



SUSTAINABLY DEVELOPING THE OUTBACK

# Annual Report 2014/15



# Diamantina History

The origin of the name Diamantina starts back in 1862, when a river that starts north-west of Longreach some thousand kilometres from this Shire was discovered by the explorer John McKinley in April 1882. He named it Mueller Creek after the noted botanist Baron Von Mueller.

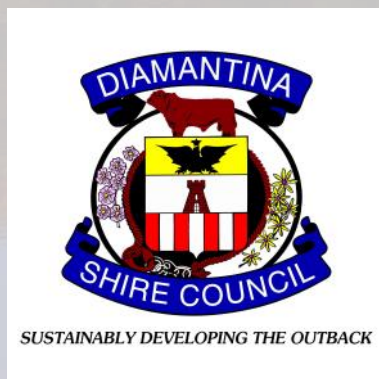
Some years later in 1886, the river was rediscovered and renamed the Diamantina by William Landsborough, thereby honouring Lady Diamantina Roma Bowen, the wife of the first Governor of Queensland, Sir George Ferguson Bowen.

The name Diamantina was conferred in 1943 to a River Class Frigate that was being built by Walker Bros at Maryborough Queensland for the Royal Australian Navy, (which was decommissioned in 1980). In 2000 a new HMAS Diamantina was launched. This vessel is a Huon Class Minehunter fitted with the latest system technologies.

The Training Ship 'Diamantina' was officially launched in 2008 and is based in Brisbane.

The Shire's logo is interesting as it bonds all the Diamantina with the remote outback and the connection to the cattle industry. Originally the Shire's logo featured a lone bull. As the years progressed Council, seeing the crest of HMAS Diamantina and that of Lady Diamantina Roma Bowen requested the use of both to form a new logo for the Diamantina Shire.

Originally this request was denied, however Council being persistent was later granted permission to combine both crests to create the crest of the Diamantina Shire.





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# Welcome to the Diamantina Shire

This Annual Report for Diamantina Shire Council is for the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

It profiles the Diamantina Shire and reports on the activities undertaken by Council during the year and aims to provide the reader with a record of Council's performance during the financial year.

The Report contains information on Council's objectives, achievements, short and long-term challenges and demonstrates Council's commitment to reporting to the Diamantina community in an open, accurate and transparent manner.

This report meets Diamantina Shire Council's statutory obligations under the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

Copies of this publication can be obtained by contacting the Council Administration Centre on (07) 4746 1202 or by visiting Council's website at [www.diamantina.qld.gov.au](http://www.diamantina.qld.gov.au)

We welcome your feedback on this Report, which can be provided in writing to the address below:

## DIAMANTINA SHIRE COUNCIL

17 Herbert Street  
BEDOURIE QLD 4829  
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2014 Dust Storm  
Approaching Bedourie

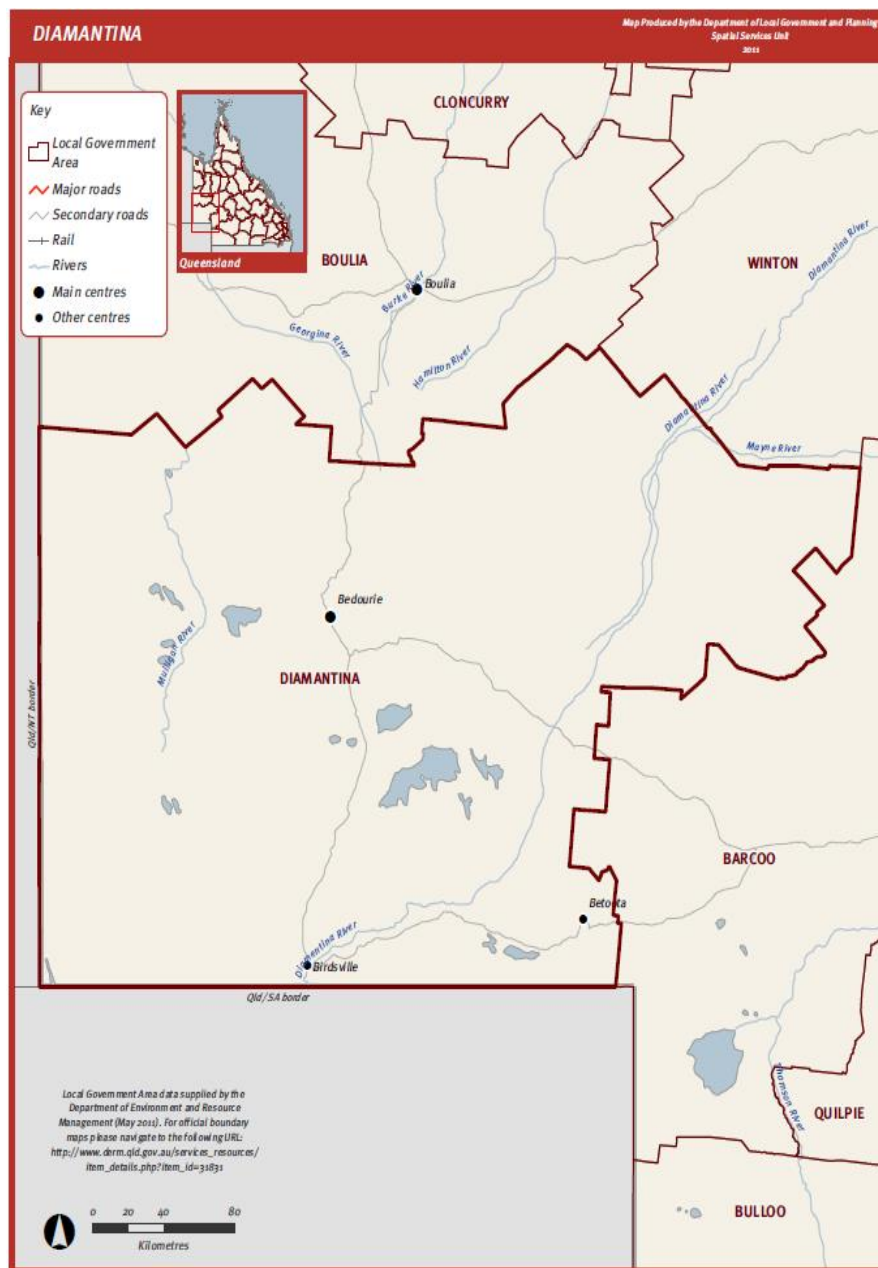


Dust Storm Arrives in  
Bedourie



# Shire Profile

The Diamantina Shire covers almost 95,000 km<sup>2</sup>, which is larger than Tasmania and twice the size of Denmark! It is the second largest Local Government area in Queensland but yet has the second smallest population.



Located in the far western corner of Queensland, the Diamantina Shire borders the Northern Territory and South Australia. It is part of the “Channel Country”, an area of Western Queensland that is renowned for some of the best grazing land in Australia. During infrequent floods, rivers and streams stretch across the channel country like fingers which flow south into Lake Eyre in South Australia. It is home to the mighty Diamantina and Georgina Rivers and Eyre Creek which form the backbone of the Shire.

In their wake, the floods leave vast plains of rejuvenated land that sustains cattle, wildlife and an abundance of wildflowers. To the west lies the arid Simpson Desert, the world’s largest area of parallel sand dunes, attracting thousands of four-wheel-driving travellers each year intent on conquering the 1200 sand dunes.

The Diamantina Shire is home to 14 beef-producing pastoral properties, some of which are still managed by descendants of the region’s early settlers. Many of these stations are certified to produce organic beef that is exported to Asia and the Middle East. Along with beef production, tourism is the life blood of Diamantina Shire.

The Diamantina Shire’s three towns are Birdsville, Bedourie and Betoota.

Bedourie, the Shire’s administration centre, boasts many modern amenities including a historic hotel, motel, roadhouse, caravan-park, unique desert golf course, outdoor flood lit tennis courts, community centre with an indoor tennis court and arguably the town’s premier facility an aquatic centre with an artesian hot spa. Bedourie, meaning ‘dust storm’, was first established as a Cobb & Co coach stop and watering point for drovers on the north-south stock route. The town’s water, sourced directly from the great artesian basin, is celebrated as being Australia’s best.





# Shire Profile

The iconic town of Birdsville lies 12 kilometres north of the Qld/SA border. Pre-federation, the town was a tolling point for the drovers transporting cattle between the colonies. At that time, Birdsville was a thriving town of approximately 300 people that boasted three hotels, a blacksmith store, cordial factory, market gardens and police and custom facilities. After federation, in 1901, tolls were abolished and the town fell into decline.

However in recent decades, Birdsville has grown to meet the demands of the growing domestic tourism industry and is now home to a historic and charismatic hotel, one of Australia's only licenced bakeries, two service stations, caravan-park, hardware store, steel fabricator and a number of tourism operators.

The famous Birdsville Races, held on the first weekend of September annually, attract over 7000 visitors to the town and is known nationally as "the Melbourne Cup of the Outback".

The Shire's third town, Betoota, has an official population of zero and is therefore Australia's smallest town. Also originally a Cobb & Co rest stop, Betoota, all but disappeared after the last horse-drawn Cobb & Co coach service ran in 1924. However, Sigmund (Simon/Ziggy) Remienko, a Polish immigrant who had been working as a grader driver in nearby Boulia, bought the Betoota Hotel in 1953. He lived in and managed the hotel, which was a popular fuel and rest stop for outback travellers, until his retirement in 1997 when he closed the hotel doors, but continued to live there as Betoota's sole resident until his death in 2004. Despite its population, Betoota hosts an annual gymkhana and race meeting that attracts visitors from all over Australia as well as pastoral workers from surrounding properties.

The Diamantina Shire's unique events, such as the Simpson Desert Racing Carnival, Bedourie Pig and Camel Races, Birdsville Bronco Branding, numerous rodeos, camp drafts and gymkhanas draw large crowds of outback locals and urban travellers alike. More recently we have seen the advent of new events such as the Big Red Run and the Big Red Bash both of which are held at the Shire's iconic Big Red sand dune near Birdsville. These events are attracting a new wave of travellers to the Shire. Attractions like the Simpson Desert's majestic dunes, historic buildings, rare species of flora and fauna, uninterrupted horizons and bright night skies ensure that the Diamantina is a diverse and memorable travel destination for all visitors.



# Our Council

Diamantina Shire Council was established on 31 March 1903 after the previous Diamantina Divisional Board was abolished. It administers Local Government within the Shire, as required by the *Local Government Act 2009*. Council provides public municipal and rural services, is responsible for local planning and policy, fosters regional social and economic development, and maintains a significant road construction and maintenance business.

## Our Mission

**Diamantina Shire Council's mission is to serve and advocate on behalf of the Shire community and to provide residents and visitors with continually improving services and infrastructure, which is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable, in order to further enhance quality of life.**



## Our Core Values

### Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Council and staff seek to overcome challenges and take advantage of opportunities through commitment to innovation. Through innovative thinking and constant review of our practices and approach we are continually improving our performance and service delivery.

### Quality

Council is committed to ensuring quality output by providing the organisation with resources which facilitate excellence in performance, commitment and service delivery.

### Accountability

Council has a responsibility to the residents and ratepayers of the Shire to be inclusive and responsive to their views and needs and to communicate effectively.

### Teamwork

We recognise the importance of maintaining a creative and responsive work environment in which the community, councillors, management and staff, work constructively together in a spirit of teamwork, trust and loyalty.

## Democratic Governance

Diamantina Shire Council comprises of five elected Councillors including the Mayor. At Local Government elections every four years, voters elect four Councillors and a Mayor for the Shire.

As defined in the *Local Government Act 2009*, our Councillors represent the interests of the community. They facilitate communication between the community and the Council and participate in the Shire's decision making processes, translating the community's needs and aspirations into the future of our Shire to ensure that the Diamantina is the best place to live, visit, work and do business.

The Mayor, Councillors, Local Government employees and any other person with a responsibility within Local Government must act in accordance with the principles outlined in the *Local Government Act 2009* ensuring:

- Transparent and effective processes and decision making in the public interest
- Sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure and effective service delivery
- Democratic representation social inclusion and meaningful community engagement as well as good governance of and by Local Government
- Ethical and legal behaviour of Councillors and Local Government employees

### **MEETINGS OF COUNCIL**

Council's ordinary meetings are usually held on the third Monday of every month, except January. Meetings commence at 9.00am and are held at the Council Administration Centre, Herbert Street, Bedourie, with one meeting a year held in Birdsville at the Birdsville Community Hall.



# Our Council

## A Message from our Mayor

The 2014/15 financial year has been a very interesting one for the Diamantina Shire. With the drought continuing the major emphasis for Council has been maintaining the sustainability of the Shire and its workforce.

The Council motto of "Sustainably developing the Outback" has really been put to the test as the Shire battles the effects of drought and our main focus for 2014/2015 has been to make sure that we maintain our core workforce and continue to provide and support local events in our towns.

Our Capital Works Programme saw a number of major projects either commenced or completed during this reporting period some of which include:-

- Finalisation of all restoration works on Council roads associated with flooding in 2011
- Upgrade and sealing of the 'Betoota Bypass'
- Birdsville Streetscape
- Upgrade of Vaughan Johnson Lookout

This year saw the Shire celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli. Events were organised for Birdsville and the Vaughan Johnson Lookout on the boundary with Boulia Shire. Both events were a great success with 300 people attending the Birdsville celebration along with past and serving representatives of the Armed Forces. The Vaughan Johnson Lookout event saw 600 people attend along with the Commanding Officer Iain Hutchins of the HMAS Diamantina and three of his ships company. It was a truly unique event.

Our focus on Events has once again contributed to the sustainability of the Shire through the influx of visitors who by their attendance contribute to the economic sustainability of the Shire. The Simpson Desert Racing Carnival, Big Red Run, Big Red Bash, Bedourie Pig & Camel Races, Betoota, Birdsville and Bedourie Gymkhanas and the Bedourie and Birdsville Rodeos are significant events that not only contribute financially to the Shire but form the fabric of our Diamantina community.

The 2014/2015 financial year saw significant effort in endeavouring to secure improved telecommunications for the Shire via the Optic Fibre Network. In conjunction with the Barcoo Shire, we thought that the project was off and running following a meeting with the Prime Minister in Longreach in May where we shook hands on a \$7M contribution from the federal government towards this project. This promise along with the contribution of \$6.25M from the State and \$4.3M from our Council meant that our dream had turned into reality. This was only a mirage as the commitment from the Prime Minister evaporated into the desert air and we were back to square one. There is still quite a lot of work to be undertaken in order to see the project to fruition and I can assure all residents that the Council will not rest until our objective is achieved - that the Diamantina Shire can enjoy equality with the rest of Australia in its telecommunications services.

I would like to acknowledge our employees, who are the ones who deliver the services to our communities. Your efforts are appreciated, especially during the tough times that we are experiencing at the moment.



Geoff Morton

Mayor





# Our Council

## Mayor Cr Geoff Morton



Geoff is a fourth generation grazier of Roseberth Station on which the town of Birdsville sits. He is the second of four children and the only son to Lyle and Phyllis Morton. Born in 1954 Geoff attended primary school by correspondence until year four, after which he attended boarding school at Scotch College Melbourne until finishing Year 12. Following his education, Geoff returned to Roseberth Station and took over the management of the station after his father's retirement in 1991. Married to Bev, they have two sons – Kerry and Stephen. Kerry assists with the management of Roseberth Station and is raising his own family in the Diamantina Shire.

Geoff is now in his seventh term as a Diamantina Shire Councillor having been involved in Council since 1980. Prior to being elected as Mayor Geoff served two terms as Deputy Mayor. Geoff is heavily involved in the Diamantina Shire community and is

## Deputy Mayor Cr Garth Tully

Born in Charleville to Colin and Betty Tully, Garth attended primary school in Bedourie until Year 5 and then attended Nudgee College in Brisbane.

After leaving school Garth was employed by the Milson family who at that time owned Cluny Station. For a period Garth managed Diamantina Lakes Station before returning to Cluny Station as manager in 1990, a position he still holds today. Married to Kathi (nee Hindom) they have two sons Patrick and Shayne.

Garth is in his seventh term as a Councillor for the Diamantina Shire Council and is committed to the Diamantina community and is President of the Bedourie Race Club.



## Cr Jody Barr



Councillor Jody Barr was elected in 2012 to represent Diamantina Shire Council, making it his first term on Council.

Born and raised in the Diamantina Shire by parents Jean and Kevin Barr, Jody is the eldest of three boys. He spent his early schooling years in the Bedourie and Birdsville State Schools, before leaving to attend boarding school in Longreach and then on to The Scots College in Warwick.

Having worked the majority of employment years in the Earthmoving Industry, Jody now runs his own business as a Machinery Owner/Operator contracting throughout the Shire

For the past four years Jody has been strongly involved in all community events, this including being the founding Member of the Bedourie Bikekhana as well as being an active member of Birdsville Social Club.

# Our Council

## Cr Don Rayment



Councillor Don Rayment was elected in 2012 and is in his first term on the Diamantina Shire Council. However Local Government is not new to Don as he served two terms on the Winton Shire Council. At the time he was one of the youngest Councillors elected to the Winton Shire.

Born in Brisbane and raised in the Diamantina Shire by parents Charlie and Pauline Rayment on Kurran Station, Don is second eldest son, with three brothers and one sister, Don started his primary schooling in Longreach and did correspondence for years six and seven and then to Winton to complete years 8 to 10 and achieving school captaincy in year 10. Don was a very active member of the cricket and rugby league teams and also followed camp draft and rodeo events. Last year Don was honoured to receive Life Membership of the Diamantina Rodeo Association in Winton.

Since finishing school he has been employed in the rural industry undertaking contract mustering, yard building and fencing. Don spent ten years contract mustering for MDH around Winton and Boulia and also did a stint as Rural Protection Officer/Rural Lands Officer with Department of Natural Resources and Local Government bodies. Don married Judy (nee Brown) in 1993 and together they have four daughters, two sons and two granddaughters. Don & Judy shifted to the Diamantina Shire in 2005 to manage the organic cattle property Adria Downs Birdsville.

For the past eight years Don has been President of the Birdsville Social Club, running the first ever rodeo in Birdsville in 2006 and first camp draft in 2012. The 2010 Birdsville Australian Bronco Championships Event won widespread recognition and success winning the Australia Day Award for the event. Don keeps very busy with the day to day running of a large cattle property but finds time to help out at community events where possible.

## Cr Steve Cramer

Born in Glen Innes, NSW, in 1976 to Philip and Moira Cramer, Steve is the third of four children. Steve completed primary school at Glen Innes State School before attending secondary schooling at Glen Innes High School. On leaving school, Steve attended Longreach Agricultural College and went on to work at S. Kidman & Co.'s Sandringham Station as a ringer. At Sandringham Station he met Jeena Kleinschmidt who came to work as a governess. After Sandringham they moved to Peak Crossing while Steve worked in the stockyards at the meatworks at Dinmore and broke in horses on the side. When Steve and Jeena married in 1999, they re-joined S. Kidman & Co and moved to Morney Plains, Windorah as Head Stockman for 18 months, then up to Ruby Plains Outstation Sturt Creek, in the Kimberleys of North Western Australia. After seven years running Sturt, Steve was relocated to Glengyle Station in December, 2007. Steve and Jeena have four children - Cody, Bridey, Beau and Jack. This is Cr Steve Cramer's first term as Councillor.





# Our Council

## Councillor Remuneration Schedule

The following details payments received by elected members for performing the role of Councillor along with details of resolutions made relating to Councillor remuneration.

At the Council Ordinary meeting held on 20 December 2013, the following resolution was adopted:

*Minute No.2013.12.20-OM-16*

*Moved Cr Morton, Seconded Cr Tully*

*that Council adopt the following remuneration rates for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor to apply from 1 July 2014, which equates to a 5% rise above the previously adopted remuneration rates:-*

*Mayor \$77,493*

*Deputy Mayor \$33,212*

*Councillor \$23,617.*

## Councillor Remuneration and Attendance 2014/15

Councillor	Meetings Attended	Remuneration	Expenses Reimbursed (Vehicle/Plane use)	Superannuation Contribution	Total
Cr G Morton	12	\$77,493	\$28,228	\$9,299	\$115,020
Cr G Tully	12	\$33,212	\$0	\$3,985	\$37,197
Cr J Barr	11	\$22,141	\$3,734	\$2,657	\$28,532
Cr S Cramer	12	\$23,617	\$778	\$2,834	\$27,229
Cr D Rayment	12	\$23,617	\$3,656	\$4,130	\$31,403
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$180,080</b>	<b>\$36,396</b>	<b>\$22,905</b>	<b>\$239,381</b>

There was no overseas travel made by a Councillor or employee in an official capacity during 2014/15.

Councillors were provided with home office and suitable ICT support including Laptop, iPad and for the Mayor a mobile telephone.

# Expenses Reimbursement

The *Local Government Regulation 2012* requires councils to adopt a policy in relation to expenses reimbursement and to report expenses reimbursed and facilities provided to each councillor during the financial year. All facilities provided to councillors are detailed in the Expenses Reimbursement - Councillors Policy set out hereunder as required by section 250(1) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

*Extract from Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 20 October 2014:*

## *Recommendation*

*'That Council adopt the following policies:-*

*Advertising Signs at Town Entrances Policy*

*Code of Conduct*

*Complaints about the CEO Policy*

*Confidentiality Policy*

*Drug and Alcohol Policy*

*Entertainment and Hospitality Expenses Policy*

*Expense Reimbursement - Councillor's Policy*

*Procurement of Goods and Services Policy.'*

*Minute No. 2014.10.20-OM-15*

*Moved by Cr Cramer and Seconded by Cr Barr*

*'That all the policies be adopted noting that the Advertising Signs at Town Entrance policy be amended by replacing the words 'in the vicinity of towns' with "within a Town Common".'*

Policy No: 11

## Expense Reimbursement - Councillors Policy

### CONTROL

Policy Type:	Finance
Authorised by:	Council
Head of Power:	Local Government Regulation 2012 – Section 250
Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Adopted / Approved:	October 20 2014, Minute No. 2014.10.20-OM-15
Last Reviewed:	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Review:	June 2015 Note: This Policy is reviewed annually and should be included

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 2009 and ensure that clear and concise instruction is available for the reimbursement of Councillor expenses.



# Expense Reimbursement

## 1.2 POLICY OBJECTIVES:

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that Councillors (including Mayors) can receive reimbursement of reasonable expenses and be provided with necessary facilities in performance of their role

## 1.3 COMMENCEMENT OF POLICY:

This Policy will commence on adoption. It replaces all other specific Expense Reimbursement – Councilors Policies of Council (whether written or not).

## 1.4 SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Councillors, including the Mayor.

## 2 POLICY

### 2.1 POLICY STATEMENT:

Council will meet or reimburse the cost of, or pay allowances to cover the cost of expenses and facilities provision which are necessary and required by elected members for conducting the business of Council. Allowable expenses and facilities to be provided by Council are limited to those contained within Section 3 of this Policy.

## 3 STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

### 3.1 KEY PRINCIPLES

- 3.1.1 To ensure that all Councillors have the facilities and other support necessary to perform their civic duties and that they are reimbursed for expenses in accordance with this policy.

### 3.2 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.2.1 To ensure compliance with community expectations and statutory requirements relating to the payment or reimbursement of legitimate expenses and provision of facilities for Councillors while carrying out their duties and responsibilities as elected representatives of the Diamantina Shire Council.

### 3.3 SPECIFIC AND STANDARD

#### 3.3.1 Expenses Categories

##### 3.3.1.1 Conferences, Meetings and Workshops

- Where Council resolves Councillors are required to attend conferences or workshops to either deliver a paper or as a delegate of Council, Council will meet the cost or reimburse expenses associated with attending the event since participation is part of the business of Council.

##### 3.3.1.2 Mandatory Training

- Where Council resolves that all Councillors are to attend training courses or workshops for skills development related to a Councillor's role, Council will meet the cost or reimburse the total costs of the course.

Note: Some examples of this training are Councillor Induction, Code of Conduct, Meeting Procedures and Legislative Obligations.

##### 3.3.1.3 Discretionary Training

- Where Council gives approval for a Councillor to attend a conference, workshop or training to improve skills relevant to their role as a Councillor, other than mandatory training as above, Council will allow for the expenses to be covered to a limit available to each Councillor during their current term in office.

# Expense Reimbursement - Councillors Policy

- A discretionary training expense limit which does not exceed the Guidelines for Councils – Reimbursement of Expenses and Provision of Facilities, will be set by Council resolution from time to time, as required.

## 3.3.1.4 Travel Expenses (including taxi and public transport)

- Councillors may incur travel costs for a number of reasons including attendance at Council meetings, travelling to conferences, training or workshops. In some cases this may involve interstate and overseas travel. If Councillors travel using their private vehicles a mileage allowance can be claimed based on log book details to substantiate the relevance of the travel to Council business.
- The amount reimbursed will be the actual amount (or equivalent mileage) expended by the Councillor.
- The mileage allowance will be set by Council resolution from time to time as required. Council will base its determination on the RACQ vehicle operating costs as recorded on its web site.
- <http://www.racq.com.au/cars-and-driving/cars/owning-and-maintaining-a-car/car-running-costs>

## 3.3.1.5 Hospitality Expenses

- Elected members may have occasion to incur hospitality expenses while conducting Council business apart from official civic receptions organised by Council. The Mayor, in particular, may require additional reimbursement when entertaining dignitaries outside of official events.
- Council will meet the cost of or reimburse reasonable hospitality expenses to a set maximum per annum.
- Hospitality expense allowances which do not exceed the Guidelines for Councils – Reimbursement of Expenses and Provision of Facilities, will be set by Council resolution from time to time as required.

## 3.3.1.6 Accommodation

- Elected members may need to stay away overnight while attending to Council business. When attending conferences, Councillors must take advantage of the package provided by conference organisers and therefore stay in the recommended accommodation unless prior approval has been granted by Council.
- In all other cases the Chief Executive Officer will authorise reasonable accommodation arrangements. In these instances, Council will meet the cost of or reimburse legitimate accommodation costs.

## 3.3.1.7 Meals and Incidental Expenses

- Subject to approval, Councillors may charge costs to Council issued credit card or claim for the reimbursement of each actual cost per meal when travelling for business related purposes.
- Alternatively, Councillors may be paid a daily meal allowance and incidental expenses based on the Australian Tax Office standards for reasonable travel expenses.
- Allowances which do not exceed the Guidelines for Councils – Reimbursement of Expenses and Provision of Facilities, will be set by Council resolution from time to time, as required.



# Expense Reimbursement - Councillors Policy

## **3.3.2 Making Claims**

- 3.3.2.1 When seeking reimbursement for expenses, elected members must complete and sign a Fees and Expenses Claim form and provide receipts for allowable expenses together with details of the Council business that the expenses relate to.
- 3.3.2.2 Expenses claims or reimbursement requests which comply with the requirements of this policy should be forwarded to the Deputy CEO. Any Expenses claims or reimbursement requests which do not comply with the requirements of this policy should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for determination.
- 3.3.2.3 Councillors are responsible for ensuring that they do not make claims in excess of allowable limits.

## **3.3.3 Provision of Facilities**

- 3.3.3.1 Council will provide and meet operational costs of facilities which are deemed necessary and required to assist Councillors in their role.
- 3.3.3.2 When determining the facilities to be provided, Council has considered what are reasonable requirements and standards for an individual Councillor. If a Councillor chooses a higher standard of facility than that prescribed by Council, any difference in cost must be met by the Councillor personally. Ownership of any facilities provided remains with Council.

## **3.3.4 Administrative Tools and Access to Council Office Amenities**

- 3.3.4.1 Council will provide the following to Councillors in its office as required:
  - a) Facilities such as office space and Council meeting rooms;
  - b) Secretarial support for Mayors and Councillors;
  - c) Computer;
  - d) Use of Council landline telephone and internet access;
  - e) Multi-function printer;
  - f) Stationery;
  - g) Publications – copies of the Act and other legislation, books, journals considered necessary; and
  - h) Any other administrative necessities which Council considers necessary to meet the business of Council.

## **3.3.5 Home Office**

- 3.3.5.1 If Council determines that it is necessary, it will provide a councillor with home office equipment, including computer, fax, copier, printer and internet access.

## **3.3.6 Maintenance Costs of any Council Owned Equipment**

- 3.3.6.1 Council will cover all ongoing maintenance costs associated with Council owned equipment to ensure it is operating for optimal professional use.

## **3.3.7 Name Badge for Councillor and Uniform**

- 3.3.7.1 Council will provide each elected member with a name badge and Councillor uniform. This may include any safety equipment such as overalls, safety helmets or glasses as required by a Councillor in their role.

# Expense Reimbursement - Councillors Policy

## 3.3.8 Vehicle

- 3.3.8.1 Council will provide a vehicle owned by Council for official business as required from time to time. Elected members are authorised reasonable private use of Council-owned vehicles when on Council business, on the condition that they reimburse Council for any private use at the adopted mileage allowance rate.

## 3.3.9 Fuel Costs

- 3.3.9.1 Council will provide fuel, meet the cost of fuel or reimburse the cost of fuel for vehicles provided by Council.

## 3.3.10 Telecommunication Needs

- 3.3.10.1 Mobile communication device:

- Where Council resolves to provide a mobile communications device to a Councillor for official business use, Council will pay for all associated costs. Any personal calls made by the Councillor must be reimbursed to Council.
- If a Councillor uses a personally owned mobile device, Council will reimburse actual Council business related costs up to 50% of the total costs incurred.

- 3.3.10.2 Where Council does not provide a mobile telephone or hand held device, Council will provide:

- A home landline at the Councillor's residence, including connection cost, monthly rental and council will reimburse actual Council business related call costs up to 50% of the total costs incurred. However, any STD or international calls made from the home telephone can only be reimbursed if a receipt and certification is provided by the Councillor that the call was related to Council business; and
- If "home office" facilities as described above, are not provided by Council, it will meet the cost of home internet access including monthly access fee and up to 50% of the package costs.

## 3.3.11 Legal Costs and Insurance Cover

- 3.3.11.1 Council may by resolution, agree to cover costs incurred through any inquiry, investigation, hearing or legal proceedings into the conduct of a Councillor, or arising out of, or in connection with the Councillor's performance of his/her civic functions.
- 3.3.11.2 Councillors are to be covered under Council insurance policies while discharging civic duties. Specifically, insurance cover will be provided for public liability, professional indemnity, Councillor's liability, personal accident, international and domestic travel insurance.

## 4. REFERENCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 4.1 DEFINITIONS:

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

Word / Term	Definition
Council	means Diamantina Shire Council.

### 4.2 RELATED POLICIES, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Links to supporting documentation
Local Government Regulation 2012 – Section 250





# Corporate Governance

## Chief Executive Officers Report

The 2014/15 year has seen Diamantina Shire, like all of its contemporaries in Outback Queensland encounter another year of drought which has placed a heavy burden on not only Council's and our Community's resources but also our general social and economic well-being.

The residents of the Diamantina are very resilient and Council has focused its efforts during the year in maintaining the sustainability of the Shire and its core workforce. Staff numbers are lower than in previous years as Council concentrates on doing more with less as it seeks to improve efficiencies.

Whilst the number of major projects undertaken during the year were down on previous years as a result of the completion of all flood damage restoration works, our workforce continued to produce major success stories in infrastructure, community and administration projects.

In 2014/2015 we have seen:-

- Significant progress towards the completion of Stage 1 of the Birdsville Streetscape
- Upgrade to the Vaughan Johnson Lookout access road
- Commencement of the upgrading of the 'Betoota Bypass' on the Birdsville – Windorah Road
- Finalisation of planning for the realignment at 'Marion Downs' on the Bedourie – Boulia Road
- Extremely successful 100 Year Anniversary ANZAC commemorations at both Vaughan Johnson Lookout and Birdsville
- Business Process Improvement Reviews for the Shire's Stores and Workshop functions
- Commencement and continuation of the review and update of the Shire's Policies and Procedures.
- Staging of the Rugby league 9's at Bedourie which represented organised football at Bedourie for the first time in 28 years
- Commenced operating the Birdsville Caravan Park at completion of lease period and prepared redevelopment plans
- Central West Health and Hospital Board commence operating the Bedourie & Birdsville Health clinics.
- Shared the cost of attending five Caravan & Camping Trade shows in capital cities with Barcoo and Boulia Shires as part of the Three Way Alliance.
- Plant and equipment replaced as required
- Saw the changeover from Skytrans to Rex Airlines as the operator of the Western Route 2 for the Qld Government.
- Commenced the acquisition of community housing stock from the Queensland Government
- Managed Council's financial sustainability during difficult times and achieved an unqualified audit.

The Diamantina Shire is recognised for its well organised events and during the 2014/15 year once again residents and visitors were treated to traditional Diamantina events and saw the growth of other events which swell numbers in our community to almost beyond capacity. They all contribute in providing a much needed social and economic boost to our shire.

The Simpson Desert Racing Carnival which includes race meetings at Betoota, Birdsville and Bedourie once again attracted massive numbers. The Big Red Run and the Big Red Bash events are gaining acclaim right across Australia. Our traditional outback rodeos, gymkhanas, camp drafts and bronco branding events allow all comers to be up close and personal at these iconic outback events. It is the volunteers that are the backbone of these events and who deserve the credit for their success.

My thanks to Mayor Geoff Morton who has led the Council admirably during the year and who has been a vocal advocate for the Shire. The support shown to me by Geoff and Councillors Garth Tully, Don Rayment, Steve Cramer and Jody Barr has been appreciated. Ultimately, it is up to the employees to implement Council's decisions and I thank all of them for their efforts during the year in making the Diamantina Shire the envy of many western Councils.



Leon Love  
Chief Executive Officer

# Corporate Governance

## Executive Staff

Council has a very experienced senior executive team whose profiles are set out below.

### Leon Love - Chief Executive Officer



Leon joined Council in October 2013 and has extensive experience in Queensland local government having worked in various Councils over the past 24 years including 9 years as Chief Executive Officer at Bungil Shire Council, (now part of Maranoa Regional Council). Prior to joining Council he worked in various senior positions at the Toowoomba Regional Council.

The vast and diverse landscapes of the Diamantina Shire are intriguing to Leon and he hopes to see a big flood soon, as it has been relatively dry during his time so far. The people are very genuine and the Shire is like a big extended family who look out for each other which you don't find in most places. Leon's goal is to improve the telecommunications and road networks in the shire and to ensure the Council and its

residents do not get left behind the rest of Australia.

Born and raised in Mundubbera, Leon completed high school at Toowoomba Grammar School and graduated with a Bachelor of Business from the University of Southern Queensland. He and his wife, Allison have five children, who love nothing more than to get back to Bedourie during breaks from their schooling in Toowoomba.

### Tony Beynon - Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Tony joined the Diamantina Shire in May 2015 as Deputy Chief Executive Officer. He comes to the Shire after a long career in Local Government, having worked at Gold Coast City Council and Mornington Peninsula Shire Council in Victoria.

Tony has fallen in love with the Diamantina country and can be seen most weekends travelling throughout the Shire taking in the magnificent scenery. Tony is committed to serving the community and his goal is to provide excellent customer service to all who deal with Council.

Married to Lizzie, they have one son Darcy who visited dad during school holidays. Show and tell back on the Gold Coast had a very distinctive outback Diamantina flavour. Tony was born and raised in Melbourne, holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration as well as a Bachelor of Business Studies Degree.



### Trevor Stewart - Infrastructure Manager



Trevor started with the Diamantina Shire Council in January 1983 as a labourer and plant operator then became Works Foreman 1992.

In 1996 he became Works Overseer before leaving the Shire in July 2001 to work for a civil construction company in Toowoomba. Trevor returned in 2011 as Infrastructure Manager.

He has three children, two of whom went to primary school in both Bedourie and Birdsville. One of Trevor's biggest achievements when working for the company in Toowoomba was being made foreman in charge of the civil works on the multi-story carpark at the Brisbane International Airport.



# Compliance Reporting

The following lists all other information that is required to be included in the Annual Report by the *Local Government Act 2009* ('LGA') or the *Local Government Regulation 2012* ('LGR')

## **COUNCILLOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION s180(2) and (4) and s181 LGA 2009**

There have been no actions under section 180(2) and (4) and section 181 of the Act during the 2014/2015 financial year resulting in orders or recommendations.

## **COMPLAINTS ABOUT CONDUCT OR PERFORMANCE OF A COUNCILLOR s176 LGA 2009**

There were no complaints lodged regarding Councillor conduct during 2014/2015.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION COMPLAINTS s187 LGR 2012**

(1) (a) Administrative action complaints encompass all complaints made to Council about its administrative actions. Council is committed to dealing fairly with all complaints in a timely manner and at the local level where possible.

(b) The complaints management process comprises an initial assessment undertaken by Council's Complaints Officer, referral following consideration by the CEO for a comprehensive assessment and remedial action as appropriate.

(c) Complaints against the Chief Executive Officer are referred to the Mayor in accordance with Council's policy.

(d) During the period under review and the previous financial year there were no administrative action complaints received.

## **EXPENDITURE ON GRANTS TO COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS s189 LGR 2012**

During the 2014/2015 financial year, Council support, in the form of cash, labour and machinery was provided to the following organisations:

Organisation	Event	Contribution
Bedourie Amateur Race Club	Bedourie Races	\$48,638
Bedourie Golf & Leisure Club	Bedourie Pig & Camel Races, Bedourie Rugby League 9's	\$14,465
Bedourie Gymkhana Club	Bedourie Camp Draft, Gymkhana, Rodeo and Bikekhana	\$27,887
Betoota Race Club Inc.	Betoota Races	\$26,403
Birdsville Race Club Inc.	Birdsville Races	\$40,000
North Qld Helicopter Service	Donation	\$5,025
Bedourie P&C	Various	\$767
Birdsville Social Club	Birdsville Camp Draft, Gymkhana, Rodeo, Bronco Branding	\$4,203
Born to Run	Big Red Run and Big Red Bash	\$63,927
Windorah State School	Windorah Sports Camp	\$504
NAPCO	NAPCO Challenge	\$753
Channel Country Ladies Day	Channel Country Ladies Day	\$504

## **RESERVES AND CONTROLLED ROADS s118 LGR 2012**

Diamantina Shire Council has control of:

- 9,523.71ha of land classified as reserves under the Land Act 1994; and
- 621kms of road that is not owned by council but is in its control.

## **EXPENDITURE AND ACTION RELATING TO JOINT VENTURES s190(1)(d)(i) LGR 2012**

Diamantina Shire Council did not enter into any joint venture agreements during the 2014/2015 financial year.

## **CHANGES TO TENDERS s190(1)(e) LGR 2012**

Diamantina Shire Council did not make a change to a tender during the 2014/2015 financial year.

# Compliance Reporting

## **REGISTERS KEPT BY COUNCIL s190 (i)(f) LGR 2012**

Assets Register  
Register of Roads  
Register of Land Records  
Register of Delegations by Council  
Register of Interests for Employees and Councillors  
Register of Local and Subordinate Local Laws  
Register of Cost Recovery Fees

## **RATES AND CHARGES CONCESSIONS s190 (1)(g) LGR 2012**

Diamantina Shire Council made no concession of rates or charges for the 2014/2015 financial year.

## **INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION s190(1)(h) LGR 2012**

Diamantina Shire Council as a Category 3 Council is required to establish an Internal Audit Committee to operate from 1 July 2014.

Council appointed Messrs O'Reagan & Partners to provide Council with internal audit services for the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2017.

As required by the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, the Internal Audit function to be undertaken by Messrs O'Reagan & Partners is to:-

- a. Prepare an Internal Audit Plan; and
- b. Carry out an internal audit; and
- c. Prepare a progress report for the internal audit; and
- d. Assess compliance with the internal audit plan.

As a Category 3 Council, the Diamantina Shire Council formed its Audit Committee during the period with meetings held on 4 September 2014 and 30 June 2015.

Legislative requirements for Audit Committees include:

- 3 to 6 members
- 1 or 2 Councillors
- 1 member with significant experience and skills in financial matters
- Chief Executive Officer may not be a member
- Must meet twice per year.

As at 30 June 2015 the Audit Committee membership comprised:

- Cr Geoff Morton ( Mayor)
- Cr Garth Tully ( Deputy Mayor)
- Tony Beynon (Deputy Chief Executive Officer)

The Chief Executive Officer and other observers attend the Committee meetings as required.

## **SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION NOTICES UNDER s49 FOR COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY COMPLAINTS s190 (1)(i)**

There were no competitive neutrality complaints received during 2014/2015.

## **RESPONSES ON QCA RECOMMENDATIONS ON COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY COMPLAINTS s190 (1)(j)**

There were no responses on competitive neutrality complaints received during 2014/2015.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: PUBLIC SECTOR DISCLOSURE ACT 2010 s30**

There were no disclosures received or referred under Part 2 during the reporting period.

## **EXECUTIVE REMUNERATION s201 LGA**

Total remuneration paid to Executive employees was as follows:

Salary Range \$100,000—\$200,000—1 employee  
Salary Range \$200,000—\$300,000—2 employees





# Our People

Diamantina Shire Council has had a busy year in regards to human resource management and improving our overall operations in regards to people management. Significant work has gone into the recruitment of staff as well as training and development of existing employees.

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Council has a commitment to learning and development and promotes study assistance as well as assistance with course fees to all employees.

Council has prepared a comprehensive training matrix to ensure that training is managed in a structured way and staff and community members are provided with regular relevant training courses.

Certificate and general training courses were provided in the following fields:-

- Chainsaw training
- Health & Safety Representative Courses
- Blue and White Card
- Grader, Front End Loader, Roller, Skid Steer, Backhoe, Stabiliser Certificate Training
- Certificate 3 in Horticulture, Civil Construction (Plant Operation and Road Construction).

A total of 207 staff and community members attended 23 different certificate and general training courses throughout the year.

The Shire continued to partner with external organisations in the development of the skills and training of its staff and community by entering into Agreements with RAPAD Skilling, Queensland Agricultural Training College and Life International.

## **EMOTIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Emotional Assistance Program was again offered to all employees and immediate family members of employees the Diamantina Shire Council. The emotional assistance program provides access to a clinical psychologist both over the phone and face to face. Introduced in the 2009/2010 financial year, the program has been accessed by various staff members throughout the year and provides support for employees and their immediate families, assisting with the reduction of negative effects of stress that can arise within the workplace and community.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN EMPLOYMENT (EOE)**

Council continued to monitor its Equal Opportunity Policy to meet legislation and workplace requirements.

**AIM:** The aim of this policy is to ensure that claims of discrimination, victimisation, sexual harassment and vilification are investigated, managed and resolved objectively and fairly.

**POLICY:** Diamantina Shire Council is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing a workplace where all employees are treated on their merits, without regard to race, age, sex, relationship status or any other factor not applicable to the position. Employees are valued according to how well they perform their duties, and on their ability to maintain the council's standards of service.

**OBJECTIVES:** Diamantina Shire Council is committed to achieving the following EOE objectives:

- Ensure all employees are treated fairly
- Fully utilise and develop the potential of every employee
- Keep all policies and procedures consistent with equal opportunity principles
- Augment employee morale and motivation by increasing staff confidence in the fairness of our human resource practices and access to opportunities
- Ensure achievement of our objectives through our equal opportunity program, which includes the training of staff on EOE and related issues.

# Our People

Council remains committed to providing equal employment opportunities in the workplace.

Relevant statistics for the past five financial years are listed:

## Staff Statistics at a Glance

	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10
Number of Employees (excluding casuals) who worked for Council during the year. (Establishment of 56 FTE).	85	79	83	82	91	81
- Internal	39	32	36	43	42	31
- External	46	47	47	39	49	50
<b>Executive/Senior Management</b>						
> Male	3	3	4	5	4	4
> Female	0	0	1	2	0	0
<b>Elected Members</b>						
> Male	5	5	5	7	4	4
> Female	0	0	1	1	1	1
<b>Total Employees</b>						
> Male	46	49	54	44	57	50
> Female	39	30	29	38	34	31
<b>Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Islander employees</b>	19	23	26	23	30	29
<b>Disabled employees</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Staff Turnover</b>	31%	44%	31%	35%	36%	32%




# Funded Programs

Diamantina Shire Council delivers a variety of services and projects on behalf of the residents of the shire. At times these activities are funded by federal or state government grants or subsidies. Diamantina Shire Council would like to acknowledge the following funding bodies for projects and activities funded in the 2014/2015 financial year.

Federal Government		
Department	Funding Program	Project Delivered
Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development	Roads to Recovery Program	Provided funds to assist in the costs to reseal the Birdsville industrial precinct – Ironstone Road
Department of Social Services	Access Point Program	Provision of Access Point Services in Bedourie and Birdsville
Department of Veterans Affairs	ANZAC Day Anniversary Grant	Siting of Plinth at Vaughan Johnson Lookout and joint Shire 100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemorative service
Queensland Government		
Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation & Arts (Arts Qld)	Regional Arts Development Funds (RADF)	Supports the development of the arts in the shire.
Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (through RAPAD)	Drought Relief Community Support Measures	Redistributed to various community groups to enhance events
Department of Community Safety	State Emergency Service Annual Local Government Subsidy	Funds provided to support SES in Bedourie and Birdsville
Department of Local Government, Community Recovery & Resilience	General Purpose Financial Assistance Grant and Identified Road Grant	Supports the general operations of Council
State Library of Qld	Vision 2017	Furniture, shelving & IT support
Department of Natural Resources Sport & Planning	Get Playing	Bedourie Aquatic Centre heat exchanger
Department of the Premier and Cabinet	100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ANZAC	Construct memorial walls at Bedourie and Birdsville



# Funded Programs

Queensland Government		
Department	Funding Program	Project Delivered
Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning 	Royalties for Regions 	Birdsville Airport resurfacing 
Department of Local Government, Community Recovery & Resilience	Local Government Grants & Subsidies Program	Construction of Birdsville Streetscape
Department of Transport and Main Roads	Discretionary TIDS Subsidy	Construction of Birdsville Streetscape
Department of Local Government, Community Recovery & Resilience	Get Ready Qld	Provision of document security cases
Queensland Reconstruction Authority	Flood Recovery & Reconstruction	The restoration of flood damage on shire roads
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Apprenticeship Funding	Support provided in Councils employment of Apprentices and trainees
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Early Childhood Education & Care Funding	Funds provided to support Playgroups in Bedourie and Birdsville
State Library of Queensland	Service Level Agreement	<i>First 5 Forever</i> Family literacy program
State Library of Queensland	Service Level Agreement	Library Materials and Equipment



# Funded Programs

## FUNDING PROGRAM IN DETAIL

The Diamantina Shire is one of the most drought affected areas of Queensland in what is being publicised as the worst drought in a century.

As part of the state-wide drought relief initiative the Queensland State Government made available \$70,000 through the Remote Area Planning and Development Board (RAPAD). This funding aims to strengthen the resilience of drought effected Queenslanders by providing access to existing community support mechanisms. The range of community events in Diamantina Shire, supported by this funding, promises to meet this objective as well as continue to deliver identified outcomes beyond the scheduled funding period.

The Council resolved unanimously to offer the funding to our local community groups. Each community group interested in receiving funding was requested to make a formal application to Council.

The funding was distributed between 8 groups holding community events in the Shire which ranged from entertainment, family fun programs, wellbeing activities, and the inaugural channel country rugby league 9's carnival. Half of this funding was allocated for a community concert (featuring Adam Brand) to be held at the Bedourie Races in September.

The events which received Drought Relief Funding were:-

**25 April** - Entertainer (Jer Gregg) at Betoota Gymkhana  
\$2,500 - Betoota Gymkhana Club

**11-13 June** - Family Wellness Fair  
\$3,500 - Bedourie Health Services

**13 June** - Rugby Nines event  
\$7,000 - Bedourie Golf & Leisure Club

**27/28 June** - DJ at Birdsville Gymkhana  
**25/26 July** - DJ at Birdsville Rodeo /Bronco Branding  
\$4,500 - Birdsville Social Club

**12 June, 2 July, 28 Aug, 27 Nov** - Family Fun Nights  
\$4,000 - Bedourie Playgroup parents

**29 Aug** - Family entertainment at Betoota Races  
\$10,000 - Betoota Race Club

**12 Sept** - Adam Brand concert at Bedourie Races  
\$35,000 Joint application from three local clubs

**10-12 Nov** - Guest instructor (African Drummer) at Splash & Arts Camp  
\$3,500 - Bedourie State School P&C



# Funded Programs

## MEETING OF THE TWO DIAMANTINA'S ON THE 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ANZAC

In this year of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the landing by the ANZAC Forces on the Gallipoli Peninsula representatives of the Royal Australian Navy's HMAS Diamantina joined with the citizens of the Diamantina and Boulia Shires in commemorating this most auspicious of occasion in our nation's history at a service which were held at the Vaughan Johnson Lookout located at the border of the two Shires

These commemorative services were joint events hosted by the two neighbouring Councils of Diamantina and Boulia and the services had been 18 months in the planning. The day was supported by funding from the Department of Veteran Affairs and the Federal Members ANZAC Anniversary Grant.



Prior to the dawn service, and as a part of the commemorative services, a plinth and a plaque were to be unveiled by the Mayors of the two Shires, Cr Geoff Morton and Cr Rick Britton, as well as the Commanding Officer of the HMAS Diamantina LCMD Iain Hutchins RAN.

With the sun slowly rising in the east the 600 plus people attending the Dawn Service braved the cold chilling wind that blew off the desert floor. Along with the plinth a time capsule was also laid with details of the day and to be opened on the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landings.

As the plinth service finished and with the sun breaking the horizon to herald the dawn, a riderless horse, a symbol of the light horseman and horses who

did not return home from the war, was led into the site by Deputy Mayor Cr Garth Tully of the Diamantina Shire Council, as the sailors from the HMAS Diamantina raised the Australian and New Zealand flags to the top of the flag poles to signal the commencement of the dawn service.

During the dawn service both Mayors read addresses with the CO of the HMAS Diamantina reading the ANZAC Day address in honour of the day and the occasion. The dignitaries laid wreaths along with community members in remembrance of those who fought and died in the ill-fated landings. After the last post had been played and both the Australian and New Zealand National Anthems finished the dawn service was completed. All those in attendance were then treated to a gun fire breakfast whilst waiting most patiently atop the windswept hill for the commencement of the day's main service.



Prior to the main service commencing, 100 horses and riders from many of the stations located in both Shires gathered at the entrance to the lookout in preparation for the walk up to the plateau. This ride was in honour of those wonderful light horsemen and their steeds that fought so gallantly in defence of the empire 100 years ago.

To see the riders and their horses travel the three kilometres into the site and be a part of this momentous occasion brought a tear to the eye of many. The 100 horses and riders each represented a year since the Gallipoli landings.



# Funded Programs

## MEETING OF THE TWO DIAMANTINA'S ON THE 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ANZAC





# Assessment of Local and Regional Issues

## Arts and Cultural Development

The Diamantina Shire has a rich and unique culture that has developed over the years with influences from both its Aboriginal and European residents. The recognition, identification and preservation of this culture is at the forefront of the Council's actions and planning. This includes the identification and preservation of both Aboriginal and European sites of significance and the maintenance of culturally significant practices through events such as bronco branding, camp drafting, gymkhanas and the annual celebration of NAIDOC week.

The strategies that have been identified in Council's corporate plan deliver these outcomes including the development of plans for community club facility development and historical site preservation.

## Disaster Mitigation and Management

As the only government body with significant staff and equipment resources in the area, the council has always had a major involvement in disaster mitigation and management. Due to the nature of the Channel Country, the Council actively manages the risks involved in and responds to accidents, fires, flooding events and asset restoration.

The restoration of flood damage on both Council and State controlled roads is a significant part of Council's works operations. It is therefore vital that Council is proactive in its mitigation and management planning to ensure that assets are protected and more importantly that restoration funding continues to be made available. To this end council has included a strategy in its corporate plan to ensure that disaster management plans are maintained and are up to date.

## Economic Development

Diamantina Shire Council continues to work collaboratively with cattle and tourism business operators, industry peak bodies, representative groups and the community to identify and grow economic development opportunities. Sealed roads and the ongoing push for optic fibre connection from Boulia to Birdsville, including the provision of 4G technology, will provide the tools for ongoing and secure economic development.

## Environmental Management

The protection and sustainability of the unique Channel Country environment has been a priority for Council for many years. The Integrated Environmental Management System (IEMS) addresses the potential environmental risks associated with the operation of Council's environmentally relevant activities and sets out Council's position for compliance with environmental legislation as well as setting the strategy for achieving best practice in environmental management.

## Infrastructure

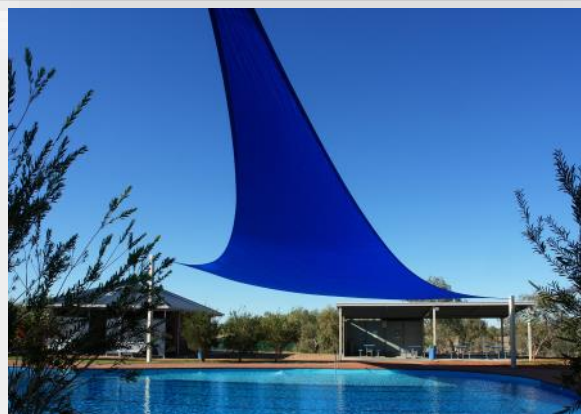
The sealing of the road network remains a major priority for Council and it is committed to the contribution of funds for works, research and lobbying to ensure that significant progress continues to be made. These issues and the required infrastructure needs for the growing communities will be included in Asset Management Plans which will ensure that infrastructure is well planned, managed and funded.

## Public Health Management

Diamantina Shire Council is in the unusual position of not only providing the standard environmental health services delivered by local government, but also of facilitating primary health care services in Bedourie and Birdsville. The operation of these clinics was transferred to Central West Health from 1st July, 2014 with Council retaining ownership of the buildings. This partnership has removed a significant burden from Council and the professionalism of the Executive and staff of the Central West Health Service is appreciated.

## Community Development and Human Services

Council's most recent corporate plan emphasises an increased focus on community development and human services. Initiatives such as community event co-ordination, a community assets development plan, funding community events and through the work of the community development officer, the Diamantina communities continue to develop, and the Council is able to provide services that build social capital and improve the quality of life of residents.



## Housing

Council has put significant effort into housing in recent years and this has addressed many of the problems faced by the community. The demand for housing in 2014/15 has waned as employment levels have reduced which now sees many houses vacant. Council has elected not to continue to participate in the management of Community housing but has instead sought approval from the Queensland Government to acquire the 14 community housing properties at no cost, so that Council can continue to manage them for the benefit of the community.

## Population

Diamantina Shire Council continues to work toward the identified population targets set out in the corporate and community plans. We aim to grow the Diamantina Shire population in a sustainable manner.

Inextricably linked to economic development, employment growth and the development of infrastructure including community services and housing, Diamantina Shire Council is well progressed in realising the objective of an increased and sustainable population.

# Performance What we Achieved

Diamantina Shire Council began a comprehensive community engagement process in February 2009, which involved community surveys and public consultation meetings to develop a long term Community Plan, five year Corporate Plan and annual Operational Plan. The 2014-2019 Corporate Plan was reviewed in early 2014 and, following community consultation, was adopted on 17th March, 2014.

Diamantina Shire Council undertakes a wide range of roles that are not traditionally carried out by Local Government in Queensland and therefore its corporate response to the community vision is broad, addresses a wide range of issues and is based on the delivery of outcomes that will move the community closer to its long term goals and vision.

The following is a summary of what Council has achieved against what it said it would do in its annual operational plan for the year in review.

Goal	Strategies to achieve this Goal	Progress and Achievements
Further development of green energy opportunities	Lobby relevant agencies to take advantage of the natural resources for the production of energy in the Shire. Actively encourage and promote renewable energy	Council has continued to liaise with Ergon Energy in relation to the upgrade of the Geothermal generation plant at Birdsville. Limitations to the use of solar power in both towns has curbed an increase in its use
The pest animals/plant status of the Shire is improved	Maintain currency of relevant pests and plants management plans  Management plans are developed and implemented to protect the environment  Engage with regional bodies and participate in the development of regional environmental management plans  Ensure, where possible, that Council decisions are in keeping with existing plans.  Continue to support Shire catchment management and Landcare groups.	Council continues to work closely with neighbouring shires and partners such as RAPAD, Queensland Wild Dog Committee, Georgina Catchment Committee, Desert Channels and the Department of Infrastructure and Planning and the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry in the areas of plant and animal pest management.  Participated in RAPAD coordinated wild dog control program funded by Qld Government.
Effective animal control within communities	Ensure that local laws and other legislation are applied as required to ensure that effective animal control is maintained	Local Laws have been appropriately administered where required.
Protection of the Great Artesian Basin	Maintain up to date information on scientific developments with respect to the Great Artesian Basin.  Maintain membership of the Great Artesian Basin Committee.  Lobby the Federal Government to re-establish the bore capping scheme.	Council has continued to lobby for the retention of the bore capping program and the importance of the Great Artesian Basin to western communities, in particular the supply of water to towns.

# Performance What we Achieved

Goal	Strategies to achieve this Goal	Progress and Achievements
Guaranteed quality water supply and sewerage treatment	<p>Maintain water infrastructure in accordance with relevant asset management practices</p> <p>Maintain waste water infrastructure in accordance with relevant asset management practices</p> <p>Investigate Waste Water reuse strategies</p>	<p>Water and sewerage infrastructure maintained as per Council's scheduled ten year capital works replacement schedule.</p> <p>Water quality continually monitored to ensure standards meet guidelines. Water Quality Management plan has been drafted and has been lodged with the department for approval.</p>



Bedourie's first bore

## Social

Goal	Strategies	Comments
A community that recognises the value of preserving the unique culture of the area.	<p>Effective management of cultural heritage and native title</p> <p>Financially viable and strongly supported traditional social events</p> <p>Identification of aboriginal sites of significance</p> <p>Preservation of historical sites and artefacts</p>	<p>Progress continues with the establishment of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan</p> <p>Council continues to be involved with the progress of ILUA's with aboriginal groups.</p> <p>Significant support was provided to a range of community groups to support events and activities</p> <p>Progress continues with aboriginal groups in regards to the identification of significant sites and cultural heritage clearance for construction works</p> <p>Progress continues on the appropriate display of aboriginal artefacts.</p>
A community where the cost of living is comparable to the south east of the state	The Cost of living in the Shire is reduced	Council continues to ensure that its decisions do not increase the cost of living for residents



# Performance What we Achieved

## Social

Goal	Strategies	Comments
Towns which are attractive, Green and Clean with a community that takes Pride in their Homes and Towns	Recognition through the tidy towns awards	Maintain membership of Keep Australia Beautiful Council (KABC) and nominate annually
	Viable fruit and vegetable gardens are operating in Birdsville and Bedourie	Council has assisted interested residents with the establishment of community gardens in Birdsville and Bedourie.
	Planned streetscape development	Further landscaping has been completed at the entrances both Bedourie and Birdsville.  Council has commenced the stage 1 & 2 of the Birdsville streetscaping project involving the reconstruction of Adelaide Street.
	Effective waste management	'Kmart' is established at both landfills to reduce the amount of waste entering the landfill and to provide residents with recycling opportunities.
A community with affordable access to the full range of transport services and facilities.	A reliable, regular air service at prices comparable to Brisbane to Mt Isa costs	Council continues to have a strong working relationship with both the Department of Transport and Rex Airlines (air service provider).  Council continues to attend 'Air User Group' meetings
	A weekly freight service at prices comparable to Brisbane to Mt Isa freight costs	Freight preferred supplier arrangements are maintained by Council with weekly services from Mt Isa.
A community with high private home ownership in which all residents are appropriately housed.	Private home ownership continues to increase	Council is undertaking a review of available housing that is suitable for sale pending the finalisation of the transfer of community housing properties to Council.

# Performance What we Achieved

## Social

Goal	Strategies	Comments
A motivated and involved community.	<p>Active and well-resourced community groups</p> <p>The Shire's youth are actively involved in the community</p>	<p>Grants to community organisations continue with strong support outlined in council's 2014/2015 budget.</p> <p>Council's grants officer continues to be available to community groups and individuals to seek financial support.</p> <p>Council continues to strongly support youth council with secretarial support as well as financial support to progress youth initiated projects and training to support skills development.</p>
A safe and crime free community.	The community remains safe and crime free	<p>Strong ties continue between Council and the Queensland Police Service officers based in the Shire.</p> <p>Crime remains low within the Shire.</p> <p>Council adopted its new Disaster Management Plan in early 2013.</p>
Full employment.	The employment rate maintained at more than 95%	<p>Training programs have been regularly advertised to community</p> <p>Child care has been identified as a significant area that hinders possible employment of residents. Investigation continues in possible strategies to improve child care within Bedourie and Birdsville.</p> <p>Discussions have been held with the QLD Department of Education and Training about the introduction of family day care in both Bedourie and Birdsville.</p> <p>eKindy has been delivered in Bedourie and Birdsville during the year.</p>

# Performance What we Achieved

## Social

Goal	Strategies	Comments
Fully operational medical and pharmacy facilities run by quality service providers that provide appropriate and affordable access to on-site GPs and specialist medical care.	<p>A community that is fully aware of and responsive to primary health care needs</p> <p>Establish a partnership with Central West Hospital and Health Board to provide a quality health service</p> <p>Services are provided for our Aged, Youth and Children as appropriate</p> <p>Quality health infrastructure that meets community needs</p> <p>Ambulance Services throughout the Shire and at Community Events are retained.</p>	<p>Central West Hospital and Health Board commenced providing health services to the communities of Bedourie and Birdsville from 1 July 2014.</p> <p>Allied health professionals continue to regularly visit both clinics. RFDS changed their arrangements for providing regular clinics to both towns with both now serviced from Mt Isa on the same day. Visiting specialists in the areas of optical, dental and cardio continue to visit regularly.</p> <p>HACC services continue to be provided by relevant providers.</p> <p>Council continues to provide the clinic buildings at no cost. Staff accommodation is also provided free of charge to CWHHB</p> <p>Council lobbied to ensure that reliable and cost effective ambulance services were provided to community events held in the shire.</p>
All Shire residents have access to an equitable Electricity Supply	Affordable power supplies are available.	Government Incentives are available for those properties producing their own power.
Quality sporting facilities	Well maintained, quality sporting facilities which meet community needs with additional facilities as appropriate for the communities	<p>Funding has been sourced to heat the Bedourie Aquatic Centre which will lengthen the swimming season.</p> <p>An agreement was entered into with the Birdsville State School to provide public access to the Birdsville State School swimming pool out of school hours.</p> <p>Sporting oval irrigation was overhauled to improve the efficiency of the system and improve grass cover.</p>
Communication access comparable with South East Queensland	Fibre optic cable ( including mobile phone towers) is connected from Boulia to Birdsville	In conjunction with Barcoo Shire Council, we continue to lobby Federal Government to fund 50% of the cost of the Barcoo Diamantina Telecommunications Project with the balance funded from State Government and Council. Council secured a verbal commitment from the Prime Minister, Tony Abbott however this did not eventuate into funding.



# Performance What we Achieved

## Economic

Goal	Strategies	Comments
A major and sustainable tourism industry	Well planned tourism initiatives	The implementation of the Tourism Development Plan has commenced. Council continues to attend Caravan & Camping trade shows in major capital cities to promote the region along with more local advertising.
A transport network maintained in line with the rest of the state	<p>A well maintained Shire road network which meets the needs of the road users</p> <p>Airports and services that meet community requirements</p> <p>All Main Roads in the Shire are Bitumen sealed</p>	<p>Works as per works program has been completed in accordance with priority listing.</p> <p>Lobbying of Government for the improvement of road networks affecting the Diamantina Shire continues</p> <p>All DTMR and Council NDRRA Road Work completed on time and assessment of 2015 NDRRA progressing.</p> <p>All airports continue to meet CASA requirements and the Birdsville runway and apron were resurfaced during the year.</p> <p>Council continued to lobby State and Federal Government for road network improvement in line with Council's 20 year main roads improvement strategy</p> <p>Offers to contribute up to 50% of the cost to seal main roads in line with budget constraints were made but were not taken up.</p>
Council is a leader in the region, which supports regional cooperation, resource sharing and partnerships	Council continue to lead the Region in co-operation and resource sharing	Council continues to work closely with the Shires of Barcoo and Boulia on several initiatives. Initiatives include joint ventures in tourism, purchasing, operational information research and joint employment arrangements.

# Performance What we Achieved

## Economic

Goal	Strategies	Comments
Council leadership delivers Growing and Diversified Industries which provide ample employment Opportunities to the Shire Residents	<p>An economic development plan in place which enables new businesses to be developed</p> <p>Support sustainability of the cattle industry</p>	<p>The Economic Development Plan continues to be implemented as appropriate.</p> <p>Council consultants are accessible to those interested in opening or expanding businesses within the Shire.</p> <p>Continuing to lobby for improved Main Roads, additional wild dog control funding and weed eradication support.</p>
Council is recognised as the sole road construction provider in the Shire	<p>Maintain a profitable plant operation</p> <p>Council owns and operates a quality plant fleet</p>	<p>Plant hire rates have been regularly reviewed and underutilised plant disposed of throughout the year.</p> <p>Machinery has been replaced as identified in the plant replacement program.</p>
Sustainable Quality Council Assets which meet Community needs	Well maintained Council and Community assets with additional facilities as appropriate for the communities	<p>Funding assistance received for the renewal of various community assets including Birdsville airport runway.</p> <p>Assets are maintained to a standard which allows Council to provide reasonable service standards.</p>



# Performance What we Achieved

## Governance

Goal	Strategies	Comments
A sustainable and effective organisation	A quality, effective and motivated workforce	<p>A new training matrix is being prepared to better meet Council staff needs.</p> <p>Performance appraisals of employed staff continue.</p> <p>The employment and development of local residents continues.</p> <p>Workplace Health and Safety within Council's operations continues to be a priority with a commitment to improve Council's systems. Improvements in dissemination of information and in-house programs and publications have improved employee focus on workplace health and safety.</p> <p>Council's Quality Assurance System (Integrated Management System), has been audited and recertified.</p> <p>Council has reviewed its Human Resources Policy to better enable it to attract and retain key staff.</p> <p>The implementation of the recently adopted Corporate Structure continued throughout the year.</p>
	Best Practice Corporate Governance is achieved	<p>Council established an audit committee and appointed an internal auditor.</p> <p>All staff participated in Code of Conduct training and ethical decision making.</p> <p>Business Process Improvements projects were completed in Workshop and Stores operations to improve business practices in these areas.</p>



# Performance What we Achieved

## Governance

Goal	Strategies	Comments
A sustainable and effective organisation	Effective knowledge management systems and policies in place	Councils electronic records management system was restricted during the year to improve compliance with relevant legislation.
	Long Term Financial Sustainability	<p>Council achieved an unqualified audit for the year and improved its financial position</p> <p>Council continues to fund its depreciation in line with its asset management policy.</p> <p>Grant and subsidy income, as well as internal revenue, is closely monitored to ensure maximum potential is received.</p>
	Quality administration and service which meets customer needs	<p>Administration resources were stable during the year allowing increased service capacity.</p> <p>Council continues to provide customer service at a level expected by its residents.</p>
	Develop and improve communications tools including website, community noticeboard, rates newsletter, annual report etc.	Desert Yarns continues to be published monthly and distributed via electronic and hardcopy. Residents are kept up to date with urgent matters via email groups and noticeboards.
	Effective Community Engagement	Council ensures that relevant community engagement is undertaken which may include formal and informal means.

# Community Financial Report

This report is intended to take complex financial information and report it in simple terms so that interested members of the community can gain a more informed understanding of Council's financial performance and financial position for the year. The Council's annual financial statements are part of the annual report and should be viewed for more detailed financial information (See Part B).

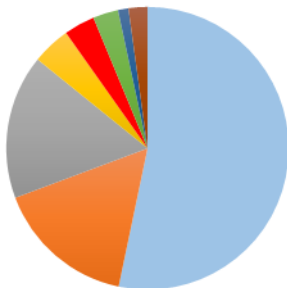
## COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The Income Statement reflects how we take the money we receive in our day to day operations and spend it to provide the level of services the community expects from our organisation. This year Council's total revenue amounted to \$19.65 million and total expenses \$21.6 million, returning an operating deficit of \$2 million. Cash balances increased by \$1.464 million to \$20.4 million.

## Five Years at a Glance - A Financial Snapshot

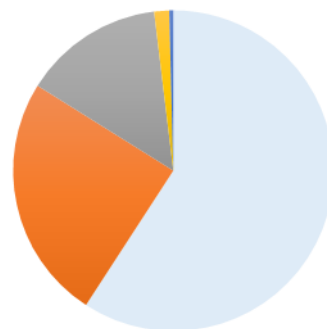
Financial Year	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Net Rate & Charges	\$862,850	\$765,431	\$736,162	\$642,858	\$603,151
Total Revenue	\$19,654,954	\$36,518,634	\$59,948,958	\$42,853,538	\$39,484,739
Total Expenses	\$21,680,276	\$26,871,054	\$36,077,198	\$44,729,941	\$34,490,971
Net Result	(\$2,025,322)	\$9,647,580	\$23,871,759	(\$1,875,503)	\$4,993,768
Capital Additions	\$2,926,315	\$14,963,063	\$16,244,524	\$7,016,467	\$7,188,601
Debt Repayment	\$348,560	\$332,874	\$313,649	\$300,539	\$224,072
Loan Balance	\$1,169,493	\$1,085,552	\$1,418,426	\$1,732,075	\$2,032,614
Total Assets	\$162,345,130	\$164,034,545	\$156,032,411	\$132,544,442	\$90,509,318
Total Liabilities	\$2,367,686	\$2,031,779	\$3,223,475	\$4,670,739	\$4,746,798
Total Equity	\$159,977,444	\$162,002,766	\$152,808,936	\$127,873,703	\$85,762,520
Reserves	\$3,135,874	\$3,135,874	\$2,030,814	\$1,907,314	\$2,049,293
Depreciation Expense	\$2,933,130	\$2,998,665	\$3,201,463	\$2,810,874	\$2,190,525

### Where the Money Comes From



- Sales - Contract and Recoverable Works \$10,474,561 - 53.3%
- Capital Grants, Subsidies, Contributions and Donations \$3,146,919 - 16%
- Grants, Subsidies, Contributions and Donations \$3,244,597 - 16.5%
- Net Rate and Utility Charges \$862,850 - 4.4%
- Interest Earned \$695,963 - 3.5%
- Rental Income \$569,999 - 2.9%
- Other Recurrent Income \$235,109 - 1.2%
- Fees and Charges \$425,356 - 2.2%

### Where the Money Goes to



- Materials and Services \$12,238,858 - 61.1%
- Employee Benefits \$5,111,682 - 23.6%
- Depreciation and Amortisation \$2,933,160 - 13.5%
- Loss on the Disposal of Non-Current Assets \$312,608 - 1.4%
- Finance Costs \$83,997 - 0.4%

**OPERATING DEFICIT \$2,025,321**

# Community Financial Report

## COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL POSITION

The balance sheet measures what Council owns and owes at the end of the financial year.

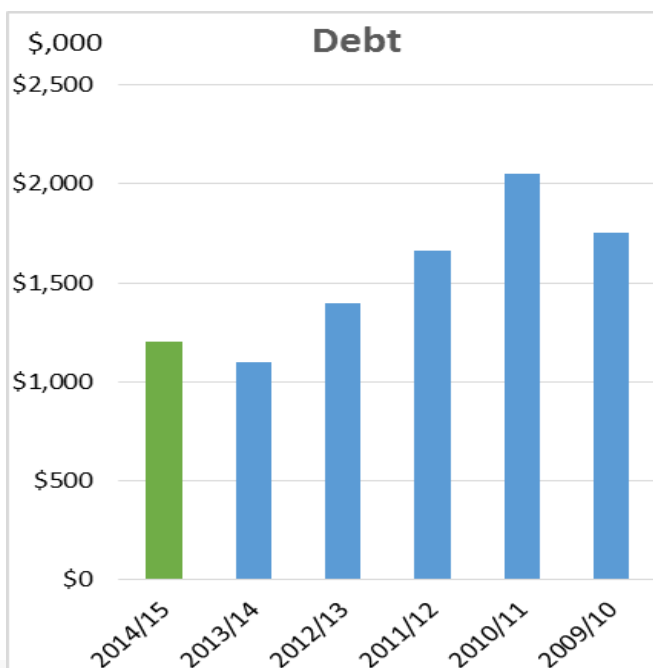
The result of these two components determines the net wealth of Council, which is therefore the net wealth of the community.

What do our assets consist of?		
<b>Cash and cash equivalents</b>	12%	\$20,419,642
<b>Trade and other receivables</b>	1%	\$1,497,683
<b>Inventories</b>	1%	\$1,396,193
<b>Non-current assets held for</b>	1%	\$1,063,000
<b>Property, plant and equip-</b>	85%	\$137,968,612
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>\$162,345,130</b>

What do our liabilities consist of?		
<b>Trade and other payables</b>	42.48%	\$1,005,974
<b>Borrowings</b>	49.39%	\$1,169,493
<b>Provisions</b>	8.11%	\$192,219
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>\$2,367,686</b>

## OUR DEBT

With debt repayments amounting to \$348,559 for the year, Council's debt at June 30, 2015 totalled \$1,169,493. Council continues to manage its debt responsibly, electing only to borrow further after taking into account the economic conditions of the period, with the view that the borrowing will provide a benefit to future generations.



## CHANGES IN EQUITY

This statement measures the change in our net wealth and considers such items as retained earnings, re-valuations of our asset base and reserves held for future capital works.

The community ownership in the infrastructure and services council provides to the community is growing steadily. A portion of community wealth is cash backed by an appropriate level of reserves held to plan for future projects, which, with financial planning, can place less reliance on loan borrowing in meeting the needs of the community.



## OUR CASH POSITION

The statement of cash flow identifies how we received and spent our money during the year, resulting in what cash is available at the end of the year.

Cash at Beginning	\$18,955,194
<b>Inflow from Operating Activities</b>	<b>\$532,027</b>
<b>Inflow from Investing Activities</b>	<b>\$848,482</b>
<b>Inflow from Financing Activities</b>	<b>\$83,940</b>
<b>CASH AT END</b>	<b>\$20,419,643</b>

While our current cash balance is \$20,419,643 it is important to note that \$3,135,874 is restricted as reserves for specific purposes, such as future capital works.

## SUMMARY

In conclusion, Council's financial position is sound ensuring continued viability of our programs so that we can continue to meet the needs of our diverse community. Given the increasing requirements with which we must comply and the trend of reducing subsidies and grants, and proposed changes to NDRRA requirements, Council, like any organisation, must prioritise its requirements so as to ensure the long-term sustainability and viability of the organisation.



# Community Financial Report

## RELEVANT MEASURES OF FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

As outlined in section 178 *Local Government Regulation 2012* it is a requirement for council to display relevant measures of financial sustainability for the financial year to which the statement relates. A local government's long-term financial sustainability statement must state the relevant measures of financial sustainability for the nine financial years following the year to which the statement relates and an explanation of the local government's financial management strategy that is consistent with the long-term financial forecast.

Ratio	2014/15 <i>Actual</i>	2015/16 <i>Budget</i>	2016/17 <i>Budget</i>	2017/18 <i>Budget</i>	2018/19 <i>Budget</i>	2019/20 <i>Budget</i>	2020/21 <i>Budget</i>	2021/22 <i>Budget</i>	2022/23 <i>Budget</i>	2023/24 <i>Budget</i>
<b>Operating Surplus Ratio</b>	-29.4%	-30.6%	-32.6%	-5.7%	-5.0%	-4.1%	-3.9%	-3.9%	-3.0%	-2.3%
<b>Net Financial Liabilities Ratio</b>	-128.0%	-205.3%	-122.6%	-116.1%	-111.0%	-107.6%	-105.3%	-103.9%	-103.6%	-103.6%
<b>Asset Sustainability Ratio</b>	66.1%	177.7%	209.6%	141.5%	137.1%	132.1%	126.7%	121.0%	122.1%	122.9%

### Operating Surplus Ratio

This is an indicator of the extent to which revenues raised cover operational expenses only or are available for capital funding purposes or other purposes. The operating surplus ratio is the operating surplus (deficit) expressed as a percentage of total operating revenue. A positive ratio indicates that surplus revenue is available. This may be used to support the funding of capital expenditure or used to offset past or future operating deficits. If the surplus is not required for this purpose in a particular year, it can be held to support future capital expenditure funding as a financial asset, used to offset past deficit funding or, where possible, used to reduce current debt levels.

*Net result divided by total operating revenue. Expressed as a percentage. Target Ratio = Between 0 - 10%*

### Net Financial Liabilities Ratio

This is an indicator of the extent to which the net financial liabilities of a local government can be serviced by its operating revenues. A ratio greater than zero (positive) indicates that total financial liabilities exceed current assets. These net financial liabilities must be serviced using available operating revenues. A positive value less than 60 per cent indicates the local government has the capacity to fund the financial liabilities and appears to have the capacity to increase its loan borrowings if required. A positive value greater than 60 per cent indicates the local government has limited capacity to increase its loan borrowings. A ratio less than zero (negative) indicates that current assets exceed total liabilities and therefore the local government appears to have significant financial capacity and the ability to increase its loan borrowings if necessary.

*Total liabilities less current assets divided by total operating revenue. Expressed as a percentage. Target Ratio = Less than 60%*

### Asset Sustainability Ratio

This is an approximation of the extent to which the infrastructure assets managed by the local government are being replaced as these reach the end of their useful lives. Depreciation expense represents an estimate of the extent to which the infrastructure assets have been consumed in a period.

Capital expenditure on renewals (replacing assets that the local government already has) is an indicator of the extent to which the infrastructure assets are being replaced.

This ratio indicates whether a local government is renewing or replacing existing non-financial assets at the same rate that its overall stock of assets is wearing out.

*Capital expenditure on the replacement of assets (renewals) divided by depreciation expense. Expressed as a percentage. Target Ratio = Greater than 90%*



*SUSTAINABLY DEVELOPING THE OUTBACK*