Etheridge
Shire Council

2020-21

OPERATIONAL PLAN

ETHERIDGE SHIRE COUNCIL
OPERATIONAL PLAN 2020|2021

The 2020|2021 Operational Plan is a "Strategic Planning Document" which supports Council's 2018 - 2023 Corporate Plan in delivering the *Vision* for the Etheridge Shire Council.

The Local Government Regulation 2012[1] requires Council to adopt an Operational Plan each financial year which needs to be consistent with the Annual Budget and state how Council will:

a) *Progress the implementation of the 5 year Corporate Plan during the period of the Annual Operation Plan; and*

b) *How Council will manage its Operational Risks*

The 2018|2019 Operational Plan identifies projects, initiatives and services that Council will deliver during the 2018|2019 financial year in achieving the long term objectives of the 2018-2023 Corporate Plan. It also provides direction to Council in setting the Annual Budget.

The Operational Plan is required by legislation[2] to be reviewed quarterly by Council and is also used as a vehicle for Council and Senior Management to evaluate Corporate performance and strategic direction.

*Etheridge Shire Council
Strategic Planning Framework*
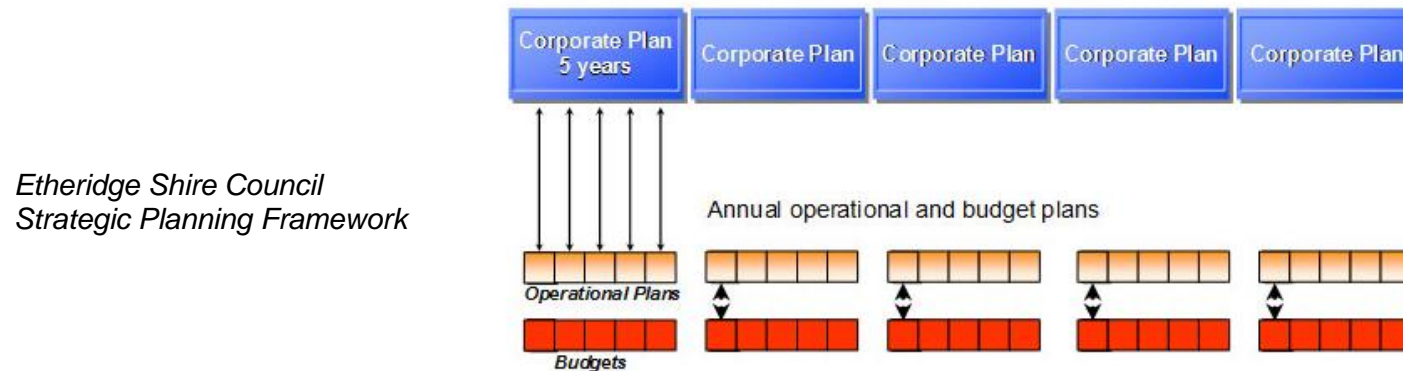
Councils Corporate Plan 2018-2023 articulates a range of Strategic Priorities, Objectives, Strategies, Outcomes and Measures all grouped within seven (7) Key Strategic Priorities.

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[1] S.174 (1) of the Local Government Regulation 2012
[2] S.174 (3) of the Local Government Regulation 2012

The Strategic Priorities from the Corporate Plan as listed below are mirrored across the structure of the Operational Plan.

1. **Resilient Transport Infrastructure and Connectivity**
2. **Developing Reliable Potable and Irrigation Water Supply**
3. **Managing the Natural Assets and Environment for Tourism and Economic Development**
4. **Developing Equitable Social Infrastructure:**
5. **Improving Communication Infrastructure and Mechanisms within the Shire**
6. **Commercial Services**
7. **Organisational Excellence and Governance**

our *Vision*

…Unearthing Etheridge's future to create a future beyond Rates, Roads and Rubbish…

In accordance with *S.175 of the Local Government Regulation 2012*, the Operational Plan is required to state how Council will progress the implementation of its 5 year Corporate Plan during the financial year. The Corporate Plan identifies 96 specific actions / strategies which Council plans to undertake across the 5 year period to help achieve its *"Vision"* for the Etheridge Shire. The 2020|2021 Operational Plan lists a range of activities tied directly back to those 96 actions / strategies which are scheduled to be undertaken within the 2020|2021 financial year.

Each activity has an associated measure / outcome which will be used to assist in providing informed quarterly and annual status reporting of the overall implementation of the Operational Plan. The focus of the Operational Plan is centered on planning, actioning and delivering upon the relevant activities to be undertaken across the financial year that will deliver on the strategies and actions as stated within the 2018-2023 Corporate Plan.

This Plan is not about tracking the myriad of day-to-day "*business as usual"* activities associated with running an organisation as complex as Council. A vast majority of Operational matters are actioned and monitored on a regular basis via a range of business plans and other management and reporting mechanisms.

Managing Operational Risks

The Operational Plan must state and demonstrate how Council will manage its Operational Risks. Council manages its Operational Risk in accordance with its Enterprise Risk Management Framework which incorporates the following:

1. Risk Management Policy
2. Councils Risk Appetite & Tolerance Statement
3. Enterprise Risk Management Plan & Guidelines
4. Corporate & Operational Risk Registers

Councils internal Audit & Risk Management Committee has been established to assist in the assessment and evaluating the Risk Control Measures that Council has established to manage any identified risks to which its operations are exposed.

Councils Enterprise Risk Management Framework details a range of measures Council has formalized which are aimed at mitigating identified risks.

A comprehensive Risk Review was completed in 2017 on the ability to deliver services outlined in the Corporate Plan. Actions are in place to minimize these risks to ensure Council continues delivering quality service to the community through its Operational Plan. Councils Enterprise Risk Management Framework is in line with the Australian and New Zealand Standards *(AS/NZS: ISO31000:2009)*

The Corporate Plan Strategies and Budget reference links creates a clear line of sight between the strategies in Councils Corporate Plan, the activities associated with advancing those actions in the Annual Operation Plan and the funding of those activities as provided for in Councils Annual Budget.

The inclusion of these reference links confirms the legislative requirements that Council's Operational Plan must be consistent with its Annual Budget.

How to read the Operational Plan

The format of the Operational Plan has been structured to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

Output / Activity	**Individual strategies identified in Councils Corporate Plan and the activity/project that will be done to achieve a particular objective from the Corporate Plan**
Responsibility	**Responsibility is assigned to a manager (identified by organizational structure) to provide direct accountability for achieving targets and / or milestones**
Outcomes / Milestones	**To report on the outcomes that have been achieved against each Output / Activity as identified within the Operational Plan**

Responsible Officer Definitions:

Abbreviations	Definition
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DCCS	Director Corporate & Community Services
DES	Director Engineering Services
W/Mgr	Works Manager
FM	Finance Manager

Budget alignment with 2020|2021 Operational Plan
The Operational Plan is strongly aligned with the budget through Council's Departments and Programs. This alignment is achieved by ensuring that all income and expenditure in the 2020|2021 budget are allocated to the relevant programs.

Council maintains appropriate financial management systems to enable reporting at various levels of detail from transaction level to strategic priority level. The Operational Plan is reporting income and expenditure at the strategic priority level.

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Corporate Objective No. 1
Resilient Transport Infrastructure and Connectivity

Resilient transport infrastructure that maximises connectivity across the Shire and links us to the major commercial centres is essential if the Shire is to have sustainable economic growth and development. A resilient transport infrastructure would be expected to support a diversity of road users from agriculture (cattle and crops), resource industry and a growing tourism industry. The condition of the state controlled roads is considered a major deterrent for tourists travelling along the Hann Highway, Gulf Developmental Road and the Gregory Developmental Road.

It has been estimated that world food production will need to increase by 70% by 2050 to keep pace with population growth. The Etheridge Shire has untapped potential for an array of irrigated agricultural outputs. Properly constructed, all weather, north-south and east-west road linkages are essential for growth of the Shire and linkages to markets.

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Develop a comprehensive, sustainable and funded, 10-year Capital Works Program for roads and drainage. • Review and update the comprehensive asset management strategy to support the maintenance, replacement and enhancement of council's road and air services assets. • Upgrade major road infrastructure and prioritise road train access on appropriate roads. • Continue to link our communities with sealed roads along Local Roads of Regional Significance. • Manage the region's road network to enable the movement of people and goods in a safe and efficient manner.	1.1.1 1.1.2 1.1.3 1.1.4 1.1.5	**CEO DES**	
Link to Budget: 4020/2231; 4010/2221; 4010/2224; 4011/2211; 4012/2211; 4013/2211; 4014/2211; 4020/4500; 4030/4505; 4061/4500; 4062/4500; 4063/4500; 4064/4500			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Maintain a fleet of Council owned plant and contractor hire arrangements. • Develop a Plant Replacement and upgrade schedule and maintain the operational capacity of plant.	1.1.6 1.1.7	**DES**	
Link to Budget: 4150/4500; 4150/1502			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)

• Maintain relationship with the Department of Transport and Main Roads and capacity to undertake road construction and maintenance.
• Continue to lobby to raise the national profile of the Kennedy Development Road (Hann Highway) and for additional funding for high priority widening and sealing.
• Lobby to raise the profile of the:
    • Gulf Development Road;
    • Gregory Development Road; and
    • Georgetown-Forsayth Road.
for additional funding for high priority widening and sealing.
	1.2.1
	1.2.2
	1.2.3
		CEO
		DES	

Link to Budget: 4160/2237; 4198/2243; 4198/2244			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Advocate for improved airfield infrastructure and services. • Maintain airfields and airports throughout the Shire. • Strengthen and extend the runway at the Georgetown airfield to 1,500m	1.3.1 1.3.2 1.3.3	**DES** **Town Supervisor**	
Link to Budget: 4091/2221; 4092/2221; 4093/2221; 4094/2221; 4095/2221			

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Corporate Objective No. 2
Developing Reliable Potable and Irrigation Water Supply

To provide service delivery and infrastructure roll out, maintenance and improvement underpins a healthy and growing economy and comfortable lifestyle in the Shire.

Reliable and affordable water and energy is essential for the Shire if it is to have sustainable economic growth and development. COAG policies including Northern Australia White Paper, Regionalisation, Asian Market Access and Indigenous Advancement have identified the strategic importance of water and energy to economic and social development.

The Shire has seasonal over and under water supply. Bulk storage and control via new dams is a key solution and offers the collateral potential benefits of hydroelectric power, tourism and lifestyle opportunities. There are potential opportunities with the Gilbert offering the possibility of irrigation developments exceeding the scale of the current Ord River irrigation area. Investment in new infrastructure to support agricultural growth in this area is required.

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Construct the Charleston Dam and reticulate water to Georgetown and Forsayth for domestic and irrigation purposes (dual supply). • Upgrade domestic water treatment and storage facilities. • Review and update the comprehensive asset management strategy to support the maintenance, replacement and enhancement of council's water assets. • Provide consistent high quality water supply to serviced communities where both practical and viable.	2.1.1 2.1.2 2.1.3 2.1.4 2.1.5	**DES Town Supervisor CEO**	
Link to Budget:4500/2221; 4500/4501; 4500/4502; 4500/4503; 4500/4504; 4320/2101;4320/2811; 4320/2822; 4320/4505; 4340/2101; 4340/2811; 4340/2822; 4340/4502;			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Advocate for expansion of sustainable agriculture developments. • Develop the Gilbert River irrigation area, Greenhill dam. • Continue to strengthen cross regional partnerships and networks across Northern Australia to manage and maximize opportunity for nation building initiatives and reduce cumulative impacts.	2.2.1 2.3.1 2.3.2 2.3.3 2.3.4	CEO	
Link to Budget: 4510/2221; 4520/4501; 4520/4502; 4530/2221			

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Corporate Objective No. 3
Managing the Natural Assets and Environment for Tourism and Economic Development

Our Shire's natural assets, natural resources and environment are key factors in the development of a sustainable economic growth of the Shire. The potential economic success of our natural assets can be driven by the growth in tourism and agriculture. This is in addition to the contributions from the region's growing global reputation in primary and mining industries.

Respecting our natural assets and upholding the integrity of the area's unique bioregions is important for the sustainable economic growth and development of the Shire. The Etheridge Shire faces a range of pressures including invasive species, changes in climate, land-clearing and increased areas dedicated to National Parks. Council recognises that healthy, resilient ecosystems are essential for sustainable economic growth and healthy communities. A collaborative approach between local government, the State and Federal governments and industry is essential in ensuring the value of our natural assets and environment is retained now and into the future to support ongoing economic growth.

The Shire is well positioned to supply local and global markets with innovative emerging industries which harness the region's natural assets, knowledge and partnerships including renewable energy, environmental management and Indigenous knowledge. Respecting and managing the region's natural assets and the environment will assist sustainable economic growth and development in the region.

By deploying a combination of strategies to protect natural assets the region will be able to prosper and grow. Strategies such as geo tourism and investment in renewable energy will stimulate employment, innovation and offer a sustainable energy source for future generations.

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Manage growth and change through local area planning initiatives • Actively participate in the regional organisations and statutory supported planning instruments	3.1.1 3.1.2 3.1.3	**CEO**	
Link to Budget: 5110/2221			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)

• Review and update the comprehensive asset management strategy to support the maintenance, replacement and enhancement of council's Tourism, Parks and Recreation assets.
• Advocating release of State Land for future development across the shire
• Promote residential and rural residential subdivisions throughout shire as land become available and demand increases.
• Progress industrial subdivisions throughout shire as land become available and demand increases.
 	
• Advocate for the development of renewable energy projects.
• Support the rural industries through infrastructure, skills development, income diversification and advocacy
• Improve business and policy outcomes by encouraging local businesses to:
   • participate in Council business activities;
   • apply a 'local preference' for purchases.
• Enhance and improve the aesthetics of the entrances to the Shire Towns.
	3.1.4
	3.1.5
	3.1.6
	3.1.7
	3.1.8
	3.1.9
	3.2.1
	3.2.2
	3.2.3
	3.2.4
	3.2.5
		Town Supervisor DES DCCS CEO	

Link to Budget: 5130/2101; 5151/2431; 5151/2432; 5151/2433; 5151/4501; 5152/2431; 5152/2432; 5152/4502; 5152/4503; 5153/2431; 5153/2432; 5153/2433; 5154/2431; 5154/2432; 5140/4500; 5140/4501			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Promote growth of the tourism market in partnership with stakeholders • In partnership with regional stakeholders, facilitate economic development opportunities relating to creative and cultural industries	3.3.1 3.3.2 3.3.3 3.4.1	**CEO** **Tourism Officers**	
Link to Budget: 5170/2002; 5170/2221; 5170/2222			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Construct recreation facilities at Charleston Dam (e.g. swimming, skiing, boating (sail), canoeing, fishing, picnicking camping, bird watching, bush trails (walking, push bike, motorbike)) to encourage activity based tourism. • Recognise and promote the value of community gardens, streetscape and properties. • Maintain the Shire's Cemeteries.	3.4.2 3.5.1 3.6.1 3.6.2 3.6.3	**CEO** **DES** **Town Supervisor**	
Link to Budget: 5152/4502; 5151/2432; 5153/2433; 5161/2221; 5162/2221; 5163/2221; 5164/2221; 5165/2221			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Maintain disaster management capabilities. • Develop Council's Biosecurity Plan in consultation with landowners and other stakeholders to reduce the impact of existing and potential pests. • In partnership with the community and external agencies, promote and support best practice management of the natural environment. • Work in partnership with stakeholders (including NGRMG) to promote attitudinal and practice change that maintains healthy ecosystem services • Work in partnership with stakeholders (including NGRMG) to implement research and technology developments that support sustainable planning and decision making. • Maintain waste management facilities throughout shire • Maintain the environment to minimise disease outbreaks through implementation of an integrated mosquito management program.	3.7.2 3.8.1 3.8.2 3.8.3 3.8.4 3.8.5 3.8.6 3.8.7 3.8.8	**CEO DES Town Supervisor**	
Link to Budget: 5030/2221; 5030/2222; 5030/2224; 5030/2229; 5030/2230; 5070/2231; 5080/2231; 5090/2231; 5100/2231			

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Developing Equitable Social Infrastructure:

There is universal agreement that strong, resilient and healthy individuals, families and community play a vital role in building the ongoing prosperity, wellbeing and economic development of a region. It has been demonstrated that long term economic growth in the regions occurs through investment in human capital development.

The population of Etheridge Shire is currently 819 persons and little growth is expected over the next few years. The region covers a large area of 39,039 square kilometres, encompassing over 2.0% of the state. The Shire is defined as being rural and remote with minor centres of population at Georgetown (250), Forsayth (140), Mt Surprise (140) and Einasleigh (80).

The connection between disadvantage, demography and geography are well established. The Socio-economic Indicators for Areas (SEIFA) –an overall measure of disadvantage – shows that Etheridge Shire has a comparatively large proportion of its population in the most disadvantaged quintile.

A number of factors influence welfare spending including population growth: the cost of providing services; rates of service use; and the capacity to pay, which in the Etheridge Shire is limited (CSSA 2014) are reflected by the relatively small private sector in human service delivery. It is well established that investments in people yield multiple returns to society in both social and economic terms. As noted by the Minerals Council of Australia, in its submission to a Parliamentary Inquiry into Northern Australia "research suggests that communities that do not have sufficient infrastructure, social amenity and economic diversity will not attract new residents and this will in turn constrain the industry's recruitment capacity".

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
Engage with and support local indigenous groups. • Partner with state government agencies to improve social conditions and liveability. • Acknowledge and support local indigenous cultural heritage, practices and protocols, to build economic social and cultural capital. • Encourage local historians to preserve and promote local history and heritage.	4.1.1 4.1.2 4.2.1 4.2.2 4.2.3	**CEO DCCS**	

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Advocate to State and Federal Governments to address social inequity and disadvantage.			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Enhance the life of seniors within the region through transport, encouraging a doctor to the region, aged care and respite and palliative care support. • Advocate and facilitate the provision and improvement of central and remote health services. • Build a variety of social infrastructure and service delivery, in partnership with the State Government and Community. • Provide assistance to the community with respect to child care, youth hostel and aged care services. • Provide libraries, as learning and information centres • Provide support to volunteers, community groups and events • Encourage the establishment of strong networks across the region where people can interact socially and safely through sport, recreation, cultural life and the arts.	4.2.4 4.2.5 4.2.6 4.2.7 4.2.8 4.2.9 4.2.10 4.2.11 4.2.12 4.2.13 4.3.1 4.3.2 4.3.3	**CEO** **DCCS**	

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Build and strengthen the Shire's identity through the support and provision of a variety of events and branding our corporate image. • Ensure a preparedness to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies and engage in planning activities aimed at minimising the impact of such disasters on the community. • Maintain public buildings to meet resident's expectations.	4.3.4 4.3.5 4.3.6 4.3.7 4.3.8		
Link to Budget: 3140/4501;3100/2221; 3130/2222; 3130/2223; 3290/2221; 3300/2221; 3310/2221; 3280/2221; 3320/2221; 3330/2221; 3340/2221; 3350/2221; 3360/2221; 3370/2221; 3360/2221; 3370/2221; 3380/2221			

Corporate Objective No. 5
Improving Communication Infrastructure and Mechanisms within the Shire

An equitable communication network for the Shire is essential if the community is to have sustainable growth and development. The size and remoteness of Etheridge Shire means we are reliant on our communication networks whether this is mobile, broadband, fixed, Wi-Fi or satellite.

To be competitive in current marketplaces (national and international) and drive increased productivity and access to greater economic opportunities through a global marketplace our communication network is essential. Etheridge has vast untapped potential for the development of an array of 'Agri-Business' and tourism products which can be exported from the region. An equitable communication network will also support social networking and infrastructure (education, health, workplace health and safety and social wellbeing) and commercial services.

There is also considerable concern that, while satellite services will deliver broadband to many areas that currently don't have it, and that it should improve speeds significantly, the network will remain far inferior to that covered by the fibre footprint.

Infrastructure Australia's Infrastructure Plan identifies that in terms of mobile coverage, services in regional Australia are not as accessible as in our capital cities. Without better mobile services, regional Australia will not fully benefit from new technologies and the associated business opportunities and better service delivery. For example, mobiles (and other technology) enable remote control of agricultural tasks including monitoring soil moisture, supplying water to drinking troughs for cattle and opening and closing gates. Mobile coverage also means a quicker response to motor vehicle accidents and greatly assists in fighting bushfires, floods and other natural disasters.

Mobile access is also important for regional tourism because visitors expect to have mobile services wherever they go. More people are choosing to forego fixed voice services and rely on mobile services alone. Only 16 per cent of people have a preference for fixed-line telephone.

As Infrastructure Australia aptly puts it, technological improvements and innovation can transform industries and open up opportunities for regional business. Providing equitable communication networks will create innovations that will help overcome geographic challenges and are particularly relevant to Etheridge Shire. This will also greatly assist in closing the gap on access to health, education, training and employment opportunities for many socially disadvantaged groups, including people in indigenous communities and people with disabilities.

Council's key focus areas will be to advocate to State and Federal Governments to provide sustainable communication networks for mobile telecommunications, broadband internet options, together with radio and television services to support existing and future industry and social infrastructure.

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Improve co-operation and communication with relevant stakeholders and all levels of government in the strategic planning of future community infrastructure. • Advocate and facilitate the provision of telecommunication services, telemetry and media. • Review and update the comprehensive asset management strategy to support the maintenance, replacement and enhancement of council's communication assets. • Maintain radio re-transmission services for Mt Surprise, Forsayth and Einasleigh. • Maintain Council's internet and internal technology capabilities. • Using appropriate social media, promote civil and respectful discussion and participation in relevant issues. • Actively participate in the membership of regional development and other organisations in order to achieve mutual regional priorities.	5.1.1 5.1.2 5.1.3 5.1.4 5.1.5 5.2.1 5.2.2 5.3.1	**CEO** **DCCS** **IT Manager**	
Link to Budget: 2030/2221; 2040/2221; 2050/2221; 2050/2222; 2050/4500; 2060/2221			

Corporate Objective No. 6
Commercial Services

It is a feature that Local Government is often put in a position to take-on commercial services that are not in a profit making environment (otherwise private enterprise would have invested in the service delivery) as a result of a lack of scale, insufficient customer base or remoteness, despite changing demographics, the services not being core business of local government and the risk that it may impact of the Council's financial viability.

Services that communities need but may not be economically viable for alternate providers, leading to Council to undertake unprofitable commercial services.

Such services include:
- *Student Hostels;*
- *Child Care Services;*
- *Tourist Information services;*
- *Aged care services and programs;*
- *Entertainment infrastructure;*
- *Airports; and*
- *Cemeteries.*

These services tend to run at a loss and are generally subsidised by the council and community. Although this impacts on the capacity of the council to provide core services, without this support the community would be-come less and less viable.

Council will:
- *Identify local service and infrastructure priorities through consultation with the community;*
- *Balance community expectations with available resources;*
- *Work closely with Commonwealth, State and regional agencies to deliver services to the community; and*
- *Lobby for services to address unmet needs.*

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Maintain Swimming Pool as a safe and attractive venue. • Review the Refuse collection and disposal activities. • Continue to promote and provide hostel services for primary aged school children with support from grant funding. • Review operation of childcare to improve viability. • Develop a strategy to encourage a more effective use of 'Georgetown Hostel'.	6.1.1 6.1.2 6.1.3 6.1.4 6.1.5 6.1.6	**CEO DCCS Town Supervisor**	
Link to Budget: 6010/2221; 6020/2231; 6030/2231; 6050/2221; 6050/2222; 6050/2223; 6050/2224			

Corporate Objective No. 7
Organisational Excellence and Governance

To deliver excellence as an organisation, embracing exceptional customer service, valuing staff and promoting ethical standards of practice supported by clear policies and strategies.

Service delivery. Council is responsible for managing and delivering a range of services to its communities, such as road construction and maintenance, public health and recreational facilities, advocacy and public libraries.

Good governance is about the appropriate processes for making and implementing decisions. Having good processes generally leads to better outcomes for local governments and their communities and has the following characteristics:

- *Accountability is a fundamental requirement of good governance. Local government has an obligation to report, explain and be answerable for the consequences of decisions it has made on behalf of the community it represents.*

- *Transparency. People should be able to follow and understand the decision-making process. This means that they will be able to clearly see how and why a decision was made – what information, advice and consultation council considered and which legislative requirements (when relevant) council followed.*

- *Follows the rule of law. This means that decisions are consistent with relevant legislation or common law and are within the powers of council. Relevant legislation includes the Local Government Act 2009 and other legislation such as the Public Health Act 2005, and the Planning Act 2016.*

- *Responsiveness. Council should always try to serve the needs of the entire community while balancing competing interests in a timely, appropriate and responsive manner.*

- *Equitable and inclusive. A community's wellbeing results from all of its members feeling their interests have been considered by council in the decision-making process. This means that all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, should have opportunities to participate in the process.*

- *Effective and efficient. Council should implement decisions and follow processes that make the best use of the available people, resources and time to ensure the best possible results for their community.*

- *Participatory*. Anyone affected by or interested in a decision should have the opportunity to participate in the process for making that decision. This can happen in several ways – community members may be provided with information, asked for their opinion, given the opportunity to make recommendations or, in some cases, be part of the actual decision-making process.

- *Informed by good information and data*, by stakeholder views, and by open and honest debate will generally reflect the broad interests of the community. This does not assume that everyone will think each decision is the right one. But members of the community are more likely to accept the outcomes if the process has been good, even if they don't agree with the decision. They will also be less tempted to continue fighting or attempting to overturn the decision. So even the most difficult and controversial decisions are more likely to stick.

- *Long-term focus*. Examples include council plans, financial plans, strategic statements and other strategic plans. Setting the vision, and then ensuring that it is achieved, is one of the most important roles of local government.

- *Advocacy*. Local governments have a role in advocating on behalf of their constituencies to state and federal levels of government, statutory authorities and other sectors. An important good governance issue relating to advocacy is that the responsibility and accountability for advocacy needs to be clear. In its formal decision-making role, council can officially advocate to external bodies or levels of government on behalf of the community and municipality. Public statements are usually made by the mayor.

One of the roles of individual councillors as representatives is to advocate to council on behalf of their constituents. This is legitimate, as long as it's done within the framework of good governance in terms of language, using appropriate forums and focusing on issues rather than personalities.

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
- Provide professional, responsible, timely and accessible services to external and internal customers that reflect the values of the organization. - Maximise grants and external income. - Disseminate accurate and relevant information within the organization, the community and other relevant audiences. - Ensure the administration of the region is governed through open and transparent decision-making and reporting processes.	7.1.1 7.1.2 7.1.3 7.2.1 7.2.2	**CEO** **DCCS**	
Link to Budget: 1020/2160; 1020/2400; 1030/2001; 1030/2290			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Ensure the transparency of council's financial operations and performance and promote awareness within the community of council's financial management and other strategies. • Promote and support a safe and healthy work environment in which the importance of family and work/life balance is recognised. • Promote a drug free environment. • Maintain compliance with legislation. • Adopt appropriate governance structures and make appropriate delegations.	7.2.3 7.3.1 7.3.2 7.3.3 7.3.4 7.4.1	**DCCS** **WHSA** **CEO**	
Link to Budget: 1030/2001; 1030/2120; 1030/2005			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Implement effective reward and recognition programs to promote innovative thinking. • Support innovation by implementing technologies that improve the way council conducts its business and manages its information and data. • Effective works program to better utilize alignments between all funding.	7.5.1 7.6.1 7.6.2 7.6.3 7.6.4	**DCCS** **CEO**	
Link to Budget: 1030/2241; 1030/2001			

Operational Plan Action / Outputs	Link to Strategy	Responsible Officer	Accomplished Outcome(s)
• Review the current practice of holding consultation meetings throughout the Shire and distribution of 'Inform' to maximise effective community engagement. • Develop and implement proactive risk management strategies to reduce risk to the council and the community. • Ensure councillors and staff are provided with relevant learning and personal development opportunities to achieve stated strategic priorities and corporate objectives.	7.7.1 7.8.1 7.8.2	**DCCS CEO**	
Link to Budget: 1020/2160; 1020/2400; 1030/2231; 1030/2241			

Financial Capability to implement this Operational Plan

Financing the infrastructure and services required to support the strategies and objectives outlined within the Corporate Plan, while improving services and public facilities remains a significant challenge.

The limited revenue base of the Council continues to result in high reliance on State and Federal Government funding for major projects. The implementation of a number of strategies identified within the plan is therefore subject to obtaining this funding.

Etheridge Shire Council maintains a 10 - year Strategic Financial Plan and is in the process of developing a 10 - year Asset Management Plan that will cover the life of the Corporate Plan and beyond. In simple terms, these plans identify planned expenditure and management of assets on council's activities and facilities over the 10 - years from where the funds have come and what the cumulative financial impacts of this will be on the shire as a whole. It is council's financial blueprint for the future and a living document that is required to be regularly reviewed.

The Corporate Plan encapsulates significant infrastructure improvements necessary to facilitate desired growth over the forthcoming five to ten years. The financial plan identifies the use of significant own - source revenue raised through rates and charges as well as external grants and borrowings as being necessary to implement these requirements.

The extension of the timeframe for the Financial Plan beyond that of the Corporate Plan ensures that council is aware of the ongoing impact of maintenance and debt servicing relating to new and improved facilities. Care is taken to ensure that debt relating to specific assets is extinguished well in advance of the end of the useful life of the asset.

Councillors and the Executive Management Team will ensure that council remains in a sustainable financial position.

The *Local Government Act 2009* requires all local governments to prepare and adopt a Corporate Plan covering a period of at least five years. Under the terms of the Act, the Corporate Plan is to be the basis for council's operational plans and budgets in each year.

Council discussed the development of this Corporate Plan at its regular community consultation meetings through-out the Shire, through articles in the 'Inform' newsletter and through its social media sites.

Council is required to make assessments of progress towards implementing its corporate and operational plans. Those assessments are contained in formal written reports and must be presented to a meeting of council at regular intervals of not more than three months.

The key threat to the sustainability of the Shire is the economic decline of its community. Council will continue to lobby for grants and subsidies to fund its operations, but will also seek to exploit opportunities and innovative ways to create jobs, economic growth and prosperity and address social and economic disadvantage.