

Connecting Council and Community



Longreach Regional Council **ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN 2025-26**



Delivering
excellent service



**Longreach
Regional Council**
Ilfracombe Isisford Longreach Yaraka

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About the Annual Operational Plan

The Longreach Regional Council Annual Operational Plan serves as a crucial roadmap for our targets and goals over a twelve-month period. It's not just a document; it's a powerful tool that guides our staff in determining their performance milestones, budgetary needs, and it forms part of the basis for their monthly reports to Council.

The strategies outlined in the Annual Operational Plan are rooted in the Longreach Regional Council Corporate Plan 2024-2028. This comprehensive plan was developed in consultation with Council's leadership, and it sets the long-term targets and goals that shape our future direction and our relationship with the community we serve.

Every year, during the adoption of our Annual Budget, the strategies from the Corporate Plan are carefully considered for the upcoming twelve months. They are evaluated alongside our commitments from previous decisions and resolutions, and compliance with legislative requirements. The selected initiatives for the next financial year are incorporated into our Annual Operational Plan. During the budgeting process, adequate funds and resources are allocated to

ensure the successful delivery of these initiatives throughout the year.

Section 104(5) of the *Local Government Act 2009* and Section 175 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* outline the requirements and components of an operational plan. According to the regulation, the operational plan must align with the annual budget and clearly specify how Council will advance its five-year corporate plan and address operational risks. Our Annual Operational Plan is prepared in strict accordance with these guidelines.

Once adopted, the Annual Operational Plan undergoes quarterly reviews, which are conducted alongside the quarterly budget review. These reviews assess our progress towards achieving the outlined strategies while minimising any potential risks that could hinder service completion. The detailed information provided in the plan helps the Chief Executive Officer prepare quarterly reports to Council, highlighting progress made against performance measures.

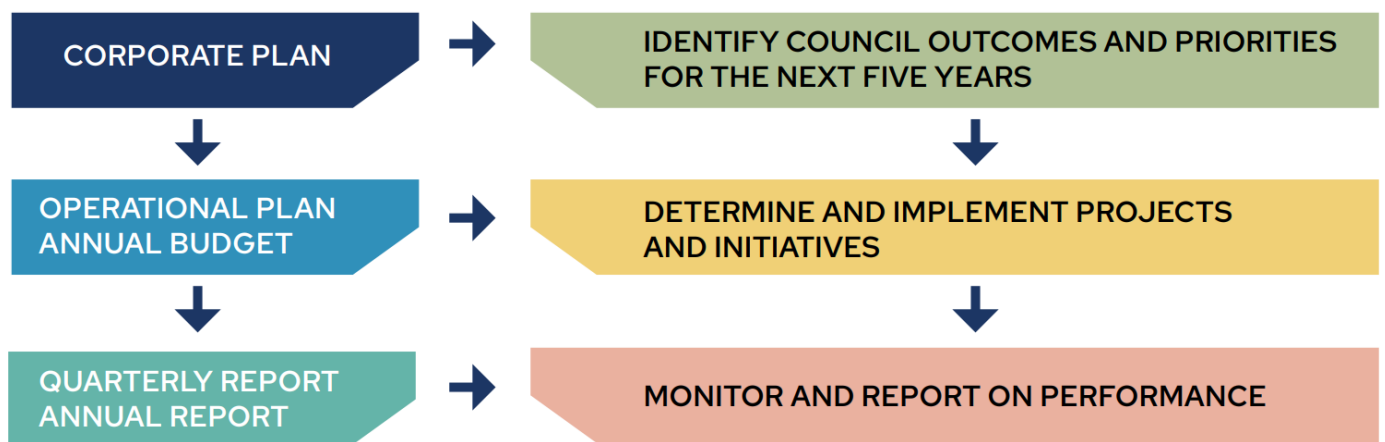
The financial allocations required to execute the plan are included in the 2025/2026 Budget, which should be referenced alongside this plan.



Strategic Framework

Council uses different ways to share information and make plans to decide what is most important given its available resources. These approaches help us effectively address the needs of the community in the short term, medium term, and long term.

Each strategy and plan includes a list of important things to focus on, key ideas to put into action, and specific steps to achieve desired results. They are considered when deciding on new ideas and how money should be spent, making sure our efforts match our long-term goals. We regularly check on the progress of these actions to see if they are being carried out as planned. This ongoing process allows for changes and updates as needed, making sure we stay on track in reaching our objectives.



Reporting

In adherence with the statutory reporting requirements of the *Local Government Act 2009* and our commitment to strategic foresight, we conduct annual reviews of the Corporate Plan. These reviews not only track our progress but also contribute to the development of our operational plan and budget for the following year.

Every three months, the Chief Executive Officer compiles a diligent review of the Annual Operational Plan to be presented to Council. This review serves to outline how well we have fared in relation to the goals outlined in our Corporate Plan, and the progress made in executing the activities detailed in our Annual Operational Plan.

Once the financial year draws to a close, Council undertakes the task of creating an Annual Report. This report serves as a comprehensive review of our achievements throughout the reporting year. It offers the community valuable insights into our performance, providing both operational and

financial information regarding how well we have fulfilled our obligations and service delivery commitments as specified in our Corporate and Operational Plans.

Risk Management

Council has a Risk Management Framework, guided by policy, which promotes a consistent and organised approach to risk management across the organisation. This framework follows the guidelines set by AS/NZ ISO 31000:2018.

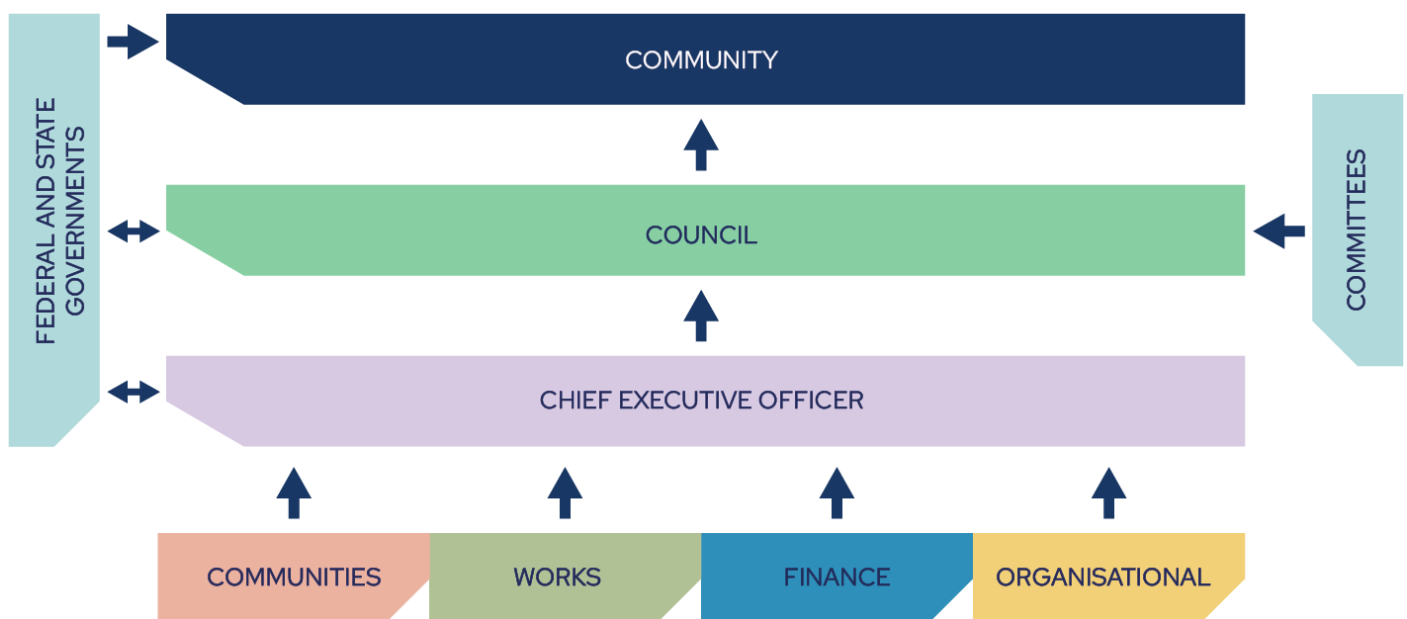
The Audit and Risk Committee plays a supervisory role in managing strategic risks. They review the Strategic Risk Register on a quarterly basis, along with the Executive Leadership Team. At the operational level, risk management is carried out by individual departments, supported by our Workplace Health and Safety team.



Organisational Structure

Within our organisational structure, the community is given highest importance, with the Mayor and Councillors responsible for representing them and addressing their needs. The Chief Executive Officer oversees all operations and ensures effective governance practices.

Further down the structure, we find four specialised directorates. The Works directorate manages and maintains infrastructure and civil works including roads, waste management, water and sewerage. The Communities directorate engages with the community, and manages community facilities like libraries, showgrounds, town halls, pools, parks and gardens. The Finance directorate handles financial resources, including budgeting, fiscal planning, plus business systems including payroll, information technology, and procurement. Lastly, the Organisational Services directorate oversees several important strategic functions such as people and culture, safety, economic development, legal, commercial and leasing, planning and development, disaster management, and regulatory services.



Reporting lines and accountability flows through the organisation up to the Directors that make up the Executive Leadership Team, through the Chief Executive Officer, up to the Mayor and Councillors then on to the community at large. Council is also guided by various committees including advisory committees, working groups, and the Audit & Risk Committee. State and federal governments provide further authority and guidance through legislation, service delivery, and funding.

This structure, and the distribution of functions within it, has been carefully designed to ensure that transparency and accountability is embedded in our culture, fostering a strong connection between Council and the community it serves.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Communities

- Childcare Services / Youth Services
- Community Engagement
- Facilities Management
- Funeral and Undertaker Services
- Council Run Community Events
- Parks and Gardens (Horticulture)
- Library Services
- Arts and Culture
- Tourism including museums and visitor information centers
- Ilfracombe Post Office

Works

- Quality Assurance
- Technical Services
- Water and Wastewater Management
- Waste Management
- Transport Management
- Fleet Management, including Workshops.
- Quarry Management
- Storm Water Management
- Town Services
- Rehabilitation and Return to Work

Finance

- Financial Services
- Revenue Management
- Asset Management
- Procurement/Stores
- Audit and Risk
- Business Improvement (ICT)
- Customer Service/Business Support
- Information Services (Records) Including Right to Information
- Insurance
- Grants and Finance Project Management

Organisational Services

- Organisational Development. Inc. Change Management
- People, Health and Safety
- Legal Administration, incl. Leasing/MOU's
- Economic Development
- Land Development/Sale of Land
- Town Planning/Development Services
- Emergency and Disaster Management
- Regulatory Services/Rural Lands
- Environmental Health Services

Annual Planning Overview

In order to prioritise and determine the initiatives and services we fund and provide to our community each year, a comprehensive process is undertaken. This process ensures that all proposed items are in harmony with our long-term strategic goals and the sustainability of our core services. It includes the identification and proficient management of operational risks, which greatly influences the decision-making process.

Annual Operational Plan

The Annual Operational Plan outlines important operational initiatives that match the focus areas and strategic goals of the five-year Corporate Plan. It also encompasses the services provided to our community. Each of our strategic themes – Community, Economy, Services, Finances, and Leadership – has its own specific strategies and performance milestones that provide guidance on how we aim to achieve our vision.

Project Decision Framework

In allocating limited resources across a wide range of competing priorities, Councillors play a central role in ensuring that projects align with community needs and deliver the best possible value. While Council relies on a disciplined approach to decision-making – considering project need, benefits, complexity, cost, and risk – it is ultimately through the judgment and leadership of elected Councillors that project priorities are confirmed.

To support this process, a Project Decision Group comprising executive leadership and senior staff meets regularly to assess and recommend the progression, timing, and planning needs of proposed projects. These recommendations are submitted to Councillors, who have the final say on which projects proceed.

To ensure transparency and consistency in how projects are evaluated, Council has developed a set of ten assessment criteria. Each project is rated against these criteria, with scores weighted to reflect their importance. This produces a ranked list of proposed projects, helping to guide discussions about funding priorities.

Importantly, Councillors are directly involved in refining and reviewing this list. During the annual budget process, the Project Decision Group undertakes an initial technical assessment. Councillors then participate in a series of budget workshops, where they provide considered input on individual project ratings – particularly in exceptional or contested cases – and confirm the overall priority of projects for inclusion in the budget. This approach ensures that while technical rigour is applied in assessing projects, the final decisions remain grounded in community values and local knowledge – through the leadership of the Councillors elected to represent them.

Annual Budget

Our Annual Budget serves as the financial framework that enables us to make a positive impact in our community. It is designed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* and *Local Government Regulation 2012*, ensuring that funding parameters are established for significant initiatives and projects outlined in the Annual Operational Plan, as well as the essential core services we provide.

The budget ensures that every activity we undertake receives the necessary funding and is carefully planned. Additionally, the Annual Budget plays a crucial role in helping us achieve our long-term financial goals. By aligning our budgetary decisions with these goals, we work towards creating a financially sustainable future for the organisation and the community we serve. We're committed to transparency and accountability in our financial practices, and the Annual Budget serves as a key instrument in achieving these aims.



Key Projects 2025-26

In each Annual Budget, a number of key projects (operational and capital) are supported, beyond the day-to-day delivery of services. These projects are identified by Councillors, Council staff, community members, community groups, or through Council's Asset Management Plans. They are then prioritised and matched to external or internal funding in line with Council's Project Decision Framework.

Key Projects funded in the 2025-26 Budget are detailed in the table below. These projects are subject to review throughout the year:

Project	Location	Funding
Complete road betterment projects	All areas	Queensland Reconstruction Authority
Replace priority grids on rural roads	All areas	Roads 2 Recovery
Reseal of town streets and rural roads	All areas	Roads 2 Recovery
Construct concrete floodways on rural roads	All areas	Roads 2 Recovery
Upgrade to computer and business systems	All areas	Council
Replace elevated water reservoir	Ilfracombe	Council
Upgrade to water treatment plant	Ilfracombe	Council
Replace racecourse water pipeline	Ilfracombe	Council
Replace electrical switchboards at Murray McMillan Dam	Ilfracombe	Council
Refurbish Ilfracombe sewer pump station	Ilfracombe	Council
Upgrade to Wellshot Centre museum	Ilfracombe	Council
Develop residential land for sale for housing	Ilfracombe	Council
Upgrade to water treatment plant: Valve Automation	Ilfracombe	Council
Pave and seal access to fuel depot	Isisford	Roads 2 Recovery
Improve drainage at town hall	Isisford	Council
New SES training room	Isisford	SES Support
Replace shade structures at swimming pool	Isisford	Council
Refurbish sewer pump station	Isisford	Council
Upgrade to works depot	Isisford	Council
Complete design for works depot	Isisford	Council
Remove vegetation from water storage	Isisford	Council
Complete Teal Street housing project	Longreach	Queensland Government



Project	Location	Funding
Replace water mains in Gull St, Heron St, Rosella St, Tern St	Longreach	Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program
Construct a new animal management facility	Longreach	State Government
Land development projects	Longreach	Council
Thomson River weir raising	Longreach	WISER
Install smart water meters	Longreach	WISER
Develop a Water Servicing Strategy	Longreach	WISER
Replace airconditioners at the works depot	Longreach	Council
Upgrade stormwater drainage in Pelican St (Cassowary St – Falcon St)	Longreach	Roads 2 Recovery
Upgrades to Longreach Childcare Centre	Longreach	Community Childcare Fund
Purchase new trench shoring equipment	Longreach	Council
Improve centre medium strips	Longreach	Council
Replace and repair cemetery plinths	Longreach	Council
Replace water pumps on Thomson River	Longreach	Council
Upgrade to showground dressing rooms	Longreach	Brisbane 32
New pontoon on Thomson River	Longreach	Brisbane 32
Expand activities at community skatepark	Longreach	Growing Regions Fund
Replace interactive table at library	Longreach	Council
New gurney for hearse	Longreach	Council
Complete design for works depot	Longreach	Council
Renovate botanical walkway plants and watering	Longreach	Council
Reseal 8km of Emmet Yaraka Road	Yaraka	Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme
Install new electric barbeque in park	Yaraka	Council
Replace the swimming pool fence	Yaraka	Council
Assess stormwater drainage at airstrip	Yaraka	Council
Complete tree planting project	Yaraka	Council

Note: projects with funding attached are dependent on funding sources



Strategies and Initiatives by theme

1. Our Community

We focus on making our region a great place to live.

Outcome Statement: Council will be responsive to community needs and create a better quality of life for its residents.

Corporate Plan Outcomes	Corporate Plan Strategies	Operational Plan Initiatives	Responsible Directorate
1.1 The region's infrastructure & services promote liveability and community amenity	1.1.1 Maintain and enhance public open spaces, parks, gardens, and pathways for community enjoyment, to create a cooling environment, and to improve accessibility	Implement tree planting projects across the region	Communities
		Implement water saving irrigation measures	Communities
	1.1.2 Maintain and enhance community facilities and services to meet the needs and interests of residents	Complete Phase 1 of Skate Park Development	Communities
	1.1.3 Develop and implement a housing strategy to meet employee and community needs	Complete construction of six new affordable homes for Council staff in Longreach	Communities
		Develop and implement a Council housing strategy for Isisford	Communities
	1.1.4 Enhance the health, safety, and wellbeing of our communities	Continue patrols to reduce the overall percentage of wandering dogs in towns, in an effort to reduce dog attacks	Organisational Services
		Issue timely overgrown allotment compliance notices to ensure safety and aesthetics of town is maintained	Organisational Services
		Promote the Regulatory Services motto of Awareness-Education-Compliance-Enforcement	Organisational Services
		Undertake a review of Council Environmental Health Service requirements, with recommendations provided to Council,	Organisational Services



		including resourcing requirements	
1.2 Council recognises the region's culture, heritage and diversity	1.2.1 Actively engage with the community to foster inclusiveness, identity, heritage, and participation	Develop community plans for each community in collaboration with Stakeholders	Communities
	1.2.2 Support the delivery of arts and cultural activities, civic functions, and community events to celebrate identity, and to create a vibrant community	Focus resources on events that are of community and cultural significance	Communities
1.3 The region's natural environment is managed, maintained, and protected	1.3.1 Effectively manage stock routes and reserves for public use while improving natural environmental health	Commence initial phases of implementation for Council's Biosecurity Management Plan 2025-2030	Organisational Services
		Continuation of Council's coordinated baiting program with landholder for pest animals	Organisational Services
	1.3.2 Maintain and improve the health of the Thomson and Barcoo River waterways and catchments	Compliant effluent discharges	Works
		Monitor and manage aquatic weeds in regional waterways	Organisational Services



2. Our Economy

We make it easy for people to invest and do business in the region.

Outcome Statement: Council will contribute to the economic growth of the region.

Corporate Plan Outcomes	Corporate Plan Strategies	Operational Plan Initiatives	Responsible Directorate
2.1 Collaborative engagement with stakeholders to maximise economic opportunities	2.1.1 Advocate to and partner with regional organisations, industry stakeholders, and governments to support emerging economic development opportunities	In line with the Economic Development Charter, promote the Local Government Area's unique economic priorities, ensuring they are adequately reflected in regional coordination	Organisational Services
	2.1.2 Grow the region's importance as a service hub to communities beyond our local government area	Advocate for public and private investment in key service sectors	Organisational Services
2.2 Council infrastructure and services support local industries and growth	2.2.1 Facilitate growth through effective and sustainable land use planning and development	Identify and resolve land tenure issues throughout the region	Organisational Services
		Ensure an adequate supply of serviceable land for future community requirements and sustainable development within the region	Organisational Services
		Commence a Major Amendment to the Longreach Regional Council Planning Scheme	Organisational Services
	2.2.2 Provide tourism development services to promote the region and grow the visitor economy	Collaborate with Outback Queensland Tourism Association and local operators on product development within the region	Communities
		Establish a working committee to market drive routes through the region	Communities
		Continue to promote the Longreach Region through development of Longreach Region Guide and other marketing opportunities	Communities
		Develop and implement a program to promote the	Communities



		region to the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) market	
	2.2.3 Create a business-friendly environment within Council	Actively participate in the Small Business Friendly Program, and support the delivery of Economic Development Charter outcomes	Organisational Services
	2.2.4 Provide logistical support services to the agricultural economy	Negotiate with RAPAD for financial support toward Council's Regulatory Services support on crucial pest management projects that benefit the agricultural economy	Organisational Services
	2.2.5 Provide comprehensive childcare services that meet the needs of families and to support working parents	Review the Childcare Centre operations to improve service provision	Communities



3. Our Services

We strive to deliver our core services to a consistently high standard.

Outcome Statement: Council will have high quality infrastructure supported by robust management plans.

Corporate Plan Outcomes	Corporate Plan Strategies	Operational Plan Initiatives	Responsible Directorate
3.1 A secure water supply that is resilient to climate factors	3.1.1 Upgrade and maintain storage, treatment, and reticulation infrastructure to provide each community with a reliable, quality water supply	Commence construction of five new weirs on the Thomson River to increase water storage	Works
		Install 50% of the planned water mains replacement project in Longreach	Works
		Complete water infrastructure upgrades in Ilfracombe as per the Key Projects Schedule	Works
	3.1.2 Partner with government agencies to increase water licence allocations to meet future demand	Increase the Longreach Town water allocation by 500ML per annum	Works Organisational Services
	3.1.3 Implement innovative water management practices to preserve the water supply	Revise the Drought Management Plan to meet the requirements of new water infrastructure	Works
3.2 Sustainable waste infrastructure and services that represent value for money, are environmentally responsible, and are responsive to community needs	3.2.1 Efficiently manage waste and wastewater facilities and services balancing customer needs and environmental protection	Operate, maintain and monitor landfill and waste water treatment facilities to comply with license conditions, regulations and industry standard	Works
	3.2.2 Develop innovative solutions for future waste management	Develop Local Waste Management Strategy considering trends in recycling, and regulatory changes	Works
3.3 Construct high quality transport infrastructure in partnership with external agencies	3.3.1 Maintain a safe and reliable road and airport network through the efficient and effective use of resources	Deliver the Road Maintenance Performance Contract within budget	Works
		Develop a new 10 year Transport Plan	Works
	3.3.2 Develop an active transport network	Continue advocating for additional funds and projects	Works



		with Department of Transport and Main Roads	
	3.3.3 Maintain an efficient fleet network to support Council operations	Continue with the development and implementation of a "fit for purpose" Plant Replacement Program	Works



4. Our Finances

We will strategically manage our finances to improve our resilience, to overcome adversity and realise opportunities.

Outcome Statement: Council will maintain a sound financial position with the capacity to invest for the future.

Corporate Plan Outcomes	Corporate Plan Strategies	Operational Plan Initiatives	Responsible Directorate
Finance	4.1.1 Achieve efficiency and reduce risks through contemporary technology, and innovative work processes	Complete planning and tendering for replacement Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software	Finance
		Implement solar energy solutions to reduce long term electricity costs	Finance
	4.1.2 Mature asset management systems and agreed service levels are used to achieve sustainable outcomes	Strategic Asset Management Plan is reviewed and updated.	Finance
	4.1.3 External funding opportunities are maximised to diversify Council's revenue base and to reduce reliance on own source funding	Service levels and infrastructure maintained using between 25-35% own-sourced funding	Finance
	4.1.4 Robust budget processes deliver a financially sustainable Council into the future	Council achieves a net result and closing cash balance within 10% of budget	Finance



5. Our Leadership

We will work together as a team for the benefit of our community and our council.

Outcome Statement: Council will be a high performing team, delivering excellent service.

Corporate Plan Outcomes	Corporate Plan Strategies	Operational Plan Initiatives	Responsible Directorate
5.1 Council has a values driven culture	5.1.1 Prioritise the safety, wellbeing, and inclusiveness of employees across all operations	Progress the Peer Support Pilot Program with Council	Organisational Services
		Commence the first-year actions of the WHS Safety Strategy as per the adopt annual action plan	Organisational Services
	5.1.2 Foster a high-performance team culture through holistic workforce development initiatives	Design and adopt Employee Value Proposition for Council	Organisational Services
		Develop leaders on the floor discussions program to create improved connections between leaders and teams	Organisational Services
		Re-establish leading change in action working groups to support change management and problem solving within council	Organisational Services
		Review and implement a holistic performance management framework	Organisational Services
5.2 Evidence based decision making based on effective governance practices	5.2.1 Maintain a robust strategic and policy framework that meets statutory requirements, mitigates risks, and drives effective governance practices	Establish policy and procedure communication and approval framework for Council	Office of the CEO Organisational Services
		Conduct a holistic review of Council to CEO and CEO to Staff delegations with the Local Laws and Planning Amendments reviews	Office of the CEO Organisational Services



5. Our Leadership

We will work together as a team for the benefit of our community and our council.

Outcome Statement: Council will be a high performing team, delivering excellent service.

Corporate Plan Outcomes	Corporate Plan Strategies	Operational Plan Initiatives	Responsible Directorate
		Adopt a Delegations and Authorisations Policy to support effective decision making	Organisational Services
	5.2.2 Increase opportunities for meaningful community engagement to improve transparency and to strengthen community trust	Facilitate open and transparent means for community to engage directly with Council both online and in-person	Communities
5.3 Council delivers a positive customer experience in all service areas	5.3.1 Deliver quality, timely, and efficient service to prioritise customer needs and outcomes	Review customer service processes to improve customer experience	Finance
		Adoption of updated Customer Service Charter	Finance
5.4 Council is resilient to climate factors	5.4.1 Enhance the region's disaster resilience through robust disaster management and recovery initiatives	Review Council's disaster management plans and processes with learnings from the 2025 flood event	Organisational Services
		Identify climate change hazards and risks with potential to impact on Council business and operations	Organisational Services Finance
		Complete the Longreach Flood Study	Works





Contacts

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CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES

Ilfracombe - 1 Devon Street, Ilfracombe QLD 4727

Isisford - 20 St Mary Street, Isisford QLD 4731

Longreach - 96 Eagle Street, Longreach QLD 4730



**Longreach
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