



SUSTAINABLY DEVELOPING THE OUTBACK

Annual Report 2020/21



About this Report

This Annual Report of the Diamantina Shire Council is for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

It profiles the Diamantina Shire and reports on the activities undertaken by Council 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 1600 or by visiting Council's website at 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

Photos in this publication have been kindly provided by community members and Council staff. A special thanks to Michelle Dillon for many of the event photos.





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A Message from our Mayor

The year started in lockdown and got better from there although it has been far from a normal year. The country has dried off following a good flood in 2019 and the tourist dried up with COVID. We are still drought declared.

As COVID restriction were lifted to our area of Queensland, we started get a small flow of tourist into the area. While things looked bright for a while, the effects of borders opening and closing and reopening, hotspots being announced and lockdowns in southern states we couldn't plan from one day to the next. Luckily, Queensland was able to open up to allow state residents to travel sufficiently to get some tourists through to us.

As always Council has assisted our community groups to put on events where we can. Unfortunately, most events, large and small were cancelled in 2020 due to COVID restrictions. We have though continued to improve the facilities across the shire which are utilised for events. This year we added a new significant event to the calendar with Council supporting the hosting of the Million Dollar Hole golf event in July 2022. This support will include assistance with the preparation of an additional 9 holes at the Birdsville Golf Course.

This has been a difficult year for our businesses and Council has made a number of adjustments to our operations in an attempt to provide support including providing a 100% concession on general rates for tourism orientated businesses.

Council continues to work closely with the Remote Area Planning and Development Board and the newly formed Western Queensland Alliance of Councils. RAPAD is very highly respected within Queensland government circles and provides many services throughout the area, RAPADSkilling is one example. Through the WQAC, the voice of 22 rural and remote western Queensland is finally being heard through this this united effort. Its priorities for the immediate future are roads and housing. To compliment this, I am a Guardian of the Local Government Association of Queensland Rural and Remote Councils Compaq which oversees the interest of rural and remote Council throughout the LGAQ.

Hopefully there is light at the end of the tunnel in terms of funding through the Local Government Grants Commission as they commence a review into their methodology into the distribution of Financial Assistance Grants to Queensland local governments.

As roads are our lifeblood, we continue to have a great working relationship with the Department of Transport and Main Roads and our regional councils as they continue to support our efforts to get bitumen to Birdsville. We expect that there will be only the Cuttaburra section of the Eyre Developmental Road unsealed by around August 2022. That's around 18km.

Yet again our employees have worked tirelessly this year to deliver a record year and this report showcases some of their major achievements as we spend the millions of stimulus funding we have received.

Robbie Dare
Mayor





A Message from our CEO

What a year. What a ride, as we endured the ups and downs of COVID. This year has been unique in so many ways. It has had positives and negatives.

With no community events in the Shire due to COVID restrictions in Queensland or interstate we were left to our own devices. While businesses did struggle to find staff and contractors, many volunteers were enjoying a rest. The constant changes to border restrictions did have a flow on effect to Council's accommodation facilities with many bookings cancelled and a difficulty in attracting staff right across the organisation.

Thankfully our residents were not affected by the health crisis however the economic effects were plain to see on the businesses.

Luckily, due to our isolation, Council was generally able to continue with its works program without much disruption. During the period we managed to complete some major road projects including:

- the pave and seal 17.3km of the Big Red Road with funding from the Works for Qld Program, Roads to Recovery, QRA Betterment Program and Council;
- Flood Restoration contract work at the 'missing link' at "Marion Downs"; and
- Completed 10 km section of pave and seal of the Eyre Developmental Road at 'Yamba Flat';
- RMPC Contract work
- DTMR Flood Damage
- Council Shire Road Flood Damage

Not only were our road crews busy but there was a significant body of work completed across all of Council's asset classes (Buildings, Airports, Water, Parks & recreation, Tourism) funded in the main from State and Federal Government COVID funding programs.

The Annual Report details Council's progress in delivering its Corporate and Operational plans. Council is on track to meet the majority of its goals within the plans, however COVID has impacted this to some degree.

The financial statements for the year lay out the extraordinary year Council has had in terms of funding. Its pleasing to have had a strong financial year which will help keep our head above water when the funding buckets dry up.

I must acknowledge the efforts of Council's staff in getting through a vast amount of work this year under difficult circumstances. It's not only the 'outside' staff who contribute to Council's successes. Our staff in administration, visitor centres and accommodation have been put under a lot of strain this year to keep the wheels of a council turning in this very different year. Its fair to say that with the vacancies that we are carrying, all staff have been doing a couple of jobs at once.

Leon Love

Chief Executive Officer





Our Vision, Mission, and Core Values

Vision

Diamantina, a friendly, growing and safe Shire of community minded residents, provides our outback community with all-weather access by bitumen road, state of the art health, education, communication and transport services with the necessary infrastructure to promote sustainable private commercial enterprise and significant levels of private housing ownership while preserving our unique environment.

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 a 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.



2020-21 Highlights

Diamantina Shire Roof Top Solar Power Generation Project

The project was born out of Ergon shutting down their green field geothermal power station in Birdsville as it became an unviable asset. As a result of this commercial decision, Ergon then considered offering the towns people solar power to their houses to compensate for the closure of the power station.

On reviewing this offer, Council's economic development staff researched the option of having solar fitted to all houses and Council's building in both towns, as to do this would have far reaching benefits for residents, Council, Ergon and businesses. Through the assistance of Ergon engineers, a system was devised that ensured the stand alone power generation system would remain stable

The benefits of the projects are:

1. Significant reduction in electricity costs for tenants giving more disposable income to spend in local businesses.
2. Significant electricity cost for Council on its high use sites;
3. Significant reduction in quantity of diesel used in Ergon Generators in both towns saving \$ for Ergon but reducing green house emissions
4. Growing the shires reputation as a clean and green location.
5. Supports the use of battery storage in the future further enhancing the above benefits.

The installation of the systems commenced in January 2021 in Birdsville and by mid-February all of the systems in the town had been installed. Bedourie installation program started late February and was completed in mid-March 2021

The projects end result is that 80 systems were installed at 67 sites which generate 922Kw .

The project has, through having a flexible and programmed implementation process, delivered an outstanding result that has used less infrastructure to generate more carbon neutral power that will improve the long term economic sustainability of the towns power generating plants and bring high quality economic electricity cost savings to Council and the shires citizens



Wirrarri Centre Birdsville



Council Administration Building,





2020-21 Highlights

Big Red Road Upgrade

Big Red Road pave and seal project from chainage 1.8km to 19.1km was completed at a cost of \$4.4m. This sees bitumen from Birdsville to within 6km of Big Red as it joins the previously completed stage. This work was completed through funding from the Works for Qld, Roads to Recovery, 2019 Betterment Program and Diamantina Shire Council. The 2019 Betterment program is joint Australian Government and Queensland Government funding to build back better, more resilient essential public infrastructure damaged by the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough, 25 January – 14 February 2019.





2020-21 Highlights

Birdsville Tourist Park and Lodge Management

As reported last year, Council assumed management of the Birdsville Tourist Park and Birdsville Lodge early in 2020. The first few months of operation were an awkward time, just as it was for all businesses, with the advent of COVID related lockdowns and border closures.

Unfortunately this situation continued into the 2020-2021 financial year. Events that seemed to be going ahead were cancelled, and other events that went ahead did so with reduced numbers. Predicting staff levels became difficult, and attracting staff was also an issue.

To demonstrate the impact that a global pandemic can have even on a remote accommodation business, consider the following. The six months from July 2020 to December 2020 were some of the worst trading months experienced at the Birdsville Tourist Park and Birdsville Lodge. The six months from January 2021 to June 2021 were, month on month, the highest trading months ever. And then border closures once again drove trading down from July 2021 onwards.

Service delivery was therefore far from perfect. I am sure all tourism and hospitality businesses understand the difficulties that COVID 19 has presented to the industry. Despite all of this, we had some wins, such as a redesigning of the unpowered site layout giving us more unpowered sites to offer guests in peak periods than the previous design. Work commenced on a new, larger laundry for our staff to utilise, the front reception area received a major clean out and many of the maintenance jobs that had been neglected for several years were completed. Solar systems were installed allowing both sites to generate more power than they consume. More developments are planned, including a redesign of the welcome/entrance area to provide more of a sense of arrival, as well as a brand new website.



Predicting the future is difficult at the best of times, let alone coming out of a once in a generation global pandemic. But given

the events that are planned for the 2021/2022 financial year, plus the relaxing of border restrictions due to higher rates of vaccination, the hope is that stability will return to the marketplace.



Birdsville Lodge



2020-21 Highlights

Amenities for Bedourie Multi-sports Complex

New amenities block has been completed providing improved facilities especially for female participants. This project was funded by Department of Sport and Recreation and Drought Communities Program. Queensland Racing contributed towards additional space for stewards and jockey change rooms replacing the 'shed' that existed previously



Birdsville and Bedourie Racecourse electrical upgrade

Birdsville and Bedourie Racecourse power upgrade has been completed. This will allow a more efficient and reliable supply of power during events. These projects were funded through the Drought Communities Program.

Photos Bedourie upgrade



Photos Birdsville upgrade





Community Financial Report

The purpose of the Community Financial Report is to give community members a plain English, easy to follow summary of Council’s Financial Statements in accordance with Section 179 of *Local Government Regulation 2012*. The Council’s annual financial statements are part of the annual report and should be viewed for more detailed financial information.

Council’s Financial Statements must be certified by both the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer as “presenting fairly” the Council’s financial results for the year. They are also required to be adopted by Council—ensuring both responsibility and ownership of the Financial Statements by management and elected representatives.

In addition, Council’s Financial Statements are audited by the Queensland Audit Office. The auditor provides an audit report which gives an opinion on whether the Financial Statements fairly present Council’s financial performance and position.

This report focuses on:

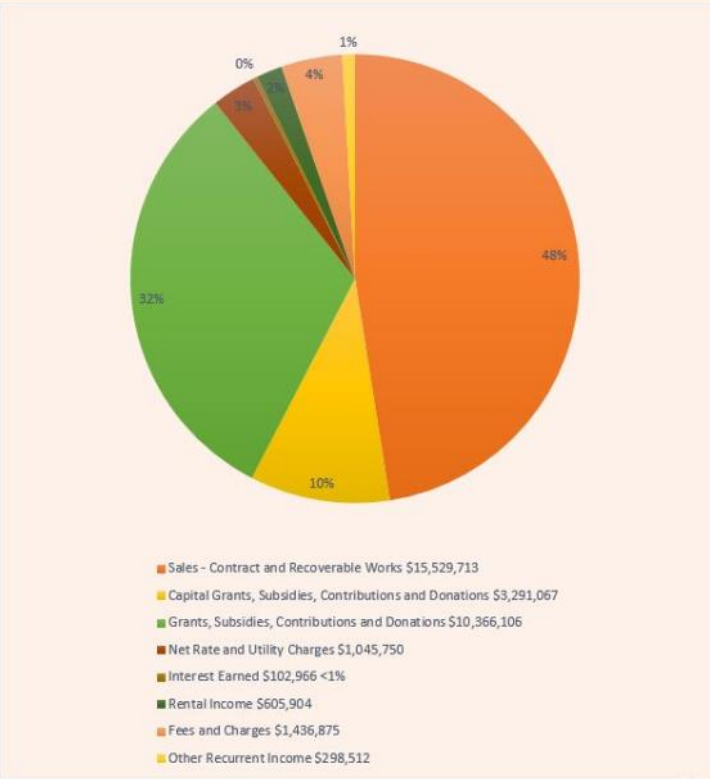
- ◆ Statement of Comprehensive Income
- ◆ Statement of Financial Position
- ◆ Statement of Changes in Equity
- ◆ Statement of Cash Flows
- ◆ Measures of Financial Sustainability

Statement of Comprehensive Income

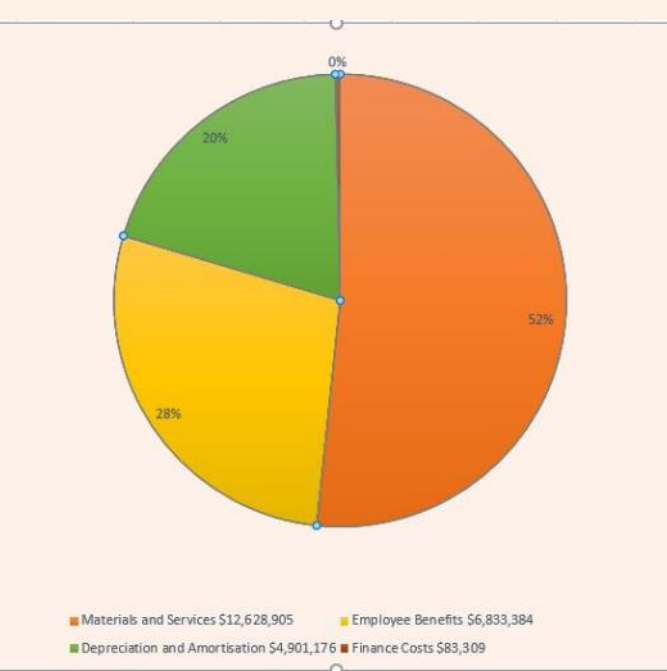
The Statement of Comprehensive Income is often referred to as the Profit and Loss statement. This statement shows what Council has earned (revenue) and what costs Council has incurred (expenses) during the year. In summary, Council’s result for the reporting period was:

	\$
What we have earned (revenue)	
Recurrent Revenue	29,385,827
Capital Revenue	3,291,067
Total Revenue	32,676,893
What we have spent (expenses)	
Recurrent Expenses	24,446,754
Capital Expenses	2,927,602
Total Expenses	27,374,357
Net Result	5,302,536

What we have earned



What we have spent





Community Financial Report

Statement of Financial Position

The Statement of Financial Position is often referred to as the Balance Sheet. The statement 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.

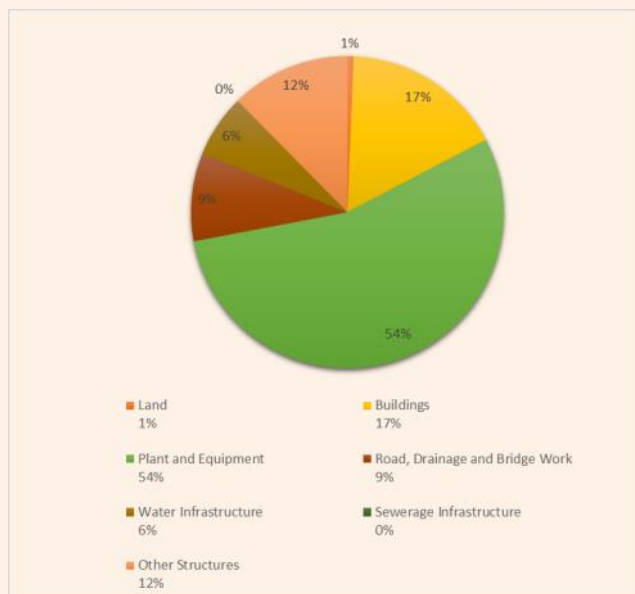
What do we own?

Council's major asset class is Property, plant and equipment, making up 89% of Council's assets.

What do our assets consist of?	%	\$
Cash and cash equivalents	9.10	14,067,543
Trade and other receivables	0.86	1,602,329
Contract assets	0.57	2,495,236
Inventories	0.95	1,908,575
Property, plant and equipment	88.52	160,293,512
TOTAL ASSETS		180,367,195

What did we spend on assets?

A significant amount of Council's activities is focussed on the maintenance, upgrade and construction of fixed assets to ensure there is adequate infrastructure services for community use. This year Council spent \$12,466,784 to renew, upgrade and build new assets for the community. The graph below shows how the money was spent in different asset classes.

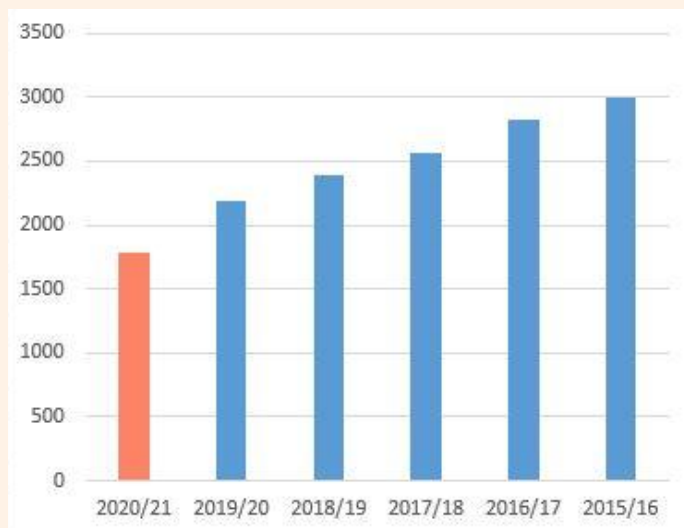


What do we owe?

With debt repayments amounting to \$199,729 for the year, Council's debt at June 30, 2021 totalled \$1,992,947. 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. No new borrowings were made during the year.

What do our liabilities consist of?	%	\$
Trade and other payables	20	694,892
Contract liabilities	38	1,980,805
Borrowings	30	1,992,947
Provisions	12	856,876
TOTAL LIABILITIES		5,525,519

Changes in Council debt over the last six years:



Statement of Cash Flows

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. This differs from the earlier reports as "non-cash items", such as depreciation are excluded.

While our current cash balance is \$14,067,543, of this \$676,445 is restricted as it unspent government grants and subsidies for specific purposes, such as future capital works.

Cash at Beginning	\$15,371,114
Inflow from Operating Activities	\$7,941,128
Outflow from Investing Activities	(\$9,044,970)
Outflow from Financing Activities	(199,729)
CASH AT END	\$14,067,543





Community Financial Report

Statement of Changes in Equity

The difference between assets and liabilities is the total community equity or the net wealth of Council. The statement shows the overall 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. At 30 June 2020 this was an amount of \$161.5M (ie Assets \$169M less Liabilities \$7.5M).

This community equity consists of an asset revaluation reserve and retained surpluses. The community ownership in the infrastructure and services council provides to the community has been reasonably steady over the last five years as show in the graph below.



Measures of Financial Sustainability

The financial sustainability statement and the associated measures (ratios) provide evidence of Council's ability to continue operating and provide an acceptable level of service and infrastructure to the community both now and into the future. Section 169 (5) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* outlines the three measures of financial sustainability on which Council must report as being:

- ◆ Asset Sustainability Ratio
- ◆ Net Financial Liabilities Ratio
- ◆ Operating Surplus Ratio.

Asset Sustainability Ratio

This ratio (expressed as a percentage) is an approximation of the extent to which the infrastructure assets managed by a local government are being replaced as these reach the end of their useful lives. The target is greater than 90% per annum (on average over the long term). The formula used to calculate the ratio is:

$$\frac{\text{Capital Expenditure on Replacement of Assets (Renewals)}}{\text{Depreciation Expenditure}}$$

Capital expenditure on replacement of assets (renewals) is an indicator of the extent to which the infrastructure assets are being replaced.

Depreciation expenditure represents an estimate of the extent to which the infrastructure assets have been consumed in a period.

Infrastructure Assets refer to those significant, long-life assets that provide ratepayers with access to social and economic facilities and services. Examples include: water and sewerage, roads, buildings, parks, pools and airports.

Target Range = > 90%

Council's Result = 53%

Comment: Council elects to expense the restoration of flood damage on shire roads rather than capitalise it, reducing this ratio. The replacement of plant and machinery is more than 50% of Councils asset renewal spend but is excluded from this ratio. This year funds were allocated towards additional assets rather than renewals in some asset classes.



Community Financial Report

Net Financial Liabilities Ratio

This ratio (expressed as a percentage) is an indicator of the extent to which the net financial liabilities of a local government can be serviced by its operating revenues. The target is less than 60% per annum (on average over the long term). The formula used to calculate the ratio is:

$$\frac{\text{Total Liabilities} - \text{Current Assets}}{\text{Total Operating Revenue (excluding Capital Items)}}$$

Total Operating Revenue (excluding Capital Items)

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.

Target Range = < 60%

Council's Result: -49.5%

Comment: Council continues to be able to service its current debt. Current loans have funded the Birdsville Lodge Construction, Birdsville Airport Runway resealing and Optic Fibre infrastructure.

Operating Surplus Ratio

This ratio (expressed as a percentage) 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 formula used to calculate the ratio is:

$$\frac{\text{Net Result (excluding Capital Items)}}{\text{Total Operating Revenue (excluding Capital Items)}}$$

Total Operating Revenue (excluding Capital Items)

The target is between 0% and 10% per annum (on average over the long term). 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.

Target Range > 0% and < 10%

Council's Result: -16.8%

Comment: It is recognised by all levels of government that Council is reliant on funding from them to maintain its operations and assets.





Community Financial Report

Five Years at a Glance - A Financial Snapshot

Financial Year	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Net Rates & Charges	\$1,045,750	\$1,107,003	\$1,137,791	\$1,087,806	\$967,756
Total Revenue	\$32,676,893	\$19,463,488	\$19,942,637	\$19,831,409	\$26,293,759
Total Expenses	\$24,446,754	\$20,202,848	\$17,783,204	\$19,192,788	\$24,003,543
Net Result	\$5,302,536	(\$739,361)	\$2,159,432	\$638,621	\$2,290,216
Capital Additions	\$12,466,704	\$8,668,437	\$5,824,838	\$6,260,280	\$9,733,792
Debt Repayment	\$199,729	\$192,261	\$185,017	\$259,705	\$246,826
Loan Balance	\$1,992,947	\$2,192,676	\$2,384,937	\$2,569,954	\$2,829,659
Total Assets	\$180,367,195	\$168,992,593	\$166,422,569	\$159,012,973	\$158,636,871
Total Liabilities	\$5,529,519	\$7,399,456	\$4,209,498	\$4,120,360	\$4,382,880
Total Equity	\$174,841,676	\$161,593,137	\$162,213,071	\$154,892,613	\$154,253,992
Depreciation Expense	\$4,901,176	\$4,468,729	\$4,380,630	\$4,159,354	\$2,941,148

Summary

Council's financial position is sound but is reliant on ongoing funding from external sources, particularly for road works. Council, like any organisation, must prioritise its requirements so as to ensure the long-term sustainability and viability of the organisation.

Council's focus will be on renewing assets in priority to creating new assets unless new assets are revenue generating or reduce operating expenditure.



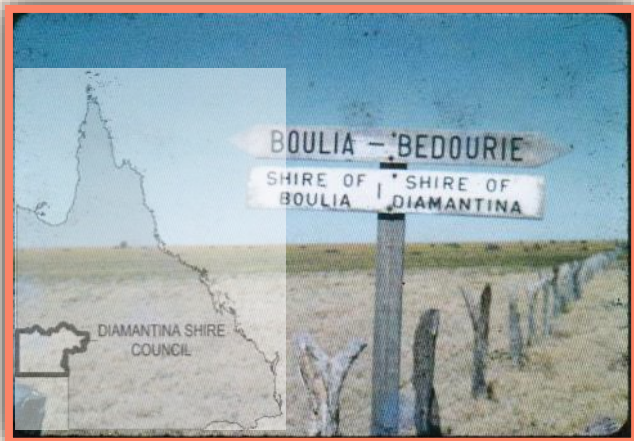
Our Shire

Our Location

The Diamantina Shire covers almost 95,000 km², 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 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.

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. 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 throughout the world. Along with beef production, tourism is the life blood of Diamantina 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.

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

Our 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 McKinlay. 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.



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.

A bronco branding rope replaced the naval rope, and a bull was placed on top of the crest instead of the ship. Wildflowers from the Shire were incorporated to create a colourful and unique crest which you see today, with the Shire motto "Sustainably Developing the Outback".



Birdsville Racecourse circa 1926

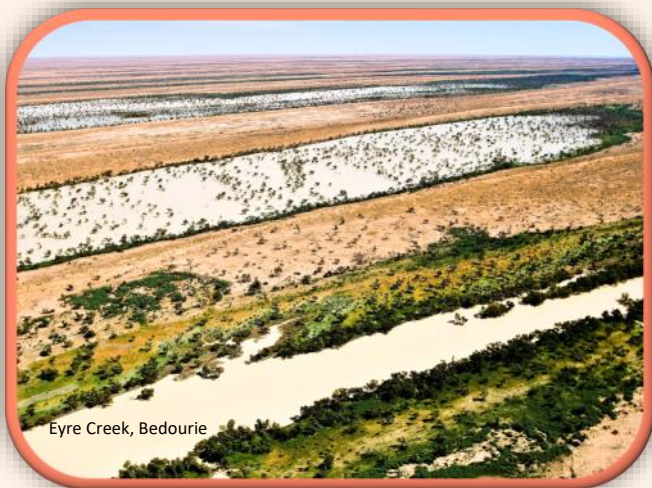




Our Shire

Our Towns

Bedourie, the Shire's administration centre, boasts many modern amenities including a community centre, Health Clinic,



Eyre Creek, Bedourie

School, historic hotel, motel, roadhouse, caravan-park, unique desert golf course, flood lit tennis courts, and arguably the town's premier facility an aquatic centre with an artesian hot spa. The town's water, sourced directly from the great artesian basin, is celebrated as being Australia's best.

Bedourie, meaning 'dust storm', was first established as a Cobb & Co coach stop and watering point for drovers on the north-south stock route.

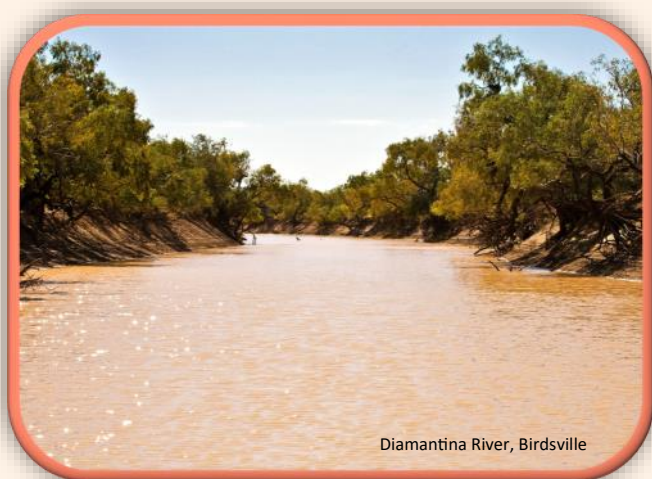
Bedourie hosts the Bedourie Camel Races in July each year and is attended by thousands who have driven from the Big Red Bash.

Bedourie has a population of approximately 100 people.

Betoota, was 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.

The hotel is open again after Get Stuffed Outback Events Pty Ltd purchased it in 2018 and commenced trading in 2020. The town continues to host the annual gymkhana and race meeting that attracts visitors from all over Australia.



Diamantina River, Birdsville

Birdsville, lies 12 kilometres north of the SA border. Pre-federation, the town was a tolling point for the drovers transporting cattle between the colonies. After federation, in 1901, tolls were abolished and the town fell into decline.

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

Birdsville hosts the iconic Birdsville Races and Big Red Bash each year.

Birdsville's population is approximately 100.



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 a range of community services, is responsible for local planning and policy, fosters social and economic development, and maintains a significant road construction and maintenance business and tourism enterprises.

The elected Council's responsibilities

Diamantina Shire Council comprises of five elected Councillors including the Mayor. Elections are held every 4 years, the most recent being in March 2020.

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.

Meetings of Council

Council's ordinary meetings are usually held on the third Monday of every month. Meetings commence at 9.00am and are held at the Council Administration Centre, Herbert Street, Bedourie.



Mayor
Councillor Robbie Dare

Elected: 2020

Born in 1955 in Charleville Queensland, Robbie is the oldest son of Bob and Marie Dare and has four siblings.

Robbie attended Windorah primary school until 1967 and then completed grade

10 at Nudgee College Brisbane in 1969.

His first job in 1969 was on the Don Burgess bridge on Whitula Creek west of Windorah. He worked with his father fixing windmills then on Macs roadworks west of Windorah.

He has worked for Diamantina Shire Council in a number of roles: as storeman in 1986, cost clerk in 1987, and then director of works from 1989 to 1997. Breeding thoroughbred horses and Angus cattle on his property near Toowoomba keeps Robbie busy.

Robbie served as Diamantina Shire Mayor from 2004 to 2012.

Robbie is married to wife Adele and has three children Ben, Jeff, and Jaime.



Deputy Mayor
Councillor Doug Cooms

Elected: 2016

Born in Charters Towers and raised in the Winton, Boulia and Mt Isa districts by parents Bev and Bruiser Cooms.

Doug has one elder brother John and a youngest sister Nerida. Doug spent his early schooling years in the Winton Boulia districts and completed his junior schooling in Mt Isa before attending boarding school at Mt Carmel College in Charters Towers.

Doug and his now wife Tracy left Boulia in their late teens and moved to Townsville where Doug worked for an earthmoving Company throughout Queensland for seven years. From there Doug and Tracy moved to the Darling Downs and brought a small farm outside Crows Nest and later on Oakey where they raised their two girls Shahn and Jasmine. In 1989 Doug joined the cement and concrete industry where he worked for 22 years mostly in the technical division throughout the Darling Downs and Central Queensland.

In 2011 Doug and Tracy had an opportunity to move back to the bush to invest in and manage the Simpson Desert Oasis Roadhouse in Bedourie. During the past 5 years Doug has been an active member of numerous community events and clubs.



Our Council



Councillor Don Rayment

Elected: 2012

Councillor Don Rayment was re-elected in 2016 for his second 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.

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 & Judy shifted to the Diamantina Shire in 2005 to manage the organic cattle property Adria Downs, 130km north west of Birdsville. Their 6 adult children and grandchildren (7 at present) are regular visitors from various places within Queensland.



Councillor Francis Murray

Elected: 2020

Francis Murray was raised in Birdsville and Bedourie by his parents Wesley and Sandra Murray. Wesley was a son of Arthur and Flora Murray who moved to Birdsville from Finnis Springs Station, north of Marree, in the early 1950s working the cattle industry as drovers, fencers and yard builders.

Francis' brother, Wesley jnr, was the last child born in the Birdsville Clinic and a few years later Francis married Michelle Cain in the Bedourie Hall. Together they established their truck business working for the Diamantina Shire. Francis and Michelle have two children, Ryder and Jonti, and when Francis' parents passed away, they also raised Wesley jnr.

Francis and Michelle now live in Birdsville from where they continue to run their business. Francis is proudly descended from the Arabana, Dieri, Barngarla and Scottish peoples of South Australia but, having lived and worked almost all of his life across the Diamantina Shire, he considers the Wangkangurru/Yarliyandi, Mithaka, Wangkamahdla, Pitta Pitta and Maiawali/Karuwali countries home.

This is Francis' first term as councillor.



Councillor Steve Cramer

Elected: 2011 to 27 February 2021

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.



Councillor Don Rowlands

From: 10 May 2021

Don Rowlands is a well-known local identity, leader and respected elder of the Wangkangurru people. He lives in Birdsville with his family. Growing up is where he learnt the beliefs, traditions, and cultures of Wangkangurru from his elders particularly his grandmother. His grandmother taught him how to understand the dreamtime and how these narratives spiritually bonded the Wangkangurru people to the Munga-Thirri (Simpson Desert).

Don is a strong proponent of "the ways of the old people", with a sincere belief that all Australians can benefit enormously from developing an understanding of their country by appreciating the culture and beliefs that sustained the indigenous people of Australia for thousands of years.

For the past 28 years Don, has worked for Queensland Parks & Wildlife Services, with added value of managing his traditional lands, protecting the cultural sites and places has been a wonderful gift and reward for Don, his family, and his people.

Don has tried many times to be elected to council without success, now finally he has a seat at the table. He loves this challenge and pledges to do everything in his power to represent the Diamantina Shire (Birdsville, Bedourie and Betoota).



Our Council

Councillor Expense Reimbursement

In accordance with section 250 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, Council must have an Expense Reimbursement Policy for Councillors. The objective of this policy is to ensure the payment of legitimate and reasonable expenses incurred by Councillors for carrying out their duties and responsibilities, and to provide facilities to Councillors for those purposes. It provides clear and concise instruction on what expenses can be reimbursed to Councillors. The full policy is available on our [website](#).

Councillors were provided with suitable ICT support including a laptop computer or iPad.

Councillor Remuneration and Attendance

At the Council Ordinary meeting held on 20 April 2020, the following resolution was adopted:

Minute No. 2020.04.20-OM-16

Moved Cr Dare, Seconded Cr Murray

‘That effective from 1 July 2020, Council increase the annual remuneration paid to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors to the maximum level available as per the Local Government Remuneration Commission Report 2019, as follows:

- **Mayor \$108,222**
- **Deputy Mayor \$62,435**
- **Councillor \$54,110’**

In accordance with section 186 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, the following table details:

- the number of meetings attended by each Councillor;
- the total remuneration, including superannuation contributions, paid to each councillor; and
- the expenses reimbursed under the Expense Reimbursement—Councillors Policy

Councillor	Ordinary Meetings Attended	Remuneration	Expenses Reimbursed	Superannuation Contribution	Communication Allowance	Travel Allowance	Total
Cr D Cooms	12	\$62,435.06	\$0.00	\$7,492.20	\$600.00		\$70,527.26
Cr S Cramer	9	\$34,570.30	\$0.00	\$4,148.43	\$400.00		\$39,118.73
Cr R Dare	12	\$108,656.04	\$0.00	\$10,322.28	\$600.00		\$119,578.32
Cr Don Rowlands	2	\$9,018.34	\$0.00	\$856.74	\$100.00	\$334.00	\$10,309.08
Cr F Murray	12	\$54,110.04	\$0.00	\$5,140.44	\$600.00	\$3,674.00	\$63,524.48
Cr D Rayment	11	\$52,606.98	\$0.00	\$6,071.75	\$600.00	\$3,047.75	\$62,326.48
Total		\$321,396.76	\$0.00	\$34,031.84	\$2,900.00	\$7,055.75	\$365,384.34





Our People



Leon Love—Chief Executive Officer

Leon joined Council as CEO in October 2013 and has extensive experience in Queensland local government having worked in various Councils over the past 29 years in Toowoomba, Roma, Normanton and Mundubbera.

Assisting Council to maintain and improve the communities infrastructure and services in a sustainable way is Leon's key focus in addition to seeing the continued sealing of Main Roads.

The unique and diverse landscapes and friendly residents make the Diamantina an enjoyable place to live and work.

Married to Allison, together they have five children who love nothing more than to get back to Bedourie.



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. One of Trevor's biggest achievements when working for the company was being made foreman in charge of the civil works on the multi-story carpark at the Brisbane International Airport.

Trevor returned in 2011 as Works Manager.

He has three children, two of whom went to primary school in both Bedourie and Birdsville.



Cassie White—Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Cassie joined the Diamantina Shire and Bedourie community in January 2018, accompanied by her partner Mick and daughter Isla.

Cassie hosts 18 years industry experience, is an Associate CPA member and holds a Bachelor of Commerce with a dual degree in Advanced Accounting and Management Law.

Cassie has a passion for remote and rural Local Governments and enjoys the challenges and learning experiences that come with rural and remote placements.

Cassie left Council in August 2020 to take up a position at Paroo Shire Council as Chief Executive Officer.



Amanda Schnitzerling—Governance and Environment Manager

Amanda started working for Council in March 2014 as Executive Assistant. She lives in Bedourie with her partner Dave Roberts, who works for Council as Facilities Maintenance Coordinator. She commenced in the position of Governance and Environment Manager in September 2019.

Coming from Maryborough on the east coast, the move to the Diamantina was both exciting and challenging but Bedourie is now proudly called Home.

Amanda holds a Bachelor of Business - Accounting and worked for the Queensland University of Technology as a Project Manager for 17 years.



Stephen Schwer—Community Sustainability Manager

Stephen's background is in economic development, specifically in the tourism and hospitality sector. This is Stephen's first government role, having worked previously in the for profit and not for profit sectors. With qualifications in education, tourism, business and project management, he is keen to be an agent for the growth of the Diamantina economy and population.

Gardening is Stephen's passion outside of work, and one of the motivations for moving to the Diamantina was the soil, abundance of water and growing conditions of the region.



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 is committed to learning and development and promotes study assistance as well as assistance with course fees to all employees. It aims to spend approximately 4% of its pure wages and salary expense on staff training. Individual training needs are identified as part of the Performance Review process.

All new outside employees are offered the opportunity to complete a Certificate III in Civil Construction.

Following is a selection of the training undertaken this year with a significant investment in safety training:-

- ◆ Stabiliser Induction
- ◆ Synergy Soft
- ◆ First Aid
- ◆ Procurement rules and guidelines
- ◆ Supervisor Safety
- ◆ National Heavy Vehicle ‘
- ◆ Magiq Infoexpert
- ◆ Dogging
- ◆ Airport Reporting Officer
- ◆ Tag and Test

A strong partnership with RAPAD Skilling was maintained with competencies in various plant being completed.

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program was again offered to all employees and their immediate family. The 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 and assistance with the reduction of negative effects of stress that can arise within the workplace and community.

Recruitment and selection

Recruiting and retaining skilled staff continues to be a challenge but Council actively funding and implementing ideas to reduce the cost of living and make working in the shire more attractive.

Trainee and apprenticeship program

DSC is committed to maintaining a skilled workforce and providing opportunities to local residents to increase their potential employment opportunities. Wherever possible DSC will recruit local residents as trainees and apprentices to enhance skill development in the shire and to skill up potential long-term employees. This year we employed one mature age Administration Officer—Trainee. We also currently have a young Operational Works Trainee completing a Certificate III in Civil Construction (Plant Operation).

Council acknowledges that older staff may be interested in furthering their skills and they are also encouraged to apply for trainee or apprentice positions.





Our People

Diversity and Inclusion

Council is committed to preventing discrimination and adhering to equal opportunity principles. Our Anti-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy is a key part of all new employees and contractors induction. All our employees have a right to work in an environment free from discrimination.

Safety and Wellbeing

Council is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees with wellbeing initiatives being actively implemented. Complacency is one of the biggest challenges for the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees. We are developing and implementing initiatives to establish a culture of safety first to bring safety and wellbeing to the forefront in everything we do.

Influenza vaccinations were again offered to staff and their immediate family, and membership of the Paraplegic Benefit Fund and Corporate BUPA was maintained.

Continuous improvement of our safety management system has resulted in a score of 94% on the construction audit conducted by JLT on behalf of TMR, we are continuing the continuous improvement journey across all of the safety and quality management systems.

We have recently implemented the AltusERM Database to record all hazards, incidents and near misses, this database enables increased visibility of the process, allows timely reporting over a range of data, ability to analyse trends etc. and assists in improving the quality and security of the data. We have increased the level of investigations being conducted in relation to injuries and other incidents to ensure root cause/s and contributing factors are established so that we can implement effective control measures.

We made some major changes to the drug and alcohol testing as part of an overall fit for work policy, the number of tests being completed has risen dramatically and the message is clear to all employees and contractors, you will, be tested anytime and anywhere. To assist in the testing we have also introduced passive testing of all employees on start-up day both in Bedourie and Birdsville.

As at 30 June	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Administrative/Community Services Staff	23	24	20
Construction & maintenance Staff	40	34	31
Total, excluding casuals	63	58	51
Executive			
> Male	3	3	2
> Female	1	2	2
Elected Members			
> Male	5	5	4
> Female	-	-	1
All employees			
> Male	36	45	30
> Female	27	23	21
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander employees	16	12	14
Employees with a disability	0	0	0
Staff Turnover	34%	23%	43%





Our Community

Events in the Diamantina Shire cancelled due to COVID-19

July 1st 2020 – June 30th 2021

Bedourie Campdraft Rodeo Bronco Branding July 2020

Bedourie Camel and Pig Races July 2020

Big Red Bash July 2020

Bedourie 9's July 2020

Betoota Races August 2020

Birdsville Races September 2020

Bedourie Races September 2020

Betoota Gymkhana April 2021





Our Community

Splash n Arts Camp

November 2020—reduced capacity only Bedourie, Birdsville and local stations participated due to COVID-19





Our Community

Children Services

The aims of the Shire’s Children’s Services are to prepare children for formal education, to strengthen the bond between carer and child and to equip the carer with tools to raise healthy and happy children. Once again the Queensland State Government through the Department of Education have continued to financially support the Children’s Services in the Diamantina Shire. With their funding and other assistance, both Bedourie and Birdsville have been able to host Playgroups for children aged 0-8 and their carers in 2020/2021.

The disruption caused by COVID 19 related lockdowns and border closures didn’t affect this year’s operations as much as the previous year’s, which was good to see. This allowed us to open our services beyond the Playgroups in the two towns, with a Shire wide combined Playgroup being held as well as some Playgroups delivered at stations in the region. We also partnered with local emergency services, schools and other agencies to run events, such as our always popular Under 8s Day.



It is with much excitement that we received confirmation recently of a further three years of funding to continue this service in Bedourie and Birdsville. The stability of funding will allow us to plan events further in advance and create even better outcomes for our Shire’s youth. We thank the State Government for their ongoing support



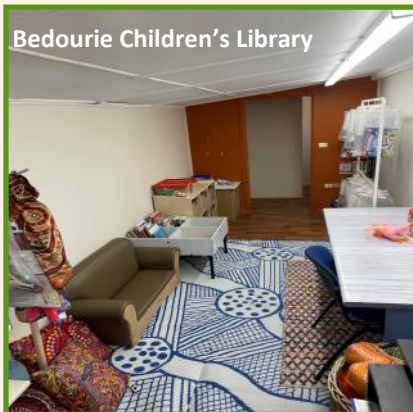
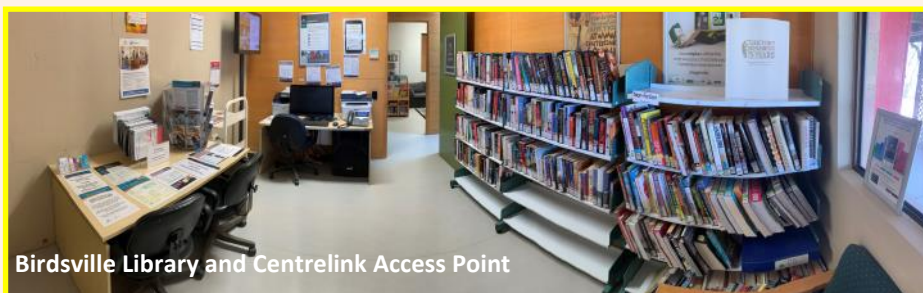


Our Community

Library Services

The Bedourie and Birdsville Libraries, located at the two Visitor Information Centres, have always been popular with families in the Shire. With not only books, but toys, DVDs, audio books and other resources, the libraries also host Playgroup sessions. What many people don't know is that membership of the library in Bedourie or Birdsville gives you membership to the whole Rural Libraries Queensland network, including online resources such as audio books and e-books.

Library usage was patchy during 2020 and 2021, but certainly increased over the 2019-2020 financial year. Our free book giveaways at both libraries were well utilised, as were the children's resources. We encourage all Shire residents and travellers to the region to use the libraries, as we receive new stock throughout the year and can order books in that you want. Thanks go to the State Library of Queensland and the Rural Libraries Queensland network for their continued support for our services.





Our Goals

Goal 1: Our Environment

- 1.1 Benefits from the utilisation of renewable energy sources.
 - 1.1.1 Energy producers partner with Council and/or community to maximise the use of renewable energy production.
 - 1.1.2 Greater uptake of renewable energy and energy efficient products.

Our Challenges



Our Achievements

Council’s solar panel project was completed in March 2021 and is compatible with Ergon’s micro grid for Bedourie and Birdsville. All Council houses had systems installed and larger consumption Council buildings. Privately owned residential and commercial properties have also participated. A reduction in nett energy usage at Council facilities for the same time last year has been seen.



- 1.2 Is protected from degradation by practices which ensure environmental sustainability.
 - 1.2.1 Harm to the environment is kept to a minimum where possible, given Council's available resources.
 - 1.2.2 Effective waste management practices meeting EPA conditions

Our Challenges

Limitations on our ability to take advantage of Queensland Government Container Recycling programme.

Our Achievements

Continue to meet environmental obligations under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA).

Investigation was conducted into the Queensland Government Container Recycling scheme but unfortunately we’re not eligible for funding to return eligible containers to recycling centres.





Our Goals

Goal 1: Our Environment (continued)

1.3 Is recognised as contaminate free.

1.3.1 The Shire's image as being clean and green is enhanced.

Our Challenges	Our Achievements
	Septic tank has been installed at Carcoory camp to treat waste water from mobile camp which will be continued at all major camp sites.
	Working with 'organic' properties in undertaking roadside weed spraying activities using low impact chemicals.
	Continue to meet Environmental Protection Act obligations.

1.4 Is relatively free from pest weeds and animals.

1.4.1 Pest weed and animal numbers are reduced.

1.4.2 Council cooperates at a regional level to prevent pest weed and animal spread into the shire.

Our Challenges	Our Achievements
The size of the shire makes it near impossible to efficiently manage dispersed pest plants and animals.	Undertaking weed spraying activities as part of the Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) Roads Maintenance Performance Contracts (RMPC).
Managing a small section of primary stock route without adequate funding from the Queensland government is unsustainable for Council.	Councils continues to offer a \$30 bounty for wild dog scalps and pay for the cost of a plane to assist with coordinated aerial baiting campaigns.
	Central West Regional Pest Management Group (CWRPMG) meetings attended by Mayor in November and February. The CEO is on the technical committee of this group.





Our Goals

Goal 1: Our Environment (continued)

1.5	Includes a healthy Great Artesian Basin.
1.5.1	Membership of relevant lobby groups is maintained.
1.5.2	Australian and Queensland Governments continue to fund the GABSI bore capping program.

Our Challenges

Council continues to seek funding for the repair of leaking artesian bores in the north east of the shire, however due to a continued lack of government funding that hasn't been possible at this stage.

Our Achievements

Funding for the GABSI bore capping program has continued. Funding was secured through DTMR to repair the Óasis' bore at Carcoory (pictured below). This work has been completed and Council has agreed to take over ownership of this bore.





Our Goals

Goal 2: Our Community

2.1	Recognises the value of preserving the unique culture of the area.
2.1.1	Effective management of cultural heritage and native title.
2.1.2	Financially viable and strongly supported traditional social events.
2.1.3	Preservation of historical sites and artefacts.

Our Challenges

Without Council support, traditional events are not financially viable.

COVID-19 forced the cancellation of all the major events in the shire.

Increasing regulation by bodies such as Qld Racing are putting pressure on Council and clubs to upgrade race track venues.

Finding adequate volunteers is an ongoing issue in a small community.

Our Achievements

Cultural Heritage Act obligations being met with various Native title holders.

Council has been a party to the Native Title Claim of the Wangkamadla People which was granted in July 2020.

Council installed 'Welcome to Country' signs prepared by the Wangkangurru/Yarluyandi Aboriginal Corporation.

Council continues to provide high levels of support to community events.

Work was completed on the restoration of the Birdsville Courthouse.



2.2	A Community Where The Cost Of Living Is Comparable To The South East Of The State
2.2.1	The cost of living in the Shire is reduced

Our Challenges

The cost of living in the shire is predominately related to the cost of food and fuel which is controlled by businesses within the shire.

Business and residents rely on road freight to get goods into the shire which is expensive.

Low population in both towns do not provide economies of scale.

Our Achievements

The installation of roof mounted solar panels on all Council housing will reduce the cost of living of these tenants, with savings of around 50% expected off electricity bills, depending on usage patterns.

The market rent of council houses is set at a level which is well below the 30% maximum allowable percentage of income under the Qld Governments Social Housing rent policy.





Our Goals

Goal 2: Our Community (continued)

2.3 Has attractive, green and clean towns of which residents are proud.

2.3.1 Recognition through the tidy town’s awards.

2.3.2 Streetscapes maintained and parks developed as funds allow.

Our Challenges

The harsh environment makes the establishment and maintenance of parks and gardens difficult and labour intensive.



Our Achievements

Town streetscapes are being maintained as resources allow.

Parks are being maintained as resources allow.

Masterplan approved for Bedourie Anzac Park. Skatepark have been completed in each town.

Birdsville Anzac Park upgrade has progressed with major elements completed.

Further review of watering of footpaths to be undertaken to avoid water wastage.

2.4 Has access to the full range of affordable transport Services.

2.4.1 A reliable, regular air service at prices comparable to Brisbane to Mt Isa costs.

2.4.2 A reliable weekly freight service at prices comparable to Brisbane to Mt Isa freight costs.

Our Challenges

Unsealed roads from the east and south makes freight difficult, expensive and dependent on weather conditions.

Providing sustainable and adequate work to freight companies to ensure ongoing and reliable service.

COVID-19 has disrupted domestic air travel.



Our Achievements

REX introduced a Community Fare in July 2019 significantly reducing the cost of air travel to and from the shire.

Council provides the ground services at the Bedourie airport at a subsidised rate.

Airports meet CASA standards and registered with Department of Home Affairs at as Tier 3 to ensure REX flies.

Crack sealing, rejuvenation and linemarking completed at the Birdsville Airport.

Freight is sourced from Mt Isa, and Brisbane to Bedourie and to Birdsville from Adelaide on regular fortnightly services.





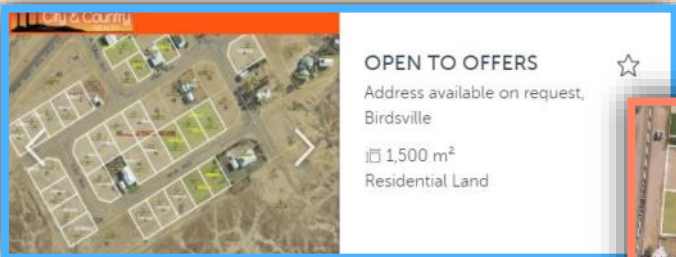
Our Goals

Goal 2: Our Community (continued)

2.5 Has significant private home ownership with all residents appropriately housed.

2.5.1 Private home ownership continues to increase

Our Challenges	Our Achievements
<p>Banks continue to be reluctant to lend to remote areas and require a 50% deposit.</p> <p>A transient population that is not inclined to financially commit to a long term stay in the shire.</p>	<p>A House and Land auction was held in November 2020, no vacant lots sold, 1 House sold being 30 Adelaide Street, Birdsville.</p> <p>1 vacant lot sold in Birdsville in May 2021.</p> <p>Lobby through RAPAD and WQAC has increased the housing affordability issue in rural and remote Qld.</p>



2.6 Where volunteering in the community is a given and community spirit is visible.

2.6.1 Active and well-resourced community groups

Our Challenges	Our Achievements
<p>Community events were cancelled due to COVID-19 throughout the year.</p>	<p>The community grants program was advertised in March 2020 for events to be held between May 2020 and April 2021. Community Grants were offered again in March 2021 for events to be held between May 2020 and April 2021. Most events in 2020 were cancelled due to COVID-19.</p>





Our Goals

Goal 2: Our Community (continued)

2.7 Is Safe and Crime Free

2.7.1 The Community remains safe and crime free

Our Challenges

The absence of local police from either of our towns means that coverage is provided from the other town. This results in a reduction in QGAP services and inability to attend to emergencies in two locations at once during a significant period during the year.

Transient population creates difficulty in ensuring SES and Rural Fire Brigade have well trained and sufficient members.



Our Achievements

Council has supported State Emergency Service (SES) groups in Bedourie and Birdsville.



With the support of Council and the dedication and hard work of volunteers a lot of training has been completed. The training included flood boat operations, storm damage operations, participate in a rescue operation, working at height operations and also a joint SES and RFS airport emergency exercise.

A trailer mounted generator and a trailer mounted community recovery trailer were delivered with the success of grant applications.



Negotiations with the QPS District Inspector continue to ensure the policing needs of the Birdsville Races are met.

Disaster Management Plan is up to date.

2.8 Cares for its residents of all ages.

2.8.1 Services are provided for our aged, youth and children as appropriate

Our Challenges



Our Achievements

Playgroup services continue to be provided in Bedourie and Birdsville with a small break in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19.

Council continues to donate the Community facilities for community run events.





Our Goals

Goal 2: Our Community (continued)

2.9	Has access to fully operational medical and pharmacy facilities run by a quality service provider offering affordable access to onsite general practitioners and other health professionals.
2.9.1	A community that is fully aware of and responsive to primary health care needs.
2.9.2	Maintain a partnership with Central West Hospital and Health Board to provide a quality health service.
2.9.4	Quality health infrastructure that meets community needs
2.9.5	Ambulance Services throughout the Shire and at Community Events are retained

Our Challenges

Developing lease agreements with Queensland Health for the clinic facilities and associated housing.

Our Achievements

Council continues to provide clinic facilities and associated housing to Central West Health at no cost.

Council supports all health initiatives through provision of facilities and advertising through our community emails and Desert Yarns.

Queensland Health undertakes regular community surveys .

Providing important information to the community during the pandemic.

2.10	Has access to a reliable and affordable renewable electricity supply.
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2.10.1	Affordable power supplies are available.
2.10.2	Renewable energy production is increased.

Our Challenges



Our Achievements

Council was successful in securing a \$943,000 Building our Regions grant for a solar roof top project and the project has been completed. This project installed solar power to all Council owned houses and community buildings in Bedourie and Birdsville bringing significant financial relief to Council and Council's tenants. Works included installation of roof mounted solar panels of various sizes and power capacity. Ergon played a vital role in bringing this unique project to fruition.





Our Goals

Goal 2: Our Community (continued)

2.11 Has quality sporting facilities with high participation rates.

2.11.1 Well maintained, quality sporting facilities which meet community needs with additional facilities as appropriate for the communities.

Our Challenges

Our harsh weather conditions make it difficult to maintain outdoor sporting fields and facilities.

Our small population means that playing team sport is difficult.



Birdsville Racecourse Roof



Bedourie Multi-Use Complex Amenities

Our Achievements

The irrigation of the Bedourie and Birdsville sports ovals has been converted to a 'travelling irrigator' method with relevant infrastructure being installed in both towns through funding from the Drought Communities Program.

Bedourie Racecourse has had an amenities block constructed through funding from Department of Sport and Recreation and Qld Racing.

Council installed underground pipework and slab to the recent roof extension at the Birdsville Racecourse.

Management agreement for access to Birdsville School pool is in place.

Solar panels installed on the Bedourie Aquatic Centre and Gym and Birdsville Indoor Sports Centre.

Electricity supply improved at Birdsville Racecourse, Birdsville Event showers and Bedourie Multiuse complex.

2.12 Has better telecommunication and internet access than South East Queensland.

2.12.1 Phone and internet services are reliable and effective.

Our Challenges

Now that we have optic fibre the challenge is to procure and implement the best technologies.

Our Achievements

Zoom Room facilities available for use by the community in the Bedourie Administration Centre and the Wirrarri Visitor Information Centre.





Our Goals

Goal 3: Our Economy

3.1 Is underpinned by the beef cattle industry and the expanding organic market.

3.1.1 Support sustainability of the cattle industry.

3.1.2 Improve animal welfare outcomes.

Our Challenges

The shire maintains over 1,684 km of road the majority of which are gravel.



Our Achievements

17.3km pave and seal completed on Big Red Road.

Ongoing maintenance of both sealed and gravel sections of road continues as funding allows.

\$14.5M was allocated towards the upgrade of the Eyre Developmental Road and a 10km section was sealed at Yamba Flat. Work continues on section around Carcoory and Old Roseberth in future years.

REPA funds used to restore Shire Roads damaged by natural disasters

3.2 Flourishes from a growing tourism industry and continuation of major events.

3.2.1 More tourists visit year on year.

3.2.2 The Birdsville Tourist Park and Birdsville Lodge contribute significantly to the Birdsville economy.

3.2.3 A cooperative group of businesses and individuals are united in promoting the Shire as a destination.

3.2.4 Birdsville Courthouse and Bedourie Pise' House established as must see tourist attractions

Our Challenges

COVID-19 was a huge challenge this year and reduced the number of tourists visiting the shire.

Majority of events were cancelled due to COVID-19.

Operating the Birdsville Tourist Park and Birdsville Lodge



during COVID has been very difficult through staff shortages and frequent booking cancellations.

Our Achievements

The Birdsville Courthouse has been renovated in accordance with the heritage guidelines and will be ready to be opened to the public in 2022. Hologram interpretation installed showcasing the History of policing in Birdsville.

Council took back the management of the Birdsville Tourist Park and Lodge to ensure it had more control over its operations and reopened in July as restrictions allowed.

New town entry signs being developed. New visitor guide being produced.

Pise House has been included in a self guided walking trail of Bedourie.

PWD Amenities and WiFi installed at Birdsville Tourist Park.

Purchased land on which Birdsville Courthouse located.



Our Goals

Goal 3: Our Economy (continued)

3.3 Benefits from a growing population with full employment.

3.3.1 The population of the shire continues to increase.

3.3.2 The employment rate maintained at more than 95%.

Our Challenges

Attracting people to come and live and work in the shire is difficult in COVID-19 times and vacancy rates have increased.

Our Achievements

Council has implemented an easy way for locals to apply for casual jobs in the shire by submitting an expression of interest to join our casual pool.

Participation in a RAPAD Human Resources group bringing together HR officers across the region.

Unemployment rate is extremely low.

Expression of Interest Casual Pool

We're regularly looking for workers in various positions including but not limited to the following:

- Administration Officers
- Finance Officers
- Plant Operators
- Labourers
- Housekeepers and Cleaners
- Tourism and Hospitality Officers

If you have suitable skills and knowledge or you're simply interested in working for Council please complete the [expression of interest form](#) and submit it with your resume by clicking below.

Submit Expression Of Interest

3.4 Is led by Council and the business community, together growing and diversifying business and industry opportunities.

3.4.1 The Economic Development Strategy priorities are progressed.

3.4.2 Additional utilisation of vacant land in Bedourie and Birdsville

3.4.3 Town Planning scheme which will meet community needs and growth into the future.

Our Challenges

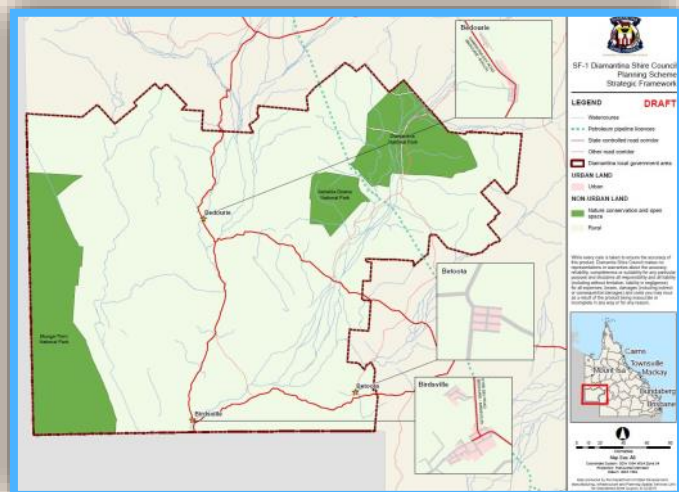
Our Achievements

A House and Land auction was held in November 2020, no vacant lots sold, 1 House sold, 30 Adelaide Street, Birdsville.

1 vacant lot sold in Birdsville in May 2021

Council adopted a new Planning Scheme in July.

Development Applications are assessed in accordance with the scheme and legislation.





Our Goals

Goal 3: Economic (continued)

3.5 Will be much stronger when there is sealed road access to Birdsville.

3.5.1 All Main Roads in Shire are bitumen sealed.

Our Challenges

The high cost of upgrading the Eyre Developmental Road between Bedourie and Birdsville and the design issues particularly around Cuttaburra.

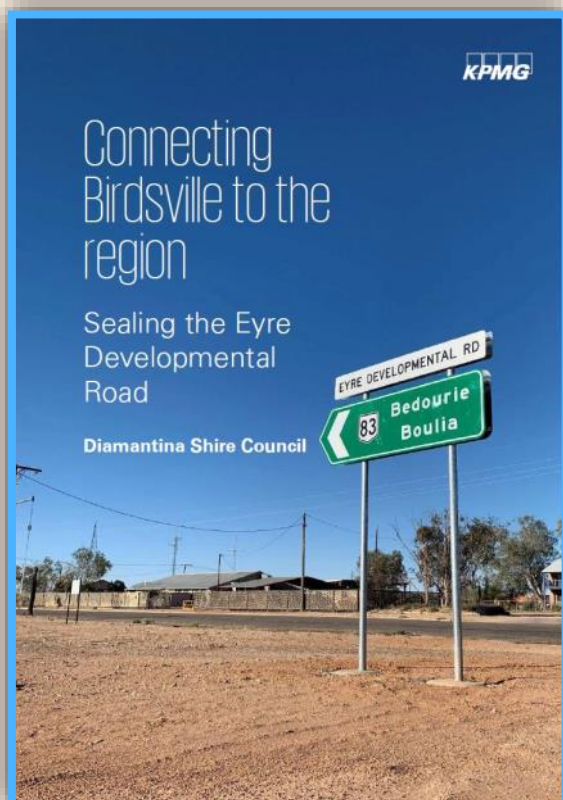
Our Achievements

Lobbying has taken place at Western Alliance of Council, RAPAD and ORRTG.

10km Yamba Flats Pave and Seal project has been completed.

Sunshine Flats/Carcorry section has commenced.

Queensland Government has announced \$10 million towards the sealing on the this road and the Australian government has committed \$4.5 million. Work will continue in 2022.





Our Goals

Goal 4: Our Organisation

4.1 Is a sustainable and effective organisation

4.1.1 A quality, effective and motivated workforce.

4.1.2 Best practice Corporate Governance

4.1.3 Effective knowledge management systems and policies in place.

4.1.4 Long term financial sustainability.

4.1.5 Quality administration and service which meets customer needs.

Our Challenges

Attracting and retaining quality staff.

Reliance on external funding remains high impacting our sustainability.



Our Achievements

Council continues to provide training and induction to all staff throughout the years.

Inductions are now online.

All asset classes revalued during the year.

Council continues to meet its legislative obligations relating to governance.

Council has continued to improve the utilisation of Synergysoft.



4.2 Is engaged with its residents.

4.2.1 Effective community engagement.

Our Challenges

Timing engagement which maximises attendance is difficult given the small population and busy lives of all wishing to be involved.

Our Achievements

The community was consulted regarding the Shire Planning Scheme development.

Community BBQ's were held in both towns.

Regular public notices were issued informing the community as required.





Our Goals

Goal 5: Our Organisation (continued)

4.3 Is a leader in the region which supports regional co-operation, resource sharing and partnerships.

4.3.1 Council participates in projects which advance regional co-operation and resource sharing

Our Challenges

Identifying projects where regional agreement and cooperation can be reasonably achieved due to varying priorities and circumstances.



Our Achievements

Cooperated with neighbouring Shires in resource sharing activities where mutually beneficial.

Participate in regional bodies such as RAPAD, OQTA, ORRG, CWRPMG.



Shared machinery and equipment with Boulia and Barcoo Shire Council.

Staff involved with regional groups relating to human resources, tourism, workplace safety, records management.

4.4 Is recognised as the sole road construction provider in the shire

4.4.1 Maintain a profitable plant operation.

4.4.2 Council owns and operates a quality plant fleet.

4.4.3 Council maintains its sole invitee status for all Department of Main Roads (DMR)

Our Challenges

Plant Hire income being impacted by vacancies.



Our Achievements

Plant rates submitted to QRA were accepted. Plant Hire income is a major source of income for Council and can be impacted by staff vacancies.

Plant Replacement program 100% complete. Major acquisitions included: 5t Kubota excavator, used 927K Scraper, CAT 150 Grader, CAT 972M wheel loader, used Drake Quad axle low loader and Dolly, CAT CW34 multi-tyre roller, CAT 299D skid steer loader with profiler, Used Hamm 3520 Drum Roller, Telehandler, 2 x 6" water pumps on trailer, 3 x 4WD wagons, 10 x 4WD Utilities

Council offered flood restoration contract works at Marion Downs by DTMR and completed a pave and seal project at 'Sunshine Flats'.





Our Goals

Goal 5: Our Infrastructure

5.1 Is constructed and maintained in a sustainable manner which meets community needs.

5.1.1 A well maintained Shire road network which meets the needs of the road users.

5.1.2 Airports and services that meet community and CASA requirements.

5.1.3 Well maintained community assets with additional facilities as appropriate for the communities.

Our Challenges

Access to water in remote locations for road maintenance.



New main switchboard at the Bedourie Racetrack

Our Achievements

Big Red Road pave and seal of 17.1km completed.

CASA audits completed showing standards have been met at airports.

Crack sealing, rejuvenation and linemarking at Birdsville Airport.

Footpaths completed from Birdsville airport Terminal to Graham Street and on Eyre St/Spinifix Ct corner, Bedourie

Main Switchboard replaced at the Bedourie community Centre

Pipework improved at Bedourie levee bank emergency pump.

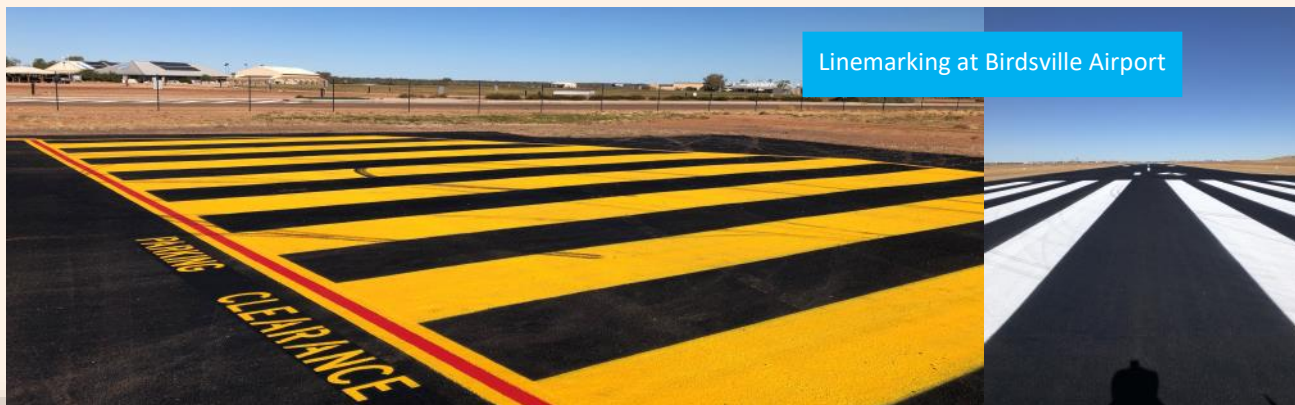
Bedourie Multipurpose complex electricity supply and distribution renewed with new switchboard

Birdsville Racecourse power supply increased and distribution improved with new switchboard.

Slab and underground services provide to new kitchen area at Birdsville Racecourse.

Housing assets maintained with a couple renovated including 2 new garages. Undertook preparatory work to transfer Bedourie Aboriginal Corporation Houses to council.

Electricity supply upgraded to Birdsville Event showers.



Linemarking at Birdsville Airport

Ovals in both towns



Our Goals

Goal 5: Our Infrastructure

5.2 Guarantees quality potable urban water supply and waste water treatment.

5.2.1 Secure potable water sources are maintained for Bedourie and Birdsville.

5.2.2 A secure and effective waste water treatment system is maintained in each town.

Our Challenges

Rates revenue is not sufficient to cover maintenance costs so external funding continues to be sought.



Slotted pipe in transpiration trench



No. 3 Bore

Our Achievements

Bedouries potable water supply has been assured with the construction of a new town bore and its connection into the town supply.

The CED system in both towns remains very reliable. Pressure line to CED evaporation ponds cleaned out’.



Bedourie Water Tower



Compliance Reporting

The following pages list 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 Conduct

Complaints about the conduct or performance of Councillors. Under the Act, each complaint is required to be referred to the Independent Assessor. Orders and complaints about Councillors during the year are shown in the table below.

Section of the Local Government Act	Type of order or complaint	Number
150I(2)	Orders made for unsuitable meeting conduct	0
150AH(1)	Orders made for inappropriate conduct	0
150AR(1)	Decision, orders and recommendations made in Disciplining a Councillor	0
150P(2)(a)	Complaints about councillor conduct referred to the Assessor	1
150P(3)	Complaints about councillor conduct referred to the Crime and Corruption Commission	0
150R(2)	Local government official must notify assessor about particular conduct	0
150S(2)(a)	Local Government must notify assessor about misconduct	0
150W(1)(a), (b) & (e)	Decision about Conduct	0
150AC(3)(a)	Referral of suspected inappropriate conduct	0
150AF(4)(a)	Investigating suspected misconduct	0
	Occasions the local government asked another entity to investigate, under chapter 5A, part 3, division 5 of the Act for the local government, the suspected inappropriate conduct of a councillor	0
	Applications heard by the conduct tribunal under chapter 5A, part 3, division 6 of the Act about whether a councillor engaged in misconduct or inappropriate conduct.	0

Public Sector Ethics Disclosures

Pursuant to the provisions of the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, Council is required to report on actions taken regarding implementation of the legislation. During the reporting period, Council provided training and education to its workforce through inductions of new staff members, together with re-inductions of all existing staff. Council supports its ongoing procedures and practices to ensure employees abide by and embrace the principles of the legislation. Council's Code of Conduct is provided to all new employees upon commencement and is provided to all of Council if and when it is reviewed.

Executive Remuneration s201 LGA 2009

Total remuneration paid to Executive employees was as follows:

Package Value \$100,000—\$200,000—2 employees

Package Value \$200,000—\$300,000—2 employees

Package Value \$300,000—\$400,000—1 employee

The total remuneration packages payable in 2020/2021 to executive employees is \$1,087,354.

Right to Information Act 2009

Council is an agency under the *Right to Information Act 2009*. Members of the public may make application to Council under this legislation to access documents. People wishing to access documents under this Act must make application in writing to the Chief Executive Officer, including an application fee. During the twelve months to the 30 June 2021, Council received no right to information applications. This Annual Report satisfies the requirements of section 21 of the Act.

Identifying Significant Business Activities s45 LGA 2009

As required under Section 45 of the Local Government Act 2009, listed in the following table are business activities conducted during the year. None of these activities were deemed "significant" according to the Local Government Regulation 2012. It was resolved by Council not to apply the code of competitive conduct to any business activities.

Business Activity	Significant	Pre-scribed	Competitive Neutrality Principle Applied	Conducted in Previous Financial Year
Birdsville Caravan Park	No	Yes	No	Yes
Building Certification	No	No	No	Yes
Birdsville Lodge	No	No	No	No
Roads Operation	No	No	No	Yes
Aerodromes	No	No	No	Yes
Bedourie Caravan Park	No	No	No	Yes
Water Supply and Sewerage	No	No	No	Yes
Waste Management	No	No	No	Yes

Administrative Action Complaints s187 LGR 2012

Council is committed to dealing fairly with administration action complaints through its Complaint Management Process. The following table shows the number of complaints received during 2020/21

Unresolved Complaints (BF 1/7/20)	Complaints Received	Complaints Resolved	Unresolved Complaints
0	0	0	0





Compliance Reporting

Overseas Travel s188 LGR 2012

No Councillors or employees undertook overseas travel in an official capacity during the financial year.

Expenditure on Grants to Community

Organisations s189 LGR 2012

Councillors do not have a discretionary expenditure fund. Council incurred expenditure, in the form of cash, hall hire, labour and machinery hire, on grants to community organisations:

Organisation	Event	Contribution
Bedourie Golf & Leisure Club	Pig & Camel Races	\$9,000
Betoota Race Club Inc.	Betoota Races	\$4,500

Expenditure and Action Relating to Joint Ventures and Special Rates s190(1)(d)(i)(ii) LGR 2012

Council did not enter into any joint venture agreements or levy any special rates during the 2020/2021 financial year.

Changes to Tenders s228(8) LGR 2012

Council made six invitations to change tenders during the 2020/21 financial year.

Registers kept by Council s190 (1)(f) LGR 2012

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

Rates and Charges Concessions s190 (1)(g) LGR 2012

Diamantina Shire Council pursuant to section 120(1)(c) and section 122(1)(b) of the Local Government Regulation 2012, Council granted a concession for the 2020/2021 financial year, for those categories of ratepayers listed in Column 1 of the table below, by way of a rebate of the general rates and charges levied, in the (amounts/percentages), as identified in Column 2 of the table below:

Column 1	Column 2
7.1—Commercial Birdsville Operating	100%
7.2—Commercial Bedourie Operating	100%

The concession is granted because, as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, requiring the ratepayers identified above to pay general rates and charges will cause them hardship.

Internal Audit Function s190(1)(h) LGR 2012

Council undertook a procurement process to appoint new internal auditors for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022. Walsh Accounting were appointed and made a visit to Council in December and June.

As required by the Local Government Act 2009 and the Local Government Regulation 2012, the Internal Audit function to be undertaken is to:-

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

The Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal Report 2016 re-categorised Diamantina Shire Council from a Category 3 to a Category 1 Council. This meant an Internal Audit Committee was no longer required and at the March 2017 Council meeting it was resolved to not have one. Council has continued to operate without an Internal Audit Committee during the 2020/21 financial year.

Summary of Investigation Notices under s49 for Competitive Neutrality Complaints s190 (1)(i) LGR 2012

There were no competitive neutrality complaints received during 2020/2021.

Responses on QCA Recommendations on Competitive Neutrality Complaints s190 (1)(j) LGR 2012

There were no responses on competitive neutrality complaints received during 2020/2021.



Financial Statements

Financial Statements are formal records of an organisation's financial performance and activities. They provide a comprehensive overview of our current financial position. As a local government agency, we are committed to transparent reporting on our financial performance throughout the year against the delivery of our Corporate Plan Goals and operational deliverables.