SHIRE PLAN

2012 - 2016

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CONTENTS

OUR SHIRE

Situated in an arid desert environment at the centre of the Australian continent, MacDonnell Shire features many iconic, panoramic landscapes which are easily accessed from Alice Springs. The picturesque swimming holes, magnificent flora and fauna, captivating mountain ranges with changing hues and red desert sands are reasons why the MacDonnell Shire is uniquely beautiful and has a deep and powerful strength that can only be felt when travelling across the land.
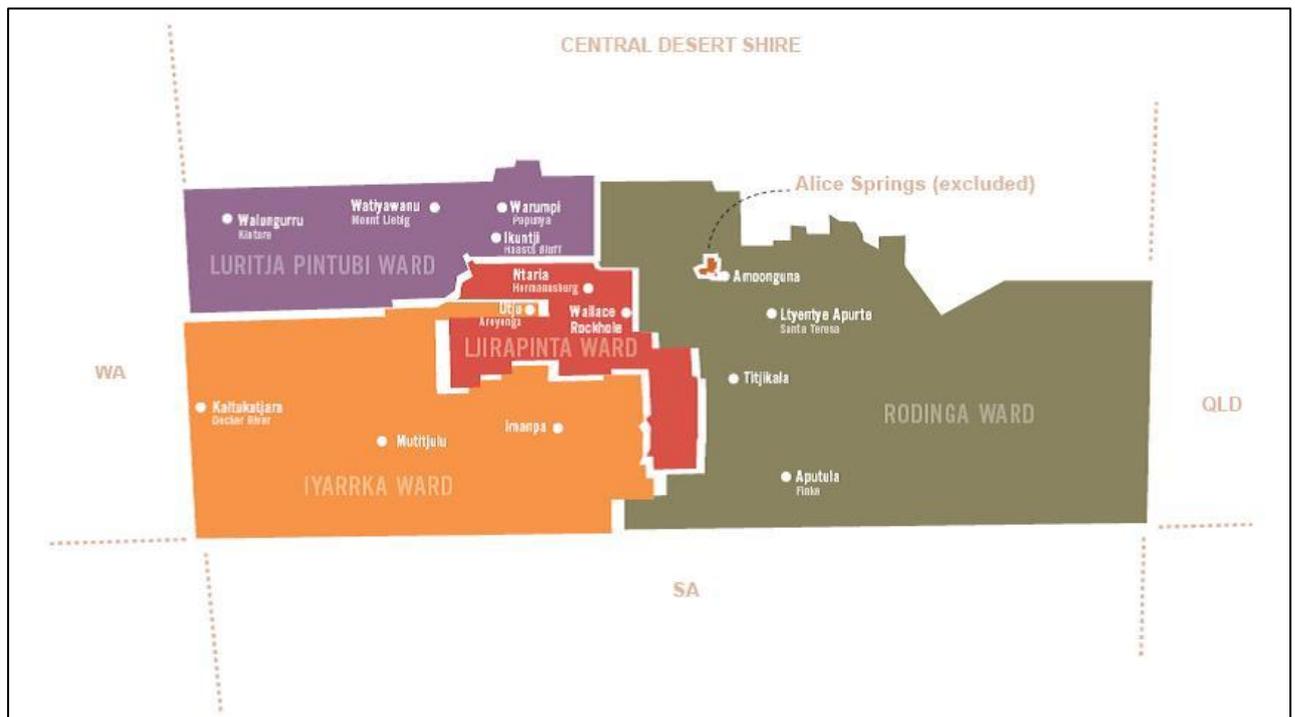
MacDonnell Shire Council officially commenced operations on 1st July 2008. Formed as a result of the Northern Territory Government's Local Government Reforms, MacDonnell Shire covers the southern portion of the Northern Territory and has a land mass of 268,887km^2.

Located within the Shire are 13 major remote communities, many outstations as well as numerous established and emerging enterprises in the pastoral, tourism and mining industries. The towns of Alice Springs and Yulara are excluded from the Shire. The total estimated population of MacDonnell Shire is 6,600 (based on the 2006 Census Data and Northern Territory Government formula to calculate population figures).

As part of the reform process the residents of 13 major remote communities located within the MacDonnell Shire are provided with a range of local government and other services by the Council. These communities include:

- Amoonguna
- Utju / Areyonga
- Kaltukatjara / Docker River

- Aputula / Finke
- Ikuntji / Haasts Bluff
- Ntaria / Hermannsburg
- Walungurru / Kintore
- Imanpa
- Warumpi / Papunya
- Titjikala
- Wallace Rockhole
- Watiyawanu / Mt Liebig
- Santa Teresa / Ltyentye Apurte

OUR HISTORY AND CULTURE

Prior to the Northern Territory Government's Local Government Reform process, there were some 63 community government councils and associations dispersed throughout the Northern Territory delivering core local government services. These incorporated local government bodies were dissolved on June 30, 2008 under the Local Government Act 2008.

In October 2008, the first elections of the new Shires were held throughout the Northern Territory under the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations. Each Shire had to elect 12 Councillors for their respective Shire Councils and in the MacDonnell Shire the 12 elected Councillors are all Indigenous. MacDonnell Shire has now been operating for three years.

Through the reform process MacDonnell Shire Council is committed to creating a strong future for all of its residents. The administration of governance, finance, funding arrangements, program management and human resources is undertaken centrally at Council Headquarters. The Northern Territory Government has provided the Shire Councils with business systems and communications technology and through consultation and negotiation with Federal and Territory Government funding bodies, the Shire has negotiated funding arrangements to align with the new Shire model.

To date the MacDonnell Shire Council has successfully attracted funding from the Australian and Territory Governments, and is a stronger political voice to advocate on behalf of its residents. As a third tier of Government, MacDonnell Shire Council will continue to talk directly to all levels of Government on a range of policies and funding issues relative to local government core and non-core services bringing the Northern Territory in line with other States and Territories.

MacDonnell Shire area is unique, expansive, multilingual and culturally diverse. MacDonnell Shire Council places respect for cultural diversity at the heart of its operations, and Council is committed to bringing Indigenous governance and Western governance systems together in a meaningful and respectful way.

The 13 major communities in MacDonnell Shire have populations made up primarily of Indigenous Australians. Outside of these communities there are numerous pastoral, mining and tourism businesses that are owned and operated primarily by non-Indigenous Australians.

There are four main Indigenous language groups spoken in the MacDonnell Shire which include Luritja, Pintubi, Pitjantjatjara and Arrente. For some residents, Warlpiri is also spoken, and English is almost always a second or third language.

Indigenous people have had their own culturally based governance systems for tens of thousands of years – with their own leaders, laws, traditions, rules, structures and traditional land ownership (Di Smith 2008, CDO Workshop). The western governance system is a relatively new form of governance for Indigenous people in Central Australia. After the granting of Northern Territory self-government in 1978, remote Aboriginal communities in Central Australia underwent major changes to begin governing their communities in a traditional Australian Local Government context. There were major issues related to governance and service delivery as a result of these changes, and the key principles of western governance often competed with the key principles of Indigenous governance.

Having a Shire Council that currently (July 2011) has full Indigenous representation, elected by residents of the Shire, provides an opportunity for the MacDonnell Shire Council to bring Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures together by building social relationships and cohesion in a way that has never been achieved before. Through effective two-way communication and good governance principles and practices, MacDonnell Shire Council aims to achieve a respectful Shire that celebrates its unique cross-cultural diversity.
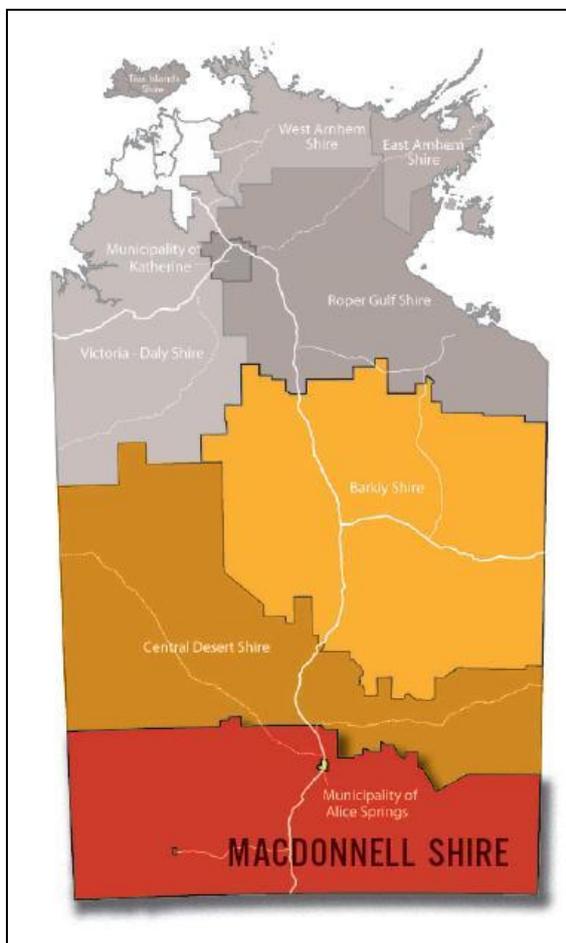
MacDonnell Shire forms part of the Central Australian region, and is part of the Local Government Regional Management Plan for central Australia released in August 2008.

A MESSAGE FRON THE PRESIDENT

SID ANDERSON
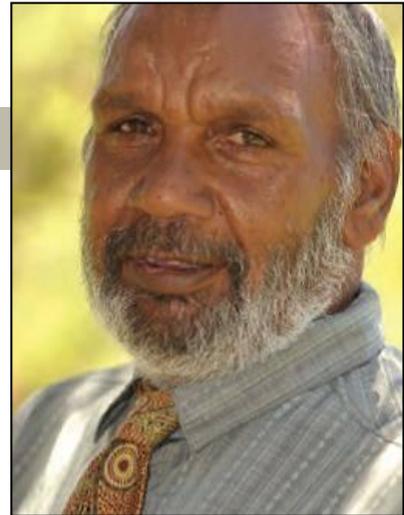
I am very pleased to have been re-elected to MacDonnell Shire Council. The work that the first Council did has provided us with a solid base from which to move forward.

Our newly elected Council is a good mix of people. We have five women and seven men on Council and both older people and some younger representatives. This gives us a good range of people who have different views that can be considered.

With the change of rules around Councillors not being able to work for Council, we had several previous Councillors who chose not to re-stand for election and keep their jobs. This is a positive thing as it keeps skilled indigenous people in our workforce. We have seven new Councillors and five re-elected from the first Council.

Council has been talking to our communities and trying to make sure we represent all people's interests who live in our Shire. We have had a lot of discussions looking forward to decide how we can best serve our communities and believe we have come up with clear goals and direction.

We spent some time talking about what our vision for MacDonnell Shire looks like in ten years' time. What we want are communities that:

- Are peaceful
- Work together to solve problems
- Get along with each other
- Council goals are tightly integrated with what the majority of people want
- Have good roads
- Have safe places for children to play
- Have good houses that suit the people
- Provide the elderly and disable with good access to houses and facilities
- Have footpaths throughout the community
- Have lots of shade trees;

  And

- Have lighting for footpaths and parks.

We have set our goals to move us towards this more detailed vision and look forward to a year where we continue to make progress in all our areas.

SID ANDERSON

MacDonnell Shire President

INTRODUCTION TO YOUR COUNCILLORS

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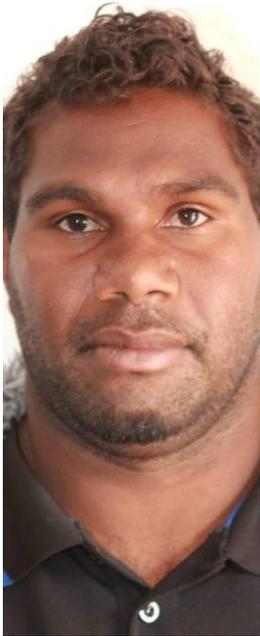
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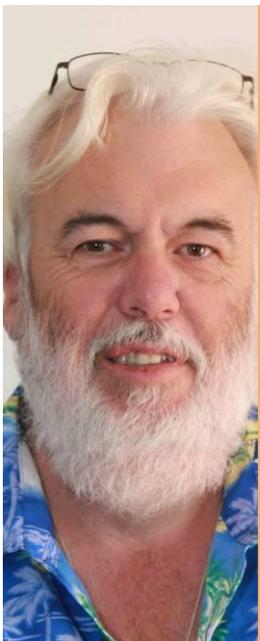
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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DIANE HOOD

MacDonnell Shire has been focused on two key steps – improving our financial sustainability and increasing our input base to achieve better, more concise and more specific gaols that really describe where we are going.

Our process this year has garnered input from many sources, including a review of local board issues and what the communities are telling us about where they want to be. Both our staff and Councillors actively engaged in the process with a series of brainstorming sessions examining our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to come up with a focused series of goals and improved Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) so that we can track how we are improving.

One of the areas in which we have good improvement is in our number of indigenous employees. As at end of May we had 471 employees. This was a drop of 15 from the last month however, most of those were casual positions. We reached 80% indigenous employment. Breaking this down into the more senior positions; we have indigenous people in 27% of the Essential Service Officer roles, 38% of Shire Service Coordinator roles and 40% of the Team Leader positions.

It is a key focus for us going forward to not only improve indigenous employment, but also the quality of roles and make every effort to improve the numbers of indigenous people in qualified roles.

To achieve gains in our community we need to be financially sustainable. We have already made big steps in the past year – implementing a finance committee, and ensuring costs explicitly match the areas of engagement which will allow us to know where cross subsidisation is taking place.

We intend to increase our momentum this year and continue our push to making a surplus for MacDonnell Shire Council to ensure our longevity.

Diane Hood

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

INTRODUCING THE EXECUTIVE TEAM

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OUR VISION

Ngkitja Ntjarra, Tnangkarra Nyinta; Wangka Tjuta, Tjukurpa Kutju

"*Many voices, one dream, building a quality desert lifestyle*"

OUR MISSION

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

OUR VALUES

Our values define the manner in which we will work to carry out our mission. We will be:

Open • We will listen to one another, share ideas and welcome input from all people.

Respectful • We will respect and support our diverse cultures and heritage.

Accountable • Our governance and management processes must be transparent and accountable to the residents in whose interests we will work.

Inclusive • We will value and incorporate local knowledge, experience and perspectives into the work that we do.

Innovative • We will constantly strive to improve the services we deliver and the outcomes we achieve.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

Our strategic goals support our vision and our statutory obligations, as well as the requirements of the Regional Plan. These goals will be pursued during the life of this plan and are reviewed annually to ensure continuing clarity and relevance.

After four years of operation, MacDonnell Shire Council has decided to re-focus its strategic goals to ensure a clear and concise sense of direction for all its stakeholders.

Our previous goals were:

1. Economic Development – a dynamic and growing economy with strong local employment

2. Environment – a Shire that respects, protects and nurtures its natural and built environment

3. Community Life – a supportive, safe and healthy social environment

4. Council Organisation and Management Environment – effect and inspiring governance, strong participation and voice, and high quality provision supported by sound management practice.

While all these areas are worthwhile goals, they are not readily remembered and Council wanted to ensure all staff and stakeholders knew what goals we are pursuing without having to look up documents. As such, our re-stated goals moving forward are:

1. Developing Communities

2. Liveable Communities

3. Engaged Communities

MacDonnell Shire has adopted a closed loop approach to extending our strategic goals into outcomes, actions and having clear feedback (Key Performance Indicators):

GOAL → OUTCOMES → ACTIONS → KPIs → FEEDBACK (loop back to GOAL)
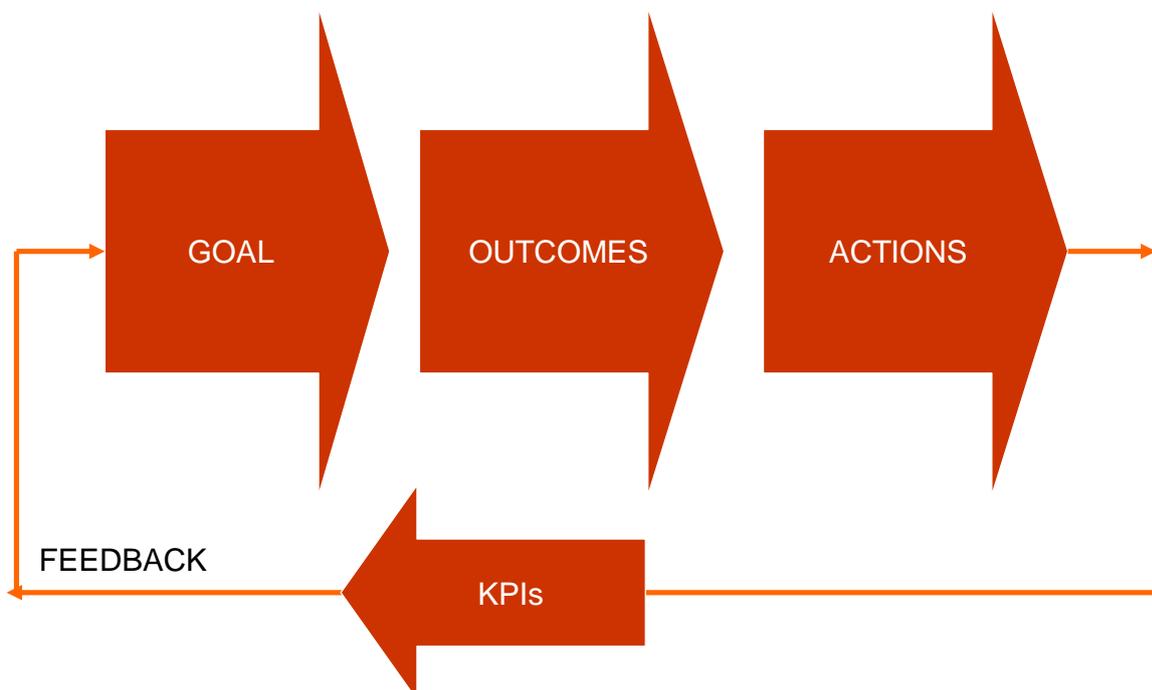
GOAL ONE: DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES

Key Outcomes:

1 (a) **Increased employment opportunity**

    KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Percentage of indigenous employees
- Promotions of indigenous employees (qualified roles, increased seniority)
- Reduced staff turnover

1 (b) **Improved infrastructure**

    KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Number of improved staff houses
- Introduction of solar power
- Secure land tenure
- Number of cemeteries improved

1 (c) **Sustainability**

    KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Number of new businesses across Shire communities
- Return a surplus to the Shire
- 'Asset Refresh: Depreciation' ratio is greater than one.

GOAL TWO: LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Key Outcomes:

2 (a) **…are clean and attractive**

    KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Meet year 2 objectives of MSC Waste Management Guidelines
- Parks and Gardens at MSC level 4 standards
- Improved community feedback on social services
- Number of letter boxes installed, number of mail deliveries to households

2 (b) **…are healthy**

    KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Reduced number of animals, healthy dogs
- Secure funding for swimming pools so can open over summer
- Number of meals delivered (Aged Care)
- Number of children and youth engaged in programs

2 (c) …are safe

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Improved public lighting, increased number of lights
- Percentage implementation of street numbers
- Number of additional houses with fences

GOAL THREE: ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

Key Outcomes:

3 (a) …participate in community life

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- 80% or more of community events supported by MSC
- Improved response times (internet, computing)
- Percentage completion of audio visual initiative for Shire Offices
- Number of improved community meeting areas

3 (b) …have effective local boards

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Minimum of three Local Boards take place for each community over the year
- Up to date community action registers
- Introduce community newsletter with outcomes from action registers

3 (c) …have improving capacity and skills

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Number of completed qualifications / certificates
- Number of apprentices in place
- Win Remote Jobs Community Program (RJCP) tender → integrated services for the communities
- Number of communities that have community based cross cultural training / induction.

PLAN SECTION 2: SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

In delivering local government services under this Shire Plan, the Shire Council is organised into the following budget areas:

- **Core Services**

    a) **Service Centre Delivery** – includes most of the Local Government services outlined in the Central Australian Regional Management Plan (RMP) –

      Local infrastructure: parks, open spaces, cemeteries, street lighting, local roads, traffic management and maintenance of shire assets including buildings, fleet and plant.

      Local environment health: waste management, weed and fire hazard reduction, companion animal welfare and control and effluent disposal.

      Local civil services: libraries, local emergency services assistance and recovery.

      These services are delivered across our thirteen Service Delivery Centres

    b) **Support and Administration** – includes financial management, human resources, information technology and communications, managerial and support requirements.

    c) **Shire Engagement** – includes other core services from the RMP around community engagement such as Council meetings, Local Boards, management committees, the office of the CEO, governance and communications

- **Agreed (non-core) Service Delivery** – includes outstation civil works, repairs and maintenance as well as swimming pools.

- **Commercial Services** – includes the Amoonguna Store, Postal Agencies contract, the Power and Water contract (Essential Services) and NT Housing contracts for repairs and maintenance and tenancy. May include any other commercial contract or government funding that is contract or service level agreement based.

- **Community Services** – specialist non-mandatory services delivered on behalf of agencies of the Commonwealth Government and Northern Territory Government; for example Aged Care, Youth Development, Community Safety and Child Care..

MacDonnell Shire Council has four Directorates which match these areas, these are:

Corporate Services which includes the Support and Administration and most of the Shire Engagement areas of engagement.

Service Centre Delivery which covers core service centre delivery and the outstation functional areas.

Technical Services which includes the commercial area, but also includes management of the shire assets – buildings, fleet and plant due to synergy of skill areas.

Community Services which includes the social services where the Shire acts as an agent for the Commonwealth or Northern Territory governments.

These Directorates match to the Shire organisation chart set out in Appendix 3.

During the financial year 2012 - 2013, the Shire Council will undertake the following actions to deliver local government services in alignment with its stated mission, goals and outcomes (strategies) and to achieve movement towards our long term vision. The Shire Council's capacity for delivering the strategies and actions set out below is dependent on funding from the Commonwealth and Territory governments. Much of what needs to be done, especially in the areas of economic development and environmental management, will require special-purpose funding over and above the base funding received by the Shire Council. These considerations are included in the Shire budget set out against the same functional service groups in Appendix 1.

GOAL ONE: DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES

OUTCOME: Increased Employment Opportunity

ACTIONS

1. Succession planning for all Team Leader and above roles
2. Actively identify employment opportunities within communities, through a resource planning matrix for each area
3. Develop training map for each job role and enact

OUTCOME: Improved Infrastructure

ACTIONS

1. Security upgrades to houses in + 3 communities
2. Introduce solar lighting for parks and gardens
3. Finalise all required leases for MSC across all communities
4. Seating, shade and tap water for all cemeteries

ACTIONS

OUTCOME:

Sustainability

- Strong financial management, finance committee
- Promote communities more widely to broader audience, including tourism and business potential
- Embed sustainability into fleet and plant refresh cycle

IMPACT TO THE DIRECTORATES:

Corporate Services has the lead for **increased employment opportunity**; with Human Resources providing the expertise and framework provision for succession planning, improved employment processes and development of training maps. Implementation of our Human Resources policy and procedures will be by the line managers in all departments and Directorates within the Shire.

In the outcome area for **improved infrastructure**, the owning Directorate will be Technical Services as part of their responsibility as owning the management of shire assets. The Service Centre Delivery directorate will own the upgrading of cemeteries and with strong input and involvement in the upgrading of parks and gardens. Leasing outcomes are headed by the CEO, with operational assistance from Technical Services.

To move further towards achieving **sustainability** the leadership is with several Directorates. The owner of achieving strong financial management and improved promotion of communities is Corporate Services. The Technical Services Directorate will own, with strong input from Corporate Services, the embedding of further sustainability initiatives into the fleet and plant refresh cycle.

GOAL TWO: LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

OUTCOME:
…are clean
and attractive

ACTIONS

1. Maintain waste collection at twice a week for all communities
2. Improve parks and gardens in all communities
3. Have strong and consistent social services across all communities. Develop quality survey for community feedback.
4. Install letter boxes to all public housing residents across the Shire, and deliver mail to houses.

OUTCOME:
…are healthy

ACTIONS

1. Research and introduce animal by-laws
2. Find funding for ongoing use of swimming pools
3. Promote family health through strong Aged Care, Youth and Children's programs

ACTIONS

1. Maintain and improve where possible public lighting
2. Introduce and enact street numbers (for emergency services)
3. Increased fencing for public housing

OUTCOME:
…are safe

IMPACT TO THE DIRECTORATES:

Increasing the **liveability of our communities** is vital within this overall strategy. To deliver clean and attractive communities all Directorates have a role to play. Service Delivery has the lead for delivery of the waste collection and improvement of parks and gardens. Key input will be needed from the Commercial group in terms of tips and other infrastructure. Community Services will have the lead in providing strong and consistent social services, and Technical Services will head the letter box initiative.

In the outcome area for **healthy** communities, several Directorates will be involved. Service Delivery will take the lead in researching and assisting Council with the introduction of appropriate companion animal by-laws; Technical Services will take the lead on swimming pools – to find funding and run the assets with assistance from the youth team under Community Services; and Community Services has the lead on promoting family health through its programs.

For **safe** communities the responsibility is again across several Directorates. While Technical Services have the lead for public lighting and increased fencing, Service Centre Delivery will provide the on-the-ground support through the Civil Works Team. Service Centre Delivery will own the action around street numbers. At a more holistic level, the Community Safety team within Community Services have a strong contribution to make to the overall public safety in our communities.

GOAL THREE: ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

OUTCOME: …participate in community life

ACTIONS

1. Improve satellite communications and computing facilities to local boards, Shire officers
2. Increased Shire involvement with community events
3. Install audio visual display units in all SDCs to improve communications and information available to Shire residents.
4. Provide shed and/or covered area for community meetings.

OUTCOME: …have effective Local Boards

ACTIONS

1. Continue to conduct quarterly Local Boards at all communities
2. Improve focus on community action registers
3. Improve feedback loops to Local Boards and to the community

OUTCOME:
…have improving capacity and skills

ACTIONS

1. Win tender for RJCP new model
2. Broaden training opportunities to community members
3. Win 3 year contracts and implement community apprenticeship scheme
4. Implement community based cross-cultural (tribes) training for staff new to community / area.

IMPACT TO THE DIRECTORATES:

Increasing **participation in community life** again crosses all Directorates. Improving satellite communications, computing facilities and increased shire involvement is owned by Corporate Services. Installation of audio visual display units in our service delivery centres will be led by Technical Services, with the responsibility of providing the communications and information availability across each Directorate for their own areas. Technical Services will also lead the action of improving the community meeting areas in the capacity of infrastructure management. The Council and the CEO will take ownership of increasing involvement in community events.

The outcome area for **effective Local Boards** is owned by Corporate Services, under the area of Shire Engagement, specifically governance and communications. The responsibility for individual actions arising from the Local Boards and on the community action registers will be logged with each action and will fall across multiple Directorates.

To **improve capacity and skills** on communities the responsibility for winning the tender for the Remote Jobs Community Program (RJCP) lies with the Office of the CEO, with input from each of the Directorates, in particular Corporate Services and Community Services. Broadening training opportunities will be owned by Corporate Services, Human Resources as will the initiative to implement community based cross-cultural training. The Technical Services team will have the lead on winning three year contracts and implementing an apprenticeship scheme.

Corporate Services will need to provide support, administrative capacity and link in to shire engagement through our local boards for each of the outcome areas.

Services Offered by MacDonnell Shire Council by Community

Community	Amoonguna	Utju	Docker River	Finke	Ikuntji	Ntaria	Imanpa	Kintore	Mt Liebig	Papunya	Santa Teresa	Titjikala	Wallace Rock Hole
Population	362	245	311	240	165	600	217	350	252	342	600	265	107
Workforce	16	27	22	31	30	32	24	27	23	29	19	43	10
Distance from A/S	21km	240km	670km	434km	250km	130km	200km	530km	325km	240km	85km	130km	120km
Dirt Road Distance		90km	190km	159km	110km	2km	5km	390km	185km	100km	68km	120km	20km
Municipal Works	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
ESO		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Tenancy Management	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Housing R&M	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Airstrip		√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	
Stores	√												
Animal Control	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Out Stations			√	√	√			√	√	√	√	√	
Power		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	
Water		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Sewerage	√	√	half	√		√	√	√		√	√		
Pools		√						√			√		
Centrelink	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Night Patrol	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Aged Care	√	√			√	√	√				√	√	
Childcare		√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√		√	
School Nutrition		√		√	√		√					√	
Youth Development	√	√		√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	
ASC/Vac Care		√			√	√		√	√	√	√	√	
Libraries											√		

[24]

3.1 THE MOST RECENT ASSESSMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Act and the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations, Council prepared a draft paper in October 2010 which was issued to stakeholders for discussion, including NTEC, and was subsequently adopted by the Council at the Ordinary Council meeting of 17th February 2011. The MacDonnell Shire Council S23(2) Review of Representation is attached in Appendix 7 and gives an assessment of the effectiveness of constitutional arrangements for electoral representation of the council area (electoral review) in accordance with the requirements of Section 23(1)(c) and 23(2) of the Local Government Act and Regulations 63 of the Local Government Electoral Regulations to determine whether the arrangements presently in force provide the most effective representation possible.

After Ministerial review, no changes were made to MacDonnell Shire boundaries, wards or Councillor mix by ward for the 2012 general election. The next assessment will take place over the next three years and before the next Local Government elections.

3.2 OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES FOR SERVICE DELIVERY

While the creation of the Shires by the Northern Territory Government has given rise to a number of opportunities for improved local government service delivery, this is not without significant threats and uncertainties for the longer term future and sustainability of the current model.

As part of its review and planning process, MacDonnell Shire Council did a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. The summary results and key items were:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
▪ Buildings and Facilities ▪ Solid experience and expertise ▪ Ability to provide local jobs ▪ Synergy of scale – resources ▪ Stability	▪ Employee attraction and retention ▪ Staff Development ▪ JSA / CDeP not synergistic ▪ Insufficient # of houses ▪ "Colonial" culture ▪ Insufficient (total) jobs in communities
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
▪ Actively pursue funding opportunities ▪ Win JSA / CDeP business ▪ Expand commercial business ▪ (Planning for) Community Development ▪ Skilled jobs in community	▪ Known sustainability of government funding ▪ Non-acquisition of required lease properties ▪ Ongoing sustainability of communities ▪ Fuel, power prices ▪ Government sees mobility = opportunity, but community sees as a threat

The key opportunities and threats (challenges) in relation to the Shire's capacity to deliver its mandated services during the current planning cycle are:

OPPORTUNITIES

- Actively pursue funding opportunities – MacDonnell Shire Council has upgraded the capacity of the Grants Officer and tasked the Directorates with a more active role in reviewing and identifying grant opportunities.

- Win the JSA / CDeP business – this has long been a desire of Council, primarily to drive better synergies of scale. The new model which will go out to tender this financial year (commencing 1 July 2013) is the Remote Jobs Community Program (RJCP) and is designed to assist community residents with transition to meaningful work.

- Expand commercial business – this opportunity needs to be aligned to the Shire's needs and skills, however there are opportunities around building service provision in communities which the Shire is well positioned to do and provides further capacity building for our indigenous employees. A key opportunity over this year is to win the expected multi-year contract with Northern Territory Housing for tenancy management and repairs and maintenance. This is a pre-requisite to enable the opportunity of providing apprenticeships within the Shire.

- Planning for community development will enable the Shire to achieve better synergy between social (agency) services and the core services work team. This should assist in improving financial sustainability.

- Increasing skilled jobs in the community ties to the third key opportunity. It is a strong desire of Council to improve opportunities for indigenous job progression (into more qualified and senior roles) which impacts overall community development.

The Regional Management Plan (RMP) for the Central Australian outlines the broader opportunities for the region. The RMP can be found at www.localgovernment.nt.gov.au. Of particular note are the opportunities outlined in terms of knowledge sharing, increase our power of advocacy and the potential for regional approaches which may provide stronger synergies of scale and save costs.

CHALLENGES

The Northern Territory Government recently undertook a financial sustainability review for all remote Shire Councils which determined that MacDonnell Shire, while viable, is unsustainable in the medium term. MacDonnell Shire Council has undertaken remedial actions over the previous financial year such as implementing a finance / audit committee, taking asset actions to decrease depreciation, ensuring costs are more closely matched to funding areas, implementing Internal Cost Recovery where core assets or labour is used for tied grants or commercial contracts and seeking funding. This work and focus will be ongoing over 2012/13 and into the future.

- Known sustainability of government funding – it is unclear in all areas whether funding will be maintained, decreased or increased with the ending of the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER) and the move to Strong Futures policy implementation. While every effort is made to have these discussions, many areas are unknown due to the timing and lack of

integration of the budget cycles across all levels of government. In addition, untied funding is at a low level which constrains the ability of elected Councillors and management to set priorities and initiate action.

- Non-acquisition of required lease properties - the Shire Council provides services in communities situated on Aboriginal land held by land trusts. In relation to the NTER the Federal Government obtained five year leases over the communities. Under the terms of an Administrative Authority granted to the Shire by FaHCSIA in 2008, the Shire Council occupies and uses a number of buildings and facilities in the communities. This gives rise to significant risks:
    - Availability risk – there is no certainty that these assets will continue to be available for occupancy and use by the Shire Council after the termination of the five year leases.
    - Economic risk - there is no certainty that funding will be available to pay for commercial rents and other outgoings that may become payable for the assets after the termination of the five year leases

- Ongoing sustainability of communities is a threat due to urban drift. The centralisation of services and resources into growth towns of which there are two in MacDonnell Shire may assist with broader community sustainability or may further exacerbate movement, this is unknown at this stage. Lack of housing plays a key role in terms of community sustainability. While the Northern Territory and Federal governments are working to address this, there is a large backlog in MacDonnell Shire communities with high occupancy in most existing houses.

- Fuel and power prices are expected to increase significantly, while local government funding is flat year on year and new revenue sources may or may not cover these increases The size of the Shire and the distances between communities poses a significant challenge in the delivery of local government services. The unsealed roads to many of the communities are prone to damage and disruption in adverse weather conditions. IT solutions are varied in their availability in different communities.

- There is a level of uncertainty across the Shire population as there is a perception that the Commonwealth sees mobility as an opportunity; however, the communities see mobility as a threat. There is a mismatch of expectations which creates a large challenge for local government to address.

Again the Regional Management Plan outlines some broader challenges that impact across the region. These include:

- limited rates and charges base as well as limited funds for core service delivery;
- ensuring effective participation and representation across a large geographic area;
- lack of an all-weather road infrastructure;
- expensive (and, in many cases, inadequate) satellite based telecommunications and IT infrastructure;
- lack of town plans;
- recruitment and retention of staff; and
- managing ageing and damaged physical infrastructure with restricted maintenance funding.

[27]

3.3 POSSIBLE CHANGES TO THE REGULATORY AND ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Shire Council periodically reviews its regulatory and administrative framework to ensure:

- Ongoing compliance with applicable laws
- Practicality
- Cultural appropriateness.

With the Northern Territory elections to be held in August 2012, there is the possibility of legislative change dependent on which major party forms government and whether there is a desire to change the Local Government Act or other related Acts.

With the cessation of the NTER, again in August, the Commonwealth Stronger Futures related legislation will take effect.

3.4 POSSIBILITIES FOR IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY

The Regional Management Plan (RMP) identifies four shared goals for the Councils across the Central Australian region (Alice Springs Town Council, MacDonnell Shire Council, Central Desert Shire Council and Barkly Shire Council).

All goals are in relation to enhancing regional service delivery and cover:

- Improving technical and engineering services.
- Maximising educational opportunities.
- Establishing a joint waste management agreement.
- Reviewing whether a regional domestic animal management plan could drive reduced costs in individual Councils.

APPENDIX 1 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BUDGET FOR 2012-2013

Income and Expenditure Budget 2012-2013

	INCOME	EXPENSES
CORE SERVICES		
Core Service Delivery	$2,254,340	$12,536,423
Shire Engagement	$124,375	$915,568
Support and Administration	$8,901,097	$3,451,495
LESS Internal Cost Recovery (Buildings, Fleet, Labour)		-$2,078,674
LESS Administration / Management fees		-$3,545,000
	$11,279,812	**$11,279,812**
Within Core Services, Infrastructure Maintenance and Management Included is:		
Roads	*$1,581,579*	*$1,213,295*
Shire Buildings and Facilities	*$285,500*	*$865,679*
Staff Housing	*$189,000*	*$566,538*
Fleet management		*$1,965,933*
AGREED (NON-CORE) SERVICES		
Outstations Repairs and Maintenance	$399,888	$399,888
Outstations Civil Works	$1,015,380	$1,015,380
Swimming Pools	$100,000	$442,359
	$1,515,268	**$1,857,627**
Commercial Operations	$10,949,856	$9,730,567
Community Services	$12,536,582	$12,536,582
	$23,486,438	**$22,267,149**
GRAND TOTAL	**$36,281,518**	**$35,404,588**
Surplus / (Deficit)		**$876,930**

NOTES:

1. At the time of preparation of this budget the Shire is engaged in discussions with funding bodies regarding grants for 2012/13. This budget therefore reflects a combination of known and anticipated funding for its continuing services based on previous experience and known service requirements.
2. It is intended to provide a surplus to MacDonnell Shire in order to create a reserve for future funding and replacement of Shire assets.
4. Infrastructure maintenance tied income and planned expenses are shown separately for information, but are included in the Core Services totals
5. Administrative fees for MacDonnell Shire have been set at 15%. Charges are to those grants external to Core Services (it should be noted that some grants will not pay 15% and this is a continuing negotiation) and to Technical Services.
6. The Budget for total Council Member's Allowances for 2012-2013 is $397,298 and the breakdown of Councillor allowances is detailed in Appendix 5
7. The shire's objectives, actions to achieve objectives and means of measuring achievement of objectives is listed in Appendix 4

APPENDIX 2 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BUDGET FOR 2012 TO 2016

Long Term Financial Plan - 2012 to 2016								
	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
	INCOME	EXPENSES	INCOME	EXPENSES	INCOME	EXPENSES	INCOME	EXPENSES
CORE SERVICES								
Core Service Delivery	$2,254,340	$12,536,423	$2,344,514	$13,037,880	$2,438,294	$13,559,395	$2,535,826	$14,101,771
Shire Engagement	$124,375	$915,568	$129,350	$952,191	$134,524	$990,278	$139,905	$1,149,889
Support and Administration	$8,901,097	$3,451,495	$9,257,141	$3,589,555	$9,627,427	$3,733,137	$10,012,524	$3,882,462
LESS Internal Cost Recovery (Buildings, Fleet, Labour)		-$2,078,674		-$2,161,821		-$2,248,294		-$2,338,226
LESS Administration / Management fees		-$3,545,000		-$3,581,384		-$3,724,640		-$3,873,625
TOTAL CORE SERVICES	**$11,279,812**	**$11,279,812**	**$11,731,004**	**$11,836,420**	**$12,200,245**	**$12,309,877**	**$12,688,254**	**$12,922,272**
AGREED (NON-CORE) SERVICES								
Outstations Repairs and Maintenance	$399,888	$399,888	$415,884	$415,884	$432,519	$432,519	$449,820	$449,820
Outstations Civil Works	$1,015,380	$1,015,380	$1,055,995	$1,055,995	$1,098,235	$1,098,235	$1,142,164	$1,142,164
Swimming Pools	$100,000	$442,359	$104,000	$460,053	$108,160	$478,455	$112,486	$497,594
	$1,515,268	**$1,857,627**	**$1,575,879**	**$1,931,932**	**$1,638,914**	**$2,009,209**	**$1,704,470**	**$2,089,578**
Commercial Operations	$10,949,856	$9,730,567	$10,837,850	$9,539,790	$11,271,364	$9,921,381	$11,722,219	$10,318,237
Community Services	$12,536,582	$12,536,582	$13,038,045	$13,038,045	$13,559,567	$13,559,567	$14,101,950	$14,101,950
	$36,281,518	**$35,404,588**	**$37,182,779**	**$36,346,187**	**$38,670,090**	**$37,800,035**	**$40,216,893**	**$39,432,036**
Surplus/(Deficit)		**$876,930**		**$836,592**		**$870,055**		**$784,857**

Key Assumptions of the Long-Term Financial Plan

1. All current services will continue to be provided by the Shire Council. Except it is assumed the Amoonguna Store will be handed back to the community by 2-13/2014.

2. There will be no significant adverse change in government policies impacting upon the operation of the Shire Council.

3. In the absence of a significant rates base, the Commonwealth and territory Governments will continue to fund services.

4. The local government cost index is 4.2%. It is further assumed additional productivity gains of 2% will be made each year.

5. The Shire population will grow by an annual rate of 2%. Revenue and expenditure for front line service delivery will rise accordingly.

6. Election costs are included in 2015/16 of an additional $120,000 against run rate.

7. Overall expense increases assumed are then 4.2%.

8. It is assumed funding will grow to cover the population growth and increase in local government costs (less productivity gains).

9. There are no additional major initiatives planned over the next four years, outside the goals outlined in the Shire Plan. This is due to major initiatives being wholly dependent on additional funding and there is currently no indication of significant increases that would enable major initiatives to be considered.

10. The repairs, maintenance, management and development of infrastructure is intended to continue at the same level as detailed in the current year budget with increases in line with inflation.

APPENDIX 3 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET

MacDonnell Shire Council

Capital Expenditure Budget 2012-2013

Description	Annual Expenditure
Vehicles	850,000
Plant & Equipment	1,200,000
Building renovations	150,000

Notes:
1. Council policy is **not** capitalise roads therefore road expenditure is reflected in the Profit & Loss budget.

2. There are no plans to increase building assets this financial year.

APPENDIX 4 SUMMARY OF THE SHIRE'S OBJECTIVES, ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES AND MEANS OF MEASURING ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

1. Objectives for the Financial Year

MacDonnell Shire Council's objectives (or outcomes) for the 2012-2013 financial year are detailed in Section 1 of the Shire Plan. In summary and within the goal structure identified they are:

GOAL 1: DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES
Objective 1: Increased employment opportunities Objective 2: Improved infrastructure
Objective 3: Sustainability

GOAL 2: LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES
Objective 1: Communities are clean and attractive
Objective 2: Communities are healthy Objective 3: Communities are safe

GOAL 3: ENGAGED COMMUNITIES
Objective 1: Community members participate in community life Objective 2: Communities have
effective local boards
Objective 3: Community members have improving capacity and skills

2. Measures the Council Proposes towards achieving Objectives:

The proposed measures to take place during the 2012-2013 financial year are the actions outlined in Section 2 of the Shire Plan. Each has been considered and included in the formation of the overall budget. In summary the measures (or actions) are:

1.1 Increased employment opportunities ACTIONS:
1.1.1 Succession planning for all team leader roles and above
1.1.2 Actively identify employment opportunities in all communities, through a resource planning matrix for each area
1.1.3 Develop a job training map for each job role and enact

1.2 Improved infrastructure ACTIONS:
1.2.1 Security upgrades to houses in + 3 communities
1.2.2 Introduce solar lighting for parks and gardens
1.2.3 Finalise all required leases
1.2.4 Seating, shade and tap water for all cemeteries

1.3   Sustainability ACTIONS:

1.3.1 Strong financial management, finance committee

1.3.2 Promote communications to broader audience, including tourism and business potential

1.3.1 Embed sustainability into fleet and plant refresh cycle

2.1   Clean and attractive communities ACTIONS:

2.1.1 Maintain waste collection at twice a week

2.1.2 Improve parks and gardens

2.1.3 Have strong and consistent social services. Develop quality survey for community feedback

2.1.4 Install letter boxes for all public housing

2.2   Healthy communities ACTIONS:

2.2.1 Research and introduce animal by-laws

2.2.2 Find funding for ongoing use of swimming pools

2.2.3 Promote family health through strong Aged Care, Youth and Children's programs

2.3 Safe communities ACTIONS:

2.3.1 Maintain and improve where possible public lighting

2.3.2 Introduce and enact street numbers

2.3.3   Increased fencing for public housing

3.1   Participation in community life ACTIONS:

3.1.1 Improve satellite communications and computing facilities

3.1.2 Increase Shire involvement with community events

3.1.3 Install audio-visual displays in SDCs to improve communications

3.1.4 Provide shed and/or covered area for community meetings

3.2   Effective Local Boards ACTIONS:

3.2.1 Conduct quarterly local boards at all communities

3.2.2 Improve focus on community action registers

3.2.3 Improve feedback loops to local boards and community

3.3 Improving capacity and skills ACTIONS:

3.3.1 Win tender for RJCP new model

3.3.2 Broaden training opportunities to community members

3.3.3 Win 3 year contracts and implement community apprenticeship scheme

3.3.4 Implement community based cross-cultural (tribes) training for staff new to community area.

3. Indicators the Council Proposes to Use to Assess Efficiency in Achieving Objectives

The proposed indicators (or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)) to be used during the 2012-2013 financial year are the actions outlined in Section 1 of the Shire Plan. In addition the financial sustainability indicators defined by Deloitte in the Shire Sustainability Report will be used, with the exception of rates coverage as that is not achievable in the short to medium term. In summary the indicators (or KPIs) are:

1.1 Increased employment opportunity - KPIs
* Percentage of indigenous employees
* Promotions of indigenous employees (qualified roles, increased seniority)
* Reduced staff turnover

1.2 Improved infrastructure - KPIs
* Number of improved staff houses
* Introduction of solar power
* Secure land tenure
* Number of cemeteries improved

1.3 Sustainability - KPIs:
* Number of new businesses across the Shire
* Return a surplus to the Shire
* Operating deficit < 10% of operating revenue (Deloitte)
* Earnings before interest and tax divided by interest expense > 3.0 (Deloitte)
* Capital expenditure divided by depreciation expense > 1.0 (Deloitte)
* Current assets divided by current liabilities > 1.0 (Deloitte)

2.1 Clean and attractive communities - KPIs:
* Meet year two objectives of MSC Waste Management Guidelines
* Parks and gardens at MSC level 4 standards
* Improved community feedback on social services
* Number of letter boxes installed, number of mail deliveries

2.2 Healthy communities - KPIs
* Reduced number of animals, healthy dogs
* Secure funding for swimming pools so can open over summer
* Number of meals delivered (Aged Care)
* Number of children and youth engaged in programs

2.3 Safe Communities - KPIs

* Improved public lighting, increased number of lights
* Percentage implementation of street numbers
* Number of additional houses with fences

3.1 Participate in Community Life - KPIs

* 80% or more of community events supported by MSC
* Improved response times (internet, computing)
* Percentage completion of audio visual initiative for Shire Offices
* Number of improved community meeting areas

3.2 Effective Local Boards - KPIs

* Minimum of three Local Boards take place for each community over the year
* Up to date community action registers
* Introduce community newsletter with outcomes from action registers

3.3 Improving Capacity and Skills - KPIs

* Number of completed qualifications / certificates
* Number of apprentices in place
* Win Remote Jobs Community Program (RJCP) tender → integrated services for the communities
* Number of communities that have community based cross cultural training / induction.

APPENDIX 5 MACDONNELL SHIRE COUNCIL MEMBER ALLOWANCES

The rates of allowances for Councillors is listed below and are applicable from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013:

Ordinary Council Members

Base Allowance	$12,001.11
Electoral Allowance	$4,391.59
Professional Development Allowance	$3,334.00
Max extra meeting allowance	$8,000.74
Total Claimable	**$27,727.44**

Acting Principal Member

Daily Rate	$232.15
Maximum Claimable (90 days)	$20,835.89

Deputy Principal Member

Base Allowance	$24,673.97
Electoral Allowance	$4,391.59
Professional Development Allowance	$3,334.00
Total Claimable	**$32,399.56**

Principal Member

Base Allowance	$66,727.29
Electoral Allowance	$17,563.16
Professional Development Allowance	$3,334.00
Total Claimable	**$87,624.44**

APPENDIX 6 MACDONNELL SHIRE COUNCIL RATES AND CHARGES DECLARATION FOR 2012/13

Rates

MacDonnell Shire Council (the "Council") makes the following declaration of rates pursuant to Chapter 11 of the Local Government Act 2008 (the "Act")

1. Pursuant to Section 149 of the Act, the Council adopts the Unimproved Capital Value (UCV) method as the basis of the assessed value of allotments within the shire area.

2. The Council intends to raise, for general purposes by way of rates and charges, the amount of $951,837 which will be raised by application of:

    (a) Differential rates with differential minimum amounts being payable in application of each of those differential rates.

    (b) A fixed charge ("flat rate")

3. The council hereby declares the following rates:

    (a) With respect to every allotment of rateable land owned by a Land Trust or Aboriginal Community living area association within the shire area that is used for residential purposes, a flat rate of $694.76 for each allotment multiplies by:

        (i) the number of separate parts or units that are adapted for separate occupation or use (pursuant to section 148(4) of the Act) on each allotment; or

        (ii) the number 1;

           whichever is greater.

    (b) With respect to every allotment of rateable land owned by a Land Trust or Aboriginal community living area association within the shire area that is used for commercial or business purposes, a flat rate of $822.13 for each allotment multiplied by:

        (i) the number of separate parts or units that are adapted for separate occupation or use (pursuant to section 148(4) of the Act) on each allotment; or

        (ii) the number 1;

           whichever is greater.

    (c) With respect to every allotment of conditionally rateable land within the shire area not otherwise described elsewhere in this declaration:

        (i) A flat rate of $336.13 for each lease for land held under a pastoral lease;

        (ii) A flat rate of $795.51 for each lease for land occupied under a mining tenement, being an active mining, extractive or petroleum lease.

(d) With respect to every allotment of rateable land within the shire area not otherwise described elsewhere in this declaration that is used for residential purposes, a flat rate of $694.76 multiplied by:

  (i) the number of separate parts or units that are adapted for separate occupation or use (pursuant to section 148(4) of the Act) on each allotment; or

  (ii) the number 1:

  whichever is greater.

(e) With respect to every allotment of rateable land within the shire area not otherwise described elsewhere in this declaration that is used for commercial or business purposes, a flat rate of $822.13 multiplied by:

  (i) the number of separate parts or units that are adapted for separate occupation or use (pursuant to section 148(4) of the Act) on each allotment; or

  (ii) the number 1;

  whichever is greater.

Charges

4. Pursuant to Section 157 of the Act, the council declares the following charges in respect of the garbage collection services it provides for the benefit of all residential land within the following designated communities within the shire area (except such land as Council from time to time determines to be exempt or excluded from the provision of such services or for which the Council has determined it is impractical to provide such services).

5. The designated communities with the shire area are Amoonguna, Areyonga, Docker River, Finke, Haasts Bluff, Hermannsburg, Imanpa, Kintore, Mt. Liebig, Papunya, Santa Teresa, Titjikala and Wallace Rockhole.

6. For the purpose of paragraphs 7 (a):

  • "residential dwelling" means a dwelling house, flat or other substantially self-contained residential unit or building on residential land and includes a unit within the meaning of Unit Titles Act.

  • "residential land" means land used or capable of being used for residential purposes (but does not include land on which there is no residential dwelling).

  • "community tip" means a portion of land set aside in each of the Shires designated communities for rubbish disposal in trenches that is managed by the Shire"

7. The following charges are declared:

  (a) A charge of $650.00 per annum per residential dwelling in respect of the garbage collection service provided to, or which Council is willing and able to provide to, each residential dwelling

within Amoonguna, Areyonga, Docker River, Finke, Haasts Bluff, Hermannsburg, Imanpa, Kintore, Mt. Liebig, Papunya, Santa Teresa, Titjikala and Wallace Rockhole Communities.

Other than a residential dwelling to which paragraph 7(a) applies.

(b) A charge of $1,300 per annum for each allotment used for commercial, industrial or community use purposes in respect of the garbage collection service provided to, or which Council is willing and able to provide to, each such allotment with in Amoonguna, Areyonga, Docker River, Finke, Haasts Bluff, Hermannsburg, Imanpa, Kintore, Mt. Liebig, Papunya, Santa Teresa, Titjikala and Wallace Rockhole Communities.

8. The following charges for using the Shire's tips:

Base rates are:

(a) For general rubbish $16.50 per cubic meter.

(b) For rubble $98.00 per cubic meter (based on one cubic meter equal to 0.85 tonne and 1 tonne charged at $114.40).

To be charged as follows:

Vehicle	m3 (up to)	General Waste	Concrete / Rubble
Ute / small trailer	1.5	$24.75	$147.00
Small FB / Tip truck	3	$49.50	$294.00
Large FB / Tip truck	6	$99.00	$588.00

9. Council intends to raise $475,150 by these charges.

Payment of Rates and charges

10. That pursuant to section 161 of the Local Government Act 2008, Council determines that rates and charges for the year 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012 inclusive, shall be due and payable in two instalments on the following dates namely:-

First instalment   Friday 5th October 2012

Second instalment Friday 1st March 2013

(a) Payment of all or any remaining instalments may be made on or before the due date of the next instalment.

(b) Details of due dates and specified amounts will be listed on the relevant rates notice under section 159 of the Act ("the Rates Notice").

(c) Variations to those options for payment will be administered according to the conditions outlined on the front and reverse of the Rate Notice.

(d) A ratepayer who fails to abide by such conditions may be sued for recovery of the principal amount of the rates and charges, late payment penalties and costs reasonably incurred by Council in recovering or attempting to recover the rates and charges.

Relevant Interest Rate

11. The Council fixes relevant interest rate for the late payment of rates and charges with Section 162 of the Act at the rate of 17% per annum which is to be calculated on a daily basis.

Assessment of the Social and Economic Effects of the Council's Rating Policies

12. MacDonnell Shire's rates and charges are set each year with regard to a number of factors including increases in the cost of providing services, proposed capital works and increases in service levels or other shire initiatives. The shire also considers statistical indicators such as the Consumer Price Index and the Northern Territory Local Government Index, which is prepared by the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT).

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

The rates as a revenue source at MacDonnell Shire represents just over 1% of revenue so is a minor part of its revenue. The rates for Pastoral Leases and Mining Leases in the shire have only been increased by the Darwin CPI (2.44%) which reflects less than the actual increase in costs that was determined by LGANT (4.24%) as a result of an extensive survey. The Shire reviewed rates for pastoral leases and mining leases nationally and they are comparatively low in this Shire. Pastoral leases have increased from only $328 per annum to $336 per annum so no economic or social impact is expected as the average value of pastoral leases in the Shire is well over $1,000,000. A Similar situation exists for Mining leases that have only risen from $777.00 to $795.42 per annum. This level of increase is not expected to cause any significant difficulties for mining lease owners.

The remaining rate payers – commercial businesses in the Shire had rate increases of 4.24% as per the LGANT index of increased costs. The council has to increase rates to match cost increases to maintain the current level of services that are to a level that cannot be reduced

without significant impacts on the communities within the Shire. The Shire currently has no reserves and is just recovering from two years of deficit budgets.

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

MACDONNELL SHIRE - Council Approved Structure

As at June 2012

MacDonnell Shire Council

Chief Executive Officer

Director Technical Services

Director Service Centre Delivery

Director Community Services

Director Corporate Services

Manager Property and Tenancy

- Shire housing
- Shire buildings
- Community housing: R & M, Tenancy
- Housing upgrades

Manager Fleet & Commercial Operations

- Fleet & Plant
- Stores
- Postal
- Centrelink
- Workshop
- Power & Water

Manager Infrastructure Projects

- Roads
- Civil contracts
- Swimming Pools

Manager Children's Services

- Child Care
- Outside school hours care

Manager Youth Services

- Youth Development
- Sport & Recreation

Manager Aged Care Services

- Aged Care
- School Nutrition

Manager Community Safety

- Community Safety

Area Manager x 4

Community Service Delivery including:
- Office administration
- Waste management
- Animal control
- Parks and gardens
- Cemeteries
- Outstations
- Project management

Manager Information Services

- Information Services

Manager Human Resources

- Recruitment
- OHS
- Workers compensation
- Industrial Relations
- Employee Relations
- Training & Development
- Performance Management

Manager Finance & Accounting

- Grants
- Rates
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Payroll
- Quality Assurance
- Reporting & Analysis

Manager Governance & Planning

- Governance
- Planning
- Media & Public Relations
- Stakeholder Liaison
- Procurement

APPENDIX 8 PHYSICAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR USE BY THE COUNCIL

On 1 July 2008 the Shire Council came into existence. During the transition from the predecessor entities the Council has inherited or negotiated the ownership, management, occupation and use of certain buildings and facilities, vehicles, plant and equipment, as well as community amenities such as cemeteries, sports grounds, parks, and waste disposal facilities.

Buildings & Facilities
With the exception of the Shire HQ Building in Alice Springs, the Council has no freehold or leasehold interests in land and buildings nor any commercial leases or licences over such property.

All of the communities in which the Council provides services are situated on Aboriginal Trust land and are subject to five year leases held by the Commonwealth Government.

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has granted to the Council an **administrative authority** to occupy and use certain buildings and facilities within these communities for the duration of the 5 year leases. The status of the Council's occupancy and use of these assets after the 5 year leases expire remains unknown. Accordingly, for financial reporting purposes, the Council has derecognised these buildings and facilities with effect from 30th June 2010.

Under the terms of the **administrative authority** the Council remains responsible for the proper maintenance, upkeep and insurance of these assets.

Vehicles, Plant & Equipment
The Shire Council has been active in addressing the status of assets with two basic rules. If it can be repaired at reasonable cost, repair it; if it cannot be repaired, dispose of it and, if necessary, replace it. Each asset of the Shire has been included in the asset register. During 2010/11 a new Fleet management system was introduced that enabled the operating costs of each asset to be measured and monitored.

Through this Fleet management system Shire administration has the ability to track the life of the asset; the repairs, maintenance and upgrades are costed specifically to the asset which informs us of the ongoing expenses incurred by the asset. Once and asset requires more maintenance than usual, under normal operating conditions, we can be sure it is time to dispose of that asset and replace it with a new one.

timely and routine fashion, ensuring that assets do not suffer neglect or fall into disrepair.

Over the coming years it is the intention to:

- Improve public amenities such as parks and sports grounds
- Purchase more appropriate plant and equipment for the delivery of Shire Council Services. This will include trialling innovative equipment in waste management, road maintenance and equipment for the maintenance of public spaces

- Increase the number of staff houses so we can employ qualified people to mentor local Indigenous staff
- Lobby for the improvement of agency facilities such as child care, aged care and recreational buildings and facilities
- Lobby for further investment Through this system, over the coming years, we intend to maintain and upgrade Shire assets in a in swimming pools
- Replace/dispose of antiquated plant and equipment
- Refurbish Shire service Delivery Centres in each community

It is a priority for the MacDonnell Shire Council to invest in local people to undertake training in maintenance of assets, both plant and equipment; and to operate assets such as major plant items, both to increase local employment and to more effectively maintain and prolong the life of Shire controlled and owned assets. This will be an ongoing initiative.

APPENDIX 9 MACDONNELL SHIRE COUNCIL S23(2) REVIEW OF REPRESENTATION (ADOPTED 17 FEBRUARY, 2011)

1. Introduction

At a meeting of council in Titjikala during August 2010, a presentation was made regarding the requirement for council to undertake an electoral review.

As stated on that occasion, the Local Government Act requires that each Shire Council, at least once in its term of office, must assess and, where necessary, revise the matters mentioned in s23(1) (c) of the Act, including:

"…the adequacy of constitutional arrangements presently in force for the council under this Act and, in particular, whether they provide the most effective possible representation for the area".

Such an electoral review must be completed at least 12 months before the next general election is scheduled to take place. This means that, for the current term of the council, the review must be completed by no later than March 2011.

This draft discussion paper sets out the facts and issues relevant to several matters which must be properly considered by council in carrying out the electoral review. Once this draft discussion paper had been considered and approved by council, it will be forwarded to the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) for consultation. A second draft discussion paper will be presented to council once input from the NTEC has been received.

2. Background Facts

MacDonnell Shire Council is presently represented by 12 elected members in 4 wards as follows:

Wards	Electors on Roll	Number of Elected Councillors	Enrolled Electors per Councillor	% Above or Below Average
Lyarrka	637	2	319	+25%
Ljirapinta	677	3	226	-18%
Luritja Pintubi	840	3	280	+1%
Rodinga	1,113	4	278	+1%
Total	3,267	12	272	

The variation from the average number of enrolled electors per councillor for each ward shows significant deviations from the mean for both Lyarrka and Ljirapinta wards.

The table below, showing a comparison with the other 7 newly created Shires, places these data in context:

Shire	Number of Wards	Electors on Roll	Number of Elected Councillors	Enrolled Electors per Councillor
MacDonnell	4	3,267	12	272
Barkly	3	4,176	11	380
Central Desert	4	2,679	12	223
East Arnhem	4	5,266	12	439
Roper Gulf	5	3,667	12	305
Tiwi Islands	4	1,533	12	128
Victoria Daly	8	3,373	12	281
West Arnhem	4	3,427	12	285
Totals	36	27,388	95	
Average	4.5	3,424	11.9	288

On average, the number of enrolled electors per councillor for MacDonnell Shire Council deviates from the mean by less than a 5%.

At the first general election of MacDonnell Shire Council held in October 2008, the voting statistics were as follows:

Ward	No. of Candidates	Ratio of Candidates to Vacancies	Electors on Roll	Total Votes Counted	Turnout %	Informal Vote %
Lyarrka*	1	1.0	637	293	46%	N/A
Ljirapinta	8	2.7	677	316	47%	7.3%
Luritja Pintubi	5	1.7	840	354	52%	8.5%
Rodinga	10	2.5	1,113	389	35%	14.4%
Total	24	2.0	3,317	1,097	42%*	

* There was only 1 candidate at the general election for the 2 vacant offices in Lyarrka ward. The first office was therefore filled unopposed without a ballot being held. A supplementary election was held in December 2008 and the figures quoted above relate to that election. Excluding Lyarrka ward, the average voter turnout rate for the general election was only 42%. In other words, most registered voters did not participate in the general election for the first Shire Council.

The variation in turnout and informal voting between the wards is significant. Rodinga ward, with the largest number of registered voters, produced the lowest turnout, with barely one third of those registered to vote actually participating in the first Shire general election. Furthermore, over 14% of these votes were informal, which is double the rate for the other two wards for which data are available. This is clearly an issue of some concern given that a third of the elected councillors come from this ward. While there is no empirical data to enable definitive conclusions to be drawn as to why this situation occurred in Rodinga ward, it is reasonable to suppose that an additional effort in relation to voter education and information may be appropriate during the lead up to the next election.

All data relating to the elections in 2008 have been extracted from the "***Northern Territory Electoral Commission's Election Report on the Shire & Rural Council Elections 2008***."

[47]

3. Matters to be Properly Considered by Council – s23 of the Local Government Act

i. Community interests in the area including economic, social and regional interests

The *"community interests"* of the population of the Shire can be defined in a number of ways. At the highest level, a distinction can be drawn between indigenous and non-indigenous community interests. According to ABS data, 88% of the population is indigenous and only 12% is non-indigenous. The indigenous population resides in numerous indigenous communities and outstations situated on Aboriginal Land Trusts. While some non-indigenous residents (including Shire Council employees) live within the indigenous communities, the majority of the non-indigenous population lives on the several pastoral properties within the central region of the Shire. There are also a few small tourism operations, road-houses and small mining ventures.

Indigenous Community Interests - MacDonnell Shire Council is the only one of the new local government entities to have an all-indigenous council. The 13 Service Delivery Centres (SDC's) of the Shire are located in indigenous communities with diverse origins and characteristics. One common factor is that all these communities are the creation of European missionaries or government agencies. As recently as the 1980's some of the present residents of the Shire lived a traditional nomadic, hunter-gatherer life in the desert. In a relatively short period of time however, each community has developed its own unique identity within a broader framework of traditional indigenous associations in the region.

Another shared characteristic of all these communities is that they lack any significant non-government economic base. Even Hermannsburg, with its tourism activities, is a government-dependent community. The economic benefits of the Land Rights Act are focused on specific favoured individuals and their families, with little discernable overall community benefit. Neither the NTER nor the local government reforms have altered these seemingly immutable facts of life in the remote desert communities.

The present ward structure and the ward boundaries were defined specifically to address distinctions between language groups and traditional tribal and cultural affinities among the indigenous residents of the Shire. Two years after the first elections there is no evidence and no change in the facts to suggest that the current ward structure and boundaries are inappropriate in achieving the intended balance of economic, social and regional interests.

The status of the voters at Mutijulu requires further special consideration. Legally, these voters reside inside a National Park upon land that forms a 99% year lease from the traditional owners to the Commonwealth of Australia. The responsible agent for the Commonwealth is the Parks & Reserves division of the Department of Sustainability, Water, Population and Communities (DSWPC). It is noteworthy that since the recent national general election, responsibility for "communities" has been added to this department's portfolio. At the time of writing there is an unresolved dispute involving the Shire, the Territory Government, FaHCSIA and DSWPC about who should provide local government and other services to the residents of the park at Mutijulu and who should pay for these services. Meanwhile, the Shire council does NOT provide any services to Mutijulu.

This situation begs the question whether Mutijulu residents should be obliged to vote in council elections for Lyarrka ward. If they receive no services from the council and pay no rates or charges to the council, then what is the nexus between them and the council? Prima facie they are in the same situation as the residents and businesses of Yulara that have been expressly excluded from the Shire and have no voting obligations for the council.

The non-indigenous & Commercial Community Interests - The tourist resort at Yulara, which is the largest commercial venture in the region as well as the largest non-indigenous community in the region, has been excluded from the Shire for reasons not yet disclosed to Councillors or Shire management. This selective exclusion of a privately owned business operation is an anomaly which continues to be a source of significant irritation for elected members and Shire management alike. It has the effect of distorting the demographic and economic characteristics of the Shire.

There is another anomaly that should be noted regarding the non-indigenous population of the Shire. This part of the voting population constitutes the ratepayers of the Shire. The only other ratepayer is the Territory Government (Territory Housing). The entire local government taxation burden is borne by this small minority of residents. Comprising mostly pastoralists and miners, these residents receive no services whatsoever from the Shire Council, being situated on private property outside of the service footprint of the 13 community-based Service Delivery Centres across the Shire. **Unlike the conventional model of local government as it exists in the States, we therefore have a situation in the Shire whereby those receiving local government services pay no rates and those paying rates receive no services.** This is the source of the hostility towards the Shires which exists on the part of ratepayers.

The nexus between physical presence in the region, electoral status and service status can be summarised in the following table:

Type of Community	In the Shire?	Receives Services?	Voter?
Indigenous (excl. Mutijulu)	YES	YES	YES
Indigenous (Mutijulu)	?	NO	YES
Non-indigenous	YES	NO	YES
Yulara	NO	NO	NO

A key electoral issue here is that the inclusion of the pastoralists, miners and tourism operators within the Shire has imposed legal obligations (to vote and pay taxes) without conveying any benefits or rights. There is no available data on how many of the non-indigenous residents of the Shire participated in the October 2008. None nominated as a candidate for election.

Shared Community Interests - While indigenous and non-indigenous residents lead largely parallel existences, their interests do intersect in relation to economic development. There is a shared perception that the Northern Territory Government is "Darwin-centric" or Top-End centric" in its policy priorities and in the allocation of public resources. A common phrase used is the "Berrimah Line", which signifies a lack of policy interest in the Southern part of the Northern Territory. An example of this is the perennial deferral of funding for the completion of the upgrading of the Mereenie Loop in the West MacDonnell Ranges. The indigenous residents of Hermannsburg and the tourism operators in the district are united in their disappointment and annoyance at this failure to follow-though on the political rhetoric.

ii. Types of communication and travel in the area with special reference to disabilities arising out of remoteness or distance.

The distances of the SDC's from Alice Springs, as well as their distance from one another, is set out in the table on the next page below:

	Alice Springs	Amoonguna	Ltyentye Apurte / Santa Teresa	Titjikala	Aputula / Finke	Mutitjulu	Utju / Areyonga	Kaltukatjara / Docker River	Imanpa	Ntaria / Hermannsburg	Wallace Rockhole	Warumpi / Papunya	Watiyawanu / Mt Liebig	Ikuntji / Haasts Bluff	Walungurru / Kintore
Alice Springs		14	82	118	245 421	455	214	647	270	126	108	246	314	223	519
Amoonguna	14		85	123	254 425	454	220	633	284	137	118	256	324	237	530
Ltyentye Apurte / Santa Teresa	82	85		96	294 481	514	292	702	332	204	186	324	391	305	597
Titjikala	118	123	96		152 420	453 558	329	618 645	260 383	241	223	360	428	342	625
Aputula / Finke	245 421	254 425	294 481	152 420		445 488	459 632	680 894	288 520	373 544	355 530	493 663	561 731	470 645	766 937
Mutitjulu	455	454	514	453 558	445 488		457	223	229	457	355 508	701	764	678	970 350
Utju / Areyonga	214	220	292	329	459 632	457		664	368	87	138	157	225	139	431
Kaltukatjara / Docker River	647	633	702	618 645	680 894	223	664		400	759	810	787	844	891	1117
Imanpa	270	284	332	260 383	288 520	229	368	400		381	377	515	583	496	788
Ntaria / Hermannsburg	126	137	204	241	373 544	457	87	759	381		50	279	347	260	552
Wallace Rockhole	108	118	324	223	355 530	355 508	138	810	377	50		261	329	242	534
Warumpi / Papunya	246	256	186	360	493 663	701	157	787	515	279	261		68	47	274
Watiyawanu / Mt Liebig	314	324	391	428	561 731	764	225	844	583	347	329	68		115	206
Ikuntji / Haasts Bluff	223	237	305	342	470 645	678	139	891	496	260	242	47	115		320
Walungurru / Kintore	519	530	597	625	766 937	970 350	431	1117	788	552	534	274	206	320	

The high degree of geographical dispersion of the communities as well as the extreme isolation of some of them, creates challenges in terms of electoral representation

Transport is almost exclusively by road. All communities, with the sole exception of Hermannsburg, can be accessed only by rough, unsealed tracks. In some cases, such as Santa Teresa, Finke and Kintore, hundreds of kilometres of unsealed roads are the only access the communities. During periods of wet weather, as has been experienced in 2010, these roads become impassable for extended periods of time, isolating the communities.

Most communities have serviceable airstrips, although few of these airstrips are suitable for all-weather operations.

Public transport in the region consists only of a privately operated "Bush Bus" service. In the case of the Shire's most remote community, Docker River, this offers a twice weekly return service to Alice Springs. This is the only transport available to community residents who do not have access to a private vehicle.

iii. Changes in the area's population trends.

While the population of the Shire is continuing to grow, there is no evidence of any significant changes in the population trends.

The demographic trends, in so far as they are known and documented, show that the Shire has a particularly high proportion of young people below voting age and a low proportion of residents aged over 65. This profile is consistent with other non-metropolitan regions in the Northern Territory.

Future reviews of the electoral arrangements will need to carefully monitor and reflect the changes in the electorate as today's children reach voting age.

iv. The area's population density

With a population of 6,999 spread over a landmass of 268,887 square kilometers, the Shire has an extremely low population density of 0.0261 persons per square kilometer (or, to use the reciprocal, there are 38.4 square kilometers per person within the Shire).

v. The area's physical features.

In geographical terms, the Shire consists of four principle land types:

- Extreme arid desert and dune-fields - e.g. the Simpson Desert.
- Complex uplands – e.g. the MacDonnell Ranges and the Peterman Ranges.
- Desiccated ancient inland seas – e.g. Lake Amadeus.
- Arid and semi-arid rangelands and plains – e.g. the central pastoral district.

The large areas comprising the deserts and desiccated inland seas are uninhabited.

In geographical terms, the origins of the communities within the Shire are all associated with proximity to water and/or transport routes. Thus, Finke was formerly a station on the original railway line, Docker River is a border crossing point into Western Australia and Hermannsburg and Titjikala are located on the banks of significant Rivers.

4. As per s63(3) of the Local Government Regulations, the council must also consider the following matters if the area is divided into wards:

i. The desirability of having elector numbers for each ward as close as equal as practicable at the next general election

There is no necessary reason why the number of electors in each ward should be similar. Of far greater importance for equity is the degree of affinity existing between the majority of the residents of each particular ward. Also of importance is equity in the number of elected Councillors in relation to the number of electors.

As shown in the table in section 2 above, there is a significant deviation in the number of registered electors per councillor in Lyarrka and Ljirapinta wards.

ii. The desirability of keeping the area of each ward containing rural and remote sectors as small as practicable.

The entire Shire is rural and/or remote. In terms of the number of enrolled voters, the existing wards are already very small. The large geographical size of the wards is simply a reflection of the very low population density. The present ward structure is intended to achieve a clustering of culturally and geographically associated communities. These communities are spread over vast tracts of land, usually associated with traditional cultural lands and Aboriginal Land Trusts. The present structure serves its intended purpose well and no appreciable benefit would be gained by further dividing the Shire into a greater number of smaller wards.

It should also be noted that the clustering of communities into wards serves the useful purpose of differentiating the Shire's governance model from the previous structure of community-based councils and associations.

iii. The desirability of keeping the demographic and geographic nature of each ward as uniform as practicable.

As noted above, the present ward boundaries are intended to group the indigenous population of the Shire into culturally associated groupings. This is regarded as highly desirable for the indigenous population who wish to be represented by individuals of shared language, land and cultural roots.

Other demographic characteristics of the indigenous population, such as age dispersion, lifestyles, economy and housing do not vary significantly from ward to ward.

The geographical nature of each ward is not relevant as an independent variable. In so far as it matters at all, the land is seen a cultural factor rather than a physical one in determining the size and boundaries of the wards.

As an example of the high desirability of cultural grouping as compared with geography, the Community of Areyonga, which is geographically surrounded by Ljirapinta ward, while close to Hermannsburg, has nevertheless been included in Lyarrka ward, together with its' culturally and linguistically associated communities at Docker River and Imanpa.

iv. The desirability of including an identifiable community wholly within one ward if practicable.

The grouping of identifiable cultural communities into one ward is regarded as very desirable. As noted above, the present ward structure successfully achieves this objective.

Issues Requiring Further Consideration

- Imbalance in the ration of electors to councillors between the wards.
- Significant variation in voter participation and informal voting.
- The status of voters who receive no services.
- The status of the residents and business of Yulara.
- The status of the residents of Mutijulu.

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