towers knocked out around Gold Coast.”*

*“Lack of technology hindered communication with affected communities.”*

*“Radio waves work.”*

*“Review the structure and layout of dashboards and updates, ensuring a clear, hierarchical display of content and information.”*

*“The database produced good localised reports.”*

*“Consider how radio will be used, agreements need to be in place.”*

#### 4.2.6. Training

A total of 50 (10%) comments highlighted the need to strengthen disaster preparedness through targeted training, induction, and community education. Feedback pointed to persistent role ambiguity within Council, LDCC, and LDMG functions, especially in relation to Councillor responsibilities, succession planning, and community-facing roles during disaster response.

There was support for increasing both the frequency and scope of training activities. Suggestions included expanding role-play exercises, enhancing induction processes for newly appointed staff, and incorporating regular refreshers on platforms such as Guardian IMS. Additional emphasis was placed on equipping Liaison Officers and sector representatives with templates, checklists, and localised knowledge to improve clarity and consistency in high-pressure environments.

Community-level education also emerged as a priority. Residents were seen as underprepared, with calls to improve awareness of Council responsibilities, public messaging e.g., places of refuge versus evacuation centres, and expectations during emergencies. Training in Psychological First Aid, pre-event exercises tailored to local business needs, and education delivered via newsletter or community outreach were all identified as important.

#### Examples:

*“Roles must be clarified and made specific, accompanied by dedicated exercising and training.”*

*“Refresher Guardian training increased staff confidence.”*

*“Councillors require better education and preparation, including the use of action templates for critical areas.”*

*“Long LOC activations highlighted the need for better pre-training.”*

### 4.3. Cross-cutting analysis – Insights by theme and PPOSTT

The PPOSTT analysis, combined with overarching thematic analysis, provides unique insights that Council can use to set direction and consider where it can leverage current and future Disaster Management and recovery resourcing, effort and support. Table 4 below captures key insights that have emerged from the review.

Table 4. Insights by theme and PPOSTT

PPOSTT	THEMES	INSIGHT
People, Organisation, Process	Governance and Coordination, Disaster Planning, Communication and Messaging	<b>Leadership and accountability are inconsistent across the system:</b> A lack of clarity around who is responsible for leading specific disaster response actions – such as public communications, activating hubs, or coordinating volunteers – contributed to confusion, duplication, and delays. Leadership presence in key decision spaces was inconsistent, and internal communication roles were poorly defined.
People, Support, Training	Community Engagement, Preparedness and Resilience, Equity and Inclusion	<b>Communities want to be equipped, not just informed:</b> Feedback reflected a strong community desire to move beyond passive information-sharing toward active participation in preparedness and recovery. Neighbour-to-neighbour support and local SES capacity were viewed as vital yet under-supported by formal systems.
Process, Technology, Organisation	Communication and Messaging, Governance and Coordination	<b>Communication and coordination are the most critical pressure points:</b> Communication and governance were the two most referenced themes in the debrief (130 and 94 comments respectively). Issues ranged from real-time failures in communication channels to confusion

about decision-making authority, exposing critical vulnerabilities in coordination structures and public messaging.

Process, Organisation, People	All themes	<p><b>There is a shared understanding of what needs to improve:</b> Despite the diversity of stakeholder input, there is a consistent diagnosis across the system – unclear roles, fragmented communication, and inadequate preparedness planning was identified as root causes of many challenges. This alignment indicates a shared awareness and readiness for change.</p>
People, Support, Training	Preparedness and Resilience, Community Engagement, Disaster Planning and Response	<p><b>Strengths exist but are not embedded in the system:</b> Local knowledge, staff commitment, and informal support networks were repeatedly acknowledged as valuable assets. However, these strengths often relied on individuals or informal efforts and lacked integration into formal systems, plans, or training programs.</p>
Support, Technology, Organisation	Infrastructure and Isolation, Economic Recovery, Evacuation and Shelter, Equity and Inclusion	<p><b>Resources and infrastructure did not match local needs:</b> Resourcing was often misaligned with community realities – local halls were unequipped, backup systems were unavailable or poorly implemented, and services like mobile showers arrived too late to be useful. This reflected gaps in both planning and delivery across the region.</p>

## 5. Lessons and learnings

The TC Alfred debrief revealed a number of consistent lessons and learnings drawn from community and stakeholder feedback, and building on thematic and PPOSTT analysis. The overarching insights highlight systemic challenges and opportunities across preparedness, response, and recovery activities. In this context, a *lesson* refers to what happened during the event and why it matters, while a *learning* reflects the new understanding or change that should result from that experience. Capire recommends reviewing the lessons and learnings in Table 5 below as a foundation for the recommendations presented in the following section.

Table 5 -Lessons and learnings

INSIGHT	LESSON	LEARNING
<b>Insight 1: Leadership and accountability are inconsistent across the system.</b>	When roles, responsibilities, and leadership presence are unclear during disaster events, coordination breaks down and critical time is lost.	Clear role definition and visible, present leadership are essential for a timely and confident disaster response. These must be embedded into governance structures and rehearsed ahead of activation.
<b>Insight 2: Communities want to be equipped, not just informed.</b>	Community members are not passive recipients of support – they are capable actors in disaster preparedness and recovery.	Empowering communities with knowledge, resources, and structured roles enhances resilience and reduces reliance on overstretched formal systems. Ongoing, place-based engagement builds this capability.
<b>Insight 3: Communication and coordination are the most critical pressure points.</b>	Communication failures and coordination gaps significantly undermine trust, delay response, and create confusion.	Integrated communications plans, defined authority over messaging, and reliable, multi-channel systems are non-negotiable elements of disaster management especially when technology fails.
<b>Insight 4: There is a shared understanding of what needs to improve.</b>	A broad range of stakeholders independently identified the same system-level challenges, indicating clarity about what is broken.	This alignment presents a unique opportunity for collaborative system reform – bringing together agencies, Council staff, and communities to co-design better preparedness and response frameworks.
<b>Insight 5: Strengths exist but are not embedded in the system.</b>	Informal networks, staff dedication, and community knowledge were vital to the response – but they were ad hoc and unsupported.	Existing strengths must be recognised, formalised, and reinforced through planning, training, and resource allocation to ensure they are not lost between events or with staff turnover.
<b>Insight 6: Resources and infrastructure did not match local needs.</b>	Even when systems and services exist, they may not be ready, accessible, or appropriate for the communities who need them.	Pre-disaster planning must include local readiness assessments and resource positioning. Local facilities should be properly equipped and prioritised as first-line response assets.

## 6. Recommendations and action steps

### 6.1. Recommendations

The following six recommendations are overarching outcomes from the review and should be considered by all stakeholder groups involved in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

**Recommendation 1: Embed role clarity and strengthen support for key roles.**

Define, document, and regularly communicate the responsibilities of each group (LDMG, LDCC, LRRG, Councillors, Executive) across preparedness, response, and recovery phases. Ensure these responsibilities are embedded in position descriptions, action plans, training programs, and exercises. In addition to clarifying responsibilities, provide targeted support, mentorship, and tailored training for individuals in key roles. This combination will build capability, enhance performance under pressure, and strengthen accountability across all levels of the disaster management system.

**Recommendation 2: Develop and implement an integrated disaster communications plan.**

Co-design a coordinated, multi-channel communications plan that includes messaging authority, communication flow, and contingency arrangements for power and internet outages. Ensure consistent alignment between LDCC, Council Communications, and elected members. Incorporate traditional and informal community channels to enhance reach, reliability, and public trust.

**Recommendation 3: Invest in locally led preparedness and resilience building.**

Prioritise place-based programs that enable communities to prepare before disaster strikes. This includes supporting SES, mapping local assets, resourcing community hubs, and offering ongoing preparedness education. Resilience is most effective when driven by those closest to the risks and realities.

**Recommendation 4: Strengthen interoperability and shared learning between response and recovery.**

Facilitate joint exercises, shared training, and collaborative debriefs across LDMG, LDCC, LRRG, and executive leaders to break down silos and improve continuity. Align tools, language, and structures used across the disaster cycle so that teams can work seamlessly regardless of phase or function.

**Recommendation 5: Align funding and resourcing with local needs and lived experience.**

Review and reform funding processes to prioritise what communities actually need – equipped local hubs, backup systems, timely deployment of mobile services, and economic recovery initiatives. Base decisions on post-event feedback and vulnerability mapping, not only on pre-existing infrastructure or standard protocols.

**Recommendation 6: Make continuous improvement part of business-as-usual.**

Conduct formal debriefs and After-Action Reviews (AARs) within 30 days of stand-down from a disaster event, in line with the Queensland Disaster Management Guidelines (2022). This ensures accurate recall, timely learning, and relevance to ongoing recovery operations.

Embedding a timely review process also improves the likelihood of community and stakeholder engagement, as participants are more willing to contribute when events are fresh, feedback is valued, and outcomes are visible.

Incorporate both operational and community perspectives in reviews, and ensure that findings are actioned, shared transparently, and revisited regularly to build trust and demonstrate system learning.

Treat each event as an opportunity to improve – not just within individual teams but across the disaster management and recovery ecosystem.

## 6.2. Suggested Actions

In addition to the endorsement of the six overarching recommendations, key actions for the stakeholders are as follows:

STAKEHOLDER	SUGGESTED ACTIONS
SRRC/LDCC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review and document all SRRC/LDCC operational roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authorities, ensuring alignment with the overarching recommendations.</li> <li>2. Develop a Councillor disaster management role statement that clearly defines responsibilities, escalation pathways, and engagement protocols during preparedness, response, and recovery.</li> <li>3. Develop a Fatigue Management Plan.</li> <li>4. Develop a region-wide, multi-channel Disaster Communications Plan, including radio, satellite, and community-led communication networks.</li> <li>5. Develop and test an internal communications and information flow protocol to address gaps identified during the debrief process.</li> <li>6. Conduct a readiness audit of LDCC facilities, equipment, and backup systems, and address any deficiencies prior to the next disaster season.</li> <li>7. Support community capability-building initiatives by endorsing local SES training.</li> </ol>
LDMG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formalise leadership roles and escalation pathways across agencies to reduce ambiguity during activation and improve decision-making speed.</li> <li>2. Endorse a region-wide, multi-channel Disaster Communications Plan.</li> <li>3. Support community preparedness events, and neighbourhood network programs.</li> <li>4. Facilitate joint planning exercises with LDCC and LRRG to build shared understanding, roles, and interoperability before the next event.</li> </ol>
COUNCILLORS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Endorse and adopt a Councillor disaster role statement</li> <li>2. Endorse Fatigue Management Plan.</li> <li>3. Participate in joint training and simulation exercises with the LDMG, LDCC, and LRRG to strengthen situational awareness and role confidence.</li> <li>4. Establish a direct information-sharing protocol with the LDCC to ensure timely and accurate updates for community communication during outages. This should also include protocols when a Councillor is on leave.</li> </ol>
LRRG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Run joint recovery exercises – Conduct scenario-based training with LDMG, LDCC, and community partners to test coordination and interoperability.</li> <li>2. Formalise early recovery integration – Embed recovery considerations into LDCC operational planning from the onset of response to enable faster activation.</li> <li>3. Maintain and strengthen access to mental health services and psychosocial support for both staff and the community throughout the recovery phase and beyond, to build long-term resilience.</li> </ol>

## Appendix A: Stakeholder response and early recovery

### LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP (LDMG)

The LDMG is the strategic command authority for Scenic Rim Regional Council area during disasters. Operating under the Disaster Management Act 2003 and the Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA), the LDMG:

- assesses evolving risks and confirms activation levels – authorising the shift between ‘alert’, ‘lean forward’, ‘stand up’ and ‘stand down’ to match the incidents intensity
- sets incident-level priorities and allocates appropriate resources – ensuring all agencies work to a single set of objectives that align with District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) and State Disaster Management Group policy
- provides high-level direction to the Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC) – allowing the LDCC to manage on-ground operations while the LDMG maintains strategic oversight and decision-making
- frames early-recovery requirements while response is still underway – identifying emerging community needs, engaging executive leadership across agencies, and shaping recovery priorities.

During Tropical Cyclone Alfred, the LDMG undertook the following activities as part of its strategic coordination role:

- endorsed the transition from ‘lean forward’ to ‘stand up’ in response to forecast conditions indicating destructive winds and potential flooding
- provided direction to operational leads, with a focus on life safety, maintaining essential services, and protecting high-risk facilities
- convened daily briefings with agency executive representatives to support coordinated messaging, address resource allocations, and monitor readiness for recovery
- activated the recovery working group ahead of peak impact to progress planning for damage assessment, community support needs, and infrastructure restoration.

These actions reflect the LDMG’s role in providing strategic leadership, supporting inter-agency coordination, and ensuring readiness for a timely transition from response to recovery.

### COUNCILLORS

Scenic Rim Regional Councillors play a vital governance and community liaison role during disaster events. While they are not involved in operational command, their responsibilities are defined under the Local Government Act 2009 and Scenic Rim Regional Council’s Disaster Management Policy (2022). A nominated Councillor is also required to serve formally as Chair of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG), ensuring elected leadership is embedded in strategic decision-making.

During response and early recovery, Councillors support the disaster management system in the following ways:

- The Chair of the LDMG represents Council’s strategic oversight and authorises disaster response priorities.
- Councillors disseminate verified, authorised messaging during disasters, helping to reinforce centralised communications and combat misinformation. This includes sharing updates through social media, community networks, and direct engagement.
- Emerging issues, service gaps, and recovery needs are relayed from their divisions to the LDMG and Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC), ensuring decisions remain grounded in local realities.
- Through their public presence during and after the event, Councillors help build trust, reinforce Council’s responsiveness, and offer reassurance to impacted communities.
- Councillors provide insights from on-ground interactions to inform the development of equitable and targeted recovery initiatives, particularly for vulnerable or remote areas.

### LOCAL DISASTER COORDINATION CENTRE (LDCC)

The LDCC serves as the operational engine room for disaster response and early recovery within the Scenic Rim Regional Council area. Operating under the direction of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) and aligned with Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA), the LDCC:

- implements the strategic intent of the LDMG – translating high-level decisions into coordinated operational activity on the ground across agencies and services
- manages incident – specific logistics, operations, and planning – ensuring timely delivery of critical resources, information, and support to impacted communities
- maintains situational awareness and operational reporting - collecting, analysing, and disseminating real-time data to support effective decision-making by the LDMG and other partners
- coordinates requests for assistance and mutual aid – facilitating resupply, surge support, and inter-agency collaboration when local capacity is exceeded
- supports early recovery transition – initiating damage assessments, community liaison, and essential service restoration as response operations scale down.

During Tropical Cyclone Alfred, the LDCC carried out a range of critical functions in alignment with the LDMG's strategic direction:

- activated rostering arrangements and scaled staffing in response to the 'stand up' activation level, ensuring 24/7 operational capability
- coordinated the distribution of sandbags and emergency supplies to priority locations, responding to real-time requests from community and field teams
- compiled situation reports (SitReps) and intelligence summaries to inform LDMG meetings, district coordination, and public messaging
- facilitated rapid impact assessments following initial storm activity, enabling prompt recovery planning and resource mobilisation.

#### LOCAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE GROUP (LRRG)

The LRRG is the lead body guiding recovery across the Scenic Rim Regional Council area following disaster events. Operating under the Disaster Management Act 2003 and Queensland's recovery governance arrangements, the LRRG:

- coordinates recovery across the four key domains – human and social, economic, infrastructure and environment
- develops and implements recovery strategies – aligning local priorities with the State Recovery Plan and leveraging input from the community, partner agencies, and functional recovery groups
- monitors emerging needs and adapts recovery efforts – maintaining visibility of gaps, reporting progress, and adjusting actions as recovery progresses
- strengthens long-term resilience – capturing lessons learned, shaping future planning, and embedding recovery considerations into Council's broader risk and resilience frameworks.

Capire Consulting Group  
The Commons,  
Wurundjeri Country  
4/54 Wellington Street,  
Collingwood VIC 3066

The Hub  
Yaggera Country  
Level 6, 200 Adelaide Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

(03) 9285 9000

[info@capire.com.au](mailto:info@capire.com.au)  
[capire.com.au](http://capire.com.au)

Capire acknowledges  
and deeply respects the Wurundjeri  
people and  
the Traditional Owners  
of the Victorian land.



**capire**

**11.6 Proposed Issue of Lease to Community Organisation - Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc.**

**Executive Officer:** Director Infrastructure Services

**Item Author:** Coordinator Commercial and Property Services /  
Acting Manager Property and Projects

**Attachments:**

1. Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc. - Locality Map [↓](#)
2. Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc. - Aerial Map [↓](#)
3. Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc. - Indicative Lease Area Plan [↓](#)

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**Councillor Portfolio / Representation**

Sport and Recreation - Cr Stephen Moriarty

**Local Government Area Division**

This report relates to Division 1.

**Executive Summary**

The freehold lease to Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc expired on 30 June 2021. Council is requested to consider the issue of a new lease agreement to Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc for premises situated at 14-16 Beacon Road, Tamborine Mountain (Lease Area F, Lot 14 on RP904762) (refer Attachments 1, 2, and 3).

Discussions have commenced with the current occupier, in relation to a potential new lease, and in doing so, Council has undertaken an inspection of the site, issued a draft freehold lease to the Club and received eligibility documentation from the Club, in accordance with Council's Community Tenure Over Council Property Policy.

**Recommendation**

That:

1. Council resolve that the exception under section 236(1)(b)(ii) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* applies to the proposed grant of lease to Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc, for premises situated at Lease Area F, Lot 14 on RP904762, 14-16 Beacon Road, Tamborine Mountain;
2. Council endorse a freehold lease on standard terms as issued by Council for Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc expiring 31 December 2030; and
3. Council delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with section 257(1) of the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise and execute a lease agreement to Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc.

**Previous Council Considerations / Resolutions**

At the Corporate and Community Services Committee Meeting held on 17 May 2016 (Item 4.5), it was recommended that Council grant a five year lease to the Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc over approximately 1,440 m<sup>2</sup> of part Lot 14 on RP904762, situated at 14-16 Beacon Road, Tamborine Mountain.

This recommendation was adopted at the Ordinary Meeting held on 24 May 2016.

**Report / Background**

Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc currently occupy a Colorbond shed at 14-16 Beacon Road, Tamborine Mountain, as referenced in the indicative lease area plan (Attachment 3).

In 2000, the Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc identified a need for the establishment of a public gymnasium on Tamborine Mountain. In September 2000, the Club successfully obtained a \$15,000 grant through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund. The gymnasium comprises a five-bay Colorbond shed measuring 15m x 6m x 2.5m.

Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club's previous lease agreement with Council commenced 1 July 2016, for a term of 5 years, expiring 30 June 2021.

Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club is a family-friendly community organisation that offers a range of activities and programmes for triathletes and fitness enthusiasts alike. The public gym, located next to the swimming pool on Beacon Road at Tamborine Mountain, features modern equipment, flexible membership options, and a range of programs including personal training, fitness classes, and athlete development.

As of 2025, the Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club maintains a membership base of approximately 200 members. The Club is run by a dedicated committee and promotes an inclusive, welcoming environment that supports health, fitness, and community involvement in the Scenic Rim.

Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc has provided the necessary eligibility documents for Council to consider the issue of a new lease agreement. Council officers have reviewed the documentation provided, and confirmed the Club's eligibility, including:

- Evidence of not-for-profit status;
- Confirmation of executive committee members, positions held and their addresses (including separate confirmation of greater than 50% committee within Scenic Rim local government area);
- Copy of constitution;
- Copy of Public Liability Insurance Certificate of Currency; and
- Copy of most recent profit and loss statement.

On 15 December 2025, the President of Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc confirmed the Club's intention to execute Council's standard community lease document.

**Budget / Financial Implications**

Each party is responsible for its own costs in relation to preparation of any agreement under Council's Community Tenure over Council Property Policy.

All costs relating to the registration of a lease (where applicable), or survey plan preparation costs (where required), will be at the lessee's expense. Any costs associated with gaining planning or other approvals shall be the responsibility of the community organisation as tenure holder or applicant.

**Strategic Implications**

*Corporate Plan 2025-2030*

Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030 outlines the organisation's Vision, Mission and Values. Council's Values are Service, Resilience, Respect, Commitment.

Strategic Goal: Sport and Recreation

Guiding Principle: Strategic Local Partnerships

*Legal / Statutory Implications*

The lease may be registered in the Queensland Land Registry in accordance with the *Land Title Act 1994*.

**Risks**

Strategic Risks

The following Level 1 and Level 2 (strategic) risks are relevant to the matters considered in this report:

CR3 Assets and Infrastructure - Council owns and maintains a significant network of assets and infrastructure. Deficiencies in funding, planning or unpredicted deterioration may lead to not meeting expected service levels.

Risk Summary

Category	Explanation
Infrastructure, Assets & Service Delivery  Lack of community infrastructure	Land and infrastructure is provided to eligible community organisations enable them to pursue their special interests. Alternatively, if council land and infrastructure is not provided, community activities will be more difficult to establish.

**Human Rights Implications**

No human rights have been impacted by any actions recommended in this report.

**Consultation**

External - Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc (current lessee)

Internal - Facilities Management team.

## Conclusion

The lease to Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc for premises situated at 14-16 Beacon Road, Tamborine Mountain (Lease Area F, Lot 14 on RP904762), expired on 30 June 2021. The Club has confirmed their intention to execute a new lease agreement under Council's Community Tenure over Council Property Policy.

Council is to consider the issue of a new lease to the Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc, under the provisions of section 236(1)(b)(ii) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, which allows a valuable non-current asset to be disposed of to a community organisation without the need for a public tender or auction.

## Options

### Option 1

That:

1. Council resolve that the exception under section 236(1)(b)(ii) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* applies to the proposed grant of lease to Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc, for premises situated at Lease Area F, Lot 14 on RP904762, 14-16 Beacon Road, Tamborine Mountain;
2. Council endorse a freehold lease on standard terms as issued by Council for Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc expiring 31 December 2030; and
3. Council delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with section 257(1) of the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise and execute a lease agreement to Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc.

### Option 2

That a lease is not issued to Tamborine Mountain Triathlon Club Inc, for premises situated at Lease Area F, Lot 14 on RP904762, 14-16 Beacon Road, Tamborine Mountain.



**SCENIC RIM**  
  
**REGIONAL COUNCIL**  
 16/12/2025  
 1:2500

Based on Data provided with the permission of the Department of Resources: Cadastral Data (2025).  
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Location Map





**SCENIC RIM**  
  
**REGIONAL COUNCIL**  
 16/12/2025  
 1:2000

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Aerial Map





**SCENIC RIM**  
  
 REGIONAL COUNCIL

08/12/2025

1:340

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 While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this data, Scenic Rim Regional Council, the Department of Resources makes no representations or warranties about its accuracy, reliability, completeness or suitability for any particular purpose and disclaims all responsibility and liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages (including indirect or consequential damage) and costs which might be incurred as a result of the data being inaccurate or incomplete in any way. ©2025 Scenic Rim Regional Council

Indicative Lease Area Plan



## Corporate and Community Services

### 11.7 Local Government Remuneration Commission Determination of Maximum Remuneration for Elected Representatives

**Executive Officer:** Director Corporate and Community Services

**Item Author:** Coordinator Governance

**Attachments:**

1. Letter from Local Government Remuneration Commission [↓](#)
2. Local Government Remuneration Commission Annual Report 2025 [↓](#)

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### Councillor Portfolio / Representation

Not applicable.

### Local Government Area Division

This report relates to the whole Scenic Rim region.

### Executive Summary

The Local Government Remuneration Commission (the Commission) has released its Annual Report for 2025, which includes its annual review of local government categories and the assignment of local governments to those categories. In addition, the Commission determined the remuneration levels for Mayors, Deputy Mayors, and Councillors of Queensland local governments, as required by section 177(c) of the *Local Government Act 2009* (Act) and Chapter 8, Part 1, Division 1 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (Regulation). These findings are contained in the Local Government Remuneration Commission Annual Report 2025, which is attached.

### Recommendation

That:

1. Council receive the Local Government Remuneration Commission's Annual Report 2025; and
2. Council adopt the Local Government Remuneration Commission's Remuneration Schedule for Scenic Rim Regional Council, effective from 1 July 2026, for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.

**Previous Council Considerations / Resolutions**

At the Ordinary Meeting held on 29 January 2025 (Item 11.5), Council resolved to:

1. Receive the Local Government Remuneration Commission's Annual Report 2024; and
2. Adopt the Local Government Remuneration Commission's Remuneration Schedule effective from 1 July 2025 for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.

**Report / Background**

The Commission is an independent entity established under the Act to assume the remuneration functions of the former Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal, which ceased to exist on 3 December 2018.

Section 177 of the Act provides the functions of the remuneration commission, which include:

- to establish the categories of local governments; and
- to decide the category to which each local government belongs; and
- to decide the maximum amount of remuneration payable to the Councillors in each of the categories.

Chapter 8, Part 1, Division 1 of the Regulation sets out the Commission's processes for determining the remuneration payable to Councillors.

The Regulation requires the Commission to review the categories of local governments once every four years, in the year before each quadrennial election, to determine whether the categories and the assignment of local governments to those categories require amendment.

After determining the categories of local governments, the Regulation also requires the Commission to decide annually, before 1 December, the maximum remuneration payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors, and Councillors in each category, effective from 1 July of the following year.

As required by section 246 of the Regulation, the Commission has prepared a remuneration schedule for various categories of Council for the 2026-2027 financial year applicable from 1 July 2026.

The Commission has established maximum remuneration levels for Queensland mayors, deputy mayors, and councillors across the new council remuneration categories. The maximum remuneration levels for Scenic Rim Regional Council, which is in Category B2, have increased by 3.25% for 2026 - 2027. The table below shows the previous years' remuneration levels for this Council.

<b>Category B2</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2024-2025</b>	<b>2025-2026</b>	<b>2026-2027</b>
<b>Mayor</b>	\$141,294	\$146,239	\$149,895	\$154,767
<b>Deputy</b>	\$88,308	\$91,399	\$93,684	\$96,729
<b>Councillor</b>	\$75,061	\$77,688	\$79,630	\$82,218

Council may either accept the remuneration amount prescribed by the Commission or, by resolution, receive a lower amount.

If exceptional circumstances arise where Council decide a councillor may be entitled to remuneration above the maximum amount, Council can make a submission to the Commission for approval.

**Budget / Financial Implications**

The development of the 2026-2027 Council budget will need to take into consideration the decision on remuneration.

**Strategic Implications**

*Corporate Plan 2025-2030*

Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030 outlines the organisation's Vision, Mission and Values. Council's Values are Service, Resilience, Respect, and Commitment.

Strategic Goal: Not applicable

Guiding Principle: Not applicable

*Legal / Statutory Implications*

This report is in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

**Risks**

Strategic Risks

The following Level 1 and Level 2 (strategic) risks are relevant to the matters considered in this report:

CR8 Ineffective Organisation Governance - Council is a complex organisation delivering a wide range of services via different processes, using different resources and systems. Council's organisational governance, including corporate planning, controls, internal compliance, monitoring and reporting, may not be adequate to ensure quality outcomes and avoid potentially poor consequences.

Risk Summary

Category	Explanation
Political  Councillors are to be remunerated in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Regulation 2012.	Awareness and acknowledgment of the Annual Report provides for Councillors to be remunerated in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Regulation 2012.

**Human Rights Implications**

No human rights have been impacted by any actions recommended in this report.

**Consultation**

Councillors  
Executive Team

**Conclusion**

Council, upon noting the findings of the Local Government Remuneration Commission Annual Report 2025, must decide on the remuneration payable for the financial year commencing 1 July 2026 for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.

**Options**Option 1

That:

1. Council receive the Local Government Remuneration Commission's Annual Report 2025; and
2. Council adopt the Local Government Remuneration Commission's Remuneration Schedule effective from 1 July 2026 for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.

Option 2

That:

1. Council receive the Local Government Remuneration Commission's Annual Report 2025; and
2. Council decide to accept a lesser amount than the Local Government Remuneration Commission's Remuneration Schedule.

Option 3

That:

1. Council receive the Local Government Remuneration Commission's Annual Report 2025; and
2. Council decide that exceptional circumstances exist for one or more Councillors; and
3. Make a submission to the Local Government Remuneration Commission for approval of a higher remuneration amount.



Our ref: D25/155930

12 December 2025

Dear Mayor and Councillors

### **Determination of maximum remuneration**

I am writing to advise you of a recent decision about maximum council remuneration amounts made by the independent Local Government Remuneration Commission (the Commission).

Consistent with section 243 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (the Regulation), the Commission has finalised its determination of the maximum remuneration amounts for mayors, deputy mayors and councillors for these categories, which will apply from 1 July 2026.

The Commission also resolved to discontinue the meeting-based remuneration requirement for councillors in A1, A2 and A3 category councils, effective from the 2026-27 determination period. This ensures there is parity in the remuneration policies for all councillors in Queensland and removes an unnecessary administrative burden on councils in these categories.

Under sections 247 and 248 of the Regulation, councils are required to pay councillors the maximum remuneration amount set out in the remuneration schedule unless the council resolves to pay a lesser amount. Any such resolution must be made before 1 July of the relevant financial year. If exceptional circumstances arise where a councillor/s may be entitled to remuneration above the maximum amount, councils can make a submission to the Commission for approval. The Commission will assess such requests on a case-by-case basis but is not obligated to approve them.

The remuneration schedule was published in the Government Gazette on 12 December 2025. More information about the council remuneration categories, guiding framework and maximum remuneration amounts is included in the Commission's Annual Report for 2025. The report is available online through the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers website: <https://www.dlgwv.qld.gov.au/local-government/for-councils/governance/local-government-remuneration-commission>.

If you have any further queries in this regard, please contact the Commission Secretariat at [LGRcenquiries@dlgwv.qld.gov.au](mailto:LGRcenquiries@dlgwv.qld.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

Bob Abbot OAM  
**Chair**  
**Queensland Local Government Remuneration Commission**

1 William Street Brisbane  
GPO Box 2247 Brisbane  
Queensland 4001 Australia  
**Telephone 13 QGOV (13 74 68)**  
**Website** [www.dlgwv.qld.gov.au](http://www.dlgwv.qld.gov.au)  
ABN 51 242 471 577

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FOR QUEENSLAND



**Queensland**  
Government

Local Government  
**Remuneration Commission**  
*ANNUAL REPORT 2025*

**Acknowledgement of Country**

The Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country. We recognise the ongoing spiritual and cultural connection Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have with land, water, sea and sky. We pay our deep respects to their Elders past and present, support future leaders and acknowledge First Nations People’s right to self-determination.

This publication has been compiled by the Secretariat of the Queensland Local Government Remuneration Commission, within the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers.

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**Interpreter statement:**

The Queensland Government is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. If you have difficulty in understanding this document, you can contact us within Australia on 13QGOV (13 74 68) and we will arrange an interpreter to effectively communicate the report to you.



12 December 2025

The Honourable Ann Leahy MP  
 Minister for Local Government and Water and  
 Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers  
 1 William Street  
 Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Minister

On 28 November 2025, the Local Government Remuneration Commission (the Commission) concluded its determination of the levels of remuneration for mayors, deputy mayors and councillors of Queensland local governments (excluding Brisbane City Council) as required by section 177(c) of the *Local Government Act 2009* and Chapter 8, Division 1 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (the Regulation).

Our determinations on these matters, together with the Remuneration Schedule to apply from 1 July 2026 are included in the enclosed Report, which we commend to you.

Yours sincerely



Robert (Bob) Abbot OAM  
 Chairperson



Andrea Ranson  
 Commissioner



Reimen Hii  
 Commissioner



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## 1. 2025 Report key determinations

### Determination of maximum remuneration levels

The Commission has decided to increase the maximum remuneration levels for mayors, deputy mayors and councillors as follows:

Council Categories A1, A2, A3 and B1	Increase by 4.5% from 1 July 2026
Council Categories B2, B3, C1, C2, C3, D2, D3, E2 and F2	Increase by 3.25% from 1 July 2026

In making its determination of maximum remuneration levels applicable for 2025-26, the Commission considered the following:

- The outcomes of the Commission's 2023 remuneration category methodology.
- Remuneration and wages indexation applied for other public sector entities.
- The importance of maintaining financially sustainable and fiscally responsible wage growth, taking into consideration:
  - the recently challenging and unstable inflationary environment and measures taken by other government authorities to manage the impacts of inflation.
  - the challenges faced by local governments and their communities in relation to climate change and environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) reporting, and the additional resources required in relation to sustainability and resilience strategies.
  - the realistic affordability and sustainability impacts for councils and their communities of wage increases for elected members.
  - the potential differential impact of Consumer Price Index (CPI) changes across various parts of Queensland, including rural and remote regions.
  - the appropriateness or otherwise of CPI as a potential measure in significant inflationary periods of time and the relative volatility of annual CPI since the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - existing remuneration disparity in dollar terms between the remuneration paid to mayors and councillors in smaller, rural, regional and remote parts of Queensland when compared to mayors and councillors in larger, metropolitan locations.
  - anecdotal evidence of the desire to attract and retain high quality candidates to these roles, particularly in regional and remote areas.
  - the continuing significant disparity in remuneration between Mayors and Councillors from smaller rural, regional, and remote communities compared to those in larger metropolitan areas, as highlighted in written and oral deputations to the Commission over the last five years.
  - the gap in real wage terms between Mayors and Councillors in Categories A1 to B1 and those in Categories B2 to F2, despite the equally important work undertaken by local governments in all categories.
  - the Commission remains committed to addressing this gap through its annual remuneration schedule and category reviews and has applied a higher percentage increase for A1, A2, A3 and B1 councils.

The Commission further took into consideration the following data:

**Increase in CPI<sup>1</sup>:**

	Dec Qtr 2024	Mar Qtr 2025	June Qtr 2025	Sep Qtr 2025
All Groups CPI inflation change (quarter)				
Brisbane	0.6%	1.9%	0.8%	1.3%
Australia*	0.2%	0.9%	0.7%	1.3%
All Groups CPI inflation change (annual)				
Brisbane	1.8%	2.7%	2.5%	4.7%
Australia	2.4%	2.4%	2.1%	3.2%

\* Australia refers to weighted average of eight capital cities

**Increases in the Wage Price Index (WPI)<sup>2</sup>:**

For the financial year ended 30 June 2025 as compared to the financial year ending 30 June 2024<sup>1</sup>:

<b>Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses</b>			
		Quarterly change (%) Mar 2025 to Jun 2025	Annual change (%) Jun 2024 to Jun 2025
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>	Australia	0.8	3.4
	Private sector	0.8	3.4
	Public sector	1.0	3.7
<b>Original</b>	Australia	0.6	3.4
	Private sector	0.6	3.3
	Public sector	0.8	3.7

<b>Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses (original) Annual and quarterly movement - states and territories</b>		
	Annual Change (%)	Quarterly Change (%)
<b>NSW</b>	3.2	0.5
<b>VIC</b>	3.4	0.6
<b>QLD</b>	3.6	0.6
<b>SA</b>	3.4	0.5
<b>WA</b>	3.7	0.8
<b>TAS</b>	3.1	0.6
<b>NT</b>	3.3	0.3
<b>ACT</b>	3.6	1.2
<b>Australia</b>	3.4	0.6

<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics  
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/consumer-price-index-australia/latest-release>

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics  
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/wage-price-index-australia/jun-2025>

**Brisbane City Council's Independent Councillor Remuneration Tribunal (ICRT)<sup>3</sup>:**

- The Commission has considered the Brisbane City Council's Independent Councillor Remuneration Tribunal (ICRT) determination as a potentially relevant factor.
- The Tribunal has determined that the base rate for a BCC Councillor should be increased by 2.5% on 1 June 2022 with effect on and from 1 September 2022.
- Note: Councillors remuneration is reviewed every 4 years.

**The Office of Industrial Relations (OIR):**

The State Government Entities Certified Agreement 2023 (2023 Core Agreement) wage increase arrangements:

- 4% effective 1 July 2023 + COLA<sup>4</sup> payment of max 3% base wages
- 4% effective 1 July 2024 + max 3% COLA if applicable
- 3% effective 1 July 2025 + max 3% COLA if applicable.

**New South Wales<sup>5</sup>**

The New South Wales Local Government Remuneration Tribunal has determined an increase of 3.0% to mayoral and councillor fees for the 2025-26 financial year, with effect from 1 July 2025, circulated on 21 May 2025.

**Victoria<sup>6</sup>**

On 30 June 2025, the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (VIRT) made the allowance payable to mayors, deputy mayors, and councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2025.

The VIRT determined a 3.0% increase to the values of the base allowances payable to mayors, deputy mayors, and councillors, effective from 1 July 2025. A 3.0% increase has also been applied to the base allowance values which take effect on 18 December 2025.

<sup>3</sup> Brisbane City Council's Independent Councillor Remuneration Tribunal

<https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/about-council/governance-and-strategy/councillors-and-wards>

<sup>4</sup> COLA refers to the Cost-of-Living Adjustment paid if CPI is higher than the base wage increases e.g. in a year where base increase is 4% and CPI is 7% the COLA paid will be 3%. If base increase is 4% and CPI is 6%, the COLA paid will be 2%

<https://www.qirc.qld.gov.au/agreements/public-service-agreements>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/https-www-olq-nsw-gov-au-category-https-www-olq-nsw-gov-au-category-council-circulars/governance/council-circular-2025-26-determination-of-the-local-government-remuneration-tribunal/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.remunerationtribunal.vic.gov.au/allowances-mayors-deputy-mayors-and-councillors-annual-adjustment>

**Western Australia<sup>7</sup>**

- In a determination published on 4 April 2025, the Western Australian Salaries and Allowances Tribunal, resolved that attendance fees and annual allowance ranges for Elected Members would be increased by 3.5%, with the adjustment to taking effect from 1 July 2025.
- In Western Australia a local government or regional local government can elect to pay council members an attendance or an annual fee to all council members who attend council, committee, or prescribed meetings. There is also provision for reimbursement of expenses.

**Tasmania<sup>8</sup>**

In Tasmania, the remuneration for local government councillors is automatically increased under the provisions of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2015. Allowances are adjusted from 1 November each year by multiplying the allowances for the previous year by the inflationary factor for the current year. Individual allowances payable to elected members from 1 November 2025 will be rounded to the nearest dollar using the inflationary factor, which is 3.09% for 2025-26.

**Northern Territory<sup>9</sup>**

The Northern Territory Remuneration Tribunal has increased all base allowances paid to Mayors and Councillors on 10 December 2024 by 4% in recognition of movements in earnings within Australia as well as the Territory, effective from 1 July 2025.

**Determination of remuneration policy for A1, A2 and A3 Councils**

The Commission resolved to discontinue the meeting-based remuneration requirement for councillors in A1, A2, and A3 category councils, effective from the 2026–2027 determination period.

Prior to making this determination, the Commission consulted with councils from these categories, as well as more broadly across the sector, to ascertain industry support for removing the meeting-based remuneration model. Overwhelming positive support was received during consultations, with many councils expressing favour in ensuring there is parity in the remuneration policies for all councillors in Queensland and in taking steps to remove unnecessary administrative burden on category A1, A2 and A3 councils.

This amendment to the remuneration policy seeks to:

---

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/local-government-chief-executive-officers-and-elected-council-members-determination-no-1-of-2025#determination-of-the-salaries-and-allowances-tribunal-for-local-government-chief-executive-officers-and-elected-council-members>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/local\\_government/councillor\\_resources/councillor\\_allowances](https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/local_government/councillor_resources/councillor_allowances)

<sup>9</sup> <https://cmc.nt.gov.au/supporting-government/boards-and-committees/reports-determinations>

1. **Promote Equity:** Ensure that all councillors across Queensland's 77 local governments remuneration process is administered on a similar basis, reflecting the value of their contributions irrespective of council size or classification.
2. **Reduce Administrative Burden:** Simplify remuneration processes by eliminating the need for monthly certification, consistent with the Queensland Government's commitment to reducing red tape for local governments.
3. **Support Financial Sustainability:** Enable councils to allocate their operating budgets with greater consistency and predictability

## Councillor advisors

The Commission was not approached to make recommendations relating to councillor advisors in the period between 1 December 2024 to 30 November 2025.

## 2. The Commission

### Formation and composition

The Local Government Remuneration Commission (the Commission) is an independent entity established under the *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act). On 1 October 2019, the Governor in Council, approved the current Commission for a term of four years.

The Chair and Commissioners were reappointed by the Governor in Council for a second four-year term on 1 October 2023.

This is the seventh report of the Commission, and the 19th report about Queensland councillor remuneration, including the reports of the former Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal and the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

The Chair and Commissioners of the Commission are:

### Mr Robert (Bob) Abbot OAM

#### Chairperson

Mr Abbot has extensive experience in the local government sector with 32 years as an elected councillor and mayor. Mr Abbot has experience working at state and national local government organisations and has held board and panel positions, including Deputy Chair of the South-East Queensland Council of Mayors, Director of the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), and Director of the Australian Local Government Association. Mr Abbot has been a mentor for newly elected mayors on behalf of the LGAQ, with a particular focus on mentoring Queensland Indigenous mayors.

In the 2021 Australia Day Honours List, Mr Abbot was the recipient of an Order of Australia (OAM) for his service to local government and to the communities of Noosa and the Sunshine Coast.

## Ms Andrea Ranson

### Commissioner

Ms Ranson is a practising commercial and dispute resolution lawyer with experience in both public and private sectors of business and governance. She holds a Master of Laws (LLM), Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and Bachelor of Arts from Monash University, Victoria. She is additionally a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Directors (AICD) and a Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia (FGIA).

Ms Ranson was a director appointed to North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation, a government owned corporation, holding the role of Chair of the Corporate Governance and Planning Committee, and the role of Member of the Audit & Financial Risk Management Committee of that Board from 2018 to 2025. Ms Ranson was appointed on 1 October 2024, as a Member of the Mackay Health & Hospital Service, a board upon which she currently serves, and is a Member of the Finance Committee, a Member of the Quality, Safety and Health Committee and a Member of the Sustainability and Capital Works Committee of that Board. Her experience includes business and commercial law, employment and industrial relations, diversity, justice, and ethics. Ms Ranson lives regionally and is passionate about regional development. Ms Ranson is a Nationally Accredited Mediator presently working with QCAT, the QSBC, and is a member of the QLD Department of Justice & Attorney-General Dispute Resolution Panel.

## Mr Reimen Hii

### Commissioner

Mr Hii is a barrister and Nationally Accredited Mediator. He holds the degrees of Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts. He is a practicing lawyer with extensive knowledge in public administration and community affairs, and a particular interest in civil and commercial law. Mr Hii is experienced in professional discipline matters, including investigations, public administration, corporate and public governance, public sector ethics and finance.

Mr Hii has a culturally and linguistically diverse background and experience collaborating with diverse communities. Mr Hii has previously been recognised as Australian Young Lawyer of the Year by the Law Council of Australia, in recognition of his significant contribution to access to justice and diversity advocacy. Mr Hii provides a deep understanding of diversity and brings well respected analytic skill, together with legal and business acumen to the role.

## Commission Responsibilities

Chapter 6, Part 3 of the *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act) established the Local Government Remuneration Commission to assume the remuneration functions of the former Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal which ceased to exist on 3 December 2018.

Section 177 of the Act provides the functions of the Commission are:

- to establish the categories of local governments, and
- to decide the category to which each local government belongs, and
- to decide the maximum amount of remuneration payable to the councillors in each of the categories, and
- to consider and make recommendations to the Minister about the following matters relating to councillor advisors—
  - (i) whether or not to prescribe a local government under section 197D(1)(a)
  - (ii) the number of councillor advisors each councillor of a local government may appoint
  - (iii) the number of councillor advisors a councillor of the council under the City of Brisbane Act 2010 may appoint; and
- another function related to the remuneration of councillors if directed, in writing, by the Minister.

Chapter 8, Part 1, Division 1 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (Regulation) sets out the processes of the Commission in deciding the remuneration that is payable to mayors and councillors.

The Regulation requires the Commission to review the categories of local governments once every four years, to determine whether the categories and the assignment of local governments to those categories require amendment.

After determining the categories of local governments, the Regulation also requires the Commission to decide annually, before 1 December each year, the maximum amount of remuneration to be paid to mayors, deputy mayors, and councillors in each category from 1 July of the following year.

In addition, section 248 of the Regulation allows a local government to make a submission to the Commission to vary the remuneration for a councillor, or councillors, where the local government considers there are exceptional circumstance and seeks payment of an amount *higher than the maximum amount* stated in the Remuneration schedule. The Commission may, but is not required to, consider any such submission. If the Commission is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist, the Commission may approve payment of an amount higher than the maximum amount of remuneration scheduled.

Section 248 of the Regulation does not address whether a council can pay a councillor whilst temporarily acting in higher duties, such as moving from Councillor to Deputy Mayor or from Deputy Mayor to Mayor. The determination to compensate for higher duties during any relieving period—provided the payment amount does not exceed the maximum established by the commission for the respective role—resides exclusively with each individual council. The Commission strongly encourages all councils to establish thorough human resources policies that guide decision-making protocols concerning the assignment of higher duties, minimum relieving periods (eg.4 weeks), the disbursement of allowances, superannuation payments, and any other related procedures.

### 3. Remuneration determination

#### Remuneration determination for councillors

As required by section 246 of the Regulation the Commission has prepared a Remuneration Schedule (the Schedule) for the 2026-27 financial year, applicable from 1 July 2026, which appears below.

Arrangements have been made to publish the Schedule in the Queensland Government Gazette and for this report to be presented to the Minister for Local Government.

#### Methodology

The Commission had regard to the matters in section 244 and 247 (2) and (5) of the Regulation in determining the Schedule. The Commission also noted and had regard to the matters listed throughout this report to determine the appropriate maximum remuneration in each category of local government.

#### Pro rata payment

Should an elected representative hold a councillor position for only part of a financial year, they are only entitled to remuneration to reflect the portion of the year served. It is out of the scope of the Commission's powers to determine otherwise.

Remuneration schedule to apply from 1 July 2026

Remuneration determined from 1 July 2026 (\$ per annum; see Note 1)

Category	Local Governments assigned to categories	Mayor	Deputy Mayor	Councillor
A1 *Note 1	Barcaldine Regional Council	\$128,509	\$74,139	\$64,253
	Barcoo Shire Council			
	Bulloo Shire Council			
	Croydon Shire Council			
	Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council			
	Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council			
	Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council			
	McKinlay Shire Council			
	Richmond Shire Council			
	Torres Shire Council			
	Woorabinda Aboriginal Shire Council			
	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council			
A2 *Note 1	Aurukun Shire Council	\$128,509	\$74,139	\$64,253
	Blackall-Tambo Regional Council			
	Boulia Shire Council			
	Burke Shire Council			
	Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council			
	Cloncurry Shire Council			
	Diamantina Shire Council			
	Etheridge Shire Council			
	Hinchinbrook Shire Council			
	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council			
	Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council			
	Mornington Shire Council			
	Murweh Shire Council			
	Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council			
	North Burnett Regional Council			
Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council				
Paroo Shire Council				

Category	Local Governments assigned to categories	Mayor	Deputy Mayor	Councillor
	Porpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council			
	Quilpie Shire Council			
	Winton Shire Council			
	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council			
A3 * Note 1	Longreach Regional Council	\$129,744	\$74,852	\$64,872
	Balonne Shire Council			
	Douglas Shire Council			
	Flinders Shire Council			
	Goondiwindi Regional Council			
	Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council			
B1	Banana Shire Council	\$129,744	\$74,852	\$64,872
	Carpentaria Shire Council			
	Burdekin Shire Council			
	Cook Shire Council			
	Torres Strait Island Regional Council			
B2	Maranoa Regional Council	\$154,767	\$96,729	\$82,218
	Cassowary Coast Regional Council			
	Charters Towers Regional Council			
	Gympie Regional Council			
	Livingstone Shire Council			
	Mareeba Shire Council			
	Mount Isa City Council			
	Scenic Rim Regional Council			
	Somerset Regional Council			
	South Burnett Regional Council			
	Southern Downs Regional Council			
	Tablelands Regional Council			
B3	Isaac Regional Council	\$155,141	\$96,963	\$82,417
	Noosa Shire Council			
	Whitsunday Regional Council			

Category	Local Governments assigned to categories	Mayor	Deputy Mayor	Councillor
	Lockyer Valley Regional Council			
C1	Central Highlands Regional Council	\$157,010	\$98,130	\$83,409
	Western Downs Regional Council			
C2	Gladstone Regional Council	\$181,137	\$119,170	\$104,868
	Rockhampton Regional Council			
C3	Bundaberg Regional Council	\$182,895	\$120,327	\$105,886
	Fraser Coast Regional Council			
D2	Cairns Regional Council	\$209,739	\$143,002	\$123,938
	Mackay Regional Council			
	Redland City Council			
	Toowoomba Regional Council			
D3	Townsville City Council	\$238,338	\$162,076	\$143,002
	Ipswich City Council			
E2	Logan City Council	\$266,942	\$184,952	\$162,072
	Moreton Bay City Council			
	Sunshine Coast Regional Council			
F2	Gold Coast City Council	\$295,542	\$208,148	\$176,371

**Notes to the Remuneration schedule**

The 2014 annual report by the former Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal explained the rationale behind the adoption of a system of remuneration which comprised a base payment (of two thirds of the annual remuneration) and a monthly payment based upon attendance at, and participation in, the 12 mandated council meetings.

The monetary amounts shown are the per annum figures to apply from 1 July 2026. If an elected representative only serves for part of a full financial year (that is, 1 July to 30 June) they are only entitled to a pro rata payment to reflect the portion of the year served.

**\*Note 1: The meeting-based remuneration requirement for A1, A2 and A3 Councils has been removed in 2026-27.**

Previously, councillors in A1, A2, and A3 category councils were remunerated through a hybrid model comprising a base payment (constituting two-thirds of the annual remuneration) and a meeting attendance payment (constituting one-third of the annual remuneration). This meeting attendance payment was contingent upon certification by the mayor or chief executive officer of the council. In contrast, mayors and deputy mayors in these categories received their total annual remuneration without this attendance-based condition.

The Commission resolved to discontinue the meeting-based remuneration requirement for councillors in A1, A2, and A3 category councils, effective from the 2026–2027 determination period.

## 4. Matters raised with the Commission

### Meetings and deputations

Local governments were invited to engage with the Commission during the Annual Conference of the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), held in Brisbane from 20 to 23 October 2025. As part of this engagement, the Commission conducted face-to-face deputations with representatives from eight councils, including:

- Barcoo Shire Council
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council
- Gladstone Regional Council
- Isaac Regional Council
- Redlands City Council
- Townsville City Council
- Whitsunday Regional Council

In addition to oral deputations, local governments were also encouraged to provide written submissions to the Commission. A total of seven written submissions were received and carefully considered.

Overall, the submissions highlighted the need for increased remuneration to better reflect the growing complexities and demands faced by mayors and councillors in modern local government. Several councils also proposed changes to their individual categorisation. However, the Commission has decided to defer any decisions regarding category changes until the next scheduled review.

In reaching its maximum determination decision for 2026-27, the Commission considered the submissions received, as well as the broader notions outlined in this report.

Key themes raised during the 2025 deputations, and the previous twelve-month review period reflected issues/topics consistently highlighted by councils in previous years as accounting for increasing the complexity and workload for elected members. These included:

- **Remuneration and Talent:** The need for competitive salaries to attract diverse and skilled candidates, particularly in regional areas, and to retain high-quality elected representatives.
- **Innovation Recognition:** Suggestions to explore mechanisms for incentivising and rewarding innovative council initiatives that foster community growth, resourcefulness, and development.
- **Inflationary Impact:** Concerns about the disproportionate effects of rising inflation and cost escalation on local governments and their communities, especially those with lower-income populations and in rural areas.
- **Community Sustainability:** A greater emphasis on ensuring the long-term viability and prosperity of communities, particularly in the context of the global transition to renewable energy and the associated need for significant infrastructure changes.
- **Leadership in Crisis and Recovery:** Acknowledging the heightened responsibilities, physical and emotional burden faced by councillors during natural disasters and other

significant events, including leading their communities through immediate response efforts and long-term recovery processes.

This feedback will continue to inform the Commission’s future deliberations and decisions.

A summary table of written submissions made to the Commission during the previous 12 months is provided below:

**Table – Summary of 2025 written submissions**

<p><b>1. Date received</b></p> <p><b>Received from</b></p> <p><b>Summary of submission</b></p> <p><b>Determination</b></p>	<p>10 October 2025</p> <p><b>Gladstone Regional Council</b> Mayor, Cr Matt Burnett</p> <p>Gladstone Regional Council proposed the introduction of a transition allowance for councillors who are not re-elected. This allowance would recognize the long-term service of elected officials and support their reintegration into the workforce, aligning local government entitlements with those of other public and private sector roles. The proposal suggests a base of 12 weeks’ salary, with an additional two weeks for each consecutive term served.</p> <p>The Commission acknowledges the submission and the significance of this proposal and will consider it during the next category review.</p>
<p><b>2. Date received</b></p> <p><b>Received from</b></p> <p><b>Summary of submission</b></p> <p><b>Determination</b></p>	<p>24 September 2025</p> <p><b>Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council</b> CEO, Lew Rojahn</p> <p>Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council advocated for a 20% increase in councillor salaries for remote Queensland communities, particularly for category A2 councils. The submission highlighted the unique demands placed on councillors in small communities, including their deep involvement in daily community life and responsibilities that extend beyond formal duties (e.g. attend funerals, resolve disputes, respond to emergencies within community). Key factors cited include cost of living differentials, workload intensity, recruitment and retention challenges, and the need for equity with urban counterparts.</p> <p>The Commission acknowledges the submission. Given the nature of the issue seeking a substantial increase to base councillor remuneration rates, the Commission will consider this proposal at the next category review.</p>
<p><b>3. Date received</b></p> <p><b>Received from</b></p> <p><b>Summary of submission</b></p>	<p>4 November 2025</p> <p><b>Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council</b> CEO, Dalassa Yorkston</p> <p>The Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council requested that the Commission take into account the unique cultural and community challenges faced by councillors in their region as part of the 2028</p>

<p><b>Determination</b></p>	<p>council categorisation review. Councils’ submission provided a comprehensive statistical overview, comparing the Northern Peninsula Area to Queensland averages on several key indicators, including the proportion of Indigenous residents, population mobility, homelessness rates, developmental vulnerability in children, educational attainment, and socio-economic disadvantage. The Council emphasised that these factors significantly increase the complexity and demands of the councillor role in their community. Additionally, the submission proposed the introduction of new classifications to distinguish between divisional and regional councils, reflecting the distinct governance and service delivery challenges in remote areas. Council has sought that its proposal and issues are considered as part of the next category review. The proposal and issues will be taken into consideration in the next category review.</p> <p>The Commission acknowledges Councils submission and the importance of these issues and confirms that they will be considered in the next category review.</p>
<p><b>4. Date received</b></p> <p><b>Received from</b></p> <p><b>Summary of submission</b></p> <p><b>Determination</b></p>	<p>7 November 2025</p> <p><b>Winton Shire Council</b> Mayor, Cr Cathy White</p> <p>Winton Shire Council expressed support for the current framework in which remuneration levels are independently set by the Local Government Remuneration Commission. In its submission, the Council has requested the removal of the requirement for council resolution to formally accept or not the Commission’s maximum remuneration determination. Council is seeking that once the Commission makes the determination that it should automatically apply to all councils within the relevant category. Council has also proposed that remuneration levels be set for the full four-year term, incorporating an annual adjustment applying indexation by the Consumer Price Index.</p> <p>The Commission acknowledges Winton Shire Council’s submission and confirms that, once the Commission makes its annual maximum remuneration determination, it is automatically applied to all councils within the relevant category for the forthcoming financial year. A council resolution is only required if a council resolution is only required if a council wishes to provide a lesser remuneration amount. The Commission will consider the suggestion to implement fixed four-year remuneration terms with annual CPI indexation as part of its next category review.</p>
<p><b>5. Date received</b></p> <p><b>Received from</b></p> <p><b>Summary of submission</b></p>	<p>6 November 2025</p> <p><b>Toowoomba Regional Council</b> CEO, Sal Petrocchio OAM</p> <p>Toowoomba Regional Council requested a reclassification from category D2 to D3 to ensure parity with comparable councils. The submission provided comparative statistical and financial data, as well as details of significant capital infrastructure projects required to address regional growth.</p>

<b>Determination</b>	The Commission noted that the new methodology allows for category review based on factors such as population and will consider this request in the next review cycle.
<b>6. Date received</b>	10 October 2025
<b>Received from</b>	<b>Isaac Regional Council</b> Councillor Jane Pickels CEO, Cale Dendle
<b>Summary of submission</b>	Isaac Regional Council has formally requested a reclassification of its remuneration category from B3 to C1 for 2026. The submission highlights that the Council's 2025/26 budget operating revenue is \$154 million, aligning the Council to category C1 based on the primary criterion under the new categorisation framework which the Commissioners have previously advised is the principal determinant applied. Council concludes its alignment to the C1 classification is further justified when service population, geography, forecast growth, and SEIFA indices are considered. The submission also noted that Isaac has long advocated for reclassification alongside Central Highlands and Western Downs Councils, which were recently reclassified to C1. While the financial difference in remuneration is minimal, the Council seeks recognition of its councillors' roles in comparison to similar resource and agriculture-based councils.
<b>Determination</b>	The Commission acknowledges the submission from Isaac Regional Council and will review the request in 2026, taking into account the Council's audited financial statement and other relevant data.
<b>7. Date received</b>	20 October 2025
<b>Received from</b>	<b>Western Downs Regional Council</b> CEO, Jodie Taylor
<b>Summary of submission</b>	Council has requested consideration of a category change from C1 to C2. Council has identified previous submissions made to the Commission that identify factors in the Western Downs Regional Council Area impacting upon councillors' time, workload and responsibilities. In this new submission the Council also refers to the increasingly high level of activity in the clean energy sector in the region.
<b>Determination</b>	The Commission notes the submission and will consider category change as part of the next category review.

## 5. Other activities

Exceptional circumstances submissions (matters raised under Local Government Regulation 2012, section 248):

Nil.

## 6. Future priorities

The Commission will continue to consider enhancements to the framework for council remuneration categorisation including an equitable method to consider industry impacts on councils and matters relating to transitioning communities and improving sustainability.

The Commission will continue to invite submissions from all Councils as part of its general review of categories and maximum determination of remuneration, as well as make themselves available for deputations at the annual LGAQ conference.

The Commission intends to travel during 2026 to engage with local governments.

Further information about the Commission can be located at

<https://www.localgovernment.qld.gov.au/for-councils/governance/local-government-remuneration-commission>

### **Local Government Remuneration Commission**

GPO Box 2247

Brisbane Qld 4001

1 William Street

Brisbane Qld 4000

Email: [LGRCEnquiries@dlgww.qld.gov.au](mailto:LGRCEnquiries@dlgww.qld.gov.au)

Website: <https://www.localgovernment.qld.gov.au/for-councils/governance/local-government-remuneration-commission>



Department of Local Government,  
Water and Volunteers  
GPO Box 2247, Brisbane,  
Queensland 4001  
13 QGOV (13 74 68)  
info@dlgww.qld.gov.au  
dlgww.qld.gov.au

**DELIVERING**  
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**Queensland**  
Government

## 11.8 Council Policy - Ex-Gratia Payments

**Executive Officer:** Director Corporate and Community Services

**Item Author:** Internal Auditor

**Attachments:**

1. Draft Council Policy - Ex-Gratia Payments Policy [↓](#)
  2. Draft Corporate Procedure - Ex-Gratia Payments Procedure [↓](#)
- 

### Councillor Portfolio / Representation

Audit and Risk Committee - Cr Amanda Hay

### Local Government Area Division

This report relates to the whole Scenic Rim region.

### Executive Summary

The Queensland Audit Office (QAO) has made a recommendation that Council establish a policy to govern ex-gratia payments, ie. a discretionary payment made that is in the public interest but Council is not under any legal or contractual obligation to make the payment. Examples of such payments are to terminated employees or for small claims of liability. A draft of the Ex-Gratia Payments Policy is presented for Council's consideration.

### Recommendation

That:

1. Council adopt the Council Policy - Ex-Gratia Payments Policy;
2. Council endorse that the Council Policy - Ex-Gratia Payments Policy will be finalised through the governance process to be included with Council's standard policies and uploaded to Council's systems and website; and
3. Council note the related Ex-Gratia Payments Procedure, which has been endorsed by the Executive Team for approval by the Chief Executive Officer.

### Previous Council Considerations / Resolutions

Not applicable.

## Report / Background

A simple definition as a starting point is "*An ex-gratia payment is a discretionary, voluntary payment made by Council without any legal or contractual obligation*". A more detailed definition is included in the draft policy.

The QAO made a recommendation on ex-gratia payments to all Councils in 2024. External Audit made a similar recommendation in the 2025 Audit Closing Report due to their finding that Council had not disclosed in the draft financial statements provided to audit some ex-gratia payments in accordance with the relevant accounting standards.

Guidance on ex-gratia payments has been published by the QAO, Local Government Managers Association and Crime and Corruption Commission. This has been considered, along with a review of the small number of policies adopted and published by other Queensland Councils.

There are no specific legislative requirements. By definition these payments are outside of the legislation, however, the general local government principles still apply. This policy needs to ensure there are "transparent and effective processes", and "decision-making in the public interest".

The policy has been drafted aiming to strike an appropriate balance between the following factors:

- Providing adequate transparency and accountability while preserving confidentiality;
- Ensuring operational efficiency against the need for appropriate review and approval;
- Enabling payments where there is a net benefit, but not undermining established procurement, grants and HR processes; and
- Retaining flexibility to address unknown circumstances while providing guidance to reduce risk and ensure well justified and documented decisions.

A supporting Ex-Gratia Payments Procedure has also been drafted and attached for the information of Councillors. It will be approved by the Chief Executive Officer if the Policy is approved by Council.

## Budget / Financial Implications

Payments associated with a staff termination would be costed against the salaries and wages budget of the relevant section.

Payments associated with claims of liability would be costed against the relevant operational area.

The Policy includes a requirement that where the payment is not able to be made within the existing approved budget, there must be consultation and approval by Council.

## Strategic Implications

### *Corporate Plan 2025-2030*

Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030 outlines the organisation's Vision, Mission, and Values. Council's Values are Service, Resilience, Respect, Commitment.

Strategic Goal: Not applicable

Guiding Principle: Operational Efficiency

*Legal / Statutory Implications*

There is no legislation that directly enables these payments, however, some aspects of the *Local Government Act (2009)* and other legislation are relevant and have been considered.

**Risks**

Strategic Risks

The following Level 1 and Level 2 (strategic) risks are relevant to the matters considered in this report:

CR8 Ineffective Organisation Governance - Council is a complex organisation delivering a wide range of services via different processes, using different resources and systems. Council's organisational governance, including corporate planning, controls, internal compliance, monitoring and reporting, may not be adequate to ensure quality outcomes and avoid potentially poor consequences.

Risk Summary

<b>Category</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Governance, Risk & Compliance  Without a policy to guide these payments there is an increased risk that they will not be in the public interest or otherwise fail to meet the legislation.	Development of a suitable policy should ensure consistency, equity, fairness, accountability, and overall compliance with the expectations of the legislation.
Reputation, Community & Civic Leadership  Without a policy to guide these payments there is an increased risk that there will be public concern regarding the appropriateness of any payments the public becomes aware of.	Development of a suitable policy should ensure consistency, equity, fairness, accountability, and overall compliance with the expectations of the legislation. There should be clear documentation of how the payments are in the public interest to enable an appropriate response to any community concerns.

**Human Rights Implications**

No human rights have been impacted by any actions recommended in this report.

**Consultation**

There has been consultation with staff in the Finance, Procurement, Governance and Human Resource departments.

Consultation with the Executive Team occurred on 27 October 2025.

Consultation with the Audit and Risk Committee occurred on 20 November 2025.

Consultation with the Councillors occurred on 4 February 2026.

**Conclusion**

The Ex-Gratia Payments Policy should ensure that there is appropriate governance and good decision making regarding potential ex-gratia payments.

**Options**Option 1

That:

1. Council adopt the Council Policy - Ex-Gratia Payments Policy;
2. Council endorse that the Council Policy - Ex-Gratia Payments Policy will be finalised through the governance process to be included with Council's standard policies and uploaded to Council's systems and website; and
3. Council note the related Ex-Gratia Payments Procedure, which has been endorsed by the Executive Team for approval by the Chief Executive Officer.

Option 2

That Council provide feedback on amendments to the Council Policy - Ex-Gratia Payments Policy for a version to then be presented to a future meeting.

Option 3

That Council not approve the Council Policy - Ex-Gratia Payments Policy and request that Council develop an alternate approach to managing such payments and the related organisation risks.



# POLICY



## Council Policy Ex-Gratia Payment Policy

<b>Policy Reference Number</b>	CPXXXXX	<b>Choose an item Date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>Directorate</b>	Corporate and Community Services	<b>Next Review Date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>Business Unit</b>	Financial Services	<b>Document ID</b>	Click or tap to enter text.

### 1. Purpose/Objective

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear framework for the assessment, approval, processing, and reporting of ex-gratia payments by Council. Ex-gratia payments are discretionary payments made where Council has no legal or contractual obligation, but considers the payment to be appropriate, defensible, and in the public interest.

The objectives of this Policy are to:

1. Ensure that all options are considered against the principles in the policy;
2. Ensure consistency and equity in decision making;
3. Provide an appropriate level of transparency and accountability; and
4. Ensure all decisions are supported by quality documentation.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all **ex-gratia payments** made by Council to employees or third parties. This policy does not cover payments required by law or contractual obligation.

This policy applies to decisions made by employees or by Council resolution.

### 3. Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and adhered to. The CEO has responsibility for approving payments that do not require Council resolution and may delegate approval authority to other officers for specific circumstances.

The Executive Manager People and Performance has responsibility for payments to terminated employees in accordance with this Policy.

The Director Corporate and Community Services has responsibility for payments for claims of liability and facilitating other potential payments in accordance with this Policy. In addition, they are responsible

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for ensuring that all payments are correctly included in Council's regular financial reports and annual financial statements.

## 4. Policy

### 4.1 Principles for all Ex-Gratia Payments

Council may offer ex-gratia payments to individuals, groups, or organisations in situations where there is no legal obligation to make a payment, but it is deemed appropriate with consideration to the overall public interest and is considered reasonable in all the circumstances.

Council must ensure ex-gratia payments are appropriate, defensible, and transparent. Council supports the use of alternative strategies to achieve a mutually agreeable outcome, prior to considering progressing with an ex-gratia payment.

Each ex-gratia payment is voluntary and made based on the facts and circumstances relevant to each particular matter. The making of an ex-gratia payment does not create a precedent for other claims or payments and does not constitute an admission of liability on the part of either party. The making of an ex-gratia payment under this policy also does not imply that payments of a similar value will be made in other matters.

Council is committed to:

- Fully assessing the options, including non-financial assistance, when considering an ex-gratia payment and ensuring that the chosen option can be clearly demonstrated to be in the public interest.
- Clearly documenting the reasoning for the payment and the basis on which the amount was determined.
- Seeking independent legal advice where the circumstances, risks or materiality warrant that expenditure;
- Having both parties execute a suitable **Settlement Agreement, Form of Discharge, Deed of Separation** or other formal documentation for all ex-gratia payments.
- Only using **non-disclosure agreements** where this serves the overall public interest and not to discourage in any way reporting of wrongdoing to oversight or regulatory bodies.
- Managing any conflicts of interest in accordance with Council's procedure;
- Ensuring the Financial Management Team are advised of all payments and provided sufficient details so that Council can meet any disclosure obligations as per accounting standards.
- Storing all related records in accordance with Council's Record Keeping Policy.
- Acting in accordance with guidance on ex-gratia payments issued by the Queensland Audit Office, the Crime and Corruption Commission and any other authoritative state government entity.
- Providing a summary annually to the Audit and Risk Committee of payments made.
- Independent review of any ex-gratia payments in accordance with the processes of External Audit, Internal Audit or other statutory oversight bodies. These entities are to be provided access to all relevant records on request.

Further details on the procedures to be followed, documentation requirements, reporting requirements, guidance on seeking legal advice and appropriate use of non-disclosure agreements are contained in the Ex-Gratia Payments Procedure.

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#### 4.2 Payments to Terminated Employees

There are a number of circumstances that may arise regarding terminated employees where consideration could be given to making an ex-gratia payment in addition to entitlements under Council's awards or employment contracts. Such circumstances that may be in the public interest include:

- Avoiding disruption to teams if an employee was to serve their full notice period;
- Managing risks of disclosure of information or other disruptions to Council's systems or processes;
- Managing workplace health and safety risks;
- Reducing the risk of allegations of unfair dismissal or other complaints to the Industrial Relations Commission;
- Maintaining goodwill, resolving disputes or otherwise reducing risks to Council's reputation and status as an employer of choice.

The delegated authority to negotiate and approve ex-gratia payments to terminated employees is as follows:

- The Executive Manager People and Performance for amounts up to \$30,000.
- The Chief Executive Officer for amounts up to \$100,000 not including any payments to a member of the **Executive Leadership Team**.
- The Chief Executive Officer, following formal consultation with the Mayor, for amounts above \$100,000 and/or involving any members of the **Executive Leadership Team**.

Where the ex-gratia payment would be made to the Chief Executive Officer, or where the Chief Executive Officer has a conflict of interest, the decision is to be made by Council resolution.

#### 4.3 Payments to resolve Claims of Liability

Council may be subject to claims of liability made by third parties. These will be managed in accordance with the Administrative Policy: Insurance Policies and Claims. Claims may be resolved through an ex-gratia payment in the following circumstances:

- Where the claim is likely to be successful through legal action against Council;
- Where the amount of the loss can be objectively determined, e.g. through provision of quotes for repairs.
- Where the claim does not include an element of personal injury; and
- Where the amount is below Council's excess under the relevant insurance policy.

Ex-gratia payments in accordance with this section can be approved by the Chief Executive Officer or other officers delegated to by the CEO which are currently the Director Corporate and Community Services and the Coordinator Governance.

#### 4.4 Payments in Other Circumstances

Other circumstances may arise where it is appropriate for Council to consider making an ex-gratia payment. It is not possible to anticipate these circumstances; however, an example would be an out-of-court settlement where Council's insurance does not provide coverage. Another may be to resolve a contractual dispute where the anticipated legal costs exceed the plausible amount of the claim with consideration to the probability of success and recovering costs.

The decision to make an ex-gratia payment for other circumstances will be determined on a case-by-case basis and, where applicable and appropriate, based on independent legal advice to ensure due

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consideration of legal mechanisms to resolve the matter and that it is not setting a precedent.

Council may only consider an ex gratia payment where it can be demonstrated that the payment will deliver a proportionate and tangible community benefit within the local government area. The determination of whether such a benefit exists must be made by Council at the relevant time, based on an objective and transparent assessment. Principles of equity and fairness must be considered, particularly where the payment that is contemplated could be made under Council's Community Grant Programs if the timing and circumstances permitted.

Where Council has relevant funds available within the currently approved budget, the delegated authority to negotiate and approve ex-gratia payments for other circumstance is as follows:

- The Director Corporate and Community Services for amounts up to \$10,000.
- The Chief Executive Officer for amounts up to \$20,000.

Where there are not sufficient relevant funds available within the currently approved budget, or where the amount is greater than \$20,000, the decision is to be made by Council resolution.

## 5. Definitions

**Deed of Settlement:** A specific form of **settlement agreement** used by Council with terminated employees.

**Ex-Gratia Payment:** An ex-gratia payment is a discretionary, voluntary payment made by Council without any legal or contractual obligation. These payments are made as an act of goodwill and are not an admission of liability or wrongdoing by the organisation. These payments do not include payments made by Council that are directly enabled by legislation such as grants, sponsorships, assistance provided during disasters, payment for goods or services, court ordered payments, or payments under contracts.

**Executive Leadership Team:** Senior management positions that report directly to the CEO.

**Form of Discharge:** A specific form of **settlement agreement** used by Council when resolving external claims of liability.

**Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA):** A legal agreement that restricts the sharing of specific information. In this context, used in settlements or employment-related matters to protect sensitive information, while preserving legal reporting obligations.

**Settlement Agreement:** A formal agreement resolving a dispute or potential claim without admission of liability, often involving financial or non-financial terms.

**Terminated Employee:** An employee who has either resigned or their employment has been terminated.

## 6. Related Legislations/Documents

Administrative Policy: Insurance Policies and Claims

Administrative Policy: Record Keeping

Conflict of Interest Procedure

Council Grant and Funding Programs Policy

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Crime and Corruption Commission publication - [Prevention-in-focus-Use-of-non-disclosure-agreements-what-are-the-corruption-risks-2020.pdf](#)

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Public Sector Ethics Act 1994

This Policy supports the Scenic Rim Regional Council Corporate Plan 2025-2030, in particular theme - FOCUS Guiding Principle - Financial sustainability

## 7. Version Information

Version No	Adoption Date	Key Changes	Approved by
1		New policy.	
2			

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## Ex-Gratia Payments Procedure

<b>Reference Number</b>	PRXXXXX	<b>Approval Date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>Directorate</b>	Corporate and Community Services	<b>Review Date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>Business Unit</b>	Financial Services	<b>Document ID</b>	Click to enter text.

### 1. Objectives

The objective of this Corporate Procedure is to provide detail on key administrative aspects of the Ex-Gratia Payments Policy:

- Key contents to include in documentation supporting decisions;
- Key procedural steps;
- Considerations for the use of non-disclosure agreements; and
- Requirements to notify the Financial Management Team.

### 2. Scope

This procedure applies to all ex-gratia payments made by Council to employees or third parties. This procedure does not cover payments required by law or contractual obligation.

This procedure applies to decisions made by employees or by Council resolution.

Examples of potential ex-gratia payments are:

- Payments to employees in addition to entitlements under Council's awards or employment contracts;
- Payments to settle claims of liability that are under Council's excess under the relevant insurance policy;
- Payments to settle a contract dispute or compensation claim before a legally binding judgment has been made; or
- Other 'out-of-court' settlements based on mediation and legal advice.

### 3. Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring this Corporate Procedure is understood and adhered to.

Other positions with key responsibilities are as follows:

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Role	Responsibility
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and potentially approve ex-gratia payments within their delegated authority as defined in the Ex-Gratia Payments Policy.</li> <li>Consult with the Mayor where required under the Policy.</li> <li>Refer payments outside delegation to the Council.</li> <li>Ensure policy compliance and oversight.</li> </ul>
Mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with the CEO in considering potential ex-gratia payments where required by the Policy.</li> </ul>
Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and potentially approve ex-gratia payments when presented to Council.</li> </ul>
Executive Manager People and Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that ex-gratia payments to terminated employees are completed in accordance with this procedure.</li> </ul>
Director Corporate and Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that ex-gratia payments for claims of liability are completed in accordance with this procedure.</li> <li>Facilitate the process and ensure that ex-gratia payments arising from other circumstances are completed in accordance with this procedure.</li> <li>Ensure appropriate disclosure of ex-gratia payments in accordance with applicable accounting standards.</li> </ul>
Managers/Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and assess circumstances where an ex-gratia payments could be made and consider all options, including non-financial assistance, to resolve the matter.</li> <li>Prepare documentation to progress potential ex-gratia payments in accordance with the Policy and this procedure.</li> </ul>
Governance Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that ex-gratia payments for claims of liability are completed in accordance with this procedure.</li> <li>Facilitate legal advice when requested regarding ex-gratia payments.</li> </ul>
Financial Management Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain accurate records when advised of approved ex-gratia payments.</li> <li>Ensure appropriate disclosure of ex-gratia payments in accordance with applicable accounting standards.</li> </ul>

## 4. Procedure

### 4.1. DOCUMENTATION

The format and length of documentation will vary depending on the circumstances and amount of the payment being considered. Generally, Council's Memorandum Template should be used. However, other forms or templates are acceptable as long as they address the following minimum requirements:

- The recipient of the payment.
- Relevant and sufficient background information to enable other readers to assess the reasons and amount of the payment. This should include how the request was made to Council, or how the circumstances were identified.
- Reference to other correspondence, evidence or other relevant records.
- Whether independent advice (legal, financial, independent expert) was obtained and a summary of the advice and/or reference to the relevant records.
- The reasons why this payment is in the public interest including consideration of alternative non-financial forms of assistance.
- How the payment amount was determined and an estimate of the costs vs benefits of the payment.

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- Declaration that there is no conflict of interest for the staff involved in the decision or reference to the Conflict of Interest declaration made in accordance with Council's Conflict of Interest Procedure.
- Who has approved the payment.

For a number of ex-gratia payments there will be other legal documents prepared such as a Settlement Agreement, Form of Discharge or Deed of Separation. These documents serve a different purpose and are not a substitute for the document described above.

#### 4.2. USE OF NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENTS (NDAS)

The use of NDAs in ex-gratia payment arrangements must be carefully controlled and consistent with Council's statutory obligations.

- NDAs must not prevent or restrict reporting of wrongdoing to oversight or regulatory bodies (e.g., Crime and Corruption Commission, Queensland Audit Office, Ombudsman).
- NDAs used in employee settlements must explicitly preserve rights under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 and other applicable legislation.
- The use of an NDA must be justified. A clear rationale should be included in the documentation, such as protecting sensitive commercial information, to protect the privacy of individuals or where the other party requires it to finalise a disputed matter.

When considering use of a NDA consideration must be given to the Crime and Corruption Commission publication - [Prevention-in-focus-Use-of-non-disclosure-agreements-what-are-the-corruption-risks-2020.pdf](#).

Where Council's existing templates for agreements are not suitable, legal advice should be sought on the form and content of any non-disclosure agreement.

The wording of the NDA or other formal agreement will not preclude Council meeting its obligations for disclosure of payments within Council's financial statements or to oversight bodies including the Queensland Audit Office, Crime and Corruption Commission, the Audit and Risk Committee and Internal Audit.

#### 4.3. INDEPENDENT ADVICE

Independent legal advice will be sought where the circumstances, risks or materiality warrant that expenditure.

The documentation prepared seeking a decision must include comment on why legal advice was not sought, or summarise the legal advice that was received.

For potential payments associated with staff termination that are adequately covered by Council's template Deed of Separation legal advice is not likely to be required. However, if the payment amount would exceed \$30,000 it is likely that legal advice would be warranted.

For Claims of Liability it is not expected that legal advice would be sought. If there was uncertainty regarding the risks associated with a matter the claim would be referred to Council's insurers to assess and manage.

For other matters it is more likely that legal advice will be needed to assess the options, ensure sound reasons for the decision and to create an appropriate formal agreement between the parties.

#### 4.4. REPORTING TO THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE (ARC)

An annual report is to be provided to the Audit and Risk Committee summarising the ex-gratia payments made in the preceding financial year. This reporting will respect the confidentiality of the matters while allowing genuine oversight and scrutiny of the governance and payments made. The Finance Team will prepare this report for the ARC at the time of preparing the annual financial statements.

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#### 4.5. RECORD KEEPING

Records are to be retained in ECM in accordance with Council's Record Keeping Policy and the Public Records Act 2023.

Subject indexes and document classes relevant to the subject are mandatory.

Documents will be subject to approved disposal after meeting minimum retention periods as set out in Queensland State Archives Retention and Disposal Schedules.

Document copies, or access to these records, will be provided to Finance, External Audit and Internal Audit upon request.

#### 4.6. ADVICE TO FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

Once the payment has been completed it is the responsibility of the Manager that initiated the ex-gratia payment to advise the Financial Management Team of the broad reason for the payment, the recipient, the amount and the payment date. If a 'lump-sum' payment is made comprised of ex-gratia payment elements and payments for other reasons; a breakdown of the components must be provided.

For ex-gratia payments related to claims for liability under Council's insurance excess it is sufficient if a summary list is provided to the Financial Management Team on a quarterly basis.

The Financial Management Team is authorised to request additional information and documentation where necessary to determine the correct treatment of the payment in accordance with the accounting standards.

### 5. Compliance and Reporting

Independent review of any ex-gratia payments may occur in accordance with the processes of External Audit, Internal Audit or other statutory oversight bodies. These entities are to be provided access to all relevant records on request.

Reporting of ex-gratia payments is to occur in accordance with the relevant accounting standards. This may require disclosure of payments to key management personnel or to related parties.

All ex-gratia payments must be reported to the Audit & Risk Committee at least twice annually, including rationale, value, conflict-of-interest declarations, and public interest justification..

### 6. Definitions

**Deed of Settlement:** A specific form of **settlement agreement** used by Council with terminated employees.

**Ex-Gratia Payment:** An ex-gratia payment is a discretionary, voluntary payment made by Council without any legal or contractual obligation. These payments are made as an act of goodwill and are not an admission of liability or wrongdoing by the organisation. These payments do not include payments made by Council that are directly enabled by legislation such as grants, sponsorships, assistance provided during disasters, payment for goods or services, court ordered payments, or payments under contracts.

**Executive Leadership Team:** Senior management positions that report directly to the CEO.

**Form of Discharge:** A specific form of **settlement agreement** used by Council when resolving external claims of liability.

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**Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA):** A legal agreement that restricts the sharing of specific information. In this context, used in settlements or employment-related matters to protect sensitive information, while preserving legal reporting obligations.

**Settlement Agreement:** A formal agreement resolving a dispute or potential claim without admission of liability, often involving financial or non-financial terms.

**Terminated Employee:** An employee who has either resigned or their employment has been terminated.

## 7. Related Documents

Administrative Policy: Insurance Policies and Claims

Administrative Policy: Record Keeping

Conflict of Interest Procedure

Council Grant and Funding Programs Policy

Crime and Corruption Commission publication - [Prevention-in-focus-Use-of-non-disclosure-agreements-what-are-the-corruption-risks-2020.pdf](#)

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Public Sector Ethics Act 1994

Public Records Act 2023

ECM Business Classification Scheme (ECM Doc Set #13440617)

Subject Index Function Guide and File Structure and Thesaurus (ECM Doc Set #8491614).

## 8. Approved By:

David Keenan

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Date:

## 9. Version Information

Version No	Adoption Date	Key Changes	Approved by
1		New procedure.	
2			

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**11.9 Council Policy - Internal Audit and Corporate Procedure - Internal Audit Charter**

**Executive Officer:** Director Corporate and Community Services

**Item Author:** Internal Auditor

**Attachments:**

1. Council Policy Internal Audit CP00037 - adopted 22 May 2024 [↓](#)
  2. Revised Council Policy Internal Audit CP00037 (with tracked changes) [↓](#)
  3. Revised Council Policy Internal Audit CP00037 [↓](#)
  4. Corporate Procedure Internal Audit Charter PR00036 - approved 22 May 2024 [↓](#)
  5. Revised Corporate Procedure Internal Audit Charter PR00036 (with tracked changes) [↓](#)
  6. Revised Corporate Procedure Internal Audit Charter PR00036 [↓](#)
- 

**Councillor Portfolio / Representation**

Audit and Risk Committee - Cr Amanda Hay

**Local Government Area Division**

This report relates to the whole Scenic Rim region.

**Executive Summary**

Internal Audit is governed by an Internal Audit Policy and a supporting Internal Audit Charter contained within a Corporate Procedure. Internal Audit completes an annual self-assessment which prompted some changes to the Policy, Procedure and Charter. In addition, a significantly updated version of the professional standards for internal audit published by the Institute of Internal Auditors has been released, which prompted further changes to these documents.

**Recommendation**

That:

1. Council rescind the current Council Policy - Internal Audit CP00037 adopted on 22 May 2024;
2. Council adopt the revised Council Policy - Internal Audit CP00037, developed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* and *Local Government Regulation 2012*; and
3. Council note that the supporting Corporate Procedure - Internal Audit Charter PR00036, will be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for approval to give effect to the Council Policy - Internal Audit.

### **Previous Council Considerations / Resolutions**

At the Ordinary Meeting held on 22 May 2024 Item 11.20, Council resolved that:

1. Council adopt the Internal Audit Council Policy; and
2. Council note the Internal Audit Charter Corporate Procedure.

### **Report / Background**

The Internal Audit Policy commits Council to achieving compliance with current industry standards for Internal Audit as reflected in the Institute of Internal Auditor's International Professional Practices Framework (the IPPF). These documents have been significantly updated which has prompted a number of changes to the policy and procedure governing the Internal Audit function.

The Internal Auditor also completes an annual self-assessment against these standards and the objectives for the Internal Audit function. The Audit and Risk Committee were consulted regarding this assessment and the need for any changes to the function and/or the policy and procedure.

The draft changes are summarised as follows:

- Additional wording to emphasise the independence of the Internal Audit function;
- Changes to the objectives of the function and the definition of internal auditing to maintain alignment with the IPPF and to make these more meaningful and easier to understand;
- Rewording the professional standards to reflect the new structure of the updated IPPF;
- Updating the wording on the code of ethics to reflect the new IPPF, in particular, the addition of the words "professional courage" to recognise the potential challenges and the expectations for the profession; and
- Explicitly recognise the expectation for auditors to maintain an appropriate level of professional scepticism which is now addressed in the IPPF.

The overall intent of the Policy and the Procedure are not changed, however, these changes should improve the effectiveness of these documents.

### **Budget / Financial Implications**

There are no budget or financial implications of these changes.

### **Strategic Implications**

#### *Corporate Plan 2025-2030*

Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030 outlines the organisation's Vision, Mission and Values. Council's Values are Service, Resilience, Respect, Commitment.

Strategic Goal: Not applicable

Guiding Principle: Operational Efficiency

*Legal / Statutory Implications*

Section 105 of the *Local Government Act 2009* provides that Council must establish an effective internal audit function. Additional requirements regarding operation of the function are set in the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

**Risks**

Strategic Risks

The following Level 1 and Level 2 (strategic) risks are relevant to the matters considered in this report:

CR8 Ineffective Organisation Governance - Council is a complex organisation delivering a wide range of services via different processes, using different resources and systems. Council's organisational governance, including corporate planning, controls, internal compliance, monitoring and reporting, may not be adequate to ensure quality outcomes and avoid potentially poor consequences.

Risk Summary

<b>Category</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Governance, Risk & Compliance  The Internal Audit function may not comply with the legislation.	Without adequate definition of the objectives and authority of internal audit there is an increased risk that the function will not be effective or otherwise fail to meet the legislative requirements. The Internal Audit Policy sets clear objectives and provides appropriate authority to the function. The Internal Audit Charter sets out how the function should operate. Overall this should help ensure that the function is legislatively compliant and is effective in meeting its objectives for the organisation.

**Human Rights Implications**

No human rights have been impacted by any actions recommended in this report.

**Consultation**

The Audit and Risk Committee was consulted on 20 November 2025.

**Conclusion**

The proposed changes to the Internal Audit Policy and Internal Audit Charter will help ensure that the documents continue to align with the relevant professional standards and help ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the internal audit function.

**Options**Option 1

That:

1. Council rescind the current Council Policy - Internal Audit CP00037 adopted on 22 May 2024;
2. Council adopt the revised Council Policy - Internal Audit CP00037, developed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* and *Local Government Regulation 2012*; and
3. Council note that the supporting Corporate Procedure - Internal Audit Charter PR00036, will be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for approval to give effect to the Council Policy - Internal Audit.

Option 2

That Council provide feedback on changes to the Council Policy - Internal Audit CP00037 and Corporate Procedure - Internal Audit Charter PR00036, to enable them to be updated and presented to a future meeting.

Option 3

That Council direct that no updates to the Council Policy - Internal Audit CP00037 and Corporate Procedure - Internal Audit Charter PR00036 should occur and the current documents are to remain in place.



## Council Policy

### Internal Audit

<b>Policy Reference Number</b>	CP00037	<b>Approval Date</b>	22/05/2024
<b>Portfolio</b>	Council Sustainability	<b>Next Review Date</b>	22/05/2027
<b>Business Unit</b>	Internal Audit and Improvement	<b>Document ID</b>	10925277

#### 1. Purpose/Objective

The objective of this Policy is to establish an independent, professional Internal Audit function to monitor and improve the organisation's processes, procedures and internal control environment to assist with the management of risks.

#### 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all Councillors and employees of Council.

#### 3. Responsibility

The Principal Specialist Internal Audit and Improvement is responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and adhered to.

#### 4. Policy

Council is committed to:

1. Complying with the *Local Government Act 2009* and *Local Government Regulation 2012* in the operation of Scenic Rim Regional Council's Internal Audit function;
2. Achieving compliance with current industry standards for Internal Audit as reflected in the Institute of Internal Auditor's International Professional Practices Framework; and
3. Facilitating the role of the Internal Audit function through the Internal Audit Procedure and Charter (PR00036).

The Internal Audit Function is to:

1. Provide a high quality audit, assurance and advisory service to Council;
2. Assist to embed a culture of continuous improvement practices across Council;
3. Support Council's risk management processes; and
4. Provide assurance and assist the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), management and the Council in the effective discharge of their responsibilities, by providing them with analyses, appraisals,

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 Document Maintained by: Council Sustainability  
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CP00037 - Internal Audit Council Policy

recommendations, counsel, reports and information concerning the activities reviewed and also, by promoting effective internal controls at reasonable cost.

### 5. Definitions

Nil.

### 6. Related Legislations/Documents

Internal Audit Procedure and Charter PR00036  
 Local Government Act 2009  
 Local Government Regulation 2012

This Policy supports the Scenic Rim Regional Council Corporate Plan 2026, in particular theme - Open and Responsive Government

### 7. Version Information

Version No	Adoption Date	Key Changes	Approved by
1	29/07/2008	Ordinary Meeting Item No. 5.4 New Policy	Scenic Rim Regional Council
2	28/07/2009	21/07/2009 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 1.3; Changes to reflect move to Oakton, including corporate plan links, changed timescales and escalation process.	Scenic Rim Regional Council
3	26/06/2012	19/06/2012 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 1.7; Changed to make reference to <i>Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Standard 2010</i>	Scenic Rim Regional Council
4	27/08/2013	20/08/2013 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 1.2; Added reference to <i>Local Government Regulation 2012</i>	Scenic Rim Regional Council
5	24/05/2016	17/05/2016 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 3.1; Corporate Plan References updated Council Commitments and Related Document updated	Scenic Rim Regional Council
6	03/02/2020	Ordinary meeting Item 11.8; Completion of due review and creation of new Procedure documents	Scenic Rim Regional Council
7	07/12/2021	Ordinary meeting Item 10.16; Reviewed and aligned with revised Procedure and Charter	Scenic Rim Regional Council
8	22/05/2024	Ordinary Meeting Item No. 11.20	Scenic Rim Regional Council

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## Council Policy Internal Audit

Policy Reference Number	CP00037	Choose an Item Date	22/05/2024
Directorate	Corporate and Community Services	Next Review Date	22/05/2027
Business Unit	Internal Audit	Document ID	2324943

Deleted: Council Sustainability  
Deleted: Portfolio  
Deleted: Internal Audit and Improvement

### 1. Purpose/Objective

The objective of this Policy is to establish an independent, professional Internal Audit function to monitor and improve the organisation's processes, procedures and internal control environment to assist with the management of risks.

### 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all Councillors and employees of Council.

### 3. Responsibility

The Internal Auditor is responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and adhered to.

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Deleted: and Improvement

### 4. Policy

Council is committed to:

1. Complying with the Local Government Act 2009 and Local Government Regulation 2012 in the operation of Scenic Rim Regional Council's Internal Audit function;
2. Achieving compliance with current industry standards for Internal Audit as reflected in the Institute of Internal Auditor's International Professional Practices Framework; and
3. Facilitating the role of the Internal Audit function through the Internal Audit Procedure and Charter (PR00036).
4. Ensuring the independence of the Internal Audit function.

The Internal Audit Function is to

1. Provide a high quality audit, assurance and advisory service to Council;
2. Assist to embed a culture of continuous improvement practices across Council;
3. Support Council's risk management processes; and

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- 4. ~~Assist the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), management and the Council in the effective discharge of their responsibilities, by providing independent, risk-based and objective assurance, advice, insight and foresight; and~~
- 5. ~~Promote effective internal controls at a reasonable cost.~~

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Deleted: them with analyses, appraisals recommendations, counsel, reports and information concerning the activities reviewed and also, by promoting effective internal controls at reasonable cost

**5. Definitions**

Nil.

**6. Related Legislations/Documents**

Internal Audit Procedure and Charter PR00036

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

~~This Policy supports the Scenic Rim Regional Council Corporate Plan 2025-2030, in particular theme - FOCUS Guiding Principle - Operational efficiency~~

**7. Version Information**

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Version No	Adoption Date	Key Changes	Approved by
1	29/07/2008	Ordinary Meeting Item No. 5.4 New Policy	Scenic Rim Regional Council
2	28/07/2009	21/07/2009 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 1.3; Changes to reflect move to Oakton, including corporate plan links, changed timescales and escalation process.	Scenic Rim Regional Council
3	26/06/2012	19/06/2012 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 1.7; Changed to make reference to <i>Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Standard 2010</i>	Scenic Rim Regional Council
4	27/08/2013	20/08/2013 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 1.2; Added reference to <i>Local Government Regulation 2012</i>	Scenic Rim Regional Council
5	24/05/2016	17/05/2016 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 3.1; Corporate Plan References updated Council Commitments and Related Document updated	Scenic Rim Regional Council
6	03/02/2020	Ordinary meeting Item 11.8; Completion of due review and creation of new Procedure documents	Scenic Rim Regional Council
7	07/12/2021	Ordinary meeting Item 10.16; Reviewed and aligned with revised Procedure and Charter	Scenic Rim Regional Council
8	22/05/2024	Ordinary Meeting Item No. 11.20 <u>Minor administrative changes only.</u>	Scenic Rim Regional Council
9		<u>Ordinary Meeting Item No. 11.XX Changes to align with revised IIA standards particularly to emphasise audit independence and simplify the wording.</u>	

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## Council Policy

### Internal Audit

<b>Policy Reference Number</b>	CP00037	<b>Choose an item Date</b>	22/05/2024
<b>Directorate</b>	Corporate and Community Services	<b>Next Review Date</b>	22/05/2027
<b>Business Unit</b>	Internal Audit	<b>Document ID</b>	2324943

#### 1. Purpose/Objective

The objective of this Policy is to establish an independent, professional Internal Audit function to monitor and improve the organisation's processes, procedures and internal control environment to assist with the management of risks.

#### 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all Councillors and employees of Council.

#### 3. Responsibility

The Internal Auditor is responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and adhered to.

#### 4. Policy

Council is committed to:

1. Complying with the Local Government Act 2009 and Local Government Regulation 2012 in the operation of Scenic Rim Regional Council's Internal Audit function;
2. Achieving compliance with current industry standards for Internal Audit as reflected in the Institute of Internal Auditor's International Professional Practices Framework; and
3. Facilitating the role of the Internal Audit function through the Internal Audit Procedure and Charter (PR00036).
4. Ensuring the independence of the Internal Audit function.

The Internal Audit Function is to

1. Provide a high quality audit, assurance and advisory service to Council;
2. Assist to embed a culture of continuous improvement practices across Council;
3. Support Council's risk management processes; and

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4. Assist the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), management and the Council in the effective discharge of their responsibilities, by providing independent, risk-based and objective assurance, advice, insight and foresight; and
5. Promote effective internal controls at a reasonable cost.

## 5. Definitions

Nil.

## 6. Related Legislations/Documents

Internal Audit Procedure and Charter PR00036

*Local Government Act 2009*

*Local Government Regulation 2012*

This Policy supports the Scenic Rim Regional Council Corporate Plan 2025-2030, in particular theme - FOCUS Guiding Principle - Operational efficiency

## 7. Version Information

Version No	Adoption Date	Key Changes	Approved by
1	29/07/2008	Ordinary Meeting Item No. 5.4 New Policy	Scenic Rim Regional Council
2	28/07/2009	21/07/2009 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 1.3; Changes to reflect move to Oakton, including corporate plan links, changed timescales and escalation process.	Scenic Rim Regional Council
3	26/06/2012	19/06/2012 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 1.7; Changed to make reference to <i>Local Government (Finance, Plans and Reporting) Standard 2010</i>	Scenic Rim Regional Council
4	27/08/2013	20/08/2013 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 1.2; Added reference to <i>Local Government Regulation 2012</i>	Scenic Rim Regional Council
5	24/05/2016	17/05/2016 Corporate and Community Services meeting Item 3.1; Corporate Plan References updated Council Commitments and Related Document updated	Scenic Rim Regional Council
6	03/02/2020	Ordinary meeting Item 11.8; Completion of due review and creation of new Procedure documents	Scenic Rim Regional Council
7	07/12/2021	Ordinary meeting Item 10.16; Reviewed and aligned with revised Procedure and Charter	Scenic Rim Regional Council
8	22/05/2024	Ordinary Meeting Item No. 11.20. Minor administrative changes only.	Scenic Rim Regional Council
9		Ordinary Meeting Item No. 11.XX Changes to align with revised IIA standards particularly to emphasise audit independence and simplify the wording.	

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## Internal Audit Charter

<b>Reference Number</b>	PR00036	<b>Approval Date</b>	22/05/2024
<b>Portfolio</b>	Council Sustainability	<b>Review Date</b>	22/05/2027
<b>Business Unit</b>	Internal Audit and Improvement	<b>Document ID</b>	10958235

### 1. Objectives

The objectives of this Procedure for the Internal Audit Charter are to establish:

1. The role and purpose of the Internal Audit function; and
2. Guidance for the conduct of Internal Audit.

### 2. Scope

This Procedure applies to the Internal Audit function and all employees who interact with Internal Audit.

### 3. Responsibility

The Principal Specialist Internal Audit and Improvement is responsible for ensuring this Corporate Procedure is understood and adhered to.

### 4. Procedure

The Internal Audit function will operate within guidance contained in the attached Internal Audit Charter at all times.

### 5. Compliance and Reporting

This corporate procedure includes the required reporting to satisfy the requirements of Section 207 of *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

### 6. Definitions

Nil.

### 7. Related Documents

Internal Audit Policy CP00037  
*Local Government Act 2009*  
*Local Government Regulation 2012*

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## 8. Version Information

Version No	Adoption Date	Key Changes	Approved by
1	03/02/2020	New Procedure	CEO
2	17/12/2021	Review; procedure number amendment	CEO
3	22/05/2024	Ordinary Meeting 22/05/2024, Item 11.20	CEO

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PR00036 - Internal Audit Charter and Corporate Procedure

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**APPENDIX 1**



## Internal Audit Charter

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## 1. Introduction

This Charter establishes the authority and responsibility conferred by Council via the Internal Audit Policy on the Internal Audit Unit (the Unit), so that it may operate effectively, efficiently and independently within the Scenic Rim Regional Council (Council).

This Charter establishes the major role, the operating environment and operating parameters of the Unit within Council.

## 2. The Role and Purpose of Internal Audit

"Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes."

Source: International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF), The Institute of Internal Auditors.

### 2.1. MISSION AND ROLE

The mission of Internal Audit is to enhance and protect organisational value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice, and insight.

The role of Internal Audit is to provide independent and objective assurance to:

- The Audit Committee and Chief Executive Officer that financial and non-financial controls are operating in a compliant, efficient, effective, economical and ethical manner.
- Assist management to improve business performance.

Internal Audit was established, and continues to operate, to meet the requirements under the *Local Government Act 2009*, s.105 and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, s 207.

### 2.2. INDEPENDENCE

Internal Audit is required to be independent and objective, with independence essential to its effectiveness. Internal Audit shall develop and maintain a cooperative but independent relationship with management. Internal Audit does not relieve management of its responsibilities and accountabilities. It is management's responsibility to maintain an adequate system of internal controls. Internal Audit has a prime role in reviewing and making recommendations on the methods and standards of controls to be incorporated into any new or existing practices, processes and/or systems.

Internal Audit has an independent status within Council and for that purpose:

- shall be directly responsible to the Chief Executive Officer via the General Manager Council Sustainability (for day to day matters) and be independent of any other program or employee of Council;
- shall have no executive or managerial powers, authorities, functions or duties except those relating to the function of the Unit;
- should not be involved in the day-to-day operation of the financial and operational matters or the internal controls therein of Council;
- shall not be responsible for the detailed development, implementation or decommissioning of systems, or variations to systems. However, as the Principal Specialist Internal Audit and Improvement deems appropriate, the Unit should furnish advice on the incorporation of adequate system controls and provide assurance to management that completed systems will contribute to the achievement of the intended corporate objectives; and shall not be subject to management direction and shall maintain independence in its reporting.

**2.3. REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS**

The current resource arrangements for the Internal Audit function has the role of the Chief Audit Executive (CAE) filled by the Principal Specialist Internal Audit and Improvement.

The Internal Audit function reports:

- Functionally to the Audit and Risk Committee through the chair.
- Administratively to the Chief Executive Officer (through the General Manager Council Sustainability).

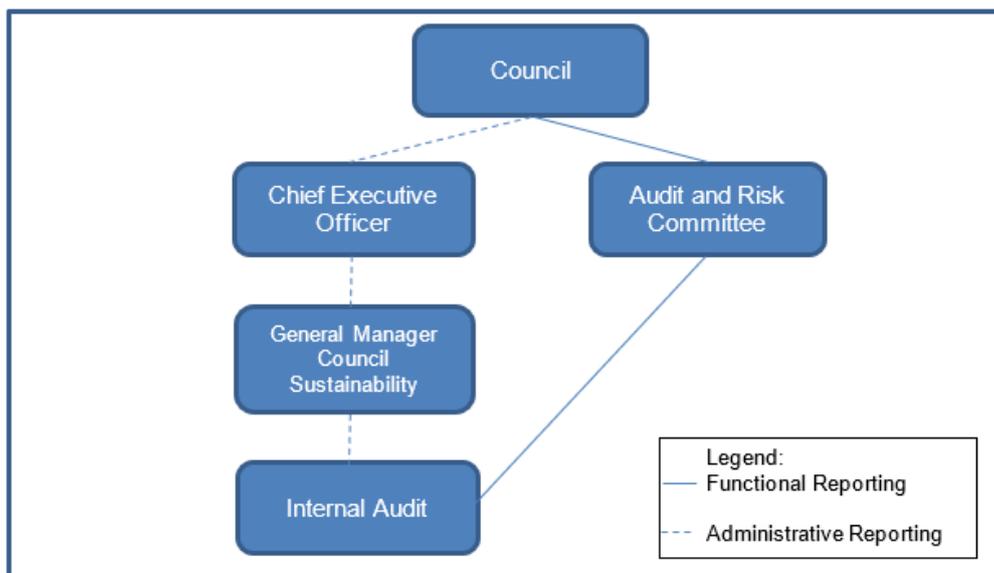
Functional reporting involves the Audit and Risk Committee:

- Reviewing and endorsing the Internal Audit Charter. The Charter will be approved by Council.
- Assessing performance of the Internal Audit function.
- Reviewing and endorsing the Internal Audit Plan, and any changes to the plan. The Audit Plan will be approved by Council.
- Reviewing reports on the results of audits, audit-related activities, audit team capability, audit performance, and other important matters.
- Monitoring compliance with standards, together with quality and improvement arrangements.
- Meeting privately with the CAE at least once a year without the CEO or other management present.
- Making enquiries of the CAE to determine any scope or budget limitations that may impede the execution of Internal Audit responsibilities.

Administrative reporting to the Chief Executive Officer includes:

- Internal Audit resources and annual budget.
- Approving decisions regarding appointment and removal of the Chief Audit Executive, including remuneration. The CEO is expected to provide a reasonable explanation and consult with the Audit and Risk Committee Chair, regarding these decisions.
- Provision of corporate services to Internal Audit including office accommodation, computers and equipment.
- Human resource administration.

The Chief Audit Executive will meet regularly with the Chief Executive Officer, with meetings planned to occur every two months. Right of direct access by the Chief Audit Executive to the Chief Executive Officer is preserved for any time the Chief Audit Executive believes it to be warranted.



## 2.4. AUTHORITY

Internal Audit has the authority to conduct audits as necessary to exercise its responsibilities, to determine their nature and scope and to develop methods of investigation for the appraisal of operations. This includes authority to finalise the Terms of Reference for each review, following a process of consultation with all stakeholders associated with the review.

Internal Audit is authorised to have full, free and unrestricted access to all functions, premises, assets, personnel, records, and other documentation and information that is necessary to enable the Unit to meet its responsibilities. Any person with access to information gathered by Internal Audit is responsible and accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of that information.

Internal Audit shall:

- undertake audits and reviews in accordance with approved Annual Internal Audit Plans;
- conduct audits, investigations and reviews, outside of the approved Audit Plans when changed risks are identified or when requests are made by management. The Chief Audit Executive has authority to approve the initial change or request. If the change is likely to impact completion of the Audit Plan, consultation must occur with the CEO and the Audit and Risk Committee Chair as suited to the circumstances.
- have access to all relevant information, staff, equipment and property of Council; and
- have discussions with relevant staff and require them to provide information for audit and review purposes.

Requests for access to information and systems will follow standard organisational processes including approval by a supervisor or the system owner. If circumstances require, the Chief Audit Executive may bypass this process by making a request in writing to the Manager Information Services and Technology.

## 2.5. CODE OF ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Internal Auditors are to conform to the Code of Conduct for the Scenic Rim Regional Council and the IIA Code of Ethics.

It is essential that audit staff respect the confidentiality of the areas and material they audit in line with privacy provisions.

Internal Audit staff must give ongoing consideration to the existence of potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest. This includes any circumstance where internal audit staff will perform services in areas where they have had previous responsibilities. It is important to the effectiveness of internal audit to be able to demonstrate the objectivity and impartiality of the function. Instances of perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest by Internal Audit staff (and service providers) shall immediately be reported to the Chief Executive Officer to determine an appropriate course of action.

## 2.6. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Internal Audit will govern itself by adherence to mandatory guidance contained in the 'International Professional Practices Framework' (IPPF) issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA):

- 'Core Principles for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing'.
- 'Definition of Internal Auditing'.
- 'Code of Ethics'.
- 'International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing'.

This mandatory guidance constitutes the fundamental requirements for the professional practice of internal auditing and the principles against which to evaluate the effectiveness of Internal Audit performance. The Chief Audit Executive is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date risk-based internal audit methodology that aligns with good practices promoted by the internal audit profession. Key aspects of this methodology are to be documented in the Internal Audit Manual.

### 3. Conduct of Work

Internal Audit will conduct its work in accordance with the key principles outlined within this section of the Charter. Further detail is documented in the Internal Audit Manual.

#### 3.1. AUDIT PLANNING

Internal Audit will each year prepare an Annual Internal Audit Plan which meets the requirements in the *Local Government Regulations 2009*. The Plan will contain a detailed plan for the next financial year and a high level plan for the following three years.

At a high level, the approach to be adopted for planning is as follows:

- the Unit prepares an initial draft plan after consideration of Council's Risk Registers, plans and strategies.
- Discussions will occur with various managers to further develop the draft plan.
- The draft plan is discussed with the Executive Leadership Team and updated as required.
- The Annual Internal Audit Plan is given final internal endorsement by the CEO.
- The Annual Internal Audit Plan is presented to the Audit and Risk Committee for feedback, update as required and subsequent endorsement.
- The Annual Internal Audit Plan is approved by Council.

A more detailed planning methodology and prioritisation model is defined in the Internal Audit Manual.

#### 3.2. REVIEW ACTIVITIES

Internal Audit will provide a range of different types of reviews to deliver on the approved Internal Audit Plan and otherwise meet the objectives of the function. All reviews will involve a structured, objective process that will generate sufficient evidence to support any conclusions and recommendations.

Reviews on the Internal Audit Plan will follow a process including the following key steps:

- Research and development of a draft Terms of Reference and audit program;
- Consultation with areas involved in the planned review prior to finalisation of the Terms of Reference;
- Conduct of fieldwork to gather sufficient evidence through methods suited to the review;
- Discussion of draft review findings in an initial exit meeting;
- Development of a draft report that will progress through consultation and feedback with the relevant team and levels of management.

Review activities can include reviews of current projects at any stage, i.e. not just limited to post implementation reviews. Internal Audit contributions to projects will always be recommendations; no design decisions will be made by the Unit. This includes recommendations on design of software functionality such as audit trails, user security and exception reporting.

#### 3.3. MONITORING OF AGREED AUDIT ACTIONS

The *Local Government Regulation 2012* and the IPPF both require an ongoing process to track and report on the implementation of agreed audit actions. Actions in scope for this process will arise from

internal audit reviews, external audits, Queensland Audit Office reports and any other report and action where the Audit Committee requests it be added to the tracking process.

Internal Audit will manage the system and process for requesting updates on action implementation, review evidence of completed actions and prepare reports for the Audit and Risk Committee and others as required.

The officer responsible for completion of an action (the action owner) may request an extension to the original due date. The first extension will only require agreement with the Chief Audit Executive. The next extension will also require agreement of the relevant General Manager. Subsequent extensions will also require agreement of the CEO. All extensions will be visible to the Audit and Risk Committee who may make recommendations to the CEO or Council regarding the urgency of implementation of the action.

### 3.4 Conduct

At all times, The Unit is required to work towards productive working relationships with all staff. This includes regular consultation with managers during internal audit reviews and appropriate follow-up. It is explicitly confirmed that the Unit will not have a 'gotcha' mentality or raise issues that do not warrant reporting. The Unit will work to the principle of 'no surprises' and will not ambush teams with senior management with findings that have not been appropriately raised and discussed.

The Unit shall have proper regard to their professional duties and ensure high professional standards are kept by ensuring that:

- reviews are performed in accordance with accepted professional standards and practices, including a professional standard of working papers;
- sufficient work is performed to substantiate serious concerns before they are raised with management or escalated to the CEO or other integrity functions before the normal reporting process is conducted;
- productive work relationships are established between auditors and managers;
- suitable confidentiality requirements are established; and
- situations that may lead to actual or potential conflicts are avoided.

## 4. Reporting

### 4.1. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

Every review identified on the Annual Audit Plan will be the subject of a formal Audit Report (other internal audit activities will report their results in a way suited to the nature of that work). Audit reports will convey the results of the audit clearly, objectively and in a timely manner so as to facilitate appropriate corrective action.

The following process will be adopted for Internal Audit Reports:

- The Unit performs field work in accordance with the agreed scope;
- The Unit discusses any issues identified with the relevant manager or nominee(s);
- The Unit completes a draft report based on fieldwork and responses or comments from relevant management;
- The Unit arranges an exit meeting with the relevant manager(s) or nominee(s) to discuss and agree the findings and reports items;
- Management will provide a response to each recommendation. Responses should state

whether they agree or disagree with the recommendation and provide other appropriate comments. Management can choose to take different actions to respond to the recommendation or can accept the risk with no further action. Management should describe any agreed actions, the due date and officer responsible for the action;

- Responses shall be provided to the Principal Specialist Internal Audit, Risk and Improvement within 10 business days following receipt of the draft report unless the matters raised are of a particularly complex nature;
- Every endeavour shall be made to agree all report findings and recommendations with the responsible General Manager prior to progressing the report to its final form. Where agreement is not reached, the views of both management and internal audit will be included in the report; and
- Final approval of the report by the CEO to confirm that the review meets the organisation's expectations and that the management responses are appropriate.

In accordance with the independent role of Internal Audit, changes to the draft report will be made at the discretion of the Chief Audit Executive. If management disagrees with the report findings or recommendations and internal audit is confident the report is accurate and does not require change this will be documented by inclusion of management's responses or comments. It is the responsibility of the Audit and Risk Committee to consider the circumstances and make a recommendation to the CEO or to Council if they consider further action should be taken.

A draft audit report must:

- state the results of the audit clearly and objectively; and
- be prepared on a timely basis to enable appropriate action.

A final audit report would normally include the following:

- the objective of the audit;
- the scope of the audit;
- the executive summary (where appropriate);
- audit conclusions for each key issue identified, including acknowledgement of good practice and remedial action in progress;
- recommendations, including solutions as far as practicable; and
- management comments in response to the recommendations.

## 5. Internal Audit Quality and Performance

### 5.1. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Chief Audit Executive is responsible for developing and maintaining a quality assurance and improvement program that includes:

- Ongoing internal assessments.
- Periodic internal assessments to be performed annually.
- Annual assertion to the Audit Committee on compliance with internal auditing standards.
- Independent external assessments performed at least once every five years by a qualified, independent assessor or assessment team from outside Council.

Internal Audit is encouraged to develop and maintain mutually beneficial relations with counterparts in other organisations, thought leaders, relevant professional bodies and networks with a view to:

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- Exchanging information on internal audit good practices.
- Exchanging information on emerging corporate governance, risk management and assurance issues.

To compensate for the impacts of working as a solo internal auditor, Internal Audit will attempt to operate a degree of peer review of work in mutual collaboration with a similar sized Council. Appropriate confidentiality agreements will be established to manage the risks in the arrangement.

## 5.2. EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE

Internal Audit will seek written feedback from the relevant Manager and General Manager following completion of each review on the Annual Internal Audit Plan.

Internal audit performance will be evaluated and results reported to the Audit Committee on an annual basis. This will include:

- Results of the quality assurance and improvement program.
- Results of any internal audit performance measures previously approved by the Audit Committee.
- Summary of feedback from management of areas where internal audit work has been performed.

Feedback on internal audit performance will be sought annually from members of the Audit and Risk Committee.



### Internal Audit Charter

Reference Number	PR00036	Approval Date	22/05/2024
Directorate	Corporate and Community Services	Review Date	22/05/2027
Business Unit	Internal Audit	Document ID	10961914

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#### 1. Objectives

The objectives of this Procedure for the Internal Audit Charter are to establish:

1. The role and purpose of the Internal Audit function; and
2. Guidance for the conduct of Internal Audit.

#### 2. Scope

This Procedure applies to the Internal Audit function and all employees who interact with Internal Audit.

#### 3. Responsibility

The Internal Auditor is responsible for ensuring this Corporate Procedure is understood and adhered to.

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#### 4. Procedure

The Internal Audit function will operate within guidance contained in the attached Internal Audit Charter at all times.

#### 5. Compliance and Reporting

This corporate procedure includes the required reporting to satisfy the requirements of Section 207 of *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

#### 6. Definitions

Nil.

#### 7. Related Documents

Internal Audit Policy CP00037  
 Local Government Act 2009  
 Local Government Regulation 2012

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### 8. Version Information

Version No	Adoption Date	Key Changes	Approved by
1	03/02/2020	New Procedure	CEO
2	17/12/2021	Review; procedure number amendment	CEO
3	22/05/2024	Ordinary Meeting 22/05/2024, Item 11.20	CEO

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**APPENDIX 1**



**Internal Audit Charter**

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### 1. Introduction

This Charter establishes the authority and responsibility conferred by Council via the Internal Audit Policy on the Internal Audit Unit (the Unit), so that it may operate effectively, efficiently and independently within the Scenic Rim Regional Council (Council).

This Charter establishes the role, the operating environment and operating parameters of the Unit within Council.

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### 2. The Role and Purpose of Internal Audit

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"Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and advisory service designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes."

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Source: International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF), The Institute of Internal Auditors.

#### 2.1. MISSION AND ROLE

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The mission of Internal Audit is to create, protect and sustain organisational value by providing the board (Council) and management with independent, risk-based and objective assurance, advice, insight and foresight.

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The role of Internal Audit is to provide independent and objective assurance to:

- The Audit Committee and Chief Executive Officer that financial and non-financial controls are operating in a compliant, efficient, effective, economical and ethical manner.
- Assist management to improve business performance.

Internal Audit was established, and continues to operate, to meet the requirements under the Local Government Act 2009, s.105 and the Local Government Regulation 2012, s 207.

#### 2.2. INDEPENDENCE

Internal Audit is required to be independent and objective, with independence essential to its effectiveness. Internal Audit shall develop and maintain a cooperative but independent relationship with management. Internal Audit does not relieve management of its responsibilities and accountabilities. It is management's responsibility to maintain an adequate system of internal controls. Internal Audit has a prime role in reviewing and making recommendations on the methods and standards of controls to be incorporated into any new or existing practices, processes and/or systems.

Internal Audit has an independent status within Council and for that purpose:

- shall be directly responsible to the Chief Executive Officer via the Director Corporate and Community Services (for day to day matters) and be independent of any other program or employee of Council;
- shall have no executive or managerial powers, authorities, functions or duties except those relating to the function of the Unit;
- should not be involved in the day-to-day operation of the financial and operational matters or the internal controls of Council;
- shall not be responsible for the detailed development, implementation or decommissioning of systems, or variations to systems. However, as the Internal Auditor deems appropriate, the Unit should furnish advice on the incorporation of adequate system controls and provide assurance to management that completed systems will contribute to the achievement of the intended corporate objectives. The Internal Auditor will complete appropriate tasks and provide advice as directed by the project plan, but will always maintain independence in its reporting.

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2.3. REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

The current resource arrangements for the Internal Audit unit has the role of the Chief Audit Executive, as defined in the IPPF, filled by the Internal Auditor. The term Internal Auditor (IA) is generally used within Council and will also be used within this document.

The Internal Audit unit reports:

- Functionally to the Audit and Risk Committee through the Chair.
- Administratively to the Chief Executive Officer (through the Director Corporate and Community Services).

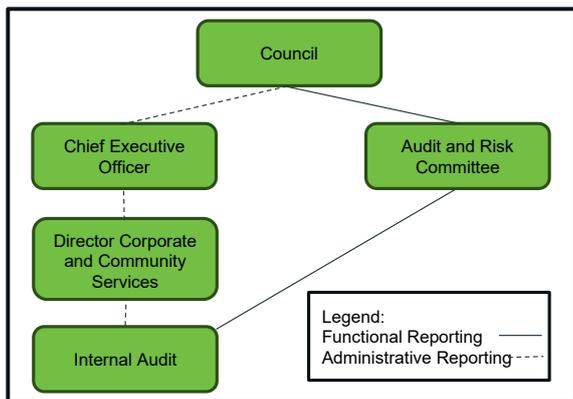
Functional reporting involves the Audit and Risk Committee:

- Reviewing and endorsing the Internal Audit Charter. The Charter will be approved by Council.
- Assessing performance of the Internal Audit function.
- Reviewing and endorsing the Internal Audit Plan, and any changes to the plan. The Audit Plan will be approved by Council.
- Reviewing reports on the results of audits, audit-related activities, audit team capability, audit performance, and other important matters.
- Monitoring compliance with standards, together with quality and improvement arrangements.
- Meeting privately with the Internal Auditor at least once a year without the CEO or other management present.
- Making enquiries of the Internal Auditor to determine any scope or budget limitations that may impede the execution of Internal Audit responsibilities.

Administrative reporting to the Chief Executive Officer includes:

- Establishing the Internal Audit resources and annual budget.
- The CEO approving decisions regarding appointment and removal of the Internal Auditor, including remuneration. The CEO is expected to provide a reasonable explanation and consult with the Audit and Risk Committee Chair, regarding these decisions.
- Provision of corporate services to Internal Audit including office accommodation, software, computers and equipment.
- Human resource administration.

The Internal Auditor will meet with the Chief Executive Officer whenever necessary. Right of direct access by the Internal Auditor to the Chief Executive Officer is preserved for any time the Internal Auditor believes it to be warranted. This right cannot be constrained by a Director, Manager or other staff member.



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**2.4. AUTHORITY**

Internal Audit has the authority to conduct audits as necessary to exercise its responsibilities, to determine their nature and scope and to develop methods of investigation for the appraisal of operations. This includes authority to finalise the Terms of Reference for each review, following a process of consultation with all stakeholders associated with the review.

Internal Audit is authorised to have full, free and unrestricted access to all functions, premises, assets, personnel, records, and other documentation and information that is necessary to enable the Unit to meet its responsibilities. Any person with access to information gathered by Internal Audit is responsible and accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of that information.

Internal Audit shall:

- undertake audits and reviews in accordance with approved Annual Internal Audit Plans;
- conduct audits, investigations and reviews, outside of the approved Audit Plans when changed risks are identified or when requests are made by management. The Internal Auditor has authority to approve the initial change or request. If the change is likely to impact completion of the Audit Plan, consultation must occur with the CEO and the Audit and Risk Committee Chair as suited to the circumstances.
- have access to all relevant information, staff, equipment and property of Council; and
- have discussions with relevant staff and require them to provide information for audit and review purposes.

Requests for access to information and systems will follow standard organisational processes including approval by a supervisor or the system owner. If circumstances require, the Internal Auditor may bypass this process by making a request in writing to the Manager Information Services and Technology.

**2.5. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

Internal Audit will govern itself by adherence to the guidance contained in the 'International Professional Practices Framework' (IPPF) issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA):

- Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) - the main body of the standards - Mandatory.
- Topical Requirements - key requirements for any review of the specific topics - Mandatory.
- Global Guidance - provides information, advice and best practices - Supplemental.

The IPPF constitutes the fundamental requirements for the professional practice of internal auditing and the principles against which to evaluate the effectiveness of Internal Audit performance. The Internal Auditor is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date risk-based internal audit methodology that aligns with good practices promoted by the internal audit profession. Key aspects of this methodology are to be documented in the Internal Audit Manual.

**2.6. CODE OF ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Internal Auditors are to conform to the Code of Conduct for the Scenic Rim Regional Council and the Requirements of Domain 2 in the Global Internal Audit Standards - Ethics and Professionalism.

Internal auditors must perform their work with honesty and professional courage. Auditors must maintain high personal standards of ethical behaviour. If internal auditors identify behaviour within the organisation that is inconsistent with the organisation's ethical expectations, they must report the concern according to Council's policies and procedures.

It is essential that audit staff respect the confidentiality of the areas and material they audit in line with privacy provisions.

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### 3. Conduct of Work

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At a high level, the approach to be adopted for annual planning is as follows:

- the Unit prepares an initial draft plan after consideration of Council's Risk Registers, plans and strategies.
- Discussions will occur with various managers to further develop the draft plan.
- The draft plan is discussed with the Executive Leadership Team and updated as required.
- The Annual Internal Audit Plan is given final internal endorsement by the CEO.
- The Annual Internal Audit Plan is presented to the Audit and Risk Committee for feedback, update as required and subsequent endorsement.
- The Annual Internal Audit Plan is approved by Council.

A more detailed planning methodology and prioritisation model is defined in the Internal Audit Manual.

#### 3.2. REVIEW ACTIVITIES

Internal Audit will provide a range of different types of reviews to deliver on the approved Internal Audit Plan and otherwise meet the objectives of the function. All reviews will involve a structured, objective process that will generate sufficient evidence to support any conclusions and recommendations. Auditors will exercise due professional care and maintain an appropriate level of professional scepticism.

Reviews on the Internal Audit Plan will follow a process including the following key steps:

- Research and development of a draft Terms of Reference and audit program;
- Consideration of the competency and experience of the resources to perform the review;
- Consultation with areas involved in the planned review prior to finalisation of the Terms of Reference;
- Conduct of fieldwork to gather sufficient evidence through methods suited to the review;
- Discussion of draft review findings in an initial exit meeting;
- Development of a draft report that will progress through consultation and feedback with the relevant team and levels of management.

Review activities can include reviews of current projects at any stage, i.e. not just limited to post implementation reviews. Internal Audit contributions to projects will always be recommendations; no design decisions will be made by the Unit. This includes recommendations on design of software functionality such as audit trails, user security and exception reporting.

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**3.3. MONITORING OF AGREED AUDIT ACTIONS**

The *Local Government Regulation 2012* and the IPPF both require an ongoing process to track and report on the implementation of agreed audit actions. Actions in scope for this process will arise from internal audit reviews, external audits, Queensland Audit Office reports and any other report and action where the Audit Committee requests it be added to the tracking process.

Internal Audit will manage the system and process for requesting updates on action implementation, review evidence of completed actions and prepare reports for the Audit and Risk Committee and others as required.

The officer responsible for completion of an action (the action owner) may request an extension to the original due date. The first extension will only require agreement with the Internal Auditor. The next extension will also require agreement of the relevant Director. Subsequent extensions will also require agreement of the CEO. All extensions will be visible to the Audit and Risk Committee who may make recommendations to the CEO or Council regarding the urgency of implementation of the action.

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**3.4 Conduct**

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- reviews are performed in accordance with accepted professional standards and practices, including a professional standard of working papers;
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- suitable confidentiality requirements are established and maintained; and
- situations that may lead to actual or potential conflicts are avoided.

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**4.1. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS**

Every review identified on the Annual Audit Plan will be the subject of a formal Audit Report (other internal audit activities will report their results in a way suited to the nature of that work). Audit reports will convey the results of the audit clearly, objectively and in a timely manner so as to facilitate appropriate corrective action.

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- The Unit performs field work in accordance with the agreed scope;
- The Unit discusses any issues identified with the relevant manager or nominee(s);
- The Unit completes a draft report based on fieldwork and responses or comments from relevant management;
- The Unit arranges an exit meeting with the relevant manager(s) or nominee(s) to discuss and agree the findings and reports items;

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- Management will provide a response to each recommendation. Responses should state whether they agree or disagree with the recommendation and provide other appropriate comments. Management can choose to take different actions to respond to the recommendation or can accept the risk with no further action. Management should describe any agreed actions, the due date and officer responsible for the action;
- Responses shall be provided to the Principal Specialist Internal Audit, Risk and Improvement within 10 business days following receipt of the draft report unless the matters raised are of a particularly complex nature;
- Every endeavour shall be made to agree all report findings and recommendations with the responsible Director prior to progressing the report to its final form. Where agreement is not reached, the views of both management and internal audit will be included in the report; and
- Final approval of the report by the CEO to confirm that the review meets the organisation's expectations and that the management responses are appropriate.

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In accordance with the independent role of Internal Audit, changes to the draft report will be made at the discretion of the Internal Auditor. If management disagrees with the report findings or recommendations and internal audit is confident the report is accurate and does not require change this will be documented by inclusion of management's responses or comments. It is the responsibility of the Audit and Risk Committee to consider the circumstances and make a recommendation to the CEO or to Council if they consider further action should be taken.

Deleted: Chief Audit Executive

A draft audit report must:

- state the results of the audit clearly and objectively; and
- be prepared on a timely basis to enable appropriate action.

A final audit report would normally include the following:

- the objective of the audit;
- the scope of the audit;
- the executive summary (where appropriate);
- audit conclusions for each key issue identified, including acknowledgement of good practice and remedial action in progress;
- recommendations, including solutions as far as practicable; and
- management comments in response to the recommendations.

## 5. Internal Audit Quality and Performance

### 5.1. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Internal Auditor is responsible for developing and maintaining a quality assurance and improvement program that includes:

Deleted: Chief Audit Executive

- Ongoing internal assessments.
- Periodic internal assessments to be performed annually.
- Annual assertion to the Audit Committee on compliance with internal auditing standards.
- Independent external assessments performed at least once every five years by a qualified, independent assessor or assessment team from outside Council.

Internal Audit is encouraged to develop and maintain mutually beneficial relations with counterparts in other organisations, thought leaders, relevant professional bodies and networks with a view to:

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- Exchanging information on internal audit good practices.
- Exchanging information on emerging corporate governance, risk management and assurance issues.

To compensate for the impacts of working as a solo internal auditor, Internal Audit will attempt to operate a degree of peer review of work in mutual collaboration with a similar sized Council. Appropriate confidentiality agreements will be established to manage the risks in the arrangement.

**5.2. EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE**

Internal Audit will seek written feedback from the relevant Manager and Director following completion of each review on the Annual Internal Audit Plan.

Deleted: General Manager

Internal audit performance will be evaluated and results reported to the Audit Committee on an annual basis. This will include:

- Results of the quality assurance and improvement program.
- Results of any internal audit performance measures previously approved by the Audit Committee.
- Summary of feedback from management of areas where internal audit work has been performed.

Feedback on internal audit performance will be sought annually from members of the Audit and Risk Committee.



## Internal Audit Charter

<b>Reference Number</b>	PR00036	<b>Approval Date</b>	22/05/2024
<b>Directorate</b>	Corporate and Community Services	<b>Review Date</b>	22/05/2027
<b>Business Unit</b>	Internal Audit	<b>Document ID</b>	10961914

### 1. Objectives

The objectives of this Procedure for the Internal Audit Charter are to establish:

1. The role and purpose of the Internal Audit function; and
2. Guidance for the conduct of Internal Audit.

### 2. Scope

This Procedure applies to the Internal Audit function and all employees who interact with Internal Audit.

### 3. Responsibility

The Internal Auditor is responsible for ensuring this Corporate Procedure is understood and adhered to.

### 4. Procedure

The Internal Audit function will operate within guidance contained in the attached Internal Audit Charter at all times.

### 5. Compliance and Reporting

This corporate procedure includes the required reporting to satisfy the requirements of Section 207 of *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

### 6. Definitions

Nil.

### 7. Related Documents

Internal Audit Policy CP00037  
*Local Government Act 2009*  
*Local Government Regulation 2012*

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## 8. Version Information

Version No	Adoption Date	Key Changes	Approved by
1	03/02/2020	New Procedure	CEO
2	17/12/2021	Review; procedure number amendment	CEO
3	22/05/2024	Ordinary Meeting 22/05/2024, Item 11.20	CEO

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**APPENDIX 1**



## Internal Audit Charter

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## 1. Introduction

This Charter establishes the authority and responsibility conferred by Council via the Internal Audit Policy on the Internal Audit Unit (the Unit), so that it may operate effectively, efficiently and independently within the Scenic Rim Regional Council (Council).

This Charter establishes the role, the operating environment and operating parameters of the Unit within Council.

## 2. The Role and Purpose of Internal Audit

"Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and advisory service designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes."

Source: International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF), The Institute of Internal Auditors.

### 2.1. MISSION AND ROLE

The mission of Internal Audit is to create, protect and sustain organisational value by providing the board (Council) and management with independent, risk-based and objective assurance, advice, insight and foresight.

The role of Internal Audit is to provide independent and objective assurance to:

- The Audit Committee and Chief Executive Officer that financial and non-financial controls are operating in a compliant, efficient, effective, economical and ethical manner.
- Assist management to improve business performance.

Internal Audit was established, and continues to operate, to meet the requirements under the *Local Government Act 2009*, s.105 and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, s 207.

### 2.2. INDEPENDENCE

Internal Audit is required to be independent and objective, with independence essential to its effectiveness. Internal Audit shall develop and maintain a cooperative but independent relationship with management. Internal Audit does not relieve management of its responsibilities and accountabilities. It is management's responsibility to maintain an adequate system of internal controls. Internal Audit has a prime role in reviewing and making recommendations on the methods and standards of controls to be incorporated into any new or existing practices, processes and/or systems.

Internal Audit has an independent status within Council and for that purpose:

- shall be directly responsible to the Chief Executive Officer via the Director Corporate and Community Services (for day to day matters) and be independent of any other program or employee of Council;
- shall have no executive or managerial powers, authorities, functions or duties except those relating to the function of the Unit;
- should not be involved in the day-to-day operation of the financial and operational matters or the internal controls of Council;
- shall not be responsible for the detailed development, implementation or decommissioning of systems, or variations to systems. However, as the Internal Auditor deems appropriate, the Unit should furnish advice on the incorporation of adequate system controls and provide assurance to management that completed systems will contribute to the achievement of the intended corporate objectives. The Internal Auditor will complete appropriate tasks and provide advice as directed by the project plan, but will always maintain independence in its reporting.

### 2.3. REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

The current resource arrangements for the Internal Audit unit has the role of the Chief Audit Executive, as defined in the IPPF, filled by the Internal Auditor. The term Internal Auditor (IA) is generally used within Council and will also be used within this document.

The Internal Audit unit reports:

- Functionally to the Audit and Risk Committee through the Chair.
- Administratively to the Chief Executive Officer (through the Director Corporate and Community Services).

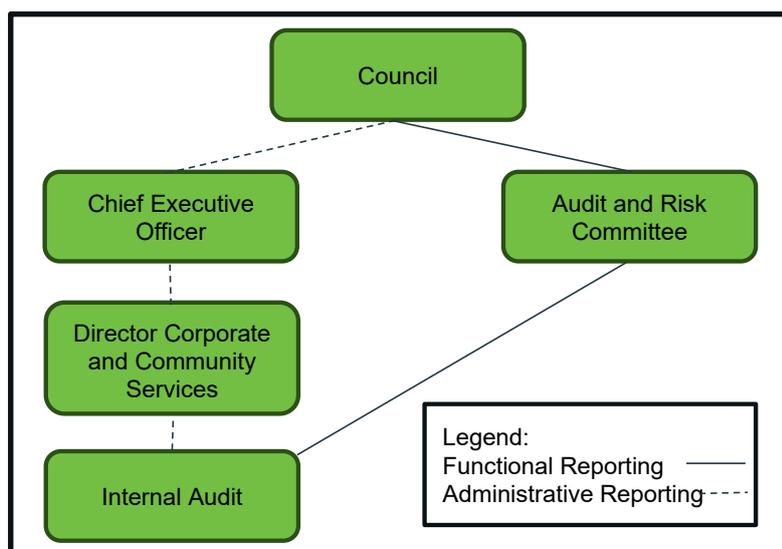
Functional reporting involves the Audit and Risk Committee:

- Reviewing and endorsing the Internal Audit Charter. The Charter will be approved by Council.
- Assessing performance of the Internal Audit function.
- Reviewing and endorsing the Internal Audit Plan, and any changes to the plan. The Audit Plan will be approved by Council.
- Reviewing reports on the results of audits, audit-related activities, audit team capability, audit performance, and other important matters.
- Monitoring compliance with standards, together with quality and improvement arrangements.
- Meeting privately with the Internal Auditor at least once a year without the CEO or other management present.
- Making enquiries of the Internal Auditor to determine any scope or budget limitations that may impede the execution of Internal Audit responsibilities.

Administrative reporting to the Chief Executive Officer includes:

- Establishing the Internal Audit resources and annual budget.
- The CEO approving decisions regarding appointment and removal of the Internal Auditor, including remuneration. The CEO is expected to provide a reasonable explanation and consult with the Audit and Risk Committee Chair, regarding these decisions.
- Provision of corporate services to Internal Audit including office accommodation, software, computers and equipment.
- Human resource administration.

The Internal Auditor will meet with the Chief Executive Officer whenever necessary. Right of direct access by the Internal Auditor to the Chief Executive Officer is preserved for any time the Internal Auditor believes it to be warranted. This right cannot be constrained by a Director, Manager or other staff member.



## 2.4. AUTHORITY

Internal Audit has the authority to conduct audits as necessary to exercise its responsibilities, to determine their nature and scope and to develop methods of investigation for the appraisal of operations. This includes authority to finalise the Terms of Reference for each review, following a process of consultation with all stakeholders associated with the review.

Internal Audit is authorised to have full, free and unrestricted access to all functions, premises, assets, personnel, records, and other documentation and information that is necessary to enable the Unit to meet its responsibilities. Any person with access to information gathered by Internal Audit is responsible and accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of that information.

Internal Audit shall:

- undertake audits and reviews in accordance with approved Annual Internal Audit Plans;
- conduct audits, investigations and reviews, outside of the approved Audit Plans when changed risks are identified or when requests are made by management. The Internal Auditor has authority to approve the initial change or request. If the change is likely to impact completion of the Audit Plan, consultation must occur with the CEO and the Audit and Risk Committee Chair as suited to the circumstances.
- have access to all relevant information, staff, equipment and property of Council; and
- have discussions with relevant staff and require them to provide information for audit and review purposes.

Requests for access to information and systems will follow standard organisational processes including approval by a supervisor or the system owner. If circumstances require, the Internal Auditor may bypass this process by making a request in writing to the Manager Information Services and Technology.

## 2.5. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Internal Audit will govern itself by adherence to the guidance contained in the 'International Professional Practices Framework' (IPPF) issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA):

- Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) - the main body of the standards - Mandatory.
- Topical Requirements - key requirements for any review of the specific topics - Mandatory.
- Global Guidance - provides information, advice and best practices - Supplemental.

The IPPF constitutes the fundamental requirements for the professional practice of internal auditing and the principles against which to evaluate the effectiveness of Internal Audit performance. The Internal Auditor is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date risk-based internal audit methodology that aligns with good practices promoted by the internal audit profession. Key aspects of this methodology are to be documented in the Internal Audit Manual.

## 2.6. CODE OF ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Internal Auditors are to conform to the Code of Conduct for the Scenic Rim Regional Council and the Requirements of Domain 2 in the Global Internal Audit Standards - Ethics and Professionalism.

Internal auditors must perform their work with honesty and professional courage. Auditors must maintain high personal standards of ethical behaviour. If internal auditors identify behaviour within the organisation that is inconsistent with the organisation's ethical expectations, they must report the concern according to Council's policies and procedures.

It is essential that audit staff respect the confidentiality of the areas and material they audit in line with privacy provisions.

Internal Audit staff must give ongoing consideration to the existence of potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest. This includes any circumstance where internal audit staff will perform services in areas where they have had previous responsibilities. It is important to the effectiveness of internal audit to be able to demonstrate the objectivity and impartiality of the function. Instances of perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest by Internal Audit staff (and service providers) shall immediately be reported to the Chief Executive Officer to determine an appropriate course of action.

### 3. Conduct of Work

Internal Audit will conduct its work in accordance with the key principles outlined within this section of the Charter. Further detail is documented in the Internal Audit Manual.

#### 3.1. AUDIT PLANNING

Internal Audit will each year prepare an Annual Internal Audit Plan which meets the requirements in the *Local Government Regulations 2009*. The Plan will contain a detailed plan for the next financial year and a high level plan for the following three years.

At a high level, the approach to be adopted for annual planning is as follows:

- the Unit prepares an initial draft plan after consideration of Council's Risk Registers, plans and strategies.
- Discussions will occur with various managers to further develop the draft plan.
- The draft plan is discussed with the Executive Leadership Team and updated as required.
- The Annual Internal Audit Plan is given final internal endorsement by the CEO.
- The Annual Internal Audit Plan is presented to the Audit and Risk Committee for feedback, update as required and subsequent endorsement.
- The Annual Internal Audit Plan is approved by Council.

A more detailed planning methodology and prioritisation model is defined in the Internal Audit Manual.

#### 3.2. REVIEW ACTIVITIES

Internal Audit will provide a range of different types of reviews to deliver on the approved Internal Audit Plan and otherwise meet the objectives of the function. All reviews will involve a structured, objective process that will generate sufficient evidence to support any conclusions and recommendations. Auditors will exercise due professional care and maintain an appropriate level of professional scepticism.

Reviews on the Internal Audit Plan will follow a process including the following key steps:

- Research and development of a draft Terms of Reference and audit program;
- Consideration of the competency and experience of the resources to perform the review;
- Consultation with areas involved in the planned review prior to finalisation of the Terms of Reference;
- Conduct of fieldwork to gather sufficient evidence through methods suited to the review;
- Discussion of draft review findings in an initial exit meeting;
- Development of a draft report that will progress through consultation and feedback with the relevant team and levels of management.

Review activities can include reviews of current projects at any stage, i.e. not just limited to post implementation reviews. Internal Audit contributions to projects will always be recommendations; no design decisions will be made by the Unit. This includes recommendations on design of software functionality such as audit trails, user security and exception reporting.

### 3.3. MONITORING OF AGREED AUDIT ACTIONS

The *Local Government Regulation 2012* and the IPPF both require an ongoing process to track and report on the implementation of agreed audit actions. Actions in scope for this process will arise from internal audit reviews, external audits, Queensland Audit Office reports and any other report and action where the Audit Committee requests it be added to the tracking process.

Internal Audit will manage the system and process for requesting updates on action implementation, review evidence of completed actions and prepare reports for the Audit and Risk Committee and others as required.

The officer responsible for completion of an action (the action owner) may request an extension to the original due date. The first extension will only require agreement with the Internal Auditor. The next extension will also require agreement of the relevant Director. Subsequent extensions will also require agreement of the CEO. All extensions will be visible to the Audit and Risk Committee who may make recommendations to the CEO or Council regarding the urgency of implementation of the action.

### 3.4 Conduct

At all times, the Unit is required to work towards productive working relationships with all staff. This includes regular consultation with managers during internal audit reviews and appropriate follow-up. It is explicitly confirmed that the Unit will not have a 'gotcha' mentality or raise issues that do not warrant reporting. The Unit will work to the principle of 'no surprises' and will not ambush teams with senior management with findings that have not been appropriately raised and discussed.

The Unit shall have proper regard to their professional duties and ensure high professional standards are kept by ensuring that:

- reviews are performed in accordance with accepted professional standards and practices, including a professional standard of working papers;
- sufficient work is performed to substantiate serious concerns before they are raised with management or escalated to the CEO or other integrity functions before the normal reporting process is conducted;
- productive work relationships are established between auditors and managers;
- suitable confidentiality requirements are established and maintained; and
- situations that may lead to actual or potential conflicts are avoided.

## 4. Reporting

### 4.1. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

Every review identified on the Annual Audit Plan will be the subject of a formal Audit Report (other internal audit activities will report their results in a way suited to the nature of that work). Audit reports will convey the results of the audit clearly, objectively and in a timely manner so as to facilitate appropriate corrective action.

The following process will be adopted for Internal Audit Reports:

- The Unit performs field work in accordance with the agreed scope;
- The Unit discusses any issues identified with the relevant manager or nominee(s);
- The Unit completes a draft report based on fieldwork and responses or comments from relevant management;
- The Unit arranges an exit meeting with the relevant manager(s) or nominee(s) to discuss and agree the findings and reports items;

- Management will provide a response to each recommendation. Responses should state whether they agree or disagree with the recommendation and provide other appropriate comments. Management can choose to take different actions to respond to the recommendation or can accept the risk with no further action. Management should describe any agreed actions, the due date and officer responsible for the action;
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Feedback on internal audit performance will be sought annually from members of the Audit and Risk Committee.

**12 Confidential Matters**

**12.1 Sale of Land For Overdue Rates and Charges Progress [Closed s.254J(3)(i)]**

**Executive Officer:** Director Corporate and Community Services

**Item Author:** Team Leader Revenue and Rates

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This report is **CONFIDENTIAL** in accordance with Section 254J(3)(i) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, which permits the meeting to be closed to the public for business relating to the following:

- (i) a matter the local government is required to keep confidential under a law of, or formal arrangement with, the Commonwealth or a State.